

The Community of Democracies and Gender Equality

The Community of Democracies (CoD) is a global intergovernmental coalition comprised of the Governing Council Member States that support adherence to common democratic values and standards outlined in the Warsaw Declaration.

Gender equality and political empowerment of women are key elements for the consolidation of sustainable democracies worldwide. Since its inception in 2000, the Community of Democracies has been actively supporting activities dedicated to advancing women's political participation, including the engagement of women in peace-building efforts and countering violent extremism. In the Community's Strategic Plan 2018-2023, **gender equality** is one of the cross-cutting themes mainstreamed into all activities undertaken by the Community.

Examples of activities

Democracy and Security report and policy briefs

The final report of the CoD's Democracy and Security Dialogue, developed by researchers of the Brookings Institution and the Institute for Security Studies, showed that **gender equal societies are less likely to engage in both internal and external violence**. Policy brief on Gender and Violent Extremism also emphasized that **women can be a powerful force to prevent and counter violent extremism**.

Policy Recommendations from the Democracy and Security report:

- Expand women's political participation;
- Empower women economically;
- Counter discrimination against women;
- Protect women's rights activists;
- Stimulate greater discussion and research into gender-based violence;
- Mainstream gender equality in security and defense;
- Enable female diplomats to engage in high-level decision-making.

Building Sustainable Peace: The Importance of Women's Inclusion

Event on the margins of the World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg, November 2018

The panel discussion was built around **the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**. Women experts in the field provided **specific lessons learned and best practices for advancing women's participation in sustaining peace** from Syria, the Balkans, Central Africa and South America. Highlighted issues included: ensuring meaningful participation of women and inclusive decision-making at the national, regional and global levels; the nexus between democracy and security; and the role of just and strong institutions for sustaining peace.





Women: A Powerful Force for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

Policy session held on the margins of the 2018 Women Political Leaders Summit in Vilnius, June 2018

Held within the “Engaging Women in Sustainable Peace” project, the session addressed the importance of gender inclusion in preventing and countering violent extremism. With panelists from NATO, OSCE, Women in International Security, and European External Action Service,

the discussion aimed to identify good practices for increasing women’s political participation.

The Summary Report outlines recommendations to policy-makers.

“Any countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism approach must recognize that women and girls should not be seen only as victims.”

Amarsanaa Darisuren, OSCE ODIHR

Advancing Women’s Political Participation

Regional consultations co-organized by the CoD, the United Nations Development Programme and International IDEA

As part of the project, **five regional consultations** were held on the margins of large international democracy-related events in **Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and MENA region**. Consultations brought together politicians, state officials, civil society activists, academics, and members of international and regional organizations to discuss gender equality and strategies for advancing women’s political empowerment in respective regions.



PUBLICATIONS: The project’s final report and consultations summary reports outline:

- challenges to overcome in the region;
- existing tools and mechanisms;
- best practices and recommendations on how to effectively advance gender equality and women’s political participation.

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