

‘EU-LAC Gender Equality Forum’

Berlin

11 and 12 May 2023

- Report -

Organisation: EU-LAC International Foundation, EU-LAC Women’s International Network

Co-Hosts: German Federal Foreign Office, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina; Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico

Implementing partners: Unidas Women’s Network between Germany, Latin America and the Caribbean, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

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Executive summary

The CELAC-EU Summit of Heads of State and Government, scheduled for 17 and 18 July 2023, will provide an opportunity to generate a high-level strategic dialogue on the challenges and opportunities for bi-regional cooperation on gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the European Union (EU) countries. In the framework of its mission to facilitate the exchange between governmental and civil society authorities of the two regions, the EU-LAC Foundation organised on 11 and 12 May 2023 a Gender Equality Forum with the objective of generating outputs to feed the discussion agenda of high-level authorities in the field of women’s political, economic and social rights, political leadership, care, gender-based violence, peacebuilding and sustainable security.

The EU-LAC Gender Equality Forum took place at the German Federal Foreign Office and the GIZ Representation Berlin and in hybrid format and was supported technically and financially by the Unidas Women’s Network between Germany, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as with the institutional support of the German Federal Foreign Office, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina, and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico.

The Forum gathered 81 face-to-face participants and 56 virtual participants – representatives of civil society networks and organisations working on gender equality, the rights of girls, women and LGBTIQ+ people, academic experts as well as cooperation agencies and international organisations specialised in the field, and governmental representatives from LAC and the EU. This report reflects, in synthesised form, the dialogues held during the Forum, along with the information shared by several experts through a previous online survey.

The exchange focused on the challenges, advances and proposals related to the institutional framework, policies, instruments and initiatives of cooperation between the two regions. It addressed the following topics: overcoming socio-economic inequalities, taking action on climate change as well as political leadership and the construction of sustainable peace and security. During the dialogues, emphasis was placed on the important role of the EU-CELAC Heads of State in ratifying and implementing international and regional conventions of reference, facilitating structural transformations at the level of societies and reinforcing the bi-regional commitment to face the growing challenges that threaten advances in gender equality. Participants explored the potential of implementing Feminist Foreign Policies as State Policies and the generation of greater coherence between domestic policies, trade policies and foreign policies. They also shared experiences and good practices in the areas of comprehensive care systems; equal access to education, training and labour markets; mainstreaming of gender equality in environmental institutions, policies, and international climate funds; prevention, attention and punishment of gender-based violence in all its dimensions; political representation and international peace building. It was advocated to strengthen regulatory frameworks, cooperation programmes, communication campaigns and civil society initiatives to achieve greater outreach and impact. Other recommendations revolved around the need to generate a more horizontal, symmetrical, solidarity-based and representative bi-regional cooperation; greater investments in gender-sensitive data collection and analysis; and the strengthening of partnerships with and among the diverse spectrum of civil society organisations that promote gender equality in the two regions.

The following recommendations for strengthening the bi-regional strategic partnership in the field of gender equality were considered in the face-to-face and virtual working groups in a cross-cutting manner:

Architecture of the bi-regional cooperation:

- Promote a reflective dialogue for the construction of more symmetrical, horizontal, supportive and participatory cooperation agendas, empowering the voices of citizens and communities that are the beneficiaries of cooperation programmes, in the design of cooperation agendas and programmes.
- Establish democratic standards of transparency and accountability regarding human rights and gender equality standards in international cooperation programmes and bi-regional agreements. The creation of cooperation roundtables was also advocated, such as those that exist in some countries such as [Colombia](#) and [Peru](#), in order to optimise resources and coordination between cooperation agencies and state entities.

- Enhance triangular cooperation and support south-south cooperation efforts as a transformative practice.
- Explore new modalities of cooperation for the construction of joint bi-regional pacts, such as a bi-regional Care Pact.

Research and dissemination of analyses:

- Strengthen the collection of data disaggregated by gender and other axes of discrimination in different public policy areas and cooperation programmes and promote analyses under an intersectional approach to understand the different nodes of systemic inequalities.
- Generate regular forums for the analysis and exchange of EU-CELAC experiences on different topics of common interest for both regions.
- Accompany public policies with effective communication strategies between the two regions through the use of audio and audiovisual materials such as podcasts, reports and documentaries, based on evidence and analysis.
- Overcome language and other access barriers to achieve effective exchange of experiences and lessons learned between LAC and EU societies, ensuring translations into Spanish and other languages used in both regions.

