

**Notes from the Steering Group meeting
LAC-EU Civil Society Forum 2025**

Online, 17-09-25

1. Meeting objectives

The purpose of the fourth meeting of the Steering Group of the LAC-EU Civil Society Forum was to share the comments received from Colombia and the EU to the outlines of the sessions, to jointly review the table of moderators and to address other matters, including the convening of an extraordinary meeting of the Group next week.

2. Content

Welcome and introduction

Participants were welcomed, and the agenda for the day was presented.

General comments received from Colombia and the EU to the sessions

Some comments received were shared, suggesting:

- Making youth perspectives and voices more evident in sessions
- Integrate the Global Gateway context more clearly into all sessions
- Include more clearly the civil and political rights of vulnerable groups: ethnic and racial minorities, people with disabilities, sexual diversity, children, women, youth, etc.
- Incorporate technical and vocational education, and its relationship to access to employment
- Also focus on the care society, and not only on the bi-regional Pact.

The members of the Group agreed to strengthen the context of the Global Gateway, to achieve a greater understanding of the strategy by civil society organizations, and to share experiences as much as possible. The Group also agreed to strengthen the visibility of vulnerable groups, supporting the possibility of adding a specific session on inequalities and social cohesion, as well as integrating social cohesion into the green and digital transition.

On the suggestions of moderators and speakers

The recommendation of Colombia and the EU to include more panelists from Central America and the Caribbean, as well as from EU civil society, was shared. Some suggestions made by Colombia and the EU for possible panelists and moderators were also shown.

It was explained that it is necessary to complete the table with all the required information about the panelists and moderators, including the perspective and value they bring, as well as an indication of their interest and availability, in order to be able to jointly decide the (around four) panelists for each session. It was emphasized that the moderators and panelists will have the travel and accommodation expenses covered, without remuneration, and with the commitment to attend the entire event.

It was clarified that it was not necessary to identify "rapporteurs" for each session, although it was important that the people of the Steering Group at each session take note of the main messages, to convey them to those who intervened in the wrap-up session on the second day.

It was also clarified that the Group could not decide on participants, either as a desired audience for the sessions or as a row zero. And it was recalled that the participation rule that limits one representative per organization also applies to moderators and panelists.

About the additional sessions

The relevance of considering the session proposed by Redes Chaco on "Territoriality with a global key: the role of civil society in green, fair and equitable investments" was assessed, jointly reviewing the current session on Green Transition and Climate Change.

It was indicated that Colombia has received another proposal from the Franco-Colombian Association of Jurists for a round table on cybersecurity and justice in relation to artificial intelligence, without further data being available at the moment.

Mention was made of the proposal by a member of the Steering Group on the need to reserve a space to discuss NGO funding. The possibility of including this discussion in the Financing session was evaluated, without prejudice to enabling some informal space to discuss the issue.

3. Agreements and next steps

- Prepare a draft of an additional session on inequalities and social cohesion (FORUS, CFS, The Coordinator)
- Review the session on Inclusive Digital Transition, to remove the focus on social cohesion (FORUS)
- Include aspects of education and access to decent work in the different sessions (CFS)
- Incorporate youth perspective in all sessions (FEJ-CJE and YSB Colombia)
- Contact Redes Chaco and jointly review the session on Green Transition and Climate Change to make the necessary adaptations (GNDR, EULAT and COICA)
- Include in the shared Excel document all the details regarding the proposed moderators and speakers, indicating which person in the Group proposes it and has the contact, and if they are interested and available

Other:

- Next (Extraordinary) Meeting: September 24, 2025
- The item on volunteers to draft the Joint Declaration is moved to the next meeting

Participants

Members of the Steering Group

1. International Cooperative Alliance (ICA Américas)
2. Articulación Feminista Marcosur (AFM)
3. COICA
4. Youth Council of Spain (CJE)/European Youth Forum
5. CSA / ITUC Américas

6. Forus International
7. GIFE
8. GNDR
9. Youth Sounding Board (Colombia)
10. La Coordinadora
11. MESA de Articulación
12. RED UE-LAT
13. Transparency International

Observers

14. Ministerio de Igualdad y Equidad (Colombia)
15. Unión Europea: DG. INTPA (Comisión Europea) y Servicio de Acción Exterior de la UE (SEAE)

Technical Assistance

- Policy Forum for Development (PFD)
- GOPA