

Regional progress report
on the
**Montevideo
Strategy**
for Implementation of the
Regional Gender Agenda within
the Sustainable Development
Framework by 2030



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC



**XIV Regional Conference
on Women in**
Latin America and the Caribbean
Santiago, 27–31 January 2020

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This document was prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 27–31 January 2020) on the basis of the reports submitted by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the first period of the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030.

The document was prepared under the supervision of María Lucía Scuro, Social Affairs Officer of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC. Special thanks are extended to Nicole Bidegain, Alejandra Faúndez and Iliana Vaca Trigo for their contributions. Paula Aghon, Amparo Bravo, Hayley Lelourec, Carolina Muñoz, Valentina Pineda, Vivian Souza, Giulia Tarducci, Alejandra Valdés, Ana Catalina Valencia and Belén Villegas are also thanked for their contributions.

Thanks are owed to Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for support in the preparation of this document.

United Nations publication

LC/CRM.14/5

Distribution: G

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Printed at United Nations, Santiago

S.19-00847

This publication should be cited as: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Regional progress report on the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030* (LC/CRM.14/5), Santiago, 2019.

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INTRODUCTION

The governments of Latin America and the Caribbean have agreed on a Regional Gender Agenda, in the framework of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this Agenda, States undertake to recognize and guarantee the rights of women without discrimination and to put gender equality at the centre, in order to move towards sustainable styles of development. The Agenda also reaffirms the international commitments assumed by the governments, particularly in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).

In 2016, at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the member States of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) recognized that gender inequality continued to be one of the region's structural features, and that it was urgent to make faster progress towards fulfilling regional and international commitments on gender equality and women's autonomy. The governments noted that four structural obstacles needed to be overcome to achieve gender equality by 2030: socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty in the framework of exclusionary growth; discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of the culture of privilege; the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care; and the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere. To that end, they adopted the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030.¹

The Montevideo Strategy is a political-technical instrument that aims to steer implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda and ensure that it is used as a road map for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provides States with the guidelines needed to turn regional and international commitments into transformative action, addressing unresolved challenges in the implementation of public policies with a 2030 horizon. To this end, it recognizes the leadership of the mechanisms for the advancement of women in the processes of gender mainstreaming within the entire State structure. It also notes the crucial need for civil society participation, particularly women's and feminist organizations and movements, together with regional and international cooperation, in advancing towards substantive equality.

The Strategy contains 10 implementation pillars and 74 interrelated measures, which guide the implementation of the agreements in terms of policies, plans, programmes and practical public actions. Its implementation contributes to creating the structural conditions needed to ensure women's rights within the sustainable development framework. It has thus become an innovative instrument for overcoming deficiencies in the implementation of gender equality policies throughout the region. Although Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region in the world where, for more than four decades without fail, States have been holding regular meetings to discuss and make commitments on these issues, the fact is that women and girls still face major challenges in exercising their rights.

The Strategy affirms that States are responsible for systematically assessing the progress made in its implementation, through an open and participatory follow-up framework that includes regional accountability mechanisms and the active participation of civil society organizations.

Governments may report voluntarily on their progress in the application and adaptation of the Montevideo Strategy at the meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. At the respective meetings held in May 2017 and January 2019, the countries of the region presented reports on progress made in the adaptation and application of the Montevideo Strategy at the national level, and its link with SDGs; and in the first quarter of 2019 they presented the national reports that have been used to produce this regional report.

¹ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030* (LC/CRM.13/5), Santiago, 2017.

As a subsidiary body of ECLAC, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean has also reported at the meetings of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development on how the Montevideo Strategy has been applied to mainstream the gender perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the Montevideo Strategy, the governments agreed that a regional report on progress in its application would be presented at each session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean until 2030. To this end, the governments submitted national reports in writing during the first three years of implementation of the Montevideo Strategy. The present regional report systemizes the national reports submitted and describes how the Strategy is being applied to expedite the implementation of regional and international commitments on gender equality and on women's rights and autonomy.

The region is currently facing multiple challenges as a result of the geopolitical, economic, technological, demographic and climatic changes that are shaping changing economic scenarios; and this is the main theme of the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2019. These scenarios give a new sense of urgency to fulfilling national and regional commitments, within the framework of the Regional Gender Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The regional report is organized in three chapters. The first deals with the four structural obstacles that perpetuate gender inequality, taking into account the current status of women in the region with respect to each obstacle and their interrelationships. The second chapter reviews the main progress made by the countries of the region in applying the Montevideo Strategy, including an analysis from the standpoint of the Strategy's implementation pillars and the three dimensions of women's autonomy, physical, economic and decision-making. The third chapter considers the challenges that have arisen in these three years of implementation of the Strategy and its potential to overcome the obstacles that perpetuate inequality, through comprehensive and transformative public policies in the coming decades and looking towards 2030.

CHAPTER I

Structural challenges of gender inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean

Introduction

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have made great strides towards achieving gender equality and women's autonomy in recent years, especially on the regulatory and institutional fronts. However, although progress is undeniable and all the countries have rolled out initiatives relating to these themes, gender inequalities remain a structural feature of the region and there are still significant obstacles to the achievement of substantive equality.

Given the persistence of inequality and its strong link with the unsustainable prevailing development pattern, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has worked with Latin American and Caribbean governments to help them overcome conceptual and public policy challenges that frustrate sustainable development based on gender equality and women's autonomy (Bárcena, 2017). As part of this process, the region's governments have identified four structural challenges that are entrenched in unequal power relations, as outlined in the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 (ECLAC, 2017a): (i) socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty in the framework of exclusionary growth; (ii) discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of a culture of privilege; (iii) the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care; and (iv) the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere.

These bottlenecks are the product of a combination of external factors and endogenous features that are inherent in the socioeconomic and cultural structures of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. As they are mutually reinforcing and generate complex socioeconomic, cultural and belief systems, they hinder and reduce the scope of policies on gender equality and women's autonomy (ECLAC, 2017a), and must be addressed in order to achieve substantive equality in the region. The Montevideo Strategy explicitly proposes the breakdown of these structural obstacles to gender equality. The following sections review some critical points reflected by these challenges, on the basis of the most recent data available for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

A. Socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty in the framework of exclusionary growth

Latin America and the Caribbean is the world's most unequal region. Inequality is a historical and structural characteristic of Latin American and Caribbean societies that has been maintained and perpetuated even at times of growth and economic prosperity (ECLAC, 2019a). In recent years, the region has faced complex conditions including slowing economies, persistent external vulnerability, poverty and inequality reduction at a standstill, deteriorating employment levels and quality, the environmental crisis and a resurgence of discriminatory and conservative discourse that calls hard-won rights into question and threatens the achievements in women's autonomy and gender equality (Bárcena, 2017).

Gender inequality is not an isolated phenomenon, but is linked to and heightened by other types of inequality, such as economic inequality, which together form a vicious circle that development strategies in the region have thus far been unable to break. This is compounded by low levels of innovation and investment, and the region's heavy dependence on the dynamics of the external sector and commodity exports. Against this backdrop, ECLAC has offered to work with the countries of the region to generate knowledge and empirical evidence which would allow them to, among other things, shed light on the way in which gender inequality deepens when combined with socioeconomic inequality and unequal distribution in Latin America and the Caribbean.

After 12 years in which poverty and extreme poverty rates in the region decreased significantly, in 2015 and again in 2016 both rates rose. The figures for 2017 show a further rise in extreme poverty, while the overall poverty figure remained the same. In 2017, the number of poor in Latin America reached 184 million, equivalent to 30.2% of the population, while the number of extremely poor stood at 62 million, or 10.2% of the population (ECLAC, 2019a).

Regional averages conceal the socioeconomic status of Latin American and Caribbean women in particular, and the specific determinants of their situation. Although poverty is measured at the household level, gender differences are a significant factor behind inequality in the incidence of poverty and extreme poverty. Thus, the ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean monitors indicators such as the femininity index of poor households, which allows a comparison between the percentage of women aged 20 to 59 years living in poverty and that of their male counterparts. This indicator has shown that poverty reduction measures in the region have not benefited men and women equally or proceeded at the same pace and that, all in all, poor households contain a higher proportion of women of ages at which productive and reproductive demands are greatest.

In 2017, for every 100 men living in poor households in the region, there were 113 women in the same situation. Moreover, despite variations in the regional poverty level, the femininity index of poverty remained relatively constant between 2012 and 2017, with values between 1.13 and 1.14, equivalent to 113–114 women for every 100 men (ECLAC, 2019a). In the case of extreme poverty, the index has been equally stable, with a slight increase between 2014 and 2016, before falling in 2017 and returning to a level similar to that of 2012, 1.16, representing 116 women for every 100 men (ECLAC, 2019a).

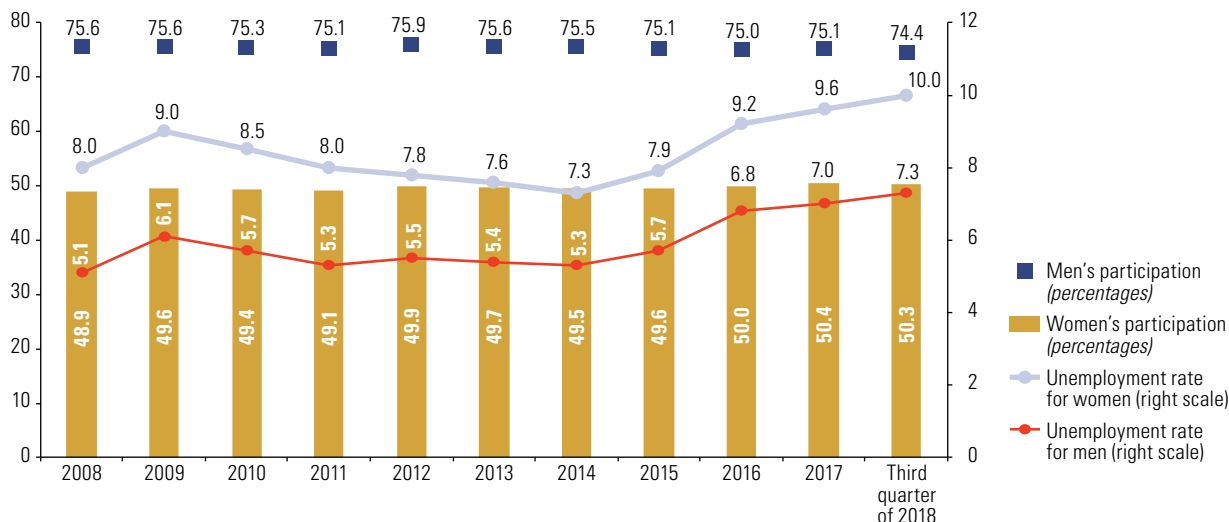
The poverty suffered by women in the region is closely linked to their labour market participation and to barriers they face to carry out paid activities. Although progress has been made in recent years in women's participation in the labour force, their labour market participation rate in Latin America and the Caribbean remains stalled at around 50%. Between the third quarter of 2017 and the third quarter of 2018, women's labour market participation rose from 50% to 50.3%, while that of men climbed to 74.4% in the third quarter of 2018 (ILO, 2018a). In other words, half of all Latin American and Caribbean women have no link with the labour market.

Low labour market participation is compounded by the fact that many women who do enter this market looking for work do not find it or obtain more vulnerable jobs, with neither contracts nor access to social benefits (ECLAC, 2015, 2016a and 2019a; ILO, 2018b; Weller and Roethlisberger, 2011). Moreover, the unemployment rate for women stood at 10% in the third quarter of 2018, compared with 7.3% for men in the same period (ILO, 2018a) (see figure I.1).

This lower labour market participation and quality of jobs for women derives from various obstacles and barriers including: the overburden of domestic and care work, the undervaluation of skills categorized as "feminine" and the discrimination which leads to "punishment" of women who take maternity leave, with harmful consequences for their careers, opportunities for upward movement and access to retirement rights, and leading to more limited benefits upon retirement.

Moreover, the quality of employment is directly related to occupational categories. In general, wage employment, which represents the largest source of employment for men (63% of the employed population) and women (54.3% of the employed population), is associated with better quality in terms of rights. Nonetheless, within the region, women continue to be overrepresented among domestic workers and unpaid family workers, which are the lowest paid and most vulnerable employment categories (see figure I.2).

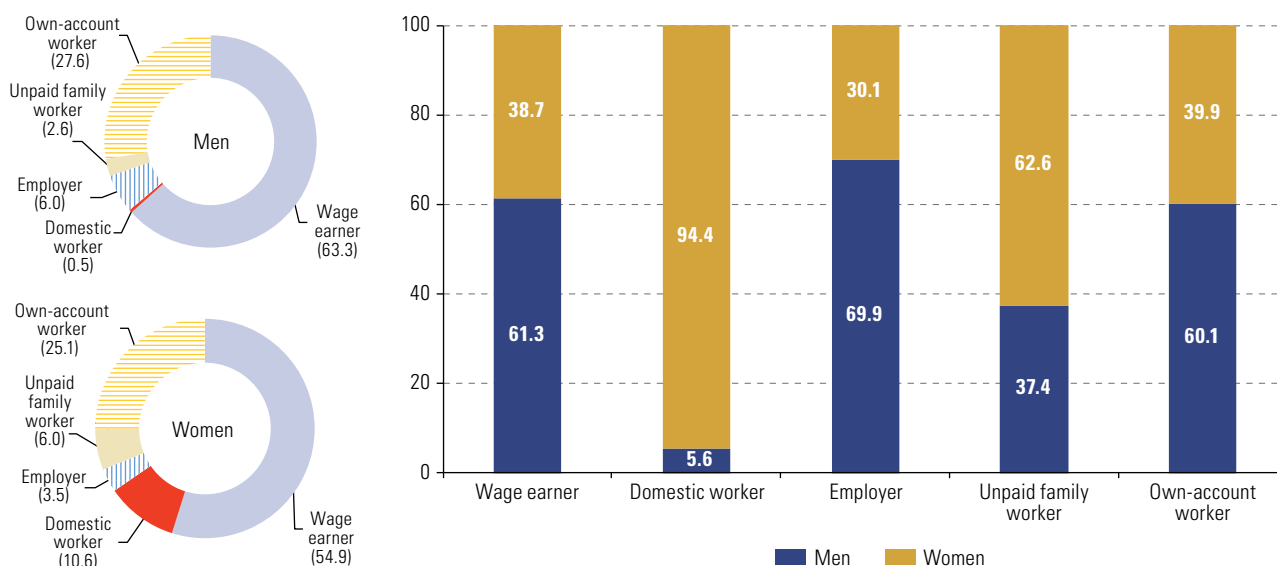
Figure I.1
Latin America and the Caribbean (26 countries): activity and employment rates, by sex, 2008–2018^a
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of International Labour Organization (ILO), *2018 Labour Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean*, Lima, 2018.

^a Weighted average of the following countries: Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay. Excludes hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Panama. Weighting factors used are International Labour Organization (ILO) projections of the total labour force and by sex.

Figure I.2
Latin America (18 countries): structure and distribution of the employed population, by sex and occupational category, around 2017^a
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).

^a Weighted average. Data refer to 2017 for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay; to 2016 for Honduras and Mexico; and to 2014 for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Meanwhile, 51.8% of women work in precarious sectors in terms of wages, employment formalization, job security and access to social services, and in the region, 82.2% of these women are not affiliated with or do not pay into a pension system (ECLAC, 2019a).

Inequalities in the labour market have a significant impact on women's economic autonomy, as this market is the main source of personal income (ECLAC, 2016a). Women's lower participation in the labour market limits their ability to generate income, and thus one in three women over the age of 15 in the region (who is not exclusively in school) has no income of their own, compared with one in ten men in the same situation. Moreover, for many women who do find jobs, the income earned is not enough to satisfy their or their families' needs.

Although women, especially those living in rural areas, participate in agricultural activities and use natural resources, they continue to face more difficulties than men when it comes to owning land or controlling the production assets used to work the land. According to agricultural census data for the region, women represent just 8%–30% of agricultural landowners (FAO, 2019). In addition, the lack of economic guarantees or possession of land or goods, in turn limits their access to lending and financial products. The heterogeneity of women's socioeconomic status is shaped by factors such as territory, ethnicity and race, and life-cycle stage, which will be addressed in chapter III of this document.

B. The sexual division of labour and unfair social organization of care

In the light of women's lack of own income and higher level of poverty as a result, it is even more important to incorporate them into the labour market. However, this continues to pose a problem for the countries of the region. These challenges go beyond unpaid work as they are defined by a rigid sexual division of labour that determines and unbalances the assignment of productive and reproductive tasks among women and men.

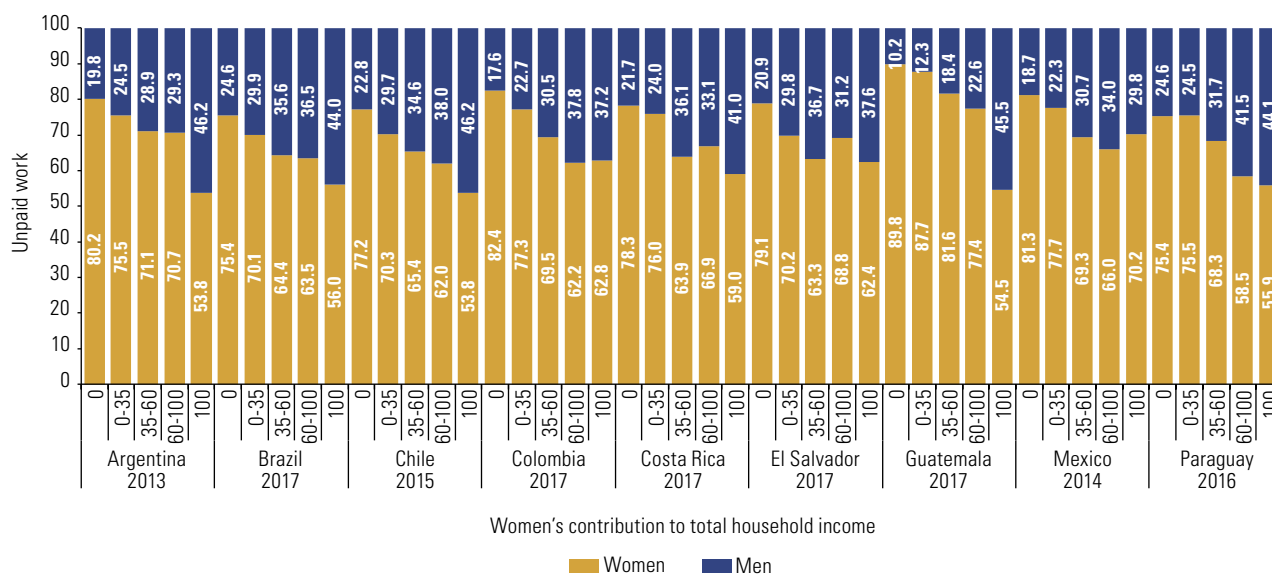
The sexual division of labour is a structural challenge of inequality because it affects women's economic autonomy by making them almost exclusively responsible for domestic and care tasks (ECLAC, 2017a). This workload, on one hand, restricts women's ability to enter and remain in the labour market, and on the other, results in intense working days for the women who do manage to enter the labour market and also continue to be almost exclusively responsible for unpaid work.

According to ECLAC, the labour market is the master key to equality, but given that gender inequality is a structural factor in the region, access to this space implies recognizing the interdependence between production and social reproduction processes (Bárcena, 2017). Light has been shed on the significant contribution of the care economy thanks to an increase in time-use surveys in the region. The results of these surveys show the differences in participation and the amount of time spent by men and women on unpaid work. According to data from the Gender Equality Observatory, women spend most time on the unpaid work needed to sustain households. Of the total unpaid work done by men and women in the household, 70%–90% is carried out by women.

Despite changes in family structures in recent years and the increase in the number of women in the labour market, the unequal distribution of unpaid work appears to have remained stable. Even in cases where women are the sole providers of household income, they spend more time than men on unpaid work (see figure I.3).

