



# Tales from the EFL classroom: Educational tourism at the UWI St. Augustine Campus

Beverly–Anne Carter  
&

Amina Ibrahim–Ali

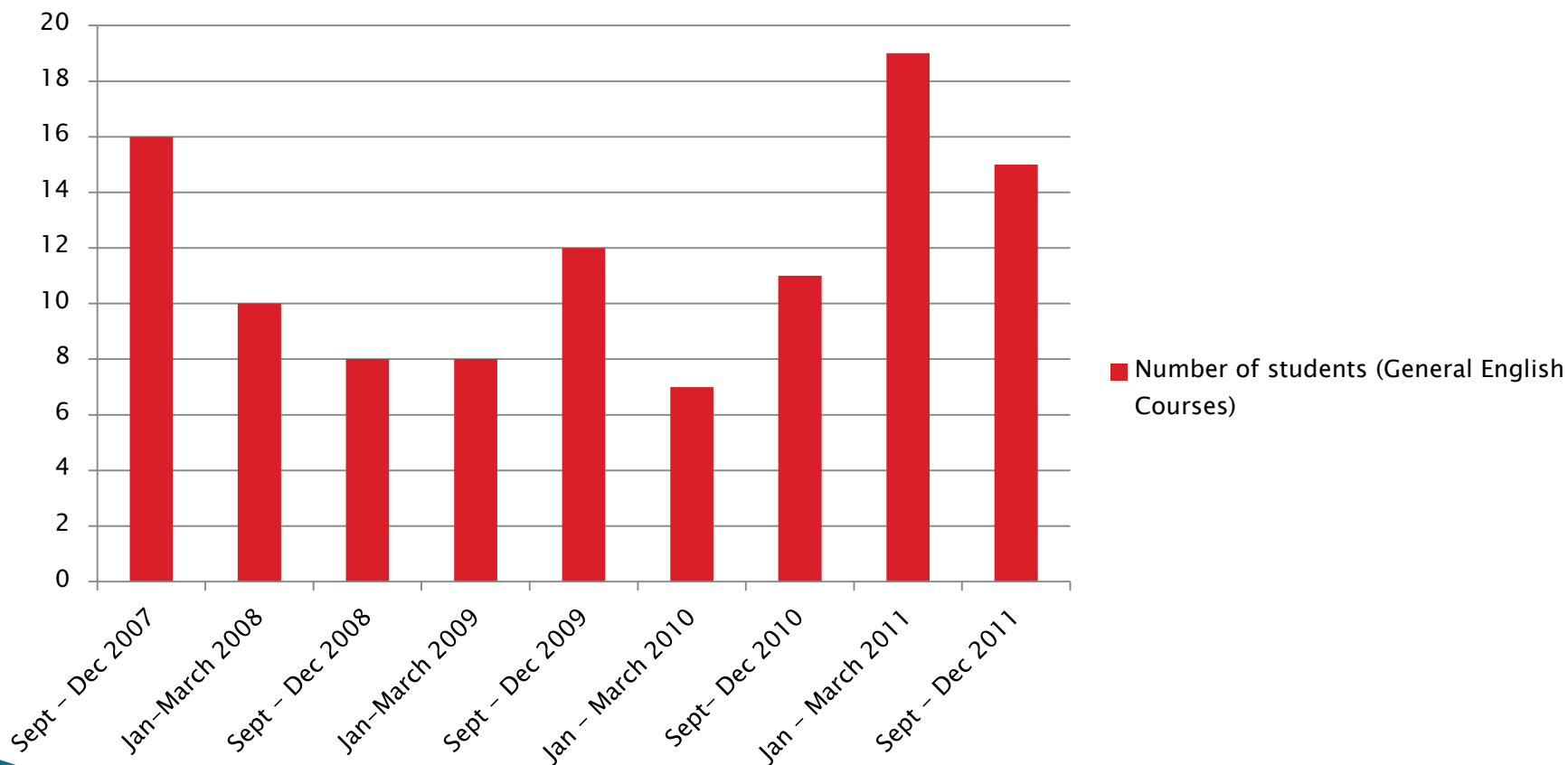
Centre for Language Learning, UWI St. Augustine

