



THE “PINK TIDE” OF EU AID:

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Prologue:

For decades as it sought to tighten its worldwide grip, a concerted globalist front has matched operational tactics to ideological substance, honing the strength of transcending borders and boundaries. Across nations and institutions, its global networks work to ensure local offshoots gain, wield, and secure power anywhere and everywhere possible. This entails mutual support in laying out the groundwork for victories—in public opinion and otherwise—along with coordinated frontal attacks on their enemy: conservatives, patriots, and largely the right. Europe is the textbook scenario to this globalist playbook. Democratic principles are being thwarted to prevent the people’s will from installing patriots in power, recently and notoriously in France, by judicially barring a leading presidential candidate from running, and in Germany, through sundry attempts against the second party. Where that fails, the plan of last resort is overturning elections or toppling elected governments, such as in Poland up until 2023. The same playbook is being continuously carried out in Hungary since 2010, when Prime Minister Viktor Orbán led conservatives and Christian democrats to power. Upon successive opposition attempts in prior elections, including foreign-funded ones, the one now led by Péter Magyar’s *Tisza* party (EPP) labors under a cloud of suspicion—and too often, evidence—of serving as the new instrument of Brussels globalists in their pro-migration, pro-gender, and pro-war ploy against Hungary.

European institutions, led by the Commission and its president, are key to this playbook. They’ve cast themselves into a mistaken role: they choose to serve other interests rather than looking after those of Europeans. Instead of coordinating European policies, they impose their will—and a certain set of ideologies—by interfering in the affairs of member states, so that the plan’s political executioners hold power nationally. This is clearly the case of Donald Tusk’s government in Poland, but the more than decade-old attempt to secure a vassal government in Hungary obeys the same rationale. Yet it isn’t only in member states that the EU seeks to impose its woke-progressive ideology. It also seizes upon pre-existing channels of development aid to foment that ideology in third countries, which in turn creates a favorable climate for neo-Marxists in those regions. This study proves that shy of a billion euros of EU taxpayer’s money were spent on Latin American NGOs over the past decade, in substantial part to that end. They compounded torrents of “philanthropy” from the likes of George Soros and steady streams of public funds from USAID, the latter only recently halted.

Donald Trump’s victory has cut off the US firehose, and shed transparency on USAID’s long record of funding wokeism, progressivism, and the global plot against patriots. This has left the EU as the

¹ Beyond its lead author, **Jorge González-Gallarza**, this report is the outcome of a months-long effort at the Madrid office of the Center for Fundamental Rights (CFR) that involved the entire rest of its staff, notably **Vajk Farjkas**, **Juan Efraín Rocha**, **Alejandro Peña Esclusa**, **Panka Király**, **Szonja Tombor** and **Ana Bolio**. In addition, our Center would like to thank the various contributions, comments, and insights selflessly provided by the following individuals and institutions outside our remit: the **Legal Clinic at Instituto de Empresa’s (IE) Law School** (Spain), the **Global Center for Human Rights** (Washington DC), **Ana Milena Zambrano** (Colombia), **Vane Vázquez** (Paraguay), **Gustavo Nakamura** (Peru), **Diego Sepúlveda** (Chile), **Paula Azzar** (Brazil) and **Christa Walters** (Guatemala).

major public funder of the selfsame neo-Marxist NGOs in the region, a role in which it remains to date. This keeps happening, incidentally, while Hungary remains deprived of funds duly owed to it for protecting its borders from illegal migration, defending the family and children against gender ideology, and upholding peace. Europe's invaluable assist has come amidst a palpable sea change that keeps rocking the region. Over the past decade, a new red wave has engulfed Latin America, led by the São Paulo Forum and *Grupo de Puebla*, a tandem akin to a "narco-communist international". Analysts keep terming it a "pink tide" to align it with the ideological vogues of the West's postmodern left, yet it is old Marxists who have come cloaked in the rainbow color palette, under the overarching cult of wokeism. These neo-Marxist elites now hold sway over much of the region. Their roadmap to dominance runs an unmistakable Gramscian playbook: a struggle for culture, language, and discourse as preconditions for seizing power and becoming entrenched within it.

The sustained patronage that EU institutions have directed to NGOs fostering the region's woke agenda keeps buttressing the "pink tide" as it rips through the continent. The €939.5 million of EU taxpayers' money this study highlights, handed out to 800-odd NGOs over ten years, has proved decisive in creating a favorable cultural climate for left-radical politicians and their discourse. If one thing is certain, it is that aid meant in theory to serve the region's development needs has, in large part, been diverted towards a predetermined ideological agenda. In producing this groundbreaking and minute analysis of data flows and the identities of their beneficiaries, our Madrid office at the Center for Fundamental Rights (CFR) hopes to bring the rot to light.

Abstract:

This study scrutinizes the **€939.5 million** in grants the **EU gave to 800-odd NGOs** across Latin America through 2014-2024, as disclosed in the European Commission's own **Financial Transparency System**. Since the USAID freeze unveiled endemic fraud and abuse within the "**NGO industrial complex**", our report enlarges the spotlight, the better to inform a larger questioning of non-state actors and aid agencies in the global culture wars. With Washington's aid cut-off pushing former USAID grantees into the substituting arms Brussels, and with the EU compelled to probe the NGOs it funds in the **LIFE scandal's** wake amidst long-standing calls for transparency, foreign-based ones that likewise rely on the EU taxpayer's dime should not evade the limelight. Two categories of NGOs stand out in our dataset—at times overlapping under the Open Society's umbrella—both showing the EU's aid more divorced with every passing year from **traditional paradigms of development assistance**. While we find the EU interwoven with US-based, highly-professionalized, **transnational "philanthropies"**, we bring into closer focus a slew of **local, far-left activist groups** that also cashed in multimillion sums in their respective categories: "LGBTQ+", feminism, sexual and reproductive rights, indigenism, migration, and "anti-disinformation". Far from a pre-existing neo-Marxist ecosystem capturing the EU's aid-disbursing bureaucracy, this study finds a gradual radicalization of the EU's grantee pool under the **steering effect** of EU monies. Many instances of disconnect from the "EU values" purportedly advanced by the aid stand out. The EU funded a 2019 Uruguayan speaking tour for avowed Marxist professor **Angela Davis** as part of its **Horizons of Freedom** project. The activities of EU-funded "LGBTQ+" NGOs included a report on "**trans corporalities in Uruguay's penitentiary system**", fostering "**trans representation in Brazilian elections**", and promoting "**sexual education in early childhood**", which the recipient NGO in question defined as a "**human right**" trampled by "**adult-centrism and the patriarchy**", to be tackled as part of a

“**reflection on childhood sexuality**”. One pro-abortion NGO came to be Peru’s top recipient of EU aid even as it underwent a **high-profile sexual abuse scandal**. Funds flowed to rural and indigenist NGOs, too, that promote untested **folk medicine** disguised as “**intercultural health**”. NGOs invoking “**media freedoms**” took EU funds to issue hit jobs against non-leftist journalists. Serving neither its interests nor its foundational values, this **firehose of aid** reveals the EU’s decisive footprints in Latin America’s **neo-Marxist “pink tide”**—a Gramscian mutation of old-school Marxist “red waves”—that has swept the region for more than a decade and risks engulfing it entirely. But it also holds a mirror to its gaping bureaucratic failure at home in how recipients are identified, aid is allocated, and contracts are audited. Our study ends with recommendations to tackle this European form of “**moral imperialism**” through greater transparency and accountability, while also counseling the strengthening of legal frameworks in receiving countries where the level playing field of influence has gone altered for years.

Introduction:

On January 20th this year, the lid was blown off a global scandal that seems nowhere close to abating: for years—if not decades—a worldwide network of radical left-wing causes had run on the US taxpayer’s dime, skirting virtually all oversight under the pretense of “foreign assistance”. Since a freshly sworn-in President Trump declared a **freeze on over \$40 billion worth of USAID projects**², an overdue reckoning is ongoing worldwide, one that goes far beyond domestic concern for transparent budgeting and accountable spending of tax monies. Just in Latin America, the fraud unveiled within ten days of inauguration included \$2 million for sex changes and “LGBT activism” in Guatemala, \$47,000 for a Colombian “transgender opera”, and \$32,000 for a “transgender comic book” in Peru³. Few of the region’s countries were spared, and some are still tracing the rogue agency’s influence on their politics, including through possible electoral interference⁴. **The challenge to small nations from torrents of dark money camouflaged as “aid” has sparked or renewed interest in beefing up transparency requirements and legal frameworks for “sovereignty protection”**⁵. Trailblazers like Paraguay or Peru may be followed by others, upon a much-awaited electoral cycle in 2025-2026 that will likely see the so-called **São Paulo Forum (SPF)** of left-wing powers unseated from several of its current fiefdoms, from Brazil to Colombia and from Chile to Honduras

Were these efforts to succeed, they may still leave questions unanswered. How different would the world look if its superpower hadn’t been putting its progressive thumb on the scale of the domestic quarrels of smaller nations? Can elected leaders put the genie of non-state foreign influence back into the bottle of popular control and accountability?

² The White House. (2025, March 14). *Reevaluating and realigning United States foreign aid*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/reevaluating-and-realigning-united-states-foreign-aid/>

³ The White House. (2025a, February 20). *At USAID, waste and abuse runs deep*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/02/at-usaid-waste-and-abuse-runs-deep/>

⁴ Nación, L. (2025, February 11). *ONGs intentaron manipular elecciones en Paraguay, sostiene senador*. *La Nación*. <https://www.lanacion.com.py/politica/2025/02/11/ongs-intentaron-manipular-elecciones-en-paraguay-sostiene-senador/>

⁵ Nación, L. (2025b, February 14). *Proceso de transparencia en Paraguay sobre ONG logra repercusión en Perú*. *La Nación*. <https://www.lanacion.com.py/politica/2025/02/14/proceso-de-transparencia-en-paraguay-sobre-ong-logra-repercusion-en-peru/>

Meanwhile, as the Trump administration keeps battling the courts, the media, and internal obstruction to assert control over USAID, the global rethink should take unfolding revelations into account. The agency may return to its mandate as truly humanitarian projects are gradually reinstated upon review, but that wouldn't make the scandal's lessons any less biting in recipient countries, even where scrutiny has so far lagged. **Webs of transnational influence this size are seldom run single-handedly, and the one just uncovered is already looking for substituting patrons.** USAID was the head of a hydra, not of a snake: the lead smuggler of ideological crusades under the guise of bolstering civil society, but **hardly the only culprit.** Even with Washington cutting its stake in it, the NGO-industrial complex keeps humming at the opaque nexus between liberal state power, big philanthropy, and radical non-state actors. Its main state benefactor withdrawn, this ecosystem is already working to cement its base in the EU, where it long had a second home. **Former beneficiaries of USAID's largesse wasted no time knocking on the EU's door—when Brussels didn't volunteer for that role outright⁶.**

The complex isn't flocking there for no reason. After a Covid hiatus, **in 2022 alone the EU contracted almost €11.4 billion to NGOs worldwide**, up from only €3 billion in 2014: a nearly 400% eight-year increase. Our own dataset begins five years after the 2009 Lisbon Treaty beefed up the bloc's foreign policy prerogatives, including on the use of aid to extra-EU NGOs as a foreign policy tool⁷. And while over 75% of the aid the last year on record, 2023, went to domestic NGOs, the pot for foreign-based ones is far from negligible: **over €3.06 billion in 2023 alone, out of which €147,69 million went to the 25 countries in our dataset** (€939.5 million in our ten-year period). Although the much larger and twice-as-populous African continent remains the largest recipient—€605,01 million to forty-four countries—Latin America appears like a go-to target of EU aid disbursers when population and size are adjusted for. The EU's privileged ties to the region and the multiple programs and channels it employs to strengthen them⁸, furthermore, multiply the nooks and crannies in which radical NGOs may squeeze in, claim a niche, and operate uncontested.

While much of this foreign aid remains unprobed—despite a transparency of data that should bring financial wrongdoings to light faster than outside the EU—the urgency to scrutinize it dovetails with Europe's own reckoning with the role of NGOs domestically. Two days after Trump's inauguration-day freeze, Dutch daily *De Telegraaf* unveiled a vast **influence-peddling** scheme whereby green NGOs funded by the European Commission's (EC) **LIFE program** were allowed to lobby lawmakers—and even other Directorates-General (DG) up and down the Commission—for the bloc's own hodgepodge of environmental policies, the Green Deal. Under the EU's long-held pretext for funding green advocacy—offsetting the corporate influence of large, polluting multinationals⁹—separation of powers and ethical rules were flouted by this *modus operandi* of inter-institutional lobbying disguised as empowering civic groups. But beyond domestic ripples, **NGOs are a markedly globalized sector**, with operational methods often extending across borders. Not unlike in the LIFE scandal, **our report reveals an incestuous feedback loop between NGOs and the bureaucrats funding them.** At times, recipients

⁶ Wheaton, S. (2025, February 7). Can Europe be the USAID Band-Aid? *POLITICO*.

<https://www.politico.eu/newsletter/brussels-playbook/can-europe-be-the-usaid-band-aid/>

⁷ The treaty of Lisbon: Fact sheets on the European Union: European Parliament. (n.d.).

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon>

⁸ Latin America and the Caribbean. (n.d.). EEAS. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/latin-america-and-caribbean_en

⁹ Thomas Fazi (MCC Brussels). *The EU's propaganda machine: How the EU funds NGOs to promote itself*. (n.d.).

<https://brussels.mcc.hu/executive-summary-the-eus-propaganda-machine-how-the-eu-funds-ngos-to-promote-itself>

seem a tool at the latter's unscrupulous fingertips, while other times the principal-agent problem kicks in, with NGOs seemingly misaligned with the purpose for which they were funded. The concern revealed by the LIFE scandal resurfaces an ocean's away, in Latin America, and for causes often far murkier than advocating for net zero emissions, the circular economy, and organic farming

Combined, these converging scandals call into question how the EU engages "civil society" on the whole, and even whether its very institutional design invites financial shenanigans and far-left activism by organizations posing as high-minded and altruistic. In the LIFE case, specific Commission guidelines not to use EU funds for hard lobbying existed¹⁰ and were breached¹¹. The so-dubbed "**Qatargate**" scandal, for its part, exposed the European Parliament (EP) as wide-open to ham-fisted, malign influence operations, with hostile powers in cahoots with venal socialist lawmakers who even jumped on the gravy train by setting up fake NGOs¹². The Commission had gestured towards beefing up transparency rules in the last legislative term¹³, long before sending a flurry of "gag orders" to NGOs exposed in the LIFE scandal. Calls for funding cuts and greater accountability in the NGO "tendering" process were made, ahead of last June's supranational race, even by the European People's Party's (EPP), which retains a lead in the new Parliament. **Such calls have only grown louder since:** on January 17, a thirteen-page resolution was voted out of the Parliament's BUDG committee, against leftist votes and with the German CDU's Markus Pieper as *rapporteur*, re-emphasizing that "NGOs are critical in upholding EU values" but that "only NGOs respecting these values should receive funding"¹⁴, a seemingly forsaken corollary. Even the executive game of musical chairs that ensues from every election seemed to presage a change of tack, as the Czech former banker and businessman **Jozef Síkela** seized the Commission portfolio for **International Partnerships**. Amidst flak from NGOs, he took over from the former school teacher and leader of the Finnish Social Democratic Party **Jutta Urpilainen**, on the role since 2019 straight from parental leave after adopting a second kid from Colombia¹⁵.

