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Giving Momentum

2022 Annual Report

Shaping

Inclusive

Systems

Contents

About WES	2
2022 in Review	
Letter from WES CEO and WES Board Chair	3
Credential Evaluation	
By the Numbers	4
Applicant Profile	5
Geographies	
Top 10 Countries of Applicants' Residence	6
Top 10 Receiving Institutions in the U.S. and Canada	6
Top Countries of Education by Region	7
Social Impact	
Programs	8
Policy	9
Philanthropy	10
Partnerships	11
Our Leadership	
Senior Leadership and Board of Trustees	13

About WES

World Education Services (WES) is a non-profit social enterprise that supports the educational, economic, and social inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students. For nearly 50 years, WES has set the standard for international academic credential evaluation, supporting millions of people as they seek to achieve their academic and professional goals. Through decades of experience as a leader in global education, WES has developed a wide range of tools to pursue social impact at scale. From evaluating academic credentials to shaping policy, designing programs, and providing philanthropic funding, we partner with a diverse set of organizations, leaders, and networks to uplift individuals and drive systems change. Together with its partners, WES enables people to learn, work, and thrive in new places.

Our Vision

Everyone is able to put their education, experience, and skills to work anywhere in the world.

Our Mission

We help people learn, work, and thrive in new places. We help society recognize the value of people's education and experience.

Letter from WES CEO and WES Board Chair

THE YEAR 2022 WAS A STRONG YEAR FOR WES. We set new records and marked important milestones. We assessed more than half a million credentials and issued the largest number of credential evaluations for the purpose of studying in the United States in WES' history. Over 4,500 higher education institutions, governments, licensing bodies, and employers in the U.S. and Canada received WES credential evaluations to facilitate recognition of international education. Through our social enterprise model, we generated revenue through application fees to cover our operational costs while investing in a social impact portfolio that helps to bring our mission to life.

We expanded our footprint as a leading social enterprise through new global partnerships. In a partnership with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), we shared expertise we acquired by assessing qualifications through the WES Gateway Program, which evaluates the credentials of refugees and other displaced people. Through this pilot, we are helping SAQA to develop systems which will ensure that refugees arriving in South Africa can make use of their qualifications in the country and achieve their academic and professional goals.

Our partner network grew to more than 500 organizations across the U.S. and Canada. WES is honored to work alongside hundreds of organizations committed to advancing work that supports the educational, economic, and social inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students. Social change requires collective effort, and we can realize greater impact because of these partnerships.

WES was able to help a record number of individuals through the WES Gateway Program in 2022. Shuttered or interrupted university operations in Ukraine and Afghanistan are making it difficult for students to access their academic documents and pursue educational or professional opportunities. WES developed the Gateway Program so that individuals can still access a credential evaluation despite obstacles like these. More than 3,000 people received a credential evaluation through the WES Gateway Program in 2022 — nearly four times the number in 2021.

Through the WES Mariam Assefa Fund we granted more than US\$10 million — including more than US\$2 million directed toward impact investing. This included investments focused on ensuring immigrants and refugees more equitable financial access and wealth-building opportunities. Impact investing is one tool that WES is leveraging to build out a sustainable sector dedicated to economic inclusion.

We celebrated the passage of the Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act. The new legislation calls for the U.S. Department of Labor to study the systemic barriers facing immigrants and refugees who hold credentials from another country. You'll see the impact of this work and more detailed in the report.

