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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Background Guide 2022

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2022 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). This year's staff are: Directors Karla Paola Chavez (Conference A) and Tyler Goudal (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Ruth Spickerman (Conference A) and Crege La Ronde (Conference B). Paola holds a Bachelor of International Relations and is currently pursuing a Masters focused on Sustainable Development. Tyler is an Information Analyst with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. He holds a Master of Arts in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University. Ruth studied Molecular Biology at Westphalian University. Crege recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Midwestern State University.

The topics under discussion for the ECLAC are:

1. Implementation of SDG 7 in Latin America and the Caribbean
2. Increasing Access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training

ECLAC is an important regional organization within the UN system, and it plays a crucial role in advancing regional cooperation and growth by incorporating social and economic policies into its core objectives. It is one of five regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and its significant work specifically focuses on development within the ECLAC region. ECLAC is also dedicated to promoting equality and sustainability to ensure the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2022 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers](#) website.

Two resources, available to download from the [NMUN website](#), serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions:

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Department, Lauren Kiser (Conference A) and Eileen Austin (Conference B), at usg.ecosoc@nmun.org

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A

Paola Chávez, *Director*

Ruth Spickerman, *Assistant Director*

Conference B

Tyler Goudal, *Director*

Crege La Ronde, *Assistant Director*

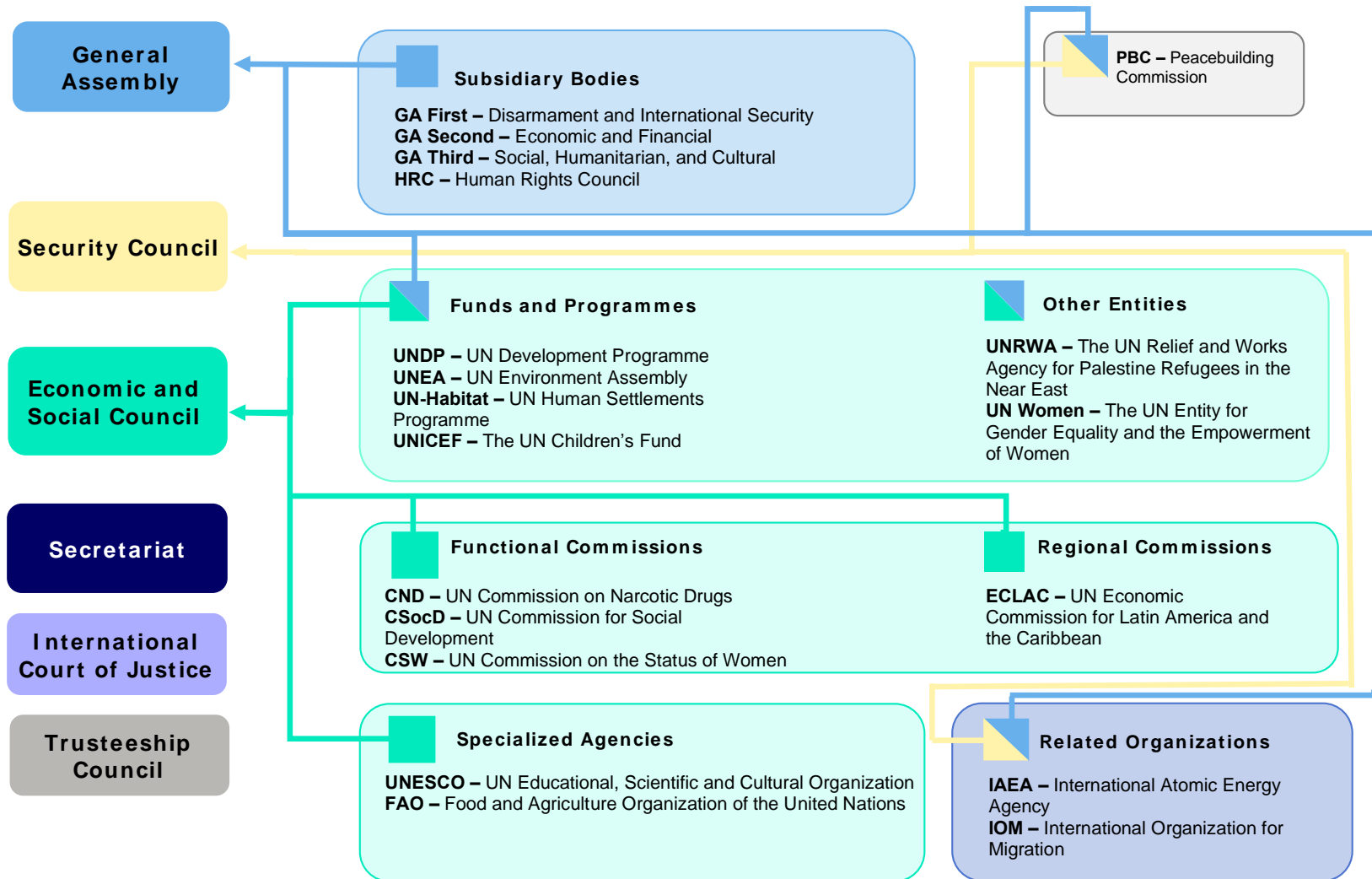


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United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.



Committee Overview

“Seventy years after its founding, ECLAC continues to be where it has always been — on the frontlines pushing for a fair globalization by producing evidence-based policies, technical analysis and knowledge to help forge structural progressive economic transformation.”¹

Introduction

In 1948, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), also known by its Spanish acronym CEPAL, through ECOSOC resolution 106(VI) on *Report of the ad hoc Committee on the proposal for an Economic Commission for Latin America*.² By 1984, through ECOSOC resolution 1984/67 on *Composition, terms of reference and programme of work of the Economic Commission for Latin America*, the Commission expanded its scope to incorporate other former European colonies in the region, mainly Caribbean islands.³ As a result, the Commission changed its name to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), keeping its original name in Spanish.⁴ In addition, the Commission’s mandate and activities were altered in 1996 by ECLAC resolution 553(XXVI) on *Reform of the United Nations and Its Impact on ECLAC*, adapting to support development processes in the region and ensuring synergy between its Member States and the United Nations (UN).⁵ This adjustment provides the opportunity to better analyze, strengthen, and coordinate the Commission’s work in the region.⁶

ECLAC is mandated to promote multilateral cooperation and the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).⁷ Although social development was not included within the Commission’s original focus areas, it was later incorporated as one of its top priorities.⁸ Moreover, ECLAC’s purposes have changed over time to match ideological shifts in the global economy, such as in the 1960s where the focus was on enacting reforms to promote industrialization and equality in the region.⁹ Two current key priorities of ECLAC include supporting the region with the global economic crisis, including those caused by inequality and the environmental crisis; and cooperation for the resilient and sustainable recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic in the economic, educational, employment, and social spheres.¹⁰

The headquarters of ECLAC is located in Santiago, Chile and has two sub-regional Headquarters: one in Mexico, as a focal point for Central America; and one in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, to serve the Caribbean islands, Belize, Guyana, and Suriname.¹¹ In addition, it has a liaison office in Washington, D.C., to strengthen the economic ties between LAC, the United States, Canada, and international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.¹²

Governance, Structure, and Membership

ECLAC is governed by the Office of the Executive Secretary, which comprises of the Executive Secretary and a Deputy Executive Secretary, who together provided development guidance to ECLAC Member

¹ UN DGC, *In Cuba, UN Chief Stresses Latin America’s Courageous ‘Development Vision’*, 2018.

² UN ECOSOC, *Report of the ad hoc Committee on the proposal for an Economic Commission for Latin America (E/RES/106(VI))*, 1948, p. 4.

³ UN ECOSOC, *Composition, terms of reference and programme of work of the Economic Commission for Latin America (E/RES/1984/67)*, 1984, p. 18.

⁴ ECLAC, *About ECLAC*.

⁵ ECLAC, *553(XXVI) Reform of the United Nations and Its Impact on ECLAC (E/1996/37)*, 1996.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ ECLAC, *Mandate and Mission*.

⁸ ECLAC, *About ECLAC*.

⁹ Bielschowsky, *Sixty years of ECLAC: structuralism and neo-structuralism*, 2009, p. 172; ECLAC, *History of ECLAC*.

¹⁰ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020, pp. 10-18.

¹¹ ECLAC, *About ECLAC*.

¹² ECLAC, *About the Washington Office*.

