



HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION WITH LATIN AMERICAN PARTNERS

TFK programme info session - LAC region, 5.3.2025
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✚ LAC - Operating Environment

- 33 countries, + 660 million inhabitants,
- Languages:
 - Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, indigenous
- Mostly middle or upper-middle income countries vs. high internal inequalities
- Almost all children in school, literacy 94 %
- On the national agendas:
 - Development of the quality and equality of education at all levels, innovation and company collaboration
- Challenges:
 - School and HE drop outs, financial and macro economic difficulties, political instabilities



✚ HE & Science in the LAC region

- Higher education system based largely on the European model
- Ongoing processes to increase regional integration in higher education
- Higher education increased strongly in past decades
 - + 50 % of the reference group = poorest 10 % vs. wealthiest 77 %
- Investments in STI growing, but still behind globally
- Best universities of the region at the same level with Finnish universities
- Top LAC-countries in HE & Science:
 - Brasilia, Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Argentina

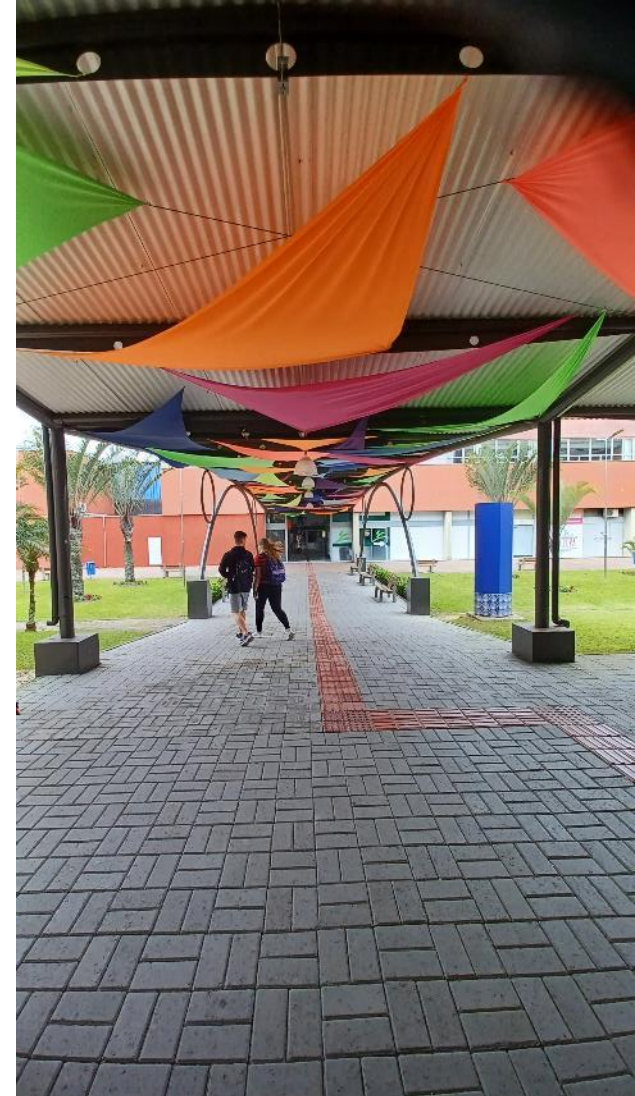
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✚ Cooperation landscape between Finland and LAC

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- Finland's academic image in LAC:
 - High quality education at all levels
 - Finnish innovation system and high technology
 - Cooperation between HEIs and private sector
 - Evidence-informed public policies
 - Still not well known as a destiny for higher education
- Collaboration with Finland seen as straightforward and non-complicated
- LAC universities have important connections to world top universities
 - Traditional partner countries : US, Spain, France, Germany, Canada, UK





Existing FIN-LAC collaboration

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- + 200 MoUs between Finnish and LAC HEIs
 - Most with Chile, Brazil and Mexico
 - Activities: Education and teaching cooperation; Student and staff mobility; Research and RDI; Education services
 - Fields: Multidisciplinary, business, education and teacher training, engineering, health, bioeconomy and forestry; social sciences and humanities
- Joint publications
 - Most with Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Colombia
 - Natural sciences, medicine and health sciences, bio and environmental sciences, technology, forestry





TFK funded LAC projects in 2022 (13)

