

## Universidad Iberoamérica 2030: The OEI's commitment to higher education

Universidad Iberoamérica 2030: La apuesta de la OEI para la educación superior

**Anghelo Josué Guerrero-Quiñonez**

anghelo.guerrero@utelvt.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3253-685X>

Technical University Luis Vargas Torres of Esmeraldas, Ecuador

**Olga Quiñónez-Guagua**

olga.quinonez@utelvt.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7415-8466>

Technical University Luis Vargas Torres of Esmeraldas, Ecuador

**Rosa Graciela Barrera-Proaño**

rosa.barrera.proano@utelvt.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2152-866X>

Technical University Luis Vargas Torres of Esmeraldas, Ecuador

**Carlos Iván Rueda-Panchano**

ivan.rueda@utelvt.edu.ec  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5067-6277>

Universidad Técnica Luis Vargas Torres de Esmeraldas, Ecuador

### ABSTRACT

Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 is an initiative of the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) that aims to transform and strengthen higher education in the region. The OEI's commitment is focused on promoting quality, inclusive, relevant higher education that is oriented towards sustainable development. The vision of Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 covers various aspects, such as academic quality, equity and inclusion, internationalization, innovation and the strengthening of teacher training. It also focuses on the incorporation of digital technologies, the promotion of research and the encouragement of the entrepreneurial spirit. The OEI recognizes that higher education plays a crucial role in the human, social and economic development of the region, which is why it seeks to promote significant changes in higher education institutions. It is intended to generate a meeting and collaboration space that trains committed citizens, competent professionals and agents of change in their communities. Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 is conceived as a collaborative project between Ibero-American countries, in which the exchange of experiences and cooperation is promoted. It seeks to take advantage of the opportunities offered by new technologies and innovative pedagogical approaches to improve the quality of education and expand access to it. It is concluded that the Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 represents an ambitious and transformative vision of the OEI to strengthen higher education in Ibero-America. Through this commitment, it seeks to promote an inclusive, relevant and quality education that prepares students to face the challenges of the 21st century and contribute to the sustainable development of the region.

**Keywords:** higher education, human development, OEI, academic quality, equity, inclusion.

### RESUMEN

La Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 es una iniciativa de la Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (OEI) que tiene como objetivo transformar y fortalecer la educación superior en la región. La apuesta de la OEI se centra en promover una educación superior de calidad, inclusiva, pertinente y orientada al desarrollo sostenible. La visión de la Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 abarca diversos aspectos, como la calidad académica, la equidad y la inclusión, la internacionalización, la innovación y el fortalecimiento de la formación docente. También se enfoca en la incorporación de tecnologías digitales, la promoción de la investigación y el fomento del espíritu emprendedor. La OEI reconoce que la educación superior desempeña un papel crucial en el desarrollo humano, social y económico de la región, por lo que se busca impulsar cambios significativos en las instituciones de educación superior. Se pretende generar un espacio de encuentro y colaboración que forme ciudadanos comprometidos, profesionales competentes y agentes de cambio en sus comunidades. La Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 se plantea como un proyecto colaborativo entre los países iberoamericanos, en el que se promueve el intercambio de experiencias y la cooperación. Se busca aprovechar las oportunidades que brindan las nuevas tecnologías y los enfoques pedagógicos innovadores para mejorar la calidad de la educación y ampliar el acceso a ella. Se concluye que la Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 representa una visión ambiciosa y transformadora de la OEI para fortalecer la educación superior en Iberoamérica. A través de esta apuesta, se busca impulsar una educación inclusiva, pertinente y de calidad, que prepare a los estudiantes para enfrentar los desafíos del siglo XXI y contribuir al desarrollo sostenible de la región.

**Palabras clave:** educación superior, desarrollo humano, OEI, calidad académica, equidad, inclusión.

### INTRODUCTION

Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 represents a significant commitment of the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) in the field of higher education. Aware of the challenges and opportunities that the 21st century presents, the OEI has outlined an ambitious and transformative vision that seeks to strengthen and transform Ibero-American universities by the year 2030.

This vision is based on the conviction that higher education plays a fundamental role in the human, social and economic development of the Ibero-American region. Therefore, the Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 raises the need for a quality, inclusive, relevant higher education oriented towards sustainable development.

In this introduction, we will explore the main pillars of Universidad Iberoamérica 2030, highlighting the objectives and key areas on which this OEI commitment is focused. From academic quality to inclusion and equity, through internationalization and innovation, the areas of action that make up this vision will be examined.

Likewise, the importance of teacher training, the incorporation of new technologies and pedagogical methodologies, as well as the promotion of research and entrepreneurship will be addressed. All this with the aim of promoting the transformation and strengthening of higher education institutions in Latin America.

As we move towards the year 2030, the Universidad Iberoamérica envisions itself as a space for meeting, collaboration and academic excellence. It is sought that Ibero-American universities train committed citizens, competent professionals and generators of positive impact in their communities and in the world.

