



# The Topics

Toolbox for empowering just transitions in cities

Vol. 01/04

# FEM. GREEN

Vol. 01/04: The Topics

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Edition: September 2025

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1. Introduction	6
2. Fem.Green approach	8
3. The topics	10
1. Inclusive public spaces and urban green infrastructure	11
1.1 Nature based solutions that fosters climate justice and urban resilience	12
1.2 Feminist and care-centered green infrastructure	13
1.3 Regenerative urbanism to prevent displacement	14
1.4 Local food systems through urban agriculture	15
2. Sustainable mobility and mobility of care	16
2.1 Inclusive and care-oriented decarbonized mobility	17
2.2 Active travel: safe, accessible and equitable for all	18
2.3 Safe and gender-sensitive public transport	19
2.4 Climate resilient and equitable public transport	20
3. Feminist and climate-just urban governance	21
3.1 Institutionalizing gender and climate justice in urban governance	22
3.2 Democratizing leadership in urban and climate transitions	23
3.3 Participatory governance to design resilient urban futures	24
3.4 Feminist governance of night cities	25
4. Gender-inclusive urban health and well-being	26
4.1 Accessible and inclusive healthcare in urban areas	27
4.2 Participatory governance to design resilient urban futures	28
4.3 Pollution reduction and climate change through women's health perspective	29
4.4 Local health assets for physical and mental well-being	30

# 01

# INTRODUCTION



FEM.GREEN was created with the aim of aligning two key perspectives and agendas in the definition and management of contemporary European cities: the feminist agenda and the agenda of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The dialogue between these two agendas is a necessary factor for achieving a just urban transition in European cities.

The project addresses this challenge by generating spaces for dialogue, shared learning, and non-formal education among people interested in the FEM.GREEN approach, with the goal of fostering community empowerment and building a more informed and engaged European citizenry. The project has collaboratively gathered, together with professionals, citizens, and administrations, data, facts, good practices, tools, and key aspects for a fairer urban transition.



FEM.GREEN goes beyond sustainability; it is rooted in justice, inclusion, and the transformation of urban design to truly reflect the diverse needs and voices of society.

The FEM.GREEN toolbox systematises the insights and conclusions generated through an international peer-to-peer exchange and reflection process. Drawing on the experience of a community of over 150 professionals and engaged individuals from around the world, it brings together key ideas, topics, and strategies that shape the FEM.GREEN framework. It also compiles resources and tools used in best practice cases to promote and influence a green and feminist transition in cities.

02

# FEM.GREEN APPROACH

Intersectionality

Climate justice

Active citizenship

Collaborative learning

The gender and green agendas are deeply interconnected and share important commonalities, especially when grounded in urban contexts. These agendas should never have been approached separately, as gender and environmental issues are inherently intertwined in everyday life at the local level. An effective environmental response must center all people — no one can be left behind.

Cities have a significant impact on the climate. Externally, they are major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, playing a central role in driving global climate change. Internally, urban activity and its interaction with the climate and surrounding environment directly affect key aspects of both individual and collective life, such as well-being, health, and safety.

In this context, urban policies must address both dimensions in an integrated manner: on the one hand, by acknowledging cities as systems embedded within an ecologically interdependent planet; and on the other, by understanding the urban environment as a physical space that directly shapes the living conditions of its inhabitants.

Individuals and communities are affected differently based on their gender roles, identities and socio-economic conditions. Women often bear a disproportionate burden in environmental degradation and climate change due to their roles as primary caregivers and their engagement with environmentally sensitive sectors like agriculture and water management, making them vulnerable to environment-related disruptions.

In recent years, the world has been hit by repeated shocks and multiple crises. What remains constant is the fact that when a crisis strikes, women and girls suffer disproportionately. The crises and shocks continuously threaten to create new challenges and reverse years of progress on women's rights and gender equality.

The FEM.GREE approach integrates intersectionality as a key framework for rethinking urban spaces through an ecological and feminist perspective. Cities are not neutral environments; they are socially and politically constructed spaces that reflect dominant societal values shaped by patriarchal dynamics and systems of overproduction. These power structures do not function independently but rather intersect and reinforce one another, creating a complex web of oppression.

