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Blueprint**

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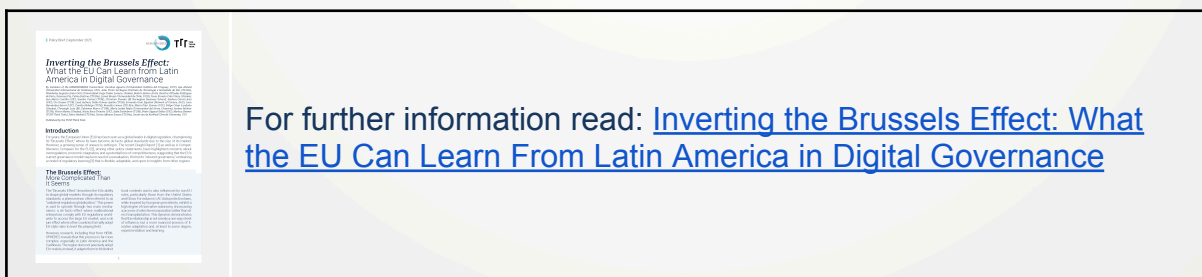
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ABSTRACT

Digital governance has become a strategic arena, and the EU–LAC relationship within it is more consequential - and more genuinely reciprocal - than its current institutional architecture reflects. Cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) on digital policy is now entering a more mature and structured phase. Over the last few years, the relationship has moved beyond a narrow focus on connectivity or “best-practice transfer” toward a broader partnership that combines infrastructure, governance, and capacity-building. The EU–LAC Digital Alliance, together with the Global Gateway investment agenda, has helped anchor this shift, pairing political dialogue with concrete initiatives on trustworthy AI and digital public infrastructure.

At the same time, the regulatory and policy backbone of this relationship is evolving rapidly. The EU’s “new digital rulebook” - from GDPR to the DSA/DMA and the AI Act - continues to shape global agendas significantly. Yet the early comparative findings of HEMISPHERES suggest that countries in LAC rarely “copy” EU models wholesale. Instead, countries in the region translate, selectively incorporate, and combine European approaches with their constitutional rights traditions and pragmatic governance tools (Gasser et al., 2025). In this light, this Blueprint argues that EU–LAC cooperation is best understood as an emerging process of mutual regulatory learning: one already visible in selective adaptation, constitutional translation, judicial experimentation, and policy innovation across both regions, but still lacking the institutional infrastructure needed to become systematic, reciprocal, and durable.¹



This Blueprint operationalizes this perspective by articulating a shared conceptual framework, examining cross-cutting challenges to policy design and implementation, and synthesizing policy innovation proposals from the HEMISPHERES Working Groups, alongside recommendations to sustain bi-regional cooperation.

¹ HEMISPHERES recognizes that, within LAC, the Caribbean faces distinct implementation conditions - limited institutional capacity, high vulnerability to climate shocks, and structural dependencies on critical connectivity and energy infrastructure. These factors reinforce the case for cooperation centered on effective implementation and resilience-building, rather than solely on rule design.

1. Brussels Effect and Regulatory Learning: Towards an Alternative Conceptual Framework for EU–LAC Cooperation on Tech Policy

The classic “Brussels Effect” has often been narrated as a one-way story: the EU sets ambitious digital rules that radiate outward as other jurisdictions copy or adjust to them (Bradford, 2020). Evidence from the HEMISPHERES project suggests a more differentiated reality: countries in LAC rarely import EU frameworks wholesale. Instead, they selectively adapt European standards, recombine them with regulatory influences emanating from the United States and China, and mediate these inputs through distinct legal traditions and binding socio-economic constraints. This pattern points less to a regulatory convergence than to a process of mutual regulatory learning, in which both regions shape and are shaped by evolving governance practices.

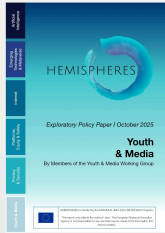
From this perspective, regulatory influence resembles less a linear export of norms and more a feedback loop. The diffusion of EU-style data protection laws in LAC, for example, has entailed both direct borrowing of concepts (such as Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIAs) or Data Protection Officers (DPOs) and indirect translation into constitutional traditions like *habeas data* and broader human-rights frameworks (Boshe & Goberna, 2024). At the same time, LAC’s experience with under-resourced authorities, pervasive informality, and uneven enforcement has generated distinctive governance experiments (such as targeted sandboxes, soft-law guidelines, and judicially driven protections) that speak to European debates about regulatory overload and uneven implementation. These dynamics suggest that the next phase of EU–LAC cooperation should treat LAC as a co-created laboratory and testbed for context-sensitive solutions capable of informing policy recalibration in Brussels - an active contributor rather than a late arrival.

A central thread across the HEMISPHERES Working Groups is adaptive governance: the view that under conditions of technological and political uncertainty and institutional constraint, “good” regulation is less a finished code than an ongoing learning process. In several LAC countries (such as Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Colombia), sandboxes in data protection and AI are beginning to function as localised learning mechanisms rather than merely deregulatory tools - spaces where regulators, firms, and civil society can jointly test rules, clarify institutional mandates, and generate evidence for future legislation. Yet these experiments remain fragmented: their lessons rarely travel across jurisdictions in systematic form, and they do not yet connect into the kind of shared evidence infrastructure that would make them cumulatively useful. The challenge and opportunity for EU–LAC cooperation is precisely to connect such localised mechanisms into a more durable bi-regional learning infrastructure. This contrasts with the more legalistic and

centrally orchestrated EU approach - but it also points to a framework Europe increasingly needs as it grapples with the implementation of complex instruments such as the Digital Services Act (DSA), Digital Markets Act (DMA), and AI Act. In our Privacy & Security and Artificial Intelligence WGs, for example, this comparative lens has shaped how we approach experimentation: as a permanent feature of sustainable digital governance rather than a passing phase waiting to be replaced by finished EU-style frameworks.


	For further information read: Exploratory Policy Paper on ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE		For further information read: Exploratory Policy Paper on PRIVACY & SECURITY
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LAC's rights-based legal approach also complicates the idea that Europe is the sole source of normative innovation. Many countries in the region embed data and communication rights not only in statutory frameworks but directly in constitutions and transitional justice instruments, through doctrines such as *habeas data* and the right to truth (Boshe & Goberna, 2024). These traditions anchor digital policy in broader struggles around memory, accountability, and social justice, and they have shaped how issues like surveillance and youth protection are framed in public debate. For the HEMISPHERES consortium, this has been particularly visible in the Privacy & Security and Youth & Media WG, where rights discourse does not stop at General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)-style regulation but extends to participation and intergenerational equity (Ahmed et al., 2025). In Europe, where digital regulation often develops through technocratic and cross-border institutional processes that can feel distant from national constitutional traditions, there is much to learn from these more explicitly political and historically grounded approaches.

	For further information read: Exploratory Policy Paper on YOUTH & MEDIA
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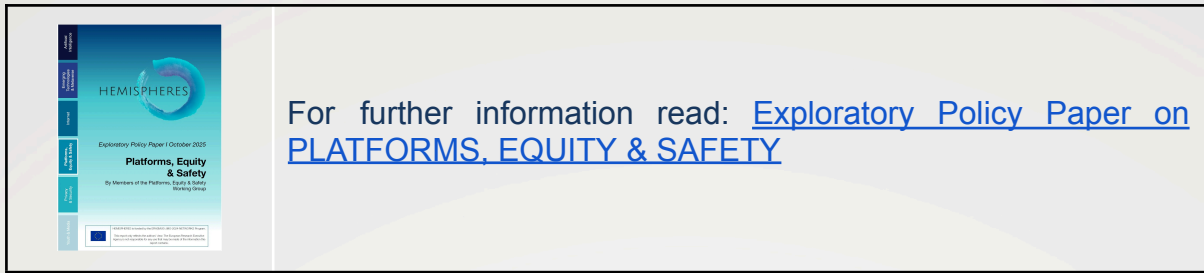
Equally important are the LAC region's experiences with inclusive, bottom-up innovation. Initiatives such as crowdsourced legislation (notably Brazil's *Marco Civil da Internet* in 2014), Brazil's multistakeholder Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br), and large-scale public education programs like Plan Ceibal in Uruguay illustrate how

policy and governance can be jointly designed. These are not merely implementation stories; they embody alternative models of how digital infrastructures are governed and legitimized. The Internet and Youth & Media WG have drawn heavily on these examples to question assumptions about centralized regulation or purely market-driven connectivity. Rather than treating community networks as marginal stopgaps, these models suggest they can serve as testbeds for participatory governance and locally attuned indicators of success that go beyond GDP or competitiveness.



For further information read: [Exploratory Policy Paper on INTERNET](#)

Platform governance offers perhaps the clearest illustration of why the Brussels Effect framework needs updating. The EU's DSA provides a structured, harmonised template for risk assessments and transparency obligations - a genuine regulatory achievement. Yet the Platforms, Equity and Safety Working Group has documented that LAC jurisdictions, operating without equivalent statutory infrastructure, have produced innovative governance responses through a different route: strategic litigation, court-driven jurisprudence on intermediary liability, and sector-specific rules that have generated consequential and internationally watched rulings on platform accountability (Archegas et al., 2025). The most prominent example is Brazil's Supreme Federal Court ruling of June 2025, which deemed Article 19 of the Marco Civil da Internet partially unconstitutional and established a differentiated liability model - holding platforms to proactive obligations for serious harms such as hate speech, terrorism, and child exploitation, while preserving notice-and-takedown as the general regime for other content (STF, 2025). Analysts have explicitly positioned this ruling within the global platform governance debate alongside the DSA, describing Brazil as a constitutional laboratory bridging the Internet Bill of Rights tradition with the risk-based regulatory models emerging in Europe - a framing that reflects the degree to which the ruling is being watched beyond its borders (Digital Law in Brazil, 2026). These are not improvised workarounds waiting to be replaced by a proper framework; they are adaptive responses to governance constraints that are generating their own normative logic. The result is parallel experimentation: different institutional constraints have produced different - and mutually instructive - governance responses, with neither region simply catching up to the other.

