



Political participation of women. Ministry of Equality

The historic struggle of women's organisations in the country contributed, among other results, to the creation of the Ministry of Equality in June 2023. This Ministry is presided over by Francia Márquez, Vice-President of Colombia since August 2022, becoming the first Afro-descendant woman to hold this position in the country. Her election was significant, as it symbolised an advance in the political and social representation of women and historically excluded groups in Colombia. The Ministry faces the following obstacles and difficulties:

- Lack of an adequate budget to implement effective programmes and policies.
- The creation and structuring of the new ministry has encountered bureaucratic obstacles, as well as resistance from some political and economic sectors that see it as a threat to their interests or as an unnecessary expense.
- Women's political participation in Colombia faces multiple obstacles at all levels due to the country's strong patriarchal culture.

Gender-based violence: an urgent challenge for Colombia

Gender-based violence is a structural problem of national scope, which has a multitude of effects on women's lives both within and outside the framework of the armed conflict. In 2023 there were 630 femicides in Colombia and up to April 2024 there have been 271[1], which is an alarming figure.

Gender-based violence is a structural problem, which highlights the need to promote comprehensive public policies that respect women's

human rights and contribute to the creation of environments free of gender-based violence. All of this in a society in which there is still a high level of tolerance and social acceptance of this type of violence. **Article 342 of Colombia's National Development Plan 2022-2026 (NDP)** declares a national emergency due to gender-based violence, recognising the urgent need to address and overcome violence against women.

Resolution 1325: towards a National Action Plan

UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted by Colombia in 2020 - 20 years after the creation of the mandate - focuses on women's participation in peacebuilding and security. In 2022, the government, at the initiative of the women's movement, began the process of drafting its first **National Action Plan (NAP)** to implement this resolution, agreeing a roadmap that has included the participation of more than 1,500 women in spaces for listening and gathering opinions, ideas and perspectives, in 21 spaces with women from

multiple social and ethnic sectors: six macro-regional forums (Pacific and South West, Caribbean Coast, Eje Cafetero, East, Orinoco, Amazon and Bogotá), seven territorial meetings, seven population forums and one national forum. This plan seeks to ensure women's meaningful participation in peace processes and decisions that affect their security and wellbeing, marking an important milestone for gender inclusion and equity in Colombia. After several delays in its publication, it is expected to be published in October 2024.

Gender and the Peace Accords



Women in civil society have insisted on the importance of a real inclusion of the gender perspective in peace negotiation processes and the effective participation of women's organisations in their diversity in these spaces. They achieved significant achievements in the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP, such as the creation of a

Sub-Commission on Gender at the negotiating table, which led to an important inclusion of the gender approach in the NAP in concrete measures, such as the fact that crimes of sexual violence were not subject to amnesty.

Nearing the eighth year of implementation of the NAP, 49% of the commitments are at the minimum level and have not been initiated; and 68% of the measures with a gender focus are not feasible[2]. Therefore, there are significant delays in the implementation of gender guidelines and measu-

res. This is due to the fact that budget allocations for the gender component have been limited, which, in turn, stems from the lack of a clear political commitment to a gender and intersectional approach as guiding principles for implementation.

On the other hand, in the National Participation Committee (CNP), a space for civil society participation in the Peace Dialogues with the ELN, composed of 81 representatives from 30 social movements and sectors, four feminist and LGBTIQ+ organisations currently participate[3]. These organisations make recommendations for the inclusion of a gender approach in these dialogues, based on their extensive experience in peacebuilding, such as the lessons learned in the process with the FARC-EP and around the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.



Support measures from the European Parliament

- Strengthen Capacities for Gender Equality: Accompany the Colombian State in the development of capacities to promote gender equality, urging international cooperation and supporting specific policies.
- Support the Colombian government in the promotion of comprehensive public policies to combat gender-based violence. The elaboration of these public policies must be agreed with women and feminist organisations in the country.
- Support the implementation of the first National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325: Request the European External Action Service (EEAS), through the European Delegation, to offer Colombia financial and technical support to strengthen the institutions necessary for the implementation of the new NAP on Resolution 1325.
- Promote and support the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth in Colombia by requesting the European Commission and the EEAS to oversee the implementation of these recommendations, support the Follow-up and Monitoring Committee (CSM) and provide technical assistance for monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Furthermore, encourage dialogue between the Colombian government and civil society, and promote awareness-raising campaigns in Europe on the importance of these recommendations.
- Promote the integration of the gender recommendations made by the Truth Commission into European gender policies and programmes related to Colombia, supporting the active participation of women, LGTBIQ+ people, indigenous and Afro-descendant communities and following up with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms tailored to the Colombian context.