English Australia

Survey of major ELICOS regional markets in 2011

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ENGLISH AUSTRALIA

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Executive Summary

of a report prepared for English Australia by Environmetrics

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Introduction

This is the sixteenth survey of the ELICOS sector commissioned by English Australia. A benchmark study was commissioned in 1996, which covered enrolment statistics for the previous calendar year. A follow-up study was conducted in 1997. Austrade undertook these two studies. This current study is the fourteenth undertaken by Environmetrics and covers enrolments for the 2011 calendar year.

The purpose of the study is to gain a clear picture of the number of overseas students and visitors who undertook English language studies in Australia in 2011. Particular attention is taken to obtain statistics on:

- student numbers by nationality;
- student numbers by visa type;
- numbers of individual and group enrolments;
- length of enrolments; and
- enrolments in each state or territory.

This report presents the main findings of the study. Data is analysed to provide an overall profile of the ELICOS sector, as well as a profile for Asia, Europe, Central and South America and the Middle East.

Executive Summary

Total enrolments (all nationalities, individuals and groups)

- 2011 saw overall ELICOS enrolments decline by -4%, dropping to 134,440 from 140,102 in 2010. The ELICOS market peaked in 2008 with 162,114 enrolments after growing consistently over a five year period from 78,338 in 2003. The sector has now experienced three consecutive years of decline (2009: -4%, 2010: -10%, 2011: -4%).

- The growth experienced prior to 2009 was generated by increasing numbers of Student visa holders. In 2010, Student visa numbers declined by -19%, and in 2011 this trend continued, with Student visas declining by -13% (11,154). All other visa types increased in 2011 on 2010 numbers. Other visas increased by +98% (5,130), Working Holiday visas by +1.1% (207) and Visitor visas by +0.5% (156), although this growth could not compensate for the decline in Student visas.

- The decline in Student visas has impacted the visa profile of the market with the share of Student visa dropping from a peak of 67% in 2009 to 60% in 2010 and to 54% in 2011. Visitor visas accounted for 24% of ELICOS students in 2011, Working Holiday for 14% and Other visas for 8%..

- With the ELICOS market shifting from the longer study period Student visa holders to shorter study period visa types, the average number of weeks studied per student decreased again this year, from 11.9 in 2010 to 11.2 weeks in 2011.The average course length ranged from a low of 4.0 weeks for Asian students on Visitor visas, to a high of 19.8 weeks for Middle Eastern students on Student visas.

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- In 2011 the number of weeks spent studying declined by -9% to 1,510,703 weeks from 1,668,328 weeks in 2010, reflecting both the decline in student enrolments and the shift in the visa profile and average course length.
- The decrease in the number of students and weeks studied resulted in a decrease in total spending. The total impact of all enrolments decreased from 1.557 billion in 2010 to 1.462 billion (a decrease of -6%)
- All regions, with the exception of Africa, declined in 2011. Student numbers from Asia declined by -4% (-3,395), Central and South America declined by -3% (-473), Europe declined by -3% (-652) with the Middle East declining the most with -13% (-1,189).
- The regional share profile of the market has changed little in 2011 from 2010. Asia remained the largest source of enrolments, accounting for 65% of the total (the same as in 2010). Europe maintained its share of 16%, as did the Americas with 12% in 2011. The Middle East increased share from 6% to 7%.
- In 2011 different states experienced very different levels of growth/decline. Western Australia had strong growth of +19% (2,491). NSW +1% (531) and Victoria -1% (-153) had little change, with South Australia -24% (-1,255) and Queensland -18%(-7,276) both declining significantly.
- NSW accounted for 42% of all enrolments in 2011, followed by Queensland (25%), Victoria (18%), Western Australia (11%) and South Australia (3%). NSW and Western Australia increased market share at the expense of Queensland and South Australia.
- Asia was the most important source region for all states. China is the most important source country for NSW, Victoria and South Australia. Japan is the most important source country for Queensland and in Western Australia China, Japan and Korea each have equal share (14%).
- The top ten source countries for 2010 were (in order): China, South Korea, Japan, Brazil, Thailand, Taiwan, Colombia, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam. Vietnam replaced France in the top 10.
- China was the major source country in 2011 with 19% of the market, though share dropped 1% from 20% in 2010. China showed declining enrolment numbers of -7% in 2011.
- South Korea and Japan each have 14% share of the market. Korea has been in second place since 2008 when China became the most important source country. Korean student numbers have been declining since 2009 and in 2011 decreased by a further -5%.
- Japan increased enrolments in 2011, strengthening its ranking position and now equal with Korea in second position. Japan had been in continuous decline since peaking in 2004/2005, but in 2010 and 2011 has returned to growth (unlike most nationalities). Growth in 2011 was a modest 1%.
- As with 2010 forty eight percent of all ELICOS enrolments in 2011 came from the top three source countries. Seventy five percent came from the top ten source countries (the same as in 2010).
- Japan, with a modest increase of 1%, was the only nationality in the top ten source countries for ELICOS to grow in 2011. All, other top 10 countries declined in enrolments in 2011. Vietnam decreased the most with a 22% decline on 2010.
- The strongest growth in terms of student numbers came from Italy, Hong Kong and Spain, with the strongest growth in weeks and revenue coming from Japan.

