



Motivations and perspectives of 100 Brazilian students at Canada's post-secondary institutions

2014 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Throughout the spring of 2014, 25 post-secondary member institutions of the [Canadian Bureau for International Education](#) (CBIE) surveyed their international student population. Over 3000 students provided extensive insights about their experience in Canada, including their decision-making process, preparation to come to Canada, their degree of social and academic success as international students, and future plans following graduation.

This report¹ depicts the experience and perspectives of the 100 Brazilian international students who responded to the *2014 International Student Survey*. It is the first release in a series to support member institutions and the broader international education sector to better understand international education markets and, ultimately, to enhance the experience of all international students in Canada.

Subsequent reports in this series will delve into the themes of immigration, study destination decision-making, social bonds between international students

and Canadians, campus-wide inclusion of international students, and more. This dataset will also form an integral part of the 2014 CBIE *World of Learning* report, highlighting key trends in our sector over the year. Stay tuned for the launch of this report at the national CBIE Conference in Ottawa this November.

The Canadian Bureau for International Education administers *Ciência sem Fronteiras* scholarships in Canada on behalf of the [National Council for Scientific and Technological Development](#) and the [Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education](#). For more information on these scholarships and other CBIE services visit [cbie-bcei.ca](#). The present sample may include some students of the *Ciência sem Fronteiras* program.

The following was prepared by Lisa Deacon, Manager of Research and Special Projects for CBIE. Questions relating to this report and the CBIE International Student Survey can be directed to research-recherche@cbie.ca.

1. All data from the 2014 CBIE International Student Survey unless otherwise stated.

1. BRAZILIAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

According to data obtained from Statistics Canada, in 2012, post-secondary institutions across Canada hosted 1188 Brazilian international students. The sample of Brazilian students in the 2014 CBIE *International Student Survey* numbered 100 from 16 colleges, polytechnic institutes and universities in seven provinces across Canada (AB, BC, SK, NB, NS, ON, QC).

These 100 students provided their first-hand perspective on their motivations for studying in Canada, their degree of satisfaction with their experience, and the extent to which it will impact their long-term personal and professional success.

At the time of completing the survey the vast majority (95%) of Brazilian respondents were pursuing full-time studies. Just over half (53%) of respondents were male, and 47% were female. Figure one shows that almost half (45%) were studying an engineering program; while a diversity of disciplines were represented in the remaining 55% of students.

The majority of students (61%) were pursuing a bachelor degree program at the time of the survey, while other students were pursuing graduate studies (11%), diplomas (10%), English as a second language programs (4%), associate degrees (4%), and certificates (4%)

Top 5 Reasons Brazilian students choose Canada:

1. Canada offers a society that is tolerant and not discriminatory
2. The strong reputation of Canada's education system
3. Canada's safety
4. Canadians' positive attitude towards international students
5. The position of Canadian institutions in international rankings

(4%) (see Figure 2). Just under one-third (31%) of respondents were 25 years of age or older, while 69% of respondents were under the age of 25.

2. CHOOSING CANADA

While 100% of Brazilian respondents cited Canada's overall national reputation as an important influence in their decision to study in Canada, five key factors emerged in students decision-making highlighting the strengths of Canada's brand as a study destination for Brazilians: Canada as offering a society that is tolerant and not discriminatory (98%); the positive reputation of the education system in Canada (96%); Canada as a safe country (96%); how respondents felt Canadians would behave toward them as international students (87%); and the position of Canadian institutions in international rankings (86%).

Figure 1: Program of study

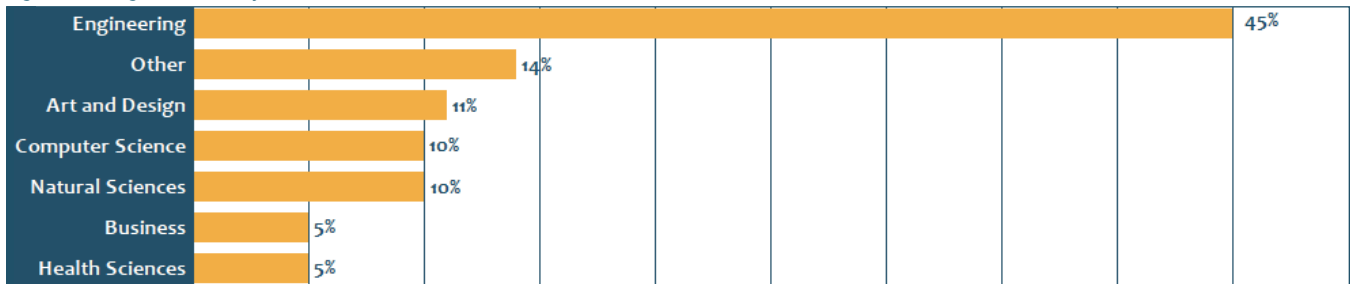
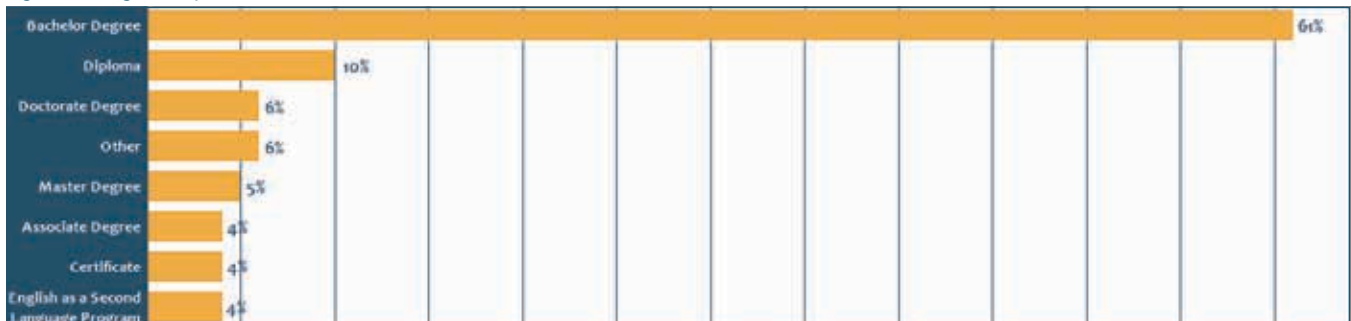


