

Biographies of speakers



REGIONAL ERASMUS+ CLUSTER MEETING AND CONTACT-MAKING SEMINAR 2025 for Latin America and the Caribbean

7-8 October 2025 | Bogotá, Colombia



Ricardo Moreno Patiño

Deputy Minister for Higher Education

Ricardo Moreno Patiño holds a degree in Social Sciences and a Master's in Interdisciplinary Social Research. He is currently pursuing graduate studies at the Institute for Political Studies and International Relations (IEPRI) at the National University of Colombia. With more than 19 years of experience, he has held key positions such as Director of Higher Education and Manager of the Higher Education for Citizenship Project at the Bogotá Secretariat of Education, where he led initiatives including the creation of the Atenea Agency and the city's first multicampus in Kennedy.

He has also worked as a consultant for peace education programs with the UNDP and supported peacebuilding policies at the Ministry of Agriculture and the Rural Development Agency. In his current role, he has contributed to strengthening the quality and accessibility of Colombia's higher education system and participated in the transition team for the current national government.



François Roudié

Ambassador of the European Union to Colombia

François Roudié, originally from Bordeaux, France, has worked in the European Union's diplomatic service for 18 years, with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean.

Between 2021 and 2025, he was EU Ambassador to El Salvador and to the Central American Integration System (SICA). Previously, he served as Deputy Head of Division for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean in the European External Action Service (2018–2021), Deputy Head of the EU Delegations in Argentina (2014–2018) and Uruguay (2010–2014), Climate Diplomacy Officer in the EEAS (2007–2010), and Political Assistant in the Directorate-General for Communication of the European Commission (2004–2007). He was also legislative negotiator in the Commission's General Secretariat (2001–2004) and began his career as Political Advisor in the European Parliament (1994–2000).

The Ambassador holds two master's degrees in European Political Affairs and Comparative European History. He also has a diploma in Journalism and studied Political Science. In addition to French, his mother tongue, he speaks English and Spanish. François Roudié has been EU Ambassador to Colombia since 15 September 2025.



Daniel Almeida

Youth Power Germany e.V. (VET project EcoLume)

Daniel Almeida is Co-Director and Project Manager at Youth Power Germany (YP-DE). With a degree in Contemporary Art and a master's in Cultural Management, he combines creativity with management skills to design and lead impactful initiatives. His expertise includes coordinating research-based projects, such as Horizon-funded programmes, and conducting research on digital employability and youth participation.

Daniel develops and implements educational programmes across Europe, supporting capacity-building for youth, educators and communities. He provides training and mentoring on inclusion, intercultural dialogue and social participation, fostering tolerance, cross-cultural understanding and active citizenship.

At Youth Power Germany, he builds partnerships with universities, municipalities, educators, NGOs and young people across Europe, Latin America and Africa. Through these connections, the organisation strengthens international collaboration and knowledge exchange while advancing innovative approaches to youth participation and community development.



Héctor Amado Salvatierra

Universidad Galileo, Guatemala (CBHE project: MOCHILA)

Héctor R. Amado-Salvatierra holds a PhD in Information and Knowledge Engineering from the University of Alcalá, Spain. He is Coordinator of the Research Area at the GES Department, Universidad Galileo (Guatemala), where he leads innovation and development initiatives in education and technology. Héctor serves as National Contact Point for Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space in the EU's Horizon Europe programme and is a member of Guatemala's International Network for Science, Technology and Innovation.

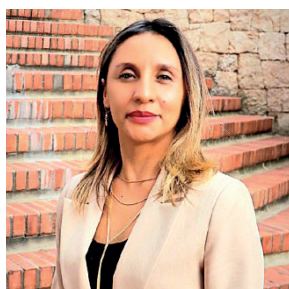
With extensive experience in the formulation, management and evaluation of international projects, he has contributed to numerous EU co-funded initiatives, including INTEGRITY-AI, GENIAL, MOCHILA, ECOcredGT, PROF-XXI, MOOC-Maker and FreeNetwork. These projects have addressed themes such as digital and micro-credentials, artificial intelligence in education, youth entrepreneurship, and the promotion of green and digital citizenship, fostering transformation in higher education across Latin America and Europe.



