



REPORT

Workshop to articulate the efforts of actors promoting the "Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation" and the "EU-CELAC Common Area for Higher Education"

08-09 April 2024 | Hamburg, Germany



EU-LAC Foundation
Fundación EU-LAC



The present publication exposes the results and written contributions generated in the framework of a Workshop, implemented by the EU-LAC Foundation on 8-9 April 2024 at the Cervantes Institute, Hamburg, with the purpose of promoting an articulation between representatives of public institutions, scientific associations and networks that have been involved in the activities and meetings of the Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI), and/or that have worked in favour of the constitution of the EU-CELAC Common Higher Education Area, in order to make visible the role of Higher Education and the university sector in the generation of competences and knowledge required to offer solutions to the multiple crises of our times, to identify shared priorities and gaps that should be overcome in order to link ongoing processes and initiatives and explore possibilities for cooperation, and to formulate proposals that could guide cooperation between both regions in these areas.

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Federal Foreign Office

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I. PROLOGUE

Following its mission to link the intergovernmental process between the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) with the academic and social sectors and, broadly and generally, with civil society organizations from both regions, to energise the bi-regional strategic partnership through impulses for the formulation and implementation of policies and agendas, and to disseminate knowledge with the aim of improving mutual understanding and visibility of both regions, as well as the bi-regional partnership, the EU-LAC Foundation has played an articulating role between networks, associations and institutions that are involved in cooperation initiatives at regional, bi-regional and international level in the field of scientific cooperation and higher education.

In this sense, the EU-LAC Foundation has cooperated with institutions such as ANUIES, ASCUN, AUGM, CSUCA, ENLACES, EUA, FAP ALC-UE, OBREAL Global, OEI, SEGIB, Universities Caribbean, LERU, and UDUAL to promote the exchange of perspectives, progress and challenges on issues ranging from access to quality education, the internationalisation of learning and teaching, accreditation systems, academic qualifications frameworks, joint degrees and programmes, schemes and grants promoting mobility, as well as university research and innovation to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. One of the fruits of this cooperation has been the joint construction of the “Matrix of Objectives and Strategic Lines for the Construction of the EU-CELAC Common Higher Education Area”¹ - an interactive database to visualise the efforts and programmes generated by various actors in both regions. We also collaborated with the institutions and networks mentioned above, as well as with others such as the Coimbra Group, the LAC NCP Network and EURAXESS in the implementation of bi-regional and inter-regional webinars, workshops, and seminars, to deepen the reflections and offer the training of researchers and university managers on specific topics such as, for example, open science, patent and technology transfer policies, or the communication of research results.

At the same time, the EU-LAC Foundation has closely followed the cooperation between the two regions regarding the “Joint Research and Innovation Initiative” (JIRI) and the steps taken to implement the Strategic Roadmap 2021-2023², in follow-up to the Brussels Declaration and the EU-CELAC Action Plan on Science, Technology and Innovation. In this regard, the EU-LAC Foundation attended the meetings of senior authorities that have sustained the relationship at this level, helped actors to link up with this process, promoted the opportunities that have opened up through the Horizon Europe programme, and

1 EU-LAC Foundation (n.d.). Matrix of Higher Education. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://eulacfoundation.org/es/education?theme=t-6>

2 European Commission (2021, April 30). ANNEX to the COMMISSION DECISION on the approval on behalf of the European Union of the EU-CELAC 2021-2023 Strategic Roadmap for the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and EU-CELAC Action Plan on Science, Technology and Innovation [C(2021)2922 final]. https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2021-07/eu-celac_strategic-roadmap-2021-2023.pdf

contributed with workshops and presentations in different bi-regional spaces to make visible the progress in this line of bi-regional cooperation.

Contributions from the educational and scientific sectors to the bi-regional agenda in the year of the EU-CELAC Summit 2023

The EU-CELAC Summit on 17 and 18 July 2023 in Brussels offered the opportunity to generate a high-level strategic dialogue on the challenges and opportunities of bi-regional cooperation around (higher) education and science, technology and innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the countries of the European Union (EU). Consequently, the EU-LAC Foundation, together with the Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), convened an EU-LAC Knowledge Forum in Montevideo³, Uruguay, on 24 and 25 April 2023, with the purpose of generating inputs to feed the agenda of discussions of the high authorities of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean related to the Summit in the field of access to knowledge, higher education, and science, technology and innovation.

The 105 participants - representatives of the student and scientific communities, experts from international organizations specialised in the subject - agreed that the context of the bi-regional partnership has changed considerably since the last EU-CELAC Summit and considered it necessary to adapt the mechanisms of scientific and academic cooperation in more equitable conditions between regions and countries. It was suggested that EU and LAC states recognise the right to science as a constitutional right of all citizens. From this right, it was suggested to derive policies, programmes of international cooperation and investments in the HE and R+D+I sector. Good practices and initiatives were shared at the bi-regional, regional, sub-regional and national levels, many of which deserve to be strengthened or even reactivated.

With regard to the “EU-LAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI)” it was suggested to strengthen the three pillars of researcher mobility, global challenges, and innovation with an action plan and provide them with funding, taking as an example the working group on the research infrastructures pillar. It was also proposed to establish a technical secretariat to follow up on the commitments made at the meetings of the high-level authorities (JIRI-SOM) and to strengthen coordination between the four pillars, for example through webinars and regular dialogues.

The Forum also articulated the need for decision-makers in both regions to establish an institutional framework for the EU-CELAC Common Higher Education Area, based on principles such as the exchange of information, mutual trust, the allocation of financial resources, the construction and convergence of existing ones, gradualness and quality, and it was recommended to proceed in a systemic manner at three levels:

3 EU-LAC Foundation (2023). EU-LAC Knowledge Forum. <https://eulacfoundation.org/es/foro-conocimiento-eu-lac>

- Strategic level - the construction of the Common Higher Education Area to be placed in the EU-CELAC bi-regional partnership, established at the First LAC-EU Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1999, in order to jointly face common challenges and build a sustainable future for the societies of the two regions;
- Political level – to deepen political dialogue and cooperation programmes in the field of higher education in priority areas, to integrate the agreements and progress achieved in different areas (e.g. UNESCO, European Higher Education Area, Ibero-American Knowledge Area, integration processes at the sub-regional level, among others), to support existing inter-university agreements as well as actors, associations and networks that have actively worked towards the goal of shaping and concretizing the Common Higher Education Area;
- Operational level – taking into account the experience gained from historical and current cooperation programmes, achieve governmental consensus on concrete steps, gradual or progressive, in the core dimensions of the common area (accreditation and recognition of diplomas, incl. diploma supplements; quality assurance system; mobility schemes, etc.), define the responsibilities of the competent authorities (ministries or agencies of higher education; accreditation agencies, etc.), and allocate financial resources to ensure the implementation of consensual actions.

Given the limited resources to promote scientific cooperation, it was suggested to establish multisectoral dialogues, strengthen public-private partnerships with the involvement of diverse actors (e.g., business chambers, development banks, foundations, think tanks, etc.), and promote science diplomacy on key issues of the 2030 Agenda. The interest in jointly developing policies to promote open science, based on the “FAIR” principles, was articulated in order to strengthen and generate a greater impact in the efforts made in both regions. In view of the multitude of instances, forums and spaces for academic cooperation and R+D+i, concrete ideas were formulated on processes and coordination mechanisms that allow generating greater synergies and avoiding duplication of efforts. Finally, the participants proposed to promote joint reflections on the transformation of higher education, promote policies aimed at equity in HEIs, the promotion of capacities and lifelong learning processes, the retention of human talent, and multilingualism in science.

Similarly, in view of the EU-CELAC Summit, other actors with whom the EU-LAC Foundation regularly cooperates have developed relevant initiatives and proposals for dialogue at the highest political level.

Thus, for example, on May 4 and 5, 2023, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), together with different partners, held the II EU-CELAC Academic and Knowledge Summit⁴ in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, in order to contribute to the construction of the common Euro-Latin American and Caribbean space of higher education, science,

4 II Academic and Knowledge Summit UE-CELAC (<https://eulac2023.org/>)

technology and innovation through the generation and management of knowledge, integration and bi-regional EU-CELAC strategic cooperation. In the Declaration of this event, it was recommended, among others, to deepen academic mobility programmes; promoting strategic action on the digital transformation of higher education; promote bilateral, regional and bi-regional agreements for the recognition of studies, degrees and diplomas, within the framework of university autonomy; encourage the creation of a framework for collaboration between national and regional CELAC and EU higher education assessment, quality assurance and accreditation systems; promote cooperation between scientific research, technology and innovation systems, particularly in the areas of doctoral and postdoctoral training and mobility of research staff, the sharing of scientific infrastructures and capacities, the promotion of innovation and the participation of scientists from both regions in joint strategic research and innovation projects; and work on improving the articulation of the actions promoted by the JIRI with the initiatives promoted through other multilateral mechanisms that promote international cooperation in the field of Science, Technology and Innovation. The Heads of State and Government, within the framework of the III EU-CELAC Summit, were requested to consider the proposals contained in the Declaration and agree on concrete measures, including financial measures, to give new impetus to the construction of the Common Area of Higher Education and Knowledge, from a comprehensive vision of higher education, science, technology and innovation.

Within the framework of this event, the Government of Spain convened an Informal Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Higher Education from both regions⁵. In the declaration of this meeting, the representatives of 25 countries gathered in Santiago de Compostela called for the EU-CELAC Summit to consider the contents reflected in the declaration, and contribute to progress in the establishment of the Common Higher Education Area, for which a series of areas of work were identified:

- cooperation between education systems, as a way of bringing the societies of both regions closer together and promoting scientific and academic exchange;
- the definition of a work plan to promote cooperation between the quality and recognition assessment agencies of the countries of both regions;
- the promotion of academic mobility between regions through the reinforcement of existing programmes and the relaunch of cooperation with new bi-regional programmes and initiatives that also include innovative formats to promote more inclusive internationalisation;
- the vertical and horizontal development of networks for the promotion of bi-regional academic dialogue and cooperation between higher education institutions in both regions;

5 Ministerio de Universidades (2023, May 5). El ministro de Universidades preside el primer encuentro de ministros y ministras y altas autoridades de la educación superior UE-CELAC. <https://www.universidades.gob.es/el-ministro-de-universidades-preside-el-primer-encuentro-de-ministros-y-ministras-y-altas-autoridades-de-la-educacion-superior-ue-celac/>

- a greater presence of the Latin American and Caribbean region in the EU's European funding instruments for higher education such as Horizon Europe or Erasmus+.

For its part, the Permanent Academic Forum Latin America and the Caribbean – European Union (FAP ALC-UE) organised, from July 6 to 8, 2023, the V LAC-EU Academic Summit⁶ in Alcalá de Henares, Spain. Following an analysis of the key components of the strategic relationship between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (including, for example, the challenges for both regions in terms of democracy, economy and climate; gender equality; the youth perspective; the SDGs and the role of higher education), The rectors, deans, directors, professors, researchers and students gathered at the University of Alcalá de Henares agreed to reiterate their commitment to work in their respective countries and regions for the creation of the Common Euro-Latin American and Caribbean Area for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation. In their Statement, they also articulated the urgency of moving towards the realization of this objective, urging the political authorities of both regions to generate the political and institutional conditions for an Academic Integration Agreement between both regions. In accordance with the agreements of this Forum, the Executive Secretariat of the FAP ALC-UE transmitted a text proposal approved by the Bi-regional Academic Council on an LAC-EU Academic Integration Agreement to the Heads of State and Government of both regions.

Similarly, in a Joint Declaration drafted by the EUA and ENLACES⁷, supported by OBREAL Global, which was published a few days before the EU-CELAC Summit, the expectation was expressed that governments will give due consideration to the contribution that higher education, research and innovation make to the EU-CELAC agenda. It was emphasised that the political and health crises of recent years have highlighted the importance of transnational and transregional exchanges and collaboration in a world of global interdependencies, as well as the risks and harms to our societies and economies that result from even relatively brief shocks. Whether it is a long-term transition process or a response to sudden crises, all of this requires solutions based on knowledge and skills, to which the university sector contributes decisively. Therefore, it was recommended that the political authorities of the EU and CELAC consider measures such as:

- A more structured dialogue between the EU and LAC on higher education and research policies, with the systematic involvement of interested organisations. This should take into account lessons learned from existing regional and bi-regional exchanges (European Research Area, Bologna Process, ASEM Education Process) and ongoing projects and pilot projects in the sector.

6 Foro Académico Permanente ALC-UE (2023, February 10). V Cumbre Académica ALC-UE, 7-8 de julio 2023. <https://www.fap-alc-ue.com/index.php/2023/02/10/v-cumbre-academica-alc-ue-7-8de-julio-2023/>

7 European University Association & Espacio Latinoamericano y Caribeño de Educación Superior (2023). JOINT STATEMENT: Higher education, research and innovation must be core pillars of a future-oriented EU-CELAC agenda. <https://eua.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?task=attachment&id=4224>

- The development of the EU-CELAC higher education area and the EU-CELAC research area, as well as the links and synergies between the two.
- Regular EU-CELAC conferences on higher education, research and innovation policies and practices. This would connect policies and practices, take stock of progress, showcase successful policies, projects and practices, and foster synergies and collaboration.
- Support transnational and trans-regional working groups on key issues and priorities, such as the development of legislation on digitalisation.
- An increase in funding, considering that the current demand under Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and the national funding programmes far exceeds the supply. More scholarships, structured exchanges, and collaborative research opportunities could bring substantial benefits not only to individual grantees, but also to their institutions and organizations, as well as their societies and economies.

Despite these and other substantial contributions and proposals generated by various networks and institutions, the Declaration of the EU-CELAC Summit of Heads of State and Government has not explicitly addressed cooperation between the two regions in the field of Higher Education. What was agreed to be reflected in the text was an expression of satisfaction with the work of the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation and the desire of the Heads of Government to give continuity to it⁸.

Thus, on November 28 and 29, 2023, the Meeting of Senior Officials (JIRI-SOM) was held in Brussels, which was attended by 13 representatives of EU Member States (Germany, Belgium, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and the Czech Republic) and 19 representatives of CELAC countries (Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela). The meeting, co-chaired by Maria Cristina Russo (Director of International Cooperation, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission) and Inga Creese (Representative of the Pro-Tempore Presidency of CELAC, Science and Technology Research Officer of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), took stock of the progress made on the “Strategic Roadmap for Research and Innovation”, while deliberating on a new and more ambitious Roadmap for the coming years.

Some of the most notable developments in each pillar of the JIRI SOM can be summarised as follows:

⁸ See par. 29 of the EU-CELAC Declaration of 2023 [12000/23]. <https://eulacfoundation.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2023-07/st12000.en23.pdf>

- In the pillar of researcher mobility, the LAC region has participated in the EU's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and is currently also supported by two EURAXESS offices in Brazil and Colombia, and 35 MSCA National Contact Points (NCPs). In addition, the Marie Curie Alumni Association has created a new chapter for the Andean Region and the Caribbean.
- The research infrastructures pillar has made significant progress following six virtual meetings and one face-to-face meeting of the EU-CELAC Working Group on Research Infrastructures. In addition, five thematic cooperation workshops and two webinars on bi-regional collaboration on research infrastructures have been organised. A new round of EU-CELAC study visits is planned for 2024. The EU-LAC ResInfra project has ended in early 2023, which will be followed by the ResInfra Plus project in early 2024.
- In the global challenges pillar, significant progress has been made in the following areas. First, cooperation on sustainable urbanization is now supported by the EU-LAC dialogue on nature-based solutions. In the field of marine research, the Atlantic Alliance for Ocean Research and Innovation (AAORIA) Declaration was signed in July 2022, with the participation of Argentina, Brazil and the EU, and an EU-Caribbean workshop on marine scientific cooperation was organised in Barbados. In the area of digital cooperation, the EU-LAC Digital Alliance was launched in March 2023; the second phase of BELLA was agreed in 2022; a new cyber training center for LAC was launched in the Dominican Republic. In the field of health, the EULAC-PerMed project involved the participation of Brazil, Panama and Chile in joint transnational calls and the launch of a Clinical Trials Helpdesk . The active topics of bi-regional cooperation in health research continue to be chronic and infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, chronic diseases, and translational and collaborative cancer research.
- The innovation pillar was created later than the other pillars and struggled to get off the ground due to the pandemic. It received support from the Horizon 2020 European Network of Research and Innovation Centres and Poles in Latin America and the Caribbean (ENRICH in LAC) project.
- The cross-cutting open access priority was worked on through a comprehensive bi-regional study published by the European Commission in March 2023 and by a bi-regional conference in June 2023.

The JIRI-SOM ended with agreements on the next steps, including the drafting of a new JIRI Roadmap 2024-2027 and the constitution of more working groups, following the positive experience with the working group on research infrastructures. The intention was also expressed to advocate for a Meeting of EU-CELAC Ministers of Science, Technology and Innovation before the next CELAC-EU Summit, scheduled to take place in Colombia in 2025.

Finally, with the study “Opportunities and advances in the construction of the EU-CELAC Higher Education Area” written by Francisco Sánchez and Sara Martín Bardera of the University of Salamanca, the EU-LAC Foundation has offered a relevant contribution to the dialogue between government actors, specialised entities, academic communities and research networks in terms of the challenges of an institutional framework and policies, but also to the dimensions in which the bi-regional Higher Education Area has materialised as a socially constructed space through interactions, alliances, agreements, and specific degrees. As the authors write:

“Although there is a clear asymmetry in the relationship between the EU and CELAC partners who want to build the bi-regional Higher Education Area, some windows of opportunity have been found to develop collaboration areas, despite the inequality of capacities evident from the fact that the European equivalent has a consolidated institutional configuration, with its own budget and capacity to design and execute public policies, as well as to make mandatory decisions about its members, while the trajectory of CELAC is still emerging. (...) In sum, the analysis of the advances shows that the construction of the EU-CELAC HEA offers more positive than negative externalities, so it is necessary to continue promoting it simultaneously and at different levels. At the macro level, in the convergence of university systems in Latin America and the Caribbean; at the micro level, in the collaboration between laboratories, courses of studies, departments, colleges or universities from both regions. An advance at this lower level will lay the foundations for the reduction of mutual mistrust and uncertainties while showing the benefits of networking in the context of cooperation. This spirit is already present in the logic with which the Erasmus student exchange programme works, where the operational part of the system is mainly executed at the level of the university degrees from which the students come and is also in its origin, prior to the Bologna process.”⁹

To give continuity to these efforts, analyses, and collective initiatives, the EU-LAC Foundation convened, on April 8 and 9, 2024, a Workshop at the Cervantes Institute, Hamburg, with the purpose of promoting an articulation between representatives of public institutions, associations and scientific networks that have been involved in the activities and meetings of the Joint Research and Innovation Initiative JIRI, and/or who have worked in favour of the constitution of the EU-CELAC Common Higher Education Area, with the aim of:

- To make visible the role of Higher Education and the university sector in the generation of competencies and knowledge required to offer solutions to the multiple crises of our times and the processes of social, economic and environmental transition – that is, to the central issues of the bi-regional agenda;
- Identify shared priorities in Higher Education, Research, Technology and Innovation, address the “blind spots” and gaps that should be overcome in order to link

⁹ Sánchez, F. & Martín Bardera, S. (2024). Opportunities and advances in the construction of the EU-CELAC Higher Education Area. EU-LAC Foundation, pp. XIV and XVII. <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/opportunities-and-advances-construction-eu-celac-higher-education-area>

ongoing processes and initiatives, explore possibilities for cooperation and create synergies that enhance the impact of the efforts generated;

- Collect proposals from scientific institutions and networks that help guide cooperation between the two regions on these issues.

The workshop was attended by representatives of institutions and networks such as ANUIES, ASCUN, AUGM, EU-CELAC University Council, ENLACES, USA, FAP ALC-UE, OBREAL Global, OEI, SEGIB, Universities Caribbean, LERU, LAC NCP NETWORK, as well as delegates from national institutions and Member States involved in the JIRI process. A number of other institutions that have not been able to attend the workshop have provided their respective written inputs, which, together with contributions from some of the actors mentioned above, have been included in the subsequent part of this publication.

During the workshop, various topics were discussed, including the crucial role of higher education and the university sector in generating competencies and knowledge to face contemporary crises and socio-economic and environmental transition processes. The progress and cooperation generated through the JIRI working groups were also reported. Likewise, shared priorities and steps to be taken to enhance the impact of collaborative efforts were identified, in view of the next CELAC-EU Summit scheduled to take place in 2025.

Among the topics that ran through the dialogue structured in five thematic sessions, the following aspects could be highlighted:

- The participants regretted the lack of inclusion of Higher Education in the latest bi-regional agenda, despite its importance for cooperation between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, and reflected on strategies to reverse this situation, through collective efforts and spaces that correspond to each of the institutions present.
- Four major challenges were identified to be overcome: the low funding of scientific cooperation, the need for capacity building to reach the most vulnerable (young researchers, women, rural HEIs, etc.), the low visibility of existing resources (available infrastructures, etc.) and political dialogue at the highest level (ministerial meetings).
- The successes of cooperation programmes and instruments between research institutions in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, such as ResInfra, Horizon Europe, etc., were highlighted.
- The need for transformative and inclusive alliances was addressed, as well as the articulation of existing networks and consortia, to create synergies in cooperations, research projects and platforms and databases, offering open access and the

circulation of knowledge among all actors, including those who do not have robust infrastructures.

- It advocated for a strengthening of the regional vision and articulation of research and academic voices from Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., through ENLACES) for effective communication with the EU, accompanied by a reflection at the European level on the little or partial complementarity of the agenda vis-à-vis regional priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Undoubtedly, the workshop was an important space for the exchange of perspectives and experiences, and laid the foundations for the continuity of collaborations and articulated actions in the field of scientific and academic cooperation between the European Union and CELAC. We are grateful, at the same time, for the assistance of our interns, Adrián Morcillo Pazos, for his assistance in the rapporteurship and the editing and translation of this publication, as well as Lucas Rodríguez Schwarzenberg, for his role as rapporteur and interpreter during the workshop.

Adrian Bonilla
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Anna Barrera
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II. REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP TO ARTICULATE THE EFFORTS OF ACTORS PROMOTING THE “JOINT INITIATIVE ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION” AND THE “EU-CELAC COMMON AREA FOR HIGHER EDUCATION”

Workshop to articulate the efforts of actors promoting the “Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation” and the “EU-CELAC Common Area for Higher Education”

PROGRAMME: MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024 | 11:00 – 18:00 (CEST)

11:00 – 11:10 **Welcome remarks and brief introduction**

Carlos Ortega Director of the Cervantes Institute in Hamburg

Adrián Bonilla Executive Director, EU-LAC Foundation

11:10 – 13:30 **Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area**

Moderator: Anna Barrera, EU-LAC Foundation

Guiding questions for Dialogue:

- What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with mobility schemes with partners from the other region?
- What would be the lessons learnt and the biggest challenges in this respect, and how could they be overcome?
- How could mobility schemes promoted by different actors be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions?

13:30 – 14:30 **Lunch break**

14:30 – 16:00 **Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures**

Moderator: Adrián Bonilla, EU-LAC Foundation

Guiding questions for Dialogue:

- Which experiences has your institution/organisation/network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?
- What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?
- How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 18:00 **Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities**
Moderator: Yaritza Hernández Barrera, EU-LAC Foundation

Guiding questions for Dialogue:

- What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?
- What shared interests and lessons learnt between research centres in both regions whose work focuses on global challenges?
- How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

PROGRAMME: TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024 | 09:30 – 13:00 (CEST)

09:30 – 11:00 **Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community**
Moderator: Adrián Bonilla, EU-LAC Foundation

Guiding questions for Dialogue:

- What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?
- What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

- How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00 Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

Moderator: Anna Barrera, EU-LAC Foundation

Guiding questions for Dialogue:

- How could university cooperation between both regions be strengthened through greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases?
- How could bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives benefit more from existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe?
- What new opportunities does the Global Gateway Investment Agenda offer to enhance bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives in areas such as digital infrastructure, green transition, or health?
- How could actors working towards the bi-regional Higher Education Area and those more closely involved in the Common Research Area better articulate to provide scientific solutions to the central challenges of the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda?

13:00 – 13:30 Wrap-up of the sessions and closing remarks

Rapporteurs of the Sessions: Nancy González, Maria Vitoria Catarino, Lucas Rodríguez, Adrián Morcillo

Dr Adrián Bonilla, Executive Director, EU-LAC Foundation



Welcome remarks and brief introduction

Carlos Ortega, Director of the Cervantes Institute in Hamburg

Carlos Ortega, Director of the Instituto Cervantes in Hamburg, began his introduction with a warm welcome to Chilehaus, one of Hamburg's most iconic buildings and home to the Instituto Cervantes. The building was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site¹⁰ and is also one of the finest examples of the German expressionist school of architecture. It was noted that the construction was financed by a German merchant and businessman named Henry B. Sloman, whose fortune came from mining and trading Chilean saltpeter, hence the name "Chilehaus."

