Mapping gangs in the caribbean

Terms of Reference for the Recruitment of Experts

Mapping of criminal gangs in the Caribbean - C4.1.1.10.25
Bi-regional workshop on criminal gang presence in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean - C4.1.1.09.25

April to September 2025
CARIBBEAN

LIMITE DE CANDIDATURE
24 Avril 2025

DURÉE DE LA MISSION
Court Terme

ZONE GÉOGRAPHIQUE
Caraïbes

1. Background

The objective of PACCTO 2.0 is to provide assistance for the strengthening of justice and security systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. Encompassing the entire penal chain - police, justice and penitentiary - the programme contributes to the fight against transnational organised crime from four specific perspectives:

1. High Level Strategic Dialogues;
2. Capacity building/institutional strengthening;
3. Facilitating operational cooperation;
4. Working with various criminal markets (drugs, money laundering, human trafficking, cybercrime, environmental crime, trafficking in cultural property).

In this sense, the expected Outcome (OC) or final result of the programme is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cooperation between EU and Caribbean criminal justice actors in the investigation and prosecution of organised crime.
In terms of the final result, the PACCTO aims to achieve three outputs (OPs) or specific results:

1. OP 1. Regional strategic dialogue and cooperation on justice and security issues enhanced.
2. OP 2: Strengthened technical and methodological capacities, and implementation of approaches focusing on human rights, gender, youth, conflict sensitivity and civil society participation.
3.OP 3: Operational capacities to prosecute organised crime in key criminal markets enhanced.

To achieve these results, PACCTO 2.0 and the Caribbean countries define a number of annual or multi-annual priorities, which are reflected in the two biannual Strategic Plans for the Caribbean, in addition to the Annual Action Plans. At the same time, activities are linked to specific indicators in the programme's Logical Framework that allow measuring progress towards the achievement of the above-mentioned intermediate and final results. The Concept Note defines the expected result(s) and relevant indicator(s) for this particular action/activity.

Background to the activity

The Caribbean Sea's location at the crossroads of North and South America places it in a perfect position to play a key role in the transshipment of drugs to the United States and Europe.

Its countless small, uninhabited islands and cays, spread over more than a million square miles, are ideal hideouts and supply points for drug traffickers.

The struggle for control of territory and drug trafficking routes is giving rise to an unprecedented wave of violence and organised crime. The proliferation of weapons (pistols, revolvers, rifles, shotguns and machine guns, the vast majority trafficked from the United States) and the influence of transnational criminal networks are increasing homicide rates in countries such as Jamaica, Guyana, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

In Trinidad and Tobago in December 2024, a state of emergency was declared following an attempt on the life of a gang leader, and the government is preparing for possible reprisals, according to authorities.

Defence forces and police are authorised to conduct warrantless searches, bail is suspended and alleged offenders can be detained for 48 hours without charge. Bail will be suspended and alleged offenders can be detained for 48 hours without charge, extendable for a further seven days.

Colombian and Mexican criminal organisations are involved in drug trafficking through the Caribbean, **often collaborating with local gangs.**

Historically, Colombian traffickers have worked closely with Dominican and Jamaican groups.Mexican organisations organise the shipment of cocaine from Colombia through the Caribbean to the coastal state of Quintana Roo. The Zetas and the Sinaloa cartel have also been involved in trafficking in the Dominican Republic in the past, but the current influence of Mexican groups in the country is unclear.

Today, the Dominican Republic is home to perhaps the most sophisticated drug trafficking groups of any Caribbean nation. Dominican groups collaborate with Colombians and Europeans to coordinate cocaine shipments to Europe and the United States.

Locally, Caribbean street gangs are closely linked to the region's high homicide rates. While most street gangs are involved in robbery, extortion and drug trafficking, some have been recruited to serve as intermediaries in the international drug trade, receiving shipments on their shores and organising their shipment to other nations.