Sandra Cecilia Bautista Rodríguez

Universidad Central, Colombia (CBHE project TechTraPlastiCE)

Sandra Cecilia Bautista Rodríguez is a chemical engineer with dual PhDs: Chemical Engineering (National University of Colombia) and Industrial Systems Engineering (Université de Lorraine, France). Associate Professor at Universidad Central (Bogotá) and an Associate Researcher (Minciencias), she completed postdoctoral work at ERPI (Université de Lorraine) and has been a visiting professor at European institutions. She is involved in the Erasmus+ project TechTraPlastiCE on strengthening circular-economy knowledge transfer in Latin America's plastics sector. Her research focuses on bio-economy, territorial sustainability, circular economy and socio-ecological systems modelling. Sandra has led and joined international research and cooperation projects on environmental management, ecosystem services and sustainability transitions in agroecosystems and productive sectors. Her publications include Journal of Cleaner Production, Environmental Impact Assessment Review and Cleaner Engineering and Technology, as well as book chapters and teaching materials. Awards include Universidad Central's Pedagogical Innovation Prize, and she has supervised award-winning theses in circular economy and sustainability.



Elizabeth Bernal Gamboa

General Secretary, ASCUN (National Universities Association of Colombia)

Elizabeth Bernal Gamboa has over 20 years of experience in higher education as a professor, researcher, consultant, and executive. She has worked with public and private universities, government institutions, and international organisations, leading projects on the 2030 Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, digital transformation, student-centred learning, and climate change. Her initiatives have engaged more than 300 institutions and thousands of participants, promoting dialogue between academia, government, and society.

Elizabeth is currently Secretary General of the Colombian Association of Universities (ASCUN), where she supports policy advocacy, institutional cooperation, leadership training, and internationalisation. Internationally, she is a member of UNILEAD's community of young women leaders in higher education, contributed to UNESCO-IESALC's CRES+5 follow-up, and served as Executive Secretary of ENLACES, where she now acts as Academic Coordinator. Her expertise lies in connecting higher education, sustainability, and policymaking for the green transition.

Germán Bernal Ríos

Policy Officer, International Cooperation in Education, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Germán Bernal Ríos works in the International Cooperation Unit of the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) of the European Commission. For the past six years he has been in charge of cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean region, with an emphasis on the international dimension of the Erasmus+ programme. He has now undertaken the same role for the Latin America and Caribbean region. In DG EAC, Germán's past assignments were in the unit in charge of the overall coordination of Erasmus+ programme and in policy development in the fields of School Education and Digital Education.



Martina Bo

Erasmus Student Network Liaison Officer for America

Martina is Italian by birth and citizen of the world by adoption. She is specialised in diplomacy, European affairs and public policy. She worked for the Italian Chamber of Commerce in the Dominican Republic and the Representation of the European Commission in Italy. Currently, she is the Liaison Officer for the Americas of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), advocating for global mobility. She is also a Senior Consultant at Deloitte Luxembourg, where she advises European Union Institutions.



Ana Lucía Bravo

Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar, Ecuador (EMJMD project CCD-SteDe)

Ana Lucía Bravo is a PhD student in Agrarian Social Studies at the National University of Córdoba, Argentina. She has over 15 years of experience working on issues related to food sovereignty. She is the local coordinator of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree in Climate Change and Sustainable Territorial Development (CCD SteDe) at the Andean University Simón Bolívar.



Cédric Cabanne

Project Adviser, European Education and Culture Executive Agency

Born in Toulouse, France, Cédric Cabanne is a Project Officer at the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission, where he contributes to the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme's Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) action, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A specialist in sustainable development, Cédric holds postgraduate degrees in Geography from the University Toulouse-Jean-Jaurès and in International Economics from the University Paris-Sud. A former resident of the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris, he also spent a year in Mexico conducting field research. Over the course of his career, Cédric has led civil society cooperation programmes involving stakeholders in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Western Balkans.



Vanessa Caicedo Sánchez

Erasmus+ National Focal Point for Colombia

With a background in International Relations, a specialisation in Social Policy, and a Global MBA, Vanessa Caicedo Sánchez brings more than 20 years of experience leading teams and managing strategic partnerships with international stakeholders, the private sector, and multilateral organisations.

Her career spans high-impact roles across the public and private sectors. In the public sector, she has served as advisor and head of International Cooperation Offices. In the private sector, she was Executive Director of a Business Foundation, where she advanced international cooperation projects, negotiated agreements, and promoted initiatives aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under sustainability and ESG frameworks.

Currently, as Head of the Office of International Relations at ICETEX, Vanessa continues to strengthen global ties and create opportunities that foster social and educational development, driving technical cooperation in education.



Ramón Fernando Colmenares Quintero

Institute of the Universidad Corporativa de Colombia (BERSTIC project)

Fernando Colmenares is CEO of BERSTIC and Director of the Engineering Research Institute (In³) at the Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia. With over 20 years of international experience, he is recognised as a champion of science diplomacy, building bridges between Europe, Asia and Latin America to turn research into practical solutions. His work integrates technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital twins and digital platforms to drive impact in renewable energy, the circular bioeconomy, digital transformation and science-based entrepreneurship.

