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The Euro-Latin Foresight Network: SELF-RULE

Foresight Brief No. 066

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Sponsors: European Commission, National Universities
Type: International network implementing Euro-Latin research, training and mobility in the field of foresight.
Organizers: SELF-RULE Coordinators (PREST & UNEFM), Members (in Europe: PREST, FFRC, U-ALICANTE and UNI-CORVINUS; in Latin America: UNEFM, UNEFA, UFRJ, ULIMA, UMOLINA, UNI, PUCP and UNIVALLE) and Partners (4-SIGHT-GROUP, DETRANS STUDIO, COLCIENCIAS and CGEE).
Duration: 2005+ **Budget:** n/a **Time Horizon:** n/a

Purpose

SELF-RULE (Strategic European and Latin American Foresight for Research and University Learning Exchange) is an academic network for mutually-beneficial exchange of foresight knowledge, tools and experiences between the European Union and Latin America. SELF-RULE aims to build a sustainable foresight capacity in the member institutions by promoting and disseminating foresight initiatives and practices.

Promoting Foresight Research and Development in Europe and Latin America

SELF-RULE is an academic Foresight network operating in eight countries - Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, Finland, Hungary, Spain and UK. While each country is represented by one academic institution, other national members can also be involved. The Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda (UNEFM) in Venezuela does the administrative coordination. However, the Scientific Coordination is lead by PREST together with the General Coordinator of the Network. The brief draws primarily on SELF-RULE activities, which are partly financed by the European Commission's ALFA Programme under the Cooperation for the Scientific and Technical Training Programme (Project N° II-0468-FA-FCD-FI).

The overall mission of SELF-RULE is to foster cooperation, integration, innovation and exchange of foresight experiences between Latin America and Europe.

In doing so, the network aims to promote a joint and self-sustained long-term cooperation agenda through academic research, training and mobility programmes.

The three primary objectives of the network are:

- To build sustainable foresight capacities in Europe and Latin America,
- To exchange foresight knowledge, tools and experiences,
- To articulate academic institutions with other stakeholders of the regional innovation systems.

Having this in mind, the scientific coordination designed the network's activities around two complementary pillars:

- Foresight knowledge transfer and exchange
- Foresight research

Foresight knowledge transfer and exchange is carried out with the support of several technological platforms developed by network Partners (4-SIGHT-GROUP and Detrans Studio) with the contributions of the EC and network Members. Among these are:



- **Mobility Programme** - This programme provides 24 scholarships for travel and living expenses for the mobility of researchers.
- **E-Learning Space** - This space includes videos, conferences and presentations, thus providing *e*-training platform.
- **Virtual Mapping** - This platform allows Latin American members to map foresight experiences in Spanish. It is based on a contextualized version of EFMN Dynamo Platform.
- **Virtual Library** - The library allows members to share teaching material, reports and network related documents.
- **Virtual Forum** - The forum provides a common space for discussions and feedback among members.
- **Virtual Voting** - The voting/polling system is used to gather opinions about issues, which are relevant for the network.
- **Virtual News** - The network news are posted with the help of a dynamic and multi-lingual event calendar.

Foresight research activities are designed around 3 areas:

- **Foresight for regional techno-economic development** - These research projects normally address the potential of

technological innovation for sustainable development. Accordingly, projects seek to position universities within regional systems of innovation, prospecting not only future contributions to regional knowledge production, but also linkages with other actors. For an example of such initiatives please visit: <http://www.4-sight-group.org/self-rule/peru/uni>

- **Foresight for regional socio-cultural development** - Work in this area will provide better understanding of the social and cultural dimensions and challenges of social change and transition (i.e. plurality of choice, individualism, creativity, uncertainty, life management, lack of vision vs. global views, etc.)
- **Evaluation of foresight experiences** - Research in this area contributes to increasing learning through foresight evaluation. Activities focus on questions such as: Who are the sponsors? Why have they initiated a foresight exercise? What are the objectives, duration, time horizon, budget, number of participants, methodology, etc.?

