



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

# 2018-19 International Experience Canada (IEC) youth study

## Final report

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This public opinion research report presents the results of a quantitative online survey and a qualitative online community conducted by Environics Research on behalf of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The survey was conducted with 520 Canadian youth and the community was conducted with 80 Canadian youth in March 2019.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Executive summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
Background and objectives .....	i
Methodology .....	i
Contract value .....	ii
Key findings .....	ii
Political neutrality statement and contact information .....	iv
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background.....	1
Objectives .....	1
About this report.....	2
<b>I. Detailed findings – Qualitative phase .....</b>	<b>3</b>
A. Participant profile.....	3
B. Travel experiences – past and present.....	4
C. Motivations of travel & decision-making factors .....	6
D. Perceived benefits to study or work abroad experiences.....	8
E. Challenges .....	9
F. The International Experience Canada program .....	11
H. Subgroups of Interest.....	12
<b>II. Detailed findings – Quantitative phase.....</b>	<b>14</b>
A. Respondent demographic profile.....	14
B. Travel profile and experience.....	15
C. International travel and work experience benefits, motivations and barriers .....	18
D. The International Experience Canada (IEC) program .....	19
<b>III. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix A: Research methodology.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Qualitative phase methodology .....	28
Quantitative phase methodology.....	29
<b>Appendix B: Online questionnaire/screener .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix C: Online community discussion guide .....</b>	<b>46</b>

## Executive summary

### Background and objectives

International Experience Canada (IEC) is a program managed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) which offers Canadian citizen youth aged 18-35 the opportunity to travel and work in one of over 30 partner countries/territories. Though the program aims to be reciprocal with its partners, participation in the program by Canadian youth is not as strong as our partner countries. IEC has a targeted stakeholder engagement and promotion plan in place, with the goal of increasing awareness of opportunities abroad, and increasing Canadian youth participation in the program.

With this broader goal in mind, the primary objective of this research is to evaluate knowledge of the IEC program among its target audiences. More specifically, the objectives of the research include measuring:

- previous travel and or work abroad experience (where, main objective of travel, duration, etc.)
- awareness of the IEC program
- motivations and barriers to participating in international work abroad experiences, such as those facilitated by the IEC program
- perceived benefits of travel or work abroad experience

Insights about perceived barriers and motivators to pursuing work abroad experiences will inform policy and allow targeted engagement and promotion. The survey results will also be used to inform corporate performance reporting requirements (such as Performance Information Profiles and associated Performance Measurement Strategy Framework) for the IEC program.

### Methodology

To meet the research objectives, both quantitative and qualitative research was conducted. The quantitative phase consisted of an online survey which screened for youth with previous international work/study/volunteer experience. The qualitative phase was conducted with youth who would be eligible for the IEC program but who do not necessarily have international work/study/volunteer experience.

1. A **quantitative online survey** conducted March 15 to 27, 2019, with 520 Canadian youth (recruited from an online panel) aged 18-35 who self-identify as having either previously participated in the IEC program or obtained a visa to work/study/volunteer abroad. The online survey screened panellists to ensure they were IEC-eligible to provide incidence estimates for this group. It also served as the source for recruiting participants to the second, qualitative phase of the research. The survey was approximately 8 minutes in length and explored behaviours and attitudes toward international travel, perceived benefits and barriers of an international experience, awareness & perceptions of the IEC program and likelihood of future participation in the IEC program.
2. A selection of the youth screened for the quantitative online survey were also invited to participate in a two-day **qualitative online community**. The online community required input from participants on two separate days and was conducted over a total window of six days, from March 21 to 26, 2019. A total of 80 youth aged 18-35 from across the country participated and each was given an honorarium of \$100. In

order to get input from specific groups of interest to IRCC, youth were screened and included from each of the following groups: General population East (Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada) and West (The Prairies, BC and the Territories), LGBTQ2+ youth, Indigenous youth, youth women in STEM and youth with mobility/hearing impairments.

A more detailed methodology is presented in Appendix A of this report.

**Statement of limitations:** Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as measured in a quantitative survey. The results of the qualitative research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

Since online panel surveys are not a random probability samples, no formal estimates of sampling error can be calculated. Although not employing a random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys provided they are well designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel.

## Contract value

The contract value was \$122,290.24 (HST included).

## Key findings

### Qualitative phase

Participants show a general preoccupation with travelling that elicits strong positive emotional responses and often describe themselves as ‘travel enthusiasts.’ For some, affordability influences their perception of travel, leading to frustration with the financial constraints that prevent them from pursuing it. Only rarely do they mention wariness about negative events such as terrorism, violence or natural disasters.

Most participants have at least some international travel experience. English speakers are more interested in Asia and Australia as desired future travel destinations, while French speakers tend toward locations in the U.S. Reasons given for these destinations include discovering their heritage/visiting family, satisfying their curiosity about certain cultures, exploring history/art or simply having an adventure.

Immersion in another culture and achieving personal growth are underlying motivations to study or work abroad. Participants value ‘stepping outside of their comfort zone’ and the enrichment and perspective it would provide them. Living abroad provides a greater opportunity to learn than leisure travel and many feel it would be valued by employers and enhance their employment prospects in Canada. Developing personal connections and the possibility of new friendships are also benefits.

Two broad groups can be defined by their travel motivations: **Experientialists** who desire new experiences that influence their mind-set and **Escapists** who desire to escape daily life and to enjoy leisure. Further analysis reveals four segments, three of which are subsets of the **experientialists**:

- **authentic travellers**, for whom travel is about exploration and excitement; it is directed at satisfying curiosities about cultures, people and places

- **experienced explorers** are drawn to new destinations as they already have international experience; they see travel as an essential learning experience and a self-reflective exercise that broadens their horizons
- **inexperienced but eager** travellers have travelled less and tend to be younger and less financially stable; they are eager, excited and determined to see the world and experience new things

The final segment consists of **escapists**:

- **no-hassle hedonists** consider themselves tourists on vacation seeking to escape their everyday lives; travel is seen as a well-deserved reward

Some participants are open to working/studying/volunteering abroad, but it is often not front of mind when they discuss travel. Participants say they would consider it if the opportunity presented itself, but it is generally a more passive consideration than an active interest. Living abroad is associated both with the excitement of having new experiences and the fear of leaving their familiar, established lives. Overall, there is less eagerness to work/study/volunteer than to travel abroad, though **experientialists** more often express enthusiasm about it than **escapists**.

The major barrier mentioned is **affordability**. Participants often cite a lack of employment, limited savings and student (and other) debt as problems. **Language barriers** are also potentially overwhelming, especially among those who are not confident in their language skills. This is seen as being likely to compound other potential issues including **gaining stable employment**. Finding work is seen as a barrier for several reasons: a perception that working abroad requires one to go through a complex application process, concerns about the transferability of qualifications/skills or a lack of employable skills. **Social disconnection** and separation from family are also barriers. Fear of social isolation is especially common among introverts who worry about making social connections.

There is a general lack of awareness of the IEC program: most participants are unaware of it and what it offers. Those who are familiar usually hear about it from friends/family or from looking into work abroad opportunities themselves. Many find the program interesting and feel that more information/knowledge about the program would make them more inclined to participate, but that their participation would be contingent on overcoming the common barriers (language, employment and finances). Others say their current life circumstances (children, career, etc.) prevent them from participating.

Participants from the population sub-groups of interest are equally enthusiastic about travel as general population participants and are no more or less likely to be interested in studying/working/ volunteering abroad. They share similar views about the benefits of the experience and foresee the same challenges already mentioned above, but also point out some which are unique to their experience. For people with mobility impairments, accommodation is a challenge and there is serious concern about reliable access to medical care among those taking medications. Those with mental health issues like anxiety and depression face barriers due to existing struggles with isolation and many say that living aboard would mean disconnecting from their support networks. Although cultural attitudes (and what they may mean for their personal safety) are major considerations for LGBTQ2+ youth and women, they also mention the same barriers as other groups.

## Quantitative phase

The demographic profile of Canadian youth who have obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada skews toward males and people from Ontario relative to the census population of Canadian citizens aged 18-35. Less than a third of those who obtained a visa/work permit say they participated in the IEC program. A little more than half obtained a visa to study, a little less than half to work and only around a third did so to volunteer (people could get more than one type).

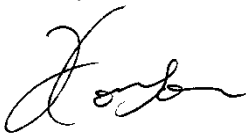
International travel experience is viewed positively by those who obtained a visa/work permit or participated in the IEC program: it leads to personal growth, learning experiences and exploration. The most common challenges faced were language barriers, financial concerns and isolation. Many in this group see future travel for leisure purposes as a near certainty, while sizeable proportions say they are very likely to work (34%), study (24%) or volunteer (22%) internationally in the future. Few say it is unlikely that they would do these things in the future but studying abroad is the option that the fewest people said they would likely do.

More than half (55%) say they know at least a little bit about the IEC program but a third have never heard of it. Among those who are unaware of IEC, two in five are interested in more information; they are most interested in getting information via a general internet search. Former participants are very satisfied with their IEC experience, saying it was a great life experience and that would recommend it to their friends and family.

A slim majority of those with a past international work/study/volunteer experience say they are likely to participate in a program like IEC in the future; those who do not say they are likely to participate in the future most often cite family or financial/career commitments.

## Political neutrality statement and contact information

I hereby certify as senior officer of Environics that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.



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# Introduction

## Background

International Experience Canada (IEC) is a program managed by IRCC offering Canadian youth the opportunity to travel and work in one of over 30 partner countries and territories. Because it is a reciprocal program, foreign youth from partner countries/territories can do the same in Canada. The age limit and types of work permits available depends on the youth mobility arrangement negotiated with each partner country but for Canadians to qualify, they must be citizens resident in Canada between the ages of 18-35.

The IEC program has the mandate to maximize reciprocity between international youth participation and Canadian youth participation in the work-travel pathways negotiated with partner countries/territories, however, IEC officials believe participation in the program by Canadian youth is not as strong as it should be and is not reciprocal in terms of participants with almost all of our partner countries. IEC has a targeted stakeholder engagement and promotion plan in place, with the goal of increasing awareness of opportunities abroad, and increasing Canadian youth participation in the program.

This report provides insight into the travel and work abroad behaviours and attitudes of Canadian youth within IEC's target audience and examines their perceptions and attitudes towards travel and work abroad experiences like those facilitated by IEC. Insights about perceived barriers and motivators to pursuing work abroad experiences will inform policy and allow targeted engagement and promotion. The survey results will also be used to inform corporate performance reporting requirements (such as Performance Information Profiles and associated Performance Measurement Strategy Framework) for the IEC program.

## Objectives

The objective of this research is to evaluate knowledge of the IEC program among its target audiences, as well as any related travel experiences. More specifically, the objectives of the research include measuring:

- previous travel and or work abroad experience (where, main objective of travel, duration, etc.)
- awareness of the IEC program
- motivations and barriers to participating in international work abroad experiences, such as those facilitated by the IEC program
- perceived benefits of travel or work abroad experience

Although both the quantitative and qualitative phases of this research contribute to these research objectives, the phases had different target audiences and specific research goals:

The **quantitative online survey** was conducted to gather information about Canadian youth who have participated in an international experience that required a visa/work permit and/or have participated in the IEC program in the past. It provides information about this group by measuring their incidence in the population and gathering feedback on their experience, views on travel, views on the IEC program and future intentions regarding international experiences.

