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## SA scholars seek international education

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*James Bowling, chief executive officer of Monarch&Co*

As another school year draws to a close, many parents and scholars are beginning to think about their tertiary education options and future career opportunities.

Given South Africa's limited quality tertiary education institutions and its annual, violent, "fees must fall" strikes, more and more people are considering residency and citizenship by investment as a means of accessing international tertiary institutions.

"The quality and standard of the study and career opportunities that a country and its academic institutions provide, play a fundamental role in the citizenship by investment (CBI) programmes that our investors choose at the end of the day," says James Bowling, chief executive officer of Monarch&Co.

The top two international study destinations that the company's clients are currently the most attracted to are the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA).

### Quality education made affordable – The European Union

"Once you become an EU resident, you can study in your particular country of residence while citizens can study in any of the EU member countries for free or at heavily subsidised rates. EU residents are also more easily admitted into other EU-based academic institutions as opposed to non-EU residents, significantly increasing the number of academic institutions to choose from," explains Bowling.

He adds that the support services, scholarship and funding as well as advanced facilities and research opportunities that the EU's top universities provide, makes the EU especially popular amongst CBI investors with children seeking international tertiary qualifications.

It is worth noting that the EU produces approximately 111 000 new doctorates each year, with the United Kingdom's University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge rated amongst the top two universities in the EU and top ten academic institutions in the world ([www.webometrics.info/en](http://www.webometrics.info/en)).

EU countries that offer legislated residency and citizenship by investment programmes for investors and their families include: Cyprus (Residency and Citizenship), Malta (Residency and Citizenship), Portugal (Residency leading to Citizenship) and Greece (Residency only).

Of these countries academic institutions, Portugal's Universidade do Porto is outperforming the rest, ranking 229 on the world university list.

In Greece, the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens enjoys a ranking of 279, followed by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (291).

Top three universities in the world – The United States of America

With the best universities in the world, the United States of America (USA) makes another popular academic destination.

Harvard University is rated as the number one university in the world, followed by the University of Stanford in second – and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in third place.

“Through the USA's EB-5 programme, CBI investors can obtain a green card, enabling them to study within the US either for free or at heavily subsidised rates,” says Bowling.

Currently, there are approximately 4 500 universities offering undergraduate degrees in the USA alone, increasing CBI investors' choice of academic subjects, courses and programmes significantly.

CBI investors obtaining a second passport in some of the best education destination countries in the world, can rest assured that they will have plenty of top academic institutions with internationally recognised programmes and leading reputations to choose from.

“Knowing that the qualification you obtain will make you even more attractive to future global employers and open doors to a wealth of opportunities, is undoubtedly one of the best investments you will ever make,” concludes Bowling.

\*Currently, South Africa's top three universities, namely the University of Cape Town (UCT), the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and Stellenbosch University respectively rank 303, 471 and 475 on the world university list.