



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Global Ireland

Ireland's Strategy for Latin
America and the Caribbean
to 2025

Contents

2	Introduction
3	Strategic Objectives
4	Strategic Objective 1 <i>Ireland will deliver a step-change in our political partnerships with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean</i>
6	Strategic Objective 2 <i>Ireland will pursue a strong, mutually beneficial economic partnership with the region</i>
7	Strategic Objective 3 <i>Ireland will pursue a collaborative Team Ireland approach across the region</i>
8	Strategic Objective 4 <i>Ireland will raise and modernise our profile across Latin America and the Caribbean, deepen cultural links and strengthen ties with our diaspora</i>
10	Strategic Objective 5 <i>Ireland will deepen engagement with Latin America and Caribbean partners to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i>

Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean to 2025

VISION

Ireland will focus on creating new relationships and reinvigorating links with this key region, vital for our shared global, rules-based, multilateral order.

As we continue to deal with the pandemic and its aftermath, this first ever whole-of-government Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) will transform our impact and influence while pursuing fundamental shared values and our mutual economic recoveries.

We will find new and smarter ways to work with the thirty three countries in the region in our joint endeavour to build a safer, more just and sustainable future. Innovative political, economic, cultural and people-to-people exchanges will be at the heart of our efforts – whether at the bilateral, EU or multilateral level.

CONTEXT

Until the end of the 20th century, Ireland's physical diplomatic footprint in Latin America and the Caribbean consisted of the Embassy in Buenos Aires. Over the last two decades we have widened our presence and impact with Embassies now not only in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico – the region's three G20 members – but also in Colombia and Chile as well as a Consulate General in Sao Paulo. This small network of six offices currently accounts for 7% of Ireland's diplomatic missions.

Latin America and the Caribbean has a population of more than 650 million with a significant and growing middle class. The COVID pandemic has hit the region harder than most, but it remains a dynamic, creative global player, with huge differences within and between its many countries, peoples and cultures. The potential for mutual benefit from enhanced two-way engagement – both bilaterally and through the EU – across a whole range of sectors is very significant. The Strategy will make an important contribution to our collective efforts to recover from the severe human and economic costs of the pandemic.



*President Michael D. Higgins visits the Presidential Palace in Lima, 2017.
© President.ie/Maxwell*

Irish people have played crucial roles in the history of the region, most notably in its independence movements. Latin America and Caribbean countries also have a long tradition of strong cooperation with Ireland on some of our most fundamental challenges, including gender equality, human rights, nuclear disarmament and more recently climate action, with the LAC region at the frontline of a dangerously warming world.

As an island nation, we also have a particular affinity with the countries of the Caribbean. Importantly, Ireland shares a constituency with a number of Caribbean countries at both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Under this Strategy, Ireland will work with partners in the region to take up these many and varied strands and weave a stronger, more vibrant tapestry reflecting the full potential of our partnerships.

Strategic Objectives

To deliver on the ambition of ‘Global Ireland’, and the vision for our future partnership with the region, the following five strategic objectives will be pursued:



1

Ireland will deliver a step-change in our political partnerships with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.



*Ireland in Frame street photography exhibition, Mexico City, 2021.
© Verónica Garduño Soto*

WE WILL:

- » **Engage** in a focused effort to enhance political and official-level links through visits in both directions, including at the highest political levels;
- » **Deliver** the Global Ireland 2025 commitment by opening at least two new Embassies in the region within the lifetime of the Strategy, reflecting our interests and new opportunities and priorities in the region and sub-regions;
- » **Establish** a new office for Central America, based at the Embassy of Ireland in Mexico, to develop political, economic, cultural, development and humanitarian cooperation in the sub-region;
- » **Expand** the programme of regular high-level political consultations with partners in the region, and hold official-level consultations with at least two LAC partners annually up to 2025, taking advantage of new technologies to deepen and broaden dialogue;
- » **Deepen** our work with Latin America and Caribbean partners at the United Nations and at regional and sub-regional fora, and intensify our consultations with LAC partners on UN Security Council, General Assembly and Human Rights Council issues to protect and progress multilateralism and jointly promote shared values;
- » **Develop** bilateral and multilateral cooperation on human rights, disarmament and non-proliferation, the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, and shared experience of conflict resolution;
- » **Contribute** to a strong and successful partnership between the EU and LAC, through close cooperation with EU Member States and EU institutions, in the region and in Brussels, and active participation in inter-regional initiatives, and we will also ratify the EU-LAC Foundation Agreement;



St. John's, capital of Antigua and Barbuda. Enhanced engagement with the Caribbean states is a key element of the Strategy. © iStock/Getty Images