The **qualitative online community** was conducted to collect in-depth information from those who generally have not participated in the IEC program. It was done using an online community where youth were asked to



provide detailed information about their international travel aspirations, motivations and barriers/concerns in order to better inform future communications about the IEC program and encourage participation. In addition to youth in the general population, the qualitative research specifically included LGBTQ2+ youth, Indigenous youth, youth women in STEM and youth with mobility/hearing impairments in order to explore if and how their views differ on these topics.

## **About this report**

This report begins with an executive summary outlining key findings and conclusions, followed by a detailed analysis of the qualitative results and the quantitative survey data. A detailed methodology section is provided in Appendix A. Provided under a separate cover is a detailed set of “banner tables” presenting the results for all questions by population segments as defined by region and demographics for the quantitative portion of the research. Results for the qualitative phase are provided as transcripts of all of the contributions made by each participant in the online community. The quantitative data tables are referenced by the survey question in the detailed analysis.

In this report, quantitative results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the tables due to rounding. Qualitative results do not reference percentages or precise proportions to avoid any implication that results are projectable.

## I. Detailed findings – Qualitative phase

### A. Participant profile

Two online community bulletin boards were conducted with English and French speakers respectively. Quotas were implemented to achieve representation of the following groups:

- LGBTQ2+ youth
- Indigenous youth
- Youth women in Stem
- Youth with mobility or hearing impairments

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of the online community bulletin board participants by target quota group.

**Table 1: Participants born in Canada**

Target group	Total online community	English bulletin board	French bulletin board
General population East	16	8	8
General population West	15	15	0
LGBTQ2+ youth	22	13	9
Indigenous youth	4	2	2
Youth women in Stem	10	7	3
Youth with mobility or hearing impairments	13	8	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>

Tables 2 through 5 summarize the demographic profile of the online community participants. Most were born in Canada to Canadian born parents, and most are currently employed. Unlike the English participants, the French participants tend to speak more than one language.

**Table 2: Participants born in Canada**

	Online community participants (n=80)	English bulletin board (n=55)	French bulletin board (n=25)
Yes	71	49	22
No	9	6	3

**Table 3: Participants with immigrant parent(s)**

	Online community participants (n=80)	English bulletin board (n=55)	French bulletin board (n=25)
Yes	23	19	4
No	55	35	20
Prefer not to say	2	1	1

Table 4: Participants' employment status

	Online community participants (n=80)	English bulletin board (n=55)	French bulletin board (n=25)
Employed full-time for pay (30+ hours per week)	51	40	11
Employed part-time for pay	8	6	2
Self-employed	4	2	2
Unemployed and looking for work	5	2	3
Homemaker	5	0	5
Student	5	4	1
Other	1	0	1

Table 5: Languages spoken by participants

	Online community participants (n=80)	English bulletin board (n=55)	French bulletin board (n=25)
English Only	40	40	0
French Only	12	0	12
English and French	18	7	11
English and Other	5	5	0
French and Other	0	0	0
English, French and Other	5	3	2
Other	1	0	1

As an introductory exercise on day 1 of the online community, participants were asked to share something interesting about themselves:

- Although the exercise instructions suggested sharing their interests and hobbies, participants often talked about their occupations.
- Those who are parents talked about their families.
- Many talked about how travelling is a hobby or interest.

"I am a software engineer by profession... By heart, I am a traveller, globetrotter. I love and live and earn only to travel all around the world. Dalai Lama said, "once a year go some place you have never been before" and this is my favourite line."

## B. Travel experiences – past and present

On day one of the online community, participants were asked about their feelings toward travel. Their responses point to a **general preoccupation with travelling**. The population for this exercise is likely more inclined toward travel than might otherwise be the case as they all completed a screening process which asked them about international travel and the invitation to participate in the online community included information about the topic.

The idea of travel elicits an emotional response. Nearly all use the word 'love' to describe their feelings about travel, with some going so far as to describe it as "essential" or describing themselves "living for" travel. It is often about the 'experience', the 'escape', the 'excitement', 'enlightenment', and 'inspiration'.

"I love to travel because I am so small, and the world is so big, so it would be pretty big waste if I didn't want to absorb as much knowledge and experience as I can so that I can live my best life, as short or as long as this life may be."

"I love to escape sometimes and discover the places and foods of other places. Taking in unique experiences adds to the fun."

Most participants are **self-described travel enthusiasts**. Even those for whom parental responsibilities take priority or those who are financially limited, travelling is an interest.

Some report that affordability influences their perceptions of travel. These respondents can feel frustrated by the financial constraints that prevent them from pursuing their interest in travel.

"I feel that travel is for the rich. I can barely afford to visit my family one province away once a year. Travelling abroad might be something I can do when I retire. If I have enough extra saved up."

Rarely, travel is associated with wariness of negative events in other countries, such as terrorism, violence and natural disasters.

"I think travelling is important to a lot of people. I find it has become less important to me since I became a mother. Before I was a mother, I was a Flight Attendant and I would travel whenever I got the chance. The thought of travelling now just makes me feel exhausted. I also have a lot more anxiety thinking about the risks of traveling, such as terrorism and natural disasters. I just feel safer at home with my family."

"I like to travel to different places, but I am a little leery lately with all the plane crashes, terrorist threats and violence happening around the world."

Participants were also asked to mark on a map where they have travelled. Most are experienced travellers who have taken 9 trips on average. **While their travels have often been domestic, most participants have international travel experience.** For English and French speakers alike, international travel has predominantly taken them to the U.S., Mexico and Europe. From the descriptions of their travels, it is apparent that some of their enthusiasm for travel is derived from the stories they can share when they get home.

When asked to mark on a map where they would like to travel, the desired destinations were diverse with the highest number of destinations in Europe. English speakers are also more interested in Asian and Australian destinations, while French speakers are more interested in visiting North American and Caribbean destinations.

- Reasons for desiring destinations include:
  - Discovering their heritage
  - Curiosity about certain cultures
  - Recommendations from friends and family
  - Visiting friends and family
  - Exploring history, art and architecture

- Having an adventure, often one they have idealised

### C. Motivations of travel & decision-making factors

On day one of the online community, participants also answered questions exploring their travel related values and attitudes.

While generally sharing an enthusiasm for travel, differing values inform two broad motivations for travelling: Travel is motivated by a desire to escape versus a desire for new experiences, which have significant influences on mind-set, perspectives, goals, etc.

**Experientialists** value the experiences and learning that travel provides them. Members of this group talked about how travelling to other places in the world provides them with perspective on their own lives and enables personal growth.

“Travelling creates so much joy within me that I consider it to be one of my main life motivators. I think every young person should venture out and travel to unknown and common places. These experiences create growth within a person and ultimately help develop well-rounded individuals. Travel forces me to think outside of the box and ignites the creative side of me that all too often takes a back seat.”

The opportunity to ‘experience’, to ‘explore’ and to ‘learn’ about other cultures drive the desire to travel abroad. For most, it is about seeing and experiencing something ‘new’ and ‘different’.

“I love travelling. I like to get away from day to day life and experience something new. I like getting the opportunity to see the various kinds of beauty in the world: from forests, to deserts, to sandy beaches, to small towns, to big cities. It's all things I don't get to experience in my normal life. I like meeting new people, eating new food, seeing new art, listening to new music.”

**Escapists** use travel to get away from their day-to-day life and usual routine.

“I love the experience of travel. A new place is like being a new person. Not only a getaway from your day to day life, but your day to day self.”

Based on motivations and travel experience, four segments of travelers can be described:

**A. Authentic adventurers** - Travel is about the experience, exploring, and excitement. It is more directed to satisfying their curiosities about cultures, including people, places and practices. Travel is often about embarking on an adventure and appears to be more activity-driven, less about leisure and more about exploration.

“Travel offers an escape for me and a chance to explore and learn more about new cultures. I love to travel especially with friends, who sometimes I don't get too many chances to see. We go on adventures together, which brings us closer together.”

**B. Experienced explorers** - This segment has extensive experience travelling, both domestic and international. They appear drawn to destinations that offer new experiences. Travel is seen as something ‘essential’. It is a learning experience, both in the sense of exposure to different cultures, traditions, etc., but also self-reflective. Travel appears to be more about broadening horizons, meeting new people, etc.

“I like to travel because I am a very curious person. In my own city as well as elsewhere, I like to discover new restaurants, places, art exhibitions, new cultures and meet new people. The journey makes me feel privileged and alive. I feel that I have this privilege of being able to try to understand the different realities, from mine, from the places I visit. When I return home, I feel lucky with what I have and at the same time I am already looking forward to going back to the adventure.”

- C. Inexperienced but eager** - This traveler segment has relatively little travel experience, and the majority of travel seems to have been solely or significantly domestic. This group tends to be younger with less financial freedom. Despite a lack of experience / exposure, they are eager, excited and determined to see the world and experience new things.

“I enjoy travelling but I have not done a lot of travelling. I've never been outside of North America, although I'd love to go to Europe and Australia. I like travelling because I always get the feeling that I'm "on an adventure", and I love that feeling.”

- D. No-hassle hedonists** – This segment would consider themselves ‘tourists’ on ‘vacation’. These travellers are seeking an ‘escape’ from their everyday lives, and it is seen as something ‘well-deserved’.

“My favourite thing about travelling is getting to relax on a warm Caribbean beach! Life is so busy and with a little one we don't have much time to just relax! So, travelling is a great way for us recharge and spend quality family time.”

“I love traveling to relax, to get away from my daily routine. For example, I like going to the beach and do nothing for a week. Backpacking trips to places such as Africa or Europe are of much less interest me. I need a beach!”

Participants rated their likelihood of travelling for leisure, business, work, studying or volunteering. **Generally, preoccupations with travel are centred on leisure travel.**

The majority of participants are likely, and eager, to engage in leisure travel (with many having established plans for leisure travel in the future). Business travel is the next most likely purpose of travel in the foreseeable future. Many mentioned travelling for business would be dependent on their current employer rather than their personal desire. Some expressed interest in volunteering abroad. Some have established plans for volunteering abroad. Most make a moral case for volunteering abroad, citing ‘the right thing to do’ or to help others where help is needed. Others see that same opportunity at home that would not require the cost or separation from family and friends. Affordability is commonly cited as a reason for being unlikely to volunteer abroad.

Generally, there is less eagerness to work or study abroad, though experientialists more often express enthusiasm about living abroad. Many see such opportunities as having passed for them because they have completed their education and are uninterested in uprooting their established lives, such as family commitments, careers, pets and/or property. Some parents noted they would consider working abroad once their children were adults. Some are open to working or studying abroad, however it is not front of mind when they discuss travel. Often it is something they would consider if an opportunity presented itself or their current situation changed (for example, if their employment situation became less secure). For some, it would be something they would consider if they took a sabbatical from their current employment. In that way, living abroad is generally a passive consideration rather than an active interest.

“I rate my likelihood of working abroad as somewhat likely because, although I would love to, and would jump on the opportunity if it ever arose, I don't know if such an opportunity would ever come my way.”

Studying abroad, more so than working abroad, can be perceived as expensive, and those who would be open to such opportunities worry about affordability.

“With the current cost of my education, in addition to my cost of living, it doesn't seem feasible to study abroad.”

Often, living abroad would depend on having the funds necessary. Family buy-in is often an important factor determining whether they would consider traveling abroad to work or study. Living abroad is associated with mixed feelings – often, the idea of living in another country is associated with both the excitement of having new experiences and fear of leaving their established lives.

#### D. Perceived benefits to study or work abroad experiences

On day 2 of the online community, specific motivators and the personal benefits of working and studying abroad were explored in-depth. Like leisure travel, **immersion in another culture and achieving personal growth** often underlies motivation to study or work abroad.