States and oversee substantial institutional documents.¹³ It also includes a Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme Analysis, and a Secretary of the Commission.¹⁴ Alicia Bárcena was elected Executive Secretary for a five-year term in 2018.¹⁵ Other key members are Mario Cimoli as the Deputy Executive Secretary, Raúl García-Buchaca as Deputy Executive Secretary for Management and Programme Analysis, and Luis Fidel Yáñez as the Secretary of the Commission.¹⁶ The Secretary-General's bulletin on the "Organization of the Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" describes the Commission's functions and organization, including the tasks to be performed by the Executive Secretary's office.¹⁷ The Executive Secretary's office leads twelve organizational divisions, including the Economic Development Division and the International Trade and Integration Division.¹⁸ Ten of these divisions report directly to the Deputy Executive Secretary and focus on various thematic topics, such as economics, social development, and sustainable development.¹⁹ The other two are responsible for the logistical planning, accountability, and administration of ECLAC's operations and report directly to the Executive Secretary.²⁰

The Commission has the autonomy to establish subsidiary bodies, as it deems necessary, to facilitate the discharge of its functions that will further strengthen the Commission's work, facilitate discussion, and coordination of cooperation between its Member States.²¹ ECLAC has nine subsidiary bodies to oversee public policies and employ experts to reinforce social and economic cooperation, such as the Committee on South-South Cooperation and the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC).²² Furthermore, ECLAC has established observatories to analyze, provide support, promote cooperation, and report on the region's social and economic development.²³ For example, the Regional Observatory on Planning for Development fosters analysis, information, and collective knowledge on planning for development throughout LAC for governments, universities, the corporate sector, and civil society.²⁴

ECLAC membership is open to the UN Member States that have international historical and economic relations with LAC.²⁵ In addition, through the membership application process, the territory may be admitted as an Associate Member of the Commission.²⁶ The Commission has 46 Member States, 33 from LAC and 13 other states from Europe, Asia, and North America, in addition to 14 non-independent territories in the Caribbean as Associate Members.²⁷

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

ECLAC's mandate strives to "[promote] economic and social development through regional and subregional cooperation and integration," and to enhance Member States' economic conditions and international competitiveness.²⁸ The Secretariat implements ECLAC's mandate and objectives by

¹³ ECLAC, *Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary*.

¹⁴ ECLAC, *Office of the Executive Secretary*.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's bulletin: Organization of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ST/SGB/2000/5)*, 2000, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ ECLAC, *Divisions and Units*.

¹⁹ UN Secretary-General, *Secretary-General's bulletin: Organization of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ST/SGB/2000/5)*, 2000, pp. 3-8.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 3-8.

²¹ ECLAC, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015, p. 23.

²² ECLAC, *Subsidiary Bodies and Intergovernmental Meetings*.

²³ ECLAC, *Observatories*.

²⁴ ECLAC, *Regional Observatory on Planning for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

²⁵ ECLAC, *Member States and Associate Members*.

²⁶ ECLAC, *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015, p. 6.

²⁷ ECLAC, *Member States and Associate Members*.

²⁸ ECLAC, *Mandate and Mission*.

organizing the Commission's administrative and substantive activities.²⁹ Furthermore, the Secretariat conducts various administrative, substantive, and research activities, such as investigating the region's economic and technological challenges and developments.³⁰ Such actions include collecting, evaluating, and reporting regional data, coordinating activities with departments and agencies of the UN to avoid duplication, ensuring the exchange of information, and managing technical cooperation between governments and other agencies.³¹ The Commission outlines the scope of work based on procedures and practices regarding program planning, budgetary aspects of programs, monitoring implementation, and evaluations.³²

The Commission develops its strategic framework on a biennial basis and this framework is informed by recent important resolutions by the General Assembly, ECOSOC, and those presented in previous sessions to manifest the priorities for its work in a biennial framework.³³ ECLAC is directly accountable to ECOSOC.³⁴ In addition, the framework outlines objectives for the next two years and oversees program funding and accountability.³⁵ Intergovernmental organizations of the General Assembly, such as the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Fifth Committee, review ECLAC's strategic framework draft before being adopted by the General Assembly on its subsequent session.³⁶

Recent Sessions and Current Priorities

In 2021, the General Assembly reviewed and approved the Commission's Draft Programme of Work of the ECLAC System, which intends to promote LAC's economic, social, and environmental sustainability through international cooperation, applied research, and comparative analysis of development processes.³⁷ The program creates a platform to support Member States further to implement the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)* and the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015)*.³⁸ It recognizes how LAC has worked to develop sustainable integration practices, such as enhancing participation in intermediate value chains and reinforcing production links with other rising economies.³⁹ ECLAC plans to advance on these challenges at regional levels by supporting efforts in different subprograms divided into thematic clusters, such as the first three that focus on economic development, though, developing efficient value chains methods, for instance, proposing adjustments in digital trade, export diversification, and integration of advisory through subject matter experts.⁴⁰ The following two subprograms focus on social development, gender equality, and social integration, proposing activities, such as social studies publications and expert meetings to incentivize dialog and the involvement of social spheres.⁴¹ Subprograms seven and eight seek public management and natural resources, concentrating on proper policy implementation of environmental and climate matters through training, seminars, building capacity in good governance, encouraging biodiversity, food security, and sustainable agriculture.⁴²

Due to the global economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, recovery and rebuilding the economy in the region became a priority for ECLAC.⁴³ The 38th session of the Commission brought attention to global and regional economic crises, the economic gap in the region, the sustainable

²⁹ ECLAC, *Mandate and Mission*.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid *Mission*.

³² ECLAC, *Cycle planning - programme - evaluation*.

³³ ECLAC, *Strategy and Legal Framework*.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ ECLAC, *Draft Programme of Work of the ECLAC System*, 2021, pp. 3-4.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 6-9.

⁴¹ ECLAC, *Draft Programme of Work of the ECLAC System*, 2021, pp. 29-34.

⁴² Ibid, pp. 39-46.

⁴³ ECLAC, *ECLAC's Associate Member Countries Call for Cooperation and Support towards a Resilient COVID-19 Recovery and Readvancing the 2030 Agenda*, 2021.

development drive, recovery, and growth from the pandemic.⁴⁴ During this session, the Commission reviewed the *Report on the activities of the Commission* (2019) and the substantive position document *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability* in October 2020.⁴⁵ The Commission also adopted 14 resolutions in the 38th session, including resolution 739(XXXVIII) on *Women in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2020), which shows concerns of the impact of COVID-19 in the access to education for women and girls in the region, and resolution 750(XXXVIII) on *Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies* (2020), focusing on the cooperation to support the response of COVID-19 in the region.⁴⁶ Similarly, in September 2020, the 28th session of the CDCC discussed the impact and response to the COVID-19 pandemic, financing for development in the region, and promoting cooperation in the Caribbean.⁴⁷ More recently, in March 2021, the fourth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development discussed the COVID-19 challenges for LAC's implementation of the 2030 Agenda, setbacks in the region's economy, primarily on unemployment and the loss of businesses, and the presentation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Gateway.⁴⁸ Consequently, the SDG Gateway serves as a knowledge platform regarding the SDGs and the efforts of the Member States and subregions to achieve the 2030 Agenda.⁴⁹

Other areas of current interest include the *Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development*, which was adopted by ECLAC at the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020.⁵⁰ This Framework seeks to promote efforts to reduce social inequality by incorporating socially inclusive development priorities into national and regional policymaking.⁵¹ The commitments demonstrated on the agenda strive to identify lines of action, consider the region's previous commitments and recent experiences, protect and expand the region's progress in social development, end poverty, and achieve greater social inclusion and equality.⁵² Furthermore, ECLAC and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), formed a strategic partnership in 2003 to increase the region's collective effort through two-year cooperation projects.⁵³ As a result, ECLAC and BMZ created the Inclusive, Sustainable and Smart Cities In The Framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean Programme for 2020 to 2022.⁵⁴ This program seeks to improve the technical and institutional basis of ECLAC's and its Member States to foster sustainable development, paying close attention to the effects of digitalization in the mobility of products, people, and services.⁵⁵ This is known as urban connectivity and has three pillars: (1) city and mobility, endorsing adequate city planning; (2) technology and energy, to reduce CO₂ Emissions and create sustainable solutions for the energy demand; and (3) industrial policy, to foster policies that ensure urban connectivity.⁵⁶ Upcoming events include several technical symposiums to discuss strategies and development models for a sustainable recovery after the pandemic.⁵⁷

⁴⁴ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020.

⁴⁵ ECLAC, *Report on the activities of the Commission*, 2019; ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020.

⁴⁶ ECLAC, *Resolutions Adopted at the Thirty-Eighth Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2020.

⁴⁷ ECLAC, *Twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee*, 2020.

⁴⁸ ECLAC, *Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development 2021 Programme*, 2021.

⁴⁹ ECLAC, *2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵¹ ECLAC, *Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development*, 2020, p. 11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵³ ECLAC, *Cooperation programme ECLAC-BMZ/giz About*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ ECLAC, *Cooperation programme ECLAC-BMZ/giz About*.

⁵⁷ ECLAC, *Events*.

Conclusion

ECLAC is a leader in driving the work needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda in LAC.⁵⁸ With a renewed focus on solving the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic, ECLAC has continued its mandate of supporting regional economic and social growth.⁵⁹ Moreover, the Commission works to estimate theoretical shifts based on evaluations of the consequences of the regional economic trends, adjusting its frameworks to create a greater understanding of their impact, and researching the current regional interests.⁶⁰ Despite the region's many challenges, ECLAC reiterates its commitment to ensuring that its Member States have the tools and strategies they need to pursue effective policymaking equitably and consistently with the 2030 Agenda.⁶¹

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Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean. (n.d.). *2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved 16 June 2021 from: <https://agenda2030lac.org/>

This is one of the most relevant websites of ECLAC. The platform is referred to as the SDG Gateway and was introduced in June 2020 and utilized over the past sessions of the Commission. Delegates can find information regarding the policies and programs developed by Member States to achieve the 2030 Agenda and published documents by the Commission in a centralized way. Delegates will find this website helpful as it easily compiles the region's and Member States' actions of each sustainable goal.

Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean. (n.d.). *Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved 16 June 2021 from: <https://www.cepal.org/en>

This source is the official website of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean. It provides an easy access platform to the information about its mandate, structure, governance, and work, including events briefing, agendas, conclusions, press releases; COVID-19 guidance; stories; videos. In addition, delegates can use this website to understand the Commission's priorities, structure, and lines of work.

Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean. (2015). *Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved 18 June 2021 from: https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/15-01076-rev.9-rules_of_procedure-eclac-web_a.pdf

This resource provides greater depth to the scope of ECLAC's organization, mandate, functions, and procedural norms. Furthermore, it provides a behind-the-scenes view of the work of the Commission. The Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean is a must-have resource for delegates for gaining a core understanding of ECLAC's working processes.

Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean. (2020). *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*. Retrieved 24 June 2021 from: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46228/S2000698_en.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y

This position document gives essential background information on the economy on a global and regional scale. It provides a comprehensive view of the work being developed within the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. Delegates can use this document to familiarize themselves with ECLAC's work during the current and past sessions and its views for future strategies and discussions.

⁵⁸ ECLAC, *The Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and the Regional Follow-up to the 2030 Agenda*.

⁵⁹ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020, pp. 13-17.

⁶⁰ ECLAC, *History of ECLAC*.

⁶¹ ECLAC, *ECLAC Reiterates Commitment to Continue Accompanying the Region's Countries in the Analysis and Proposals for a Way Out of the Emergency and a Transformative Recovery*, 2021; ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020, pp. 10-18.

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1. Implementation of SDG 7 in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in 2015, containing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and providing a vision for a better future.⁶² SDG 7 (“affordable and clean energy”) aims to ensure energy access for everyone and increase the share of renewable energy sources available.⁶³ There are numerous definitions for renewable energy; however, the Sustainable Energy for All initiative defines it as all forms of energy produced from a renewable source sustainably, including solar, wind, ocean, hydropower, biomass, geothermal resources, and biofuels.⁶⁴ Only about a quarter of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) energy is currently produced by renewable sources, half of which are combustible sources like firewood and sugar cane.⁶⁵ To meet the goals of the *Paris Agreement*, LAC needs to drastically reduce CO₂ emissions by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.⁶⁶

In 2019, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reported that 4% of the population in LAC has no access to electricity.⁶⁷ However, in 2020 the International Energy Agency (IEA) published a report stating that LAC had made significant progress towards universal access to electricity to the point that more than 98% of the population has access to electricity.⁶⁸ Data from the World Bank shows that in LAC 99.7% of people in urban areas have access to energy, whereas only 93% have energy access in rural areas.⁶⁹ Haiti, for example, faces a major challenge, where, as of 2019, only 45.4% of the population has access to energy.⁷⁰

The issue of access to energy and the sustainability of the energy sector is interconnected with other areas and other SDGs.⁷¹ One significant example of this is the water, energy, and food nexus, which has been on the international agenda since 2011.⁷² In 2017, the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) published a brochure to foster good practices in the water, energy, and food nexus.⁷³ In LAC, these areas are closely connected, as water is used to generate energy, such as hydropower and cooling thermal power stations, and the extraction of fuels.⁷⁴ The production of food also requires energy and water; however, biofuel production needs crops, and these compete with food crops for land and water, demonstrating the complexities of this issue.⁷⁵

⁶² UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ IEA & The World Bank, *Sustainable Energy for All 2013-2014: Global Tracking Framework*, 2014, p. 194.

⁶⁵ ECLAC, *SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019, p. 1; The World Bank, *Tracking SDG 7 The Energy Progress Report 2020*, 2020, p. 171.

⁶⁶ IDB & DDPLAC, *Getting to Net-Zero Emissions: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean (Executive Summary)*, 2019, p. 8.

⁶⁷ ECLAC, *SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019, p. 1.

⁶⁸ The World Bank, *Tracking SDG 7 The Energy Progress Report 2020*, 2020, p. 4.

⁶⁹ The World Bank, *Access to electricity, urban (% of urban population) - Latin America & Caribbean*, 2021; The World Bank, *Access to electricity, rural (% of rural population) - Latin America & Caribbean*, 2021.

⁷⁰ The World Bank, *Access to electricity (% of population) - Latin America & Caribbean*, Haiti, 2021.

⁷¹ ECLAC, *About ECLAC*.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ UNECE, *Deployment of Renewable Energy: The Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus Approach to Support the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2017.

⁷⁴ Bellfield, H., *Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2015, p. 6.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

International and Regional Framework

The discussion of renewable energy was first brought forwards by the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) adopted in 1992.⁷⁶ It was signed by 197 countries and aimed to prevent dangerous impacts on the climate through humans.⁷⁷ In addition, the UNFCCC established the Conference of the Parties to review the implementation of the Convention.⁷⁸ Later, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) was established in 2009, and within their statute, the contributing states committed to promoting the adaptation of renewable energy while considering energy efficiency and environmental benefits.⁷⁹

In 2000, the General Assembly adopted the *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, resulting in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were eight goals to be achieved by 2015.⁸⁰ In 2012, the General Assembly adopted *The Future We Want*, which recognized energy as a central factor to development, and committed to increasing the access to electricity and the share of renewable energy sources.⁸¹ The resolution laid the groundwork for the development of the SDGs and called for the adaption of the energy sector to counteract climate change.⁸² The document further highlights Small Island Developing States' (SIDS) need for support in achieving higher rates of renewable energy.⁸³ Building upon the MDGs to continue and broaden the work that has been done, in 2015, the General Assembly adopted the *2030 Agenda* containing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which provide the current framework for all of the UN's work.⁸⁴

Adopted in 2015, the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (AAAA) addresses many aspects of financing sustainable development, such as public and private resources, innovation, and the need for public-private partnerships.⁸⁵ Along with many other aspects, Member States to the AAAA emphasized the importance of energy access and infrastructure, and committed to supporting developing countries and SIDS in these areas.⁸⁶ The Agenda puts significant focus on using trade as an engine for development and calls on supporting developing countries to participate in world trade.⁸⁷ In addition, in 2015 the Conference of the Parties adopted the landmark *Paris Agreement*, a legally binding treaty with the main goal of keeping global warming under 2°C, preferably under 1.5°C, compared to pre-industrial levels.⁸⁸ Although the 2030 Agenda does not indicate by how much the share of renewable energy should increase, the goals established in the *Paris Agreement* can only be achieved by significantly increasing energy from sustainable sources.⁸⁹ Like the UNFCCC, the *Paris Agreement* recognizes the responsibility of industrial countries to offer support, and the need of developing countries to receive support, in fighting climate change.⁹⁰ It also highlights the needs of SIDS, of which there are 16 in the Latin American and

⁷⁶ UNCED, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.

⁷⁷ UNCED, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ IRENA, *Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)*, 2009, p. 4.

⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, pp. 24-25.

⁸² UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, pp. 24-25; UN DESA, *United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20*.

⁸³ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 34.

⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁸⁵ UN General Assembly, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*, 2015.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸⁸ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015.

⁸⁹ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015; IRENA, *World Energy Transitions Outlook: 1.5°C Pathway*, 2021, p. 17.

⁹⁰ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015; UNCED, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.

Caribbean region.⁹¹ In order to reach these goals, the global energy generation from renewable sources needs to reach 85% by 2030 and 90% by 2050.⁹²

Role of the International System

In its most recent session in 2020, ECLAC addressed different scenarios to increase the share of renewable energy sources and how the region can react to the COVID-19 pandemic and recover faster.⁹³ ECLAC has established the *Big Push for Sustainability* (2020) approach to support countries in sustainable development efforts by coordinating policies in that field.⁹⁴ Guided by this approach, ECLAC established the Energy Big Push program to promote a sustainable energy transition in Brazil.⁹⁵ ECLAC is also coordinating plans for a regional energy integration between Mexico and four Central American countries as part of a *Comprehensive Development Plan* (2021).⁹⁶ Climate change strongly affects developing states, especially SIDS, and has social and environmental consequences, such as rising sea levels, food insecurity, and migration.⁹⁷ In 2020, ECLAC predicted that climate change would cost the region 2% of its gross domestic product in the second half of the twenty-first century.⁹⁸ Implementing SDG 7 therefore reduces inequalities, fights the climate crisis, and offers an opportunity to create jobs and foster economic development in the region.⁹⁹

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) provides funding and assistance for countries in LAC to support sustainable development in multiple financial and technical aspects.¹⁰⁰ For example, in 2020, IDB granted loans to countries to repair damage to the electricity infrastructure by Hurricane Dorian and to promote electromobility such as electric cars or e-bikes.¹⁰¹ In addition, in 2020, IDB provided \$280 million for a project to support the energy transition in Ecuador, addressing several aspects that help achieve SDG 7, including a plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Ecuador and modernizing the energy sector reliably.¹⁰²

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is an intergovernmental organization that encourages and supports governments to transition to renewable energy sources.¹⁰³ IRENA provides data and studies on renewable energy and facilitates planning for regional energy concepts.¹⁰⁴ For example, in 2021, IRENA published the *Antigua and Barbuda: Renewable Energy Roadmap*, which supports the goal of Antigua and Barbuda to generate 100% of their energy from renewable sources by 2030.¹⁰⁵ Within this roadmap, IRENA analyses different scenarios and gives recommendations for a successful energy transition.¹⁰⁶

⁹¹ COP 21, *Paris Agreement*, 2015; United Nations, *List of SIDS*.