Figure I.3

Latin America (9 countries): unpaid work done by each partner aged between 20 and 59 in two-parent, extended and composite households, by women's contribution to total household income, latest year available (Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, Repository of information on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean [online database] <https://oig.cepal.org/en/infographics/repository-information-time-use-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

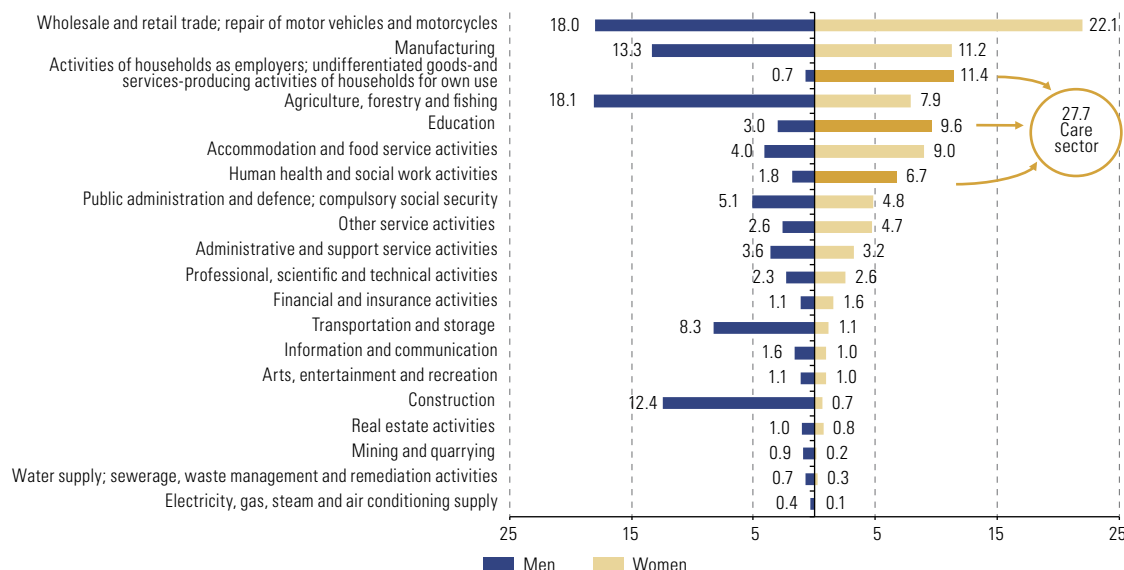
These data reflect the strength with which cultural patterns that prevent a more balanced distribution of domestic care responsibilities are imposed and persist. This is important for the formulation of public policies that aim to change the current distribution of care tasks and encourage greater co-responsibility. Although progress has been made in recent years in terms of public policies concerning care in Latin America and the Caribbean, advances on the legislative front relating to greater co-responsibility of the State, companies and men in care activities remain limited. For example, paternity leave is still non-existent or insufficient in the countries of the region, and few legislations include the right to give or to receive care as a universal right (Sallé, Molpeceres and Infante, 2018).

Structural heterogeneity in the region affects labour markets, which reflect a strong concentration of employment in lower-productivity sectors and a high level of labour segmentation. The sexual division of labour is also evident upon analysis of women in the labour market, where they are overrepresented in jobs relating to care (see figure I.4). This extension to the public sphere of the role assigned to women as caregivers can be attributed to social assumptions about the existence of an innate aptitude in women for this type of work, which is less valued and recognized in economic terms. For example, certain branches of education —particularly the teaching of the youngest children— are seen as an extension of women's traditional maternal role (ILO, 2016).

The services provided by the women working in care sectors are mixed. Large segments of this sector are characterized by low wages, long working hours, precarious conditions and lack of social protection, and workers are probably exposed to discriminatory practices. A typical case is women employed by households to carry out domestic and care work.

Figure I.4

Latin America (16 countries^a): distribution of the employed population, by sector of economic activity, around 2017^b (Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).

^a Weighted average of the following countries: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

^b Data refer to 2017, except in the case of Honduras and Mexico, for which they refer to 2016, and in the case of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Guatemala and Nicaragua, for which they refer to 2014.

As the Montevideo Strategy makes clear, the social organization of care remains unfair, with heavy implications in terms of the equality gap between men and women; between women of different socioeconomic status; and between countries and territories. Latin American and Caribbean women are part of global care chains. In the coming years, demographic changes in the region and throughout the world will increase the demand for care for older persons and other groups in situations of dependency (ECLAC, 2017a and 2018a). Thus, it is crucial to shed light on, recognize and value unpaid work, encouraging the fair distribution of care responsibilities as part of the transition towards more sustainable development patterns (Bárcena, 2017).

C. Discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of a culture of privilege

Discriminatory, sexist and racist sociocultural patterns are another structural challenge that sustains gender inequality in the region. Gender-based discrimination and violence against women¹ remains a serious problem, which manifests itself in various spaces and in multiple forms, despite the progress made in recent decades.

Not only is gender-based discrimination and violence against women a violation of human rights, but it also affects Latin American and Caribbean women's economic and political autonomy, and is closely linked to the patriarchal culture which legitimizes male violence (Aguayo and Nascimento, 2018; ECLAC, 2017a).

¹ According to the Convention of Belém do Pará, violence against women is "any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere" (OAS, 1994, art. 1). Violence against women includes multiple forms, perpetrators and environments, for example within the family, interpersonal relationships, the community and in public spaces, and may also derive from the action, omission and inaction of the State (OAS, 1994, art. 2). According to general recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2017), "gender-based violence against women" is used as a more precise term that makes explicit the gendered causes and impacts of the violence.

Although most countries in the region (32 out of 33) have adopted and ratified the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), implementation has been very uneven (Essayag, 2016), and there is still a gap between formal and substantive equality, which is especially wide in this area that is, paradoxically, among the most frequently targeted by equality policies in the region.

Efforts to address gender-based violence in the region have been boosted in recent years by legislative and programmatic measures, such as the promulgation of comprehensive protection laws and regulations on femicide (either through codification or classification as an aggravating factor in a murder), and an increase in protection measures —ranging from direct protection for victims, to measures relating to the provision of support during the legal process (Rodríguez and Pautassi, 2016). However, this has not necessarily translated into a decline in the phenomenon, which must be addressed through different approaches, given the problem's deep roots in the region.

Moreover, once laws have been adopted, new challenges arise, such as access to justice, the need for stronger institutional coordination and the guarantee of sufficient financing for effective implementation (ECLAC, 2016a). In the region —and the world— gender-based violence against women is expressed in different ways: sexually, physically, psychologically and economically. It also occurs in different spheres, for example, sexual harassment at work, violence or sexual harassment in the street and in public transportation, and trafficking in persons. Manifestations of violence in institutions include that inflicted on women in prisons, obstetric violence, and violence against migrant women and towards sexual diversity (ECLAC, 2016a). Once women gain access to the public sphere from which they had been excluded traditionally, new forms of violence emerge, reflecting discriminatory and violent patriarchal patterns. Current examples are violence against defenders of human rights and the environment, and violence through mass media, which pose major challenges for the region. Gender-based violence against women is related to other forms of violence and discrimination —for example those targeting indigenous and Afrodescendent people, migrants, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons—, with a varied impact on women's autonomy depending on their social position.

The Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) —specifically its Committee of Experts— has emphasized that femicide stands in violent opposition to all declared rights and guarantees of human rights established in both national and international legislation as it is “a dehumanizing act of hate that, over time, has consolidated the male hegemonic vision over women as an object of transgression and weakness; it is a configuration of the dominating system of patriarchal power” (MESECVI/IACW, 2018, p. 11).

Therefore, femicide has been described as the most dramatic and extreme form of violence against women (Bárcena, 2017) and of structural gender inequality. It represents an attack on human rights on a daily or exceptional basis, in two settings: in relationships, whether in a union or not (intimate femicide), and inflicted by other persons —whether relatives, people from the women's social environment or strangers—, and which derive partly from situations of social conflict or crime (ECLAC, 2016a).

In most countries in the region, femicide occurs mainly in intimate relationships, with the exception of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, where it is more often related to various forms of social violence. Although information systems and statistical records have been developed to shed light on violence, data are insufficient. Even so, the available data reveal a situation that imperils the physical autonomy of women and girls in all segments of society (ECLAC, 2019b).

Despite the progress made in recent years, the ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory has outlined the difficulty in the region of collecting data, especially on femicide. On one hand, there have been advances in the measurement of femicide thanks to the commitments made by the countries at the regional level and the efforts to standardize and reach agreement on figures across different institutions in the justice and security sectors and machineries for the advancement of women. These processes have been carried out thanks to the establishment of inter-agency working groups, agreements and protocols to collect data and standardize records, and in some cases, national statistical institutes have coordinated efforts to include the indicator in national statistical systems. However, femicide records in the different countries of the region vary, and are not necessarily harmonized in terms of criteria, collected variables and operational definitions (see box I.1).

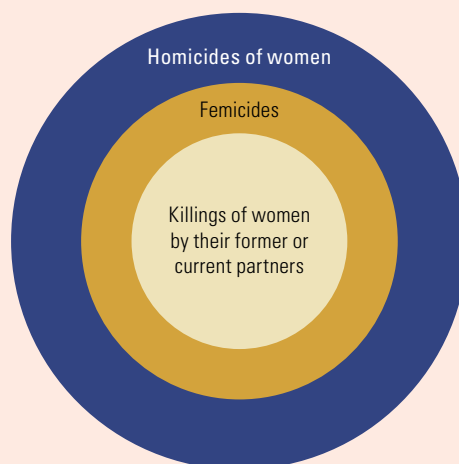
Box I.1**Progress in the measurement of femicide in Latin America and the Caribbean: contribution of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean**

Since 2009, the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean has promoted the measurement of femicide^a in the region, with a view to providing reliable, verifiable and comparable data on the countries, allowing an understanding of the phenomenon in all its complexity. The Observatory aims to contribute to the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies on prevention, protection and reparation for secondary victims, and the punishment of perpetrators.

To date, the Observatory has information on 34 Latin American and Caribbean countries for three indicators that, jointly, reflect the dynamics of extreme violence against women (see diagram 1). Specifically, there are data for 30 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean on women murdered by their current or former intimate partners, for 23 countries on femicide, and for 28 countries on homicides.

Diagram 1

Data on extreme violence against women compiled by the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean



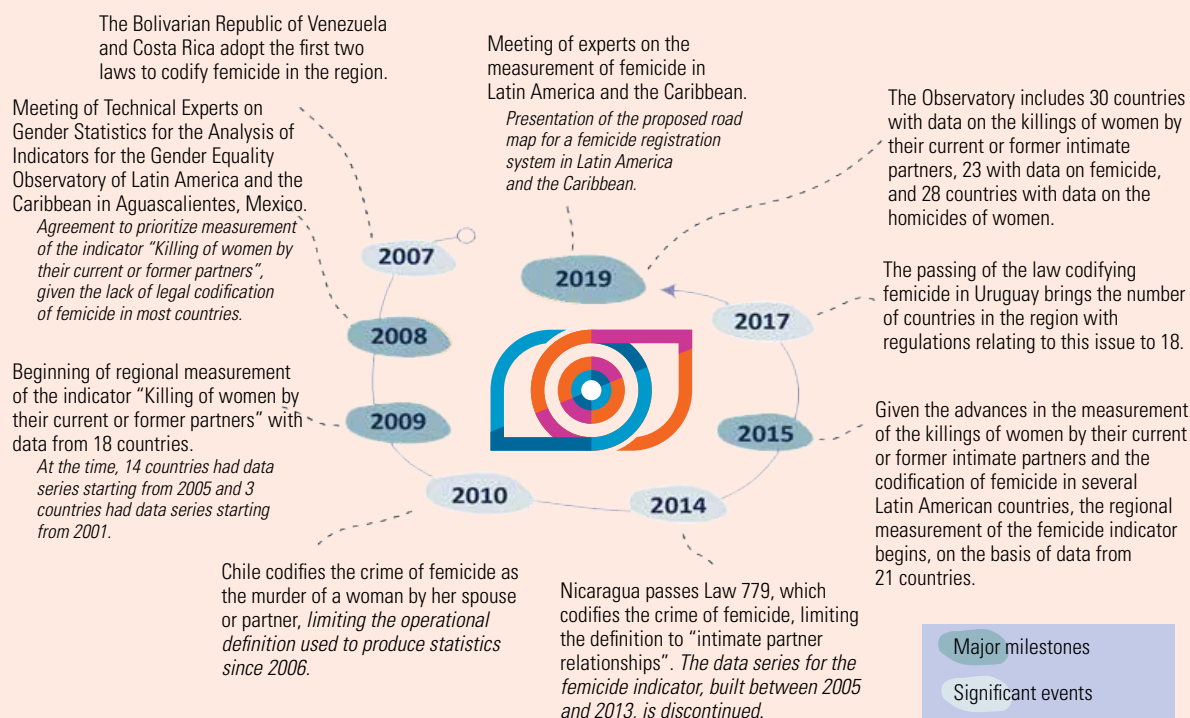
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

At present, different institutions are responsible for national records on femicide in the region. In Latin America, the public prosecutor's office, attorney general's office, government ministries and the judiciary usually produce these records. In the Caribbean, the police are the data source in 11 of the 12 countries that provide information to the Gender Equality Observatory. The evolution of the indicator shows that the records of femicide in the different countries are heterogeneous in nature and do not necessarily coincide in terms of criteria, compiled variables and operational definitions (see diagram 2). This is partly explained by the fact that countries' regulatory definitions of the phenomenon vary, from a broad expression of femicide to penal categories that limit it to cases in which the victim and perpetrator were married or lived together. Between 2007 and 2018, 18 Latin American countries codified femicide into specific penal categories, or classified the violent death of women on the basis of gender as an aggravating circumstance of homicide. In the Caribbean, the concept of femicide is used operationally, for measurement purposes. This heterogeneity is also reflected in the use of different approaches, focusing either on penal categories, codification, security or prevention.

Costa Rica is an example of a country where femicide statistics are not limited to the definition included in existing regulations. Although current Costa Rican laws define femicide as the killing of a woman with whom there is "a relationship of marriage, in a de facto union whether declared or not"^b, the legal system uses, for statistical purposes, the records of all gender-related deaths according to the definition of gender-based violence of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará).

Box I.1 (concluded)

Diagram 2
Measurement of the Gender Equality Observatory's femicide indicator



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

Although femicide is not included in the global indicator framework for monitoring the SDGs, its measurement is strategic for the fulfilment of SDG 5 (on gender equality) and 16 (on peace, justice and strong institutions), especially targets 5.2, "to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation"; and 16.1, "to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere".

Given the challenge of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its 17 goals and 169 targets, the countries of the region agreed, within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, to incorporate the rate of femicide per 100,000 women into the prioritized set of 154 indicators for regional follow-up of the Agenda. This represents a step forward in the statistical visibility and legitimization of this social issue.

Against this challenging backdrop, ECLAC is striving to develop a shared femicide registration system for Latin American and Caribbean countries, which would be used to increase national data to deepen the analysis of femicide and strengthen regional comparability^c. Only detailed and reliable records, which allow the identification of the characteristics of femicide, motives and modus operandi, along with the characteristics of the victims, perpetrators, their environment and the relationship between them, will facilitate a broader analysis of the actual dynamics of lethal violence on the basis of gender, and provide empirical evidence that would contribute to building effective public policies for the prevention and punishment of violence against women.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a In the region, different legal definitions use the terms femicide and femicide.

^b See Law No. 8589 on the punishment of violence against women [online, in Spanish] [http://www2.congreso.gob.pe/sicr/cendocbib/con5_uibd.nsf/8F74FD_C75A642339052583190077F516/\\$FILE/penalizacin_de_la_violencia_contra_las_mujeres_8589.pdf](http://www2.congreso.gob.pe/sicr/cendocbib/con5_uibd.nsf/8F74FD_C75A642339052583190077F516/$FILE/penalizacin_de_la_violencia_contra_las_mujeres_8589.pdf).

^c See Valdés (2019).

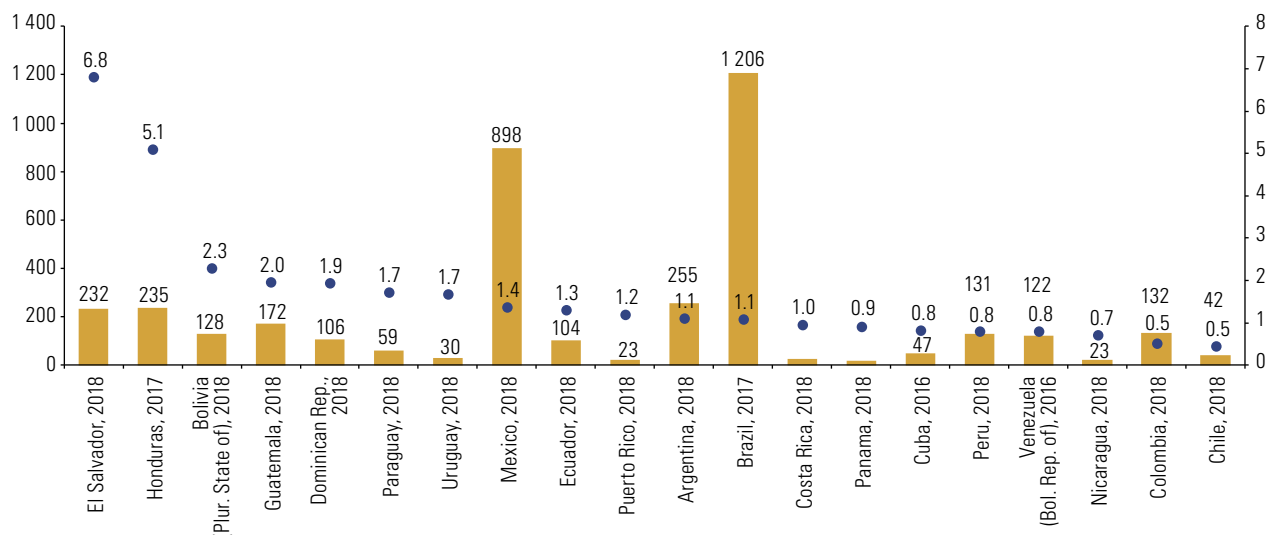
On the other hand, the progress made in Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the codification of femicide as a criminal offence and its statistical visibility have not been enough to reduce this expression of extreme violence against women. According to the most recent official information provided by 33 countries of the region to the Gender Equality Observatory, more than 3,800 women were killed owing to their gender. In 2018, four of the five highest femicide rates in the region were recorded in Central America, in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras (see figure I.5).

Figure I.5

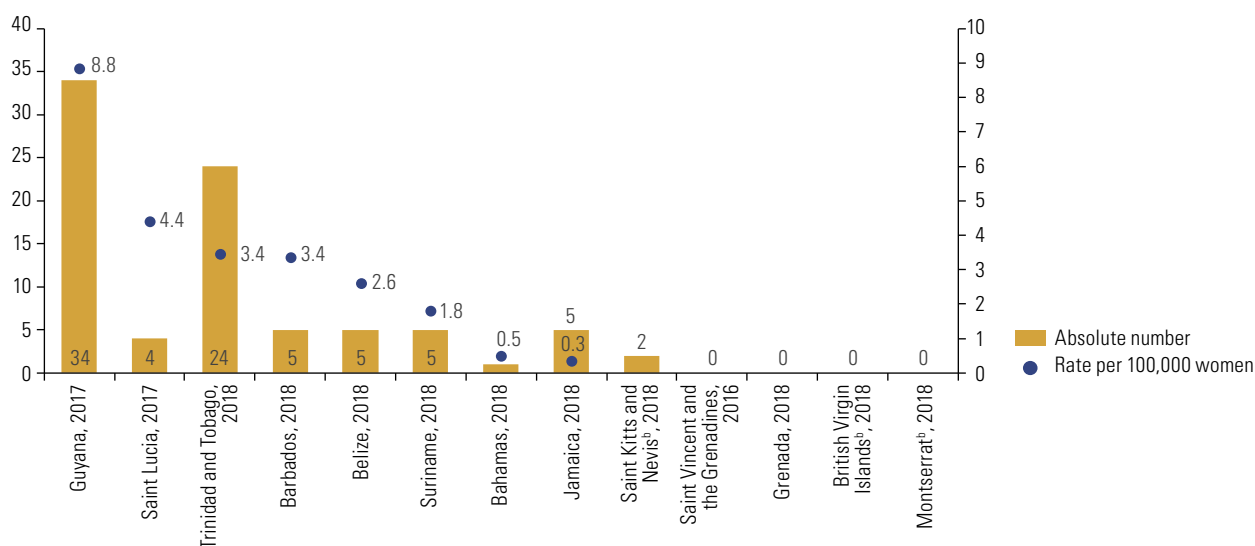
Latin America and the Caribbean (33 countries): femicide, latest year available^a

(Absolute numbers and rates per 100,000 women)

A. Latin America (20 countries)



B. The Caribbean (13 countries)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a The data refer to femicide, except in the case of the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, which only report on cases of intimate femicide (committed by a current or former partner).

