



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01005**

BY: **MR. TAN (DON VALLEY NORTH)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 5, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONORABLE AHMED HUSSEN**

Response by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Foreign Students

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

1. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)'s Settlement Program serves many eligible clients (permanent residents, protected persons and convention refugees, and those selected, inside or outside Canada, to become permanent residents), which include both the principal applicant and their spouses and dependants. As soon as individuals receive approval in principle for their permanent resident status, they are eligible to receive settlement services. As an integral part of IRCC's Settlement Program, language training delivered in English through Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), and in French through les Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (CLIC), is available throughout the country (outside Québec) from basic literacy to advanced levels to help adult newcomers of school leaving age develop the skills needed to function in Canadian society and contribute to the economy.

The federal government does not have the authority to fund settlement services for temporary residents, including international students. The legislative authority for the Settlement Program is found in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, whereby the Settlement Program must directly contribute to the following objective of the Act: 3. (1) (e) to promote the successful integration of permanent residents into Canada.

As such, international students and graduates are eligible for federally funded settlement services (including language training) when they become permanent residents of Canada. International students who have received initial approval of their permanent resident application can also access IRCC funded language training in both official languages.

While individuals who are in Canada on a temporary basis are not eligible for federally funded settlement programming, these individuals may choose to participate in alternative language training options including provincially funded English or French as a Second Language (ESL/FSL) programs as well as courses offered through post-secondary or private sector language organizations. Colleges and universities are important partners in the delivery of language training and other specialized programming and services for students facing barriers to employment or further education. For recent immigrants and international students, this includes workplace communication courses and professional bridging programs that facilitate their entry into the Canadian labour force and transition to further educational programming.

2. Improving Canada's standing as a destination of choice for international students is a priority for the federal government. International students enrich the academic environment and intercultural competencies of domestic students. International students are viewed as ideal candidates for permanent residency given their language proficiency, Canadian education credentials and Canadian work experience. They also contribute an estimated \$11.4 billion a year in economic activity in Canada.

IRCC has created mechanisms that facilitate international student participation in the labour market which allows them to acquire work experience. In June 2014, new regulations for international students were implemented that included automatic authorization for eligible students to work twenty hours per week during their studies and full-time during scheduled academic breaks without the need to apply for a separate work permit. Another work program for international students, the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program, allows eligible students to work for up to three years after graduation. Students can also gain work experience through the Coop Work Permit Program and on-campus employment.

IRCC has created pathways for international students to transition to permanent residence status. The Canadian Experience Class program capitalizes on skilled temporary residents who have a head start due to prior Canadian work or study experience. The Federal Skilled Worker program looks at retaining doctorate candidates who can make major contributions to the Canadian labour market. Provinces and territories are also active in attracting international students and creating pathways to permanence under their Provincial Nominee Program.

Canada's International Student Program facilitates the issuance of co-operative work opportunities to international students who must perform work that is an essential part of a postsecondary academic, vocational or professional training offered by a designated learning institution in Canada. International students who obtain a co-operative work permit may work for any employer, private or public, in Canada.

As of November 19, 2016, points are now awarded by the CRS for education obtained in Canada in the following way:

Points will be awarded for study in Canada above high school.

The CRS will award 15 points for a one- or two-year diploma or certificate. It will award 30 points for a degree, diploma or certificate of three years or longer, or for a Master's, professional or doctoral degree of at least one academic year.