

# **Guidelines for the functioning of the EU-LAC Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) to develop and sustain R&I dialogue**

## **Article 1**

### **Role and Tasks of the R&I SOM**

#### **1.1. Role**

In the context of the EU-LAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation and of the follow-up of successive EU-LAC Summits, the regular EU-LAC Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) play a central role in stimulating and monitoring EU-LAC R&I cooperation.

#### **1.2. Tasks**

With a view to promoting the development of an EU-LAC Knowledge Area as first promoted by the 2004 Guadalajara Summit and reiterated by the 2010 Madrid Summit and thereby to supporting the sustainable development of both regions, the EU-LAC R&I SOM will:

- act as a forum for the exchange of information and views and recommendations on R&I policy in the EU-LAC region and establish a common information base on this subject;
- identify and update common priorities and issues of regional importance to be addressed by R&I and requiring cooperative EU-LAC activities, including synergies between activities supported by different policy instruments on both sides;
- encourage mutual policy learning;
- ensure the proper implementation and effectiveness of cooperation instruments;
- explore the possibility of working jointly with other institutions in matters related to innovation and knowledge, applied research and technological innovation;
- to this effect, establish and update a road map to implement the EU-LAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation and define concrete actions;
- monitor, and comment on, R&I policies, developments and activities in the EU-LAC context;
- report to the EU-LAC Ministerial Forum or the EU-LAC Summits on implementation of EU-LAC R&I cooperation and progress with the development of the EU-LAC Knowledge Area

## **Article 2**

### **Composition of the EU-LAC R&I SOM**

The Member States of the EU as well as the Latin American and Caribbean countries will be represented by at least one official delegate each. The delegates should be designated by their government authorities responsible for R&I. Countries are free to participate with larger delegations, e.g. also representing other ministries interested/involved in EU-LAC cooperation in R&I.

The European Commission will be represented by at least one delegate from the service responsible for coordinating EU-LAC - cooperation in R&I. Where appropriate, other involved services of the European Commission will be associated with the Commission's delegation. The European External Action Service (EEAS) will be represented by at least one delegate.

## **Article 3**

### **Chairmanship**

The R&I SOM will be co-chaired by the European Commission and the Presidency of the LAC countries.

## **Article 4**

### **Role and Tasks of the Co-Chair**

The co-chairs will prepare the meetings of the EU-LAC R&I senior officials, chair the meetings and agree the minutes. The co-chairs will transmit all background documentation prior to meetings to the members of the R&I SOM, in particular information concerning points on which the R&I SOM must formulate an opinion.

The co-chairs will ensure continuity between SOMs notably by providing regular information regarding progress in the implementation of the road map. They will be assisted by senior officials as agreed by each region. INCONETs and other projects will be called upon to support the implementation of specific actions as appropriate.

## **Article 5**

### **Meetings of the EU-LAC R&I Senior Officials**

#### **5.1. Frequency**

The SOM will be convened, in principle, once a year. The dates and venue of meetings will be agreed at its preceding meeting, if possible. The EU-LAC R&I SOM may decide to convene additional *ad hoc* meetings when required.

#### **5.2. Venue**

The EU-LAC R&I SOM will be hosted by one of the countries represented. The SOM will normally take place alternately in an EU Member State and a LAC country. SOMs can also be organised in the form of a video-conference.

#### **5.3. Agenda**

The agenda will be proposed by the co-chairs of the EU-LAC R&I SOM. Any nominated senior official may ask the chair not later than three weeks prior to the next meeting, to include a specific point on the draft agenda. The requesting country should provide the chair with the necessary background documentation in order to allow for timely distribution to the EU-LAC senior officials. The agenda will be approved by the SOM at the beginning of each meeting.

#### **5.4. Preparation of Meetings**

Detailed information on date and venue, as well as the draft agenda and any document relating to a meeting of the senior officials, will be sent to them by the co-chairs at least one month prior to the meeting.

#### **5.5. Minutes**

The minutes of the senior officials meetings will be drafted by the co-chairs and summarise the discussions held and will report on all decisions reached. Opinions expressed by individual senior officials will normally not be reported in the minutes. The minutes should be sent to all delegations not later than one month after the SOM.

#### **5.6. Adoption of Conclusions and Recommendations**

Conclusions and Recommendations of the EU-LAC R&I SOM will be adopted by general consensus. Draft recommendations will be submitted to senior officials prior to the meeting.

#### **5.7. *Ad hoc* Working Group**

*Ad hoc* working groups can be set up on specific topics for a limited duration of time. Working groups report back to the full SOM.

## **Article 6**

### **Financial Issues**

#### **6.1. Travel and Subsistence**

Travel and subsistence expenses of nominated senior officials participating in a meeting will normally be met by their seconding country.

#### **6.2. Organisational Costs**

Local organisational costs will normally be covered by the host country.

## **Article 7**

### **Confidentiality**

The work of the EU-LAC R&I SOM will normally not be confidential. However, each nominated senior official, including the European Commission and the EEAS, may request that information which s/he provides to the SOM, either written or orally, be treated as confidential. In that case, it will not be reported in detail in the minutes. All members must respect this and should not take advantage of confidential information they receive during the EU-LAC R&I SOM.

## **Article 8**

### **Amendments to the Guidelines**

The present Guidelines lay down the organisational structure and functions of the EU-LAC R&I SOM. Amendments to these Guidelines may be proposed by any nominated senior official. Their adoption requires consensus of the EU-LAC R&I Senior Officials present at the meeting in which the decision is to be taken. EU-LAC R&I Senior Officials will be informed of the proposed amendments at least 21 days prior to the meeting by the Co-Chairs.