

A SHIFT IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION PREFERENCES: ANALYZING
COLOMBIAN STUDENTS' TRENDS OF CHOOSING THE EUROPEAN UNION AS THEIR
DESTINATION

BY

RAFAEL ARTURO RODRIGUEZ DIAZ

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in European Union Studies
with a minor in Global Studies
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2018

Urbana, Illinois

Advisors:

Dr. Neil Vander Most, Chair
Assistant Professor Antonio Sotomayor

Abstract

Despite the substantial amount of critical work on globalization and its impact on the internationalization of higher education regarding the mobility of students from all over the world, the role of the European Union (EU) as the union it represents, instead of the sum of the nation-states that compose it, remains relatively unexplored. When comparing the number of Colombian students traveling abroad for educational purposes before and after 2007, the United States come first among the main destinations chosen by students from low-income countries such as Colombia. However, when these numbers are compared with the numbers of students travelling to the EU as a whole, the rankings change considerably. It is this shift of students' preferences and its causes which have motivated the present research.

This thesis conducts a historical and documentary research based on the data collected from COLFUTURO, the main organization in Colombia which provides Colombians with financial support under a scholarship-loan model so that they can pursue Higher Education degrees abroad; and the efforts of the European Commission to promote the European Union as a whole among the main destinations for international perspectives Higher Education students. I argue, therefore, that there has been a shift of the dominance of the United States as the main destination for Colombians' higher education. By exploring and analyzing the number of Colombian students traveling from 2000 to 2016 as well as their increase after 2007, I demonstrate that the EU has successfully achieved a better positioning within the rank of desired destinations for Colombians. Herein, I answer the question "Why did the number of Colombian students traveling to the EU with COLFUTURO have the biggest increase compared to any other destination in the world since 2007?". I also demonstrate that the influence and the image of the EU and its education system within Colombia has improved and increased significantly due to a

number of reasons but specially the lower cost of studies, highly ranked higher education institutions, the use of English as a lingua franca in institutions of higher education within the European Union, increased number of scholarships offered by the member-states, and more traveling opportunities within the Union. Additionally, the promotion of the Study in Europe Brand since 2007 was a significant determinant for Colombians to have the European Union as their main destination from that same year. As a result, the findings of this research invite international stakeholders to further explore the potential of implementing the European Union unified practices in several areas such as education and gradually construct a more effective international higher education framework.

Key words and concepts: Mobility of Students, Colombia, COLFUTURO, European Union, Push and Pull Factors, Globalization, Internationalization of Higher Education.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank various people for their contribution to this project; Dr. Neil Vander Most for his most professional guidance and valuable technical support. It has been a real honor to learn from you during the last two years and get to know you as an instructor, as an advisor, and as a person.

I would also like to thank Dr. Antonio Sotomayor for taking the time to be the second reader of this thesis and support me with valuable feedback when needed.

Special thanks should be given to Dr. Evangelia Karagianni for her personal support and constructive recommendations on this study. Your constant guidance and support lifted me when I needed it the most in this journey.

I consider it necessary as well to extend my gratitude to the staff of COLFUTURO, especially, to its Executive Director Mr. Jeronimo Castro, and its Program Director Ms. Maria Lut Siza Pinto, for their time and willingness to answer my questions and provide me with valuable feedback that helped me to develop this piece of research.

I would like to thank the University of Illinois and especially the European Union Center and the faculty for these amazing two years in which I learned and grew personally, academically, and professionally.

Finally, I would like to deeply thank my mother and father for always showing me such unconditional support with every decision that I have taken in my life. Thank you for giving me my life and filling it every day with your love.

Dedicado a mi padre y a mi madre, a quienes les debo mi vida entera y a los Ángeles que aparecen en nuestras vidas cuando más los necesitamos.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	vii
Introduction	1
CHAPTER 1: Literature Review	6
CHAPTER 2: Research Methodology	37
CHAPTER 3: Data Presentation and Analysis	45
CHAPTER 4: Discussion of Findings	53
CHAPTER 5: Conclusions	60
References	65
APPENDIX A. Summary of the data collected	74
APPENDIX B. Increase of students traveling from Colombia with COLFUTURO towards the 6 main EU destinations and the United States	75

List of Abbreviations

- AIFS American Institute for Foreign Study Foundation
- ASCUN Colombian Association of Universities
- CAN Andean Community
- CEDEFOP European Center for the Development of Vocational Training
- CNA National Council of Accreditation
- COLCIENCIAS Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation
- COLFUTURO Foundation for Colombia's Future
- COP Colombian Peso
- EAIE European Association for International Education
- ECTS European Credit Transfer System
- EHEA European Higher Education Area
- EQF European Qualifications Framework
- EU European Union
- GDP Gross Domestic Product
- HE Higher Education
- HEI Higher Education Institution(s)
- ICEF International Consultants for Education and Fairs
- ICETEX Colombian Institute of Credit and Technical Studies Abroad.
- IIE Institute for International Education
- ISCED International Standard Classification of Education
- OAS Organization of American States
- RCI Colombian Network for the Internationalization of Higher

Education

- SENA National Service of Learning
- UK United Kingdom
- UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- US United States
- USD United States Dollar
- WHO World Health Organization
- WTO World Trade Organization

Introduction

A technologically faster interconnected world has provided low-income countries, such as Colombia, with the path to create alternatives for prospective higher education (HE) students to achieve their educational goals abroad. As it will be presented in this research, in mainstream education, several persuasive voices have argued that the internationalization of education is one of the most noticeable phenomena that has been fortified by globalization. For example, it is argued that families and students see studying abroad as a tool to enhance career prospects in terms of obtaining interviews, getting job offers, and accelerating career progression (Franklin, 2010). Not only does internationalization of education represent global student mobility, but it also reflects a shift from long-established political, economic, and cultural influences around the globe towards new perceptions of leadership of the high-income countries.

However, those influences witnessed over the last centuries from the North Hemisphere over the South do not only happen in a vertical direction but horizontally as well since key transatlantic arrangements have made it more challenging to distinguish influential and leadership roles globally. For instance, the European Union (EU) has accomplished closer relations with Latin America thanks to its influence as a single, and one of the strongest markets in the world (“The EU in Brief,” 2016). In addition, under Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council that happened in April 2010, a non-EU citizen holding a legitimate study visa issued by a Schengen state may travel and remain in the region of other Schengen countries for no more than 90 days in any 180-day time span (“Schengen Visa Types,” n.d.). This example raises a point for what I propose to look critically at: the number of Colombians that chose countries within the EU for HE purposes before and after 2007. More specifically, I put forward a different classification scheme for comparing the preferences of Colombians when

choosing their destination to study abroad while using the financial support of the public and privately funded Foundation for the Future of Colombia, COLFUTURO. By analyzing their destinations, I critically question the notion of measuring and comparing Colombian students' mobility towards single countries within the EU instead of looking at the EU as a unit, that is, as what it represents in the field of HE.

Having stated this, the fundamental premise is that the movement of students pursuing HE abroad has increased so dramatically that it becomes necessary to identify the most relevant global players in order to understand global influences better (see Chapter 1 for more information regarding International HE as soft power). Macready and Tucker (2011) highlight this fact by stating that “from 2000-07 the number of foreign students enrolled in tertiary education worldwide grew by 85%” (p. 2). World leader institutions on the study of HE also determines that the number of students registering in HE is projected to increase by 1.5 per cent annually on average until 2027 (“Global Student Mobility,” 2018). Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), best known for publishing the QS World University Rankings, state in their website that international student enrollment has grown exponentially to reach five million between 1990 and 2014; by 2025, this number is expected to reach 8 million (West, 2018).

Although these numbers reflect how the internationalization of Higher Education has brought students and universities from different countries closer, this thesis is focused specifically on Colombian students traveling towards the European Union member-states for Higher Education purposes. The reasoning for centering my attention on the aforementioned country lies on the fact that Colombia, apart from being one of Latin America's largest economies according to the International Monetary Fund, it is also considered the world's second largest market of international students in the region after Brazil (“BMI Media,” n.d.). It is also

worth noticing that Colombia is a key partner for the EU in Latin America with significant investments in different political, economic, and social sectors (“EU-Colombia Relations,” 2016). Besides the trade agreement that started in August 2013, during 15 years of coordinated effort, the EU has picked up validity, acknowledgment, and Colombians’ trust through €1.5 billion worth of investment in peacebuilding exercises in the country (“EU Trust,” 2016). As it will be presented in the following pages, the increasing number of Colombians traveling abroad towards EU member-states is a great example that illustrates the rise of international HE and the marked influence of the EU on the South American country.

Conspicuously, regarding the purpose of this research and looking at the EU as the main destination for Colombian students, the reasons why some of the European Union member states are the main destinations in the world for Higher Education purposes may not be difficult to understand (see Chapter 3). The EU, despite emerging as a political and economic union of countries quite recently, i.e. after the Second World War, has sought reconciliation between the people and nations of Europe by expanding and assuming new responsibilities. It has also defined its relations with the rest of the world based on 6 values: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, and human rights (“The EU in Brief,” 2016). Furthermore, it has eliminated trade barriers, contributed to the development of the poorest regions, and it has fostered peaceful cooperation within its borders. Clearly, both at a regional and an international level, the EU has strengthened the bridges of globalization and has attracted the attention of international students, including Colombians (see Chapter 2 for more reasonings regarding the comparison of the EU altogether with other single HE destinations and Chapter 3 for data proving the attraction of Colombians by the EU).

To paint a more comprehensive picture, the global system is nowadays distinguished by the constant measuring of soft and hard power of the political, military, and economic leaders of the world and by the competitive collaboration with and among the United States, the European Union, and regional trading blocs like the Andean Community (in Spanish, Comunidad Andina [CAN]) in South America (Grabendorff & Seidelmann, 2005). Europe's interest in gaining a space in the design and implementation of strategies aimed at improving the level of development in other countries has established a fluent dynamism in its relations with South America trading blocs, and thus with Colombia (“Colombia - International,” 2013).

Indeed, the relevance of focusing this study on the old continent comes from the interest in assessing the efforts of the EU to exert a greater transatlantic influence over Latin America, and more specifically for this research, over Colombia. This work supports the notion of why a ‘European Union’ makes more sense in a globalized world, using the perspective of international education. I also prove the competitive advantage the EU has developed through students’ mobility projects like the ERASMUS+ program. (See Chapter 1). Having set the general context, the question that this research answers is: “Why did the number of Colombian students traveling to the EU with COLFUTURO have the biggest increase from 2007 compared to any other destination in the world?”

This thesis comprises 5 chapters. The **first chapter** will present some of the theories and more recent definitions and studies regarding globalization, internationalization and the role of the HE within those two contexts. It also defines what push and pull factors are and describes the causes and effects of Internationalization of HE and presents all the information regarding COLFUTURO and the background of the international relations between Colombia and the EU. The **second chapter**, the methodology section, describes in detail the research question, the type

of study, the population profile, the data source and collection, and the method of analysis. The **third chapter** presents and analyzes the data which is based on figures compiled using COLFUTURO's annual reports and public selected and benefited students' database. The **fourth chapter** is centered on the discussion of the results stemming from the data analysis in conjunction with the literature review presented in the first chapter. Finally, conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research are presented in the **last chapter**.

CHAPTER 1: Literature Review

The first chapter of this study defines and discusses the themes of globalization and internationalization of HE. It presents some of the theories and most recent definitions of the terms used in this work and examines the causes and effects of Internationalization of HE. It also delineates the identity and the role of COLFUTURO, the Colombian foundation that provides financial support to Colombian students who seek to obtain higher education degrees abroad and describes some key issues in the relations between Colombia and the EU.

1.1 Globalization vs. Internationalization

Before delving into the core of this study, let me first define each one of these concepts separately so that it is easier for the reader to understand their relevance to the context of this research.

1.1.1 Globalization

Globalization is a concept that has received many definitions as a response to the many areas of global human interaction. In the last decades, there have been several intents to clarify the definitions of the globalization concept from dictionary definitions like Webster's in 1961 (as cited in Stoudman and Al-Rodhan, 2006) to scholarly journals and books (Daly 1999; Mitchell & Nielsen 2012; Stoudman & Al-Rodhan 2006). Some theories have raised important issues concerning globalization in terms of economic and political agreements, institutional reforms and/or cultural identities (Hobsbawm, 2000). However, the evolution of globalization processes per se, including its own definition, is driven by many factors, such as the exponential growth of new technologies, especially in the field of communications; and the predominance of the recognition of globalization as the way to describe the modern economy model of the free market (Stoudman & Al-Rodhan, 2006).

First, it may be worth delving into the aforementioned predominance of the definition of globalization from a world-economy perspective. For instance, the World Bank defines globalization as “the growing integration of economies and societies around the world” (“The World Bank,” 2002), and as the “freedom and ability of individuals and firms to initiate voluntary economic transactions with residents of other countries” (as cited in Chanda, 2007, p. X). This definition encompasses clear business and economic concepts that outweigh social and cultural ones and includes those characteristics that world leader organizations assign to their definitions of globalization. This global financial interaction is also acknowledged by The World Trade Organization’s definition, according to which:

Globalization can be defined as a historical stage of accelerated expansion of market capitalism, like the one experienced in the 19th century with the industrial revolution. It is a fundamental transformation in societies because of the recent technological revolution which has led to a recombining of the economic and social forces on a new territorial dimension. (Lamy, Pascal. Director-General of the WTO 2005-2013)

These definitions from the World Trade Organization and the World Bank accentuate the monetary side of globalization. Both capture the social or human part of the procedure, but they do not expand the concept further. The reasoning for this economic focus of the concept lies on a world that is driven, to the greatest extent, by the constant trade of goods and services and the search for global markets in a faster digitally interconnected world. On this base, the International Monetary Fund affirms that:

The term "globalization" began to be used more commonly in the 1980s, reflecting technological advances that made it easier and quicker to complete international transactions—both trade and financial flows. It refers to an extension beyond national

borders of the same market forces that have operated for centuries at all levels of human economic activity—village markets, urban industries, or financial centers.

(“Globalization: A Brief,” n.d.)

So far, I have looked at definitions which tend to delineate the concept in discussion in purely economic terms, which are closely related to this research since economic aid in the form of scholarships influences students' choices (see Chapter 4). I now turn to other definitions which adopt a more holistic approach, which looks beyond economic transactions and embraces social, political, and cultural interactions not only at a global transnational level, but also at a local, and regional scales. Green (1997) defined globalization as the “...rapid acceleration of cross-border flows of capital, goods, services, people and ideas”. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2001) defines globalization in broader terms as “the increasing and intensified flow of goods, services, capital, ideas, information and people between countries, which generates the national cross-border integration of a number of economic, social and cultural activities”. Both these definitions indicate that globalization induces an increased demand for specialized labor market skills. Furthermore, the World Health Organization displays the following definition on its website:

Globalization or increased interconnectedness and interdependence of peoples and countries, is generally understood to include two interrelated elements: the opening of international borders to increasingly fast flows of goods, services, finance, people and ideas; and the changes in institutions and policies at national and international levels that facilitate or promote such flows. (“Health Topics,” n.d.)

This definition highlights how border crossing, which started hundreds of thousands of generations ago, varies in frequency and purposes and is still creating new forms to transform

international relations. Border crossing relates to students' mobility since it facilitates intercultural knowledge and understanding. In other words, higher levels of intercultural experiences are created by the international mobility of students and the increasingly technologically global facilitated movement of digital information, goods and services. Globalization then opens new doors for citizens from underdeveloped countries to have better access to developed countries' resources, like education, as in the case of Colombians traveling to the EU ("Colombia Aims to," 2017).