Within this context, intersectionality emerges as an essential analytical tool for understanding the convergence of multiple systems of domination and their effects on bodies, territories, and socio-environmental relations. This integrated perspective

supports the development of more just urban models that promote both gender equity and ecological sustainability. However, it is crucial to recognize that there is no single definition of intersectionality as it relates to gender and ecology; instead, its meaning is shaped by the diverse realities and lived experiences of individuals and communities.

Gender and ecological analysis must be grounded in lived experience, beginning at the community and neighborhood scale to enable a subsequent, multi-scalar analytical interpretation. This approach advocates for the de-hierarchization of knowledge by incorporating the perspectives and insights of those who inhabit urban spaces and are directly affected by various forms of discrimination.

It also calls for the depatriarchalization of urban planning, highlighting and acknowledging the role of women in shaping cities. Furthermore, integrating territorial analysis and recognizing the contextual differences between scales—such as urban and rural, or center and periphery—is essential to understanding how social phenomena take spatial form, and to comprehensively addressing the issues explored within the FEM.GREEN framework.

In relation to the importance of experience in identifying gaps that undermine gender equity and environmental sustainability, a set of analytical tools and methodologies grounded in empirical evidence and validated approaches is incorporated. These methodologies enable precise and context-sensitive diagnostics that reveal structural inequalities and the differentiated impacts based on gender and environmental factors.

Furthermore, collaborative learning is promoted as a key strategy to strengthen community capacities, fostering empowerment processes that support informed and autonomous decision-making. In this way, communities are not only better equipped to understand their socio-environmental realities, but also to critically engage with them in an equitable and sustainable manner.

03

# THE TOPICS

The topics are the result of an international reflection on the proposed approach. They define the key areas of work to effectively implement the FEM.GREEN perspective.

01



Inclusive public spaces  
and urban green  
infrastructure



# 1.1

## NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS THAT FOSTERS CLIMATE JUSTICE AND URBAN RESILIENCE

Climate adaptation Climate impact mitigation  
Ecosystem-based solutions  
Climate justice Nature-based solutions

This subtopic focuses on the implementation of nature-based solutions (NBS) to address urban climate challenges — such as heatwaves and flooding — in an equitable manner. These solutions aim not only to mitigate climate impacts, but also to promote social and environmental justice in vulnerable communities.



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### Strategies

- Prioritise the implementation of nature-based solutions — such as green roofs, rain gardens, and green corridors — in neighbourhoods facing high levels of climate and social vulnerability.
- Design multifunctional green spaces that deliver both environmental benefits (e.g. shade, temperature reduction, stormwater management) and social benefits (e.g. meeting areas, recreational opportunities, and support for mental health).
- Promote the active participation of local communities in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of green infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability and foster a sense of ownership.

# 1.2

## FEMINIST AND CARE-CENTERED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Feminist urban design Care infrastructure  
Accessibility Inclusive recreation  
Community well-being

This subtopic proposes the design of parks and green public spaces from a feminist and intersectional perspective, prioritising safety, comfort, and accessibility for all. It advocates for the integration of care infrastructures and community participation as foundational pillars in creating urban environments that foster well-being, social connection, and spatial justice.



### Strategies

- Design parks and recreational green spaces with features that promote safety, visibility and comfort—such as appropriate lighting, natural surveillance, and inclusive pathways—prioritising the needs of women, children, older adults and vulnerable groups.
- Ensure the inclusion of care infrastructure in public space design, including child-friendly areas, accessible restrooms, breastfeeding zones, shaded seating and other amenities that support caregiving activities and intergenerational use.
- Promote collective planning processes—such as community mapping and citizen assemblies—that allow residents, especially women and caregivers, to co-design public green areas that reflect their needs, rhythms and values.
- Integrate sustainability and ease of maintenance into the design of parks and public spaces, balancing environmental goals with long-term usability and shared responsibility for care and upkeep.



Social equity in urban renewal

Displacement prevention

Community-driven restoration

Care work recognition Gender and climate risks

This subtopic addresses urban regeneration from an ecofeminist perspective, aiming to prevent green gentrification processes that displace vulnerable communities. It promotes regenerative urbanism that prioritises social equity, recognises care work, and fosters community participation in the transformation of the urban environment.



## Strategies

- Prevent green gentrification by ensuring that urban regeneration projects incorporate strong social equity measures — such as anti-displacement policies, access to affordable housing, and the right to remain — for low-income and historically marginalised communities.
- Promote regenerative urbanism that challenges extractive development models and places care, sustainability, and equity at the core of city transformation strategies.
- Recognise and support care work and community knowledge in environmental restoration efforts, ensuring that women, caregivers, and local organisations lead the design, implementation, and long-term stewardship of green projects.
- Integrate ecofeminist principles into climate-adaptive regeneration policies by linking environmental restoration to circular economies, food sovereignty, and social infrastructure that strengthens collective resilience.

Local food systems Urban agriculture

Women's empowerment in agriculture

Food justice Food Sovereignty

This subtopic promotes community-based urban agriculture as a strategy to strengthen food sovereignty, climate resilience, and social justice. It highlights the importance of empowering women and vulnerable communities to lead sustainable food production initiatives in underutilised urban spaces.



## Strategies

- Promote urban agriculture initiatives — such as community gardens, rooftop farms, and vertical gardens — in underutilised urban spaces, prioritising the participation, leadership, and access of women and marginalised groups.
- Recognise urban agriculture as essential green infrastructure for climate adaptation and food justice, and integrate it into municipal planning frameworks and climate resilience strategies.
- Encourage Cooperative Farming Models where community members, particularly women and marginalized groups, can work together to produce and distribute food. This model not only strengthens local food systems but also creates economic opportunities for those traditionally excluded from the economic mainstream
- Establish long-term funding mechanisms for community-based food initiatives through public investment, grants, or micro-loans, ensuring their continuity and social impact in vulnerable urban areas.



# Sustainable mobility and mobility of care

Women still dominantly carry out the biggest share of care work, meaning that they take more responsibility for organizing family life. This usually goes hand in hand with the transport of shopping and other people, and consequently results in very specific needs regarding accessibility to transport infrastructure. Trip-chaining, the combination of different trips, is more typical for journeys made by women than men and happens closer to home, therefore being more dependent on a good walking and cycling infrastructure. (Women on the Move: Sustainable Mobility and Gender European Mobility Atlas 2021)

Care-focused mobility   Decarbonized transport

Gendered transportation needs

Sustainable mobility solutions   Transport equity

This subtopic defines the overarching framework for transforming urban mobility through a feminist and climate-just perspective. It emphasises the need to decarbonise transport systems while ensuring they accommodate diverse mobility patterns associated with care work, social inequalities, and climate vulnerability. It sets out the principles that guide the development of specific dimensions of mobility — such as active travel, safe public transport, and climate resilience — ensuring that the transition towards sustainable urban transport simultaneously advances social and gender justice.



### Strategies

- Prioritise the implementation of nature-based solutions — such as green roofs, rain gardens, and green corridors — in neighbourhoods facing high levels of climate and social vulnerability.
- Design multifunctional green spaces that deliver both environmental benefits (e.g. shade, temperature reduction, stormwater management) and social benefits (e.g. meeting areas, recreational opportunities, and support for mental health).
- Promote the active participation of local communities in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of green infrastructure to ensure long-term sustainability and foster a sense of ownership.

Active travel Safe walking and cycling

Inclusive transportation Sustainable mobility

Gender-sensitive infrastructure

This subtopic emphasises the importance of promoting active mobility — walking, cycling, and other non-motorised modes — as a fundamental component of a low-carbon and socially just city. It advocates for the design of inclusive and safe infrastructure that eliminates access barriers for women, girls, and vulnerable groups.



