

OVERSEAS, OVERWHELMED

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Abroad Perspective

Now in its third year, the World Education Market (WEM) will be held in Lisbon at the Lisboa Congress Centre from May 21 to 24, 2002. This education-oriented congregation - one of the most important of its kind in the world - brings together key stakeholders and decision-makers, providing them with an opportunity for business, networking and building partnerships. This year, WEM organisers are expecting 2500 participants from over 60 countries.

Higher-Edge has been selected to be part of the Canadian government-sponsored pavilion at WEM. If you would like more information on our participation at this event, contact isabelle@higher-edge.com. Also visit www.wem.canadauk.com for more on Higher-Edge at WEM. ♦

Let's Go Canada!

In March of this year, both the AUCC President and the chair of AUCC's Standing Advisory Committee on International Relations met with Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham to talk about the importance of international education for Canada. They took the opportunity to stress the need for more Canadian students to study abroad, "(...) particularly in light of the government's interest in cultivating highly qualified people."

On the theme of study abroad, CBIE recently launched a comprehensive website (<http://www.destineducation.ca>) for those who wish to pursue an international education. Working as a two-way street, DestinEducation serves foreign learners who wish to study in Canada as well as Canadian students who wish to study abroad, offering both groups an excellent collection of resources currently available online.

As a specialist in the field of international education, Higher-Edge firmly believes in the great value of study abroad experiences. In particular, the company believes that more students should be provided with the opportunity to study not only in "traditional" destinations, such as England and France, but also in developing nations.

As a representation of its commitment to this cause, Higher-Edge is providing two university students with internship opportunities in South Asia this summer. Stay tuned as they share their impressions of India and Bangladesh in the upcoming months.

Do contact us to see how we might assist you in negotiating and administering exchange agreements in parts of the world that have traditionally been overlooked. ♦

Over the Counter

Time Magazine Asia dedicated its April 14, 2002 cover to international education. While most of the feature articles focussed on Asian schools, Time's essayist Michael Elliott tore a strip off German public education. Elliott wrote:

"German schools and universities used to be the envy of the world, especially in math and science. But the country has been shocked by a couple of recent reports from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The average performance of German high school students in math and science is now below that found in most OECD countries, with a worryingly large gap between the strongest and weakest German students. Moreover, only about 1 in 6 of those who graduate from a German secondary school ever completes a university degree, compared with 1 in 3 Britons and Americans. Germany's free public universities are a joke: full of perpetual students who have little contact with professors. Serious German students are flocking to private, fee-charging institutions, many of which use English as their medium of instruction."

For Canadians, the article highlights the importance of preventing the erosion of publicly funded higher education. Like the Canadian system, the German private university system too started small, but is now burgeoning in lock-step with the decline of quality of the public higher education system. ♦

Globe Tipping

The tightening of visa regulations around the world continues in the wake of "September 11" and the general growing concerns regarding the movement of people.

Last week Travel Tips informed that Bangladesh is no longer providing entry visas at its Dhaka airport. Last year Pakistan scrapped a plan to allow visitors from Western nations to get visas upon arrival at their international airports.

Now comes news that even Thailand plans to overhaul its entry visa process. "From now on we will pay more attention to the quality of people getting into the country rather than the quantity," Thai Interior Minister Purachai Piumsombun announced on April 18.

An April issue of the *Bangkok Post* reports that the Thai government wants to curb security concerns and the use of Thailand as a sex-tour destination. It also plans to have longer term stay guests register with the government. "We'll also be getting even with countries that do not allow Thais easy access," added the Minister. ♦