



## COMMON VISION AND ACTION PLAN

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## FOREWORD

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This document constitutes the final version of Deliverable 6.4 of the project in accordance with the Description of the Action included in the contract.

Its dimension and format take into account the comments received in the Final Conference of the project and the restricted Policy Round Table with EU officials that were held in Brussels on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2019 as well as discussions with the incoming Presidency of CELAC. It concentrates into the more operational aspects and synthetizes the content of a longer document that will be uploaded in the website of the project.

It comprises three parts:

- The first presents the new approach that has been developed by EULAC Focus in order to analyse, from a policy-oriented perspective, European Union – Latin America and Caribbean (EU – LAC) relations.
- The second is the main one and is divided in two sections:
  - o one of general policy recommendations; and
  - o a second one describing a set of proposed strategies, qualified as “ambitiously modest” in order to emphasize its two main parameters: accepting all the restrictions and constraints that exist (so: “modest”) but intending to really contribute to the strengthening and the improvement of EU – LAC relations by leading to “actions” and not simply to “words” (so: “ambitious”).
- The third is very short and responds directly to a request in the Expert Review Report of the second Periodic Report of the project: giving sustainability to the project itself.

The document is also meant to be the basis for the Technical Final Report to be submitted in conformity with article 20.4 of the Grant Agreement.

## PART I: THE GENERAL APPROACH

### 1 WHY A NEW APPROACH IS NEEDED FOR THE ANALYSIS OF EU – LAC RELATIONS

The literature review carried out by EULAC Focus has led to the identification of two main risks in the analysis of EU – LAC relations.

The first is that of confusing the EU with its Member States. EULAC Focus, while asserting that the EU can also become (and should strengthen its role as) a framework for Member States collaboration, emphasizes that the EU is a separate legal and political entity with its own life and its own policies.

The second is that of ending up suggesting, recommending or proposing changes in the EU policy or policies towards LAC that, in fact, imply changes in the EU Treaties, i.e. changes in the EU's nature, because the EU does not have the competences to develop many of the changes of policy that are suggested, recommended or proposed. In order to avoid this risk, EULAC Focus research has rigorously been directed to reach policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations to be accepted and implemented on the basis of the EU Treaties as they stand at present. This approach is also warranted by the study of EU – LAC scenarios (deliverable 6.3 of the project).

Therefore, EULAC Focus has conducted an extremely detailed study of the institutional framework of EU – LAC relations, highlighting, in particular, the specific nature of the EU as an actor in international relations (deliverable 6.1 of the project). It has been guided by the discussion of the four cross-cutting issues (Mobility, Inequality, Diversity and Sustainability) carried out by work-package 2 (deliverables 2.1 to 2.4). The “horizontal” perspective of work-packages 2 and 6 has given coherence to the “vertical” work of the thematic work-packages 3, 4 and 5 on cultural, scientific and social policies.

EULAC Focus does not proceed from theories and views of international relations to the specific policies that “**should**” be defined and implemented, mainly by the EU, in the framework of EU - LAC relations, assuming (wrongly) that the EU is able to do whatever stems from this discussion. It proceeds from the specific competences attributed to the EU and the policies it defines and implements on their basis to actions that “**can**” be developed in the EU-LAC framework.

### 2 EULAC FOCUS ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

As a methodological guide for its analysis, EULAC Focus adapts an Analytical Framework (AF) proposed in an ambitious 2002 research project of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB/BID) on regional integration.<sup>1</sup> The AF proposes a non-unidimensional/non-unidirectional view of regional integration (and other international processes) and focuses the preconditions, the

<sup>1</sup> *Bridges for Development: Policies and Institutions for Trade and Integration*, R. Devlin and A. Estevadeordal, eds., Inter-American Development Bank, 2003, Chapter 6. Available in <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Bridges-for-Development-Policies-and-Institutions-for-Trade-and-Integration.pdf>

objectives, the instruments, and the dimensions of the regional, bi-regional, bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral processes to be analysed.

- The analysis of preconditions must be unbiased and emphasize the change of circumstances when it occurs.
- It is considered that setting the objectives does not mean producing a long list of them, but, on the contrary, specifying the main ones and articulating them in one or two overall political ones and a small set of intermediates ones designed to pursue the former.
- Instruments are classified in four categories: Legal Rules, Public Activities, Redistribution through the budget and Diplomatic Instruments. This categorization is essential for the analysis of EU – LAC relations in the areas covered by EULAC Focus because EU internal policies (and EU relations with third countries and other regions of the world) make a use extremely different of these instruments.
- And four dimensions are considered: The external dimension, effective content, strength and capacity of adaptation.

They should not be confused with the objectives: objectives can legitimately change and be left aside. This is not the case with the dimensions: they are always there; they define the map, or the space, of regional/bi-regional/international relations. It is politically legitimate for a process to advance in one dimension and remain static or even move backwards in the other. But the analyst (and the policy maker) cannot brush aside the second development and only take into account the first: a step backwards in one dimension is always a step backwards in the process, whatever the advances in the other dimensions (European Union integration has become, in the last 30 years, the main example of this: Based on its high capacity of adaptation, it has achieved a relevant progress in the dimension of effective content, which, however, has gone hand-in-hand with setbacks in strength and an insufficient progress in its external dimension).

### 3 IDENTIFYING CROSS CUTTING CHALLENGES

EULAC Focus began by identifying four challenges that cut across the policies to be analysed and that could serve as criteria on whose basis the actions defined and implemented in the bi-regional framework could be assessed. They are the following:

- Fostering Mobility
- Reducing Inequality
- Preserving and Respecting Diversity
- Giving Sustainability

They could also be considered, in terms of EULAC Focus Analytical Framework, as specific “Bi-regional Objectives” to be achieved by bi-regional policies and actions. Deliverables of work-package 2, and, in particular, Del. 2.4 (Synthesis Report on Cross-cutting Topics) justify the choice of them and apply them to the different policy areas covered by EULAC Focus. Deliverables of the three thematic work-packages 3, 4 and 5 use also them for the same purpose.

Of course, the choice of these challenges is in itself political and other challenges could be identified and addressed. What EULAC Focus strongly recommends, both to policymakers and to analysts, is to proceed explicitly at this identification in order to give a more operational meaning to the discourse on the “strategic partnership” and the ways of improving or strengthening it.

## 4 LAC AS A REGION?

EULAC Focus was conceived as a project on some dimensions of EU – **CELAC** (Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños) relations, taking at face value the substance and the form of EU – CELAC Summit Declarations and their Plans of Action. Therefore, one of its first tasks was to conduct an in-depth analysis of CELAC, its Summits and their Plans of Action, as well as of EU-CELAC Summit Declarations and Plans of Action. Deliverable 6.3 on Scenarios for bi-regional relations examined also the prospects of CELAC/LAC integration and of bi-regional relations.

However, the results of the research led to the conclusion that CELAC could not become a full partner of the EU for bi-regional relations; and that no replacement for CELAC can be envisaged, at least in the short and middle term. These results were confirmed by the facts, those internal to CELAC and those unfolding in the framework of EU – CELAC relations. As a consequence of this, the project had to accept that the EU partner will be “LAC”, i.e. the states of Latin America and the Caribbean. The different integration processes developing in the different sub-regional groupings of LAC countries were also studied. But CELAC’s lack of international, and in particular bi-regional, “actorness” cannot be replaced by that of these integration processes, which do not even appear as such in the agreements their member countries sign with the European Union (a legal fact of the most profound political significance).<sup>2</sup>

The conclusion seems unavoidable: for the foreseeable future, bi-regional relations will remain EU-driven as only the EU qualifies as a real “region” from a policy perspective. The real issue becomes, then, twofold:

- How to articulate these EU-driven EU-LAC relations with the set of relations established by the EU (and its Member States) with the different sub-regional LAC groupings and individual countries? The “articulation problem” underlies the whole EULAC Focus Plan of Action.
- How to increase the convergence between the political dialogue, a ‘diplomatic instrument’, in terms of EULAC Focus’ Analytical Framework, which maybe can continue developing at the bi-regional level, with the ‘public activities’ that give real content to this bi-regional relation and for which there is no LAC counterpart of the EU (or, at least, how to avoid

<sup>2</sup> The only exception remaining the 1995 agreement between the European Community and its Member States and MERCOSUR and its States Parties, for very specific reasons explained in deliverable 6.1 of the Project.



political dialogue and public activities developing in parallel tracks)? This is again one of the main analytical and political issues underlying EULAC Focus' Plan of Action.

Therefore, the analytical and policy discussion must, unfortunately but also necessarily, focus the EU and its policies, as LAC regional policies are very difficult to identify or even to envisage. A fundamental challenge, however, arises then: how to avoid a Eurocentric perspective and how to take Latin American perspectives into account, even if there is no uniform Latin American approach.

Additionally, EULAC Focus research must also conclude that the decades-long effort to export to Latin America the "European model" of regional integration has completely failed. EULAC Focus considers that this failure should be recognized; and its Analytical Framework provides the framework for a good explanation of it. Indeed, the intended exportation did not take into account that the preconditions and objectives of Western European integration did not apply to Latin America. The main precondition in Europe was the dramatic and bloody experience of 70 years of armed conflict (with long intermediate periods of generalized hunger), which justified as main objective that of promoting peace through the "taming" of sovereignty through regional cooperation/integration. Whereas in LA, in the absence of such a long period of armed conflict, most countries continue to strive today to defend sovereignty against external forces. Of course, and as thoroughly discussed in deliverable 6.1 of the project, preconditions and objectives have changed in the last 20 years in the EU, which explains its current difficulties.

