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A vision of Latin America and the Caribbean countries

27 february 2024

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Higher or University Education in Venezuela

The South American country has positioned itself as one of the countries with the best human capital index, with high standards formed by its universities.

In Venezuela, as in many Latin American countries, university education is the responsibility of the State. There are a significant number of public sector universities, although many are also privately owned.



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Great progress has been achieved in the South American country in the academic sector regarding Higher Education with the coming to power of the so-called Bolivarian Revolution, led by Commander Hugo Chávez and currently with Nicolás Maduro as President.

These governments undertook major transformations in Higher or University Education, allowing thousands of Venezuelans to have access to it. The knowledge generated is related as a way to improve the welfare or social development of the nation, since it is applied for these purposes through science, innovation and technology.

Science from Universities Applied to Industry

In order to promote a better development of industry, the Venezuelan government began to apply the results of science, technology and innovation directly to industry and social development.

Venezuela is one of the countries with the largest proven hydrocarbon reserves, but given the structural crisis that the economy is going through, in addition to external coercion factors that do not allow access to state-of-the-art technologies for a better exploitation, there is a stagnation in production. However, as is well known, crises create opportunities for change, for taking advantage of endogenous capacities to overcome the difficulties of the moment.

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In the midst of public policies of universal access to education, the government requested the application of the results of research conducted by universities. Each territory, through the network of educational and research centers, laboratories and discussion spaces, began to promote and apply the results obtained.

For example, new systems were designed to improve the drilling of oil wells and to create new capacities to refine the extracted crude oil. This allowed the country's main oil company, the state-owned Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), to move from stagnation and setbacks in production to a better use of its installed capacity.

In addition, the collaboration of research projects with countries in the region was encouraged in order to confront advances in innovation. One of the most outstanding universities in this aspect is the Central University of Venezuela, completely financed by the state, which has achieved great advances in science, technology and innovation indicators.

Others, such as the Universidad de los Andes, located in the city of Mérida, has dedicated its main research to the diversification of the agricultural sector. This has allowed them to obtain, according to the Executive's statements recently presented to the Venezuelan National Assembly, full food sovereignty and even the export of viands and vegetables to neighboring countries.

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In the turbulent modern world, it is essential to continue to promote higher quality educational services. Increasingly, there is a need for greater application of science for better utilization of production through the creation of new university centers, centers for innovation.

Science, technology and innovation indicators are a tool for defining the dynamics of formulation, application or evaluation of public policies in these areas. Venezuela has positioned itself as one of the countries with the best index of human capital with high standards trained by universities. Its advances in innovation and science applied to knowledge have allowed it to obtain tangible results in the economic and social sphere.

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Musical Phenomenon in Latin America, a Mix of Flavors

Latin America is home to the world's musical heritage, where all rhythms and sonorities converge in harmony.

Let's talk about what is known as Latin American music, due to its origin in different countries of the region. This category has a great extension, it includes subgenres of great variety and particular sound.



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Latin American music emerged mainly to accompany the traditional dances of each region. With the introduction of instruments such as the Spanish guitar and the accordion, a new range of sounds was added to the aboriginal ways of making music.

Similarly, with the forced introduction of Africans to the continent to be used as laborers in the sugar and mining industries, new instruments and ways of making music arrived. As is common in this region, they mixed with the already existing sonorities to create an explosion of rhythms. The drums constitute the most significant contribution of the African culture.

Each country, as we have mentioned, has its own rhythms, which differentiate it from the rest. For experts, there are three countries that have one of the most widespread musical heritages in the world: Brazil, Cuba and Colombia, each with its own rhythms and melodies.

Brazil has as many rhythms, instruments, dances, festivities, as its large size, but as always the ones with Afro-Brazilian influence stand out. This is how we find the Frevo, the Choro, Bossa Nova, the Sertanejo, Tropicalia, the Brazilian Popular Music and the samba. The latter is an exponent of the musical culture of Brazil in the world, a rhythm that is cultivated and remains in the preference of the new generations. Some of the most famous sambas are "Aquarela do Brasil" by Ary Barroso, covered by musicians from all over the world.

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Cuba, despite its insularity, has the richest cultural heritage in the Caribbean. Known as the island of music, its small size has not prevented it from revolutionizing international music with its rhythms. Undoubtedly, the most widespread Cuban musical genre in the world is the Son. The Guantanamera, by musician Joseito Fernandez, has been covered by thousands of musicians around the world. Rumba, Guaguancó, Mambo and Changüí are also Cuban heritage.

Colombia, land of very powerful rhythms. They vary according to the areas, so starting from the Caribbean coast to the interior of the country we find rhythms such as: Cumbia, bullerengue, mapalé, porro, puya, zafra, son and vallenato. Cumbia is the most representative rhythm of this country internationally. One of the most popular versions is entitled "Colombia tierra querida" by musician Lucho Bermúdez.

We cannot fail to mention other well-known musical genres in Latin America, such as Mexican music, with its bands that sing the famous rancheras or corridos, where they always tell a story. In Argentina we find the internationalized Tango, which was said to be a dance that unites bodies. Uruguayan Candombe also stands out, one of the most powerful rhythms in the world, based on big and small drums.

