



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE
DIRECTORATE B – Growth and Innovation
Unit B3.Territorial Development



Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainability in Latin America, a place-based innovation approach for development in transition

9 December 2020

16:00 (Central Europe Time), 09:00 (Mexico); 10:00 (Peru); 12:00 (Chile);
Virtual event, WEBEX

Rationale

The EU reconfirmed its commitment to strengthen engagement with the LAC, following the endorsement by the EU's Foreign Affairs Council in autumn to re-launch the high-level political dialogue with the region. An informal EU-LAC foreign ministerial will be co-organised on December 14, with Germany, with the idea to join forces for a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Latin America is one of the most dynamic places for Smart Specialisation outside Europe. In Latin America, the lessons already learnt from Smart Specialisation, can help businesses gain a **competitive edge on emerging global markets, position themselves in the green and digital transition while actively contribute to post-COVID recovery.**

Smart Specialisation, as a place-based and innovative approach to innovation, was conceived as a "Made in EU" concept associated to the European cohesion policy. Under this umbrella, Smart Specialisation has triggered the development of more than 120 Smart Specialisation Strategies among EU regions and Member States in recent years. Among its main features, Smart Specialisation builds on (i) a thorough diagnosis of territorial assets, based on a broad view of innovation, (ii) the continuous involvement of a range of public and private stakeholders, (iii) the design of a transformative agenda for the region or the country focused on strategic priorities and (iv) the promotion of interregional and international cooperation.

Latin America has shown a strong interest and dynamism towards Smart Specialisation. The JRC study "Innovation and regional specialisation in Latin America" (Barroeta et al., 2017) highlights that Mexico and Brazil have been pioneers in the development of decentralised innovation policies based on Smart Specialisation. To different extents, Colombia, Peru, Chile and Argentina have also been considering Smart Specialisation as an inspirational driver of regional innovation and specialisation.

In the framework of the bioregional cooperation EU - CELAC, the Senior Officials Meeting of the Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) took place on 30th October 2020. A key outcome of this meeting was **the JIRI SOM 2021-2023 Strategic Roadmap for the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and EU-CELAC Action Plan on Science, Technology and Innovation.** The roadmap recognises Smart specialisation as a promising area for further development, with potential to foster localised, innovation-driven sustainable territorial development.

In line with the Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations, **Smart Specialisation has been internationally recognised as a valuable methodology for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.** In this endeavour, the Smart Specialisation approach is indeed gaining increasing

prominence in Latin America to promote localised innovation policies. As evidenced by the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations, development cannot be limited to economic progress, or income growth. Instead, it encompasses multiple economic, social and environmental dimensions. Moreover, development is a continuous process, which is also related to the interdependence among international, national and regional levels.

Accordingly, the concept of "**Development in Transition**" is particularly significant in Latin America, where most countries are reaching higher income levels, but continue to face structural challenges. Development in Transition embraces a movement to better design policies, practices and partnerships, taking into account the multifaceted nature of the development concept. Against this background, **the EU-led initiative "Regional Facility for Development in Transition for Latin America and the Caribbean"**, reflects the need to rethink international cooperation with Latin America.

The project S4LatinAmerica will be implemented under the governance of the Regional Facility for Development in transition. Its main goal is to confirm the potential of the EU Smart Specialisation policy concept to steer innovation-driven territorial development, in line with sustainable development principles. The territorial scope of the project addresses EU-Latin America cooperation by focusing on cases and practices in Mexico, Chile and Peru. Lessons learnt from other EU programmes/projects dealing with Smart Specialisation as innovation bridge between EU and LAC regions will be also reflected .

