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The Issue of Gender in Relations between the EU and LAC: State of the Art and Opportunities for Bi-regional Cooperation



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- AECID:** Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
- ALBA:** Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America
- CARICOM:** Caribbean Community
- CAAAMI:** Andean Council of High Female Authorities and Equal Opportunities
- CAN:** Andean Community of Nations
- CEDAW:** Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- CELAC:** Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
- CIM:** Inter-American Commission of Women
- COMMCA:** Council of Female Ministers of Central America and Dominican Republic
- DAW:** Division for the Advancement of Women
- ECLAC:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- ERDF:** European Regional Development Fund
- ESF:** European Social Fund
- EIGE:** European Institute for Gender Equality
- EU:** European Union
- EUROSTAT:** Statistical Office of the European Union
- FGM:** Female Genital Mutilation

FRA: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
ILO: International Labour Organisation
INSTRAW: United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
LAC: Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MERCOSUR: Common Market of the South (Latin America)
OAS: Organization of American States
OIJ: Organization of Ibero-American Youth
OSAGI: Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
RMAAM: Meeting of Female Ministers and Women's Highest Authorities
SAP: Santiago Action Plan
SEGIB: Ibero-American General Secretariat
SICA: Central American integration System
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper ensures continuity to the activities that were initiated within the framework of the dialogue on gender issues, offering a state of the art on gender issues in the European Union (EU), Latin America and the Caribbean. Therefore, special attention will be placed upon three main areas, as defined by the Santiago Action Plan (SAP): (i) the political participation of women; (ii) the eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence; and (iii) the economic empowerment of women and their participation in the workplace and in all decision-making processes.

This study uses a transnational perspective, a gender-based and rights-based approach to analyse the progress that has been made, and the challenges it faces in the quest for equality between men and women within the EU-LAC space. The incipient Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the EU-CELAC dialogue have directed this paper's focus toward Latin American and the Caribbean integration systems prior to the inception of CELAC.

In the last few decades, the bi-regional relationship has been cemented with a foundation that is based on a shared identity and history between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. Both regions share values and goals that originate in Western traditions (Sanahuja 2013:171), which are related to democracy, the validity of human rights, the rule of law, social cohesion, the defence of multilateralism and peace, and international cooperation, among others. This study thus charts the development of a normative framework that articulates and orients interventions on gender issues. However, this soft and hard legislation develops differently in both regions. In the Latin American and the Caribbean region, the development of this type of legislation is conditioned by the different processing speeds of each integration system.

The inclusion of the principle of equality as a constituting element in both regional spaces is one of the cornerstones for the reinforcement of democracy and the development of fairer, egalitarian societies. Policies and actions over the last couple of decades have been oriented towards maximising the political participation of women at every level in society under the auspices of equality between men and women. In this way, and parallel to the international and regional debates on, and developments in, achieving equality (CEDAW, Beijing, Belém do Pará, Rome Statute, etc.), the focus and approaches have translated to the development of legislation, strategies and concrete interventions. The integration of gender perspectives and the combination

of strategies that emerge in both regions as a result of the 1995 Beijing Summit resulted in the institutionalisation of an agenda on gender in both regions. This institutionalisation has not yet taken place in the bi-regional space: this will be enabled by the dialogue and the actions to be defined vis-à-vis gender norms.

The institutionalisation process has also evolved differently in both regions. Even though the main topics and concerns within the agendas are similar, the participation of civil society in the LAC region is now more dynamic than in the EU. The institutionalisation processes have been developed with different focuses in mind. While in Latin American it is a markedly bottom-up process, in the EU it can be seen as a top-down process. The combination of both approaches would be the ideal compromise for the bi-regional space and for the development of future interventions. The deconstruction of the patriarchal model reinforced by neoliberal policies, and the structures that endorse it, is necessary in order to build more democratic societies where equality is to be *iure* (formal) and *de facto* (real, substantial). Inclusive democracy can only be achieved by respecting human rights and its basic principles of equality and non-discrimination; but this will not be achieved while inequality and discriminations continue to prejudice half of the world's population.

The fundamental aspects proposed by the SAP encompass domains where inequality and discrimination persist between men and women. The key areas for achieving equality are political participation, the fight against violence, economic empowerment and equal access to the labour market. According to previous analyses on actions and best practices by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Gender Equality Observatory in LAC, none of the regions are close to achieving equality in these three areas. On the contrary, the data demonstrates that inequality is still rife and progress has been slow.

The gender gap continues to be present in both regions, which raises challenges when it comes to the need to produce and systemise data as well as determining the action that needs to be taken in the different dimensions of gender inequality: rates of employment in different countries and across different age groups – under 25 and over 60 – and vulnerable groups – immigrant women, disabled women, women from ethnic minorities; women who work double and triple shifts, the existence of remunerated and non-remunerated work, time availability and working hours; carrying out studies to have reliable data on the inequality in the distribution of hours – remunerated and non-remunerated – between men and women that can contribute to planning agendas and policies; the measures oriented towards financial incentives – fiscal and loan systems –, the opportunity for economic independence and adapting adequate pensions; and the development of budgetary frameworks sensitive to gender issues, among others.

The recommendations that have resulted from this study are general in nature with regards to the design, management and improvement of initiatives within the bi-regional space that can contribute to achieving gender equality – mechanisms for triangular cooperation, a multi-donor fund, meta-analysis of actions, evaluation and follow-up, knowledge management, incorpora-

tion of civil society agents in dialogues, as well as contributing to the three key areas contained in the SAP.

- 1. Political participation:** foster alliances, establish dialogues and roundtables on the role of leadership, strategic partnerships and spaces for convergence and participation.
- 2. Eradication of violence against women:** systems for the production of information and statistics on the different forms of violence, multi-stakeholder task groups that can analyse and promote frameworks for joint interventions for most vulnerable sectors, bi-regional protection programmes for victims of gender violence and coordination on the fourth point in the SAP.
- 3. Economic empowerment:** integration of economic and feminist market theories regarding the difference in time distribution, evaluation of the different types of work, care environment, as well as the exchange of experiences in the design and implementation of gender-sensitive budgets and task groups that can analyse the feasibility of replicating activities.

1 INTRODUCTION

“Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development and peace. A transformed partnership based on equality between women and men is a condition for people-centred sustainable development.”

Fourth World Conference on Women, United Nations, Beijing, 1995.

A full and equal participation of women in civil, cultural, economic, political and social life in national, regional and international spheres, and the eradication of all forms of gender discrimination, has been the main objective for the international community since the 1994 International Population and Development Conference, and above all, the 1995 Beijing Conference.¹ In this regard, attempts have been made in the last few decades to situate the progress made in gender equality and in the empowerment of women at the centre of gender policies in the European Union and the Latin America and the Caribbean region. This has been driven by the earlier work done in the world conferences that brought about a historical shift in the evolution of women’s rights and its role in development, as well as in fostering equality.

In spite of the progress made, discrimination against women continues to be a reality. We are still far from attaining formal and real equality between men and women. The latest report on the Global Gender Gap by the World Economic Forum (2014) concludes that the most progress has been made in basic rights (health and education, which surpass 90%), but the gap is still significant in terms of economic participation (60%), and worrying in terms of political empowerment (21%). These data, in turn, highlight the areas that need to be focused on in order to achieve equality. This gender gap also persists in both regional spaces, in which there is still a lot to do and a lot to achieve. For this reason, it is very important to develop strategies that contribute to establishing areas for joint action and for an exchange of experiences that can help to achieve equality.

¹ Also worth mentioning previous meetings: México City (1975), Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985).

In Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC), gender perspectives have been incorporated into regional development through the various integration mechanisms. The Belém do Pará Convention (Organisation of American States (OAS), 1994), the Quito Consensus (during the 10th Regional Conference of Women in LAC), and the designation of 2010 as the Inter-American Year of Women, were key in pushing the gender-based agenda in the region. Gender issues will feature for the first time in the new regional forum in the 2010 Cancun Declaration for the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).²

In the European Union, equality between men and women is constituted as a fundamental principle since the Rome Treaty (1957). Yet, despite its intrinsic nature and the progress made in recent decades (development of a normative corpus on equal treatment, universality of gender perspectives in policymaking, effective measures for promoting women, and increasing participation of women in the labour market), inequality still persists. The same is true in Latin America: despite the objectives thus far achieved, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making processes, they continue to constitute a high percentage of the population living below the poverty line, and they are mostly in the worst-salaried, covert labour sectors.

With regard to European Union–Latin America and the Caribbean relations (EU-LAC), the relationship has progressed and deepened since the beginning of the Strategic Association in 1999. During this time, a series of central concerns have been incorporated into the process that looks to improve social cohesion and justice, gender-related topics among them, which are stated in the Santiago Action Plan (SAP) of 2013 in three aspects: (i) the political participation of women; (ii) the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence; (iii) the economic empowerment of women and participation in the labour market and decision-making processes. These aspects look to go beyond approaches based on core needs and point to the areas where gender gaps are most prevalent.

In order to analyse the main progress made and the challenges standing in the way of equality between men and women, this paper takes as its point of departure a transnational perspective that equates a Gender Focus to a Rights Focus, which goal is to contribute to the empowerment of women as holders of rights and widen their capabilities for action in EU-LAC relations.

The process of globalisation reflects the emergence of inter-regional networks and systems of exchange that interact among themselves (Held et al., 1999). From these, complex interdependencies arise that blur traditional competitions (for example, between the States or in national sectors as unique areas for interventions against inequality and to guarantee human rights) that demand new courses of action (this includes new agents at various levels, from local to global, as well as, national and regional). Transnationalism as a methodology implies broadening the scope of these topics, agents and levels that are relevant in international relationships – in this case, the relationship between the EU and the LAC – thus offering more open and dynamic interpretations of these complex processes. Such is the case of the patriarchal system that is

² Absent in Bahia (2008) and Montego Bay (2009).

characterized by inequality (Astelarra, 2004).³ Feminist theory and a gender-based approach offer an alternative that can help to better understand the nature of such inequality.

Feminism can be understood as a social and ideological movement that offers a solid proposal for social and political change. It aims to broaden the rights of people through a political critique of the appropriation by men of that which is defined as genuinely “human” (Cobo, 2008). The concept of gender arises precisely as a feminist methodological proposal to highlight patriarchal structures (Lagarde, 1996). To talk about gender implies a discussion on the transformation of political structures that enable the power relations that define domination/subordination relationships in society. This entails homing in on the subordination of women, the condition from which this subordination originates, the mechanisms that perpetuate it, and the elaboration of a normative corpus that can eliminate this condition and guarantee equality. Therefore, a gender-based approach is, above all, a political proposal that requires a holistic and critical view of social, economic and political relationships with the objective to reveal, analyse, and rectify inequalities and discrimination.

A vital tool in this regard is empowerment. Empowerment is a multifaceted and bi-dimensional strategy (it includes an individual and a collective dimension, and must be applied to social, economic, cultural and political aspects) that includes access to, and control of, material and symbolic resources, changes to social structures, participation and increase in individual capacities in order to foster personal autonomy and decisions on economy, politics, etc. (Murguialday et al., 2008). In this empowerment process, the focus on gender considers of crucial importance the participation of women and their organisations in decision-making processes thus increasing their actual capacity for action.

From this perspective, it is not enough to simply implement and ratify international mechanisms and instruments that guarantee and demand upholding of women’s rights. While it is an essential step, it is not enough unless women are included as the main stakeholders in the decision-making process, and above all, if those structures that perpetuate gender inequality are not criticised and changed. Ultimately, a gender-based approach is closely linked to the demand for the expansion and provision of rights rooted in political action, in order to mainstream these issues and thus construct a citizenry that is capable of demanding from the State – as bound by duty – coherent policies with regards to these issues.

An approach based on rights (Echart, 2012), both in European and Latin American and Caribbean contexts, uses a normative framework to guide policies and initiatives on gender issues. Nevertheless, it is necessary to test whether this framework in fact influences actions in favour of gender equality in a universal and holistic manner, therefore contributing to establishing rights and maximising the potential for political participation among the citizenry, particularly among

³ De Miguel goes further and defines the patriarchal system “a system of sexual domination that is conceived, furthermore, as the basic system of domination on which other types of domination, such as classist and racial, are supported.” (De Miguel, 1995: 29).

women, as the main stakeholders in the bi-regional development process. Programmatic documents aside, it is important to see how this commitment operates in praxis within the association relationship, whether the focus is mainstreamed and if it leads to a definition of the responsibilities, or whether interventions will continue to depend upon the willingness of the State. To this end, there must be a methodology that will *de facto* ensure the transversal incorporation of a gender-based approach in the Euro-Latin American association, and the promotion of real spaces for participation and intervention that will enable the realisation of policies appropriate to the discourse.

Based upon these theoretical premises, this paper seeks to carry out an analysis of the gender-specific issues concerning EU-LAC relations, with a particular focus on the three key aspects contained within the Santiago Action Plan (political participation, the elimination of violence and the economic empowerment, and participation in decision-making processes). The starting point of this paper is the analysis of the incorporation of a gender-specific perspective and the principle of equality in political and programmatic aspects in both regional blocs, to then reveal experiences and practices, especially those that could potentially drive dialogues and interventions in a space shared by Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. Lastly, areas for joint action, general conclusions and recommendations that could contribute to the procurement of the objectives and the definition of the initiatives for cooperation in the aspects defined by the SAP.

The methodology used in this paper has been, in the first instance, of an analytic-synthetic nature, through which existing policies and programmes on gender-specific topics in both regions were revised. In addition, the demands of social agents were also considered. Afterwards, interviews were conducted to obtain information of a more qualitative nature from actors involved in these issues. The information obtained enabled the formulation of recommendations for actions that will guarantee gender equality and the protection, implementation and promotion of women's rights utilising the empirical data extracted from fieldwork.

2 THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY IN REGIONAL BLOCS AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Bi-regional relations have been cemented based on the shared history and identity between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean over the last few decades. Both regions share a similar set of values that originate from the Western tradition (Sanahuja, 2013:171), and which are related to democracy, the prevalence of human rights, the rule of law, social cohesion, the defence of multilateralism and peace, and international cooperation, among others.

These values have been reinforced and incorporated into the constitutional treaties of both regional groups, political declarations and in praxis, thus becoming instrumental for the construction of a Strategic Bi-regional Association. This association is based upon the mutual commitment to “the purposes and principles established in the United Nations Charter” and “with the universality and indivisibility of Human Rights as established in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights” (Santiago Declaration, points 5 and 7). The principle of equality appears to be contemplated in a shared space and within both regional blocs. The gender perspective will be incorporated directly into the 2013 Santiago Summit as a new axis with the understanding that “the inclusion of this perspective within the EU-ECLAC association will strengthen gender equality, democracy and will foster fair and egalitarian societies” (Santiago Declaration, point 38).

The inclusion of a gender perspective is also inspired by – in addition to the Universal Declaration – the Pact for Economic, Social, Cultural, Civil and Political Rights (1966), which enshrines the Principle of Equality as a structural principle. It is also inspired by the United Nations’ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and its optional protocol that establishes that “women’s maximum participation in equal conditions to men in all fields is indispensable for the full and complete development of a country, the world’s welfare and as a cause for peace”.

CEDAW is especially relevant since it defines the rights of women and girls as Human Rights, and compels those States to ratify the Committee, to adopt its norms within their own national legislations – it is therefore a binding force –, and to develop concrete measures to eliminate discrimination against women. The Committee presupposes a normative framework that is essential in both regions and to achieve the three strategic axes approved by the SAP.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which emerged from the IV World Conference on Women (1995), were directed at eliminating obstacles for the participation of women at all levels of public and private life; they placed particular importance on equality and non-discrimination on gender grounds as the key elements in the construction of future societies and in the integration of the gender perspective in policies and measures designed “to support or reinforce the promotion of gender equality and to improve the conditions of women” (Beijing Declaration, point 57).

Throughout the legislative process of the principle for equality in international, regional, national and local law, there was evidence of a process that evolved from equal treatment and affirmative action, to gender equality and transversal policies on gender issues.

The inclusion of equality and gender perspectives in international and regional agendas has been promoted during decades by women’s movements, manifesting itself in normative and institutional circles. In spite of the steps taken in the second half of the 20th Century (as seen in the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in 1967, the Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1979; the four World Conferences on Women: Mexico, 1975; Copenhagen, 1980; Nairobi, 1985; and Beijing, 1995), there is still a long way to go in both regions in order to attain true equality. The knowledge that has been gained from the political and programmatic steps taken in both regions, may serve future joint interventions in relation to gender issues.

Gender Theory explains the sociocultural mechanisms that are the product of multiple dimensions of gender inequality in the three working areas of the SAP. The political level represents a dimension of inequality between men and women. Its structures and mechanisms restrict access and participation of women under equal terms to men. Gender inequalities currently remain in political participation despite the writing in formal equality into legislation. This inequality in praxis and in the implementation of rights between men and women is one of the main challenges facing modern democracies. The political participation of women is directly related to the construction of an inclusive, democratic society. The incorporation of women as political entities is an inherent element of what is understood as a true democracy – a democracy that recognises inequalities and advocates a new egalitarian social contract viable in both public and private spheres of life.

