LEADERSHIP

Latin America-Europe ICT Research
& Innovation partnership

Policy brief on LAC

Digital Agendas

Analysis of the Digital Agendas in Latin
America and their relations with the Digital
Agenda for Europe

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1   Introduction

The **LEADERSHIP project** supports the evolving dialogues on EU-LAC research and innovation (R&I) cooperation in ICT by providing input to bilateral and bi-regional dialogues on Science, Technology and Innovation. To this purpose, **the "Input Paper in Digital Agendas Working Group"** presents an analysis of the Digital Agendas in Latin America and their relations with the Digital Agenda for Europe to identify common areas for future R&I cooperation in ICT, as well as to strengthen and improve the coordination of the LAC Digital Agendas.

The Input Paper **addresses the LEADERSHIP target countries** – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico, plus Costa Rica, Peru and Uruguay that have also advanced in the development of Digital Agendas. More specifically, the Input Paper is intended to feed into the LAC ICT Expert Group and thereby to the larger bi-regional and bilateral policy dialogues, in particular to the ICT Working Group of the EU-CELAC[1] Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in order to:

* Support the coordination of national digital agendas in LAC;
* Identify synergies with international aspects of the Digital Agenda for Europe;
* Promote the transfer of good practices to countries with digital agendas under construction; and
* Provide recommendations to support EU-LAC cooperation in ICT.

The **elaboration of the Input Paper**, led by CONACYT – National Council of Science and Technology of Mexico, is **based in three main inputs**:

1. An extensive literature review of the Digital Agendas and other documents containing ICT policies in the target countries, mainly from key Ministries that have been working on the development of the information society;
2. In-depth one-on-one interviews with experts from the Digital Agendas Working Group following common guidelines to harmonise information and to gather insights for further recommendations; and
3. Discussions with the Digital Agendas Working Group within the LEADERSHIP LAC-ICT Expert Group. A face-to-face meeting was held on September 29th, 2014 in Guadalajara, Mexico to discuss and critically assess Latin America Digital Agendas strategies.

The **Policy Brief on LAC Digital Agendas** synthesizes the knowledge and results produced in the elaboration of the Input Paper on Digital Agendas. It aims to **highlight main findings and recommendations** to strengthen and improve the coordination of the LAC Digital Agendas. The document is **structured in the following chapters**: Chapter 2 gives an overview of the Digital Agendas in Latin America and provides the insights gathered from the Digital Agendas Working Group; Chapter 3 contains possible synergies between Europe and LAC Digital Agendas; and Chapter 4 presents mechanisms and measures to strengthen and coordinate Digital Agendas throughout Latin America. Finally, Chapters 5 and 6 present conclusions and overall recommendations.

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[1] CELAC – Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños

2   Overview of Digital Agendas in Latin America

The first attempts to develop an integral policy on ICT started in the 1990's and the beginning of 2000. Countries such as Brazil, Chile and Colombia were the first ones to start the process of developing ambitious ICT policies. As a consequence these practices were spread and promoted in international summits. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) established guidelines representing the consensus of 175 countries over 67 principles and 167 goals. Its fulfilment horizon was until 2005.

The Tunis Agenda, an output of the WSIS, recommended the governments to elaborate an appropriate, comprehensive, progressive and sustainable agenda, the e-Strategy for Nations before 2010 (WSIS, Chapter 85). The WSIS classified as a reference 8 application areas[2]; e-government, e-business, e-education, e-heath, e-employment, e-environment, e-agriculture, and e-Science.

Regarding to the term "Digital Agenda", the term is not commonly applied in Latin American countries analysed to refer to political documents on Governments' strategies to develop the digital economy and society. Whilst Chile, Peru and Uruguay use the term Digital Agenda, the other countries prefer terms such as National Digital Plans, Innovation Plans, Digital Strategies, etc.

Figure 1: Term for Digital Agendas used per Country

In addition, each country uses their own terminologies to define their ICT policies and action plans. These includes for instance strategic pillars (Chile, Brazil, Costa Rica), strategic sectors (Argentina), digital ecosystem (Colombia), Objectives and Enablers (Mexico), Objectives and Strategies (Peru), strategic guidelines and action areas (Uruguay).