Objective

The objectives of this event are three fold:

- To present the potential of Smart Specialisation to foster localised, innovation-driven sustainable territorial development, as an important milestone in the **new Innovation pillar of the EU-CELAC Common Research Area (CRA)**.
- **To officially launch the project S4LatinAmerica** as a joint action of two services of the European Commission: DG DEVCO and the Joint Research Centre (JRC). The event will allow to share detail of activities and expected outcomes, notably those addressing: (i) mapping of innovation potential, (ii) Entrepreneurial Discovery Processes, (iii) identification of pilot projects and (iv) role of sustainable dimension in place-based innovation approaches.
- To review progress of the Smart Specialisation uptake in Latin America through results achieved by previous projects. Implicitly, the event will contribute to **situate the S4LatinAmerica project as strategic action within the "Development in Transition"** initiative led by the European Commission in collaboration with strategic partners such as OECD, CEPAL, SEGIB, etc.
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Target audience

Invited stakeholders who represent National and Subnational governments of the EU and Latin America, particularly those in charge of innovation, territorial development and/or sustainable growth policies. Similarly, partners and projects working on Smart Specialisation and/or, development in transition issues; representatives of EU Delegations in Latin American countries; officials of International Organisations and any other interested parties who can contribute to the project implementation.

Organisation

This event is organised by the European Commission (JRC and DG DEVCO), in collaboration with the CELAC pro-tempore presidency

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Hour: 16:00 (Central Europe Time), 09:00 (Mexico); 10:00 (Peru); 12:00 (Chile);

Format: virtual event, WEBEX

Expected number of participants: 150 attendees

Registration link: [online form](#)

Language: Spanish and English (without translation)

Agenda

16:00 - 16:30

BLOCK 1: Smart Specialisation, a place-based innovation approach bringing together EU and Latin America

Moderator: **Alessandro RAINOLDI**, Head of Territorial Development Unit, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.

- **Mauricio ESCANERO**, Mexican Ambassador to the EU, Representative of the CELAC Pro-tempore Presidency.
"The innovation dimension of bio regional cooperation EU-CELAC"
- **Alessandro RAINOLDI**, Head of Territorial Development Unit, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.
"Smart Specialisation in Latin America, lessons and challenges"
- **Rita LEBYCHOVA**, Head of Unit, International Cooperation. DG RTD
"Towards operationalisation of Smart Specialisation in Latin America, Strategic Roadmap JIRI SOM"
- **Jorge DE LA CABALLERIA** Head of Unit Regional Operations Latin America and the Caribbean, DG DEVCO, European Commission.
"Development in transition and the new prospects for EU International cooperation with Latin America"

16:30 - 17:00

BLOCK 2. Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainability in Latin America (S4LatinAmerica), project presentation and capitalisation of results

Moderator: **Manuel PALAZUELOS**, Team leader of S3 Platform, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.

- **Javier GOMEZ PRIETO** Project coordinator, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.
"Strategic vision of Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainability and Description of S4LatinAmerica project activities"
- **Gloria MARMOLEJO**, Director General of the State Council of Science and Technology of Colima, Mexico (CECYTCOL) and Technical Secretariat of the Commission of Science and Technology of the National Conference of Governors of Mexico (CONAGO), Mexico.

“Capitalisation of experiences, the case of Colima Region, Mexico”

- **Soledad VALIENTE MOYANO**, Directorate of Territorial Acceleration, CORFO, Chile.
“Capitalisation of experiences, the case of Chile”
- **Gloria Isabel LAZO** (tbc), Responsible economic development policy, Arequipa region, Peru
“Capitalisation of experiences, the case of Arequipa Region, Peru”

17:00 – 17:45

BLOCK 3. Round table discussion and interaction with the audience

Moderator: **Pelayo ROCES FERNANDEZ**, Programme Manager, DG DEVCO, European Commission

- **Sandra MARIN**, Coordinator EU-Latin America cooperation in International Urban Cooperation project.
- **Ramón TORRENT**, Scientific Coordinator of the Horizon 2020 EULAC Focus project.
- **Ana CAPILLA**, Coordinator Science and Education, Organisation of Ibero-American States.
- **Alejandra GONZALEZ** (tbc), Project Coordinator i2Latam (Erasmus+).

Questions and comments from the audience

17:45 – 18:00

Wrap Up and Concluding remarks

Alessandro RAINOLDI, Head of Territorial Development Unit, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.

Liliana PASECINIC, Deputy Head of Unit Inter-institutional Relations, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission.