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## Spanish Humanitarian Policy in Latin America: Peculiarities and Priorities

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the establishment and formation of the humanitarian policy of Spain, the evolution of the concept of “Hispanidad” in relation to Latin America, when Spain, along with the expansion of investment and economic cooperation, was building up educational, scientific, cultural interaction based on a common historical past, and intended positioning itself as a “bridge” between the EU and this region. The authors apply the theory of constructivism, based on the position that “historical and cultural paradigms,” norms and beliefs, and not only economic power influences the rapprochement of states. The chronological order makes possible to trace the evolution of the features and priorities of the country’s humanitarian policy, starting from the second half of the 2010s, when it was reduced to the dominance of the educational and scientific factor in Spanish public diplomacy towards Latin America. The Spanish state has achieved significant results in improving the system of higher education, making it attractive to foreign students. The activities of public and private structures (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, AECID, Carolina Foundation, Casa America) are focused not only at creating a positive image of Spain (the Program “Spain Global”), but also at forming a common Ibero-American scientific and educational space. In the Ibero-American Community of Nations (ICN), which unites countries on the basis of language and culture, an important place is given to youth problems related to the availability of quality education and employment, as well as issues of digitalization, economic modernization, renewable energy. Within the framework of the ICN, the Tordesillas Group, the Association of Ibero-American Universities, the La Rabida Group, etc., are intended to implement the 2021 Goals in the field of education. The use of professional research networks, the introduction of new skills and competencies for students and teachers, the creation of the Ibero-American Institute for Education and Productivity (IEEP), focusing on the relationship between education and economic growth, became a real basis for strengthening a common Ibero-American educational and scientific space as a main priority in the actual humanitarian policy of Spain.

**Key words:** Spain, Ibero-American Community of Nations, ICN, education, science, AECID, hispanidad, Tordesillas Group

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## Гуманитарная политика Испании в Латинской Америке: особенности и приоритеты

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**Аннотация.** Рассматривается становление и формирование гуманитарной политики Испании, эволюция концепции «испанизма» в отношении Латинской Америки, когда Испания наряду с расширением инвестиционного и экономического сотрудничества наращивала образовательное, научное, культурное взаимодействие, основанное на общем историческом прошлом, и стала позиционировать себя как «мост» между ЕС и этим регионом. Использован комплексный подход, основанный на применении положений теории конструктивизма, где основой для сближения государств служат «исторические и культурные парадигмы», нормы и верования, а не только экономическая мощь государства. Важное место занимает проблемно-хронологический метод, позволяющий проследить особенности и приоритеты гуманитарной политики страны начиная со второй половины 2010-х гг., которые в результате свелись к доминированию образовательного и научного фактора в публичной дипломатии Испании в отношении Латинской Америки. Испанское государство достигло значительных результатов в совершенствовании системы высшего образования, сделав его привлекательным для иностранных студентов. Деятельность государственных и частных структур (МИД, АЕСИД, Фонд «Каролина», «Каса Америка») направлена не только на формирование позитивного образа Испании (Программа «Испания Глобал»), но и на создание единого иберо-американского научного и образовательного пространства. В Иберо-американском сообществе наций (ИСН), которое объединило страны по признаку языка и культуры, важное место отводится проблемам молодежи, связанным с доступностью качественного образования и занятостью, а также вопросам цифровизации, модернизации экономики, возобновляемых источников энергии. В рамках ИСН работает Группа Тордесильяс, Ассоциация иберо-американских университетов, Группа Ла Рабида и т. д., в задачи которых входит реализация «Целей 2021» в сфере образования. Использование профессиональных исследовательских сетей, внедрение новых навыков и компетенций для студентов и преподавателей, создание Иберо-американского института образования и производительности (ШЕУР) для изучения взаимосвязи между образованием и экономическим ростом стали реальной основой для упрочения единого иберо-американского образовательного и научного пространства как основного приоритета в современной гуманитарной политике Испании.

**Ключевые слова:** Испания, Иберо-американское сообщество наций, ИСН, образование, наука, АЕСИД, испанидад, Группа Тордесильяс

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### Introduction

The Latin American region is one of the main focuses in Spanish foreign policy strategy for 2021—2024, and it is noteworthy that the country seeks to become “a key agent in relations between Europe and the countries of this region”; at the same time “Ibero-America has always been a priority of Spain’s foreign

policy.”<sup>1</sup> The same document emphasizes that countries are united by “human, historical, social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic ties,”<sup>2</sup> so it seems only natural that

<sup>1</sup> España en Iberoamérica // Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores Unión Europea y Cooperación. URL: <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/es/PoliticaExterior/Paginas/EspanaIberoamerica.aspx> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Spain would be trying to cement these relations with questions of national and cultural identity.