To have a country profile on current status on the development of LAC Digital Agendas, including the main action lines, policy framework, Ministry/Agency responsible, implementing stakeholders, and official website; download the complete Input Paper on LAC Digital Agendas at http://www.leadershipproject.eu/?page_id=3442.

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[2] Tunis Agenda from World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). Society, W. S. (2014). *World Summit on the Information Society*. Retrieved 10 10, 2014, from Gevena 2003 - Tunis 2005: http://www.itu.int/wsis/index.html

3 Synergies between LAC and European Digital Agendas

Unlike Europe, in Latin America there is not a common Digital Agenda for the region. Nevertheless, a comparative analysis between the Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) and the LAC Digital Agendas has been elaborated in order to show some similarities and common areas of interest that represent opportunities for cooperation between both regions. Taking the Pillars of the DAE as a reference, the following table shows similar actions and common views by country.

Table 1: Common actions lines with DAE

Pillar I - Digital Single Market	Pillar II - Interoperability and Standards	Pillar III: Trust and Security	Pillar IV: Fast and ultra-fast Internet	Pillar V: Research and Innovation	Pillar VI: Enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion
Colombia	Brazil	Brazil	Brazil	Argentina	Argentina
	Chile		Chile		Brazil
	Colombia	Colombia	Colombia	Brazil	Chile
Mexico	Costa Rica		Costa Rica	Chile	Colombia
	Mexico		Mexico		Costa Rica
	Peru		Peru	Colombia	Mexico
Peru	Uruguay	Mexico	Uruguay	Peru	Peru
					Uruguay

Infrastructure, access, inclusion, broadband and promoting the ICT Industry, are common objectives although not thoroughly mentioned in some of the Digital Agendas analysed. Also, most of the countries studied include the creation of knowledge, digital literacy, content, e-government and e-education to create human talent.

In particular, there are three international aspects of the Digital Agenda for Europe that can be considered as a basis for the design of EU - LAC International Cooperation initiatives in ICT: Internet governance, Market Access and Regulatory approximation.

With the aim of targeting the societal challenges broadly, the work of the SOM ICT group is focused on e-Inclusion, e-Health, Smart Cities, and Living Labs, addressing challenges in the fields of social cohesion, inclusiveness, sustainability and innovation for the benefit of the populations both in Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe. These four topics have been identified by the SOM ICT Working Group as central for the development and cooperation among both regions.

4 Mechanisms to strengthen LAC Digital Agendas

The Digital Agendas WG experts and the LEADERSHIP team discussed a list of relevant aspects to be considered in the Digital Agendas in Latin America in view to a more efficient implementation and future coordination. The list was proposed by CAF based on the World Economic Forum Networked Readiness Index, and aspects were classified in five groups: Infrastructure, Digital Inclusion/Human Talent, Institutional Framework, Digital Public Services and Digital Economy.

As a result of the above mentioned aspects analysis, experts of the Digital Agendas Working Group proposed the following measures to enhance and coordinate the Digital Agendas in Latin America:

- Better Integration in the private sector and more articulation and joint actions between the government, academia and the industry: more transparency should be implemented in the development of the processes and actions must be fulfilled respecting the deadlines and using a mechanism to inform the society;
- Enhance International Cooperation;
- Involve the industry, academia and social actors in the elaboration and design of the Digital Agendas;
- Build dialogue between experts, public and private sector leaders and the academia: improve transversal cooperation and coordination between the entities and stakeholders involved;
- Add a chapter about internationalization: set up a unified action plan for collaboration with countries to take advantage of skills and service offer improving local and regional competitiveness.
- Legal Structure: create regional committees and working groups for different action plans and topics;
- Operative: through projects and regional programs, bi-national and multinational participation;
- Financial: through common funds to develop programs and projects, with the participation of international organisms;
- Follow up activities: through a Latin-American Digital Observatory. Create a common matrix with advanced indicators and impact evaluation. For example, the World Economic Forum's Networked Readiness Index that measures ICT development; and
- Set up implementation plans: through greater participation of companies, universities and government entities to an institutional level.

5 Conclusions

The process to establish outstanding Digital Agendas requires the participation and involvement of relevant stakeholders, from government to academia and to industry, as well as the inclusion of the innovation dimension to enhance the ICT development ecosystem.

