



# International Student Program

## Study Permit Processing

February 21st



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



# Purpose

- To provide an update on Canada's International Student Program:
  - I. Overview
  - II. Reasons for refusals
  - III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in Three Regions
  - IV. Policy and Program Updates

# I. Overview

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## The International Student Program

- Canada's International Student Program has seen a decade of significant growth.
- The number of international students in Canada has doubled since 2004 to over 415,000 in 2016.
- The Government of Canada's International Education Strategy is designed to drive growth even further over the next decade.

# I. Overview

## International Student Program Trends



Data source: CICEDW (MBR) as of January 12, 2018

# I. Overview

## International Student Trends (continued)

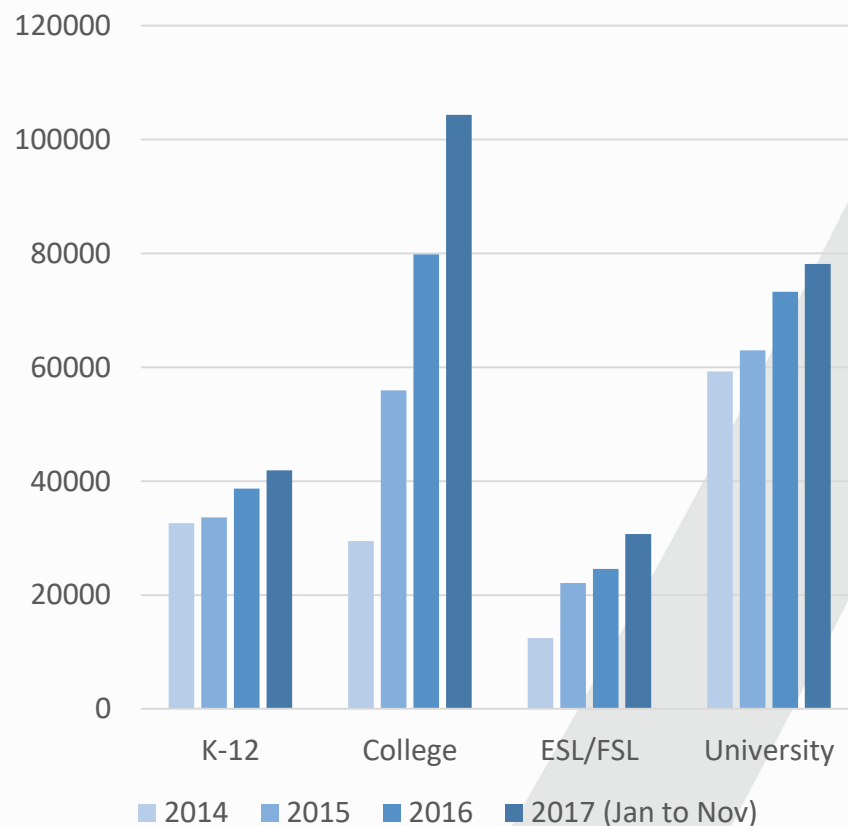
Growth in numbers of study permit applications across all levels of study in 2017 (January to November):

- **Primary/Secondary (K-12):** 41,916 SP applications-an increase of 8.4% from 2016
- **ESL/FSL:** 30,702 SP applications - an increase of 24.8% from 2016
- **College:** 80,431 SP applications -an increase of 29.7% from 2016
- **University:** 73,235 SP applications - an increase of 6.7% from 2016

**International Student application destinations are concentrated in 3 provinces:** Ontario (46%), British Columbia (22%), Quebec (12%), Prairie provinces combined (11%), and Atlantic provinces combined (5%).

**Top 5 Countries of international student origin in Canada include:** China (27%), India (25%), Korea (6%), France (4%), and Brazil (3%).

New Study Permit Applications Processed by Top Levels of Study 2014-2017



# I. Overview

## Study Permit Application Approval Rates

- IRCC approved **75%** (66% new permits, 94% extensions) of all study permit applications processed between January and November 2017.
- Approval rates vary across education sectors and fluctuate over the years:

	Approval Rate (SP and SP-EXT)		
Level of Study	2015	2016	2017
K-12	84%	79%	85%
ESL/FSL	74%	73%	74%
College	56%	61%	69%
University	81%	75%	79%

## II. Reasons for Refusals



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### Overview of Requirements

- IRCC issues study permits to applicants, if following an examination, it is established that:
  - they have been accepted to undertake a program of study at a DLI;
  - they applied in accordance with Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations; and
  - they will leave Canada by the end of the period authorized for their stay.

