

Concept Note

September 18, 2019 | Shilla Hotel, Seoul, Republic of Korea



Background

The 4th Industrial Revolution and the subsequent digital transformation present both structural challenges and business opportunities to FEALAC countries. Driven by the increasing significance of universal connectivity and access to digital data, business environments in FEALAC countries are now under transformation. Traditional distribution channels are giving way to e-commerce in Asia and Latin America, and FEALAC member states are under pressure to support the digital transformation of their economies. Such change offers challenges as well as opportunities especially to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which seek to increase their access to the global market.

SMEs are the backbone of the economies of the FEALAC region, as around two thirds of the SMEs represent the total employment in both Latin America and the Caribbean and ASEAN countries. However, despite their potential contribution to the development of FEALAC economies, existing trade cost barriers – such as excess legal and regulatory frameworks, limited access to payment methods, high transportation costs, to name a few – remain as a stumbling block to the internationalization of the SMEs in the region. By taking advantage of the innovative technologies that connect SMEs with the global market and the support of the respective government, SMEs in the FEALAC region can create a new business value in the context of the digital economy.

FEALAC member states have recognized the importance of trade facilitation in creating a more efficient and transparent trade environment. During the 8th Foreign Minister Meeting (FMM) in 2017 in Busan, Korea, FEALAC Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the role of international trade as an "engine for inclusive growth and poverty reduction" and reiterated that the "opposition to protectionism on trade and investment in all its forms." Meanwhile, the Working Group on Trade, Investment, Tourism and MSMEs (TITM) of FEALAC serves as a forum for sharing and reviewing a series of national and regional projects aimed at incorporating SMEs to the Global Value Chain (GVC).

With the recognition that the digital revolution serves as a useful tool for FEALAC countries to modernize and harmonize the existing trade practices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea has continued to make contributions to the digitalization and internationalization of SMEs in the FEALAC context. It held its first-ever tripartite academic seminar in 2016, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), at the ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, to explore strategies to boost Korea-CELAC economic cooperation. A series of capacity building workshops on the internationalization of SMEs followed in December 2017 in San Salvador, El Salvador, and the most recent one was held in May 2019 in Santiago, Chile. The workshops helped share the common view that the internationalization and digitalization of SMEs accelerate their productivity growth, contributing to sustainable and more inclusive development.

To maintain the positive momentum made at the most recent FEALAC FMM held in 2017 and to further promote cooperation among FEALAC member countries in a more internationalized and digitalized world, **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic will jointly host the Seminar on Trade and SMEs – entitled "FEALAC's Trade Facilitation in the context of the Digital Economy" – in Seoul this September.** The Seminar seeks to find ways to improve regional connectivity among FEALAC member states and to nurture business capabilities of SMEs in a digital economy.

Objectives of the Seminar

The main objectives of the seminar are:

1. To discuss current developments and to seek the future direction of economic cooperation among FEALAC members in a digital economy;
2. To take stock of ongoing initiatives and achievements by FEALAC members regarding trade and SMEs to enhance the effectiveness of the TITM Working Group of FEALAC; and
3. To nurture a network between policy-makers and experts in trade and SMEs in the context of FEALAC.

Format

■ Participants and Registration

This seminar will bring together around 100 people from the government, academia and the private sector of FEALAC member states, as well as a number of eminent experts in trade and SMEs. Inputs from and active participation of the FEALAC member states in the preparation for the Seminar are highly appreciated. The seminar is also open to the general public.

Everyone wishing to participate in the seminar is requested to fill out the attached Registration form and send it by e-mail (fealacseminar2019@gmail.com) no later than September 8, 2019.

■ Preparation and Arrangements

Organizers

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic will cohost the Seminar in Seoul on September 18, 2019.

Format

The seminar will consist of two sessions and one roundtable. Each session will have three to four presenters, each of who will give a power-point presentation for approximately 20 minutes. The roundtable will have four panelists. The floor will be open to other participants during the Q&A (discussion) session.

There will be a networking lunch (Invitation Only) and a dinner reception for all participants hosted by the Organizers.

Language

The official language of the Seminar is English. Translation and interpreting services will not be available.

■ Cost Coverage

Airfare expenses (economy class) and hotel accommodation for two (2) nights will be covered by the Korean government for all presenters and panelists coming from outside of Korea. One government official (vice-minister or above vice-minister level) will be provided with airfare expenses (business class). Please note that sponsored participants are responsible for all the additional costs charged for service or facilities such as mini bar, room service and phone calls upon check-out.