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- Chile
 - AU: Smart wearables
 - UEF: Green transition
 - Karelia: Active & healthy aging
 - Laurea: Internationalization
- Argentina:
 - AU: CIT for vertical farming
 - ULA: Circular bioeconomy
- Uruguay:
 - HAMK: Forestry
- Mexico:
 - UTU: International business
- Brazil:
 - UH: Indigenous languages, knowledge and environment
- Peru:
 - ULA: Indigenous cultures/Sustainable law and ethic
- Bolivia & Peru:
 - UEF: Underutilized crops and sustainable food systems
- Chile & Peru
 - JYU: Business environment
- Argentina & Mexico
 - AU: Maritime engineering



TFK funded LAC projects in 2023 (10)

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- Brazil:
 - UO: Business studies
 - UH: Antimicrobial Resistance
 - LUT: Artificial intelligence
 - Hanken: Humanitarian operations management
- Uruguay:
 - UEF: STEAM in teacher education
 - AU: Learning Environment Design
- Chile
 - Novia: Wind power to hydrogen
- Mexico:
 - AU: Co-creating intercultural mentoring
- Peru:
 - UV: Sustainable internationalization in business
- Argentina, Brazil & Ukraine
 - UH: evolution education and biodiversity

TFK funded LAC projects in 2024 (6)

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- Brazil:
 - Laurea: Sustainable business & working life connections in the Amazon
 - LUT: Solid mechanics
- Argentina:
 - AU: Community communication networks
- Argentina & Uruguay:
 - UTU: Digital learning in reading and math
- Ecuador & Peru:
 - Forest education & research
- Chile & Colombia:
 - AU: Innovation capacities

✚ EU-LAC collaboration opportunities

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- Most LAC countries eligible for EU funding, except for Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay
- EU-CELAC Strategic Roadmap 2021-2023 for R&I cooperation – to be updated in 2025
 - Health, green transition, digital transformation, innovation, researcher mobility
- Team Europe initiatives and Global Gateway with Latin America
 - Security and justice, inclusive and equal societies, green transition, digitalization, forest governance and biodiversity, sustainable growth and livelihoods, human rights
 - Energy, transport, health, education and research
- EU's bilateral science and technology cooperation agreements with Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico
 - Energy, health, oceans, water and digitalization, etc.





Past and existing collaboration with EU funds

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Erasmus+ Mobility

- In 2022-2024 in total 30 Erasmus+ Global Mobility partnerships with LAC countries
- Most with Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay
- + some CBHE projects

Horizon 2020

- In total +200 partnerships
- Most cooperation with Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Mexico
- Great variety of topics

Horizon Europe

- Still notable cooperation with Brazil, less with other countries
- Potential topics with joint funding:
biodiversity, sustainable blue economy, water security and ICT

+ HE and science in Brazil



- World's 7th biggest population (212 million) and 9th biggest economy
 - 20 % undergrad degree; under 1 % master's degree
- Largest HE sector in LAC and 5th largest in the world
 - Over 2600 HEIs = 302 public + rest are private
 - Over 9 million HE students: 75 % in private institutes, majority in undergrad level (97 %)
 - Best universities are public, with 95 % of the scientific production
 - 67 universities in THE ranking 2024
- Scientific production: 3,2 % of the global (13th place) and 50 % of the LAC science
 - Top: Engineering, chemistry, agriculture
 - Volume: Parasitology, tropical medicine, odontology, agriculture and forestry
- ~50 Existing Finnish HE partnerships with a variety of partners

