



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada



International Experience Canada

OVERVIEW

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Canada



Objectives of Today's Presentation:

- Provide general information on the International Experience Canada (IEC) program.
- Provide an overview of IEC's renewed mandate and outline strategy to address this.
- Discuss the role educational institutions can play in supporting renewed mandate.





Background

- [International Experience Canada](#) (IEC) is a youth mobility program that provides Canadian and foreign participants , between 18-35, opportunities to develop a mutual understanding of other cultures through travel, life and work experiences abroad and in Canada. This cultural experience also enhances their personal and professional development, giving them a competitive edge in the job market.
- The initiative originated in 1951 as a reconciliatory cultural exchange between Canada and Germany following World War II. In 1967, following the success of the initiative, Canada proceeded to create an international travel and exchange program. More than 45 years later, Canada is still very committed to fostering cultural exchanges between young people.
- Today, Canada has Youth Mobility Agreements (YMAS) with **32 countries** (see Annex A for list of countries) under the IEC.





IEC: One program with many opportunities

- **IEC has three categories:**
 1. Working Holiday:
 - Open work permit that allows youth to work for any employer, anywhere in the host country.
 2. International Co-op (Internship) (students only - internships):
 - Employer-specific work permit that allows students to gain targeted work experience related to program of study.
 3. Young Professionals (career development):
 - Employer-specific work permit that allows youth to gain targeted experience related to profession or program of study.
- Work permits are valid for up to 24 months, depending on the country.
- Participants can participate in the IEC as many times as they like so long as they meet the age criteria and choose a different country or category each time they participate.

****Participants do not need to be actively studying or working in Canada to be eligible for the IEC****





How much does it cost? What kinds of support are available to youth?

- **How much does it cost?**
 - Application fees vary by host country, from \$0 to approximately \$850.
 - Canada's IEC Participation Fee, which foreign participants pay, is \$150*.
 - Application fees for work permits under IEC YMA are less expensive and have more timely processing times than other work permits available in Canada and in the 32 partner countries.
 - **Recognized Organizations (ROs):**
 - Organizations that offer support services and advice to Canadian and foreign youth seeking to work and travel in Canada and abroad.
 - Services can include: assistance with travel arrangements, assistance in seeking and securing work placements, and pre-departure and post-arrival orientation sessions.
 - Services are for a fee, which is paid by youth who choose to use ROs.
- Note:** It is not mandatory for applicants to use the services of a RO; the decision is a personal choice.





Benefits to Youth, Canada, and Partner Countries of working and travelling abroad

- In a world of increasing globalization, emerging economies, including recently announced free trade agreements, Canada can only benefit from a labour force with international perspectives.
- Anecdotally, there is evidence that the internationalization of Canadian youth has a positive impact on their labour market outcomes, as they gain a competitive advantage by acquiring valuable skills and abilities in the workplace environment, establish international contacts and relationships, and acquire experience in the international market.
- Moreover, empirical evidence gathered through the Erasmus Impact Study, found that Erasmus student exchange graduates with international experience fare much better on the job market. As a result of their international experience, they are **half as likely to experience long-term unemployment** compared with those who have not studied or trained abroad, and **five years after graduation, their unemployment rate is 23% lower**.
- According to the Canadian Tourism Commission, Canadians spend more than \$35 billion annually while travelling outside the country = a true benefit for the economies of IEC's partner countries.
- In addition to the positive labour market outcomes and economic benefits, international experiences also allow youth to immerse themselves in different cultures and to appreciate the varying social norms and customs which can enhance their cultural awareness and sensitivity – a key element of the IEC .





Taking advantage of an environment that prioritizes the acquisition of international experience

- Canadian businesses, educational institutions, and federal, provincial/territorial governments prioritize the importance of having a global perspective.
- This has been demonstrated by the release of “internalization strategies” across the country, for both inbound and outbound mobility.
- The market of qualified Canadian youth who can contribute to the economic, social and cultural makeup of a foreign country is notable: 68.5% of Canada’s population are of working-age, which is higher than in most G8 countries. Of this, 48.9% represent the younger working-age population (ages 15-39)*.
- Indeed, the context in which we are working is an opportune time to maximize the use of the IEC program.

*Statistics Canada, “The Canadian Population in 2011: Age and Sex”, 2011.





IEC's Renewed Mandate and Strategy Moving Forward

- **Renewed mandate:**
 - Increasing Canadian participation and reaching a target ratio of 2:1 foreign to Canadian participants by 2019 (which means increasing Canadian participation by 50%).
 - Enhancing international opportunities for Canadian youth.
- **Strategy Moving Forward:**
 - To meet the objectives of the renewed mandate, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has established a phased-in approach for its engagement with the education sector:
 - **Phase 1: Build awareness** amongst provincial/territorial ministries of education, national education organizations, educational institutions (administration and staff), academic and career advisors, Canadian youth and their influencers (i.e. parents/guardians).
 - **Phase 2: Explore opportunities** to collaborate with stakeholders to increase promotion of the IEC program and to leverage the IEC so that it becomes one of the main facilitators of international work experience for youth.
 - **Phase 3: Action** strategies in collaboration with stakeholders.
 - **Phase 4: Measure** outcomes.





Other initiatives underway @ IEC

- **What else is CIC doing to increase Canadian participation?**
 - Exploring the types of opportunities available to Canadian youth by establishing partnerships with private sector employers in Canada and abroad, and expanding the list of RO partnerships.
 - Building promotional capacity by developing an IEC Ambassador network to facilitate peer-to-peer interaction, creating promotional materials that are effective in reaching out to youth and their influencers, and undertaking market research to better understand the Canadian youth market.
 - Working with IEC partner countries to ensure the entry of Canadian youth to their respective countries is as facilitative as possible.





What role can YOU play?

- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:**

- What are your ideas about how to increase awareness of, and participation in the IEC amongst students/graduates at your institution?
- Does the IEC align well with international strategies in place at your institution?
- Are there opportunities to link existing co-op/internship programs at your institution, with the IEC?
- How can we help Canadian youth gain valuable international experiences, giving them an added competitive advantage in today's global economy?
- How can we start changing Canadian mentality from one that hesitates going abroad, to one that jumps at the opportunity?





Learn more about IEC

More information on International Experience Canada is available at:

<http://www.canada.ca/iec-eic>



International
Experience
Internationale





Annex A: List of IEC's 32 Partner Countries

Australia	Greece	Norway
Austria	Hong Kong	Poland
Belgium	Ireland	Slovakia
Chile	Italy	Slovenia
Costa Rica	Japan	Spain
Croatia	Republic of Korea	Sweden
Czech Republic	Korea	Switzerland
Denmark	Latvia	Taiwan
Estonia	Lithuania	Ukraine
France	Mexico	United Kingdom
Germany	Netherlands	
	New Zealand	

