



A bulletin published by Prestomedia

EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA JOINED ONCE AGAIN

BY AL-INVEST IV

Soon:

**Consortium
Coordination and
Services:**

Exhibition in Europe:

MACEF.-
4-7 September
ANUGA.-
10-14 October
POLLUTEC.-
1-4 December

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Between 17 and 19 June, a major regional co-operation programme between the European Union and Latin American Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) was officially launched. AL-INVEST IV has some clear priorities: understanding how internationalising SMEs affects local development, regional integration, orientation towards Europe, and synergies with other co-operation programmes. Many delegates and representatives of the Latin-American and European consortia were present at the Conference when the programme was launched. They were joined by representatives from EuropeAid and representatives from Latin American EC Delegations.



Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV

First bulletin AL-INVEST IV

The Head of Unit of EuropeAid, European Commission: *Welcome by Basile Papadopoulos*



Since it was first launched in 1993, the AL-INVEST programme has benefited from the participation of small and medium size companies from Latin America, trading internationally which has been increasingly liberalised over time, and which at the same time, promotes experience and knowledge exchange between business organisations in the European Union and Latin America.

During the different phases of the programme, instruments have been created and execution modalities have been identified that pointed at an increasingly effective way to integrate internationalisation processes of companies in local and regional development activities.

In this fourth phase (2009-2012) the aim to internationalise SME's is considered specifically from the perspective that they can contribute to social cohesion and regional integration processes.

I am sure AL-INVEST IV will help to promote support policies, which recognise the complex relations that exist between SMEs and their reference territories. These policies are also likely to strengthen the interaction that can exist between consolidation processes of companies, the extension

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This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of AL-INVEST IV and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



The European Union consists of 27 Member States that have decided to share their knowledge, resources and destinations. Together, for a period of 50 years, they have constructed a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development, supporting at the same time the cultural diversity, tolerance and the individual freedoms. The European Union promises to share their achievements and values with the countries and peoples beyond its borders.



The AL INVEST IV programme is financed by the EU



B.T. Papadopoulos. ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV of their markets and local development.

This is the programme's real challenge. There is no doubt that only if we work together in an environment of great trust that AL-INVEST participants will be able to face up to the challenge, learning at the same time from the best practices that exist in Latin America and in the European Union.

I am convinced that accomplishing this task will be helped by the synergies and co-operations established with other European Union regional programmes, such as ALPHA, @lis and URBAL III. We can also take advantage of the complementarities that exist between the bilateral programmes that are managed by the European Union Delegations in Latin America.

I am sure that if AL-INVEST IV is built upon dialogue and if it intensifies discussions on ideas and experiences among the organisations that represent the SMEs from Latin America and business organisations of the European Union, it will manage to leave an important mark on the support policies of this sector in Latin America. Likewise, it will allow them to take advantage of the opportunities and to face the challenges posed by the current economic crisis in a globalised context.

Basile Papadopoulos
 Head of Unit Centralized
 Operations for Latin America
 European Commission

Inaugural session

Sao Paulo, Wednesday, 17 June



Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV

The conference to launch AL-INVEST IV lasted for three consecutive days, from 17 to 19 June. A training session on financial and administrative procedures, aimed at programme associates, and delivered by the Services Consortium and the European Commission, took place on 16 June.

The inaugural day of the AL-INVEST IV launch conference was used to reveal the great opportunity this programme represents for Latin-American SMEs as it may be used to create solutions to the current economical crisis.

People in charge of the welcome

session at the launch conference were: Head of Unit of EuropeAid, from the European Commission; José Augusto Fernandes, Industries National Federation (CNI) from Brazil; Alessandro Teixeira, Pro-motion, Exports and Investments Brazilian Agency, (APEX) representing the Federal Government of Brazil; and Joao José Pacheco, Chief of the European Commission Delegation in Brasilia.

Basile Papadopoulos, Head of Unit of EuropeAid pointed out that "a general consensus exists on the opportunities this programme offers.

He warned that participants should all be capable of materialising its potential into specific actions that really reach out to the SMEs so that they can benefit from the invested resources. "For this reason, the key to this new AL-INVEST is to increase the capabilities of Latin-American SMEs to internationalise themselves".

