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**Educación Superior y Sociedad (ESS)**, em uma Carta Semestral, editada pelo Instituto Internacional para a Educação Superior em América Latina e Caribe (IESALC) da Unesco, sede em Caracas, Venezuela. **Educación Superior y Sociedad (ESS)**, é consagrada a resultados públicos de Investigações; Identificar brechas do conhecimento e novas prioridades de investigação; Trainar al ámbito del debate cuestiones y problemas actuales; Promover a investigação e a educação superior; Disseminar informações sobre políticas e boas práticas; Contribuir para o estabelecimento de puentes entre os resultados da investigação ea formulação de políticas; Facilitar e analisar as arenas internacionais e interdisciplinares para o intercâmbio de ideias, as experiências eo debate crítico, estimular a organização de redes e a cooperação entre actores, fortalecer as condições para a inovação da educação superior; Fortalecer uma plataforma de comunicação para os investigadores e um repositório de investigações relacionadas com a educação superior nos diferentes países da região. **Educación Superior y Sociedad (ESS)**, Colección 25.º Aniversário, consolidado como um órgão de divulgação científica que responde à missão encomendada desde janeiro de 1990 e é consecutivo com os objetivos misionais de fazer um conhecimento social, para um diálogo de saberes La contextualidad local, transitando a transformação para um novo consenso no desenvolvimento humano sustentável na região.



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## PRESENTACIÓN

**Luis Daniel Álvarez**

Escuela de Estudios Internacionales  
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El parámetro tradicional de las relaciones internacionales ha cambiado desde diversas perspectivas, dando lugar a fenómenos mucho más amplios y de interpretación general que rompen con la concepción clásica que impera desde 1648, cuando se asume que sobre el Estado no hay absolutamente ningún otro cuerpo, y que todos los fenómenos que traten de explicar el funcionamiento del mundo deben hacerlo desde la perspectiva de la supremacía estatal y del estudio del fenómeno político.

Ese enfoque, válido o no, aun cuando ha imperado desde hace siglos, ha sido superado en las últimas décadas, pues su dogmática aseveración que sobre el Estado no hay nada, impide entender la irrupción de una realidad como la de la Unión Europea en la que temas como la representación colectiva tienen enorme significado y poder vinculante –basta ver como ejemplo el funcionamiento del Parlamento Europeo–, la puesta en práctica de una política migratoria común y una estructura financiera compartida, misma que inclusive llega a tener una moneda común. Es decir, las bases que establecen que el mundo gira en torno a la figura del Estado pueden ser limitadas en este sentido.

A ello se une el concepto de globalización, que aparece con inusitada rapidez en el horizonte académico y comunicacional, y que es erradamente entendido como un factor que permite la eliminación de barreras con miras a facilitar la promoción de productos en otras fronteras. Siempre se ha dicho que el mejor ejemplo para entender la globalización (y de eso los lectores pueden dar fe), es que se puede recibir una publicación diagramada en un país determinado, con una gama de articulistas provenientes de distintas latitudes y un prologuista venezolano, que la lectura se haga en una computadora japonesa, usando un conector chino, alum-

brándose con un foco estadounidense, bebiendo café colombiano, endulzado con azúcar dominicana y aderezado con leche holandesa. Ahora bien, este ejemplo, por más curioso y real que pueda ser, no permite una lectura adecuada de la globalización.

El fenómeno de la globalización, más que concepto es una estructura, que si bien permite la promoción de los mercados financieros y la paulatina eliminación de las barreras arancelarias, va más allá y asume a la persona humana como un actor que se nutre de experiencias, y toma del contexto el aprendizaje para avanzar y poder establecer criterios más amplios. Pero, como no debe verse simplemente como un entramado de realidades aisladas, la gran apuesta tiene que ser examinar cómo afecta el fenómeno globalización a los actores locales, y como lo peculiar puede tener una acción influyente en temas complicados.

De esta manera nacen *fenómenos intermésticos*, o el concepto de la glocalización, que establecen como se relacionan los aspectos locales y la realidad internacional. Por eso la mirada preocupada de algunos países hacia vecinos que violan derechos humanos o tienen serias limitaciones a la democracia, o la preocupación hacia el trato que se da a los migrantes; pues acciones que no tienen en lo inicial una repercusión más allá de un espacio circunscrito a una frontera, pueden incidir en fenómenos mucho más amplios. Casos como el de Ruanda y Burundi, cuya realidad se limitaba a la lucha histórica entre dos tribus, representa una de las mayores catástrofes humanitarias en la historia, sembrando de dolor, desplazamiento forzado y crueldad, dejando en muy mal pie a una comunidad internacional que decía que lo que allí ocurría era un asunto de política doméstica.

