



**EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI)  
Seventh Senior Officials Meeting on Science and Technology  
2 October 2017, San Salvador, El Salvador**

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

1. The seventh Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on Science and Technology of the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) was held in San Salvador, El Salvador on 2 October 2017.
2. The meeting was co-chaired by the Vice Minister for Science and Technology of El Salvador, Mrs. Erlinda Handal, representing the *pro tempore* presidency of CELAC (Group of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation) and the Head of the Unit for North America, Latin America and The Caribbean, Director General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, Ms. Begoña Arano.
3. In total: 26 countries were present, which are hereafter referred to as 'the Participants'.
4. The Participants recalled :
  - a. The strategic relevance of Science, Technology and Innovation in the bi-regional agenda, and the advances in the Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI).
  - b. The 2015 Brussels Declaration and EU-CELAC Action Plan, which calls for the creation of the EU-CELAC Common Research Area and for exploring synergies between the academic representatives and the JIRI.
  - c. The Joint Communiqué of the fifth JIRI Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of 2016, in which Senior Officials committed towards the implementation of the EU-CELAC Common Research Area around three strategic pillars: mobility of researchers, international outreach of research infrastructures and increased thematic cooperation to address global challenges; followed by the sixth JIRI SOM, in which Senior Officials highlighted the key role of research and innovation for sustainable development and growth and put in place concrete initiatives with socio-economic impact for the efficient implementation of the EU-CELAC Common Research Area.



- d. The Santo Domingo Declaration of the EU-CELAC Ministerial Meeting of 26 October 2016 and the assessment of EU-CELAC action plan and programmes, which called for the efficient implementation of the priorities agreed under the Common Research Area and for exploring support mechanisms to maximise the participation of both CELAC and EU countries in European research programmes; followed by the Punta Cana declaration of 25 January 2017, which advocates technology, scientific development and innovation as a way to build knowledge societies and sustainable development.
5. The Participants welcomed the organisation of the JIRI SOM during the EU-CELAC Knowledge week and acknowledged the benefits of ensuring synergies between the academic stakeholders and research and innovation ministries, as mandated by the EU-CELAC Heads of State and Governments in the 2015 Action Plan.

In this regard the Participants encouraged the EU LAC Foundation to continue facilitating a science and academic bi-regional dialogue.

6. The Participants highlighted the strategic relevance of research and innovation for implementing the 2030 Agenda, as well as achieving productivity and growth. In this context, the Parties welcomed the progress made with the pilot Policy Advice initiative for Central America and the Dominican Republic in the area of climate change and biodiversity, and acknowledged the policy benefits of participating in the EU-CELAC Policy Advice initiative, launched by the European Commission at the sixth JIRI SOM in March 2017, to support CELAC countries in addressing the sustainable development goals through research and innovation.
7. The Participants welcomed the progress made within the EU-CELAC Common Research Area and agreed on concrete actions under each of its three pillars.
8. Under the pillar of mobility of researchers:
  - a) The Participants stressed the importance of efficient tools and instruments to inform on existing national, regional and European programmes supporting mobility of researchers, such as the European Research Council grants, Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions for international mobility and Erasmus+ Programme in Latin America and in the Caribbean.
  - b) The Participants welcomed the opening of the EURAXESS Worldwide Network to CELAC as a way to provide information on mobility, jobs and funding opportunities for CELAC researchers in Europe, and re-iterated their commitment towards the development of a regional portal for researchers in CELAC, based on synergies such as the “*Ibero-American Knowledge Area*”.
9. Under the pillar of research infrastructures:



- a) The Participants welcomed the intra-CELAC workshop held in Uruguay on 28-29/09 as a first step towards the development of a regional approach on Research Infrastructures in CELAC and endorsed the mandate of the EU-CELAC Research Infrastructures Working group, including next steps. The Participants also acknowledged the need to explore synergies with existing regional programmes and instruments.
  - b) To ensure bi-regional policy coordination and sharing of good practices in policy development and mapping of research infrastructures, the Participants called for the nomination of European Member States representatives for the working group and welcomed the organization of the first bi-regional meeting of the Working Group in spring 2018 in Brussels.
10. Under the pillar of strengthened thematic cooperation:
- a. The Participants acknowledged the inclusive consultation process, conducted in the field of Health, as follow-up to the last SOM, which has led to the definition of a large scale R&I action on translational collaborative cancer research between Europe and CELAC in Horizon 2020. The Participants also committed to explore further areas of cooperation in the field of Health, such as personalised medicine. CELAC countries are also invited to join initiatives such as GACD, IRDiRC<sup>1</sup>, GloPID-R<sup>2</sup> and JPIAMR<sup>3</sup>.
  - b. Building on this positive experience, the Participants agreed on the need to put in place a structured consultation on sustainable urbanization. The Participants agreed to set up a Task Force with this aim and welcomed the organization of the workshop on sustainable urbanization focused on common EU-CELAC priorities in the area of sustainable urbanization. This workshop as well as the Horizon 2020 new R&I action for EU-CELAC cooperation on nature based solutions for restoration and rehabilitation of urban ecosystems will be the base on which the Task Force will start working.
  - c. The Participants also agreed to apply the principle of cooperation in the areas of common interest, such as sustainable agriculture and clean urban transport, and agreed to ensure an appropriate follow-up in establishing a coordinated approach, based on the common interests and capacity of the CELAC countries.
  - d. To ensure that the EU-CELAC research community will unlock the full potential of opportunities under the last Horizon 2020 Work Programme for the period 2018-2020, the Participants committed towards the widest

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<sup>1</sup> [www.irdirc.org](http://www.irdirc.org)

<sup>2</sup> [www.glopid-r.org](http://www.glopid-r.org)

<sup>3</sup> [www.jpiaamr.eu](http://www.jpiaamr.eu)



dissemination of Horizon 2020 and mobilization of national stakeholders, with the support of the Regional Horizon 2020 NCP Network.

11. Building on the mandate of the last JIRI SOM, on the existing work on innovation in CELAC and the EU, the Participants agreed on the need to strengthen the innovation dimension of the EU-CELAC cooperation under the Common Research Area and committed towards the development of a common innovation agenda ahead of the next JIRI SOM. As a first step, the Participants agreed to support an expert innovation event in spring 2018.
12. The Participants acknowledged the strategic policy inputs of bi-regional projects and programmes and welcomed the European Commission International Cooperation Services Facility's support to the JIRI. In this context, CELAC countries stressed the need for a research and innovation portal to better articulate the connection among CELAC countries and facilitate their participation in all three pillars of the Common Research Area.
13. The Participants stressed the important work done and achievements made under Chapter 1 of the EU-CELAC Action Plan, in synergy with Chapter 9, and stressed the importance of continuing the EU-CELAC political dialogue.

The parties also highlighted the need to inform EU-CELAC political leaders about the key role that research and innovation play in sustainable development and productivity.

14. The next Senior Officials Meeting on Research and Innovation will take place in Brussels.