# Overview

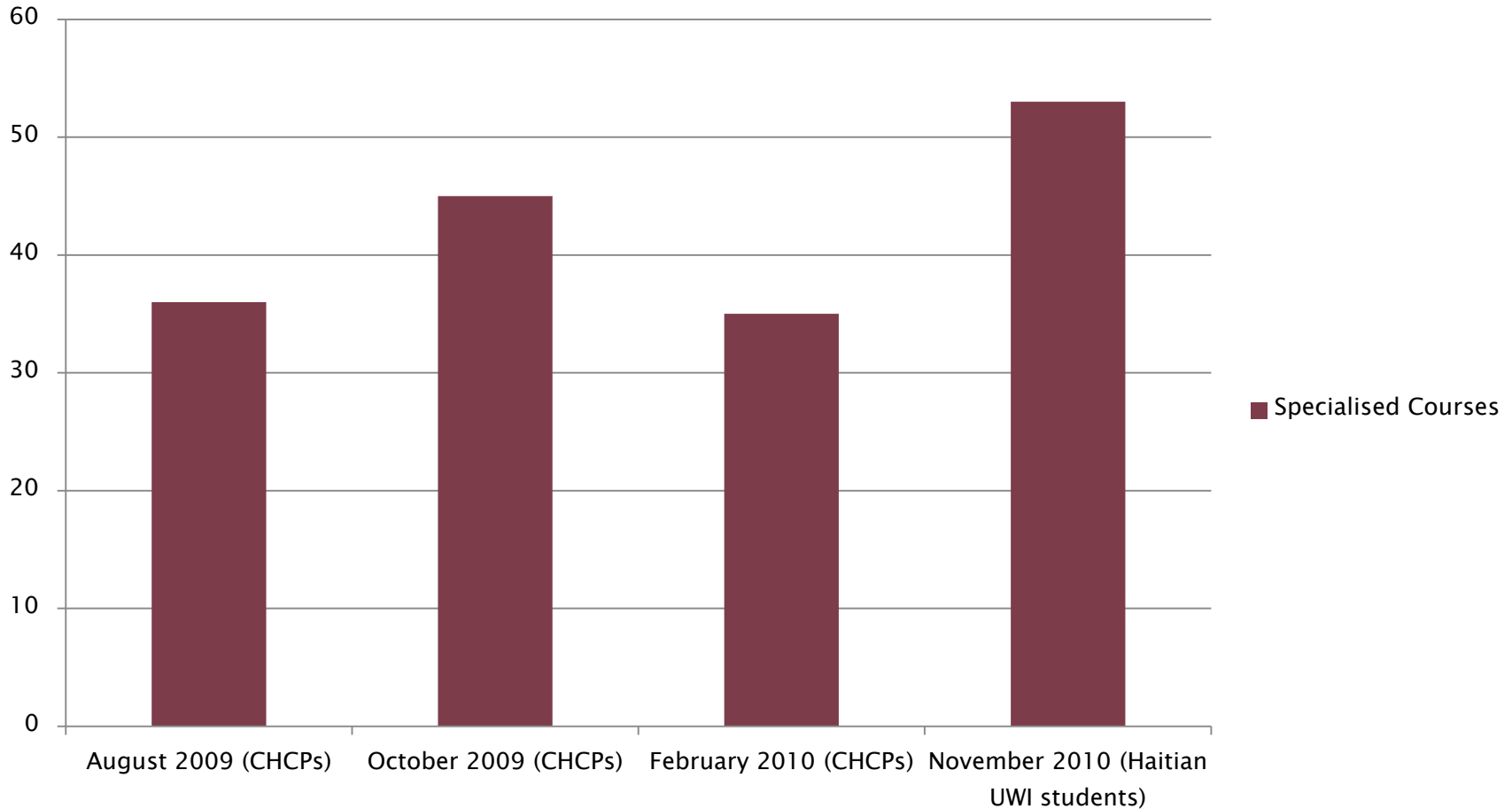
1. EFL @ St. Augustine 2007–2011
2. Defining educational tourism
3. Using the ‘push–pull theory of tourism’ to make sense of the UWI EFL product
4. Working towards a more comprehensive approach to educational tourism @ St. Augustine and in T&T
5. References

