

Ireland and Japan sign working holiday deal

GREATER working opportunities in Ireland will soon be on the cards for Japanese students, thanks to the signing of a Working Holiday visa agreement between the two countries. Taking effect from 1 January 2007, the new agreement will mean Japanese and Irish young people can work in each other's countries for up to 12 months.

Irish Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Michael Martin, said the new programme would "provide young people in Ireland and Japan with a chance to travel, to learn more about each others' countries and to build international friendships".

At English language schools' association, MEI~Relsa, Director, Brian Burns commented, "Compared with other larger English speaking countries, Ireland is still relatively unknown in Japan. The new working holiday programme will be promoted throughout Japan and should help place Ireland on the map amongst agents and potential students."

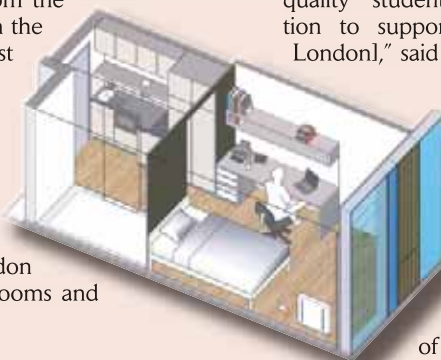
He said that he expected English language schools in the country to develop working holiday programmes that would incorporate an induction course, English language training programme and then paid work placement.

In other news in Ireland, membership of MEI~Relsa has increased since new categories of membership for summer schools have been introduced. Current membership now stands at 62 schools, and further members are expected to join in the future. ●

New trendy living concept for London

STUDENTS in London, UK, can choose from an entirely new style of accommodation from September next year. As well as host family or residential dormitory-style accommodation, Nido Student Living will be offering studio-style living within a building housing 846 rooms on 16 floors. The option to share with a friend – using a communal kitchen – is also offered from the latest student accommodation provider on the scene, providing what it terms the "newest way of living student life" in the King's Cross area of London.

All students will have access to a resident student services manager and facilities that include separate study rooms, a gym and fitness centre. Services such as room (cube) cleaning and laundry pick-up will also be offered as extras. Nido London also has space that can be used as classrooms and faculty offices.



An artist's impression of the Nido Cube, offering complete studio living

Nido Student Living is aimed at all types of students, from short-term study abroad students to postgraduates. "There is a staggering lack of quality student accommodation to support [students in London]," said Nido London's spokesperson, Maureen McDermott, who claimed, "British universities provide accommodation for less than a quarter of potential student demand." ●

China promotes Mandarin study

CHINA has launched a website that offers free Mandarin lessons and study materials, www.linese.com. It is hoped that the site, which is only available in English and Chinese at present, will encourage interest in Mandarin language learning overseas. Versions of the website in Japanese and Korean are also being developed.

Interactive exercises, resources for teachers and audiovisual presentations of famous landmarks and cultural icons are included on the website. The Chinese Ministry of Education has also revealed that it plans to set up more Confucius Institutes around the world to promote Chinese culture. There is currently a Confucius Institute in South Korea, Sweden and Germany. ●

DMGT to sell Study Group

The Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT), owners of Study Group, are looking to sell their shares in the company and an announcement was imminent at the time of going to press.

Nick Tellwright, Group Marketing Director at Study Group, explained that the company has definite growth plans following a good year last year and a very successful 2006. "We believe, and DMGT shares this view, that the time is right [to attract new investment]," he said. "Our growth plans focus on expanding our university partnerships [see page 49], developing our programme range, opening new centres and extending our marketing reach."

The company was valued at UK£80 million (US\$148 million) in a *Sunday Times* report. ●

Currency

1xUS\$ =currency*

Argentinean	Pesos	3.078
Australian	Dollar	1.330
Brazilian	Real	2.187
British	Pound	0.540
Bulgarian	Leva	1.550
Canadian	Dollar	1.134
Chilean	Pesos	539.15
Chinese (PR)	Yuan RMB	7.990
Czech	Koruny	22.41
Danish	Kroner	5.898
Egyptian	Pound	5.740
EU	Euro	0.790
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.775
Hungarian	Forint	216.89
Icelandic	Kronur	73.320
Indonesian	Rupiah	9,151.0
Israeli	New Shekels	4.431
Japanese	Yen	116.76
Maltese	Lira	0.339
Mexican	Peso	10.879
New Zealand	Dollar	1.606
Norwegian	Kroner	6.278
Polish	Zloty	3.111
Russian	Rubles	26.924
Singaporean	Dollar	1.584
Slovakian	Koruny	30.185
South African	Rand	6.958
South Korean	Won	949.46
Swedish	Kronor	7.300
Swiss	Franc	1.243
Taiwanese	NT Dollar	32.761
Thai	Baht	38.053
Turkish	New Lira	1.552
Venezuelan	Bolivar	2,147.3

*Rates are subject to change and should be used as indications only. 20/07/06.