They value the potential enrichment and perspective such an experience may provide them. For many, it is about ‘stepping outside of their comfort zone’, experiencing, trying and learning new things in a new place. They perceive it as a position where they would be ‘forced’ to ‘adapt’ to a new lifestyle and language.

“To me, the more important benefits would be to my self-confidence, adaptability, and self-respect.”

Immersion in another culture is seen as providing greater opportunity to learn compared to a trip or vacation.

“You're literally immersed in their culture and way of life. You're forced to live, eat, and pretty much do everything the way they're used to doing it.”

Many suggest that the personal growth and life experience achieved through working abroad would be valued by future employers. There is some recognition that **acquiring international experience** would ultimately benefit employment prospects in Canada. Others see it as an opportunity to **broaden their current educational and career opportunities**. Some see it as not only providing the opportunity to expand skills, perspective, and knowledge in their field, but also, expose them to the ‘larger world’, issues, business practices, etc.

“I appreciate opportunities to apply and expand my current skill sets to new situations and in a different area. Both working and studying abroad can help you see different perspectives, even if you're still working in the same field or even the same position, which then become valuable when resuming work at home.”

“Working abroad would be a great personal and professional experience. The flexibility, adaptability, openness to change and new experiences that are required of travellers are also essential skills in the workplace.”

For others, this would be the ideal opportunity to establish themselves professionally as competitive in their respective industries/markets and differentiate their work experience from other candidates.

“I would have the opportunity to learn about my field from the perspective of a different culture. International experience looks great on a resume because it demonstrates versatility and an eagerness to learn.”

In addition to life experience and personal growth, **developing personal connections** is commonly seen as a benefit of living abroad. For some, new friendships would be the most important outcome of living abroad.

Learning or improving language is an assumed part of the immersion process moving to a new country to work or study. There is ambivalence about the benefit of learning languages by living in other countries. Some highlight this as a driver of working or studying abroad. Others are unsure of their ability to learn another language.

“I would be forced to learn a new language to communicate.”

A number do mention that they ‘wouldn’t’ or have no interest.

## E. Challenges

On day 2 of the online community, participants were also asked about barriers to working or studying abroad. Overall, fear of uncertainty is the dominant theme of challenges to working, studying or volunteering abroad. This fear leads to more risk-averse decisions, in terms of the information participants look for when investigating options, which countries they would consider moving to, and often driving the decision to not move at all.

“I think there are certain things in our lives that we're just used to, and when we enter a new way of living that does not rely on those common things, it can be a bit jarring.”

Common challenges associated with living abroad include:

- **Affordability** is perceived as a major obstacle to working or studying abroad.

“I think that financial issues would be the biggest/most important challenges. A lot of other challenges could be easier to adapt to with enough research, or with actual experience, but without the appropriate finances, I'd be unable to travel in the first place.”

- Many cite lack of employment, limited savings, tight budgets, student loans and debts as the reason they would have a hard time affording their travel experience.

“Cost of living is high and has increased over the last 10 years. It is a lot harder to save money now than in previous generations.”

“Traveling is expensive. Air fare, food, lodging, transportation to name a few.... although one's income may be steady, the fact that you have to save in addition to everyday life expenses is stressful.”

- **Language barriers** can be perceived as potentially overwhelming.
  - While several express their confidence and ability to pick up on new language quickly, many say they see learning a new language to be quite difficult – for this group, there is particularly unease about being unable to communicate with others and express their own needs and be understood, etc.
  - Not speaking the language of a country is seen as having the potential to compound other potential issues such as finding employment and social isolation.

“Meeting new people can be extremely difficult when there is a language barrier or miscommunication.”



- Of note, when asked about the hypothetical of working, studying or volunteering in another country, participants more often chose countries that speak English or French. Participants reasoned that such countries would be the closest to Canada in language and culture, and as such it would be an easier transition. Similarly, participants more often chose countries from which their families originate, given existing connections and familiarity with the language and culture.

“I only speak English and French fluently, so I'd have hard time living/working in a country where the main language is something other than those two”

- **Gaining stable employment** in other countries is often raised as a concern due to lack of familiarity with the process of attaining work visas/entry requirements and with job markets in other countries.

- Overcoming this lack of familiarity is often the first stage of planning, and for many, moving abroad is dependent on first securing employment. Further, **many participants have the perception that working in another country requires one to go through a complex application process similar to immigrating to Canada.**

“I don't even know where to begin.”

- For most this can be a very challenging, stressful and complicated part of the process – sorting out what documents are needed, what if any requirements they must meet, etc.

“I don't know what I would qualify for. I don't have a university degree and I don't know what they would be looking for. I don't think a passport would be an issue because I have no criminal record.”

- For others, it's just about being organized, planning and being prepared – this group doesn't see the documentation phase as a significant barrier or issue.

“I may not have the time or money to get the documents or permits I need.”

- For one transgender participant, having their paperwork match their gender identity would be an expensive challenge.

“I haven't yet changed my name or gender marker on my passport, although I have changed both on all other documents including my driver's licence, because it is expensive and time consuming to do so.”

- The negative impact of not speaking the language on finding employment is a common concern with working abroad.

“I do not speak another language. This would be the main contributor to not being able to find a job outside Canada.”

- Many worry about how well their qualifications, skills and work experience would transfer to a new country. Several in more specialized fields say that employment opportunities would be limited or that their credentials are non-transferrable. Others noted that they had found it challenging to find a position in their chosen field in Canada and wondered whether they would be faced with the same challenge if they looked abroad.

“The career I want to get into requires specific certification that differs between provinces and countries, so I think it may be a difficult process to work abroad.”

- Others are concerned with their lack of work experience and/or skills. These participants do not see themselves as being as competitive in a foreign market against locals with more extensive work experience.

“I wouldn't know where to look, and I honestly don't know how my work and education would translate well (or at all) in another country.”

- **Disconnection** is perceived to be major challenge to moving abroad. Separation from family is a common concern and often of high importance. Furthermore, lack of familiar culture and customs can be daunting, particularly for inexperienced travellers. Often related, fear of social isolation is a common theme, especially among those who do consider themselves introverts. Some worry about making connections.
- **Navigating other cultures, including different laws and norms**, can be perceived as posing a challenge especially during the initial transition. This is more often seen as a challenge by those with little or no travel experience. More experienced travellers are more confident in their ability to navigate other cultures.
- Lack of knowledge (e.g. knowing what is safe, what isn't, etc.) and lack of familiarity with a foreign culture seems to drive feelings of **insecurity**.

“Given that I am not a local, there maybe instances where I am vulnerable or susceptible to theft or scams.”

## F. The International Experience Canada program

As a final exercise, participants were asked about their awareness and likelihood of participating in the International Experience Program. There is a general **lack of awareness** of the International Experience Canada program – **the vast majority indicate they have never heard of the program**.

“I had never heard of this program, but please sign me up.”

While generally aware of work visas, few were aware of a program facilitating access to countries partnering in the program for those aged 18 to 35. Some are familiar with the program through friends or family who have participated or through investigating opportunities to work abroad themselves.

“A friend told me about it, so I looked into it. I was drawn to the support system that is part of the program (pre-established relationships with many countries) and the fact that a work offer was not required.”

In general, the program perceived as a better fit for the “single, healthy and wealthy”. Although they find the program interesting, many acknowledge that their participation would depend on overcoming the barriers they discussed earlier in the online community, including language, employment, and financial barriers.

“This sounds like a program that would be really interesting and beneficial, although I think that my ability to participate is dependent on many other things. While I'd love to do so, my financial circumstances, my current educational obligations, my ability to find interesting/relevant work abroad, and my anxiety around traveling and meeting new people, would all be large influences on whether I actually could participate.”

Financial constraints were commonly reiterated as a barrier to participating in the program.

“I would love to, but I am too broke”

Others stated that it is something they would have been interested in when they were younger (i.e. their 20's), however their current life circumstances (children, career, etc.) now prevent them from participating.

“Although it is a great opportunity, I'm at a stage in my life where picking up and moving abroad is not really an option. It would be much too complicated to try make arrangements if I were to leave. I have too many important commitments in Canada to be gone for an extended period.”

A number found the program intriguing and would consider participating. Some see the value of gaining work experience while earning money to travel.

“If I felt like I could fund my travels, and was able to find the right job, this program seems very helpful and I would love to participate.”

“Yes, I am definitely likely to participate. I am currently working a contract job and next year I have total flexibility/freedom to go wherever - even better if I can find a paid position and explore another country that way.”

Many see the value of gaining international work experience to long-term career prospects.

“Sounds like an awesome way to "get your foot in the door" with different work experiences. It also gives a person a different work environment that people aren't used to.”

“It is quite likely that I do it because working abroad can be a great asset to promote your career plan, provided you are well prepared.”

A few would take advantage of the opportunity for language immersion. A number say with more information/knowledge, they would be inclined to potentially participate.

“I believe that I remain open to working abroad. The program should publicize its advantages to support more young people taking the opportunity to experience this magnificent adventure.”

Support they say they need to participate often includes:

- Financial support
- Support finding employment and housing in the destination country
- Buy in from support network (Family, friends and spouses/partners)

## H. Subgroups of Interest

Generally, the subgroups (LGBTQ2+ youth, indigenous youth, youth women in STEM and youth with mobility or hearing impairments) are as enthusiastic about travel as the general population. The groups appear to be no more or less likely to have an interest in studying or working abroad than the general population. Like the general population, they see value in the experiences, and personal and professional growth living abroad would afford them. However, while the major challenges these groups foresee with living abroad align with the general population, namely affordability and lack of interest, some of the challenges they foresee are unique to their lived experiences.

One participant with mobility impairments noted that on the few occasions she has travelled, accommodation for her impairment has been challenging. Some of those with medical challenges talked about how **accessibility and reliable medical care**, including medication, are major barriers to travel.

“Travel is one of my biggest dreams; I would love to see the world and because I have MS it severely cuts down on my dream.”

“My main concern is health care. If I researched enough about hospitals in the area and travel insurance, I might be able to make it work.”

LGBTQ2+ youth worry about **cultural attitudes** and what that may mean for their personal safety. This fear can be shared by women. Women also often worry about safety in general.

“I am transgender, and personally I would have difficulty visiting any Eastern or African countries for work or school because it is not only culturally unacceptable, but also often outright illegal.”

LGBTQ2+ youth, indigenous youth, and youth women in STEM are as likely to say they would participate in the International Experience Program as the general population. At the same time, perceived safety and security can be the most important considerations determining whether LGBTQ2+ youth and women in general would work or study abroad. It may be that these barriers lead to reduced participation of these groups in the program, however they provide the same reasons for being unlikely to participate – namely, they are unable to afford it and/or they have no interest in disrupting their established lifestyles.

Among youth with mobility or hearing impairments, likelihood of participation appears to depend on whether their impairments are associated with medical considerations. Finding reliable healthcare represents a hard barrier to participation for those that have medical considerations in general.

“If I were single, healthy and wealthy I would participate in this program for sure. I just can't risk my life to go forward with something like this. It is hard for me to know that it is not currently an option but I hope in the future I will have more answers about my condition so I can have the freedom to pursue a program like this.”

Those with **mental health impairments**, such as anxiety and depression, emerged as another group with major barriers. This groups struggles with isolation in their current day-to-day lives. Many say that living aboard would mean disconnecting from their support networks they rely on. Disconnection/social isolation is often recognized as a challenge of living abroad by those in the general population. However, it can represent a hard barrier to those with mental health impairments.

“Unfamiliar places in general tend to give me anxiety, even in my own city. So, travelling to a new country that is entirely unfamiliar, and also not having any of my support system there with me in real life, would likely be pretty uncomfortable for me.”

