



Latin America and Caribbean Initiative

to Promote Stability, Democracy and the Rules-Based International Order (LAK-FSDRIO)

Background

Latin America and the Caribbean are politically, culturally and economically important cooperation partners for Germany and Europe. To support cooperation with the region and strengthen regional stabilisation efforts, the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) launched a Latin America and Caribbean Initiative (LAC-Initiative) in 2019. It sets a framework for political relations, joint projects or policy dialogues on issues such as the rule of law and women's rights.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has several project activities that support the efforts of the Federal Foreign Office and contribute to the LAC-Initiative:

Women's network Unidas

The [women's network Unidas](#) was launched in May 2019 with the aim of fostering dialogue among its members on women's rights and gender justice. Around 350 members and nine partner organisations from Latin America, the Caribbean and Germany have joined the network so far. Unidas has been under the patronage of German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock since March 2022. Through its close ties to the German Federal Foreign Office, Unidas is also part of and a contribution to a feminist foreign policy.

The day-to-day tasks of the network are undertaken by the GIZ and comprise the work with member organisations and individuals to coordinate the network's activities, which include national and supra-regional network meetings, workshops and events on the Unidas' focus areas:

- Women's rights and democracy
- Women, Peace and Security Agenda
- Violence against women and femicide
- Women's participation in the economy



© Juan Camilo Martínez | Unidas Week in Cali/Colombia (June 2023)

Unidas promotes exchanges between its members through thematic dialogues and trainings e.g., on sexual and reproductive health and rights in LAC and Germany.

Currently, Unidas is focusing on feminist foreign policies, the nexus climate-gender-security and online gender-based violence.

Cooperation on the rule of law

The LAC Initiative collaborates with regional counterparts to improve legal procedures and equal access to rights. This work includes the presentation and exchange of knowledge on good practices in the field of criminal justice in a number of countries in the LAC region. Based on regional best practices, the German Federal Foreign Office offers trainings together with the [Justice Studies Center of the Americas](#), a think tank of the Inter-American system of the Organization of American States (OAS). The trainings enhance competencies for the prosecution of gender-based violence cases and the investigation of corruption. The trainings are offered in online or blended formats (online learning together with face-to-face practical training). They are based on mutual learning aimed at improving the

effectiveness and efficiency in the investigation and prosecution of unbiased criminal justice processes. The courses and exercises contained therein are designed to increase awareness upon victims' needs, strengthen objective investigation methods, assess risks for the process and the victims, as well as to improve cooperation between different state actors within the criminal justice process. Throughout the trainings, officials (prosecutors, investigating authorities and judges) are shown examples of measures applied in local systems that can improve their work processes. The trainings are also available to civil society organisations.



© JSCA | Closing ceremony of a training programme, Oaxaca/Mexico (February 2024)

Foreign policy dialogues

In close alignment with the [German foreign policy agenda with the LAC-region](#), the project supports the Federal Foreign Office in the organisation and implementation of dialogue formats. The formats of foreign policy dialogues offer the opportunity to discuss best practice approaches to improving stability, gender equality, rule of law and democracy, in dialogue with representatives and experts from politics and civil society.

Together with the Organisation of American States (OAS) the project organised for the Federal Foreign Office a [side event at the 54th General Assembly of the OAS](#). The meeting in June 2024 partnered with the Commission of Women (CIM) and the Government of Paraguay and addressed the access to rights for rural women.



© Mario Achucarro | Side event at the OAS general assembly, Asunción/Paraguay (June 2024)

In cooperation with the EU-LAC Foundation the project supported the ["Training Programme for Young Diplomats on the EU-CELAC Strategic Partnership"](#), which was held at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin in November 2023. The meeting aimed to involve young diplomats from Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe in the strategic partnership and to strengthen future cooperation.

Further dialog formats facilitated discussions on current topics of EU-Latin America and Caribbean relations, with a focus on digital transformation and democracy (["Future Affairs"](#) 2019-2021).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the German Federal Foreign Office organized a "Dialogue on the pandemic" (June 2020-January 2022) with the [Charité hospital](#) to support informed pandemic policies in the region.



© AA | Main graphic of the Future Affairs Compact 2021

Published by:

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Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Location and year of publication: Berlin, January 2025

Project information:

Latin America and Caribbean Initiative to Promote Stability, Democracy and the Rules-Based International Order (LAK-FSDRIO)

Contracting authority: German Federal Foreign Office

Project duration: October 2022 – June 2026

First project phase: March 2020 – September 2022

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