Building Sustainable Foresight Capacities in Europe and Latin America

SELF-RULE's 2005-2007 work plan included three major network meetings: Venezuela (2005), Brazil (2006) and UK (2007). The meetings normally consist of two days for conferences, seminars and events, followed by three days of internal and strategy discussions. While meetings have also been used to build capacities at host institutions and countries, the network's capacity building strategy is mostly based on the Mobility Programme and the *e*-Learning Space.

Mobility Programme

The network targets a total of 24 grant-holders with the following flows: EU-LA (from Europe to Latin America); LA-EU (from Latin America to Europe); and LA-LA (within Latin American). And the following mobility types:

- **Advanced Training (AT)** - The AT supports PhD (co-direction) and master trainings for periods of 6 to 12 months.
- **Short Term Training (STT)** - The STT supports studies within the scope of post-graduate programmes for max. 3 months.

- **Training of Researchers (TR)** - The TR supports visits of scientific nature for researchers for periods of up to 6 months.

e-Learning Space

The *e*-Learning Space is a web-based platform supporting online socialisation, information exchange and knowledge construction. The system uses a constructivist approach to learning; therefore it is learner-centred. There are two main areas: one for **VIDEOS, CONFERENCES & NEWS** (where visitors get access to relevant presentations and videos about network meetings and events) and one for the **E-TRAINING**, which includes the following categories:

- **Foresight Theory** - Training material on general foresight issues
- **Foresight Methodology** - Training material on practices and methodologies
- **Methods, Techniques and Tools** - Training material on specific methods, such as: scenarios, Delphi, etc.
- **Studies, Projects and Programmes** - Presentations about projects and programmes, such as: Brazil 3 Tempos and the UK TF Programme
- **Thematic and Sectoral Foresight** - Thematic and sectoral presentations in areas like: ICT, biotechnology, nanotechnology, etc.

Exchanging Foresight Knowledge, Tools and Experiences

Network Partners have developed a variety of web-applications for sharing and exchanging knowledge, tools and experiences. Two of these are the **Virtual Mapping** and the **Virtual Library**.

Virtual Mapping

SELF-RULE Virtual Mapping is a web-platform that helps to capture and analyse foresight experiences in Latin America. The system is currently designed in Spanish and is based on further elaborations and contextualisation of the EFMN Dynamo Database. The mapping involves only four steps:

Accessing the system

Visiting <http://www.4-sight-group.org/mapping> and entering the personal information of the correspondent (name, organisation and e-mail)

Providing level 1 information about the activity

Country, title, type (exercise, conference, training course), territorial scope (sub-national, national, cross-border or international), and name of major programme or agenda the activity may be linked to.

Providing level 2 information about the activity

Executive summary, sponsor name, organisers name, date of initiation, end date, time horizon, number of participants, size of the budget, objectives, impacts, benefits, types of target audience, types of sponsors, methods used, types of products, types of impacts, and evaluation of impacts (quantity, status, effectiveness, examples)

Providing level 3 information about the activity

Related industries (using the NACE classification), economic sectors (based on the IPC classification), and research areas (using the OECD classification of the Frascati Manual)

Virtual Library

Access to the Virtual Library is granted only to network members, partners and observers; therefore visitors require a login ID and a password.

The library has several sections:

- **European Library** - Including documents in PDF, Word, Excel and PowerPoint formats about foresight mobilities, readings, teaching programmes and projects in member countries and institutions from Europe - Finland, Hungary, Spain and United Kingdom
- **Latin American Library** - Including documents in PDF, Word, Excel and PowerPoint formats about foresight mobilities, readings, teaching programmes and projects in member countries and institutions from Latin America - Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela
- **Network Meetings** - This section includes documents and information about major meetings of the network - e.g. Venezuela 2005, Brazil 2006 and UK 2007
- **Network Mobilities** - This section contains one folder per mobility. Each folder has the personal information (CV) and other research-related documents of the grant-holder like research proposal, reports, etc.
- **Network Procedures** - This section provides access to important application forms and guidelines of the network - e.g. language support, expenses form
- **Network Promotion** - This section includes leaflets, brochures, posters, presentations and other types of promotional material about the network
- **Network Readings** - This section has several reading materials on foresight. Documents are normally provided by members, partners and observers - e.g. guides, manuals, handbooks, briefs, publications
- **Network Reports** - Here is where major network reports are located - e.g. progress and intermediate reports
- **People** (members & observers) - This section includes general information about the people involved with the network - coordinators, national correspondents and other observers

The Virtual Library is built within the network's website and members are encouraged to populate their country and institution folders with foresight-related files. The following picture shows how the library looks like.

