

# Inbound Mobility Report of International Students to Colombia 2016-2019-I

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# INBOUND MOBILITY REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TO COLOMBIA 2016-2019-I

RED COLOMBIA - CHALLENGE YOUR KNOWLEDGE®

## AUTHORS

Ericka Duncan (Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar)  
y Daniela Sierra (Universidad De La Sabana)

Manuela Vélez Restrepo (Universidad EIA)

Sandra Lorena Cárdenas Arias (Universidad de Medellín)  
y Camilo Iván Puerto-López (CCYK Network)

Jeannie H. Caicedo, María Angélica Díaz Granados  
y Katherine Acuña Páez (Universidad del Norte)

Carlos Coronado (Universidad del Magdalena)  
y María Teresa Uribe-Jaramillo (Universidad EAFIT)

Giovanni Anzola-Pardo (Universidad Externado de Colombia)

---

## EDITOR

Giovanni Anzola-Pardo (Universidad Externado de Colombia)

---

## DATA ANALYSIS SUPPORT

Eden Bolívar Crucillo  
(CESA)

---

## TRANSLATION AND PROOFREADING

María Camila Pabón

Diana Marcela Rodríguez

---

## LAYOUT

Mauricio Ramírez

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2020

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*Giovanni Anzola-Pardo*

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**María Victoria Angulo González**

Minister of National Education

**Luis Fernando Pérez Pérez**

Vice-Minister of Higher Education

**Carolina Guzmán Ruiz**

Director of Promotion of Higher Education

**Elcy Patricia Peñalosa Leal**

Director of Quality for Higher Education

**Santiago Fernández de Soto Pombo**

Head of the Office of Cooperation and International Affairs

**Brigitte Baptiste Ballera**

Chancellor Ean University

**Billy Crissien Castillo**

C.E.O Ean University

**Juanita Rodríguez Kattah**

Vice-Chancellor for Academic Innovation Ean University

**Carlos Julio Bernal Segura**

Vice-Chancellor for Finance and Administration Ean University

**Sara Vera Aguirre**

Director of International and Interinstitutional Affairs Ean University

---

**Translation and proofreading**

Diana Marcela Rodríguez Pareja  
María Camila Pabón Cuadros

**Project Team**

Ean University

**Layout**

Mauricio Alejandro Ramírez Forero

---

**International and Interinstitutional Office**

- Sara Vera Aguirre
- Jesús Denegri Flores
- Marjorie Maia Zomignani
- Jimmy Lugo Guerrero
- Ángela Galeano Colonia
- Hugo Buitrago Carvajal
- Angélica María Virgüez Monsalve
- José Álvarez Montoya (Orangus SAS Development Company)
- Diana Marcela Rodríguez Pareja
- Mauricio Alejandro Ramírez Forero
- María Camila Pabón Cuadros

- Liliana Leguizamón Buitrago

**Sustainability Coordination**

- María Eugenia Rinaudo Manucci
- María Cristina Rodríguez Villera

**Ministry of National Education**

- Santiago Fernández de Soto
- Carolina Guzmán Ruiz
- Elcy Peñalosa Leal
- Andrés Lemus Rendón
- Nury Paola Suárez Pineda
- Daniela Lozano Padierna

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## National experts

- Gabriela Casanova Rangel
- Luisa Echeverría King
- Camilo Forero Piñeros
- Doris Hernández Dukova
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- Jennifer Niebles Lubo
- Tatiana Olarte Barrera
- Alexis Ortiz Morales
- Nancy Rozo Montaña
- Maria Cristina Valderrama
- Martha Valencia Zuluaga
- Jeannette Vélez Ramírez
- Marcela Wolff López

## International experts

- Marcos Ávilez Aros (Chile)
- Paloma Baumann (Switzerland)
- Robert Buttery (Switzerland)
- Patrick Hafenstein (Australia)
- David Julien (Canada)
- Robert Lawrence (Australia)
- Ann Mason (United States)
- Pablo Ramírez Didou (Mexico)
- Claudia Rodríguez Ramírez (Peru)

## Institutions of the Intersectoral Table for the Internationalization of Higher Education

- Ministry of National Education
- Ministry of Science
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Procolombia
- CNA National Accreditation Council
- SENA National Learning Service
- ICETEX Colombian Institute of Educational Loans and Technical Studies Abroad "Mariano Ospina Pérez"
- APC Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation
- Caro y Cuervo Institute
- ASCUN Colombian Association of Universities
- CCYK Colombia Challenge Your Knowledge Network
- RCI Colombian Network for Internacionalización
- REDTTU Network of Technical, Professional and Technological Institutions and Public Universities

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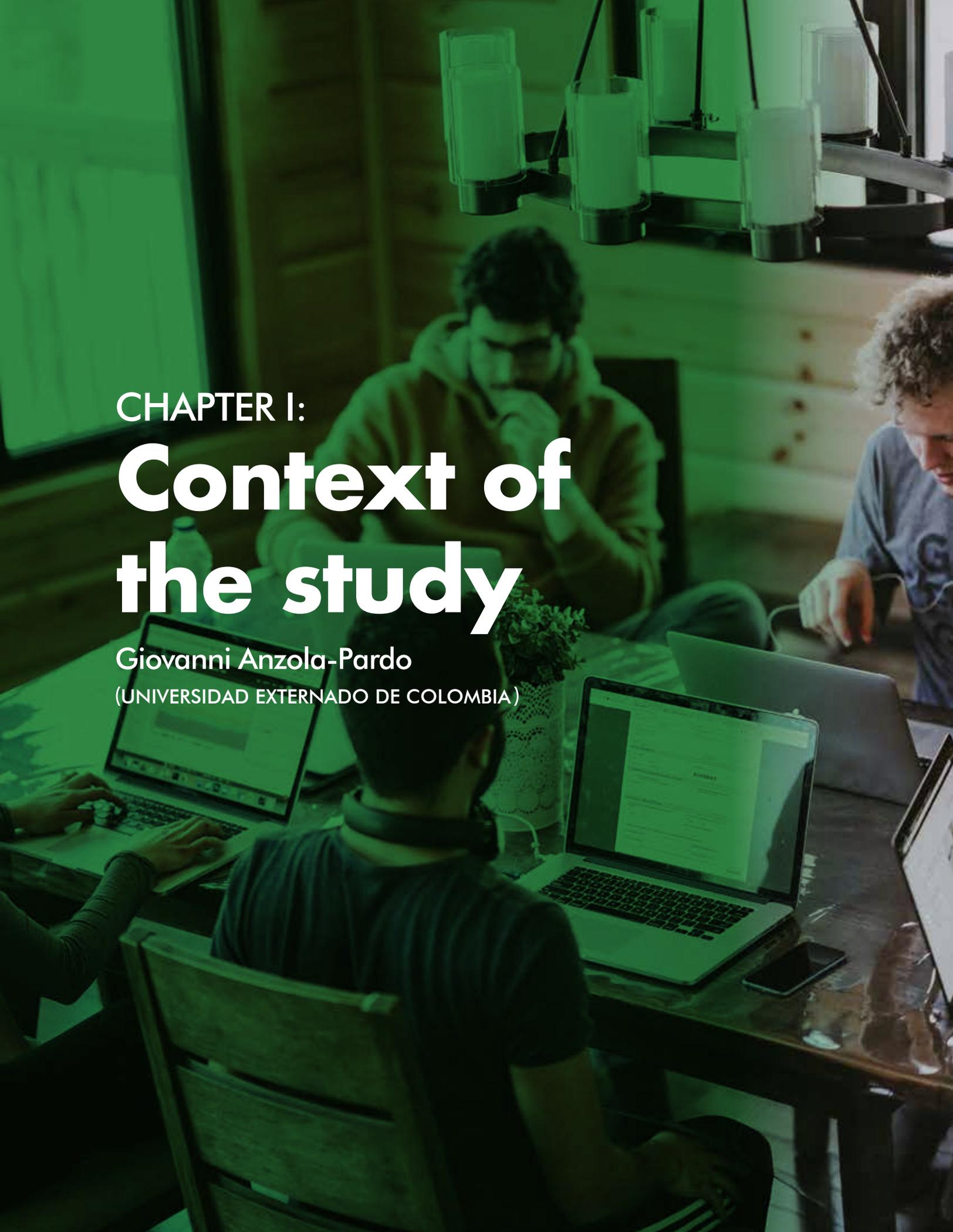
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A photograph of a study room with a green color overlay. Several students are seated at a table with laptops. One student in the foreground is wearing headphones and looking at a laptop. Another student in the background is resting their head on their hand. The room has a modern aesthetic with a whiteboard and a desk lamp.

CHAPTER I:

# Context of the study

Giovanni Anzola-Pardo

(UNIVERSIDAD EXTERNADO DE COLOMBIA)

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## 1.1. Introduction

Colombia is facing two new realities, a post-conflict situation —with an undetermined implementation of the peace agreements— and another, a pandemic that has it facing the dichotomy of economic stagnation and public health. This implies that higher education, equally, faces important challenges regarding the proposals of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to address new and existing social problems related to poverty, inequality, access and coverage (directly and indirectly).

On the other hand, it is important to mention that the Colombian HEIs already presented important results in relation to their international proposal, in particular, with respect to the possibilities of attracting international students to carry out academic activities in our training institutions, as demonstrated in the first version of the document generated by the Colombia-Challenge Your Knowledge (CCYK) network called 'Inbound mobility of US students to Colombia' (2015) and the Study on the Internationalization of Higher Education in Colombia and Modernization of Internationalization Indicators of the National Information System for Higher Education (SNIES) by CCYK and the Ministry of National Education (2013).

Unfortunately, the health situation, possibly, will have effects on the academic rhythm of the commitments made and then a 'new reality' will arrive where digital platforms, creativity to interconnect classrooms with virtual environments for learning, methodologies and creative ways of thinking about student academic mobility, from the premises of knowledge itself without the need to move from one place to another, will be the elements that set a radical change in the reality of this activity.

Incoming student mobility is a topic of constant interest to the CCYK network, to the extent that a section was dedicated in the "Guide to the Internationalization of Higher Education - Incoming Mobility" (CCYK, 2015:39-42)<sup>1</sup> which outlined guidelines for the management of incoming students, among other contents for internationalization. In addition, the Colombian Migration Administrative Unit's reports show that foreigners are entering the country under the authorized study activity, with an increase in the number of foreigners entering the country during the period 2016 to 2019-I<sup>2</sup>.

Precisely, this document focuses its attention on the behavior of incoming mobility of international students to Colombia for the period 2016-2019-I. This document presents, in a descriptive manner, elements related to the international student movement visiting Colombia, its modalities, the cooperation activities that have allowed it, the services of the institutions, the cities —with their associated costs of living— the security, the most attractive

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areas of knowledge, among others. The above, together with a student population of more than 39 thousand students from 65 public and private institutions of higher education in Colombia.

The analysis presented here is the result of a structured survey (issued with the support of the Mesa Intersectorial para la Internacionalización de la Educación Superior-MIIES convened by the Ministry of National Education through the Cooperation Office), which gathered information on the above-mentioned activity. Likewise, on an expectation of academic normality, data are projected in order to identify an expected trend. In this sense, the behavior of international student mobility to the country is shown based on two models of analysis. The first model presents the trend from statistics (least squares and semi-averages) and the next trend is made from prospective and morphological analysis. The two models seek to describe future results until 2021.

Finally, this report, called the Inbound Mobility Report of International Students to Colombia 2016-2019-I, is intended to serve as an input for good decision-making, to address collegiate strategies from the institutions themselves, the articulation of the sectors, and the leadership of the National Government. The results indicate an important panorama of progress and academic projection in Colombia that is worth adapting to the current global dynamics.

## 1.2. Methodology

This study is the result of several years of work, which implied the need to understand the behavior of incoming mobility of international students to the country to answer how this activity was for the period 2016-2019-I, the elaboration of analysis variables and dimensions, the determination to carry out a quantitative study of descriptive and analytical character, the implementation of a structured survey (with its respective validation) and the subsequent data and results analysis-shown in this document.

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1. Retrieved from [http://aprende.colombiaaprende.edu.co/ckfinder/userfiles/files/INFORME\\_FINAL.pdf](http://aprende.colombiaaprende.edu.co/ckfinder/userfiles/files/INFORME_FINAL.pdf) in August 2020.

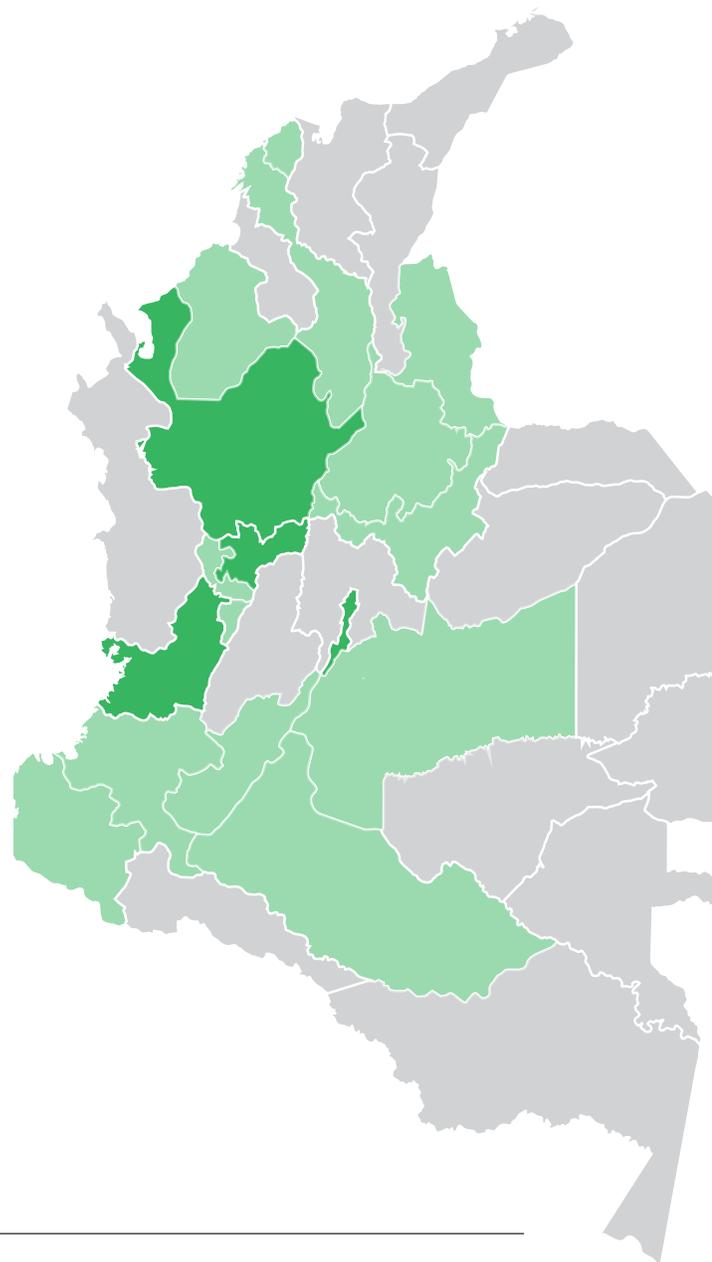
2. Consulted at: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/migraci.n.colombia#!/> September 30, 2020. Filter for each year: Entry and for 2019 selection of months corresponding to the first semester.

## 1.3. Participants

The surveys sent to the HEIs by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) had a total population of 299 HEIs (according to the SNIES<sup>3</sup> platform), from which 65 surveys were selected (31% public and 69% private HEIs) whose records met the criteria predefined by the researchers.

**Table 1 Number and types of HEIs in Colombia selected as a sample by city**

CITY	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	TOTAL
Armenia		1	1
Barranquilla	2		2
Bogotá	23	5	28
Bucaramanga	3		3
Cali	4	2	6
Cartagena	2		2
Florencia	1		1
Manizales	3	1	4
Medellín	5	3	8
Montería		1	1
Neiva		1	1
Pamplona		1	1
Pasto	1		1
Pereira		1	1
Popayán		1	1
Santa Marta		1	1
Tunja	1	1	2
Villavicencio		1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>65</b>



3. <https://hecaa.mineducación.gov.co/consultaspublicas/ies>

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## 1.4. Representativeness of the sample

For the present study, a universe of 299 HEIs (N=299) was taken into account, of which 212 HEIs participated, with a sample of 65 HEIs responding to a structured survey (n=65). Thus, taking into account that N=299 and n=65, a confidence interval of 93% and a margin of error of 10% is obtained. In other words, statistically the information provided by n=65 could represent the universe N=299 in the analysis process.

## 1.5. Instrument

The data collection instrument was a structured survey with 28 information request items and 1 authorization item, where items with single responses and others with multiple responses were identified.

The survey called "Inbound Mobility Report of International Students to Colombia 2016-2019-I" was created by the academic team of the CCYK network and validated by MIIES. The distribution of the survey was carried out through the Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Education at the end of 2019, with an extension of completion at the beginning of 2020.

## 1.6. Procedure

For the preparation of the structured survey, the variables with their dimensions and indicators were previously determined in order to carry out the subsequent process of organizing the information and the respective analysis processes. In this sense, Pagano (2011) points out that a variable is any property or characteristic of some event, object or person that can produce different values at different times, according to the present conditions. The CCYK members determined the variables and dimensions for this analysis.

Subsequently, under initial guidelines of data selection criteria, the raw data was purified by selecting the surveys that complied with the predefined guidelines for analysis, and the corresponding databases with the allusive dimensions were created.

Methods were used from the technique of descriptive statistics, as an initial condition in every process of quantitative analysis.

In order to develop the trend, it was taken into account that trend analysis can be seen from a wide number of theoretical models and methods. It is defined to work on two models that can give approximations about the future of the mobility of incoming students to Colombia for its relevance.

A photograph of two students, a woman and a man, sitting at a desk and looking at a laptop screen. The woman is on the left, smiling broadly, and the man is on the right, wearing glasses and also smiling. The laptop screen shows a website with the word 'Unsplash' visible. The background is a chalkboard with some faint writing. The entire image has a green color overlay.

CHAPTER II

# The dynamics of student mobility towards Colombia

Ericka Duncan  
(UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA DE BOLÍVAR)

Daniela Sierra  
(UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA)

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## 2.1. References of academic mobility and context

International student mobility has significantly increased in the last decade. According to the OECD, in its latest report Education at a Glance 2020, in 2018, 5.6 million tertiary education students worldwide advanced some type of academic mobility program, more than double the number in 2015; in particular, according to UNESCO in its study on Mobility in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, it has increased from 2.05% of all higher education students who have moved internationally, to 2.3% between 2012 and 2017.

In this regard, there are several factors at the individual, institutional, national and global levels that have stimulated academic mobility internationally, mainly in response to the challenges of the knowledge economy<sup>4</sup> and the patterns of this type of process. Thus, more and more students in tertiary education are looking for learning spaces that strengthen international, intercultural and soft skills in different and complementary knowledge to their disciplines, which provide them with tools to approach and understand diverse perspectives. Also, at the national and international level, there are opportunities for additional sources of funding, areas of study, language, and government policies to encourage cross-border mobility for education.

In Colombia, this reference framework for academic mobility is evident in various national, regional, and global initiatives that have made it possible to leverage resources, recruit talented students from different parts of the world, and focus on the competitiveness of academic programs and multidisciplinary and multicultural spaces for the generation and strengthening of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI).

Some of these initiatives are the Pacific Alliance, the Latin American Academic Exchange Program (PILA), Fulbright U.S. Student Researcher, Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA), 100,000 Strong in the Americas, DAAD, ERASMUS+, Programa Delfín, Scholarship Colombia Extranjeros, among others. Some of them will have a preponderant role in the cooperation chapter of this document.

For this study, the characterization of international academic mobility was

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<sup>4</sup> The knowledge-based economy -which responds to the term knowledge-based economy -is based directly on the production, distribution, and use of knowledge and information (Tardío, A. B., & Llauger, M. B., 2001).

categorized into three groups:

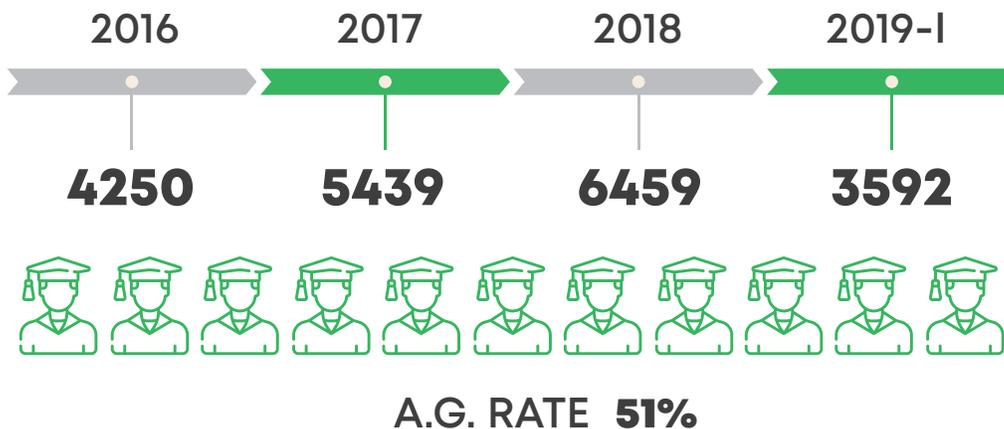
- Semester academic mobility: It allows students to study one or two academic periods in partner institutions that will be recognized as part of their academic program (Valderrama and Herrera, 2015).
- Other modalities: This category refers to other academic mobility modalities different from the academic semester abroad. These modalities include: double degree, internship, Spanish as a foreign language courses, language assistants, volunteering, short courses, academic missions/visits, congresses/conferences/workshops, and clinical clerkship.
- Complete programs: where the student takes a program to obtain an undergraduate or graduate degree (Specialization, Master's or Doctorate).

