



Social Enterprises
Knowledgeable Economies
and Sustainable Communities

International Students in Saskatchewan Policies, Programs, and Perspectives

Joe Garcea and Neil Hibbert

**A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba,
and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite**

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Entreprises sociales
économies intelligentes
et communautés durables



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
IN SASKATCHEWAN

This paper is part of a collection of research reports prepared for the project
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POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND PERSPECTIVES

JOE GARCEA AND NEIL HIBBERT



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Centre for the Study of Co-operatives
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The overarching purpose/goal of this report is to provide an analysis of some facets of Saskatchewan's recent policies and programs related to the recruitment/attraction and retention of international students and what, if any, reforms are required.

OBJECTIVES OF REPORT

This report pursues five key objectives related to the analysis of Saskatchewan's international student policy during the past decade:

- to explain the impetus for the policy;
- to explain the key elements and evolution of the policy;
- to provide an overview of trends related to international student flows;
- to provide an overview and analysis of a survey of international students in Saskatchewan conducted in 2010 regarding several settlement and integration issues; and
- to provide a set of recommendations for potential reforms based on suggestions and insights provided by international students who participated in the survey, informed observers and those associated with this research project.

OVERVIEW OF REPORT

1. Overview of impetus for the policy

This section provides context to the province's international students policy initiatives and identifies the driving factors behind these changes. The focus is on increasing government awareness of the importance of immigration to the province's development and its identification of international students as pillars of the immigration policy because of their value for the educational and economic systems.

2. Overview of key elements and evolution of the policy

The purpose of this section is to present an overview of the development of Saskatchewan's international student policy. The general trend observed is progressive loosening of the restrictions in the federal policy as part of the broader aim of attracting and retaining international students. Key policy developments identified include: the establishment of the International Students category in the Saskatchewan Immigration Nomination Program (SINP); modification of Off-Campus Work Permits; expansion of eligibility for the Graduate Retention Program to include international students; and the establishment of the International Education Council. It also presents a comparative analysis of Saskatchewan's policy with other provincial and federal programs and policies.

3. Overview of trends related to international student flows

This section establishes the significant increase of international students in Saskatchewan's post-secondary educational institutions, particularly Universities, in the past decade. It also provides demographic information on the changing make up of the international student population and notes the significant growth of Chinese students. Information on SINP student applications and nominations, as well as changes in processing times is also provided.

4. Overview of the survey of international students in Saskatchewan

This section provides an overview of the results and analysis of the International Student Survey (consisting of focus groups, interviews and written questionnaires). It presents the methodology of the survey and the profile of respondents. It also identifies five major categories of factors that influence the post-graduate settlement decisions of international students: employment experiences and perspectives; experience and awareness of immigration programs; engagement and awareness of integration services and programs; community dynamics and factors; and family situations and opportunities.

5. Overview of observations and recommendations

Based on the experiences and views of international students who participated in the survey, this section outlines recommendations for improving Saskatchewan's standing as an attractive site for international students to study, work and live. The recommendations are organized in the areas of: employment; immigration policy and programs; integration services and programs; community dynamics; and, family issues. The recommendations underscore the basic view of the report that the experiences of international students in these areas during their studies have significant impacts on their post-graduate decisions to stay in or leave the province.

1. INTRODUCTION

The overarching goal of this report is to provide an analysis of some facets of Saskatchewan's recent policies and programs related to the attraction and retention of international students during the past decade and what, if any, reforms are required. With that goal in mind the report has six key objectives related to the analysis of Saskatchewan's international student policy:

- to explain the impetus for the policy;
- to explain the contexts in which the policy emerged;
- to explain the key elements and evolution of the policy ;
- to provide an overview of trends related to international student flows;
- to provide an overview and analysis of a survey of international students in Saskatchewan conducted in 2010 regarding several settlement and integration issues; and
- to provide a set of potential reforms based on suggestions and insights provided by international students who participated in the survey, informed observers and those associated with this research project.

The remainder of the body of this report consists of six major sections devoted to each of those objectives in turn, as well as a general conclusions and a set of appendices of importance in understanding key issues related to some key provincial and federal policies and programs that impinge on international students. It is important to note that this report explains policies and programs as they were in 2010. Anyone reading this report in the future should check on whether any of these policies and programs have been modified or terminated.

2. IMPETUS FOR SASKATCHEWAN'S POLICY

Saskatchewan's international student policy is largely the product of a steadily increasing provincial government interest in immigration since 1998 (Cameron, 2009; Assailly, 2010). That interest resulted in an ambitious provincial immigration strategy that increased the number of immigrants arriving annually in Saskatchewan from approximately 1,500 at the start of past decade to approximately 10,000 toward the end of the decade (Saskatchewan, 2004, 2009a). Notwithstanding the historical legacy of Saskatchewan and other provinces attracting international students in past decades (Cameron 2006), the impetus for the contemporary Saskatchewan provincial international student policy emerged at the turn of the 21st century when international students started being viewed as very valuable for the educational and economic systems in the province (Saskatchewan, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009b, 2010a and 2010b). By this time, the value of international students for those systems was recognized more fully than in previous decades not only by the Saskatchewan provincial government and its counterparts in other provinces, but also by the federal government (Peyko, 2004; BC, 2006; Ontario, 2009; Manitoba, 2010; CBEI, 2007, 2009; CMEC, 2010, COF, 2011). Furthermore, all of them recognized that they would have to develop effective policies, programs and services to become more successful in competing against other countries in the world (CBOC, 2009; Kennedy 2010; Alboim 2010) and particularly the United States (CFR, 2009; United States, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c) and Australia (Marginson, 2007; Australia, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d) in attracting

international students to study in their institutions and at least for some to fill knowledge and skill shortages in their respective labour markets (WES, 2010).

2.1 VALUE FOR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

In the case of the educational system, international students have been viewed as valuable primarily as sources of human capital and to some extent also of financial capital (Saskatchewan, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, and 2010a; Canada, 2009f).

As sources of human capital, international students provide a number of benefits for educational institutions across undergraduate and graduate levels. In some cases, international students are needed to create a critical mass of students required to sustain some academic programs. In other cases international graduate students, and particularly those at the graduate level, provide the research and teaching assistance needed for academic training and research programs to operate effectively. International students are also perceived as valuable in advancing the goals of educational institutions to ‘internationalize’ their student composition, course content, class discussions, research agendas, and occasionally even their teaching staff insofar as some graduate students are assigned sessional teaching positions

As sources of financial capital, international students are valued not only as a source of additional tuition revenue, but also as a potential source of additional revenue for post-secondary institutions through government grants that take the number of registered students into account either directly or indirectly. If international students have a positive experience at an educational institution they can also create a self-perpetuating base for attracting additional students and the related revenues in the future.

The observations regarding the perceived and actual financial capital value of international students, it must be noted the attraction and retention of international students is by no means revenue source without some costs. Notable costs are related to some of the programs and services that they access during their studies (e.g., international student welcome, orientation, and support centres; career centres, counselling services; learning assistance centres, etc.). In some jurisdictions international students also add some costs beyond the educational institutions in which they study. In Saskatchewan, for example, international students can access health services on the same basis as other students from the moment they register, rather than incurring any special charges or after a waiting period.

2.2 VALUE FOR ECONOMIC SYSTEM

International students have also been perceived as valuable for the province's economic system (Saskatchewan, 2009a; Canada, 2009f). Whereas prior to the introduction of the international student policy, international students were underutilized as a source of educated and skilled immigrants, in subsequent years considerable efforts have been made to utilize them more extensively and effectively. Today international students are recognized as providing educated and skilled human capital needed by the labour market both during and after their studies. Moreover, both during and after their studies they are seen as having higher integration capacity and lower settlement costs than some other categories of immigrants. They are also deemed to be valuable for the local and provincial economy as source of financial capital through their own spending. Finally, they are also deemed as potentially valuable for the provincial and local economies if their family members with skills or financial capital immigrate to the province under any categories of the SINP including the Entrepreneur/Investor category or the Family category..

3. EVOLUTION OF SASKATCHEWAN'S POLICY

The development of Saskatchewan's international student policy is a relatively recent strategic initiative that was launched in 2004. Prior to 2004, Saskatchewan did not have a singular and explicitly defined policy on international students with clearly articulated terms and conditions. Students destined to educational institutions in Saskatchewan, as in other provinces, were subject only to federal policy that was applied uniformly across the country. This policy included restrictive regulations such as limiting the employment of international students to the educational institution while studying. Eventually the policy was modified to allow students to work in Canada for up to one year after they graduated, but thereafter they had to leave the country to apply for permanent resident status. As discussed below, however, during the latter part of the recent decade this facet of the national and provincial policies were made much less restrictive as both levels of government sought ways to facilitate the attraction and retention of international students (Saskatchewan, 2004, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b; Canada, 2004a, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b, 2008b, 2008c, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d, 2009e, 2009f, and 2010a).

The development of Saskatchewan's international students policy began in 2003 with the report entitled '*Open Up Saskatchewan*', which emphasized the importance and value of international students (Saskatchewan, 2003). The report included two notable recommendations that were implemented in 2004. The first was the creation of an international student category in the SINP to increase the number of provincial nominees. This recommendation was based on the view that that their knowledge and skill-sets were likely to be very valuable to the province's economy, and that their economic and social integration would be easier than for their counterparts who had not studied in Saskatchewan or elsewhere in Canada. The second recommendation was to negotiate an MOU with the federal government, comparable to the one negotiated by New Brunswick that would extend the post-graduation work period from one to two years. In 2004 the provincial government implemented these two recommendations. Other recommendations of the 2003 report were not implemented. This included the following recommendations: to establish an exchange program based on the model proposed in a report titled '*Expanding International Mobility for Study and Experience*'; establishing targeted bursaries for international students

with limited funds to defray costs of their education in the province; defraying the cost of English language examination for students enrolling in post-secondary educational institutions in the province; and reviewing the admission policies of post-secondary institutions in the province in detail to ensure that there are no artificial barriers created for admission of international students.

In 2004 the Saskatchewan and federal governments signed an agreement to create a pilot project for three years designed to make it increase the amount of time that international students graduating from universities and colleges in Saskatchewan, to work in the province two years, rather than only one year as had been the case under the previous agreement and policy framework. The international students were required to work in areas related to their areas studies (Saskatchewan, 2004).

In 2005 the Canada-Saskatchewan Immigration Agreement, which replaced the 1998 agreement, affirmed the province's right to formulate and implement policies and programs related to international students (Canada, 2005a). One of these was the establishment of the International Students category within the SINP. The similarities and differences for the International Student category in Saskatchewan's SINP and the nominee programs of other provinces are profiled in Table 1. In that same year the federal and provincial governments agreed to establish the National Post-Graduate Work Program to replace the provincial pilot projects with a new provincial post-graduate work program allowing students to work for three years after graduation (Canada, 2005b).

In 2006 the provincial government changed its own Off-Campus Work Permits policy in two ways: first, the length of time of study before being eligible to apply for an off-campus work permit was reduced from twelve to six months; secondly, regardless of whether they would be working on-campus or off-campus, international students could work for a maximum of twenty hours per week during the school year, and on a full time basis during the summer break and holidays (Saskatchewan, 2006).

The new International Students category within the SINP also continued to evolve and in 2008 it was expanded to include: students who graduate anywhere in Canada, rather than just Saskatchewan; students who worked for a Saskatchewan employer in any occupation (rather than in their field of study) on a Post-Graduation Work Permit for at least six months; employment regardless of skill requisites and fit to students' area of study; and students holding permanent, full-time job offers in any occupation (Saskatchewan, 2008c). Changes were also made to grant work permits for spouses of international students holding a post-graduate work permit without obtaining 'Labour Market Approval' from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) as was required in previous years. Those program changes were made to ensure that the criteria under the SINP were more closely aligned with the federal Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (Saskatchewan, 2008c, Canada, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c).

During the latter part of the past decade the provincial government also undertook some initiatives to retain students in Saskatchewan after they completed their studies. One of the key initiatives adopted in 2008 was making international students eligible for the Graduate Retention Program the details of which can be found in Appendix C (Saskatchewan, 2008a, 2008b). Under

this program, international students completing eligible programs of study (i.e., equivalent to six months of study and results in a certificate, diploma, degree or journeyperson's certification) and who stay to work in Saskatchewan can apply for a refundable income tax rebate of up to \$20,000 in tuition fees over seven years. The program includes students who graduated in Saskatchewan as well as other graduates across and beyond the country who choose to pursue careers in Saskatchewan.