Alliances:

- Work jointly towards a paradigm shift to conceive of gender equality as a society-wide issue and not a women's issue.
- Expand the collaboration of States with women's organisations, men, feminists, LGLBTIQ+ people, communities, academics and others in the design and implementation of public policies, programmes and projects aimed at gender equality, strengthening feminist leadership and networks working on new masculinities.
- Support and strengthen the resources of women's and feminist networks and organisations to promote their representation and scale up successful experiences led by civil society organisations such as collective mobilisations in social networks and consider the creation of a Latin American-Caribbean-European ecofeminist network for the exchange of experiences and lessons learned.
- Support the forms of collective organisation of rural and indigenous communities, their systems of self-governance and justice, and strengthen their leadership capacities in order to have a greater impact in spaces of decision making.

1. Interventions by authorities

The event was inaugurated by **Dr Tobias Lindner**, State Secretary of the German Federal Foreign Office, who stressed that gender equality should be at the centre of the bi-regional agenda. He presented the [Guide for the Implementation of a Feminist Foreign Policy](#) in Germany, which offers an overview of the concept and guidelines for the implementation of a feminist policy in foreign policy activities in the areas of peace and security policy, humanitarian assistance and crisis management, human rights, climate diplomacy and foreign energy policy, investment and foreign trade policy, cultural and social diplomacy as well as guidelines for mainstreaming this issue within the Federal Foreign Office. He mentioned that there are common interests with Latin America and the Caribbean on issues such as gender equality, climate action, economic prosperity and peace building.

Likewise, to bring these interests closer together work is being done, among others, through the “[Red Unidas](#)” Network.

Leire Pajín, President of the EU-LAC Foundation, highlighted the EU-CELAC Summit as an opportunity to resume bi-regional relations at the highest level and to put on the agenda issues such as care, a pact for fair economies and societies on equal terms and with an intersectional approach. She emphasised the need to continue working to incorporate women into all spheres of power and politics, to confront political violence and to create a strategic digital alliance that guarantees safe spaces for women. She also articulated the need to double bi-regional efforts in favour of gender equality as a response to a convulsive international context that threatens advances in women's rights and feminist movements. In addition, she highlighted the [EU-LAC International Women's Network](#) as a space in which work is being done to achieve these efforts.

The Deputy Director for the Americas of the European External Action Service, **Javier Niño Pérez**, stressed the importance of celebrating the achievements made, such as the fact that LAC is the region with the highest percentage of women parliamentarians in the world, and the construction of a Latin American, Caribbean and European model in favour of gender equality with some basic premises that should be positioned at the EU-CELAC Summit. At the same time, he expressed concern about the international context marked by the war in Ukraine and authoritarian models that threaten advances in gender equality.

Pilar Cancela, Secretary of State for International Cooperation of the MAEC, highlighted Spain's Presidency of the EU Council as an enormous opportunity to place gender equality with a cross-cutting and intersectional vision at the centre of the bi-regional agenda, thus positioning Spain's commitment to the feminist movement and gender equality in the world. She announced that her country approved in February 2023 the [new Law on Cooperation for Sustainable Development and Global Solidarity](#) that affirms gender equality, explicitly promoted from a feminist approach. In addition, she expressed concern about new forms of violence such as political violence, climate violence, digital violence and telework violence, and emphasised the need to strengthen common ties with the LAC region in the fight for human rights and to combat setbacks in gender equality.

The Special Representative for Feminist Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina, **María Cristina Perceval**, made the case for the construction of a multilateralism of equality, which seeks to generate dialogue based on parity, inclusiveness and negotiations and puts care at the centre of societies, as reflected in the [Buenos Aires Commitment](#). She also recalled that the feminist movement was the only international movement that has achieved a revolution in peace, hand in hand with the construction of human rights.

Dr Cristopher Ballinas, General Director of Human Rights and Democracy of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recalled his country's commitment to a feminist foreign state policy to recognise the activism of Latin American feminist movements, especially of indigenous women, who worked to build a normative framework for political participation. He reflected on new challenges such as violence during pandemics, climate violence and digital violence. Moreover, he presented the concept of the [Mexican Feminist Foreign Policy](#) to strengthen the contribution of women to foreign policy and global actions, to mainstream the human rights approach, the gender perspective and intersectionality in all

areas of foreign policy, and to generate greater coherence between public policies and the foreign policy of his country.

Helga Barth, Director for Human Rights and International and Social Development, German Federal Foreign Office, reiterated the Ministry's commitment to the implementation of a Feminist Foreign Policy and the pursuit of common interests and objectives with LAC countries. Among these, she highlighted socio-economic inequalities, environmental protection, protection of women human rights defenders, sustainable peace building and the need to incorporate diverse collectivities and civil society organisations in the implementation of the Feminist Foreign Policy.

The Special Ambassador for Feminist Foreign Policy, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, **María Jesús Conde Zabala**, presented the document of the [Feminist Foreign Policy of Spain](#) published in 2021 with a guide containing the principles, instruments, lines of action, actors, follow-up mechanisms and resources to promote equality as a State Policy in Spanish foreign action. She explained that there are five priorities, including gender-based violence and the women, peace and security agenda, and five guiding principles for transforming foreign policy. For its implementation, a high-level advisory group was created and an action plan was drafted which is linked to the Spanish government's [foreign action strategy](#) which includes accountability, articulation between ministries, and mainstreaming within the ministry.