Yet with the EPP firmly back as Parliament's largest group¹⁶, **it took the USAID scandal to significantly shake Brussels on the issue.** Years-old reports by the **European Court of Auditors** (ECA) recommending an ambitious overhaul of the NGO selection process for both foreign and domestic NGOs still languish

¹⁰ Guidance on funding for activities related to the development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of Union legislation and policy (Ref. Ares (2024)3320196-07/05/24). (2024). Secretariat-General, Directorate-General for Budget's Legal Service. Retrieved March 28, 2025, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/290965/Guidance_funding%20to%20lobbying%20activities_final%20Ares\(2024\)3320196-%2007052024.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/290965/Guidance_funding%20to%20lobbying%20activities_final%20Ares(2024)3320196-%2007052024.pdf)

¹¹ Gros, M., & Guillot, L. (2024, December 6). Commission tells NGOs EU money is not for lobbying. *POLITICO*. <https://www.politico.eu/article/european-commission-ngos-lobbying-environmental-advocacy-green-funds-life-program/>

¹² Costa, O. (2024). The European Parliament and the Qatargate. *JCMS Journal of Common Market Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13666>

¹³ EU Transparency Register: 2021 interinstitutional agreement I Think Tank I European Parliament. (n.d.). [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)751434](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2023)751434)

¹⁴ EUR-LEX - 52024IP0036 - EN - EUR-LEX. (n.d.). https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AC_202405725

¹⁵ Politico. (2019, November 28). Meet the commissioners. *POLITICO*. <https://www.politico.eu/article/meet-the-commissioners-president-ursula-von-der-leyen-team-european-commission-members/>

¹⁶ EU funded NGOs must become more transparent. (n.d.). <https://www.eppgroup.eu/newsroom/eu-funded-ngos-must-become-more-transparent>

unread¹⁷, with the latest one added to the pile on April 7¹⁸. Talks remain stalled at this stage amidst hysteria from the NGO sector for allegedly being “stigmatized” under a far-right agenda disguised as pro-transparency¹⁹. Meanwhile, the EU keeps lecturing countries—from Georgia²⁰ to Hungary²¹, and chiefly Paraguay²² in our region of Latin America—taking steps to cast mere light on opaque NGOs wielding decisive influence on their legislative output, news cycles, and even electoral results. “Sovereignty laws” are abhorred as an alleged crackdown on civil society, even where the transparency registers and disclosure requirements imposed—often kicking only beyond a given threshold of foreign funding—fall short of compelling or forbidding the activities the NGOs in place already carry out. Critics on the other side, meanwhile, have called for an EU DOGE²³, modeled on Elon Musk’s drive for cost-cutting and streamlining the US federal government. **The rise of sovereigntist and conservative parties at last June’s election is already exacting greater transparency, with scrutiny of NGO aid a core aim²⁴.**

This report is intended as a narrower input to this flurry of concern and action. Other regions have seen dubious non-state entities in past pools of EU aid recipients, such as various Palestinian radical groups and a web of “charities” linked to the Muslim Brotherhood channeling earthquake relief funds towards Islamist radicalization²⁵. **Our study spotlights misallocation and abuse in Latin America, with a view to the kind of left-radical NGOs that are coming under most scrutiny.** This aid serves indeed a mission akin to that of USAID, and it is no coincidence that “EuropeAid” was the alternate name for DG DEVCO, the Commission’s unit handling these flows that was renamed DG INTPA in 2021, for “International Partnerships”. While recipient NGOs may vary widely, both USAID and INTPA have cloaked their work in the language of furthering the “values” they’re expected to serve. But while it took a hard-fought electoral upset in November to unveil USAID’s dark underside, the EU—no less prone to opaqueness and illusion of democratic control—is stuck in **bureaucratic and political stasis**, while having the upside of greater transparency this study leverages.

By shedding light on the **asymmetrical weight of hyper-progressive ideology brought to bear in the affairs of small nations**, we weigh in on a two-ended debate. The “moral imperialism” laid bare in the

¹⁷ Transparency of EU funds implemented by NGOs: more effort needed. (n.d.). <https://www.eurosai.org/en/databases/audits/Transparency-of-EU-funds-implemented-by-NGOs-more-effort-needed/>

¹⁸ NEWS2025_03_NEWSLETTER_01. (n.d.). NEWS2025_03_NEWSLETTER_01. European Court of Auditors. https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/news/NEWS2025_03_NEWSLETTER_01

¹⁹ False alarm: fake news and the right fuel attack on NGOs. (n.d.). Corporate Europe Observatory. <https://corporateeurope.org/en/2025/03/false-alarm-fake-news-and-right-fuel-attack-ngos>

²⁰ Armstrong, K. (2024, June 28). EU says Georgia’s membership path on hold over NGO law. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cql82we090vo>

²¹ Commission decides to refer HUNGARY to the Court of Justice. (2024, October 3). European Commission - European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/it/ip_24_4865

²² Color, A. (2024, October 26). Cronología y reacciones contra ley anti-ONG que Peña debe promulgar o vetar. ABC Color. <https://www.abc.com.py/politica/2024/10/25/cronologia-y-reacciones-contra-la-ley-anti-ong-que-pena-debe-promulgar-o-vetar/>

²³ MCC Brussels calls for establishment of EU DOGE. (2025, February 17). <https://brussels.mcc.hu/news/following-shocking-new-report-about-scale-of-the-eu-ngo-propaganda-complex-mcc-brussels-calls-for-establishment-of-eu-doge>

²⁴ Körömi, C. (2025, February 27). Hungary demands to see all European Commission contracts with NGOs. POLITICO. <https://www.politico.eu/article/hungary-demands-full-and-unrestricted-access-to-european-commissions-ngo-grant-contracts/>

²⁵ González-Gallarza, J. (2021, June 30). When the EU funds hate. The American Conservative. <https://www.theamericanconservative.com/when-the-european-union-funds-hate/>

EU's nefarious meddling overseas, on one side, holds lessons close to home. When **rogue bureaucracies** squander Europe's symbolic capital in Christian-majority nations of the West where that appeal has little to do with intersectionality and the rainbow flag, their domestic agenda begins to take deeper perspective. On the other, even if the ideological bias were innocuous—say, if the EU funded Esperanto academies or wellness research—the question remains as to why its role in these should be through financial aid. The unaccountability and opacity in which the EU-NGOs nexus thrives should mobilize **fiscal hawks of all persuasions** in a call for transparency and restraint.

Much remains to be known about the deficient tendering process, poor accountability, and low audit standards to which these NGOs were subjected. More should be done to leverage the Parliament's watchdog and budgetary control powers. **But a decade's worth data on these flows is abundant enough to beg questions aplenty.** Amidst the flow of light, we hope this study will add an important piece, and even serve as a template for researchers working to uncover similar rot in the EU's dealings with other regions.

The dataset:

Stretching no further back than 2014 and encompassing 2024, the last fiscal year on record, the EU's **Financial Transparency System**²⁶ (FTS) styles itself as a bird's eye view into all monies disbursed yearly by the bloc's executive arm. The funds in our dataset are either managed (1) "directly" by the Commission or its agencies—from its Brussels HQs in the Berlaymont or through EU delegations abroad, as is often our case here—or (2) "indirectly" through international partners. Up until five years ago, a share flowed through the **European Development Fund** (EDF), a foreign aid instrument made of member state contributions the Commission co-managed with the European Investment Bank (EIB) but itemized in the FTS, too. In 2020, however, the EDF was folded into the EU's seven-year budget²⁷, the so-called **Multiannual Financial Framework** (MFF) that surpassed €2 trillion for 2021-2027. To narrow our dataset down to NGO beneficiaries and leave out third-party states and private companies, we seek the overlap between two categories in the FTS: **non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and not-for-profit organizations (NFPOs)**. While seemingly synonymous, the NGO category includes for-profit businesses the EU may be tendering for projects, or funding for research or innovation. For this study's purposes, and although they often go in Latin America by "**Civil Society Organizations**" (CSOs), we will keep referring to these third-sector, non-lucrative entities as "**NGOs**".

Every project or money flow in our dataset is listed in its corresponding **year** (1) as having a **beneficiary** (2) residing in a **country** (3). Although aid for multi-country projects is also reflected through a "benefitting country" where it differs from that NGO's home base, we stick to the "beneficiary" category, as aid flows are computed in whole even when they spill across borders (most of the left-activist NGOs in our database don't operate beyond country they're registered in anyway). Also listed is a **responsible department** (4)—a Directorate-General or agency of the Commission—disbursing the money through a **program** (5). While several "**funding types**" (6) recur across the FTS—prizes, public procurement,

²⁶ European Commission - Financial Transparency System. (n.d.). <https://ec.europa.eu/budget/financial-transparency-system/>

²⁷ Publications Office of the European Union. (2021). *The integration of the European Development Funds into the MFF 2021-2027*. Publications Office of the EU. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/809a3996-d7b7-11eb-895a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

budget support, external experts, and other “financial instruments”—grants dominate our dataset by far: 100% for nearly all countries in all years. Unlike for procurement contracts below €15.000, not public from 2012 onwards, this predominance of grants ensures the disclosure of even low-amount projects—which often may mean life or death for the small NGOs relying on them in our dataset.

Though amounts below €10.000 are rounded down to zero in the Excel files downloadable from the FTS web portal, they do appear through the more tedious “explore” function. Available there, too, are **project start and end dates** (7), the **beneficiary’s VAT number** (8) and its **exact location**, city and address (9). The whole is wrapped up in a **reference number** (10) that is often used in the EU legislative process for accountability purposes. But more importantly, a **purpose** or “**subject of grant or contract**” (11) is disclosed, per the project-based rules of budgeting prevalent across the global NGO space²⁸, where the use of **feminized language**²⁹ happens to be widespread.

Finally, the FTS features disbursing “**departments**” (12): 67% of the €939.5 million went through either DEVCO or INTPA, the same department before and after the 2021 renaming. The remainder 33% went through a word-soup of quangos—EACEA, REA, RTD, CNECT, INEA, FPI, EASME, HADEA, CINEA, HOME—covering a smorgasbord of issues including education, research, communication networks, innovation, SMEs, health, climate, and migration. The “**programs**” (13) category displays a greater scattering: 33% went through the EU’s Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the Commission’s instrument of choice before the EDF was folded into the budget in 2020. Nearly 24% was channeled by the Global Europe instrument (Neighborhood, Development, and International Cooperation). The remainder include: Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe (research and innovation), European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, EDF, Erasmus+, Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), EU Aid Volunteers Initiative (EUAVI), European Solidarity Corps (ESC), Internal Security Fund (ISF), COSME (SME competitiveness) and European Neighborhood Instrument (ENI).

Some projects feature twice under different names, such as in Honduras, where two feminist organizations—the *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (CDM)*³⁰ and the *Centro de Estudios de la Mujer (CEM-H)*³¹—appear as simultaneous beneficiaries of the same 2020 project worth €550.000 (rather than co-grantees) but under slightly different titles: “enforceability and defense of human rights in the context of the Covid-19 emergency” and “defending human rights in times of Covid”. **Just as this sort of double-counting is likely the result of human error, the prospect of funds having evaded the radar altogether through no malice can’t be ruled out either.** The FTS, in passing, disclaims that “a small number of beneficiaries are not reported for security reasons”.

In our 25 countries—the Western Hemisphere minus the US and Canada—our dataset yields **800 NGOs as having received some EU aid sometime in our ten-year period**. These NGOs range from the top beneficiary—*RedClara*³², the region’s prime academic network, awarded €21.1 million for its work, among others, in connecting the region’s universities to Europe’s *GEANT* data network—to the bottom

²⁸ Poole, L. (2020a). (rep.). *The Programme-Based Approach: 10 Lessons*. Retrieved 2025, from <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/the-programme-based-approach/10-lessons-pba-funding-nrc-july-2020.pdf>.

²⁹ Wikipedia contributors. (2024, April 23). *Feminization of language*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminization_of_language

³⁰ Centro de Derechos de Mujeres. (n.d.). <https://derechosdelamujer.org/>

³¹ Centro de Estudios de la Mujer (CEM-H). (n.d.). <https://cemh.org.hn/>

³² RedClara (Cooperación Latinoamericana de Redes Avanzadas). (2025, March 11). Portal2023. <https://redclara.net/es/>

recipient, to *Groupe d'Action Francophone pour l'Environnement*³³, a Haitian advocacy that got €190 for work on “eco-citizenship” and the “socio-ecological transition”. With **1.083 budgetary commitments**, nearly 300 NGOs have received money twice (or more times). This higher number is (partly) offset by the same NGOs appearing under different names at different points in time, whether owing to an official renaming in public registries, or to receiving monies through different branches of their operation (such as the regular case of an NGO itself and its adjoining association both featuring).

These 800 entities come in many different forms, from international giants to local youth houses, from federations of municipal governments, technological hubs, and think-tanks to local faith groups, ancestral indigenous tribal councils, and associations of victims seeking redress for a given ill. Meta-NGOs, NGO federations, or NGO incubators appear, too, whether serving as forums for non-profits or catalysts of a wider intersectionality mindset. They include, for instance, *Confederación Colombiana de ONGs*—€0.18 million granted—and Peru’s *Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo*—€0.02 million.

Amounts appear as either “committed”, “contracted”, or “consumed”. The FTS defines a commitment as a “reservation of appropriations to cover for subsequent expenses”, whereas the contracted amount, the measure herein used, is laid down in a contract, and may be lower than the initially committed, high-bound estimation of total costs to be incurred. The consumed amount is reported by the NGO under transparency rules we’ll address in the report’s final section.

The aforementioned rounding down to €0 of figures in the FTS-issued spreadsheets adds another opaquing filter to our survey. Our striving for clarity can only go so far: this study has merely focused on de-rounding those €0 sums, while often finding the NGOs in question tapping into pots of money for multi-NGO projects much larger than €10.000, in which cases the figures in our tables appear footnoted. **It is these cases of non-itemized multi-actor projects that doubtless add the thorniest difficulty to our scrutiny, but they’re not reduced to NGOs misleadingly listed as receiving €0.** When the money goes to a project involving more than one NGO, overall sums aren’t always broken down by recipient, in which case the FTS forewarns that “repartition for each beneficiary was not available in our central accounting system “ABAC” at the time of publication”³⁴. In all cases, an invitation to request more information activates an e-mail pop-up to INTPA-FTS@ec.europa.eu, with budg-fts@ec.europa.eu in the cc line, at the bottom of which the Commission again disclaims it is “committed to answering enquiries in the most appropriate manner and as quickly as possible”.

Where grants herein analyzed involve multiple actors and the funds apportioned aren’t disclosed NGO-by-NGO, this study speaks of a “funding radius”, denoting the overall pot of money into which that specific NGO tapped. Our table columns, similarly, list “contracted amounts whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool”.

For reference, “Accrual-Based Accounting” or ABAC, which the Commission used up until January 1 this year, afforded a more up-to-date picture than the earlier forms of traditional cash accounting it used, as it recorded expenses when they’re incurred, not when cash is exchanged. The Commission’s use of ABAC, however, was phased out the year our dataset ends and replaced by the even more cutting-edge

³³ *Groupe d'Action Francophone pour l'Environnement*. (2024, October 28). Home - GAFE HAÏTI. <https://gafe-haiti.org/>

³⁴ This opacity occurs, actually, even with single-beneficiary projects at times, where the overall grant amount appears disclosed in the “project details” function of the FTS, while the Excels generated feature €0 for the NGO in question. This has required contrasting with the grant’s page in the interface, where that NGO appears as the lone recipient.

SUMMA system³⁵. The authors hope the introduction of SUMMA will at least partly clear out the morass of uncertainty and inexactitude in future fiscal years.

Topline observations:

Two preliminary observations preface our perusal of the data. The preeminence of transnational networks and left-radical local groups in the recipient pool, combined with the multiple layers of NGO financing, together produce institutional overlaps worthy of note, whether with EU member state and regional governments or with philanthropic and grant-making entities such as the **Open Society Foundation (OSF)**³⁶, whose funding streams are delicately cross-examined with the EU's in this section. Several difficulties in categorization are then addressed, before sorting the most dubious NGOs into seven broad groups. In focusing on the most flagrant misallocation to progressive causes, our typology leaves out NGOs in other realms, such as environmentalist ones, even if manifestly on the radical end of those spectrums (and climate alarmist groups do abound in the dataset). Lest it adopts a fatalist outlook, the analysis features the odd instance where aid did flow to effective, on-the-ground, non-ideological groups, as a benchmark of what an alternative EU approach to NGO financing—cleansed of bias and abuse—could one day look like.

1. Transnational philanthropic networks and ideological NGOs over local needs:

While our focus is kept south of the US-MEX border, briefly including the US and Canada as beneficiary countries sheds light on the EU's role in the global NGO industrial complex. US-based NGOs accounted for nearly 58% of the bloc's aid to the whole hemisphere in our period. This includes the dataset's top three beneficiaries: the **Wildlife Conservation Society** (€76.2 million), the **International Rescue Committee** (€69.76 million), and the **International Financial Reporting Standards Foundation** (€39.26 million). While most channel part of that money south, others are strictly US-focused, such as anti-death penalty groups or trustee boards of progressive colleges—to which the EU upped its funding in the Trump years. Along with the ideologically-fueled NGOs that don't fit the mold of **Non-Governmental Development Organizations** (NGDOs) and that are this paper's focus, the preeminence of US-based transnational NGOs in the wider hemispheric dataset suggests **a picture of EU aid to the region's NGOs that is divorced from the traditional paradigm of development or humanitarian assistance.**

Indeed, these two classes—the US-based giants and the ideologically-driven radical groups—dominate our dataset at the expense of locally-anchored, “bread-and-butter” social enterprises working effectively within communities. **Local needs are thus obscured by professional-transnational bureaucracies and ideological agendas.** The hazard this creates may be pushing the feeble NGO ecosystems of poorer countries to embrace ideological agendas they wouldn't otherwise have, lest they remain overlooked and underfunded. Crowded out for a limited pot of money, pragmatic local groups may perish in turn.