Lo dinámico de la realidad pudiese llevar a otro factor y es que una de las verdades de inicios del siglo XXI es que pareciera que pilares y conceptos duros e inamovibles, como el de soberanía, están en entredicho y no pueden tenerse como dogmas o verdades irrefutables. Si esto se plantea de esa manera, la interrelación entre lo global y lo que puede ocurrir en lo doméstico, adquirirá cada vez más fuerza.

En este contexto se explica la importancia de *Internacionalización de la Educación Superior*, número 21 de la colección 25.º aniversario de la revista ESS, presentada por UNESCO-IESALC, pues el ámbito de la educación superior es donde de mejor manera puede apreciarse la vinculación conceptual entre lo particular y lo general, que inexorablemente deja en el debate

una certeza que debe asumirse como punta de lanza formativa: *la de una realidad que pese a las fronteras pueda debatirse*. Europa ha sido pionera con su integración educativa y en América Latina empieza a asomarse la discusión.

A este respecto, la profesora Patricia Pol, Doctora en Administración y profesora en la Universidad Paris-Est Créteil, institución de la que fue vicerrectora, encargándose del desarrollo internacional, presenta el artículo *Espacios regionales de educación superior e internacionalización: hacia nuevas solidaridades*, en el que señala que el desarrollo de Espacios Regionales de Educación Superior (ERES) ha cobrado enorme relevancia en los últimos veinte años, y donde la coordinación de políticas nacionales trata de armonizar sistemas diferentes y cambiantes, pero con realidades y necesidades comunes. En el artículo la profesora Pol, creadora de un Master de Desarrollo y Management Universitario, estudia el Espacio Europeo de Educación superior (EEES) y analiza, otras dinámicas regionales en África y América Latina, proponiendo parámetros de acción.

A continuación la profesora Jocelyne Gacel-Avila, quien posee un Doctorado en Educación Internacional y una Maestría ès Lettres por la Universidad de París, en Lenguas y Civilizaciones Extranjeras, y que actualmente ocupa la Dirección de División y es Profesor-Investigador del Centro Universitario en Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades de la Universidad de Guadalajara –institución en la que por veintisiete años fue Coordinadora General de Cooperación e Internacionalización–, presenta su artículo *La ciudadanía global, un concepto emergente y polémico*, que fomenta la discusión que venimos asomando en este prólogo, y define a la ciudadanía global como una categoría fundamental en el marco conceptual de la internacionalización de la educación superior. La doctora Gacel-Avila plantea que existen controversias al no existir una visión unificada de enfoques teóricos e interpretaciones. Finalmente, discute la crítica radical al concepto de ciudadanía global, realizada recientemente por algunos autores.

Seguidamente, encontramos el artículo *Misconceptions about (the end of) internationalization, challenges and opportunities for the future*, del director del Centro Internacional para la Educación Superior del Boston College y profesor de Lynch School of Education, Hans de Wit; quien muestra que la internacionalización es el camino al desarrollo de la educación superior, y que el debate

de la globalización debe migrar desde visiones políticas y económicas, hacia espacios de mayor amplitud que permitan mitigar la visión negativa que se ha dado sobre internacionalización.

Posteriormente, se publica el artículo *Dialogue for improved internationalization of higher education* de Eva Egron-Polak y Fanta Aw. La doctora Egron-Polak, además de haber estudiado literatura francesa, ciencia política y economía internacional, ha investigado diversas variables que tienden a plantear a la educación como un camino al desarrollo. Actualmente se desempeña como secretaria general de la Asociación Internacional de Universidades. Por su parte, la profesora Fanta Aw, originaria de Mali en África y Doctora en Sociología, ha sido directora de NAFSA, la asociación internacional de educación con mayor número de integrantes (diez mil). En el artículo presentan los elementos que llevaron a varias organizaciones educativas a realizar los denominados Diálogos Globales, explicando sus alcances, metas y obstáculos, además de examinar la perspectiva a futuro.

Christine Farrugia, académica del Instituto Internacional de Educación, ganadora en 2014 del premio Harold Josephson a la promoción y difusión de la internacionalización educativa, presenta el artículo *Academic mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean: patterns and prospects*, mismo en que propone que si bien ha aumentado la movilidad internacional en América latina y el Caribe, su influencia sigue siendo limitada. La profesora Farrugia describe el panorama actual de la movilidad internacional en la educación superior en la región, tomando en consideración magnitudes, tendencias y motivaciones.