# EFL enrolments 2007 –2011

## General English Courses



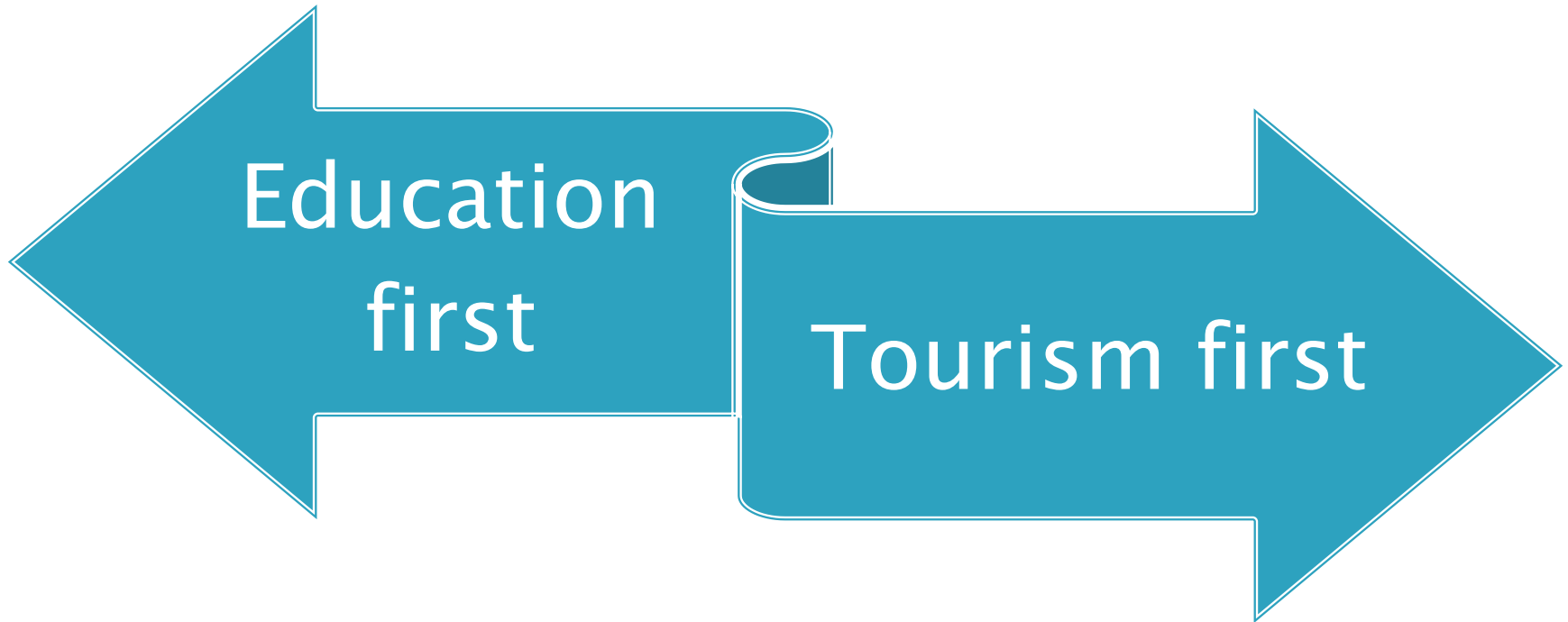
# Courses for specific purposes 2009–2010



# Educational tourism—a special interest sub-sector

- ❖ Williams (2010) notes that:
  - The typology is categorised according to the specific motivation e.g. past-time, hobby, leisure pursuit.
  - The focus might be recreational, educational or a combination of both.