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### Strategies

- Promote active mobility as a central pillar of sustainable transport to reduce urban emissions and improve public health. Develop green corridors, including safe cycle-pedestrian routes, that connect key locations (workplaces, schools, healthcare centres), prioritising access for women and vulnerable groups.
- Embed active mobility within green mobility frameworks, systematically removing barriers related to gender, age, and disability.
- Ensure that active mobility infrastructures are designed from a dual climate and care perspective. Ensure their adaptation to changing climatic phenomena with draining pavements, sun protection or safe evacuation routes, while maintaining a design adapted to specific needs, such as children's circulation or cargo bicycles.

Anti-harassment policies Women's safety in transit

Gender-based violence prevention

Surveillance and monitoring Safety infrastructure

This subtopic addresses the transformation of public transport from the perspective of safety and gender equity. It proposes measures aimed at eliminating harassment, ensuring safe spaces, and building public mobility systems that respect the rights and meet the needs of women and historically marginalised groups.



### Strategies

- Design public transport systems from a gender-sensitive perspective, ensuring that the safety needs of women, caregivers, and marginalised groups are prioritised across all stages of planning, implementation, and operation.
- Implement anti-harassment policies, active surveillance measures, and design standards (such as well-lit stations and safe stops) to prevent gender-based violence in public transport, particularly during night-time hours.
- Establish rapid response protocols to address incidents of violence or insecurity, and provide comprehensive training for all transport personnel on gender equality, human rights, and anti-discrimination practices.



Affordable transit solutions Eco-friendly transport

Equitable transport systems

Resilient transport systems

Transit-oriented development

This subtopic focuses on building public transport networks that are low-carbon, resilient to the effects of climate change, and designed to address territorial inequalities. It seeks to ensure that the benefits of the green transition are accessible to historically vulnerable communities.



### Strategies

- Expand public transport networks to provide affordable, safe, and accessible services for marginalised communities — particularly women, caregivers, and low-income populations — with a focus on prioritising underserved areas.
- Develop low-emission and climate-resilient transport systems capable of operating safely during extreme weather events, including heatwaves, storms, and floods.
- Integrate climate justice and social equity principles into transport planning, ensuring that the benefits of decarbonisation — such as electric fleets and green corridors — are distributed equitably across all urban areas, while actively preventing green gentrification.



# Feminist and climate- just urban governance

When the gender representation of sectors is examined, it is noticeable that the sectors with the most significant carbon impact also have a low representation of women. Energy, transport, housing and agriculture are also analysed as crucial sectors in other reports on climate change policies and gender. (Nordic Council of Ministers)



Gender mainstreaming Innovative democracy  
Institutional equity

This subtopic focuses on strengthening institutional frameworks that ensure gender mainstreaming and climate justice in urban planning and transition policies. It involves policy commitments, resources, institutional capacity building and participatory monitoring mechanisms that promote governance that is more equitable, resilient and responsive to the differentiated impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable communities.



## Strategies

- Adopt **inclusive legal and regulatory frameworks** that institutionalise gender equality and climate justice as a guiding principle. This includes reforming existing regulations and creating new laws that mandate an intersectional approach at all stages of the urban and climate policy cycle, from formulation to implementation and evaluation.
- Design and implement mandatory **fem.green-sensitive assessment** processes. These assessments should be a standard part of all urban decision-making processes, considering differentiated impacts by gender, age, class, ethnicity and other variables, in order to reduce structural inequalities.
- Establish **participatory monitoring and evaluation** systems with an intersectional approach. The systematic collection and use of data disaggregated by gender and other variables is key. These systems should include citizen follow-up mechanisms to ensure institutional transparency and accountability.
- Strengthen **institutional capacity through continuous training of public staff**. Implement mandatory training programmes on gender, intersectionality and climate justice for all technical and political staff in local public administration. This contributes to transforming institutional culture from within.
- Strengthen **advocacy to integrate feminist perspective into urban and climate planning**. Support social movements, feminist networks and community organisations to actively participate in defining institutional priorities. This implies opening formal channels for dialogue and direct influence on public policies.