Finalmente, presentamos el artículo *Dilemas en torno a la internacionalización de la educación superior*, del Doctor en Ciencias Biológicas por la Universidad Complutense de Madrid e Investigador Científico del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Jesús Sebastián Audina, quien además ha sido Investigador Asociado en las Universidades de Wisconsin y Brandeis, profesor de bioquímica y biología molecular en la Facultad de Medicina de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid y subdirector General de la Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI) (1989-92). En su trabajo el profesor busca respuesta a varios asuntos de la internacionalización de la educación superior, para lo cual recurre a tres familias de dilemas, con énfasis en el contexto latinoamericano.

Por la pertinencia y calidad de sus artículos, *Internacionalización de la Educación Superior, además de tentador*, resulta ser un aporte necesario para romper paradigmas establecidos en otras épocas y mostrar variables que no se queden en el debate teórico, sino que sirvan para estructurar y plantear políticas necesarias de integración entre países, que trasciendan a los gobiernos y permitan tener al desarrollo como respuesta.

El emblemático filósofo español Fernando Savater indica que la educación debe tener por norte la formación de ciudadanos y no de empleados, es decir, la idea es moldear a una persona que tenga herramientas para innovar, repensar su sociedad y llegar en algunos casos a cambiarla. Las experiencias de otras latitudes ayudan; en una sociedad donde lo internacional y lo local se mezclan, nada más necesario que fomentar un intercambio que enriquezca y permita definir a la verdadera globalización, no como un fenómeno económico o tecnológico, sino humano.

El gran literato universal Rómulo Gallegos, quien efímeramente gobernó a Venezuela antes de que la huella militarista y altanera lo derrocará, planteó en su novela Doña Bárbara, la lucha entre la civilización y la barbarie; entre el progreso y la esperanza y entre la libertad y el temor. Es la educación el triunfo de la libertad, y es la internacionalización el caballo en el que un Santos Luzardo victorioso, derrotará para siempre los remedos de la maldad y el miedo.

## NOTA BIOGRÁFICA

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# ACADEMIC MOBILITY IN THE AMERICAS: PATTERNS AND PROSPECTS

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## :: Abstract

While its scale has been relatively limited, international student and scholar mobility to and from Latin America and the Caribbean has played a growing role in the internationalization of higher education institutions in recent years. This article describes the current landscape of international higher education mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the region's global position in international mobility; the current scale and patterns of inbound and outbound students and scholars; analysis of the drivers of mobility; and discussion of future prospects.

**Key words:** academic mobility, internationalization, higher education.

## :: Resumen

A pesar que la movilidad internacional de estudiantes y académicos en América Latina y el Caribe, tanto saliente como entrante, es relativamente limitada, ha tenido un papel importante en la internacionalización de las instituciones de enseñanza superior durante los últimos años. Este artículo describe el panorama actual de la movilidad internacional en la educación superior de América Latina y el Caribe, incluyendo la posición global de la región, su magnitud, tendencias, el análisis de sus motivaciones y la discusión de escenarios futuros.

**Palabras clave:** movilidad académica, internacionalización, educación superior,

## :: **Résumé**

Bien que son échelle soit relativement limitée, la mobilité internationale des étudiants et des chercheurs vers et depuis l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes a joué un rôle croissant dans l'internationalisation des établissements d'enseignement supérieur au cours des dernières années. Cet article décrit les tendances actuelles de la mobilité internationale de l'enseignement supérieur en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes, y compris la position mondiale de la région en matière de mobilité internationale, son importance, ses tendances, ainsi que l'analyse de ses motivations et perspectives d'avenir.

**Mots-clés:** mobilité internationale, internationalisation, enseignement supérieur.

## :: Resumo

Apesar de a mobilidade internacional de estudantes e acadêmicos na América Latina e no Caribe, tanto a dos que saem como a dos que entram, ser relativamente limitada, têm um papel importante na internacionalização das instituições de ensino superior durante os últimos anos. Neste artigo está descrito o atual panorama da mobilidade internacional na educação superior da América Latina e do Caribe, incluindo a posição global da região, sua importância, tendências, a análise de suas motivações e a discussão de cenários futuros.