- » **Maintain** continuous dialogue with Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), bilaterally, through the EU, UN and other multilateral fora, and hold regular meetings to share views and build further collaboration, in line with commitments in Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with SIDS;
- » **Facilitate** increased parliamentary, government and official links at local, regional and national level with countries in the LAC region, maximising potential for digital exchanges, including by exploring the establishment of a LAC Friendship Group in the Oireachtas;
- » **Establish** a regular regional young politicians/young leaders exchange;
- » **Expand** concurrent accreditations to deepen and widen our reach with a view to establishing formal diplomatic relations with every country in the region;
- » **Pursue** observer status at the Pacific Alliance and develop opportunities that arise from this;
- » **Develop** added value through the appointment of additional Honorary Consuls in countries across the region;
- » **Support** the development of the capacity of Irish and LAC think-tanks and research institutions to forge partnerships and organise joint seminars and workshops on key themes of mutual interest;
- » **Build** on the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM);
- » **Develop** bilateral and multilateral co-operation on gender equality and other equality issues, sharing experiences and best practice. Explore lessons shared on increasing political participation of women in LAC countries.

2

Ireland will pursue a strong, mutually beneficial economic partnership with the region.



Christ the Redeemer statue lights up in green for St Patrick's Day, Rio de Janeiro, 2021. © Dado Galdieri/Sherlock Communications

WE WILL:

- » **Work** as Team Ireland to take full advantage of the opportunities and benefits for Irish business of existing and future EU trade, association and other agreements with the region;
- » **Explore** the possibility of establishing a LAC Chamber of Commerce in Ireland in cooperation with LAC missions accredited to Ireland;
- » **Ensure** regular opportunities for key Irish business and other leaders in the LAC region to provide input to Government on regional economic developments;
- » **Hold** an Ireland-LAC Business and Economic Forum to facilitate dialogue on business opportunities and to showcase innovation;
- » **Develop** opportunities for best-practice policy exchange on education;
- » **Promote** trade, tourism, education, research, innovation and investment links and missions, and support new and existing Irish-LAC business networks across the region;
- » **Promote** agri-food trade development to build insights and market understanding, particularly in the dairy ingredients and meat sectors;
- » **Maximise** opportunities to advance economic relations by supporting trade facilitation, increased market access, direct air links to the region, an expanded network of double taxation agreements, where appropriate, an expansion of the working holiday programme, and a streamlined provision of visa services;
- » **Promote** Ireland as a destination for higher education and research collaboration in the LAC region, targeting key sub-regions; promote increased research and mobility partnerships between Ireland and LAC universities, institutions and researchers, in line with Ireland's forthcoming International Education and Research Strategy;
- » **Foster** cooperation between Caribbean SIDS and Irish institutions on areas of mutual interest including tourism and telecommunications, and explore how existing person-to-person partnerships could provide a basis for longer-term trade and investment relationships, as outlined in Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with SIDS;
- » **Maximise** opportunities for Irish businesses to align with and benefit from EU priorities for the region, including regarding digital alliance and green and circular economy, in order to 'build back better'.

3

Ireland will pursue a collaborative Team Ireland approach across the region.



Staff of Embassy Brasilia and Consulate General Sao Paulo celebrate Pride with local activists, Brazil, 2021. © Marcia Minillo

WE WILL:

- » **Supplement** existing resources to deliver on the ambitious objectives of the Strategy by strengthening our presence in the region;
- » **Reinforce** the recently established dedicated Latin America and Caribbean Directorate in DFA to support delivery of this Strategy;
- » **Establish** regular biannual regional LAC Team Ireland meetings;
- » **Maximise** the opportunities presented by the creation of a regional Garda Liaison Officer post, in autumn 2021, based at Embassy Bogota;
- » **Build** on the experience of greater inter-Embassy cooperation fostered by the pandemic to deliver regional events and programmes of interest under the Strategy;
- » **Develop** opportunities to increase awareness and understanding in Ireland of the region and its culture, society and commerce, and work to promote increased study of the Spanish and Portuguese languages;
- » **Maximise** opportunities presented by Ireland's Associate Observer Status at the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) and Observer Status at the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF);
- » **Explore** opportunities for collaboration and lesson-sharing under Ireland's Green Foreign Ministry Initiative.



Avenue MacKenna, named after Chilean writer Vicuña MacKenna, grandson of Irish-born Chilean independence hero Juan MacKenna, Santiago, Chile, 2021. © DFA

4

Ireland will raise and modernise our profile across Latin America and the Caribbean, deepen cultural links with the region and strengthen ties with our diaspora.



