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Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean

The future of work in Latin America
and the Caribbean: old and new forms
of employment and challenges
for labour regulation



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Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is a twice-yearly report prepared jointly by the Economic Development Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Office for the Southern Cone of Latin America of the International Labour Organization (ILO), headed by Daniel Titelman and Fabio Bertranou, respectively. Work on the document was coordinated by Gerhard Reinecke, Senior Expert on Employment Policies of ILO, and Jürgen Weller, Chief of the Employment Studies Unit of the Economic Development Division of ECLAC.

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Foreword

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a set of guidelines for moving towards a new vision of development, as set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Emphasis has rightly been placed on the Goals' indivisibility and none have been prioritized over others. However, work is evidently the main source of income for the vast majority of households in the region. Sustainable Development Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) therefore has a key role. Indeed, the lack of decent work opportunities not only affects people's income and well-being, but is also one of the factors that "lead to an erosion of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress".¹

Over medium- and longer-term horizons such as those of the 2030 Agenda, progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 8 is subject to a number of trends that will have a profound impact on labour markets, including rapid population ageing, large migratory movements and the transformation of the production structure towards environmentally sustainable growth. Previous issues of this report looked at the associated challenges regarding the creation of quality employment, specifically with regard to the employment prospects of older persons and immigrants, as well as the outlook for creation of decent work in a context of environmental and production transformations.

Another trend that is affecting labour markets in the region—and will do so with greater force in the future—comes from the technological transformations of what has come to be known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The future of work, which will be significantly affected by these changes, has been selected by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as one of the central topics for discussion in 2019, the year of its centenary. Recently, with a proposal of "harnessing and managing technology for decent work", the Global Commission on the Future of Work established by ILO drew attention to the relationship between new technologies and work as a matter requiring renewed dialogue and regulation. At the regional level, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) provides support for the organization of the Ministerial Conferences on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean—the seventh of which will be held in 2020—which promote the development of policies for productive and inclusive use of new technologies.

This twentieth issue of the joint ECLAC/ILO report analyses a specific issue that is extremely relevant to the relationship between new technologies and decent work. Digital platforms create new job opportunities both locally and in global digital markets. However, these new forms of work

¹ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, *The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. An opportunity for Latin America and the Caribbean* (LC/G.2681/Rev.2), Santiago, April 2017.

are often performed outside existing regulations, denying these workers legally established labour and social rights. A key question in this regard is whether these new forms of work are a new form of wage employment or independent work, or whether the regulatory framework should be adapted, since neither the rules on wage employment nor those on self-employment adequately reflect the characteristics of these jobs.

This report emphasizes that digital platforms give rise to different forms of work that have novel features, as well as characteristics akin to existing forms of work in the region, such as agricultural day labour or home-based work. In fact, divergent views emerged—and continue to emerge—as to whether these traditional forms of work are dependent or independent. It is argued that the discussion on proper regulation of the new forms of work can draw on the guidelines that were developed in the past with respect to long-standing types of labour relations. In this regard, the Global Commission on the Future of Work has proposed a Universal Labour Guarantee of fundamental workers' rights, regardless of contractual arrangement or employment status.

In addition to the medium- and long-term challenges that must be overcome to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 8, the economic conditions facing Latin America and the Caribbean are not conducive to significant progress in the short term. In real terms, the region's per capita GDP in 2018 fell short of the 2013 figure; nor is the outlook for 2019 very auspicious, with regional economic growth projected at 1.3%, meaning that per capita GDP will be almost stagnant.

The first chapter of this report analyses the region's labour trends in 2018, finding that, although the regional unemployment rate did not rise (for the first time since 2015), this was not the result of a rebound in labour demand, since most of the new employment consisted of non-wage work. The expansion of own-account work—and the more prevalent informality of wage employment—in several countries represent further setbacks to progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 8. Gender gaps have narrowed in participation and employment rates, but not in unemployment rates. Moreover, the growth in female employment is occurring in a context in which most new jobs are of poor quality. Lastly, although real wages rose, the gains were generally smaller than in prior years, except in countries with high inflation.

The performance of the region's economies in the first few months of 2019 and the outlook for the remainder of the year do not support a forecast of significant improvements. In particular, wage employment creation will remain weak and gains in average real wages will be small. On average for the year, the unemployment rate is projected to remain largely unchanged from 2018, at around 9.3% in urban areas and 8.0% at the national level.

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I. Labour market trends in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2018

Introduction

After the sustained deterioration in labour market conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean from 2015 to 2017, a moderate improvement in labour performance was expected for 2018, mainly owing to the recovery in economic growth and the related revitalization of labour demand (ECLAC/ILO, 2018). Contrary to expectations, however, economic growth did not pick up in 2018; instead, the growth rate was slightly lower than in 2017 at 1.1%.

In this context, the expected upturn in the employment rate did not materialize either, although the rate did increase for the first time in five years. Nevertheless, the increase was minimal (0.1 percentage point) and was not driven by creation of wage employment.

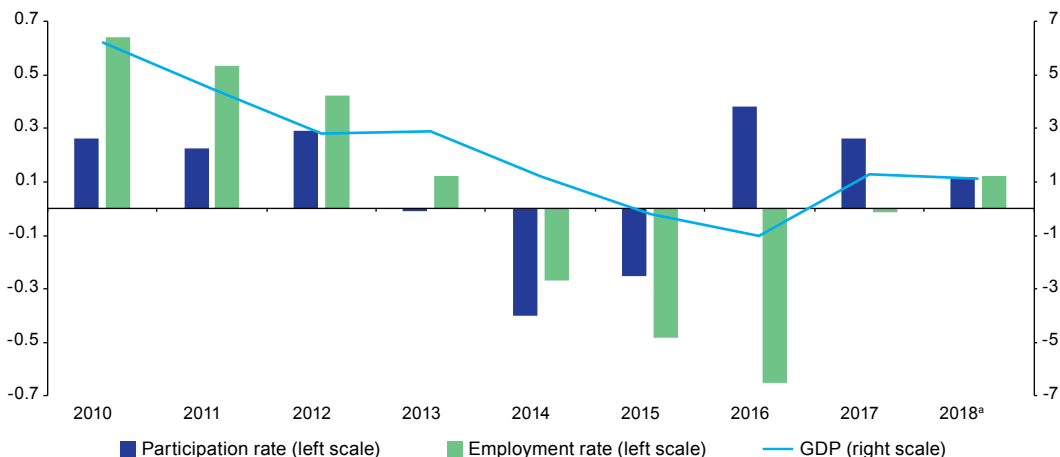
At the urban level, this slight increase in the employment rate was offset by a similar increase in the labour supply, so that the urban unemployment rate in Latin America and the Caribbean remained at 9.3%. At the national level, the region's participation rate remained stable, so that the slight increase in the employment rate led to a modest reduction in the unemployment rate, from 8.2% to 8.0%.

The rise in the unemployment rate between 2015 and 2017 —by 2.4 percentage points— was thus halted. Despite this, other indicators show further deterioration in average employment quality in many countries, owing to insufficient creation of wage employment with respect to the needs of many of those seeking labour income and also to increases in informal wage employment, counteracting the progress made in formalization between the mid-2000s and the current decade.

A. 2018 marked an end to the rise in the unemployment rate, but it remained high

Figure I.1 shows the close correlation between the change in the urban employment rate and economic growth. The sharp slowdown in growth between 2010 and 2016 had a marked impact on job creation, first by tempering increases in the employment rate and then by driving the rate down. In 2017 and 2018, the slight recovery in growth led to stabilization of the employment rate.

Figure I.1
Latin America and the Caribbean: variation in urban participation, employment and economic growth rates, 2010–2018
(Percentage points and percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a Preliminary data.

In contrast, the participation rate showed mixed performance. In the first few years of the decade, the labour supply increased, as job creation was relatively strong, reflecting a long-term trend towards stronger labour force participation by women. Between 2013 and 2015, weaker employment options led to the withdrawal of a proportion of the labour force from the job market. However, from 2016 onward urban participation began to climb again, even though wage employment creation had not yet picked up, probably driven by many households' income needs; new sources of labour income were thus created, above all through own-account work, as will be seen below.

Figure I.2 shows the year-on-year variation in the main labour variables in 2018, in urban areas as a whole, and the national total.¹ Employment rates increased by around 0.1 percentage points at the urban and national levels, while the participation rate increased in urban areas, but remained stable in the national figures. As a result, the urban unemployment rate was almost the same as the previous year while the national unemployment figure was slightly down.²

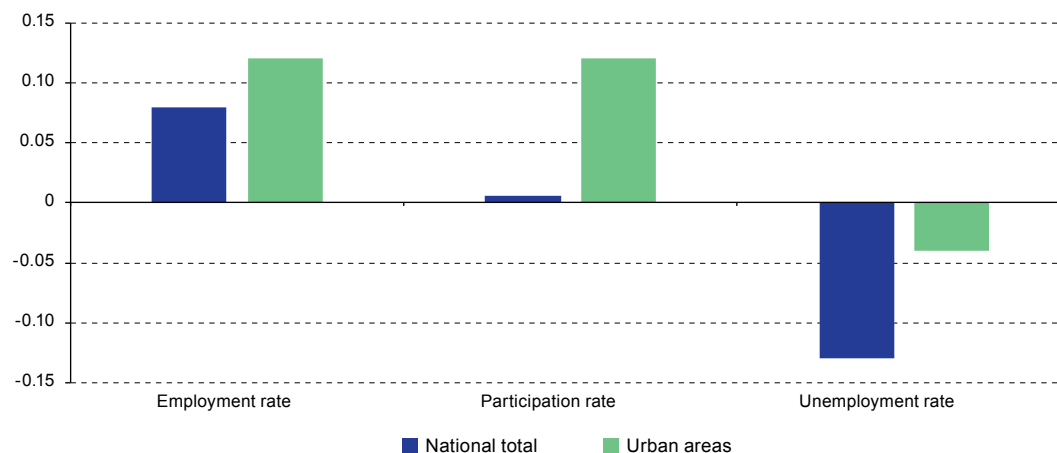
¹ Urban rates tend to reflect the impact of the economic situation to a greater extent. In contrast, rural rates —and therefore national rates— cover much of the agricultural sector, which for structural reasons tends to record low rates of open unemployment and a more measured impact from the economic situation, especially as regards the labour supply reflected in the participation rate.

² The three rates (employment, participation and unemployment) tend to be higher in urban areas than in rural areas, and therefore higher than the national total.

Figure I.2

Latin America and the Caribbean: year-on-year variation in urban and national employment, participation and unemployment rates, 2018^a

(Percentage points)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a Preliminary data.

This regional result is largely due to the performance of the labour market in Brazil, where the employment rate increased 0.2 percentage points both nationally and in the 20 major metropolitan regions. The participation rate also rose (0.1 percentage points) in urban areas but fell by the same extent at the national level. As a result, the unemployment rate fell more sharply at the national level (0.5 percentage points) than in urban areas (0.3 percentage points).

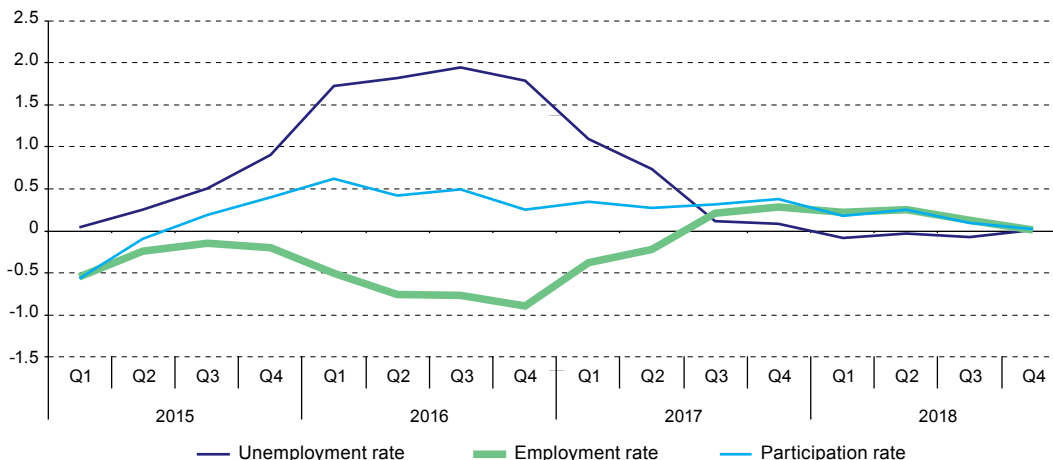
Therefore, whereas in previous years the sharp downturn in the Brazilian labour market had a marked impact through increases in unemployment rates at the regional level, in 2018 its impact was the opposite. Indeed, while in Brazil unemployment fell moderately both at the national level and in urban areas, in the rest of the region the results were less auspicious, with unemployment edging up both at the urban level (from 6.1% to 6.2%) and nationwide (from 5.5% to 5.6%); the disparate behaviour of urban and national unemployment rates at the regional level is therefore largely due to the contrasting evolution of these rates in Brazil.