The Language Show

Date: November 3-5
Venue: London, UK
Email: jrs@thelanguageshow.co.uk
Web: www.thelanguageshow.co.uk

The Icef Berlin Workshop

Date: November 5-7
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

CIEE Annual Conference

Date: November 8-11

Venue: Seville, Spain
Email: conference@ciee.org
Web: www.ciee.org

Expolingua Praha

Date: November 10-11
Venue: Prague, Czech Republic
Email: prague@expolingua.com
Web: www.expolingua.cz

"Education and Career XXI"

Date: November 16-18
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Date: November 21

Venue: Nizhny Novgorod, Russia
Date: November 19-21
Venue: St Petersburg, Russia
Email: rtv@znanie.info
Web: www.znanie.info

Expolingua Berlin

Date: November 17-19
Venue: Berlin, Germany
Email: info@expolingua.com
Web: www.icwe.net
www.expolingua.com

The Alphe Asia Workshop

Date: November 19-21
Venue: Bangkok, Thailand
Email: jane@hothousemedia.com
Web: www.hothousemedia.com

Oriente European Ed. & Employment Fair

Date: November 24-26
Venue: Brussels, Belgium
E: orienta.international@cpexpo.com
Web: www.cpexpo.com

The Icef Americas Workshop

Date: December 03-05
Venue: Miami, USA
Email: info@icef.com
Web: www.icef.com

Le Salon des Formations Internationales

Date: January 13-14 2007
Venue: Paris, France
E: camille.rabehanta@ltdudiant.fr
Web: www.ltdudiant.fr

Airlines add to fleet to stay competitive

As air passenger traffic and competition between airlines around the world increases, a number of air carriers are planning to expand their air fleet, with a spate of large orders placed with airline manufacturers this year. Brazil's TAM, Europe's Ryanair, Japan Airlines, China Eastern Airlines and China's Hainan Airlines have all announced high profile plans to buy new aeroplanes over the next two-to-four years in an effort to keep up with customer demand for air travel and stay profitable.

The demand for air travel in China in particular is increasing fast and two airlines there are showing a determination to stay ahead of the game. One of the country's top three air-

lines, China Eastern Airlines, announced in June that it had signed a contract to buy 30 A320 passenger jets from Airbus. The planes are scheduled to be delivered between May 2008 and November 2010 and will principally serve the domestic market. Meanwhile, Hainan Airlines recently sold 2.8 billion new shares in order to raise US\$700 million, which will help it compete with Air China, China Eastern Airlines and China Southern Airlines. "We will use the proceeds to set up an airline group and acquire new planes to increase our capacity," said a spokesperson for the carrier.

Japan Airlines has also announced plans to sell off shares in order to raise much needed funds to buy new aircraft. The carrier was due to issue 700 million new shares earlier this year in order to raise ¥222.71 billion (US\$1.9 billion) for new planes as well as more fuel-efficient equipment.

In Europe and South America, Ryanair announced in July that it had bought 10 Boeing 737-800s for delivery in 2008, while TAM in Brazil agreed to acquire 37 additional Airbus aircraft to be delivered in 2010. A spokesperson for Ryanair said that the new aircraft would allow the carrier to launch more low-cost fare routes to new destinations in 2008.

The latest figures released from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) showed that overall international air traffic in May this year increased by seven per cent over the previous year. ●

Visitors spend more overseas

TOURISTS spent a total of US\$682 billion in 2005, an increase of 3.4 per cent on the previous year, according to figures released by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). This means that tourism spending worldwide now averages US\$2 billion a day.

Tourist spending increased across all world regions last year, although growth varied from 7.8 per cent in Africa to 2.3 per cent in Europe. In terms of market share, Europe gains the most from tourist spend-

ing, with US\$347 billion being spent by visitors to the continent in 2005. Africa was the fastest growing region in terms of tourist arrivals, increasing by 10 per cent last year.

WTO Secretary General, Francesco Frangialli said, "Visitor spending continues its strong overall growth, contributing substantially to global services exports and particularly to the overall trade balances of developing economies. Africa's 7.8 per cent increase is a significant success story." ●

Cathay Pacific makes moves in China

HONG KONG carrier Cathay Pacific has announced plans to buy out Dragonair in China in order to gain a foothold in China's rapidly expanding air industry. The purchase, which is costing Cathay Pacific £573 million (US\$1,061 million), will enable the carrier to add 23 more destinations in China to its Beijing and Xiamen services.