When it comes to participating in political life, women face two types of obstacles: structural barriers (discriminatory laws and institutions) and gender gaps relative to their capabilities (education, networking, and resources). This type of political participation corresponds to an institu-

tional participation (associated to a public space, which has been traditionally male-dominated) that would vindicate the right for women to represent and be represented.⁴ This would mean inhabiting and making visible a space in which there has been scant representation for women. This formal participation is developed parallel to the traditional political participation on the informal level – women’s participation from grass roots activism, from women groups and social movements. Henceforth, political participation is here understood as all actions carried out to influence political matters, whether through formal or informal means or institutional or non-institutional channels.

“The quality of democracies requires the balanced participation of men and women in spaces for representation at all decision-making levels and circles.”

(Cadiz Declaration, Second European Summit “Women in Power”, 2010)

Regarding the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, many different types of violence that affect the welfare of women and girls are recognised. These can be found at different levels – family, community, national – and hinder their personal development and full participation. Violence against women and girls constitutes a human rights violation, rooted in the historical imbalance between men and women where women are subjugated by male domination and discrimination. This reality highlights that the structural nature of violence against women and is based upon gender, which is then used as a mechanism for social subordination. The lawful and *de facto* realisation of equality among men and women, both formal and practical, will prove to be instrumental in eradicating violence against women and girls.

Lastly, regarding economic empowerment of women and their participation in the workplace and all decision-making processes, there is a consensus on the different levels of action that inverting empowerment of women directly contributes to gender equality, the eradication of poverty, and inclusive economic growth. Despite the acknowledgement of these needs, the inequalities in access to and control of resources in public and private levels continue to manifest gender-based discrimination.

⁴ As recognised in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, CEDAW, United Nations Resolution 66/130, 2012, etc.

2.1 THE EUROPEAN UNION

“Equality between men and women is a fundamental right, a common principle and a basic value of the European Union”

(EIGE)

The last few years have seen a process of institutionalisation of gender issues in Europe through a top-down process that has allowed few spaces for citizen participation, and whose impact has proved to be heterogeneous in the 28 countries that make up the European Union. Based on this institutionalisation, there has been an attempt to make visible changes to the lives of European women through policies, strategies and financing programmes with actions directed at fostering equality, eradicate violence and improve and increase women’s participation in all political and economic levels. The need to expand upon such institutionalisation from the top by focusing on it from below, and based on a combination of the two that ensures a greater presence of women movements in Europe, would improve the appropriation of institutionalisation process. Despite the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the European agenda and in individual national agendas and their public policies, it should not be forgotten that gender as such is an area for the articulation of power that reinvents and reshapes itself through time and history. It is in these very processes where a gender discourse could see itself appropriated by institutions – integrating into legislation and normative and political frameworks – and emptied of its contents and distanced from a mainstreaming process that influences structures and enables a *de facto* vindication of women.

Within the domain of the European Union, equality among men and women constitutes a fundamental principle in Community Law. It appears for the first time in the Treaty of Rome and from that point on it is instituted as an objective to be achieved, incorporated later into interventions and community policies. In order to guarantee its status, the concepts relative to the principle of equality between men and women have been defined and redefined in direc-

tives, recommendations, resolutions, decisions and programmes for community intervention for equal opportunities. Equality appears as a community principle under the dual track approach that encompasses the integration of a gender-specific perspective and the design and completion of interventions aimed at reducing inequality.

The EU has developed ten directives in relation to the principle of equality. These directives exhibit how the principle has evolved, from the initial labour market notions associated with it, prohibiting any form of direct or indirect discrimination (EU, 1975), to the affirmative action measures aimed at increasing the presence of women in the labour market (EU 1976, 1979, 1986a, 1986b, 2003, 2004 and 2006b), which served as a basis for the first Community Programmes for equal opportunities for women. Likewise, the Directive 2002/73/EC (EU, 2002) represented an important step forward in the fight against gender-based discrimination in the workplace by introducing clear guidelines for affirmative action and indirect discrimination.

The objectives of the EU in terms of equality between men and women consist in guaranteeing opportunities and equal treatment between genders while fighting all forms of gender-based discrimination. The fight for equality has been harmonised with other interventions carried out by the EU, thus highlighting the international dimension vis-à-vis the fight against poverty, access to education and health services, participation in the economy and decision-making processes, and equating women’s rights to human rights.

| Table 1 Milestones in gender issues in the EU | |
|--|--|
| 1999 Amsterdam Treaty | When the 1999 Amsterdam Treaty came into force, the promotion of equality between men and women became a central objective for the European Community (Article 2CE). Since 1999, the EU has competently adopted new measures to confront gender discrimination (article 13(1) CE, now: 19(1) TFUE) |
| 2000 Charter for Fundamental Rights | Gender equality in the EU is also an integral part of the EU’s 2000 Charter for Fundamental Rights, which prohibits discrimination for any reason, including sex (art. 21) and recognises the right to gender equality in every aspect and the need for positive action to promote it. |
| 2009 Lisbon Treaty | Equality between men and women is one of the foundational values of the Union (article 2 of the TUE), which means, for example, equality will be used as a criterion in determining whether a country is eligible to join the Union. The promotion of gender equality figures as one of the missions for Union (article (3) 3 of the TUE), along with the duty of eliminating inequalities. The Lisbon Treaty clearly reaffirms its duty to guarantee gender equality, both for the Union and its member States. |
| Directive 97/80/CEE 1997 | Directive 97/80/CEE relative to the burden of proof in relation to gender discrimination. |
| 2010-2015 Strategy | The Strategy for equality between men and women for the period 2010-2015. It reflects the Commission’s commitment to intensify its activities in relation to gender equality (IP/10/1149) |
| Source: adapted from various sources | |

In order to guarantee equality between member States, the EU has integrated a gender-specific approach in its community policies and interventions, as shown in the Strategy for the Equality between men and women 2010-2015, the Women's Charter, the V Community Action Programme for equal opportunities (2001-2006), among others. Table 1 shows the main achievements in gender issues that have been produced within the last few decades in the European Union.

Among these important achievements, it is appropriate to highlight the current Strategy for Equality between men and women for the 2010-2015 period, which establishes six priority areas: economic independence for men and women; equal pay for equal work; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and the eradication of gender-based violence; the promotion of gender equality outside of the EU; and horizontal issues.

The midterm evaluation for the 2013 Gender Equality Strategy support the work done by the Commission highlighting the measures developed to improve the balance between genders in the economic decision-making process (EC, 2012a and EC, 2012b), the promotion for equal pay (EC, 2013a and EC, 2014a), the fight against violence against women and female genital mutilation (EC, 2014b) and the promotion of gender equality through the 2020 Europa Strategy. These measures have been harmonised with the working areas established by the Santiago Action Plan (violence, political participation and economic empowerment), which in turn have been aligned to the priorities of the International Women's Agenda, considered fundamental for achieving equality.

Despite the efforts made by the EU in the last few decades (the development of both hard and soft legislation, financing of specific programmes and actions, and others) the data continues to show a considerable gap among the three areas contained in the SAP. In the EU, 33% of women over 15 years of age have suffered some type of physical and/or sexual violence from their partner or another person (FRA, 2014a). The unemployment rate for women in the EU is 58.8% in 2013. According to the EUROSTAT⁵ data, employment rates for women are well below those for men in all 28 member States, although there are some differences depending on the countries and age range. The data related to political participation suggests a similar situation. There is still a long way to go on the road to equality.

The Athens Declaration (I European Summit "Women in Power", in November 1992), marked a starting point in the fight for parity for EU institutions and Member States. In this Declaration, the democratic deficit and prevailing inequality in positions of political representation between men and women was widely denounced.

It is evident that implementing the principle of equality between men and women has been a global objective for the European Union and its institutions. Equality constitutes a fundamental

⁵ Eurostat data is available at: <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do?sessionId=hRPDVMR6UkSPQpzvkyznsOaEcoUHzGfu5i4fWrxFAC2JuFpsRmSsl527496198>

Table 2 Overview of the participation of women in posts of political representation and the private sector in the EU

None of the following European institutions is presided by a woman: European Parliament, Commission, Economic and Social Committee, Committee of Regions. In European Parliaments there is a representation of 37% and Commissioners total 32%. In National Parliaments only 7 women are president as compared to 21 males, and only 28% of women are members of parliament. Regarding Regional Assemblies, only 13% of them have female presidents, with 32% total female members. In national Executive Branches, 12% are presided by women. Out of the 297 regional executives only 34% are women. Nation governments in the EU present 2 female presidents and 19 male presidents, 4 female premier ministers compared to 24 male premier ministers. Also, 28% occupy roles of ministers, while 72% are male. Lastly, at local levels 14% of total mayors are female and 32% are council members.

In decision-making roles of European companies only 5% hold presidencies and there are only 19% among their members. 3% of women are CEOs, and only 12% are executives with high-level representation.

In financial circles, one woman presides the Central Bank of the 28 total in the EU. Women represent 20% of deputy director positions. The Central Bank, Investment Bank and the Investment Fund are presided by men and have a largely male composition (92% male versus 8% female).

In the justice sector, no woman presides any of the European courts – Civil Service Court, European Human Rights Court, European Justice Court, General Court – and there are only 27% of female judges. At national levels, 8 women preside supreme courts and judges make up 37%. Constitutional courts only account for 2 female presidents (Croatia and Slovakia). Also, only 6 Chief Prosecutors are women.

In the media, women represent 31% of board members, while there are only 9 female presidents of any type of media outlet, while 30% barely occupy executive positions.

IN THE EU, WOMEN REPRESENT 51% OF THE TOTAL POPULATION

Source: Adapted from information contained in the Database for men and women in decision-making levels as developed by the European Commission.

value for the EU, and it is recognised as such in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union (art. 23).⁶ In order to achieve and promote equality, a dual-track approach has been established, based on a gender-specific perspective in all policies and laws regarding employment, goods and services, and the development of specific interventions designed to allow women to progress beyond their present situation.

In 2010, the Women's Charter recognised the importance of working in the interest of equality and defined five areas where much work remains to be done.⁷ The areas related to work were taken up again and ratified by the Committee's Strategy for Equality between Men and Women and the European Council's 2010-2015 European Pact on Equality (EU, 2011a). Therefore, it can be said that, since the publication of the 1996 community policies (EU, 1996a), these areas have been defined and oriented towards structuring these five aspects. The interventions

⁶ Articles 2 and 3 of the European Union Treaty and article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

⁷ These areas are as follows: 1. Economic Independence (efforts have been made to fight against discrimination, stereotypes, labour market segregation, involuntary part-time work, unequal distribution of family responsibilities, etc.) 2. Equal pay 3. Female representation in decision-making processes and participation in positions of political representation 4. Respect for the dignity and integrity of women along with the eradication of gender-based violence, and 5. The EU's external actions with regard to issues related to equality among men and women (support to the development of sustainable and democratic societies through raising awareness, and cooperation with international and regional bodies, as well as, State and non-State agents).

carried out by the EU have attempted to promote equality by reducing the gap between men and women in employment, salaries and pensions due to gender-based discrimination, and by fighting towards the eradication of violence and promoting equal opportunities between men and women.

2.2 LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the issues surrounding gender are, if at all, much more complex than in the European Union, considering the geographical size of the region, the various regional integration systems and the heightened cross-linked discrimination in contexts of high inequality. The recently formed CELAC calls for an analysis of the older integration systems that have, to a greater or lesser extent, inspired it. Within these older systems, the initiatives to include a gender perspective and to design and implement concrete interventions have defined national agendas and policies in the last few years; but it has not been “a lineal progression, but rather, one with ups, downs, divergences and obstacles” (ECLAC, 2010a:31). In order to understand the situation of the matter at hand, the analysis needs to be interrelated with the diversity of agents involved and the place each occupies in the dynamics of this regional relationship.

All of the achievements made with regard to the principle of equality are a product of the gradual institutionalisation of gender issues as a response to the vindication of social feminist movements of the 1970s. These have been one of the most important socio-political movements in the region; although these movements have different characteristics from region to region, exemplifying the diversity of the continent, “they share the transformational potential of the historic struggle for equality in women’s rights” (America Latina Genera, 2010).

The creation of the concept of “gender” in the 1970s on the part of feminist academics supposed a significant and unprecedented epistemological shift thus giving way to the creation of a wider set of theories, approaches and tools that have enabled different development agents to become involved in the common notion of gender equality. (America Latina Genera, 2010).

Driven by these social movements, the principle of equality and the gender perspective have become a feature of State politics, in many instances, as a priority for various governments. In a study conducted by Abramo et al. (2000) for the International Labour Organization (ILO), almost

all countries in the region “integrate these two principles into their guidelines, either in general, or specifically alluding to non-discrimination on gender grounds”. This must be so given that 26 out of the 32 CELAC nations⁸ have signed and ratified the American Human Rights Convention without any reservations related to women’s development or gender-based discrimination.⁹ On top of this, every member has ratified the Committee for the Elimination on Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),¹⁰ and therefore must comply with the agreements contained in the Beijing Platform for Action. This agenda established the necessary elements for the effective functioning of the mechanisms designed for women’s development, those designed for institutionalisation and gender issues, which depended on the participation of the key actors – including decentralised administrations, civil society and social movements –, the allocation of enough human and economic resources and the highest possible echelon of hierarchical governments.

In any case, the institutionalisation of gender issues needs to be understood beyond the “classic opposition between equality of opportunities and equality of outcomes, as embodied by equal treatment and affirmative action, and move towards a gender mainstreaming that focuses on the structural perpetuation of gender inequality and aims to transform the political process in such a way that gender biases are eliminated completely” (Rodriguez, 2014:56). The main idea behind this effort is to move beyond the mere prioritisation of gender issues and move into a transversal management of gender, and generate structural changes capable of setting in motion transformative processes at the root, sufficiently solid to influence every public policy, whatever its central concern. This would mean taking account of important changes not only – though without forgetting – in budgetary and political levels, but at a theoretical one as well.

However, these challenges, which in many cases presuppose changes more than substantial in nature, have caused the institutionalisation of gender to not follow as linear a process as it would seem – this despite the recommendations contained in the Beijing Platform for Action. The 2011 annual report from the Gender Equality Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean contains a chart of mechanisms for women’s development, with its inauguration year, its modification and hierarchical dependency, for countries in Latin America, the Caribbean and the Iberian Peninsula. It also puts forward a hierarchical rank of these instances within State institutions. A more current report on the state of the organisations responsible for gender issues in the different countries, with links to their websites where the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America by ECLAC’s Gender Issues Division, can be consulted.¹¹ A revision of

⁸ The remaining 6 countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Santa Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) have included the principle of equality and non-discrimination into their constitutions.

⁹ For more information on the Convention, ratifications and reservations, please visit: http://www.oas.org/dil/esp/tratados_B32_Convencion_Americana_sobre_Derechos_Humanos_firmas.htm. It’s important to point out that only 14 countries in the region have ratified the Facultative Protocol thus creating a very significant limitation in the guarantee of these rights.

¹⁰ To view ratifications and reservations on the Official United Nations website: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/Pages/HumanRightsintheWorld.aspx>

¹¹ For more information please visit: <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getprod.asp?xml=/mujer/noticias/paginas/4/28704/P28704.xml&xsl=/mujer/tpl/p18f-st.xsl&base=/mujer/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>

such information sheds light on the different approaches of each country, which adopt various stances and different hierarchical forms: state agencies, legal counsel, prosecution authority, commissions and units contained within ministries (Guzmán and Bonan, 2014). For this reason, it is pertinent to review other levels of institutionalisation.

IN THE REGIONAL INTEGRATION SYSTEMS

The current international context contributed to blurring the division between national, regional and global frontiers, which can attenuate the effects of individual attempts to tackle shared challenges if a framework for convergence is not in place, especially in terms of political and public dialogue, for dealing with the said challenges. Moreover, despite the heterogeneity of the different realities in Latin American and Caribbean countries, there is a consensus on some priority issues, especially those related to social aspects, as the one discussed herein. Therefore, this would appear to be a propitious time to generate the necessary synergies that will enable driving strategies forward to achieve equality in the region; but can only be set in motion through the different integration systems currently in place.

At first glance, the intricacies of the regional integration systems can appear to be a complex reality: leaving aside some of the more specific areas – which deal more specifically with concrete sector issues like trade and energy among others – the thirty-two countries that make up CELAC are also members of thirteen other systems of integration (see chart 1 in the Annex).¹² Not all of these integration systems contain specific channels for gender issues. Of course, gender is a recurring issue in initiatives and documents developed by the different systems; however, these seem to correspond more to an attempt to adequately satisfy international commitments, that to the development of more comprehensive studies in this area. Out of the thirteen systems, only six have created *ad hoc* structures related to gender topics. Some, such as CARICOM, have a rather fuzzy internal development.

All of the institutions included in Table 3 dedicate themselves mostly to offering counsel, support and accompaniment services. The vast majority of these have very little international or regional presence, thus limiting their work to the territory in which the system for integration is to be found. Nevertheless, there are two systems, MERCOSUR and the OAS, whose work should be highlighted. The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), part of the OAS system, as indicated in their website, is the “only political forum in the hemisphere dedicated to women’s rights and gender equality in the Americas. It was the first inter-governmental organisation created to guarantee the acknowledgment of women’s human rights”. The Commission is composed of 34 female delegates, each one a representative of an OAS member State. The Commission meets every two years at its (Female) Delegates Assembly and has the authority to approve plans and programmes.

