



... connecting Research on the Knowledge Society
in the European Union and Latin America



Newsletter #5

April 2011

Welcome to the last electronic newsletter of the EULAKS project!

This last newsletter of the EULAKS project, that ended with October 2010, is a retrospective of all project activities and sums up main research results of the work packages.

Furthermore we take a look back at the last EULAKS milestone, which was a policy workshop on SSH research relevance for policy making, organised at LSE in London.

We thank you for your interest!

In this issue:

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. EULAKS Policy Workshop | p. 2 |
| 2. main EULAKS research results: a résumé | p. 3 |

Please visit and register at the EULAKS website: www.eulaks.eu

**1. EULAKS policy workshop –
Informing the Knowledge Society.
Feeding SSH Research into Policy
Design in Latin America and Europe**



To celebrate its final project milestone, EULAKS invited project partners, researchers and interested stakeholders to a policy workshop at the London School of Economics on September 23 - 24.

In the foreground, the workshop served to give all project partners the opportunity to present main research findings and outcomes of their individual work packages and work tasks performed in the framework of the EULAKS project.

Embedded in three key note addresses, a joint discussion was then developed on the general understanding of the relationship between social science and humanities (SSH) knowledge and policy formulation.

The question why, when, how and which information - produced by the SSH research community - is used by decision makers in the formulation, design, implementation and monitoring of policies was debated, with reference to concrete EULAKS research findings.

The discussion was led along the exploration of the differences between the Latin American and European context as regards the processes behind and conditions for successful SSH research – policy connections.

The three keynote speeches focused on the following issues:

Annette Boaz from King's College London and joint managing editor of the journal “Evidence&Policy” introduced theory and practice of how organizations can know whether their research is feeding into policy. Using the example of ten European organisations she compared different methods and best practices of impact assessment of research for policy use.

Christina von Fürstenberg, Chief of the UNESCO Section for Policy and Cooperation in Social Sciences, provided a UNESCO perspective on how to adopt an innovative approach to make social science the facilitator of participatory public policy approaches. In this context she referred to the UNESCO Programme MOST (Management of Social Transformations) that focuses on building efficient bridges between research, policy and practice and promotes a culture of evidence-based policy-making on national, regional and international level.

Jane Russell is an expert in bibliometric research and analysis the development of collaboration networks between Europe and LAC in the last twenty years. She introduced main findings from her bibliometric work in Mexico.

A concluding panel discussion, with participation of representatives of the European Commission, summarised perspectives on how the SSH can improve the design, implementation and monitoring of STI public policy.

You may find all workshop presentation online on our website:

<http://www.eulaks.eu/policyworkshop/retrospective.html>

2. Main results of EULAKS research on the knowledge society – a résumé:

WP1. Review, Analysis and Policy Recommendation

Social Sciences and Humanity Research and Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy-Making in Latin America: A Nexus Perception Study performed by the Universidad de la República, Uruguay (UdelaR), Michele Snoeck & Team:

The objective of this study was to gain a better understanding of the STI research-policy nexus, based on the perception of this nexus by researchers and policymakers (PM) in Latin America.

One major outcome of the empirical work was the design of a taxonomy of modes of articulation between research and policy-making:

1. Arm's length mode: the national research community and policy-makers work at a distance. The logic that moves both parties, including the incentive system, precludes a jointly negotiated research agenda.

2. Connected distance mode: bridges exist between the two communities but no systematic connections, which still results in independent agenda fixing.

3. Hands-on mode: innovation research agenda and policy design are strongly connected. Nexus develop, among others, through: people moving from academia to policy positions and vice versa; joint calls for policy oriented research projects, further debating results and recommendations; specific think tanks, etc.

Though no country fits exactly or invariably into one of these stylized modes, if the surveyed countries had to be classified, Brazil,

Chile and Cuba would belong to the hands-on mode, Venezuela to the arm's length mode, and Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay, at a different rate, to the connected distance mode. The articulation modes appear to be highly dependant on the specific institutional context as expressed in the corresponding National Innovation System.

Methodologically the Study relies on an extensive literature review on the SSH research-policy links and a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews to researchers and policy-makers from selected Latin American and European countries.

Policy implications could be that researchers should be incentivised to develop policy-relevant projects, where they engage with policy-makers and other stakeholders from an early stage and end up with policy briefings that are understandable and useable by policy-makers in framing, selecting and/or evaluating policies. A main challenge is to devise institutional tools to facilitate the move towards more hands-on modes of articulating SSH research and policy making in the field of STI; doing so implies changing the innovative context.

Knowledge flows in scientific communities EU -LAC (IRD), Rigas Arvanitis & Team:

Activities of WP1 in EULAKS project under IRD responsibility was mainly conceived as a series of empirical activities aiming at better understanding the notion of knowledge flows in scientific communities. IRD efforts resulted in the gathering of large empirical material on the scientific activities of Latin American scientific communities in relation to their collaborations with the European Union.

Collaborations between researchers in Latin America and Europe has been not only very intense but also instrumental in the creation of some scientific fields. Co-operation is to be understood less as the result of policy of the EU and rather as the result of the

institutionalization of research in Latin America (Vessuri 1996)¹.

The consequence is in Latin America, the rich European countries are less concerned by 'capacity building' or to promote research activities in the sub-continent, and more inclined to do that as a by-product of "associate partnerships" where the Europeans see and feel co-operation as a partnership with high level scientists equal to them.

This perception of collaboration is to be examined under *institutional* level (in Latin America, science and with it co-operation have been a progressively institutionalizing social activity) and under *disciplinary* level.

In EULAKS, the IRD team chose to examine closely some specific disciplines and co-operation patterns in order to have both historical depth and an analysis of today's state-of-the-art.

The field of "science studies" in LA was taken out as one of the most developed in the world and certainly more developed in any 'peripheral' country.

An interesting aspect of this rich tradition in science studies is its early interest in science policy making and its new tendency toward economics of innovation. What the field of "science studies" shows is that it has been permanently involved with the policy concerns, so that it cannot be said that research has kept away from policy. On the contrary, its main default was probably a too close connection between research and policy needs.

WP2. Assessing and Building Research Capacities for the Knowledge Society in EU and LAC:

The Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (UAM), under the lead of Daniel Hugo

Villavicencio, led work package 2 that consisted of three components: virtual education, knowledge society indicators, and knowledge society foresight capacity building. As for virtual education (VE), UAM identified different models and capabilities of how VE is implemented as a new transmission model for specialised knowledge in selected Latin American universities .

For future policy making in VE UAM suggests to (1) create instruments for broad and horizontal collaborative spaces for VE, (2) to implement a policy that provides equal opportunities to universities to acquire the technological infrastructure for VE, (3) to create support structures for teaching and general competences of VE, and (4) to carry out national studies to assess the impact of VE on different aspects of cultural and economic societal developments.

As a second component UAM did a comparative analysis on the status quo of knowledge society indicators in the EU and Latin America, with a focus on indicators used by international organizations and Manuals.

Some concluding policy recommendations are (1) to redefine information platforms in LA in order to propose a new kind of statistics that shows real processes of knowledge diffusion in different sectors of society, (2) to reconsider the use of indicators proposed by international manuals and build new ones, and (3) to establish a political dialog between policy makers, productive and social sectors to create consensus on the national, regional and sectoral priorities for development based on an increased use of knowledge.

In a final part, UAM compared experiences in foresight exercises related to S&T and innovation policy in the EU and Latin America by accomplishing an extensive review of literature and foresight studies.

Based on the definition of new indicators - for instance on technological capabilities or innovations patterns - and also based on a

¹ Vessuri, Hebe M.C. (1996) 'El proceso de institucionalización de la ciencia', in J.-J. Salomon, F. Sagasti & C. Sachs (eds), *La búsqueda incierta. Ciencia, Tecnología y desarrollo* (México DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica): 199-233

new policy dialogue, UAM recommends the promotion of foresight exercise at regional or sectoral level to reduce gaps between necessities, priorities and strategies and support more collective and consensual projects of STI development. Further, international cooperation on foresight and STI assessment shall be part of a learning process for public organizations that are in charge of STI development.

WP3. Strategic Studies of Digital Ecosystems Research in the EU and LAC

Lorena Rivera León and Paolo Dini from the London School of Economics und Political Science (LSE) and Rodrigo Kataishi from the Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento (UNGS) analysed the implementation process of Digital Ecosystems (DEs), assuming a dependence on specific regional contexts. Their research suggests that an effective strategy to achieve sustainable socio-economic development is through the integration of processes of social innovation with the adoption of information and communication technologies in an economic context characterised by a balance of competition and collaboration. This implies at least three important elements. First, there has to be collaboration among social actors (or in other words, connectivity). Second, it is required that social actors have something to offer to other actors (learning capacities and absorption capacities have to be heterogeneous and close to the state of the art, and possibly determined by local common practice). Third, it is supposed that ICTs can amplify both connectivity and absorption capacities. Additionally Social Capital and Level of participatory governance should be added to visualize main dimensions of policy-making that are consistent with DE hypotheses.

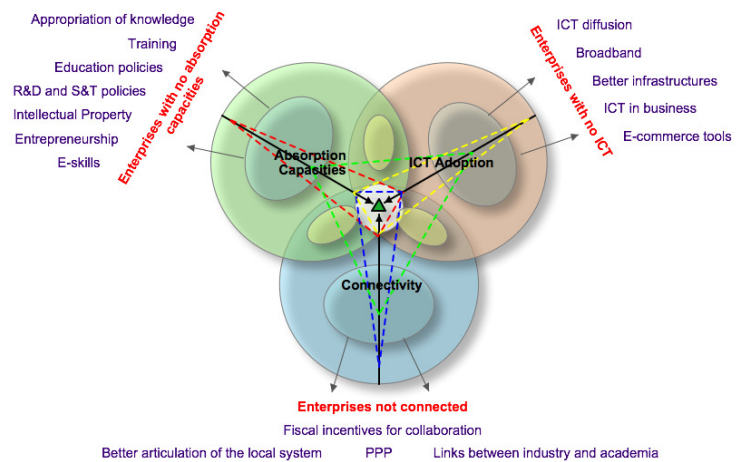


figure of main dimensions of policy-making, by Dini P., Rivera León L., Kataishi, R.

This research was motivated by the desire to strengthen the link between theoretical and policy-oriented research relevant to DEs theory. This resulted in an improved understanding through the integration of three distinct research perspectives: theoretical, based on hypotheses and assumptions to be verified or falsified when applied to the Latin American context; qualitative and quantitative empirical data gathering and analysis, including the visualisation and analysis of networks of firms and institutions in Argentina; and applied, focussed on the development of a policy analysis visualisation tool, whose main contribution is the possibility of comparing relatively different regions through the aggregation of their regional characteristics and framework conditions (i.e. stage in the development process), and allowing the formulation of tailored policy options.