HE and research funding in Brazil

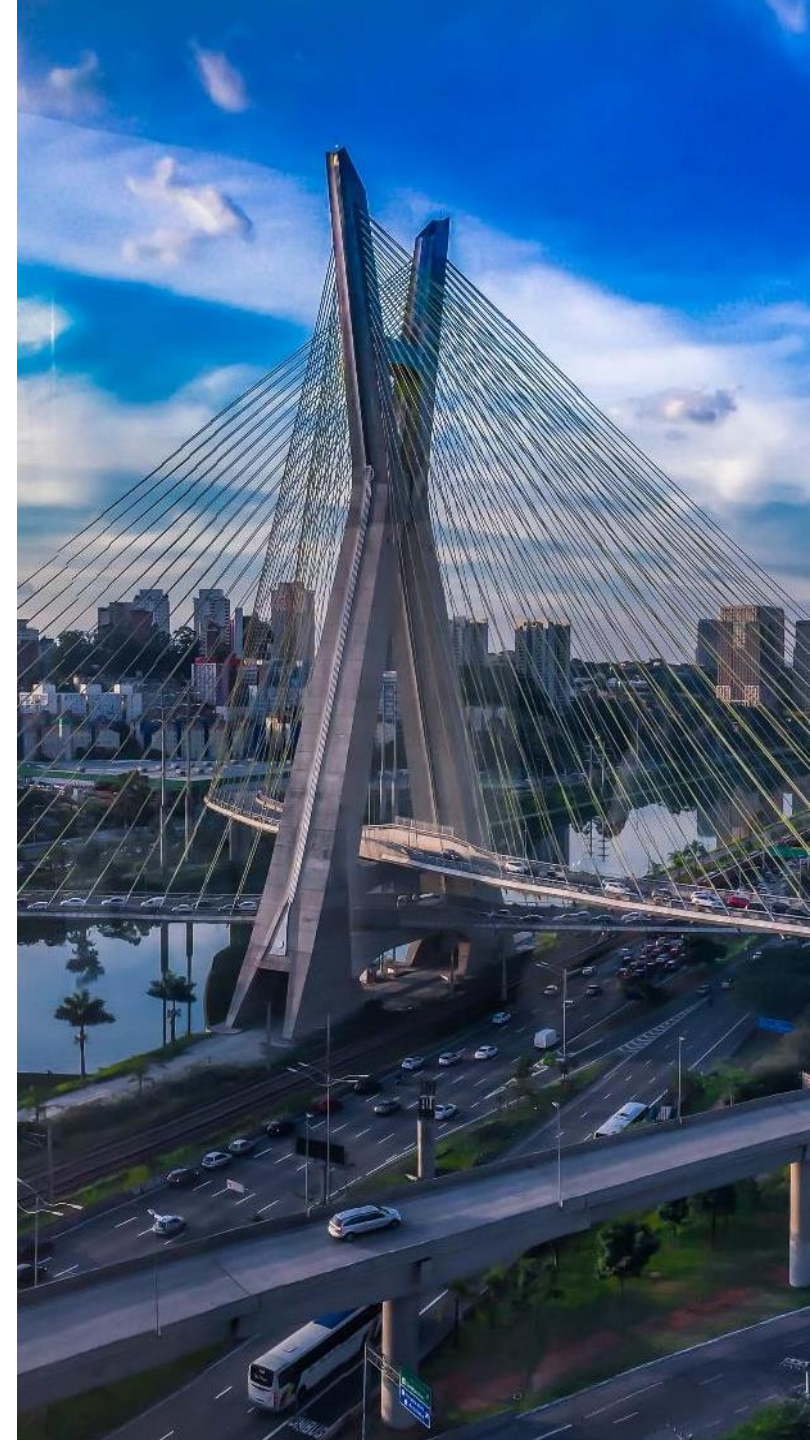
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Brazil has significant national and state funding for mobility and research

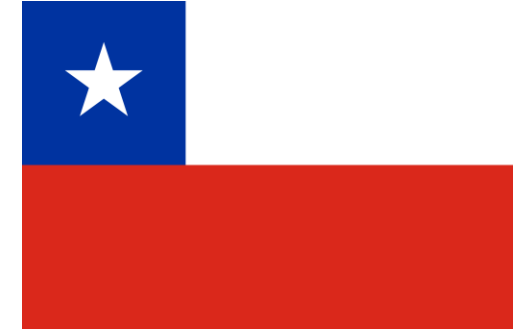
- CAPES, CNPq and FAP's (incl. FAPESP)
- "Initiation in Science" scholarships for internships in research projects abroad for undergrad and master's students
- Scholarships for sandwich degrees/short term mobility for postgrad and post doc
- Funding for full degrees abroad only in strategic areas, such as teacher training
- Internationalization at home: Scholarships for incoming students and researchers
- Internationalization of HE: Focus on the universities with less internationalization
- Collaboration with universities in the Amazon high on the national agenda, e.g. Amazonia+10 funding programme
- Similar research project funding as our RCF funding

✚ Brazilian HE degrees

- Graduação (undergrad)
 - Bachelor, 3-6 years
 - Training for job market in all areas: industry, commerce and services
 - Licenciatura, 4-5 years
 - teacher training in early childhood, basic and secondary education
- Pos-graduação (research careers)
 - Master, 1,5-2 years
 - Doctor, 4 years



+ HE and science in Chile



- ~50 Existing Finnish HE partnerships with a great variety of partners!
- Aim to increase the share of R&D in the economy
 - Many synergies with Finland in different sectors
 - Digitalization, mining, bio-economy, energy and defense material cooperation
 - Chile seeks to be among Top 3 of the main exporters of green hydrogen
 - Funding: ANID and BECAS CHILE
- Private education sector has a very important role in the country
 - Dynamic market for short diploma degrees and master's degrees

