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HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION WITH LATIN AMERICAN PARTNERS

TFK programme info session - LAC region, 3.3.2026

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Consulate of Finland in Sao Paulo, Brazil

LAC - Operating Environment

- 33 countries, + 660 million inhabitants
 - Languages: Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, indigenous
 - Almost all children in school, literacy 95 %
 - Mostly middle or upper-middle income countries vs. high internal inequalities
- Education development needs:
 - Equality, equity, inclusion, accessibility and permanence
 - Quality of education at all levels
 - Teacher training and valorization
 - Education to better meet the needs of society, research-based policies, innovation and industry collaboration
 - AI in education, media education, fight against disinformation



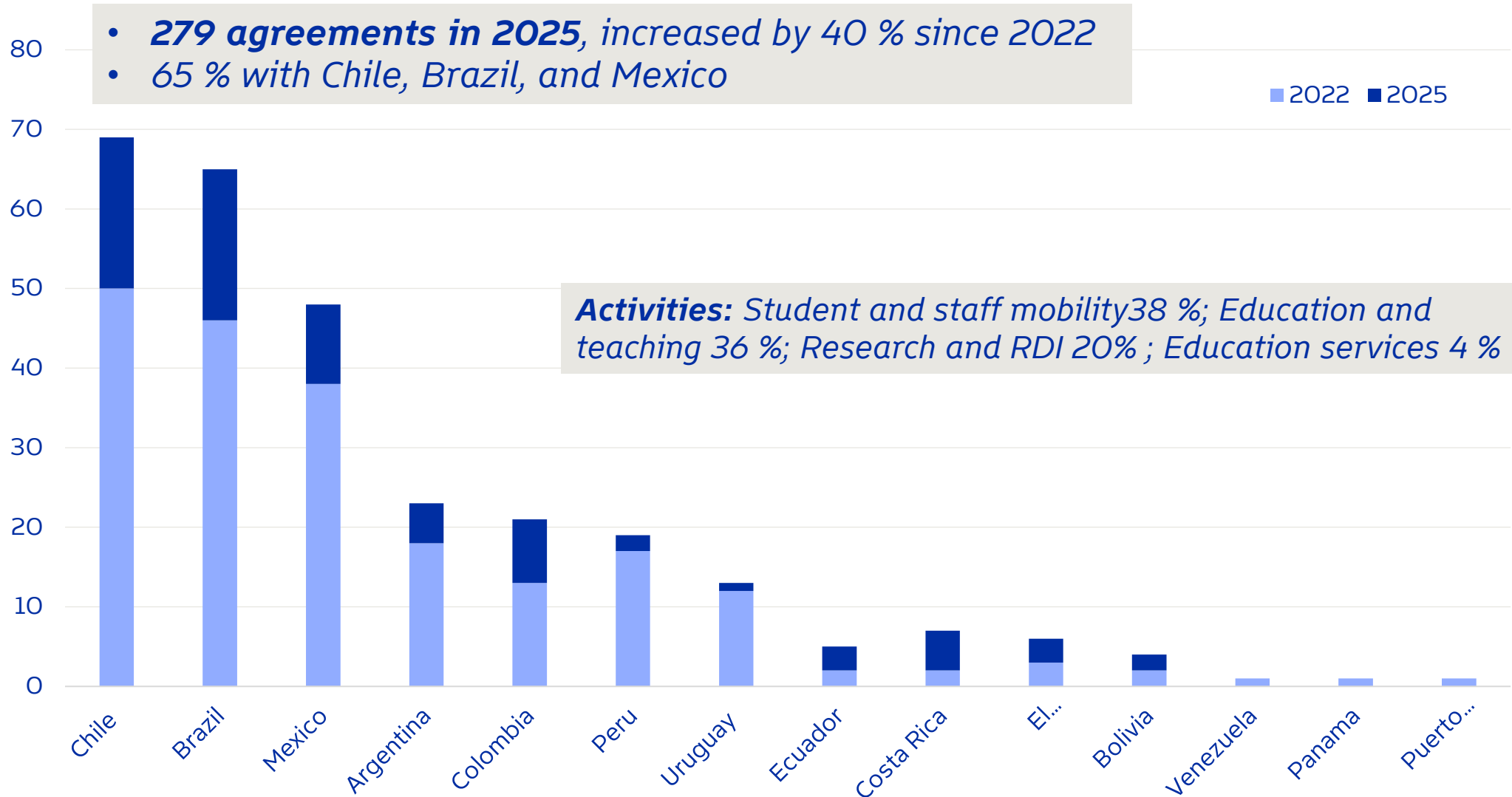
HE & Science in the LAC region

- Higher education increased strongly in past decades
 - 58 % gross enrollment with much variation, 2 % study abroad
- Investments in R&I growing, but still behind globally
- Higher education system based largely on the European model
- Regional integration and harmonization in higher education
- Best universities at same level with best Finnish universities
- Top LAC-countries in HE & Science:
 - Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Argentina
- LAC universities have important connections to world top universities
 - Traditional partner countries : US, Spain, France, Germany, Canada, UK

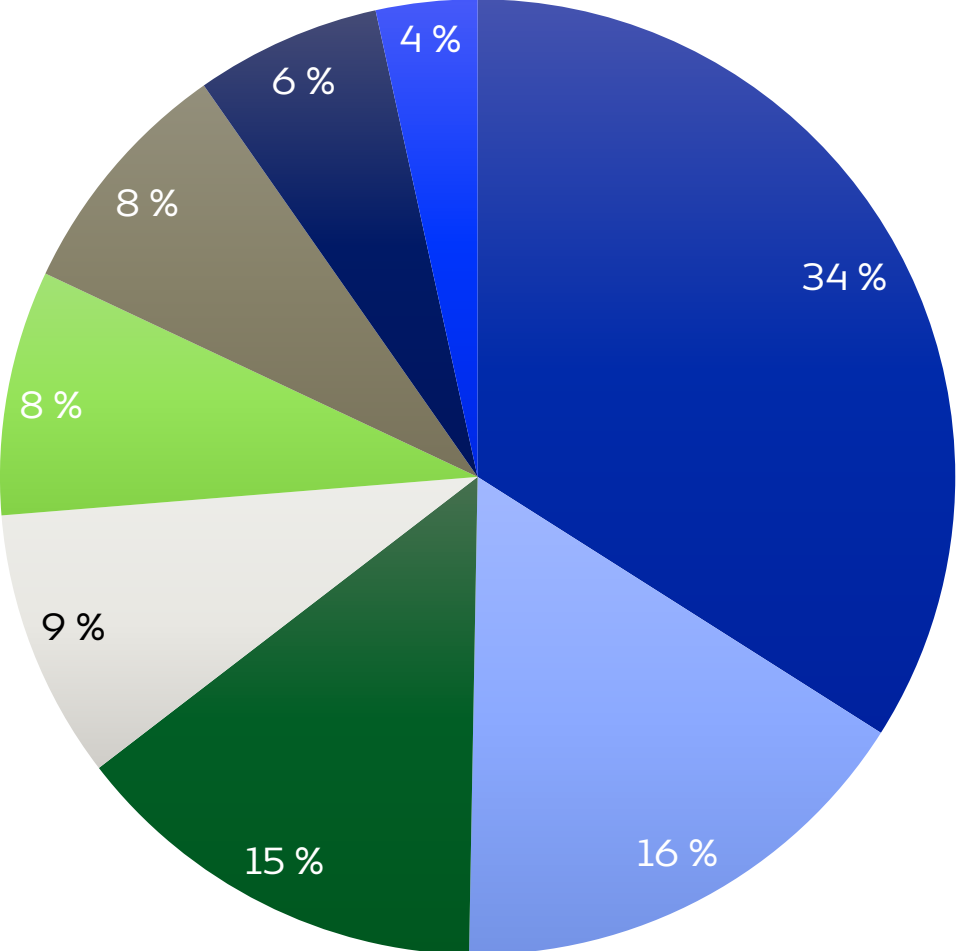


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Finnish HEIs' agreements with LAC



