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Snapshot 15

Landed Immigrant Youth and
International Students in
Canadian Provinces.



**Canadian Council
for Youth Prosperity**

**Conseil Canadien pour
la Réussite des Jeunes**

ccyp-ccpj.org

Snapshot 15 Summary

- Immigration is the source of growth in Canada's youth population.
- Small provinces like PEI experienced higher growth in landed immigrant youth than the large provinces like Ontario or Quebec,
 - In fact, PEI grew the most in terms of landed immigrant youth compared to other provinces,
 - PEI also had the highest growth in Canadian born youth (unlike other provinces)
 - International students were a very significant contributor to PEI's landed immigrant youth population
 - A similar process in the other Maritimes.
- Although a small share of 19-29-year-olds in Canada, international students have been increasing in importance as a source of landed immigrant youth since 2018.
- In terms of sheer numbers, Ontario has the largest youth population, landed immigrant youth population, AND international student population at 2.9 million, 609,201 (February 2022) and 292,240 (2021) respectively.
 - However, between 2022 and 2018, Ontario ranked 8 out of 9 in landed immigrant youth growth. Its share of international students actually declined in 2021 compared to 2018 as international student growth was higher in other provinces.
- Ontario processed the most international student applications for permanent residency prior to the pandemic in 2018 and in 2021, during the pandemic.
 - However, international students as a pool for potential landed immigrants in Ontario is small.
- Small provinces like Saskatchewan draw on their international student pools for potential immigrants. Large provinces like Ontario do not do that in a significant way.



Landed immigrant youth are approximately 18% of 15–29 year olds in Canada.

Landed immigrant youth are 15–29 year-olds who are not born in Canada, arrived in Canada as either, permanent residents or transitioned to permanent residency from another entry status (international students, temporary foreign worker, refugee status, etc). Landed immigrant youth include youth who may presently be naturalized Canadians but had previously been on landed or permanent resident status.

Landed immigrant youth could have arrived with their families or independently into Canada.

How many?

As of February 2022, there were 1.3 million landed immigrant youth in the age range of 15–29 years in Canada. Canadian-born youth numbered 5.8 million as obtained from the Labour Force Survey microdata for that month.

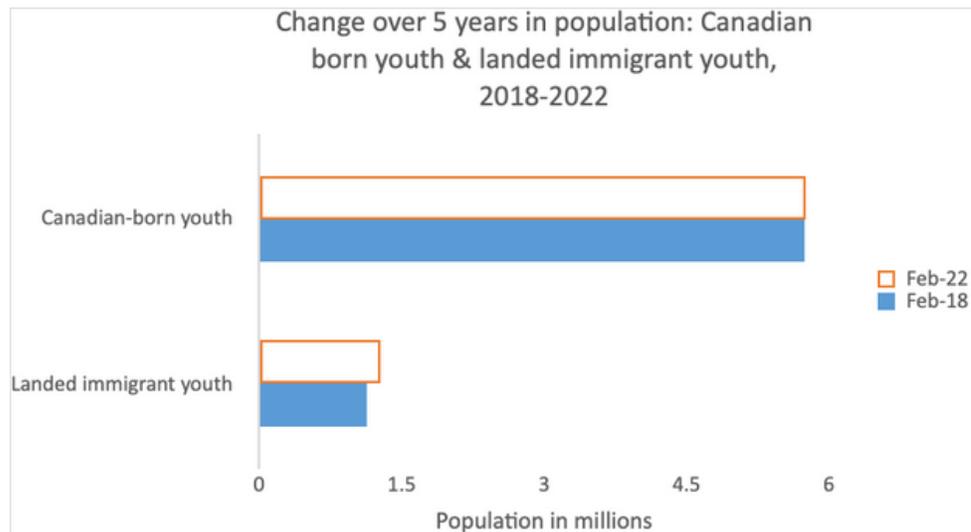
A point of note:

We are using seasonally unadjusted monthly data from the LFS to provide us with the most current estimates of population totals, we realize that there are small differences between monthly population figures put out by the Labour Force Survey public use microdata, arising from survey design. The non-seasonality of population figures allows us to use the selected months and years in the LFS for only an approximation of annual figures. For the most part, we have used the monthly figures to determine change overestimates but there are a few places in the following document where we use these data as proxies for annual figures for the aforementioned reason."