Thus, the results of these groups are presented in the following section.

## 2.2. Academic semester abroad

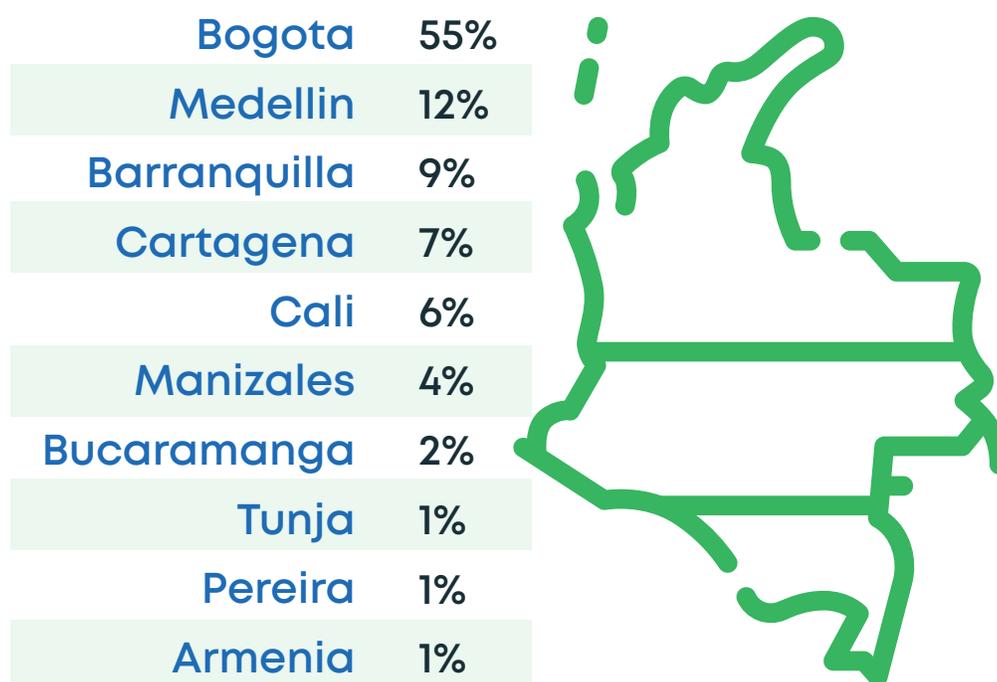
This section details the behaviour and results of the academic mobility from 2016 to the first semester of 2019. For this period, 19,740 international students completed an academic semester, and 1,309 decided to extend their stay (which corresponds to 7% of the total number of incoming students in this modality). Figure No. 1 shows the increase in the number of students who completed the academic semester abroad, from 2016 to 2018, and shows an absolute growth rate of 51%.

**Figure 1 Total international students in academic semester mobility by year (2016-2019-I)**



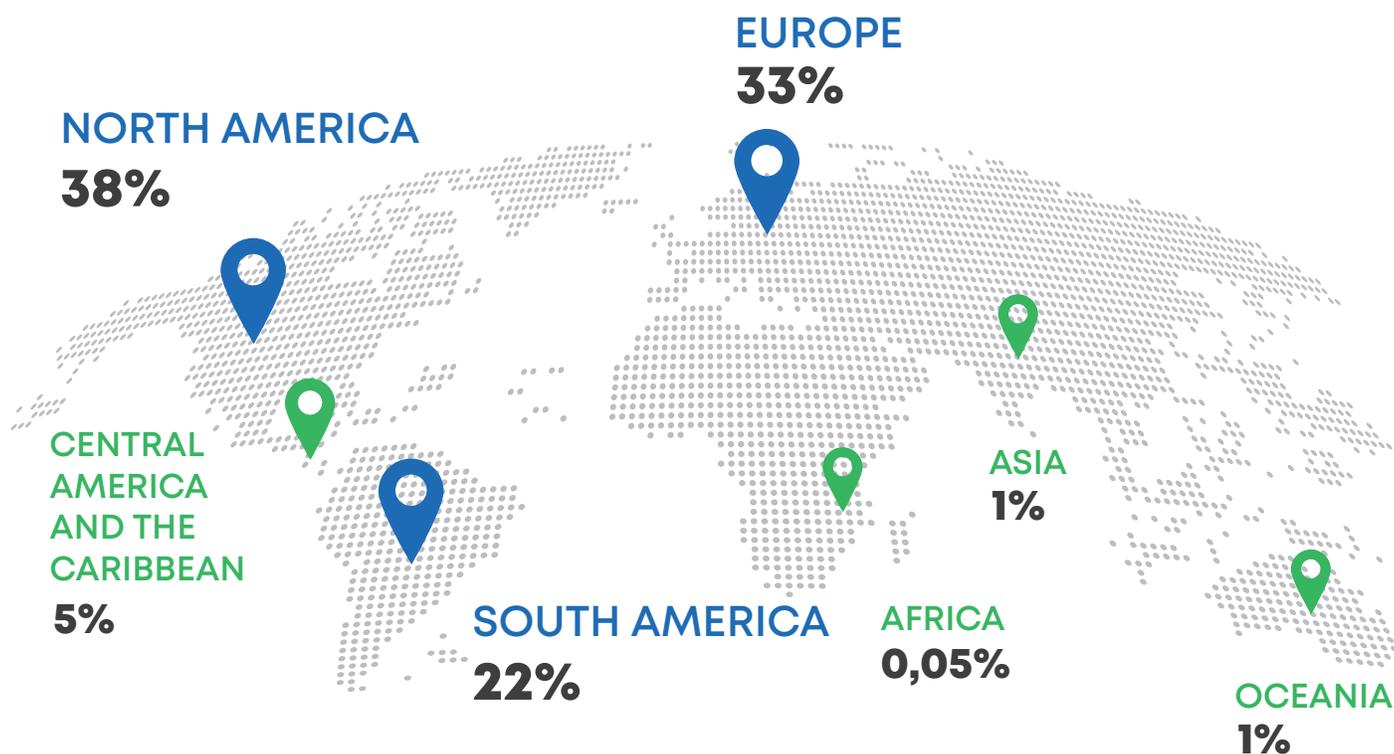
84% of the total universe of students reported (19,740) correspond to students linked to academic semesters at the undergraduate level and 16% to graduate programs. In addition, Bogotá, Medellín, and Barranquilla are the cities that receive the most international students in this modality, as shown in Figure 2. Regarding the 7% of students who decide to extend their studies, 1,082 correspond to undergraduate programs and 227 to graduate programs. Bogotá, Barranquilla, and Medellín are the cities where international students most frequently decide to extend their studies.

**Figure 2 Total number of international students in academic semester mobility by the ten Colombian cities where they arrive most (2016-2019-I)**



With regard to the origin of international students in academic semester mobility, 38% come from North America, 33% from Europe, 22% from South America, 5% from Central America and the Caribbean, followed by Asia and Oceania with 1%, as shown in Figure 3.

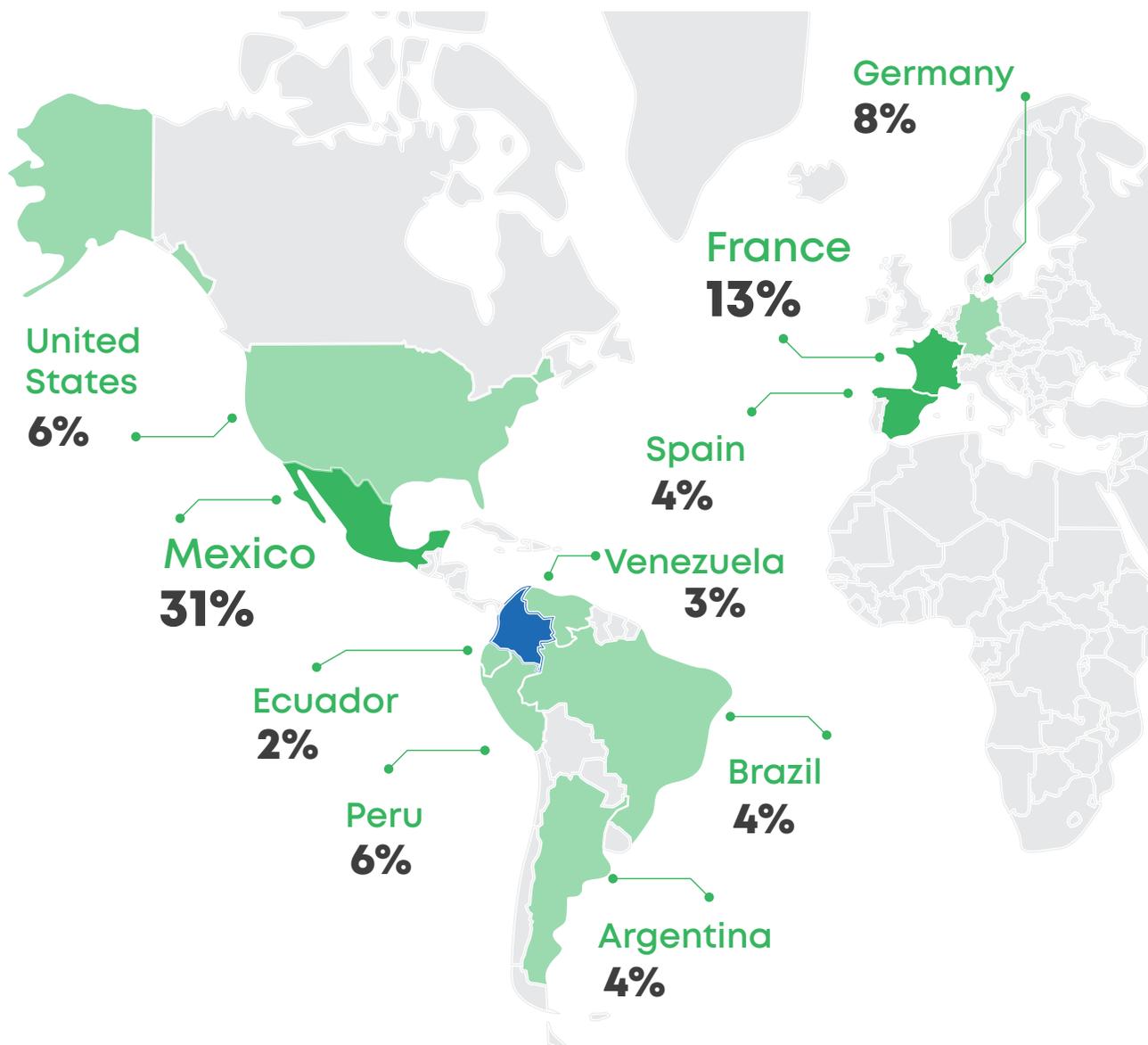
**Figure 3 Total international students in academic semester mobility per continent (2016-2019-I)**



Regarding students who decide to extend their academic semester, 51% are students from Europe, followed by South America (28%) and North America (13%).

By country of origin, Mexico is the main country that sends international students to Colombia with 31%, followed by France (13%) and Germany (8%). As a reference, some international programs stand out, such as the Platform for Academic and Student Mobility of the Pacific Alliance (formed by Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Chile), ERASMUS + and the DAAD, which promote academic mobility and credit recognition.

**Figure 4 Top ten countries of origin of international students in academic semester mobility (2016-2019-I)**



Although the academic semester abroad is traditionally the most frequent form of mobility due to its reciprocal conditions, recognition of credits, and financial support, the results of the survey show that more and more HEIs are focusing their efforts on other modalities of academic mobility and complete program studies.

## 2.3. Incoming mobility in other modalities

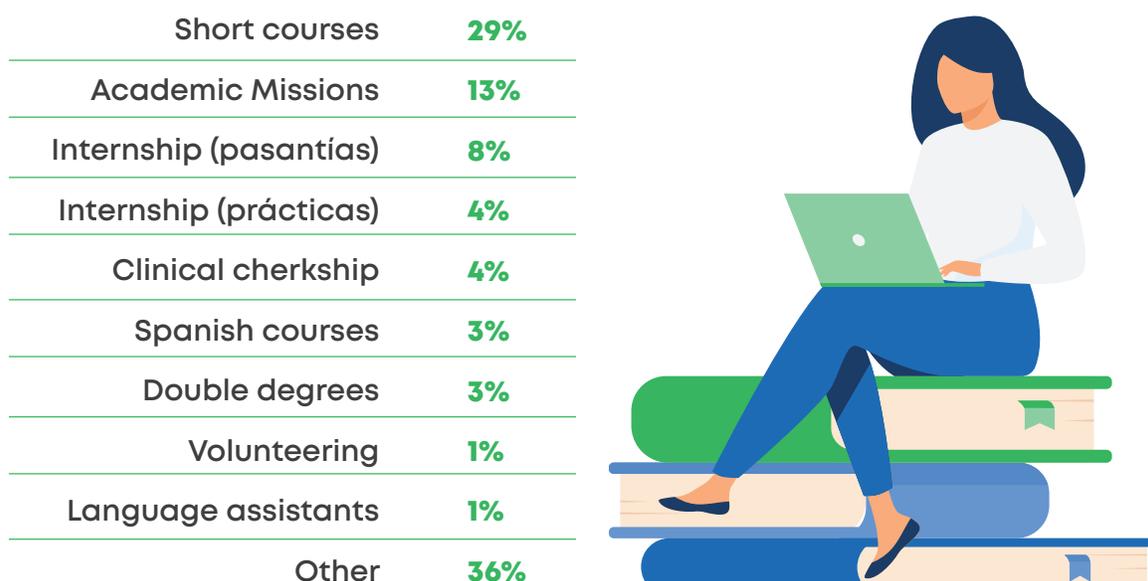
This section analyzes the results of the survey regarding the incoming student mobility during the period analyzed in modalities different from the academic semester category.

This category includes students who came to the country for activities such as short courses, academic missions, internship, clinical clerkship, Spanish courses, double degrees, volunteering and language assistants.

For the period covered, respondents reported 19,459 students in these modalities, a figure very similar to the number of students received in the academic semester modality, 19,740. This implies that a total of 39,199 foreign students entered the country to take an academic semester and the other modalities recently mentioned. This total number of students represents 2.5% of the total population enrolled in undergraduate programs at universities in Colombia by 2019, which was 1,552,078 (SNIES, 2019).

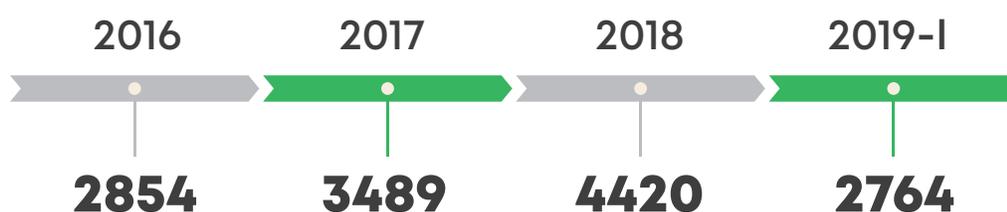
Moreover, as presented in Figure 5, regarding the category of incoming mobility according to modalities different from academic semester, it is evident that short courses represent approximately one third of the total of these modalities. If we compare this with the total number of mobilities (39,199), the percentage represented by short courses is 14%. The following categories are academic missions, internship, which represent 25% of these types of mobilities.

**Figure 5 Other modalities of academic mobility (2016-2019-I)**



Regarding the evolution of incoming mobility in other modalities, the results of the survey point to a growth dynamic. For the period 2016 - 2018 (see Figure 6), the average annual growth rate was 24%. It is important to note that between 2016 and 2017 there was a growth in the arrival of students of 22%, and from 2017 to 2018 of 27%. By the first semester of 2019, 63% of the incoming mobility of other modalities in 2018 had already been reached.

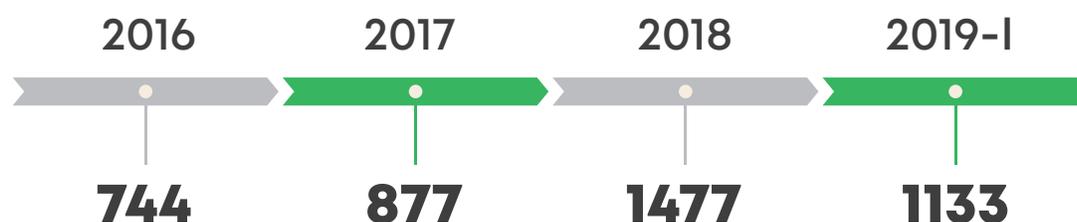
**Figure 6 Total incoming mobility in other modalities per year**



According to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the total number of foreign visitors in the country increased by 10.4% between 2017 and 2018 and the average rate since 2011 is 8.4%. This implies that the speed of growth of student mobility in the categories analyzed, doubles the growth of international passenger arrivals in the country. (EFE, 2019).

A disaggregated analysis of the evolution of each of the categories highlights the significant growth observed in short courses (see Graph 7). Mobility for this type of course increased 18% between 2016 and 2017 and 68% between 2017 and 2018. Although the information for 2019 corresponds only to the first semester of the year, a higher dynamic is already observed in the total participation of short courses than in previous years, while in 2017 and 2018 the participation of short courses in the totality of these mobilities was 25% and 33% respectively, for 2019 this participation represented 41% for the first semester.

**Figure 7 Total incoming mobility in short courses per year**

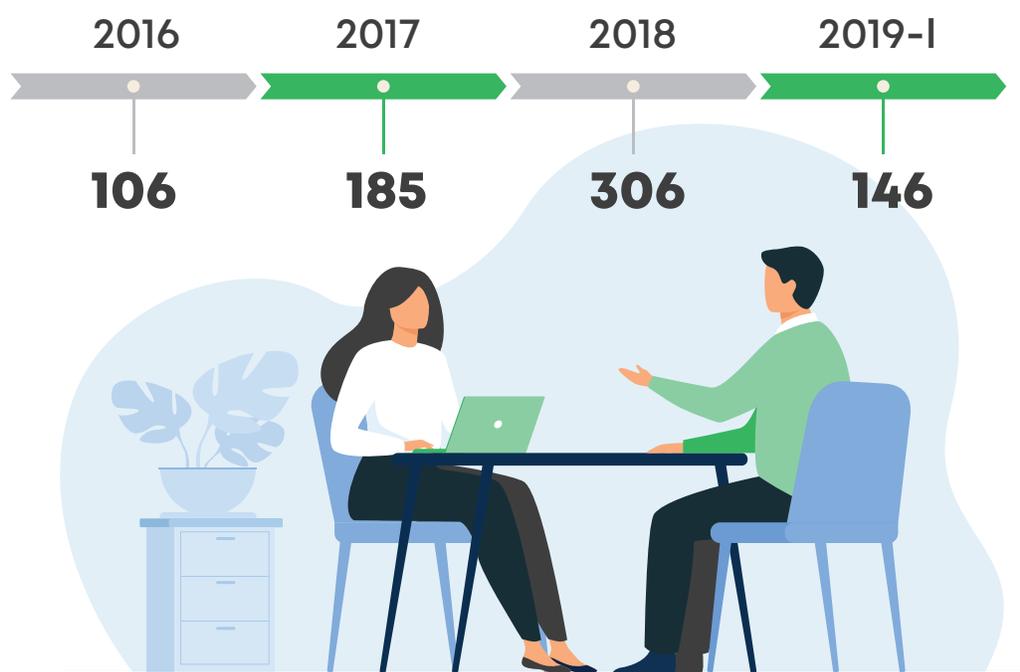


This dynamic corresponds to a trend that has been observed internationally for several years, characterized by students' preference for shorter international academic experiences (less than eight weeks). According to data from the Institute of International Education (IIE), enrollment in international programs lasting eight weeks or less has grown by about 250% in the last decade. (Mulholland, 2014).

It is important to note that, unlike the academic semester modality where in most countries there is an exemption from tuition costs thanks to agreements signed by universities, short courses are payable programs. This implies that for the host university the offer and development of short courses for foreign students represents a strategy of institutional internationalization to attract more international students and at the same time a source of income.

Another category observed concerns entry into the country to participate in congresses, conferences, and workshops. This modality grew on average 70% per year between 2016 and 2018, and according to partial data to 2019-I, the figure reaches almost the half of the one observed in 2018 and almost equal to the total of 2017.

