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Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean

Labour market inclusion of young people
and redistribution of care work:
challenges and opportunities



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ECLAC



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Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is a twice-yearly report prepared jointly by the Economic Development Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Office for the Southern Cone of Latin America of the International Labour Organization (ILO), headed by Daniel Titelman and Fabio Bertranou, respectively.

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Foreword

The Latin American and Caribbean economies are facing complex conditions, in which multiple concurrent crises are threatening to exacerbate many of the region's structural problems. The low-growth path is compounded by the negative effects of climate change and of rapid innovation and technological change, which are transforming production processes and widening productivity gaps between developed and developing countries. All this has had a major impact on the region's labour markets, with trends recorded over the past two years showing signs of change.

In the first half of 2023, slower economic growth adversely affected labour markets. As noted in the first part of this twenty-ninth edition of *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean*, the increase in the regional employment rate slowed significantly in the first six months of the year. At the same time, the participation rate dropped even further below pre-pandemic levels.

The report also shows that the post-pandemic recovery of labour markets resulted in a decline in unemployment rates —both total unemployment and for men and women— throughout the first half of 2023, which fell to their lowest level since 2015 (6.7%). Other notable findings are that the increase in wage employment creation helped to drive down informality rates, which nonetheless remain high, while lower inflation rates led to improvements in real minimum wages, although average wages fell in real terms in most of the countries for which information is available. This report argues that the repercussions of the regional economic slowdown, which are likely to worsen from the second half of 2023 and last into 2024, will make continued growth in the rates of employment, wage employment and formal employment more difficult to sustain.

Data for 2022 and the first half of 2023 suggest that gender and age gaps in participation and employment rates persist, albeit marginally smaller than in 2019, before the pandemic. However, these gaps remain substantial and are in stark contrast to the educational gains that women and young people of the region have made.

Currently, 50% of women are out of the labour market, while the participation rate for men is above 75%. This inequality is rooted in cultural patterns that have led to the sexual division of labour and which, to a large extent, are reflected in care work, most of which is carried out by women. As the second part of this report shows, the women of Latin America and the Caribbean spend almost triple the time spent by men on unpaid domestic and care work; as such, for there to be equality and justice, these burdens must be redefined and we must move resolutely towards a care society.

Furthermore, the main gender equalities in education begin at school level and become more visible later in fields of study and in tertiary, technical and vocational education. There tends to be a higher concentration of women in education, health, the social sciences and the humanities, whereas their participation is lower in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This educational segregation is reflected in marked occupational segmentation, with women in lower-paying jobs, many of which are related to care work.

Building a society that restructures care work in a co-responsible manner is more than just an ethical imperative; it is a blueprint for boosting the region's economies through the development of a growing sector. Recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work and creating quality jobs is a key strategy for achieving gender equality, the well-being of society as a whole, decent work and economic growth.

This edition of *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean* analyses the dynamics that connect the labour market to the critical work done to support social reproduction, such as unpaid work, which sustains life and economies. In keeping with the provisions of the Buenos Aires Commitment, adopted in November 2022, it highlights the importance of comprehensive care policies and the labour market and digital inclusion of women, especially young women, as a pillar of development for the region. The region therefore has an opportunity to chart a new course towards sustainable development with gender equality that has at its centre care of people and care for the planet. In this vein, countries that have yet to ratify the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) are encouraged to do so. The ratification of these and other relevant instruments provides an international legal framework for ensuring the human rights of women, adolescents and girls in all their diversity and their implementation helps to achieve gender equality and labour market inclusion, in line with international standards.

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I. The employment situation in the first half of 2023

Introduction

Amid a regional economic slowdown starting in 2022, the labour markets of Latin America and the Caribbean performed worse in the first half of 2023 than they had in 2021 and 2022. The regional employment rate continued to rise, albeit less than in previous years, when economic activity reflected the rebound effect following the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Meanwhile, the regional participation rate fell and has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. The regional unemployment rate continued to decline, but year-on-year change at the country level varied more than it had in the first half of 2022. Still, the unemployment rate fell well below pre-pandemic levels.

This section of the report contains an analysis of the main employment indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean in the first half of 2023. In light of slowing job creation in the region, it is particularly significant that growth in wage employment outpaced that of own-account work. Job creation was concentrated in the services sector. In relative terms, however, the manufacturing sector recorded the highest rates of job creation.

