'Multi-stakeholder Forum on the EU-LAC Bi-regional Care Pact'

Concept and Agenda

(Version 27 June, 2025)

Organisation: EU-LAC Foundation
Partners: Spain, Colombia, ECLAC, GIZ, Global Alliance for Care, UN Women
Venue: "Care Pabellon" of the Global Alliance for Care: Casa de la Provincia, Plaza del Triunfo 1, 41004 Seville, in the context of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville
Format: On-sight
Date & hours: 1 July 2025 - 09:00-11:00 a.m. & 17:30-19:30
Language: Spanish and English (with simultaneous interpretation)

Context

In recent years, both EU member states and Latin America and the Caribbean have recognised the transformative potential of public policies that prioritise life and the planet, moving towards a new social organisation of care. The unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the burden of care work, both paid and unpaid, which falls mostly on the female population and highlighted the essential role that care work plays in sustaining life. In both regions, the services and infrastructure available for care provision have been affected not only by epidemiological trends, but also by increasing demand due to population ageing. And it cannot be overemphasised that these trends disproportionately affect women, and in particular those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as poor, rural, indigenous, Afro-descendant, disabled, older women, women in contexts of human mobility.

As a response, both the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean have pushed for policies to strengthen care systems. In order to ensure quality, affordable and accessible care services across the European Union and to improve the situation of both caregivers and those who care for them, professionally or informally, the European Commission presented in September 2022 the European Care Strategy and the European Council adopted recommendations to improve the situation of carers and cared-for persons. In November 2022, at the 15th Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the States adopted the Buenos Aires Commitment, which recognises care as a right and proposes overcoming the sexual division of labour through a socially just organisation of care. The right to care - which encompasses the right to receive care, to provide care and to practice self-care - also requires recognition of the value of care work. It is agreed to advance in comprehensive care policies and systems from the perspectives of gender, intersectionality, interculturality and human

rights, and which include articulated policies on time, resources, benefits and universal and quality public services in the territory, guaranteeing financial sustainability, ensuring financial sustainability.

Looking ahead to the EU-CELAC Summit of Heads of State and Government convened for July 2023 in Brussels, Belgium, the EU-LAC Foundation promoted multi-stakeholder dialogue spaces such as the EU-LAC Gender Equality Forum in Germany, where participants proposed to "*explore new modalities of cooperation for the construction of joint bi-regional pacts, such as, for example, a* ***Bi-regional Pact on Care***", - in resonance with other exchanges generated by civil society organisations and networks and multilateral agencies where the same proposal has been articulated. The idea of the 'Bi-regional Care Pact' is based on shared interests and challenges, as well as on the reflection that joint exchanges, analysis, and training on policy frameworks and comprehensive care systems, the construction of decent working conditions and quality employment for caregivers, the raising of data and the design of statistics, among others, could help to accelerate and advance the fulfilment of the recommendations that emanate from the European Care Strategy as well as the Regional Gender Agenda, and particularly the Buenos Aires Commitment, promoting the rights of people and closing multiple gaps that exist in the populations of both regions.

At the EU-CELAC Summit in July 2023, both regions renewed their strategic partnership, committing to promote decent work, gender equality and the full participation of women in decision-making processes. However, the proposal for a Bi-regional Pact for Care has not materialised in this higher-level of cooperation between the two regions.

Subsequently, meetings such as that of the 65th Steering Committee of the Regional Conference on Women in October 2023 and the EuroLat Parliamentary Committees in November reiterated the importance of adopting a gender approach and strengthening public policies on care. In the Agreements adopted during the 65th Steering Committee of the Regional Conference on Women, the member countries encouraged ECLAC in coordination with UN Women and the EU-LAC Foundation "*to advance a bi-regional compact for care between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union with a view of promoting cooperation among the countries of both regions on comprehensive care policies and systems with a gender perspective*". Also, in March 2024, the EU-LAC Foundation organised a high-level dialogue in New York during CSW68, where it was reaffirmed that the Bi-regional Pact for Care would be a pioneering initiative to develop comprehensive systems with gender and social co-responsibility, also linking migratory, fiscal and professionalisation aspects of the sector, in favour of a more equitable and sustainable society.

In the last two years, significant transformations in the geopolitical context have impacted efforts to advance the fulfilment of women's rights and the care agenda both in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the European Union. Factors such as the global economic crisis resulting from the pandemic, geopolitical tensions intensified by international conflicts, the rising cost of living and the changing political positions in several countries have generated a more complex environment for the implementation of comprehensive policies that promote sustainable development. Similarly, there is

a perceived weakening of cooperation in multilateral initiatives and of support for an international system based on agreed principles and rules among the international community.