³⁵ BUDGET - Welcome to SUMMA news! (n.d.). <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/budget/items/777723/en>

³⁶ Open society in Latin America and the Caribbean. (n.d.). <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/what-we-do/regions/latin-america-and-the-caribbean>

2. The multi-layered nature of public philanthropy:

As expected in the age of NGOs becoming key partners to supranational agendas—such as, close to home, Agenda2030, illegal migration, or the European Green Deal—the dataset reveals many of our NGOs, too, on the receiving end of multiple, oft-synchronized funding streams. Whether self-reported by the sector or produced by external watchdogs, alternative NGO transparency portals such as **NGO Report**³⁷, **Candid**³⁸ or **DevelopmentAid**³⁹—as well as the disclosures on NGO websites and reports—reveal many to have more European public donors beyond the EU itself, such as member-state aid agencies, EU regional governments, and mayoralities. Our dataset reveals Spain to play a major role, though often on par with countries like Sweden, Norway, Germany, and even the Czech Republic. To pick just three, Colombia’s *RedProDePaz* was funded by Germany, Guatemala’s *Comité del Altiplano* by the *Generalitat Valenciana*, and El Salvador’s *Asociación Colectiva de Mujeres para el Desarrollo Local* by the Basque Government. In a striking testament to the catalyzing potential of regions in decentralized countries like Spain devoting budgets to foreign aid, the Dominican Republic’s *Mujeres en Desarrollo* discloses funding partnerships with the governments of Andalucía, Galicia, Castilla-la-Mancha, and Madrid (city).

Beyond the evident convergence with USAID funding targets, the overlap with “philanthropic networks” is also striking, and the imbrication with the **Open Society Foundation’s** (OSF) vast footprint in the region bears special mention. A look at the self-reported database of OSF-funded NGOs⁴⁰ yields several that are simultaneously backed by the George Soros’ empire and the EU, including Paraguay’s *Memetic Media*, Colombia’s *Corporación Misión de Observación Electoral* and *Fundación Karisma*, the pan-regional *Comité por la Libre Expresión*, Brazil’s *Centro Feminista de Estudios e Assessoria*, Peru’s *Organización Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas y Amazónicas*, and *Caribbean Vulnerable Communities* (Jamaica-based). In this list of seven overlapping entities, a clear thematic bent stands out, pointing to the same likely bias in OSF’s overall list: **four out of the seven NGOs deal one way or another with media and information**, advancing various versions of “independent journalism”, “transparency”, or “digital rights”—a category that features less prominently in the EU list, but to which a special section is devoted towards the end of this report.

Finally, the role of **intermediary NGOs**, outsourced for coordination purposes even if not for actual execution, is worth noting. In several EU-funded projects this report analyzes, the aid flows through the Latin American regional offices of “middleman” entities, which often add another node of opaqueness to whether the selection of ultimate executioners is made by the EU or not. This is notably the case of **Hivos**, from the Netherlands, and Sweden’s **Daikonía**, to be addressed later where they appear. Another number of catalyst fora exist, within the Brussels bubble, where some of the NGOs in our dataset belong and admittedly coordinate part of their work. **CONCORD Europe**⁴¹ is often adduced as a microcosm of the platforming into which the NGO sector tends to converge and streamline its lobbying, advocacy, and

³⁷ Report, N. (2025, March 29). Home. NGO Report. <https://ngoreport.org/>

³⁸ Candid I Foundation Center and GuideStar are now Candid. (n.d.). Candid. <https://candid.org/>

³⁹ DevelopmentAid. (n.d.). Award — Fortaleciendo las capacidades de las mujeres leucos para erradicar la violencia hacia ellas, las niñas y los Femicidios, en el marco de la Iniciativa Spotlight en Honduras — for Honduras by EC, UN Women in Civil Society & NGOs, Gender, Human Rights sectors —. <https://www.developmentaid.org/>

⁴⁰ Open society in Latin America and the Caribbean. (n.d.). <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/what-we-do/regions/latin-america-and-the-caribbean>

⁴¹ Home - CONCORD. (2025, March 3). CONCORD. <https://concordeurope.org/>

other dealings with the institutions in which it relies for the funds it covets and the policies it seeks to influence. Yet it is unclear just how decisive its role can be in the selection of the NGOs this report focuses on. **CONCORD**, after all, federates an unwieldy mosaic of national NGO umbrellas from every member state and several global giants in development aid, claiming to speak for 2.600 NGOs in total. As the EU’s “main interlocutor” on development policy, its lobbying is frenetic and yields regular high-level meetings⁴², particularly around the seven-year budget negotiations for the EU’s various foreign aid programs. In 2023, it spent €1 million on lobbying, more than half of its €1.754.000 annual budget that famously combines a €1.150.000 operational grant from DG INTPA—the very department that disburses the aid to NGOs on behalf of which CONCORD lobbies—and donations from the Gates Foundation. CONCORD’s activities, including the AidWatch portal⁴³, certainly have their effect, as it relentlessly pressures the EU and its member states to keep their commitment of spending 0.7% of gross income on “development aid”, while shifting to a more intangible “rights-based approach” that upholds EU values everywhere. **Yet, CONCORD’s rapport with the small, ideological, left-radical NGOs analyzed herein—let alone a role in recommending them for grants—is uncertain at best.**

Similarly unclear, but in some ways more relevant, would be the role of groups like the **EU Human Rights & Democracy Network**, a Brussels-based network of 68 NGOs converging on working groups to produce “good practices” for NGOs and aid donors working in the space, with a solid sample of member groups active in Latin America. The **EU-Lat Advocacy Network Red de Incidencia**, similarly, coordinates the lobbying and advocacy of NGOs working in Mexico and Central America. Yet, again, the NGOs adhering to these groups remain mostly large and Europe-based, thus evading the prime focus of this study. Even though they may play a role in publicizing their network to EU aid donors, the role of neither organization lies in canalizing the aid nor in executing projects, and this paper mentions their work only in passing.

The ideological breakdown of radical-activist groups:

1. Intersectionality and the challenge of categorization:

Meanwhile, categorizing recipient NGOs into distinct ideological families or fields of action is made difficult by the interlocking of the causes they embrace—to the point where we begin with a category devoted to those neatly fitting into none. Borrowing the neo-Marxist shibboleth coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, no single cause can be tackled in a vacuum in the age of “intersectionality”⁴⁴, neither amidst expanding definitions of “human rights” and the rise of **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (DEI) as an englobing mantra for all minorities. This operational paradigm views socio-economic and cultural challenges of all kinds as enmeshed within one another, with unidimensional approaches unfit for tackling their common root. Beyond the textbook intersectionality of the “LGBTQ” movement, feminism and abortion tend to go hand-in-hand in our dataset, to name two—with their underlying connections, and with a gendered dimension increasingly embedded in racial and environmental NGOs, too. While translated in English as the less original “mainstreaming”, a Spanish term has made its way to

⁴² CONCORD Europe / lobbyfacts. (n.d.). <https://www.lobbyfacts.eu/datacard/concord-europe?rid=34478709670-34>

⁴³ 2024 Report - AidWatch reports. (2024, October 30). AidWatch Reports. <https://aidwatch.concordeurope.org/2024-report/>

⁴⁴ Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039https://www.jstor.org/stable/1229039>

many of the NGO missions studied herein and even to the odd EU project name—*transversalización*—meaning that the cause or policy in question (often gender, but spreading to the rest) ought to cut across every initiative implemented.

A chicken-and-egg quandary addressed throughout this paper, this begs the question of the EU’s role in fostering this conceptual and practical morass, this importation of a Western-sourced intersectional paradigm that lacks cultural depth in a conservative-leaning region. **Is the bloc’s selection of grantees and the purposing of projects molding the NGOs ecosystem into a worldview that it wouldn’t otherwise have adopted?**

Examples are found in Ecuador, where *Fundación Asociación Latinoamericana Para el Desarrollo Alternativo*, or ALDEA, exists to “build an inclusive, intercultural, equitable society”, with a focus on “human rights, gender, and interculturality” and even “pluriculturality”. Interwoven in its campaigns against femicide is its work for indigenous autonomy, both in Ecuador’s Autonomous Decentralized Governments (GAD per their Spanish acronym) and the indigenous “life territories” known as TICCA or *Territorios y Áreas Conservados por Pueblos Indígenas y Comunidades Locales*. Along with *Alianza Ceibo*, ALDEA partook in a €1 million project in 2023 entitled “*Frontepaz*: youths and women building territories and borders of peace”. Per ALDEA’s own website, *Frontepaz* “strengthens 16 women’s organizations and accompanies more than 300 indigenous and Afro-descending youths in promoting and revitalizing the social tissue in the Sucumíos and Esmeraldas provinces” of Ecuador. What seems like a dull local development endeavor, however, also seeks to “revalorize Afro-descending and Amazonian cultures to strengthen the participation of women and youths in promoting a culture of peace, gender equity, and social rights”. In Peru, the *Centro de Políticas y Derechos Humanos Peru Equidad* takes a similarly holistic approach that encompasses, per its website, “indigenous peoples, children and teens, the LGBTI community, workers, the disabled, and victims of corporate harm”. In 2017, along with the Open Society-funded *Organización de Mujeres Indígenas y Amazónicas del Perú*, they became the Peruvian partners to a €3.65 million global project on “making the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) work for indigenous peoples”.

As an intersectional category, “youth” poses problems of its own, too. Vaguely premised on helping “develop processes of growing autonomy and creative transformations in society”, Uruguay’s *El Abrojo Instituto de Educación* styles itself as a cooperative, or social, enterprise, devoted to the wellbeing of “children, teens, and youths”. It claims to foreground leisure, labor skills, and “aptitudes for life” with off-time outings, workshops, and a kindergarten in downtown Montevideo. Yet its colorful palette of programs includes advocating for “**sexual education in early childhood**” (universally defined as 0-8 years of age), which it defines as a “**human right**” trampled by “**adult-centrism and the patriarchy**”, to be tackled as part of a “**reflection on childhood sexuality**” that reckons the issue’s “**complexity as a historical, social, and cultural construct**”⁴⁵. *El Abrojo* also stands for a “**culture of careful drug consumption**” centered on the “rights of people” (consumers, one intuits). Its “alter-action” program in this latter area aims to “de-stigmatize” and “fight simplified views, prejudice, and disinformation” surrounding drugs “both legal and illegal”, and to develop “models of careful consumption”. Its method of “situationally” tackling drug use at festive gatherings is less than forthright about the downsides of narcotics and the upside of abandoning them. This is a far cry from other harm reduction NGOs in the

⁴⁵ EDUCACIÓN SEXUAL INTEGRAL en la PRIMERA INFANCIA - El Abrojo. (2025, February 19). El Abrojo. <https://www.elabrojo.org.uy/educacion-sexual-integral-primera-infancia/>

region such as Colombia's *Nuevos Rumbos*—funding radius of €0.46 million from the EU in our period—that effectively implement the so-called “communities that care” model⁴⁶.

From 2017 onwards, *El Abrojo* took a series of “capacity building” EU grants. €16.510 flowed in 2017 for a project on “entering the digital era”, underlining that the EU’s aid for digital modernization projects often overlooks the out-of-date ideological substance those up-to-date digital systems will eventually serve. In 2020, €21.400 went for “inclusion through art in Europe and Latin America”, and €10.239 that same year for “strengthening youth through the empowerment of partners”. Its work on sexual trafficking of minors—for which it partnered with fellow Uruguayan NGO *El Paso*⁴⁷ in 2020 to tap an unknown share of a €45.000 grant—sits awkwardly with its advocacy for sexual education for the under-8, part of a larger pattern of intersectional pollution. *El Abrojo* is far from the only EU-funded NGOs, as will be shown, to center its child welfare efforts around **Comprehensive Sex Education** (CSE), even as the consensus should seem to be, at the very least, keeping the two separate—when not opposing CSE under the very banner of children’s healthy development.

Along with three other Uruguayan NGOs, 2020 saw *El Abrojo* contract a €520.000 project under the vague title “more knowledge, more participation, more rights”, while another NGO consortium that included *El Abrojo* took €150.000 in 2019 for international volunteering exchanges. With *El Paso* again, it partook in a €396.000 project on “collective autonomies against gender violence” that led to a flurry of activity advertised on a dedicated website⁴⁸. It is not an uncommon conflation in our dataset for radical NGOs to invoke the mantle of combatting gender violence to advocate for the sexualization of children through early-childhood CSE. These NGOs often allege the lack of sexual education trainings in primary schools to lie unmistakably downstream from epidemics of adult-on-adult gender violence, even as they fail to provide evidence for that claim, and as they stray even from the international, evidence-based, technical guidelines provided on the matter by the OMS⁴⁹. In the case of *El Paso* and *El Abrojo*, much of their program lived up to the worthy fight against men-on-women abuse, exploitation, and even trafficking, but the framing of these “collective autonomies” often slid down the age spectrum. A gathering on “building sexual-affective bonds free of violence among teenagers”, part of this *El Paso-Abrojo* project⁵⁰, doubled down on CSE, with “children and teens” one of their strategy’s eight pillars. In 2024, along with Ecuador’s *Fundación Vase*⁵¹, *El Abrojo* was again graced with a €16.200 grant for a volunteering project.

Proderechos, in Uruguay too, extends the intersectional catchall even further. It stands for regularizing marihuana, decriminalizing abortion, and marriage equality. It loudly opposed Uruguay’s move to lower the age of penal responsibility to 16, and stands for “democratizing the media”. In 2017, along with the feminist *Asociación Civil Mujeres en el Horno*, it received €530.249 for a two-year project entitled

⁴⁶ Corporación Nuevos rumbos. (n.d.). <https://nuevosrumbos.org/newnr/post?id=9>

⁴⁷ ONG El Paso. (n.d.). ONG El Paso. <https://ongelpaso.org.uy/>

⁴⁸ Autonomías colectivas contra la violencia de género. – . . . (n.d.).

<https://www.autonomiascolectivascontralaviolenciadegenero.org.uy/>

⁴⁹ Orientaciones técnicas internacionales sobre educación en sexualidad. (n.d.).

<https://www.who.int/es/publications/m/item/9789231002595>

⁵⁰ Colectivas, A. (n.d.). ACTIVIDAD «VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO Y VIOLENCIA GENERACIONAL. LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE VÍNCULOS SEXOAFECTIVOS LIBRES DE VIOLENCIA EN LAS ADOLESCENCIAS» – Autonomías colectivas contra la violencia de género. <https://www.autonomiascolectivascontralaviolenciadegenero.org.uy/realizamos-en-las-pioneras-la-actividad-violencia-de-genero-y-violencia-generacional-la-construccion-de-vinculos-sexoafectivos-libres-de-violencia-en-las-adolescencias/>

⁵¹ Fundación Vase. (n.d.). <https://www.volunteervase.org>

“horizon of freedoms: expanding rights, deepening democracy” (in short, *Horizonte de Libertades*). Whether the defunction of both *Proderechos* and *Mujeres en el Horno* since is related to the project’s closing in 2021 or not, its other three executioners—*Ovejas Negras*, *Mizangas* and *+VIHdas*—remain alive and kicking, notably as coordinators of Uruguay’s *Marcha por la Diversidad*. This annual flagship pride march advocates “sexual diversity”, but the EU-funded **Horizon of Freedoms** project that fueled their organizers was even more conceptually muddled, stretching the intersectional mantle of rights discourse to “teenage prison inmates, the LGBTI+ community, HIV patients, and the Afro-descending”. Along with co-producing a set of bibliographies riddled with intersectional jargon⁵², the NGO consortium published a “collective mapping of Uruguayan NGOs⁵³” that likely informs the EU delegation in Montevideo to this day, a report on “trans corporalities in the penitentiary system⁵⁴”, and even a highly elaborated board game—*Trivia Diversa*⁵⁵—for educators and activists to “didactically approach human rights from an intersectional perspective”.

