

Launch of the
**GENDER
EQUALITY**
BULLETIN

On the occasion of
**International
Women's Day**



**Time for care in
Latin America and the Caribbean**
Towards social and gender co-responsibility

6 March | 11 a.m.–12.30 p.m.
(Chile, GMT-3)

Link:
<https://tinyurl.com/22byjs2t>



1. Background

The distribution of care work and gender equality, as well as the right to care, have been central to the debates and agreements of ECLAC member States that have shaped the Regional Gender Agenda since 1977. On the other hand, the recent Resolution on Decent Work and the Care Economy (ILO, 2024), adopted at the 112th session of the International Labour Organization's General Conference in Geneva, marks a milestone as the first international tripartite agreement on the subject. This agreement establishes a common framework for the care economy, including its definition, guiding principles, and recommendations for the design of public policies.

To overcome the current social organization of care, it is essential to promote the design and implementation of comprehensive care policies and systems from a gender, human rights, and intersectional perspective, contributing to gender and social co-responsibility. This entails redistributing responsibilities between men and women, as well as among families, communities, businesses, and the State.

The Buenos Aires Commitment, adopted by ECLAC member States at the XV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2022, sets a path towards a care society and recognizes care as a need, as work, and as a right—the right to provide care, receive care, and practice self-care. The Commitment promotes measures to overcome the sexual division of labour and move towards a fair social organization of care, within the framework of a new development model that fosters gender equality across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. This intergovernmental commitment calls for the design and implementation of State policies that promote co-responsibility and help overcome stereotypes, advocating for parental leave policies that reflect diverse family structures, as well as non-transferable and mandatory paternity leave and other leave provisions for the care of persons in situation of dependency (ECLAC, 2023a).

International labour standards provide a broad framework for the development of care policies, particularly the ILO Conventions No. 183 on Maternity Protection (2000) and No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981). Along with their accompanying Recommendations No. 191 and No. 165, these instruments address the need to establish leave provisions and care services to advance gender equality in paid employment. Also of particular relevance is Convention No. 189 on Domestic Workers, which aims to ensure decent work for care sector workers. The recent Resolution on Decent Work and the Care Economy, adopted at the 112th session of the International Labour Conference in June 2024, marks the first international tripartite agreement on the subject (ILO, 2024). It underscores the urgency of action to guarantee decent work and promote access to quality care and support, based on the 5R Framework (Recognizing, Reducing, and Redistributing unpaid care work, as well as Rewarding and Representing care workers), international labor standards, and social dialogue. The Resolution provides a definition of the care economy, guiding principles, and policy recommendations.

On March 8, International Women's Day is commemorated under the slogan “For all women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.” This year’s theme underscores the urgency of adopting transformative measures to move towards a future where no one is left behind. The year 2025 is pivotal for advancing gender equality and women’s autonomy as it marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted during the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

At the regional level, from August 12 to 15, the XVI Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in Mexico. Its central theme, “Transformations in the political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental spheres to drive the care society and gender equality,” is key to accelerating effective implementation and overcoming the structural challenges of gender inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2. Objective

To present the publication “Gender Equality Bulletin - No. 4: Times to Care in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards Social and Gender Co-responsibility”, jointly prepared by ECLAC and the ILO, and to create a space for comments and reflections among representatives of governments, employers, and workers on how to advance greater social and gender co-responsibility in the labour market.

The bulletin provides an analysis of the progress made in maternity, paternity, and parental leave in Latin America and the Caribbean, and outlines challenges to further measures such as long-term care leave, leave for urgent reasons, reduction of working hours, and increased flexibility in work schedules and locations with a focus on gender equality. It argues that these regulatory tools, which should be available to both men and women, are key to practicing co-responsibility, ensuring the right to care, and achieving gender equality.

3. Agenda

11.00-11.05

Introduction

Ana Güzemes García, Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC

11.05-11.30

Time for care in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards gender and social co-responsibility

José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC

Ana Virginia Moreira, Regional Director of the ILO for Latin America and the Caribbean

11.30- 12.00

Discussion with government representatives, business and trade union organizations

Moderator: Paz Arancibia, Senior Specialist in Gender and Non-Discrimination at the ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Mónica Xavier, Director (designated) of the National Institute for Women (Inmujeres), Uruguay

Alesia Rodríguez, Federation of Chambers and Associations of Commerce and Production of Venezuela (Fedecámaras)

Kaira Reece, Secretary for Sustainable Development, Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA)

12.00-12.25

Exchange with participants

12.25-12.30

Closing remarks

Lucía Scuro, Senior Social Affairs Officer at the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC