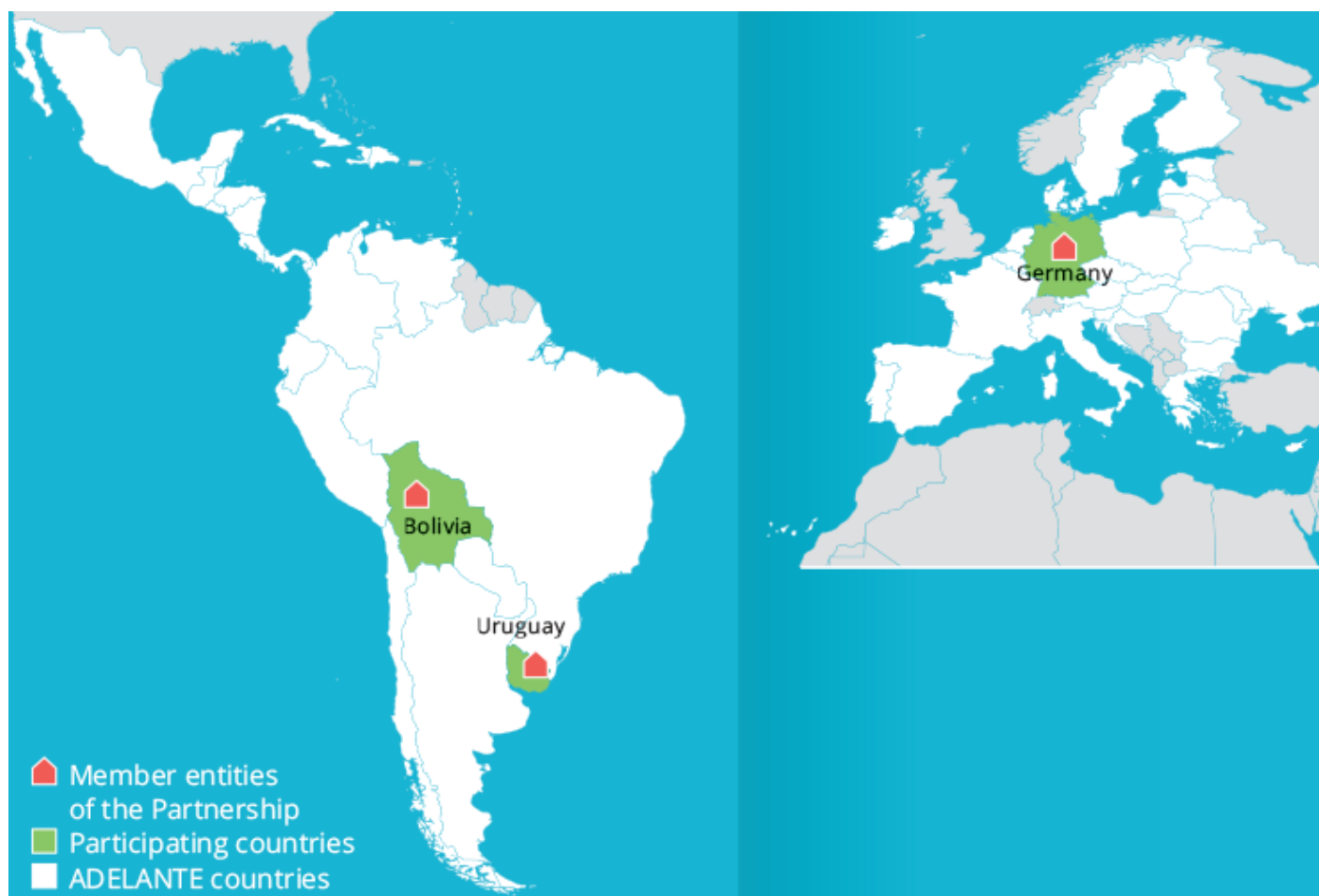


## Strengthening cross-border governance of water basins

### PARTNERSHIP



### Background

The *Asociación de Regiones Fronterizas Europeas* - Association of European Border Regions - AEBR (Germany), the *Congreso de Intendentes de Uruguay* - Congress of Mayors of Uruguay and the *Autoridad Binacional del Lago Titicaca* - Lake Titicaca Binational Authority - ALT (Bolivia and Peru) have a track record of joint collaboration in cross-border cooperation and territorial development, with previous experience under the Triangular Cooperation modality in the framework of several political dialogue forums, supported by Spanish Cooperation activities.

AEBR and ALT are also signatories to a cooperation agreement that provides opportunities for training and technical assistance, with the opportunity to share and transfer European knowledge and experiences on cross-border public policies.

In addition, through the EUROsociAL+ programme, there have been coordinated actions to strengthen cross-border multi-level governance, in which AEBR and ALT have worked closely together, as well as measures to strengthen the governance of the Uruguay River Basin. In this case, AEBR, through the Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin, has collaborated with the Congress of Mayors to implement a local development programme for river basins.

