

OECD March on Gender 2022

AGENDA

Girls in STEM as a policy objective in LAC:

How can the public and private sectors collaborate to improve outcomes?

Lessons learned from the NiñaSTEM initiative in Mexico

Tuesday, 29 March 2022

4.00-6.30 PM Paris CET 

8.00-10.30 AM  | 9.00-11.30 AM  | 11.00- 1.30 PM 

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The objective of this meeting is to promote an exchange of perspectives and experiences among OECD-LAC countries and private actors seeking to improve girls' participation, achievement and continuation in pursuing a STEM education. As a follow-up to Mexico's experience implementing the NiñaSTEM initiative, this meeting aims to discuss opportunities for the expansion of the Initiative on a regional scale.

Women are still under-represented in most information technology companies and laboratories today. Although more women than men complete tertiary education across OECD and LAC countries, they account for just a quarter in Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers. Many factors can explain this gap but the international evidence shows that girls' performance and career choices are greatly influenced by gender stereotypes. These are first learned within the family nucleus and later on at school, having a permanent effect in girls' confidence and career paths. Even when performing the same, the career paths of boys and girls already start to diverge by the age of 15. The same pattern has been identified worldwide.

Across OECD countries, 15-year-old boys are, on average, more than twice as likely as girls to pursue a career in engineering, science or architecture. While the under-representation of women in STEM widens the gender pay gap, a shortage of STEM professionals hampers countries' development and the future of their economies. Since the adoption of the OECD Gender Recommendations in 2015, many countries have taken new measures or reinforced existing ones to increase female participation in STEM studies and occupations. However, the gender gap persists and might even have been widened as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To empower girls to enter STEM fields of study and careers, and develop the skills they will need for the labour market, the OECD invites all key actors to join forces to dismantle the barriers that girls face to become users, shapers and creators of scientific and technological knowledge, and provide them with the necessary tools to fully and equally integrate the future of work.

NiñaSTEM is an OECD-Mexico public-private initiative that promotes girls' interest in STEM education through female mentorships and immersive workshops. Under the leadership of Mexico, the OECD [Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Programme](#) (LACRP) today launches the regional alliance for Girls in STEM.

16h00: Opening remarks

- Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen, Deputy Secretary-General and Gender Champion, OECD
- Gabriela Ramos, Deputy –Secretary of the Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO
Founder of the NinaSTEM initiative
- H.E. Ambassador Sybel Galván, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OECD

16h10: Session 1: Why do we need more girls in STEM?

A growing demand for professionals in Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering (STEM) is met with a significant labour shortage in these fields. To meet this demand, it is necessary to increase female participation in STEM. By doing so, as STEM careers are often better paid, their increased participation in such sectors will also imply a gradual reduction in the gender pay gap. This session will allow key actors from the private and public sectors and civil society to express their views and projections for the future of work so that governments and education systems can adapt accordingly and better prepare girls for the future.

Presentations: Key findings from the OECD

- Marta Encinas-Martin, Counsellor and OECD Education Gender Ambassador, Education & Skills Directorate, OECD
- Diana Toledo, Project Leader, OECD Education Policy Outlook, OECD

Moderator: Carmen Enedina Rodríguez Armenta, OECD NiñaSTEM Mentor, Engineer, Director General of Higher and Intercultural Education in the Ministry of Public Education, Government of Mexico

PANEL:

- Gheidy Gallo, High Presidential Advisor for Gender Equality of Colombia
- Randall Arias, Senior Employers' Activities Specialist, ILO
- Naser Faruqi, Director of Education and Science, IDRC
- Kareninna Gómez, Skills Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean, Microsoft

17h10: Session 2: How can the private and public sectors join forces to better prepare girls' integration in the economy of the future?

Bridging the gender divide in STEM careers requires action on both the supply and demand side of the labour market. Beyond the awareness of gender inequalities, governments and companies could find common avenues of co-operation to change the male-dominated setting of STEM fields. This session will explore ways in which private and public actors can join forces to better prepare girls' integration in the economy of the future, including their part in the workforce as well as work environments.

Presentations:

NiñaSTEM Pueden: the Mexican pilot experience [10 min]

- Mario López Roldan, Head of OECD Mexico Centre for Latin America
- Jorge Alberto Salcido Portillo, Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Ministry of Public Education of the State of Coahuila (SEDU)

Moderator: María de los Ángeles Solórzano Murillo, OECD NiñaSTEM Mentor, Director of the Institute of Innovation and Educational Robotics

PANEL:

- Antonia Orellana, Minister of Women and Gender Equality, Chile
- Elspeth McOmish, Gender Equality Program Specialist, UNESCO
- Eduardo Aguilar Brondo, General Director of secondary schools, Ministry of Public Education of the State of Coahuila (SEDU)
- Claudette Muñoz, Regional Manager, Americas, Lego Education

18h00 Key Takeaways: action-oriented conclusions

NiñaSTEM: leveraging the OECD's Regional Programme for LAC

- José Antonio Ardavín, Head of the Latin American and the Caribbean Division, Global Relations Secretariat, OECD
- H.E. Ambassador Sybel Galván, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OECD