

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN BC'S EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Summary of Research from the
Student Transitions Project

PREPARED BY
JOANNE HESLOP,
STP MANAGER
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Executive Summary

About this Research

This report provides key research findings from a recently updated analysis of international students studying in the B.C. secondary and post-secondary education systems. The study was conducted by the Student Transitions Project (STP), a collaborative research partnership involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and post-secondary institutions.

This report is based on STP2023 data and provides an update to a similar report prepared in 2018 from STP2017 data. A small portion of this report provides an overview of B.C. K-12 international students, with the primary focus of this research on the institutions, programs, pathways and education outcomes of international students who enrolled in B.C.'s public post-secondary system.

Quick Facts

[How many international students are studying in B.C.'s education systems?](#) In July of 2024, the Province of B.C. reported 553,000 post-secondary students enrolled in B.C. public and private institutions, of which 217,600 were international students (based on study permits): 111,900 in public post-secondary and 105,700 in private post-secondary institutions. This STP study focuses primarily on 92,749 students enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary institutions in an earlier time period, academic year 2022/2023, and also includes some analysis of 2,706 international B.C. grade 12 graduates from B.C. public and B.C. independent schools. [\[Page 19\]](#)

International students make up 21.5% of the total headcount enrollment (domestic and international combined) in B.C. public post-secondary institutions and this varies by institution, from a high of 38.6% for Langara College to less than 4.1% for College of the Rockies. [\[Page 20\]](#)

What is an international student?

An **international student** is any non-Canadian citizen who does not have permanent residency status in Canada and is participating in a program of study at an education institution in Canada. International students are defined differently in each of three different data sources provided to the STP, but the definitions are sufficiently similar across systems for this analysis (see [How does the STP identify international students?](#) on [page 4](#)).

Why do international students choose to study in B.C.?

According to international student recruiting agencies and visa services*, there are numerous reasons why students study in B.C.:

- High quality education from top universities and colleges.
- Natural beauty and outdoor lifestyle.
- Cultural diversity and multi-culturalism.
- Career opportunities and excellent job prospects for graduates.
- High standard of living.
- Mild climate, compared to the rest of Canada, especially in Vancouver.
- The BC Transfer System allows students to begin at smaller institutions and subsequently transfer to a larger one.
- Safe and secure environment in British Columbia with lower crime rates than the national average.
- Available support services help students navigate their educational journey.
- Part-time work opportunities and eligibility to apply post-graduation work permits.

* Perplexity.ai identified 10 reasons from 3 sources: [enhancevisa.com](#), [msmunify.com](#), [go2canadaeducation.ca](#).

How does the STP Identify International Students?

International students are defined differently in each of three different data sources provided to the STP, but the definitions are sufficiently similar across systems for this study.

The **B.C. K-12** system does not collect student visa status and citizenship information centrally, but residency status is collected and submitted to the STP. Non-resident students, or those students who are [not ordinarily resident in B.C.](#) for funding purposes, offer a reasonable proxy for identifying international students in the STP, although this proxy is not perfect. Roughly 1% of domestic residents from other Canadian provinces will appear as international students.

The **Central Data Warehouse (CDW)** institutions (all post-secondary institutions excluding Research universities) define international students on the basis of the fees the students pay. Students who pay international fees are classified as international students. It is also assumed that international exchange students pay domestic fees and are therefore counted as domestic students in this study.

The **Research-Intensive Universities (RIUs)** identify international students according to the student visa status. The following visa status values are provided to the STP: Diplomat, Minister, Other, Student Visa, Visitor and International Exchange. Although international exchange students were included in some of the preliminary analysis, they have primarily been filtered out.

What are the 10-year trends in international and domestic enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system? Over the last 10 years, from 2013/2014 to 2022/2023, the total headcount enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system has remained relatively unchanged, increasing just 0.1%, from 431,626 to 431,962. [\[Page 21\]](#)

As international student enrollment grew, did domestic enrollments decline? Over the last 10 years, total international student headcount in the B.C. public post-secondary system grew by roughly the same number of students as the decline in domestic student headcounts. The total decrease in domestic students across the post-secondary system during this time period (-52,748) was offset by roughly the same increase in the number of international students (+53,833), such that the total enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system remained virtually unchanged over 10 years, growing by 336 students (or 0.1%), from 431,626 to 431,962. During this same time period, the number of B.C. K-12 graduates also remained relatively constant. [\[Page 22\]](#)

What are the 10-year trends in new international and domestic students entering the B.C. public post-secondary system? Over the last 10 years, the total number of new students entering the B.C. public post-secondary system has increased 1% from 164,0911 to 165,708. Currently, new international students represent 46% of total international enrollment, whereas domestic students represent a smaller proportion (36%) of total domestic enrollment. Consistent with the enrollment changes over the last decade, a steady increase in the relative share of new international students has occurred, growing 16 percentage points from 10% to 26% of the total; and this was balanced with an offsetting decline in the share of domestic student enrollment from 90% to 74% of the total. [\[Page 24\]](#)

What are the international student enrollment trends – by institution type? Although RIU's have the largest number of international students, they saw the smallest percentage increase in international students (+59%) over the last 10 years. The largest growth occurred in Institutes (+528%), TIUs (+171%) and Colleges (+209%), where international headcounts are collectively 3.3 times higher now than 10 years ago. [\[Page 25\]](#)

What are the international student enrollment trends – by region of B.C.? International student enrollments have seen the largest rate of growth in the Cariboo-North region, compared to any other region in the province, where international student headcounts are 3.8 times

the number a decade ago. Growth in other regions was more moderate, reaching levels that are 1.4 to 2.6 times the levels from a decade ago. Within the Mainland/Southwest region, Colleges and Institutes saw more than double the rate of growth of universities. [Page 26]

Which countries do international students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions come from? The largest share of international students are from India (43%) and China (16%). All other countries represent 3% or fewer international students enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary system, including Philippines, Iran and the United States rounding out the top five countries. The number of international students from the top 10 countries alone currently comprise 81% of the total international student enrollment. [Page 29]

Which post-secondary study levels and credentials are international students enrolled in? Among the roughly 93,000 post-secondary international students in 2022/2023, the majority (86%) were enrolled in undergraduate programs, with 12% in graduate degree programs and relatively few (2%) in developmental programs. The largest proportion of international students were enrolled in Bachelor's degree programs (30%). [Page 33]

Which program areas do international students enrol in? International undergraduate students primarily enrol in three program areas: (1) Arts, (2) Business and Management and (3) Engineering and Applied Sciences. Compared to graduate students, a greater proportion of international undergraduate students seek credentials in Business and Management (31% vs. 25%) and Arts (26% vs. 16%), whereas a significantly smaller proportion of international undergraduate students seek credentials in Engineering and Applied Sciences (14% vs. 40%). [Page 35]

What is the proportion of domestic versus international students within each program? At 42%, undergraduate Business and Management programs have the largest proportion of international students enrolled, and this is roughly double the proportion of international students enrolled in the next four programs frequently sought by international students, including Human and Social Services (24%), Science (24%), Engineering (23%), and Arts (21%). More than half (57%) of the graduate-level registrants in Engineering programs are international students and more than one-third

B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Region

B.C. public post-secondary institutions are located in urban and rural regions of the province. For the purpose of tracking students around the province, the STP has assigned each of the post-secondary institutions to one of the following four geographic regions.

Cariboo-North (CNO) – College of New Caledonia, Northern Lights College, Coast Mountain College, University of Northern British Columbia.

Mainland-Southwest (MSW) – British Columbia Institute of Technology, Capilano University, Douglas College, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Justice Institute of B.C., Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Langara College, Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Community College.

Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay (TOK) – College of the Rockies, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Okanagan College, Thompson Rivers University, Selkirk College, University of British Columbia (Okanagan).

Vancouver Island (VIS) – Camosun College, North Island College, Royal Roads University, University of Victoria, Vancouver Island University.

See the Student Transitions Project website for a [map](#) of the B.C. public post-secondary system, with institutions identified by type and by region.

International Student Enrollment Highlights

The **total number** of international students enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary system has more than doubled over the last decade, increasing by roughly 53,833 students, from 38,916 students in 2013/2014 to 92,749 to 2022/2023.

By **institution type**, the increase of 28,000 international students in Colleges and Institutes over ten years was virtually the same as the increase seen in RIUs and TIUs; however, this equates to a four-fold increase in **Colleges and Institutes**, but only a two-fold increase in **TIUs and RIUs**.

By **study level**, international students represent roughly 20% of all undergraduate students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions, compared to 38% of graduate students. Among the **programs** with the largest share of international students, 42% of students in undergraduate Business programs are international, versus 57% of students in graduate-level Engineering and Applied Science programs.

In terms of **country of origin**, the largest proportion of international students are from India (43%) and China (16%). Over the last decade, China dropped to second place behind India which is now the top country from which the majority of international students come to B.C. to study. A total of 185 countries in the world are currently represented by international students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions, with 81% coming from the top ten countries.

of graduate students in four other program areas are international, including Science (45%), Business and Management (45%), Visual and Performing Arts (41%) and Arts (34%). [\[Page 36\]](#)

[Do the program preferences of international students differ by country of origin?](#) The top three program areas sought by all international students from all countries combined are Business and Management (32%), Arts (26%) and Engineering and Applied Sciences (17%), with eight of the top 10 countries holding these same top three program rankings. Business and Management is the top program destination for students from half of the top 10 countries: India (38%), Philippines (61%), Viet Nam (48%), Nigeria (46%) and Mexico (34%). [\[Page 38\]](#)

[Do the types of institutions and regional destinations of international students differ by country of origin?](#) International students from three countries chose RIUs as their institution type, China (66%), United States (86%) and South Korea (49%). B.C. Colleges are the primary institution type for students from the Philippines (74%), Viet Nam (41%), Mexico (47%), Japan (46%) and Viet Nam (41%). TIUs are the primary institution type for students from Nigeria (48%) and India (35%). The majority of international students from the top 10 countries enrol in the Mainland/Southwest region of the province. [\[Page 39\]](#)

[How many international students graduate from the B.C. K-12 education system in 2022/2023, by region?](#) In 2022/2023, a total of 44,115 eligible grade 12 students graduated from grade 12 in B.C., of which 2,706 (or 6.1%) were identified by the STP's proxy definition as "international" students (or B.C. non-residents). [\[Page 40\]](#)

[What are the previous B.C. education experiences of international students studying in B.C.?](#) The majority (91%) of the 92,749 international students in B.C. in 2022/2023 did not previously attend B.C.'s K-12 education system, although 8% were B.C. grade 12 graduates and a further 1% had attended the B.C. K-12 system without attaining B.C. grade 12 graduation. [\[Page 41\]](#)

[What are the trends in the number of international grade 12 graduates in B.C.?](#) The number of international grade 12 graduates in B.C. nearly doubled over the first half of the decade, from 2,020 graduates in 2013/2014 to a peak of 3,987 in 2018/2019, but subsequently declined over the latter half of the

decade to current levels of 2,706 in 2022/2023. The total number of international grade 12 graduates grew by 34%, with slower growth in B.C. public schools (+29%) and steeper growth in independent schools (+45%). [Page 42]

What proportion of international grade 12 graduates transition to B.C. public post-secondary education? Roughly one-third (30% to 35%) of international B.C. grade 12 graduates subsequently enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary education system within one year of graduation in each of the last 10 years, compared to 52% to 54% of domestic grade 12 graduates. [Page 43]

What proportion of new international students in B.C. Public Post-secondary institutions entered directly from B.C. grade 12 graduation? Currently, fewer than 6% of new international students to B.C. public post-secondary institutions have previously attended the B.C. K-12 system, down from 14% 10 years ago. This is consistent with the decline in the total number of international students who graduated from the B.C. K-12 system. [Page 44]

How reliable or consistent is STP's ability to identify "international" students across B.C.'s education systems (among B.C. public post-secondary registrants with B.C. grade 12 graduation)? Virtually all (97%) of the B.C. grade 12 "international" graduates who transitioned to B.C. public post-secondary education over the last 10 years subsequently enrolled as an international student in the B.C. public post-secondary system, with 3% enrolling as domestic students. As a result, the STP is satisfied that using "non-resident" status as a proxy for international students is a reasonably accurate approach. [Page 45]

Do undergraduate international students in the B.C. public post-secondary system remain at one institution, or do they attend multiple institutions over time? Of all undergraduate international students who first entered the B.C. public post-secondary system in the 10-year period between 2013/2014 and 2022/2023, the majority (88%) attended just one institution throughout their educational career in the B.C. public post-secondary system; 12% attended multiple post-secondary institutions. Whether students attended multiple institutions (i.e. switched institutions) during the course of their studies in the B.C. public post-secondary system largely depended on the type of institution they first enrolled in, the length of time enrolled in the system and the type of credential completed. [Page 46]

Education Outcomes of International vs. Domestic Students

The **first-year attrition rate** of immediate-entry international students is 10.1%, which is higher than the 6.8% attrition rate for domestic students.

International students seeking a Bachelor's degree in 2022/2023 had a **cumulative grade point average (CGPA)** of 76.6, compared to 74.6 for domestic students.

The five-year and six-year **Bachelor's degree completion rates** of international students (64% and 73%) are higher than the rates for domestic students (46% and 56%), but the seven-year degree completion rates are similar (72% international and 71% domestic). This is a forward-looking measure that tracks Bachelor's degree entrants over seven years.

The time to Bachelor's degree completion is a retrospective measure that quantifies the number of elapsed years to complete a Bachelor's degree, but only among those who completed a degree. International Bachelor's degree completer's took roughly one year less than domestic students to complete a Bachelor's degree (4.5 years versus 5.6 years).

Among all post-secondary **credentials awarded** in 2022/2023, the top four credentials awarded to international students were Bachelor's degrees (30%), Diplomas (24%), Post-Degree Diplomas (18%) and Masters Degrees (14%). The top four credentials awarded to domestic students were Bachelor's degrees (40%), Certificates (21%), Diplomas (12%) and various other undergraduate credentials (12%).

Entry Characteristics of International Students by Country of Origin

Among international students from the top ten countries of origin who entered undergraduate programs in 2018/2019 and were followed for five years to 2022/2023, some interesting differences in demographics and entry characteristics are evident.

Gender– Although the proportion of men and women entrants is roughly balanced, a larger share of females entered from three countries, including the Philippines (64%), Japan (62%), and South Korea (60%).

Average Age – New international students in 2018/2019 were younger (22) than domestic students (29), but students from the Philippines (27) and Iran (28) were older than international students from other countries.

B.C. K-12 Experience – Most of B.C.'s international entrants to public post-secondary institutions (91%) had no previous experience in the B.C. K-12 system.

Entry Institution Type – In 2018/2019, Colleges were the primary destination for 34% of new international students; RIU's were the top destination institution type for students from the United States (67%) and China (53%); TIUs were the top destination for 48% of students from Nigeria; Institutes were the top destination for students from Iran (49%).

A summary of the **education outcomes** of these international students is provided in this report, beginning on [page 52](#).

[To what extent do international students move between institution types in the B.C. public post-secondary system?](#) The mobility patterns of international students who completed a Bachelor's degree show a significant proportion had initially entered and completed their degree in an RIU, but of the 13% who first entered a College, roughly two-thirds of this group had moved to an RIU to complete their degree. [\[Page 48\]](#)

[What are the first-year attrition rates of international and domestic immediate-entry students?](#) The attrition rate is calculated as the proportion of students who did not complete a credential and did not return to any B.C. public post-secondary institution over the four years after their immediate entry. A total of 1,106 international students and 21,017 domestic B.C. high school graduates of 2016/2017 first enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary education in 2017/2018. The attrition rate of these international students is 10.1% which is 3.3 percentage points higher than domestic students (6.8%). [\[Page 50\]](#)

[How do international vs. domestic Bachelor's degree students compare on academic progress, performance and outcomes?](#) Among Bachelor's degree completers, domestic students earn cumulative GPAs that are two percentage points higher than international students (76.6 and 74.6 percent, respectively). Consistent with their larger credit load, a higher proportion of international students (68%) were enrolled full-time, or attempting 12 or more credits in the Fall term, than domestic students (62%). International students have higher Bachelor's degree completion rates than domestic students and international students have a shorter time to degree completion. [\[Page 51\]](#)

[Which credentials were awarded to international and domestic students in 2022/2023?](#) The top 3 credentials awarded to international students in 2022/2023 were Bachelor's degrees (30%), Diplomas (24%) and Masters degrees (14%), compared to domestic students who earned Bachelor's degrees (40%), Certificates (21%) and Diplomas (12%). [\[Page 54\]](#)

[What are the post-secondary education outcomes of international students in B.C., by country of origin?](#) A cohort of new undergraduate and developmental international students was tracked for five years, from the time of first entry in 2018/2019, through to the end of academic year 2022/2023. A summary table of the entry characteristics and education outcomes is provided, with a comparison across the top 10 countries to all domestic students, including: gender, age, entry institution and program characteristics, academic performance, number of institutions attended, and credentials completed. [\[Page 55\]](#)

Introduction

Overview

This report addresses some key research questions about international students studying in the B.C. secondary and post-secondary education systems. The study was conducted by the Student Transitions Project (STP), a collaborative research partnership involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and post-secondary institutions.

The number of students crossing national borders to receive an education outside of their home country seemed to be on an unstoppable growth trajectory, but in some jurisdictions, including Canada, recent policy changes are threatening our ability to sustain enrollment levels (see [page 16](#)). In light of these challenges, we are frequently reminded that “the contributions of international students extend well beyond tuition.” Dr. Rahim Somani’s commentary in the December 6, 2024 *Academica Forum* further explains that “their presence stimulates local economies, especially in university towns, and they fill critical gaps in labour markets such as technology, health care, environmental stewardship, and research. International students often act as cultural bridges, enriching the diversity of campuses and communities while fostering global networks that benefit Canada’s international relations and trade.”¹ The benefits of international education are multi-faceted.

- For **students**, studying abroad offers them an opportunity to access education or acquire skills that might not be taught in their home country, frequently resulting in better access to labour markets and improved employability. In addition, foreign students have an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of other societies and improve their language skills.
- From the perspective of the **host country**, international students provide an important source of income and positive economic impact, as these students typically pay higher tuition fees than domestic students and they contribute to the local economy through their living expenses. Over the long run, foreign students might stay in the host country, participate in the domestic labour market, and offer a new pool of talent and skills to contribute to the growth of the local economy. According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), more than 355,000 international students in Canada attained their permanent resident status in 2021-2023.²
- From the perspective of the **country of origin**, students who leave to study elsewhere and later return to their home country with new knowledge and skills, can help build capacity back home and facilitate the growth of their local economy.

In light of the continued importance of international students in British Columbia, this STP update to a previous edition of this report from December 2018, discusses the education pathways and achievements of international students studying in the B.C. secondary and post-secondary systems. A number of research questions are addressed in this report and results are primarily summarized at a provincial level, with some aggregations by institution type, program area, provincial region and post-secondary institution. More detailed information at the institution and program level may be obtained from representatives in post-secondary institutions.

¹ Somani, R. *The vital role of international students in Canada and the need for sustainable support systems*, The *Academica Forum*, December 6, 2024, <https://forum.academica.ca/forum/the-vital-role-of-international-students-in-canada-and-the-need-for-sustainable-support-systems>.

² <https://immigration.ca/355000-international-students-become-canadian-permanent-residents-in-three-years/>

What is the profile of international education around the world?

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics³, the number of outbound internationally mobile students in tertiary⁴ education has increased roughly 28% over the five-year period (2017 to 2022), from 5.4 million to nearly 6.9 million students; and the OECD⁵ reports that 6% of students worldwide are international. Additional information on the level of post-secondary education and fields of study sought by international students, including the top countries of origin and destination, are provided below.

- **International Shares by Study Level:** Worldwide, the share of international students expressed as a proportion of total 2022 enrollment levels in the host countries, gradually increases with education level, from 5% Bachelor's, to 15% Master's to 25% Doctoral (OECD⁵, Table B4.3)⁵.
- **Distribution by Field of Study:** The largest proportion (30%) of international students around the world were enrolled in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM fields) in 2022. Business, administration and law (27%) was the next most popular field of study, followed by social sciences, journalism and information (12%), and health and welfare (11%). (OECD⁵, Table B4.3)⁵

Are there any differences in the field of study preferences between international students and those who did not leave their country of origin to study in another country? A smaller proportion of worldwide domestic students (19% vs. 30%) enrol in STEM fields, while a larger proportion of domestic students seek studies in health than international students (15% vs. 11%), whereas business is sought by roughly equal shares of domestic and international students (25% vs. 27%).

- **Country of Origin:**
 - In 2022, more than one million students from China were studying outside of their home country, representing roughly 18% of all outbound international students.
 - A total of 600,000 international students came from India, representing 10% of the total worldwide international students.
 - Roughly 950,000, or almost as many international students as those from China, originated from the next eight top country sources, with each country sending approximately 100,000 to 150,000 students abroad to study. These eight countries include Uzbekistan (2.5%), Viet Nam (2.3%), Germany (2.1%), United States (1.9%), France (1.9%), Nigeria (1.9%), Syrian Arab Republic (1.8%) and Nepal (1.6%). (OECD⁵, Table B4.3).
- **Destination Countries:**
 - The top five destination countries of outbound international students in 2022 were the United States (950,000), United Kingdom (634,000), Canada (553,000), France (365,000) and Australia (364,000) (UNESCO, Project Atlas 2022).

³ UIS survey of formal education and the joint UNESCO-OECD-EUROSTAT (UOE) survey <https://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=3807#>, accessed December 9, 2024.

⁴ Tertiary education generally includes post-secondary education provided at universities, trade schools and colleges, leading to a credential, such as a certificate, diploma or degree; or vocational programs leading to the labour market; or professional programs leading to advanced research or high skill professions, such as medicine.

⁵ Education at a Glance 2024, OECD Indicators, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c00cad36-en>, accessed December 12, 2024.

What is the profile of international students studying in Canada?

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE)⁶, a total of 1,040,985 international students at all levels of study held a valid study permit in Canada, as at the end of calendar year 2023. This represents a 29% increase over 2022, a 63% increase over 2017, and triple the number of international students from a decade ago. According to this source, Canada currently hosts 10% of all globally mobile international students.

- **Destination Province:** According to CBIE, the primary destination province of international students studying in Canada is Ontario, capturing more than half (52%) of Canada's international enrollment. British Columbia ranks second as a destination, attracting nearly double the share (20%) of international students that enrol in Quebec (11%). The prairie provinces attract 11% of Canada's international enrollment, with the Atlantic provinces at 5% and the North (Yukon, Nunuvut and Northwest Territories) accounting for fewer than 1%.
- **Country of Origin:** The top two countries of origin for post-secondary international students studying in Canada are India (41%) and China (10%), but this varies by institution type. Students from China tend to enrol in Canadian universities, whereas international students from India are more inclined to enrol in Canadian colleges. To round out the top 5 countries of origin, the next 3 countries are the Philippines (5%), Nigeria (4%) and France (3%).

Numerous data sources allow the STP to piece together a profile international students in Canada, although each data source is extracted from a different time period and according to different definitions. Based on an STP presentation on international students delivered to the BCCAT Joint Annual Meeting in November of 2024⁷, this report provides some key visuals from that presentation to better understand the international student enrollment situation in Canada.

Figure 1 shows that the province of Ontario had the steepest rate of growth in international students over the last 20 years, based on Statistic's Canada's PSIS Fall enrollment data.

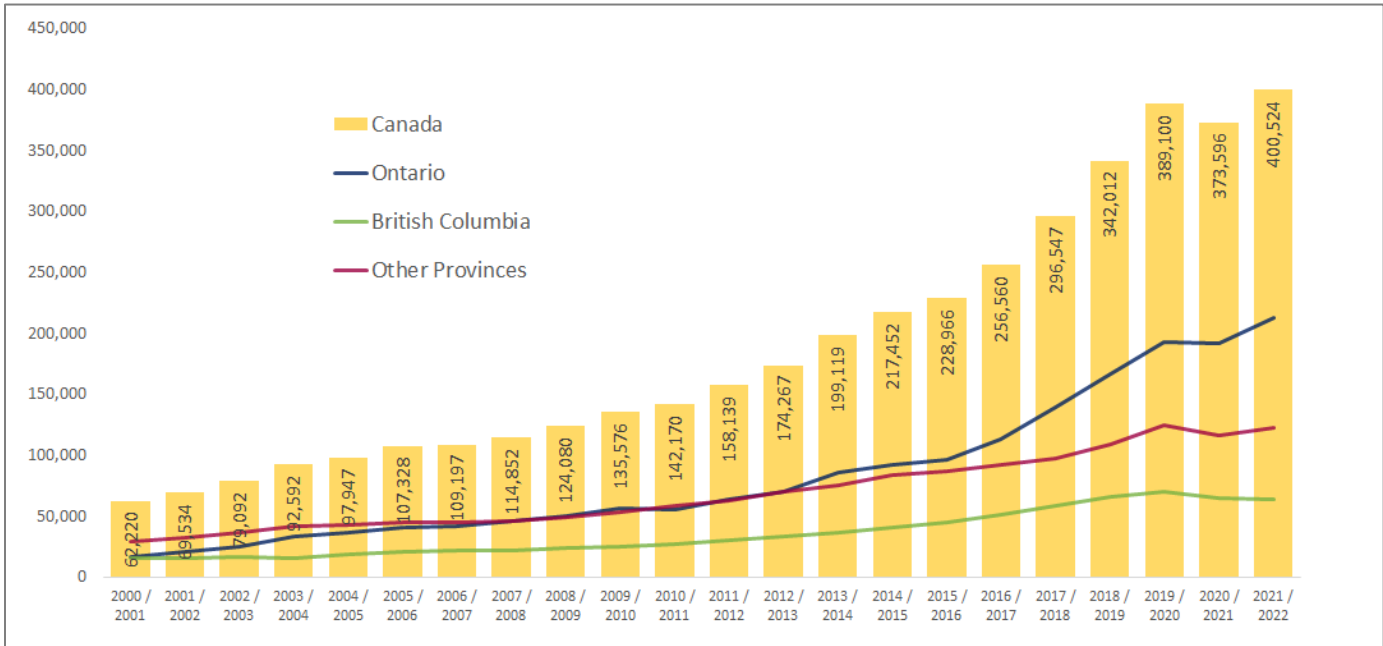
Figure 2a reveals that 18% of the total Fall post-secondary enrollment in Canada in 2021/2022 was comprised of international students and this varies by province, with Ontario at 23% and British Columbia at 22%. The 20-year trends for this indicator are provided for the regions of Canada in **Figure 2b**. It is evident that the West, which is comprised exclusively of B.C., has maintained the highest proportion of international students until the most recent year of available data in 2021/2022, when Ontario increased its share of international students to 23%.