However, not all these benefits are immediately perceived due to the intricacy of the interconnection process. This challenge is recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). As mentioned on its website, Urzua (2000) sees the term in discussion as a "multi-dimensional process" categorized by the acknowledgment of an arrangement of monetary guidelines, digital revolution and massification of information, the diffusion of social esteems, but also the re-rise of patriotism and social clashes, among others (as cited in UNESCO, n.d.).

Globalization, a word characterized by the complexity of its definition, has been used as an umbrella term to cover all sorts of "causes, course, and consequences of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human activities" (Stoudmann, 2006, p. 5) which occur globally. In the last century, the exponential growth of advancements in technology has made this concept even more popular and significant. The internet and digital devices have shortened distances through real-time communication and virtually provided immediate access to information, making globalization processes stronger and unstoppable.

For the purpose of this research, I opted for the WHO's definition of globalization since it is comprehensive, all-encompassing and also embraces the exchange of ideas and knowledge, or

education. For this thesis, globalization is a procedure of expanding connections but also pressure; a procedure that incorporates monetary, political, innovative, social, intellectual, and cultural relations amongst people around the globe. In this definition, the outcomes of globalization are not foreordained but rather, they are in constant development. In this manner, a familiarity with the potential consequences emerging from globalization development is fundamental so that stakeholders can adopt marketing strategies which will promote a better understanding of how universities respond to globalization through the internationalization of HE, a central concern for this work.

1.1.2 Internationalization

In this section, I am looking at a concept whose definition will be presented in comparison with that of globalization, since, for the purpose of this research, the association of these two terms results in a much clearer definition and ranking. Indeed, the scope of the interpretation of the term internationalization is much narrower than the one of globalization. Yet, familiarization with both terms is deemed essential since they are irrefutably connected, as it is proved in this section.

Internationalization highlights the process of making something international in character, composition or scope (“Internationalization,” n.d.) and is mainly framed within a political perspective that recognizes the relation between sovereign nations-states. In this respect, the Global Policy Forum differentiates internationalization from globalization by assuring that while the latter concept disintegrates clear international borders in order to achieve a more coherent and cohesive integration, like the free market economy, the former concept maintains at all times, a clear definition of the notion of borders in order to have a clear vision of what and where something is being internationalized (Daly, 1999).

Taking this into consideration, internationalization deals with a simpler purpose, to move goods, services, knowledge, or people across well-defined political borders, while globalization encompasses a more thorough merge of interests and benefits or even disadvantages of these exchanges (Saunders, 2013). Even though there could exist a tendency to use these two terms interchangeably by focusing on the international arena in which they take place, this could be highly controversial since they cannot be taken as substitutes of one another (Knight, 2015). The most important relation between these two concepts lies in the fact that internationalization is a process that takes place within globalization, but never vice versa. Regarding the relation between these two main concepts, this thesis will maintain the idea of internationalization as being one of globalization's engines (Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012) and as the way in which universities respond to the pressures of globalization (Cantwell & Maldonado, 2009).

Notwithstanding that the definition of internationalization appears to be simpler compared to the one of globalization, it is indeed the former concept which will receive most of our attention for the rest of this research as it is within the frame of HE that internationalization provides the main frame to represent both, the mobility of international students around the globe, and the effort of universities to promote their programs internationally. Yet, both globalization and internationalization remain an inseparable construct for international HE.

1.2 The Role of Higher Education within Internationalization and Globalization

Having defined the two notions of globalization and internationalization in the previous sections, the first part of what follows will briefly illustrate the central role of HE in this context in order to acquaint the reader with the specific area of education this research is based upon. More precisely, for the remaining part of this thesis, HE will refer to master's and doctoral degrees, corresponding respectively to the seventh and eighth level of the International Standard

Classification of Education – ISCED – developed by UNESCO (“International Standard Classification”), and to the seventh and eighth level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) which are based on the learning outcomes approach (for the foundations of this innovative approach see “Defining, writing,” 2017; Pouliou, 2014;). In a similar vein, the exposure to globalization itself differs by sector, and an understanding of this sectoral variation in the field of education is essential for this study as there are numerous international initiatives influencing its subsystems. These include:

- a) the European Qualifications Framework
- b) international sectoral standards, qualifications and competence frameworks

The most frequently mentioned international sectoral qualification and training standards are the international qualifications in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sector (for example European Computer Driver License [ECDL] certificates relating to transversal ICT skills or specialized certificates of leading ICT sector companies, such as CISCO, Microsoft and others) and international qualifications associated with national networks of supporting institutions (ECDL Education, n.d.)

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems. It covers qualifications at all levels and in all sub-systems of education and training (“Learning Opportunities,” n.d.). This clarification is deemed essential as this concept is often viewed from a double perspective in literature. Following the definitions of the World Bank, both HE and tertiary education refer to education received after obtaining a bachelor’s or equivalent degree (“Tertiary Education,” n.d.). Thus, both terms are used indiscriminately along this thesis. Additionally, it is important to make the distinction between

international education and internationalization of HE. Regarding the concerns of this research, the former is used to refer to any other level of education at an international level while the latter will be the main term to be used within this thesis.

Having established this distinction, and as noted in the previous section, only through internationalization can universities around the world be part, as well as embrace globalization processes through all its benefits. As noted by the American Council of Education (“Articulating Global Strategy,” n.d.), internationalization of higher education brings on many sorts of benefits: it develops global competency and international skills for the student;

- a) it supports the promotion of human welfare globally and the mitigation of stereotypes for the community;
- b) it creates a global footprint of quality for the educational institutions, and
- c) helps them to become financially stronger.

Concerning the students’ benefit perspective, this international academic mobility renders young people capable of understanding, accepting and tolerating differences related to physical, cultural, religious, political or other aspects, which can contribute to a more coherent and stable global society and finance. Dolby and Rizvi (2008) argue that international students grow their identity within the context of global mobility, seeing themselves beyond mere tourists or immigrants, but having a complete new cultural reality (as cited in Brooks & Waters, 2011). According to the International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF) as of 2015, approximately 5 million students studied abroad in 2014, which represent double the number of the ones in 2000 and triple the number of the ones in 1990 (“The State of,” 2015). Most of these students are still stirred today by those cultural and personal exchange opportunities which bring people from all over the world together into a single culture and fidelity to the same institutions

where they study, as UNESCO stated in 2004 (Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012). The same authors state that people in general have gradually started to become aware of and willing to participate in the opportunities and grants that can be accessed or consumed at an international level (2012). Thus, beyond the academic achievement through international HE, students are prepared to compete successfully in a global job market that is increasingly demanding skilled workers capable of coping with the needs of the global digital information and instant communication.

From another more local perspective, HE has many possibilities to exceed, and not just because of the revenues that international students can leave in the country, such as the \$12 billion to the US economy (Altbach & Knight, 2001). Beyond the economic profit, at the point when globalization is comprehended as a dynamic arrangement of procedures in which the world and the region connect unpredictably, the development and recreation of social structure wind up conceivably (Cantwell & Maldonado, 2009). However, some authors recognize that there are certain pitfalls, like the use of English not only for research purposes but also for teaching (Altbach & Teichler, 2001). More analytically, the use of the English language as a lingua franca has been a common factor in different non-English speaking countries in order to attract more international students; this does not necessarily reflect a positive factor. Stories of colonization, current methods of power, and a constant increment in the use of English explains how this language has become 'global' (Cantwell & Maldonado, 2009). The interaction among students from different cultures and backgrounds builds bridges between nations and institutions, testing and most of the times, shifting students' loyalties towards the institutions where they receive their education (Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012). But, quite often, when most of the research and instruction is done in a single language, then the opposite happens; that is other languages' importance and their cultural background are diminished (Wit, 2015), which diminishes the

value of the globalization process as well. Nevertheless, the increasing mobility of students promotes the falling of stereotypes through international student mobility and the personal experiencing of the world (Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005).

Regarding educational institutions themselves, the benefits are also substantial. Due to an economic or financial focus, international HE is now considered a commodity that can and should be freely traded. Countries like Australia, Canada, and the UK are able to reach out for international students who can pay high fees (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Armstrong (2007) and Scott (2000) affirm that when universities go after that global market of international students proposing different types of study programs abroad, these institutions expand their concept of globalization and go beyond the simple movement of people to a specific location to having a big diversity of students, curriculums and activities (as cited in Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012). Hence, there is little doubt that HE has an essential function in enlightening the world although universities are the ones that need to have a global focus when teaching their local and international students (Saunders, 2013). In this latter respect, the European Association for International Education (EAIE) affirms that it is indispensable for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to keep boosting their internationalization in a Europe where patriotism has increased while some of the higher education resources have decreased (“How to make,” 2017). In addition, there is also the role of the private sector and all the exchange agencies which, on one hand, have a great influence on prospective students when they choose their destination for studying abroad and, on the other, also have the capability of creating awareness of the importance of mobility and international education (Altbach & Teichler, 2001).

1.2.1 Push and Pull Factors in International Higher Education

To reiterate, internationalization has been frequently confused with globalization. However, the latter becomes a push factor through economic, political, and cultural forces, for prospective students to reach across borders for HE degrees (Altbach & Knight, 2007). By push factors I refer to the driving forces of the country of origin, which in this case would be Colombia. These push factor could be positive or negative. Positive ones are, for example, the encouragement of its citizens to study abroad through financial aid like the one provided by COLFUTURO. Negative push factors could be the quality of education in Colombia and the lack of access to HE institutions within the country (Macready & Tucker, 2011).

In addition, in this work, pull factors are described as the attractive aspects of the countries where students decide to go and study, like the EU member-states (see Chapter 2). These pull factors are also defined by the outcomes of globalization regarding the internationalization of HE. This includes support for international research, the appearance of English as a lingua franca for communication in sciences, the increasing international labor market for academics and science experts, and the implementation of information technology, among others (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Now, it is equally important to describe the rationales for the internationalization of education which will be briefly outlined below.: According to Stier (2004), idealism, instrumentalism and educationalism, should be used as points of reference to talk about the subject of internationalization, instead of mutually exclusive categories for either students or institutions.

1.2.2 Rationale for the Internationalization of Higher Education

Having explored some of the benefits and theories regarding the internationalization of HE, let us now briefly examine its rationales. To begin with, an **idealist** rationale of internationalization in HE assumes that internationalization is good per se since, through international cooperation, higher education can support the development of a “democratic, fair and equal world” (Stier, 2004, p. 88). The role of educational institutions under this model would be to train citizens of the world to be capable of great tolerance and respect for other human beings and thus create a better and moral world. Stier (2004) explains that a curriculum which would involve students and teachers into understanding global life-conditions and social-injustice would get them ready to “demand a redistribution of resources and welfare as well as enable people to establish a satisfactory level of life-quality” (p. 89). In this sense, the eventual fate of advanced education is a worldwide one, and it becomes necessary to set tertiary education world ready for this. In this way, what we require are individuals who comprehend and characterize their part inside a worldwide group, rising beyond the national outskirts, and grasping the ideas of sustainability—equity of rights and access, development of instruction and research, to a great extent (Stier, 2004). In any case, we must clearly reaffirm the central role of universities: to assist students comprehend this world and to enhance our managing of it (Brandenburg & Wit, 2015).

In the field of education, the second rationale, **instrumentalism**, maintains, the coherence with its pragmatic and financial goals at all times, within a sustainable development view (Stier, 2004). It impacts policy makers on building up the level of openness and preparation between national instructive frameworks, empowering and streamlining the versatility of individuals and coordinating college degrees as well as evaluating these frameworks. As

indicated by instrumentalists like Dewey, humans use the gears existing in the secular-cultural world, or develop new ones, to grasp their opportunities (Eldridge, 1998). In this sense, according to Stier (2004) advanced education is a method for growing profit, guaranteeing financial lift and reasonable improvement and exchanging belief systems of governments, transnational companies, partners or supranational administrations. Furthermore, the internationalization of HE is expected to meet the requests of the capitalist and global world, which becomes a reason for the European Union to continue working on lifelong learning, e-learning, student exchange programs, etc., in order to develop a flexible labor force and to improve their competencies, and competitiveness of the EU in the global market (Stier, 2004). Through instrumentalism, education becomes just one more asset to trade, having universities looking for new markets and tailoring their programs towards them, so in return they can raise their profit margins, or in the case of the European Union, according to Stier (2004), promote a sense of community and cultural diversity.

The third rationale, **educationalism**, which is more human-oriented, involves the academic development of both students and instructors in order to create brain power (Knight, 2004). Knight convincingly argues that by being aware of the significance of knowledge economy and labor force mobility, countries put more effort into recruiting brain power through international education actions. Following this rationale, one could claim that the internationalization of HE is a vehicle towards that end. Yet, even in such a case, there are substantial benefits to be reaped by the people involved in the process. The processes international students go through while experiencing a new culture, geography and even academic style are the triggers for new perspectives that challenge previous beliefs, opinions, and stereotypes; the role of international education, in this sense, is to help individuals to

recognize, learn and adapt to the new environment while enhancing their commitment to learning (Stier, 2004). In the case of Colombia, which, according to the United Nations occupies the 98th position on the Human Development in Education index, promoting high quality and access to HE is essential for the country's National Development Plan (as cited in "Colombia Aims to," 2017). From the educationalism perspective, then, international education provides the necessary tools for individuals to grow more independently and become more self-aware of their surroundings and their social interactions (Stier, 2004).

While the idealist rationale, as presented earlier, focuses its attention on the moral world, the instrumentalist on the global market, and the educationalist on the individual's learning process, none of these rationales escape to criticism (Stier, 2004). Ethnocentrism, brain drain, and even individualization respectively, are some of the complaints to the presented rationales. Even though they raise a question with the aim of rationalizing the internationalization of higher education, they also echo the fact that, disregarding motivation, HEI need to be clear in articulating their actions towards internationalization, as arrangements, projects, methodologies, and results are altogether connected and guided by express and even verifiable rationales (Knight, 2004).

It is important to mention that for the purpose of this research, and as it can be perceived along the rest of the document, these three rationales are used as a base for describing the relevance and also the effects of the internationalization of HE. Nevertheless, the instrumentalism and educationalism rationales will be perceived more frequently.

Having explored the rationales, the benefits as well as some of the downsides of the internationalization of higher education in brief, the next part will establish the role of HE education within globalization.

1.2.3 International Higher Education as a Soft Power

The profound changes in world geopolitics are usually the object of study in political science, and their analysis often results in policy recommendations. The Internationalization of Higher Education is a phenomenon that has been studied not only within the field of education but also of politics due to the unconcealed influence that it can cause. In several nation-states of Europe as well as in the United States, scientific knowledge has been one of the key principles which determines development and control over other nations (Marchand & Parpart, 1995).

Several scholars agree on the fact that HE can be considered a form of soft power, a way for countries to obtain what they want or influence other countries through appealing cultural and political values and foreign policies to humanity's minds and hearts, rather than through intimidation or economic expenses (Nye, 2005; Watanabe, & McConnell, 2008). The international force of HE has always influenced intellectual and scientific development, and it has collaborated to spread ideas globally among people and institutions; the experience of studying abroad and meeting with other cultures, shapes people's view and attitudes towards societies in this world (Altbach & Peterson, 2008).