^b The calculation of the rate per 100,000 women for the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and Saint Kitts and Nevis is not possible owing to the lack of population estimates. The British Virgin Islands and Montserrat reported no femicides in the most recent year for which data are available (2018 and 2017, respectively), while Saint Kitts and Nevis recorded two femicides in 2018.

Figure I.5 presents data on femicide in 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, for the latest year available. The information shows that the incidence of femicide in the northern countries of Central America remains an acute and worrying problem. Meanwhile, in the Caribbean, Guyana and Saint Lucia recorded at least 4 deaths per 100,000 women according to the data provided for the latest available year.

In some countries of the region, most homicides of women are femicide cases. For example, in El Salvador, three out of five homicides of women were recorded as femicides in 2018; in other words, 60% of these homicides involve a component of “hate or contempt for women,” as codified in article 45 of the special comprehensive law for a life free of violence for women.

The indicators for follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development to measure physical and sexual violence include: physical or sexual violence perpetrated against women aged 15 to 49 by a current or former intimate partner, which corresponds to SDG indicator 5.2.1. Data provided by nine countries of the region² show that 10%–35% of women stated that they had been subjected to physical or sexual violence by their partners in the previous 12 months (ECLAC, 2018c).

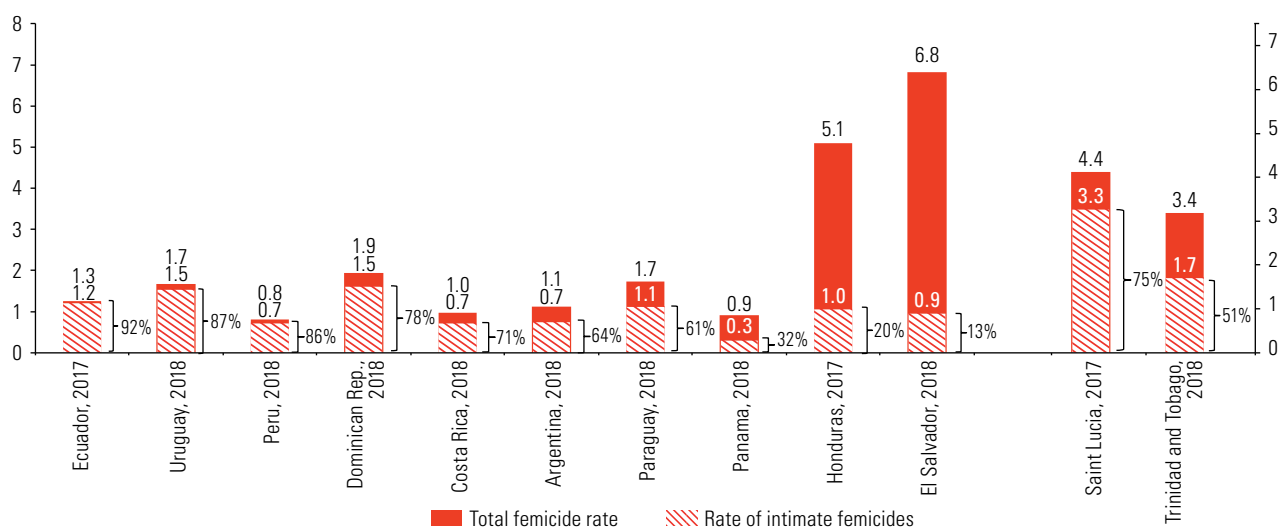
In most countries of the region, 25%–33% of women have experienced an episode of physical or sexual violence inflicted by their partner. These figures are higher in countries such as the Plurinational State of Bolivia (58.5%), Colombia (33.3%), Costa Rica (35.8%) and Ecuador (35.5%), where more than one third of women are subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner (Bott and others, 2019).

Moreover, violent patterns in intimate relationships are reflected in the high percentages of homicides of women in this context, as shown by the indicator regarding murders of women by a current or former intimate partner (see figure I.6). In most Latin American countries, perpetrators of femicide are the victims’ current or former partners. Women murdered by their current or former partners accounted for 92% of femicides in Ecuador, 87% in Uruguay and 86% in Peru. This highlights the existence of power patterns, within intimate relationships, deriving from violent socialization processes, which define hegemonic models of masculinity that fail to recognize women as equal beings with rights and dignity. Therefore, in relationships that involve the greatest intimacy and trust, there is a serious violation of women’s right to a life free from all forms of violence, which has significant impacts on the different dimensions of their autonomy and, in its most dramatic form, results in their death at the hands of those whom they trusted to share intimate bonds with.

Figure I.6

Latin America and the Caribbean (12 countries): total femicides and intimate partner femicides^a, latest year available

(Rates per 100,000 women and percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a This concept refers to femicide committed by the victim’s current or former partner.

² Bolivia (Plurinational State of), 2008; Colombia, 2010; Dominican Republic, 2013; El Salvador, 2008; Guatemala, 2015; Haiti, 2012; Honduras, 2012; Nicaragua, 2007; and Peru, 2012.

Patriarchal cultural patterns are also manifested in other forms of violence and discrimination, through sexist stereotypes about the roles of men and women, and the different expectations of each gender, with less importance and value assigned to women and the feminine (Bárcena, 2017). Both discrimination and violence against women have been normalized by these cultural patterns, permeating the academic, labour and political environments, the media and public spaces, and they underlie the wage gap, academic segmentation, and the social organization of care (ECLAC, 2017a).

In addition, discrimination is deepened and reinforced by factors such as ethnicity and race, age, socioeconomic status and territory, among others, and when multiple forms of discrimination intersect, women may be exposed to even greater dangers (ECLAC, 2016a and 2016b; UN-Women, 2018). For example, the discrimination and violence that LGBTI persons face by reason of their sexual orientation and gender identity are evident in the obstacles they encounter in access to health care, employment, legal forms of union and family composition, and identity recognition and registration (ECLAC, 2017a). Women who are part of the LGBTI population may face different forms of violence and discrimination, for example lesbophobic and transphobic violence,³ which are normally excluded from laws and policies that address gender-based violence against women and which, furthermore, are not included in national records or statistics on violence.

Gender-based violence against women is shaped by stereotypes that dehumanize Afrodescendent and indigenous women, to the extent that expressions of violence occur in the context of racist and patriarchal societies (ECLAC, 2018b). Against the backdrop of increasing migratory flows in the region, forms of violence and discrimination against women are emerging strongly and require a special intersectional analysis. Discrimination on the basis of gender, country of origin and migratory status is another common vector of exclusion and deprivation (UN-Women 2018; Fries, 2019).

In the past few years, social demands relating to violence against women and girls have come to the fore. Across Latin America, several countries have experienced a resurgence of social and feminist movements against old and new forms of violence against women. This indicates the need to link femicide with other forms of violence that are still not included among policy priorities (Gherardi, 2016).

These various forms of violence persist as they are based on the social, political and economic structure, which are marked by discriminatory and violent patriarchal patterns. Today this poses a double challenge for Latin American and Caribbean countries: address, on one hand, the persistence of patriarchal patterns interwoven into countries' cultural traditions, and on the other hand, the neoconservatism accompanying the emerging social and institutional discourse against women's rights and autonomy, and threatening the progress made. The patriarchal order sustains itself over time because it operates in both the public and private domains, and attempts to transform it are fiercely resisted as they involve questioning male privilege (UN-Women, 2017), which is directly linked to themes such as the concentration of power, hierarchical relations in the public sphere and the predominance of a culture of privilege, which will be addressed in the following section.

D. Concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere

Power relations and social hierarchies are central elements of the unequal gender order that has shaped Latin American and Caribbean societies, where the public sphere and the exercise of power have been construed symbolically as masculine (ECLAC, 2016a), excluding women as a result. Thus, ensuring women's decision-making autonomy is especially important as it means their full participation in the decisions that

³ According to the United Nations Free and Equal campaign, acts of homophobic and transphobic violence range from aggressive and sustained psychological intimidation to physical assault, torture, kidnapping and targeted assassination, and have been reported in all regions of the world. Cases of sexual violence have also been widely reported, particularly "corrective" or "punitive" rape, committed by men against women who are assumed to be lesbians under the pretext of trying to "cure" victims' of homosexuality (United Nations, 2017).

affect their lives and their communities. Given that in the region, institutional, social and cultural structures that restrict women's access to power and decision-making processes have remained in place (ECLAC, 2017a), the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public sphere are considered the fourth structural challenge of gender inequality.

In that regard, political systems, historically monopolized by men, are sustained by a patriarchal political, cultural, economic and social base that continues to resist the presence of women. Women remain underrepresented in decision-making processes in political and State institutions. At present, the only countries in the region where a woman holds the highest position of executive power are Barbados (prime minister) and Puerto Rico (governor). However, more women are being included in presidential formulas, and many have assumed the role of vice-president, especially in Latin America (see table I.1).

Table I.1

Latin America (8 countries): women vice-presidents

Country	Vice-President	Beginning of term
Argentina	Gabriela Michetti	2015
Colombia	Marta Lucía Ramírez	2018
Costa Rica	Epsy Campbell	2018
Dominican Republic	Margarita Cedeño	2012
Nicaragua	Rosario Murillo	2017
Peru	Mercedes Aráoz	2018
Uruguay	Lucía Topolansky	2017
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Delcy Rodríguez	2018

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

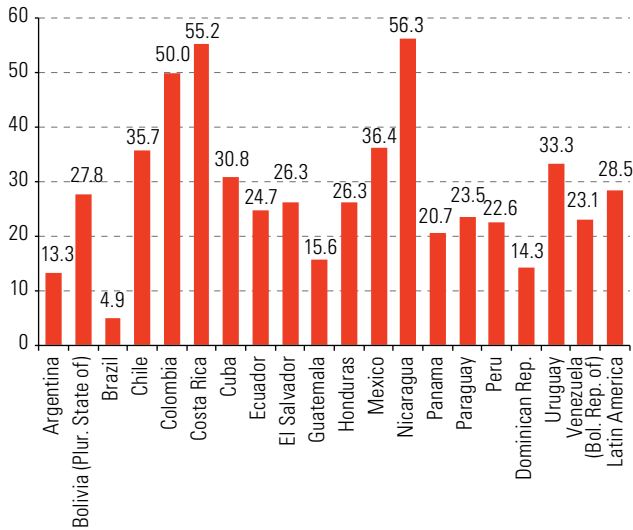
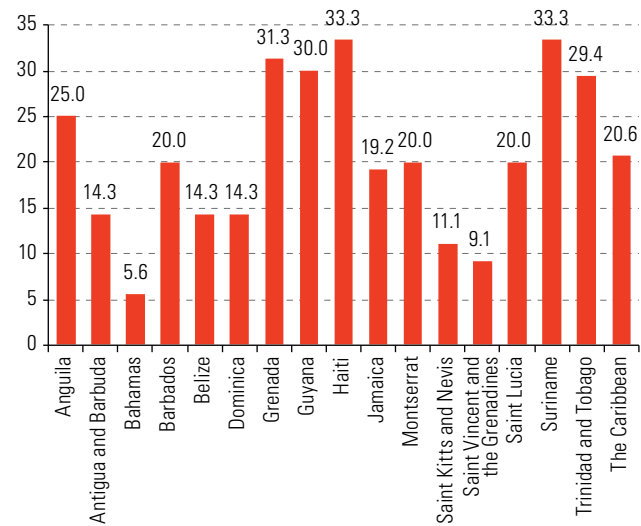
Although progress has been made in the implementation of some commitments and affirmative action measures, such as electoral quotas, the democracies of the region remain in debt to women. Therefore, women's decision-making autonomy must be considered from an intersectional perspective that recognizes their plural identities and affords insight into the difficulties that women—in their specificity and diversity—face in accessing decision-making posts (ECLAC, 2016a). However, the data available in the region continue to focus on average participation, overlooking the diversity of women who live in it and play a role in decision-making environments.

Considering women's participation in decision-making instances, regional average data from the Gender Equality Observatory show that they accounted for 31.5% of national legislators and 32.1% of supreme court justices, above the ceiling of 30% seen in recent years. With regard to executive powers in Latin American and Caribbean countries, women's representation remains below 30%, as shown in figure I.7, which compares data available for the three most recent terms of office. In the Caribbean, women's participation in cabinets exceeds 30% only in Grenada, Guyana, Haiti and Suriname.

An analysis of the average representation of women in ministerial cabinets in Latin America shows a slight increase, from 24.6% in the antepenultimate term to 28.5% in the most recent. Similarly, the corresponding average for the Caribbean rose 5.8 percentage points, from 13.6% in the antepenultimate period to 19.4% in the most recent. Virtually all Latin American and Caribbean countries now have women in their ministerial cabinets, but most of these women continue to be assigned social and cultural portfolios (51%). Although their participation in economics has increased slightly (25%), it has declined in politics (17%), from the 22% seen in the two previous periods (see figure I.8).

Figure I.7

Latin America and the Caribbean (35 countries): women in ministerial cabinet positions, 2018^a
(Percentages)

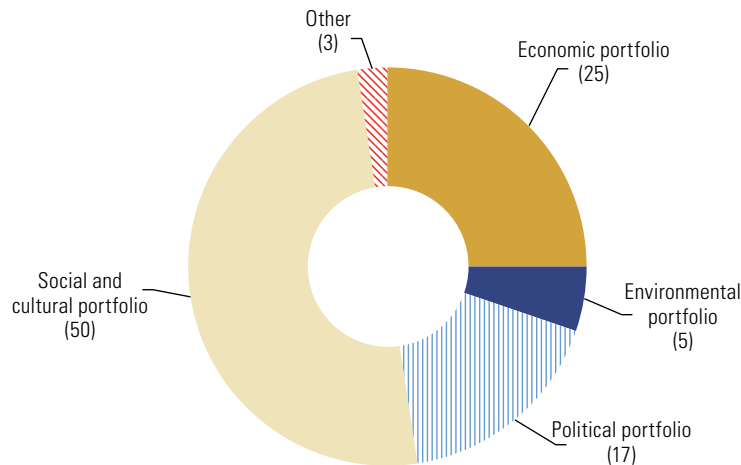
A. Latin America (19 countries)**B. The Caribbean (16 countries)**

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a Most recent term of office for which data are available.

Figure I.8

Latin America and the Caribbean (35 countries): women in ministerial cabinet positions and breakdown by portfolio, 2018^a
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

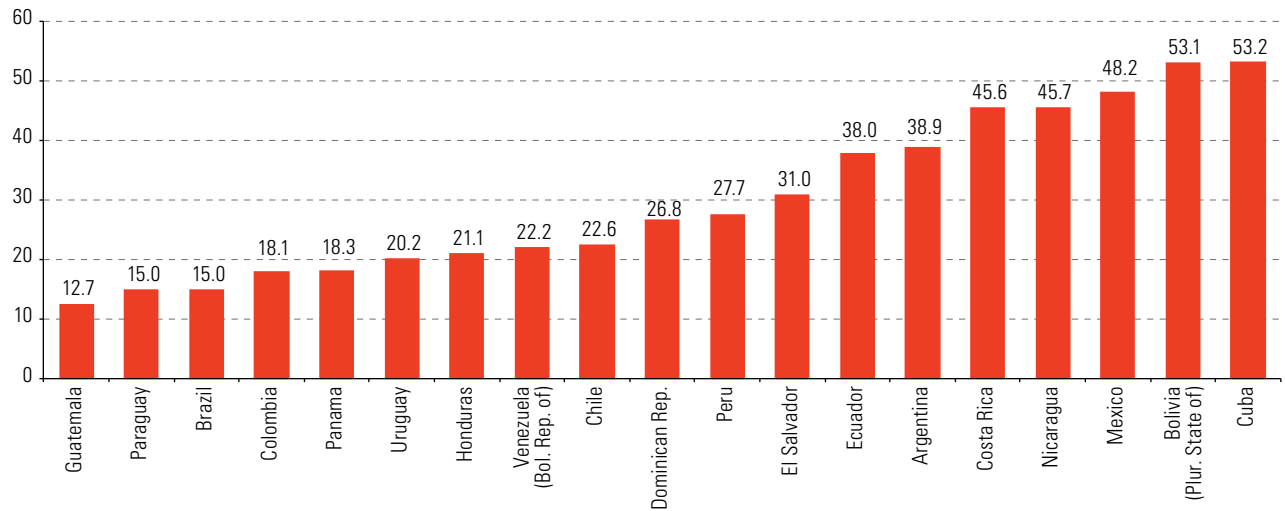
^a Most recent term of office for which data are available. The countries included are: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

With regard to legislative powers, countries that have passed quota or parity laws have made significant progress in terms of the presence of women in lower houses of parliament or unicameral parliaments. Between 2016 and 2019, the regional average of women in national legislatures increased by roughly 2 percentage points, from 29.3% to 31.2%. The breakdown by country is shown in figure I.9.

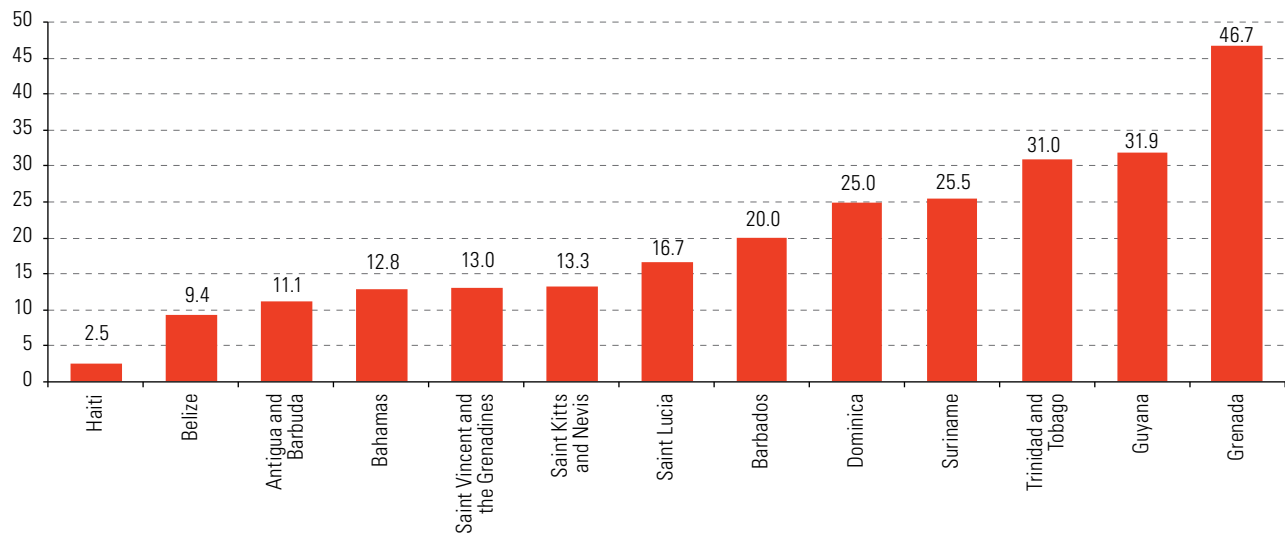
Figure I.9

Latin America and the Caribbean (32 countries): proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (SDG indicator 5.5.1a), 2019
(Percentages)

A. Latin America (19 countries)



B. The Caribbean (13 countries)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>; Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Since the implementation of parity laws in the Plurinational State of Bolivia in 2010, women's representation has risen to 53.1%. In Cuba, the percentage of women in national legislative bodies is 53.2%, and in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, 46%. In Mexico, which has also passed similar laws, women's representation in parliament has risen from 42.6% to 48.2%. Most countries have recorded positive trends, barring a few exceptions, such as Guatemala, which has not adopted any form of affirmative action in electoral law to increase women's political participation. At present, women's representation in parliament is lower than 20% in 13 countries, including Haiti, with the lowest figure in the region (2.5%).

With regard to women's participation in the highest courts of justice, Gender Equality Observatory data show that between 2016 and 2018, Cuba and Uruguay recorded large increases in the number of women supreme court judges, of 10 and 20 percentage points, respectively. Meanwhile, this number declined in four countries: Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Guatemala. In 2018, women's average participation in the highest courts of the Caribbean, including in the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, was 58.3%, and Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago recorded significant increases. The highest percentages of women in the highest courts of justice were registered in Barbados, Jamaica and lastly Suriname, which led the region with 73.7%.

