

Request for Delegation

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

MEETING DATE YYYY/MM/DD 2021/09/09	MEETING NAME Regional Council
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Attention: Regional Clerk
Regional Municipality of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9
Phone: 905-791-7800 ext. 4582
E-mail: council@peelregion.ca

DATE SUBMITTED YYYY/MM/DD 2021/07/23
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NAME OF INDIVIDUAL(S) Puneet Dhillon Balraj Kahlon
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POSITION(S)/TITLE(S) Manager, Communications and Research

NAME OF ORGANIZATION(S) Punjabi Community Health Services and One Voice Canada
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REASON(S) FOR DELEGATION REQUEST (SUBJECT MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED) To explain how the mismanagement of the International Student Program is leading to social problems in the Peel Region. The problems concern housing, an underground economy, labour and sexual exploitation, and mental health/suicides.

A formal presentation will accompany my delegation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Presentation format: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint File (.ppt) <input type="checkbox"/> Adobe File or Equivalent (.pdf)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Picture File (.jpg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Video File (.avi,.mpg)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>
Additional printed information/materials will be distributed with my delegation : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Attached		

<p>Note: Delegates are requested to provide an electronic copy of all background material / presentations to the Clerk's Division at least ten (10) business days prior to the meeting date so that it can be included with the agenda package. In accordance with Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, delegates appearing before <u>Regional Council</u> or <u>Committee</u> are requested to limit their remarks to 5 minutes and 10 minutes respectively (approximately 5/10 slides).</p> <p>Delegates should make every effort to ensure their presentation material is prepared in an accessible format.</p> <p>Once the above information is received in the Clerk's Division, you will be contacted by Legislative Services staff to confirm your placement on the appropriate agenda.</p>
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<p align="center">Notice with Respect to the Collection of Personal Information (Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act)</p> <p>Personal information contained on this form is authorized under Section 5.4 of the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, for the purpose of contacting individuals and/or organizations requesting an opportunity to appear as a delegation before Regional Council or a Committee of Council. The Delegation Request Form will be published in its entirety with the public agenda. The Procedure By-law is a requirement of Section 238(2) of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i>, as amended. Please note that all meetings are open to the public except where permitted to be closed to the public under legislated authority. All Regional Council meetings are audio broadcast via the internet and will be posted and available for viewing subsequent to those meetings. Questions about collection may be directed to the Manager of Legislative Services, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, 5th floor, Brampton, ON L6T 4B9, (905) 791-7800 ext. 4462.</p>

Please save the form to your personal device, then complete and submit via email attachment to council@peelregion.ca



ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM IN THE PEEL REGION

Puneet Dhillon, Punjabi Community Health Services
Balraj S. Kahlon, One Voice Canada

7.1-2

September 2021



Housing Issues

- 20% of survey respondents (i.e. international students) indicated living in overcrowded accommodations
- overcrowded housing
- illegal second units

Labour Exploitation & Underground Economy



- Many international students experience labour exploitation:
 - Not paid or paid below minimum wage
- International students will often not report their employer because they fear jeopardizing their chance at getting PR.

Suicide and Addictions Problems

- A survey found:
 - 9 in 10 students are concerned about their expenses
 - 6 in 10 students suffer from poor well-being
- **10** publicly reported suicides of international students **(4 in Peel Region)**
- Lotus Funeral Centre receives **4 to 5** international student death cases **per month**. The concern is drug overdose/suicides may be responsible for the high number of deaths.

Sexual Exploitation

- Many female international students vulnerable to sexual crimes
- Financial and housing insecurity are some of the causes of sexual coercion and exploitation
- Sexual abuse victims are often economically dependent on their abusers (e.g. landlord or employer).
- Many sexual abuse victims lack support and fall into a cycle of abuse and exploitation