Fernando founded BERSTIC as a global network fostering sustainable projects and alliances across academia, industry, government and communities. His projects, supported by the EU, UKRI, Horizon Europe and the Royal Academy of Engineering, focus on clean energy, bioeconomy and digital innovation. As a mentor and science communicator, Fernando promotes international cooperation to advance inclusive and equitable development.



Constanza Bertilda Correa Sarmiento

Experta Integrada en Educación y Desarrollo Estratégico, AHK Colombia

Constanza Correa is an economist specialised in international cooperation from Philipps-Universität Marburg (Germany) with more than 30 years of professional experience. Since 2021 she has served as Integrated Expert of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) at the German-Colombian Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK Colombia), where she leads initiatives on just energy transition, renewable energies, energy communities, green hydrogen, and the circular economy.

Among Constanza's main achievements is the promotion of the Regional Training Center for Renewable Energies (CERFER), supporting knowledge transfer and dual training models to strengthen local capacities in Colombia and Latin America. Her work connects the private sector, academia, and international cooperation, fostering public-private projects that integrate education, technological innovation, and sustainable development within the framework of the Climate Alliance and Just Energy Transition between Germany and Colombia, while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals.



Yanelys Delgado Triana

Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas, Cuba (Jean Monnet project EULP27)

Yanelys Delgado Triana holds a PhD in Legal Sciences (2007) from the University of Havana. She is Full Professor and Director of Internationalization at Universidad Central Marta Abreu de Las Villas. She completed a specialised human rights course at the Inter-American Institute (Costa Rica) and postdoctoral work at Pompeu Fabra University and the University of Pavia. She has led and coordinated international research projects including Environmental Law (Université Paris 1), Erasmus KA107 Interdisciplinary Research Methods (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), ESLatinA (University of Birmingham), Erasmus-JMO EULP27 and XREI (VUB), and coordinates the JUST SIDE network (University of Coimbra). Yanelys is a member of the Ibero-American Association of Constitutional Law, coordinates the master's in Economic and Social Rights, and serves on the Academic Committee of the PhD in Legal Sciences. Her publications include Springer, Taylor & Francis and Global Jurist, and SCOPUS-indexed journals on constitutional law, human rights, and energy, food and water.



Oscar Roberto Espinoza Lastra

UNIANDES, Ecuador, (CBHE project ICOOPEB)

Oscar Roberto Espinoza Lastra is an Ecuadorian professor and researcher with a PhD in Local Development and Territorial Innovation from the University of Alicante. He also holds a master's degree in Business Management, a bachelor's in Business Administration, and a bachelor's in Educational Sciences.

He is a Full Professor and Research Coordinator at the Regional Autonomous University of the Andes (UNIANDES) in Puyo, Ecuador. He leads the Multidisciplinary Research Group for Entrepreneurship, Gender Equality and Sustainable Rural Development (EMIGEDERS) and is a member of the Official International Research Group “Cooperativism, Rural Development and Solidarity Enterprises in the European Union and Latin America.”

Oscar leads the international cooperation project ICOOPEB as UNIANDES' representative under Erasmus+, and served as Ecuador lead for the University of Alicante's Development Cooperation Projects, participating in the annual calls from 2017 to 2023.



Rafael González Muñoz

Universidad de las Artes (ISA), Cuba (CBHE project EVA)

Rafael González Muñoz is a Cuban writer and playwright who graduated from the University of the Arts of Cuba (ISA). He was national president of the Hermanos Saíz Association (AHS) and is currently president of the Playwrights Section of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) in Havana.

He is Vice Dean of the Faculty of Theatrical Arts at ISA and dramaturgical advisor to Teatro Cañabrava in Cienfuegos, where several of his plays have premiered. He has published more than a dozen books with Cuban publishers including Reina del Mar Editores, Ediciones La Luz, Casa Editora Abril, Editorial Pueblo y Educación, and Ediciones Matanzas, as well as with Enlace Editorial and Libros & Libros in Colombia and Selvi Ediciones in Spain.

Rafael has also coordinated international cooperation projects such as Juntarte: The Creative Chain that Makes the Stage Inclusive and the Erasmus+ projects CL.au.DI.A, CREAC, and EVA.



Anna Herrero

Cooperation Officer, European Commission, Directorate-General for International Partnerships

Anna Herrero is an official at the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) of the European Commission. In the Regional Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, she is responsible for higher education, vocational training, youth, and social cohesion. She holds a degree in Humanities.