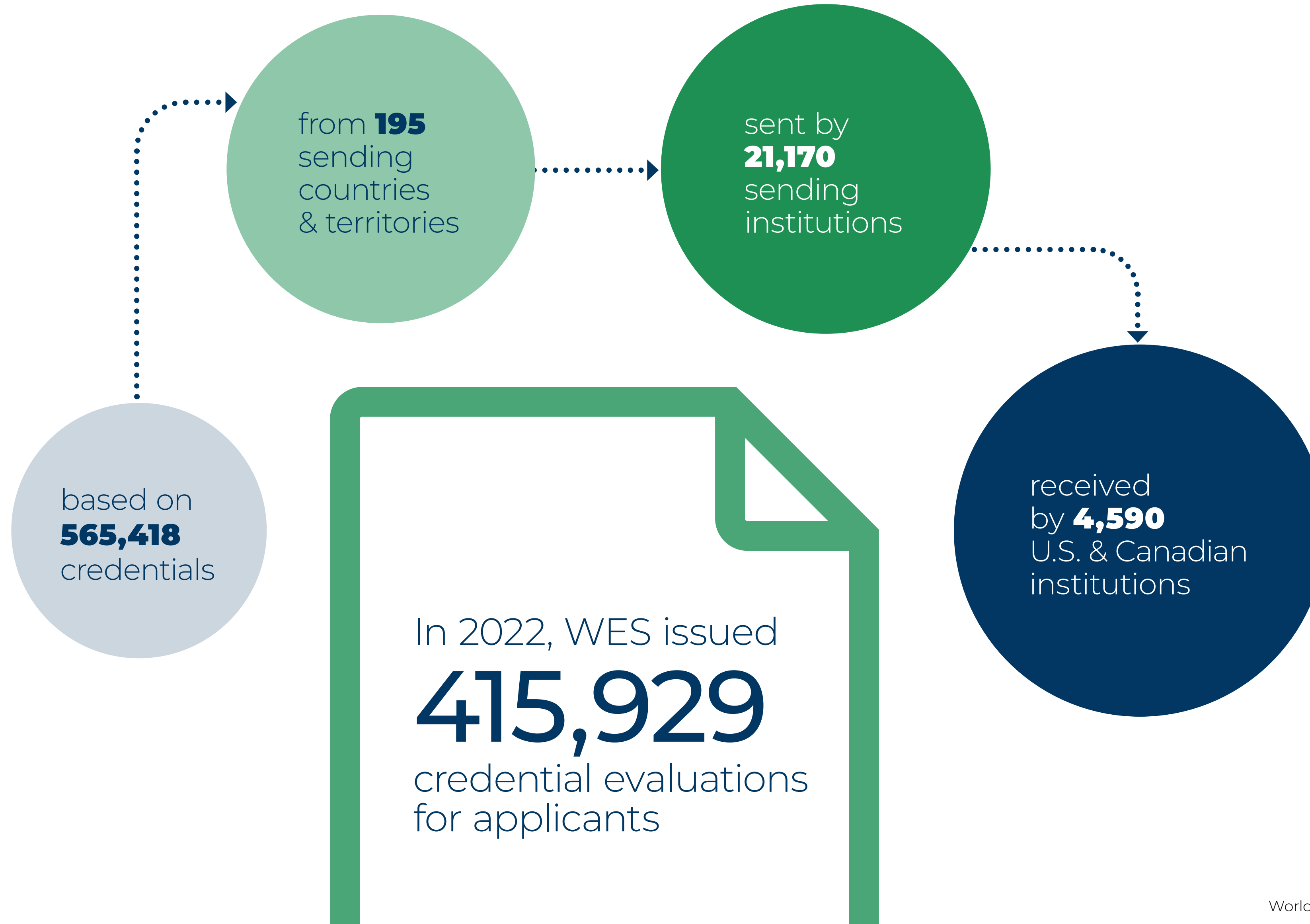
In 2023, we will lay the groundwork to launch boldly into our 50th anniversary in 2024, focused on global mobility and dedicated to immigrants, refugees, and international students — the people we serve. We look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together with our Board of Trustees, trusted partners, dedicated colleagues, and our partners in the U.S., in Canada, and around the world.



Audrey Hendley
Chair, WES Board of Trustees

Esther T. Benjamin
CEO and Executive Director

By the Numbers



Applicant Profile

UNITED STATES

107,210

Completed credential evaluations

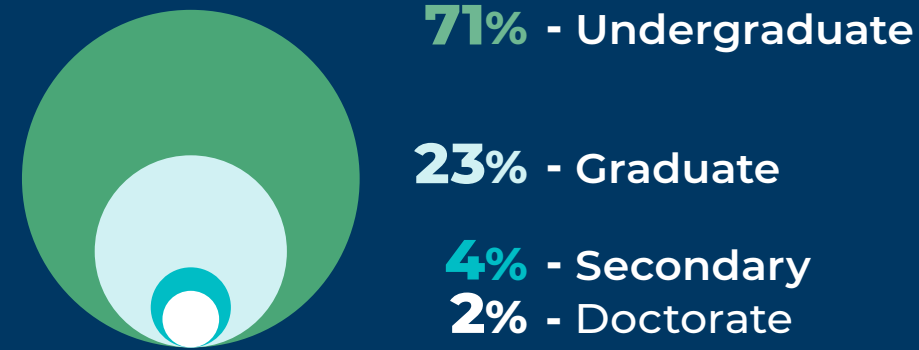


40% of these applicants lived in the U.S.

