



Moroccan and Senegalese students now eligible for Canada's expedited visa processing system

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Short on time? Here are the highlights:

- *Morocco and Senegal join China, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Pakistan on the list of countries whose students are eligible for faster Canadian study permit processing through an online system known as the Student Direct Stream (SDS)*
- *The addition of the two French-speaking nations is in line with the Canadian government's Francophone Immigration Strategy, which aims to draw more French-speaking students to Canada and to encourage them to immigrate*
- *The SDS programme plays a key role in Canada's new International Education Strategy, which seeks to further diversify the country's foreign student enrolment*

Students from Morocco and Senegal [can now access Canada's Student Direct Stream \(SDS\)](#), an online system that offers faster visa processing times for students from certain countries. Morocco and Senegal are the latest additions to the SDS programme, joining China, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Pakistan.

The government's goal is to process SDS applications within 20 days, though longer processing times may be required.

[The SDS](#) was launched in 2018 and the list of countries included on it is growing quickly. The first four countries on the list were China, India, Vietnam, and the Philippines; Pakistan made it into the group this past summer; and this week, Morocco and Senegal were announced.

To be eligible for SDS processing, students from the selected countries must demonstrate that they have the financial resources and language skills to succeed in their studies in Canada. [As we reported](#) when SDS was first announced, students need:

- Higher-than-average language skills (an IELTS score of at least 6 for English-language studies or a *Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens* score of at least 7);
- A certain level of financial security, to be shown through a Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC) of CAN\$10,000 and proof of tuition payment for the first year of studies.

Expansion of SDS is in line with three goals

The addition of Morocco and Senegal to the SDS list of countries fits into Canada's new [International Education Strategy for 2020–24](#), which prioritises the diversification of international student populations at Canadian colleges and universities.

Adding Morocco and Senegal also dovetails with the Canadian government's [Francophone Immigration Strategy](#) that is broadly designed to encourage more young French speakers to choose to study in Canada.

Expanding the SDS also supports a policy goal of making it easier for talented international students to come to Canada and immigrate; international students are viewed as ideal candidates for permanent residency and as having strong potential to enhance the quality of Canada's workforce.

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, made this comment to support the announcement of Senegal and Morocco's inclusion on the SDS:

“Canada’s diverse, welcoming society, high-quality educational institutions and opportunities to work or immigrate after graduation have made Canada a leading destination of choice for students from around the world. In expanding the Student Direct Stream to a more diverse range of prospective students, we’re enhancing the tremendous cultural, social and economic benefits that international students provide.”

According to the government, nearly 54,000 former students in 2018 transitioned to permanent residence, “an all-time high.”

Canada’s international student population is growing quickly

In 2018, [572,415 international students](#) were enrolled in Canadian colleges and universities, representing growth of 16.3% over 2017. This year-over-year increase has helped to make Canada the fastest-growing study destination in the world over the last five years. With just over half of all foreign students in Canada either Indian or Chinese, diversification has become a key priority for the Canadian government and for Canadian educators.

Some of the countries now contributing the highest rates of growth for Canada are Bangladesh (+53% in 2018), Iran (+48%), Vietnam (+46%), Colombia (+41%), Philippines (+29%), Kenya (+29%), and Brazil (+17%).

For additional background, please see:

- [“Canada: New International Education Strategy focuses on diversification and outbound mobility”](#)
- [“Canada’s foreign enrolment took a big jump in 2018”](#)
- [“Canada adds Pakistan to its expedited student visa programme”](#)

<https://monitor.icef.com/2019/09/moroccan-and-senegalese-students-now-eligible-for-canadas-expedited-visa-processing-system/>