

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION – MARKET DEVELOPMENT PLAN LATIN AMERICA

The Victorian Government's one- to two-year strategic priorities for International Education

## MARKET INSIGHTS

- Over the past 10 years, Latin America has managed to lift more than 70 million people out of poverty while expanding the middle class by more than 50 per cent. With population growth on an upward trajectory and a rising middle class, there are growing demands for high-quality education, infrastructure, security and healthcare. Governments across Latin America are attempting to address these expectations while also seeking to address the large population of chronically poor within this region.
- Should the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement be implemented, Australian universities and vocational providers are anticipated to benefit from improved market access throughout Chile, Mexico and Peru.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Trans-Pacific Partnership: Education Outcomes', 2016, *DFAT*, accessed 9/11/2016, <https://dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/tpp/Documents/outcomes-education-services.pdf>

# COUNTRY EDUCATION PROFILES

## Argentina

Argentina is currently undergoing an economic transformation that promotes sustainable economic development with social inclusion and integration into the global economy, which is seeing new opportunities emerge. Argentina is looking to Australia for collaborative partnerships as it seeks to improve its technical education system.

## Brazil

Following the economic boom of the 2000s, Brazil experienced rapid economic growth.<sup>2</sup> In recent years, however, Brazil has experienced political instability, economic downturn and decreased investor confidence, which has seen the economy remain a key challenge for the country's new leadership.

The large youth population continues to be Brazil's greatest resource for driving future economic growth, although the benefits will be dependent on job creation rates in coming years. Brazil's education system is facing the challenge of producing high-quality and industry-relevant graduates, particularly in technical fields, to drive an economy transitioning towards more knowledge-based activities.

Science without Borders funds Brazilian students to study abroad, however, political and economic factors have seen the government limit scholarship places to doctoral students.

## Colombia

Colombia has the goal to be the most educated country in Latin America. The government is focusing on policies to boost education quality across the entire education system. The Ministry of Education is in the process of reforming the vocational education and training system while investing in English capacity building at a school level. Accreditation is now required for any provider of higher education in the country and an element of the accreditation includes emphasis on internationalisation.

## Chile

Chile's growing national prosperity and a strong focus on education has contributed to a rapid increase in tertiary enrolments across all segments of society. The promotion of English-language learning and greater internationalisation of the higher education system have featured among the

plans of successive governments in recent years. Unemployment in Chile is below average but the transition into further education and the labour market remains a key challenge.

Chile is currently undergoing an education reform aimed at making education free for Chileans, in particular the most disadvantaged, and raising the level of human capital in order to deal with low productivity. This includes a new focus on technical education with the Ministry of Education announcing plans to roll out new public technical training centres in each region of Chile.

The Inter-American Development Bank is funding a VET reform project in Chile and working on plans to expand the mining skills model into other industry sectors.

## Peru

Peru's Ministry of Labour is leading the development of Committees of Labour Competencies (CCLs) in sectors such as agribusiness, mining, hospitality and tourism, construction and water and sanitation. The CCLs aim to address the skill needs in these sectors, which Peru considers important for its economic development.

## Mexico

The government is prioritising education and training. Education is seen as vital for boosting competitiveness and job creation. One of the key programs rolled out in 2016 was the National English Program aimed at primary schools.

A key government priority is energy, with significant reforms underway and 60,000 scholarships on offer for students to study locally and internationally.

## Ecuador

Ecuador's National Development Plan has prioritised areas such as education, arts, natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, social sciences, ICT, engineering, construction and industrial design, agriculture, fishing and forestry, and health. The current government is prioritising English language learning as a means of raising the country's profile further on the international stage.

The Ecuadorian Government is building an ambitious new City of Knowledge, Yachay, with a focus on education and research. With four development phases planned between 2012 and 2035, Yachay is expected to become home to more than 120,000 people.

2 'Brazil: Overview', *The World Bank*, accessed 9/11/2016, [www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil/overview)

# VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## 1. Support Victorian vocational education and training (VET) providers to respond to opportunities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru

### Rationale

There is growing demand for vocational education and training in Latin America and many countries are undertaking reform of their vocational education and training systems in order to support this growth.

### Key actions

- Build and strengthen relationships with government bodies, industry peak bodies and agencies involved in workforce development to understand training needs.
- Develop collateral profiling Victorian VET capabilities to support emerging opportunities.
- Support providers to work collaboratively to secure high-value offshore projects.

### Stakeholders

Governments in Latin America, industry peak bodies, skills councils and training providers in Latin America, Victorian VET providers

## 2. Deepen the relationship with the State of Paraná, Brazil

### Rationale

Paraná is an innovative state with a high R&D expenditure and many synergies with Victoria. In April 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the states of Victoria and Paraná to facilitate collaboration in areas of mutual interest, including education, research, training and links with industry. The MoU identifies five areas for collaboration: water, liveable cities, health and medical sciences, tourism and hospitality, and the challenges faced by regional centres and communities.

### Key actions

- Increase engagement with the State Government of Paraná to further opportunities in research, education and training resulting from the MoU.
- Support Victorian providers in their activities with institutions in Paraná, including through the development of research working groups.

### Stakeholders

State of Paraná, Fundação Araucária, universities in Paraná and Victoria

### 3. Understand and respond to opportunities in English language studies and teacher training

#### Rationale

Across Latin America, there is an increasing need for a second language, such as English. However, English language skills are generally low throughout the region. Many Latin American universities require graduating students to demonstrate English language ability in order to graduate.

There is strong demand for English language teacher training and capacity building to support government efforts for bilingualism, although many government programs require a co-contribution and an agreement with a partner government. English language courses are the predominant pathway for Latin American students considering further study in Australia.

#### Key actions

- Build and strengthen relationships with relevant bodies to enable access for Victorian providers to respond to emerging opportunities.
- Lead an English language and teacher training mission to Latin America.
- Develop collateral profiling Victorian English language and teacher training to support emerging opportunities.

#### Stakeholders

Federal, state and local government education portfolios in Latin American countries, Victorian language training providers, study tour companies

### 4. Promote Victoria as the leading destination in Australia for student experience

#### Rationale

Latin American students rely heavily on education agents to assist them with information on study destinations and institutions, the application process and visas. It is therefore important that agents have an excellent understanding of Victoria as a study destination, Victoria's research excellence, pathway opportunities and international student experience initiatives.

#### Key actions

- Work with agents to build their expertise and awareness of the Victorian education experience, including the depth and breadth of providers, using tools such as MyStory.
- Invite top performing agents to visit Melbourne as part of an inbound agent familiarisation to showcase Victoria as a study destination.
- Implement a social media campaign to promote the Study Melbourne brand in the region.
- Develop collateral promoting the Victorian student experience.

#### Stakeholders

Education agents in Latin America, especially those with relationships with Victorian providers

## CONTACT

**Camille Mansell**  
Education Services Manager  
Latin America (Bogotá)

T: +57 1 657 7821  
E: [camille.mansell@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:camille.mansell@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

**Jaffa McKenzie**  
Senior Market Development Adviser  
International Education

T: +61 3 9651 9709  
E: [jaffa.mckenzie@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:jaffa.mckenzie@ecodev.vic.gov.au)