Thanks to this history of joint collaboration, AEBR, ALT and the Congress of Mayors, with the support of the Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin, decided to form a Triangular Cooperation Partnership that aimed to harness the knowledge of the member entities to jointly create a 'Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model,' which could be applied in the territories represented by the Congress of Mayors of Uruguay.

In order to develop the model, the Partnership identified two collaborating entities, the ***Agrupación Europea de Cooperación Territorial del Río Miño*** - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation of the Minho River - EGTC Minho River (Portugal) and the ***Asociación Transfronteriza de Municipios del Lago Alqueva*** - Cross-border Association of Municipalities of Lake Alqueva - ATLA - (Spain), who shared their expertise in cross-border management structures and territorial development strategies, which is of great interest for establishing the development strategy for the middle basin of the Uruguay River.

## Entities and roles

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### BENEFICIARY ENTITIES



[Congreso de Intendentes](#)

Uruguay

### FIRST PROVIDER ENTITIES



Autoridad Binacional del Lago Titicaca

Bolivia

## SECOND PROVIDER ENTITIES



Asociación de Regiones Fronterizas Europeas - ARFE

Germany

## COLLABORATING ENTITIES

AECT Rio Minho, Spain

Asociación Transfronteriza de Municipios del Lago Alqueva - ATLA, Portugal

## Development challenges

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Thanks to this Triangular Cooperation Initiative, the Congress of Mayors and the Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin, in collaboration with the Uruguay River Administrative Commission (CARU), drew on the expertise of the Association of European Border Regions and the Lake Titicaca Binational Authority in cross-border planning and governance structures, territorial development, environmental management and the fight against climate change, to develop a '**Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model**' to contribute to the improvement of public services, economic development and social integration in the border territories of the Uruguay river basin.

This Initiative promoted opportunities for dialogue and learning, in which Europe's extensive experience and the similar contextual experience of the Lake Titicaca region served as a starting point for the creation of an innovative model, adapted to the area of intervention.

## INITIATIVE

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*This Triangular Cooperation Initiative strengthened the capacities of the Partnership entities to **create a cross-border and multi-stakeholder governance model** for water basins, aimed at improving the economic, social and environmental development of the territories.*

## Triangular approach

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Border areas whose economies, social integration and service provision are closely linked to border transit and cooperation between entities and authorities on both sides of the border and at different levels, have been particularly affected by the closure of border crossings during the COVID-19 crisis. This has led to an increase in unemployment and the informal economy, which in turn has led to an increase in vulnerability, while cooperation between neighbouring territories has diminished. This has been coupled with pre-existing challenges arising from climate change, which increase the fragility of natural resources shared between countries, especially water resources.

Faced with these challenges, this Initiative tapped into the experience of European and Latin American entities in joint planning and the creation of structures for cross-border economic, social and environmental development, to generate a sustainable model of cooperation and multi-level governance for water basins that contributes to local development. The 'Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model' is intended to be replicated in other Latin American border regions, especially where water resources are shared between countries.

