

From Fragmentation to Coherence: Rethinking EU–LAC Cooperation for the Digital Era



*Working Group - Cooperation and Stakeholder
Engagement | 2026*

May 2026

João Victor Archegas - Institute for Technology and Society of Rio de Janeiro
Camila Breventano - Universidad Católica del Uruguay
Ana Carolina Amado Britto - Institute for Technology and Society of Rio de Janeiro
Lionel Brossi - Universidad de Chile
Ana María Castillo Hinojosa - Universitat Internacional de Catalunya
Pablo Gómez Ayerbe - Technical University of Munich
Maria Pilar Llorens - Universidad de San Andrés
Luis Maurin Hakala - Institute for Technology and Society of Rio de Janeiro
Suanny Rosario Diaz - Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo
Yamilet Serrano Llerena - Universidad de Ingeniería y Tecnología
Joselyn Vargas - Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris

Suggested Citation:

Archegas, J., Breventano, C., Britto, A. C. A., Brossi, L., Castillo, A. M., Gomez, P., Llorens, M.P, Maurin, L., Rosario, S., Serrano, Y., & Vargas, J. (2026). From Fragmentation to Coherence: Rethinking EU–LAC Cooperation for the Digital Era. HEMISPHERES. Technical University of Munich. <https://hemispheres.digital/>



**Funded by
the European Union**

HEMISPHERES is funded by the ERASMUS-JMO-2024-NETWORK Program. This report only reflects the authors' view. The European Education and Culture Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information this report contains.

| | |
|---|---|
| CALL: ERASMUS-JMO-2024-NETWORKS (Jean Monnet Policy Debate) | TOPIC: ERASMUS-JMO-2024-NETWORKS-H EI-NON-EU-LATIN-AMERICA |
| TYPE OF ACTION: ERASMUS-LS (ERASMUS Lump Sum Grants) | PROPOSAL NUMBER: 101176829 |
| PROPOSAL ACRONYM: HEMISPHERES | TYPE OF MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT: ERASMUS Lump Sum Grant |
| REPORTING PERIOD: From 01.11.2024 to 31.11.2027 | TYPE OF MODEL GRANT AGREEMENT: ERASMUS Lump Sum Grant |
| REPORT VERSION: 1.0 | DATE OF PREPARATION: 29.05.2026 |
| BENEFICIARY ORGANIZATION: Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany | |
| PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Urs Gasser | PROJECT COORDINATOR: Pablo Gómez Ayerbe |
| PROJECT COORDINATOR ORGANIZATION: Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany | PROJECT COORDINATOR EMAIL ADDRESS: pablo.ayerbe@tum.de |



Executive Summary

This paper analyzes how EU–LAC digital cooperation has evolved into a dense but fragmented landscape of initiatives, policy dialogues, and investment frameworks. Drawing on three illustrative cases, it assesses how governance structures affect the capacity of cooperation mechanisms to produce coherent and inclusive outcomes. It argues for a more integrated model centered on an EU–LAC Digital Governance Network, supported by shared digital commons and interoperability frameworks that strengthen coordination, co-ownership, and sustained knowledge co-production across both regions.

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technologies is reshaping labor markets and production systems across both the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). These transformations extend beyond sectoral change, affecting production models, public service delivery, regulatory environments, and the broader organization of economies. As a result, digital transition has emerged as a central policy priority requiring coordinated, cross-sectoral, and multi-level governance responses.

In this context, EU-LAC cooperation has increasingly positioned digital transformation as a strategic area of engagement. A growing number of initiatives (investment frameworks, policy dialogues, and multi-stakeholder platforms) reflect a shared commitment to fostering inclusive digital economies, strengthening connectivity, and promoting common regulatory approaches. Flagship cooperation frameworks such as the EU-LAC Digital Alliance, the Digital for Development Hub for LAC, and the digital pillar of the Global Gateway illustrate the strategic ambition of this engagement. At the same time, this architecture is complemented by a wide range of bilateral digital cooperation projects managed by EU Delegations at the country level, often tailored to national priorities and institutional capacities. While these initiatives enhance responsiveness and contextual adaptation, they also contribute to an increasingly complex and dispersed landscape of cooperation, further complicating efforts to ensure coordination and coherence across instruments and governance levels.¹

Against this backdrop, the central challenge is to understand how the governance characteristics of EU-LAC digital cooperation shape its capacity to deliver coherent and effective outcomes. This paper, therefore, asks: How do the governance structures of EU-LAC digital cooperation frameworks condition their capacity to generate coherent and inclusive results in the context of digital transformation? By focusing on the organization and operationalization of cooperation, the analysis moves beyond questions of policy ambition or resource allocation. It examines the structural conditions that enable, or constrain, effective interregional collaboration.