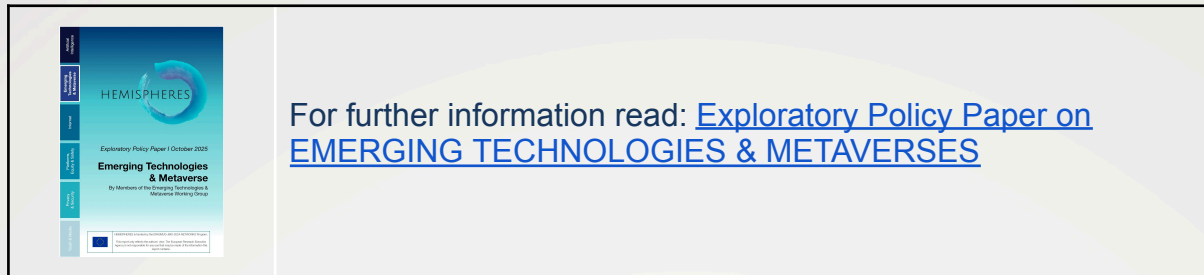


The same dynamic is visible in artificial intelligence, where the asymmetries and complementarities between the two regions take a more structural form. The AI Working Group has mapped how the EU, with its risk-based AI Act and a nascent institutional specialisation through the AI Office, approaches AI governance through detailed ex ante norms designed to manage risk before deployment. LAC, by contrast, faces structural gaps in connectivity, compute capacity, and regulatory infrastructure that make that model neither directly transferable nor, in some respects, the most relevant reference point. What the Emerging Technologies and Metaverse Working Group found is that LAC's research hubs, civic tech initiatives, and sector-specific pilots in health, education, and public services are not simply working around these constraints - they are generating a different set of governance questions (Aguerre et al., 2025).

Where EU AI governance tends to foreground risk classification, liability allocation, and conformity assessment, LAC initiatives foreground inclusion, informal work, climate justice, and the distributional consequences of algorithmic systems for populations that European regulatory debates have not yet centred. These are not questions that emerge once the technical governance framework is settled; in LAC they are the starting point. Treating these initiatives as early reference points rather than late arrivals means recognising that the EU's AI Act was designed primarily around the risks and market structures of high-income, high-connectivity economies, and that the governance questions LAC is already navigating are likely to surface in European policy debates at a later stage, when they are more difficult to address than they would have been during the design phase.

Emerging technologies, particularly quantum, underscore the need for a learning-oriented partnership rather than a unidirectional import-export model. The Emerging Technologies & Metaverse WG highlights LAC's nascent but strategic efforts to define national quantum agendas, align curricula, and build regional research ecosystems despite chronic underinvestment and risk of brain drain (Barquero et al., 2025). These efforts resonate with parallel challenges in the EU, including talent retention and attraction, industrial policy coordination, and the integration of ethics and fundamental rights, central in the global race for technological leadership. Rather than framing the EU as the natural provider of expertise and LAC as a passive recipient, a regulatory learning framework reframes

quantum and other emerging technologies as shared challenges that require jointly designed funding instruments, mobility schemes, and competence frameworks.



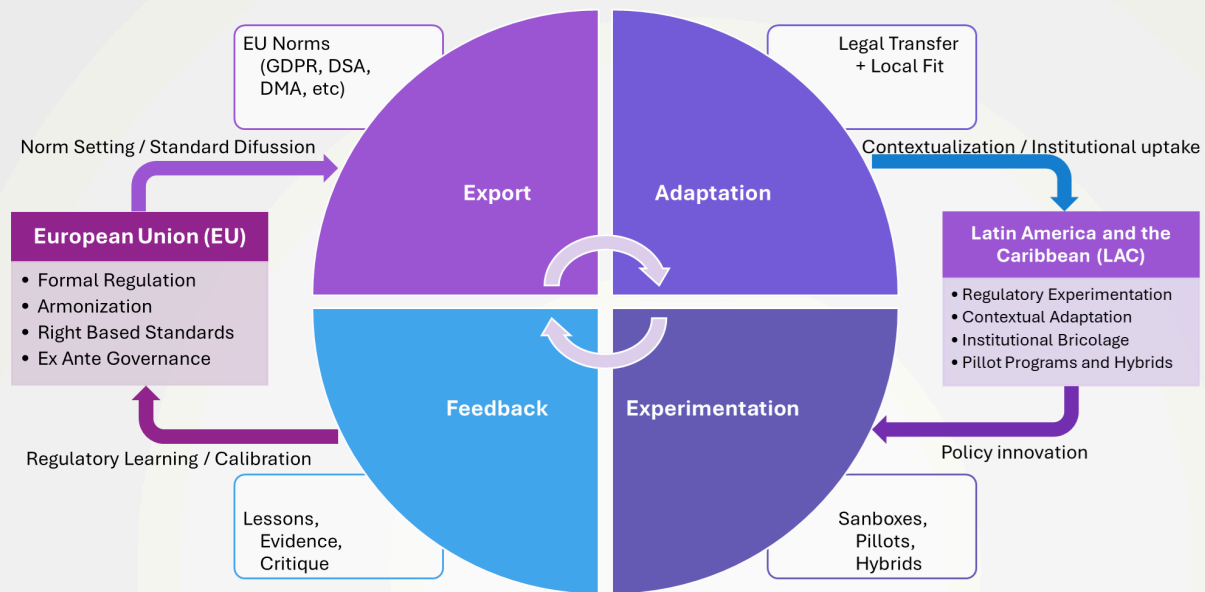
Across these domains, the HEMISPHERES Working Groups effectively prototype an alternative conceptual framework for EU–LAC technological cooperation in practice that treats both regions as co-producers of knowledge and situates regulatory learning - grounded in institutional capacity and legitimacy - as the central mechanism linking diverse policy debates on digital transformation and infrastructure development under conditions of uncertainty and inequality.

It is worth making the conceptual structure of this argument explicit, because the Blueprint uses several related terms in ways that are analytically distinct. (1) Adaptive governance is the overall orientation: the view that regulation is best understood as an ongoing process of adjustment under uncertainty rather than a finished code applied to a stable domain. (2) Regulatory learning is the process by which that adjustment occurs: jurisdictions observe, adapt, test, and recalibrate governance responses in light of what they see working, or not working, elsewhere and at home. (3) Experimentation is one method through which learning happens: sandboxes, pilots, judicial innovations, public consultations, procurement trials, and community-based governance models that test responses before generalising them. And (4) learning infrastructure is what makes learning durable: observatories, indicators, enforcement tracking, data access frameworks, evaluation protocols, communities of practice, and institutional memory that allow the lessons of one cycle to inform the next. The argument of this Blueprint is that the first three are already present - sometimes richly so - in both regions. What is systematically absent is the fourth.

Taken together, these insights suggest that EU–LAC digital cooperation should be reconceived less as a project of rule export or harmonisation, and more as a structured process of mutual, problem-driven experimentation. The goal of this Policy Innovation Blueprint is to sketch the contours of a polycentric governance architecture where the EU remains an influential node in a broad network of regulatory learning, and in which LAC innovations increasingly shape global debates on platform power, AI, youth protection, privacy, and digital sovereignty.

Figure 1 reframes the Brussels Effect not as a one-directional export of norms but as an iterative learning cycle in which EU standards are adapted within LAC through legal transfer and institutional experimentation, generating feedback that informs regulatory recalibration in both regions. The figure's core contribution is to make visible what the linear model obscures: that adaptation and feedback are not exceptions to regulatory influence but its primary mechanisms.

Figure 1. The Brussels Effect as a Dynamic Regulatory Learning Cycle between the EU and LAC.



Source: HEMISPHERES elaboration.

2. Governance Challenges for Technology Policy: Common and Context-Specific Dynamics in EU–LAC

Across the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), technology policy is shaped by persistent governance frictions: coordination gaps across institutions, uneven capacity to implement reforms, and limited evidence to guide decision-making. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, data-driven systems, digital platforms, and cybersecurity infrastructures act as transversal forces, amplifying these frictions as they cut across productivity, labour markets, competition, public service delivery, data governance, security, and social inclusion. These dynamics make technology policy a structurally complex and high-stakes domain of public governance in both regions.

This chapter examines how these governance challenges play out across the EU and LAC. It draws on evidence from the first cycle of HEMISPHERES Working Groups, which surfaced concrete frictions across multiple technology domains in both regions, and situates these findings within analytical frameworks developed by

organisations such as the OECD, ECLAC, and the United Nations. The analysis attends to the structural, institutional, and political conditions shaping digital transformation in each region, examining both what the EU and LAC share as governance challenges and where their starting points diverge in ways that matter for how those challenges can be addressed.

By integrating empirically grounded insights from the Working Groups with a systemic analysis of coordination failures, stakeholder asymmetries, and capacity constraints, this chapter frames technology policy challenges within a broader governance perspective. The objective is not only to diagnose recurring obstacles but to clarify why policy innovation, regulatory learning, and cross-regional collaboration are necessary to translate strategic ambitions into effective, inclusive, and context-sensitive outcomes in both regions.

The governance challenges detailed in this chapter constitute the specific institutional and structural frictions that drive the Regulatory Learning Cycle introduced in Section 1 (Figure 1). These frictions are not symmetrical: the EU and LAC face versions of the same underlying problems from different institutional positions, and it is precisely that asymmetry - rather than simple convergence or divergence - that gives EU-LAC regulatory learning its practical value. Where LAC's governance constraints have generated context-sensitive adaptations and policy innovations, these circulate back into European debates; where EU institutional frameworks offer procedural maturity and enforcement architecture, these inform LAC capacity-building. The chapter that follows maps the terrain on which that exchange takes place.

Despite significant differences in institutional maturity, economic structure, geopolitical positioning, and sociocultural context, the EU and LAC share a core set of challenges in the governance of digital and emerging technologies. These common challenges stem primarily from the nature of contemporary technological change itself, which generates coordination demands, power asymmetries, and evidence deficits that no single governance architecture - however well designed - has yet resolved.

2.1. Policy Complexity and Cross-Sectoral Spillovers

The governance challenge of the current moment is not produced by any single technology but by their simultaneous convergence. Artificial intelligence, data-driven platforms, connected infrastructure, and emerging biotechnologies are reshaping labour markets, public services, competition, and rights simultaneously - and in combination, they generate policy pressures that no single regulatory domain, and no single region, was designed to absorb alone.

Contemporary digital technologies do not respect administrative boundaries. Artificial intelligence, data-driven platforms, and connected infrastructure simultaneously reshape labour markets, public service delivery, competition dynamics, content governance, and fundamental rights protection - often faster than any single ministry or regulatory body can track. This convergence is not a future risk to be managed; it is the baseline condition under which policymakers in both the EU and LAC are already operating.

The structural problem this creates is not simply one of complexity, but of institutional misfit. Governance architectures in both regions were designed for a world of relatively stable, clearly bounded policy domains. Each of these bodies governs its assigned domain with reasonable competence. But when a single AI system deployed by a platform simultaneously determines content visibility, shapes labour conditions for gig workers, processes sensitive personal data, and influences electoral information flows, no single authority holds jurisdiction over the whole. The result is not chaos but something more insidious: system-level risks fall through the gaps between individually functional regulators, and no one is responsible for the whole.