**Palavras chave:** mobilidade acadêmica, internacionalização, educação superior.

## :: Introduction

Higher education development throughout Latin America and the Caribbean touches on many areas, including expansion of capacity and funding, quality improvement, and expanded student access across socio-economic groups (Holm-Nielsen, Thorn, Brunner, & Balan, 2005). As part of this evolution of higher education, internationalization has played a role as institutions and governments in the region have grown in their embrace of international mobility (Gacel-Avila, 2007). Cross-border academic mobility presents opportunities to aid educational integration, to support higher education improvement; and to help achieve economic development goals throughout the region. This article describes the current landscape of international higher education mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the current scale and patterns of mobility, analysis of the drivers of mobility; and discussion of future prospects.

## :: What is international academic mobility?

International academic mobility encompasses the physical movement of students and scholars across national borders to engage in study, teaching, or research in another country, as distinguished from other forms of international education, such as the movement of institutions (e.g., international branch campuses) or collaborations in which no physical mobility takes place (e.g., distance learning, cross-border research partnerships) (Altbach & Knight, 2007; OECD, 2004).

While the mobility of students and scholars has long been a feature of higher education around the world, the growth in student mobility has picked up momentum over the past 15 years, doubling from 2.1 million students in 2001 to 4.1 million students in 2016 (UNESCO, 2016). Many factors have driven this growth, including the desires of individual students and their families to access higher education overseas; expanding middle classes in many sending countries, enabling families to afford international study; efforts of higher education institutions to elevate their status, generate revenue, and diversify their institutions by attracting international students and scholars; and national-level efforts to develop a workforce with global skills and strengthen international relations through educational diplomacy (Bettie, 2015; Campus France, 2014; Deloitte Access Economics, 2015; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016; Hazelkorn, 2015; IIE, 2015; IEduChina, 2016; Lebovic, 2013; Salmi, 2009; Smith, 2015; Times Higher Education, 2016; Universities UK, 2017). Many of these drivers of international academic that are seen on the global level are also reflected in Latin America and the Caribbean.

## :: The position of Latin America and the Caribbean in global student mobility

The balance of international student exchange in Latin America and the Caribbean tilts toward outbound student mobility, with more than 227,000 students from the region pursuing a degree outside their home countries and just 96,000 international students pursuing degrees in the region in 2014<sup>(1)</sup> (UNESCO, 2017c; 2017b). Placed in a global perspective, the region ranks eighth out of nine world regions in the number of outbound students, and ranks sixth out of nine regions for inbound mobility, indicating that levels of international student flows are relatively low and remain an emerging component of higher education in the region. At the same time, growth in both inbound and outbound students in the region has also been limited. While the number of international students globally increased 50 percent from 2005 to 2012 (OECD, 2015; 2016), outbound mobility from Latin America and the Caribbean grew more slowly, increasing by just 29 percent over the same time period. On the inbound side, the growth of Latin America and the Caribbean is closer to the global average, with international students in the region increasing 45 percent (UNESCO, 2017c; 2017b).

While outbound student flows are the more prevalent form of international mobility in the region, the ratio of outbound students compared to students remaining in their home countries is quite low. Just 1 percent of tertiary students in the region study outside their home countries, which is the lowest ratio of any world region, making Latin America and the Caribbean the least active world region for outbound mobility (UNESCO, 2017b). However, there are variations by country, with higher rates for some. Within Latin America, Honduras, El Salvador, and Uruguay have the highest rates of outbound mobility, with each country at about 2 percent – double the rate for the region as a whole (UNESCO, 2017b). These relatively high outbound rates are likely due to insufficient capacity to meet growing student demand at home, which drives students to seek higher education opportunities in nearby countries (Long, 2011).

Despite the low outbound ratio for students from the region overall, when looking at the Caribbean sub-region, students study outside their home countries at much higher rates. For instance, Bermuda has more higher education

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(1) Data from UNESCO reflect students studying outside their home country for one year or longer. Given the duration of their studies, most are pursuing degrees, although a portion may engage in study that does not lead to a degree. Other data sources cited in this article provide more complete counts of globally mobile students that are inclusive of students who engage in short-term international exchange, such as Project Atlas® ([www.iie.org/projectatlas](http://www.iie.org/projectatlas)) and some national-level data sources.

students studying outside the country than within it, and other Caribbean nations including Turks and Caicos, Sint Maarten, the British Virgin Islands, and Saint Lucia have some of the world's highest rates of outbound student flows, ranging from 34 to 64 percent in 2015 (UNESCO, 2017b). These high rates of outbound mobility from the Caribbean are often due to limited higher education capacity at home as well as the attractiveness of high quality educational and work opportunities in large host countries such as the United States and Europe (Holm-Nielsen, Thorn, Brunner, & Balan, 2005; Mishra, 2006).