Student Recruitment Problems

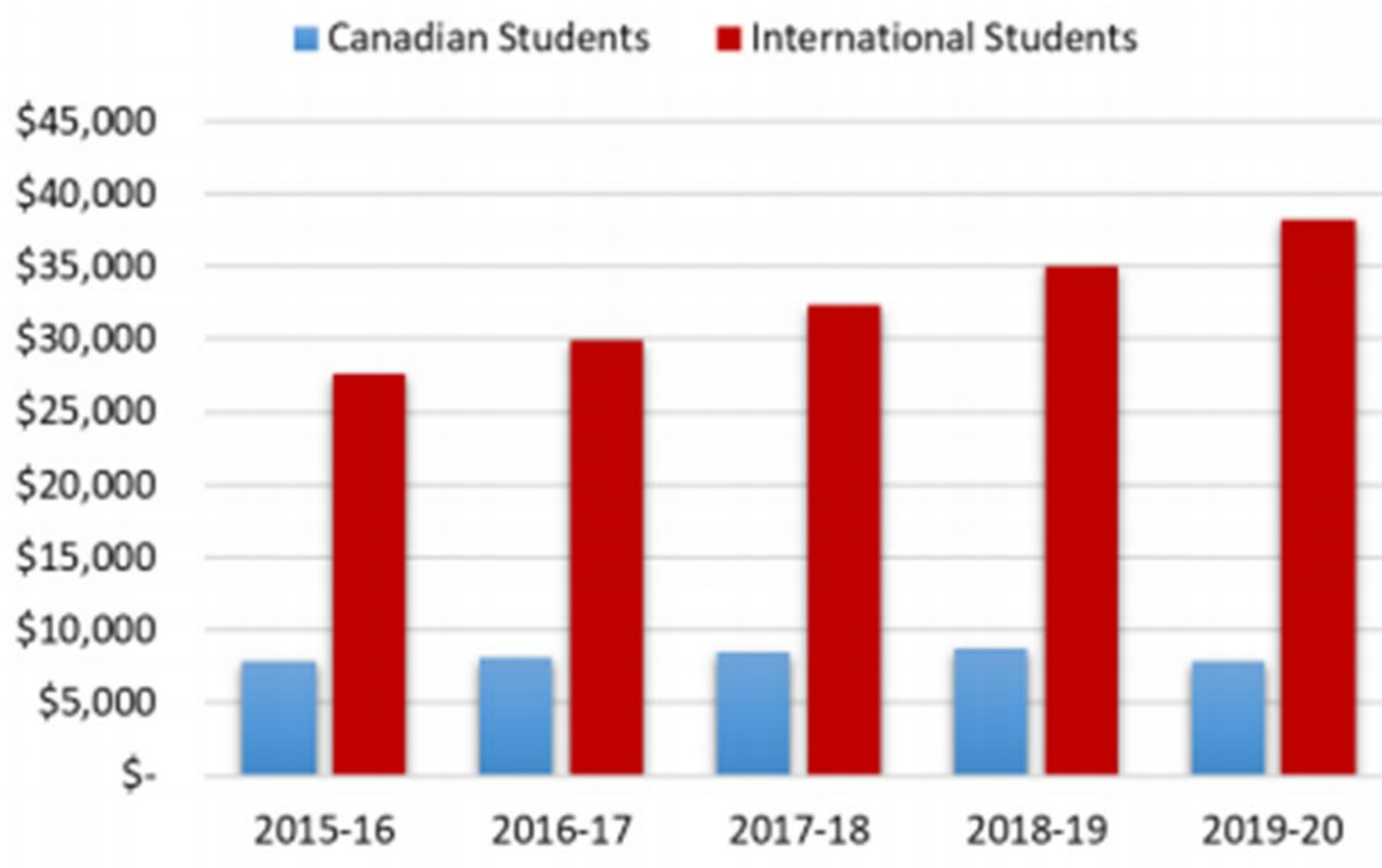
- Colleges partner with a disreputable student recruitment industry

Reports on corruption in international student recruitment

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2016)
- Independent Commission Against Corruption, Australia (2015)

The result is colleges are recruiting many students misinformed and/or ill-equipped to study in Canada.

Ontario Tuition Fees



International students
pay almost **5x** higher
tuition fees

Poor Outcomes of International Student Grads

- Multiple federal government studies (i.e. Statistics Canada) have found international student grads have poorer economic outcomes compared to Canadian citizens/Permanent Residents.
- Largest earnings gap is in **Business, Management, and Public Admin** which is also the most common field of study for international students.

Whether the International Student Program is effective at meeting skilled labour needs is unproven.

Private Colleges (Diploma Mills)

- Many private colleges cater to international students
- Ontario has over 700 private colleges
- Peel Region accounts for approximately 25% of all private colleges

Are colleges making the poor economic outcome problem for international students worse?