This dynamic is visible across both regions, though it takes different institutional forms. In the EU, the DSA, the AI Act, the GDPR, and the DMA were each designed with internal coherence, yet their interaction generates significant ambiguity - for instance, around which authority leads when an AI system used for content moderation by a very large online platform triggers obligations under multiple instruments simultaneously. In LAC, the fragmentation is starker at the institutional level: Brazil's regulatory landscape for AI simultaneously involves ANPD (data protection), Anatel (telecoms), CADE (competition), and the judiciary (constitutional rights), with no overarching coordination mechanism and no settled hierarchy among them. Evidence from the HEMISPHERES AI and Platforms Working Groups suggests this is not a Brazilian exception but a regional pattern, with Colombia, Argentina, and Chile exhibiting analogous fragmentation along slightly different institutional lines.

What makes this a shared challenge rather than parallel national problems is precisely the cross-border dimension. The platforms and AI systems generating these spillovers operate globally. Their governance cannot be achieved through unilateral national action, nor through bilateral EU-LAC rule transfer alone. It requires coordination frameworks capable of operating across institutional boundaries within each region and between regions simultaneously - which is the core governance challenge that the sections below examine.

2.2. Governance and Coordination Challenges

The cross-sectoral nature of digital technology does not only complicate what governments need to regulate - it fundamentally disrupts how they are organised to do so. In both the EU and LAC, responsibility for digital policy is distributed across ministries of economy, telecommunications regulators, data protection authorities, competition bodies, social policy institutions, and in some cases dedicated AI or innovation agencies. None of these institutions was designed with a comprehensive digital mandate, and few have the political authority or legal standing to coordinate across the others. The result is a governance architecture that is structurally prone to fragmentation even when individual institutions perform their functions well.

In the EU, this fragmentation operates at two levels. Horizontally, multiple regulatory instruments with overlapping scope - the GDPR, DSA, DMA, AI Act, Data Act, and Cyber Resilience Act, among others - create coordination demands that no single body is positioned to resolve. The European Data Protection Board, the DSA's system of Lead Supervisory Authorities, and the AI Office each carry parts of this coordination responsibility, but the boundaries between them remain contested in practice, particularly for cross-cutting cases involving AI systems deployed on large platforms. Vertically, the reliance on national authorities for enforcement generates persistent asymmetries: a very large online platform operating across all Member States will be supervised by whichever national authority happens to be its lead regulator, with predictably uneven results. The ongoing implementation of the DSA has made this vertical fragmentation newly visible, as the gap between the regulatory ambitions of the instrument and the enforcement capacity of individual Member States has become difficult to ignore.

In LAC, the coordination problem is more acute and operates under heavier institutional constraints. Digital policy responsibilities are typically dispersed without even the partial harmonisation mechanisms that EU law provides. In most countries in the region, there is no institutional equivalent of a lead coordinator for digital governance - decisions emerge from whichever ministry or agency gains political traction at a given moment, producing policies that are reactive, siloed, and difficult to sustain across electoral cycles. OECD and CAF analysis confirms that this fragmentation is not simply a capacity problem but a structural one: even in countries with relatively strong institutions, the absence of cross-sectoral coordination frameworks means that digital initiatives launched by one body are routinely undermined or duplicated by another (OECD/CAF, 2023).

What connects the EU and LAC experiences is not the severity of their coordination failures but their underlying cause: both regions built governance institutions for a world in which policy domains were separable, and are now governing technologies for which they are not. The practical implication is that strengthening any single institution - however necessary - is insufficient on its own. What both regions need, and what EU-LAC cooperation can support, are coordination architectures: sustained mechanisms for managing inter-institutional conflict, aligning enforcement,

and generating shared evidence across the agencies that each, individually, hold only part of the picture.

2.3. Power Asymmetries and Stakeholder Inequality

Technology governance does not take place on a level playing field. In both the EU and LAC, the entities with the greatest stake in how digital policy is designed - large technology companies - are also the entities best positioned to shape it. Corruption and capture are real risks, but they are not the central dynamic here. What drives the asymmetry is more systemic: global platforms and AI developers command informational advantages, legal firepower, sustained engagement capacity, and narrative resources that no public authority or civil society organisation can match on equal terms

These asymmetries operate at every stage of the policy process. In agenda-setting, industry actors define the technical parameters of debate and are routinely the primary source of evidence on which regulators rely - not because regulators are naive, but because the data needed to assess platform behaviour, AI system performance, and algorithmic risk is held almost exclusively by the companies being regulated. In regulatory design, the resources available for lobbying and legal challenge mean that even well-designed instruments are subject to sustained pressure during implementation, with compliance requirements gradually interpreted in ways that serve incumbent interests. In enforcement, the disparity between the legal teams of a major platform and the budget of a national supervisory authority is stark enough in the EU; in most LAC countries, it is of a categorically different order.

Civil society, academic institutions, SMEs, and local innovators face the mirror-image problem. They bear many of the costs of poorly governed digital systems - discriminatory algorithmic decisions, exploitative platform labour arrangements, surveillance infrastructure deployed in public spaces - but lack consistent access to the deliberative processes where governance choices are made. In LAC, this exclusion is compounded by additional structural barriers: underfunded consumer protection bodies, limited judicial expertise in technology cases, and the concentration of technical capacity in a small number of urban centres and elite institutions. The result is that the stakeholders with the most direct experience of digital governance failures are systematically underrepresented in the processes designed to address them.

Two responses to this asymmetry are worth distinguishing because they require different policy instruments:

The first is improving formal access - ensuring that civil society, SMEs, and technical communities have structured routes into consultations, impact assessments, and

enforcement processes. The EU's DSA introduces some mechanisms of this kind through trusted flagger status and researcher data access provisions, though implementation has been uneven. Several LAC countries have experimented with public consultation models for digital legislation, most notably Brazil's crowdsourced drafting process for the *Marco Civil da Internet* (Internet Bill of Rights), which remains a reference point for participatory digital governance.

The second response is more structural: reducing the informational monopoly that large platforms hold over the evidence base on which regulators depend. This requires mandatory data access frameworks, independent audit capacity, and investment in public technical expertise - none of which can be built quickly, but all of which are prerequisites for governance that is genuinely accountable rather than merely formally inclusive. EU-LAC cooperation offers a practical avenue for accelerating both, through shared research infrastructures, joint capacity-building, and mutual recognition of audit methodologies across the two regions.

2.4. Weak Evidence, Evaluation, and Learning Ecosystems

Across both regions, policymakers are already learning from practice. Courts test new liability models; regulators use sandboxes and guidance to probe uncertain terrain; expert communities circulate lessons; and crises reveal gaps that formal rulemaking had missed. But these lessons are often not consistently documented, compared across jurisdictions, or fed back into future policy design. The result is learning that is real but dispersed - episodic rather than cumulative, local rather than comparative, and too dependent on individual networks and crisis moments to be reliably reproduced. Effective governance therefore depends not only on the presence of learning, but on feedback loops capable of making it systematic. Policymakers need to know whether the rules they enact are achieving their intended effects, what unintended consequences are emerging, and how enforcement is translating into real-world outcomes for firms, users, and affected communities. Without that knowledge, regulation is not adaptive - it is sequential guesswork, with each new instrument responding to the visible failures of the last rather than to a systematic understanding of why those failures occurred.

In both the EU and LAC, the infrastructure that would make this learning cumulative remains underdeveloped. Baseline data on digital markets, platform behaviour, and algorithmic systems is scarce, unevenly distributed, and rarely collected in forms that allow meaningful comparison across jurisdictions or over time. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms lag behind the ambition of the regulatory instruments they are meant to assess. Impact assessments, where they exist, tend to be conducted ex ante and rarely revisited once a measure enters into force. The result is that governments accumulate regulatory layers without accumulating institutional knowledge - each reform cycle begins with limited understanding of what the

previous one actually produced. EU–LAC cooperation should focus on turning this dispersed learning into shared institutional capacity.

The EU faces this problem from a position of comparative institutional strength, which paradoxically makes it harder to see clearly. The volume and sophistication of the EU's regulatory output can create an impression of governance maturity that the evidence base does not yet support. The Commission's own Second Report on the Application of the GDPR (European Commission, 2024) acknowledges persistent divergence in national interpretations, uneven use of cross-border cooperation tools among data protection authorities, and insufficient investigatory resources across Member States - gaps significant enough to prompt the adoption of a new GDPR Procedural Regulation in late 2025 specifically to address cross-border enforcement coordination. The DSA's transparency reporting infrastructure is newer still: standardised, comparable transparency reports were published for the first time only in February 2026, following an implementing regulation that entered into force in July 2025.

Analysis of earlier reporting cycles found that key data points were not connected across platforms, categories of illegal content were applied inconsistently, and the reasoning behind content moderation decisions remained largely opaque - limiting the analytical value of the data well below what the instrument's oversight ambitions require (Alexander et al., 2025; Trujillo et al., 2025). The delegated act enabling vetted researcher access to platform data under Article 40 DSA was adopted in mid-2025 and remains contested in practice, with both TikTok and Meta found preliminarily in breach of their data access obligations as recently as October 2025 (European Centre for Algorithmic Transparency, 2025). The AI Act's conformity assessment and post-market monitoring framework is designed on paper but largely untested in practice.

In LAC, the evidence deficit is more acute and more directly consequential. Many countries lack the baseline data needed even to establish what a given policy is changing. Digital economy statistics are incomplete or methodologically inconsistent across countries, making regional comparisons unreliable. Regulatory agencies frequently lack the technical capacity to analyse the data they do collect, let alone to commission independent evaluations or sustain longitudinal monitoring.

The consequence, as UNESCO and ECLAC research has documented, is a strong tendency toward policy borrowing without adaptation - importing regulatory frameworks designed for institutional environments and data infrastructures that do not exist in the recipient context, producing symbolic compliance rather than substantive change (UNESCO, 2023; CEPAL, 2025). This dynamic is particularly pronounced in smaller Caribbean jurisdictions, where the gap between regulatory ambition and evaluation capacity is widest and the costs of misaligned policy design are highest relative to institutional resources (UNDP, 2024).

The shared implication for EU–LAC cooperation is specific and actionable. Both regions would benefit from investment in joint evidence infrastructure: common indicator frameworks for measuring digital policy outcomes, data-sharing arrangements between regulatory authorities, and bi-regional research partnerships capable of generating the comparative evidence that neither region can easily produce alone. Building shared evaluation capacity is therefore not a support function to digital governance cooperation; it is a substantive priority in its own right.