In the following analysis, we will explore in detail the pillars and actions proposed by the OEI at Universidad Iberoamérica 2030, highlighting their importance and the impact that is expected to be achieved in higher education in the Ibero-American region.

### **Iberoamerican University 2030**

Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 is a vision or proposal that seeks to transform and strengthen Ibero-American universities by the year 2030, with the aim of facing the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities that arise in the 21st century. This vision is based on the need for a quality, inclusive, relevant, and sustainable development-oriented higher education in the Ibero-American region.

Some of the key elements of Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 may include:

**Academic quality:** The vision seeks to promote academic excellence in universities, fostering high-level research, the training of highly competent professionals, and the generation of relevant knowledge for the development of the region.

**Internationalization:** It seeks to promote the internationalization of Ibero-American universities, promoting collaboration and academic exchange between institutions from different countries. This includes student and faculty mobility, research cooperation, and academic networking.

**Innovation and entrepreneurship:** Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 promotes the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in universities, fostering the transfer of knowledge to society and the promotion of entrepreneurial initiatives that contribute to economic and social development.

**Inclusion and equity:** The vision is oriented towards inclusive and equitable higher education, promoting access and permanence for students from various sectors of society, regardless of their socioeconomic origin, gender, ethnicity or other characteristics. It seeks to eliminate the barriers that limit the participation and academic success of historically marginalized groups.

**Sustainable development:** Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 recognizes the importance of addressing the environmental, social, and economic challenges of the 21st century. It is sought that universities assume a commitment to sustainability, promoting research and training on issues related to sustainable development, social responsibility and ethics.

It is important to highlight that the Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 can be a vision shared by different actors, such as governments, universities, international organizations and society in general. Its implementation implies collaborative work and a profound transformation in higher education in the Ibero-American region, with the aim of training committed citizens, competent professionals and generators of positive impact in their communities and in the world.

### **The bets of the OEI for education**

The Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) is an institution whose objective is to promote cooperation and the development of education, science and culture in Ibero-American countries. Among the OEI's commitments to education, the following stand out:

**Educational quality:** The OEI is committed to improving the quality of education in Latin America. This implies promoting quality standards and criteria, strengthening teacher training and updating, promoting educational research and developing quality educational programs and resources.

**Equity and inclusion:** The OEI works to guarantee inclusive and equitable education in the region. This implies promoting access to quality education for all citizens, regardless of their socioeconomic origin, gender, ethnicity or disability. The OEI promotes strategies and policies that reduce educational gaps and favor equal opportunities.

**Teacher training:** The OEI is committed to strengthening the initial and continuous training of teachers. This includes promoting teacher training and updating programs, fostering the exchange of good practices and experiences between

teachers from different countries, and supporting the professionalization of the teaching career.

**Educational innovation:** The OEI promotes innovation in education, promoting the incorporation of new technologies and pedagogical methodologies in the teaching and learning processes. It seeks to promote the use of digital tools, distance education, project-based learning and other innovative strategies that improve the quality and relevance of education.

**Education for sustainable development:** The OEI is committed to integrating education in sustainable development in the educational systems of the region. The incorporation of contents and approaches related to environmental, social and economic sustainability in the curricula is promoted, as well as the training of conscious citizens committed to caring for the environment and building more just and equitable societies.

These commitments of the OEI reflect its commitment to improving education in Latin America and its recognition of education as a fundamental pillar for the human, social and economic development of the region.

### **Latin American Virtual Education**

Virtual education in Latin America has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by technological advances and the need to adapt to the demands and challenges of the 21st century. Virtual education offers new opportunities to access higher and continuing education, breaking geographical and temporal barriers.

In Ibero-America, virtual education has been approached from a collaborative and cooperative perspective among the countries of the region. Organizations such as the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), the Ibero-American Virtual University (UVI), the Ibero-American Consortium for Education in Science and Technology (ISTEC) and other institutions have promoted collaboration and the exchange of experiences in the field of virtual education (Casas, et al., 2020).

Virtual education in Latin America covers different educational levels, from basic education to higher education and professional training. Online platforms and programs have been developed that offer courses, undergraduate and postgraduate programs, and training in various areas of knowledge (Mora, 2020).

One of the main benefits of virtual education in Latin America is its ability to reach a greater number of people, especially those who face difficulties in accessing traditional education. Virtual education provides flexibility, allowing students to tailor their learning to their individual schedules and needs.

In addition, virtual education in Latin America has promoted the internationalization of education, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and collaboration between students and academics from different countries. This has enriched cultural diversity and promoted intercultural dialogue in virtual learning environments (López, & Rodríguez, 2020).

However, there are also challenges in the implementation of virtual education in Latin America. It is necessary to address the digital divide and guarantee equitable access to technology and connectivity throughout the region. In addition, a solid teacher training in the design and delivery of virtual courses is required, as well as the effective evaluation of learning in virtual environments (Henríquez, & Díaz, 2020).