Figure 3 provides a breakdown of Canada's Fall international enrollments from 2010/2011 to 2021/2022 and shows that students from Asia represent a growing proportion of Canada's international enrollment, while the proportion of international students Europe and the Americas have declined. The trends for each of these world regions, Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia are provided in **Figure 3b**.

⁶ Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), <https://cbie.ca/infographic>. This data includes all levels of education, with enrollment counts derived from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) data.

⁷ *STP Spotlight on International Students*, presented at BCCAT Joint Annual Meeting, November 8, 2024, <https://www.bccat.ca/jam/STPPresentation2024.pdf>.

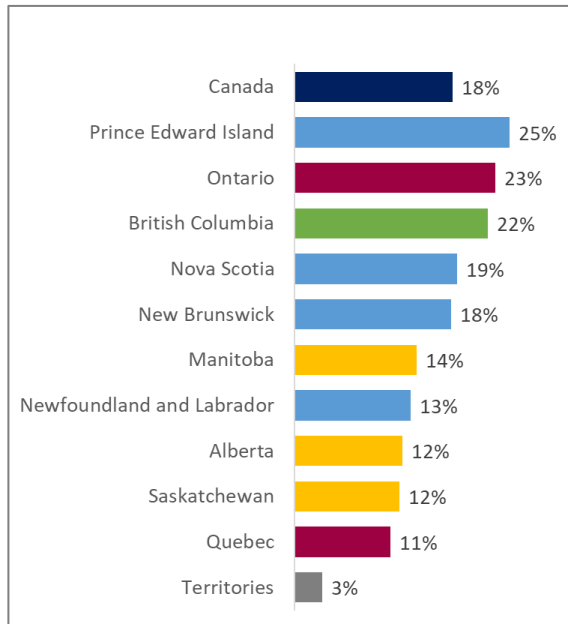
FIGURE 1: INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN CANADA, FALL SNAPSHOT, BY REGION OF CANADA (2000/2001 TO 2021/2022)



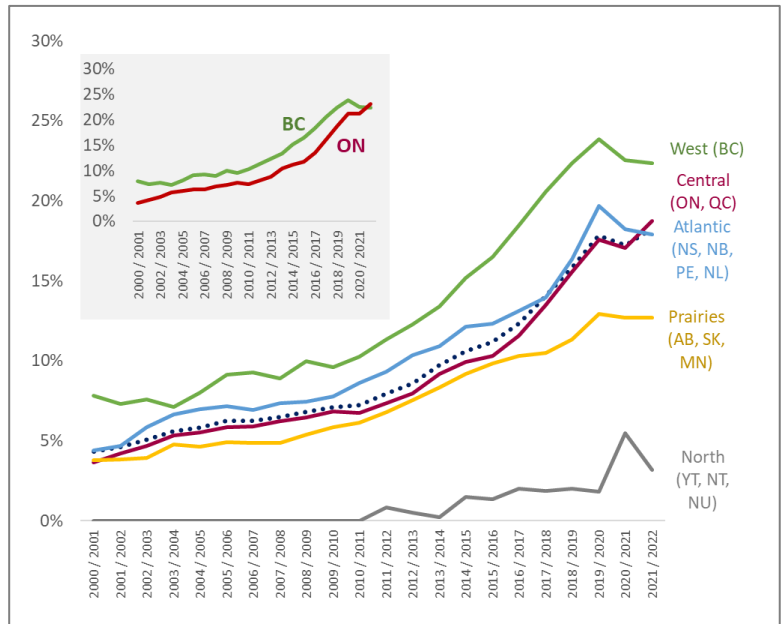
Source: Statistics Canada, PSIS, Postsecondary enrollments, by registration status, institution type, status of student in Canada and gender, Fall snapshot, Table: 37-10-0018-01

FIGURE 2: % INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT, FALL SNAPSHOT, BY PROVINCE

(A) % INTERNATIONAL (2021/2022)

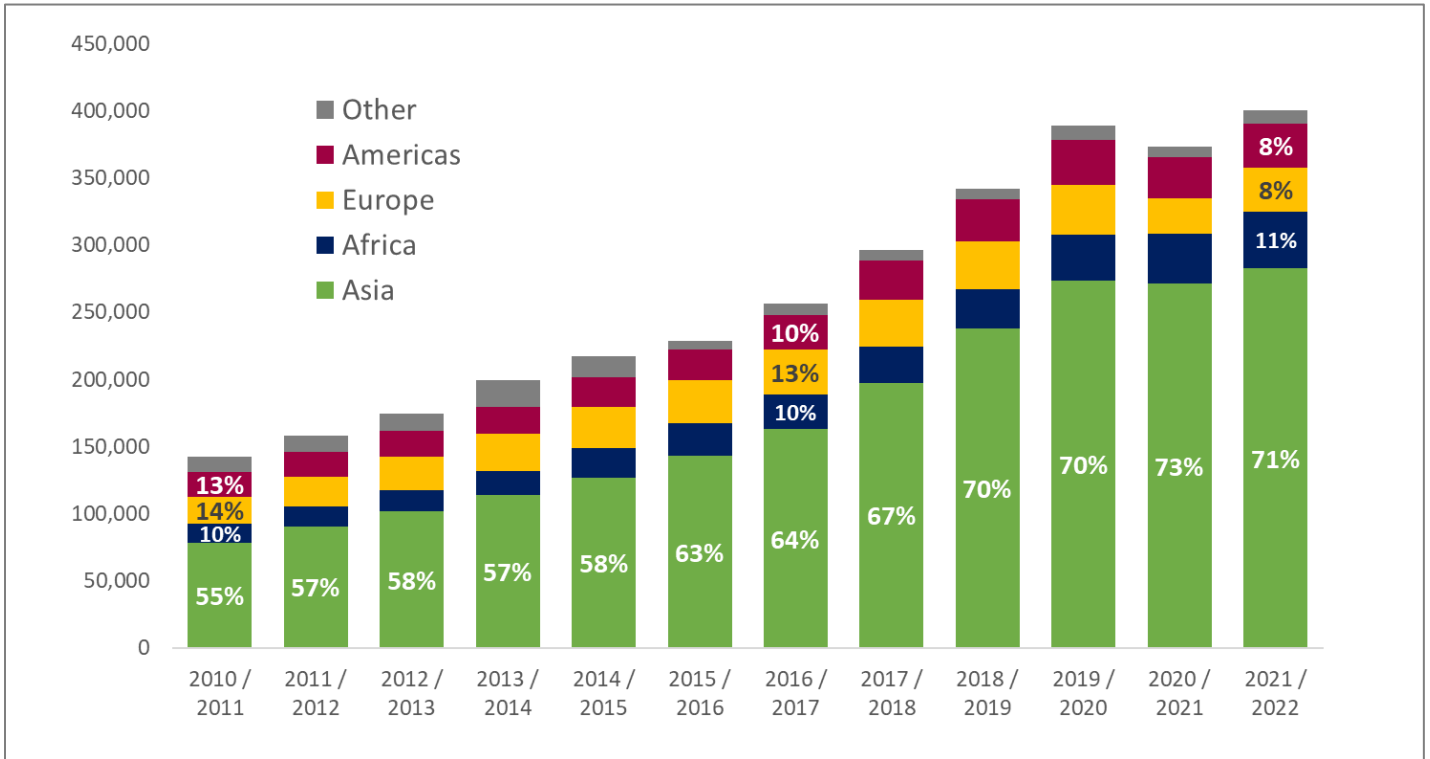


(B) % INTERNATIONAL TREND (2000/2001 TO 2021/2022)



Source: Statistics Canada, PSIS, Postsecondary enrollments, by registration status, institution type, status of student in Canada and gender, Fall snapshot, Table: 37-10-0018-01

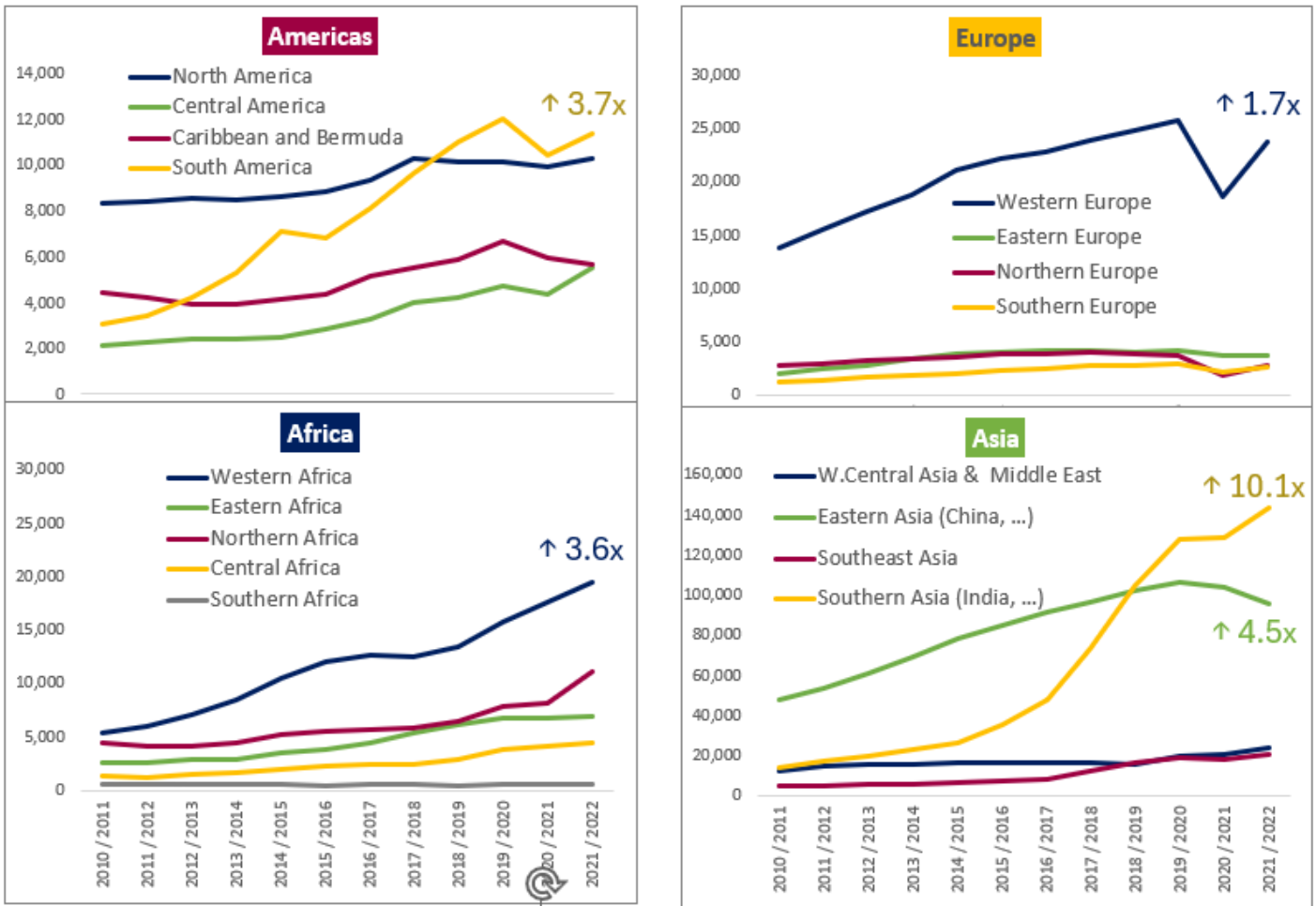
FIGURE 3A: INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN CANADA, BY WORLD REGION OF COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP (2010/2011 TO 2021/2022)



Source: Statistics Canada, PSIS, Postsecondary enrollments, by registration status, institution type, status of student in Canada and gender, Fall snapshot, Table: 37-10-0018-01

See [Figure 3b](#) on the following page for the trends within each of the world regions, Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia.

FIGURE 3B: INTERNATIONAL FALL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN CANADA, BY CITIZENSHIP SUB-REGION (2010/2011 TO 2021/2022)



Note: Please use caution when comparing the trends across world regions. The vertical axes on these charts use different scales to aid readability.

Source: Statistics Canada, PSIS, Postsecondary enrollments, by registration status, institution type, status of student in Canada and gender, Fall snapshot, Table: 37-10-0018-01

After sustained long-term growth in international enrollment, what are the new policies affecting international enrollments in Canada?

A number of recent federal policy changes have taken place in Canada that are expected to impact international enrollments in B.C. It is beyond the purpose of this retrospective STP report to delve into the details of these policy changes; however, the STP will offer some insight on the possible impacts and continue to monitor and report on the impact over the coming years.

- January 22, 2024 – "The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship announced today that the Government of Canada will set an intake cap on international student permit applications to stabilize new growth for a period of two years. For 2024, the cap is expected to result in approximately 360,000 approved study permits, a decrease of 35% from 2023." These measures were because a growing number of students have been "arriving in Canada without the proper supports they need to succeed" and this puts "pressure on housing, health care and other services" and threatens the "integrity of the international student system."⁸
- September 18, 2024 – Further cuts of 10% were announced for 2025 to "manage the volume of temporary resident arrivals, uphold the integrity of our immigration system, and protect vulnerable people". This announcement additionally set new limits on spouses of master's degree students, denying them work permits, unless the program is at least 16 months long.⁹
- October 4, 2024 – New language requirements were announced, and new limits were set on eligible programs for students wishing to apply for a Post-Graduation Work Permit, effective November 1, 2024. Since more than half of all international students apply for a PGWP, it is anticipated that a decline in international enrollments will be the result, but moving forward, it is anticipated that international students will be more likely to enrol in PGWP eligible programs. Note that international students already enrolled in programs with a study permit are not affected because the new policy is relevant only to those students who apply for a study permit on or after Nov. 1, 2024.
- November 15, 2024 – It was further announced that international students who wish to transfer between institutions will be required to apply for another Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL), effective November 8, 2024. Students are required to be enrolled in the Designated Learning Institution (DLI) named on their study permit, and thus they must obtain a new student permit when transferring to a new Designated Learning Institution (DLI).¹⁰ This will likely impact the smooth transfer that students studying in B.C. seamlessly take advantage of as they navigate their way through the system to achieve their education goals.
- December 10, 2024 – Students transferring between institutions in January and May 2025 would be granted a temporary exception and eligible students could begin attending their new DLI while their study permit extension was being processed.¹¹

⁸ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, News Release, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/01/canada-to-stabilize-growth-and-decrease-number-of-new-international-student-permits-issued-to-approximately-360000-for-2024.html>.

⁹ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, News Release, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/09/strengthening-temporary-residence-programs-for-sustainable-volumes.html>

¹⁰ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, News Release, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/11/new-international-student-program-regulations-take-effect.html>

¹¹ The PIE News, <https://thepienews.com/ircc-temporary-grace-period-dli-international-transfer-students/>

What are the anticipated impacts on international enrollments from new eligibility requirements for the PGWP program?

The recent changes to eligibility requirements for the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) program¹² will have a greater impact on Colleges and Institutes than RIUs and TIUs in B.C.

- RIUs and TIUs:** Under the new PGWP eligibility rules that took effect on November 1, 2024, all graduates from university Bachelor's, Masters and Doctorate degrees in RIUs and TIUs will continue to be eligible for a PGWP in any field of study, but students must also meet minimum Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 7 in English or NCLC 7 in French. The STP estimates that 24% of B.C.'s university graduates will not be eligible, specifically those students graduating from programs that are not within the list of eligible fields of study. These estimates were based on the current program designations of international university registrants and graduates, but the STP recognizes that new regulations may provoke students to switch programs to ensure they are eligible for the PGWP. Therefore, the impact of the new PGWP eligibility requirements may be less severe than initially estimated, and the proportion of ineligible graduates would be lower than 24%.
- College and Institutes:** A significant proportion (estimated by the STP at 84%) of graduates from B.C. Colleges and Institutes will not be eligible for a PGWP because only a small proportion of B.C. College and Institute students are graduating from programs linked to "eligible occupations in long-term shortage". The language requirements for college graduates is a minimum CLB 5 in English or NCLC 5 in French. As defined by the set of PGWP-eligible programs, students in the majority of B.C. College and Institute programs are not enrolled or graduating from such eligible programs and are thus no longer deemed eligible for a PGWP. Similar to university graduates, it is possible that students will be able to switch programs to ensure they are eligible for the PGWP, such that the impact of these new requirements may in fact be less than initially estimated by the STP.

Based on available study permit data to the end of July 2024, the STP initially estimated a 35% reduction in the total number of study permit holders to the end of calendar year 2024 (as presented at the BCCAT JAM conference in November 2024). More recently, however, the latest IRCC data on study permits, issued to the end of November 2024¹³, suggests that the decline in study permits is not as steep as initially estimated from fewer data points. Based on a total of roughly 472,000 study permits issued to the end of November 2024, or a 31% reduction from 681,000 study permits issued in calendar year 2023, the STP estimates that the total number of study permits issued by the end of calendar year 2024, will be roughly 20% lower than calendar year 2023. Therefore, based on the estimated reduction in study permits for 2024, it is anticipated that the various federal government policy changes will contribute to significant declines in international enrollments, especially in B.C. Colleges and Institutes in the coming year(s).

While it is beyond the scope of this retrospective STP report to discuss and analyze the policy changes and implications, the STP hopes the historical information in this report will offer some insight on international student trends to help institutions navigate these challenges.

¹² Post Graduation Work Program, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/after-graduation/eligibility.html#field-of-study>

¹³ Temporary Residents: Study Permit Holders – Monthly IRCC Updates – Canada – Study permit holders by country of citizenship and year in which permit(s) became effective, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/90115b00-f9b8-49e8-afa3-b4cff8facaee/resource/b505b9bc-d375-4525-af39-afdf25639acf>

Which International Students are Included in this Study?

In July of 2024, the Province of B.C. reported 553,000 post-secondary students enrolled in B.C. public and private institutions, of which 217,600 were international students (based on study permits): 111,900 in public post-secondary and 105,700 in private post-secondary institutions.¹⁴ This STP study focuses primarily on 92,749 students enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary institutions¹⁵ in an earlier time period, academic year 2022/2023, in addition to 2,706 international B.C. grade 12 graduates from B.C. public and B.C. independent schools. Ten-year trends for these two groups will also be covered in this report.

The international students included in this study are limited to those whose records are accessible and identifiable by the STP in either or both of the following systems: (1) international grade 12 graduates from the B.C. K-12 system, and (2) international post-secondary students enrolled in B.C.'s public post-secondary system (see inset box **How Does the STP Identify International Students** on page 5). The international students in each of these two systems are described below.

- **B.C.'s K-12 education system** enrolls international and visiting students in all elementary and secondary grade levels, including International Baccalaureate¹⁶ students.
- **B.C.'s public post-secondary system** enrolls international students in undergraduate, graduate and developmental education programs. These post-secondary students seek degree or non-degree programs; some enrol in English language training courses or field school courses; some enrol in short-term professional training programs; some are researchers or post-doctoral students; and some are visiting or exchange students who enrol in B.C. and later return to their home country and institution to complete their credential.¹⁷

Which International Students are Excluded from this Study?

Several categories of international students are excluded from this STP study.

- Post-secondary **international exchange** students are excluded from this study¹⁵ because these students are not normally expected to stay for the full duration of their education in the postsecondary system, nor are they expected to complete a postsecondary credential in B.C.
- B.C. K-12 international students who were **not identifiable** via the proxy definition are excluded. The use of student residency status (B.C. non-resident) as a proxy for international student status is currently the best available method to the STP for identifying international students attending the B.C. K-12 system. The STP acknowledges that this proxy is not precise and is continuing efforts to help the B.C. K-12 system create and collect specific international student identifiers in order to integrate more accurate information in the STP database.
- International students attending **B.C. private post-secondary** institutions, such as language training schools or other B.C. private post-secondary education institutions are excluded because student records from B.C. private post-secondary institutions are not submitted to the STP. This represents a significant portion of the students excluded from this study.

¹⁴ BC Gov New, PSFS, <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024PSFS0035-001111>.

¹⁵ This study excludes post-secondary international exchange students. For RIU's, this means 302 international exchange students in 2022/2023 were excluded. For CDW institutions, no exclusions were necessary because international exchange students are not submitted to the STP.

¹⁶ The International Baccalaureate program is an academically challenging program for students, typically age 16 to 19, with the objective of preparing them for acceptance and success at leading universities around the world.

¹⁷ The STP excludes offshore students who receive their education through a B.C. institution that delivers programs in other countries.

Research Results

How many international students are studying in the B.C. public post-secondary system?

Consistent with the definitions and caveats previously identified, there were 92,749 unique headcount international students studying in the B.C. public post-secondary education system in academic year 2022/2023 (see [Figures 4 to 6](#)).

- More than one third (35%) of these international students were enrolled in research-intensive universities, with approximately 17,015 enrolled at UBC and nearly 8,000 enrolled at SFU.
- International students are concentrated in Lower Mainland/Southwest institutions with 73% enrolled in this region, compared to 4% of B.C.'s international students enrolled in the Cariboo-North region.
- International students make up 21.5% of the total headcount enrollment (domestic and international combined) in B.C. public post-secondary institutions and this varies by institution, from a high of 38.6% for Langara College to less than 4.1% for College of the Rockies.
- International students also make up a larger proportion of the total enrollment at teaching-intensive universities, where 25% are international, compared to research-intensive universities (24%) and B.C. colleges (19%) and institutes (18%).