⁹² UNFCCC, *Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week 2021: Output Report*, 2021, p. 12.

⁹³ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020.

⁹⁴ ECLAC, *A big push for sustainability in Brazil's energy sector Input and evidence for policy coordination*, 2020, p. 21.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁹⁶ ECLAC, *Latin America and the Caribbean Has All the Right Conditions to Become a Renewable Energy Hub with Great Potential in Green Hydrogen*, 2021.

⁹⁷ Verner, *Social Implications of Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2011.

⁹⁸ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020, p. 60.

⁹⁹ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 81.

¹⁰⁰ IDB, *About us*, 2021.

¹⁰¹ IDB, *Inter-American Development Bank Annual Report 2020: The Year in Review*, 2021, p. 18; Infineon Technologies AG, *What you need to know about electromobility*, 2021.

¹⁰² IDB, *Support for the Transition of the Energy Matrix in Ecuador II*.

¹⁰³ IRENA, *About IRENA*, 2020.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ IRENA, *Antigua and Barbuda: Renewable Energy Roadmap*, 2021, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

The International Energy Agency (IEA) was created in 1974 and provides data, recommendations, and solutions for countries in the energy sector.¹⁰⁷ In recent years IEA has increased the focus on renewable and clean energy.¹⁰⁸ For example, IEA established the Technology Collaboration Program to enable experts from different organizations to research and develop a wide range of energy technologies, including many clean and sustainable technologies.¹⁰⁹ In 2020, the IEA hosted a ministerial roundtable with the Latin American Energy Organization, where ministers from several countries in LAC discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the energy sector and different views on how to increase clean and renewable energy production.¹¹⁰

The High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) was mandated in 2012, by the General Assembly.¹¹¹ HLPF reviews the progress towards the SDGs and offers guidance for sustainable development.¹¹² In 2018, the HLPF called upon all stakeholders to work for better access to energy and the acceleration of implementing renewable energy technology and committed to strengthening the international cooperation to reach SDG 7.¹¹³

Sustainable Energy Solutions to Reduce CO₂ Emissions

In LAC, 74% of energy is produced by fossil fuels.¹¹⁴ In electricity, more than half of the energy is produced by renewable energy, while in transportation, more than 90% of the energy comes from fossil fuels.¹¹⁵ A large part of the energy is generated by firewood and sugar cane, which regrow fast but still emit CO₂.¹¹⁶

Hydropower is one of the major energy generators in LAC.¹¹⁷ In their 2016 *Renewable Market Analysis: Latin America*, IRENA stated the region still has more potential in hydropower.¹¹⁸ LAC holds 20% of the world's hydropower capacity but has only developed 23% of its potential in that sector.¹¹⁹ However, hydropower alone is not a reliable and resilient solution for energy generation as it is highly influenced by climate.¹²⁰ For example, due to the climate crisis, LAC will likely experience droughts more often, which will affect the energy generation by hydropower.¹²¹ Therefore, hydropower plants must become more climate-resilient by building structures that can tolerate a range of temperatures and big floods.¹²² Climate-resilient hydropower can provide reliable energy and possibly offer stability in water management when utilizing dams and reservoirs, which can act as water storage.¹²³ This can stabilize the water supply during the increasing weather fluctuations due to the climate crisis.¹²⁴

¹⁰⁷ IEA, *History*, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ IEA, *Mission the IEA works with governments and industry to shape a secure and sustainable energy future for all*, 2020.

¹⁰⁹ IEA, *Technology collaboration Advancing the research, development and commercialisation of energy technologies*, 2021.

¹¹⁰ IEA & OLADE, *IEA-OLADE Ministerial Roundtable "Insights for defining Latin America's regional energy agenda in a Post-Covid-19 era"*, 2020.

¹¹¹ UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 16.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹³ UN ECOSOC, *Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" (E/HLS/2018/1)*, 2018, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ ECLAC, *Quadrennial report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019, p. 170.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹¹⁸ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 114.

¹¹⁹ Development Bank of Latin America, *In Latin America, water should be more precious than gold*, 2016.

¹²⁰ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 117.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹²² International Hydropower Association, *Hydropower Sustainability Guidelines*, 2020, p. 182.

¹²³ IEA, *Climate Impacts on Latin American Hydropower*, 2021, p. 6.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

In recent years investment in solar and wind energy has increased in LAC.¹²⁵ However, in 2013, less than 1% of the energy in the region was generated by wind or solar sources.¹²⁶ Data from Uruguay has shown, that hydropower cannot meet the energy demand, especially during the summer, while more solar energy can be generated during these months.¹²⁷ Countries like Brazil and Uruguay have increased their solar and wind energy capacity in recent years to become less dependent on hydropower since droughts have led to energy shortages or the need to depend on oil-fired backup generation.¹²⁸ IRENA stated in 2016 that the capacity in wind energy could be increased significantly in LAC as it is a desirable region for renewable energy investment.¹²⁹

While electricity production is a significant factor in CO₂ emissions burning coal, oil, and gas to produce electricity is essential to transition fuels used in transportation and other sectors to reduce CO₂ emissions, and achieve climate goals.¹³⁰ In 2020, IEA reported a significant decrease in the demand for fossil fuels due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while the demand for renewable energy has increased mostly due to increased installment and priority dispatch.¹³¹ The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a decrease in CO₂ emissions due to multiple factors, and it will be vital that the recovery of the pandemic is dedicated to a clean energy transition.¹³² The transport sector is a major contributor to CO₂ emissions, and the electrification of transport will be vital to reducing these emissions.¹³³ ECLAC reported that policy changes, which obligate the marketing of electric vehicles and an increase in the price of combustion engines, can significantly increase the share of electric vehicles in the following years.¹³⁴ Other means to reduce the usage of fossil fuels are increasing energy efficiency, fostering the development of bioenergy and natural gas technology, scaling up the low-carbon liquids and gases such as hydrogen.¹³⁵ Natural gas is the cleanest fossil fuel and can be a solution in areas where power supply depends on gas-fired power plants and where the supply from clean energy is not stable and reliable yet.¹³⁶

As of 2018, only 15% of the geothermal potential in LAC has been used, and only eight countries have installed geothermal power capacity.¹³⁷ For instance, Mexico has installed a geothermal capacity of 957 MW, the biggest in the region.¹³⁸ One issue that arises with the use of geothermal potential has been lacking standards and guidelines regarding geothermal energy.¹³⁹ To address this issue, the UNECE published the *United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009* (2010), followed by a specification for renewable energy sources, including geothermal energy, in 2016.¹⁴⁰ The framework's guidelines and specifications provide those who use them with comparable data and offer investors and policymakers a better opportunity to assess the potential for

¹²⁵ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 11.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹²⁸ Atxalandabaso, *Renewable energy in Latin America: 5 renewable energy trends emerging from south of Rio Grande*, *Rated Power*, 2021.

¹²⁹ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 60; Alves, *Renewable energy in Latin America - statistics & facts*, *Statistica*, 2021.

¹³⁰ IEA, *Financing clean energy transitions in emerging and developing economies*, 2021, p. 14.

¹³¹ International Energy Agency, *Global Energy Review 2020 The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on global energy demand and CO₂ emissions*, 2020, p. 3.

¹³² International Energy Agency, *Global Energy Review 2020 The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on global energy demand and CO₂ emissions*, 2020, p. 4.

¹³³ ECLAC, *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*, 2020, p. 142.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹³⁵ IEA, *Financing clean energy transitions in emerging and developing economies*, 2021, p. 14.

¹³⁶ IEA, *Gas*, 2020.

¹³⁷ The World Bank, *Opportunities and Challenges for Scaling Up Geothermal Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2018, p. ix.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³⁹ IRENA & IGA, *United Nations Framework Classification for Geothermal Energy: Pilot applications in the Caribbean, Ethiopia and Indonesia*, 2021, p. 6.

¹⁴⁰ UN ECE, *United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009*, 2010.

geothermal energy in any region.¹⁴¹ Geothermal energy is exciting to the Caribbean states as they are close to volcanos, which will provide the opportunity to no longer depend on oil imports and the varying oil prices.¹⁴² However, geothermal energy needs large investments and resilient infrastructure, especially in the Caribbean, where destruction by hurricanes is common.¹⁴³ The IDB published a report which analyzed geothermal potential in five Caribbean states and concluded that these countries could meet their energy demand and possibly export energy, which would lower the energy price significantly and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁴⁴ LAC can produce a large part of their energy with hydropower, but the region needs to diversify its energy mix to become more resilient to climate events and not rely heavily on fossil fuels for back-up energy generation.¹⁴⁵

Financing for the Energy Transition

Financing for development is a process that supports the outcomes of all major UN conferences and summits, including the SDGs.¹⁴⁶ This process is guided by major frameworks like the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* and includes foreign direct investment (FDI), public resources, and international trade.¹⁴⁷

In order to reach the goal to limit the rise of the global temperature to 1.5°C or less, IRENA stated that the annual investment in renewable energy in LAC would have to double by 2050.¹⁴⁸ However, energy is the most attractive sector for FDI in LAC and accounted for 78% of cross-border mergers and acquisitions in 2019.¹⁴⁹ A report by ECLAC shows that the investment projects in renewable energy have significantly increased since 2005, and the investment in coal, oil, and gas has decreased.¹⁵⁰ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FDI in LAC decreased by 57% from 2019 to 2020.¹⁵¹ However, in that time, FDI in renewable energy in the region has increased compared to the years prior, which shows that the sector is very attractive for foreign investors.¹⁵² When recovering from the pandemic, advanced economies can invest in infrastructure and renewable energy solutions, which will generate new financial flows into these sectors.¹⁵³ At the same time, developing countries often need to use their limited financial resources to address economic and social emergencies, not to invest in renewable energy.¹⁵⁴

Green bonds are one way of providing funds for renewable energy projects.¹⁵⁵ With a green bond, the proceeds are invested in green projects like renewable energy.¹⁵⁶ Green bonds need to be evaluated by a third party to verify the use of the proceeds.¹⁵⁷ In 2020, 24 green bonds were issued in LAC for a total amount of over \$13.4 billion, which proceeds will partially be used to foster renewable energy in the region.¹⁵⁸ One issue with green bonds is that taxation varies and can influence an investor's choice.¹⁵⁹

¹⁴¹ IRENA & IGA, *United Nations Framework Classification for Geothermal Energy: Pilot applications in the Caribbean, Ethiopia and Indonesia*, 2021, p. 6.

