

mated at just under 40 per cent of the total, is generally at the lowest level of the economic scale.

Language

Spanish is the official language of Peru; however, Quechua and Aymara are also recognized as official languages in the Central and Southeast Andean regions. Spanish is generally the language of business and government although a number of business people have a good command of English.

Religion

The majority of the population is Roman Catholic, but Peru has complete freedom of religion.

Education

Primary education is obligatory and free in state schools. All schools, whether primary, secondary, national or foreign, are under the general supervision of the Ministry of Education. Large companies are required to contribute to the education of workers and their families. Under more recent legislation, employers are also obliged to organize instruction units to promote the specialized training of their work force. All these measures are rapidly lowering the previously high illiteracy rate in Peru.

There is intense competition every year for the available places in technical schools and universities, reflecting the keen interest in learning of today's Peruvian youth. There are private grammar and high schools, where English, French, German or Italian are spoken. There are two well-known private universities, La Catolica and Universidad de Lima.

Interpreter and Translation Services

Whenever possible, Spanish should be used in contacts with Peruvian government officials, although a number of business people have a good command of English. Interpretation and translation services in Lima are available through various agencies and in major hotels. The Canadian Embassy can also direct you to competent interpretation and translation services.