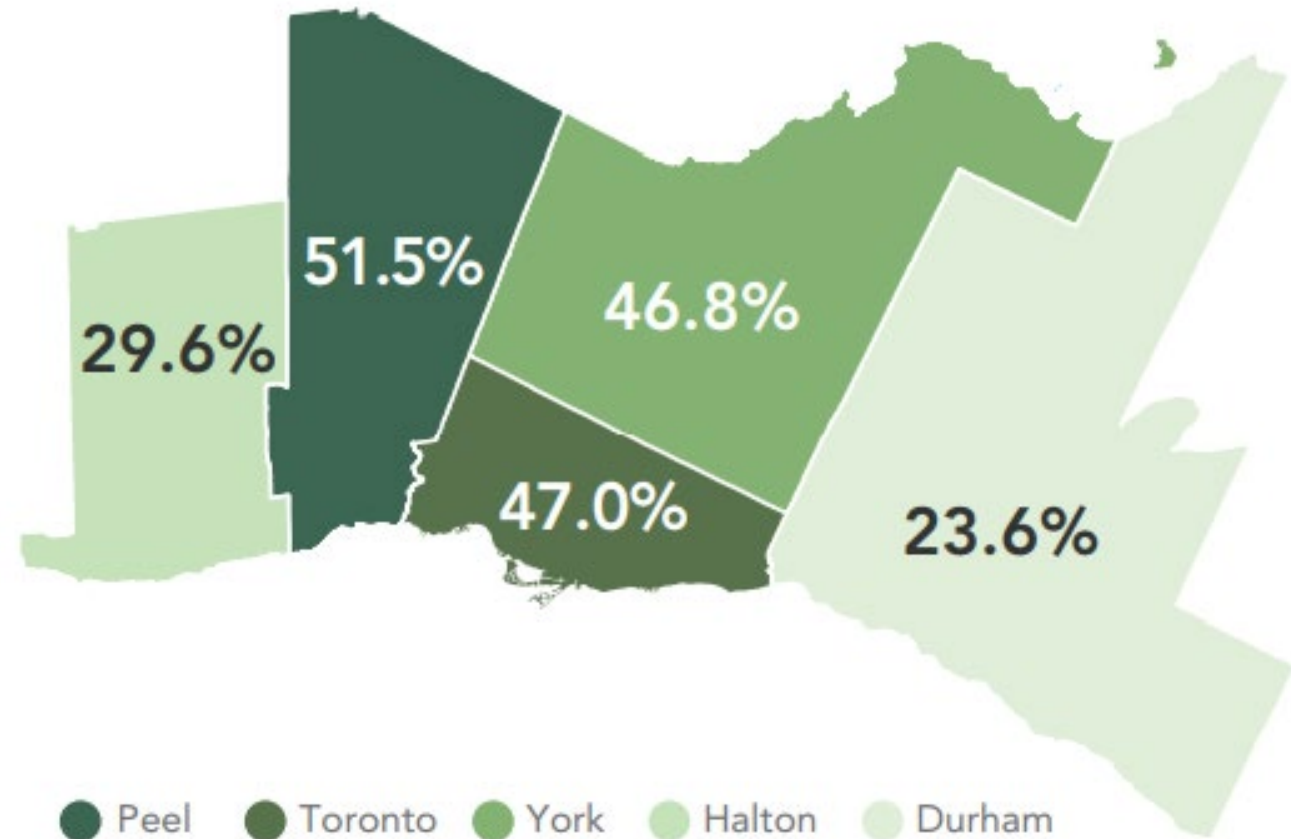
Complicit Federal Government

- In **2015 Immigration Canada** conducted an evaluation of the international student program
 - identified concerns of fraud and misuse of the program with respect to genuineness of students and educational institutes.
- In **2017 House of Commons Committee** studied the exploitation of international students and other migrants
- In **2018 Niagara College** re-tested hundreds of international students because they were academically struggling due to poor English skills.

Cause for Concern

- Immigrants earn significantly less money than Canadian-born workers
- Immigrants have higher rates of poverty
- Immigrants experience declining health in Canada

IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN THE GTA



**based on 2016 census*

The continued mismanagement of the International Student Program may be hindering the Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2028

How You Can Help

Advocate to the Federal Government to review and reform the International Student Program

Past Examples:

1. Peel council calls on Trudeau to limit air travel to hot spots to keep new variants from entering
2. Peel council passes motion asking province to 'level the playing field' for small retailers amid lockdown
3. Peel asks Ontario government to test toxicity of fluoride added to local drinking water

The Realities of International Students: Evidenced Challenges

A report by One Voice Canada

January 2021

Executive Summary

International education is very lucrative for Canada; but there is a social cost associated with the profits being made off of international students. One Voice Canada's report on *The Realities for International Students: Evidenced Challenges* raises concern of the problems arising from Canada's international student program among Indian international students.

India is one of the largest source countries for international students. A significant proportion of Indian students are coming from the state of Punjab. A study in Punjab indicates a sizeable proportion of prospective international students from the State are from low-and modest-income families. The motivation for these families to have their child pursue an expensive Canadian education is to improve the family's economic situation.

Canadian postsecondary schools pay a commission to foreign consultants for every student they recruit. In Punjab, this economic model has given birth to an industry catering to youth wanting to obtain a study visa and settle in Canada. The promotion of a Canadian education as a means to obtain permanent residency is so effective that many families are taking loans to send their children to Canada.