Subnational and local governments play a transformative role and coordinate demands relating specifically to the territories they represent. This means they are a privileged space for the implementation of sectoral public policies. Their scope of action allows community participation through territorial organizations that work more directly and effectively than those at the national level. However, women remain in the minority in terms of participation in this sphere of local power. An analysis of elected city council members who are women reveals that the average for Latin America has risen marginally, to 29.6%. This indicator shows that quota or parity policies have led to changes in the political culture of parties and coalitions, improving women's representation (see box I.2).

Box I.2

Progress in the measurement of women's participation in local leadership positions

Within the framework of SDG follow-up, an indicator for monitoring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at the local level was proposed: 5.5.1b (proportion of seats held by women in local governments). This indicator considers positions in deliberative bodies, whose representatives are elected through universal suffrage, at all levels of local government identified in national legal frameworks. Prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the follow-up of women's political participation at the global level was limited to representation in national decision-making bodies, such as parliaments and ministries, and failed to consider many women and men holding positions in decentralized units within countries' political and administrative structures.

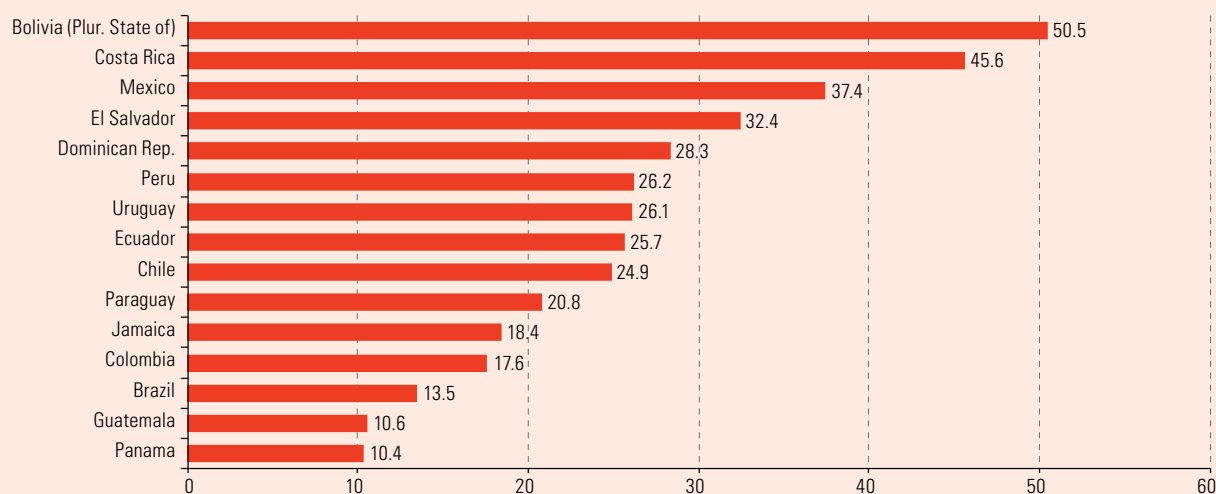
Although indicator 5.5.1b is new and represents a step forward at the global level, women's participation in decision-making at the local level in Latin America and the Caribbean has been systematically monitored since the creation of the Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean through two indicators: elected mayors who are female (percentage of women among total elected mayors) and elected city council members who are female (percentage of women among total elected city council members). Both are part of a set of basic indicators of the Gender Equality Observatory adopted by the countries of the region within the framework of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, in line with the agreements of the Quito Consensus, according to which: "[t]he achievement of equality in the exercise of power, in decision-making, in mechanisms of social and political participation and representation, [...] constitutes a goal for the eradication of women's structural exclusion" (ECLAC, 2017b, pp. 78–79).

The Gender Equality Observatory indicators are compiled each year within the framework of an updating process developed in partnership with machineries for the advancement of women in the region. This work has provided Latin America and the Caribbean with a historical series of measurements of women's participation in local governments, with data from 1998 up until now.

Box I.2 (concluded)

The region's position in the vanguard of the measurement of women's representation at the local level has laid the foundations for the ECLAC Division for Gender Affairs to support the follow-up of indicator 5.5.1b, for which the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) is responsible at the global level. For this reason, national agencies responsible for monitoring the SDG indicators in Latin American and Caribbean countries have been requested to work with the Gender Equality Observatory to validate and complement data, which has allowed the representation of 15 countries of the region in the global report, as shown in the following chart.

Latin America and the Caribbean (15 countries): proportion of seats held by women in local governments (indicator 5.5.1b of the SDGs)
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), on the basis of the governing bodies of the respective countries.

These statistics show that, in spite of the progress made in recent years —mainly in response to quota or parity laws passed by some of the region's countries— hierarchical relations that complicate women's access to decision-making spheres remain. As shown in the previous chart, although the number of women in positions of power at the local level reflects parity in some countries —e.g. the Plurinational State of Bolivia (50.5%), Costa Rica (45.6%) and Mexico (40.5%)— they remain in the minority in most of the region.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>; *40 Years of the Regional Gender Agenda* (LC/G.2682/Rev.1), Santiago, 2017; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

One of the most illustrative examples of the increase in women elected city council members is the Plurinational State of Bolivia, where the number rose from 13.4% in 2005 to 42.3% in 2010. Since 2015, the majority of these positions have been occupied by women (51.1% of elected members). This stems from the fact that since 2014, the country has applied parity and alternation criteria. Although women's participation in decision-making is limited overall, since the position of mayor is a single post, it is not subject to affirmative action and thus progress is very slow, as confirmed by the regional average of 15.5% of women mayors in 2018 (see figure I.10).

Figure I.10
Latin America (18 countries): women elected mayors, December 2018
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>; official data from the countries.

Women's minority presence is not restricted to the political arena. This limited participation is also noticeable in other spheres of decision-making, such as the social sphere and the economic sphere, either in businesses or trade unions, or in the field of scientific, computer-based or technological research. Women are concentrated in sectors of activity and positions that are generally less respected and lower-paid. In addition, men and women are distributed unequally across hierarchical levels, making it more difficult for women to get ahead in their profession and gain access to more skilled and better-paid jobs (ECLAC, 2013).

In the labour market, the concentration of women in lower-level positions is called vertical segregation, and is attributed to a "glass ceiling" of invisible factors such as gender stereotypes and prejudices, unfavourable corporate policies and insufficient experience for managerial positions (ECLAC, 2013 and 2019a).

E. Mutually reinforcing structural challenges limit the scope of public policy

To fully understand gender inequality in the region, it is necessary to establish how the four structural challenges overlap and feed into each other, helping to generate complex socioeconomic, cultural and belief systems, which together hinder and reduce the scope of policies on gender equality and women's autonomy (ECLAC, 2017a). There are many different intersections and links between structural challenges, and it is often difficult to distinguish one from another. For example, the persistence of discrimination and violence against women, resulting from discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns, affects their ability to generate their own income, overcome poverty and develop professionally and personally, thus reinforcing economic inequality and poverty.

In addition, the overburden of unpaid domestic and care work perpetuates vicious circles of income and time poverty, as it is one of the main barriers to women's incorporation into the labour market and their ability to obtain more stable, better quality and higher-paid jobs. This not only affects women's career paths, but also results in fragmented and unequal access to social protection in old age (ECLAC, 2016a), which worsens socioeconomic inequality and perpetuates poverty.

Achieving more equal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work between men and women remains a considerable challenge, given that even in countries that have made strides in implementing paternity and parental leave, men rarely take such leave, reinforcing the cultural pattern that care is the sole responsibility of women (Lupica, 2015; Batthyány, Genta and Perrotta, 2015).

Furthermore, an analysis of the gender wage gap in the region shows how patriarchal cultural patterns reinforce socioeconomic and gender inequality. Notwithstanding the efforts made in recent decades to reduce the wage gap, women earn, on average, 16.1% less than men in the same occupations. Paradoxically, the gap is even wider for women who have more years of schooling (ECLAC, 2016a). Similarly, in Latin America and the Caribbean, women's participation remains persistently low in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), where they represent just 34.6% of graduates.

Discriminatory patterns and gender stereotypes continue to influence the tendency to associate women and men with certain careers and occupations, as a result of the strict sexual division of labour expressed in occupational and vocational segregation, with determined areas for women (e.g. health and education) and for men (e.g. construction, electricity and mechanics). Even when they are involved in traditionally "masculine" areas, women are affected by this organization of work on the basis of gender, as reflected in the studies carried out in the region on technical and professional education. These studies highlight the predominance of the traditional meanings of the "feminine" and what is expected of women, which reinforce the sexual division of labour, the perception of the differentiated abilities of women and men, the hierarchization of abilities and the unequal valuation of women's and men's technical skills (García, 2019; Muñoz, 2019; Bloj, 2017; Buquet and Moreno, 2017; Espino, 2018).

Gender inequalities also overlap with territorial, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic inequalities, among others. For example, rural women not only spend more time on unpaid work than men, but their share of this type of work is also higher compared to men and women living in urban areas (ECLAC, 2016a). In addition, in six countries in the region (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Uruguay), attendance rates in higher education are low among young Afrodescendent women between the ages of 18 and 24. In Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Panama and Uruguay, Afrodescendent women are the most severely affected by unemployment (ECLAC, 2018b). Both topics will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Another reflection of this intertwining of challenges is political harassment of women which, along with the cultural assignment of unpaid domestic and care responsibilities to women, constitutes limitations and barriers to active participation in the public sphere and full exercise of rights. In particular, political violence and harassment directed towards women link the concentration of power and hierarchical relations to discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns. According to the Declaration on Political Harassment and Violence against Women of the Organization of American States (OAS), both political harassment and violence against women "may include any action, conduct, or omission among others, based on their gender, individually or collectively, that has the purpose or result of undermining, annulling, impeding, or restricting their political rights, violating the rights of women to a life free of violence and to participate in political and public affairs on an equal footing with men" (OAS/MESECVI, 2015, p. 6). This type of violence prevents women from being recognized as political subjects and thus discourages many of them from exercising or continuing political careers, limiting their decision-making autonomy.

Given the complexity of the structural challenges of gender inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean, along with the various linkages that strengthen and perpetuate oppression and inequality for women, joint efforts are needed to achieve women's autonomy and gender equality, not just in the formal sense, but also substantively. The four structural challenges help to identify the pillars around which substantive equality may be built in the region: ending socioeconomic inequality and poverty; transforming discriminatory, violent and patriarchal cultural patterns and the culture of privilege; dismantling the sexual division of labour and consolidating parity democracy in the region (ECLAC, 2017a).

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CHAPTER II

The Montevideo Strategy's contribution to the design and implementation of equality policies in the region

Introduction

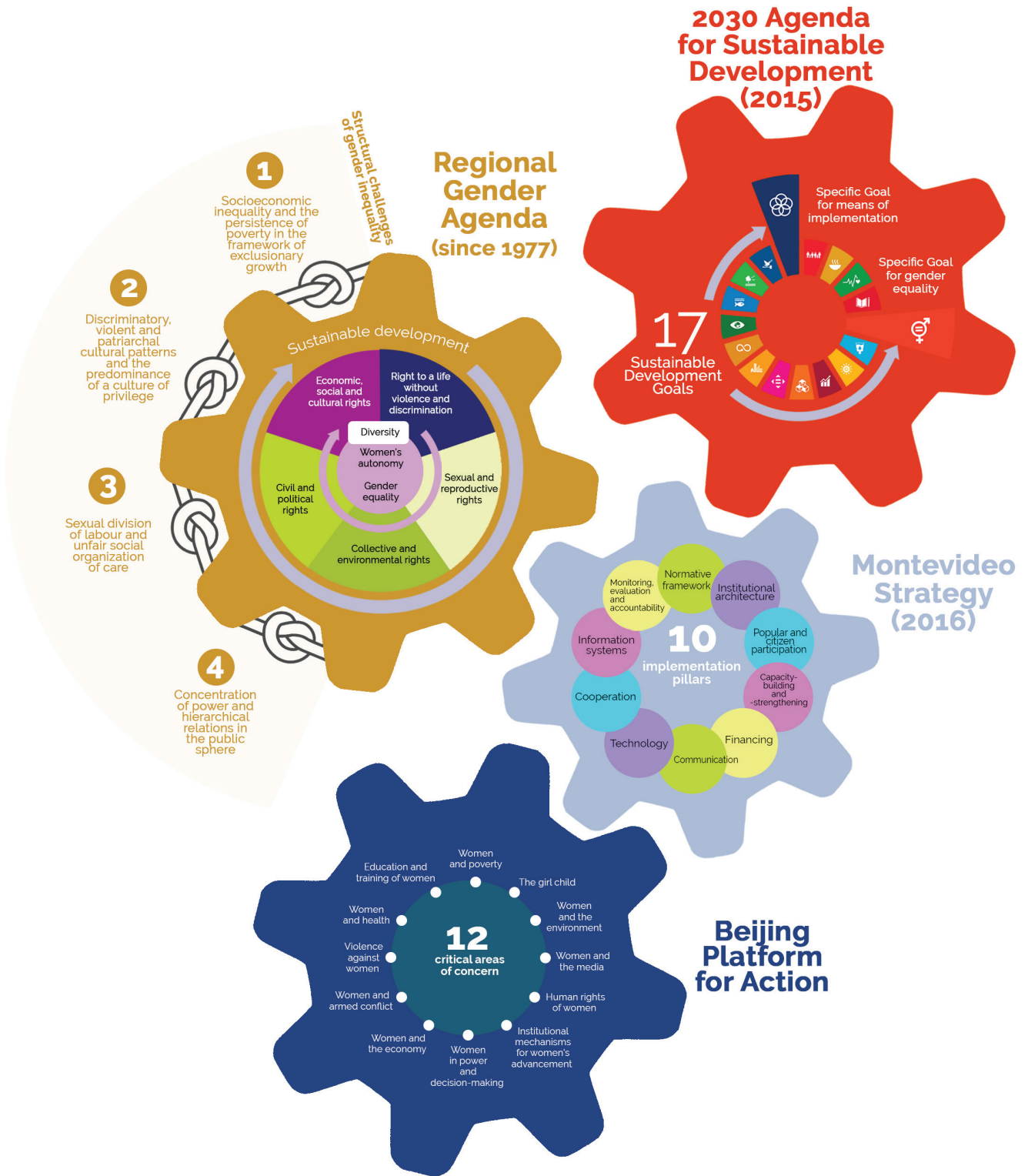
The Regional Gender Agenda contains the commitments of the Latin American and Caribbean governments to the rights and autonomy of women and gender equality that have been adopted at the sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean held since 1977. Those commitments stem from an approach to sustainable development based on the right to a life without violence and discrimination, sexual and reproductive rights, economic, social and cultural rights, civil and political rights and collective and environmental rights (ECLAC, 2017).

The Regional Gender Agenda is bolstered by and interconnected with the commitments assumed at the global level, and it has served as the shared platform for Latin America and the Caribbean's influence within international forums. Thus, the 1995–2001 Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean —adopted at the sixth session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1994— made a key contribution to the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, together with its 12 critical areas of concern, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. In turn, the commitments of the Santo Domingo Consensus (2013) on the right to care, sexual and reproductive rights and comprehensive policies for ending femicide served as the contributions of the region's governments to the global negotiations for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, for the drafting of Sustainable Development Goal 5.

At the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the governments agreed on the need to strengthen the role of States in creating the structural conditions and the means, mechanisms and resources for turning those commitments into actions. Accordingly, they established ten pillars for implementation, which were set down in the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030. The Montevideo Strategy complements the means of implementation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those of Goal 17 and Goal 5, and its objective is the implementation of comprehensive policies to tackle the structural causes of gender inequality in the three dimensions —economic, social and environmental— of sustainable development (see diagram II.1).

Diagram II.1

The Montevideo Strategy: road map for implementing regional and international commitments on gender equality and women's rights and autonomy within the framework of sustainable development



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

One significant step forward taken by the region has been the use of the Montevideo Strategy as a tool for gender mainstreaming in national development strategies and sustainable development plans.

Colombia's National Development Plan (PND), for example, includes a specific chapter titled "Pact for Women's Equity", which contains measures to promote women's autonomy in four dimensions: physical, economic, political and educational.

In Paraguay, the Technical Planning Secretariat for Economic and Social Development began the updating of the "Paraguay 2030" National Development Plan and, encouraged by the Ministry of Women, included in that plan's strategic axes and lines of action the international commitments that the country has signed and ratified, including the Montevideo Strategy and the Regional Gender Agenda.

Since 2016, the Dominican Republic's Ministry of Women has been promoting the Cross-Cutting Gender Mainstreaming Programme in the public sector, which is being implemented under the coordination of the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development as part of the 2010–2030 National Development Strategy.

The Planning Institute of Jamaica—the government agency responsible for overseeing the Vision Jamaica 2030 National Development Plan—set up a national working group on gender issues that helped incorporate a gender-equality perspective into the National Development Plan.

A. Use of the Montevideo Strategy in designing plans and in strengthening gender institutions and information systems

Most of the region's countries have made efforts to address gender inequality through different strategies and public policies. The main initiatives include the formulation of equality plans, which, while they vary in their names and scope,¹ establish strategic objectives and goals for gender equality and women's human rights.

The Montevideo Strategy has become a guide for directing the design of gender equality plans and policies. Since 2016, at least seven of the region's countries have drawn up equality plans incorporating the approaches, pillars and measures set out in the Montevideo Strategy (see table II.1). Some of these plans emphasize women's autonomy while others focus on the challenges of gender inequality and adapt them to their own contexts. They also incorporate specific measures relating to the implementation pillars to speed up progress towards equality in their countries. At least four countries set 2030 as their deadlines, aligning the time frame for their gender equality policies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Montevideo Strategy.

Other countries are currently drafting or updating their gender equality policies and plans and incorporating their commitments under the Montevideo Strategy into those new instruments.

In the Dominican Republic, the Montevideo Strategy is being used as the frame of reference for the Third National Gender Equality and Equity Plan 2019–2030 (PLANEG III) and for the actions implemented in pursuit of Goal 5 in the country.

Mexico is currently preparing its Programme for Equality between Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD) for the 2019–2023 period, which will set objectives, strategies and lines of action for the three branches of government, the three levels of government and autonomous agencies, in order to consolidate the national equality policy. To support this process, the country has the *México rumbo a la igualdad* ("Mexico towards Equality") platform, which is a tool for identifying progress on gender equality in the country's 32 States by examining their main regulatory, public policy, budgetary and accountability instruments.

¹ Examples of the names used in different countries include equity and equality plans, plans for equal opportunities between men and women, plans for the equality of men and women, and other similar variations.

Suriname has included the citizen participation pillar in its Gender Action Plan for 2019 and 2020 and in its 2021–2035 Gender Vision Policy document. In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Montevideo Strategy is playing a central role in the drafting of the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP), which is still under development. Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda and the British Virgin Islands are working to update their National Equality Policies and Plans of Action, and the Montevideo Strategy is being used as a guide and source of reference for defining activities and responsibilities.