FIGURE 4: HEADCOUNT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, 2022/2023

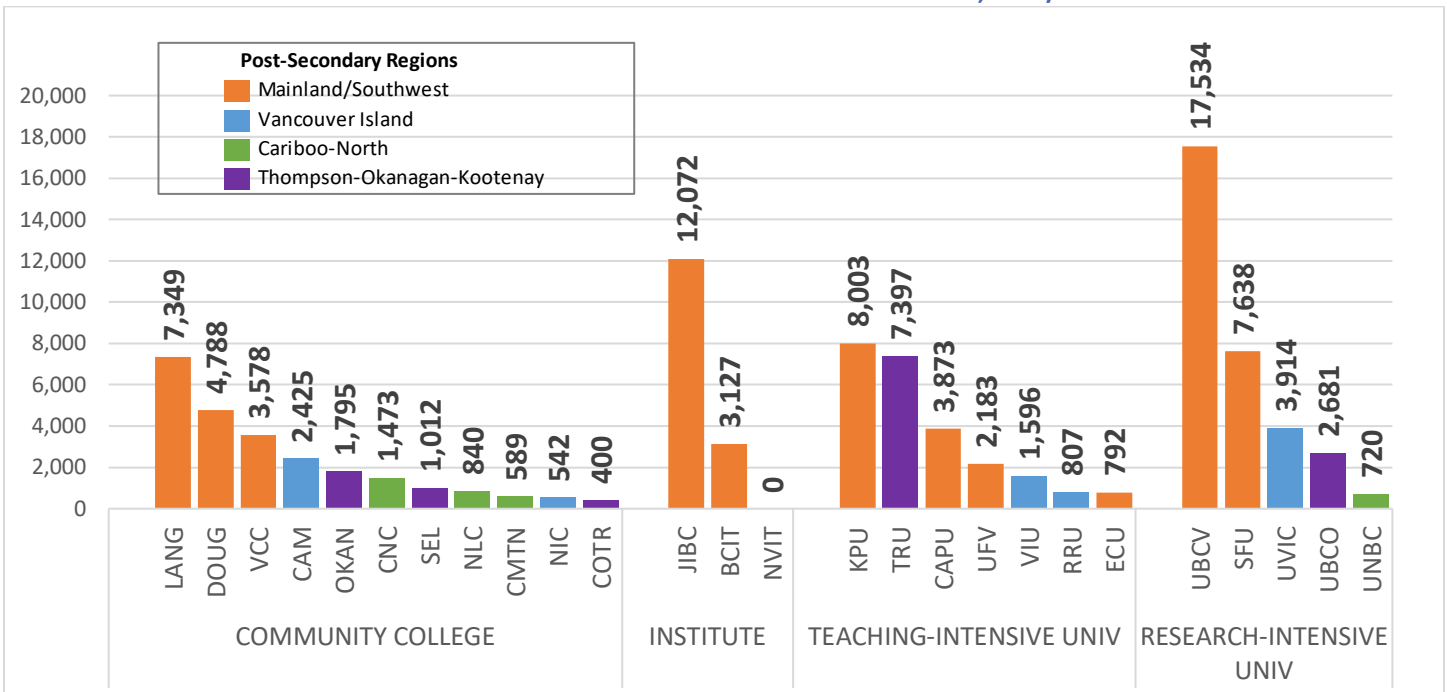


FIGURE 5: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AS % OF INSTITUTION TOTAL, BY INSTITUTION, PSI TYPE AND REGION, 2022/2023

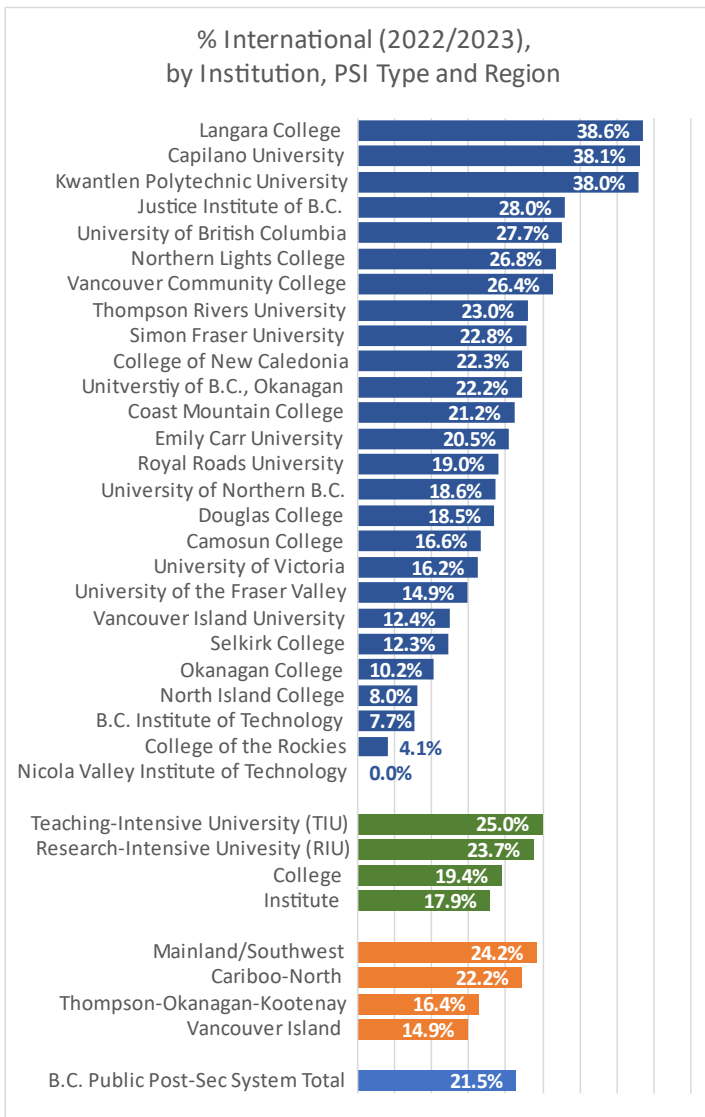
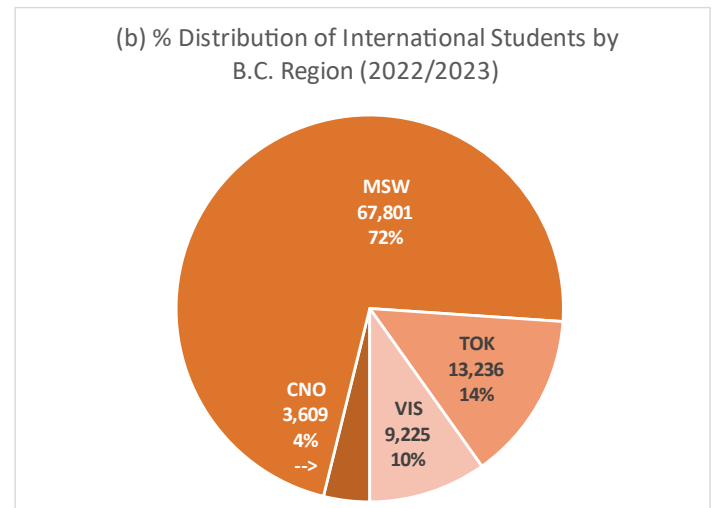
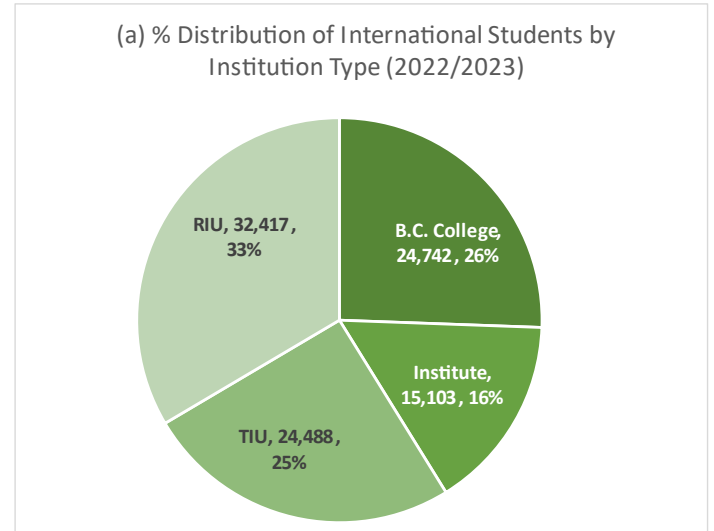


FIGURE 6: % DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY: (A) INSTITUTION TYPE, AND (B) B.C. REGION



Note: The % international figures include Continuing Education (CE) students (in all institution types, excluding RIUs). When CE students are excluded, a larger share (23.5%) of students in the B.C. System are international, compared to 21.5% when CE is included.

What are the 10-year trends in international and domestic enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system?

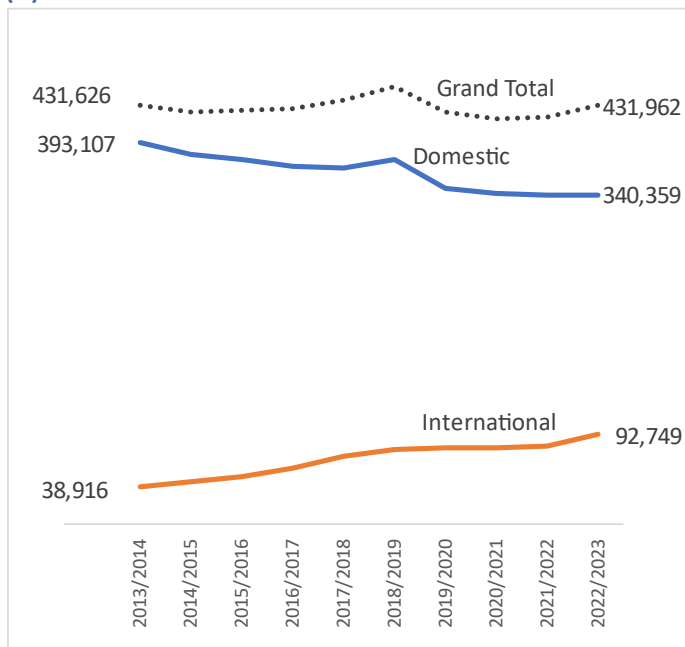
Over the last 10 years, from 2013/2014 to 2022/2023, the total headcount enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system has remained relatively unchanged, increasing just 0.1%, from 431,626 to 431,962; however, total enrollment did reach a peak of 450,535 in 2018/2019 prior to the COVID-10 pandemic, or roughly 4.4% above current enrollment levels. See [Figure 7a](#).

In terms of domestic and international student enrollment trends over the 10-year period, domestic enrollment declined by 52,749 students (-13%), from 393,107 to 340,359 students, while international enrollment more than doubled, increasing by roughly 53,833 students, from 38,916 students to 92,749 over 10 years.

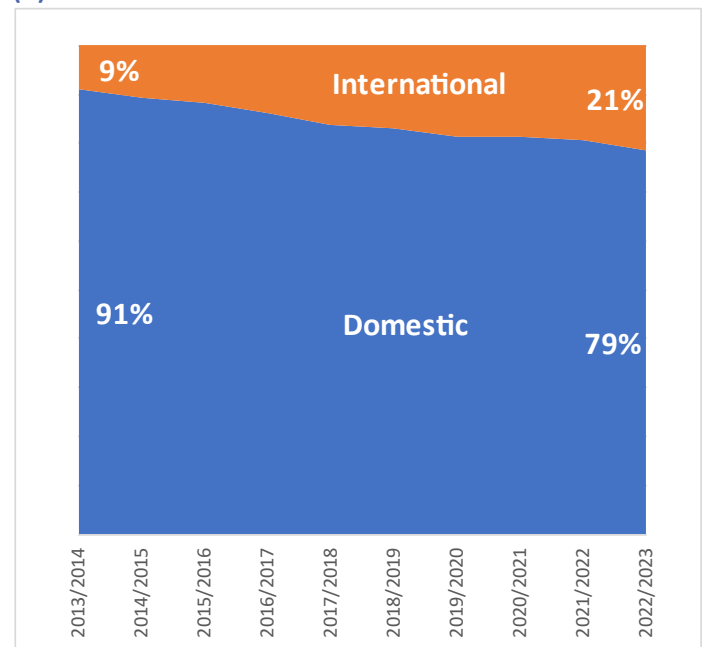
Consistent with the enrollment changes over the last decade, a steady increase in the relative share of international students has occurred, growing 12 percentage points from 9% to 21% of the total; and this was balanced with an offsetting decline in the share of domestic student enrollment from 91% to 79% of the total. See [Figure 7b](#).

FIGURE 7: ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL

(A) TEN-YEAR HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT TREND



(B) TEN-YEAR TREND IN % SHARES OF ENROLLMENT



As international student enrollment grew, did domestic enrollments decline?

The total number and relative share of domestic students in the B.C. public post-secondary system declined over the last decade, while the total number and relative share of international students grew.

- As shown in [Figure 8](#), the total headcount enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system remained relatively unchanged over the last 10 years (+0.1%), despite the -13.4% change in domestic student enrollment.
- The total decrease in domestic students across the system during this 10-year period (-52,748) was offset by roughly the same increase in the number of international students, such that the total enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system remained virtually unchanged over 10 years, growing by 336 students (or 0.1%), from 431,626 to 431,962.
- Over this same time period, 2013/2014 to 2022/2023, the number of B.C. K-12 graduates remained relatively constant, increasing 1.2% from 43,571 to 44,115, with non-resident graduates increasing 34% and resident graduates declining 0.3%. See [Figure 21b](#) later in this report.
- Although international enrollment grew, while domestic enrollments declined, this does not imply that domestic students were displaced by international students. In fact, international students helped to fill the vacant seats created by declining domestic enrollment. A variety of factors likely contributed to the decline in domestic enrollments over this time frame, such as student demographic changes, a strong job market, the effects of inflation on education affordability, and other reasons.

FIGURE 8: 10-YEAR CHANGE IN INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENT ENROLLMENTS, 2013/2014 TO 2022/2023

Student Type	Institute	College	TIU	RIU	Total	% Change
International	+12,697	+16,742	+15,462	+12,088	+53,833	+138.3%
Domestic	-568	-43,192	-17,709	+2,302	-52,748	-13.4%
Total	+12,080	-26,450	-2,290	+14,331	+336	+0.1%

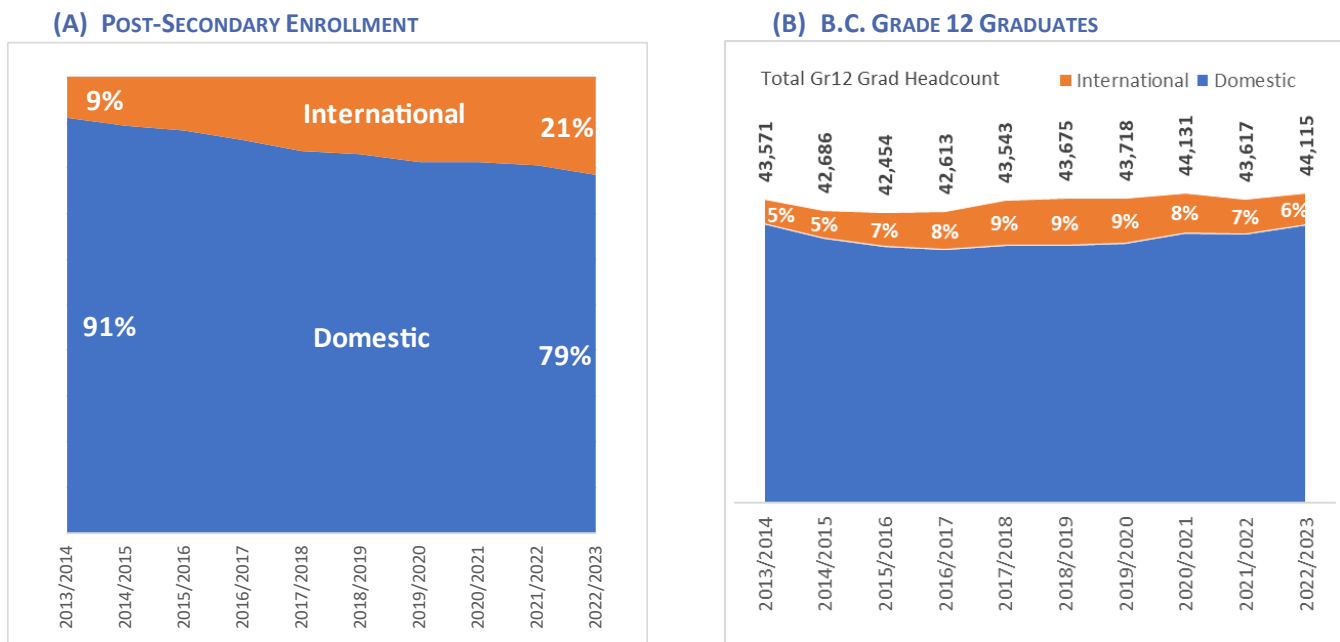
*Ten-year enrollment changes are calculated from the difference in unique headcount totals per institution type per year. Although students may enrol in multiple institution types simultaneously, they are counted only once in the totals.

- Colleges contributed to international enrollment growth to a greater extent than any other institution type, with an increase of more than 16,000 students, whereas RIUs, traditionally a primary destination of international students, contributed the least to international enrollment growth in the B.C. system, increasing by roughly 12,000 international students.
- Domestic enrollments increased exclusively in RIUs over the decade, while international enrollments increased in all institution types across the B.C. system.
- Total enrollment declined over 10 years in TIUs, and especially in Colleges, because the international student growth was not enough to offset domestic enrollment declines; however, total enrollment growth in institutes was attributed almost entirely to international students.

During this period of rapid growth in post-secondary international students, it was previously shown in [Figure 7b](#) that the share of international students more than doubled, increasing from 9.0% to 21.5% of total enrollment. For comparison with similar information for B.C. grade 12 graduates, this chart is repeated in [Figure 9a](#).

A similar shift in the shares of international students occurred within the population of B.C. grade 12 graduates: International grade 12 graduates increased from 5% to 6% of B.C.'s fluctuating population of grade 12 graduates over the last 10 years, despite reaching a peak of 9% throughout 2017/2018 to 2019/2020 (see [Figure 9b](#)).

FIGURE 9: TEN-YEAR CHANGE IN SHARES OF DOMESTIC VS. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



What are the 10-year trends in **new** international and domestic students entering the B.C. public post-secondary system?

Over the last 10 years, the total number of distinct new students entering the B.C. public post-secondary system has increased 1% from 164,091 to 165,708 (see [Figure 10a](#)). Students who were new to multiple institutions over the 10 years are counted only once in their first instance as a new student to the system. All new students represent about 38% of total enrollment; however, new international students represent 46% of total international enrollment, whereas new domestic students represent a smaller proportion (36%) of total domestic enrollment. If these relative trends in new students continue, then international students will continue to represent a growing share of total B.C. public post-secondary enrollment. Nevertheless, given the recent restrictions and limits on the intake of new international students in Canada, it is unlikely that the number of new international students in B.C. will continue on the same trajectory as the past.

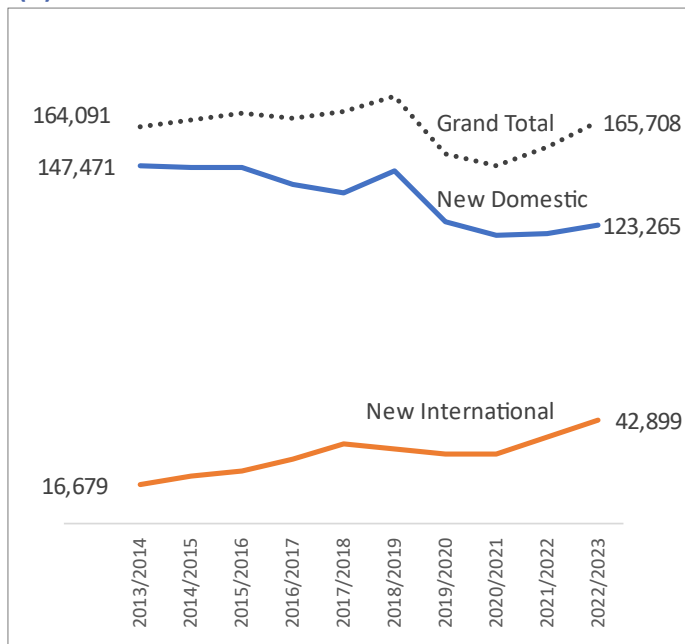
Similar to the total headcount enrollment trends in B.C., the new student enrollment trend also reached its peak in 2018/2019, reaching 175,973 total new students or 6.1% higher than the current level of new students.

In terms of new domestic and new international student enrollment trends over the same 10-year period, new domestic enrollment declined 16%, while new international enrollment more than doubled from 16,679 students to 42,899.

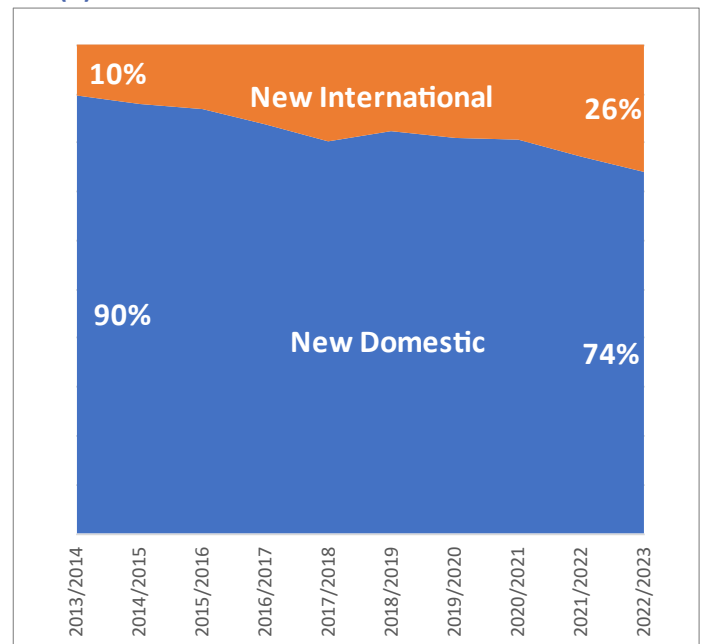
Consistent with the enrollment changes over the last decade, a steady increase in the relative share of new international students has occurred, growing 16 percentage points from 10% to 26% of the total; and this was balanced with an offsetting decline in the share of domestic student enrollment from 90% to 74% of the total. See [Figure 10b](#).

FIGURE 10: NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL

(A) TEN-YEAR NEW STUDENT HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT TREND



(B) TEN-YEAR TREND IN % SHARES OF NEW STUDENTS



What are the international student enrollment trends – by institution type?

International students continue to be attracted to B.C. public post-secondary institutions in growing numbers and this is revealed when we look at the enrollment trends by institution, institution type and region.

- Despite slower growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, the total number of international students enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary system is more than double the number it was a decade ago, increasing from 38,916 in 2013/14 to 92,749 in 2022/2023 (see [Figure 11a](#)).
- Although RIU's have the largest number of international students, they saw the smallest percentage increase in international students (+59%) over the last 10 years.
- The largest growth occurred in Institutes (+528%), TIUs (+171%) and Colleges (+209%), where international headcounts are collectively 3.3 times higher now than 10 years ago. Unlike JIBC that maintained steady international enrollment growth throughout the pandemic, BCIT, BC Colleges and TIUs experienced enrollment declines for several years, beginning in 2020/2021, but returned to steeper growth in 2022/2023. (see [Figure 11b](#) and [Figure 12](#)).
- In terms of the distribution of B.C.'s international students across the different types of B.C. public post-secondary institution types, the proportion attending research-intensive universities has declined over the last 10 years (from 50% to 35%), while a greater share of international students are now attending other institution types, including colleges (increasing from 22% to 27%), institutes (from 6% to 16%) and TIUs (from 23% to 26%) (see [Figure 10a](#)).

FIGURE 11A: TOTAL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS BY YEAR AND CHANGE IN % DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY INSTITUTION TYPE

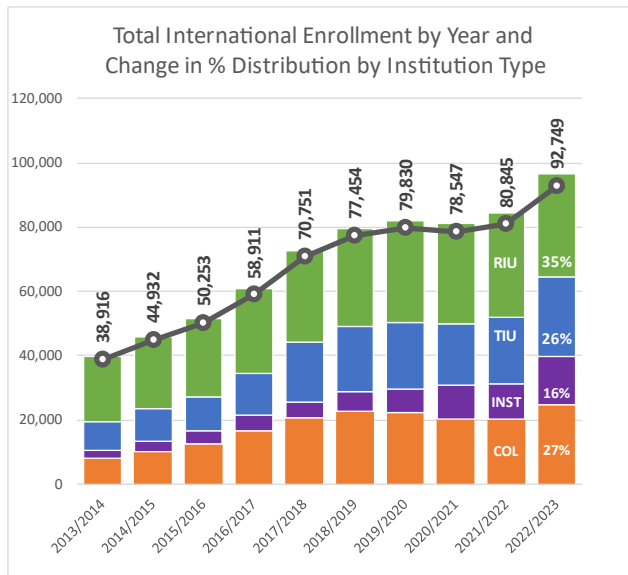
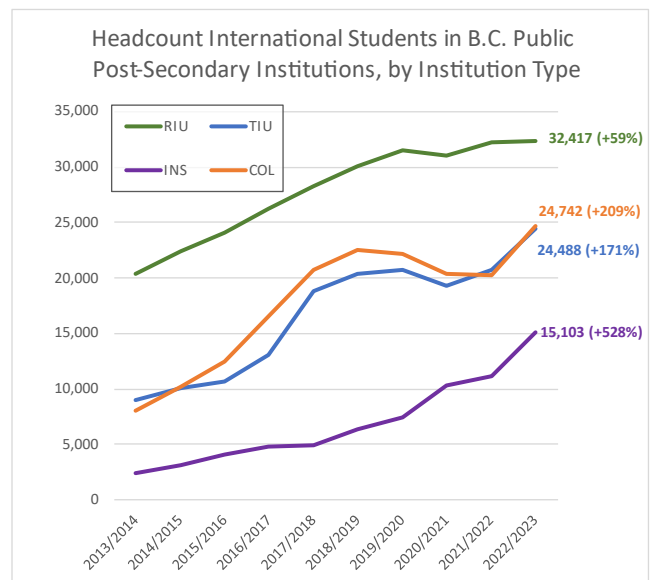


FIGURE 11B: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, BY INSTITUTION TYPE



What are the international student enrollment trends – by region of B.C.?

The regional distribution of international students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions has not changed significantly over the last decade (see [Figure 12a](#)); however international enrollment increases across the province have allowed the B.C. public post-secondary system to more than double its share of international students from 9.0% of the total to 21.5% of total headcount enrollments.

International student enrollments have seen the largest rate of growth in the Cariboo-North region, compared to any other region in the province, where international student headcounts are 3.8 times the number a decade ago. Vancouver Island institutions have seen more moderate growth, with international enrollments currently 1.4 times the level a decade ago, whereas the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays and Mainland/Southwest Colleges and Institutes have nearly tripled, reaching 2.6 times the number of international students, as compared to 10 years ago. The growth in the Mainland/Southwest region universities was much slower, only doubling over the decade, compared to colleges and institutes in the region, with international enrollments reaching levels that are 4.5 times higher than 10 years ago.

[Figures 12b to 12f](#) reveal the extent to which institutions in each region contributed to the regional international enrollment growth in B.C.

- Thompson Rivers University (TRU), University of BC, Okanagan and Selkirk College accounted for the majority of the international enrollment growth in the **Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay** region, where international enrollments at these institutions roughly tripled over the last decade (see [Figure 12b](#)).
- The three largest institutions on **Vancouver Island** (UVic, VIU and Camosun College) contributed to a significant share of international student growth on the Island over the first half of the decade, but international enrollments declined during COVID-19, with most institutions restoring their international enrollments by 2022/2023.
- Institutions in Prince George (College of New Caledonia and University of Northern B.C.) account for the largest share of the international students in the **Cariboo-North** region, but Coast Mountain College with its main campus in Terrace has seen the most significant growth over the decade, reaching current levels of roughly 600 international students, significantly more than the total of four international students at CMTN 10 years ago (see [Figure 11d](#)).
- UBC, SFU and KPU contributed significantly to the growth in international students in **Mainland/Southwest** universities (see [Figure 12e](#)); however, over the last five years, college and institutes have shown more significant growth in international students (see [Figures 12f](#)) than universities. The number of international students in Mainland/Southwest colleges increased nearly five-fold (↑4.5) over the decade, compared to a doubling of university international headcounts in the region (↑2.0). It also is evident in [Figure 12f](#) that many colleges and institutes in the region saw more international enrollment growth in the first half of the decade (Langara, Douglas and BCIT), whereas others (JIBC and VCC) saw more growth in the latter half of the decade.

[Figures 12g](#) and [12h](#) provide international student headcount trend lines for each region, with the three regions with proportionately fewer international students shown separately on a different scale. With the change in scale, it is more evident that international enrollment growth on Vancouver Island has been relatively slow, compared to Cariboo-North and Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays.

