

**Are British Columbians Ready for the World?
Enhancing Study Abroad Opportunities for BC
Undergraduate Students**

**by
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B.A. (Political Science), University of British Columbia, 2005

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Requirements for the Degree of
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Abstract

The focus of this capstone is on study abroad participation among undergraduate students at public universities in British Columbia (BC). In this capstone, I explore the economic and developmental benefits of international learning for students, estimate the current rate of study abroad in BC and discuss the policy tools available to the BC Government to encourage more students to study abroad. The current rate of international learning among BC university students suggests that there is ample room for growth in study abroad participation. Provincial policies available to the BC Government include: biennial study abroad data collection, enlisting the private sector, improving professional development, enhancing the BC Study Abroad Consortium, and establishing an international mobility program.

Keywords: International education; outbound student mobility; study abroad; public policy; education policy

Dedication

This work is dedicated to those who believe that international education is a two-way exchange that expands international learning for local students and invites international students to our local communities.

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List of Acronyms

Term	Initial components of the term
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BC AVED	British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education
BCCIE	British Columbia Council for International Education
BCSAC	British Columbia Study Abroad Consortium
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education
IES	International Education of Students (USA)
SAGE	Study Abroad for Global Engagement (USA)

Executive Summary

“What nations don’t know can hurt them. The stakes involved in study abroad are that simple, that straightforward, and that important. For their own future and that of the nation, college graduates today must be internationally competent.”

- Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005

In international education, much attention is devoted to inbound international students and the associated immediate economic benefits for the Province of British Columbia (BC). Less attention and resources are paid to advancing outbound mobility for BC students. Research indicates that study abroad can produce gains in terms of professional, academic and personal development for students, as well as economic gains for the province, in the form of enhanced international competitiveness and scientific innovation.

The purpose of this capstone is to identify the major barriers to study abroad and to evaluate a set of policy tools available to the BC Government to enhance study abroad opportunities for undergraduate students at BC’s universities.

For students, the three main barriers to study abroad participation are cost, time and a lack of information on available programs, funding and support. Moreover, policy making in this area is hindered by a lack of provincial baseline data with which to inform and to evaluate study abroad initiatives. To inform this study, study abroad data has been obtained from four of BC’s largest public universities to estimate BC’s rate of study abroad and to identify policy opportunities and gaps.

To enhance study abroad opportunities for BC students, this capstone recommends a series of policy actions that can be undertaken by the BC Government:

1. Work with post-secondary institutions to establish study abroad baseline data on a biennial basis.
2. Actively engage non-governmental organizations to fund additional scholarships, bursaries and grants; and to increase international internship opportunities for BC students.

3. Enhance professional development opportunities for outbound student mobility staff.
4. Enhance the relevance of the BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC).
5. Undertake efforts to solicit private sector and/or federal funding partnerships to increase the financial feasibility of an international mobility program.

Chapter 1.

Introduction to Study Abroad

1.1. Canadian Students Studying Abroad

The most recent Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) survey estimates that approximately 2% of Canadian full-time university students have participated in some form of study abroad for academic credit (AUCC, 2007). An appropriate international comparison may be to compare Canada's rate of study abroad with that of other English-speaking developed countries such as the United States, United Kingdom and Australia. Recent estimates put the proportion of total post-secondary students (all levels) in the US and UK who have participated in study abroad for academic credit at roughly 1-2% (British Council, 2013; NAFSA, 2013). In Australia, a study suggests that approximately 5% of post-secondary students completing in 2007 had participated in study abroad (Olson, 2007). However, international comparisons may be problematic due to vast differences in data collection, methodology and reporting.

Increasing the number of students studying abroad may help develop a workforce with stronger foreign language skills, intercultural competencies and international linkages. Such a workforce is critical for increasing economic competitiveness in international markets and fostering innovation within the home economy.

For this capstone, study abroad will be defined as an out of country academic experience undertaken by a home institution's students for academic or co-op credit. As a concrete example, a Simon Fraser University (SFU) student studying at a Chinese university or working/volunteering in China and receiving course or co-op credit at SFU for this international experience is counted as study abroad. On the other hand, if this student does not receive credit from SFU for his or her study abroad experience, then it

will not be counted as study abroad for the purpose of this capstone. In addition, a Canadian studying for a full degree at a university overseas is also outside the scope of this capstone.

There are two main reasons for requiring academic or co-op credit for the definition of study abroad. First, study abroad participation in programs that do not offer credit at home universities is difficult to track. Often, universities do not collect data on non-credit bearing study abroad participation other than survey data where students self-report whether or not they have participated in international learning. Second, requiring credit can establish a basic level of quality in study abroad programs. The logic here is that for students to benefit from overseas learning, they should be participating in programs that provide adequate programming quality and student support. By offering credit for an international learning experience, the assumption is that a study abroad program meets the basic pedagogical and student support requirements of the home university.

1.2. Scope of Capstone

The jurisdictional focus of this capstone is British Columbia (BC). The main rationale for this provincial focus is that in Canada, provincial governments have exclusive jurisdiction over education.¹ In BC, post-secondary education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Advanced Education (BC AVED). This capstone is a policy analysis of the specific ways in which the BC Government can reach their stated goal of increasing study abroad opportunities for BC university students. The scope of this report will be limited to BC's public universities and four-year undergraduate programs. I will not address the issue of study abroad in BC's K-12, college diploma or graduate programs unless it has a direct connection to study abroad in four-year undergraduate degree programs.

¹ It is noted here that limited study abroad scholarship and exchange opportunities are available through the Federal Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Furthermore, I recognize that there are multiple avenues outside of study abroad that can enhance foreign language capabilities, intercultural competencies and international linkages. In addition to study abroad, policy responses may include recruiting international students, expanding language training and the internationalization of university curricula. To clarify, the policy problem addressed in this capstone is not how to enhance the international competency of BC students and workers. Rather, insofar as study abroad is an appropriate tool for enhancing international competency, this capstone will develop a provincial policy framework to increase the number of BC undergraduate students participating in study abroad.

1.3. British Columbians Studying Abroad

On a provincial level, the BC Government identifies study abroad as a component of the Province's International Education Strategy. According to BC Premier Christy Clark, BC must attract more international students and "just as significantly, to send more of our own students on similar exchanges abroad to bring social, cultural and economic benefits back home to our communities" (AVED, 2012).

Specifically, BC's International Education Strategy aims to increase out of country academic opportunities for BC students by (AVED, 2012):

- Enhancing scholarships, bursaries and employment incentives for BC students who study abroad.
- Working with institutions to help BC students who study overseas receive credit for those studies and have the credential(s) they earn recognized in BC.
- Working with BC employers to facilitate job opportunities for BC students returning after study abroad in key fields.²

Provincial funds devoted to study abroad are mostly in the form of international scholarships distributed by The Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society

² It is not clear from BC's International Education Strategy what the "key fields" are. The report does state that in BC, the fastest growth in demand is for occupations in health, natural and applied sciences, and in art, culture, recreation and sport. According to the BC Jobs Plan, the key sectors in BC are: Forestry, Mining, Natural Gas, Agrifoods, Tourism, Transportation, International Education and Technology.

from its endowment fund. As part of the Province's International Education Strategy in 2012, the BC Government contributed \$2 million to enhance this endowment to provide financial assistance to BC students studying outside North America (AVED, 2012).³ In 2012, 249 international scholarships were awarded worth a total of \$418,150 (The Society, 2012). Since the program's inception in 2008, just over \$1.6 million in international scholarships have been awarded (Victoria Foundation, 2013).

1.4. Research Questions

This capstone will focus on the following research questions:

1. What is the current state of study abroad at BC universities among four-year undergraduate degree programs?
2. How does increasing BC's rate of study abroad benefit BC students and the provincial economy?
3. Given the current state of study abroad in BC, what policy tools are available (or appropriate) to the BC Government to encourage or incentivize more undergraduate students at BC universities to participate in study abroad?

1.5. Why Care about Study Abroad?

1.5.1. *Economic Rationale*

Knowledge Importation Via Study Abroad

The connection between study abroad and economic development is difficult to measure: it is hard to isolate the impact of study abroad on economic growth. However, a number of scholars have identified a relationship between study abroad and economic growth in developing countries. As Fry points out, during the early periods of Japanese industrial development, there was a strong emphasis on sending Japanese technicians and students abroad to acquire technical skills in a variety of fields relevant to national

³ International scholarships of \$1000-\$3500 are available each year and Premier's International Scholarships valued at between \$6000-\$10,000 are awarded each year to students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and community involvement.

development. Indeed, Fry's findings suggest that study abroad does have a positive and significant relationship with economic performance in developing nations (Fry, 1984).

What specific aspects of study abroad correlate most with economic development? According to Kim, study abroad contributes to the import of advanced knowledge and leads to economic growth in developing nations. Specifically, two factors have a considerable positive relationship with economic growth in developing countries: students studying abroad in developed countries and students abroad studying technology-oriented fields such as natural sciences, engineering and medical sciences (Kim, 1998). The policy implication from Kim's findings is that if a state chooses to allocate resources to enhance study abroad, it may be more efficient to focus on technology related fields and on certain destination countries that can return the most value.