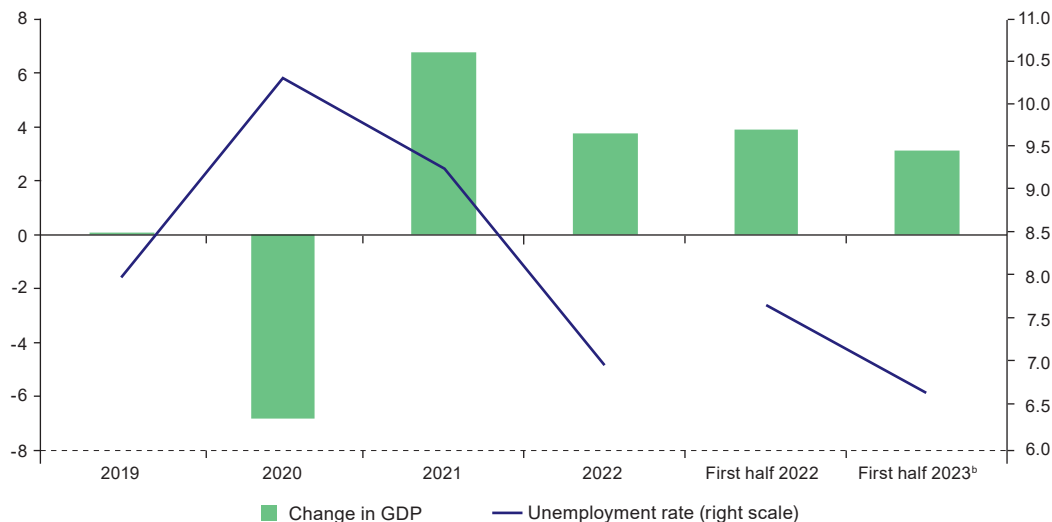
A. The regional unemployment rate continued to decline, while the participation rate lagged behind pre-pandemic levels

In the first half of 2023, the unemployment rate continued to decrease. It fell 1 percentage point year-on-year, to 6.7%, the lowest level recorded since 2015. As shown in figure I.1, regional economic growth continued, but at a slower rate. As the regional economy slowed, although the trend of job creation continued, it was much weaker than in previous years. As shown in figure I.2, the employment rate increased by 3.3 percentage points in the first half of 2022, compared to 0.5 percentage points in the first half of 2023. The effect of gradual economic deceleration was most evident in the performance of participation rates. In the first half of 2022, the regional participation rate increased by 1.7 percentage points but decreased by 0.2 percentage points in the year-later period. Slow economic growth marked a departure from 2021 and 2022, when the post-2020 rebound effect had generated a healthier labour supply and demand. The participation and employment rates responded much as they had to previous economic slowdowns, including those occurring between 2015 and 2019 (ECLAC/ILO, 2022).

Figure I.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries):^a regional GDP growth and unemployment rate trends, 2019–first half of 2023

(Percentages)



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

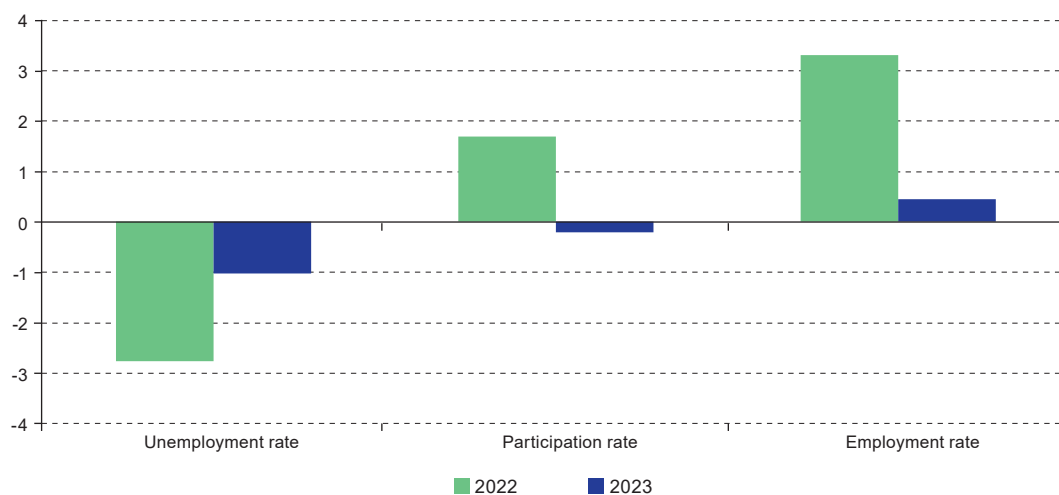
^a Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

^b GDP growth rate refers to the first quarter of 2023.

Figure I.2

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries):^a year-on-year variation in the unemployment, participation and employment rates, first quarters of 2022 and 2023

(Percentage points)



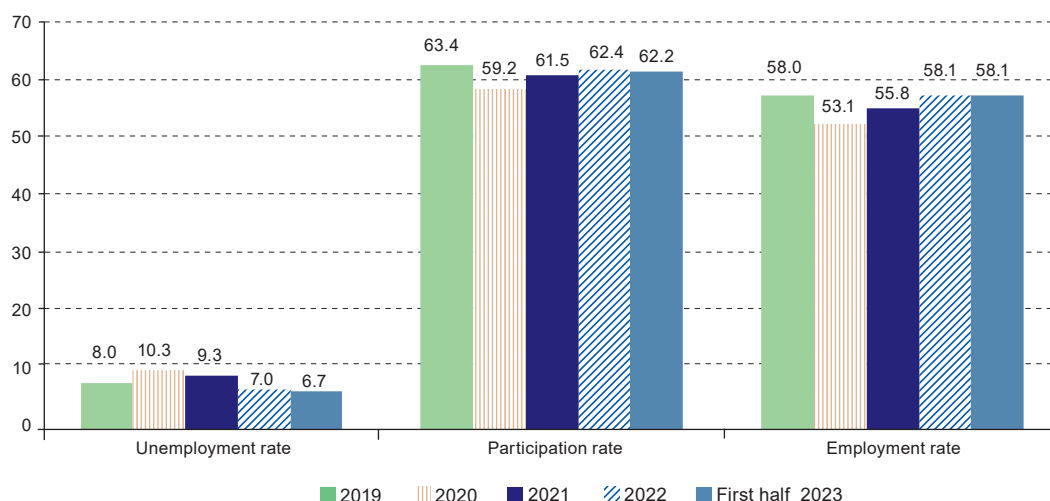
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

