

# ENLACES

**ESPACIO LATINOAMERICANO  
Y CARIBEÑO DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR**



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## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION AREAS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: SYNERGIES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES**

4<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COORDINATION GROUP ON GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE



Sandra Goulart Almeida

UFMG Rector

# Outline

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1. Context of Education in LA

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2. The CRES & Enlaces

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3. What it means LLL in Latin America and the Caribbean

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4. Conclusion

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5. Way forward

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6. Inspiration

# 1. Context of Education in LA

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Diversity of systems of education

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History of colonization and epistemic violence in the area

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High social and economic inequality

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Large informal labor market and youth unemployment

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Strong presence of public schools and Universities

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Adult literacy gaps

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Rural-urban education gaps

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Significant expansion of private sector in the 1980s and 1990s, not always aligned with quality

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Significant advances in inclusion, equal opportunities and democratization in education

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Digital transformation, connectivity gaps, challenge of post-COVID learning recovery

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Financing challenges and constraints

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## Key Regional Metrics (2015-2024)

Indicator	Latin America	OECD Average
Gross Enrollment Rate (Tertiary)	52% (2018)	76%
Tertiary Completion Rate	25.1%	40%
Adults (25-64) with Tertiary Education	Chile 29%, Costa Rica 22%, Mexico 21% Brasil 18.4%	40%
Spending per Student (USD PPP)	3x lower than OECD	Baseline
Average Years of Schooling	9.07 years	11+ years

Source: OECD Education at a Glance 2024-2025, IDB State of Education Report 2023, UNESCO IESALC

## 2. CRES - Regional Conferences of HE - Unesco

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I CRES 1996 – Havana, Cuba

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II CRES 2008 – Cartagena de Indias, Colombia -  
creation of ENLACES

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III CRES 2018 – Córdoba, Argentina

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CRES+5 2024 – Brasília, Brazil (CRES+5)

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IV CRES 2028

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Education as a public and social good, as a  
fundamental human right, the responsibility of the  
State – “not for profit”

# 3. What LLL means in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Learning throughout life - from early childhood to older adulthood
- Education as a public good, a human right and the responsibility of the State – not for profit
- Formal, non-formal, and informal education
- Education for citizenship, employment and social inclusion

**Why it is important:** ability and skill development is key to economic resilience, social mobility and democratic participation.

# 4. Priorities in LLL

- Early childhood education
- Basic education quality
- Primary and secondary education for all
- Technical and vocational education development
- Higher education, continuing education and outreach programs (academic extension) – access and permanence
- Adult education & literacy
- Digital transformation, skills and reskilling
- Inclusion and equity

# 5. Conclusion

Lifelong learning in LA & C is:

- Essential for social mobility and economic growth
- Key to reducing inequality and promote social justice
- Central to achieving SDG 4 and all the other SDGs
- A long-term investment in inclusive education, citizenship, critical thinking and democracy

## 6. Way forward

- Institutionalize lifelong learning in national law
- Strengthen adult education systems
- Promote inclusive access
- Sponsor permanence for disadvantaged groups
- Strengthen technical and vocational systems
- Expand university extension courses and professional development programs
- Provide quality distance learning
- Expand digital access and infrastructure
- Align training with labor market needs
- Adopt micro-credentials and modular certification
- Improve regional and international cooperation - cross-border education cooperation
- Increase funding & monitoring systems

“Education is the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world”.

“True cooperation is an act of solidarity, in which all parties are equally human and equally capable of knowing and transforming the world, and contributing to liberation and democratic participation”.

Paulo Freire



**Thank you!**  
**Obrigada!**

