

**03/2020**

**Auswertungsbericht über eine berufsvorbereitende  
Berufsinformationsreise  
in Kolumbien**

**18.11.2020 – 20.01.2021**

von

**Herrn Wilson Arturo Hurtado Valencia  
aus Kolumbien**

**Economic Behaviour and Governance (M.Sc.) an der Universität Kassel**

Erstellt am:  
27.02.2021

**Einreichungsfrist: 01.03.2021**

## 1. Introduction

During the first months of my studying in Germany, I had to face financial difficulties. Due to this situation, I became acquainted with the ESG association, which financially supported me for a few months and let me know about the training project "**Grenzenlos**" that is part of the **WUS** association. From the first seminar, I was fascinated with the learning strategy, the students' approach, and the possibility of demonstrating my knowledge and experience for the first time. Since my master's degree is taught in English, I did not have any previous knowledge of the German language. So I was happy to have the opportunity of learning the German language and participate in a German environment without getting rejected because of the language barrier.

After several workshops and seminars, I obtained the certificate as a "**Facilitator for global and intercultural learning.**" Subsequently, I was able to develop seminars in various educational establishments in the state of Hessen. Also, I did my internship with the "Grenzenlos" project, and thus I got the information and knowledge, and participation of the **STUBE BPSA program** to carry out my degree thesis research. So, I participated in the **STUBE** training seminars and obtained all the requirements to apply for the scholarship. However, the COVID-19 pandemic also played a role in my story when Colombia decided to close its air borders for international flights, and so my academic plans were obstructed, so that I could not carry out my thesis research in Colombia.

As an alternative later, **STUBE** gave me the possibility of conducting a labor observatory in Colombia. I searched in the local websites for job offers, and subsequently, I contacted by phone and emailed the companies and applied to the offers that favorably match my profile. This alternative brought me again the Colombian work market approach after almost five years that I left my country for the first time. Despite the difficulties, I obtained eight work interviews for different positions but all of them related to economy, management of financial resources, personnel management, and project development.

However, the international air traffic measures continued to be a difficult obstacle to overcome. First was the United States' closure to travelers from the European community and then repeatedly canceling the trip. With much patience on the part of **STUBE**, the travel agency, and my part, we overcame this final obstacle to start the work observatory in Colombia.

This report is presented to explain the main characteristic that I faced in the Colombian work environment; after eight interviews with different employers, there are some common characteristics and results of the experiences and the Colombian job market.

## 2. Description of the internship position/the employer/the institution(s) visited

- Company: **Psicologia Integral y Desarrollo**  
Job offer: **Financial analyst**  
Tasks: Development of the annual financial plan, complete the financial responsibilities of the projects, and supporting the new international students project.  
They do: Comprehensive Psychology and Development is a company constituted as an alliance of professionals in psychology areas. Each psychologist in the alliance has training and certified experience.  
I chose them: I liked the international student project where they want to support and assist Colombian students abroad in their emotional issues and problems.
- Company: **Enlace Medico Ltda**  
Job offer: **Finance Analyst**  
Tasks: Analysis and support to the financial department in input and output of medical supplies and storage control.  
They do: They distribute medical implements to the Colombian clinics and hospitals and support the new medical developments in the region.  
I chose them: It is a well-known company in the region and highly respectable in the health sector. I thought the work conditions would have more stability and better salary.
- Company: **Ferreteria la Valvula**  
Job offer: **Marketing and promoting**  
Tasks: Development of the project to expand the brand to other branches.  
They do: The Valvula is a commercial establishment dedicated to the sale of tools for the construction industry and household needs, usually for the general public.  
I chose them: It is a company with a long history in the city, its projects have a national and international scope, which I saw as an opportunity for job stability due to the possibility to manage the projects for 2021.
- Company: **Construyendo Proyectos SAS**  
Job offer: **Entry-level finance**  
Tasks: Knowledge and development of the financial department and its responsibilities.  
They do: Construction work  
I chose them: It is a company with a long history in the country, there is an opportunity to earn from the best professional in the sector, job stability, and mobility around the country.
- Company: **Soluciones Eficientes SAS**  
Job offer: **Project development**

Tasks: Development of projects obtained by the sales department and classification of projects for subsequent execution.

They do: Comprehensive planning of the projects preparing the business plan ensuring financing sources, coordinating the marketing and sales strategy.

I chose them: The work position is excellent. It had total autonomy and independence to work on projects that I considered relevant.

- Company: **Educational Institute Isaac Newton**

Job offer: **Entrepreneurship Teacher**

Tasks: Teaches and implements entrepreneurship strategies on business ideas and entrepreneurship at the community and social level.

They do: It is an organized system of firmly rooted structures in values, feelings, and attitudes with a purpose to raise and prepare teenagers for the future through the management of the teaching-learning process.

I chose them: One of my passions is teaching and offering the young people of my country the same opportunities that I have built. Likewise, this school is located in one of the city's marginal sectors what it generates an extraordinary feeling in me since it brings back memories of my childhood.

- Company: **Conselect Ltda**

Job offer: **Entry-level project worker**

Tasks: Developing energy projects at the national level, classification, and project control.

They do: Install electrical connections, water, gas, and telephone pipelines for extensive urban planning and civil engineering buildings.

I chose them: It is a recognized company in the electric sector of the region, which could provide me with stability and the possibility of growth at the national level.

- Company: **Multiproyectos y Proyectos de ingeniería SAS**

Job offer: **Finance Analyst**

Tasks: Supervision, control, and supervision of the finance department based on its monthly goals at the local and national level.

They do: Consulting engineers begin by assessing the situation, the project, or the idea to be developed or redirected. These tasks include analysis, operation, and the resources available, and above all, the viability of its engineering plans.

