



The U.S. Department of Commerce's International Education Connection



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www.buyusa.gov/studyusa

HELPING YOU EDUCATE THE WORLD

Education and training is our country's 5th largest services export, bringing over \$12 billion in annual revenue to the United States, as well as enormous benefits of cultural and international understanding that are impossible to quantify. U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Centers around the country work to help expand exports of U.S. products and services. This newsletter is a free service provided to U.S. educational institutions interested in expanding their international marketing and student recruitment. Comments and feedback on this newsletter are appreciated.

Please check the boxes next to the items of interest to you, complete the brief form at the end of this newsletter, and fax or e-mail it back to the trade specialist above to receive more detailed information.

COUNTRY FEATURE: VENEZUELA

Market Overview

Venezuela is a natural resource-rich country of 26 million people, 6.36% of whom (1,653,600) have a college degree. The country has long been a particularly U.S.-oriented market. Geographic proximity, cultural affinity, and commercial relationships tie Venezuela particularly close to Florida. Decades-long trade and investment in the petroleum and mining sectors have also forged close links between Venezuela, Texas, Louisiana, and the western mining states. But Venezuelan students are found throughout the U.S., studying across the complete range of academic disciplines.

Reflecting the close commercial and cultural ties between the two countries, Venezuela ranks third among the South-American countries in the number of students it sends each year to the United States. More than 5,280 Venezuelan students attended some type of U.S. educational institution during the 2004/2005 academic year.

U.S. schools hold several attractions for Venezuelan students, among them: quality of education, opportunity to improve English skills, availability of graduate and post-graduate specializations, the status in Venezuela of a U.S. degree, and the entree provided to work in U.S. or multinational businesses or institutions. English language training, medicine, engineering, architecture, computer science, and business are areas of study preferred by Venezuelan students in the U.S.

Market Trends

Over half a million students were enrolled in Venezuelan higher education centers during the 2003/2004 academic year (2004/2005 statistics are not available). Of these 512,371 students, 56,460 obtained their college degree (42,460 from state institutions and 13,940 from private institutions). There are just over 29,000 Venezuelan public and private schools. There are 42 universities, all subject to the nationwide University Law. Of these, 21 are private universities, and 21 are state universities.

Generally speaking, private Venezuelan middle schools and high schools are well funded and achieve high academic standards. Public high schools, many of which receive inadequate resources, have generally not been able to achieve similar results. On the other hand, publicly funded universities enjoy more prestige, and frequently achieve higher results, than do their private counterparts. High school education runs five years, after which the student can enroll in university.

Venezuelan schools did not offer graduate studies for a long period of their history. A full range of graduate programs is now available, but only a handful of those programs are comparable in scope and quality to the long-established graduate studies offered at many U.S. schools. Consequently, U.S. graduate programs have a special appeal for many Venezuelans.

Many Venezuelans opt to attend schools in Spain for language and cultural reasons. Others choose to study in Canada, which also offers the advantage of education in English.

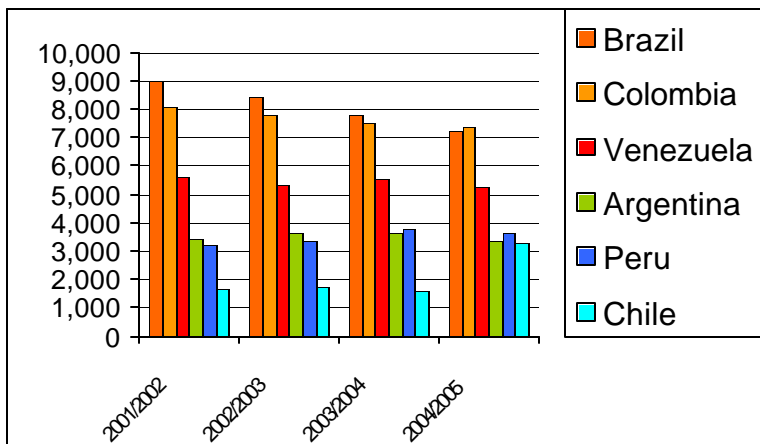
Many Venezuelan students who study abroad are part a small percentage of the population with economic resources and do not require a lot of financial assistance. In some cases, their families have sufficient funds of their own. In many other cases, private companies in Venezuela finance the graduate studies of employees. In the past, many government offices offered scholarships or other financial assistance to pursue graduate studies in the U.S.

