

## *Foreword*

Colombia is one of the major economies of the Latin American and Caribbean region and the government has set itself ambitious goals for its social and economic development, for which human capital development is crucial. Despite progress in the education sector, much remains to be done to address a number of challenges including: expanding enrolment and improving equity, increasing quality and relevance, and making governance and finance more responsive. Among other actions, the government needs to continue increasing participation in post secondary education through improved loan and scholarship systems and increasing student places more evenly throughout the country.

The examiners' report covers the full range of tertiary education in Colombia using information provided in the *Background Report* prepared by the Colombian authorities for the Joint OECD/World Bank review and information supplied in meetings in the course of sites visits (Bogota, Barranquilla, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, Ibague, Manizales, Palmira and Pereira). The report gives an analysis of the achievements of the last decade and the challenges that Colombia faces in the quest of providing a world class system for its citizens in light of the economic, social and political context of the country. The review offers an in-depth study and recommendations on access and equity; the relevance of the system; its governance and management; research and development; and, financing. Other recommendations include a reform to the legal framework; greater focus on measurement of learning; and an integration of all actors, both university and non-university, into the system. They also emphasised increased funding for equity and an improved targeting system; strengthening quality assurance mechanisms; and further efforts to promote international integration, and research and innovation. The final chapter brings together, in the form of a synthesis, the specific recommendations of each chapter and sets out how policies can and should be addressed.

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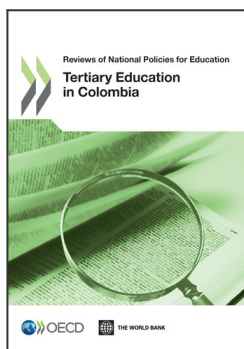
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