Articulating Academic Institutions with other Stakeholders of the Regional Innovation Systems

Within the limited scope of the network activities, some members have managed to undertake research activities - such as the Virtual Mapping - with the support and participation of other stakeholders of the regional innovation systems - e.g. S&T agencies, R&D centres, non-profit civil associations, governmental departments.

Members in Europe

In **UK**: PREST (policy research in engineering, science and technology) institute of the University of Manchester leads the overall Scientific Coordination of the network.

- Ian Miles (PREST Co-Director)
- Luke Georghiou (PREST Co-Director)
- Rafael Popper (Scientific Coordinator / Tutor / Resp.)
- Michael Keenan (Scientific Coordinator / Tutor)

In **Finland**: FFRC (Finland Futures Research Centre) of the Turku School of Economics and Business Administration.

- Heljä Kajander (Financial Manager)
- Anita Rubin (Tutor / Responsible)

In **Hungary**: FSD (Futures Studies Department) of the Corvinus University.

- Tamás Mészáros (Rector)
- Erzébet Nováky (Tutor)
- Bernadett Szél (Responsible)

In **Spain**: the University of Alicante.

- Antonio Marcilla (Vice-Rector of Research)
- Enric Bas (Tutor / Responsible)

Members in Latin America

In **Venezuela**: UNEFM (Universidad Nacional Experimental Francisco de Miranda) and UNEFA (Universidad Nacional Experimental Politécnica de las Fuerzas Armadas).

- Yuli Villarroel (General Coordinator / Responsible)

- María E. Gómez (Rector of UNEFM)
- Franklin Zeltzer (Rector of UNEFA)
- Rosalba Gómez (UNEFM Tutor)
- Gonzalo Acosta (UNEFA Tutor)
- María José Torres (UNEFA Responsible)

In **Brazil**: UFRJ (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro).

- Belkis Valdman (Director of School of Chemistry)
- Luis d'Avila (Vice-rector)
- Adelaide Antunes (Tutor / Responsible)

In **Colombia**: UNIVALLE (Universidad del Valle).

- Iván Ramos (Rector)
- Javier Medina (Tutor / Responsible)

In **Peru**: ULIMA (Universidad de Lima), UMOLINA (Universidad Nacional Agraria la Molina), UNI (Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería), and PUCP (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú).

- Ilse Wisotzki (Rector of ULIMA)
- Luis Maezono (Rector of UMOLINA)
- Roberto Morales (Rector of UNI)
- Luis Guzmán (Rector of PUCP)
- Isaías Quevedo (Tutor / Responsible for Peru)
- Victor Guevara (Tutor / Responsible at UMOLINA)
- Edwin Dextre (Tutor / Responsible at UNI)
- Sandro Paz (Tutor / Responsible at PUCP)

NOTE: The list above indicates Members of the network's 2005-2007 work plan.

Sources and References

Villarroel, Y. and Popper, R. (2006) SELF-RULE Network: Intermediate Report, Coro, Venezuela

Internet Site

- <http://www.self-rule.org>
- <http://www.4-sight-group.org>

About the EFMN: Policy Professionals dealing with RTD, Innovation and Economic Development increasingly recognize a need to base decisions on broadly based participative processes of deliberation and consultation with stakeholders. One of the most important tools they apply is FORESIGHT. The EFMN or European Foresight Monitoring Network supports policy professionals by monitoring and analyzing Foresight activities in the European Union, its neighbours and the world. The EFMN helps those involved in policy development to stay up to date on current practice in Foresight. It helps them to tap into a network of know-how and experience on issues related to the day to day design, management and execution of Foresight and Foresight related processes.