## II. Detailed findings – Quantitative phase

### A. Respondent demographic profile

The qualified respondents to the online survey are those who self-report that they have ever obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada or mention that they participated in the IEC program. The demographic profile of this group is presented in the tables below.

**Table 6: Survey participants' gender**

	All respondents (n=520)
Female	39%
Male	60%
Another gender	<1%
Prefer not to say	1%

**Table 7: Survey participants' age**

	All respondents (n=520)
18-24	22%
25-30	44%
31-35	35%

**Table 8: Survey participants' province**

	All respondents (n=520)
Atlantic Canada	5%
Quebec	18%
Ontario	46%
Prairies	16%
BC + Territories	16%

**Table 9: Survey participants born in Canada**

	All respondents (n=520)
Yes	80%
No	19%

**Table 10: Survey participants with immigrant parent(s)**

	All respondents (n=520)
Yes, one parent	11%
Yes, both parents	35%
No	52%
Prefer not to say	2%

**Table 11: Survey participants' employment status**

	All respondents (n=520)
Employed full-time/self-employed	67%
Employed part-time for pay	9%
Unemployed and looking for work	2%
Student	19%
Other	2%

Table 12: Languages spoken by survey participants

	All respondents (n=520)
English	92%
French	29%
Other	13%

## B. Travel profile and experience

Less than a third of people who obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada report being participants in the IEC program.

Among Canadian youth who have ever obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada, more than half (56%) did so in order to study abroad, just less than half so they could work (49%) and around a third did so to be able to volunteer (many did more than one of these). Only three in ten Canadians within this group report knowingly participating in the IEC program (IRCC is aware that some proportion of program participants are not aware they have participated in IEC).

Arrangements for their international experience were most often either self-arranged (42%) or made through their school (40% - rising to 60% among those 18-24) and most did not experience any issues while arranging their experience (58%). Two thirds (68%) of those who specifically got a work permit worked in countries/territories which are part of the IEC program.

Table 13: Visa/work permit for each type of travel

Question S10: Have you ever obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Study	56%	57%	53%	59%	55%	56%
Work	49%	39%	50%	53%	39%	55%
Volunteer	31%	37%	27%	32%	29%	32%

Table 14: IEC participant (aware)

Question S11: Have you ever obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Yes	30%	28%	31%	29%	23%	35%
No	65%	70%	64%	64%	71%	62%
Not sure	5%	2%	4%	6%	7%	3%

Table 15: Method of arranging international experience

Question 1: How did you arrange your international experience when you needed to obtain a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer? Please select all that apply.

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Self-arranged	42%	32%	46%	44%	42%	43%
Through school	40%	60%	37%	31%	47%	34%
Employer	20%	14%	21%	21%	12%	25%
Travel or adventure company	14%	12%	17%	11%	12%	15%

Government program	11%	8%	11%	13%	6%	13%
Non-profit organization	8%	5%	11%	6%	9%	8%
Other	1%	3%	0%	2%	2%	1%

Table 16: Reasons for arrangement method

Question 1A: Why did you choose to arrange your international experience in that way?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Easy to process /Convenient	25%	25%	25%	26%	24%	26%
No other option	13%	12%	11%	16%	13%	12%
Experience different culture/personal development/opportunities	12%	15%	8%	14%	12%	12%
Personal preference, knowledge and experience	11%	9%	13%	9%	10%	12%
Organized by school/university	11%	14%	10%	8%	14%	8%
Faster/more reliable/good	8%	5%	11%	7%	7%	9%
Low cost /Scholarship	7%	7%	6%	6%	5%	7%
Organized by company/organization	7%	5%	8%	5%	8%	6%
Better control/Freedom/wanted to do it myself	3%	1%	3%	5%	3%	4%
Recommended by friends or families	2%	4%	3%	1%	4%	1%
Other	4%	8%	3%	3%	5%	4%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%

Table 17: Issues encountered arranging their international experience

Question 1B: What issues, if any, did you encounter when arranging your international experience?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Timing/delays	8%	8%	7%	9%	7%	8%
Complex Process (e.g. paper work)	8%	4%	8%	9%	6%	8%
Issues relating to trip itself (cultural differences, language, living conditions, etc.)	7%	10%	7%	4%	10%	5%
Visa	6%	8%	8%	3%	10%	4%
Financial	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%
Lack of information /resources/needed help	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%	2%
Other	5%	7%	4%	4%	3%	6%
No issues	58%	55%	57%	63%	56%	61%
Don't know	4%	8%	3%	3%	4%	4%

Table 18: Work permit destinations

Question 1C: Have you worked, using a work permit, in any of the following countries? Please select all that apply.

Subgroup: Those who worked abroad on a work visa or participated in the IEC program (n=304)

	Overall (n=304)	18-24 (n=56)	25-30 (n=139)	31-35 (n=109)	Female (n=172)	Male (n=129)
Australia	20%	16%	20%	23%	14%	22%
United Kingdom	19%	12%	23%	19%	15%	21%
Japan	12%	18%	11%	9%	3%	16%
France	11%	19%	13%	5%	13%	11%
Germany	10%	13%	9%	10%	4%	12%
Hong Kong	8%	11%	7%	8%	7%	9%
Italy	5%	8%	8%	1%	6%	5%
New Zealand	5%	3%	4%	8%	1%	7%
Spain	5%	8%	5%	3%	4%	5%
Mexico	5%	1%	6%	5%	5%	4%
Sweden	3%	5%	3%	4%	1%	5%
Switzerland	3%	6%	4%	1%	3%	4%
Belgium	3%	1%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Denmark	3%	0%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Ireland	3%	1%	4%	2%	2%	3%
Netherlands	3%	0%	4%	2%	3%	2%
Norway	2%	6%	1%	2%	2%	3%
Greece	2%	5%	1%	3%	1%	3%
Chile	2%	0%	2%	3%	1%	3%
Costa Rica	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	1%
Austria	2%	0%	4%	0%	0%	2%
Czech Republic	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Portugal	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Croatia	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Latvia	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%	2%
San Marino	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Republic of Korea	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Slovenia	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Taiwan	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Lithuania	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Ukraine	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Estonia	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Poland	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Slovakia	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
None of the above	32%	33%	33%	30%	33%	31%



### C. International travel and work experience benefits, motivations and barriers

International travel experience is seen in a positive light, leading to personal growth, learning experiences and exploration while language barriers are the most common challenge faced.

When asked what the key benefits of their international experience were, large proportions highlight that the experience contributed to their personal growth (66%), allowed them to learn about a new country or culture (65%) and allowed them to experience an adventure (62%). More practical benefits like obtaining international career experience (46%) and learning/improving a secondary language (41%) are mentioned commonly but less often. Facing a language barrier is the most commonly mentioned challenge (37%), but people also mention financial challenges funding the experience (29%), isolation or loneliness (29%) and not feeling safe and secure (26%).

A large proportion say they are very likely to travel for leisure/pleasure (74%) in the future, while sizeable proportions say they are very likely to work (34%), study (24%) or volunteer (22%) internationally. Very few say it is unlikely that they would do these things in the future, but studying abroad is the option that the largest proportion of people said they would be unlikely to do.

**Table 19: Perceived benefits of work/study/volunteer experiences outside Canada**

**Question 2: What would you say are the key benefits you gained from your work, study or volunteer experiences outside of Canada? Please select all that apply.**

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
International travel experience that contributed toward my personal growth	66%	70%	67%	61%	75%	60%
Learned about a new country or culture	65%	66%	69%	60%	71%	61%
Exploration and adventure	62%	67%	63%	59%	73%	55%
Obtained international career experience or professional development	46%	36%	46%	54%	41%	50%
Learned or improved a secondary language	41%	39%	46%	37%	43%	41%
Other	3%	2%	4%	3%	4%	2%
Not applicable	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%

**Table 20: Key challenges faced during work/study/volunteer experience outside Canada**

**Question 3: What would you say are the key challenges you faced during your work, study or volunteer experiences outside of Canada? Please select all that apply.**

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Encountering a language barrier	37%	38%	34%	39%	38%	35%
Financial issues funding my travel experience	29%	33%	25%	32%	35%	25%
Isolation or loneliness	29%	31%	26%	31%	34%	26%
Feeling safe or secure (for example, concerns about personal safety, and/or racial, religious, or sexual orientation/gender discrimination)	26%	33%	25%	23%	26%	25%

Challenges with country customs and laws, cultural norms or cultural shock	25%	34%	24%	20%	24%	25%
Challenges with travel, residency or employment documents/permits	21%	17%	22%	22%	20%	21%
Impact on my obligations back in Canada (for example, family, children or career)	18%	21%	18%	16%	18%	18%
I did not know how to get started	18%	21%	19%	14%	17%	18%
Challenges finding employment outside of Canada	15%	11%	15%	17%	15%	15%
Other	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Not applicable	10%	8%	9%	12%	10%	10%

Table 21: Likelihood of travel in the future

Question 4: How likely or unlikely are you to do any of the following activities outside of Canada in the future?

	Travel for leisure or business	Work	Study	Volunteer
Very likely	74%	34%	24%	22%
Somewhat likely	14%	30%	20%	26%
Neither likely nor unlikely	7%	18%	19%	20%
Somewhat unlikely	3%	8%	16%	14%
Very unlikely	1%	7%	18%	14%
Do not know	2%	3%	4%	4%

## D. The International Experience Canada (IEC) program

While a third have never heard of the IEC program, more than half say they know at least a little bit about the program; awareness most often comes from friends/family or their own internet research.

Awareness of the IEC program is variable with some saying they know the program well (18%) or know a fair amount about it (19%) and others saying they know a little about it (18%) or had only heard the name (11%). Around a third (31%) say they have never heard of the program.

Among those who had at least heard of the IEC program, their awareness most often comes from friends or family (33%) or doing their own internet searches (31%). Hearing about it through their academic institution/school (23%), through their work (19%) or from the IRCC website (16%) are also common routes.

Table 22: Awareness of the IEC program

Question 5: Before taking this survey, to what extent were you aware or unaware of the International Experience Canada program?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Know the program well	18%	15%	19%	18%	10%	24%
Know a fair amount about the program	19%	20%	20%	18%	15%	22%
Know a little bit about the program	18%	18%	18%	17%	21%	15%
Only know the name	11%	10%	13%	10%	13%	10%

Never heard of it	31%	33%	28%	35%	39%	27%
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**Table 23: How you became aware of the IEC program**

**Question 6: How did you become aware of the International Experience Canada program? Please select all that apply.**

**Subgroup: Those who had ever heard of the IEC program (n=328)**

	Overall (n=328)	18-24 (n=72)	25-30 (n=151)	31-35 (n=105)	Female (n=194)	Male (n=131)
From my friends and family	33%	24%	32%	38%	36%	31%
General internet search	31%	30%	32%	30%	28%	32%
Academic institution/school campus	23%	29%	23%	20%	21%	24%
Through my work	19%	19%	23%	13%	14%	22%
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website	16%	17%	15%	17%	10%	20%
Person/group I follow on social media	14%	14%	13%	16%	14%	14%
From a news agency (print or online)	11%	13%	9%	12%	9%	12%
International Experience Canada Abroad Instagram account	10%	11%	9%	11%	8%	11%
International Experience Canada Abroad Facebook account	8%	12%	7%	8%	4%	11%
Through a Recognized Organization (AIESEC, SWAP, etc.)	8%	9%	8%	7%	12%	6%
Other	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Do not know	5%	8%	5%	3%	6%	5%

### Those who are unaware of the IEC program

**Two in five of those who are unaware of the IEC program are interested in receiving information about it, and they would prefer to get that information from a general internet search.**

Among those who have never heard of the IEC program, around two in five (41%) say they would be interested in receiving more information about it and around half say they would not be (48%). People interested in this information say that a general internet search is the method they would most prefer (58%) but other also mention their academic institution (36%), friends/family (29%) and the IRCC website (29%).