The methodological basis of this study is the theory of neoliberalism and constructivism, where the interests of the state are determined not only by the interests, strength and power of the state, but by social structures, ‘historical’ and ‘cultural’ paradigms, norms and beliefs. A rapprochement based on cultural, spiritual commonality, and not just pragmatism, helps to explain the “deep mechanisms” of interaction between states (Wendt, 1999, pp. 165—176), their mutual perception, when a coincidence of interests leads to the creation of international coalitions, and their clash — to conflicts of various intensities and depths. International structures are formed not only due to material factors, but also humanitarian ones, which have a longer and deeper impact (Pavlenko, 2015, p. 57). Spain began paying considerable attention to the formation of its positive image (Borzova & Nikolashvili, 2020, pp. 77—90), the development of the foundations of public diplomacy in Latin America (Lobanova, 2019, p. 6.), the expansion of “soft power,” the use of a flexible strategy when the rejection of coercive measures must be combined with the impact on the mass consciousness of a given country or the entire world community (Keohane, 2005, pp. 49—53). “Soft power” began to be actively used by the former metropolises in building relations with once dependent territories, once the historical, cultural and linguistic affinity with the newly independent countries, that had arisen earlier, became a reliable foundation for building relations on a new conceptual basis (Kharitonova & Prokhorenko, 2018, pp. 39—43). This corresponded to the new concept of education, both in Spain itself (Merchán Iglesias, 2021, pp. 10—12) and in Latin America (Santa María et al., 2021, pp. 329—332).

Spanish researchers H. Noya and I. Olivier supplemented the ideas of J. Nye with their own reasoning, which made it possible to prepare a comprehensive “Global Presence Index” for the country. In 2011, 54 countries used as subject matter in their research, and in 2022 —

150 countries. According to the formula developed, “soft power” accounts for 36%, the economy — for 43%, and the military component — for 21% of the country’s global influence.<sup>3</sup>

H. Noya (2005) considers education, scientific and technological achievements, promotion of interest in the Spanish language, and cultural ties to be the main elements of “soft power.” Among the official bodies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation, the Ministry of Education and Training, the research centers: *Casa de America*, *Casa Arabe*, *Casa Asia* and *Casa Mediterranea* play a key role in creating a positive image, which contributes to the development of all-round Spanish foreign relations and have an important role in creating international cooperation programs to maintain a positive “Spanish brand.” The Spanish Cervantes Institute is actively promoting the spread of the Spanish language and culture, building a holistic system of learning Spanish in the world (Khimich & Terentyeva, 2018, pp. 200—203).

### Conceptual Rationale for Spain’s Humanitarian Policy in Latin America

Spain lost its Latin American colonies in the first third of the 19th century, and the defeat in the American-Spanish war of 1898 meant the complete collapse of the country’s military and political policies on the American continent. It turned out to be disastrous not only for Spanish politics and economics — it became a disaster for the Spanish national identity. Spain, which at the end of the 19th century had ceased to be a great power, in the war with the United States lost the last vestiges of its elite’s mental sense of self-sufficiency. The spiritual values that Spain lived by were thrown into the dust-heap, and the mirage of a former greatness suddenly vanished. Under these conditions, a generation of writers,

<sup>3</sup> Que es el Índice EICano de Presencia Global. Estructura // Real Instituto Elcano. 2022. URL: <https://www.globalpresence.realinstitutoelcano.org/es/estructura> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

philosophers, historians, artists, poets — the “lost Spanish generation” — was formed. These thinkers were united by a mental sense of catastrophe and the search for a national idea. At the same time, various “recipes” for overcoming the crisis were offered, but in general, Spanish intellectuals of the early 20th century could be combined into two large groups: the Westerners, the supporters of rapprochement with Europe, and the Iberophiles, the supporters of the need to return Spain to its great past, to the great European metropolis. This, according to the Iberophiles, could only be achieved by relying on their own civilizational specifics, i.e. unity with their former colonies.

At the beginning of the 20th century the positions of a return to traditional values were supported to a greater extent by representatives of the right wing of Spanish social thought. In the works of the classic Spanish conservative, Ramiro de Maestu, there appears the term *Hispanidad*. It became extremely popular throughout the 20th century. In 1931—1933, he publishes a series of articles, which he later combines into the book *Defensa de la Hispanidad* (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 1988, pp. 27—30). He believes that the *Hispanidad* will become the basis for restoring the broken community with the countries of Latin America, and will also allow Spain to play a leading role in the world historical process. At the same time, Catholicism and spirituality will become the “bonding cement” that will connect the metropolis with its former colonies. The messianic ideas of the *Hispanidad* and nationalistic Pan-Spanish tendencies were embraced by the leaders of the Francoist movement, who, starting from the 1940s, began to test this concept in practice to strengthen their positions in the Latin American world (Kuleshova, 1979, p. 129).

Throughout the 36 years of F. Franco’s reign, the idea of the *Hispanidad* was the official doctrine of the state and was used to build priority relations with Latin America. This was facilitated by the international isolation in which the Francoist regime found itself after the Second World War. The report of the General

Directorate of Cultural Relations of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs of February 2, 1959 stated: “In the case of Spain, whose international strength lies primarily in its relations, united by the spirit of the *Hispanidad*... cultural policy is one of the main means of its presence in the world” (Filatov, 2014, p. 69). Special institutions were created: the Council of the Hispanidad (1940—1945) and the Institute of Spanish Culture (1945—1977).

The concept of the *Hispanidad* was so closely associated with Francoism that it was completely rejected by representatives of the Left, be it the leftist opposition during the Francoist regime or the leftist parties during the Spanish transition to democracy. In the political rhetoric of governments in the early years of the democratic transition, interest towards the concept in Latin America had never been publicly displayed (Treviño, 1985, p. 111). With the coming to power of the socialists in 1982, Spain joined NATO and began to integrate into the European Community. An important political moment was the crisis and the subsequent liquidation of military dictatorships in Latin America, which created the conditions for the expansion of Spain’s political presence on the world stage and, within the framework of this course, allowed it to return to the issue of strengthening its positions in Latin America and the European Union as a whole. A government communication dated October 22, 1983 states that it is necessary to begin “the transformation... of traditional politics in Ibero-America, moving from rhetoric to its actual implementation” (Treviño, 1985, p. 113).