## II. Reasons for Refusals

### Overview of Requirements

- Letter of acceptance from a designated learning institution;
- Purpose of visit;
- Duration of stay;
- Ties to Canada or country of residence;
- Previous international travel;
- Travel documents;
- Financial support;
- Criminal and health checks;
- Previous refusals and removals.

## II. Reasons for Refusals

### Common grounds for refusals abroad:

- Lack of or insufficient proof of adequate funds to support oneself while in Canada
- Not satisfying the visa officer that the individual will leave Canada at the end of their period of authorized stay
- Submission of fraudulent documents (e.g., letter of acceptance, diplomas, proof of funds, language test results).

## II. Reasons for Refusals

### **Common grounds for refusals abroad based on *bona fides*:**

Refusals based on *bona fides* are reflected in a number of refusal reasons. Some of the most common are:

- Purpose of visit
- Personal financial status
- Family ties
- Travel history
- Current employment situation
- Proposed length of stay

## II. Reasons for Refusals

### Clarifying the concept of *Dual Intent*:

- **Dual intent** is when a foreign national who has applied for permanent residence in Canada also applies to enter Canada for a temporary period as a visitor, worker or student.
- An intention by a foreign national to become a permanent resident does not impede them from becoming a temporary resident. However, the officer must be satisfied that they will leave Canada by the end of the period authorized for their stay, if their permanent residence application is not approved.

### **III. Analysis of Study Permit refusals in 3 regions:**

**China**  
**Brazil**  
**Mexico**

### **III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions**

#### **China: Processing Volumes and Approval Rates**

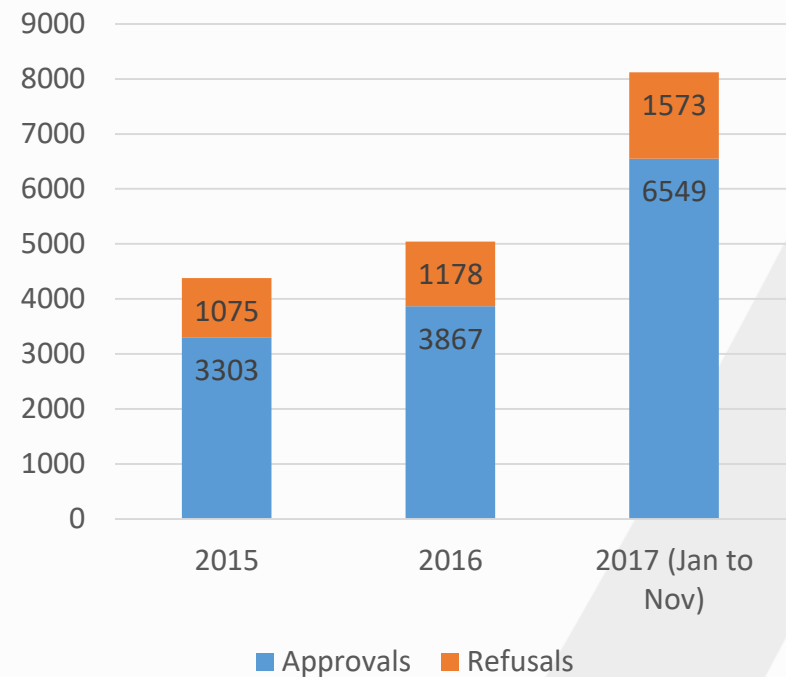
- In 2016, a total of 82,199 Chinese citizens were issued study permits (both new permits and renewed permits). This is a 16% increase over 2015, when 70,986 study permits were issued or renewed.
- With another 72,706 issuances and renewals between January and the end of September 2017, Canada continues to be a popular destination for Chinese international students.
- The total number of study permit issuances and renewals more than tripled in the ten years between 2006 and 2016.
- The overall approval rate for student applications received at mainland China offices in throughout 2016 and the first nine months of 2017 was 88%.