Growth in Canada's youth population comes from immigrant youth

Figure 1

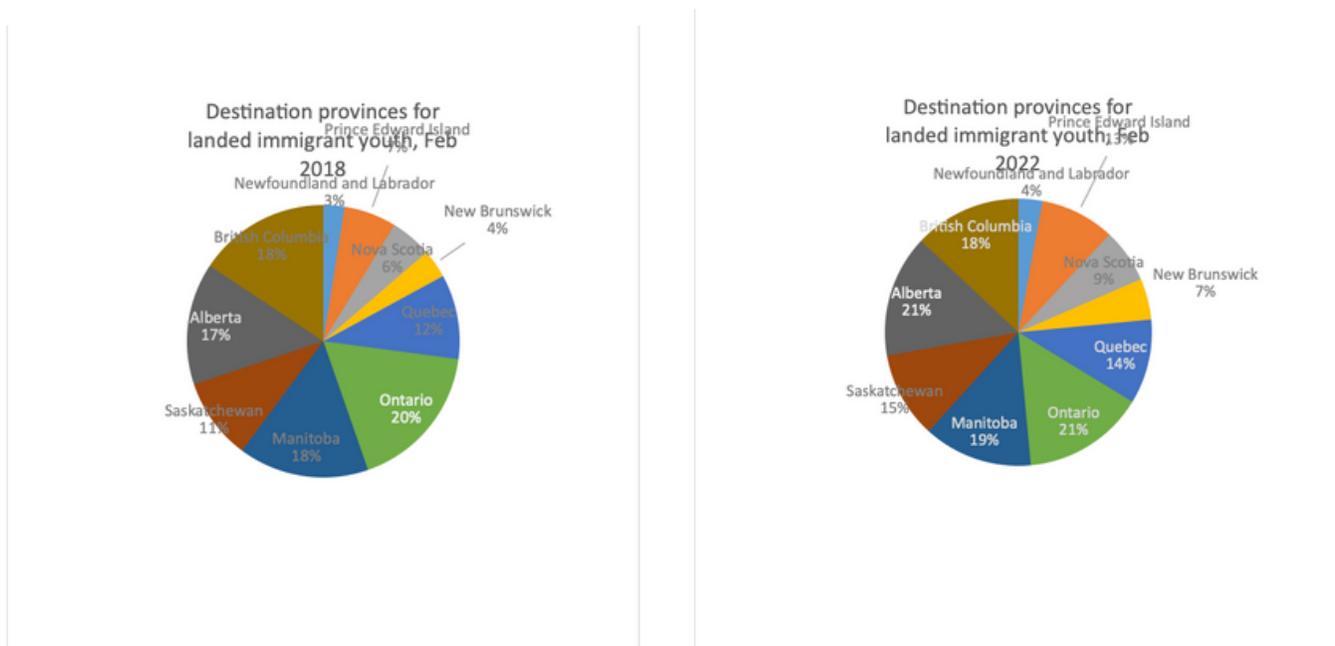


Source: Calculated from LFS microdata

There were 5.7 million Canadian-born youth and 1.1 million landed immigrant youth in Canada in February 2018. By February 2022, there were 1.3 million landed immigrant youth, a 13% increase over 5 years. Naturally, the growth rate of Canadian-born youth was very low, a mere 0.2% increase over the same period. All growth in the youth population came from the immigration of youth.

Which provinces did immigrant youth go into?

Figure 2



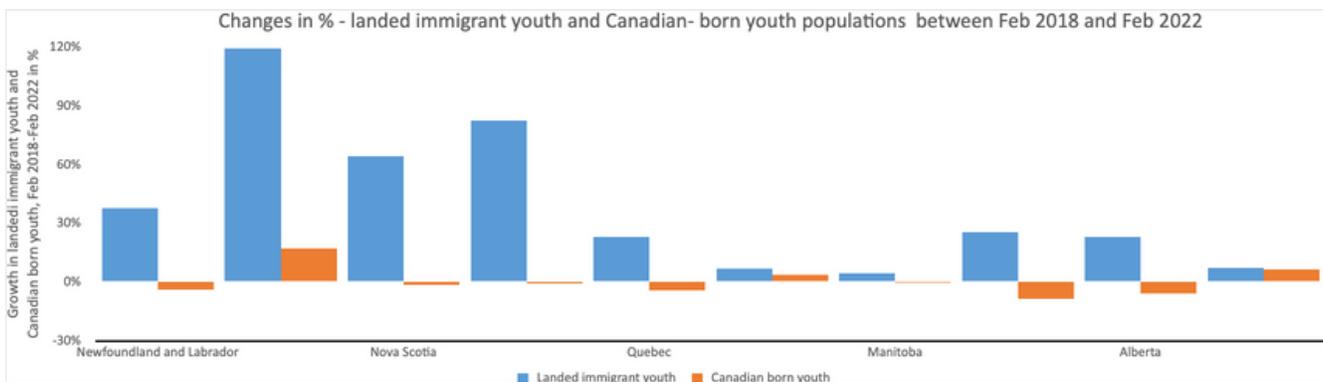
Source: Calculated from LFS microdata



The number 1 destination province for landed immigrant youth is Ontario. Runner up by Feb 2022 was Alberta, where landed immigrant youth formed 21% of youth in the 15–29 age category, up from 17% in Feb 2018. British Columbia ceded its second place to Alberta, falling to the third-largest destination province for landed immigrant youth. Quebec retained its fourth-place position during this 5-year period. Notably, the Atlantic provinces together (Newfoundland & Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick) where landed immigrant youth comprise 20% of their youth population in Feb 2018, saw their combined share rise to 33%, the highest share yet amongst all provinces by Feb 2022. Except for British Columbia, every province in Canada received more landed immigrant youth.

PEI more than doubled its landed immigrant youth population AND it also attracted the most Canadian born youth amongst all the provinces

Figure 3



Source: Calculated from LFS microdata

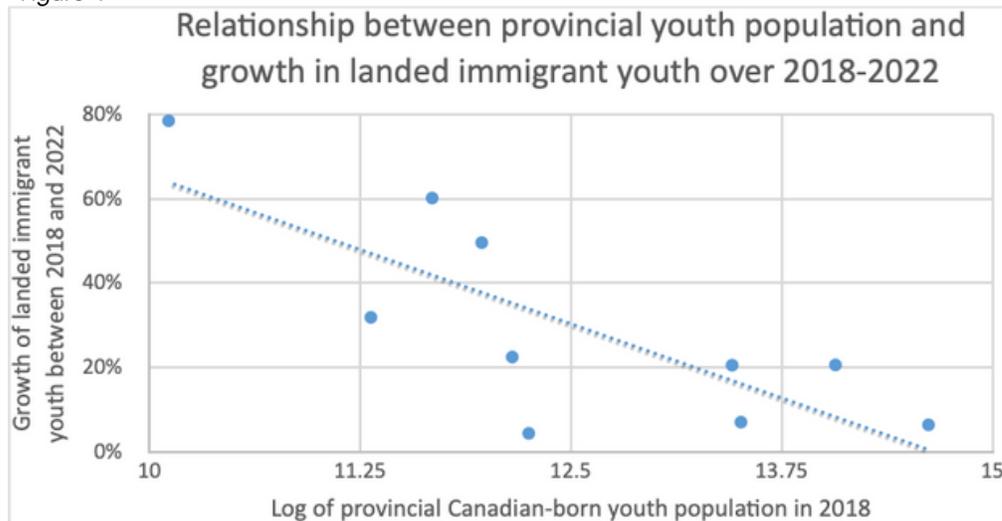
PEI went from a landed immigrant youth population of 1,921 in Feb 2018 to 4,209 by Feb 2022. Its' Canadian born youth numbered 24,675 in Feb 2018, but by Feb 2022, it grew unlike other provinces to 28,903 youths. It is likely that this is also the result of in-migration of Canadian youth from other provinces.

The relatively high growth in landed immigrant youth likely happened because of the Atlantic provinces pursuing immigration policies in response to their relatively small youth populations and aging demographics.



Small provinces like PEI experienced higher growth in landed immigrant youth than the large provinces like Ontario or Quebec

Figure 4



Source: Calculated from LFS microdata

Intuitively, provinces with relatively small youth populations likely encouraged landed immigrant youth to settle in as seen from both figures 3 and 4. The dashed blue line above indicates the relationship or correlation between provincial size in terms of youth population initially, and the extent to which they grew in terms of their landed immigrant youth. The smaller the province's Canadian-born youth population, higher the growth in landed immigrant youth. The larger the province's Canadian-born youth population, the lower the growth in landed immigrant youth. Hence the scatter plot supports the bars in Figure 3 that shows that provinces like PEI and New Brunswick, (the smaller provinces in terms of youth population), experienced the largest growth in landed immigrant youth.

International students as landed immigrant youth?

We obtained data from the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) open data base on international students (temporary residents on a study permit) who transitioned to landed immigrant status in each province in 2018 onwards and up to 2021. Due to their international student status and very possibly studying in Canada at the post-secondary levels, the vast majority of them on study permits were in the 19-29 age range [1]. The data from IRCC is not longitudinal and is just aggregate study permits granted per year, by province. Hence, we cannot determine an actual transition rate of achieving permanent residency from international student status nor confirm that those who transitioned to

[1] There is a small minority of international students who arrive in Canada on study permits for secondary education, who also are in the 15-19 age range. Due to their relatively small numbers, we do not focus on them here.

landed immigrant status from prior study permits still remained in the youth category. On reviewing a paper based on the Longitudinal Immigration Database [2], we see that the highest rate of transition from study permit visas to permanent residency status is in the first 5 years since the study permit was obtained with a peak at year 3 (or year 4 in one case) after arrival into Canada on a study permit. Hence, we assumed that it was likely that those international students who did achieve permanent residency could be classified as youth.

In 2018, 10,950 landed immigrants were previously on a study permit Canada-wide. That number doubled by 2021 to 22,670 landed immigrants who were previously international students. There was a sharp decline in 2020 due to the pandemic when IRCC issued only 7750 permanent residency permits. Nonetheless, landed immigrants who transitioned from international student status comprised approximately 2.5% of landed immigrant youth in 2021, up from 1.3% in 2018.

International students and landed immigrant youth in Canada's provinces

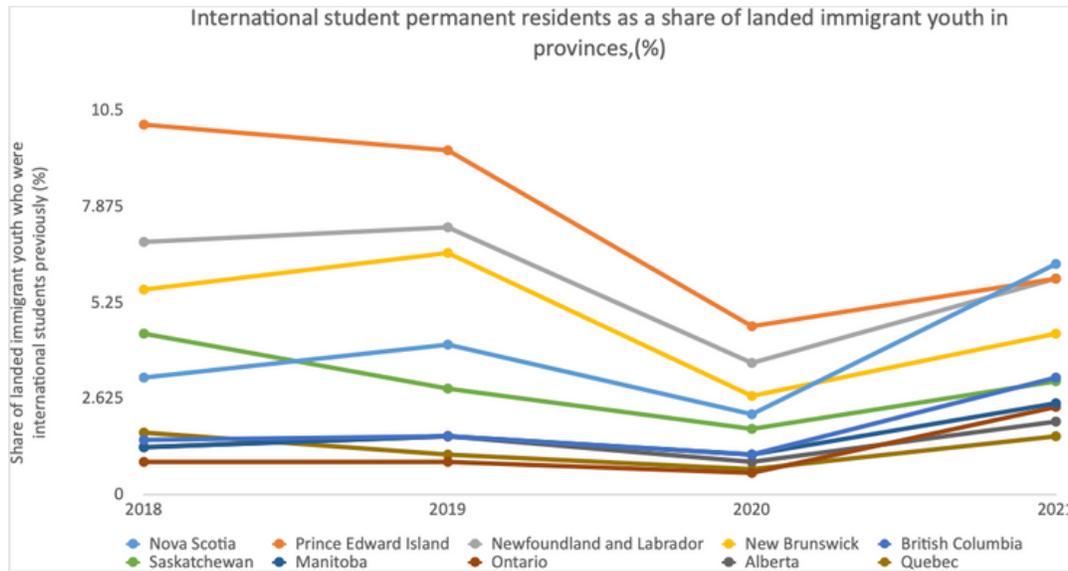
We have calculated the share of landed immigrant youth in each province from 2018–2021, who entered Canada on a study permit i.e., were international students in previous years. The Maritime provinces lead the way with respect to having the largest shares of landed immigrant youth who were previously international students, because they are also the provinces with the highest median age of population in Canada. Public policy for the Maritime provinces is about attracting youth residents. For the largest provinces like Ontario and Quebec, landed immigrants who were previously international students form the smallest pools for landed immigrant youth, because these are significant destinations for immigrants in general across all age groupings and immigrant class [3]. The chart below illustrates those features of the data.

