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## South Korea Gives Its Universities the Power to Set Tuition Rates

By ALAN BRENDER

The South Korean Education Ministry plans to revise a law governing higher education so that national universities can set their own tuition rates.

Eight national industrial universities will be allowed to establish their own admission and tuition fees in 2002, and 36 other universities and 6 national professional colleges will be allowed to follow suit in 2003.

Initially, the Education Ministry had planned to allow all the universities to have more freedom to set their own policies next year. But an outcry from students and parents, who feared substantial tuition increases, led the Education Ministry to delay the move for most universities. The ministry also capped the tuition increases at 20 percent over the next three years.

In the past, the ministers of education and of finance and economics set the tuition for the national universities, and increases have been relatively modest: 6.7 percent last year, 1.4 percent in 1999, and 0.8 percent in 1998.

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