### III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

#### China: ESL/FSL

- 61% increase in new ESL/FSL study permit applications, from 3,867 in 2016 to 6,549 in 2017
- 80% approval rate for new ESL/FSL permits in 2017, an increase from 77% in 2016

ESL/FSL New Study Permit Applications, China 2015-2017





# III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

## China: Study Permit Refusals and Findings

### Common grounds for refusal in China:

- Insufficient funds
  - In the Study Direct Stream and the Student Partners Program, students will have to obtain a GIC (guaranteed investment certificate). This document is useful for the officer when reviewing an application.
- Fraudulent bank documents
- Fraudulent letter of acceptance (LOA)

### III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

#### Mexico: Processing Volumes and Approval Rates

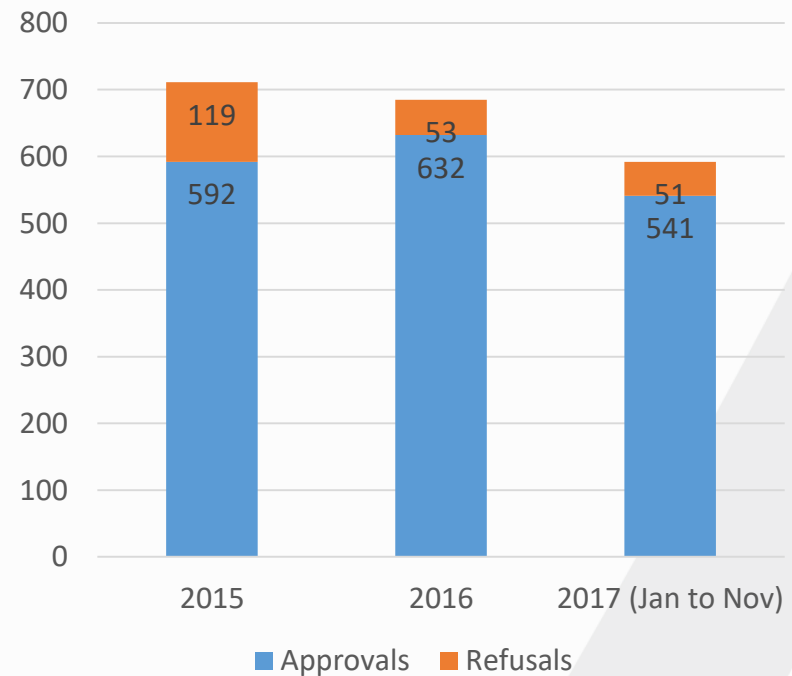
- The number of study permit applications processed in Mexico City has remained relatively constant in recent years, between 5000 and 5500
- As of October 2016, the make-up of the caseload has changed as Mexico City has become a regional processing hub, now processing applications from:
  - Mexico
  - Venezuela
  - Central America
  - Haiti
- The Mexico City refusal rate has fluctuated as the composition of the caseload has changed, with a marked increase from 2016 to 2017

### III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

#### Mexico: ESL/FSL

- Number of applications for new ESL/FSL permits relatively stable
- Fluctuation in approval rates for all study permits due to change in make-up of caseload of Mexico City case processing centre
- 92% approval rate for new ESL/FSL applications in both 2016 and 2017 (January to November)
- Concerns regarding bona fides and insufficient financial resources most commonly cited refusal grounds