3. The Need for Policy Innovation, Regulatory Learning, and EU–LAC Collaboration

The governance challenges documented in chapter 2 are not a catalogue of regional shortcomings. They are expressions of a single structural condition: both the EU and LAC are governing technologies with institutions designed for a world in which policy domains were separable, and in which the entities being governed were slower, more bounded, and more legible than the platforms and AI systems that now shape daily life across both regions. That shared structural condition is what makes EU–LAC cooperation analytically productive rather than merely diplomatically convenient. Neither region can resolve an institutional misfit of this kind through unilateral reform alone, because the technologies generating the misfit operate across the very boundaries that make unilateral action insufficient.

Understanding the four governance challenges as expressions of this common structural condition also clarifies what kinds of cooperation would actually help - and what kinds would not. Rule harmonisation and best-practice transfer address the symptoms of the misfit - divergent legal texts, uneven enforcement, capacity gaps - but leave the underlying architecture intact. What both regions need instead are cooperation mechanisms designed specifically to operate under conditions of institutional fragmentation, asymmetric capacity, and weak evidence: mechanisms that build coordination across the boundaries that national and regional governance cannot bridge, generate evidence that neither region can produce alone, and create structured channels through which governance innovations developed under constraint in one region can inform institutional design in the other.

Chapter 2 identified four specific structural frictions. Each generates a specific cooperation need that goes beyond what either region is currently providing through existing bilateral channels.

The institutional misfit from cross-sectoral spillovers - documented in section 2.1 - requires coordination frameworks that cut across administrative mandates rather than operating within them. Neither the EU's instrument-by-instrument approach nor LAC's ministry-by-ministry governance produces institutions capable of managing

the system-level risks that fall between sectoral jurisdictions. EU–LAC cooperation can address this by creating shared spaces - joint working groups, interoperable regulatory sandboxes, and coordinated enforcement pilots - where cross-sectoral cases can be worked through jointly rather than handled separately in each region. The AI and platform governance domains offer the most immediate opportunities, precisely because the cross-sectoral spillovers are most advanced and most consequential there.

The coordination architecture failures documented in section 2.2 point to a different cooperation need: not more rules but better mechanisms for managing institutional conflict and aligning enforcement practice across the agencies that each hold only part of the governance picture. For the EU this means addressing the vertical fragmentation between the Commission and national authorities that chapter 2 documented in the GDPR and DSA enforcement contexts. For LAC it means building the horizontal coordination mechanisms that most countries in the region lack entirely. EU–LAC cooperation can support both through shared governance infrastructure - joint training programmes for regulatory authorities, mutual recognition frameworks for audit methodologies, and structured bilateral dialogues that connect EU enforcement experience with LAC institutional capacity-building in ways that go beyond technical assistance.

The power asymmetries documented in section 2.3 require cooperation that directly addresses the informational monopoly that large platforms hold over the evidence base on which regulators in both regions depend. Neither region can resolve this through domestic regulation alone: platforms contest and delay mandatory data access requirements in the EU, while in LAC they face far fewer obligations and correspondingly less enforcement pressure. A joint EU–LAC approach to platform data access - shared researcher frameworks, harmonised audit standards, and coordinated enforcement on transparency obligations - would reduce the ability of global platforms to manage their regulatory exposure by playing jurisdictions against each other, which is a structural feature of the current governance landscape that neither region has yet addressed at the bilateral level.

The weak evidence and evaluation ecosystems documented in section 2.4 generate perhaps the most tractable cooperation opportunity, because the gap is not primarily one of political will but of infrastructure. Neither region has invested adequately in the data collection, indicator frameworks, and longitudinal monitoring capacity needed to know whether digital policy is working. Joint investment in that infrastructure - common measurement frameworks, bi-regional observatories, shared research partnerships - would produce returns for both regions simultaneously and would create the evidence base on which future cooperation can be grounded rather than improvised.

Table 1 maps these five cooperation needs against the governance challenges that generate them. Read as a design brief rather than a problem inventory, the table makes visible the direct line between the diagnosis in chapter 2 and the working group proposals in the Appendix A: the coordination row maps onto the AI governance and internet governance proposals; the power asymmetry row maps onto the platforms and privacy proposals; the evidence row runs across all working group domains as a cross-cutting infrastructure requirement. The proposals that follow are not isolated recommendations - they are instances of the structural response that the governance challenges in chapter 2 specifically call for.

Table 1. Snapshot of Core Governance Challenges in EU–LAC Digital Governance.

Challenge	EU	LAC	Cooperation need
Coordination	Multi-level complexity	Fragmented governance	Cross-sectoral coordination frameworks and joint enforcement pilots
Institutional Capacity	Uneven enforcement	Structural capacity gaps	Shared regulatory training, audit methodologies, and mutual recognition frameworks
Evidence & Evaluation	Partial evaluation systems	Weak evidence ecosystems	Joint indicator frameworks, bi-regional observatories, shared research infrastructure
Regulatory Coherence	High formal coherence, uneven practice	Low coherence, context-driven	Interoperable regimes built on shared core commitments rather than identical legal texts
Adaptive Capacity	Structured but constrained experimentation	High contextual experimentation, limited institutional anchoring	Structured channels for translating LAC governance innovations into EU policy debates and vice versa

Source: HEMISPHERES elaboration.

The regulatory learning argument developed in chapter 1 and grounded in chapter 2 implies that the measure of successful cooperation is not convergence toward a common regulatory text but the accumulation of shared institutional capacity to govern under uncertainty. A partnership that produces interoperable enforcement frameworks, shared evidence infrastructure, and structured channels for bilateral policy learning - even in the absence of harmonised rules - would represent a more durable and more analytically defensible achievement than formal alignment that lacks the institutional foundations to sustain it. The practical question that follows is not whether this kind of cooperation is desirable - the structural diagnosis makes that clear - but what specific governance interventions, across which domains, and through which institutional mechanisms, would actually build that capacity in both

regions. That is the question the HEMISPHERES Working Groups were designed to answer, and to which chapter 4 now turns.

4. Building What Neither Region Can Build Alone: An Action Agenda for EU–LAC Digital Cooperation

The structural diagnosis developed in Chapters 2 and 3 points to a clear conclusion: both the EU and LAC are operating with governance architectures that were designed for a world in which policy domains were separable and the entities being governed were slower and more legible than the platforms and AI systems that now shape daily life across both regions. Neither region can resolve that institutional misfit through unilateral reform alone. What is needed are cooperation mechanisms designed specifically for conditions of fragmentation, asymmetric capacity, and weak evidence - mechanisms that build coordination across the boundaries national governance cannot bridge, generate evidence that neither region can produce alone, and create structured channels for governance innovations developed under constraint in one region to inform institutional design in the other.

This chapter organises that case into an action agenda. Rather than presenting the six HEMISPHERES Working Groups' proposals as parallel domain-specific inventories, it distils from them the cross-cutting governance infrastructures that neither region can build alone - and that, built together, would represent a durable shift in how EU–LAC digital cooperation actually operates. The detailed domain-specific proposals from each Working Group are preserved in full in Appendix A, where they provide the evidential grounding for the priorities named here.

Reading across the six Working Groups, four cross-cutting governance infrastructures emerge as the concrete requirements for sustained EU–LAC digital cooperation. These are not aspirations; they are the specific institutional investments that the structural diagnosis in Chapter 2 calls for - and that the domain-specific proposals in Appendix A collectively evidence.

4.1. Enforcement Visibility

Neither the EU nor LAC can currently see, in any reliable and comparable way, whether its digital governance rules are being applied, how platforms are actually behaving, or what outcomes regulatory decisions produce in practice. This is not a peripheral gap. As Chapter 2 established, regulation without feedback is sequential guesswork: each reform cycle begins with limited understanding of what the previous one produced. Building shared enforcement visibility - making the regulatory landscape legible to policymakers, researchers, and civil society in both regions

simultaneously - is the precondition on which all other cooperation instruments depend.

The proposals across all six Working Groups converge on the same practical requirement: mechanisms that make enforcement actions, platform behaviour, audit results, regulatory decisions, and implementation outcomes visible and comparable across both regions. These include a bilateral EU–LAC AI governance enforcement exchange; a shared platform enforcement tracking mechanism covering content moderation, algorithmic curation, and liability decisions; a coordinated enforcement posture on privacy dark patterns; a joint minimum standard for youth protection applied consistently in both regions; and an internet governance observatory mapping who governs what and with what effect. None of these requires new treaty obligations. All require sustained institutional commitment to producing and sharing the data that governance accountability depends on.

4.2. Shared Evidence Infrastructure

The governance questions both regions are navigating - what AI systems do to informal labour markets, what school phone restrictions produce in different institutional contexts, what data sovereignty approaches work under different legal traditions - cannot be answered from within either region alone. The comparable, longitudinal evidence that would allow both regions to learn from each other rather than speculate about each other does not yet exist in usable form. Building the infrastructure to generate it is not a support function to cooperation; it is what makes the regulatory learning this Blueprint describes possible in practice.

Across the Working Groups, this infrastructure takes several concrete forms: an EU–LAC Quantum Research Fund generating co-owned outputs across both regions; a joint AI risk assessment methodology that produces comparable evidence under different institutional conditions; a youth digital governance measurement protocol defining common indicators for evaluating school phone restrictions, age verification systems, and platform safety features; multi-dimensional internet access indicators that go beyond subscription rates to capture affordability and user capability; and a privacy bilateral evidence framework documenting enforcement outcomes and compliance experiences across jurisdictions. These are not separate initiatives; they are components of the shared knowledge base on which every other cooperation instrument depends.

4.3. Participatory Legitimacy

The people and communities most directly affected by digital governance decisions have the least consistent access to the processes that make them. This is not incidental; it is the structural exclusion that Chapter 2 documented in its analysis of

power asymmetries and stakeholder inequality. Building structured, institutionalised routes for meaningful participation is not an equity aspiration - it is the condition under which cooperation outputs acquire the democratic legitimacy that makes them sustainable across electoral cycles and political changes in both regions.