José Augusto Fernandes, General Manager of the CNI (Brazilian Industry National Federation) said that "AL-INVEST helps first in terms of inter-territorial and regional co-ordination and co-operation, which is a real challenge in itself. It also suggests a new way of innovating the methodological and decision processes of SMEs in Latin-America as well as economic and social agents". "In the end, what we risk is the possibility of forming mental procedures in our companies that are internationally the same". APEX and Joao José Pacheco (European Commission in Brasilia) both agreed that European and Latin American SMEs had to follow the same paths and have a responsibility to their regional economies. Vittorio Tonutti, Sector Chief of Europeaid (European Commission) was in charge of the conference programme of this first day.

Inaugural session

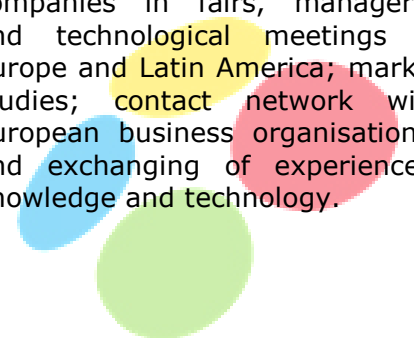
Sao Paulo, Wednesday, 17 June

Consortia

In this session, the action plans of each consortium that takes part in the fourth phase of this programme were presented. The action plans of Central America, Mexico and Cuba, led by NAFIN, were presented by Danielle Pellat. The action plan for the Andean region, led by CAINCO, was presented by Julio Silva and action plan for Mercosur, Chile and Venezuela, led by CNI, by José F. Alvares.

This inaugural day to launch AL-INVEST IV finished with a presentation on the programme's website, followed by an intervention of Jesus Corral Fuentes, who presented on the activities that the European Consortium for Co-ordination and Services have carried out. This European Consortium co-operates with a number of institutions led by EUROCHAMBRES and a Coordination and Services Team, in charge of launching the

following services: technical assistance for SMEs; facilitating the participation of Latin-American and European companies in fairs, managerial and technological meetings in Europe and Latin America; market studies; contact network with European business organisations; and exchanging of experiences, knowledge and technology.



Conference

Sao Paulo, Thursday, 18 June



Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV

At the second day of the conference to launch the AL-INVEST IV Programme, the topics and action items from the main co-operation Programmes favouring Latin-American SMEs were analysed. Participants at this session were: Claudio Cortellese's (FOMIN); Gonzalo Capriles (SELA); Maria Pilar Coral (Sub-regional Cooperation Andean Region, European Commission); and Esteban García de Motilola (Bilateral Cooperation between Uruguay and the European Commission). All participants are representatives of organisations that develop co-operation programmes in Latin America and are also the ones who may establish future synergies with the AL-INVEST IV Programme. Claudio Cortellese, representing FOMIN, explained the initiatives launched by his organisation to promote the competitiveness of SMEs, which in turn helps SMEs to internationalise themselves and territorial development. Gonzalo Capriles explained the main points of the SELA-

IBERPYME programme (Economic Systems for Latin-America and the Caribbean), whose objective is to contribute to the development of Latin-American Micro SME capacities in terms of management and dealing with governments. María del Pilar Coral explained the Bilateral Co-operation Programme of the Andean Region funded by the European Commission FAT (Technical Assistance Facility to Trade). The total economic assistance to this programme is of 3,9 million Euros, of which the European Union has put forward 2,6 million Euros. 125.000 Euros were jointly financed with SG-CAN and 1,1 million Euros were co-financed by the beneficiaries.

The last speaker, Esteban García de Motilola, talked about the PACPYMES programme objectives, which provides support to SMEs in terms of competitiveness of exports and promotion. This is the result of the bilateral co-operation between the European Union and the Uruguayan State. After this session a round table took place called "Institutions and Policies Supporting SMEs in Europe and Latin America", where Dirk Vantuyghem, representing Eurochambres, and Giovanni Stumpo, representing CEPAL – an organisation of the United Nations, presented. The following workshops were also developed during this conference day:

Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV



Workshop A.

