

Europe and Latin America & the Caribbean step up cooperation on cybersecurity

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The EU-LAC Digital Alliance held a high-level policy dialogue on cybersecurity on 14-16 February 2024 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, as the first dialogue following the 2023 Digital Alliance Days. Two regions, one goal: join forces to tackle one of the main threats of our time: cyber-attacks.



In an increasingly interconnected world where **cyber threats know no borders**, a dedicated dialogue on cybersecurity between the European Union (EU) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is very timely. The EU and LAC share a common approach towards a human-centric digital transformation, which

provides a strong foundation for this dialogue and will further **strengthen their close bi-regional partnership**.

With the purpose of **boosting this cooperation and identifying concrete initiatives** to advance jointly, over 150 senior government representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the European Union (EU) and its Member States, as well as civil society, academia, and private sector, gathered in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on 14-16 February 2024.

The dialogue was opened by Joel Santos Echavarría, Minister of the Presidency of the Dominican Republic and the following discussions were co-chaired by Felice Zaccheo (European Commission) and Vice Minister José Montilla (Dominican Republic). The **focus was on key issues of cybersecurity**, such as cyberdiplomacy, resilient ecosystems, capacity building and the protection of critical infrastructure. The event was also marked by Belize official interest in joining the Digital Alliance.

Over the past years, **the number of cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure in LAC has increased exponentially**. Hence, the strengthening of such infrastructure is essential to ensure the reliability and sustainability of services and data. The bi-regional dialogue provides a platform for governments but also other relevant actors to **explore avenues to strengthen national and regional cybersecurity ecosystems**.



Action-oriented approach

The Dialogue has developed a **comprehensive approach** on cybersecurity based on four key pillars: **workforce capacity building, multi-stakeholder cooperation, strengthened cyber ecosystems** and **secure connectivity**.

How can we address the growing **demand for qualified professionals** capable of securing digital systems and infrastructures against cyber threats? The discussions addressed education and training, partnership with the private sector and academia, skill enhancement as well as cybersecurity awareness and global collaboration.


Cyber threats transcend geographic boundaries and target entities in all sectors, public, private, academic or civil society. **International cooperation** between LAC and the EU allows for the **exchange of experience and best practice**, and this **multi-stakeholder cooperation** enhances regional and global cybersecurity resilience.

A robust national and regional cybersecurity ecosystem, including **relevant policy and regulatory frameworks**, are crucial components to detect, mitigate, and recover from cyber-attacks.

Alongside policies and regulatory frameworks, cybersecurity depends on a **resilient infrastructure** for **secure connectivity**. Given the current threat landscape, and the expanding connectivity infrastructure, the sustainability of such infrastructure hinges on its ability to withstand cyber-attacks.

Stock photo cybersecurity

EU-LAC Digital Alliance moving forward

During the [EU-LAC Digital Alliance days in Colombia in November 2023](#)  , participants agreed that collaboration between both regions is essential to enhance global cybersecurity, and **contribute to a free, open, safe and secure cyberspace**, also in view of the **new challenges pose by emerging technologies**.

These bi-regional Dialogues also contribute to better align **EU and LAC shared values and norms in multilateral fora**.

This Dialogue is part of a roadmap set by the [EU-LAC Digital Alliance](#)  , launched in March 2023, under the EU Global Gateway. Participating countries issued a [Joint Declaration](#)  in the context of the EU-CELAC Summit in July 2023, where they committed to regular bi-regional dialogue and cooperation on digital matters for the benefit of their citizens.

The outcome of the EU-LAC Dialogue on Cybersecurity and other upcoming digital dialogues will be a set of **concrete steps on the way towards the 2025 EU-CELAC Summit**.

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
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
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