



EU-LAC Foundation  
Fundación EU-LAC

EU-LAC FOUNDATION'S NEWSLETTER

# The Bi-Regional Relationship in 2023: A New Starting Point

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## Opinion Article



### THE BI-REGIONAL RELATIONSHIP IN 2023: A NEW STARTING POINT

By **Leire Pajín**,

President of the EU-LAC Foundation

The year 2023 has been especially relevant for the relations between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union. At the beginning of the year, the III EU-CELAC Summit was seen as an unprecedented opportunity in the last eight years to revitalise and recalibrate the dynamics between two regions united by a historical legacy and destined to collaborate in an increasingly multipolar global context facing several crises. The meeting of heads of state and government, held on 17 and 18 July in Brussels, met the expectations placed on it.

The success of the meeting was evident in the notable attendance of 48 regional leaders and the presidencies of the EU and CELAC. Moreover, it was embodied in a Joint Declaration that expressed the willingness to advance towards more sustainable, digitalised, and equitable societies, using tools like the EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda to achieve these ends. Of particular relevance was the establishment of new commitments to strengthen the political relationship, including biennial high-level meetings and an inter-summit follow-up mechanism.

However, as I have reaffirmed throughout the year, we are at a starting point, not a culmination. It is now imperative to nurture the existing bi-regional relationship not only with mutual and loyal commitment but also with the establishment of a stable and honest collaboration framework. Shared values and interests and strong economic, social, and cultural ties are fundamental for a robust bi-regional relationship, but they are not enough.

The environmental, digital, and social transition can only be achieved if we are capable of jointly adopting the specific

objectives and initiatives that both regions need. This requires recognising existing asymmetries, for example, in the responsibility for emissions, in the necessary and available raw materials, and in strengthening public systems to address inequalities. From this recognition, we must agree on common goals and provide the necessary tools for their achievement.

To overcome these challenges, we need cooperation instruments that allow us to weave alliances, find shared solutions, and continue exchanging experiences that drive our progress. It is essential to create dynamic and attractive spaces for the diverse actors of bi-regional links. Deepening the relationship implies uniting societies, cultural and academic sectors, civil society organizations, women's alliances, indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, migrant populations, and other groups. It is vital to promote broad and diverse citizen participation and focus on the most vulnerable.

In this sense, the EU-LAC Foundation centred its efforts in 2023 on forging connections and linkage spaces between actors from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe; and, simultaneously, on promoting the exchange between civil societies and governmental and local authorities of both regions. The Foundation organised various thematic forums that generated valuable inputs to enrich the high-level authorities' discussion agenda. Participants in these events identified and shared recommendations and key actions for the adoption of common lines of initiatives, programmes, and public policies that help articulate the ties between the EU and LAC. In this context, the EU-LAC Foundation promoted a new perspective on the interests and needs

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of both regions (and sub-regions) and advocated for more equitable cooperation mechanisms.

Thus, the work of the EU-LAC Foundation in the first half of the year was dedicated to supporting and disseminating the Summit from the outset of the initiative and accompanying its realisation. On the other hand, the second half of 2023 focused on communicating and following up on the priorities and commitments established in the Summit Declaration, as well as on the critical analysis of the opportunities and limitations of the agreements reached and the formulation of mechanisms for their effective implementation.

The meeting of heads of state and government marks a new dimension in the intensity of the relationship between Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe and, therefore, outlines a new horizon for the activities of the Foundation. The Declaration resulting from the Summit opens an opportunity for the launch of new initiatives and for the continuity of

those linked to a shared vision of development, the specific nature of the bi-regional link, and the affirmation of a multilateral approach to the main problems and challenges of the contemporary world. The Foundation's priorities, in strategic terms, align with those enunciated at the Summit, adjusted to the organization's capacity to disseminate, promote, and generate specific dialogues and analyses around these policies.

At the EU-LAC Foundation, we propose to capitalise on the networks we have already woven and turn them into spaces of effective, tangible, and innovative cooperation. Our goal is also to find and develop spaces between Summits that allow us to follow up on the Declaration and the EU-CELAC 2023-2025 Roadmap, materialise the commitments made, and continue strengthening this relationship, which is honest and solid, to advance the equitable, dignified, and sustainable development of our societies.