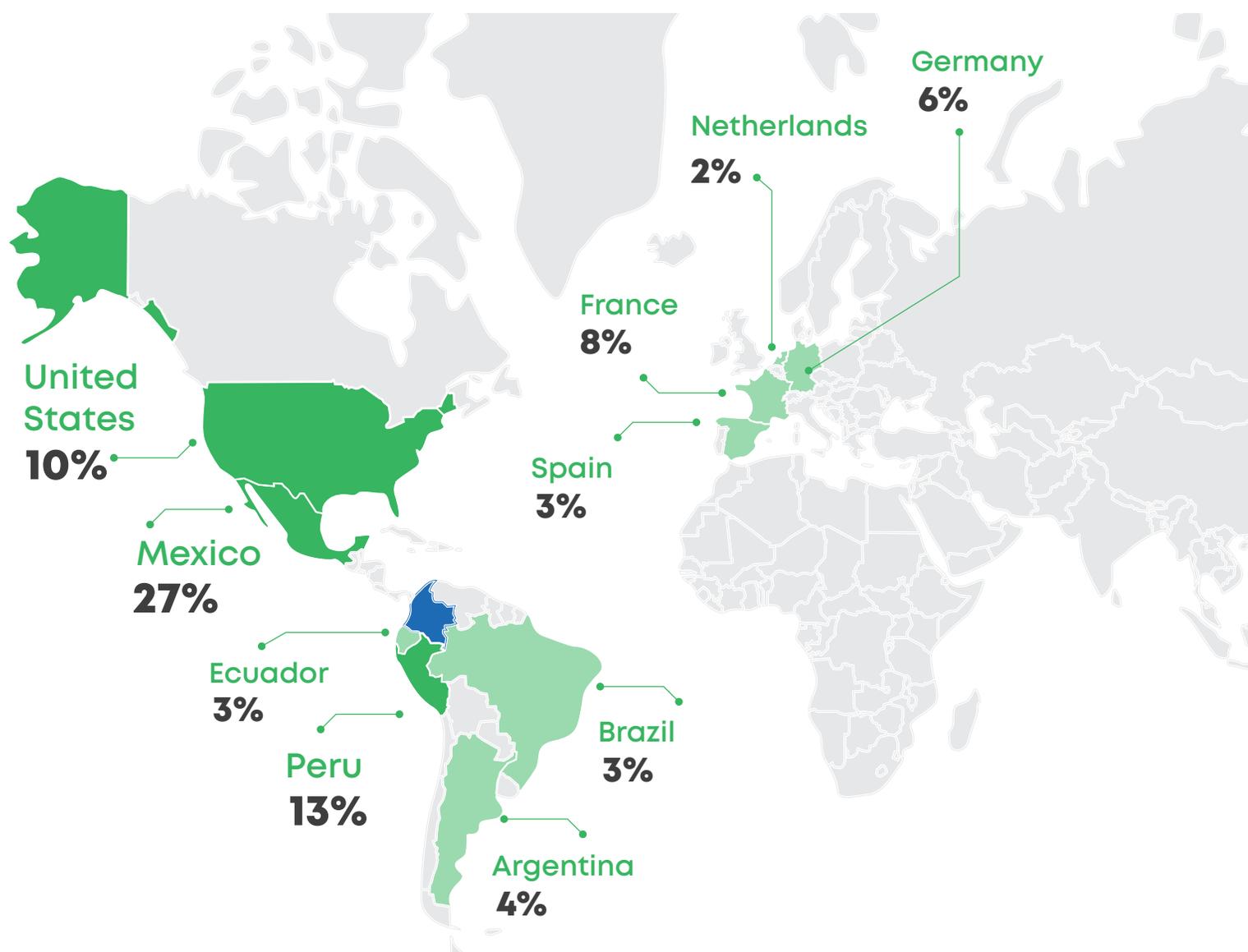
**Figure 8 Total incoming mobility in courses, congresses, conferences, workshops per year**



## 2.4. Incoming mobility according to modalities different from academic semester by country

In relation to the country of origin of this type of mobility, Mexico and Peru stand out in this survey by registering 5,258 and 2,514 students respectively, who entered the country during this period. Between the two countries, they contributed 40% of total mobilities in these modalities.

Figure 9 Top ten countries of origin of students in mobilities different from academic semesters



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In this respect, we can highlight the consolidation of the Inter-institutional Program for the Strengthening of Research and Graduate Studies in the Pacific —Dolphin, which has boosted incoming student mobility from Mexico. This mobility program aims to promote the formation of intellectual capital of high academic level through research stays. According to information provided by the Coordination of the Delfin program in Colombia, while in 2016 the program managed to attract 129 foreign students to Colombia, the previous year ended with 536 incoming mobilities. During the four years analyzed, 1,228 international students entered Colombia within the framework of this program<sup>5</sup>, mostly from Mexico.

According to UNESCO, in some cases, geographic proximity plays an important role in intraregional mobility patterns, which may partially explain Peru's results. (IESALC, 2017).

The United States ranks third in terms of the number of students who travel to Colombia in mobilities other than academic semesters. According to the Open Doors 2019 report, Latin America is the second favorite region, after Europe, for American students to study or develop an academic experience abroad. The report also reveals that 65% of U.S. students who travel abroad for an international academic experience do so for summer courses or short programs of less than eight weeks.

In accordance with the results of the report, it was found that, of the sample analyzed, about 64% of the mobilities of U.S. students who entered Colombia in the period studied corresponded to students who took short courses, Spanish courses, and academic missions.

Among the programs and entities that have contributed to this result we can mention Partners of the Americas, the United States Embassy in Colombia, and Icetex with the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative, through which American students have come to Colombia to participate in projects selected in the different calls launched during the study period and which were characterized by having a mobility component.

Fulbright Colombia has also been a leader in the development of programs such as the U.S. Student Researcher and the English Teaching Assistant (ETA), the latter supported by Icetex and the Colombian Ministry of Education, aimed at strengthening bilingualism in the country's educational institutions through native language assistants. According to information provided by Fulbright Colombia, 521 students entered Colombia through these two programs during the period of time studied<sup>6</sup>. In 2016, 97 students were admitted to these programs, while in 2019, 161 students moved to the country.

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## 2.5. Characteristics of the mobility by country

The detailed analysis of the database by country and modality allows to identify some elements that can help characterize student mobility different from academic semester. For example, Mexico provides four out of every ten students (42%) who enter the country for internships and one out of every four students (24%) who come to Colombia to take short courses. Another interesting element observed in this disaggregation has to do with the case of France, a country that contributes approximately seven out of every ten students (68%) that enter the country to pursue a double degree program.

## 2.6. International students enrolled in the HEIs in complete programs

For the purposes of this document, complete programs correspond to the mobility of students entering the country to develop an undergraduate or graduate program with the aim of obtaining the corresponding degree. According to UNESCO, by 2014, 57% of international students studying in Latin America and the Caribbean will come from another country in the same region. By 2017, Colombia ranked fifth as the region's student destination, after Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Chile. According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 78% of foreign students received in Colombia come from the same region. (UNESCO, 2018).

The latest OECD report, Education at a Glance 2020, states that in approximately one third of the OECD member countries, international students represented more than 10% of the higher education students enrolled in 2018. In countries like Australia, Luxembourg, and New Zealand this participation reaches 20%. However, in the case of Colombia this figure does not reach 2%. (OECD, 2020)

For the present study, the participating institutions reported 13,002 foreign students who entered the country to take complete programs. This represents approximately 1% of the students enrolled in university programs in Colombia by 2019 according to the National Information System for Higher Education

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5. "The Coordinator of the Delfin program in Colombia declared that 1,228 international students entered Colombia during the period of study in the framework of this program, the great majority coming from Mexico". (Personal communication, October 29, 2020).

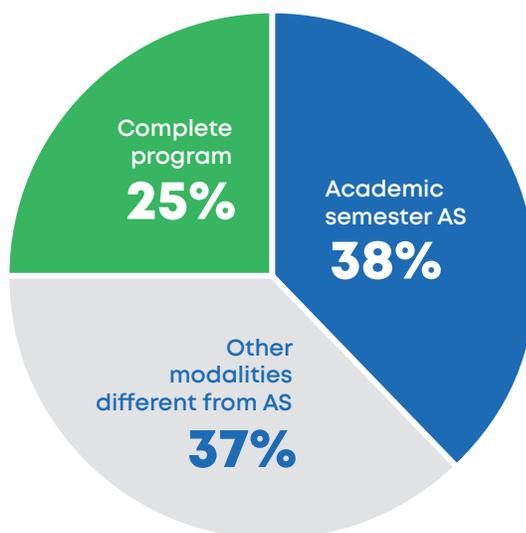
6."The Fulbright Community Coordinator in Colombia stated that through the U.S. Student Researcher and the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) program, 521 students were admitted to Colombia during the period of study". (Personal communication N. Prieto, November 3, 2020).

(SNIES). Between 2016 and 2018 there is an absolute growth rate of 20% in relation to international students who have completed undergraduate programs in the country. Mobility for undergraduate programs represents the highest growth rate with respect to graduate programs. It should be noted that 90% of these students are concentrated in universities located in Bogotá, Medellín, and Manizales.

Of the 13,002 students who arrive to develop complete programs, 72% are linked to undergraduate university programs, 16% to master's programs, 9% to specialization programs, and 3% to doctoral programs. It is worth mentioning that approximately one third (28%) of the students are enrolled in programs in the area of Social Sciences.

Adding the three categories, academic semester, other modalities, and complete program, the total number of foreign students registered reaches 52,201 for the period of study. In this sense, the distribution for each modality can be seen in the following Figure No. 10. The main contribution (38%) is made by students who come to develop an academic semester, 37% corresponds to other modalities, and 25% corresponds to complete programs that generate a degree, both undergraduate and graduate.

**Figure 10 Mobility participation by category**



One of the strategies generalized in countries interested in attracting foreign students to attend complete programs is the implementation of complete or partial government financial support programs. In the case of Colombia, one of the programs that promotes this type of mobility is the Scholarship Colombia Extranjeros administered by Icetex. This program offers 100% scholarships in tuition fees for graduate programs to foreign students, as well as books, materials, health policy, monthly stipend, installation expenses and courtesy visa. In the period from 2016 to 2019, 840 of these scholarships were awarded. (OECD, 2020).

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## 2.7. Conclusions and recommendations

In sum, this analysis shows that Colombia has become an attractive destination for international students from different parts of the world. For the category of academic semester abroad, for example, an absolute growth rate of 51% is presented for the period from 2016 to 2018. Also, for the first semester of 2019 it represents 56% of all academic semester mobility compared to 2018. It is clear that Latin America is the main source of students interested in pursuing different forms of academic mobility in Colombia. It is worth highlighting Mexico, which represents three out of every ten mobilities to the country in academic semesters and other modalities, followed by France with one out of every ten students in this type of mobility.

On the other hand, it was observed that the international trend towards preferring short courses abroad is reflected in the results of the survey. Mobility for this type of courses grew 68% between 2017 and 2018, and by the first semester of 2019 it had already reached 77% of the mobility of the previous year. This is an opportunity to increase the diversity of international students, attract new market segments, such as Asia, which represented 57% of total student mobility in 2018 in OECD countries, and generate additional income. Finally, in relation to complete academic programs, the average annual growth rate was 6% between 2016 and 2018.

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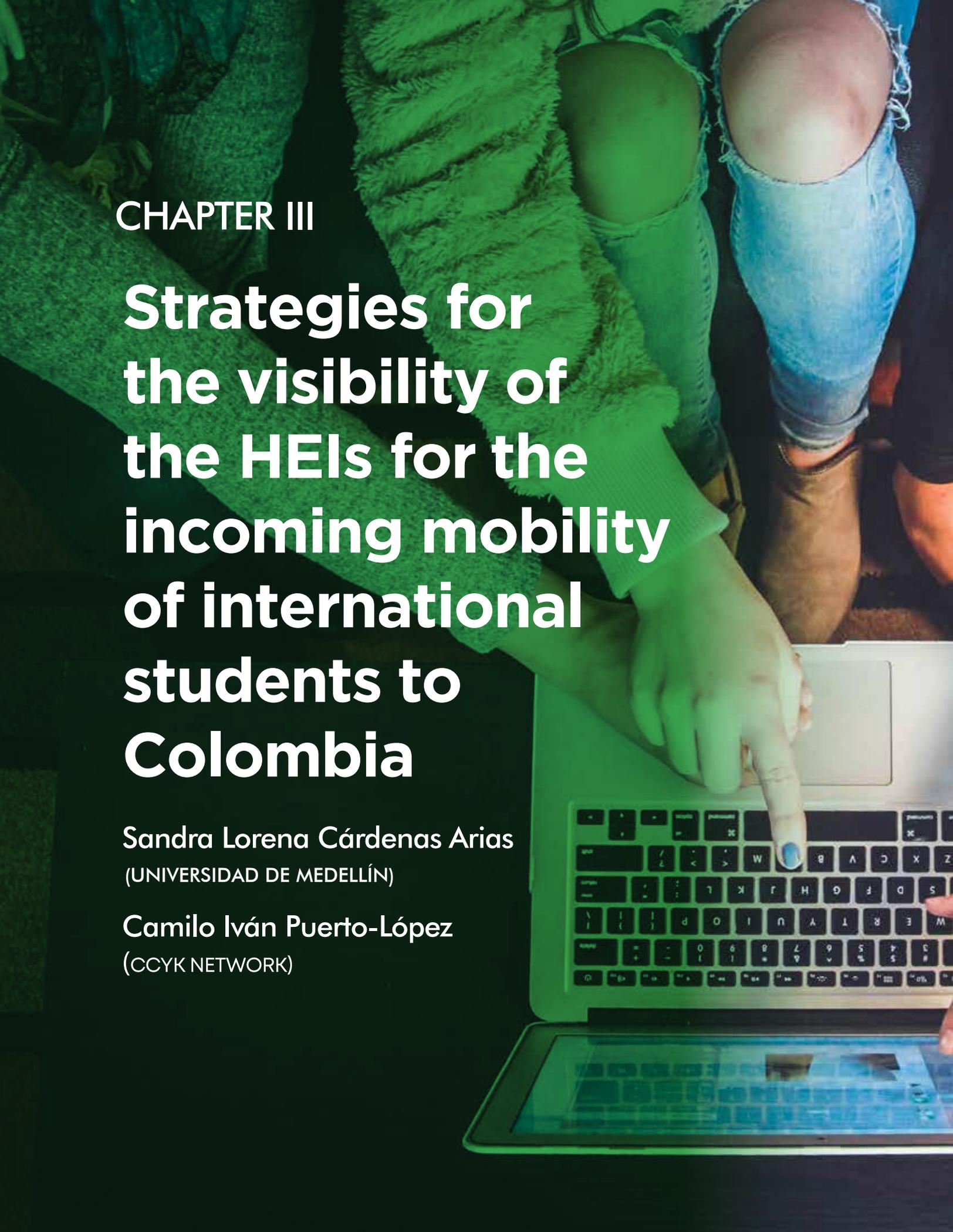
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CHAPTER III

# Strategies for the visibility of the HEIs for the incoming mobility of international students to Colombia

Sandra Lorena Cárdenas Arias  
(UNIVERSIDAD DE MEDELLÍN)

Camilo Iván Puerto-López  
(CCYK NETWORK)

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## 3.1. Introduction

It is estimated that approximately 5 million international students carried out some form of mobility in the world in 2017 (De Wit and Altbach, 2020, p. 11). Of the above, the main recipient countries were the United States, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Australia, and the main exporting countries were China, India, and South Korea, with a very small participation of Latin America. In 2014, Latin America sent 227,000 students to the rest of the world and received 96,000 students in the same year; in addition, it ranked as the eighth destination region for international students among nine regions (Gacel-Ávila, 2017, p. 99). Furthermore, the region represented only 5% of the world's total student mobility in 2005. (De Wit, 2011, p. 69).

This shows a highly marked hierarchy of receiving countries in the world, resulting from their degree of social, political and economic development, the quality, prestige, and visibility of both the Higher Education systems and the HEIs, as well as the student attraction strategies of both governments and their HEIs, and the employment opportunities for international students once they complete their studies.

Even with the above, the efforts that the Colombian HEIs have made, aimed at strengthening their visibility abroad to increase their numbers in incoming mobility are highly important to continue supporting from the directives of the HEIs and from the National Government in a more assertive, continuous and strategic way. These figures have represented a change of paradigm of the country's visibility abroad in relation to Higher Education, a strengthening of the Internationalization of the Higher Education System, and an increase in the quality of the HEIs in terms of training and research aspects.

This chapter analyzes the strategies of the HEIs, through the communication channels used and the main mechanisms that have contributed to the attraction of incoming student academic mobility in recent years in Colombia.

## 3.2. Higher Education Institutions and communication channels

Manuel Castells, in his work "The Rise of the Network Society", mentions that, as electronic communication networks proliferate, a new social morphology of our societies is generated. With the approach of distances, time and space are reordered to generate new processes that transform society; some call it globalization, since thanks to information technologies channels that cross borders and bring cultures closer together have been opened, generating new forms of interaction (Castells, 2006).

Public and private Higher Education Institutions are not unaware of these needs to communicate their educational offerings, become visible and competitive in both national and international scenarios, which is why they have taken advantage of one of the most widely used communication channels to date: e-mail.

According to the survey conducted for this study, in Figure No. 11, it was found that the communication channels most used by public and private institutions are e-mail (25.62%), followed by the institutional web page (23.14%), the Facebook fan page (14.88%) in public institutions (13.02%) and (19.18%) in private institutions, physical dissemination material (13.22%); while other media such as Instagram (10.74%), international recruitment fairs (8.26%), and other unspecified media, such as association to international networks, voice to voice, dialogue with International Affairs offices of partner institutions, institutional visits, relationship with partners, and information sessions have a representation of 4.13%.

**Figure 11 Communication channels used by public and private HEIs for international student mobility**

e-mail	Institutional web page	Facebook Fanpage	Physical dissemination material	Instagram	International recruitment fairs	Other media
<b>26%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>

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E-mail had its peak in 1972 and today 48 years later this channel of communication is still the most used by Higher Education Institutions, so it could be said that it is still the most important medium, perhaps because of its formal character and thanks to the personalized domain of the mail that allows to certify the veracity of the information of its sender.

Similarly, an analysis of the use of the website is made and for this purpose, the survey conducted by QS in 2019, aimed at international students, was taken into account, which showed that 77% of foreign students use the website as a source of information for inquiring about an Higher Education Institution, hence the importance of having an attractive, intuitive, optimized for mobile devices website that prioritizes the information that most interests students such as employment results, information on employment opportunities while studying, post-graduate work opportunities, cost of living, tuition, housing, scholarships/financial aid, visa, testimonials from other students, and quality of education.

Regarding the website, some important challenges for Higher Education Institutions are visualized, since for the present study a 23.14% use of this media is reflected, an indicator that invites to reflect on the use of this communication channel in the light of the trends and new generations marked by the use of technologies, as are the millennials, known as digital natives and the Z or centennial generation, who 'do not conceive' the world without internet and that is why, then, the use of the web page in these generations has taken so much relevance, since a student before choosing an institution examines the web site (Geron, 2018).

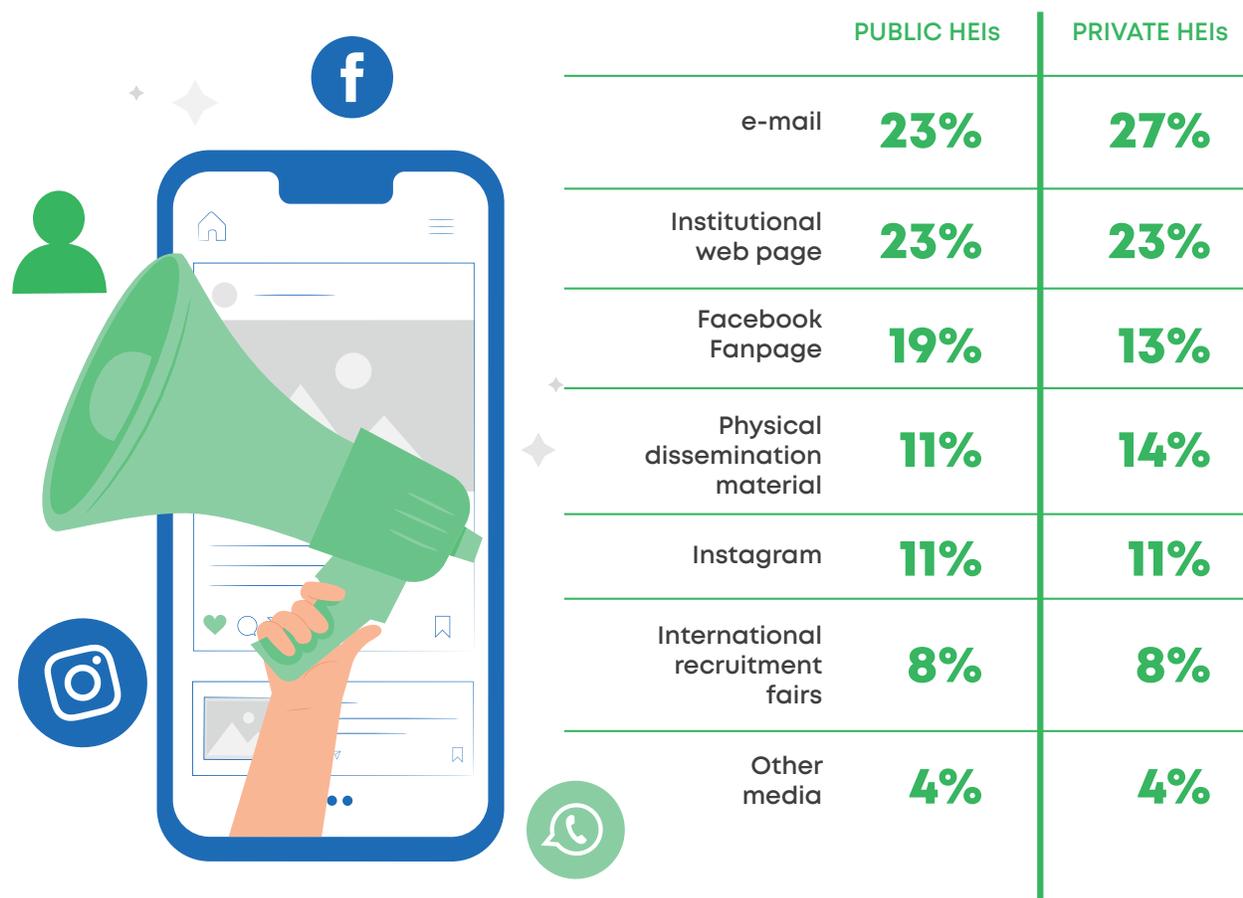
One of the most important findings on this topic of the website is that most Latin American universities with relatively high international rankings include substantial content in English, which generates greater international visibility. Gabriela Geron, in her article "Best practices in institutional websites for international visibility", mentions that, on average, only 13% of institutions in Ibero-America have information in English, while 86% of universities in Spain have information in English. To maximize the website experience, Geron recommends six best practices, including: offering key features and functions, focusing on the user experience (Nielsen Norman Group), ensuring accessibility, having professional translators, focusing on key content sections, and taking advantage of global opportunities.