In a speech to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January 1984, Prime Minister F. Gonzalez developed this idea. “It is important for Latin America that Europe knows its problems,” he declared (Treviño, 1985, p. 119). The meaning of these declarations is quite clear and boils down to strengthening Spain’s bilateral relations with the countries of Latin America, to the emergence of a new role for Spain as a ‘bridge’ in relations between Latin America and the European Union. As an ideological basis, the socialists

borrowed the concept of the *Hispanidad*, which had been actively promoted by Franco. Enough time had already passed — and the idea of unity with Latin America had ceased to cause rejection among the leftist forces: as a result, the Spanish Socialist and Workers' Party (PSOE), having borrowed this main trump card of right-wing policy, turned this concept around 180 degrees, dressed it in “democratic clothes” and began to actively implement it. Moreover, if R. de Maestu had understood and prioritized the religious and spiritual ties of the *Hispanidad*, then the socialists — its human, historical, social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic ones (Pereira, 2003).

As part of the formation of the Latin American foreign policy course in the government of F. Gonzalez, three main priorities were identified, which were then picked up by subsequent Spanish governments. By the beginning of the 21st century, these were: military cooperation — 0.5%, economic — 7.8%, socio-cultural — 2.9%, covering a total of 11.1% among other priorities of Spain's foreign policy.<sup>4</sup>

Since the late 1980s this concept received its institutional content: the first structures and institutions, whose activities were aimed at strengthening cooperation with Latin America, were being created. By 1988, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) under the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been created. Its main task was to expand the presence of Spanish culture and Spanish business abroad. Within the framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the implementation of the country's foreign cultural policy was under the control of the Agency for Cultural Activities (ACE) of Spain. The implementation of the Latin American vector was carried out by the Casa de America, located in Madrid. Another important institution of cultural diplomacy was

<sup>4</sup> #DataméricaGlobal: La presencia española es económica, no blanda // Real Instituto Elcano. 14.03.2018. URL: <https://www.politicaexterior.com/datamericaglobal-la-presencia-espanola-america-latina-economica-no-blanda/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

the Carolina Foundation, established in October 2000. Within the framework of these organizations, priority attention was given to the development of cooperation with Latin America in the field of science and education.

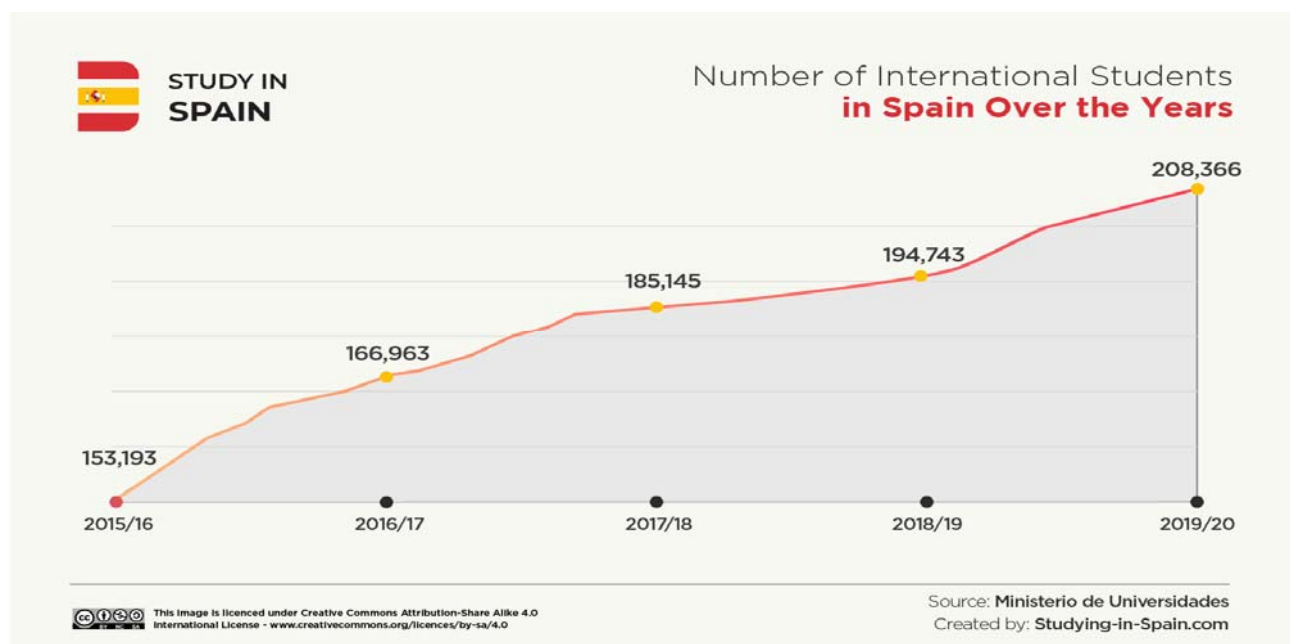
### **Spanish Approaches to Improving Competitiveness in Education and Science**