Fields of cooperation in existing agreements



- Multidisciplinary (64) and blanks (55)
- Business, Administration and Law (57)
- Technology and Engineering (50)
- Environmental sciences, Forestry and Bioeconomy (32)
- Social Sciences and Humanities (29)
- Health and Nutrition (29)
- Education and Teacher training (22)
- Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics (12)

Joint publications: Natural sciences, medicine and health sciences, bio and environmental sciences, technology, forestry

TFK funded LAC projects in 2022 (13)

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)

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)

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

TFK funded LAC projects in 2025 (8)

Chile:

- TAMK: Brain health
- Novia: Strengthening of internationalization in engineering

Brazil & Chile:

- 6G Machine-Type Communications

Brazil:

- Aalto: H2 and Electric systems

Uruguay:

- Karelia: Climate-Smart Forestry

Colombia & Peru:

- Lapland: Indigenous digital heritage
- UEF: Sustainable Food and Nutrition

Ecuador:

- UH: Climate Change Adaptation

EU-LAC collaboration opportunities

- Most Latin American countries eligible for EU funding, except for Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay
- New Agenda for EU–CELAC Cooperation on Research and Innovation (2025)
 - *Climate change, environmental sustainability and energy transition; Health; and Artificial intelligence in science*
- Global Gateway & Team Europe initiatives with Latin America
 - *Fair green transition, Inclusive digital transformation, Human development, Health resilience and vaccines*
 - *Security and justice, Inclusive and equal societies, Green transition, Digitalization, Forest governance and biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, the Amazon basin*
- EU's bilateral science and technology cooperation agreements with Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico
 - *Energy, health, oceans, digitalization, water, critical minerals, sustainable cities, etc.*



EU–LAC Supercomputing Network

- Within the framework of the EU-LAC Digital Alliance
 - To connect and strengthen existing HPC infrastructures, developing researchers' expertise, increasing scientific cooperation and opening opportunities for joint innovation
 - Opportunities: pharmaceutical development and climate simulations, as well as in the development and deployment of AI applications
- 14 EU and LAC countries as members:
 - Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and Uruguay
- Joint funding
 - Brazil 8 MEUR; European Commission and EuroHPC 3 MEUR , Spain 1 MEUR



Past and existing collaboration with EU funds

Erasmus+

- Since 2022...
- 39 Global Mobility partnerships with LAC universities
 - Most with Brazil, Chile, Uruguay
- 9 CBHE projects with LAC
 - Most with Colombia, Ecuador

Horizon 2020

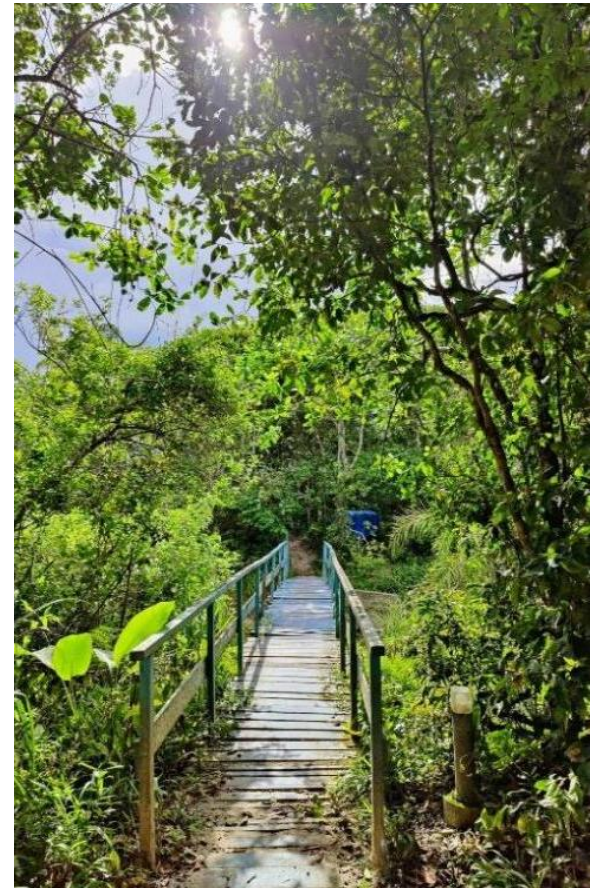
- In total +200 partnerships with LAC
- Most with Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Colombia and Mexico
- Great variety of topics