He congratulated the EU-LAC Foundation for the initiative to organise the JIRI workshop and also highlighted the importance of the long-standing collaboration between the Foundation and the Cervantes Institute, noting the efforts of both parties to promote exchanges and scientific production at the bi-regional level. As director of the Institute, he underlined the importance of the Spanish language in Ibero-American relations and, in the development of multilingual societies and forms of communication, facing the challenges associated with multilingual communication and linguistically diverse productions.

Adrián Bonilla, Executive Director of the EU-LAC Foundation

The Executive Director began his speech by thanking the Instituto Cervantes for its hospitality and emphasised the importance of articulating mechanisms to promote higher education, a topic not mentioned in the priorities established by the Heads of State and Government in the most recent Declaration of the EU-CELAC Summit 2023.¹¹ He noted that the objective of the JIRI workshop is closely related to the bi-regional agenda on the three "just transitions"¹²: climate change adaptation and mitigation, just energy transition, and inclusive digital transformation. He also presented a number of opportunities considering the EU-CELAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda¹³ of the European Union (EU) for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

He went on to welcome the different processes triggered by the Joint Research and Innovation Initiative¹⁴ and the Meeting of Senior Officials of the EU-CELAC Joint

10 Unesco (2015). Speicherstadt and Kontorhaus District with Chilehaus. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1467/>

11 European Commission (2023, July 18). Declaration of the EU-CELAC Summit 2023 (STATEMENT/23/3924). https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_23_3924

12 EU-LAC Foundation (2023). EU-LAC Just Transitions Forum. <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/eu-lac-just-transitions-forum>

13 European Commission (n.d.). EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda. International Partnerships. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/global-gateway/eu-lac-global-gateway-investment-agenda_en

14 EU-LAC Foundation (2021, October 21). The EU-CELAC Joint Research and Innovation Area: A living example of bi-regional cooperation driven by the EU-LAC Foundation. <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/eu-celac-joint-research-and-innovation-area-living-example-bi-regional-cooperation-driven-eu-lac>

Research and Innovation Initiative (JIRI SOM),¹⁵ initiatives that have been established to discuss the possibilities of a bi-regional common research space. This has been achieved to some extent in Europe through the Bologna Process¹⁶, but not in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In addition, he pointed out three important lines of action that should inform the discussions during the workshop and that dialogue with the bi-regional agenda. First, to resume discussions on ways to make a “common space” of higher education more possible, even in the face of normative and regulatory obstacles. The intergovernmental and heterogeneous dynamics that characterise the Latin American region make it difficult to imagine a Common Area between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. However, these logics seem to have been overcome in university environments, where contacts between universities, students and researchers are visible between the two regions.

Second, to encourage the construction of inter-university networks, which are important for the dissemination and mobilization of knowledge in both regions. And finally, at the operational level, establish basic ideas for effective mobility, including funding and standards for the recognition of degrees, degrees and credits. With this, he concluded that the construction of this space must be accompanied by multilingualism and the defense of open science, to make it inclusive and avoid verticality and discrimination.

Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area

Ana Capilla, Director of Higher Education and Science at the Organization of Ibero-American States, stressed that there are still relevant challenges for effective mobility, although there are proposals to solve them, such as the OEI initiative “Universidad Iberoamérica 2030”¹⁷, with the aim of creating a platform that facilitates not only communication between institutions, but also to show important information about universities, schools and academic institutions. Mobility is one of the challenges for a better bi-regional articulation, even more so because in Latin America there is no unified credit system like the ECTS model widely practiced in Europe. She also highlighted the difficulty in finding funding to promote bi-regional mobility schemes, considering, for example, that ERASMUS+ programmes¹⁸ are mainly restricted to intra-European

15 EU-LAC Foundation (2023, November 28). The EU-LAC Foundation participates as observer in the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation Senior Officials Meeting. <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/eu-lac-foundation-participates-observer-eu-celac-joint-initiative-research-and-innovation-senior>

16 European Commission (n.d.). The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area. European Education Area. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/bologna-process>

17 Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (n.d.). Universidad Iberoamérica 2030. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/universidad-iberoamerica-2030/presentacion>

18 European Commission (n.d.). Erasmus+. EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>

education initiatives. He complemented his speech by assessing that the EU-CELAC summit in 2023 has not generated specific instruments to overcome these obstacles in cooperation in Higher Education, and that CELAC does not have structures to promote the agenda on its own.

In this regard, **Yuma Inzola, Head of Training and Capacity Building at the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)**, highlighted the work carried out by IESALC in promoting exchange spaces on issues of academic mobility and improvement of higher education in UNESCO Member States. More specifically, she mentioned the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education¹⁹, adopted in 2019. This Convention complements five other UNESCO regional conventions, one of which is the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean²⁰. She stressed that many LAC countries have ratified the global Convention, but not the regional Convention, which remains a pending task.

Recognition is also hampered by the lack of trust of European stakeholders in the institutions of LAC countries, due to the lack of a standardised regional ECTS system and global quality assurances. The preference has been for bilateral agreements, which makes it difficult for the region to unify voices and consolidate itself as an exporter of knowledge. Finally, she highlighted the importance of learning from initiatives such as the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) and the National Information Centres on Academic Recognition in the European Union (NARIC)²¹ to advance in the promotion of the mobility agenda between Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

The Policy Specialist for EU-International Cooperation in Higher Education, Research and Innovation of the Delegation for European and International Affairs of the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, **Axel Leisenberg**, welcomed the task of fostering bi-regional cooperation in higher education through the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI). From the French ministerial perspective, the importance of complementarity between bilateral and bi-regional initiatives between European and LAC partners is emphasised. France has a number of mobility program memorandums with several countries and networks in Latin America and the Caribbean, such as Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. There are also many efforts to facilitate broader collaboration in that field between the two regions, such as the Assessment-Oriented of Scientific Cooperation (ECOS).²² However, the cooperation landscape requires timely adaptation to emerging geopolitical and geographical dynamics, which calls for innovative financing mechanisms. He stressed that France has always advocated for

19 Unesco (n.d.). Global Convention on Higher Education. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://www.unesco.org/en/higher-education/global-convention>

20 Unesco (2022, October 26). New Regional Convention for the Recognition of Studies, Degrees and Diplomas in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean enters into force. <https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/en/2022/10/26/new-regional-convention-for-the-recognition-of-studies-degrees-and-diplomas-in-higher-education-in-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-enters-into-force/>

21 European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) and National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) (<https://www.enic-naric.net/>)

22 Evaluation-Oriented of Scientific Cooperation (<https://www.univ-spn.fr/ecos-sud/>)

high-level standards and recognition of diplomas amid language differences and budget constraints. In his view, building synergies with existing networks such as ERASMUS+ and the Alliance of European Universities²³ can also improve collaboration. Structural changes, such as the effective ratification of global efforts, such as the UNESCO Global Convention, are crucial, along with ongoing policy dialogues to promote equality and transparency in bi-regional mobility and cooperation efforts.

Marilena Rossano, head of the Naples Branch of the International Relations Unit of the Italian National Research Council (CNR) cited examples of possible areas of collaboration between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe, and specifically Italy, such as traditional mobility schemes, exchange of doctoral students, establishment of institutional academic networks and co-financing initiatives. In particular, she emphasised the role of bilateral agreements between the CNR and several countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico²⁴. Secondly, she emphasised the importance of focusing not only on bilateral collaborations, but on proposals of bi-regional scope, such as CO-FUND activities, that play an important role in science diplomacy while enhancing capacity building, such as the one financed in southern Italy, open to PhD students from LAC countries. She highlighted the importance of addressing challenges related to the recognition of diplomas through specific programmes and best practices to facilitate co-funded mobility schemes and joint collaborative research. Thirdly, she highlighted the potential of short-term mobility programmes for students and researchers to work abroad, highlighting linguistic differences as a challenge.

Maria Maia, Specialist of the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) of the Ministry of Education and Science of Portugal began by introducing the institution, responsible for multilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding regarding scientific and technological cooperation between Portugal and more than 70 countries, at intergovernmental, interministerial and interinstitutional levels. In this sense, the FCT contributes to the development of Ibero-American educational efforts and facilitates the emergence and establishment of collaborative research networks, with a strong emphasis on social policies, supporting research projects, scientific training, publication initiatives and international conferences. In the history of the FCT, many lessons have been learned, such as the urgent need to strengthen capacity in grant management, especially in CELAC countries. She also highlighted the benefits of triangular cooperation to unite the European and Ibero-American regions, highlighting the Paulo Freire Project for the Academic Mobility of Students of University Teacher Training Programs²⁵.

For his part, **Alejandro Quinteros** based his speech on his experience as a **Specialist of the LAC NCP NETWORK**, of which the Uruguayan Agency for International Cooperation (AUCI) coordinates for the entire LAC region. This network comprises 350 representatives from the 18 areas of the Horizon Europe programme across 23 countries in the region. He

23 European University Alliance (<https://europeanunialliance.eu/>)

24 Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (2023, January 27). International activity. <https://www.cnr.it/en/international-activity>

25 Paulo Freire Project (<https://paulofreire.oei.es/>)

highlighted that it is a key instrument for supporting international cooperation projects as it connects and collaborates with all the science and technology institutions in the region, linking them with national contact points (NCP) and European authorities. He emphasised the solid work of AUCI in the Horizon Europe Programme,²⁶ the Erasmus+ Programme, and the European Enterprise Network Project,²⁷ as well as the ongoing work of the LAC NCP NETWORK in the region. He pointed out that regional challenges also include informing universities, research centres, public institutions, and the business sector about EU programmes and access to available resources. Furthermore, he noted that more institutions and other key actors need to be reached, and efforts should be made to bring cooperation closer to researchers by training international cooperation managers and incorporating the language of cooperation. Finally, he mentioned the situation of countries such as Uruguay, Panama, Mexico, Brazil, and Chile, which, according to their GDP, do not receive automatic funding for the Horizon Europe programme. He also highlighted the importance of raising the visibility of researchers on platforms, the Euraxess portal, and thematic networks, depending on their areas of interest.

Elizabeth Bernal, Secretary General of the Colombian Association of Universities (ASCUN) and, in that capacity, president of the Higher Education Area of Latin America and the Caribbean (ENLACES), also emphasised common challenges related to regulations, recognition of diplomas and disciplines, and language barriers. However, he stressed that, although there are no clear and standardised bi-regional agreements on mobility, there have been effective mobility practices emanating from universities and institutions, a type of bottom-up networking process. She addressed the issue of mistrust towards LAC institutions with the Colombian projects led by ASCUN²⁸, which tried to overcome it with mobility programmes, where the choice of educational institutions was carried out by coordinating committees, providing opportunities for lesser-known institutions to actively participate. She emphasised that these projects do not have external funding, but even so, they have proven to be resilient and viable and could become success stories. In addition, he mentioned the need to promote inclusion and diversity among students in mobility schemes, as well as the importance of institutionalising know-how within universities. Finally, she also addressed the benefits of science diplomacy mechanisms to promote a bi-regional agenda for higher education, citing the important work carried out by ENLACES.²⁹

Representing **OBREAL Global, the Director of Strategic Development Nicolás Patrici** highlighted that, while cooperation in this area at the bilateral and subregional levels seems to be thriving, the bi-regional agenda at the political level seems to be inactive. In this regard, he was of the view that it may be important to investigate whether there is still

26 European Commission (n.d.). Horizon Europe. Research and innovation. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

27 European Commission (n.d.). Access to EU funding programmes. Helping SMEs to understand and to access EU programmes and funds. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://een.ec.europa.eu/about-enterprise-europe-network/advice-support/access-eu-funding-programmes>

28 Colombian Association of Universities (n.d.). Academic Mobility Program. Retrieved 26 April, 2024, from <https://ascun.org.co/programas-de-movilidad-academica/>

29 ENLACES Network (<https://espacioenlaces.org/>)

a strong political interest in promoting a bi-regional dialogue in this field, and whether waning interest may be the cause of a decline in funding. However, he highlighted, along with the rest of the participants, the resilience of mobility programmes that, even with little funding, generate a great impact. Finally, he regretted the absence of Brazilian representatives, noting that Brazil, as one of the regional leaders, is a critical partner in this process, adding that the Portuguese language should be included in translations and working documents.

Francisco Sánchez, Director of the Ibero-American Institute at the University of Salamanca, added to the doubts about whether LAC is really an EU priority when it comes to promoting higher education. To counteract the difficulties with financing, he highlighted that there are a series of mechanisms such as those coordinated by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He stressed that LAC countries face a number of constraints that also relatively restrict collaborations in higher education, such as social inequalities and, more specifically, disparities in the educational quality of universities and schools³⁰. However, it is also important to encourage the mobility of European researchers to knowledge centres in Latin America and the Caribbean to foster visions of the Global South. He points out that digital technologies should be used to democratise access to resources and participation in, for example, international conferences.

Félix García, Coordinator of the Ibero-American Knowledge Area of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) considered it key to address the objective of promoting academic mobility in Higher Education from a pragmatic perspective. He assumed that the fate of budgets and European countries do not always have the same priorities, but work must continue to make it a political priority and become a financial priority. He defended the perspective that the reality is much more inspiring and that there are many good initiatives and students from LAC studying in Europe³¹. From this point of view, it is vital to generate facilities to move towards common operating standards that enable systems to make them comparable, allowing a conversion to be made from the academic credit. An example of this can be the work carried out by the Ibero-American System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (SIACES),³² which strengthens collaboration and establishes shared criteria for accreditation and qualification.

Françoise Moulin Civil, President of the Institute of the Americas (IdA), emphasised that while the Institute does not participate in traditional mobility programmes, it

30 Didriksson T., A. (2020). La educación superior en América Latina y el Caribe: el reto de la desigualdad frente a los ODS. *Revista educación superior y sociedad: nueva etapa*, 32(2), 279-304. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000378619>

31 Unesco (2019). *La Movilidad en la Educación Superior en América Latina y El Caribe: Retos y Oportunidades de un Convenio Renovado para el Reconocimiento de Estudios, Títulos y Diplomas*. Instituto Internacional para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe (Working Papers). <https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/2020/02/20/la-movilidad-en-la-educacion-superior-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe-retos-y-oportunidades-de-un-convenio-renovado-para-el-reconocimiento-de-estudios-titulos-y-diplomas-2019/>

32 Ibero-American Higher Education Quality Assurance System (<https://www.siaces.org/>)

operates exchange initiatives not only through its four regional centers³³, but also through its numerous international centers located in the Americas³⁴. PhD students from both regions can visit EU and LAC countries to coordinate and enhance scientific activities, thus promoting intercultural dialogues. She also highlighted the importance of holding face-to-face meetings to promote the bi-regional higher education agenda.

The Head of the Coordination of Scientific Cooperation, academic projects and research of the Association of Universities of the Montevideo Group (AUGM), Juan Manuel Sotelo Silveira, spoke about the common operational obstacles that revolve around the financing of mobility schemes between both regions, especially considering the asymmetries and the fluctuating political will of the actors. Although trust, the recognition of diplomas and degrees continues to be a challenge, he highlighted the great work of cooperation between institutions in both regions, and where exchanges continue to thrive. He echoed Nicolás Patrici's words and pointed out that Brazil is essential, especially considering its position as a member of MERCOSUR and its participation in South-South cooperation schemes that cover Latin America such as CAPES³⁵, and other regional initiatives such as ENLACES.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructure

Francisco Sánchez began the discussion with a reflection that was referred to throughout the day: the need for funding for the construction and maintenance of scientific infrastructures. Bureaucratic hurdles and expenditure control requirements must include regional asymmetry, so that they do not pose an insurmountable constraint to initiating and sustaining research projects. Regarding the possibility of providing competencies and resources to other agencies, he predicts that countries would perceive it as an acknowledgement of their lack of capacity, reducing the effectiveness of the measure. In addition to these challenges, the environmental characteristics of LAC are mixed that make it difficult to create these infrastructures. Francisco Sánchez also pointed out that the greatest cooperation is concentrated in the field of Social Sciences, since the other branches (e.g. engineering) are more difficult to manage, although it is in them where you find the greatest added value. Under this criterion, the importance of taking into account patents³⁶ (plants, animals, ancestral knowledge...) and "academic colonialism"³⁷

33 Institut des Amériques (n.d.). Regional Centers. Retrieved 26 April, 2024, from <https://www.institutdesameriques.fr/en/pole/regional-centers>

34 Institut des Amériques (n.d.). Pôles internationaux. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from <https://www.institutdesameriques.fr/pole/poles-internationaux>

35 Ministry of Education of Brazil. (2024, April 05). Programa atrairá pesquisadores da América Latina e Caribe. <https://www.gov.br/capes/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/programa-atraira-pesquisadores-da-america-latina-e-caribe>

36 CAF (2017, August 01). Lo que hace una patente por el desarrollo de América Latina. <https://www.caf.com/es/actualidad/noticias/2017/08/lo-que-hace-una-patente-por-el-desarrollo-de-america-latina/>

37 Drazer, M. (2023, October 27). El largo brazo del colonialismo científico en Latinoamérica. Deutsche Welle. <https://www.dw.com/es/el-largo-brazo-del-colonialismo-cientifico-en-latinoamerica/a-67234094>

as an example of how language or the management of academic journals can perpetuate asymmetries entered the debate.

Following these reflections, **Sabina Guaylupo, Head of the Ibero-American Office of the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT) and Programme Officer of the EU-LAC ResInfra Plus Project**, stressed that infrastructures are basic and not all countries should have these capacities, but the opportunity to access these resources. Her speech was accompanied by a mention of the European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI),³⁸ which it does not fund, but lays the foundations for research cooperation. These needs, she emphasised, are recognised in JIRI SOM and its working groups, with a specific EU-LAC infrastructure group³⁹. The challenges were summarised in four main blocks: funding, capacity building, visibility among researchers, infrastructures and policy dialogue. Sabina Guaylupo considered that EU-LAC ResinfraPlus⁴⁰ should also take into account national programmes and those of the different researchers, highlighting that Resinfra and ResinfraPlus tried to give visibility to all cooperations and not only to Horizon 2020. He affirms that ESFRI was made little by little and in bi-regional cooperation and investment a choice should also be made by priorities (selection of countries by their capacities, etc.).

Ana Capilla commented that the OEI obtained a call for infrastructure on Energy Transition⁴¹, given that as an international organisation they could apply to Horizon. She said that having access to lithium is also in Europe's interest, and providing LAC with technology transfer can be vital for this. She also said that it was very important to provide specific practical tools for EU-LAC cooperation. Ana also recalled UNESCO's publication on the State of Science 2023⁴², which shows that the number of articles published by LAC authors in indexed journals has increased in LAC.

María Maia assured that Digital Infrastructures are vital (JIRI SOM) to connect other thematic areas such as artificial intelligence (aligned with the EU-LAC Digital Alliance).⁴³ In this regard, she highlighted the BELLA fibre optic cable⁴⁴, vital for many synergies and interconnections between students, academics and, in general, all data exchange (Copernicus programme).⁴⁵ She agreed that Resinfra has been important for the exchange

38 European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (<https://www.esfri.eu/about>)

39 ResinfraPlus (2020, October 19). EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation Senior Officials Meeting tomorrow. <https://resinfra-eulac.eu/news/eu-celac-joint-initiative-on-research-and-innovation-senior-officials-meeting-tomorrow/>

40 EU-LAC ResinfraPlus (<https://resinfra-eulac.eu/>)

41 Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (2024, March 06). Arranca Energytran, el proyecto de la OEI para encarar una transición energética limpia y justa en Europa y América Latina. <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/noticias/arranca-energytran-el-proyecto-de-la-oei-para-encarar-una-transicion-energetica-limpia-y-justa-en-europa-y-america-latina>

42 Unesco (2023, December 20). Se presentó el Informe Estado de la Ciencia 2023. <https://www.unesco.org/es/articulos/se-presento-el-informe-estado-de-la-ciencia-2023>

43 EU-LAC Digital Alliance (<https://d4dhub.eu/es/lac>)

44 EEAS (2021). The EU and LAC come together: a 6000 km high-capacity submarine cable bridges the digital gap between the two continents. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/la-ue-y-am%C3%A9rica-latina-y-el-caribe-se-unen-un-cable-submarino-de-alta-capacidad-de-6-000-km_es

45 Bella II. Building the Europe Link to Latin America and the Caribbean (<https://www.bella-programme.eu/index.php/en/>)

of good practices and considered it essential to connect with government representatives to consolidate cooperation and lead to Memorandums of Understanding. He highlighted the call launched in 2022 on global challenges in collaboration with EU-LAC Interest Group and ResInfra⁴⁶.

Axel Leisenberg gave the example of the European Southern Observatory⁴⁷, an astronomical organization with 16 member states, with Chile as the host country (Atacama Desert) and Australia as a strategic partner. It plays a leading role in promoting and organizing international cooperation in research and provides astronomers with state-of-the-art research facilities. Axel also pointed out that geographical distances and regulatory heterogeneity pose barriers to cooperation and mobility. He considered that it would be very useful to intensify the bi-regional dialogue and align financing mechanisms with thematic areas and shared global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity or health.

Félix García said that SEGIB believed in the framework rules that serve to strengthen cooperation, but they agree that there are many other initiatives that come out of the will of the different actors and that, although they are very important, due to their adaptation to the realities of the region⁴⁸, they can go unnoticed.

Alejandro Quinteros highlighted study visits conducted within the framework of the ResInfra project and the CELAC-EU Research Infrastructures Working Group as a best practice, noting these visits as a tool for connecting universities, infrastructures, and researchers. He also emphasised the ResInfra and ResInfra Plus projects and expressed gratitude to the Commission for launching a second call for research infrastructure topics. In the same vein, he stressed the ongoing work of the CELAC Research Infrastructures Working Group, comprising 32 representatives from LAC (one principal and one alternate per country), and the progress in the five thematic areas: health, food security, biodiversity and climate change, energy, and emerging technologies, which facilitates the link between higher education and research infrastructures. Additionally, he underlined the importance of continuing training sessions, such as the one held last year within the framework of Interconecta, focusing on the ResInfra project.

Juan Manuel Sotelo focused his speech on the importance of saving resources and the possibility of developing a repository that harvests everything related to infrastructures. The Executive Secretariat of AUGM proposes to promote the creation and maintenance of institutional repositories to share academic resources in a free and accessible way. In addition, it suggests developing joint open educational resources. He also highlighted

46 EU-LAC Interest Group (2022). 4th EU-LAC Joint Call in STI 2022. <https://www.eucelac-platform.eu/joint-call/4th-eu-lac-joint-call-sti-2022>

47 European Southern Observatory (<https://www.eso.org/public/spain/about-eso/?lang>)

48 Por qué Latinoamérica necesita hacer más ciencia propia en la region (2023, July 30). Infobae. <https://www.infobae.com/educacion/2023/07/31/por-que-latinoamerica-necesita-hacer-mas-ciencia-propia-en-la-region/>

AUGM's support for the creation of a Regional Knowledge Agency (ARCO),⁴⁹ calling on actors such as ENLACES, as defined in the final declaration of CRES + 5⁵⁰, to promote research, extension and collaborative innovation in higher education.

Marilena Rossano underscored the value of RESINFRA and the importance of the visibility of infrastructure, which is heterogeneous in Latin America and the Caribbean. Each country faces significant differences in size or funding, so it is also important to keep those that are not among the most advanced in terms of standards compliance involved. She pointed out that maybe without the ESFRI programme, Europe would be in a situation similar to that of LAC. Italy participates in many ESFRI infrastructures⁵¹ and will also participate in RESINFRA+, the project funded by Horizon Europe with the aim of continuing and further implementing the results achieved with RESINFRA.

Myriam Moïse, Director of Caribbean Universities, highlighted the importance of access to research infrastructures, especially for emerging researchers who often lacked such access. He highlighted the significance of inclusivity in infrastructure, bridging the gap between rural and urban areas and ensuring accessibility beyond continental Europe. Myriam also discussed the role of cultural industries in developing research⁵², addressing social issues and promoting social inclusion and poverty reduction.

Adrián Bonilla concluded by stating that when we talk about research infrastructure, we are talking about funding. Inequalities are perpetuated in LAC (GINI),⁵³ governments do not have the resources they had before and do not have the capacity to generate funds and, although cooperation programmes are important, they will not solve structural problems. Adrián Bonilla ended the session by stating that from the Latin American perspective it is necessary to better define priorities, and from the EU to understand that there is no complementarity in the agenda in terms of concerns.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities

During the second session, **Carlos Quenan, Vice-President of the LAC-EU Permanent Academic Forum and Member of the Bureau of the Institute of the Americas, IDA**, made some initial remarks highlighting the importance of establishing connections with research

49 Unesco (2024, March 15). CRES+5 final document defends democratic, inclusive and free higher education. <https://www.iesalc.unesco.org/en/2024/03/15/cres5-final-document-defends-democratic-inclusive-and-free-higher-education/>

50 Regional Conference on Higher Education - CRES+5 (<https://cres2018mas5.org/en/conferencia-regional-de-educacion-superior-5-english/>)

51 Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca (2017, February 17). Online il Programma Nazionale per le Infrastrutture di Ricerca (PNIR) 2014-2020. <http://www.ponricerca.gov.it/notizie/2017/pnir/>

52 Inter-American Development Bank, BOP Consulting, & Korean Research Institute on Human Settlement (2020). Creative and Cultural Industries in Urban Revitalization: A Practice Based Handbook. IDB Publications. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0001994>

53 ECLAC (2023, November 23). Income distribution. CEPALSTAT. Portal of inequalities in Latin America. <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/inequalities/incomes.html?lang=es&indicator=3289>

infrastructures and taking advantage of the resources that networks can offer, especially mentioning the IdA network and its focus on global challenges such as the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change. In addition, he pointed out fundamental points such as the challenge of funding to initiate and maintain research projects, or the problem of articulation between universities, institutions and governments in a multilevel process. He highlighted the fundamental role of education and its contribution to society, emphasizing the importance of cooperation to overcome the lack of strategic focus in high politics.

Elizabeth Bernal, emphasised the crucial role of Higher Education in advancing towards sustainable development (SDGs), sharing the work done for CRES+5. She underlined the strategic importance of networks of higher education institutions in this area, as key agents in the training of professionals and the generation of knowledge. However, the lack of dissemination of researchers' contributions to other sectors was identified as a significant challenge, evidencing the need to improve the connection and communication between academia and other governmental, social and business actors. Three regional priorities were established, including transforming educational institutions to better adapt to the demands of sustainable development, redefining indicators for measuring progress in this area, and improving communication and collaboration to promote an integrated approach to achieving the SDGs.

Francisco Sánchez thoughtfully addressed the complex agenda of global challenges, pointing out that the Global North places decarbonization and greenhouse gas mitigation at the center. In his analysis, Francis questioned the European Union's role in this agenda, suggesting that its approach may lack realism. He exemplified this criticism by mentioning the lack of support from the European Investment Bank to sectors crucial to regions such as Latin America, such as mining and construction. There are also crucial questions about who should bear the associated costs and how universities can effectively contribute to addressing these challenges. Francisco Sánchez emphasised the need for States to recognise and convene academic institutions so that they can actively contribute to defining and addressing global challenges.

Yuma Inzola highlighted the need to consolidate transformative networks and alliances as key tools to face contemporary challenges. However, she stressed the importance of avoiding the multiplication of networks, seeking instead a consolidation that would allow for greater effectiveness in joint action. In addition, the role of public policy and higher education in bi-regional agreements was discussed, where the creation of a specific fund within the framework of CRES+5 to promote initiatives in this area was proposed. Finally, she proposed establishing alliances with the private sector, actively involving universities and recognizing the value of public-private collaboration in the search for effective solutions to shared challenges.

Félix García again addressed the discrepancy between Europe's priorities and the criticism of the absence of Higher Education in the declaration of the EU-LAC Summit 2023. This omission generated a reflection on the importance of Higher Education in

the political agenda and the need to promote its recognition and appreciation in these international forums. In addition, he highlighted the importance of leveraging existing networks, referring to the relevance of Elizabeth's words in this context. Finally, he reflected on how institutions can promote interaction, recognising the importance of taking advantage of the opportunities that arise from these connections to strengthen cooperation and academic exchange at the international level.

Ana Capilla highlighted the crucial importance of addressing the financial aspects of research projects, from the identification of funding sources to the efficient management of available resources, in order to ensure the success and sustainability of scientific and academic initiatives. The importance of having robust financing alternatives was discussed, as well as the pressing need for clear and transparent instruments to guide the process of applying for and allocating funds. The Global Gateway, as a promise of cooperation, is an instrument that requires further clarification from European institutions in order to better understand its scope and possibilities. In addition, he shared the experience of the Programme for the Strengthening of Science and Technology Systems (FORCYT),⁵⁴ which highlighted the financial constraints that can hinder the development and effectiveness of such networks. The Development in Transition Facility of the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) has not been renewed, leaving Latin America without a financing channel that included countries that were overcoming the development trap.

Héctor Casanueva took up the uncertainty surrounding the financing of the Global Gateway initiative and the pressing need for greater specificity in this aspect. The III Summit marked a milestone after eight years of interruption, with important agreements on the economy and cooperation, although many relevant areas remained unaddressed. He regretted the failure to take advantage of the body of proposals accumulated since the 2015 Summit in Brussels, underlining the importance of updating the fundamentals and contents to address the current challenges. Although he insisted on the relaunch of EU-LAC relations and the new stage to be faced, he warned that what has been achieved since 1999 and the path traced at the 2015 Summit should not be ignored. In this regard, he proposed resuming the Parallel Summits of Civil Society that had been taking place since the Vienna Summit.

He also highlighted the Millennium Project⁵⁵ and the need to better characterise the challenges of the future, including geopolitical ones, and highlighted the fundamental role of universities in addressing the peace, security and sustainability agenda. He argued that the geopolitical issue should not be ignored and highlighted the ability of universities to influence, supported by the political capital represented by 50 million students and 3 million professors between the two regions. Héctor Casanueva considered that this political capital is sufficient to exert pressure on decision-makers and maintain

54 Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (2023). Programa para el Fortalecimiento de los Sistemas de Ciencia y Tecnología (FORCYT). <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/www-oei-int-forcyt/presentacion>

55 Millennium Project (<https://www.millennium-project.org/>)

a synchrony between the academic-scientific world and the political world. This could be seen materialised in the Declaration of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly⁵⁶ that called for the Common Area of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation as a pillar of the Bi-regional Strategy, highlighting the proposals made in Academic Summits and several university networks.

In relation to these debates, **Maria Maia** pointed out the role of FCT in the EU-CELAC Senior Officials Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation, collaborating in various instruments supported by the European Commission, such as the EULARINET⁵⁷ and ALCUE-NET⁵⁸ thematic networks, as well as the networks for the coordination of bi-regional joint financing schemes such as EULANEST⁵⁹ and ERANET-LAC⁶⁰. The FCT also participates in the EU-LAC Interest Group and coordinates Key Networks on Innovation in Raw Materials to Strengthen Industrial Competitiveness or on Raw Materials for Sustainable Development and the Circular Economy, which include Brazil as a partner. In addition, she indicated that FCT's participation in CYTED allows the creation of an institutional network and the formation of thematic networks for global challenges.

Marilena Rossano addressed aspects related to the participation of different countries in the research agenda, as well as the importance of integrating this agenda into the regional reality. She stressed the need for inclusive participation, recognizing the diversity of approaches and perspectives that each nation can bring to scientific and technological development. She underlined the importance of integrating the research agenda into the regional reality, acknowledging that challenges and priorities can vary significantly. In addition, she mentioned the concept of "variable geometry" as an example of how research agendas can be flexible to favour integration and mutual interest in different regional contexts. This strategy makes it possible to tailor research policies and programmes according to the specificities of each region, recognising the diversity and complexity of regional contexts.

Axel Leisenberg highlighted France's extensive cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean, evidenced by the considerable number of applications received for academic studies related to global challenges. This underlines the solid basis at the bi-regional and regional level to address crucial issues such as environmental protection and conservation, as well as digitalization. In addition, he described specific actions taken, such as the declaration for Amazonian countries on forest preservation⁶¹ and the focus on solutions

56 European Parliament (2023). Declaración "Abordando viejos y nuevos retos para sentar las bases de una mayor prosperidad compartida en el futuro". EUROLAT. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/278365/Declaracion_EuroLat_Santo_Domingo.pdf

57 EULARINET (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/212186>)

58 ALCUE-NET (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/311953>)

59 EULANEST (<https://www.era-learn.eu/network-information/networks/eulanest>)

60 EURANET (<https://www.era-learn.eu/network-information/networks/eranelac>)

61 French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development. The Manaus Declaration: Committed and shared research in Amazonia. <https://en.ird.fr/manaus-declaration-committed-and-shared-research-amazonia>

and commitments for ocean conservation, as discussed at the 2022 Ocean Conference⁶². He emphasised the importance of developing science-based solutions to address these challenges, thus highlighting the crucial role of research in effective policy decision-making. He also highlighted the importance of mutual learning and collaboration in the exchange of best practices, as well as cooperation in research based on shared values and principles. Finally, he made specific mention of the importance of university alliances in the innovation of projects for capacity building.

Juan Manuel Sotelo acknowledged the significant impact of the political dimension at the present time, especially with regard to Europe's vision towards universities and the disparity between similar agendas, but different needs. In this regard, he mentioned initiatives such as triangular cooperation work, exemplified by the Coimbra Group⁶³. He also explored the link between city and university, highlighting the transfer of knowledge and the capacity of universities to solve urban problems. In addition, he reflected on the bi-regional relationship between Spain, Portugal and France, and how their visions can influence projects with Latin America, thus underlining the importance of understanding and taking advantage of regional dynamics in bi-regional collaboration.

Myriam Moïse presented a distinctive perspective on global challenges from the Caribbean, highlighting the importance of considering the unique particularities and needs of this region. The critical importance of capacity building in the Caribbean was reflected, noting that the bottom-up approach is not a reality in practice, implying the need for increased support and resources to strengthen local and Global South capacities. In this sense, it is important that research programs and projects emerge and are led by researchers from the region. This does not preclude collaboration with the European Union, but this accompaniment must be equitable and with a fairer distribution of resources and opportunities, thus promoting a more inclusive approach focused on regional needs.

Katrien Maes addressed the implementation of the Green Deal, acknowledging the fragmentation of policies by the European Commission and the lack of coordination between them and set out to place the Sustainable Development Goals at the centre of the conversations. She mentioned the importance of education on smart and sustainable cities, including transport, at the local level, thus highlighting the need to promote awareness and action in urban communities to address environmental and social challenges. She also reflected on the ownership of digital data and its importance in research, health, and access to public data. She ended the session by agreeing with Myriam Moïse on the challenges associated with bureaucracy and excessive regulation that hinder innovation and generate greater asymmetries.

62 United Nations (2022). Ocean Conference. <https://www.un.org/es/conferences/ocean2022>

63 Coimbra Group (<https://www.coimbra-group.eu/>)

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

Anneken Reise highlighted the ENRICH in LAC Project, an initiative born in 2017 with pilots in Brazil, the US and China, which seeks to facilitate knowledge exchanges between Europe and LAC. From 2024, the Global Service Facility, with the support of ENRICH in LAC, will organise EU-LAC incubator matching events with the aim of creating a sustainable network of start-up incubators and accelerators. This effort seeks to connect the start-up ecosystems of both regions to promote cooperation on issues such as reducing plastic waste, cleaning up the oceans or creating a circular economy.

Maria Maia also considered that ENRICH in LAC facilitates the connection between Europe and Latin America, promoting high-level business and connections. Its mission is to unlock business opportunities and share knowledge in key areas such as health, digital transformation and renewable energy. The CYTED programme addresses a wide range of regional issues, from agri-food to information technology, fostering innovation and collaboration. Although challenges remain in cooperation between Europe and Latin America, a new approach that culturally understands the region is needed to achieve sustainable and inclusive development.

Marilena Rossano highlighted that in 2022, more than 200 start-ups were created throughout the CELAC region, reflecting significant growth in the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. This increase underscores the importance of fostering public-private collaboration to drive innovation and address regional challenges. CNR is focused on the exploitation of research results and has established a specific unit to manage aspects such as patenting, intellectual property management and support for the creation of spin-offs. In addition, it has strengthened its ties with the Italian Ministry of Enterprises and Made-in Italy (MIMIT) and has collaborated to implement Industrial Doctorates, thus contributing to socio-economic development. With regard to research, she stressed that there are differences between the times and urgencies of the different actors, such as the case of entrepreneurs and researchers, the latter being mainly focused on publications and patents.

Ana Capilla commented on the challenges presented by certain researchers without an institutional culture, which leads them to make mistakes such as publishing before patenting. He also recalled that FORCYT implemented a component aimed at knowledge transfer⁶⁴. In this process, the IEO collaborated with the Joint Research Centre (JRC),⁶⁵ which was working in Latin America on the "Smart Specialization Strategy".⁶⁶ However, the JRC currently lacks the budget to continue this line of work with Latin America. To

64 Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura, & Fundación Botín (2023). La Transferencia De Conocimiento En Iberoamérica: Sistematización De La Experiencia Piloto Del Programa Forcyt. <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/publicaciones/la-transferencia-de-conocimiento-en-iberoamerica-sistematizacion-de-la-experiencia-piloto-del-programa-forcyt-2023>

65 European Commission (n.d.). Joint Research Centre. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/joint-research-centre_en

66 European Commission (n.d.). Smart Specialisation. Retrieved April 26, 2024, from https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/scientific-activities-z/smart-specialisation_en

avoid a complete shutdown, the IEO is collaborating with the JRC on the Energytran project.

Félix García proposed to the EU-LAC Foundation to resume the work of the EU and LAC cluster. SEGIB has promoted the Ibero-American Innovation Strategy and its five innovation missions: food, climate change and the environment, digitalisation and artificial intelligence, health and energy transition; to contribute to the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. Each theme is taken on by one country: Brazil for food, Colombia for the environment, Spain for digitalization, and energy Chile, Mexico for health.

Also mentioned was MetaRed X⁶⁷, the collaborative network that strengthens entrepreneurship units in higher education institutions in Ibero-America, promoting the creation of startups and interaction with entrepreneurship ecosystems. Promoted by Universia and Santander Universities, it focuses on knowledge transfer and training in incubation, with relevance for LAC-EU cooperation in innovation and employability. Félix García considered it key to incorporate the private sector, and programmes such as Erasmus Mundus⁶⁸, which focus on employability due to its links with companies, and Industrial Doctorates were cited. The need to know the Latin American context was highlighted, where a public university will hardly want to be linked to a company due to ideological prejudices. He indicated that there is a strong resistance to changing mentality, but there are also facilities in centers accustomed to these public-private partnerships, such as polytechnic universities.

Yuma Inzola highlighted two emerging initiatives that are adopting the missional model: the NetZeroCities⁶⁹ project and UNESCO's Learning Cities⁷⁰. In the design of these projects with the EU, she emphasised the importance of incorporating the university as an articulating axis, from a transformative social perspective. In addition, she mentioned capacity building, including courses for entrepreneurship and university leadership at the institutional level.

Héctor Casanueva spoke about Tecnológico de Monterrey, a private university that has established a strong relationship between academia and the business sector. Since 1999, it has been at the forefront of developing programmes that address the future of education. In addition, they are involved in the creation of innovation districts that connect study centers, the public and private sectors, thus leading the way towards an applied future (Future Design Lab⁷¹). From 2026, studies on the future will be integrated into all the degrees offered by this university. With 22 nodes in Latin America and 70 worldwide, they are committed to exploring new frontiers in education and innovation.

67 MetaRed X (<https://www.metaredx.org/global/index.html>)

68 European Commission (n.a.). Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters (students). Retrieved 26 April, 2024, from <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/es/opportunities/opportunities-for-individuals/students/erasmus-mundus-joint-masters>

69 NetZeroCities (<https://netzerocities.eu/mission-cities/>)

70 UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (<https://www.uil.unesco.org/es/learning-cities>)

71 Futures Design Lab (<https://fdl.tec.mx/es>)

Carlos Quenan continued with another initiative of Tecnológico de Monterrey, which is collaborating with European and Latin American institutions that address the future of education⁷², focusing on innovations and advances in assessment and pedagogical approaches. In this regard, he highlighted the Institute for the Future of Education⁷³ and the sectoral projects that bring together technical vocational training in the regions of France linked to companies that develop issues of international cooperation. Carlos Quenan considered it key to adapt the educational offer to Latin American informality⁷⁴, with the possibility of short diplomas in specific training.

Adrián Bonilla highlighted the existing prejudices that could limit multi-stakeholder alliances. Specifically, he cited a project in Ecuador that did not get off the ground due to a lack of connection with the private sector and the private sector's prejudices towards the universities themselves. In addition, he commented on the dispute between researchers from the same public and international funds. They had no interest in complementing each other, and even if the universities agreed to integrate, they were not operational on a practical level.

He also provided ECLAC data on the conditions of informality⁷⁵, where young people, the Latin American rural sector and women concentrate the highest percentages of informality. In these conditions of structural weakness, he said, any public policy will have little scope and the innovations that emerge from informality will be so microscopic that we will not be able to systematise them.

Axel Leisenberg underlined the importance of taking into account geographical differences and regulatory divergences in partnerships between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. Challenges such as disparities in innovation systems between the two regions, the need for capacity building, improved market integration and overcoming mobility barriers for researchers, students and entrepreneurs alike were highlighted.

Elizabeth Bernal highlighted the importance of policies aimed at promoting evaluation, seeking to identify structural elements and good practices through comparisons. She also emphasised the need to learn from both failures and unfulfilled initiatives, underscoring the continued importance of this evaluation process.

72 Melchior, D. (2023, October 30). Innovation Hub Europe: Tec Center to Foster Research in Europe. TecScience. <https://tecscience.tec.mx/es/tecnologia/innovation-hub-europe/>

73 Institute for the Future of Education (<https://tec.mx/es/ife>)

74 Maurizio, R. (2021). Serie Panorama Laboral en América Latina y el Caribe 2021 Empleo e informalidad en América Latina y el Caribe: una recuperación insuficiente y desigual. International Labour Organization. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_819022.pdf

75 Espejo, A. (2022). Informalidad laboral en América Latina: propuesta metodológica para su identificación a nivel subnacional (Documentos de Proyectos LC/TS.2022/6). Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b5e5aa09-8dd9-4ddf-84af-c9412db19f20/content>

Myriam Moïse spoke of the importance of solution-based research, noting the challenge posed by the invasion of sargassum in the Caribbean. She reiterated the need to empower vulnerable groups, proposing that bi-regional cooperations assign LAC universities and innovation centers a more prominent role as community servants, emphasising their value and the importance of a transdisciplinary dimension in this approach.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

Juan Manuel Sotelo recognised the importance of academics as bi-regional interlocutors, highlighting their continuity and independence in research, as well as the relevance of initiatives such as ENLACES and the CRES document as a basis for regional dialogue. New cooperation programmes, such as the Global Gateway, promise to share experiences on social, digital and green transitions. In this sense, the formation of university clusters to address key issues, such as climate change or innovation in sectors such as health and agribusiness, can play a crucial role for training for the future. Technology transfers are key to promoting the circular economy, electromobility and the preservation of biodiversity, and projects such as Resinfra, OpenAIRE⁷⁶ and the Network of Latin American repositories⁷⁷ can facilitate access to and dissemination of scientific production in both regions.

Sabina Guayalupo stressed that financing, political dialogue and training should be considered as fundamental aspects in the Summits, as they are key instruments for the development of cooperation in open science. This new global paradigm transforms the way scientific knowledge is produced, funded, communicated, and evaluated. Globally, open science has been supported by initiatives such as the UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science in 2021⁷⁸ and the creation of the Global Diamond Academic Publishing Federation, announced at the 2023 Global Diamond Open Access Summit⁷⁹ that took place in Mexico. In Europe, the Horizon Europe programme and the European Open Science Cloud⁸⁰ are examples of these practices, as well as the Council Conclusions on Research Evaluation and Implementation of Open Science⁸¹ and the Council Conclusions in Defence of a High-Quality and Transparent Scholarly Publishing System⁸². Sabina Guayalupo ended her intervention by recalling that the European Commission published a report on Open Access Policies in Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union

76 OpenAIRE (<https://www.openaire.eu/>)

77 Latin American Repositories (<https://repositorioslatinoamericanos.uchile.cl/>)

78 Unesco (2021). UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science. <https://doi.org/10.54677/YDOG4702>

79 II Diamond Open Access Conference (<https://globaldiamantooa.org/diamond-open-access-conference/home/>)

80 Open Science Cloud (<https://open-science-cloud.ec.europa.eu/>)

81 Council of the European Union (2022). Council conclusions on Research assessment and implementation of Open Science (No. 10126/22). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/56958/st10126-en22.pdf>

82 Council of the European Union (2023). Council calls for transparent, equitable, and open access to scholarly publications. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/05/23/council-calls-for-transparent-equitable-and-open-access-to-scholarly-publications/>

in 2023 identifying common progress and challenges and proposing recommendations for a joint political dialogue⁸³.

Ana Capilla suggested exploring financing channels adapted to the needs of Latin America and the Caribbean, such as the Development in Transition Facility⁸⁴. She also advocated increasing Horizon calls to promote scientific cooperation and proposed the inclusion of more actions of the Erasmus Plus programme for Latin America, as well as allowing international organizations to be beneficiaries. He considered that a programme similar to Share is needed⁸⁵ to strengthen university and scientific cooperation between the EU and CELAC, promoting reforms to create a shared space for higher education and science in Ibero-America. She emphasised the disconnect between the work done by experts and the political dialogue, stressing that in Coreper⁸⁶ ministers already have points agreed in advance that need to be addressed, regardless of the subsequent crises that mark the agendas. As a strategy to facilitate the implementation of effective programmes, Ana Capilla proposed that the JIRI develop concrete proposals and that the JRC have a small budget for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Félix García emphasised the importance of supporting the institutionality of the EU-LAC Foundation, thus recognising the need for solid and lasting structures to promote cooperation between the two regions. He highlighted the lack of attention to Higher Education in the documents as a priority in the bi-regional agenda. To reverse this, he considers it vital to access the European Commission, providing the process with political institutionality to achieve more specific actions. In this regard, he mentioned that on the European side there was also little enthusiasm for incorporating education into the Summit, despite the informal meeting of education ministers in Santiago de Compostela as an attempt to address this issue.

Francisco Sánchez observed the persistence of competencies in Higher Education at the national level, maintaining significant control. He reflected on the lack of a European title after 15 years of Bologna, which indicates standardization challenges at the European level as well. How Global Gateway can include LAC in these discussions is unknown. Finally, Francisco Sánchez stressed the importance of accessibility in open science to break the monopoly of large academic journals.

Maria Maia highlighted the success of the BELLA programme in establishing a high-speed transatlantic link between Portugal and Brazil (EllaLink⁸⁷), along with the expansion of the terrestrial network to several Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Panama). She highlighted the importance of these infrastructures to strengthen

83 European Commission (2023). Políticas de acceso abierto en América Latina, el Caribe y la Unión Europea: avances para un diálogo político. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/162>

84 ECLAC (n.d.). Facility for development in transition. Retrieved on 26 April, 2024, in <https://www.cepal.org/es/facilidad-desarrollo-transicion-facility>

85 Programme Share (<https://www.share-asean.eu/>)

86 Council of the European Union (n.a.). Coreper I. Retrieved 26 April, 2024, from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/es/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/coreper-i/>

87 Ella link (<https://ella.link/>)

cooperation between higher education institutions and promote open access to research, pointing to the opportunities offered by the Global Gateway Investment Agenda to improve research networks in areas such as digital infrastructure, green transition and health. In addition, he mentioned RedClara⁸⁸ and the working groups it is developing led by research communities in Latin American and Caribbean countries, with emphasis on areas such as Earth observation (Copernicus⁸⁹) and supercomputing. Finally, she underlined the importance of European participation in networks such as CYTED and application to Horizon Europe and ERASMUS Plus to promote equality and benefits in cooperation between Europe and Latin America.

Together with **Alejandro Quinteros**, he mentioned the increase in the participation of Latin America and the Caribbean in the innovation framework programmes, which indicates a growing interest and commitment of the region in scientific cooperation. In addition, María Maia highlighted the need to take advantage of opportunities such as CYTED and the holistic spirit of Global Gateway to address global problems together.

Elizabeth Bernal mentioned the role of ENLACES and its contribution to the last declaration, focused on strengthening cooperation networks. He stated that ENLACES sends messages that universities should be aware of so that in any space they can continue with the same demands (open science, recognition of the HEL...). In this sense, it is very important to identify regional priorities and common ground, with CRES+5 being an example of a space that can bring together various key actors. He concluded by stressing that the proposals aim to promote a more comprehensive and coordinated approach in the search for solutions to common challenges.

Carlos Quenan echoed the demands about considering the Common Area for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation as a priority, especially in view of the IV CELAC-EU bi-regional Summit in 2025⁹⁰. He highlighted the need to promote greater articulation between the Academic Summit and the Economic-Business Summit⁹¹, as well as the mobilisation of institutional relations and networks to strengthen this purpose. In addition, he emphasised the need to mobilise the academic community to revitalise the bottom-up dynamic that drove the Academic Summits process in 2012-2013. He announced the organisation of a workshop in Paris to raise awareness among key actors in France about the joint work carried out so far and the process of building the Matrix of Objectives and Strategic Lines⁹².

88 Red Clara (<https://www.redclara.net/index.php/es/>)

89 EU-LAC Foundation (2021). BELLA Impact: Latin America can tackle climate emergencies with high-speed and reliable access to vital Copernicus Earth Observation data. <https://eulacfoundation.org/es/el-impacto-bella-america-latina-puede-hacer-frente-las-emergencias-climaticas-con-acceso-confiable>

90 Council of the European Union (2023, July 17). EU-CELAC ROADMAP 2023 to 2025. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/65921/eu-celac-roadmap2023-25.pdf>

91 European Commission (2023, July 17). EU – Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Business Roundtable. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/eu-latin-america-and-caribbean-lac-business-roundtable-2023-07-17_en

92 EU-LAC Foundation (2021). Matrix of objectives and strategic lines for the construction of the EU-LAC Common Higher Education Area. https://eulacfoundation.org/sites/default/files/documents/Matrix_CoopAcad_EU_ALC_06_2021_final.pdf

Héctor Casanueva emphasised the importance of civil society participation in the conclusions of the Summits until 2015, highlighting the effort of the EU-LAC Foundation because it was included in the talks in this 2023 edition. Unfortunately, this was not reflected in the final declaration. Héctor Casanueva questioned the words of Ursula von der Leyen at the opening of the Business Summit (*“Businesses are the lifeblood of our partnership”*),⁹³ where she stressed that the commercial axis was the soul of bi-regional relations, wondering why education is not.