## 5 HOW TO VIEW THE EU AND THE POLICY CHALLENGES FACED BY THE EU IN ITS EXTERNAL ACTION?

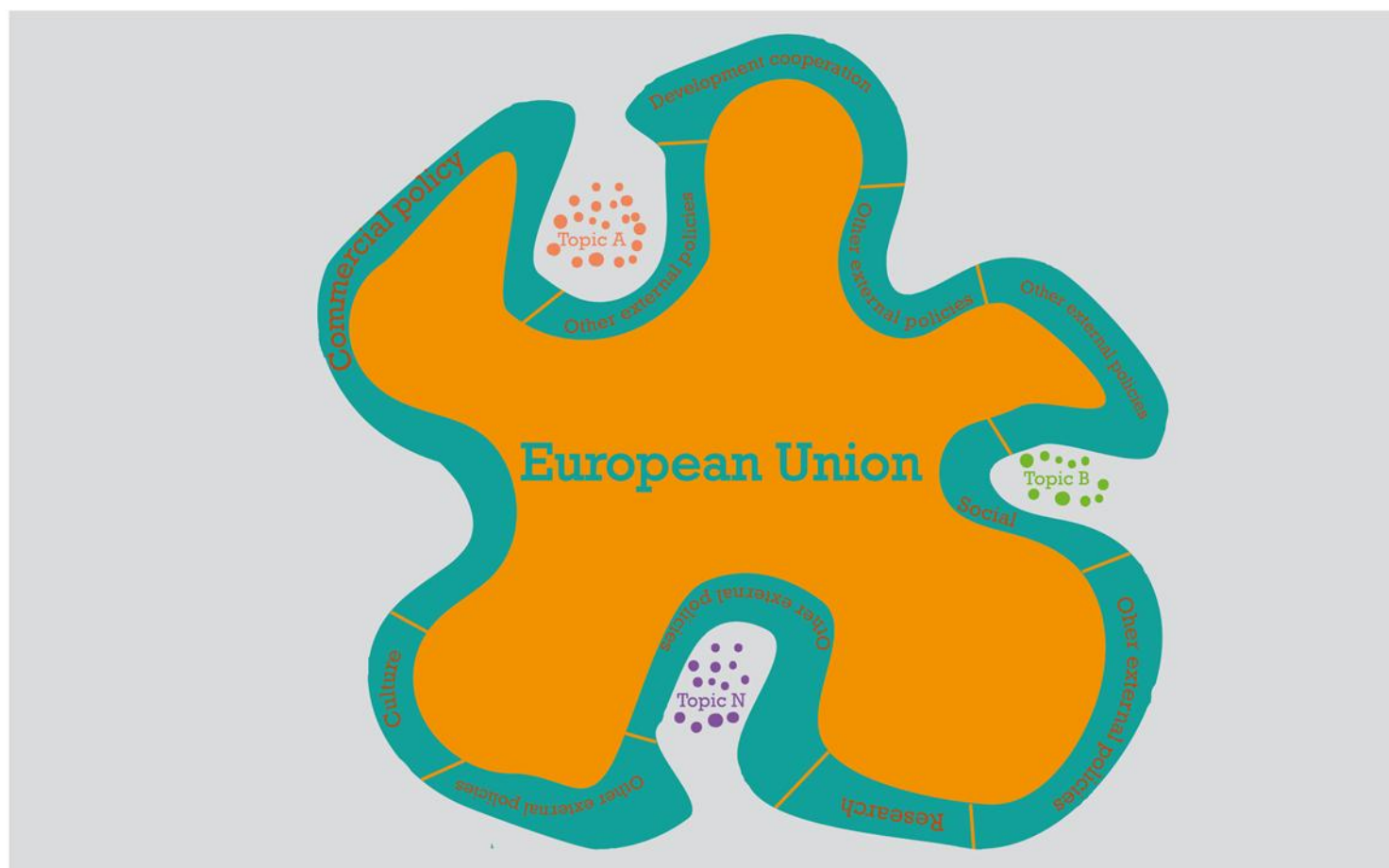
The EU is not a sort of amorphous organic amoeba like that shown in the first of the two following graphics<sup>3</sup>,

- endowed with a very sensitive cell membrane (a foreign policy embracing all its internal policies) and
- able to crawl around the whole map of policies and, in particular, external relations policies, and
- able to tackle any problem that appears in the world (the dots in the graphic)

in order to do what the analyst considers it **should** do, embracing and phagocytizing any problem, and giving to it a nice and brilliant solution.

From a heuristic perspective, it is much more fruitful to compare it to an architectural game or to a LEGO (see the second of the following graphics)

<sup>3</sup> The graphics are a contribution by Nicole Font (OBREAL).



## The External Relations of the European Union: the amoeba model

Figure 1 The external relations of the European Union: the amoeba model

## THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE ARCHITECTURAL / LEGO MODEL

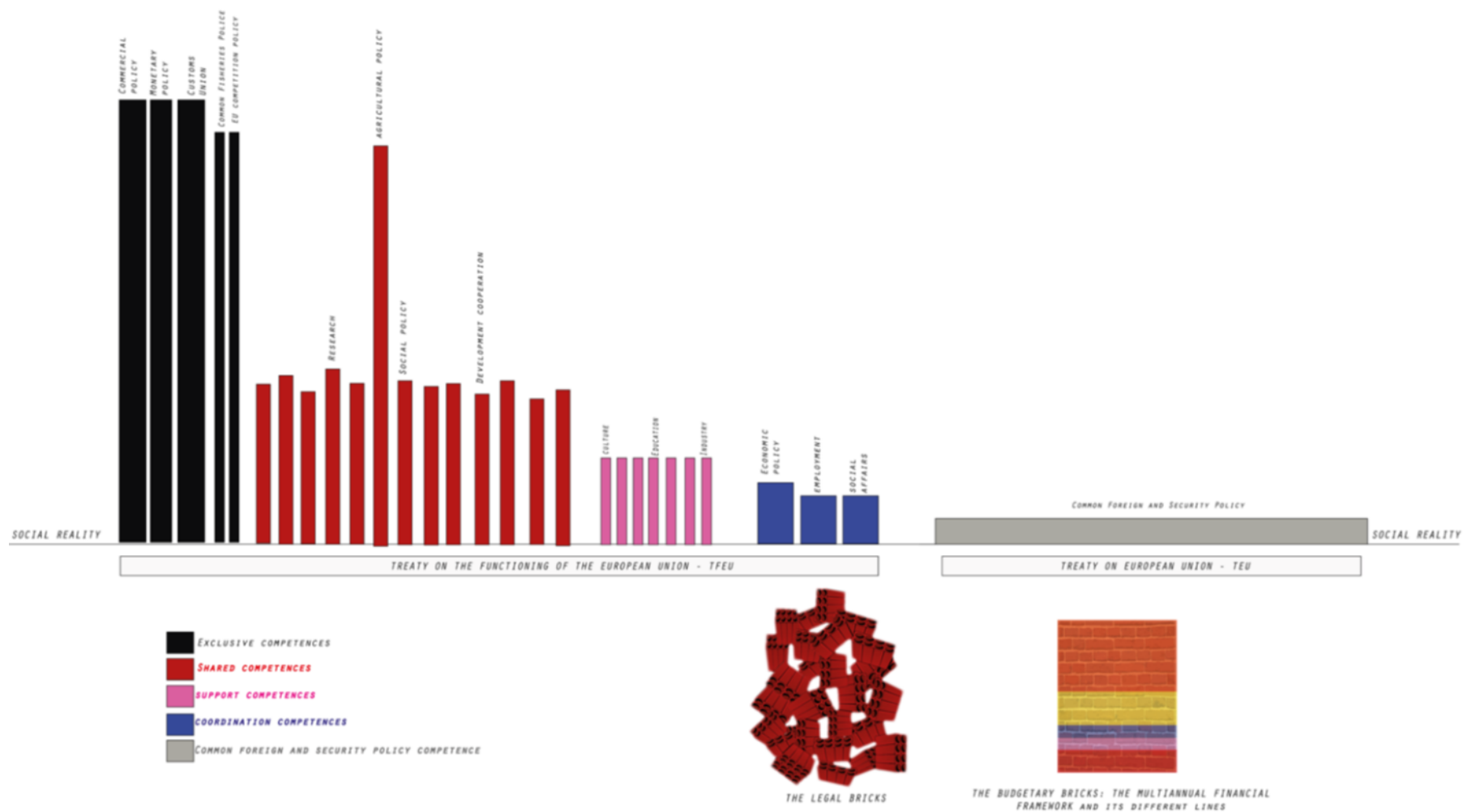


Figure 2 The European Union: The Architectural / LEGO model

## 5.1 EXPLANATION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL / LEGO MODEL<sup>4</sup>:

1.- The Union has no sovereignty (in singular) nor a “general competence”<sup>5</sup>. It only has specific competences, attributed to it by specific provisions of the Treaties: The competence on common foreign and security policy attributed by the Treaty on European Union – TEU - (the grey low column in the graphic) and those conferred by the introductory provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union – TFEU-: exclusive, “shared”, “support”, “coordination”<sup>6</sup> (the black, red, rose and violet columns of different width and height in the graphic). The 28 competences enumerated in these introductory TFEU articles are later defined in specific articles of the Treaty. Competences are of different width (scope) and depth – or height - (capacity to take action).<sup>7</sup> These competences are separate and independent from each other (the columns are not integrated; they simply have a common foundation, in fact a twofold foundation: the two Treaties)<sup>8</sup>. **The first prerequisite of any EU policy or action is a legal one: the determination of its legal basis in the Treaties. Can the EU do it?**

2.- The Treaties offer to the Union two boxes of bricks (or pieces of LEGO) in order to build an edifice on the basis of such a structure.

- One is legal, or better, has a legal framework: the mechanisms and procedures allowing the Union to use the instruments of regional integration analysed in EULAC Focus’ Analytical Framework, and in particular, to produce secondary law and to give implementing powers to the European Commission.
- The second is economic: the appropriations in the Union’s budget. But the annual budgets (and all appropriations in them) are, in fact, an implementation of the Union’s Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): it is, in fact, this multiannual MFF that offers, with its multiannual periodicity, the budgetary bricks.

Deliverable 6.1 and the longer version of this deliverable 6.4 of the project study more in depth these two boxes of bricks.

The analyst (and the policy maker) must clearly distinguish which instrument of legal integration (in terms of EULAC Focus’ Analytical Framework) is applied when using the “legal box of bricks”. In order to give some examples in the three main areas studied by EULAC Focus:

<sup>4</sup> Deliverable 6.1 of the project establishes the framework for this explanation and enlarges and deepens the discussion of its different elements. This deliverable is based on deliverable’s 6.1 content.

<sup>5</sup> Nor a competence to determine its own competences (it does not have a Kompetenz-kompetenz).

<sup>6</sup> The distinction between “shared”, “of support” and “of coordination” competences, introduced by the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, can be misleading: these three types of competences are all of them “non-exclusive”, as opposed to the exclusive ones. This division between exclusive/non-exclusive EU competences remains the essential one.

<sup>7</sup> It would be tempting to introduce scales in the horizontal and vertical axes in order to measure, respectively, the scope/width and the height/depth/intensity of the competences (the columns). However, this is impossible and would overstretch the analogy making it misleading. The reasons for it are offered in the extended version of this Deliverable 6.4; they help to deepen the understanding of the attribution of competences to the European Union.

<sup>8</sup> But the Union can exercise some of them jointly (adopting basic legal acts, including international agreements, with “a multiple legal basis in the Treaties”).

- The so-called Open Method of Coordination (in the EU's internal social policy) or, in the external field, the Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) and the Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs) in the framework of EULAC Summits are simply diplomatic instruments (in which participate not only the EU but also its Member States).
- And the EU's legal rules applicable directly to research and culture are nearly non-existent (even if legislations in other areas – for example, intellectual property or audiovisual - have strong effects on these areas that should not be neglected). Contrariwise, legal rules are the essential instrument used for the EU's internal social policy (rules applicable to workers, in particular migrant workers, and working conditions).
- As redistribution through the budget does not apply to these areas (the logic of cohesion/structural/regional funds is very different and responds to other policy objectives), it remains that the focus (from an EU perspective), in the scientific and cultural areas, should be on EU public activities: a) EU own research centres (the Joint Research Centre – JRC-, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology – EIT – and the recently created European Innovation Council) and b) the research and innovation programmes, mainly the EU multiannual Research Framework Programme (Horizon 2020 until 2020 and Horizon Europe for 2021-27); as well as c) Creative Europe in the cultural area. Contrariwise, EU public activities in the internal social policy area are nearly non-existent: they are left to Member States.

The existence of these two boxes of bricks and the need to use both of them at the same time explains why EU action (including external action) follows, because of its inherent nature, a multiannual calendar (that of the MFF). What happens in the middle of these multiannual periods (be it declarations at the highest level in bi-regional Summits) cannot change the main logic and content of the multiannual programmes and actions.