The Working Group proposals name this requirement across every domain: a structured bilateral mechanism giving young people standing to shape DSA implementation reviews and LAC legislative drafting; a bottom-up AI governance engagement mechanism connecting civil society, SMEs, and underrepresented communities to governance processes in both regions; platform stakeholder coordination across telecommunications, competition, media, and consumer protection authorities that currently govern in isolation; support for community networks and cooperative ISPs as legitimate governance actors and innovation sites; and a privacy community of practice connecting ground-level practitioners to policy design in both regions. Past cooperation programmes have consulted civil society without consistently giving it standing. These proposals are designed to leave a verifiable trace in governance outcomes

4.4. Coordination Architectures

The governance architecture failures documented in Chapter 2 are not resolved by producing more rules or more bilateral declarations. They require durable mechanisms capable of managing inter-institutional conflict, aligning enforcement practice across agencies that each hold only part of the picture, and maintaining the continuity that project-based cooperation consistently fails to provide. The Working Groups identify several such mechanisms: a dedicated EU–LAC coordination mechanism connecting the EDPB, EU AI Office, and LAC data protection authorities to manage overlapping obligations; a bilateral regulatory sandbox programme allowing LAC countries to test adaptations of EU digital norms with results feeding back into EU implementation reviews; quantum and AI research consortia with joint governance over outputs and infrastructure; and coordinated co-development of national digital strategies that build LAC institutional capacity from within rather than importing frameworks designed elsewhere.

These four infrastructures are mutually reinforcing. Enforcement visibility without shared evidence produces data that cannot be contextualised. Shared evidence without participatory legitimacy produces knowledge that serves institutional actors rather than the communities governance is meant to protect. Participatory legitimacy without coordination architecture produces consultation processes with no durable institutional home. And coordination architecture without enforcement visibility cannot verify whether the mechanisms it builds are working. All four must be developed together, and the domain-specific proposals in Appendix A provide the entry points for doing so across each thematic area.

Table 2 maps the four infrastructure priorities against selected flagship proposals from the Working Groups, illustrating how domain-specific proposals generate cross-cutting governance value. The full Working Group proposals are in Appendix A.

Table 2. Cross-cutting infrastructure priorities and illustrative Working Group proposals.

Cross-cutting infrastructure	Example Working Group proposals
Enforcement visibility	AI enforcement exchange; platform enforcement tracking; privacy/dark patterns enforcement cooperation; youth protection standards
Shared evidence infrastructure	youth measurement protocol; internet access indicators; quantum research fund; privacy evidence framework
Participatory legitimacy	youth participation mechanism; AI civil society/SME engagement; community networks; privacy practitioner community
Coordination architecture	AI/privacy coordination mechanism; internet governance sandbox; platform oversight across telecoms, competition, media, and consumer protection authorities

These four infrastructures reinforce each other. Enforcement visibility without shared evidence produces data that cannot be contextualised. Shared evidence without participatory legitimacy produces knowledge that serves institutional actors rather than the communities governance is meant to protect. Participatory legitimacy without enforcement visibility produces consultation processes that feel inclusive but cannot verify whether anything changes. All four need to develop together; the domain-specific proposals in Appendix A provide the entry points for each.

4.5. Priorities for the Next Phase of EU–LAC Digital Cooperation

The transition from the first to the second phase of HEMISPHERES coincides with a moment of genuine uncertainty in the global digital governance landscape. The US retreat from multilateral platform governance cooperation, the EU's own deregulatory pressures, and the accelerating pace of AI development are all reshaping the terrain on which EU–LAC cooperation operates. Three priorities follow from the architecture Chapter 4 has built and the conditions the document has honestly diagnosed.

First, make enforcement visible before adding more rules. The proposals in Chapter 4 collectively identify enforcement visibility as the most immediate and tractable priority. Both regions already have substantial regulatory frameworks across AI,

platforms, privacy, internet governance, and youth protection. What neither has is the shared infrastructure to assess whether those frameworks are working. The next phase should prioritise building that infrastructure - the bilateral enforcement exchanges, the comparative tracking mechanisms, and the shared transparency benchmarks - over negotiating new normative instruments. More rules without better feedback will reproduce the pattern Chapter 2 diagnosed: accumulating regulatory layers without accumulating institutional knowledge.

This priority also requires both regions to attend to the stability of the normative foundations on which cooperation is being built. The coherence of EU–LAC digital cooperation depends in part on Europe's own regulatory commitments. Current deregulatory pressure within the EU - reflected in simplification initiatives that reduce compliance obligations before enforcement infrastructure is fully operational - risks shifting the reference points that LAC countries have been orienting toward in their own regulatory development. Sustaining the partnership's credibility requires that both regions attend not only to building shared capacity, but to maintaining the regulatory foundations on which that capacity rests.

Second, invest in evidence infrastructure as a first-order governance priority. The absence of comparable, longitudinal data on digital policy outcomes is not a research gap to be filled by the next academic cycle - it is the immediate practical obstacle preventing more grounded, adaptive governance in both regions. The quantum research fund, the youth measurement protocol, the multi-dimensional internet access indicators, and the privacy community of practice are all, at their core, investments in shared knowledge production. The next phase should treat these not as support activities but as the substantive cooperation agenda they are: the infrastructure without which the regulatory learning this Blueprint describes remains a conceptual framework rather than an operating practice.

Third, embed participation structurally, not rhetorically. The proposals for youth participation in regulatory processes, bottom-up AI governance engagement, and civil society access to platform data are not add-ons to the technical cooperation agenda - they are the mechanism through which that agenda acquires legitimacy and sustainability. Past EU–LAC cooperation programmes have consulted civil society without consistently giving it standing in governance processes. The next phase should design participation mechanisms that produce verifiable outcomes: specific instances where civil society input changed a regulatory decision, specific communities of practice that influenced implementation guidance, specific youth engagement processes that shaped legislative drafting. Participation that leaves no trace in governance outcomes is not participation - it is a process.

Taken together, these three priorities do not call for new institutions in the first instance. They call for the sustained, intentional investment in governance infrastructure that no single working group, project cycle, or bilateral dialogue has yet

provided. The question the third cycle of HEMISPHERES is positioned to answer is whether such infrastructure can be built - and through what institutional vehicle.

4.6. Setting the Stage: Towards a Centre of Centres for EU–LAC Digital Governance

The architecture Chapter 4 has designed and the priorities Section 5.2 has named both points toward the same institutional gap. The governance infrastructure that would make EU–LAC digital cooperation durable - the enforcement visibility mechanisms, the shared evidence frameworks, the communities of practice, the longitudinal monitoring capacity - requires a permanent, independent, bi-regionally owned institutional home. No existing institution in either region currently fills that role. National regulatory authorities lack the cross-regional mandate. The EU–LAC Digital Alliance provides a political dialogue channel but not a research and knowledge-production capacity. Individual university partnerships and think tank collaborations generate valuable work but dissipate between project cycles without accumulating into a shared institutional base.

What the Blueprint's diagnosis points toward is a centre of centres: a structured network of universities, research institutions, and think tanks across the EU and LAC, jointly governed and co-owned by both regions, designed specifically to serve as the knowledge infrastructure for EU–LAC digital governance cooperation. Not a new international organisation, and not a single institution that would replicate the asymmetries the Blueprint has worked to avoid, but a federated network in which EU and LAC nodes contribute complementary capabilities and share governance over the whole.

The third cycle of HEMISPHERES is positioned to develop the institutional design for such a body. That design work will need to answer questions that this Blueprint can frame but not resolve - and framing them precisely is itself a contribution, because it defines the scope of the work ahead.

What governance model ensures genuine bilateral co-ownership? A centre of centres that is administratively anchored in European universities, funded primarily through EU instruments, and staffed predominantly by European researchers would reproduce the very asymmetry the regulatory learning framework is designed to move beyond. Genuine co-ownership requires that LAC institutions hold governing authority, not merely participation - that they shape the research agenda, hold leadership positions, and have standing to redirect priorities. Designing the governance structure that makes this real rather than nominal is the first institutional design challenge.

What is the relationship between the centre and the regulatory authorities it serves? The centre's value depends on its independence - its capacity to generate credible, comparative evidence that is not shaped by the institutional interests of the regulators it studies. But independence without structured channels to regulatory processes means that evidence is produced and ignored. The institutional design must solve this tension: building structured routes through which the centre's outputs reach enforcement decisions, legislative processes, and policy reviews in both regions, without compromising the independence that makes those outputs credible.

How does it handle heterogeneity within LAC? Brazil's institutional density, the Caribbean's resource constraints, Colombia's and Chile's regulatory trajectories, and Central America's very different starting points are not a temporary condition waiting to be resolved through convergence. They are structural features of the region that a centre of centres must accommodate rather than flatten. The risk is that a network designed to connect institutional equals will in practice create a new hub-and-spoke structure in which a small number of well-resourced LAC institutions hold structural authority over the rest. Designing against that outcome - through explicit provisions for smaller institution participation, intra-LAC mobility, and distributed governance - is the second institutional design challenge.

What funding model allows it to operate across political cycles? Project-based funding, which has characterised most EU-LAC cooperation to date, produces knowledge that accumulates within project timescales and dissipates when funding ends. The governance infrastructure the Blueprint calls for - longitudinal monitoring, sustained communities of practice, institutional memory - cannot be built on project timescales. Identifying funding models that provide structural continuity without creating dependency on any single government's priorities or any single funding programme's conditionalities is the third institutional design challenge.

How does it connect to the communities most affected by digital governance failures? The Blueprint has been consistent throughout in treating civil society, youth, informal workers, community network operators, and practitioners in under-resourced institutions not as audiences for the centre's outputs but as contributors to its work. A centre of centres that operates primarily within the academic and policy community - producing research that is read by regulators and ignored by everyone else - would fail at the participatory legitimacy priority Section 5.2 names. Building the structural connections between the centre's research capacity and the communities whose governance experiences should shape it is the fourth institutional design challenge.

These questions do not have obvious answers, and the Blueprint does not pretend they do. What it can say is that the governance challenges diagnosed across Chapters 2 and 3, and the cooperation proposals developed across Chapter 4, collectively make the case that these questions are worth answering. The EU-LAC

digital governance partnership has reached a point of institutional maturity where the next necessary investment is not more rules, more projects, or more bilateral dialogues - but the durable, co-owned knowledge infrastructure that would allow both regions to govern together under conditions of uncertainty, rather than simply cooperating when circumstances allow.

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Appendix A. Domain-Specific Policy Innovation Proposals from the HEMISPHERES Working Groups

The following sections present the full domain-specific proposals from each of the six HEMISPHERES Working Groups. Each section opens with the governance context specific to that domain, presents the concrete proposals developed through comparative research across EU and LAC, and identifies the structural links to the cross-cutting infrastructure priorities in Chapter 4. These proposals provide the evidential grounding for the action agenda in the main text; they are not a separate or subordinate set of recommendations, but the domain-specific expression of the same governance logic.