- The strongest decline in student numbers came from China ,France, Vietnam and Korea, with the strongest decline in weeks and revenue coming from Saudi Arabia.
- Group enrolments accounted for 11% (up from 9% in 2010) of the total number of students, however they only accounted for 3.5% of student weeks, with an average course length of 3.6 weeks. Numbers of group enrolments grew by 21% with a 26% increase in student weeks.
- Asian nationalities again dominated group enrolments with 96% of the total (increasing from 91% in 2010). Japanese students made up 49% of these (down from 53% in 2010).
- English Australia member colleges accounted for 83% of total enrolments.

Asia-Pacific region total enrolments (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments for the Asia Pacific region decreased from 91,025 in 2010 to 87,630 in 2011. This represents a decrease of -4% (-3,395).
- The largest increase in the number of enrolments for an individual nationality was shown by Hong Kong (559), followed by Japan (170)) and then Indonesia (146).
- The largest decrease in the number of enrolments for an individual nationality was shown by China (-1,817), then Thailand (-1,275) followed by South Korea (-902).
- For the fourth consecutive year China was the most important source country in the Asia Pacific region, contributing 30% of the region's total enrolments. South Korea and Japan share second place with 22%.
- In 2011 the state profile changed somewhat, with NSW still dominant and increasing, accounting for 41% of all Asian enrolments in 2011, Queensland declining to 24% (from 28%), followed by Victoria increasing to 21% (from 20%), Western Australia increasing to 11% (from 8%) and South Australia declining to 3.6% from 4.5%.
- The proportion of Student visas declined to 52%, with Visitor visas increasing to 25%, Working Holiday visas increasing to 16% and Other visas to 7%.
- Total student weeks decreased from 1,025,006 to 953,817 in 2011 (a -7% decrease), with the average number of weeks spent studying decreasing to 10.9 (from 11.3 in 2010).
- China (35%) and South Korea (21%) accounted for the largest number of student weeks in 2011.
- Total estimated spending of enrolees from the Asia Pacific region was $950 million compared with $981 million in 2010. This is an overall decrease of -3% from 2010.
- The number of Asian students in groups increased from 11,200 to 14,254. The average number of weeks for groups increased from 3.2 to 3.5 weeks.

European region (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments from Europe decreased from to 22,542 in 2010 to 21,890 in 2011. This represents an decrease of -3% (-652).

- The largest increase in the number of enrolments for an individual nationality was Italy (1,013), followed by Spain (226) and then Russia (108). France (-1,532) experienced the largest decline in enrolments followed by Hungary (-155).

- As in previous years Swiss enrolments made up a large proportion of the European market, accounting for 20% (a decline of 2% on 2010), followed by Italian enrolments, with 16%. Italy in 2011 overtook France and Germany to become Europe's second most important source country. Spain overtook the Czech Republic in importance as its numbers also grew strongly.