# Education first vs tourism first (Ritchie et al., 2003)



# Education first (Williams, 2010)

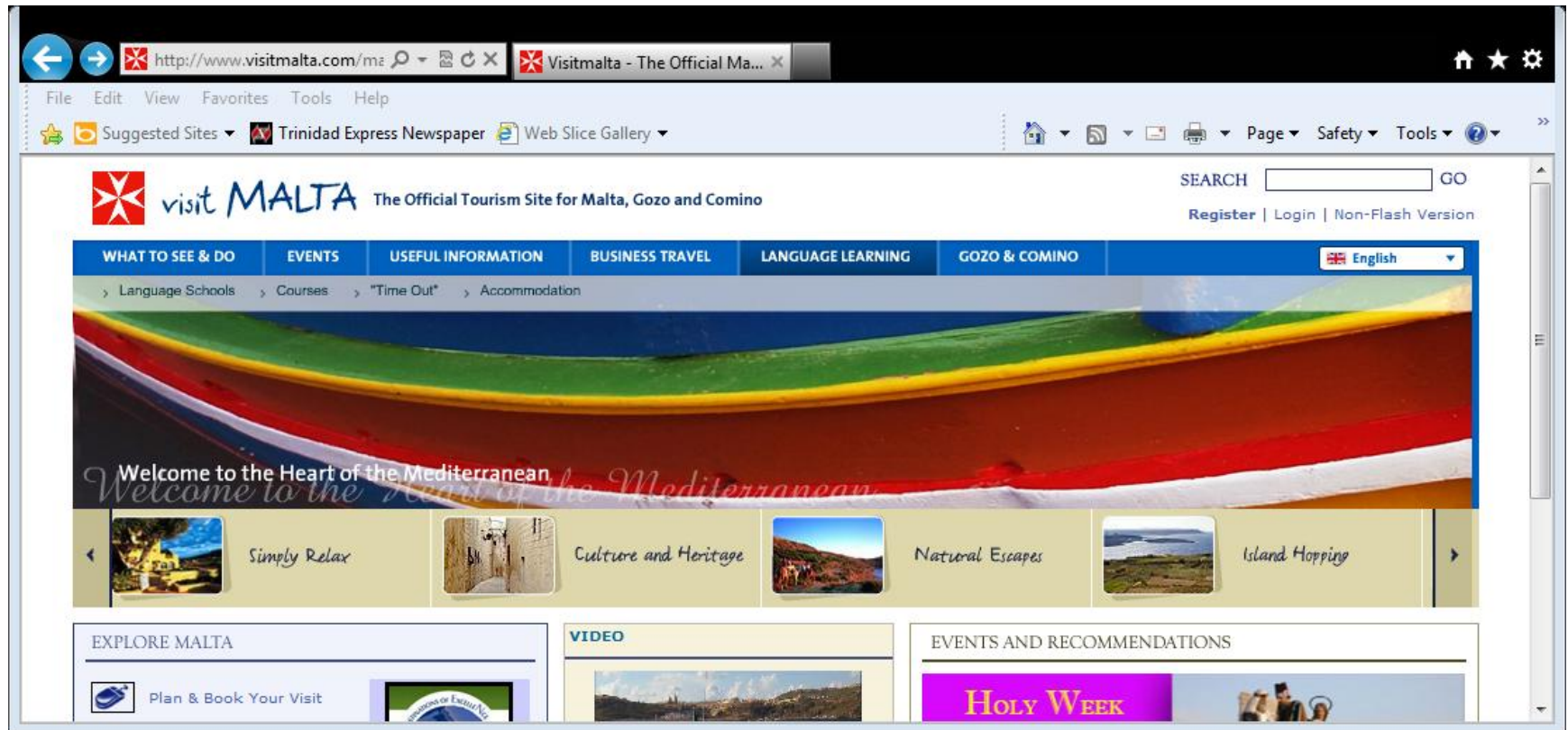
- ▶ Primarily motivated by education and learning
- ▶ Incidental tourism motivation
- ▶ Lack of recognition by tourism industry
- ▶ Peripheral element of visitor economy strategy
- ▶ Invisible tourism-related impacts

# International educational travel

- ❖ According to Trew & Cockrell (2003):
  - International educational travel is an important and fast growing sector with considerable tourism-earning potential.
  - The UK is the world's largest supplier of English language courses w/ revenues estimated at £1.5 billion per year <http://www.visitbritain.com/en/Travel-tips/Study-and-learn/10-reasons-to-study-English-in-Britain.htm>  
<http://www.englishuk.com>
  - Newer EFL markets benefit from a cohesive marketing structure, i.e. government, tourist board and suppliers work in unison.