A.1. Artificial Intelligence

When the EU's AI Act entered into force in 2024, it triggered an extensive wave of compliance preparations across European institutions - and a quieter, more uncertain adjustment process in LAC, where regulators pursue similar governance ambitions with only a fraction of the enforcement infrastructure. This disparity is not simply a matter of capacity; it reflects a deeper governance design challenge that the AI Working Group placed at the centre of its inquiry.

In both regions, AI governance is characterised by ambitious regulatory objectives and significant implementation uncertainty. The EU's AI Act provides a comprehensive ex ante regulatory architecture, but effective oversight depends on technical expertise, monitoring infrastructure, and institutional coordination that are unevenly distributed across Member States. In LAC, structural capacity constraints mean that even where normative alignment with international standards exists, firm-level accountability mechanisms are largely absent - producing symbolic compliance rather than behavioural change. The working group found that both regions are failing at the same specific point: the gap between rule adoption and enforcement visibility.

Consistent with the regulatory learning framework developed in Chapter 3, the Working Group approaches AI governance not as a finalised regulatory model to be transferred, but as an evolving domain in which experimentation, monitoring, and institutional feedback loops are essential. The AI WG paper's comparative analysis - documenting how Europe deploys what it calls "second-generation" regulatory and adaptive measures while LAC uses a "first-generation" approach focused on enabling conditions - is not a deficit story but a structural one. These are different stages of the same challenge, not different levels of success. That framing shapes the proposals below.

Overview of suggestions

- Establish a bilateral EU–LAC AI governance enforcement exchange - a shared register of AI compliance actions, audit findings, and enforcement outcomes maintained through the EU–LAC Digital Alliance, making the enforcement landscape legible to both regions and reducing the capacity of large AI developers to manage regulatory exposure across jurisdictions.
- Develop a joint AI risk assessment methodology adapted for LAC's institutional context - building on the EU AI Act's risk classification framework but designed for regulatory environments with limited technical capacity, enabling meaningful risk assessments without requiring full replication of the EU's conformity infrastructure.
- Create firm-level accountability standards for AI deployment in public services - covering internal audit processes, impact documentation, and redress mechanisms that both EU and LAC governments can adopt in AI procurement, reducing the informational asymmetry between public authorities and technology vendors in both regions.
- Establish a jointly financed EU–LAC open-source AI fund - supporting the development of AI systems that are transparent, auditable, and accessible to regulators and civil society, reducing dependence on proprietary systems and directly addressing the informational monopoly that large AI developers hold over regulatory evidence bases in both regions.
- Strengthen LAC participation in the International Network of AI Safety Institutes and emerging multilateral AI governance forums - ensuring LAC's governance innovations, particularly in health, education, and informal labour contexts, shape global norms rather than being incorporated only after standards are set.
- Build a structured bottom-up engagement mechanism connecting civil society, SMEs, academia, and underrepresented communities to AI governance processes in both regions - ensuring that AI governance frameworks are socially legitimate and contextually grounded, not only technically compliant.
- Develop a joint guide for AI technology selection in public procurement - balancing performance, reliability, and energy consumption for public sector actors in both regions, addressing the sustainability dimension of AI governance that neither the EU AI Act nor emerging LAC frameworks currently centre..

Source: Aguerre et al., 2025

Translating these proposals into practice requires starting with what neither region currently has: a shared picture of how AI enforcement is actually operating on the ground. A systematic mapping of existing AI capabilities, governance initiatives, and

the institutions responsible for them - at both regional and global levels - is the prerequisite for anything more ambitious. This mapping is itself a governance product: making the enforcement landscape legible to all parties is what makes coordination possible in the first place.

Practical decision-making tools matter at the firm level, not only at the regulatory level. A guide to selecting AI technologies that appropriately balance performance, reliability, and energy consumption would help public sector actors in LAC - where procurement of AI systems often proceeds without adequate technical guidance - make choices aligned with both sustainability goals and regional resource constraints. The same instrument would be relevant in EU Member States where procurement frameworks have not yet been updated to reflect AI Act requirements.

Two structural conditions shape the ambition of all other proposals in this domain: First, the LAC region's informal labour force - which constitutes the majority of workers in many countries - is largely invisible to the AI governance frameworks being designed in both regions. The ILO and World Bank estimate that between 26% and 38% of jobs in LAC could be influenced by generative AI, yet the governance frameworks addressing those impacts remain oriented toward formal employment relationships and documented labour markets. Building AI governance that accounts for informality is not a LAC-specific concern; as AI systems begin operating in less formalised sectors in Europe, this will become a European governance question as well.

Second, open-source AI systems are not merely a cost-saving alternative; they are a governance instrument. Systems that are transparent and auditable support the regulatory visibility that neither region currently has, and they reduce the informational monopoly that large proprietary AI developers hold over the evidence base on which regulators depend. Joint EU-LAC investment in open-source AI for governance contexts is therefore a direct response to the power asymmetry problem identified in Chapter 2, not a peripheral technology preference.

A.2. Emerging Technologies and the Metaverse

Quantum technologies present EU-LAC cooperation with a governance challenge that is structurally different from any other domain in this chapter. The timeline is long, the institutional investment required is substantial, and the opportunity to shape the governance architecture before a small number of states and corporations consolidate control over the technology is narrow. The Emerging Technologies and Metaverse Working Group approached this not as a distant horizon but as an immediate strategic decision: whether both regions invest now in the shared capacity to co-govern these technologies, or whether LAC enters the quantum era as a user of standards and systems designed entirely elsewhere.

The paper's central argument is that EU–LAC cooperation on quantum must be anchored in a dual imperative: building LAC's technical capacity while simultaneously ensuring LAC is a co-shaper of the rules, standards, and governance frameworks that will define the technology's global trajectory. For the EU, this cooperation is not philanthropy - it expands access to diverse application environments in agriculture, energy, and health where quantum technologies can be tested and scaled in real-world conditions, diversifies talent pipelines, and consolidates Europe's role as a partner in shaping inclusive global innovation ecosystems. The asymmetry between the regions is real, but the Working Group treats it as a starting condition to be transformed, not a fixed relationship to be managed.

A word on the metaverse is warranted here, because the Working Group's decision to focus primarily on quantum rather than immersive technologies reflects an analytical judgment that the Blueprint carries forward: the withdrawal of major private actors from metaverse investment after 2023 confirms that public digital policy anchored to corporate technology cycles will consistently find itself governing yesterday's hype. The governance lesson - that both regions need strategic patience and independent assessment of which emerging technologies merit sustained public investment - applies beyond quantum and should inform how the EU–LAC Digital Alliance structures its emerging technology agenda going forward.

Overview of suggestions

- Co-develop national and regional quantum strategies: EU and LAC governments should collaborate in designing mutually aligned quantum strategies, ensuring LAC moves beyond proposals toward implementation, drawing on lessons from the EU Quantum Flagship while integrating regional LAC priorities - building strategies jointly rather than having them externally imposed.
- Establish an EU–LAC Quantum Research Fund, co-financed through EU programmes such as Horizon Europe and Digital Europe and LAC science agencies, with joint calls requiring consortia of EU and LAC partners, ensuring co-ownership of research outputs and equitable access to infrastructure - building on the precedent of Horizon 2020's EU–LAC collaboration.
- Adapt and co-design competence frameworks: the European Competence Framework for Quantum Technologies (CFQT) should be adapted in co-creation with LAC universities, ensuring sensitivity to linguistic diversity, socio-economic realities, and local labour markets.
- Expand bi-regional education and interdisciplinary tracks: embed quantum within broader STEM fields and create interdisciplinary EU–LAC programmes in areas such as law, health, climate, and agriculture, with joint

curricula and bilingual resources to democratise access and ensure talent can address societal needs in both regions.

- Strengthen bi-regional industrial partnerships: incentivise joint EU–LAC industrial pilots, exchanges, and clusters - building on existing cases such as Cemex–IBM–Monterrey Tech (Mexico) and Kipu Quantum–Quantum South (Germany/Uruguay) - to create employment pathways and stimulate commercialisation across both regions.
- Expand mobility networks between EU–LAC and within LAC: scale bi-regional mobility programmes modelled on Erasmus Mundus (such as QuanTEEM) to include LAC universities systematically, while strengthening intra-LAC mobility so smaller and less-resourced institutions can participate - with return pathways and reintegration funding to prevent brain drain.
- Promote brain circulation as a shared goal: establish co-funded fellowships, joint research positions, and bilateral industry placements that benefit both regions - ensuring LAC talent reinforces local ecosystems while Europe benefits from a diversified talent pool.
- Build regional and bi-regional coordination mechanisms: strengthen LAC regional coordination structures (such as CLEI) and link them to the EU–LAC Digital Alliance to harmonise research agendas, share infrastructures, and prevent duplication - ensuring EU–LAC projects build cumulative rather than fragmented impact.
- Co-invest in shared research infrastructures: go beyond mobility and funding calls by jointly investing in quantum laboratories, simulators, and cloud-access platforms - providing distributed experimentation capacity that reduces structural gaps in LAC while giving EU researchers access to new application environments.
- Create incentives for private sector participation: co-design innovation challenge funds, tax incentives, and co-financed R&D programmes that actively involve companies on both sides, ensuring joint research translates into jobs, commercialisation, and sustainable market opportunities.
- Anchor cooperation in the SDGs: explicitly link EU–LAC quantum cooperation to shared global challenges - quantum applications in health (SDG 3), clean energy (SDG 7), and food security and agriculture (SDG 2) are of strategic importance for LAC while providing Europe with large-scale testing grounds - ensuring the partnership delivers reciprocal benefits and social legitimacy.

Source: Barquero et al., 2025

The eleven recommendations above form a coherent architecture rather than a list of separate actions. They are organised by the Working Group around five axes - education and talent development, research and funding mechanisms, industrial collaboration, multilateral governance, and societal impact - and they are designed to operate simultaneously rather than sequentially. This systemic approach reflects a

hard-won lesson from both regions' experience with technology cooperation: piecemeal initiatives produce isolated results; durable capacity requires parallel investment across all five axes at once.

Two proposals deserve particular attention in the context of the Blueprint's broader regulatory learning argument. The first is the co-development of national and regional quantum strategies. The Working Group's insistence that strategies be jointly built rather than externally imposed is not procedural courtesy - it is the precondition for legitimacy and sustainability. Quantum strategies developed in Brussels and adapted in Bogotá will produce different governance outcomes than strategies developed together, because the latter will incorporate LAC's distinct priority sectors, institutional constraints, and constitutional traditions from the design stage rather than as afterthoughts. This mirrors the Blueprint's central argument about regulatory learning: that genuine bi-regional cooperation produces better governance for both parties than any unilateral model, however well-designed.