In 2010 the provincial government established the International Education Council (IEC). This was based on a recommendation that emerged from stakeholder consultations undertaken two years earlier. The stated purpose of the IEC is to "help the Government of Saskatchewan position the province internationally as a renowned destination for quality education and research" (Saskatchewan, 2010a, 2010b). Toward that end, it makes recommendations for: student recruitment; student and faculty exchanges; and student engagement. The IEC consists of representatives from stakeholder groups in the secondary and post-secondary education sector involved in education. This includes representatives of public and separate school boards, representatives of post-secondary institutions including universities and colleges, and provincial government's departments responsible for education and immigration (Saskatchewan, 2010a, 2010b).

Table 1: Comparison of Student Category in Provincial Nominee Programs 2010

Provinces	Student Category in PNP	Work Experience Requirement	Permanent Full Time Job Offer	Employer Involvement	Post-Secondary Education
British Columbia	Yes Students are included under the Strategic Occupations category which is one of the two categories	None	Yes Market rate wage required Occupations in certain NOC Skill levels Be able to provide for themselves financially	Indirectly through job offers	Graduated from a recognized post-secondary institution in Canada within two years of application
Alberta	Yes International graduates are included under the Employer Driven Stream New pilot project this year for Masters and PhD students in the natural, applied and health sciences	Yes Six months of full time work experience with the same Alberta Employer	Yes Job offer must be in NOC 0, A, B Skill levels	Indirectly through job offers	Graduated from an approved institution in a program that was minimum two years for undergraduate and one year for graduate level
Saskatchewan	Yes Students are included under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Stream and the Master's and PhD Stream of the SINP	Six months of paid employment that does not have to be related to their field of study Can use co-op terms and both on-campus, off-campus work to meet this criterion	Yes Does not have to relate to the students' field of study	Indirectly through job offers	Graduated from a recognized post-secondary educational institution in Canada that was at least one academic year of full time study

Manitoba	Yes	Full time for six months at the same employer as job offer before application	Yes Related to your field of study	Direct Involvement	Graduated from a recognized college or university in the province
Ontario	Yes Has 3 streams for students to apply		Yes Except Masters and PhD graduates	Direct Involvement	Minimum two years at a recognized institution in Canada for the International Student with a Job Offer Stream Minimum two year program at recognized Ontario institution for Ph.D. and Masters Pilot Graduate Streams
Quebec <i>**Quebec's authority to deal with international students falls within the scope of its comprehensive bilateral immigration agreement with the federal government)</i>	Yes Quebec Experience Program	Work experience must be in a skill level above D by the NOC	Ability to support oneself financially for three months after obtaining the PR		Hold a Quebec diploma or expect to complete program within six months of the date that application is submitted. Intermediate knowledge of French

Nova Scotia	Yes International Graduate Stream	Full-time for three months at the same employer as job offer	Full time job offer. The government will only consider certain types of occupations and assesses on a case by case basis. The wage must meet provincial standards	Indirect through job offer	Graduated from a program of at least one year and studied in Canada, at a recognized post-secondary institution
NFLD	Yes International Graduate Category	None	Full time job offer in field of study or related, or have proven attachment to the local labour market (i.e., those working in temporary positions that have potential to be extended). Wages for jobs or job offers must meet the prevailing wage rates	Indirect through job offer	Completed a minimum two year program at a recognized Canadian college or university, and applying within two years of graduation
New Brunswick	No				
PEI	No				

Table 2: Federal Initiatives for Attracting and Retaining International Students

<p>2004-- Pilot project with provinces to grant post-graduate work permits for two years. Prior to 2003 international students who graduated at a Canadian post-secondary institution could only get a one year post-graduate work permit.</p> <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/releases/2004/0409-pre.asp</p>
<p>2005-- Federal government created the National Post-Graduate Work Program. This program replaced all the agreements with individual provinces regarding post-graduate work permits. The Post-Graduate Work Permit increased the length of time that students could work in Canada from one to two years after graduation provided they worked outside Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. It also gave students more flexibility to change programs of study while in Canada.</p> <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/releases/2005/0512-e.asp http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/media/backgrounders/2006/2006-04-27.asp - tphp idtphp</p>
<p>2006-- Off-campus work permit program was launched nationally through agreements with the provinces and territories. This work permit allows students to work 20 hours per week and unlimited number of hours during the summer break and school holidays. Prior to this international students could only work on-campus while studying.</p> <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/releases/2006/0601-e.asp</p>
<p>2006-- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) launched the Edu-Canada unit to promote Canada as a destination of choice to be educated and coordinate with the provinces on attraction efforts.</p> <p>http://www.international.gc.ca/education/about_us-a_notre_sujet.aspx?lang=eng</p>
<p>2007-- Federal Budget assigned DFAIT a mandate to create a marketing campaign to attract international students. The result was the campaign titled 'Imagine Education au/in Canada.'</p> <p>http://imagine.cmec.ca/en/</p>
<p>2008-- Department of International Trade released report titled "<i>Economic Impact of International Education</i>..1 The report emphasized the positive economic impact international students have on Canada. The report revealed that international students created approximately \$291 million in government revenue in 2008. http://www.international.gc.ca/education/impact.aspx</p>
<p>2008-- Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) and DFAIT launched a branding campaign that highlighted the opportunities for international students to study in Canada. The new brand was entitled Imagine Education au/in Canada. The purpose of this branding is articulated on the CMEC website: "A new brand was needed to clearly establish Canada and its provinces and territories as a preferred destination for the growing number of international students looking to travel abroad to pursue their education.....fierce competition by an increasing number of countries vying for international students made it necessary to create a strong and distinctive image." http://imagine.cmec.ca/en/</p>
<p>2008-- Off-campus work permit application became available online. This made it easier and quicker for students to apply. <i>A few students mentioned that they liked online applications and they felt it made the process quicker.</i></p> <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/releases/2008/2008-09-03a.asp</p>
<p>2008-- Post-Graduate Work Permit extended to three years and eliminated the requirement for job offer or employment in a particular field of study.</p> <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/English/department/media/releases/2008/2008-04-21.asp</p>
<p>2010--The Federal Skilled Worker Program and Canadian Experience Class were modified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those applying to the Federal Skilled Worker Program and Canadian Experience Class will be required to complete a language proficiency assessment exam. Documents such as completed theses will not be enough to prove language proficiency. Students can only apply for the FSWP if they have an offer of permanent employment or experience in one of the 29 in-demand occupations. Prior to the change students were exempt from having experience or job offer in the in-demand occupations. <p>http://www.cic.gc.ca/ENGLISH/department/media/backgrounders/2010/2010-06-26c.asp</p>

4. STUDENT FLOWS TO SASKATCHEWAN: A TREND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

This section provides information on international students in Saskatchewan between 1999 and 2008, a period in which there has been a substantial increase in the number of such students. The focus is both on student entries (i.e., arriving annually) and students present (i.e., living and studying in the province) for each of those years. Although the principal focus is on international students in post-secondary institutions, this section also provides some insights on the number of such students in the primary and secondary education institutions.

Table 3 reveals that the annual entries of international students increased substantially between 1999 and 2008. The increase has occurred primarily in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Indeed, for most of this period there has been a slight decrease in the number of annual entries.

Table 3: Number of Entries of International Students in Saskatchewan (1999-2008)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Regina	403	469	520	523	576	472	534	429	424	534
Saskatoon	399	431	543	446	460	414	490	533	606	648
Other Saskatchewan	346	338	335	317	352	279	299	305	239	251
Saskatchewan	1,148	1,238	1,398	1,286	1,388	1,165	1,323	1,267	1,269	1,433

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008: (DVD)

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 4 reveals that the annual entries of international students in Saskatchewan as a percentage of the total number of entries in Canada declined from 2.6 percent in 1999 to 2.1 percent in 2008. It is important to note, however, that the decline has been largely due to a decline in entries destined to places other than the two major cities of Regina and Saskatoon for which the percentage of entries remained relatively stable despite the fact that the actual number of entries increased substantially.

Table 4: Percentage of Entries of International Students in Saskatchewan (1999-2008)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Regina	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8
Saskatoon	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0
Other Saskatchewan	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Saskatchewan	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.1

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008: (DVD)

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 5 reveals the number of international students present in Saskatchewan increased by more than 1,500 between 1999 when it was 2,499 and 2008 when it was 3,655. The increase has occurred primarily in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. For most of this period the number of international students present in other communities in Saskatchewan fluctuated, but generally only marginally as it reached a high of 693 in 2003 and a low of 488 in 2008.

Table 5: Number of International Students Present in Saskatchewan (1999-2008)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Regina	851	902	1,061	1,202	1,313	1,441	1,515	1,330	1,318	1,391
Saskatoon	1,106	1,157	1,346	1,464	1,518	1,577	1,587	1,585	1,709	1,776
Other Saskatchewan	542	570	625	632	693	612	632	578	508	488
Saskatchewan	2,499	2,629	3,032	3,298	3,524	3,630	3,734	3,493	3,535	3,655

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008: (DVID)

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 6 reveals that the percentage of International students present in Saskatchewan as a percentage of the total number present in Canada declined from 2.6 percent in 1999 to 2.1 percent in 2008. It is important to note, however, that the decline has been largely due to a decline in percentage of international students present in communities other than the two major cities of Regina and Saskatoon for which the percentage remained relatively stable despite the fact that the actual number present in those two cities increased substantially.

Table 6: Percentage of International Students Present in Saskatchewan (1999-2008)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Regina	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8
Saskatoon	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0
Other Saskatchewan	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Saskatchewan	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.1

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008: (DVD)

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 7 reveals that between 1999 and 2008 the majority of international students in Saskatchewan were male and that the percentage of males and females changed very little over time. Whereas in 1999 approximately 57 per cent (1,415) were male and 43 per cent (1,084) were female, by 2008 approximately 59 per cent (2,142) were male and 41 per cent (1,513) were female.

Table 7 also reveals that between 1999 and 2008 the majority of students were enrolled in universities. It also reveals that the number of students enrolled in universities increased from 904 students in 1999 to 1,585 by 2008. The next largest group of international students was enrolled in primary and secondary educational institutions. The international students enrolled in trade institutions, other post-secondary institutions, and other types of educational institutions constituted a very small proportion of the total number during this period.

Table 7: International Students Present in Saskatchewan by Gender and Educational Institutions 1999-2008

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Secondary or less	377	377	426	406	405	417	436	382	401	443
Trade	26	26	32	30	29	36	36	26	18	11
University	904	961	1,161	1,331	1,436	1,509	1,546	1,517	1,557	1,585
Other post-secondary	52	66	89	99	118	82	84	69	59	68
Other	56	69	68	69	84	83	79	64	45	35
Level of study not stated	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Males	1,415	1,499	1,778	1,935	2,072	2,127	2,181	2,058	2,080	2,142
Secondary or less	330	332	348	323	348	344	391	327	338	395
Trade	15	19	18	18	20	25	21	15	11	19
University	661	691	785	901	952	1,015	1,036	988	1,014	1,019
Other post-secondary	30	44	52	63	75	55	49	60	49	50
Other	45	43	50	58	57	64	56	45	43	30
Level of study not stated	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Females	1,084	1,130	1,254	1,363	1,452	1,503	1,553	1,435	1,455	1,513
Secondary or less	707	709	774	729	753	761	827	709	739	838
Trade	41	45	50	48	49	61	57	41	29	30
University	1,565	1,652	1,946	2,232	2,388	2,524	2,582	2,505	2,571	2,604
Other post-secondary	82	110	141	162	193	137	133	129	108	118
Other	101	112	118	127	141	147	135	109	88	65
Level of study not stated	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gender not stated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (Males & Females)	2,499	2,629	3,032	3,298	3,524	3,630	3,734	3,493	3,535	3,655

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008 (DVD):

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 8 provides the data on international students entering Saskatchewan's universities for the first time annually from 1999 to 2008 by source countries. It reveals that the number of international students entering Saskatchewan's universities has increased during that period from a low of 584 in 1999 to a high of 793 in 2008. It also reveals that China consistently led all other countries for the number of students entering university in the province.

Table 8: Entries of International Students at Universities by Source Countries

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
China,	121	115	281	215	260	164	153	282	295	378
South Korea	46	77	68	67	62	29	42	56	55	46
Japan	80	59	56	70	79	90	107	7	48	44
India	21	26	23	35	45	32	36	28	38	34
United States	35	25	25	24	28	15	34	22	26	18
Germany	15	20	15	12	21	15	13	13	15	13
Thailand	15	16	20	18	17	24	17	14	17	12
Hong Kong	15	8	10	5	15	18	12	6	6	6
Other Countries	236	280	242	239	219	203	208	170	199	242
Total	584	626	740	685	746	590	622	668	699	793

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008 (DVD):

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

Table 9 reveals that since 1999 China has consistently supplied Saskatchewan with the largest number of students. Indeed in 2008, Chinese students constituted 1376 of 2604 or approximately 50% of international students enrolled at the two universities in the province. It continues to outpace every other country in this regard. Five other major source countries have been India, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and the United States.