In conclusion, **Dr Adrián Bonilla**, Executive Director of the EU-LAC Foundation, shared his reflections on the importance of a feminist foreign policy as a state policy and a commitment that goes beyond state-centrism. In addition, he highlighted the great importance of the inputs generated from this Forum to promote a bi-regional gender agenda based on common interests and objectives and to nurture the political dialogue of leaders from both regions in a very relevant year for the bi-regional partnership.

2. Keynote speeches

The opening segment was followed by three thematic keynote speeches. **Ana Gúezmes**, Director of the Gender Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), presented an outline for the construction of a care society, explaining the underlying concepts, principles, public policies and highlighting the opportunity to cooperate bi-regionally for the construction of a care society. She stressed that the care society proposes a transformational change to face the cascade of crises and the structural knots of gender equality faced by both regions and that the design and implementation of care policies require affirmative actions in the areas of taxation, employment, productive, economic, and social policies. She advocated moving jointly towards a bi-regional pact on care, based on the [European Care Strategy](#) and the [Buenos Aires Commitment](#), which would facilitate the breaking of some statistical blind spots, the promotion of sub-regional, regional and multilateral cooperation programmes through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation modalities, and the formulation of concrete policy and project proposals.

Ginny Heinsen, Founder and General Manager of Sostenibilidad 3RS, presented advances and challenges in the implementation of gender equality through her experience in supporting organisations to achieve environmental sustainability and eco-efficiency of

their processes through the [certification of environmental management systems](#). She expressed concern about existing gaps such as women's land tenure and access to natural resources, gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, inequalities in access to energy and water, and the low participation of women in climate governance spaces. She welcomed advances such as the [Gender and Climate Change Action Plan in the Dominican Republic](#) and increased funding opportunities for gender issues in this country, as well as the renewal of the [Gender Action Plan at the Climate Change Conference](#) (COP25).

The former President of the Supreme Court of Justice of Peru, **Dr Elvia Barrios**, outlined her concerns about the context that threatens the progress of gender equality. Gender-based violence is one of the main causes limiting political leadership and the incorporation of women in peacebuilding. In her presentation she proposed effective strategies to combat and sanction gender-based violence from the perspective of justice, such as strengthening the use of information technologies and permanent coordination with actors in the justice system. Regarding the role of women in the legal sphere, she proposed improving women's access to the justice systems on the basis of [General Recommendation No. 33](#) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopting parity as a principle of representative democracy, complementing short-term initiatives such as the quota system with preventive measures to guarantee access, permanence and promotion, and incorporating gender affirmative and intersectional actions in the justice systems in the selection, promotion and appointment of male and female judges that recognise structural barriers.

3. Overcoming economic and social inequalities

The outputs generated in this thematic area centred on challenges, good practices and recommendations for strengthening bi-regional cooperation in the following areas:

- Access to basic services, including health care, education and social security;
- Equal participation in economies and decent employment;
- Comprehensive care systems.

Stocktaking, lessons learned and good practices

The participants of the working groups and the experts who participated in the previous online survey highlighted, in the first place, advances in terms of the commitment and recognition of the States of both regions regarding women's rights and the will to strengthen gender issues as a cross-cutting theme in public policy. In this sense, participants mentioned the instruments that reflect the political commitment to advance gender equality, such as the Regional Agreements on Women in LAC, the national reports on the implementation of CEDAW, the G7 Women 7 (W7) expert group, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the public institutions created with specific gender agendas such as Ministries of Equality, among others.

They also stressed progress in both regions in terms of equal access to public health services, especially sexual and reproductive health services, public education services and financial education, as well as the promotion of women's autonomy and participation in the economy and in entrepreneurship sectors.

Progress in reconciliation and care policies, such as the European Commission's Directive on reconciliation of family and professional life and paternity leave, was acknowledged.



Improvements in the conditions of paid and unpaid care workers (formalisation of informal workers, minimum wages, fair working hours, solidarity pensions) were also highlighted. Participants took particular notice of states' commitment to build comprehensive care systems and to put care at the centre of public policies and development, as reflected in the European Care Strategy of September 2022 and the Buenos Aires Commitment of November 2022.

Among the lessons learned to close gender gaps, the need was mentioned to strengthen training processes to empower women in the exercise of their rights; to strengthen the role of trade union actors in collective bargaining processes and social dialogue; to promote the concepts of co-dependence and co-responsibility in care and the role of the State as guarantor of care rights; to work at different levels (individual, household, community, organisational and political) involving multiple actors and recognising the particular situation of each of them, in order to achieve transformative changes; to involve women in all their diversity with an intersectional approach to take into account other structural elements of inequality.