3.- Therefore, the model is completely different from that of an amorphous organic amoeba crawling at will, all the time, in the map of policies, and, in particular, that of external relations, and able to phagocyte any problem or topic existing or arising in that map. **EU policies are an edifice, very painstakingly build, brick by brick (and assembling two completely different types of bricks: the legal and the budgetary), by using a very rigid structure of pre-designed and non-integrated columns (the different EU competences), and subject to the periodicity of the Multiannual Financial Framework<sup>9</sup>.** A fundamental achievement of EU integration lies in the uncontested fact that, in spite of all these enormous architectural difficulties, a consistent edifice has been built and still stands: This must be recognized as an extraordinary success in terms of regional integration, whatever its shortcomings in terms of specific policies.

4.- The Treaty of Lisbon merged the European Community and the European Union but kept separated the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The competence on common foreign and security policy attributed to the Union by the TEU follows a different logic and has a different definition and implementation mechanism from those of the competences attributed to the EU by the TFEU (the former competences attributed to the European Community by the European Community Treaty – ECT -). This gives rise to “two tracks” for EU action. In order to produce “basic legislative acts” leading to implementation measures/programmes that allow for expenditure, the EU cannot rely on its general

<sup>9</sup> One of the more meaningful results of EULAC Focus research has been its analysis of the *Institutional Iter* of representative projects of EU cooperation with LAC (see deliverables 6.1 and the long version of deliverable 6.4). It shows how these projects require a painstaking process of “building” both from the legal and budgetary perspective.

competence on foreign policy attributed by the TEU – articles 24 and 25 TEU explicitly forbid this -; therefore, it must exercise the 28 competences attributed by the TFEU. But these competences, with the exceptions of those on commercial policy and development cooperation, are “introverted”/ “inner-looking” competences: for intra-EU relations and actions, not for external action.

#### 5.- Three challenges arise, then, from the perspective of external relations and, in particular, of EU – LAC relations:

- **How to merge the two tracks (or make them converge):** the TEU track for foreign policy and the TFEU track for the 28 specific competences/policies that were already attributed to the European Community by the ECT.
- **How to give some external dimension (in particular a LAC dimension) to EU competences and policies that are attributed to it for internal action,** in particular those in the domains of culture, science (and higher education) and social policy. The existence of this challenge would advise, in fact, reversing EULAC Focus’ own title. Instead of referring to the “cultural, scientific and social dimension of EU – LAC relations” it would be much better to refer to “how to give a LAC dimension to internal EU cultural, scientific and social policies”. This reversal of the title of the project (and of the Call on whose framework the proposal was submitted) summarizes, in fact, EULAC Focus’ innovative approach and is perfectly in line with the political approach to be followed by the new European Commission 2019 – 2024<sup>10</sup>.
- **How to give coherence to the exercise of the 28 specific competences attributed to the EU by the TFEU,** in particular in their possible LAC dimension.

6.- A fourth challenge arises when EU action gets intertwined with that of Member States -MS- (in some cases, necessarily: for example when EU and MS are joint signatories of international agreements with third countries or participate jointly in diplomatic instruments of dialogue as “bi-regional Summits”): How to give coherence to the joint action of all of them (EU + MS)?

7.- And these challenges must be faced in the framework of an overarching challenge: that of giving coherence to EU policies in general when the EU is not endowed with the equivalent of a Government or of a Head of Government (an essential EU feature analysed in Part III of Deliverable 6.1).

8.- A consequence results from the previous points: The decisive timing, and the decisive policy framework, for the future of EU – LAC relations, in particular in the areas covered by EULAC Focus, is

<sup>10</sup> Indeed, all the “letters of mission” addressed by the new President of the European Commission to the new Commissioners include the following paragraph: *“To ensure our **external action** becomes more strategic and coherent, it will be systematically discussed and decided on by the College. To support this, all services and Cabinets will prepare the external aspects of College meetings on a weekly basis, mirroring the process already in place for interinstitutional relations **This should also better align the internal and external aspects of our work. This will be a ‘Geopolitical Commission’**”*. The letter of mission addressed to Commissioner Mariya Gabriel ([https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-mariya-gabriel-2019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-mariya-gabriel-2019_en.pdf)) states: *“I would like to entrust you with the role of Commissioner for Innovation and Youth. The best investment in our future is in our young people, our innovators and our researchers. Education, research and innovation will be key to our competitiveness and our ability to lead in the transition to a climate-neutral economy and new digital age. It is about equipping people with the knowledge, life experience and skills they need to thrive. Our world-leading science, research and innovation capacity can help us find European solutions to the most pressing global issues”*

not that of EULAC Summits and their Plans of Action but that internal to the EU. It is not even that of the election of the European Parliament and the designation of the European Commission (both 2019 – 2024). **The decisive timing and framework are those of the approval and implementation of the Multiannual Financial Framework (2021 – 2027) and the basic legislative acts, synchronized with it, which will establish the programs to be implemented in the future.** This is why 2020 (and 2021 insofar as this will be, in all likelihood, the year for the initial implementing acts to be adopted by the European Commission) are the decisive years for EULAC Focus set of policy recommendations.

To be more concrete, the decisive period will be the second semester of 2020<sup>11</sup>, as this is the semester in which the German Government will become the rotating Presidency of the EU Council<sup>12</sup>. The Presidency of the EU Council has always been much less important than it seems.<sup>13</sup> However, this importance depends also on which is the government holding it and, very in particular, on the circumstances. As, in all likelihood, the approval of the new Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021 – 2027 and the basic legislative acts to be implemented during that period will only take place at the end of the year, the German Government will play, as President of the EU Council, a decisive role in brokering the final adjustments and compromises. And if they were not approved under the German Presidency of the EU Council, there is the risk that everything will be brought to a halt until the first semester of 2022 (French Presidency of the Council).

<sup>11</sup> The second semester is, in the internal operation of the EU much shorter than the first. It begins, in fact, after the first week of September, when all institutions recover their cruising speed after the summer break.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016D1316&from=EN>

<sup>13</sup> To begin with, it has never had (and continues not to have) the control of the Council's agenda. And its importance has even diminished after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon just 10 years ago (November 2009). Previously, the Presidency of the Council only had "to share" the representation of the EU with the President of the European Commission (EC). Now, it has to compete, additionally, with the High Representative, who leads the European External Action Service (EEAS) independently from the Presidency of the Council; and, in particular, with the non-rotating Presidency of the European Council



## PART II: GENERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND AMBITIOUSLY MODEST STRATEGIES

### 1 GENERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU – LAC RELATIONS RELEVANT FOR EULAC FOCUS' THREE MAIN AREAS

#### 1.1 TO MODESTLY LOOK TO EU (AND EU MEMBER STATES) AND LAC...

**In the world:** accepting the reality of the XXIst century and the decreasing weight of both EU and LAC in the global economy. The World Bank website provides a very useful and pedagogic interactive page,<sup>14</sup> very user-friendly, that allows for all sort of comparisons between different countries by different indicators. The extended version of this deliverable includes a comparison, in terms of GDP and GDP per capita, between three Latin American countries (Brazil, Colombia and Mexico), one of the best performing (in terms of economic growth) member state of the EU (Poland) and two countries of more or less similar population in two different continents (Ethiopia and Vietnam). The results of the comparison vividly illustrate a reality that nobody denies but is not sufficiently internalized in terms of policy design: the sharp decline of LAC and EU member states in terms of their weight in the world economy.

**And internally,** including the consideration of

- very recent EUROSTAT findings on increasing inequality within the EU (see, as only a very recent example, Eurostat's Yearbook 2019<sup>15</sup> - and, in particular, the comparative findings on regional GDP (GDP per inhabitant, 2017, in purchasing power standards – PPS - in relation to the EU-28 average) showing the increase in the number of regions whose GDP per inhabitant is below the 75% of the EU average.<sup>16</sup>
- some unsatisfactory – at least from EULAC Focus perspective- political developments in both continents that question the so-called “traditional democratic common values” of respect of the rule of law, human rights –including those of immigrants-, separation between the State and the Church, etc.

<sup>14</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org>

<sup>15</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/publications/statistical-books/regional-yearbook> and <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/10095393/KS-HA-19%E2%80%91001-EN-N.pdf/d434affa-99cd-4ebf-a3e3-6d4a5f10bb07>

<sup>16</sup> The best way of accessing these findings is through the very pedagogic interactive maps provided by EUROSTAT itself:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2019.json&mids=BKGCNT,C06M01,CNTOVL&o=1,1,0.7&ch=ECF,C06,C02&center=50.03696,19.9883,3&lcis=C06M01&> gives access to the one in the 2019 Yearbook.

A useful presentation in the media is that provided by El País:

[https://elpais.com/economia/2019/10/07/actualidad/1570473780\\_217753.html](https://elpais.com/economia/2019/10/07/actualidad/1570473780_217753.html)



## 1.2 TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OLD AND NEW VIEWS ON THE WORLD:

### How to view the world: North and South or Eastern and Western hemispheres?

Many EU academics and policymakers are relatively unaware that the “hemispheric vision of the world” is very different in the EU and in the Americas. In the EU, children (and adults) are taught that the planet has two hemispheres (North and South); in the Americas the vision is different (in particular in the most sophisticated academic circles specialized in international relations): the two hemispheres are the Eastern (Eurasia and Africa) and the Western (Americas). The different visions have a political and ideological consequence of extreme importance for EU – LAC relations. For the EU, the United States are in its hemisphere (the Northern); but, from a LAC perspective, they are in its hemisphere (the Western).

### Changing views on the world economy and its regulatory framework.

EULAC Focus emphasizes two among them:

- The distinction between “centre” and “periphery” (in any of the perspectives from which it has been proposed) cannot any longer be sustained in a world in which increasing differentiation and inequality are taking place both in the old centre and in the old periphery and where some formerly peripheral countries, and China in the very first place, are emerging (or, rather, re-emerging) as global powers.
- The traditional distinction (that has often been associated to the conception of the European Union as a “normative power”) between “rule-makers” and “rule-takers” must also be revised. It certainly does not fit the actual present state of affairs: it is enough to reflect on the defence by China of the WTO as a normative framework facing the US lack of respect and contempt for it. Following an approach presented by professor Jingxia Shi in the Academic Conference held in the framework of the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires (December 2017)<sup>17</sup>, EULAC Focus would suggest focusing “rule-shaping” (with a very variable degree of incidence by different countries), instead of simply keeping to the distinction between rule-makers and rule-takers.

### A new CEPAL-ECLAC/OECD/EC-DEVCO approach to development and development cooperation.

- A joint document published in September 2018<sup>18</sup> proposes a new paradigm that recognizes that development is an ongoing process, understands that countries at any level of income face development challenges, acknowledges multidimensional measures, embraces tailor-made national strategies and orients the multilateral agenda towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Instead of considering that some countries “graduate” from the process of achieving development goals, it puts forward a multidimensional approach to

<sup>17</sup> <http://intal-lab.iadb.org/thinktrack/> and <https://www.iilj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Call-for-Papers-WTO-11th-Ministerial-Conference-Think-Track-v28-7ing.pdf>

and

<http://ielpo.org/Call%20for%20Papers%20WTO%2011th%20Ministerial%20Conference%20Think%20Track%20v20-8cast.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> *Emerging challenges and shifting paradigms: New perspectives on international cooperation for development* (<https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/44002-emerging-challenges-and-shifting-paradigms-new-perspectives-international>)

development and international cooperation for development that should lead to the adoption of effective policies to address new and persistent structural challenges.