Program

TIME	SESSION
09:30-10:00 (30')	Registration
10:00-10:30 (30')	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opening Remarks ▪ Group Photo
10:30-12:00 (90')	Session 1 Enhancing Connectivity among FEALAC Member States through Digital Trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better access to digital information and the future of digital trade in the FEALAC context (20') ▪ Needs for a collective action against non-tariff measures and excess regulations (20') ▪ Establishment of digital infrastructure for the economic connectivity within FEALAC (20') ▪ Country Case (15') ▪ Questions and answers (15')
12:00-14:00 (120')	Networking Lunch (Invitation Only)
14:00-15:30 (90')	Session 2 Challenges and Opportunities of SMEs in FEALAC's Digitalizing Economies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efforts to create a more financially-sustainable condition for SMEs (20') ▪ Building an intra-regional platform aimed at supporting innovative SMEs (20') ▪ Country Case I (15') ▪ Country Case II (15') ▪ Questions and answers (20')
15:30-15:50 (20')	Coffee Break
14:00-15:30 (90')	Session 3 (Round table) Action Plans for Internationalizing SMEs in Digital Economies of FEALAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recent progress and challenges toward the implementation of New Action Plan of FEALAC (20') ▪ Re-establishing the database for Trade, Investment and SMEs from Singapore (20') ▪ Towards a more inclusive and sustainable corporate environment in the digital economies (20') ▪ Incorporating SMEs with FEALAC's Value Chain Development Project (20') ▪ Questions and answers (20')
17:30-19:00 (90')	Dinner Reception

Logistical Note

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Meeting Venue and Registration

The 2019 FEALAC TITM Seminar on Trade and SMEs will be held on Wednesday, 18 September 2019 in Seoul, Republic of Korea at the Shilla Seoul Hotel.

■ The Shilla Seoul Hotel

The Shilla Seoul, a prestigious global hotel combining traditional Korean aesthetics with a modern sensibility, is a premium lifestyle hotel that offers refined rest and world-class services with our philosophy.

Tel. +82 (0)2-2233-3131

Address. 249 Dongho-ro, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea 04605

For more detailed information.

<http://www.shilla.net/seoul/index.do>

Visa

Any foreign visitors wishing to enter Korea must have a valid passport and obtain a Korean visa. Visitors from 103 countries who want to visit Korea temporarily are permitted to enter without a visa according to visa-exemption agreements, or in accordance with principles reciprocity or national interest. Please refer to the following website and contact the Republic of Korean Embassy in your country to receive further information on visa regulations.

For more detailed information.

https://www.visa.go.kr/openPage.do?MENU_ID=10101

Accommodation

A block booking has been made for all participants at the Shilla Seoul Hotel at a discounted rate, but participants must make their own room booking. For those whose participation is funded by the event organisers, further information on accommodation and travel will be provided by e-mail.

Transportation

■ Incheon International Airport to The Shilla Seoul Hotel

1. Limousine Bus

Bus number.

6702 KAL Limousine Bus

Boarding location.

Terminal 1: 1st Floor Bus Stop Number 4A, 3B (Gate 3)

Terminal 2: 1st basement level Bus Stop Number 17-19 (Transportation Center)

Ticket purchase.

You can purchase a ticket at the KAL Limousine Bus Counter (Terminal 1: 1F next to the Gate 4, Terminal 2: B1 Bus Ticket Kiosk) and go to Boarding location mentioned above

Bus fare.

Cash/Card KRW 16,000 (Around USD 15)

Arrival bus stop.

Jangchung Gymnasium (Towards Dongguk University Station Exit 5)

Estimated travel time.

Terminal 1: Approx. 110~120 Minutes / Terminal 2: Approx. 90~100 Minutes

Operation hours.

To hotel 5:00~22:00, To airport 4:48~18:57 (service interval: every 25-30 minutes)

For more detailed information.

http://www.kallimousine.com/eng/line/station.php#on_scroll

2. Subway

Boarding location.

Airport Railroad T1/T2 1st basement level

Ticket purchase.

You can purchase a ticket at the Automatic Ticket Machine or Customer Information Center

Ticket fare.

Express Train: Around KRW 9,000 (Around USD 9)

All Stop Train: Purchase Prepaid Card around KRW 7,000 (Around USD 7)

Arrival station.

Subway Line 3 at Dongguk Univ. Station, Exit No. 5

Transfer information.

Take Airport Railroad at Incheon International Airport T1/T2

→ Transfer to Subway Line 4 at Seoul Station

→ Transfer to Subway Line 3 at Chungmuro Station

→ Get off at Dongguk Univ. Station

Estimated travel time.

Terminal 1: Approx. 90 Minutes / Terminal 2: Approx. 100 Minutes

For more detailed information.

<https://bit.ly/2ToUk3S>

3. Taxi

Taxi fare.

Deluxe Taxi: Approx. 1 hour (Around KRW 100,000 – toll fees included)

Normal Taxi: Approx. 1 hour (Around KRW 70,000 – toll fees included)

Meals and Specific Food Requirements

Lunch (Invitation Only), dinner and refreshments will be provided during the meeting on 18 September. If participants have any special dietary requirements or requests (such as food allergies, halal food, vegan, vegetarian, etc.), please inform to the Secretariat by e-mail. We will do our best to meet your requests.

Additional Information

Weather.

In September, the average temperature in Seoul is between a low of 20°C and a high of 21°C.

Time difference.

Korea is 9 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +9) and does not observe daylight savings time.

Voltage (Electricity).

Outlets for 220 Volts/60Hz are mostly used in Korea. In order to convert the power into 110 volts, please contact hotel housekeeping.

Contact Information

If you have any logistical questions, please contact to us by e-mail or call.
FEALAC TITM Seminar on Trade and SMEs 2019 Secretariat

Tel. +82 (0)2-547-1640

E-mail. fealacseminar2019@gmail.com