### **:: Outbound students: where do they come from and where do they go?**

There is great variation in the scale of mobility from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. At just over 39,000 students, Brazil had the largest number of students from the region studying overseas for one year or longer in 2015, accounting for 17 percent of outbound students from the region (UNESCO, 2017d). Mexico and Colombia rank second and third in the number of outbound students, sending 30,000 and 28,000 students, respectively (UNESCO, 2017d).

Among these top three source countries of students in the region, Brazil has seen the strongest growth over the past ten years, doubling from 2005 to 2015 (UNESCO, 2017d). Brazil's rapid growth in outbound student mobility over this period may be tied to its parallel expansion of domestic higher education enrollment, which expanded the pool of university students eligible to study overseas, as well as the country's economic growth, which eased the affordability of international study and also supported the government's investment in large-scale international scholarship programs for Brazilian students (Frou-min & Platonova, 2017). Among the region's other sizeable sending countries, there was also been high growth from 2005 to 2015 from Ecuador and Dominican Republic, whose numbers grew by 1.5 times over the ten-year period. In Ecuador, recent higher education reforms have stimulated student interest in overseas study and have made it more attainable. Government investments in improving higher education access and quality, as well as a rising economy and increased availability of graduate scholarships for overseas study have improved students' preparation for study in other countries and have made it more affordable (Custer, 2012, Aug 1; ICEF Monitor, 2014, Nov 21; Lloyd, 2017).

While the United States is the largest single host country of students from Latin America and the Caribbean, the largest proportion of outbound students from the region (37 percent) pursue higher education in Europe. Spain is the largest European host of students from the region, with students from Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia ranked among Spain's leading places of origin of



international students in 2014/15 (OECD, 2017b; Project Atlas, 2016). Spain is followed by France, Germany, UK, Italy, and Portugal as the next leading hosts of Latin American and Caribbean students (UNESCO, 2017d). Mobility to Europe is largely due to colonial and linguistic ties between Latin America and Spain and Portugal, as well as the English-speaking Caribbean and the UK. The high quality and relative affordability of European higher education compared to the United States also serves as a strong driver of the region's students to Europe (IIE, 2015).

The single largest host country of international students from the region is the United States, with 85,000 students from the region in the United States, including both students pursuing degrees and shorter-term exchange students (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016). Given the size of its higher education system and the diversity of its colleges and universities, the United States is able to host large numbers of students from the region, with varying levels of academic preparation. This is particularly notable in U.S. community colleges, which enroll students from Latin American and Caribbean at higher rates than other institutions in the country (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016). Other factors also contribute to students' decisions to study in the United States, including the wide portability of U.S. degrees to other countries and student interest in professional training and work opportunities in the country.

Based on the information available on mobility patterns of international students in the United States, we also know that historical migration patterns also influence where students from the region study. Many students from Latin America and the Caribbean study in areas of the United States with sizeable diaspora populations where they may have access to family or social networks that can provide support during their U.S. studies. Examples include large numbers of international students from Venezuela studying in Florida and many Mexican international students studying in Texas (Farrugia, 2016a; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016).

## **:: Sources and destinations of international students in Latin America and the Caribbean**

The region's largest hosts of international students are Cuba, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic. In 2012 – the most recent year for which data is available – Cuba enrolled more than 20,000 international students in its higher education institutions (UNESCO, 2017c). With a strong education sector, Cuba has a long history of enrolling university students from abroad and providing scholarship support for many foreign students, particularly in the medical fields (De Vos, Ceukelaire, Bonet, & Van der Stuyft, 2007; ICEF Monitor, 2013, Apr 25). International students in Cuba are drawn largely from the region, while collaborations with countries such as South Africa, Vietnam, and the European Union also

contribute to the international student population in Cuba (Custer, 2012, Mar 5; ICEF Monitor, 2013, Apr 25). With Cuba's own strides in opening trade with the world, the prospects of improved technology, information communications, and ease of financial transactions may further open the country to students outside of Latin America and make higher education there more accessible (ICEF Monitor, 2015).

Many international students are also attracted to Brazil, which has a large higher education sector and whose internationalization efforts have led to growing numbers of international students. Higher education collaboration and partnerships among the BRICS countries and partnerships with Portuguese-speaking African countries have contributed to increasing student mobility (ICEF Monitor, 2013, Nov 21; Lee, 2013; Sawahel, 2103). Students from throughout South America make up the bulk of Brazil's international students. (See next section on Intra-regional Mobility for further information.) However, Angola – a country that shares Portuguese as an official language – is the largest single place of origin of international students in the country, accounting for 12 percent of all international students (UNESCO, 2017a).