The demand for online or distance learning is increasing in Venezuela. Despite the relatively small number of Internet users (2 million, or 7%, out of a population of 26 million Venezuelans), private and public universities are making a considerable effort in providing their students with Internet laboratories in which they can take online courses.

ESL

Venezuela ranks 13th among the total of international students taking ESL programs in the U.S. Although statistics are not available, the number of international students taking ESL programs in the U.S. has reportedly increased since September 11, 2001. We estimate, for the academic year of 2003/2004, that the total number of Venezuelan students in U.S. was approximately 50,000. Out of this total, we believe that the number of Venezuelan students taking ESL programs in the U.S. has also increased. We estimate that for 2003/2004 academic year, 1,200 Venezuelan students enrolled in ESL programs in the U.S.

South American Students in the U.S.
(In thousands)
All Levels and Disciplines



Source: Institute of International Education

Market Entry

For the first approach to the Venezuelan market, Post recommends that U.S. schools consider participating in one of the several Educational Fairs organized either locally or by international organizations. This approach allows the educational institution to obtain direct market information by talking to potential students and competitors during the event.

Posting the institution’s information in the Student Advising Centers located in Caracas, Maracaibo and Merida is another way to promote consideration of a particular U.S. school.

We also suggest partnering with local institutions or freelance student advisors that promote the educational institution through the appropriate local channels.

The above is an excerpt from a report prepared in April 2006 by the U.S. Commercial Service in Venezuela. For the complete report, please select the Venezuela report on the list of new market research below, complete the form and send to the contact person listed at the top of page one of this newsletter.

Competition

The most popular destinations for Venezuelans studying abroad are the United States, Canada and Great Britain. Trinidad and Tobago and Australia have also emerged as preferred study destinations, the first because of its proximity and the second because of its trendy appeal despite the distance.

Compared to Canada and Great Britain, the U.S. offers more financial aid and a more attractive climate, especially in the southern U.S. Despite these advantages, the visa issue has become a major concern for Venezuelans considering study in the U.S. Many Venezuelans tend to think that obtaining a U.S. visa is almost impossible, and might consequently opt for the U.K., which does not request a visa for short-term periods of stay. Many Venezuelans also consider the Canadian visa application an easier process with more chance of success.

NEW MARKET RESEARCH

Our specialists abroad develop market research to help you evaluate markets for your educational services. Research ranges from short reports on areas of opportunity to detailed market and industry reports. Below are a few examples of some of our most recent market research reports available FREE OF COST. Please check the boxes next to the items of interest to you, complete the brief form at the end of this newsletter, and fax or e-mail it back to the trade specialist above to receive the complete reports.

Detailed Country Reports:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Thailand	International Student Recruitment	June 2, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Turkey	International Student Recruitment	May 31, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Singapore	Int'l Education & Student Recruitment	May 15, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Taiwan	International Student Recruitment	May 11, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	China	Overseas Study Market	May 3, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Belgium	Distance Education Market	May 3, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hungary	Education Opportunities & Trends	April 26, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	The Market for Educational Materials	April 28, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mexico	International Student Recruitment	April 14, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kenya	International Student Recruitment	April 13, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Venezuela	International Student Recruitment	April 12, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	India	Distance Education	March 22, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Switzerland	Undergrad and Grad Educational Services	February 24, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cambodia	Consultants Needed to Improve Education Quality	February 16, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chile	English Language Training Market & Sept. Fair	February 8, 2006
<input type="checkbox"/>	Canada	Approval Needed for U.S. Schools to Offer Degrees in BC	December 19, 2005
<input type="checkbox"/>	Switzerland	Recruitment Opportunities for Undergrad Programs	December 6, 2005
<input type="checkbox"/>	Singapore	Executive Education	December 5, 2005

These reports can also be found at www.export.gov.