The now established global university system that enables universities to reach even transatlantic international markets of students, as well as the global rankings that determine the standard and attractiveness of these higher education institutions, become an essential source of soft power that have the potential, as a governance instrument, to readapt the global higher education scenery (Lo, 2011). For the case of this research, and as it will be presented at the end of the present Chapter and later discussed in Chapter 4, the EU has developed a vivid opportunity to reach farther, not only into Colombia but also into Latin America thanks to the promotion of the image of its Unity as one of the most valuable destinations for HE purposes. As

it will be demonstrated from Chapter 3, the EU has achieved to exercise a greater influence or soft power on Colombian prospective HE students' decisions on destinations, than what the US used to do.

After having established the role of Higher Education within internationalization and globalization earlier, the following section sheds light on Colombia and discusses to what extent its higher education has been internationalized, in order to understand the steps that the country has taken to support the international mobility of its students in the last couple of decades.

1.3 Internationalization of Higher Education in Colombia

In Colombia, the northern country of South America, the determination with which governments of the last couple of decades have worked on HE can be captured in several efforts at a national and international level. Historically, there has been a tandem increase on the enrollment of Colombian students in HE abroad, with an escalation of 185% between 1998 and 2016, going from 9,851 to 28,122 students (Trines, 2017). Within the frame of the “National Plan of Development: All for a new country” of the National Ministry of Education, from 2014 to 2018, several goals have been achieved through the establishment of the National System of Tertiary Education and the National System for the Quality of Higher Education (“Boletín Educacion,” 2016a). They have attained to increase the number of students that enter tertiary education although there is still a need to reduce the number of students that drop out. According to the Ministry’s report (2016a), the policy designed to improve the quality of education aims that all students, regardless of their origin, social, economic and cultural situation, have opportunities to acquire knowledge, develop the skills and values necessary to live, be productive and follow learning throughout life. This policy has also been reflected on the support to the internationalization of higher education.

The government in Colombia has taken several steps towards acknowledging the need to conceive the internationalization of education as fundamental for its citizens to expand or build a new perspective on their own country (“Boletín Educación,” 2016b). The National Ministry of Education has focused its efforts on five principal tasks (“Internacionalización,” 2009):

1. **Management of internationalization:** seeking that HEI have a clear policy on the subject that allows them to enhance the benefits and meet the challenges of internationalization.
2. **International academic mobility:** promoting the movement of students, teachers and researchers between different systems of higher education in the world through short stays, academic semesters, internships and double degree programs, among others.
3. **Participation of HEI in university networks:** facilitating the creation of alliances and the exchange of experiences and knowledge, as well as the formulation of academic programs and joint research projects.
4. **Internationalization of the curriculum:** bringing an international dimension to higher education through the teaching of foreign languages, curricula with an international vision, and through incentives for the presence of foreign students and teachers, among other mechanisms.
5. **Internationalization of research:** developing joint research initiatives among Colombian HEI and their peers in other parts of the world, in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and the creation of global networks.

Additionally, within the Ministry, there is a firm belief that for both universities and companies, studying abroad develops leadership in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, which means better opportunities for employability and broadening the employment

horizon of the graduates (“Boletín Educación,” 2016b). This is echoed in the organizational structure of the figures of the government that support this mission, which starts with the Interinstitutional Committee for the Internationalization of Higher Education, the body in Colombia that seeks to generate synergy among the efforts that each entity of the education sector carries out. This committee is made up of several institutions, among which are the Ministry of National Education, the Colombian Institute of Credit and Technical Studies Abroad (ICETEX), the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (COLCIENCIAS), the National Council of Accreditation (CNA), the National Service of Learning (SENA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Colombian Association of Universities (ASCUN) and the Colombian Network for the Internationalization of Higher Education (RCI) (“Internacionalización,” 2009). Since the focus of this research is the mobility of Colombian students towards the European Union, for the purposes of this study, we will focus on those organizations that promote and are directly related to this mobility of students.

In general, Colombian students have a number of options to fund their studies abroad; one option is personal decision, processing, and funding; a second option would be through international agreements of the same educational institutions from which students obtained their bachelor; another one is through private sector companies focused on guiding the selection, application and travel of Colombians to educational institutions abroad; and, last, through government agencies that manage international agreements and scholarships (Monsalve, 2016). Regarding the last option, Colombia, has three main entities, the Colombian Institute of Educational Credit and Technical Studies Abroad (ICETEX), the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (COLCIENCIAS) and the Foundation for the Future of Colombia (COLFUTURO). These organizations, will now be briefly described.

First, ICETEX was created in 1950 to promote higher education and facilitate access to educational opportunities offered by the international community to raise the quality of life of Colombians and thus contribute to the economic and social development of the country (“Quienes somos?” n.d.). This can be clearly related to the instrumentalist and educationalist rationales described in the previous section. ICETEX is the representative in Colombia of ONE (National Liaison Office), as the entity that administers the Regular Program of Scholarships of the Organization of American States (OAS) and its Professional Development Program; this allows the institution to receive offers of foreign scholarships made to the country, disseminate these programs and present the bidding government with the pre-selection of applicants, as well as provide professional guidance to study abroad. It currently has an educational credit line to pursue undergraduate programs, specialization programs, master’s and/or doctorate studies at a national and international level. For the case of international HE studies, it covers a minimum amount of USD 16,000 and a maximum of USD 32,000 per year which must be paid during or after the studies have been completed (“Reglamento de Credito,” 2007). Even though, within the requirements to access these credits, students need to be of a very good academic standing and also to have been admitted to a university of their preference, the loan will not become a scholarship at any point unless very strict conditions are met or the student belongs to an underrepresented group in the nation (“Quienes somos?” n.d.).

Next, COLCIENCIAS created in 1968, is the main body of the Colombian public administration responsible for formulating, guiding, directing, coordinating, executing and implementing state policy in Science, Technology, and Innovation (“About Colciencias,” n.d.). Focused on education for research, education, and culture, COLCIENCIAS has been conducting annual calls for the funding of master's and doctorate studies since 1992 in Colombia and abroad.

While studies at PhD level are 100% funded for a maximum period of four years, in the case of master's degrees, it offers the possibility of acquiring a credit-scholarship for a maximum period of two years and condoning 50% of it. (“About Colciencias,” n.d.). Since 2009, COLCIENCIAS has partnered with COLFUTURO, managing the government sources that correspond to the scholarship portion of the loan-scholarship program of the organization (“High Level Education,” 2016).

Finally, COLFUTURO, which is an institution created in 1991, aims at co-financing the training of Colombian professionals abroad through educational credits (COLFUTURO, 2017). Since this organization is the central source of data for this research, the following section will be used to describe it in detail.

1.3.1 COLFUTURO

As mentioned in the previous section, one of the entities in Colombia which has been created to support its citizens in the acquisition of tertiary education degrees abroad utilizing both public and private funding, is COLFUTURO. What needs to be highlighted regarding this institution is the fact that it is the only one that allocates all of its resources on the formation of Colombians' tertiary studies abroad and focuses all its efforts on having later these specialized professionals returning to the country after finishing their studies. This is mainly accomplished through its loan-scholarship program in which students can request up to USD 25,000 per year, and for a maximum of two years with a maximum line credit of USD 50,000. The interest rates oscillate between 7% during the study period and 15% during the accelerated amortization period.

Regarding the scholarship portion, if students return to Colombia in the established time after obtaining the degree that COLFUTURO helped them finance, and remain in the country

from 3 to 5 years, they will be able to obtain the following cumulative percentages of forgiveness up to 80% on the disbursed amount: 20% for students who pursue MBA studies, master's in administration and Law, and 40% for the rest of the study areas. Another 20% is given if the beneficiary is linked as a full-time employee of the state or as a teacher or researcher in an educational institution. An additional 20% is offered to any beneficiary for working outside Bogota and its metropolitan area ("Programa Credito Beca," n.d.). Concerning 2007, the year we are more interested in for the purpose of this research, the credit limit was the same as the current one, despite the fact that the condonation was calculated in different percentages. For any MBA or management-related degree there was a 25% and between 35% and 50% for any other area of study; both plus an optional 10% if the beneficiary was later linked as a full-time employee of the state or as a teacher or researcher in an educational institution ("Reglamento Convocatoria." 2007).

Yet, the amount of funding and the options to transform the loan into a scholarship, are not the only advantages that COLFUTURO offers. The application process for the loan-scholarship program is relatively similar to the application for a tertiary education institution. Colombians who wish to apply need to be citizens, have an undergraduate degree, master a second language, have a clear idea of the program of interest, write a statement of purpose, pay the application fee equivalent to USD \$16, and fill out the online application form ("Convocatoria," 2018). Furthermore, currently COLFUTURO has more than 90 agreements with HEI distributed among 16 countries including the United States and 11 countries within the European Union. These agreements offer tuition discounts ranging from 10% to 100% or contribute to support costs while the student is abroad. When students return to Colombia after finishing their studies, they get automatically into the Networking and Employment program of

COLFUTURO through which the specialized professionals are supported in obtaining a job. Finally, apart from covering tuition and insurance expenses, the foundation allocates a total of USD 8,000 from the loan towards round-trip tickets and living expenses for the first few months. All these advantages have urged an increased number of Colombians (see Chapters 3 & 4 for a detailed analysis of figures from COLFUTURO) to pursue degrees in international higher education institutes and to later return and contribute to the development of the country. According to COLFUTURO, a high percentage of 76% of the beneficiaries of the program from 1992 to 2015 returned to Colombia after completing their studies abroad (COLFUTURO, 2017).

Since its creation in 1991, the number of Colombian students who have benefited from the program has been continuously increasing. Starting with the ambition of a group of Colombian leaders from both the public and private sectors to develop the country by focusing on its human capital, COLFUTURO has been able to support a total of 13,123 Colombians to date. More specifically, 1,527 doctorates and 11,596 master's degrees were acquired under the aforementioned circumstances (COLFUTURO, 2017 & 2012). Even though the conditions and benefits of the program have changed over the years, the continuous growth of the foundation has been noticeable. From 46 students who benefited in 1992, the highest number of Colombian students who have been supported was in 2015, when the number reached a total of 1,510. After more than a decade, in 2007, COLFUTURO signed the first cooperation agreement with the National Ministry of Education, ICETEX, and COLCIENCIAS. This agreement opened a new door for COLFUTURO to boost its funding and support 165% more students compared to the previous year. After the success of this agreement, in 2008 COLFUTURO signed another agreement with COLCIENCIAS and ICETEX to cover the beneficiaries of that year. In 2009, through a new agreement signed with the previously mentioned organizations, the government

agreed on assuming the condonation part of the beneficiaries of that year, acknowledging in this way the importance of the role of COLFUTURO. These cooperation agreements facilitated the process for COLFUTURO to reach the goal of 1000 beneficiaries in 2010. Then in 2015, the national government stated its support to COLFUTURO once again with COP 700 billion towards its development and growth until 2025. Finally, since all of funds from COLFUTURO are given to the students in no other currency but US Dollars, in 2017, a new collaboration agreement was signed with ICETEX and COLCIENCIAS until 2025, mainly in order to support the students' loan payments affected by the devaluation of the Colombian peso in the last decade due to the recovery of its price in Colombia after the Financial Crisis of 2008 (Toro, Garavito, López, & Montes, 2015). It is worth highlighting that none of these agreements influenced the students' destination selection process for their studies abroad as we shall analytically demonstrate in Chapters 3 and 4.

1.4 Colombian Students Traveling with COLFUTURO: Numbers and Destination Preferences

Having presented the important role played by COLFUTURO in funding Colombian students' HE studies abroad, it is now useful to examine the number of students who were benefited between 2000 and 2016 as well as their mobility patterns so that we can provide a more detailed answer to our research question (see Chapter 2). This study highlights Colombian students' HE preferences and views them through EU as a single destination, which is one more reason that makes the contribution of this research stand out.

1.4.1 Number of Colombian Students Funded by COLFUTURO

According to the International Consultants for Education and Fairs (ICEF), Colombia has increased its student mobility to 30,000 students registered in higher education abroad in 2015” (“Colombia aims to,” 2017) (see Chapter 3). Through the public information provided on the

website of COLFUTURO, it is possible to look at the number of students who were selected and benefited. On one hand, selected student are the ones who after having accomplished all the application processes, are also admitted by COLFUTURO to receive the loan. On the other hand, benefited students are the ones who completed all the process, traveled, and received the funds from the Foundation (“Reglamento Convocatoria,” 2007). Between 2000 and 2016 a total of 11,057 Colombian students were selected to be funded under the loan-scholarship program. From this number, 8,870 students were benefited for a total of USD 295.5 million invested (“Beneficiarios del Programa,” n.d.). Out of the total number of selected students, there were 7,918 applications for master’s degrees and 952 for doctorates (a more detailed analysis of these figures will be presented in Chapter 3 and discussed in Chapter 4).

1.4.2 Destinations of Colombian Students Funded by COLFUTURO

Besides the significance of the rise in the number of Colombian students who decided to study abroad these last decades, the selected destinations and their rationalizations are of equal, if not of greater importance for this study and the research question it aspires to answer. Regarding Colombians’ decision-making process of the destinations for higher education, economic and social causes within the country work as push factors for students to go abroad. Colombia, for instance, is within the list of the 10 most unequal countries in terms of access to HE (“Colombia aims to,” 2017). However, the decision as for which country students will select is dependent on a variety of pull factors, especially the cost of the programs, the reputation or ranking of both the educational institution and the program they want to enter as well as the economic condition of the host country (Macready & Tucker, 2011).

Based on the data provided by COLFUTURO, the United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, France and Germany have been the 5 main destinations for Colombian students in the last

two decades. The US and the UK have always maintained the leadership (see Appendix 1) while the Netherlands and Italy have remained closer and from time to time have made it to the top five destinations for Colombian students.

1.5 Case Selection: Colombia and the European Union

In the previous sections we explored various aspects related to the internationalization of HE with particular reference to Colombia. Yet, being acquainted with some background knowledge concerning the EU and Colombia relations within the field of the internationalization of HE will facilitate our understanding of the context we are exploring further.

1.5.1 Internationalization of Higher Education in the EU

As it will be presented, many of European higher education institutions have been successful in creating opportunities for internationalization e.g. with the development of international curricula and joint degrees, nurtured international research and collaborative innovation projects, and of course with the support of the movement of students, staff and knowledge. Within the European Union for example, within the field of education, the first move towards internationalization was given in 1987 with the foundation of ERASMUS and then in 2001 with the acknowledgement of the Bologna Process. The latter was the main voluntary endeavor to define and standardize the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), and to create the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma Supplement, which were key to work on what are today their 6 main objectives (Thompson, 2011)”

1. adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees;
2. adoption of a system based on two main cycles: undergraduate and graduate;
3. establishment of a system of credits;
4. promotion of mobility, students and teachers;
5. promotion of European level cooperation in quality assurance; and

6. promotion of a European dimension in higher education.

As a matter of fact, an object of discussion within the course of the European Union as a main attractor of all the international students of higher education, was the nature of the relationship between EU institutions of higher education and that of the international market. Thus, between 2007 and 2009, the European Commission developed the ‘Study in Europe brand’, putting into international focus the strengths of Europe as a higher education destination (“Study in Europe,” n.d.). This policy urged the Commission to participate in 10 to 12 international education fairs per year all over the world since then, in order to promote Europe as a study and research destination and the opportunities offered by the EU funded programs and scholarships. The attendance to these fairs has been made possible through the work of governmental organizations and other institutions like Campus France and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), which coordinate the participation of more than 80 European HEI and work in tandem with Foundations like f COLFUTURO, to bring these institutions to different cities within Colombia (“Expo-Estudiante,” n.d.).