¹For further information read: [Policy Innovation Blueprint](#)

2. Analytical Lens & Scope

This work looks at cooperation through the interregionalism lens (Baert et al., 2014; Litsegård & Mattheis 2018., Doige, 2011), which is a structural modality of interaction among heterogeneous actors (governments, regional organizations, and non-state stakeholders) seeking to pursue convergent interests while mitigating power asymmetries (Doige, 2011). Interregionalism, therefore, operates simultaneously as a process and as an instrument: a process reflecting the evolving reconfiguration of global governance toward more polycentric arrangements, and an instrument enabling regions to enhance collective agency, coordinate preferences, and shape international rulemaking.

This document understands that new cooperation mechanisms have been added without consolidating or effectively coordinating existing ones. This has resulted in an increasingly dense institutional landscape characterized by dispersed initiatives and limited alignment across governance levels (Bianculli, Brossa & Jordana, 2025). Instead of generating cumulative and systemic effects, cooperation often produces fragmented outputs and weak policy coherence.

These limitations are particularly significant in the context of AI-driven transformations, where the rapid evolution of technologies demands coordinated, adaptive, and forward-looking policy responses. Fragmented cooperation structures struggle to keep pace with these dynamics, limiting their capacity to support coherent digital transition processes and to ensure alignment across policy domains and levels of governance.

To operationalize this analytical framework, the following section examines how these governance dynamics manifest in practice. Specifically, it assesses selected EU-LAC digital cooperation initiatives through the lenses of coordination, coherence, and inclusiveness. The case studies are not intended as exhaustive representations of EU-LAC cooperation, but as analytically illustrative examples of three key dimensions of interregional governance: financial (Global Gateway Initiative), operational (D4D Hub), and regulatory (Ibero-American Data Protection Network - RIPD, in Spanish). This selection allows for a comparative assessment of how different cooperation modalities reproduce or mitigate the structural fragmentation identified above.

Digital commons can be understood as shared resources, such as data, knowledge, and digital infrastructures, that are collectively created, governed, and maintained (Dulong & Stalder, 2020). Bollier & Helfrich (2012) offer an alternative model of collective action that operates beyond purely market-driven or state-centric approaches, relying on collaborative governance and shared stewardship. In particular, these instruments are characterised by a plurality of people sharing resources and governing them and their own relations and reproduction processes through horizontal doing in common, commoning (De Angelis, 2017). In the context of EU-LAC digital cooperation, this governance model is relevant precisely because it offers an alternative to the bilateral, project-driven logic that has produced the fragmentation documented in the cases below - distributing ownership and stewardship across a broader set of actors rather than concentrating them in donor-recipient relationships.

3. Cooperation in Action: Selected Study Cases

This section examines how EU-LAC cooperation on digital transformation materialises in practice. As discussed above, the biregional landscape is characterised by a dense and fragmented institutional architecture, making it difficult to consolidate cooperation efforts within (LAC case) and amongst regions and actors. The group identified a broad set of initiatives in this field (see annex for full list). From this mapping, three initiatives were selected for in-depth analysis: Global Gateway Initiative, Digital 4 Development Hub (D4D Hub), and the Ibero-American Data Protection Network.

The financial dimension is embodied in the **Global Gateway Initiative**, which provides the overarching investment framework for digital cooperation with the LAC region, particularly in infrastructure development and the enabling conditions for sustainable development (European Commission, 2026d). Its operational arm, the Investment Agenda, prioritizes projects related to the green transition, inclusive digital transformation, human development, and health resilience (European Commission, 2026c).

Rather than functioning as a collection of isolated projects, the initiative adopts an integrated approach that combines country-level, multi-country, and regional actions under the Team Europe framework. This approach brings together multiple actors aligning political coordination, technical assistance, and a diverse set of financial instruments (European Commission, 2026d).

Within this framework, Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) structure cooperation around shared priorities. In the LAC region, six main regional TEIs, including EU-LAC Digital Alliance and GreenTransition/EUROCLIMA, provide the main architecture for implementation and reflect the attempts to coordinate cooperation across sectors and regions.

Concerning the stakeholders, the initiative operates through a multi-layered governance model. At the core are Team Europe actors: EU institutions, EU Member States, development institutions such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), and private-sector actors. At the implementation level in LAC, this is complemented by partner governments, national agencies, civil society, academia, and business support organizations. This broad configuration reflects an explicit emphasis on multistakeholder collaboration, particularly in the social and inclusion-oriented strands, where training, innovation, and capacity-building actors play an essential role.

However, so far, the Global Gateway has shown uneven implementation and governance results. Both official and academic assessments highlight several deficiencies in the initiative including limited transparency regarding its functioning, unresolved governance questions, and the need for stronger oversight and communication mechanisms (Buhigas Schubert & Costa, 2023).

Moreover, private sector participation has often been perceived as cumbersome or unattractive (Casano et al., 2024). These governance deficiencies - limited transparency, unresolved accountability structures, and the relative underdevelopment of digital and social portfolios compared to energy and infrastructure - collectively explain why the initiative's

operational results have not kept pace with its stated ambitions. For example, although the Global Gateway encompasses a wide range of areas, including not only hard infrastructure but also enabling environment, regulatory frameworks, norms, standards and good governance principles, there is evidence that the portfolio is not evenly distributed with projects in the LAC region remaining concentrated in energy and green transition, while digital and social initiatives are comparatively less developed (Casano et al., 2024).

Despite these limitations, the Global Gateway retains significant prospects for transformative impact in the LAC region, particularly due to the scale and coherence it brings to interregional cooperation. Academic assessments highlight that the model has genuine strategic potential in the LAC region thanks to existing investment ties and the sharing of many priorities, including ecological transition, digitization, inequality reduction, and defense of multilateral rules (Santillán O'Shea & Talvi, 2024).

In this context, initiatives such as the EU-LAC Digital Alliance illustrate emerging entry points for deepening cooperation in digital matters. While the initiative has already mobilised €214 million (European Commission, 2026b), its relevance lies also in its structured approach to cooperation, including policy dialogues on AI, data governance, and e-governance; the expansion of the Building Europe Link to Latin America (BELLA) cable network; the promotion of EU-LAC business collaborations through the Digital Accelerator; and the establishment of two regional Copernicus centers (European Commission, 2026b).

Taken together, these elements provide the foundation for scaling interregional cooperation in the areas that remain underdeveloped within the Global Gateway portfolio. At the same time, broader impacts in the labor market, productivity, or AI governance should still be understood as emerging rather than already established.

D4D Hub for LAC is the initiative that represents the operational dimension of cooperation. It serves as the strategic platform for multi-stakeholder coordination within the broader EU-LAC Digital Alliance. This initiative enhances dialogue and cooperation on digital issues between both regions. By bringing EU digital expertise to the LAC region and fostering partnerships and investments in the digital economy, it seeks to promote a human-centered digital transformation (European Commission, 2026).

A further dimension through which the operational dimension is reflected is the stakeholders' configuration. The D4D Hub for LAC places particular emphasis on the private sector as a core driver for cooperation, encompassing digital businesses and business associations. At the same time, it involves a broad range of public actors, including partner States, national institutions, and international organizations such as the European Commission and the UN Economic Commission for LAC (ECLAC) (European Commission, 2026). This is complemented by the participation of expert groups, including academia, think tanks, and civil society organizations. This multi-stakeholder configuration reflects that the Hub privileges partnership-building and coordination across sectors and levels of governance.

However, this multi-stakeholder configuration does not automatically result in more effective cooperation mechanisms. In practice, disparities in institutional capacity — especially within the LAC region — reinforce dependence on EU-funded technical assistance, shaping a

cooperation dynamic that remains predominantly EU-driven. This, in turn, may constrain long-term sustainability and limit the development of strong regional ownership.

Despite these limitations, the D4D Hub for LAC remains a relevant platform for strategic cooperation in a wide range of technical and strategic fields including emerging technologies as well as social and public services. The Hub also provides a unified platform for bi-regional dialogue, helping prevent fragmented efforts, while leveraging specialized knowledge through technical assistance, advisory services, and thematic workshops. Unlike purely infrastructure-focused initiatives, it emphasizes shared values and a human-centered approach to digital transformation.

Finally, the **Ibero-American Data Protection Network (RIPD)** represents the regulatory dimension of cooperation. It functions as a forum for exchanging information, promoting progressive development of data protection frameworks, and developing initiatives concerning the effective protection of personal data in Ibero-America (Red Iberoamericana de Protección de Datos Personales, 2026). It plays a significant role in coordinating data protection governance across the region by enabling regulatory harmonization, technical standard-setting, and the orientation of legislative reforms across the region (Peruzzotti, 2025; Martín Gómez, 2026). As such, it can be considered a relevant reference for analysing regulatory digital cooperation between the EU and LAC region.

