

WORLD EDUCATION NEWS & REVIEWS

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Regional News

Africa

ANGOLA

The Education Ministry has confirmed that more than 50,000 children will remain out of school this year in Luanda allegedly because of lack of classrooms.

According to Andre Some, the Education Ministry delegate for Luanda, the city is short of 1,000 new classrooms to meet the needs of students. Some schools with about 600-900 openings were said to have received between 10,000-15,000 applications. This has forced a large number of the aspirant students to be dropped.

Education Minister Antonio Burity da Silva on March 20 said he recognized that last year, contrary to expectations, the Ministry failed to implement all the plans for the construction of new schools, with these being put off until 1998 due to lack of funds. However, he denied rumors that this school year risked being marred — as in previous years — by a new wave of teachers' strikes due to increasing discontent over poor and delayed salaries. He said arrangements have been made to ensure that salaries will now be paid on time.

*-Afrika News Network
(Angola News Roundup)
March 1998*

KENYA

The African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), which has been working in Kenya for 41 years to research and alle-

viate the region's health problems, has committed 100 million Kenya shillings (about \$1.5 million U.S.) to the construction of a new medical training college in Nairobi.

Kenyan Health Minister Jackson Kalweo, officiating at the ground-breaking ceremony in March, said the facility will cater to the health needs of the increasing population. Programs to be offered at the college will range from a one-year diploma in community health for middle-level health professionals to one-month training courses and short workshops.

The first phase of construction will include the building of a laboratory, a lecture hall, three classrooms, three seminar rooms, a computer room, a training laboratory and offices. The new facility will also house AMREF's international headquarters.

The new college will admit 200 full-time students every year to study a curriculum of more than 30 different programs.

*-The Nation (Nairobi),
March 31, 1998*

Asia-Pacific

BURMA

Nearly 400,000 high school students began taking university entrance examinations in March, although most of the country's universities have been closed for the past 16 months to prevent student unrest.

Following a series of antigovernment protests, the government

closed more than 30 universities and colleges in December 1996.

More than 200,000 students who passed entrance examinations in 1996 and 1997 have been waiting to begin their tertiary education since then.

Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, secretary one of the ruling State Peace and Development Council, announced that the government was arranging to reopen closed colleges and universities. Nyunt denied rumors that the universities would remain closed for a long time

Another government spokesperson told Reuters that many colleges will be upgraded to university status to cope with the expected overflow of students.

*- Reuters
March 4 & 8, 1998*

CHINA

The State Education Commis-

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Regional News

sion (SEC) has announced that all postsecondary vocational schools will introduce a standardized tuition system by the year 2000.

About 3,200 such institutions currently operate in China, offering technical programs that train workers for business, vocational schools that train employees for tertiary industry and secondary teacher training schools.

In 1997, nearly 3.7 million students were enrolled in these schools, the vast majority of whom entered after finishing junior and senior middle school programs.

Currently, students may enter postsecondary vocational schools by one of two routes. Under the state mandatory recruitment plan, students must pass state-unified exams, and those who enroll obtain government funding during their study and government employment after graduation.

Independent recruitment is conducted by the schools for students who fail the state-unified exams. These students are admitted after paying tuition.

According to the director of the SEC's Department for Vocational Education, the co-existence of the two systems has caused problems of recruitment, management and teaching in the schools. And over the past decade, some schools have overcharged students to gain profits.

Under the new plan, regional educational departments can set standards for tuition according to local economic-development levels, schools' educational expenses and students' family incomes.

- *China Daily*, Feb. 23, 1998

INDIA

Jamia Millia Islamia University has resolved to change the name of undergraduate degrees in the Faculty of Engineering and Technology from "Bachelor of Science in Engineering" to "Bachelor of Technology" for all programs.

The change is effective from the 1996-1997 academic year, and mark sheets of all students affected by this change will be amended to reflect the new title.

The change in nomenclature was adopted by the university's academic council on the basis of a perception that students were facing problems obtaining employment or admission to higher degrees.

- *University News*, March 9, 1998

MALAYSIA

For the first time, a foreign university has been licensed to operate a branch campus.

In February, the Malaysian Education Ministry announced that Australia's Monash University had been awarded the first license under recently amended legislation permitting foreign institutions to operate in-

dependently in the country.

