

MINUTES OF THE DISSEMINATION SEMINAR

EVALUATION OF THE EU'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH LATIN AMERICA (2009-2017)

The dissemination seminar of the *Evaluation of the European Union's regional development cooperation with Latin America (2009-2017)* took place on 3 October 2019 at Thon Hotel, Rue de la Loi 75, Brussels, with the purpose of presenting the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation to interested stakeholders. This evaluation was entrusted by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission to an external evaluation team from Particip GmbH.

Agenda of the seminar

- **Welcome address**, by *Philippe BRUNET*, Principal Adviser, Head of DEVCO Task Force Knowledge, Performance and Results
- **Introductory remarks**, by *Felice ZACCHEO*, acting Director DEVCO G Latin America and the Caribbean, Head of Unit DEVCO G2
- **Main findings and conclusions of the external evaluation**, by *Enzo CAPUTO*, Evaluation team leader
- **Recommendations of the external evaluation**, by *Enzo CAPUTO*, Evaluation team leader
- **Comments of the EU Services**, by *Denis THIEULIN*, Deputy Head of Unit DEVCO G2
- **Concluding remarks**, by *Caroline ADRIAENSEN*, acting Head of Unit DEVCO G1



The video of the seminar, including presentations, discussions, questions and comments from the participants, is available at [DEVCO Academy](#).

Main findings and conclusions, and recommendations

Enzo Caputo, Team Leader, and Tino Smaïl, Deputy Team Leader, presented the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. Upon an introduction of the evaluation scope (temporal and sectoral), main findings were presented, including specific ones for the following focal sectors: security-development nexus, environment and climate change, social equity, inclusive growth, higher education. Subsequently, key conclusions emerging from the findings were put forward (see presentation slides in annex).

In the following discussion on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation, participants welcomed the timeliness of the evaluation with regards to the new programming, changes at EU political and institutional level (new Commission) and broader changes at the geopolitical level. The exchange brought up issues related to the lessons learnt from past experiences such as, i) the acknowledgement of the positive return on investment from the regional cooperation; ii) the importance of strengthening of LA regional and national institutions, but also Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and the private sector to maintain a continuous (political and policy) dialogue at all levels; and iii) the recognized need to develop innovative approaches to cooperation and improve coordination between EU and EU MS agencies.

In the second part of the presentation, the team presented six key overall recommendations along with sectoral recommendations (see presentation slides in annex). The recommendations were generally well received. Several participants underlined their agreement with the recommendations about maintaining the cooperation with countries that ceased (or will cease) to receive ODA from the EU. It was highlighted that the EU should continue exploring new ways of cooperation with these countries in order to encourage their leadership in promoting prosperity and stability in the region. Participants also emphasized the importance of funding instruments such as blending and the need to build on the experiences from other regions where such instruments were used, including in supporting public policies. The recommendation on monitoring and learning was also appreciated, as it was seen as allowing further encouraging intra-regional exchange for a continuous political and policy dialogue. EU services acknowledged the need for better internal coordination and coherence. With the new programming and new political context at EU level (new Commission), some measures have already been taken to progress in the recommended direction. Participants raised the possibility for the EU cooperation to take a problem-based approach instead of sector-based approach in order to better align with the SDGs and Agenda 2030.

Response from EU services

The report presents very positive findings. EU services globally agree with the conclusions and recommendations, they come at the right time and many of them are already under implementation.

On the continuous engagement with countries exiting EU ODA (Recommendation 2), the EU concur with this recommendation, as underpinned by the meeting organised in Santiago in October 2018 to discuss the 'development in transition' agenda. In the proposed new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), cooperation with all countries will be possible regardless of the level of their development. For example, such cooperation will concretise in triangular cooperation, an approach to include all countries in cooperation activities, which the EU is preparing through a new programme 'ADELANTE II'. More specifically, the proposal foresees that 8% of the NDICI amount is not bound to the OECD/DAC development cooperation rules.

On strengthening links between bi-regional cooperation and regional operations (Recommendation 1), the EU plans to continue in that direction. As seen in the case of EUROsociAL, it is important to use this regional programme to bring around the table all LA countries and continue to exchange. While CELAC is currently facing difficult times, the EU and partners still have the possibility to implement the EU-CELAC Action Plan. Despite the different levels of interest in one topic, the EU and partners will encourage the possibility to work on more multi-country basis (e.g. EL PACCTO, Ameripol), keeping at the same time this dialogue, discussion and work with all LA countries.

On improving internal EU coherence (Recommendation 12), the EU recognizes the need to continue to discuss internally, as well as to implement a global EU strategy. This is something reflected in the new guidelines through 2 dimensions: i) engage more internally with other directorate general involved with LA; ii) engage more with EU MS.