Table 9: International Students Present at Saskatchewan Universities 1999-2008

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
China	264	341	578	830	998	1,141	1,185	1,240	1,311	1,376
India	66	67	72	87	120	134	140	119	132	131
South Korea	133	147	164	160	138	122	128	108	127	115
Saudi Arabia	12	14	12	14	11	14	24	21	39	104
Japan	196	142	138	138	146	130	142	117	84	69
United States	69	71	81	77	66	61	63	62	70	61
Hong Kong	197	181	165	142	119	120	106	89	74	59
Thailand	38	35	50	54	47	54	56	56	49	51
Nigeria	13	31	34	39	61	78	71	67	60	50
Iran	31	28	22	36	37	51	54	44	44	48
Vietnam	6	12	18	17	23	26	26	29	30	29
Mexico	31	48	46	50	29	35	34	39	40	28
Bangladesh	10	11	24	36	39	46	39	35	23	26
Botswana	5	9	9	9	14	15	22	25	23	25
Malaysia	33	30	35	29	30	29	34	32	25	21
Germany	24	23	22	25	29	22	20	19	21	19
Taiwan	51	58	61	61	48	47	46	31	24	17
Ghana	31	37	40	41	35	25	28	20	17	16
Pakistan	36	29	24	22	16	10	7	9	10	15
Kenya	29	25	27	26	22	20	13	15	16	14
Columbia	21	21	21	20	10	7	9	10	11	14
United Kingdom	22	21	27	23	27	22	9	14	12	13
Ukraine	15	12	10	14	12	14	13	12	14	12
Libya	12	7	11	9	16	16	18	16	15	12
Indonesia	25	25	25	21	18	19	17	20	19	11
France	10	7	6	10	9	11	9	7	7	10
Turkey	10	9	8	8	10	7	9	10	11	10
Poland	8	8	5	8	7	9	8	9	7	8
Russia	7	14	13	13	12	10	11	12	7	8
South Africa	7	7	16	15	13	12	12	9	13	7
Sweden	7	14	9	5	9	6	7	5	7	5
Other Countries	146	164	173	193	217	211	222	204	229	220
Total	1,565	1,652	1,946	2,232	2,388	2,524	2,582	2,505	2,571	2,604

Source: Government of Canada, CIC, *Facts and Figures* 2008 (DVD):

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/temporary/11.asp>

4.2 SINP STUDENT APPLICATIONS

Since its implementation in 2004, interest in the SINP has increased exponentially. In 2004-05 no application data was collected. Whereas in 2005-06 only 10 applications were received, by 2009-10 this had increased to 149, an increase of 1,390 per cent.

Table 10: SINP Applications Received by Category

Year	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Students	No data	10	36	78	89	149

Source: Government of Saskatchewan, 2009b

4.3 SINP STUDENT NOMINATIONS

The number of nominations for the SINP has also increased substantially since the program's implementation. Whereas in 2004-05 only 6 individuals were nominated, by 2009-10 this had increased to 140.

Table 11: SINP Number of Nominations

Year	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Students	6	11	18	63	95	140

Source: Government of Saskatchewan, 2009b

4.4 SINP APPLICATION PROCESSING TIME

Despite the SINP's increasing popularity and case load, the average processing time continues to decline. Whereas in 2007-08 it took an average of 5.1 months to process a case, that decreased to 3.5 months in 2008-09 and to 2.5 months in 2009-10. This improvement in processing times has been a very good trend. Unfortunately, a perception persists among many international students who were interviewed for this report that it probably takes much longer than that to process an application.

Table 12: SINP Average Processing Time (in Months)

Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Processing Time	5.1	3.5	2.5

Source:, Government of Saskatchewan, 2009b

5. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SURVEY: RESULTS & ANALYSIS

5.1 PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY OF SURVEY

This section of the report provides an overview of the findings of a survey of international students. The central purpose of the survey was to uncover the major factors influencing international students' decisions regarding post-graduate residency and work either in Saskatchewan or elsewhere following the completion of their studies. The survey also sought to uncover student awareness of, experiences with, and perspectives on immigration and economic integration policies, programs and services.

The survey consisted of a combination of focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and questionnaires involving 35 international students (undergraduate, graduate and recent graduates) in Saskatoon and Regina. The survey was conducted during the spring and summer of 2010. The following subsections are based on the data collected through the aforementioned means, but particularly the questionnaires.

5.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

In total, 35 international students in Regina and Saskatoon were interviewed. Of these, 20 were male and 15 were female (Table 13). Eight of these participants had a spouse and 27 did not (Table 14). The number of undergraduate and graduate students was approximately the same. Of the 35 respondents, 16 were undergraduate students and 19 were graduate students (Table 15). Of the 19 graduate students, 14 were enrolled in a Master's program and 5 were enrolled in a PhD program (Table 15). Whereas 11 respondents were from China, only less than three were from each of the other source countries (Table 16).

Table 13: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Female	Male
Students	15	20

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Table 14: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Participants with Spouse	Participants Without Spouse
Students	8	27

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Table 15: Level of Study of Respondents

Degree	Number of Respondents
Bachelors	16
Master's	14
PhD	5

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Table 16: Home Country of Respondent

Country	Number of Respondents
Bangladesh	2
China	11
Columbia	3
Ecuador	1
Ghana	2
Iran	2
Jamaica	1
Kyrgyzstan	1
Mexico	2
Nigeria	3
Panama	1
South Korea	1
Russia	1
Thailand	1
Ukraine	1
No Response	2

Source: Survey conducted for this project

5.3 PREFERRED POST-GRADUATION DESTINATIONS

The majority of international students, 23, preferred to stay in Canada following the completion of their studies, 6 intended to return to their home country, and 5 were undecided. Of those who intended to stay in Canada, four students planned to stay in Saskatchewan and 17 (i.e., approximately 66%) were open to the possibility of staying in the province (Table 17).

Table 17: Post-Graduate Destinations

Intended Destination	Staying in Saskatchewan	Canada (Open to Saskatchewan)	Larger Canadian City	North America	Returning to Home Country	Undecided
Respondents	4	17	2	1	6	5

Source: Survey conducted for this project

5.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISIONS TO STAY OR LEAVE SASKATCHEWAN

The survey data revealed five major factors that influence decisions of international students to stay in or leave Saskatchewan following the completion of their studies. These are:

1. Students' pre- and post-graduation employment experiences, their awareness of existing jobs, and their perceptions of job prospects in the future for themselves and their spouses.
2. Students' experience with, and awareness and knowledge of, immigration policies and programs of different levels of government.
3. Students' awareness and use of integration services and programs.
4. Students' perceptions of community profile and dynamics.
5. Students' perceptions of family situations and opportunities

The following section provides an overview of the international students' responses related to each of these five factors, as well as some observations regarding the influence they have on their decisions regarding their preferred places of residence after completing their studies in Saskatchewan.

5.4.1 EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES, AWARENESS AND PROSPECTS

The first major set of factors affecting decisions of international students either to stay in or leave Saskatchewan included their employment experiences, awareness of employment opportunities, and prospects of employment opportunities. The vast majority of respondents indicated that the most significant factor in their decision to stay in or to leave the province was finding employment for themselves in fields related to their educational background. For some married students, another important factor was finding employment for their spouses either in fields related to their educational background or at least with employers who had a good working environment and relatively good wages.

In assessing the employment prospects for themselves and their spouses several students indicated that the performance of Saskatchewan's provincial economy was a major consideration for them. More specifically, they noted that if indications were that the provincial economy would continue to perform well they were more likely to consider staying in the province. At the time of the interviews the respondents indicated that they were reasonably confident about the province's economic growth, but they were less confident about the employment prospects for themselves and their spouses.

The extent to which students were willing to stay in or leave Saskatchewan was also a function of economic conditions and employment opportunities either in other parts of Canada or in their home countries. Those considering moving to other parts of Canada indicated that they were likely to move to large cities in other provinces that would either afford them and/or their spouse good employment opportunities or at least the requisite social networks that would likely increase their prospects of finding such employment opportunities. The major cities generally mentioned were those in British Columbia and Alberta (e.g., Vancouver and Calgary). The cities mentioned were perceived as having vibrant economies, good employment prospects, and robust

and vibrant ethnocultural communities. Some of them were not very confident that prospective employers outside their respective ethnocultural communities would hire them.

Those considering moving back to their home countries indicated that their decision was based on the likelihood that they would fare either as well or better there than they would in Saskatchewan or any other part of Canada. Whereas some indicated that they were confident that they would fare better because their parents were wealthy, others indicated that they were likely to fare better because it would be easier for them to find employment either on their own or with the assistance of their social networks. Another respondent echoed similar sentiments regarding the value of the social networks in his country of origin, and the challenges in experiencing those in Saskatchewan. The student also feared that he would not be able to find employment in Saskatchewan due to his uncommon foreign name and was seriously considering moving to Vancouver where his name would not be as unusual.

The following section and sub-sections examine international students' responses on the following matters:

- employment experience pre-graduation and post-graduation;
- Awareness, knowledge, and assessment of immigration policies and programs;
- Awareness, knowledge and assessment of integration programs and services;
- Community profiles and dynamics; and
- Family situations and opportunities

5.4.1.1 Employment Experience Pre- and Post-Graduation

International students are allowed to work while studying in Saskatchewan, albeit subject to some restrictions related to the time after arrival, the place of employment and total hours of employment per week. International students are not allowed to start working either on or off-campus until six months after commencing their studies. Thereafter they are permitted to work either on-campus or off-campus for up to twenty hours per week during the regular school year and full time during the summer break and holidays.

Such students are also permitted to work after graduation with fewer restrictions than they faced while they were completing their studies. Moreover, in recent years, the amount of time for which they have been allowed to work after graduation has gradually increased under various policies. In contrast to the original policy where students were not allowed to work in Canada after completing their studies, more recent policies have not only allowed them to do so, but they have lengthened the term of employment from six months to one year and most recently to three years.

5.4.1.1.1 Pre-Graduation Employment Experience

Most respondents had found employment while studying. Generally, all respondents were aware that international students are allowed to work while studying at a post-secondary institution. However, some respondents implied that not all international students are aware of the employment regulations or potential employment opportunities. They added that many students do not fully understand the importance of those work experiences for their future career and immigration prospects. As one respondent stated: *“Most international students think they should study and get good grades and not focus on getting [work] experience... ...letting students know the importance of [work] experience ... is a big thing.”*

Most of the respondents had worked on-campus or off-campus while pursuing their studies. Of the 35 respondents, 25 indicated they had worked on campus, 13 indicated they had worked off campus, 7 indicated they had been enrolled in a co-op program, and only 3 indicated that they had not worked and had not intended to work while completing their studies (Table 18).

The general consensus was that finding jobs was not easy, but that it was easier to secure employment on-campus than off-campus. Moreover, respondents who had worked on-campus tended to have better experiences than those who had worked off-campus.

Table 18: Work Experience While Studying

Place and Type of Work While Studying	Number of Responses
Worked on campus doing regular job while studying	25
Worked off-campus doing regular job while studying	13
Worked off-campus in a co-op placement while studying	7
Did not work either on-campus or off-campus while studying	3
Total Number of Responses	43
N.B.: The total number of responses is greater than the total number of respondents because some respondents had engaged in work both on-campus and off-campus.	

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Attitudes towards on-campus employment tended to be more positive than towards off-campus employment. Many respondents with positive employment experiences during their studies indicated that those experiences had contributed to not only to their economic and social integration during their studies, but also to their decisions to consider staying in Saskatchewan or elsewhere in Canada after graduation.

Those who worked on campus while studying did so for several entities including: departments as teaching assistants, research units as research assistants, libraries, food outlets, and student unions. The majority of those who found jobs on-campus and off-campus did so through their supervisors or other members of their departments, friends and posters advertising jobs, or job search support centres.

Respondents indicated that it was easier to secure employment on-campus because they found out about job opportunities through their social network, which included thesis supervisors, professors and friends. Other factors that contributed to their ability to secure jobs on campus were that: they knew their employers and their employers knew them; the application and interview processes were more streamlined and more informal; and they were able to project themselves as more competent because there was lower levels of anxiety related to various aspects of the application and interview processes. The prevailing view was that the on-campus application and interview processes were generally simpler and that the people who they were dealing with were generally supportive. They also indicated that they were quite satisfied with working conditions and compensation levels.