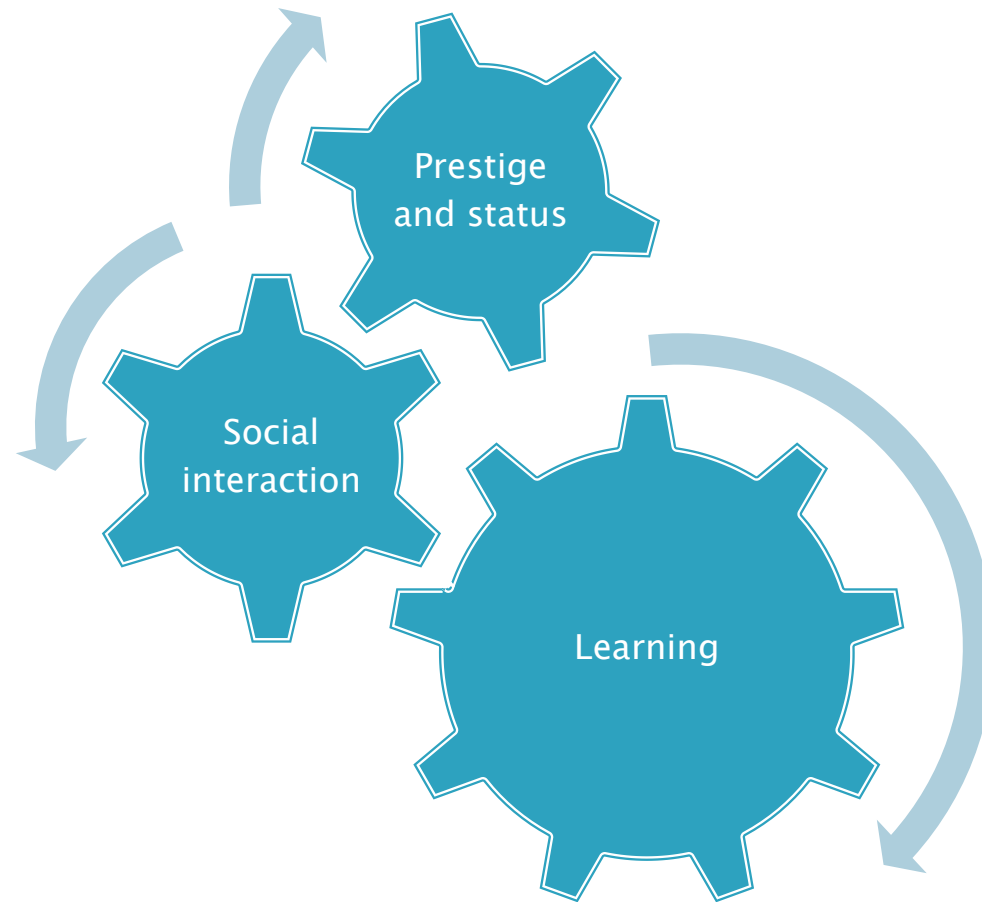
# EFL in Malta




# Push-pull theory of tourism



# Push factors = socio-psychological motives of the tourist



# Pull factors or what makes the destination attractive

- ✓ An immersion language experience, e.g. *If you take a course in Venezuela or Colombia, you speak English in class. But in the break you have to buy a snack in Spanish and then you finish the course and take the bus in Spanish, so it does not work. (María)*  
*Of course the main goal was to improve the English skill...(and) the culture and that is why Trinidad has the opportunity for people like us to come from Colombia and Venezuela, because is close, very. (Juan)*
- ✓ Teaching quality and the reputation of the educational provider 
- ✓ Low cost, e.g. *For the same money you need more hour in my country to learn English... (Diana)*

# Pull factors = infrastructure and other resources

1. Government processes, e.g. arrival at ports of entry and the visa process
2. Private sector processes e.g. finding suitable accommodation
3. UWI processes e.g. enrolling as an international English language student
4. Safety and security

