



AL-INVEST IV INFORMS

N°24 - JULY 2011



AL-INVEST IV - EUROCHAMBRES - Avenue des Arts, 19 A/D - B-1000 Brussels - info@al-invest4.eu



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CONTENTS

Special Issue on the Latin American Academy

Editorial
The Latin American Academy:
A Successful Recipe1

The Latin American Academy
Business Training as an
Open Window to Europe2

Central America, Mexico and Cuba
Silvia Cuéllar2

Andean Region
José Rosas3

Mercosur, Chile and Venezuela
Daniella Cunha3

International Trade Academy
Bruno Misisca3

Oswaldo Barriga3

Interview to...
Román Regás, International Consultant4

Evert Jan Schouwstra,
Chief International Trade Officer4

Activities
VII International Round
of Design Business5

‘European Regulation for
Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables’5

CAINCO, Expert in Communication before
the Spanish Chambers of Commerce5

Looking for the Santa Cruz Brand5

I Green Production Congress: Environmen-
tal and Business Sustainability6

Annual AL-INVEST IV Meeting6

Success Cases
Paraguayan Shoes and Leather
Accessories in the European Market6

For the Innovation of the Baking
Industry in Colombia6

Coming up & Contact7

Special Issue on the Latin American Academy

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Academy: A Successful Recipe



It's been almost thirteen years since EUROCHAMBRES launched the Academy: an initiative aimed at enhancing professional development of top and middle managers in the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Europe. The first Academy took place in Munich, 1998. Since then, EUROCHAMBRES has organized yearly Academies in the European Union and beyond: Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean as well. Chile was the first hosting country of Latin America and the last Academy, in Lima, was its fifth edition.

As in some other occasions, the event was organized in the framework of the AL-INVEST Program. This year's Academy gathered 64 representatives of Chambers of Commerce, Federations and Associations from 14 Latin American and European countries.

The philosophy behind this Program is simple: we believe that Chambers of Commerce and Industry and other business organizations have an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience. Nowadays we live in a global world where we need to operate globally to serve our companies right, which means working together and learning from everybody.

In addition, SMEs face today great challenges in the process of internationalization and innovation. A better understanding on how to position ourselves in the world's new economic landscape as well as how to find the most suitable strategies to steer our companies in the right direction is of utmost importance. And this is exactly what the Academy is about

Undoubtedly, the last Academy in Peru was one step more in this direction. Multiple training courses have enabled executives from business organizations to understand not only how the EU works, but also, and more importantly, to share, discuss and analyze internationalization and management strategies, as well as specific application techniques for their own environment.

In this regard, the Academy complements individual exchanges already organized in the framework of the Coordination and Services Consortium. As such, it has contributed to create a network to cooperate and exchange ideas among business organizations.

This confirms, once again, the value of bringing European and Latin American business organizations closer together. I believe that by promoting such cooperation among business organizations this will spur the search for further alliances between Europe and Latin America which in turn will enable joint cooperation projects and more business. Something that becomes especially relevant in light of the Free Trade Agreements recently signed and currently under negotiation among several Latin American countries and the EU. We need to make the most of these agreements.

Constanza Negri Biasutti
Senior Advisor
Department of

International Affairs EUROCHAMBRES

AL-INVEST



Facilitating the internationalization
of Latin America SMEs

The AL-INVEST IV Programme is co-financed
by the European Union

This publication has been made with the assistance of the European Union. The sole responsibility for its content lies with AL-INVEST IV and in no case shall it be deemed to reflect the EU point of view.

Business Training as an Open Window to Europe

For three days, the Peruvian capital became the stage of the fifth edition of the Latin American Academy, an important business meeting organized under the direction of EUROCHAMBRES, leader of the Coordination and Services Consortium in the AL-INVEST IV Program. The event brought together representatives from Latin American and European business areas. It was a key meeting point between Latin American and European business organizations.



Source: CS

Attendants to the Latin American Academy.

A window to Europe and a link between business organizations in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as Spain and France.

This is the mission leading the initiative of the Latin American Academies, whose main work tool is based on the cooperation of business communities from both sides of the Atlantic seeking to find business opportunities and promoting business contacts.

Their pillars? Developing and teaching networking and benchmarking techniques, essential to satisfy the needs of this type of organizations.

Under the umbrella of the AL-INVEST IV Program, the event took place in Lima, Peru. A total of 64 executives and middle managers

from the three Latin American Consortia, as well as representatives from business organizations and European Chambers of Commerce benefited from four days of intense training.

The backbone of the fifth business meeting, a key element developed by EUROCHAMBRES, is made up of a series of core courses of general interest for all attendants and other optional courses, focused on specific interests and real needs of Latin American business organizations.