**Table 24: Interest in receiving information about the IEC program**

**Question 7: Would you like to receive information about the International Experience Canada Program?**

**Subgroup: Those who are unaware of the IEC program (n=192)**

	Overall (n=192)	18-24 (n=49)	25-30 (n=72)	31-35 (n=71)	Female (n=136)	Male (n=54)
Yes	41%	40%	47%	36%	41%	41%
No	48%	46%	45%	52%	44%	52%
Unsure	11%	14%	9%	13%	15%	7%

**Table 25: Preferred method for receiving information about the IEC program**

**Question 8: How would you prefer to receive information about the International Experience Canada program? Please select**

all that apply.

Subgroup: Those who are unaware of the IEC program and interested in receiving IEC program information (n=105)

	Overall (n=105)	18-24 (n=29)	25-30 (n=41)	31-35 (n=35)	Female (n=76)	Male (n=27)
General internet search	58%	60%	64%	51%	66%	53%
Academic institution/school campus	36%	61%	38%	17%	44%	30%
From my friends and family	29%	20%	36%	27%	26%	34%
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website	29%	23%	19%	45%	23%	36%
Through my work	27%	21%	24%	33%	21%	34%
International Experience Canada Abroad Facebook account	22%	23%	14%	29%	26%	19%
From a news agency (print or online)	20%	20%	26%	12%	22%	18%
Person/group I follow on social media	18%	20%	13%	24%	22%	15%
International Experience Canada Abroad Instagram account	17%	23%	21%	9%	20%	15%
Through a Recognized Organization (AIESEC, SWAP, etc.)	17%	26%	16%	12%	23%	10%
Specific websites I visit	5%	6%	4%	5%	3%	7%
International Experience Canada information seminar/session/fair	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other	6%	0%	14%	2%	2%	11%
Do not know	9%	9%	6%	12%	11%	3%

## IEC Participants

**Former IEC participants are satisfied with their experience, saying it was a great experience and would recommend it to their friends and family.**

Among those who participated in the IEC program (and are aware that they participated in it), two thirds used the open work permit option and less than a quarter (22%) used an employer-specific work permit. Around one in ten (12%) are not sure which of these options they used.

Satisfaction with their travel experience overall is very high, however, with more than four in five (82%) saying they were at least somewhat satisfied (with 42% very satisfied); virtually no aware IEC program participants say they are dissatisfied with their travel experience. The reasons given for satisfaction include that it was a great experience that allowed for personal growth (47%) and that the process was good and provided support (17%). The small group who were neutral or dissatisfied with the program mentioned specific negative aspects of their personal experience (44%) while many could not provide a specific reason (42%).

A large proportion of past participants are likely to recommend the IEC program (40% saying very likely to and 42% saying somewhat likely). The reasons given for recommending it include saying that it was a good experience that made a good impression on them (42%) and that it was a great opportunity for personal growth (18%). A sizeable proportion (16%) say they are neutral on recommending it, however. Many of these people did not provide a specific reason why (45%) while others talked about the program being good but not great (26%) or that it is not for everyone and would depend on their preference. (7%).

Table 26: IEC stream travelled through

Question 9: Earlier in the survey you mentioned that you participated in the International Experience Canada program. What International Experience Canada stream did you travel through?

Subgroup: Aware IEC participants (n=141)

	Overall (n=141)	18-24 (n=31)	25-30 (n=65)	31-35 (n=45)	Female (n=76)	Male (n=64)
Open work permit	66%	58%	67%	70%	61%	69%
Employer-specific work permit (pre-arranged contract of employment required)	22%	31%	19%	22%	26%	20%
Do not know	12%	12%	15%	9%	13%	11%

Table 27: Satisfaction with IEC program

Question 10: To what extent were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your work and travel abroad experience via the International Experience Canada program?

Subgroup: Aware IEC participants (n=141)

	Overall (n=141)	18-24 (n=31)	25-30 (n=65)	31-35 (n=45)	Female (n=76)	Male (n=64)
Very satisfied	42%	28%	47%	42%	42%	41%
Somewhat satisfied	40%	38%	37%	44%	45%	38%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9%	16%	9%	6%	2%	12%
Somewhat dissatisfied	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%	3%
Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Table 28: Reasons for level of satisfaction with IEC program

Question 11: Why do you say that?

Subgroup: Aware IEC participants who were satisfied with IEC program (n=118)

Note: Too few Aware IEC participants were dissatisfied to be able to report the reasons for their dissatisfaction

	Overall (n=118)	18-24 (n=24)	25-30 (n=56)	31-35 (n=38)	Female (n=66)	Male (n=51)
Great experience/personal growth	46%	39%	46%	49%	43%	47%
Easy process/good support	17%	8%	19%	20%	15%	19%
Some negative sides (e.g. complex process)	11%	6%	18%	4%	10%	12%
Personal preference and experience	6%	11%	10%	0%	4%	7%
Other	4%	8%	0%	6%	3%	4%
Not sure/no valid response	18%	28%	13%	21%	24%	16%

Table 29: Likelihood to recommend IEC program to friends/family

Question 12: To what extent are you likely or unlikely to recommend an international working abroad experience such as International Experience Canada to family or friends?

Subgroup: Aware IEC participants (n=141)

	Overall (n=141)	18-24 (n=31)	25-30 (n=65)	31-35 (n=45)	Female (n=76)	Male (n=64)
Very likely	40%	34%	45%	37%	47%	38%
Somewhat likely	42%	29%	43%	49%	36%	45%
Neither likely nor unlikely	16%	37%	10%	11%	12%	18%
Somewhat unlikely	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Very unlikely	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
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Table 30: Reasons for likelihood to recommend IEC program

Question 13: Why do you say that?

Subgroup: Aware IEC participants who are likely to recommend IEC program (n=117)

Note: Too few Aware IEC participants were unlikely to recommend to be able to report the reasons they were unlikely to recommend

	Overall (n=117)	18-24 (n=22)	25-30 (n=58)	31-35 (n=37)	Female (n=63)	Male (n=53)
Overall good experience and positive impression	42%	22%	46%	44%	48%	38%
Great opportunity/personal growth	18%	15%	16%	20%	18%	18%
Personal Preference and experience	9%	19%	7%	7%	6%	11%
Other	6%	15%	5%	5%	8%	6%
Not sure/no valid response	25%	29%	26%	23%	20%	28%

## Future participation

A slim majority of those with a past international experience say they are likely to participate in a program like IEC in the future; those who are not usually cite family or financial/career commitments.

While those who have experienced an international work/study/volunteer experience are positive about it, feelings about participating in another one with a program like IEC in the future are mixed. While a majority say they would be very (21%) or somewhat (34%) likely to do so, around two in five (41%) are neutral or say they are unlikely to do so. While the reasons for being likely to participate in a program like this again involve positive impressions of the program (20%), getting to explore a new culture (17%) and a personal preference for this sort of experience (16%), those who are less likely to participate cite reasons revolving around their stage of life or family commitments (34%) and concerns about maintaining their career (21%).

The people who are likely to participate in a work and travel abroad program like IEC most commonly name Australia, the UK, France and Germany as their most likely destinations.

Table 31: Likelihood to participate in a work &amp; travel abroad program in future

Question 14: To what extent are you likely or unlikely to participate in a work and travel abroad program like International Experience Canada in the future?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Very likely	21%	26%	23%	17%	17%	25%
Somewhat likely	34%	42%	33%	30%	38%	32%
Neither likely nor unlikely	22%	18%	24%	21%	21%	23%
Somewhat unlikely	9%	7%	10%	11%	11%	7%
Very unlikely	10%	4%	7%	18%	9%	11%

Table 32: Reasons for likelihood to participate in a work &amp; travel abroad program in future

Question 15: Why do you say that?

Subgroup: Those who are somewhat or very likely to participate in a work &amp; travel abroad program in future (n=283)

	Overall	18-24	25-30	31-35	Female	Male
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	(n=283)	(n=80)	(n=125)	(n=78)	(n=177)	(n=105)
Positive impression of program/curious about it	20%	13%	22%	21%	23%	17%
Explore new culture and experience life/work in abroad	17%	13%	18%	19%	16%	18%
Personal preference, choices and experience	16%	21%	12%	16%	14%	17%
Enjoy traveling	10%	17%	9%	4%	17%	5%
Age/family/life stage/timing	7%	4%	8%	6%	8%	5%
Concern about career/financial/visa/process/safety	5%	7%	4%	3%	8%	3%
Need more information/if opportunity arise	4%	4%	3%	4%	7%	2%
Not sure about future/not interested/like Canada	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%	3%
Not sure/no valid response	24%	25%	23%	26%	14%	31%

**Table 33: Reasons for lack of likelihood to participate in a work & travel abroad program in future**

**Question 15: Why do you say that?**

**Subgroup: Those who are not somewhat or very likely to participate in a work & travel abroad program in future (n=217)**

	Overall (n=217)	18-24 (n=38)	25-30 (n=90)	31-35 (n=89)	Female (n=138)	Male (n=76)
Age/Family/Life stage/timing	34%	11%	34%	41%	37%	32%
Concern about Career/Financial/Visa /Process/Safety	21%	15%	18%	26%	22%	21%
Not sure about future/Not interested/Like Canada	12%	25%	10%	10%	16%	10%
Positive impression of program/ curious about it	7%	9%	9%	4%	3%	9%
Personal preference, choices and experience	5%	10%	7%	2%	5%	4%
Need more information/ if opportunity arise	3%	10%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Explore new culture and experience life/work in abroad	2%	2%	4%	1%	2%	3%
Enjoy traveling	2%	4%	3%	0%	2%	2%
Not sure/no valid response	17%	17%	19%	15%	14%	20%

Table 34: Likely future program participation destinations

Question 16: To which of the following International Experience Canada partner countries and territories would you work, study or volunteer abroad in? Please select all that apply.

Subgroup: Those who are somewhat or very likely to participate in a work & travel abroad program in future (n=283)

	Overall (n=283)	18-24 (n=80)	25-30 (n=125)	31-35 (n=78)	Female (n=177)	Male (n=105)
Australia	50%	51%	53%	43%	55%	47%
United Kingdom	36%	45%	36%	29%	45%	31%
France	34%	43%	31%	30%	40%	31%
Germany	31%	30%	35%	27%	32%	31%
New Zealand	29%	30%	31%	26%	38%	23%
Switzerland	28%	32%	30%	23%	34%	25%
Italy	28%	29%	32%	21%	36%	23%
Japan	27%	29%	28%	24%	29%	25%
Hong Kong	25%	25%	26%	22%	24%	25%
Spain	24%	27%	28%	14%	33%	18%
Ireland	23%	26%	24%	18%	33%	17%
Austria	22%	23%	24%	19%	25%	21%
Belgium	22%	22%	23%	20%	26%	19%
Denmark	21%	22%	23%	18%	28%	17%
Costa Rica	21%	21%	22%	20%	29%	16%
Greece	21%	21%	18%	26%	32%	14%
Sweden	20%	23%	23%	15%	25%	18%
Netherlands	19%	20%	20%	17%	25%	16%
Norway	17%	18%	21%	12%	25%	13%
Portugal	17%	18%	18%	15%	23%	14%
Chile	17%	15%	19%	17%	20%	15%
Croatia	15%	15%	15%	16%	21%	12%
Republic of Korea	14%	18%	10%	15%	16%	12%
Mexico	12%	15%	12%	10%	14%	11%
Czech Republic	12%	10%	15%	9%	15%	10%
Taiwan	11%	14%	9%	13%	17%	8%
Poland	11%	13%	10%	12%	17%	7%
Estonia	10%	10%	9%	10%	12%	8%
San Marino	9%	12%	8%	7%	12%	7%
Slovenia	8%	8%	6%	10%	12%	5%
Slovakia	7%	11%	4%	9%	10%	6%
Ukraine	7%	9%	7%	5%	14%	3%
Lithuania	6%	9%	4%	7%	8%	5%
Latvia	6%	5%	5%	7%	9%	4%
Do not know	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%	8%



Table 35: Additional comments

Question 17: Do you have anything else you would like to share?

