



CELAC REGIONAL ROADMAP ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Cartagena de Indias, October 15–17, 2025



CELAC REGIONAL ROADMAP ON HIGHER EDUCATION **issued from the Declaration of CELAC Higher Education Ministers and Senior Authorities,** **Cartagena de Indias, October 15–17, 2025**

The ministers and senior authorities responsible for higher education in the Member Countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), meeting in Cartagena de Indias within the framework of the Meeting of Higher Education Ministers and Senior Officials, jointly adopt this Declaration and Roadmap as an expression of their political and technical commitment to guide the development of higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean over the coming years. Based on the principles of horizontality, cooperation, and consensus, this Roadmap reaffirms the collective will of the states to strengthen a fair, autonomous, and solidary regional integration, aimed at the unrestricted defense of higher education as a fundamental right and public good, serving as a strategic pillar for the sovereignty and development of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

1. Higher education as a fundamental right and public good

- Identifying and sharing effective state practices that demonstrate the sustained efforts of Member States to ensure equitable and inclusive access, retention, graduation, and well-being of academic communities, as well as the quality of higher education—measured by relevance, diversity, and excellence—as a fundamental right and a public good.
- Facilitating the standardized compilation of public indicators using data available from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and ministries, enabling comprehensive monitoring of access, retention, and graduation/dropout rates.
- Publishing an annual joint regional report on progress in guaranteeing the right to higher education.

2. Peace, democracy, and social integration

- Promoting virtual CELAC meetings among academic communities and social organizations to share experiences and best practices in reconciliation, peacebuilding, and participatory democracy.
- Prior to each ministerial meeting, promoting a regional forum involving state, academia, and civil society to debate the role of higher education in democracy and social integration, generating input for political discussions.
- Stimulating mechanisms involving the state, academia, and civil society to foster debate on the role of higher education in democracy and social integration.
- Systematizing the conclusions of the regional forums held prior to the ministerial meetings on higher education as official inputs for formulating public policies and multilateral agreements within the framework of CELAC, aimed at strengthening the role of higher education as a driver of peace, democracy, and social integration.

3. Higher education in the face of polycrisis

- Articulating collaborative platforms among the state, higher education institutions, and civil society in strategic areas such as energy transition, food security, health, digitalization, and democracy, among others, with the aim of strengthening the regional response to the polycrisis. These platforms should generate public policy proposals grounded in existing research and intersectoral dialogue and cooperation processes.



- Organizing CELAC regional spaces for academic prospective analyses, where higher education institutions present evidence to ministries to guide regional decisions on priority topics.
- Promoting the integration of traditional and community knowledge into ministerial debates, facilitated by higher education institutions that systematize these perspectives.

4. **Quality Assurance**

- Promoting the implementation of the regional agreement on the mutual recognition of academic degrees.
- Generating dialogues aimed at harmonizing quality assurance systems to promote undergraduate and graduate mobility, while safeguarding the diverse epistemologies of the region and respecting the unique characteristics of the territories.

5. **Mobility**

- Consolidating intra-CELAC mobility programs for students, teachers, researchers, and administrative staff through various modalities.
- Articulating the solidarity-based internationalization of higher education with its core functions—research, extension, community engagement, and outreach—while highlighting the territorial relevance and social impact of institutions.

6. **Plurilingualism**

- Developing a regional space for academic dialogue on the preservation, revitalization, and teaching of indigenous, creole, and ancestral languages, coordinated by higher education institutions with the political support of the States.
- Promoting the production of knowledge in the various indigenous and ancestral languages of the region, with the support of higher education institutions and ministries of education.

7. **Knowledge as a common good and scientific sovereignty**

- Approving and institutionalizing, through a collegiate approach, the CELAC principles of open science and multidirectional knowledge transfer. These principles, adopted by ministries and higher education institutions, recognize knowledge as a common good and promote the scientific sovereignty of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Establishing general principles regarding the role of Higher Education Institutions in Artificial Intelligence (AI) to guide this transformation responsibly and ethically, encompassing research, student training, and social development.
- Organizing regional forums for knowledge dialogues, involving academia, communities, and governments.
- Analyzing the proposal for the creation of the Regional Knowledge Agency (ARCO), ENLACES.

8. **Solidary and sustainable cooperation in the context of extra-regional relations**

- Approving a framework of CELAC principles for extra-regional cooperation in higher education—such as horizontality, equal treatment, sovereignty, and cognitive justice—for common use by ministries and HEIs.
- Based on the development of a framework of principles, establishing priorities and strategies for relations with extra-regional partners.



9. **CELAC Permanent Ministerial Roundtable on Higher Education**

- Formally establishing the CELAC Permanent Ministerial Roundtable on Higher Education during the first semester of 2026, with biannual virtual meetings.
- Developing a CELAC-Academia Roundtable as an official mechanism for permanent dialogue, to be convened before each ministerial meeting.
- Publishing joint state-academia recommendations as inputs for national and regional policies.

10. **Gender parity and equity**

- Promoting, formulating, and ensuring regional institutional policies on sex and gender equity in higher education.
- Preparing and publishing regional reports on gender gaps in higher education using data provided by higher education institutions and national organizations.
- Promoting the joint implementation of institutional protocols for the prevention, response, and eradication of gender-based violence through regional agreements between ministries of education and higher education institutions, thereby strengthening safe, inclusive, and discrimination-free educational environments.

11. **Racial equality and recognition of the value of traditional communities**

- Promoting public policies in higher education that seek to guarantee access for historically underrepresented populations, particularly Afro-descendant communities, Indigenous peoples, and traditional communities.

12. **Dignifying the teaching profession**

- Promoting the development of a regional framework of reference to dignify and enhance the teaching profession in higher education. This framework should establish common guidelines on working conditions, job stability, well-being, recognition, and professional development, while respecting institutional autonomy and the diversity of education systems.

13. **Strengthening higher education in the Caribbean**

- Recognizing the Caribbean as a strategic axis of regional integration, and promoting actions that highlight and strengthen its higher education institutions.
- Generating spaces for dialogue, best practices, and regional forums from the Caribbean that showcase their experiences of resilience, social innovation, and peacebuilding to all of Latin America and the Caribbean.

14. **Roadmap and follow-up**

- Recognizing this Roadmap as a living instrument for the implementation of the Declaration.
- Directing the Permanent Ministerial Roundtable to consolidate annual reports, incorporating inputs from ministries and academic institutions.
- Disseminating results in multilateral forums, demonstrating the state-academia collaboration as a regional example.