Table II.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (7 countries): use of the Montevideo Strategy's approach and pillars in designing gender equality plans and policies (2016–2019)

Country	Contributions to equality plans and policies
Uruguay	National Strategy for Gender Equality 2030 Uruguay's National Strategy embraces the Montevideo Strategy's analytical framework and commitments. It incorporates the critical issues affecting the human rights of women, the structural challenges of inequality and the ten implementation pillars. The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2030 was produced through inter-institutional work by the State in conjunction with the academic sector and social organizations. It was also based on studies prepared by the Planning and Budget Office (OPP) and on the international commitments assumed by Uruguay under the Regional Gender Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, the recommendations made by the Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2016 and other related instruments.
Costa Rica	National Policy for Effective Equality between Women and Men in Costa Rica 2018–2030 This policy, based on the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Montevideo Strategy, addresses four strategic axes: the culture of rights for equality, time distribution, wealth distribution and the distribution of power, which are related to the structural challenges of gender inequality identified in the Montevideo Strategy. It was drawn up through consultations with representatives of civil society organizations, women from different sectors in the country, public institutions and the private sector.
Chile	Fourth National Plan for Equality between Men and Women 2018–2030 This plan was drawn up by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity (MMEG) in its capacity as the lead agency for equality policies. It takes on board the Regional Gender Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Montevideo Strategy, and its objectives are to recognize, respect and guarantee women's rights in all their diversity in order to achieve gender equality and the autonomy of women; to strengthen and ensure the operational sustainability of the institutional architecture for gender topics; and to mainstream gender into public policies, by interconnecting the State's initiatives in pursuit of gender equality and equity and the autonomy of women.
Argentina	National Plan for Equal Opportunities and Rights (PIOD) 2018–2020 This plan is based on the concept of autonomy, seeks to involve all the ministries of the national public administration and addresses the ten pillars of the Montevideo Strategy, with particular emphasis on cross-cutting commitments that provide for training, education and the production of data and statistics. The PIOD is structured around four lines of action—autonomy in decision-making, physical autonomy, economic autonomy and cultural change—each of which has its own strategic objectives.
Ecuador	National Agenda for the Equality of Women and LGBTI Persons 2018–2021 This plan contains three framework axes and nine topics and policies to be structured by the National Council for Gender Equality and carried out by the lead agencies responsible for public policies at the national level. It was drawn up in keeping with the main national and regional instruments dealing with the human rights of women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, including the Montevideo Strategy, which was used as a guide to determine how the instrument is to be applied in public sector agencies. It is a mandatory national planning instrument, aligned with the country's 2017–2021 National Development Plan, and represents the general strategy for the cross-cutting adoption of the principle of equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of gender.
Paraguay	Fourth National Equality Plan 2018–2024 Drawn up under the leadership of the Ministry of Women, this plan's goal is to progress towards real and effective equality by eliminating obstacles and all forms of discrimination. Its drafting took on board the human rights treaties ratified by the country, the recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2017 and the commitments assumed under the Montevideo Strategy.
Peru	National Gender Equality Policy The Montevideo Strategy is one of the main regional instruments that provide the theoretical and regulatory framework of this policy. The analysis of the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care work were among the most important aspects of the Montevideo Strategy used to prepare the policy.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

At the same time, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras and Peru report progress on gender mainstreaming in education. Chile has formulated the Work Plan for Education with Gender Equality, which was signed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity in 2019. In July 2018 Ecuador passed its Organic Higher Education Act, which enshrines equality as a cross-cutting principle and has enabled the implementation of a national strategy, in addition to comprehensive and intersectoral intervention plans and protocols, thereby guaranteeing access to higher education with equality of opportunities. In addition to developing several policies in the education sector,² Peru adopted a National Basic Education Curriculum in 2016, which includes the gender equality approach and defines it in line with the 2012–2017 National Gender Equality Plan.

² Sectoral Policy for Intercultural Education and Bilingual Intercultural Education, National Intercultural Bilingual Education Plan for 2021, Education Attention Policy for Rural Populations and Intercultural Bilingual Education Service Model.

In Guatemala the Montevideo Strategy contributed to the internal strengthening of the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM) by building on the conceptual basis of women's autonomy and aligning its policies with the SDGs. In 2016, the country reformulated the Secretariat's institutional mandate in order to strengthen its technical advice processes and its monitoring of public institutions and local governments, to which end the management of public policies for tackling inequalities between men and women was strengthened. These strengthening processes helped raise the profile of the State's role in creating plans, programmes and projects for reducing inequality, for aligning and harmonizing national and international regulations, for accountability in and following up on national priorities with the participation of civil society, and for promoting local, inter-institutional and intersectoral strategies.

In addition, the Montevideo Strategy has helped build stronger ties within States to further gender equality by contributing to the identification of frameworks for action and competences of other authorities and institutions as well as mechanisms for the advancement of women, and by favouring mainstreaming, intersectoral approaches and accountability.

In Ecuador, the Montevideo Strategy has been included within the State's priorities for following up on its regional and international commitments. In addition, in line with the Strategy's provisions for ensuring complementarity and avoiding overlaps in the monitoring and evaluation of policies for gender equality and women's rights, a comprehensive mechanism for following up on the commitments of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Montevideo Strategy and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has been established. This mechanism has a coordinating committee that comprises the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Religion (currently the Secretariat for Human Rights) and the National Council for Gender Equality. Efforts have been made to coordinate the presentation of reports to the different regional and international agencies.

At the same time, as established by the Montevideo Strategy's institutional architecture implementation pillar, the region's States have undertaken strengthening efforts either through their specialized agencies for the advancement of women or through intersectoral institutional coordination work to implement cross-cutting policies; in fact, according to the national reports, this is the pillar where the countries have achieved the highest level of progress.

In Argentina, for example, the National Institute for Women (INAM) was created in 2017 as a decentralized organ of the Ministry of Health and Social Development; it assumed the functions of the council it replaced in order to pursue comprehensive public policies for women's empowerment.

In Chile, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity has since 2016 been the national lead agency for the design, coordination and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes for promoting gender equity and equal rights and for pursuing the elimination of all forms of arbitrary discrimination against women, with which the National Service for Women and Gender Equity (SERNAMEG) was included within its responsibilities.

Some Caribbean States have strengthened their mechanisms for the advancement of women. For example, in Antigua and Barbuda, the Directorate of Gender Affairs was relocated and equipped with technical staff to discharge its duties and, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the strengthening of the Gender Affairs Division has been one of the Government's main achievements with the institutional architecture for equality over recent years.

Panama also strengthened the geographical deployment of its mechanism for the advancement of women through the creation, between 2015 and 2016, of National Institute for Women (INAMU) centres at the national, provincial and indigenous territorial levels. Those centres are territorial offices that expand the coverage of services for women in areas relating to the three dimensions of their autonomy: physical, economic and political. In Guatemala, progress has been made with the institutional architecture for gender at the subnational level, by means of amendments to the Municipal Code which upgraded the country's Municipal Offices for Women to the category of Municipal Directorates for Women and charged them with providing technical advice on implementation and the coordination of actions with the financial and planning directorates.

The creation of gender units within different ministries and at different levels of the public administration and the establishment or strengthening of coordination mechanisms for gender equality policies has been one kind of initiative that, while it was already observed in years past, gained importance in several countries following the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy (see table II.2).

Table II.2

Latin America and the Caribbean (9 countries): State mechanisms and initiatives for coordinated gender equality policies, 2016–2019

Country	Mechanisms
Argentina	The National Institute for Women (INAM) has given a renewed boost to the Federal Council of Women, the inter-jurisdictional coordination agency that brings together all the country's highest gender authorities. Between 2016 and April 2019, the Federal Council held 13 meetings in different parts of the country, and a Permanent Secretariat was appointed.
Chile	The Interministerial Committee for Equal Rights and Gender Equality was established and assigned the task of working for the adoption of an approach based on equality between men and women in the nation's ministries and services and providing them with technical advice. At the same time, work began on strengthening the Gender Network, with the support of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity, where coordination takes place among ministerial gender advisers and Sectoral Gender Panels. At the subnational level, Regional Gender Equity Commissions were established and ratified by resolutions of the regional intendants. Likewise, all Chile's ministries are equipped with the citizen participation mechanisms provided for in Law No. 20,500 on Associations and Citizen Participation in Public Administration in the shape of Consultative Civil Society Councils (COSOCs) as established in the Citizen Participation Act and, in May 2019, the COSOC of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity was established, comprising representatives of 15 civil society organizations.
Dominican Republic	In an effort to strengthen institution-building and intersectoral coordination, a Joint Commission for Gender Mainstreaming was established, comprising the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Development, the Ministry of Public Administration, the Ministry of Finance, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The Commission leads processes for the effective implementation of the plan in eight agencies of the State: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and MSMEs, the Ministry of Public Health, the General Directorate of Procurement and Contracting, the Ministry of Public Administration, the General Budget Directorate (DIGEPRES), the National Bureau of Statistics (ONE) and the Office of the Attorney General. Its main achievements include the creation of 57 gender offices for following up on the adoption of equality and equity rules and policies in coordination with the organizational structures of the pilot agencies.
El Salvador	The National System for Substantive Equality (SNIS), an inter-agency coordination mechanism, brings together the State institutions responsible for enforcing the national equality regulations, monitors the progress made on behalf of women by each agency and promotes accountability.
Grenada	In 2017, the Inter-Ministerial Council of Gender Focal Points was established to facilitate gender mainstreaming within the country's ministries.
Guatemala	The National System for Equity between Men and Women was designed. It aims to order and structure public endeavours in systematic, long-term actions, by promoting the comprehensive development of women. Since a close relationship exists between the system and the public policy cycle, its management is tied in with the National Planning System.
Jamaica	The Gender Advisory Committee, created in 2018, is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the National Policy for Gender Equality and the National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence and with advising the Government and the Bureau of Gender Affairs on strategic guidelines for gender-aware policies.
Paraguay	Efforts have been made to mainstream the gender perspective in the country's institutions and to promote inter-institutional strengthening through the creation of gender mechanisms within the three branches of government. Thus, the Ministry of Women is interconnected with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare through an inter-institutional agreement and an Inter-Agency Technical Panel on Gender in Health that comprises representatives of both ministries and is charged with implementing a joint plan of action.
Peru	In 2017 regulations were adopted requiring national and regional governments to institute mechanisms for gender equality within all their agencies. By December 2018, 25 government entities (86% of the total) had some form of gender equality mechanism, either at their headquarters or within one of their dependent agencies. All the country's ministries are now equipped with mechanisms for gender equality, which will facilitate the adoption of concerted actions on the issue within the executive branch.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

The measures adopted in relation to State capacity-building and -strengthening for public administration based on gender equality—one of the pillars of the Montevideo Strategy—have had a significant impact. In Argentina, for instance, following the adoption of “Micaela’s Law” (Law No. 27,499) and within the framework of the National Plan for Equal Opportunities and Rights, the Secretariat for Modernization, through the National Government Services Institute (INAP), is carrying out a special programme for the mandatory training of all personnel within the national civil service with a focus on promoting gender awareness and women’s empowerment within the federal executive branch.

Another noteworthy case is El Salvador, where capacity-building processes on symbolic violence and sexist language have been carried out with public employees from the communications areas of the three branches of government, the Public Prosecution Service and local governments. The institutions have guidelines for non-sexist communications and are required to abide by Handbooks for Substantive Equality in Communications.

As for the pillar that mandates the implementation of information systems, the initiatives reported by the region’s countries include the construction of repositories, the strengthening of administrative records and the creation of information systems, gender observatories and atlases.

One of the most significant steps forward is the importance that has been given to the production of statistics with a gender perspective. Governments have acknowledged the need for statistics and indicators that better highlight the situation of women in their countries and in different areas within them. Thus, the most significant progress, which places the region at the forefront on these topics, has been made in measuring time use and the distribution of unpaid work, and in the conceptual and methodological development of methods to quantify femicide. This can also be seen in the priority that the region's countries, within the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, placed on the regional set of indicators for monitoring the region's progress with the SDGs, which includes two indicators from the ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (OIG) that did not originally feature on the framework of global indicators: total work time, and the femicide rate. This progress has been possible thanks to the existing regional architecture and to the solid partnerships that exist between the producers and users of information.

Countries have also taken steps to incorporate time use and unpaid work modules in their national surveys, through which they are obtaining empirical data on the sexual division of labour. To date, 19 of the region's countries have measured time use on at least one occasion, which has enabled them to follow up on their national, regional and global commitments regarding the distribution of unpaid work and to construct satellite accounts for unpaid work within households. Of these, ten countries carried out their measurements following the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy (see table II.3).

Table II.3

Latin America (10 countries): surveys, modules or questions to measure time use since the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy

Country	Date	Instrument
Argentina	2016	Time-use Survey of the City of Buenos Aires
Brazil	Since 2016	Module in the National Continuous Household Survey (PNAD-C)
Colombia	2017	National Time-use Survey
Costa Rica	2017	National Time-use Survey
Cuba	2016	Section on time use and care in the National Survey on Gender Equality
Dominican Republic	2016	Time-use module in the National Multipurpose Household Survey
El Salvador	2017	National Time-use Survey
Guatemala	2017	Module in the National Survey of Employment and Income
Mexico	2016	Questions in the National Survey of Household Expenditure and Income
Paraguay	2016	Time-use Survey (EUT)

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, Repository of information on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/es/infografias/repositorio-informacion-uso-tiempo-america-latina-caribe>.

In Cuba, one of the modules in the 2016 National Survey on Gender Equality addressed the issues of time use and care; the results of the survey were published in a report in 2018 and included nationally representative measurements of paid and unpaid work broken down by sex. In Guatemala, the inclusion of time-use modules in the National Survey of Employment and Income (ENEI) and the National Survey of Living Conditions (ENCOVI) has enabled calculations to be made for the Guatemalan Households Unpaid Work Satellite Account; the most recent survey was taken in 2017. In 2016, the Dominican Republic incorporated a time-use module in its National Multipurpose Household Survey, which is administered by the National Bureau of Statistics (ONE) and the Ministry of Women, with support from ECLAC.

As part of the commitments set out in El Salvador's National Regulations for Gender Equality, the Directorate-General of Statistics and Censuses (DIGESTYC) created the Gender Statistics Department, the main achievements of which have been launching the Gender Statistics Observatory (OEG) and conducting the 2017 National Time-use Survey and the 2017 National Survey on Violence against Women.

In Chile, a Subcommittee on Gender Statistics was created within the National Statistics System's National Statistics Commission. The Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity is a member of that subcommittee's technical secretariat, along with the National Statistics Institute (INE). The subcommittee facilitates inter-institutional coordination between various ministries and other public agencies to consolidate the production of gender indicators in the public sector. In turn, the Management Improvement Programme and its Gender Equity System, which enables strategic objectives to be set for the management of public agencies in the executive branch, has coordinated with the different ministries and public agencies of the executive branch to include gender awareness in the production, processing and analysis of information and data.

Mexico has the Technical Specialized Committee for Information with a Gender Perspective (CTEIPG), which is a joint participation and consultation agency that assists the development of the National System of Statistical and Geographical Information (SNIEG). Between 2012 and 2018, CTEIPG succeeded in adopting the Guidelines for Incorporating a Gender Perspective in the SNIEG, thereby ensuring that the gender perspective is taken into account in the production, dissemination and use of statistical and geographical information.

In Paraguay, the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses (DGEEC) has produced the Gender Atlas, which is a platform designed in conjunction with the Ministry of Women. The atlas contains information that is georeferenced by departments and sex-disaggregated data on population, education, information and telecommunications technologies, paid and unpaid work, income, health, social security, indigenous peoples and women's political participation in elected office. In addition, during the period following the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy, Paraguay joined the Working Group on Gender Statistics of the ECLAC Statistical Conference of the Americas and conducted its first national survey on time use, providing it with information for monitoring the SDGs.

B. Main policies and initiatives for women's autonomy

In recent years, ECLAC has proposed an approach based on the idea of autonomy as the conceptual framework for equality policies, wherein autonomy is understood as individuals' "capacity to take free and informed decisions about their lives, enabling them to be and act in accordance with their own aspirations and desires, given a historical context that makes those possible" (ECLAC, 2011, p. 9).

Based on a multidimensional vision of development, ECLAC has strategically focused its approach to women's autonomy on three dimensions and the interrelations between them: (i) economic autonomy, or the possibility of controlling assets and resources, (ii) physical autonomy, or the ability to decide freely about sexuality and reproduction and the right to a violence-free life, and (iii) autonomy for decision-making, or the full participation of women in the decisions that affect their lives, families, communities and society as a whole (ECLAC, 2016a).

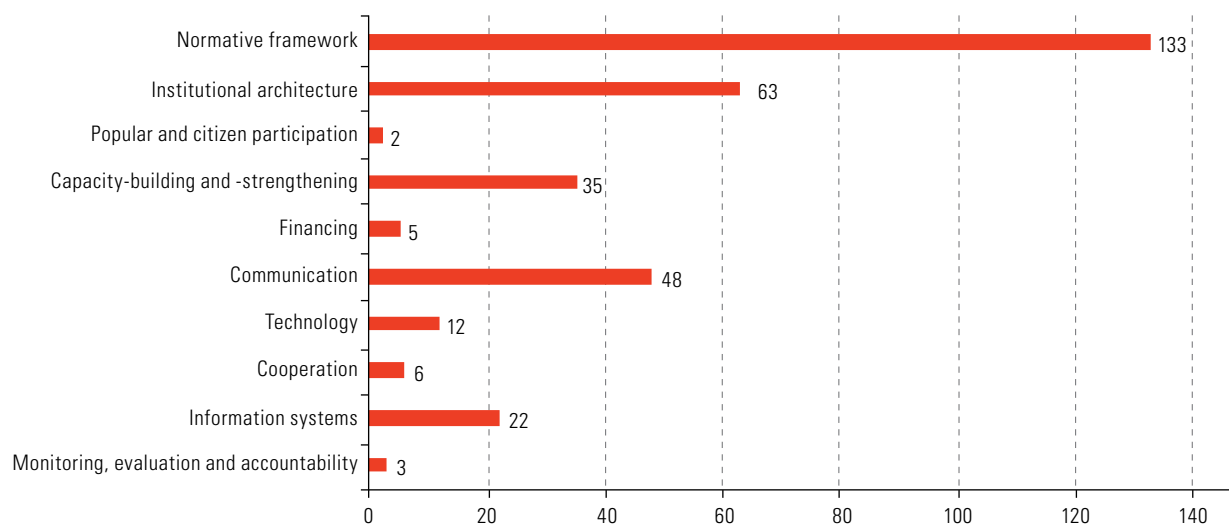
The Montevideo Strategy's ten pillars are interconnected. Accordingly, depending on the aspect of public policies for equality and women's autonomy that is being addressed, some pillars can acquire greater importance than others. That is determined by each country's context and level of progress made with the Agenda, the institutional architecture and the policies addressing the issue in question. The region's governments have reported on those pillars that have been of the most importance in their countries for designing and implementing policies for ensuring the physical, economic and decision-making autonomy of women.

1. Key measures for attaining women's physical autonomy

The following strategic pillars of the Montevideo Strategy have played a key role in the development of initiatives to strengthen women's physical autonomy in the region's countries: the normative framework and institutional architecture, capacity-building (chiefly by training public sector officials about gender violence), communication (national and local awareness campaigns on violence against women) and information systems (through the increased availability and quality of statistical data and information on gender violence against women) (see figure II.1).

Figure II.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (21 countries):^a initiatives undertaken for women's physical autonomy, by implementation pillar of the Montevideo Strategy, 2016–2019 (Totals)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

^a Anguila, Argentina, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Uruguay.

The progress made with normative frameworks for women's physical autonomy in the countries of Latin America has included legislation on gender violence against women and on sexual and reproductive rights. Since October 2016, at least 28 laws have been enacted in ten countries to prevent and eradicate gender violence against women, along with legislation criminalizing femicide, sexual harassment, abuse, human trafficking and other offences (see table II.4).

Table II.4

Latin America (10 countries): normative frameworks for women's physical autonomy, 2016–2019

Country	Acts, decrees and other national laws addressing physical autonomy
Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Law No. 27,352, which amended article 119 of the Criminal Code of the Nation in order to specify those actions that constitute the crime of sexual abuse (2017). – Law No. 27,363, which established the cancellation of parental responsibility for those guilty of femicide (2017). – Law No. 27,452, which established the economic redress regime for the children of victims of femicide ("Brisa Act") (2018). – Regulatory decree No. 522/2017 of Law 26,879 ordering the creation of the National Genetic Data Register for crimes against sexual integrity (2017). – Law No. 27,499, "Micaela's Law", on mandatory gender training for all officials of the Argentine State's three branches of government. Its monitoring is provided for in the National Plan for Equal Opportunities and Rights (PIOD) (December 2018).
Chile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Law No. 21,030, which regulated the decriminalization of the voluntary termination of pregnancy in three circumstances (2017). – Law No. 21,153, which amended the Criminal Code to establish the crime of sexual harassment in public spaces as an offence (2018). – Law No. 21,155, which introduced measures to protect breastfeeding and the practice thereof (2019). – Law No. 21,013, published on 6 June 2017, which amends Law No. 20,066 on domestic violence, establishes the new offence of mistreatment and increases protections for especially vulnerable persons (2017).
Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Comprehensive Organic Act to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (2017). – Organic Act Reforming the Organic Higher Education Act, which incorporated the principles of equality and non-discrimination, together with the eradication and punishment of all forms of violence against women in educational settings (2018).
Paraguay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Law No. 5777/2016, Act on Comprehensive Protection for Women against All Forms of Violence. – Decree No. 6973 of 27 March 2017, which established a series of measures that —under article 6 of Law No. 5777/2016, the Act on Comprehensive Protection for Women against All Forms of Violence— must be adopted by the implementation agencies, including training for public servants.
Uruguay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Law No. 19,580 on gender-based violence against women (2018). – Law No. 19,643, the Prevention and Combat of Human Trafficking Act. Proposed by the Inter-Agency Panel on the Prevention and Combat of Human Trafficking (2018). – Law No. 19,538, which amended articles 311 and 312 of the Criminal Code to include acts of discrimination and femicide (2017).

