

EN
ANNEX

PREPARATORY ACTION: EU-CELAC COOPERATION ON TERRITORIAL COHESION (BUDGET ARTICLE 13 03 77 17)

1. Introduction

1.1. *Budget line: 13 03 77 17*

1.2. *Basic Act: Not applicable*

1.3. *Policy context*

The international dimension of EU regional policy gains on importance over the last years. There are currently regional policy dialogues formalized through written agreements with 6 CELAC countries, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, as well as with the Central America Integration System (SICA). Outside this group exchanges have taken place as well with Costa Rica and Caribbean countries.

The EU-CELAC Action Plan approved at the last EU-CELAC Summit (Brussels, 10-11 June 2015) emphasises the need to promote the exchange of experience and best practice between the European Union and CELAC countries on “territorial cohesion and equity and on regional development policies, with a particular focus on cross border cooperation and on territorial development strategies, to strengthen the capacity of the regional and urban authorities to promote economic development and innovation and social inclusion and cohesion”.

1.4. *General objectives of the preparatory action:*

The objectives of the work under the preparatory action will be to:

- facilitate the sharing of experiences and knowledge on national policies of regional development, in pursuit of greater territorial cohesion within CELAC countries to bring concrete support to these countries in their efforts to improve public policy in regional development, and regional and local governance issues;
- to continue supporting exchange of experience and technical assistance on regional innovation and territorial cooperation (including policy in post-conflict situations) in Latin America, where most countries are engaged in decentralisation reforms and aim to diversify through innovation their commodities-driven economies;
- pool international responses and experience to the benefit of participating regions and cities on the challenges faced by countries and regions worldwide that have a strong "territorial" dimension and that require action at local and regional level and provide networking opportunities to EU regional and local authorities.

2. Actions/ Type of financial intervention

In 2017 the preparatory action will be implemented through the use of specific contracts under framework contracts or through calls for tenders and expert contracts (following a call for expression of interest), including with non-EU experts. The actions supported will include the organisation of events, information activities, study visits, networking, technical assistance and studies.

2.1. ACTION 1: Studies and technical assistance

A number of technical assistance actions and studies could for example cover the following topics:

- Cross-border regional innovation strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean: Technical assistance to support the improvement of the management of the regional innovation systems in selected border regions such as, *inter alia*, Argentina-Brazil-Paraguay, Brazil-Peru, Bolivia-Peru, Colombia-Peru and Guatemala-Belize border areas through the establishment of technical guidelines, training of officials and experts, as well as the identification and development of strategies, action plans and concrete projects or programmes for the development of cross-border value chains.
- Support the definition of smart specialisation strategies in selected Brazilian States building on the experience of the technical assistance project on regional innovation systems in Pernambuco (financed under Decision C(2016) 2915 of 20 May 2016).
- Technical assistance and studies to support the preparation of territorial development strategies and plans, and to support decentralised innovation policies, in CELAC countries such as, *inter alia*, Argentina, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Costa Rica and Cuba, as well as the members of the Pacific Alliance.
- Technical assistance to support the management of metropolitan areas in Argentina (namely the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires).
- Follow up cross-border cooperation in Latin America: support to specific cooperation actions in Central American (SICA) or South American border areas through the establishment, for example, of action plans proposing working lines for enhancing the collaboration in the border areas with concrete actions and measures.

Indicative budget: € 1 700 000

2.2. ACTION 2: Programmes exchanges (study visits and seminars)

Study visits and seminars are an important means of exchanging information and promoting mutual understanding with CELAC countries. There is an increasing demand from CELAC countries for direct experience of the implementation of EU regional policy on the ground in different contexts. The preparatory action makes this possible, by assuming travel and accommodation costs incurred by nominated European and third country experts as well as those incurred by other key third country regional and urban policy actors.

A number of seminars and training programmes could be supported to be held in main partner countries on topics such as: strategic and governance issues, sustainable urban development, regional innovation strategies and clusters, cross-border cooperation, etc. For example:

- Seminars and communication events, in the framework of the annual European Week of Regions and Cities, on regional policy co-operation with CELAC countries.
- Seminar to exchange good practices and identify possible cooperation in the field of blue and green growth potential in EU Outermost Regions in Latin America.
- International Seminar on Regional Innovation Policies in Brazil.

A number of exchanges could take place, for example, with Colombia on the subject of development policies in post-conflict situations (taking into account the experience of the EU PEACE programme) and decentralization and multi-level governance, as well as, for example, on the introduction of a new regional development policy in Costa Rica.

In all such cases, participants in CELAC countries will be requested to report on lessons learned, good practices and relevance of the European experience for their professional life. Practical guides and handbooks could be also drafted by participants in the training programmes.

Other expert visits from CELAC countries to Europe or from European regional policy experts to CELAC countries could take place depending on specific interests.

Indicative budget: € 300 000

3. Total budget: € 2 000 000

4. Indicative calendar for procurement procedures

The Community contribution to the procurement procedures described in the work programme will be covered by commitment appropriations for 2017 for which an amount of € 2 000 000 is available. The procurement procedures (either use of a FWC or of direct contracts) will start during the 2nd quarter of 2017. All specific and direct contracts are expected to have been signed by end 2017.