



# Best Educational E-Practices (BEEP)

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## E-Learning Initiatives Outside the United States

*“With the rise of Online teaching the correspondence tradition is now much the dominant mode of distance learning around the world.”*  
([Sir John Daniel](#), *“Mega-Universities and Knowledge Media,”* 1999.)

Although U. S. colleges and universities often imagine e-learning to be an American invention, the truth is that this nation is a relative newcomer to using a method of education prevalent throughout the rest of the world. This issue looks at what other countries have done in the delivery of education at a distance.

### Associations, Consortia and Networks

(These are examples of larger organizations worldwide. Many individual countries have their own.)

- [The Commonwealth of Learning](#). A consortium of 54 English-speaking nations that were formerly part of the British empire. This group plans to create and deliver courses through a [virtual university](#) for its smaller members.
- [European Association of Distance Teaching Universities](#). An organization that seeks to promote and support the creation of a European network for higher level distance education.
- [European Distance Education Network \(EDEN\)](#). A consortium with members from 36 nations that fosters developments in distance education through the provision of a platform for co-operation and collaboration among a wide range of institutions, networks and individuals.
- [Global Alliance for Transnational Education \(GATE\)](#). An international organization concerned with quality that has devised a standard of best practices for transnational education.
- [The International Center for Distance Learning \(ICDL\)](#). A UK-based (Open University) documentation center collecting and disseminating e-learning information worldwide.
- [International Council for Open and Distance Education \(ICDE\)](#). Officially recognized by the United Nations as the global non-governmental organization responsible for the field of open and distance learning, with members from 130 countries.
- [World Bank Global Development Learning Network](#). A growing network of independently owned distance learning centers utilized by private and public organizations and institutions to deliver learning programs around the globe, especially to poorer countries.

### Free, Full-Text Online E-Journals

- [European Journal of Open and Distance Learning](#). A journal that presents a forum for discussion of issues at all educational levels and in all training contexts.
- [E-Journal of Instructional Science and Technology \(e-JIST\)](#). Australian multi-faceted publication with content likely to be of interest to policy makers, managers, investors, professional staff, technical staff, and academics within education and training.
- [International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning](#). A refereed electronic journal to advance theory, research and practice in open and distance learning worldwide.
- [The Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education](#). International in scope, peer-reviewed, and research/theory oriented.

### International E-Learning Directories

- [Distance Education Organizations](#). Links to virtual campuses, open and distance learning institutions, distance education departments in conventional institutions, and distance learning networks. Maintained by Athabasca University, Alberta, Canada.
- [Galaxy of Distance Learning](#). Commercial Web site with links to e-courses from 130 countries.
- [World Wide Learn](#). Links to international virtual universities, e-learning portals/directories, study abroad programs, online training and international e-learning resources.

## Mega-Universities

The term mega-university was coined several years ago by Sir John Daniel, administrator at the Open University in the United Kingdom. He defined it as an e-learning institution with a current enrollment of at least 100,000 students. By 1999, thirteen of these mega-universities existed, all of them created under the leadership of the governments in their respective countries. Some of these universities rely largely or solely on electronic media other than computers to transmit their courses.

### Background Information

- [“Knowledge Media for Mega-Universities: Scaling Up New Technology at the Open University.”](#) Text of a speech by Sir John Daniel at the Shanghai Open and Distance Education Symposium, 1998.
- [“Mega-Universities and Knowledge Media.”](#) Article by Sir John Daniel written for the Kogan Page Co. Web site, 1999.
- [“Mega-Universities Fill Huge Gap.”](#) Article in City University of *Hong Kong Bulletin* Issue 14, August 1997.

### Mega-University Web Sites

- [Allama Iqbal. Open University. Islamabad.](#) Pakistan.
- [Anadolu University.](#) Turkey.
- [Bangladesh Open University.](#)
- [Centre National d’Enseignement a Distance.](#) France.
- [China TV University System.](#) Probably the oldest mega-university, with more than 500,000 currently enrolled, and the only one that is almost entirely telecourse-based.
- [Indira Gandhi National Open University.](#) India. With an enrollment of more than 750,000, IGNOU recently underwent a [dramatic expansion](#) of distance offerings, largely by creating 40 FM radio stations for course delivery.
- [Korea National Open University.](#) South Korea. This country has recently unveiled a plan to roll out high-speed online connections to 10 million citizens by the end of 2002, 70% of its homes.
- [The Open University.](#) United Kingdom. Although it closed its United States Open University in June 2002, the Open University continues to partner with the [University of Maryland](#) and may add additional schools.
- [Payame Noor University.](#) Iran.
- [Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University.](#) Thailand.
- [Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia.](#) Spain.
- [Universitas Terbuka.](#) Indonesia.
- [University of South Africa.](#) In addition to its mega-university offerings, a new [South African Defense Force](#) program will soon offer distance military training as well as academics.

### Examples of Recent Developments in E-Learning Internationally

- [“Global Universities: Sowing the Seeds of the Future, or Hanging on to the Past?”](#) Article by Chris O’Hagan in *Vision*, May/June 2002. Predicts that highly selective universities are unlikely to be successful in global ventures and tells what it takes to prevail in the global arena.
- [“National Open U. of Nigeria Plans to Start Operations in October.”](#) Article by Kate Galbraith in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 22, 2002. A mega-university in the making, the school will open with 60,000 students and little Internet use for course delivery. Nigeria also boasts the recently completed [Owerri Digital Village](#), a project of the [Youth for Technology Foundation](#) in a rural part of the country that provides youth with access to technology.
- [Royal Roads University’s MA in Distributed Learning.](#) Announcement in late June 2002 of a new online master’s program in e-learning by a Canadian university. It hopes to attract students from around the world who will build an “international learning community” with shared interests.
- [“Syria, Eyeing Advantages of Education, Opens a Virtual University.”](#) Article by Daniel del Castillo in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 19, 2002. A small - 600 students - but entirely online effort. State-owned, it will be modeled after Western universities, a first for Syria.