Horizon Europe

- Notable cooperation with Brazil, less with other countries
- Topics with joint funding: biodiversity, sustainable blue economy, water security and ICT

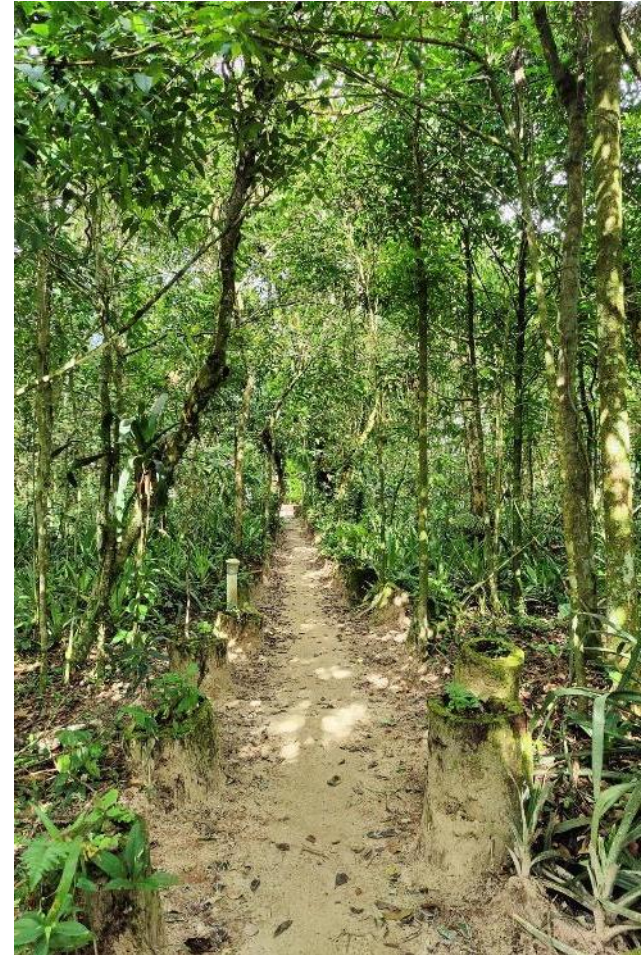
Tips for planning partnerships 1/3

- 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
 - 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

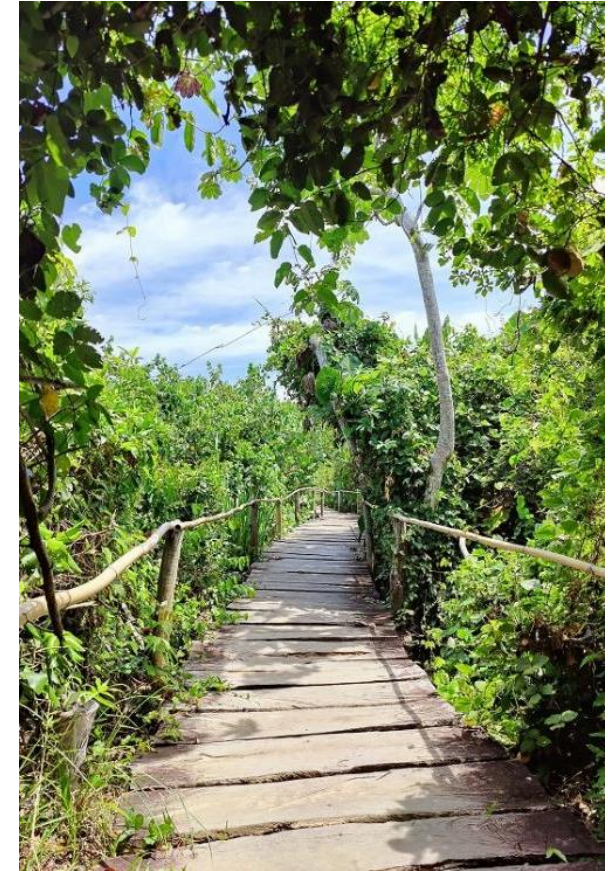
- LAC institutions are known for hierarchic leading and bureaucracy
- Language: English used in research, but not always in admin, limited availability of studies in English
- Cultural differences: concept of time
- LAC partners tend to be flexible and agil with different terms
- Concretizing cooperation 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