Renowned scholars in the field of Chambers of Commerce offered a wide range of possibilities, from learning strategies in service-internationalization trends, to seizing the current situation in the EU and in-depth immersion in techniques to generate revenues and business in emerging markets.

For more information:

<http://www.al-invest4.eu/actividades2/actividades-consorcio-servicios/servicios-para-organismos-intermedios/academias/americas-latina>

América Central, México y Cuba

Silvia Cuéllar, Executive Manager of COEXPORT, on behalf of the Central American, Mexican and Cuban Consortium has shared her view on the Academy. Among other key points, she mentioned the possibility of strengthening her services thanks to ideas learnt at the event by attaining future collaboration proposals for attendants.

SILVIA CUÉLLAR

Executive Manager of the Corporation of Exporters of El Salvador (COEXPORT)

"The Latin American Academy in Lima, Peru, has been a very positive experience, due to the process of change we have in the Chamber. Learning about new ideas, successful and non-successful experiences from others, having very practical experts to lecture in conferences and sessions where the environment is ideal to exchange experiences, has enabled me to acquire ideas for its immediate application. Our corporation has already proposed a program of special events and we are working in a reorganization based on objectives, making substantial savings in internal communication and improving efficiency".

Andean Region

Thanks to José Rosas, General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce in Lima, we learnt about the experience of one organizer of this event. As representative of the Andean Region Consortium (AR), Mr. Rosas has praised the correct organization of several activities and beneficial training offered to attendants in this type of events.

JOSÉ ROSAS

General Manager of the Chamber of Commerce of Lima

"It has been a very different experience to be behind the 'counter' in the Academy, organizing and managing down to the details so that attendants feel well treated and carefree since their arrival. Thanks to EUROCHAMBRES' extensive know-how in this type of events, it has been easier to organize and follow up on activities. I consider it a great opportunity to receive training on specific issues to manage the Chambers of Commerce and industrial institutions in this event, since this type of courses is not usually available on the market".



Attendants to the Latin American Academy.

Source: CS

Mercosur, Chile and Venezuela

Daniella Cunha, Coordinator of the International Business Center (CIN/FIEB) has shared with us her view on the Peruvian Academy, which has presented her with a unique opportunity to explore new ways of cooperation and improve existing contacts.

DANIELLA CUNHA

Coordinator of the International Business Center (CIN/FIEB)

"From the standpoint of a Latin American Chamber, taking part in this event is a unique opportunity to learn about best practices in the EU and Latin America and gain better understanding of the situation in European and Latin American Chambers of Commerce; which favors work between both parties and the development of joint projects and actions. It has been a pleasure to present information about Brazil and Bahia to the rest of attendants".

International Trade Academy

Best Practices in International Trade

A business event specialized in international trade techniques took place in Jodoigne, Belgium, last March.

The International Trade Academy, a business meeting organized by the Coordination and Services Consortium of the AL-INVEST IV Program in collaboration with EUROCHAMBRES, brought together

multiple business organizations and representatives of institutions from Europe, Latin America, Eastern countries, North Africa and the Middle East last March 27 to 30.

The goal was to develop a 20-hour training program of intensive courses specialized in international trade and custom policies.

“ The benchmarking and networking format is based on strengthening soft skills. The attendants to the Academy in Jodoigne understood and made use of the opportunity and tried to meet all attending colleagues, their projects, organizations and needs. As a result of my experience in the Academy, the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA by its Spanish acronym) is currently studying how to implement new programs and products presented there.”

”

Bruno Misisca, Head of Institutional Communication of the Argentine Industrial Union (UIA by its Spanish acronym)

“ The experience of the Chamber of Exporters of Santa Cruz (CADEX) in the Academy of Jodoigne was very positive, since we gained knowledge to improve the work we carry out for the benefit of SMEs participating in the AL-INVEST IV Program, and created bonds with other entities supporting Latin American and European companies, opening the way for new strategic alliances. These mingling experiences are the starting point for very interesting, beneficial proposals to develop our institutions.”

”

Oswaldo Barriga, General Manager of the Chamber of Exporters of Santa Cruz, Bolivia (CADEX)

Renowned scholars in the field of Chambers of Commerce participated in the development of June's Latin American Academy. AL-INVEST IV INFORMS was honored to talk to two of those experts: Román Regas, a Frenchman who is an International Consultant specialized in the competence of Chambers of Commerce and Industry worldwide, and Evert Jan Schouwstra, from the Netherlands, Chief International Commerce Officer and an expert in strategies to tap into foreign markets. They shared their view and conclusions on the event.

Román Regas, International Consultant

What was your experience participating as expert in the Latin American Academy event?

It has been a very fulfilling experience, since it has enabled me to mingle with participants from Latin America with different degrees of experience, specific expectations and a strong will to move forward.

What would you highlight from the event?

I feel the level of the Academy increases year by year. The participation of those present in the event truly was on par with European standards.