In 2019, to mark International Women’s Day (March 8) and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21), the project brought Angela Davis to Montevideo⁵⁶, on the occasion of her *Doctor Honoris Causa* degree awarded by *Universidad de la República*. With a long record of rooting for violence in the US and for human rights-abusing regimes abroad—particularly in Latin America—the Marxist professor and former member of the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) gave a rally speech at the Udelar esplanade⁵⁷ and a lecture at *Teatro Solís*⁵⁸ under the heading “without racism, more democracy”. Davis gave an interview stating that Uruguay—then run by President Tabaré Vázquez of the far-left *Frente Amplio*, a party back in power last year under President Yamandú Orsi—was the “progressive hope of Latin America⁵⁹”. *Horizonte de Libertades* featured its own project logo at these public events, meaning that the EU’s footprints in them went at least partly veiled.

Yet other instances of grantees using their stated mission as a fig leaf for murkier uses of EU money include *Fundación LLAVES*⁶⁰ in Honduras (*Llanto, Valor y Esfuerzo Asociación Civil*), which got an unknown share of a €296.208 pot to—on paper—strengthen protections for HIV patients, which was doubtless the group’s mission at its founding by suffering patients of the illness. Although fighting unconsented sterilization in Honduras and easing access to prenatal treatments for would-be mothers

⁵² *Materiales educativos*. (2021, June 29). *Horizonte De Libertades*. <https://horizontedelibertades309557471.wordpress.com/materiales-educativos/>

⁵³ *Mapeo colectivo de organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil*. (2021, June 29). *Horizonte De Libertades*. <https://horizontedelibertades309557471.wordpress.com/mapeo-colectivo/>

⁵⁴ *Entre el borrado y la afirmación. Corporalidades trans en el sistema penitenciario*. (2021, July 1). *Horizonte De Libertades*. <https://horizontedelibertades309557471.wordpress.com/entre-el-borrado-y-la-afirmacion/>

⁵⁵ *Trivia diversa*. (2021, June 29). *Horizonte De Libertades*. <https://horizontedelibertades309557471.wordpress.com/trivia-diversa/>

⁵⁶ Clarín, R., & Clarín, F. (2020, July 2). Angela Davis en Montevideo, un llamado a transformar las estructuras sociales para abolir el racismo. *Clarín*. https://www.clarin.com/cultura/fotogalerias-angela-davis-montevideo-llamado-transformar-estructuras-sociales-abolir-racismo_5_5i7v2eynx.html?srsltid=AfmBOorZjwNf4pMJ8oK3jiyrH_FkIYYmbLeSZeVqfq0ePwE3l3FdDhkB

⁵⁷ *Horizonte De Libertades*. (2019, November 28). *Angela Davis en la explanada de la Udelar, en Montevideo*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JKd1mhjp2E>

⁵⁸ *Horizonte De Libertades*. (2019, November 28). *Angela Davis en Uruguay - Conferencia en el Teatro Solís* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BUrTpkimP8>

⁵⁹ Felartigas, M. (n.d.). “Uruguay es la esperanza de América Latina.” <https://www.casagrandefa.com/2019/03/uruguay-es-la-esperanza-de-america-latina/>

⁶⁰ Llavés, O. (2024, April 24). *Metodología de trabajo con Hombres*. *organizacionllaves*. <https://www.organizacionllaves.org/>

with HIV features prominently in its activities, *LLAVES* also embraces a definition of “sexual and reproductive rights” that goes far beyond that, and has led it to be the Honduran partner of International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the local executor of “We Lead”, a global project on sexual and reproductive rights run by the Latin American office of the arch-progressive Hivos foundation and funded by the Dutch foreign ministry. As part of the EU-funded project on “promoting peace and a violence-free life for HIV positive women in Central America”, *LLAVES* published a “methodology for work with men⁶¹” that spoke, in reference to masculinity, about “cultural and social constructs through History that have assigned roles to men which they think are those of their gender”. HIV prevention is similarly the excuse for the aggressive “LGBT” advocacy of Ecuador’s *Corporación Kimirina*.

This interlocking of causes seems to heighten, lastly, in contexts of humanitarian crises, where progressive ideologies see all of their totems besieged at once through the same intersectional prism. Take Colombia’s peace process, and the accompanying rise of a “peace-industrial complex” of NGOs partly funded by the EU, which in 2016 supported the agreement with the *FARC* guerrilla. Negotiated with the far-left terror group by the administration of Juan Manuel Santos in Havana, Colombians would later vote down that draft in a referendum—only to see many of its components implemented nonetheless, beginning with the introduction of parliamentary quotas for formerly armed guerrillas claiming to have forsaken violence (several of these “dissident groups”, both from the *FARC* and the *ELN*, now operate in regions that receive vast multi-channel funding from the EU, including the Cauca Valley⁶²). *Corporación Sisma Mujer*⁶³, a feminist NGO at the center of a €1.87 million radius of EU funding, works to solidify the “gender component” to that peace agreement, among other goals. Yet systematically, every past case of gender violence it calls out had the Colombian state as its perpetrator, with no scrutiny of its terrorist adversaries engaging in similar—let alone worse—practices⁶⁴, however publicly averred those cases are, too⁶⁵. For a similar mission and with a similar bias, *Asociación Alianza Departamental de Organizaciones de Mujeres Tejedoras de Vida*, in Putumayo, cashed in €1.2 million in grants. These look not like feminist or even anti-hate outlets combatting alleged leniencies in trialing gender violence cases. Instead, their context-dependent mission becomes an asset to broader, left-radical, country-specific agendas using women as an excuse more than a guiding principle—such as one-sidedly delegitimizing the Colombian state’s conduct against *FARC* in omission of the violence it opposed.

⁶¹ Llaves, O. (2024, April 24). Metodología de trabajo con Hombres. *organizacionllaves*. <https://www.organizacionllaves.org/post/metodolog%C3%ADa-de-trabajo-con-hombres>

⁶² Del Valle, G. (n.d.). Valle del Cauca y Unión Europea fortalecen cooperación para el Tren de Cercanías, Bonos Verdes y SAF. Gobernación Del Valle. <https://www.valledelcauca.gov.co/publicaciones/85315/valle-del-cauca-y-union-europea-fortalecen-cooperacion-para-el-tren-de-cercanias/>

⁶³ Administrador. (2024, May 24). Inicio - Sisma. Sisma. <https://sismamujer.org/>

⁶⁴ Administrador. (2025, February 4). Comunicados - Sisma. Sisma. <https://sismamujer.org/comunicados-2/>

⁶⁵ Osorio, C., Osorio, C., & Osorio, C. (2023, July 14). La JEP acusa a exguerrilleros de las FARC que usaron la violencia sexual como arma de guerra. *El País América Colombia*. <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2023-07-14/la-jep-acusa-a-exguerrilleros-de-las-farc-que-usaron-la-violencia-sexual-como-arma-de-guerra.html>

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Uruguay] ASOCIACION CIVIL EL ABROJO INSTITUTO DE EDUCACION*	0.07
[Ecuador] FUNDACION ASOCIACION LATINOAMERICANA PARA EL DESARROLLO ALTERNATIVO ALDEA	1.00 ⁶⁶
[Uruguay] PRODERECHOS	0.53 ⁶⁷
[Honduras] ASOCIACION JOVENES PARA HONDURAS*YOUTH FOR HONDURAS	0.04
[Peru] CENTRO DE POLITICAS Y DERECHOS HUMANOS-PERU EQUIDAD	6.65 ⁶⁸
[Honduras] ORGANIZACION NO GUBERNAMENTAL LLANTO, VALOR Y ESFUERZO ASOCIACION CIVIL (LLAVES)	0.3 ⁶⁹

2. The “LGBTQ” lobby:

Some of the region’s states may be understandably at pains to provide the same succor against sex and hate crimes as in Europe, and a portion of EU finding goes to NGOs working to remedy these lacunae. Such would be the case, understandably, of countries beset by bigotry and high levels of Sexually Transmittable Diseases (STDs), where patients may at times be discriminated even by the healthcare system. That seems to be Jamaica’s case, with the EU giving €0.73 million to **Jamaica AIDS Support for Life**, €0.52 million to **Caribbean Vulnerable Communities**, and €0.15 million to **Eve for Life**, the latter of whom assists HIV patients and female victims of gender violence. And yet, in most countries, the Commission does impress its set of ideological biases inherent in first-world notions of “diversity”, in turn molding the NGO ecosystem under the incentives its monies offer. Monies earmarked for “LGBTQ” advocacy, thus, are often diverted from aiding HIV patients, punishing, and preventing homophobic violence to overt pride displays, Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE), or “trans rights”. Concepts like “LGBT citizenship”, “lesbophobia”, and the perilous rise of “religious fundamentalism” in the region become standard language among these NGOs the EU funds.

The Andean region features prominently here, notably through the two iterations of “*Adelante con la Diversidad*” (onwards with diversity), a four-country project the EU backs “financially and strategically”

⁶⁶ The FTS discloses a 2023 grant of €1 million for “Frontepaz” to ALDEA and Alianza Ceibo, the “repartition” amongst them of which remains undisclosed to this day.

⁶⁷ The FTS discloses a 2017 grant of €530.249 for “Horizonte de Libertades” to Proderechos and Mujeres en el Horno, the “repartition” amongst them of which remains undisclosed to this day.

⁶⁸ The FTS discloses three grants, in 2017, 2020, and 2022, to NGO consortiums that included *Perú Equidad*, in all of which the “repartition” remains undisclosed: €3.65 million in 2017 for “making the SDGs work for indigenous peoples”, €1 million for “multilateral commitments between businesses and community agents towards strengthening the framework of rights, institutionality, and sustainability” in two areas, and €2 million for “articulation towards the participatory building of Peru”, respectively.

⁶⁹ Even though LLAVES was the lone recipient of a single €296.208 grant in 2015, its share in it—and the NGO’s overall contracted amount, therefore—appeared as €0.

through its partnership with **Hivos Latin America**, the regional branch of the Dutch NGO⁷⁰. Phase one of the program doled out €800.000 to foster “change and innovation for the exercise of full LGBTI rights”, whereas phase two doled out €2 million in three tranches—€1.3 million, then €50.794, then €648.977—under the headline “social, political, and legal forces for the effective protection of the LGBT collective’s rights and those of its defenders in the Andean region”. Self-styled as “one of the very few International NGOs (INGOs) with a distinctly humanist ethos”, **Hivos Latin America** justifies the two-phase program thusly on its website:

*The region currently experiences the rise of social actors that compete for power, both formal and symbolic. Among them, **religious-fundamentalist leaderships** have a discourse that extols religious values and promotes the rejection of sexual diversity and gender equality. This threatens the advances made in human rights, and puts at even greater risk of exclusion LGBTI people, who face violence and murder for their gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and sexual characteristics.*

In Peru, the EU’s partners of choice for “*Adelante con la Diversidad*” were **Instituto de Estudios en Salud, Sexualidad y Desarrollo Humano** (IESSDEH) and **Promsex Asociación** (the latter, in addition, got a pro-abortion grant alluded to later). In the title to a 2020-2023 report of its observatory on “TLGBI human rights”⁷¹—the project’s exact dates suggesting EU funding was purposefully earmarked for it—IESSDEH spoke of Covid-19 as having had its impact in a “lesbophobic, capitalist, and colonial context”. The acronym used, TLGBI, switches the more usual “LGBT” to foreground the trans movement ahead of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual ones. In its own description of the project, Hivos seeks to “stimulate the co-creation of innovative narratives, with a focus on human rights, that will be more effective in halting the anti-rights discourse, with the active involvement of key, non-traditional social actors”.

In Ecuador, the EU’s partners in “*Adelante con la Diversidad*” were **Corporación Kirimina** and **Sendas**, both flexibly straddling the boundary between HIV prevention and bolder “LGBTQ” advocacy. The former deploys a formidable array of services for Ecuadorean women, particularly teenagers, to prevent unwanted pregnancies and HIV, including a phone app and an IA-powered digital guide. But it also seizes on the scourge of under-18 motherhood to push for “training in gender”, advocacy for “sexual and reproductive rights”, and Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE). Bolivia’s partner to both of the project’s phases, **Asociación Civil de Desarrollo Social y Promoción Cultural Libertad**, o ADESPROC, had already been the lone beneficiary of €300.000 for a 2016-2018 project entitled: “more rights, less impunity: LGBT people with full citizenship”. On the whole, as part of that project, ADESPROC repeatedly tapped into a pot of money worth €2 million—in addition to the €300.000 that went to it alone.

⁷⁰ America Latina. (2021, July 23). *Proyecto Adelante con la Diversidad II*. <https://america-latina.hivos.org/program/proyecto-adelante-con-la-diversidad-ii/>

⁷¹ Camacho García, G., Forno, M., León Morris, F., Silva Santisteban, A., & David Pérez, Á. (2024). Informe Anual del Observatorio de Derechos TLGBI 2020-2023. In *Instituto De Estudios En Salud, Sexualidad Y Desarrollo Humano (IESSDEH)*. Centro de Investigación Interdisciplinaria en Sexualidad, Sida y Sociedad – CIISSS/UPCH, Proyecto Unicxs – Personas Trans por Inclusión Social, Observatorio de Derechos Humanos TLGBI. Retrieved March 25, 2025, from https://ciiiss.cayetano.edu.pe/usuario/ftp/Informe_2020-2023.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0Vd5k4X7NjG3bWtNYx8CKsL5qFS2R4m_Q4K9ldFhD9AVXKqG2cThfnGxg

In 2024, Bolivia kept attracting more than its share of the EU’s “LGBT”-related aid: three NGOs in the space—**ADESPROC**⁷², **Colectivo Rebeldía**⁷³ and **ONG Igual**—were contracted for a three-year, “fundamental rights and freedoms” project of €720.000, the title of which remains undisclosed as of this writing but suggests a step beyond “*Adelante con la Diversidad*”. The role of **Hivos** and **Daikona**, its partner from Sweden, in guiding and tutoring the Andean region’s “LGBTQ” and gender activists—not least in soliciting EU funds, one presumes—is clear in **Colectivo Rebeldía**’s self-marketed narrative. The Bolivian NGO’s own website even names two officials—a Hivos employee, Janny van Esch, and a Dutch diplomat, Ana Rochkowski—as having been instrumental in expanding **Colectivo Rebeldía**’s reach upon its very founding in 1995. These days, the group styles itself “a reference point in popular and intersectional feminisms”, its work filtered through three prisms: (1) intergenerational and intercultural feminism, (2) de-patriarchization and decolonization and (3) “no climate justice without gender justice”.

Beyond the Andes, in Honduras and El Salvador, the year 2020 saw €1.5 million doled out for a 2021-2024 project aimed at “prevention and restitution of rights, prohibition of torture and mistreatment of women, youth, and the LGBT community”. The former country’s share went partly to **Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGTBI Somos CDC**⁷⁴, and the rest to a feminist NGO, **Centro de Estudios de la Mujer**⁷⁵, connoting a tight interconnection between the “LGBT” and feminist causes. The former’s ambitious network of funders—including USAID, Germany, and the UK’s Christian Aid, besides the EU—spurs, among other bold initiatives, polling on self-reported violence or discrimination amongst “LGBT” Hondurans. But it also enables a whole-of-society approach far beyond preventing those: it liaises with Honduras’ National Committee for Telecommunications (*Conatel*) for airtime to its cause, among others, and seeks to ease the Central American “migrant route” through detailed maps of shelters. Additionally, a whopping €3.5 million ReCIPE grant in 2013 for a two-year project had, as its Salvadorean recipient, the **Asociación Centro de Estudios de la Diversidad Sexual y Genérica**⁷⁶. Per its initials, the Oxfam-run, EU-co-funded ReCIPE project is about “Recentring the Civic Internet through Partner Engagement”, seeking to foster “digital rights” in ten countries. The grant is a testament that, through seemingly neutral operational support such as enabling NGOs to operate digitally, the EU ends up funding their ideological substance, too—even when the purpose stated doesn’t reflect that. **Somos CDC** returned to the EU’s grantee pool in Honduras in 2024, while **Asociación Lambda**⁷⁷, an NGO in the same space, joined the list from nearby Guatemala.