[2] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021006/article/00002-eng.htm>

[3] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91-215-x/2021001/sec1-eng.htm>



Figure 5



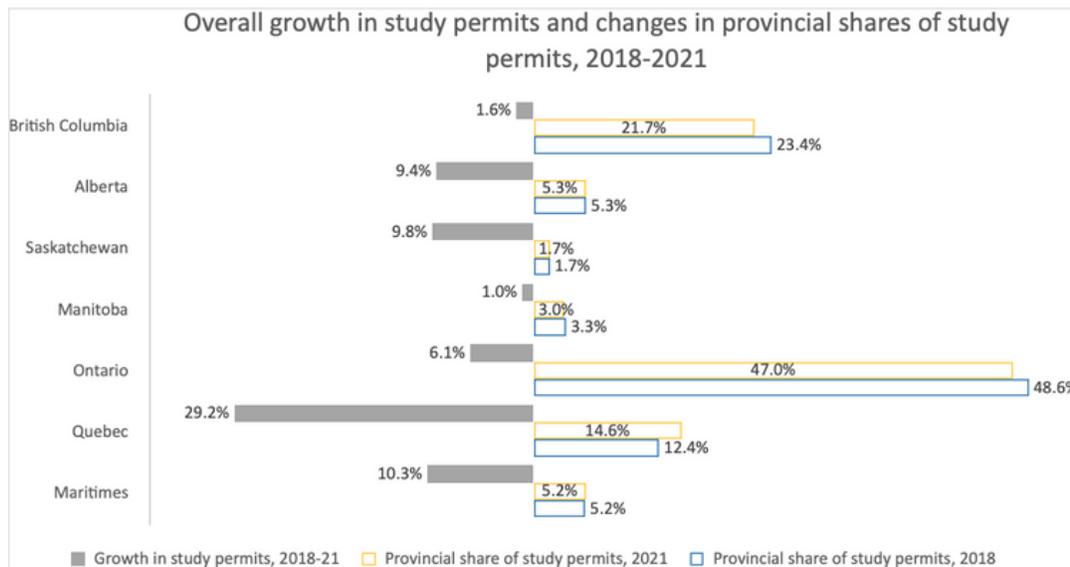
Source: LFS data and IRCC data on Study Permit Holders by Destination of Study and Year Permits became Effective

The year 2020 was a crisis year for study permits for permanent resident transition due to an all-stop arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the share of actual landed immigrants (youth or otherwise) who transitioned to permanent residency status from previous study permits is still rather small as the chart above indicates, even before the pandemic began.