Table II.4 (concluded)

Country	Acts, decrees and other national laws addressing physical autonomy
Costa Rica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Law No. 9406, on strengthening the legal protection of girls and young women against situations of gender violence in abusive relationships (2017). – Decree No. 41240-MP-MCM, declaring the situation of violence against women to be a priority matter, on account of the high number of attacks and femicides that have occurred in recent years and that continue to increase, in order to ensure the effective intervention of the State in dealing with all manifestations of this grave problem in a prompt and comprehensive fashion (2018).
El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Legislative Decree No. 754, amending the Family Code to prohibit child marriage (2018). – Amendments to the Special Comprehensive Act for a Life without Violence for Women, published in the Official Gazette on 13 December 2016, specifically as regards the principle of favourability contained in article 4, section (b); addition of article 56-A on the creation of the Specialized Jurisdiction and Multidisciplinary Teams; and amendments to article 57, sections (f) and (l). – Amendments to the Domestic Violence Act published in the Official Gazette on 13 December 2016, to bring it into line with the Special Comprehensive Act for a Life without Violence for Women as regards the duration of preventive, precautionary or protective measures (article 9), following up on protective measures (article 23), and support for the multidisciplinary teams attached to the Specialized Courts for a Life without Violence for Women in following up on preventive, precautionary or protective measures in criminal cases (article 42). – Special Act against Human Trafficking, published in the Official Gazette on 14 November 2014, the purpose of which is detecting, preventing, prosecuting and punishing the crime of trafficking in human lives, together with attending to, protecting and comprehensively restoring the rights of victims and their dependents or responsible persons, through the implementation of mechanisms to enable the pursuit of that goal.
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Immediate Search for Disappeared Women Act (Decree No. 9-2016). – Genetic Database for Forensic Use Act (Decree No. 22-2017). – Decree No. 13-2017, which prohibits persons aged under 18 from contracting marriage and eliminates the exceptions that were previously in force.
Honduras	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Decree No. 106-2016, which created the Investigation Unit for Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides, attached to the Technical Criminal Investigation Agency (ATIC) and the Inter-Agency Monitoring Commission for Investigations of Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides.
Panama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Executive Decree No. 100 of 2017, enacting regulations for Law No. 82 of 2013 that criminalized femicide and violence against women. In addition, following the adoption of the regulations, and by means of a process led by the National Institute of Women (INAMU), part of the National Committee on Violence against Women (CONVIMU), in 2018 the legal defence of women in civil and family proceedings was expanded by requiring the judicial branch to provide mandatory free defence counsel. – Executive Decree No. 303 of 2016, which enacted regulations for Law No. 79 on trafficking in human lives and related activities, emphasizing vulnerable groups. Under this legislation, the Unit for the Identification and Attention of Trafficking Victims was created and a protocol and rules of procedure for identifying victims of this crime were adopted.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

In addition, Peru has officially recognized different forms of gender violence: sexual harassment in public spaces was targeted, femicide was recognized as an independent criminal offence and the Criminal Code now provides for the crimes of sexual harassment and the dissemination of images and audiovisual materials with sexual content. In Mexico, as of the first quarter of 2019, the nation's 32 States have enacted general legislation on the access of women to a life without violence, 29 have published the corresponding regulations, and all 32 have installed the National System for the Prevention, Attention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women. Similarly, 27 States have general laws to prevent, punish and eradicate human trafficking crimes and for the protection and assistance of victims of those offences, of which 11 have already enacted the corresponding regulations.

In the Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Guyana, the British Virgin Islands and Suriname have made progress with strengthening their normative frameworks for gender-based violence against women.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines has established a National Commission on Gender-Based Violence, which is charged with monitoring international and regional agreements, including the Montevideo Strategy. The Commission serves as the national monitoring and follow-up mechanism for gender equality issues.

The countries also report progress with the implementation of plans of action to eradicate and prevent violence against women and with the strengthening of their institutional architectures for implementing intersectoral programmes and coordination mechanisms for dealing with this topic. Following the adoption of the Montevideo Strategy,³ new policies and plans on gender violence against women have been enacted in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Suriname.

To address gender-based violence in the countries of the Caribbean, Antigua and Barbuda has a Sexual Offences Model Court, Grenada has a Gender-Based Violence Unit within the Division of Gender and Family

³ Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Uruguay had plans of action on gender-based violence against women prior to October 2016.

Affairs and, in June 2017, Suriname's Ministry of Justice and Police established the National Council on Domestic Violence, which is to serve for a period of three years.

In addition, in line with the institutional pillar of the Montevideo Strategy, significant progress has been made regarding the development and strengthening of intersectoral coordination mechanisms (see table II.5).

Table II.5

Latin America and the Caribbean (12 countries): intersectoral coordination mechanisms for eliminating gender-based violence against women

Country	Intersectoral coordination mechanisms
Chile	Intersectoral Panel on Preventing Violence against Women Pursues two broad initiatives: (i) building a single register of victims of violence against women, and (ii) creating a mechanism for following up on precautionary measures in extreme cases.
Costa Rica	National System for the Attention and Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Comprises 22 institutions that have drawn up rules, guidelines and protocols in order to bring their institutional actions into line with international laws and conventions. In addition, at the local level, there are local committees for the immediate attention and follow-up of high-risk cases of violence against women (CLAIS), involving the coordinated efforts of the judiciary, the Ministry of Public Security and the National Institute for Women (INAMU). At present, 20 of these local committees are operational.
Dominican Republic	Inter-Agency Committee for the Protection of Migrant Women (CIPROM) Coordinated by the Ministry of Women and charged with building national capacities for preventing and dealing with human smuggling and trafficking in human lives.
Ecuador	National System for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women Comprises the Ministry of Education, the Secretariat for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, the National Equality Councils, the Council for the Regulation, Development and Promotion of Information and Communications, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), the ECU 911 Integrated Security Service, the Judicature Council, the office of the Attorney General, the Public Defence Office, the Ombudsman's Office and a representative elected by the assembly of each associative organ of the decentralized autonomous governments.
El Salvador	National System for the Attention of Women Facing Violence Comprises the Institutional Specialized Treatment Units for women facing violence and the shelters created by the Special Comprehensive Act for a Life without Violence for Women. Also in place is the Specialized Technical Commission (CTE), an inter-institutional mechanism created to guarantee the implementation of the Special Comprehensive Act for a Life without Violence for Women and of the National Policy for the Access of Women to a Life without Violence and its Plan of Action.
Guatemala	National Coordinating Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women (CONAPREVI) Headed by the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM).
Honduras	Inter-Agency Commission to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking The National Institute for Women (INAM) sits on this commission, with particular responsibility for its endeavours in the area of prevention. An Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence (CIPPDV) was also created, on which the INAM has served in an advisory role since 2016.
Mexico	National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women (CONAVIM) The Commission has worked for, as a public policy, the creation and strengthening of the Women's Justice Centres (CJM), which provide comprehensive attention with a gender perspective to women who have been victims of violence. It has also worked for the criminalization of the offence of femicide and to bring the legal definition contained in the Federal Criminal Code into line with international standards and the National Agreement for the Life and Security of Women.
Panama	Several coordination mechanisms are in place for topics related to gender-based discrimination and violence against women: the National Committee on Violence against Women (CONVIMU), for which the National Institute for Women serves as the secretariat, the National Council for Attending to Teenage Mothers, the National Intersectoral Commission for the Prevention of Sexual Violence against Children and Adolescents and the National Commission against Human Trafficking.
Paraguay	Crisis Panel Comprises representatives of the National Police, the Public Prosecution Service, the Supreme Court's Gender Secretariat and the nation's Ombudsman's Office, all of which are responsible for enforcing the Act on the Comprehensive Protection of Women against All Forms of Violence.
Suriname	National Council on Domestic Violence Created to update the National Policy Plan: Structural Approach to Domestic Violence and to draw up its work plan.
Uruguay	National Consultative Council for a Life Free from Gender-Based Violence for Women Comprises new agencies and assigns new tasks for consolidating coordinated, interconnected efforts for tackling gender-based violence under a shared theoretical framework. The enactment of the Act to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking also led to the creation of the National Council to Prevent and Combat the Trafficking in and Exploitation of Persons, which involves agencies from all branches of government and civil society organizations and is chaired by the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES).

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

In Jamaica, the commitment towards implementing the National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence led to the allocation of funds from the 2019–2020 budget for the acquisition of additional shelters for gender-violence victims in specific regions.

Noteworthy initiatives under the institutional architecture pillar in pursuit of physical autonomy include intersectoral programmes to attend to victims of violence, intersectoral protocols for action in emergency

situations and the creation of specialized investigation units and specialized justice systems to deal with gender violence and human trafficking.

Other campaigns and initiatives represent progress in the Montevideo Strategy's communication pillar: in Argentina, the creation of the Symbolic and Media Violence Observatory and efforts under the *Compartamos el Cuidado* ("Let's Share Care") campaign as part of the relaunch of the *Hombres por la Igualdad* ("Men for Equality") network; in Honduras, the *Soy Mujer y Vivir sin Violencia es mi Derecho* ("I am a Woman and Living without Violence is my Right") permanent campaign, which targets the judiciary, justice system workers and society in general, together with institutional campaigns targeting young people, men and women; in Ecuador, outreach campaigns on gender violence in educational settings, and information campaigns to tackle human trafficking; in Uruguay, the *Noviazgos Libres de Violencia: 50 Días de Reflexión* ("Dating without Violence: 50 Days of Reflection") national campaign, which encourages the involvement and leadership of adolescents from across the country and proposes the identification of actions to bolster reflection, awareness and the promotion of violence-free dating.

As regards regional cooperation and in line with the Montevideo Strategy's "Cooperation: towards democratic multilateral governance" pillar, the Governments of Ecuador and Peru have agreed to cooperate on the design of strategies for preventing and dealing with political violence and harassment against women. As part of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Dominican Republic has contributed to the design of the Five-Year Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Women in Central America, which is to be put into effect by the SICA member countries. Also noteworthy is the cooperation initiative between the Governments of Chile and Peru for strengthening information systems on violence against women.

In the area of sexual and reproductive rights, the main progress made under the normative framework pillar includes national plans and policies on sexual and reproductive rights, and the prevention of teenage pregnancy, and programmes for the provision of sexual and reproductive health services. As regards the provision of services, several States have strengthened or improved their programmes for ensuring women's sexual and reproductive health (provision of contraceptives in Costa Rica), for providing adolescents with specific attention (in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico and Uruguay), and for improving maternal and neonatal health services (in El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico).

Legislative advances include Chile's adoption in 2017 of Law No. 21,030, which regulates the decriminalization of the voluntary termination of pregnancy in three situations, and Mexico's 2016 amendment of the Official Mexican Standard on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Violence against Women to include the right of legal pregnancy termination for rape victims. Similarly, in 2018 Argentina's National Congress debated a bill for the voluntary termination of pregnancy that had originally been lodged with Congress in 2007 by various feminist organizations under the umbrella of the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion. The bill was passed by the Chamber of Deputies, but failed to pass in the Senate.

The Government of Uruguay acknowledges that there are problems in accessing voluntary pregnancy termination services: primarily in certain specific areas of the country and on account of the conscientious objection of health professionals. In order to overcome these barriers to access, a series of ordinances have been adopted that require health care providers to provide timely and accessible pregnancy termination services.

The national reports on the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy also identify the main obstacles that still prevent women from fully enjoying their rights. For example, in the area of sexual and reproductive health, Costa Rica acknowledges that the enactment of rules for therapeutic abortion is still a pending task: it was legalized in domestic law more than 40 years ago (Criminal Code) but those provisions are not effectively enforced, largely on account of the lack of technical standards both to guarantee women access to such services and to support the actions taken by health workers.

Under the institutional architecture pillar, particularly as regards plans and policies for sexual and reproductive rights, a large number of States report national strategies for tackling teenage pregnancy: in Argentina, the National Plan for the Prevention of Unintentional Pregnancy in Adolescence; in Ecuador, the National Sexual and Reproductive Health Plan; in El Salvador, the 2017–2027 National Intersectoral Strategy to Prevent Pregnancy among Girls and Adolescents; in Guatemala, the 2018–2022 National Plan to Prevent

Pregnancies among Teenagers and Young People; in Mexico, the 2013–2018 Sectoral Health Programme; in Peru, the Technical Health Standard for the Comprehensive and Differentiated Attention of Adolescents during Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Postnatal Period; and in Uruguay, the National Intersectoral Strategy to Prevent Unintentional Pregnancy among Adolescents.

In the area of capacity-building and strengthening, the region's countries have pursued training initiatives for public officials, their judiciaries and members of civil society on topics related to gender-based violence (particularly as regards the operation and enforcement of laws, guidelines and care protocols) and sexual and reproductive health (in particular, training for health workers, public officials, teachers and young people).

Chile's judiciary, for example, has expanded its training programmes and activities for judges so that, with a greater awareness of all forms of violence against women, they can provide victims with appropriate assistance.⁴ Ecuador has taken steps to train public officials at the agencies of the National System for the Prevention and Eradication of Gender Violence against Women, particularly as regards the enforcement of the Comprehensive Organic Act to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women. In Peru, the Ministry of Health (MINSa) has undertaken efforts to raise the awareness of regional health authorities and to train the members of its health worker networks. El Salvador has launched a Basic Course on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in order to strengthen knowledge and develop attitudes and skills among the participating teachers. The Dominican Republic implemented a training programme designed to strengthen the system for attending to human trafficking victims.

Among the actions for women's physical autonomy taken under the Montevideo Strategy's communication pillar, States report the implementation of outreach and awareness campaigns to prevent gender violence and on sexual and reproductive rights. In 2017 Argentina created the symbolic and media violence chapter within the Observatory on Violence against Women of the National Institute for Women, which is intended to work for the elimination of sociocultural patterns that promote and perpetuate gender inequality and relationships of power over women in the media. Chile launched the *No lo Dejes Pasar* ("Don't let it happen") national campaign, which aims to work for cultural change to instil the idea that ending gender violence is a task for everyone and that surroundings are also complicit when they normalize acts of violence.

Costa Rica has organized national campaigns to work for the recognition of street harassment as a form of violence. In El Salvador, between 2014 and 2018, the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) has carried out a series of campaigns on the topics of gender violence, human trafficking and civil and political rights.

In Panama, the National Institute for Women launched a telephone hotline for providing guidance in the event of gender violence and for attending to and channelling reported cases. Paraguay carried out several outreach initiatives, including the 2016 and 2017 editions of the *Sello Empresa Segura Libre de Violencia y Discriminación hacia las Mujeres* ("Safe Company Free of Discrimination and Violence against Women Stamp") outreach campaign; the *Noviazgo sin Violencia* ("Dating without Violence") campaign, as part of which the *Bloquea la Violencia* ("Block Violence") outreach campaign was launched; the *Violencia Cero* ("Zero Violence") campaign, "for the enforcement of Law No. 5777/16 on the comprehensive protection of women against all forms of violence," focused on preventing and raising the profile of the gender violence problem in the country; and the *¡Emergencia! ¡Basta de Femicidios!* ("Enough! No More Femicides!") campaign, which aimed to raise public awareness about violence against women and to place the problem on the country's agenda.

In the Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Women has worked to raise the profile of the *Mujer *212* helpline run by the Ministry of Women in conjunction with the systems of the Attorney General's office, the National Police and the 911 National Emergency and Security Attention System. Through the same ministry, the country is also conducting a campaign on street harassment through social networks, with the aim of bringing about a cultural change among Dominican men and women so that such practices are acknowledged and rejected.

Uruguay has conducted three annual editions of its *Noviazgos Libres de Violencia: 50 Días de Reflexión* ("Dating without Violence: 50 Days of Reflection") campaign (2016, 2017 and 2018). In parallel, in 2017 the

⁴ Among the training efforts carried out, particularly notable was the launch of a course on gender roles and stereotypes in the curriculum of the Judicial Academy, and the inclusion of a part-onsite, part-online course on gender and sexualities in its continuous training programme.

office of the President of the Republic launched a public awareness campaign on gender violence that is intended to encourage society to reflect on the topic. Actions have also been deployed to raise awareness about the issue in the nation's departments.

Some progress has been made with actions to ensure women's physical autonomy under the information systems pillar: chiefly coordination initiatives with national statistics institutes for collecting data on gender violence and the creation of observatories or intersectoral commissions for generating and analysing information.

In Chile, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity has designed a system of indicators on gender violence based on the 2014–2019 National Plan of Action on Violence against Women. It was included in the third version of the National Survey on Domestic Violence against Women and Sexual Offences, which is administered by the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security's Undersecretariat for Crime Prevention and has provided measurements of different forms of violence against women.

In 2016 Costa Rica administered a pilot version of the National Survey on Violence against Women, which was jointly designed by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) and the National Institute for Women (INAMU). The Monitoring Commission of Costa Rica's National System for the Attention and Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women is also equipped with a Subcommittee on Femicides, which conducts statistical analyses and individual studies of each femicide, so as to formulate possible improvements to the actions of the different actors involved and to the responses they give. Costa Rica's experiences provide an example of how femicide statistics can be produced in a way that showcases the dimensions of the phenomenon beyond the restrictions imposed by the definition of the concept in domestic law: although the legal definition of the offence only covers femicides committed within an intimate relationship, the judiciary has availed itself of the definition given in the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará) as the basis for the figure of expanded femicide.

In 2016, the Centre for Women's Studies of the Federation of Cuban Women and the Centre for Population and Development Studies of the National Office of Statistics and Information (ONEI) jointly developed the National Survey on Gender Equality (ENIG), which includes a module that served to gather important information on violence against women within intimate relationships.

In 2017 Ecuador created the Technical Subcommittee for Verification of Femicide within the Special Inter-Agency Security and Justice Commission and under the coordination of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), to construct a standardized indicator and to return official information validated by the agencies with responsibilities for the problem: the Secretariat for Human Rights, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses, the National Council for Gender Equality, the office of the Attorney General, the Judicature Council, the National Planning and Development Secretariat (SENPLADES) and the Public Defence Office.

El Salvador has a National Data, Statistics and Information System on Violence against Women that processes data, statistics and information with the primary goal of compiling the national database of acts of violence against women.

In 2016, Guatemala strengthened its National Information System on Violence against Women for it to provide inclusive, quality statistics on the problem of violence against women. Mexico set up the Violence against Women Statistics Group within the Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Information Technical (CTEIPG) of the National System of Statistical and Geographical Information (SNIEG), in order to generate information for quantifying violence, follow up on the set of strategic indicators for measuring violence against women, support the enhancement and strengthening of the national survey on violence against women and assist with the design of the National System of Information on Violence against Women within the SNIEG framework.

Panama's National Institute for Women created an administrative register of users and assailants which reports nationwide data through an information system and an IT platform called DATA INAMU that came online in January 2019. Paraguay, meanwhile, to enforce the terms of the Act on the Comprehensive Protection of Women against All Forms of Violence, embarked on the creation of a Women's Observatory in 2018; it has been charged with monitoring, analysing and investigating violence against women, conducting diagnostic

assessments of critical issues related to the topic and designing or updating public policies for preventing all forms of violence. The Dominican Republic's judicial branch launched a Gender and Justice Observatory and, in 2018, an Uruguayan statute established the Observatory on Gender-Based Violence against Women, within which an inter-agency working panel has been set up that coordinated the design and methodology for the second National Survey on the Prevalence of Gender- and Generation-Based Violence.