- It proposes that new narratives of development cooperation should move “from graduation to gradation”, using a toolkit based on five pillars. First, international cooperation for development should measure development beyond per capita GDP. Second, the cooperation strategies should be linked to national strategies and reflect a multidimensional approach. Third, the focus of the multilateral agenda should be based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promoting better global public goods. Fourth, the governance and financing approach to cooperation should look beyond official development assistance (ODA) and be multilevel in nature, taking into consideration South-South and triangular cooperation as well as cooperation across different levels of government. Finally, international cooperation should go beyond traditional instruments and include such modalities as innovative instruments of knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and technology transfers.
- This new approach can certainly lead to unwelcomed consequences (mainly to forgetting the responsibility of richer countries “to help” those that are poorer by emphasizing the logic of “interest on both sides because all countries face development problems”). But EULAC Focus proposes to look at it positively because of the emphasis it places in the multidimensionality of development and in the need to revise old and no longer fruitful approaches.
- In the framework of the application to social policies of the new CEPAL-ECLAC/OECD/EC-DEVCO approach to EU Development and Development Cooperation, and besides the more specific suggestions presented in the following section, the following orientations for bi-regional relations can be identified:
  - Update the discourse on development and social issues at the bi-regional level to adopt a holistic and universal perspective and to overcome the outdated north-south divide.
  - Establish a bi-regional platform on social development monitoring.
  - Establish an ambitious EU cooperation programme to exchange welfare experiences between EU and LAC.
  - Strengthen the social dimensions of joint research programmes in the field of social policy between EU and LAC.
  - Build up joint Training and Research Programme(s) on social inclusion policy.

### **1.3 TO QUESTION THE “COMMON HISTORY/VALUES” EULAC NARRATIVE AND TO ACCEPT THE “COMMON LANGUAGES” EULAC REALITY (IN PARTICULAR, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT BREXIT):**

International trade negotiations between the EU and LAC subregions are conducted in English. This could be explained by the extent in which English has monopolized this field, even in the WTO (which, nevertheless, has also French and Spanish as official languages). But what seems absolutely unjustifiable is that EU – LAC Summits Declarations have only one official authentic version: that in

English<sup>19</sup>. This is extremely meaningful<sup>20</sup>. Of course, Latin American Heads of State and Government are still more to blame for this than their EU counterparts, but, precisely because of this, the EU should take a much more offensive stance by underlying that five EU official languages (Spanish, Portuguese, English, French and Dutch) are also official in LAC (taken as a whole). This “commonality” in languages is much more certain and undisputable than all commonalities in history and values so often predicated and places the EU in a much closer relation to LAC than the United States or China.

Of course, taking an offensive EU stance on this issue implies recognizing that two official EU languages deserve a privileged treatment in the framework of EU – LAC relations: Spanish and Portuguese. Brexit, if it finally eventuates, gives a welcome opportunity to reassess the whole cultural/linguistic framework of EU – LAC relations, in particular if the EU effectively recognizes at policy level another undisputed fact: that Spanish and Portuguese rank among the six or seven more important languages in the world.

#### **1.4 TO ACCEPT THAT, AT LEAST FROM THE EU PERSPECTIVE, LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ARE DIFFERENT REALITIES. A FACT THAT MAKES IT VERY DIFFICULT TO BRING BOTH OF THEM UNDER THE SAME POLITICAL UMBRELLA**

The Caribbean is an extremely heterogeneous reality. Very often, references to the Caribbean are in actual fact referred to only a part of it. Therefore, some clarifications are needed:

- The Caribbean embraces islands and continental states. And there are “regional organizations” (for example Universities Caribbean, a very relevant one for EULAC Focus purposes) that also embrace Caribbean areas of proper Latin American States (like Colombia, for example).
- The Caribbean embraces four types of political entities: a) independent States; b) departments of an EU member state (France); c) what in terms of EU law are denominated as “overseas countries and territories”<sup>21</sup>; d) islands under US sovereignty. Their legal and political links to the EU are completely different.
- The population of Caribbean states is widely different, ranking from around eleven million (Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti) to the 70.000 or 52.000 of Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Their GDP per capita is also very different.
- Their history is also different, as well as their cultural background. The knowledge of Spanish (and French) in English speaking Caribbean is surprisingly low taking into account that they are official languages in the biggest Caribbean States.

The “common EU -Caribbean history” is particularly shaped by colonialism and this generates responsibilities on the EU plus Member States side. It is certainly true that the whole, so-called,

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23747/eu-celac-political-declaration\\_es.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23747/eu-celac-political-declaration_es.pdf) . At the end of the Spanish version of the Declaration, a note is added; *The present document is a courtesy translation, provided by the General Secretariat of the Council, of the original English text.*

<sup>20</sup> In particular because of two reasons: First, these declarations have been “pre-cooked” well before the Summit takes place, giving ample time for its translation, at least to the five official EU languages also official in LAC. Secondly, because the EU Council Secretariat has the more powerful Translation Service in the whole world, able in a matter of hours (not to say minutes) to introduce any last-minute changes in the pre-cooked declaration.

<sup>21</sup> See Annex II of the TFEU and Council Decision 2013/755 of 29-XI-2013 - <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32013D0755&from=EN>

“common history” between the EU (or, better, EU Member States) and Latin America and the Caribbean is very “unequally common” as it is decisively shaped by colonialism. However, this is much more acute in the case of the Caribbean, as independence by many Caribbean states was achieved very late and is not yet at all a “past history”; and because the historic importance of slave trade and exploitation is also much more accentuated in the Caribbean and creates unperishable responsibilities in the EU Member States side.

EU – Caribbean relations have been placed most often within the EU – ACP framework, and not in the EU – LAC one.

- Caribbean States that were former British colonies became included in the ACP (African/Caribbean/Pacific) group of countries that were signatories, in 1975, of the Lomé Convention. The Lomé Convention a) gave to them preferential access to the European Community market and b) set up a financial mechanism funded by contributions of Member States to a “basket” that was and remains common but is not integrated into the EC/EU budget. This twofold specific regime, absolutely different from that applying to Latin American states, continues. Haiti and the Dominican Republic became also signatories of the Lomé Convention (Lomé IV) in 1990. Cuba is a member of the ACP group but has never been and is not a signatory of the agreements with the EU that have replaced the Lomé Convention.
- The regional groupings within the ACP Group (including the Caribbean one), and the separate agreements signed by them with the EU, were not created as a result of an endogenous process but as a means to overcome the legal WTO hurdles raised by the long and very damaging dispute on trade on bananas.

The devastating effects of climate change in some Caribbean small states seems to require very specific responses, simply to keep them alive. Building resilience has become not only a main objective, but, in fact, the precondition for any development cooperation. This applies also to Central America.

Brexit, if it finally eventuates, will undoubtedly have on English-speaking Caribbean a very specific effect, whose profile, however, is very unclear.

### **1.5 TO EFFECTIVELY APPLY THE MORE OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE JOINT HIGH REPRESENTATIVE – EUROPEAN COMMISSION APRIL 2019 EU -LAC COMMUNICATION,<sup>22</sup> ENDORSED BY THE EU COUNCIL IN MAY 2019**

The joint High Representative – European Commission April 2019 EU-LAC Communication,<sup>23</sup> endorsed by the EU Council in May 2019, is quite recent and has not yet been internalized in the discourse on EU – LAC relations. Therefore, it deserves a somewhat lengthy quotation as it certainly provides the orientation for future action by the European Commission and the European External Action Service. We select only the sections that cut across cultural, scientific, higher education and social issues. EULAC Focus underlines the following paragraphs:

*1.- From the section on “Partnering for prosperity”*

<sup>22</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/joint-communication-european-parliament-and-council-european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/joint-communication-european-parliament-and-council-european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean_en)

<sup>23</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/joint-communication-european-parliament-and-council-european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/joint-communication-european-parliament-and-council-european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean_en)

*Focused and determined action will be required to revitalise economies and support growth. ... Making results sustainable also means joining forces to reduce socio-economic inequalities, creating decent jobs and making globalisation work for all, and the transition towards a green and circular economy.*

*Promoting the transformation towards a green economy...* EU research, technology and expertise ...could assist LAC in unlocking its enormous potential for sustainable hydro, wind, solar, ocean and geothermal energy, while strengthening energy resilience and creating jobs and business opportunities.

*Promoting the blue economy.* Closer collaboration on the blue economy and the sustainable use of marine resources...

*Promoting sustainable and smart cities.* ... The EU and LAC can benefit from exchanging research and experience available in the area of sustainable urbanisation such as nature-based solutions, low-carbon mobility solutions, or restoration of urban ecosystems. The successful city-to-city cooperation on sustainable urban development, such as the Global Covenant of Mayors, could be scaled up.

*Promoting decent work and competitive and responsible businesses.* ... The EU's successful experience in dialogue with social partners could be shared through the exchange of best practices.

*Closer cooperation should increase the productivity of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).* ... Cooperation in this area will build on the successes of ongoing programmes, supporting business intelligence, MSME networks and start-ups across both regions. The EU should also seek to encourage cooperation between LAC MSMEs and the Enterprise Europe Network. LAC business clusters and networks could take advantage of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

*Investing in knowledge, innovation and human capital.* Both regions should make use of opportunities under Horizon 2020 and the proposed future Horizon Europe programme... The two regions should continue cooperation in higher education, building on the programme Erasmus+, engaging in more higher education exchanges and capacity building, and strengthening regional dialogue among academia and policy makers They could develop closer cooperation on vocational education and training ...

*Advancing the digital economy.* Digital cooperation should be made central to the relationship, assisting the economies of both regions to reap the benefits of new technologies, while promoting innovation and digitalisation. Guided by a long-term vision of a digital single market in LAC, regulatory alignment should be supported, including on 5G, "Internet of Things", Artificial Intelligence, standardisation in technologies for the digital transformation, European Global Navigation Satellite Systems and Copernicus and their industrial application, and investment in high-speed data infrastructure

## *2.- From the section on "Partnering for resilience"*

*Social cohesion is put under constant stress in a context marked by globalisation, social inequality, rapid urbanisation, climate change, environmental degradation, recurring and intensifying disasters, migratory flows and forced displacement. All these challenges pose*

*particular problems for the most vulnerable LAC countries and can be the object of exchange of experience and best practices between the two regions. To sustain progress in development trajectories, the EU proposes a multifaceted and tailored approach to address state, society and ecosystems resilience in the relations between the two regions. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, EU cooperation with LAC should focus on: Climate resilience agenda..., Environment and biodiversity..., Fight against inequality..., Citizen security and the fight against organised crime..., Migration and mobility..., Institutional resilience*

*Cultural cooperation can help make the EU-LAC shared cultural diversity and rich heritage a resource for human development and economic growth. The EU proposes a people-to-people cultural policy approach targeting cultural operators and promoting partnerships, co-productions and exchanges around three pillars: (i) supporting culture as an engine for social and economic development (ii) promoting culture and inter-cultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations and (iii) reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage. This will also help to take advantage of both regions' immense potential in the cultural and creative industries including design, digital services, fashion, music, and audio-visual arts.*

In this context, the European Commission could consider an increased collaboration with the EU-LAC Foundation as a permanent bi-regional promoter of contacts between relevant stakeholders, in particular after it has completed its transformation into a full-fledged international organization.

## **1.6 TO LEARN FROM OTHER BI-REGIONAL RELATIONS AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO CHALLENGE LATIN AMERICA WITH THE PRECEDENT OF THE EU – AFRICA PARTNERSHIP.**

By reference to previous literature on the area, EULAC Focus intends to place the analysis of EU – LAC relations in a broader context. Work package 6 has tried to learn, by studying other bi-regional frameworks, which are some of the lessons, best practices or precedents that could be applied to EU – LAC relations; some of them are also mentioned and discussed in the next section (“Ambitiously Modest” strategies...).

From a general perspective, a reference to the Africa – EU partnership is absolutely necessary. The objective is not that of comparing African and LAC regional integration but that of showing (returning to the idea put forward in the introductory paragraph of this document) what **can** be done by the EU. From this perspective, the Africa – EU partnership comprises:

- An institutional set-up that links the diplomatic instruments (political dialogue) with the public activities (EU programmes and projects duly funded)
- With a specific treatment all along its *institutional iter*:
  - o A specific treatment in the basic act (the DCI regulation<sup>24</sup>): Arts. 9, 14 and Annex III are specific for the Pan-African Programme.
  - o Very specific Multiannual Programmes<sup>25</sup> covering different sectors (of particular interest for EULAC Focus is Sector of Cooperation 2 - Investing in People: education, science, technology and skills development) which are developed in, also very specific, Annual Action Programmes.

<sup>24</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/regulation-dci-2014-2020-en.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/mip-pan-african-programme-2018-2020\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/mip-pan-african-programme-2018-2020_en.pdf) and [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/mip-pan-african-programme-2018-2020-annex\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/mip-pan-african-programme-2018-2020-annex_en.pdf)



- And implemented with a relevant participation of the African Union Commission (AUC).

Of course, this (which is certainly possible on the basis of what the EU is) becomes only possible (in the framework of its international relations) because a counterpart exists for the EU in the African side: the African Union (AU) and the AUC. The history of the AU and its origin in the OAU as well as the nature and role of the AUC could be usefully reviewed by academics and policymakers interested in EU – LAC relations. However, what matters is the legal/institutional/political main fact: the AU has legal personality and the AUC has a clearly defined role in the exercise of the AU competences. Once again, the legal aspects become essential in explaining the structure and functioning of EU's external relations.

On the EU side, it is obvious that relations with LAC will never achieve the degree of priority of those with Africa. But the model of the EU – African Partnership could very easily be adapted. What makes impossible this adaptation is not the “EU's lack of will” (as sometimes it is argued) but the absence of an organization with legal personality in Latin America (not so much in the Caribbean).

## 1.7 TO ARTICULATE THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RELATIONS OF THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES WITH LAC COUNTRIES

Relations between EU member states and LAC have a very long and diversified history. This has given rise to different levels or layers of relations that most often precede EU – LAC relations:

- Bilateral relations of individual EU member States with individual LAC countries.
- Relations of individual EU member states with sub-regional LAC groupings.
- Plurilateral relations of some EU member states (in particular Portugal and Spain) with Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in Latin America and the Caribbean: “Iberoamerican” relations.

These relations have their own history and their own rationale. The EU must recognize them. The policy objective must be, while keeping the EU autonomy and leadership, articulating all of them in the best interest of all parties. It is undoubtful that synergies and complementarities are very easy to promote and to find, particularly in the area of innovation, science and higher education.

And, as already mentioned above in section 5 of the First Part, the EU itself must improve the articulation between its action at the bi-regional level and its action with the different sub-regional groupings and with individual LAC countries, which is also an approach that would induce a strengthening of LAC integration.

The EU promotes already, in the areas covered by EULAC Focus, initiatives of collaboration among EU Member States and participates in them. It should be studied how they could be opened to LAC Countries. A very good example to be taken as a model or precedent is that of the Joint Programming Initiatives in the area of research.<sup>26</sup>

- Joint Programming Initiatives are developed in a structured and strategic process where EU countries agree on a voluntary basis on common visions and Strategic Research Agendas (SRA) to address major societal challenges. The aim of the joint programming process is to

<sup>26</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/joint-programming-initiatives> and <http://jpi-ch.eu/wp-content/uploads/Joint-Programming-Initiatives.pdf>

pool national research efforts in order to make better use of Europe's research and development resources and tackle common European challenges more effectively.

- The Joint Programming process was launched by a Communication of the European Commission in July 2008. The EU Council (in its Competitiveness formation) adopted several Conclusions since then to guide the development of the process. It has mandated a dedicated configuration of European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) and the High-Level Group on Joint Programming – GPC - to steer the process and identify the themes for possible JPIs.
- These challenges include addressing climate change; ensuring energy and food supply; healthy ageing of citizens. Ten initiatives have been launched in these areas. One of these initiatives covers a cultural domain that EULAC Focus recommends for EU – LAC action: Cultural Heritage and Global Change

## 2 “AMBITIOUSLY MODEST” STRATEGIES IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE LAC DIMENSION OF INTERNAL POLICIES IN THE AREAS COVERED BY EULAC FOCUS

### 2.1 TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE REORGANIZATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2019 – 2024), WHICH INCLUDES IN THE SAME PORTFOLIO CULTURE, RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION AND WHICH FOCUSES “INNOVATION AND YOUTH” – THE TITLE OF THE PORTFOLIO-

The letter of mission addressed by the new President of the European Commission to Commissioner Mariya Gabriel<sup>27</sup> includes a programme of action that EULAC Focus fully shares insofar as relations with LAC are concerned. The letter (September 2019) is even more recent than the HR-EC Communication analysed in the previous part. As it defines the policy to be followed by the European Commission in the areas covered by EULAC Focus, it deserves also some lengthy quotation:

First, and as already mentioned above in the first Part of this document, it states

*(as) our external action becomes more strategic and coherent (we) should also better align the internal and external aspects of our work. This will be a ‘Geopolitical Commission’.*

Secondly, it states:

#### ***Your mission***

*I would like to entrust you with the role of Commissioner for Innovation and Youth. The best investment in our future is in our young people, our innovators and our researchers. Education, research and innovation will be key to our competitiveness and our ability to lead*

<sup>27</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-mariya-gabriel-2019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-mariya-gabriel-2019_en.pdf)



*in the transition to a climate-neutral economy and new digital age. It is about equipping people with the knowledge, life experience and skills they need to thrive. Our world-leading science, research and innovation capacity can help us find European solutions to the most pressing global issues. By cooperating across languages, borders and disciplines, we can collectively address the societal challenges and skills shortages that currently exist. Culture and sport will also be important tools to improve our mental and physical wellbeing and to create jobs and growth.*

### **Education, research and innovation**

*Your task over the next five years is to harness this potential and to ensure that education, research and innovation help us deliver on our ambitions and wider objectives.*

- *You should ensure swift agreement on and full implementation of the future Horizon Europe programme ...*
- *As part of this, you should ensure sufficient investment flows to disruptive research and breakthrough innovations, notably through the European Innovation Council. To stay competitive globally, we should better support our innovators to bring their ideas to the market.*
- *I want you to work with Member States to build a true European Research Area ...*
- *I want you to ensure that research, policy and economic priorities go hand in hand. ...*
- *You should support the objective of tripling the Erasmus+ programme as part of the next budget. ...*
- *I want you to lead the work on making the European Education Area a reality by 2025 ...*
- *I want you to promote excellence and networking among European universities....*
- *I want you to focus on digital literacy and education to close the digital skills gap....*
- *You should maximise the potential of our exchange programmes to foster international cooperation in education, research and innovation.*

### **Culture, youth and sport**

*Whether history, architecture, literature, music, film, art or sport, culture is about freedom of expression, identity and diversity....*

- *You should ensure the full implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture. You should develop ways to strengthen Europe's commitment to preserving and protecting our cultural heritage, notably by making the most of digital technologies.*
- *You should promote creative industries as a catalyst for innovation, jobs and growth and maximise the potential of an ambitious Creative Europe Programme.*
- *I want you to promote sport as a tool for inclusion and wellbeing...*
- *You should aim to foster cultural cooperation as a part of the Union's partnerships with countries around the world.*

*(Organizational guidelines)*

*As a rule, you will work under the guidance of the Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age in matters relating to research and innovation, and the Vice-President for Protecting our European Way of Life<sup>28</sup> in matters relating to education, culture, youth and*

<sup>28</sup> The portfolio has finally been named "Promoting our European Way of Life".

*sports. The Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture will support you in your work. You will also be administratively responsible for the Joint Research Centre.*

## 2.2 ADDRESSING THE SPECIFICITIES OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN THROUGH THEIR SUB-REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF UNIVERSITIES

EULAC Focus has identified a very specific problem that small states in the Caribbean face in order to participate in EU (and other international) programmes: The limited availability of technical expertise and limited capacity of government administrative structures in small (including small island) developing states. This applies also to Central American states. EULAC Focus participated in a workshop organized by the EU-LAC Foundation<sup>29</sup> in order to assess whether specific training activities could be useful to contribute to solve this problem. The assessment was positive. Therefore,

- Technical capacity-building should be included as a critical element in all EULAC projects and programmes executed in the Caribbean sub-region and in Central America.
- The implementation of EULAC programmes and projects in the Caribbean should include technical advice and support, to be called upon as needed by the implementing countries.

Capacity building could have much more impact and become much more effective by using, as sub-regional partners, associations of Universities that are well rooted in the reality of the different member countries and that already possess a considerable capacity. For Central America, the Consejo Superior Universitario Centroamericano (CSUCA) has been integrating effectively for seven decades all public Universities in the sub-region and has a good experience in the design and implementation of EU-funded projects.<sup>30</sup> For the Caribbean, the University of West Indies is a very successful example of “regional University” embracing different Caribbean Member States, and has also a good experience. Universities Caribbean, an association created by transformation of the former UNICA, broadens the scope of Caribbean cooperation and integration in Higher Education and Research. It makes no doubt that, through them, the issue of capacity can be better addressed than by acting at the level of individual Universities or campuses. EULAC Focus contributed to the organization of the 2019 Symposium of Universities Caribbean, where all these issues were discussed and received a high degree of approval.

## 2.3 CLUSTERING OF PROJECTS

There is unanimous agreement on the thesis that EU-funded projects in the framework of EULAC relations should have impact and sustainability beyond the period of implementation of the project. Application forms for the submission of proposals include, usually, one or two sections on “Impact and Sustainability” that have also a specific section in the evaluation grids used in the procedure of selection of proposals; and final reports for the financial justification of the grants must also cover these two aspects. However, these requests risk becoming pure formalities. It is also undisputed that, in particular in sectors so highly regulated as education or some social policy areas, one specific project is unable to achieve a sustainable impact, even less a modification of deeply entrenched situations with very consolidated vested interests based on them. Only the combination of the

<sup>29</sup> See <https://eulacfoundation.org/es/calendario/fortalecimiento-de-las-capacidades-de-las-instituciones-de-am%C3%A9rica-latina-el-caribe-y-la>

<sup>30</sup> One of them, the Erasmus CBHE Project HICA (Harmonization and Innovation in Central American Higher Education Curricula) - <http://hica.csuca.org/> -, has deserved the transmission by the EACEA of a letter to the Heads of the EU Delegations in all Central American countries recommending it as a best practice.

outcomes of a group of them can achieve some noticeable impact. And only by combining their efforts, previous projects can feed into projects that have taken off later and achieve sustainability.

Therefore, EULAC Focus proposes the Clustering of projects as a strategy to apply **systematically** in order to achieve impact, and very in particular, sustainability. Clustering, in particular Clustering across different policies and programmes, can also become the best mechanism to apply the global approach put forward in the Joint HR/EC Communication of April 2019 analysed in section 1.5 of this Part.