The ‘Study in Europe Brand’, specifies 8 reasons why international students should decide for a member-state to pursue their HE degrees (“Study in Europe,” n.d.):

1. Careers: strong international business, creative and research sectors
2. World-class education: World-leading universities, top facilities, inspirational teaching
3. Pioneering research: 1.58 million full time equivalent researchers in the EU-27 in 2009. The EU is actively looking to attract an additional 1 million researchers.
4. Support and friendship: Europe is a welcoming, friendly place for students from all around the world. 7 of the world's 10 happiest countries are in the EU.
5. Cultural experience: it is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to discover new countries.

6. Scholarships and costs: Get value for money
7. Diversity: Study the way you want
8. Languages: Learn in English or another leading global business language

A globalized world has permitted an increasing number of students from developing nations like Colombia, now to have access to all these benefits and then take the privileged knowledge back to their countries to support their own national employment and research. As mentioned by several scholars, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and its Institute of Statistics (UIS) stated that there were approximately 2 million mobile students in 2010 and more than 4 million in 2013 (Abdullah, Aziz, & Mohd, 2017). With over a 100% increase in just three years, it is difficult not to pay attention to such a global phenomenon.

This student mobility has also been facilitated through the history of transatlantic relations. The Maastricht Treaty, signed in 1992, urged the member-states of the European Union to develop a common foreign security policy (CFSP), which also sought to reaffirm the EU commitment with a stronger relationship with its Latin America and Caribbean partners (“Europe and Latin America,” 1994). Composed of 12 countries and speaking some of the languages of the European Union, like Spanish, Portuguese, and even English, and French, South America has become one of the most solid recipients of Europe’s foreign investment (Grabendorff, & Seidelmann, 2005). A great individual example was given by Italy in 2006 when through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the government decided to launch the program called ‘Invest Your Talent in Italy’. This project was developed with the goal to offer to international students from Azerbaijan, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Turkey, Tunisia, Vietnam, China, and Brazil, the opportunity to

access Italian HE in engineering, advanced technologies, architecture, design, economics, and management, by offering a series of scholarships and other benefits like English instruction (Torino, n.d.). After having been launched in 2006, the first call for applications took place between 2007 and 2008 (see Appendix 2 for information on the increase of Colombian students traveling to Italy).

The need for globalization, growth, and stability has boosted the establishment of blocs that seek to lessen the complexity of international trade and cooperation by managing them from a supranational level but at the same time ensuring benefits for each one of its member states.

1.5.2 Internationalization of Higher Education between Colombia and the EU

In South America, there are three trading blocs, the Pacific Alliance, the Andean Community (known by its Spanish acronym CAN), and the Common Market of the South (known by its Spanish acronym MERCOSUR). Despite being geographically closer to the United States, the EU has become the strongest trade and investment partner of MERCOSUR with a total of €387 billion invested in the region (“Countries and Regions,” 2018b). While there is no agreement with the Pacific Alliance, the EU is also the third largest bilateral partner for CAN with a total of €25.2 billion worth of trade in 2016 (“Countries and Regions,” 2018a). As a matter of fact, even though the European Commission and CAN established the first approaches in 1970, the first cooperation agreement between the EU and Latin America was signed with CAN in 1983 (“Europe and Latin America,” 1994). Colombia has gotten an even closer relation with the EU thanks to its membership to this bloc in South America. This trading bloc was initially formed in 1969 by Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile, with the main goal of an economic and social integration that would enhance the living situation of their inhabitants (“Reseña Historica,” n.d.). The trade agreement between Colombia and the EU, which entered

into force on August 1, 2013, offers both a stable and transparent legal framework, guaranteeing a preferential access in order to encourage business (Cantuarias, Barbosa, Lopez, & Lozano, 2015).

As far as the field of education is concerned, the axis of bilateral cooperation between the European Union and Colombia on education is Erasmus+, the EU's education, training, youth and sports program. Erasmus+ offers people of all ages and organizations such as universities, education and research centers and private companies the possibility to develop and share knowledge and experiences in different countries (“Bilateral UE-Colombia,” 2016). Through the Erasmus+ Program, the European Union provides a series of joint master's degrees offered by consortia of European HEI from different countries. To obtain a degree that can be double, multiple or joint, students must study in at least two of the universities of the different countries that make up the consortium, all of which offer full scholarships (“Viajar a la UE,” 2016). All of the above is not exhaustive, given the fact that new joint master's as well as new partnerships are established between European and Colombian universities expanding the opportunities for mobility every year.

Colombia, being a country rich in fuels and agricultural and mining products, along with the bilateral cooperation with the EU, has seen greater opportunities to boost foreign investment (Colombia – OECD, 2017). The representation that this international cooperation has, shows a country that has been preparing for a more open international role through participation in regional blocs and free trade agreements including the EU. Clearly, the EU and Colombia have built firm, steady, and dynamic political and economic relations through a history of ties and have maintained a constant dialogue under the Framework Agreement for Cooperation between the European Union and the Andean Community, and bilaterally between the European Union

and its member-states and Colombia (“EU-Colombia Relations,” 2016). Areas like economy and trade, justice and human rights, technology, and education have been a focus for the bilateral relations between the bloc and this country and the fact that the EEAS (European External Action Service), which is the EU’s diplomatic service, has an office in Colombia is a clear proof of that (“Sobre la Delegacion,” 2016).

Last but not least, the new grant options for researchers' careers have been included in the Horizon 2020 Program (<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>), which is the European Union's largest program for Research and Innovation (“EU – Latin America,” n.d.). Colombian researchers can benefit from the Horizon 2020 Program through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), which subsidize all phases of the careers of researchers, whether they are candidates for doctorates or already highly experienced researchers; and which also promote transnational, intersectoral and interdisciplinary mobility (“Viajar a la UE,” 2016). This comes immediately after the investment made by the EU in LA for a total of €556 million between 2007 and 2013, to cover areas like social cohesion, water management, higher education and information society (European Commission, 2015).

In the first chapter of this study, we presented a literature review on the key terms that compose this research. More specifically, the concepts of globalization and internationalization have been defined and described within the context of the Internationalization of Higher Education. Furthermore, we discussed the rationales for this internationalization to happen and then we presented the way in which Colombia has assumed this challenge. Following the main source of data for this research, we mentioned the different options that Colombian students have to fund their studies abroad, and presented the Foundation for the Future of Colombia, COLFUTURO, in detail. Not only did we present how the organization works but we also

displayed some of the most representative figures regarding the number of students using the foundation's services and the factors they consider relevant when choosing a destination for their HE studies. Finally, we explored the background of the EU-Colombia relations to better set the context for the following chapters which will present the methodology followed and discuss the findings of our study.

CHAPTER 2: Research Methodology

The second chapter, the methodology design section, will set the research question this study attempts to answer as well as the method followed in the collection of data. Then I shall outline the population profile, the sources the data stems from as well as the way this data is analyzed.

2.1. Research Question

As it was hinted in the introduction of this thesis, this piece of research aims at analyzing the number of Colombian students traveling with COLFUTURO for higher education purposes. It also looks at their mobility patterns between 2000 and 2016 in order to claim that the EU member-states and the EU itself has become the number one destination for Colombians. I also state that the EU should be seen within the context of HE, as the Unity that it represents and that it has been working for since 2007.

More analytically, this study focuses on Europe in order to assess the efforts of the EU to exert a greater transatlantic influence on Latin America since the first summit of the heads of governments in Rio de Janeiro in 1999 (Grabendorff & Seidelmann, 2005). The authors also state that the promotion of multilateral cooperation and common solutions to global challenges came as a counterweight to the influence of the United States on South America. This study analyzes this influence by considering the number of Colombian students who chose European Union member-states over other destinations, to pursue higher education degrees. The goal of this research is to determine the reasons why the EU member-states became more popular among Colombian students after 2007, compared to other destinations. This work contributes to the argument of why a ‘European Union’ is necessary for its states and for low-income countries like Colombia, from the perspective of international education, and demonstrates the competitive

advantage the EU has through mobility projects like the ERASMUS+ program, to keep gaining terrain as a destination for HE competitors (“Latin America,” 2013). The purpose is to add to the dissemination of information regarding different economic, cultural, political, and historical factors that affect the destination selection process of future students from Colombia.

Having set the scene for the discussion that will follow, the question that this research answers is: “Why did the number of Colombian students traveling to the EU with COLFUTURO have the biggest increase since 2007 compared to any other destination in the world?”

2.2. Type of Study

The study I am conducting in order to answer the research question falls into the category of historical and documentary research (see Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). While mentioning the word ‘historical’ could give a notion of the use of noticeable incidents or events in the past, according to Borg (1963), this type of research is also suitable when one wishes to examine and synthesize data previously collected in order to establish new facts and conclusions about past events (as cited in Cohen et al. 2007). The main advantage of a historical approach of research as mentioned by Hill and Kerber (1967) is that it allows the revaluation of data in relation to selected hypotheses, theories and generalizations that are currently maintained over the past, besides shedding light on present and future trends (as cited in Cohen at al. 2007). The use of this approach within this research, helped to determine the variations in the number of Colombian students traveling abroad through COLFUTURO for HE purposes. It also helped to establish a comparison between those variations and the efforts of the European Union to attract international students. However, there are also several limitations regarding the selection, organization and analysis of the data, which we will described in Chapter 5.

Examining the number of Colombians traveling to the EU before and after 2007 through a historical research approach, helps us interpret this mobility of Colombian students more analytically (Buckley, 2016). This approach is called into question since, for instance, the financial crisis of 2008 is considered to have affected Latin America more than other regions of the developing world by terms of reduction in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and slower growth (Ocampo, 2009). However, in 2007 the European Commission started efforts to start branding the EU as a unity, as a destination for international HE prospective students (“Making the EU,” n.d.). Analysis of the sequences, time series and processes allowed this research to look into the connecting instruments that link the push and pull factors for Colombians to choose their destination for higher education purposes (Buckley, 2016).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this research we will be using the pull factors proposed by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the American Institute for Foreign Study Foundation (AIFS) as our theoretical framework (Macready & Tucker, 2011). More analytically, they examine tertiary students’ mobility in relation to the following pull factors:

- High quality study opportunities
- Specialized study opportunities
- Teaching in a language mobile students speak or want to learn
- Traditional links and diasporas
- Affordable costs
- Internationally recognized qualifications
- Good prospects of high returns
- Post-study career opportunities in destination country

- Good prospects of successful graduation within a predictable time
- Effective marketing by destination country/institution
- Home country support for going there to study
- Helpful visa arrangements, for study and for work while studying (Macready & Tucker, 2011, p. 45-46)

Considering the type of study I am conducting, the theoretical framework I am adopting in order to analyze the data I have collected through COLFUTURO (see Chapter 3) will be based on the following 6 previously mentioned pull factors, as they are more related to our context:

- Affordable costs
- Internationally recognized qualifications
- Home country support for going there to study
- Teaching in a language mobile students speak or want to learn
- Effective marketing by destination country/institution
- Helpful visa arrangements, for study and for work while studying

According to Macready and Tucker (2011) the order of the pull factors does not need to be restrictive and they can be rearranged in order to suit specific contexts. For the purpose of our study we selected the aforementioned factors and we rearranged them so that they correspond to the presentation of our data in Chapter 3.

2.4 Population Profile

For the purposes of this study, the focus is Colombian students who traveled with the Foundation for the Futuro of Colombia (COLFUTURO) to obtain higher education degrees abroad. Since the interest of this research is to count the number of Colombian citizens in general, there will be no specifications regarding the regions within Colombia from which

students traveled. Also, due to the fact that the main interest lies on the drastic change in the total number of HE students traveling to the EU before and after 2007, I opted for exploring the data gathered only by COLFUTURO and excluding other forms of financial support for studying abroad, as they appear to exhibit broader international activity within other areas of education.

To highlight how reliable COLFUTURO is and justify the choice to focus on it for the purpose of this study, it is worth mentioning the selection process of beneficiaries it follows. More specifically, COLFUTURO considers three main selection criteria: academic quality of students, the quality of the study program, and the comparison amongst all applicants, maintaining each student's anonymity. To accomplish such a task COLFUTURO bases its decision on assessing the study programs, not the educational institutions by themselves; it verifies international rankings based on fields of study and analyses aspects like teacher training, awards, program accreditation, years of experience of the school, admission requirements, admission rate, and the overall characteristics of the educational system ("Reglamento Convocatoria," 2007).

These criteria make the process more competitive for students to select their destination and they also assure that the academic formation of the students will be of the highest quality. Let us not forget as well that COLFUTURO is the only Organization in Colombia that has no age limit in its registration processes, no field of knowledge is privileged, therefore, applicants can apply each year to HE programs in various disciplines that are offered in countries all over the world. It also develops labor intermediation strategies through which it promotes the linkage of its alumni to the Colombian labor market once they complete their studies and return to the country ("Reglamento Convocatoria," 2007).

It is very relevant to mention that the data used is non-parametric, which means that there were no assumptions whatsoever regarding the population (Cohen et al., 2007). Even though the database in the website of COLFUTURO displayed more than the information needed for this research, we have focused specifically on the following items:

- Year
- Destination Country
- University of destination
- Field of Study
- Type of program (master's or doctorate)
- Status (selected or benefited applicants)

2.5 Data Source Description & Method of Collection

As it was described earlier, this type of study examines the number of students traveling with COLFUTURO between 2000 and 2016. After browsing the official website of the Foundation, it was clear that they have made their database public since the first year in which they supported the first students to travel abroad for HE purposes. More analytically, we opted for drawing all our data from the online public directory (<https://www.colfuturo.org/seleccionados/>) of selected applicants and beneficiaries of the credit-loan program of COLFUTURO, and also from reports and documents regarding the mobility of Colombian students for higher education purposes (Abdullah, Aziz & Mohd, 2017; Altbach & Teichler 2001; Brandenburg & Wit, 2015; Macready & Tucker 2011). Additionally, we have also made use of the annual reports that COLFUTURO has been publishing since 2008 which present several statistics regarding number of applications, participants, countries and universities of destination, demographics etc. This way of collecting data provided this study

with official evidence and an objective viewpoint in order to conduct a secondary analysis to answer the question that inspired this research.

Last but not least, the data from Colfuturo was filtered in order to only reflect the number of Colombians traveling towards EU member-states and English-speaking countries like the US, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand (see Chapter 1 for more information about English within the internationalization of HE). Likewise, in some of the figures created with the data from COLFUTURO, the European Union member-states are not represented individually but altogether as the European Union, highlighting, thus, one of the points this study wishes to make. The reasoning to present this new approach to compare the mobility of Colombian HE student globally comes from all that makes the European Union unique disregarding which member-state students travel to. More specifically, the cultural plurality, the unified monetary system, the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people within the EU, along with the Bologna Process, the main voluntary endeavor to define and standardize the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) propose unmatched advantages for those who get to visit or study within the European Union.