In countries such as Jamaica and Haiti, for example, government sectors have established political alliances with local gangs to compensate for the state's neglect of certain communities. Gangs in Trinidad and Tobago also play key social roles: their leaders call themselves ‘community leaders’ and control the allocation of jobs through public works contracts.

The gang situation in Haiti is the most serious in the Caribbean, with gangs controlling most of the capital, Port-au-Prince. Gangs have taken advantage of the security crisis following the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in 2021 to use Haiti as a hub for drug and arms trafficking.

These groups are increasingly made up of young people, recruited from poor neighbourhoods where the presence of the state is almost non-existent and that of the gangs is strongly felt. As a rule, they have little family support, few activities to occupy their free time, little interest in school, and end up finding ‘support’ and a source of income in their participation in these groups.

In addition to the involvement of young people in these gangs, it is also important to highlight the role of women. Women's participation in gangs has changed from being victims of coercion to joining these criminal groups. It is necessary to distinguish their participation as perpetrators, accomplices, accessories to crimes or victims.

It would also be important to analyse the activity of these criminal groups from a human rights perspective. According to Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: ‘Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

The evidence suggests that certain individuals and groups are disproportionately affected by acts of organised crime. The impact is most pronounced for groups that are structurally vulnerable: ***youth at risk; women and LGBTQIA+ communities; victims of crime; and those living in communities affected by violence and poverty.***

2. Objective

The main objective of the mapping exercise is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the scale and dynamics of gang-related crime and drug trafficking in the CARICOM region, as well as to provide clear recommendations and opportunities for future

activities. This includes an analysis of how these groups operate, whether and how they interact with each other, the scale of their activities in different countries, and how their activities affect human rights, gender and youth.
Some preliminary and tentative ideas: regional approach to crime control, operational support, preventive programmes, legislation, awareness raising campaigns, data and information exchange, regional workshops and collaboration with international partners. In this way, the foundations are laid for specific actions to address the problem. The mapping exercise should complement the activity or activities to be organised under the other PACCTO 2.0 component around this issue. Another objective is to establish relevant and effective points of contact.

Specific objectives of the mission:

- The objective is to map the criminal groups involved in drug trafficking operating in the Caribbean islands. This mapping exercise will focus on identifying the extent of the gang problem in the Caribbean region, its relationship to drug trafficking (as well as to human rights, gender and youth offences) and the national and/or regional approaches that already exist or are being developed (experts will have to use a questionnaire to be completed by individual Caribbean countries on gang activity in their territory).
- This includes an analysis of how these groups operate, whether and how they interact with each other, and the scale of their activities in different countries. It will also identify which countries require additional attention in future activities to address gang-related problems. Overall, the exercise should provide clear recommendations for future PACCTO 2.0 activities.
- Some preliminary and tentative ideas: regional approach to crime control, related to drug trafficking, operational support, preventive programmes, legislation, awareness raising campaigns, data and information exchange, regional workshops and collaboration with international partners. This lays the groundwork for specific actions to address the problem. The mapping exercise should complement the activity or activities to be organised under the other PACCTO 2.0 component around this issue.
    1. Main functions

3. Description of services to be performed

DURATION AND PLACE	The duration of the activity will be 15 days: 10 days teleworking at the expert's home, 5 days in the field (dates and country to be confirmed). 5 days in the field (country to be defined): meetings with local institutions to learn about existing policies and processes. Participation in preparatory meetings with the KEY EXPERT on Drugs and Weapons of the EL PACCTO 2.0 Programme will be requested. At the conclusion of the activity, the experts will be asked to prepare a report. Presentation of a first version of the mapping during the bi-regional meeting (C4.1.1.09.25) in the Dominican Republic in September (to be confirmed).
WORKLOAD	The activity will be carried out by 2 experts with proven experience in the subjects to be developed, one European and one local person.
DATES	10 days remote 5 days in the field, country and dates to be defined

1. Deliverables:

Product related to the mapping of criminal groups operating in the Caribbean islands. This product should include the following elements.