## News

### EU-LAC Foundation and INBAL initiatives boost bi-regional cultural cooperation

08 December 2023



On 4, 5 and 6 December, the EU-LAC Foundation, in close collaboration with the National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature of Mexico (INBAL), organised the 14th EU-LAC Reflection Forum “Challenges and Opportunities for the Construction of a Common Agenda for Cultural Cooperation between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union”. The Seminar “International Cultural Cooperation in a Changing Scenario: Building a shared agenda between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union” was also held. These meetings were conceived as a space for cultural managers, public authorities and members of civil society to come together to promote dialogue and in-depth reflection on the intersection of culture and development in the current scenario and the dynamics of cooperation between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

[More information!](#)

### The EU-LAC Foundation participates as observer in the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation Senior Officials Meeting

28 November 2023



The EU-LAC Foundation participated as observer in the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation Senior Officials Meeting (JIRI SOM), which took place on 28 and 29 November in Brussels. The JIRI SOM constitutes an important element of the EU-CELAC Road Map 2023-2025 as agreed upon during the EU-CELAC Summit in July 2023.

[More information!](#)

## IX Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Governors of the EU-LAC Foundation

27 November 2023



The IX Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Governors of the EU-LAC International Foundation was held on 24 November in Ljubljana, Slovenia. During this second meeting of 2023, the Board of Governors reviewed the activities, results and functioning of the Foundation's and decided upon its work programme for 2024.

[More information!](#)

## EU-LAC Women's International Network celebrates its second anniversary.

23 November 2023



Two years ago, a group of women committed with Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and gender equality came together with a clear purpose: to promote a common gender agenda between the two regions. The [EU-LAC Women's International Network \(EU-LAC WIN\)](#) was born. Since then, we have built a space where more than 60 members representing different institutions, networks and independent experts come together to promote a common gender vision between the two regions.

[More information!](#)

## Webinar examines opportunities and challenges of the EU-Andean Multi-Party Association Agreement

22 November 2023



The opportunities and challenges observed during the 10 years of the Multi-Party Association Agreement between the EU and the Andean countries were analysed during a virtual seminar organised by the EU-LAC Foundation on 21 November. The seminar brought together more than 35 participants from academia, government, diplomacy, international organisations and business, both from Latin America and Europe.

[More information!](#)

## Young diplomats attend training programme on EU-CELAC strategic partnership

21 November 2023



Thirty-four professionals from the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the third edition of the “Training and Updating Programme for Young Diplomats on the EU-CELAC Strategic Partnership”. Organised by the EU-LAC Foundation and the German Federal Foreign Office, the course took place from 13 to 17 November in Berlin, Germany.

[More information!](#)

## Workshop addresses digital transformation as an enabler for improving food security and clean energy transition

17 November 2023



Experts, academics and policy makers from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean gathered on 16 and 17 November for the workshop “Digital Transformation as an Enabler for Improving Food Security and Clean Energy Transition”, co-organised by the EU-LAC Foundation, RedCLARA and the Centre for Energy, Environmental and Technological Research (CIEMAT).

[More information!](#)

## 1st EU-LAC Foundation - UNED Pontevedra Days “Relaunching EU-CELAC bi-regional cooperation”

18 October 2023



The [1st EU-LAC Foundation - UNED Pontevedra Days “Relaunching EU-CELAC bi-regional cooperation: Financial flows, funding mechanisms and inequalities”](#) took place on 16 and 17 October. The event was jointly organised by the EU-LAC Foundation and the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Vigo, Spain.

[More information!](#)



## Mission to Costa Rica: EU-LAC Foundation participates in the First OECD Environmental Sustainability Summit

10 October 2023



The EU-LAC Foundation participated in the First OECD Ministerial Summit on Environmental Sustainability: Economic Resilience, Green and Just Transition. Adrián Bonilla, Executive Director of the Foundation, participated in the panel “Towards a Green and Just Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean”, where he highlighted the achievements of the III EU-CELAC Summit.

[More information!](#)

## The EU-LAC Multi-Actor Dialogue Forum on Just Green Transition, Inclusive Digital Transformation, and Social Cohesion follows up on the III EU-CELAC Summit

06 October 2023



Personalities from academia, diplomats, international organisations and multinational companies, among others, participated in the “[Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Forum: Just Green Transition, Inclusive Digital Transformation and Social Cohesion](#)” in Costa Rica, on 4 October 2023. This event was successfully organised by the EU-LAC Foundation and the School of International Relations of the National University of Costa Rica (UNA).

[More information!](#)

## The EU-LAC Foundation joins the German Unity Day Celebration

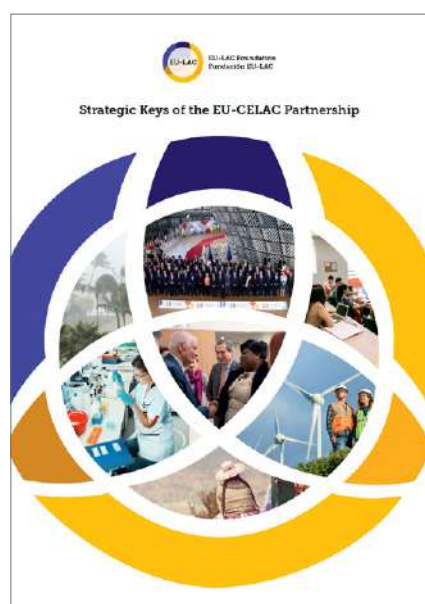
05 October 2023



The EU-LAC Foundation was honoured to be invited to participate in the “Tag der Deutschen Einheit” or German Unity Day, on 2 and 3 October. This event took place in the city of Hamburg, commemorating the German reunification under the theme “Horizon Öffnen” or “Opening Horizons”.

[More information!](#)

## Recent Publications



### Strategic Keys of the EU-CELAC Partnership

The EU-LAC Foundation organised different thematic EU-LAC Fora in the run-up to the III EU-CELAC Summit, aimed at generating inputs to enrich the agenda of discussions of high-level authorities. During the II EU-LAC Forum of Journalists, the EU-LAC Think Tank Meeting, the EU-LAC Knowledge Forum, the EU-LAC Gender Equality Forum, the EU-LAC Just Transitions Forum and the Meeting of Intergovernmental Organisations, participants identified and shared recommendations and key actions for the adoption of common lines of initiatives, programmes and public policies that help

to articulate the links between both regions. The main takeaways of these civil society and multi-stakeholder fora fall within the strategic thematic areas of the EU-LAC Foundation and provide opportunities to be supported by public and private institutions which implement programmes in both regions. As a result, this document summarises those main takeaways to showcase the potential of the bi-regional EU-CELAC partnership at the global level, with the 2030 Agenda as an umbrella.

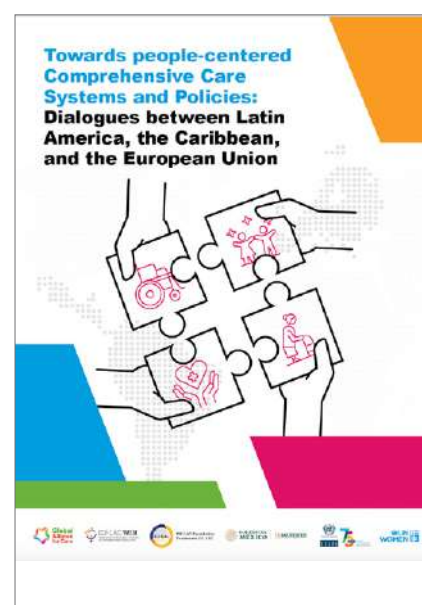
[Read the publication!](#)

### Towards people-centered Comprehensive Care Systems and Policies: Dialogues between Latin America, the Caribbean, and the European Union

With the aim of advancing the care agenda, the EU-LAC Foundation, through the EU-LAC International Women's Network, in close collaboration with UN Women for the Americas and the Caribbean, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Global Care Partnership and the National Institute of Women of Mexico (INMUJERES), organised a cycle of five inter-regional dialogues on integrated care systems.