I choose them: It is a recognized company in the engineering sector, and at a Latin American level, it has mobility possibilities in the continent and can also provide job stability

### 3. Description of tasks and responsibilities as well as the working conditions during the internship

All the interviews were conducted online due to the constant changes in the national mobility regulations. For example, in Bogotá were closed interstate mobility because it was the city with a higher number of infected people. The rest of the interviews were in Cali, despite being in the same city, it was the most appropriate way since the mobility regulation were through the last number of citizen's identification, one day citizens with an identification number ending in an even number and the next day citizens with an identification number ending in an odd number, to carry out essential procedures in the city (doctor, banks, government, etc.).

Most of the interviewers were interested in the reasons for me to return due to the general migration culture that has predominated in Colombia. They wanted to know about my personal experience abroad how German people see Colombia in general words, my work experience abroad what are the main differences between the work environments, my academic background, and the correlation with the position at the company.

Even though the work activities are diverse from the eight companies described in the previous item; however, the job offers or work responsibilities are quite similar from the financial part, control, and monitoring of projects to the academic part as a teacher.

#### **4. Assessment of your BPSA in preparation for your career and outlook for employment opportunities in the country of origin**

I strongly consider that the primary abilities or capacities valued by Colombian companies to hire students or professionals with international education and experience are the followings: multicultural knowledge, international experiences, social and human skills, decision-making process, the autonomous work process, commitment to the proposed goals, adaptability to new environments, and the constant learning obtained when leaving a comfort zone. The company will have a valued asset with professionals with a vast view of the reality, an understanding of the word problematics and differences, and softs skills necessary to improve the workplace environment.

The outcome of the work observatory was good. The Educational Institute Isaac Newton and Conselet Ltda offered me the job position; however, the main issue was the salary in these two particular cases. The rest of the job offers followed the standard hire procedure and let me know in the following weeks the results. Moreover, the outcome was excellent because four of six companies called me for the next interview, but the work contract's length was not optimal (renewable every six months ) as well as the salary.

Finally, **BPSA** gave me an excellent opportunity to meet the Colombian work environment again and gave me a clear idea of the possibilities for me as a professional in my country. Without this support, I would not know what to expect from the Colombian job market.

## **5. Assessment of your BPSA with regard to the acquisition of knowledge and competences useful for your continued studies in Germany and your future career**

Having spaces for learning, discussion, and debate such as those provided by **STUBE Hessen** is very important for the growth confrontation and consolidation of theoretical knowledge. Then moving to a work stage, the practical part is experienced that allows us to establish a real experience of what has been learned and results achieved with the knowledge and experiences.

I have learned and experienced with **BPSA** the power of good education and the possibilities that create different approaches and intercultural dimensions where we can use all the tools around us to change and improve the world for a better place.

In my personal case, I got an educational loan to come to Germany in the first place, so my decision to return to Colombia must be based on finding a good position that brings me financial stability. On the other hand, I'm focused on improving my German language and then learning another language to be able to compete with European professionals. Simultaneously I'm applying for Ph.D. positions in institutes that relate to Latin American issues, social dynamics, and migration.

Finally, I am a co-founder of two associations in Colombia and one in Germany, focused on education, helping children develop their skills and learn German as a foreign language. The German association is about coworking, helping, and motivating Latin American students to accomplish their goals in Germany, so now, thanks to **STUBE**, I am more engaged than ever to develop these projects.

## **6. Overall assessment of your BPSA in preparation for your career and outlook for further opportunities in the country of origin**

The general evaluation of the work observatory is quite good since I have met the working conditions; I talked with the managers and contacted first hand the Colombian reality. However, the conditions are pretty different about hiring and contracting professionals, and my personal goals and needs do not match the salary offers, the hiring conditions, and the contracts' renewal.

In some job positions, it can be seen how overqualification becomes a problem when developing the job skills, especially when the companies are medium-sized, given that the administrative structure does not have a complete development and many tasks fall within the same employees.

At a professional level, jobs have a series of guidelines and responsibilities in which it is not possible to go beyond the responsibilities of each job position, so this condition limits the ability to analyze and make decisions.

Simultaneously, it is straightforward for everyone that the pandemic Covid-19 increased and exposed some social problems that Colombia goes through.

Finally, these findings influence my future decisions. As I mentioned before, I would like to stay in Germany, improve my language skills, find work in the social or migration sector and apply for Ph.D. positions. I want to develop and work on projects focused on improving people's conditions, so I am still on the learning curve to acquire skills and accomplish them.

#### **7. Personal impressions/concluding words and tips for other international students interested in a BPSA**

My personal opinion has two different sides to the story: On the one side, preparation and learning in open spaces for debates and discussion as **STUBE** provides become a vital tool to face the worldwide problematics as racism, violence, gender equality by example, at the individual level, it is possible to affect in a positive way empathy, teamwork, leadership, development and project fulfillment, which are skills that are highly valued for a company.

On the other side, the work differences between developed countries and developing countries are notorious and enormous. The conditions and benefits that we as employees could achieve in Germany make a big difference when we must make a life decision.

So, I will conclude that I highly recommend **STUBE Hessen**, its **BPSA** program and **WUS** association in general, the people working there are great and lovely. The people around me know that I have always been happy to share information about **Grenzenlos** and **STUBE** with Latin American friends. I am still in contact with them, and I will do an application or seminar with **STUBE** anytime.

Anlage Bilder (bitte 2 aussagekräftige Bilder des Aufenthaltes hier einfügen):

Bild 1: Welcome home



Bild 2: Cali, Kolumbien im Lockdown