Clustering can be carried out through different criteria. The more obvious ones are:

- Geographical, by country or subregion. Quite surprisingly, there is a wide lack of knowledge on projects (for example Erasmus + projects) being implemented in the same LAC country (not only among participants but also among authorities, including even, too often, the delegations of the European Union). And there is no sense of “common action” among the projects.
- Thematic
  - o In terms of specific content (Renewable Energies, Biodiversity or Natural Disasters prevention, for example)
  - o In terms of policy areas: For example, Quality Assurance or Governance or Access and Retention of students in the area of Higher Education; or access to research infrastructures or open science in the area of research; or intra-regional migration in the area of social policy.
- Across different EU policies and programs. linking Research/Higher Education -HE- and Employability/ Entrepreneurship, for example; or using Territorial Development as a clustering criterion; or focusing Doctoral Education, and, in particular, “Industrial”<sup>31</sup> Doctorates, as an approach that also links HE, Research and Innovation and Industrial Policy.

Clustering cannot be left to the projects themselves, following a bottom-up approach, because, very often, consortia (and professional practices underlying them) oppose any sharing of the “ownership” of their project and of their results. EULAC Focus conducted an innovative empirical study of ongoing EU-funded projects involving LAC partners<sup>32</sup>. On that basis, EULAC Focus co-organized, together with an Erasmus + CBHE project led by OBREAL – CAMINOS- a clustering event in Argentina (September 2019)<sup>33</sup> that was extremely successful<sup>34</sup>. It was attended by 194 people from 17 countries, a hundred Universities and EU and LA governments and national agencies, including representatives of more than 20 Erasmus+ CBHE and Horizon 2020 projects. Therefore, it was a convincing validation of the Clustering strategy. However, it was only possible because, without impinging in the autonomy of each individual project, the European Commission’s Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) signalled it positively to projects being implemented in Argentina by communicating

<sup>31</sup> From some perspectives, the notion of “Industrial” Doctorates is not accepted: Doctorates are considered as a single category, and only the existence of different paths and careers is recognized.

<sup>32</sup> It is introduced and used in deliverable 4.1.

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.fiesa2020.com.ar/en/background/>

<sup>34</sup> See the report and the recommendations of the event in <https://www.fiesa2020.com.ar/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/1.-Sugerencias-para-el-Fortalecimiento-de-las-Relaciones-UE-AL.pdf> and <https://www.fiesa2020.com.ar/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/4.-Recommendations-from-Road-To-FIESA-2020-Conference.pdf>

to them in writing that the costs of participation were eligible. Once the Clustering Strategy is adopted, there is a very broad menu of different mechanisms and approaches to be explored.

Clustering is, in fact, the logic behind initiatives that the EU is already leading, in particular in the scientific area. The whole functioning of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities in the framework of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (see below, section 2.5) or the Joint Programming Initiatives (see above section 1.7) can be analysed as mechanisms and frameworks for clustering,

In a wider perspective, the European Commission is also part to initiatives that share the clustering approach. One example very meaningful for EULAC Focus because it involves the EU and Latin America<sup>35</sup> is the All Atlantic Ocean Research Community.<sup>36</sup> The meeting envisaged for the 6-7 February 2020<sup>37</sup> will be carefully observed by the EULAC Focus Network (see below Part III) from the clustering perspective.

To be more concrete, EULAC Focus brings forward three specific suggestions:

- To introduce in the application forms for the different programmes (and in the evaluation grids) a specific section on Clustering and Synergies with other EU-funded projects. This would force interested institutions to become aware of ongoing projects in the same or related fields and would push them to look for synergies and ways of really strengthening outreach, impact and sustainability.
- To focus as a horizontal priority Doctoral Education, and, in particular, “Industrial” Doctorates. It is an area already focused in some EIT research projects (for example, EIT Digital) and it is much more accessible to EU support action in HE than other areas much more subject to very rigid regulatory requirements by the different EU Member States. It also has more direct impact on the economic and social areas than traditional Doctorates. Furthermore, Doctoral Education is a privileged field of action by the European University Association (EUA), which since 2008 has launched a very successful initiative on it (the EUA Council of Doctoral Education).<sup>38</sup>
- To continue deepening and disseminating EULAC Focus’ innovative empirical study in order to facilitate the access to ongoing EU-funded projects with LAC partners.

## 2.4 CREATING PERMANENT BI-REGIONAL PLATFORMS.

It seems impossible to consolidate bi-regional relations without some permanent platforms. The following examples and proposals can be offered:

- The Erasmus+ Network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs)
  - o The network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) – around two hundred and fifty- was established by the European Commission’s Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in the framework of the Tempus programme, addressed to most EU’ neighbouring countries, and continues to be supported through Erasmus+.

<sup>35</sup> But, very meaningfully, without even a token participation of a Caribbean state.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.allatlanticocean.org/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=events&eventcode=90A6420F-A55E-C57A-F775F34464B04AA8>

<sup>38</sup> <https://eua-cde.org/>

- Each former Tempus country has a team of HEREs, appointed by the national authorities in the former Tempus Partner Countries and led by the National Erasmus Officer (NEO). They participate in the development of policies and reforms in their countries and contribute to the training of local stakeholders.
- The network has been and is managed by a consortium (there have been two successive ones) in the framework of 3-years services contract awarded after a competitive tender<sup>39</sup>.
- The objectives of this initiative are:
  - Capacity building of the nationally selected HERE teams to actively contribute to higher education reform at national level in their countries and at the level of organisations and higher education institutions.
  - Awareness raising in particular about EU higher education policy – namely the EU Modernisation Agenda – and policy developments in the EHEA, and how these policies could potentially impact partner countries.
  - Enhancing networking between HERE of different countries through a variety of regional and international activities.
  - Peer learning to allow HERE teams at different levels of knowledge and experience to learn from each other.
- The themes being explored are:
  - Enhancement of learning and teaching with regards to methods and approaches
  - Degrees and degree systems
  - Mobility and internationalisation
  - Governance, management and funding of higher education institutions and systems
  - Quality assurance (institutional, external and regional)
  - Graduate studies/doctoral education
- The following activities are organised on an annual basis:
  - An international conference, usually towards the end of the year, linking different themes and topics.
  - One or two thematic seminars in different partner countries and European countries.
  - Two or three study visits to universities, organised as a means to provide hands-on experience and peer-learning for the HERE.
  - Around 50-60 technical assistance missions, as a means of providing targeted, hands-on support and consultancy to the HERE and the academic community and government in their respective countries.
  - Further development and maintenance of **The Higher Education Reform Portal and publication of a quarterly newsletter.**

This initiative has a very high benefit/cost ratio. It requires only a budget for three years of a total of only 1.500.000€, less than two usual Erasmus + CBHE projects. It would be very easy to adapt it to EU – LAC relations.

<sup>39</sup> See [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/here\\_report\\_2015.pdf](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/here_report_2015.pdf) and <https://supporthere.org/>

- Giving continuity or reviving former EU-funded EU-LAC platforms, in particular in the scientific domain – for example ALCUE-NET<sup>40</sup> or ERAnet - LAC<sup>41</sup> -, whose outcomes EULAC Focus research considers very positive.
    - o These platforms are studied in detail in the published work-package 4 deliverables of EULAC Focus. They gave some form of underlying structure to the EULAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) and the Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs).
    - o In that case, the instrument was not, as for HERE, a services contract but a grant agreement under the framework of the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework programme. Their total multiannual budget was 3.752.000 for ALCUE-NET (five years, from 1-12-2012 to 30-11-2017) and 2.500.000 for ERAnet-LAC (4 years and three months, from 1-10-2013 to 31-12-2017)
    - o In order to maintain the network of funding agencies established under ERAnet-LAC after the end of the project funding in December 2017, Germany and Argentina jointly initiated the EU-LAC Interest Group. This Group is comprised of more than 30 funding agencies from both regions, committed to initiating and funding joint research programs in the future. ALCUE-NET resulted, inter alia, in the establishment of a network of National Contact Points for the EU Framework Programs in LAC; this LAC NCP network is maintained through the engagement of Uruguay. Both initiatives are based on high commitment of their members. However, personal meetings on a regular basis (yearly or two-yearly) are indispensable to keep the commitment alive. As the European Commission acknowledges the value of both networks for the bi-regional Common Research Area, it provides some financial support to them in the Framework of the Service Facility for International Cooperation. This support could be easily increased,
  - Giving effect to the recent (June 2019) EU Council Conclusions on an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and a framework for action,<sup>42</sup> and in particular to its point 36: *to designate ‘cultural focal points’ and ensure adequate capacities for culture in EU delegations*, and, on that basis,
    - o Disseminate in LAC EU and Member States relevant policies and initiatives and
    - o Set up a bi-regional permanent EU – LAC platform.
  - Reviving the EU – LAC High Level Dialogue on Migration<sup>43</sup>
- It should be underpinned by some EU DG DEVCO small project sufficient to
- o oblige LAC countries to designate a “focal point” able to manage small amounts of funds;
  - o designate a person not only for participation in the meetings but also for permanent contact in between meetings;
  - o valorise EU rules on treatment to third-country migrant workers and ask for effective reciprocity.

<sup>40</sup> <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/106440/factsheet/es>

<sup>41</sup> <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/109856/factsheet/en>

<sup>42</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0607\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0607(01)&from=EN)

<sup>43</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/eu-celac\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/latin-america/eu-celac_en)



These platforms should play a very active role in the implementation of the Clustering Strategy mentioned in the previous point. In the specific area of Higher Education, so close to research and scientific policy, and as mandated in the contract with the Research Executive Agency – REA-, EULAC Focus has already collaborated very actively with the EU-LAC Foundation in the promotion of such platforms and in their use as clustering instruments: Firstly, in the promotion of the Cumbre Académica y del Conocimiento that was held in October 2017 in San Salvador<sup>44</sup> and drew together two separate and competing similar initiatives. Secondly, in the discussion and elaboration of the *Matriz de objetivos y líneas estratégicas para la construcción del Espacio Común de Educación Superior EU-LAC*,<sup>45</sup> an instrument for analysis and policy design that, furthermore, is currently the only common forum of dialogue between all initiatives on EU – LAC cooperation in Higher Education. This seems a promising way of action.