In this context, it is crucial to highlight that the Bi-regional Pact for Care between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union is closely aligned with UN agreements, policies and rights frameworks: Beyond advancing the 2030 Agenda, especially Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3, 4, 8 and 10, the Pact's proposal seeks to reinforce the commitments set out in the Agreed Conclusions of the CSW (Commission on the Status of Women), especially in CSW66, CSW68 and the advance statement of CSW69, which underline the need to invest in care systems to reduce poverty, achieve gender equality and promote sustainable development. By promoting the development of universal, sustainable and gender-sensitive care systems, recognising care as a fundamental pillar for development and equality, the proposal of the Pact also aligns with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 'Promoting care and support systems for social development' adopted in February 2024.

Furthermore, the draft Pact endorses several ILO Conventions, such as ILO Convention No. 189 on Domestic Workers (2011) and ILO Convention No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981). Both the Pact proposal and the UN system document 'Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the SDGs and the Common Agenda' recognise care as a public good and a human right, and adopt the '5Rs' approach (recognise, reduce, redistribute, reward and represent), promoting investments in universal, gender-sensitive and sustainable care policies and systems as part of a new global social

As part of the activities that the EU-LAC Foundation has been building in coordination with its members and other partners towards the CELAC-EU Summit to be implemented in November 2025 in Colombia, some key events have already taken place to promote the development and approval of the Bi-regional Pact for Care between the EU and LAC regions:

- On the **10th of March 2025**, within the framework of CSW69, the EU-LAC Foundation, together with ODI Europe / Walking the Talk and La Coordinadora de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo, organised the side event *'Beijing+30 – Transforming Financial Architectures for Gender Equality: Pathways to Inclusive and Prosperous Societies in Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean.'* This high-level dialogue provided an opportunity to promote, from a multi-stakeholder and bi-regional perspective, a renewed financial architecture that places gender equality, women's empowerment, and the care society at the heart of public policy and international cooperation.
- On the **12th of May 2025**, representatives of the EU-LAC Foundation, ECLAC and UN Women participated in a meeting of the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (DLAT), where the development of care systems in both regions was discussed, and the Pact was recognised as a key mechanism to advance human rights and sustainable development.

- On **May 19th 2025**, the EU-LAC Foundation, ECLAC and UN Women participated in a virtual discussion convened by Red Trenzando Cuidados, Coordinadora de la Mujer de Bolivia, Foro Ciudadano para las Relaciones CELAC–UE, Articulación Feminista Marcosur (AFM), CICSA - RED Mujer y Hábitat, Coordinadora de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo, and Oxfam, aimed at strengthening the coordination and political advocacy of networks, platforms, and civil society organisations from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe around the proposal of a Bi-regional Care Pact.
- On **21st of May 2025**, the EU-LAC Foundation, with the support of the Global Care Alliance, launched a Digital Consultation on the Bi-regional Care Pact, opening the possibility for experts and representatives of networks, initiatives, civil society organisations, the academic community and public and international institutions to review a draft of the Pact in order to reaffirm its relevance and enrich it with new contributions.
- During the session of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat) held in Lima from **1 to 3 June 2025**, parliamentarians welcomed the momentum of a new Bi-regional Pact for Care as a key initiative to advance the objectives of the European Care Strategy and the Bueno Aires Commitment. In view of the CELAC-EU Summit in Colombia, they "*underline(d) the need to reach a bi-regional commitment to consolidate and finance comprehensive care systems, prioritising this initiative in national budgets and the articulation of EU cooperation commitments, taking into account the different levels of development in both regions*".

These spaces represent concrete opportunities to strengthen political commitment, align shared agendas, and move toward a pact that reflects co-responsibility, sustainability, and the recognition of care as a right. For this reason, the EU-LAC Foundation proposes organising a Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Care during the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville (FfD4).

Bi-regional Pact for Care

The draft Bi-regional Pact for Care between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union is a proposal to foster cooperation between the two regions on the development of comprehensive care policies and systems. It responds to shared challenges such as population ageing, structural gender inequalities and the impact of global crises, and recognises care as a fundamental right. The pact seeks to contribute to people's well-being, reduce gender gaps and generate economic and social benefits through accessible, quality care services with decent employment for caregivers.

The proposal promotes the exchange of experiences, comparative studies and the formulation of concrete proposals on regulations, quality standards, professional training, financing and articulation with climate change. Also, it promotes cooperation modalities such as North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, with the goal of moving towards a care society. For its implementation, it proposes the creation of a Bi-regional Liaison Commission that will draw up a joint work plan between key institutions in both regions.

Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) will be held from 30 June to 3 July 2025 in Seville, Spain, at FIBES Seville Exhibition and Conference Centre. The FFD4 aims to build a renewed global financing framework that will mobilise greater volumes of capital at lower cost. In Seville, and through this new framework, leaders intend to take action to boost investment in the SDGs and reform the international financial architecture to enable the transformative change the world urgently needs. Spain, as host country of the Conference, has also placed on the agenda the urgent need to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs, and to support the reform of the international financial architecture.