In Canada, business and public finance interests have become dependent on international education. The number of immigration consultants has almost doubled across the country in the 2010's decade. There are also a considerable number of private colleges catering to international students. Revenues from international students have allowed the BC and Ontario government to decrease their proportion of revenue for post-secondary schools.

The perspective and experiences of international students are important to consider given the many burdens they face in Canada. The greatest being their financial burden due to the exorbitant tuition fees coupled with the cost of housing in major urban markets. A recent survey found 9 in 10 international students surveyed are concerned about their expenses.

To manage this financial burden many international students are working illegally. This has put them in a vulnerable position and many are victims of labour exploitation, and, exploitation of international students has become prevalent in communities across Canada. The economic dependency of female international students is especially unsettling as it makes them vulnerable to sexual violence.

Being an international student in Canada is also having an impact on the mental well being of many Indian international students. International student suicides have become a disturbing trend in Canada. This mirrors the international suicide problem for the last decade in Australia. The economic impact of COVID-19 seems to have only exacerbated these problems.

Governments are aware of the discussed issues. Government studies have identified shortcomings of the international student program and the vulnerability of international students. However, there have been no publicized reforms that address the underlying problem causes.

To improve the integrity of the international student program, and the welfare of international students, One Voice recommends to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive evaluative study of the international student program, examining the period between 2014 and 2020, and implement reforms to make the program designed to meet skilled labour market needs.
2. Regulate and reduce tuition fees for international students.
3. Increase funding and training for specialized services within post-secondary international student offices.

In closing, it is difficult to foresee these issues mitigating in the absence of any reforms that address the identified problem causes.

List of Key Reports and Study Findings

This list includes reports and study findings discussed in the presentation *Adverse Impacts of the International Student Program in the Peel Region*.

- 1. Title:** Advisory Statement for Effective International Practice Combatting Corruption and Enhancing Integrity: A Contemporary Challenge for the Quality and Credibility of Higher Education
Organization (Year): UNESCO (2016)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: Examples of corrupt practices with respect to student admissions and recruitment include publishing false recruitment advertising and cheating rings for admissions tests.
- 2. Title:** Learning the hard way: managing corruption risks associated with international students at universities in NSW
Organization (Year): Independent Commission Against Corruption, Australia (2015)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: Universities may feel obliged to recruit from corrupt markets where student document and financial fraud can result in an influx on international students who struggle to complete their studies. Unchecked credentials, students with poor English-language proficiency, and collusion between agents and students are problems because recruiting agents main concern is to get a commission from recruiting.
- 3. Title:** International Students, Immigration and Earnings Growth: The Effect of a Pre-immigration Canadian University Education
Organization (Year): Statistics Canada (2017)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: On average, Canadian-educated immigrants had much lower earnings than the Canadian-born population.
- 4. Title:** Early earnings trajectories of international students after graduation from postsecondary programs
Organization (Year): Statistics Canada (2021)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: International students earned less than domestic students after graduation. The earnings gap is substantial in the field of business, management and public administration which is also the most popular field of study for international students.
- 5. Title:** Evaluation of the International Student Program
Organization (Year): Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2015)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: There is a lack of information sharing and coordination to address the fraud and misuse of the International Student Program.

6. **Title:** Starting Again: Improving Government Oversight of Immigration Consultants
Organization (Year): House of Commons Standing Committee (2017)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: The study highlighted the vulnerability of those with precarious immigration status (e.g., live-in caregivers, temporary foreign workers, and international students). In addition, many vulnerable individuals with precarious immigration status are unlikely to report being exploited out of fear that it will harm their immigration status.
7. **Title:** Are the gaps in labour market outcomes between immigrants and their Canadian-born counterparts beginning to close?
Organization (Year): Statistics Canada (2021)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: The earnings gap between immigrant workers and Canadian-born workers with similar sociodemographic characteristics increased between 2000 and 2015.
8. **Title:** Immigration, Poverty and Income Inequality in Canada
Organization (Year): Institute for Research on Public Policy (2019)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: The poverty rate of recent immigrants has increased to 2.4 times to that of Canadian born adults.
9. **Title:** The healthy immigrant effect and mortality rates
Organization (Year): Statistics Canada (2011)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: Immigrants arrive to Canada healthier than the average Canadian but Immigrants' health tends to decline as their years in Canada increase.
10. **Title:** Report on Peel Newcomers Peel Newcomer
Organization (Year): Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (2019)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: 52% of Peel neighbourhoods are considered low income, and these are also areas where a higher proportion of newcomers settle.
11. **Title:** 2018-2028 Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy: Community Action Plan
Organization (Year): Peel Poverty Reduction Committee (2018)
Key Insight/Relevant Findings: The Plan's intermediate-term strategy includes advocacy to decrease systemic barriers to stable non-precarious employment for marginalized and equity seeking groups.