The economic development and competitiveness of a modern state largely depends on the availability of educated and competent specialists and high technologies that contribute to the development of efficient production and labor productivity. High-quality higher education contributes to the realization of these tasks. The United States has traditionally been the main destination for Latin Americans to receive higher education, so Spain made significant efforts to increase the attractiveness of its higher education system. Almost all state bodies of the country were involved in the development and implementation of educational programs; since 2014, spending on education in Spain has been constantly growing: if in 2014 it amounted to 2.175 million euros (0.61% of GDP), then in 2022 it already reached 5.023 million euros.<sup>5</sup> With regard to spending on research and digitalization, the state budget for 2022 allocates the largest amount of all public expenditure items for these purposes — 13,298 million euros.<sup>6</sup> 45 of the 76 universities in the country were founded by the state, and today 55 Spanish universities have become world-class universities and are included in the QS World University Ranking.<sup>7</sup> The

<sup>5</sup> Sube el gasto dedicado a Enseñanza en España // Datosmacro. URL: <https://datosmacro.expansion.com/estado/presupuestos/espana?sc=PR-G-F-32> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>6</sup> Cifra histórica para la ciencia en España: más de 13.000 millones para investigación, desarrollo y digitalización // Público. 07.10.2021. URL: <https://www.publico.es/economia/gobierno-destinara-13-298-millones-ciencia-cifra-historica.html> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>7</sup> Rankings: The 55 Best Universities in Spain for 2022/2023 // Portal Study.eu. URL: <https://www.study.eu/best-universities/spain> (accessed: 15.06.2022).



**Fig. 1. The number of international students in Spain by year, 2015—2020**

Source: International Student Statistics in Spain 2022 // Study in Spain.

URL: <https://www.studying-in-spain.com/spain-international-student-statistics/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

improvement in the quality of higher education has led to the expansion of inter-university ties at the international level, an increase in the number of foreign students, the exchange of students, projects and ideas across national borders (Fig. 1).

According to the Ministry of Education, in 2019—2020, there were more than 1,633 million students studying in the country, of these there were 208,366 foreigners, of which 55,277 were studying on mobility programs.<sup>8</sup> In that academic year, the number of international students grew by 7%, and in the previous three years the increase was 12%. The largest number of students in the 2019—2020 academic year came from Italy (21,441), Ecuador (16,758), France (16,509), Colombia (16,460) and China (12,571).<sup>9</sup> Most international students in Spain study engineering, management and administration, languages, humanities, law or medical sciences. Among the wide variety of specialties that

<sup>8</sup> International Student Statistics in Spain 2022 // Study in Spain. URL: <https://www.studying-in-spain.com/spain-international-student-statistics/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Spain offers to students, there is also the opportunity to get an education in the American system entirely in English at universities such as Schiller International University Madrid Campus, Saint Louis University Madrid Campus, the American College in Spain, etc.

Science and education are becoming the main area of cooperation, and education is seen as the basis for integration with Latin American countries. In the 2018—2019 academic year, in the Spanish university system there were 39,878 students from Latin America and the Caribbean on distance learning. This is an increase of 1,000 students from the previous year. Colombians and Venezuelans are the most numerous Latin Americans in pre-university education in Spain, with 40,174 and 36,235 students respectively in the 2020—2021 academic year.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Javier A. F. Cuál debe ser el papel de España en la educación superior de Latinoamérica // El País. 18.09.2020. URL: <https://elpais.com/sociedad/futuros-educacion/2020-09-18/cual-debe-ser-el-papel-de-espana-en-la-educacion-superior-de-latinoamerica.html> (accessed: 15.06.2022).



Education is turning into a universal tool of Spain's soft power, helping to strengthen its ties with Latin America and promoting its political interests there.

### **Carolina Foundation and AECID in Spanish Educational Diplomacy**

The goal of the Carolina Foundation, established in 2000, was to promote the popularity of Spanish universities and research centers around the world, to create a unified Ibero-American scientific and educational space. The Foundation carried out research activities first through the Center for Ibero-American Studies (CEHI), and since 2004 through the Center for Latin American Studies and International Cooperation (CeALCI), which, after organizing 80 seminars and issuing 150 publications, has become a respected center of expertise in the field of international research on problems development. The Foundation develops education based on academic programs in the field of the environment, social innovation, IT technologies and gender equality. As of 2020, postgraduate scholarships are distributed in areas known as the "five P": people, planet, prosperity, peace, justice and sustainable institutions, and alliances (partnerships) (in Spanish — Personas, Planeta, Prosperidad, Paz, justicia e instituciones solidas y alianzas (Partenariados)).

In its 20 years of activity, the Foundation has provided 17,256 scholarships and grants in the following forms: 11,748 postgraduate scholarships; 3121 for doctoral students and doctoral internships, 1711 teacher mobility fellowships and 676 other fellowships. The institution has implemented 3491 programs in public and private universities in Spain and signed 3167 agreements with almost 300 Spanish and Latin American organizations.<sup>11</sup>

The Foundation conducts research in the field of higher education, multilateralism and regionalism, digitalization and inclusiveness,

<sup>11</sup> Historia de la Fundación Carolina // La Fundación Carolina. URL: <https://www.fundacioncarolina.es/la-fundacion/historia/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

relations between the European Union and Latin America. Cooperation has been expanded with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), EU — LAC Foundation, OECD Development Center, UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education, and others. Thanks to initiatives such as "Young Leaders," "Women Leaders" or "Ibero-American Journalists," more than 3,000 people have received internship opportunities in Spain, and were able to establish contacts with colleagues and strengthen horizontal cooperation within the "Carolina Network," which connects more than 20,000 people, including former students, leaders, researchers and professionals (Morales San-Juan, 2017, p. 314).