The EU-LAC Foundation believes that these financial reforms are necessary to align economic policies with human development, human rights, and climate priorities, ensuring sufficient resources for public policies. In this sense, FfD4 in Seville also offers an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, focusing on evidence-based policies, fiscal reforms and innovative financing. Sustained dialogue and collaboration are necessary to foster inclusive growth and long-term progress.

Objectives of the Forum

Considering the potential of a 'Bi-regional Pact for Care', which, if approved at the highest political level - the Summit of Heads of State and Government CELAC-EU in Colombia, could deepen and enrich the range of cooperation mechanisms between both regions, it is proposed to organise an event in the context of the FfD4, with the following objectives:

- To generate an exchange and articulation between representatives from both regions, including ministerial authorities and state secretariats responsible for cooperation, foreign affairs, finance, social and women's affairs, about the 'why', the 'what' and the 'how' of a 'Bi-regional Pact for Care'.
- Collect technical inputs on the possible contents and modalities of cooperation under the umbrella of a possible 'Bi-regional Pact for Care.
- To position the relevance of the Pact for Care in the context of bi-regional cooperation and the CELAC-EU Summit to be held in Colombia in November 2025.

Format

The Multi-stakeholder Forum will be divided into two segments. Forum participants will have the opportunity to participate in a high-level segment as well as a technical segment.

Tentative agenda

First segment: 1 July 2025 // 09:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

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Time (Sevilla)	High-level segment	Speakers
09:00 – 09:30	**Opening Session** - Welcome - Presentation of objectives of the Forum - Initial reflections	- **Alberto Brunori**, EU-LAC Foundation - **Arlene Tickner**, Ambassador at large for Gender Issues and Feminist Global Policy, Colombia (PPT CELAC) - **Christian Burgsmüller**, Head of Americas Division 1, EEAS - **José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs**, Executive Secretary, ECLAC - **Ana Redondo García**, Minister for Equality, Spain
09:30 – 10:55	**High-level dialogue:** - What is the relevance for increasing bi-regional cooperation on care? - What contributions could countries and organisations make to a bi-regional Pact for Care? - What forms of cooperation could be envisaged for its implementation? - How could the Pact be financed?	<u>- State Representatives:</u> - **Antonia Orellana Guarello**, Minister of Women and Gender Equality, Chile (*video message*) - **Wayne Henry**, Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica - **Daniel Cámara Ávalos**, Director General of American Regional Organisations, Ministry of External Relations, Mexico - **Carlos Arturo Hoyos**, Viceminister for Foreign Affairs, Panama - **Andjelie Gajadhar**, Officer International Cooperation, Suriname - **Rodrígo Arim**, Director of the Office for Planning and Budget, Uruguay <u>- Representatives of international organisations and development banks:</u> - **Raquel Lagunas**, Global Director for Gender Equality, UNDP - **Bibiana Aidó Almagro**, Representative of UN Women in Colombia - **Leire Pajín**, Vice-President of the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly

		- **Diana Rodríguez Franco**, Special Advisor on Gender and Diversity to the President of IDB - **Alejandra Claros** – Secretary General, CAF Development Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean
10:55 – 11:00	**Brief summary of the first segment & next steps**	- **Ana Moreno**, Global Alliance for Care - **Anna Barrera**, EU-LAC Foundation

Second segment: 1 July 2025 // 17:30–19:30, followed by a reception

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Time (Sevilla)	**Technical segment**	**Speakers**
17:30 – 17:40	**"Wrap-up" of the first segment** **Core contents of the 'EU-LAC Bi-regional Care Pact' – presentation of virtual consultancy** **Introduction into the methodology of the Working Groups**	- **Anna Barrera**, EU-LAC Foundation - **Elizabeth Wright Veintimilla**, EU-LAC WIN
17:40 – 18:50	**Parallel thematic working groups on the 'what' and 'how' of the Bi-regional Pact for Care** Each table works on one axis of the pact, guided by a facilitator and rapporteur. **Working group 1:** Bi-regional exchanges and dialogues on progress and promising practices in care policies and programmes **Working group 2:** Studies and comparative analysis on care policies and systems: data generation and usage and statistical designs **Working group 3:** Programmes and cooperation mechanisms and financing to	All participants **Coordination of WG 1:** **UN Women** **Coordination of WG 2:** **ECLAC** **Coordination of WG 3:** **La Coordinadora de ONGs**

	promote a Bi-regional Pact for Care	
18:50 – 19:20	**Plenary** - Presentation of the rapporteurs of WGs - Discussion	
19:20 – 19:30	**Closing** Final reflections and next steps	- **María Guijarro**, Secretary for Equality, Spain - **Ana Moreno**, Global Alliance for Care - **Anna Barrera**, EU-LAC Foundation
	Reception	

This event is organised within the framework of the Strategic Alliance ECLAC-BMZ/GIZ by the Project "Care Economy for a gender-equitable sustainable economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean (2024-2027)" implemented by ECLAC together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and financed by Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ).

The event is implemented in cooperation with:

EU Regional Programme Inclusive Societies in Latin America and the Caribbean