

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

EU-LAC HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON INCLUSIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTH PRODUCTS

Introduction

The **III EU - CELAC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Brussels (17-18 July 2023)** marked the revitalisation of the bi-regional relations between the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). The new Global Gateway Investment Agenda for LAC emerged as a central element for enhanced collaboration, including its human development dimension. The Summit provided a political platform for dialogue with diverse stakeholders in the EU-LAC Days (13-14 and 17 July), involving private sector operators and representatives of youth, civil society and local authorities, fostering a set of recommendations to the Leaders.

The **EU-CELAC Roadmap for 2023-2025** agreed in the Summit proposes to have a bi-regional dialogue on health regulatory matters. To abide to this commitment, a high-level event in Brussels is proposed to take it even forward by offering a comprehensive overview on our bi-regional collaboration in human development.

The **EU Council Conclusions of 21 November 2023 on “Relations between the EU and LAC” and globally on “Social, Green and Digital Transition”**, call to strengthen the Team Europe’s joint work with LAC partner countries in responding to human development challenges. This, coupled with the renewed spirit of the bi-regional partnership, offers an opportunity to address inequalities and to build more inclusive and sustainable societies.

The **Global Gateway Investment Agenda for LAC** brings also new opportunities for decent employment and social affairs. It provides a space to discuss and address gaps, and to explore synergies between health, wellbeing and the future of work, illustrating how public, private and social actors can contribute to strengthening health, education, and social cohesion. The shift towards a sustainable, climate neutral and digital world changes the way we work, learn and live. Engaging and empowering individuals in both regions to pursue those opportunities require policies that boost learning and employment prospects, creating more sustainable economies while leaving no one behind.

Human Development is at the heart of the EU action and the Global Gateway Strategy. Worldwide, the EU is committed to human development in alignment with the 2030 Agenda, promoting poverty eradication, inequality reduction, and an economy that works for people and the planet. The EU champions global agendas on gender equality and women’s empowerment, youth empowerment and children’s rights. It also calls for responsible business conduct and adherence to international labour standards, with meaningful strategies on Decent Work and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence. The EU Global Health Strategy aims to reinforce health systems, advancing universal coverage, increasing global health security and contributing to a revamped global health architecture.

Within the Global Gateway, partnerships and flagship initiatives jointly with LAC partners underpin the work conducted in the different human development sectors.

The **EU-LAC Partnership on Health Resilience and Equitable Access to Health Products** initiated in June 2022, responds precisely to the interest expressed by EU-LAC Leaders in enhancing health systems and regional manufacturing capacities. It aligns with the Global Gateway aim of strengthening supply chains for an equitable access to vaccines, medicines and health products. The initiative intends to support ongoing regional efforts such as the Regional Plan for Health Self-Sufficiency approved by CELAC in 2021. The goal is to foster an environment that promotes innovation and investment, and facilitates resilient and equitable access to health products responding to health priorities. Transparency, participation, and environmental sustainability are emphasized.

The **Team Europe Initiative on Inclusive and Equitable Societies** aims to contribute to addressing inequalities, poverty, and exclusion, while enhancing social cohesion in LAC. It promotes gender equality, social rights, inclusive employment and education, and good governance. The initiative aims to support LAC efforts in developing social policies and actions to facilitate access to social rights and services, to enhance inclusive, accountable and transparent institutions, and to foster social innovation, resilience and just transitions amid global challenges.

Considering all the above, this high-level event aims to reach the following objectives:

- a) To facilitate a high-level exchange among EU-LAC authorities to foster collaboration on health regulatory frameworks and equitable access to health products, emphasizing human development.

Following the successful EU-LAC business matchmaking event (February – March 2023), the High-level Forum on Sharing Pharmaceutical Innovations (21 March 2023) and the Business Round Table on Health Resilience (17 July 2023), this high-level event aims to advance the discussions on possible partnerships that can underpin the Global Gateway Investment Agenda in the health sector. The sessions could facilitate knowledge sharing, raise awareness on existing opportunities to enhance regulations and improve access to health products within and between EU and LAC, and propose a roadmap for future collaboration between both regions. Topics would include: a) Regulatory frameworks; b) Research and innovation, market shaping, clinical trials and technology transfer to support innovation, development, production, supply and equitable access to health products; c) Public-private partnerships and investment opportunities, notably manufacturing capacities.

- b) To reinvigorate the EU-LAC high-level dialogue on social policies and launch Team Europe Initiatives.

