

MEDIA RELEASE



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ENGLISH AUSTRALIA AND IALCA AGREEMENT RECOGNISES IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND ITALY

English Australia, the association representing the leading English language colleges in Australia, and the Italian Association of Language Consultants and Agents, IALCA, are pleased to announce that they have concluded an important collaboration agreement.

Growth of 60% over the last two years in the number of Italians going to Australia to study English has seen Italy become the #1 source of students from Europe and the #8 source of students across all nationalities for Australia.

The agreement provides for the two groups to exchange information on best practices from both countries and both sectors, collaborate in the advocacy of advantageous policies, foster promotional activities, and uphold rigorous standards in their respective industries. These measures are a concrete example of how each association recognises the importance of maintaining the highest standards of quality in their work in order to protect students, promote education, and create stronger ties between Australia and Italy.

The signing ceremony was hosted by the Australian Ambassador David Ritchie AO, who used the opportunity to emphasise the valuable contribution that educational and language exchange makes to the relationship between the two countries.

English Australia Executive Director Sue Blundell said "English Australia and IALCA are great examples of the important work that associations undertake in their own countries to support and promote quality and it was a natural step to recognise the mutual benefit that can be achieved from such associations working collaboratively to ensure students have the best possible experience when they are studying overseas."

Lorenzo Agati, President of IALCA, said "This agreement is only a beginning. It has provisions that state that our two associations must now put together a working group to reach specific objectives, ensuring that our agreement leads to a strong and vibrant partnership".

Austrade's Education Manager based in Milan, Sheralyn Derrick, who was also in attendance, said "The growth in the number of Italians studying English language programs in Australia is testament to the excellent opportunities Australia offers to those seeking to develop their language skills and contribute to their future."

This signing ceremony was a follow up to a very successful visit to Australia by IALCA members in November 2012. Pina Foti, Honorary President of IALCA and the leader of the familiarisation visit to Australia, concluded "That visit was an important first step in the collaboration between our two associations. It was

bigger than the ten participants themselves as they have become ambassadors for Australia and have shared their experience with their colleagues within the IALCA membership. We look forward to a productive ongoing relationship with English Australia and its member colleges”.

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English Australia is the national peak body for the English language sector of international education in Australia, and represents over 100 member colleges throughout Australia that provide quality English language programs to students and professionals from around the world. Over 80% of the more than 124,000 international students learning English in Australia in 2012 chose to study with an English Australia member college.

IALCA is the Italian Association of Language Consultants and Agents from all over Italy. The aims and the purposes of IALCA are as follows:

- to promote the image and credibility of language and education consultants with the Italian government;
- to improve the quality of services offered to Italian students;
- to recommend reliable information about agents;
- to offer complaints for issues to be solved between IALCA members and schools.

Italy as a source of students for Australia

Italy is a relatively new source country in terms of its significance for international education providers in Australia, but one that has shown strong growth over the last two years. In 2012, 4,054 Italian students undertook English language study in Australia, showing +60% growth over the last two years (see attached Fact Sheet).

Italy has overtaken Switzerland to become the #1 source of English language students from Europe and is now the #8 source of English language students for Australia across all nationalities.

47% of Italian students choose to use a Working Holiday visa because of the flexible options it provides to combine study, travel and work. 32% are focused on longer courses of study and have student visas, whilst 17% study on a tourist visa.

About the Agreement of Collaboration

As representatives of their respective sectors, both associations seek to promote practices that protect international students and that comply with national and international regulations. Additionally, both seek to promote quality and best practice in the delivery of services of their respective sectors, elevate the visibility of international education, and represent the interests of the sectors to government.

This agreement proposes a framework for collaboration between the two associations to support the fulfilment of their respective and shared mandates.