Evaluation Purpose



Highest Education Level



CANADA

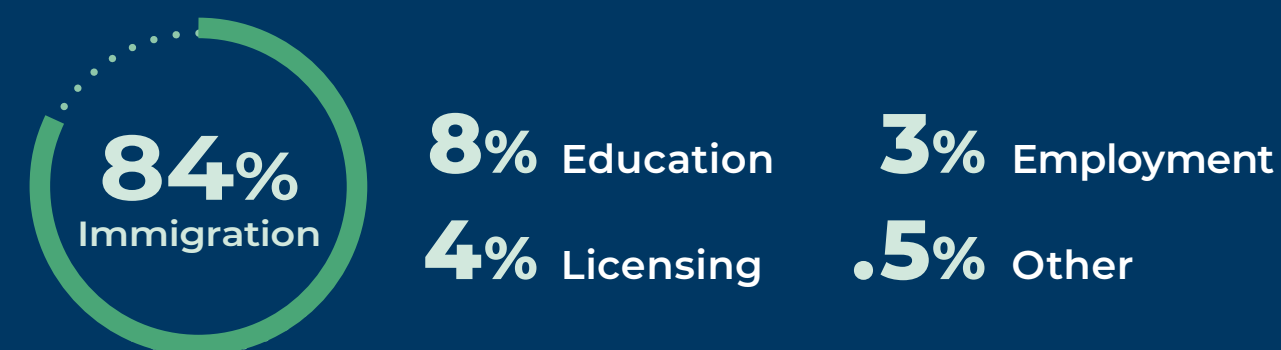
308,719

Completed credential evaluations

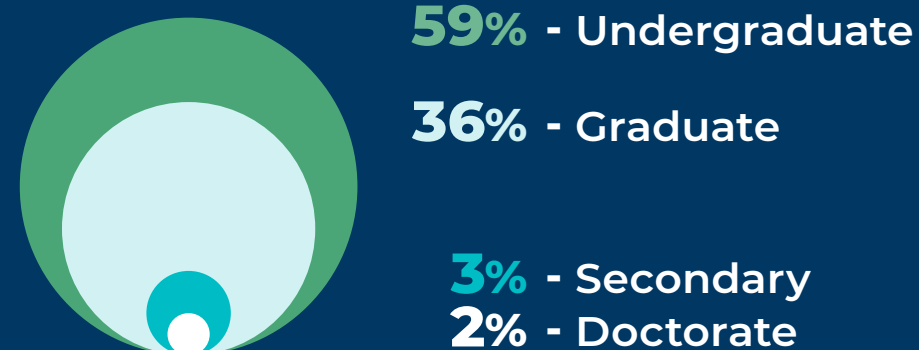


35% of these applicants lived in Canada

Evaluation Purpose



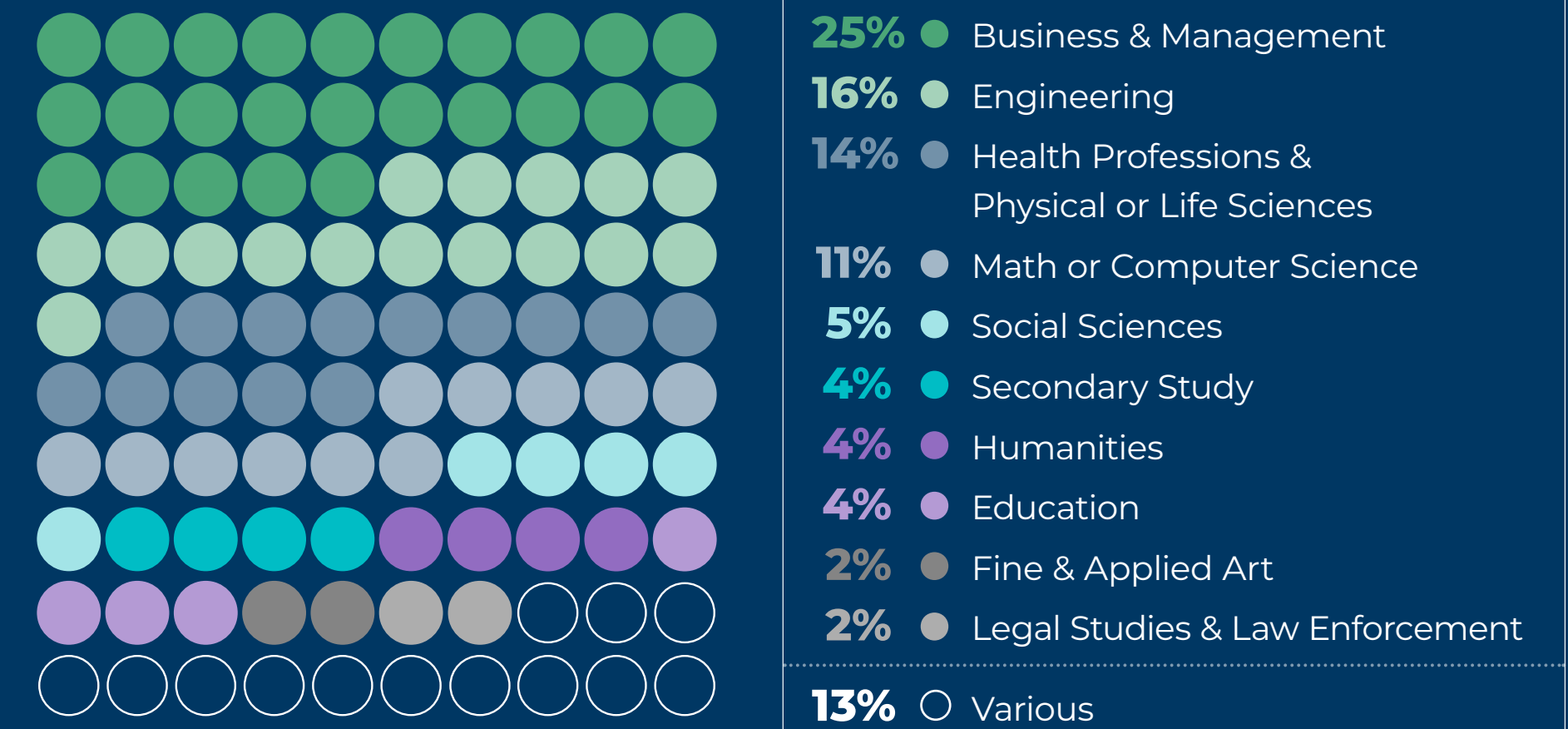