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Latin America is home to the world's musical heritage, where all rhythms and sonorities converge in harmony with the realities of their creators.



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Trinidad and Tobago, a Powerful Energy and Gas Industry

The country is expected to contribute about 25%, or 820 million cubic feet per day (MMcf/d) of America's natural gas production by 2025.

Trinidad and Tobago's economy is based on the energy industry. The Caribbean country has a tradition as one of the oldest hydrocarbon producers in the region, with more than a century of experience as an oil economy.



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Back in the nineties of the last century, the Caribbean country began a dizzying development of the gas and petrochemical industry, which eventually positioned this sector as the key to the nation's future development. Between 1993 and 2008, the governments of Trinidad and Tobago undertook policies favorable to foreign investment in the gas and petrochemical sector, allowing them to reap significant economic benefits.

Growth was rapid, reaching one of the largest natural gas processing complexes in the Western Hemisphere, with a production capacity of 70,000 bl/day of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The country thus became one of the world's leading producers of Ammonia and Methanol.

This industrial development has led Trinidad and Tobago to rank among the countries with the best World Development Indicators (WDI). According to the World Bank, it is classified as a high-income economy, with a GDP per capita 57.7% higher than the regional average for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Current Period

Although between the years 2018-2021 the gas industry had a slight stagnation in production, due to operational stress in shallow water wells; later came a process of updating technologies. Thanks to commercial alliances with foreign investors, the country's industry was equipped with advanced technologies for the exploitation of new fields found in deeper waters.

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With such rigorously designed and planned projects, as explained by the country's government authorities, Trinidad and Tobago is expected to contribute about 25%, or 820 million cubic feet per day (MMcf/d) of America's natural gas production by 2025.

The islands' authorities have also embarked on diversifying the economy to become less dependent on the gas industry and avoid a slowdown in the economy. The non-energy sector will therefore be driven by increased business activity and the continued resurgence of consumer demand, as well as strong investments in the health and education sectors and an opening up of the leisure industry.

The aim is for food inflation to continue to decline, driven by the deceleration of local product values. The Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago reported that the unemployment rate in the country was 4.9 percent in the first quarter of 2023; slightly below the 5.1 percent recorded a year earlier in the same period.

Undoubtedly, these are tangible signs of a recovery that both local authorities and major world economic institutions believe will keep the small Caribbean country among the most advantaged in the energy and gas production and commercialization sector.

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Trinidad and Tobago is an archipelago geographically located in the Caribbean Sea, specifically in the group of islands called Lesser Antilles. It is located near the mainland of South America, with Venezuela as a neighboring country in the continent. They form a group of islands and cays, but the two that give name to the country stand out: the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, the first is the largest and most economically and socially important and where the capital is located; named Port of Spain. They have a total population of more than one million, 300 thousand inhabitants, whose official language is English.

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The Caribbean: Introduction to Leisure & Entertainment Industry

Endowed with exceptional natural features, with its stunning beaches, crystal clear waters, mountains and rich cultural heritage, the region attracts millions of foreign visitors every year.

The new world economic order has driven the economic restructuring of the Caribbean from a producer of agricultural products for the dinner table (sugar, coffee, tobacco, cocoa and fruits) to a platform for the leisure and entertainment industries.



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The development of tourism in the Greater Caribbean (insular Caribbean and Central America) dates back to the 1970s, with the rise of all-inclusive package tours and cruise ships. Such was the momentum and demand that by 2001 the Caribbean had become the world's leading cruise destination. This was achieved by maintaining a high level of hotel infrastructure, generally resorts, as well as extra-hotel services.

Tourism is one of the main contributors to the region's economy; some countries consider it their main industry and earn their main foreign exchange revenues from the sector. According to estimates by the Caribbean Tourism Organization, the industry accounts for approximately 14% of the region's GDP and provides employment for more than 2.4 million people.

Ecotourism and Cultural Tourism

However, there are vulnerabilities, especially in terms of environmental impact and sustainability. The natural beauty of the Caribbean is a major attraction for tourists, however, the impact of the industry on the environment can be a concern. Issues such as overdevelopment, pollution and destruction of coral reefs can have a negative impact on the region's ecosystems.

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Fortunately, responses from governments and industry bodies have not been delayed. Many Caribbean countries are taking steps to promote sustainable tourism practices, such as limiting the number of visitors to sensitive areas and promoting ecotourism and cultural tourism activities. The latter is a major strength, as the sector offers visitors the opportunity to enjoy the music, gastronomy and traditions of the Caribbean. They have also made better use of communication technologies: from online booking platforms to social media marketing, technology has made it easier for tourists to plan and book their trips.

The future of the Caribbean tourism industry depends on several factors, including global economic conditions, environmental sustainability and the region's ability to adapt to changing consumer preferences. Many countries continue to invest in infrastructure and promote sustainable tourism practices to ensure the long-term viability of the industry.

In upcoming writings, we will address the main tourist destinations in the Caribbean region, which are an example of resilience and adaptability to changing global economic and environmental conditions.

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