An analysis of the use of social networks created in the last 20 years, such as the Facebook fan page born in 2004 with its creator Mark Zuckerberg, and six years later, in 2010, Instagram was born with its creator Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, shows a trend in the evolution of communication channels. The above indicates an appropriation of these communication channels as a dissemination strategy, also making a proper reading of the context, since

these last media are setting the path towards the recruitment of foreign students. In addition, they are the favorite media used by students when exploring alternatives to study abroad with a participation level of (29.75%) including unspecified media.

Communication channels, such as the Facebook fan page, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other unidentified media, should serve to reflect the communication objectives of internationalization in order to attract a greater number of foreign students. (The six digital generations living together in our society today, 2018).

**Figure 12 Communication channel preferences between private and public HEIs**



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The QS survey also shows that 85% of students use social networks to ask questions about studying abroad. Within the range of platforms to which they access are YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, showing an exponential growth of the aforementioned platforms. Likewise, QS states that 70% of students use social platforms first for consultations, as these generate emotions in students, while brochures, emails and chat with admissions staff use it to request practical information as they advance in the registration process. On the other hand, QS states that three out of ten students refer to sources such as discussions with university staff (28%), family and friends (27%), brochures (26%). In the latter, a significant finding was found, as students reported reading the brochures with their parents, who have significant influence in choosing where their children will study.

Finally, when analyzing international recruitment fairs, they have an 8.26% participation, Kwiek (2001) points out that HEIs in the Western world pay more and more attention to marketing, because they see education as an export service.

Governments have launched various initiatives to increase the mobility of foreign students, for example, Education UK and the British Council in the United Kingdom, and the Korean government which developed its website "Study Korea". In other countries, marketing activities are carried out by organizations or agencies. For example, Education New Zealand is funded by public and private organizations. In Sweden, the Swedish Institute presents tertiary education at education fairs, while Edufrance, NUFFIC, and CIU from Norway carry out similar international cooperation activities in Higher Education.

In Korea, government support for marketing activities is essentially funded, which helps HEIs to participate in education fairs. Some governments use their diplomatic representations to strengthen long-term education partnerships with key regions, this is the case of New Zealand and Australia (Internationalisation: Shaping strategies in the national context, marketing policies. p, 265). Figure 2 reflects the preference for the use of communication channels according to the type of HEI, whether public or private.

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### 3.3. The main mechanisms implemented by HEIs to strengthen incoming student academic mobility

In the information reported for this study, the mechanisms most used by the HEIs to contribute to the increase of their incoming student academic mobility are highlighted: i) with 25%, attention to international delegations and visits, ii) with 21%, participation in academic missions promoted institutionally, iii) with 16%, the participation in international fairs within the framework of the international conferences, iv) with 16%, intermediation through foreign government agencies that promote educational services such as DAAD, Fulbright, Campus France, v) with 11%, other activities, vi) with 8%, the academic missions promoted by government bodies, and vii) with 3%, the intermediation through commercial agencies that promote mobility services.

In relation to the above, and differentiating the public and private universities in the sample, some differences are identified with respect to the activities already mentioned to make the HEIs visible in terms of attracting international student mobility.

As Figure 13 shows, one of the most used activities by public HEIs is intermediation through government agencies such as DAAD, Fulbright, Campus France, among others, with 25%, while for private HEIs it is the fourth option with 13%. For the private HEIs, the most used activities are the attention of international delegations and visits in their institution with 26%, being this the second option for the public HEIs with 20%.

Regarding the international education fairs of the main conferences, for the private HEIs this is the third activity that has contributed most in the incoming student academic mobility with 18%, while for the public HEIs it is the fifth activity with 12%. The latter is behind the participation in academic missions promoted by other government bodies with 13% for public HEIs as the fourth option, while for private HEIs the government missions are a fifth option with 8%. (see Figure 13).

In relation to the three main cities of the country, there are also differences between the most important activities used by the HEIs, to increase their incoming student mobility. For the HEIs of Medellin, the most used activity is the attention of international delegations and visits with a wide difference over the rest of activities. For the HEIs of Bogota, both this activity and the participation in institutional academic missions are the most used. In the case of the HEIs of Cali, the most used activity is the institutional academic

missions and the intermediation through foreign government agencies, while the international visits on campus are the third most used activity. (See Figure 14).

**Figure 13 Percentage of activities that have contributed to academic mobility**

	TOTAL	PUBLIC HEIs	PRIVATE HEIs
Attention to international delegations and visits	<b>25%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Participation in academic missions promoted institutionally	<b>21%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Participation in international fairs (NAFSA, EAIE, APAIE).	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>18%</b>
Intermediation through foreign government agencies that promote educational services	<b>16%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Others	<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Participation in academic missions promoted by government bodies	<b>8%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Intermediation through commercial agencies that promote mobility services	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>

**Figure 14 Percentage of activities that have contributed to incoming student academic mobility at the universities of Bogotá, Cali, and Medellín**

	TOTAL HEIs	HEIs Bogota	HEIs Cali	HEIs Medellin
Attention to international delegations and visits	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Participation in academic missions promoted institutionally	<b>21%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Participation in internacional fairs (NAFSA, EAIE, APAIE).	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Intermediation through foreign government agencies that promote educational services	<b>16%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Others	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Participation in academic missions promoted by government bodies	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Intermediation through commercial agencies that promote mobility services	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

On the other hand, the most relevant International Conferences and Fairs for the HEIs of Bogotá is the third activity of greatest contribution to the attraction of incoming mobility. For the HEIs of Cali it is the fourth activity with a 16%, with the same importance as the assistance to international delegations, while for the HEIs of Medellín, it is the fifth activity of greatest contribution equal to other mechanisms.

The HEIs of the country have concentrated their strategic and operative efforts in the previous activities through the channels already identified and analyzed. Additionally, several mechanisms and activities have allowed to increase the visibility of their institutions abroad in order to promote and strengthen their incoming student mobility programs, having important results. As can be seen, the various universities according to region and nature focus their efforts on

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various strategies, with different priorities.

The alliances that each HEI establishes with respect to their relationship priorities, their institutional capacities and the networks of international partners that their directors, internationalization officials and professors and researchers build, have contributed to the development of the incoming mobility programs, added to other variables such as an attractive environment of the country and some cities, an increase in security, a strengthening of the quality of the academic programs and of the services offered by the HEIs to foreigners, a relatively cheaper cost of living with respect to other countries and a cultural and tourist offer in consolidation.

This is the case of the reception of delegations, visits, and international missions in the country that the HEIs receive unilaterally, which are also managed by important Colombian associations and networks and which, in recent years, have been affirmed through important international missions in the country. Visits from universities in the United States, Europe, Latin America and to a lesser extent from Asia have increased in recent years in response to a strengthening of security and the country's effort to increase its visibility and degree of attraction for foreigners in different sectors (foreign investment in strategic sectors such as IT services, communications, agriculture, construction and tourism).

As a complement to the above, the institutional missions carried out by Colombian HEIs abroad have been another complementary mechanism to strengthen the attraction of international students on their campuses. These missions are understood as delegations of professors, researchers, directors, administrative staff, and students, formed in a strategic and planned manner with the objective of developing face-to-face approaches to universities, research centers, and other important allies, in order to generate an exchange of knowledge in diverse academic, scientific, research, and entrepreneurial areas.

In relation to the incoming and outgoing missions, these can be optimized through Associations, Consortiums, and Networks, together with international partners and government entities, in order to generate greater impact, distribute better administrative, logistical and economic efforts and reduce costs, besides making visible a quality Higher Education System, united and representing the country. Some important examples were demonstrated in relation to the Encounter of Researchers between Colombia and Quebec — COLUQ— in 2018, held in different cities of the country, joining efforts and benefiting various HEIs in the country with an important leadership of ICETEX (ICETEX, p. 44, 2018), or with the meetings of researchers from the CCYK Network with the universities of New Zealand, in 2017 and 2018, in alliance with

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Education New Zealand-ENZ.

The following activities that according to the HEIs contribute more to the incoming student academic mobility, are the intermediation through government agencies that promote educational services and the participation in fairs offered within the main international conferences. It has been found that these are very important commitments, with diverse scopes and diverse demands for the HEIs that have forced them to strengthen their planning activities in a more organized and continuous way.

The government agencies dedicated to academic and research exchange such as DAAD from Germany, Campus France, the British Council, Fulbright and Education USA from the USA, Austrade from Australia, EduCanada, and Education New Zealand-ENZ, among others, with an important presence in Colombia, have been external agents that have stimulated the internationalization of Higher Education in the country. Many of these agencies were created after the World War I (DAAD-1925 and British Council-1934) as mechanisms for the search for peace through academic exchange and international cooperation, and as multipliers of the values, principles, and cultural assets of the main powers of that time within a national strategy of Soft Power. (De Wit & Altbach, 2020, p. 3).

These agencies have become crucial allies for the internationalization of Colombian HEIs, approaching each other in collaborative spaces of mutual benefit, where the country's institutions find platforms for communication, knowledge, and recognition of their allies in these countries, relationship bridges, and also funding opportunities for incoming and outgoing mobility programs, capacity building projects, foreign language teaching, and joint knowledge generation projects. For the public HEIs in Colombia, this is the main activity of contribution to their incoming student academic mobility.

One of the recurrent and important activities that have contributed to the visibility of the HEIs in the country is their participation in the main international conferences of global, continental, and regional scope. These spaces have been consolidated in the last 10 years with greater intensity in the planning of the International Affairs Offices of the HEIs in Colombia. (Instituto Caro y Cuervo).

Conferences of great world-wide scope of Associations such as NAFSA<sup>7</sup>, EAIE<sup>8</sup>, AIEA<sup>9</sup>, IIE<sup>10</sup>, IAU<sup>11</sup> are spaces of great importance where almost 10,000 experts in International Education can be gathered annually (in NAFSA) and where actions and spaces as diverse and convergent as great plenary sessions and academic workshops, visits in campus, spaces of networking, and important exhibition fairs are contemplated where a geopolitical representation of the Higher Education Systems of the countries is demonstrated, proving its

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importance, visibility and world-wide attraction.

Similarly, the regional international conferences are strategic meeting spaces for HEIs from many parts of the world to focus on international collaboration with specific regions. This is the case of APAIE<sup>12</sup> in Asia Pacific, EURIE<sup>13</sup> for the Eurasian region, CAEI<sup>14</sup> in the Americas and LACHEC<sup>15</sup> in Latin America and the Caribbean led by Colombia through the Colombian Network for Internationalization (RCI) of ASCUN. Other major conferences that focus on specific countries but have a broader scope are CACIE<sup>16</sup> in China, FAUBAI<sup>17</sup> in Brazil, FIESA<sup>18</sup> in Argentina, NZIEC<sup>19</sup> in New Zealand, AIEC<sup>20</sup> in Australia, CBIE<sup>21</sup> in Canada, among many others.

It has been identified at these conferences that the importance of governments, national agencies, consortiums, associations, and networks is strategic for the promotion of national higher education systems. This effort has been carried out by the CCYK Network since 2009 with substantial results, but broader and deeper strategies must be proposed to consolidate the participation and leadership of entities such as the Ministry of National Education, PROCOLOMBIA, ICETEX, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the recently created Ministry of Science, Technology, and Research. Support and coordination is required from all the actors of the Mesa Intersectorial para la Internacionalización de la Educación Superior (MIIES), which leads the Ministry of National Education, in order to overcome the obstacles of lack of resources, inclusion of other HEIs and continuity beyond the periods of government.

Among other mechanisms that are worth highlighting for the HEI's are

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7. NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Education Conference

8. EAIE: European Association for International Education

16. CACIE: China Annual Conference for International Education

9. AIEA: Association of International Education Administrators

17. FAUBAI: Brazilian Association for International Education

10. IIE: Institute of International Education

18. FIESA: Feria Internacional de Educación Superior Argentina

11. IAU: International Association of Universities

19. NZIEC: New Zealand International Education Conference

12. APAIE: Asia-Pacific Association for International Education

20. AIEC: Australian International Education Conference

13. EURIE: EURASIA HIGHER EDUCATION SUMMIT

21. CBIE: Canadian Bureau for International Education

14. CAIE: Conference of the Americas on International Education

15. LACHEC: Latin American Conference for Higher

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the participation in mobility programs of associations, consortiums, and networks, such as the ASCUN programs: Latin American Academic Exchange Program —PILA (for Argentina and Mexico), Brazil-Colombia Student Exchange Program (BRACOL), the virtual program of the Virtual Mobility Space in Higher Education (e-Movies) of the Organization of Inter-American Universities (IOHE), the Academic Program of Educational Mobility PAME of the Association of Universities of Latin American and Caribbean (UDUAL). Also the strategy of 'voice to voice' of international students who visited the Colombian HEIs that share their experience in their foreign universities of origin, which means offering successful experiences in academic, cultural, and tourism to build ambassadors of the HEIs abroad.

### **3.4. Conclusions and recommendations**

The visibility strategies of HEIs for internationalization and specifically for incoming student mobility, must result from comprehensive planning processes, aligned with the mission of the university, with clear objectives, and measurable and quantifiable goals. The formulation of the visibility strategies must oscillate between the analysis of the contexts and short-term challenges and the decision making of values, principles, and community assets, identifying the moment in which the deliberate strategies in the long term must give place to the emergent strategies that allow the HEIs to adapt to turbulent environmental patterns. (Soliman et al, 2019, p. 1415). According to a survey conducted by QS in 2019, 89.7% of Latin American HEIs have an official international strategy, but only 41% include the component of expansion and improvement of international mobility. (QS, 2020).

A clear example is what has been demonstrated in relation to the international conferences and fairs; according to important experiences of universities with great trajectory in Colombia, it is necessary to carry out a strategic planning of the scope, objectives, resources, and effects of the participation in this type of conferences, since, due to their size and diversity of activities and participants, a previous preparation of the representatives of the HEIs that will participate is required, in order to achieve significant and quantifiable benefits.

The visibility strategies of the HEIs to attract incoming international students must also be segmented for different audiences (formal education, industrial and business sector, and continuous and permanent education), levels of study (undergraduate, master and doctorate), modalities (short courses, internships,

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and language courses), thematic areas (faculties and disciplines) and even by geographical areas of origin of the students, both in the marketing actions and in the mechanisms and activities to be employed. In this sense, an integral strategy would allow the use of diverse efforts with greater impact depending on the above factors. This requires the use of communication channels, marketing and promotional materials in English and other languages, and the optimal use of technologies that support internationalization efforts.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 has accelerated an interesting dynamic of virtuality in international education. The closure of national borders around the world has meant that both the visibility activities that HEIs prioritized, such as incoming and outgoing missions, participation in international conferences, and the mobility of students, professors, and administrative staff have been severely affected. It is the right opportunity to generate new innovative actions of visibility and exchange of students, professors, and knowledge through virtuality and technologies, with reduction of travel costs and with massive and more inclusive activities for students.

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A photograph of a person's hands writing in a notebook with a pen. The image is heavily overlaid with a green color, creating a monochromatic effect. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a light-colored shirt. The notebook is open, and the pen is in the person's right hand, writing on the page. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a desk or table.

CHAPTER IV

# 4.1. Context of international cooperation for academic mobility in Colombia

Carlos Coronado  
(UNIVERSIDAD DEL MAGDALENA)

María Teresa Uribe-Jaramillo  
(UNIVERSIDAD EAFIT)

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## 4.1. Context of international cooperation for academic mobility in Colombia

The collaborative and universal nature of knowledge allows Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to mobilize international resources to achieve their mission objectives at the global level. In several cases, these resources are offered within the framework of state policies of international cooperation, through different programs administered by public and private organizations, associations, networks, and agencies of academic cooperation. In other cases, the resources arise from bilateral or multilateral agreements between HEIs, whose objective is to amplify academic results through the joint investment of resources.

Among the traditional objectives of this type of cooperation is international academic mobility, which is one of the pillars of the internationalization processes of Higher Education. In the Colombian context, there is a strong presence of organizations, agencies, and other entities that include in their offer programs that finance international exchange between students, researchers, and university managers, both foreign and Colombian. Many of these programs have a wide recognition and consolidation, becoming a fundamental part of the cultural and educational cooperation policies of Colombia with countries like Germany, the United States, and Spain.

The following is a brief description of the main cooperating entities for international mobility, outlining programs related to inbound mobility, based on the results reported by the Colombian HEIs, the object of this study.

### a) Cooperating entities for academic mobility in Colombia - America

#### Pacific Alliance<sup>22</sup>

In 2012, the governments of Colombia, Chile, Peru, and Mexico established the scholarship program "Platform for Academic and Student Mobility of the Pacific Alliance", for the exchange of students from technical, technological, undergraduate, and graduate programs, as well as to encourage the exchange of guest professors and researchers.

#### Fulbright

Fulbright Colombia is the Commission for the Exchange between the United States and our country and for 63 years, it has been dedicated to offering

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<sup>22</sup> More information on the program can be found at <https://becas.alianzapacifico.net/>

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grants for graduate studies, research and teaching at universities in both countries. Website: [www.fulbright.edu.co](http://www.fulbright.edu.co)

### Bracol

The BRACOL program is a two-way mobility scheme adopted thanks to the cooperation agreement between the Colombian Association of Universities (ASCUN) of the Republic of Colombia and the COIMBRA Group of Brazilian Universities (GCUB) of the Federative Republic of Brazil signed in 2011. Website: <https://www.ascun.org.co/internacionalizacion/detalle/programa-bracol>

### ELAP

The Emerging Leaders of the Americas (ELAP) is a program led and funded by the Government of Canada to promote academic exchange at the undergraduate level and research stays in postgraduate programs through scholarships offered annually, which are enabled through institutional collaborations and student exchange agreements between Canadian and Latin American or Caribbean institutions. Website: <https://www.educanada.ca/scholarships-bourses/can/institutions/elap-pfla.aspx?lang=eng>

### 100,000 Strong in the Americas

The 100,000 Strong in the Americas program is an initiative under former President Barack Obama to promote two-way exchange between U.S. citizens and citizens of Latin American and Caribbean countries. Currently, the program is promoted by the U.S. Department of State. Website: <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/>

### b) Cooperating entities for academic mobility in Colombia – Europe:

#### Erasmus

ERASMUS has been a leading program of cooperation —for more than thirty years— in the fields of education, sport and youth in Europe and from this continent to the world. In the last 15 years, three specific lines have financed academic mobility: Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (2005-2010), Erasmus Mundus Action 2 (2010-2015) and Erasmus + International Credit Mobility (2015-2020). Website: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus->

#### DAAD

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is an organization that promotes international student and scientific exchange between Germany and the rest of the world. Through its scholarship programs and calls for funding

for scientific mobility, it has been present in Colombia since 2005. Website: <https://www.daad.co/es/>

### c) Cooperating entities for academic mobility in Colombia – Asia

#### KOICA

The Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) implements, among other initiatives, the Korean Volunteers program in the country, which has as key actors the HEIs of Colombia, as recipients of volunteers in different academic, cultural, and sports areas. Website: [http://www.koica.go.kr/sites/koica\\_en/index.do](http://www.koica.go.kr/sites/koica_en/index.do)

## 4.2. Characteristics of international cooperation for academic mobility in Colombia 2016-2019-I

For the present study, there were registered 30 Higher Education Institutions (public and private) that reported a financing income for USD 1,349,930, from different international cooperation agencies that support the processes of incoming students, from academic mobility. In 2016 and 2019, a financing of more than 400,000 USD was obtained, with 2019 being the year with the highest amount reported with 454,239 USD (see Figure 15.). These two years present numbers that double the behavior of the amounts in 2017 and 2018. It is evident that the increase is obtained by the Erasmus program in 2016 and the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund in 2019.