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Tips for planning partnerships 3/3

- 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



Webinar series: Focus on Latin America

Strengthening Finnish and EU partnerships in Higher Education, Research and Innovation with Latin America

- The aim is to highlight and strengthen the Finnish HEIs' and research community's collaboration with Latin America and inform about cooperation possibilities
- ***Finland's priorities in EU-CELAC Research & Innovation cooperation***
 - Time: 11.3.2026, 14.30–16.00
- ***Finnish Higher Education Institutions' partnerships with the LAC region***
 - Time: 12.3.2026, 14.30–16.00
- **Register for the webinars by Tuesday, 10 March via [this link](#).**

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
- Scientific production: 50 % of LAC and 3 % of global (13th place)
 - Top: Engineering, chemistry, environment, agriculture
 - Volume: Biodiversity, animal health, applied biology, health, biosciences and natural resources
- 65 existing Finnish HE partnerships with a variety of partners
- 5 % of Finland's international publications are with Brazil

HE and research funding in Brazil

Brazil has significant national and state funding for mobility and research

- CAPES, CNPq and FAP's (incl. FAPESP)
 - Similar research project funding as our RCF funding
- "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 HEIs: Focus on the universities with less internationalization
 - Collaboration with universities in the Amazon high on the national agenda, e.g. Amazonia+10 funding programme
- Participation in Horizon Europe through CONFAP, CNPq and Finep

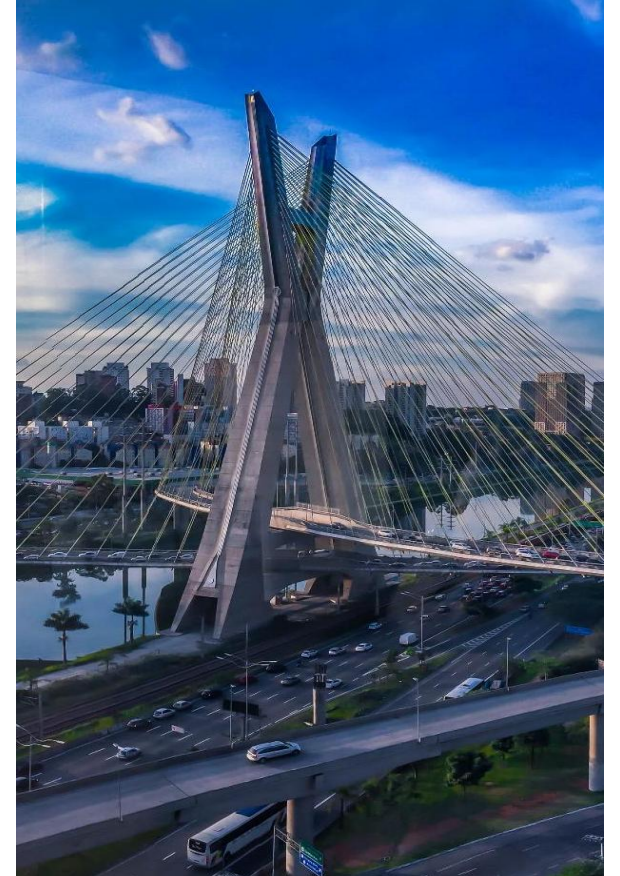
Brazilian HE degrees

Graduação (undergrad)