2.6 Method of Analysis

When analyzing internationalization, there are many techniques in historical research that are essential for examining sequences, processes, rhythms, and speeds (Buckley, 2016). As our data comes from tables and statistics already collected and organized, we chose to interpret them through the creation of new figures without altering any of the data. In a more specific way, we have used a ratio scale of the data from COLFUTURO (see Appendix 1). This ratio grasps four main features that were essential to answer our question: classification, order, an equal interval metric, and an absolute zero (Cohen et al. 2007). Through this ratio it is easier to establish

proportions and apply basic arithmetical processes, which for the case of this research, makes it possible to determine the fluctuation of the number of students traveling to the EU more than to any other destination in the world (see Chapter 3 for further analysis).

Now, considering the type of data collected and just described above, the methods of analysis used in this research were descriptive statistics, in order to provide descriptions of the trending on the selection of destination by the students; and inferential statistics in order to make inferences and predictions about these trends (Cohen et al., 2007).

In this chapter, the research methodology was presented; more specifically, we described the research question, the type of study we are conducting, the population and the time period we are examining, and our data sources as well as our method of analysis. The next chapter will display the data our study is based on, using different figures that will allow a better perception of the data collected.

CHAPTER 3: Data Presentation and Analysis

In the previous chapter, the research design and methodology were presented in detail. This chapter aims to present the data this study is based upon in order to set the background for the discussion that will follow in Chapter 4. More specifically, the data this study describes and analyzes regards the number of students who have been benefited by the flagship program of COLFUTURO (see Chapter 1 for a detailed presentation of this institution) as well as their destinations within the European Union between 2000 and 2016 (see Chapter 1 for information on Colombian students' mobility patterns) in order to trace any shift(s) in numbers and destinations and provide an answer to the research question we articulated at the beginning of this thesis based on the pull factors as presented in Chapter 2.

3.1 Total Number of Colombians Traveling with COLFUTURO from 2000 to 2016

Figure 1 consists of two pie charts. The first pie chart presents the total number of students who applied and were selected by the Foundation to study in the USA and Europe, i.e. 11,057 (For more information regarding the history of student mobility from Colombia see Chapter 1). This number was distributed between selected and benefited students, in other words, those who were only accepted and those who got to travel (see Chapter 1 for a better understanding of the classification). Considering the purpose of this research and our focus on the European Union member-states and some of the English-speaking countries, the second pie chart of Figure 1 displays the total number of students who traveled between 2000 and 2016 to the EU and the US. As it is shown, the European Union was the main destination with 5,515 students (70%) compared to 2,328 who traveled to the USA (30%), out of a total of 7,843 students.

The most noticeable aspect that can be inferred from this pie chart is that a single country is compared with an established alliance of countries. However, when looking at current studies, the United States appear in the highest position among destinations for Colombians' HE purposes, compared to any other single country ("A Donde Viaja," 2016; "Global flow of," n.d.; "Para donde nos Vamos," 2017; Trines, 2017). (See Chapter 2 for more details on the reasoning for this approach). It is relevant to notice that out of the 8,870 benefited students, 1027 Colombians went to different destinations other than the EU and the US. In other words, approximately 90% of the benefited students from COLFUTURO chose these two destinations between 2000 and 2016. The following figures present the data that allowed us to spot the reasons behind the shifting of preferences of Colombian students regarding HE destinations.

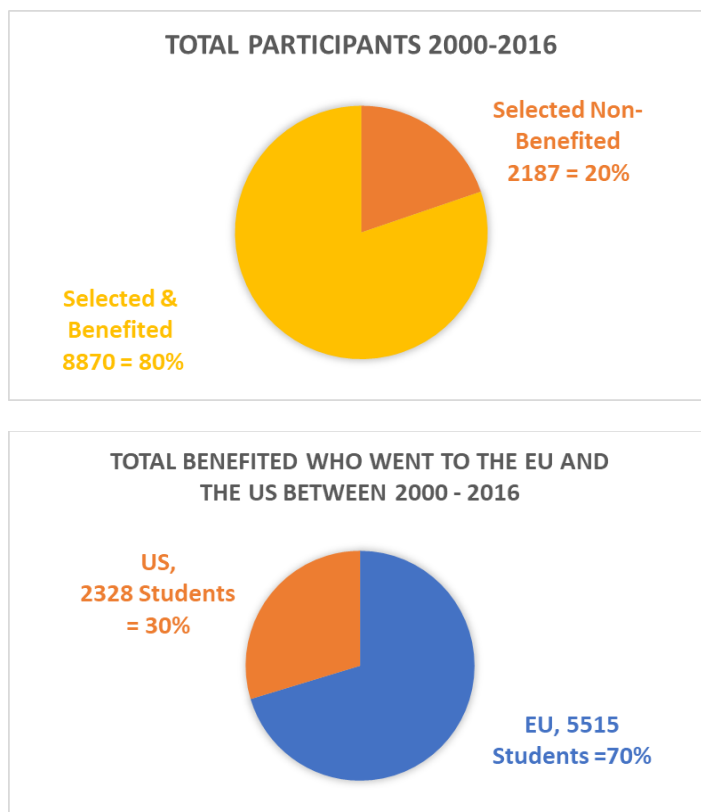


Figure 1 Percentages of Colombian students traveling with COLFUTURO to the EU and the US from 2000 to 2016. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO ("Listado Becarios Colfuturo," n.d.)

3.2 Total Number of Colombians Traveling to the EU from 2000 to 2016 per Member-State

In order to better understand those EU member-states that have been among the main destinations for students traveling with COLFUTURO, Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the total number of Colombians that traveled to the EU per member-state between 2000 and 2016. Figure 2 overall, shows the main 6 member-states that have maintained a good number of Colombians coming to their universities, i.e. the UK, France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and Italy. The UK more than doubles the number of Colombian students hosted in the Universities of France, Germany, and Spain, the next three main destinations within the EU. For the purpose of this research the analysis will be mainly based on these 6 EU member-states which hosted hundreds of Colombians, due to the immediate attention that this fact draws from the initial table (See Appendix 1), and for the example that they represent in terms of internationalization of HE within the EU.

On the other hand, Figure 3 shows the number of Colombian students traveling towards the remaining 22 EU member-states. It is clear in the figure that Belgium and Sweden also appear to be two important destinations among Colombians. It is important to notice that most of the eastern EU member-states i.e. Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia received zero Colombian Students during the time frame on which this study is based. While Belgium and Sweden will still be used during our discussion as relevant destinations for Colombian students, the other EU member-states will be used to understand why some of them are still falling behind in the internationalization of education especially regarding the Colombian international students' market. The initial move towards hosting Colombian students by countries like Hungary, Ireland, Poland and Estonia will be further analyzed in Chapter 4.

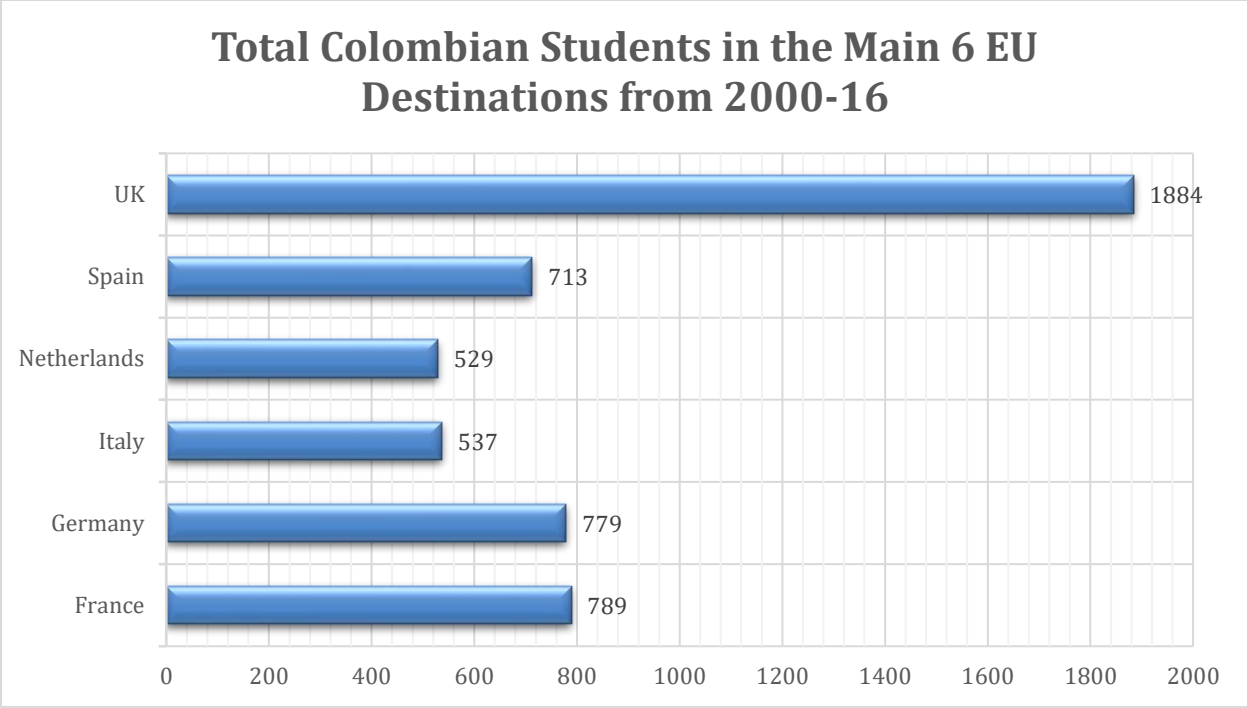


Figure 2 Total Number of Colombian Students traveling to the main 6 EU destinations from 2000-16. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO ("Listado Becarios Colfuturo," n.d.)

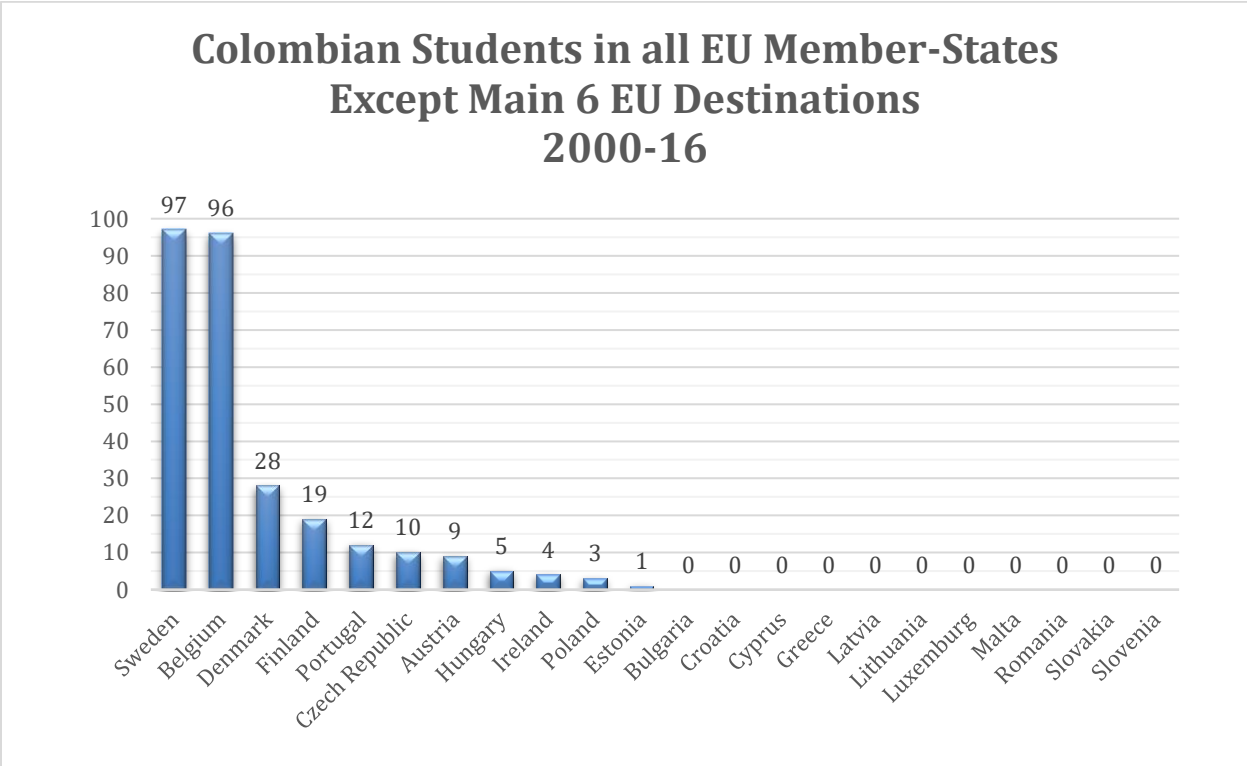


Figure 3 Total Number of Colombian Students within the other EU Member-States from 2000-16. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO ("Listado Becarios Colfuturo," n.d.)

3.3 Comparing Colombians Traveling to the 6 Main EU Destinations and the United States

As mentioned in the description of Figure 1, the United States have maintained a distinctive position among the destinations for HE of Colombian students. Figure 4 shows in detail the total number of students per year between 2000 and 2016 that traveled with COLFUTURO to the 6 main EU member-states and the US. Very noticeable is the increase of Colombian students traveling from 2007. An important aspect is that both the UK and the US are the two countries that had the biggest influx of Colombian students between 2000 and 2006 compared to countries like Spain, the Netherlands or France, which also hosted Colombian students in considerably smaller proportions. In 2003 the US received a total of 72 students and the UK in the same year 56 students. After the increase of 2007, the year in which more Colombian students traveled to these two destinations was 2014 with 274 who went to the US and 252 to the UK. 2007 marks the beginning of the growth in the number of students traveling with COLFUTURO. While France and Germany had an increase of around 400%, the Netherlands and Spain of almost 200%, and the UK of 250%, the United States saw an increase of less than 200%. This raising tendency continued until 2010 when the US and the UK had a difference of only three students but with the UK being the number one destination for that year. It is interesting to notice as well that Italy had this boost of incoming Colombian students after 2008, being stronger in 2009 (this fact will be further analyzed and explained in Chapter 5). One more fact shown by Figure 4 is that in 2015, apart from the Netherlands and Spain, a decreasing tendency in the number of students traveling to all other countries, which affected Spain in 2016, started. While Figure 4 shows the US as the main destination, the next figures will include the European Union as a single destination, revealing a very different picture of the Colombian students' mobility (see Chapter 2 for more on the reasoning for this approach).