**Figure 15 Amounts (USD) of funding from international cooperation agencies to support processes of incoming student academic mobility in Colombia, totals for the year 2016 -2019-I**

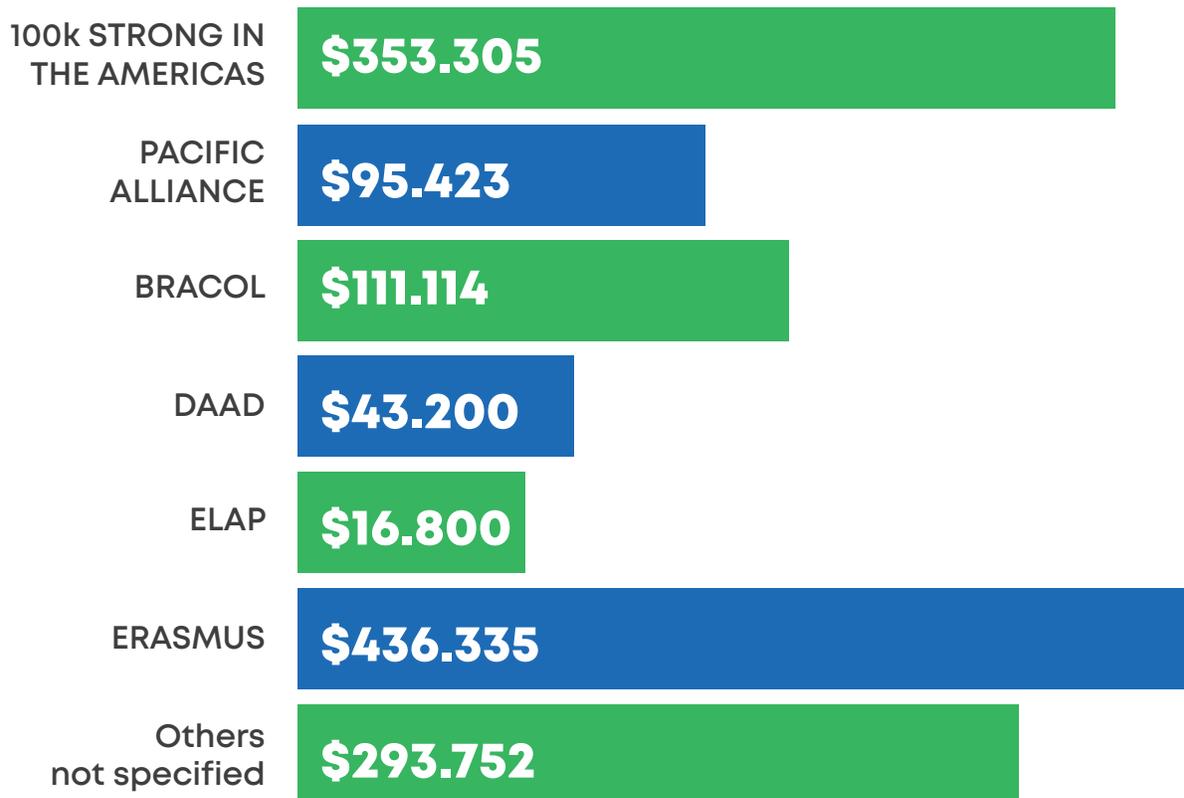


\* Amount in use of funding from international cooperation agencies / organizations

### 4.3. Source of funding

The main donors reported by the Higher Education Institutions, from highest to lowest number of resources contributed in USD are: ERASMUS (\$436,335), 100,000 Strong in the Americas (\$353,305), BRACOL (\$111,114), Pacific Alliance (\$95,423), DAAD (\$43,200) and ELAP (\$16,800). Likewise, \$293,752 of financing from other unspecified international cooperation agencies was reported, as can be seen in Figure No. 16.

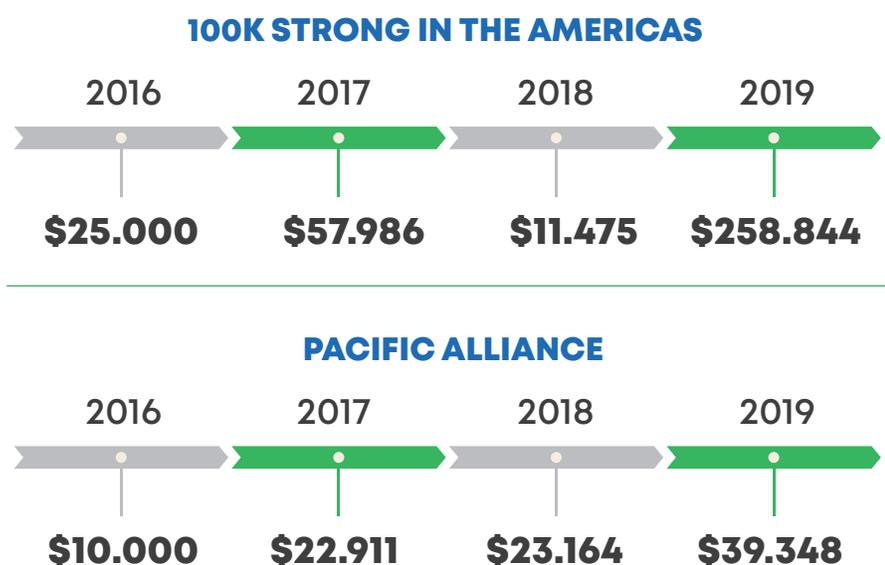
**Figure 16 Amounts (USD) of funding from international cooperation agencies to support incoming student academic mobility processes, totals by agency 2016-2019-I**



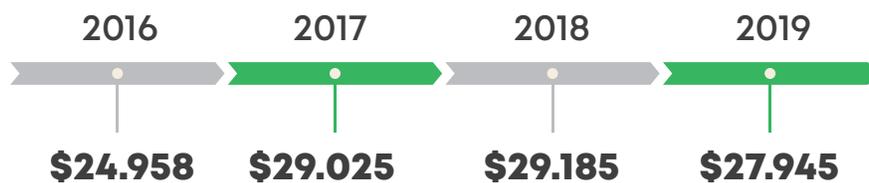
In Figure No. 17, it can be observed, according to each agency, the behavior of the financing in the period examined.

- In the case of ERASMUS, the highest financing was reported in 2016 for USD 291,953 and subsequently between 2017 and 2019 the annual amount ranged between USD 20,000 and 70,000.
- In the case of 100,000 Strong in the Americas, it is worth highlighting the highest financing in 2019 with USD 258,844, while between 2016-2018 the amounts ranged between USD 10,000 and 60,000.
- In the case of BRACOL the financing is maintained between USD 24,000 and 30,000 each year.
- For the Pacific Alliance, a growth in the financing received was reported, going from USD 10,000 in 2016 to USD 39,348 in 2019.
- The funding from DAAD ranges from USD 5,000 to 14,000 each year.
- Finally, ELAP maintained a constant funding of USD 5,600 between 2016 and 2018, and for 2019 no funding was reported for this program.

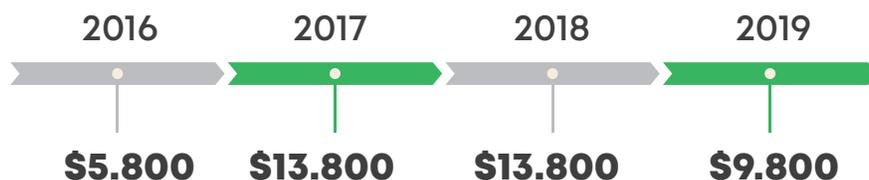
**Figure 17 Amounts (USD) of funding from international cooperation agencies to support incoming student academic mobility processes, totals per year by agency 2016-2019-I**



### BRACOL



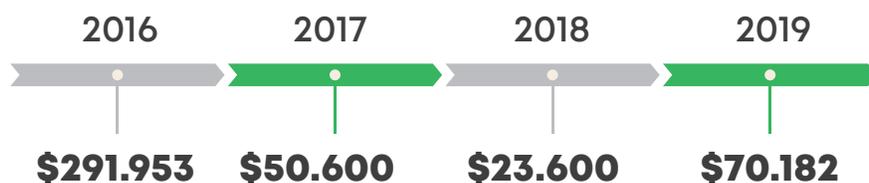
### DAAD



### ELAP



### ERASMUS



### Others not specified

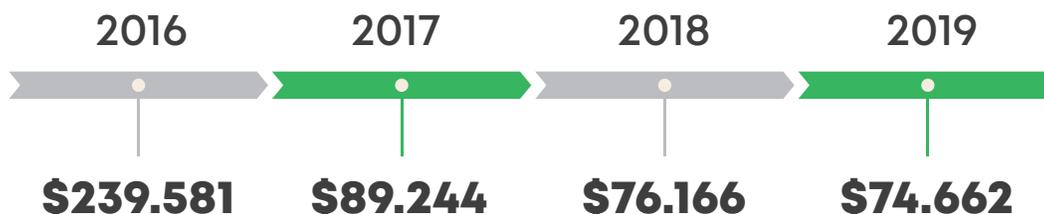


## 4.4. Description of higher education institutions benefiting from the funding

Of the 30 HEIs that reported some funding, 20 are private (67%) and 10 public (33%). In the public HEIs, there was a total funding of USD 479,653 for the period between 2016 and 2019, where the highest amount received in 2016 stands out for USD 239,581. From 2017-2019, the amount of funding ranged between USD 70,000 and 90,000 each year, as can be seen in Figure No. 18. The main source of cooperation resources for academic mobility of public HEIs has been the ERASMUS program with an amount Total reported of USD 242,785 for the 4 years.

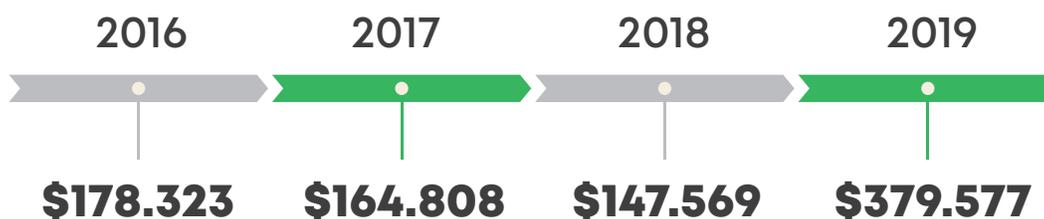
Regarding private HEIs, revenues of USD 870,277 were reported, with 2019 being the year with the highest funding —with an amount of USD 379,577.

**Figure 18 Amounts (USD) of funding from international cooperation agencies to support incoming student academic mobility processes, total per year public HEIs 2016-2019-I**



As can be seen in Figure No. 19, between 2016 and 2018, the financing amount ranged between USD 140,000 and USD 180,000 each year. The main source of cooperation resources for incoming student academic mobility from private HEIs has been the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund, with a total reported amount of USD 331,844 for the period of this study.

**Figure 19 Amounts (USD) of funding from international cooperation agencies to support incoming student academic mobility processes, total per year private HEIs 2016-2019**



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When reviewing the data reported by regions in Colombia, it was identified that 98% of the financing is found in the Andean region—in mostly private HEIs with USD 19,543,994. The remaining 2% are public HEIs from the Caribbean Region with USD 365,485 and Orinoquia region with USD 3,202.

## 4.5. Analysis of identified trends

As previously mentioned, there was a substantial increase in funding obtained by the Erasmus program in 2016 and the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund in 2019. For this reason, it is worth reviewing in greater detail what happened during these years with those funds.

In 2019, the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund awarded 198 grants to more than 350 university teams in 25 countries, and Colombian HEIs were one of its main beneficiary countries. This is largely due to the fact that the Ministry of National Education, together with ICETEX and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation—formerly known as the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia (COLCIENCIAS)— have strengthened the processes of international cooperation between governments and the different HEIs since 2014. According to the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund, “Colombia is one of the leading countries in this hemispheric initiative to form dynamic partnerships with US colleges and universities to provide students with access to academic exchange programs in both countries. To date, 15 Colombian departments and 26 US States benefit from the Innovation Fund partnerships.”<sup>23</sup>

On the other hand, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the Department of State of the United States provide a large number of resources to support new partnerships and international cooperation projects to institutions between both countries. In the years 2016 to 2018, the grants awarded have been 25,000 USD per project each year, and in 2019 this amount increased to \$ 35,000 USD and, in addition, this year grants were awarded to 13 projects in Colombia, achieving an increase in funding during that last year.

It is also important to bear in mind that since the creation of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund in 2014, at an educational level, around 11 million dollars have been invested in the region, of which Colombian HEIs are the second largest recipient, with 95 institutions that add up to 20% of the total of

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23. 100,000 Strong in the Americas. (s. f.). 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund Announces New Grant Winning Institutions Between Colombia and the United States. – 100,000 Strong in the Americas. [www.100kstrongamericas.org](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org). Recuperado 9 de noviembre de 2020, de <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/colciencias-winners-2019/>

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HEIs benefited in Latin America. <sup>24</sup>

In 2019, the 13 projects financed by the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund in Colombia generated resources for 13 universities: Universidad de Antioquia, Instituto Tecnológico Metropolitano, Fundación Universitaria de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano, Fundación Universidad del Norte, Fundación Universitaria del Área Andina, Universidad de Caldas, Universidad del Rosario, Universidad Católica de Manizales, Universidad de los Andes, Universidad de la Sabana, Universidad Ean, Universidad Industrial de Santander and Universidad Santiago de Cali.

On the other hand, in 2016, there was a notable increase in resources for incoming mobility reported by the HEIs within the framework of the Erasmus + International Credit Mobility program, which is aligned with the increase in the proposals of this selected program with the participation of Colombian HEIs (32 in 2016 compared to 21 in 2015).<sup>25</sup>

In addition to this fact, the accounting in 2016 of active mobilities financed by the previous version of the program, called Erasmus Mundus Action 2, set an upward pattern that would not be repeated in the future since these mobilities had a final term in that same year. For these reasons, the Erasmus programs made it possible to manage 291,953 USD in incoming mobility in 2016, considerably leveraging the total international resources mobilized and reported by HEIs in that term.

## 4.6. Conclusions and recommendations

International cooperation for academic mobility through international agencies has been strengthened each year, obtaining in 2019 more funding from agencies for projects with HEIs in Latin America and especially Colombia. Cooperation mainly with Europe through the ERASMUS and DAAD programs with funding of around \$ 500,000 USD stands out.

Likewise, the cooperation received from the United States through the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund (\$ 353,305) occupies a second place in the origin

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24. 100,000 Strong in the Americas. (s. f.). El Fondo de Innovación 100,000 Strong in the Americas anuncia una nueva convocatoria de subvenciones para alianzas de educación superior entre Colombia y los Estados Unidos. Recuperado 9 de noviembre de 2020, de <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/icetex-2020-espanol/>

25. European Commission. (2020, enero). Erasmus + para la educación superior en Colombia. [ec.europa.eu. https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/erasmus-plus/factsheets/americas-caribbean/colombia\\_erasmusplus\\_2019\\_es.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/erasmus-plus/factsheets/americas-caribbean/colombia_erasmusplus_2019_es.pdf)

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of resources, with a fund that has been increasing in recent years, giving way to innovation projects among Colombian and US institutions that promote academic mobility. It is important to recognize the growing funding obtained by Latin American programs and funds such as BRACOL and the Pacific Alliance, which together add up to resources of more than 200,000 USD, which promote mobility in the region.

Although the data obtained in the present study show greater funding obtained for private institutions, it is important to bear in mind that this occurs precisely because 20 of the 30 institutions that reported data in this regard have that legal nature, which is why it is not possible to generalize the results for all HEIs. What can be inferred from the data is that the main source of cooperation resources for academic mobility for public HEIs has been the ERASMUS program, while for private HEIs it has been the 100,000 Strong in the Americas fund. This may be due to historical collaboration links or diverse approaches in the management of internationalization, which may be the subject of future analysis.

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CHAPTER V

# Colombia, an attractive destination for international students

Manuela Vélez Restrepo  
(UNIVERSIDAD EIA)

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Student mobility is a fundamental pillar for the internationalization of higher education due to its contribution to the training of global citizens UNESCO (2015), to the consolidation of knowledge networks, its contribution to the solution of global problems and the social integration of territories, among others.

These and other benefits have surely motivated governments and universities to allocate significant efforts and resources to attracting international students. As an example of government initiatives, we could mention the European Union and its Erasmus + program, which in 2018 allocated 2.8 billion euros to finance more than 850 mobilities (European Commission, 2020). A closer example is the mobility program of the Pacific Alliance, of which Colombia is a part along with Chile, Peru and Mexico and, between 2013 and 2018, invested 9,668,781 dollars for the exchange of 1,792 undergraduate students (Pacific Alliance, 2018).

In this sense, Higher Education Institutions develop projects and assign resources to increase academic mobility from different strategies. In the case of Colombia, achieving a balance between the number of students who leave and those who are received has represented additional efforts. Hence, in this report, the actions developed in terms of visibility (Chapter III), cooperation activities (Chapter IV) and security actions (Chapter VI), among others, are analyzed.

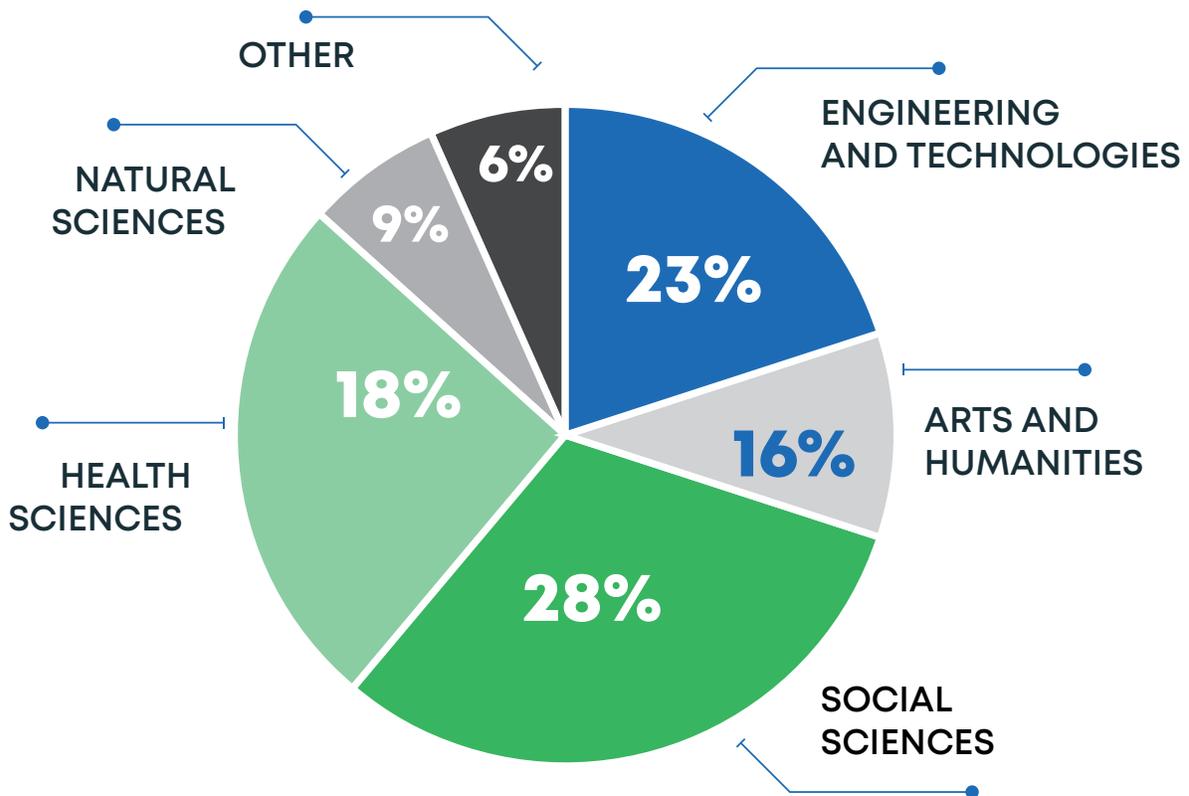
In this section we will focus on the elements for attracting students, namely: areas of knowledge in which foreigners participate, type of universities they attend, mobility modalities that are more popular and economic factors associated with the activity.

## **5.1. Selection of areas of knowledge**

This section presents the areas of knowledge in which the participating institutions managed to attract the highest percentage of students to complete a full program.

**Figure 20 Areas of knowledge in which international students enroll in complete programs**

**\*PERCENTAGES OF MOST FREQUENT AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE IN WHICH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED IN FULL PROGRAMS (2016-2019- I SEM)**



Social Sciences occupy the first place, with a percentage of 28% and it is followed by engineering and technologies with 23%.

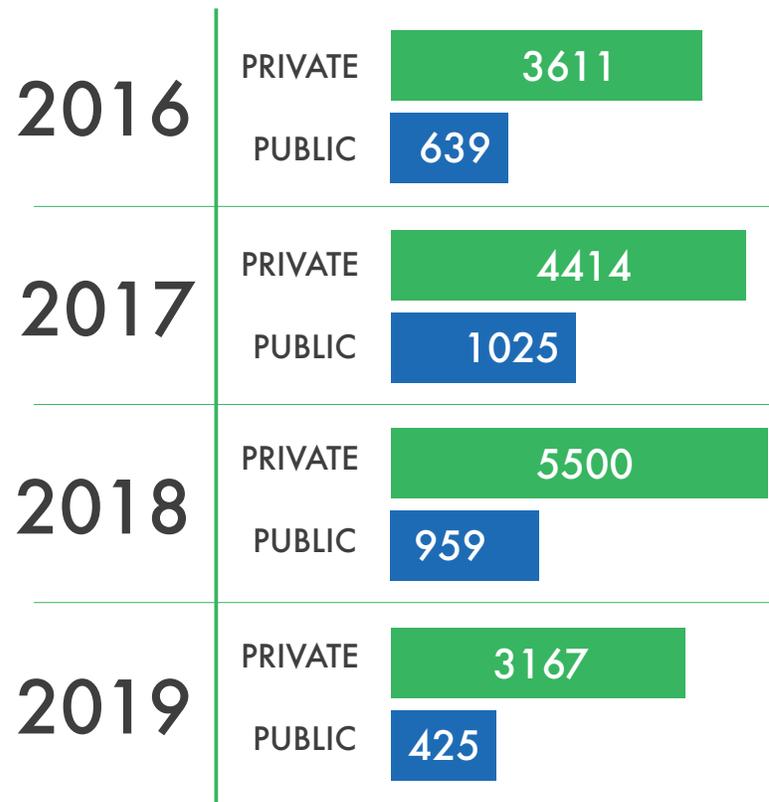
According to the QS World University Rankings, within Social Sciences there are programs such as: Accounting, Finance, Anthropology, Business, Communication, Economics, Sociology, Education, Sports, Statistics, and Law. In engineering and technology there are academic programs in: Civil Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Computer Science, Electronic Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Mining engineering (QS Intelligence Unit, 2020).

It is striking that, according to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Colombia is the second country in biodiversity and is among the 12 most mega-diverse nations on the planet, however, in this study, natural science programs obtain only a 9% participation of international students (Colombia. Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation [MinCiencias], 2016).

## 5.2. Type of host universities

Although in this study the number of participating private HEIs exceeds the number of public ones, 45 and 20 respectively, the results presented in the following Figure No. 21 show that private institutions manage to attract a greater number of international students.