Recent initiatives, programmes and publications to be highlighted included:

- Foro Generación Igualdad
- Project [“Mujeres emprendedoras: Mejorando las oportunidades de negocios de MIPYMES lideradas por mujeres”](#)
- Project [“Promoción STEM y reducción de la brecha digital en Centroamérica desde una perspectiva de género”](#)
- Project [“Actualización Profesional para la Preservación y Renovación Generacional del Sistema Productivo Textil en la Comunidad Lenca de Honduras y El Salvador”](#)
- [Mujeres al Volante](#)
- [NiñaSTEM](#)
- [Cupo Laboral Travesti-Trans](#)
- Meetings of [Mujeres Rurales](#)
- Global programme [“Acelerar el progreso hacia el empoderamiento económico de mujeres rurales”](#)
- [Red Impacto](#)
- [Wegate European Union](#)
- [Global Alliance for Care](#)
- [Georeferencing maps](#) for care supply and demand in LAC
- [Share The Care](#)
- Law of Economic Development of Women ([Ley DEM](#))
- [Manzanas del Cuidado](#)
- Publication [‘Towards the construction of comprehensive care systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. Elements for implementation’](#)
- [Centro de Capacitação Toque de Mestre](#)
- Project [Potencias femeninas del Muquiço](#)

Current challenges

Among the current challenges, participants highlighted how the situation of women, especially in LAC, worsened though the Covid-19 pandemic, generating new inequalities,



greater informality, occupational segregation and unemployment, multiple forms of violence, an increase in the digital divide and a crisis of care. These challenges are linked to structural causes such as the crisis of democracy, the greater valuation of productive work over reproductive work, conservative movements that reject gender equality and attack feminism, the war in Ukraine and a disjointed Latin American and Caribbean region. In addition, participants mentioned women's lack of access to education and financial services, land tenure legislation, maternity or paternity legislation paid for by companies, biases in vocational education, unequal retirement age, unequal access to pre-natal education, with the consequence of persisting gender inequalities in the division of unpaid work and family relations.

Among the bottlenecks related to bi-regional cooperation assistants highlighted the lack of accessibility of information on existing opportunities and bi-regional exchanges in languages used in LAC; the lack of systems of transparency, accountability and visibility of cooperation results; the scarce support for South-South cooperation strategies; regional treaties without a gender lens; short-term fund allocations; restrictive cooperation funds generating entry barriers; and in general, power inequalities in EU-CELAC relations. Among the key factors to overcome the obstacles, they highlighted the involvement of community-based civil society organisations in the formulation of strategies that take into account the communities' contexts; fostering training processes to improve citizen participation; promoting decentralised cooperation to enhance the role of local and regional governments; reforming cooperation by overcoming a colonial vision and promoting horizontal, solidarity-based and bi-directional relations, as well as by strengthening the role of experts, academia and local actors in the design of projects.

Common interests and recommendations

Care systems:

- Promote a Bi-regional Pact for Care which, in compliance with the European Care Strategy approved by the EU in September 2022 and the Buenos Aires Commitment adopted by LAC countries in November 2022, would seek to promote the exchange of advances and practices in care; the carrying out of studies and comparative analyses; promote sub-regional, regional and multilateral cooperation programmes; and consider the formulation of concrete proposals, recognising investment in care as a driver of development.
- Foster co-responsibility for care by promoting intersectoral efforts to incorporate actors such as the private sector, international cooperation, cooperatives, academia, communities and gender co-responsibility between men and women.
- Strengthen public investment in care, which is critical for women's increased economic participation and improving households' access to quality services. This requires estimating financial requirements and employing fair and progressive tax reforms and financial systems to expand care services.
- Recognise and formalise community care, which fulfils a social and economic function in the territories; this implies to guarantee the rights of community carers and make the role of women carers in the communities more visible.

Access to basic services:

- Strengthen access and retention in formal education services and vocational education services, especially STEM careers.

- Promote access to health systems, especially sexual and reproductive health and family planning services. Also, work to eliminate child marriages and early unions and prevent child and young women's pregnancies and address unsafe abortions and the risk of maternal mortality.
- Promote policies and legislation on access to credit, finance and entrepreneurship to promote women's access to financial services.
- Strengthen networks of public actors, especially mechanisms for the advancement of women and governmental actors for the promotion of gender equality in different public institutions.