Of the 19 countries with available information, the urban unemployment rate rose by more than 0.1 percentage points in 10 (Argentina, Bahamas, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay), dropped 0.1 percentage points in six (Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico and Peru) and remained stable in 3 (Barbados, Belize and the Dominican Republic).

The trends in urban employment, participation and unemployment rates over the year show that: (i) movements in employment and participation rates were strongly correlated, (ii) the variations on the prior year were small, and (iii) the regional labour market lost momentum towards the end of the year (see figure I.3).

Figure I.3

Latin America and the Caribbean (12 countries):^a year-on-year variation in participation, employment and unemployment rates, first quarter 2015–fourth quarter 2018^b
(Percentage points)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a Weighted average for the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Includes estimates based on partial data.

^b Data for 2018 are preliminary.

B. Women's participation and employment rates rose, but the unemployment rate gap did not narrow

Figure I.4 illustrates the divergent patterns in employment and participation rates for men and women; changes in rates are shown at the national level, weighted by each country's working-age population. Behind the slight overall increase in the employment rate are opposing variations for each sex: a much steeper increase for women and a slight fall for men. Furthermore, the regional participation rate stood still, reflecting the combined impact of an increase in the rate for women and a fall of a similar amount in the rate for men. Therefore, the long-term trend of women's rising participation in labour markets has continued, while men's participation rate is declining, mainly owing to young men spending more time in education and to population ageing. In the case of women, both factors (higher educational levels and ageing processes) also apply, but are more than offset by increased labour market participation by women of prime working age. However, this rising participation by women is occurring in a situation in which most emerging jobs are of poor quality, as will be seen later.

Figure I.4

Latin America and the Caribbean (19 countries):^a year-on-year changes in national participation, employment and unemployment rates, weighted average and median by sex, 2018^b
(Percentage points)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a The countries covered are Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

^b Preliminary data.

Although men's and women's participation and employment rates show opposing trends, their impact on the unemployment rate in 2018 was similar, with a slight fall in the weighted average in both cases. Regardless, there are still large gender gaps in participation, employment and unemployment rates.

As the medians of the variation rates in the graph show, there are some differences if no weighting is applied. This implies that regional data chiefly reflect the performance of a few countries with large populations. Although the participation and employment rates for men decreased and those for women increased, also in the median, they did so by different magnitudes. Specifically, women's participation and employment rates increased well above the weighted average, while men's employment rate fell more, and their participation rate declined less.

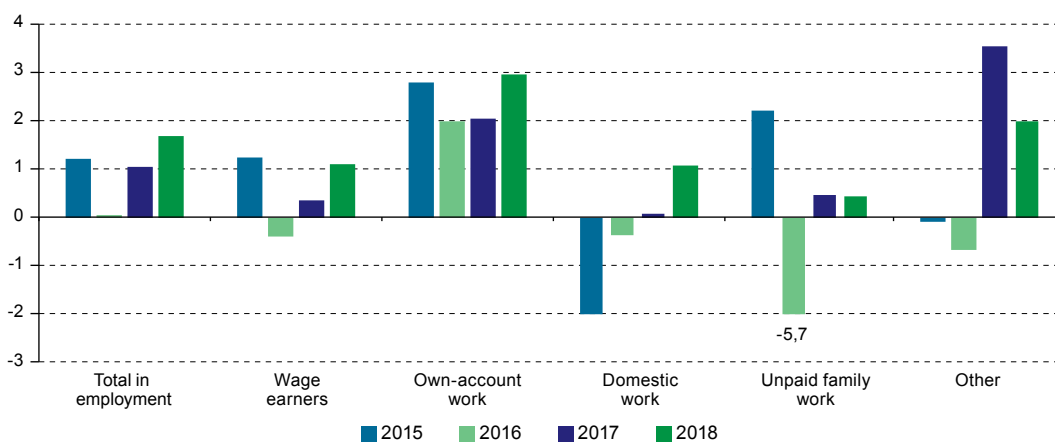
Consequently, in the median (as opposed to the weighted average), unemployment rates increased overall, since, as noted earlier, this rate rose in more countries than it fell. In the median the unemployment rate increased for both sexes, and it did so by slightly more for men. Again, labour participation and levels of employment both increased for women, while in the case of men both rates contracted.

C. Average employment quality continued to decline

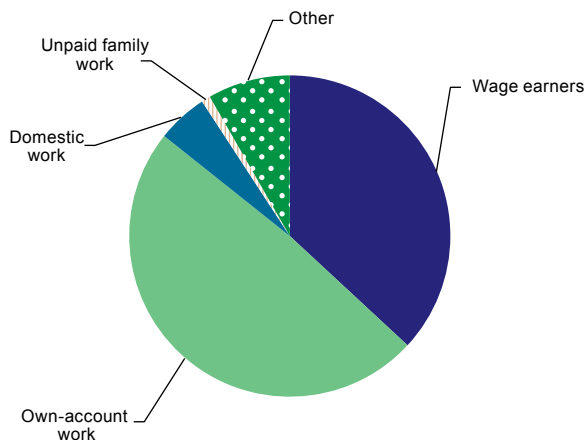
In 2018, the number of people employed in the labour market climbed by approximately 1.7%. Specifically, wage employment creation accelerated slightly on the previous year to 1.1%, the highest rate since 2013. For the sixth consecutive year, however, wage employment expanded less than own-account work —generally of poorer quality— resulting in a continued decline in the average quality of paid work (see figure I.5). Own-account work expanded by 3.0% in 2018; domestic service grew by 1.1% and unpaid family work 0.4%.

Figure I.5
Latin America and the Caribbean (12 countries):^a employment creation by work category
(Percentages)

A. Year-on-year changes, 2015–2018^b



B. Contribution to employment growth, 2018^b



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a Weighted average for the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru.

^b Data for 2018 are preliminary.

The expansion in own-account work thus contributed roughly 49% of the increase in the number of employed in the labour market, while wage employment creation contributed just 37%. Other categories of employment contributed the remaining 14% of the new jobs. This composition of net job creation in 2018 indicates that it mostly comprises low-quality work, signalling a further decline in average employment quality in the region.

While the performance of other indicators in the different countries was fairly mixed, weak wage employment creation prevailed more or less across the board. Of the 14 countries with relevant data, growth in wage employment outpaced own-account work in only 3 (Chile, the Dominican Republic and Honduras), while the opposite was true in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

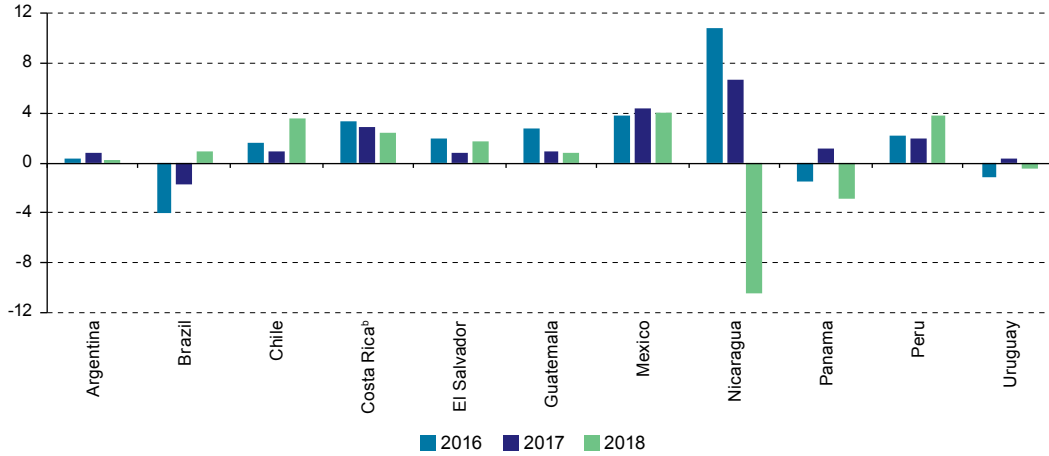
The decline in employment quality inherent in this situation is worsened by the slippage in the quality of wage employment, as well, in a few countries where these data are available. For example, in Argentina the proportion of wage earners making pension contributions fell from 66.1% on average in 2017 to 65.6% in 2018. In the same period, among Brazilian private wage earners, the proportion of workers covered by labour and social legislation fell from 75.7% to 74.6%. In Colombia, the proportion of formal workers in private employment fell slightly, from 80.5% to 80.3%. In contrast, Mexico saw a slight improvement in the composition of wage earners, with the proportion of those with employment benefits rising from 62.3% to 62.7%, and in Chile the proportion of formal workers among private wage earners rose from 82.2% to 82.8%.

The data on registered employment show uneven patterns in quality, and reflect no overall improvement in the performance of labour markets. As figure I.6 shows, on average, registered employment growth gathered pace in Chile, El Salvador and Peru in 2018, while in Brazil, after three years of contractions, this type of employment expanded slightly in absolute terms. In Mexico, private registered employment continued to expand at the relatively high rate of previous years. In Costa Rica, employment growth remained positive but continued to slow gradually. Registered employment fell by different degrees in Panama, in Uruguay and —especially heavily, amid internal conflict— in Nicaragua. In contrast, in Argentina, the average for the year showed a slight increase, despite negative year-on-year variation from September onward as economic activity cooled.

Time-related underemployment patterns also testify to uneven employment quality performance in the region's labour markets. The overall trend leans towards a deterioration, since 7 out of 14 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Panama and Peru) recorded increases of 0.2 percentage points or more in underemployment. In five countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and Paraguay) underemployment fell, while in Chile and Uruguay it remained virtually unchanged (see figure I.7).

These data, together with variations in open unemployment rates and information on the composition of new jobs created, confirm that job creation remains insufficient to meet the employment and income needs of numerous households, and that in many countries the average quality of employment is declining.

Figure I.6
Latin America (11 countries): year-on-year growth in registered employment, 2010–2018^a
(Percentages)

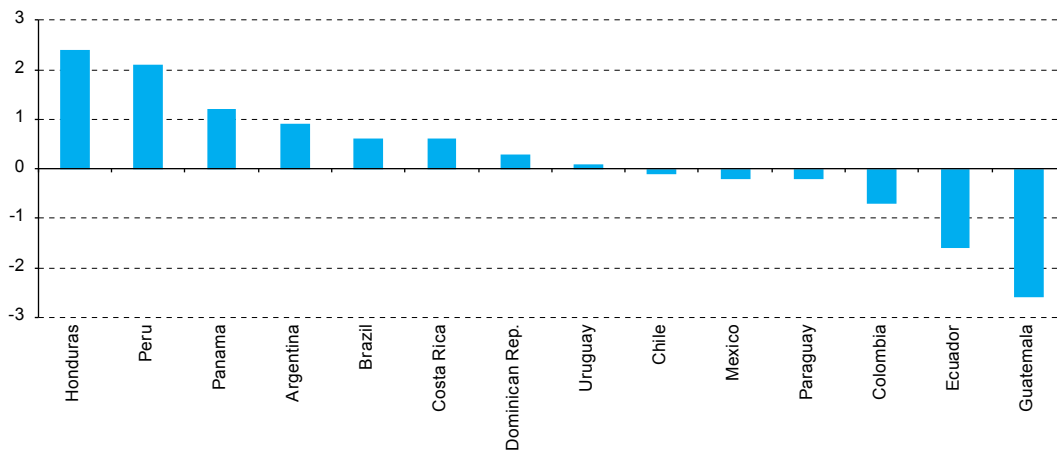


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^a Data refer to wage earners contributing to social security systems, except in the case of Brazil, where they refer to private sector wage earners reported by firms to the General Register of the Employed and Unemployed, and Panama, where the figures reflect the results of a survey of firms with five or more employees.