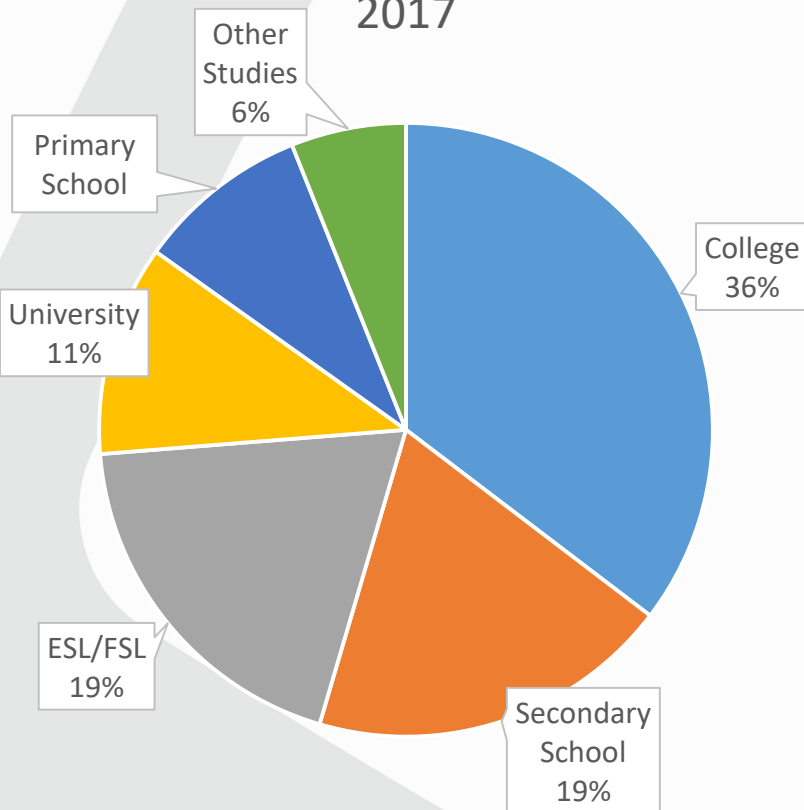
ESL/FSL New Study Permit Applications, Mexico 2015-2017



### III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

#### Brazil: Study Permit Refusals and Findings

Sao Paulo Caseload Make-up - 2017



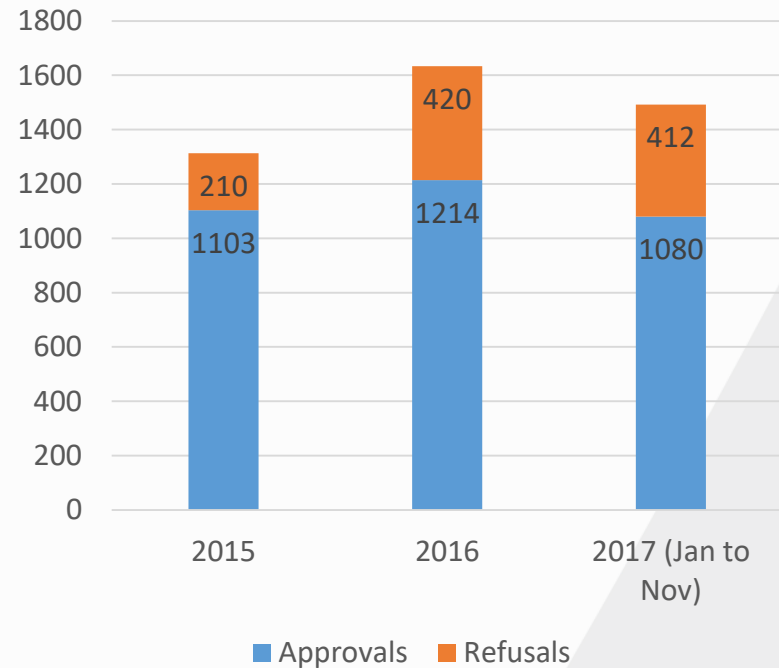
- ESL/FSL makes up a large portion of the case load
- Around 8,800 study permit applications received in 2017
- Around 1,600 were ESL/FSL study permits

### III. Analysis of Study Permit Refusals in 3 Regions

#### Brazil: Study Permit Refusals and Findings

- Slight decrease in new ESL/FSL study permit applications (1,492 in 2017, from 1,634 in 2016)
- Approval rate for ESL/FSL study permits remains relatively stable, 72% in 2017 compared to 74% in 2016

ESL/FSL New Study Permit Applications, Brazil  
2015-2017



## **IV. Policy and Program Updates**

## IV. Policy and Program Updates

- Pre-requisite programs instructions
- Actively pursuing studies clarifications

## Way Forward

*What can institutions do to help support/assist with better study permit outcomes?*

- Share common objective to welcome international students that are bona fide and that will respect the conditions of their study permit
- Provide clear letters of acceptance
- Adapt the approach of recruitment by admitting applicants that can fulfill study permit requirements