



OBSERVATORIO  
AMÉRICA LATINA  
ASIA PACÍFICO

**CALL FOR PAPERS  
FOURTH ACADEMIC SEMINAR  
LATIN AMERICA – ASIA PACIFIC OBSERVATORY**

**“Latin America and Asia: Between the digital revolution and a  
globalization in question”**

**12-13 November 2019**

**United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)  
Santiago, Chile**

## **1. Background**

Created in 2012, the Latin America – Asia Pacific Observatory ([www.observatorioasiapacifico.org](http://www.observatorioasiapacifico.org)) is a joint initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC), the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF).<sup>1</sup> Its main goals are to create and disseminate knowledge about economic relations between both regions and to contribute to the adoption of policies and strategies to deepen those relations in a mutually beneficial way.

Interacting with the academic community, both from Latin America and Asia Pacific, is key to achieving the Observatory’s goals. The main instrument for this is the Academic Seminar. Thus far, three editions of the Academic Seminar have been held: in July 2013 and July 2015 at ECLAC’s headquarters in Santiago (Chile), and in November 2018 at ALADI’s headquarters in Montevideo (Uruguay). On each occasion, distinguished academics from both regions presented original works selected by a special committee.<sup>2</sup> The fourth edition of the Academic Seminar will be held on 12-13 November 2019 at ECLAC’s headquarters in Santiago under the title **“Latin America and Asia: Between the digital revolution and a globalization in question”**.

## **2. Motivation**

This century has witnessed remarkable growth in trade relations between Latin America and Asia. Two-way trade in goods multiplied sevenfold between 2000 and 2017, from US\$ 69 billion to more than US\$ 487 billion. Asia already absorbs 21% of Latin America’s total exports and originates 32% of its imports. The number of trade agreements in force between countries or groupings from both regions went from zero in 2000 to more than 20 now, with several

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<sup>1</sup> [www.aladi.org](http://www.aladi.org); <https://www.cepal.org/en>; <https://www.caf.com/en>.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.observatorioasiapacifico.org/en/news/item/tercer-seminario-academico-del-observatorio-america-latina-asia-pacifico-5.html>.



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others being negotiated or awaiting ratification. Bi-regional economic relations have also deepened in other spheres. Some examples are the strong financial links between China and some South American countries, and the increasing presence of Chinese infrastructure firms in the region.

Several ongoing initiatives point to an intensification of economic links between both regions in the coming years. Chief among them is China's proposal to extend its ambitious "Belt and Road" (BRI) infrastructure project to Latin America. To date, at least 17 countries in the region have signed memoranda of understanding with China to participate in this initiative. On the other hand, on December 30, 2018, the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) came into force, bringing together 11 countries from both shores of the Pacific Ocean. Chile will host the meetings of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) throughout the current year. At the same time, the trade negotiations of the Pacific Alliance with Australia, New Zealand and Singapore continue, as well as those of MERCOSUR with the Republic of Korea and Singapore.

The growing economic relations between both regions have as backdrop an international context marked by intense transformations and tensions. The United States and China are engaged in a strong competition for global economic and technological dominance, while globalization is being increasingly criticized in countries that were traditionally its main promoters. The multilateral trading system faces the greatest crisis since its creation seven decades ago. On the other hand, the technological breakthroughs collectively known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (artificial intelligence, internet of things, additive manufacturing, blockchain) are redefining all the spheres of economic and social life, including the ways of working, producing, consuming and trading. All these factors interact to generate a global juncture of great uncertainty and will undoubtedly impact on the relations between Latin America and Asia in the coming years.

Despite their dynamism and great potential, economic relations between both regions exhibit several features that raise concerns in Latin America. Among these are the high and persistent concentration of Latin American exports to Asia in a small number of commodities, the intense competition that Asian manufactures pose to Latin American industrial sectors, and the still relatively low levels of Asian foreign direct investment (FDI) in the region.

The main objective of the fourth Academic Seminar, as it was of its previous editions, is to generate a debate on the strategies and policies that Latin American countries should follow in the coming years to "take a leap of quality" in their economic relations with Asia. Until now, the trade link has been the dominant one, but with important problems that show no signs of attenuation. Therefore, it is essential to promote other elements, particularly greater flows of Asian FDI that contribute to productive and technological capacities in recipient countries. Participation in the BRI also opens interesting perspectives to improve physical and digital connectivity between both regions and to address the well-known Latin American infrastructure deficit. However, the specific modalities that such participation could take have not been sufficiently discussed. The fourth Academic Seminar is an ideal occasion to promote this and other debates.



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Academics from Latin America and Asia are invited to submit papers that fall within the general guidelines outlined above, in the following areas:

- Trade relations, with emphasis on the opportunities that electronic commerce of goods and services offers to SMEs in both regions; interregional trade agreements; impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in trade relations.
- Investment relations, especially comparative experiences in terms of attraction, protection and facilitation of foreign direct investment; technology transfer; interregional investment agreements.
- Financial relations, particularly financial cooperation (for example, the Renminbi Qualified Foreign Institutional Investor program and Currency Swap Agreements).
- Interregional cooperation, especially on issues related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
- The Belt and Road Initiative: challenges and opportunities for Latin America (priority projects, possible financing modalities, etc.)
- Interregional value chains.

The Seminar has a multidisciplinary character, so contributions from various fields are welcome (economics, economic law, international relations, international political economy, economic geography, international business, etc.). Papers that include policy proposals will be privileged. Papers can have a wide geographical scope (i.e., focusing on region to region relations) or a narrower one (that is, dealing with specific countries or groupings).

### **3. Relevant dates and procedures for the selection of papers**

Interested authors should send their articles (in Spanish, English or Portuguese) to [observatorio@aladi.org](mailto:observatorio@aladi.org) no later than Friday, July 26, 2019, in Word or PDF format. The articles must:

- ♣ have an extension between 8,000 and 12,000 words (without counting the bibliography, which must be attached and in APA format);
- ♣ be complete works (no drafts or abstracts will be accepted); and
- ♣ be unpublished at the time of presentation.

Each article must be accompanied by a brief CV of the author(s).

Articles will be reviewed by an evaluation committee. The committee will decide which works are accepted for presentation at the fourth Academic Seminar, based on their originality, quality of analysis and relevance. Committee members will not know the identity of authors.

The acceptance of each article can be definitive or provisional (subject to the introduction of adjustments). The selected works will be part of a publication after the Seminar, so the presentation of the texts in MS Word and the tables and graphs in Excel will be required. The results will be made known to the authors via e-mail on Friday August 30, 2019. In the case of



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articles that are provisionally accepted, the final versions thereof must be delivered no later than Monday 30 of September 2019.

The Latin America - Asia Pacific Observatory will finance the travel expenses (economy class) and accommodation of the authors selected to present their work and who do not have the means to attend.

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