⁹³ European Commission (2023, July 17). Opening speech by President von der Leyen at the EU-LAC 2023 Business Round Table. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_23_3888





III. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

1. Directorate-General for Research and Innovation & Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission

Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with mobility schemes with partners from the other region?

What would be the lessons learnt and the biggest challenges in this respect, and how could they be overcome?

How could mobility schemes promoted by different actors be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions?

Disclaimer: what follows is a contribution for the dialogue, but not an official position of the European Commission.

After prior experiences (e.g. ALFA, Erasmus Mundus), the European Commission has been funding international mobilities with its flagship programme Erasmus+ since 2015. More than 15,000 mobilities in both ways have taken place in this period (until 2023). The initial focus on staff mobility (also in order to create new institutional partnerships) has evolved towards a more balanced composition of the flows. The International Credit Mobility of Erasmus+ has been instrumental to create new partnerships beyond traditional institutions, reaching in one side smaller EU Member States and countries/universities with less historic ties with Latin America and the Caribbeans (LAC), as well as in the other side smaller, newer and rural higher education institution in the LAC region.

The creation in 2023 of a network of Erasmus+ National Focal Points within the authorities of LAC countries (11 as of April 2024) is a starting point to integrate Erasmus+ within a wider offer of mobility and cooperation schemes, so LAC authorities will be able to better understand Erasmus+ and the possibilities it offers for synergies and strategic orientation without altering the bottom-up nature of the [programme](#). In addition, the European Commission has been fostering the bi-regional cooperation in research and innovation through the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). The Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Actions are the European Union's reference programme for doctoral education and postdoctoral training, and complement Erasmus+ in various ways. The programme is open to all domains of research and innovation from basic research up to market take-up and innovation services. Fields and sectors are chosen freely by the applicants in a fully bottom-up manner. The MSCA are open to researchers and innovation staff members at any career stage, regardless of their nationality, research field or age. The MSCA also fund individual postdoctoral fellowships, the development of excellent doctoral and postdoctoral training programmes and collaborative research projects worldwide, being open to organisations from all over the world. By doing so, they achieve a structuring impact on higher education institutions, research centres and non-academic organisations.

The MSCA are the most international part of Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, accounting for more than 50% of all participations of third (non-EU) countries and for most of LAC's participations in these programmes (52% of all participations by LAC organisations) - therefore they are a success story when it comes to fostering the ties. Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile and Mexico are among the top best-performing (non-associated) third countries in the MSCA.

Since 2014, nearly of 3,900 LAC nationals have been supported by the MSCA, mainly focusing on staff mobility, training and career development under the Staff Exchanges scheme. In the same period, 2150 MSCA fellows of different nationalities have been hosted in LAC organisations, fostering collaborative research, internationalisation of LAC organisations and knowledge transfer.

The main challenges faced are similar to those of Erasmus+ - therefore they will not be repeated. Again in this case, MSCA account only for a fraction of the demand in the region. The current programme offers a wide range of tools, allowing for the cooperation of individuals and organisations from LAC – however the participation should be diversified by involving more LAC organisations in all the schemes provided by MSCA (such as Doctoral Networks) and organisations from the non-academic sector (beyond academia and research centres). In addition, there is a need to create complementarities and synergies with existing funding schemes in the region that could complement the schemes available under MSCA, by providing cofunding for joint research and innovation programmes and doctoral/fellowship programmes fostering exchanges between the two regions.

Similarly to Erasmus+, the MSCA have a strong network of National Contact Points in the region, which raise awareness on the programme among university research managers and R&I organisations, bringing a clear added value which has so far led to an increase in terms of both quality and quantity of the proposals with LAC participation. However, many big players in the region have not nominated any contact points (e.g. Mexico) and there is a need to build capacity beyond NCPs in certain countries.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Which experiences has your institution/organisation/network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?

What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?

How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

While there is a certain overlap between research infrastructures and universities – indeed, many research-focused universities operate their own research infrastructures – research infrastructures themselves are usually distinct entities established by the national authorities and agencies or by international treaties and agreements in specific areas. Indeed, from the point of view of research, it matters little whether the establishing body is a university or a state body.

The key link between universities and research infrastructures can be found along two lines:

- Development of knowledge and skills of the researchers (either new researchers starting their careers and preparing for work at research infrastructures, or upskilling of existing research infrastructures staff), which is then used in specific projects managed by research infrastructures.
- Observations and experimental data generated and managed by the research infrastructures, and which can then be fed back into the academic domain or into applied research for the development of specific societal solutions.

The flow of information and data between these three domains – academic sector, research infrastructures, and application – is essential; obstacles or breakdowns of the information flow can have wide-ranging consequences for the extension and application of knowledge.

This also applies to the cross-border links between the research infrastructures themselves – either cooperating on specific projects or simply sharing their knowledge and expertise, learning new methods and approaches and keeping abreast of the latest developments among their counterparts.

Many countries keep a closed system of their (national) research infrastructures and the awareness of similar activities across their borders can be limited. In some cases, this may be justified for understandable reasons (e.g. research security or sensitivity of the

topic, such as in nuclear research), but often this is simply due to the perception that since such infrastructures are funded from national budgets, their use should be limited to the domestic research community. The degree of openness and collaboration with other research infrastructures may thus depend on external factors beyond those purely research related.

The EU benefits from existing fora, such as the ESFRI, which bring together research infrastructures in the Member States and help coordinate their activities. It also has the benefit of the long-established framework programmes of the EU, which provide support and funding, but also act as a framework for the development of common policies, recommendations and guidance aimed at the harmonisation of the research infrastructures landscape in Europe.

In the LAC region, the situation is very different and the degree of coordination of research infrastructures across the borders is very low. Much of the landscape is thus very fragmented and kept within the national borders.

Both regions have established a joint working group on research infrastructures, with one of the challenges it faces being the issue of fragmentation and the need for the research infrastructures to be aware of the developments in both regions, in order to be able to establish closer contacts wherever possible. Erasmus+ Capacity Building projects and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, notably the Staff Exchanges scheme, could serve (as many already do) to modernize research structures and governance within higher education institutions, but also to better articulate the connection between university, research, policy-making and labor market.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?

What shared interests and lessons learnt between research centres in both regions whose work focuses on global challenges?

How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

We would not go into detail in this question: all this is precisely what Horizon Europe does and what the EU's Global Approach to Research and Innovation addresses.⁹⁴

The question of consortia is at the heart of pillar 2 of Horizon Europe, which is designed exactly to encourage such collaborative work. Impact of proposed research projects is examined during proposal evaluation and is one of the key criteria. The Commission encourages international participants – including those from LAC – to link up with established research networks in the EU who have valuable experience with the EU framework programmes and can advise on forming or accessing consortia.

Jean Monnet projects and networks, as well as Erasmus+ Capacity Building projects, are also active in this field.

Besides, thanks to its bottom-up nature, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions are also funding extensive networks involving EU-LAC cooperation and tackling global, regional and local challenges.

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?

What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

The topic of transfer of knowledge from its origin to its application is highly relevant to the innovation capacity of a country. The EU has been working for more than a decade on opening the research and innovation processes (notably through its open science and open innovation policies), to promote a smooth, direct, and successful transfer of its research base, including public research, to a competitive market environment. Such central drive across the region does not exist in LAC (for obvious reasons) and these efforts are organised by individual countries with varying degrees of success.

Many of the obstacles and difficulties facing each country in this task are related to their institutional capacities, availability of financing, a sound regulatory environment, the

⁹⁴ European Commission (2021). COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world [COM/2021/252 final]. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2021%3A252%3AFIN>

existence of strong and mature intermediary organisations, and a relevant and coherent policy mix. Additionally, the engagement of researchers and industrial stakeholders to collaborate is a key element. Too often they exist in parallel realms and do not interact with sufficient regularity and intensity.

Regulatory gaps, contradictions, uncertainties and the lack of systematic exchange between the academic circles and industrial actors are thus the major issues of the transfer of knowledge towards the productive areas.

One of the clearest answers to these issues is deep integration of open science policies in the research systems, so that the scientific output is accessible as freely as possible to the broader society, including to the industry. This can be further strengthened by similar approaches developed across the research infrastructures, which are among the major generators of scientific data.

This, of course, does not remove the various legal, regulatory or financial obstacles mentioned above, such as restrictions on researchers at public universities and their collaboration with the industry, creation of university spin-offs and commercialisation of intellectual property.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

How could university cooperation between both regions be strengthened through greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases?

How could bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives benefit more from existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe?

What new opportunities does the Global Gateway Investment Agenda offer to enhance bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives in areas such as digital infrastructure, green transition, or health?

How could actors working towards the bi-regional Higher Education Area and those more closely involved in the Common Research Area better articulate to provide scientific solutions to the central challenges of the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda?

On the topic of the Global Gateway Investment Agenda, this flagship initiative by the EU can be a very beneficial investment into research and innovation capacities. While many of its projects will focus on the development of local or regional infrastructures, it is important for the participating countries to emphasise innovative approaches in such projects, providing a long-term value to the society. Additionally, the countries may want

to use the GGIA funding to invest into their research capacities, which in the medium and long term will help improve the quality of their research systems, raise the skills of their researchers and prepare them better to participate in competitive programmes such as Horizon Europe, where scientific excellence is the defining element.

Education is a key area for the Global Gateway, under which the EU will invest in quality education, including digital education, with a life-long learning perspective, paying particular attention to the inclusion of girls and women and other vulnerable groups that often show lower school attendance. It will assist partner countries to transform their education systems and address deficits in teaching, training, and learning at all levels. The EU will also facilitate mobility of students, staff, teachers, and trainees, and strengthen networks and peer learning across higher education institutions. The EU committed to increase our investments in education from 7% to a minimum of 10% of the current EU's budget for international partnerships including with LAC countries.

A call for a Jean Monnet Network specifically focused on Latin America was launched in 2024. While the evaluation results are still to be published, the future Jean Monnet Networks (as well as others already existing in the region) should be an important element of dialogue and dissemination of research and capacity building projects towards civil society and political authorities.

2. Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT)

Perspectives, ideas and proposals on Open Science – GIC Dept

Context

The new global paradigm of open science implies an evolution in the way scientific knowledge is produced, financed, communicated and evaluated. It represents an important paradigm shift in research activities, dissemination of results and measurement of research performance that affects the life sciences, physics, engineering, mathematics, social sciences and humanities.

The set of actions that are framed in open science is having a great impact on science policy on a global scale, as shown by the publication of **the UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science** in 2021 and their subsequent impact on actions such as the Global Federation of Diamond Academic Publishing, announced by UNESCO itself at the Global Open Access Diamond Summit held from 23 to 27 October 2023 in Toluca, Mexico.

In the European context, the **Horizon Europe programme (2021-2027)** identifies open science practices with excellent science, and introduces specific obligations on open access to scientific literature and research data management to its beneficiaries and includes open science as an object of research in various work programmes for, among

other actions, *build the European Open Science Cloud EOSC*, as a federation of research data. In a complementary way, the European states through the **Council Conclusions on the Evaluation of Research and Implementation of Open Science**, approved on June 10, 2022, and the **Council Conclusions in defense of a high-quality, transparent, open, reliable and equitable** academic publishing system, approved on 23 May 2023, have made an open defence of the need to modify the system for the recognition of research merit and the need to strengthen a non-commercial system for the publication and communication of research results.

In 2023, the European Commission published the report *Open Access Policies in Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union: Progress for a Policy Dialogue*. The report describes the R+D systems (legal framework and agents of funding, execution and evaluation of research activity), open access policies for scientific production and the state of their implementation infrastructures (repositories, journals and curricular information management systems) in 10 Latin American countries and the EU. In addition, it analyses the common challenges and convergence paths faced by both regions and, finally, proposes specific recommendations for joint public action on which to base a political dialogue. These are structured into 4 priority objectives broken down into 7 actions and 19 concrete measures.

In May 2023, Spain approved its **National Open Science Strategy 2023-2027 (ENCA)**, which includes the commitments of the Government and all actors in the national science, technology and innovation system related to open science. These commitments have been strongly reinforced by a recent legal reform (Law 17/2022, of 5 September, amending Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation, and Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March on the University System) and are structured around four strategic objectives.

The Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), under the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, is the main agent for the technical deployment of ENCA. It provides certification, maintenance and financing of the main digital infrastructures for the implementation of open science (repositories, curriculum management systems or academic publishing and publishing platforms) and represents Spain in key international initiatives such as LA Referencia, OpenAIRE, OPERAS, EOSC or the European DIAMAS project. In addition, it is a member of COARA, COAR and the EOSC Association.

Proposals

(1) The Session: *The Role of Science and Open Innovation in the Ibero-American Area in a Changing World. Vision from universities and from research and technology centres that must include collaboration in open science in their agenda.* The issues on the agenda for discussion should be articulated around the priority objectives, actions and concrete measures of the report *Open Access Policies in Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union: Progress for a Policy Dialogue*: delving into issues such as

strengthening governance and financing in STI systems in LAC, expand the coverage of open science policies, strengthen open science digital infrastructures in both regions, and align research evaluation systems with the open science paradigm.

The debate takes place within Theme 2 (Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures) and Theme 5 (Opportunities and challenges in the articulation between actors and initiatives that promote cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union in the field of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation).

(2) It is proposed that **FECYT organise a parallel session on open science** that focuses on strengthening aggregation, publishing and editing systems in open science and fostering the diamond academic publishing ecosystem.

3. Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT), Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Portugal

Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area

What experiences has your institution/ organisation/ network made with mobility schemes with partners from the other region?

In Portugal, the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT)⁹⁵ under the aegis of the Ministry for Education, Science and Innovation is responsible for the participation, implementation and management of multilateral agreements and Memoranda of Understanding for research cooperation at different levels as Intergovernmental, Interministerial and inter-institutional.

Bilateral cooperation in science and technology promotes the strengthening of scientific and technological cooperation through various mechanisms that promote scientific exchange such as joint calls to support research projects or mobility, support for the training of researchers, publication of joint scientific articles, presentation of joint papers or participation in international congresses. The dynamics created through these activities promote the creation of networks of researchers and the reinforcement of existing international partnerships and teams, enhancing the access to diversified sources of funding for international science and technology programmes. There are more than 70 countries with which Portugal has bilateral cooperation agreements, either in the field of cultural cooperation (which include references to science and technology) or scientific cooperation, the latter being both intergovernmental or institutional.

⁹⁵ Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (<https://www.fct.pt/en/>)

Higher Education institutions and research centres are the main beneficiaries of such programmes, however FCT is open to different kind of institutions as applicants.

At multilateral level, Portugal has been participating through FCT in the Ibero-American Program of Science and Technology for Development-CYTED,⁹⁶ created in 1984 through an inter-institutional agreement signed by 21 Ibero-American countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela). Since 1995, the CYTED Programme has been formally included among the Cooperation Programmes of the Ibero-American Summits of Heads of State and Government.

The CYTED programme has as main objective to contribute to the harmonious development of the Ibero-American research space through the **establishment of cooperation mechanisms between research groups from Universities, R&D centres and innovative companies from Ibero-American countries**, which aim to achieve scientific and technological results transferable to production systems and social policies. It is a common instrument of the national Science and Technology Systems of the Ibero-American Region, generating a platform that promotes and supports multilateral cooperation.

The CYTED programme has also significantly contributed to the mobility of researchers across the region. Its structure, managed by a Secretary-General (currently from Portugal), and supported by Area Managers from 16 countries, illustrates a commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive scientific community. This programme has been pivotal in facilitating the exchange of knowledge and expertise, providing researchers from **21 countries opportunities to engage in collaborative networks. In a remarkable show of collaborative spirit, 20 out of the 21 CYTED member countries have successfully coordinated at least one of the 315 networks that have been established through competitive calls. CYTED has been instrumental in bringing together over 25.000 scientists, technicians, and professionals from over 1000 companies**, all united in their endeavour to drive scientific and technological progress. CYTED's efforts in creating an interconnected scientific community through researcher mobility not only embody the spirit of this pillar but also provide a successful model for future collaborative initiatives in the EU-CELAC partnership. **More than 90.000 individuals have, so far, profited from training and working activities.**

What would be the lessons learnt and the biggest challenges in this respect, and how could they be overcome?

Lessons learnt includes the impact of political cycles has a barrier on the continuation on implementation of bilateral programmes and instruments as just mobility schemes

⁹⁶ Ibero-American Program of Science and Technology for Development (<https://www.cyteted.org/>)

towards joint bilateral collaborative projects. It could be overcome with an improvement of institutional administrative governance. At multilateral level and regarding CYTED programme there are several lessons learned, one of those is related with the lack of capacity on grant management from the beneficiary institutions. To overcome it CYTED is to improve soon the "Guidance handbook" so that management gains will result on a bigger impact of the grants. More capacity building actions are needed.

How could the mobility schemes promoted by different actors be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between the research communities in both regions?

The mobility schemes promoted by different actors could be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions. CYTED programme offers a large potential to strengthen the cooperation of CYTED activities generated **networks and European countries or the EC itself, for example the thematic networks (solid, well established and recognised scientific networks) allow the participation of third countries and international organisations as long as they pay for their expenses.** Like so this is a way of connected the European research area to the Ibero-American research area.

The creation of those enlargement networks with multi-stakeholders from EC countries and international organisation could be potential candidates to other European programmes such as ERASMUS Plus and Horizon Europe.

There are other existing mobility schemes such as the Paulo Freire Programme from the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI)⁹⁷, the largest multilateral cooperation body between Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Ibero-American countries, that links 20 countries of the region. The Paulo Freire Scholarships allow the mobility of both Students, PhD students and professors.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Which experiences has your institution/ organisation/ network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?

⁹⁷ Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (n.d.). Programa Paulo Freire +. Retrieved 26 April, 2024, from <https://oei.int/pt/escritorios/secretaria-geral/programa-paulo-freire-2/presentacion>

The Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT) was a partner in the project “Towards a sustainable EU-LAC Partnership in Research Infrastructures (ResInfra)⁹⁸” and is now continuing this collaboration in the project ResInfra+. Also, FCT has a representative for Portugal in the EC Working Group on Research Infrastructures EUCELAC. The involvement in the projects and the Working Group enabled the participation in several meetings, workshops, webinars and even visits to research infrastructures in Uruguay, in 2022. In 2019, FCT has hosted a part of a study visit where researchers from infrastructures/ institutions from the LAC region came to Portugal to visit FCT in Lisbon and Centro de Ciências do Mar (CCMAR) in Algarve region in Portugal.

What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?

It has become evident that European research infrastructures (RIs) are more developed and better organised than Research Infrastructures in the LAC region. The cooperation between the two regions has enabled the sharing of experiences and best practices, providing LAC Research Infrastructures suggestions on how they can better organise themselves to achieve higher goals. Some success cases already exist, and their internationalization is growing. National investments are obviously needed and the political instability in several LAC countries has hindered this development as well as the establishment of collaborations with Europe, over the years.

How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

As mentioned, particularly in the LAC region, political stability and funding are crucial. It is very important to continue to have (EU) instruments that can connect RIs and governmental representatives from both regions, so that relations can be established/ consolidated, and collaborations can be fostered. The implementation of joint activities allows for trust to be built and the sharing of knowledge, experience and best practices. Nowadays there are good examples of successful collaborations between RIs from both regions, some even firmed with Memoranda of Understanding. It is very important to showcase these examples, to promote more collaborations and bring the LAC RIs to a more mature state.

98 European Commission (2023). Towards a new EU-LAC partnership in Research Infrastructures. <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/871140>

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

What experiences has your institution/ organisation/ network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?

The Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT) from Portugal participated in the Senior Officials Meeting EUCELAC on Science, Technology and Innovation and all the supported instruments by the European Commission such as the International Cooperation Networks (INCO-NET) defined the thematic areas of cooperation between 2009-2017 (EULARINET and ALCUE-NET) and the European Research Networks (so called ERA-NETS) for the coordination of joint funding schemes between UE-CELAC as EULANEST and ERANET-LAC between 2009-2017, the thematic areas of the roadmap between UE-CELAC. Several mobility and mainly bi-regional transnational collaborative projects were funded by FCT. After 2017 FCT is participating on the EU-LAC Interest Group that launched already bi-regional transnational call being the last on Research Infrastructures and the global challenges aligned with UE-CELAC roadmap on R&I.

CT also coordinated (2016-2022) the European Research Area Network on “Implement a European-wide coordination of research and innovation programmes on raw materials to strengthen the industry competitiveness and the shift to a circular economy” (so called ERA-Net Cofund ERA-MIN2⁹⁹) where partners from Argentina, Chile and Brazil join the European partnership and the subsequent on-going Pan-European network “Raw materials for the sustainable development and the circular economy” (ERAMIN3¹⁰⁰) (on-going 2020-2025) that includes Brazil as partner.

The participation of FCT in CYTED allows the creation of an institutional network and provides the creation of multi-stakeholder networks on the global challenges thematic areas (Agro-food, Health, Promotion of industrial development, Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems, Information and communication technologies, Science and society and Energy).

How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

The mobility schemes promoted by different actors could be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions. CYTED programme

99 ERA-NET Cofund on Raw Materials, ERA-MIN2 (<https://www.era-min.eu/about-era-min-2>)

100 ERA-NET Cofund on Raw Materials, ERA-MIN3 (<https://www.era-min.eu/about-era-min-3>)

offers a large potential to strengthen the cooperation of **CYTED networks and European countries of the EC ones for example the thematic networks (solid, well established and recognised scientific networks) allow the participation of third countries and international organisations if they pay for their expenses.**

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American, and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?

What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

The European Network of Research and Innovation Centers and HUBs in Latin America and the Caribbean (ENRICH in LAC) is a facilitator of access between Europe and the Latin American and Caribbean region, paving the way for those interested in doing business or establishing high-level connections. ENRICH in LAC’s mission is to unlock new business opportunities, share knowledge, experiences, and exchange innovative practices through an international network of science, technology, and innovation stakeholders. The network is focusing on key topics in the global innovation landscape, such as health, digital transformation, the bioeconomy, renewable energies, and sustainable urbanization.

The CYTED programme exemplifies a multifaceted approach to regional cooperation, encompassing a wide array of thematic areas. This diversity is mirrored in the programme’s thematic coverage, which includes critical sectors such as Agrofood, Health, Industrial Development, Sustainable Development, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Science and Society, Energy, and **Business Incubators**.

Each thematic area under CYTED is a hub of innovation and collaboration, targeting specific regional challenges and opportunities. For instance, the Agrofood sector focuses on enhancing food security and adding value to agricultural products, while the health sector is dedicated to advancing medical biotechnology and addressing public health concerns. In the realm of Industrial Development, CYTED fosters research in raw material processing and sustainable industrial practices. The Sustainable Development theme emphasises responsible management of natural resources, aligning with global environmental goals.

Furthermore, **CYTED’s emphasis on ICTs aims to bridge the digital divide in the region**, enhancing access to information and technology. The Science and Society area works

towards making science more accessible and engaging for the broader Ibero-American community. The Energy theme focuses on diversifying and optimizing energy resources, crucial for socioeconomic development. Lastly, the Business Incubator area promotes collaboration between the corporate sector and research institutions, driving industrial competitiveness and innovation.

CYTED's approach in covering these diverse themes demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of scientific and technological advancement. This aligns with the "Transversal Priorities" of the EU-CELAC partnership, showcasing the potential of collaborative efforts that cut across various disciplines and sectors. By fostering such wide-ranging cooperation, CYTED shows how regional initiatives can contribute to overarching goals of sustainable and inclusive development.

As mentioned before, there are important ongoing initiatives, projects and networks that have huge potential to facilitate and enhance cooperation, as above shown, nevertheless the "blind spots" persist and are well known: the difficulty in creating stable structures and organizational procedures in Europe - Latin America Cooperation programmes. It is important that these programmes build capacity in a different way comparing to what has been done. It is necessary a new lens that culturally understands the region and permit a better application of funding and effort with better results.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

How could university cooperation between both regions be strengthened through greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases?

The BELLA programme has concluded successfully, establishing the high-speed transatlantic link between Portugal and Brazil – EllaLink and expanding the terrestrial network from Brazil to Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Panama. The submarine cable going from Sines, Portugal to Fortaleza (BR) started to operate in 2021 and the terrestrial part – going from Fortaleza to Chile through Argentina started to operate in 2022; the links to Panama and Ecuador were implemented by RedClara using existing cable connections. RedClara is also putting in place several working groups to develop use cases of BELLA led by research communities in LAC countries. Among the areas of more prominent interest are Earth observation (developing synergies with COPERNICUS) and supercomputing. Those infrastructures have a real importance in the strengthening of the cooperation between Higher Education Institutions with a greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases.

How could bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives benefit more from existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe?