Highest Education Level



30,287 DISTINCT MAJORS*

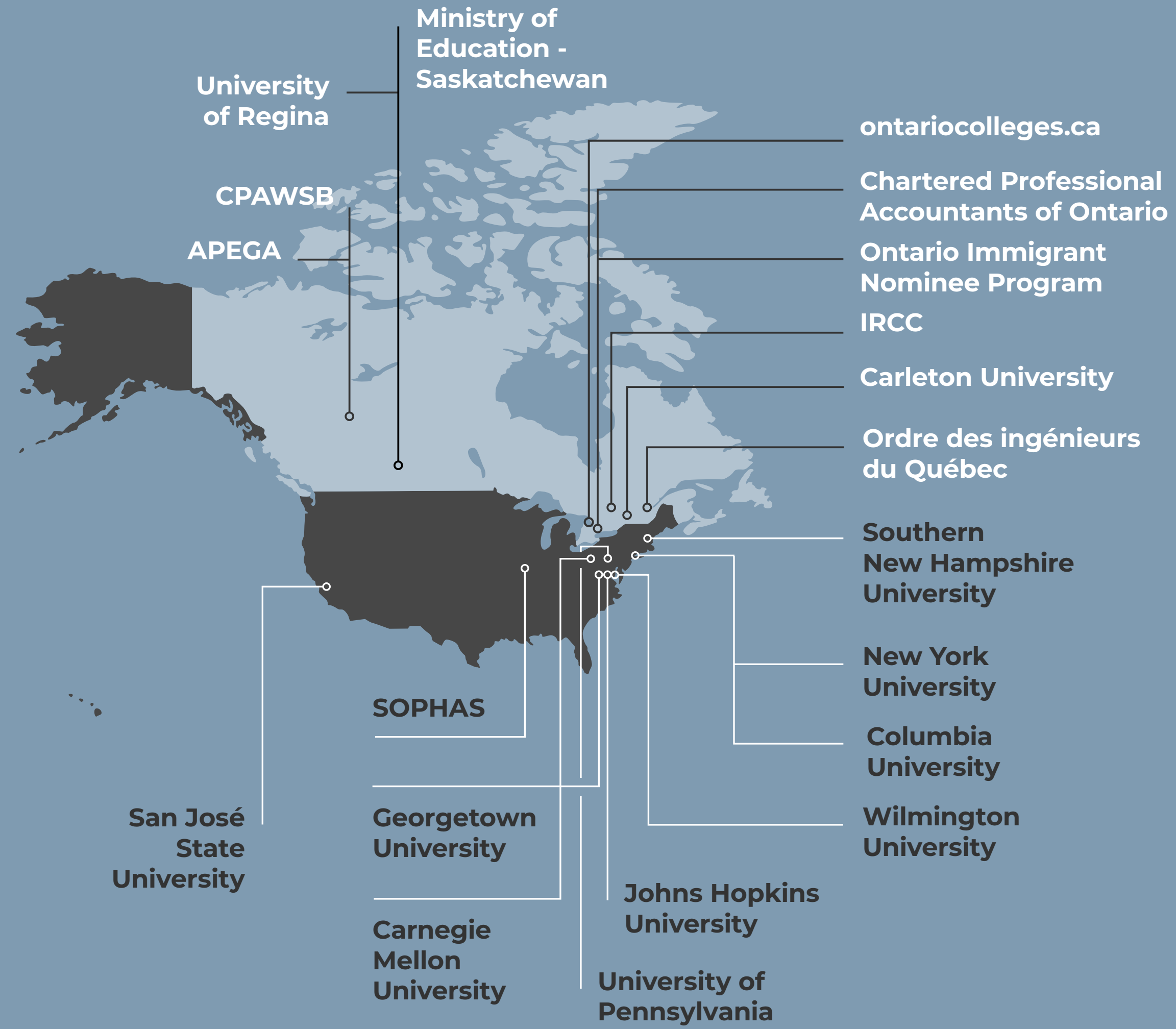
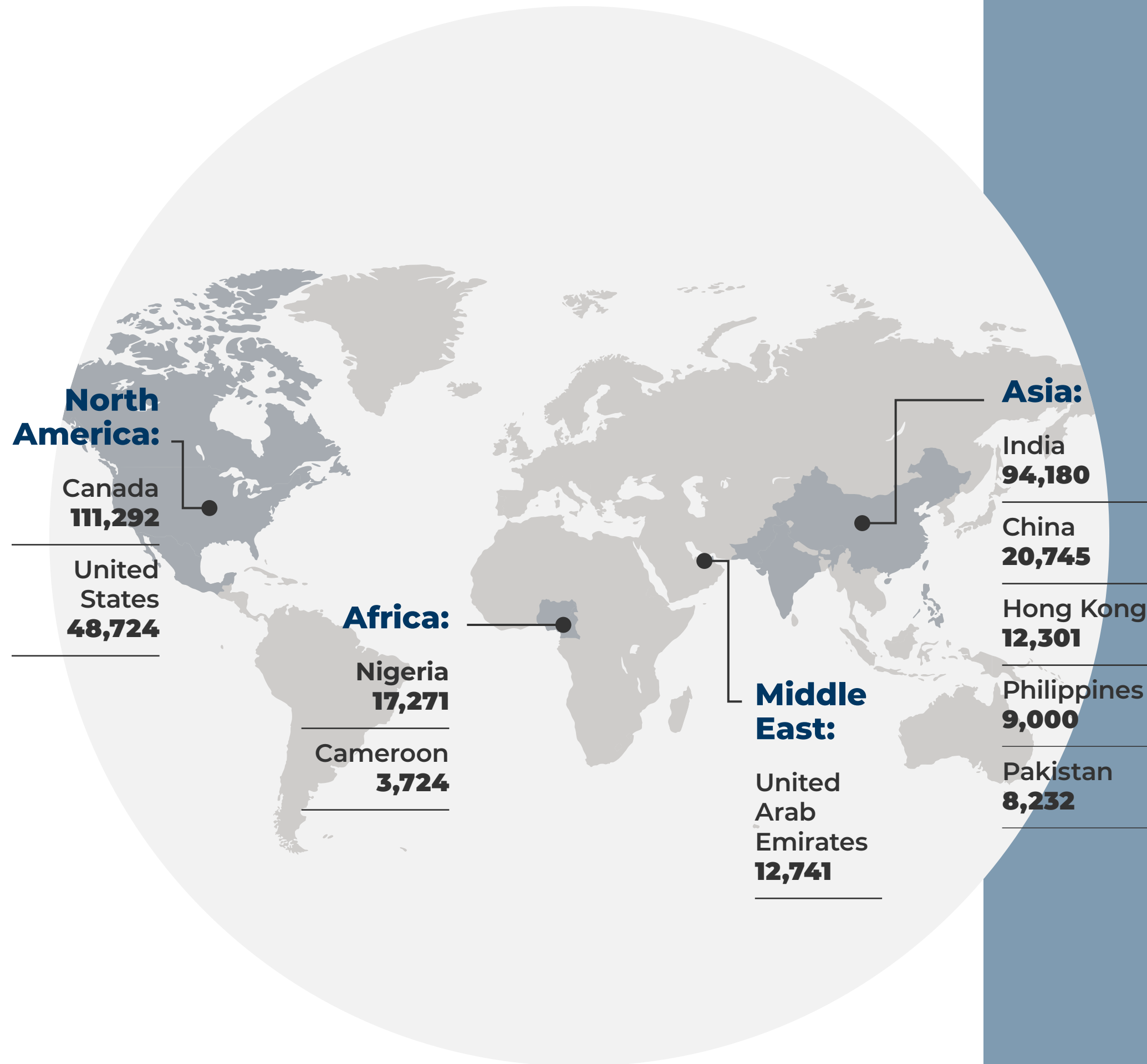
In 2022, WES evaluated credentials associated with **30,287** distinct majors. These majors can be grouped into the following top 10 fields of study.