Figure 21 International students by year and type of HEI



## 5.3. International student concentration

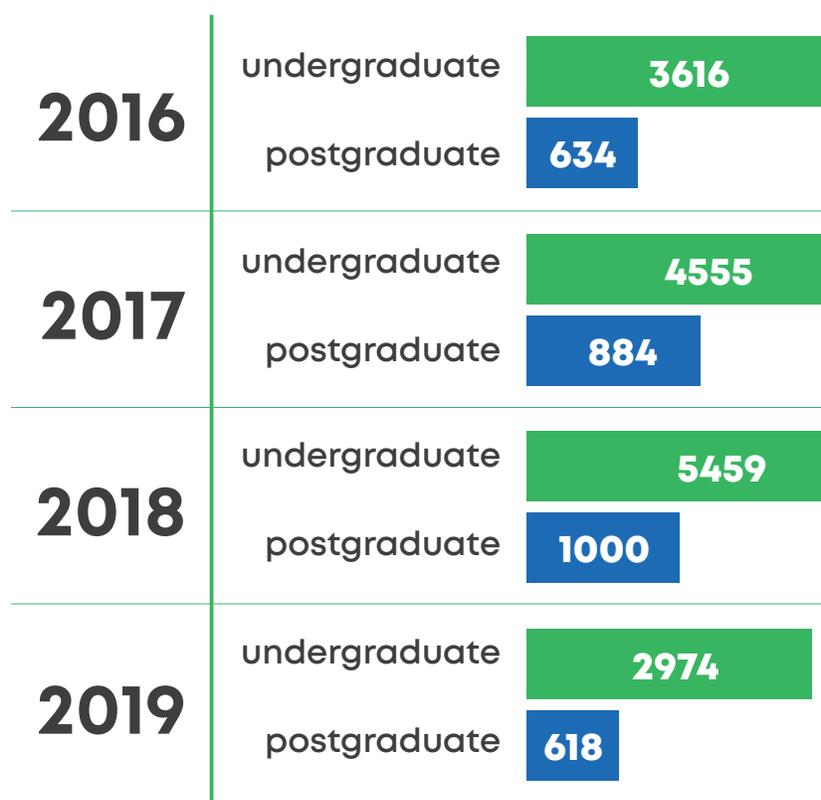
This section details the concentration of students in undergraduate and graduate programs and in the different mobility modalities.

### a) International undergraduate and graduate students

The study shows that between 2016 and 2018, Colombia had an increase in international students of 52% (from 4,250 students to 6,459). We also find that, in the first half of 2019, the number is 3,592, which shows that the growth trend continues.

In Figure No. 22 the wide difference in the number of international students participating in postgraduate and undergraduate programs is notable; clearly, Colombian HEIs manage to attract a greater number of students to their undergraduate programs, placing their participation in postgraduate degrees below 20%.

**Figure 22 Student mobility by year and level of study**



Within the postgraduate programs, master's degrees are those that achieve the highest participation of international students. Between 2016 and 2019-1, 2,029 foreigners opted for this type of program, followed by the specializations that received 1,179, and the doctorates, 449.

Figure 23 International students enrolled in HEIs in degree seeking programs



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## b) Concentration of students by mobility modality

This report also details the participation of students by country of origin in each of the mobility modalities. As mentioned in Chapter II, Mexico is the country that sends the most students to Colombia, 5,258 between 2016 and 2019-I, while Peru and the US occupy the second and third place in number of students in the country.

In the survey carried out, the significant participation of French students in double degree programs is striking, with 329 in total. This — possibly— is due to the existence of more than 400 academic cooperation agreements between Colombia and France and the agreement signed in 2010 between the Conference of Presidents of Universities (CPU), the Conference of Directors of the French Schools of Engineers (CDEFI), the Corporation for Studies in France (CEF) and the Colombian Association of Universities (ASCUN), for the exchange, mutual recognition of studies and diplomas in the continuation of higher studies (Campus France, 2018).

Additionally, the interest of French students to learn Spanish could motivate the completion of long-term studies such as double degrees. According to the Instituto Cervantes, an institution specializing in the teaching of Spanish in the world, France is one of the countries with a special interest in its learning, registering 2.5 million learners (Llorente, 2019).

## 5.4. Economic factors

The cost of living, scholarships, sources of funding and benefits are decisive factors when selecting an academic destination.

### a) Costs

The approximate range of costs per city that an incoming student must bear is given below. Tables 2 and 3 show the minimum and maximum costs reported by the HEIs in the 5 cities, which according to DANE26 (year 2019) are the most expensive to live in, as well as those that reported the highest student mobility. Afterwards, the results of the rank of the other cities that are not in the list of the most expensive are shown.

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26. DANE. 2019. Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the cost-of-living studies carried out by the data and statistics collection platform, NUMBEO.

**Table 2 Expenditures in cities with greater mobility**

CITY	ACCOMODATION	RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	FOOD	OTHER EXPENSES	TRANSPORT
<b>Bogota</b>	Min.: \$400.000 Max.: \$1.400.000	Min.: \$100.000 Max.: \$1.000.000	Min: \$60.000 Max: \$1.500.000	Min.: \$80.000 Max.: \$1.500.000	Min.: \$100.000 Max.: \$400.000
<b>Cartagena</b>	Min.: \$450.000 Max.: \$800.000	Min.: \$100.000 Max.: \$200.000	Min: \$100.000 Max: \$200.000	Min.: \$100.000 Max.: \$150.000	Min.: \$150.000 Max.: \$200.000
<b>Barranquilla</b>	Min./Max.: \$1.000.000	Min./Max.: \$300.000	Min./Max.: \$550.000	Min./Max.: \$350.000	Min./Max.: \$220.000
<b>Medellin</b>	Min.: \$400.000 Max.: \$1.200.000	Min.: \$150.000 Max.: \$2.500.000	Min: \$275.000 Max: \$600.000	Min.: \$20.000 Max.: \$200.000	Min.: \$90.000 Max.: \$400.000
<b>Cali</b>	Min.: \$400.000 Max.: \$900.000	Min.: \$50.000 Max.: \$200.000	Min: \$150.000 Max: \$600.000	Min.: \$50.000 Max.: \$150.000	Min.: \$100.000 Max.: \$500.000

**Table 3 Total costs**

CITY	TOTAL (ACCOMMODATION + LEISURE + FOOD + TRANSPORT + OTHERS)
<b>Bogota</b>	Min.: \$740.000 Max.: \$3.069.500
<b>Cartagena</b>	Min.: \$900.000 Max.: \$1.550.000
<b>Barranquilla</b>	Min./Max.: \$2.420.000
<b>Medellin</b>	Min.: \$935.000 Max.: \$4.900.000
<b>Cali</b>	Min.: \$750.000 Max.: \$2.350.000



**Table 4 Total costs other cities**

CITY	ACCOMODATION	RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	FOOD	OTHER EXPENSES	TRANSPORT
<b>Cities (other)</b>	Min.: \$300.000 Max.: \$1.000.000	Min.: \$30.000 Max.: \$400.000	Min.: \$150.000 Max.: \$600.000	Min.: \$10.000 Max.: \$862.000	Min.: \$30.000 Max.: \$207.500

Note: Among other cities are: Manizales, Armenia, Florencia, Bucaramanga, Villavicencio, Popayán, Neiva, Pasto, Tunja, Montería, Santa Marta and Pereira.

## b) Financing

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, both governments and Higher Education Institutions allocate financial resources for student mobility.

Some supports are offered in the form of study grants; Among the most popular we can mention the Eiffel scholarships (France), Fulbright scholarships (United States), Chevening scholarships (United Kingdom), DAAD scholarships (Germany), Endeavor scholarships (Australia), ELAP scholarships (Canada), Santander Ibero-America scholarship, Carolina Foundation Scholarships (Spain), ERASMUS + Scholarships (Europe), among others.

In Colombia, we could highlight the ICETEX Reciprocity Scholarships for Foreigners, as published by this institute on its website:

This program provides non-reimbursable financial aid to foreign citizens to carry out their postgraduate studies in Colombian Higher Education Institutions, whether for specialization, master's or doctorates. Within the development of this program, ICETEX supports foreign scholarship recipients with support costs, health policy and courtesy visa, among other expenses that may arise. The Higher Education Institutions that are the study destination of these young people cover the entire cost of tuition for the program to be taken (Colombia. Colombian Institute of Educational Credit and Technical Studies Abroad [ICETEX], 2019, pair. 6).

In the last decade, between 2010 and 2019, 1,159 citizens of other countries have been able to access their higher studies through this initiative. This confirms the result of the study; according to table 4, and taking into account the frequencies: Sometimes, Frequently and Always of the scale, the source of funding that the HEIs reported the most, was ICETEX reciprocity scholarships.

In second and third place are the 'Total institutional scholarships' and 'partial discounts on tuition'. On the other hand, the two lowest reported sources were 'credits with external entities' and 'financing through the university'.

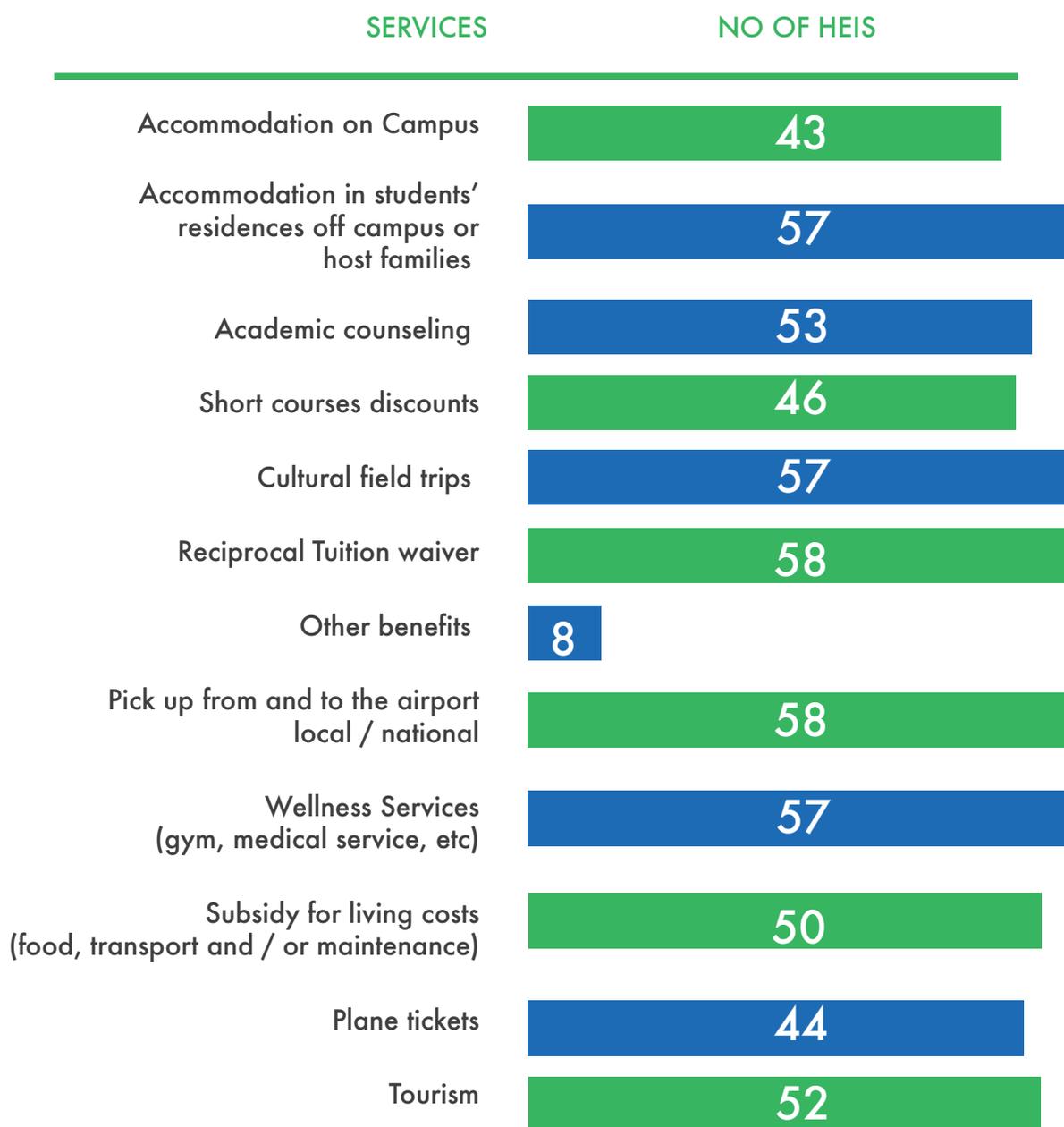
**Table 5 Percentages of the dimension ‘sources of funding for an incoming international student in full academic programs at HEIs**

SOURCES OF FUNDING	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY	NEVER	RARELY	ALWAYS
<b>ICETEX reciprocity scholarships</b>	43%	13%	5%	15%	25%
<b>Total institutional scholarships</b>	19%	16%	16%	13%	38%
<b>Partial discounts on tuition</b>	17%	23%	9%	14%	37%
<b>Scholarships for external cooperation entities</b>	23%	19%	6%	16%	35%
<b>Scholarship credits an special financing</b>	28%	16%	3%	25%	28%
<b>Credits with external entities</b>	21%	21%	3%	24%	30%
<b>Financiacing through the university</b>	20%	23%	0%	23%	33%

### c) Benefits for foreign students in mobility

In the information reported, we find that more than 80% of the institutions participating in the study exempt from tuition payment to foreigners in mobility; They pick them up at the airport, offer them university welfare services and schedule cultural and tourist excursions for their recreation. Another important support that appears in the study is the support subsidy, granted by 77% of the participating HEIs.

**Figure 24 Services offered by HEIs**



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## 5.6. Conclusions

Student mobility is a fundamental pillar for internationalization due to its contribution to the training of global citizens, its contribution to solving global problems and integration of territories. Aware of these benefits, the Higher Education Institutions of Colombia make important efforts to increase mobility and attract international students.

This study shows efforts in terms of academic and economic services such as the offer of different modalities for mobility, wellness programs, tourism, academic counseling, scholarships, tuition exemptions, support for sustenance, among others.

According to the increase in incoming mobility, evidenced in this report, it can be affirmed that all these actions have had a positive impact on the results.

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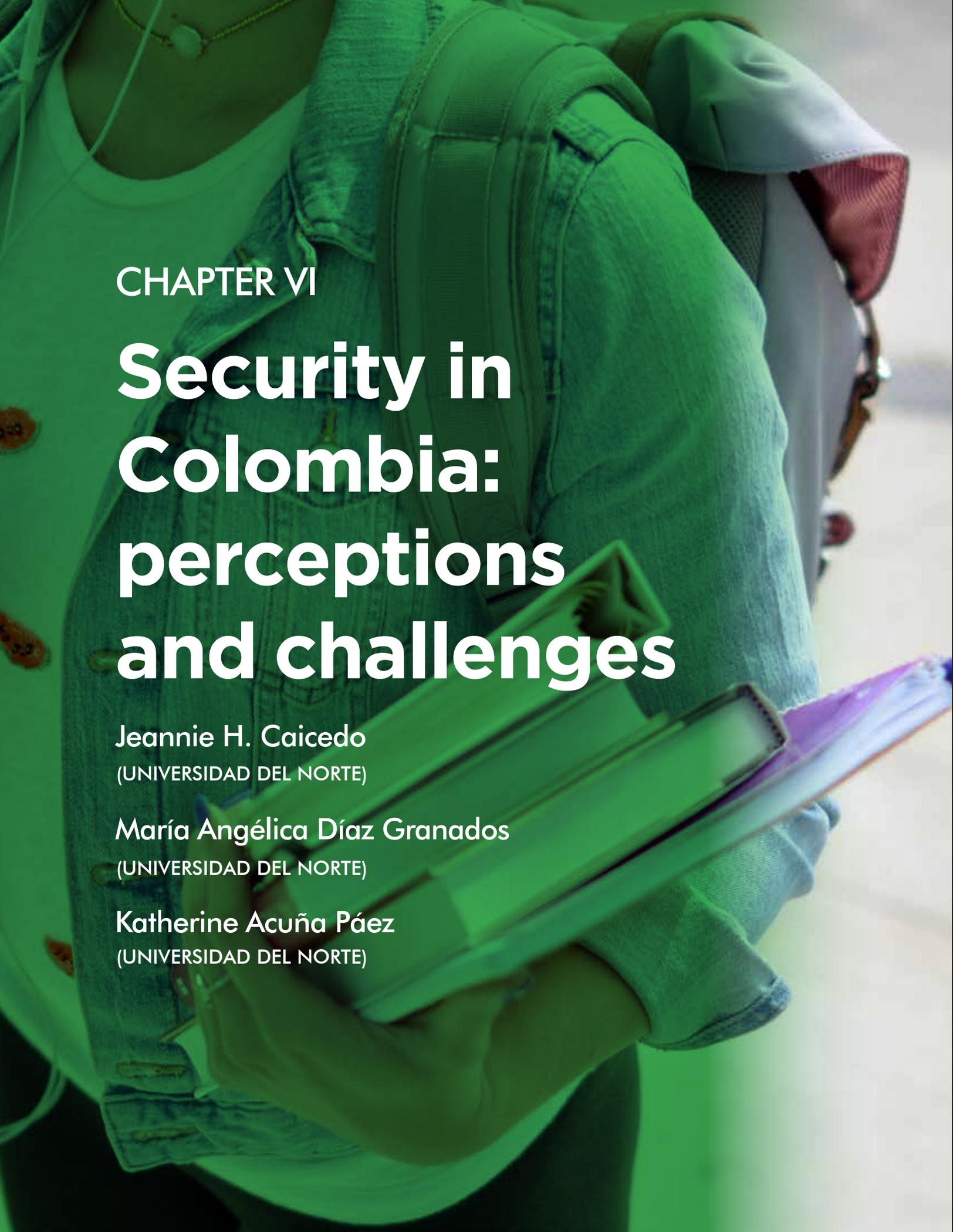
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A photograph of a person wearing a denim jacket, holding several books. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The person is wearing a necklace and glasses. The background is slightly blurred.

CHAPTER VI

# Security in Colombia: perceptions and challenges

Jeannie H. Caicedo  
(UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORTE)

María Angélica Díaz Granados  
(UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORTE)

Katherine Acuña Páez  
(UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORTE)

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## 6.1. Introduction

Clark, M., van Aart, J. (2016) mention that students when deciding to carry out their higher education studies consider three main criteria: the choice of the program they are going to study, the country in which it will be carried out and the language in which the classes will be taught. The second factor refers to the conditions given at the country level—in light of expectations as a destination for international students and it will be the one that we will emphasize for the purposes of our analysis—.

According to Clark & Van Aart (2016), the main aspects to consider regarding the country of destination refer to: 1. The quality of the education offered compared to that of their country of origin, 2. International academic recognition, 3. The attitude of the host country towards international students, and 4. The security of the destination country.

This chapter intends to explore aspects related to the third and fourth aspects regarding the importance of the incidence in attracting international students to Colombia as an academic destination from the perspective of security. For this purpose, relevant data from the national context and the safety findings of the report presented by the HEIs participating in the study are presented, with 19,740 international students who entered the country in the period from 2016 to 2019 (1st semester).

Likewise, some elements on the international perception of the country's security are presented and some of the most relevant challenges of this topic for incoming international mobility of students and academics are discussed.

## 6.2. 2016-2019 Incoming Student Mobility: Safety and health incidents

The report presented by the HEIs participating in the study, about the international students who entered the country in the period 2016-2019 (1st semester), reflected that there were 114 incidents, in the 13 cities of the country where the participating HEIs are located (see graph 25), in which the following categories stand out: robberies (34%), pickpocketing (29%), theft using psychoactive substances (11%), motor vehicle accidents (8%). It is important to highlight that the incidents grouped in the category of “others” (7%), mostly incorporate events associated with the physical and mental health of the students, such as general illnesses, depression, physical and psychological injuries.

**Figure 25 Number of incidents reported by HEIs in incoming mobility during the period 2016-2019-I**

Incidents	Private	Public
<b>Car accidents</b>	8	1
<b>Robbery</b>	27	12
<b>Poquetpicketing</b>	27	6
<b>Deportations</b>	1	2
<b>Enforced disappearance</b>	1	0
<b>Extortion</b>	6	1
<b>Theft under psychoactive substances</b>	10	2
<b>Natural death</b>	1	0
<b>Others</b>	7	1
<b>Kidnapping</b>	1	0

Most of the incidents occurred in the three most populated cities in the country (see graph 26), Bogotá (38%), Cali (15%) and Medellín (14%), with the least reported incidents being Montería (1%), Pereira (1%) and Santa Marta (1.7%). Most of the incidents were reported by private HEIs (78%), versus incidents reported by participating public HEIs (22%).

Figure 26 Total incidents by city

<b>Armenia</b>	Robbery	1
	Deportations	1
<b>Barranquilla</b>	Robbery	1
	Pocketpicketing	1
	Extortion	2
<b>Bogota</b>	Car accidents	2
	Robbery	16
	Pocketpicketing	18
	Extortion	1
	Theft under psychoactive substances	7
	Others	4
<b>Bucaramanga</b>	Car accidents	1
	Robbery	2
	Pocketpicketing	2
	Others	1
<b>Cali</b>	Car accidents	2
	Robbery	4
	Pocketpicketing	3
	Deportations	1
	Enforced disappearance	1
	Extortion	3
	Theft under psychoactive substances	2
	Natural death	1
	Others	1
Kidnapping	1	
<b>Cartagena de Indias</b>	Car accidents	2
	Robbery	2
	Pocketpicketing	2
<b>Florencia</b>	Robbery	1
	Pocketpicketing	1

<b>Manizales</b>	Car accidents	<b>1</b>
	Robbery	<b>1</b>
	Pocketpicketing	<b>1</b>
<b>Medellin</b>	Car accidents	<b>1</b>
	Robbery	<b>7</b>
	Pocketpicketing	<b>4</b>
	Extortion	<b>1</b>
	Theft under psychoactive substances	<b>3</b>
	Others	<b>2</b>
<b>Monteria</b>	Robbery	<b>1</b>
<b>Pereira</b>	Robbery	<b>1</b>
<b>Santa Marta</b>	Robbery	<b>1</b>
	Extortion	<b>1</b>
<b>Tunja</b>	Robbery	<b>1</b>
	Pocketpicketing	<b>1</b>
	Deportations	<b>1</b>

In a percentage proportion of the recorded data, the information indicates that only 0.64% of the international student population were affected by some type of incident, which reflects a safe environment for incoming student mobility.

