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Building international business bridges in geographically isolated areas: 
The role of Foreign Market Focus and Outward Looking Competences in 
Latin American SMEs

Ferran Vendrell-Herrero\textsuperscript{a}, Emanuel Gomes\textsuperscript{ab*}, Kamel Mellahi\textsuperscript{c} and John Child\textsuperscript{a}

\textsuperscript{a} Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom; 
\textsuperscript{b} Nova School of Business and Economic, Universidade Nova, Portugal 
\textsuperscript{c} Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Abstract
This paper focuses on the internationalization of SMEs located in geographically isolated contexts like Latin America. We argue that strategic priorities towards foreign markets, Foreign Market Focus (FMF), as well as “Outward Looking Competences” (OLC) are important factors in enhancing productivity, and ultimately achieving a sustainable competitive presence abroad. FMF and OLC lay the foundation for setting better international business relations with foreign clients and increase opportunities for learning and attaining economies of scale. Results demonstrate the significance of FMF as a means of enhancing productivity only in manufacturing firms. OLC positively moderates the relation between FMF and productivity.

Keywords: Foreign Market Focus, Outward Looking Competences, Exports, Productivity, Latin American SMEs, Multilatinas.

* Corresponding Author: Emanuel Gomes (Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TY, UK), email: E.Gomes@bham.ac.uk

Acknowledgement
For their helpful comments on earlier drafts, our thanks go to Alvaro Cuervo-Cazurra, Luciano Ciravegna, Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez, Ruth Aguilera, Esteban Lafuente, and two anonymous reviewers. Ferran Vendrell-Herrero acknowledges financial support from the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions project “MAKERS: Smart Manufacturing for EU Growth and Prosperity” with grant agreement number 691192, and the Spanish Government under Grant ECO2014-58472-R.