The second is the SDG anchoring proposal. Explicitly tying quantum cooperation to health, clean energy, and food security is not merely a legitimacy strategy - it is a governance instrument that keeps the partnership oriented toward public goods rather than allowing it to drift toward the commercial and geopolitical interests that dominate the quantum ecosystem globally. In a domain where private actors and a small number of state actors are moving rapidly to consolidate positions, the EU-LAC partnership's distinctive contribution is precisely that it can centre distributional impact and democratic accountability in a way that neither purely commercial nor purely geopolitical cooperation frameworks can.

The mobility proposals are worth reading carefully, because previous EU-LAC mobility programmes have been criticised for accelerating brain drain from LAC toward European institutions. Framing mobility as circulation - requiring return pathways, reintegration funding, and joint positions that split time between both regions - is a substantive redesign of the cooperation model, not a rhetorical aspiration. The EU-LAC Digital Alliance should treat this as a design principle across all its talent cooperation instruments, not only in the quantum domain.

A.3. Internet

Internet governance has never been a single regulatory challenge, but it is becoming an increasingly fragmented one. The combined pressures of platform consolidation, infrastructure nationalism, and persistent connectivity gaps mean that LAC countries are being asked to govern an internet they do not fully control - technically, economically, or politically. The Internet Working Group begins from this structural tension rather than from the assumption that a ready-made model can be transferred across regions. As the paper makes explicit, direct transposition of EU rules to LAC

is not only unfeasible in many cases - it is not recommended, because issues such as internet access are highly context-specific and require governance solutions built from within rather than imposed from without.

Both regions share a foundational commitment to an open internet. Chile pioneered the first net neutrality law globally in 2010; Brazil enshrined it in the Marco Civil in 2014; the EU has governed it through its Open Internet Regulation since 2015. Yet both are now navigating a new phase of this debate - the "fair share" argument that has re-entered European policy discussions since 2022, driven by telecom operators seeking network cost contributions from large content providers, and which has permeated LAC through operators such as Telefónica and through forums including LACNIC. How both regions respond to this pressure, and whether they do so in coordination, will shape the openness and equitability of the internet in both for years ahead. The Internet Working Group treats this shared challenge - alongside persistent questions of digital sovereignty, layered governance, and the legacy of the digital divide in new forms - as the terrain on which EU-LAC cooperation must now operate.

Consistent with the regulatory learning framework developed in Chapter 3, the Working Group approaches internet governance as a domain where the diversity of approaches across both regions is an asset rather than a problem to be resolved through harmonisation. The goal is not convergence toward a common legal text but the construction of deliberate, structured cooperation that can turn the observed Brussels Effect into a genuine partnership for shaping a fair, free, and rights-based digital order.

Overview of suggestions

- Establish a structured EU-LAC coordination mechanism for internet governance - operating through the EU-LAC Digital Alliance and connecting national regulators, multistakeholder bodies including CGI.br and LACNIC, and civil society organisations, to manage the layered governance of infrastructure, content, and data flows that no single institutional level currently oversees in either region.
- Create regional observatories or dashboards that track who governs what across both regions - mapping the roles of regulators, telecom operators, platforms, and civil society - and how decisions affecting infrastructure, content moderation, and data flows are actually made and enforced, giving policymakers in both regions the visibility they currently lack.
- Promote bottom-up approaches that have favoured access and alternative governance models by actively supporting community networks, municipal broadband projects, and cooperative ISPs as legitimate governance actors and sites of policy innovation - with dedicated funding mechanisms and regulatory sandboxes in both regions.

- Develop indicators that support recognition of the multi-dimensional nature of digital access - capturing speed relative to income, device access, platform affordability, and user capability - moving beyond simple connectivity metrics and embedding these in EU-LAC Digital Alliance monitoring frameworks.
- Create a bilateral regulatory sandbox programme for internet governance - enabling LAC countries to test adaptations of EU digital norms including GDPR data flow provisions and DSA content standards in their institutional contexts, with results feeding back into both LAC policy development and EU implementation reviews.
- Develop a joint EU-LAC framework for data mobility and digital sovereignty - moving beyond the EU's adequacy mechanism to build cooperative instruments that support cross-border data flows while safeguarding privacy rights, addressing the structural friction that LAC's fragmented regulatory landscape currently creates for organisations operating across both regions.

Source: Aguerre et al., 2025 b

Each of the proposals above picks up a specific thread from the Chapter 2 diagnosis. The observatory responds to the evidence gap neither region currently has adequate visibility into who is making the decisions that shape internet access and content, and a jointly maintained mapping instrument would generate the shared knowledge base that neither can produce from its own data alone. The community networks proposal takes the participatory legitimacy argument seriously in a domain where it has concrete institutional implications: some of LAC's most durable connectivity governance solutions have emerged from community-owned and cooperative models, and treating those actors as legitimate rather than marginal carries lessons for EU debates about democratic accountability in infrastructure governance that top-down frameworks tend to miss.

The multi-dimensional access indicators proposal goes to the power asymmetry problem in its most practically consequential form. Subscription rates and population coverage figures serve incumbent operators well: they make coverage appear more complete than it is for the populations that matter most. Indicators that capture speed relative to income, device access, and actual user capability make visible the inequalities that simple connectivity data conceals, giving regulators and civil society the basis needed to hold both public and private actors accountable for the quality, not merely the existence, of access. Developing such indicators jointly would produce a measurement framework that neither region could build as credibly in isolation.

The digital sovereignty proposal requires care, because the Internet Working Group identifies it as genuinely double-edged. Adopting robust EU-style privacy, competition, and content standards can empower LAC states to assert democratic

control over digital markets. But leaning heavily on EU frameworks also risks limiting indigenous policy innovation and creating structural dependency on external standards - particularly in a region that, as a fragmented market, lacks the same leverage over global internet actors that the EU commands. The Blueprint's regulatory learning framework addresses this not by choosing one side but by insisting on co-creation: governance instruments designed together, tested in both institutional contexts, and revised on the basis of what both regions learn in practice. That is the model the EU-LAC Digital Alliance should adopt as its default approach to internet governance cooperation - and the standard against which its cooperation instruments should be evaluated.

A.4. Platforms, Equity and Safety

Platform governance in LAC is not waiting for the DSA. Brazil's Supreme Federal Court ruling of June 2025 deemed Article 19 of the Marco Civil da Internet partially unconstitutional, establishing a differentiated liability model that holds platforms to proactive obligations for serious harms while preserving notice-and-takedown as the general regime for other content. This ruling has been explicitly positioned alongside the DSA in global platform governance debates - describing Brazil as a constitutional laboratory bridging the Internet Bill of Rights tradition with risk-based regulatory models emerging in Europe (STF, 2025; Digital Law in Brazil, 2026). Meanwhile, the EU is experiencing a noticeable decline in political momentum to enforce the DSA with full rigour, as geopolitical pressure from the current US administration and economic uncertainty over retaliatory tariffs are creating constraints on regulatory priorities. The Platforms, Equity and Safety Working Group begins from this convergence: two regions whose regulatory trajectories are moving in opposite directions at precisely the moment when joint action would be most productive, and whose complementary institutional resources - LAC's assertive judicial governance and the EU's regulatory infrastructure - are most needed by each other.

The paper's central analytical finding is that both regions share the same structural deficit, but experience it from opposite institutional positions. In the EU, platform internal governance is increasingly subject to transparency obligations and external oversight, yet enforcement remains fragmented across Digital Services Coordinators, the Commission, and national courts - and platforms are now actively shifting toward self-regulatory models such as "community notes" that are designed to preempt statutory obligations before they are fully enforced. In LAC, regulatory enforcement lacks the necessary technical resources, political stability, or institutional autonomy to demand transparency and accountability from large platforms systematically - producing drastic individual interventions, such as Brazil's temporary suspension of X, rather than sustained governance. The platforms operate globally and manage their content, labour, and data practices internally; in both regions, regulators are governing systems they cannot adequately see.

Consistent with the regulatory learning framework developed in Chapter 3, the proposals below address this shared visibility deficit directly - with the cooperation need in each case generated by the Chapter 2 diagnosis, and the Working Group paper providing the evidential grounding.

Overview of suggestions

- Establish a bilateral EU–LAC mechanism for tracking enforcement of platform regulation - systematically documenting public and private enforcement actions, judicial decisions, and regulatory findings across both regions, making enforcement outcomes visible and comparable in ways that reduce platforms' capacity to manage regulatory exposure by playing jurisdictions against each other.
- Develop shared benchmarks for platform transparency obligations - particularly around content moderation practices, algorithmic curation, and internal governance shifts such as the transition from third-party fact-checking to community-based moderation - aligning common expectations for disclosure and due process that improve regulatory leverage in both regions simultaneously.
- Invest in mutual reinforcement of institutional capacity for platform oversight, particularly in intermediary liability - strengthening the ability of regulatory authorities, courts, and civil society organisations in both regions to monitor platform behaviour, drawing on LAC's experience with judicial remedies and fundamental rights alongside the EU's regulatory and procedural architecture.
- Engage systematically with the full range of stakeholders involved in platform regulation enforcement - including telecommunications, consumer protection, competition, and media authorities - to build the cross-sectoral coordination that no single authority in either region currently provides, and that platform governance structurally requires.
- Develop a bilateral governance approach to digital labour platform regulation - addressing the disproportionate impact of platform work on LAC's large informal workforce and building on Spain's "Riders Law" and emerging LAC regulatory experiments to develop context-sensitive standards that the EU's more formalised labour market model cannot produce alone.
- Conduct a comparative law study of platform regulation across both regions - using structured expert surveys to generate the evidence base needed for more grounded policy recommendations, and to make legible the spectrum of enforcement strategies and institutional conditions under which platform regulation either works or fails.

Source: Archegas et al., 2025.

On enforcement tracking: the paper documents how regulatory momentum in both regions is being reshaped by anticipation of US policy shifts, with several governments stalling or reassessing their legislative agendas in response to geopolitical instability. A bilateral mechanism for tracking how enforcement is actually proceeding - what actions are being taken, what outcomes they produce, what platforms do in response - creates the shared knowledge base that both regions currently lack. Without that picture, cooperation produces one-off interventions rather than durable governance.

On transparency benchmarks: in most LAC jurisdictions, platforms determine internally - without external oversight - which content is displayed, removed, or penalised. Meta's shift from third-party fact-checkers to community notes in early 2025 illustrates the problem: a major change in how public discourse is governed across hundreds of millions of users, made unilaterally, with no prior regulatory consultation in either region and no obligation to disclose its effects. Common transparency standards that make these internal shifts subject to external scrutiny in both regions simultaneously would reduce platforms' capacity to use self-regulatory moves to preempt binding obligations before they take full effect.