Inclusive leadership Feminist urban governance  
Gender equity in decision-making  
Grassroots urban activism

This sub-topic promotes equitable access to leadership and decision-making spaces in urban and climate transition contexts. It seeks to make visible and strengthen the role of women, LGBTQIA+ people and racialised communities, with a clear commitment to the redistribution of power. It incorporates the principle that the people and territories most affected by the climate crisis must be at the centre of political, technical and community leadership spaces.



## Strategies

- Ensure the **effective representation** of women and dissidents in urban and climate planning processes. This implies establishing criteria for parity, meaningful participation and monitoring mechanisms that ensure inclusion beyond symbolic presence.
- **Remove structural barriers** through affirmative action policies with an intersectional approach. Adopt measures such as inclusive quotas, historical correction mechanisms, and internal rules that address multiple discriminations based on gender, race, sexual orientation or migrant status.
- Implement **mentoring and training programmes** for diverse leadership in urban and climate governance. Design strategies for training, mentoring and support networks for women, youth and non-normative people to access leadership roles with concrete tools.
- **Fund and strengthen feminist community leadership** in urban climate justice. Allocate public funds and technical support to grassroots organisations led by women and dissidents that promote just, sustainable and locally-rooted solutions.
- Review and **transform institutional power dynamics**. Promote power audits, more horizontal structures, and internal evaluation mechanisms that challenge patriarchal, racist or colonialist logics in urban governance.

### 3.3

## PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE TO DESIGN RESILIENT URBAN FUTURES

Social innovation Feminist urban governance

Community-led planning

Representation in policy-making

This subtopic proposes rethinking traditional models of institutional participation through feminist, care-centred and climate-sensitive methodologies. It recognises the importance of including historically marginalised voices in the planning of just and resilient cities, and positions participation as a transformative tool in the face of ecological and social crisis.



### Strategies

- Apply **intersectional participatory methodologies** that recognise multiple forms of oppression (gender, class, race, disability, etc.) and climate vulnerability, ensuring meaningful inclusion.
- Design **horizontal participatory processes**, with non-hierarchical structures that distribute power and promote co-responsibility in decision-making. Ensure access to informed processes that take into account the slow variables and impacts of climate change.
- Establish active **accessibility mechanisms** (clear language, interpretation, careful schedules, safe spaces, etc.) so that all people can participate fully.
- **Recognise and redistribute care work**, incorporating concrete supports such as childcare, time compensation, and times adapted to the reality of the participants, especially in processes linked to adaptation and resilience.
- Ensure transparency and accountability at all stages of the process, including clear decision-making criteria and participatory evaluation mechanisms.
- Focus processes on structural transformation, not just inclusion. The aim is to change who participates, how decisions are made and what priorities are put at the centre.

### 3.4

## FEMINIST GOVERNANCE OF NIGHT CITIES

Nighttime justice Safe spaces and mobility

Night workers rights Inclusive nightlife

Addresses the night as a key urban space for gender and climate justice. This subtopic makes night inequalities visible and promotes policies that guarantee safety, mobility and rights for all people who live or work at night.



### Strategies

- Address gender dynamics in night-time economies and policies, with attention to visibility, safety and climate vulnerability.
- Design accessible, safe and functional night-time urban spaces for all gender identities.
- Ensure equity in night-time transport, with safe and gender-sensitive services especially in sustainable modes of transport such as bike infrastructure and public transport.
- Incorporate principles of sustainability in night-time planning, reducing environmental impacts and reinforcing inclusion.
- Ensure the possibility of participation of night-time workers in public policy design processes.





# Gender-inclusive urban health and well-being

Climate-Related Health Risks. Women face heightened vulnerability to health risks from climate change, such as heatwaves, vector-borne diseases, and food and water scarcity. During environmental crises, women's access to healthcare often diminishes due to social and economic constraints.

## 4.1

## ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE IN URBAN AREAS

Urban health equity

Health justice

Mental health access

Social care networks

Public health in cities

This subtopic addresses structural inequalities in access to healthcare services in urban settings. It proposes transforming health systems to make them accessible, affordable, culturally inclusive, and gender-sensitive, while also adapting to emerging public health challenges driven by climate change.



