



## IMPROVING ENGLISH TEACHING IN COLOMBIA: THE PATH TO INCREASED INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS

Run by the Ministry of Education, Colombia's National Bilingual Program aims to improve English teaching in the country, in order to strengthen innovation and competitiveness and enhance Colombia's international presence. English-language proficiency allows Colombian citizens to access new and highly-rewarding job opportunities in the global marketplace, as well as opening the door to cultural and educational exchanges. Developing a bilingual workforce is therefore essential for Colombia to maintain its recent growth rate, creating a more equal society able to face today's challenges.

## LEARN SPANISH IN COLOMBIA

Foreign nationals interested in learning Spanish can do so at prestigious universities with many years of experience in the field. These universities offer Spanish-language classes to students of all levels and types of needs, while also introducing them to Colombian and Latin American culture.

### BARRANQUILLA

Universidad del Norte:  
[www.uninorte.edu.co/extensiones/idiomas](http://www.uninorte.edu.co/extensiones/idiomas)

### CARTAGENA

Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar:  
<http://everano.unitecnologica.edu.co/2009/en/studyspanish>

### BOGOTÁ

Universidad Nacional de Colombia:  
[www.extensionidiomas.unal.edu.co](http://www.extensionidiomas.unal.edu.co)  
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana:  
[www.javeriana.edu.co/Facultades/comunicacion\\_lenguaje/centro\\_lat/pg\\_centro.htm](http://www.javeriana.edu.co/Facultades/comunicacion_lenguaje/centro_lat/pg_centro.htm)  
Universidad de la Sabana:  
<http://nuevalengua.com/cursos.htm>  
Universidad de los Andes:  
<http://lenguajes.uniandes.edu.co/>

### MEDELLIN

Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana:  
[http://convena.upb.edu.co/cdelenguas/ele\\_esp.html](http://convena.upb.edu.co/cdelenguas/ele_esp.html)  
EAFIT:  
[www.eafit.edu.co/EafitCn/Idiomas/spanishProgram/Ingles/ Metodologia+en+Espa%C3%B1ol.htm](http://www.eafit.edu.co/EafitCn/Idiomas/spanishProgram/Ingles/ Metodologia+en+Espa%C3%B1ol.htm)  
Universidad de Antioquia:  
[www.udea.edu.co/portal/page/portal/portal/A.InformacionInstitucional/H.UnidadesAcademicas/B.Escuelas/Idiomas](http://www.udea.edu.co/portal/page/portal/portal/A.InformacionInstitucional/H.UnidadesAcademicas/B.Escuelas/Idiomas)

### CALI

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana:  
[http://www.puj.edu.co/Paginas/Institucional/Departamentos/DptComunLenguaje/DptComLenguaje\\_EspanolFuncionalparaExtranjeros-EFE.aspx](http://www.puj.edu.co/Paginas/Institucional/Departamentos/DptComunLenguaje/DptComLenguaje_EspanolFuncionalparaExtranjeros-EFE.aspx)



## NATIONAL BILINGUAL PROGRAM

{ IMPROVING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE }

[www.colombiaprende.edu.co/bilinguismo](http://www.colombiaprende.edu.co/bilinguismo)  
[www.mineducacion.gov.co](http://www.mineducacion.gov.co)

Revolución  
Educativa  
Colombia aprende

Ministerio de  
Educación Nacional  
República de Colombia





## MAIN STRATEGIES

The National Bilingual Program is made up of three core strategies:

1. Setting National English Standards
  - To guide teachers, students and parents, it's essential to set national standards for the language skills that students should develop in each grade.
2. Creating a system to assess English-language competencies among teachers and students
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  - An English-language component, in line with the National English Standards, has been incorporated into the higher-education entry exam ICFES.
  - An English-language component, in line with the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference, has been incorporated into the National Graduate Exam ECAES.
3. Professional development programs for teachers of English as a foreign language: The Ministry of Education offers the following support for English teachers in Colombia:
  - English-language and methodology courses;
  - English immersion courses;
  - Online English-language courses;
  - Professional development courses;
  - Opportunities to apply for scholarships to study abroad;
  - Audiovisual tools to teach and learn English; and
  - Support for academic and professional associations and events.

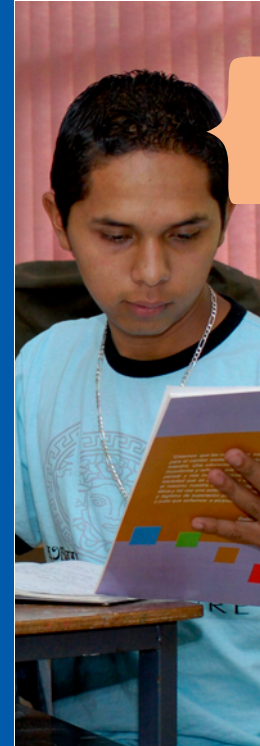
## FURTHER INFORMATION ON EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Programs for UK citizens: British Council Colombia. Website: [www.britishcouncil.org.co](http://www.britishcouncil.org.co)  
Contact: Aida Salamanca, [aida.salamanca@britishcouncil.org.co](mailto:aida.salamanca@britishcouncil.org.co).

Programs for US citizens: Fulbright Commission Colombia. Website: [www.fulbright.edu.co](http://www.fulbright.edu.co)  
Contact: Alexandra Moreno, [amoreno@fulbright.edu.co](mailto:amoreno@fulbright.edu.co).

International programs in Colombia: ICETEX. Website: [www.icetex.gov.co](http://www.icetex.gov.co)  
Contact: Rubby Montano, [rsmontano@icetex.gov.co](mailto:rsmontano@icetex.gov.co).

The Ministry of Education also promotes the use of information and communication technologies to facilitate English learning and teaching. Teachers, students and the general public can access the website [www.colombiaprende.edu.co/bilinguismo](http://www.colombiaprende.edu.co/bilinguismo), where they can find digital learning and teaching tools, virtual forums and communities, and online courses.



## STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TEACHER TRAINING AND ENGLISH TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Given socio-economic trends, new technologies, and evolving learning requirements, there is a need to tailor education to employment needs. Today's professionals must respond to global demand for a working knowledge of English. The National Bilingual Program seeks to promote, improve and strengthen English-language teaching and learning at universities and higher education institutions. To do this, we have invited all universities that offer modern-languages programs and degrees to participate in a project to help improve training for English-language teachers for Colombia's schools and universities.

The three main areas of work are:

- Creation of professional development English programs for teachers at technical and vocational schools;
- The modern-languages programs and degrees quality improvement project; and
- Professional development opportunities for English teachers throughout the country, offered by public and private universities.



## SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL BILINGUAL PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA

The Ministry of Education has been working closely with international and local organizations to strengthen government efforts through alternative financing sources. The Ministry and its regional education representatives have received support from international organizations such as the British Council, the Fulbright Commission, the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs of the US State Department, WorldTeach and renowned international universities and publishing houses. In addition, different public and private Colombian universities, companies, language centers and institutes are currently supporting the Ministry's efforts.

We would like to invite your organization to join our efforts to improve English-language learning and teaching in Colombia. Partner us in helping Colombia become a more developed, equal and prosperous country, through increased innovation and competitiveness.

Some examples of ways in which you can get involved:

- **Teacher exchanges:** this program brings qualified teachers from English-speaking countries to Colombia to teach English-language classes at public schools around the country. In exchange, Colombia sends qualified teachers to the partner country to teach Spanish-language classes. A mutual memorandum of understanding between the two countries is established in order to arrange the specific details of the exchange.
- **Volunteers:** this program brings native English speakers to Colombia to work as language assistants at public schools around the country. The initiative gives the students and teachers involved a unique opportunity to learn from a native English speaker.