Trends in Higher Education in Canada

University of Victoria

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Major trends shaping Canadian HE

1. Demographic shifts

2. The new generation of students and their choice factors

3. Movement toward applied fields and WIL

4. Rise of teaching universities in BC

5. International student trends

6. Indigenization
An aging Canadian population

Figure 2.5
Distribution of the total population by age group, observed (1921 to 2013) and projected (2014 to 2063) according to the low-growth (L), medium-growth (M1) and high-growth (H) scenarios, Canada

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

Notably, in all projection scenarios, total demographic dependency in 2063 would not drastically exceed that experienced early in the 20th century (Table 2.4). However, the composition of the ratio would have changed markedly: in 1921, seniors accounted for just over 12% of the non-working age population, compared to between 57.7% (scenario H) and 66.6% (scenario L) in 2063.

According to the medium-growth scenario (M1), in 2060, both Canada’s senior demographic dependency ratio and its median age (Table 2.5) would fall below the average projected for other developed countries according to the United Nations’ World Population Prospects, but still higher than what would be observed, for example, in the United States, Sweden and the Russian Federation.
Variations by Province

1. The far eastern provinces (PEI, N-L, NS) are flat or shrinking, following stagnant population sizes or decreases:
   - They will also age rapidly, reflecting a smaller young population.

2. Quebec and Ontario continue to grow and dominate Canadian population clusters:
   - However, the population ages there, too, and over a quarter of all people are projected to be over age 65 by 2038.

3. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta are expected to grow significantly and stand out as the provinces that will be younger than others in the country:
   - This will be an opportunity for recruitment for all universities that attract a national audience.
Variations by Province

1. British Columbia will continue its growth over the next 25 years, according to projections.

2. Like the eastern provinces, the population will age rapidly and the percentage of persons over age 65 is expected to reach about 25% by 2038.

Figure 3.19
Population, observed (1989 to 2013) and projected (2014 to 2038) according to selected scenarios, British Columbia

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.
# Variations by Province – Aboriginal population

### Table 9
Aboriginal identity population and proportion that it represents in the total population by province and territory of residence, Canada, 2011 (observed) and 2036 (according to four projection scenarios)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province and territory of residence</th>
<th>2011 (observed population and proportion)</th>
<th>2036 (projected population and proportion)</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Moderate convergence of fertility</th>
<th>Constant fertility</th>
<th>No ethnic mobility</th>
<th>No internal migration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thousands</td>
<td>percent</td>
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<td>9.8</td>
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</table>

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.
Population trends in British Columbia
Some important notes about Canadian demography

1. The northernmost territories continue to have a very small population and even high growth rates leave them with populations smaller than many midsize Canadian cities.

2. Much of the projection of growth is fueled by international migration into the provinces:
   - This could change for any number of reasons and growth, as a result, could be negative in several provinces.

3. BC has a highly differentiated post-secondary system, new residents may not understand the variations between institutions. If international in-migration continues, Universities will need to adjust efforts to attract these new students.
The next generation of university students

1. Post-Millennials, Gen Z, iGen, Centennials
   – Born between 1996 and 2000
   – Now entering universities

2. "Cloud innate"
   – Storage is not needed
   – Everything is streaming or online

3. Favorite “channel” is YouTube

4. Hyper-aware of security and safety issues:
   – There has always been terrorism and we have been at war with terrorism since they were toddlers or pre-school age
Important aspects of GenZ and enrolment (Usher, 2017)

1. Parental influence in decision-making is minimal, especially compared to Millennials
   - College choice may be generally guided by parents but is otherwise the student’s choice

2. Willing to invest only if the returns appear to be extraordinary
   - Otherwise, “good enough” is OK and local options for HE would be fine

3. Most HE marketing turns them off:
   - Quality is not what they expect and they are negatively impressed by the institution, as a result
   - Recruitment presentations are perceived a saccharine or generic and therefore of little worth
Applied Learning

1. Growth in popularity of STEM fields

2. Shifting away from fields in social sciences, liberal arts and fine/performing arts

3. For men, shifts away from math and biology

4. For women, gains in biology and neutral in math
Recessional impacts on choice of major

Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

1. Goal:
   - 100% of Canadian post-secondary students will have access to applied learning as part of the degree programs
     • Sado, Jenkins, Cannon – July, 2016 in iPolitics
   - Four initial steps:
     • Establish a common definition of WIL
     • Find out what is working and where gaps exist
     • Bring everyone on-board
     • Remember why this is important (making Canadians globally competitive)

2. Also a prevalent movement in Australia
New Universities in BC

1. 1989: UBC-O, Okanagan College partnerships and continued expansion of Okanagan through 2005

2. Five colleges were granted university status in 2008:
   - Fraser Valley
   - Kwantlen
   - Vancouver Island
   - Emily Carr Art + Design
   - Capilano

3. While none of these alone may significantly dent UVic’s overall enrolment, they may:
   - Chip away at key revenue-paying students
   - Erode some of the quality within specific programs where they are somewhat competitive
International student trends

1. Up 10.7% across Canada from 2016 to 2017

2. More than a “Trump Bump”:
   - Follows a pattern of growth: 7% annually in 2015 and 2016
   - Driven by policy decisions that make Canada easier to come to and easier to stay, live and work in after degree completion

3. Uneven results across the provinces:
   - BC had the biggest increase at 15.2%
   - Newfoundland decreased by 5.7%
   - Saskatchewan grew just 2%
   - PEI and ON grew by 13%, each

Indigenous representation in HE

1. Growth in programs and activity directed at making universities more “welcoming to and representative of Canada’s Indigenous peoples.”
   – Academica, January 2017

2. 2015 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (just some of those most evidently related to HE):
   – Close educational achievement gaps
   – Fund post-secondary grants (PSSSE)
   – Preserve Aboriginal languages, including degree programs in them
   – Close health gaps; improve health care for Aboriginal peoples:
     • Increase the number of Aboriginal health care professionals
   – Data collection and study of Aboriginal social issues; related increases in treatment and improvement of social conditions
Indigenous representation at UVic

1. UVic has an “Indigenous Plan 2017-2022”

2. Five Cedar Strands:
   - Students
   - Faculty and Staff
   - Education
   - Research
   - Governance

3. Student enrollment has grown from just over 500 to over 1200 since 2002.