	Overall (n=520)	18-24 (n=121)	25-30 (n=223)	31-35 (n=176)	Female (n=330)	Male (n=185)
Positive experience	5%	3%	3%	8%	5%	5%
Intention to attend/travel	4%	8%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Benefits of traveling	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Complaints about process/suggestion to improve	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Wish I had known before	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Other	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%
No comment/invalid response	85%	85%	89%	80%	85%	85%

### III. Conclusions

The results of this research provide insight into the views held by Canadian youth about international travel, work, study and volunteering abroad, and the challenges and barriers they face when considering it. As IRCC is concerned with increasing awareness of, and participation in, the IEC program, among Canadian youth, some observations from this research are highlighted below for consideration.

Interest in international work/study/volunteer programs like IEC is higher among younger people who are not yet as established (i.e. those 18-24 years old) and those who view international travel as a valuable experience that cannot be gained through leisure travel (i.e. experientialists). Any communications which focus on these groups and highlights the benefits that youth already see from experiences like this may help to drive participation.

The barriers or challenges that are most often raised about taking part in a program like IEC revolve around finances, language barriers, finding employment and social isolation. The same barriers are volunteered by those who have not had an international experience before and are confirmed by those who have. Communications aimed at assuaging these concerns by highlighting available methods of financing the experience, focusing on the benefits of learning another language and/or providing language learning support resources (or, alternatively, highlighting destinations which do not require learning another language) and raising awareness of the supports that are available through the IEC program for finding employment would be beneficial.

Most people who are aware of the IEC program learn of it either through friends/family or through their own research. To raise awareness of the program among those who are not already seeking out information, outreach through social media platforms (such as Facebook and Instagram), at academic institutions and in workplaces would be helpful in reaching youth who are not already seeking information. Another potential method might include recruiting past IEC program participants to provide presentations or spread the word through social media. They could act as 'spokespeople' to not only promote the program but provide advice and feedback about their experiences focused on the most common barriers.

## Appendix A: Research methodology

In order to meet IRCC's research objectives two phases of research were conducted that focused on different target audiences.

### Qualitative phase methodology

The target population audience for the **qualitative online community** was Canadian youth who have *not had* an international experience that required a visa/work permit and *have not* participated in the IEC program. It included youth from the general population but also recruited those from low-incidence groups (LGBTQ2+ youth, Indigenous youth, youth women in STEM and youth with mobility/hearing impairments) to explore if/how their views differ from those in the general public. Separate English and French communities were run concurrently.

A total of 80 participants completed the community over a total window of six days, from March 21 to 26, 2019. Participants were recruited as part of the quantitative phase and all respondents who did not qualify for the online survey were screened for recruitment (including questions to evaluate their suitability). While most qualitative participants were not qualified for the quantitative survey (i.e. they had not participated in the IEC program or obtained a visa), everyone from the low-incidence target groups was invited to participate. A total of nine participants completed both the online and qualitative phases.

Participants in the online community exercise were informed of the purpose of the exercise, the time commitment and incentive, and provided with guidance on how to protect their privacy. The methodology avoided attrition by minimizing the time lag between recruitment and the beginning of the qualitative exercise. Each participant was given an honorarium of \$100 as a thank you for their time.

**Table 36: Demographic breakdown of participants in the online community**

Group	English bulletin board	French bulletin board	Total
General population East	8	8	16
General population West	15	0	15
LGBTQ2+ youth	13	9	22
Indigenous youth	2	2	4
Youth women in Stem	7	3	10
Youth with mobility or hearing impairments	8	5	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>80</b>

The online community used the Recollective online bulletin board platform (programmed and hosted in Canada). This platform generated an asynchronous threaded discussion that developed as participants completed the research. Respondents were required to log onto the platform on two separate days to allow them the opportunity to review and comment on the posts of others before coming in to complete their second day. This approach brings together a focus on introspective, individual activities and feedback from moderators and a larger community to encourage participants to volunteer and explain their motivations, concerns and feelings more openly. The full transcripts of the English and French bulletin boards were downloaded and provided to IRCC.

The moderator overseeing the research process was Tony Coulson with support on the bulletin boards provided by our partner, Research Now/Dynata. At Tony's direction, analysts from Research Now/Dynata posted comments on the board in order to stimulate conversation and to probe participants for further information.

This research was qualitative in nature, not quantitative. As such, the results provide an indication of participants' views about the issues explored, but they cannot be generalized to the full population of members of the general public or members of the targeted audience segments.

## Quantitative phase methodology

The **quantitative online survey** was conducted in order to measure the incidence of Canadian youth who have participated in an international experience that required a visa/work permit and/or have participated in the IEC program in the past. It gathered information from this group on their experience, their views on travel, their views on the IEC program and their future intentions regarding international experiences.

### Sample design and weighting

To measure the incidence of youth who participated in an international experience that required a visa/work permit and/or have participated in the IEC program, panelists were screened first to identify if they met the eligibility requirements of a potential IEC program participant (a Canadian citizen living in Canada between the ages of 18-35). Given the low incidence target audience, no quotas were set, but in total, 2,489 youth respondents were identified who met these eligibility requirements and were asked the screening questions to determine whether they qualified for the survey by asking about past international travel experiences and/or participation in the IEC program. A total of 520 qualified youth completed the survey.

Since the demographic characteristics of the group of Canadian youth who have either previously participated in the IEC program or who obtained a visa to work, study or volunteer abroad is not known, screening was done with a large number of youth eligible to participate in the IEC to estimate the incidence of qualification for each gender within each region.

**Table 37: Incidence of international experience among eligible screened participants, by demographic group**

Demographic group	Number of eligible screened participants	Incidence of international experience
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,489</b>	<b>24%</b>
Atlantic Canada – Male	49	16%
Atlantic Canada – Female	133	18%
Quebec – Male	179	23%
Quebec – Female	430	13%
Ontario – Male	270	33%
Ontario – Female	691	22%
Prairies (MB/SK) – Male	49	16%
Prairies (MB/SK) – Female	144	14%
Alberta – Male	47	30%
Alberta – Female	192	20%
British Columbia/Territories – Male	82	35%
British Columbia/Territories – Female	204	20%

Weights for the final data file were generated by first weighting the sample of 2,489 cases who were eligible to participate in the IEC (Canadian citizens living in Canada aged 18-35) according to the 2016 Census and then dropping the cases which did not qualify (did not have a past international experience). This procedure ensured the final data set (n=520) accounted for variations in qualification incidence within each gender/region group. The final data therefore matches the population of Canadian citizen youth living in Canada aged 18-35 but accounts for the likelihood of each group being qualified to participate. The demographic characteristics of the final data set are presented in the below.

**Table 38: Survey participants' gender**

	All respondents (n=520)
Female	39%
Male	60%
Another gender	<1%
Prefer not to say	1%

**Table 39: Survey participants' age**

	All respondents (n=520)
18-24	22%
25-30	44%
31-35	35%

**Table 40: Survey participants' province**

	All respondents (n=520)
Atlantic Canada	5%
Quebec	18%
Ontario	46%
Prairies	16%
BC + Territories	16%

Since online panel surveys are not a random probability samples, no formal estimates of sampling error can be calculated. Although opt-in panels are not random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys provided they are well designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel. Respondents were informed about privacy and anonymity.

### Questionnaire design and pre-test

Environics adapted the survey questionnaire provided by IRCC to meet the research objectives and to act as both a quantitative survey instrument and as an effective method of recruiting qualified, high-quality participants into the qualitative online community exercise. The survey screened respondents to ensure they qualify using socio-demographic and program related screening questions to identify the target audience for the quantitative survey and to identify potential participants for the qualitative research.

Once finalized, the online survey was translated into French. The final online survey/screener is included in Appendix B.

Environics' data analysts programmed the questionnaire, then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured that the data entry process conformed to the surveys' basic logic. The data collection system handles sampling invitations, quotas and questionnaire logic (skip patterns, branching, and valid ranges).

Prior to finalizing the survey for field, a pre-test (soft launch) was conducted in English and French. The pre-test assessed the questionnaire in terms of question wording and sequencing, respondent sensitivity to specific questions and to the survey overall, and to determine the survey length. It also tested the measurement of suitability for taking part in the qualitative online community exercise. As no changes were required following the pre-test, the pre-test cases (70 English, 20 French) were included in the analysis.

## Fieldwork

The survey was conducted by Environics using a secure, fully featured web-based survey environment. The interviews took place from March 15 (soft launch pre-test) to March 27, 2019. The average interview length among those who completed the full quantitative survey was 8.5 minutes.

All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the survey in their official language of choice. All research work was conducted in accordance with the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Online Surveys and recognized industry standards, as well as applicable federal legislation (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA).

## Participation rate

The participation rate for the survey was 7% (calculated as the number of responding units, divided by the sum of unresolved units, in-scope non-responding units, and responding units). The completion results are as follows:

- Total email addresses used: 86,357
- Invalid cases: 0
- Invitations mistakenly sent to people who did not qualify for the study: 0
- Incomplete or missing email addresses: 0
- Unresolved units: 80,389
  - Email invitations bounce back: 0
  - Email invitations unanswered: 80,389
- In-scope non-responding units: 279
  - Non-response from eligible respondents: 0
  - Respondent refusals: 0
  - Language problem: 0
  - Selected respondent not available (illness; leave of absence; vacation; other): 0
  - Early break-offs: 279
- Responding units: 5,689
  - Completed surveys disqualified – quota filled: 1,122
  - Completed surveys disqualified for other reasons: 4,047
  - Completed surveys: 520

## Non-response bias analysis

Since no census data exists of the demographic make-up of the qualified target population, an analysis of non-response bias is not possible.

**Statement of limitations**

Qualitative research provides insight into the range of opinions held within a population, rather than the weights of the opinions held, as measured in a quantitative survey. The results of the qualitative research should be viewed as indicative rather than projectable to the population.

Since online panel surveys are not a random probability samples, no formal estimates of sampling error can be calculated. Although not employing a random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys provided they are well designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel.

## Appendix B: Online questionnaire/screener

### Landing page:

Welcome and thank you for your interest in this study. The purpose of this study is to gather information on motivations, drivers and barriers for youth to participate in international work and travel experiences. The study is being conducted on behalf of the Government of Canada.

The survey is approximately 10 minutes. Your participation in the study is voluntary and completely confidential. All your answers will remain anonymous and will be combined with responses from all other participants.

This study is being conducted by Environics Research. Your privacy is important to us. If you have questions about the legitimacy of this study please contact us at [publicaffairs@environics.ca](mailto:publicaffairs@environics.ca) or view our privacy policy, found here [link to: <https://environicsresearch.com/privacy-policy/>].