^b Year-on-year change in the January–July period.

Figure I.7
Latin America (14 countries): year-on-year change in time-related underemployment, 2018
(Percentage points)



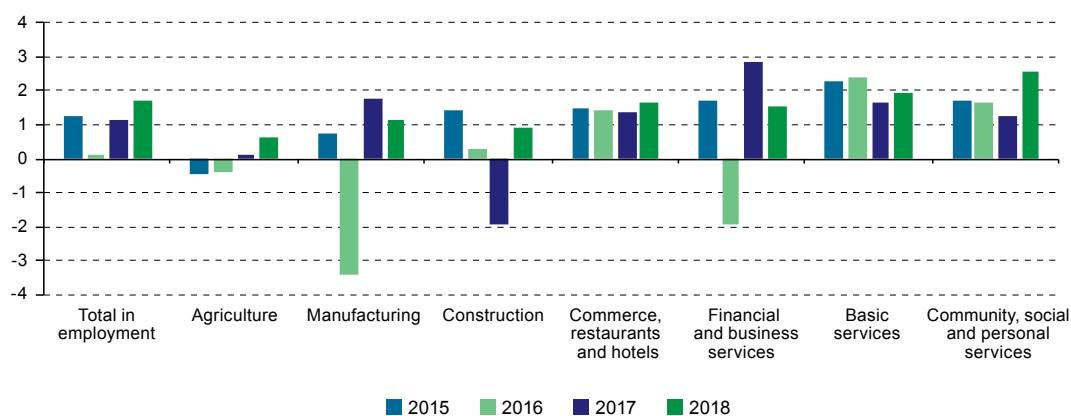
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

D. Employment grows in all branches of activity, especially in the service sector

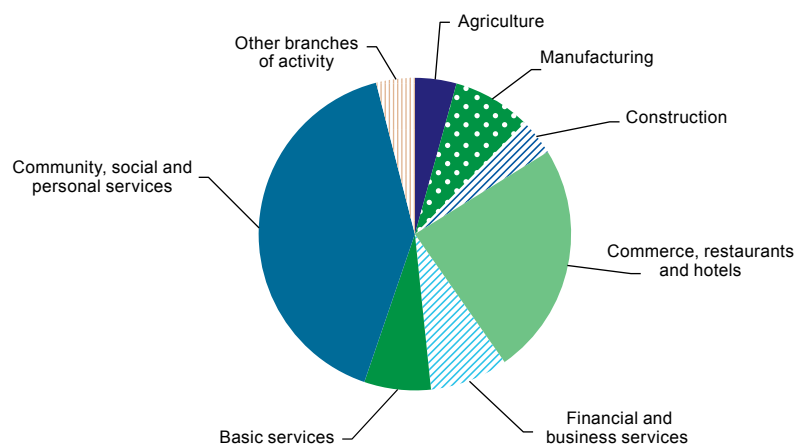
As regards employment creation by branch of activity, none of the main branches recorded a contraction in employment in 2018, for the first time since 2012 (see figure I.8). As has been occurring for some time now, the strongest job creation is being produced by the various branches of the tertiary sector, including community, social and personal services; basic services; and commerce, restaurants and hotels. Meanwhile, following a very weak gain in manufacturing employment starting in 2012 and a contraction in 2016, the timid reactivation of employment in this sector that began in 2017 continued in 2018. Construction posted a modest increase in employment, contrasting with the decline recorded in 2017.

Figure I.8
Latin America and the Caribbean (13 countries):^a employment creation by branch of activity
(Percentages)

A. Year-on-year changes, 2015–2018^b



B. Contribution to employment growth, 2018^b



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

Note: Basic services include electricity, gas and water, as well as transportation, storage and communications.

^a Weighted average for the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru.

^b Data for 2018 are preliminary.

Overall, the tertiary sector accounted for the vast majority of net new jobs; community, social and personal services more than 40%, and commerce, restaurants and hotels 24%. Contributions from branches in other sectors were relatively modest: manufacturing contributed 8% and agriculture and construction around 4% each.

Part of this marked expansion of the tertiary sector in recent years is clearly due to the increase in informal activities with low entry barriers, in many cases own-account work, in response to slack labour demand from firms. Most of these activities are in commerce and some services. This is also evident in figure I.8A, which shows that employment in commerce and in community, social and personal services has expanded every year, with no substantial variations over the economic cycle, reflecting a high proportion of non-wage work.

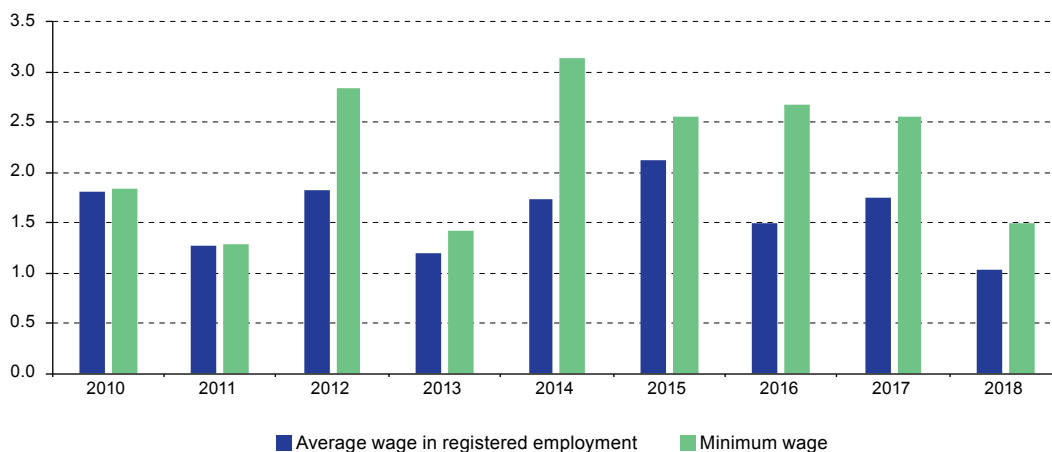
E. Real wage growth slowed

Weak labour demand has contributed to a slowdown in real wage growth. As can be seen in figure I.9, the median real wage growth rate for registered employment in 2018 was the lowest this decade. As regards the region's large countries, real wages in formal private employment stagnated (-0.2%) in Brazil and contracted sharply (-5.7%) in Argentina. In contrast, moderate increases were recorded in Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

Figure I.9

Latin America and the Caribbean: median rate of change in real average wages from registered employment and in the minimum real wage, 2010–2018^a

(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official figures.

^b Data for 2018 are preliminary.

The more conservative wage policies pursued in most countries in 2018, by comparison with previous years, likely contributed to this slowdown in wage growth. As figure I.9 shows, real minimum wage increases of between 2% and 3% prevailed between 2012 and 2017, always exceeding average wage gains. In contrast, in 2018 the median minimum wage hike was 1.5%: although this again topped the rise in average wages, in relation to the minimum wage gains of other years, it surpassed only those of 2011 and 2013.

F. Outlook for 2019

In a complex global economic context, with key hurdles to overcome to shore up economic activity in several countries of the region, the economic growth projection for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019 has been cut to 1.3% (ECLAC, 2019), a rate similar to the previous two years and clearly insufficient to improve labour market performance and social indicators. This will mark six consecutive years of low growth in the region (and even negative growth in 2015 and 2016), a situation which hurts labour markets and has partly reversed the progress made during the preceding period. Although economic growth is not the only factor that influences labour market performance, it has a direct impact on labour demand and determines the availability of resources for more expansionary policies to mitigate that impact, such as active labour market policies.

The low economic growth projected for 2019 is likely keep wage employment creation subdued. Because many households need to generate labour income for subsistence, many of the new jobs will likely be of lower average quality, given that they will consist in the main of some form of own-account work. The employment situation will deteriorate especially badly in countries that are experiencing economic crises in 2019, such as Argentina, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Similarly, it is feared that informal work will continue to expand, owing to weakness in the creation of wage employment —the category that usually accounts for most formal employment— and to existing jobs becoming informal as a result of cost-cutting strategies. These processes certainly pose a policy challenge; nevertheless, a number of strategies to promote formal employment have met with some success in recent years, even in low-growth conditions.

In this context, regional employment and unemployment rates are unlikely to change significantly; in particular, urban and national unemployment rates are expected to come in again at around 9.3% and 8.0%, respectively. With the exception of countries with strong inflationary pressure, real wages are projected to remain relatively stable, with most increases tending to be modest.

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II. The future of work in Latin America and the Caribbean: old and new forms of employment and challenges for labour regulations

Introduction

The inclusion of new technologies in the production system and its impact on labour relations is being intensely debated both globally and in Latin America and the Caribbean. New forms of employment arising from this process include concepts such as teleworkers, so-called “digital labourers” and, more generally, a group of workers who are on the borderline between wage employment and self-employment, often with high levels of informality. These trends, which have recently been examined in the report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2019a), are having an impact on the regulatory framework of labour policies in a context of structural heterogeneity in both production and labour markets that have historically characterized the region.

Despite the innovative effect of new technologies, the new forms of working have historical parallels that offer grounds for reflection as part of the ILO centenary celebrations in 2019. Digital labourers share many traits with day labourers of the past, although the shift from traditional recruiters, or “enganchadores”, to digital intermediary platforms implies changes in scale, to the forms of supervision and income distribution. Similarly, some of today’s homeworkers share many features with traditional, manufacturing sector homeworkers in the region’s urban labour markets since the beginning of the twentieth century and in rural areas from the second half of the twentieth century. While standard labour relations between an employer and a salaried employee with an open-ended, full-time work contract, were considered the height of modernity during the second half of the twentieth century, they were never the only, or even the most widely-used, model in a region that has been characterized by significant levels of informality (covered since the 1970s by the concept of “urban informal sector”). This chapter will identify both continuity and changes in the organization of work and labour relations.

With regard to public policies, the impact of new technologies has given rise to new challenges and issues that require novel regulations, such as salaried employees’ rights to disconnect and to data privacy. Furthermore, legislation defining wage employment needs to be reviewed to ascertain whether it is still up-to-date or whether it needs to be amended to include some digital platform-based jobs. In turn, there are historic challenges that continue to pose a problem. For example, the concerns about reasonable maximum working hours raised in the ILO Hours of Work (Industry) Convention (No. 1), adopted 100 years ago, are still valid today, even though those same working hours could be distributed more flexibly now.

This chapter examines the evolution of labour relations and the most important challenges it poses, firstly in general terms (section A) and then in relation to examples of a traditional form of non-standard employment, manufacturing home work (section B) and an emerging form of work, based on digital labour platforms (section C), which, despite their obvious differences, have much in common in terms of the challenges to identify and regulate the working relationship. Lastly,

section D contains some public policy guidelines and examples of innovative regulations from some countries of the region, which could provide a benchmark for governments, employers and workers in other countries.

A. The future of work and labour relations in the light of history

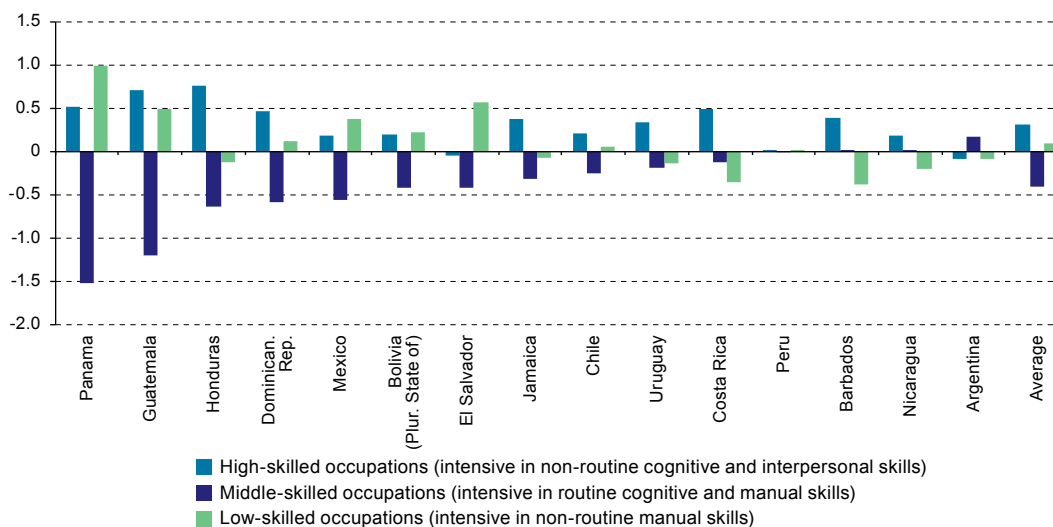
1. The impact of innovation on the quantity and quality of jobs

The current discussion surrounding the impact of technological transformations on the labour market is similar to that which took place during previous waves of technological progress, as it has revolved around the possibilities offered by production restructuring for current and future jobs, with regard to both job creation and destruction and employment conditions and productivity gains, as well as its impact on poverty and inequality levels. However, transformations are now taking place at high speed and have a potentially cross-cutting impact (Schwab, 2016), raising the question of whether this time the process is different from that which has been observed in previous transformations (Mokyr, Vickers and Ziebarth, 2015). When analysing all these potential effects, particularly in employment, there are different perspectives (Tarabusi, 1997; Weller, 2017; OECD, 2019), which can produce differences in the net results of job creation and destruction and in the quality of those jobs. While there is no doubt that a significant number of jobs will be replaced by new technologies, even more will be transformed. There are concerns about the quality of both those jobs that will be transformed and those that will be created on the basis of new technologies. As Weller (2017) notes, the impact of technological change on employment in Latin America cannot be analysed in a deterministic manner as the automatic result of technological innovation, rather technological aspects should be considered in their institutional and organizational context.

At the aggregate level, various studies on employment flows have stressed the substitution rate of those jobs linked to routine (manual and cognitive) skills, together with the growth in new jobs based on non-routine cognitive skills, with high levels of creativity and critical thinking. In this regard, at the global level, the share of employment of occupations involving routine tasks fell 0.6 percentage points annually, while the share of occupations involving non-routine cognitive skills had increased by 0.4 percentage points year-on-year between 1995 and 2012 (World Bank, 2016). This trend can also be seen in Latin America, albeit with differences depending on the data sources. According to the World Bank (2016), the share of employment of high-skilled occupations had increased by 0.3 percentage points annually between 1995 and 2012, while the share of occupations intensive in routine manual and cognitive tasks had fallen by 0.4 percentage points per year (see figure II.1). However, according to ILO (2016), the highest employment growth rate was in non-routine cognitive occupations (3.7% annually) in 30 countries of the region between 1995 and 2015, while occupations involving routine tasks saw relatively less growth (2.3%), but more than jobs involving non-routine manual tasks (see figure II.2).

Figure II.1

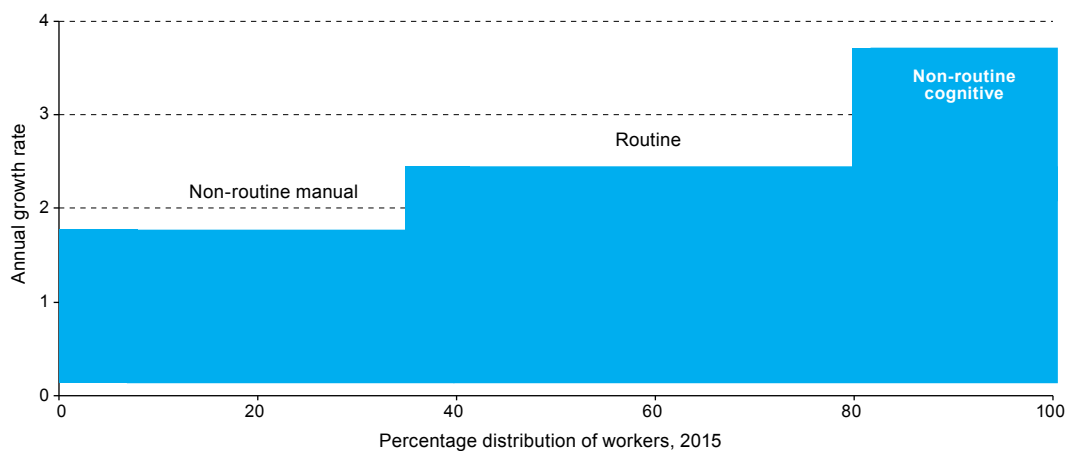
Latin America and the Caribbean: annual average change in employment share by types of occupation, around 1995–around 2012
(Percentage points)



Source: J. Weller, “Las transformaciones tecnológicas y su impacto en los mercados laborales”, *Macroeconomics of Development series*, No. 190 (LC/TS.2017/76), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2017 and World Bank, *World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends Overview*, Washington, D.C., 2016.

Figure II.2

Latin America and the Caribbean (30 countries): annual employment growth rate by type of task, 1995–2015
(Percentages)



Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), *2016 Labour Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean*, Lima, December 2016.

However, the faster pace of growth in occupations intensive in non-routine cognitive tasks does not necessarily mean a better-quality job, rather it reflects the production and labour market heterogeneity that has historically characterized Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, highly productive larger companies, which are relatively less employment-intensive and have

more formal labour relations, have coexisted in the region with a broad cross-section of medium-productivity companies, more focused on local markets, and with low-productivity sectors, made up of own-account, non-professional workers and salaried employees of micro enterprises, which is mainly a reflection of vulnerable households' needs for means of subsistence rather than a sign of an emerging entrepreneurial sector. Those sectors are characterized by limited access to capital, more intense work and a greater tendency to informal labour relations.

Manufacturing home work, which is analysed in section B, clearly corresponds to a low-productivity sector with a high incidence of informal employment. The expansion of home work to cover new services-related activities, generally under the concept of telework, requires greater use of technology, such as telephones, faster telecommunication connections, audio equipment and computers. Digital labour platforms, which are analysed in section C, combine disparate elements. While the coordination and oversight tasks undertaken through the platforms, made possible by the widespread use of the Internet, are high productivity tasks, the work coordinated through the platforms is often quite traditional (such as buying groceries and delivering them to customers' homes) and, as will be shown below, share many elements of informal employment.

While the region's first labour laws established a normative framework for minimum working hours, wages, contract requirements and access to social benefits, particularly during the first half of the twentieth century, they were restricted in their scope because most of the workforce was concentrated in informal jobs. Moreover, countries' institutional capacity to ensure compliance with the rules was generally low, against a backdrop of limited resources and restrictions on the development of socio-employment institutions. In turn, the scope of legal and institutional frameworks was restricted when the limits of the wage-dependent relationship, which underpins regulatory standards, were unclear. This was evident from the employment arrangements of workers on the margins of wage-dependent employment, such as homeworkers, temporary workers or day labourers.

Although these non-standard modalities of work emerged at different points in time and in different sectors, they do share several common aspects. There is a long history of both homeworkers and day labourers in the region. In the past, these forms of work were concentrated in manufacturing (homeworkers) and agriculture (day labourers), although they were also observed to a lesser extent in other economic sectors.

2. The heart of the matter: in search of the employer

While new non-standard forms of employment differ from the old ones in some very important respects, detailed below, they do share a key element that pervades all dimensions of public policy analysis and improvement: doubts about the existence of a dependent employment relationship. For regulations to be effective, it is imperative to determine, first, whether the employment relationship is a dependent one, wage earning, or an independent one, self-employed. In the case of many non-standard forms of employment, whether new or old, the answer to this question is complex because they combine elements associated with both dependent and independent employment. In that regard, it should also be borne in mind that there is considerable variation in the platforms' functions and, therefore, in the specific modalities of the employment relationship. Second, if the employment relationship is found to be dependent, it must be determined who the employer is, something which in many cases is complicated by the existence of triangular employment relationships which may involve different intermediaries (recruiters, platforms, contractors or subcontractors) who assume some of

the responsibilities that are traditionally associated with an employer. This is complicated further if the employer's usual functions are divided between, for example, a platform and the party requesting the labour through that platform.

Doubts about whether forms of employment are classed as wage-earning (dependent) or self-employment (independent) are not a recent phenomenon; they have been evident in the work of ILO since it was established 100 years ago. Two examples of these forms of employment are homeworkers and day labourers who are recruited through an *enganchador*, either in person or virtually through digital platforms. These examples show that this problem has existed in the region since at least the beginning of the twentieth century, although the public policies used to address and resolve it have changed over the years, as has the manner in which those policies have been implemented. Technological innovations do not change this problem fundamentally, rather they bring new challenges. Firstly, they have led to traditional *enganchadores* being replaced by digital platforms, which have a much greater spatial scope and the potential to reach more people, in addition to often carrying out very different functions. In many cases, digital systems also carry out thorough checks of the work done, in addition to the fact that computer algorithms and clients take on worker supervision duties. Lastly, another factor is the amount of information held by companies in their computer systems and workers' right of access to that information.

B. A form of work that refuses to disappear: home work

1. The historical importance of home work

ILO Convention No. 177 on Home Work of 1996 defines "home work" as work carried out by a person:

(i) in his or her home or in other premises of his or her choice, other than the workplace of the employer; (ii) for remuneration; (iii) which results in a product or service as specified by the employer, irrespective of who provides the equipment, materials or other input used, unless this person has the degree of autonomy and of economic independence necessary to be considered an independent worker under national laws, regulations or court decisions (article 1).

As a result of its origins in artisanal production, home work was often considered a traditional form of work that would be phased out with the spread of industrialization. This was based on the fact that the share of home work in total employment in the industrialized countries had declined considerably as a result of industrialization. For example, in France, home work accounted for 36.9% of female employment in 1906 (Perrot, 1997, p. 539) and fell sharply in the later stages of industrialization, although some women continued to be employed on this basis (Lallement, 1990). In Switzerland, home work accounted for 20.3% of employment in 1888, 8.6% in 1910 and 3.0% in 1930, and by 1960 the percentage had fallen to 0.6% (Tanner, 1992, table 1).

However, home work never disappeared completely, especially in labour-intensive industries, such as the clothing industry. In light of sharp fluctuations in demand owing to market changes and seasonality, home work was one of the tools that gave businesses the necessary flexibility. An ILO report on problems arising from fluctuations of employment in the clothing industry, published in 1964, states that:

Fluctuations of production and employment are to some extent characteristic of all branches of economic activity, although their nature and extent differ from one branch to another. The clothing industry has certain basic features which accentuate these fluctuations. These features may briefly be stated as the periodic variations in demand for the products of the industry owing to seasonal and climatic changes and changes in fashion, the existence of a large number of small-scale producers who are not in a position to easily forecast demand, the relative ease with which firms can enter the industry, the practice of getting part of the work done outside the factories either by contractors or by home workers (ILO, 1964, p. 2).

More recently, in the context of the “new international division of labour” (Fröbel, Heinrichs and Kreye, 1978), clothing manufacturing—and the fluctuations in demand that it entails—has increasingly been transferred to developing countries where there is an abundance of unskilled labour. This has helped to shift attention to analysis of home work in those developing countries where clothing was produced for markets in developed countries (Balakrishnan, 2002). Far from being insulated from large-scale industrial production, small workshops and homeworkers make up the lower links of supply chains that can cover the full range of production facilities, from large multinational corporations to home work.

However, home work in developing countries in general, and in Latin America in particular, existed long before this relatively recent debate on globalization. In Chile, for example, home work has been documented since the second half of the nineteenth century to the present day. Since the 1860s or 1870s, the expansion of the manufacturing industries—especially the textile and clothing industries—provided women with new opportunities for wage employment. The work was often done in the workers’ homes, as many of the new clothing companies hired seamstresses to work both in their factories and from home.¹

The spread of industrialization did not lead to the disappearance of home work, despite the fact that the issue had disappeared from the public agenda and no specialized studies were undertaken in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s. However, there are occasional references that confirm the existence of homeworkers in Chile during that period (CADE, 1967; Montecinos, 1981, p. 34). The number of homeworkers began to increase again in the 1980s as a result of the cost-reduction strategies pursued by many companies and workshops in an effort to compete with imports following the country’s early adoption of trade liberalization (Díaz and Yáñez, 1998). However, home work was clearly not a “new production system”, as some studies called it (Ibáñez and Winn, 1989, p. 17).

The National Institute of Statistics and the Labour Department carried out a survey in 1997 to estimate the number of homeworkers in Chile, according to which 56,847 persons worked as homeworkers in the week covered by the survey. Thus, home work accounted for 1.1% of total employment. The survey revealed that homeworkers were present not only in traditional manufacturing sectors (textiles, clothing and footwear), but also in services (Henríquez and others, 1999).