Equal participation in the economies:

- Strengthen the role of rural, peasant and indigenous women and consider them as strategic allies of cooperation and pillars of development. It was suggested to guarantee women's right to land ownership in national legislations and to officially support the proposal of celebrating a [Decade of Rural Women](#) to contribute to guarantee rural women's rights.
- Promote the triple green, digital and social transitions through policies and programmes that support investment and the creation of triple-impact businesses, with special attention to feminised sectors, democratise access to technologies to eliminate the gender digital divide and support larger enterprises and businesses led by women.
- Consider intersectionalities to ensure equal participation in economies. It is important to make visible the diversities of women and their contexts, such as the dimensions of poverty, disability and age, as well as migrant women and their role in transnational care chains and rural women. A short-term instrument could be the implementation of participation quotas in EU cooperation projects to ensure the representation of traditionally excluded groups.
- Establish accountability mechanisms so that the private sector assumes a commitment to guarantee labour rights. Decision makers were urged to promote labour legislation based on the concept of decent employment, the incorporation of Labour Codes in national legislations, as well as the participation of workers in tripartite dialogues. The need for a bi-regional commitment to advance regulations for a binding treaty on business and human rights within the UN was also emphasised.

4. Taking action on climate change

The outputs provided in this thematic area concerned challenges, good practices and recommendations in order to give new impetus to bi-regional cooperation in areas such as:

- Climate action and natural disaster risk management
- Resilience and adaptive capacity
- Food security
- Women's knowledge and skills-based solutions

Stocktaking, lessons learned and good practices

Working group assistants and those who participated in the online pre-survey highlighted, first and foremost, progress in terms of institutional and legislative frameworks that allow

for greater synergies between the environmental and gender equality agendas. In general, the commitments made by countries in both regions to meet the international climate change goal of limiting temperature increase through the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) were recognised; 100% of LAC NDCs have gender references (in 2015 only 45%); 82 gender mandates that exist in the climate and environmental agendas were recorded; several Ministries of Environment established gender offices, specific mandates and focal points. It was positively assessed that the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has conducted a regional consultation on the empowerment of women and girls in the context of climate change, environment and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes. Likewise, there is progress in recognising care for the planet in the care agenda through the Buenos Aires Commitment, with eight mentions of care for the planet.

The consideration of differentiated social and gender impacts of the climate crisis through the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); gender-responsive environmental finance programmes; and the generation of knowledge about the links between inequality, gender, and environmental issues were also highlighted. In particular, participants appreciated the entry into force of the Escazu Agreement - the first regional environmental treaty in LAC that contains provisions for the protection of human rights defenders in environmental issues who are regularly confronted with harassment, threats and attacks on their lives. Finally, the recognition of a healthy environment as a universal human right in the UN General Assembly in July 2022 was highlighted as an important milestone, as well.

Recent initiatives, programmes and publications to be highlighted included:

- [Fondo Verde del Clima](#) (GCF)
- [Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial](#) (GEF)
- [Fondo específico para pérdidas y daños](#) aprobado en la Conferencia sobre Cambio Climático (COP27)
- [Acuerdo de Escazú](#)
- [ILO Convention No. 169](#)
- [European Green Deal](#)
- [Climate Promise](#) Project
- [Grupo de Género y Ambiente](#) del Foro de Ministros y Ministras de Medio Ambiente de ALC
- [Mujeres Tejedoras del Agua](#)
- Red Ecofeminista Latinoamericana y del Caribe

Current challenges

Among the main challenges to achieving gender-transformative climate action, the continuity of the extractivist model was highlighted, especially in the areas of mining, energy and agribusiness, inextricably linked to the fossil fuel dependence of advanced economies. The lack of human rights due diligence legislation, i.e., rules and regulations to ensure that governments and companies and their supply chains do not harm people, communities and the environment, was also addressed.

Another major challenge was seen in the low availability of financial resources for gender and environment projects, especially for projects led by women or women's organisations

and indigenous communities, without adequate triangulation between global funds, national proposals and women's organisations. In addition, women defenders experience multiple forms of violence and feminist organisations are characterised by still weak structures, which further limits their ability to obtain and use resources. The mechanisms for payments for environmental services, as well as the lack of clarity and free, prior and informed consultation on debt swap mechanisms were questioned. Furthermore, there are insufficient funds for loss and damage and environmental debt.

Participants stressed the importance of theoretical, conceptual and analytical foundations to understand the relationships between climate change and gender (in)equality. The lack of data to address the intersectionality of gender and environment was noted, with little or no disaggregated and recorded information available at the country level. In particular, the lack of a cross-cultural and situated approach to environment and gender actions was mentioned. Likewise, there is little or no information on climate migration and the present and future social and economic impacts nor much research addressing the underlying environmental causes of such migration. Thus, at present, it is difficult to conduct monitoring and evaluation studies to measure the impacts of environmental redistribution policies on gender equality. This is linked to the need to generate research to ground concrete solutions in practice and to scale up successful experiences based on a bottom-up approach.

Finally, there are challenges in implementing gender issues in local agendas and problems of corruption in LAC governments that limit the use of resources earmarked for gender and environment.