With nearly 10,000 international students, the Dominican Republic is also a significant host of students in the region. Almost two thirds of the country's international students hail from nearby Haiti who study there in significant numbers because of fiscal challenges and capacity limitations on Haiti's universities since the earthquake in 2010 (Banco Central, 2014; Custer, 2012).

### •Intra-regional mobility

Of the 96,000 international students who studied in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2014, more than 55,000 students (57 percent) came from another country in the region (UNESCO, 2017d). The profile of these intra-regional students varies significantly from the students who study abroad outside of the region, with the largest numbers of intra-regional students coming from Haiti, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, and Venezuela (UNESCO, 2017d), countries in which limited higher education capacity at home push students towards study in another country, while at the same time personal financial constraints cause students to seek study options nearby. Cuba, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Chile, and Ecuador host the largest numbers of students from within the region (UNESCO, 2017c).

In some cases, proximity plays a role in intra-regional mobility patterns, as in the case of Haitian students who study in large numbers in the Dominican Republic; Bolivian students who study in Brazil and Chile; and Venezuelan students in Colombia (UNESCO, 2017a). For some host countries, the size of their higher education systems and strength of their internationalization efforts

attracts students broadly from the region. For example, both Brazil and Chile host sizeable numbers of students from many countries in South America (UNESCO, 2017a). Growing intraregional cooperation among national and regional higher education associations accounts for some of this growth, as well as other intra-regional efforts towards broader regional integration, such as those occurring as part of the Mercado Común del Sur (MECOSUR) alliance and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (CARICOM, 2017; Jaramillo & de Wit, 2011; Martínez La-rrechea & Chiancone Castro, 2009).

Expanding our focus on the broader Western hemisphere, we also see that mobility throughout the Americas is quite active. Notably, the United States is the largest single sending country of international degree students to Latin America and the Caribbean, with over 10,000 students in Latin America coming from the United States in 2015 and an additional 59,000 U.S. students engaging in shorter-term mobility in the region on both a credit and non-credit basis (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016; UNESCO, 2017d). Although the United States is not part of the Latin American region, its proximity to the region, economic ties, and large Latin American and Caribbean diaspora populations likely account for the sizeable flows of students from the United States to higher education institutions in the Americas. Likewise, U.S. students also travel to Latin America in large numbers for short-term exchange. Latin America and the Caribbean is the second most popular destination region after Europe in the category of study abroad for academic credit, and the most popular region for US students engaging in non-credit work, internships, and volunteering (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016).

### •Scholar mobility

The true impact of internationalization efforts often depends on academic staff who drive teaching practice and research (Finkelstein, Walker, & Chen, 2013). Because faculty are at the center of the academy's core enterprises of teaching and scholarship, the ways that faculty engage internationally have critical implications for educating students and producing knowledge in ways that are globally relevant. However, compared to the detailed information available on student mobility across borders, there is relatively little data available about the flows of scholars to and from Latin America and the Caribbean. Despite limited global data on international scholars, the importance of their role in global education is high.

Many faculty and researchers pursue international collaborations and often travel abroad to engage with colleagues and carry out academic activities abroad. However, this aspect of academic mobility is not well-documented in most countries. The United States has comprehensive data available on the numbers of international scholars who come to the country for short-term scholarly

activities (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016). These data indicate that over 9,900 scholars from Latin America and the Caribbean traveled to the United States on a temporary basis in 2015/16 to conduct research, teaching, or clinical activities in U.S. higher education institutions. The largest numbers come from Brazil – accounting for 44 percent of scholars from the region – and Mexico, which account for about 19 percent. In addition to these scholars in higher education, many academics travel to the United States to work in research organizations outside of higher education, but their numbers are not known.

While several countries have data available on the profile of scholars that benefit from funded international research opportunities, these data provide only a partial picture of the full range of globally mobile scholars and more needs to be known about the mobility patterns of scholars and the impact of their mobility on teaching and knowledge production.

## **:: Regional drivers of international academic mobility**

There are many motivations for students to study abroad and a wide range of factors that contribute to governmental and organizational efforts towards higher education internationalization. This section discusses key drivers that play a role in international flows of students in Latin America and the Caribbean, including government initiatives, economics, and language skills.

### **•Government initiatives**

Since the 1970s, governmental scholarship initiatives have played a strong role in facilitating international student mobility in the Latin American and the Caribbean (Gacel-Avila, 2007). In the years since, scholarship initiatives from Latin American governments, foreign governments, and international organizations have supported inbound and outbound student and scholar exchange in the region. There is clear evidence from the data that a government focus on fostering exchange is an effective way to boost mobility.