Simply choose your preferred language and click “continue” at the bottom of the page to begin the survey.

LANG. Would you prefer to complete the survey in English or French?

Préférez-vous répondre à ce questionnaire en anglais ou en français?

- English
- Français

### Part 1: Screening questions

S1A. In what year were you born?

RECORD YEAR [TERMINATE IF <18 YEARS OLD; or OVER 35 YEARS OLD]

- Prefer not to say

S1B. [IF S1A=PREFER NOT TO SAY] Would you be willing to tell us in which of the following age categories you belong?

- 17 or younger [TERMINATE]
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 30
- 31 to 35
- 36 and older [TERMINATE]
- Prefer not to say [TERMINATE]

S2. In which province or territory do you live?

- British Columbia
- Alberta
- Saskatchewan
- Manitoba
- Ontario
- Quebec



- New Brunswick
- Nova Scotia
- Prince Edward Island
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Yukon
- Nunavut
- Northwest Territories
- Outside of Canada **[TERMINATE]**
- Do not know/Prefer not to say **[TERMINATE]**

S3B. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Another gender
- Prefer not to say

S4. Are you a Canadian citizen?

- Yes
- No **[TERMINATE]**
- Do not know/Prefer not to say **[TERMINATE]**

S5. Do you identify as being a member of the LGBTQ2+ community?

- Yes **[QUALIFIES AS LGBTQ2+]**
- No
- Prefer not to say

S5A **[IF S5=YES]** As a member of the LGBTQ2+ community, do you identify as any of the following? *Please select all that apply.*

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer
- Two-spirit
- Intersex
- Asexual
- Other LGBTQ2+ member
- Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

S6. Are you an Indigenous person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit)?

- Yes **[QUALIFIES AS INDIGENOUS YOUTH]**
- No
- Prefer not to say

S7. Do you experience any of the following physical impairments? *Please select all that apply.*

- Hearing impairment or hearing loss that is a partial or total inability to hear [**QUALIFIES AS YOUTH WITH IMPAIRMENTS**]
- Mobility impairment that impacts your ability to perform tasks that require motor control and coordination [**QUALIFIES AS YOUTH WITH IMPAIRMENTS**]
- Vision impairment or vision loss not easily corrected with glasses or contact lenses
- Other physical impairment not listed (please specify)
- No physical impairment [**EXCLUSIVE CHOICE**]
- Prefer not to say [**EXCLUSIVE CHOICE**]

S8A. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed to date?

- Elementary school or less
- Secondary school
- Some post-secondary or current post-secondary student
- College, vocational or trade school
- Undergraduate university program
- Graduate or professional university program
- Prefer not to say

S8B. [**IF S8A=SOME POST-SECONDARY/COLLEGE/UNDERGRAD/GRADUATE**] What is your area of study that you are either currently completing or have in the past completed? *Please select all that apply.*

- Arts and Humanities
- Business Administration, Commerce and Economics
- Education
- Engineering [**IF FEMALE, QUALIFIES AS YOUTH WOMEN IN STEM**]
- Health Sciences
- Mathematics [**IF FEMALE, QUALIFIES AS YOUTH WOMEN IN STEM**]
- Sciences [**IF FEMALE, QUALIFIES AS YOUTH WOMEN IN STEM**]
- Skilled trades
- Social Sciences
- Other
- None [**EXCLUSIVE CHOICE**]
- Prefer not to say [**EXCLUSIVE CHOICE**]

S9. How many times have you done any of the following activities outside Canada in your lifetime? Please enter a number. *If you aren't sure, please provide your best guess.*

- Travel for leisure or business
- Work
- Study
- Volunteer

S10. Have you ever obtained a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer outside of Canada?

**ROWS – SHOW IF VALUE AT S9>0**

- Work
- Study
- Volunteer

**COLUMNS**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

S11. Have you ever participated in the International Experience Canada program, which provides Canadian youth facilitated access to a work permit in 34 different countries and territories?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**Part 2: Travel style/Behaviour of respondents**

Q1. How did you arrange your international experience when you needed to obtain a visa or permit to work, study or volunteer? *Please select all that apply.*

- Self-arranged
- Through school
- Travel or adventure company
- Employer
- Government program
- Non-profit organization
- Other (please specify)
- Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

Q1A. Why did you choose to arrange your international experience in that way?

- **[OPEN-ENDED TEXT BOX]**

Q1B. What issues, if any, did you encounter when arranging your international experience?

- **[OPEN-ENDED TEXT BOX]**

Q1C. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT OR HAVE WORKED ABROAD ON A VISA]** Have you worked, using a work permit, in any of the following countries? *Please select all that apply.*

**SHOW LIST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Chile
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France

- Germany
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Korea
- San Marino
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- None of the above **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]** **[ANCHOR]**

Q2. What would you say are the key benefits you gained from your work, study or volunteer experiences outside of Canada? *Please select all that apply.*

**RANDOMIZE LIST ORDER**

- Learned about a new country or culture
- Learned or improved a secondary language
- Obtained international career experience or professional development
- Exploration and adventure
- International travel experience that contributed toward my personal growth (for example, increased confidence, adaptability or self-awareness)
- Other (please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
- Not applicable **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]** **[ANCHOR]**

Q3. What would you say are the key challenges you faced during your work, study or volunteer experiences outside of Canada? *Please select all that apply.*

**RANDOMIZE LIST ORDER**

- Challenges with country customs and laws, cultural norms or cultural shock
- Encountering a language barrier
- Challenges with travel, residency or employment documents/permits
- Isolation or loneliness

- Challenges finding employment outside of Canada
- Financial issues funding my travel experience
- Feeling safe or secure (for example, concerns about personal safety, and/or racial, religious, or sexual orientation/gender discrimination)
- Impact on my obligations back in Canada (for example, family, children or career)
- I did not know how to get started
- Other (please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
- Not applicable **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE] [ANCHOR]**

Q4. How likely or unlikely are you to do any of the following activities outside of Canada in the future?

#### ROWS

- Travel for leisure or business
- Work
- Study
- Volunteer

#### COLUMNS

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Do not know

### Part 3: Work abroad and awareness of IEC questions

Q5. International Experience Canada is a youth mobility program for Canadian and foreign youth, aged 18-35 years, to work and travel abroad. Under the program, Canadian youth have facilitated access to a work permit in 34 different countries and territories across Europe, Asia, Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand. As well, international youth from our partner countries can apply for a work permit to work and travel in Canada.

There are two categories of work permits:

- **Open Work Permit** - Also known as a Working Holiday, this category allows youth to gain experience while earning money to pay for their travels. A job offer does not need to be secured before applying.
- **Employer-Specific Work Permit** - This category includes Young Professionals and International Co-op Internships, and allows youth to gain valuable international work experience, develop personally and professionally, and enhance their understanding of other languages and cultures. This permit requires a pre-arranged contract of employment before applying.

Before taking this survey, to what extent were you aware or unaware of the International Experience Canada program?

- Know the program well
- Know a fair amount about the program

- Know a little bit about the program
- Only know the name
- Never heard of it
- Do not know

Q6. **[IF Q5=KNOW THE NAME OR HIGHER]** How did you become aware of the International Experience Canada program? *Please select all that apply.*

**RANDOMIZE LIST ORDER**

- Person/group I follow on social media
- International Experience Canada Abroad Facebook account: @CanadiansAbroadIEC
- International Experience Canada Abroad Instagram account: @iec\_abroad
- General internet search
- Specific websites I visit (please specify which website(s))
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website (Canada.ca/iec)
- Academic institution/School campus
- Through my work
- From my friends and family
- From a news agency (in print or online)
- Through a Recognized Organization (AIESEC, SWAP, etc.)
- International Experience Canada information seminar/session/fair (please specify which seminar/session/fair)
- Other (please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
- Do not know **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE] [ANCHOR]**

Q7. **[IF Q5=NEVER HEARD OR DK]** Would you like to receive information about the International Experience Canada Program?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Q8. **[IF Q7=YES OR UNSURE]** How would you prefer to receive information about the International Experience Canada program? *Please select all that apply.*

**RANDOMIZE LIST ORDER**

- Person/group I follow on social media
- International Experience Canada Abroad Facebook account: @CanadiansAbroadIEC
- International Experience Canada Abroad Instagram account: @iec\_abroad
- General internet search
- Specific websites I visit (please specify which website(s))
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website (Canada.ca/iec)
- Academic institution/School campus
- Through my work
- From my friends and family
- From a news agency (in print or online)
- Through a Recognized Organization (AIESEC, SWAP, etc.)

- International Experience Canada information seminar/session/fair (please specify which seminar/session/fair)
- Other (please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
- Do not know **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE] [ANCHOR]**

Q9. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT]** Earlier in the survey you mentioned that you participated in the International Experience Canada program. What International Experience Canada stream did you travel through?

- Open work permit
- Employer-Specific Work Permit (pre-arranged contract of employment was required)
- Do not know

Q10. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT]** To what extent were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your work and travel abroad experience via the International Experience Canada program?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Do not know

Q11. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT]** Why do you say that?

- **[INSERT OPEN-END TEXT BOX]**

Q12. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT]** To what extent are you likely or unlikely to recommend an international working abroad experience such as International Experience Canada to family or friends?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Do not know

Q13. **[IF IEC PARTICIPANT]** Why do you say that?

- **[INSERT OPEN-END TEXT BOX]**

Q14. To what extent are you likely or unlikely to participate in a work and travel abroad program like International Experience Canada in the future?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Do not know

Q15. Why do you say that?

- [INSERT OPEN-END TEXT BOX]

Q16. [IF Q14=SOMEWHAT OR VERY LIKELY] To which of the following International Experience Canada partner countries and territories would you work, study or volunteer abroad in? *Please select all that apply.*

**SHOW LIST IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Chile
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Korea
- San Marino
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- Do not know [EXCLUSIVE CHOICE] [ANCHOR]

Q17. Do you have anything else you would like to share?

- [INSERT OPEN-ENDED TEXT BOX]



**Part 4: Demographics**

Now I would like to ask you a few last questions for statistical purposes only.

D1. Were you born in Canada?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

D2. **[IF D1=NO]** In what year did you come to Canada?

- **RECORD YEAR**
- Prefer not to say

D3. Did your parents immigrate to Canada from another country?

- One parent
- Both parents
- No
- Prefer not to say

D4. What were the ethnic or cultural origins of your ancestors? *Please select all that apply.*

- Canadian
- British
- French
- Indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuk)
- American
- African
- South Asian
- East Asian
- Southeast Asian
- Caribbean
- Western European
- Scandinavian
- Eastern European
- Latin American
- Middle Eastern
- Oceanian
- Other (please specify)
- Do not know/Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

D8. What is your current employment status?

- Employed full-time for pay (i.e. more than 30 hours per week)
- Employed part-time for pay
- Self-employed
- Unemployed, and currently seeking work
- Homemaker

- Student
- Retired
- Other (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

D9. **[IF D8=EMPLOYED]** Are you currently employed in an information technology (IT) occupation?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

D10. Do you personally or jointly hold a balance on any of the following types of debt? *Please select all that apply.*

- Student loan
- Credit Card
- Mortgage/home equity line
- Car or other vehicle loan
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**
- Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

D11. Which languages do you speak fluently? *Please select all that apply.*

- English
- French
- Other (please specify)
- Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

D12. Who do you usually live with in your household? *Please select all that apply.*

- Entirely alone
- With a partner/spouse
- With your own (or your partners') children under the age of 18
- With your own (or your partners') children aged 18 or over
- With a parent or parent-in-law
- With other relatives
- With friends, colleagues or students
- In some other type of household/ group
- Prefer not to say **[EXCLUSIVE CHOICE]**

D13. Do you own or rent your home?