Supporting policies to consolidate and internationalise SMEs in Europe. The lessons learnt and its transferability. Jesús Albizu from AVU-Spain and Giacinto Bosco were in charge of this workshop. Nine critical areas were analysed to support the internationalisation process of companies. The workshop's conclusions dealt with the following questions:

What must be prioritised, increasing the exporters' base or further developing existing exporters?

How can interest be increased to export as well as the current knowledge of programmes and facilities to export?

How to make associations, consortia and exporting cores work?

What is better, to give more qualifications to the companies or to give them technical assistance in the exporting process?

Workshop B

Policies supporting the consolidation and internationalisation of Latin-American SMEs: successful experiences, information systems and impact indicators. Paul Angelelli, from the Inter-American Development Bank was in charge of this workshop, and Carlos Tedesco from the Brazil CNI provided assistance. The main contributions to this workshop were, among others: promoting innovative processes in the area of AL-INVEST IV, establishing indicators for these processes and their impacts, and clearly defining the different stages of the internationalisation process.



Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV

Workshop C

SMEs and Latin-American territorial development. Determining factors and perspectives. Gioacchino Garofoli, member of the Insubria's University (Italy), assisted by Ricardo Castedo from CAINCO, was in charge of this workshop. Garofoli pointed out the following learnings from policies supporting European SMEs:

-Local development represents a changing and innovative process rather than a protectionist policy for the local community

-Local development is innovation and taking advantage of opportunities (in an open market) without being totally submitted to the "market's logic".

- The aim of the process and the collective actions is what is called a "development highway" (not social "dumping").

Workshop D.

The exchanges in North-South and South-South experiences and its possible influence in the evolution and the strengthening of supporting policies to SMEs. Patricio Marcos, member of UNAM, assisted by Danielle Pellat from NAFIN - Mexico, was in charge of this workshop. For this workshop, AL-INVEST IV was the right strategy, based on creating four regional consortia, on moving the responsibility of defining the tools and instruments to the Latin - American executors, on



Photo: ConceitoVisual-AL-INVEST IV

administrating their own budget, on contracting directly the supporting services to answer to the needs of SMEs, and on conciliating the exchange of experience among the consortia. In this workshop, it was considered that this strategy will strengthen entities of the region, not only in terms of the services offered, but also in the search for experiences and better practices with other consortia and regions of the world. The person in charge of this workshop explained the cultural difference between societies of knowledge as well as societies of technology in Europe, where there are no entities for development because they are not necessary (it is said that the best assistance programme is the one that disappears because it has fulfilled its mission), compared with Latin-American societies where SMEs are not small but on the contrary "they are big companies" that must survive in the middle of bureaucracy, shortages and very little competitiveness.

Conclusions, Friday, 19 June

Throughout the whole morning, the results obtained in each of the workshops were gathered. Once all results were gathered, EuropeAid's Head of Unit, Mr Papadopoulos presented the conclusions of the launch conference to the participants.

The main conclusion of the EU's representative was that AL-INVEST IV is a challenge for all because of its new co-operation with three Latin-American consortia as well as a service consortium.

A mutual learning process was

started at this conference to launch the Programme, to exchange ideas and experiences. It is definitively a common adventure of co-operation where the real actors must be the SMEs in their internationalisation process.

As a final conclusion, the Consortia were reminded of the big responsibility they have acquired for the next four years with the commitment. Especially the next months that will be critical to start the programme so that it will be able to fulfil its aims.

CAMC



Danielle Pellat Thomé from NAFIN presented on the CAMC (Central America, Mexico and Cuba) Consortia, speaking about the aims and methodology to be developed in the region.

The associates taking part in the Consortia are: ASERCA, CMIC, CANIETI and CANACINTRA in Mexico, APEX in Panama, CADEXCO in Costa Rica, AGEXPORT in Guatemala, COEXPORT in El Salvador, AGROEXPORTADORES's FEDERATION OF Honduras, and APEN in Nicaragua. The European associates are: ONUDI PARIS in France, COMPAGNIA DELLE OPERE in Italy, ATEGRUS in Spain and the GERMAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND INVESTIGATION. Currently, negotiations are underway to include the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Cuba.

CAMC relies on a budget of 17.5 million Euros that will be spent to support, in a comprehensive way, the competitiveness and internationalisation of 2.180 SMEs, to facilitate their participation in the international market with tools like the Technical Training and Assistance, Managerial Familiarisation Missions, Business Round Tables and Specialised Agendas.