TOP 10 FIELDS OF STUDY*



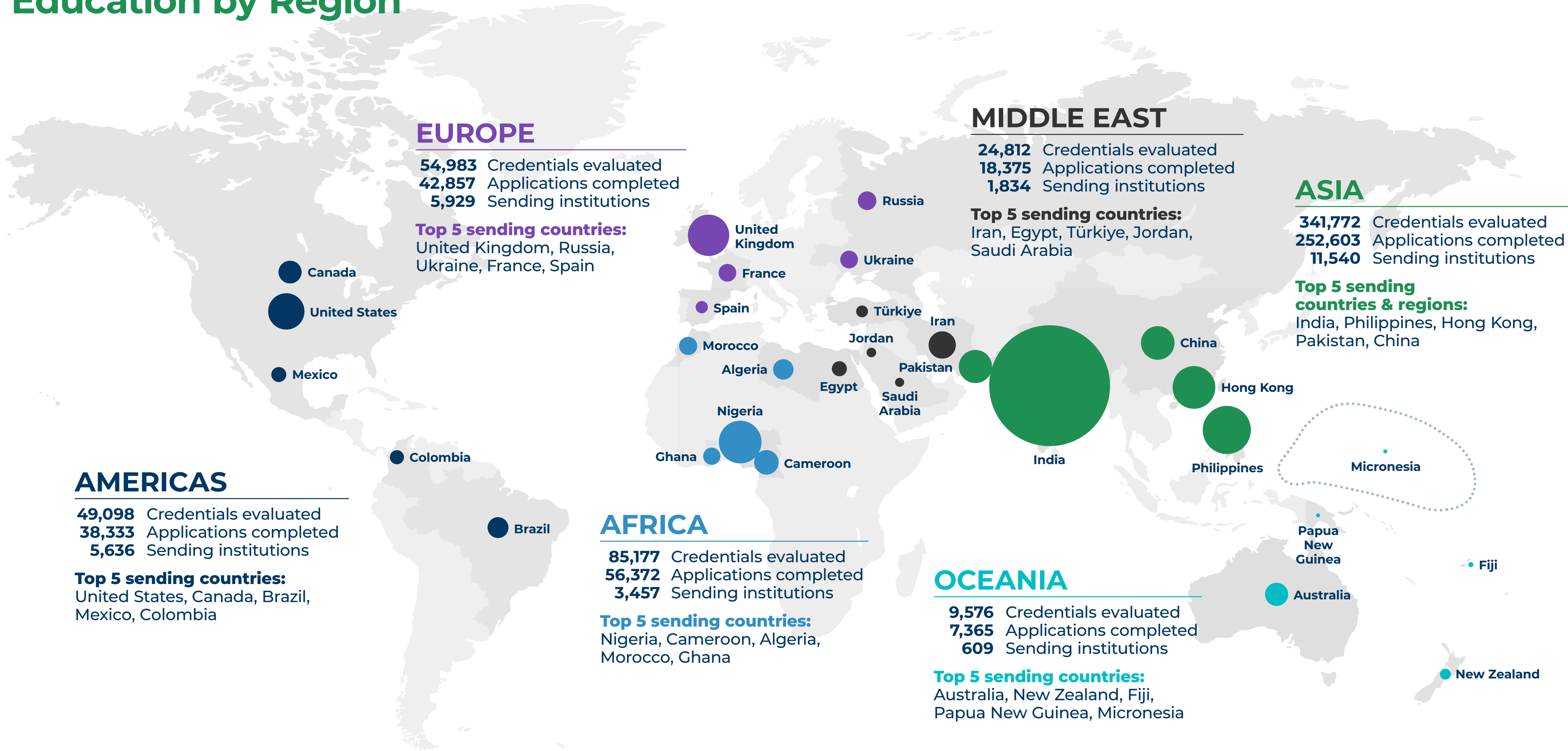
*The number of distinct majors included illustrates only those for which WES evaluated 10 or more credentials. These majors were categorized into fields of study based on categories established by the Institute of International Education.