Respondents indicated that off-campus employment opportunities were scarce in their areas of interest or expertise. Employment opportunities that existed tended to be in the service sector where the compensation levels were quite low. Some noted that even in that sector it was difficult to find jobs for the following reasons: they found it challenging to fill out various types of applications (i.e., the off-campus work permit applications and specific job application); they did not have Canadian work experience; they had not established work-related relationships in Canada with people who they could list as references; and employers were concerned or wary because they were international students on special work permits and not permanent residents or citizens. Some noted that not knowing the system and people within it was detrimental to their employment prospects and was demoralizing.

In addition to the lack of knowledge of employment systems, some respondents indicated that they suffered from insufficient knowledge of the employment regulations for international students. For example, one respondent struggled understanding the regulations pertaining to off-campus work permits. That respondent erroneously noted the regulations only allowed him to work 20 hours per week during the summer months. The regulations state that the 20 hour per week limit only applies during the fall session and winter session of the regular academic year; but the limit is 40 hours per week during regular school breaks (e.g., Spring and Summer Sessions, Reading Week, and the holiday break in the latter part of December and early part of January).

5.4.1.1.2 Post-Graduation Employment Experience

Another factor shaping the decisions of students to stay in or leave Saskatchewan is their post-graduation employment experiences. Ease or difficulty in finding employment related to their field of study was a major concern for those who had recently graduated as well as for those approaching graduation.

Of the 11 respondents who had graduated, 5 found work in their field of study, 2 had found work somewhat related to their field of study, 3 had positions unrelated to their field of study, and one intended to pursue post-graduate work in Ottawa (Table 19).

Table 19: Post-Graduation Employment

Responses	Number of Respondents
Found employment in their field of study	5
Found employment partly related to their field of study	2
Found employed unrelated to their field of study	3
Intended to pursue post-graduate academic work	1

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Two important observations are in order here. First, and most importantly, the fact that most of these respondents had managed to find work in the province should not lead readers to assume that this is typical or reflective of the majority of those who graduate from Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions. The respondents were available to participate in the project because they had found employment. Many of those who had not been able to find employment likely left the province in search of jobs in other parts of the country, their countries of origin or some other countries with job prospects to which they were admitted as immigrants.

Second, of the respondents who had sought employment after graduation many had found employment related to their field of study or partly related to their field of study, and others had found employment completely unrelated to their field of study. The respondent who intended to pursue post-graduate work outside the province had graduated with a Ph.D. degree. This respondent found it hard to find employment within and outside academia despite having a graduate degree, additional specialized training, publications, and a good record of employment. This student and some of those who had not found employment in their field of study expressed disappointment and frustration with the challenges they faced. There was a perception that in some instances jobs were offered to Canadian applicants who had fewer qualifications or less experience. As expressed by one respondent *“I feel that international students are at a disadvantage in finding jobs compared to Canadian students.”* Some of the international students who were unable to find employment in their field of study in Saskatchewan started seeking job opportunities in Alberta; at least one of these had found a job in that province.

In explaining success in their job search, respondents pointed to the following agencies and programs as having provided them with valuable information, advice or support: the Career Center on campus; SaskJobs; Workopolis; Monster; and the Gradworks program. They also pointed to specific services provided by some agencies either in person or on-line such as job search support and resume writing assistance as being particularly important to their success in securing employment.

5.4.1.2 Spousal Employment Experiences and Prospects

Another significant employment related factor that influenced the settlement decisions of respondents either to stay or leave Saskatchewan was the employment experiences of their spouses. Among participants who had a spouse there was a diversity of answers regarding their employment, place of residence and citizenship.

Of those living in Canada, two indicated their spouses worked in their preferred field, one indicated that the spouse worked at home, and one indicated that the spouse was still looking for work. Two indicated that their spouses were still studying in Canada. One indicated that the spouse was still living in their home country, and one indicated that the spouse was a Canadian citizen (Table 20).

Table 20: Employment and Residence Status of Spouse

Employment and Residence of Spouse	Number of Respondents
Spouse is working in her field	2
Spouse is working while studying	1
Spouse is looking for work	1
Spouse is studying in Canada	2
Spouse is at home with child	1
Spouse is still in home country	1

Source: Survey conducted for this project

5.4.1.3 Employment Aspirations

In addition to being asked regarding their employment experiences during and following their studies, respondents were also asked regarding their employment aspirations. This included the type of employment they preferred and in which sector of the economy they wished to find employment. Differences were evident among respondents regarding their employment aspirations or preferences. Whereas 17 indicated the private for profit-sector as their first choice, 10 indicated the government sector, 4 indicated the cooperative or non-profit sector, and four indicated the university (Table 21).

Table 21: Preferred Employment Sector

Employment Sector Preferred by Respondents	Number of Respondents
Preferred the Private For-Profit Sector 1 st	17
Preferred the Government Sector 1 st	10
Preferred the Cooperative or Non-Profit Sector 1 st	4
Preferred the University Sector 1 st	4

Source: Survey conducted for this project

5.4.1.4 Employment Opportunity Awareness

After stating their employment preferences, participants were probed on how familiar they were with employment opportunities in different economic sectors. Of the 4 sectors identified in the questionnaire (i.e., for-profit, non-profit, cooperative and government) respondents demonstrated the greatest familiarity with the “for-profit” sector followed by the governmental sector and the non-profit sector, and the least familiarity with the cooperative sector. 10 were ‘very familiar’ with the “for profit” sector, 18 were ‘somewhat familiar,’ and 5 participants were ‘not very familiar’ with it. The respondents demonstrated less familiarity with the non-profit and co-operative sector. Only 4 respondents were ‘very familiar’ with the non-profit sector, 15 were ‘somewhat familiar’ and 15 were ‘not very familiar.’ The participants displayed even less familiarity with the co-operative sector as only 2 were ‘very familiar,’ 8 were ‘somewhat familiar’ and 24 were ‘not very familiar.’ Familiarity with the governmental sector fell between the other sectors, as 5 respondents indicated they were ‘very familiar,’ 17 were ‘somewhat familiar’ and 12 were ‘not very familiar’ with the governmental sector (Table 22).

Table 22: Employment Opportunity Awareness

Sector	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Very Familiar
For-Profit	10	18	5
Non-Profit	4	15	15
Cooperative	2	8	24
Government	5	17	12

Source: Survey conducted for this project

After stating where they hoped to be employed and their familiarity with the various sectors, respondents were asked to expand on their understanding of the two major sectors of the social economy (i.e. non-profit and cooperative sectors). As was demonstrated in the previous section, few considered these two sectors of the social economy as potential areas of employment or career development options for them.

While many participants were aware of the two sectors of the social economy, 14 had not considered either of them as potential areas of employment and career development. There were 7 respondents who recognized the potential of those two sectors as areas for career development, but indicated that they were not interested in working in these particular sectors. Whereas 4 respondents had not heard of these two sectors and were not interested in learning more about them, 5 respondents who were not familiar with employment and career opportunities in these sectors indicated that they would consider applying for work therein if they were provided with information regarding employment opportunities and conditions in that sector.

Table 23: Social Economy Awareness and Interest

Aware of the social economy and its potential for career development., but did not consider it for themselves.	7
Aware of the social economy but had not considered the sector as having opportunity for career development.	14
Aware of the social economy and would work in it. 2/4 had worked in the social economy for their co-op terms.	5
Had not heard of it and was not interested (electronic engineering)	4
Was not aware of the term, but said that if he would have known about opportunities at graduation he would have applied for jobs.	5

Source: Survey conducted for this project

Indeed, the majority of respondents were not aware of the social economy. Some students indicated that they were not very aware of the social economy because they had focused more on academic learning rather than either on learning about that particular component of the economy or on establishing social networks that could provide them with valuable insights into it. It was observed in the interview process that natural science students were less likely to be knowledgeable of the social economy than social science students. Regardless of their awareness very few of the students were aware of the wide range of employment career opportunities in this economic sector.

Generally, international students tended to think relatively narrowly about which economic sector afforded them the greatest opportunities to find either paid employment (salaried and contractual) or volunteer positions that could possibly lead to employment opportunities in the future. Many were unaware or uninterested in different components of the cooperative, non-profit, and volunteer sectors. This was also true of employment opportunities areas directly or indirectly related to their studies, or areas that were not related to their studies at all but still provided interesting and well-compensated career opportunities. One potential explanation for this is that the social economy does not have many job opportunities for students specializing in and seeking positions in scientific and technical fields.

Unfortunately, most international students, like other students, are not adequately aware of the opportunities afforded to them by the various sectors of the social economy. The interviews revealed there was not sufficient understanding that these sectors could provide them with valuable ‘gateways’ for economic integration. One possible reason for this is that for most of them their social networks were likely to be limited to persons who worked in the for-profit, service and educational sectors. This lack of awareness is a significant impediment to their ability not only to benefit from employment and career opportunities in this sector, but also to their ability to make significant contributions to this sector. Limiting out-migration would be advanced through enhanced awareness of social economy opportunities.

5.4.2 AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ASSESSMENT OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The second major set of factors affecting respondents' decisions regarding post-graduate settlement choices was their awareness, knowledge and assessment of immigration programs. This includes: the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP), the Post Graduate Work Program (PGWP), the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC). This section provides an overview and analysis of the respondents' levels of awareness of different immigration programs, the sources of awareness, and their assessment of accessibility and clarity of information on those programs.

5.4.2.1 Awareness of Immigration Policies and Programs

Several respondents had applied or were either in the process of applying, or considering applying to one or more immigration programs. Among these respondents, the highest interest was to apply for the SINP (9), followed by FSWP (7), PGWP (3), and CEC (3). Approximately one third of the respondents (12) were undecided about the immigration program that they would choose. One respondent had already acquired permanent residency through sponsorship by his wife.

Overall the level of awareness of immigration programs amongst respondents was relatively low (Table 24). Across the various programs discussed awareness rates ranged between 33 per cent and 60 per cent. Students in graduate programs, particularly PhD students, exhibited higher levels of awareness of immigration programs. Among the respondents, the highest awareness and knowledge was evident for the SINP (31), the second highest was for the PGWP (29), the third was for the CEC (18) and the fourth was the FSWP (7). One student was not knowledgeable of either the PGWP or CEC and was not interested in remaining in Canada over the long term.

Table 24: Interest in and Awareness of Immigration Program

Immigration Programs	Interest of Applying	Awareness of Program
SINP	9	31
FSWP	7	18
PGWP	3	29
CEC	3	7

Source: Survey conducted for this project

The highest level of awareness was of the SINP; 31 respondents indicated awareness of this program. However, some students, including those who were aware of the SINP, were not aware that they could apply for landed immigrant status under the SINP. More specifically, they were not aware that they could apply for such status within the scope of the SINP's 'Student Category' and its two streams. The first is the Post-Graduation Work Permit Stream for individuals who have graduated with a certificate, diploma, or undergraduate degree and have received the federal Post-Graduation Work Permit. The second is the Master's and PhD stream that does not require a Post-Graduation Work Permit. In particular, they were not aware that the student

category and streams of the SINP outline several criteria for receiving landed immigrant status pursuant to the SINP. Moreover, most were not aware of the following:

- The requirements under the SINP for all applicants to receive bona fide job offers from employers.
- The federal PGWP, a program that was specifically designed for post-graduate students seeking permission to work anywhere in Canada outside the scope of the provincial SINP.
- Their eligibility to apply for the SINP after completing their certificate, diploma or undergraduate degree and receiving their PGWP.

Furthermore, both in the interviews and in presentations related to this research project international students were generally not aware that they were eligible for the provincial Graduate Retention Program (GRP). Only a handful of students indicated that they were aware of the GRP. Of those, most did not know the details related to the eligibility for the program, the application process, or how to access the information regarding the program. During some of the presentations related to this project, students were informed that the information is available at the provincial government website (i.e., <http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca/grp>).

5.4.2.2 Sources of Awareness of Immigration Policies and Programs

Awareness of the immigration programs came from a variety of sources. The most common source was the respondents' social network. This is because friends and fellow international students exchanged information regarding the immigration programs while socializing. Respondents also cited more traditional sources including government websites and information seminars.

Most respondents who gained knowledge of the SINP did so through their social networks and workshops on campus, and three heard about it through the ISO. Very few students were aware of the PGWP and thus there was little feedback. The one student who had used the program heard about it through friends and had accessed information about it online.

Despite not being designed specifically for students, FSWP drew more **interest** than the other work and immigration programs. The seven respondents, who indicated that they were interested in it, suggested that a major reason for this is that they felt they had the relevant work experience based on their employment experience in their home country that would likely provide them with more points under the point system.

5.4.2.3 Assessment of Immigration Policies and Programs

The respondents' assessments of immigration programs tended to focus on accessibility and clarity of information, the duration of employment to qualify for a visa, processing times and eligibility requirements.

5.4.2.3.1 Accessibility and Clarity of Information on Immigration Programs

The accessibility and clarity of information were important factors in shaping student experience with immigration programs. Respondents noted that while government websites present a wealth of information it was sometimes difficult for them to understand. Some respondents also hoped the two levels of government expand upon their web content and demonstrate how to correctly fill out an immigration application. They noted that often the content was written from a domestic paradigm and not from an international one. This was primarily experienced on federal government rather than provincial materials.

The presentation of, and access to, information was a primary concern for participants. They noted that it was easier to access provincial than federal information. One respondent stated that the: *"Saskatchewan government has lots of phone numbers where you can talk to actual real people."* The federal government's use of automated and voice recorded telephone a system was a point of frustration for respondents who only wished to have a question answered. This caused confusion as to how to properly fill out the application, which in some instances required time-consuming corrections.

5.4.2.3.2 Employment Experience Requirements

Respondents indicated that their preferences among immigration programs were influenced by requirements related to the duration and type of employment experience.

The duration of work required to qualify for immigration programs was very important for many respondents. Two respondents commented on the merits of the work requirements under the SINP and the CEC. Both indicated that they preferred the SINP because whereas it only required six months of work, the CEC required one year of continuous employment in the applicant's field of study.

Immigration programs also cause difficulties for international students because of their specific employment requirements. For example, many students interested in the SINP found they could only find part-time or contract-based employment rather than full-time employment. This proved to be problematic because the SINP requires applicants to be employed full-time for six months to qualify for SINP. Several students indicated that they were required to turn down part-time and contractual job offer because they would not help them with their SINP application. This inability to find full-time employment sometimes acted as a barrier to sustainable employment. Allowing international students to fulfill their requirement of 960 hours of employment through part-time and contractual work would be beneficial not only to students but also to their employers.

5.4.2.3.3 Language Requirements of Immigration Policies/Programs

Some criteria related to language competency and the processes for determining the same were also criticized by respondents. This criticism focused primarily on the language requirements under the federal CEC program. One student noted that he had completed a degree at the University of Regina but still had to take a language proficiency test. Moreover, due to the long waiting list in Saskatchewan, the respondent was encouraged to take the test in Calgary or Vancouver. The respondent noted that this was both expensive and time consuming, but necessary to obtain a permanent job and to establish the social networks that could prove valuable for purposes of economic integration.

5.4.2.3.4 Application Processes

Respondents also pointed to application processes as problematical in their efforts to acquire some types of immigration visas. Many had encountered such problems, or knew someone who had encountered such problems. At least three types of problems were noted. First, in cases where a portion of an application was not completed correctly, the application form was sent back to applicants rather than simply being contacted them by phone or e-mail to make the correction. Students felt that requiring them to resubmit the form created a significant delay. Two participants who noted that they had already paid approximately \$1,500 for the application expressed dissatisfaction with this particular type of inconvenience. Another criticism was that some students are not informed of the decision on their applications in a more timely fashion. One respondent indicated that only after taking the initiative to phone SINP officials regarding the application, did it become evident that it had been approved at an earlier point in time. Another facet of an immigration application process that concerned at least one student was what was understood to be a requirement to submit the current passport for up to one month to government officials who were reviewing the immigration application. Respondents may have been confused as to what documentation was necessary for each program as requirements differ. The forfeiture of one's passport is not a requirement for every immigration program. The Canadian Experience Class (CEC) and Federal Skilled Workers Program (FSWP) both require applicants to mail their passport to CIC at some point of the application process. However, this is required only if they apply for either of these programs from outside of Canada. The SINP and PGWP do not require the individual to mail their passport to CIC. Whereas the SINP requires a photocopy, the PGWP requires a digital copy.

5.4.3 INTEGRATION SERVICES

The third major set of factors influencing decisions of respondents regarding post-graduate settlement choices was their experience with various integration services both on- and off-campus. In discussing integration services, international students pointed to those offered by only a few agencies either on-campus or off-campus as most important to them. Generally, the respondents indicated that they used integration services provided by on campus agencies at a higher frequency than those provided by off campus agencies.

5.4.3.1 On-Campus Integration Services

Respondents identified two general categories of service agencies on campus as at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina as important points of contact and sources of assistance. These were the international students' offices (ISO's) and the university career centers. Respondents noted that the ISOs and the career centres were able to address most of their queries.

5.4.3.1.1 International Students Offices (ISOs)

Respondents indicated that the accessibility and quality of services offered by ISOs were important in shaping their settlement and integration experiences in Saskatchewan. The main functions of the ISOs are to assist international students with a wide ranging set of settlement support, academic advising, and various types of academic and social networking.

Respondents expressed largely positive views regarding the settlement and integration services of ISOs they had used. In particular, they valued the support that they received in understanding and dealing with important matters where their English language deficiency was a problem.

The ISOs were also used as a source of guidance for dealing many problems. For this reason alone respondents found the ISOs invaluable. One student who had also benefited from an employment experience at one of the ISOs noted that it had been a very *“good way of connecting with Saskatchewan, right from the beginning.”*

Despite the many accolades conferred on the ISOs, some respondents also articulated some criticisms. The most notable criticism was that the ISOs were not always able to provide them with all the information they required. Instead, they merely referred them to potential sources of information. Respondents also noted that they would have benefitted from information being communicated to them in greater detail.

Given the multifaceted nature of ISOs and the multifaceted needs of international students, it is not surprising that they are likely to incur service shortfall in some areas. A related observation by respondents was that it is important for ISOs, and other organizations, to keep in mind that international students are not a homogeneous group and therefore they need different types and levels of information and support.

5.4.3.1.2 Career Centres

Many respondents identified career centres on the two university campuses as valuable in assisting them with employment searches, career counselling, resume writing, and preparation for interviews. They indicated that particularly useful were their services in finding job advertisements, career counselling, and guidance in producing resumes. Of the 35 respondents, only 14 indicated that they had used the career center at their respective university. Of these respondents 7 indicated they had accessed it specifically for preparing resumes. In the case of other respondents, 8 indicated they had heard of, but had not used, a career center, 2 indicated they were too focused on their studies to use it, and 5 had never heard of it.

One respondent, who had received help on job market orientation, job search, resume preparation, and interview preparation, described the career centre as the most important service on campus. Many respondents expressed this sentiment. They agreed that the career center's success was a result of its singular focus on career related support.

Nevertheless, despite the singular focus of career centres, some respondents were still confused regarding what they did. One respondent believed the Career Center at his university dealt only with on campus jobs. This led the student not to use the Career Center until late into his studies. Another student who had recently graduated noted that in hindsight she wished she had used the Career Centre to find degree relevant work during the summer months because eventually she realized how important such work would be in finding employment related to her academic training

5.4.3.4 Off-Campus Integration Services

Some respondents also accessed integration services provided by off-campus community-based organizations. Often their services supplemented or complemented those offered at the universities. Respondents who accessed off-campus agencies were generally positive about the integration services offered by off-campus agencies. They noted that an array of agencies existed that provided a wide range of services.

When asked about the existence of such agencies, most pointed primarily to what are commonly referred to as immigrant settlement services agencies, rather than other community based agencies that serve non-immigrants as well as immigrants. Most gravitated to these agencies either because they were referred to them by on-campus agencies, or because persons within their social networks were aware of the existence of such agencies and that they provided some valuable information, programs, services and supports.

Of the off-campus service provider agencies, participants demonstrated the greatest knowledge of the major settlement service agencies. Respondents observed that the services provided by these community based agencies tended to be accessed primarily by married students whose spouses were living with them in Saskatchewan. For most respondents with spouses, off-campus service agencies tended to be more important than on-campus agencies. The settlement service agencies were particularly valuable for accessing language instruction, preparing resumes,

translation in acquiring driver licenses, resume preparation, and dealing with issues related to credential recognition.

Several other types of community-based organizations were utilized by some respondents as integration tools. Three respondents indicated that they had joined sports organizations to strengthen their language abilities while also allowing them to participate in recreational activities in the community. One respondent identified a Christian organization as a place useful for practicing English. Other respondents cited organizations within their ethnic community as places where they could seek assistance.

Despite what can be described as their positive assessment of these off-campus agencies, some noted that the agencies did not provide sufficiently clear information regarding the precise programs and services that each of them provided for students or their spouses. Some students noted that some agencies also tend to draw lines arbitrarily regarding the services they provide for international students as opposed to immigrants and refugees. Some students found it disconcerting that some off-campus programs and services were available to landed immigrants and refugees, but not to them.

5.4.4 COMMUNITY PROFILES AND DYNAMICS

The fourth major set of factors influencing decisions of international students to stay in or leave Saskatchewan involved community profiles and dynamics. Particularly important for some in this respect were the size and composition of their respective ethnocultural communities. Some respondents noted that if they stayed in Canada, they were more likely to move to cities such as Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal that had larger ethno cultural communities. The participant who wanted to move to a larger city did not mention employment as a factor but instead he liked that Toronto had more people and a faster pace. He also stated that he would like to find a partner who spoke Spanish and there is a larger Spanish speaking population in Toronto. He stated that one always sees “*the same people at the Latin American parties in Regina.*”

Respondents valued ethnocultural communities both because they felt that they contributed to social and economic integration and ultimately to a higher quality of life. Among other things, it would provide social, recreational, religious and culinary benefits that they considered very important for their quality of life. For some respondents finding community was as important and in some instances even more significant than the quality of employment opportunities or career advancement opportunities.

It is important to note, however, that not all respondents believe that economic and social integration and quality of life were contingent on the existence and involvement within their respective ethnocultural communities. Some students noted that a sense of community was found through social interactions with other students from a wide range of racial, ethnocultural and religious background, rather than through their respective ethnocultural community. The small social networks that they developed during their studies were enough to provide them with social integration and a high quality of life. Generally those who articulated this point of view noted that they felt welcome in Saskatoon and that they were comfortable attending events that were not put on by their respective ethnocultural community.

5.4.5 FAMILY SITUATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The fifth major set of factors that affected the international students' settlement and integration experiences and ultimately their decisions on whether to stay in or leave Saskatchewan was their family situations and opportunities for members of their families. Particularly important for them in this regard were several considerations related to the needs and preferences of various members of their families, but most notably their spouses, children, parents, and fiancées.

Some of those with spouses noted that their preference to stay in the province was quite closely linked to the employment opportunities, social networks and social relations available to their spouses.

Some of those with very young children indicated that access to good and affordable daycare was very important. Similarly, some of those with older children indicated that the quality of life that those children would experience at school and in the community would also be a key factor in their decision either to stay in or leave Saskatchewan. Those who were inclined to stay suggested that the major cities in Saskatchewan were good places to raise their children because they provided good access to good services and programs, and did not present the same types of problems or challenges commonly experienced in, or attributed to, larger cities. Factors such as low population density, clean air and the relatively low cost of living when compared to some of the largest cities in Canada were also cited as important in their decision to stay in Saskatchewan. Surprisingly, most respondents regarded the cold winter weather as only a minor detraction from what in many other respects was deemed to be a relatively good quality of life for their families.

Some of those with parents or fiancés in their home countries were more likely to consider leaving Saskatchewan and either return to those countries, or move to other provinces in Canada. Whereas some of those who were thinking of moving to their home countries did so because they believed that their parents or fiancés were unlikely to be admitted to Canada, others indicated that even if they were admitted they would likely find it much more difficult to achieve an adequate level of economic or social integration in Saskatchewan cities than in cities in British Columbia and Alberta with more and larger ethnocultural communities. Clearly their decisions regarding where to live and work after graduation were heavily affected by considerations related to familial factors, and the ability of all members of their families being able to achieve economic and social integration that included solid and substantial inter-personal relationships.

6. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The various parts of this report reveal that the policies, programs and services related to International Students have been evolving quite quickly during the past decade. They also reveal that notwithstanding many positive directions and initiatives in such policies, programs and services, some improvements are required for the dual purpose of ensuring:

- (a) that international students have even more positive learning, living and working experiences while studying at post-secondary institutions; and
- (b) that more international students who can make a positive contribution to Saskatchewan's provincial economy and society will choose this province as the place to work and live.

This section provides some recommendations for improving Saskatchewan's standing as an attractive site for international students to study, work, and live in Canada. The recommendations cover the following areas that have been noted as important by the respondents:

- employment opportunities and experiences
- immigration policies and programs
- integration programs and services
- community demographic profiles and dynamics
- family situations and opportunities

In addition to the recommendations contained below, readers of this report should review the recommendations contained in various other reports cited herein, but particularly the reports produced by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE, 2008), Conference Board of Canada (CBO, 1999, 2009), the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (COF, 2010), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada in collaboration with several other associations of post-secondary education (AUCC et al., and Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA, 2010).

6.1 IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Respondents repeatedly emphasized the importance of employment in shaping their decisions regarding post-graduate settlement. Many felt underserved and unconfident in approaching employment. As one participant stated: *"the biggest problem I hear from students is that they need work experience and it can be a very nerve wracking process to find jobs after graduation."* A range of factors was identified as barriers to success in labour markets, particularly lack of networks, language barriers and lack of information. Further assisting of international students in navigating the labour market must be a major pillar of retention strategies.

6.1.1 Increase Employment Search Support for Students

(a) Observation(s)

Students need more assistance in finding and in understanding information related to jobs and careers from the ISOs and university career centres. As one respondent stated: *"You cannot just tell students what the opportunities are – without showing them the way... because everything is*

so new.” Moreover, respondents expressed the challenges that they and other students faced in understanding some information. In the words of one respondent: “You go to the career center and you don’t really know what you are asking—if it is not in the language that you really understand it is difficult.”

(b) Recommendation(s)

The university ISOs and career centres should provide more direct assistance targeted at the specific needs of international students who may need some additional assistance with finding information regarding specific job opportunities and careers.

Special efforts should be made to ensure that information regarding job opportunities and careers is presented both in written and oral forms in ways that can be understood more easily by international students.

6.1.2 Expand Opportunities To Meet Work Requirements for Immigration Programs

(a) Observation(s)

International students need more opportunities to help them fulfill the work requirements for various federal and provincial immigration programs.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to help international students fulfill their work requirements for their immigration programs. Towards that end, special efforts should be made to expand employment opportunities for international students, or at least to assist international students in finding and securing existing opportunities. These should include employment opportunities that they can hold on full time, part time, and contractual basis either during or after they complete their studies.

6.1.3 Expand Co-op and Internship Opportunities

(a) Observation(s)

Co-op and internship programs are very valuable in creating important work experiences for international students. The expansion of co-op and internship programs will increase the likelihood of participation by international students. They also create the social networks that some international students do not have.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to expand the co-op and internship programs at post-secondary institutions that will facilitate and increase the participation of international students.

6.1.4 Expand Career Guidance and Mentorship Programs

(a) Observation(s)

International students expressed lack of confidence in searching for employment, in contacting potential employers, and in job interview situations. They expressed the need for guidance and mentoring regarding these matters as they attempt to find employment both during their studies and after completing their studies.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Establish guidance and mentorship programs designed to help international students become more comfortable and competent in searching for employment, contacting employers, and conducting themselves in job interviews.

6.1.5 Develop Networking Skills and Opportunities

(a) Observation(s)

International students indicated that they did not have extensive networks that would facilitate their search for and their ability to secure employment, and that they did not have the skills to establish and utilize such networks in Saskatchewan.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Post-secondary institutions and/or other agencies involved in providing settlement and integration services to international students or members of their families should provide networking skills workshops to enhance their skills in establishing and utilizing networks that may be useful in searching for and securing employment.

6.2 IMPROVE IMMIGRATION POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Respondents raised numerous concerns regarding different aspects of immigration policies and programs that would be usefully addressed as part of the province's international students retention strategy.

6.2.1 Improve Presentation of Information on Immigration Policies, Programs and Processes

(a) Observation(s)

Respondents expressed concern with the intelligibility of information provided to international students on immigration policies and programs. Many found the written information regarding the immigration application processes complex and confusing. Some also indicated that they found it difficult to comprehend some technical issues regarding immigration policies, programs and application and approval processes when explained to them orally. The difficulties were not simply due to language problems, but also to the fact that the students are not very familiar with Canadian jurisdictional and organizational frameworks.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Information materials regarding immigration policies and programs should be written in ways that can be understood much more easily by international students. Similarly, oral explanations of immigration policies, programs and the application and approval processes should be tailored to make them more intelligible to international students.

6.2.2 Increase Knowledge of Immigration Policies, Programs and Processes Within on-Campus Agencies

(a) Observation(s)

Some students noted that key student services agencies on campus agencies (i.e., ISOs and UCCs) do not always have enough staff members on duty with extensive expertise about immigration policies, programs and processes. Even if there are some staff members with that expertise, they do not necessarily deal with all student requests themselves. Consequently, not all students benefit equally from the expertise that exists in those offices.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Student services agencies on campus should have staff members available on a regular basis who can answer questions regarding immigration policies and programs. It would be particularly useful if those staff members had extensive and direct knowledge of the criteria and application processes for various programs. Student services agencies and federal and provincial government agencies should collaborate in improving immigration information and application support systems for international students.

6.2.3 Improve Modes of Providing Information and Support Services On-Campus

(a) Observation(s)

Respondents expressed concern that the current information and support systems related to immigration policies and programs are inadequate. They indicated there was too much reliance on providing information through brochures, websites and automated telephone systems, and on agencies and officials located off-campus. They added that this was not always adequate in answering their questions or in understanding what they had to do and how they should do it.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Federal and provincial immigration officers should make themselves available on campuses on a regular basis to meet in person with international students either in groups or individually to provide them:

- **with important information and to answer their questions regarding immigration policies and programs, and**
- **with guidance and support in dealing with important issues related to immigration policies and programs.**

6.2.4 Simplify and Expedite Permanent Resident Status Process

(a) Observation(s)

Respondents indicated that there are too many steps for students to become permanent residents. One student stated: *“I have been here for six years and I still do not have the right to work where I want”* (this was a PGWP problem). Graduate students stated the immigration programs should be altered to make it easier for them to acquire permanent resident status. One respondent stated that graduate students should not have to graduate before being able to apply for permanent resident status. This is considered very important because, in the words of one student: *“If they don’t have permanent resident status they don’t know what will happen”* to them not only in terms of acquiring such status, but also in terms of where they will live and work after they graduate.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Review the application systems, especially the criteria, for international students to acquire permanent resident status in an effort to simplify them and to expedite their applications.

6.2.5 Simplify, Clarify and Reconcile Immigration Policies and Programs

(a) Observation(s)

The division of powers for immigration creates some confusion and administrative problems. International students are not well versed in the division of authority between the national and provincial governments. Thus, they face challenges in understanding different immigration programs and requirements.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special initiatives should be undertaken to ensure that international students are aware of the differences between national and provincial immigration programs, and that the application processes are simplified, clarified, and reconciled. Every effort should be made to provide students with the requisite support to deal with the application processes both for federal and provincial immigration programs either through a ‘single window’ or at least through separate windows either in a ‘co-location’ or ‘close locations’, or possibly through a single web portal.

6.2.6 Improve Access to Contractual Work for SINP Requirement

(a) Observation(s)

Students indicated that the post-graduation work requirement to qualify for the SINP is unduly restrictive because it is very difficult for them to get full time work, part time work, and in some instances even short-term contracts that are quite common in today's labour market.

(b) Recommendation(s)

The SINP policy should be changed in the following ways to facilitate the ability of international students to qualify for the SINP:

- **,reducing the length of full time employment required to even less than six months and/or replacing the number of months with number of hours; and**
- **counting short-term contractual work as sufficient in meeting the employment criteria under the SINP.**

6.2.7 Reduce Work Requirement under the CEC

(a) Observation(s)

Respondents also indicated that the work requirement to qualify for the federal CEC program is also unduly restrictive. More specifically, they found the one year of employment much too difficult to achieve given how hard it was for them to find and secure work.

(b) Recommendation(s)

CEC policies should be changed in the following ways:

- **Facilitate the ability of international students to qualify for the CEC by, among other things, reducing the length of employment required from one year to less than six months; and**
- **Count short-term contractual work as sufficient in meeting the employment criteria under the CEC.**

6.3 IMPROVE INTEGRATION POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Several recommendations emerge from participant responses and concerns regarding the following matters: employment services, language services, assistance with immigration processes, and housing.

6.3.1 Improve Availability and Clarity of Information on Programs and Services

(a) Observation(s)

Respondents expressed confusion regarding the integration programs and services available to them. One of the common problems cited was the lack of readily available and clear information on settlement and integration programs and services provided by various agencies on-campus and off-campus. In the words of one respondent: *"It seems that there are 'secret programs' "*

available; if you know someone you can find a program, but if you don't know people you don't know about it."

(b) Recommendation(s)

The availability and clarity of information regarding services provided by various agencies both on-campus and in the community should be improved. Among other things, there should be a brochure and website that identifies the organizations and programs that exist to help students and their spouses. The content of such a brochure and website should be constructed very carefully to make them very "user-friendly" and very clear for international students. Such a brochure and website should be perfectly clear regarding what services are available, which organizations provide them, and who is eligible to access them.

6.3.2 Improve Coordination Between On- Campus and Off-Campus Agencies

(a) Observation(s)

Some respondents pointed to what they viewed as a "gap" and insufficient coordination between on-campus and off-campus agencies in designing and delivering programs and services for international students and their spouses. They noted that on-campus agencies did not have sufficient programming for spouses, off-campus agencies did not have sufficient programming for either students or their spouses, and neither on-campus nor off-campus agencies had sufficient programming in which both students and spouses could participate in together.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Improve coordination between on-campus and off-campus agencies in the provision of programs and services for international students and their spouses. In addition to the type of programs offered for by various agencies, attention should be devoted to the relative merits of programs and services that are offered (a) only to international students, (b) only to their spouses, and (c) jointly to international students and their spouses.

6.3.3 Expand On-Campus ESL Services

(a) Observation(s)

International students noted that insufficient language fluency or clarity is a barrier to successful integration for some international students. Their language capacities also affect their decision to remain in, or to leave, Saskatchewan. They also noted that the international student offices and career centers on their respective campuses have been good at assisting them with some challenges they face in light of their language deficiencies. However, many students who were not confident in their language abilities expressed concern about the effect it would have on their career prospects after they graduate. To help them overcome language deficiencies, they suggested that more ESL training should be provided to international students and their spouses both on-campus and off-campus.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Existing policies and programs related to ESL training for international students should be reviewed and possibly reformed. Some attention should also be devoted to the policies and programs related to ESL training for the spouses of international students. Part of that review should include an analysis of TOEFL scores as indicators of the extent to which students are likely to be successful (with and without ESL training) not only in their academic programs, but also in starting careers immediately after graduating.

6.3.4 Establish Canadian Studies Certificate for International Students*(a) Observation(s)*

International students come to Saskatchewan study various disciplines. In part, however, they come here to learn about Canada. Learning various things about Canada and Saskatchewan within and beyond the scope of their primary area of academic specialization would be useful for them regardless of whether they remain in Saskatchewan, move elsewhere in Canada, or leave the country. The knowledge they would acquire from pursuing courses within the scope of the certificate in Canadian Studies will increase not only their awareness of and engender interest in Canada, but also their ability to integrate economically and socially. Such certification that is clearly and officially recognized by the post-secondary institutions would benefit students immensely.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Post-secondary institutions should consider establishing Canadian Studies Certificate Programs. Such certificate programs should consist of course based and experiential learning that would help international students become more knowledgeable about various aspects of Canada. Such certificate programs should be promoted extensively among international students. Such certificate programs should be recognized officially in documentation regarding their academic training and achievements at the post-secondary institutions.

6.3.5 Improve Housing Assistance*(a) Observation(s)*

Housing concerns were identified as a major issue of successful integration for international students. In the words of one respondent: *“once you find a place to live everything is smoother after that.”* Another respondent told a story regarding a misunderstanding on her part as to whether she had to reapply for residence after her first year of living there. She thought her initial application guaranteed her a place in residence for the duration of her studies at the university. By the time she realized that she had to reapply, the application deadline had passed and all the rooms had been rented. For several days she was very worried about whether she would be able to find any affordable and safe place to stay in the city. Fortunately the ISO was able to help her find such a place.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Consideration should be given to the following matters:

- **Producing an information package that explains what they can expect at the university and in the city related to various important matters, including housing options, costs, and regulations. The information package should be distributed to all international students either prior to or upon arrival.**
- **Developing and maintaining housing registries and housing search support services for international students.**
- **Ensuring there are clusters of housing units both on and off campus available for international students and students born in Canada so they are living in close proximity to each other in ways that will make it possible for them to interact and socialize, share important information, and support each other in dealing with various academic and non-academic matters.**

6.3.6 Improve Homestay Programs**(a) Observation(s)**

Two students reported that they had negative experiences with their hosts in the Homestay Program offered in conjunction with the ESL program. More specifically, they noted that the home environment was not very hospitable or friendly. Examples of this were the insufficiency of food and unreasonable restrictions on showering.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Homestay programs offered in conjunction with the ESL program should have the following: adequate screening of potential hosts; adequate orientation of those selected to be hosts to acceptable and unacceptable standards for hosting; adequate orientation of students to what they can expect in homestay situations; and adequate monitoring of the homestay situations to ensure that both students and hosts are satisfied with the arrangements and relationship.