While the employment and unemployment rates in the first half of 2023 were similar to or better than pre-pandemic levels, the participation rate continued to lag behind. As shown in figure I.3, in the first half of 2023, the unemployment rate continued to fall—well below the 8.0% recorded in 2019—and the employment rate hovered around pre-pandemic levels. However, nearly four years on from the beginning of the pandemic, the lag in the participation rate persisted, and in the first half of 2023, it was down 1.2 percentage points relative to 2019 levels, demonstrating the longer-lasting effects of the pandemic on the labour market. There is a cohort of workers that remains unable to reenter the labour market, despite the return to normal economic and educational activity, whether in person or in hybrid modalities.

Figure I.3

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries):^a regional unemployment, participation and employment rates, 2019–first half of 2023
(Percentages)



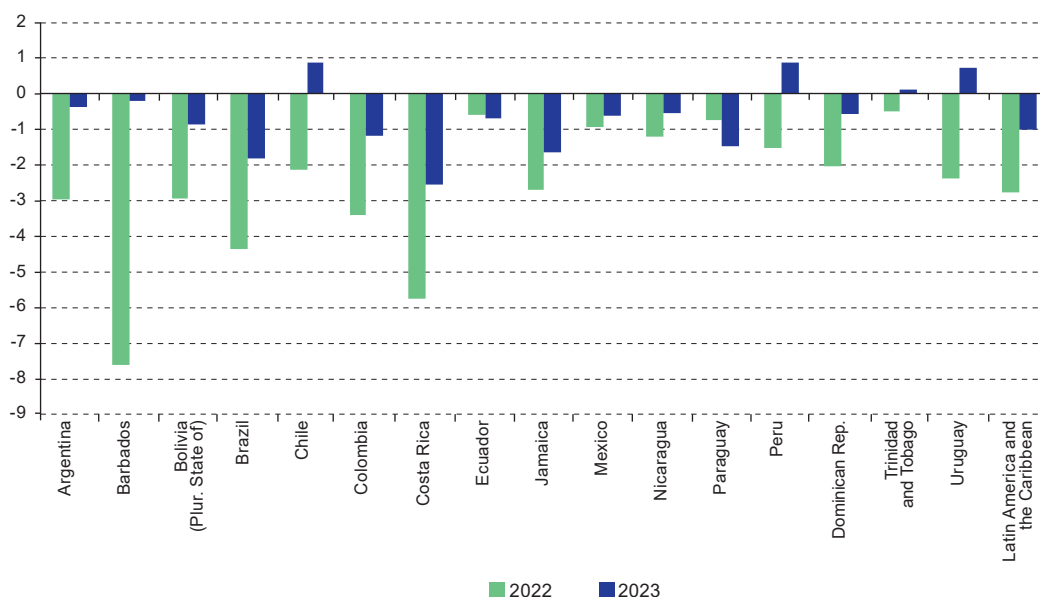
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

The weighted regional average unemployment rate has decreased, but the situation is more varied at the country level. As figure I.4 shows, between 2021 and 2022, the unemployment rate fell in all 16 countries for which data are available, while between 2022 and 2023, it fell in 12 countries—with the steepest falls recorded in Costa Rica, Brazil and Jamaica—but rose in 4 (Chile, Peru, Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago).

Figure I.4

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries): year-on-year variation in the unemployment rate, by country, 2022 and 2023
(Percentage points)



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

The similarities in unemployment rate patterns corresponded to relatively analogous patterns in labour market performance at the country level. In figure I.5, where the 45-degree line represents an equal rate of change in labour supply and demand, any country in which the employment rate performed better than the participation rate is plotted above the line.¹ Of the 17 countries for which data are available, 13 are plotted above that 45-degree line, with differences among them reflecting their distinct national trends. In the first half of 2023, the employment rate rose more than the participation rate year-on-year in 8 countries but fell less than the participation rate year-on-year in 5 countries. In Chile, Uruguay and Trinidad and Tobago, the participation rate increased more than the employment rate owing to the increase in the unemployment rate, while in Peru, the increase in the unemployment rate was due to the employment rate falling more than the participation rate.