¹² ECLAC member States also participate in integration organisations such as: ALADI, ALBA, ABC, Pacific Alliance, CAN, CARICOM, Mercosur, OAS, OBCE, PM, SELA, SICA and UNASUR.

Table 3 Gender Structures in the Integration Systems

| SYSTEM | GENDER STRUCTURE |
|----------|--|
| ALBA | Committee of Female Ministers and Equal Opportunities |
| CAN | Andean Council of High Female Authorities and Equal Opportunities (CAAAMI) |
| CARICOM | Office for Women's Issues |
| MERCOSUR | Meeting of Female Ministers and Women's Highest Authorities (RMAAM) |
| OAS | Inter-American Women's Commission (CIM) |
| SICA | Council of Female Ministers of Central America and Dominican Republic (COMMCA) |

Sources: Adapted from various sources

There are several reasons why the work of the CIM is remarkable when compared to that of other regional integration systems. The first is that the OAS is the oldest regional integration system in the world, successor of the old International Union of American Republics, created in 1890. The second is that it includes all of the States located in the American continent, except Cuba, who, although a member since 2009, has declined to participate in any of the Summits. The third reason is that it hosts the legislative and judicial bodies related to Human Rights in the region: the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights are the two bodies that make up the System of Human Rights. In this way, a solid collection of legally binding instruments for human rights has been developed as a result of conferences and summits held. For example, in its 1933 Montevideo Conference, thanks in part to the work done by the CIM, the Inter-American Convention on the Nationality of Women was approved and became “the first international legal instrument that dealt with the rights of women and became a catalyst for the recognition from the League of Nations of the existence and legitimacy of women’s rights movements”. The political and legal achievements do not end there. The proclamation of the Women’s Decade in the Americas (1976-1985) or the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (also known as the Belém do Pará) in 1994, are other important examples of significant accomplishments by other regional actors.

In April of 2000, the CIM organised the first meeting between female ministers or other high-level authorities responsible for the policies on women in member States under the title “Situation of Women in the Americas and the Reinforcement and Modernisation of the Inter-American Commission on Women”. In this meeting, the Inter-American Programme on the promotion of women’s human rights and gender equality (PIA) was approved, which lays out the guidelines contained in the triennial work programmes and its strategic plans. Currently, the strategic plan is valid for the 2011-2016 period containing five priority areas: (1) women’s rights and gender violence; (2) women’s substantive citizenship within democracy and governance; (3) citizenship and economic security of women; (4) citizen Security from a gender perspective; and (5) institutionalisation with a gender-based approach of the work done by the OAS.

The MERCOSUR Meeting of Female Ministers and Highest-Level Authorities on Women (RMAAM) was created in 2011 as a successor to the MERCOSUR Specialised Meeting on Women (REM). For its part, it is a space for dialogue between the highest authorities on gender within the institutional structure of the system. It is made up of government representatives on matters related to gender from National Sectors, appointed by the States and bodies of the associated States. Its remit is to advise and propose measures, policies and interventions on gender issues with the authority to issue declarations and recommendations. Also, decisions can be issued, but the MERCOSUR Council must first approve them. The RMAAM works based upon Task Forces whose current priorities are: (1) gender-based violence; and (2) labour and economic integration. Also, taking advantage of the Pro-T empore Presidency (currently held by Argentina) this task force meets biannually.

Currently, the MERCOSUR Council has approved the Directive of the Policies for Gender Equality in MERCOSUR, designed by RMAAM, which seeks to promote the “design, creation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies, regulations, strategies, programmes, action plans as well as resource management and budget design” for the gender mainstreaming in two distinct dimensions: the institutional and the regional policy dimension.¹³

IN MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS

The issue of the incorporation of gender topics does not end with regional integration systems. In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, multilateral institutions, particularly those with regional representation, have been the most prolific in the matter, making their work more remarkable when compared to other initiatives. Specifically, it is worth noting the work carried out by three United Nations Organisations: the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), UN Women and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The Gender Issues Division at ECLAC has as its main objective the promotion of gender equality in governmental public policies, institutions and organisations of member States. It functions as a governmental Technical Secretariat in the region through the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which, in turn, is made up of each country’s highest-ranking authorities responsible for issues related to women and policies aimed at protecting gender equality. Its work is centred on five main areas: (1) statistics on gender; (2) gender and economics; (3) social development; (4) human rights; and (5) power and institutionalisation.

¹³ Available at: http://www.mercosurmujeres.org/userfiles/file/files/RMAAM_2013_2/Documento%20Directrices%20Aprobado%20V1%20RMAAM_ES.pdf

¹⁴ Gender statistics are divided into 9 groups of a more general nature (such as population and home and family), while other correspond to priority sector issues (violence, labour, education, among others). Please visit the following link: <http://interwp.cepal.org/sisgen/ConsultaIntegrada.asp?idAplicacion=11&idioma=e>

There have been two very interesting initiatives launched by the Gender Issues Division. The first is the creation of a database¹⁴ that will finally allow the archival of the vast information lacuna that exists in the region. The second is the Observatory for Gender Equality in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was created during the X Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, 2007) and provides a more comprehensive analysis on the situation of women, developing research and papers that will bring progress in the quest for the objectives. Furthermore, the Observatory's conceptual framework revolves around three areas of autonomy for women, in line with the three key areas of the Santiago Action Plan.

In addition to this Division, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean exists within ECLAC. This subsidiary organisation is of a permanent nature and "carries out periodical evaluations of the activities performed in compliance with the regional and international plans and accords on the subject. Also, it provides a forum for the debate on these issues".

UN Women, a United Nations organisation dedicated to promoting gender equality and empowerment of women around the world.¹⁵ Its Latin America and the Caribbean headquarters is in Panama; from here it develops all its interventions based three priority areas – which coincide with the three working areas related to gender matters as contained in the Santiago Action Plan – that are considered by UN Women as "strategies to overcome the shared challenges of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean".

Since its first Report on Human Development in 1995,¹⁶ **the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** understands that human development cannot be achieved without gender equality and the "enabling women to maximise their potential must be an integral part of the sustainable human development paradigm" (UNDP, 1996). In addition to dealing with gender as a mainstreaming issue, women's empowerment has become a priority area for the work of UNDP in the region: "UNDP works with governments, parliaments and civil society organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean on the development of laws and public policies that guarantee gender equality and women's rights".

Among its initiatives for the region, the creation of the online portal *America Latina Genera* stands out as an important project. As the website indicates, this organisation was created in 2006 as a response to "the need to face the dispersion of knowledge with regard to the topic of gender and the lack of exchange and systematisation of the experiences devel-

¹⁵ UN Women is the result of the merger of the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

¹⁶ The report, which is dedicated to The Revolution toward Equality in the Condition of Genders, is available online at: <http://hdr.undp.org/es/content/informe-sobre-desarrollo-humano-1995>

¹⁷ Practical Area for Gender, UNDP Regional Centre for LAC: <http://www.regionalcentre-lac-undp.org/es/genero>

oped in the region". In 2014, this project became the backbone for the work carried out by the Gender Practical Area of UNDP's Regional Centre in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁷ The objective of this area is to drive forward the UNDP corporate mandate on gender equality, promoting the development of policies, projects and initiatives that can transform the structures, values and patterns perpetuated by gender inequalities in the region, as well as offering support and advice to the countries that are members.

In addition to those already mentioned, there are other multilateral bodies that work towards women's autonomy and gender equality. Among the most relevant, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) have important programmes and develop interesting initiatives in this regard, many of which will be included in the section on good practice.

Amid this complex and convoluted Latin American and Caribbean institutional framework, a new system for consensus, cooperation and political dialogue is emerging within the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). This new system sets itself up as a renewed Latin American regionalism, and seeks to channel the energy of the international agenda through the consolidation of shared stances in global fora, without undermining each country's strategic objectives for development (Ayllón et al., 2014).

CELAC's current agenda is defined in the 2014 Action Plan of the Pro-Tempore Presidency in 21 thematic axes, none of which are exclusively dedicated to gender or women's issues. Despite the fact that member States continue to comply with their commitment in this area,¹⁸ there was a need to wait for EU-LAC relations to get underway before concrete actions could take place. Since then, however, advances have been quite evident. Among the highlights, there is the Special Declaration on the Promotion of Equality and Empowerment of Women in the New Post-2015 Development Agenda,¹⁹ approved within the framework of the II CELAC Summit held in Havana, Cuba in January of 2014. During this event, an emphasis was made on the need for the continuous work on the three working areas of the SAP and the importance of gender perspectives as a universal element in all actions. In any event, CELAC seems to be the ideal organisation to lead the political dialogue in the region, because it remains as the system with the largest geographical coverage and, given its recent creation, does not inherit the burden of earlier incarnations. Yet it inherits the successes that its member states have achieved in both national and other regional integration mechanisms.

¹⁸ Proof of this can be found in the speech given by Chile's Permanent Representative on behalf of ECLAC during the 56th session of the UN Commission on the Judicial and Social Condition of Women, 27 February, 2012.

¹⁹ Special Declaration on the Promotion of Equality and Empowerment of Women:
http://ECLAC.cubaminrex.cu/sites/default/files/ficheros/doc_3_7_declaracion_esp_sobre_genero_espanol.pdf

2.3 SPACES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Along with regional and multilateral institutions, organisations and social movements have played an important role from within various spaces (civil society meetings, the elaboration of reports and campaigns, the creation of transnational networks, mobilisations, etc.) in relation to the inclusion of perspectives that broaden human rights, which subsume women's rights. In order to grasp the reality, it is essential to take a more transnational look that considers the interaction of these non-state actors when it comes to defining agendas, policies and international practices (Risse-Kappen, 1995; Peterson, 1992).

Social forces, through the creation of global citizen networks and transnational communities, have been central stakeholders in processes for transformation, thus opening important avenues for debate within the international society – especially when it comes to human rights, the environment, global public goods, development and participation of citizens, which has contributed to radicalising democracy and the demand for a redistribution of power (Kaldor, 2005; Vidal Beneyto, 2003; Smith et al., 1997). These social movements operate through several different channels, both institutionalised (the insiders, who participate by invitation) and non-institutionalised (the outsiders, who participate by force), as well as through different forms of coordination (Tarrow, 2005; Echart, 2008). In the fight for rights, transnational links are especially relevant, due, in part, to the prevalent violations of rights that take place in dynamics that transcend the mere national level (plans for structural adjustments and austerity measures by international organisation, free trade agreements negotiated inter-regionally, mining activities of transnational corporations, etc.), but also because the unification of transnational networks reinforces local and national claims (Brysk, 2009). Their participation in EU-LAC relations and the inclusion of gender equality and women's rights in their agendas is a good example of the dynamic of these transnational social networks.

In accordance to the demands for empowerment and participation that permeate the gender-based proposals launched by feminist movements, it is essential to consider these actors as central figures when it comes to designing policies and programmes, especially with regards to allowing the participation and giving a voice to the groups most vulnerable to social, economic

and political exclusion, as well as, overlapping discrimination, as can be seen in the case of Indigenous women, farmers, poor or migrant, among others. At a time when social movements are demanding broader democracy and rights throughout the world, it is crucial to consider the demands of these agents in the elaboration of agendas in a bi-regional space. With specific regard to the matter at hand, there are two large areas for social participation that can be created around the Euro-Latin American summits:

- Fora for institutional participation, such as the Euro-Latin American-Caribbean Fora of Civil Society organised by the Negotiation Table, which has been used as a space where NGOs have met and followed up on all of the EU-LAC Summits since Madrid 2002.
- Non-institutional meeting spaces for social movements, mainly the Social Meeting *Enlazando Alternativas* (connecting alternatives), in which participating social movements have met on both continents since Guadalajara 2004.²⁰

Many of these spaces, with regards to gender, have adopted a focus on rights that is linked to feminist claims, though they emphasise different modes and dimensions that should be prioritised. However, there are different approaches on what needs to be prioritised. These concerns have been present since the beginning: the first Forum of Civil Society for the 1999 EU-LAC Rio de Janeiro Summit included a final declaration on the defence of human rights and participative democracy, as well as calling for increased attention on vulnerable groups to avoid a situation where dynamics of exclusion that are generated by globalisation, and by free trade agreements, exacerbate discrimination against women. In the forums following the EU-LAC Civil Society meetings, there will be continued pressure on the need for greater participation “particularly of women’s organisations in both regions during negotiation processes, implementing and monitoring inter-regional agreements” (Madrid, 2002). Likewise, there is a call to cross-reference the gender-based focus, and to include, to test it, clear monitoring indicators, providing statistical data that highlights gender differences in all areas, and prioritising budgetary aspects. Gender policies are reinforced amid other demands, insisting on a focus on rights, in the political participation of women, in all public and economic decision-making spheres (with an emphasis on informality and maquilas) and paying special attention to vulnerable groups, such as migrant women (Mexico, 2004).

During the I CELAC Summit (2013), social bodies maintained their demands for greater democracy, equality, respect for human rights and special attention to those most affected by global capitalism. These social movements proposed to achieve this through reinforcing and democ-

²⁰ Prior to the 1999 Rio Summit, there already existed spaces for participation. In particular the Civil Society Meeting organised by the European Social and Economic Committee and the Forum for Civil Society that sought to build a Continental Social Alliance. At the Madrid Summit, social movements gathered at the Trans-Atlantic Social Forum. Among these spaces, it is worth pointing out that the organisation of various meeting of feminist movements in both regions, such as the World March of Women (<http://encontrommm.wordpress.com/about/>), and the Latin American and the Caribbean Feminist Meeting (<http://www.13eflac.org>), among others.

raising the political bi-regional dialogue, thus incorporating within it the effective participation of civil society.²¹ Moreover, there was also a call to uphold rights, which in turn implies the adoption of specific measures and the fulfilment of legal obligations.²²

The positioning of these social movements go further in this regard, demanding full respect, guarantee and fulfilment of human rights based upon this new, more structural rhetoric that places neoliberalism and patriarchal societies as models that need to be challenged; they insist also on the importance of the agency of these social movements. During *Enlazando Alternativas* (Lima, 2008), a meeting specifically for women was held, which committed to the collective construction of the development and democratisation processes through the strengthening, articulation and feedback of these social movements that can change power networks. That is to say, the onus is on a more collective political dialogue that leads to empowerment and more direct participation (“we women believe that full democracy, to no end, is the basis of all alternative integration for and by the people where speaking directly, transparently, with arguments and care will allow to regain confidence and to reform the road ahead”). This is the position that will be adopted during the last *Enlazando Alternativas* meeting (Chile, 2013), which restates “direct, participative and popular democracy and its consolidation from its social bases”.

In other spaces aside from the Summits, feminist movements in both regions maintain a political rhetoric where the extension of women’s rights meets a feminist, anti-patriarchal and anti-capitalist project. It is important to point out that these deliberation spaces provide opportunities for women to build their own agendas, priorities and interventions. The World March of Women, an international feminist movement against poverty and sexual violence, includes among the organisation’s principles that women are active stakeholders in the fight for the transformation of their lives, the right to self-determination and equality as the basis for society.²³ It stands for amulti-levelled action, from local to global, and a multidimensional approach taking into account all interconnected areas of discrimination (gender, race, class, ethnic, sexual orientation, etc.), and aims to occupy the spaces for political participation and democratic construction. Its achievements include changes to agendas and interventions concerning women in several countries where they are active, greater participation of women in decision-making processes, the adoption of laws favourable to women’s rights and shifts to the public perception of women.

²¹ The call to “implement mechanism for permanent evaluation and follow-up in a public, participative and binding manner on all bilateral agreements”, “institutionalise mechanisms for participation of the social stakeholders, both in ECLAC as in other Latin American integration mechanisms, and open up spaces for civil society consultation in Europe”, “broaden spaces and instances of political participation of civil society”, and “guarantee the right to association, expression and put a stop to the criminalisation of social protest in both Latin America and Europe” (Chile, 2013).

²² The call is to “adopt integrated measures in an action plan that will ensure the emancipation of women, gender equality and the eradication of any type of violence against women, including Femicide. This is to be done in strict compliance with the Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence Against Women (Belem do Para Convention) and the European Convention on the Fight and the Prevention of Violence Against Women” (ECLAC, 2013).

²³ World March of Women: <http://encontrommm.wordpress.com/about/>

The Latin American and the Caribbean Feminist Movement Meetings, held since 1981, are another example of spaces that have been created by feminist movements in the region to stake their claims. The topics discussed are relatable to the ones elaborated for the SAP, including aspects such as violence, labour, and political struggles. In the political manifesto for the 13th meeting (Lima, 2014), these aspects are further developed, insisting on the fight against “capitalist-neoliberal, colonial, patriarchal, hetero-normative and racist societies where relations of domination and exploitation are rampant”, and for “the defence of democracy and the extension of rights (...) from an inter-culturally and inter-sectoral critical perspective” that ultimately takes into account all forms of discrimination.²⁴

There definitely exists a bi-regional space with a strong potential for making progress in gender equality and in the broadening of the guarantees for women’s rights: from an international normative framework that translates in great measure into national laws of a binding nature (although it is important to keep pressure for the signing and ratification of all available instruments), regional programmes and institutions whose remit is the issue of gender (who, without doubt, should continue growing and coordinating amongst themselves), inclusion of a gender perspective in the bi-regional partnership, and above all, an active and dynamic civil society in the struggle for progress in these aspects, which demands a central role in the definition of these agendas and practices, and which continues to exert pressure in order to solidify the progress thus far made. The three key areas for action included in the SAP embody some of these claims, and allow for the demythologising of women as vulnerable beings that require basic social services and in its stead, instil to a vision of women under the principles of empowerment and social, economic and political participation, which are essential for fomenting fairer and less unequal societies. A better understanding of the challenges in each of these key areas, and the methods for overcoming them, will lead to improvements in future work in this direction.

