



EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI)
Sixth Senior Official Meeting on Science and Technology
14 March 2017, Brussels, Belgium

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1. The sixth Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on Science and Technology of the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative on Research and Innovation (JIRI) was held in Brussels on 14 March 2017.
2. The meeting was co-chaired by the Director of International Cooperation at DG RTD, European Commission, Ms. Maria Cristina Russo, and 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).
3. In total: 42 countries were present, hereafter '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 Joint Communiqué of the fifth JIRI Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) held in Brussels, Belgium on 14 March 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.
 - c. The Santo Domingo's 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 countries of both CELAC and EU in European research programmes.



- d. The Punta Cana declaration of 25 January 2017, which features technology, scientific development and innovation as way to build knowledge societies and sustainable development.
5. The Participants agreed to continue working on strengthening the strategic regional partnership in research and innovation under the EU-CELAC Common Research Area and to ensure that appropriate functioning and activities are defined under each of its pillars.
6. Under the pillar of mobility of researchers:
 - a. The Participants acknowledged the need of a more structured and inclusive bi-regional academic dialogue in relation to science and technology, as well as scientific dialogue in line with the EU-CELAC Action Plan. The EU-LAC Foundation is encouraged to contribute in liaising with key stakeholders at regional and bi-regional level and ensuring an appropriate follow-up, within its mandate.
 - b. The Participants recognized the importance of efficient tools and instruments to support mobility of researchers, such as the EURAXESS network and portal for researchers in Europe and committed towards the development of a regional portal for researchers in CELAC, utilizing synergies such as the “*Ibero-American Knowledge Area*”.
 - c. The Participants engaged to ensure higher visibility of relevant Latin American and Caribbean programmes and to promote the opportunities provided by the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions for international mobility and Erasmus+ Programme in Latin America and in the Caribbean.
7. Under the pillar of research infrastructures, the Participants acknowledged the political and socio-economic importance of promoting a structured dialogue on research infrastructures and endorsed, as a first step, the establishment of a working group on research infrastructures to ensure bi-regional policy coordination and sharing of good practices in policy development and mapping of research infrastructures.
8. Under the pillar of strengthened thematic cooperation:
 - a. As a follow-up to the conclusions reached at the last SOM, the Participants agreed to implement joint activities in the areas of Health, including non-communicable diseases, and Sustainable urbanization by the means of potential Horizon 2020 large scale topics specifically devoted to international cooperation with the CELAC region.



- b. The Participants agreed also on the relevance of new possible areas for cooperation such as sustainable agriculture and clean urban transport, and to ensure an appropriate follow-up in defining the principal of cooperation, on the base of common interests and capacity of the CELAC countries.
 - c. The Participants agreed to further enhance the intra-regional dialogue on climate change, i.a. in the context of the new EU Regional Environment and Climate Change programme for Latin America – EUROCLIMA+, and to liaise with relevant stakeholders at national level to ensure the efficient implementation of the new programme.
 - d. The Participants took note of the progress achieved by the JIRI Working Groups on Bioeconomy, Biodiversity including Climate Change, ICT, Energy and Health and agreed on the need to align the work of the groups, to allow for a more efficient implementation of the Common Research Area,.
9. The Participants noted the strategic policy inputs of bi-regional projects and programs and the achievements of the two EC-funded projects, Alcue-Net and ERA-Net Lac, and welcomed the establishment of a dynamic regional Horizon 2020 NCP network for CELAC, as well as the launch of the EU-CELAC funding agencies interest group, in view of the effective implementation of the priorities agreed at the SOM.
10. The Participants reiterated the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in goals such as: innovation, protection of the environment, urban resilience, health and renewable energy, among others, which aim to promote inclusive growth and the reduction of poverty.
11. In this context, the Participants welcomed the launch of the EU-CELAC R&I Policy Advice initiative of the European Commission to support CELAC countries in addressing the sustainable development goals, and committed towards its implementation on a voluntary basis, through the launch of a pilot policy exercise with interested countries. The first advancements should be presented to the next EU-CELAC Summit in El Salvador.
12. The Participants agreed on the need to acknowledge the important role of research and innovation for economic growth and sustainable development at the next EU-CELAC Summit in El Salvador.
13. The Participants acknowledged the importance of innovation for boosting growth and jobs and committed to further addressing innovation under the JIRI and the Common Research Area.
14. The next Senior Officials Meeting on Research and Innovation will take place in the country holding the CELAC Pro Tempore Presidency.