

Connecting Canadian talent to the world

Investing in our youth to drive a prosperous, inclusive and innovative Canadian economy



At a time of closing borders and closing minds, international opportunities for Canadian students are essential. When Canadian students go abroad – to study, research or learn a new language – they develop essential skills, perspectives and networks that will not only help them navigate our rapidly changing labour market, but also enhance Canada’s productivity and competitiveness.

Canada must take bold action to equip a critical mass of young Canadians from all backgrounds with career-boosting experiences that prepare them for our shifting global economy, and allow Canada to better compete on the world stage.

The Benefits

Future-proofing Canada’s youth and economy

We are in an era of unprecedented global change. **The essential 21st century skills gained through global experiences** – abilities to problem-solve, adapt, collaborate and communicate with people from other backgrounds – will help Canada’s young people adjust to the shifting nature of work, and **are critical to building a strong economy in the face of disruption.**

Strengthening global ties

The people-to-people ties forged through study abroad help build and maintain strong foundations for diplomatic and trade relations. To compete globally, Canada must maximize its trade agreements, sign new ones, and help Canadian businesses (of all sizes) and young entrepreneurs succeed within them. How? **By investing in talent, equipping students with global competencies and encouraging them to build valuable international networks through global study.**

Increasing social equality

Studying abroad gives students better academic and employment outcomes after graduation – and those benefits are particularly pronounced for those from less-advantaged backgrounds. Far from being a luxury or an indulgence for the wealthy few, **study abroad is vital to driving future prosperity for all Canadians.**

50%

50% of Canadian jobs will demand major skills shifts in the next 10 years as technological advancements change the way we work.

80%

More than 80% of Canadian hiring managers say grads with cross-cultural understanding and knowledge of the global marketplace are assets to the competitiveness of their companies.

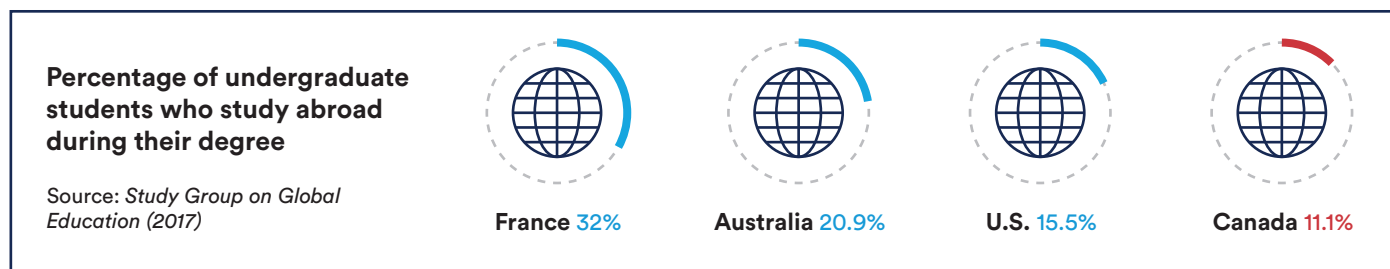
6.1%

According to a 2017 U.K. study, graduates from more disadvantaged backgrounds who were mobile during their degree earned, on average, 6.1% more than those without an international experience.

The Challenge

Canada is at risk of losing its competitive edge

Despite the clear benefits, only **11% of Canadian university students take part in international study** over the course of their degree, and **Canada currently lacks a national strategy** to increase this number. Meanwhile, our closest partners and competitors are ramping up programs to send more students overseas. Canada is at risk of falling behind in the global knowledge economy.



Students choose traditional markets

By 2050, six of the seven largest economies in the world are predicted to be China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia and Mexico. However, students who go abroad are overwhelmingly studying in traditional English – or French – speaking destinations, such as the United States, Australia, France and the United Kingdom. To compete with our global peers, Canada should **encourage more students to study abroad, and more to go to the world’s fastest growing economies.**

60%

Nearly 60% of Canadians believe trade with Asia will outweigh trade with the U.S. in the future, and more than half are concerned that Canada will fall behind international competitors in gaining access to Asian markets.

The Solution

Go Global Canada

To equip young Canadians to compete with global peers and build valuable international networks, **Canada needs a well-resourced national approach that sets specific goals.** The Study Group on Global Education’s landmark 2017 report *Global Education for Canadians* calls for Canada to set **a target of 25% of Canadian postsecondary students having international learning experiences within 10 years.**

Investing in a new national initiative, *Go Global Canada*, would support **15,000 Canadian postsecondary students per year going abroad within five years, rising to 30,000 a year within a decade.** It would also include tailored programs to boost participation from lower-income and underrepresented groups, and expand the proportion of students going to emerging economies.



“If Canada is to compete in an increasingly interconnected and fast-changing world, our next generation of leaders will need the experience and connections to operate internationally.”

- Dominic Barton, Global Managing Director, McKinsey & Company, *Global Education for Canadians*, November 2017

Learn more and download Universities Canada’s Budget 2019 submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance at univcan.ca/budget2019submission.