²⁴ Encuentro Feminista Latinoamericano y del Caribe: <http://www.13eflac.org>

3 PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES TO BE FACED

The achievement of equality between men and women in both spaces, as well as in their shared space, is articulated in relation to actions and responses on the part of EU institutions and their LAC counterparts. In addition to already established policies and norms – laws or national plans for equality, sector policies or national programmes – there have been a series of programmes developed upon specific credit lines established by the regional blocs.

The current tasks carried out in the bi-regional space are focused upon two activities: the EU-CELAC Seminar on violence against women, femicides and the online Discussion on Data Lacunas on Gender Equality on the Wikigender website – for this reason its development is still at an embryonic stage. Therefore, the interventions and Best Practices (BP) that are presented here are limited to the EU and LAC spheres, thus following the SAP taxonomy. The lessons learned and other intervention voids, which are associated with these practices, have served to define existing challenges in the bi-regional space that contribute to attaining equality between men and women.

3.1 SOURCES AND DATABASES EMPLOYED

The current chapter includes a series of practices, previously evaluated as good by other agents, mainly ECLAC and EIGE, in relation to the key areas defined in the SAP.²⁵ Both institutions are considered independent entities that contribute to this endeavour, and operate in the areas that are the object of this study.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is an independent European Union centre (EU, 2006c) that collects, analyses and disseminates information and data for the promotion of gender equality. Conceived as a centre for the coordination and exchange of knowledge related to gender equality topics within the EU, its main objectives are to reinforce and promote gender equality, which includes the integration of a gender perspective in all EU policies and resulting national policies, the fight against gender-based discrimination, as well as raising awareness about gender equality among EU citizens. Its main contributions are the following:

- The creation of the **Gender Equality Index**, which allows for the measurement and comparison of achievements made over time, reconciling the different definitions and perspectives on equality.
- The **design and development of tools that gather information and data** in the 28 member States on the different gender-based issues.
- The **documentation and systematisation of best practices** – positive measures aimed at achieving gender equality. A series of practices, widely recognised as good, shared and analysed as such (See Annex, graphs 16 and 17), have been documented.

²⁵ The division of practices in relation to the three key areas also follows the logic of the practices in the ECLAC taxonomy, based on the Observatory for policies on gender equality in the LAC (Best Practice for granting women access to public authorities and decision-making processes, policies on equality that promote economic autonomy for women and Best Practice to address the issue of violence against women).

The Observatory on Gender Equality in Latin America and the Caribbean is an initiative coordinated by the Gender Issues Division at ECLAC and conceived as a tool that would meet the objectives of analysing and making visible the fulfilment of international aims and objectives with regard to gender equality. In order to achieve this, it puts at the disposal of member States specific tools and indicators for the formulation of policies; it provides technical support and training for the States. Moreover, it provides technical assistance and training to States – National Statistics Institutes and Mechanisms for Women’s Rights – to produce statistics and indicators; and publishes an annual report on the inequalities between men and women – including aspects relative to decision-making and political representation, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, and remunerated and non-remunerated labour (use of time and poverty). Its main guidelines are aligned to those described in the SAP.²⁶

In relation to the Latin American and the Caribbean region, data has been provided by two other entities, which have been previously mentioned: information offered by the OAS Inter-American Commission on Women and the America Latina Genera organisation belonging to the UNDP Regional Centre. The OAS’s CIM²⁷ shares two of the SAP’s working areas: all forms of violence against women and political participation. On their website, they offer information on these topics, including not just statistics, but also examples of their own and others’ best practices within the region.

For its part, the UNDP Regional Centre launched an ambitious online portal in 2006, America Latina Genera,²⁸ which is now considered as a reference point both inside and outside the region, as an answer to the “great dispersion of knowledge and information on gender topics and the lack of interchange and systematisation of experiences developed in the region that will allow to make headway in terms of lessons learned and achieving the best possible results”. Among its initiatives, it is worth noting the convention “Experiences that Make a Difference: Universality of Gender Equality in Public Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean”,²⁹ launched in 2014 under the framework of the “Overcoming Obstacles for the Transversal of Gender in Latin America and the Caribbean” project, which has selected twelve experiences related to gender issues and developed by the public sector and other tertiary sector entities in the region.

All of these entities have been developing, among other things, a project for the systematisation of data, practices and experiences; systemisation of its processes, learning and results, both for dissemination as its potential replication in other context as a support for the construction of inclusive, democratic societies in both regions.

²⁶ That is, physical autonomy (gender violence and health and reproductive rights); economic (paid and unpaid labour, time use and poverty); and decision making (political representation at a ministerial, legislative and judiciary level.

²⁷ CIM/OEA: <http://portal.oas.org/Portal/Topic/Comisi%C3%B3nInteramericanadeMujeres>

²⁸ América Latina Genera: <http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite/index.php/es/genera>

²⁹ <http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite/index.php/es/banner/2609-12-experiencias-destacadas-en-la-convocatoria-regional-de-experiencias-que-marcan-la-diferencia-transversalidad-de-la-igualdad-de-genero-en-las-politicas-publicas-de-america-latina-y-el-caribe>

3.2 BEST PRACTICES

In keeping with the SAP's rationale, a series of best practices are put forward in this section, in accordance with each of the established working areas: political participation, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, economic empowerment and participation in the workplace.

ON THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

The historical and social contexts of both regions will mark female political participation and the development of legislation that advocates the introduction of gender quotas and highlights the difficulties in achieving true and formal equality. Beyond the creation of laws for the equal participation of genders, it has been and remains important to effectively and efficiently implement these regulations. The design, execution and sustainability of these formal interventions have been reinforced and driven by the work done by women's movements in both regions, and the recognition and diffusion of informal and non-institutional participation as spheres of influence. For the LAC region, the consolidation of the women's movement and the institutionalisation of gender issues has been decisive in achieving electoral and administrative reforms that aim to increase women's political participation and making progress in gender equality issues (Donoso and Valdes, 2007).

The practices that have been developed in both spaces try to overcome obstacles that limit equal participation – the erosion and break-up of the patriarchal system, the division of labour by gender, gender roles and stereotypes, the disappearance of triple work shifts, the inequalities in opportunities and access to education between men and women, the modification and elimination of legislation, and mechanisms and institutional structures that are discriminatory.

Practices that are recognised as influencing the increase of women's political participation are as follows: the adoption of laws establishing quotas, the incorporation of women into jurisdictional organisations or specialised administrative institutions on electoral issues, the inclusion of

affirmative actions measures in political financing, the electoral training of women, the creation of electoral observatories for gender that endorse the fulfilment of normative equality, the balanced representation of men and women in public administration and the exercise of justice, the establishment of special quotas for the constitution of higher-level ranks in political parties, the creation of specific mandates within political party statutes that guarantee female participation in decision-making circles, the incorporation of women as alternates in uninominal positions, the adoption, implementation and financing of measures that guarantee the inclusion of women among the lists for promotion to higher ranks within the justice sector, affirmative actions expressed in terms of quotas for nomination to public office positions, actions aimed at demanding rights, influencing and lobbying for the incorporation of women into councils of magistrates in the judicial sector or the participation in academia in courses on women's rights, among others (ECLAC, 2010b). The institutionalisation of these mechanisms, measures and interventions oriented towards fostering women's political participation are now a reality that has generated best practices of public policies aimed at building an inclusive, equal and quality democracy.³⁰

In the case of the European Union, there is still an insufficient representation of women in positions of responsibility in all fields. As has been pointed out before, the causes for this situation are complex and diverse and originate from the structural inequality between men and women. There have been certain measures taken within the EU, although still insufficient, which are aimed at increasing women's participation at all levels of power. The systematisation and analysis of comparable data is another of the visible efforts carried out by the Commission since 2002.³¹ The statistics that first revealed the absence of women in public office appeared in the 1990's, and served as an effective tool to approach the problem of women's lack of representation. From then on, strategies for establishing quotas were being adopted as starting points for the elimination of traditional inequality and shorten the gender gap. The quota system³² – a mechanism for affirmative action that surfaced in Nordic countries during the 1980s – was to be integrated into several EU countries, either through national legislation (Belgium), or their political parties (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Ireland and Sweden).

It is also important to highlight that the systematisation and analysis of data – the Network of Experts on “Women in Decision-making”, and the European database of men and women in

³⁰ According to United Nations, an equal democracy is a regime whereby inequalities and discrimination are recognised so that a new social contract will lead to the blurring of private and public sectors. In this regard, the ethics of co-responsibility become fundamental in both sectors.

³¹ The efforts made by the Network of the European Commission can also be highlighted due to their promotion of women in decision-making circles related to politics and economy. This network has provided a platform at the EU level in order to discuss successful strategies and best practices directed at attaining a balance of gender in decision-making positions.

³² The system of quotas implies an advance in the construction of a new model of citizenship and public spaces whereby other type of priority measures need to be considered in order to make significant gains toward parity as a basis for the redistribution of power. Its implementation requires legal instruments and public policies that contribute to the deconstruction of the socially exclusive dichotomic model. The new paradigm needs to be aimed at creating a de facto parity between men and women, and consequently, an equal redistribution of responsibility and burdens of work in the private sector.

decision-making circles – , along with the development of a community-level debate, led by the European Parliament Commission on Women’s Rights, has been decisive in developing a balanced participation by men and women in political institutions, and the legislation of soft law (EU, 1996b). This type of soft law is oriented towards the representation of women in elected office, in assigned positions, and participation in general political life.

Soft law urges the “Council, Commission and member States to produce and apply effective policies in terms of gender equality, along with multiple strategies, in order to achieve equal participation in decision-making processes and leadership on all levels, especially in the realm of macroeconomic policies, trade, labour, budget planning, defence and foreign relations; to evaluate its impact and disseminate it to the public through adequate equality indicators; that establish measurable objectives, clear action plans, and mechanisms for periodic supervision, followed up by binding corrective legal actions when objectives are not met within the established time-frame” (EU, 2012).

Currently, out of the 28 member States, only four have female Heads of State – Germany, Denmark, Slovenia and Lithuania. If we analyse current equal representation, the number of female representatives MEPs in the European Parliament has gone from 35.5% in 2009/2014 to 36.75% in 2014/2019. The highest percentage of women can be found in Finland, Sweden and Ireland, while Spain follows at 41%; 40% in France, Netherlands, Estonia, Italy, Austria and the UK; 35% in Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Portugal and Slovenia; 20-25% in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Greece, while Lithuania only has one female representative out of 11 representatives.

Despite the fact that this data suggests progress in equal parliamentary representation, this does not correlate with similar increases seen in other positions of representation. For example, in the European Parliament, out of the 14 vice-presidencies, only 6 are held by women – budget oversight, domestic market and consumption, regional development, and constitutional matters, in addition to the Commission of Women’s Rights and Gender Equality.³³ In the Commission, there are 9 female commissioners out of 28.

Parity, as previously explained, is linked to the construction of a new model for society. Therefore, in addition to qualitative and quantitative female representation in political circles, there must be changes made to the structural causes, which are ultimately perpetuating patriarchal political structures.

Lastly, it is important to highlight – because of their importance as practices that, based on a focus on human rights, cross-reference gender and disability, integrating different vulnerable groups into interventions – the projects developed by the European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), on political participation by people with disabilities (FRA, 2014b).

³³ There are also two Parliamentary Sub-Committees that are represented by women: Human Rights, and Security and Defense.

When analysing the status of the women's political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean, we can find a new element of heterogeneity. While the advances made have been remarkable, in particular regarding the number of political positions held by women within the central administration in the various countries, "the realisation of parity is still far away and it is necessary to produce concrete measures of political will" (Ruiz and Bonometti, 2010:80) that will allow the entire region to progress at the same pace. In addition, the 2014 Women in Politics Map provides optimistic data on Latin America and the Caribbean.³⁴ For 40 years, there were only 10 female Presidents in Latin America, while in 2013; four women led their respective countries at the same moment.³⁵

"During the last five-year period, six women were elected as President in Latin America and the Caribbean. Currently, the rather promising figure of 42% of the population in Latin America finds itself governed by a woman; this represents a historic feat [...] In the last few years, governments in the region have put parity at the centre of their political agendas, as established by the Quito Consensus, which proposes to "reach equality in the exercise of power, decision-making in the mechanisms for social and political participation and representation of women, [...] which constitutes a target for eradicating the structural exclusion of women" (OIG, 2010).

The uneven progress is more evident if the analysis is done on institutions and on geographical districts. For example, as recent reports warn, in the executive branch, the posts occupied by women are still more related to social areas than economic and/or defence. In the legislative branch, the percentage of positions held by women is around 25%. This percentage is lower in local administration despite the fact that women's political participation has been traditionally at a more informal, community level, closer to the citizenry.

According to Ruiz and Bonometti (2010), the problem lies in the fact that even if countries have approved quota system laws, there are no sanctions if these laws are not upheld. A structural change is also necessary, one that is "capable of modifying political culture in Latin America that creates discriminatory biases". That is to say that collective interventions and structural relationships must be added up the legal focus and the measures for individual empowerment.

Naturally, it is up to the different governments to take the initiative and foster an environment where women can participate fully in politics. However, there are different regional experiences, such as the ones promoted by UN Women, or the CIM within the OAS, which contribute to making progress in this area. For example, UNDP, in conjunction with UN Women and IDEA, are developing the ATENEA project for the creation of a system that can monitor women's political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. As they themselves claim, this "allows for the

³⁴ Carried out by the Inter-parliamentary Union and UN Women. Available at: http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmmnmap14_sp.pdf

³⁵ Dilma Rouseff in Brazil, Cristina Fernández in Argentina, Laura Chinchilla in Costa Rica and Michelle Bachelet in Chile.

³⁶ www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2014/empoderamiento%20politico%20de%20las%20mujeres%20lac%202014-17%20unwomen.pdf

establishment of a more integrated, permanent and comparative perspective on the political participation of women”. This is not merely a database that, through the conclusions yielded by the analysis of the information gathered, will promote spaces for communication and action where proposal and recommendations could be developed.

Meanwhile, UN Women published a strategic guide in 2014 called *Political Empowerment of Women: a framework for strategic action in Latin America and the Caribbean (2014-2017)*.³⁶ As well as providing a state of the art report and a compendium of norms regarding the matter at hand, it also provides “a framework for action as defined in the five strategic objectives”: (1) the promotion of equal democracy through affirmative actions; (2) the integration of a gender perspective in policies, actions and institutions; (3) the reinforcement of leadership in women through training and the generation of women’s networks; (4) the promotion of substantial equality in political parties; and (5) the elimination of discrimination and sexist stereotypes in all areas.

Other interesting initiatives for Latin America and the Caribbean have also come from the United Nations. For example, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) implemented the “Strengthening of Governance with a Gender-based Approach and the Political Participation of Women at the Local Level” in Central America.³⁷ This project is noteworthy because, based on work of the implicated parties, it allows for its national appropriation so that every country can manage the results ensuring its impact and sustainability.

At the national level, almost every country in the region has prioritised specific programmes to promote the leadership qualities of women through empowerment and/or developing their potential, such as the programme implemented by *Cotidiano Mujer* “Political Participation and the Empowerment of Women” in Uruguay, the “Bolivian Women in the Process of Change: a normative framework with parity and gender equality” by the Bolivian Women’s Coordination, or the SUMA project for political and economic empowerment of women in Mexico, among others.

ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, INCLUDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The elimination of violence in all its form is a shared political priority, as has been established in international, regional and local frameworks. Any instance of violence is a violation of human rights and goes against human integrity. The policies, specific plans, programmes and interventions to combat the different forms of violence – sexual, domestic, female genital mutilation (FGM), femicide, traffic, exploitation, and others – are a constant in both regions. This underscores the persistence of violence as a manifestation of unequal power relations that are traditional between men and women, and the persistence of a social problem that needs to be dealt with by regional entities, the State, and civil society as a whole in order to prevent and eradicate it.

³⁷ http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite//images/610_executivesummary_aeciproject_sp.pdf

The European Union has been developing an effective normative framework that acts as a deterrent in the fight against violence towards women and girls. Declaration 19 of the Lisbon Treaty (2007), relative to article 8 of the Treaty for the Functioning of the European Union, establishes that member States must adopt every measures necessary to confront domestic violence and help protect victims. In its general efforts to eliminate the inequalities between men and women, the EU, through its policies, attempts to confront all forms of domestic violence. It is imperative for member States to adopt any means necessary to prevent and punish unlawful acts and lend support and protection to victims (Council of Europe, 2011: 258).

According to estimates, between 20 – 25% of women living in the EU have been victims of physical violence at least once in their lives, while almost half a million women have suffered genital mutilation (EU, 2011a: 4).