With more than 20 years of experience in international cooperation, Anna has worked extensively with the EU in Brussels, as well as on international assignments in Egypt and Nicaragua. Her career began in local and regional public administrations.



Facundo Manzi

Warm Argentina (CBHE project SLGB)

Facundo Manzi is an agricultural engineer with a master's degree in marketing and is currently pursuing a PhD. He has over ten years of private-sector experience leading international initiatives in climate innovation and sustainable development. His expertise includes project design and stakeholder engagement to drive systemic change through the agricultural bioeconomy.

Through his NGO, Facundo builds bridges between Latin America and Europe, leading participatory processes and international cooperation projects that bring together local governments, universities, communities, and businesses. His work focuses on developing and implementing innovative solutions that combine education and climate action and deliver positive, measurable results. His overarching goal is to contribute to building a just, resilient, and sustainable future.



Ester Montiel Cortés

Project Adviser, European Education and Culture Executive Agency

Ester Montiel Cortés works as a Project Officer at the European Education and Culture Executive Agency within the European Commission. In her role, she oversees international Erasmus+ projects, with a focus on vocational education and training (VET) and virtual exchanges. She is committed to fostering collaboration and exchange to enhance education and skills development internationally.



Alejandra Nazar-Kafati

Think Digital, Honduras (VET project DigiBuild)

Alejandra Nazar Kafaty is a digital transformation and project management expert with 15+ years leading strategic initiatives. Co-founder of Think Digital and a Council Founding Member at Empresa AI, she advances tech education and AI-powered solutions across Central America. A graduate of MIT Professional Education (Certificate in Digital Transformation), she designs programmes for high-performing teams and works with national and international organisations to implement recognised project-management methodologies. Alejandra is also co-author of the book *Liderazgo Femenino: Inspirando, Empoderando y Rompiendo Barreras*. An active PMI volunteer, she was the first Honduran woman to help validate and translate into Spanish the PMBOK® Guide (7th edition). Her work focuses on empowering leaders through education and innovation.



Jesús Olivero-Verbel

Universidad de Cartagena, Colombia (CBHE project CLIMAR)

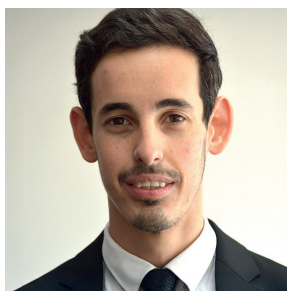
Prof. Jesús Olivero-Verbel holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Toxicology from Michigan State University and is currently Full Professor at the University of Cartagena, Colombia. He serves as Director of the Institute for Research on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, and coordinates both the Ph.D. Program in Environmental Toxicology and the Ph.D. Program in Environment and Sustainable Development. He has authored more than 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals and has been honoured with prestigious national and international awards, including the Kenneth E. Moore Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at Michigan State University, the Distinguished Toxicology Award from the Hispanic Organization of Toxicologists (HOT) of the Society of Toxicology (SOT), and most recently, the Lifetime Achievement Award (Premio de Vida y Obra) granted by the Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences.



Lisa Presciani

Unidad Planificación y Desarrollo, Colombia, (CBHE project SUREST)

Lisa Presciani holds a master's degree in organic agriculture from the University of Bologna (UNIBO) and a degree in statistical sciences. Since 2015, she has coordinated projects for UPD. A specialist in peace and human rights, she currently leads the SUREST project, promoting the inclusion of vulnerable communities in education and employment.



Alejandro Quinteros

Erasmus+ National Focal Point for Uruguay

Alejandro Quinteros is a lawyer and notary public who graduated from the Catholic University of Uruguay and holds a university diploma in South–South and Triangular Cooperation from the National University of Córdoba. Since 2022 he has served as the Focal Point for the Erasmus+ Programme in Uruguay and, since 2020, as the National Contact Point for Legal and Financial Aspects of the Marie Skłodowska–Curie Actions (MSCA) under the European Union’s Horizon Europe programme. Alejandro has over five years’ experience in international cooperation, focused on the management and monitoring of international projects. He also lectures across the region on topics related to the European Union’s framework programmes.



Waldo Soto

Co-founder 2811 Global (VET project BLUE-ECONOMY-LAB)

Waldo Soto is a social entrepreneur with over 12 years of experience advancing social innovation and the social economy across Latin America and the Caribbean. He is the co-founder of 2811, a global platform for social and climate innovation. Waldo holds an MSc in Urban Management from TU Berlin and a BA in Management and Business from PUC-Chile.



