



Eurocamaras Latin America Regional Strategy Paper¹

Introduction

This document has been prepared by the EU Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (Eurocamaras) that cooperate in the framework of the ELANBiz programme, funded by the European Commission: Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, México and Perú.

It formulates the strategic position of these Eurocamaras, in the context of the economic and commercial relations between the EU and Latin America, and develops a series of proposals aimed to the strengthening of the European business organizations, as well as to promote public-private cooperation in the framework of the EU “economic diplomacy”.

This document is addressed to the public and private actors that participate in the development of the economic and commercial relations between the EU and Latin America, and invites them to coordinate their efforts and strengthen their collaboration with the Eurocamaras, with the aim of advancing in the development of a framework of interregional relations based on complementarity and harmony.

Strategic Role of the Eurocamaras in the framework of the economic relations between the EU and Latin America

As a result of the historic, cultural and economic relations with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the EU maintains a strong cooperation and political dialogue with the region. The EU-LAC biregional summits started in 1999 and, since 2013, they have been held every two years with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) as the EU counterpart.

The **economic dimension** of the bilateral relations **has intensified in the last 10 years**. The EU is the second commercial partner of Latin America (LATAM), the largest international investor and the first sponsor of development initiatives in the region. Bilateral trade of goods has grown at a fast pace and has increased twofold in the last decade, accounting for around 6% of the EU foreign trade. As a whole, the countries of LATAM are the fifth largest trade partner of the EU. LATAM is also one of the main destinations of EU investment, and the EU FDI stock in the region is larger than the accumulated EU FDI in Russia, China and India combined.

The depth of the linkages between both regions favors a **bidirectional economic relation**, based on the values of quality, social responsibility, job creation, technology transfer, research and innovation and the commitment towards sustainable development.

¹ This document forms part and is a result of the “Eurocamaras-ELANBiz Roadmap” launched on October 2016 with the objective of strengthening of the Eurocamaras in Latin America.



It is more and more obvious the need to integrate the EU and LATAM economies through the global value chains, based on a circular economy model, as well as the importance of concluding bilateral and multilateral trade agreements as effective tools that can contribute to confront the global challenges shared by both regions.

In fact, LATAM is currently the region **where the EU has concluded a largest number of trade agreements**. When the negotiations with Mercosur are finalized, the EU will have preferential agreements with virtually every major economy in the region.

Economy has gradually become the main engine of global political influence. The **economic diplomacy**, in the framework of the strategic vision developed by the EC, is a fundamental tool for the EU to remain a relevant actor in the globalized economy and to maintain their leading role in LATAM. In this context, **the Eurocamaras in Latin America can and intend to play a key role in the economic diplomacy**, contributing to shape and energize the public-private dialogue, and to articulate the economic and commercial interests of the European companies in the region.

Who are the Eurocamaras in Latin America?

The **Eurocamaras in Latin America (ECs LATAM)** that underwrite this document, are independent, private and nonprofit business organizations, recognized by EU and local institutions as the voice of the EU business community in LATAM. We are second-tier organizations, and our members are the EU Bilateral chambers in each country. Thus, we are the main advocate for the promotion of the interest, aspirations, concerns and projects of the **“European Business Community” in the region (EBC-LATAM)**.

While some ECs are **newly-created organisations**, we are institutions of reference, fully integrated in the socio-economic and political systems of the various countries, and have the **experience, the operational capacity and the recognition** achieved by our members, who in many cases have over **100 years** of existence advocating for the European business systems.

Our **mission** is to promote the interests and the aspirations of the EU companies established in the region, and the improvement of the commercial and economic frameworks in which they operate.

We actively collaborate with the EU Delegations (EUDs) in the various countries, as well as with the European business networks, and several Eurocamaras are members of the **“Enterprise European Network” (EEN-BCC)** and the **“European Business Organizations Worldwide Network” (EBO-WWN)**.



The Eurocamaras in the seven LATAM countries included², represent **65 EU Bilateral chambers** and over **15.000 companies**, the EU being the largest international investor in LATAM and accounting for 37% of total FDI in 2010-2015 and € 61.7 billion in 2016.³

For these reasons, we constitute a forum for the economic and business dialogues between the EU and Latin America, and provide a platform where the companies from both regions interact and explore together opportunities for the increment of bilateral trade, investments and technological cooperation.

We advocate the enhancement of market access conditions and of the framework for the attraction and protection of investments between both regions.

We are also committed with the interregional cooperation and the economic and social development of Latin America. The facilitation of commercial exchanges, the growth of investments and business cooperation, are strategies conducive to improving the competitiveness of the region, through the integration of Latin American businesses into the global value chains.