1. A questionnaire to be distributed to the different countries that make up the Caribbean, on the activity of the gangs involved in drug trafficking in their territory.
2. Identification of the criminal gangs/gangs operating in the Caribbean region, as well as the

criminal activities in which they are involved;
3. Identify how the activities of these criminal groups relate to human rights, gender and youth issues;
4. An analysis of how these groups operate, as well as their relations with each other (i.e. within the same island) and their relations with criminal groups in other Caribbean islands and beyond (Latin America and Europe).
5. Relate the structure of the gangs to the recruitment and exploitation of young people;
6. Infographic mapping of gangs/criminal gangs in each country.
7. Identify which countries require additional attention in future activities aimed at addressing gang-related problems, making clear recommendations for future activities with PACCTO 2.0, namely: regional approach to crime control, operational support, preventive programmes, legislation, awareness raising campaigns, data and information exchange, regional workshops and collaboration with international partners.
    1. Mandatory requirements of the expert(s):

Preparation and qualifications:

Specific qualifications:

Expert from an Caribbean country or regional institution, with experience in organized crime, drug trafficking and with knowledge of human rights, youth and gender policies in the security and/or justice sector and with knowledge of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Common qualifications:

- Fluent English proficiency (oral and written).
- Proven writing and synthesis skills.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and multidisciplinary teamwork.
- Ability to relate to and communicate with multicultural interlocutors.

General Professional Experience:

- Minimum of 10 years' experience investigating organized crime and “gangs” in the Caribbean and Latin America

Specific professional experience:

- Experience in bodies or institutions related to the investigation of organized crime will be a plus.
- Experience developing Action Plans for interstate or regional organizations.
- Membership in judicial or institutional networks for international cooperation will be a plus.
- Experience working in Latin America, particularly the Caribbean.
- Experience working with human rights, youth, and gender policies in the security and/or justice sectors.

4. Criteria scale

The stated requirements and merits will be assessed based on the information contained in the CVs. CVs must be in Europass format, in English.

If necessary, an ad hoc scoring table can be established.

5. Award or mobilization and formalization period

The contract will be awarded, or the letter of appointment or commitment will be signed no later than April 25th at 14:00 Madrid.

The document of formalization of the contract will grant inside of the term 7 business days from the award.

6. Duration

The contract or the designation letter should have a duration of maximum 5 months since the signature. The maximum number of working days will be 15, from April 30th to September 30th, 2025.

7. Fees and allowances[1]

The fees for service reasons are €350 (THREE HUNDRED FIFTY EUROS) per day of activity. The payment of fees will be made at the end of the mission, on the basis of the days worked as stated in the appropriate Certificate, and upon presentation of the following documentation:

- Digital delivery of the deliverables
- Original attendance certificate (time sheet) signed by the expert and the Project Manager.
- Certificate of tax residence in original as the case may be.
- Any other administrative document requested by the contracting authority.

8. Presentation of proposals

The required institutions will send the CVs of the proposed experts who meet the requirements defined in these Terms of Reference to the email address of the SPO of component 4: ignacia.perez@elpaccto.eu

The deadline for receiving applications ends on April 24th 2025 at 14:00 p.m. (Madrid local time).e
In the case of experts who belong to the public civil service, once selected, the institution to which the candidate depends on must send a letter of appointment of the selected person.

The curriculum vitae must be accompanied by a letter of motivation, in the case of an expert not appointed by a public institution.
In the case of experts belonging to the civil service, once selected, the institution to which the candidate belongs must send a letter of appointment of the selected person.

The EL PACCTO 2.0 program reserves the right to reject the applications of experts who do not meet the requested requirements.

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[1] En el caso de que se trate de la movilización de un/a funcionario/a público/a mediante la firma de una carta de compromiso, el pago de los honorarios y dietas se hará en función de las reglas del Ministerio de originen de la persona experta. / (sólo para los TdR que no se vayan a publicar. Si se publican, se elimina este apartado)