A contemporary example of an outbound student mobility program with such purpose is Brazil's Science Without Borders program. This program is primarily funded by the Brazilian federal government (with additional funding from private sector) and seeks to strengthen and expand science and technology, innovation and economic competitiveness through international mobility of post-secondary students and researchers. Its stated goal is to fund 100,000 Brazilian students and researchers to attend the world's top universities by 2015 (Government of Brazil, 2013). In terms of academic disciplines, Science Without Borders focuses on increasing outbound students in fields related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. As for destination countries, Brazil has identified a number of mostly developed countries in North America, Europe and Asia as partners.⁴

Of course, the needs and characteristics of a developed economy, such as BC, are not the same as those of developing nations, such as Brazil. The knowledge gap between developed economies is much narrower than between developed and developing countries. Thus, it would be unrealistic to assume that benefits to BC from BC students abroad would be of the same magnitude as for a developing economy. On

⁴ These countries are Germany, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, South Korea, Denmark, USA, Spain, Finland, France, Netherlands, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Norway, New Zealand, Portugal, UK, Czech Republic, Russia, Sweden, and Ukraine.

the other hand, to state that BC has little knowledge to gain from other countries would be also be erroneous. Regardless of the level of economic development, all economies stand to gain from the importation of knowledge from abroad.

Enhancing International Trade Via Study Abroad

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), “as a trading nation, Canada increasingly needs young leaders with the international awareness, knowledge, skills and connections that study abroad provides in order to drive our future economic development” (CBIE, 2013). For BC in 2012, the value of international exports from BC totalled \$31 billion (BC Stats, 2013). However, unlike other Canadian provinces, BC is equally dependent on exports to the Pacific Rim⁵ as to the United States. In 2012, BC exports to the Pacific Rim accounted for 44% of total exports, roughly equal to the share of exports to the United States (BC Stats, 2013). This is compared to Canada as a whole, where exports to the United States accounts for over 70% of total Canadian exports (Statistics Canada, 2013). Just a decade ago in 2003, BC exports to the Pacific Rim accounted for a mere 24% with exports to the United States accounting for 67% (BC Stats, 2013).

The growing economic importance of Asia has certainly garnered the attention of the BC Government. In 2007, the BC Ministry of Economic Development released its “British Columbia Asia Pacific Initiative” (BC Ministry of Economic Development, 2007). This report predicts that total annual trade between BC and Asia Pacific economies⁶ would grow from \$29 billion in 2005 to \$106 billion by 2020. To enable BC to maximize the economic benefits of a fast-growing Asia Pacific, the BC Government calls for actions to ensure that BC “has citizens with the Pacific Century skills to compete globally and maximize Asia Pacific opportunities”. In particular, an action item of the Asia Pacific Initiative is to increase international education opportunities in Asia to ensure that BC

⁵ According to BC Stats, the Pacific Rim includes: Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Laos, Mongolia, China, Indonesia, North Korea, South Korea, Philippines, Macau, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, Fiji, New Zealand.

⁶ The BC Asia Pacific Initiative defines Asia Pacific economies as Japan, China, South Korea, India, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South East Asia.

has the necessary “cultural and business knowledge and language skills to compete in the Pacific Century economy”.

Of course, BC is not the only jurisdiction to recognize the growing link between study abroad and international economic opportunity. The largest student exchange program in the world is the European Union’s ERASMUS Programme. Since 1987, close to 3 million students have participated and ERASMUS’s annual budget is over EUR€450 million (European Commission, 2013). However, comparisons between BC and Europe must be made with caution. One reason for the large annual budgets is that the ERASMUS Programme is also viewed by the European Union as a critical part of its European integration strategy. Moreover, the geographical proximity of European countries may enable more European students to study abroad than in Canada or BC.

Perhaps a more appropriate comparison is with Australia. Similar to BC, Australia is a major exporter of natural resources, is highly engaged with the Asia Pacific and is geographically distant from outside countries. One important difference, however, is that unlike Canada, post-secondary education is under the jurisdiction of the Australian Government. In 2013, the Australian Government announced \$100 million of new funding over five years for the New Colombo Plan (*New Colombo Plan*, 2013). The main goal of the plan is to enhance knowledge of the Asia Pacific in Australia and to strengthen people-to-people and institutional relationships through study and internships undertaken by Australian undergraduate students. Over time, the Australian Government hopes to see study in the Asia Pacific as a “rite of passage” for Australian students. This plan will begin in 2015, after a pilot phase in 2014 that will focus on study abroad in Japan, Indonesia, Singapore and Hong Kong.

1.5.2. Learning Outcomes of Study Abroad

Limitations of Data

Before delving into the learning outcomes of study abroad, a discussion of the limitations of the data is appropriate. First, much of the evidence for improved intercultural competencies, language acquisition and career outcomes are in the form of self-reported data. Self-reported data may not accurately reflect the real gain (or loss) in key competencies as respondents may not know or choose not to state the reality.

Secondly, a self-selection bias may exist with surveys on study abroad. For instance, does study abroad increase intercultural competencies or are intercultural competent students more likely to participate in study abroad? Some research attempts to remove this self-selection bias by incorporating a control group made up of non-study abroad participants. However, even in this case, this non-study abroad control group may not have identical characteristics with the study abroad group and therefore, does not fully remove self-selection bias. With these limitations in mind, I will now turn to the data on learning outcomes associated with study abroad.

Language Acquisition & Intercultural Outcomes

In 2009, a Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) survey suggests that study abroad can contribute to personal and educational growth. Selected CBIE findings are below:

Table 1.1: All Areas of Learning/Growth Reported by Area of Growth, Expressed as Percentages

	Learned more abroad	Learned about the same	Learned Less abroad
General Cultural Awareness & Understanding	95%	4%	2%
Self-Confidence	84%	11%	5%
Openness to Different Ways of Thinking	81%	17%	3%
Foreign Language Skills & Competencies	81%	12%	8%
Knowledge of World Events	76%	16%	7%
Intellectual Development	62%	24%	15%
Academic Achievement	43%	28%	31%

(Bond, 2009)

In terms of foreign language acquisition, over 80% of study abroad respondents (table 1.1) report that they learned more abroad. This is hardly surprising as exposing learners to “frequent and intense opportunities to interact with native speakers” is an effective way of achieving linguistic goals (Pellegrino, 1998).

For international competencies, a strong majority of study abroad participants (table 1.1) report that they learned more abroad in terms of cultural awareness and

understanding, openness to different ways of thinking, and knowledge of world events. For Martin, the ability to navigate through the cultural differences of the host culture, and to be sensitive and tactful of such differences, are crucial to success in international business settings and within an increasingly diverse domestic society (Martin, 2006).

Substantiating the CBIE findings, Stebleton et al. find a significant positive relationship between study abroad and student development in the following areas:

- Understanding the complexities of global issues
- The ability to apply disciplinary knowledge to a global context
- Linguistic and cultural competency in another language
- Ability to work with people from other cultures

(Stebleton et al., 2013)

Additionally, the overall impact of study abroad on post-secondary education experiences is large. According to a US Study Abroad for Global Engagement (SAGE) study, more than 80% of study abroad participants report that their study abroad experience had a “strong impact” on their college experience. This puts study abroad ahead of other factors, such as friendships and coursework, which also impact the college experience for study abroad students (Paige et al., 2009).

Career & Employment Outcomes

In terms of developing skills related to career or employment, a US International Education of Students (IES) survey of IES alumni finds (IES Abroad, 2004):

- 76% report that they acquired skills sets that influenced their career path.
- 62% report that their study abroad ignited an interest in a career direction pursued after the experience.
- 48% report that they have worked internationally or participated in volunteer activities since studying abroad.

In addition to the above US survey, CBIE findings (table 1.1) suggest study abroad participants can also benefit from increased self-confidence, intellectual development and academic development, all of which are valuable to both employees and employers.

Cross border person-to-person connections are also crucial to business success internationally. In Martin's study, over 90% of study abroad respondents report that their international academic experience had a positive impact on their friendships (Martin, 2006). For the state, these friendships are not merely beneficial to the individual: these international relationships may form the foundation for future business linkages that result in economic benefits.

It seems that employers also value skills developed through study abroad. According to a 2009 CBIE survey of employers, over 50% of surveyed employers state that they would hire a graduate with study abroad experience over a graduate who does not have such experience, holding other qualifications as equal (Bond, 2009). Outside of Canada, a CBI Education and Skills Survey found that 41% of UK employers are not satisfied with UK graduates' international cultural awareness and 54% of UK employers are not satisfied with UK graduates' foreign language skills (CBI, 2012).

The economic importance of foreign language skills is an example of why many employers value employees with international experience. According to a European Commission survey of 2000 businesses, it is estimated that 11% of exporting European SMEs (small and medium size enterprises) may be losing business as a result of a lack of language skills (European Commission, 2007). Of the businesses that reported this loss of business, the average loss per business over a three-year period is CDN\$470,000.⁷ This forgone business can have a significant impact on the larger economy. For instance, one Swiss study estimates that the value of Switzerland's multilingualism is worth close to CDN\$40 billion per year or equivalent to 9% of Switzerland's annual GDP (Grin et al., 2009). These studies indicate that the BC export economy can benefit enormously from a multilingual workforce. Although foreign language training can take many forms, language learning abroad is recognized as the one of the most effective methods.

⁷ Converted to Canadian dollars from €325,000 according to exchange rate on December 16, 2013.

1.6. Barriers to Study Abroad Participation

1.6.1. *Financial Cost*

By far the most significant barrier to study abroad participation is cost. According to the Association of Universities and Colleges (AUCC), financial expense is the most commonly referenced barrier to study abroad by Canadian students (AUCC, 2007). Collaborating this, a CBIE study found 78% of students report that the costs of study abroad exceed their available funds (Bond, 2009). The additional expense of study abroad can take the form of both direct and indirect costs. The direct costs of study abroad include air transportation, overseas accommodation, and program tuition. Indirect costs include the inability to include the costs of study abroad in financial aid application, lost income from work during time abroad, the risk of losing a job because of time abroad, and alternative arrangements to support young or elderly dependents while abroad (Bond, 2009). Without financial assistance, it seems that only a small minority of students can afford to participate in studies overseas.

1.6.2. *Time*

Another barrier to study abroad participation is the extended time away from one's home institution when studying abroad. As mentioned previously, this time away is already costly in terms of forgone income from part-time work at home. In addition to lost earnings, other undesirable consequences can be associated with overseas studies. For example, according to the CBIE study, 30% of students report that the delaying of graduation was an obstacle to participating in study abroad (Bond, 2009). In the AUCC study, close to half of students report that inflexible or heavy curriculum at home university as a barrier to study abroad (AUCC, 2007). This may be of particular consequence to students in cohort-based programs, such as engineering or computer sciences, where course schedules are often standardized, demanding and inflexible.

1.6.3. *Lack of Information*

Encouragingly, survey data indicate that university students are mostly aware of the benefits of international learning. According to the CBIE study, 85% of students

report that they are interested in study abroad while 56% of students report that they are likely to participate in a study abroad program during their post-secondary studies (Bond, 2009). According to a 2010 New to UBC Student Survey, 52% of incoming domestic students report that they intend to participate in an international learning opportunity (University of British Columbia, 2010). Collaborating this finding, a 2011 survey of York University students show that 60% of surveyed students report that they intend to study abroad while at York (Trilokekar and Rasmi, 2011).

Although many students seem to have a desire and the intention to participate in studies internationally, actual participation rates are in order of magnitudes lower than reported intention rates. Why such a discrepancy? First, students may later realize that they do not possess sufficient financial means to study abroad. Second, students may also be unaware of the availability of funding, programs, and support for study abroad. The 2011 York University survey found that 74% of student respondents at York University were not able to readily identify international opportunities at the university (Trilokekar and Rasmi, 2011). By making more students aware of the funding, program and support opportunities for international learning, already internationally minded university students may be more likely to become actual study abroad participants.

Chapter 2. Study Abroad Baseline Data in BC

2.1. Research Methodology

Currently, there are no available data on students in BC universities who participate in study abroad. As a result, the primary research of this capstone relied on requests for data from BC universities. The aggregated baseline data form the basis from which to develop a policy framework.

The following public universities in BC have provided data for this study:

- Simon Fraser University
- University of British Columbia (Vancouver & Okanagan)
- University of Victoria
- Vancouver Island University

The main rationale for selecting the above universities is that they are the largest public universities in BC and cover a variety of geographic areas including the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, and the Okanagan. The large size and diverse locations make this sample more generalizable to the greater post-secondary student population of BC.

The following data were requested from the above institutions:

- Number/percentage of study abroad students (undergraduate) for recent school years
- Breakdown of study abroad by discipline
- Breakdown of study abroad by destination country
- Breakdown by study abroad by term length

In terms of secondary research, I relied on the following types of sources:

- Government/organization studies on the state of student mobility (Canada, USA, Europe, Australia)
- Studies on the impact of study abroad on economic development
- Studies on the impact of study abroad on intercultural competencies, language acquisition and career outcomes.
- Case studies to identify and evaluate policy measures in other jurisdictions such as Australia and Brazil.

2.2. Research Findings

2.2.1. Overall Rate of Study Abroad

Based on data from Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia (Okanagan & Vancouver), University of Victoria and Vancouver Island University, the overall rate of study abroad is estimated below:

Table 2.1: Overall Rate of Study Abroad (2011-2012 School Year)

N = 90,7528	
Proportion Of Undergraduates Studying Abroad	Proportion Of Undergraduates Studying Abroad During 4 Year Degree
2.2%	8.8%

According to table 2.1, just over 2% of undergraduate students in the 2011-2012 school year participated in some form of study abroad.⁹ If we assume that individual study abroad participants study abroad once, and that the proportion of undergraduates that go abroad and the total number of undergraduate students remain constant over a four year period, then the proportion of undergraduates that participate in study abroad at some time during their four year degree programs can be estimated at almost 9%.¹⁰

⁸ This represents the total undergraduate headcount for academic year 2011-2012 for Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia (Okanagan & Vancouver), University of Victoria and Vancouver Island University (Simon Fraser University, 2013; University of British Columbia, 2013; University of Victoria, 2013).

⁹ The 2011-2012 school year consists of Fall 2011, Spring 2012 and Summer 2012. Study abroad data include exchange/field school and international co-op/internship numbers.

¹⁰ Under this set of assumptions: 2.2% X 4 = 8.8%.

2.2.2. Study Abroad by Length of Term

Table 2.2 breaks down study abroad data by the length of term:

Table 2.2: Study Abroad by Length of Term (2011-2012 School Year)

N = 1568 ¹¹	
Proportion of undergraduates studying abroad for 1 term	Proportion of undergraduates studying abroad for 2 or more terms
79%	21%

According to table 2.2, approximately 8 out of 10 undergraduates studying abroad do so for one term. Conversely, only 2 out of 10 undergraduates studying abroad do so for at least two terms of more.

2.2.3. Study Abroad by Academic Discipline

Table 2.3 breaks down study abroad data by academic disciplines:

Table 2.3: Study Abroad by Academic Discipline (2011-2012 School Year)

N = 2020	
Faculty/Department	Proportion of Study Abroad
Arts	40%
Business	26%
Science	20%
Applied Science	14%

Of the undergraduate students that studied abroad, two-thirds are from either Arts or Business. Conversely, only one-third of students studying abroad come from either Science or Applied Science faculties.

¹¹ Length of term breakdown was not available for some university departments. Out of the 2026 students that studied abroad, only 1568 had either concrete or estimated term breakdown data.

However, the data look significantly different when we compare the academic disciplinary make up of international co-op versus that of exchange/field school students. Table 2.4 below illustrates this comparison.

Table 2.4: Academic Discipline Comparison: International Co-op vs. Exchange/Field Schools (2011-2012 School Year)

Faculty/Department	International Co-op (including internships) N = 622	Exchange and Field Schools N = 1398
Arts	23%	47%
Business	11%	33%
Science	32%	16%
Applied Science	35%	4%

According to table 2.4, the academic disciplinary make up of co-op/internship students is far different than that of exchange/field school students. Whereas approximately two-thirds of all international co-op students are from Science or Applied Science, only 2 out of 10 exchange/field school students are from the physical sciences.

2.2.4. Study Abroad by Destination Countries and Regions

Table 2.5 below breaks down study abroad data by destination regions:

Table 2.5: Study Abroad by Destination Region (2011-2012 School Year)

N = 1884 ¹²	
Region	Proportion of Study Abroad Students
Europe	39%
Asia	33%
Australia + New Zealand	10%
USA	9%
Africa	5%
Latin America	3%

¹² Destination region breakdown was not available for some university departments. Out of the 2026 students that studied abroad, only 1884 had destination region breakdown data.

Middle East	1%
Caribbean	0.5%

According to table 2.5, by far the top two destination regions for students to study abroad are Europe (39%) and Asia (33%). Combined, almost 3 out of 4 study abroad students chose either Europe or Asia as their study destination. Other regions of note include the United States (9%) and Australia and New Zealand (10%). For a complete breakdown of study abroad by individual countries, please see Appendix A.

In addition, comparing destination data of international co-op and exchange/field school student shows marked differences for a number of regions. Table 2.6 below illustrates this comparison.

Table 2.6: Destination Region Comparison: International Co-op vs. Exchange/Field Schools (2011-2012 School Year)

Region	International Co-op (including internships) N = 617	Exchange and Field Schools N = 1267
Europe	19%	48%
Asia	47%	26%
USA	20%	4%
Australia + New Zealand	4%	13%
Latin America	4%	3%
Africa	4%	5%
Middle East	2%	1%
Caribbean	1%	0%

A significant difference is that close to half of all international co-op students go to Asia compared to one-quarter of exchange/field school students choosing Asia. Additionally, exchange/field school students are two and a half times more likely to go to Europe (48%) than co-op students (19%). Finally, co-op students are five times more likely to go to the United States (20%) than exchange/field school students (4%).

2.3. Policy Implications of Research Findings

2.3.1. Overall Rate of Study Abroad

The first research finding of significance is that just over 2% of undergraduate students participated in some form of study abroad in the 2011-2012 school year. This proportion is similar to the estimated 2006 Canadian average of 2% (AUCC, 2007). Based on this estimate, it is clear that there is ample room for growth in the number of undergraduate students participating in study abroad. Enhanced government policies by the BC Government can play an important role in increasing the number BC students studying abroad. Specific policies to make progress toward this goal will be discussed in later sections of this capstone.

2.3.2. Study Abroad by Length of Term

In terms of the length of study abroad terms, close to 8 out of 10 students chose to study abroad for one semester. On one hand, this finding implies that only 2 out of 10 students that study abroad do so for two semesters or more. According to Dwyer, the impact of study abroad grows with increased duration of abroad experience (Dwyer, 2004). Thus, policies that encourage more students to study abroad for at least two semesters may be desirable in this regard. On the other hand, this same Dwyer study also finds that short term abroad programs of at least six weeks in duration can still be enormously beneficial and that the trend in the past decade is toward more students choosing shorter term programs. Therefore, due to the overwhelming popularity of short-term one-semester programs, policies that encourage more students to take part in single semester exchange, field school or internships may be more realistic and effective.

2.3.3. Study Abroad by Academic Discipline

As for academic disciplines, two-thirds of study abroad students were from either Arts or Business. Conversely, only one-third of study abroad students were from Science or Applied Science. This preponderance of Business and the Social Science students in

study abroad is roughly in line with other jurisdictions, such as the United States (IIE, 2013).

On the other hand, there seem to be significant disciplinary differences between international co-op and exchange/field school students. The data shows that international co-op students are more than three times more likely to be from Science and Applied Science than exchange/field school students. This may mean that compared to exchange/field school students, the disciplinary make up of co-op students is much more conducive to fostering scientific and technological innovation in BC. The policy implication here is that to further increase the number of study abroad students from the physical sciences, emphasis on increasing international co-op opportunities may be particularly effective.

2.3.4. Study Abroad by Destination Region

For destination regions, close to 3 out of 4 study abroad students went to either Asia or Europe (33% and 39%). Another notable destination is the United States, home to approximately 10% of study abroad students from BC. Again, data comparing co-op and exchange/field school students show marked differences. Compared to exchange/fields school students, international co-op students were almost twice as likely to go to Asia (47% vs. 26%) and two and half times less likely to go to Europe (19% vs. 48%). In addition, co-op students were five times more likely to go to the United States than exchange/field school students (20% vs. 4%).

As Asia has emerged as a major buyer of BC exports (on par with the USA) over the past decade, the large proportion of study abroad students choosing Asia (particularly co-op students) is encouraging in this regard. However, the number of study abroad students choosing to go to BC's other large trading partner, the United States, is comparatively low. The United States is also an important destination country for the importation of scientific and technological knowledge into BC.

Data on destination region suggests that policies that increase international co-op opportunities may be particularly effective in increasing study abroad participation in both Asia and the United States.

2.4. Limitations of Baseline Data Collection

The collection of baseline study abroad data in this capstone is limited in a number of ways. First, the universities that made data available for this study were Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia (Okanagan & Vancouver), University of Victoria and Vancouver Island University. Although this represents a sizable sample from a variety of geographical regions in BC, the data nonetheless leaves out seven of BC's other public universities (AVED, 2014).

Second, at many universities, different departments within each institution track study abroad enrolment data for their respective units. As a result, due to time constraints, the universities that participated in this study were likely not able to provide complete study abroad data encompassing all departments and faculties. This may mean that the data collection undercounts the real rate of study abroad participation in BC. Furthermore, not all of the data provided from the various departments could be broken down by categories such as discipline, length of study, and destination region. Therefore, the findings of these categories are limited to the data that did contain such statistical breakdowns.

Third, this capstone only uses data from the 2011-2012 academic year. Although some universities were able to provide data for a more recent 2012-2013 school year, other institutions were not able to provide complete data for the 2012-2013 year. To maximize the completeness of data, 2011-2012 data was chosen for this study.

Fourth, there are variations in how study abroad data is tracked between universities and even between departments of the same institution. For example, while some departments and universities track the number of students participating in study abroad, others track the number of terms. Therefore, since this capstone is more concerned with the number of students, estimates on the average number of terms per student were used to estimate the number of students studying abroad in these instances.

Finally, no data were available on what proportion of the students participating in study abroad were domestic or international. Although this capstone is concerned with

BC students studying abroad, it is likely that at least some of the students that were captured in the data collection were in fact international students.

Chapter 3. Policy Options

A summary of the current policy framework is necessary to provide a starting point for any additional policy options.

3.1. Status Quo

As previously discussed in section 1.3, the BC Ministry of Advanced Education (BC AVED) outlines its priorities in regards to outbound student mobility in its 2012 International Education Strategy. To recap, BC endeavours to increase out of country academic opportunities for BC students by (AVED, 2012):

- Enhancing scholarships, bursaries and employment incentives for BC students who study abroad.
- Working with institutions to help BC students who study overseas receive credit for those studies and have the credential(s) they earn recognized in BC.
- Working with BC employers to facilitate job opportunities for BC students returning after study abroad in key fields

In terms of action items, BC AVED aims to:

By 2013:

- Develop baseline information on the number/percentage of BC students pursuing study/work abroad opportunities to identify issues and inform market development opportunities.
- Highlight the benefits for BC businesses employing BC students who have studied abroad, including international connections, enhanced skill sets, and language skills.
- Expand the existing BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC) to increase access to information on post-secondary study abroad opportunities and benefits.

By 2014:

- Develop a tool for measuring the number of BC students going abroad to study, work and volunteer.
- Work with Mitacs – a BC based, national not-for-profit research organization that fosters collaboration between academia and industry – to augment its successful Globalink program to include an overseas component for domestic students.

3.2. Additional Policy Options

With the current policy framework as a starting point, I now move to introduce a number of policy options to enhance study abroad opportunities for BC undergraduate students. Please note that the below policies are not mutually exclusive. The options are:

1. Biennial study abroad data collection
2. Enlisting the private sector
3. An enhanced BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC)
4. Enhanced professional development for study abroad staff
5. A provincial international mobility program

3.2.1. Policy #1: Biennial Study Abroad Data Collection

First, sound public policy must be based on accurate data. To date, minimal progress has been made on the development of a tool to measure the number of BC students studying abroad. Data collection on a regular basis enables policy makers and educators to evaluate policy initiatives and to identify policy trends, opportunities and gaps.

In this capstone, I attempt to estimate the current rate of study abroad among undergraduate students by collecting data from four of BC's largest public universities. Based on this framework, the Province can expand the scope of the data collection to

eventually include all of BC's public universities.¹³ In addition, baseline data should be collected on a regular basis (say every two years) to maintain up to date information and to identify any changes or trends that can inform future outbound student mobility policies.

3.2.2. Policy #2: Enlisting the Private Sector

The private sector can play a role in enhancing study abroad opportunities for BC students.

Fundraising

As mentioned previously, financial considerations are by far the largest barrier to study abroad. To address this obstacle, private donors and businesses can fund scholarships and bursaries to provide financial assistance for BC students to study abroad.

In 2004, the BC Government formed the Irving K. Barber Scholarship Society to fund and distribute scholarships to support BC students studying abroad. One way of enlarging this endowment fund is to expand the fundraising capacity of the Society. A more robust fund development capacity may lead to a larger pool of funds available for international scholarships for BC students.

The BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) is another organization that could benefit from an expanded fundraising capacity. For example, private sector money can enable BCCIE to fund additional BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC) scholarships/grants and professional development opportunities for study abroad staff.

Brazil's Science without Borders program is an example of how the state and the private sector can jointly support a major outbound student mobility initiative. Of the over 100,000 scholarships made available, 26,000 will be funded by the private sector (Government of Canada - Brazil, 2013).

¹³ Although outside the scope of this capstone, it would seem logical that baseline study abroad information would overtime also include public and private colleges.

International Internships

The private sector, which includes business, business and professional organizations, non-profit organizations and NGOs can also be consulted to explore opportunities for increasing international internship opportunities for BC students. Data from this capstone shows marked differences in the academic and destination region make up of international co-op/internship students compared to exchange/field school students. Co-op students are over three times more likely to be from the physical sciences, close to twice as likely to go to Asia, and five times more likely to go to the United States when compared to traditional academic exchange and field school students. This suggests that enhancing international internship opportunities can have a positive impact on trade with both Asia and the United States and the importation of scientific and technological knowledge.

According to BC's International Education Strategy, the Ministry of Advanced Education (BC AVED) intends to work with Mitacs, a BC based national non-profit research organization that fosters collaboration between academia and industry, to augment its Globalink program to include an overseas component for domestic students (AVED, 2012). Continued engagement with Mitacs to enhance international work opportunities for BC students would be a positive development.

In addition, based on ideas discussed in Australia's New Colombo Plan, a number of other approaches can also be considered to connect students with international internship opportunities (*New Colombo Plan*, 2013):

- Development of an online platform to facilitate interaction between BC students and potential international internship providers.
- Support to university international co-op offices in developing links with potential providers of internships.
- Engage with organizations, such as the Business Council of British Columbia, to explore opportunities to promote and support international internship opportunities.

3.2.3. Policy #3: Enhanced BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC)

The BCSAC is a group of participating BC post-secondary institutions that collaborate to encourage students to participate in study abroad by offering short-term

study abroad programs to students of participating institutions.¹⁴ The main component of the Consortium is its BC Study Abroad website where students can find and apply to short-term study abroad programs offered by participating institutions (“BC Study Abroad,” 2013). By offering study abroad programs to students of other participating institutions, students have access to a wider range of study abroad programs and member institutions are better able to meet the minimum enrolment requirements of their own programs.

Another purpose of the BC Study Abroad website is to address the concern that many students in BC are unaware of the current study abroad programming, funding and support opportunities available. Currently, the website contains information on international programs offered by member institutions, a list and links to available scholarships and bursaries, tips for student budgeting, and links to contact relevant study abroad support staff at member institutions.

As part of BC’s International Education Strategy, the BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) rebranded and re-launched the Consortium’s BC Study Abroad website in 2013. Long dormant, the website re-launch and the subsequent re-engagement with Consortium member institutions is a positive step toward encouraging collaborative efforts among BC institutions in the area of outbound mobility. Looking ahead, much work still needs to be done to increase the relevance of the Consortium. First, re-engagement with existing members must be continued to expand the number of study abroad programs offered on the BC Study Abroad website. Second, this website should be promoted and positioned as a central resource for university students interested in studying abroad. Third, a tool for tracking actual participation in Consortium programs must be developed. Fourth, private sector sponsors should be engaged and additional public funding can be considered to support scholarships/bursaries for students and study abroad programs from participating institutions. And fifth, over the long-term, an expansion of the Consortium to include a larger number of BC’s institutions should be considered.

¹⁴ Currently, there are 19 participating institutions. The five largest are Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, Thompson Rivers University, Vancouver Island University and the University of Northern British Columbia. A full list of member institutions are here: <http://www.bcstudyabroad.ca/about>

3.2.4. Policy #4: Enhanced Professional Development

A core purpose of professional development is to ensure quality programming and support for students that choose to study abroad. Although much of government policy is driven by quantitative measures, such as participation rates, attention must also be paid to the quality of the study abroad experiences that BC students participate in. If additional public resources and efforts are devoted to increasing the number of BC students studying abroad, it would be prudent to ensure that students are indeed benefiting from high quality programs. Furthermore, quality may indeed drive quantity. Abroad programs of higher quality are likely to result in greater gains for students, which in turn, would make it more attractive for future students to participate.

Led by BCCIE, professional development for international educators in BC has seen significant growth in recent years. At the same time, much of this professional development is focused on the area of inbound international students, particularly in the area of international student recruitment. On the other hand, professional development opportunities for outbound student mobility professionals have been relatively modest. For example, at BCCIE's Summer Seminar 2013, only 3 out of the 32 concurrent sessions were related to outbound student mobility (BCCIE, 2013). This relative imbalance means that outbound staff do not have the same opportunities to network, mentor, and share and learn from best practices as their inbound counterparts.

A number of avenues exist to increase professional development opportunities for BC's study abroad staff. First, a renewed effort by BCCIE to engage and encourage BC's outbound mobility staff to participate in and/or to provide content for workshops and seminars would be constructive. For signature events/programs, such as BCCIE's Summer Seminar and the Mentorship Program, a formal component focusing on study abroad may be considered to demonstrate BC's commitment to outbound student mobility.

3.2.5. Policy #5: International Mobility Program

An ambitious policy option is to establish a provincial outbound student mobility program. In Canada, no such program exists at either provincial or at the national level. As other jurisdictions, such as the European Union, Australia and Brazil, have

established outbound student mobility programs, a 2012 Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy proposed an International Mobility Program for Canadian Students to serve 50,000 students per year by 2022 (Advisory Panel, 2012). Assuming that little or no progress is made towards such a national program, the BC Government can develop a provincial international mobility program to increase international learning opportunities for students in BC.

Based on the models established by Australia's New Colombo Plan and Brazil's Science without Borders Program, an international mobility program would require additional public and private sector funding to establish a system of grants and scholarships for study abroad. The BC Government would award scholarships directly to student applicants while grants would be distributed to universities/colleges. A less costly option would be the establishment of loans for study abroad.

The focus of an international mobility program would depend on the objective of the Government. For example, if the overriding objective is to facilitate trade with major trading partners, then a mobility program can focus on study abroad programs to major trading partners, such as countries in the Asia Pacific. However, if the objective is to import technical knowledge to drive long-term economic innovation, then the focus of a mobility program should be on sending more Science and Applied Science students to advanced developed countries.

Chapter 4. Criteria and Measures

All policy options will be evaluated by the following set of criteria:

4.1. Criterion #1: Effectiveness

The primary goal of each policy option is to increase the number of BC undergraduate students participating in study abroad. As such, each policy option will be evaluated on the degree or time horizon to which it can achieve this objective. Specifically, each policy option can be rated into three categories:

A = Immediately effective

B = Effectiveness is over the long term

C = Effectiveness is inconclusive

The rationale for the above measures is that certain policy options, such as an international mobility program, will create immediate spaces for study abroad with increase government funding. I assume program take-up to be high, meaning that additional BC students will immediately fill the majority of subsidized study abroad spaces. This assumption is based on research that indicates financial expense as the largest barrier to study abroad participation (AUCC, 2007; Bond, 2009). On the other hand, other policy options, such as enhancing professional development for study abroad staff, will not have an immediate impact on the number of BC students participating in study abroad. Instead, the goal is to develop an environment where higher quality programs can lead to a long-term increase in study abroad participation. Other policy options that currently have insufficient evidence to support its effectiveness in the short or long term will be rated as “inconclusive”.

4.2. Criterion #2: Cost

Each policy option will be evaluated by how much it will cost the government. Each option can be rated into three categories:

- A = No or negligible additional cost
- B = \$10,000 to \$100,000 in additional cost
- C = Over \$100,000 in additional cost

Estimated costs associated with proposed scholarships and grants, additional staff hours and other incremental administrative costs will be used to determine the cost of each policy option.

Additionally, the cost criterion is also relevant in determining the public acceptance (or political feasibility) of a policy option. For a relatively non-controversial issue, such as study abroad, the degree of public acceptance or opposition to specific policies will likely centre around the cost to the taxpayer. For this reason, public acceptance is not included as a separate criterion in my policy analysis.

4.3. Criterion #3: Implementation Complexity

The degree of change required to implement a policy option will also be considered in my policy analysis. My consideration of complexity will be based on an analysis of how the implementation of proposed policies will require a change in stakeholder relations, legislation and/or government structures and processes. Specifically, each policy will be rated into the following three categories:

- A = Low complexity: no or little change required
- B = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholder groups
- C = High complexity: requires one or more of the following (in addition to B): new legislation, change in administrative structure and/or processes.

4.4. Criterion #4: Equity

An evaluation of the degree to which proposed policies can increase study abroad opportunities for identified underrepresented groups is also required. The Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) identifies the following groups as underrepresented in study abroad participation (Bond, 2009):

- First Nations students
- Male students
- Science/Applied Science students
- Working students
- Students with financial hardships

Moreover, the positive gains achieved through study abroad may be more pronounced for students from traditionally underrepresented groups. According to Stebleton et al., low-income and working class students, and visible minority students that studied abroad, reported even higher gains in key intercultural competencies¹⁵ than the rest of the student population (Stebleton et al., 2013).

In terms of a measure, each proposed policy is evaluated by the degree or time horizon in which a policy can increase study abroad opportunities for underrepresented groups. For reasons similar to the effectiveness criterion, each policy option will be rated into the following three categories:

- A = Immediately effective
- B = Effectiveness is over the long term
- C = Effectiveness is inconclusive

¹⁵ Key competencies: understanding complexities of global issues, ability to apply disciplinary knowledge in a global context, linguistic or cultural competency in another language and the ability to work with people from other cultures.

4.5. Criterion #5: Stakeholder Acceptability

Finally, each policy option will be evaluated on the basis of its acceptability to stakeholder groups in the field of study abroad. I have identified the following as relevant stakeholder groups:

- BC universities
- BC undergraduate students
- BC employers

As for measures, the anticipated position of each stakeholder group will be determined and each policy option will be rated into the following three categories:

A = Majority of stakeholder groups approve with no groups opposed

B = Majority of stakeholder groups neutral with no groups opposed

C = One or more stakeholder groups is opposed

4.6. Summary of Criteria

Table 4.1 is a combined summary of all of the criteria.

Table 4.1: Criteria and Measures Summary Matrix

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	MEASURES	METHODOLOGY
Effectiveness	The primary goal of each policy is to increase the number of BC undergraduate students participating in study abroad.	Degree or time horizon in which a policy can increase the number of undergraduate students participating in study abroad. A = Immediately effective B = Effectiveness is over the long-term C = Effectiveness is inconclusive	Evaluation of best practices and strategies to enhance effectiveness.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	MEASURES	METHODOLOGY
Cost	Budgetary cost of policy option. Consideration of public acceptance is also captured under this cost criterion.	Annual dollar amounts. A = No or negligible additional cost B = \$10,000 - \$100,000 in additional cost C = Over \$100,000 in additional cost	Cost estimates on scholarships/grants, additional staff hours and other incremental administrative costs.
Implementation Complexity	The degree of change required to implement a policy option.	Complexity of change required. A = Low complexity: no or little change required. B = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholders. C = High complexity: requires new legislation and/or change in administrative structure and/or processes.	Analysis of change required based on current government structures and/or policy framework.
Equity	Degree to which policy option can increase study abroad opportunities for underrepresented groups. Underrepresented student groups include: First Nations, men, science & applied science, working students and students with financial hardships (Bond, 2009).	Degree or time horizon in which a policy option can increase study abroad opportunities for underrepresented groups. A = Immediately effective B = Effectiveness is over the long term C = Effectiveness is inconclusive	Analysis of how a policy can target underrepresented groups.
Stakeholder Acceptability	Acceptability of policy option to relevant stakeholder groups. Relevant stakeholder groups are: BC universities, BC undergraduate students, and BC employers.	Anticipated position of stakeholder group toward policy option. A = Majority of groups approve with no groups opposed B = Majority of groups in neutral with no groups opposed C = One or more groups is opposed	Anticipated positions of relevant stakeholder groups.