+ HE and science in Mexico



- ~40 existing Finnish HE partnerships with a great variety of partners!
 - Research in e.g. forestry, social sciences and renewable energy
- Main sectors of interest for Finland
 - Forestry, circular economy, smart city, energy efficiency and smart energy, bioenergy, sustainable fashion, design and architecture
 - Needs for research and skilled labor: metal and machinery (manufacturing), ICT and telecommunications
- Funding: National Council of Science and Technology (Conacyt), AMEXID, FUNED

✚ HE and science in Argentina



- Leading higher education country in the region
 - ~ 80 000 foreign students, big share of intra-LAC student mobility
 - Public universities tuition free, even for foreign students
 - Law, medicine, different areas of engineering
 - Federalist country in which provinces and city of Buenos Aires have operating authority
- Existing Finnish HE partnerships (~19)
 - Most with private universities but public science universities shouldn't be forgotten: high quality!
- Main sectors of interest for Finland:
 - Connectivity and digitalization (5G, satellites, cybersecurity, AI), maritime technology, bio-economy, circular economy
 - In HE also: biotechnology and food industry, renewable energies
- Argentines are experienced applicants for EU funding and often fluent in English

✚ Argentinian HE degrees

- Grado (undergrad)
 - Titulo de ejercicio profesional, 5-6 years
 - Professional training in specific fields
 - Licenciatura, 4-6 years
 - Research expertise in specific areas
 - Profesorado, 4-5 years
 - Accreditation for university teacher
- Posgrado (research careers)
 - Master, 2 years
 - Doctor, 4 years



+ HE and science in Colombia



- ~15 existing Finnish HEI partnerships
- Main sectors of interest for collaboration with Finland:
 - Education, digitalization, renewable energies, circular economy, sustainable mining
- Education is the biggest sector for government spending!
 - The government budget for education has increased significantly on a yearly basis
 - The main objective: to strengthen the education system by improving infrastructure and education quality (especially in remote territories), promoting teacher training and investing in HE
 - Ministry of Educacion's interest towards Finnish teacher training and educational infrastructure
 - Cooperation with EDUFI's FinCEED in 2023-24
 - SENA and the transformation of Vocational Education and Training
 - Continuous discussions on advancing cooperation
- Higher education in Colombia is 40% public and 60% private approx.
- Funding: ICETEX and Colfuturo, succesful at applying EU funding

+ HE and science in Uruguay



- A lot of interest for Finnish HE partnerships, currently ~ 15 agreements
- MoU between ANEP, ANII and EDUFI
- The most like-minded country in LAC and stable operating environment
- Finnish expertise is more widely known than in many other LAC countries
- Main sectors of interest for Finland
 - Bio-economy, circular economy, built environment, digitalization (education, cybersecurity, AI)
 - Upcoming areas of interest: smart mobility
- Resources for further financing:
 - ANII research and innovation funding agency, AUCI
 - Uruguay University of Technology (UTEC) Fellowship Programme
- Teacher education and national curriculum framework recently modified
- A big challenge for HE is the metropolitan focus and the massification of HE

✚ HE and science in Peru

- ~17 Existing Finnish HE partnerships
- Main sectors of interest for Finland:
 - digitalization, mining, naval, education
- Peru has 51 public and 92 private universities
- Challenges:
 - Very unequal access to HE studies
 - Peru ranks poorly in different international rankings



+ HE and science in Panama



- Main sectors of interest for Finland:
 - Maritime technology, edtech, digitalization, water sciences and environment
- Panama hosts an increasing number of HEIs and its public universities are tuition free, even for foreign students
- *Research institute of Panama Canal* launched in 2022
 - Expressed interest in collaborating with Finland
 - High investment in water and sanitation, hydrology, environmental studies
- Needs for an educational system reform widely discussed across the government and the media; the model of Finnish education system has raised interest

✚ Potential themes for joint interests

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- **Education:**
 - Development of education (systems and infra) to better respond to the societal needs
 - Equality, equity, inclusion and accessibility of education
 - Teacher training (all levels), school connectivity and digitalization
 - Media education, fight against disinformation
- **Digital transition:** ICT, connectivity, AI, cyber security, space, quantum
- **Green transition:** Bioeconomy, circular economy; renewable energies, climate, biodiversity; polar and antarctic cooperation; forestry, sustainable mining
- **Health:** Health technologies, biosciences and biotechnology
- **Humanities and social sciences:** Indigenous people and cultures, human rights