In Brazil, €518.909 went to a 2015-2018 project purposed on “combatting discrimination and alleviating situations of poverty among LGBT people”, shared between Rio de Janeiro’s trans association (**Associação dos Transgeneros do Rio de Janeiro**) and the **Grupo Arco Iris de Conscientização Homossexual** (also self-billed as promoting “LGBT citizenship”). Besides shedding light on Brazil’s high rates of transphobic violence, the former sued the government over changes last year to the civil law

⁷² ADESPROC LIBERTAD GLBT. (n.d.). <https://adesproc.org/>

⁷³ Colectivo Rebeldía. <https://colectivorebeldia.com/>

⁷⁴ SOMOS CDC. (2024, September 26). Inicio | SOMOS CDC. <https://somoscdc.hn/>

⁷⁵ CEM-H. (n.d.). <https://cemh.org.hn/>

⁷⁶ AMATE El Salvador | San Salvador. (n.d.). Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/amateelsalvador/?locale=es_LA

⁷⁷ Asociación LAMBDA. <https://www.asociacion-lambda.org/>

registry, billing them unconstitutional, that required a “sex” and “social name” for individuals⁷⁸. It also ran a program promoting trans representation in Brazilian elections⁷⁹.

The year 2024 has seen a number of new beneficiaries come into play, not least the regional branch of the worldwide **International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association**⁸⁰ (ILGA-LAC) for a three-year project on promoting “LGBT rights” in Central America to the tune of €3 million in two installments.

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Brazil] ASSOCIACAO DOS TRANSGENEROS DO RIO DE JANEIRO*	0.52
[Brazil] GRUPO ARCO IRIS DE CONSCIENTIZACAO HOMOSSEXUAL*GRUPO ARCO IRIS DE CIDADANIA LGBT	0.52
[El Salvador] ASOCIACION CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE LA DIVERSIDAD SEXUAL Y GENERICA	3.50
[Ecuador] CORPORACION KIMIRINA	0.80
[Honduras] CENTRO PARA EL DESARROLLO Y LA COOPERACION LGTBI SOMOS CDC	1.50
[Bolivia] ASOCIACION CIVIL DE DESARROLLO SOCIAL Y PROMOCION CULTURAL LIBERTAD ADESPROC LIBERTAD	2.30
[Panama] GRUPO GENESIS PANAMA POSITIVO (GGP+)	0.01
[Peru] INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS EN SALUD SEXUALIDAD Y DESARROLLO HUMANO	0.80
[Peru] ONG CENTRO DE PROMOCION Y DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS- PROMSEX ASOCIACION	0.80
[Peru] ONG CENTRO DE PROMOCION Y DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS	1.32
[Jamaica] EQUALITY FOR ALL FOUNDATION JAMAICA LIMITED	0.47
[Argentina] ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE LESBIANAS, GAYS, BISEXUALES, TRANSE E INTERSEX PARA AMERICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE (ILGALAC) ASOCIACION CIVIL	3

3. Feminism:

The sample of grantees embracing “feminist” labels and self-designations displays a clear bias towards the movement’s latter waves—provided we can still speak of a cohesive “movement” amidst its seemingly irreconcilable contradictions in Europe, which in our case appear intactly exported. This is doubly jarring for a region—Latin America—where feminism lacks the cultural depth, when understood as a radical ideology, that it enjoys in Europe and North America, and where a more traditional focus on formal equality of rights between the sexes would have a larger role to play than in more developed

⁷⁸ *Alteração Registro Civil*. (2018, November 15). Associação Nacional De Travestis E Transexuais. <https://antrabrazil.org/alteracao-registro-civil/>

⁷⁹ *Candidaturas*. (2020, September 24). Associação Nacional De Travestis E Transexuais. <https://antrabrazil.org/candidaturas/>

⁸⁰ ILGA LAC. <https://www.ilgalac.org/en/>

countries performing better on that measure. Having long pivoted to equality of outcomes—when not to a full-fronted cultural war on forms of patriarchy it understands as encompassing heteronormativity, borders, and capitalism itself—this EU-funded feminism can be hardly said to advocate on behalf of women. In our dataset, it appears instead polluted with intersectional categories, spilling into abortion, the “LGBT” cause, and—naturally and most contradictorily, as in Europe—the trans movement.

The space, furthermore, is even clearer proof of ideological steering, by the EU, of women-led organizations that previously drew on feminist discourses unaltered by the global culture wars. The bloc seems to either select feminist NGOs that accord to its hyper-progressive, European standards of female emancipation, or those pre-existing, traditionally feminist NGOs likely become radicalized and aligned with the European norm by EU monies. NGOs that would be limited to preventing sexual and gender abuse or promoting workplace equality—such as the rare case of Chile’s *Fundación Chilemujeres*—often end up resorting to more radical forms of feminism, as seen in their eventual embrace, in service of particular EU projects sometime along the data series, of the trans cause, abortion rights and the wider paradigm of intersectionality—an ideological anomaly that bears the EU’s footprints. On the EU’s side, a large majority of its project titles are written in feminized language—or even using “x” as a non-binary gender marker.

Brazil stands out in this category. The *Centro Feminista 8 de Março Associação*⁸¹ was the lone recipient of two grants that used environmental concerns as a subterfuge for hard-core feminism. In 2016, the first and largest one of €986.706 went to the “women redesigning life” project, subtitled: “civil society organizations strengthened to promote the overcoming of poverty through accessing public policies and social technologies in semi-arid Brazil”. The second, in 2021, amounted to €499.000 for “women constructing, systematizing, and disseminating socio-environmental solutions, solidary and innovative, to reach Agenda2030’s goals and implement conventions on biological diversity and combating desertification”. Then comes *SOS Corpo (Instituto Feminista para a Democracia Associação)*⁸², which puts together an annual trans visibility day in Rio. Along with the Open Society-funded *Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria*, *SOS Corpo* took €1.3 million for a project on “strengthening the network: articulating Brazilian women”, and another unknown share of a whopping €5.416.770 pot for a “cooperation framework between the EU and MERCOSUR’s feminist articulation”. Another unknown amount, part of a €998.000 grant, ended up in *SOS Corpo*’s coffers for a project entitled “black striving women blazing trails, building rights”.

Central America and the Andes closely follow Brazil in progressive concern for the plight of women, just as they do for “LGBT” and abortion. Under the pretext of palliating a Covid-19 spike in gender violence, small NGOs in El Salvador and Honduras were oiled with large sums. In the former, *Asociación Colectiva de Mujeres para el Desarrollo Local* (ACMDL), or *La Colectiva Feminista*, emerged as a go-to EU partner in this space, just as it became one of the loudest NGOs in the lawsuit against the Salvadoran state at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHRs) for allegedly denying abortion rights to “Beatriz” in 2023. ACMDL became the likely only recipient of a series of grants: €241.532 in 2014 for the “integral protection of Salvadorean human rights defenders and social fighters”, €500.000 in 2018 for the “inclusion of youths and women in citizen impact in and oversight of the implementation of the *El Salvador Seguro* plan”, €499.797 in 2020 for “strengthening Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to improve democratic governance and policy impact for an efficient response to vulnerable groups post-Covid,

⁸¹ Centro Feminista 8 de Março. (n.d.). Centro Feminista 8 De Março. <https://centrofeminista.com/>

⁸² SOS corpo. (n.d.). SOS Corpo. <https://soscorpo.org/>

particularly youth and women”, the Salvadorean share of a €1.5 million project with Honduras to “foster civil society-based governance to prevent, retribute rights and ban torture and mistreatment towards women, youths and LGBT population”, and finally, another million in 2022 for a project titled “alive and empowered: fighting for our rights in El Salvador”.

In next-door Honduras, the *Centro de Derechos de Mujeres* (CDM) and the *Centro de Estudios de la Mujer* (CEM-H) appear as the EU’s point feminist NGOs. In 2018, the latter got €415.000 along with the *Asociación de Mujeres Defensoras de la Vida* (AMDV)—a confusing name for a pro-abortion group—for a project on feminist leadership development within the country’s Lenca indigenous community. Intersecting feminist and indigenist advocacy is not rare in our database, par for the course within an intersectionality paradigm, and a likely channel to effective social impact whenever the EU assists indigenous victims of gender violence in their recourse to justice beyond their communities. Yet in cases like these, where the EU’s money flowed under the umbrella of UN’s Spotlight Initiative against gender violence, one wonders which of the two imperatives prevailed. For all the feminist NGOs’ talk of the patriarchy being a white, colonialist imposition on the continent, indigenous communities are far from guilt-free in endemic gender violence, and the EU’s bet seems to include funding partnerships between country-wide feminist outlets and the tribal groups and authorities whose record in stemming the scourge within their communities is paltry at best, such as ONIL and MUPIL among the Lenca community in the EU’s program with CEM-H and AMDV (the Lencas, incidentally, are steeped in the timber industry, and a key stakeholder in the EU’s Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with Honduras to combat illegal logging).

In 2020, CEM-H became part of the aforementioned €1.5 million grant, shared in Honduras with *Somos CDC*, to “foster civil society-based governance to prevent, retribute rights and ban torture and mistreatment of women, youths and LGBT”. CEM-H and CDM were the partners, along with Honduras’ NGO umbrella (*Asociación de Organismos No Gubernamentales*) to a €550.000 grant to “defend human rights in times of Covid-19”. In 2021, fully €1 million went to the CDM and the *Asociación Coordinadora de Instituciones Privadas por los Niños, Niñas y sus Derechos* for a project titled “weaving networks: kids, teens, youths, and women articulating actions for the defense of their human rights”. In Colombia, three NGOs stand out—*Corporación Sisma Mujer*—with a funding radius totalling nearly €2 million—followed by *Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica* (CIASE) and *Fondo de Acción Urgente América Latina* (FAUAL)—and five in Bolivia—*Coordinadora de la Mujer* (CdM), *Centro de Promoción de la Mujer Gregoria Apaza* (CPMGA), *Asociación Colectivo Rebeldía* (ACR), and the first two’s respective associations. *Asociación Coordinadora de la Mujer* (ACdM) leads Bolivia’s pack with 1.39 million over the period, followed by far—0.11 million—by CPMGA.

Three of these feminist NGOs were returnee beneficiaries in 2024, for various projects: Peru’s *Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán*, Bolivia’s *Centro de Promoción de la Mujer Gregoria Apaza*, and Colombia’s *Corporación Sisma Mujer*. The latter has again had a fertile year, with €1.5 million of EU monies going in two installments to fund its partnership with *Christian Aid Ireland*⁸³, centered on delivering “innovations through feminist, intersectional justice”.

⁸³ Christian Aid Ireland. (n.d.). <https://www.christianaid.ie/>

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Brazil] CENTRO FEMINISTA 8 DE MARCO ASSOCIACAO*CF8	1.49
[Brazil] CENTRO FEMINISTA DE ESTUDOS E ASSESSORIA (CFEA)	2.30 ⁸⁴
[El Salvador] ASOCIACION COLECTIVA DE MUJERES PARA EL DESARROLLO LOCAL*COLECTIVA FEMINISTA	1.00
[Honduras] CENTRO DE DERECHOS DE MUJERES*WOMEN S RIHGT CENTRE	1.00
[Honduras] CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE LA MUJER- HONDURAS (CEM-H)	0.42
[Bolivia] ASOCIACION COORDINADORA DE LA MUJER	1.39
[Bolivia] CENTRO DE PROMOCION DE LA MUJER GREGORIA APAZA	0.15
[Bolivia] ASOCIACION COLECTIVO REBELDIA	0.80 ⁸⁵
[Bolivia] CENTRO DE PROMOCION DE LA MUJER GREGORIA APAZA ASOCIACION*CPMGA	1.50 ⁸⁶
[Bolivia] COORDINADORA DE LA MUJER*	1.00 ⁸⁷
[Chile] CENTRO REGIONAL DE DDHH Y JUSTICIA DE GENERO CORPORACION*CORPORACION HUMANAS	1.58 ⁸⁸
[Chile] FUNDACION CHILEMUJERES OCHILEMUJERES O CHILE MUJERES	0.65 ⁸⁹
[Colombia] CORPORACION DE INVESTIGACION Y ACCION SOCIAL Y ECONOMICA	0.47 ⁹⁰
[Colombia] SISMA MUJER CORPORACION	2.38 ⁹¹
[Dominican Republic] CENTRO DE INVESTIGACION PARA LA ACCION FEMENINA CIPAF INC	2.19 ⁹²
[Peru] CENTRO DE LA MUJER PERUANA FLORA TRISTAN ASOCIACION*	0.02

⁸⁴ CFEA featured as having received individually less than €10,000—thus a €0 disclosure—even as it shared a €1 million grant with three other NGOs in 2016 to “extend the relevance, recognition, and impact of NGOs” in 2016, and a €1.3 million grant with SOS Corpo in 2018 to “articulate Brazilian women”.

⁸⁵ *Rebeldía* fell under the €10,000 threshold of disclosure but was the Bolivian partner to “*Adelante con la Diversidad*”, a €800,000 Andean project encompassing four countries for which its individual share went undisclosed.

⁸⁶ The association linked to Bolivia’s *Centro de Promoción de la Mujer Gregoria Apaza* fell under the radar, too, but it was one of only two Bolivian NGOs to share a €1.5 million pot to promote “fiscal justice with a gender focus” in 2016.

⁸⁷ The association linked to *Coordinadora de la Mujer* received an undisclosed amount of a €1 million grant for “strengthening parity democracy in Bolivian political parties” of which it was the only beneficiary, meaning its lone receipt of it went mostly under the radar.

⁸⁸ *Corporación Humanas* got an undisclosed amounts of a €1,012,001 feminist grant in 2018, and of a €570,000 in 2021 for its involvement in Chile’s constitutional convention.

⁸⁹ *ChileMujeres* received two solitary grants in 2017 for “gender equality in the workplace”, of €417,852 and €231,348, even though its lone receipt of them went undisclosed in the project.

⁹⁰ CISE was the lone beneficiary of a €472,488 loan for a “land restitution project” for which its share (the total of it) went undisclosed.

⁹¹ *Sisma Mujer* featured under two different names, splitting its figures, but overall it got €2,380,199 in four grants between 2017 and 2022, mostly for feminist projects as part of Colombia’s peace process.

⁹² CIPAF partook in grants worth €2,191,500, though its share in them remains undisclosed.

[Peru] CENTRO DE LA MUJER PERUANA FLORA TRISTAN (CMPFT)	8.45 ⁹³
[Brazil] SOS CORPO- INSTITUTO FEMINISTA PARA A DEMOCRACIA ASSOCIACAO*	1.30

4. Sexual and reproductive rights:

Though an intersectional concern with abortion rights permeates the categories above, EU funds over our period also went to eight NGOs exclusively focused on promoting “sexual” and “reproductive rights” or “family planning”. In very few cases did this merely entail advocating or even informing about contraception. Advocacy and lobbying for the right to terminate a pregnancy, instead, is a common denominator across these groups. Though falling short of the Planned Parenthood model of operating private abortion clinics, several of them—like Mexico’s **GIRE** or Peru’s **Promsex**—are partners of the US-based global giant.

With a radius of €1.32 million in funding in Peru, **PromSex**, or *Centro de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos*, is also that country’s largest recipient, and the largest in this group of pro-abortion NGOs. While **PromSex** remains an advocate for fully depenalizing abortion in cases of nonconsensual sex, it has been rocked by a different kind of sexual scandals—within its own ranks, and leading to a scrappy row of slanders on Peru’s Catholic press⁹⁴. In 2018, Jaris Mujica, a **PromSex** researcher and university lecturer, was accused by students of sexual improprieties⁹⁵. In August 2019, **PromSex** announced the firing of its then-President Jerónimo Molina, a famed Peruvian journalist and documentary filmmaker, upon a lengthy investigation into allegations of sexual abuse towards a female journalist from Costa Rica while shooting a production⁹⁶.

Then comes a €1.25 million funding radius for Venezuela’s **CEDESEX** or *Fundación Centro de Estudios Sobre Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos*. Mexico’s **Grupo de Información sobre Reproducción Elegida** (GIRE), for its part, got €0.5 million. Finally, there’s Uruguay’s **Asociación Civil Mujeres en el Horno**, with “in the oven” a phrase recalling the difficulty of carrying out an abortion in Argentina and Uruguay in the 1990s, before pro-choice legislation made its way. Granted €530.249 by the EU, **Mujeres en el Horno** styles itself, to this day, as a “collective of diverse, feminist and abortion-practicing women” (*aborteras*, the Spanish term, means squarely the practice of abortion and not the advocacy for the right to do so). From 2014 to 2021, as part of the aforementioned Uruguayan mega-project **Horizonte de Libertades**⁹⁷ (“*ampliar derechos, profundizar democracia*”), **Mujeres en el Horno** famously ran a “safe abortion lifeline” (“*línea aborto información segura*”). The program, which took calls and offered guidance to women allegedly already decided on having an abortion, launched in 2014, two years after Uruguay legislated its current abortion law, and was gradually wound down from 2020 onwards, until being dissolved in 2021. The end date is eerily coincidental with the lapse in EU money to the project, after which **Mujeres en el Horno** claimed to be “undergoing a process of evolution, reorganization and internal training”. Though its final assessment of it seems to have been withdrawn, **Mujeres en el Horno** took as its measure of success the growing number of calls it received year-on-year, divorced from what

⁹³ CMPFT partook in four grants of a whopping €7.930.770 before 2024 where its share remains undisclosed, one of it being a Mercosur-wide project of €5.4 million, and was back for another one worth €0.52 million last year.