More recently, production volume and employment in the textile and clothing industry have continued to decline in Chile and in several other Latin American countries. However, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have survived by undertaking specific orders for large retail companies (department stores) or catering for niche clothing markets on demand (for example, school and hospital uniforms and corporate clothing). In turn, these SMEs tend to outsource part of their production to homeworkers, often through *enganchadores* who form the link between the enterprises and the homemaker. *Enganchadores* may hire people to produce whole pieces or parts of a piece (Fundación Sol, 2017).

¹ See, for example, Salazar (1992) and Prates (1987) on home work in Uruguay.

Home work was also evident in several other Latin American countries during the same period and ILO carried out studies in Argentina (Jelin, Mercado and Wyczykier, 2001), Brazil (Lavinás and others, 1998), Guatemala (Rodríguez, 1999), Paraguay (Heikel, 1998) and Peru (Verdera, 2000).

In Argentina and Brazil, the liberalization of the clothing industry happened later and more gradually than in Chile, but, since the beginning of the 2000s, there has been increasing pressure on national production to compete with the production costs of Chinese firms by outsourcing more to homeworkers, many of whom are immigrants from the Plurinational State of Bolivia and other neighbouring countries, such as Paraguay, Peru and Chile, in that order. This section of the supply chain is very low technology and the working conditions are generally very precarious, although there is a lot of variation among workers (Rizek, Georges and da Silva, 2010; Leite, Silva and Guimarães, 2017; ILO, 2011).

There has also been a marked increase in home work in other occupations in Chile since the 2000s, not only manufacturing, but also trade and services, such as selling goods, debt collecting and transcribing recordings. In Uruguay, some companies that have become part of supply chains for global services in areas such as market research, legal services and software, also employ homeworkers. The growth of these activities, which are generally referred to as “telework”, has led to more men and people with a high level of education working from home (Labour Directorate, 2005; Cárdenas, 2012; Couto, 2019).

2. Employees or self-employed workers? Quality and type of home work

Not only is home work a long-standing phenomenon, so is policymakers' concern about how to address it, because of both the ambiguity surrounding the applicability of labour laws and the poor working conditions and instances of abuse to which many homeworkers, especially women, have been exposed. Homeworkers appear to have some degree of autonomy given that they do not have strictly enforced working hours, they generally own the equipment they use, and they have the possibility of working for several clients at the same time. However, they must carry out the work according to the technical specifications and using the materials provided by the hiring company, which also sets the price and delivery date for the finished piece. Analysis of home work in the early and mid-twentieth century would reveal similar issues.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, at the international level, home work was considered to be wage employment that needed to be regulated in order to avoid situations of exploitation and abuse. Thus, article 1 of ILO Convention No. 26 on Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery of 1928 states that:

Each Member of the International Labour Organisation which ratifies this Convention undertakes to create or maintain machinery whereby minimum rates of wages can be fixed for workers employed in certain of the trades or parts of trades (and in particular in home working trades) in which no arrangements exist for the effective regulation of wages by collective agreement or otherwise and wages are exceptionally low.

These concerns were also raised at an early date in Latin America, as is reflected in a document from 1907 on home work in Chile, which describes a situation that continues to exist today:

The situation of home workers is of course always more difficult than that of labourers who work in workshops or industrial settings. It is well known that dressmakers, dressers, embroiderers, shirtmakers, seamstresses, spinners, etc, often work until midnight in order to earn the minimum wages needed to live (Ministry of Industry and Public Works, 1907, p. 40).

The importance given to the regulation of home work at that time is also reflected in the discussion of this subject at the first Labour Conference of American Member States of the International Labour Organization, held in Santiago in 1936. For example, at that meeting, the employers' delegate from Peru said that:

When the Committee took up the question of minimum wages, the Employers' Group thought it right to lay down a fixed minimum wage rate for each job in industry and commerce and to call the attention of governments to the necessity of ratifying and applying the Convention and Recommendation adopted in Geneva in 1928 on the subject of minimum wages, with a view to abolishing in America the exploitation of female labour, which is mainly to be found in the field of home work (ILO, 1936, p. 158).

The Report on the Action Taken to Give Effect to the Resolutions Adopted by the Santiago Conference, presented at the second Labour Conference of American member States of the International Labour Organization (held in Havana, in 1939), refers to those Latin American countries where laws had been enacted to enforce legislation on minimum wages and other labour issues with regard to homeworkers (ILO, 1939). Several countries in the region were quick to adopt regulations on wages and other working conditions for homeworkers, such as Argentina, Colombia and Peru in 1918, Chile in 1931, Uruguay in 1934 and Bolivia in 1942. In general, the regulations sought to calculate the salary of homeworkers in a similar manner to that used for the wages of a worker in a factory or workshop for the same work. The report also details the efforts of several countries to create home work inspection bodies (ILO, 1939; Caffarena, 1924; Brandi, 2007).

More recently, home work was excluded from the implementation of the labour laws in Chile, thus essentially classifying it as independent employment. Law No. 18,018 of 1981 repealed provisions on home work, as "services provided habitually in the home of the persons who perform them or in a place freely chosen by them, without direct supervision or management by the person who hires them" did not constitute an employment contract. This was the situation for more than 20 years, until the Labour Code reform in 2001. Since then, home work has been subject to the common system and would, therefore, be wage employment when the classic employee conditions of subordination and dependency are met; otherwise it would be considered to be self-employment. However, no special provisions have been made for this type of hiring, except for telework. Teleworkers who, by choice, use computer or telecommunication technology to provide services outside the company's workplace or worksite are exempt from the cap on working hours (Labour Directorate, 2005).

A study conducted in the 1990s of the clothing production chain in Chile, which included 100 homeworkers, found that 80% of them worked for a single company or workshop. All of them were given clearly defined and specific work orders; 80% could not choose which garment to make; 94% could not decide on its design; 88% were not allowed to make any modifications; and 61% were required to meet deadlines and production quotas. None of the workers interviewed had an employment contract (Díaz, 1999). The most recent study on home work in Chile, published in 2017 (Fundación Sol, 2017), does not include quantitative surveys, but it does appear to suggest that the situation has not changed significantly.

Meanwhile, other Latin American countries have continued to adopt comprehensive legislation on home work in the interim. Two trends regarding the legal protection of homeworkers are emerging in the countries studied. The first is the adoption of specific legislation (Argentina) or the inclusion

of provisions in the labour codes and employment laws (Paraguay and Peru) to regulate this form of work to a certain extent. The second is the extension of general labour laws to include homeworkers, in effect considering their working relationship to be an employment contract (Brazil) However, implementation efforts were mixed and sporadic in most cases (Tomei, 1999).

The study undertaken in Argentina revealed that administrative institutions had been dismantled and rules on home work had not been implemented for many years. For example, there was almost no oversight of the register of home contracts kept by the Ministry of Labour. In 1995, 51 workers and 89 work providers were registered compared to thousands in the 1950s. No inspections were carried out either, as the inspectors were all transferred to other duties in 1986 (Jelin, Mercado and Wyczykier, 2001). However, since the late 1990s or early 2000s, the general public and the state administration have become increasingly concerned about informal work in clothing workshops and home workers. While local governments were responsible for carrying out inspections, the Home Work Division of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security acted as supervisor, coordinator and auditor of local authorities (Boffi, 2013). The government of the City of Buenos Aires, where much of the clothing industry and related home work is concentrated, issued an order in 2008 requiring businesses and workshops that hired homeworkers to register.²

The situation in other countries of the region during the 1990s, as illustrated by Brazil, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, was very similar to that of Argentina, in that very sophisticated and specific laws and regulations were combined with a virtual absence of administrative efforts and inspections to ensure compliance with the law (Heikel, 1998; Verdera, 2000, Rodríguez, 1999; Lavinás and others, 1998). For example, in Paraguay, the legislation is very specific and there are many formal requirements (contracts, workers and employers must be registered with the administrative authority, workers must be issued with an official wage and payments book), but in practice there has only been one case, in 1996, in which the court of second instance recognized the home work relationship as constituting employment (Heikel, 1998). The picture was similar in Peru: very protective legislation remained in force but was not enforced. The Employment Promotion Act of 1991 includes a chapter on home work, but there seems to have been a social consensus not to apply it. It is a textbook case of ineffectual legislation. There was simply no administrative responsibility: home work contracts were not registered, so labour inspections did not cover home work (Verdera, 2000).

Another reason why job quality tends to be low for homeworkers is that their scattered geographic distribution makes it difficult for them to unionize and participate in collective bargaining. Furthermore, the sometimes clandestine nature of this work is another obstacle to unionization, for example in the case of immigrant workers who do not have valid immigration documents. For this reason, trade unions that have been able to support homeworkers are an exception (Rossignotti, 2006).

Nevertheless, homework was a major concern of the trade union movement at the beginning of the twentieth century, even at the international level. The trade unions organized the First International Congress on Home Work in Brussels in 1910, followed by the second in Zurich in 1912, at which a resolution was passed containing a proposed act to regulate paid home work (Caffarena, 1924, pp. 109-110; BLS, 1920, pp. 281-286).

In Argentina, some homeworkers in the textile and clothing sectors are members of trade unions (ILO, 2011, p. 115; Boffi, 2013) and, in 2017, the Argentine union of textile home and allied workers

² Order No. 308 – DGPDT/08 – Registration requirements for home work providers.

led a campaign calling on the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Security to implement Law No. 12,713 on Home Work effectively throughout the country (CTA, 2017). The wage commissions have met only intermittently since the 1970s, last meeting in 1993 (Jelin, Mercado and Wyczykier, 2001, p. 16) before resuming their efforts between 2005 and 2017. Pursuant to resolution No. 1,184 of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security of 22 December 2005, the first and second home work wage commissions for the clothing industry were established and wage agreements were negotiated until 2017 (FAIIA, 2017).

In Chile, the unionization of home workers is one of the lines of action of the National Textile Federation (CONTEXTIL). Faced with the decline in membership among enterprise-based unions as a result of the crisis in the sector, the Federation took steps to organize home workers (Fundación Sol, 2017). Current members include eight enterprise-based unions, four home textile workers' unions and one union of dependent and independent workers from different areas. Today, the Federation has two parallel pillars of union representation: one comprises salaried workers in the textile and clothing trade and industry—including leather and footwear—, members of enterprise-based unions; while the other is made up of homeworkers, especially women, members of local textile homeworkers' unions, who work alone or in groups for one or more employers or independently.

C. *Enganchadores* and day workers: from agriculture to service platforms

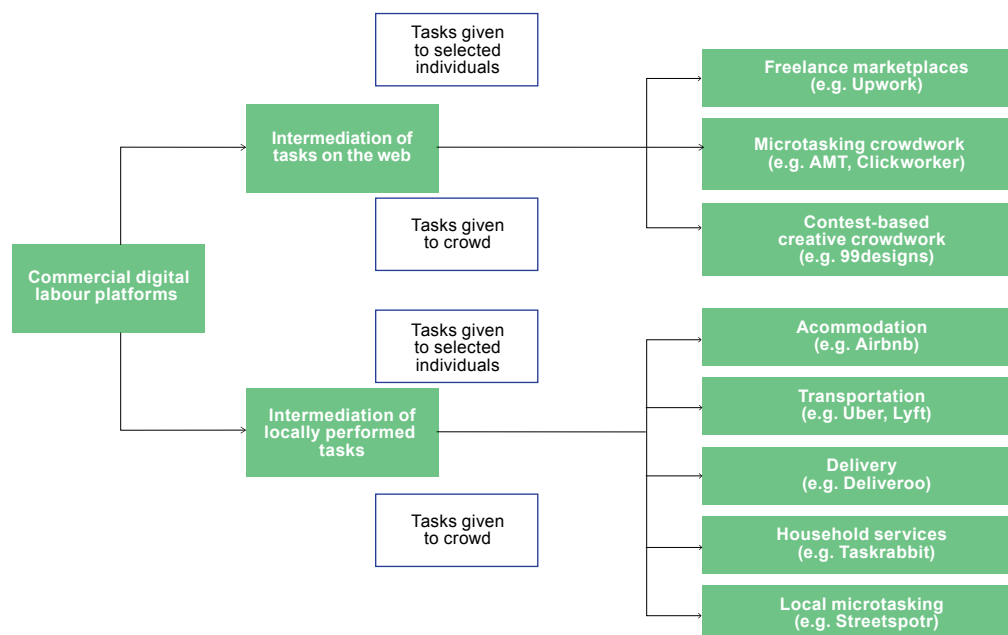
Day labourers are a long-standing feature of the labour market in Latin America and the Caribbean, and they have been widely used in agriculture. Contact between demand for labour and supply of potential workers is often organized through middlemen called *enganchadores*, who are familiar with the local labour market and charge a commission or a percentage of the respective wages. Traditionally, day labourers are often paid by piece rates, i.e. proportionally to the volume of work done (for example, kilograms of fruit harvested), rather than by time worked. This is the case of many agricultural workers in Mexico, who are hired by the day but are paid on the basis of the volume of work done: by bins, crates or tons (FAO/ECLAC/ILO, 2012).