This declaration of intent has been reinforced by a package of measures to guarantee that the rights of victims remain at the forefront, and they will be treated fairly. In this regard, a Directive was established to set a minimum standard on rights, support and protection to victims, as well as reinforcing the rights granting families access to information and their procedural rights during criminal court proceedings (EU, 2012b).³⁸ Along the same lines, the approval of a bylaw for the mutual acknowledgment of measures of protection in civil law (CE, 2011) allows for the expansion of protection to individuals in the event of migration within the EU. This measure supplements the Directive on the European order for protection, which is applied to all orders for protection adopted as a result of criminal proceedings (EU, 2011b).³⁹ According to this, all women who have suffered domestic violence will be able to obtain a restraining order from their home country no matter where they are within the EU.

Since 1996, these directives are supplemented with the development of a full and multi-disciplinary proposal for the prevention of violence against women and girls in the EU: preventive measures, including explicit legal protection, for all people involved, and measures for the protection, support and assistance of victims. The Commission integrated in its Strategy a *framework for equality* between men and women (2001-2005), and the current strategy includes measures for protection in the long-term in order to change social attitudes concerning violence against women, including the trafficking of women and girls. The Council also adopted and improved the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020),⁴⁰ which included for the first time the fight against violence directed at women.

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³⁸ The member States of the EU have until 16 November, 2015 to apply all dispositions contained in the current Directive into their national legislation.

³⁹ The EU member States have to apply these dispositions contained in the current Directive into their legal frameworks prior to 11 January 2015.

⁴⁰ Predecessor to the 2005 pact on equality, this pact reinforces and supports the 2010-2015 Strategy of Equality and the 2020 Strategy for Employment and Growth.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE 2014 EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SURVEY

Magnitude of the problem

- It is estimated that 13 million women in the EU have experienced physical violence within 12 months prior to the survey.
- It is estimated that 3.7 million women in the EU have suffered sexual violence within 12 months prior to the survey.

The global prevalence of physical and sexual violence

- One out of three women (33%) aged 15 or over have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence.
- 8% of women have suffered physical and/or sexual violence within 12 months prior to being interviewed for the survey.
- Of all women aged 15 or over who have a partner (current or former), 22% have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from their partners.

Characteristics of physical violence

- 31% of women aged 15 or over have experienced one or more acts of physical violence.

Characteristics of sexual violence

- In total, 11% of women aged 15 or over have suffered some form of sexual violence from their partner or someone else.
- One out of 20 women (5%) aged 15 or over have been raped.
- Of the women that indicated having been a victim of sexual violence on the part of a non-partner, almost 1 out of 10 women indicated that there was more than one person involved when they described the acts.

Details on domestic violence

- One third of victims (34%) of physical violence perpetrated by a former partner experienced four or more instances of such violence.
- The most common forms of physical violence include: pushing or shoving, slapping or pulling on a woman's hair.
- While the majority of cases of violence by former partners occurred during their relationship, one out of six women (16%) who were victims of abuse by a former partner, experienced abuse after the relationship had ended.

Details on violence outside of a relationship

- One out of five women (22%) aged 15 or over have been a victim of violence by someone that was not their partner.

The Istanbul Convention – the European Council Convention on the Prevention and Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – seeks to contribute to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and to promote true equality for men and women through the autonomy of women. In this Convention, different types of violence against women are defined as crimes. Its focus is on the detection, prevention and fight against all forms of violence directed at women, ranging from mistreatment at the hands of partners or ex-partners, to forced marriages, FGM or trafficking for exploitation reasons. Moreover, it compromises all ratifying States to adopt legislative and punitive measures, to inform and raise awareness in order to persecute these crimes and protect the victims. This international treaty presupposes a new call to fight for the equality between men and women, given that it now recognises violence against women as a violation of human rights and as a form of discrimination. In addition, States would be now held accountable if they do not respond adequately to this type of violence. Also, a monitoring mechanism is established in order to guarantee the effective application of the regulations by the member States that have ratified it, thus reinforcing its binding nature.

Best practices in relation to violence have been collected and systematised by EIGE, including domestic violence and FGM (EIGE, 2013). These are focused on programmes for support services (28%), increasing awareness (24%), training (24%), protection (9%), and prevention/persecution and partnerships/alliances (9%). The country where the best practices in the fight against gender-based violence have been documented is in the UK (5 programmes), followed by Spain, the Netherlands, Austria and Germany (2 programmes), and France, Croatia, Denmark, Luxembourg, Slovakia, and Portugal (1 programme) (See annex graph 17).

Over the last two decades, the European Union and Commission have been designing and financing numerous programmes and actions within the institutions that are aimed at the prevention and protection against violence directed at children, teenagers and women. In this regard it is worth remarking on the bodies financed by European programmes:

DAPHNE (see appendix, graph 18), fights against violence directed at girls and boys, teenagers and women. It has been operational since 1997.⁴¹

STOP has been fundamentally oriented at building the capacities of judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, public officials and civil servants responsible for matters concerning immigration and border control, social and tax law and child sexual exploitation.

URBAN has tried, over its three stages, to intensify the exchange of information and experiences in relation to sustainable urban development in the European Union. This programme, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), has revealed a number of situations of violence that are associated with an urban environment, even though this is not its objective.

⁴¹ Over the years, there have been numerous papers, systematisations and data collection, trainings and dissemination, pilot plans, and the creation and strengthening of networks of interchange of experiences and knowledge among EU countries with the aim to identify best practices that could be replicated in other EU member States.

⁴² NGO projects that are aimed at the integration and participation of the most vulnerable groups within economic, social and political marginalisation.

The PHARE and TACIS programmes have contributed to the financing of smaller, more specific projects on violence prevention,⁴² especially in Central and Eastern European countries that are candidates to join the EU. PHARE funds were also used to co-finance the participation of these countries in other community programmes such as DAPHNE and the V Community Programme for Equal Opportunities for men and women.

In November 2013, the European Commission announced a new quest to fight FGM in the European Union and beyond (CE, 2013b). To this end, the Commission designed a document outlining their strategy wherein a series of actions were proposed to work toward the elimination of FGM.⁴³ Based on the studies carried out by EIGE, it points to the development of national policies – national action plans, both specific and general that include the issue of FGM –, criminal legislation and concrete actions (DAPHNE II) directed at confronting FGM (EIGE, 2013).

The European Commission in collaboration with other civil society stakeholders has considered that, to keep track of all the different actions and to ensure their continuity in political agendas and, furthermore to contribute to a change of attitude in society, it was important to carry out different campaigns; noteworthy among which are: the European Campaign against Domestic Violence, the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, and the Day against Human Trafficking (CE 2013b, 2014c, 2014e).

The European Agency for Fundamental Rights carried out a survey in 2014 on violence against women in the EU. According to their findings, comparable data and indicators have shown that 33% of women over the age of 15 in the EU have experienced some type of violence from their partners.⁴⁴ The projects carried out by this Agency have the potential to intersect their work with other vulnerable groups; for example, immigrants, ethnic minorities, and the disabled.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, violence is a widespread issue that affects all sorts of women regardless of their socio-economic status and is caused by structural issues deeply ingrained in everyday life in the region. Undoubtedly, the most significant step taken in this regard has been raising awareness of the problem and the attention it has received from regional and multilateral spheres, thus putting pressure on governments to take action on these issues. In this way, within a region that is characterised by its heterogeneity and marked by the absence of systematised data, reports such as the ones carried out by the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (for 2011 and 2012), or the report published by ECLAC in

⁴³ These actions included i) a better understanding of the phenomenon (production of development indicators); ii) Prevention of FGM and support to victims (utilising EU funds for the DAPHNE programme, Lifelong learning and the Youth in Action programme, and funds for Asylum and Migrations; iii) More effective processing by member States; iv) Protection to women at risk within EU territory (the proper application of EU asylum norms is sought); v) Actions toward the elimination of FGM worldwide (bilateral dialogues have been established with pertinent nations, in collaboration with the African Union and United Nations to promote worldwide initiatives against FGM). During 2013, the Commission contributed 2.3 million Euros to projects specifically aimed at FGM.

⁴⁴ <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/violence-against-women-survey>

2010 containing information on violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean, has been vital in improving our understanding of the scale of the problem.

The response to this situation has been, unfortunately, neither fast nor effective enough. A recent study conducted by UNDP and UN Women, entitled “The Commitment of the States: Plans and Policies to Eradicate Violence against Women in Latin America and the Caribbean”, offers, as well as a current appraisal of the situation, a collection of national initiatives to end violence. Without a doubt, this is necessary reading for those who wish to gain a deeper understanding on the matter. Among other important information, it is especially important to note the table that explains the typology of the policy and/or the national plan to deal with violence against women in the 32 countries studied in the report established seven levels: (1) 9 countries have formulated a specific national plan, which has been approved and is in force; (2) 4 countries are in the process of formulating and/or approving the plan; (3) 10 countries have formulated a non-specific, national plan that has been approved and is in force; (4) 4 countries are in the process of formulating and/or approving a non-specific plan; (5) 6 countries where violence against women is a central issue in an Equal Opportunity Plan for Men and Women and/or Gender Equality; (6) 2 countries where violence against women is a central issue in another type of non-specific public policy; (7) 1 country, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, does not have any type of public policy to deal with the issue of violence against women.

America Latina Genera estimates that 2 out of 3 women in the region have suffered some sort of violence in their lives. Also, 2 out of 3 women were murdered simply for being a woman. The rate of women who have suffered sexual harassment in the workplace has risen to an alarming 70% of textile [maquila] workers (...) the cost of violence against women fluctuates, according IDB, between 1.6 and 2% of GDP for countries in the region.⁴⁵

The report also recalls that the “States have a clearly defined obligation, in light of international law, to confront violence against women”. But not just in light of international law, but also regional law. As has been mentioned before, one of the greatest achievements for gender equality and parity was the OAS approval in 1994 – a year before the IV World Conference on Women – of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (better known as the Belém do Pará Convention). The recent Pachuca Declaration, “to reinforce the efforts made for the prevention of violence against women”,⁴⁶ drafted by the CIM of the OAS within the framework for tracking realised in the Belém do Pará Convention, recognises and extends a congratulatory note for the progress thus far made, but also reminds the States of the need to continue fulfilling agreements.

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⁴⁵ For more details see online: http://www.americalatinagenera.org/es/infografia/Infografia_violencia_contra_mujeres.pdf

⁴⁶ The survey can be consulted at: <http://www.oas.org/en/mesecvi/docs/DeclaracionPachuca-ES.pdf>

From a programmatic perspective, in 2009, the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB by its Spanish acronym), and the Ibero-American Youth Organisation (OIJ by its Spanish acronym), with the support of Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID by its Spanish acronym), launched the “Zero Abuse” campaign,⁴⁷ conceived as the first campaign for raising awareness of gender-based violence issues, and carried out jointly by all countries in the Ibero-American region, though each country could adapt it to its specific needs.

Concluding on a more local note, in September 2013, the Ibero-American Union of Municipalities – through the Ibero American Network of Municipalities for Gender Equality and supported by UN Women – organised a week of municipal action against gender-based violence, where among other activities, common experiences and initiatives were shared, always within a local context, and considered as best practices.⁴⁸

ON THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKPLACE AND ALL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Empowerment in an economic sense looks to promote the participation of women in economic activities with assumed equal opportunities and treatment. Investing in economic empowerment of women contributes to the construction of more stable and fair societies with stronger economies, inclusive growth and the eradication of poverty. It is a fact that women contribute significantly to the economies in both regions, simultaneously in many cases, therefore it is fundamental to empower women so that they can participate fully in economic life in every sector.

Economic empowerment is a tool and a basic strategy in the breakdown of discrimination and gender inequality, and the cycle of poverty and violence under which many women find themselves, thus reducing their material dependency. The impact of the policies, measures and actions affect women, their environment, society and the State. The economic empowerment of women and their participation in the workplace and in all decision-making processes is a lever for social transformation that is related to, and positively influences, the political participation of women and the elimination of violence.

Even though the concept of empowerment surfaces in the 1980s (as a process through which women gained access to material and symbolic resources and reinforce their capacities and prominence in all levels), it would not be until the IV Beijing Platform for Action where the consolidation of women’s empowerment becomes a requirement for equality. This idea will be revisited in the Beijing+15, along with a concomitant resolution (United Nations, 2010). It is no surprise that economic empowerment and women’s participation in the labour market are common denominator issues in both regions. The paradox, and perhaps one of the issues worth re-

⁴⁷ A summary of campaign results can be consulted at: <http://segib.org/actividades/files/2010/03/Informe-final-a-diciembre-2009-Campa%C3%B1a-Maltrato-Cero.pdf>

⁴⁸ All experiences can be consulted at: http://www.uimunicipalistas.org/redes/redgenero/?page_id=1665

visiting, is the vision and contributions measured through traditional economic paradigms. Thus, the practices that are proposed follow the rationale of markets in detriment to the contribution made by feminist economics, which are based on the strategy of empowerment.

Perhaps this is the biggest bias upon which the actions of the European Union are based. In line with the previous point, the European context recognises the relationship between the commercial empowerment of women, economic empowerment, job creation, economic growth, innovation and development, and the reduction of poverty, in detriment of the more collective approaches that exert influence from a more structural dimension.

Since 1957, equal remuneration and access to the job market features in the normative framework of the Union – treaties, directives, recommendations, strategies, programmes, measures, for instance. Even though the proportion of women in the workplace increased roughly by 8% from 1997 to 2013, the participation of women in the workplace in the EU (see annex, graphs 4 and 6), continues to be lower than other regions of the world (USA 65%, Japan 65%). The biggest disparities between men and women are found in the distribution of jobs – which also differs depending on the EU country: female employment rates are below 60% in Greece, Italy, Malta, Croatia, Spain, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Poland, but above 70% in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Netherlands, Austria, and Estonia (see annex, graph 6). With regards to type and quality of jobs that men and women occupy, 32% of women work part-time compared to only 8% of men; regarding pensions, these are lower for women, 39% lower in fact (EU, 2013), which puts women at a greater risk of poverty.

Even though in some cases part-time work (see annex, graph 7) is a matter of choice, it is evidence of the limited professional opportunities for women, as well as evidence of lower wages and smaller pensions; an underuse of human capital and therefore, lower economic growth. That is to say, the prevalence part-time work is caused by a lack of alternatives. Also, this situation highlights the covert nature and non-remuneration for work done on a private level, which is aimed at maintaining the status quo, and which, in the majority of cases, is work done by women.⁴⁹ In order to deal with this reality, some member-States (mainly Nordic and Baltic nations), have developed policies that combine high rates of employment among women and a reduction in the difference between the hours worked by men and women (EC, 2014d).

The salary gap between men and women (see annex, graph 9), according to the definition provided by the European Commission, is “the difference between the average salary of men and women per hour worked”. Current data shows an average of 16.4% for the entire Euro-

⁴⁹ The glass ceiling is still a reality. Only 24% of women in the world fill positions of upper management. There are barriers that still limit the potential of women. These can be legal (to work or inherit property, have access to maternity or paternity leave, receive equal pay as men for the same type of work, obtain an ID card or passport, open bank accounts, have access to credit, the right to justice in cases of domestic violence and sexual harassment), or social (perception of men and women), natural disasters, economic crises, underage marriage, violence against women and girls, limited access to education, justice and health services, etc.

pean Union (EC, 2014e and EU, 2013), with a slight plateau after a small downward trend in recent years (17%). This trend is due in part to the fall experienced in certain “masculine” sectors – construction and engineering – without the corresponding increase in women’s incomes.

This difference between the salaries of men and women is rooted in the patriarchal structure of society and economics. In order to deal with the causes of this persistent gap, there is a need for integrated law and non-legislative actions. In this regard, the Commission has been developing several initiatives linked to the supervision of the current normative framework, the evaluation and monitoring of income equality, recommendations to member States vis-à-vis reducing the salary gap, raising awareness, etc.

Directive 92/85/CEE, which addresses maternity leave (14 weeks) and protection against dismissal, was modified and reinforced in 2008 with a proposal by the Commission regarding maternity leave – “it would increase the minimum period of leave from 14 to 18 week and recommends paying women 100% of their salary, but with the possibility for member States to set a maximum limit equivalent to sick leave...”. Parental leave emerges as part of the measures that have been developed to balance work and family life and promote equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace (EC, 2009 and EU, 2010a).

THE OBJECTIVES FOR BARCELONA

One of the factors that influence the salary gap is the burden of care and care work that women carry out – only 67.8% of women with a small child (younger than 6) is currently working, in comparison to 89% of men. Guaranteeing proper day-care facilities (for about 90% of children between 3 and school-age, and 33% of children under 3), is a vital step towards equal employment opportunities among men and women (European Council, Barcelona Summit, 2002).

Directive 2010/181/EU establishes minimum conditions on parental leave (base agreement celebrated by European social stakeholders,⁵⁰ in order motivate parents to take parental leave, thus converting one of the four months parents have a right into non-transferable; so if the parent does not claim it, they would lose it). For those people who are self-employed, the right to maternity leave appears for the first time since 2010 as decreed by Directive 2010/141/EC related to self-employed workers and their spouses (EU, 2010b, and EC, 2010). The directive betters the protection for workers and their spouses or partners (maternity subsidy and leave for at least 14 weeks, in case it is taken up), thus repealing the previous directive (86/613/EEC). Furthermore, the proposal by the Commission to set a minimum target of 40% for the incorporation of women into corporate boards of publicly traded companies by 2020, has been harmo-

⁵⁰ Business Europe, European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME), Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services (CEEP), Confédération Européenne des Syndicats (CES).

nised with the Charter of Women and the Strategy for Equality and attempts to address the low rates of participation by women in the EU.