The digital labour dimension deserves particular attention because it is largely absent from how EU-LAC platform governance cooperation has been framed until now. Platform work is a primary axis of platform regulation in LAC because of the region's high levels of informality: digital work platforms connect service providers with customers in conditions that are often precarious, poorly documented, and invisible to the frameworks designed for formal employment. Spain's Riders Law and emerging LAC regulatory experiments represent governance innovations that the EU's more formalised labour market model has not generated - and that LAC's experience with informality specifically has. In LAC contexts, platform governance and labour governance are the same governance challenge, and the Blueprint's cross-sectoral spillover diagnosis calls for a response that reflects this.

A.5. Privacy and Security

Data protection in LAC is frequently characterised as a patchwork - a framing that underestimates both the substantial progress the region has made and the analytical value of its heterogeneity. Brazil's LGPD (*Lei Geral de Proteção de Dados*), Chile's reformed data protection law, Colombia's Ley 1581, and Argentina's framework collectively cover the majority of the region's population. Uruguay has held EU adequacy status since 2012. The 2017 Ibero-American Data Protection Standards have provided a voluntary regional convergence mechanism that mirrors GDPR principles and is already facilitating cross-border data flows across LAC. These are not approximations of a European model waiting to be completed; they are expressions of a different but comparable rights tradition - one in which habeas data

doctrines, pioneered in LAC and now standard in laws worldwide, anchor privacy protection in constitutional rights rather than in statutory compliance alone.

The Privacy and Security Working Group's central finding is that EU and LAC regulatory traditions offer genuinely complementary strengths. The EU contributes procedural consistency, institutional resilience, and enforcement architecture developed over decades. LAC contributes constitutional enshrinement of data rights, a holistic integration of privacy with transparency and anti-corruption agendas, and documented experimentation with regulatory sandboxes and multi-stakeholder forums for navigating the intersection of data protection and emerging technologies. Both regions are now confronting the same structural challenge: the growing intersection of data protection with AI governance, which is straining frameworks built for a pre-generative-AI world and which neither the GDPR nor any LAC equivalent was designed to address. Consistent with the regulatory learning framework developed in Chapter 3, the Working Group treats this shared challenge - and the complementary governance resources each region brings to it - as the productive terrain on which EU-LAC cooperation must now operate.

Overview of suggestions

- Establish a dedicated EU-LAC coordination mechanism for the data privacy and AI governance intersection - connecting the EDPB, the EU AI Office, and LAC data protection authorities to manage the overlapping obligations the AI Act and LGPD are now generating for firms in both regions, and building on LAC's more integrated approach to privacy and public policy to inform how the EU structures cross-regulatory coherence.
- Develop a coordinated transregional enforcement posture on dark patterns and manipulative platform design - drawing on LAC's habeas data constitutional frameworks and consumer protection traditions alongside the EU's GDPR and DSA consent provisions to create joint standard-setting and enforcement strategies that reduce global platforms' capacity to apply weaker consent standards in LAC than they are required to apply in EU markets.
- Establish differentiated Privacy by Design implementation pathways through bilateral technical cooperation - adapting PbD guidance to varying levels of institutional maturity across LAC, enabling integration of privacy requirements into digital innovation without requiring full GDPR replication, and feeding LAC implementation experience - particularly Chile's explicit statutory model - back into EU review processes as evidence for recalibration.
- Build a community of practice connecting data protection practitioners across both regions - ensuring that ground-level implementation experience informs policy design in both directions, not only from regulator to practitioner, and that the knowledge generated by LAC's sandboxes and

multi-stakeholder forums travels into EU institutional debates.

- Build a bilateral evidence framework for data protection governance - documenting enforcement outcomes, compliance costs, and implementation experiences across EU and LAC jurisdictions systematically, creating the comparative knowledge base that currently does not exist and that would allow both regions to assess what works, what transfers, and what requires context-specific adaptation.

Source: Castillo et al., 2025.

Dark patterns are the most immediately tractable entry point for bilateral enforcement. The Working Group documents that interface designs that manipulate users into sharing more data than they would choose to share undermine the consent frameworks on which both GDPR and LAC data protection laws rest. Global platforms face binding GDPR and DSA obligations on consent design in the EU while operating with considerably more discretion in LAC - a two-tier protection system that mirrors the platform enforcement gap documented in section A.4. Closing that gap requires coordinated action: platforms that contest and delay consent requirements in EU courts face even fewer obligations in LAC, and only coordinated cross-regional pressure reduces their capacity to manage regulatory exposure by playing one jurisdiction against another.

The intersection of data protection with AI governance is where the cross-sectoral spillover problem of Chapter 2 is most acute in this domain. AI systems depend on personal data at scale; generative AI is producing data practices that existing frameworks were not designed to govern; and the AI Act and LGPD are now generating overlapping obligations for firms operating across both regions without any settled coordination mechanism between the authorities responsible for each instrument. The EU's procedural architecture - the EDPB's cross-regulatory coherence work, the AI Office's coordination with data protection authorities - and LAC's more integrated approach to privacy and broader public policy provide different but complementary starting points for building the bilateral coordination both regions need.

The community of practice proposal responds to a specific gap that formal cooperation channels do not fill. LAC's regulatory innovations - its sandboxes, its multi-stakeholder forums, its pragmatic approaches to data sovereignty in finance and health - generate implementation knowledge that currently has no structured route into EU institutional debates, where it could inform GDPR implementation guidance, adequacy assessments, and Privacy by Design technical standards. A bilateral community of practice creates that route. Where formal cooperation channels tend to move in one direction - from the EU outward - a practitioner community is the mechanism through which learning actually circulates

A.6. Youth and Media

By 2025, legislation restricting children's mobile phone use in schools had been adopted across France, the Netherlands, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Ireland, Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia - with active proposals in Uruguay, Colombia, Spain, and Finland. The speed of this convergence is striking; its empirical grounding is not. The Youth and Media Working Group's central finding is that both regions are enacting consequential policies affecting young people's digital lives on the basis of political urgency rather than comparable, evaluated evidence. Evidence on the effectiveness of school phone restrictions remains limited. Alternative approaches that integrate digital tools into inclusive learning environments remain underexplored. Both regions are, in different ways, making governance decisions about youth and digital technology in a knowledge vacuum - and neither can fill that vacuum alone.

This is the specific governance failure that connects the Youth and Media domain directly to the structural challenges diagnosed in Chapter 2. The cross-sectoral spillover problem is acute here: school phone bans are decided by ministries of education without coordination with data protection authorities who oversee what platforms collect from children, or with platform regulators who govern what algorithmic systems do to adolescent attention and mental health. The power asymmetry problem is equally visible: Meta, TikTok, and Google have each introduced youth safety features - Teen Accounts, Family Pairing, and aligned DSA age verification respectively - but the Working Group documents that these tools are deployed under binding regulatory pressure in EU markets while being offered on a largely discretionary, education-and-advocacy basis in LAC. The result is a structurally unequal protection system that no LAC jurisdiction can resolve through domestic action alone. Consistent with the regulatory learning framework developed in Chapter 3, the proposals below address these structural failures directly - with the Working Group paper providing the evidential grounding for each.

Overview of suggestions

- Establish a joint EU–LAC protocol for measuring the outcomes of youth digital governance policies - defining common indicators for evaluating school phone restrictions, age verification systems, and platform safety features across both regions, so that evidence generated in one context is comparable and usable in the other.
- Create a cross-sectoral coordination mechanism within the EU–LAC Digital Alliance connecting education authorities, data protection authorities, and platform regulators in both regions - addressing the institutional misfit that currently allows school-based device policies and platform data practices to be governed in isolation from each other.
- Develop a coordinated enforcement posture on platform youth protection standards - establishing a joint minimum standard for age-appropriate

design and data practices that closes the gap between what platforms apply under DSA obligations in the EU and what they apply on a discretionary basis in LAC, reducing the ability of global platforms to operate a two-tier protection system across both regions.

- Build a structured bilateral mechanism for youth participation in regulatory processes - giving young people standing to provide input into DSA implementation reviews and LAC legislative drafting, moving from ad hoc consultation to an institutionalised route through which youth perspectives shape governance outcomes in both regions.
- Support context-sensitive piloting of age verification and school restriction approaches in LAC, drawing on the EU's BIK+ framework and DSA age assurance experience as a reference - while accounting for the civil registration gaps and infrastructure constraints that make direct transposition inappropriate and that LAC's own experience is better positioned to resolve.
- Establish a bilateral evidence-sharing protocol connecting education ministries, data protection authorities, and platform regulators across both regions - documenting what school restriction policies, age verification systems, and platform safety features actually produce in practice, creating the institutional memory that currently dissipates after each policy cycle and that both regions need to govern adaptively rather than reactively.

Source: Ahmed et al., 2025.

Without a shared measurement framework, every other intervention in this domain is built on uncertain ground. Both regions are making costly policy commitments - school bans, age verification mandates, platform safety requirements - without the shared indicators or longitudinal monitoring capacity to know whether those commitments are working. The Working Group documents the gap explicitly: mobile phone bans have been widely adopted, but evidence on their effectiveness remains limited and methodologically inconsistent across jurisdictions. A common measurement framework, developed jointly and applied in pilots on both sides, would generate the comparable evidence base that neither region can produce from its domestic experience alone.

Youth digital governance sits across at least three distinct institutional mandates - education, data protection, and platform regulation - and none holds authority over the whole. The ministry that bans phones in schools cannot reach what platforms collect from those same children outside school hours. The data protection authority enforcing GDPR consent for minors has no formal connection to the platform regulator assessing age assurance compliance. Building a coordination mechanism that connects these mandates across both regions - with the EU-LAC Digital Alliance as the institutional anchor - addresses the governance gap that has kept these decisions siloed from one another.

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The political salience of the platform enforcement question is clear enough. Meta's Teen Account features, TikTok's Family Pairing tools, and Google's DSA-aligned age verification are all deployed in response to binding EU obligations - while LAC users receive these protections on a discretionary, commercially driven basis that platforms can revise or withdraw without legal consequence. A coordinated bilateral standard that makes these protections binding in both regions would close the jurisdiction-shopping gap that neither region has yet addressed through bilateral cooperation.

The current drift toward protectionist bans often obscures a deeper systemic failure in public and policy debate to address the digital literacy gap. From a pedagogical standpoint, a ban is a tactical stopgap: it may produce temporary silence in the classroom, but it sends students back into the digital world without the critical discernment needed to navigate it. The challenge for both regions is to move governance from that silence toward something more durable - a genuinely digitally resilient generation.

