

GIGA Mission Statement

The German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) / Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien is an independent social science institute committed to research excellence and rigorously upholding the Leibniz motto of “theoria cum praxi”: science for the benefit of society. The GIGA analyses political, economic, and social developments in and across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, as well as global issues and their regional and local repercussions. Based on its research, the Institute engages in regular knowledge-exchange activities with policymakers, practitioners, and the wider public.

Approach to Scholarship

The Institute’s flagship approach is Comparative Area Studies (CAS), with which we conduct both intra- and cross-regional comparisons at different levels of analysis – global, regional, national, local. The GIGA’s scholarship combines context sensitivity with cutting-edge research methodologies. We develop and apply, as such, innovative analytical approaches engaging with perspectives and experiences from different world regions.

The GIGA operates a matrix structure: All researchers belong simultaneously to one Regional Institute and one (or more) of the four cross-regional Research Programmes: “Accountability and Participation”; “Peace and Security”; “Globalisation and Development”; and “Global Orders and Foreign Policies.” This matrix structure helps facilitate innovative comparative studies and cross-regional learning. The GIGA publishes its research in high-impact academic journals and as books appearing in a number of different languages. We are committed to disseminating our research findings and original data on an Open Access basis. In our scholarship, we are guided by clear academic and ethical standards.

People and Collaboration

The GIGA is a multidisciplinary institute, one comprised of political scientists, economists, and researchers from related disciplines. Our international team includes researchers from pre-doctoral to professorial level. In pursuit of the highest standards of work, our researchers are supported by several dedicated service departments, including our research library that holds one of the largest collections of texts in Europe on Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and global issues. We treasure a healthy institutional culture and are committed to helping staff members advance in their careers, in particular junior researchers. The GIGA promotes equal opportunities, family friendliness, and diversity.

We also collaborate with leading research institutions around the world. Doing so builds on a long-standing tradition of working with colleagues in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East via institutional partnerships, participation in major research initiatives, formal and informal networks, and individual research stays. Associates of and Visiting Fellows at the Institute work with GIGA colleagues on specific projects, events, and publications. We are mindful of and continuously reflect on power asymmetries and the complex and varying parameters informing such collaboration with partners in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and beyond.

Outreach and Policy Exchange

Outreach to policymakers, the media, and the wider public is central to the GIGA’s work. The Institute is committed to fostering knowledge exchange and dialogue in Germany, Europe, and internationally, and to further developing Hamburg as a hub of knowledge. We include regional voices in both our research and outreach activities and seek to share results of these activities with societies in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.