# Charting a Way Forward

**Part 7 of the Trust Through Information series**

## Acknowledgements

WES is grateful to those individuals who took time to speak with us about the information ecosystem, provide examples of good practices, or participate in a findings validation session. This report was strengthened due to their contributions and insights.

This project was a collaborative effort. The WES project team included:

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Ashika Niraula, Senior Research Associate with the CERC in Migration and Integration Program at Toronto Metropolitan University, served as a consultant and was involved in all stages of the project. The WES team thanks Ashika for her expertise and dedication.

Suggested citation: World Education Services. (2026). *Trust Through Information: Strengthening Canada's International Student Information Ecosystem.* https://knowledge.wes.org/canada-report-international-students-information-ecosystem.html

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# Charting a Way Forward

## Introduction

This paper is part of a research series designed to support cross-sector dialogue on strengthening integrity and accountability in the ecosystem of information provided to international students.

The research reveals critical shortcomings in the information that reaches international students. Official sources, defined as government (federal, provincial, and territorial) and post-secondary institutions (PSIs), provide inadequate guidance, leaving students reliant on intermediaries (people or organizations that provide education services in exchange for payment) and content creators. Artificial intelligence technologies draw from vast bodies of outdated or inaccurate information. These dynamics enable widespread circulation of misinformation, creating a damaging gap between what students expect, what they experience in Canada, and what policymakers intend. The consequences include harm to international students, erosion of global trust in Canada's post-secondary education sector, and reduced policy effectiveness.

The series consists of an introductory paper, *Trust Through Information*, that summarizes all the challenges our research uncovered, followed by individual reports that go into depth on each challenge. Each report includes proposed outcomes, actions, and accountability mechanisms that could improve the information ecosystem.

To read the full series, please visit the **WES website**.

This final paper summarizes the proposed outcomes, actions, and accountability mechanisms that appear in each report, divided by actor:


1. **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)** pp 2–6
2. **Global Affairs Canada** pp 7–9
3. **Provincial and Territorial Governments** pp 10–15
4. **Post-Secondary Institutions** pp 16–19


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# 1. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

## Immigration Policy

### Proposed Outcomes

- Immigration policy, including international student policy, is aligned with long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals.
- International students can expect consistency in their rights and opportunities, from when they are recruited to when they complete their study or post-study work.

### Proposed Actions

- Federal and provincial governments collaborate to establish a whole-of-government approach to setting shared long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals, and determine what role immigration should play in meeting these objectives.
- IRCC aligns international student policy with this long-term vision.
- IRCC creates a stable pathway to permanent residence for international students that enables them to assess their circumstances against clear eligibility criteria that remains consistent over time.

## Access to Good Information

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to find clear, accurate information about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, and labour market information, as well as data about immigration outcomes and labour market outcomes of recent international students.
- International students are able to easily find and understand information about policy changes when they occur.
- Statements about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes, including those on the IRCC website

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or in marketing and recruitment materials distributed by post-secondary institutions and education agents, reflect accurate information.

- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed.

## Proposed Actions

- Federal government collaborates with relevant partners to build and maintain a single, centralized platform in plain language where international students can find all the information they need about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, data about immigration outcomes, and advice on verifying AI-generated information about Canadian immigration.
    - Federal government takes steps to optimize international student platform to improve visibility in AI-generated content.
    - Federal government tracks whether international student platform information is included in AI-generated content.
- IRCC establishes clear timelines (for example, within 48 hours) for making updates following policy announcements, including updating the international student platform, notifying federal, provincial, and designated learning institution (DLI) partners, and publishing an IRCC Newsroom announcement.
- Content that promotes “study and stay” is removed from the IRCC website. This includes content that implies that study and stay is encouraged or that makes vague promises about study and stay opportunities.
- IRCC Express Entry (EE) Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) points calculator results include a link to recent EE draw types and points cut-off scores.

## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Federal government seeks regular feedback from DLIs and settlement services to ensure that a centralized international student information platform covers all necessary topics in clear language.
- IRCC regularly surveys international students about access to good information. Survey topics include whether the international student platform provides information students need, whether that information is clearly presented,

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what other sources of information they use, and whether they received false information from, for example, an intermediary, AI, or another online source.

- IRCC requires provinces and post-secondary institutions to collect and publish graduate labour market outcome data disaggregated by international student status.
- IRCC requires DLIs and education agents to include date stamps, regular review cycles, and links to government websites when providing online immigration and visa information.
- IRCC requires that DLIs and education agents ensure that marketing and promotion efforts do not make false promises related to immigration program eligibility, as well as graduate immigration outcomes and graduate labour market outcomes.
- IRCC requires that DLIs implement practices for effectively managing and monitoring the conduct of contracted education agents in relation to information accuracy.

## Policies Relating to Education Agents

### Proposed Outcomes

- Prospective international students who need help with their study permit applications engage the services of a provider who is licensed in Canada and authorized to provide those services.
- Prospective international students are aware of red flags that signal an intermediary who is not acting in their best interests.
- International students are able to easily find out which education agents or recruiters have a contract with a DLI.
- Any statements in marketing and recruitment materials about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed by education agents or recruiters.
- Data show declining instances of unauthorized practitioners, such as education agents not registered with the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC), providing visa services.

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### Proposed Actions

- IRCC website and the centralized international student information platform offer guidance on working with an intermediary and make it easily accessible by linking to it prominently from all international student-facing websites.
- Study and stay messaging is removed from promotional materials circulated by education agents and recruiters contracted by DLIs.

### Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- IRCC requires education agents contracted to DLIs to be registered and licensed.
- IRCC requires DLIs to publish and maintain a list of contracted agents and recruiters.
- IRCC requires DLIs to prominently publish guidance on working with an education agent, or links to such guidance, on their websites for prospective international students.
- IRCC requires DLIs to monitor the activities of education agents and recruiters to ensure that those intermediaries do not circulate misleading information.
- IRCC requires DLIs to regularly survey international students about their experience working with their education agent and to share survey results with the licensing body.

## DLI Designation Process

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to easily find information on key topics, including graduate labour market outcomes and the names of education agents contracted by DLIs.
- Any statements in marketing and recruitment materials about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed.

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## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- IRCC requires DLIs to publish and maintain a list of contracted agents and recruiters.
- IRCC requires DLIs to prominently publish guidance on working with an education agent, or links to such guidance, on their websites for prospective international students.
- IRCC requires DLIs to monitor the activities of education agents and recruiters to ensure that those intermediaries do not circulate misleading information.
- IRCC requires DLIs to regularly survey international students about their experience working with their education agent and to share survey results with the licensing body.

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# 2. Global Affairs Canada

## Immigration Policy

### Proposed Outcomes

- Immigration policy, including international student policy, is aligned with long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals.
- International students can expect consistency in their rights and opportunities, from when they are recruited to when they complete their study or post-study work.

### Proposed Actions

- Federal and provincial governments collaborate to establish a whole-of-government approach to setting shared long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals, and determine what role immigration should play in meeting these objectives.

## Access to Good Information

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to find clear, accurate information about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, and labour market information, as well as data about immigration outcomes and labour market outcomes of recent international students.
- International students are able to easily find and understand information about policy changes when they occur.
- Statements on the EduCanada website or any promotional materials circulated by Global Affairs about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed.

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### Proposed Actions

- Federal government collaborates with relevant partners to build and maintain a single, centralized platform in plain language where international students can find all the information they need about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance related to education agents, data about immigration outcomes, and advice on verifying AI-generated information about Canadian immigration.
    - Federal government takes steps to optimize international student platform to improve visibility in AI-generated content.
    - Federal government tracks whether international student platform information is included in AI-generated content.
- Global Affairs establishes clear timelines (for example, within 48 hours) for making updates to the EduCanada website and the centralized international student information platform following policy announcements or changes.
- Content that promotes study and stay is removed from the EduCanada website. This includes content that implies that study and stay is encouraged or that makes vague promises about study and stay opportunities.

### Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Federal government seeks regular feedback from DLIs and settlement services to ensure that a centralized international student information platform covers all necessary topics in clear language.

## Policies Relating to Education Agents

### Proposed Outcomes

- Prospective international students who need help with their study permit applications engage the services of a provider who is licensed in Canada and authorized to provide those services.
- Prospective international students are aware of red flags that signal an intermediary who is not acting in their best interests.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed by education agents or recruiters.
- Data show declining instances of unauthorized practitioners, such as education agents not registered with CICC, providing visa services.

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## Proposed Actions

- The EduCanada website and the centralized international student information platform offer guidance on working with an intermediary and make it easily accessible by linking to it prominently from all international student-facing websites.
- Global Affairs develops mechanisms to support post-secondary institutions, provinces, CICC, and a new regulatory body for education agents in identifying unauthorized provision of services.
    - Global Affairs develops mechanisms to reduce instances of unauthorized provision of services and misinformation by education agents.
    - Global Affairs notifies affected international students that they may have received unauthorized services.

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# 3. Provincial and Territorial Government

## Immigration Policy

### Proposed Outcomes

- Immigration policy, including international student policy, is aligned with long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals.
- International students can expect consistency in their rights and opportunities, from when they are recruited to when they complete their study or post-study work.

### Proposed Actions

- Provincial and territorial governments collaborate with federal government departments to establish a whole-of-government approach to setting shared long-term objectives related to population growth, labour market needs, infrastructure priorities, and regional development goals, and determine what role immigration should play in meeting these objectives.
- Provincial and territorial governments align immigration and settlement policies with this long-term vision.
- Provincial and territorial governments create a clear, stable pathway to permanent residence for international graduates so prospective students can understand their immigration opportunities.

## Access to Good Information

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to find clear, accurate information about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, and labour market information, as well as data about immigration outcomes and labour market outcomes of recent international students.
- International students are able to easily find and understand information about policy changes when they occur.
- Statements about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes, including those in marketing and

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recruitment materials distributed by post-secondary institutions and education agents, reflect accurate information.

- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed.

## Proposed Actions

- Provincial and territorial governments collaborate with relevant partners, including federal government and other provincial and territorial governments, to enable maintenance of a single, centralized platform in plain language where international students can find all the information they need about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, data about immigration outcomes, and advice on verifying AI-generated information about Canadian immigration.
- Provincial and territorial governments work together to develop a standardized approach to collecting information on labour market outcomes of international graduates.
    - Labour market outcomes of international graduates are shared with a centralized international student information platform and made available on provincial and territorial government websites aimed at international students.
- Provincial and territorial governments review their websites for content that states or implies that study and stay is possible and ensures that their content reflects current immigration opportunities available to international students.

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## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs, legal representatives, and education agents to include date stamps and links to government websites when providing online immigration and visa information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs, legal representatives, and education agents to institute regular review cycles if they provide online immigration and visa information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require post-secondary institutions to collect and publish graduate labour market outcome data disaggregated by international student status.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to provide data, or links to external data, on regional or provincial labour market needs.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to publish a list of contracted education agents and recruiters.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to provide clear guidance on working with an education agent on official websites aimed at international students.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs and education agents to ensure that marketing and promotion efforts do not make false promises related to immigration program eligibility, as well as graduate immigration outcomes and graduate labour market outcomes.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to implement practices for effectively managing and monitoring the conduct of contracted education agents in relation to information accuracy.

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## Policies Relating to Education Agents

### Proposed Outcomes

- Prospective international students who need help with their study permit applications engage the services of a provider who is licensed in Canada and authorized to provide those services.
- Prospective international students are aware of red flags that signal an intermediary who is not acting in their best interests.
- International students are able to easily find out which education agents or recruiters have a contract with a DLI.
- Any statements in marketing and recruitment materials about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed by education agents or recruiters.
- Data show declining instances of unauthorized practitioners, such as education agents not registered with CICC, providing visa services.

### Proposed Actions

- Provincial and territorial governments create a regulatory body for education agents.
- Provincial and territorial governments collaborate with Global Affairs, DLIs, CICC, and a new regulatory body for education agents in identifying unauthorized provision of services.
    - Provincial and territorial governments collaborate with Global Affairs to develop mechanisms to reduce instances of unauthorized provision of services and misinformation by education agents.
- Provincial and territorial governments implement practices for monitoring the conduct of education agents in relation to information provided to prospective students, especially with regard to immigration and labour market outcome information.

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### Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- All education agents contracted by DLIs are registered and licensed.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to publish and maintain a list of contracted education agents and recruiters.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to prominently publish guidance on working with an education agent, or links to such guidance, on their websites for prospective international students.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to monitor the activities of education agents and recruiters to ensure that they do not circulate misleading information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to regularly survey international students about their experience working with their education agent and to share survey results with the licensing body, as well as with the provincial or territorial government.

## DLI Designation Process

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to easily find information on key topics, including international graduate labour market outcomes and the names of education agents contracted by DLIs.
- Any statements in marketing and recruitment materials about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed about immigration options and labour market outcomes.

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## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs, legal representatives, and education agents to include date stamps and links to government websites when providing online immigration and visa information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs, legal representatives, and education agents to institute regular review cycles if they provide online immigration and visa information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require post-secondary institutions to collect and publish graduate labour market outcome data disaggregated by international student status.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to provide data, or links to external data, on regional or provincial labour market needs.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to publish a list of contracted education agents and recruiters.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to provide clear guidance on working with an education agent on official websites aimed at international students.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs and education agents to ensure that marketing and promotion efforts do not make false promises related to immigration program eligibility, as well as graduate immigration outcomes and graduate labour market outcomes.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to implement practices for effectively managing and monitoring the conduct of contracted education agents in relation to information accuracy.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to publish and maintain a list of contracted education agents and recruiters.
- Provincial and territorial governments require guidance on working with an education agent, or links to such guidance, on their websites for prospective international students.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to monitor the activities of education agents and recruiters to ensure that they do not circulate misleading information.
- Provincial and territorial governments require DLIs to regularly survey international students about their experience working with their education agent and to share survey results with the licensing body, as well as with the provincial or territorial government.

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# 4. Post-Secondary Institutions

## Access to Good Information

### Proposed Outcomes

- International students are able to find clear, accurate information about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps. Examples include visa and immigration rules, guidance on working with education agents, and labour market information, as well as data about immigration outcomes and labour market outcomes of recent international students.
- Statements about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes, including those in marketing and recruitment materials distributed by post-secondary institutions and education agents, reflect accurate information.
- International students are able to easily find out which education agents or recruiters have contracts with a post-secondary institution.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed.

### Proposed Actions

- Post-secondary institutions provide information and feedback to support the federal government in maintaining a single, centralized platform where international students can find all the information they need about topics where there is high demand for information or high risk in information gaps.
- Post-secondary institutions direct international students to read about immigration and visa rules on the IRCC website or centralized international student information platform rather than reproduce the rules on their own websites.
    - When post-secondary institutions create their own content on immigration rules, they state when the information was updated, institute regular review cycles, and direct international students to verify content on the IRCC website or the centralized international student information platform.
- Post-secondary institutions review their websites for content that states or implies that study and stay is possible and ensure that content reflects current immigration opportunities available to international students.
- Post-secondary institutions publish content on their websites for prospective international students that advises international students to verify immigration

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information with official sources, such as IRCC or the centralized international student information platform.

- Post-secondary institutions publish regional and provincial labour market information or provide links to clear data that can be used by prospective students to guide decisions about their field of study.
    - Data, or links to data, on regional and provincial labour market information are displayed prominently on their websites for prospective international students.
- Post-secondary institutions collect and publish international graduate labour market outcomes.
- Post-secondary institutions publish content on their websites for prospective international students about education agents, including:
    - A list of education agents and recruiters who have contracts with the post-secondary institution
    - Rules related to what services education agents are and are not authorized to provide
    - Whether or not prospective international students are required to use the services of an agent

## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Post-secondary institutions require contracted education agents to include date stamps and links to government websites when providing online immigration and visa information.
- Post-secondary institutions require education agents to institute regular review cycles if they provide online immigration and visa information.
- Post-secondary institutions require contracted education agents to ensure that marketing and promotion efforts do not make false promises related to immigration program eligibility, as well as graduate immigration outcomes and graduate labour market outcomes.
- Post-secondary institutions regularly survey international students and graduates about whether they understand their immigration options and whether they received any false information about immigration.

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## Policies Relating to Education Agents

### Proposed Outcomes

- Prospective international students who need help with their study permit applications engage the services of a provider who is licensed in Canada and authorized to provide those services.
- Prospective international students are aware of red flags that signal an intermediary who is not acting in their best interests.
- International students are able to easily find out which education agents or recruiters have a contract with a DLI.
- Any statements in marketing and recruitment materials about international students' immigration prospects, employment prospects, and labour market outcomes reflect accurate information.
- International students report declining instances of being deceived or misinformed by education agents or recruiters.
- Data show declining instances of unauthorized practitioners, such as education agents not registered with CICC, providing visa services.

### Proposed Actions

- Post-secondary institutions collaborate with provincial or territorial government, Global Affairs, CICC, and a new regulatory body for education agents in identifying unauthorized provision of services.
    - Post-secondary institutions collaborate with provincial or territorial government and Global Affairs to develop mechanisms to reduce instances of unauthorized provision of services and misinformation by education agents.
- Post-secondary institutions monitor the conduct of education agents in relation to information provided to prospective students, especially with regard to immigration and labour market outcomes.
- Post-secondary institutions publish content on their websites for prospective international students about education agents, including:
    - A list of education agents and recruiters who have contracts with the post-secondary institution
    - Rules related to what services education agents are and are not authorized to provide
    - Whether or not prospective international students are required to use the services of an agent
- Post-secondary institutions regularly survey international students about their experience working with an education agent and share results with the

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provincial or territorial government and with the proposed education agent licensing body.

## Proposed Accountability Mechanisms

- Post-secondary institutions institute accountability mechanisms for contracted education agents who are found to be providing false or misleading information, especially with regard to immigration and labour market outcomes.

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