FIGURE 12: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT GROWTH BY REGION OF B.C.

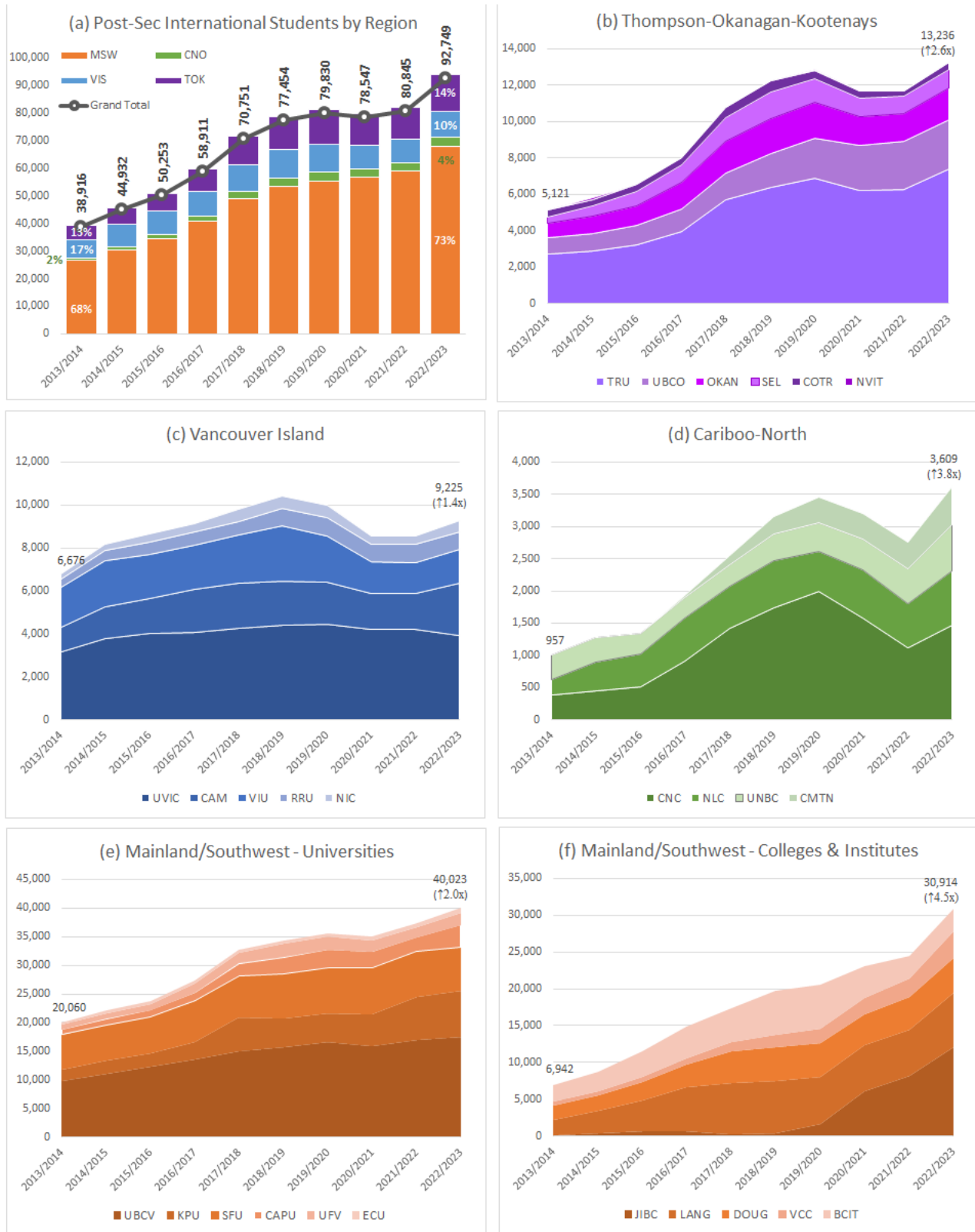
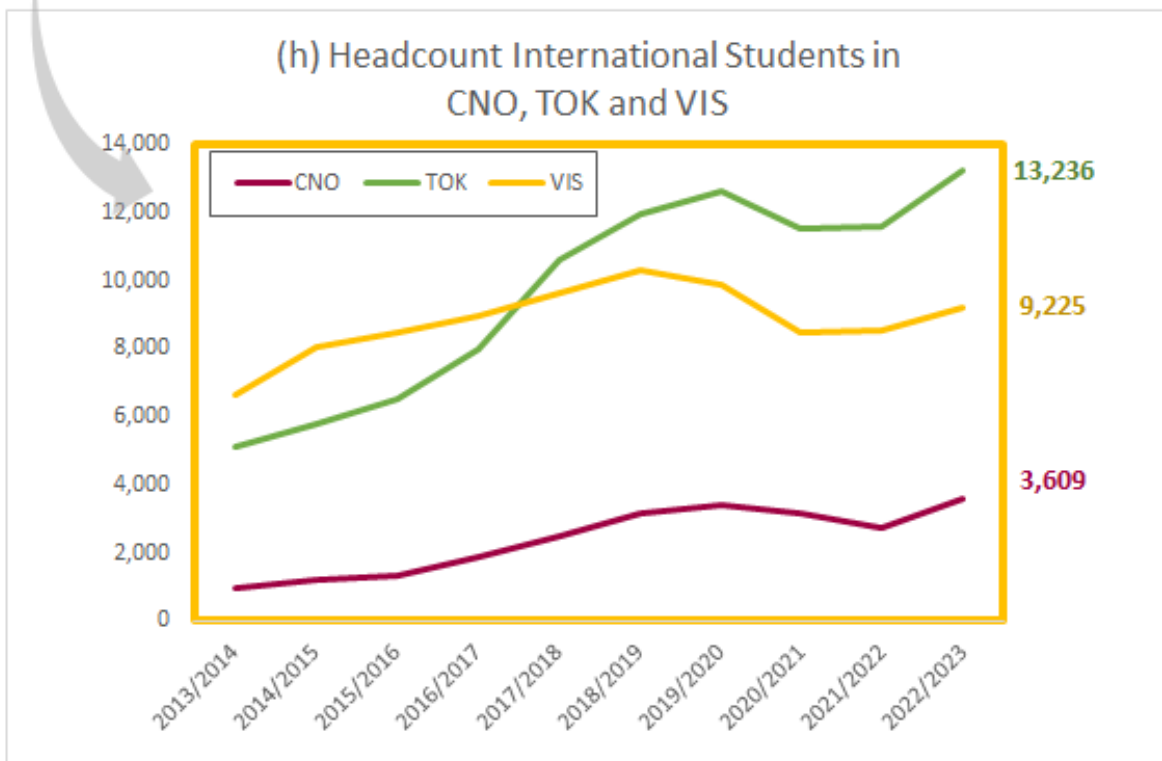
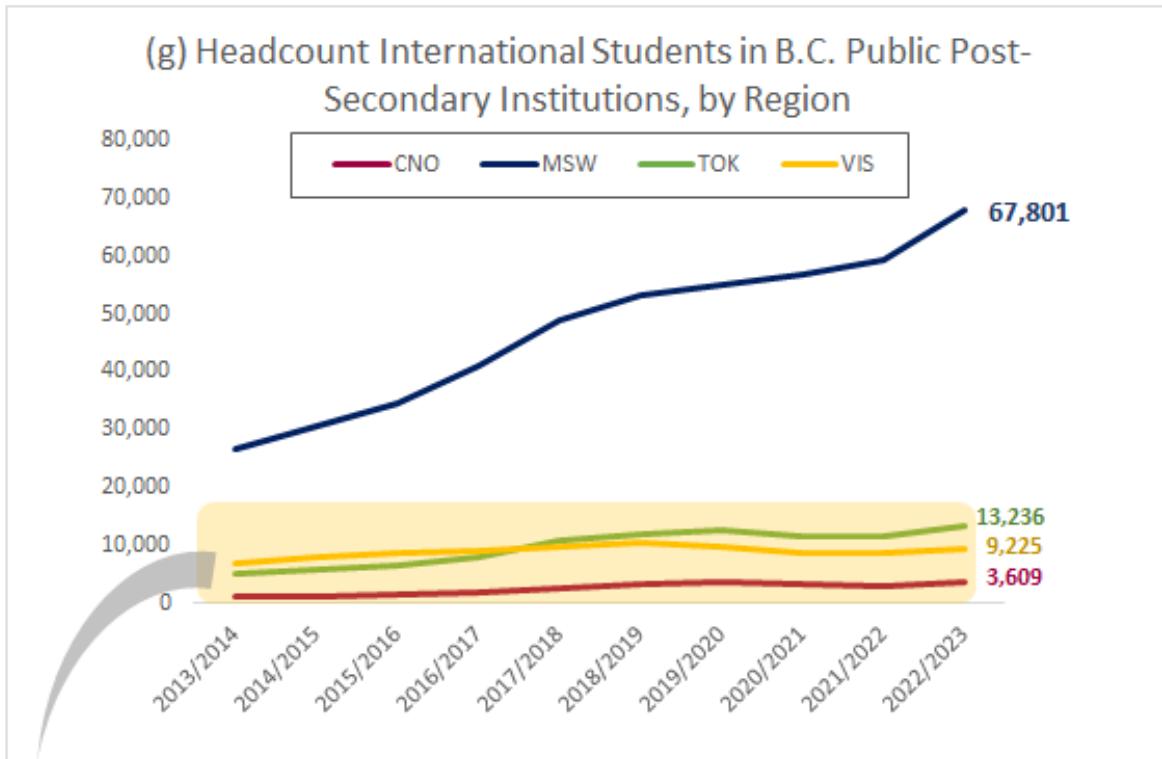


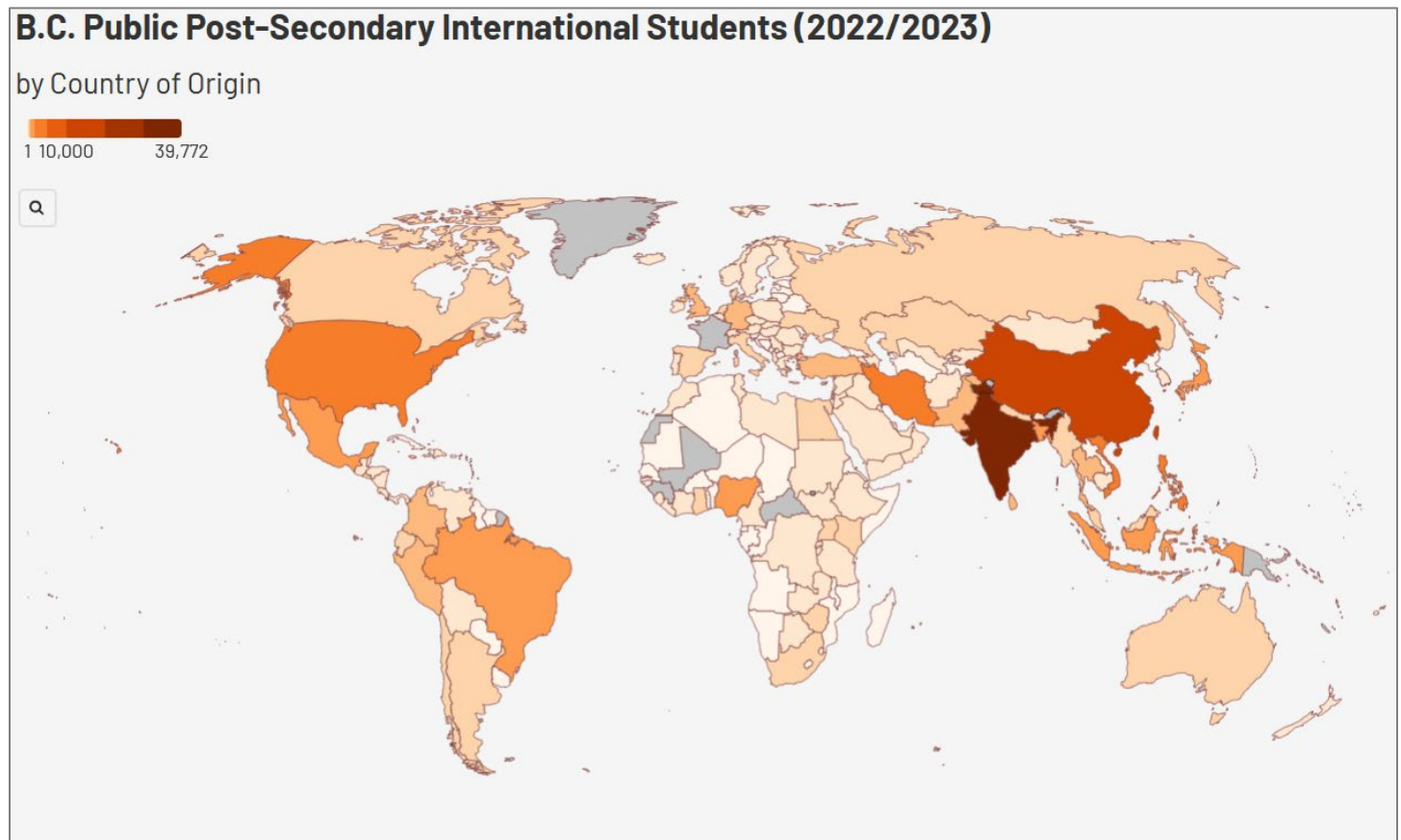
FIGURE 12, CONT.: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT GROWTH BY REGION OF B.C.



Which countries do international students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions come from and what are the trends?

The world map in [Figure 13a](#) shows the countries from which B.C.'s 92,749 international students of 2022/2023 originated, with the darker colored countries representing a larger number of students who come to B.C. study. The largest proportion of international students are from India (43%) and China (16%). All other countries represent 3% or fewer international students enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary system, including Philippines, Iran and the United States rounding out the top five countries. See [Figure 13b](#) for the top 30 countries.

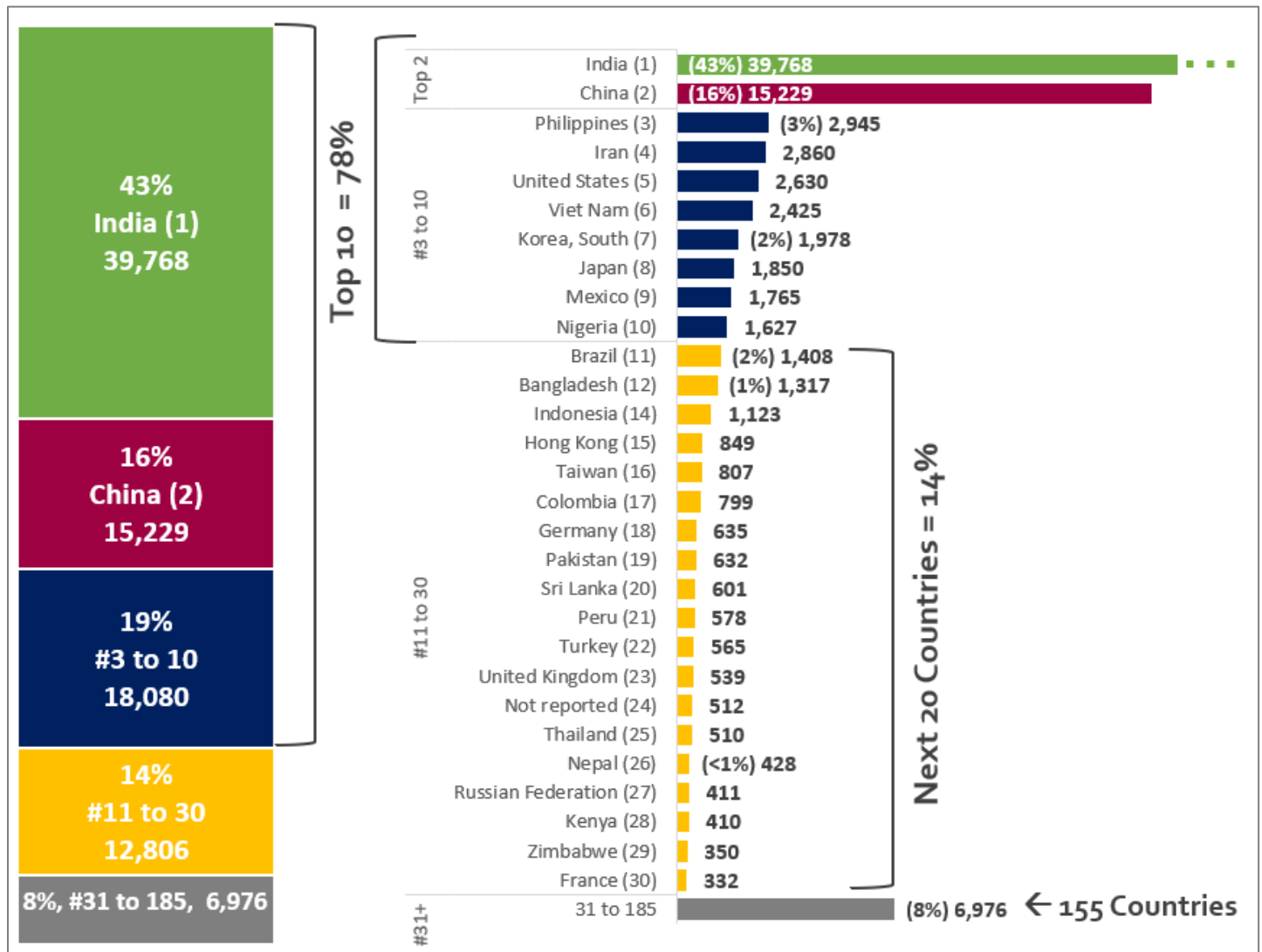
FIGURE 13A: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, BY COUNTRY, 2022/2023



Note: Roughly 100 international students have Canadian citizenship, as reported to the STP from institutions. Since Canadian citizens are not considered international students, these might be students who became Canadian citizens after they enrolled in the institution, or Canada is the default citizenship value for missing data in the student information systems of contributing institutions.

Although 185 countries in the world are currently represented by international students studying in B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions, the number of international students from the top 10 countries alone currently comprise 81% of the total international student enrollment (see [Figure 13b](#)).

FIGURE 13B: NUMBER AND % OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, BY COUNTRY, 2022/2023



The relative change in the top 10 country rankings (by number of international students enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary institutions) is shown in Figure 13c. Over the last decade, China dropped to second place behind India which is now the top country from which the majority of international students come to B.C. to study. The relative rankings of the top 10 countries have shifted over time for several other countries, as well. For example, Philippines, Iran, Viet Nam, Mexico and Nigeria have increased their relative share of international students studying in B.C., while the share of students from the United States, South Korea and Japan have decreased.

The 20-year enrollment trends for each of the top eleven countries are provided in Figure 13d.

FIGURE 13C: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT TRENDS – CHANGE IN RANKING OF TOP 10 COUNTRIES, 2013/2014 TO 2022/2023

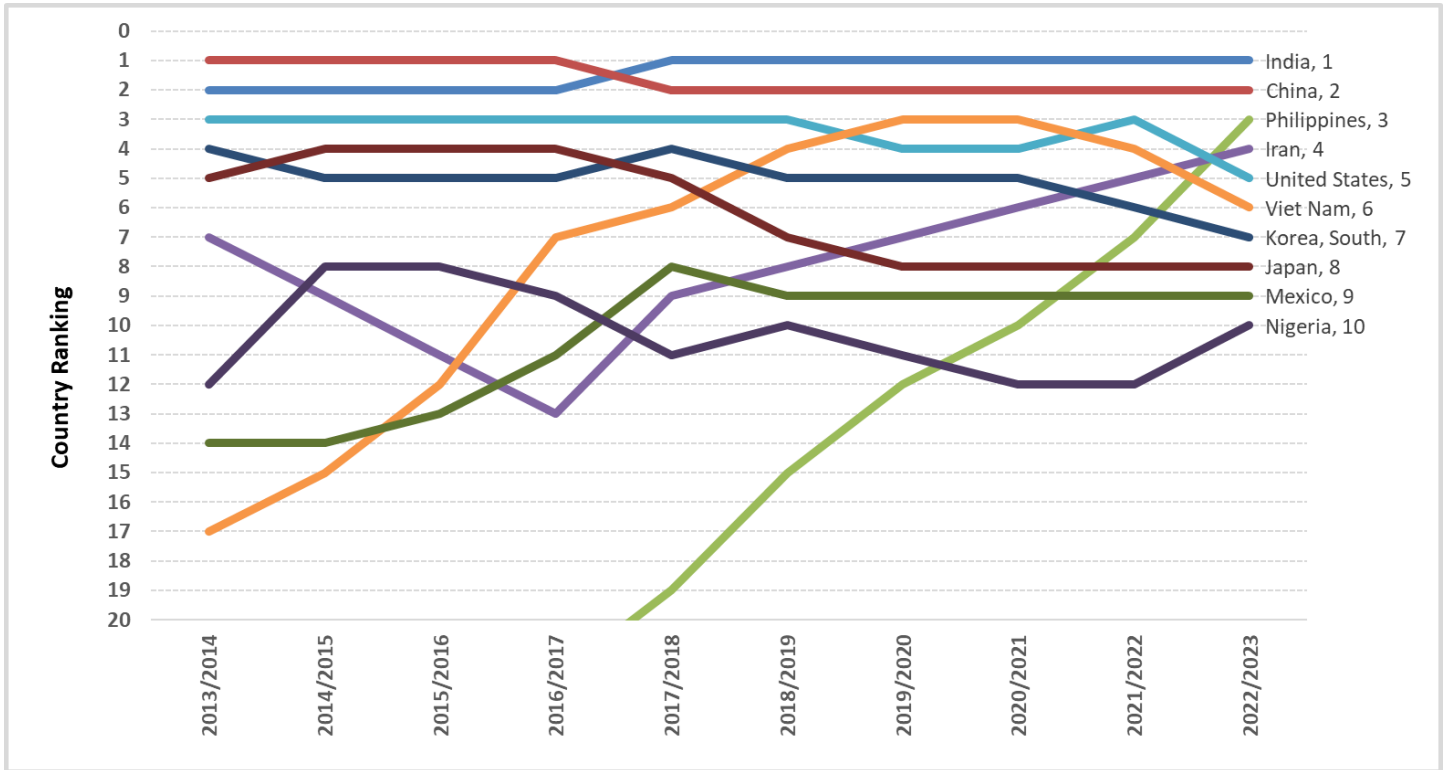


FIGURE 13D: INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, FOR TOP 11 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

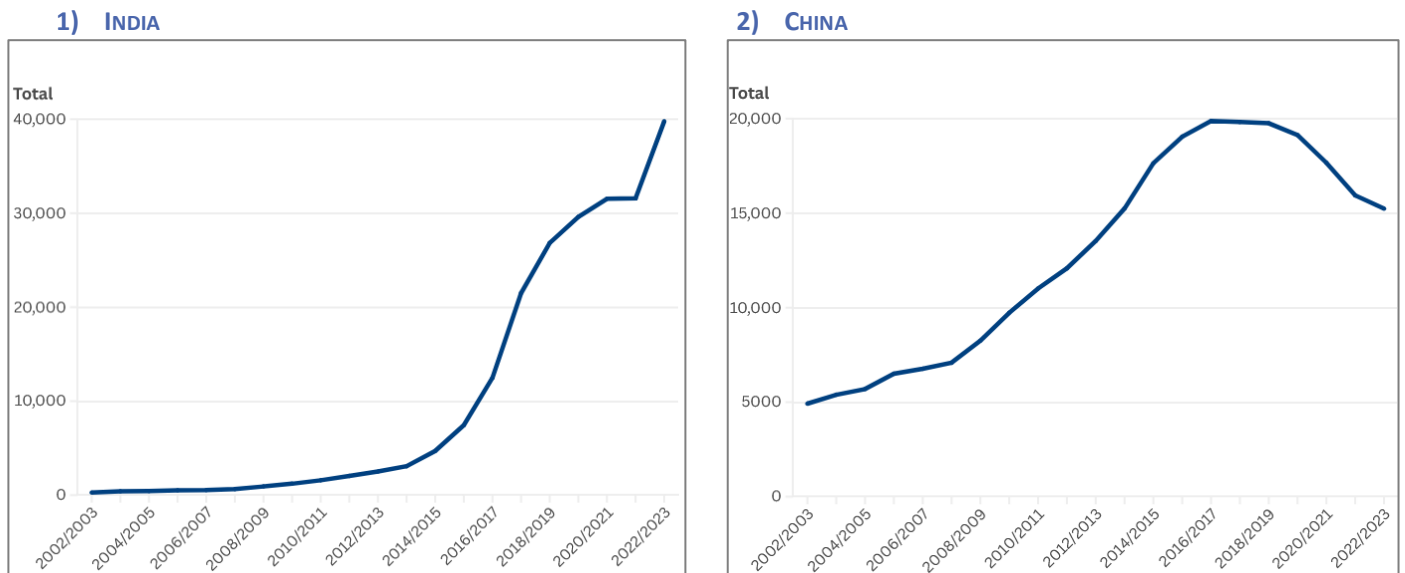
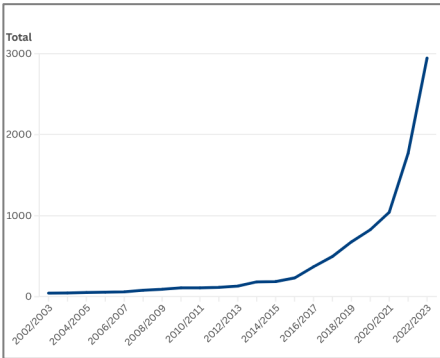
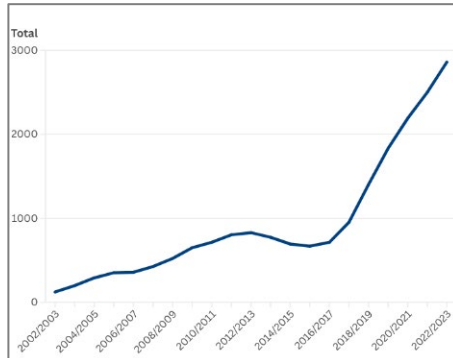


FIGURE 13D, CONT.: INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, FOR TOP 11 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

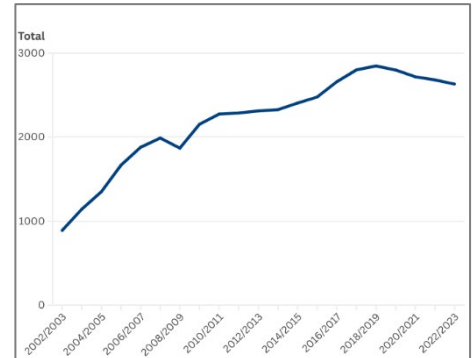
3) PHILIPPINES



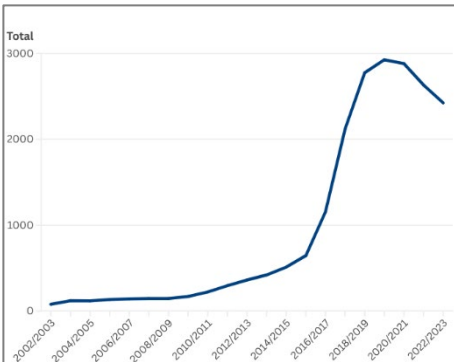
4) IRAN



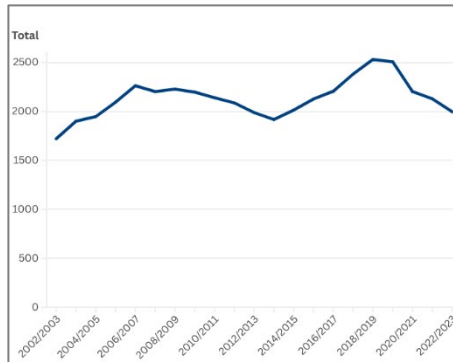
5) UNITED STATES



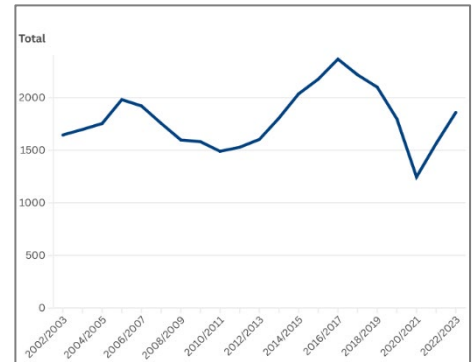
6) VIETNAM



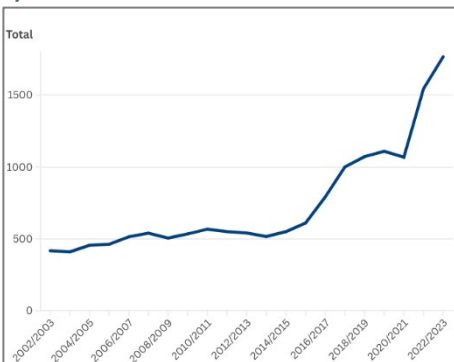
7) SOUTH KOREA



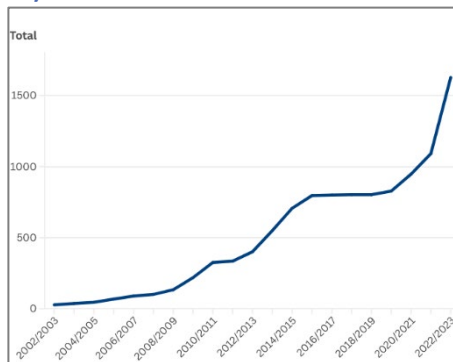
8) JAPAN



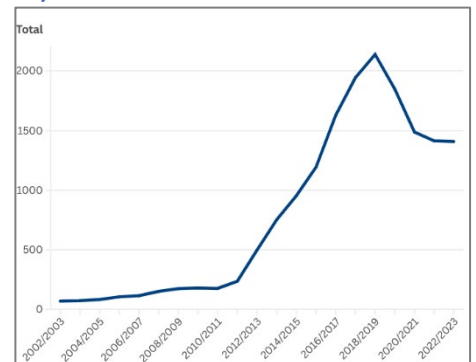
9) MEXICO



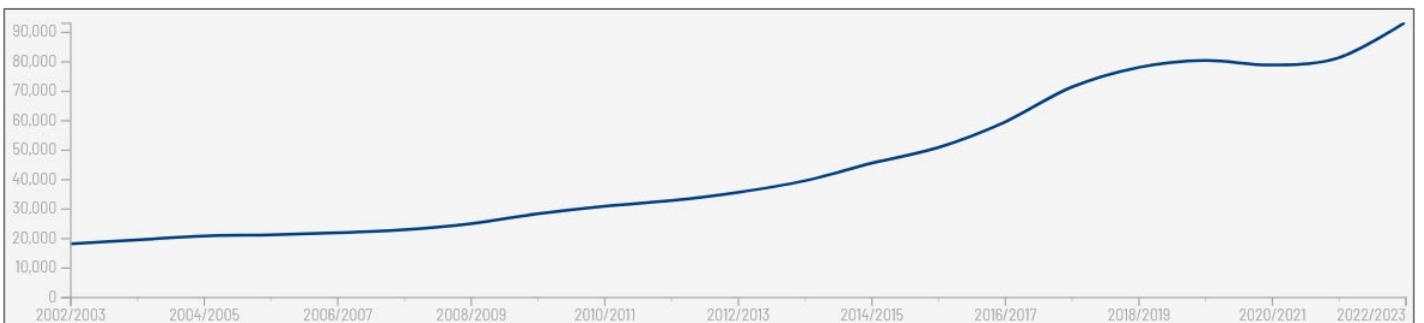
10) NIGERIA



11) BRAZIL



TOTAL INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT, ALL COUNTRIES, 2002/2003 TO 2022/2023



Which post-secondary study levels and credentials do international students enrol in?

The STP classifies post-secondary student enrollments into one of three study levels: Developmental, Undergraduate or Graduate. Within each of these study levels are a number of different credential categories (see [Credential Categories by Study Level](#) in sidebar).

Among the roughly 93,000 post-secondary international students in 2022/2023, the majority (86%) were enrolled in undergraduate programs, with 12% in graduate degree programs and relatively few (2%) in developmental programs. See [Figure 14](#).

- At the undergraduate level, 27,694 international students were enrolled in Bachelor's degree programs, representing the largest proportion (30%) of all international students studying in B.C. in 2022/2023.
- A total of 11,212 students (or 12% of total international students) were studying at the graduate level, with three quarters of these graduate students (or 8% of the international enrollment) seeking a Master's degree; 4% were pursuing a doctorate degree.
- Nearly 1,800 international students (or 2%) were enrolled in a developmental program in 2022/2023, which is significantly fewer than the number (about 4,500) enrolled in developmental programs 10 years earlier. This shift may be due to a reduction of developmental course offerings in post-secondary institutions and may be attributed to changes in funding for these programs. International students enrolled in developmental programs are primarily taking non-credit second language learning programs. Most of the students enrolled in these programs had not previously attended the B.C. K-12 education system.

Another perspective on the presence of international students in the B.C. public post-secondary system is the proportion of all registrants who are international, by study level and credential category.

- Among all students enrolled, graduate-level programs have roughly double the share of international students enrolled (38%), compared to undergraduate programs with 20% international.
- Bachelor's degree registrants in 2022/2023 were represented by 20% international students and 80% domestic students.
- Post-degree diploma programs have the largest share of international students enrolled (77%).

Credential Categories by Study Level

The post-secondary study levels and credential categories used by the STP across the B.C. public post-secondary system are listed below in descending order of entry qualifications for the study level and credential category.

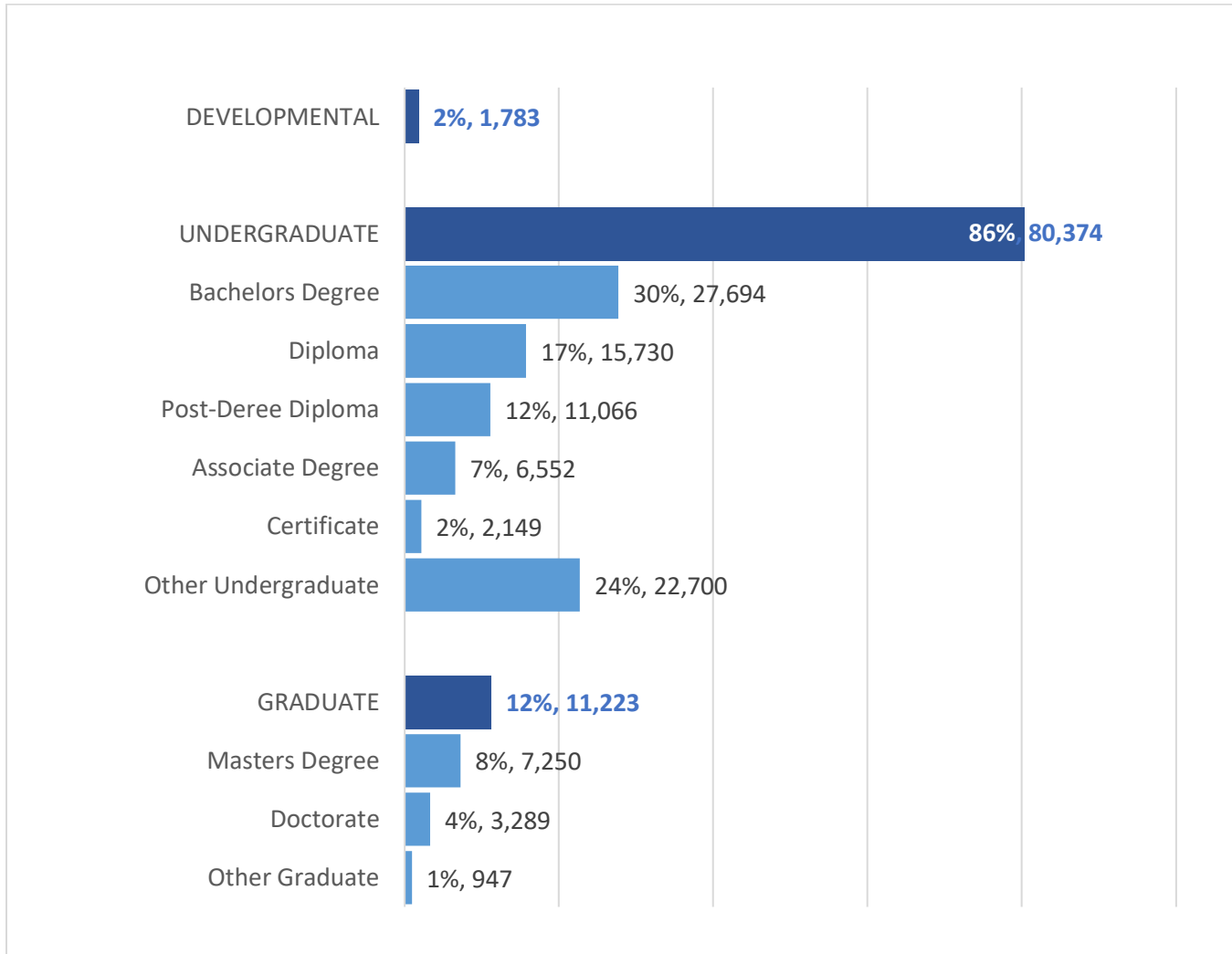
Graduate

Doctorate
Master's Degree
Graduate Diploma
Graduate Certificate

Undergraduate

Post-Degree Diploma
Post-Degree Certificate
First Professional Degree
Bachelor's Degree
Advanced Diploma
Advanced Certificate
Associate Degree
Diploma
Certificate
Apprenticeship
Short Certificate
Other
None

Developmental - The classification of credentials within this study level varies across institutions, but may include a variety of developmental certificates, short certificates, "other" or "none". The developmental study level is commonly used at B.C. colleges, institutes and teaching-intensive universities. Research-intensive universities do not submit any "developmental" student records to the STP. Please see [Figure 9](#) for more information on the typical programs included in this study level.

FIGURE 14A: 2022/2023 DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, BY STUDY LEVEL AND CREDENTIAL SOUGHT

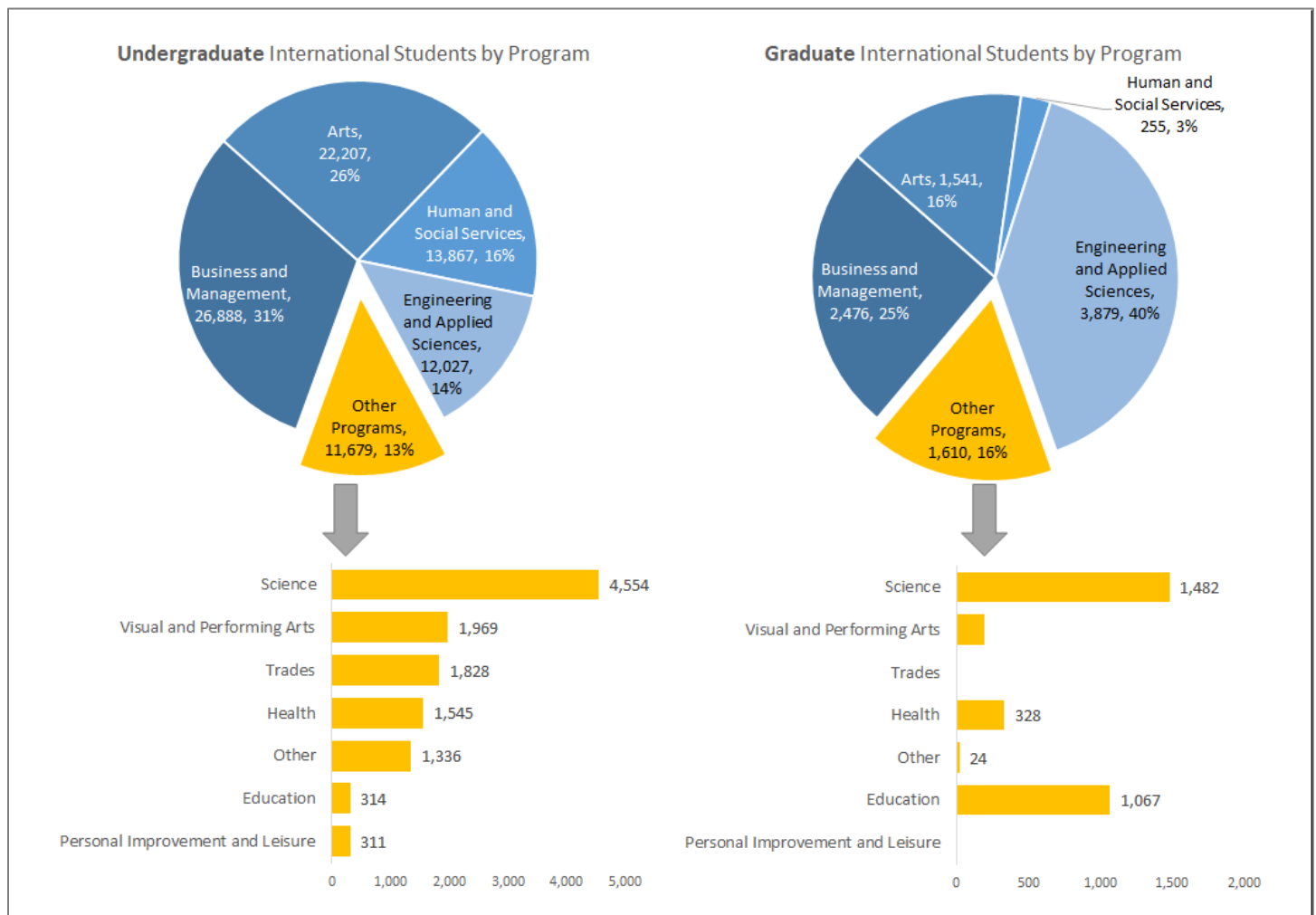
Note: Developmental enrollment includes students in non-credit basic skills courses (primarily English Language Learning), high school diploma and certificate programs, foreign languages, and non-credit leisure and recreational activities.

Which program areas do international students enrol in?

International undergraduate students primarily enrol in three program areas: (1) Arts, (2) Business and Management and (3) Engineering and Applied Sciences. International students are generally eligible to enrol in most programs offered in the B.C. public post-secondary system, although some institutions may set a limit on the number of international students admitted to selected programs or restrict their program to Canadian citizens or permanent residents, such as UBC and BCIT's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Compared to graduate students, a greater proportion of international undergraduate¹⁸ students seek credentials in Business and Management (31% vs. 25%) and Arts (26% vs. 16%), whereas a significantly smaller proportion of international undergraduate students seek credentials in Engineering and Applied Sciences (14% vs. 40%). See **Figure 15**.

FIGURE 15: 2022/2023 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY PROGRAM, UNDERGRADUATE VS. GRADUATE



Note: Due to a high proportion of international students enrolled in JIBC's Basic Security Training program for security guards and security workers, the proportion of total international students in Human and Social Services is higher than is typically found in other B.C. public post-secondary institutions, and this distorts the provincial total.

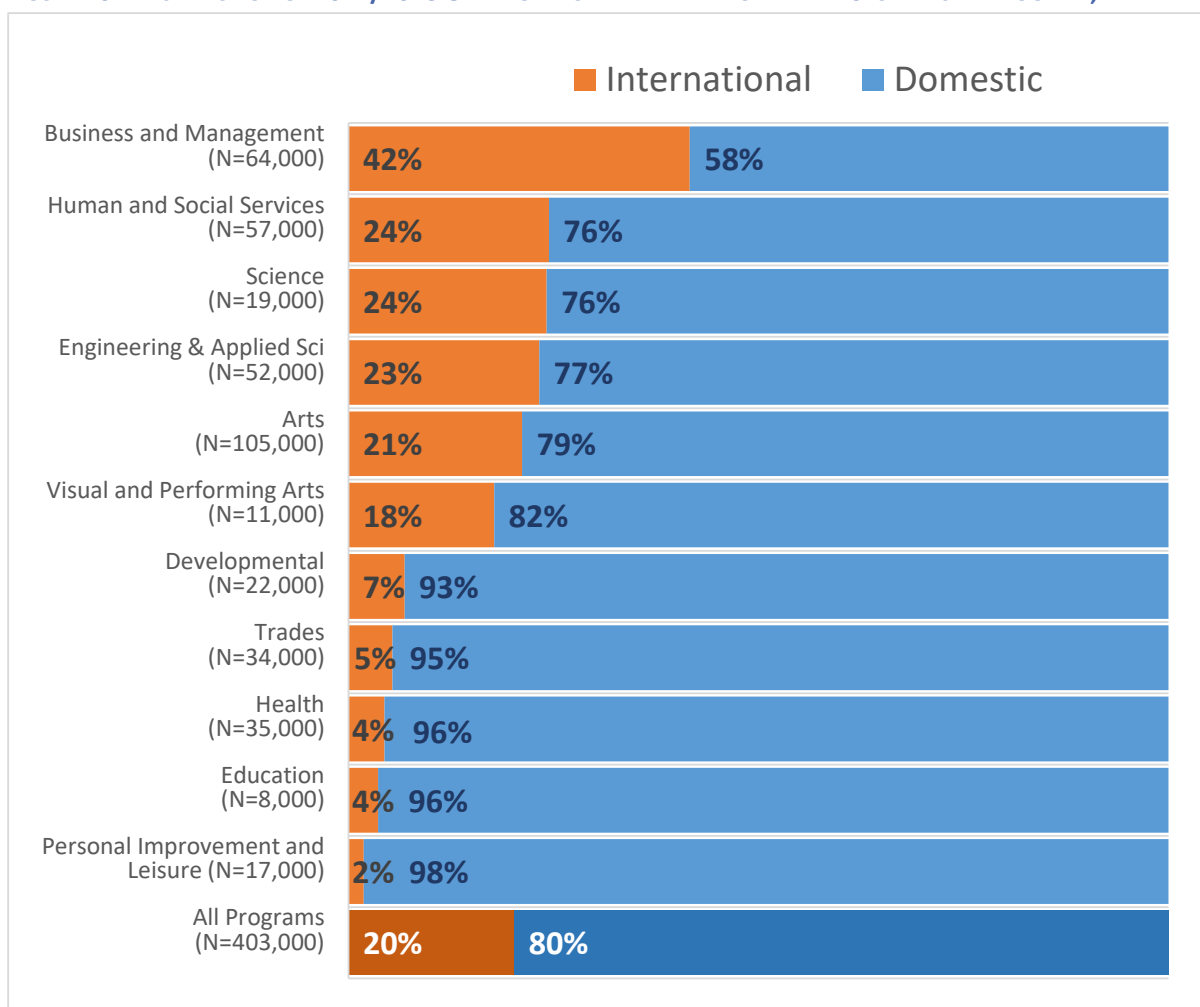
¹⁸ Developmental programs excluded (N=1,783).

What is the proportion of domestic versus international students within each program?

Undergraduate Programs: Across all undergraduate and developmental programs in 2022/2023, 20% of registrants were international students and 80% were domestic students. These proportions vary by program, as shown in [Figure 16a](#).

- At 42%, Business and Management programs have the largest proportion of international students enrolled, and this is roughly double the proportion of international students enrolled in the next four programs frequently sought by international students, including Human and Social Services (24%), Science (24%), Engineering (23%), and Arts (21%).
- International students represent a relatively small share of registrants in Trades (5%), Health (4%) and Education (4%) programs.

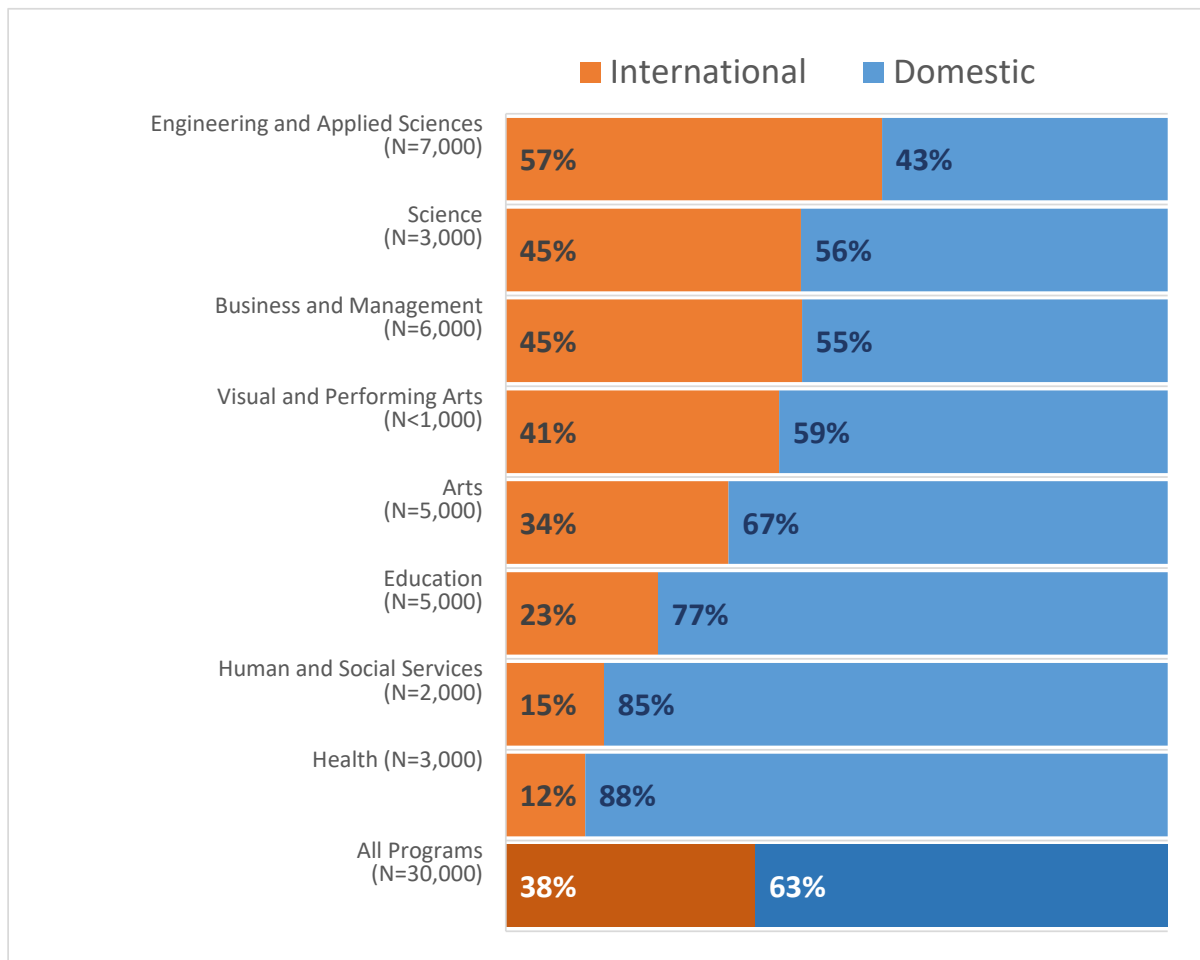
FIGURE 16A: DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 UNDERGRADUATE AND DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENTS BY PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL VS. DOMESTIC



Graduate Programs: Compared to undergraduate programs at (20%), nearly double the proportion (38%) of registrants in graduate-level programs in 2022/2023 were international students. These proportions also vary by program, as shown in **Figure 16b**.