### 6.3. National security context

Although the study from the Ministry of National Education did not show any case of death by homicide, this data is one of the main security references in the countries. For the Colombian case, a search for these data was carried out through the information presented by the Ministry of Justice and National Defense, as well as by international organizations.

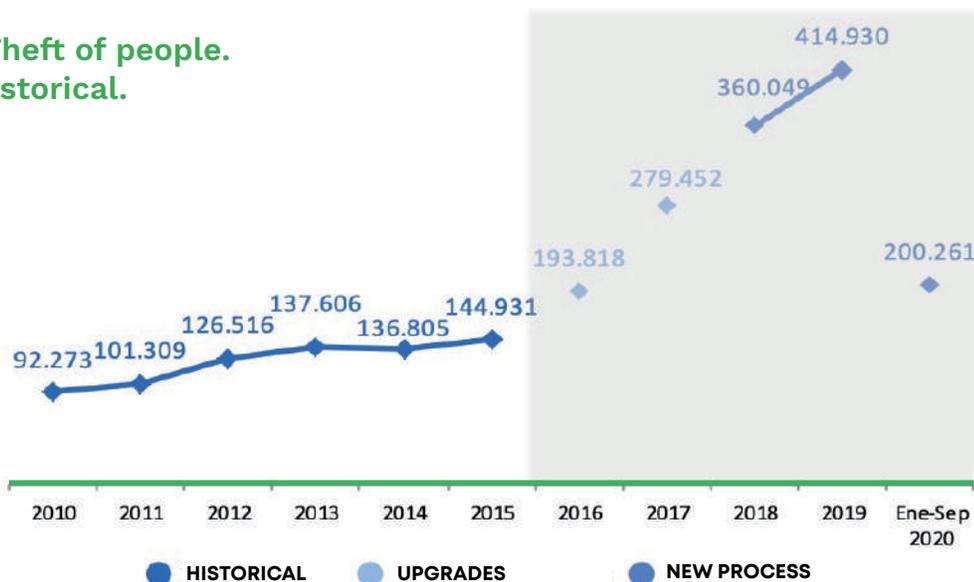
**Figure 27 Homicide Rate Ministry of Justice and National Defense**



Source: Report "LOGROS DE LA POLÍTICA DE DEFENSA Y SEGURIDAD" (2020).

In the report of the Ministry of Justice and National Defense (2020), a stable homicide rate is evidenced (see graph 27) in the same period of the study (2016-2019). Regarding theft to people between 2016 and 2019, an increase in reported cases of 209% is reflected. It is worth bearing in mind that the report emphasizes that, as of 2016, the National Police and the Office of the Attorney General of the Nation carried out two important updates in their information systems, which allows unifying criteria in the definition of crimes for the consolidation of the report and enables citizens to report electronically, streamlining and decongesting the face-to-face reporting system.

**Figure 28 Theft of people. National Historical.**



Source: Report "LOGROS DE LA POLÍTICA DE DEFENSA Y SEGURIDAD" (2020).

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As an additional factor of the security context in the country, there is the perception of security at a national level. The Survey of Coexistence and Citizen Security (2019) in this regard shows an index of perception of insecurity in cities and municipalities of 44.6% at a national level, being significantly higher in the capital cities than in rural areas, with 50.1% and 23.8% respectively.

It could be interesting for future studies to have information on the perception of safety of international students, as well as factors associated with the management of safety, health and well-being risks, to know how national HEIs contemplate these aspects in the evaluation of the experience of the students, which could contribute to decision-making in managing the attraction of international students, contributing to the improvement of the factor initially mentioned regarding the attitude of the host country towards international students. A possible reference for this measurement could be the exercise called "Index of University Cities-ICU" of the Colombian Network of Cities How We Go (RCCCV), which evaluates the concept of the "university city" under a vision that integrates the aspects that affect the quality of life of students, including: the university environment, the quality of higher education, the cost of living, the employability of graduates and the quality of life in cities. (As We Go University Cities Index, 2017).

## 6.4. International perception

Regarding the international perception of security, the official references consulted by foreign citizens are those contained in the travel warnings of international governments or Travel Warnings, which are constantly monitored and therefore frequently updated. There are other sources of reports on safety aspects such as the statistics by country of Violence, Injury and Prevention of the World Health Organization (WHO) and those of the health information platform for the Americas reported by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), associated with homicide rates. However, these data were updated to 2011 and 2015 respectively.

ProColombia assured in 2018 that as a result of the peace process and the improvements that occurred in the security conditions and the country's reputation at an international level, confidence in the country as a tourist destination of international stature was evidenced. According to figures from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the flow of foreign visitors had an increase of 9.4% in 2018 compared to 2017 and an increase of 9.7% in international cruises during the same period, being the United States (one

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of the governments with the most severe travel warnings to Colombia), the country with the highest number of foreign visitors that entered the country in 2018, with an increase of 22.2%.

Additionally, as announced by ProColombia in 2019, eight countries made positive adjustments to travel warnings to the country, these being: The United States, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy, Israel, South Korea and Japan, having very significant effects favorable for tourism, which increased by 2.8% compared to 2018, consolidating in that year as the second industry with the greatest attraction of foreign currency and contributing in general to the international perception of the country.

The 2019 Safe Cities Index (SCI), prepared by the intelligence unit of The Economist magazine, which classifies 60 cities in 57 indicators in the following categories: digital security, health security, infrastructure for security and personal safety, places the capital of the country in position No. 51 according to the general score. According to the different categories, the capital's position is ranked No. 41 in terms of digital security, No. 45 in terms of infrastructure for security, No. 56 for personal security and No. 47 in terms of security sanitary. It is important to highlight that the capital of the country has a score in all the categories that places it in the “high” security range (50.1-75).

Additionally, as a consequence of the current global health crisis around the pandemic generated by COVID-19, security warnings have made new developments in public health in the different countries a priority, therefore aspects such as prevention and awareness health and well-being risks will become increasingly important in attracting foreign visitors, including international students and academics to our country.

## **6.5. Conclusions and recommendations**

The national security reports and the present study show a stability in the main national security indicators and a low incidence of cases of insecurity that affected international students in the 2016-2019 period (less than 1%). However, the level of perception of insecurity maintains high levels at a national level, although the international perception of security in the country has improved, shown in the ratings of travel warnings for Colombia from strategic countries such as Korea, Japan, United Kingdom, France, United States, Canada, Israel and Italy and urban safety indices recognized as the SCI.

This, together with the new challenges imposed by the global public health situation, leads us to consider the importance of strengthening the management and risk management in terms of safety, health and well-

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being of students participating in international mobility programs, in order to consolidate our capacity for prevention, care and response and, in turn, strengthen the perception of our country as an academic destination for foreign citizens. This requires the leadership of the Ministry of National Education, articulated with the corresponding national and international organizations, for the construction of a public policy that guides the management that HEIs should give to situations of emergent and permanent risk, only possible to through collective commitment.

Some points to consider are:

1. The establishment of an information system, mediated by technologies, that allows strengthening, among others, the following aspects:
  - Reference for students abroad, in search of official and reliable information with the intention of selecting Colombia as an academic destination.
  - Updated knowledge of the national and territorial security situation.
  - Collection of incident reports by international students and Colombian students abroad.
  - Data analysis for institutional decision-making, in order to improve the experience of students in international mobility.
2. The requirement of institutional protocols for the management of risks associated with international mobility (Colombians abroad and internationals in Colombia).
3. Analysis of good practices of IES, governments or specialized organizations at a global level, on risk management.

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A photograph of two women in a meeting. The woman on the left is partially visible, looking at a tablet held by the woman on the right. The woman on the right is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a white brick wall and a wooden cabinet. The entire image has a green color overlay.

CHAPTER VII

# Trends

Giovanni Anzola-Pardo  
(UNIVERSIDAD EXTERNADO DE COLOMBIA)

## 7.1. Introduction

In this section, all metrics and quantitative or descriptive interpretation of the same, are made on the total set of information, that is, the information is not particularized to a specific HEI or type of HEI, this in order to maintain the level of representativeness of the sample and not to lower the level of confidence. Also, the information is presented on the observed -registered- data of entry (entries) of students to Colombia and their totals.

In the first place, in order to work on trends, the total results for each year of the number of incoming students reported in mobility were taken into account from the selected dimensions, namely: a) academic semester, b) modalities, and c) complete programs.

Second, the model to be implemented to define the trend was on least squares (to identify the exponential trend 2016 and 2017 and project it until 2021), also, the semi-average technique is used (linear trend 2016 to 2018). The intention is not to compare trends, only to verify the projection of the data and thus account for the behavior of the mobility of incoming students.

Finally, the results of the "structural matrix" prospective exercise are described.

## 7.2. Analysis and expressed trends

Entering the topic of the trend, the first small and short pattern of behavior can be identified in the totals of the incoming mobility data of students, and it is not only the increase in the number of students, but the average increase between the year 2017 to 2018 which was 19% per year.

**Table 6 Incoming mobility and percentage of increase in students per year<sup>27</sup>**

	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
Movilidad entrante (Inbound Mobility Report) # estudiantes	10.309	12.466	14.630	46.269
Percentage of increase of students per year	-	21%	17%	Average 19%

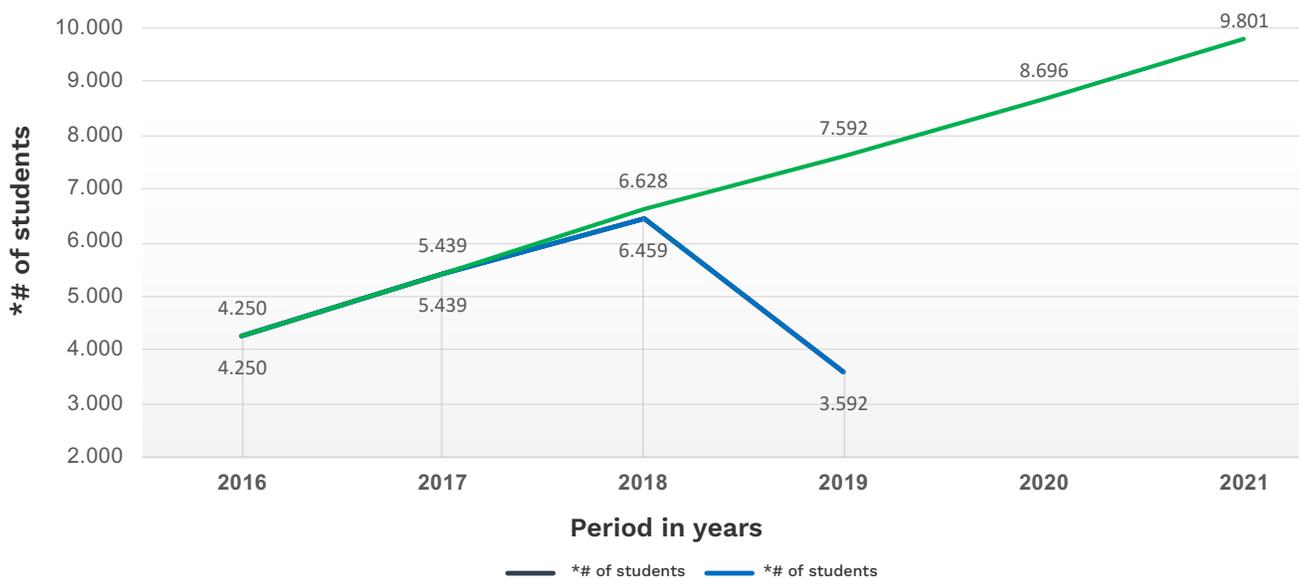
27. 2019 is not included, since the mobility behavior of the 2nd semester is unknown.

By examining the trend of the variable 'incoming student mobility flow' in each of the three dimensions -1) academic semester, 2) Modalities other than academic semester <sup>28</sup> and 3) complete programs- it was possible to verify that during the last three years and a half these dimensions have increased the mobility of incoming students and they may continue to have this behavior until 2021, if the environmental conditions are similar. It is worth noting that the mathematical processes carried out are infallible, however, it is necessary to take into consideration the external factors that may affect what is expressed here.

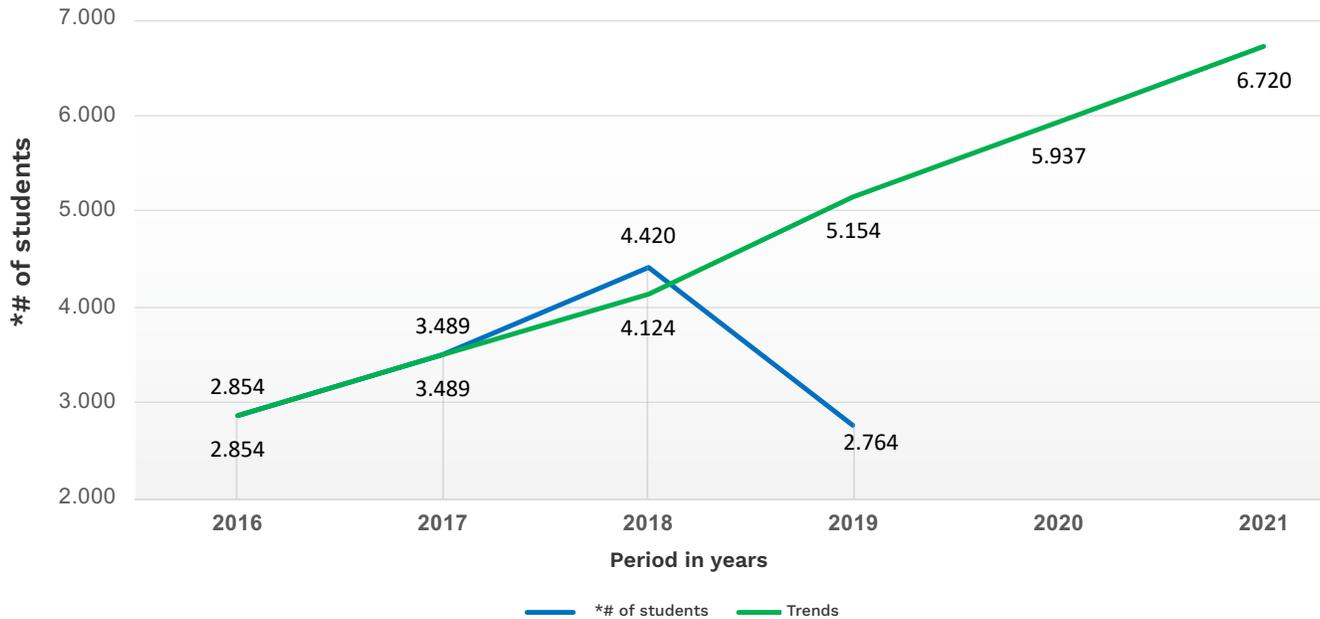
It was evidenced that in the dimension of 'mobility of complete programs', specialization is the only type of study that tends to continue a downward trend every year, which is opposite to the other types of studies (undergraduate, master's and doctorate) and academic modalities (academic semesters, language assistants (FULBRIGH, ICETEX, etc.), congresses / conferences / workshops, short courses, Spanish courses for foreigners, double degrees, academic missions / visits, others, internships, internships, clinical clerkship, volunteering.

Figure 29 expresses that until 2021 it can arrive. As the graph shows, in the trend of 2018 an increase of 22% of students in academic semester mobility was expected in relation to 2017, and it had 19%, which indicates that that year was below the expected trend. Moving forward in the timeline, 2019 expected a 15% high in relation to the previous year, but since it was below the trend (22%) to reach it, it will have to achieve 18%, recovering 3%<sup>29</sup> from 2018. And until the first semester of that year (2019) there were 47% of students, so it is likely that the trend would remain close, but below it.

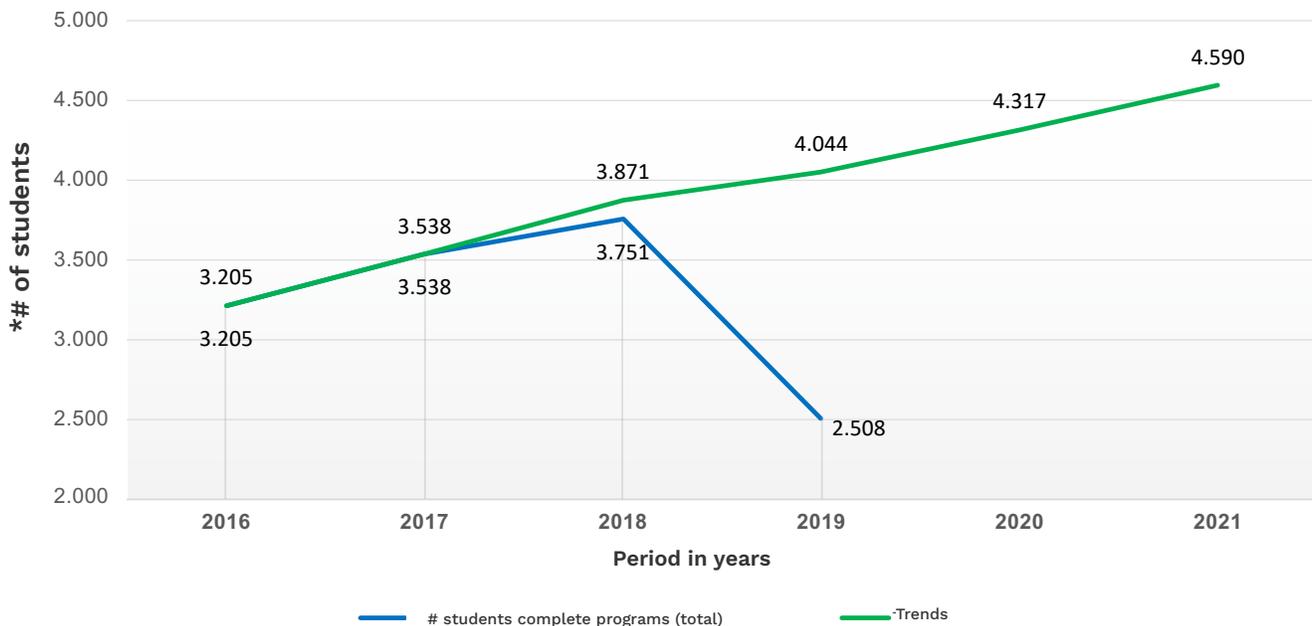
**Figure 29 Comparison between the trend (projected to 2021) and the mobility data in academic semester**



**Figure 30 Comparison between the trend (projected to 2021) and the mobility data in Academic Modalities**



**Figure 31 Comparison between the trend (projected to 2021) and the mobility data in Complete Programs**



28. The data correspond to the dimension 'Incoming mobility (international) who carried out academic activities in HEIs other than academic semesters' since the dimension of mobility in academic semester is described separately and the dimension has a time series for carrying out the trend, on the other hand, the survey

29. Another dimension of 'Incoming (international) mobility according to academic modalities' was explored, which was intended to be explored by country and does not have a time series (this dimension was addressed in chapter II).

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According to this model, it is expected that by 2019 in its second semester there will be an increase of 53% of students, while for 2020 there will be an increase of 15% of students in relation to 2019 and for 2021 a 13%, of students in mobility academic semester. That is, the number of students for the next 2 and a half years is expected to average 14%.

Of the incoming mobility students in academic modalities other than academic semesters, it is illustrated how in 2018 mobility was above the trend 7% (+296 students) and in 2019, with an expected trend of 5,154 students, the first semester there was an academic mobility of 54% in relation to the trend for that year. It is expected that for the second semester -2019- the incoming student mobility will be 46% (2,390 students)

As illustrated in Figure No. 30 and continuing with the timeline, the trend marks an increase in students in mobility for academic modalities and a trend of 6,720 students is expected in 2021.

For 2019, which reached 67% during the first semester in relation to the expressed trend, there is a remaining 33% of students who would be in academic semester mobility during the remainder of 2019.