What do networking and benchmarking techniques provide to an organization?

These techniques teach attendants to gain an advantage on the competition, and to question the efficacy of their procedures to progress and offer better services.

How can Latin American SMEs perform an optimal penetration of these markets?

By maintaining an appropriate quality of their products, Latin American SMEs have all tools necessary to be competitive in European markets.

Do you think the presence of Latin American SMEs in Europe is important? How can they improve?

Latin American SMEs are poorly represented in Europe, since they do not see exports from a market-control perspective. These companies know that working hand in hand to attain common goals will lead them to penetrating and leading in new markets.



Evert Jan Schouwstra, Chief International Trade Officer



What is your assessment as participant of the Latin American Academy in Peru?

I was honestly impressed with the organization of the event. The program was comprehensive; there was time for individual study, team work and leisure time. I was touched by the friendliness, passion and teamwork spirit of all participants.

What are the most remarkable results this event has yielded?

Exchanging knowledge with Europeans and their way of thinking at work. Seeing teamwork at play.

How do you think this event will be positive to the core of your organization?

Latin America seems to be far away from many companies in my region. I am sure the contacts made in the Academy will improve business opportunities for both sides.

What is the most efficient strategy SMEs in emerging Latin American economies should implement to position themselves in the European market?

Good preparation is the only way to success. The European market is very competitive, so it is necessary to know the market and find suitable partners.

What are the challenges we face after the results obtained in the Academy?

The biggest challenge is to keep regular communication flowing with the contacts made. Exchanging knowledge is a key issue when doing business.

VII International Round of Design Business

May 23-25, Buenos Aires, Argentina



'Puro Diseño' Fair

In the aftermath of the 'Puro Diseño 2011' Fair last May in the capital city of Argentina, the 'VII International Round of Design Business' took place from May 23 to 25.

This round, developed thanks to the efforts of the AL-INVEST IV Program, enabled 108 Argentine companies to interact with renowned buyers from the United States, France, Portugal, the Netherlands and Italy.

After more than 240 meetings in three intense days of work, foreign companies assured they were "impressed" by the great variety of the Argentine companies and opportunities to create new business. They highlighted the heterogeneity and forward-thinking of its market.

Contact: Bruno Misica brunom@uia.org.ar

'European Regulation for Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables'

June 2011, Chile

Jacques Dasque, Secretary General of the Association of Fruit and Vegetable Regions, was in charge of delivering four seminars on 'European Regulation for Exporters of Fruits and Vegetables' in the first week of June.

The sessions were organized by the Business Foundation EuroChile and offered to 72 businesspeople of the AL-INVEST IV Program in the Chilean regions of Valparaíso, O'Higgins, Maute and Metropolitan Region.

Since the European fruit and vegetable sector has been weakened in the last few years because of an increase in quality and control requirements, Dasque recommended Chilean producers trying to introduce their products in Europe "to build up their logistics and trade departments to guarantee quality and sanitary conditions and continuity of services".

For more information: www.areflh.org



CAINCO, Expert in Communication before the Spanish Chambers of Commerce

June 15, Madrid, Spain

The Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism of Santa Cruz, Bolivia (CAINCO) shared last June 15 in Madrid their service communication and marketing experience in the Meeting of Heads of Communication of the Chambers of Commerce of Spain, organized by the Spanish High Council of Chambers.

CAINCO's participation in this event, to which 40 communication professionals from several Spanish Chambers attended, is part of an individual exchange activity organized by EUROCHAMBRES as leader of the Coordination and Services Consortium of the AL INVEST IV Program.

The discussion between attendants stressed the significance of press teams in the Chambers of Commerce for all environments involving design, promotional activities and spreading the word about the services.

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Looking for the Santa Cruz Brand

Santa Cruz, Bolivia

A group of city marketing experts met in Santa Cruz to provide ideas for the future brand of the region. These meetings are part of the AL INVEST IV Program and are promoted by the Autonomous Government of the Department of Santa Cruz and the Chamber of Industry, Commerce, Services and Tourism of Santa Cruz (CAINCO).

The next step these experts will take to define the brand of the city will be to assess the history, population, culture and heritage, investment, immigration and tourism of the region with multiple quality tools.

The benefits obtained with this type of brand boost strengths and attributes of a specific geographic area. Factors such as exports, investments and tourism may be boosted by this type of strategies.

Other ideas already implemented have seen the light through this type of studies. Some examples: 'Ecuador, Where Life Is Pure', 'Natural Uruguay', 'Passion for Colombia' and 'Barcelona, Shopping City'.

