

## THE PLAYING FIELD

### *U.K. student numbers 'set to fall'*

A study by higher education action group Universities UK has indicated that there may be a drop in numbers of U.K. undergraduates over the next decade. The fall in numbers of 18 to 20-year-olds would equate to around 70,000 full-time undergraduate places over the next 10 years.

Other figures indicate a continued rise in overseas students at U.K. universities, particularly from India. China remains the source of the highest number of non-U.K. higher education students, although numbers fell by 2% from 50,755 in 2005/06 to 49,595 in 2006/07. The biggest increase was among Polish students, whose number rose by 56% from 4,325 in 2005/06 to 6,770 in 2006/07.

Professor Rick Trainor, president of Universities UK, said: "This is an invaluable piece of work which should help the U.K. higher education sector prepare for some of the expected demographic changes between now and 2019. The work will also form part of Universities UK's preparation for the review of variable fees in England, due next year. The review will need to take into account the wider issues facing higher education, some of which are reflected in this report."

Source: "[UK student numbers 'set to fall'](#)", [BBC News, March 20, 2008](#)

## GLOBE TIPPING

### *Keeping cash handy in Asia*

When traveling to countries in Asia such as Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, one must make sure that there are a variety of financial options available in the form of credit cards, travellers' cheques and cash. Consult your automatic teller machine (ATM) card provider for information about overseas services and availability. Not all overseas ATMs accept international cards, and it is advisable to carry sufficient cash for everyday requirements. For more details, consult these links for [Mastercard](#) and [Visa](#).

## ABROAD PERSPECTIVE

### *Higher Education Facelift in Saudi Arabia*

With a comprehensive 25-year development strategy at hand, the government has started revamping Saudi

Arabia's higher education sector. Co-operation agreements have been signed with leading universities in the United States, Europe and Asia. Over the last four years, 12 new universities have been established, increasing the number of universities in the region to 20.

Saudi academics and officials have been involved in preparing the 25-year strategy to develop the higher education system in tune with the country's development and job market requirements. "We have completed studies on seven major aspects of higher education with the support of research groups from different Saudi universities," said Muhammad Al-Ouhali, director of the project.

According to a report published by *The Economist* magazine, Saudi Arabia has grabbed seventh position - beating France, Spain, Russia, Japan, Egypt, Italy, Poland and Malaysia - in terms of the number of universities it has and per capita spending on students.

Source: "[Higher Education Getting a Major Facelift, Says Official](#)," [Arab News, April 1, 2008](#)

## OVER THE COUNTER

### *Western institutes zero in on India*

Several international colleges and universities are making a beeline for India to cash in on the country's large student market. Universities such as Harvard, Kellogg, Michigan University, Carnegie Mellon, Georgia Institute of Technology (United States), Grenoble Ecole de Management (France), and Aston Business School (United Kingdom) are working towards setting up base in the country,

According to a recently released study on foreign education providers in India conducted by the New Delhi-based National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, more than 130 local institutions have already collaborated with foreign institutions offering either a foreign degree or a foreign diploma. Reports suggest that significant numbers are in the process of joining the bandwagon.

The method of delivering the courses vary. While some have set up independent campuses, other institutes prefer to collaborate with an Indian partner. "Foreign universities outside India play a large role in the Indian higher education scene, [by filling in] the need to supplement Indian content-rich curricula with activity-based learning and bridge the gap between academia and industry," said Jane Schukoske, of the US Educational Foundation in India.

Source: "[Western colleges find school mates in India](#)."

[Asia Times, March 29, 2008](#)