

ASSOCIATION NAME

COUNTRY

National Report for FELCA AGM – 2008

AGENTS & Associations

There are around 300 agents operating in Brazil, but many of them are small agencies or travel agencies that use to sell few programmes.

Today, BELTA congregates 65 organizations, making an account of approximately 600 exchange agencies in Brazil, 34 of them already offering inbound programs in our country. They represent around 90% of the international education market here.

Market Growth/Decline

As last year, Brazil is going through an important moment. Brazilian economy is increasing. The Real (Brazilian currency) has risen in comparison to US dollar since the second semester 2007. Besides an international experience is becoming more popular among young people and preparing them for the work market. For this reason there were 80,000 Brazilian students travelling in 2007 and expect it will increase 20% this year: 96.000.

Unfortunately we could have a market research by a research company this year, but we have an agreement with Brazilian Tourist Board – EMBRATUR for an official research about Economic Indicator next months.

Visa regime – any new difficulties?

The relationship with US, Australia, New Zealand, UK, Ireland Consulates and Embassies is working very well. We can offer a wonderful support to our members. Moreover as Belta's members they can get assistance from them directly.

On the other hand there will be a new rule for Europe visas for Brazilian students next year. It could be a little bit complicated, but we should know how it will work in 2009.

Government Relations – any developments with your or other governments?

Since May 2005, Belta administers the Brazilian Exchange Bureau with the support of EMBRATUR. The purpose of this partnership is to internationally promote Brazilian programs that focus on foreign students through the divulgation of the program "Study in Brazil", which aims for promoting the opportunities of studies in Brazil overseas, consolidating the country as an important educational destination.

The Brazilian Exchange Bureau congregates institutions that offer educational programs to foreigners: High School, Portuguese as a foreign language, Undergraduate courses, short and long term Academic Programs and programs combined with tourism, sports, volunteer work, etc.

Besides the mission of conquering overseas market, the Brazilian Exchange Bureau is also responsible for giving orientation to its associates so that the concept of the program is kept, a uniform conduct exists and the offered services are provided within the highest quality.

To drive a better performance of the Studies and Exchange Travel segment, with the support of the Tourism Ministry and as part of the future actions, the pilot program of ProBEI – Brazilian International Education Program, named "Projeto de Desenvolvimento do Destino Indutor/Cidade Referência do Turismo de Estudos e Intercâmbio", was created at the city of São João del-Rey, aiming for a future application on a national scope.

The objective of this project is to stimulate the demand and the potentiality of the region, providing qualification to professionals, giving orientation on the development of study and exchange travel products, contributing for the improvement of services and providing subsidy so that the participants of this net have an opportunity to acquire knowledge, dominating and introducing sustainability practices on their projects and enterprises. Simultaneously to these actions, the program foresees the association of governmental organs, diplomatic representations, educational institutions and inbound Brazilian agents for the creation of a national code of conduct that enables the development of an integrated and effective net.

Other key issues for the industry?

As an umbrella organization for International Education and Exchange in Brazil, BELTA is working on the reunion of all agents involved in the educational sectors, private, governmental, community, non profit organisations, among others.

Initiatives/Developments for your association?

The **II Brazilian Forum on International Education - ForBEI** is happening in March 2009 in São João del-Rei. It is the Symbolic Action of the pilot program of ProBEI – Brazilian International Education Program. As the I ForBEI it will be an initiative to discuss this subject through the viewpoint of various sectors and agents that operate in, and were related to the education world in Brazil, exploring the possibilities and ways of joint actions and the potential of the country as a destination for international students.

An issue of great emergence nowadays, the international dimension in education has constituted a field in which several professional and productive segments have been acting, and it has also represented an important challenge for Higher Education Institutions, in terms of staff training and management policies.

To mark its 10th edition, **ExpoBelta 2009 – Forum Belta for International Education** will bring new concepts, with the aim of becoming much more enlightening, joining information and culture. For the first time there will be a forum specialized in international education – an innovation in the country – to debate and discuss the theme with experts and take the information to the Brazilian students and interested people, besides workshops, cultural presentations, lectures from each country and the concept of “countries islands” for booths. This way the public can have a good idea of what they can find in the place they have decided to study. Moreover, the event will enable a better approach between exhibitors, agents and visitors – an excellent opportunity to do some networking – it's awaited 140 exhibitors (46 of them will take part of an European Island to promote the Erasmus Mundus Program) and over 10.000 visitors. It will take place in three locations: Belo Horizonte (March 24th), São Paulo (March 27th-29th) and Rio de Janeiro (March 31st). For next year the organization is planning a modern and efficient marketing and communication plan, focusing on attracting our main target: high school and university students, their parents, teachers and professionals interested in taking an experience abroad.

The Association is in charge for creating a network among all Brazilian Ministries involved as Ministry of Tourism, Education, External Relations, Justice, and Labour, since last December. There had been created a committee in a meeting last month (August) that will be take care the Brazilian structure for receiving international students

BELTA has created a new structure organization in order to extend the improvement process of the association. It should be conclude until the beginning of 2009.