Top 10 Countries of Applicants' Residence



Top 10 Receiving Institutions in the U.S. and Canada

Top Countries of Education by Region



AMERICAS

49,098 Credentials evaluated
38,333 Applications completed
5,636 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries:
United States, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia

EUROPE

54,983 Credentials evaluated
42,857 Applications completed
5,929 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries:
United Kingdom, Russia, Ukraine, France, Spain

AFRICA

85,177 Credentials evaluated
56,372 Applications completed
3,457 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries:
Nigeria, Cameroon, Algeria, Morocco, Ghana

MIDDLE EAST

24,812 Credentials evaluated
18,375 Applications completed
1,834 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries:
Iran, Egypt, Türkiye, Jordan, Saudi Arabia

ASIA

341,772 Credentials evaluated
252,603 Applications completed
11,540 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries & regions:
India, Philippines, Hong Kong, Pakistan, China

OCEANIA

9,576 Credentials evaluated
7,365 Applications completed
609 Sending institutions

Top 5 sending countries:
Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Micronesia

Social Impact

Programs

WES incubates and implements programs that tackle some of the most persistent challenges that prevent immigrants and refugees from thriving in the U.S. and Canada. Programs are designed to drive change at a systems level with the goal of being scalable or replicable in other communities and industries.



WES piloted **#ImmigrantsWork** with three communities in Canada: Greater Moncton, Durham Region, and Waterloo Region. Through the program WES works with employers and regional partners to co-design effective, sustainable workforce strategies grounded in local networks and resources to facilitate immigrant inclusion. Based on the success of the pilot, the program will continue with five new communities in 2023.



The **Global Talent Leadership Network** deepened its work with immigrant and refugee leaders across the U.S. through the Train the Trainer Group Mentoring Program, providing three member organizations with the knowledge, skills, and support to launch mentoring programs within their own communities.



The **Skilled Immigrant Integration Program (SIIP)** expanded to 40 communities across the U.S. WES welcomed new organizations to SIIP'S fifth cohort as well as network alumni committed to advancing the workforce inclusion of immigrants and refugees. For the first time, WES launched a Demonstration Project in which organizations received financial and technical assistance to develop promising workforce inclusion initiatives. The SIIP network is also home to Teacher Bridge, a community of practice comprising state and local partners collaborating to strengthen pathways to teaching for internationally trained educators.



Policy

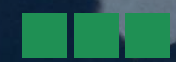
Through policy advocacy, WES aims to promote skills-commensurate career advancement and remove barriers to economic mobility. WES seeks to drive the adoption of new policies by providing evidence, proposing solutions, engaging policymakers, nurturing communities of partners and influencers, serving as a resource, and raising public awareness.