Strictly speaking, the stakeholders model of the RIPD is centered on national and regional data protection authorities from Ibero-American countries. However, it is complemented by a broader ecosystem that includes international organizations, civil society, and business-related actors (Red Iberoamericana de Protección de Datos Personales, 2026b). This expanded configuration is intended to keep the network open to technical cooperation and dialogue beyond state authorities alone.

This design constitutes both a major strength and a structural limitation. On the one hand, as a non-binding forum, the network's influence depends on whether member states incorporate its standards into national law and enforcement practices (Peruzzotti, 2025; Martín Gómez, 2026), while institutional capacity remains uneven across the region. On the other hand, this flexible and inclusive ecosystem allows the network to focus on its main concern (how data is processed across both state and market activity) while also expanding its agenda to emerging technology fields, especially artificial intelligence, neurotechnologies, online child protection, cloud computing, health data, and digital violence against women and girls.

Against this background, the network provides a shared regional reference point within an otherwise fragmented legal landscape, while its adaptability shows how cooperative regulatory frameworks can evolve to address new technological challenges without abandoning their harmonization role.

Collectively, these case studies suggest that the fragmentation of EU-LAC digital cooperation results from the fact that it is distributed across mechanisms that operate with different logics, time horizons, and degrees of institutionalization. For instance, the Global Gateway is investment-driven, the D4D Hub is coordination-driven, while the RIPD is more principled and standards-driven. Each case treats a practical need, but none on its own

closes the gap between shared political ambition and sustained implementation. This gap is further compounded by uneven institutional capacities across the LAC region, the absence of strong regional ownership in key areas of implementation, and the persistence of siloed cooperation mechanisms that have precluded a genuinely polycentric approach to digital governance collaboration.

Moreover, understanding EU influence in LAC as a simple one-way transfer of rules (often referred to as the “Brussels Effect”) turns a blind eye to the possibility of regulatory learning and co-development, especially since LAC countries selectively adapt external models to local contexts (Gasser et al., 2025). This helps explain why fragmentation reflects a dense institutional landscape that struggles to align diverse development needs, regulatory traditions, and governance capacities within a single biregional framework. What remains missing is a stronger connective layer between existing mechanisms that often operate in parallel rather than as part of a cumulative and jointly owned strategy.

Concretely, EU-LAC cooperation still lacks clearer mutual channels for turning shared priorities into joint action, evaluating what works, documenting policy experimentation, and strengthening LAC-led agenda-setting. Ultimately, there is a need for more interoperable and jointly owned initiatives for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

4. Recommendations and Policy Suggestions

As established in the analysis, the central constraint affecting EU-LAC cooperation is not the absence of initiatives, but the fragmented and weakly coordinated governance architecture through which these initiatives are designed and implemented. Addressing this limitation requires a shift from an additive, project-based model toward a more integrated approach.

In response, this paper proposes the establishment of an **EU-LAC Digital Governance Network**: a bi-regional infrastructure designed to connect non-traditional actors across both regions and embed them more systematically within cooperation processes. The network would operate as a *living infrastructure* with a set of relationships, nodes, and coordination mechanisms that persist over time, independent of specific projects or political cycles. Its defining feature would be a deliberately light institutional footprint, ensuring flexibility while avoiding the creation of additional bureaucratic layers.

At its core, the network would bring together actors that are consistently underrepresented in formal cooperation frameworks, including universities and research centers, civil society organizations, youth and student networks, community-based digital initiatives, etc. By centering these constituencies, the network would complement existing government-led cooperation channels, filling a critical gap in the current architecture.

The proposal is open to an obvious objection: if fragmentation results from layering mechanisms without consolidating what already exists, a new network risks following the same path. The difference, however, is one of function rather than scale. The proposed network would not operate as a thematic program producing its own parallel outputs - it would function as connective infrastructure, enabling knowledge, governance standards, and

institutional experience generated across existing initiatives to circulate more systematically within the biregional system. That distinction only holds in practice if the network's governance design actively prevents mandate creep. The light institutional footprint and rotating co-chair model are not incidental features; they are the structural conditions on which the argument rests.