Chapter 5. Policy Evaluation

In this section, each policy option will be evaluated according to the criteria introduced in Chapter 4. Although each policy option will be evaluated individually, they are not mutually exclusive.

5.1. Policy Option #1: Study Abroad Baseline Data

This study has attempted to approximate the rate of undergraduate study abroad at BC's public universities. Using this capstone as a possible model, the Province can obtain study abroad data on a regular basis and increase the scope of the data collection to include a wider range of public universities.

5.1.1. *Benefits of Baseline Data*

The effectiveness of this policy option lies in its long-term impact on policy making. Official baseline data provide a basis for policy formulation and follow up data collection enables policies to be evaluated and enhanced over time. This data can also enable policymakers to identify trends, gaps and opportunities in the area of study abroad. Of course, the collection of baseline study abroad data is merely a first step toward informed policy making and is unlikely yield an increase in the number of BC students studying abroad in the short-term.

Over time, consistent data collection can also identify trends in study abroad that impact traditionally underrepresented groups. For example, even in the limited sample of this capstone study, I was able to identify Science and Applied Science students as an underrepresented group and point to possible avenues for addressing this issue, such as supporting the development of increased international internship opportunities. As the capacity for data collection is enhanced over time, trends in study abroad participation

for other groups related to ethnicity and socio-economic class can also be identified to inform policymaking.

My experience with collecting study abroad data suggests that there is support for and agreement on the importance of establishing baseline data on study abroad from administrators at BC's universities. However, this support should not be taken for granted. Care should be taken to ensure that future data requests do not overburden university staff with already full workloads.

5.1.2. Challenges of Data Collection

A significant hurdle for establishing accurate baseline data is that it depends largely on individual universities to collect study abroad data. Compounding this, there is much variation between institutions on the type and quality of the data collected. A common difficulty for universities is that different departments and faculties keep data for various types of abroad programs. University departments may use different methodologies for data collection and this results in data that can be difficult to compare.

A number of approaches can be considered to mitigate such complexities. First, the BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) is likely the most appropriate vehicle for baseline data collection due to its long experience working closely with university stakeholders. Second, BC institutions should be consulted regularly to discuss collection methods and to develop a sustained culture for consistent data collection. Third, early studies can focus on a limited number of institutions and expand to include a larger sample, once best practices have been identified and adequately tested.

The collection of baseline data will entail costs to the government. For example, since 2011, BCCIE has commissioned biennial studies on the economic impact of international students in BC to inform policy on inbound student mobility. According to a BCCIE representative, a comprehensive study on the rate of study abroad in BC is estimated to cost \$10,000-\$15,000 per study, either through additional staff time or via a third party consultant. If baseline data is collected every two years, the annual cost will be approximately \$5000-\$8000.

Summary

- **Effectiveness: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Cost: A** = Less than \$10,000 in additional annual cost
- **Implementation Complexity: B** = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholders
- **Equity: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Stakeholder Acceptance: A** = Relevant groups approve with no groups opposed

5.2. Policy Option #2: Enlisting Private Sector

5.2.1. *Potential Benefits of Fundraising*

The private sector can support study abroad by providing financial support for BC students without a complete reliance on public dollars.

Private sector support can also help address the relatively low study abroad participation of certain student groups. For example, funds raised can be allocated to bursaries for students from specific underrepresented groups or a fundraising campaign aimed at supporting specific groups of students can be undertaken.

Costs of Fundraising

To increase private sector support, additional public investments are required to expand fundraising capacities of organizations such as the Irving K. Barber Scholarship Society and/or BCCIE. One challenge is for these organizations to acquire an adequate level of fundraising expertise. It is likely that extensive consultations with experienced fund development professionals at organizations, such as universities and other not-profit organizations, will be a necessary prerequisite for successful fundraising.

Exactly how much upfront capital is required to raise additional funds from the private sector is difficult to estimate. As an illustrative example, we can take the “generally acceptable” ratio of fundraising cost per fundraising revenue of 35% according to the Canada Revenue Agency (Ayer et al., 2009). In addition, we assume that the

average salary of a fundraising professional in BC to be approximately \$70,000 per year.¹⁶ Based on these assumptions, we can expect that over the long-term, a typical fundraising professional would raise an average of \$200,000 per year in gross revenue leading to a net income of \$130,000 per year. However, there are risks associated with fundraising that make financial returns uncertain. In this case, the additional cost and complexity of developing a new donor base will likely lead to a higher fundraising cost per fundraising revenue ratio in the initial start up period.

Due to the uncertain nature of fundraising, stakeholders such as institutions and students are likely to prefer increased government funding but would otherwise not oppose increased private sector support.

Possible Strategies for Fundraising

A possible strategy to encourage more private sector involvement and to maximize the effect of public funds is to institute a program or fundraising campaign where the BC Government matches privately raised funds. For Gliozzo, corporate donors often request matching funds as “the matching gift concept doubles the amount of scholarships and is symbolic of an institutional commitment to study abroad (Gliozzo, 2000).”¹⁷ For example, at John Hopkins University, the university matches funds raised through various school functions for its School for Advanced International Studies’ summer internship fund. In 1999, \$50,000 was made available for stipends to support student internships in the US and abroad (Gliozzo, 2000).

Currently, a number of private donors (corporations and individuals) are already financially involved with supporting educational activities in BC at the university level. These same donors would be a logical place to start building a potential donor base for proposed study abroad scholarships or grants. Additionally, international corporations that operate in BC and BC based corporations that operate internationally may be willing to financially support study abroad initiatives as they may be aligned with their business

¹⁶ Estimate based on job postings for fund development officers at the University of British Columbia.

¹⁷ Gliozzo is writing about engagement with the private sector at the university level. The fundraising experience at the university level can be instructive for any government led fundraising effort.

objectives. Other potential private supporters may also be ethnic and service organizations that have an interest in promoting cultural, historical, or language study in their country of origin (Gliozzo, 2000).

Increase International Internship Opportunities

In terms of engaging the private sector to increase international internship opportunities for BC students, additional cost is not expected to be significant but will require additional staff time either for the Ministry, or for an organization such as BCCIE. The main challenge of this type of initiative will be acquiring the support and the sustained commitment of relevant private sector partners. Of course, a proposed development of an online platform to connect BC students and internship providers will entail costs associated with the development and maintenance of such a website.

International co-op/internship offices at BC universities, students and employers are likely to support greater public-private collaboration in increasing international internship opportunities for BC students.

Summary

Private Sector Fundraising

- **Effectiveness: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Cost: B** = \$10,000 - \$100,000 in additional annual cost (dependent on the degree of fund development expansion)
- **Implementation Complexity: B** = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholders
- **Equity: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Stakeholder Acceptance: B** = Relevant groups neutral with no groups opposed

International Internships Engagement

- **Effectiveness: C** = Effectiveness is inconclusive
- **Cost: A** = Less than \$10,000 in additional annual cost
- **Implementation Complexity: B** = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholders
- **Equity: C** = Effectiveness is inconclusive

- **Stakeholder Acceptance: A** = Relevant groups support with no groups opposed

5.3. Policy Option #3: Enhanced BC Study Abroad Consortium

The BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC) is a group of participating BC post-secondary institutions that collaborate to encourage students to participate in study abroad by offering short-term study abroad programs to students of participating institutions. Managed by BCCIE, the main component of BCSAC is its BC Study Abroad website where students can find and apply to short-term study abroad programs offered by participating institutions.

5.3.1. *Benefits of BC Study Abroad Consortium*

The BCSAC can enhance study abroad opportunities for BC students. First, on the program supply side, by opening up field school programs of individual universities to students of other participating institutions, minimum enrolment requirements are more likely to be met and this in turn encourages universities, particularly smaller ones, to develop and trial more abroad programs. Second, on the student demand side, the ability to participate in abroad programs of other institutions gives these students a wider range of programs to choose from. Third, data from this capstone study shows that 8 out of 10 students that participate in study abroad choose short-term programs of one term or less. As BCSAC focuses on short-term field school programs, it is indeed offering programs that are the most popular to students. And fourth, the BC Study Abroad website provides an online resource for study abroad programs, funding and support for students considering studying overseas. For these reasons, institutions and students alike will likely support an enhanced BCSAC.

