

“Enhancing women’s participation in peacebuilding in Syria and Iraq: Lessons learned from implementing the WPSA in the MENA region”

8-10 October 2025, Amman – Jordan

EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI), in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), organised the regional meeting “Enhancing Women’s Participation in Peace-Making in Syria and Iraq: Lessons Learned from Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPSA) in the MENA Region”. Held in Amman, Jordan from 8 to 10 October 2025, the event brought together women’s rights activists, civil society leaders, and experts from across the region to exchange experiences and lessons learned in advancing women’s participation in peacebuilding and political processes.



The regional meeting took place within the framework of the project “Strengthening Women’s Participation in Decision-Making and Peacebuilding in Syria and Iraq”. The project aims to enhance the role of women in peace and political transition processes through capacity building, dialogue facilitation, and regional knowledge exchange. It supports the implementation of the WPSA by fostering collaboration between women’s rights defenders, civil society organisations, and institutional actors to promote equality between women and men,

inclusive governance, and sustainable peace in the region.

This three-day regional event served as a key platform to advance the WPSA in the MENA region, fostering dialogue, collaboration, and collective reflection among women leaders, experts, and civil society representatives. Through a series of presentations, working groups and panel discussions, the event explored both the persistent challenges and emerging opportunities for women's participation in peacebuilding and governance.

During the first two days, participants identified challenges to advancing the WPSA in Syria and Iraq, including discriminatory laws, patriarchal social norms, limited political participation, and weak protection and justice mechanisms. Ongoing conflict, political instability, and the lack of institutional coordination and funding further hinder women's access to justice and participation in public life. Participants also pointed to widespread impunity, fear of stigma, and the marginalisation of independent women's voices as key barriers to change.

To address these challenges, they issued key recommendations, including:

- Strengthening the capacities of civil society organisations,
- Promoting comprehensive legal and institutional reforms protecting women and girls,
- Developing National Action Plans based on UNSCR 1325,
- Creating regional platforms and partnerships to coordinate advocacy on the WPSA across Syria and Iraq.



The final day brought together two high-level panels which broadened the conversation to address questions of justice, memory, belonging, and inclusive citizenship. In the first panel on “Women shaping Transitional Justice, Reconciliation and Accountability”, panellists emphasised challenges such as the marginalisation of women and their exclusion from representation and decision-making positions. This discussion concluded on the need to protect women and properly implement inclusive and comprehensive laws. The second panel on “Rethinking Citizenship and Belonging - Intersectional Feminist Perspectives” gathered speakers from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Yemen. Panellists reflected on the fragmentation of ideas of belonging and citizenship in post-conflict contexts and the challenges faced by women and girls in claiming equal citizenship when identity is constantly politicised. This panel concluded with an encouraging call for women to request their legitimate rights and shape inclusive long-term policies of inclusion and belonging where no voices are sidelined.

The regional meeting reaffirmed the essential role of women as agents of peace, justice, and inclusive governance in Syria, Iraq, and the wider MENA region. By fostering collaboration across borders, it strengthened collective efforts to advance the WPSA and promote equality between women and men in post-conflict transitions. EFI and its partners remain committed to translating these shared lessons and recommendations into sustained advocacy, policy reform, and inclusive peacebuilding.



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About EuroMed Feminist Initiative (EFI):

EuroMed Feminist Initiative is a policy platform that provides expertise in the field of equality between women and men and women's rights as inseparable from democracy building and citizenship, and advocates for political solutions to all conflicts, and for the right of peoples to self-determination.