

Trending Topics Survey: International Applicants for Fall 2017- Institutional & Applicant Perceptions



3/13/2017

Early Release of Key Findings

IN COOPERATION WITH



TRENDING TOPICS SURVEY: INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS FOR FALL 2017- INSTITUTIONAL & APPLICANT PERCEPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Over the past year, international educators expressed concern that the political discourse surrounding foreign nationals in the U.S. leading up to the November 2016 U.S. presidential election could be damaging to international student recruitment efforts. In response to those voiced concerns, a coalition of six higher education associations launched an inter-associational member survey in February 2017.

This survey was intended to be a snapshot of student/family perceptions and institutional activities as opposed to a deep-dive into applicant numbers. Partners such as the Institute of International Education (IIE), which publishes the annual Open Doors Report, and the Council of Graduate Schools, which publishes the annual International Graduate Application and Enrollment Report, typically conduct in-depth and thorough research on international student enrollment trends. Because of the annual and in-depth nature of those reports, we will not see those numbers for many months. This report provides a snapshot of foreign applications to U.S. higher education institutions, initiates a dialogue, and should assist institutions as they forecast and prepare for what might lie ahead.

More than 250 U.S. institutions responded to the short survey, with representation of all sizes, types and geographic diversity of higher education in the United States.

EARLY RELEASE OF KEY FINDINGS

Key findings of the survey include:

- 39% of responding institutions reported a decline in international applications, 35% reported an increase, and 26% reported no change in applicant numbers.

- Institutions report the highest declines in applications from the Middle East. Open Doors data from the 2015/2016 academic year indicates that there are more than 100,000 students studying in the U.S. from the Middle East, making up just under 10% of our international student enrollment nationwide. In the snapshot survey:
 - 39% of institutions have reported declines in undergraduate applications for Fall 2017 from the Middle East.
 - 31% of Institutions have reported declines in graduate applications for Fall 2017 from the Middle East.
- Institutions report that applications from India and China have also been impacted. Open Doors 2016 indicates that these two countries currently make up 47% of our international student enrollment, with almost half a million Indian and Chinese students studying in the U.S.
 - 26% of institutions have reported undergraduate application declines from India and 25% reported application declines from China.
 - 32% of institutions have reported graduate application declines from China, and 15% have reported application declines from India.
- International student recruitment professionals report a great deal of concern from students and families all over the globe, with the highest number of concerns emanating from the Middle East (79%), Asia (36%) and Latin America (34%). [See figure 3]
- The most frequently noted concerns of international students and their families, as reported by institution-based professionals, include:
 - Perception of a rise in student visa denials at U.S. embassies and consulates in China, India and Nepal.
 - Perception that the climate in the U.S. is now less welcoming to individuals from other countries.
 - Concerns that benefits and restrictions around visas could change, especially around the ability to travel, re-entry after travel, and employment opportunities.
 - Concerns that the Executive Order travel ban might expand to include additional countries.
- 77% of institutions expressed concerns regarding application yield, with data that align closely to the countries of concern.

FINAL REPORT RELEASE PLANNED

A complete and final report will be available by March 30, 2017 after a full review of the data. The report will include more elements of the survey and comments from the participating organizations.