## 2.5 STRENGTHENING THE LAC DIMENSION OF THE MORE IMPORTANT EU INTERNAL RESEARCH CENTERS, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

EULAC Focus has distinguished seven main lines of action to strengthen the scientific dimension of EU – LAC relations:

- increase visibility and promote open access platforms
- strengthen LAC as unique research destination
- enhance mobility of researchers in both directions
- strengthen joint EU and EU Member States and LAC States research funding, including smaller countries
- establish synergies to foster industry-society-academia cooperation
- align higher education with regional research and innovation policies
- promote science diplomacy in the EU - LAC cooperation

In an operational perspective, movement along these lines must take into account the underlying structure for EU's research policy and action<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, three main areas must be differentiated and looked at from the perspective of EU – LAC relations:

- First, EU's own research centres:
  - o The Joint Research Centre (JRC)<sup>47</sup>. See below, for example, the reference to the Smart Specialization Strategies it is promoting.
  - o How to give an international, and specifically, a LAC projection to the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT) and the 8 very ambitious Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), involving Universities and Research Centres, Industry, Public Administrations and Social actors that it has set up: Climate, Digital, Food, Health, Energy, Manufacturing, Raw Materials, Urban Mobility<sup>48</sup>. It makes no doubt that these areas are of great interest for LAC countries (and that it is the EU interest to strengthen its international role in all of them). However, EULAC Focus

<sup>44</sup> <https://eulacfoundation.org/es/calendario/cumbre-acad%C3%A9mica-y-del-conocimiento>

<sup>45</sup> [https://eulacfoundation.org/en/system/files/consulta\\_consultation\\_academic\\_matrix\\_eu-lac.pdf](https://eulacfoundation.org/en/system/files/consulta_consultation_academic_matrix_eu-lac.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> The best guide for it is the one-page summary breakdown for the EU's Research Framework Programme. See [http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/press/horizon\\_2020\\_budget\\_constant\\_2011.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/press/horizon_2020_budget_constant_2011.pdf) for the current Horizon 2020 Framework Programme

<sup>47</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/departments/joint-research-centre>

<sup>48</sup> <https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities>

- has analysed them and conducted interviews with their leaders, reaching the conclusion that the EIT has an insufficient systematic policy of global projection of these initiatives. On the other side, it is also clear that LAC countries lack a policy towards them (and even the necessary background knowledge to design it).
- The same applies, mutatis mutandis, to the recently born European Innovation Council<sup>49</sup>.
  - Second, European Research Infrastructures.
    - In 2009, the EU Council set up a legal framework for the creation of European Research Infrastructures Consortia.<sup>50</sup> They are tools for strengthening of collaboration between Member States and are open to third countries.
    - Research Infrastructures have already been identified as one of the pillars of the EU-LAC Common Research Area, and a bi-regional Working Group on research infrastructures (RI) was endorsed at the Meeting of the Senior Officials in Brussels in March 2017. Subsequently, the Working Group launched different activities (such as Policy Workshops and Study Visits of RIs) - financed by the EC - to ensure bi-regional policy coordination, sharing of good practices in policy development and mapping of RIs in LAC. These activities have revealed a great interest at the level of policy makers and RIs themselves to further strengthen and intensify the ongoing collaboration activities. The process will be enhanced through an H2020 Coordination Support Action starting in 2020 and should be one of the main areas in which to concentrate cooperation.
  - Third, the Research Framework Programmes (the current 2014-2020 Horizon 2020 and, in particular, the future 2021 – 2027 Horizon Europe). In order to strengthen its projection to LAC, their *Institutional Iter* must be carefully studied (in particular from the LAC side) because the orientation to be followed in their implementation is established in the basic act and in the periodic/annual work programmes.<sup>51</sup>

The enlargement to LAC of International Consortia promoted or supported by the European Union should also be envisaged. A very good example is that of the International Consortium for Personalized Medicine – ICPeMed -, which was initiated during several workshops organized by the European Commission throughout 2016. ICPeMed aims to provide a flexible framework for cooperation between its member organizations. Together, they work on fostering and coordinating research as driver of personalized medicine. ICPeMed is currently internationalized towards LAC and China. This process is supported by three Coordination and Support Actions in the framework of Horizon 2020 targeting these regions/countries, and its outreach to LAC can be easily strengthened.

Finally, the Science Diplomacy approach is very promising in order to achieve this strengthening of the LAC dimension of EU centres and programmes. The European Union is defining its strategy for a

<sup>49</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/european-innovation-council-2019-mar-18\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/european-innovation-council-2019-mar-18_en)

<sup>50</sup> See Council Regulation (EC) No 723/2009 of 25 June 2009 on the Community legal framework for a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32012D0136&from=EN>)

<sup>51</sup> See the workprogrammes for 2014-2015 (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32012D0136&from=EN>) , 2016-2017 ([https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016\\_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-intro\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-intro_en.pdf)) and 2018-2020 ([https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014\\_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-intro\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-intro_en.pdf))



regional science diplomacy. Three complementary Horizon 2020 projects – El-CSID, InsSciDE, and S4D4C – support this endeavour, forming Europe’s first science diplomacy cluster. Through multidisciplinary research and dialogue, the projects generate frameworks for governance, strategic advice, training modules for diplomats and scientists, and ground-breaking knowledge on science diplomacy histories.<sup>52</sup> To this end, EULAC Focus will feed its results into the EU-funded S4D4C project on Science Diplomacy, and the EULAC Focus Network that will be born from it (see Part III below) will also collaborate with it, following up the joint activity that took place in Buenos Aires on June 2019.<sup>53</sup>

## 2.6 LAUNCHING “STRUCTURING ACTIONS”

(and, if needed, combining different legal basis<sup>54</sup>).

This strategy would also promote the “global vision” of the recent HR/EC Joint Communication on EU - LAC relations. In general, and as a horizontal policy orientation, synergies between research, academia/higher education, industry, territorial and social development should be systematically pursued. More concretely, the following initiatives can be proposed:

### - Digitalization for social development

In its third workshop in Quito in 2017, EULAC Focus brought forward the idea of considering *Digitalisation for Social Development* a “structuring action” able to create synergies between different policy areas. The publication in 2018 of the joint CEPAC-ECLAC/OECD/EC-DG DEVCO study (see above) proposing a new approach to development and development cooperation gives a very adequate foundation to the idea. EULAC Focus co-organized in Colombia in March 2019 an International Conference covering this topic that gave a very positive validation of the idea<sup>55</sup>. A specific issue that would fit perfectly well in the EU approach is that of Digital Literacy, from the twofold perspective of a) recognition (even if acquired outside the formal educational system) and b) gender (as an instrument of women empowerment and promotion in all areas of social life).

### - Smart Specialization<sup>56</sup>

Conceived by the European Commission within the reformed Regional / Cohesion policy of the European Union, Smart Specialisation is a place-based approach characterised by the identification of strategic areas for policy intervention. What makes it a “structuring idea or approach” of particular interest for EULAC Focus are three aspects:

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.science-diplomacy.eu/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.s4d4c.eu/eu-and-argentina-discussing-science-diplomacy-s4d4c-joins-in/>

<sup>54</sup> The notion of “structuring actions” was brought forward by a European Commission official heading a unit covering Latin America.

<sup>55</sup> <https://comunidad.udistrital.edu.co/7forofuturodelastecnologiasocialesenlaregionamericas/files/2019/04/PROGRAMA-VII-Foro-Futuro-TIC.pdf>

A report on the Conference can be found in <http://eulac-focus.net/private/Modules/Tools/EUProject/documents/173/Informe%20FINAL%20Foro%20TIC%20Bogot%C3%A1%20EULAC%20FOCUS.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> All the language in this section on Smart Specialization is taken from the EU website on the topic (<https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/what-is-smart-specialisation->). Only some emphasis is added in order to highlight some points.

- First, it can organize or “structure” action across different EU policies and programmes, creating synergies among them (in particular those in the social and research areas).
- Second, it is now an approach promoted by the EU’s Joint Research Centre (i.e. an element of EU’s scientific policy), which emphasizes its Innovation component and hosts the Smart Specialization Platform and has set up a Team taking charge of it.<sup>57</sup>
- Third, it has already had some projection on LAC, in particular in the area of Urban Development. Experiences in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Perú deserve examination.<sup>58</sup> And the package of proposals concerning Cohesion/Regional policy for the period 2021-2027<sup>59</sup> emphasize the need to strengthen the external projection of smart specialization strategies (including triangular and South-South cooperation).

A Smart Specialization Strategy (3 S) should embrace a broad view of innovation, supporting technological as well as practice-based and social innovation. This would allow each region and Member State to shape policy choices according to their unique socio-economic conditions;

A S3 should prioritise domains, areas and economic activities where regions or countries have a competitive advantage or have the potential to generate knowledge-driven growth and to bring about the economic transformation needed to tackle the major and most urgent challenges for the society and the natural and built environment. The number and nature of these priorities will vary from region to region.

Priorities could be framed in terms of knowledge fields or activities (not only science-based, but also social, cultural and creative ones), Social, organisational, market and service innovation, or practice-based innovation, play as important a role in S3 as technological innovation based on scientific research. This is especially relevant for regions with comparatively weaker technological and science basis.

Finally, there is a specific role for science and business parks in S3. The EU Guide on Research and Innovation Strategies (RIS3 Guide) highlights the important role to be played by all innovation actors in the S3 process. Science, technology and business parks are essential stakeholders to be included in the S3 governance framework, and their input for the prioritisation stage should be considered a key element in the process. In addition, these parks contribute to other dimensions of the smart specialisation paradigm: they stimulate and manage flows of knowledge and information between different actors, and provide an environment that enhances a culture of innovation, creativity and quality. They facilitate the creation of new businesses and work in a global network that gathers many thousands of innovative companies and research institutions throughout the world, facilitating the internationalisation of their resident companies and the combination of different activities and different sectors. Therefore, they provide many examples of cross-fertilization of activities and sectors.

<sup>57</sup> <https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/researchers>

<sup>58</sup> <https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/-/innovation-and-regional-specialisation-in-latin-america?inheritRedirect=true>

and

<https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/198909/Innovation+and+Regional+Specialisation+in+Latin+America/f96a3bc4-42b3-4d2c-b7f7-e27334c7f595>

<sup>59</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/2021\\_2027/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/)

The package of European Commission proposals for 2021-2027 emphasize two aspects that are relevant from a LAC perspective:

- Customization, and avoiding any temptation of ‘one-fits-all’ strategies.
- Decentralization, a real challenge for many LAC countries.

- **Actions that are able to bridge very different policies, in particular scientific and social.**

- The example of milk production/applied research/territorial development/micro-and-small enterprises

EULAC Focus organized in Colombia, with the Universidad de Caldas, and preceded by an exploratory experience in Spain, an International Workshop on *Investigación aplicada y Desarrollo económico y social. El caso de la producción de leche a pequeña escala y el desarrollo sostenible de los territorios (Una validación del enfoque de EULAC Focus para las relaciones UE – ALC)*. Milk is very difficult to replace as food for human, children in particular, consumption; milk production has always been a cornerstone of EU’s agricultural policy; international trade in milk and dairy products is a very sensitive area within EU’s commercial policy; milk production can play a very important role in territorial development in Latin America, in particular in rural areas affected by decades of violent conflict; and, finally, milk production by MSM agricultural enterprises can be facilitated and increased by the results of applied agronomical research.

The workshop was a great success<sup>60</sup> and validated EULAC Focus idea of “structuring actions”.

- EU-LAC Collaboration in regulatory issues that cut across different policies, including those of EULAC Focus covered areas, in particular where different approaches compete at the international level.

A typical example is that of the regulation of the audiovisual sector, including TV, which has a high impact on cultural policies. The European Union, and in particular DG CONNECT within the European Commission, has the needed knowledge and experience and wants (and needs) to strengthen the EU approach internationally. LAC countries are objectively interested in the issue. And there are precedents on which to build, in particular in the framework of the Andean Community, as Colombia remains the only Latin American country that has adopted the European standard for Digital TV and there have already been projects implemented in Colombia in this area. EULAC Focus has already established contacts in this direction both in Colombia and in the Andean Community Secretariat, which will be continued by the future EULAC Focus Network envisaged below in Part III.

<sup>60</sup> A report on the workshop can be found in <http://eulacfocus.net/private/Modules/Tools/EUProject/documents/175/Informe%20Tecnico%20Evento%20Pegue%C3%B1a%20lecheria%20UCaldas%20EULAC%20Focus.pdf>

## 2.7 LEARNING FROM OTHER BI – REGIONAL CONTEXTS:

### - Adapting projects developed in the framework of the Africa – EU Partnership

The African – EU partnership,<sup>61</sup> already mentioned from a general perspective, covers three fields of action:

- Investing in people – education, science, technology and skills development
- Strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance
- Mobilizing Investments for African structural sustainable transformation.

