

Differences and Convergences in EU and CELAC Social Inclusion Policy Approaches



The report analyses the framework conditions, differences and convergences between EU and LAC policies regarding social inclusion by focusing on the following three areas:

Anti-poverty policies with focus on money transfer policies: Poverty alleviation and social inclusion are shared challenges in social inclusion policy of both regions, but based on different concepts of poverty. Whereas the EU approaches poverty alleviation mainly through social and labour market integration measures, LAC focuses on the satisfaction of basic needs and human capital development. However, LAC is in a transition phase towards stronger focus on labour market integration.

Inclusion of migrants: Migration movements between EU and LAC and integration of migrant populations in both regions is analysed in historical and legal contexts, providing an overview of good practices regarding integration of migrant populations. LAC countries have traditionally had differing migration policies and currently face challenges regarding new migration flows, whereas the EU has a complex legal framework for the integration of (third country) migrant workers which guarantees certain (social) rights, although Member States are implementing more restrictive immigration policies.

Territorial cohesion: Territorial cohesion has been promoted as a key goal of EU-LAC cooperation in the last decade. However, approaches differ from the EU economic and social cohesion approach to a more territorial development approach applied in LAC. Research concludes that EU interventions in promoting territorial cohesion in LAC have had certain impact on social policy reforms and on addressing multidimensional inequality from a territorial perspective.

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Main findings:

- Fighting poverty is a common concern of EU and LAC, but both regions define and measure poverty quite differently. Whereas the EU uses multidimensional measures which consider social and labour inclusion, LAC countries predominantly use income as the main indicator; however, the multidimensional approach is gaining importance, thus facilitating the bi-regional dialogue.
- In terms of implementation of social inclusion policies, it is clear that their scope and orientation varies considerably between, but also within, the regions. LAC countries generally favour policies that are more targeted at the most vulnerable groups, while the EU policies are generally more focused on facing transitory risks.
- In LAC, Conditional Transfer Programmes (CTP) is the most frequently used strategy to reduce poverty, while the EU predominantly uses Minimum Income Schemes (MIS) for people of working age to ensure a minimum standard of living.
- Both regions show growing tensions regarding new flows of migrant populations and their access (or not) to social assistance. The EU has a vast experience in the field that could be interesting to Latin American countries to further analyse in a context of increased intra-regional migration.
- In order to promote interventions in LAC based on the European territorial cohesion approach, it is important to activate three dimensions (r/urbanisation, interculturalisation and institutionalisation) at once. Furthermore, the European territorial cohesion approach could benefit from a dialogue with LAC-based ideas about territorial development, especially in the area of interculturalisation.

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