On sector-specific recommendations:

- Peace & security: Although there is an increased number of stakeholders engaged through the regional programme, as well as national level dialogue (mesa país) organised, more involvement possibilities remain. The EU is currently working on this recommendation.
- Inclusive growth: Through EUROMIPYME the EU is currently working on this priority to develop conducive environment for SMEs but recognizes the need to develop new ways to do investment. For instance, the European Investment Plan, is an approach which could be applied worldwide. One important pillar the EU is considering is climate investment.
- Investment facility: The EU will continue to link operations financed by LAIF to their sectoral priorities. Looking at the figures, 70% of blending resources are used for climate change and/or environment.
- Gender: The EU has developed a focus on gender in EUROsociAL, and is trying to progressively make the gender principle a reality.
- Monitoring: Is important to note that the work the EU is doing with LA is different than what is being done in other regions. In LA, the lack of a regional organisation can make monitoring a challenge. Yet, if all regional programmes were going through a regional organisation, the same level of results might have not been reached. The EU recognize the need to improve the monitoring system, particularly to observe progress in key areas such as climate change. With EUROCLIMA, the EU will work on how to create a platform for coordination and access to information for all partners.

Annex: Presentation by the external evaluation team

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**Evaluation of the EU's Regional Development
Co-operation with Latin America (2009-2017)**

Seminar
Brussels, 03/10/2019

AGENDA

Introduction

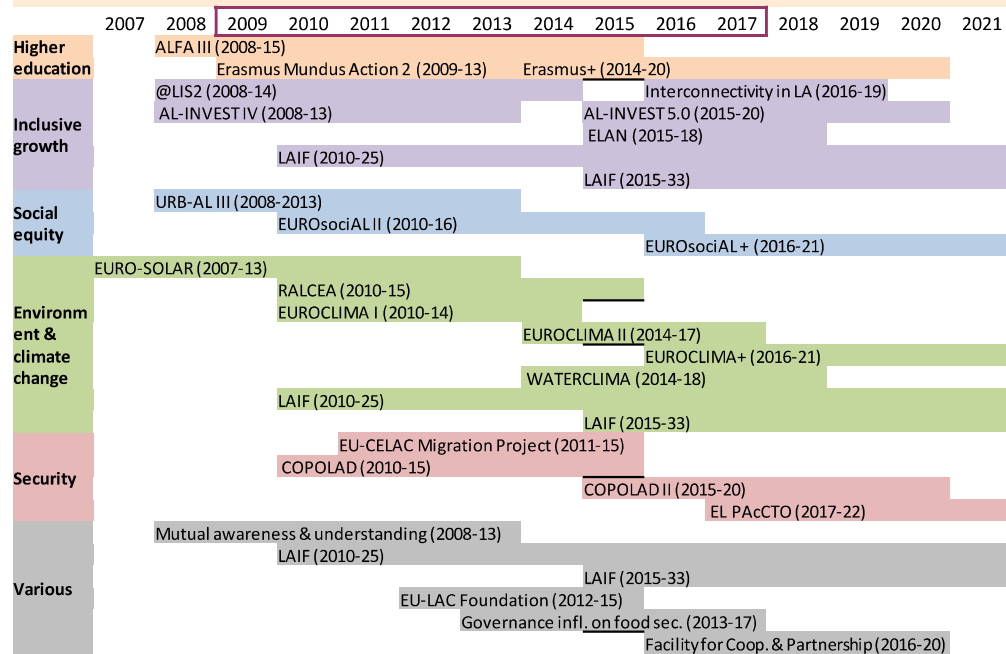
Main Findings and Conclusions

Sector co-operation

Transversal issues

Looking at the future – Main Recommendations

PART I: INTRODUCTION



DATA COLLECTION

- **Interviews:** over 370 stakeholders interviewed in Europe and LA
- **Document analysis:** library of 1000+ documents
- **Field visits** to 7 countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru
- **eSurvey** to EUDs covering all 18 countries

PART II: MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS



- Substantial contributions to **knowledge production and joint learning** on migration, drug trafficking and organised crime
- EU support provided **space for regional networking and building of trust**, although low sustainability of supported platforms
- Limited influence on **policy reform**
- Some **challenges in ensuring involvement of LA stakeholders**

Main programmes covered: EU-CELAC Migration; EI PAcCTO; COPOLAD I & II.

IIA: SECTOR LEVEL

ENVIRONMENT & CC



- EU support contributed to the strengthening of the **joint regional and global responses** to CC and environmental challenges, aided by the development of **regional partnerships** between EU and LA
- The **weak regional coordination** was an obstacle to building a regional approach
- Where policy reforms and new laws have been adopted, **policy implementation** has generally been slow
- EU support as a **facilitator**, bringing key state and non-state actors in the region together.