6.4 ENHANCE NUMBER, SIZE, VIBRANCY OF ETHNOCULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Saskatchewan's limited number, size, and vibrancy of ethnocultural communities was cited as a reason by some students for choosing to leave the province. Some students felt that the existence of and involvement in such communities was important for them, their spouses, their children and any parents or siblings they hoped would join them in Canada someday. A related factor what some described as very limited sets of social networks, too much 'social distance' or insufficient 'social warmth'. These expectations and hopes are not easy to address, but best efforts on a continuing basis to improve these situations at least through incremental changes are required in a few areas.

6.4.1 Increase the Number, Size, Vibrancy and Profile of Ethnocultural Communities

(a) Observation(s)

Some students noted the absence of a critical mass of members of their respective ethnocultural communities in Saskatchewan, and that valued elements of their respective cultures (e.g., ethnoculturally based social, recreational and religious infrastructure and programming) were either absent or at least limited.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to enhance the number, size, vibrancy and profile of ethnocultural communities through the immigration and multiculturalism policies and programs. Toward that end, special efforts should be made to build upon and expand the multicultural population base, the multicultural nature of commercial and community services and activities (e.g., stores, restaurants, arts, sports, recreation, etc.). All such efforts should devote attention to the needs, interests or preferences of international students, as well as those of immigrants and non-immigrants who are already well established in their respective communities.

6.4.2 Improve Awareness Among International Students of Ethnocultural Communities

(a) Observation(s)

Comments and observations made by international students suggest that they were not very aware of the existing ethnocultural communities in the cities and other communities in the province.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to increase awareness among international students of the existing ethnocultural communities in Saskatchewan. This could take many different forms and may require more systematic partnerships between university agencies serving international students and proactive leaders of ethnocultural associations and communities.

6.4.3 Improve Opportunities for International Students to Connect with Ethnocultural Communities

(a) Observation(s)

Comments and observations made by international students suggest that even if they were aware that ethnocultural communities existed in the cities and other communities in the province, they were unable to connect with them and to link up with social or occupational networks within them.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to increase opportunities for international students to connect with existing ethnocultural groups and for them to link up with existing social and occupational networks within them. This could take many different forms including:

- **establishing more partnerships between university agencies serving international students and proactive leaders of ethnocultural associations and communities;**
- **identifying existing types of spaces, events and activities on-campus and off-campus that would contribute to facilitating such connections, and establish any additional ones that may be required; and**
- **exploring ways that the internet could be used in fostering and sustaining such connections.**

6.5 IMPROVE FAMILY SITUATION AND OPPORTUNITIES

Several respondents cited proximity to and opportunities for their family members as a factor that influences their decisions either to stay in Saskatchewan or to return to their country of origin.

*6.5.1 Assist Spouses and Children of International Students in Canada**(a) Observation(s)*

Some respondents noted that attention should be devoted to the needs of spouses and children of international students. Among the key needs noted were the following:

- those of their spouses for language training, access to education programs, and access to employment; those of their very young children to good and affordable daycare service; and
- those of their older children to educational, social and recreational activities that would contribute to a positive experience during their stay in the province.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to identify and meet the needs of spouses or international students for language training, access to education programs, and access to employment; those of their very young children to good and affordable daycare service

Special efforts should be made to identify the needs of the older children of international students for older children to educational, social and recreational activities that would contribute to a positive experience during their stay in the province.

*6.5.2 Facilitate Student Sponsorship of Family Members**(a) Observation(s)*

Several participants cited working and living close to their family as a reason for returning to their home country after completing their studies. This can be attributed to many factors, not the least of which is their belief that it would be difficult for members of their family (especially

their spouses, children, and parents) to be granted permanent resident status to live in Canada within a reasonable length of time, if at all.

Initiatives to facilitate family reunification in the province would likely contribute substantially to the retention of international students. Ultimately, of course, in addition to sustaining important family ties, it would also contribute to the establishment and/or sustainability of ethnocultural communities that, in turn, would also contribute to attracting and retaining other prospective immigrants.

(b) Recommendation(s)

Special efforts should be made to do the following:

- **undertake a special policy and program review to examine the opportunities and obstacles of international students in sponsoring family members (i.e., spouses, children, parents, siblings, and possibly even fiancés);**
- **ensure that the sponsorship requirements do not present unduly restrictive or burdensome for international students with viable employment who are trying to sponsor family members through provincial or federal programs; and**
- **ensure that international students who are able to secure employment in Saskatchewan receive adequate assistance to sponsor members of their family to immigrate to Canada either through the provincial or federal immigration programs.**

The foregoing observations and recommendations, along with those articulated in other reports, should be considered carefully by various stakeholders within the educational system in making choices regarding strategic directions and actions. All stakeholders have a role and responsibility in making choices regarding strategic directions and actions, because they all have a stake, individually and collectively, for the effective management of this important program area that has significant implications for individuals, institutions, communities and economies

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES

PART I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDIVIDUALS

1. What is your gender?
[] Male [] Female
2. What is your age? _____
3. What is your country of origin? _____
4. How long have you studied in Canada? _____
5. What type of degree/certificate program are you registered?(eg: Bachelors, Graduate)

6. What academic program were you enrolled in? _____
7. Have you worked **on campus** while studying?
[] Yes [] No
8. Have you worked **off campus** while studying?
[] Yes [] No
9. If so what sectors have you worked in?
[] University (i.e. teaching, research, student assistant)
[] Government Sector (i.e. City of Saskatoon)
[] For-Profit Sector (i.e. private company, restaurant)
[] Non-Profit Sector (i.e. Settlement agency – Open Door, International Development agency)

10. What immigration, employment or international student services are you aware of **on** campus?

Have you used any of these services?

[] Yes [] No

If **YES**, which one of these have you used (s)?

11. What immigration, employment or international student services are you aware of **off-** campus (in Saskatoon, Regina or other places in Saskatchewan)?

Have you used any of these services?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If **YES**, which one of these have you used?

12. Employment Preferences of Student and Spouse

12.1 Which of the following sectors are you most interested in finding employment? (rank from highest interest to lowest interest)

- ☐ Private Sector
☐ Government Sector
☐ Cooperative and Non-Profit Sector
☐ University Sector

12.2 Which of the following employment sectors is your spouse most interested in finding employment: (rank from highest interest to lowest interest)

- ☐ Private Sector
☐ Government Sector
☐ Cooperative and Non-Profit Sector
☐ University Sector

13. Familiarity with Employment Opportunities

13.1 How familiar are you and/or your spouse with employment opportunities in the for-profit sector?

☐ Very Familiar ☐ Somewhat Familiar ☐ Not Very Familiar

13.2 How familiar are you and/or your spouse with employment opportunities in the non-profit sector?

☐ Very Familiar ☐ Somewhat Familiar ☐ Not Very Familiar

13.3 How familiar are you and/or your spouse with employment opportunities in the cooperative sector?

☐ Very Familiar ☐ Somewhat Familiar ☐ Not Very Familiar

13.4 How familiar are you and/or your spouse with employment opportunities in the government sector?

☐ Very Familiar ☐ Somewhat Familiar ☐ Not Very Familiar

PART II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS GROUPS

1. Plans to Stay or Not Stay in Saskatchewan/Canada

- 1.1 What are your plans in the short term and long term regarding where you will work and live?
- 1.2 Why have you chosen OR not chosen to stay in Saskatchewan/Canada?
- 1.3 What factors are influencing your decisions on where to live and work?

2. Knowledge of Immigration Programs

- 2.1 What is your knowledge and understanding of the Post-Graduate Work Program?
- 2.2. What is your knowledge and understanding of the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program and the Canadian Experience Class?
- 2.3 What has been your experience with accessing information of these Immigration Programs?
- 2.3 If you are choosing to stay in Saskatchewan/Canada which immigration program will you be applying under? Why have you made this particular choice?

3. Experiences with Support Services for Immigration and Integration

- 3.1 What have been your experiences with the support services **on- and off-**campus for social/community integration?
Probing questions: What have been your best experiences with these services? What have been your worst experiences?

4. Employment Experiences of Student and Spouse

- 4.1 What does employment mean to you and your spouse?
- 4.2 What does career development mean to you and your spouse?
- 4.3 What is your and your spouses' understanding of the social economy sector for employment and career development? By social economy sector, we mean non-profit, cooperative and community-based organizations.
- 4.4 What have you and your spouse done in terms of advancing your career and seeking employment?
- 4.5 What has been your experience with finding employment opportunities and using employment support services?
- 4.6 What were your employment experiences while studying and/or immediately after graduation?
- 4.7 What has been your spouses' experience with finding employment opportunities and using employment support services?
- 4.8 What were your spouses' employment experiences while studying and/or immediately after graduation?
- 4.9 What do you think you and your spouse's employment prospects are?

5. Improvements

- 5.1 What improvements could be made to programs and services help to you and your spouse decide to stay in Saskatchewan? Who do you think can make these improvements?
- 5.2 What improvements could be made to programs and services to help you and your spouse decide to develop your career and find employment in Saskatchewan? Who do you think can make these improvements?
 - **(Prods would include mentioning these different sectors:** university, community and cooperative agencies, non-profit agencies, for-profit companies, or the government).
- 5.3 Whose responsibility is it in your opinion to support your and your spouse with immigration related questions and needs?

6. Other Comments or Suggestions

- 6.1 Do you have any other comments or suggestions regarding what has to be improved to help international students decide to stay in Saskatchewan?

APPENDIX B: IMMIGRATION PROGRAMS REQUIREMENTS

1. SASKATCHEWAN IMMIGRANT NOMINEE PROGRAM (SINP)

<http://www.saskimmigrationcanada.ca/sin>

The Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) can provide an alternate and quicker means of entry into Canada. It allows Saskatchewan to nominate applicants, who qualify under criteria established by the province, to the federal government for landed immigrant status. The SINP offers:

- The ability to select applicants whose skills and abilities best fit the province's needs;
- Application processing times that are faster than other federal immigration classes; and
- Assistance from Provincial Immigration Officers who are readily available to explain program requirements and processes.

What You Need to Know about Using Immigration Representatives

You do **not** need to hire an immigration representative/consultant to apply to the SINP. However, if you wish to engage the services of an immigration representative or consultant, you should note that:

- Immigration representatives usually charge money for their services to applicants.
- Your application will not be given special attention and your immigration representative/consultant cannot guarantee that your application will be approved.
- No immigration consultant has an immigrant quota from the Province of Saskatchewan.
- The SINP does not engage the exclusive services of any agencies or representatives.
- The SINP provides all the forms and information you will need to complete your application for free on this website.

[Learn more](#) about how to choose a licensed, reputable and trustworthy representative and how to protect yourself from scams and immigration fraud.

[Students](#)

This category allows students who have graduated from a recognized, post-secondary educational institution in Canada to apply for landed immigrant status under the SINP. It is divided into two sub-categories:

- Post-Graduate Work Permit Stream and
- Master's and PHD Graduate Stream

The Student Category allows eligible post-secondary graduates to apply for landed immigrant status under the SINP. There are two streams of the Student Category: the Post-Graduation Work Permit Stream and the Master's and PhD Graduate Stream.

Eligibility

Post-Graduation Work Permit Stream

You may qualify to apply under the SINP Student Category: Post-Graduation Work Permit Stream if:

1. You have graduated with a certificate, diploma or degree from a recognized post-secondary educational institution in Canada. The program must have been equivalent to at least one academic year (eight months) of full-time study.
2. You have worked for at least six months (with minimum 960 hours) of paid employment **in Saskatchewan**. Eligible types of work experience in Saskatchewan include on-campus, off-campus, co-op terms, graduate fellowships that can be verified by your institution, and work experience gained on a post-graduate work permit.
3. You have applied for and received a post-graduation work permit from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).
4. You have a current, permanent, full-time job offer from a Saskatchewan employer. The job offer does not have to relate to your studies.