5.3.2. *Challenges for BC Study Abroad Consortium*

One barrier against the further enhancement of BCSAC is that there is currently no tool for tracking how many students actually participate in BCSAC programs. In its current form, the website functions to give prospective students information on a

selection of international field school programs from participating institutions. The next step of actually processing participants is left to individual study abroad offices at BCSAC institutions. Any mechanism for such a tracking tool will likely require member institutions to collect and supply the relevant data. Getting agreement and developing a sustained commitment to this type of data collection from member institutions is likely the most significant hurdle to accurately tracking BCSAC participation.

An effective BCSAC requires sustained engagement from member institutions and from front line study abroad staff at these institutions. Specifically, further education for study abroad staff on the benefits of study abroad collaboration will be needed. Moreover, public messages targeting students to make them aware of the BC Study Abroad website as a central resource for study abroad funding, programs and support should be developed to help inform students considering studying overseas.

Additionally, there will be costs associated with additional staff time required for a concerted re-engagement with Consortium member institutions. Moreover, additional scholarships, bursaries and grants to incentivize students and to support the development of BCSAC programs will require additional public and/or privately raised funds. To address underrepresented groups, a number scholarships or bursaries can be allocated to target these student groups.

Summary

- **Effectiveness: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Cost: B** = \$10,000 - \$100,000 in additional cost (dependent on the extent that public funds are used for scholarships, bursaries or grants)
- **Implementation Complexity: B** = Moderately complex: requires buy-in from and collaboration with stakeholders
- **Equity: B** = Effectiveness is over the long term
- **Stakeholder Acceptance: A** = Relevant groups support with no groups opposed

5.4. Policy Option #4: Enhanced Professional Development

5.4.1. *Long Term Benefits of Professional Development*

The purpose of enhancing professional development is to ensure that BC universities' study abroad professionals have up-to-date knowledge on best practices that will enable the continual improvement of study abroad programs. Currently, BCCIE is responsible for the development and implementation of professional development for international educators in BC. Avenues for enhancing professional development for outbound mobility staff may include organizing additional workshops and seminars on study abroad and the establishment of a formal component of outbound mobility in BCCIE signature events such as the annual Summer Seminar and the Mentorship Program. By facilitating the development of high quality and innovative study abroad programs, the benefits of study abroad become greater and in turn, encourage more students to participate.

Professional development programming can also help address the underrepresentation of certain student demographics in study abroad. For example, seminar or roundtable topics focusing on reaching out and supporting these groups of students would be positive in this regard.

5.4.2. *Minimal Costs and Complexity*

Professional development programming in addition to the status quo will entail additional costs in the form of staff hours and venue cost. However, the reallocation of the existing program to include more outbound mobility issues will not have additional costs. Moreover, establishing a formal component on study abroad for BCCIE's Summer Seminar and the Mentorship Program will also not entail additional cost to the current budget.

Finally, enhancing professional development does not require a structural change in the current format of delivering development programming and is likely to receive support from post-secondary institutions.

Summary

- **Effectiveness: B** = Effectiveness is over the long-term
- **Cost: A** = Less than \$10,000 in additional cost
- **Implementation Complexity: A** = Low complexity: no or little change required
- **Equity: B** = Effectiveness is over the long term
- **Stakeholder Acceptance: A** = Relevant groups support with no groups opposed

5.5. Policy Option #5: International Mobility Program

5.5.1. Immediate Benefits

The most effective method of significantly increasing study abroad participation is to address the financial barrier of learning abroad through a system of additional grants, scholarships and bursaries. As the lack of financial assistance is by far the most commonly reported barrier to study abroad, I assume that take up rates for scholarships, bursaries and subsidized spaces (through grants) to be high, leading to an increase in the number BC students studying abroad.

An outbound mobility program can also be designed to achieve a number of objectives. First, to enhance commercial opportunities in important international regions, a mobility program could focus on funding BC students to study in high priority markets such as China or the United States. Second, targeting funding for Science and Applied Science students would have a positive impact on science and innovation in BC. Third, additional funding targeting underrepresented groups can encourage more students from these groups to take part in study abroad. For example, establishing eligibility requirements that take into account the financial needs of recipients can minimize program take-up of financially well-off students that would have otherwise studied abroad without funding assistance.

Support from stakeholder groups will likely be high. Significant government investment to enhance the international competencies of students will be welcomed by educators, students and employers.

5.5.2. **Costs & Complexity**

The major trade-off of an international mobility program is cost. As an illustrative example, let us assume an outbound initiative with the following structure:

Table 5.1: International Mobility Program Structure

Number of Students Served per Year	5000¹⁸
Average Cost per Student Served (Range)	\$1000 - \$6000 ¹⁹
Cost per Year	\$5 million - \$30 million

In addition to the cost of scholarships/bursaries and grants, there will also be costs associated with increase staffing to administer a mobility program. Additional staffing will be required to process and approve a significant increase in scholarship/bursary and grant applications and to monitor compliance if necessary. To mitigate costs, private sector funding can supplement public spending. For example, in Brazil's Science without Borders program, 26,000 of the 100,000 scholarships made available is funded by the private sector (Government of Canada - Brazil, 2013). Another option to mitigate costs would be the use of student loans to finance study abroad in which students must pay back (with interest) after graduation.

Finally, an international mobility program will require new legislation and new administrative processes and/or structures for both government and universities. Moreover, consultations with BC and overseas universities will be necessary to ensure adequate programming and student support capacities for a significant increase in BC students studying abroad. To alleviate such complexities, a pilot program with a limited financial scope and a select number of university partners can be considered.

Summary

- **Effectiveness: A** = Immediately effective

¹⁸ Based on 2012 Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy recommendation of a Canadian outbound mobility program to serve 50,000 students per year by 2022. I estimate BC's portion of that to be 5000.

¹⁹ For reference, the current Premier's International Scholarship distributed by Irving K. Barber Scholarship Society is \$6000 per recipient.

- **Cost: C** = Over \$100,000 in additional cost (dependent on the scope of program)
- **Implementation Complexity: C** = High complexity: requires new legislation and/or change in administrative structure
- **Equity: A** = Immediately effective
- **Stakeholder Acceptance: A** = Relevant groups support with no groups opposed

5.6. Policy Evaluation Summary

The preceding policy evaluation is summarized in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Policy Evaluation Summary Matrix

	Effectiveness	Cost	Complexity	Equity	Stakeholder Acceptance
1. Assemble Study Abroad Data	B	A	B	B	A
2a. Engage Private Sector (Fundraising)	B	B	B	B	B
2b. Engage Private Sector (Internships)	C	A	B	C	A
3. Enhance BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC)	B	B	B	B	A
4. Enhance Professional Development	B	A	A	B	A
5. Finance International Mobility Program	A	C	C	A	A

5.6.1. Key Policy Trade-offs

Effectiveness vs. Cost

As the major inhibitor of study abroad participation is cost, the sole avenue to increase study abroad participation over the short-term is to allocate significant public dollars to fund additional scholarships, bursaries and grants. However, the high budgetary cost associated with such a policy may render it unpalatable to elected legislators and to the public. In the policy evaluation above, an international mobility program is the only policy deemed to be immediately effective but it is also by far the highest cost option. For low and moderate cost options, their effectiveness is either unproven or only in the long-term. This same trade-off between effectiveness and cost also applies to increasing study abroad participation of underrepresented student groups.

Outside Partnerships Required

Additionally, a number of policy options entail at least a moderate level of implementation complexity, in the form of required partnerships with private sector actors and universities. Specifically, the degree to which the private sector can be persuaded to commit to advancing study abroad will be dependent on the success of the Province's engagement with these non-state actors. In addition, baseline data collection and enhancing the BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC) will require long-term partnerships with BC's universities. Finally, an international mobility program will require consultation with BC and overseas universities to ensure adequate programming and student support capacity for a significant increase in study abroad participation.

Little Stakeholder Opposition

Finally, none of the policy options are expected to invite opposition from any of the identified stakeholder groups. In fact, students, universities and employers will likely support the majority of the policy options introduced above. Hence, I do not foresee stakeholder opposition to be a significant barrier to policy implementation. As such, the main challenges associated with all of the policy options are cost and implementation complexity.

Chapter 6. Recommendations & Conclusion

This capstone recommends a number of policy and implementation actions to be undertaken to enhance study abroad opportunities for BC students.

6.1. Recommendation #1: Biennial Data Collection on Study Abroad in BC

An immediate priority is to develop a mechanism to regularly measure the rate of study abroad in BC. This capstone establishes an estimated baseline based on a limited set of institutional data for the 2011-2012 school year. In order to measure trends and to measure the performance of policy, study abroad data should be collected every two years.

Based on the experience of this capstone study, initial studies should focus on a select number of institutions to reduce project complexity. In conjunction with this data collection, a wider consultation with BC public universities should be initiated to establish a consensus around a standardized definition of study abroad and how and what type of data can be tracked. Over time, the scope of the data collection can be expanded to include a wider sample of institutions.

A logical vehicle for this type of research and consultation is the BC Council for International Education (BCCIE) due to their long experience working directly with BC's post-secondary institutions in the area of international education.

6.2. Recommendation #2: Enlisting the Private Sector

As financial expense is the largest barrier to study abroad participation, business and other private sector organizations should be engaged to provide funding for additional scholarships, bursaries and grants.