Zamira Elena Soto Varela

Simón Bolívar University, Colombia (CBHE project NEREIDAS)

Zamira Soto Valera holds a PhD in Agri-Food Sciences and, since 2012, has been a microbiologist, researcher and professor in the Faculty of Basic and Biomedical Sciences at Simón Bolívar University (Barranquilla, Colombia). She is a research member of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Center in Colombia.

She has extensive experience designing, managing and delivering research on the environment, food and biomedicine—particularly the microbiological quality of water and beach sediments and the biotechnological applications of microorganisms—and has published scientific papers in these fields. Zamira currently collaborates with colleagues at the Severo Ochoa Molecular Biology Center and the University of Cádiz (Spain) on coastal marine ecosystems under stress, and serves as a senior professor-researcher with the NEREIDAS Project.



Ana Paula Tostes

Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Brazil (Jean Monet project EUgac)

Ana Paula Tostes is a Jean Monnet Chair and Full Professor at Rio de Janeiro State University (UERJ), in the Department of International Relations and at the Institute for Social and Political Studies (IESP/UERJ). She is a Senior Fellow at the Brazilian Center for International Relations (CEBRI) and coordinator of the Laboratory for Teaching and Research in International Relations (LabRI/ UERJ). She is associate editor of DADOS (IESP/UERJ), a core member of the Observatory on Climate Change (OIMC/UERJ), and coordinator of the CAPES/DAAD project promoting research cooperation between GIGA (Hamburg) and UERJ. Her research agenda—funded by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), the Rio de Janeiro Research Foundation (FAPERJ), and the European Union (EUgac–JMC)—covers European studies, European unification, EU green diplomacy, international institutions and climate change.



Eva Valle Casanova

Project Adviser, European Education and Culture Executive Agency

Eva Valle Casanova was born in Spain and has been a Project Officer at the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission in Brussels since 2009. She works on the Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE) action of the Erasmus+ Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean. She holds a master’s degree in Political Sciences and International Relations from the University of Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), with a specialisation in International Humanitarian Aid. Eva previously worked for many years as a Project Coordinator in NGOs focused on development cooperation in Spain and Belgium, and for the Tempus Programme at the European Training Foundation of the European Commission in Turin (Italy).



Alex Villazón

Universidad Privada Boliviana (UPB)

Alex Villazón holds an MSc and a PhD in Computer Science from the University of Geneva, Switzerland. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, and at the University of Lugano, Switzerland, where he participated in several European projects.

In 2010, Alex returned to Bolivia to join Universidad Privada Boliviana (UPB), where he founded the CINTI Research Center, which he continues to direct. He has been a Full Professor since 2016 and currently serves as National Dean of Technological Development and Innovation. Alex has published over 100 papers and is ranked among the top ten most cited researchers in Bolivia. He has received several national and international awards and is co-author of the first technology patent in Bolivia. He is also the coordinator of the Erasmus+ EU-BEGP project.



Jenny Elmaco

Academic Expert, Centralised Support to the network of Erasmus+ National Focal Points, PRACSIS srl

Jenny Lind Elmaco is the Academic Expert for the Centralised Support of the global network of Erasmus+ National Focal Points. She has received the Double Gold in Education and the Global Diamond Award in Innovation from the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network (UK), as well as the Marie Curie Social Impact Award. As part of her passion projects, she serves as United Nations Vienna and UNESCO Representative and United Nations Administrator for the International Federation of Business and Professional Women. Jenny also chairs the Genders, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group of the Marie Curie Alumni Association and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of the Arts (UK).

A former Erasmus scholar and Marie Curie fellow, she holds a PhD in Peace and International Development, a master's in Global Studies, Peace and Security, and an MBA in Big Data and Business Intelligence. Jenny also completed executive programmes in Law, Policy and AI (IE Law School, Madrid) and in Circular Economy and Sustainability Strategies (University of Cambridge).



Daniel Ventura

Erasmus+ National Focal Points Regional Manager, Latin America and the Caribbean, PRACSIS srl

Daniel Ventura is the Erasmus+ National Focal Points Regional Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean. Born in Colombia, he holds a PhD in Education Policy and Leadership from the State University of New York (Fulbright Scholar). He also holds a master's in modern languages from the University of Palermo (Italy) and a master's in European literature from the University of Bremen (Germany), both through an Erasmus Mundus scholarship. Daniel has over five years' experience as a Project Manager at the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) and served as Communication and Events Manager at the EU Delegation in Colombia. As a researcher and educator, he has worked at the National University of Colombia, the State University of New York, and Beijing International Studies University (China).