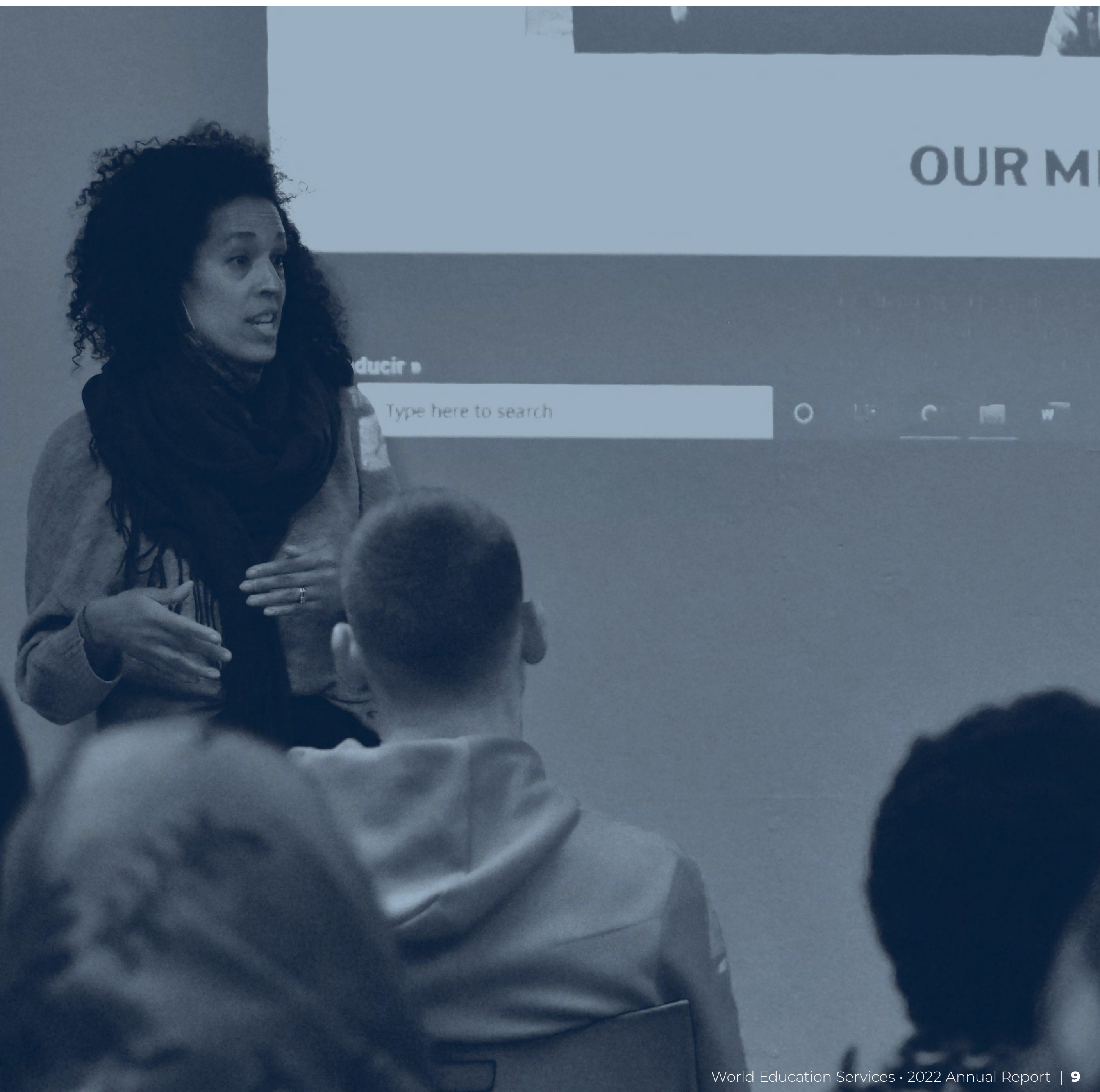
WES contributed to a **Health Canada** working group tasked with developing a human resources blueprint to better integrate internationally trained doctors and nurses into the health care system. Policymakers at the provincial and federal levels are examining the potential of this plan to bolster the health care system across the country.



In Canada, WES has supported the emergence of a coalition representing thousands of internationally trained physicians. With **Internationally Trained Physicians of Ontario**, WES co-published a report detailing benefits that can be realized from three policy changes, among them the implementation of a **Practice-Ready Assessment (PRA)** program. The Ontario government has announced that it will establish a PRA program in the province in 2023.



The IMPRINT Coalition grew to nearly 30 member organizations across the U.S., all of which are committed to addressing barriers to economic advancement of immigrants and refugees. WES mobilized the network to push the passage of the **Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act**, which directs the U.S. Department of Labor to study the factors limiting employment opportunities for immigrants and refugees who hold credentials from another country.



Social Impact

Philanthropy

The WES Mariam Assefa Fund invests in leaders and organizations that are increasing access to opportunity, building wealth, shifting power, and advancing justice for immigrants and refugees in the U.S. and Canada. In 2022, the Fund approved more than US\$10 million in grants, impact investments, and donations.



With support from the **WES Mariam Assefa Fund**, the **International Rescue Committee** launched the **Support for Afghan Financial Empowerment (SAFE)** initiative. The SAFE fund provided US\$3.9 million in 428 interest-free loans to Afghan refugees that will support them upon arrival and help them to establish credit in the U.S.



In partnership with the **Tamarack Institute**, the WES Mariam Assefa Fund completed a participatory grantmaking pilot in Peel Region, Ontario. Through this model, the decision-making power shifted to community members who formed a “People’s Panel” and issued C\$600,000 in grants to six local organizations offering employment support to immigrants and refugees in the region.