Common interests and recommendations

Green, democratic and equitable transitions:

- Generate policies and programmes that holistically address the environment, including the climate and nature crisis, biodiversity losses and mass species extinctions, threats to food sovereignty and differentiated social and economic impacts.
- New social contracts should put at the centre care for life in all its forms, with a development model that restores balance with nature and promotes renewable energies with sustainable technologies, due diligence, and free, prior and informed consultation.
- Actions aimed at promoting the green transition should be processed under an intercultural, intersectional, climate justice and gender approach. In this regard, it was recommended that spaces for dialogue and consensus-building be built in order to recover the ability to listen to the voices of citizens in decision-making and to respect the different ways and visions of understanding the relationship with nature in line with the principles of participatory, environmental and feminist democracy.
- Build post-extractivist economies and societies with the development of options that facilitate an orderly, progressive and sustainable exit from dependence on oil, coal and gas, mining, deforestation and large monocultures, and the transition towards renewable, decentralised, decommodified and democratic energy schemes, as well as collective, safe and quality mobility models; the design of these

transitions should be focused on the eradication of poverty and multidimensional inequalities.

- Recognise access to energy as a human right and promote democratic access to energy, which means, for example, that energy tariffs should not exceed people's ability to pay at the individual, family and community level. At the same time, it was recommended that energy and technologies from fair and sustainable production chains should be promoted.

Financial architecture:

- Create funding mechanisms to address the intersectionality of environment and gender issues, for example through a specific environmental fund, or gender windows in existing environmental funds, as well as non-reimbursable funds for gender capacity building and women's empowerment.
- Incorporate new gender requirements in environmental financing, such as the presentation of good practice reports to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the analysis phase; the inclusion of a percentage of the budget of environmental projects to gender; the incorporation of specific project objectives, actions and results; and reporting on progress and impacts in the monitoring and evaluation phases.
- Adapt loss and damage funding mechanisms to the needs and demands of feminist organisations and indigenous and ethnic groups, based on spaces for dialogue between funders and these groups in the territories.
- Explore ecological debt cancellation mechanisms for highly indebted countries. Even when these countries would benefit from debt restructuring programmes, they would continue to face the choice of either continuing to service their debt to private creditors or meeting commitments to their people to foster public policies that build development and resilience to environmental degradation and climate disasters. It was also suggested that fossil fuel subsidies be eliminated and that all investments should include binding due diligence.

Governance and capacity-building:

- Enhance the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Gender Plan of Action and allocate specific resources to support its implementation.
- Promote ratification of ILO Convention No. 169 among countries in both regions that have not yet done so.
- Promote the ratification of the Escazú Agreement among LAC countries that have not yet done so and adopt a Gender Plan for this Agreement.
- Strengthen gender focal points in the Ministries of Environment and other Ministries whose actions have an impact on the environment (Ministries of Energy, Production, Water...) and environmental issues in the Ministries of Gender and Equality.
- Establish national gender and climate change working groups, especially to accompany NDC implementation plans.
- Strengthen the capacities of decision-makers so that successful experiences in gender and environment become national policies and that these can be adopted in local agendas.

- Increase the resources and scope of gender equality mainstreaming in the EUROCLIMA+ programme.
- Strengthen data collection and accompany research with strategic communication campaigns, building bridges between academia and communities to promote gender-sensitive climate research at the territorial level and ensure that information reaches communities.
- Create a European-Latin American and Caribbean Ecofeminist Network to address dialogues and actions on just and equitable transitions, from a gender and intersectional perspective. It is important to generate an intercultural dialogue that recovers the listening of citizens' voices in decision-making and respect for the different ways and visions of understanding balance and the relationship with nature. It was also recommended that existing networks of women environmental and human rights defenders be strengthened and articulated to promote women's leadership and respect for the different ways and visions of understanding the balance and relationship with nature.

5. Political leadership and peacebuilding

In this thematic area, challenges and good practices were analysed and recommendations were made to promote bi-regional cooperation in the fields of:

- Equal participation in the public sphere
- Gender-based violence in all its dimensions
- The role of women in building sustainable peace and security

Stocktaking, lessons learned and good practices

In relation to equal participation and leadership, participants positively assessed the increasing exercise by women of their right to be elected and to hold political offices in the EU and LAC. They also acknowledged the normative advances aimed at increasing the presence of women in spaces of power through quota systems and gender parity laws and the development of a political parity index in LAC, as well as the increased leadership of women through feminist caucuses and alliances among women parliamentarians.

In terms of gender-based violence, regulatory advances in recognising different expressions of violence against women (physical, sexual, political, feminicide, digital violence, obstetric violence, among others), as well as denaturalising and criminalising all types of gender-based violence were valued. Most LAC countries have included the crime of feminicide in their legislation and have developed laws to prevent and address violence against women and promote access to justice, while several European states find themselves in the data collection and conceptualisation phase of feminicide. Furthermore, political violence has become increasingly visible and recognised as a form of violence and as a crime in certain countries, including violence against women human rights defenders. Progress was also acknowledged in the guarantee of rights for LGBTIQ+ people in both regions, in terms of social acceptance and legal guarantees.

