

# WORLD EDUCATION NEWS & REVIEW

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## Africa

■ About 40 million children in sub-Saharan Africa are deprived of basic education, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Educational spending per child is half of what it was 20 years ago.

While the number of children enrolling in primary school has increased from 25 percent in 1960 to 60 percent today, the ranks of the uneducated have also grown.

It is estimated that by 2015 about 75 million children in the world — most of them in Africa — will have no basic education.

A major reason for this is lack of funds due to debt repayment. Thirty of Africa's most indebted nations currently spend as much on loan interest as they do on health and education combined.

For the past two decades, austerity measures demanded by international aid agencies like the World Bank and the IMF have led to substantial cuts in government spending.

Tanzania, for instance, spends three times as much on debt servicing than it does on education (the education budget has shrunk by more than two-thirds over the past 10 years). Likewise, debt repayment constitutes about 10 percent of Zambia's GDP, which leaves little money for schools and books.

But while thousands of children go without basic education, both of these countries seem to find plenty of money to spend on de-

fense. Zambia's defense spending rose from 1.1 percent of the GDP in 1985 to 1.8 percent in 1996. That same year, the military budget in Tanzania reached 3.3 percent of the GDP.

A few countries, however, have made some progress. Uganda, for instance, has managed to put 2 million more children in school by cutting fees and abolishing school uniforms.

According to UNICEF, \$2 billion more a year would be enough to educate every child in Africa, a sum which is equal to an increase in government spending from 2 percent of the Gross National Product to 3 percent. The world spends approximately that same amount on military equipment each day.

Better-directed aid could also help improve the situation; at present only 15 percent of foreign assistance to Africa is earmarked for education and health. Oxfam has suggested that debt relief programs be contingent on raising educational standards to prevent governments from spending more money on defense.

In addition to the debt crisis, there are other reasons contributing to the failure of education throughout Africa.

AIDS is a big factor in keeping girls at home to care for stricken relatives. Others catch AIDS at school and are forced to drop out.

Teen pregnancy is another reason so many girls leave school, while some parents don't bother to educate their daughters at all.

An even bigger problem is poor salaries for teachers. In Nigeria, for

instance, teachers receive only \$23 a month and often have to wait months at a time for their paychecks. Sometimes they don't get paid at all.

— *The Economist*  
May 26, 1999

## The Americas

### CHILE

■ Out of the 60,000 Chilean students attending universities this year, only about half will make it to graduation, according to *The Economist*. The rest will either withdraw for financial reasons or lose interest and drop out.

For most Chilean families that scrape and save to send their children to college, this is an expensive loss to chalk up. Annual tuition fees can run anywhere from

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# Regional News

\$1,700 to \$3,500. There are few scholarships to be had. More than 60 percent of Chilean students pay full tuition without the aid of grants or loans.

Experts attribute the high dropout rate to a lack of information on university programs and job prospects. Many students enter programs that are not suitable for them only to lose interest and leave school before graduation. Moreover, students do not have access to information on dropout rates while, at the same time, many universities have a tendency to over-enroll freshmen to compensate for the thinning out process that occurs in later years.

To combat this problem, the government recently initiated a five-year program that will publish statistics on dropout rates and introduce an accreditation system for institutions of higher education. The plan is backed by a \$145 million loan from the World Bank.

The proliferation of new colleges and universities over the past two decades has also raised concerns about the diminishing quality of higher education. Between 1973 and 1990, the Pinochet government did much to deregulate Chile's system of higher education, opening it to private investment. In 1980, the country had eight universities. Today there are 70; two-thirds of them are private institutions that operate with little or no state funding.

Twenty years ago, about 30 percent of all high school graduates went on to pursue college degrees. That figure has grown to 60 percent today.

The government has recently taken steps to ensure that the emergence of so many new institutions does not bring down educational standards: Newly established universities are now required to obtain a permit and undergo a probationary period.

One of the reasons students give for leaving school early is that courses remain too specialized and the current system makes it virtually impossible for students to change majors if they choose to do so.

The University of Chile, which is state supported, is attempting to solve this problem by introducing a two-year common core curriculum. This will lengthen most university degree programs to six years, but the government hopes the new scheme will give students a broader education while curbing the dropout rate.

— *The Economist*  
 May 1, 1999

**MEXICO**

■ After seven weeks of student strikes, administrators at the National Autonomous University of Mexico finally backed down on June 7 and rescinded plans to raise tuition. The strike, which first went into effect on April 20, was the longest in the university's 89-year history.

The administration, supported by some faculty members and students, pushed for a tuition increase with the

aim of making the university more selective and changing its curriculum to better prepare students for the job market.

But the strikers condemned the proposal, arguing that it infringed on the constitutional rights of all Mexican citizens to a free college education.