The Spanish development agency AECID, in addition to providing humanitarian assistance and ODA, also focuses on supporting contacts in the field of science and education. Since 2018, with the change of government, a cooperation policy is emerging from the so-called "detachment period," when from 2010 to 2016 Spain's ODA to Latin American countries declined due to the crisis situation in the country. In 2018, Latin America received USD 288.8 million in ODA, which contrasts with the growth in private investment in the region over the same period (Atienza & Macías, 2020). In 2018—2019 the government identified as a priority the "revival of the policy of international cooperation for development," and set the goal of increasing the volume of official development assistance to the average level in Europe. Spain has signed so-called Country Partnership Programs with every Latin American country. Humanitarian assistance was 7.4 million euros in 2018 and 4.9 million euros in 2019.<sup>12</sup> In 2020, 33% of AECID humanitarian resources were devoted exclusively to addressing the challenges caused

<sup>12</sup> Panorama Humanitario 2019/2020. América Latina y el Caribe // AECID. URL: <https://www.aecid.es/Centro-Documentacion/Documentos/200519%20Panorama%20Humanitaria%20ALC%202019-20%20con%20NIPO.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

by the COVID-19 pandemic in the region, of which almost 60% of the funds were allocated to address problems to help, at the regional level, Venezuelan refugees and migrants and their countries of destination.<sup>13</sup> The Agency's humanitarian resources have quadrupled compared to previous years, reaching almost 28 million euros.<sup>14</sup> In 2021, 2.253 billion euros had already been allocated for development assistance (more than 5 million for the development of education and 1.589 million for the promotion of Spanish culture).<sup>15</sup>

AECID has 31 technical cooperation offices, 16 of them — in Latin America. 11 of 13 cultural centers are located in Latin America and promote Spanish policy of cultural and scientific cooperation, as well as the provision of scholarships for study in Spain (Becas MAEC–AECID).<sup>16</sup> AECID has 4 training centers in Bolivia, Guatemala, Colombia and Uruguay, that specialized in knowledge management and transfer, serving as fora for the exchange of experiences on development issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

According to the provisions of Spain's "V General Plan for Cooperation,"<sup>17</sup> special

attention is paid to such areas as human rights and fundamental freedoms, gender policy, the environment, and respect for cultural diversity. In partnership with UNICEF, AECID is working to close the digital education divide in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Peru; through its Educ@ Foundation, it promotes the integration of children of Venezuelan migrants into the education system in Colombia, expands educational services for children in southern Haiti affected by the 2021 earthquake, ensures adolescents have access to inclusive and quality education in Venezuela, which was reflected in the adopted Spanish Humanitarian Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2022—2023.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Ibero-American Community of Nations and the Formation of a Common Educational Space**

Within the framework of the Ibero-American Community of Nations (ICN), created in 1991 and uniting 22 states, education, scientific and cultural cooperation were also declared as priorities. At the ICN summits, education was seen as a factor in community cohesion, and an essential element of social policy and economic development.<sup>19</sup> The Ibero-American educational television program TEIB, aimed at teacher education, the MUTIS Program and then the IBERCAMPUS Program, aimed at increasing inter-university mobility of students, graduate students and teachers, within the

<sup>13</sup> COVID-19 en América Latina y el Caribe: Consecuencias socioeconómicas y prioridades de política // OCDE. 08.12.2020. URL: <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/covid-19-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe-consecuencias-socioeconomicas-y-prioridades-de-politica-26a07844/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>14</sup> Panorama Humanitario 2020/2021. América Latina y el Caribe // AECID. URL: <https://www.aecid.es/Centro-Documentacion/Documentos/Acci%C3%B3n%20Humanitaria/210923%20Panorama%20Humanitaria%20ALC%2020-21%20con%20NIPO.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>15</sup> Propuesta de Presupuestos Generales del Estado para 2021. Informe Ayuda Oficial al Desarrollo // Ministerio de la presidencia, relaciones con las cortes. 04.11.2020. URL: [https://www.congreso.es/docu/pge2021/121-35-3\\_Ayuda\\_Oficial\\_al\\_Desarrollo\\_de\\_la\\_AGE.pdf](https://www.congreso.es/docu/pge2021/121-35-3_Ayuda_Oficial_al_Desarrollo_de_la_AGE.pdf) (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>16</sup> Becas MAEC–AECID para cursos, especializaciones y maestrías en España // Oficina de Comunicaciones y Relaciones Institucionales. 22.01.2020. URL: <https://www.gob.pe/institucion/pronabec/noticias/490781-becas-maec-aecid-para-cursos-especializaciones-y-maestrias-en-espana> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>17</sup> V Plan Director de la Cooperación Española 2018—2021 // AECID. URL: <https://www.aecid.es/>

Centro-Documentacion/Documentos/Planificación/PD%202018-2021.pdf (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>18</sup> España aporta 6,78 millones de euros para apoyar la atención humanitaria en América Latina y el Caribe // Naciones Unidas Centro Regional de Información. 01.02.2022. URL: <https://unric.org/es/espana-aporta-678-millones-de-euros-para-apoyar-la-atencion-humanitaria-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe/> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>19</sup> "The Social Role of Education" (XX Summit, Argentina, 2010), "The Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Role of the Ibero-American Community in the New World Context" (XXIII Summit, Panama, 2013), "Ibero-America in the 21st Century: Education, Innovation and culture" (XXIV Summit, Mexico, 2014), "Youth, entrepreneurship, education" (XXV Summit, Colombia, 2016).



framework of prestigious educational institutions in Ibero-America, the Cooperation Program for the Development of National Educational Quality Assessment Systems, IBEROFOP Vocational Training Cooperation Program, the Ibero-American Educational Management Modernization Program IBERMADE, etc.