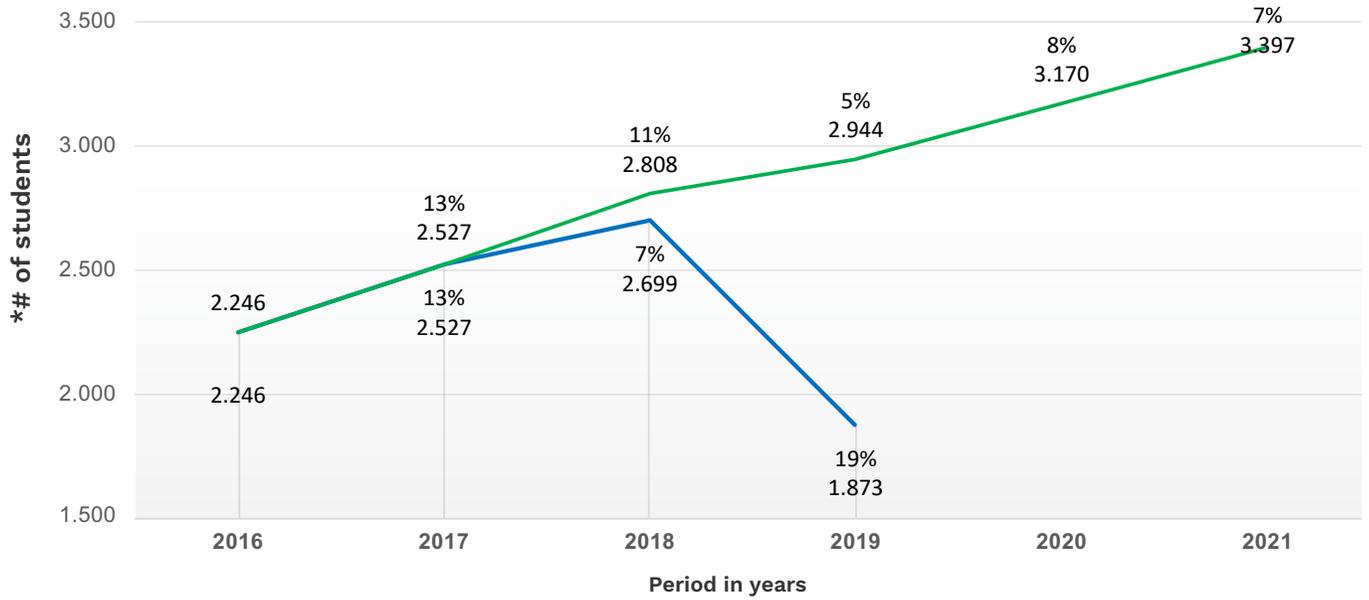
Finally, starting from a baseline in 2016 of 2,854 incoming mobility students for other academic modalities other than academic semesters, 2,111 international students have entered until 2019 (I Semester).

The 'complete programs' comprise the undergraduate, specialization, master's and doctoral levels of study. As can be seen in Figure No. 3, mobility in 'complete programs' presents an annual increase, it is worth remembering that the fall in 2019 corresponds to the fact that only the first semester of that year is registered. Compared to the trend, a closeness with the trend in 2018 is noted (97% approximation to the trend), and an advance in 2019 of 62% in the first semester.

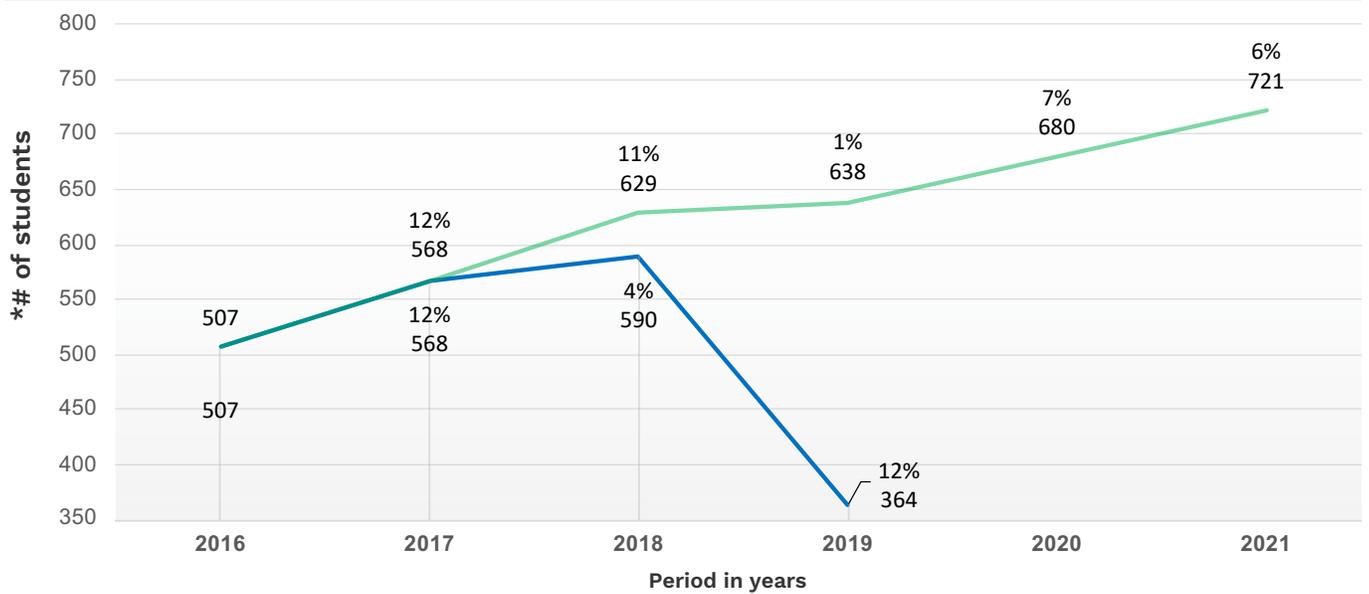
However, for 2020, 273 students (7%) are expected compared to the trend of the previous year. While for 2021 the increase compared to 2019 (and based on the trend) is 13% (546 students).

The trends for each level of studies (undergraduate, master's, specialization, and doctorate) are illustrated below, since each one has a different population profile and can be approached, strategically, in a different way. The trend in that specified at each level of study can identify significant intervention factors.

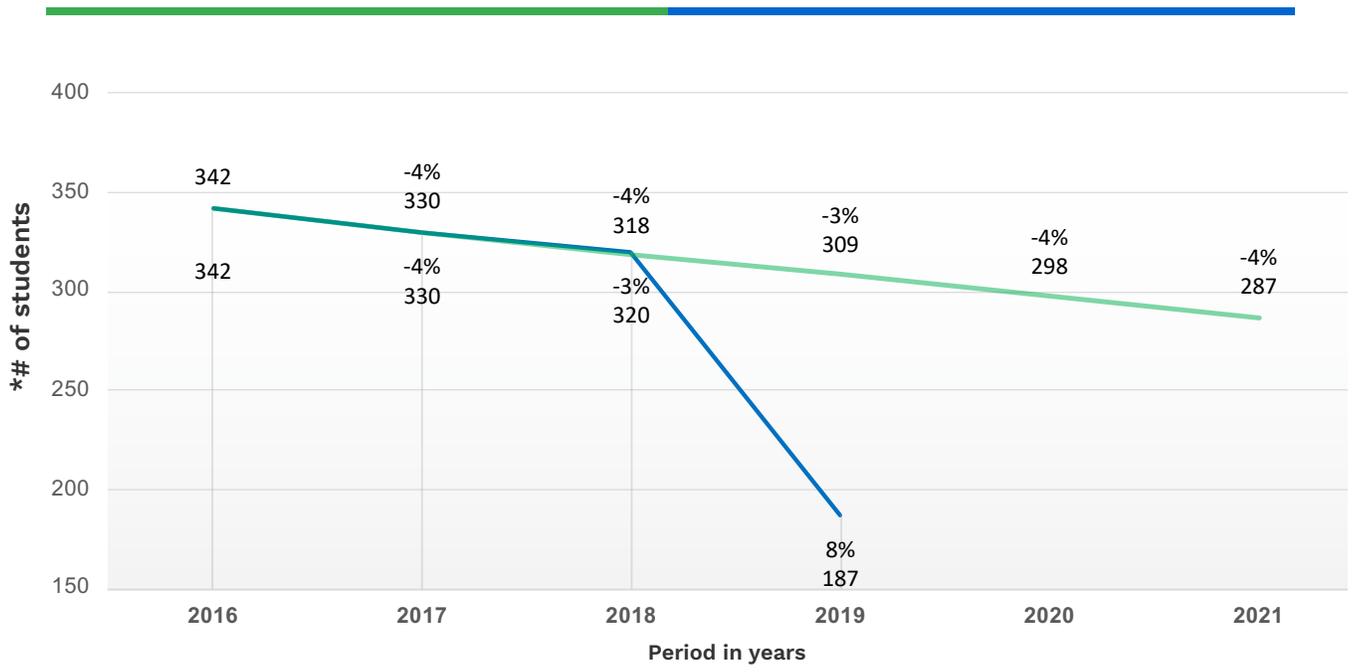
Figure 32 Level of studies tendencies



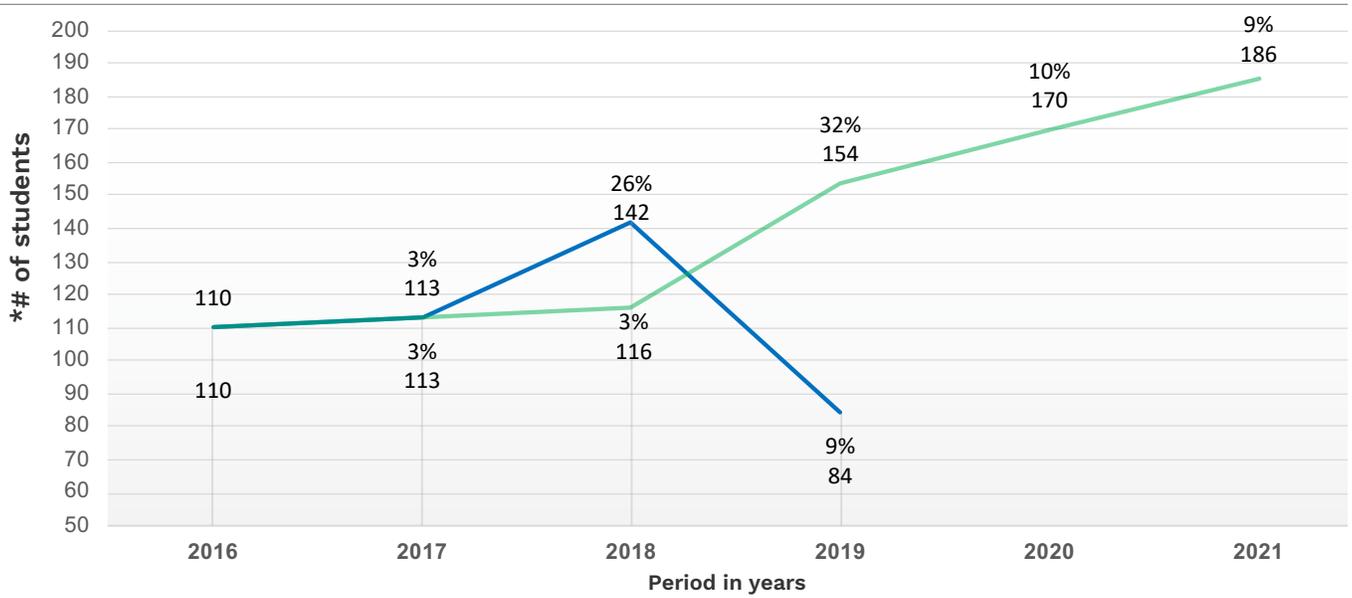
— # Estudiantes pregrado — Tendencia



— # Estudiantes maestría — Tendencia



— # Estudiantes especialización — Tendencia



— # Estudiantes doctorado — Tendencia

As the graphs show, the trend with the greatest force is undergraduate and master's and doctorates are slowly rising, however, the data presented in the full specialization programs tends to decrease annually.

The data present, in this method, a linear trend that invites the annual increase of students in 'complete programs' of 273 students per year. It must be taken into

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account that a 51% mobility was reported in the first semester 2019.

As in the previous information, the trend with the greatest strength is that of undergraduate degrees and masters and doctorates are slowly rising, however, the data presented in the complete specialization programs tend to decrease annually.

## 7.3. Structural matrix proposal

For this section, the realization of the proposed structural matrix guide to be developed has been defined. This type of analysis tends to “systematically explore possible futures from the study of all the combinations resulting from the decomposition of a system” (Godet 2007). It is carried out from the variables defined by CCYK for the construction of the survey.

The structural matrix aims to help understand the morphology of the system and the dimensions that make it up, the results allow defining the typology and importance of the dimensions according to their dependence and influence. But what cannot be predicted or managed is the subjectivity of the expert. Both in the definition of the dimensions and in the interpretation of the results.

## 7.4. Results

The construction of the morphological space

The objective of morphological analysis is focused on the exploration of possible futures from the study of the combinations of the elements resulting from the decomposition of a system. Therefore, it allows to show new prospective scenarios from the relationships that have been identified.

Each definition phase and the results are shown below.

### **Phase 1. Situational identification**

Mobility of international students (Entrants).

### **Phase 2. Define the criteria**

In this phase, the dimensions defined for the construction of the survey ‘Inbound Mobility Report 216-2019-I’ defined by CCKY are taken into account.

### **Phase 3. Structure matrix of the dimensions.**



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## Matrix analysis of the structure of the dimensions

How were the dimensions located and what is the impact?

Of 20 dimensions that are listed in phase 2, a qualification process was made of the level of influence they had between them. Said qualification produced a graph that allows visualizing its location in different areas of the Structural Analysis Matrix.

This is how the exit zone quadrant did not present any dimensions, which means that for now there are no autonomous dimensions, which are self-regulating and their management does not require greater effort.

In the zone of indifference, the dimensions that, their volatility and impact are exogenous and depend on other environments, at the same time cannot be controlled by HEIs.

Next, the dimension tuition costs and the variable 'actions of HEIs for mobility' are in the power zone, this variable influences all the others, however, it receives very little influence from the others, only from the growth of students international.

Finally, in the conflict zone the rest of the dimensions remained (14). These have a high dependence and influence on the mobility of incoming students and are the ones that are considered with the greatest care in the analysis, taking into account that radical changes in the growth of demand affect them directly, either positively or negatively.

After evaluating the level of influence and dependence of the dimensions on situational identification, the four dimensions that are closest to the bisectix of the conflict zone quadrant are selected - the reason is that these are the ones with the greatest dependence, influence and their volatility can become a risk in the future-, they are:

- Approximate cost of one international student per month in the city of stay.
- Incidents presented by international students during the academic stay 2016-2019.
- Sources of funding for an incoming international student in full academic programs at HEIs.
- International students in semester academic mobility.

It must be taken into account that the selection of three or four dimensions is to define strategies and tactics measurable in time and to make adjustments and include others. When many dimensions are worked on, its operation in

institutions can be exhausting and ineffective.

The conflict quadrant is the one with the largest agglomeration of dimensions, which implies, as an observation, that the strategies carried out in the period 2016 to the first semester of 2019 have a lot of influence and a lot of dependency and if they are not addressed, will affect the mobility significantly.

Also, the selection is of three or four dimensions to define strategies and tactics measurable in time and to make adjustments including others. When many dimensions are worked on, its operation in institutions can be exhausting and ineffective.

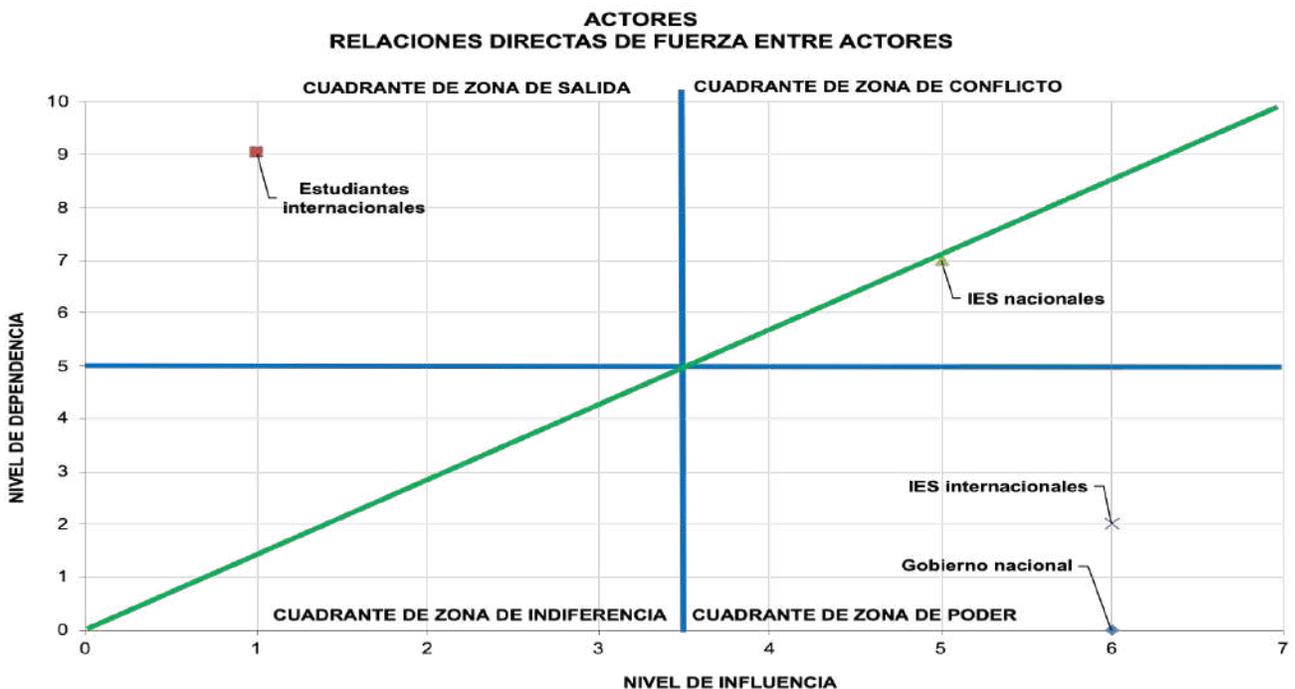
As Figure No. 37 illustrates, the conflict quadrant is the one with the greatest agglomeration of dimensions, which implies that the strategies carried out in the period 2016 to the first half of 2019 have a lot of influence and a lot of dependency and, if they are not addressed affect, their volatility tends to increase.

### Phase 5: The actors

It is visible in the quadrants of actors that national HEIs are the only ones that have a high dependence and influence, from which it can be seen that the strongest strategy must be established on this actor.

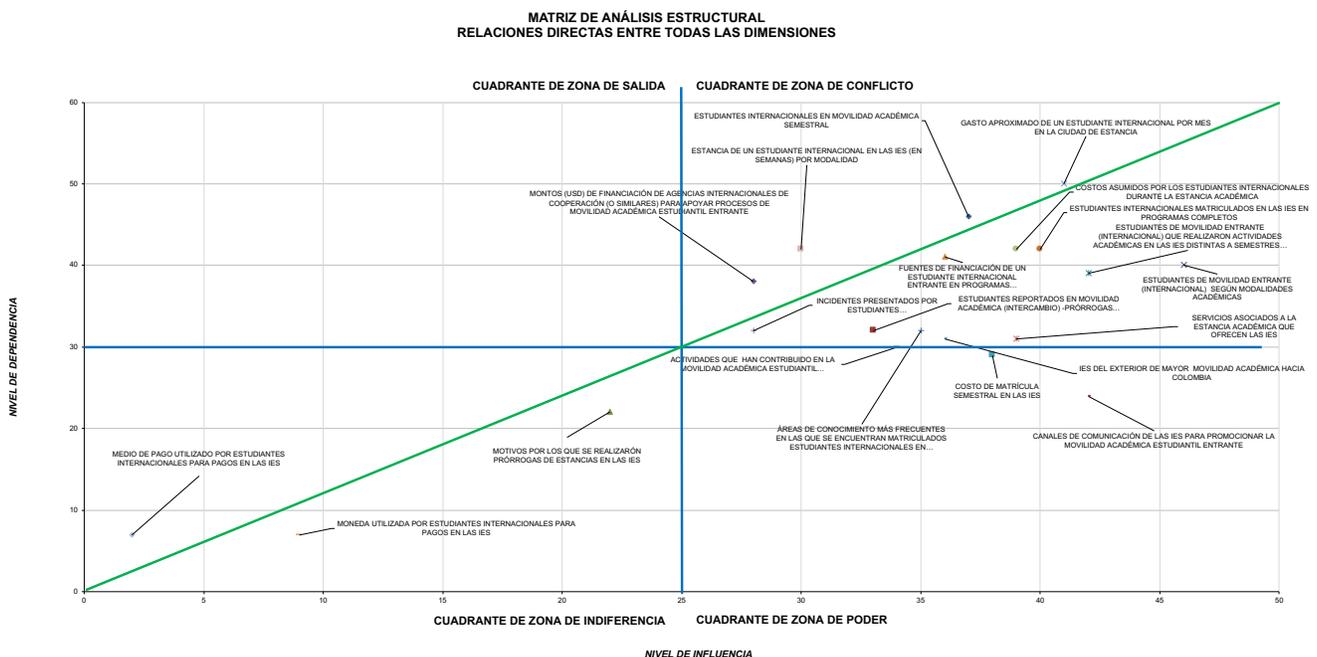
While the starting area tells us about an autonomy on the part of the 'International students' actor, which is within expectations.

**Figure 34 Direct relationships of force between actors**



In turn, the structural matrix (Figure 34) shows the aforementioned dimensions in the conflict zone, along with others, which if not strategically addressed would affect mobility and, consequently, the projection described for 2021, being the dimension of 'mobility in academic semesters' has the highest priority, not only because it is the one that generates the largest number of international students (incoming), but also because of its high capacity to influence other dimensions and allow themselves to be influenced -influence and dependence.

**Figure 35 Structural analysis matrix**



After observing these two results, the opening question to the chapter can be oriented from a) generating actions to maintain the environment and / or b) defining short-term and long-term strategies to approach or overcome the trend. The latter depends on the level of competitiveness and resources that are implemented in the strategy process.

Finally, as this document has a descriptive intention of the mobility of international students (incoming), its contribution, rather than having the pretense of being generalizable, has been oriented to obtain a direction in the trend and a consistent action to achieve said projection. It is convenient to expand these observations in the coming years, in other studies and involve the absent HEIs, in order to continue learning about the behavior of international students, the practices of the HEIs and the opportunities of the context.

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