¹⁴² Timperley, *Why geothermal could be key to clean energy security in the Caribbean*, *Energy Monitor*, 2020.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 2020.

¹⁴⁴ Gischler et al., *Unlocking Geothermal Power: How the Eastern Caribbean could become a geothermal powerhouse*, 2017, p. 75.

¹⁴⁵ Atxalandabaso, *Renewable energy in Latin America: 5 renewable energy trends emerging from south of Rio Grande*, *Rated Power*, 2021.

¹⁴⁶ UN DESA, *What is Financing for Sustainable Development?*

¹⁴⁷ UNDESA, *What is Financing for Sustainable Development?*

¹⁴⁸ IRENA & CPI, *Global Landscape of Renewable Energy Finance*, 2020, p. 52.

¹⁴⁹ ECLAC, *Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2020, p. 35.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁵⁵ IRENA, *Renewable energy finance: Green Bonds (Renewable Energy Finance Brief 03, January 2020)*, 2020, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ UNDP, *Green Bonds*, 2016, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ ECLAC, *Capital flows to Latin America and the Caribbean: 2020 year-in-review in times of COVID-19*, 2021, p. 29.

¹⁵⁹ UNDP, *Green Bonds*, 2016, p. 3.

Furthermore, tax incentives for green bonds can lead to more investors buying green bonds, and there is a lack of transparency and reporting in the field.¹⁶⁰ A consensus and more regulations in these areas are needed to foster investment in green bonds.¹⁶¹

The transition to clean energy solutions increases the demand for infrastructure resources and creates challenges that policymakers and finance leaders must address.¹⁶² The World Energy Council expressed concern that the challenges of the existing infrastructure are not addressed when considering the energy transition.¹⁶³ Globally, a large part of the existing infrastructure will have to be decommissioned while some of it can be repurposed, and this transition will be most cost-effective when it happens early on and involves all stakeholders.¹⁶⁴

Conclusion

The work on providing energy access to everyone has progressed significantly in LAC.¹⁶⁵ However, investment in clean energy solutions still lacks in the region.¹⁶⁶ One reason could be that fossil fuel still receives significantly more funds than renewable energy.¹⁶⁷ Large investments are still needed to achieve the international community goals in the *Paris Agreement* and the SDGs.¹⁶⁸ The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted many different areas, including the energy sector.¹⁶⁹ Despite the challenges recovering from the pandemic presents, there is an opportunity to shape the recovery towards sustainability.¹⁷⁰ LAC holds great potential in different areas of clean energy generation, which offers opportunities to reduce CO₂ emissions significantly.¹⁷¹ Clean energy has many different aspects, and all stakeholders need to consider all facets to provide suitable and sustainable solutions.¹⁷²

Further Research

When preparing for this topic, delegates should consider: how can Member States, ECLAC, and other entities work together towards SDG 7? What can Member States do to foster investments in renewable energy and energy infrastructure? How can ECLAC help the region recover from the COVID-19 pandemic regarding energy? What measures can be taken to make energy production more resilient in the face of the climate crisis? How can the region diversify their energy production?

Annotated Bibliography

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The Energy Big Push project is an important project of ECLAC and other organizations addressing the energy transition in Brazil. In this document, the project is analyzed and

¹⁶⁰ UNDP, *Green Bonds*, 2016, p. 3.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶² World Energy Council, *The road to resilience: Financing resilient energy infrastructure*, 2016, p. 5.

¹⁶³ World Energy Council, *Innovation Insights Brief - Energy Infrastructure: Affordability Enabler or Decarbonisation Constraint?*, 2019, p. 5.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

¹⁶⁵ The World Bank, *Tracking SDG 7 The Energy Progress Report 2020*, 2020, p. 4.

¹⁶⁶ IRENA & CPI, *Global Landscape of Renewable Energy Finance*, 2020, p. 52.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁶⁹ International Energy Agency, *Global Energy Review 2020 The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on global energy demand and CO₂ emissions*, 2020, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ IEA, *Sustainable Recovery*, 2020, p. 14.

¹⁷¹ IRENA, *Renewable Energy Market Analysis: Latin America*, 2016, p. 114; The World Bank, *Opportunities and Challenges for Scaling Up Geothermal Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2018, p. ix.

¹⁷² World Energy Council, *Innovation Insights Brief - Energy Infrastructure: Affordability Enabler or Decarbonisation Constraint?*, 2019, p. 5; ECLAC, *About ECLAC*.

discussed. Delegates benefit from this source by gaining insight into one of the past projects of ECLAC and possible ways to implement similar projects in the region.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. (2020). *Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability*. Retrieved 28 July 2021 from: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46228/4/S2000698_en.pdf

The outcome document of the latest ECLAC session discusses the energy transition at multiple points throughout the document and provides the reader with the current priorities and issues ECLAC has. In addition, the document provides a detailed insight into the energy sector's current situation in Latin America and the Caribbean and discusses different scenarios to integrate renewable energy sources in the region. Delegates will find this source useful when researching the situation of renewable energy in Latin America and the Caribbean and the current work of ECLAC.

International Energy Agency. (2020). *Global Energy Review 2020 The impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on global energy demand and CO₂ emissions*. Retrieved 22 June 2021 from: https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/7e802f6a-0b30-4714-abb1-46f21a7a9530/Global_Energy_Review_2020.pdf

This report reviews the effects the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic had on the international energy demand. It provides global data on different energy sources and offers comparisons between renewable and fossil energy sources. Delegates will be able to compare energy demands and CO₂ emissions throughout different sectors and are offered the historical context of other instances which affected the energy demand in the past.

International Energy Agency. (2021). *Climate Impacts on Latin American Hydropower*. Retrieved 31 July 2021 from: https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/8fa86b9d-470c-41a6-982e-70acd3fbdda4/ClimateImpactsonLatinAmericanHydropower_WEB.pdf

This report discusses the impact climate change will have on hydropower in Latin America. It considers three different scenarios of increasing global temperature and their effects. It further offers policy recommendations from the IEA. Delegates will find this source helpful when considering the impact climate change has in this sector.

International Energy Agency. (2021). *Financing clean energy transitions in emerging and developing economies*. Retrieved 1 August 2021 from: <https://www.iea.org/reports/financing-clean-energy-transitions-in-emerging-and-developing-economies>

IEA provides a thorough overview of financing clean and renewable energy solutions. The report discusses different opportunities to foster financing in developing economies and different aspects that need to be considered. This document will be helpful when considering how to finance clean energy and offers a great starting point for further research.

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The World Energy Council analyzed how the energy infrastructure correlates with the energy transition. This Innovation Insights Brief discusses challenges and solutions of adapting energy infrastructure regarding the energy transition. The brief discusses different scenarios and action plans for adapting infrastructure. This will be helpful for delegates when considering the broader impact of implementing clean energy solutions while finding cost-efficient solutions.

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2. Increasing Access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines technical and vocational education as: “all forms and levels of the educational process involving, in addition to general knowledge, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, know-how, attitudes and understanding relating to occupations in the various sectors of economic and social life.”¹⁷³ Technical and vocational education (TVET) is a lifelong learning process, and includes work-learning, professional development, and training, which may lead to certification in a particular field.¹⁷⁴ There are three forms of TVET: (1) formal, which refers to trainings and certifications obtained through the formal education system (including secondary and tertiary institutions); (2) non-formal, which refers to “education [that] takes place outside the formal system on either a regular or an intermittent basis”; and (3) informal, which is training that results from daily life activities related to work, family, or leisure.¹⁷⁵ The formal educational system includes secondary and tertiary institutions that offer TVET programs.¹⁷⁶ Post-secondary non-tertiary TVET programs are also part of the educational system, providing degrees equivalent to bachelor’s degrees.¹⁷⁷ Informal learning may be categorized as a form of non-formal learning; however, informal learning often refers to skills obtained through work or acquired in households.¹⁷⁸ Non-formal learning often refers to skills obtained at institutions outside of the formal education system, including trade schools and summer training programs.¹⁷⁹

TVET helps Member States address unemployment challenges by providing opportunities for individuals to obtain skills relevant to the modern economy, including in technologies like automation, artificial intelligence, and robotics.¹⁸⁰ Implementing green initiatives also help to develop the modern economy by providing a workforce for maintaining low carbon, resource efficient, and socially inclusive employment opportunities for all people.¹⁸¹ The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) promotes the importance of targeting these modern TVET programs at women, youth, senior citizens, and other vulnerable populations to further assist governments in reducing gender inequality and poverty.¹⁸²

TVET program certification largely depends on imparting and assessing practical skills, which is difficult to do in a remote environment.¹⁸³ Pandemic closures of TVET centers in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), coupled with strict physical distancing requirements to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, adversely made practical training through internships and apprenticeships near impossible.¹⁸⁴ The Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training office based in Montevideo, Uruguay, conducted a survey among national TVET agencies and their training networks, covering 20 states across LAC, which showed that 90% of respondents reported a complete closure of TVET centers in their country.¹⁸⁵ Further, countries in LAC continue to experience employment-based challenges that have

¹⁷³ UNESCO, *UNESCO – UNEVOC Convention on Technical and Vocational Education*, 1898, p. 11.