At the 14th Ibero-American Summit, San José, 2004, the task was to strengthen “education for progress,” to create an Ibero-American knowledge space focused on the necessary transformation of higher education and research activities, on developments in the field of innovation, which summit participants considered a necessary condition for increasing labor productivity, reducing the digital divide between the region and the rest of the world, and for enhancing Latin America’s international competitiveness.<sup>20</sup> At the 20th Summit (Argentina, 2010), the focus was on the development of “education for social inclusion.” At the summits in Cartagena (2016) and Guatemala (2018), initiatives were launched to promote academic mobility with the provision of 200,000 scholarships for teachers, researchers and students.<sup>21</sup> More than 600 public and private organizations from 18 Ibero-American countries have already joined these initiatives. This commonality unity is one of the most important instruments of Spain’s Latin American policy in the field of education and science, although it has experienced a number of serious crises (Yakovlev, 2016, pp. 43—47).

Since the early 2000s, the ICN has launched a number of academic exchange and mobility programs to increase opportunities to study and conduct research at foreign universities and laboratories. At the same time, many scholarships are allocated for Latin American students and teachers for internships in Spain. Thus, in 2013—2014, within the

<sup>20</sup> Declaración de San José // La Secretaría General Iberoamericana. URL: <https://www.segib.org/?document=declaracion-de-san-jose> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

framework of the “Pablo Neruda” academic mobility program 20% of the total number of scholarship holders completed internships at Spanish universities.<sup>22</sup>

The Ibero-American Organization for the Promotion of Education, Science and Culture (OEI, Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura)<sup>23</sup> operates within the framework of the ICN, and 24% of its total funding is provided by Spain.<sup>24</sup> It was OEI, relying on a number of comprehensive studies that identified the reasons for the LACH lagging behind other regions in the field of higher education and research and development (R&D). Among the negative factors identified were: insignificant spending on higher education, insufficient training of teaching staff and, therefore, their insufficient numbers, and a weak system of training in the field of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). In 2018, for example, only Ecuador allocated 2.18% of GDP for the development of higher education. In Chile, it was 1.36%, in Brazil — 1.31%, in Argentina — 1.21%, in Mexico — 1.02%, in other countries, it was much less than even that (Dutrénit et al., 2021).

There are about 4000 higher education institutions in Ibero-America, which is a historical record for the region, but these universities occupy a modest place in world rankings: only 3 are in the TOP-200 of the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), and 79 are in the TOP-1000<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> El espacio iberoamericano del conocimiento // SEGIB. Memoria annual. 2016. URL: <https://www.segib.org/memoria2016/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/04-espacio-conocimiento.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>23</sup> Members of the organization are: Andorra, Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Venezuela, Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Spain, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Portugal, El Salvador, Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador and Ecuatorial Guinea.

<sup>24</sup> Memoria 2011—2012. Programa Presupuesto 2013—2014 // OEI. Memorias de actividades. URL: <https://oei.int/pt/publicacoes/memoria-2011-2012-programa-presupuesto-2013-2014> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>25</sup> 2020 Academic Ranking of World Universities // Shanghai Ranking Consultancy. URL:

(40 of them are in Spain, 22 — in Brazil, 9 — in Portugal, 4 — in Chile, 2 each — in Mexico and Argentina, and 1 each — in Colombia and Uruguay). About 60% of research projects are carried out in universities. However, the share of students studying at the doctoral level in 2017 was only 0.8% of the total, and at the master's level — 5.4%. The number of researchers per 1,000 labor force in the region in 2013 was 0.98%, and in 2017 it was 1.03%. The largest number of researchers is in Argentina (2.91%), followed by Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Uruguay (Dutrénit et al., 2021).

An important fact is that the largest number of publications by Latin American researchers is devoted to the problems of agroecology, tropical medicine, sustainable ecosystems, biodiversity conservation, the agricultural system. Research on biotechnology, robotics, and important strategic technologies account for only 7.1% of the world's publications (Basco et al., 2020). 60% of PhDs in areas such as mathematics, IT technology, engineering were prepared by Hispanics in Canada and the USA, and only 26% in Mexico.<sup>26</sup> Taking into account the data of ECLAC that the population of the region, which today is 620 million people, will reach 784 million by 2050 and the number of students will double by 2040 — from 30, 4 to 65.4 million people, despite the consequences of COVID-19, it should be emphasized that Latin American universities face a serious task — to ensure that the training of qualified specialists meets the requirements of the economy and technological development (Ermolyeva, 2014, pp. 27—41).