Bust of Bernardo O'Higgins, Merrion Square, Dublin, 2021. © DFA

WE WILL:

- » **Promote** and support Irish culture, arts, history, heritage and values, including through celebrations of St Brigid's Day, St Patrick's Day, Bloomsday and Halloween, and the use of innovative technologies and virtual, in-person and blended events;
- » **Establish** a Regional Cultural Hub and appoint a Regional Cultural Officer to enhance Irish cultural engagement across Latin America and the Caribbean;
- » **Showcase** Ireland as a modern, creative, innovative country at major business and cultural events across the region;
- » **Promote** increased structured co-operation between cultural bodies, think-tanks and educational institutions to support the expansion of Irish Studies in the region;
- » **Establish** a travelling guest professorship for Irish Studies in five key universities in the region;
- » **Offer** a number of scholarships on an annual basis to support Irish Studies students in the region to study in Ireland;
- » **Promote** the translation of Irish literature to Spanish and Portuguese;
- » **Support** research on the history of Irish-Latin American relations which can enhance our public diplomacy;
- » **Hold** an annual high profile lecture on Ireland-LAC relations;
- » **Build** a strong network of local public diplomacy and cultural officers in missions across the region; strengthen and leverage links with media in the region and expand our use of social media in order to boost Ireland's profile;
- » **Participate** actively in EU-led cultural and public diplomacy initiatives in the region;



Ladies' Gaelic football team, Buenos Aires, 2020. © Hurling Club

- » **Engage** with our international alumni, exploring opportunities to grow networks of interest in the region;
- » **Promote** cooperation and exchange on sport and encourage further development across the region through our work with our diaspora and partnerships with the GAA and other national sporting organisations;
- » **Implement** the commitments in Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025 to sustain and renew the connections with our diaspora and our expanding reverse and affinity diaspora in LAC;
- » **Maximise** involvement in relevant regional commemorations across the LAC region to support our partnerships and raise visibility of Ireland;
- » **Conduct** a study of the links between Ireland and the Caribbean, as outlined in Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with SIDS;
- » **Deliver** the highest standard of passport and consular services and consular assistance to reflect the goals of our Consular Strategy, including regional cooperation – enhanced, where relevant, by the roll-out of digital services;
- » **Work** to ensure that our visa policy takes into account broader strategic, political, economic and cultural interests in the region, including by the addition of Colombia and Peru to the Short Stay Visa Waiver Scheme, the possible removal of visa fees and additional measures to further people-to-people relationships;
- » **Work** to further diversify our networks, deepen our influence and enhance our consular assistance as part of expanding the reach and impact of the Honorary Consul network.

5

Ireland will deepen engagement with Latin America and Caribbean partners to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

WE WILL:

- » **Contribute** actively to the development and implementation of EU policy and priorities in the region, including under Team Europe Initiatives and through the new EU funding instrument (NDICI-Global Europe), to address key global challenges including inequality and climate change and to explore opportunities for triangular cooperation;
- » **Develop** strong partnerships with LAC countries, civil society and human rights actors, and enhance our advocacy and public diplomacy activity in the region, including on the protection of Human Rights Defenders and reaching the furthest behind first, in line with the focus of Ireland's policy for international development, 'A Better World';
- » **Increase** the sharing of Ireland's experience of economic and social development, of peace and reconciliation on the island, of constitutional reform and of democratic governance with partners in the region;
- » **Build** on existing partnerships with international organisations, including UN agencies and missions, and civil society organisations to identify and support further opportunities to progress issues related to human rights, peace and conflict resolution, migration and, particularly in Central America, food security and nutrition, and on blue and orange economies in the Caribbean;
- » **Work** with international NGOs and civil society organisations in Central America to explore innovative models of funding, including consortia, that promote and facilitate a vibrant civil society and support local communities;
- » **Provide** support and respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and the wider region, and enhance emergency response to extreme weather events and other natural disasters across the region;
- » **Grow** cooperation and engagement with the Caribbean states within our shared constituency in the IMF and World Bank as well as with regional International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the Caribbean Development Bank, which will provide further opportunities to work together with Caribbean states;