Technological innovations, especially in the area of information and communication technologies (ICTs), have led to the emergence of a working arrangement that has been dubbed “digital day labour”. This shares many of the features of the traditional day labourers' work, but the *enganchador* has been replaced by digital platforms that link up supply and demand (Berg and others, 2018; ILO, 2019a, p. 18). Digital labour platforms may be categorized into different types, as shown in diagram II.1.

Labour relations differ among the different types of platforms. For example, platforms which intermediate web-based tasks usually have no direct influence on working conditions, because these are set by the contracting entity. They do exert an indirect influence, however, insofar as many working modalities—for example, digital crowdwork and the resulting task disaggregation—are rendered possible only by the existence of digital platforms. By contrast, as will be discussed in more detail below, platforms that offer location-based employment opportunities determine many aspects of the work directly.

Diagram II.1

Categorization of digital labour platforms



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of J. Berg, *Digital Labour Platforms and the Future of Work: Towards decent work in the online world*, Geneva, International Labour Organization (ILO), 2018 and F. A. Schmidt, *Digital Labour Markets in the Platform Economy: Mapping the Political Challenges of Crowd Work and Gig Work*, Bonn, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2017.

Although digital platforms are less developed in Latin America and the Caribbean than in North America, Europe and Asia, several digital labour platforms, of both regional and extraregional origin, have a presence in countries of the region (ECLAC, 2018). For example, Uber Technologies Inc., an international business that provides a transport network for its customers over an online platform (website and mobile app), connects passengers to drivers of vehicles registered in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay. The Airbnb accommodation provision platform operates in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay, among others. Glovo purchases, picks up and delivers orders via an app. The service is provided by independent couriers called Glovers or riders, and the business is now present in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru and Uruguay (Bueno, 2018, pp. 98–99). Cornershop is an application with a presence in Chile and Mexico, which does shopping for its clients, mainly in supermarkets (Munizaga, 2018).

As in the case of home-based work, one of the issues that generates most controversy in the analysis of platform-based employment is determining whether the work is wage work or self-employment. To address this question, it is useful to look at the characteristics of these jobs that indicate either autonomy or the existence of a dependent employment relationship (see box II.1).

Box II.1**In-depth analysis of a specific case: Cornershop**

When we refer to platforms, we are in fact referring to a tool used to deliver very different services, each with specific forms of organization (see diagram II.1). By way of illustration of a type of platform that intermediates location-based tasks, the business Cornershop is used to identify elements that could help to characterize its workers as independent or dependent.

Cornershop is an app that operates in Chile and Mexico. It intermediates shopping transactions for its customers, mainly in supermarkets. Customers order their purchases over the platform, which contacts workers who are available to carry out the purchases at a given point in time. The service includes the delivery of the shopping to the customer's address.

The company selects its shoppers (as it calls its workers) in a process consisting of several stages. First, prospective shoppers register on the website and answer a number of questions on shopping and others that refer to their personality. The second stage is in person: applicants are asked to work in groups to resolve specific situations. The selected candidates must then answer another online questionnaire, after which they are trained in a supermarket and sign a service-delivery contract.

Orders are allocated to shoppers by means of an algorithm that factors in the location, the size of the order, and whether the order can be delivered by motorcycle or car, as well as each shopper's record of speed in fulfilling their order and the time they have been working, among other factors.

Workers who are available for an order wait in the vicinity of the supermarket. It is therefore important to distinguish the time that each worker is at the disposal of the app from the time actually spent working. Shoppers wear a corporate jacket or T-shirt and package the orders in paper bags with the Cornershop logo. They receive a notification from the app when they are assigned an order; the shopper cannot choose the customer. Shopping time is monitored by the Cornershop headquarters from the time the worker agrees to fulfil the order. Time is measured for the purchase of each product, for the purchase of the entire order and for the delivery. The whole process must be completed within two hours and each stage has benchmark times. To complete the purchase, the shopper must contact the customer over the Cornershop telephone switchboard, and uses a Cornershop credit card to pay for the order.

The order may be delivered by the same shopper, or another devoted solely to making deliveries in his or her personal vehicle. Only at that point does the app give the shopper the customer's address. The company monitors the time and route of delivery by GPS, and carries civil liability insurance in case of accident. Once the order is delivered, the customer may rate the quality of the service. Workers are forbidden under company rules to accept tips and they are paid weekly by bank deposit. Payment per order is calculated by means of a basic sum and additional amounts depending on the number and weight of products. Payment for delivery depends on the distance travelled and the weight transported.

This analysis finds that the company is responsible for organizing the entire process and closely monitors every stage to avoid contact between the customer and the worker. It sets the parameters for workers' payments and defines the variables used by the algorithm to assign orders to them. The selection process is fairly similar to that of any business with wage employees, although Cornershop may unilaterally dismiss shoppers whose performance does not meet the company's expectations.

Source: R. Munizaga, "La mano de obra tras Cornershop", *Revista del Sábado*. El Mercurio, 27 October 2018.

Features that would indicate autonomy include the fact that there are no regular full-time or part-time working hours; rather, the time worked varies greatly from one day to another. The platforms argue that people work the hours they wish and can organize their own schedules, just as own-account workers do. Secondly, the place of work in platform-based jobs is not exclusive. A person may work part of the day for one platform and the rest of the day for one or more other platforms. This type of work is thus often a secondary activity that enables workers to generate income in addition to their

earnings from their main employment. Thirdly, platform workers have a working capital in their laptop, mobile telephone or bicycle, motorcycle or car, which they use to contact the platform and provide the service to the end user. So, like many independent workers, platform workers invest in order to be able to provide a service, and it is they who decide what investment to make (for example, whether to acquire a bicycle or a motorcycle, or what type of mobile phone plan to enrol in).

In short, platform workers organize their own work on the basis of their needs; they determine their own working hours, at least partially; they do not necessarily work for a single platform (and change from one to another at any time); and decide for themselves what capital to invest in order to be able to provide the respective service.

There are other characteristics, however, that would indicate the existence of an employment relationship between the worker and the platform. Some platforms carry out selection processes that are similar to the staff recruitment processes of more traditional firms. In addition, after the selection process, some companies train workers in formal group sessions. Many platforms provide corporate identification materials that workers are required to use during service delivery. What is more, as well as selecting its workers, the platform may also dismiss them unilaterally without prior notice, justification or financial compensation. All of this points to inequality in the relationship.

In general, this inequality is evident in various dimensions of the relationship, since—at least in the case of platforms that intermediate location-based tasks—it is the platform that organizes the entire process. The worker has contact with the customer only via the platform, which mediates the communications between the two parties. The platform minutely monitors the entire service and each action and generates records that are constantly assessed. Many digital platform businesses have a system of incentives, rewards and penalties, which controls, for example, workers' possibilities of receiving different types of orders and thus, more orders and higher incomes; conversely, a low rating can lead to suspension from use of the app, blocking receipt of orders for a given period of time (ILO, 2019b). The platform also establishes the price of the service for the final customer and the payment corresponding to each worker unilaterally, depending on the variables it considers most relevant. It can even pay extra for good performance or penalize services that are of low-quality or poorly rated by customers, according to criteria determined exclusively by the platform.

In addition to these explicit features, others may be hidden in the algorithm—which is essentially the black box of the platform's operation. For example, although workers can choose what time of day and how long to make themselves available to work for a platform, the algorithm often penalizes workers who are available at low-demand times or for short periods, vis-a-vis workers who are available at higher-demand times and for longer periods. Therefore, the longer the worker is at the disposal of the platform, the more opportunities she or he will be given to accept an order, compared with workers who have less time available. Clearly, then, although platforms are in principle open to workers who can commit different amounts of time, they will most likely afford preference to some over others.

Another feature that could be hidden in the algorithm concerns the worker's ability to accept or reject a request. The algorithm penalizes workers who turn down a request they consider not worthwhile, by putting them behind others who always accept any request.

This means that two of the main features of autonomy—the worker's freedom to choose whether or not to accept a request and to work hours that suit—are heavily conditioned or limited by the criteria embedded in the algorithm. Evidently, the operation of the algorithm is not random or neutral in respect of workers' behaviour, but instead use incentives or penalties to try to make them adapt to the platform's needs.

In many cases, labour oversight bodies or even law courts have been asked to determine whether this type of work should be treated as dependent or independent. In Chile, for example, a recent ruling by the Labour Directorate analysed the nature and general conditions of the nexus between Uber and the drivers providing the service. The ruling states that “the firm engages in a selection process”, that “the driver is required to possess the level of training, expertise and experience to provide transportation services in a professional manner, with due skill, care and diligence, and to maintain high standards of professionalism, service and courtesy”, that the fee for services consists of “a weekly payment made by the company and deposited in drivers’ accounts, depending on the number of trips made, minus the percentage fixed unilaterally by Uber as manager of the company”, and that Uber establishes certain conditions regarding the structure of rights and obligations and when and how and services are to be provided (Labour Directorate, 2016). Notwithstanding these considerations, the ruling does not offer a conclusion regarding the existence of a wage employment relationship, because the Labor Directorate is an administrative body that does not have a mandate to provide that sort of definition (Bueno, 2018).

D. Approaches to regulation and oversight: achieving decent work in non-standard forms of employment

Almost all labour legislation defines an employment relationship by a combination of elements relating to control by the employer and the subordination or dependence of the worker. In fact, there are many situations of control and subordination where control is not as direct, immediate or comprehensive as in a standard working relationship that takes place in the establishment of the firm employing the worker (Casale, 2011). Treating formal subordination as the sole criterion for defining the employment relationship risks overprotecting labour relations that already have a relative balance of power between employer and worker, but excluding relationships in which the worker is very underprotected and urgently needs the protection of labour laws (Ameglio and Villasmil, 2011).

Since the 1950s, ILO reports have documented a variety of situations in which it is difficult to determine the existence of an employment relationship or the identity of the employer (ILO, 1996), giving rise to discussions on subcontracted work and triangular labour relations. In 2006, the discussion on the employment relationship was taken up at the International Labour Conference (ILO, 2006), resulting in Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198). Article 13 of this recommendation gives a fairly open definition of possible criteria for determining the existence of an employment relationship:

Members should consider the possibility of defining in their laws and regulations, or by other means, specific indicators of the existence of an employment relationship. Those indicators might include:

(a) the fact that the work: is carried out according to the instructions and under the control of another party; involves the integration of the worker in the organization of the enterprise; is performed solely or mainly for the benefit of another person; must be carried out personally by the worker; is carried out within specific working hours or at a workplace specified or agreed by the party requesting the work; is of a particular duration and has a certain continuity; requires the worker’s availability; or involves the provision of tools, materials and machinery by the party requesting the work;

(b) periodic payment of remuneration to the worker; the fact that such remuneration constitutes the worker's sole or principal source of income; provision of payment in kind, such as food, lodging or transport; recognition of entitlements such as weekly rest and annual holidays; payment by the party requesting the work for travel undertaken by the worker in order to carry out the work; or absence of financial risk for the worker.

Table II.1 summarizes some criteria of dependency and autonomy in the two forms of work described in the preceding subsections: manufacturing home work and the work of digital day labourers over platforms.