The Ibero-American community began expanding interaction with the EU to achieve these goals, and support the development of interuniversity associations. OEI works with the EU both through policy dialogue in the field of education, science and culture, as well as through joint programs and projects. In 2020,

<https://www.shanghairanking.com/rankings/arwu/2020> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>26</sup> Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators // OECD iLibrary. URL: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2020\\_69096873-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2020_69096873-en) (accessed: 15.06.2022).

there were 224 programs implemented in Latin America, where about 702 thousand students completed their studies; approximately 98,000 teachers completed advanced training courses; more than 750 studies have been carried out, as well as about 2000 congresses and various events.<sup>27</sup> The educational project “Goals 2021” put forward by Spain (“Metas 2021: la educación que queremos para la generación de los Bicentenarios”) received support from the EU: at the 6th EU — LAC summit, Madrid, 2010, the leading European states decided to provide it with additional financial subsidies to supplement the appropriations that the countries of Latin America had to find themselves.

Since 2006, the EU has implemented the *EUROSociAL Educacion* program, which involves relevant departments from 14 Latin American states and several European countries. The work of the organization is supported by a special OEI Foundation with headquarters in Spain, as well as by the International Center for Educational Research in Paris (CIEP—Francia) and the International Committee for Population Problems (CISP—Italia). The main task of *EUROSociAL Educacion* is to promote Latin American policies aimed at achieving social cohesion, to develop new competencies among students.<sup>28</sup>

Within the framework of the ICN, there are a number of associations aimed at improving higher education in Latin America. The Association of Ibero-American Postgraduate Universities (Asociación Universitaria Iberoamericana de Postgrado, AUIP), recognized by UNESCO, currently has

<sup>27</sup> La Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos. 70 años trabajando por la educación, la ciencia y la cultura en Iberoamérica // OEI. URL: <https://www.oei.es/uploads/files/microsites/6/34/libro-70-anos-oei-el-reto-iberoamericano-educacion-ciencia-y-cultura.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>28</sup> EUROSOCIAL+: La nueva fase del programa de la Unión Europea para el periodo 2006—2021 con el objetivo de incrementar la cohesión social en América Latina // EUROSOCIAL. 28.04.2016. URL: <http://eurosocial-ii.eurosocial.eu/es/noticia/eurosocial-puesta-en-marcha-de-la-nueva-fase-del-programa-de-la-1> (15.06.2022).

254 partner institutions located in the following countries: Argentina (22), Bolivia (6), Brazil (9), Chile (12), Colombia (50), Costa Rica (2), Cuba (9), Ecuador (16), El Salvador (2), Spain (50), Guatemala (2), Honduras (1), Mexico (28), Nicaragua (5), Panama (2), Paraguay (3), Peru (12), Portugal (5), Puerto Rico (1), Dominican Republic (5), Uruguay (6), Venezuela (6). 50 partner institutions are located in different autonomous communities.<sup>29</sup>

As a general goal, the task is to promote the provision of high academic quality in the training of university teachers, scientists and specialists at the level of doctoral students, the academic mobility of teachers, as well as the improvement of management and organizational development of universities. Joint programs are formed on the basis of consortia or strategic alliances between several universities with the financial support of the Autonomous Communities of the Kingdom. Thus, the General Secretariat for Universities, Research and Technology of the Council of Andalusia actively supports the Program of Academic Exchanges and Mobility (Programa de intercambio y movilidad académica, PIMA): in 2013, the Council allocated USD 407,000 for scholarships under this program, from 2011 to 2016, it funded the creation of about 40 research networks in various scientific fields, and, in 2015, awarded 600 scholarships for master's and doctoral studies.<sup>30</sup> In 2020—2021, The “Joint Program for the training of researchers and teachers for higher education” (Programas Colaborativos de Formacion Doctoral) between the universities of Andalusia and Latin America in the field of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and in the field of SDGs was adopted. Within the framework of this program, new scientific areas were developed — sustainable energy, food technologies, economics and computerization of

enterprises, the media, maritime law, international law, biomedicine, IT technologies in education. In 2020—2021, 620 scholarships worth 860,000 euros were awarded. In 2022, 23 doctoral programs are already being implemented, and 72 Ibero-American research networks (Redes Iberoamericanas de investigadores, RII) and the Ibero-American Knowledge Space (Espacio Iberoamericano de Conocimiento, EIC) have been created, whose activities are aimed at improving the quality of postgraduate education.<sup>31</sup>

In the Plan for 2022—2023 the tasks are to strengthen the EIC, expand academic exchanges for effective interaction in social, cultural, economic, industrial, geopolitical spheres, technology transfer. A goal has been set to open 36 more general research networks to bring their number to 108. The plan provides for the allocation of 400 scholarships for doctoral studies, 424 scholarships for masters. For academic mobility, expenses include 3.378 million euros out of a total amount of 5.5 million euros, which includes expenses for the institutional strengthening of the entire system, seminars, fora, innovations in education.<sup>32</sup>

The Tordesillas Group (Grupo Tordesillas), an academic network of universities in Spain, Portugal and Brazil, has been functioning since 2000. Within the framework of this association, joint participation in examination commissions; integration of research groups, association of professors in areas of scientific interest, joint publications, international seminars and joint training on an interdisciplinary basis are being carried out. The organization is made up of 54 universities, including 24 from Brazil, 10 from Portugal and 20 from Spain. In 2018, at the 19 meeting of rectors, an agreement was signed between the Tordesillas Group and the Carolina Foundation to provide 12 scholarships for the internship of professors and doctors of

