

26.5.2026

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**Title**

Equity of access to higher education in the context of South-South cooperation in Latin America : a pluri-scalar analysis / Thomas Muhr

**Publication year**

2016

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education. - 72 (2016) 4, S. 557 - 571

**Inventory number**

44141

**Keywords**

Ausland : Lateinamerika : Studenten, Studium, Lehre ; Ausland : Lateinamerika : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Venezuela : Studenten, Studium, Lehre ; Ausland : Venezuela : einzelne Hochschulen

**Abstract**

This article draws from an education governance approach to conduct a pluri-scalar analysis of equity of access to tertiary education in the context of South–South cooperation. An account of distributional justice in access to tertiary education in the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is integrated with a structural approach related to South–South cooperation among the two nations as well as within the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), upon which two interrelated arguments are developed: first, despite persistent inequities in access to university education in both territories, state-interventionist policies enhance equity of access directly with respect to availability and accessibility. Second, South–South cooperation transforms the background conditions for educational justice by producing an alternative structure to the neoliberal global governance of education and its agenda of privatisation and commercialisation. (HRK / Abstract

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