⁹⁴ Prensa, A. (2023, August 19). *Promsex - Últimas noticias*. ACI Prensa. <https://www.aciprensa.com/tags/2865/promsex>

⁹⁵ Prensa, A. (2023, August 19). *Ex directivo de ONG pro aborto y profesor de la PUCP es acusado de violación en Perú*. ACI Prensa. <https://www.aciprensa.com/noticias/71680/ex-directivo-de-ong-pro-aborto-y-profesor-de-la-pucp-es-acusado-de-violacion-en-peru>

⁹⁶ Apolaya, J. (2019, August 12). *COMUNICADO*. Promsex. <https://promsex.org/comunicado-de-prensa-09-08-19/>

⁹⁷ *Horizonte de Libertades*. (n.d.). Horizonte De Libertades. <https://horizontedelibertades309557471.wordpress.com/>

underlying wish to end pregnancies there may have been in Uruguay. The model of a safeline has since been implemented in ever more countries, from Peru to Venezuela.

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Mexico] GRUPO DE INFORMACION DE REPRODUCCION ELEGIDA	0.50
[Venezuela] ASOCIACION LARENSE DE PLANIFICACION FAMILIAR*ALAPLAF	0.44
[Venezuela] FUNDACION CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS SOBREDERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS (CEDESEX)	1.25
[Uruguay] ASOCIACION CIVIL MUJERES EN EL HORNO	0.53
[Bolivia] CENTRO DE INVESTIGACION, EDUCACION Y SERVICIOS	0.90
[Dominican Republic] ASOCIACION DOMINICANA PRO BIENESTAR DE LA FAMILIA INC	0.66
[Peru] ONG CENTRO DE PROMOCION Y DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS (PROMSEX)	0.13
[Peru] INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS EN SALUD SEXUALIDAD Y DESARROLLO HUMANO*INSTITUTE OF STUDIES IN HEALTH SEXUALITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	0.8
[Peru] PROMSEX ASOCIACION*	0.80

5. Indigenism and racialism

The EU funds several Indigenous Political Organizations (IPOs or *Organizaciones Políticas Indígenas* in Spanish) that often liaise with the states—at times several of them—in which these aboriginal tribes live. In our dataset these include, to name just two, the **Parliament of Guatemala’s Xinka people**, which tapped into a €500.000 fund unlocked in 2019 to foster that indigenous group’s “inclusive development”⁹⁸, or the women’s indigenous arm of the **Honduran Miskitas**⁹⁹, which in 2018 tapped into two larger grants, together worth around €2 million. The NGOs funded are at times genuinely concerned with assimilating indigenous communities into the modern nations in which they dwell—such as through financial and banking inclusion, in the case of Paraguay’s *Pro Comunidades Indígenas*—yet more often they embrace an identitarian agenda that risks stoking resentment and separation. With the EU’s backing, these latter opportunities are often seized by radical NGOs channeling local realities through the Western prism of racial and identity politics, to the exclusion of groups serving indigenous interests on their own terms. This slanted approach by the EU to the indigenist ecosystem often includes fitting the paternalizing mold of the “noble savage” into the paradigm of wokeism.

Indigenous groups enjoy varying degrees of autonomy to conduct their own affairs across the region, under settlements that often come under scrutiny amidst the challenge of managing large private investments. The EU’s grantee pool often invokes these “autonomous political agendas”, even as the bloc sometimes sides resolutely against “land rights” when they imply the ability to exploit natural

⁹⁸ *Mi Pueblo Xinka Tiene Voz – Casa de Europa*. (n.d.). <https://casadeeuropa.com/proyectos/mi-pueblo-xinka/>

⁹⁹ *Organización de Mujeres Indígenas Miskita de Brus Laguna I Brus Laguna*. (n.d.). Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/people/Organizaci%C3%B3n-de-Mujeres-Ind%C3%ADgenas-Miskita-de-Brus-Laguna/61550924185810/#>

resources. Peru's *Central Asháninka del Río Ene* (CARE) pursues one such agenda, *Agenda Política Kametsa Asaike*, seeking "economic autonomy and self-sufficiency", such as through agricultural cooperatives and "strengthening indigenous land rights". Yet CARE also provides for its self-defense through its *Comités de Autodefensa y Desarrollo*, promotes "intercultural health" (more on that below), and education in "indigenous languages and ancestral cultures" at the exclusion of real-world skills for the job market. Along with the environmentalist NGO *Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales* (DARs), CARE was given €382.000 in 2020 to "uphold environmental human rights and protect their indigenous defenders against large infrastructure projects, extractive activities, and illegal activities". While illegal mining may run rife at the detriment of habitats, the project clearly opposes non-illegal activities that the Peruvian state has allowed, seemingly siding with a definition of "indigenous rights" that is imposed from Europe on a sovereign state.

While these NGOs converge on upholding and preserving ancestral cultures, EU money seems to steamroll hyper-progressive agendas unto them, including abortion under the pretext of taming the effects of abuse and the unwanted children it brings. Another indigenist excess concerns "popular, traditional, indigenous, or folk medicine" disguised as "intercultural health", rooted in animist religious practices. At times clinically untested, these methods, treatments, and remedies seem to complement the healthcare systems of states in low-density areas, but in reality they're based on premises that are often irreconcilable. This is the case of Brazil's *Centro Nordestino de Medicina Popular* (CNMP), which in 2014 was the lone recipient of €492.611 for a project in the gypsum-rich Sertão do Araripe, in the northeastern state of Pernambuco, on "doula females"—in reference to the women without obstetric training giving guidance and support during labor—"articulating lives to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality" (even in a non-indigenous context, this undermining of medicine reappears in Mexico, where the *Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdova A.C.* ran a workshop titled "*Luz en el Camino*" based on Reiki, an alternative practice based on energy transfer). CNMP rationalizes popular medicine with its defense of "food security", against "food waste", for "family farming", the fight against the "venom" of "agro-toxic products", and a dose of feminism. It invokes "the importance of medicinal plants in the treatment, cure, and prevention of diseases". It claims these medicinal plants are "an instrument not only for curing diseases, but also for rescuing knowledge about health and a means of empowering people". CNMP advises groups on their planting and consumption, and runs two gardens. Beyond asking whether the EU's money wouldn't be better invested in strengthening the Brazilian healthcare system in that region, ancestral practices seem pursued not in obedience of a health imperative, but even at the risk of employing unsafe, untested or altogether ineffective treatments.

The EU seems to operate under a similarly irrational spell in its dealings with indigenist NGOs purporting to speak for so-called "peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact", or **PIACIs** per its Spanish acronym (*Pueblos Indígenas en Aislamiento y Contacto Inicial*). These NGOs often seek to prolong that state of severance from society, while other times advising moderate forms of rapprochement that often result in unspeakable violence. The challenge is captured in the story of Alejandro Labaka, a Basque Capuchin missionary who moved to Ecuador in 1954. Ministering amongst the Huarani, Labaka sought come into contact with the isolated Tagaeri people deeper into the Amazon. Labaka was immediately killed with 20 spear strikes, leaving 80 scars, before his Colombian female friend followed suit, as soon as the tribe's men arrived. An NGO named after him keeps alive the myth that he died a martyr to the indigenous cause, seeking to warn his unwitting murderers of the perils of oil companies, and not from a reckless lapse in judgement by approaching a lawless people. Revealingly, *Fundación Alejandro Labaka* in 2017 took an unknown part of a €246.000 pot of EU money to help "protect indigenous

peoples in voluntary isolation and sensitize Ecuadorean society”. This underlies the EU’s enthralling by the “noble savage” ideal: at times beguiled by their ancestral lifestyles and seeking to keep them separate, at others daring reckless attempts at bridging the civilizational gap. The EU should instead partner with states seeking to safely engage with these tribes, and only once it’s done, focus on transferring much-needed job skills to ease assimilation.

Perú’s *Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana*, or AIDESEP, is another case in point. The country’s main council of indigenous tribes—9 regional chapters, 1809 communities home to more than 650.000 Peruvians, part of 64 peoples from 19 linguistic families—it claims to watch over the Peruvian Amazon. It advocates for indigenous electoral districts, intercultural health, and opt-outs in the justice and educational sectors. In 2014, it was the lone recipient of a €20.000 grant for “consultancy on promoting indigenous participation at the COP20-CMNUCC”, which took place in Lima that December, and where its leaders appear annually garbed in traditional attire. Two later grants are murkier. Along with the CARE and DARNs NGOs mentioned earlier, in 2018 AIDESEP’s chapter in Ucayaly was part of a €950.000 project to “strengthen indigenous vigilance to vanquish discrimination of indigenous peoples in decisions over their own land”. Finally, in 2017, AIDESEP partnered with DARNs to take €949.998 for a project on “empowering the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon to defend their rights through the guiding principles of the UN about corporations and human rights”. AIDESEP’s same branch in Ucayali-Orau returned in 2024 to the dataset, along with CARE and the Honduran Miskita NGO.

Finally, though nowhere near the weight of indigenism among the recipient pool, it is worth noting the odd race-based NGO importing woke tropes otherwise extremely marginal in the region. In 2020, *Ashanti Perú* (also known as the **Peruvian Network of Afro-Descending Youths**) got €12.850 from a bi-continental project on “building capacities for inclusion through arts in Europe and Latin America”. Job inclusion and education projects sit awkwardly among Ashanti’s activities with promotion of quotas and affirmative action for “proud Afro-Peruvians”, a form of racialism lacking cultural depth in a Hispanic context that may actually sever these youths from society. With one of *Ashanti*’s annual booklets claiming that “it isn’t enough not to be racist”, the NGO advocates for Afro-Peruvian media, cross-dimensioning that identity into notions of well-being and rights, and even including the “Afro-Peruvian agenda” in local and regional elections. In a region where racial tropes fall flatter than in Europe, these become an intersectional vehicle for other causes: the fight against “LGBTIQ+ phobia”, gender and sexual diversity, reproductive rights—all of which Ashanti views as indispensable to truly further the interests of its members.

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Brazil] CENTRO NORDESTINO DE MEDICINA POPULAR*CNMP	0.49
[Brazil] CONSELHO INDIGENISTA MISSIONARIO*INDIGENOUS MISSIONARY COUNCIL	0.80 ¹⁰⁰
[Guatemala] ASOCIACION COMITE CAMPESINO DEL ALTIPLANO	0.50 ¹⁰¹
[Guatemala] PARLAMENTO DEL PUEBLO XINKA DE GUATEMALA	0.50 ¹⁰²
[Ecuador] ASOCIACION DE MUJERES WAORANI DE LA AMAZONIA ECUATORIANA	0.70 ¹⁰³
[Ecuador] FUNDACION ALEJANDRO LABAKA	0.64 ¹⁰⁴
[Ecuador] FUNDACION ALIANZA CEIBO	1.00 ¹⁰⁵
[Honduras] ASOCIACION DE MUJERES INDIGENAS MISKITAS MAIRIN INDIANG MISKITU ASLA TAKANKA	1.5 ¹⁰⁶
[Peru] ASOCIACION INTERETNICA DE DESARROLLO DE LA SELVA PERUANA*	0.02
[Peru] ORGANIZACION NACIONAL DE MUJERES INDIGENAS ANDINAS Y AMAZONICAS DEL PERU	4.03 ¹⁰⁷
[Peru] CENTRAL ASHANINKA DEL RIO ENE ASOCIACION*CARE	1.20 ¹⁰⁸
[Paraguay] PRO COMUNIDADES INDIGENAS*PRO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES	0.80
[Peru] RED PERUANA DE JOVENES AFRODESCENDIENTES ASHANTI PERU	0.01

¹⁰⁰ For its work on indigenous land rights, Brazil's IMC got an €800.000 grant in 2020 of which it was the lone beneficiary, yet again, its undisclosed share of that lone-NGO grant misleadingly nulled the figure.

¹⁰¹ In 2017, Guatemala's ACCA got a half-million grant in two installments for its work in preventing conflict in Lake Atitlán's south basin, despite its long record of road closures and picket lines. Its individual share in them went undisclosed.

¹⁰² The Xinca people's parliament got half a million euros in 2019 for fostering "dialogue" and "inclusive development", yet the tables again didn't reflect the grant.

¹⁰³ The Waorani indigenous tribe's women association in Ecuador got €700.000 in 2018 for a project on sustainable tourism in the Amazon rainforest.

¹⁰⁴ In 2017 and 2019, two grants flowed to *Fundación Alejandro Labaka*, both for protecting indigenous tribes in voluntary isolation, totaling €646.002.

¹⁰⁵ In 2023, *Alianza Ceibo* partook in a €1 million grant towards *Frontepaz*, the EU project involving women and youths in building "safe frontiers", of which only *ALDEA* appears as the second recipient, with no individual breakdown.

¹⁰⁶ In 2018, the Miskita tribe's female association tapped into a two-grant pot of €1.499.898, where other NGOs went undisclosed, for fostering the economies and upholding the identities of indigenous and afro groups in Honduras.

¹⁰⁷ Perú's *ONMIAAP* tapped into a pot of no less than €4.032.000 between 2017 and 2020: €382.000 went to it alone in 2017 for defending "protectors of the Amazon", while in 2020 it shared a Peruvian cheque of €3.65 million with Perú *Equidad* for that country's chapter of the "making SDGs work for indigenous people" global project.

¹⁰⁸ *Central Ashaninka* contracted some share of €1.2 million through its role in two 2014 projects: €250.000 went to it alone for a project on "inclusive and intercultural communication", while another to foster "indigenous vigilance" received €950.000 that same year, shared with two other NGOs.

6. Migrant rights and free movement:

Migration routes are the playfield of a different ecosystem of NGOs, too. Though refugee crises such as Venezuela's—and the strain they pose on nations absorbing the exodus—have helped focus the world's attention on the region's migration challenges, EU-funded NGOs in this space have been overwhelmingly active in the transit countries of Mexico and Central America, where cross-country caravans have intensified, particularly under the northward pull effect of the Biden administration's lax border policies. Much as in Europe's own recent experience with illegal flows, and besides creating magnet effects by running shelters and services including legal counsel, these NGOs often lobby for laxer border security while framing free movement as a human right, and the failure to uphold that "right" as harboring humanitarian crises in the making. Additionally, as the transit nations that concern us here—particularly Mexico—have turned into migrant destinations unto themselves under the first Trump administration's beefed-up policies of border enforcement, concerns around human trafficking that should drive the EU's aid to these NGOs seem to have not risen in importance, but waned. They have given way, it appears, to agendas that willfully create incentives for illegal migration, whether by easing emigration into the US or easing the permanence of irregular, often non-assimilating communities in formerly transit nations (such as Haitians in Mexico).

In Mexico, *Centro de Derechos Humanos (CDF) Fray Matías de Córdova A.C.*¹⁰⁹ was the lone recipient of a three-installment grant of €600.000, in 2020, to "strengthen the guarantee and protection of migrant persons, asylum-seekers, and refugees, with a focus on women, children and teens". While part of the grant may have gone to fund its robust legislative advocacy program, allowing it to lobby for various bills written with those high-minded ends in mind, *CDH Fray Matías de Córdova* stands also as a microcosm of the shifting mission of traditional migration NGOs. Per its own description of that mission, it seeks to "foster sustainable and durable processes with a gender, intercultural, intersectional focus". The combat against human trafficking that should guide NGOs in its space, meanwhile, is far from central. Its fight for alternatives to detention for illegal migrants in Mexico, meanwhile, coinhabits with a slew of initiatives that stray far from the welfare of migrants exclusively. In its Mexico City community center, *CDH Fray Matías de Córdova* runs workshops on "sexual dissidences", "new masculinities", and even rehearsals of Augusto Boal's famously left-radical drama genre, Theatre of the Oppressed¹¹⁰ (TO). The core of its ideology, meanwhile, conveys a clear rejection of "external borders", by which it means borders of any kind. Its US partnerships, meanwhile, clearly signal that, through its funding of *CDH Fray Matías de Córdova* and groups of its nature, the EU partakes in an agenda to undermine America's border security and its sovereign immigration laws. One of *CDH Fray Matías de Córdova's* US partners, *Justice in Motion*¹¹¹, advocates for "portable justice" from its HQs in New York, by which it means that "rights do not stop at the border", and that migrants takes them all with them, with the erasure of legal borders the natural implication.

