Country: Uruguay
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Small country in southeastern South America (similar in size to the state of Washington).

Situated between Argentina and Brazil.

Borders South Atlantic Ocean.
URUGUAYAN PEOPLE

- **Population:** 3,316,328 (July 2012 est.)
- **Origins:** Predominantly of European descent (mainly Spanish and Italian)
- **Primary language:** Spanish
  - Portuguese/Spanish mix spoken on Brazilian border
- **Rate of Poverty:** 18.6% (as of 2010)
- **Average Years of Schooling Completed:** 15 years
- **Literacy Rate:** 98%

Montevideo, Uruguay’s capital, is home to about half the country’s population.
STABILITY

- Uruguay is considered a relatively stable country socially, politically, and economically.
- The economy remains largely dependent on agriculture.
- Uruguay has one of the highest rates of urbanization in South America.
- Uruguay has felt waves of prosperity and instability over the last few decades, which help to explain emigration trends since the middle of the twentieth century.
SCHOOLING IN URUGUAY

- Public education is free and mandatory for students ages 6 – 14.
- Secondary and technical education and the Universidad de la República (University of the Republic) are free to enrolled students.
- A university education is highly valued in Uruguay.
School runs from March to December.

A typical primary school day lasts 4 hours. Public school students attend class for a morning or afternoon session.

Pictured above are students dressed in traditional school uniforms (white apron style coat with large blue bow).
How is school structured in Uruguay?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Level</th>
<th>Starting Age (approximate)</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2 years to study math, science, language, history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Secondary</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 – 4 years before university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(students placed in tracks based on career choices)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of 2004, primary school enrollment and completion in Uruguay was close to 100 percent, while secondary school enrollment was close to 75 percent, with a 30 percent drop-out rate.
Curriculum includes the following subjects: Spanish, math, geography, history (including Uruguayan history), and science.

Large class sizes. Some cases of overcrowding in urban areas. However, a greater emphasis has been placed on reducing class size in order to address this problem.

Educators value the importance of learning a second language including English.
Despite high literacy rates and a commitment to education, Uruguay suffers from educational inequities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Urban</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◆ Country’s only public university located in capital city, Montevideo.</td>
<td>◆ Limited access to resources and supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◆ Majority of the population (93%) resides in urban areas.</td>
<td>◆ Lower rates of schooling and often long distances between home and local school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◆ Increased access to resources.</td>
<td>◆ Inadequate facilities doomed to closure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EDUCATION INITIATIVE: “PLAN CEIBAL”

What is it?
An education reform initiative provides one laptop for every primary school student in Uruguay.

Program Goals:
1. To provide digital access to all Uruguayan students, including those in the countryside.
2. To improve overall quality of education.
3. To promote universal opportunities within a public educational system.
4. To increase educational resources for all.
A Relationship between Economic Crises and Emigration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Settled where?</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960s and 1970s</td>
<td>Primarily Argentina, many to United States</td>
<td>Post World War II instability and economic conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973 - 1985</td>
<td>Primarily Argentina and Brazil</td>
<td>To escape oppressive military regime, widespread debt crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 - 2008</td>
<td>Mainly Spain, United States, Italy, and Brazil</td>
<td>Problems of low wages and unemployment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uruguayans still remain a small part of the US population. The majority who come settle in New York City, New Jersey, Washington D.C., and Florida.
ATTITUDES TOWARD ENGLISH AND THE U.S.

How do Uruguayans perceive English?

- For Uruguayans the purpose of learning English is primarily to gain access to better job opportunities.
- The English language represents modernity and global involvement.

What about the United States?

- Generally, Uruguayans hold favorable impressions of the United States. They enjoy American media. However, Uruguay is more influenced by European culture as the majority of the country’s population has European roots. The city of Montevideo is similar to many cities in Europe.
Recent immigrants from Uruguay tend to be well educated.

Most immigrants do not come from poor households. Individuals living below the poverty line rarely have access to the financial resources needed to emigrate from Uruguay.

Many Uruguayans in the US are young, professional people who have chosen to continue studying at universities or are looking for greater employment opportunity.

With young people immigrating to other countries, an increasingly large percentage of Uruguay’s remaining population is elderly. Approximately 20% of Uruguayans are over 60.
Books


Images


Images (cont.)


Internet


**Videos**

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