



SPOTLIGHT ON KEY ORGANISATIONS: SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

This Spotlight presents some of the key Latin American organisations working to support the strengthening of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the region, and highlights some of the most important NHRIs in Latin America. The emphasis of this Spotlight is on the resources that these organisations offer to strengthen the work of human rights actors from other regions. The Spotlight also highlights the work these organisations do in providing spaces for knowledge exchange as well as training opportunities.

To learn more about the design and key features of NHRIs in the region, read the [ELLA Brief: Latin America's National Human Rights Institutions: Fostering Democratic Transitions and Guaranteeing Human Rights](#).

ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING NHRIs

► Ibero-American Federation of Ombudsman (*Federación Iberoamericana del Ombudsman - FIO*)

Link: <http://www.portalfio.org/inicio/>

Areas of Expertise: Strengthening NHRIs

Key Activities: Research, building networks amongst NHRIs, training and promoting knowledge exchange opportunities

FIO is a regional network that has played an important role in promoting the creation and strengthening of NHRIs. It was created in 1995 and joins together the different NHRIs of the countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean, as well as Spain and Portugal. It has improved the work of these institutions through training, study and research programmes, and enjoyed the support and cooperation of international agencies.



► Ombudsnet of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR)

Link: <http://www.iidh.ed.cr/comunidades/ombudsnet/>

Areas of Expertise: Ombudsman offices, national human rights legislation

Key Activities: Research and promotion of NHRI activities and publications, networking, online learning and discussion forums

Ombudsnet is an integrated information and communication system for Ombudsman Offices in Latin America and the Caribbean. The site gathers information about the ombudsman offices, including links to other networks at the sub-regional level, and collates resources about human rights doctrine, legislation and jurisprudence in the region. *Ombudsnet* also offers a digital library, discussion forums and online courses. *Ombudsnet* is administered by the [IIHR](#), an autonomous, academic international institution. Created in 1980 through an agreement between the [Inter-American Court of Human Rights](#) and the government of Costa Rica, it conducts research, advocacy and education about human rights issues in the region.

► Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section

Link: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/nhri/pages/nhrimain.aspx>

Areas of Expertise: Human rights, NHRIs

Key Activities: Share useful information related to United Nations reports and documents to strengthen NHRIs

The National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section (NIRMS) of the OHCHR gathers and publicises United Nations documents related to NHRIs. This mechanism offers a useful way to access guidelines and recommendations the UN has issued about establishing and strengthening NHRIs.

SPOTLIGHT ON KEY NHRIs

► Mexico City's NHRI

Link: <http://www.cd hdf.org.mx/index.php>

Areas of Expertise: Defending and promoting human rights

Key Activities: Receives complaints related to human rights violations, investigation and elaboration of recommendations and reports related to those violations, development of public policy proposals and human rights education activities

The Human Rights Commission of Mexico City was created in 1993. Although established relatively recently, it has succeeded in creating consolidated and comprehensive programmes to defend and promote human rights. For example, it played a strong role in developing human rights-based budgeting, documented in the [ELLA Case Study: Mexico City's Innovation: Budgeting with a Human Rights Approach](#). It has pushed forward innovations such as establishing public policies with a human rights perspective, and has gained credibility among civil society members and public institutions. Its website provides access to information about reports, programmes and general activities that the institution develops and implements.



► Peruvian Ombudsman

Link: <http://www.defensoria.gob.pe/>

Areas of Expertise: Defending and promoting human rights

Key Activities: Receives complaints related to human rights violations, investigation and elaboration of recommendations and reports related to those violations, development of public policy proposals and human rights education activities and reports related to those violations, development of public policy proposals and human rights education activities

The Ombudsman Office in Peru was created by the 1993 Constitution as an independent body in charge of defending fundamental rights and monitoring the performance of government agencies in terms of respecting human rights. The work accomplished by this institution has had a significant impact on conflict resolution, especially related to indigenous rights. It has gained credibility and certainly has become a counterweight to public sector actors and agencies. On its website, readers can access information such as reports about programmes and general activities, as well as research about the government's performance in terms of protecting specific human rights.

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FIND OUT MORE FROM [ELLA](#)

To learn more about Latin American efforts to strengthen NHRIs, read the [ELLA Brief: Latin America's National Human Rights Institutions](#). To learn more about other aspects of human rights in Latin America, read the [ELLA Guide](#), which has a full list of the knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA development issues, browse other [ELLA Themes](#).



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