

Latin America in Transition: Contemporary Development Challenges

Professors: Olivia CUQ and Lucas LEBLANC
Contact information: olivia.cuq@oecd.org
lucas.leblanc@oecd.org
Department: International affairs
Semester: 2
Course level: L3 undergraduate

Domain: International Development, Political Science
Teaching language: English
Number of in-class hours: 18
Number of course sessions: 10
ECTS: 6

Course description and objectives

How can the Latin American region move towards a sustainable development model? How can a multidimensional approach lead to more prosperity for the citizens of the region? What development traps are holding back the regions development? What is the role of national and subnational institutions?

The answers to these questions are closely linked and are part of the system response Latin American countries need to move towards a more sustainable development model. This course focuses on the challenges and opportunities of multidimensional development and how active policies to place citizen's well-being at the center can help close the developing traps of the region.

The sessions delve into specific topics in the field of sustainable development, including a macroeconomic analysis of the region, the multidimensionality of vulnerability, the role of reinforced institutions, the impact of climate change in the region, the challenges and opportunities of place-based solutions, the crucial role of the labour market, and Latin America's engagement with the world through diplomacy and development cooperation.

The course draws on academic literature, but also on policy reports and specific case studies from developing economies. The intention is to combine rigorous empirical analysis with policy-oriented training, so students are not only able to evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence on regional development topics, but also use this evidence to navigate existing institutional constraints and promote concrete policies. More than just a review of the existing literature and evidence, students will be asked to apply the findings in a regional/place-based context through individual and group assignments.

Prerequisites

Ability to reflect critically on public policy.

Ability to cite materials and interpret data.

Some previous knowledge of Latin American history and recent socio-political events in the region.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the course, the students will have achieved:

- (1) A solid overview of the theoretical literature and policy approaches on i) the major drivers behind sustainable development, ii) labour markets and inequality and iii) the development in transition

approach, and iv) the political outcomes of bad (and good) development strategies in a Latin American context.

- (2) Exposure to case studies from Latin American economies on policies related to the topics highlighted above.
- (3) The ability to critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence on sustainable development topics from both academic and policy sources.
- (4) The ability to analyse existing public policies in the field of sustainable development and to produce their own policy recommendations.

Assignments and grading

- (1) **Participation** (50%) will be evaluated throughout the course through “mini” thematic country presentations and participation during lectures.

Individual assignment:

- (2) **Policy brief** (40%) covering a policy challenge of the students’ choice that highlights the multidimensional nature of a development challenge in a Latin American country. Further instructions will be provided during the course.

Group assignment:

- (1) **Group presentation** (10%) that brings together policy challenges for one country covered in the individual policy briefs.

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for this course is 10/20.

Class participation: Active class participation – this is what makes classes lively and instructive. Come on time and prepared. Class participation is based on quality of comments, not quantity.

Course structure

Session	Topic	Lecturer
1	Course overview and conceptual introduction: <i>Latin America in transition</i>	Olivia
2	Topic 1: Social and spatial inequalities	Lucas
3	Topic 2: Green and just transition	Olivia
4	Topic 3: Labor markets and informality	Lucas
5	Topic 4: Productive diversification	Olivia
6+7	Topic 5: (class debate) Trade – Mercosur-EU Association Agreement debate	Lucas
	Topic 6: International Relations	
8	Topic 7: Institutions and political economy	Olivia
9	Topic 8: International Cooperation	Olivia
10	Presentation Day	Lucas

General bibliography

1. AFD (2022), Islands and Coastal Cities Faced with Climate Change: Increasing the Resilience of Island Communities.
2. Alejos, L. (2021), What are the fiscal risks from extreme weather events and how can we deal with them?, Inter-American Development Bank.
3. Arora, A. and H. Schroeder (2002), “How to avoid unjust energy transitions: insights from the Ruhr region”, Energy, Sustainability and Society, Vol. 12
4. Arent, D. et al. (2017), The Political Economy of Clean Energy Transitions, Oxford University Press
5. Bleeker, A. et al. (2021), Advancing gender equality in environmental migration and disaster displacement in the Caribbean, Studies and Perspectives series, No. 98, ECLAC
6. Cabutto, C., S. Nieto Parra and J. Vázquez Zamora (2022), Hacia un contrato social renovado en tiempos de Covid-19 para América Latina: ¿por qué? ¿qué incluir?, ¿cómo llevarlo a cabo?, Blog, Foco Económico
7. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2023. Accessible version (LC/A.2023/4LC/PUB.2023/19), Santiago, 2024.
8. ECLAC et al. (2020), The climate emergency in Latin America and the Caribbean. The path ahead – resignation or action?
9. Fortin C, Heine J, Ominami C, eds. Latin American Foreign Policies in the New World Order: The Active Non-Alignment Option. Anthem Press; 2023.
10. Guzmán, J. (2020), De mínimos a máximos: cómo los estacionamientos en Ciudad de México están cambiando, Transecto.
11. Hickey, A. and V. Wellenstein (2021), 10 key points on climate change impacts, opportunities and priorities for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Bank Blogs.
12. Lamb, W. et al. (2021), “A review of trends and drivers of greenhouse gas emissions by sector from 1990 to 2018”, Environmental Research Letters, Vol. 16/7, Institute of Physics (IOP) Publishing.
13. Maldonado Valera, C. et al. (2022), Social cohesion and inclusive social development in Latin America: A proposal for an era of uncertainties, Project Documents, LC/TS.2021/133/Rev.1, ECLAC.
14. OECD et al. (2023), Latin American Economic Outlook 2023: Investing in Sustainable Development, OECD Publishing, Paris.

15. OECD (2022), From informal to formal jobs: The contribution of cooperatives in Colombia. OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Papers.
16. OECD et al. (2022), Latin American Economic Outlook 2022: Towards a Green and Just Transition.
17. OECD (2020), COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: Regional socio-economic implications and policy priorities.
18. OECD (2020), Informality and employment protection during and beyond COVID-19: good practices and the imperative of universal safety nets. Background note, OECD-LAC Virtual Social Inclusion Ministerial Summit.
19. OECD (2020), Impacto social del COVID-19 en Ecuador: desafíos y respuestas, Making Development Happen, Volume 4.
20. OECD/ILO (2019), Tackling vulnerability in the Informal Economy, Development Centre Studies.

Lectures' biography

Olivia Cuq is a Policy Analyst within the OECD Development Centre (DEV). In DEV, she coordinates and collaborates with various reports and projects dedicated to the green transition in LAC. Before that, Olivia worked at the Argentinean delegation to the OECD, and various subnational governments in Argentina. Olivia holds a B.A. in Political Sciences from the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), a specialization in Public Opinion from FLACSO, a master's in public policy from Universidad Austral and Sciences Po and a specialization in Latin American studies from UBA and Euro Sapienza. Olivia speaks English, French, and Spanish.

Lucas Leblanc is a Policy Analyst within the OECD Local Employment and Economic Development Programme (LEED). In LEED, Lucas works on employment and skills policies with a focus on the local level. Lucas has also had experience within the European Parliament and think tanks in Washington, D.C. Lucas holds a B.A. in International Relations from the College of William & Mary in the US, during which he studied abroad in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and a Master of European Affairs from Sciences Po Paris. Lucas speaks fluent English, French, Italian and Spanish, and can speak conversational Portuguese.

Moodle

This course is on Moodle: **No – the instructors provide materials on GoogleDrive.**

Academic integrity

Be aware of the rules in Université Paris Dauphine about plagiarism and cheating during exams. All work turned in for this course must be your own work, or that of your own group. Working as part of a group implies that you are an active participant and fully contributed to the output produced by that group.