Our principles

- We are independent, nonprofit organizations, governed by our members, EU Bilateral chambers of commerce with ample experience in Latin America
- We defend the interests of the EU companies doing business in the region
- We promote bilateral trade, FDI and technological cooperation, as these are conducive to strengthening the interregional relationship and the sustainable development of LATAM
- We work together with the EU authorities, and are committed to the promotion of the interest of EU businesses and investors, as well as the effective implementation of the economy diplomacy
- We maintain constructive relationships with local authorities, aimed at the improvement of the business climate and the regulatory framework governing foreign trade and investments.

Our strengths

- We are the major natural bridge that links the EU and LATAM businesses
- We share the European and the Latin American values, and consolidate them in a proposition for bilateral cooperation based on equality, balance and sustainability

² Los países cubiertos por el programa ELANBiz de la CE: Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, México y Perú.

³ Fuente: CEPAL



- We are the leading EU business network in LATAM and in every individual country in the region, and at the aggregate level, one of the largest business networks worldwide
- We are the main point of reference for EU-LATAM business relations, focal point and source of information for the facilitation of commercial exchanges and investments in the two regions
- Through the Eurocamaras regional network, we facilitate South-South cooperation between EU and Latin American businesses operating in the various countries of the region
- We assemble and articulate the voice of the European business in each of our countries and at the regional level
- Being bilateral organizations, we are also strategic allies of the Latin American countries, because we support the development of the value added of their economies and the creation of quality jobs, by connecting EU technology and know-how with the necessities of the value chains in each country

What we do?

- “Advocacy”: we articulate, represent and defend the interests of the EU businesses doing business in the region
- “Intelligence”: we know the economies of our countries, we analyze their markets and recognize the complementarities and opportunities for cooperation between our countries
- “Scouting”: we identify business opportunities between EU and Latin American companies. We participate in the organisation of events and activities for the promotion of trade in Latin America with businesses from both regions. In particular, we produce proposals for initiatives and projects aimed to the strengthening of the biregional economic and trade relations.
- “Business cooperation”: we support public and private initiatives for the promotion of business cooperation and technology transfer, that are conducive to the inclusion of SMEs into the global value chains and to the improvement of the competitiveness of our economies

As a network of Eurocamaras, we encompass virtually every productive and services sector in the EU, and in particular we collaborate in the promotion of strategic areas such as innovation, business competitiveness, vocational education, climate change, sustainable development and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The vocation of the ECs LATAM is to work in projects that belong to these strategic priorities, both at the country and the regional levels, seeking to open new opportunities and to offer increased guarantees for the EU businesses that want to invest or that are already established in one or more countries of the region.



Recomendations

To the Eurocamaras and EU Bilateral chambers of commerce in Latin America:

- To strengthen the existing Eurocamaras, pursuing the inclusion and active involvement of all the EU Bilateral chambers in every country in the region, the formalization of the corresponding incorporation agreements and the design of autonomous institutional strategies
- To sponsor the constitution of Eurocamaras in those Latin American countries where there is not one yet, leveraging on the best practices and lessons learned at the regional level
- To assemble and articulate the voice of the EU business in an effective manner, advancing in the development of position papers that are relevant to the strategic areas and that contribute to the promotion of the EU interest in the region
- To create an extensive Network of Eurocamaras in Latin America, the founding nucleus of which is formed by the Eurocamaras that underwrite this document, and that has the vocation of incorporating every country in the region
- To take an active role in the identification of opportunities for business cooperation between the EU and LATAM, and assess their interest in collaborating with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)

To the European authorities:

- To effectively support the coordination of the interest of the EU businesses at the regional level, specifically by collaborating in the strengthening of the Eurocamaras in each of the countries of Latin America, and the Network of Eurocamaras presented in this document
- To effectively and actively engage the Eurocamaras in the implementation of the EU economic diplomacy in Latin America, recognizing their representativeness and their capacity for public-private dialogue
- To promote and strengthen the “advocacy” function of the Eurocamaras, inviting them to share their views and positions in relation with issues that are relevant in the framework of the interregional economic strategy and, in particular, in the negotiation, modernization and implementation of the trade and economic cooperation agreements
- To recognize the differential character and the value added of the Eurocamaras, as actors that are relevant to the design and implementation of EU projects for the development of the trade relations and the improvement of the local competitiveness



in Latin America, in particular in the subjects of integration of SMEs in global value chains, linkages between technology clusters in the two regions and the development of initiatives of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- To promote the active engagement of Eurocamaras, with the objective of facilitating the participation of EU SMEs operating in the region in projects of technology transfer and productive innovation, among others

To the representatives of the EU Member States:

- To recognize and support the role of the EU Bilateral chambers as representatives of the businesses from each EU Member State
- To invite diplomatic missions and trade promotion organizations from EU Member States that do not have a Bilateral chamber in any Latin American country, to join the Eurocamaras with the purpose of coordinating their strategies, support their businesses and advance in the configuration of an authentic European voice in the region

Ciudad de México, October 11th, 2017