Following the high-level policy dialogue on social affairs held in June 2022 and the EU-CELAC Summit in 2023, this could be an opportunity to highlight key bi-regional priorities and look for areas of most added value in the field of health, education, social protection and social inclusion, contributing to the overall goal of increasing the resilience of social systems, fostering social cohesion and reducing inequalities. This segment could allow to present valuable experiences and to have a dialogue on the possibilities of EU support to the existing LAC efforts to address inequalities and foster social cohesion in a critical geopolitical scenario. This could be an excellent occasion to launch relevant Team Europe Initiatives in this domain and present proposals to guide the future work, including for the EU programme Inclusive Societies announced during the EU-LAC Days.

Practical Information

Venue and format: The event is foreseen to take place in Brussels, indicatively on 21-22 March 2023. It will be organised in a hybrid format to enable both face-to-face and virtual participation of all the key stakeholders.

Sessions: Indicatively, the event will open with two high-level sessions to gather political support by EU-LAC countries and further exchange on priorities for EU-LAC collaboration. The high-level sessions will be followed by thematic/specialized sessions with roundtables where key stakeholders will bring their contributions. Side events may eventually be integrated based on the possibilities of coordination with the available opportunities.

Participants: The event will bring together around 100-150 participants (tbc), involving key EU and LAC actors in the areas to be discussed, representing public authorities, private sector, experts, academia, civil society, local authorities and youth, among other. Indicatively, the health-focused sessions will engage regulatory authorities, industry representatives, research institutions, public health institutes and organisations, local authorities, civil society networks, and financial institutions active in the region.

Travelling expenses for speakers and selected in-person participants may be covered by the European Commission.

Draft Agenda (Indicative)

DAY 1	HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUES
10:00h	<p>Welcoming Remarks by INTPA Commissioner (tbc) Guiding Topic: The Human Development Pillar of the Global Gateway for LAC</p>
10:30h-12:30h	<p>Session 1: EU-LAC High-Level Policy Dialogue on Social Policies The session could focus on how EU-LAC can collaborate to move towards well-being societies that foster social cohesion and take action to reduce poverty and inequality in its different forms. Partners could discuss shared values, common goals and priorities with the prospect of the CELAC-EU Summit in 2025.</p>
12:30h-13:00h	<p>Official Launch of Team Europe Initiatives in the field of Human Development in LAC</p>
13:00h-14:45h	<p>Lunch and Networking</p>
15:00h-17:00h	<p>Session 2: EU-LAC High-Level Dialogue on Health Regulatory Frameworks and Inclusive Access to Health Products The session could focus on how EU-LAC could collaborate to increase equitable access and resilience of health systems by strengthening and harmonising regulatory frameworks leading to the marketing approval and monitoring priority health products in LAC. Partners could signal areas of interest and present ideas for collaboration on policy and regulatory issues and share experience on specific issues.</p>
17:00h-17:30h	<p>Closing remarks The session would recapitulate on the highlights of the high-level policy and regulatory dialogues and compile proposals on human development for future follow up in the EU-LAC bi-regional dialogue.</p>
18:00h	<p>Cocktail and Networking</p>
DAY 2	THEMATIC SESSIONS
09:00 – 18:00	<p>Round Table “Strengthening regulatory frameworks to support innovation and access to health products in the EU and LAC: challenges, opportunities and best practices” The session could showcase the role of research, innovation and adapted clinical trials to respond to public health needs in EU and LAC, as well as the impact on market shaping. Discuss bottlenecks and opportunities for technology transfer to improve equitable access to health products in both EU-LAC.</p>
	<p>Round Table “Public-private partnerships –Opportunities to Strengthen Production Capacities” The session could explore concrete opportunities for investments in production, innovation and private sector collaboration between EU and LAC.</p>
	<p>Round Table “Health Equity and Wellbeing Societies” The session could explore opportunities, share EU-LAC experiences, and discuss how the Team Europe could contribute to foster collaborations with LAC in an impactful manner to care/wellbeing societies.</p>
	<p>OTHER SIDE EVENTS THAT COULD BE INTEGRATED IN THE AGENDA (subject to confirmation)</p>
	<p>Session on triangular cooperation between EU, LAC and Africa This session could be integrated depending on the available opportunities of coordination with the high-level event foreseen between the EU-African Union, benefiting from the convergence of events. It could offer an opportunity to foster triangular collaboration, for example through a social event on the evening of the 20th or the morning of the 21st (tbc).</p>