¹⁷⁴ UNESCO, *Proposal for the revision of the 2001 Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education*, 2015, p. 8.

¹⁷⁵ Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2016, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019, p. 8.

¹⁸¹ Alverado, *Greening TVET in Latin America. Virtual Conference Synthesis Report*, 2017, p. 24.

¹⁸² Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2019, p. 9.

¹⁸³ International Labour Organization, *Skills development in the time of COVID-19*, 2021, p. 12.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁸⁶ According to the International Labour Organization, the LAC region lost 26 million jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic, seeing the average employment rate drop from 57.4% to 51.7% by the end of 2020, with women being disproportionately affected.¹⁸⁷ Millions of children enrolled in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions dropped out of school in the region in 2020, and Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica, and Bolivia had dropout rates over 20%, according to the World Bank.¹⁸⁸ As the economies of Member States recover from COVID-19, ECLAC continues to encourage Member States to reform TVET programs, including conducting policy reviews to address the inequalities, hence promoting accessibility to TVET for women, migrants, and other disadvantaged groups.¹⁸⁹

International and Regional Framework

In 1948, the General Assembly adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR).¹⁹⁰ Article 26 of the UDHR states that “Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all based on merit.”¹⁹¹ General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI), *The International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights* (ICSECR) (1966), further aligns with the UDHR, as it recognizes the right to work, with the security that this right will be protected.¹⁹² The ICSECR specifically identifies technical training programs, strategies, and methods as necessary to truly achieve constant economic and social development by creating consistent and productive employment opportunities which safeguards the underlying political and economic freedoms of employees.¹⁹³

Article 13 of the ICSECR, which recognizes the right of every individual to an education, correlates with article 18 of General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) on the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) (1966).¹⁹⁴ The ICCPR promotes conditions which allow for the individual enjoyment of civil and political rights.¹⁹⁵ Article 18 of the ICCPR strongly supports the freedom for individuals to obtain an education that coincides with their own religious and moral convictions, ultimately promoting freedom of thought.¹⁹⁶ TVET is recognized as being part of the universal right to education and the right to work, and plays a significant role in the development of individuals and societies through supporting the civil and political rights of all people.¹⁹⁷

Additionally, UNESCO adopted the *Convention on Technical and Vocational Education* (1989), recognizing that the advancement of technical and vocational education contributes to maintaining peaceful diplomatic relations among Member States.¹⁹⁸ This convention specifically outlines the role of TVET in developing individuals and societies by improving access to education and training for all people.¹⁹⁹ At the Third International Congress for TVET held in Shanghai in 2012, the *Shanghai Consensus: Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life* was developed.²⁰⁰ This document

¹⁸⁶ Maurizio, *The employment crisis in the pandemic: Towards a human-centered job recovery*, 2021, p. 4.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁸⁸ World Bank Group, *Acting Now to protect the Human Capital of our Children*, 2021 p. 14.

¹⁸⁹ ECLAC, *Women’s autonomy in changing economic scenarios*, 2019, p. 12.

¹⁹⁰ UN General Assembly, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217(III))*, 1948, p. 76.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁹² UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200A)*, 1966, p. 1.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁴ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200A)*, 1966, p. 5.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁶ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (A/RES/2200A)*, 1966, p. 5; UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200A)*, 1966, p. 1.

¹⁹⁷ UNESCO, *Recommendation Concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training*, 2016, p. 4.

¹⁹⁸ UNESCO, *UNESCO – UNEVOC Convention on Technical and Vocational Education*, 1989, p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁰⁰ UNESCO, *Shanghai Consensus: Recommendations of the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training on “Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life”*, 2012.

provides recommendations focused on ways to enhance and modernize TVET programs by developing the best strategies to expand access to, enhance the quality of, and improve equity in TVET.²⁰¹ Member States are further advised by this document on adopting the proper qualifications and creating pathways for the expansion of TVET.²⁰² This will help strengthen leadership and expand relationships to advance TVET programs, build on investments in and diversify financial resources for TVET.²⁰³ ECLAC encourages Member States to continuously provide resources to strengthen, expand and enhance TVET programs.²⁰⁴

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) serves as the UN's most important current framework document, and it outlines the role of TVET in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 (“quality education”) and 8 (“decent work and economic growth”).²⁰⁵ SDG 4 explains the need to ensure comprehensive and high quality education for everyone and highlights the importance of lifelong learning.²⁰⁶ Furthermore, SDG 4 calls on Member States to ensure equal access to TVET programs, to considerably increase the total number of individuals who possess the appropriate skills that will allow them to obtain gainful employment and build business.²⁰⁷ SDG 8 outlines the need to “promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.”²⁰⁸ SDG 8 poses a challenge to Member States to promote the creation of employment opportunities, which are not only result in consistent employment but also fosters constant and sustainable economic development.²⁰⁹ Keeping in mind these challenges posed by the SDGs, TVET programs are encouraged to become more sustainable; providing individuals with high demand, relevant and important skills which are not simply of economic value, but which support lifelong learning and inclusion.²¹⁰

Role of the International System

The 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference, held in Paris in November 2015, led to a report titled *Recommendations concerning TVET*, which encourages Member States to build and maintain an environment for high quality TVET and increase TVET program options at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels, among other things.²¹¹ High quality TVET programs are described as programs which relate to the training needs in the labor market.²¹² The *Recommendations concerning TVET* (2015) report further explains that the focus of TVET is to empower individuals and promote employment, decent work, and lifelong learning, to sponsor inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and to encourage social equity and environmental sustainability.²¹³

Following the *Technical and Vocational Education Convention* (1989), UNESCO introduced an International project on Technical and Vocational Education (UNEVOC) and opened the International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training network in 1992.²¹⁴ In 1999, the Second Congress for TVET, held in Seoul, brought together Member States to exchange information and engage

²⁰¹ UNESCO, *Shanghai Consensus: Recommendations of the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training on “Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life”*, 2012.

²⁰² UNESCO, *Shanghai Consensus: Recommendations of the Third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training on “Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life”*, 2012.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2016.

²⁰⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/L.1)*, 2015, p. 14.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²¹⁰ Alverado, *Greening TVET in Latin America. Virtual Conference Synthesis Report*, 2017, pp. 3-5.

²¹¹ UNESCO, *Recommendations concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training*, 2015, p. 2

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²¹⁴ UNESCO, *UNESCO-UNEVOC in Brief*, 2013, p. 5.

in discussions on developing TVET through the 21st century.²¹⁵ This conference initiated a forum to redefine TVET policy to address the employment and other socio-economic challenges of the twenty-first century.²¹⁶

Additionally, the *UNESCO Strategy for TVET (2016- 2021)* outlines important proposals to increase access to TVET.²¹⁷ This strategy defines the role of UNESCO in assisting Member States in increasing access to TVET by providing evidence-based and impact-oriented advice and financial resources to Member States who need it.²¹⁸ The areas of priority include fostering youth employment and entrepreneurship, promoting gender equality, and facilitating the transition into green economies and sustainable societies.²¹⁹ The Strategy was developed to support Member States who wish to improve the applicability of TVET systems to provide all individuals with the skills needed to obtain decent employment and become entrepreneurs.²²⁰ This Strategy aligns with SDG 4, which is focused on providing quality educational opportunities to all people.²²¹

UNESCO and ECLAC continue to promote efficient and effective education management that impacts the value and relevance of educational programs.²²² This is to ensure that the economic and practical investments of Member States results in essential growth in the educational successes of future generations in the LAC region.²²³ ECLAC further promotes advancements in quality TVET that will contribute to economic growth through job creation in LAC and organize actions to promote and strengthen the economic relations between Member States.²²⁴ ECLAC also continues to focus on securing investments for TVET, as explained in the 2019 report on *Financing of education and TVET in Latin America and the Caribbean*.²²⁵ This report provides a detailed analyses of the funding for TVET programs, initiatives, and policies in LAC.²²⁶ The report mentions that 30% of firms in the LAC region have indicated that an inadequately trained workforce was a major obstacle affecting their operations.²²⁷ This report then outlines the benefits for both public and private sector financing of TVET, citing an economic rationale explaining that TVET provides a highly skilled workforce.²²⁸

General education funding and increased focus on TVET funding from Member States have potential to significantly increase TVET participation in LAC.²²⁹ Though most Member States in the LAC region have increased the percentage of their GDP dedicated to education funding, weak funding practices, and little room in Member States' budgets have created challenges for TVET programing in the LAC region.²³⁰

²¹⁵ UNESCO, *Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education, Main Working Document*, 1999, p. 4.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²¹⁷ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, pp. 6-11.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-11.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-11.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-11.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-11.