- Own
- Rent
- Neither
- Prefer not to say

D14. What are the first three characters of your postal code?

- **FORMAT A9A**
- Prefer not to say

### Qualitative assessment and invitation

**TERMINATE SURVEY IF NOT QUALIFIED TO BE INVITED TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.**

**THERE ARE TWO BOARDS – ENGLISH & FRENCH. ASSIGN RESPONDENTS TO A BOARD BASED ON LANGUAGE. RESPONDENTS CAN QUALIFY FOR MORE THAN ONE QUOTA GROUP; ASSIGN TO LEAST FILLED BASED ON RECRUITMENT QUOTA.**

In the text box below, please describe what you consider to be the **luckiest thing** that ever happened to you. **Please be as specific and detailed as possible**, and explain not just what happened, but how you felt.

- **Text box: [SET MIN 50 CHARS]**

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do the following statements express your feelings. A score of 10 means the statement describes your feelings extremely well, a score of 1 means that the statement does not describe your feelings at all, or you can use any number in between.

### ROWS

- If asked to describe something, I can usually do so in detail:
- I'm comfortable expressing my feelings online:
- My friends often ask my opinions of things:
- I generally have an opinion or point-of-view on topics or issues:
- I enjoy exchanging ideas with people on a wide variety of things:
- People tell me I'm creative:
- I will share my ideas, even if other people have different points of view:

### COLUMNS

- 10 – Describes well
- 9
- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 – Doesn't describe

**ALL RESPONDENTS MUST HAVE 4 OR MORE STATEMENTS CIRCLED A "7", "8", "9", OR "10". IF NOT AND QUALIFY ON ALL OTHER FRONTS, HOLD RESPONDENT.**

QUAL1. We may conduct follow-up qualitative research to understand your perceptions of international work and travel. This would take the form of a moderated online community of youth like yourself. Participants would receive an honorarium of \$100 as a thank you for their time.

Participating in the next phase of research is completely voluntary. If you are interested, you will be required to provide your first name, last name and email address to be screened for the online community. Please note that this information will not be used for any analysis of your responses and will only be used if you are selected to be among those invited to participate in a subsequent qualitative phase of research.

Would you be interested in participating?

- Yes
- No

## Appendix C: Online community discussion guide

### Day 1: About you, and attitude towards international work and travel in general

#### HELLO and WELCOME!

Thanks for joining me today! My name is **[NAME]** and I will be your moderator for this discussion.

I would like to ask you to share with me your thoughts, experiences and activities around international work and travel. For each key question posted, there will be sub-questions. Please try to be as clear and as detailed as you can when you respond to each question and sub-question, because your answers are really important to me and will help me understand how you think and what is important to you when it comes to international work and travel.

Sometimes I will ask some follow up questions to make sure I really understand your answers – please make sure you come back and check on this board to see if there are any follow up questions for you.

Today we are going to be talking about motivators and barriers to international work and travel in general. Tomorrow, we will dive into more details about these specific motivators and barriers for you.

#### Part 1: Getting to know you

##### [Warm up / Ice break.]

To get us started, briefly introduce yourself, and share something about yourself that is interesting or unique (i.e., your interests, hobbies, etc.)

#### Part 2: Travel in your life

##### [Identify types and common themes in travel experience]

We want to know how you feel about travel and your experience!

- a. How do you feel about travel? Do you like to travel? Why?
- b. How much of your travel would say is Domestic (Canada Only) or International? Thinking about your travel experience to-date, please use the spaces below to provide a percentage of Domestic vs. International travel.
  - Domestic: **[RECORD %]**
  - International: **[RECORD %]**
- c. And how much of your travel experience would you say has been for leisure or for business. Please use the spaces below to provide a percentage of Business vs. Leisure travel.
  - Leisure: **[RECORD %]**
  - Business: **[RECORD %]**

#### Part 3: Making your mark - mapping your travel destinations

##### [Identify attitude towards travel in general and values and motivations around travel.]

What countries have you been to?

**[SHOW INTERACTIVE WORLD MAP] INSTRUCTIONS:** Please use the map markers to show us where in the world you have traveled to-date and the top THREE destinations you would like to travel to in the future.

- a. Traveled here!: Tell us a bit about your trip...
- b. Want to go here! (**ALLOW UP TO 3 CHOICES**): Tell us a bit about why you want to go here...

#### Part 4: Travel plans

**[Identify the likelihood of future travel experiences.]**

How likely are you to travel abroad for leisure or for business in the future? How likely are you to work abroad? To study abroad? To volunteer abroad?

Using the scale below, please indicate how likely you are to travel abroad for each of the following in the future.

#### ROWS

- Leisure Travel
- Business Travel
- Work Abroad
- Study Abroad
- Volunteer Abroad

#### COLUMNS

- Very Likely
- Somewhat Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat Unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Not sure

**(AFTER EACH SELECTION, PROVIDE BOX FOR BRIEF EXPLANATION OF RATING).**

- Additional Commentary:

#### Part 5: How you feel about travel

**[Identify context, situations/scenarios that warrant different types of travel, rationale/thinking behind choices, factors that influence what they choose.]**

Complete the following sentences with the first 1 to 3 thoughts that come to mind...

- a. For me, travel is...
- b. I travel because...
- c. The most important factor when I travel is...

- d. When it comes to travel, I get frustrated when...
- e. The most important reason I want to travel internationally is...
- f. The biggest thing preventing me from travelling internationally is...

### Part 6: Going abroad

**[Identify context, situations/scenarios that warrant different types of travel, rationale/thinking behind choices, factors that influence what they choose.]**

Let's talk about how you make choices around travel.

Please complete the sentences below:

- a. I would travel abroad because...
- b. I would work abroad because...
- c. I would study abroad because...
- d. I would volunteer abroad because...
- e. I would not travel abroad because...
- f. I would not work abroad because...
- g. I would not study abroad because...
- h. I would not volunteer abroad because...

### Part 7: Demographics

**[KEEP PRIVATE - Measure demographics]**

To end today's discussion, we just have a few questions that will help us understand your background a bit more. Your responses to these questions will not be shared with other members of this discussion group.

1. Were you born in Canada? **[Yes/No/Prefer not to say]**
2. **If not born in Canada:** How old were you when you moved to Canada? **[Number]**
3. Did your parents immigrate to Canada from another country? **[One parent/Both parents/No/Prefer not to say]**
4. What were the ethnic or cultural origins of your ancestors?
5. What is your current employment status? **[Employed full-time for pay (30+ hours per week)/ Employed part-time for pay/ Self-employed/ Unemployed and looking for work/ Homemaker/ Student/ Retired/ Other/ Prefer not to say]**
6. What languages do you speak fluently?

7. Do you or any member of your household work in or has retired from: **[Market Research or Marketing/ Public Relations or Media (TV, Print)/ Advertising and communications/ An employee of a political party/ An employee of a government department or agency, whether federal or provincial/ None of the above]**

That's all for today – thank you so much for this discussion today! We look forward to hearing from you again tomorrow!

## Day 2: Overcoming Obstacles

### Part 1: Journey exercise

**[Warm up for Day 2: Journey exercise.]**

Welcome back! Today is all about your reasons why you might or might not work, study or volunteer abroad.

I'm going to describe a situation and I'd like you to tell me how you feel. Let's pretend that you make the decision to go abroad and plan to work while you're there. Please tell me what you're thinking and be sure to provide lots of details.

- Which country do you decide to go to? Why?
- What type of work do you want to do when you're there? Why?
- How do you feel about this decision? What excites you? What scares you?
- Who are the key people you need to talk to about this decision? At home? In your group of friends? At school? At work?
- What are the first things you do to start planning? What information would you need? How would you go about finding that information? What information would you expect to find? What would you do if you could not find it?
- What obligations in your life do you have to manage to be able to make this trip work? What could you or would you do to overcome these obligations?
- What help do you need to make this happen? Big or small, please describe what you need.

### Part 2: Specific motivators

**[Explore specific motivators, identify new motivators, understand motivators specific to target audience (ex. are they the same? Are they different?).]**

I would like to explore some of the benefits to working, studying or volunteering abroad. Please complete the sentences below:

Working, studying or volunteering abroad would help me, personally, [INSERT ITEM BELOW] because...

**PROBES:** Why is that important to you? What exactly would you hope to gain in this respect?

- a. To learn about a new country or culture



- b. To learn or improve a secondary language
- c. To obtain international career experience or professional development
- d. Explore and have an adventure
- e. To increase my confidence, adaptability or self-awareness

Is there anything else you would gain by working, studying or volunteering abroad?

And which of these would be the most important benefit you would gain working, studying or volunteering abroad?

Are you doing any of these things in Canada already? What are you doing?

### Part 3: Specific challenges

**[Explore specific challenges, identify new challenges, understand challenges specific to target audience (ex. are they the same? Are they different?).]**

I would like to explore some of the challenges to working, studying or volunteering abroad. Please complete the sentences below:

- a. I would personally have a hard time with country customs and laws, cultural norms or cultural shock when working, studying or volunteering abroad because...
- b. I would personally have a hard time with a language barrier when working, studying or volunteering abroad because...
- c. I would personally have a hard time getting the right documents or permits for travelling, living or work abroad because...
- d. I would personally have a hard time with isolation or loneliness abroad because...
- e. I would personally have a hard time finding a job outside of Canada because...
- f. I would personally have a hard time with financial issues funding my travel experience because...
- g. I would personally have a hard time feeling safe or secure abroad because...

Are there any other challenges you would face working, studying or volunteering abroad?

And which of these would be the most important challenge you would face working, studying or volunteering abroad?

What are your specific concerns? Let's get creative. How could you overcome these concerns?

Do you experience any of these issues in Canada? Why or why not?

### Part 4: Youth mobility

**[Explore knowledge and impressions of IEC.]**

International Experience Canada is a youth mobility program for Canadian and foreign youth, aged 18-35 years, to work and travel abroad. Under the program, Canadian youth have facilitated access to a work permit in 34 different countries and territories across Europe, Asia, Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand. As well, international youth from our partner countries can apply for a work permit to work and travel in Canada.

There are two categories of work permits:

- **Open Work Permit** - Also known as a Working Holiday, this category allows youth to gain experience while earning money to pay for their travels. A job offer does not need to be secured before applying.
- **Employer-Specific Work Permit** - This category includes Young Professionals and International Co-op Internships, and allows youth to gain valuable international work experience, develop personally and professionally, and enhance their understanding of other languages and cultures. This permit requires a pre-arranged contract of employment before applying.

### [SHOW IEC LOGO]

Before taking part in this exercise, to what extent were you aware or unaware of the International Experience Canada program?

- Know the program well
- Know a fair amount about the program
- Know only a little bit about the program
- Only know the name
- Never heard of it
- Not sure

**Pop up box:** "Please Provide a brief explanation of your rating"

### Part 5: Participation

#### [Explore the likelihood of participating in IEC in the future.]

International Experience Canada is a youth mobility program for Canadian and foreign youth, aged 18-35 years, to work and travel abroad. Under the program, Canadian youth have facilitated access to a work permit in 34 different countries and territories across Europe, Asia, Central and South America, Australia and New Zealand. As well, international youth from our partner countries can apply for a work permit to work and travel in Canada.

How likely are you to participate in a work and travel abroad program like this in the future?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely
- Not sure

Please explain your answer.

**Follow up: End and thank.**

Thank you very much for your time! Is there anything else you want to add based on what we've discussed over the past 2 days?

Thanks again everyone! We hope you have a great day.