The existence of a regulatory framework that has supported the corporate initiative of women has been supplemented with subsidies for programmes⁵¹ from the European Social Fund (ESF), and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). These programmes have worked hard to promote women's economic empowerment. Specifically, the ESF has supported local and regional institutions that through their projects foment pacts, networks, associations and provides support to local initiatives for employment and social inclusion. The ERDF funds have co-financed projects for local and urban development in small and medium municipalities, among others, which include in their objectives family reconciliation and economic progress.

Of the good practices carried out by EIGE relative to entrepreneurship (EIGE, 2014a), those linked to training (Finland, Ireland and Hungary), network creation (Germany, France, Ireland and Spain) and financing (Cyprus, UK, Croatia, Germany and Greece) stand out (EIGE, 2014a).

In the Latin American and the Caribbean region, there have been good practices collected in countless studies that show that actions have been focused on the incorporation of women into the labour market and their non-discrimination within that environment; as opposed to the contributions that could be gleaned by viewing this issues through a feminist perspective.

Women's Access to the workplace, inside and outside the Latin American and Caribbean region, is perhaps one of the most complex issues to deal with. "The most notable aspects where gender-based discrimination can be seen in the workplace are: low remuneration, informal work, low-productivity work, higher unemployment, unequal usage of time and especially related to domestic work" (Ruiz and Bonometti, 2010: 79). All of these aspects imply the violation of one or several human rights. For example, several reports indicate that the levels of discrimination against women drop the more qualified women are, therefore, access to education and the rate of women who leave school early are other phenomena that affects the incorporation to, and situation of women in, the labour market. Also, sexual harassment of women in the region is well above the international average, thus issues of gender violence should also be considered within this problem. Presenting a clear picture of this situation, as was pointed out, is very complicated.

In any event, this is an issue that has always been at the forefront of national and regional agendas. This matter has gained even more momentum when reports, such as those produced by the World Bank, alerted of the need to increase female employment, lest the levels of poverty continue to rise. The progress made with regard to this issue has been insufficient, albeit significant. The first step is, as pointed out by the ILO, to foster the principle of equality and non-discrimination. This principle has been incorporated into Constitutions and labour legislation in

⁵² Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/standards/relm/rgmeet/16amr/dwork.pdf>

⁵¹ For more details see online: http://ec.europa.eu/social/esf_projects/result2.cfm

all countries in the region that has, as well as everything else, made considerable headway in the last few years.

“Despite the advances of women on several levels, there remains still a lack of proper employment, inequality when it comes to participation in the workplace, occupational segregation, income inequality, unsafe conditions, low participation of women in decision-making roles and in positions of influence and power, as well as in the distribution of non-remunerated time that men and women dedicate to the care of family. Even if women represent 51.2% of the total population, and 52.1% of the people in working age, women are clearly over-represented in the group that is excluded from the labour market (71.7%) and under-represented in formal employment (41.1%). The disproportionate burden assumed by women in household tasks is one of the explanations for this gap. The greatest obstacles that limit labour opportunities for women are reflected in the high unemployment rates (9.1% in women and 6.3% in men). This accounts for more than half of the unemployed people in the region” (ILO, 2013b: 29)

At a regional level, in the 1970s the OAS declared the Women’s Decade in the Americas (1976-1985), and its action plan proposed the equal and full participation of women in socio-economic life. This was a plan that had a clear and integrated vision since it included, among other things, the variable for training in order to achieve its goals. Perhaps the proclamation of this decade influenced other multilateral institutions, like ECLAC or ILO, who now pay more attention to this issue. For example in 2006, within the framework of the VXI ILO American Region Meeting, celebrated in Brasilia, the “Hemispheric Agenda for Dignified Labour in the Americas” was approved.⁵² This instrument promotes gender equality as a universal area of interest across the board. In 2010, the XI Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, also celebrated in Brasilia, approved the Brasilia Consensus,⁵³ which seeks to further women’s economic independence.

The recent report published by both institutions in conjunction with UN Women, FAO and UNDP titled, “Dignified Employment and Gender Equality. Policies to improve access and quality of employment of women in Latin America and the Caribbean”, stands out. This report offers updated data and presents interesting initiatives in this regard, with a special reference to the conditions of migrant women or those who are engaged in household work. Also, it explains the international normative framework, which is of a binding nature for States, and has been developed in relation to women and work from the ILO.

The online portal *America Latina Genera*, in to this matter⁵⁴ presents as diverse practices as rural ones in in rural Uruguay or Guatemala, others directed at indigenous peoples in Peru and Ecuador, or those that advocate for greater economic empowerment and increased awareness

⁵³ Available at: http://www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/5/40235/ConsensoBrasilia_ESP.pdf

⁵⁴ See “work and employment” at: http://www.americalatinagenera.org/es/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=229&Itemid=334

of women in the workplace that have been developed in Brazil and Costa Rica. However, without seeking to belittle the progress achieved up to now, the real situation cannot be fully addressed abandoning such a welfare-oriented perspective, and instead begin working on granting women full access to the labour market without perspectives that inherently undermine women.

3.3 CHALLENGES

Despite the progress made and the practices implemented to further the achievement of greater equality in society and in the workplace, such progress has been slow, and gender gaps still exist. Economic independence and empowerment are objectives shared by both regions. This goal is a fundamental requisite in allowing men and women to take control of their lives. Along with this strategy in the economic field, actions developed in both spaces have been merged under the strategy for mainstreaming gender – the integration of gender perspective in all policies; and with actions specific to gender violence and the participation of women in politics. The challenges that face both spaces have been articulated into these three key areas. Potential for common working areas has been detected in the following:

- The exchange of knowledge with regard to legislation (binding or otherwise), regional programmes and national initiatives with the aim to detect progress and setbacks on gender issues, with special focus to those defined by the SAP.
- The harmonisation and systematisation of data on gender equality (Wikigender, 2014).
- Establish association with international organisation within the bi-regional dialogue based on individual experiences in both blocs.
- Cross-referencing gender, disability, migrants, indigenous, LGTB, etc., within the three SAP key areas.
- A common roadmap for the advancement of political parity, increasing the number of women in roles of representation and public administration.
- Differences in gender regarding education and professional training, while breaking down stereotypes and differences between professions and positions.

- Shared experiences on gender-responsive budget design.
- Identify experiences of economic and political empowerment to isolate sustainable practices and the potential for replication in both regions.
- Mentoring models, networks and the promotion of women in professional roles.
- The differences in employment rates based on gender and specific age ranges (under 25 and over 60), vulnerable groups (migrant and disabled women).
- Gender differences in relation to part-time work, and in those sectors that employ men and women, occupational discrimination, time management, etc.
- Double and triple working shifts for women, the prevalence of non-remunerated work, time management and working hours. The production of studies on time management in order to obtain reliable data on total employment (remunerated and non-remunerated) among men and women, which can lead to the design of instruments within agendas and policies.
- Differences in gender regarding family responsibilities and the revision of the design of family policies built on the concept of traditional families and roles of care.
- Measures oriented towards financial incentives (fiscal systems and benefits), which can lead to the possibility of economic independence and the attainment of leveling of pension benefits.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

“Gender equality has become part of the political agenda of regional, sub-regional and national institutions”

In a complex, heterogeneous and diverse scenario, a worldwide consensus on the construction of democratic societies can be observed. These societies can only be considered as such if they include formal and legal equality (as found in legal frameworks), between genders. Despite the fact that both regions seek to achieve both, true equality is still a long way ahead. The actions developed and oriented specifically towards women have had a positive impact on the lives of women, but have had no impact on the structure of gender inequality and discrimination.

There is clearly a political will that looks to end inequality between men and women. This political will represents an important step in the attainment of equality (agenda for equality, training and knowledge building; formulation and execution of public policy and programmes). Also, the eradication of violence against women is assumed as a commitment on the part of States in both regional spaces.

An agenda has been institutionalised in both regional blocs based on the commitment acquired in Beijing and regional fora. Mechanisms have been developed at a high level (ministries, institutes), thus adapting legal frameworks for the advancement of women (legislative measures, directives, laws, recommendation, plans, programmes, and budgets), and institutional reforms that are useful to the emergent institutionalisation of the bi-regional space.

The processes for institutionalisation in both regions have been developed at different speeds, through different approaches (top-down/bottom-up) and through different mechanisms. The institutionalisation of gender issues in the bi-regional space are of varying intensity and has greater or lesser presence depending on the country, topics and time, as described by Wallace (2000) in his metaphor of magnetic fields (global, regional and domestic) to explain the relation between globalisation and europeanisation. The bi-regional space, upon including gender a priority issue, allows for aspects with more advances in one region and another to be used as a working example and potential line of enquiry for the institutionalisation of gender in the bi-regional dialogue.

Similarities have been detected in priority issues within agendas for equality in both regions, thus identifying recurring economic themes (women's access to the labour market, salary and benefit gap, care work, maternity and paternity leave), participation of women (political, economic and social), and prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls.

The prevalence of initiatives related to these three areas allows underscoring the relevance of these. In other words, they do not respond to the unilateral will of one of the parts, but they correspond to the cumulative work done in both regions. This allows for greater legitimacy of the SAP, which ultimately aids its visibility. The actions analysed are considered relevant in both spaces since they directly or indirectly affect citizens in the EU and LAC. They also seek to reduce discrimination and conditions of inequality between men and women.

There would be no clear limits to the potential for action if we heed the three guidelines for gender (political participation, economic empowerment and the eradication of violence). These three areas are clearly inter-related. **Many programmes have based their actions on these three lines or on two of them simultaneously.**

There is no joint effort or agenda to achieve gender equality in both regional blocs beyond what has been described in the Santiago Action Plan. In this regard, actions oriented towards the building of a bi-regional dialogue in terms of gender have been rather weak. Despite the existence of a clear agenda in both regional and international circles, there is a lack of appropriate proposals or agendas in order to carry out joint efforts leading towards gender equality. The three axes that have marked the SAP are aligned to regional and international agendas, but do not necessarily translate into one general dialogue that has institutionalised gender with specific actions.

The long-term vision and perspective that characterise the democratic approach of the EU and LAC must be retaken in order to ensure, among other things, that values such as equality among men and women become immutable, non-negotiable or renegotiated in a context where economics prevail over politics in daily life (Sotillo, 2013). In a changing geopolitical context where the structures of power can be renegotiated, both regions, their governments and citizens, within a framework of respect for hu-

man rights and under democratic principles, must look to build a dialogue that solidifies a different type of power. This represents a clear difference in the incorporation and articulation of gender in both regions and in their mutual relation.

The construction of democracy and development are being developed without a fundamental pillar, which is gender equality (ECLAC, 2010b). The advancement of LAC in the construction of egalitarian societies implies investment and progress for the holders of economic, social and cultural rights in order to achieve greater equality in the access to education, health, employment, housing, basic services, environmental quality and social security (ECLAC, 2014a).

The participation of women in political circles continues to be low (10%), when compared to men. Only in those countries where regulations prevail for the implementation of quotas has there been an increase in the participation of women. While quota laws have been a successful strategy in bucking the trend and increasing the presence of women in decision-making roles (Chiefs of State, parliaments, judicial power, mayorships, councils, among others), parity still has a long way to go.

Gender equality policies in the LAC region have been developed as a result of an alliance between feminist organisations and civil society and the States. As a result of the Belém do Pará, Pachuca, Beijing and Quito meetings, this partnership has been built despite being affected by national and regional dynamics that have produced setbacks. The context in which these actions and policies emerge (social, economic, political, cultural) will mark their development.

The development of a body of law relative to gender issues is key in LAC. An example of this can be seen in the widespread ratifications of the Belém do Pará Convention. These advances have been centred upon the acknowledgement of rights, legal reforms and the implementation of promising policies. State legislation has evolved its concept of violence (from the concern over family or domestic violence to considering all forms of violence against women), thus proposing new rights and challenges (ECLAC, 2014a).

Since 2007, there has been specific legislation on femicide in Costa Rica and Venezuela. This has created a debate in the LAC region regarding the convenience of modifying, or not, criminal law to include this new crime. It is to be contemplated independently under the name of Femicide or Feminicide. The debate lies whether it should be considered a separate crime or included as an extension of murder/homicide (ECLAC, 2014a:70). There is also discussion on whether there should be specific regulation to deal with this crime.

The salary gap still persists in the region. Despite the increase in female employment in LAC, 22.8 million women in the last 10 years, around 100 million women, there has also

been an increase in female unemployment when compared to males. **These figures vary from country to country, and within each country, and are contingent on educational levels, age and socioeconomic status.** The regional average of 62% of female participation in the workplace among the richest quintile in the world, while only 38.4% in the case of women in the lowest quintile, stands out (ECLAC, 2014a).

The European Union has contributed to the application of the Beijing Platform for Action through the development of a normative framework on gender equality and the consolidation of institutional mechanism for gender equality in member States.

The EU is still halfway to achieving an egalitarian society in terms of gender. In spite of the fact that, for the last 50 years, it has been applying policies and actions on a European scale, member States still have not managed to overcome gender inequalities (EIGE, 2014b).

From acknowledgement to commitment: The European Union has incorporated the principle of Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination of Gender into its legislation, based on article 119 of the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Since this acknowledgement, the principle has been modified and broadened up to the present time (1985 Single Charter, Maastricht Treaty of 1987, 1997 Amsterdam Treaty – article 2. the elimination of inequalities between men and women in all activities to be carried out and the promotion of equality). The evolution towards active policies on gender has been reflected in the development of directives, recommendations, decisions, resolutions, and programmes for community action for the equality of men and women, or the reform to Structural Funds. The EU model for intervention has been based on dual transversal that combines gender mainstreaming and affirmative actions.

There is an imbalance of gender in the decision-making process that can be seen at a regional, national, and local level in political circles (representation in ministries, parliaments, regional assemblies, municipalities, etc.) and economic (boards, banking, etc.).

The EU's actions have brought progress towards gender equality. Employment rates in women have increased to 63%, the salary gap has been reduced by 16.4%, actions have been carried out to break the glass ceiling – the number of women in boards has steadily increased, going from 11% in 2010 to 17.8% in 2014, daycare services have been expanded from 26% in 2007 to 30% in 2011 in the case of children under 3, and from 81% to 86% for those children 3 to school age. Regarding employment, according to participation, segregation and quality of work, the EU has managed a score of 69 out of 100, despite the fact that segregation in the workplace, greater difficult to access employment and increased risk – financial security and economic conditions, and the difference in salary among men and women, are still prevalent (EIGE, 2014b).

There are challenges pending and equality is still not achievable in the short term.

According to 2014 data, the EU has achieved a score of 54 out of 100 on the gender equality index developed by EIGE. Despite the notable presence of women in university (60%), and the increased rate of women employed, salary differences, the glass ceiling (types of jobs and shifts), and the gender gap in pension (39%) still continue to be too high. **Inequality in time management** between men and women persist. Therefore, it is necessary to raise awareness of all the tasks that are still being carried out at home and which are mostly carried out by women. The care for children and domestic tasks require an average of 26 hours per week for women, while only 9 hours for men. High rates of violence are still persistent: 1 out of 3 women over the age of 15 has been victims of physical and sexual violence.

Gender-based violence is recognised as a violation of human rights that affects the dignity and integrity of women and girls. This has a clear impact on families, communities and societies, and is a manifestation of inequality in the power relationship between men and women. Despite measures and actions carried out, direct and indirect violence persists. The lack of statistical data coordinated at a European level suggests that this is an area where inequality is difficult to measure.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

RELATIVE TO DESIGN, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF BI-REGIONAL SPACES IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OF GENDER EQUALITY

- To accept heterogeneity in bi-regional space and incorporate each country and region's specific needs. In this regard, it would be advisable to include mechanisms for triangular cooperation since this promotes horizontal cooperation among countries with different levels of development in areas of common interest (Gómez et al., 2011: 21).
- Regarding the previous point and in keeping with UN cooperation, it would be interesting to analyse the feasibility and pertinence of the creation of a multi-donor fund (UN, EU, CELAC) that can function by means of a triangular cooperation mechanism that would implement technical cooperation actions for programmes and projects in EU or CELAC countries.
- To include civil society stakeholders in discussions, particularly, those who represent women.
- It is fundamental to create spaces where women themselves can participate and define their own agendas. It is also important to pay attention to vulnerable groups (underprivileged women, indigenous, migrant, etc.), thus considering their individual idiosyncrasies in a way in which they could incorporate their own values and interests into their demands.
- In order to improve the design and joint programming of pilot initiatives in the three SAP areas, it is recommended that a meta-analysis of systematised actions by the Observatory for Equality and America Latina Genera in the LAC region, and the European Institute for Gender Equality in the EU be carried out. This will allow for the promotion of an inter-sector exchange of information and experiences in order to track the pertinence and coherence of best practices implemented on the main challenges and gaps at national and regional levels.