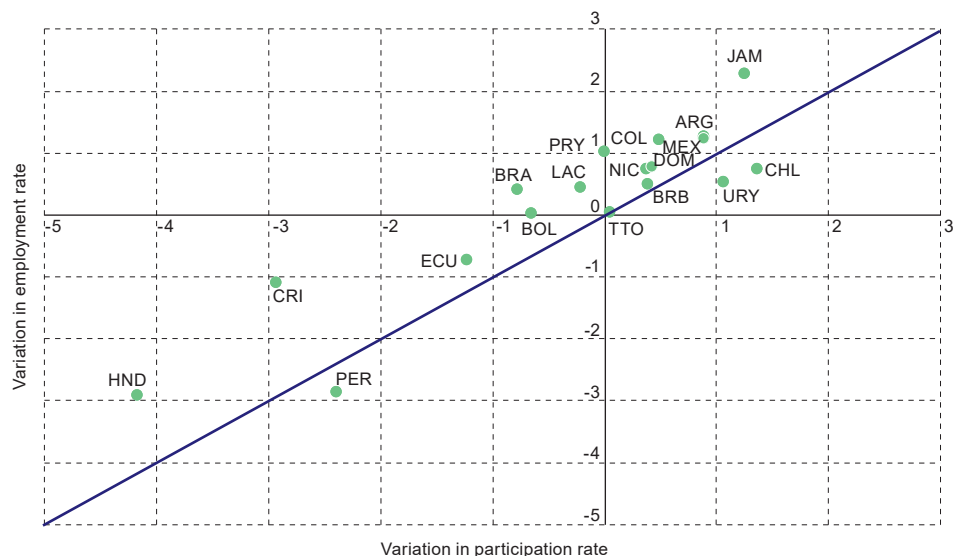
An analysis of the main labour variables by sex shows distinct trends at the regional level. The participation rate decreased by 0.4 percentage points for men but remained constant for women (see figure I.6). The employment rate increased for both sexes, with women experiencing a greater increase than men (0.7 percentage points compared to 0.2 percentage points). These supply and demand trends reduced the unemployment rate for men and women, with women again experiencing a greater change than men (-1.4 percentage points compared to -0.7 percentage points). The gender gap in the unemployment rate² narrowed between the first half of 2022 and the first half of 2023, with the ratio decreasing from 1.5:1 to 1.4:1, continuing the trend of recent years.

¹ This occurs when employment rates rise more than participation rates, or when employment rates decrease less than participation rates.

² Defined as the ratio between the unemployment rate for women and the unemployment rate for men.

Figure I.5

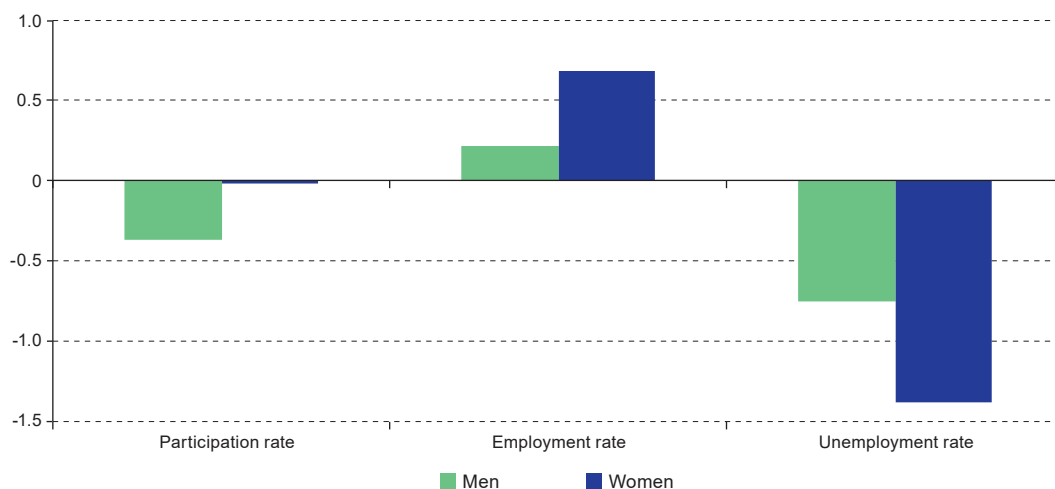
Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries): year-on-year variation in the employment and participation rates, by country, first half of 2023
(Percentage points)



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

Figure I.6

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries):^a a weighted average of the year-on-year variation in the unemployment, participation and employment rates of men and women, first half of 2022 and first half of 2023
(Percentage points)