Significantly increasing fundraising returns will entail an upfront investment in fund development capacity. Successful fundraising campaigns require time, complex planning and fundraising professionals to implement. Organizations that could benefit from an expanded fund development capacity are the Irving K. Barber Scholarship Society and BCCIE. These organizations can utilize private funding to augment public contributions for additional study abroad scholarships and bursaries. However, before any significant investments are made into expanding the fund development capacities of either organization, adequate levels of fundraising expertise and realistic fundraising goals should be established.

In addition to fundraising, private sector organizations may also be encouraged to develop international internship opportunities for BC students. First, the Ministry should continue its consultation with Mitacs to develop an outbound internship component to its Globalink program. Second, this type of consultation can be expanded to include a wider range of organizations. For example, enhanced Ministry engagement with co-op offices at BC universities to support links between universities and potential internship providers can be beneficial. Third, to encourage the involvement of private sector partners, an establishment of a new award category (within BCCIE International Education Awards) recognizing private sector contributions to international learning can be considered. Data from this capstone suggests that internship students are much more likely to be from the physical sciences, and more likely to choose economic priority regions such as Asia and the United States. Moreover, paid internships can alleviate much of the cost of study abroad.

6.3. Recommendation #3: Enhance the BC Study Abroad Consortium (BCSAC)

The recent refresh and rebranding of BCSAC's BC Study Abroad site and the subsequent re-engagement with consortium members are positive steps toward a re-invigorated BCSAC. Looking forward, additional actions can be undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of the consortium. First, a tool for tracking student participation should be established. This will require consultations with BCSAC members on an appropriate tracking mechanism. Second, active re-engagement with member institutions is needed to increase the number of international programs offered on the BC Study Abroad website. Third, public and/or private funding for additional scholarship, bursaries or grants should be considered to incentivize more students to participate in BCSAC programs. Fourth, public messaging to students positioning the BC Study Abroad website as a central online resource for study abroad programs, funding assistance and student support should be developed.

6.4. Recommendation #4: Enhance Professional Development

In our efforts to increase the number of students studying abroad, the issue of quality cannot be ignored. One way in which BC can enhance quality is to support additional professional development opportunities for study abroad staff. To advance professional development, establishing a formal study abroad component to the annual BCCIE Summer Seminar and the BCCIE Mentorship Program should be considered.

6.5. Recommendation #5: “Wait and See” on International Mobility Program

Due to its high cost, a number of actions should precede any serious consideration of a provincial international mobility program. First, federal support for a Canada-wide study abroad program may lighten the burden on provincial finances. A 2012 Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy recommended a creation of a program to serve 50,000 students per year by 2022 (Advisory Panel, 2012).

Further consultations with other provincial counterparts and the federal government about a federally supported mobility program should be undertaken. Second, private sector funding can also alleviate the cost to the Province. In this case, consultations with the private sector on opportunities for funding partnerships can be initiated.

If the Province chooses to fund an outbound mobility program, an initial pilot program of limited financial scope, with specific target beneficiaries (to target underrepresented groups), and with a selected number of university partners should be considered to limit complexity and to allow for an evaluation of program effectiveness before more public funding is allocated.

6.6. Conclusion: Building a Foundation for Study Abroad

Today, much of the focus on international education is on the inflow of international students and its immediate economic benefits. Much less attention is paid to how the outflow of BC students studying and working overseas enhances their international competencies and benefits BC's international competitiveness over time. Study abroad data from four BC universities suggest ample room for growth in the total number of students studying abroad and highlights opportunities for growth in Science and Applied Science students and to important destination regions, such as Asia and the United States. This capstone recommends a series of policy initiatives to be undertaken by the BC Government in order to build a foundation for enhancing long-term study abroad participation among undergraduate students in BC. These include: biennial study abroad data collection, enlisting private sector support, enhancing the BC Study Abroad Consortium and an expansion of professional development opportunities for study abroad staff.

Finally, serious consideration of a provincial international mobility program should be preceded by actions to seek federal or private sector funding partnerships. A limited pilot mobility program can also be considered to alleviate initial costs and complexity.

Chapter 7. Future Areas of Research

Although outside the scope of this capstone study, there are areas of research that can be undertaken in the future to advance study abroad opportunities for BC students. These include:

- Longitudinal studies to measure differences in academic, professional and personal development outcomes between study abroad participants and non-participants.
- Evaluations of international mobility programs in Australia and Brazil.
- Advancing study abroad at secondary school level in BC.

7.1. Longitudinal Studies

One of the limitations of current research is that the evidence suggesting gains in academic, professional and personal development as a result of study abroad are in the form of self-reported data. As mentioned previously, self-reported data may not accurately reflect the real gain (or loss) in key competencies and its results may be skewed by self-selection bias.

One type of study that could mitigate the above weaknesses is a longitudinal study that compares a treatment group of study abroad participants and a control group of non-participants. The key here is that both treatment and control groups must have similar characteristics, such as income, education, ethnicity and gender, in order to isolate the impact of international learning.

Of course, the implementation of this type of longitudinal study is hampered by at least two challenges. First, this study would likely span many years and as such, will require significant financial support and the long-term commitment of both participants and researchers. Second, finding participants for both the treatment and control groups

with identical characteristics may prove difficult and this will adversely affect the accuracy of the findings.

Although complex and costly to implement, findings from longitudinal studies can assist policymakers to make informed decisions on the appropriate level of public investment allocated to supporting study abroad opportunities for BC students.

7.2. Evaluations of International Mobility Programs

Recently announced or implemented international mobility programs in other jurisdictions should be studied and evaluated. Of particular interest to BC are Australia's New Colombo Plan and Brazil's Science without Borders program. Issues to be studied and evaluated include: program take-up, funding costs, implementation best practices and challenges, and impact on underrepresented groups. In addition, studies to identify or to measure the long-term economic impact of increased study abroad participation in these jurisdictions would also be informative. Specifically, for Australia's New Colombo Plan, its long-term impact on international trade with target countries can be evaluated. For Brazil's Science without Borders program, a long-term evaluation of the impact of study abroad on the development of science and technology in Brazil can be conducted.

7.3. Study Abroad at Secondary School Level

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), students who have already experienced study abroad report a greater likelihood of participating again (Bond, 2009). Therefore, in order to increase study abroad participation for undergraduate students, it may be logical to expand international learning opportunities for high school students in BC. To paraphrase a senior administrator with experience in international education, in order build a student mindset that values international learning, it may be particularly effective to "start young" where ways of thinking are still highly malleable.

In terms of specific research areas, studies to measure the gains in intellectual and personal development for adolescents participating in study abroad and how this

affects international learning at the post-secondary level would be informative. In addition, a policy analysis (similar to this capstone) focusing on advancing study abroad opportunities for secondary students can help illuminate the policy tools available to the BC Government to make progress in this area.

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Appendix A. Study Abroad by Country

Table A.7.1: Study Abroad by Country (From most to least popular)

Country	Number of Students	Proportion
China	222	11.85%
United States	181	9.66%
Australia	157	8.38%
United Kingdom	150	8.00%
Japan	138	7.36%
France	137	7.31%
Germany	125	6.67%
South Korea	87	4.64%
Italy	50	2.67%
Spain	48	2.56%
Ghana	43	2.29%
India	43	2.29%
Singapore	41	2.19%
Taiwan	40	2.13%
Sweden	38	2.03%
Netherlands	37	1.97%
Denmark	35	1.87%
New Zealand	28	1.49%
Zambia	24	1.28%
Austria	18	0.96%
Ireland	17	0.91%
Switzerland	16	0.85%
Belgium	15	0.80%
Mexico	15	0.80%
Thailand	15	0.80%
Czech Republic	10	0.53%
Poland	10	0.53%
Costa Rica	9	0.48%

Country	Number of Students	Proportion
Peru	9	0.48%
Turkey	9	0.48%
Uganda	8	0.43%
Malaysia	7	0.37%
Norway	7	0.37%
Chile	6	0.32%
Fiji	6	0.32%
Saudi Arabia	6	0.32%
Finland	5	0.27%
Philippines	5	0.27%
South Africa	5	0.27%
Brazil	3	0.16%
Iceland	3	0.16%
Indonesia	3	0.16%
Iran	3	0.16%
Kenya	3	0.16%
Barbados	2	0.11%
Bolivia	2	0.11%
Cayman Islands	2	0.11%
Cote D'Ivoire	2	0.11%
Egypt	2	0.11%
Slovenia	2	0.11%
Ukraine	2	0.11%
Vietnam	2	0.11%
Argentina	1	0.05%
Bahrain	1	0.05%
Bangladesh	1	0.05%
Colombia	1	0.05%
Croatia	1	0.05%
Cyprus	1	0.05%
Ecuador	1	0.05%
Haiti	1	0.05%

Country	Number of Students	Proportion
Hungary	1	0.05%
Jordan	1	0.05%
Malawi	1	0.05%
Morocco	1	0.05%
Nepal	1	0.05%
Romania	1	0.05%
Russia	1	0.05%
Rwanda	1	0.05%
Serbia	1	0.05%
St Martin	1	0.05%
Tanzania	1	0.05%
Tunisia	1	0.05%
United Arab Emirates	1	0.05%
Total	1874	100.00%