The WES Mariam Assefa Fund awarded **US\$1 million** in grants to **eight organizations** in the U.S. and Canada working to shift employer practices. The Fund is convening a community of practice for the organizations to share what they learn as they seek to drive change and support the economic mobility and success of immigrants and refugees.



Some of the WES Mariam Assefa Fund’s early grantee partners are marking important milestones. **Brightly**, a worker-owned cleaning service developed by the **Center for Family Life** in Brooklyn, New York, expanded the franchise into Philadelphia. The **Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)** piloted a program for internationally educated early childhood educators — 20 individuals graduated in the first cohort. Based on the success of the pilot, ISANS received provincial funding to continue the program.



Partnerships

WES serves as a convener of many networks across the U.S. and Canada. Our goal is to create a hub for sharing, learning, and co-creating a future in which immigrants, refugees, and international students can realize their academic and professional goals. The WES Mariam Assefa Fund also engages partners through co-funding with other like-minded funders to compound resources and impact.

500+ **PARTNERS**
IN THE U.S. AND CANADA

Partnerships

continued



National Town Hall on Immigrant Youth Workforce Development

WES and the Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity held a virtual knowledge sharing and collaboration event designed to identify ways to improve the labour market outcomes of immigrant and refugee youth. More than **100 individuals** from across the country participated, including immigrant and refugee youth, employers, youth-serving organizations, and policymakers.

Rebuilding Ontario's Health Care Workforce: Envisioning System-Level Strategies for Integrating Internationally Educated Professionals

WES engaged critical stakeholders in a virtual forum to conceive a vision for Ontario's health workforce that more effectively integrates internationally educated professionals. The discussion focused on the intersections of immigration, licensure, and workforce integration. More than **140 attendees** joined

the discussion, including individuals representing occupational regulatory bodies, provincial and federal government, employers, associations, and national bodies, as well as a coalition of internationally trained health professionals.

Toronto Refugee Hiring Event

WES partnered with Jumpstart Refugee Talent, Starbucks Canada, and member organizations of the Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable to host the Toronto Refugee Hiring Event. Through the event, **a dozen top employers** like CIBC, IKEA, and TD Bank interviewed **149 refugees** for open roles. Some individuals received job offers on the spot, and others were invited for second round interviews to continue in the recruitment process. The event is an initiative of the Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable, co-chaired by Senator Ratna Omidvar and Darrell Pinto.

WES Economic Inclusion Forum

At the first WES Economic Inclusion Forum, WES brought together more than **150 partner organizations** for community-building and strategy-planning activities centered on shared programmatic and policy agendas to advance the economic, social, and workforce inclusion of immigrants and refugees.

Network Convenings

As part of the WES Economic Inclusion Forum, WES hosted gatherings for dedicated networks like the **IMPRINT Coalition** and the **Skilled Immigrant Integration Program**. WES Global Talent Bridge also held the **Office of New Americans State Network Convening** and the **Federal-State Convening on New Americans**.

#UntappedTalent Campaign

Through the #UntappedTalent campaign, WES mobilized more than **200 institutions** to advance policy reforms focused on immigrant and refugee inclusion. Campaign supporters shared stories of immigrants and refugees who face challenges to economic mobility due to systemic barriers including limited licensure pathways and lack of credential recognition. During a week of action, the network contacted 75 U.S. senators to seek support for the Bridging the Gap for New Americans Act.

Co-funding and Funding Collaboratives

In 2022, WES funded projects with the **Black Migrant Power Fund**, **California Dignity for Families Fund**, and **Echoing Green's** Racial Equity Philanthropic Fund, among others. Co-funding and funding collaboratives increase the capital directed to immigrant and refugee communities. The WES Mariam Assefa Fund raised an additional US\$9 million through partnership funding initiatives.

Our Leadership

Senior Leadership



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CEO and Executive Director



ABBIE COWAN
Chief People Officer



CHERYL CRAMER TOTO
Chief Operations Officer



SHAMIRA MADHANY
Deputy Executive Director
and Managing Director, Canada



MONICA MUNN
Chief Social Impact Officer



JOHN VERMAATEN
Chief Financial Officer



MEGAN BLACKBURN
Chief of Staff and Senior Director,
Strategy and Planning



BETH CLARKE
Senior Director, Strategic
Partnerships, Canada



ASHLEY CRADDOCK
Senior Director, Social Impact
Communications & Marketing



PAUL FELTMAN
Deputy Executive Director,
Global Talent Policy and Programs



JILL HANDY
Senior Director,
Human Resources



ADITI KADAKIA
Senior Director,
Global Operations



BRIAN KOSTANTIN
Senior Director,
Sales and Marketing



HOLLY SANDERS
Chief Transformation Officer



STACEY SIMON
Senior Director, Strategic
Partnerships and Policy, U.S.



BIREN SHAH
Chief Technology Officer



BEKA TAVARTKILADZE
Senior Director, Global Education
and Knowledge



LÉA TIENOU-GUSTAFSON
Senior Director,
WES Mariam Assefa Fund

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Former Director, U.S. Peace
Corps; Former U.S. Government
Diplomat; Senior Advisor
Emeritus, RTI International



ESTHER T. BENJAMIN
Ex officio; CEO and Executive
Director, World Education Services



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