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

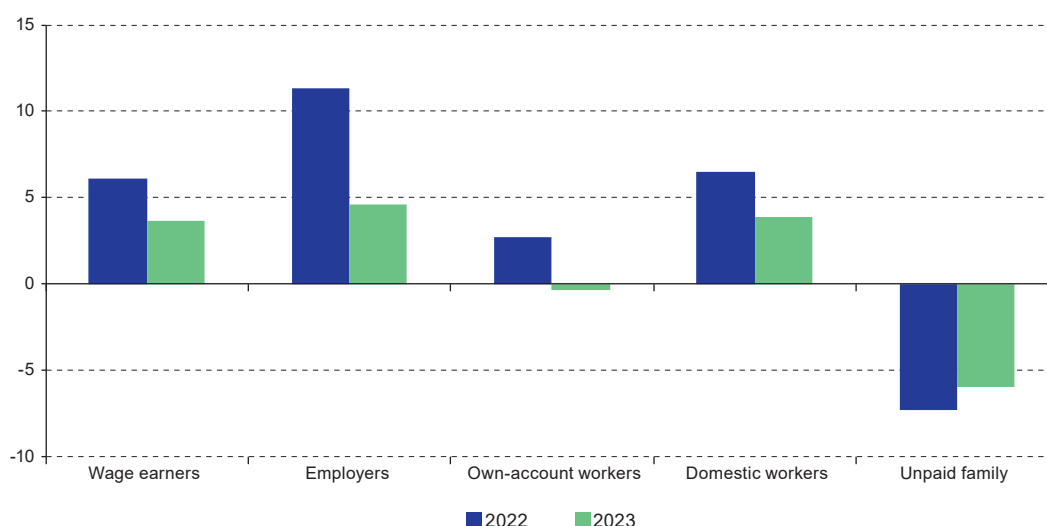
^a Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

B. Wage employment continued to grow as rates of informal employment declined

In Latin America and the Caribbean, job creation continued alongside falling regional unemployment, just as it had in 2022, in particular among groups most affected by the pandemic. In the eight countries for which data on the first half of 2023 are available, total employment increased by 2.5% compared to the first half of 2022. This trend held true across the board, although it was particularly pronounced in Argentina, Colombia and Mexico. As shown in figure I.7, regional wage employment grew 3.5% in the same period, with variation among countries: significant increases were recorded in Paraguay, Argentina and Colombia, but the rest of the countries recorded increases below the regional average. Private wage employment continued to grow, unlike public wage employment, which had stalled.

Figure I.7

Latin America and the Caribbean (8 countries):^a year-on-year variation in total employment, by category, first half of 2022 and first half of 2023
(Percentages)



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

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

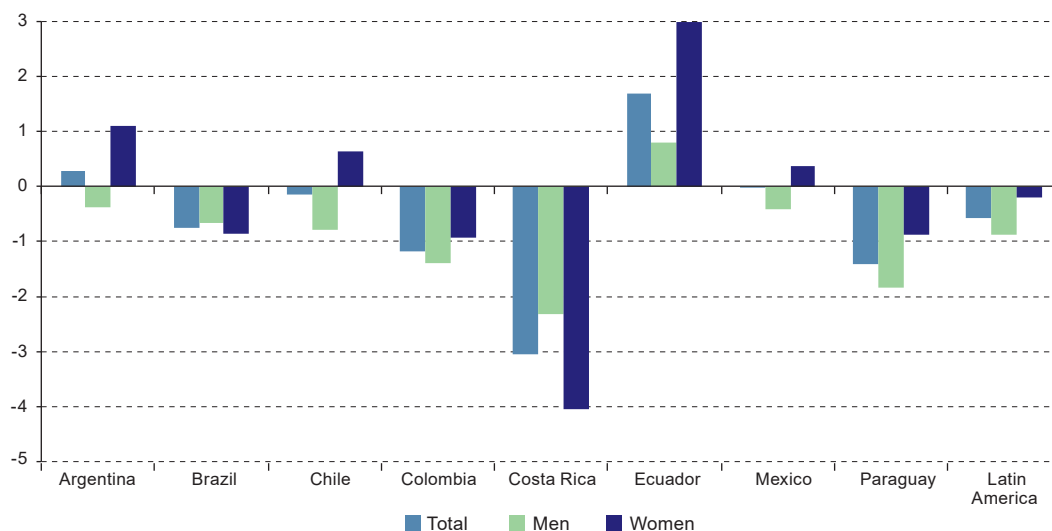
Analysis across occupational categories shows continued expansion in those that had been most affected by the pandemic, most notably in the employers (4.6%) and domestic workers (3.9%) categories. In contrast, own-account and unpaid family work declined (-0.3% and -6.0%, respectively). Own-account work decreased most in Costa Rica, Ecuador and Paraguay, while it increased in Chile, Mexico and Colombia.

Owing to improved job creation in the wage employment category, the regional labour market recorded a fall in informal employment rates in the first half of 2023. As shown in figure I.8, of the eight countries for which data are available, only Argentina and Ecuador recorded increased informal

employment rates relative to the first half of 2022. In the rest of the countries, the informality rate declined, in particular in Costa Rica, Paraguay and Colombia. Trends in informality rates varied according to sex: the rate for men increased in Ecuador alone, while the rate for women increased in four countries.