- More than half (57%) of the graduate-level registrants in Engineering programs are international students.
- More than one-third of graduate students in four other program areas are international, including Science (45%), Business and Management (45%), Visual and Performing Arts (41%) and Arts (34%).

FIGURE 16B: DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 GRADUATE STUDENTS BY PROGRAM, INTERNATIONAL VS. DOMESTIC



All Study Levels: Across the B.C. system for all study levels combined, Business and Management stands out as the program area with the highest proportion of international students (42%), and this ranges from a high of 85% at Northern Lights College to a low of 29% at the University of the Fraser Valley. Eleven of B.C.'s 25 public post-secondary institutions have more than 50% of their Business program(s) comprised of international students, suggesting that Business is likely to attract international students, regardless of which institution in the province offers the program.

Program Predictions: Due to recent changes in the eligibility requirements for a Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP), it is anticipated that we will see a growing share of international students enrolling in [PGWP-eligible programs](#); and institutions may additionally offer more seats in these program to attract or retain international students.

Do the program preferences of international students differ by country of origin?

Figure 17 shows the programs in which international students from the top 10 countries were enrolled in 2022/2023.

- The top three program areas sought by all international students from all countries combined are Business and Management (32%), Arts (26%) and Engineering and Applied Sciences (17%), with eight of the top 10 countries holding these same top three program rankings.
- Business and Management is the top program destination for students from half of the top 10 countries: India (38%), Philippines (61%), Viet Nam (48%), Nigeria (46%) and Mexico (34%).
- Although Arts and Sciences have traditionally been reported as a single cluster of programs, Arts and Sciences are separated in this report, with Arts receiving 26% of international students and Sciences with 7%, such that collectively Arts and Sciences at 31% receives almost as many international students as Business and Management programs. Arts is the number one program destination of students from China (39%), United States (41%), South Korea (30%) and Japan (34%).
- Engineering and Applied Sciences is the most popular program for international students from Iran (41%) and is among the top three programs for students from China (23%), United States (21%), Nigeria (21%), Viet Nam (20%), South Korea (20%), Mexico (15%) Philippines (10%).
- Human and Social Services ranks as the fourth most popular program destination of international students, but this is primarily attributed to international students, primarily from India, enrolled in JIBC's Basic Security Training program for security guards and security workers. This program is popular among international students because it offers flexible learning options with both in-person and online formats, enabling students the flexibility to balance their studies with part-time work.
- Each of the other program areas typically attract fewer than 5% of the international students; and cumulatively, these less popular programs for international students account for roughly 15% to 25% of international student enrollments for each of the top 10 countries.

FIGURE 17: DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY PROGRAM AND COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

BC CIP Cluster	All Countries	India	China	Philippines	Iran	United States	Viet Nam	Korea, South	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria
Business and Management	32%	38%	18%	61%	21%	6%	48%	18%	15%	34%	46%
Arts	26%	21%	39%	11%	13%	41%	16%	30%	34%	26%	21%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	17%	12%	23%	10%	41%	21%	20%	20%	11%	15%	17%
Human and Social Services	15%	30%	3%	8%	4%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	5%
Science	7%	6%	8%	2%	10%	14%	5%	6%	3%	5%	5%
Visual and Performing Arts	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	6%	2%	6%	1%	7%	1%
Health	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%
Trades	2%	1%	3%	4%	2%	1%	5%	6%	2%	3%	1%
Developmental	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%	3%	5%	25%	2%	1%
Education											
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	4%	5%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Personal Improvement and Leisure	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Total International	92,749	39,768	15,229	2,945	2,860	2,630	2,425	1,978	1,850	1,765	1,627

Do the types of institutions and regional destinations of international students differ by country of origin?

Figure 18a shows the institution types where 2022/2023 international students register, for each of the top 10 countries. At 35%, research-intensive universities (RIUs) are the primary institution type where international students were registered in 2022/2023. Other institution types also enrol a sizeable portion of B.C.'s international students, including Colleges (27%), TIUs (26%) and Institutes (16%). The institution types where international students are enrolled varies by country of origin.

- International students from three countries chose RIUs as their institution type, China (66%), United States (86%) and South Korea (49%). By comparison, several countries show relatively small shares of students enrolling in RIUs, including the Philippines (9%), India (14%) and Iran (21%).
- B.C. Colleges are the primary institution type for students from the Philippines (74%), Mexico (47%), Japan (46%) and Viet Nam (41%).
- TIUs are the primary institution type for students from Nigeria (48%) and India (35%).
- Although institutes do not receive the largest share of international students from any of the top 10 countries, they do receive 31% of B.C.'s international students from India.
- Among the top two countries, India and China, it is evident that the institution type preferences are quite different.
 - Students from India are less inclined to enrol in RIUs (14%), but equally as likely, at roughly 30% each, to enrol in any of the other institution types.
 - Students from China are much more likely to enrol in RIUs (66%) than any other institution type.

FIGURE 18A: DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY INSTITUTION TYPE AND COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

Institution Type	All Countries	India	China	Philippines	Iran	United States	Viet Nam	Korea, South	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria
RIU	35%	14%	66%	9%	21%	86%	33%	49%	32%	27%	25%
College	27%	29%	14%	74%	57%	4%	41%	28%	46%	47%	23%
TIU	26%	35%	18%	13%	20%	9%	19%	14%	20%	19%	48%
Institute	16%	31%	3%	5%	3%	3%	9%	11%	3%	7%	4%
Total International	92,749	39,768	15,229	2,945	2,860	2,630	2,425	1,978	1,850	1,765	1,627

In terms of the regional destinations of international students (see Figure 18b), it is not surprising that the majority of international students from the top 10 countries enrol in the Mainland/Southwest region of the province, as this is where the majority of the post-secondary institutions are located. Nigerian students are the only exception with 39% enrolling in the Mainland/Southwest Region and 38% enrolling in the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays, primarily in TRU Business programs.

FIGURE 18B: DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BY DESTINATION REGION AND COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP

Institution Region	All Countries	India	China	Philippines	Iran	United States	Viet Nam	Korea, South	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria
Mainland/Southwest	73%	78%	76%	59%	71%	76%	81%	84%	60%	64%	39%
Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays	14%	13%	13%	13%	12%	8%	7%	7%	17%	14%	38%
Vancouver Island/Coast	10%	6%	12%	7%	15%	16%	11%	8%	22%	21%	16%
Cariboo North	4%	5%	0%	21%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	8%
Total International	92,749	39,768	15,229	2,945	2,860	2,630	2,425	1,978	1,850	1,765	1,627

How many international students graduated from the B.C. K-12 education system in 2022/2023, by region?

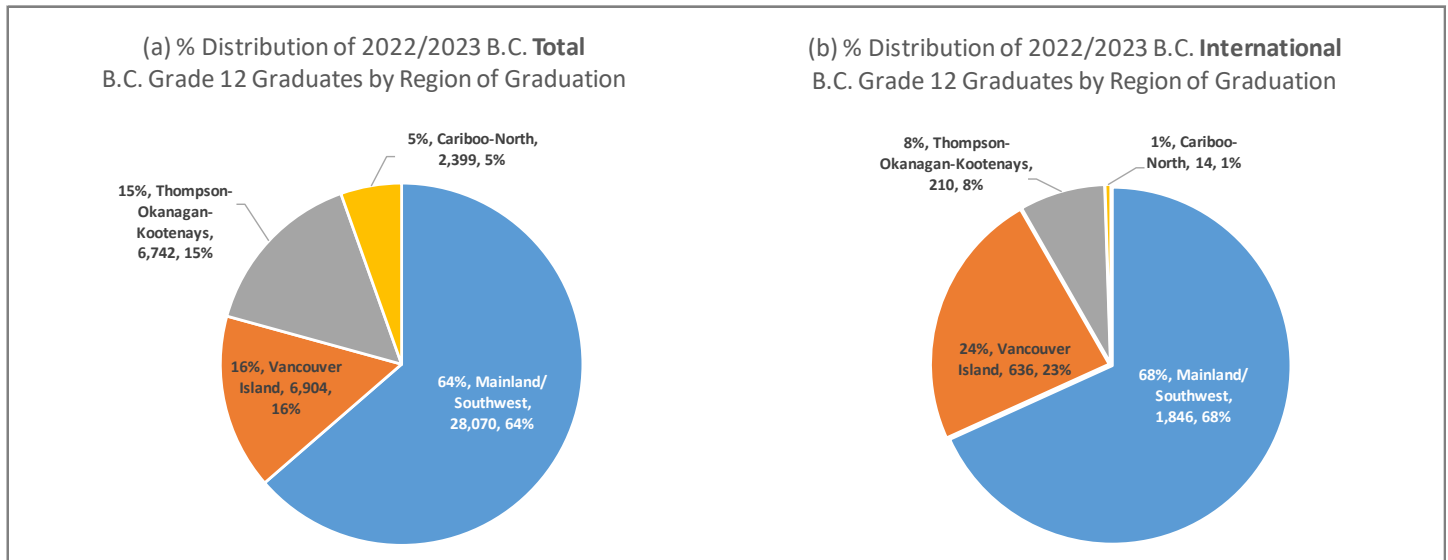
In 2022/2023, a total of 44,115 eligible¹⁹ grade 12 students graduated from grade 12 in B.C., of which 2,706 (or 6.1%) were identified by the STP's proxy definition as "international" students (or B.C. non-residents).

Among the 2,706 international grade 12 graduates of 2022/2023, the majority (64%) were graduates from high schools in the Mainland/Southwest region of B.C. The remaining international graduates completed grade 12 at B.C. high schools in the Vancouver Island region (16%), Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays (15%), and Cariboo-North region (5%). See [Figure 19b](#).

As revealed in a comparison of [Figure 19a](#) and [19b](#), two regions of the province have a disproportionately larger share of B.C.'s international grade 12 graduates: Mainland/Southwest (68% international grade 12 graduates versus 64% of total grade 12 graduates) and Vancouver Island (23% versus 16%). In addition, collectively, these two regions account for 91% of B.C.'s international grade 12 graduates, but only 80% of all grade 12 graduates.

A disproportionately smaller share of international grade 12 graduates, relative to the total grade 12 graduates in the respective regions, graduate from the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays (8% vs. 15%) and Cariboo-North contribute (1% versus 5%), suggesting that school districts in these regions do not attract international students to the same extent as other more-populated regions of the province.

FIGURE 19: % DISTRIBUTION OF 2022/2023 B.C. GRADE 12 GRADUATES BY REGION OF GRADUATION



¹⁹ An "eligible" grade 12 graduate is a student who was deemed eligible to graduate at the end of the school year upon successful completion of the courses registered in; and based on the courses previously completed towards graduation. The grade 12 graduates reported here are selected from those identified as "eligible" to graduate.

What are the previous B.C. education experiences of international students studying in B.C.?

By linking student records across education systems, the STP can identify whether B.C.'s international students had any previous education experience in B.C.'s K-12 education system, including whether they graduated from grade 12 in the B.C. system. Some interesting patterns are revealed in the cross-tabulation of international student post-secondary study level and previous B.C. K-12 education experience (see [Figure 20](#)).

- The majority (91%) of the 92,749 international students in B.C. in 2022/2023 did not previously attend B.C.'s K-12 education system, although 8% were B.C. grade 12 graduates and a further 1% had attended the B.C. K-12 system without attaining B.C. grade 12 graduation.²⁰ Domestic students are much more likely to have previously attended the B.C. K-12 system, with only 37% enrolling in B.C. public post-secondary education without any B.C. K-12 experience.
- Of the 7,117 international post-secondary students in B.C. who previously graduated from B.C. grade 12, they were almost exclusively (98%) enrolled in undergraduate programs, similar to domestic students at 89%.
- The vast majority (98%) of the 11,212 graduate-level international students studying in B.C. had no record of previous B.C. K-12 attendance and/or grade 12 graduation in B.C. This implies that these graduate students primarily came to B.C. directly from their home country to pursue a Master's, Doctorate or other graduate-level program, although some may have previously attended a B.C. private or non-B.C. institution. By comparison, a much smaller share (56%) of domestic students enrolled in graduate-level programs without any previous B.C. K-12 attendance or B.C. grade 12 graduation.
- Among the 1,783 total international students enrolled in developmental programs in 2022/2023, the vast majority (95%) had not previously attended the B.C. K-12 system and/or graduated from B.C. grade 12. This might suggest that attending and/or graduating from the B.C. K-12 system prior to enrolling in the post-secondary education system reduces the need for international students to enrol in developmental or language training programs because their language skills were sufficiently developed in the K-12 system in B.C.

FIGURE 20: 2022/2023 INTERNATIONAL POST-SECONDARY REGISTRANTS IN B.C., BY PREVIOUS B.C. K-12 EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Study Level	Previous BC K-12 Experience						Total Headcount	
	Attended BC K-12*		BC Gr12 Graduate		Not from BC K-12			
Developmental	40	2%	57	3%	1,686	95%	1,783	100%
Undergraduate	890	1%	6,976	9%	72,508	90%	80,374	100%
Graduate	37	0%	199	2%	10,976	98%	11,212	100%
Grand Total	962	1%	7,117	8%	84,594	91%	92,749	100%

* Distinct from BC Gr12 Graduates are those who "Attended BC K-12". These students have some enrollment history in B.C.'s K-12 education system, but no record of B.C. grade 12 graduation, although they may have graduated from grade 12 in some other jurisdiction, or they have not yet graduated from grade 12.

²⁰ Students may be counted in more than one post-secondary study level, but they are counted only once in the grand total (92,749).

What are the trends in the number of international grade 12 graduates in B.C.?

- The number of international grade 12 graduates in B.C. nearly doubled over the first half of the decade, from 2,020 graduates in 2013/2014 to a peak of 3,987 in 2018/2019, but subsequently declined over the latter half of the decade to current levels of 2,706 in 2022/2023 (see [Figure 21a](#)). Since non-resident graduates are used as a proxy for international students (as defined on [page 5](#) of this report), the STP acknowledges that identifying B.C. grade 12 international students in the STP is problematic and these international student counts likely do not accurately estimate the true counts and true growth rate over time.
- In terms of a rate of growth over the decade, the number of international grade 12 graduates grew by 34%, but with slower growth in B.C. public schools (+29%) and steeper growth in independent schools (+45%) (see [Figure 21a](#)). In comparison to the subset of international graduates, the total number of grade 12 graduates in B.C. grew much more moderately, by 1.5%, from 43,571 to 44,115, again with slower growth in B.C. public schools (+1.1%), than independent schools (+3.4%).
- Collectively in the B.C. K-12 system (public and independent schools combined), international students declined from 6.1% of the total to the current level of 4.6%. Due to differences in the rate of growth of student sub-populations by school type, the independent schools now have a larger share of international grade 12 graduates (nearly 16%) than 10 years ago (12%), having reached a peak of 22% international in 2018/2019. B.C. public schools have remained at roughly 4% to 5% international grade 12 graduates ([Figure 21b](#)).
- Despite the fact that independent schools have maintained their contribution of roughly 11% to 13% of total grade 12 graduates in B.C., their contribution to B.C.'s total number of international grade 12 graduates has grown from 29% of the total to 32%.

FIGURE 21B: TOTAL INTERNATIONAL B.C. GRADE 12 GRADUATES BY GRADUATION YEAR AND SCHOOL TYPE

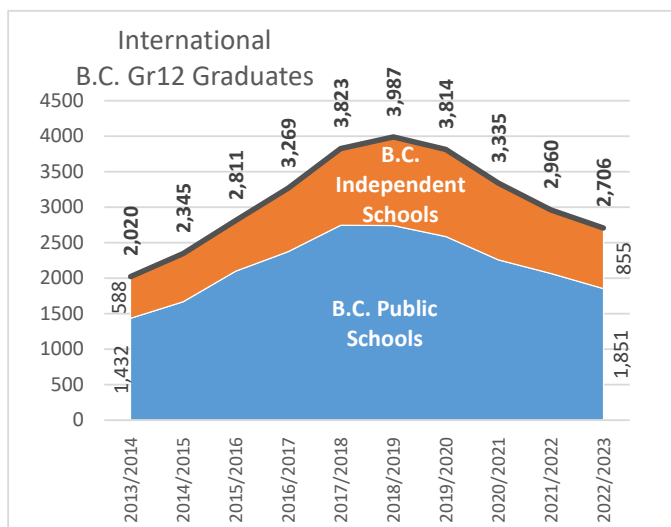
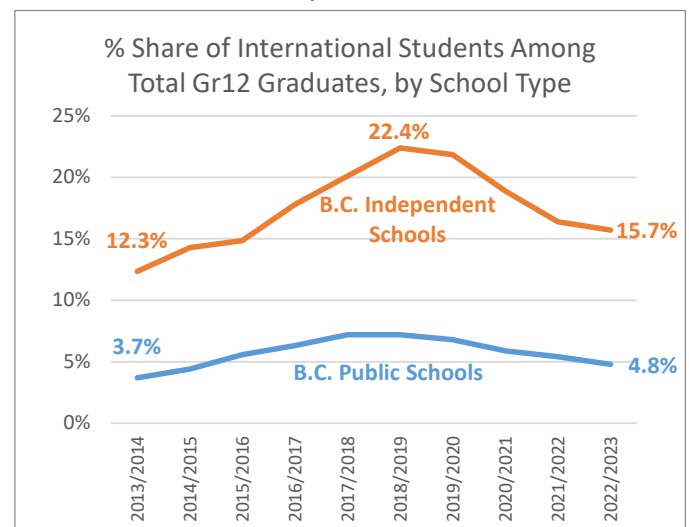


FIGURE 21B: % SHARES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AMONG TOTAL GRADE 12 GRADUATES, BY SCHOOL TYPE



What proportion of international grade 12 graduates transition to B.C. public post-secondary education?

Consistent with the definition of an international grade 12 graduate previously defined on [page 5](#) (*How does the STP Identify International Students?*), the STP finds that more than one-third of international B.C. grade 12 graduates (30% to 35%) subsequently enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary education system within one year of graduation in each of the last 10 years. The largest proportion of students transition to post-secondary education immediately after grade 12 graduation, with fewer than 7% of the international grade 12 graduates, on average, enrolling in the B.C. public post-secondary system over the subsequent three years after graduation. (see [Figure 22a](#)).

By comparison, more than half (52% to 54%) of domestic grade 12 graduates enrol in the B.C. public post-secondary education system within one year of graduation (see [Figure 22b](#)), with an average of 20% enrolling over the next three years.

International students are not expected to enrol in the B.C. public post-secondary system at the same rate as those achieved by domestic students, especially since many international students may return to their home country for post-secondary education.

In terms of the institution type destinations of grade 12 graduates, domestic and international grade 12 graduates enrol in proportionately similar institution types, including B.C. Colleges (23% to 25%), Institutes (7% to 8%) and universities (68% to 69%). These figures are based on high school graduates of 2021/2022 who enrolled immediately in post-secondary education in B.C. public post-secondary institutions 2022/2023. The only notable differences are evident in the proportion who enrol in RIUs (53% international versus 44% domestic) and TIUs (24% international and 16% domestic).

FIGURE 22A: INTERNATIONAL GRADE 12 GRADUATES IN B.C. WHO TRANSITIONED TO B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

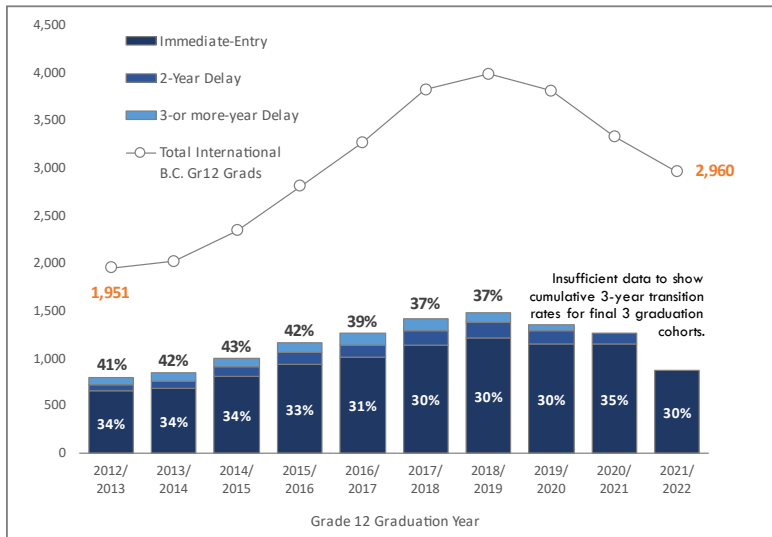
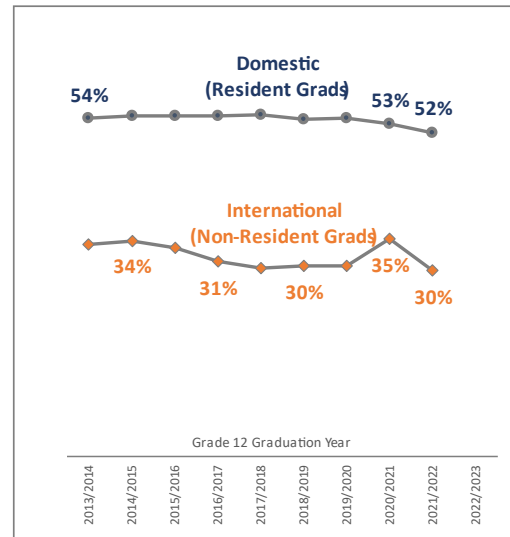


FIGURE 22B: IMMEDIATE-ENTRY TRANSITION RATES: DOMESTIC VS. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

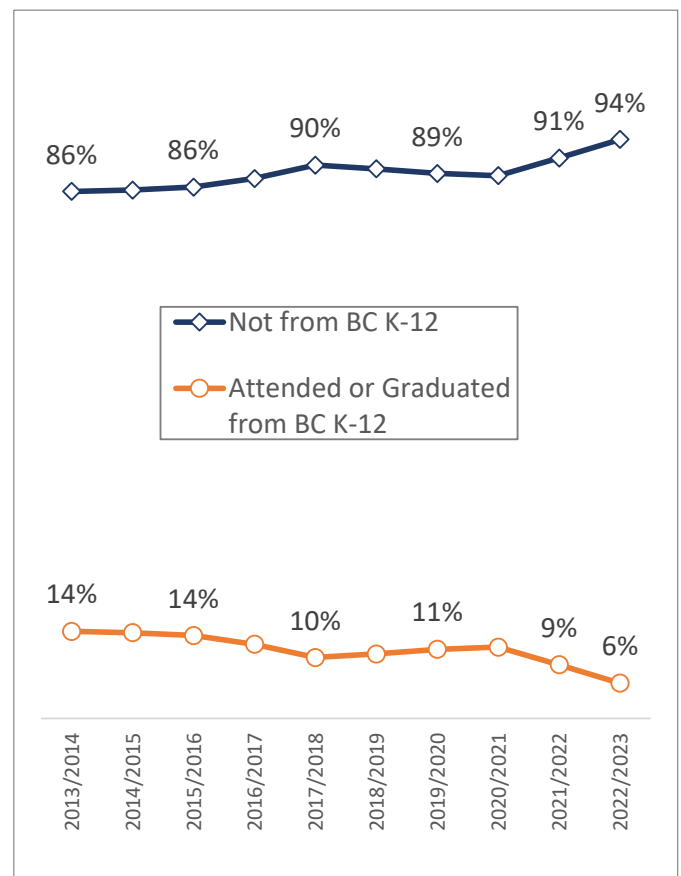


What proportion of new international students in B.C. public post-secondary institutions enrolled directly from B.C. Gr12 graduation?

Although roughly 30% to 35% of B.C.'s international students make the transition from B.C. grade 12 graduation to B.C. public post-secondary education within a year of graduation, these international student transitioners in B.C. represent only a small proportion of all new international students enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary education system.

- As previously shown in [Figure 20](#) on [page 41](#), 9% of all international students registered in B.C. public post-secondary institutions in 2022/2023 had some previous education experience in the B.C. K-12 system; however, among the new international students in the same year, fewer than 6% had any previous experience in the B.C. K-12 system, including nearly 5% who were grade 12 graduates and 1% who previously or simultaneously attended the B.C. K-12 system.
- A review of the past decade reveals that proportionately fewer new international students are entering the B.C. public post-secondary system via the B.C. K-12 system. Ten years ago, nearly 2,000 international students had entered the B.C. public post-secondary system via B.C.'s K-12 system, rising to nearly 3,000 students in 2016/2017, and subsequently falling for the last two years, reaching current levels of 2,244 students. This is consistent with the decline in the total number of international students who graduated from the B.C. K-12 system.
- The decline in new international students entering B.C. public post-secondary institutions with some B.C. K-12 experience means that a growing proportion are entering without any B.C. K-12 education experience, increasing from 12,782 (or 86% of new international students) in 2013/2014 to 37,001 (or 94%) in 2022/2023. Some of these new international students may have last attended a B.C. public or private post-secondary institution or any secondary or post-secondary institution outside of B.C., but most would have come directly from outside of Canada. The STP does not collect the previous education data for students who entered from outside of B.C.'s education system (see [Figure 23](#)).

FIGURE 23: % OF NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ENTERING B.C. POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS WITH OR WITHOUT B.C. K-12 EDUCATION EXPERIENCE



How reliable or consistent is STP's ability to identify "international" students across B.C.'s education systems (among B.C. public post-secondary registrants with B.C. grade 12 graduation)?

By linking student records in a **forward-looking** direction, from the B.C. K-12 education system into the B.C. public post-secondary education system, the STP finds that 97% of the B.C. grade 12 "international" (or non-resident) graduates who transitioned to the B.C. public post-secondary system over the last 10 years subsequently enrolled as an international student in the B.C. public post-secondary system and roughly 3% enrolled as domestic students. This relatively small proportion of K-12 non-residents who were identified by the proxy definition as "international", but subsequently enrolled as domestic students in the B.C. public post-secondary system might in fact be residents from other Canadian provinces, or international students who became Canadian citizens and are now considered domestic students. In general, the STP is satisfied that international student status is accurately identified in the data collected from post-secondary institutions.

Similarly, through a **backward-looking** comparison of international student status across education systems, the STP finds that roughly 88% of the 2022/2023 post-secondary registrants who previously attended the B.C. K-12 system were also identified in the B.C. K-12 data via STP's proxy definition as "international" students (or non-residents of B.C.). This is consistent with the forward-looking validation of international status across education systems and confirms that solely using non-resident status to identify international K-12 students is a reasonable approach, although still not perfect. (In the past, the STP also filtered out non-resident students whose primary language spoken at home was English, but at the recommendation of the Ministry of Education and Childcare, this is no longer the practice.) The STP will continue their efforts to encourage the K-12 system to collect more precise international student identifiers and to help integrate this new information into the STP database.

Do undergraduate international students in the B.C. public post-secondary system remain at one institution, or do they attend multiple institutions over time?

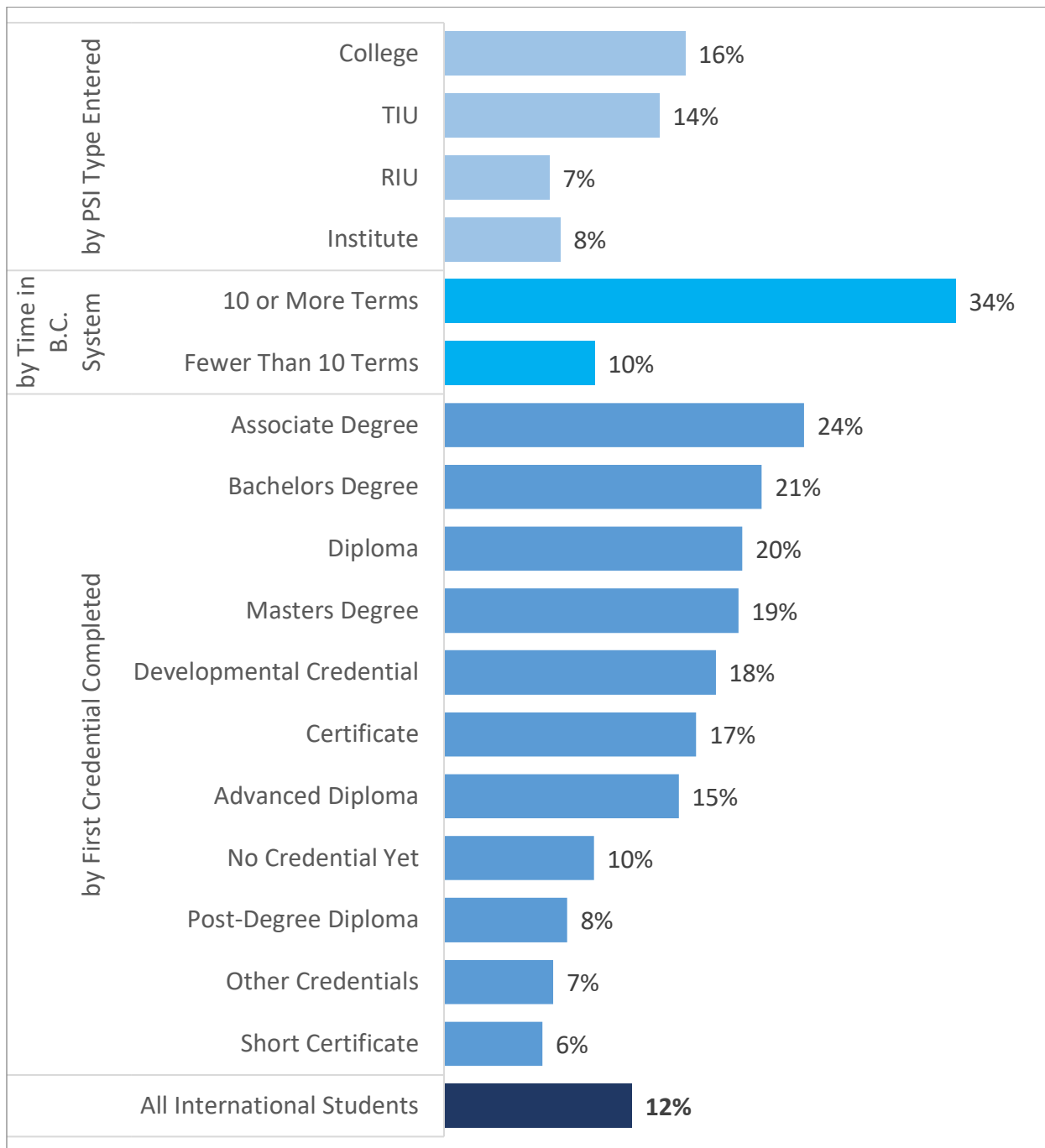
Of all undergraduate international students who first entered the B.C. public post-secondary system in the 10-year period between 2013/2014 and 2022/2023, the majority (88%) attended just one institution throughout their educational career in the B.C. public post-secondary system; 12% attended multiple post-secondary institutions.

Whether students attended multiple institutions (i.e. switched institutions) during the course of their studies in the B.C. public post-secondary system largely depended on the type of institution they first enrolled in, the length of time enrolled in the system and the type of credential completed in the B.C. public post-secondary system by Fall 2022. The precise timing of the student mobility (i.e. after x number of terms) was not quantified in this analysis. (see [Figure 24](#)).

- **Institution Type First Entered:** Of those international students²¹ who first enrolled in a B.C. College, 16% attended more than one institution. This proportion was slightly higher than the proportion of multi-institution attendees who first enrolled in a Teaching-Intensive University (14%), Institute (8%) or Research-Intensive University (7%). These findings are consistent with the fact that students have numerous options available to transfer between institutions in B.C., such as the traditional pathway from a college to a university.
- **Length of Time in the B.C. System:** Of those international students who had fewer than 10 registration terms in the B.C. public post-secondary system throughout the maximum 10-year time frame, 10% switched institutions at least once, compared to more than triple that proportion, or 34% of those who attended for 10 or more terms in the B.C. system. In other words, the greater the number of terms a student registered in the B.C. system over the 10-year time window, the greater the share who switched institutions. Among the subset of international students who switched institutions at least once, the majority (90%) of mobile students switched institutions just once, whereas 10% attended up to 6 different institutions over the 10-year period.
- **Type of First Credential Completed:** Over one-fifth (21%) of international students who completed a Bachelor's degree attended more than one institution to attain their credential, compared to 24% of Associate Degree completers and 20% of Diploma completers. Among those international students who had not yet completed a credential by the Summer of 2022, 10% had switched institutions at least once during their stay in the B.C. public post-secondary system. International students who completed shorter credentials were less likely to switch institutions than other credential completers.

²¹ This includes nearly 232,521 new international students who first entered undergraduate or developmental programs in the B.C. public post-secondary system between 2013/2014 and 2022/2023.

FIGURE 24: % OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO SWITCHED INSTITUTIONS WHILE ATTENDING THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM, AFTER FIRST ENTERING UNDERGRADUATE AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS BETWEEN 2013/2014 TO 2022/2023.



Note: (a) This chart shows the % of students who attended more than one institution, within each grouping (Institution type, number of terms spent in the system between 2013/2014 to 2022/2023, or first credential completed). For example, 16% of students who first entered a B.C. College, attended more than one institution over the 10-year time frame; or 21% of students who first completed a Bachelor's degree attended more than one institution over the 10 years to attain that degree. (b) "Other Credential Types" includes Post-Degree Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, First Professional Degree, Doctorate, Apprenticeship, Other and None.

To what extent do international students move between institution types in the B.C. public post-secondary system?

Figure 25a shows the mobility patterns of **all new international students** between institution types, among those who first enrolled in the B.C. public post-secondary system between 2013/2014 and 2022/2023 in undergraduate or developmental programs.

- As shown in the main diagonal of the matrix, the majority of students entered a B.C. College (36%) and a similar proportion (33%) last registered in a B.C. College.
- In general, the distribution of students across entry institution types are similar to the distribution where they last registered.
- The off-diagonal figures in the matrix indicate that there is very little mobility of international students between institution types, and thus, by the time of their last registration period, the majority (93%) of students were still enrolled in the same institution type where they first enrolled.

The following page provides another perspective on student mobility, but this time for international students who completed a Bachelor's degree. The mobility patterns of these degree completers show a greater tendency to switch institutions than the overall population of international students

FIGURE 25A: MOBILITY OF ALL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BETWEEN INSTITUTION TYPES – FROM FIRST ENTRY TO LAST REGISTRATION TERM

PSI Type Entered		Type of Institution Where Last Registered				Grand Total	% of Column
		COL	INS	RIU	TIU		
COL	Student Count	65,461	2,772	3,240	2,370	73,843	
	% of Row	89%	4%	4%	3%	100%	36%
INS	Student Count	1,291	29,019	93	265	30,668	
	% of Row	4%	95%	0%	1%	100%	15%
RIU	Student Count	485	218	40,001	519	41,223	
	% of Row	1%	1%	97%	1%	100%	20%
TIU	Student Count	731	1,566	1,154	56,266	59,717	
	% of Row	1%	3%	2%	94%	100%	29%
Total Student Count		67,968	33,575	44,488	59,420	205,451	205,451
Total % of Row		33%	16%	22%	29%	100%	

Figure 25b shows the pattern of mobility between institution types for the subset of international students who **completed a Bachelor's degree**.

- These international Bachelor's degree completers were much more inclined to begin and end in an RIU (at 63% and 73%), compared to any other institution type.
- The mobility matrix reveals that RIU's play a significant role in Bachelor's degree completion; and the off-diagonal figures reveal a greater proportion of student mobility than shown in the preceding figure for all international students.
- The main diagonal of **Figure 25B** reveals the proportion of Bachelor's completers who remained in the same institution type, from time of entry to time of last registration, averaging 84% for the full matrix, which is lower than 94% shown for all international students in all credential categories.
- The entry role of Colleges and degree completion role of RIUs is also evident in this matrix, with 67% of Bachelor's completers who initially entered a College and subsequently moving to an RIU, and 10% to a TIU by the time of their last registration. Only 22% of international Bachelor's degree seekers remained in a College from time of entry until the time of their last registration.
- Attributed to Bachelor's degree expansion in most of the institutions in B.C. and due to the flexibility of the B.C. transfer system, many students are now able to enter one institution type and complete a Bachelor's degree in another.

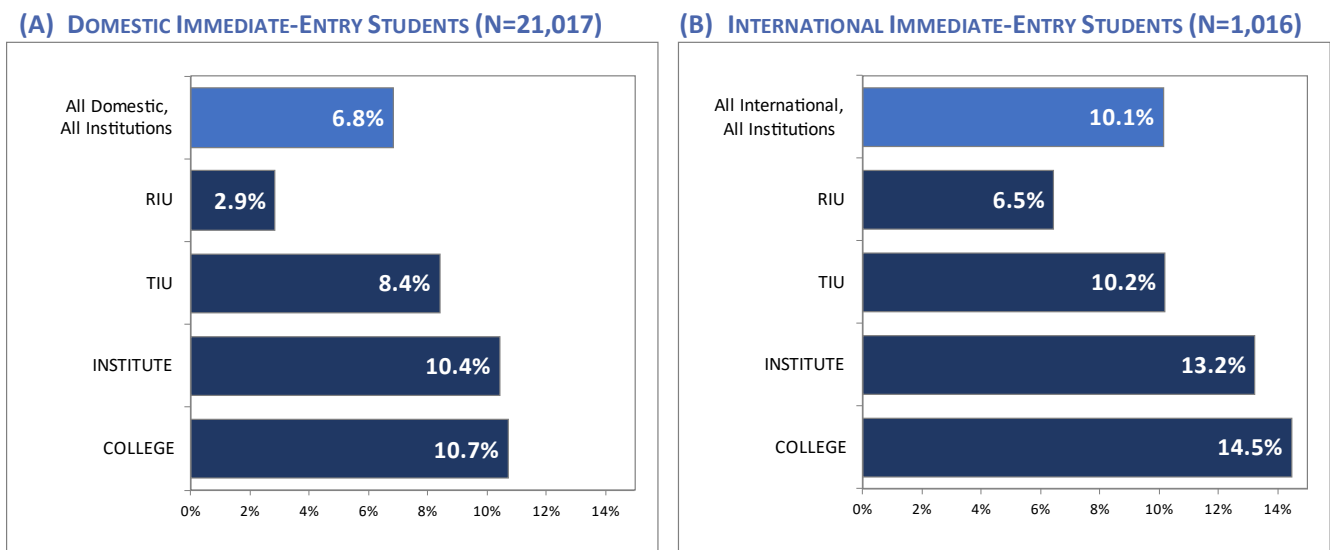
FIGURE 25B: MOBILITY OF INTERNATIONAL BACHELOR'S DEGREE COMPLETERS BETWEEN INSTITUTION TYPES – FROM FIRST ENTRY TO LAST REGISTRATION TERM

PSI Type Entered		Type of Institution Where Last Registered				Grand Total	% of Column
		COL	INS	RIU	TIU		
COL	Student Count	526	37	1,593	235	2,391	
	% of Row	22%	2%	67%	10%	100%	13%
INS	Student Count	5	174	25	19	223	
	% of Row	2%	78%	11%	9%	100%	1%
RIU	Student Count	78	81	10,783	183	11,125	
	% of Row	1%	1%	97%	2%	100%	63%
TIU	Student Count	32	17	493	3,433	3,975	
	% of Row	1%	0%	12%	86%	100%	22%
Total Student Count		641	309	12,894	3,870	17,714	17,714
Total % of Row		4%	2%	73%	22%	100%	

What are the first-year attrition rates of international and domestic immediate entry students?

The attrition rate is calculated as the proportion of students who did not complete a credential and did not return to any B.C. public post-secondary institution over the four years following their immediate-entry year. A total of 1,106 international students and 21,017 domestic B.C. high school graduates of 2016/2017 first enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary education in 2017/2018, many of whom returned for another year of education in the following year. International students have an attrition rate of 10.1% which is 3.3 percentage points higher than domestic students (6.8%). Regardless of the institution type of first entry, international students have higher attrition rates than domestic students, although the gap in attrition rates between international and domestic students is narrower for entrants to TIUs (1.8%) than College entrants (3.8%). See [Figure 26](#).

FIGURE 26: FIRST YEAR ATTRITION RATES OF 2016/2017 B.C. GRADE 12 GRADUATES WHO ENROLLED IMMEDIATELY IN B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS IN 2017/2018



How do international vs. domestic Bachelor's degree students compare on academic progress, performance and outcomes?

International and domestic Bachelor's degree students, including those seeking a Bachelor's degree in 2022/2023 and those who completed a Bachelor's degree, are compared along a number of different dimensions. Numerous differences between the two groups of students are evident in [Figures 27 to 30](#) on the following two pages.

- **Cumulative Percentage GPA Distributions:** Among students seeking a Bachelor's degree in 2022/2023, the cumulative percentage GPA distributions of international and domestic students are similar, although the distribution for international students is shifted to the left of domestic students by two percentage points. This shift in GPA distributions results in domestic students earning cumulative GPAs that are two percentage points higher than international students (76.6 and 74.6 percent, respectively). See [Figure 27](#).
- **Attempted Credits per Term:** In the Fall of 2022, which is typical of other preceding terms, international students seeking a Bachelor's degree enrolled in a greater number of credits than domestic students. Consistent with their larger credit load, a higher proportion of international students (68%) were enrolled full-time, or attempting 12 or more credits in the Fall term, than domestic students (62%). See [Figure 28](#).
- **Bachelor's Degree Completion Rates:** The Bachelor's degree completion rate is a forward-looking measure that quantifies the proportion of students who began in a Bachelor's degree and subsequently completed it within five, six or seven years. Given that international students enrol in more credits per term than domestic students, it follows that international students have higher Bachelor's degree completion rates than domestic students. This is especially evident in five-year Bachelor's degree completion rates (46% domestic versus 56% international) and six-year completion rates (64% domestic versus 73% international). Seven years after entering a Bachelor's degree program, roughly equal proportions (71% domestic and 72% international) attained a Bachelor's degree, suggesting that the two groups are equally likely to earning a Bachelor's degree within seven years of entry, but taking a higher credit load allows a greater proportion of international students to finish sooner than domestic students. See [Figure 29](#).
- **Time to Bachelor's Degree Completion:** An alternative and complementary measure to the Bachelor's degree completion rate is the retrospective time to Bachelor's degree completion. With this measure, students who completed a Bachelor's degree are traced back to their point of entry in the B.C. public post-secondary system in order to quantify the length of time it took to complete their degree. On average, international Bachelor's degree completers took roughly one year less than domestic students to complete their Bachelor's degree (4.5 years versus 5.6 years). Again, differences in credit load is a factor in this measure. See [Figure 30](#).

FIGURE 27: CUMULATIVE POST-SECONDARY PERCENTAGE GPA DISTRIBUTIONS OF 2022/2023 BACHELOR'S DEGREE SEEKERS

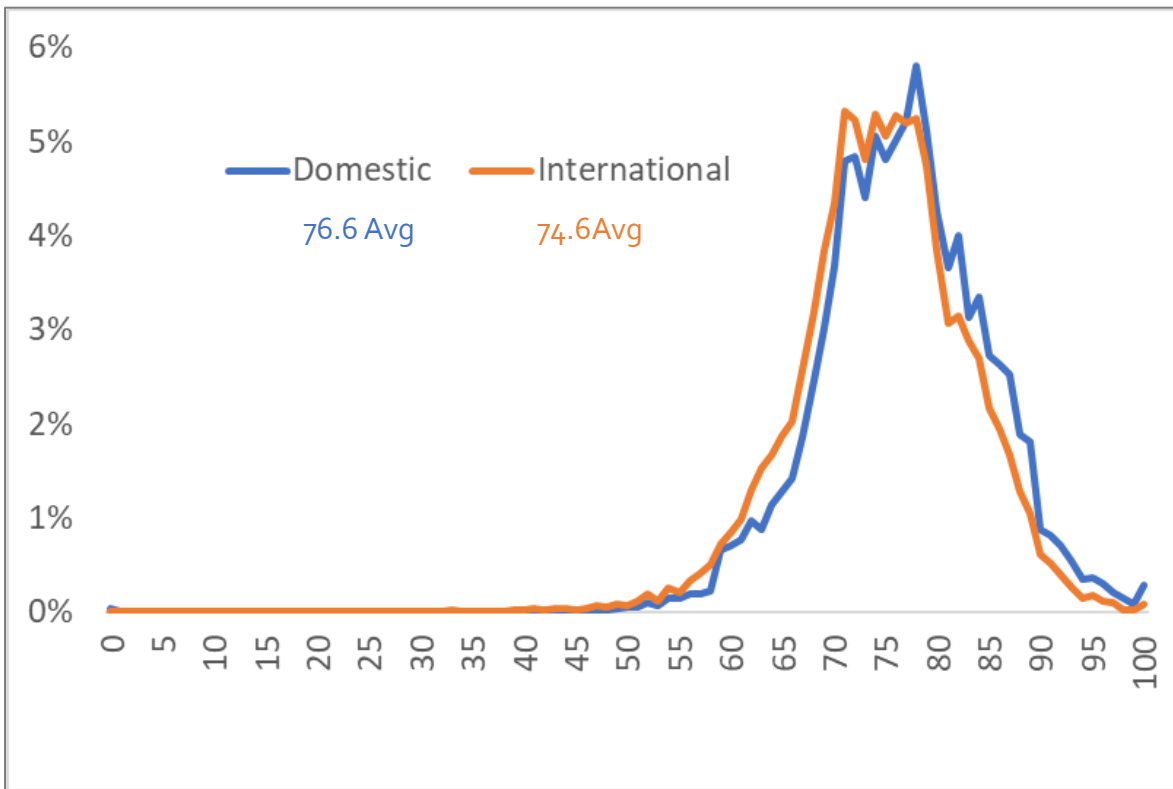


FIGURE 28: CGPA DISTRIBUTIONS (ON A 100% SCALE) OF 2022/2023 BACHELOR'S DEGREE SEEKERS: DOMESTIC VS. INTERNATIONAL

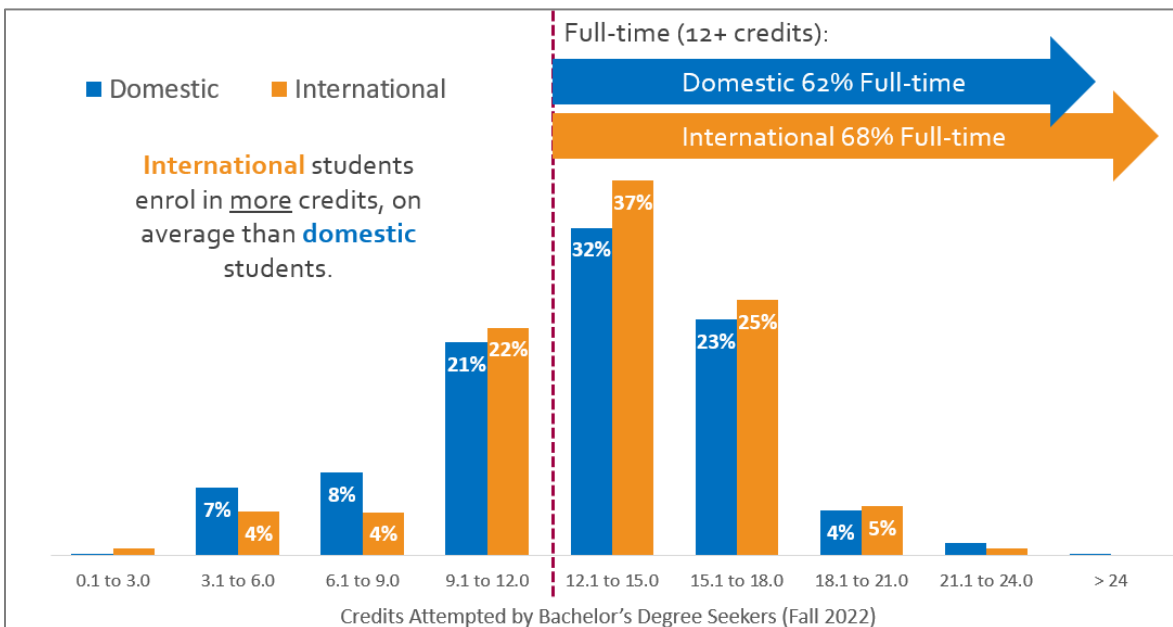


FIGURE 29: BACHELOR'S DEGREE COMPLETION RATES OF INTERNATIONAL VS. DOMESTIC IMMEDIATE-ENTRY STUDENTS

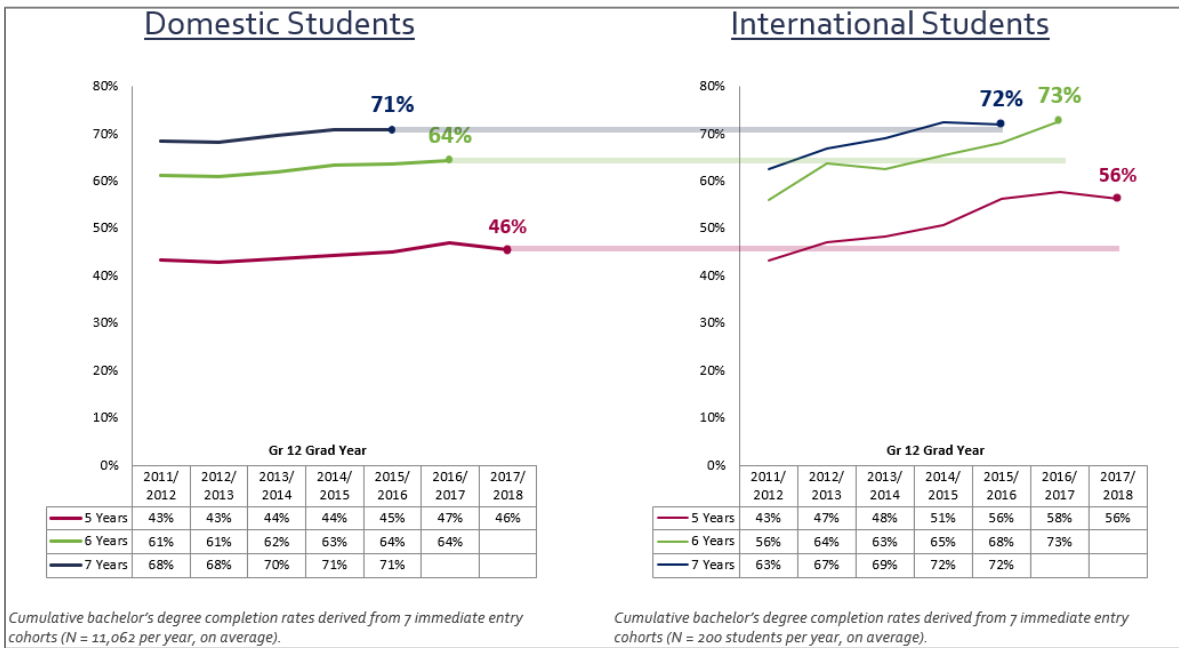
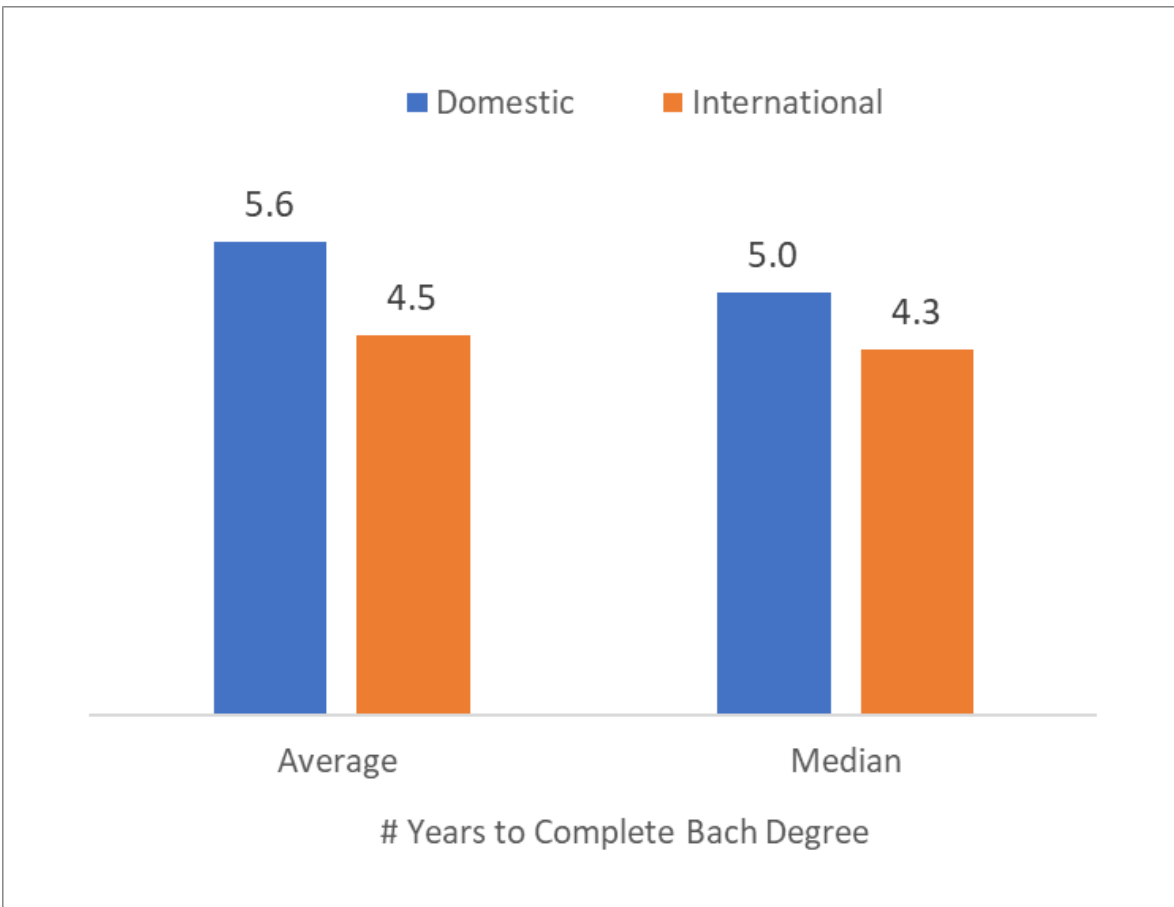