The governing council of the university, composed of both students and faculty, announced that tuition fees would still be raised from the equivalent of two cents a year to \$70 a semester but that payments would be voluntary.

Classes and all other campus activities, except for basic research, came to a standstill during the strike, which interrupted the studies of 270,000 students. The council also announced it would extend the semester into the summer months to make up for lost time.

— *New York Times*  
June 8, 1999

## UNITED STATES

■ Business schools across the country are experiencing a surge in female applicants from China and other Asian countries. The number of Asian women taking the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) rose 44 percent to 14,447 in 1996-97, up from 10,157 in 1992-93.

During that period, the number of women registering for the GMAT increased 867 percent from Vietnam, 185 percent from China and 116 percent from South Korea.

At Yale, where the international student population has traditionally been 99 percent male, the number of Asian women admitted to the business school has surged 132 percent in the past six years.

In 1997, there were only two Asian women attending the University of Chicago's business school. This year, that number jumped to 19. There are 289 women from Asia applying for MBA

admission at the school this fall, up from 168 just two years ago.

This upward trend is largely the result of increasing numbers of women seeking positions in the Asian business world, a realm that has traditionally been dominated by men.

American companies with branches in Asia are hiring more and more native-born women to work for them. Many of these women go to the United States to earn their MBA degrees and then return to their home countries in search of better job opportunities.

— *Wall Street Journal*  
June 1, 1999

## Asia-Pacific

### AUSTRALIA

■ In a recent move aimed at increasing foreign enrollment at colleges and universities, the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) has agreed to allow institutions to market courses and programs overseas using its Brand Australia logo — a kangaroo against a sun.

Australian Education International (AEI) recently announced the deal to all institutions on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students. These institutions will now benefit from ATC marketing.

The decision has been greeted with mixed feelings among higher-education professionals. Some see education and tourism as two aspects of the same market aimed at middle-class consumers. Others feel education is something entirely different from tourism and should be marketed separately.

Under the agreement, ATC marketing will serve as the platform for the AEI campaign: Study in Australia 2000. Advertisements will allow institutions to include the Brand Australia logo along with their own images.

— *Campus News*  
Feb. 24 - March 2, 1999

### CHINA

■ The government recently passed a new law to protect overseas students from rogue service agencies. Intermediate service agencies in China play an important role in linking students and faculty with foreign institutions.

In general, they provide information on studying abroad, apply to foreign colleges and universities on behalf of students and offer training programs for students before they leave.

But Wei Yu, a vice-minister of education, disclosed recently that some of these agencies deceive students through false advertising and are operating illegally.

There have been several cases where students paid agencies for services that were never rendered. Often the students could not find the fake agents to reclaim their money.

Other students who entered the countries where they intended to study were expelled because the visas the unauthorized service agencies had prepared for them at home were counterfeit.

The new law requires all intermediate service agencies to be authorized educational institutions. They must have experience in dealing with student exchange and cooperating with foreign institutions of higher education.

Before providing services to students, these agencies must first get approval from local educational administrations and the Ministry of Education. In addition, they must meet certain standards set by the Ministry of Public Security.

— *China Daily*  
July 6, 1999

■ China University of Political Science and Law currently offers a foreign lawyer training program in cooperation with the Chinese Ministry of Justice.

The program is conducted each year through the university's foreign languages department and

caters primarily to students and lawyers who need to become proficient in English legal terminology.

This is not a law degree but an English language program for Chinese lawyers. The program takes one year to complete and is divided into two terms consisting of the following courses:

**First term:** extensive reading of English; fast reading of English; focus listening of English; western holidays with associated customs and culture; contract I; property and common law.

**Second term:** intensive reading of English; writing of English; oral English; American society and culture; contract II; business enterprises.

— Correspondence from China  
University of Political Science and Law

## INDIA

■ The International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) in Mumbai currently offers a distance-learning program leading to a master's degree in population studies (MPS).

Admission requirements are as follows: a master's degree in any of the related social sciences or sciences, including math and sta-

tistics or a diploma in population studies from IIPS.

The program has a duration of two years, but because it is offered through distance learning, students can take up to four years to complete the necessary requirements.

— University News  
March 1, 1999

■ Four new job-oriented programs are being offered at Delhi University: a postgraduate diploma program in international business operations; a bachelor's degree in financial analysis; a bachelor of science (honors) in biomedical sciences; and a bachelor of arts (honors) in mass media and communications.

In January 2000, the Indira Gandhi National Open University will launch a new master's program in tourism studies. The objective of the program is to train qualified personnel for the country's growing tourism industry, with special emphasis on job requirements.

Approximately 130 study centers across the country will be open to students participating in this program.