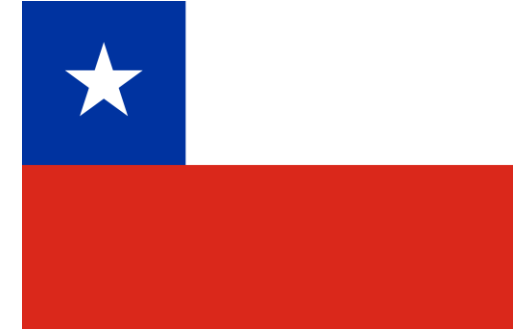
- Bachelor, 3-6 years
 - Training for job market in all areas: industry, commerce and services
- Licenciatura, 4-5 years
 - teacher training in early childhood, basic and secondary education

Pos-graduação (research careers)

- Master, 1,5-2 years
- Doctor, 4 years



HE and science in Chile



- 69 Existing Finnish HE partnerships with a wide variety of partners
- Growing number of higher education students: In 2025, enrollment rate grew by 5% compared to 2024, reaching approximately 1.5 million students
- Chile aims to increase the share of R&D in the economy, with many synergies with Finland in different sectors
 - Digitalization, mining, bio-economy, energy and defense material cooperation
 - Funding: ANID and BECAS CHILE
 - Chile–Finland Platform for Development and Technological Transfer: a five-year initiative designed to accelerate innovation, sustainability, and the development of clean technologies
- Private education sector plays a very important role in the country
 - Dynamic market for short diploma degrees and master's degrees

HE and science in Mexico



- ~50 existing Finnish HE partnerships with a variety of partners
 - Research in e.g. forestry, social sciences and renewable energy
 - Over 9200 HEIs, public subsystem dominant in scale
 - Total enrollment during 2024-2025: approx. 5.5 million students
 - 3.4 million students approx. (62% of total) in public institutions
 - 2.1 million student approx (38% of total) in private institutions
- Main sectors of interest for Finland
 - Forestry, circular economy, energy efficiency and smart energy, bioenergy, ICT, mining and manufacturing
 - Needs for research and skilled labor: metal and machinery (manufacturing), ICT and telecommunications
- Funding and scholarships:
 - Secretaria de Ciencia, Humanidades, Tecnología e Innovación (SECIHTI, previously 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
- + 20 Existing Finnish HE partnerships
 - 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)

- Título 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



- + 20 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, Colombians succesful at applying EU funding
- Elections in spring 2026 may change the national policies

HE and science in Uruguay



- A lot of interest for Finnish HE partnerships, currently ~13 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
- A big challenge for HE is the metropolitan focus and the massification of HE

HE and science in Peru

- Finland and Peru have an education cooperation MOU covering higher education, TVET and research
- ~20 active partnerships between Finnish and Peruvian HE institutions
- Ongoing engagement with MINEDU, universities and technical institutes
- Peru HE System includes 143 licensed universities (SUNEDU)
- Main sectors of interest for Finland:
 - Green transition, circular economy, digitalization, sustainable mining, naval, education
- Growing demand for industry-relevant skills opens opportunities for Finnish HE institutions to offer VET programs.



More information

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*](#)
- [*CONICET: Catalog to boost Argentine scientific development, 2025*](#)

Chile

- [*Kasvatus ja koulutus Chilessä - Muistio Suomen koulutusviennin tueksi, 2025*](#)

Colombia

- [*Colombian Education Sector, 2023*](#)

Uruguay

- [*Katsaus Uruguayn koulutusjärjestelmään ja yhteistyömahdollisuuksiin, 2024*](#)

Paraguay

- [*Markkinaselvitys Paraguayn koulutusmarkkinoista, 2024*](#)

KIITOS!
THANKS!
GRACIAS!
OBRIGADA!

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