Philip Chen, Cathay Pacific Chief Executive, said that the acquisition of Dragonair would

"reinforce Hong Kong's role as the premier aviation hub in the Asia Pacific region". The carrier has also strengthened its ties with Air China by doubling its holding in the company to 20 per cent, while Air China has acquired a ten per cent stake in Cathay Pacific. The deal means that Air China will be exclusively responsible for Cathay sales in mainland China and Cathay will carry out the same role for Air China in Hong Kong. ●

Travel Update

- UK carrier **British Airways** has announced pre-tax profits for the year ending 31 March 2006 of £620 million (US\$1,148 million); an increase of 21 per cent on the previous year. The airline slashed many European fares earlier this year, in order to compete effectively with low-cost carriers such as Easyjet and Ryanair, and also added new routes to China and India. Chief Executive, Willie Walsh, said that the company's short-haul business was in profit for the first time in 10 years.

- A report by the **European Tour Operators Association** shows that countries who host the Olympic Games suffer from a drop in tourism growth in the years surrounding the event. The report highlights that the trend holds true for four out of the last five different Olympic venues, Sydney, Atlanta, Barcelona and Seoul, while official statistics for Athens – the fifth venue – are not available.

- New airline **Oasis Hong Kong Airlines** has launched flights from Gatwick in London to Hong Kong from just £75 (US\$139). The flights will be available five times a week from October this year. "We are pleased to announce the first ever low-fare, high-quality long haul flights from London to the Far East and we look forward to launching flights to more destinations in the future," said Steve Miller, Chief Executive of the airline.

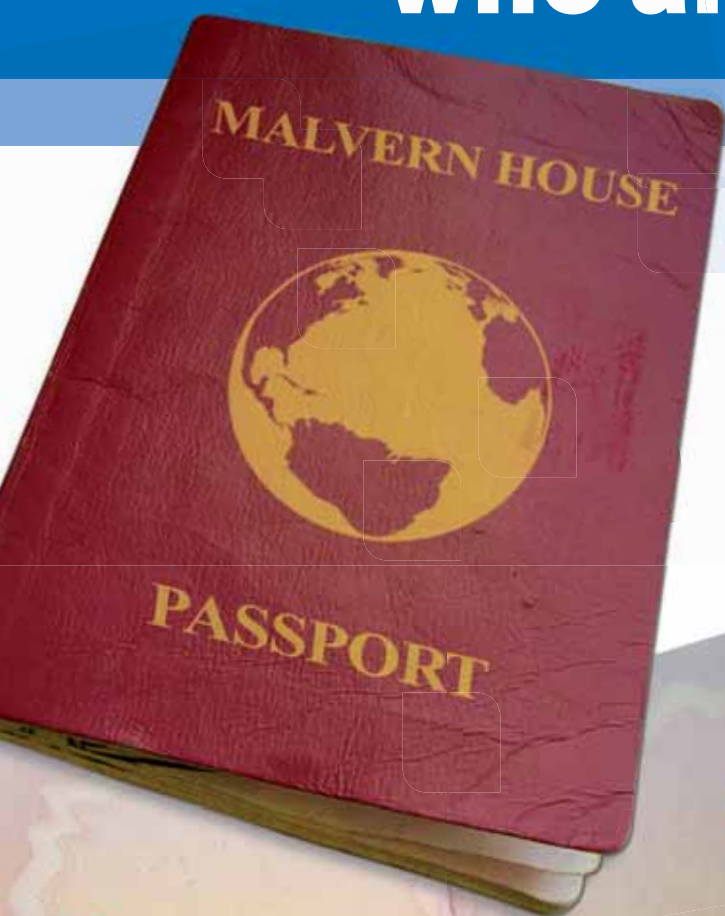
- The number of flights between **Japan and China** are to increase in the future after a deal was struck between Japan's Transport Minister Kazuo Kitagawa and the civil aviation authorities in Beijing. The deal will increase the number of weekly passenger flights between the two countries by 20 per cent to 547.

- New Zealand carrier **Air New Zealand** is to suspend flights to Singapore from October as well as overhaul some other routes in order to increase profitability. A new service to Shanghai is due to start in November, while the route between Christchurch and Los Angeles will be scrapped. "North Asian routes represent substantially greater growth prospects than Southeast Asia which is already well served with international airline capacity," said Rob Fyfe, Chief Executive at Air New Zealand.

- Two Americans have filed a price fixing lawsuit against **British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, American Airlines and United Airlines** saying that they used fuel surcharges to wrongfully inflate prices. The travellers claim that British Airways has added six fuel surcharges since May 2004 and have conspired with other airlines to artificially inflate prices.

- The Singapore government has extended its air services agreement with Malaysia, enabling low-cost carriers in the region to land in **Changi Airport** in Singapore. Cheap flights into Changi will help further Singapore's plans to turn the airport into the region's premier airline hub.

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