

#### AGENTS & Associations

As said last year, there are around 300 agents operating in Brazil. This number has been maintained – a few agencies closed due to the crisis; on the other hand, there has been a proliferation of small companies selling educational programmes.

Nowadays BELTA congregates 60 organizations, making an account of approximately 600 point of sales throughout the country – 30% of them offer inbound programmes.

#### Market Growth/Decline

The Brazilian market went to stagnation on the second semester of 2008 due to the world financial crisis. However the first semester had a positive growth, which was retaken from the beginning of 2009. Today the Real (Brazilian currency) is stronger in comparison to other currencies, especially in comparison with the American dollar.

Brazilians are taking more courses abroad: we estimate that 120.000 Brazilian students travelled in 2008 – a growth of 30% in comparison to the previous year.

Unfortunately we do not have an up-to-date market research, but we have an agreement with the Brazilian Tourist Board – EMBRATUR – for an official research on Economic Indicator.

#### Visa regime – any new difficulties?

BELTA has developed a strong relationship with Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, the Netherlands and others – due to the partnership, they take part at ExpoBelta every year with booths and lectures about visa, destination and educational system. UK and US consulates, in particular, have been offering work and student visa training to the BELTA members.

#### Government Relations – any developments with your or other governments?

Since May 2005, BELTA administers the Brazilian Exchange Bureau (BBI) with the support of EMBRATUR. The purpose of this partnership is to internationally promote Brazilian programmes that focus on foreign students through the promotion of the programme “Study in Brazil”, which aims promoting the opportunities of studies in Brazil overseas, consolidating the country as an important educational destination.

BELTA, via Brazilian Exchange Bureau, took part at several events in 2008: cultural presentations about study opportunities in Brazil at Brasilia; conference at Amics de la UNESCO; Alphe Latin America; NAFSA with the Brazilian night event; Alphe UK; WYSTC; ICEF Berlin e ICEF Americas Workshop; Going Global. In 2009 BBI was at NAFSA.

The partnerships with EMBRATUR and Ministry of Tourism have ended, however we are already working on a new plan for 2010. The II ForBEI, which took place in São João del-Rey city, on April/2009, was a great success. The Ministry of Tourism aims to take the project to other Brazilian cities.

#### Other key issues for the industry?

In April 2009 BELTA associates elected a new board of directors. The new board has been continuing the work developed previously, however, focusing now on building and improving the processes. The current directors aim to strengthen the association and, mainly, BELTA's agents image in the market. The objective is to capitalise in order to be able to invest in promotion of the international education market, strengthen the association and, consequently, the associates.

### Initiatives/Developments for your association?

BELTA's board of directors objective is to create a more participative performance of the members through famtrips, trainings, meetings and regional activities; maintain and improve the relationship with consulates and international organizations; seek sponsors; strengthen BELTA products – BELTA Magazine, ExpoBelta and BELTA Online; build an active performance in the segment working with the entities of the educational and tourism sector, considering that EMBRATUR and Ministry of Tourism see BELTA as an important player in the market; send financial reports each 3 months to the associates; organize annual workshops to the staff of the associated companies; reevaluate current processes.

**ExpoBelta 2010 – Forum Belta for International Education** will bring the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of a forum specialized in international education to debate the theme with experts in the sector and the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the exhibition. It will be targeted on students, teachers and interested people, from high school to higher education levels. Together with lectures from many countries about visa and educational system, the event will enable a better approach between educational institutions, agents and students – an excellent networking opportunity. It is expected over 10.000 visitors and 90 exhibitors. The event, whose guest of honour will be USA, will take place in São Paulo, on March 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> 2010, just after Alphe Latin America. ExpoBelta has the support of: Australian Education International, Australian Consulate General / Austrade, Canadian Education Centre - CEC, General Consulate of Canada, US Department of Commerce / US Commercial Service, Education USA, ALPHE Workshops, British Council / Education UK, Consulado Britânico / UK Border Agency, CenDoTec / CampusFrance, Maison de la France, Nuffic - Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education, Education New Zealand, EduSA - Education South Africa, Enterprise Ireland, Irish Institute, FAUBAI - Forum of Brazilian University Offices for International Relations, ICEF - International Consultants for Education and Fairs, IIE - Institute of International Education, Secretaria de Turismo de la Nación Argentina and Tourspain Sao Paulo.