*Fundación Scalabrini de México A.C.*¹¹², meanwhile, was the Mexican partner to a global program on "Safespaces: integration program for unaccompanied minors" that saw it receive €52.480, wholly 13% of an overall sum shared between five European countries—Germany, Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, and Norway—suggesting a European pattern of support to unaccompanied minors that was transposed to

¹⁰⁹ CDH Fray Matías – Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Matías de Córdova A.C. (n.d.). <https://cdhfraymatias.org/>

¹¹⁰ Wikipedia contributors. (2025, March 25). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_the_Oppressed

¹¹¹ HOME | Justice in motion. (n.d.). Justice in Motion. <https://www.justiceinmotion.org/>

¹¹² Inicio - FSMX donaciones. (2023, September 29). FSMX Donaciones. <https://fsmx.org/>

Mexico. In Costa Rica, home to a large population of Nicaraguan migrants, the *Fundación Centro de Derechos Sociales del Inmigrante S.A.*¹¹³ (*CENDEROS*) received €186.718 in 2015 for a program on “strengthening capacities for the participation and impact of female and youth migrant workers and cross-border workers in public spaces”, and an unknown share of a €400.000 grant for “social inclusion of Nicaraguan migrant and/or refugee children, youth, and women”. In the Dominican Republic, the *Centro para la Observación Migratoria y Desarrollo Social en el Caribe*¹¹⁴ (OBMICA), another recipient of EU aid, defends a “right to nationality” for the long-settled Haitian community.

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Mexico] FUNDACION SCALABRINI DE MEXICO AC	0.05
[Mexico] CENTRO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS FRAY MATIAS DE CORDOVA AC ASOCIACION*CDH FRAYMATIAS	0.60
[Chile] INSTITUTO CATOLICO CHILENO DE MIGRACION	0.45 ¹¹⁵
[Costa Rica] FUNDACION CENTRO DE DERECHOS SOCIALES DEL INMIGRANTE SA	0.20
[Costa Rica] ALIANZA COOPERATIVA INTERNACIONAL	8.00 ¹¹⁶
[Dominican Republic] CENTRO PARA LA OBSERVACION MIGRATORIA Y DESARROLLO SOCIAL EN EL CARIBE OBMICA	0.36

7. Media outlets, transparency initiatives, and “media freedom” NGOs:

Media poses its own categorization difficulty. Seeking to foster “media vibrancy” or combat “disinformation” as ends unto themselves, the EU may choose to fund investigative outlets, transparency portals, digital media, or incubators for up-and-coming, so-called “activist” or “citizen” journalism. More often, funds to journalistic initiatives, even nominally for the aforementioned purposes, are the spurious channel through which the EU bankrolls the substantive agendas these outlets convey. Grants for “media freedoms”, for instance, may end up in outlets that almost exclusively use the money to promote woke narratives, provide media backing to left-wing politicians, or hold conservative politicians exclusively to account, in which case our categories become again contingent. The EU’s vision of media freedoms and transparency, in its dealings with foreign-based NGOs, ends up resembling the one it purports at home: not transparency, but a pivoting of the transparency imperative towards offering a very slanted view of things, part of the EU’s agenda of informational control.

Among the most slanted EU-funded outlets is Argentina’s *Revista Crisis*, famously edited by Eduardo Galeano in 1973-1976 before being shut by the country’s military junta. After a brief second stint alive

¹¹³ *Centro de Derechos Sociales del Inmigrante CENDEROS*. (n.d.). Centro De Derechos Sociales Del Inmigrante CENDEROS. <https://cenderos.org/>

¹¹⁴ OBMICA. (n.d.). <https://obmica.org/>

¹¹⁵ Along with *Fundación Avina* and *Observatorio Ciudadano*, Chile’s ICCM was one of three legs to a €453.210 grant in 2021 for “pro-migration” work.

¹¹⁶ Costa Rica’s ACI was that country’s partner to an €8 million global grant in 2023 to foster “people-centered businesses for sustainable, democratic, and inclusive development”.

in the mid-1980s, it was reborn in 2010 under a more skewed line that has only radicalized since Javier Milei's election. In its popular essays and occasional manifestos, the magazine inveighs against "imperialism" and occasionally whitewashes the communist and socialist regimes of Cuba¹¹⁷ and Nicaragua, respectively, while speaking of a "far-right", "reactionary" international" at power in Argentina and the United States¹¹⁸. For a two-year project headlined "capacity building: us versus them" for which no information exists, €134.442 was channeled through Erasmus+ in 2019 to *Crisis*.

"Social communication" is another fig-leaf for skewed journalism in the EU's pool of grantees. Ecuador's **Fundación El Churo**¹¹⁹ styles itself as a youth incubator named after the large snail shell indigenous tribal leaders once used for cross-valley communication. Upon closer inspection, it emerges as the umbrella for an exhaustive network of media and community initiatives, all advancing similar forms of left-radicalism from their respective functional corners. **El Churo** runs **La Libre Tecnologías Comunitarias**¹²⁰, a taskforce of techies offering digital services—cloud, web hosting, app development—to left-wing groups across the region. **Ojo Semilla**¹²¹, its cinema and audiovisual laboratory, works both as a movie producer and a forum for left-radical filmmakers to submit their work to regional audiences. Though it seems inactive, **La Zurda**¹²² (the leftie) is or was a community facility in downtown Quito, self-styled as a "youth house for cultural diversities". But **El Churo**'s flagship initiative is doubtless **Wimbura**¹²³, a "community, popular, and left-wing media" that claims to be "committed to feminist, intersectional, and community communication". Initially set up by journalism graduates as a radio station, **Wimbura** has since turned into a nationwide, professionalized, and popular outlet for far-left discourse, these days chiefly directed against Daniel Noboa's current government in Ecuador and its war on narco-trafficking gangs and networks. Partnering with a human rights foundation, **El Churo** was the co-grantee of three tranches of EU funding, amounting to over a million euros, most of it contracted in 2016, which likely fed its entire operation. The largest, of around 65% of the total, went for "indigenous governance" and the "inclusion of collectives", whereas the latter two, amounting to the rest, went for defending human rights and nature in the country. Echoes of that same mission have reappeared in 2024 with **SocialTIC**¹²⁴, a regional network of "info-activists" based out of Mexico dedicated to digital training and online tools explicitly put to the service of causes and narratives such as "LGBT rights" and "the right to choose". Last year, along with Mexico's branch of the Article 19 global campaign for freedom of expression and information, **SocialTIC** was contracted by the EU for a €800.000 grant titled "the power of our voices".

In Paraguay, EU-funded media NGOs were at the heart of the USAID-led effort to destabilize the ruling, conservative *Partido Colorado*. **Memetic Media** (or **Fábrica Memética** in Spanish) was among the most prominent¹²⁵, and not unlike **El Churo**, its know-how is made regionally available to non-profits wishing

¹¹⁷ *la isla de fidel*. (n.d.). Revista Crisis. <https://revistacrisis.com.ar/notas/la-isla-de-fidel>

¹¹⁸ *apuntes sobre milei y el internacionalismo reaccionario*. (n.d.). Revista Crisis.

<https://revistacrisis.com.ar/notas/apuntes-sobre-milei-y-el-internacionalismo-reaccionario>

¹¹⁹ 3lchur, S. 1. 2. P. (2024, September 10). *El Churo*. <https://elchuro.org/>

¹²⁰ *LaLibre – Tecnologías comunitarias*. (n.d.). <https://lalibre.net/>

¹²¹ *Ojo Semilla – Cine y Audiovisual Comunitario*. (n.d.). <https://ojosemilla.elchuro.org/>

¹²² Beto, D. (n.d.). *CASA ZURDA*. <https://churocomunicacion.blogspot.com/2010/03/casa-zurda.html>

¹²³ Agila, G. R. (2025, January 20). *Inicio I Wambura medio comunitario*. Wambura Medio Comunitario. <https://wambura.ec/>

¹²⁴ *INICIO*. (2025, June 6). <https://socialtic.org/>

¹²⁵ Nación, L. (2025b, February 12). Fondos de Usaid también financian a periodistas y activistas anti-ANR. *La Nación*. <https://www.lanacion.com.py/investigacion/2025/02/12/fondos-de-usaid-tambien-financian-a-periodistas-y-activistas-anti-anr/>

to tap into its journalistic methods for visually-appealing message-crafting¹²⁶. **Memetic** aims to, per the Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN), target social media users with new “digital narratives”, a “bet on the youth” that **Memetic**’s founder, Juan Heilborn, states is “a political bet”. Since 2016, **Memetic** has innovated in “format, language, and journalistic approach”, such as through visual and data journalism. **El Surtidor** is its GIJN-affiliated outlet, **Latinográficas** is its visual arm, and **Fotociclo** is its photolab. And while **Memetic** may seem at times to gear its activity towards fact-checking and the work of a corruption watchdog, it is also heavily invested in combating “disinformation”, “hate speech” online, and “digital violence”. It was the media partner to a €1.31 million EU project, in four tranches. The first two, in 2019, were a cash prize awarded by the **Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos de Paraguay** (CDHP) for “*Ñamombarete Yvypóra Derécho Paraguáipe*” (“strengthening human rights in Paraguay”, in local guaraní). The two latter projects, in 2023, were titled “informed and resilient: actions against disinformation and digital violence in Paraguay”. Though **El Surtidor**’s editors have been lavished with prizes, fellowships, and platforms across the West—from Oxford’s Reuters Institute, to the GIJN, to the Goethe Institute, to the Pulitzer Center—some of their recent coverage wouldn’t pass the muster even of Europe’s mainstream media. To name just one piece of “reporting”, in August 2023 “**El Surti**” sought to expose Paraguay’s Congress for extending asylum to Oswaldo Eustáquio¹²⁷, an exiled Brazilian journalist, whom it labeled a “Bolsonarist fugitive blogger” in a piece that was echoed by GIJN’s Latin American chapter, the **Centro Latinoamericano de Investigación Periodística**¹²⁸, or CLIP. Right from the title, **El Surti** accused Eustáquio of “disinforming about the country’s 2022 election result and supporting a military coup”. Yet upon being later granted asylum in Spain—ruled by a far-left government of its own with a firm grip on prosecutions—this past March 13th Spain’s lead prosecutor impelled the country’s High Court to deny Brazil’s request for Eustáquio’s extradition¹²⁹. Meanwhile, **El Surti** is yet to retract its piece, which assumed as truthful the claims against a journalist made by a regime most of the world considers autocratic and censorious. Still up, the piece features Eustáquio holding a gun—thus recycling the Lula regime’s playbook of self-validating censorship, legal harassment, and persecution through the mere allegation of involvement in coup-plotting. Besides the **Open Society Foundation** (OSF) and a slew of global media initiatives, **Memetic Media** is supported—by a wild stretch of the imagination—by the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation linked to Germany’s far-left *Die Linke* party.

The EU’s “anti-disinformation agenda” is indeed exported through aid to NGOs, particularly in states reeling from armed conflicts and still being held accountable in courts of law and of opinion. The fluid notion of “human rights” wrapping the victims of one side becomes the playing field where the EU’s money slanders dissenters by labelling them “disinformation”, a cudgel used to tilt the balance. This is notably the case of Peru’s **Checkea** campaign, a project of APRODEH (**Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos**), which had earlier received €232.751 between 2015 and 2019 for six different projects, one in 2015 for “humanitarian aid for sustainable development” and the next five for EU aid volunteers. **Checkea** is funded exclusively by the EU through the **Consejo Regional de Servicios** (CRES), an NGO

¹²⁶ Fábrica Memética – Diseñamos información para la acción. (n.d.). <https://memetic.media/fabrica/>

¹²⁷ Congreso paraguayo gestionó refugio de bloguero bolsonarista prófugo en Brasil | El Surtidor. (2023, August 23). El Surtidor. <https://elsurti.com/reportaje/2023/08/23/congreso-paraguayo-gestiona-refugio-de-bloguero-bolsonarista-profugo-en-brasil/>

¹²⁸ Lupa, S. C. (2025, March 21). El clip. El Clip. <https://www.elclip.org/>

¹²⁹ Efe, A. (2025, March 30). La Fiscalía pide no entregar a Brasil a un bloguero bolsonarista: “Está amparado por la libertad de expre. La Razón. https://www.larazon.es/espana/fiscalia-pide-entregar-brasil-bloguero-bolsonarista-esta-amparado-libertad-expresion_2025033067e8f6e546af5b000120532f.html

umbrella operating in Honduras, Colombia, and Peru through the regional office of **Diakonia**, the faith-based Swedish NGO. It was set up in late 2022, which may explain why it doesn't feature in the dataset, yet its nature is clear. Along with its anti-disinformation crusade, its contents include courses on gender, intersectionality, and combating lesbophobia.

In the title to its last report¹³⁰, in December, *Checkea* stated that "Disinformation and fake news threaten human rights in Peru". The 11-page "study" reads as an activist hit job on non-leftist journalists and politicians, perusing 20 cases of "fake news" that garnered over a million views on social media. It blames their purveyors for ushering the country in a post-truth era by "denying or minimizing" the reality of human rights abuses—and "stigmatizing" those who defend them—committed during **Peru's so-called internal armed conflict** of 1980-2000, in which the state cracked down on terrorist groups including *Sendero Luminoso* and *Tupac Amaru*. Yet the headlines *Checkea* adduces as examples would be fair game anywhere else: "IACHRs attacks Peru", in reference to a lawsuit at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the repeated use of the "caviars" epithet in right-wing outlets to describe well-funded leftist activists and politicians. Lima's mayor is labeled an apologist of human rights abuses for stating on Twitter that the *Ojo que Lloro*—a memorial seeking to honor victims and promoting reconciliation—is not cultural patrimony, while journalist Diego Acuña is spotlighted for alleged lewd language. Behind this "disinformation", claims the report, lies an "ideological, ultraconservative, anti-democratic and anti-rights" focus, an "authoritarian, prejudiced, discriminatory, and sexist" look. It disclaims that it is APRODEH's "strict responsibility" and "doesn't reflect the EU's *viewpoints*". Yet in strict imitation of EU *methods*, it lays out a rationale for censorship by stating that "these fake news are meant to justify and legitimize an authoritarian regime", claiming that they currently hold majority sway among decision-makers and the media.

Colombia's **Verdad Abierta** has played a similar role up until now, as apparently will do on a smaller scale, from 2024 onwards, **Comunicación, Territorio y Resistencia**¹³¹, a video channel out of the country's Caribbean coast contracted for a grant last year. An investigative outlet in the form of a web portal, **Verdad Abierta** has famously covered the aftermath of Colombia's fraught peace process, which culminated in failure in 2016 with a deal proposal championed by then-President Juan Manuel Santos and loudly backed by the EU, but voted down by Colombians in a referendum. However much it claims to shed light on under-covered aspects of the war between the Colombian state and the guerrillas, primarily *FARC* and *ELN*, **Verdad Abierta** conveys its own biased reading of the conflict. In 2022, it received €144.000 to develop "new local narratives to combat disinformation and stigmatization about actions in defense of human rights and community-based journalism". Óscar Javier Parra—**Verdad Abierta's** founder, director, and the man behind another outlet by the name **Rutas del Conflicto**—embodies the incestuous links between this allegedly fresh, investigative journalism and the very clear bias of the NGO-industrial complex it serves. He is an alum of the Open Society network, of **RedProDePaz**, and of the **Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz**, the transitional justice mechanism widely perceived to have been lenient with the *FARC* and ruthless with Colombia's armed forces.