The CAMC Consortia will offer support to 100 institutions of the region, with the aim of favouring synergies and generating multiplier effects to make the Programme self-sustained. It intends to do so by running Sensibilisation Meetings, Innovation Forums in the CAMC region and in Europe, round tables on R&D, as well as trainings to strengthen the institutions. The actions are focused to support the following sectors: agro-nourishment, crafts, infrastructure, environment, services and TICs.

RA



The Consortium for the Andean Region is led by CAINCO for the four countries in the region. The Consortium has a budget of 13,75 million Euros and covers 11.600 SMEs. It expects to generate 20.000 jobs directly and 60.000 jobs indirectly during the execution time in the four countries. Julio Silva presented the project at the inaugural conference, explaining how AL-INVEST IV is developed in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. One of the most outstanding activities he presented on was a project executed at regional level by Business Core, Sequa, a European Associate. To reach these results, trainings were held in ten cities of the Andean Region: Ecuador (Cuenca, Quito, Guayaquil), Colombia (Cartagena, Bogota, Bucaramanga), Peru (Lima) and Bolivia (Santa Cruz, La Paz, Cochabamba). 739 people participated, among which Counsellors, Executives and Businessmen.

Julio Silva remarked that in order to achieve the aims set by the other Consortia it is necessary to create an adequate business climate that promotes commercial exchange. With this aim in mind, CAINCO (Bolivia), ANALDEX (Colombia), FEDEXPOR (Equator) and CCL (Peru), formalised the "Andean Chambers Network" on 15 June in Sao Paulo (Brazil), at the launch conference of the AL-INVEST IV Programme. The objective of this network is to encourage the development of activities that will stimulate, strengthen and integrate the business sectors in the Andean Region.

MCV



The general aim of the AL-INVEST IV programme in Mercosur, Chile and Venezuela is to contribute to the local economical development and to improve the social cohesion in these countries. Specifically, it aims to boost the competitive development and the internationalisation of SMEs in the sectors covered by the Programme in each country, favouring the promotion of innovation and allowing Latin American SMEs to participate in international markets. CNI leads the consortium of the institutions that are responsible for implementing the Programme in the countries of the Consortium. The following institutions are associated: Argentina: UIA and CAC, Chile: EUROCHILE and the National Trade Chamber, Services and Tourism of Chile F.G.N. Paraguay: CIDEAL and the Industrial Paraguayan Union (UIP). Uruguay: Industries Chamber of Uruguay; Trade Stock Exchange S.A. -National Trade and Services Chamber of Uruguay. Venezuela: CONINDUSTRIA and CONSECOMERCIO. Germany: Handwerk International (HWI). Spain: COPCA. France: ONUDI. Italy: Promos-Special Agency of the Trade Chamber of Milan for the International Activities.

The economic and geographical sectors that have been selected, have been selected for their clear competitive advantages, the growth potential and the opportunities to add local value. These sectors worldwide positive growth trends, like ICTs, bio technologies, energy, agro-industry, food, etc.

The programme involves 9.208 Small and Medium Enterprises, supporting organisations for the development of SMEs, private sector institutions and government agencies.

EUROCHAMBRES, COORDINATION AND SERVICES

Apart from the three Latin-American consortia in charge of putting in place the activities put forward by the AI-INVEST IV Programme, this fourth phase of AI-INVEST also has a Coordination and Services Consortium, which aims at providing cohesion and homogenisation to the Programme. It offers a number of services to the other consortia involved in the Programme, to help in the internationalisation process of Latin-American SMEs and to strengthen their presence in European markets.

This Consortium for Coordination and Services is led by EUROCHAMBRES.

The following institutions are part of this Consortium: PRESTOMEDIA, ARCA, CESES, INDRA, INWENT, EMECA, AICO, AILA.

The Services Consortium also has a Coordination and Services Team in charge of managing the services that the Programme offers. With these services, the Consortia involved in the Programme receive technical support as well as the correct tools and good practices. These allow them to ensure actions are developed efficiently allowing them to internationalise the activities of Latin American SMEs, by doing business with the European Union, as well as guaranteeing the Programme's sustainability and coherence.