In terms of building sustainable peace and security, participants rated as positive the greater political commitment of some states in both regions to make international policy more inclusive through the construction of a feminist foreign policy. They also welcomed

the interpretation of sexual violence as a weapon of war and the United Nations Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, such as Resolution 1325, as instruments to broaden the scope and obligatory nature of attention to violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Advances in the construction of peace agendas from a feminist perspective and historical memory agendas that include and share the perspective and experiences of women were also highlighted. Similarly, participants acknowledged the increase in women's participation in peace missions.

A lesson learned shared at the Forum was the need for equality policies to be designed as state policies so that achievements in this area do not depend on governments in office, but last over time.

Recent initiatives, programmes and publications to be highlighted included:

- [GAP III](#)
- CEPAL's [Gender Equality Observatory](#)
- Initiative [SUMA, democracia es igualdad](#)
- [Atenea initiative](#)
- [Political Parity Index](#)
- [Spotlight Initiative](#)
- [“Sin ti no hay democracia”](#) campaign
- Centre of empowerment and leadership of women [“Alas de mariposas”](#)
- Publication [En sus marcas: carreras de las mujeres en la política](#)
- [Voto Trans](#) Protocol
- Publication [Monetizing misogyny](#). Gendered disinformation and the undermining of Women's Rights and Democracy Globally
- [Istanbul Convention](#)
- Mobilisation [“Ni Una Menos”](#)
- Campaign [“Silencios que cantan, almas que pintan, voces que resignifican”](#)
- [Tarjeta Violeta](#) programme
- [National register of persons sanctioned for gender-based political violence against women](#)
- [No Means No Worldwide](#)
- [Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women](#)
- Citizen initiative [“Ley 3 de 3”](#)
- [Ley Micaela](#)
- [Ley Brisa](#)
- Publication: [COVID-19 and intimate partner violence against women in the EU](#)
- Publication: [Improving responses to counter femicide in the European Union: Perspectives from victims and Professionals](#)
- [Resolution 1325 \(2000\)](#)
- Redes de [Mujeres Constructoras de Paz](#)
- Publication: [Datafeminism](#)

Current challenges

In relation to political leadership, participants articulated their concern about democratic decline and the rise of fundamentalism, conservatism and authoritarianism that threaten



advances in gender equality. In the EU and LAC, glass ceilings and invisible barriers to women's access to spaces of power persist, and participants insisted in the need to analyse representation in substantive terms, i.e., the quality of representation and not only the numerical increase of women in power in descriptive terms. The under-representation of women in local politics is a factor that, according to the participants, deserves more attention from governments. Likewise, the lack of an intersectional approach is evident, where the voices of diverse women are still excluded from decision-making spaces, especially indigenous, Afro-descendant, migrant, rural, lesbian, trans and disabled women, among others). The problem of the binary conception of gender was also discussed.

In terms of gender-based violence, the inadequate response of governments to manage the increase in violence in contexts of crisis and conflict, as reflected during the Covid-19 pandemic, when incidents of gender-based violence increased alarmingly, was identified as a challenge. Gaps in the implementation of laws aimed at preventing and sanctioning gender-based violence in its different dimensions were also cited, especially due to the scarcity of budgetary resources, the lack of inter-institutional articulation and persistent gender biases in the investigation and sanctioning processes, which result in impunity. In addition, the lack of protection mechanisms for the children of murdered women was highlighted. With regard to sexual extortion, a limited awareness-raising in society and public institutions and the absence of an adequate legal framework to deal with sexual extortion as a form of corruption and violence were noted, as well as the lack of reliable channels of complaint.

With regard to peacebuilding, contradictions and incoherence between feminist foreign policies, trade policies and domestic policies were highlighted in some countries, where governments domestically violate women's rights or pursue economic and trade relations with other states that do not respect the rights of women and sexual minorities. Concern was expressed about increased militarisation as a strategy of patriarchy. Another challenge is the insufficient funding to strengthen the role of civil society organisations and the exclusion of minorities in peacebuilding processes. Also, according to the participants, gender linkages in contexts of displacement crises and migration contexts have not yet been comprehensively addressed.

Common interests and recommendations

Equal participation in the public sphere:

- Place gender equity at the centre of governance and recognise it as a qualifying element of democracy and parity in access to and exercise of power (more equity implying a deepening of democracy and more sustainable development). A case was made for continuing to articulate a narrative that gender is a society-wide issue, not just a women's issue, in both regions.
- Expand the scope of feminist leadership training programmes to transform political leadership into one of equality and without gender bias.
- Guarantee secular states as a fundamental aspect of functioning democracies and combat fundamentalisms that threaten feminist movements and the struggle for gender equality.
- Recognise the contribution of diverse women (rural, indigenous, migrant, women with disabilities, among others) and LGBTIQ+ people in cooperation policies and programmes aimed at gender equality.