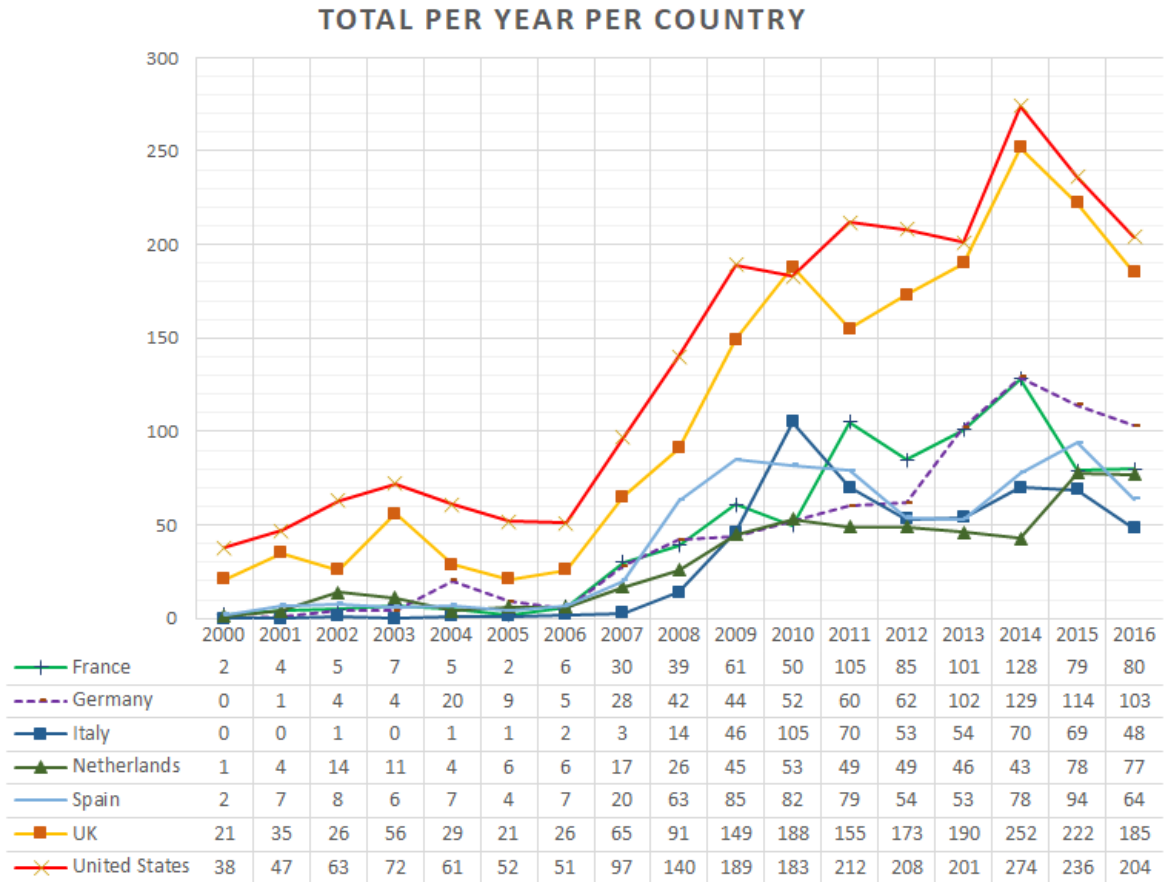


Figure 4 Comparing the number of Colombian Students in the US and the 6 main destinations within the EU from 2000-16. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO (“Listado Becarios Colfuturo,” n.d.)

3.4 Comparing the Number of Colombians who Chose to Study in the 6 Main EU Destinations and the United States

Figure 5 shows the European Union as a single destination and compares it with the United States. A first look at the figure instantly reveals the ample difference between the growth in the number of Colombian students traveling to these two destinations after the dramatic increase of their participation in 2007. From 2010 to 2012 the EU had a decrease in the number of Colombian students while in the United States their number kept rising slightly. As opposed to that, in 2013 the EU had again a significant increase of around 16% on the number of Colombians students traveling towards its member-states, while the US suffered a small decrease

of 3%. The graphic also displays clearly the drop in the total number of Colombians traveling to both destinations in 2015. From that year on, the number of students traveling shows a decreasing tendency for both the EU and the US, although not in the same proportions. Between 2014 and 2016 the US saw a bigger decrease of nearly 25% compared to the EU which had a decrease of almost 20%.

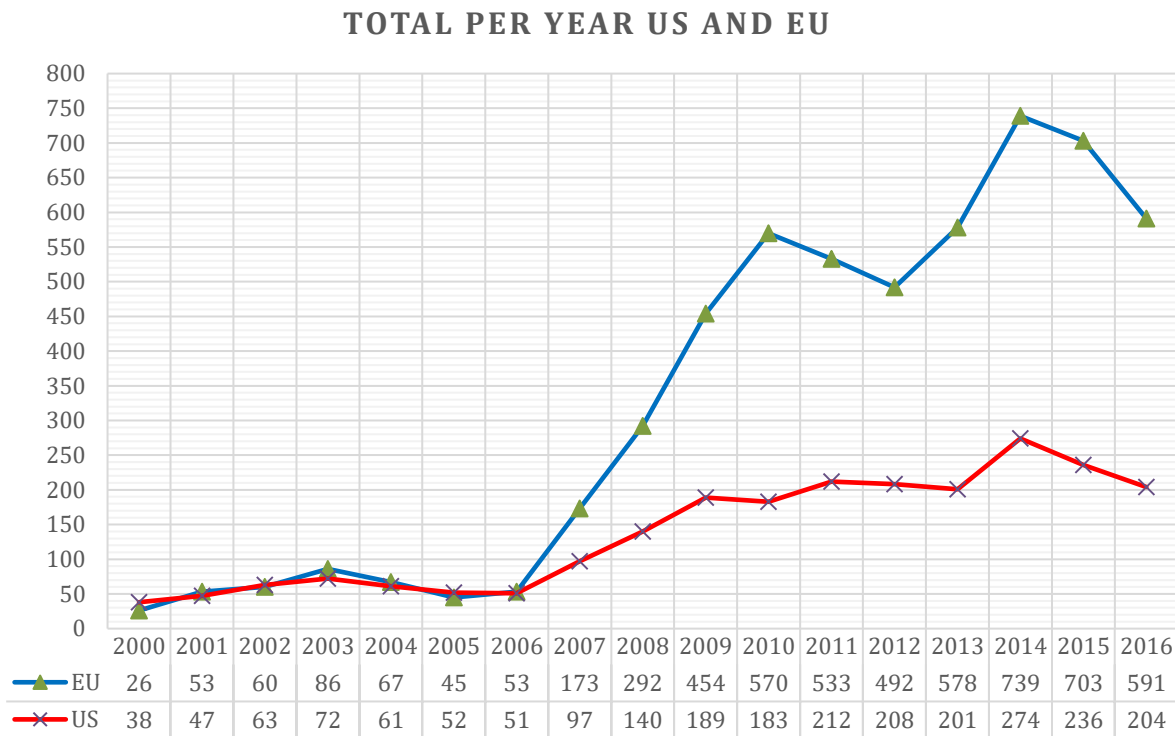


Figure 5 Comparing the number of Colombian Students in the US and the EU per year from 2000-16. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO ("Listado Becarios Colfuturo," n.d.)

3.5 Comparing Colombians Traveling to the 6 Main EU Destinations and English-speaking Countries

Regarding the use of English as a lingua franca (see Chapter 1 for more information on this topic), Figure 6 shows that within the time frame this research utilizes, apart from the UK and the US, other countries with English as their official language received a significantly lower number of Colombian students than non-English speaking countries did. While the UK and the

US received thousands of Colombians, Australia did not reach 500 Colombian students in 16 years. Canada is in the second place with 217 Colombian students in total and New Zealand comes last with only 19. The EU comes first in this Figure as the first destination between 2000 and 2016 with a total of 5,609 students. Also, even being a EU member-state, Ireland only hosted 4 students. Another important aspect that Figure 6 shows is that even though Colombia and Spain share the same official language, countries like France and Germany received a larger number of Colombian students within the same period of time [788 and 799 respectively], compared to 713 who selected Spain. One last fact that should be mentioned regarding this table is that the number of Colombian students who went to the UK counts for more than 30% of the total of the Colombian students that went to the EU.

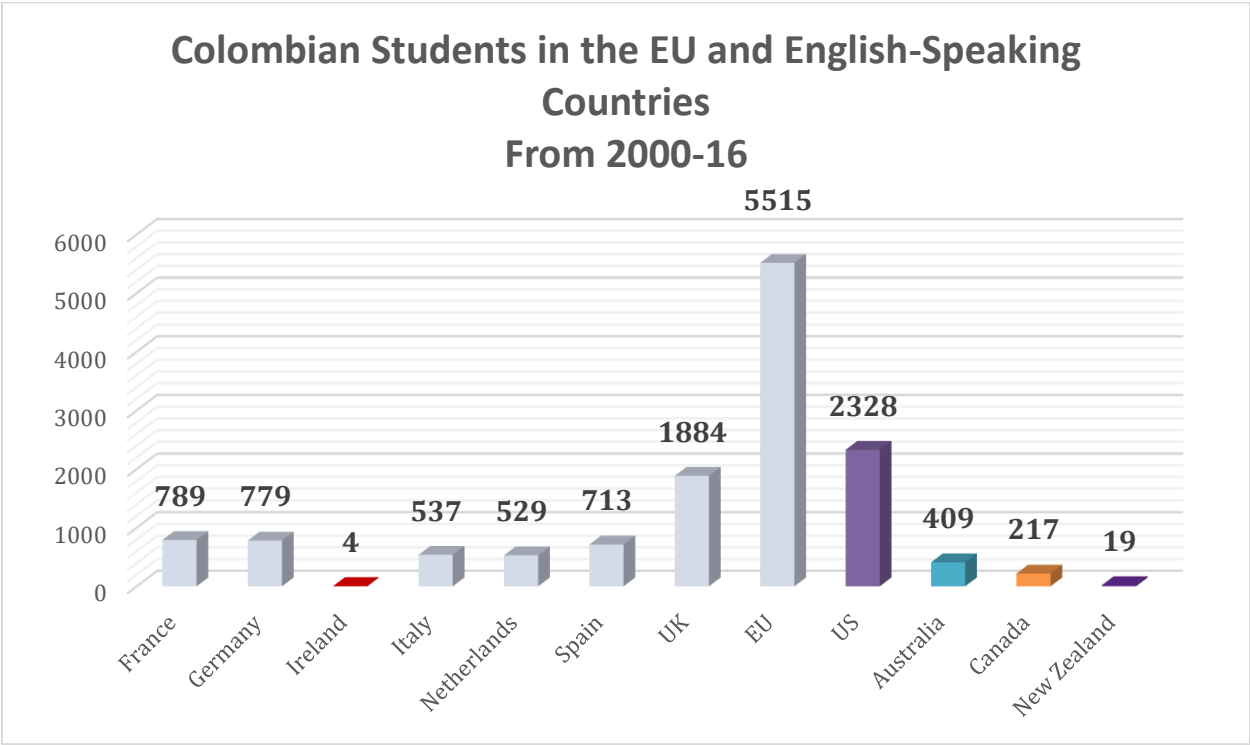


Figure 6 Comparing Colombians traveling to the 6 main EU destinations and English-speaking countries. Data obtained from the public database of COLFUTURO (“Listado Becarios Colfuturo,” n.d.)

CHAPTER 4: Discussion of Findings

Having presented and analyzed the public data from COLFUTURO through different Figures, we are now aiming to revisit our research question: Why did the number of Colombian students traveling to the EU with COLFUTURO have the biggest increase since 2007 compared to any other destination in the world?

The data previously summarized presents the mobility of students from Colombia seeking higher education degrees abroad, considering the European Union member states not individually but at a supranational level. Since the EU member-states representation falls into bilateral relations in many areas, like education, most, if not all of the international reports, still present a higher percentage of students traveling to the United States per year compared to the ones traveling to individual member-states. While the rationale for this approach lies on the individual efforts of countries and institutions to create global connections and partnerships, the sui generis characteristic of the European Union, gives it the value to be considered as a single actor when it comes to attract international higher education students.

Following the historical and documentary research approach, I will now explain the data I presented in Chapter 3 based on the six pull factors that comprise our theoretical framework (see Chapter 2).

4.1 Affordable Costs

It is clear from Figure 5 that a greater number of Colombian students have traveled to Europe after 2007, rather than any other destination in the world. The two main reasons for the increase of Colombian students' mobility fall into the first pull factor presented by Macready and Tucker (2011) i.e. the cost of the programs. While 2007 was the year in which COLFUTURO signed the agreement with the Colombian government to receive more funding through ICETEX

and COLCIENCIAS (see Chapter 1), the European Commission started working on the development of the ‘Study in Europe Brand’ in the same year (see Chapter 1). From the year 2007 and onwards, history reveals that there was a perfect combination of these two endeavors in two different regions of the world which gave way to a bigger number of Colombian students feeling pulled by destinations within the European Union. While in Colombia more students were being given the chance to access the necessary funding through COLFUTURO for their studies abroad, in the European Union, a strategy to attract international students was being developed, acknowledging the need to compete as a Union to attract the talent from around the world, and increasing the support of academic agreements for research and scholarships that would facilitate the internationalization of education.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development maintain that the differences in tuition fees and additional living and services costs are quite noticeable among countries due to different public distribution of resources for higher education (OECD, 2017). While in public US institutions international students are supposed to pay the same fees as domestic out-of-state students, in practice, international students pay higher tuition fees than domestic students since most of them are enrolled as in-state. As opposed to that, in Europe, regardless of the country of origin, international students can enroll in a public institution free of charge. This is the case with Finland, Germany, Iceland, and Norway among others (OECD, 2017). Let us also remember that out of 90 scholarship agreements that COLFUTURO has distributed among 16 countries, 11 of them are within the EU (COLFUTURO, 2017). After the recovery of the Financial Crisis of 2008, the high value of the US dollar, could arguably dissuade students even further from going to high-cost nations, since unfavorable exchange rates exacerbate the already considerable financial concerns of foreign students.” (Verbik &

Lasanowski, 2007). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the devaluation of the Colombian peso has made it almost impossible for the alumni from COLFUTURO to meet their loan payments making a Colombian government intervention necessary. The Colombian peso was devalued for three main reasons: the fall in the price of oil, the reduction of foreign investment and the decrease in exports. The Colombian currency was devalued by more than 50% in relation to the US dollar between September 2014 and the same month of 2015 (Toro, Garavito, López, & Montes, 2015). By looking at Figures 4 and 5, we can understand now why the sudden decrease happened from 2015. Colombians were afraid of the amounts that they would need to pay after taking a loan to study abroad.

4.2 Internationally Recognized Qualifications

Another reason that can be added to explain the earlier mentioned increase is Colombian students opting for HEI which are globally highly ranked. In other words, reputation and prestige of the universities and programs - defining prestige as a global acknowledgement on the basis of achievements and quality -, encourage students around the world to choose those destinations which also host the top-ranked higher education institutions (OECD, 2017). An increasingly perceived added value for international education and institutions in developed nations, is now one of the main benchmarks for students' destination selection process (Beine, Noël, & Ragot, 2014). According to the OECD (2017), university league tables and other international university and programs rankings known globally have made students become progressively aware of the differences in tertiary education systems. Additionally, universities within the main 6 EU destinations have been highly ranked since two decades ago by the most worldwide recognized organizations such as QS Top Universities, Forbes, Times Higher Education and US News among others (“Search US News,” n.d.; “The World’s Top,” n.d.; “Top Universities,” n.d.;

“World University Rankings,” 2016). The fact that students could have access to some of the best ranked universities at a very low cost or none due to scholarships, serves as an answer to the questions of why there was such an increase in the number of Colombian students traveling towards the 6 main EU destinations.

4.3 Home Country Support for Going There to Study

Colombia is one of the best examples of countries supporting prospective HE students to acquire their degrees at an international level. The proof of that is the governmental support to COLFUTURO (see Chapter 1 for a timeline and details of that support) which signed a new collaboration agreement with ICETEX and COLCIENCIAS in 2017 until 2025, mainly in order to support the students’ loan payments affected by the devaluation of the Colombian peso in the last decade. It is worth highlighting that none of these national agreements influenced the students’ destination selection process for their studies abroad since the application process remained clear on the students being the ones responsible for making that final decision.