- To establish a debate on the pertinence of creating a protocol that will aid the generation of best practices in policies for equality in the four main stages: design, formulation, implementation and evaluation (follow-up, monitoring and control).
- Knowledge management, transparency, and accountability are aspects that can be made more dynamic, starting with the EU-LAC dialogue. The creation of a tool for joint knowledge is recommended in order to make dissemination of information and data more efficient in both regions (EIGE/ ECLAC observatory and *America Latina Genera*).
- To construct a framework for joint tasks related to the three SAP working areas which include principles, objectives and indicators. This will eventually lead to tangible results in the achievement of equality between men and women.
- It is advisable, in order to ensure the cross-referencing of gender perspectives and the coherence of the different SAP areas, that an independent evaluation unit be created within the EU-LAC Foundation.
- Promote the development of indicators that evidence the gender gaps contained within each of the SAP areas. Moreover, these should be tailored to each country's context and own realities in order to fulfil commitments made at an international level.

SPECIFIC TO THE THREE SAP WORKING AREAS

- Foster partnerships at different levels of political participation – policies, techniques, women's movements – in order to improve political empowerment and leadership.
- Establish a dialogue that elaborates the role of civil society participation in the formulation and execution of public policies that address the institutionalisation process from higher levels.
- Create a space for exchange on the types of leadership and characteristics and those associated to the political participation of women.
- Build strategic partnerships and spaces for consensus that favour electoral reforms that contribute to increasing the presence of women, their interests and agendas from a political perspective.
- Broaden spaces for participation of women in order to increase their influence in the definition of agendas, policies and programmes with relation to institutional participation, but also to the creation of their own deliberative spaces.

- Establish improved systems for the production of information and statistics on the different types of violence.
- Establish a multi-stakeholder task group that analyses and promotes frameworks for joint action in benefit of vulnerable groups (migrants, girls, indigenous population, disabled persons, LGTB).
- Study the feasibility of a bi-regional protection programme for victims of gender-based violence based upon legislation on the mutual acknowledgement of protection measures contained in civil law (COM/2011/276 final). This is meant to be considered under the premise that protection travels along with the individual.
- Considering the importance of domestic, intra-regional and bi-regional mobility, and in coordination with the fourth point of the SAP (migration), transnational programmes to combat trafficking of migrant women and girls need to be strengthened with resources and assistance mechanisms to victims in both regions and in transnational space.
- Sistematise and reveal the data on the different types of violence, focusing particularly on FGM and femicide so that these issues can be fully understood and produce pertinent actions and legislation.

- It is essential to address this area from the perspective of economic theory and feminist markets, thus breaking stereotypes that only allow for actions focused on assistance. In this regard, making visible the differential use of time as a means for social, political economic subordination of women is vital, as well as identifying gender-based division of labour.
- Quantify those jobs that do not count as remunerated tasks in economic terms, but that are essential in maintaining social integrity and attending to the needs of the population.
- Establish bases for dialogue on the exchange of results obtained on time management surveys – time for personal needs, working time, time allotted to domestic chores, time for family care, time for volunteer work or community service, leisure time – in countries within both regional spaces in order to deal with the issue of non-remunerated work overload related to household work and care.
- Institute a bi-regional task group on the pertinence and potential for the replication of instruments such as *sello reconcilia* – measure for conciliation that favour flexibility, improve participation and influence, professional performance and development, reduction of absenteeism, foster teamwork and attract professional women.
- Generate a joint working space for learning and exchange on aligned surveys on time management and experiences on gender-responsive budgeting.

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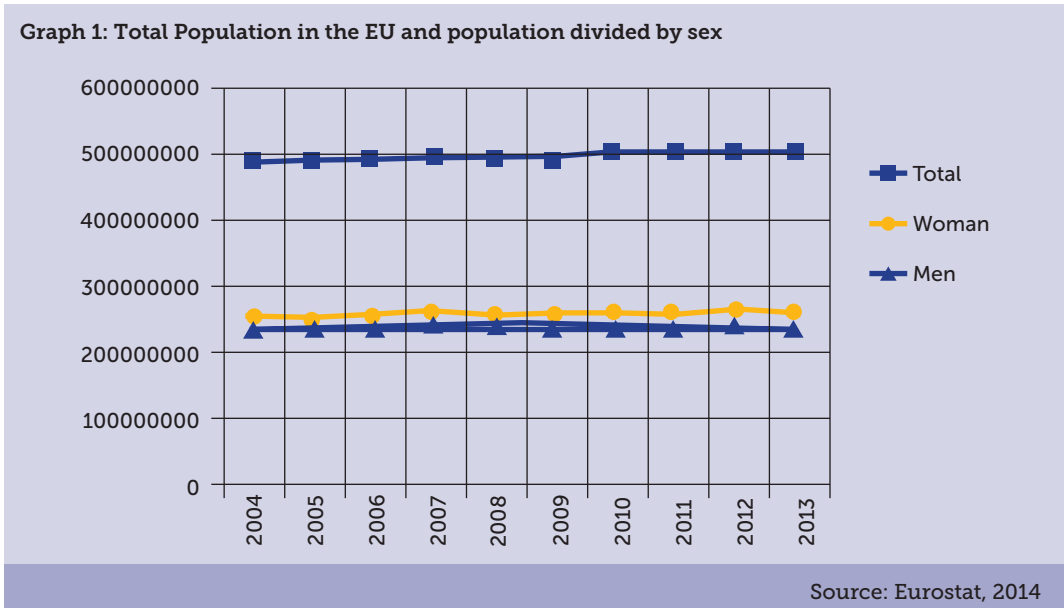
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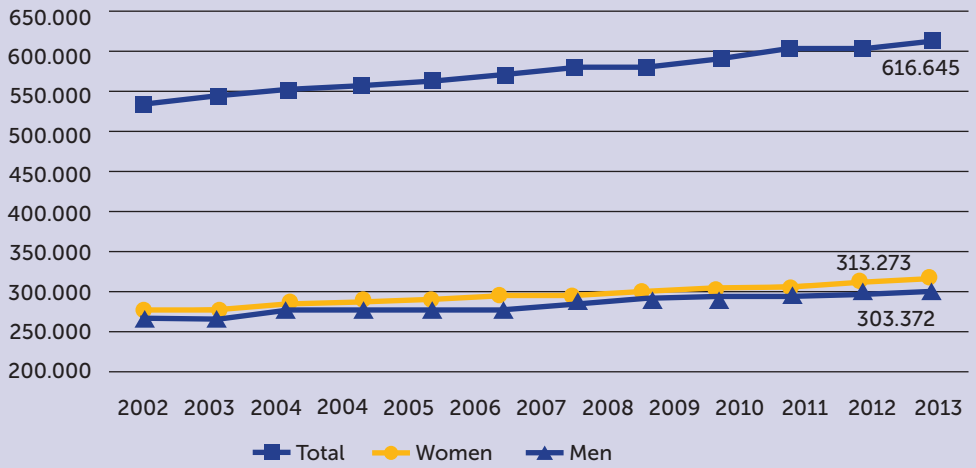
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5 ANNEXE

The following is a series of charts and graphs that complement the text in this report. The information has been organised after general data has been presented based on the Santiago Action Plan: *economic empowerment of women and their participation in the workplace and in decision-making processes; the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence; and political participation of women.*



Graph 2: Total Population in LAC and population divided by sex



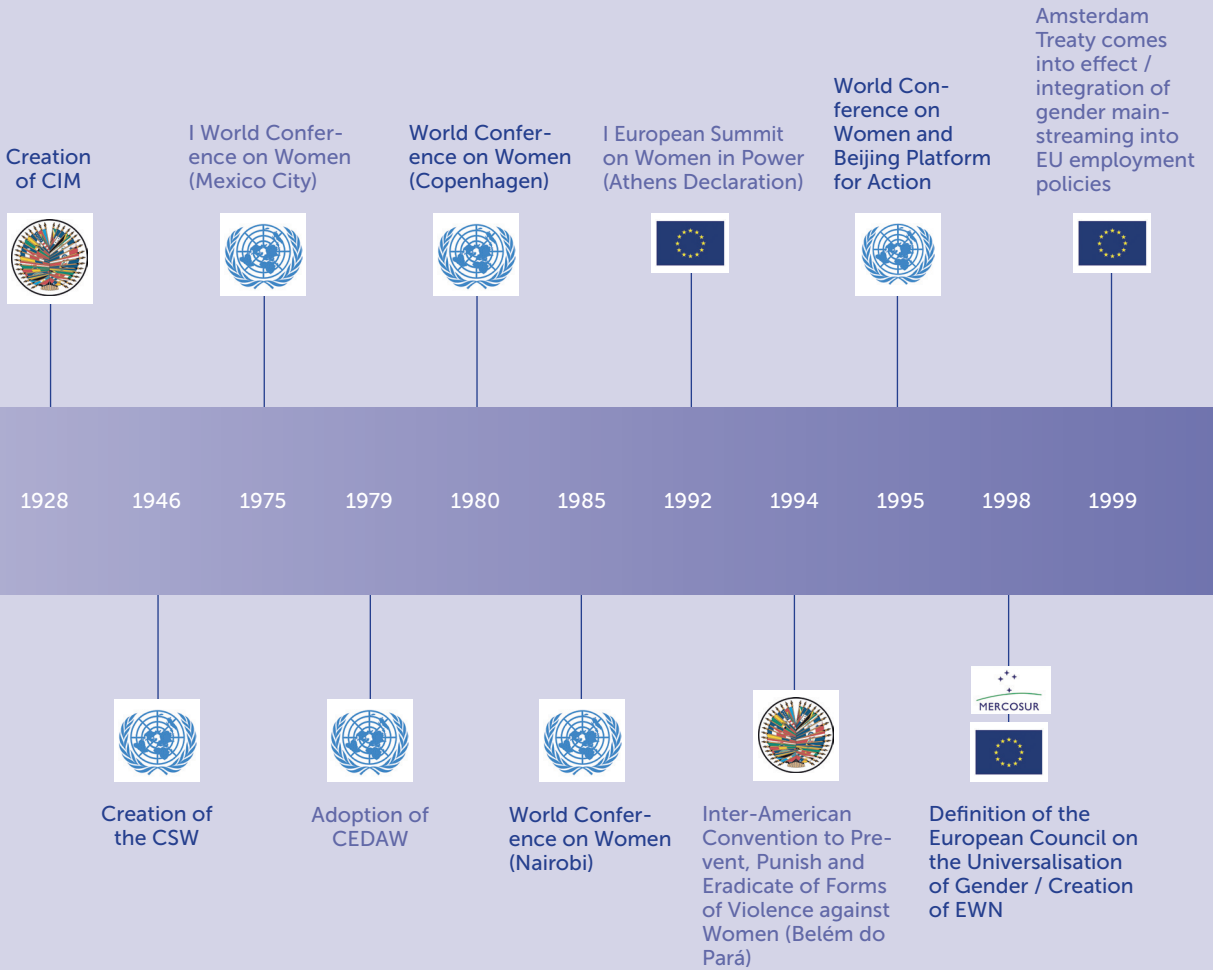
Source: CEPALstat, 2014

Chart 1: ECLAC countries and their systems of integration

| CELAC | ALI PACIFI- CO | ALADI | ALBA | AEC | CAN | CARICOM | MERCOSUR | OEA | OECS | PM | SELA | SICA | UNASUR |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|---------|----------|-----|------|----|------|------|--------|
| Antigua and Barbuda | | | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | | |
| Argentina | | x | | | | | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Bahamas | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | |
| Barbados | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | |
| Belice | | | | x | | x | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Bolivia | | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Brasil | | x | | | | | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Colombia | x | x | | x | x | | | x | | x | x | | x |
| Costa Rica | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Cuba | | x | x | x | | | | x | | | x | | |
| Chile | x | x | | | | | | x | | | x | | x |
| Dominica | | | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | | |
| Dominican Republic | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Ecuador | | x | x | | x | | | x | | | x | | x |
| El Salvador | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Granada | | | | x | | x | | x | x | | x | | |
| Guatemala | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Guyana | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | x |
| Haiti | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | |
| Honduras | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Jamaica | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | |
| Mexico | x | x | | x | | | | x | | x | x | | |
| Nicaragua | | | x | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Panama | | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | |
| Paraguay | | x | | | | | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Peru | x | x | | | x | | | x | | | x | | x |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | | | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | | |
| Saint Lucia | | | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | | |
| Surinam | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | x |
| Trinidad and Tobago | | | | x | | x | | x | | | x | | |
| Uruguay | | x | | | | | x | x | | | x | | x |
| Venezuela | | x | x | x | | | x | x | | | x | | x |

Source: adapted from various sources

Graph 3: Main achievements in gender issues and most relevant stakeholders



Declaration of Managua. Resolution on the Functioning of the Regional Network of National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women in Central America and the Caribbean and General Guidelines for Action.



Creation and strengthening of the tables for women in the economy. Joint declaration of Central American States during the meeting for the revision of the advances on the Beijing Platform for Action by the Judiciary Commission.



Creation of the CAAAMI



Signing Istanbul Convention. Creation of RMAAM which replaces REM.



Adoption of the Inter-American Convention against all Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.



2001

2002

2004

2005

2006

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014



Integration of gender perspectives in the Declaration and Action Plan for the Third Summit of the Americas in XII inter-American Conference of Labour Ministers.



Creation and first meeting of COMMCA



XIV REM, Creation of the "Technical Tables on Gender-based Violence"



II Summit of European Women in Power. Cadiz Declaration. European Commission's Charter of Women. Start of operations European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Creation UN Women.



I Meeting of Female Ministers and Women's Highest Authorities. Andean Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health for Teenagers and Pregnancy Prevention. Adherence of CAN to the Andean Advisory Council of the Highest Authorities.



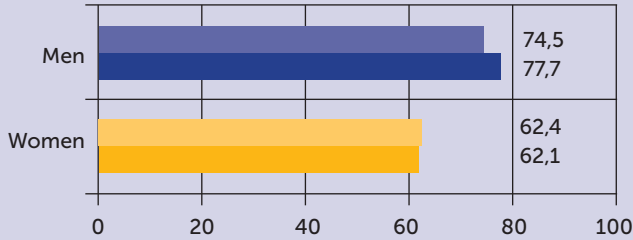
Istanbul Convention comes into effect.

Pachuca Declaration on "Strengthening Efforts in the Fight against Violence against Women".

Gender Equality Policy in MERCOSUR.

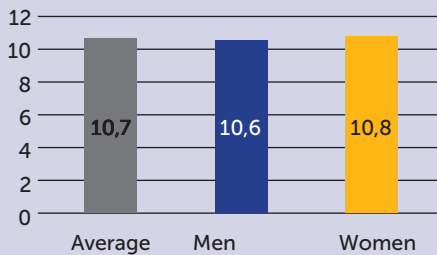
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Graph 4: Unemployment rates in men and women between the ages of 20-64 in the EU (percentage). Comparative data 2007-2012.