Figure 1

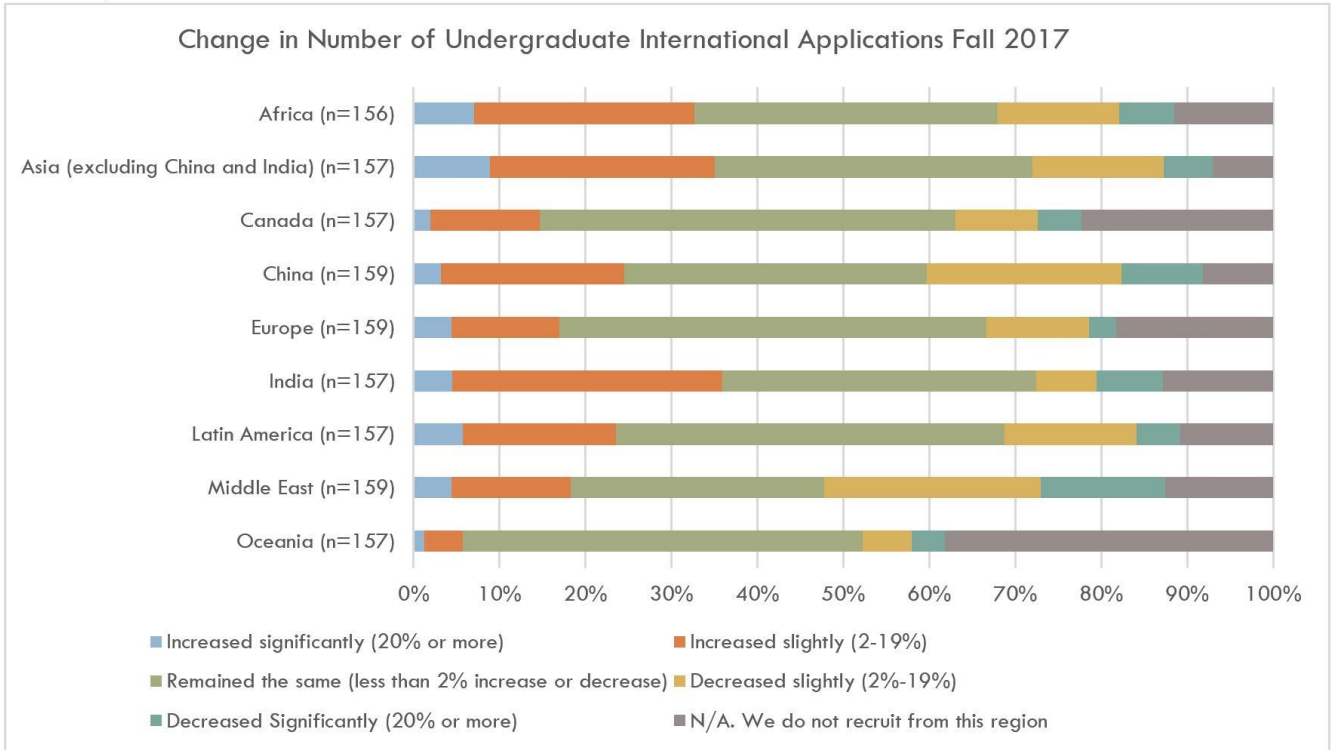


Figure 2

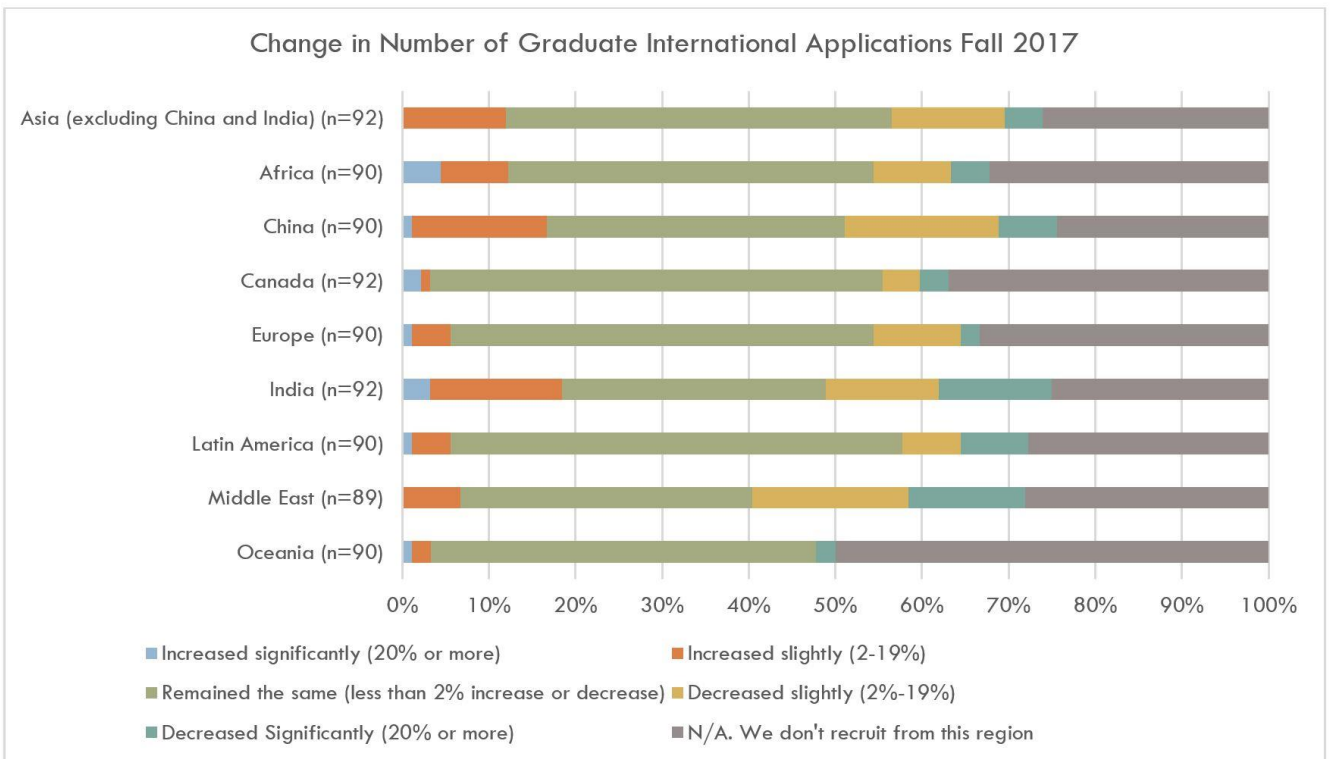


Figure 3:

