

News Blog

Higher-education news from around the Web

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Report Assails Canadian Program Aimed at Drawing Foreign Students

International students in Canada are so disillusioned by the nation's after-graduation job program that many move to the United States or other countries to work after they obtain their degrees. A report, commissioned by the Canadian Bureau for International Education and scheduled to be released on Tuesday, will recommend that the government create a national strategy on international students and take a hard look at how other countries, such as Australia, handle the issue.

The government [created the job program](#) two years ago, hoping it would help attract foreign students to Canada and retain them after graduation.

But the program is "having the opposite effect," the report's author, Sheryl Bond, told *The Chronicle*. Ms. Bond, a professor of education at Queen's University, in Ontario, surveyed 900 foreign students and found that only a third were planning to stay in Canada.

Among other obstacles, the students said that potential future employers lacked proper information, that they had only 90 days to land a job when the process usually takes much longer, and that the program's official documents often conflict with one another. As a result, many foreign students feel the Canadian government is not serious about the program.

The paradox is that foreign students are interested in working, both before and after they receive their degrees, according to their campus advisers. "It's the third most popular reason for students to contact us," said Michelle Suderman, associate director of international-student development at the University of British Columbia. "But 90 days just isn't long enough to find a job."

Canadian educators are worried about the [recent decline in international students](#). Other countries are using the possibility of postgraduate jobs as a marketing and recruiting tool. The report notes that Australia, Britain, and New Zealand, among other countries, are aggressively working to attract and retain international students through five-year work permits and employer-information programs.

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