

OVER THE COUNTER

450 Schools to Attend Chinese Fair

About 450 schools of various kinds, drawn from 30 countries and regions, are expected to attend the China Education Expo 2006, slated for Oct. 14-29, according to a Chinese state news agency. The fair is expected to attract 60,000 visitors as it tours China, passing through six cities.

The largest contingent of exhibitors will be from the U.K. Nearly 60 British schools—including universities, language training schools and tourism management schools—are expected to take part, offering consulting sessions on the spot. Also attending will be 53 Russian colleges and universities and 12 national educational institutions from New Zealand.

Britain is the largest destination for Chinese students; there are now about 60,000 in Britain.

According to new regulations, foreign PhD students will now be paying the same tuition fees as local students in New Zealand.

Source: [“450 Overseas Schools to Attend China Education Expo,”](#) *China View*, October 2, 2006

THE PLAYING FIELD

In Malta, Booming ESL Sector Charting Still More Growth...

The number of foreign students in Malta has more than doubled over the last decade, rising from 30,000 in 1996 to 62,000 in 2005, chiefly due to the island nation's healthy ESL industry.

Dramatic though the trend may seem, the Federation of English Language Schools in Malta believes there's room for still more growth. The group hopes changes in government practice will help the industry develop further. For example, it wants the Malta Tourism Authority to promote the island as a study destination not just for the summer, but for the winter months as well. It wants a better system for vetting visa applications, and it also wants the government to promote the industry overseas through trade missions.

Source: [“The Future of English Language Schools,”](#) *Times of Malta*, October 1, 2006

ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

...While in New Zealand, Industry's Collapse Prompts Finger-Pointing

Opposition politicians in New Zealand are accusing the government of fumbling on international education after the release of recent numbers outlining revenues from the country's schools.

According to a recent report, the income New Zealand ESL schools make from tuition dropped from \$258 million (\$171 U.S.; \$192 Cdn.) in 2003 to \$112 million (\$74 U.S.) \$84 Cdn.) in 2006. Meanwhile, a number of New Zealand universities are cutting staff.

Instead of spending money on posting “education counsellors” overseas, the government should be streamlining visa processing, improving work opportunities and taking other measures, a spokeswoman for the opposition National Party said recently.

Currency fluctuations and other factors have been blamed for the crash of New Zealand's ESL sector, which has seen the closure of many schools recently.

Source: “International Education in Disarray,” New Zealand National Party news release, September 27, 2006, available on [Scoop.com](#)

GLOBE TIPPING

Ramadan Varies Widely Within Islamic World

Non-Muslims have little idea about most things in the Islamic world, says Mel Broitman, Higher-Edge's director for international outreach—and that includes what it means to travel and work in Islamic countries during Ramadan, the “month of fasting.”

“Islam is practiced and expressed very differently around the globe,” Mr. Broitman says. “In Saudi Arabia, food consumption is mostly strictly forbidden in public. But in Dubai, restaurants in hotels are open, as well as food courts in office areas and private dining areas for workers. For the Western traveller, most Islamic nations are closer to Dubai than Saudi in the practice of Ramadan.”

Ramadan this year lasts from September 24 to October 24. Stay tuned to Not-So-Foreign for more advice on travel during Ramadan next week!