Figure I.8

Latin America and the Caribbean (8 countries): year-on-year variation in the informal employment rate, by sex, first half of 2023
(Percentage points)



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

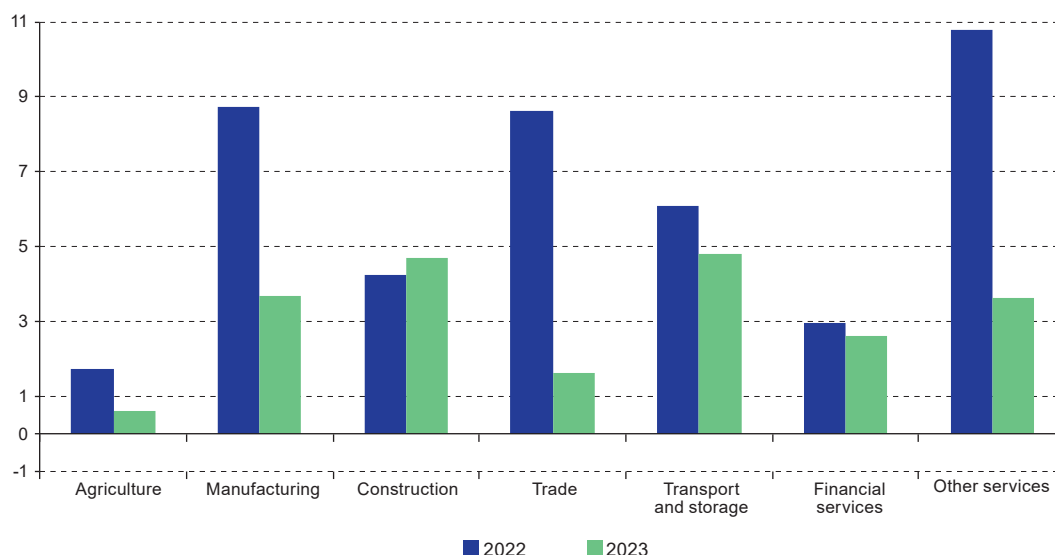
C. Job creation slowed in the manufacturing sector and in the tertiary sectors that account for the bulk of new jobs

In the first half of 2023, employment growth continued in the manufacturing sector and the bulk of new jobs remained concentrated in the services sectors, but job creation waned in both instances. Job growth in the manufacturing sector has been on the upswing since 2021, and that remained the case in the first half of 2023 (see figure I.9), when the sector recorded average year-on-year growth of 3.7%. Manufacturing job growth was particularly pronounced in Argentina, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Strong growth was also recorded in the construction sector (4.7%) and the transport sector (4.8%) relative to 2022. Construction sector growth was highest in Ecuador, Costa Rica and Argentina, and transport sector growth was highest in Mexico, Brazil and Ecuador.

Figure I.9

Latin America and the Caribbean (8 countries):^a median year-on-year variation in employment, by sector, first half of 2022 and first half of 2023

(Percentages)



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

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

Employment increased by around 3% in the other services and financial services sectors. Job growth was more moderate in the trade and agricultural sectors (1.6% and 0.6%, respectively). Job creation slowed considerably year-on-year in the trade sector, which accounts for nearly one fifth of total employment. While job growth in the trade sector increased substantially in the first half of 2023 in Argentina, Mexico and Colombia, it decreased in other countries, in particular Ecuador and the Dominican Republic.

D. Real minimum wages rose amid cooling inflation, but trends in real average wages were mixed

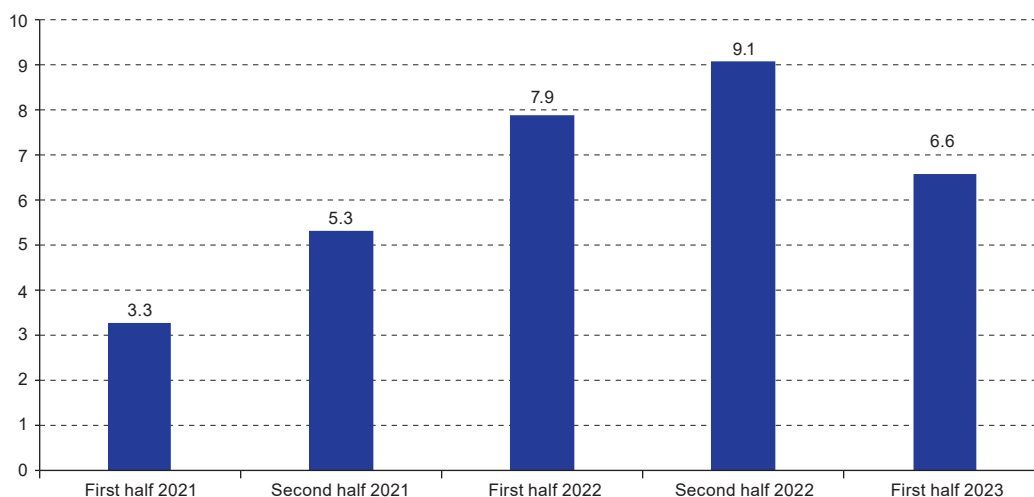
Inflation ramped up beginning in the first half of 2021, owing to a variety of factors affecting the majority of the countries of the region, both external (rising global fuel and food prices) and internal (increased aggregate demand in 2021) (ECLAC/ILO, 2022). However, in the first half of 2023, regional inflation fell for the first time in two and a half years, to around 6.6% (see figure I.10).