+ Tips for planning partnerships 1/3

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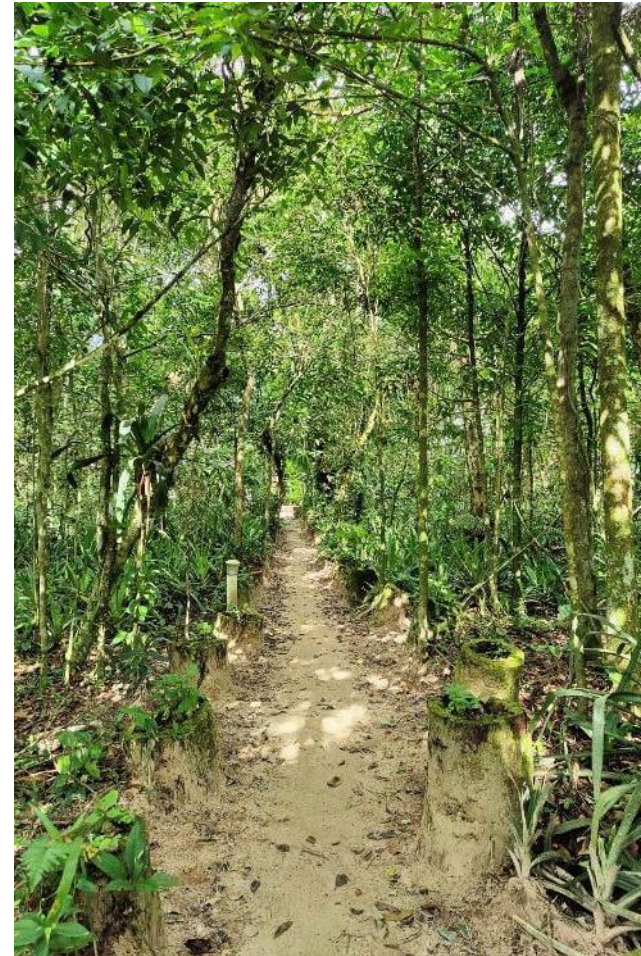
- Expectations: Equal partnership vs. model/support from Europe
- Choosing your partner: Societal relevance of universities much highlighted in LAC – not reflected in the international rankings
- Education often not considered as a commercial commodity
 - Education service provision vs. Education export
 - Cooperation vs. commercial contract and export
 - Collaboration with HEIs: Identifying and applying for joint funding
- Many LAC countries have lack of skilled work force and talents
 - Reciprocal mobility cooperation vs. Student recruitment
 - Finnish study programmes are competing with LAC universities
- LAC universities may not have international strategies, but they do have international offices and personnel



+ Tips for planning partnerships 2/3

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- LAC institutions are known for hierarchic leading and bureaucracy
- Language: English used in research, but not always in admin, limited availability of studies in English
- Different understanding of time & "Everything will be fine"
- LAC partners tend to be flexible and agil with different terms
- Concretizing cooperation requires presence, close contact and communication, and building of trust
- University networks as gateways to/facilitators of partnerships
- Funding:
 - Mobility to Finland is VERY expensive and funding for undergrad scarce
 - Linking with Finnish companies' collaboration in the region



+ Tips for planning partnerships 3/3

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- Addressing the thematic and strategic needs defined by
 - Global, regional, national, local, public, private, third sector interests?
 - By partnering Higher Education Institutions?
 - *Relevance, impact and sustainability of cooperation in wider society and in partner institutions*
- Reciprocal and genuine partnerships, where all partners contribute and benefit, including in self-financing
- Much focus on the needs for internationalization of HE and Research in LAC





More information

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- Brazil
 - [*Katsaus Brazilian korkeakoulu- ja tutkimusympäristöön, 2024*](#)
 - Team Finland Market opportunity (requires signing up): [*Vocational education and training in Brazil, 2024*](#)
 - [*Markkinaselvitys Brazilian koulutusmarkkinoista, 2023*](#)
 - [*The start-up ecosystem in Brazil: Main characteristics and opportunities of cooperation for Finnish entities, 2023*](#)
- Argentiina
 - [*Katsaus Argentiinan koulutusjärjestelmään ja yhteistyömahdollisuuksiin, 2024*](#)
- Colombia
 - [*Colombian Education Sector, 2023*](#)
- Uruguay
 - [*Katsaus Uruguayn koulutusjärjestelmään ja yhteistyömahdollisuuksiin, 2024*](#)
- Paraguay
 - [*Markkinaselvitys Paraguayn koulutusmarkkinoista, 2024*](#)



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KIITOS! THANKS! GRACIAS! OBRIGADA!

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