Since 2011, the United States and Mexican governments have focused on promoting greater international educational exchange between the two countries. On the U.S. side, President Obama launched 100,000 Strong in the Americas in 2011, with the goal of sending 100,000 students in each direction between the United States and Latin America, including Mexico. The Mexican government has also established its own mobility initiative – *Proyecto 100,000* – with the goal of sending 100,000 Mexican students to study in the United States and 50,000 U.S. students to Mexico. The efforts of the United States and Mexican governments resulted in strong growth of students, scholars, and other exchange visitors engaging in academic activities in each other's countries in

2014/15 and continuing evidence of a continuing positive impact on U.S.-Mexico mobility flows in the years since (Farrugia, 2016a).

Another recent example of a large and influential national scholarship program was the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program (BSMP) - known in Brazil as *Ciência sem Fronteiras* - which operated from 2011 to 2016 and funded thousands of undergraduate and graduate students from Brazil to study at colleges and universities in more than 40 countries. The program focused on disciplines viewed by the government as critical to the country's growth including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The program model primarily focused on limited-term exchanges and was designed to enable students to return to Brazil to complete their degrees after one year abroad for academic study followed by a summer internship (Monks, 2013). Following the conclusion of the BSMP, Brazil recently announced the launch of a new program that will emphasize cross-national partnerships to create sustained international engagements signaling the country's sustained engagement in internationalization efforts (Axelberg, 2017).

In addition to these large, single-country or bilateral efforts, there are also several other regional cooperative efforts that foster cross-national ties in a range of areas, including education. Programs and associations involving Latin America and the Caribbean such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), European Union-Latin America Caribbean (EU-LAC), CARICOM, and MERCOSUR involve countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and aim to support economic growth, leverage their collective resources, strengthen cultural ties, and share regional best practices. These regional associations all have some focus on education, which contribute to cross-border academic mobility in both direct and indirect ways (Jules, 2016; Perrotta, 2016; Robertson, Olds, Dale, & Dang, 2016).

Cross-border academic mobility is limited by a number of factors in Latin America. A systematic credit transfer system, such as that developed in Europe under the Bologna Process, could encourage greater short term student exchange within Latin America by enabling students to transfer academic credits back to their home institution (Brunner, 2009; Gacel-Avila, 2007). Recent efforts towards developing common credit transfer frameworks through the biregional European Union - Latin America and Caribbean (EULAC) initiative have sought in part to facilitate the smooth transfer of academic credits across borders, thereby supporting student mobility. Moves towards greater degree recognition among Latin American and Caribbean countries also contribute to higher levels of student mobility by enabling students to make use of higher education degrees throughout the region (Felsen, 2016).

Such large-scale government initiatives have effectively mobilized thousands of students to gain international experience in the region. However, a key com-

ponent for the success of these programs is to sustain their momentum with enduring governmental support.

### •Economics as a driver

Economics is widely cited as a key factor driving the global mobility of students. Many note the high economic value that international students bring to a host country through the payment of tuition and fees, which are largely paid for by the students and their families (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016; Maldonado-Maldonado, Ibarra Casares, & Cortes Velasco, 2017). Because tuition fees for international studies are often high, cost can be a determining factor in whether students study abroad and this is evident among many students from Latin America and the Caribbean. Affordability of study abroad limits the number of students from Latin America who study outside the region. Currency exchange rates and travel costs contribute to the expense of overseas study, as well as high tuition costs in systems such as the United States, which does not have the tradition of high rates of public subsidy of higher education that is common in Latin America and Europe (Brunner, 2009). Mobility patterns of students from the region suggest that affordability is an influential factor, as many students study in Europe or within their own region where they pay lower tuition rates than they would in the United States. Among Latin American and Caribbean students who do study in the United States, they choose community colleges – which have relatively low tuition rates – at higher rates than do other international students (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016). While cost of overseas study remains a barrier that limits the potential growth of outbound international students from the region, it is clear from the recent example of the Brazilian government's large-scale scholarship program, that when economic barriers to overseas study are removed, students are eager to take part in international education opportunities.

Work opportunities also play a role in mobility. These include options for students to gain international work experience alongside their studies, as well as prospects for employment opportunities in the host country following graduation (Farrugia, 2016b). For example, as the number of U.S. students embarking on international work, internships, and volunteering grows, Latin America and the Caribbean has emerged as the leading destination for these types of applied learning activities. Of the 22,000 U.S. students reported by U.S. campuses as engaged in non-credit work experiences, 40 percent did so in Latin America in 2013/14, with Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, each hosting more than 1,000 U.S. students in non-credit endeavors (Farrugia & Bhandari, 2016).