Governance would be structured around genuine biregional co-ownership from the outset. A rotating EU-LAC co-chair model, combined with shared decision-making procedures, would ensure that agenda-setting power is balanced across regions. To reinforce this parity, a distributed secretariat could be jointly hosted by academic institutions in both regions, with periodic rotation to prevent institutional capture and maintain adaptability over time.

The added value of the proposed network resides in its capacity to perform functions that exceed the mandate and design of existing cooperation frameworks. Most notably, it would operate as an integrative mechanism across otherwise fragmented initiatives, enabling knowledge generated in specific contexts to circulate more systematically across regions and sectors. By fostering sustained and structured interaction among its members, the network would convert isolated experiences into cumulative and iterative learning processes.²

This integrative function is particularly necessary given a structural limitation that pervades current cooperation frameworks: their tendency to reproduce asymmetric paradigms in which the EU is positioned as the primary source of expertise and LAC as a passive recipient of digital knowledge and technology. The HEMISPHERES project (2025) has addressed this limitation directly by advancing an inversion of the Brussels Effect - reconceptualizing the EU-LAC relationship as a genuinely bidirectional exchange. Under this framework, LAC countries are not merely recipients of regulatory models or technological standards, but active contributors whose innovations carry transferable value. A notable example is the region's pioneering community-centered and bottom-up approaches to internet access in underserved areas, which offer lessons of direct relevance to EU contexts facing analogous connectivity and inclusion challenges.

First, the proposed network would institutionalize this logic of **reciprocal learning**, ensuring that knowledge flows in both directions and that cooperation is grounded in mutual recognition rather than hierarchical transfer. Crucially, this integrative ambition extends beyond the EU-LAC axis and addresses a persistent structural challenge within the LAC region itself: the tendency of countries and institutions to operate in isolation from one another, reproducing fragmented and siloed approaches that limit the accumulation and regional circulation of knowledge. Rather than reinforcing this dynamic, the network would actively work to **bridge intra-regional divides**, fostering horizontal exchange among LAC actors and building a shared epistemic foundation from which the region can engage more cohesively with global digital governance processes.

Second, it would serve as a platform for **knowledge co-production**, rather than one-directional knowledge transfer. In a context where regulatory developments tend to shape global standards, the network would create space for LAC actors to engage as active

² For further information read: [Inverting the Brussels Effect: What the EU Can Learn From Latin America in Digital Governance](#)

interlocutors, contributing contextual insights and influencing emerging governance approaches. This would support a more balanced and reciprocal model of cooperation.

Third, the network would play a critical role in **knowledge translation**, making complex regulatory and technical developments accessible to a broader range of stakeholders. Through the production of bilingual, non-technical analyses on issues such as AI governance, platform regulation, and data policies, it would bridge the gap between expert communities and wider society.

Finally, the network would establish a structured interface with **formal cooperation mechanisms**, including policy dialogues and intergovernmental platforms. By channeling bottom-up perspectives into these processes, it would enhance their legitimacy and responsiveness without replacing existing institutional arrangements.

Pilot Initiative 1: EU–LAC Digital Commons:

As a first concrete application of this networked approach, EU-LAC partners could develop an **EU- LAC Digital Commons Facility**, building on the experience of the European Digital Commons EDIC led by the European Commission.

In the context, a Digital Commons Facility would function as a shared governance and infrastructure mechanism, enabling the joint development and management of digital public goods across regions. Unlike traditional project-based initiatives, its objective would not be to introduce new isolated programs, but to integrate existing efforts through common, reusable assets and coordinated governance structures.

As an initial step, and in direct response to the fragmentation identified in this paper, the facility could focus on the development of a limited set of high-impact shared resources. These may include open-source AI tools in Spanish and Portuguese, jointly governed datasets, AI audit and accountability frameworks, and shared repositories of digital governance practices. By pooling resources and embedding common standards within these tools, the initiative would facilitate interoperability and reduce duplication across projects.

At the same time, the Digital Commons would serve as a mechanism for aligning ongoing initiatives, enabling the reuse of infrastructures, and supporting greater coherence across policy domains. In doing so, it would contribute not only to efficiency gains but also to strengthening collective technological autonomy and the capacity of both regions to shape digital governance on their own terms.

Pilot Initiative 2 EU-LAC Interoperability Framework:

Rather than encouraging LAC countries to replicate European regulatory models, this initiative proposes a more flexible and context-sensitive approach aimed at proposing a set of minimum interoperable principles in key areas such as data governance, platform accountability, and AI transparency, which can be adapted and implemented across diverse institutional contexts.³

³ There has been advances at European level, for example: Knowledge Innovation Centre. (2025). Proposal for a Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Group on European Higher Education Interoperability.