<sup>29</sup> Auiip Conecta // AUIP. URL: <https://auip.org/es/auip-conecta> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>30</sup> Informe de Gestion 2020—2021 // AUIP. URL: <https://informesgestion.auip.org/2022/files/downloads/InformeGestionBarranquilla2022.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>31</sup> Plan de acción 2022—2023 // AUIP. URL: [https://planesaccion.auip.org/2022-2023/files/downloads/plan\\_accion\\_2022\\_2023.pdf](https://planesaccion.auip.org/2022-2023/files/downloads/plan_accion_2022_2023.pdf) (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

sciences from Portuguese and Brazilian universities in Spanish universities — members of this group. This was followed by the first meeting of the “Doctoral Colleges of Tordesillas,” which was attended by 50 professors and doctors of science from the three member states of the Group. There are currently four “Colleges of Tordesillas” in operation to enhance PhDs in nursing, physics, public health and the history of science, languages and cultures.<sup>33</sup>

The Association “Grupo La Rábida” brings together 80 universities from 17 countries and is aimed at academic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation, strengthening ties between universities and the integration of Ibero-American peoples. The group is led by three Spanish universities: the University of Cadiz, the University of Granada and the University of Huelva. The Association conducts lectures, seminars, summer schools, provides scholarships, creates regional research groups to develop joint projects in the field of culture, science, technology, both in the academic and student environments.

The Proeduca Group sets an ambitious goal — to create an Ibero-American space of higher education (Espacio Iberoamericano de Educación Superior), for which the Cofuturo Consortium, an academic alliance of Spanish and Latin American universities led by the International University of La Rioja (UNIR), was created. Its goal is to implement joint inter-university doctoral programs and virtual mobility plans, such as the Mejía Lequerica program, which UNIR is successfully implementing, for example, with 15 Ecuadorian universities. The pandemic has raised the issue of the expansion of distance education, the digital transformation of higher education, and in 2022 the Proeduca Group and OEI announced the provision of 150 scholarships for masters

and doctoral students to “help universities move to a virtual modality.”<sup>34</sup> OEI is the coordinator of cooperation between Ibero-American universities, for which the OEI Center for Higher University Studies, which deals with the certification of degrees and joint programs, was established. In addition, together with the University of Alcalá de Henares (UAH), it created the OEI–UAH Department of Ibero-American Education.

One of the latest OEI initiatives has been the creation of the Ibero-American Institute for Education and Productivity (IIEYP), which aims to study the relationship between education and productivity, identifying best practices in policies that promote the creation and application of knowledge and innovation to stimulate economic growth. Since 2019, OEI, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, together with the Latin American Education Network (la Red Latinoamericana por la Educación, REDUCA), attracts public organizations, private campaigns, such as Fundación Telefónica, to implement digitalization initiatives in schools, development of ICT, the formation of new skills and competencies.<sup>35</sup>

## Conclusion

The ambitious task that Spanish politicians set back in the 1980s, when the dictatorial bureaucratic apparatus was dismantled and the principles of a new democratic state were being built, was to regain their geopolitical influence in Latin America. It continues to be a strategic goal at the present time. However, no matter which parties lead Spanish politics, they clearly understand that Latin America, a region close to

<sup>33</sup> La UGR acoge el XIX Encuentro de Rectores del Grupo Tordesillas bajo el lema “Universidades inclusivas para avanzar en la Agenda 2030” // Canal UGR. 09.11.2018. URL: <https://canal.ugr.es/noticia/ugr-xix-encuentro-de-rectores-del-grupo-tordesillas/> (accessed: 15.06.22).

<sup>34</sup> La Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos. 70 años trabajando por la educación, la ciencia y la cultura en Iberoamérica // OEI. URL: <https://www.oei.es/uploads/files/microsites/6/34/libro-70-anos-oei-el-reto-iberoamericano-educacion-ciencia-y-cultura.pdf> (accessed: 15.06.2022).

<sup>35</sup> La educación en tiempos de la pandemia de COVID-19 // Repositorio CEPAL. Agosto de 2020. URL: [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45904/S2000510\\_es.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/45904/S2000510_es.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (accessed: 15.06.2022).

them in terms of national and cultural identity, is the most difficult for their expansion there. The Monroe Doctrine, although quite old, is used by the US every time they realize that someone is trying not even to replace them, but simply to reduce slightly their global dominance in this region. Spain, having lost its colonies on the American continent, is trying to regain influence there by fostering the growth of political and cultural elite that speaks the same language and shares the same civilizational and ideological values. Therefore, using the strategies of humanitarian policy and, above all, its scientific and educational component, it can gain a foothold there. This article demonstrated how, with the help of public and public-private organizations, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and affiliated structures, to various

cultural and educational centers, Spain annually increases its humanitarian presence in the region, providing scholarships, programs to help education and science, organizing joint projects. Hundreds of these programs have been adopted in recent years, and their number is growing annually. The result of this strategy has been the successful implementation in Latin America of its educational and cultural priorities and the formation of an Ibero-American educational space. In this way, in just the last 20 years, Spain has made tangible progress. The educational priorities of Spain's humanitarian policy, the methods and strategies used by this country, primarily in Latin America, can serve as a good example for Russia, especially in the new geopolitical conditions.

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