PROMOTIONAL EVENTS

The U.S. Department of Commerce develops and/or supports promotional fairs abroad at which U.S. educational institutions can recruit international students and meet with educational multipliers and agents. Events include trade missions, promotional fairs and educational seminars. Below is a list of our upcoming programs.

June 21, 22, and 25, 2006: Study USA Fair – Israel

This fair is being organized in conjunction with the Israel Studies Exhibition at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds, an event which attracts a captive audience of 28,000 prospective students! There are more students studying in the United States from Israel than any other country in the Middle East – more than the UAE and Egypt! Israeli students represent a distinct opportunity for accredited American post-secondary educational institutions. In 2004-5 there were 3,500 Israeli students studying in the United States and in 2005 more than 25,000 Israelis requested information about studying in the United States. PARTICIPATION OPTIONS: Option 1 (\$800): You or your designee represents your institution at your own table in the U.S. pavilion. Option 2 (\$400): You send us your

catalogs, and Embassy personnel represent your programs. Deadline for Registration – June 1, 2006. For the Israel Education Market brief and online registration, see <http://www.buyusa.gov/israel/en/studyusa.html>.

❑ **September 25-28, 2006: Europe MBA Fair - Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia**

Organized by the U.S. Commercial Service, the MBA Fair is now in its tenth year and has become a pivotal platform for international marketing of U.S. MBA programs as well as related graduate studies in international law, diplomacy and economics. The U.S. Commercial Service in Switzerland and Austria invites U.S. colleges and universities, as well as European schools with an associated U.S. programs, to participate in the three-city MBA Fair 2006 to be held in Zürich, Vienna, and Ljubljana from September 25-28. This year, Ljubljana, Slovenia will be added to the MBA Fair's well-established venues of Zürich and Vienna. As a new member of the EU and a substantially higher GDP per capita than that of other transitioning economies of Central Europe, Slovenia is an attractive new venue for the MBA Fair. The MBA Fair 2006 will open in Zürich on September 25, will move to Vienna on September 27, and will conclude in Ljubljana on September 28. The participation fee is \$850 for one city, \$1,400 for two cities, and \$1,800 for all three cities. Each participant will be responsible for travel/hotel expenses. To travel from city to city, there are excellent connections among the three cities aboard air carriers. Please contact the U.S. Commercial Service in Zürich for additional fair information and/or registration at sandor.galambos@mail.doc.gov with cc to debra.rogers@mail.doc.gov.

❑ **October 18-21, 2006: Study USA Mission to Mexico – Queretaro, Puebla, & Mexico City**

This mission is being organized by the U.S. Commercial Service in Mexico City in conjunction with the Education USA Mexico Group. The mission targets bilingual & bicultural schools in three of Mexico's most dynamic cities. Participating U.S. educational institutions will have the opportunity to speak with Mexican students interested in, and most importantly, *able* to study in the U.S. Mission includes the ASF fairs in Mexico City and Queretaro; reception for agents, counselors, & other multipliers; visits to 3 int'l schools in Puebla; & U.S. embassy briefing and tour of the visa pavilion. Contact Debra Rogers at 312-353-6988 or debra.rogers@mail.doc.gov for more information.

Updated information on upcoming events can also be found at www.buyusa.gov/studyusa.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on any of the programs and market research mentioned please complete the following, check the boxes next to newsletter items of interest and fax or e-mail this document to the contact listed on the top of the first page.

Your Name _____ Organization _____

Title _____ E-mail address _____

Telephone _____ Fax Number _____

Comments _____