Held between November 2022 and September 2023, this cycle sought to place the priority populations that receive and provide care at the centre. This document presents the main conclusions drawn from these dialogues as a result of the exchange of experiences between experts from Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

[Read the publication!](#)





## Policy Brief: Towards gender-transformative climate actions: Dialogues between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union

The struggle to promote gender equality and the commitment to and concern for the environment are two matters which occupy a central place in the agendas of the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Both regions have played a leading role in the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the principal Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including the Paris Agreement, as well as other political frameworks with wide global consensus such as the Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015- 2030 and the New Urban Agenda, among others. Given the importance of acting collectively to safeguard the environment and promote

gender equality and women’s empowerment, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the EU-LAC Foundation made a commitment to hold a series of dialogues on action for gender and the climate between September and December 2022. This document presents the principal conclusions resulting from this series of dialogues in order to design and implement gender-transformative climate actions based on the exchange of experiences between experts from Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

[Read the publication!](#)

## Report: Multi-Actor Dialogue Forum: Just Green Transition, Inclusive Digital Transformation and Social Cohesion

The Multi-Actor Dialogue Forum: “Just Green Transition, Inclusive Digital Transformation and Social Cohesion”, organised by the EU-LAC Foundation and the National University of Costa Rica (UNA) on 4 October 2023, gathered around 170 leaders from civil society organisations, academics, business and labour representatives, development banks, international organisations, and governments to

discuss the outcomes of the EU-CELAC 2023 Summit and discuss strategies and proposals for its implementation. The Forum, which is part of the EU-CELAC Roadmap 2023-2025, was divided on parallel panels, where each one corresponded to the three thematic areas.

[Read the publication!](#)





## Report I Conference UNED Pontevedra –EU-LAC Foundation ‘Relaunching the EU-CELAC bi-regional cooperation: Financial flows, funding mechanisms and inequalities’

On 16 and 17 October, the First EU-LAC – UNED Pontevedra Conference ‘Relaunching the EU-CELAC bi-regional cooperation: Financial flows, funding mechanisms and inequalities’ was held. The event was organised by the EU-LAC Foundation and the National University of Distance Education (UNED) in Vigo, Spain. The conference convened representatives from international organisations, the academic community, and leaders from various sectors to analyse the relationship between the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean in diverse economic dimensions. The event was

accessible to students and participants remotely. The Conference Programme included three panels: Financial Flows and Financing Mechanisms; Sustainable Growth and Climate Change; and Economic Growth and Inequality, where complex issues confronting the European Union, Latin America, and the Caribbean were addressed from multiple perspectives. This publication systematises the content covered during the meeting.

[Read the publication!](#)

## The challenge of working together: European Union - Latin America and the Caribbean relations in the face of major global challenges

In this publication you will find comprehensive coverage of more than 11 panels, each of which looks in depth at the challenges facing both the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. Critical issues such as the economy, climate change, gender equality, citizenship, democracy promotion and social

cohesion were analysed in depth. The central purpose of these panels was to create a space for meaningful dialogue and to promote cooperation between the regions, with the shared goal of finding common solutions.

[Read the publication!](#)



## Blog Articles

### Food Security: How to promote dialogue and cooperation between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean?

Pamela Aróstica - Senior Researcher CEAPI – UNTREF

Anna Ayuso - Senior Researcher for Latin America at CIDOB

29 November 2023



Food security is now a top priority on the international agenda. On 20 November, the Global Forum on Food Security in London highlighted that “climate change, conflict and population growth pose increasing challenges to food security”. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), almost 30% of the world’s population (2,356.9 million people) is food insecure.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is a major global food supplier, exporting 40% of its food production and representing 17%

of the total world food exports. However, several countries in the region are also importers. In addition, inequalities in access to food persist, and climate change, rural poverty, loss of agricultural biodiversity, food inflation and health crises (such as COVID-19) pose challenges to food security in LAC. In the European Union (EU), food supply is not under threat, but European agriculture is dependent on imports of essential products such as animal feed and fertilisers.

[Continue reading](#)



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