International students and landed immigrant youth in Canada's provinces

Figure 6

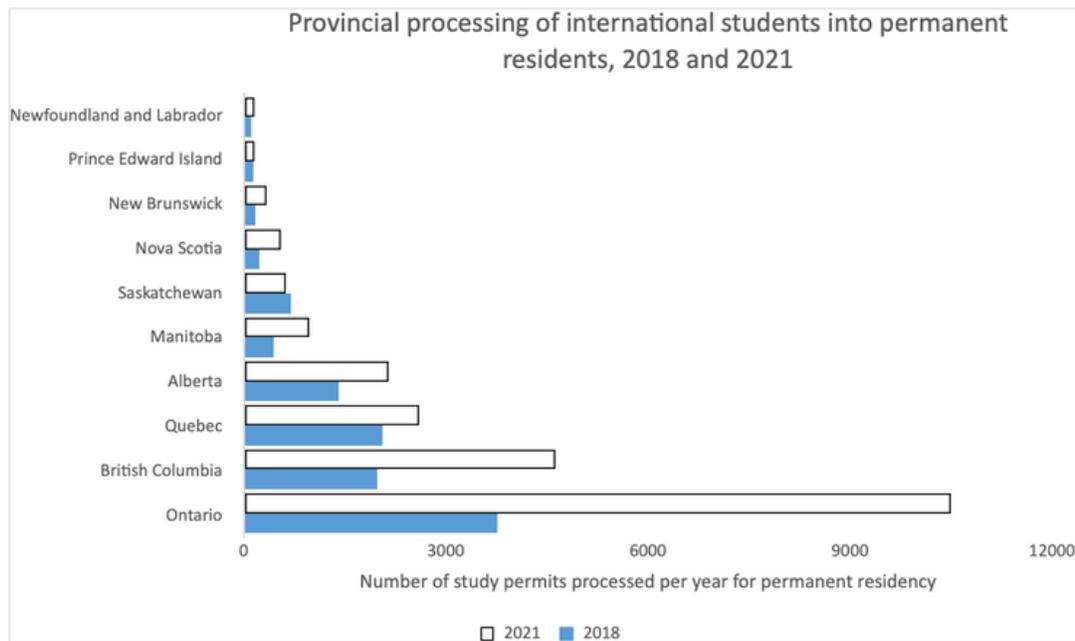


Source: IRCC data on Study Permit Holders by Destination of Study and Year Permits became Effective

Between 2018 and 2021, every province experienced an influx of international students, but Quebec and the Maritimes had the largest increases in study permits, with Quebec leading the way. However, that does not mean that Quebec is the largest recipient province for international students. It comes in third place after Ontario and British Columbia which together comprised 68% of international study permits in 2021, down from 72% in 2018. Essentially, Quebec was the only province that substantially grew their international students as a pool for immigrants relative to all other provinces that remained stagnant in terms of their shares or declined in their shares. While the Maritimes also had a relatively large increase in international students over 2021-18, that growth was not large enough to increase their relative percentage shares of total study permits issued in Canada between 2021-18.

Ontario leads the way in processing of study permits to permanent residents in 2021

Figure 7



Source: IRCC data on Study Permit Holders by Destination of Study and Year Permits became Effective

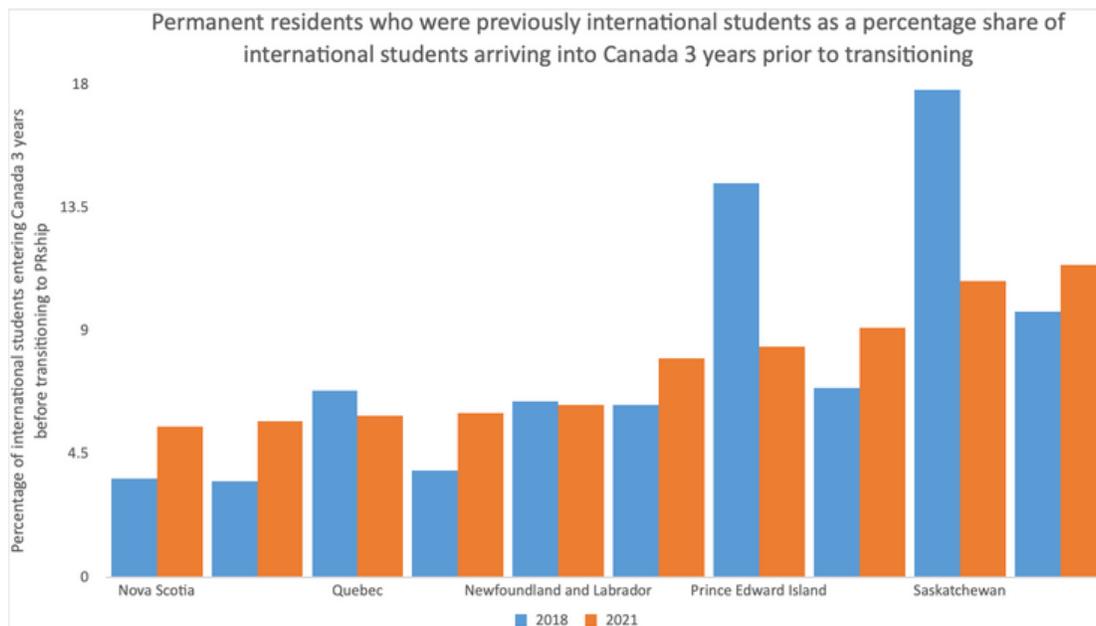
Ontario, followed by Quebec and then British Columbia, were the destination provinces for international students turned permanent residents. However by 2021, while Ontario remained the leader in transitions of international students to permanent residents, BC superseded Quebec. Although Quebec had the highest growth of international study permits issued between 2018 and 2021, the transition of previously international students to permanent immigrants was less than Ontario's.