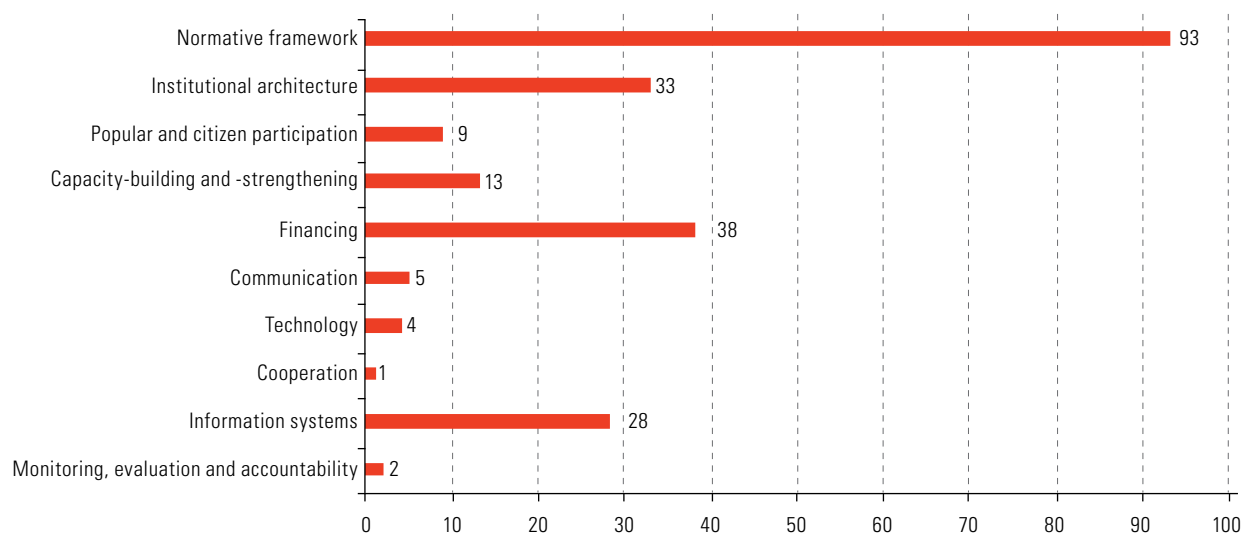
In the Caribbean, Anguilla reports that the Ministry of Social Development began coordinating with the Royal Anguilla Police Force to receive data on all reported cases of domestic violence, in order to analyse trends in the types of incidents and relationships involved. Progress was also made with gathering data on sexual and reproductive health in order to begin work on drafting a public policy addressing those issues. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the gender authorities conducted a project in collaboration with the police and the Statistics Department to gather data on domestic violence cases; the result of this effort was a sex-disaggregated database on various forms of gender violence that is kept by the police. Grenada is carrying out a study on the prevalence of violence against women, while Suriname conducted a similar study in 2018.

2. Key measures for attaining women's economic autonomy

In the area of economic autonomy, the progress made has included initiatives to address resource and time poverty, the unequal distribution of paid and unpaid work, inequality in the labour market and shortcomings in social protection. Over the period covered by this report, governments undertook initiatives related to the normative framework, institutional architecture, funding and information systems pillars in pursuit of women's economic autonomy and the protection of their economic rights. Albeit to a lesser extent, other initiatives were also reported in connection with the State capacity-building and strengthening, popular and citizen participation and communication pillars (see figure II.2).

Figure II.2

Latin America and the Caribbean (21 countries):^a initiatives in the area of economic autonomy, by implementation pillar of the Montevideo Strategy, 2016–2019
(Totals)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

^a Anguilla, Argentina, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Uruguay.

The design of normative frameworks has played a key role in promoting greater participation by women in paid work and in reducing discrimination and gender-based earnings gaps in the region's labour markets. Other initiatives related to care policies and systems were carried out, along with initiatives targeting women in rural areas.

In the area of paid work, States have worked to adopt regulations and implement initiatives dealing with workplace equality and non-discrimination, earnings equality, protection for motherhood and oversight of domestic work (see table II.6).

Table II.6

Latin America (12 countries): provisions, laws, regulations or initiatives for equality and non-discrimination in paid work

Country	Initiative
Chile	In 2016 and 2017, the Directorate of Labour implemented a special monitoring programme for gender equity issues in labour standards, covering protection for motherhood, pay, overtime and protections for workers' life and health. Law No. 21,129 came into force in 2019, amending various pieces of legislation to extend maternity rights to women employed in the armed forces and law enforcement agencies, in keeping with article 201 of the Labour Code.
Costa Rica	Law No. 9343, the Labour Procedural Reform Act, was adopted. Its purpose is to speed up conciliation and negotiation processes and, in addition, it bans workplace discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, ethnic origin, sex, religion, political opinion, trade-union membership or economic status. In 2019, by means of Law No. 9608, the country adopted the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Law No. 7142, on the promotion of the real social equality of women, was amended to protect equal pay between women and men. It stipulates that in both the private and public sectors, for work of equal value, in similar positions or different positions with similar functions and under the same employer, women must receive equal wages. The regulations adopted by the Board of the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, published in 2017, require all employers to meet their obligation of including domestic workers as waged employees in the Social Security Fund's insurance schemes.
Cuba	In late 2016, Decree Law No. 339 on Working Mothers was enacted, together with Decree Law No. 340, which amended the special social security regimes as regards the protection of motherhood. Resolution No. 26 of 2017 was adopted, which grants a rebate on monthly personal income tax payments to female own-account workers who have two or more children aged under 17.
Dominican Republic	In 2016, the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), was ratified, which extends maternity leave for workers from 12 to 14 weeks. This was achieved through a political partnership between the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Labour, the National Congress, trade unions, civil society and the media. In 2018, through this same political partnership, the country ratified the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). Under the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and by means of a Presidential Decree of 27 February 2019, paternity leave in the public sector was extended from 2 to 7 days.
Ecuador	In 2017 the Ministry of Labour issued Ministerial Agreement No. MDT-2017-0082, which is mandatory for the public and private sectors across the country and is intended to regulate equal conditions in personnel selection processes. In 2018, the Ministry of Labour embarked on several lines of action to promote gender equality in job opportunities and employment.
El Salvador	The Special Act for the Regulation and Installation of Day-Care Centres for Workers' Children was passed in 2018. It requires employers to provide day-care centres for their workers' children aged between 4 months and 3 years during the parent's workday in order to ensure a suitable environment for comprehensive early development. The act came into effect in 2020. In March 2018, Cabinet approved a bill, and the corresponding regulations, to expand social security coverage to independent female workers and their dependants.
Honduras	Decree No. 130 of 2017 enshrined discrimination as an offence in the Criminal Code and established specific punishments for workplace discrimination, denial of services on discriminatory grounds, discrimination in the exercise of rights and sex-based discrimination.
Mexico	The Federal Labour Act was amended to include such concepts as substantive equality, equal wages, decent work, bans on sexual and workplace harassment, non-discrimination, paternity and professional training.
Nicaragua	Law No. 664, the General Labour Inspection Act, regulates the labour inspection system and its organization, powers and competences in order to promote, safeguard and ensure compliance with the legal provisions governing working conditions and the discrimination-free protection of workers in the workplace.
Peru	Law No. 30,709, the Act Prohibiting Pay Discrimination between Men and Women, requires companies to prepare charts of employment categories, duties and pay, in order to ensure a much more objective allocation of earnings for men and women. Its regulations were enacted in 2018 and, in 2019, the National Superintendency of Labour Inspection (SUNAFIL) ordered the publication of the draft version of the Protocol for the Supervision of the Pay Obligations Set Out in Law No. 30,709. In 2018, Peru ratified the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189).
Suriname	Three ILO Conventions were ratified: the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), both in 2017, and the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), in 2018. The Law on Protection of the Family in Employment was enacted in 2019. Women employees will be entitled to 16 weeks' paid maternity leave and men to 7 days' paternity leave.
Uruguay	Within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Protocol for Action in the Event of All Situations of Workplace Harassment or Discrimination was drawn up and put into effect. The country also adopted Law No. 18,689 of 2018, which maintains affirmative action with higher subsidies for hiring young women and expands it to those aged over 45.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

The formulation and adoption of laws and policies targeting women in rural areas is a response to the approach based on intersectionality and interculturality agreed in the Regional Gender Agenda and endorsed by the Montevideo Strategy. Notable in this regard is Paraguay's enactment of Law No. 5446/215, on Public Policies for Women in Rural Areas, which aims to promote and guarantee the economic, social, political and cultural rights of rural women. Also noteworthy is Nicaragua's Law No. 717, the Act Creating the Fund for Purchases of Land with Gender Equity for Women in Rural Areas, which aims to ensure rural women means of production and work, and Honduras's National Solidarity Credit Programme for Rural Women and its regulations, adopted in 2018 and intended to meet the credit needs of organized rural women.

El Salvador is working on a proposal for a National Policy for the Comprehensive Development of Rural, Indigenous and Campesino Women for 2018–2030, which aims to transform rural development policies into instruments that guarantee human rights and promote the autonomy of rural women, particularly among campesino and indigenous women. Uruguay has also focused on the development of an inter-agency policy for women in rural areas that includes such aspects as affirmative production policies (such as the *Somos Mujeres Rurales* ["We Are Rural Women"] programme), joint ownership of State-owned land, registers of family production, the drafting of a work agenda with women in rural areas and the construction of a forum for governance with civil society and various State actors.

In order to break down the sexual division of labour and the unfair social organization of care work, several States have designed laws and policies for care. Those initiatives seek to uphold the rights of people who need care at all stages of the life cycle and, at the same time, to address the problem of the excessive burden of unpaid work borne by women and its impact on economic autonomy.

In Uruguay, Law No. 19,353 created the National Integrated Care System (SNIC) as the fourth pillar of the country's social protection apparatus. Likewise, in order to address the insufficient supply of public early-childhood care serves, in 2016 Argentina launched its National Early Childhood Plan. The country has conducted several publicity campaigns on the joint responsibility of the genders as part of the National Integrated Care System, the aim of which is to inform the public about the right of all persons to provide and receive care in conditions of quality and equality.

Between 2015 and 2017 Chile designed and launched a National Care System, which includes a National Support and Care Subsystem that addresses recognition of women's role as caregivers. The country also has the *Chile Cuida* ("Chile Cares") programme that provides professional caregivers, which gives women engaged in care work more free time and enables them to prepare for joining the labour market. In Costa Rica, Law No. 9,220, on the National Care and Child Development Network (REDCUDI), seeks to interconnect the different institutions that provide comprehensive early-childhood care and attention, to enable women to enter the job market. Another component of the system is the Progressive Attention Network for the Comprehensive Care of Older Persons.

In Cuba, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance and Prices adopted specific rules for working mothers to encourage the care of children requiring differentiated treatment and to promote care work as a form of employment. In 2015, El Salvador drafted its Joint Social Responsibility Policy for Care, which was approved by the Cabinet for Social Policy and Inclusion in January 2018. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Women, sectoral institutions, international cooperation agencies and civil society, Paraguay is working on a national care policy, for which purpose it created the Inter-Agency Driving Group for the Preparation of the Care Policy in Paraguay (GIPC), officially established by decree in 2019 and comprising 12 public agencies engaged on social issues. The GIPC has defined a road map and a framework document for the National Care Policy in Paraguay.

The goals of Ecuador's 2017–2021 *Toda Una Vida* ["A Whole Life"] National Development Plan include reducing gaps in wages and decent work between men and women. To address the challenges faced, the Ecuadorian State has included strategies for access to financial resources and capacity-building in several of its programmatic offerings, such as *Menos pobreza, más desarrollo* ["Less Poverty, More Development"], which implements the Human Development Credit, 92% of the beneficiaries of which are women.

Among employment plans and policies, Honduras approved the 2017–2028 National Employment Policy, which includes the principle of gender equity in recognition of the leading role played by women in the world of work. Guatemala formulated the 2017–2032 National Policy for Decent Employment, the guiding principles and approaches of which include gender equity, in order to guarantee women access to well-paid and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. It also drafted technical instruments, such as the Thematic Agenda for the Economic Empowerment of Women and the Operational Strategy for Economic Affairs, in order to better understand the problems of women as regards economic issues, to enhance the effectiveness of public actions and interventions for reducing inequality gaps between men and women and to comply with the observations made by the international committees that deal with women's human rights.

Notable in Peru was the adoption of the 2018–2021 Sectoral Plan for Equality and Non-Discrimination in Employment and Work, which aims to increase formal employment in productive, well-paid, discrimination-free jobs among women and groups requiring special protection. Over the 2015–2018 period, through the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, the Peruvian State implemented the Intersectoral Plan of Action for Women's Empowerment and Economic Autonomy in Peru, to improve the employability of women and the management of their companies and business undertakings and identify actions to help reconcile family life and the world of work.

Uruguay has its National Plan for Productive Transformation and Competitiveness 2019, which integrates a cross-cutting gender perspective by means of the *Transforma Uruguay* programme in order to review the provisions, programmes and instruments of potential relevance for the development of women entrepreneurs and companies headed by women. In 2018, the country amended Law No. 19,292 to promote State contracts with micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and rural businesses, with a priority on family units, women-owned businesses and companies that incorporate a gender perspective in their activities.

Similarly, in 2008 the Dominican Republic introduced a regulatory regime to develop and raise the competitiveness of MSMEs which also requires 15% of total public procurement to be with companies of that kind. Likewise, State agencies must conduct 20% of their purchasing from women's MSMEs, provided that the goods and services the agencies require are available from them. A company is considered to be led by women if female shareholders account for more than 50% of the capital stock. To check this figure, the gender indicator in the Register of State Suppliers is used. Currently, 11,235 women and women-led companies are listed in the Register of State Suppliers (Department of Public Procurement, 2019). Of the State's current total of more than 77,300 suppliers, 18% are women.

The region's States have conducted a number of outreach campaigns to raise public awareness about the unpaid work performed by women, to increase its visibility, and to promote a culture of joint responsibility for care. In Argentina, for example, as part of the relaunch of the Men for Equality network, the *Compartamos el Cuidado* ("Let's Share Care") campaign was presented in November 2017, with the aim of reducing the gap between men and women in the provision of care and domestic chores. In September 2018, Chile's Ministry of Women's Affairs and Gender Equity and the General Secretariat of the Presidency launched a social media campaign to raise the profile of the additional domestic chore burden borne by women and to underscore the importance of sharing domestic and care responsibilities among all family members. In Uruguay, meanwhile, the National Care Secretariat has carried out several publicity campaigns about joint gender responsibility with the goal of raising public awareness about the right of people to provide and receive quality care.

The Montevideo Strategy has also had an impact on other aspects of women's economic autonomy, such as access to credit and the promotion of women-run businesses. These include the *Mujeres que Lideran* ("Women who Lead") programme of Argentina's Bank for Investment and Foreign Trade, which was launched in 2018 in Argentina and provides loans to SMEs that have at least 51% of their capital stock held by women and to those that, with a minimum of 25% female shareholders, also have at least one woman on their boards or among their senior management.

Table II.7

Latin America and the Caribbean (9 countries): intersectoral coordination mechanisms for the economic autonomy of women

Country	Coordination mechanisms
Costa Rica	Tripartite Panel for the Transition to Formality Tripartite effort (State, trade unions and employers), supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO), with the main objective of formalizing work through measures adopted along four lines of action: education and technical and professional training, social protection, reduced red tape and tax simplification.
Dominican Republic	Multisectoral Panel for Non-Discrimination Founded in 2018 and led by the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Labour, with members from the business sector, trade unions, academia and technical and professional training institutes. Its main purpose is to set the foundations for non-discrimination and women's participation in the labour market and access to decent employment. A partnership also exists between the Ministry of Women and the Technical and Professional Training Institute (INFOTEP), with the purpose of bringing about changes in the education system, above all as regards technical and professional training, by offering women technical courses in areas in which their participation has traditionally been low.
Ecuador	Agreement between the National Council for Gender Equality and the Ministry of Labour (2018–2021) Sets lines of action to harmonize labour regulations in order to ensure gender equality in work and employment.
Honduras	Panel on Gender and Employment Following the creation of the Gender and Employment Committee, which coordinates the work between the National Institute for Women and the Ministry of Labour, the gender approach was incorporated into the national employment policy. A Gender Committee was also created in the Honduran Private Enterprise Council (COHEP).
Jamaica	Business Development and Capacity Building Working Group Incorporation of gender awareness in matters relating to entrepreneurship and companies controlled by women. The Working Group designs and implements capacity-building programmes to improve access to funding for MSMEs by expanding credit facilities.
Panama	Panamá Emprende y Crece ("Panama Enterprise and Growth") 2017–2022 Initiative for Gender Parity Public-private partnership to develop good practices in order to close gender-based economic gaps.
Paraguay	Inter-Agency Driving Group for the Preparation of Care Policy in Paraguay Established by Decree No. 1783 of 17 May 2019 and composed of 12 public institutions that work on social issues. Inter-Agency Law Enforcement Commission (CIAL) Set up by the Ministry of Women for the implementation of Law No. 5446/15, on public policies for women in rural areas. It comprises technicians of both sexes with decision-making power from 15 agencies with responsibilities under that law in order to ensure its enforcement.
Peru	Tripartite Working Panel Helps promote and strengthen the participation of women and the observance of their rights in social and labour contexts. Working Panel to Prepare and Follow up on the 2019–2021 Plan of Action for the Observance of Domestic Workers' Rights.
Uruguay	National Care Board Created under the 2016–2020 National Care Plan and comprising the State agencies with responsibilities for the topic, together with a Consultative Care Committee. It provides a forum for dialogue with society and following up on care policy. In addition, the Tripartite Commission on Equality of Opportunities and Treatment at Work, which is attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, has been strengthened.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

Costa Rica's Development Banking System (SBD) is an example of a financial entity that promotes productive projects that assist in eliminating gender inequalities. Article 8 of Law No. 8634, on the Development Banking System, states that "the SBD will design policies to neutralize gender-based inequalities, with funding and non-financial support policies to afford women equitable access to credit, bonds, guarantees, conditions and non-financial and business development services". The SBD allocates resources through its network of around 50 financial operators, including banks, mutual associations, cooperatives, financial agencies and microcredit providers. According to the most recent data available, women account for 30% of the loans awarded by the SBD's regulated operators. The pattern is similar among the SBD's non-regulated operators, where women account for 31% of the loans extended and men for 69% (SBD/SUGEF/INAMU, 2019).

Mexico's Nacional Financiera development bank (NAFIN) designed a credit product called *Crecamos Juntas* ("Let's Grow Together") to help women entrepreneurs registered with the Fiscal Inclusion Regime (RIF), a segment than was denied access to the *Mujeres Pyme* ("Women SMEs") programme because they had only recently become formalized. These loans are subject to certain limits and offer a competitive interest rate, without real-estate guarantees or third-party underwriting. A total of 1,691 loans were granted between November 2015 and December 2018.

In Paraguay, the Ministry of Women and the Agricultural Loans Facility (CAH) signed an agreement to promote and expand the credits available to women. This led to the creation of a line of credit called *Mujer Emprendedora* (“Entrepreneurial Woman”), exclusively for women, and another called *Juventud Emprendedora* (“Entrepreneurial Youth”). Also available to businesswomen are the *Kuña Katupyry* loans offered by the National Development Bank (BNF), which serve women in situations of poverty aged between 18 and 75 who need financial resources, together with another programme for women entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 75 who own formal businesses and require funding to expand and develop their economic activities.

Ecuador’s National Popular and Solidarity-Based Finance Corporation (CONAFIPS), as a second-tier bank, facilitates women’s access to loans extended by financial institutions by granting guarantee certificates across the country. For segments with a greater capacity for indebtedness, the National Finance Corporation (CFN), an agency belonging to Ecuador’s public banking sector, increased its number of operations with women by 71% over the 2015–2018 period. Currently, 17% of the institution’s borrowers are women, who receive loans for productive endeavours.

The Development Bank of El Salvador (BANDESAL) has the *Banca Mujer* (“Women’s Banking”) programme, which aims to promote the economic autonomy and financial inclusion of women business-owners by providing them with credit lines, guarantees and training and technical assistance for capacity-building. It has also promoted the *Fondo Mujer* (“Women’s Fund”) credit line, which is available at the offices of the *Ciudad Mujer* (“Women’s City”) programme as a way of making services available in different parts of the country.

The Dominican Republic has a programme called the Comprehensive Model for Strengthening Entrepreneurship and Business Skills for Women’s Economic Autonomy, which is led by the Ministry of Women and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and SMEs. It also has the *Banca Solidaria* (“Solidarity Bank”) programme, which is the main programme of the National Council to Promote and Support Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (PROMIPYME) and has the primary goals of facilitating funding and providing financial education.

The countries of the Caribbean have also carried out programmes to promote entrepreneurship. Anguilla has the Get Small Entrepreneurial Training programme (SET), which supports young businesspeople between the ages of 18 and 35 with training, loans and access to subsidies for starting their businesses. In Jamaica, the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries jointly launched the Women’s Entrepreneurship Support Project (WES). In Suriname, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing has funded a training programme for business initiatives.

To raise awareness among public officials and the private sector, initiatives have been carried out to build capacities in the area of good labour practices and to develop knowledge and technical tools for entrepreneurship (see table II.8).