Figure 2: Degree, diploma or certificate



3. CHOOSING AN INSTITUTION

When choosing a particular institution in Canada, Brazilian respondents cited five main factors which ultimately influenced their decision: quality of education at their institution (93%); the prestige of the degree/diploma from their institution (90%); the availability of their particular program at the institution (76%); the size of the institution (68%); and the position of their particular institution in ranking/league tables (68%). Students 25 years of age or older were more likely to select their institution based on the prestige of the diploma or degree (97%).

“The most positive thing about my study experience in Canada is that it is a calm, safe and peaceful place to study.”

4. ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Brazilian students were generally satisfied with their studies in Canada. Many respondents underscored Canadian institutions' state-of-the-art facilities, resources, and exceptional instructors as highlights of their experience. With regard to program coursework and other requirements, 96% of Brazilian students felt they were successfully meeting academic demands in Canada.

“My university has a high level of infrastructure and I had access to academic materials and books that were important during my study here.”

“My classes are really amazing! I feel that here the students are treated more as professionals, and this experience is really good.”

5. CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Brazilian students indicated that they are fairly active in extracurricular activities across Canada's campuses, with 79% reporting participation in a range of student clubs and programs. The top extracurricular activities for Brazilian students included international student groups (45%), and both international student orientations (38%) and campus-wide student orientation programs (21%).

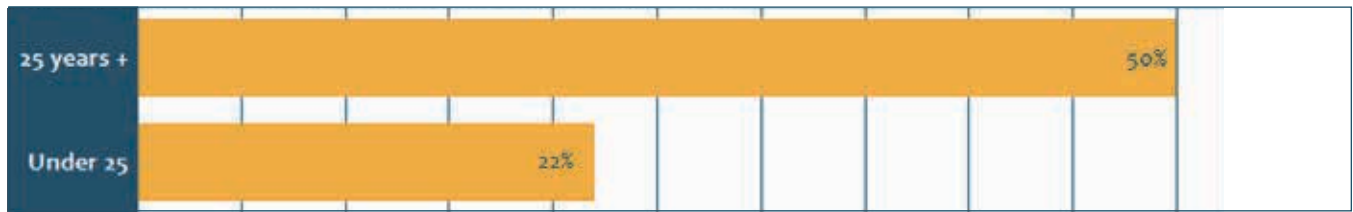
6. EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY

As mentioned earlier, the top reason for many Brazilians to study in Canada was its reputation as a culture of tolerance, acceptance and appreciation of diversity. Unsurprisingly, the opportunity to experience diversity and gain a deeper understanding of cultural difference was identified as one of the top outcomes of respondents' educational experience in Canada, with 87% in agreement that their Canadian education helped them to understand people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality, etc.).

“The most positive thing about my experience has been the contact with people from all around the world... this contact made me think about the world completely differently.”

“[The opportunity to practice a new language and interact with people from all over the world...] has made great personal development possible for me and permitted me to understand different concepts about culture, society and world-wide development.”

Figure 3: Plans to apply for permanent residency following



7. OVERALL SATISFACTION AND FUTURE BENEFITS

The vast majority (90%) of respondents indicated a strong degree of satisfaction with their experience as international students in Canada. Students under 25 years of age were generally more likely to be satisfied (96%) than students 25 years of age and older (82%).

“It has been an amazing experience living in Canada. I’ve learned a lot of new things not only at the university but also in my personal life.”

From a personal standpoint, 89% of students felt successful in adapting and living in Canadian culture and society. Many respondents highlighted self-awareness, independence and personal responsibility as attributes which they deepened while in Canada.

“[The most positive aspect of my experience has been...] learning how to live without my parents’ help and making decisions on my own — Taking responsibility.”

Brazilian students were generally less likely to plan to apply for permanent residency in Canada following their studies than the global average of the *International Student Survey*: 32% of Brazilian students indicated this

was their plan compared to 50% of all students in the survey. However, as shown in Figure 3, more mature students (25 years of age and older) were more likely to pursue permanent residence (50%) compared with students under the age of 25 (22%).

By and large, students felt that their experience in Canada would support their future objectives, with 90% of respondents indicating that their program of choice in Canada would help them to meet their personal and professional goals in the future, and 84% citing that their experience has helped to prepare them for employment in Brazil.

The value of a Canadian education to support the ongoing development of Brazil was also identified as a positive outcome of respondents’ experience: 85% of students felt that their Canadian education would contribute to the advancement of Brazil.

The reputation of Canada as a top study destination will continue to spread throughout Brazil as 94% of respondents indicated they were likely to recommend Canada as a study destination. This number was even higher among students under 25 years of age, where 98% indicated they would recommend Canada to their peers. What’s more, 88% of respondents agreed that they would likely recommend their particular institution.

94% of Brazilian students would recommend Canada as a study destination.

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