FIGURE 30: TIME TO BACHELOR'S DEGREE COMPLETION: INTERNATIONAL VS. DOMESTIC IMMEDIATE-ENTRY STUDENTS

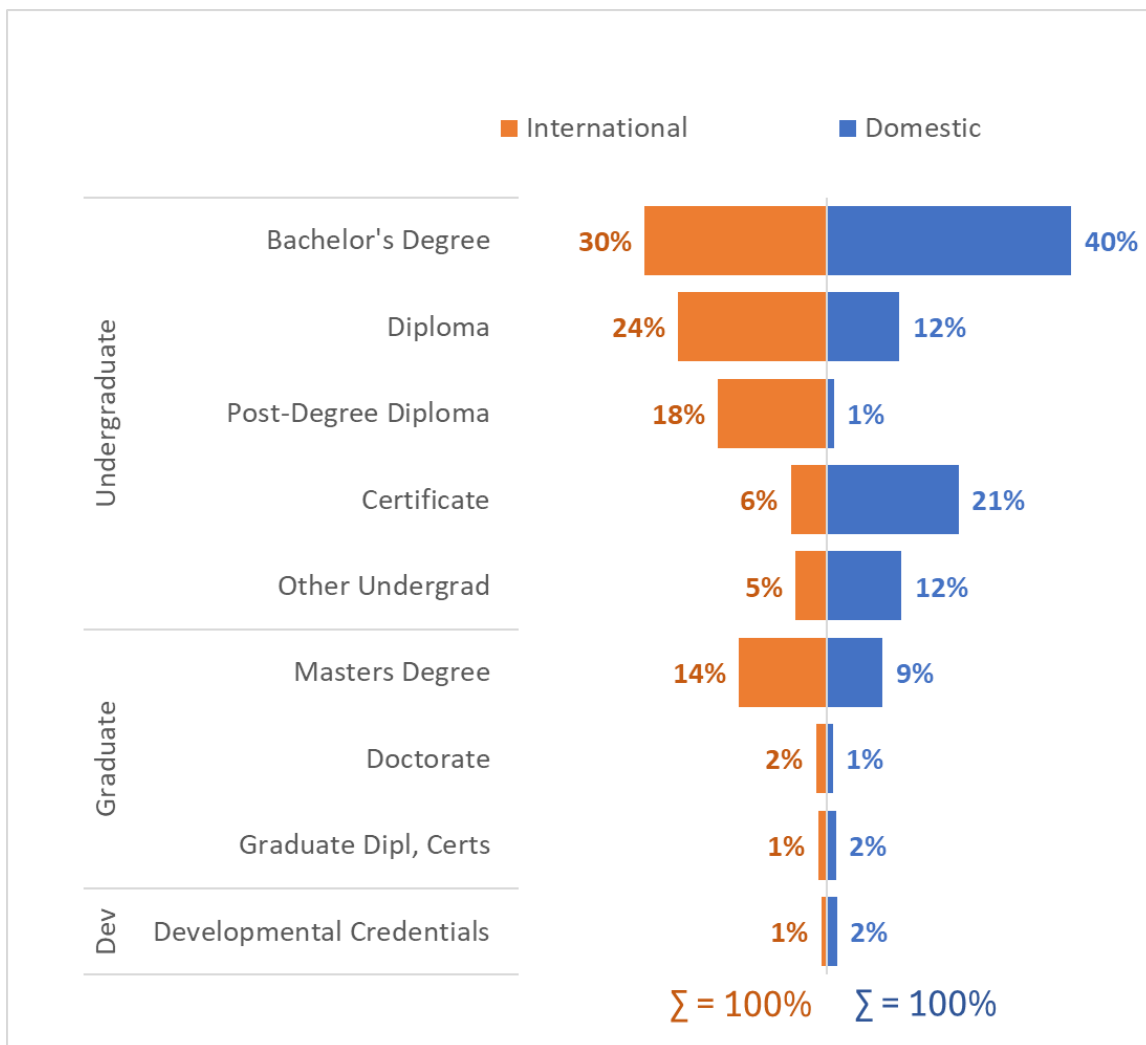


Which credentials were awarded to international and domestic students in 2022/2023?

In academic year 2022/2023, a total of 19,644 credentials were awarded to international students and 53,290 credentials to domestic students. The percentage distribution of credentials awarded to international versus domestic students is provided in **Figure 31**.

- The top 3 credentials awarded to international students in 2022/2023 were Bachelor’s degrees (30%), Diplomas (24%) and Masters degrees (14%), compared to domestic students who earned Bachelor’s degrees (40%), Certificates (21%) and Diplomas (12%).
- International students earn twice the proportion of Diplomas that domestic students earn (24% versus 12%), whereas domestic students earn triple the proportion of Certificates that international students earn.
- International students are more likely to earn a Master’s degree than domestic students (14% versus 9%), whereas domestic students are more likely to earn a Bachelor’s degree than international students (40% versus 30%)

FIGURE 31: % DISTRIBUTION OF CREDENTIALS AWARDED TO INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENTS (2022/2023)



What are the post-secondary education outcomes of international students in B.C. public post-secondary, by country of origin?

A cohort of new international students was tracked from the time of their first entry in B.C. public post-secondary education in undergraduate and developmental programs in 2018/2019, through to the end of academic year 2022/2023, allowing five years to complete a credential. This cohort of 25,138 new international students is comprised of students from each of the top 10 countries, plus the remaining countries combined, allowing for a comparison of the entry characteristics, academic progress and education outcomes for each of the countries represented in B.C.'s public post-secondary system. For additional context, similar information is also provided for all domestic students combined. A number of differences across countries and compared to domestic students are evident in [Figure 32](#).

Gender: The proportion of males and females are roughly equal for the overall entry cohort of international students, but females represented a larger share of students from the Philippines (64%), Japan (62%) and South Korea (60%), whereas proportionately more males were studying in Canada from India (53%) and Nigeria (57%). Non-binary students and those who did not specify their gender are not shown, but account for 3% of domestic students.

Average Age: International students from the Philippines and Iran are older than students from other countries, with an average age of 27 and 28 respectively; however, on average, all new international students in 2018/2019 were younger (22) than domestic students (29).

B.C. K-12 Experience: The vast majority (91%) of new international students had no previous experience in the B.C. K-12 education system, although roughly 1.5% had some B.C. K-12 education and just over 7% attained grade 12 graduation in B.C. By comparison, a significantly larger proportion (34%) of new domestic students in 2018/2019 were B.C. grade 12 graduates, in addition to the roughly 8% who had attended a B.C. secondary school, but did not graduate in the B.C. K-12 system.

Study Level: Across all source countries, 10% of international students entered a developmental program, but this proportion was higher among students from Japan (66%), Iran (43%), Viet Nam (40%), South Korea (28%) and China (15%). The distribution of domestic students by study level was similar to international students. Students entering graduate-level programs were excluded from this analysis.

Entry Institution Type: B.C. Colleges, at 34%, were the primary destination of new international students in 2018/2019, although this was not the case for all countries. RIU's were the top destination for students from the United States (67%), China (53%), and all other non-top-ten countries combined (45%). TIUs were a top destination for 48% of students from Nigeria, whereas Institutes were a top destination for 49% of students from Iran. Compared to international students, new domestic students were more inclined to enrol in B.C. Colleges and Institutes and about half as likely to enrol in RIUs as international students.

Entry Region: Mainland/Southwest institutions were the primary destination for 67% of international students and 59% of domestic students in 2018/2019; however, 41% of students from Nigeria entered the Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays region (TRU), unlike the typical 16% of international students entering this region. The Vancouver Island region, with 12% of new international students, was a more popular destination for students from Japan (24%) and the United States (17%).

Academic Performance: New international undergraduate students of 2018/2019 earned 10.8 of the 11.7 credits they attempted in their first term, achieving a 70.4 percent GPA score in their first term. By the time of their last registration term (which varies for each student, depending on their program and persistence in the system), the cumulative GPA percentage scores of international students (74.1) were an average of nearly 4 percentage points higher than their first term GPAs, but 1.1 percentage points lower than domestic students (75.5). Domestic students sought and earned fewer credits, on average, than international students, at 10.2 and 9.8 credits respectively.

PSI Term History: Although students in this 2018/2019 entry cohort were seeking different programs of varying lengths, international students were registered for an average of 6.7 elapsed terms, compared to 6.0 elapsed terms for domestic students. On average, over the duration of all possible registration terms from 2018/2019 to summer 2023, international students from each of the countries had proportionately fewer stop out periods of non-registration than domestic students (7.8% versus 13.5%). Among international students, those from Japan were the least likely to stop out for any length of time (2.4%), whereas students from Nigeria were the most likely to stop out (11.2%).

Types of PSI's Attended: From first entry in 2018/2019, through the end of academic year 2022/2023, new international students primarily attended one institution, although 12% attended multiple institutions and this is lower than the 15% of domestic students who attended multiple institutions during their time in the system. The country with the highest proportion of students attending multiple institutions during the five years was China, at 19%.

Credential Completion: By the summer of 2023, 59% of the 2018/2019 international student entry cohort had completed a credential, with most of these students (52% of the 59%) completing their credential in the same institution where they first began their education in the B.C. public post-secondary system. Students from the Philippines (79%) and India (76%) had the highest credential completion rate, while students from Japan had the lowest (24%). Degree program length is a factor in these credential completion rates as students from India (7%) and the Philippines (10%) earned a relatively small proportion of Bachelor's Degrees, but a relatively large proportion of Certificates and Diplomas.

The top two credentials completed by international students from this cohort were Diplomas and Bachelor's Degrees at 26% each, compared to domestic students who attained 34% Bachelor's degrees and 22% Certificates. Although domestic students had lower credential completion rates (24%) within five years of entering the B.C. system in 2018/2019, not all credentials sought lead to an awarded credential, especially continuing education programs, sought by roughly 25% of the domestic students versus 1% of international students.

FIGURE 32: COMPARISON OF EDUCATION OUTCOMES OF 2018/2019 ENTRY COHORTS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENTS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM, BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

	Summary Statistics:	International Students, by Country of Origin											Internt'l	Domestic
		India	China	Philip pines	Iran	United States	Viet Nam	Korea, South	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria	Other Countries	Total	Total
Entry Cohort:	# New International Students	9,443	4,549	287	454	629	1,000	975	1,206	407	145	6,043	25,138	98,165
Entry Demographics:	% Female	46%	53%	64%	53%	51%	59%	60%	62%	53%	43%	50%	51%	50%
	% Male	53%	47%	35%	47%	49%	41%	40%	36%	47%	57%	49%	49%	47%
	Average Age	21	20	28	27	21	21	24	20	24	23	23	22	29
BC K-12 Experience:	% BC K-12 Graduates	0.3%	26.2%	2.1%	6.8%	2.2%	8.8%	16.3%	5.2%	7.1%	6.2%	3.4%	7.3%	34.2%
	% with Other BC K-12 Experience	0.2%	4.4%	0.3%	4.4%	1.1%	0.6%	2.5%	0.7%	2.7%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	7.6%
	% with No BC K-12 Experience	99.5%	69.4%	97.6%	88.8%	96.7%	90.6%	81.2%	94.0%	90.2%	92.4%	95.1%	91.2%	58.1%
Study Level Entered:	Developmental	1%	15%	6%	43%	0%	40%	28%	66%	11%	1%	5%	11%	10%
	Undergraduate	99%	85%	94%	57%	100%	60%	72%	34%	89%	99%	95%	89%	90%
	Graduate (Excluded)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PSI Type of 1st Entry:	COL (B.C. College)	47%	18%	61%	20%	9%	61%	42%	52%	36%	16%	19%	34%	42%
	INS (Institute)	14%	6%	13%	49%	10%	8%	16%	3%	24%	3%	15%	13%	22%
	TIU (Teaching-Intensive University)	32%	22%	16%	17%	14%	17%	18%	28%	13%	48%	21%	25%	21%
	RIU (Research-Intensive University)	7%	53%	10%	13%	67%	14%	25%	17%	27%	33%	45%	28%	14%
Region of 1st Entry:	MSW (Mainland/Southwest)	68%	65%	51%	87%	66%	75%	73%	42%	68%	33%	68%	67%	59%
	TOK (Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenays)	13%	21%	32%	5%	15%	8%	6%	32%	14%	41%	17%	16%	21%
	VIS (Vancouver Island/Coast)	9%	13%	5%	7%	17%	15%	15%	24%	14%	14%	14%	12%	16%
	CNO (Cariboo-North)	10%	1%	11%	1%	2%	3%	6%	2%	5%	12%	1%	5%	4%
Academic Performance:	Avg # Credits Attempted in First Term	11.3	11.2	12.1	12.4	11.9	12.5	13.8	10.9	12.5	10.7	12.1	11.7	10.2
	Avg # Credits Earned in First Term	10.1	10.8	11.8	12.1	11.1	11.8	12.6	10.3	11.7	9.3	11.4	10.8	9.8
	Avg First Term GPA	66.8	71.3	78.2	71.4	72.4	74.6	71.3	72.7	72.1	69.3	74.5	70.4	71.7
	Avg CGPA at Last Reg. Term	71.3	75.9	77.6	74.1	75.5	76.1	75.3	73.7	74.3	72.1	76.2	74.1	75.5
PSI Term History:	Avg # Elapsed Terms (Includes stopouts)	6.6	9.0	6.2	6.4	7.6	8.6	5.9	3.5	5.6	8.1	5.6	6.7	6.0
	Avg # Reg. Terms (Excludes stopouts)	5.8	7.9	5.4	5.7	6.2	7.5	5.0	3.2	4.9	6.9	4.9	5.9	4.5
	Avg # Stopout Terms	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.3	1.1	1.0	0.3	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.8	1.6
	Stopout Rate	8.4%	8.5%	10.1%	7.0%	11.7%	10.3%	8.6%	2.4%	7.4%	11.2%	6.4%	7.8%	13.5%
Type of PSI's Attended:	Avg # Terms in Colleges	2.6	0.8	3.0	1.1	0.4	3.9	1.9	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.7	1.3
	Avg # Terms in Institutes	0.8	0.3	0.7	2.4	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.1	1.0	0.1	0.7	0.7	0.6
	Avg # Terms in TIUs	1.8	1.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	1.4	0.5	0.7	0.8	3.1	1.0	1.3	1.0
	Avg # Terms in RIUs	0.7	5.4	1.0	1.3	5.0	1.6	1.8	0.9	1.5	2.9	2.5	2.2	1.6
PSI Attendance History:	% Attended Multiple Institutions	16%	19%	4%	9%	5%	14%	8%	5%	7%	6%	5%	12%	15%
	Avg # PSIs Attended	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2
	Avg # Terms at Each PSI	5.8	7.7	6.0	5.9	7.2	7.7	5.4	3.2	5.2	7.8	5.3	6.0	5.0

FIGURE 32, CONT.: COMPARISON OF EDUCATION OUTCOMES OF 2018/2019 ENTRY COHORTS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENTS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM, BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

		International Students, by Country of Origin											Internt'l	Domestic
Summary Statistics:		India	China	Philip pines	Iran	United States	Viet Nam	Korea, South	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria	Other Countries	Total	Total
Credential Completion:	% Completed Credential by Summer 2023	76%	59%	79%	51%	44%	68%	45%	24%	49%	48%	43%	59%	24%
	% Completed Credential (in Entry PSI)	66%	50%	78%	46%	41%	58%	41%	22%	46%	46%	40%	52%	19%
	Avg # Credentials Per Completer	1.09	1.10	1.09	1.13	1.04	1.18	1.14	1.20	1.11	1.03	1.08	1.10	1.11
	Headcount Credential Completers	7,198	2,672	228	232	277	678	438	293	201	69	2,583	14,869	23,781
	Total Credentials Completed (See below):	7,870	3,230	252	292	290	889	525	514	225	78	2,889	17,054	27,202
Cred Category Completed:	Bachelor's Degree	572	2,182	25	39	226	160	91	70	49	25	1,035	4,474	9,252
	Certificate	1,259	84	65	76	22	63	69	41	68	6	544	2,297	7,575
	Diploma	2,877	241	61	66	19	313	247	57	47	8	457	4,393	4,289
	Masters	30	89	0	9	3	5	2	1	2	6	34	181	177
	Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Developmental	17	197	3	21	0	82	25	161	0	1	77	584	634
	Other Credential Category	3,115	437	98	81	20	266	91	184	59	32	742	5,125	5,273
% Top 3 Credentials Compl:	Bachelor's Degree	7%	68%	10%	13%	78%	18%	17%	14%	22%	32%	36%	26%	34%
	Certificate	16%	3%	26%	26%	8%	7%	13%	8%	30%	8%	19%	13%	28%
	Diploma	37%	7%	24%	23%	7%	35%	47%	11%	21%	10%	16%	26%	16%
	All Other Credential Categories	40%	22%	40%	38%	8%	40%	22%	67%	27%	50%	30%	35%	22%

Figure 32 Notes: (a) This table provides the entry information and education outcomes of new students who entered a B.C. public post-secondary institution for the first time in 2018/2019. These students were followed through credential completion by the end of the 2022/2023 academic year. (b) This is a study cohort, thus the process for cohort inclusion filtered out some student records for data quality reasons. (c) New students to graduate programs are excluded. (d) The number of new students per year includes only those new students to the BC system for the first time in 2018/2019. Therefore, students who were new to an institution in 2018/2019, but had previously enrolled as a new student in another institution prior to 2018/2019 are excluded.

What are the B.C. public post-secondary education outcomes of international students, by B.C. K-12 education experience?

The subset of B.C. public post-secondary international students who previously graduated from the B.C. K-12 system generally achieved better education outcomes than international students with some or no previous education in the B.C. K-12 system.

See **Figure 33**. These B.C. grade 12 graduates:

- Persisted in the B.C. public post-secondary education system for a longer elapsed time (11.4 terms versus 8.6 or 6.8 terms), primarily at a research-intensive university; and attended for a greater number of registration terms (9.5 versus 7.1 and 5.8);
- Took a greater number of stop out terms (1.9 versus 1.5 and 1.0) and recorded higher stop out rates (14% versus 12% and 9%). This suggests that B.C. grade 12 graduates, who were likely more settled in Canada than students with limited or no B.C. K-12 experience, may have taken summers off to work or pursue other activities, rather than persisting in their post-secondary studies without a break;
- Attended a greater number of institutions (1.41 on average versus 1.36 and 1.15) by Fall 2022 and this is likely because they persisted in the B.C. system for a greater length of time than the other sub-populations;
- Achieved higher credential completion rates by Summer 2023 (72% versus 54% and 55%);
- Earned proportionately more bachelor's degrees (63% versus 40% and 39%) and fewer developmental credentials (6% versus 11% and 8%).

These results suggest that post-secondary institutions might consider focusing their international student recruiting efforts on those students who previously attended and graduated from the B.C. K-12 system because these students have generally demonstrated superior education outcomes than those international students who did not previously attend and graduate from the B.C. K-12 education system.

FIGURE 33: COMPARISON OF EDUCATION OUTCOMES OF 2015/2016 ENTRY COHORTS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC STUDENTS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM, BY B.C. K-12 EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

		2015/2016 International Entrants to BC Public Post-Sec			
Cohort Success Measure:		Attended B.C. K-12 (BC12 Graduate)	Attended B.C. K-12 (Non-BC12 Graduate)	No B.C. K-12 Experience	All New International Students
Entry Cohort:	# New International Students to BC Public Post-Sec	1,380	636	15,686	17,702
Identity in B.C. K-12 System:	BC K-12 International Students (Proxy)	1,166	454	0	1,620
	BC K-12 Graduates (before or after enrolling in post-sec)	1380	100	0	1,480
	BC K-12 Graduates as % of Cohort	100.0%	15.7%	0.0%	8.4%
PSI Type of 1st Entry:	RIU (Research-Intensive University)	41.8%	14.8%	35.1%	34.9%
	TIU (Teaching-Intensive University)	20.6%	29.4%	20.0%	20.4%
	COL (B.C. College)	30.1%	41.8%	33.8%	33.8%
	INS (Institute)	7.5%	14.0%	11.1%	10.9%
PSI Term History:	Avg # Elapsed Terms (Includes stopout terms)	11.4	8.6	6.8	7.2
	Avg # Registration Terms (excludes stopout terms)	9.5	7.1	5.8	6.1
	Avg # Stopout Terms	1.9	1.5	1.0	1.1
	Stopout Rate (Stopout Terms as % of Elapsed Terms)	14%	12%	9%	9%
Type of PSI's Attended:	Avg # Terms in RIU(s)	5.2	2.1	2.7	2.8
	Avg # Terms in TIU(s)	2.0	2.1	1.1	1.2
	Avg # Terms in B.C. College(s)	1.7	2.2	1.6	1.6
	Avg # Terms in Institute(s)	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.5
PSI Attendance History:	Avg # PSIs Attended	1.41	1.36	1.15	1.18
	Avg # Terms at Each PSI Attended	8.7	6.4	5.9	6.2
Credential Completion:	Credential Completion Rate (by Summer 2023)	72.0%	53.9%	54.7%	56.0%
	Average # Credentials Per Credential Completer	1.21	1.23	1.19	1.19
	Total Headcount Credential Completers	994	343	8,576	9,913
	Total Credentials Completed (See breakdown below):	1,200	421	10,190	11,811
Cred Compl Level:	Developmental	78	45	819	942
	Undergraduate	1,090	369	9,015	10,474
	Graduate	32	7	356	395
Cred Compl Category:	Bachelor's Degree	758	170	3,931	4,859
	Certificate	75	52	957	1,084
	Diploma	213	112	2,432	2,757
	Masters	31	7	327	365
	Doctorate	1	0	3	4
	Developmental	78	45	814	937
	Other Credential Category	153	87	2,867	3,107

Figure 33 Notes: (a) Education outcomes of new international students admitted to B.C. public post-secondary institutions in 2015/16; outcomes achieved by Summer 2023. (b) This is a study cohort, thus the process for cohort inclusion filtered out some student records for data quality reasons. (c) Excludes new students to graduate programs. (d) 100 BC grade 12 graduates in the cohort of students with B.C. K-12 experience did subsequently graduate from B.C. grade 12, but grade 12 graduation occurred after they were admitted to a B.C. public post-secondary institution.

Conclusion

International students studying in B.C.'s education systems continue to enrich the diversity of perspectives and academic, social and cultural experiences of local students, while making an important contribution to the B.C. economy and society. Recent federal policy changes will likely disrupt these trends over the coming years. The STP will continue to monitor and report on the enrollment trends and education achievements of these students in the B.C. system to aid policy development, program planning and decision-making within institutions and government.

For More Information

Additional information in various formats is available to post-secondary institutions seeking more detailed information on international students studying in B.C.

STP Highlights newsletters and reports are available on the public Student Transitions Project [web site](#) at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/data-research/student-transitions-project>