¹³⁰ Checkea. *La desinformación y fake news amenazan los derechos humanos en el Perú*. <https://bit.ly/4iCyuFp>

¹³¹ *Comunicación Territorio y Resistencia*. (n.d.). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/@comunicacionterritorioryres4161>

Name of NGO	Amount contracted in millions of EUR (whether by the NGO as lone beneficiary or as part of a non-itemized grantee pool)
[Argentina] REVISTA CRISIS ASOCIACION CIVIL	0.03
[Ecuador] FUNDACION EL CHURO	0.99 ¹³²
[Paraguay] MEMETIC.MEDIA	1.31 ¹³³
[Colombia] FUNDACION VERDAD ABIERTA	0.14
[Peru] [ASOCIACION DE COMUNICADORES SOCIALES- CALANDRIA*ACS CALANDRIA	0.58
[Colombia] CORPORACION MISION DE OBSERVACION ELECTORAL*MOE	0.69
[Colombia] FUNDACION KARISMA	3.8 ¹³⁴
[Mexico] SOCIALTIC	0.8

Transparency rules and oversight mechanisms

As with USAID's global trail of dark money, EU grants to activist NGOs—particularly when disguised as development aid or blanket promotion of “EU values”—thrive on the **lack of transparency rules and oversight mechanisms in recipient countries**. This means not that Latin American NGOs operate in a legal vacuum in this realm. Aside from the stifling of civil society under authoritarian regimes, the baseline of legislation across the region does require that NGOs sign onto civil law registries and with tax authorities, while complying with varyingly strict anti-money laundering regulations. Yet no shared framework exists to make foreign funds to these NGOs transparent, even as the sector keeps swelling in size, and even as the NGOs are bound to play a natural role in supranational fora such as the Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS)¹³⁵, in which the role of foreign funding remains hotly contested¹³⁶. This domestic opacity remains the region's historical norm, despite corruption opportunities in the non-profit realm abounding, often fostered, not limited, by humanitarian disasters and aid vacuums¹³⁷. In a prior *status quo* where NGOs were indeed self-constrained to development assistance, as partners to agencies and institutions in fostering material development, this lack of control may have been natural or even justified. Yet they've kept capitalizing on the ambient opacity even as they increasingly abandon those missions and callings, rendering the preceding paradigm obsolete. **It is**

¹³² In 2016, *El Churo* shared €992.320 with *Fundación Regional de Asesoría en Derechos Humanos* in three grants, the respective shares in which remain undisclosed.

¹³³ Aid to *Memetic*, totaling €1.310.000 came through two channels: two installments of the CODEHUPY prize in 2019 amounting to €700.000, and two 2023 grants totaling €610.000 for fighting “disinformation and digital violence”.

¹³⁴ Karisma took an unknown share of a €3.796.408 global grant for “civil society alliances and digital empowerment”.

¹³⁵ *IACHR: Basic Documents in the Inter-American System*. (n.d.). Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). https://www.oas.org/en/IACHR/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/mandate/basic_documents.asp

¹³⁶ García Dao, I. J., Schuff, S., Quiroga, M. A., Julio Pohl, & Global Center for Human Rights. (n.d.). *Design*. <https://globalcenterforhumanrights.org/files/GCHR-Balance-of-the-financing-of-the-IACHR-and-the-Inter-American-Court.pdf>

¹³⁷ Candid. (n.d.). *International NGOs facing increased scrutiny in Haiti*. Philanthropy News Digest (PND). <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/news/international-ngos-facing-increased-scrutiny-in-haiti>

in the confusion brought about by a new ideological climate in the sector that the EU has squeezed its agenda—when not shaped the loopholes in the first place.

The non-reciprocity of these rules, furthermore, sheds light on the EU's hypocrisy. If the funds the bloc showered over the past decade were directed by non-EU powers toward European NGOs of a different ideological bent—particularly in the wake of post-Qatargate rules¹³⁸—they would not have passed muster. **Meanwhile, the EU senses autocracy and far-right rule when other countries replicate its moves, adapting them to local contexts, to make those funds transparent.** Masking this hypocrisy is a conceptual error. Whether by harassing its own member states, as in Hungary's case, or making the accession pathway of a not-yet member such as Georgia more difficult for similar reasons, **the EU wrongly equates transparency rules with prescriptive action against NGOs. Its defense of Hungarian and Georgian non-profits subjected to mere disclosures in these nations belies a will on the EU's part to preserve the current opacity.** Regions like Latin America, furthermore, may be seen to face greater incentives to pierce this cloud over the drivers of NGO activity. **Ending the blanket invocation of development needs as an excuse for woke activism shrouded in stealth is, in some ways, a step to first-world status**—and towards catching up with the EU's own transparency strides post-Qatargate.

Again, authoritarian regimes with a vested interest in stifling civil society remain a separate case study—but even here, the EU's record is murky. **While the EU labels the transparency imposed by sovereign democracies “authoritarian”, in actual autocracies most NGOs are regulated into extinction, and one wishes the EU's denunciations would ring as loud.** In the region's “troika of tyranny” (Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua)—and increasingly in backsliding semi-democracies under the São Paulo Forum's control such as Brazil and Honduras—NGOs are controlled in what they say and do, with members exiled or under threat of persecution. **These are actual laws against free speech and free assembly, unlike the ones compelling free NGOs to disclose their foreign funding beyond a threshold while keeping their activities, when legal, intact and free.** In Venezuela and Nicaragua, a modicum of civil society remains alive—often with EU support—but its countervailing power keeps withering away under the yoke of Nicolás Maduro and Daniel Ortega, respectively¹³⁹. Although they framed the revelations around USAID in different terms—another plot at imperialist control of the continent—these hybrid autocracies, along with Mexico, seized on the scandal to turn the heat further up on NGOs holding them to account on judicial abuses, concentration of power, and rank corruption¹⁴⁰. Meanwhile, in Cuba, the EU's 2016 deal with Fidel Castro's successors has assisted their regime's hamstringing of civil society. Besides handing it several direct lifelines, the bloc channels millions into the few Cuban NGOs that the regime vets and approves for obvious reasons¹⁴¹. **When it seems to confuse communist regime fronts for a spontaneous underground, many of the EU's totems around “civil society” crumble.**

¹³⁸ Fox, B., & Fox, B. (2024, September 29). New transparency rules “serious first step” after Qatargate, say EU lawmakers. Euractiv. <https://www.euractiv.com/section/eu-institutions/news/new-transparency-rules-serious-first-step-after-qatargate-say-eu-lawmakers/>

¹³⁹ Ríos, B. F. V. (2024, August 21). Venezuela y Nicaragua contra las ONG, las Naciones Unidas ya expresaron su preocupación | El Colombiano. <https://www.elcolombiano.com/internacional/venezuela-y-nicaragua-contra-las-ong-NA25250863>

¹⁴⁰ Hernandez, N. (2024, August 20). La batalla por limitar la injerencia vía ONGs - teleSUR. <https://www.telesurtv.net/la-batalla-por-limitar-la-injerencia-via-ongs/>

¹⁴¹ Palacio, Y. (2024, June 9). Cuba, la Unión Europea y las TIC: un triángulo de engaños. CONNECTAS. <https://www.connectas.org/cuba-ong-union-europea-tecnologia/>

Elsewhere in the region, the aid firehose challenges nations into exacting the same transparency requirements they would of NGOs were they financed locally, and to firewall their sovereignty against foreign interference, or even outright illegal activities. **The passing of these laws is made no less urgent by the fact that, on its end of the equation, the EU diligently publishes its data, though riddled with accounting quirks and opaque mis-reporting.** Instead, the time lag with which the EU's data is probed in Europe is compounded by the spatial distance that makes findings like this report's harder to disseminate in far-off nations across the Atlantic.

Among those to have taken an interest in beefing up these frameworks is Paraguay, following aforementioned accounts of widespread USAID-funded interference at the country's last election, part of a campaign against the ruling *Colorado* party that involves the EU, too¹⁴². Leading up to President Santiago Peña's election in the summer of 2023, an EU aid package of €100 million to Paraguay was conditioned on implementing Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) in primary schools¹⁴³. Beyond the media ecosystem delved into earlier, the EU also funded, in 2017, *Fundación Paraguaya de Cooperación y Desarrollo* to the tune of €25.302 for "capacity building in youth education". The serial social entrepreneur who founded it in 1985 and is now again heading it, **Martín Burt**, has had notable stints in politics throughout the period, notably as mayor of Asunción (1996-2001) and chief of staff to former President Federico Franco. Both Franco and Burt are linked to the liberal-progressive *PLRA* party (*Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico*), and Burt's retirement from politics is far from averred. In 2022, he again filed a presidential pre-candidacy, this time for nomination under the *Concertación para un Nuevo Paraguay*, a big-tent coalition to unseat *Colorado*.

Last November 16, Peña signed into law¹⁴⁴ a bill to "establish control, transparency, and accountability of non-lucrative organizations", the result of a several-reading bicameral back-and-forth that launched a "participatory" codification process, in Peña's words, to involve NGOs themselves. Yet the NGO ecosystem howled in unison, with the *Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos del Paraguay* (CODEHUPY) and Amnesty International claiming it "violates the right to freedom of association", the "autonomy of NGOs", "their ability to obtain necessary resources" and even "freedom of expression" and the "right to privacy", posing "highly restrictive conditions"¹⁴⁵. **These critiques begin from the same false conflation of transparency laws with restrictive or prescriptive ones.** The Paraguayan bill merely requires a financial statement from the entities subjected to it, creates a database for them to register "all the funds and goods they receive or administer", and demands a report about "the accomplishment of their objectives", as well as "of their personnel and beneficiaries". This "transparency regime" and "official registry", per President Peña, seeks to "improve coordination with the state, fostering accountability and public impact for the citizenry". **The deeper misunderstanding, indeed, is to believe the law stems from some vendetta against Paraguayan NGOs in a vacuum** (cases of money laundering and other

¹⁴² The European Conservative. (2023, July 7). Paraguay Athwart liberalism. *The European Conservative*. <https://europeanconservative.com/articles/analysis/paraguay-athwart-liberalism/>

¹⁴³ Miranda, E. (2021, November 23). *Presentaron Plan de Acción de Género "Igualdad para Crecer"* Secretaría Técnica De Planificación Del Desarrollo Económico Y Social. <https://www.stp.gov.py/v1/presentaron-plan-de-accion-de-genero-igualdad-para-crecer/>

¹⁴⁴ Efe. (2024, November 16). Presidente Peña promulga ley de control a oenegés pese a las críticas de sectores sociales. *SWI swissinfo.ch*. <https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/presidente-pe%C3%B1a-promulga-ley-de-control-a-oeneg%C3%A9s-pese-a-las-cr%C3%ADticas-de-sectores-sociales/88171962>

¹⁴⁵ Amnistía Internacional. (2024, July 8). *Paraguay: Senado aprueba proyecto de ley que pone en riesgo la defensa de los derechos humanos*. <https://www.amnesty.org/es/latest/news/2024/07/paraguay-senado-aprueba-proyecto-ley-pone-riesgo-defensa-derechos-humanos/>

wrongdoings exist but remain limited¹⁴⁶). The law, in fact, channels a widely-held popular sense among Paraguayans—such as exists in other nations—that the multi-million aid streams into the country’s NGOs rarely trickle down into any sort of wider societal value. Instead, grantees stick to narrow ideologies that interest few locals, thus feeding a combined sense of elite disconnect and foreign interference.

Peru deserves a different kind of mention, too. On March 12 this year, with 82 votes in favor out of the chamber’s 102, its Congress amended the law on the country’s Agency for International Cooperation (APCI), **granting it powers to control and sanction NGOs receiving foreign aid**, in an attempt to limit their role in human rights litigation—national or international—against the Peruvian state. NGOs will either have the APCI’s green light or else face penalties of up to \$720.000. The agency will consider a “very grave breach” the alleged use of these monies to provide legal counsel, assistance, or financing for actions judicial, administrative, or otherwise against Peru in courts of law. NGOs pounded the law for seeking to “persecute”, “censor”, and “criminalize” them, in language similar to that heard in Paraguay. **Yet the amendment’s legislative target was narrow: the particular role of NGOs enabling recourse to justice against the Peruvian state, rather than foreign electoral influence or advocacy of left-radical views *per se*.** This makes the Peruvian case *sui generis*, and rather different from other countries that may follow the trail blazed by Paraguay. The Peruvian state stands accused in several ongoing lawsuits, including against a trans person alleging torture and sexual violence by police, and for cracking down on protesters against Dina Boluarte’s incumbent government. More importantly, it remains dogged by a long trail of alleged human rights abuses between 1980 and 2000, such as the killing of around 69 people, in 1985, in a raid against the terror group *Sendero Luminoso* in Accomarca¹⁴⁷.

Conclusion

No astute observer of Latin America could possibly have missed the unlikely rise, over the past decade, of an **engulfing neo-Marxist agenda that keeps profoundly reordering the region’s political cleavages, its social structures, and even its role on the world stage.** While part of this gradual “revolution” has been manifest in the advance of far-left parties under the São Paulo Forum’s aegis, this time the Marxist surge is rooted in layers deeper than the vicissitudes of electoral politics. Whereas earlier cycles of far-left breakthroughs relied on a discourse of resistance and the promise of redressing the material inequities of US-style capitalism, the new dialectic modes of confrontation and struggle, this time, are wrapped in the discourse of wokeism. Rather than the “red waves” of old, this neo-Marxist shift incidentally validates the notion of a “pink tide¹⁴⁸”, coined in early 2000s journalistic jargon, that has intermittently swept the region since then.

It is yet to dawn on the peoples of Europe and Latin America how decisive the EU’s role has been in this momentous march. Without the millions in aid herein analyzed from a foreign power, it is unlikely that the attempt to mainstream wokeism across the region would have happened the way it has. The

¹⁴⁶ Color, A. (2024, October 1). Ley anti-ONG: Latorre justifica tratamiento, ¿con una mentira? ABC Color. <https://www.abc.com.py/politica/2024/10/01/ley-anti-ong-latorre-justifica-tratamiento-con-una-mentira/>

¹⁴⁷ Redacción. (2016, September 2). Accomarca: la masacre detrás de la histórica condena de cárcel contra “El carnicero de los Andes” y otros 9 militares en Perú. BBC News Mundo. <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-37254469>

¹⁴⁸ Wikipedia contributors. (2025, March 28). Pink tide. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pink_tide

lack of systematic auditing mechanisms leaves unclear where all of the money ultimately may have gone—and its potential channeling to partisan or electoral ends can't be ruled out with perfect ease.

Back in Europe, this dense firehose of dark, unaccountable money can't be solely blamed on the opacity of the EU's institutional design. Granted, in the absence of vibrant watchdogs and investigative outlets, bureaucratic centralization of grant contracting within the Commission shields these shenanigans from wider public view. **But so have fiscal hawks and common-sense leaders failed to fully apprehend the NGO industrial complex, and its effective advancement of a destructive, global woke agenda—on the EU taxpayer's dime and to the exclusion, when not at the expense, of the region's many local needs.** Only because too few voices were raised were these monies disbursed, and the damage done, to no major ruckus. The Commission acts as the lone authority publishing calls for proposals, choosing awardees, contracting grants, and monitoring their implementation. **Yet the EU's institutional maze offers several nodes of control that weren't fully marshalled into a coherent counterstrategy.**

These range from data troves like the ones used here, to the European Parliament's own robust powers of budget monitoring, to the possibility of erecting alternative "civil society" structures to question the NGO industrial complex. These things were possible before—and are even more urgent after—the USAID mega-scandal and the patriotic surge at last June's parliamentary euro-race, after which inquiries were launched into the rot in earnest¹⁴⁹. The two events combined, happening within a semester of one another, provide a measure of the problem—and a pathway to a solution.

They create, furthermore, a **window of opportunity for patriotic lawmakers, parties, and civic groups on both sides of the Atlantic**—indeed across the West and the world as a whole—to synergize their truth-finding efforts and counteroffensives. On one side stand conservative parties and leaders in the Latin American receiving end of these dark monies, which are either leapfrogging governments besieged by the hyper-progressive tide, or flowing into states where neo-Marxists in power welcome them heartily, as is often the case in the São Paulo Forum-run regimes. On the other stand European patriots fighting, from within the EU, the supranational behemoth whose power of the purse is used to scam taxpayers into funding wokeism overseas. **From think-tanks, legal initiatives, and cross-parliamentary caucuses sharing evidence, ideas, and legislative language, to new dark money watchdogs and observatories feeding the latest data, any number of initiatives could have them cooperate.** Efforts like those will highlight that the diagnosis is shared, and that a converging pathway of action lies open.

¹⁴⁹ Deconinck, C., & Deconinck, C. (2025, April 2). 'EC denies transparency on NGO funding,' claim MEPs. Brussels Signal. <https://brusselssignal.eu/2025/04/ec-denies-transparency-on-ngo-funding-claim-meps/>