

The Colombian Government concludes with success the IV version of a project to teach Spanish as a foreign language to East Asian students and tour guides

Bogota D.C., November 22nd 2016. "I would like to thank the Government of Colombia for giving me the opportunity to study here. The past four months were absolutely fructiferous and pleasant. I love you Colombia" were the words of Hognyu Fan, Chinese scholar from the last edition of the ELE FEALAC initiative.

Thanks to this strategy of the national government to position Colombia as a destination for learning Spanish, 60 students and tour guides of East Asian countries from the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation-FEALAC- received training in Spanish as a foreign language during four months in eight Colombian universities recognized for the high quality of their Spanish courses, which are located in Bogota, Medellin, Manizales, Armenia and Bucaramanga.

The event was attended by representatives of the public entities that lead the initiative, who offered a few words of farewell to the scholars and made a call for them to be multiplier agents of their experience in the country.

During the closure the scholars who completed their training received a certificate of attendance. Also, some of them shared stories about their learning process, their cultural experience and their volunteering activities, as well as their touristic experience.

ELE FEALAC

This initiative has its origins in the meetings of the Working Group on Culture, Sports and Education of FEALAC as well as in the visit to Cambodia preceded by the Vice Minister of Multilateral Affairs, Patti Londoño, in 2012. During her trip, the Vice Minister met with tourist authorities from East Asian countries who requested cooperation from the Colombian Government to train tour guides in Spanish.

Attending this demand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia proposed the initiative "Teaching Spanish Language in Colombia", with which seeks to diversify and strengthen Colombia's relations with East Asian countries and promote a deeper dialogue between the two regions through language and culture.

APC-Colombia, as the national manager of international cooperation, considered important to give technical leverage and financial support to this initiative under the guidelines given by the President of the Republic of positioning Colombia as a destination for learning Spanish.

This year, in order to support the generation of relations between universities of both regions, undergraduate and graduate students were included as beneficiaries of the program. As well, volunteering activities with the universities were included to complement their Spanish learning process. A total of 223 East Asian citizens have benefited from the initiative.