Monash, along with other foreign universities, had previously operated in Malaysia under established "twinning" arrangements with local private colleges in which students complete the first year or two of an academic program at home before being required to transfer to the degree-awarding institution.

Sunway College, Monash's "twinning" partner in Malaysia since 1993, will become the Monash University Sunway Campus and offer complete degree programs.

It will also be recognized as part of the Malaysian university system, and the first students admitted to the new campus will enroll in July.

It is expected that Malaysian students who complete Monash degree programs at Sunway will benefit from a substantial savings in tuition fees and other expenses associated with study abroad.

The agreement, reached after two years of negotiation between Monash and the Malaysian government, represents part of a long-term plan by Monash University to establish a range of campuses and extension centres throughout the Asia-Pacific region and in selected countries beyond that region.

Although Sunway is the first full campus Monash will have outside Australia, it is also conducting programs in Indonesia with the University of New South Wales and has been seeking registration from the South African government to run programs in that country beginning in 1999.

- *Campus Review*
Feb. 25 - March 3, 1998

Eastern Europe & Newly Independent States

BELARUS

The Ministry of Education has approved a pilot program designed to introduce written school-leaving examinations — which will ultimately replace oral entrance examinations — as the means by which students are admitted to a university.

The Belarus Testing Initiative (BTI), devised by the British Council in Minsk, began introducing formal three-hour written English-language tests to 550 school-leavers in 98 schools last year.

The program should expand in five years to include other foreign languages (French, German and Spanish).

Evgeni Maslyko, a professor at the Linguistics University in Minsk who heads the BTI, said that government backing for written exams should speed acceptance by universities that still rely on the

traditional — but much criticized — system of oral entrance examinations.

Introduction of written school-leaving exams will be monitored by a new national testing center to be set up in Minsk in 2000.

The center will liaise with universities and draw up regulations to ensure common standards as the initiative spreads to other subjects.

Under the present system, 17-year-old university entrants must take school-leaving exams in May, followed by university entrance tests a month or two later.

- *Times Higher Education Supplement*
April 10, 1998

POLAND

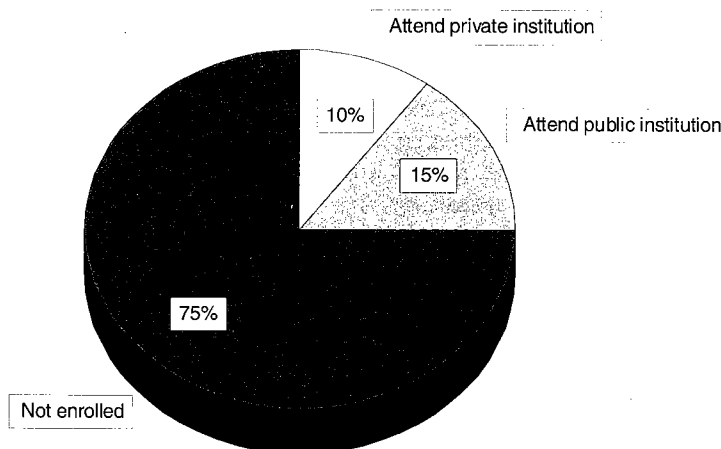
Fee-paying students are changing the face of Polish higher education, and institutions are becoming diploma marts.

The number of regular students is declining at an alarming rate in proportion to the ever-increasing numbers of fee-paying students.

Large numbers of students are crowded in lecture halls, and under-qualified instructors are teaching a record number of hours.

The common assumption about the declining quality of education as business pursuits gain in impor-

Polish higher-education enrollment: 19-24 year olds



Source: *Le Monde de l'Education*

tance was largely confirmed by a government audit report that examined 32 of the 89 public institutions of higher education.

Since the fall of the Communist regime in the early 1990s, the Polish government has been committed to increasing the ratio of 19 to 24 year-olds enrolled in higher education to the levels found in Western Europe.

Today that proportion in Poland stands at 25 percent of the age group with 10 percent of those attending private institutions.

Public institutions can enroll fee-paying students in evening, part-time, weekend and correspondence programs.

Unlike regular students who are selected by competitive examination and study free-of-charge, fee-paying students are enrolled at will and in ever-increasing numbers.

This happens despite the Higher Education Council's admonishment to universities that their number not exceed the number of regularly enrolled students.

The audit showed that one in three institutions has twice as many fee-paying students as regular students.

For example, the engineering school at Wroclaw Polytechnic offers regular students 800 hours of instruction in mathematics, while fee-paying students receive only half that amount.

They are also not taught foreign languages or given access to practical training like other students.

Institutions also generate revenues from correspondence or "external" students who represent up to 30 percent of the total enrollment at some schools. Instructors in high-demand disciplines, such as business, economics and law, teach triple the number of hours and earn correspondingly more income.

At the Polytechnic of Koszalin, faculty who are contracted for 210 hours often average 1,243 hours of teaching by working at several

Mother-tongue education at all levels for ethnic Hungarians is one of the Romanian pledges written into the "basic treaty" of friendship between Romania and Hungary.

institutions. This heavy load does not allow many of them to make progress towards their doctoral degrees. In 1995-96, only half the 10,300 teaching staff in Poland had the requisite academic qualifications, with a mere 12 percent of associate professors holding doctoral degrees.

The audit also revealed the absence of a correlation between hours of instruction and fees. It also showed that large-city universities offering in-demand disciplines were generally more expensive.

- *Le Monde de l'Education*
February 1998

ROMANIA

Romanian President Emil Constantinescu has promised that mother-tongue higher education will be available to all young ethnic Hungarians in Romania beginning with the next academic year — provided they satisfy the entry requirements.

The pledge came during a debate in the Romanian Parliament on an education bill that would make full provision for mother-tongue education for the Hungarian minority.

This followed a previous walk-out threat by Members of Parliament from the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania, which could have brought down the coalition government.

In advance of the law, the number of openings in Hungarian-taught colleges and faculties has

been increased to meet student demands.

New Hungarian-taught higher education courses have also been opened in Covasna and Harghita in central Romania.

The president did not specify what programs the new higher education colleges would offer.

There is a considerable difference between Hungarians' desire for full university education in their own language and, for example, training colleges to produce primary school teachers for ethnic Hungarian villages in Romania.

Yet mother-tongue education at all levels for ethnic Hungarians is one of the Romanian pledges written into the "basic treaty" of friendship between Romania and Hungary.

- *Times Higher Education*
Supplement
Feb. 27, 1998

SLOVENIA

Six acts regulating the organization and funding of education adopted by the National Assembly in 1996 are now being implemented.

The first new pre-school education curriculum to be prepared by the end of 1998 will introduce more variety and choice in the curriculum and stimulate higher enrollment rates in pre-school establishments, especially for children between three and six years of age.

The new legislation introduces nine-year basic education, consisting of three three-year cycles.

The school entering age was also lowered to six.

New primary school curricula to be prepared and gradually implemented in schools by appropriate curriculum committees also include such new features as grading at the first stage of education, earlier foreign language teaching, a larger selection of subjects and flexible diversification in the last years of school.

Between 1999 and 2003, new programs for the first and third levels of education will be tested and implemented.

A 10th year of basic education will be introduced after the first pupils pass the state-wide final examination.

In the 1996-1997 school year, pilot vocational school programs leading to technical qualifications were offered for the first time. Both master craftsman examinations and the dual system have already started in some schools.

Since 1990, when gymnasia (academic secondary schools) were reintroduced into the system, important new features concerning the contents of studies have been implemented.

Since 1995, schooling concludes with a matura (maturity certificate) examination.

In 1996-1997, pilot technical gymnasia in the fields of technical science, economics and music were established. A pilot classical gymnasium was also founded.

The law regulating higher education, adopted in 1993, guarantees autonomy to universities. Some private higher education institutions have since been founded.

The 1996-1997 academic year began with all new and renewed study programs. It can be anticipated that undergraduate study programs will be modernized and graduate studies will be updated in the coming years.

Slovenia's participation in Europe-wide student mobility net-

works is expected to assist in making its higher education programs more comparable to those offered in other countries, while significantly improving their quality.

- *Le Magazine 8 (1997)*

Latin America

EL SALVADOR

Implementation of the 1991 educational-reform law started in 1995 and is expected to be completed by 2005.

According to the law, the length of academic programs at the upper-secondary level has been reduced from three to two years.

Upon completion of the two-year cycle, the bachillerato general is awarded.

The program of study is detailed in the table below.