Programmes and projects implemented in the three fields, and particularly in the first, offer a good menu of ideas that could be replicated in the EU-LAC framework. Some of them have already been mentioned above. Another one of particular interest for EULAC Focus is the Africa – Europe Innovation Partnership.<sup>62</sup> Policymakers and officials on both sides of the EU – LAC relationship, as well as academics interested in it, could very usefully study the whole set of them

### - The possibility of setting-up an initiative like the Euro- Mediterranean PRIMA

Under the framework of article 185 of the TFEU, PRIMA<sup>63</sup> brings together the EU, EU Member States, Horizon 2020 Associated States and Partner Countries in the Mediterranean region on an equal footing (co-ownership, co-management, co-funding). At present 19 States are participating: 11 from the EU and 8 non-EU Member States.

The decision (EU) 2017/1324 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 on the participation of the Union in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) jointly undertaken by several Member States<sup>64</sup> is a very exceptional case of application of article 185 of the TFEU, which states: *In implementing the multiannual framework programme, the Union may make provision, in agreement with the Member States concerned, for participation in research and development programmes undertaken by several Member States, including participation in the structures created for the execution of those programmes.*

Getting PRIMA approved by the EU was not easy, and the PRIMA process is probably very difficult to replicate. However, it offers a very good example of how bi-regional projects can be built on the basis of the “columns” and the “bricks” discussed previously in the “LEGO model”.

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/our-action-0>

<sup>62</sup> <https://africaeurope-innovationpartnership.net/>

<sup>63</sup> <http://prima-med.org/about-us/prima-in-brief/>

<sup>64</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32017D1324&from=EN>

## 2.8 IN THE CULTURAL DIMENSION OF EU – LAC RELATIONS, FINDING SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE EU ACTION WOULD BE POLITICALLY POSSIBLE WITHOUT HURTING SENSITIVITIES IN EU MEMBER STATES AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER ARTICULATE AND STRENGTHEN ACTION BY MEMBER STATES ON THEIR OWN.

In a general perspective,

- The reorganization of the European Commission portfolios for the period 2019- 2024 should contribute to strengthen the importance of culture, which concerns in particular Youth (one of the main areas of the new “Innovation and Youth” portfolio). Precedents like SALTO-YOUTH and its activities within the Youth section of Erasmus + offer valuable ideas.
- The cultural area or dimension should be given a high priority concerning relations with the Caribbean, in particular in the area of cultural heritage (see below).

Taking into account the sensitivity of this area for national (including, very in particular, sub-central levels of government), EULAC Focus advises, first, a very carefully balanced use of diplomatic instruments promoting EU Member States Governments action in the bi-regional context. In this perspective, the following lines of action could be considered:

- The EU could offer support to the definition of a cultural strategy by CELAC, an area that CELAC itself has identified as a priority. A way of achieving this could be launching the idea of a bi-regional periodic meeting of Ministers of Culture.
- The initiatives already undertaken by the EU – LAC Foundation (meetings in Lisbon and Genova in 2019, where EULAC Focus participated) should be given continuity, if necessary with some funding from specific services contracts. This could include the mapping of the current mobility situation in terms of cultural cooperation, with the collaboration of entities like On-the-Move, national and regional / sub-central agencies and local administrations.
- A dialogue could also be launched on the promotion of artistic residences.
- And EU (and EU Member States) and LAC should share experiences of protection of linguistic and cultural diversity, in respect to the UNESCO Conventions on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) and for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).

Secondly, in the area of public activities,

- A way of strengthening the LAC dimension of the new Creative Europe Programme should be found, in particular if its financial envelope is substantially increased for the period 2021-27.
- The new Erasmus programme for 2021 – 2027 should
  - o Enhance capacity-building actions in terms of training of international cultural managers, and training of trainers’ strategies.
  - o Foster cultural diversity and inclusiveness in the framework of projects.
- More concretely, the following sectorial strategies can be identified:
  - o Cultural Heritage
    - Setting up an inter-regional program focused on exploring innovative models of protection and integrated promotion of tangible and intangible heritage.

- Enlarge knowledge transfer and network strengthening programmes in the field of tangible and intangible heritage
- Establishment of a science-policy stakeholder social platform on endangered heritage.
- Enlarge the cultural routes program to LAC, in alliance with the European Institute of Cultural Routes (Council of Europe).
- Creative industries
  - Identification of strategic EU-LAC fairs and markets for the cultural industries with the participation of key actors from both regions.
  - Use the potential of the new context opened by the EU-Mercosur agreement to strengthen bi-regional relations in the interface between cultural and economic (trade and investment) exchanges.
- The initiative of the European Houses of Culture, led by EUNIC with EU funding, and very modestly already open to LAC, could also be strengthened.
- More transversal initiatives can also be identified:
  - To build on the experience of EULAC Museums and develop a set of calls on Cultural heritage and innovation in creative industries in an EU-LAC framework.
  - To open the participation of LAC cultural operators to EU digitalisation programmes, like #Digital4Culture strategy, which propose digital transformation of media literacy and film education, as well as digital transformation in the field of cultural heritage.

Finally, a very concrete need has been pointed out to EULAC Focus by experts and professionals: that of enlarging to the EU – LAC context the mechanism of mediation and arbitration for disputes involving cultural actors very recently set up in the Ibero-american framework.

## 2.9 LAUNCHING AN EU – CELAC FORUM OF DISCUSSION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES ON “COOPERATION TRANSFRONTALIÈRE”

Very recent developments in LAC have changed the reality and the perception of cross-border cooperation and even of geography. Drug trafficking and migration (in all its different types and with all its different causes) are shaping a new geography and a new vision of regional cooperation in LAC as well as creating a new interaction between LAC, the United States and the global world.

Mexico, as the incoming CELAC pro-tempore presidency, is in the middle of such social changes, in reality and perception. In principle, it should be extremely interested in developing a dialogue with the EU (and getting its political support) to face the challenges deriving from them. The EU could enter this dialogue without any fear, enriched with its decades-long experience in “cooperation transfrontalière”.<sup>65</sup> This is an area where the diplomatic instruments of EULAC Focus’ Analytical Framework can be fruitful and contribute to strengthen the EU – LAC role in international affairs, in contrast to the approach of Trump’s US Presidency; furthermore, Public Activities funded by the EU in the field of Development Cooperation could be very easily combined with, and put to the service of, the objectives discussed in the bi-regional political dialogue.

<sup>65</sup> It would be worth, in particular in the perspective of Brexit, recovering these French expressions that are in the roots of Western European integration and whose very positive connotations are often lost in their English translation.

EULAC Focus has validated this idea in its contacts with policymakers; and concludes that this could be a promising way of re-launching EU – CELAC dialogue.

## **2.10 LAUNCHING PROJECTS WITH LOW COST BUT HIGH BENEFIT/COST**

In its workshop in Quito (2017), EULAC Focus brought forward the idea of launching EULAC projects with low cost but very large outreach. These projects, besides their specific usefulness in terms of substance, could give a very high and large visibility to EU-LAC relations. The concrete example to be proposed was the launching of an audiovisual competition opened to students from Communications and Journalism from all over LAC on some thematic issues, for example a) Successful initiatives in promoting urban development, b) Successful post-conflict initiatives and programmes; etc.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> A document explaining more in detail this idea can be found in <http://eulac-focus.net/private/Modules/Tools/EUProject/documents/174/Anteproyecto%20audiovisuales%20EULAC%20Focus.pdf>



## **PART III: EULAC FOCUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ITS APPROACH AND ITS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED STRATEGIES**

### **1 THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE EULAC FOCUS HORIZON 2020 PROJECT INTO AN EULAC FOCUS INFORMAL-BUT-PERMANENT NETWORK**

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EULAC Focus was not conceived as a usual research project on Social Sciences leading to literature to be published in academic journals or publishing houses. Its main objective was inherently policy oriented: Giving focus to three areas in EU – LAC relations. In the proposal, the sustainability of the project was already mentioned twice. The issue of the sustainability of the project as such was also raised in the evaluation of the second Period Report. Therefore, there is an obligation (moral if not legal) to give continuity to EULAC Focus. This is why, in order to continue contributing to give focus to EU-LAC relations, the EULAC Focus project will be transformed into an EULAC Focus informal-but-permanent Network.

The network, in order to develop all its potential, must have legal personality. To this effect, an association of Spanish law will be created by a very small number of core individual members and later enlarged to all interested participants. The association is not conceived in order to provide services to its members. Its main purpose is to serve the community of institutions and individual people interested in an improvement of EU – LAC relations, in particular in the areas covered by the EULAC Focus project. This will be pursued by facilitating networking and creating synergies among the members of the association and between all of them and the main target recipients of the association's activities:

- The policy-making community involved in the definition and implementation of EU – LAC relations;
- The community of students and scholars interested in the study of EU – LAC relations, focusing in particular students (under- and post-graduate) and young academics/researchers.

As a project, EULAC Focus has produced a significant number of deliverables. They will always be openly accessible in the project's website and in the EC portal. However, these are not the best ways of disseminating the results to the targeted audience. Therefore, two actions are being undertaken:

- Firstly, the project has established a collaboration with the EU-LAC Foundation contributing to its repository of documentation and, in some specific cases, adapting, and even translating, the deliverables.
- Secondly, EULAC Focus Network will promote the transformation of the deliverables into pieces of literature adapted to the needs and practices of the network's target audience. In particular, it will intend to adapt those materials in order to produce one or more Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) and one or more Small/Selective Open Online Courses



(SOOCs). Some of the materials should also be translated to Portuguese and Spanish. The materials will also be fed into the EU-funded S4D4C project on Science Diplomacy.

The network intends also to consolidate the strong bi-regional institutional ties established in the course of the project.

- One way to achieve this objective would be to establish a COST Action, directly putting the recommendations made in the EULAC Focus project into practice. By establishing this transdisciplinary EULAC Focus COST Action, a platform would be created that serves as permanent space for bi-regional meetings, conferences, workshops, short-term scientific missions, training schools, publications and dissemination activities. Creating this network adds a much-needed perspective to EU-LAC relations, strengthening ties between researchers on all career stages, academic and non-academic institutions and potentially even the private sector. Establishing this COST action would also go hand in hand with making use of synergies between the different existing H2020 projects active in the EU-LAC framework and identified by the EU-LAC Focus project.
- The EULAC Focus Cost action could be accompanied by the use of the EC service called “D&E Booster” which provides tailor made services to build project and/or project groups’ capacity in disseminating research results.

The initiative of transforming the EULAC Focus project into an informal-but-permanent Network was discussed in an International Conference organized in Quito by SENESCYT, in the framework of EULAC Focus, in June 2019<sup>67</sup> and received a high degree of support. It was also mentioned in the project’s Final Conference and in the final Policy Round Table (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2019), where it was met with approval.

EULAC Focus project has already established a working relationship with the incoming Mexican pro-tempore Presidency of CELAC, and the EULAC Focus association is already planning a workshop to be held in Brussels in January-February of 2020 in order to begin to build on the foundations of EULAC Focus’ Plan of Action. The presentation of the EULAC Focus Network in Casa de América in Madrid at the beginning of 2020 is also envisaged as well as in other international forums and contexts. And further collaboration with activities of the EU-LAC Foundation is also envisaged.

<sup>67</sup> See the programme in <https://www.educacionsuperior.gob.ec/agenda-del-seminario/>