Therefore, in the case of Colombia within this study, COLFUTURO is one of the main push factors for Colombian students to travel abroad (see Chapter 1 for more information on push and pull factors). While by offering financial support to prospective tertiary students who wish to study abroad is a factor that contributed to the significant increase on the number of students traveling with COLFUTURO after 2007, I do not identify it as one of the reasons why Colombian students chose the EU as their main destination.

4.4 Teaching in a Language Mobile Students Speak or Want to Learn

As discussed in Chapter 1, English has become a lingua franca for many HEI within the EU and for the programs they offer. This is the reason why Colombian students are able to choose any EU member-state including Germany or France, whose official language is not

English but whose HEI offer their programs in that specific language. According to the guidelines for the application process set by COLFUTURO, Colombian students need to demonstrate fluency in the foreign language in which the program they are applying for is delivered (COLFUTURO, 2017). Since the number one foreign language in Colombia is English (de Mejía, 2006), the added value of high ranked universities and lower costs make the EU destinations more attractive for Colombian students. As seen in Figure 6, even though other high-income countries like Canada or Australia or even Ireland as a EU member-state have English as their official language, the preference by Colombians for the main 6 EU member-states is clear.

This pull factor is one of the most determinant by looking at Figure 3. Particularly, since the beginning of the new century, the adoption of English-Taught Programs (ETP) has increased within the EU from around 721 in 2001 to 2,389 in 2007 and 8,089 in 2014; among these last figures, the Netherlands has the largest amount with 1078, followed by Germany with 1030 and France with 499 (“English-taught Programs,” 2015). The same study from the ICEF Monitor stated that eastern and southern European countries are the ones which offer the smallest amount of ETP by both number and percentage compared to other EU member states (2015). An article from QS Top Universities also determines that the two most attractive EU member-states that attract international students through ETP are Germany, and the Netherlands (“Where You Can Study,” 2017).

4.5 Effective Marketing by Destination Country/Institution

The EU has achieved to develop an image of a great partner for Colombia (see Chapter 1). This image has been reinforced through humanitarian aid, different investment programs targeting several social fields like education, and through the offering of numerous scholarships

from many of its member-states. In fact, COLFUTURO has more than 90 agreements with HEI distributed among 16 countries including 11 within the European Union. These agreements offer tuition discounts ranging from 10% to 100% or contribute to support costs while the student is abroad. Since economic factors have always played a significant role in HE, COLFUTURO has achieved to maintain and grow the number of international agreements to provide better funding for its applicants. More specifically, it has signed agreements with 23 institutions in the US, including Harvard and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and about 40 more with EU member-states including Germany, Spain, France, and the UK (COLFUTURO, 2017).

What is clear is that these agreements have emerged from the endeavor of the European Commission to brand the EU as a single and very attractive destination for international HE prospective students. As presented in Chapter 1, the “Study in Europe” brand started exactly the same year in which Colombia reached the highest peak on the number of students traveling abroad (see Figure 5). Clearly then, as mentioned along the pull factor related to the costs of the programs, another reason that explains why Colombian students preferred the European Union as their main destination is that its member-states were no longer competing individually but as a unity promoting the 8 advantages mentioned in Chapter 1.

4.6 Helpful Visa Arrangements, for Study and for Work while Studying

Last but not least, there are other factors which, even though they are of minor importance for this study, also affect students’ decisions. The study-visa offered by an EU member-state to non-citizens grants the same freedom of movement as that provided to the citizens of the 26 countries that belong to the Schengen Space. The Schengen Agreement was also adapted by non-EU member-states like Norway and Iceland (“The Schengen Agreement,” n.d.). This is an area without internal borders that students can explore during their studies. This

could be another reason why Colombian students opt for the EU as their main destination. It is important to highlight that this freedom of movement within the Schengen Space is one of the reasons given by the Study in Europe brand (see Chapter 1).

CHAPTER 5: Conclusions

5.1. An Overview of Key Findings of the Study

This study aimed at exploring the reasons why there was a larger number of Colombian students selecting EU member-states as the main destination for Higher Education Purposes after 2007. Based on data drawn from COLFUTURO, I compiled figures illustrating the total number of Colombians traveling with COLFUTURO from 2000 to 2016, as well as those traveling to the EU member-states. I compared the number of student who traveled and chose to study in the six main EU destinations (the UK, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands) and the US. I also examined whether the students choosing study destinations were influenced by the official language of the hosting country. Following Buckley's methodological suggestions (2011) the analysis of the sequences, time series and processes allowed this research to look into the connecting instruments that link the push and pull factors for Colombians to choose their destination for higher education purposes. The type of research conducted was necessary to examine and synthesize data previously collected by COLFUTURO, in order to establish the following facts and conclusions.

Applying Macready and Tucker's (2011) modified list of pull factors regarding students' mobility in Tertiary Education as a theoretical framework in our analysis of data, I reached the following conclusions:

1. There has been a clear preference of EU member-states over the US as a higher education destination by Colombian students since 2007.
2. This shift in HEI preferences towards the EU can be attributed to
 - a. the lower tuition fees in EU countries
 - b. more highly ranked institutions and programs

- c. the use of English as a lingua franca among EU HEI and their programs
- d. the offer of greater number of scholarships offered by EU member-states as a more effective marketing strategy
- e. the advantages of a student visa from a EU member-state

5.2 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

Despite the fact that this study has contributed a fresh perspective of the reasons why there was an increase in the number of Colombian students who decided to study in the EU, due to the limited scope of this study there are a number of drawbacks that need to be considered. First, this was a historic and documentary type of research which is based on existing data collected from COLFUTURO's website and annual reports from 2012. This actually means that this study is very limited while conducting a different type of research, collecting more data and utilizing a wider range of research instruments such as questionnaires and interviews is bound to shed more light on the reasons why Colombian students make specific decisions regarding higher education destinations.

Another limitation regarding this study is the fact that all data was drawn from a single source, COLFUTURO. This study did not consider the other ways through which Colombian students can fund their HE studies abroad, i.e. personal funding; through international agreements of the same educational institutions from which students obtained their bachelors; private sector companies focused on guiding the selection, application and travel of Colombians to educational institutions abroad; other publicly and privately funded organizations that support international mobility of students. Therefore, it would be particularly interesting to have access and examine all the data regarding Colombian students who have studied abroad till the present irrespective of the means of funding they used. In addition, this thesis is still putting aside the

number of students who applied but for different reasons did not use the program. This type of research would give more data to understand the perceptions and trends in the selection process of Colombians looking for international higher education degrees even during times of financial crises.

As a last remark, knowing all the reasons that influence prospective students' decisions as well as being able to access data related to the fields of study these students select, and the place of employment they obtain could help future researchers clarify all these issues further and propose ways to improve higher education at a national and international level.

5.3 Implications of the Study

The selection process of academic destinations for higher education is a topic that has continuously drawn researchers' attention since students comprise the most relevant stakeholder group in international higher education. The need to react to new student matters has brought about an extensive variety of institutional and fundamental modifications that have changed, and keep on changing, the size, shape, and nature of higher education (Veloutsou, Lewis, & Paton, 2004). The findings of this work can support policies regarding recruitment of international students and it can also assist in advising how to improve institutional performance.

Concerning the mobility of Colombian students, including those traveling to the United States, the data presented supports the discussion regarding the global competition of international actors to influence developing countries and their students' study-abroad decisions. The understanding of the selection trends can have a number of implications at an individual, institutional and national level. These implications are seen within politics, finance as well as decisions related to the internationalization of higher education. At the economic level, the monetary returns for high education graduates are the most astounding in the whole educational

framework — there is an expected 17% increase expansion in income as contrasted with 10 percent for primary and 7 percent for secondary training (“Higher Education”, 2017). Today, there are around 200 million higher education students globally, in comparison with 89 million in 1998. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for instance, the quantity of students in higher education programs has almost multiplied in the previous decade. This is very significant because, as indicated by a World Bank Group report, students with a higher education degree in the region will earn more than twice as much as students with only a secondary school diploma (World Bank, 2017).

5.4 Concluding Remarks

After March 29th, 2019, when the United Kingdom is supposed to complete the Brexit process, it will be necessary for the remaining 27 states of the EU to remain strong in building education policies that create eco abroad. Until now, the UK has been indeed one of the main representative figures regarding destinations for international students. With the UK out of the game, the EU may not seem as competitive within this field. Since the UK has always been a cherry-picking member from the beginning of The Union, a successful negotiation of foreign policies between the EU and the UK, would facilitate the continuation of the arguments presented above on why Colombian students prefer this region of the world for higher education purposes.

Students from Colombia have realized the opportunities that they are provided with by obtaining a degree in any university of excellence in the European Union and also at a pretty much affordable cost. This has been reflected in the increasing number of students that select the old continent to complete their tertiary education degrees. Considering that globalization is a multidimensional set of factors, education, and exchange of knowledge is one of the key elements that determines the elimination of boundaries among nations (Kaplinsky, 2005), and

that can generate positive impacts at a global scale, taking into account all the social interactions that international education involves.

Globalization stimulates stronger and more frequent interactions between markets at the local, national and international level. This leads to the development of a knowledge-rich environment, driven by the power of competition, quickly expanding knowledge and technological capacity.

This research contributes to the argument of why a 'European Union' is necessary for low-income countries like Colombia, from the perspective of international education, and demonstrates the competitive advantage the EU has achieved through mobility projects like the ERASMUS+ program. The present study, despite being very limited in scope, has contributed to the dissemination of information regarding different economic, cultural, political, and historical factors that affect the destination selection process of future students from Colombia.

References

- ¿A dónde viajan los colombianos a estudiar? (2016, December 6). Retrieved April 11, 2018, from <http://www.portafolio.co/tendencias/paises-a-los-que-viajan-los-colombianos-a-estudiar-502105>
- Abdullah, D., Abd Aziz, M. I., & Mohd Ibrahim, A. L. (2017). The Stories They Tell: Understanding International Student Mobility Through Higher Education Policy. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 21(5), 450–466. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315317720766>
- About Colciencias | COLCIENCIAS. (n.d.). Retrieved November 17, 2017, from <http://www.colciencias.gov.co/node/1434>
- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3–4), 290–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315307303542>
- Altbach, P. G., & Peterson, P. M. (2008). Higher education as a projection of America's soft power. *Soft power superpowers: Cultural and national assets of Japan and the United States*, 37-53.
- Altbach, P. G., & Teichler, U. (2001). Internationalization and Exchanges in a Globalized University. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 5(1), 5–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/102831530151002>
- Articulating Global Strategy | Making the Case for Internationalization. (n.d.). Retrieved October 19, 2017, from <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Making-the-Case-for-Internationalization.aspx>
- Beck, U. (2000). The cosmopolitan perspective: sociology of the second age of modernity. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), 79–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/000713100358444>
- Beine, M., Noël, R., & Ragot, L. (2014). Determinants of the international mobility of students. *Economics of Education Review*, 41, 40–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2014.03.003>
- Beneficiarios del Programa Credito Beca para Postgrados en el Exterior. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2018, from <https://www.colfuturo.org/seleccionados/#>
- Bilateral UE-Colombia. (2016, May 12). Retrieved January 10, 2018, from http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/colombia/eu_colombia/political_relations/bilatera-l-eu-colombia/index_es.htm
- BMI Media | International Student Recruitment Fairs. (n.d.). Retrieved March 3, 2018, from <http://www.bmimedia.net/>
- Boletín Educación Superior en Cifras - Noviembre de 2016a - Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. (2016). Retrieved March 30, 2018, from

<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/micrositios-superior/Publicaciones-Educacion-Superior/359642:Boletin-Educacion-Superior-en-Cifras-Noviembre-de-2016>

Boletín Educación Superior en Cifras - Abril de 2016b - Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. (2016). Retrieved March 30, 2018, from

<https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/Educacion-superior/Sistema-de-Educacion-Superior/350451:Boletin-Educacion-Superior-en-Cifras>

Brandenburg, U., & Wit, H. D. (2015). The End of Internationalization. *International Higher Education*, 0(62). Retrieved from

<https://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ihe/article/view/8533>

Brooks, R., & Waters, J. L. (2011). *Student mobilities, migration and the internationalization of higher education*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave macmillan.

Buckley, P. J. (2016). Historical Research Approaches to the Analysis of Internationalisation. *Management International Review*, 56(6), 879–900. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-016-0300-0>

Cantuarias Salaverry, F., Barbosa Mariño, J. D., Lopez Raygada, P. S., & Lozano Ortiz de Zarate, M. C. (Eds.). (2015). *Acuerdo comercial entre Colombia, Perú y la Unión Europea: contenido, análisis y aplicación*. Bogotá, D.C., Colombia: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Universidad del Pacifico, Union Europea, Grupo Editorial Ibañez.

Cantwell, B., & Maldonado-Maldonado, A. (2009). Four stories: confronting contemporary ideas about globalisation and internationalisation in higher education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 7(3), 289–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767720903166103>

Chanda, N. (2007). *Bound together: how traders, preachers, adventurers, and warriors shaped globalization*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Retrieved from

<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=3420381>

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed). London ; New York: Routledge.

COLFUTURO. (2017). *COLFUTURO: Closer to You* (pp. 1–96). Bogotá, D.C., Colombia. Retrieved from <https://www.colfuturo.org/apps/seleccionados2017/>

COLFUTURO. (2012). *COLFUTURO: Changing the Future of Colombia for 20 Years* (pp. 1–45). Bogotá, D.C., Colombia. Retrieved from <https://www.colfuturo.org/english>

Colombia - International Cooperation and Development. (2013, June 17). Retrieved March 2, 2018, from https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/countries/colombia_en

Colombia - OECD Statistics on International Trade in Services, Volume 2017 Issue 1 - OECD iLibrary. (n.d.). Retrieved March 7, 2018, from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/proxy2.library.illinois.edu/trade/oecd-statistics-on-international-trade-in-services-volume-2017-issue-1/colombia_sits-v2017-1-table55-en

- Colombia Aims to Move Higher Education Reforms Forward. (2017, May 23). Retrieved November 15, 2017, from <http://monitor.icef.com/2017/05/colombia-aims-move-higher-education-reforms-forward/>
- Convocatoria 2018 - Programa de Crédito y Beca. (2016, December 5). Retrieved March 31, 2018, from <https://www.colfuturo.org/convocatoria>
- Countries and Regions | CAN. (2018, a). Retrieved February 9, 2018, from <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/andean-community/>
- Countries and Regions | MERCOSUR. (2018, b). Retrieved February 9, 2018, from <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/mercosur/>
- Daly, H. (1999). Globalization Versus Internationalization: Retrieved March 4, 2018, from <https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/162/27995.html>
- de Mejía, A.-M. (2006). Bilingual Education in Colombia: Towards a Recognition of Languages, Cultures and Identities. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, (8), 152–168.
- Defining, writing and applying learning outcomes | A European Handbook. (2017, November 8). Retrieved April 15, 2018, from <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4156>
- ECDL Education. (n.d.). Retrieved April 21, 2018, from <http://ecdl.org/ecdl-education>
- Eldridge, M. (1998). *Transforming experience: John Dewey's cultural instrumentalism* (1st ed). Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- English-taught Programs in Europe up more than 300%. (2015, June 9). Retrieved November 23, 2017, from <http://monitor.icef.com/2015/06/english-taught-programmes-in-europe-up-more-than-300/>
- EU Trust Fund for Colombia - International Cooperation and Development - European Commission. (2016, August 23). Retrieved March 16, 2018, from https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/eu-trust-fund-colombia_en
- EU-Colombia Relations, Factsheet. (2016, December 12). European Union External Action Service Retrieved March 1, 2018, from [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/16968/EU-Colombia relations, factsheet](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/16968/EU-Colombia%20relations,%20factsheet)
- EU-Latin America cooperation in education and training - Education and training - European Commission. (n.d.). Retrieved January 23, 2018, from https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/international-cooperation/latin-america_en
- Europe and Latin America: A Partnership for Action. Basic Document on the Relations of the European Union with Latin America and the Caribbean (1994). [Brochure]. European Commission and the Institute for European-Latin American Relations. Belgium.