Under this approach, countries would retain regulatory autonomy while ensuring compatibility between systems through mechanisms of mutual recognition. By building on existing dialogues with the Digital for Development Hub, the framework would facilitate alignment without imposing uniformity. In doing so, it directly addresses one of the central challenges identified in this paper: the fragmentation of regulatory and technical approaches, while supporting more coherent and scalable cooperation.

Leveraging the diversity of stakeholders and the academic expertise embedded within the proposed EU-LAC Digital Governance Network, the initiative would adopt a multi-layered approach to interoperability, building on to the one proposed by European Commission et al (2025):

- At the **legal level**, it would support the development and revision of regulatory frameworks that enable interoperability, including provisions for data sharing, cross-border cooperation, and recognition of equivalent standards. This would help create an enabling environment for coordinated digital governance without requiring full harmonization.
- At the **organizational level**, the initiative would promote practical tools to support implementation, such as reference architectures, operational guidelines, and use-case-based frameworks. These instruments would translate high-level principles into actionable pathways for public institutions, regulators, and private actors.
- At the **semantic level**, efforts would focus on the development and adoption of shared vocabularies, data models, and classification systems. Establishing common semantic standards is essential to ensure that information can be meaningfully exchanged and interpreted across systems and jurisdictions.
- Finally, at the **technical level**, the framework would recommend reference standards for key use cases and support their adoption through mechanisms such as conformance testing, certification schemes, quality labels, or the integration of standards into public procurement processes.

Taken together, this multi-layered approach would reduce fragmentation, facilitate cross-border collaboration, and enhance the capacity of both regions to develop compatible yet context-sensitive digital governance models.

The two pilots proposed are mutually reinforcing. The Digital Commons enables cooperation through shared resources and collective ownership, while the Interoperability Framework ensures that systems, standards, and regulatory approaches remain compatible across contexts. Together, they operationalize a model of cooperation that is not based on convergence or replication, but on alignment, adaptability, and co-production.

By embedding coordination within both institutional arrangements and technical systems, this approach enhances the capacity of EU- LAC cooperation to generate cumulative impact, strengthens collective technological autonomy, and fosters the conditions for a more inclusive and sustainable digital transformation. This is particularly evident where cooperation evolves beyond conventional, unidirectional models to incorporate reciprocal learning dynamics — most notably when the European Union draws on Latin American and

<https://knowledgeinnovation.eu/kic-publication/proposal-for-a-multi-stakeholder-coordination-group-on-european-higher-education-interoperability/>, and interregional (EU-LAC) efforts: D4DHub. (2025). The EU-LAC Digital Alliance meets in Estonia to gear up e-governance. <https://d4dhub.eu/news/the-eu-lac-digital-alliance-meets-in-estonia-to-gear-up-e-governance>

Caribbean expertise. In this regard, the analysis of innovative institutional configurations such as Brazil's Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br), a pioneering multi-stakeholder governance body, offers valuable insights into alternative models of digital governance.

Taken together, the proposed EU–LAC Digital Governance Network and its pilot initiatives signal a shift from fragmented, initiative-driven, Europe-centered cooperation toward a more integrated and effective multilateral systemic model. Rather than adding further layers to an already complex institutional landscape, these proposals seek to reorganize cooperation around shared infrastructures, coordinated governance mechanisms, and sustained interaction among actors. The Network functions as the relational backbone through which knowledge, practices, and experiences can circulate bidirectionally across regions, while the Digital Commons and Interoperability Framework operationalize this coordination into tangible, scalable outcomes.