The four largest provinces expectedly were able to transition the most international students to permanent residents between 2018 and 2021. This is likely due to these provinces having the most job opportunities.

A word of caution: these aggregate numbers appear small, 10,950 in Canada in 2018 and then just 22,670 in 2021. This is because these are only those international students who directly transitioned to permanent residency. There are international students who moved to work permit status and then became permanent residents. However, work permit holders include others who have directly moved to Canada for work, not necessarily study and then work. Hence, we do not include them here.

In 2021 however, Alberta processed the most international students who entered Alberta three years earlier on study permits.

Figure 8



Source: IRCC data on Study Permit Holders by Destination of Study and Year Permits became Effective

While Ontario has been the province with the most study permit-to-landed status transitions, we need to determine the processing of international students to permanent status, depending on the provincial intake of international students.

We assume a 3-year lag between entering the country on study permits and transitioning to landed status because we are only looking at those who transitioned from a study permit directly to permanent residency and the minimum term requirement to qualify for residency is three years. In 2018, 10,940 international students transitioned to permanent residency in Canada, out of 219,540 international students in Canada at that time who could have applied for landed status or a rate of 5%. By 2021, IRCC approved 22,622 international students for residency out of a pool of 354,010 potential international student applicants in 2018. In 2021, the share of approvals of international students who entered Canada 3 years earlier went up to 6.4%.

When we take the intake of potential applicants into account, Alberta leads the way in 2021, followed by Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. The same set of provinces were at the forefront in 2018 in the processing of international students who arrived in 2015. They had the highest percentage of shares or



rates of transitioning international students who arrived in 2015 or 2018 to permanent residents in 2018 and 2021.

Certainly, these data are not longitudinal or survey-based so actual transition rates of international students to permanent residency status are difficult to obtain. Nonetheless, the figure above provides us with information about potential immigrants from each province's international student pool. In Saskatchewan for example, from the 2015 pool, five out of every 25 international students could achieve permanent residency status in 2018. In Ontario, from the 2015 pool, one out of every 25 international students would achieve residency status in 2018. By 2021, the pandemic-related backlog on immigration processing [4] meant that Saskatchewan, the leader in 2018, could process as permanent residents around 3 in 25 international students who entered Canada in 2018. In Ontario, for every 25 international students who entered Canada in 2018, IRCC processed 1.5 cases for permanent residency in 2021.

After the setback of the pandemic, it appears that the smaller provinces in the Canadian Prairies and the Maritime provinces (apart from Nova Scotia) are continuing to transition more landed immigrants from their respective pools of international students than the larger provinces. This possibly arises from provincial economic and demographic factors since Prairie Provinces and the Atlantic Provinces have older populations than the remaining ones. International students possibly form a minor pool for potential immigration in Ontario, BC, and Quebec compared to other provinces in the Prairies and Maritimes. However, we need to examine the pattern of immigration in terms of age and class of immigration over the past decade to be sure. Perhaps a subject for a future Snapshot?

[4] <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-feb-14-2022-1.6346717/immigration-backlog-of-nearly-2-million-applicants-has-forced-some-to-wait-years-for-updates-1.6352441>