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Andrea Farell. andrea_farell_rivero@hotmail.com

I Green Production Congress: Environmental and Business Sustainability

April 26-27, San José, Costa Rica



The event focused on raising awareness in the business sector about how to reduce costs through sustainability, the ever-

Thanks to the AL-INVEST IV Program, the first Green Congress took place last April in Costa Rica, lead by the Chamber of Exporters.

growing trade opportunities for environmentally-friendly products and the fruits to be reaped if companies convert to Carbon Neutral.

Over 20 talks were given by national-level players and by international experts from pertinent bodies pushing for environmental sustainability.

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Annual AL-INVEST IV Meeting

July 19-22, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

Every year, the three Latin American Consortia of the AL-INVEST IV Program and the Coordination and Services Consortium meet with members of the European Commission and other organizations linked to the world of SMEs for the Annual Meeting of the Program to analyze the current situation.

From July 19 to 22, the successful meeting took place in the Colombian city of Cartagena de Indias, a stage where other progress of the Program was analyzed as well, possible follow up alternatives for AL-INVEST IV beyond 2012 where identified and potential contacts with other programs and EU projects were explored.

AL INVEST IV INFORMS will publish shortly a special issue on the details of the event, which is an opportunity for communication between partners, intermediary bodies and institutions.



Annual AL-INVEST IV Meeting

Source: CS

For more information: <http://www.al-invest4.eu/actividades2/actividades-consorcio-servicios/conferencias-anuales/conferencia-anual-colombia-2011>

Success Cases

Paraguayan Shoes and Leather Accessories in the European Market

Several Paraguayan companies have designed together a collection to be launched in the European market. Some 25 leather shoe, bag, belt and wallet designs were made and defined with the assistance of two Italian technicians with expertise in shoe wear and leather goods.

Thanks to the support of the AL INVEST IV Program, the collection was presented in the Italian Fair Riva del Garda, one of the most important ones in the field of shoe wear and accessories.

British company showed special interest in products from Paraguayan SMEs and requested some samples to be included in their Fall-Winter catalogue 2011, which is distributed to their network of retailers in the UK and other European countries.

Contact: Marta Arce. martaarce@catedral.com.py

Items of the collection created by Paraguayan companies.
Source: MCV



For the Innovation of the Baking Industry in Colombia

Thanks to the support provided by the AL-INVEST IV Program, 16 businesspeople in the Bakery group of the Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga (Colombia), participated in the International Fair for Bakery, Cake and similar industries (Intersicop) in Madrid, Spain.

As part of the European event, Colombian businesspeople learnt about new cold techniques and healthy bread baking and specialized machinery, and they visited other SMEs specializing in baking. All this enabled them to benchmark their current business models.

Contact: Sergio Mendoza Sergio.mendoza@camaradirecta.com



Colombian Businesspeople in the Intersicop Fair

Source: RA

Events

Specialized Agendas July 01, 2011 - December 31, 2011 (CAMC)

Training and technical assistance for aligned SMEs in the hotel and service industries in the Atlantic and Insular Regions of Honduras, seeking to implement handbooks and improvements to obtain the Green Globe certification July 1, 2011 – November 12, 2011 (CAMC)

Tourism, new products, brand strategies and Regional Brand July 01, 2011 – December 31, 2011 (CAMC)

The Academy in Europe (tentative dates) July 30, 2011 (SC)

SIAL MERCOSUR September 1, 2011 – September 2, 2011 (SC)

SIMM Madrid 2011 September 1, 2011 – September 3, 2011 (SC)

ANUGA 2011 – Koln October 8, 2011 – October 12, 2011 (SC)

Corporate Responsibility of SMEs October 20, 2011 – October 21, 2011 (SC)

FIMMA-Maderalia Valencia 2011 October 25, 2011 – October 28, 2011 (SC)

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"The AL-INVEST IV Program is one of the most relevant regional economic cooperation programs of the European Commission in Latin America. The main goal of the IVth phase of the Program is to promote social cohesion by supporting Latin American SMEs in their consolidation and internationalization, sharing innovation and knowledge and creating economic relations with their European counterparts".

Publications

Final Report of the Thematic Seminar "Investing in Latin America's Boom":

<http://www.al-invest4.eu/attachments/FINAL%20REPORT.pdf>

Final Report of the Thematic Seminar "Technological Innovation as a Factor in Competition for Latin American SMEs":

<http://www.al-invest4.eu/attachments/Informe%20Final%20Seminario-Rio-de-Janeiro.pdf>

The Annual Report 2010 of the AL-INVEST IV Program:

<http://www.al-invest4.eu/centro-de-conocimiento/informe-anual-2010>

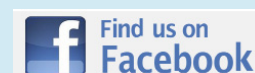
The sectorial Analysis on "Aqua-culture" will be available on our website at the end of July

Contact

For more information visit our website

www.al-invest4.eu,

or Check our Facebook profile



<http://www.facebook.com/pages/AL-Invest-IV-Consortio-de-Servicios/175340069146180?ref=ts>



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