²²² UNESCO, *UNESCO-UNEVOC Regional Forum Advancing TVET for Youth Employability and Sustainable Development*, p. 19.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²²⁴ Cecchini, *Technical and vocational education and training in Latin America and the Caribbean: Socioeconomic impact and financing*, 2019.

²²⁵ Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2016, p. 30

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²²⁹ Hanni, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean Financing of TVET*, 2016.

²³⁰ Fiszbein et al., *The Future of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean - Possibilities for United States Investment and Engagement*, 2018, p. 27.

Besides ECLAC and UNESCO, many other organizations are making contributions to the development of TVET, including the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the General Assembly.²³¹ The ILO is mainly concerned with TVET as it relates to occupational engagements and the wellbeing of employees.²³² ECOSOC resolution 2008/18 on *Promoting full employment and decent work for all* reasserts the immense importance of all levels of education, including both formal and non-formal education, in providing decent employment for all people.²³³ It also encourages Member States to focus on skill development training which improves the desirability of employees and helps to create a more adaptable labor market.²³⁴ Additionally, the UNESCO-UNEVOC network with support from the German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training in 2019 launched the Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET (BILT) project.²³⁵ BILT was created mainly for Member States to share new and advanced practices to grow TVET structures.²³⁶ It further outlined examples on ways to incorporate new credentials and which are necessary for the development of innovative TVET systems for appealing professions.²³⁷

Organizations that focus on expanding TVET in LAC include the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in LAC. This institution advocates for the inclusion of technical programs in higher education and provides advice to Member States to advance and reform policies within their education system.²³⁸ Additionally, within the Caribbean, the Caribbean Community has developed the Education for Employment Programme, which promotes economic development by strengthening the TVET system in the Caribbean.²³⁹ These programs are unique in that they focus specifically on the national development, growth and expansion of TVET within educational institutions in Member States in the LAC region, to provide skills necessary to obtain immediate employment.²⁴⁰

Policy review to address gender inequality in TVET in LAC

Around the world, inequalities and poverty remain prevalent, even with the significant advancements in technology and growth of the world economy.²⁴¹ In 2014, the global unemployment rate for women was 6.4% compared to 5.7% for men, with the global labor force participation rate of women being 68.7%, compared to 81.7% for men.²⁴² UNESCO reports that women lack opportunities for skills training and development and decent work as they overall continue to experience greater unemployment and lower rates of participation in the labor market.²⁴³

UNESCO has highlighted these disadvantages and identified the most efficient and cost effective policies to address them.²⁴⁴ These policies include providing support for strategy development to ensure that TVET programs attract individuals of all genders and performing a wholistic analysis of financial assistance initiatives within the region to promote the stable and sustainable use of TVET resources.²⁴⁵ Other areas of focus include developing plans to encourage access to more diverse career options for women and detecting global practices which are relevant to modern TVET initiatives while periodically

²³¹ Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020, p. 3.

²³² UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, p. 2.

²³³ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/18)*, 2008, p. 8.

²³⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Promoting full employment and decent work for all (E/RES/2008/18)*, 2008, p. 8.

²³⁵ UNESCO, *Bridging Innovation and Learning in TVET*, 2019, p. 2.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²³⁸ Gazzola et al., *Trends in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2008, pp. 9-10.

²³⁹ UNESCO, *Advancing TVET for Youth Employability and Sustainable Development*, 2013, pp. 12-13.

²⁴⁰ Gazzola et al., *Trends in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2008, pp. 9-10; UNESCO, *Advancing TVET for Youth Employability and Sustainable Development*, 2013, pp. 12-13.

²⁴¹ UN ECOSOC, *World Social Report 2020 Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World*, 2020, pp. 60-72.

²⁴² UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, p. 10.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

assessing the state of gender equality in TVET.²⁴⁶ UNESCO has further provided support to Member States to specify important policy measures that will help foster diverse involvement in TVET and to make certain that all individuals are offered equal learning opportunities.²⁴⁷ For individuals residing in rural regions, limited access to the internet, technology and other resources pose major challenges to the expansion of TVET programs in these areas, and often are factors causing migration out of rural regions.²⁴⁸ To assist Member States in improving skill development training quality, UNESCO has placed focus on improving skills development in the informal sector and rural areas.²⁴⁹ UNESCO has made this decision to address the disproportionate rate of poverty in rural areas compared to urban areas, noting that 75% of poor people in developing countries reside in rural areas.²⁵⁰ TVET can potentially be used to transform rural areas and eliminate the rural-urban poverty divide.²⁵¹

Financing of TVET in the LAC region also affects the ability of Member States to address gender inequality.²⁵² Inequality further adversely impacts education and TVET markets.²⁵³ ECLAC's 2019 report on *Financing of TVET in LAC* mentions that gender, race, and ethnicity, along with lack of financial availability, may play a major role in preventing potential students from entering TVET programs.²⁵⁴ This often has an adverse effect of bolstering the social and economic conditions that TVET aims to reduce.²⁵⁵ Government interference can aid in reducing these obstacles, which motivates further financial investments in TVET.²⁵⁶

In 2019, ECLAC and the ILO reported that among women, employment growth was weak compared to labor participation, which resulted in the unemployment rate in the LAC region rising to 9.6% on average.²⁵⁷ For men, a decrease in both the employment rate and the labor supply was noted compared to previous years, but the unemployment rate remained steady at an average of 7.1%.²⁵⁸ Inequalities and gender stereotypes have a large impact when considering women participation rates in the labor force and in TVET programs.²⁵⁹ As a result of gender stereotypes mainly surrounding traditional gender roles there is a gender bias in many TVET programs in LAC, which often leads to lower rates of participation among women, particularly in the fields of work with higher salaries.²⁶⁰ Noting that 66% of all young people in the LAC region who are not in education or working are women, this gender bias poses a significant real world challenge to eliminating the social and economic disparities between men and women.²⁶¹ While TVET programs in the LAC region can generally boast of increased participation of women, because there are usually no age limits for access to trainings, there is a disparity that disadvantages women concerning these TVET programs which result in higher paying jobs.²⁶²

²⁴⁶ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, p. 9.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

²⁴⁸ ILO & UNESCO, *The Digitization of TVET and Skills Systems*, 2020, pp. 90-92.

²⁴⁹ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, p. 11.

²⁵⁰ Shaw et al., *Technical and vocational education and training, and skills development for rural transformation*, 2011

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2011.

²⁵² ECLAC, *Financing of education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*, 2016.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ ECLAC & ILO, *Employment situation in Latin America and the Caribbean; Work in times of pandemic: the challenges of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)*, 2017.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2017.

²⁵⁹ McOmish, *TVET in Latin America and the Caribbean, A Regional Approach towards 2030*, 2015, p. 26.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Ensuring that TVET is equally accessible to both men and women importantly links TVET to SDGs 4 (“quality education”) and 5 (“gender equality and women’s empowerment”).²⁶³ TVET is encouraged to offer the same opportunities to learn, develop, and enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of both men and women, which helps address their diverse needs.²⁶⁴ Further, the educational and financial needs of migrants and indigenous people are important to also be considered, as these populations often face additional challenges as they transition to new societies.²⁶⁵

TVET access to migrants

The UN migration agency defines an international migrant as “a person who moves [to] a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year.”²⁶⁶ As migration trends continue to change with rising conflicts, economic instability, and climate change, many Member States continue to have fluctuating rates of involuntary and voluntary migration.²⁶⁷ With only 40% of young indigenous people on average completing secondary education in the LAC region as of 2016, indigenous populations often face additional challenges whenever they migrate domestically, often from rural to urban areas, because of their lack of education and language skills.²⁶⁸ Additionally, young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are often left more vulnerable to unemployment and lower educational opportunities as they continue to be disproportionately affected by administrative, linguistic, and practical barriers to TVET.²⁶⁹

According to a UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs report titled *International Migration 2019: Highlights* (2019), the immigration corridor, which is defined as the land that individuals physically traverse when attempting to immigrate, from Latin America and the Caribbean to North America was the second largest migration corridor in 2019, with an estimated 26.6 million persons.²⁷⁰ The report continues to state that between 2000 and 2010, this corridor saw an average increase of 500,000 international migrants travelling through per year, and an average of 300,000 migrants between 2010 and 2019.²⁷¹ The number of individuals both skilled and unskilled traversing this corridor is a significant number.²⁷² The potential for increased employment opportunities caused by the development of TVET programs in LAC can potentially assist in lowering the number of people migrating this corridor.²⁷³

The ILO notes that migrants do assist in filling labor gaps in host countries, making them valuable assets to the expansion and diversity of a Member State’s economy.²⁷⁴ Integration into the labor market remains essential to enhance the impact of migrants into other Member States.²⁷⁵ Hindrances in transferability of credentials, limitations in migrant’s language abilities and poor recognition of prior learning standards and systems in many countries often prevent the skills and credentials of migrants and their families from being acknowledged in Member States receiving large amounts of migrants.²⁷⁶ This forces many migrants

²⁶³ UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/L.1)*, 2015, p. 14.

²⁶⁴ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016, p.12

²⁶⁵ Wedekind et al., *Human Migration and TVET Discussion Paper*, 2019, p. 5.

²⁶⁶ Osaki-Tomita, *Revisiting the Concepts, Definitions and Data Sources of International Migration in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2017, p. 2.

²⁶⁷ Wedekind et al., *Human Migration and TVET Discussion Paper*, 2019, pp. 5-15.

²⁶⁸ Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020; UN General Assembly, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295)*, 2007, p. 5.

²⁶⁹ Wedekind et al., *Human Migration and TVET Discussion Paper*, 2019.

²⁷⁰ UN DESA, *International Migration 2019: Highlights*, 2019.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020, p. 23.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁷⁶ ILO, *How to Facilitate the Recognition of Skills of Migrant Workers Second Edition*, 2020; Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020, p. 23.

to settle for low wage jobs that are below their qualifications.²⁷⁷ Furthermore, migrants who may lack in-demand skills, particularly migrants originating from rural areas, typically accept low paying and less challenging jobs with limited to low workers' protection.²⁷⁸

To maximize the benefits of migration for individuals and host countries, TVET serves a means to assist in assimilating migrants into economy and society.²⁷⁹ Administrative and legal barriers also prevent many migrants from accessing TVET programs within host Member States.²⁸⁰ Cultural and social barriers have psychological effects on migrants, and significantly impacts their assimilation into society.²⁸¹

Suitable integration policies for migrants with regards to access to education, health care resources, and language learning opportunities are pivotal to protect their rights.²⁸² This is also vital to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth, to develop the host country, and to contribute to the well-being of migrants themselves.²⁸³ In 2019, UNESCO reported that 77% of all governments stated to have strategies in place that focus on fostering the assimilation and inclusion of migrants into society.²⁸⁴ Central and South Asian countries lead with 100% of countries reporting to have access to these programs.²⁸⁵ While this is a rather promising number, gaps still remain; approximately 25% of all Member States where international migrants encompassed at least 10% of the host Member State's total population, had not developed specific national plans and policies to encourage the integration of migrants into societies.²⁸⁶

Inadequate labor laws, plans and policies not only cause challenges for international migrants, but also hinders the economic advancement of indigenous populations who migrate domestically.²⁸⁷ Indigenous people face challenges when migrating to urban regions because of inadequate formal education and their limited marketable abilities for employment within urban environments.²⁸⁸

For Indigenous people and ethnic minorities, many of the challenges faced in relation to access to TVET programs stem from racial and ethnic biases within host Member States.²⁸⁹ Discrimination and racism in learning institutions, linguistic challenges, and the "non-adaptation of learning materials and contents to their needs (in particular the lack of intercultural approaches and local languages)" are pertinent factors which affect indigenous people attempting to assimilate into different cultural environments.²⁹⁰ Even within their own nations in the LAC region, as of 2016, only 40% of all enrolled indigenous children completed secondary education.²⁹¹ Addressing discrimination, and the challenges pertaining to education, training and the lack of proper labor laws are vital to ensuring that indigenous migrants are empowered to become productive participants in society.²⁹²

Conclusion

Increasing access to TVET in LAC involves working to eliminate the gender disparities in TVET programs, increasing accessibility to TVET initiatives for domestic and international migrants, and providing financial

²⁷⁷ Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020, p. 23.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁷⁹ Wedekind et al., *Human Migration and TVET Discussion Paper*, 2019.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14

²⁸¹ Rudiger et al., *The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration*, 2003, p. 5.

²⁸² Rudiger et al., *The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration*, 2003, p. 5.

²⁸³ UN DESA, *International Migration 2019: Highlights*, 2019, p. 40.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁸⁷ Trujano, *Indigenous Routes: A Framework for Understanding Indigenous Migration*, 2008, p. 45.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²⁸⁹ Lange et al., *Guide on making TVET and skills development inclusive for all*, 2020, p. 5.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²⁹² Rudiger et al., *The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration*, 2003, p. 5.

assistance to expand TVET.²⁹³ The development of new training programs in the region should complement the development of new and modern industries and consider environmental sustainability to ensure that relevant skills are being taught to individuals.²⁹⁴ Considering the constant movement of persons, Member States should consider the impact of TVET on migrants and young people and explore avenues to maximize benefits for all people.²⁹⁵ By accomplishing the aforementioned goals, TVET can not only be made more accessible for all, but advancements in TVET will assist in promoting education and stimulating economic growth in LAC.²⁹⁶ This will certainly help to achieve ECLAC's primary mandate of promoting economic, social and environmentally sustainable development in LAC.²⁹⁷

Further Research

To efficiently develop solutions to this issue, delegates should ask themselves: What innovative practices can be introduced to ensure that TVET is keeping up with modern technology? What tactics can be used to encourage young women in LAC to participate in TVET programs which result in higher paying jobs? What ways can ECLAC provide support to Member States in the LAC region to adequately develop new TVET programs? How can Member States who struggle with maintaining TVET programs in LAC address financial constraints? What policies can Member States in the LAC region enact to improve gender equality in TVET and ensure that increased access to TVET for migrants is provided?

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Alverado, I. (2017). *Greening TVET in Latin America. Virtual Conference Synthesis Report*. Retrieved 25 June 2021 from: https://unevoc.unesco.org/up/vc_verde_synthesis.pdf

UNESCO-UNEVOC's report on greening TVET provides a real and pragmatic guide for institutions as TVET investors continue to incorporate more green and sustainable principles in their TVET programs around the world, particularly in Latin America. This guide focuses on TVET institutions and provides a guide for investments in green initiatives to help institutions understand why it is vital to undertake a greening process, and what exactly this could mean for future generations. This guide takes an institution-based approach focusing on the revolutions in handling resources, and sharing of skills, knowledge, and competencies through curriculum and training. Delegates can use this source to address concerns about the environmental impact of TVET or to justify methods that exist to ameliorate environmental consciousness without sacrificing the quality of these training programs.

Hanni, M. (2019). *Financing of Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved 24 June 2021 from:

https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/44599/4/S1900376_en.pdf

This document focuses on the need for financing to achieve the complete accessibility and inclusivity to and in quality education for all. The importance of investments within the LAC region in the public sector, by stakeholder and individuals, is examined in detail. The role of TVET in the process of expanding education to all is explained, particularly as the world and LAC countries continue to experience changes. The need for adaptation is discussed, as technology continuously changes the world of work; the needs for a review of initial financing for education and TVET in LAC is also considered. Apart from being another way to emphasize the potential of TVET programs to improve the social and economic situation in the LAC region, delegates can use this source as one suggestion to

²⁹³ UNESCO, *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) (2016 – 2021)*, 2016.

²⁹⁴ Rawkins, *A Global Overview of TVET Teaching and Training: Current Issues, Trends and Recommendations*, 2018, p. 2.

²⁹⁵ Wedekind et al., *Human Migration and TVET Discussion Paper*, 2019.

²⁹⁶ Hanni, *Financing of Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean Financing of TVET*, 2016.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

improve greater economic participation from the public sector despite economic changes to Member States in the LAC region.

McOmish, E., et al. (2015). *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Latin America and the Caribbean. A Regional Approach Towards 2030*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Santiago/pdf/Technical-and-Vocational-Education-in-Latin-America-and-.pdf>

This directive was approved at the World Education Forum, held in May 2015 in the Republic of Korea. It provides advice on the how to implement the goals of member states for TVET programs. Specifically, goals related to TVET in the context of how they aim to advance equal access to quality education for all genders and people, including those who are disabled. It highlights the discrepancies in TVET training among indigenous peoples and discusses ways to increase youth engagement in TVET. It outlines the areas for expansion in access to employment, work and business development, by promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth and supporting the transition to green economies and environmental sustainability. This source can provide delegates with further information on the implementation of TVET programs in the LAC region. Delegates may also wish to highlight that these training programs diminish cultural disparities while enabling economic growth and providing support for transitioning economies.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2016). *Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) 2016-2021*. Retrieved 24 June 2021 from: <https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/tvet.pdf>

UNESCO's Strategy for TVET 2016-2021 was launched on World Youth Skills Day in Bonn, Germany on 15 July 2016. The Strategy discusses the Education 2030 Framework for Action for the enactment of SDG 4 directed at mobilizing countries and stakeholders all over the world to achieve SDG 4. The strategy details the goals of UNESCO in achieving TVET equality and supports Member States in their efforts to enhance the relevance of their TVET systems to equip all youth and adults with the skills required for employment, decent work, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning. Delegates should find this helpful in highlighting existing support and strategies for the global TVET education.

Wedekind, V., et al. (2019). *Human Migration and TVET*. Retrieved 27 June 2021 from: <https://unevoc.unesco.org/pub/30002-eng.pdf>

This discussion paper describes the scale of migration and differentiates between three types of migration: forced, labor, and environmental. The underlying causes of the three types of migration, in addition to the specific issues that pertain to each, are further discussed. Secondly, this paper describes some of the effects of migration for migrants, host, and origin countries. Conclusions are drawn with respect to migrants being bound by difficulties that result from their migrant status. Challenges including mental health, legal constraints, education, training impediments, and labor market barriers are discussed. Delegates could use this source to identify challenges to the globalization of TVET programs, as well as an opportunity to suggest feasible solutions to these challenges.

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