## Sectoral approach - Contribution to the 2030 Agenda

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### PRIMARY SDG



**Goal 10.3** Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard

**Goal 10.B** Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes

### SECONDARY SDG



**Goal 13.1** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

**Goal 13.B** Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

## ADELANTE SDG



**Goal 10.3** Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard

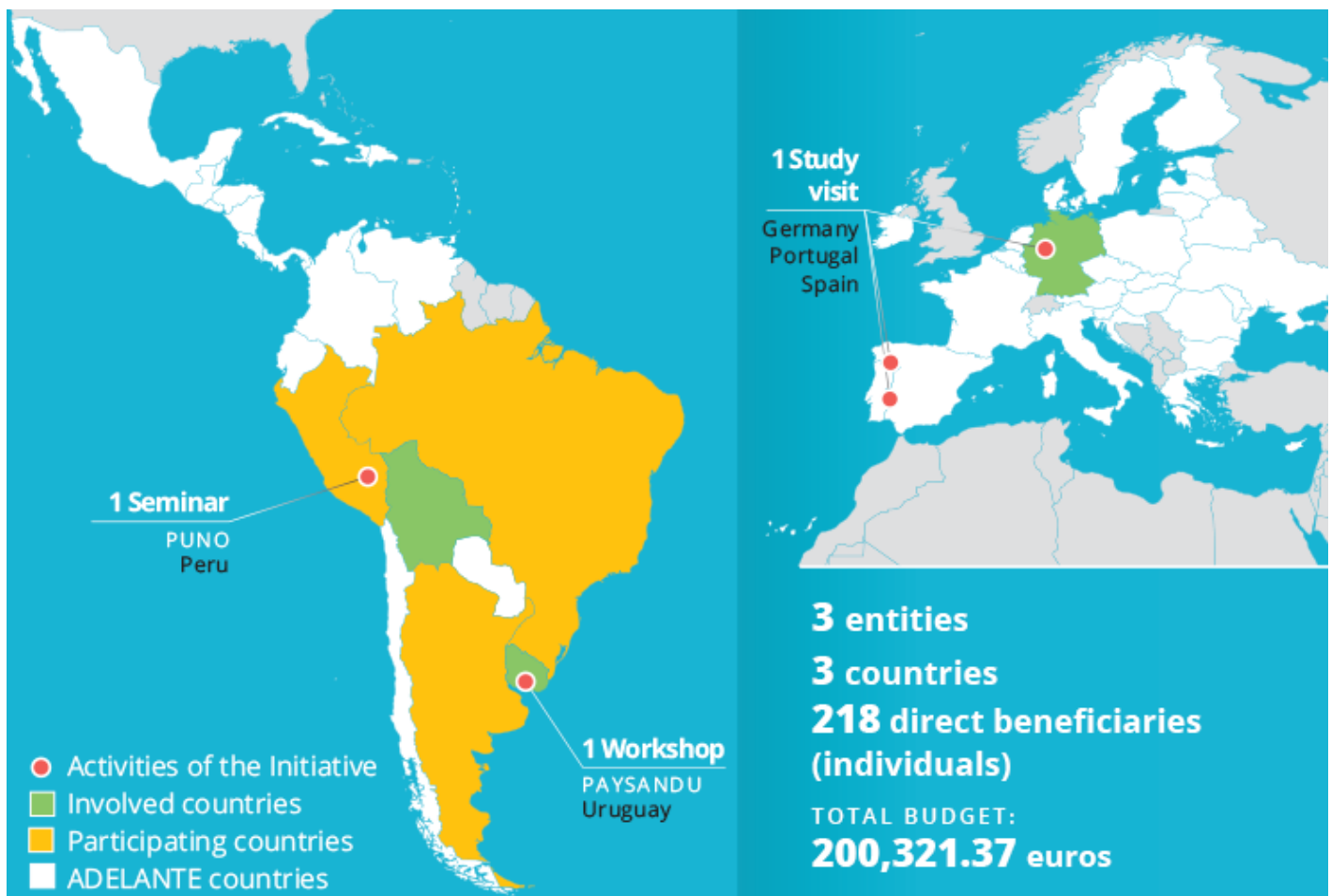
**Goal 10.B** Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes



**Goal 17.17** Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships

## Territorial approach

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## Intervention methodology

The work plan in this Initiative was based on four activities that aimed to create spaces for dialogue between the Partnership member entities and collaborating entities, as well as between the collaborating entities and various key players in the European and Latin American border territories involved in the Initiative. This methodology facilitated the development of a 'Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model' that truly took into account the diversity of contexts, interests and challenges of the area.

The first activity was **a study visit to European border territories** (the Rhine basin and Spanish-Portuguese border basins), organised by AEBR, to learn about cross-border multi-level governance strategies and structures. This activity set the foundations for the creation of a European-Latin American network for local development in water basins.

Following this, **a seminar** was held in the Lake Titicaca basin, where ALT shared its experience in binational planning, its cross-border structure, the multi-level governance model applied in its Peruvian and Bolivian basins, and its experiences in environmental management and the fight against climate change.

The Initiative concluded with an internal work session, through **a workshop** organised by the Congress of Mayors, held in the Uruguay river basin. On this event, the 'Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model' was presented and discussed, and channelled towards the official decision-making circles for final approval. This activity culminated with the Formalisation Meeting of the Euro-Latin American Network for

Transboundary River Basin Governance where commitments were established and a roadmap with the future commitments of the network partners was drawn up.

These spaces for exchange and knowledge generation were accompanied by **a consultancy**, which contributed to the systematisation of the knowledge generated and to the analysis of the situation of current cross-border governance processes, including topics such as human rights, gender and the environment adapted to the Uruguay river basin. The findings of the consultancy were important inputs for the development of the 'Cross-border Water Basin Governance Model'.

## Direct beneficiaries (individuals)

*According to Rule 9 of the Guidelines for Applicants: all persons participating in the activities of the Initiative.*

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This Initiative had **218 direct beneficiaries**, who were mainly professionals from the Partnership entities and officials from sub-national public entities from the territories affiliated with the Congress of Mayors of Uruguay and the Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin (Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay).

The study visit to the European border regions and the seminar on Lake Titicaca facilitated collaboration with a wide range of local actors, who also benefited from the exchange of knowledge between European and Latin American entities. In addition, the possibility of making certain parts of the seminar open to the general public increased the number of beneficiaries beyond what was initially planned.

## Budget

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EU contribution: 149,573.63 €

Co-financing - Triangular Cooperation Partnership: 51,747.74 €

Total budget: 200,321.37 €