The analysis of the Latin American Digital Agendas show that there is a growing need to have better communication mechanisms since trustworthiness and excellent communication techniques are now of high importance. Other challenges to be faced are the need for further development of ICT training, human talent and digital literacy.

Latin American Digital Agendas follow the WSIS Tunis Agenda guidelines to a large degree. Its action lines and initiatives to elaborate appropriate, comprehensive, progressive and sustainable agendas as part of the information and knowledge society are covered within the content of the Latin American Digital Agendas; in particular, the role of public government authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICT for development, information and communication infrastructure, access to information and knowledge, capacity building and ICT applications for e-government, e-business and e-learning.

The fact that Latin American and the European Union meet some similarities on their pillars and topics of common interest represents the areas with potential for cooperation, in particular enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion; fast and ultra-fast Internet access; and interoperability and standards. In addition, there are three international aspects of the Digital Agenda for Europe that can be considered as a basis for boosting EU-LAC cooperation initiatives in ICT, such as Internet governance, Market Access and Regulatory approximation.

The proposed measures to enhance and coordinate the Digital Agendas in Latin America should be encompassed by:

- More collaboration between the government, academia and the industry in order to improve coordination between the entities and stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of Digital Agendas;
- Reinforce internationalization, by setting up a unified action plan for collaboration with countries;
- Harmonise legal, operational and financial structures; and
- Set up follow-up mechanisms.

6 Recommendations

The recommendations from the Input Paper on Digital Agendas are intended to provide contributions to strengthen and improve the coordination of the Latin American Digital Agendas, which will enhance ICT cooperation between Latin America and Europe. Thus the Input Paper is framed within the LEADERSHIP actions to support the policy dialogue in science, technology and innovation at the bi-regional level. To contribute to this dialogue, a number of recommendations are made, particularly for the EU-CELAC SOM ICT Working Group, but also for the European Commission and LAC governments committed in building Digital Agendas and enhancing EU-LAC cooperation in ICT R&I.

The first set of recommendations addressed to the **EU-CELAC SOM ICT Working Group** is to take advantage of the discussions on digital agendas and ICT strategies in Latin America carried out by the LAC-ICT Expert Group set up by the LEADERSHIP project, and to share the SOM ICT WG's views on digital agendas in Latin America to explore their roles in the context of the evolving EU-LAC policy dialogue; to follow up the evolution of Latin America Digital Agendas, deepening the comparative analysis of the digital agendas of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru and Uruguay in order to align Latin American national strategies in ICT; as well as to promote areas of common interest for EU-LAC cooperation in ICT R&I (i.e. those priority areas and topics identified by the LEADERSHIP project and validated by the LAC-ICT Expert Group).

In addition, it is recommended to explore the possibilities of the SOM Energy and Health thematic working groups to jointly or transversally develop proposals for pilot activities together with the ICT WG. The relevance of energy and health to tackle Societal Challenges in Latin America has been underlined by the LEADERSHIP survey and also topics related to energy efficiency are partially addressed by Digital Agendas of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico.

Recommendations addressed to **Latin American Governments/ICT Agencies** suggest to update priority areas for ICT in the content of the Digital Agendas or National Digital Strategies, on the basis of recent surveys and insights from relevant stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of Digital Agendas; as well as include innovation and entrepreneurship in the structure of the Digital Agendas.

In addition, LAC Government/ ICT agencies should establish an administrative office for "ICT affairs", so each country can follow up the implementation of the National Digital Agenda despite changes in the government administration; as well as to establish coordination mechanisms through Digital Agendas in Latin American countries. Possible mechanisms should be discussed and promoted in international events or spaces for discussion and interaction between the ministries, agencies and stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of the ICT policies in Latin American countries.

Finally, recommendations to the **European Commission** suggest including the need of coordination of Digital Agendas in the political agenda of EU-LAC dialogues. Topics for discussing in the EU-CELAC SOM should cover areas of common interest addressed by the Digital Agendas in Latin America and the Digital Agenda for Europe; as well as international aspects that specifically affect EU-LAC cooperation, such as Internet governance, market access and regulatory aspects.

Download the complete report at:
http://www.leadershipproject.eu/?page_id=3442

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Quotation:

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