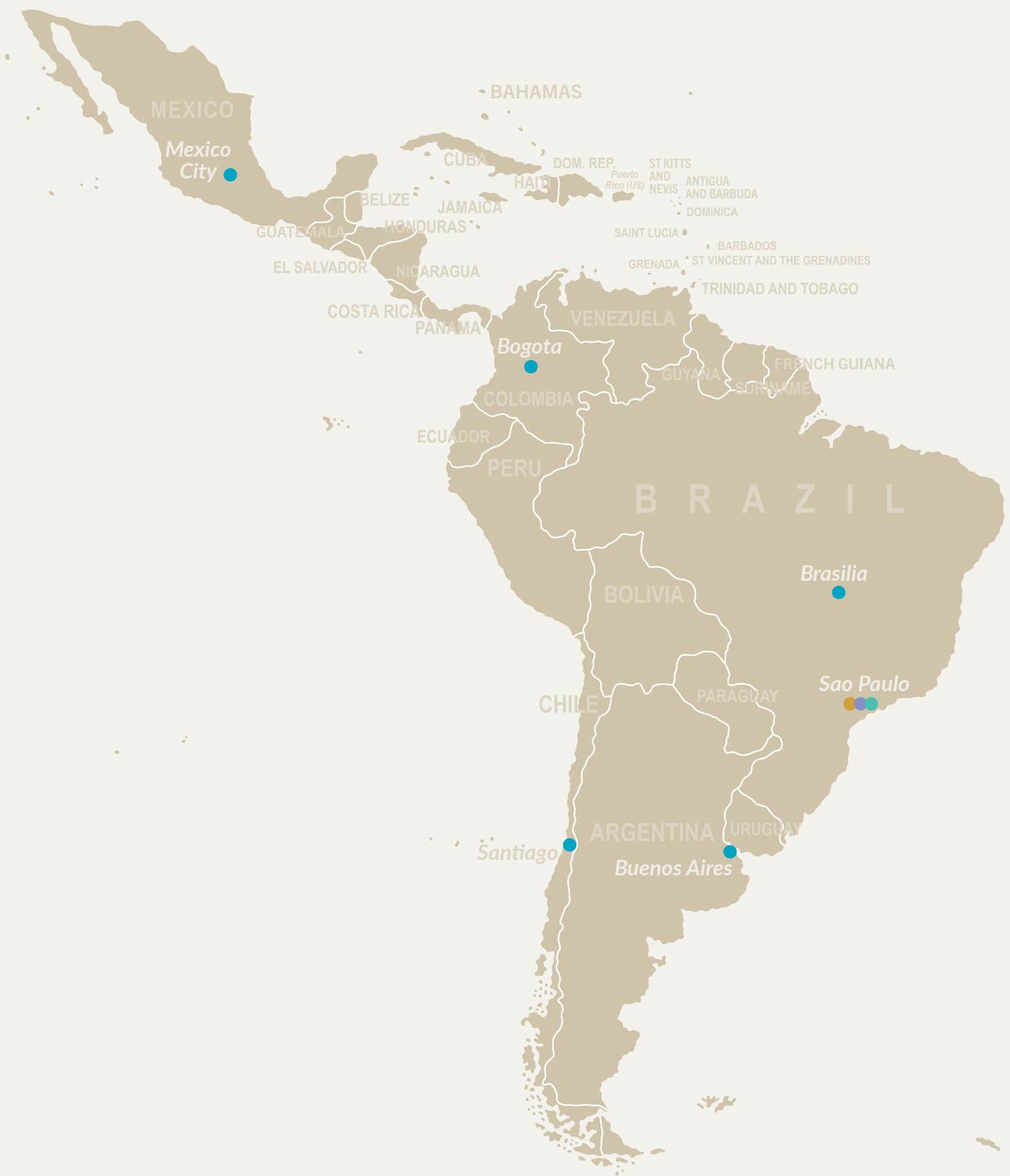


Embassy Bogota participates in a human rights trip to Antioquia, Colombia, 2021. © Antonio Castrillon

- » **Implement** Caribbean-related commitments in Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This includes commitments to:
 - » Deepen our relationship with the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF), while also exploring how we engage with other innovative financing mechanisms;
 - » Explore a partnership with a regional Caribbean body on the blue economy, linking sustainable coastal and marine management, investment pipelines, livelihoods for the poor, and renewable energy development;
 - » Seek to identify specific areas of collaboration, such as women's economic empowerment, in dialogue with the Caribbean Development Bank;
 - » Launch and continue existing partnerships in cooperation with Caribbean SIDS including an Ocean Innovation Initiative and the SIDS fellowship scheme;
 - » Support UN Volunteer placements in the Caribbean.
 - » **Organise** a conference with civil society partner organisations active in the region;
 - » **Support**, financially and through advocacy, efforts aimed at the preservation and sustainable use of the Amazon rainforest as part of Ireland's commitment to tackle climate change and protect vulnerable indigenous groups;
 - » **Continue** our support for the Colombian Peace Process, including through our work on the UN Security Council (2021-2022);
 - » **Launch** a series of fellowship awards, in line with the objectives of this Strategy, including Roger Casement (Human Rights) and Cecilia Grierson (Equality) awards schemes;
 - » **Support** adaptation and blue economy activities in the Caribbean, including via PROBLUE, a World Bank trust fund that supports the development of integrated, sustainable and healthy marine and coastal resources;
 - » **Explore** the potential for capacity-building initiatives in the areas of tax administration, expenditure and debt management, and skills development in areas such as financial services and climate change.
-
- » Report annually to Government on progress towards these five strategic objectives.



Irish Aid monitoring visit, Honduras, 2019. © DFA



Ireland's Footprint in Latin America and the Caribbean

- Embassies
- Consulates
- Current IDA Ireland locations
- Current Enterprise Ireland locations



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