Main programmes covered: EUROCLIMA (I, II, +), RALCEA, WATERCLIMA, EURO-SOLAR

SOCIAL EQUITY



- Important role in creating **spaces for policy dialogue**
- Effective mobilisation of **expertise from the EU and LA** to **accompany policy reforms** in a wide range of areas
- Focus on **policy implementation** than on the strengthening of the legal framework or the shaping of strategic directions
- Some challenges faced during implementation in terms of **involving important stakeholders** such as social actors
- **Development challenges** in terms of poverty reduction and social equity remain huge

Main programmes covered: EUROsocial I & II, URB AL III.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH



- Notable contributions to the strengthening of **business organisations' action** in the region; but **dissemination of regional good practices** and intra-regional transfer of knowledge have remained limited
- Focus on private sector actors rather than the **policy framework for MSME** development (changed in recent years)
- EU support helped to create private sector **linkages between LA and the EU**; but low participation of the European private sector has hampered exchanges
- LAIF helped increase **strategic investments** in green sectors, but weak links with other cooperation areas

Main programmes covered: AL INVEST IV and 5.0; ELAN Biz and ELAN Network

HIGHER EDUCATION



- The EU **strengthened bi-regional cooperation** with LA in the fields of higher education through **bi-regional university partnerships, networks & mobility** of students and academic staff
- The EU contributed to **internationalisation and South-South cooperation**, but stakeholders perceive that opportunities for **intra-regional co-operation** have decreased with the last programme
- **Policy dialogues** contributed to greater equality in bi-regional relations, but the bi-regional co-operation remains **unbalanced**

Main programmes covered: ALFA III, Erasmus Mundus, Erasmus+

IIB: TRANSVERSAL ISSUES

C1 STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

- EU support was **highly relevant** for the needs and challenges of LA partners, especially considering the priorities established in the EU-LA Strategic Partnership.
- EU regional development co-operation has rightly **focused on strengthening institutional capacities** and response strategies across the region.
- Key role of **political dialogue**, which was a condition for success

C2 ADDED VALUE

- EU and LA have met around **wide bi-regional objectives** and interests in a way that would have not been possible to achieve at the level of individual EU Member States.
- EU support has also helped to keep **countries exiting from ODA** ('graduated countries') engaged in development cooperation at regional level.

C3 GENDER EQUALITY & MARGINALISED GROUPS

- EU has **not systematically addressed** gender equity and the rights of marginalised groups in its regional programmes.
- Attention to these issues **significantly increased** in the last four years (e.g. EUROSOCIAL+).

C4 JOINT RESPONSES TO KEY CHALLENGES

- EU support has been instrumental in **fostering a common vision** among LA and EU partners in major policy areas. This helped translate the ambitions of CELAC into implementation.
- EU regional programmes only partially managed to compensate for problems deriving from the very nature of this Community.

C10 EU INTERNAL COORDINATION

- Weak coordination and **limited complementarities** between regional cooperation and other EU instances

C11 COORDINATION WITH EU MS

- Some degree of coordination/exchange of information with EU MS, but, overall, **synergies with EU MS** sector programmes at operational level remained limited

C12 REGIONAL MONITORING & LEARNING

- **Regional monitoring and learning** hampered by weak monitoring mandates and systems, as well as weak intra-regional and bi-regional policy dialogue structures

PART III: RECOMMENDATIONS

IIIA: OVERALL ISSUES

LINKAGES WITH BI-REGIONAL DIALOGUE

R1

- Further strengthen links between multilevel bi-regional dialogue, including its sector and thematic instances (not only the summits, but also the ministerial and technical meetings) and the regional cooperation programmes

INVOLVEMENT OF 'GRADUATED' COUNTRIES

R2

- Establish a specific approach to strengthen the participation of countries exiting (or having exited) from EU bilateral cooperation in regional programmes, both as policy support providers and beneficiaries in crucial development areas

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

R3

- A rights-based approach should be incorporated at the highest level in the regional development cooperation programmes, and commitments in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment should be closely monitored to ensure actual implementation

INTRA-REGIONAL EXCHANGE

R4

- Given the absence of regional operational / coordination bodies, the EU regional programmes (within the limits imposed by the regional context) should promote and strengthen mechanisms and tools to facilitate regional policy exchange (networking, coordination and strategic monitoring) at sector and thematic level

MONITORING AND LEARNING

R5

- Put monitoring and learning at the centre of the regional cooperation programmes, including through strengthened monitoring capacities at sector/action level and the promotion of enhanced policy and institutional 'learning by doing'

INTERNAL COHERENCE

R12

- Improve coordination between cooperation programmes at regional, national and thematic level, including through dedicated resources to disseminate information among EU services and EU MS, and a stronger emphasis on the complementary roles to be played by the EU Delegations and Headquarters teams

IIA: SECTOR-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS



PEACE AND SECURITY

- Reinforce high-level dialogue and country stakeholders' participation to strengthen the security-development nexus



ENVIRONMENT & CC

- Promote the establishment of a regional coordination capacity and mechanism on climate change



SOCIAL EQUITY

- Strengthen the EU regional support to social reforms by focusing on policy innovation, new social exclusions and vulnerabilities and enhancing the participation of non-state actors



INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- Strengthen the emphasis on improving the private sector development framework to enable MSME growth



INVESTMENT FACILITY

- Improve LAIF's coherence and complementarity with the regional cooperation programmes, especially regarding climate change



HIGHER EDUCATION

- Strengthen reciprocity and inclusion of higher education programmes and improve links with other European interventions