- Market share by state has changed somewhat for Europe in 2011, with NSW gaining 4% to achieve 52% of all European enrolments whilst Queensland's share declined strongly by 8% to account for 25%. Western Australia's share increased from 11% to 14%, Victoria's from 7% to 8% and South Australia remained unchanged on 1%.

- Visitor visas are still the most popular choice for European enrolees, though in 2011 they decreased by 6% to 38% after increasing to 44% in 2010. The proportion of Student visas has increased marginally to 34% (from 33%). The proportion of Working Holiday visas has increased in 2011 to 21% from 19%, returning to the same level as in 2009 and Other visas also increased to 8% (from 4% in 2010).

- The total number of weeks enrolled has decreased from 200,489 in 2010 to 184,985 in 2011 (a decrease of -8% - a stronger decline than overall student enrolments). This stonger percentage decline in weeks was caused by the average number of weeks in a course declining by 0.4 of a week to 8.5 weeks.

- Total estimated spending of European enrolees was $167.1 million compared with $174.9 million in 2010. This is an overall decrease of 4% from 2010.

Central and South American region (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments from the Central & South America region decreased from 16,929 in 2010 to 16,456 in 2011. This represents a decrease of -3% (-473).

- Brazil again yielded the largest number of enrolments, representing 53% (identical to 2010), of all enrolments from this region (a total of 8,758 enrolments for 2011 though declining -3% on 2010). The second most important source country, Colombia, declined -2% on enrolments in 2010, with Chile increasing by +19% on 2010.

- NSW accounted for 42% of all Central and South American enrolments in 2011 (40% in 2010), Queensland's share decreased from 34% in 2010 to 31% in 2011, Western Australia's rose from 10% to 12%, whilst Victoria's remained stable on 14% and South Australia also remained stable at 2%.

- 82% of all Central and South American enrolees held Student visas (slightly down from 85% in 2010), with 9% arriving on Visitor visas (10% in 2010) with Other visas now accounting for 8% (up from 5%) and Working Holiday visas accounting for less than 1% in 2010 (equal to 2010).

- There has been a -9% decline in the total number of student weeks (from 253,675 to 231,956), with the average number of student weeks declining to 14.1 (15.0 in 2010).

- Total estimated spending of Central and South American enrolees was $201.4 million compared with $214.2 million in 2010. This is an overall decrease of -6% from 2010.

Middle Eastern Region (individuals and groups)

- The Middle Eastern region declined more than any other region in 2011 in percentage terms after experiencing steady growth since 2007. Total enrolments for the Middle Eastern region in 2011 were 8,067, representing a decline of -13% (-1,190) on 9,257 in 2010.

- Saudi Arabia contributes 52% (4,175) (up 1% from 2010) of all enrolments from the Middle East. In 2011 actual enrolment numbers declined by -12% (from 4,754 to 4,175) from Saudi Arabia.

- The largest Middle Eastern contributors were Saudi Arabia and Turkey (decrease of -32%) with most key Middle Eastern countries showing decreasing enrolments in 2011. There were increases from students from Egypt (23%), Jordan (15%) and Pakistan (14%) though on smaller bases.

- In 2011 there was strong change in the share of the states compared with 2010. Queensland increased its share by 7% to 30%, moving into second place ahead of Victoria on 25% (dropping from 26% in 2010). NSW remained the top source country however its share declined 6% to 32%. The share for Western Australia (8%) and South Australia (5%) remained stable.

- 78% of all Middle Eastern enrolments held Student visas, down from 84% in 2010. The number of Other visas increased strongly in 2011, increasing from 6% to 15%. The proportion of Visitor visas decreased to 7% (from 10%).

- The total number of student weeks for Middle Eastern enrolments was 137,417 (a decrease of -26% or -48,842), and the average number of student weeks declined 3 weeks to 17.0 (down from 20.1 in 2010) underlying the decrease in total weeks.

- The total estimated spending of Middle Eastern enrolees was $140.4 million (down from $184.5 million in 2010). This is an overall decrease of -24% on 2010.