References

1. Baert, F., Scaramagli, T. & Söderbaum, F. (Eds.). (2014). *Intersecting Interregionalism: Regions, Global Governance and the EU*. United Nations University Series on Regionalism. Vol. 7. Springer Netherlands. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7566-4>
2. Bianculli, A.C., Brossa, L., Jordana, J. (2025). European Union–Latin American Interregional Relations: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead. In: D. Katsikas, M. A. del Tedesco Lins & A. Ribeiro Hoffmann (Eds.) *Finance, Growth and Democracy: Connections and Challenges in Europe and Latin America in the Era of Permacrisis* (pp. 349-370). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-68475-3_21
3. Bollier, D., & Helfrich, S. (Eds.). (2012). *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state*. Levellers Press.
4. Buhigas Schubert, C. & Costa, O. (2023). *Global Gateway: Strategic governance & implementation*. European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/702585/EXPO_STU%282023%29702585_EN.pdf
5. Cassano, G., Fontana, O. & Nastasi, F. (2024). The Global Gateway to Latin America Strengths and Bottlenecks of the European Strategy: a Mid-Term Review. *Perspectives on Federalism*, 16(2), 56-86. <https://www.on-federalism.eu/published-issues>
6. De Angelis, M. (2017). *Omnia Sunt Communia: On the commons and the transformation to postcapitalism*. Zed Books.
7. Doidge, M. (2011). Regional actors and the rise of interregionalism. *The European Union and Interregionalism: Patterns of Engagement*, 3-50.
8. Dulong de Rosnay, M., & Stalder, F. (2020). Digital commons. *Internet Policy Review*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/10.14763/2020.4.1530>
9. European Commission: Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, German Academic Exchange Service, Deloitte, Knowledge Innovation Centre (KIC), Stifterverband, SURF, & EDEN. (2025). *Proposal for a Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Group on European Higher Education Interoperability – Developed as Part of the European Higher Education Interoperability Framework Under the*

- Umbrella of the European Digital Education Hub (EDEH)*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2766/321298>
10. European Commission. (2025, December 15). Digital Commons EDIC launches to advance Europe's technological sovereignty. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/digital-commons-edic-launches-advance-europes-technological-sovereignty>
 11. European Commission. (2026). *D4D Hub overview*. <https://d4dhub.eu/>
 12. European Commission. (2026b). *EU-Latin America and Caribbean Digital Alliance*. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/global-gateway/eu-latin-america-and-caribbean-digital-alliance_en
 13. European Commission. (2026c). *EU-LAC Global Gateway Investment Agenda*. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/global-gateway/eu-lac-global-gateway-investment-agenda_en
 14. European Commission. (2026d). *Global Gateway overview*. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/global-gateway/global-gateway-overview_en#a-team-europe-approach
 15. Gasser, U., Aguerre, C., Ahmed, A., Archegas, J. V., Arias-Ortiz, W. A., Botero Arcila, B., Bottino, C., Brossi, L., Cala Vitery, F. E., Castillo, A. M., Cortesi, S., Fieseler, C., García Avis, I., Gómez Ayerbe, P., Guio Español, A., Hernández-Serret, J., Hidalgo, C., Lemos, R., Llorens, M. P., ... van de Kerkhof, J. (2025). *Inverting the Brussels effect: What the EU can learn from Latin America in digital governance*. TUM Think Tank, Munich School of Politics and Public Policy, Technical University of Munich. <https://tumthinktank.de/en/output/inverting-the-brusselseffect-what-the-eu-can-learn-from-latin-america-in-digitalgovernance>
 16. Litsegård, A., & F. Mattheis. (2018). The Atlantic Space – A Region in the Making. In: F. Mattheis and A. Litsegård (Eds.) *Interregionalism across the Atlantic Space* (pp. 1–34). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62908-7_1
 17. Martín Gómez, I. (2026). La influencia del Reglamento General de Protección de Datos en la normativa de protección de datos de carácter personal en las empresas de los países latinoamericanos. *Anuario Jurídico y Económico Escorialense*, 59, 173–200. <https://doi.org/10.54571/ajee.722>
 18. Peruzzotti, M. (2025). Apostillas sobre el encuentro de la Red Iberoamericana de Protección de Datos Personales. *La Ley Privacidad*, (24).
 19. Red Iberoamericana de Protección de Datos Personales. (2026). *The network. About RIPD*. <https://www.redipd.org/en/the-network/about-ripd>
 20. Red Iberoamericana de Protección de Datos Personales. (2026b). *The network. Composition*. <https://www.redipd.org/en/the-network/composition>
 21. Santillán O'Shea, M. & Talvi, E. (2024). *Global Gateway: What we Know and What it Means for Latin America and the Caribbean* (ARI 2/2024 (English Version)). Elcano Royal Institute. <https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/en/analyses/global-gateway-what-we-know-and-what-it-means-for-latin-america-and-the-caribbean/>

