



Comparison between Canada's and Australia's international education sectors

This snapshot looks at the available data on international students from Australia and Canada. The data used in the snapshot represent each countries' latest reported full year on international students. Canada is the fourth most popular English-speaking study destination for international tertiary students, while Australia is the third most popular¹.

Canada's primary source of student data comes from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada² unlike countries such as the USA, UK and Australia whose primary data sources are education providers. Canada's counting of study permit holders incorporates the levels 'secondary or less' (15% of total), 'post-secondary' (75%) and 'other studies' (10%). Of the post-secondary permit holders, 67% studied at universities and 25% at colleges³. Thus, the scope of Canada's data appears similar to Australia's multi-sector data, albeit with a larger proportion of school students (15% compared to Australia's 3%). As Canada's annual data count is of unique individuals, the most comparable Australian measure is our unique international student count, which avoids the duplication inherent in course enrolment data.

On this basis, Canada hosted 494,525 international students in 2017⁴, following 20% growth on 2016, while Australia hosted 624,001 international students in 2017, following 13% growth on 2016. Each countries' top 10 student source countries in 2017 are shown below in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: International students in Canada

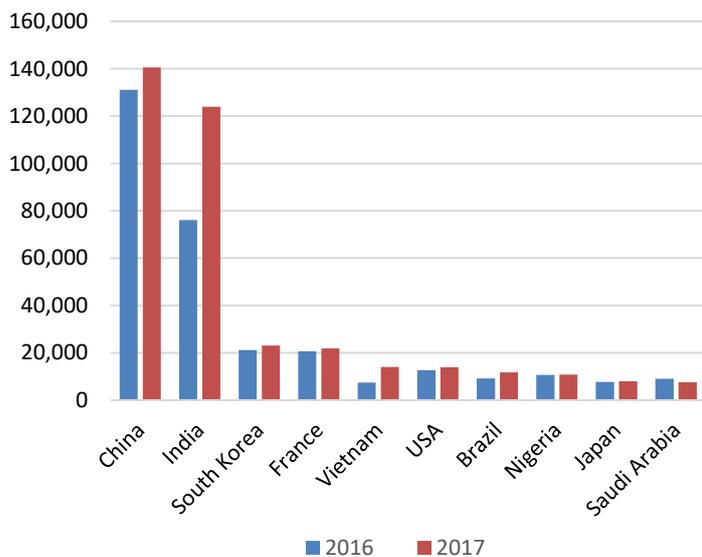
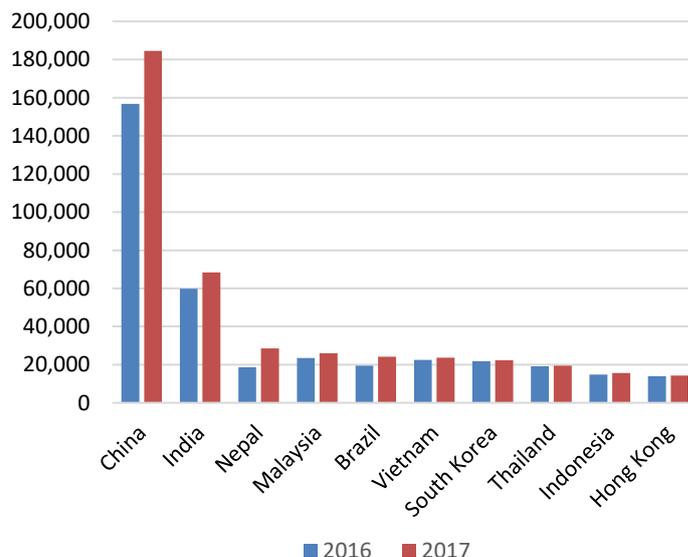


Figure 2: International students in Australia



The top 10 source countries contributed 76% of Canada's total and 68% of Australia's total student numbers in 2017. While the proportion of Chinese students in each country is similar (28% for Canada and 30% for Australia), Indian students made up 25% of international students in Canada (compared with 11% in Australia), following a 63% increase in Indian students since 2016. Canada also saw large growth in students from Vietnam (89%) and Brazil (28%) in this period. Australia saw similar growth from Brazil (24%), however its fastest growing source country Nepal, sends only a few hundred students to Canada (540 in 2017).

Research undertaken by IDP in 2017 identified that Canada's current migration policies are perceived as more welcoming by international students, particularly when compared with current policies of the United States and United Kingdom⁵.

1. According to UNESCO 2015 data, Australia is the 3rd most popular destination after the US and the UK, while Canada comes 7th following France, Germany and Russia.

2. Sourced from: [Study permit holders on December 31st by country of citizenship](http://net.cbie.ca/download/World-of-Learning-2016-EN.pdf).

3. Sourced from: <http://net.cbie.ca/download/World-of-Learning-2016-EN.pdf> and [Study permit holders on December 31st by province/territory of intended destination and study level](#). Canada's colleges have some similarities to Australia's VET institutions in offering undergraduate-level courses with primarily vocational goals.

4. As is common in the northern hemisphere, Canada's academic year commences in September and ends in June, but its count of student permit holders is reported by calendar year.

5. As reported here; <https://thepienews.com/news/canada-increasingly-attractive-to-mobile-students-idp/>