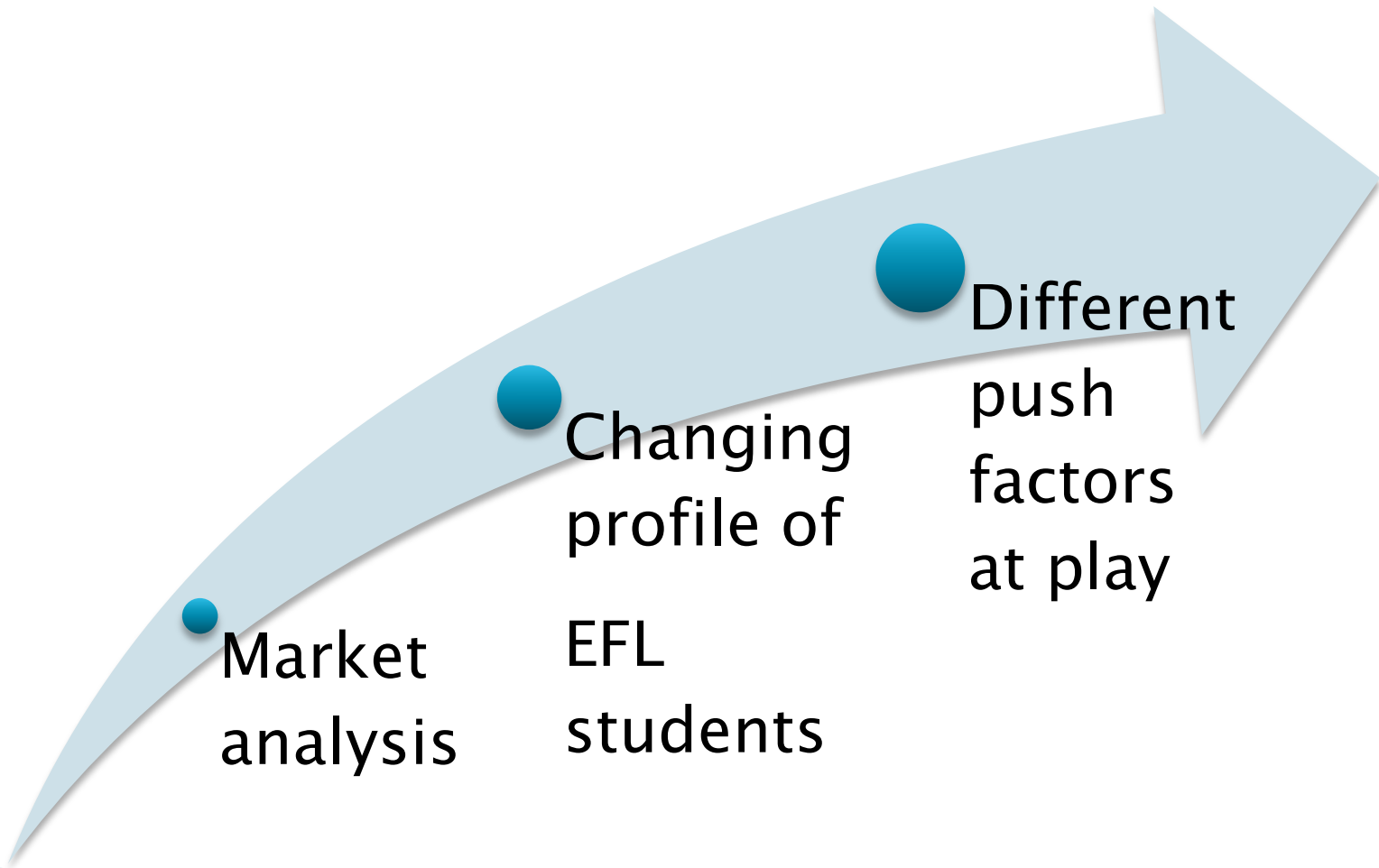
# Moving forward

- ▶ What is required to bridge the gap between where we are and where we would like to be?
- ▶ According to Prideaux & Watson (2010):
  - A realistic understanding of the pull factors
  - A realistic assessment of the push factors
  - The ability to respond to the push factors
  - Recognition of the changing nature of the push factors

# EFL Business Plan



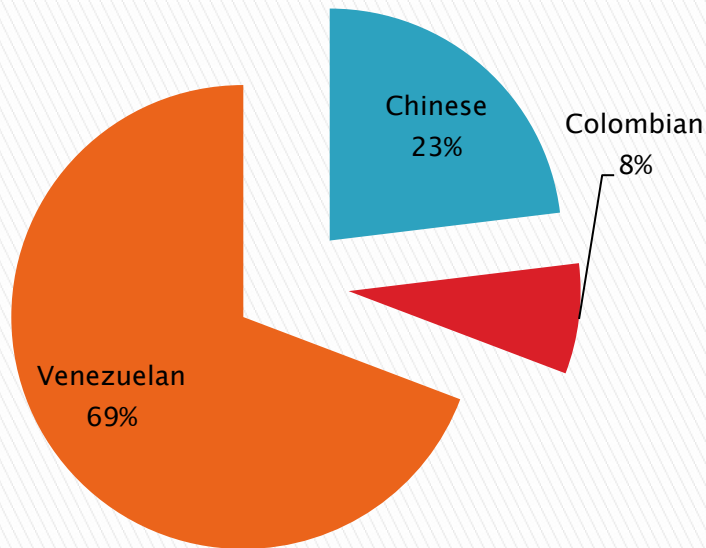
# Recognising the changing nature of push factors