Some mobility programs in the region have made industry skills a cornerstone of their program structure. Countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador,

and Mexico, among others, have invested in scholarships for foreign study or research that focus on fields tied to the development of innovation and the building of knowledge economies, such as science and engineering (Belyavina & Brensinger, 2013). In the case of Brazil, the incorporation of internships into students' international study experiences also exposed students to professional training with foreign and multinational companies, further supporting the goals of the program to develop STEM industries in Brazil (Monks, 2013).

For a region where it is estimated that a third to a half of all higher education students studying in their home countries major in social sciences (Garcia de Fanelli, 2013), the strong focus on science and technology fields in governments' international scholarship programs underscores the role that international academic mobility plays in supporting national economic development goals.

### •Language skills as a limiting factor for mobility

A key contributor to mobility flows into and out of Latin America and the Caribbean is the language proficiency of students. Spanish is overwhelmingly the language of instruction throughout Latin American higher education, while English is used in many Caribbean countries. The prevalence of Spanish-language instruction in Latin American education functionally limits the growth of academic mobility into and out of the region, particularly in an environment where English has become the global lingua franca for higher education (Altbach, 2007). Indeed, many countries and regions of the world where English is not the native language have introduced English-taught degree programs in an effort to attract international students (Brenn-White & van Rest, 2013; Smith, 2017), but this trend has not extended to Latin America. Globally, just over 400 million people speak Spanish as their native language, and additionally there are nearly 100 million people studying Spanish as a second language, compared to about 350 million native English speakers and 600 million people studying English as a second language (Lewis, Paul, Simons, & Fennig, 2016, in International Association of Language Centres (IALC), 2016), illustrating the drastic global imbalance of English-speakers versus Spanish speakers.

There are indicators that English language proficiency is increasing in Latin America, which can potentially set the stage for growth in outbound student mobility from the region, as well as allowing for students' deeper engagement in the host country. Recent studies indicate that English skills throughout Latin America are improving, due to domestic and foreign government initiatives to advance English instruction (British Council, 2015; Education First, 2015).

While the push for English instruction is often aimed at improving economic competitiveness, there is likely to be an effect on academic mobility as students

and scholars are better able to access a wider range of foreign higher education opportunities because of their growing English proficiency.

Among U.S. students – the leading source of international students from outside the region – Spanish is the most frequently studied foreign language, with more than 790,756 students enrolled in Spanish classes in 2013 (Goldberg, Looney, & Lusin, 2015). More U.S. students study Spanish than all other foreign languages combined and for many decades their numbers were increasing. But a recent 8 percent drop in Spanish language enrollments from 2009 to 2013 suggests a renewed need to promote Spanish language learning for U.S. students (Goldberg, Looney, & Lusin, 2015).

### **:: Prospects: international mobility as a driver of development in Latin America and the Caribbean?**

Many countries around the world view higher education as playing a critical role in development through its contributions to producing a skilled workforce and generating knowledge and innovation that advance industry. They view higher education as having potential for developing global competencies in the workforce, which supports global trade by helping to attract multinational firms interested in employees with intercultural work skills and language abilities. Higher education is also the locus for generating knowledge and innovation, often through cross-national research teams working together on global challenges. The physical mobility of students and scholars is often a key component of internationalization efforts that are essential in achieving these goals. As institutions and governments in Latin America and the Caribbean increasingly recognize the role of higher education in supporting economic development, particularly at the national and regional levels, greater future international mobility of students and scholars – both inbound and outbound – is the likely result.

International mobility of students already plays a role in providing access to higher education in many countries in the region, particularly in the Caribbean where high rates of student study away from home, as well as several other countries in Central and South America. These patterns are likely to continue, especially as the capacity of high quality higher education institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean is constrained by a number of factors. Recent expansion of higher education capacity throughout the region has occurred primarily in the middle-tier sector, particularly among private higher education institutions (Ferreya, Avitabile, Botero Alvarez, Haimovich Paz, & Urzua, 2017).

With limited supply of the highest quality higher education, elite students with the means to study in another country may do so in greater numbers. At the



same time, expanding options in domestic higher education provision may increase the pool of students interested in international studies. However, students with lower academic preparation or lower financial means face challenges in accessing overseas study and, for these students, strategic investments in providing scholarships for international educational experiences will likely be the determining factor in the region's international mobility patterns in the future.

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