

A Mere 10% of Brazilian Youths Go to College

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The number of students attending Brazilian federal universities is expected to double in the next five years. There are currently 128,000 students enrolled in the country's 67 federal universities.

The goal of the Ministry of Education's Expansion Plan is to add 30 thousand new places annually in the federal system, beginning in 2007. US\$ 81.7 million were invested on university expansion in 2005. Through 2007 a total of US\$ 252.9 million will be invested.

The Expansion Plan provides for the creation of universities in the interior of Brazilian states. This will accomplish two goals simultaneously by increasing the number of places and enabling thousands of young people not to have to leave their regions and move to the large cities in order to have access to higher education.

The new institutions are intended to produce social inclusion, economic growth, and scientific and technological development, as well as contributing to the diminution of regional disparities in the country.

Civil service exams were held in 2005 to fill 1,800 new university teaching positions and hire 2.200 professors to fill empty positions. This will make it possible to increase the number of night courses.

Only 10.4% of the 24 million Brazilians between the ages of 18 and 24 attend universities, while the comparable figure in Chile is over 20%; in Argentina, 30%; in the United Kingdom, 50%; in the United States, 70%; and in South Korea, 86%.

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