Table II.1
Criteria of dependency and autonomy in manufacturing home work and platform-based work by digital day labourers

Criterion	Home-based manufacturing work	Platform-based work by digital day labourers
Working hours	In principle, workers may freely organize their day, but are under strong pressure to meet often extremely tight delivery times.	In principle, workers may freely organize their day, but several platforms have incentive systems that give preference in allocating orders to workers with more availability.
Exclusivity	Workers may work for several firms or intermediaries although, in practice, they often build up relatively stable relationships with single firms. The home-based work is a secondary occupation in some cases.	Worker may work through several platforms simultaneously. The platform-based work is a secondary occupation in many cases.
Capital equipment	Workers usually use their own machinery (e.g. sewing machines) and, sometimes, their own materials (e.g. thread).	Workers usually use their own technological devices (computers, mobile phones) or means of transport (bicycle, motorcycle, car).
Definition of products and prices	Workers have no freedom to define product characteristics or prices. Sometimes workers perform a single process in work that the company or intermediary distributes among several workers.	Workers have no freedom to define product characteristics or prices.
Supervision	In most cases, supervision is indirect and seeks compliance with deadlines and quality standards of finished work.	In most cases, especially in platforms that intermediate location-based tasks, workers are closely supervised via platform apps. For example, these monitor workers' locations, the duration of each step in the performance of the work and customer satisfaction.
Existence and role of intermediaries	Tasks may be allocated directly by a company or workshop, or through intermediaries. The intermediary may assume some employer functions, which creates the risk of triangular situations and unclear employer identity.	In platforms that intermediate tasks on the web, the intermediation consists mainly of linking supply and demand. Conversely, in many of the platforms that provide location-based opportunities, intermediation includes oversight and remuneration functions that correspond to an employer.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO).

As shown in table II.1, the two situations described have both elements that point to a dependent wage employment relationship and others that are more akin to independent self-employment.

The same criteria apply both to old forms of work, such as manufacturing home work (notwithstanding the existence of a specific Convention concerning Home Work), and to new forms, such as work over digital platforms. However, new elements have also arisen with the emergence of ICTs, such as the right to disconnect and the right to information, which has to do, for example, with transparency in decision-making (calculation of pay, service rating criteria and reasons for dismissal), as well as the issue of data privacy.³

In this regard, the report of the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work provides the following recommendation (ILO, 2019a, p 13):

Expanding time sovereignty. Workers need greater autonomy over their working time, while meeting enterprise needs. Harnessing technology to expand choice and achieve a balance between work and personal life can help them realize this goal and address the pressures that come with the blurring of boundaries between working time and private time. It will take continued efforts to implement maximum limits on working time alongside measures to improve productivity (...).

³ See a review of the discussion on options for regulating new forms of work, for example, in Bensusán (2017).

This recommendation by the Global Commission on the Future of Work shows that the central issue of the first ILO Convention, adopted 100 years ago (Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, No. 1), remains valid today. In addition, ILO (2019a, p. 42) states that: “Urgent action is needed to ensure dignity to people who work “on call” so that the choice for greater flexibility is a real one and that they have control over their schedules. We recommend the adoption of appropriate regulatory measures that provide workers with a guaranteed and predictable minimum number of hours”.

ILO (2019a, p. 13) includes two other recommendations in its report:

Ensuring collective representation of workers and employers through social dialogue as a public good, actively promoted through public policies. All workers and employers must enjoy freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, with the State as the guarantor of those rights. Workers’ and employers’ organizations must strengthen their representative legitimacy through innovative organizing techniques that reach those who are engaged in the platform economy, including through the use of technology. They must also use their convening power to bring diverse interests to the table.

Harnessing and managing technology for decent work. This means workers and managers negotiating the design of work. It also means adopting a “human-in-command” approach to artificial intelligence that ensures that the final decisions affecting work are taken by human beings. An international governance system for digital labour platforms should be established to require platforms (and their clients) to respect certain minimum rights and protections. Technological advances also demand regulation of data use and algorithmic accountability in the world of work.

For the successful implementation of these recommendations, progress is needed on the basic definition of the legal status of workers, in order to determine what labour rights they have and who is responsible for ensuring their fulfilment. This may include the definition of new legal concepts that reflect the combination of elements of dependency and autonomy typical of the situation of many workers engaged in non-standard forms of work, whether traditional or emerging. For example, some European countries have already legislated on economically dependent self-employment or “parasubordinate workers” as new legal concepts (Bensusán, 2017).⁴

There are several noteworthy examples of regulation and implementation in the region. For example, the Territorial Inspection, Surveillance, Monitoring and Management Directorate of Colombia has a programme for identifying and combating disguised or ambiguous labour relations in the supply chains of goods and services, which seeks to identify labour intermediation situations where subcontracting is used to hide abusive practices of illegal transfer of labour. In Uruguay, the inspection planning makes provision for platform-based delivery businesses (Bueno, 2018). In Argentina, Law No. 5.526 (2016) of the City of Buenos Aires, known as the “delivery law”, establishes a typology for the operation of home delivery services and provides that the delivery persons in such firms must be dependent workers. However, it has not yet been possible to implement the law in practice and a number of legal challenges have been raised against it (ILO, 2019b).

⁴ In the area of labour statistics, a new figure already exists (ILO, 2018, article 35): Dependent contractors are workers who have contractual arrangements of a commercial nature (but not a contract of employment) to provide goods or services for or through another economic unit. They are not employees of that economic unit, but are dependent on that unit for organization and execution of the work, income, or for access to the market. They are workers employed for profit, who are dependent on another entity that exercises control over their productive activities and directly benefits from the work performed by them.

The regional experiences of labour inspection bodies in relation to the oversight of workers of web-based platforms include a series of actions carried out in 2017 by the National Inspection Department of Argentina following complaints brought by workers' representatives (Trade Union Association of Motorcyclists, Messengers and Services (ASIMM)), against several firms and enterprises, most of them retail and gastronomy enterprises operating over Internet portals and dispatching their products via motorized delivery drivers. These workers, whose tasks match all the characteristics of dependent work, figure as own-account workers (independent drivers) or simply have no employment or commercial record. However, to the extent that they serve the same employer for certain working hours and in exchange for pay, they are imputed as dependent employees of the respective firm. The first 10 inspections found 37 workers, of whom 80% had no registered employment relationship (Bueno, 2018). In April 2019, a court ruling ordered the Government of the City of Buenos Aires to prohibit deliveries by bicycle for the platforms Rappi, Pedidos Ya and Glovo, citing a lack of basic safety standards. The workers were also found to be working in vulnerable and informal conditions.

In Uruguay, all drivers working with the Uber and Cabify apps were brought under formal employment status, but in this case they were not defined as dependent workers, but as independent business entities, registered for tax purposes and affiliated to the social security system. This was achieved by inter-agency coordination between the various actors involved: the Social Security Bank, the Department of Taxation, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Departmental Government of Montevideo and the private companies involved (BPS, 2017).

In sum, despite the emergence of new non-standard forms of work, such as platform-based work, many of today's challenges with regard to decent work are strikingly similar to those that have existed over the 100-years history of ILO. Nevertheless, there are undoubtedly new dimensions that raise challenges for which solutions have only just begun to be devised, both globally and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Annex A1

Table A1.1

Latin America and the Caribbean: annual average urban unemployment rates, by sex, 2008–2018
(Percentages)

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ^a
Latin America											
Argentina ^b	7.9	8.7	7.7	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.3	6.5	8.5	8.4	9.2
Men	6.6	7.8	6.7	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.5	5.7	7.8	7.5	8.2
Women	9.7	9.9	9.2	8.5	8.8	8.5	8.4	7.6	9.4	9.5	10.5
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	6.7	6.8	...	3.8	3.2	4.0	3.5	4.4	4.9	4.6	...
Men	...	...	...	3.1	2.2	3.2	2.5	3.5	3.6	4.0	...
Women	...	...	...	4.7	4.4	5.1	4.9	5.6	6.5	5.5	...
Brazil ^b	7.9	8.1	6.7	6.0	8.2	8.0	7.8	9.3	13.0	14.5	14.2
Men	6.1	6.5	5.2	4.7	6.8	6.6	6.7	8.1	11.6	13.0	12.5
Women	10.0	9.9	8.5	7.5	9.9	9.7	9.1	10.7	14.7	16.2	16.1
Chile ^d	8.2	10.2	8.5	7.4	6.7	6.2	6.7	6.4	6.8	6.9	7.3
Men	7.3	9.7	7.6	6.5	5.7	5.5	6.4	6.1	6.6	6.7	6.8
Women	9.7	10.9	9.8	8.7	8.0	7.0	7.0	6.9	7.1	7.2	7.8
Colombia ^a	12.1	13.2	12.7	11.8	11.4	10.7	10.0	9.8	10.3	10.5	10.9
Men	10.2	11.1	10.6	9.6	9.2	8.7	8.1	7.9	8.4	8.6	8.9
Women	14.5	15.7	15.3	14.4	14.0	12.9	12.2	11.9	12.4	12.7	13.2
Costa Rica ^d	4.8	8.5	7.1	7.7	9.8	9.1	9.5	9.7	9.6	9.0	10.3
Men	4.3	6.5	6.0	6.3	8.9	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	7.7	8.7
Women	5.6	9.2	8.8	9.7	11.5	10.5	11.3	11.7	11.5	10.9	12.6
Cuba ^a	1.6	1.7	2.5	3.2	3.5	3.3	2.7	2.5	2.0	1.7	...
Men	1.3	1.5	2.4	3.0	3.4	3.1	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.7	...
Women	2.0	2.0	2.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	...
Dominican Republic ^b	5.3	5.8	5.7	6.7	7.2	7.9	7.2	7.9	7.9	6.1	6.1
Men	3.8	4.5	4.8	5.4	5.8	5.9	5.4	5.8	5.6	4.4	3.9
Women	7.6	7.8	7.1	8.5	9.3	10.7	9.8	10.9	11.0	8.3	9.1
Ecuador ^d	6.9	8.5	7.6	6.0	4.9	4.7	5.1	5.4	6.8	5.7	5.2
Men	5.5	7.1	6.3	5.1	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.4	5.6	4.5	4.3
Women	8.8	10.5	9.4	7.2	5.5	5.4	6.0	6.7	8.5	7.1	6.4
El Salvador ^d	5.5	7.1	6.8	6.6	6.2	5.6	6.7	6.5	6.9	6.8	...
Men	7.2	9.0	8.3	8.7	8.0	6.8	8.5	8.1	8.2	8.3	...
Women	3.5	4.9	5.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.6	4.6	5.2	5.1	...
Guatemala ^d	...	...	4.8	3.1	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.9
Men	...	...	4.4	2.8	3.7	3.9	3.9	2.9	3.1	2.8	3.9
Women	...	...	5.2	3.7	4.5	3.7	4.2	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.8
Honduras	4.2	4.9	6.4	6.8	5.6	6.0	7.5	8.8	9.0	8.2	8.0
Men	4.2	4.6	5.9	6.2	5.3	5.7	6.9	7.0	7.0	6.8	7.6
Women	4.2	5.2	7.1	7.6	6.1	6.3	8.3	10.9	11.3	9.8	8.4
Mexico	4.3	5.9	5.9	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.3	4.7	4.3	3.8	3.6
Men	4.3	6.0	6.1	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.4	4.7	4.3	3.7	3.6
Women	4.3	5.7	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.3	5.2	4.7	4.2	3.8	3.6
Nicaragua ^a	8.0	10.5	10.5	8.1	8.7	7.7	8.5	7.7	6.3	5.2	7.5
Men	8.4	...	11.0	8.4	8.7	8.1	8.6	7.8	6.5	5.5	8.1
Women	7.6	...	10.0	7.7	8.6	7.2	8.5	7.5	6.1	5.0	6.7
Panama ^d	6.5	7.9	7.7	5.4	4.8	4.7	5.4	5.8	6.4	6.9	7.1
Men	5.4	6.3	6.5	5.3	4.2	3.9	4.7	5.1	5.7	5.8	6.0
Women	7.9	9.9	9.3	5.4	5.5	5.7	6.4	6.7	7.5	8.4	8.4

Table A1.1 (concluded)