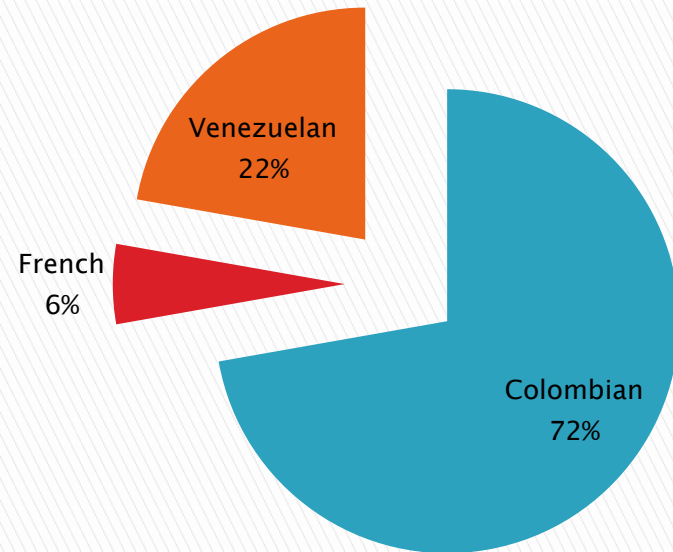
# Changing push factors

January – April 2009



+ Venezuelans

January – April 2012



+ Colombians

# Addressing the challenges posed by the pull factors

1. Government processes, e.g. arrival at ports of entry and the visa process
2. Private sector processes e.g. finding suitable accommodation
3. UWI processes, e.g. 'issues include logistics with payment, registration and accommodation'
4. Safety and security

# Some recommendations (external)

- ▶ Use fora like these to promote the notion of educational tourism and lobby for a cohesive approach to marketing (inputs from TDC, the Immigration Department, other industry stakeholders).
- ▶ Strengthen the sector via linkages in order to arrive at an industry perspective and promote quality assurance, quality management systems etc. The CLL EFL programme should play a leadership role in this regard.

# Some recommendations (internal)

- ▶ Promote cross-disciplinary approaches to address some of the issues faced by EFL.
- ▶ Continue to raise the profile of EFL on campus.
- ▶ Continue to stress the potential of EFL as a core facet of UWI St. Augustine's internationalisation thrust and thus a strategic initiative.

# Conclusion

- ▶ EFL is a viable tourism product in Trinidad and Tobago.
- ▶ Recognising this means drawing on the lessons of the wider tourism industry and making other tourism stakeholders our partners in the process.
- ▶ In meeting students' needs, we would do well to consider their interactions both inside and outside the classroom; re-conceptualizing our approach to educational tourism—with a renewed focus on the tourism dimension—allows us not to lose sight of the bigger picture.

# References

- ▶ Cohen, E. (1972). Toward a sociology of international tourism. *Social Research* 39.1, 164–182.
- ▶ Prideaux, B. & T. Watson (2010). Rebranding Norfolk Island – Is it enough to rebuild visitor numbers? In A. Lewis–Cameron & S. Roberts (eds.), *Marketing island destinations: Concepts and cases*. Oxford: Elsevier, 23–36.
- ▶ Ritchie, B. W., N. Carr & C. Cooper (2003). *Managing educational tourism*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- ▶ Trew, J. & N. Cockrell (2003). The UK's education travel market—the potential. <http://www.insights.org.uk> article accessed 10 December 2011.
- ▶ Williams, P. (2010). Educational tourism: understanding the concept, recognising the value. <http://www.insights.org.uk> article accessed 10 December 2011.

# Acknowledgements

- ▶ EFL students and tutors @ CLL
- ▶ Imran Berment, AV Technician CLL
- ▶ Vanessa Williams, AA (EFL & Outreach)

# Thank you