Table II.8

Latin America and the Caribbean (5 countries): initiatives related to capacity-building and exchanges of good practices to bolster women’s employment and entrepreneurship

Country	Initiatives
Chile	Good Labour Practices with Gender Equity Programme Seeks to promote and put in place good labour practices within organizations in order to help reduce gender gaps. Chilean Standard NCh 3262–Management Systems–Management of Gender Equality and Reconciliation of Work, Family and Personal Life Aims to allow organizations to detect and eliminate gender gaps in personnel management.
Costa Rica	Emprende Project <i>Emprende</i> (“Enterprise”) seeks to strengthen women’s business capacities to bolster their economic autonomy. Between 2012 and 2018, a total of 996 small businesses and microenterprises led by women participated in the project.
Ecuador	Economic Inclusion Schools Project Aimed at the target population of its programmes and services, including women, these schools consist of two instruction phases: (i) training to create entrepreneurship and (ii) training for capacity-building on both administrative and management topic and technical know-how.
Nicaragua	Usura Cero (“Zero Usury”) Programme The National Technological Institute (INATEC) trained 218,703 women through this programme, thereby strengthening and empowering their family businesses and providing them with greater economic independence.
Suriname	Economic Empowerment of Rural Women A project for the economic empowerment of rural women in Nickerie district.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

As regards the production of data and information on access to and use of financial services, in Costa Rica the General Superintendency of Financial Entities (SUGEF), along with INAMU and the Development Bank System, and with technical advice from ECLAC, defined a road map for exploring the situation of Costa Rican women in the national financial system. The result of this process was a situation analysis of the gap in banking and financial system service access and use, and the creation of guidelines to prevent and eradicate the financial exclusion of all women.

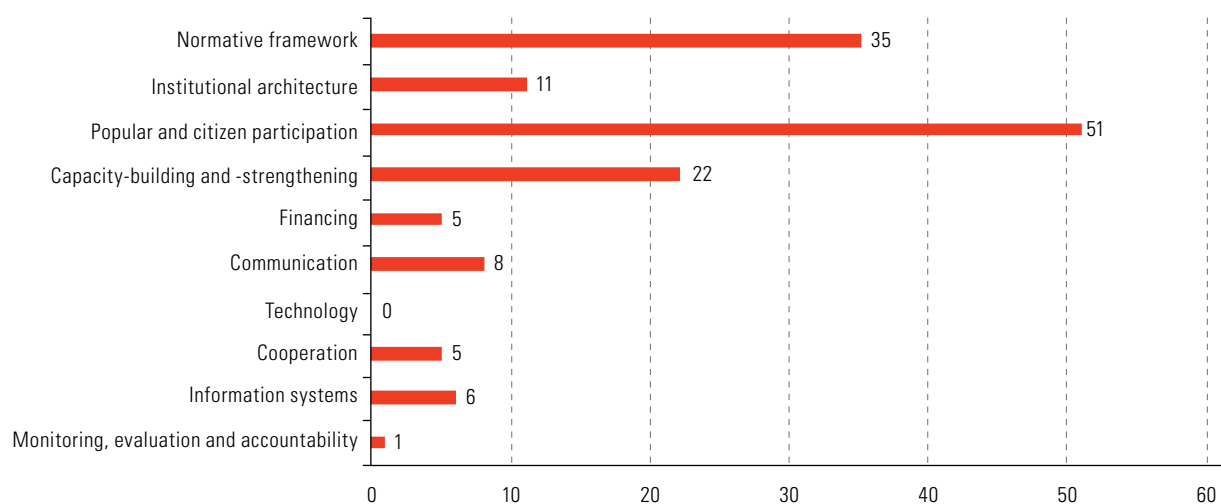
El Salvador, in 2017, began the renewal of the inter-agency effort led by the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) in coordination with the Central Reserve Bank (BCR) and public financial institutions to analyse the financial system from a gender perspective. In turn, Jamaica designed a National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) and published a study on financial inclusion as a component of its MSME policy.

3. Key measures for attaining women's autonomy in decision-making

One of the region's most important steps forward with gender equality has been the increased participation of women in public positions as the result of policies that, while they were launched prior to the Montevideo Strategy, remain a priority for the region's countries.

Most of the initiatives undertaken establish normative frameworks that recognize and enforce the principle of gender parity, quota mechanisms and other positive actions to bolster women's political participation. Some countries have also developed national plans or strategies to promote the participation of women in different public and private decision-making roles. In addition, since 2016, actions have also been taken in connection with citizen participation and, albeit to a lesser extent, with capacity-building forums, processes to consolidate national institutional architectures for gender matters and outreach activities (see figure II.3).

Figure II.3: Latin America and the Caribbean (21 countries):^a initiatives in the area of autonomy in decision-making, by implementation pillar of the Montevideo Strategy, 2016–2019 (Totals)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

^a Anguila, Argentina, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Uruguay.

Some Caribbean countries have brought forward legislative initiatives to bolster women's participation in decision-making. For example, Guyana adopted the Election Laws (Amendment) Act to introduce a one-third quota of women on lists of candidacies for national and local elections.

The countries of Latin America have also made progress with their normative frameworks for advancing women's decision-making autonomy through the enactment of laws and regulations that promote parity between men and women. In 2017, Argentina enacted Law No. 27,412, on Gender Parity in Political Representation, which enshrined its adherence to the concept of parity-based democracy, which is one of the Montevideo Strategy's four pillars for attaining equality by 2030. In addition to the enactment and adoption of regulations for this law, the National Institute for Women (INAM) has assumed, jointly with the Association of Argentine Ombudspersons (ADPRA), the commitment of monitoring its enforcement.

In 2016, Costa Rica's Supreme Electoral Court issued resolution No. 3603-E8-2016, which requires political parties to draw up their electoral lists with alternating male and female candidates and a 50% share for each sex, in addition to including mechanisms for ensuring parity in their statutes. In 2016, Honduras adopted the Regulations for the Enforcement of the Principle of Parity and the Alternation Mechanism for the Political Participation of Women and Men in Elections. Mexico, meanwhile, amended its Constitution to guarantee gender parity in all public positions within the three branches and three levels of government.

In 2017, Panama amended its Electoral Code and incorporated a provision requiring 50% parity in popularly elected positions and stipulating that parties' internal or primary elections must earmark a minimum of 50% of their candidacies for women. The Dominican Republic enacted Law 33-18, on political parties, groups and movements, and the Electoral Regime Act, which stipulates that "electoral boards, including the Central Electoral Board, shall not admit lists of candidacies for popularly elected office containing less than 40% and more than 60% of either men or women." In 2017, Uruguay passed Law No. 19,555, which identifies equal participation by persons of both sexes in the composition of national and departmental elected bodies and in the leadership of political parties to be a matter of general interest, repeating the concepts and guidelines for enforcement of Law 18,476 of 2009, but without the concluding date.

Also during this period, the region's countries have enacted legislation dealing with the participation of women in state institutions, associations and organizations. Chile enacted Law No. 20,940, which modernized the labour relations system and made it mandatory for organizations' statutes to include mechanisms to guarantee women seats on their boards; it also adopted Law No. 20,881, which assures equal representation of partners of both sexes. In 2017, Panama enacted Law No. 56, which requires the participation of women on State boards, with a mandatory 30% quota for women in the composition of all boards of State agencies. In 2016, El Salvador's Legislative Assembly approved an amendment to article 120 of the Municipal Code, in order to ensure the inclusion and active participation of women in community associations with a quota of at least 30%.

The adoption of measures under the Montevideo Strategy has served to strengthen the institutional architecture for guaranteeing women decision-making autonomy. The Dominican Republic created Gender Committees in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, Gender Offices at town councils, and Policy Commissions for Equality between Men and Women at both the Central Electoral Board and the Superior Electoral Court. It also as an Observatory for Women's Political Participation led by the Central Electoral Board.

At the same time, the countries have carried out actions to bring about active and substantive participation by the public in the implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda. These initiatives include the creation of civic schools and training programmes, national plans or strategies to promote the participation of women and female leadership in different public and private decision-making forums, mechanisms for civil society participation, intersectoral coordination initiatives and the participatory design of equality plans and policies.

In Chile, the Women, Citizenship and Participation programme, one of the key work areas of the National Service for Women and Gender Equity (SERNAMEG), was revamped in 2018 to emphasize the delivery of tools to train women leaders in politics as of 2019.

Costa Rica's INAMU has a Centre for the Political Training of Women, which offers comprehensive training through courses on leadership and political participation to expand women's capacity to impact different areas (primarily political, electoral and within social organizations).

Ecuador has a Framework Inter-Agency Agreement for 2018–2022, entered into by the National Council for Gender Equality, the National Electoral Council (CNE) and the Institute of Democracy, with the aim of incorporating gender awareness into the electoral system and thus strengthen the institutional architecture in pursuit of equal participation by women. Part of this initiative focuses on raising awareness about political participation and gender equality among women in rural areas. In 2015 and 2018, training on gender equality, political participation by women and political violence was given to representatives from the CNE's provincial offices. At the same time, as part of efforts to promote the leadership of women and social organizations, between January 2013 and December 2021, the project "Permanent and Continuous School for Civic Training" project is being carried out under the coordination of the National Secretariat for Policy Management. Similarly, in 2018, the Supreme Electoral Council launched an online classroom targeting the members of the temporary electoral agencies (OET) and the general public, with the aim of providing training on electoral processes and legislation, inclusion, citizen participation and political participation by women.

In turn, Honduras created the School of Equality and Empowerment for Honduran Rural Women as a training and knowledge centre for women's empowerment.

Guatemala has made efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making roles among the international posts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through a policy to include women in leadership roles. At the territorial level, between 2016 and 2018, 28 women's commissions were established.

In 2018 Jamaica drew up policy guidelines for the appointment and selection of the members of public agencies' boards. Likewise, the Bureau of Gender Affairs, through its gender mainstreaming programme, is focused on increasing the number of women in decision-making and management roles and has conducted training activities among various key stakeholders to build capacities and strengthen the institutional architecture.

In Mexico, the Temporary Commission for the Strengthening of Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination in Political Participation during the 2017–2018 electoral process, with the task of carrying out research/enforcement and outreach/awareness activities to ensure that the political participation of women and men takes place with equality, parity, non-discrimination and free of political violence. In addition, the National Electoral Institute (INE), with the backing of the Electoral Court of the Federal Judiciary, introduced affirmative action measures to increase the numbers of women and indigenous people in the Congress of the Union that convened on 1 September 2018. One affirmative action measure requires that at least 13 indigenous districts have guaranteed representation in the Chamber of Deputies. In 2017, the country created an online training programme called Public Policies with a Gender Perspective, in coordination with the Electoral Court of the Federal Judiciary and the Economic Research and Teaching Centre (CIDE).

Panama's amendments of its Electoral Code require that of the total post-electoral funding for training activities, a minimum of 20% must be earmarked for women-only training activities. That percentage must be coordinated with the party's Secretariat of Women, which is also required to present an annual training plan.

Paraguay has established programmes for strengthening the political participation of women in public positions, such as the Empowering Women for Parity-Based Democracy programme. In addition, through training days for magistrates, directors and officers of the Superior Court of Electoral Justice, efforts have been made to implement a cross-cutting gender perspective in the institution. Two editions of the Superior Court of Electoral Justice's Political Training School for Women Leaders have been held, and a third is being planned.

In Peru, the National Elections Tribunal (JNE) has carried out training and guidance programmes, together with educational and outreach activities on the subject of political participation, under the aegis of the Women and Civic Inclusion programme. The Peruvian State has also considered specific actions to reduce the political representation gaps of women, young people and members of indigenous communities through the 2016–2019 National Education and Civic Training Plan, which contains the guidelines for the design and implementation of the efforts in the field of education undertaken by the JNE. In addition, since 2015, the Ministry of Women

and Vulnerable Populations has been serving as the Chair of the Working Panel to Promote and Guarantee the Political Participation of Women.

The Dominican Republic has a working panel for women politicians led by the Ministry of Women and a National Forum of Women from Political Parties, both of which have an active impact on decision-making. Training activities for women politicians have also been organized by the Ministry of Women and the Electoral and Civil Status Training School of the Central Electoral Board.

One noteworthy aspect is that some countries have made progress with preventing and tackling political violence by positioning the topic on the public agenda and developing guidelines and protocols for attending to women affected by that phenomenon (see table II.9).

Table II.9

Latin America (6 countries): initiatives to prevent and deal with political violence

Country	Initiatives
Dominican Republic	Within the Working Panel for Women Politicians, a draft set of inter-agency guidelines has been drawn up to address and refer incidents of political harassment and a study of political harassment against women has been prepared.
Ecuador	The National Electoral Council issued resolution No. PLE-CNE-5-14-11-2018-T, establishing principles for electoral propaganda, including parity and gender equity, public participation and ideological pluralism and prohibiting calls for violence, racism and sexism. In addition, the National Council for Gender Equality, under its partnership with the National Electoral Council and as part of its observation mandate for the March 2019 sectional elections, prepared and disseminated a public call for the electoral campaigns to be free of political violence.
El Salvador	In 2017, the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) prepared a Handbook for Dealing with Political Violence against Women, the aim of which was to cast light on the violence that women face in exercising their political rights and to provide guidance for correctly lodging complaints with the competent authorities. In addition, in coordination with the Parliamentary Women's Group and the Supreme Electoral Court, ISDEMU has carried out various initiatives to promote violence- and discrimination-free political participation by women.
Guatemala	In 2017, the Public Prosecution Service drafted the Protocol for the Investigation of Crimes against Human Rights Defenders. In addition, during 2018, with support from social organizations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Presidential Commission of Human Rights (COPREDEH) prepared a draft version of the Public Policy for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, which will be endorsed at the national level in 2019.
Mexico	The Protocol for Addressing Political Violence against Women was developed in order to tackle the obstacles women encounter in the exercise of their political and electoral rights.
Peru	Political harassment is addressed in the 2016–2021 National Plan against Gender Violence and guidelines have been adopted for attending to women politicians affected by incidents of that kind. In addition, the National Elections Tribunal prepared the National Survey of Candidates in the 2018 Regional and Municipal Elections, one of the objectives of which was to identify cases of discrimination and political harassment affecting female candidates during the 2018 electoral campaign. In addition, the <i>Observa Igualdad</i> ("Observe Equality") platform provides information on cases in which candidates' political rights have been violated.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of national reports on progress in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 from the respective countries.

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CHAPTER III

Current challenges and prospects for gender equality by 2030

This first regional progress report on the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 stresses the importance of this technical-political tool for the design and implementation of comprehensive and effective gender equality policies. It also reveals the Strategy's potential for mainstreaming the gender perspective into sustainable development strategies. The application of the Strategy's measures is helping to construct a solid institutional framework that will mobilize political will and ensure that actions for attaining gender equality become State policies.

The Strategy's measures are adapted to the different situations faced by the region's countries. As countries have made different degrees of progress in achieving equality and face their own specific obstacles, the Strategy's pillars are organized according to the priorities and needs of each context. According to the national reports, the speed and extent of the application of the Montevideo Strategy have been heterogeneous. Some pillars have been prioritized over others, notably the institutional architecture, normative framework, and monitoring, evaluation and accountability pillars. The pillars on technology, financing and cooperation have been applied more slowly.

According to the information analysed, the Montevideo Strategy has paved the way for the expansion of conceptual frameworks and the scope of policies. Several governments have adopted the agreed approaches, challenges, pillars and measures as a frame of reference for the preparation or updating of equality plans and policies.

From a political point of view, recognizing the challenges of inequality, described in the Montevideo Strategy, has given governments a broader understanding of the structural nature of inequality and highlighted the need for all their initiatives to include a comprehensive and transformative approach to gender inequalities. Governments have also identified how, in specific contexts, the challenges of inequality reinforce each other and manifest themselves in the normalization of violence and gender discrimination, in women's excessive burden of unpaid work, and in limitations on the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights, and they have, therefore, identified the need for effective policies that respond to multidimensional problems.

In addition, the incorporation of gender equality, women's rights, intersectional and intercultural approaches into plans and policies, as called for in the Strategy, has profound implications for the scope, objectives and impact of public policies. While more information is needed on how these approaches guide policies and programmes, the fact that the need for these approaches has been recognized is a major step forward that goes beyond targeted, short-term welfare policies. It is an opportunity to identify gender biases and eliminate them from macroeconomic, production, labour, social and environmental policies in an effort to redistribute time, power and resources. According to the national reports, there are still major challenges to efforts to establish systems for monitoring public policies on gender equality to evaluate the impact of those policies on women's lives and on narrowing gender gaps.

Meanwhile, in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Montevideo Strategy has strengthened the role of machineries for the advancement of women in the processes of mainstreaming the gender perspective in sustainable development plans and strategies. From an intersectoral perspective, it has led to the involvement of State sectors that were not traditionally sensitized to gender issues. In this regard, intersectoral and inter-institutional coordination efforts among machineries for the advancement of women, relevant ministries and planning entities are noteworthy. The Montevideo Strategy has been used as a planning tool and has created stronger links between gender equality plans and national and local sustainable development plans and strategies.

Nevertheless, multiple challenges must be addressed to overcome inequality by 2030. The first challenge is the magnitude of gender inequalities in the region and the limited State capacities and resources available to address and reduce them in an adverse context. For example, while necessary progress has been made in the construction of normative frameworks and institutional architecture to address gender discrimination and violence, it has not been sufficient to end this violation of women's human rights. To achieve that, a comprehensive response is needed that covers the 10 implementation pillars of the Montevideo Strategy.

Secondly, while governments have identified the mainstreaming of an intersectional and intercultural approach as crucial to reducing inequalities among all women, putting that approach into effect in policies, programmes and actions remains a challenge. Efforts to further disaggregate information systems' data must therefore be stepped up. In this regard, particular attention must be paid to understanding and addressing the situation of rural women, indigenous women, Afrodescendent women, migrant women, adolescent girls and young women, among others, as well as the barriers that they face to fully achieve their autonomy.

Thirdly, governments recognize that gender inequalities manifest themselves at the international, regional, national and subnational levels and that a new vision of public policy is required in order to respond to them in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The multiscale approach to State action must be strengthened, together with regional cooperation that transcends national borders. In some cases, machineries for the advancement of women have stepped up their efforts to broaden the scope of gender equality and women's rights policies to cover subnational and local spaces. The territorial anchoring of policies must continue to be reinforced in order to expand their coverage, relevance and effectiveness in responding to the manifold needs and demands of women and girls. To this effect, regulatory frameworks must also be harmonized at different levels of government within countries in synergy with multilateral governance policies, agreements and strategies.

Fourthly, various countries agree that the budgets for gender equality policies should be increased. The low budget allocation for equality policies is a cause for concern. Cuts to the budgets for gender equality policies lead to a reduction in States' response capacity in the field of women's and girls' rights. Furthermore, given the current economic downturn, steps must be taken to ensure that women (especially women living in poverty) are not disproportionately affected; in fact, countercyclical policies should be implemented in sectors that are key to women's empowerment. The application of the Montevideo Strategy measures on financing and cooperation provide alternatives that expand the fiscal space and tax revenue progressively, thus ensuring that States have sufficient resources to fulfil their commitments to achieve equality.

In addition, although the region is to be commended for the participation of civil society in the shaping of the Regional Gender Agenda, favourable conditions must continue to be created for the effective participation of those organizations, in particular women's and feminist organizations and movements, in the monitoring of public policies. These organizations have played a crucial role in putting the enforceability of women's rights on the public agenda and in warning of possible setbacks in the event of adverse political and economic circumstances.

Forty years after the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the establishment of the Regional Gender Agenda, and 25 years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is clear that progress towards equality is not linear. There have been setbacks and new challenges have arisen as a result of economic, political and social changes. The Montevideo Strategy offers a road map for overcoming implementation gaps and achieving sustainable development based on gender equality, women's autonomy and respect for women's rights. It strengthens planning capacity in contexts of uncertainty, aligns means with ends and accelerates progress towards equality, by linking short-term measures with medium-term ones.

Analysis of the progress made in the first three years of the Strategy's application shows that efforts must be redoubled to overcome the structural challenges of inequality and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The fifteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2022, will be an opportunity for a midpoint review before the 2030 target date.

Therefore, not only must advances in regulatory frameworks, institutional architecture and information systems be examined, but also decisive steps must be taken with regard to financing equality policies, cooperation and technology, adopting a multiscale approach. Taking a comprehensive approach to the 10 implementation pillars is key to creating conditions conducive to ensuring that public policies have profound and long-term effects on women's autonomy and the achievement of gender equality. This will require far-reaching transformations in how the State is organized and managed. To this end, institutional inertia and cultural resistance to the processes of gender mainstreaming in policies must be overcome and steps taken to ensure the greater involvement of the relevant ministries and planning and budgeting entities. In addition, the machineries for the advancement of women must continue to be strengthened, while ensuring their full integration into the national coordination mechanisms for the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. This will help to create positive synergies for achieving gender equality in all three dimensions of sustainable development and attaining substantive equality by 2030.



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