- *Ministry of Education (Correspondence, 1998)*

MEXICO

The federal government has blamed falling oil prices for a decision to cut the 1998 budget of Mexico's largest university by about \$30 million. The announcement of the cut by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) was made only weeks after faculty members won a 17-percent raise. About 75 percent of the university's budget goes to pay salaries.

Although no instructors will be fired, a hiring freeze has been imposed.

Ninety percent of UNAM's budget is provided by government funding. The university's rector has announced that it will be necessary for UNAM to undertake austerity measures to end the year with a balanced budget.

The decrease is expected to have a major impact on the university's ability to finance investment in laboratories and

Program of study for El Salvador's general bachillerato degree

Subjects	Hours per Week 1st Year	Hours per Week 2nd Year
<u>General</u>		
Language & Literature	5	5
Mathematics	6	6
Natural Sciences	6	6
Social & Civic Studies	5	5
Foreign Language	3	3
Computer Science	3	3
<u>Applied</u>		
Child Psychology	3	3
Electives	6	6
Seminars	3	3
Total	40	40

equipment to support the 1,300 researchers based at UNAM. Some 60 percent of basic research in Mexico is conducted at UNAM, where about 2,000 officially recognized projects are currently in progress.

- *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 20, 1998

Middle East

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

A private college founded in January 1997 has already signed agreements with six British and Dutch academic institutions to offer postsecondary programs up through graduate degree level. Dubai Polytechnic was established by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry to address a perceived skills gap among both nationals and resident aliens. It began offering short vocational courses to students under its own auspices in March 1997 but has since signed agreements with several foreign institutions to offer a wider range of programs.

To date the new polytechnic has received approval from the Business and Technology Education Council, Bournemouth University, the University of Central Lancashire, Middlesex University, the University of Hull (all in the United Kingdom) and the Maastricht School of Management (in the Netherlands) to offer selected programs.

Enrollment now stands at 350 students, but polytechnic officials predict a doubling of this figure by September, when the first new academic programs are scheduled to start. About a third of the current student body consists of foreign nationals.

- *Times Higher Education Supplement*
March 6, 1998

North America

CARIBBEAN

Education in the English-speaking Caribbean has reinforced — rather than challenged — traditional gender role stereotyping and has serious implications for women's economic independence, according to a 1997 study prepared for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Analysis of 1996 Caribbean Examinations Council data reveals a persistence of curriculum segregation along gender lines, in both academic and technical-vocational streams. In academic subjects, boys predominate in science while girls predominate in the humanities and languages. In the vocational stream, the division is more closely aligned to older colonial policies with girls undertaking domestic and business subjects and boys undertaking the wider range of technical subjects.

According to the CARICOM study, these patterns predispose the sexes to pursue different postsecondary areas of study and different career paths. The study also examined school textbooks and the attitudes of teachers and parents to student subject choices. It found that women were almost invisible in most texts while sexist language was used throughout them.

Surveys of teachers and parents found that some teachers admitted giving boys and girls different tasks in early childhood education classrooms, and some parents vehemently object to their male children being taught how to cook and sew.

Less severe patterns of gender segregation are evident at the tertiary level, and while in many cases women outnumber and outperform men at the secondary and tertiary levels of education, this development has not translated into increased employment op-

portunities or remunerative benefits for women.

The study attributes this apparent anomaly to the concentration of female students in the less marketable and less lucrative vocational fields. There was also evidence suggesting that women seem to need higher levels of education than men to enter the labor market but congregate in lower-level, lower-paying jobs.

- *CARICOM View*
September/October 1997

UNITED STATES

Starting salary offers to new college and university graduates are rising in most fields, according to a survey published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

The January 1998 issue of NACE's *Salary Survey* indicates bachelor's degree graduates in engineering, computer science and business fields are especially in demand.

Marilyn Mackes, NACE's executive director, attributes the trend to a strong economy and a technology boom.

Majors with the greatest rise in average starting salaries include chemical engineering (\$44,735), electrical engineering (\$41,192), computer science (\$40,417) and mechanical engineering (\$35,251).

In business disciplines, management information systems graduates now command average starting salaries of \$38,229.

Other majors showing increases include economics and finance (\$32,522) and accounting (\$32,407).

Liberal arts and other majors have yet to see enough offers to establish a trend, but the early numbers are encouraging. And the booming economy seems likely to produce more opportunities, according to the NACE.

- *National Association of Colleges and Employers*
Feb. 16, 1998