

*International Financing*

ARGENTINA  
REACHES AN  
AGREEMENT WITH  
IMF STAFF ON KEY  
ASPECTS OF A NEW  
PROGRAM

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*History*

THE "DAUGHTERS  
OF SARMIENTO":  
PIONEERS IN  
EDUCATION

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*Tourism*

VISITING  
ANTARCTICA:  
INTEREST GROWS  
AMONG THE  
UNITED STATES  
TOURISTS

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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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Minister of Economy Martín Guzmán (Left) and President Alberto Fernández (Ctr.) with Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF (Right).

## ARGENTINA REACHES AN AGREEMENT WITH IMF STAFF ON KEY ASPECTS OF A NEW PROGRAM

Last Friday, January 28, the Argentine government and the IMF staff each publicly issued separate statements indicating they had reached an agreement on the core aspects of the new program under negotiation.

Earlier that day, President Alberto Fernández celebrated the agreement -from the official Olivos Residence-, saying it “does not impose conditions on us” and through which “we will be able to exercise our sovereignty and carry out our policy of growth, development and social justice.”

“I have confidence in Argentina and in the general guidelines

of this agreement, which I will present to Congress for its consideration. We need your support for this agreement, and I appeal to everyone to make a national commitment”, he stated.

“Governing is an exercise in responsibility”, he said, adding: “We had a problem, and now we have a solution. We had a noose around our necks, a sword of Damocles, and now we have before us a path we can follow”.

He explained that “without an agreement, we did not have a clear-cut future ahead of us. With this agreement, we



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter. This edition includes an article about the agreement with the IMF staff on the key aspects of a new program, which must be endorsed by the Argentine Congress and by the IMF Board.

In this edition we also include an article on the American teachers who arrived in Argentina and played a part in laying the foundation of the educational system in our country.

Finally, an article on the growing number of American citizens interested in visiting Antarctica.

Jorge Argüello  
Ambassador to the United States



President Alberto Fernández at the official Olivos Residence.

## THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK AGREED TO, CONSISTS OF TWO BLOCKS: THE MACROECONOMIC POLICY ARRANGEMENT AND THE MEASURES TO PROMOTE MEDIUM-TERM GROWTH AND LASTING STABILITY.

1% of GDP; in 2023, around 0.6%; and in 2024 this will decrease to near 0". "We aim to reach a situation in which there is no more systematic financing from the Central Bank to the Treasury," he added.

A very important step has therefore been taken: an agreement in principle with the IMF staff on the key aspects of a new program, which must be endorsed in the coming weeks/months by the Argentine Congress and by the IMF Board.

It is a good agreement for Argentina, because it allows the country to continue on its path towards economic recovery, which, ultimately, is the only way for the country to be able to honor its obligations. Likewise, it generates favorable expectations, as shown by the markets' initial reaction regarding the country's future and economic outlook. The terms of the agreement in principle and the expectations it generates strengthen Argentina's ongoing economic recovery process, which is robust.

It is also a good agreement for the IMF which, like our country, needs to find an effective response to the problem generated by the failed standby in 2018. In this regard, the international organization is showing flexibility and the ability to understand what the current situation demands: supporting the recovery under way, and setting out a path of convergence to a fiscal balance that is realistic and consistent with the growth of the economy in the coming years. ■

can shape the present and build a future".

During a press conference, Chief of Staff Juan Manzur and the Minister of Economy Martín Guzmán gave details regarding some of the key elements agreed on with the IMF staff. During his presentation, Minister Guzmán explained the general framework agreed to, which consists of two blocks: the macroeconomic policy arrangement and the measures to promote medium-term growth and lasting stability. In this regard, the Minister stressed that a "fiscal policy that does not constrain a sustained recovery" was agreed to. He added that there will be "a gradual decrease in the fiscal deficit based on a recovering economy" and that a 2.5% primary fiscal deficit of GDP is projected for 2022; 1.9% by 2023; and 0.9% by 2024.

Regarding monetary policy, the Minister said that a "gradual but decisive reduction of the monetary assistance provided by the Central Bank to the Treasury" is expected, anticipating that this year, "monetary financing will be



## THE “DAUGHTERS OF SARMIENTO”: PIONEERS IN EDUCATION

On a day in 1869, the porters at the Buenos Aires port were fighting over a huge trunk that belonged to a 25-year-old girl who only spoke English. Mary Gorman, the daughter of a Baptist clergyman that had graduated with honors in Wisconsin, was the first U.S. teacher who arrived in that distant country they called Argentina. Later on, there were 61 women and four men.

As pioneers in a time of intolerance, shortages and political disputes, the teachers settled in the different provinces of a still inhospitable land. They left behind the comforts of a quiet and safe life in their homes to embark on an adventure during which they had to travel for days in wagons and stagecoaches. Most of them had to learn to speak Spanish and face that society's prejudices.

At that time, President Domingo Faustino Sarmiento had launched a crusade that marked the history of education in our country and in turn set a milestone in the field of cooperation between the United States and Argentina. The objective was to create training schools and institutions where docents could carry out their teaching practices.

In 1845, a little more than 10 years before Gorman's arrival, Sarmiento traveled to Europe and the U.S. on behalf of the Chilean government. The purpose was to research and analyze the different educational systems in various countries. This was how he learned about the work of Horace Mann, who implemented the theories of the Swiss pedagogue Johan Heinrich Pestalozzi, a system that relied on public education as the basis for a state's growth.

Portraits of the teachers that Sarmiento brought to Argentina in the old library of the Argentine Embassy in Washington DC.