### Strategies

- Strengthen healthcare infrastructure in underserved areas to ensure equitable access for all genders, with particular emphasis on reproductive health, mental health, and gender-sensitive services .
- Expand digital health solutions to reach marginalized and low-income communities, especially in the context of climate-related mobility restrictions and emergencies. .
- Integrate climate adaptation strategies into urban health planning by strengthening healthcare facilities, community care networks, and public wellness infrastructure as key resilience assets against extreme weather events and environmental stresses.



## 4.2

# PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE TO DESIGN RESILIENT URBAN FUTURES

Post-growth urbanism

Well-being and care economy Slow cities

Ecological transition Feminist degrowth

This subtopic proposes a shift away from urban models centred on continuous economic growth towards new frameworks focused on human and environmental well-being. It advocates for reorienting urban development to prioritise health equity, care infrastructure, social cohesion, and climate resilience. In the context of the climate transition, promoting proximity-based services, low-carbon lifestyles, and regenerative local systems is essential to reducing emissions while strengthening community health and social justice.



## Strategies

- Reorient urban development priorities by replacing economic growth indicators (such as GDP) with well-being frameworks that prioritise health equity, care infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and community resilience.
- Promote compact, proximity-based urban planning models that reduce dependency on private vehicles, facilitate low-carbon mobility, and ensure that housing, healthcare services, food access, and public spaces are available within short walking or cycling distances.
- Support housing and food systems that strengthen local economies, promote social cohesion, and integrate climate mitigation objectives, ensuring that urban sustainability efforts simultaneously enhance well-being and reduce inequalities. Support housing models and food systems that emphasize sustainability, community, and health.

## 4.3

# POLLUTION REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH WOMEN'S HEALTH PERSPECTIVE

Climate vulnerability & Urban heat islands

Air pollution & Clean energy access

Reproductive health & Maternal health

Heat exposure & Water scarcity Sanitation access

Ecofeminism

This subtopic explores how pollution and climate change exacerbate health inequities in urban areas, disproportionately affecting women, girls, and marginalised communities. It promotes feminist and climate-just approaches to urban health policies, ensuring that mitigation and adaptation strategies actively reduce environmental health risks and advance gender equity within broader climate resilience efforts.



## Strategies

- Acknowledge and address the gendered impacts of environmental health risks, ensuring that urban policies and climate adaptation plans respond to the specific vulnerabilities of women and marginalized genders.
- Strengthen climate adaptation policies to protect communities from heat stress, food insecurity, and water scarcity, and sanitation challenges, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable population. .
- Regulate, monitor and reduce urban pollutants – especially in air and water contaminants – that disproportionately affect reproductive, maternal, and respiratory health aligning pollution control efforts with gender and climate justice objectives.

Trauma-informed design & Psychological safety

Healing environments Sensory-friendly

Wellness infrastructure Emotional resilience

This subtopic focuses on strengthening spaces and infrastructures that support physical and mental well-being in urban settings, particularly for women, caregivers, and vulnerable groups. It advocates for recognising and enhancing local health assets — such as green spaces, community care centres, public wellness facilities, and safe mobility networks — as key components of climate adaptation strategies.



### Strategies

- Identify and map local health assets — including parks, public spaces, care networks, and wellness infrastructures — particularly in underserved neighbourhoods, prioritising access for women, caregivers, and vulnerable communities.
- Invest in the expansion and maintenance of public spaces and green infrastructure that promote physical activity, emotional resilience, and social cohesion, integrating climate adaptation features such as shading, water access, and heat-mitigation designs
- Develop urban planning policies that strengthen care infrastructures (childcare centres, eldercare services, safe community hubs) as essential components of urban climate resilience strategies.
- Incorporate trauma-informed design principles and mental health support services into community health assets, ensuring that urban resilience extends beyond physical infrastructure to include emotional and social well-being.



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