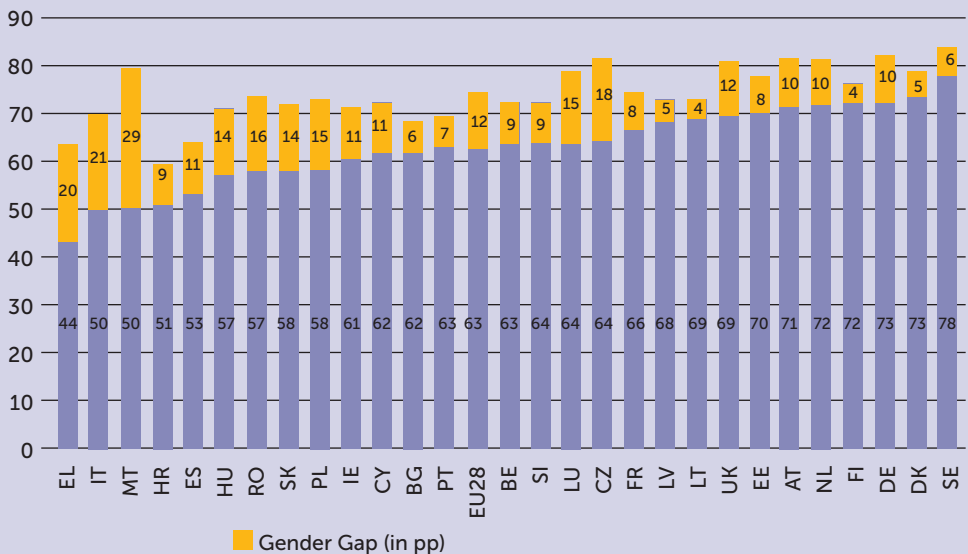
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 5: Unemployment rate of men and women in the EU (percentage, 2013)



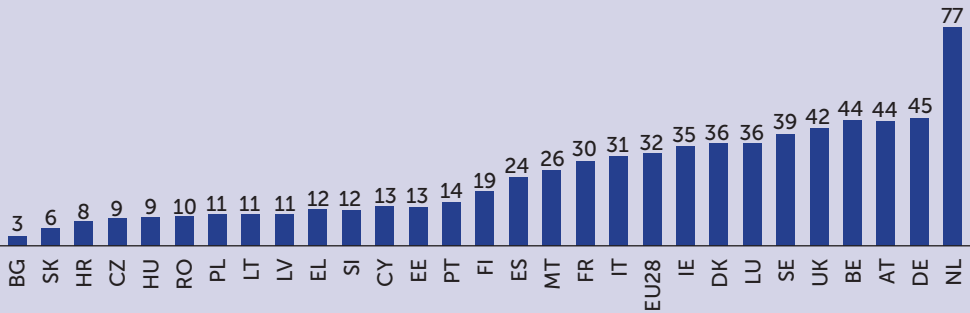
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 6: Employment rates of men and women in the EU (percentage), and gender gap in employment rate, people aged 20-64 (third trimester, 2013)



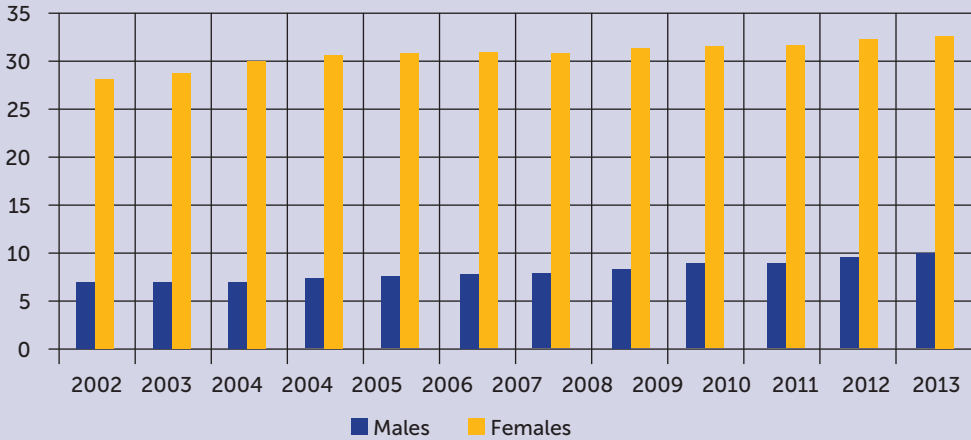
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 7: Proportion of part-time employed women in the EU, 2012 (percentage)



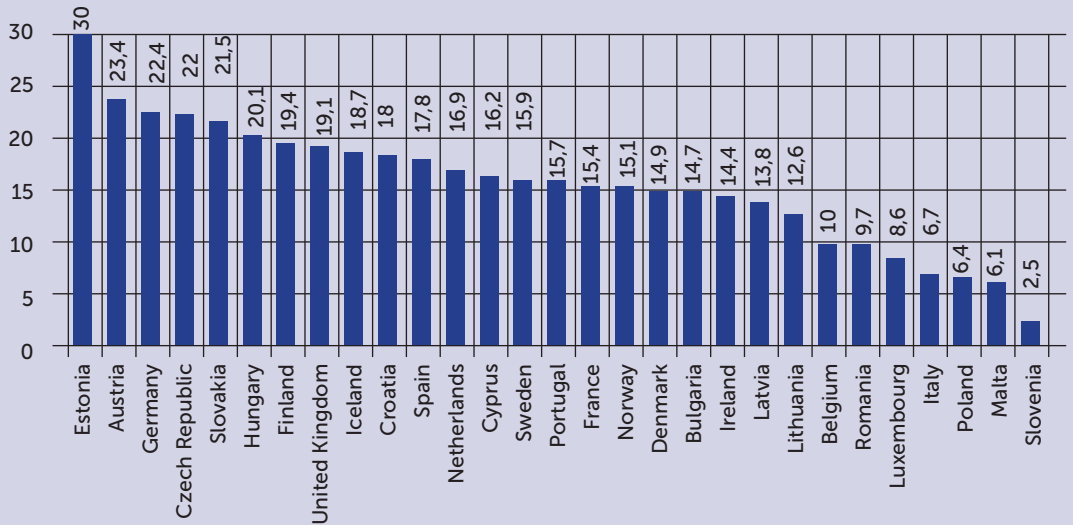
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 8: Proportion of full-time employed people in the EU (percentage)



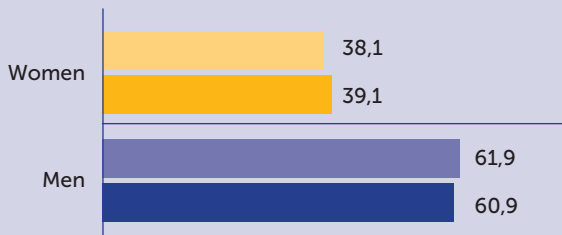
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 9: Wage gap in EU countries



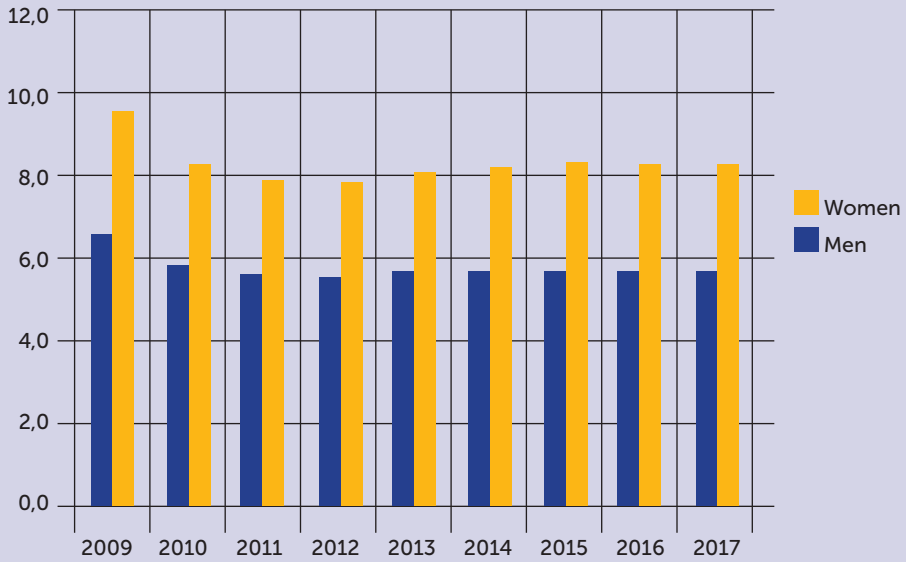
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 10: Employment rates by sex in LAC (percentage). Evolution 2007-2012



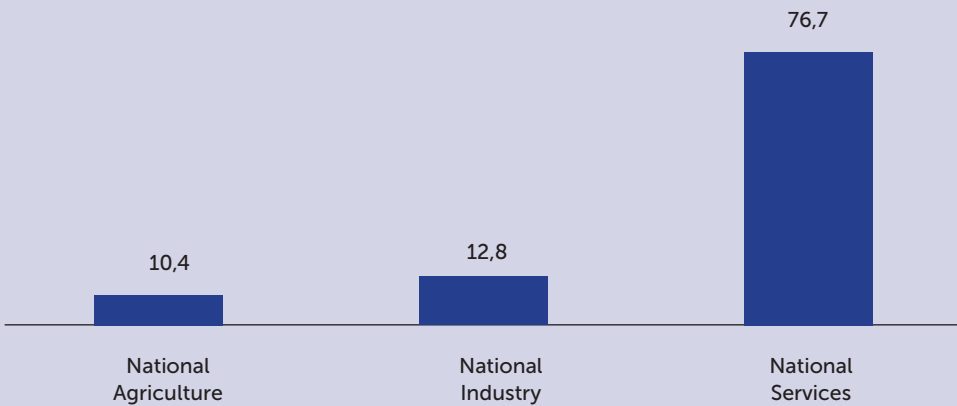
Source: Eurostat, 2014

Graph 11: Unemployment rate in LAC (percentage)



Source: Eurostat, 2014

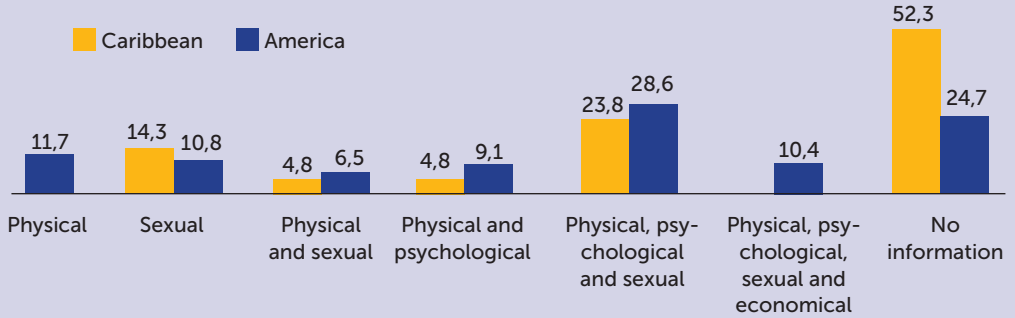
Graph 12: Female population employment by sector, 2012



Source: Eurostat, 2014

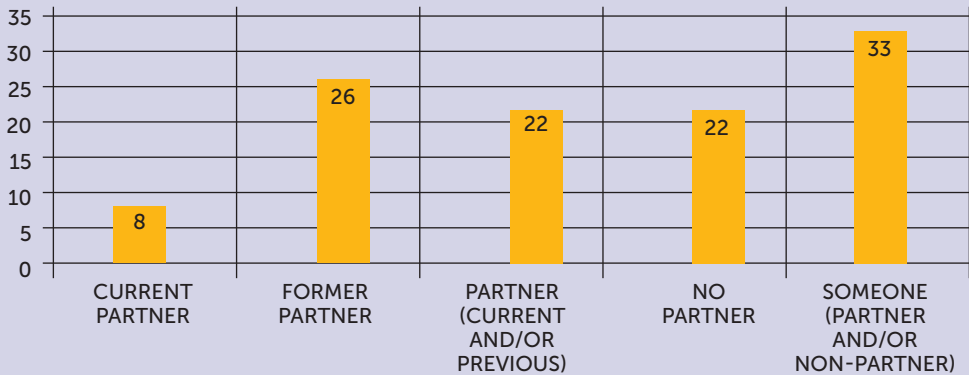
ERADICATION OF ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE

Graph 13: Instances of different types of violence in LAC, 2010 (percentage)



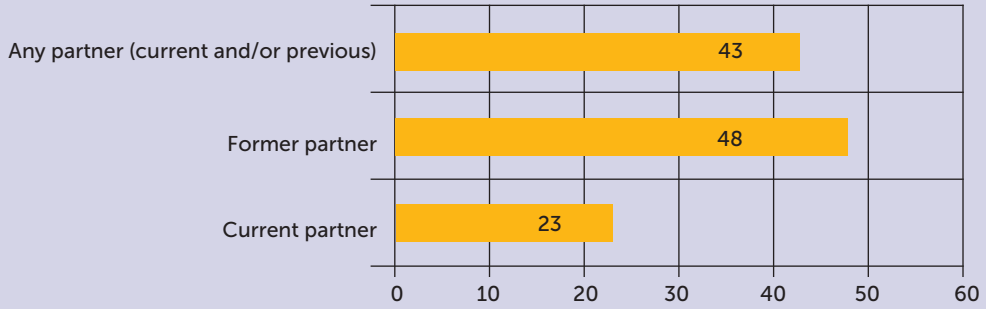
Source: CEPALstat, 2014

Graph 14: Percentage of women that have experimented physical or sexual violence by their partner or another person, from the age of 15, in the EU, 2012



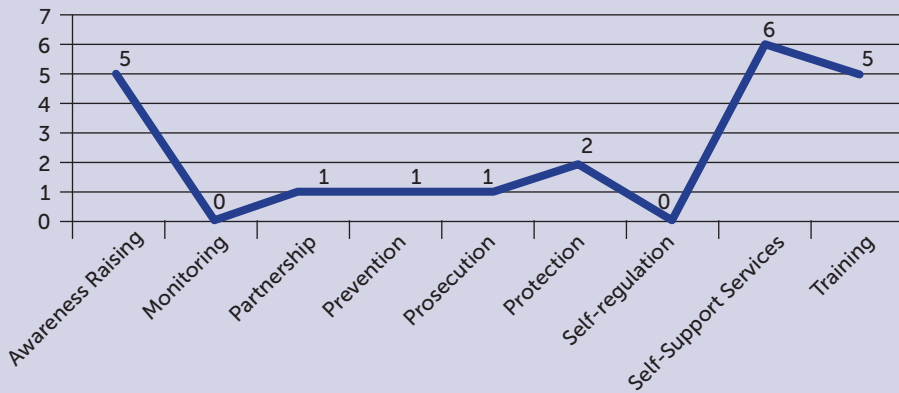
Source: FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012.

Graph 15: Percentage of women that have experienced psychological violence during a relationship in the EU, 2012



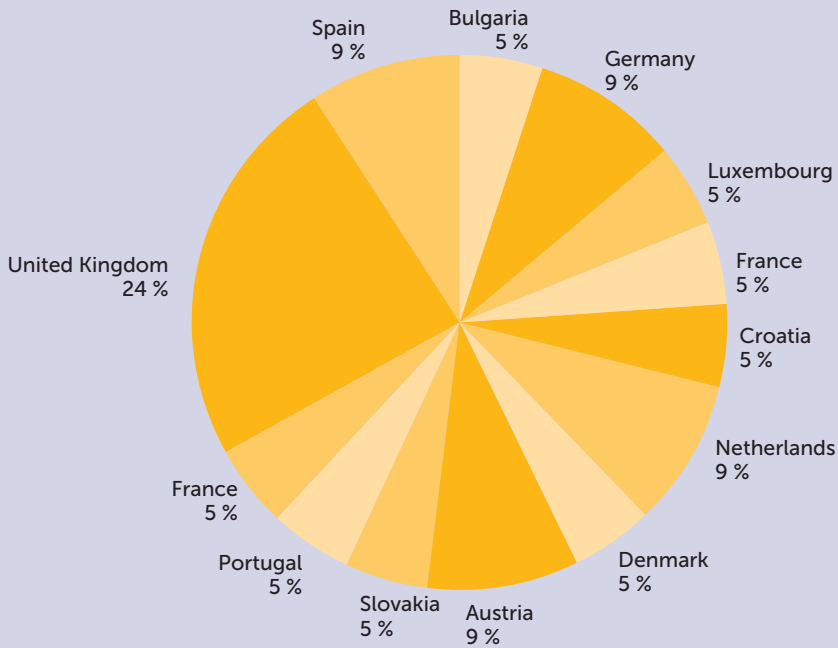
Source: FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012.

Graph 16: Number of systematised best practices on gender-based violence in the EU



Source: Adapted from EIGE's approach to good practices

Graph 17: EU countries that have contributed best practices



Source: Adapted from EIGE's approach to good practices

Graph 18: Main topics of the DAPHNE programmes (1997-2005)



Source: Adapted from Project DAPHNE database

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Chart 2: Gender quotas in the EU

| COUNTRY | TYPE OF QUOTA | % WOMEN CONGRESS | % WOMEN SENATE | % WOMEN SINGLE CHAMBER |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Austria | | | | |
| Belgium | Legislated | 39 % | 38 % | |
| Bulgaria | Legislated | | | |
| Croatia | Legislated | | | |
| Cyprus | Legislated | | | |
| Czech Republic | Legislated | | | |
| Denmark | Legislated | | | |
| Estonia | Legislated | | | |
| Finland | Legislated | | | |
| France | Legislated | 27% | 29 % | |
| Germany | | | | |
| Greece | Legislated | | | 21% |
| Hungary | Legislated | | | |
| Ireland | Legislated | | | 15% |
| Italy | Unlegislated | | | 28% |
| Latvia | Legislated | | | |
| Lithuania | Legislated | | | |
| Luxembourg | Legislated | | | |
| Malta | Legislated | | | |
| Netherlands | Legislated | | | |
| Poland | Legislated | | | 24% |
| Portugal | Legislated | | | 27% |
| United Kindgom | Legislated | | | |
| Romania | Legislated | | | |
| Spain | Legislated | 33 % | 36 % | |
| Slovakia | Legislated | | | |
| Slovenia | Legislated | | | 32 % |
| Sweden | | | | |

Source: Adapted from IDEAS, 2013.

Chart 3: Gender quotas in LAC

| COUNTRY | TYPE OF QUOTA | % WOMEN CONGRESS | % WOMEN SENATE | % WOMEN SINGLE CHAMBER |
|--------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Argentina | Legislated | 37 % | 39 % | |
| Bolivia | Legislated | 22 % | 17 % | |
| Brazil | Legislated | 9 % | 16 % | |
| Colombia | Legislated | 13 % | 17 % | |
| Costa Rica | Legislated | | | 39 % |
| Dominican Republic | Legislated | 21 % | | |
| Ecuador | Legislated | | | 39% |
| El Salvador | Legislated | | | 26 % |
| Guyana | Legislated | | | 31 % |
| Haiti | Reserved | | 3 % | 4 % |
| Honduras | Legislated | 26 % | | |
| Mexico | Legislated | 37 % | 33 % | |
| Nicaragua | Legislated | | | 40 % |
| Panama | Legislated | | | 8 % |
| Paraguay | Legislated | 18 % | 20 % | |
| Peru | Legislated | | | 22 % |
| Uruguay | Legislated | | 13 % | 14 % |

Source: Adapted from IDEAS, 2013.

EU-LAC FOUNDATION 2015