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AUTHORS

Mueller, Richard

DOES THE STATUE OF LIBERTY STILL FACE OUT? 1 THE DIVERSION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS FROM THE UNITED STATES TO CANADA IN THE POST 9/11 PERIOD

ABSTRACT

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, have resulted in the increased scrutiny of both immigrants and non-immigrants entering the United States. The latter group includes students who enter the country on temporary visas to complete programs of higher education. Depending on the source, the number of foreign students in the United States has remained constant or fallen since 2001, and there has been a large decline among students from predominantly Muslim countries. Canada, by contrast, has relaxed its entry requirements for some foreign students and there has been a concerted effort among Canadian universities to increase foreign student enrolment. We find that the number of foreign students in Canada did increase following 9/11, especially those from predominantly Muslim countries. We discuss some of the implications of this increase in foreign students for Canadian universities and the Canadian labour market. Although these results support the hypothesis that changes in U.S. immigration policy are responsible, causality cannot be inferred from our data. This underlines the need for better data to adequately address the post-secondary education choices of international students.

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