## A CRUSADE THAT MARKED THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN OUR COUNTRY AND IN TURN SET A MILESTONE IN THE FIELD OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ARGENTINA.

However, it was only during the three years he was posted as ambassador in Washington, between 1865 and 1868, that he strengthened his contact with Mary Mann after the death of her husband. As an undeniable liaison, she was the one who helped Sarmiento materialize his project of hiring teachers from the United States to create an education program in Argentina.

They were known as “the daughters of Sarmiento”. They came from New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio, among other states, as well as from the New England area. In many cases they found out about that program through Mary Mann, and also through the notices published in major newspapers in the United States.

When their contracts ended, many of them decided to stay in Argentina, while others returned to the United States, and some married foreigners. Others, such as Mary Morse and Margaret Collord, met on the ship and became inseparable friends. They lived in Mendoza Province, and when they retired they bought and managed a winery. Both died there in 1945 several days apart and were the last survivors of that heroic literacy campaign.

Each one of them was an architect of the educational system in Argentina at the beginning of the twentieth century. Suffragettes, feminist activists, science and nature lovers, they were the first to add physical education as a part of their training.

Innovative and brave, Sarah Eccleston created the career of Kindergarten Teacher, which did not exist in the country. From her trench, she promoted manual labor in elementary schools for students to develop practical skills and represented the country at the 1897 World Conference on Education.

They brought the value of discussion and debate into the classrooms and the existing teaching system, as well as respect for the students’ cultural background. They all agreed to eliminate punishments, instead searching for a fluid communication without violence with the students. They also fostered the value of personal independence.

That was how, when she arrived in Jujuy Province, Jeannette Stevens, known as “Miss Juanita”, noticed that girls from well-off families went to school accompanied by a servant who brought their school supplies. She gradually banished that custom, just as she encouraged the habit of doing gymnastics. When her contract ended, she decided to stay in Jujuy and preferred using Spanish, as it was a more “cordial and friendly” language.

Mary Graham, Florence and Sarah Atkinson, Clara Gillies, Sarah Harrison, Cora Hill, Amy Wade, Martha Graham, Charles Dudley and Clara Armstrong are some of the teachers who arrived in Argentina between 1869 and 1893. And with them, the first teacher, George Stearns who, along with his wife Julia C. de Stearns, settled in Entre Ríos and founded the Escuela Normal de Paraná, which was nationalized by Sarmiento.

The images of 45 of these teachers are part of the permanent collection of the Argentine Embassy and for many years they covered the walls of the former library. Currently, a large part of this collection is showcased in some of the rooms of the Sarmiento building of our consulate. ■



Tourist boats in the Antarctic Peninsula region. Photo: Ministry of Tourism.

## VISITING ANTARCTICA: INTEREST GROWS AMONG THE UNITED STATES TOURISTS

Tourism, along with fishing, is one of the two commercial activities in Antarctica. Interest in the white continent has been on the rise among tourists from the United States. It is a unique journey that offers travelers extraordinary landscapes and contrasts.

The formal start of commercial tourist activities in Antarctica began in 1958, when the Argentine Naval Transport "Les Eclaireurs" transported tourists to the frozen continent for the first time.

Until the early 1980s, only a few hundred tourists visited Antarctica. Since the early 1990s, tourist activities have been expanding both in the number of visitors and in the number of places visited.

Today the possibility of navigating frozen bays, watching whales, walking among penguins, and observing sea lions and elephant seals is an accessible reality for tourists from the United States. The ideal dates for this trip are from early November to late March, and it is advisable to spend at least 7 days there.

To begin the journey, it is necessary to arrive in Ushuaia, the capital of the province of Tierra del Fuego, a city with an international airport. In any case, more than 90% of tourist activities in Antarctica take place through cruise ships, and only a few companies offer airborne tourism. Tourist ships sail mainly in the Antarctic Peninsula region. More than 80% of cruise tourism departs from -or stops

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at some point in- the port of Ushuaia, between November and March, with itineraries lasting an average of 10 to 20 days.

During the 2018-2019 summer season, the number of tourists in Antarctica exceeded 50,000 visitors.

Landings in Antarctica are mainly concentrated in the easily accessible ice-free sites, with unique fauna and flora, landscapes, history and scientific activities. Although about 200 sites are the ones usually visited by tourists, they concentrate mainly in about 30 sites, which turn out to be the most popular and are mostly located in the northwest area of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Tourist activities in the Antarctic continent are wide-ranging, and include hiking, small boat trips, visits to scientific stations, kayaking, camping, climbing, diving and snorkeling, among others.

Due to the absence of terrestrial predators, the coasts of Antarctica are a paradise for birds. To the south is the nesting place of emperor penguins, Antarctic petrels, South Pole brown gulls, cormorants, and albatrosses, along with 40 other species. Among these birds the penguins stand out, of which two species live only in Antarctica.

Antarctic tourism on cruise ships usually includes a significant educational component, since guides and lecturers on board give talks regarding the value and preservation of the continent. Therefore, Antarctic tourism can be seen as a means of dissemination that contributes to spreading information on the importance of conservation of the Antarctic continent.

The Antarctic Treaty System has established rules and guidelines that visitors and tour operators must comply with to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on the Antarctic environment and its scientific and aesthetic values. ■

*It is possible to download an application that includes a map showing the sites, guidelines for visitors, and relevant information for each of these sites. This application can be downloaded here:*

<https://antarctictreaty.maps.arcgis.com/>