

Beijing +35 Regional Consultation UNECE

Background

The Fourth World Conference for Women took place in Beijing in 1995. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action listed 12 Critical Areas of Concern. In keeping with UN practice, there is a review every five years of significant Conventions and major agreements. The five year consultations to assess progress take place at the UN regional levels prior to the global summit that takes place in New York. For B+35 this will probably be the UN Commission on the Status of Women 2030. The mandate of CSW is to monitor the implementation of the BPfA as well as highlight emerging issues and ensure CSW maintains its catalytic role in gender mainstreaming across the UN system and ensure system-wide coherence. CSW is also mandated to ensure public awareness of the themes of the BPfA. According to the Methods of Work Resolution from CSW, the UN is encouraged to consult with Civil Society especially in regard to emerging issues and for the five-year review.

For the two UN regions of Western Europe and Other States and Eastern Europe, the regional consultation is organised by UNECE.

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva organised women from its members to attend the conference in Beijing and organised the Civil Society consultations with UNECE for B+5, +10, +15, +20 and +30 For B+25, WMG organised the Civil Society Consultation.

Consultation Process

The formal Member States analysis of B+35 will take place through the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2030. The Preparatory Committee for UNECE will take place in Geneva in October 2029 hosted by UNECE. The result of this consultation on the achievements, gaps and challenges for our region will be shared with UN Women and will be included in the global report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Civil Society will hold a two day event prior to this. Civil Society engagement is vital and NGOCSWGeneva will consult widely to find the most inclusive manner for Civil Society engagement. Building on best practice from past consultations, NGOCSW Geneva has created a consultation process with four pillars. Every effort will be made, in all aspects of the endeavour, to ensure inclusivity and reach out to Eastern European women and girls and those whose voices are not yet heard including rural women, widows, disabled women, indigenous women.

1. Analysing achievements, gaps and challenges

In order to ensure full participation, all interested civil society are been invited to participate in on-line working groups for each of the critical areas of concern. The work has begun in April 2026 with WG co-chairs confirmed and with the first meeting of the WG taking place in May 2026. There will be a 1000 word statement, three action points and resource papers produced. The first statement will be ready by October 2026 as a first step. The invitations to join the groups will be

widely disseminated to ensure inclusion from across the whole of the UNECE region. The proposed draft statements will be circulated with comments to be provided to the C-Chair in time for relevant edits. The final statements, action points and background papers will be published in early October 2029. As each area covers a range of issues, some groups will have sub-groups. There is also a Working Group drafting the Chapeau statement that will take into consideration the intersection between all themes with additional proposals to understand well the intersections and ensure robust representation of these issues.

In addition there are two emerging issue groups: women and water and AI & technology.

There is also a desire for a critical analysis of the Beijing Platform for Action as a whole and a consideration of its achievements and gaps, especially in regard to CEDAW and Agenda 2030. In order to achieve this analysis we have invited interested individuals to offer their help in research and editing. The statements and recommendations of the 15 Working Groups will be formatted into one document that will serve as a signpost to civil society concerns.

2. Expert Round Tables

In coordination with UN entities, there will be a number of virtual and in-person round tables with Member States. In addition the NGO CSW Geneva will be holding Breakfast Briefings for Ambassadors. The aim of the Round Tables is to develop a meaningful dialogue with Member States, thus they are all held using Chatham House rules. UN entities are invited together with some civil society. The working groups on the relevant round table are suggesting the civil society experts and are also sharing their working document with the participants. This process is an attempt to have an ongoing conversation with Member States on the areas of concern to ensure a more in-depth analysis of the issue than that which can take place in a 2 day event covering such a wide area, each of great importance.

3. In-person event Geneva October 2029

We are consulting with all stakeholders to ascertain the best use of the two days which we hope to be held within the UN Headquarters in Geneva. We have asked widely and the over-riding response has been a desire for an in-person event. Experience from B+30 is that the day of workshops and training was very important and it is envisaged that these will happen again. We look forward to the integration of the arts and creativity in the two days.

As part of this process there will also be an in-person event in October 2026 entitled “Moving Forwards” providing an opportunity for each WG to present their current findings and discuss cross-cutting themes, with the particular lens of how this affects the Agenda 2030 discussions on what to follow Agenda 2030.

4. Member State consultation

In collaboration and consultation with UNECE and UN Women the voices of civil society will be included in the Member State consultation. We anticipate a meaningful conversation looking for positive actions that are realistic and that will enable Member States to realise in the lives of women and girls in their own countries the aspirations of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Communications

It is anticipated that the documents will be ready for dissemination by September 30 so that they can be shared widely prior to the Member State consultation. We look forward to offers of help to share the key messages from the statements on social media.

CSW and Human Rights Council

It is anticipated that the Working Groups will host joint side events at CSW and HRC as part of the B+35 review process and ensure that this collaboration across civil society in the region will continue to grow and strengthen.