In conclusion, virtual education in Ibero-America has become an important tool to democratize access to education, promote internationalization and promote collaboration between countries in the region. As we move into the future, virtual education is expected to continue to evolve and play an even more important role in the transformation of education systems in Latin America.

### **Mobility promotion platform**

There are various platforms and programs that promote mobility in different areas, such as student, academic, professional and cultural mobility. Next, I will mention some of the best known and used platforms internationally:

**Erasmus+:** It is a European Union program that promotes the mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff in the field of higher education. It allows participants to carry out exchanges and stays in educational institutions in different European countries.

**Fulbright:** It is an educational and cultural exchange program managed by the United States government. It offers scholarships for students, professors and researchers from different countries to carry out academic and research stays in US institutions and vice versa.

**Santander Universities:** It is a program promoted by the Santander Group that promotes student and academic mobility in various countries. Through this program, scholarships and financial aid are offered to carry out exchanges, stays and research projects at universities around the world.

**DAAD:** The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is an organization that promotes academic mobility in

Germany. It offers scholarships and exchange programs for international students, researchers and academics who wish to carry out studies or research in German institutions.

National Student Mobility Program (PRONAME): It is a program promoted by the Mexican government that seeks to promote student mobility nationally and internationally. It provides economic support and facilitates the exchange of students between Mexican educational institutions.

These are just some of the most prominent platforms and programs internationally. It should be noted that each country or region may have its own mobility platforms and programs, so it is important to investigate and consult the options available in each specific case.

### **University virtual mobility towards 2030**

Virtual university mobility towards 2030 is an emerging trend in the educational field, which is expected to play an increasingly relevant role in the higher education landscape. As digital technologies continue to advance and become more accessible, virtual mobility offers new opportunities for students, scholars, and researchers to participate in international programs without the need to physically travel.

Some of the perspectives and trends that can be expected for virtual university mobility by 2030 are the following:

**Greater accessibility:** Virtual mobility makes it possible to overcome the geographical and economic barriers that limit participation in exchange programs. Technological advances and growing global connectivity will facilitate access to virtual mobility programs for a greater number of students and academics.

**Focus on quality:** As virtual mobility expands, it will be essential to ensure the quality of virtual programs and experiences. Educational institutions must guarantee that virtual mobility programs offer quality education, with adequate resources, meaningful interaction and rigorous evaluations.

**International collaboration:** Virtual mobility will allow greater collaboration between educational institutions from different countries. Virtual mobility programs may facilitate the formation of international collaboration networks, promoting joint research, academic cooperation and the exchange of knowledge in a virtual environment.

**Intercultural experiences:** Although virtual mobility does not imply direct immersion in a new cultural environment, it is expected that the programs include activities and experiences that promote interculturality and global understanding. Educational institutions can incorporate virtual activities, such as collaborative projects, international conferences and intercultural tutorials, to enrich the experience of the participants.

**Curriculum adaptation:** Virtual mobility will require curricula adaptation to take full advantage of online learning opportunities. Educational institutions should develop flexible and modular study programs that allow students to combine virtual courses from different institutions and countries, and obtain academic recognition for their achievements.

It is important to highlight that virtual mobility is not intended to completely replace physical mobility, but to complement it and expand internationalization opportunities in higher education. Both forms of mobility can coexist and benefit each other, providing students and scholars with a broader range of options to enrich their educational and professional experience.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The most important conclusions of the Universidad Iberoamérica 2030: The OEI commitment to higher education are the following:

**Transformation and strengthening:** Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 represents a vision of transformation and strengthening of higher education in the region. The importance of adapting to the challenges of the 21st century and promoting quality, inclusive, relevant education geared towards sustainable development is recognized.

**Collaboration and cooperation:** The initiative is based on collaboration and cooperation between Ibero-American countries. The OEI promotes the exchange of experiences, joint work and cooperation between higher education institutions to achieve the proposed objectives.

**Academic quality:** Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 seeks to improve the academic quality of higher education institutions. The importance of having rigorous teaching and learning programs and processes is emphasized, as well as the promotion of research and innovation.

**Inclusion and equity:** The initiative aims to promote inclusion and equity in higher education. It seeks to guarantee

access to education for all, regardless of their socioeconomic origin, gender, geographic location or other conditions.

**Internationalization:** Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 promotes the internationalization of higher education. Collaboration and academic exchange between institutions from different countries is promoted, which enriches cultural diversity and strengthens regional cooperation.

**Innovation and technology:** The initiative recognizes the critical role of innovation and technology in higher education. It seeks to incorporate new technologies and innovative pedagogical approaches to improve the quality of teaching and learning, as well as to expand access to education.

In conclusion, Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 represents an ambitious and transformative commitment by the OEI to strengthen higher education in the region. Through collaboration, academic quality, inclusion, internationalization, innovation and technology, it seeks to improve higher education and prepare students to face the challenges of the 21st century.

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