The first step could be the participation of EU countries and international European institutions on CYTED networks and after their consolidation turn their efforts into applying for Horizon Europe and ERASMUS Plus. This would also be a good way of building capacity and creating more equality and benefits within and from cooperation programmes between Europe and Latin America.

What new opportunities does the Global Gateway Investment Agenda offer to enhance bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives in areas such as digital infrastructure, green transition, or health?

The existing initiatives between UE-CELAC countries on digital infrastructure, green transition and health participated by different kind of stakeholders from Higher Education and Science and Innovation are critical on the existing capacity, expertise and skills towards the implementation of the Global Gateway Investment Agenda. One example could be provided on the Atlantic and Seas on-going projects but also on digital BELLA infrastructure.

- How could actors working towards the bi-regional Higher Education Area and those more closely involved in the Common Research Area better articulate to provide scientific solutions to the central challenges of the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda?
- To develop interconnections between the Common Research Area and the Higher Education Area identifying institutional transformations, research careers, scientific education training, international cooperation and knowledge circulation on EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda (under the roadmap 2024-2026 on science, technology and innovation UE-CELAC).
- To create synergies between the Higher Education Area and the Common Research Area linking the scientific knowledge to the learning and teaching and supporting research-based education providing to the students with the skills they need in the future for the job market and social transitions that requires a transformation of higher education institutions and an improvement in their alignment with the economic and social environment.
- To strengthen collaboration and synergies both in education sectors and between higher education, and research, innovation, and the world of work.

4. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR)

One of the main priorities on the Italian political agenda with non-EU countries is greater integration and cooperation in research and innovation. This is particularly true for Latin America and the Caribbean, where there is a consolidated bond that has been formed over generations. Italy's presence in the Latin American subcontinent (the Italian community is almost 40 million people) has nurtured over time a precious flow of ideas, culture and economic relations, which has further enriched a privileged relationship founded on bonds of friendship and shared values.

For the above reasons, Italy and the CNR, as the largest public research institution, intend to increasingly strengthen the EU-CELAC partnership and contribute, with a renewed effort, to addressing complex global challenges such as the effects of climate change, ecological transition and social equity.

In this context, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), in collaboration with the Italian-Latin American Institute (IILA), has been organising Conferences of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Italy and the CELAC countries every two years since 2003. Since the Conference held in 2007, this event has become one of the most important for the intergovernmental dialogue with the CELAC countries, a dialogue that Italy intends to develop in synergy with the European Union and according to the results of the Third EUCELAC Summit held on 17 and 18 July 2023.

The CNR signed a memorandum of understanding with IILA in 2022 with the main objective of enhancing the exchange of researchers and joint research within the framework of the main priority sectors of cooperation.

During the third EU-CELAC Summit, the importance of the EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda was recognised, especially that of JIRI SOM and international cooperation as keys to promoting sustainable development in the region. The CNR is ready to implement scientific and technological cooperation to address the major challenges of society. The CNR welcomes the preparation of the next round of study visits to Research Infrastructures, building on the successful pilot project of 2019/2020, in which the CNR played an important role as host country.

Session 1. Higher education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American and Caribbean area

The CNR is the largest public research institution in Italy, the only one under the Ministry of Research that carries out multidisciplinary activities. Its mission is to carry out research in its own Institutes, promote innovation and competitiveness of the national industrial system, promote the internationalization of the national research system, provide technologies and solutions to emerging public and private needs, advise the Government and other public bodies, and contribute to the qualification of human

resources. The CNR's main resource is the available knowledge, i.e. people, with their skills, commitment and ideas. This capital has more than 8,000 employees, of which more than half are researchers and technologists. Around 4,000 young researchers undertake postgraduate studies and research training at the CNR within the organisation's priority areas of interest. A significant contribution also comes from partners: researchers from universities or private companies, who are involved in the CNR's research activities.

As far as international relations are concerned, there are many actions with national and foreign universities and other research centers. They are carried out within the framework of specific Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), within the framework of international projects, bilateral agreements, joint expeditions in sectors such as Oceanographic and Cultural Heritage missions.

The mobility plans implemented so far are as follows:

1. Within the framework of EU-funded projects (MSCA);
2. Within the framework of bilateral programmes and memorandums of understanding with universities and research centres in EU countries and Latin America and the Caribbean jointly funded by the CNR and the partners in the region concerned;
3. Within the framework of the calls of the Short-Term Mobility Programme, funded by the CNR.

1. EU-funded projects:

With regard to the mobility of researchers in the framework of the CE-Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) for researchers and institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, EURAXESS Italy and the Italian National Contact Points of APRE – Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca Europea work together with the NCPs of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to disseminate useful information about the programme.

In this context, MSCA CO-FUND activities play an important role in science diplomacy, researcher mobility and enhanced capacity building. One of the best experiences was the launch of the CO-FUND initiative called INCIPIT-Innovative Life Science PhD Programme in the south of Italy, an international PhD program, aimed at providing innovative multidisciplinary and intersectoral training in Life Sciences and Biomaterials. PhD students from Latin America were hosted at Italian public research institutes along with other students from all over the world. The ultimate goal was to train the next generation of researchers to become a very attractive source of employment. The project was considered valuable to be replicated in other sectors. Many of the researchers involved in INCIPIT had the opportunity to stay three or more years in Italy and move to Europe or to their own countries as employees of multinational industries or in Research Centers. The CNR is willing to have more experience like the one mentioned above.

The CohesiNet project (Cohesin and its regulators: from chromosome dynamics and nuclear architecture to human diseases) also offers opportunities for cooperation with Latin American scientists, an MSCA European Doctoral Network funded by Horizon Europe and coordinated by the CNR. CohesiNet aims to train a team of 12 PhD students to use complementary experimental approaches to study the molecular and cellular functions of cohesin, the multiprotein complex responsible for shaping and maintaining the structure of chromosomes, and to unveil the molecular basis of diseases due to cohesin malfunction (the so-called “cohesinopathies” and various forms of cancer). CohesiNet PhD fellows will be exposed to an intense multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary training programme that will enhance their career prospects, while experiencing first-hand the value of Open Science and the importance of inclusion, transparency, accessibility, and integrity in scientific research.

On the other hand, with regard to the MSCA Doctor network, a call for the training of doctors within the framework of the N=O cancer Net project has been closed and evaluations are ongoing.

There is a framework for further cooperation in the area of the MSCA. Unfortunately, the long distance and sometimes also the limited knowledge that our researchers have of the Spanish language prevent us from having more cooperation with Latin American scientists. An extra effort should be tempted to be even more attractive to the region in question.

2. NRC MOU and Bilateral Programmes

The CNR signed a memorandum of understanding with many research centers and universities in CELAC countries: Argentina (2 MoU); Brazil (7), Colombia (1), Ecuador (11), Honduras (1), Mexico (2). In addition, the following bilateral science and technology (S&T) agreements are ongoing:

- ARGENTINA: CNR/CONICET - National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (many fields of S&T);
- BRASIL: CNR/CNPq - Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico y Tecnológico; CNR/FAPESP - Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo;
- MEXICO: CNR/IDEA GTO - Guanajuto Institute of Innovation, Science and Entrepreneurship for Competitiveness.

Other bilateral agreements with ACAC (Colombia), SENESCYT (Ecuador), Conacyt (Paraguay) and CONCYTEC (Peru) expired.

In Bilateral Science and Technology Agreements, the type of cooperative research may include joint collaborative research projects, seminars, conferences, workshops, and individual exchanges. Other types of cooperation activities can be mutually agreed. Areas of cooperation can span the entire spectrum of science, engineering, social sciences, and

humanities. The target groups are scientists from both countries. Parties select projects through consultation, based on their respective review of the results of the proposals submitted, and adopt a practice of equitable cost-sharing for the implementation of joint projects.

Bilateral projects are sometimes the first step in submitting project proposals under the EU's Horizon Europe programme. For this reason, its importance **goes beyond bilateral cooperation**.

3. Within the framework of the calls of the Short-Term Mobility Programme, funded by the CNR

The **Short-Term Mobility Programme (STM)** allows Italian academics to carry out research activities in cooperation with foreign universities and research institutions of clear international prestige. It also makes it possible to invite highly qualified researchers from foreign universities and research institutions of clear international prestige to carry out research in cooperation with the CNR institutes. The CNR funds short-term stays of 21 days for Italian researchers and 10 days for foreign researchers involved in international research projects of mutual interest. The Programme has been successfully implemented since 1995 within the framework of initiatives for the development of international scientific cooperation. In particular, it has enabled the initiation and continuation of numerous cooperative activities that have resulted in important high-quality joint research outputs and the creation and application of highly specialised techniques in many different fields.

As part of last year's call, two researchers from LAC countries had the opportunity to work with CNR scientists.

Some suggestions for future cooperation:

With regard to the **mobility of researchers**, a better and wider use of EU instruments (in particular the Marie Skłodowska-Curie research grant programme) is recommended, including awareness-raising, capacity-building and increased use of MSCA funds. Some obstacles to mobility, such as long distances from their own country, lack of facilities or prospects for carriers, may prevent researchers from moving abroad for a cooperative experience. AN EU-CELAC NFC platform with the direct participation of representatives from some of the leading research and innovation institutions, academia and funding agencies could help increase visibility and attractiveness.

In addition, there is a need for greater visibility of opportunities for national mobility programmes funded by universities or research centres. Sometimes the echo of such opportunities reaches those countries where there is already cooperation activity or close relations. Some institutional benchmarks might be useful in providing more information.

Finally, the mobility programmes of the various actors should be more flexible, i.e. open to the new institutions. This could happen across the board or by sector. Example: within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between Italy and Chile, Uruguay may enter into co-financing some specific initiatives on the basis of variable geometry and mutual interest.

This could be useful for increasing regional cooperation, improving exchanges and work between the research communities of both regions.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

The CNR is aware of the results of the EU-CELAC Working Group on Research Infrastructures and welcomes the second round of **visits to RI**. Those organised in Italy on Physical Sciences and Engineering at the CNR IOM (Istituto Officina dei Materiali) in Trieste and Beyond Nano in Catania (October 2019) were very useful in strengthening mutual trust, sharing competencies and best practices, and providing networking opportunities for RI staff to acquire new skills and knowledge. The Services Service (SF) of the European Commission launched a call for proposals to host delegations from some CELAC countries. The CNR was one of the hosts of these delegations from the Center for Nanosciences and Nanotechnology of the UNAM, Mexico; Science and Technology Funding Agency, Brazil; Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation, Argentina; Universidad Austral of Chile and of the Research Council of the University Center for Distance Education of the National Pedagogical University of Honduras; National Nanotechnology Laboratory at the High Technology Center of Costa Rica. Following the visits, some of them remained in contact, in particular with IOM, which provides, develops and maintains strategic infrastructures for the national and international scientific communities to study advanced materials, nanostructures, biosystems, sensors and devices. It manages and develops infrastructures at the Italian Synchrotron and at the free-electron laser light sources (Elettra and Fermi in Trieste), at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) and at the neutron scattering facility of the Institut Laue-Langevin (ILL) in Grenoble. Synchrotron laboratories, free electron lasers and neutron scattering infrastructures are open to national and international scientific communities. The visit was also an opportunity to discuss **open access**.

Italy participates in many ESFRI infrastructures. The ESFRI Landmark INSTRUCT-Integrated Structural Biology Infrastructure (led by the UK) which continues to establish an extensive network of international partners. Memorandums of understanding and formal partnerships with Brazil, Argentina and Mexico have been defined or are in the final stages of definition. In addition, E-RIHS, the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science, led by the CNR, participated as one of the main reference infrastructures in the RESINFRA project co-funded by Horizon 2020, in which Italy participated with representatives of E-RIHS, CNR and representatives of the Italian Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Italy will also participate in RESINFRA+, the project funded by

Horizon Europe with the aim of continuing and implementing the results achieved with RESINFRA.

At the poles, the CNR is active at the following **research stations**:

- Arctic Base “Dirigibile Italia” (“Airship Italy”), a multidisciplinary station based in the Svalbard Islands, whose activities are coordinated by Polarnet, the unit supported by the Department of Earth System Sciences and Environmental Technologies of the CNR in relation to polar research;
- “Mario Zucchelli” Research Station, based in Terra Nova Bay, in the Ross Sea, Antarctica, used for studies and research, in particular, on marine ecosystems, coastal environments, marginal ice areas and for atmospheric monitoring;
- The Italian-French station “Concordia”, built in 2005 on the Antarctic plateau, internationally recognised in the field of deep ice drilling (ice coring), is believed to be an excellent site for carrying out high-precision astronomical observations.

Thanks to their participation in Ev-K2, CNR researchers can carry out important studies in the fields of meteorology, hydrology, medicine, ethnography, zoology and botany, within the “pyramid” made of glass, aluminum and steel that offers the world’s best scientists a technologically advanced logistical base at an altitude of more than 5,000 meters in Mount Everest National Park.

The CNR also participates in oceanographic programmes, and manages, in particular, the oceanographic vessel “Dallaporta”, which carries out advanced studies in the field of scientific fisheries, marine biology and the marine environment in general.

Other International Programmes with CNR participation include: HFSP, Human Frontier Science Programme, in the field of Life Sciences; W3C, the World Wide Web Consortium, an international consortium, founded in 1994, that works to set web standards. CNR houses the Italian office of the W3C; ERCIM, the European Research Consortium in Computer Science and Mathematics, which houses the European headquarters of the W3C¹⁰¹.

ODP - International Ocean Drilling Program is dedicated to the reconstruction of the Earth’s history and structure by studying sediments and rocks in the underwater environment. The objective of the IODP is the construction of a drillship and an ocean-going platform for seabed exploration. Other infrastructures are ELIXIR European Life-science Infrastructure for Biological Information, EuroBioImaging- European Research Infrastructure for Imaging Technologies in Biological and Biomedical Sciences, ICOS-ERIC Integrated Carbon Observation System, LIFEWATCH-ERIC e-Science

¹⁰¹ It is a consortium created in 1988 with 20 member countries whose purpose is to be an open network of centres of excellence in the fields of information science and technology and applied mathematics.

European Infrastructure for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, CNR is a partner of INFN IPCEI-HPC-BDA-Important Project of Common European Interest on HPC and Big Data Enabled Applications; INGV EPOS-European Plate Observing System; INGV EMSO- European Multidisciplinary Observatory on the Seabed and Water Column.

Some of the infrastructures mentioned above involve or may involve CELAC countries. There are many groups in the Latin American region that have developed technological expertise to make significant contributions of hardware, computers and software to large-scale experiments, in biological databases, in marine research. Unfortunately, the disparity of CELAC countries in the development of RI remains a problem. In order to increase EU-CELAC cooperation in RIs, the CNR participated – with its own funds – in the 4th call launched within the framework of the EU-LAC Interest Group. The projects funded under this call were an **important step in the collaboration of RIs at the bi-regional level**. Their effects will be visible in the short term, but without a scientific community to sustain and stimulate such efforts, there is a possibility that they will not be able to deploy their full capabilities.

Some suggestions for future cooperation:

There are some **weaknesses** that need to be duly taken into account: greater visibility of EU-CELAC infrastructures; Need for harmonization among countries with respect to project finance regulations; Lack of a sustainability plan for medium- and long-term collaboration; Increased cooperation between China and Latin America and the Caribbean, which could lead to a decrease in collaboration between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean; End of some of the EC programmes that generated and supported the collaboration between the EU-LAC RI. To **overcome some of these obstacles**, it is necessary to increase awareness of CELAC RI. A dedicated platform could be useful for building bridges between RI stakeholders, facilitating the exchange of personnel, leveraging the enormous scientific capacity of CELAC countries in many fields, aligning policies and funding. RESINFRA-Plus will address the problems, but it must be accompanied by **meaningful policies** and cooperative activities, in order to have the expected long-term impact.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

CNR participates in numerous projects funded by the European Commission within the framework of H2020 and Horizon Europe with CELAC countries. One that deserves a special mention is AtlantECO, a network that includes the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG), Brazil, with the aim of evaluating and predicting changes in the state and dynamics of the ocean ecosystem. Within this framework, many accelerations are

planned so that mobility plans and scientific cooperation can be merged to enhance capacity building and a deep understanding of ecosystem stressors, while generating new observations on microbiomes, plastics and the platinosphere. Cooperation was also extended to other CELAC countries, such as Argentina, thus contributing to increased internal regional cooperation.

With the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCyT) and CONICET, CAIMAR, Argentine-Italian Center for Marine Sciences, has been implemented. As mentioned above, there are many collaborations in marine and Earth sciences. Following the agreement with CINVESTAV - Center for Research and Advanced Studies of the National Polytechnic Institute, Mexico, two projects in Earth Sciences have been funded, while with the Fundação Universidade de Brasília and the Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, Brazil, researchers are working together on Climate Change.

In addition, a joint LAB on “Green separation processes for wastewater treatment and pollutant recovery” has been implemented with the University of Guanajuato, Mexico.

Finally, the CNR is a partner of GEMEx - Europe-Mexico Geothermal Energy Research Cooperation for the development of Enhanced Geothermal Systems and Superhot Geothermal Systems, co-funded under the EU’s H2020 programme.

Given that the management, restoration and exploitation of cultural heritage is a common theme, the Joint Laboratory of Pre-Hispanic Archaeological Sciences (LaPAS) at the Antonini Museum in Nasca deserves a mention here. With the most advanced techniques for Earth Observation, from multispectral optics to SAR, through geophysical prospecting and sophisticated spatial analysis models, his work was useful to acquire new information on human-environment dynamics and to discover new archaeological sites, monitor and evaluate the state of conservation of a particularly fragile archaeological heritage.

Some suggestions for future cooperation:

The above-mentioned projects are only a small example of the cooperation activities between the CNR and CELAC. The main global challenges require greater integration of efforts and policies. The more economic and geopolitical crisis, the more the role of science is needed. Scientific cooperation means common trust, common goals to solve very similar or closely interconnected problems at the global level.

The implementation of the CELAC Working Group is very useful to mobilise more countries and competencies on global issues. This is why the CNR hosts and participates in the EU-CELAC policy dialogue in the field of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), with researchers involved in the Italian NBS centre and a wealth of experience in the management and conservation of changing landscapes.

Both scientists and managers of the EU and CELAC must make progress in the field of **science communication**: for funding agencies, for citizens, for policy makers. The experience of Covid-19 showed us how much good communication is needed to unite policies, to combat fake news. An emerging global topic to watch out for is **Artificial Intelligence**. In this regard, scientists with different backgrounds and from different countries need to cooperate and communicate the challenges they face and the opportunities they need to seize.

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

CNR has a dedicated unit for the exploitation of research results, which deals with the granting of patents, the management of intellectual property rights, support for the creation of spin-offs, the creation of partnerships, participation in public-private companies and joint ventures.

In order to contribute to the socio-economic development of our countries, the CNR will increasingly improve relations with the Italian Ministry of Enterprises. In addition, it signed an Agreement with Confindustria – the General Confederation of Italian Industries, to implement Industrial Doctorates that proved to be very useful for the valorization of the results and employment of postgraduates.

In recent years, some CELAC countries have created a favorable regulatory climate, granting access to financing to local entrepreneurs, supporting the need for qualified personnel in the start-up scene. In 2022, more than 200 startups have been created throughout the CELAC region and will be positioned on the world map of startups and business growth.

Some suggestions for future cooperation:

The dynamic public-private partnership has the potential to foster remarkable technological advancements and nurture a resilient ecosystem to meet the multifaceted challenges of the present and future. The involvement of private companies should be more envisaged in **research and innovation projects** funded by the European Commission. In addition, **governments** should include innovation capacity-building in their development cooperation frameworks, partnerships and programmes. Innovation is needed in processes, technologies, policies, business models, and mindsets. The guiding **principles** are those addressed by FAO in its “Science and Innovation Strategy”¹⁰²: Rights-based and people-centred; Gender equality; Evidence-based; Needs-oriented; Aligned with sustainability; Informed about the risk; Ethics-based.

102 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2022). FAO Science and Innovation Strategy. <https://www.fao.org/3/cc2273en/cc2273en.pdf>

Everywhere, governments increasingly recognise the importance of supporting innovation and have taken steps to promote it. These measures encompass regulatory frameworks that facilitate companies' access to resources and finance, as well as initiatives to establish the digital infrastructure necessary for seamless integration into the market landscape. There is room for a change of mindset that allows for greater cooperation between academia and industry. Education and, above all, higher education and industrial doctorates can be instrumental in this. In addition, national research centres and innovation centres could be more involved in higher education partnerships¹⁰³ to share news, strengthen cooperation and take advantage of a favourable environment for research and innovation.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

EU and CELAC countries need to work together to harness their collective strength, defend common interests and jointly address global challenges. Europe's Global Gateway initiative builds on the close links between the two regions. It aims to create a partnership in which the public sector in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean (such as development banks and national export credit agencies) is linked to the private sector, to generate business investments that can contribute to richer societies for the benefit of all. This is important to stimulate innovation and tackle global challenges together. In addition, it highlights investment projects to help address the needs of some regions, while creating local added value and promoting growth, jobs and social cohesion.

These new opportunities are very welcome, even if it is too early to assess their results. The important thing is to have **indicators** for monitoring actions, not only at Community level, but also at local level. In addition, it is important to involve policy makers and civil society representatives from the outset, while training scientists and representatives of academia to **better communicate** the results of their cooperation activities. Scientists need **to be truly engaged** in the process of cooperation towards the achievement of the SDGs.

5. French Ministry of Higher Education and Research (not an official position)

Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with mobility schemes with partners from the other region?

¹⁰³ For example, the Magalhães Network was formed in 2005 to increase academic exchange and collaboration between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Magalhães Network offers systematic exchange of good practices and student mobility (<https://www.magalhaes-network.org/smile>).

France is carrying out several initiatives to promote the mobility of higher education and research, in particular with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean. This commitment is reflected in various mobility programmes aimed at promoting university and scientific networks. For example, France actively participates in cross-mobility programs such as FITEC, connecting engineers with their counterparts in Argentina (ARFITEC), Brazil (BRAFITEC) and Mexico (MEXFITEC). Scientific initiatives such as the ECOS or CAPES-COFECUB and USP-COFECUB programs facilitate collaboration between researchers in France and countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Brazil. In addition, regional programs such as AMSUD focus on engineering, mathematics, and climate change in approximately ten countries in the region.

Another example of a cooperation project that includes mobility is the project currently being developed by the Franco-Mexican University House (MUFRAMEX) for a “Campus of International Transitions” designed to respond to major global challenges. A place for scientific and educational experimentation, its fundamental principle will be a strong commitment to social responsibility through training. It is supported in France by the University of Toulouse and in Mexico by the Autonomous Metropolitan University. It aims to be open to all French and Mexican higher education institutions, as well as to the world of local authorities and socio-economic partners.

What would be the lessons learnt and the biggest challenges in this respect, and how could they be overcome?

The importance of adapting mobility plans to different geopolitical contexts and evolving demographic challenges has been underlined as a key lesson. France highlights the maintenance of high quality standards in the reception of international students as a fundamental element for the internationalization and attractiveness of its higher education system.

However, challenges remain, particularly in the recognition of diplomas. The great diversity of education systems across countries poses a primary challenge, as variations in accreditation standards, curriculum frameworks, and grading systems complicate grade comparisons. In addition, language differences and lack of knowledge further complicate diploma recognition, as many students and employers are unaware of the procedures and requirements.

The budgetary constraints associated with mobility programmes represent another major challenge. Effective programs require substantial financial resources for grants, administrative support, infrastructure, and collaborative research initiatives. Limited budgets can restrict the scale and scope of mobility programmes, reducing opportunities for students and researchers. To address these challenges, France, the EU and their partners

in Latin America and the Caribbean need to explore innovative financing mechanisms to ensure the sustainability and expansion of mobility initiatives.

How could mobility schemes promoted by different actors be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions?

Improving the linkage of mobility programmes promoted by different actors is crucial to foster exchanges and collaboration between research communities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Promoting and better integrating programmes such as Erasmus+ and initiatives such as European universities into bilateral relations can provide structural frameworks to facilitate mobility and collaboration. In fact, the ERASMUS+ programme has been instrumental for both intra-European and international mobility. With a budget of €26.2 billion for the period 2021-2027 (compared to €14.7 billion for the period 2014-2020), complemented by approximately €2.2 billion from EU external instruments, ERASMUS+ aims to be more inclusive, digital and environmentally friendly. For the Americas, in the 2021-2027 programming period, 9% of the budget (€2,174 million) dedicated to international mobility (students, teachers and staff) is reserved for this region, with €28 million earmarked for Latin America and the Caribbean over the seven years.

In addition, concerted efforts are needed to streamline the processes for the recognition of diplomas and to ensure the seamless transfer of qualifications between regions. A crucial step towards this goal is the ratification of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications and the continuation of our global political dialogue within the framework of the Bologna Process. This exchange forum based on the principle of equality, together with other transnational initiatives (e.g. the network that has been formally established to serve as an operational arm for the implementation of the UNESCO Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Degrees and Diplomas in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean) improves the understanding of the different organizational systems. In addition, it makes recognition procedures, quality assurance and certification frameworks more transparent. This is an essential condition for facilitating the mobility of researchers and, in the long term, moving towards a more balanced mobility. The next Global Policy Forum, to be held on 29 and 30 May in Tirana, will provide an opportunity to call for strengthening synergies between various projects and instruments aimed at developing student mobility at the global level in order to better structure interregional cooperation.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Which experiences has your institution/organisation/network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?

What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?

How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

Research infrastructure (RI) cooperation between Europe and its partner regions, such as Latin America and the Caribbean, is increasingly important to address global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and public health crises.

We also acknowledge the important work carried out by the relevant EU-CELAC working group on research infrastructures. We follow the subject with great interest.

The European Southern Observatory (ESO) is a key infrastructure with several locations in Chile. Currently, ESO is composed of 16 Member States, the host state, Chile, and one strategic partner, Australia. ESO carries out an ambitious programme based on the design, construction and management of ground-based astronomical observation facilities, enabling important scientific discoveries to be made. ESO also plays a leading role in promoting and organising cooperation in astronomical research.

France and Chile are developing joint projects. One notable project is the Franco-Chilean Astronomy Laboratory, a joint venture led by the CNRS involving several Chilean universities, which facilitates the exchange of researchers and students in the field of astronomy.

The meeting of the Working Group on Research Infrastructures to be held in May in Lima aims to strengthen the network of delegates in the RI Working Group and set the timetable and responsibilities for the work ahead in 2024/2025. In particular, study visits will be organised to research infrastructures in both regions, focusing on the following three thematic areas: climate change, biodiversity and health. Dr. Susana Gota Goldmann will attend the Lima meeting.

However, there are still significant advances and gaps to be addressed. While the potential for bi-regional cooperation in research infrastructure is great, there is a need to overcome barriers such as geographical distances, diverse regulatory frameworks, and different levels of research infrastructure development.

To enhance bi-regional cooperation initiatives and create more impact, several strategies can be pursued. Firstly, the focus should be on intensifying dialogue and collaboration

mechanisms between the European and Latin American institutions. This could involve establishing more joint research programmes, facilitating academic exchanges, and fostering partnerships in key areas of research. In addition, efforts should be made to align financing mechanisms to ensure long-term sustainability and impact.

France supports the three thematic areas (climate change, biodiversity and health) and after the Lima meeting, meetings will be organised with the scientific sectors of the MESR to discuss visits and collaboration between French laboratories and infrastructures and those of the CELAC region.

In addition, building on the success of initiatives such as European university alliances, there is an opportunity to expand similar models of collaboration to include partners from Latin America and the Caribbean. By leveraging the expertise and resources of both regions, we can address common challenges more effectively and foster innovation that benefits societies on both sides of the Atlantic.

In conclusion, cooperation between France, the EU and partners in Latin America and the Caribbean on research infrastructures has immense potential to advance knowledge, address global challenges and foster mutual understanding.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?

France has collaborated significantly to address global challenges through research, together with partners from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). During the period 2013-2022, France and Latin American countries (24 countries analysed) have produced approximately 64,000 joint publications in various fields, such as Physics and Astronomy, Medicine, Earth and Universe Sciences, Engineering, Agriculture, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and Computer Science. This strong collaboration forms a solid basis for more ambitious projects at both European and bi-regional level¹⁰⁴.

Research efforts addressing global challenges in collaboration with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean have focused particularly on areas such as forest preservation, ocean conservation, public health, and the bioeconomy.

¹⁰⁴ Data from SciVal (<https://www.scival.com/landing>)

Forest Preservation:

Recent initiatives in the field of forestry include the Manaus Declaration, signed in July 2023, involving scientists from five Amazonian countries – Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, France and Peru – as well as the French Institute for Development Research (IRD). This declaration calls for collaborative and impactful research in the Amazon region, encompassing 25 actions focused on various aspects, such as biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource management, improving human health, urban development, regional growth, food systems sustainability, climate resilience, and water management. The declaration emphasises the importance of an inclusive and pragmatic regional approach to ensure the sustainable management of Amazonian socio-ecosystems.

The “One FOREST Summit”, co-hosted by the French and Gabonese authorities in March 2023, and focused exclusively on tropical forests, further demonstrates the commitment to the preservation and sustainable management of forests on a global scale, crucial to addressing global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. The summit highlighted shared challenges in tropical forest basins in Africa, the Amazon and Asia. In addition, the “One Forest Vision” (OFVi) initiative was launched during the summit, with the aim of mapping and measuring the carbon balance of key carbon and biodiversity stocks in these forest basins over the next five years.

Ocean Conservation:

Initiatives such as the One Planet Ocean Summit, organised in Brest under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union with the support of the United Nations, which brought together 37 international leaders together with representatives of major companies and NGOs, underline joint efforts to protect marine ecosystems, combat pollution and mitigate the impacts of climate change on the oceans. Discussions focused on solutions and commitments to address key ocean issues, such as protecting marine ecosystems, fighting pollution, deploying marine solutions to climate change, and improving international governance.

In addition, the third United Nations Ocean Conference, co-chaired by France and Costa Rica, will take place in Nice in June 2025. Preceded by a stakeholder meeting in Costa Rica in June 2024, the conference aims to provide transformative solutions to ocean challenges. This event presents a unique opportunity to develop cooperation networks between Costa Rica, France and other Central American countries.

In this regard, a symposium entitled “Oceans and Societies: Towards a Franco-Central American Cooperation Network” was held in June 2023, organised by the Department of Central American Cultural Cooperation and Action of the French Embassy, the University of Costa Rica, and the National University of Costa Rica. The symposium brought together researchers and university vice-rectors from France and Central America specializing in various fields of marine sciences.

These platforms facilitate collaboration between European, Latin American and Caribbean stakeholders to develop science-based solutions and promote international governance of marine resources.

Public health:

On the topic of Health, emphasis is placed on the PREZODE (PREventing Zoonotic Disease Emergence) initiative, announced by President Emmanuel Macron in January 2021 at the One Planet Summit on Biodiversity. With the support of the European Commission and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, PREZODE aims to increase understanding of the emergence of zoonotic diseases and establish prevention and surveillance strategies to prevent future pandemics. It operates through a co-construction approach, fostering cooperation at the local, regional and global levels. PREZODE has been supported by organisations such as WHO, OIE, FAO, UNEP and the European Commission. With its 2nd General Assembly held in November 2023, PREZODE has expanded its community to almost 230 members, including research centers, academia, civil society, international organizations, foundations, and 25 governments, including those of CELAC.

The emphasis on open science in health research, including transparency in publications, data sharing, and process reuse, underscores the importance of inclusive and transparent research practices. These principles are essential for building trust, reproducibility and innovation in addressing global health challenges.

Digital Technologies:

In the field of digital science and technology, France is developing a number of partnerships with Latin America, such as Chile. A declaration was recently signed between the Ministries of Science of France and Chile to strengthen cooperation between Chilean institutions and the French and European ecosystems, particularly in digital sciences and more specifically in the field of artificial intelligence, in particular through the INRIA Chile center. This centre is a driving force for technological innovation and knowledge transfer, working effectively with companies, institutions and start-ups to meet the challenges of the digital revolution. Cooperation with Brazil in the field of artificial intelligence will also be expanded.

France and Brazil have just signed a strategic action plan covering a range of scientific topics related to global problems. A roadmap on the bioeconomy and the protection of tropical forests has also been signed, as well as a declaration calling for greater ambition in the fight against climate change. In particular, the Franco-Brazilian Institute of Amazonian Biodiversity is expected to be reactivated, which will promote exchanges between researchers, professors and students in the region and contribute to research on biodiversity and climate change.

What shared interests and lessons learnt between research centres in both regions whose work focuses on global challenges?

The initiatives mentioned above demonstrate shared interests between research centers in France, Latin America and the Caribbean to address global challenges. In general, they mainly concern topics such as sustainability, climate change mitigation, public health, digitalization, and socio-economic development. These shared interests foster mutual learning, collaboration, and the sharing of best practices. Key lessons include the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and integrating local knowledge into research agendas.

How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

In order to further enhance the impact of research for sustainable development, existing bi-regional networks and consortia can be better articulated to create greater synergies. This can be achieved through better coordination, communication, and alignment of research agendas.

In order to improve the impact of research for sustainable development, existing bi-regional networks and consortia can be better articulated by:

- Strengthen partnerships between universities, research institutions, and government agencies in both regions.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building through joint research projects, workshops and training programmes.

For example, the Franco-Mexican conference on research, higher education and innovation, held in March 2023 in Mexico City, has proven to be a valuable mechanism for identifying common challenges and opportunities for collaboration.

- Promote inclusive approaches that involve local communities, policymakers, and civil society organizations.
- Collaboration through digital technologies for data sharing, collaboration and cross-border communication.
- Aligning the research agenda and investing in mechanisms that support long-term research collaboration and knowledge transfer.

France's investment in European dynamics, in particular during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022, underlines its commitment to strengthening international cooperation based on reciprocity and values and principles

and fostering synergies between higher education, research and innovation. European university alliances can play a key role, serving as incubators for innovative projects with an international cooperation component. These partnerships can serve as vehicles to promote knowledge sharing, capacity building, and joint research initiatives aimed at addressing global challenges.

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?

Scientific cooperation, by fostering connections, work habits, and exchanges, can serve as a solid foundation for promoting innovation-oriented collaborations. Therefore, one way to strengthen these innovation collaborations is to identify, among the research projects carried out collaboratively, those that could lead to new developments with innovation prospects.

A good practice is to promote exchanges (of various kinds, from informal to structured) between the research community and the socio-economic sphere within local innovation hubs. This approach can be applied to cooperation, albeit in a more organised way. However, organised meetings between public and private partners from different regions, focused on specific topics of common interest, can facilitate the emergence of collaborations.

The ENRICH-LAC project has been a remarkable initiative that has focused on thematic priorities such as health, bioeconomy, digitalisation, renewable energy and sustainable urbanisation. It maintains the RTI Europe-Latin America and the Caribbean Network Linkage Platform, which facilitates connections between universities, research centres and productive actors.

We are also looking with great interest at the pilot project in support of the EU-LAC Innovation Cooperation: This project aims to create a network of startup incubators and accelerators in both regions, aligning with strategic priorities and promoting self-sustainability. In addition, it aims to structure and create synergies between existing Member States or European centres and incubators already present in LAC.

What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

Given the distances between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the differences (especially legal) that may exist between the different systems, innovation cooperation can be complex to implement, especially for smaller actors (startups), but fundamental for the emergence of innovation. Programmes dedicated to them must therefore carefully consider the material difficulties of cooperation and be designed to provide them with clear added value.

Considering the challenges hampering innovation cooperation between the EU and the Latin American and Caribbean regions, a number of needs and blind spots emerge that require more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives:

- Addressing disparities in innovation systems: Since innovation systems vary significantly in their development across LAC countries, there is a need for tailored support and capacity building initiatives. This involves understanding the specific challenges and needs of each country and implementing specific strategies to close the gaps.
- Improved market integration: Lack of market integration restricts firms to small domestic markets, limiting their growth potential.
- Promotion of intra-regional cooperation: The absence of a policy framework covering research and innovation (R&I) in the Latin American and Caribbean region underscores the need for greater intra-regional cooperation. Bi-regional initiatives should prioritise the development of collaborative frameworks and platforms that facilitate knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and joint research efforts among LAC countries.
- Overcoming mobility barriers for entrepreneurs and innovators: Barriers to mobility for entrepreneurs and innovators inhibit cross-regional collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Bi-regional programmes should promote mobility schemes that foster the exchange of talent and experience between EU and LAC regions.
- Harmonised regimes: The lack of a harmonised regime in Europe for LAC nationals to access opportunities to innovate and engage in entrepreneurship creates a barrier to collaboration. Bi-regional initiatives should work to harmonise regulatory frameworks, standardise procedures and promote equal opportunities for LAC citizens to engage with European innovation ecosystems.

Addressing these needs and blind spots through targeted interventions and collaborative efforts can enhance the potential of innovation cooperation between the EU and the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

In terms of sharing best practices and capacity building, a central challenge is to identify elements that can be transferred from one context to another. It may be beneficial to take advantage of networks already involved in exchange and training at national or European level. Take advantage of platforms such as the RTI Network Matchmaking Platform of the ENRICH-LAC project to facilitate connections and knowledge exchange between research centres, universities and productive actors. Other examples are the national CURIE network and the European ASTP network, both of which are active in the field of research valorisation.

Supporting the implementation of the EU-LAC Innovation Cooperation Support Pilot Project to create a network of startup incubators and accelerators also fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

How could university cooperation between both regions be strengthened through greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases?

University cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union could be strengthened through greater use of open access platforms and databases. This could be achieved by:

- Facilitate access to shared research resources and data repositories.
- Promote collaborative projects that take advantage of open access platforms for the exchange and dissemination of knowledge.
- Encourage the development of joint research initiatives using open access databases for interdisciplinary studies.
- Provide training and support to researchers to effectively use open access platforms and databases.

In this regard, France has participated in open science initiatives with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In September, Paris hosted the 3rd France-South America International Meeting on Open Science, in collaboration with Brazil's Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. This successful event brought together key players from France, South America, Mexico, Togo and Senegal to discuss. A number of topics were explored, including open science policies, the "diamond" model of open access, research evaluation, and the challenges and practices of open science. The aim was to facilitate transatlantic exchange and promote collaborative initiatives in this area.

France, with the support of the EU and Latin America, promotes the widespread adoption of open science by fostering equity through open access publishing, free of charge for researchers. This approach, known as the “diamond way”, was discussed at a recent global summit in Toluca, Mexico, where stakeholders agreed to strengthen their cooperation in this regard. However, in order to achieve this, it is essential to constantly evaluate and reward researchers based on their actual contributions rather than publication locations. This approach is supported by CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment), a European initiative that is gradually opening up to collaboration with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It should be noted that openness in publications, data, and the entire research process is also important in health research. In this regard, special attention should be paid to the opening of clinical trials, which currently suffer from publication biases that favor positive results that can compromise statistical conclusions. In addition, for openness to be fully meaningful, it must involve the re-use of data and processes, which can only be ensured if appropriate open licenses, such as Creative Commons licenses, are used to ensure that FAIR principles are respected.

How could bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives benefit more from existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe?

The partnership between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean is mainly based on collaboration between academic and scientific actors. They are the ones who require a fluid and stable forum for exchange, without overly rigid governance that could impede the development of bi-regional collaborations.

During the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022, France significantly elevated the debate on:

- To build the universities of tomorrow and to promote synergies between higher education, research and innovation at the service of society.
- Structuring international cooperation, in particular through the promotion of multilateral dialogue on the values and principles essential for our researchers to collaborate effectively.
- Strengthening alliances between European universities. These can play a central role in cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean, serving as laboratories for innovative projects with an international cooperation component.

Our cooperation should also be structured around existing programmes and activities that need better networking. We encourage our higher education, research and innovation actors to use bilateral funding opportunities as a springboard towards even larger projects

that can be funded by programmes such as Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe. These are genuine opportunities also for our partners in Latin America and the Caribbean, and this momentum needs to be further supported, in particular through the creation of co-financing mechanisms.

Bi-regional networks, consortia and research initiatives can benefit significantly from existing programmes by leveraging their resources, expertise and networks. One approach is to actively engage with Horizon Europe or Erasmus+ through participation in calls for proposals, joint projects and collaborative initiatives. This can provide access to funding, infrastructure, and expertise that can enhance research capacity and collaboration between universities in both regions. In addition, fostering partnerships and networks with European institutions already involved in Horizon Europe projects can facilitate knowledge sharing, capacity building and collaborative research activities.

At EU level, efforts to promote mobility and cooperation in education and training with third countries are evident in initiatives such as the European Commission's Talent and Skills Mobility Package, presented in 2023. This package underlines a broader vision to improve mobility in various education sectors, with an emphasis on international cooperation in education and training, including with partners in Latin America and the Caribbean.

How could actors working towards the bi-regional Higher Education Area and those more closely involved in the Common Research Area better articulate to provide scientific solutions to the central challenges of the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda?

The European higher education ecosystem is based on the principle of collaboration to address global challenges. France, with its rich scientific heritage and vibrant academic community, aspires to play a central role in this collective effort. By emphasizing both research and the social dimension of European universities, France seeks to increase the international visibility of French and European higher education institutions beyond European borders. It is important to internationalise European university partnerships in all regions of the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean. Given the importance and quality of France's relationship with these regions, France and its European partners can play an important role in their development within the framework of a close partnership.

6. DLR-Projektträger

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Which experiences has your institution/organisation/network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?

What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?

How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

During the SOM EU-CELAC in November 2023, delegates made the following statements:

“The EU-CELAC Bi-Regional Working Group on Research Infrastructures (RI WG) was founded in 2017 and meets regularly twice a year; the first face-to-face meeting after the COVID pandemic took place in Tenerife in September 2023, where priority topics such as health, climate change, biodiversity and open science were discussed in depth. Cooperation between RIs is a very dynamic area of work and a wide geographical area is essential to its success, so all countries on both sides of the Atlantic are encouraged to join the RI Working Group to increase the effectiveness of the group.

The RI Working Group and the EU-LAC ResInfra project are working in parallel: the Working Group exchanges good practices, the project develops specific activities. RI includes not only large scientific institutions, but also databases and computer tools. The aim is to create collaborations in scientific areas where it is important to take advantage of data from many countries, for example, environmental monitoring. The European Strategic Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) cannot be transferred to the Latin American and Caribbean region, but the lessons learned can serve as inspiration to create their own intra-regional RI exchange mechanisms, ensuring access for researchers to advance science, especially in the field of climate change and the environment. Open science is another focal point in RI collaboration.”

- The next meeting of the RI Working Group will take place in Lima, Peru, on 7-8 May 2024, with the aim of strengthening the network of delegates in the RI Working Group and setting the timeline and responsibilities for the work ahead in 2024/2025. In particular, study visits to research infrastructures in both regions will be organised, with a focus on the following three thematic areas: climate change, biodiversity and health, which will provide good opportunities to initiate networking and also explore links with the EU-LAC ResInfra project.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?

What shared interests and lessons learnt between research centres in both regions whose work focuses on global challenges?

How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

The EU-LAC Interest Group

The EU-LAC IG is a group of funding agencies from Latin America, the Caribbean countries and EU Member States and associated countries cooperating on science, technology and innovation (STI) on a bi-regional basis. The European Commission participates in this initiative with the specific objective of maintaining general coherence with the governance of EU-LAC relations. The EU-LAC IG was founded in March 2017 at the initiative of Germany and Argentina in order to maintain the very active bi-regional network created by the EU-funded ERANet-LAC project.

The EU-LAC Intergovernmental Group builds on the long experience of collaboration and mutual trust established in previous FP7 projects, e.g. under ERANet-LAC, ALCUE NET and several BILAT projects. To date, four joint EU-LAC calls have been organised, with the aim of supporting the implementation of the EU-LAC Common Research Area and creating greater added value to its four pillars: Mobility of researchers; International projection of Research Infrastructures; Increased thematic cooperation to address global challenges; and Innovation. A 5th Joint Call is currently being prepared.

The EU-LAC IC¹⁰⁵ defines priority themes and instruments of common interest, taking into account the suggestions of its members. The participating funding agencies decide individually which joint activities and themes they want to be involved in (variable geometry).

The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, BMBF, currently coordinates the Interest Group together with the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology, FECYT, which has taken over the secretariat.

¹⁰⁵ EU-LAC Interest Group has a website (<https://www.eucelac-platform.eu>) and a Twitter account: @eu_lac_sti, maintained by FECYT, which helps to publicise STI cooperation and activities between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?

What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

An example of good practice is the establishment of collaborative innovation hubs that bring together stakeholders from academia, industry and government to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. These centers provide a physical and virtual space where researchers, students, and entrepreneurs can collaborate, exchange ideas, and access resources such as funding, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

From 2024, the Global Service Facility, with the support of the ENRICH Centre in Latin America and the Caribbean, will organise on-site EU-LAC incubator matching events with the aim of creating a sustainable network of start-up incubators and accelerators. By supporting the creation of incubator networks, the intention is to connect the start-up ecosystems of both regions and foster exchange that could lead to cooperation and co-creation by solving the problems faced by both regions, albeit in different circumstances, in line with the political priorities of the EU and LAC, such as reducing plastic litter, cleaning up the oceans, fighting neglected diseases or creating a circular economy.

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

How could university cooperation between both regions be strengthened through greater utilization of open-access platforms and databases?

During the SOM EU-CELAC in November 2023, delegates made the following statements:

“Open science has a horizontal systemic character, which affects the entire research cycle, and in order to move forward it is necessary to advance in a coherent way on different fronts. Policies need to be put in place, open science needs to be made possible through the exchange of infrastructures (mainly digital). In addition, capacity building

is necessary and should be encouraged, encouraged and recognised, which requires a reform of current evaluation systems, which is considered essential.

The Commission is promoting a number of initiatives, including the flagship European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), which is working on its international extension. Mexico is being recognised as a world leader for the diamond model. Organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean were also encouraged to join the Coalition for the Advancement of Research Evaluation (CoARA). The importance of facilitating multilingualism in academic activity was also highlighted, as well as the social impact of innovation. Overall, a great potential for bi-regional cooperation on open science was recognised, which currently lacks a forum, channel and instruments.”

- To open the bi-regional policy dialogue on open access, the EC, with the support of its Global Service Mechanism, plans to organise an EU-CELAC conference on open access in the second half of 2024.

How could bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives benefit more from existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe?

Bi-regional networks, consortia and research initiatives could amplify the benefits of existing programmes, such as Horizon Europe, through strategic alignment and proactive engagement. First, these entities should actively participate in Horizon Europe calls for proposals, taking advantage of their significant funding resources and extensive network of partners across Europe. Should support be needed along the way, researchers should proactively reach out to their National Contact Points (NCPs). In this way, they can access financial support and forge partnerships with leading European research institutions, improving the reach and impact of their projects. In addition, fostering stronger connections with their European counterparts can facilitate knowledge sharing, technology transfer and access to state-of-the-art research infrastructures, thereby accelerating the progress of research and innovation. In addition, taking advantage of Horizon Europe’s thematic priorities and funding instruments relevant to their focus areas can optimise the alignment between bi-regional initiatives and European research agendas, maximising their potential for success and impact. Overall, by proactively engaging with Horizon Europe, bi-regional research networks, consortia and initiatives can unlock new opportunities for collaboration, funding and knowledge sharing, driving transformative advances in science, technology and innovation in both regions.

What new opportunities does the Global Gateway Investment Agenda offer to enhance bi-regional research networks, consortia, and initiatives in areas such as digital infrastructure, green transition, or health?

During the SOM EU-CELAC in November 2023, delegates made the following statements:

“The EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda (GGIA) highlights potential investment projects that contribute to meeting the region’s infrastructure needs, while creating local added value and promoting growth, jobs and social cohesion. The aim is to invest in critical raw materials (such as lithium and others), digital transformation (e.g. the BELLA cable, which ensures the transport of data over 35,000 kilometres, including last-mile connectivity) and disaster prevention, through satellites and Earth observation. In the area of marine research, sargassum algae, being a natural species in the Caribbean, has become invasive and becomes an environmental problem, threatening biodiversity and fisheries. Pilot research is underway to explore its potential use for biomass, green electricity, cosmetics or biofuels. Starting from a human-caused problem, the goal is to create economic diversification through innovation.

In the area of health, especially in the production of vaccines and the manufacture of medical products, some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean need to develop their capacities, and safety issues must be assessed before further participation.

In the area of green hydrogen, progress has been made in cooperation with Chile and Brazil; Chile is a good example for the use of various renewable energy sources such as wind power, hydropower, full green hydrogen as a fuel or as a component for synthetic fuels. The challenge is to bring together four stakeholder groups around a table in each country for the implementation of stable and productive cooperation: 1.) Partner country, 2.) EU and Member States (MS) present in the country, 3.) Private sector, including research capacities, 4.) Investors, e.g., investment banking, Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), private banking sector.”

How could actors working towards the bi-regional Higher Education Area and those more closely involved in the Common Research Area better articulate to provide scientific solutions to the central challenges of the EU-CELAC bi-regional agenda?

Fostering stronger communication channels and partnerships between higher education institutions and research organisations in both regions can facilitate knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration. By aligning their efforts, these actors can leverage complementary expertise and resources to address key challenges on the bi-regional agenda, such as climate change and health, more effectively. Establishing platforms for dialogue and joint decision-making between policymakers, academics and industry stakeholders could ensure that scientific solutions are aligned with the priorities and needs of both regions, fostering innovation and sustainable development.

7. Mission of Mexico to the European Union, Brussels

In 2023, the European Union launched the Global Gateway Investment Agenda, which pools funds of up to €45 billion for investment in projects in LAC, in various fields of action such as renewable energies, electromobility, health, digital change, climate, etc., according to the objectives of the 2030 agenda. This amount is equivalent to the investment capacity of the entire industry, cooperation funds, and development bank funds of the EU member countries and could be increased, depending on the participation of private actors involved in the projects of interest in both regions.

These resources will be implemented in a logic of capacity building, promotion of innovation and technology transfer, in the homologation of production standards according to EU standards and hand in hand with private sector actors. Clearly, the importance of the development of human capacities and research and innovation are transversal axes for the implementation of the programs and projects that may be subscribed within the framework of this initiative.