The Coordination and Services Team Director, Jesus Corral Fuentes, gave a brief introduction during his speech on each of the services offered by the programme, as well as on the activities that have taken place to

date. He also broached on the main topics that should be taken on board in the next months.

Mr Corral Fuentes talked about the main aspects of these services: technical assistance, participation in fairs and managerial meetings in Europe, market studies, thematic seminars, creation of a network with the institutions interested in the Programme and information about administrative and financial procedures.

Finally, Mr Corral Fuentes highlighted the different activities the Coordination and Services Team have been working on up to now, and he explained to the participants all the activities that are on the agenda to be carried out in the next months, above all, the AI-INVEST IV participation in three European fairs: MACEF (Milan, Italy); ANUGA (Cologne, Germany) and POLLUTEC (Paris, France).



Coordination and Services Team presentation:
In Brussels:

Jesús CORRAL FUENTES: Team Director

Corinne SAINTILAN: Expert in charge of Events Organisation, contacts among managerial organisations, Communication and visibility of the Programme

Irene HADDAD: Team Assistant



In Bogota:

Gabriele COEN: AI-INVEST
IV Office Coordinator in
Colombia.

Welcome to the fourth phase of the AL-INVEST Program!

As is well-known to you all, AL-INVEST is the most important programme of the European Commission to support, strengthen and internationalise Latin-American small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Many years have passed since the European Commission started in 1993 with the first phase of this Programme. In that time, the AL-INVEST Programme started out as a Technical Assistance Office in the European Commission. Throughout the years, AL-INVEST has been developed further and has won in popularity and prestige.

This fourth phase provides three Latin-American Consortia with a wide range of services that will enable them to execute their activities adequately, as was mentioned in the launch conference of the fourth phase of the Programme, and has been mentioned in this newsletter, where the Coordination and Services European Consortium is presented. The regular production of newsletters, such as this one, is one of the services that the Programme offers.

The aim of these newsletters is to communicate on AL-INVEST IV and make it externally visible. It also aims to become an interconnecting tool for all the Programme beneficiaries and participating institutions.

In this fourth phase the processes of associability will be promoted, as well as pushes for regional integration and the promotion of development policies. It will focus on the qualitative aspects of researching new instruments and tools to make companies more international. The Programme will be flexible enough so that it can be adapted to the demands of the beneficiaries of the Programme.

In addition, the image of the Programme has been changed. The new logo is still as colourful as the one used in the previous phase, but its concept reflects the new Programme's philosophy. The new image is based on the unification of four elements, representing the benefitting Consortia as well as the institutional Consortium in charge of providing the Programme services.

The people who are managing AL-INVEST IV are conscious of the big challenges the Programme will face throughout these coming four years. This Programme's fourth phase will be developed at the same time as the world's economic crisis, which particularly affects small and medium businesses all over the world, and specifically Latin-American SMEs. During AL-INVEST IV life, the Latin-American SMEs will need more support, help and advice than others in a better economic situation.

Because of all this it is important that each of the people who take part in AL-INVEST work hard and in a co-ordinated way to achieve the same common aim, so that at the end of these four years they can see they have reached the aims that the Programme has set.

Keep up the good work!



Jesús Corral Fuentes
Coordination and Services
Team Director

Previous activities

CAMC CONSORTIUM

In June a workshop in SMEs took place on the basis of which a leaflet was published called: "From SMEs to SMEs: practical advice and lessons taken from the internationalisation process".

RA CONSORTIUM

Between 27 April and 5 June, courses were undertaken on associative mechanisms as well as trainings for core business counsellors.

MCV CONSORTIUM

From 7 to 10 June, the space "Mode and Brasilidade/ Fashion and Brasility - Verao/Summer 09/10" was held in Rio de Janeiro.

COORDINATION AND SERVICES CONSORTIUM

On 16 June, a course on financial contractual procedures and rules of the European Commission took place in Sao Paulo.

The website of the Programme is available at: www.al-invest4.eu

Each Consortium related to the Programme has its own space in the public part of the site, and they are responsible for its management and maintenance, as well as for providing users with specific information, news and links to events related to their region. The website also has areas of restricted information and an intranet zone.