- European Commission. (2015). *Promotion of Higher Education | European Union Regional Cooperation with Latin America*. Retrieved from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-213_en.htm
- European Commission. (2017a). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of The Regions* (No. 572). Strasbourg, France. Retrieved from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2017%3A572%3AFIN>
- European Commission. (2017b). Program guide | Erasmus+ (Program Guide No. 2). Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en
- European Commission / EACEA/ Eurydice (Ed.). (2017). *Modernisation of higher education in Europe* (Text completed in June 2017). Luxembourg: Publications Office. Retrieved from <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/news>
- European Commission, & Education, A. and C. E. A. (2014). *Higher education cooperation between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean: academic cooperation and mobility : bringing the two regions closer*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Retrieved from https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/colombia/17465/higher-education-cooperation-between-european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean-academic_es
- Expo-Estudiante. (n.d.). Retrieved December 23, 2017, from <http://colombia.expo-estudiante.com>
- Franklin, K. (2010). Long-term Career Impact and Professional Applicability of the Study Abroad Experience. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, XIX, 169–191.
- Gacel-Avila, Jocelyne. (2014). *La colaboración académica de América Latina y el Caribe con la Unión Europea y Estados Unidos. Principales tendencias y características*. Educación Global. 18. 39-54. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301778847>
- Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students | Colombia. (n.d.). Retrieved March 11, 2018, from <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>
- Global student mobility growth ‘to dwindle over next decade.’ (2018, January 31). Retrieved April 17, 2018, from <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/global-student-mobility-growth-dwindle-over-next-decade>
- Globalization: A Brief Overview. (n.d.). Retrieved March 3, 2018, from <https://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2008/053008.htm>
- Grabendorff, W., & Seidelmann, R. (Eds.). (2005). *Relations Between the European Union and Latin America: Biregionalism in a Changing Global System* (1. Aufl). Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Health Topics | Globalization. (n.d.). Retrieved March 4, 2018, from <http://www.who.int/topics/globalization/en/>

- High Level Education | COLCIENCIAS. (2016). Retrieved March 31, 2018, from <http://www.colciencias.gov.co/node/1769>
- Hobsbawm, E. (2000). Pt. II. Explaining Globalization. 9. The World Unified. In J. Boli & F. Lechner (Eds.), *The globalization reader* (1st ed., pp. 49–69). Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell. Retrieved from <https://trove.nla.gov.au/version/46666388>
- Hoof, H. B. V., & Verbeeten, M. J. (2005). Wine Is for Drinking, Water Is for Washing: Student Opinions About International Exchange Programs. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 9(1), 42–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315304271480>
- Horizon 2020 - European Commission. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2018, from <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>
- How to make a compelling case for internationalisation. (2017, October 12). Retrieved October 19, 2017, from <https://www.eaie.org/blog/make-compelling-case-internationalisation/>
- Human Development Reports | Colombia. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2018, from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COL>
- International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). (n.d.). Retrieved October 19, 2017, from [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_\(ISCED\)#Correspondence_between_ISCED_2011_and_ISCED_1997_.28aggregated_levels.29](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED)#Correspondence_between_ISCED_2011_and_ISCED_1997_.28aggregated_levels.29)
- Internacionalización de la educación superior - Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia. (2009). Retrieved March 30, 2018, from <https://www.mineducacion.gov.co/portal/Educacion-superior/Informacion-Destacada/196472:Internacionalizacion-de-la-educacion-superior>
- Internationalization, n. (n.d.). *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved from <http://www.oed.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/Entry/422963>
- Kaplinsky, R. (2005). *Globalization, poverty and inequality: between a rock and a hard place*. Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity.
- Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(1), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315303260832>
- Knight, J. (2015). Updating the Definition of Internationalization. *International Higher Education*, (33), 2–3. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2003.33.7391>
- Kolodziej, E. A. (2016). *Governing globalization: challenges for democracy and global society*. London ; New York: Rowman & Littlefield International.
- Lamy, P. (2006). “Humanising Globalization.” Retrieved March 3, 2018, from https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/sppl_e/sppl16_e.htm

- Latin America - Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+: Partnership in higher education. (2013, October 8). Retrieved October 9, 2017, from https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/erasmus-mundus_en
- Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe - European Commission. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2018, from </ploteus/en/content/descriptors-page>
- Lo, W. Y. W. (2011). Soft power, university rankings and knowledge production: distinctions between hegemony and self-determination in higher education. *Comparative Education*, 47(2), 209–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2011.554092>
- Macready, C., & Tucker, C. (2011). *Who goes where and why? an overview and analysis of global educational mobility*. New York: Institute of International Education.
- Making the EU more attractive for foreign students. (n.d.). [European Commission - Education and training]. Retrieved April 22, 2018, from https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/international-cooperation/education-quality_en
- Marchand, M. H., & Parpart, J. L. (1995). *Feminism/postmodernism/development*. London: Routledge.
- Marconi, G. (2013). Rankings, accreditations, and international exchange students. *IZA Journal of European Labor Studies*, 2, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-9012-2-5>
- Mitchell, D. E., & Nielsen, S. Y. (2012). Internationalization and Globalization in Higher Education. *Globalization - Education and Management Agendas*. <https://doi.org/10.5772/48702>
- Monsalve, J. A. P. (2016). Claves para estudiar en el exterior. Retrieved February 8, 2018, from <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/educacion/estudiar-fuera-no-es-imposible-BD4027524>
- Nuestra gestión en cifras. (2018). Retrieved January 26, 2018, from <https://www.colfuturo.org/nuestra-gestion-en-cifras>
- Nye, J. (2005). Soft Power and Higher Education. *Forum for the Future of Higher Education (Archives)*, 11–44.
- Ocampo, J. A. (2009). Latin America and the global financial crisis. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 33(4), 703–724. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bep030>
- OECD (2017), *Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>.
- ¿Para dónde nos vamos los colombianos? (2017, May 17). Retrieved April 11, 2018, from <http://noticias.universia.net.co/estudiar-extranjero/noticia/2017/01/04/1148097/donde-vamos-colombianos.html>

- Pouliou, A. (2014). The Learning Outcomes Approach in English Language Teaching. Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation. Patras, Greece; Hellenic Open University. Retrieved March 11, 2018 from <https://apothesis.eap.gr/handle/repo/26772>
- Programa Crédito Beca. (n.d.). Retrieved March 31, 2018, from <https://www.colfuturo.org/financiacion-para-posgrados-en-el-exterior>
- Quienes somos? - ICETEX (n.d.). Retrieved March 31, 2018, from <https://portal.icetex.gov.co/Portal/Home/el-icetex/quienes-somos/introducci%C3%B3n>
- Reglamento Convocatoria. (2007). COLFUTURO. Retrieved from https://www.colfuturo.org/sites/default/files/reglamento_2007.pdf
- Reglamento de crédito - ICETEX (June 2007). Retrieved March 31, 2018, from <https://portal.icetex.gov.co/Portal/Home/el-icetex/biblioteca/reglamentodecredito>
- Reseña Histórica. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2018, from <http://www.comunidadandina.org/Seccion.aspx?id=195&tipo=QU&title=resena-historica>
- Saunders, S. (2013). Defining Internationalization vs. Globalization Within Higher Education. Retrieved March 4, 2018, from <http://universityoutlook.com/topics/international/defining-internationalization-vs-globalization-within-higher-education>
- Schengen Visa Types. (n.d.). Retrieved March 26, 2018, from <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-types/>
- Search US News Best Colleges | US News Rankings. (n.d.). Retrieved April 23, 2018, from <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/search>
- Sobre la Delegación de la UE de Colombia. (2016, November 5). Retrieved February 10, 2018, from https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/colombia_es/1075/Sobre_la_delegación_de_la_UE_de_Colombia
- Stiasny, M. (Ed.). (2012). *Going global: the landscape for policy makers and practitioners in tertiary education*. Howard House: Emerald.
- Stier, J. (2004). Taking a critical stance toward internationalization ideologies in higher education: idealism, instrumentalism and educationalism. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 2(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1476772042000177069>
- Stiglitz, J. E. (2010). *Freefall: America, free markets, and the sinking of the world economy* (First edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Stoudmann, A. G., & Al-Rodhan, N. (2006). *Definitions of Globalization: A Comprehensive Overview and a Proposed Definition*. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/versions?doi=10.1.1.472.4772>
- Study in Europe. (n.d.). Retrieved January 23, 2018, from https://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe_en

- Tassara, C., & Zuluaga, Y. (2013). Cooperación Euro-Latinoamericana En La Educación. Lecciones Aprendidas En El Programa Eurosocial En Colombia. *Investigación y Desarrollo* 21(1), 29-73. Retrieved February 10, 2018, from http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0121-32612013000100003&lng=en&tlng=
- Tertiary Education. (n.d.). [Text/HTML]. Retrieved March 6, 2018, from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/tertiaryeducation>
- The EU in brief. (2016, June 16). [Text]. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en
- The Schengen Agreement: Countries, Map and the Definition. (n.d.). Retrieved March 7, 2018, from <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-agreement/>
- The State of International Student Mobility in 2015. (2015, November 5). Retrieved March 7, 2018, from <http://monitor.icef.com/2015/11/the-state-of-international-student-mobility-in-2015/>
- The World Bank. (2002). *Globalization, growth, and poverty: building an inclusive world economy* (No. 23591) (p. 1). Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/954071468778196576/Globalization-growth-and-poverty-building-an-inclusive-world-economy>
- The World's Top Universities In 2017. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2018, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/karstenstrauss/2017/09/20/the-worlds-top-universities-in-2017/#8ef677a2ba1c>
- Thompson, T. S. (2011). *From Bologna to Berlin 1999–2003: The initial steps of the Bologna Process and creation of the European Higher Education Area* (Ph.D.). University of Pittsburgh, United States -- Pennsylvania. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/dissertations/docview/908416689/abstract/A75EEE9F2B254A96PQ/27>
- Top Universities. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2018, from <https://www.topuniversities.com/>
- Torino, P. di. (n.d.). International Students - Invest Your Talent in Italy. Retrieved February 23, 2018, from /financial_aid/politecnico_international_scholarships/invest_your_talent_in_italy
- Toro, J., Garavito, A., López, D. C., & Montes, E. (2015). El choque petrolero y sus implicaciones en la economía colombiana. *Borradores de economía*, 906, 1-65.
- Trines, S. (2017, September 18). The Student Mobility Outlook from Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela. Retrieved February 28, 2018, from <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/09/going-north-the-student-mobility-outlook-from-latin-america>
- UNESCO | Globalisation. (n.d.). Retrieved March 4, 2018, from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/globalisation/>

- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2001). World Public Sector Report. Globalization and the State (Vol. 1).
- Veloutsou, C., Lewis, J. W., & Paton, R. A. (2004). University selection: information requirements and importance. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 18(3), 160-171.
- Verbik, L., & Lasanowski, V. (2007). International student mobility: Patterns and trends. *World Education News and Reviews*, 20(10), 1-16.
- Viajar a la UE desde Colombia - Comisión Europea. (2016, November 5). [Delegación de la Unión Europea en Colombia]. Retrieved January 10, 2018, from https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/colombia_es/1078/Viajar_a_la_UE_desde_Colombia
- Watanabe, Y., & McConnell, D. L. (Eds.). (2008). *Soft power superpowers: Cultural and national assets of Japan and the United States*. ME Sharpe.
- West, J. (2018, February 9). Growth of International Student Numbers in Higher Education. Retrieved April 17, 2018, from <http://www.qs.com/growth-international-students-higher-education/>
- Where Can You Study Abroad in English? (2017, September 29). Retrieved January 22, 2018, from <https://www.topuniversities.com/student-info/studying-abroad/where-can-you-study-abroad-english>
- Wit, H. D. (2011). *Trends, issues and challenges in internationalisation of higher education*. Hogeschool van Amsterdam.
- Wit, H. D. (2015). Internationalization Misconceptions. *International Higher Education*, 0(64). Retrieved from <https://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ihe/article/view/8556>
- Wit, H. D., Hans [editor, Jaramillo, I. C. [editor, Gacel-Avila, J. [editor, & Knight, J. [editor. (2005). *Higher education in Latin America - the international dimension*. The World Bank. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/857841468091483395/Higher-education-in-Latin-America-the-international-dimension>
- World Bank. (2017). Higher Education [Text/HTML]. Retrieved April 8, 2018, from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/tertiaryeducation>
- World University Rankings. (2016, August 17). Retrieved March 23, 2018, from <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2017/world-ranking>

APPENDIX A. Summary of the data collected

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	3	9
Belgium	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	6	20	7	10	10	16	12	8	96
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	5	0	3	10
Denmark	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	8	4	4	4	28
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Finland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	3	4	5	3	19
France	2	4	5	7	5	2	6	30	39	61	50	105	85	101	128	79	80	789
Germany	0	1	4	4	20	9	5	28	42	44	52	60	62	102	129	114	103	779
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
Italy	0	0	1	0	1	1	2	3	14	46	105	70	53	54	70	69	48	537
Netherlands	1	4	14	11	4	6	6	17	26	45	53	49	49	46	43	78	77	529
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	5	0	12
Spain	2	7	8	6	7	4	7	20	63	85	82	79	54	53	78	94	64	713
Sweden	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	5	12	15	16	5	1	6	5	15	10	97
UK	21	35	26	56	29	21	26	65	91	149	188	155	173	190	252	222	185	1884
EU	26	53	60	86	67	45	53	173	292	454	570	533	492	578	739	703	591	5515
US	38	47	63	72	61	52	51	97	140	189	183	212	208	201	274	236	204	2328
Australia	2	0	3	3	1	0	3	8	29	55	68	30	42	32	46	45	42	409
Canada	9	5	8	6	4	6	5	12	14	8	21	12	23	21	11	29	23	217
New Zealand	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	4	0	3	2	4	2	19

Note: Composed based on the data collected originally from COLFUTURO <https://www.colfuturo.org/nuestra-gestion-en-cifras>

APPENDIX B. Increase of students traveling from Colombia with COLFUTURO towards the 6 main EU destinations and the United States

	2006	2007	%	2008	2009	%	2014	%
France	6	30	450%	39	61		128	
Germany	5	28	460%	42	44		129	
Italy	2	3	50%	14	46	230%	70	
Netherlands	6	17	180%	26	45		43	
Spain	7	20	185%	63	85		78	
UK	26	65	150%	91	149		252	
European Union	54	176	226%	298	460		749	1280%
United States	51	97	90%	140	189		274	430%

Note: Composed based on the data collected originally from COLFUTURO <https://www.colfuturo.org/nuestra-gestion-en-cifras>