Master's and PhD Graduate Stream

You may qualify to apply under the SINP Student Category: Master's and PhD Graduate Stream if:

1. You have completed all degree requirements for an existing Master's and/or PhD program that required at least one academic year of full-time study from the University of Saskatchewan or the University of Regina.
2. You are applying within two years of the date on which your degree was granted and from a country in which you have legal status.
3. You intend to live in Saskatchewan and are able to demonstrate your ability to settle and work in Saskatchewan with at least one of the following:
 - Have at least six months of employment history in your field of training in Saskatchewan;
 - Are currently employed in your field of training or have received a job offer in your field of training in Saskatchewan for a term longer than six months;
 - Your spouse is currently employed in Saskatchewan in a permanent, full-time position; or,
 - You have enough money to sustain for a short time without work (\$10,000 for you and \$2,000 for each accompanying family member).

2. FEDERAL POST GRADUATE WORK PERMIT

Work permits for students: Working after graduation— Who can apply

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-postgrad-who.asp>

To obtain a work permit after your graduation, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must have studied **full time** in Canada and you must have completed a program of study that lasted at least eight months.
- If in your last semester of study you are registered as a part-time student because you only need a few courses to graduate, but you have been studying full-time during your studies, you are eligible to apply for a Post-Graduation Work Permit.
- In addition, you must have graduated from:
 - a public post-secondary institution, such as a college, trade/technical school, university or CEGEP (in Quebec), or
 - a private post-secondary institution that operates under the same rules and regulations as public institutions, and receives at least 50 percent of its financing for its overall operations from government grants (currently only private college-level educational institutions in Quebec qualify), or
 - Canadian private institution authorized by provincial statute to confer degrees **but only if you are enrolled in one of the programs of study leading to a degree as authorized by the province and not in all programs of study offered by the private institution.**
- You must apply for a work permit within 90 days of receiving written confirmation (for example, a transcript or an official letter) from your institution indicating that you have met the requirements for completing your academic program.
- You must have completed and passed the program of study and received a notification that you are eligible to obtain your degree, diploma or certificate.
- You must have a valid study permit when you apply for the work permit.

Impact of length of program of study in Canada and the length of the work permit

A Post-Graduation Work Permit cannot be valid longer than the official length of your program of study in Canada. For example, students graduating from a four-year degree program might be eligible for a three-year year work permit. Students graduating from an eight-month certificate program would only be eligible for a work permit of eight months.

If the official length of your program of study is...	Then..
Less than eight months	You are not eligible for this program
Less than two years but more than eight months	You may get a work permit for a period no longer than the length of your program of study (for example, if you studied for nine months, a work permit may be issued for a period of nine months)
Two years or more	A work permit may be issued for three years

You are not eligible for the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program if you:

- Study in a program that is less than eight months long
- Participate in a Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)
- Participate in a Government of Canada Awards Program funded by DFAIT
- Receive funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- Participate in the Equal Opportunity Scholarship, Canada-Chile
- Participate in the Canada-China Scholars Exchanges Program
- Participate in the Organization of American States Fellowships Program
- Participate in a distance learning program either from abroad or from within Canada or
- Have previously been issued a Post-Graduation Work Permit following any other program of study.

Studying in Canada: Work permits for students—Working after graduation

If you want to work in Canada after you graduate from your studies, you must apply for a work permit under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program.

Post-Graduation Work Permit Program

The Post-Graduation Work Permit Program allows students who have graduated from a participating Canadian post-secondary institution to gain valuable Canadian work experience.

A work permit under the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program cannot be valid for longer than the student's study program. For example, if you graduate from a four-year degree program, you could be eligible for a three-year work permit if you meet the criteria. If you graduate from an eight-month certificate program, you would be eligible for a work permit that is valid for no more than eight months.

3. FEDERAL CANADIAN EXPERIENCE CLASS

If you are a temporary foreign worker or a foreign student who graduated in Canada, you often have the qualities to make a successful transition from temporary to permanent residence. You are familiar with Canadian society and can contribute to the Canadian economy. You should have knowledge of English or French and qualifying work experience.

Applying to stay in Canada permanently in your case is simple. You can do this under the Canadian Experience Class. All the guides, information and forms you need to apply are included here.

Before you apply, make sure you get to know the requirements and current application procedures. After you apply, make sure you return to this website to find out about the steps that follow.

You must meet these minimum requirements to apply for permanent residence under the Canadian Experience Class. You must:

- Plan to live outside the province of [Quebec](#)
- Be either:
 - a temporary foreign worker with at least two years of full-time (or equivalent) skilled work experience in Canada, or
 - a foreign graduate from a Canadian post-secondary institution with at least one year of full-time (or equivalent) skilled work experience in Canada
- Have gained your experience in Canada with the proper work or study authorization
- Apply while working in Canada – or – within one year of leaving your job in Canada
- Include the results of an independent language test (from an agency designated by CIC) with your application

According to the Canadian National Occupational Classification (NOC), skilled work experience means:

- Skill Type 0 (managerial occupations) or
- Skill Level A (professional occupations) or
- Skill Level B (technical occupations and skilled trades)

Your application will be assessed on two requirements if you apply as a temporary foreign worker:

- Your work experience and
- Your ability in English or French.

If you apply as a graduate of a Canadian post-secondary educational institution with Canadian work experience, it will be assessed using the above requirements, as well as:

- Your education.

Principal applicant

If you are married or living with a common-law partner in Canada, and she/he also meets the above requirements, you can decide which one of you will apply for the Canadian Experience Class as a principal applicant.

4. FEDERAL SKILLED WORKER PROGRAM

Skilled workers are people who are selected as permanent residents based on their ability to become economically established in Canada.

Federal skilled worker applications are assessed for eligibility according to the criteria set out below.

For your application to be eligible for processing, you must:

- include the results of your official language proficiency test, **AND**
- have a valid offer of [arranged employment](#), **OR**
- have one year of continuous full-time paid work experience in at least one of the [occupations listed here](#).

Work experience minimum requirements

If your application is eligible for processing, it will then be assessed against minimum requirements.

Your work experience must be:

- for at least one year, continuous, and paid (full-time or the equivalent in part-time), **AND**
- Skill Type 0 (managerial occupations) or Skill Level A (professional occupations) or B (technical occupations and skilled trades) on the Canadian [National Occupational Classification](#) (NOC) list, **AND**
- within the last 10 years.

If you meet the above minimum requirements, your application will be processed according to the six selection factors in the skilled worker points grid , which are:

- your education
- your abilities in English and/or French, Canada's two official languages
- your work experience
- your age
- whether you have arranged employment in Canada, and
- your adaptability.

You must also show that you have enough money to support yourself and your dependants after you arrive in Canada.

APPENDIX C: SASKATCHEWAN GRADUATE RETENTION PROGRAM

(Check following website for updates: <http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca/grp>)

Graduate Retention Program (GRP)

What is the Graduate Retention Program?

Saskatchewan is thriving and opportunities for graduates have never been brighter. The Graduate Retention Program rewards you for building your future in Saskatchewan by providing a rebate up to \$20,000 of tuition fees paid by eligible graduates who live in Saskatchewan and who file a Saskatchewan income tax return.

The Graduate Retention Program became effective January 1, 2008.

The program has been expanded to include graduates from across the country and beyond who pursue their careers in Saskatchewan!

From 2000-2007, the Government of Saskatchewan had two **previous graduate tax benefit programs** for graduates from post-secondary programs.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible if:

- you graduated from an approved program after January 1, 2006;
- you already live in Saskatchewan; or
- you are moving to Saskatchewan.

An approved program **must**:

- be equivalent to at least six months of full-time study at an **eligible institution**;
- result in a certificate, diploma, or undergraduate degree; or,
- provide journeypersons certification.

PLEASE NOTE: If you graduated in 2006 or 2007 with a certificate, diploma, undergraduate degree or journeypersons certificate and previously received the GTE, please ensure we have your most current address as we may need to contact you to gather additional information prior to issuing a GRP certificate.

How do I claim my rebate?

As an eligible graduate, you will be issued a GRP certificate by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration to be submitted along with the amount of tuition paid when **filing your Saskatchewan income tax**.

How do I apply?

- **Graduates of Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions**
 - **Graduates of post-secondary institutions outside of Saskatchewan**
NOTE: If you wish to have a third party request information pertaining to your graduate tax benefit on your behalf, the following Consent to Release Information form must be completed and faxed or mailed to Student Financial Assistance Branch.
 - **Consent to Release Information - Graduate Tax Benefit Programs**
-

How will my tuition rebate be calculated?

Your rebate will be based on the actual tuition you paid as indicated on the T2202A tax receipts issued by your post-secondary institution - up to the **maximum tuition rebate amount** you are eligible for based on your program.

For examples of unique situations (ie. more than one credential, more than one institution attended) see **Scenarios** or check out **Frequently asked Questions and Answers**, or contact us directly.

**Calculate your potential GRP amount.**

NOTE: The calculator is for estimation purposes only and represents potential rebate amounts you may be eligible for based on the information you have submitted.

Contact Us

Telephone	1.800.597.8278 toll-free; 306.787.5620 in the Regina area or outside Canada
Fax:	306.787.1608
Mail Address:	Graduate Retention Program Student Financial Assistance Branch 200 – 3303 Hillside Street REGINA SK S4S 6P4
Email:	SFAWEB@gov.sk.ca

APPENDIX D: SASKATCHEWAN GRADUATE TAX BENEFIT PROGRAMS

(Check following website for updates: <http://www.aeei.gov.sk.ca/graduatetaxbenefit>)

Graduate Tax Benefit Programs (GTE/GTC)

From 2000-2007, the Government of Saskatchewan had two previous graduate tax benefit programs for graduates from post-secondary programs.

The new **Graduate Retention Program** initiative became effective January 1, 2008.

Graduates from 2000-2006: The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit (GTC)

The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit is a one-time tax credit that graduates and journeypersons may apply against their Saskatchewan Income Tax. The tax credit amount is dependent on the year of graduation and any unused credit may be carried forward for up to four years.

Year of Graduation	Tax Credit Amount
2000-2003	\$350
2004	\$500
2005	\$675
2006	\$850

Graduates from 2006-2007: Graduate Tax Exemption (GTE)

The Graduate Tax Exemption will provide a \$10,000 exemption from Saskatchewan Income Tax for the 2007 taxation year. Graduates who earn a lower income in 2007 can carry over the unused exemption for an additional five years.

The Information below applies to both the Graduate Tax Credit and Graduate Tax Exemption Programs.

Who is Eligible?

Post-secondary graduates from approved programs from 2000-2007 are eligible if their training:

- Results in a certificate, diploma, or degree; or
- Provides certification to journeypersons or a proficiency certificate (where applicable); and
- Is the equivalent of at least six months in length of full-time study.

Students who graduated from an eligible out-of province program and are living and working in Saskatchewan may also be eligible.

Both programs apply to the graduate only and cannot be transferred to another person including parents or spouses.

Information for 2006 Graduates Only

2006 graduates are eligible for both the Graduate Tax Credit and the Graduate Tax Exemption. The same eligibility criteria applies to both programs, however you must complete both a **Graduate Tax Credit application form** and a **Graduate Tax Exemption application form**.

How to Apply

Some Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions may have applied to the Government of Saskatchewan on behalf of graduates who provided their consent. If you believe your educational institution may have applied on your behalf but have not received either the **Graduate Tax Credit** or **Graduate Tax Exemption**, please contact our office to confirm that your application was received.

Graduates whose educational institutions did not apply on their behalf who wish to receive either the **Graduate Tax Credit** or the **Graduate Tax Exemption** must apply directly to the Government of Saskatchewan. The government will then issue a certificate to be filed with the graduates' income tax.

Graduates must confirm that they graduated from an eligible program of study by including a copy of the following with their application for either program:

- Transcript; or
- Certificate, degree, diploma; or
- Journey person certification or proficiency certificate (where applicable).

Application Forms

Please complete the corresponding application form to your year of graduation:

Year of Graduation	Application Form
2000-2005	Graduate Tax Credit Application
2006	Graduate Tax Credit Application Graduate Tax Exemption Application
2007	Graduate Tax Exemption Application

Reminder: 2006 graduates must complete both application forms to receive both benefits!

Claiming the Tax Benefit

To claim either the **Graduate Tax Credit** or **Graduate Tax Exemption**, graduates will need to file the certificate issued by the Government of Saskatchewan with their Saskatchewan Income Tax for the taxation year in which they graduated.

Graduates who have already filed their Saskatchewan Income Tax return for the year they graduated may be required to have their taxes reassessed by the Canada Revenue Agency for the taxation year in which they graduated to claim the benefit.

Both programs apply to the graduate only and cannot be transferred to another person including parents or spouses.

Contact Us

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