— University News  
March 1, 1999

## PAKISTAN

■ A university for Afghan refugees was recently opened in the border town of Peshawar. The new institution is funded by the Pakistani government, which only last year shut down several refugee universities.

Authorities said at the time that the universities were closed because they were operating illegally and did not meet national standards for higher education.

However, the closures caused widespread protest among the more than 1.5 million Afghans living in Pakistan, forcing the government to open a new university for refugees.

This means that Afghan women, who are prohibited from attending universities in their home country, will have a chance for higher education in Peshawar.

The university's chancellor is Sibghatullah Mojaddidi, a former Afghan rebel leader and Islamic scholar. According to a university spokesman, the Taliban government in Afghanistan has applauded the opening of the new university and recently sent a letter of congratulations.

— BBC News online  
April 5, 1999

## VIETNAM

■ The World Bank recently issued an \$80 million loan to overhaul Vietnam's system of higher education.

Since the government introduced economic reforms more than 10 years ago, Vietnam has been slowly moving towards a free-market system. The many internal structural transformations and changes in diplomatic relations have largely reduced the existing Soviet educational model to an anachronism.

To help universities better adjust to a market-economy transition, the government implemented a new education law last June. The law gives institutions greater

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autonomy over their academic, administrative and financial affairs, while effectively decreasing the Ministry of Education's authority to interfere in university activities.

The Ministry of Education organized a workshop in Hanoi with the cooperation of UNESCO's Principle Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP) in preparation of the law. Educators and administrators in attendance decided the ministry should be responsible for developing an accreditation system based on foreign models.

However, the workshop recommended that universities be allowed to determine the content of the curriculum and that they should have more autonomy in awarding academic qualifications. Finally, it was suggested that schools be given more control over the allocation and management of expenditures.

The UNESCO-PROAP plans to sponsor another workshop next year.

— *Times Higher Education Supplement*  
June 11, 1999

## Caribbean

### JAMAICA

■ The Northern Caribbean University, formerly West Indies College, has been registered by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) to offer tertiary programs. The UCJ serves as the national accreditation body for Jamaica's system of higher education.

The following programs offered by the Northern Caribbean University have been accredited since the dates indicated below:

- 1) Bachelor of science in biological sciences, October 1991
- 2) Associate of science in biology, October 1991
- 3) Associate of science in business administration, October 1991
- 4) Bachelor of science in busi-

ness administration, May 1994

5) Bachelor of arts in primary teacher education, May 1997

6) Bachelor of arts in secondary teacher education, September 1998

7) Bachelor of science in secondary teacher education, September 1998

The bachelor of science degree in nursing has been accredited by the Nursing Council of Jamaica since 1981. It was recently reaccredited for another five years. The UCJ recognizes the accreditation of the Nursing Council of Jamaica.

— *Correspondence from the University Council of Jamaica*  
July 14, 1999

## E. Europe and the Newly Independent States

### HUNGARY

■ The International Organization for Migration, an international relief agency based in Geneva, and the University of Pecs Medical School in southern Hungary have joined forces to create a post-graduate program in "migrational medicine."

The curriculum is being developed with the support of a \$500,000 grant from the Canadian government, and classes are scheduled to begin this fall.

The one-year program, the first of its kind anywhere in the world, is geared towards doctors who want to work with relief agencies or have an interest in treating immigrants and refugees. In addition to dealing with the special medical needs of displaced people, the course of study will also focus on the clinical and psychological aspects of treating refugees and immigrants, as well as the international policies that affect them.

Tuition for the program is \$10,000. Classes will be taught in English by noted specialists from Hungary, other European countries, the United States and Canada.

— *Chronicle of Higher Education*  
March 12, 1999

### RUSSIA

■ The Institute of Diplomatic Relations (IDR) was recently founded in Moscow through the joint sponsorship of the International Academy for the National Security of United Europe, with its head offices in Boeham (Germany), and the International Center for Systems Analysis of National Security Problems in United Europe based in Vienna (Austria).

However, IDR is a separate international higher-education institution registered in Russia and is not affiliated with any foreign university.

The institute was created for the explicit purpose of training professionals in various fields, so they may take part in the process of integrating Russia into the new European order. It is hoped that graduates of the program will go on to become leaders in government and non-government organizations, private business enterprises and professional agencies.

In addition, the institute functions to disseminate information to the public regarding major issues related to Russia's integration into greater Europe. The institute offers degree programs at both the bachelor's and master's levels, and students can study either full-time or part-time.

Graduates who wish to continue on for a Ph.D. are entitled to enroll in the doctoral program at the International Academy for the National Security of United Europe in Vienna.

IDR is a nonprofit organization, and the tuition charged covers only about two thirds of its actual operating costs.