Annex 1. Relevant EU-LAC programs correlated to AI and Work

| Program / Initiative | Description | Relevance to AI & Work | Example Outputs / Focus Areas |
|--|--|---|---|
| Joint framework EU-LAC Digital Alliance | Political-strategic cooperation framework between EU and LAC fostering digital transformation, including AI governance and human-centric AI ⁴ | Serves as the umbrella for dialogues and cooperation on AI policy, skills, inclusion and employment impacts. | High-level policy dialogues, coordination of AI strategies across regions; dialogues on skills & capacity building ⁵ . |
| EU-LAC Digital Accelerator⁶ | A platform funded by the EU that connects startups, SMEs, corporates, and innovation actors across EU and LAC. | Supports work creation, innovation and digital entrepreneurship (including AI applications), enabling workforce engagement and corporate–startup collaboration. | Open calls; acceleration services; sector workshops on AI & digital innovation. |
| High-Level Policy Dialogues on AI⁷ | Regular bi-regional dialogues co-organized by EU, LAC governments, CEPAL, academia and private sector. | Strengthen policy alignment on AI governance, skills development, and socio-economic impacts (including labor market transformation). | Workshops on AI governance, capacity building, mutual learning on workforce issues. |

⁴ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/alianza-digital-ue-lac_en

⁵

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/alianza-digital-ue-lac-liderando-una-inteligencia-artificial-centrada-en-el-ser-humano_es

⁶ <https://eulacdigitalaccelerator.com/>

⁷ <https://www.cepal.org/en/events/eu-lac-digital-alliance-high-level-policy-dialogues>

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| EU-LAC Supercomputing Network for AI⁸ | Initiative launched to link EU and LAC research infrastructures for AI research. (International Partnerships) | Enhances research and innovation ecosystems, creating R&D jobs and training opportunities relevant to AI and future workforces. | Research collaboration; HPC capacity for AI applications; training engineers & scientists. (International Partnerships) |
| Global Gateway: Team Europe Initiatives | Broad EU investment strategy including digital and social inclusion in LAC. | Digital skills, innovation and employment, including inclusive societal programs that link digital transformation to workforce readiness. | Regional programmes to foster inclusive societies, digital training, entrepreneurship support. |
| EU-LAC Network de Mujeres Líderes en Política Digital⁹ | Network under Digital Alliance to support women in digital leadership roles. | Contributes to closing gender gaps in tech and AI workforce participation, aligning inclusive employment goals with digital policy leadership. | Leadership workshops; networks for women in digital policy and tech sectors. |
| D4D Hub: EU digital cooperation coordination¹⁰ | Team Europe coordination hub for digital cooperation (incl. AI) with partner regions. | Supports programming that includes AI adoption and workforce needs in partner regions, aligning EU & partner strategies. | Theme-based cooperation; guidance on AI, data governance and related workforce challenges. |

8

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/two-years-eu-latin-america-and-caribbean-turn-global-gateway-commitments-action-2025-11-10_en

9

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/mujeres-preparadas-para-liderar-la-transformacion-digital-en-am%C3%A9rica-latina-el-caribe_es

¹⁰ <https://d4dhub.eu/en/what-we-do/themes>

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| CEPAL: Digital transformation School¹¹ | Training hub within the bi-regional cooperation on digital transformation. | Offers digital governance & AI skills training for public officials and policymakers, indirectly affecting employment policy design. | Courses on AI governance, data, cybersecurity and digital economy. |
| IAméricas (Adigital + BID Lab) (To explore¹²) | Strategic alliance to promote responsible AI use in Latin America & Caribbean. (Cinco Días) | Focuses on business adoption of AI, training, and best practices - influencing workforce upskilling and AI-ready employment. | Business training programs, governance best practices, responsible AI adoption in firms. (Cinco Días) |
| Erasmus + | Learning mobility of individuals; Cooperation among organisations and institutions; Support to policy development and cooperation. | Knowledge exchange that enables shared learning and research opportunities, where AI and the future of work are key issues for both regions to address within academic partnerships. | Initiatives such as HEMISPHERES and all the research and teaching experiences within EU member states as well as in collaboration with other research and policy centers to address joint research and mobility schemes that produce evidence for policymakers ¹³ . |

¹¹

<https://www.cepal.org/es/notas/cepal-presenta-avances-la-alianza-digital-ue-lac-su-contribucion-la-transformacion-digital>

¹²

<https://cincodias.elpais.com/companias/2025-01-30/la-patronal-adigital-y-el-bid-se-alian-para-el-impulso-de-la-ia-en-latinoamerica.html>

¹³ EGRUiEN. (2025, October 4). EGRUiEN researchers share insights on AI, green transition, and the future of work. <https://egruien.eu/en/readings/articles/egruien-researchers-share-insights-on-ai-green-transition-and-the-future-of-work>