Hand in hand with the EU, Mexico has promoted the inclusion of several projects in the GGI's agenda. Each of these projects has scientific and academic cooperation components with great potential for the generation of research consortia with Europe and countries in the LAC Region. Although the will of the respective authorities to strengthen cooperation and open new spaces for mobility and generation of research experiences has been expressed in various high-level meetings, the success of this cooperation will depend on factors and conditions that are not alien to the experience acquired in other framework programmes such as Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe.

For the purposes of this workshop, I would highlight three important projects promoted by Mexico within the framework of the GGIA: the Sonora Plan, the Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the actions to combat the arrival of Sargassum in the Greater Caribbean. In particular, for each of these initiatives, it would be worthwhile to quickly highlight the academic and research cooperation approach they envision.

Plan Sonora

It is an initiative of the President of the United Mexican States, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, as part of a sustainable regional development strategy and industry 4.0 with an impact on Mexico's national development. It is the first circular economy model in Latin America that seeks to promote and develop clean energies such as solar and blue hydrogen; promoting the semiconductor and electromobility industries; and, strengthen the logistics infrastructure in Northern Mexico.

The Plan includes six priority lines of action: 1) sustainable ecosystem and strategic hubs; 2) Talent development; 3) Back-End Semiconductor Industry; 4) Clean energy; 5) State-of-the-art infrastructure and 6) Electromobility.

Within the framework of this Plan, the aim is to design with the EU a *specific cooperation mechanism for the development of human capital*, linking industry with academia, innovation and research, beyond the existing well-known mobility programmes, ERASMUS+ and Marie Curie. Although there is not yet a plan that goes in this direction, clearly we must also begin to innovate in this logic, not only because of the type of project and specific needs that it implies, but also because it requires a certain flexibility in training: responding simultaneously to the requirements of the industry and respecting the principles of academic-scientific training. The challenge, or rather the first difficulty, to be solved is to see to what extent European programmes can be adapted (out of box) to these characteristics. This is clearly not a specificity of the Mexican case, but a recurring challenge, even identified by most of the partners in the CELAC region during the last JIRI in Brussels, in November 2023.

A second axis that emerges from the Sonora Plan is the possibility for European research centers to participate in the development of science parks and, in particular, to collaborate in the Joint Research Center on semiconductors implemented by the University of Arizona and the University of Sonora. Although for the moment this collaboration responds to a regional interest between two border states, it opens spaces to explore academic mobility and knowledge transfer with Europe in other fields of action. In this logic, it would be worth highlighting the work that has been done, for example, by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the EC, in the field of smart regional specialisation with some States of the Mexican Republic and Europe (Spain in particular), in the field of renewable energy.

Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (CIIT)

It is an emblematic project that connects two Mexican ports: Atlantic/Pacific. The aim is to benefit the national economy, mainly the states of Oaxaca and Veracruz, and to promote the comprehensive, sustainable, sustainable and inclusive development of the entire region of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, through the implementation of a logistics platform that integrates the provision of port administration services and their interconnection through rail transport. It is planned that the CIIT will boost trade with countries in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Oceania, thus generating an alternative to the Panama Canal.

As in the case of the Sonora Plan, this megaproject contemplates the creation of ten Development Poles located along the corridor, with a vocation to attract national and international investments, in specialised industry, but with community impact. The academic and scientific potential of the region, as well as the generation of high-level Mexican technologists, represents an opportunity for international cooperation with European researchers and universities in electronics, semiconductors, automotive, auto parts and transportation equipment, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, metals and petrochemicals, among others.

Among the projects that are underway, for the development of the poles, national companies plan to carry out research in green hydrogen and a research center for high

energies. Taking into account the size of these projects, the degree of participation of local and national actors, and their potential regional impact, the Corridor is logically part of the GGI initiative. The challenge for the CIIT in the medium term is precisely to generate within the poles of development, the research and academic training clusters that are identified with the regional specialty of the Isthmus, in such a way that they are also poles of attraction of human capital.

Sargassum in the Greater Caribbean

At the EU-CELAC summit in July 2023, leaders from both regions pledged to work together towards the effective management of sargassum in the Caribbean. Within the framework of the EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda (the EU's roadmap for potential investment projects to help address the region's infrastructure needs), the EU launched the "Turning Sargassum into an Economic Opportunity" initiative, a Team Europe initiative that aims to reduce the negative ecological and socio-economic effects caused by the massive landslides of this algae in the coastal zone and integrate them into the circular economy, where, for example, sargassum would be transformed into cosmetics, fertilizers, electricity and biomass. It also includes aspects related to monitoring, research and resource mobilization to maximise impact to address and optimise the joint approach of both regions. EUROCLIMA is leading the EU's efforts in this area. Mexico is actively participating in this effort, highlighting the following actions:

Mexico, through various public bodies and the Mexican Institute for Research in Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (IMIPAS), participated in the Regional Conference organised by the EU and the Dominican Republic in June 2023, entitled: Turning sargassum into an opportunity. At the meeting, it was agreed to identify common solutions and frame development initiatives for the efficient use of sargassum within the framework of the GGI, as a raw material for the production of biofuels, sustainable construction materials and renewable material in the textile industry. At the same time, jobs could be created for its collection at sea; the implementation and repair of collection and transport types, and in the transformation and creation of new industries.

In addition to participating in various international meetings (COP 28 "Sargassum: Urgency and Opportunities for Action and Investment", 2023 for example), the regional initiatives that Mexico seeks to promote in the face of the ecological, social and economic challenge represented by the Sargassum issue open spaces for regional cooperation. In fact, the GGI includes it as a lighthouse and transversal project for the region, in which areas of opportunity and diverse fields of research are identified.

The EU also supports initiatives related to research and innovation related to various sargassum issues in the region, through its Horizon Europe programme. In it, calls are published for the generation of research consortia where the participation of Mexico and other countries in the region is possible, under certain conditions. In addition to these European initiatives, there are several specific programmes such as the one carried

out with the Netherlands, France and Mexico, for example, which publish calls for the participation of researchers and experts in the field. Such initiatives are replicated in various parts of the Caribbean. As it is a cross-cutting issue, the challenge that the EU would have through the GGI is not only to involve private co-investment, which seems more evident as it is an issue that particularly affects tourism, but also to achieve that efforts are combined in a single large mechanism with a view to medium and long-term research objectives.

The examples of academic and scientific collaborations mentioned above are in no way particular to Mexico's relationship with the EU, within the framework of the GGI. Many countries in the region have this type of example, which undoubtedly respond to their own interests and characteristics. However, there are common axes and problems such as the training of technical staff, the consolidation of co-investment spaces for research and development, and environmental and social challenges that condition the success of long-range projects, financed in part through the GGI.

If we must insist on the strengthening of regional research ecosystems, which involve so many public (local), private and international actors, it is because it is unlikely that a strengthening of the CELAC-EU Common Higher Education Area will be achieved, if these regional fabrics that respond to common challenges and interests are not consolidated. From the EU's perspective, GGI has been promoted as an initiative that would catalyse and consolidate instruments to support development in the region through co-investment and regional projects. It seems like a good idea, although it is not yet very clear the degree of flexibility that the GGI entails to take into account the variable geography of the CELAC Region, and even more, that of the Greater Caribbean.

On the other hand, if we look at CELAC-EU research projects after the covid-19 pandemic, we see that the vast majority correspond to academic mobility of students and researchers, and to a much lesser extent, to research projects. Although this mobility is essential, it should be part of broader and regional research projects so that the return of these students and researchers also favours the consolidation of the fabric to which I referred. In this sense, specific calls open to third countries such as Mexico and Brazil, within the framework of the Horizon Europe programme, for example, in the case of sargassum, which can promote projects of regional impact from their national research platforms and infrastructures, in line with the general objectives of the GGI, are again required. Otherwise, only academic mobility is encouraged, with all the benefits that entail, but relatively little is contributed to the consolidation of research platforms and consequently of the Common Higher Education Area.

8. Organisation of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI)

I. Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American and Caribbean area

Among the mobility programs that the OEI implements, the following stand out:

- Paulo Freire, focused on the field of Education, and Paulo Freire Plus, aimed at the training of doctors in Ibero-America in any field of knowledge (only 40% of researchers in the region are doctors).
- PIMA¹⁰⁶, for the mobility of undergraduate students.

On the other hand, the OEI has designed the Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 en movimiento platform¹⁰⁷. The technical report was launched in 2021¹⁰⁸ by a group of Ibero-American experts on mobility convened by our Organization, in collaboration and consultation with technicians from higher education institutions (HEIs) in the region. They propose to offer a platform as a technological solution to facilitate the management of academic mobility between universities. In addition, the platform provides universities with the necessary information on the studies to be carried out at the host university (contents, learning outcomes, class hours and the student's independent work, skills, etc.), which allows the recognition of studies by the university of origin, which is one of the major obstacles to mobility in Ibero-America. Through this platform, universities will be able to manage the exchange and recognition agreement so that the student can carry out their mobility with the guarantee that the studies they are going to carry out at the host university will be recognised by the home university upon their return.

Opportunities

A proposal such as Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 en movimiento could be funded under Key **Action 2 of the Erasmus plus programme**, which provides for the financing of projects that produce these results:

Increased capacity and professionalism to work at EU or international level; improved management competences and internationalisation strategies; reinforced cooperation with partners from other countries, other fields of education, training and youth and/or other socio-economic sectors; increased allocation of financial resources (other than EU funds)

106 Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (n.d.). Programa de intercambio y movilidad académica. <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/programa-de-intercambio-y-movilidad-academica/presentacion>

107 Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (2021). Universidad Iberoamérica 2030 en movimiento: una propuesta para la movilidad académica. <https://oei.int/publicaciones/universidad-iberoamerica-2030-en-movimiento-una-propuesta-para-la-movilidad-academica-informe-tecnico>

108 Organization of Ibero-American States (2021, May 14). Informe Universidad iberoamérica 2030 en movimiento: una propuesta para la movilidad académica. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0u24eUVHso0>

to organise EU or international projects in the field of education, training and youth; increased quality in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU or international projects.

For this to happen, it would be necessary to:

- **That the Erasmus plus programme would open up Key Action 2 to proposals in collaboration with Latin American organisations and institutions.** So far, Erasmus plus only finances mobilities for Latin America (Key Action 1) with funds from DG INTPA. Despite the investment effort dedicated over the years to financing these mobilities, Latin America continues to be the second region in the world where academic mobility has grown the least, which indicates the need to commit to structural reforms and not only the financing of mobility.
- That **international organisations** are also eligible to lead Erasmus plus proposals, as in the Horizon programme¹⁰⁹.
- On the other hand, it is also worth mentioning as a precedent of interest for Latin America the Share programme, through which the EU has supported and promoted higher education in Southeast Asian countries for 7 years within the framework of the partnership between the EU and ASEAN. The programme has involved an investment of €15 million in actions aimed at harmonising university systems, improving their quality and mobility and internationalisation.

II. Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Since January, the OEI has been implementing the EULAC Energytran program¹¹⁰: “Research infrastructure cooperation for energy transition between European and Latin American and the Caribbean countries”. In view of the last call for Horizon Europe, specifically HORIZON-INFRA-2023- DEV-01-06¹¹¹, the IEO set up a consortium with two ERICs (LifeWatch and EUSolaris), universities and research and innovation agencies, institutes and foundations from six countries: Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Costa Rica. The aim of the project is to promote scientific cooperation between research infrastructures in the European Union (EU) and LAC to address a common challenge: how to achieve a clean, sustainable and fair energy transition. It pursues its objective through the exchange, generation and transfer of knowledge between entities

¹⁰⁹ European Commission (2023, October 15). Horizon Europe (Horizon). HE Programme Guide (4.0 Version). https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf

¹¹⁰ Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (2024). Energytran. EULAC for energy transition. Research infrastructure cooperation for energy transition between European and Latin American and the Caribbean countries <https://oei.int/downloads/blobs/eyJfcmljcmVudXN1bG9iX2k1In19-01a588aa95ca99edab6a1b9ccadb5d63941ae846/Dossier%20ENERGYTRAN%20Oficial.pdf>

¹¹¹ European Commission (2023). Strengthen the bilateral cooperation on research infrastructures with Latin America. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-infra-2023-dev-01-06>

from a transdisciplinary approach (technological, environmental and social) and through support for the development of public policies and regulatory frameworks that promote climate neutrality.

This Horizon Europe call introduced a specific clause that made it possible for the first time for international organisations to be full partners of Horizon projects and to receive funding under them. Specifically, the clause that opened a door to this situation was found in the general annexes of the 2023-2024 work programme of Horizon Europe¹¹²;

International organisations – International European research organisations are eligible to receive funding. Unless their participation is considered essential for implementing the action by the granting authority, other international organisations are not eligible to receive funding. International organisations with headquarters in a Member State or Associated Country are eligible to receive funding for “Training and mobility” actions and when provided for in the specific call conditions.

III. Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

Among our main works with research networks are:

- The Program for the Strengthening of Science and Technology Systems (FORCYT) was born in the midst of the pandemic to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 and climate change, based on the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, with special attention to strengthening the role of women in science. This programme represented a first rapprochement between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in the field of science from a cross-cutting approach. Among its components was the promotion of cooperation between the two regions through research networks¹¹³ composed of research groups from both sides of the Atlantic.

This programme was funded by the EU through **the Development in Transition Facility of the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA)**. This facility was the only one specifically aimed at Latin America and was designed with the purpose of supporting those countries that were overcoming the development trap. **This facility has NOT been renewed**, and it does not appear that there will be an operational financial alternative to meet this need. In this way, Latin America is left without a financing channel specially designed to carry out

112 European Commission (2024, April 17). Horizon Europe. Work Programme 2023-2025 (Decision C(2024) 2371). https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-13-general-annexes_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf

113 Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (2022). FORCYT - Evaluación intermedia. Programa para el fortalecimiento de los sistemas de ciencia y tecnología. <https://oei.int/oficinas/secretaria-general/publicaciones/evaluacion-intermedia-programa-para-e-fortalecimiento-de-los-sistemas-de-ciencia-y-tecnologia-forcyt>

advanced cooperation projects such as FORCYT, which are so necessary for the region

IV. Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

FORCYT had a component aimed at knowledge transfer, which made it possible to offer personalised advice to 4 Ibero-American research teams that had developed a sufficiently mature and attractive technology to be brought to the market.

In the development of this component, the OEI had the collaboration of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), which had been developing interesting work in Latin America in relation to the S3 (Smart Specialization Strategy). However, the JRC currently lacks the budget to continue this line of work with Latin America and does not plan to have it in the near future. At the OEI we also count on your collaboration in the Energytran project in order to avoid a complete disconnect between the JRC and Latin America.

V. Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

Having presented our past and present experience in the issues addressed, we identify the following challenges and opportunities:

- Reopen specific financing channels for LAC, adapted to the development needs of the region, such as the Development in Transition Facility.
- Define and articulate a procedure around the Global Gateway for LAC, so that this mechanism is truly known and accessible.
- Promote more Horizon calls for Latin America, in order to generate more opportunities for scientific cooperation in areas of mutual interest.
- Open up more actions in the Erasmus Plus programme to Latin American countries, and allow international organisations to also be beneficiaries, with the intention of promoting regional projects.
- Promote a programme similar to Share to promote university and scientific cooperation between the EU and CELAC, and promote reforms and initiatives that allow the construction of a true shared space for higher education and science in Ibero-America, which is fully compatible with the European one.

9. Association Of Montevideo Group Universities (AUGM)

In order to introduce ourselves to the related topics on which we can make comments for this workshop (1,3,5) and to some extent introduce the perspective of the network, it

is worth placing the Association of Universities Grupo Montevideo (AUGM) in context, both in its geographical area of action, its advances and setbacks, as well as some ideas for the future that can be analysed around the points that will be dealt with in the workshop.

First of all, to reaffirm the conviction that the policy of international insertion is a substantive part of the existence and interest not only of our network but also of those who make it up and of obtaining the necessary resources for comprehensive development, as a strategic objective for regional integration and in this case to add the possibility of going further and connecting in a bi-regional way more structurally and permanently.

By way of review, it should be noted that in AUGM's area of action, MERCOSUR, after more than 30 years of foundation, does not have a political strategy that seriously promotes the integration of higher education and research. In its action plans, MERCOSUR has promoted recognition or accreditation, mobility and inter-institutional cooperation, where in order to meet these objectives, only a few erratic initiatives have been developed, freeing up competitive funds, but without a structural continuity that allows the development of this model of promotion. ARCUSUR is the example that has survived over time and has done so beyond the borders of the regional bloc, allowing the generation of quality standards, recognition and accreditation among peers.

That said, and thinking about specifying agreements with characteristics of bi-regional action as a bloc, it places us in a complex place if we take the EU as a reference to be able to think about agreements or concrete actions if we do not have this working space with the support of the states. Beyond this logic that emerges from the above, we believe it is important to highlight that despite not having defined lines in terms of support for Higher Education and research by the member states of Mercosur, if we think of regional integration or international projection as a bloc of countries as a whole, Universities have managed, within the framework of their autonomy, to strengthen ties that allow the generation of a fabric that supports the growth of knowledge transfer between them and the subsystems linked to the generation of knowledge in the region and beyond. And this is a space to be exploited, asserting the active role of the Universities in the resolution projecting our regions in a good way.

Although many of those who participate in this workshop are familiar with AUGM, we believe it is worth describing some initiatives and their composition and then delving into some concepts, examples and reflections regarding the issues raised.

AUGM was founded 33 years ago and has to date 41 public universities, self-governed in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay,¹¹⁴ in its principles it has defined having members who have the conditions to develop cooperation activities with certain perspectives of viability dependent exclusively on the agreements reached in their statutes, programs and projects. The need to work for excellence, quality, relevance and to fulfill the tasks that public higher education requires, has sought to consolidate over time

114 Association Of Montevideo Group Universities (<http://grupomontevideo.org/site/universidades-miembro/>)

the sharing in solidarity, academic staff of the highest qualification, material resources, facilities, equipment, laboratories, libraries, etc., building an expanded common academic space, where obstacles are overcome and the possibilities of action are multiplied year after year.

In this context, today the network is self-financed by its members and has 13 programs that promote the cooperation and internationalization of universities in academic matters. The network fosters spaces for interaction for researchers, professors, as well as undergraduate, graduate and managerial students. In the case of researchers, in particular, they do so on strategic issues for the network and their region (many in common with those that are promoted globally), generating knowledge through exchange and their subsequent publications. This is a possibility that, in terms of networking, offers university students through another channel to generate or strengthen pre-existing networks, academic stays outside their origin, beyond their specific format and objective (postgraduates, sabbaticals, research stays, laboratory practices, seminars, postdocs, etc.). These are tools that allow us to sustain and improve the academic standards of universities by densifying the networks of belonging to research groups.

Based on this vocation and with the prospect of increasing the possibilities of the University communities that make up our network, the Council of Rectors has begun to work on actions that to some extent will allow to deepen the processes of integration in the region and outside it at the academic level. Initiatives that can be replicated with similar characteristics by making human and material resources available to consolidate concrete actions. Within this framework, AUGM intends to grow both in the number of universities that make it up and in its geographical margin of action. At the same time, it has reached agreements with the national networks of rectors of the member countries (CIN, ANDIFES, CUECH, AUPP), as well as the articulation with ENLACES at the continental level and other university associations (especially in EUROPE as a strategic partner) through reciprocal projects or collaborations, especially in postgraduate and research. Likewise, it is working on a restructuring of its research groups with the idea of focusing them on the study of global problems, generating their own knowledge about the problems existing globally. Progress is being made in the creation of a joint postgraduate programme, an AUGM bank of postgraduate evaluators, a repository of scientific projects and a programme for the sharing of infrastructure installed in the universities of the network.

On another level, work is being done on articulation with some states, with the idea of promoting spaces for research. In particular, and very recently, an agreement has been signed with CAPES, Brazil, an institution that promotes the training of higher education personnel with an emphasis on postgraduate studies and that we consider a good interlocutor to promote similar initiatives that go beyond our region. To be clearer, through this agreement, the government of Brazil commits to finance a total amount of 20 million dollars over a period of four years academic integration projects that articulate research and postgraduate studies between its universities and those that make up the AUGM, in annual calls that will finance up to 15 projects with these characteristics

on each occasion. In the calls, priority areas or lines to be financed will be defined by mutual agreement between the parties. In this way, strategic alliances are promoted between AUGM universities and Brazilian universities, which involve research programs articulated with postgraduate training, in the modality of postdoctoral and “sandwich” doctorates.

After this brief synthesis, which is intended to be a starting point for thinking about some ideas related to possibilities of bi-regional joint action, we consider it necessary to build relevant and achievable agendas in the search for the strengthening of bi-regional public goods and substantive political dialogues. If this happens in a coordinated manner, it will be more convenient for the common objectives, always recognizing the differentiated responsibilities and asymmetries present between the parties.

The benefits derived from historical, cultural and value linkages have been widely recognised by both sides, and it is essential that strategies focused on resource extraction give way to partnerships between value-added sectors and mutual transfer of skills.

The new cooperation programmes (such as Global Gateway or Horizon Europe) and a willingness to share the experiences developed around the challenges posed by the so-called three transitions (social, digital and green) are encouraging. We see it as very possible and a great opportunity for cooperation to form clusters associated with the universities of both regions to work on climate change, the promotion of renewable energies, digital transformation and natural resources with technology transfer.

Considering underpinning education and training for the future of work from academia, strengthening health care services and the production of medicines and vaccines with technology, or promoting innovation in the agribusiness sector can be areas of common agreement to work with university teams. Technological innovations are also key to driving the circular economy and industries such as electromobility, green hydrogen and clean energy supply chains, as well as contributing to shared biodiversity preservation goals and more open and effective public administrations.

Take advantage of the efforts made, for example, in the Resinfra project with the idea of generating a system of information, advice and dynamization of academic cooperation.

Use and connect initiatives such as OpenAIRE and the Network of Latin American Repositories, facilitating access to and dissemination of scientific and academic production in both regions.

Some of the initiatives we can promote are encouraging the creation and maintenance of institutional repositories where publications, research, educational materials and other relevant resources can be hosted and shared free of charge and easily accessible to the academic community, or developing joint open educational resources.

Last but not least, it is worth mentioning what was defined and supported by AUGM in the CRES + 5 in its final declaration where the call to ENLACES and regional and national higher education networks, associations and consortia is promoted to promote the creation of a Regional Knowledge Agency (ARCO) that promotes research, extension and collaborative innovation. solidarity and horizontality and its link with teaching with a clear programmatic, prospective and integrationist orientation, in the perspective in which the content and public policy orientation of the document emanating from the CRES+5 has been concentrated. An instrument that can be very useful for internal dialogue in LAC and become an articulating space between the regions.

10 Central American Higher Education Council (CSUCA)

University activity is an essential component for the growth, development and competitiveness of our countries, so our leaders must be aware of this, since the possibility of conceiving and carrying out actions of great impact and scope that effectively contribute to successfully facing the complex reality in which we live depends on it. It also makes it possible to guide humanity towards a promising and hopeful future.

It is important to highlight that the Sustainable Development Goals are very important in the development of our countries, however one of the goals that each country should emphasise in fulfilling is SDG 17, because in order to move forward, human beings must work collaboratively and in solidarity, so we must build alliances that allow us to move forward. which must be forged on common principles, values and objectives, focused on the mission and vision of our institutions so that each actor can contribute experiences, knowledge and contribute jointly for the benefit of society. All this may seem like a huge challenge, impossible to achieve, but it is about finding common factors, finding new ways of thinking and doing things, taking advantage of the resources available. The purpose is to promote an academic exchange, acquire experience, research, innovate, be proactive and take advantage of the thinking, physical and technological resources that are within our reach.

It is necessary to emphasise that networking is the most appropriate in terms of the objectives of integration with which our institutions must work, because they must create and consolidate academic and research links that improve the quality of education through solidarity cooperation, through the academic exchange of both students, professors and researchers.

International cooperation is the joint effort of all sectors, supported by the dynamism of international organizations, civil society, academia, the public and private sectors, to promote actions that contribute to sustainable development and improve the standard of living of the population through the transfer, reception and exchange of information, knowledge, experiences, resources, among others. However, higher education was absent from the cooperation agendas in a large part of open regionalism, because it was influenced by the diversity among higher education systems, considered by national authorities as an

obstacle difficult to overcome, and second, because the economic agenda proposed by multilateral organizations considered it as an expense and not an investment.

Subsequently, in the 1990s, higher education institutions themselves began to develop cooperation mechanisms that were increasingly linked to their internationalization strategies, through student and faculty exchange activities, opportunities that our universities have been able to value and that have gradually been strengthened.

Therefore, from our experience as the General Secretariat of the Central American Higher University Council, we can share that in order to strengthen university cooperation between the two regions, various spaces and platforms have been used, since a series of activities have been carried out with different actors in various spaces such as: Regional Conferences, Congresses, Meetings of Networks of Organizations and Institutions of Higher Education from which they have emerged important proposals, proclamations, manifestos and agreements that are of interest to all. However, a call to action is imperative, that is, that all sectors of education, government, public and private institutions come together to work collaboratively and in solidarity.

To conclude this transcendental topic, I would like to refer to the strengthening of communication and dissemination as a support mechanism in International Cooperation, since in a globalised world such as the one in which we currently live, it is essential to become aware of the co-responsibility that all actors have in the process of human development, so we must have better tools, that allow for more efficient communication, that provide us with a faster and more effective approach, that disseminate accurate, clear and effective information among all sectors: cooperation agencies, educational institutions, governments, civil society, public and private sectors; so that they make known both the needs of the population and the existing international support, and in this way those valuable resources of the support that the cooperation entities provide are not lost due to ignorance of these opportunities and initiatives.

There is so much to do, however, we must focus on working on the needs of society, to whom we owe ourselves, always acting with principles and values, carrying out results-based management, being innovative, proactive, equitable, inclusive, transparent, accountable among cooperating partners, working in a more collaborative, supportive, coordinated and integrated way.

11. League of European Research Universities (LERU)

Taking into account the themes and objectives of the workshop, LERU presents this short note on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It is based on a more extensive recent publication, which also includes many practical examples from LERU

universities¹¹⁵. Beyond ESD, LERU has also worked on universities' procurement and investment policies to contribute to sustainable development¹¹⁶.

From values to strategies and their implementation

Responding to the world's challenges, as expressed in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, is a matter of utmost urgency. Transitions to sustainable development¹¹⁷ will require a continuous supply of new knowledge, as well as skilled and ethically trained people. LERU universities have the potential and responsibility to contribute to the necessary processes of social transformation.

In higher education, it is clear that today's students need both a basic conceptual knowledge about the main aspects of sustainable development and a vision of how their individual research disciplines, enriched by connections with other disciplines, can contribute to sustainable solutions. The specific challenge for universities is not only to be producers of knowledge, but also to support transformative science. This requires students to be trained to contribute and act as agents of change to the transformation required within their field of expertise, but also to be able to live and work in complex and uncertain times.

Typically, LERU universities have included ESD as a key element in an overall university strategy for sustainable development or have a specific strategy on ESD. Going further, it is well known that implementing a strategic commitment comes with a variety of **challenges**. These can range from raising awareness and creating acceptance, to developing appropriate organizational structures and culture, to obtaining the necessary resources, etc. Once a strategy is implemented, it must be monitored, evaluated, and updated regularly.

A unique and important feature of the university environment is **academic freedom**¹¹⁸, which includes freedom of teaching: in relation to ESD, **it is essential to ensure that teachers recognise the value and benefits of integrating sustainable development into their teaching, and to support them in this endeavour.**

115 Maes, K. and Members of the Sustainability Ad-hoc Group (2024). How to enhance education for sustainable development. LERU. <https://www.leru.org/publications/how-to-enhance-education-for-sustainable-development-esd>.

116 Since the latter topic is beyond the scope of this brief note, the reader may refer to the publication LERU (2021). Las universidades intencivas en investigación destacan la importancia de la inversión y las adquisiciones sostenibles en la lucha contra el cambio climático [Declaration]. https://www.leru.org/files/Publications/LERU-statement-on-sustainable-investment-and-procurement_2021.pdf

117 "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987). Sustainable development was specified by the United Nations in 2015 in the resolution "Transforming our world: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

118 See, for example, advisory paper Vrieling, J., Lemmens, K., Lemmens, P., & Parmentier, S. (2023). Challenges to academic freedom as a fundamental right. LERU. <https://www.leru.org/publications/challenges-to-academic-freedom-as-a-fundamental-right>

A second distinctive element is the fact that sustainable development is not “a single issue”, but **a complex web of issues**, based on the vision of a profound transformation of society in view of the degradation of ecosystems and ethical requirements such as equal access to health and safe living conditions.

Despite the widely accepted urgency, making certain activities, courses, programmes, etc. mandatory for students or staff can be a hard sell and may not be the most successful way to begin to include sustainable development in university teaching. Therefore, **the initial stimulation of intrinsic motivation is important**. While incremental accumulation may be acceptable for the initial phase, bolder steps are needed and are indeed emerging. Favorites or a coalition of the willing can and do act as catalysts. The establishment of an ESD development centre can contribute to the development of expertise – values, attitudes, skills and competencies – tailored to the specific needs of faculties and departments. **In a participatory process, bottom-up initiatives and top-down institutional decisions can create valuable synergy.**

Trends in the Offering of Curricular and Extracurricular Courses

While sustainable development is an established or newly emerging component in many of the existing bachelor’s and master’s programmes at LERU universities¹¹⁹, it can be argued that new bachelor’s and master’s programmes dedicated entirely to sustainable development, or aspects of it, are another cornerstone of ESD. In fact, the need for new ESD programmes is being debated in LERU universities **versus the need to reform existing education to include sustainable development**. This debate affects ESD in a broad sense, from individual conferences, courses and programmes to entire faculties and the university as a whole. Although the consensus among LERU universities is that **both new aspects and modifications to existing education are needed, the question that each university must address is what balance is needed.**

In many bachelor’s and master’s degree programmes focused on sustainable development at LERU universities, **inter- or transdisciplinary perspectives are central features**. Although universities have made significant progress in this regard, it is well documented that truly inter- or transdisciplinary structures are not easy to develop¹²⁰. Challenges such as the acceptance of interdisciplinarity as a unique complex of competencies different from disciplinary science or adequate recognition in funding and career advancement, although they are being addressed, are slow to take hold. Since significant efforts are being made to promote and support interdisciplinarity wherever it is desired, it is clear

¹¹⁹ And, in fact, also at PhD level, but this is not within the scope of this work.

¹²⁰ See, for example, the 2016 and 2023 LERU papers on interdisciplinarity: Wernli, D., Darbellay, F., & Maes, K. (2016). Interdisciplinarity and the 21st century research-intensive university. LERU. <https://www.leru.org/publications/interdisciplinarity-and-the-21st-century-research-intensive-university> & Wernli, D., & Ohlmeyer, J. (2023). Implementing interdisciplinarity in research-intensive universities: good practices and challenges. LERU. <https://www.leru.org/publications/implementing-interdisciplinarity-in-research-intensive-universities-good-practices-and-challenges>

that sustainable development acts as a fertile testing ground for further developing ambitious interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary structures, innovative institutes, etc.

Given their important role in educating current and future generations of experts and decision-makers, it makes sense for universities to link the Sustainable Development Goals to the desired outcomes of university-wide education. It is clear **that there is no one-size-fits-all solution: different disciplines and different faculties require tailor-made solutions**. In order to accelerate efforts to firmly integrate ESD into university teaching portfolios, it is essential to conceive of this effort as an ongoing participatory process, in which bottom-up and top-down initiatives ideally interact synergistically.

The creation of a compulsory education project aimed at several tens of thousands of students is a major challenge for universities. **It requires strong institutional anchoring of sustainable development, concerted consultation and planning efforts, well-developed coordination and communication channels**, and other issues, including **compliance with external frameworks** governing universities' educational programmes, as well as the availability of **human and financial resources**.

In addition to the bachelor's and master's degree programmes, there are many extracurricular courses and educational activities on sustainable development at LERU universities. These range from electives to workshops, living labs, pre-semester weeks, and face-to-face or online teaching. Currently, all of these courses are voluntary; No university has yet a sustainable development course that is mandatory for all students, although in some cases individual faculties or departments have made them mandatory. **It is expected that in the coming years there will be a shift towards more compulsory courses, especially when there is strong support from university management.**

Among **the practical obstacles**, LERU colleges note that course structures often prevent students from taking additional courses outside of their general curriculum. Providing ECTS credits for voluntary courses, certificates of course completion, etc. can help **make voluntary courses attractive to students from all disciplinary backgrounds**.

Lifelong learning

It is important to include lifelong learning (LLL, or continuing education¹²¹) in a discussion of ESD. LERU universities deliver lifelong learning on sustainable development through on-campus and online learning programmes, such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), SPOCs (Small Private Online Courses), etc., **thus reaching many more students**

¹²¹ The goal of continuing education (LLL) is to enable people to access lifelong education and ensure that everyone has the knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to thrive in their personal and professional lives. LLL students can be working or retired professionals, local or distance learners, interested citizens of all ages, and all types of students with varied educational backgrounds.

than they can otherwise¹²². In many cases, micro-credentials are being developed, as a way to certify the learning outcomes of short-term learning experiences.

LERU universities see lifelong learning as an opportunity to **strengthen the commitment of their cities and regions** to the issue of sustainable development, as well as other issues. On-campus LLL courses are regularly used as a means of networking between academia, business, and local government.

Staff training

Staff training is an important area of change at LERU universities¹²³. There is a growing awareness in LERU universities and elsewhere that **the “train-the-trainer” aspect, i.e. the training of those who train others, is a critical element in the expansion of ESD**. While many teachers already include sustainable development in their classes, others may not be as interested or may be interested but don’t know how to get started. It simply cannot be assumed that all staff involved in learning and teaching have a good understanding of sustainability issues. **Staff need support and feel safe** to make changes to enable this. Therefore, an important task for university management is to achieve acceptance and adoption without making training mandatory for all teaching staff in all contexts.

As mentioned above, academic freedom is a value that is highly valued at LERU and other universities, and entails duties and responsibilities, both in research and teaching. LERU universities have experienced that when staff training is imposed, it risks becoming a potentially ineffective box-ticking exercise. On the other hand, voluntary training runs the risk of attracting those who are already convinced and not reaching certain officials.

Beyond teaching staff, LERU universities have noted that providing support and resources to professional and administrative staff, regardless of whether they are directly or indirectly involved in ESD, is of considerable benefit.

Conclusion

For some years now, sustainability and sustainable development have been on LERU’s agenda. LERU’s ad hoc group on sustainable development, which was formed in 2021,

122 For example, 80.000 students have so far enrolled in the University of Copenhagen’s MOOC on the Sustainable Development Goals; more than 55.000 students in the Lund University MOOC “Circular Economy - Sustainable Materials Management”.

123 Training is at the top of the list of opportunities cited by higher education institutions in an IAU report in Toman, I., van’t Land, H., & Harris, M. (2023). 3rd IAU Global Survey Report on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development. Accelerating action for the SDGs in higher education. International Association of Universities, pag. 11. https://iau-aiu.net/IMG/pdf/iauhesdsurvey2023_accelerating_actions.pdf – also: “The survey found that teaching and learning is the area with the highest commitment to sustainable development (86.2%), followed by research (79.4%) and campus operations (67.8%). Respondents considered campus operations, community engagement, and vision/mission to be essential areas of engagement by respondents, although they needed to be developed.”

has been an important forum for discussing, comparing, learning from each other, and helping to shape LERU's experience in sustainable development.

LERU universities are willing to learn from each other, to reflect and be stimulated by the continuously emerging innovative practices provided by their member universities and, where appropriate, to adapt successful strategies to their own environment. In this way, LERU universities aim to live up to society's expectations and provide the necessary catalyst for the required transformation processes. In addition, LERU raises awareness at European, international and cross-sectoral level among policymakers and other stakeholders, and invites other institutions to join the debate and transformation.

12. Institut des Amériques (IdA)

Françoise Moulin Civil - President Ida / Carlos Quenan - Vice-President Ida (with the collaboration of Luis Miguel Camargo - Deputy Administrative Manager Ida)

Session 1: Higher Education and mobility promoting research in the European, Latin American, and Caribbean area

What experiences has your institution/organization/network had in terms of mobility schemes with counterparts from the other region?

As an "institutionalised network of institutions," the Institute of the Americas (IdA) does not participate in "traditional" mobility schemes with counterparts in the Latin American region. However, within the framework of its role, which has to do in substance with the "added value of networks", the IdA has 12 international poles in the Americas that allow it to develop its own mobility scheme. In fact, linked to the "cœur de métier" of the IdA, i.e. the sending of doctoral students-coordinators to the international poles of Latin America and the Caribbean who interact with higher education establishments and other institutions that host them, a process of exchange and mobility is developed. On the one hand, the welcome and support of these institutions with respect to our doctoral students-coordinators; On the other hand, it opens up possibilities for mobility to France for researchers and students who participate in the scientific animation activities of the international poles.

In addition, as a GIS (Groupement d'intérêt scientifique or Grouping of Scientific Interest) that brings together 60 universities and higher education establishments, the IdA compiles each year the list of incoming and outgoing mobilities (chairs of visiting professors/researchers in France / members of the network invited in the Americas). This is elaborated with the help of the delegates of the poles, and then published in the

Lettre of the IdA. We may try to make our files available to the Matrix and provide the information on a regular basis.

The IdA also disseminates calls for French mobility programmes such as ECOS, Prefalc, FMSH, IEA, etc. through our website.

What would be the lessons learnt and the biggest challenges in this respect, and how could they be overcome?

The collection of information, its dissemination and the promotion of cross-initiatives should be strengthened (e.g. involving some network events of these incoming mobilities / putting teachers from the French network going to the Americas in contact with our international poles: coordinators and local referents).

As far as international hubs are concerned, maintaining relations with one or another institution in a sustainable manner remains a constant challenge. With regard to the lessons learned: not directing the poles according to preconceived themes and building the offer of scientific animation of the pole around the research topics of the doctoral students-coordinators provides a remarkable impetus and vitality to cooperation actions (emergence of innovative research topics, events of different scope but of great impact, opening up research in dialogue with actors from civil society, the political world, art...).

How could mobility schemes promoted by different actors be linked and thus enhance exchanges and work between research communities in both regions?

In the case of the IdA, it is necessary to coordinate better in advance (year -1) with the mobility project managers of the member universities of our network. A session to launch the compilation framework with a communication programme on social networks and a more systematic articulation with structuring projects.

It is necessary to further strengthen the synergies between French and European cooperation actors present in Latin America. For example, the IdA collaborates with two UMIFREs in Lima and Mexico City, but also with the Franco-Argentine Centre (CFA) in Buenos Aires and other major cities in Argentina, with the French Institut des Recherches pour le Développement (IRD) and the future IRL of the Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Sao Paulo, as well as with diplomatic missions and Alliances Française in most international hubs. In all cases, greater coordination with Team Europe in each Latin American country is required.

Session 2: Universities in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and their cooperation in research infrastructures

Which experiences has your institution/organisation/network made regarding cooperation related to research infrastructures with partners from the other region?

The notion of research infrastructures is probably more suited to the so-called “hard sciences”. However, the IdA, as a Scientific Interest Group that develops and promotes research dynamics, can be assimilated to this notion. In addition, the IdA collaborates and develops cooperation activities with institutional mechanisms that have characteristics close to research infrastructures, for example, the MUFAMEX (Réseau de Recherche France Mexique).¹²⁴

What are the most significant developments and gaps, and how could these be overcome?

Progress has been made in working together and addressing specific issues (the gender issue, the significance of the Caribbean in the bi-regional relationship, etc.), but there is a need for greater articulation of the actions and initiatives of the IdA with the priorities of the JIRI, the construction of the ALCUE Common Area for higher education and the Bi-regional Agenda.

How could bi-regional research infrastructure cooperation initiatives be enhanced and create more impact?

The answer to this question should be one of the key products of the workshop organised by the EULAC Foundation: to promote greater articulation between the JIRI and the actors involved in the concretization of the ALCUE Common Area for higher education.

Session 3: Research agendas and networks focusing on global challenges (Green Transition, Health, Digitalization) in European, Latin American, and Caribbean Universities

What experiences has your institution/organisation/network made with research on global challenges with partners from the other region?

¹²⁴ MUFAMEX - Réseau de Recherche France Mexique (<https://www.muframex.fr/>)

In this regard, the IdA has developed a rich experience as one of the founding members of the Permanent Academic Forum Latin America and the Caribbean - European Union¹²⁵ which, in close interaction since its creation in 2012 with the EU-LAC Foundation, has considered the decisive importance of global challenges (e.g. the important role of universities, international university cooperation and the bi-regional Common Higher Education Area in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda). This topic has been the subject of analysis and proposals, in particular in the Academic Summits and in the Permanent Reflection Groups of the FAP ALC-UE, more specifically in the Reflection Groups “Links between the Academy and Public Policies” and “Links between the Academy and Society”.

In terms of the activities of the IdA itself, we can highlight the annual colloquium IdA-EULAC-AFD-MEAE, which is held within the framework of the Latin American and Caribbean Week (SALC) in France and which is “multi-actor” (academics, policy makers, NGOs...) and focused on global challenges and bi-regional cooperation, despite the fact that we believe that it is not sufficiently conceived and prepared with counterparts in the Latin American region. It is also worth considering here the process of organization and the content of the biannual Congress of the IdA, devoted to current research topics that also involve, of course, North America, and are linked to global challenges.

What shared interests and lessons learnt between research centres in both regions whose work focuses on global challenges?

We note that there is growing concern, especially in the face of the challenges posed by the financing of research and innovation projects. This is partly due to the change in state research funding models and the specificities of public-private dialogue in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. On the other hand, there is a better way to identify shared interests, especially with regard to countries’ science policies.

The question of learning requires an in-depth study that can be a decision of the meetings organised by the EULAC Foundation. In the Matrix there is already material to make a first assessment.

How could existing bi-regional networks and consortia be better articulated to create greater synergies and thus increase the impact of research for sustainable development?

Jointly organised congresses and colloquiums between bi-regional networks and consortia are already a good field for cooperation. It is likely that an effort will need to be made at

125 Foro Académico Permanente América Latina y el Caribe - Unión Europea (FAP ALC-UE) (<http://www.fap-alc-ue.com>)

the level of publication/dissemination of the results and conclusions of the activities of these networks and consortia.

On the other hand, the IdA and the FAP ALC-UE can aim to strengthen the links in networks and consortia focused on sustainable development of institutions such as the IRD (member of the IdA) in the case of France, which has already participated in several ALCUE Academic Summits.

Session 4: Innovation hubs in European, Latin American and Caribbean universities and their links with productive actors and the community

What have been good practices or experiences regarding hubs and innovation initiatives among universities in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe?

Some good practices that should be examined: the CMQs (Campus des métiers et des qualifications, Campus des professions et des qualifications) which bring together several higher education and technical training establishments around a pole of competences in the regions of France and which develop cooperation actions with states, provinces or regions of Latin American countries in connection with productive sectors.

What needs and “blind spots” exist in this respect and deserve more attention in bi-regional programmes and initiatives that foster innovation and research?

How could capacity building and scientific knowledge exchange between research centres and innovation-driven initiatives in both regions be enhanced?

In relation to these two points and the previous one, it would be advisable to consult and follow the meetings, as well as the reflections and products produced within the framework of the ALCUE University-Business Network¹²⁶. The ALCUE University-Business Network actively participates in the activities of the FAP ALC-UE and contributes decisively to the animation of the Permanent Reflection Group “Links between the Academy and Society”.

126 Red Universidad-Empresa ALCUE (<https://www.redue-alcue.org/>)

Session 5: Opportunities and Challenges in Articulating Actors and Initiatives Promoting Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union in Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

Rather than giving a specific answer to the questions raised, we refer to a brief reflection on the urgent need to put the construction of the Common Area for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation back among the priorities of the bi-regional relationship.

Here are the main points of this reflection:

- The III Summit of Heads of State and Government CELAC-EU held in Brussels in July 2023 after eight years of interruption of bi-regional meetings and the proposals adopted at it are extremely positive events.
- However, the absence of reference to the construction of the Common Area in the Declaration of the III CELAC-EU Summit must be regretted. The construction of the Common Area has been, since its origins, one of the pillars of the bi-regional Strategic Partnership announced in 1999. This has been embodied, thanks to the action of the bi-regional academic community, in Chapter 9 of the Action Plan adopted at the 2015 CELAC-EU Summit.
- The fundamental challenge is therefore to resume, taking into account the current circumstances and context, the priority of building the Common Higher Education Area closely articulated with the JIRI and in the perspective of the IV CELAC-EU bi-regional Summit that will take place in Colombia in 2025.
- Given the importance of the Global Gateway Investment Agenda and the interest in strengthening its relations with bi-regional research and higher education networks, consortia and initiatives, it is necessary to promote, among other things, a greater articulation between the next Academic Summit and the Economic-Business Summit, as happened in part in the CELAC-EU Summits of 2013 and 2015.
- The IdA intends to redouble its efforts to enrich and promote the initiatives and proposals of the FAP ALC-UE and, working with all the actors involved, to mobilise its institutional relations and its international poles in the perspective of strengthening the Common Area of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and the organization of the preparatory seminars for the next Bi-regional Academic Summit.
- It is also necessary to remobilise the bi-regional academic community to reinforce the bottom-up dynamic that allowed the launch of the Academic Summits process in 2012-2013. To this end, IdA intends to relaunch the involvement of its 60 members by inviting them to participate in a workshop that, organised jointly with the EU-LAC Foundation, will take place in Paris on May 31 within the framework of SALC

2024. This working session, aimed mainly at the vice-presidents/vice-rectors of International Relations of the higher education establishments that make up the IdA, will make them aware of the collective work carried out around the consolidation of the Common Higher Education Area developed by the FAP ALC-UE together with other actors and the process of building the Matrix of Objectives and Strategic Lines for the construction of this Area coordinated by the EU-LAC Foundation.

13. Foro Académico Permanente ALC-UE (FAP ALC-UE)

1. The III CELAC-EU Summit held on July 18 and 19, 2023, agreed that the IV CELAC-EU Summit will be held in Colombia in 2025.
2. The results of the Third Summit can be considered important, both because they were held after eight years of interruption in the process of summit diplomacy, and because of some specific agreements on economic matters, investments, cooperation, as well as the agreement on fundamental political issues.
3. However, many relevant issues were not considered.
4. Perhaps what generates the most concern is that the wealth of proposals, agreements, and coincidences accumulated during the previous Summits was not taken into account and was wasted, until the one held in 2015 in Brussels, in which a broad Action Plan with 10 axes was agreed for the strategic relationship, whose foundations and contents continue to be addressed. duly updated to the current reality.¹²⁷
5. Before, during and after the III Summit in 2023, both parties insisted on the “relaunch” of EU-LAC relations, in the new stage to be addressed and the new challenges to be faced. However, this new stage must not be built by ignoring what has already been achieved in the strategic relationship since 1999, nor the path designed at the 2015 Summit.
6. One of the new axes introduced in the Action Plan in 2015 was that of Higher Education (Chapter 9) thanks to the impetus and proposals of the Bi-regional Academic Community since 2013. It is undoubtedly thematically linked to axis or chapter 1, Science, Research, Innovation and Technology, which gave rise to the JIRI.

¹²⁷ Heads of State and Government of the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission (2015, June 11). Declaración Política «Una asociación para la próxima generación». https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/266608/EU-CELAC%20Political%20declaration_ES.pdf; Declaración de Bruselas «Modelar nuestro futuro común: trabajar por unas sociedades prósperas, cohesionadas y sostenibles para nuestros ciudadanos». https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/266601/EU-CELAC%20Brussels%20Declaration_ES.pdf; PLAN DE ACTUACIÓN UE-CELAC. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/266609/EU-CELAC%20Action%20plan_ES.pdf

7. Unfortunately, in the Declaration of the III CELAC-EU Summit of 2023 there is no mention of Higher Education despite the extensive programme of meetings and seminars of the academic community developed to contribute to the III CELAC-EU. (The word education only appears once, among others)

Some suggestions on the agenda of the IV CELAC-EU Summit and the common space for higher education and JIRI

- Recover the 2015 Action Plan, adapted to the new global and regional circumstances, taking advantage of its ordering nature for the future of the strategic partnership.
- To return to the tradition of the Parallel Summits of organised civil society that had been held since the Vienna Summit (Five sectors met in parallel at each Official Summit until 2015).
- Education, science, technology and innovation must be the essence of our relationship, with a bi-regional institutional framework that covers the multiple initiatives of the universities of both regions, which make up an important network of cooperation and research, with their 50 million students and 3 million professors.
- In specific areas, among others, to recover the proposal to create a Common Area for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, through a CELAC-EU Academic Integration Agreement (Proposal of the V Academic Summit 2023)¹²⁸
- In this agreement, the two initiatives are integrated: JIRI and the Common Area for Higher Education.
- The official Summit this time should start with an Academic, Science, Technology and Innovation Summit, instead of starting with a Business Summit as the III in Brussels began. That would be a powerful signal.

What do we need to position education, and especially higher education, as the academic pillar of the strategic partnership (also not mentioned at the III Summit)?

A solid, unique story, its own. To address key issues through education:

- The value disconnect that has been occurring between the two regions, for example, with respect to:
 - Russia's War

¹²⁸ FAP ALC-UE (2023, July 8). Acuerdo de Integración Académica CELAC-UE para la creación del Espacio Común de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación. <https://www.fap-alc-ue.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Propuesta-Acuerdo-FAP-ALC-UE.pdf>

- The Siege of Democracy and Models Alienated to European-Latin American Values
- The Welfare State

This is a consequence of the excessive economic-commercial imprint, thinking that FTAs would bring a community of values, when they only bring a community of interests, and therefore changing.

We must recover the community of values, and that is why we must invest in education, and especially in higher education, with the critical mass represented by the academic community.

- Propose a “Global Education Gateway” for the IV SUMMIT, associated with the recovery of Area + JIRI, for global challenges.