- Create optimal conditions for the participation and leadership of women in their diversity in spaces of power, for example, through training processes for the empowerment and strengthening of capacities in the exercise of political and public functions and to exercise power in a substantive way, and that these be constant and comprehensive to accompany leadership and advocacy in spaces of decision making. Emphasis was also placed on the need to increase protection for women leaders and human rights defenders, including their sexual and reproductive rights, to guarantee safe environments of protection and care.
- Measure political participation and representation in qualitative terms, expanding data collection at the local level and taking into account diversity, through relevant indicators that go beyond the quota system and can measure representation from a substantive perspective. In this sense, it was suggested that existing evidence-generating mechanisms such as [ECLAC's Gender Equality Observatory](#) and the political parity index of the [Atenea initiative](#) should be strengthened.
- Generate more information about the differentiated impact of corruption on women, girls and diverse collectives for policy formulation, for which it is essential to promote plural participation in the design of anti-corruption and transparency policies.
- Establish specific political participation protocols to incorporate minorities and diversities that have been traditionally excluded from voting and political participation, such as migrant women, indigenous women, rural peasant women, based on good practices such as the [Trans Voting Protocol](#).

Fight gender-based violence in all its dimensions:

- Work on a bi-regional commitment to strengthen policies and programmes to eliminate all forms of violence on the basis of the Belém do Pará Convention and the Istanbul Convention.
- Conceive gender-based violence as a cultural problem and work in a more articulated and inter-institutional way between justice, health and education actors in the prevention and eradication of gender-based violence.
- Strengthen the education of children, adolescents and students in gender equality and non-violence, accompanied by training for teachers and authorities responsible for education policies. It is recommended that more Gender Chairs be created in universities to strengthen education programmes to prevent violence and gender stereotypes and to promote parallel programmes on the culture of peace and human rights.
- Strengthen training processes in new masculinities in our societies to increase men's participation in the fight against gender-based violence.
- Promote awareness-raising and capacity building for judicial sector authorities to improve women's access to justice and consolidate policies for the reparation of harm. It was suggested that training courses should be mandatory, as in the [Micaela Law](#) in Argentina, and also aimed at the highest level of authorities. To investigate homicide cases, capacity building for officials and public servants was advocated through tools such as the [Latin American Model Protocol](#) for the investigation of gender-related killings of women and the use of sanctions for those officials who do not comply with gender mandates.
- Design policies for the prevention, care and punishment of gender-based violence that complement the punitive approach with a restorative justice approach in

which the participation of the whole environment (victim, aggressor and context) is part of the attention to the case. In cases where this is appropriate, it was suggested to work with the aggressors so that they can recognise and take responsibility for the harm.

- It was recommended that the scope of the Women's Centres for Justice ([e.g., Mexico](#)) be expanded as spaces for interdisciplinary attention for the establishment of rights and the promotion of access to justice, for example, by extending legal representation as a protective measure for women who decide to file a complaint of gender-based violence.
- Replicate successful experiences with a focus on reparation and financial security for victims of gender-based violence such as the [Brisa Law](#) in Argentina, targeting victims of gender-based violence as well as the children of women victims of femicide.
- Increase technical, human and financial resources to make the implementation of existing laws for the prevention of gender-based violence more effective.
- Expand sources of data and statistics on rising forms of gender-based violence, such as digital violence, unsafe abortion violence and political violence, and invest in protocols for gender-based violence investigations.
- Create mechanisms for those responsible for digital platforms to ensure democratic participation and counteract gender-based violence that occurs in digital environments. It was suggested to implement a gender approach in the regulation of the development of new technologies, especially artificial intelligence, so that these do not result in a deepening of gender gaps and inequality.
- Develop good practice manuals and lessons learned on managing gender-based violence in crisis contexts such as the Covid-19 pandemic and displacement crises and migratory phenomena. Design improved care services for migrant women and families.

Sustainable peacebuilding and security:

- It was suggested that the concept of 'conflict' be broadened and that prevention and peacebuilding initiatives be promoted in countries where there are no 'traditional' situations of armed conflict, but where there is a high level of human rights violations and gender-based violence.
- Promote a policy of human security where the life and dignity of people prevail; expand gender training for police and security forces.
- Strengthen the role of women peacebuilders and mediator networks for the maintenance of peace at the community and rural level in LAC, taking into account that these people are exposed to risk situations for the defence of land and their territories. For this reason, it was suggested that peace promotion policies be articulated through communication strategies, especially community communication. At the same time, it was recommended that grants for grassroots organisations committed to peacebuilding be simplified and strengthened with more resources.
- Establish gender commissions in peacebuilding and peace consolidation processes, with specific mandates and budget allocations, implementing an intersectional perspective and overcoming heteronormative approaches.
- Allocate more resources to national plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, opting for greater inclusion of women and a gender perspective in peace missions and for a transitional justice approach.