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ^a
Paraguay ^f	7.4	8.2	7.4	6.9	7.9	7.7	7.8	6.5	7.7	6.9	7.1
Men	6.6	7.9	6.7	6.1	6.5	6.1	6.3	5.5	6.3	6.0	6.5
Women	8.5	8.7	8.2	7.8	9.6	9.4	9.6	7.6	9.3	7.9	7.8
Peru	6.0	5.9	5.3	5.1	4.7	4.8	4.5	4.4	5.2	5.0	4.8
Men	5.3	5.6	4.6	4.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.9	4.8	4.7
Women	6.9	6.2	6.0	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.0	4.5	5.6	5.4	5.6
Uruguay	8.3	8.2	7.5	6.6	6.7	6.7	6.9	7.8	8.2	8.3	8.6
Men	6.1	6.1	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.5	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.4
Women	10.8	10.5	9.5	8.1	8.3	8.3	8.5	9.0	9.6	9.7	10.1
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) ^g	7.4	7.8	8.6	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.2	7.0	7.3	7.2	...
Men	7.1	7.4	8.2	7.7	7.4	7.1	6.7	6.6	7.1	6.3	...
Women	7.9	8.5	9.2	9.3	9.0	8.8	8.0	7.7	7.8	8.4	...
The Caribbean											
Bahamas ^h	8.7	14.2	...	15.9	14.4	15.8	14.8	13.4	12.2	10.0	10.4
Men	7.7	14.0	...	...	15.0	15.6	13.5	11.8	10.3	8.6	10.1
Women	9.7	14.4	...	...	13.7	16.0	15.8	15.0	14.2	11.0	10.7
Barbados ^m	8.1	10.0	10.8	11.2	11.6	11.6	12.3	11.3	9.7	10.0	10.1
Men	6.9	10.1	10.9	9.8	10.9	11.7	11.8	12.3	9.0	9.8	9.9
Women	9.5	9.8	10.6	12.6	12.3	11.6	12.8	10.3	10.1	10.1	10.3
Belize ⁿ	8.2	13.1	12.5	...	15.3	13.2	11.6	10.1	9.5	9.3	9.4
Men	...	...	...	...	10.5	10.6	6.3	6.8	5.6	5.9	5.6
Women	...	...	...	...	22.3	20.0	19.9	15.4	15.6	14.6	14.9
Jamaica ^o	10.6	11.4	12.4	12.6	13.9	15.2	13.7	13.5	13.2	11.7	9.1
Men	7.3	8.5	9.2	9.6	10.5	11.2	10.1	9.9	9.6	8.5	6.8
Women	14.6	14.8	16.2	16.8	18.1	20.1	18.1	17.9	17.4	15.4	11.8
Trinidad and Tobago ^p	4.6	5.3	5.9	5.1	5.0	3.7	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.8	...
Men	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.8	2.9	3.9	4.2	...
Women	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.0	4.2	4.0	5.6	...
Latin America and the Caribbean^q	7.6	8.8	8.2	7.4	7.2	7.1	6.9	7.3	8.9	9.3	9.3
Men	...	...	...	...	6.4	6.1	6.1	6.4	7.9	8.2	8.1
Women	...	...	...	...	8.6	8.3	7.9	8.4	10.1	10.6	10.7

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from the household surveys conducted in the respective countries.

^a Preliminary figures.

^b Includes data for 31 urban centres. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina does not recognize data corresponding to 2007-2015 and is in the process of reviewing them. Therefore, these data are preliminary and will be replaced when the new official figures are published. 2015 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters and 2016 data correspond to the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^c Up to 2011, data for six metropolitan areas are included. From 2012 onwards, data for 20 metropolitan areas are included (data are not comparable to those of previous years).

^d From 2010 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^e Data correspond to municipal capitals. Hidden unemployment is included.

^f From 2009 and from 2012 onwards, new forms of measurement are applied (data are not comparable to those of previous years).

^g National total.

^h From 2015 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

ⁱ Hidden unemployment is included.

^j From 2011 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to June.

^k From 2009 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters.

^l Between 2010 and 2016 data correspond to Asunción and urban areas in the Central Department.

^m National total. Hidden unemployment is included.

ⁿ National total. Hidden unemployment is included. 2018 data correspond to April.

^o Weighted average with adjustments for lack of information and methodological differences and changes. Includes data adjustments for the exclusion of hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Panama.

Table A1.2

Latin America and the Caribbean: annual average national labour force participation rates, 2008–2018
(Percentages)

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ^a
Latin America											
Argentina ^b	58.8	59.3	58.9	59.5	59.3	58.9	58.3	57.7	57.5	57.8	58.5
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	64.9	65.1	...	65.9	61.1	63.4	65.8	61.0	65.6	62.4	...
Brazil ^c	62.0	62.1	...	60.0	61.4	61.3	61.0	61.3	61.4	61.7	61.6
Chile ^d	56.0	55.9	59.8	59.5	59.6	59.6	59.8	59.7	59.5	59.7	59.7
Colombia ^e	58.5	61.3	62.7	63.7	64.5	64.2	64.2	64.7	64.5	64.4	64.0
Costa Rica ^f	56.7	60.4	59.1	58.4	62.5	62.2	62.6	61.2	58.4	58.8	60.7
Cuba	74.7	75.4	74.9	76.1	74.2	72.9	71.9	67.1	65.2	63.4	...
Dominican Republic ^g	57.4	55.2	56.5	57.8	59.0	58.7	59.1	61.8	62.3	62.2	63.6
Ecuador ^h	66.2	65.3	63.7	62.5	63.0	62.9	63.2	66.2	68.2	68.8	67.0
El Salvador ^e	59.0	58.2	58.1	58.6	59.4	59.9	58.4	57.8	57.9	57.6	...
Guatemala ^h	...	...	62.5	61.8	65.4	60.6	60.9	60.7	60.8	61.0	60.2
Honduras	50.7	53.1	53.6	51.9	50.8	53.7	56.0	58.3	57.5	59.0	60.4
Mexico	60.0	59.9	59.7	59.8	60.4	60.3	59.8	59.8	59.7	59.3	59.6
Nicaragua ⁱ	53.3	66.6	71.2	75.6	76.8	75.8	74.0	72.4	73.6	73.5	71.5
Panama ^e	63.9	64.1	63.5	61.9	63.4	64.1	64.0	64.2	64.4	64.0	65.4
Paraguay ^j	62.2	63.1	60.8	61.1	64.4	63.3	62.3	62.1	62.6	71.0	71.9
Peru	73.8	74.0	74.1	73.9	73.6	73.2	72.3	71.6	72.2	72.4	72.3
Uruguay	62.7	63.4	62.9	64.8	64.0	63.6	64.7	63.8	63.4	62.9	62.4
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) ^e	64.8	65.0	64.6	64.4	64.0	64.3	65.1	63.7	64.0	66.3	...
The Caribbean											
Bahamas ^e	76.3	73.4	...	72.1	72.5	73.2	73.7	74.3	77.1	80.5	82.8
Barbados ^e	67.6	67.0	66.6	67.6	66.2	66.7	63.9	65.1	66.5	65.3	64.8
Belize ^k	59.2	...	...	...	65.8	64.0	63.6	63.2	64.0	64.1	65.5
Jamaica ^e	65.4	63.5	62.4	61.7	61.9	63.0	62.8	63.1	64.8	65.1	64.1
Trinidad and Tobago ^e	63.5	62.7	62.1	61.3	61.8	61.3	61.9	60.6	59.7	59.2	...
Latin America and the Caribbean^l	62.2	62.5	62.3	62.2	62.2	62.1	61.9	61.9	62.0	62.1	62.1

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from the household surveys conducted in the respective countries.

^a Preliminary figures.

^b Includes data for 31 urban centres. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina does not recognize data corresponding to 2007-2015 and is in the process of reviewing them. Therefore, these data are preliminary and will be replaced when the new official figures are published. 2015 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters and 2016 data correspond to the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^c From 2012 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^d From 2010 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^e Hidden unemployment is included.

^f From 2009 and from 2011 onwards, new forms of measurement are applied (data are not comparable to those of previous years).

^g From 2015 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^h From 2011 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to June.

ⁱ From 2009 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters.

^j From 2017 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^k National total. Hidden unemployment is included. 2018 data correspond to April.

^l Weighted average with adjustments for lack of information and methodological differences and changes. Includes data adjustments for the exclusion of hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Panama.

Table A1.3

Latin America and the Caribbean: annual average national employment rates, 2008–2018
(Percentages)

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 ^a
Latin America											
Argentina ^b	54.2	54.2	54.4	55.2	55.0	54.7	54.0	53.9	52.6	52.9	53.1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	63.1	63.0	...	64.2	59.7	61.5	64.3	58.9	63.4	60.2	...
Brazil ^c	57.5	56.9	...	56.0	56.9	56.9	56.8	56.1	54.3	53.8	54.0
Chile ^d	51.7	50.5	53.7	55.5	55.7	56.0	56.0	56.0	55.6	55.7	55.5
Colombia	51.9	53.9	55.4	56.8	57.9	58.0	58.4	59.0	58.5	58.4	57.8
Costa Rica ^e	53.9	55.4	54.8	52.5	56.2	56.4	56.6	55.4	52.8	53.5	54.4
Cuba	73.6	74.2	73.0	73.6	71.6	70.5	70.0	65.4	63.8	62.4	...
Dominican Republic ^f	54.7	52.3	53.6	54.5	55.2	54.6	55.4	57.3	57.9	58.7	60.0
Ecuador	62.2	61.1	60.1	59.6	60.4	60.3	60.4	63.3	64.6	65.5	64.3
El Salvador	62.7	62.8	62.5	62.7	63.2	63.6	62.8	62.1	62.2	61.9	...
Guatemala ^g	...	...	60.2	59.2	63.5	58.7	59.1	59.2	59.2	59.4	58.6
Honduras	49.2	51.5	51.5	49.7	48.9	51.6	53.1	54.0	53.2	55.1	57.0
Mexico	57.6	56.6	56.5	56.7	57.5	57.3	56.9	57.2	57.4	57.3	57.6
Nicaragua ^h	50.1	61.3	65.6	71.2	72.3	71.5	69.1	68.1	70.2	70.8	67.6
Panama	60.3	59.9	59.4	59.1	60.8	61.5	60.9	60.9	60.8	60.1	61.5
Paraguay ⁱ	58.7	59.1	57.3	57.7	61.5	60.1	58.6	58.7	58.9	66.7	67.4
Peru	70.4	70.7	71.1	70.9	70.8	70.3	69.7	69.1	69.2	69.5	69.5
Uruguay	57.7	58.5	58.4	60.7	59.9	59.5	60.4	59.0	58.4	57.9	57.2
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	60.0	59.9	59.0	59.0	58.8	59.3	60.4	59.2	59.3	61.5	...
The Caribbean											
Bahamas	69.7	63.0	...	60.6	62.1	61.6	62.8	64.4	67.7	72.5	74.2
Barbados	62.1	60.3	59.5	60.0	58.5	58.9	56.0	57.7	60.0	58.8	58.3
Belize ^j	54.3	...	...	...	55.7	55.7	56.3	56.8	57.9	58.1	59.0
Jamaica	58.5	56.3	54.7	54.4	53.3	53.4	54.2	54.6	56.2	57.5	58.2
Trinidad and Tobago	60.6	59.4	58.4	58.2	58.8	59.1	59.9	58.5	57.4	56.3	...
Latin America and the Caribbean^k	58.1	57.7	57.7	57.9	58.2	58.1	58.1	57.8	57.1	57.1	57.2

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from the household surveys conducted in the respective countries.

^a Preliminary figures.

^b Includes data for 31 urban centres. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina does not recognize data corresponding to 2007-2015 and is in the process of reviewing them. Therefore, these data are preliminary and will be replaced when the new official figures are published. 2015 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters and 2016 data correspond to the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^c From 2012 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^d From 2010 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^e From 2009 and from 2012 onwards, new forms of measurement are applied (data are not comparable to those of previous years).

^f From 2015 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^g From 2011 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to June.

^h From 2009 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years). 2018 data correspond to the average of the first three quarters.

ⁱ From 2017 onwards, a new form of measurement is applied (data are not comparable with those of previous years).

^j 2018 data correspond to April.

^k Weighted average with adjustments for lack of information and methodological differences and changes.

The labour markets in Latin America and the Caribbean did not perform well enough in 2018 to support progress towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 on economic growth, employment and decent work. Although —for the first since 2014— the unemployment rate showed no rise on average, it nevertheless remained at a 13-year high and the jobs created over the year reflected a deterioration in the average quality of employment. The labour outlook for 2019 is not auspicious, and the unemployment rate is projected to remain much the same as in 2018.

The longer-term prospects for fulfilment of Sustainable Development Goal 8 are threatened by the nature of the new forms of work, which are often performed outside existing regulations, thereby denying workers legally established labour and social rights. Some of these types of work, many of which are organized over digital platforms, offer innovative facets. But others are surprisingly similar to century-old forms of labour that defy definition as either dependent or independent work. The search for appropriate ways to regulate such employment must therefore look to the means used to foster decent work in long-standing types of occupation in the region, such as home-based manufacturing and agricultural day labour.