Cooling inflation had an equivocal impact on real average wages. Of the 11 countries for which data are available, 7 recorded a contraction and 4 recorded an increase in real average wages in the first half of 2023 (see figure I.11). The largest increases were in Brazil (6.7%), Mexico (4.2%) and Peru (3.7%), while the greatest declines were in Nicaragua (-2.9%), El Salvador (-2.8%) and Argentina (-1.9%).

Figure I.10

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a year-on-year variation in median regional inflation, first half of 2021–first half of 2023

(Percentages)



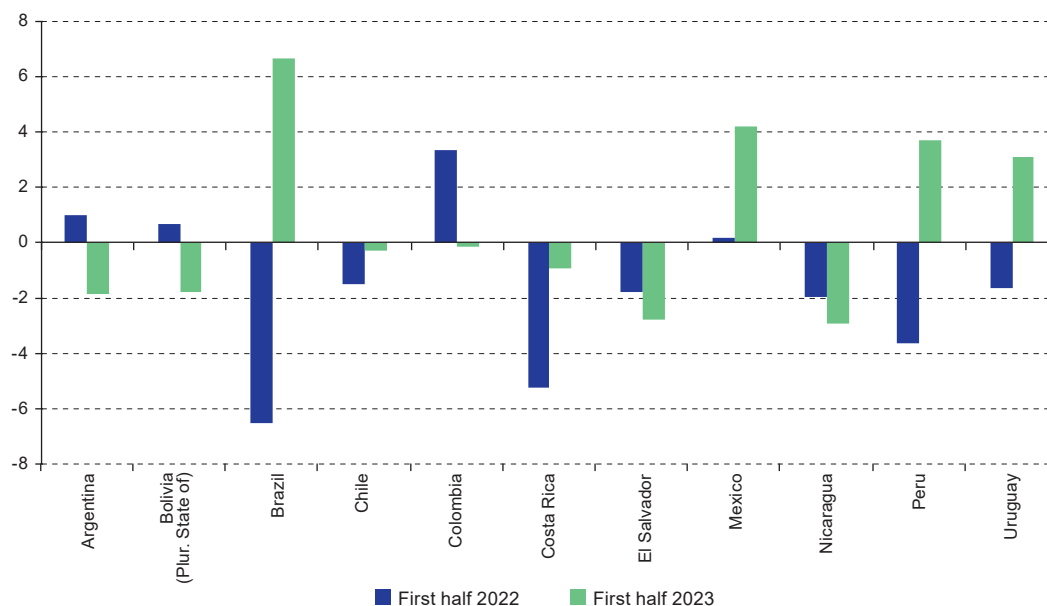
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

Figure I.11

Latin America and the Caribbean (11 countries): year-on-year variation in real average wages, first half of 2022 and first half of 2023

(Percentages)

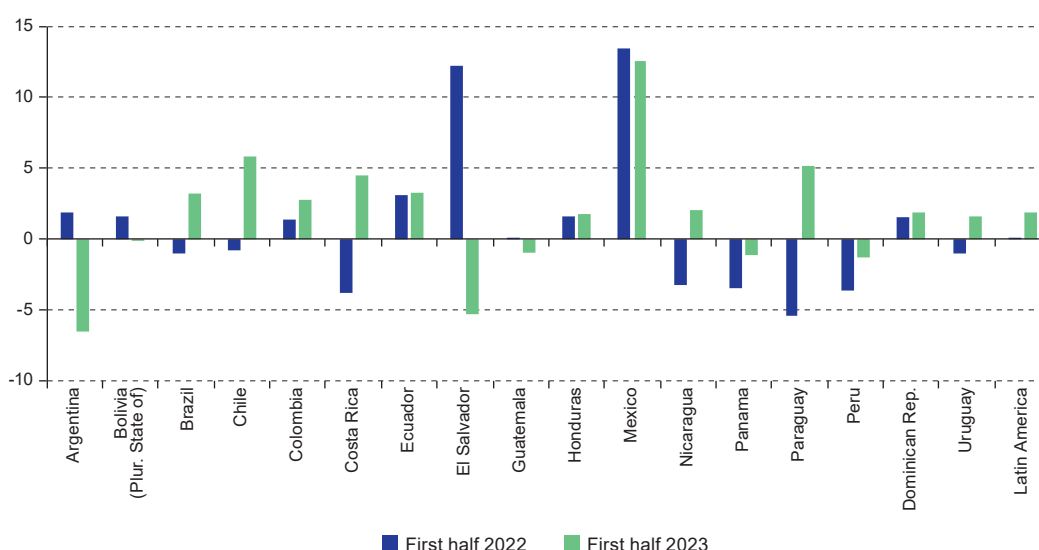


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

However, where the effect of easing inflation was seen most directly was in the overall increase in the region's real minimum wages. As shown in figure I.12, unlike in the first half of 2022, when real minimum wages fell in 8 of the 17 selected countries, they increased in 11 countries in the first half of 2023. Mexico, which continued to implement its policy of significant minimum wage adjustments, led the region with 12.6% growth in real minimum wages. There was also strong growth in Chile (5.9%), Paraguay (5.1%) and Costa Rica (4.5%), while growth did not exceed 3.3% in the rest of these countries. Among the six countries in which real minimum wages fell, Argentina and El Salvador registered the greatest declines (6.5% and 5.3%, respectively); the rest registered declines of less than 2%.

Figure I.12

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries): year-on-year variation in real minimum wages, first half of 2022 and first half of 2023
(Percentages)



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

E. Outlook

After two years of strong post-pandemic recovery, labour markets weakened in the first quarter of 2023 amid an economic slowdown. Growth in the regional employment rate flagged and the participation rate declined. The participation rate has yet to regain pre-pandemic levels, representing a major challenge for social and labour policy. Notably, the participation rate remained stagnant among women and contracted among men. The unemployment rate, however, continued to fall for both men and women. Wage employment creation led to a reduction in informality rates, and lower rates of inflation improved real minimum wages, although real average wages fell in most of the countries for which data are available. Notwithstanding the positive signs, the impact of the regional economic slowdown will likely intensify, in particular in the second half of 2023. In Latin America and the Caribbean, economic growth is projected at 2.2% in 2023 and 1.9% in 2024 (ECLAC, 2023), which will put a damper on rising employment rates and on wage and formal employment. However, trends in the composition of employment are likely to lead to improvements in non-wage-earning and service categories.

In light of the above, and taking into account shifting inflationary trends, the labour policy challenges of the present closely resemble those of the pre-pandemic era. Between 2015 and 2019, annual economic growth in the region averaged less than 2%, which limited the capacity for job creation and exacerbated both labour informality and the gender and age gaps. Now, firms and households have to contend with greater restrictions and uncertainty and tighter fiscal space for implementing active policy measures. Thus, in the years following the pandemic, renewed efforts are needed to close existing gaps (e.g. participation rates), returning to pre-pandemic levels, and strengthen policies that facilitate and foster the creation of formal jobs, prioritizing access for the most vulnerable groups, such as women and young people.

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II. Young people in Latin America and the Caribbean: challenges and opportunities for the redistribution of care work

Introduction

As has been discussed extensively in the literature, the current social organization of care obstructs women's participation in the labour market and diminishes the quality of their employment (ECLAC, 2019a, 2022e; ECLAC/ILO, 2019). The Regional Gender Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean has defined the sexual division of labour as one of the four structural challenges of gender inequality.¹ The corresponding gender gaps are discernible from youth onwards and intersect with inequalities based on class, ethnicity, race and territory, among others (Abramo and others, 2021; ECLAC, 2022a; Collins and others, 2022; Dias and Vasconcelos, 2020; Gebel, 2015; United Nations, 2023; ILO, 2022a; UNICEF, 2023; Yeung and Yang, 2020).

Another structural challenge of gender inequality in the region concerns cultural patterns, in which issues such as adolescent maternity,² early union and adolescent marriage³ reinforce the sexual division of labour. This results in girls, adolescent and young women spending large amounts of time in care-giving and other unpaid work. This is particularly pronounced among women from lower-income households, women living in rural areas, and Indigenous and Afrodescendent women, which can further restrict participation by young women in paid work and in the educational system.⁴

In this context, a large proportion of young people are not in the labour market, nor studying or in training.⁵ In addition to the individual and social costs, and those of economic performance (loss of individual incomes and tax revenues, higher government spending and reduced economic output), the failure to complete studies and to enter the labour market on an adequate basis in youth has consequences that last throughout their working lives (ECLAC/ILO, 2020). This translates into lower wages and more frequent episodes of unemployment in the future (Yeung and Yang, 2020). Studies that have estimated this impact for the region converge on the existence of a clear gender gap that starts at early ages and affects the expected transitions between the educational system and vocational training and labour market entry. Depending on the criteria used,⁶ the proportion of women who are not in paid employment or studying is twice or three times that of men (ECLAC, 2019b, 2022d; Morales and Van Hemelryck, 2022; ILO, 2022b).

In Latin America, women aged 15–29 who are not in education or employment are those who spend the most time on unpaid work: between 40 and 75 hours per week depending on the country (while young men in this same condition spend between 9 and 26 hours per week in this way)

¹ The Regional Gender Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean is a roadmap for implementing public policies that contribute to overcoming the structural challenges of gender inequality, in synergy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

² Adolescent fertility in Latin America and the Caribbean, estimated at 61.3 live births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 in 2015–2020, is the second highest among the world's regions after Africa; and it has fallen by much less than total fertility (ECLAC, 2019c).

³ One in five girls or adolescents are married or in union before they are 18 years old (ECLAC, 2023a).

⁴ See ECLAC, 2022b.

⁵ Feminist economics criticizes the concept of “not in education, employment or training”, because it ignores the fact that many of the women included in this category are engaged mainly in unpaid work at home and in the community, which diminishes their access to education and paid employment.

⁶ The criteria in question relate to the age groups considered, the databases used and the methodologies of analysis.

(ECLAC, 2017, 2022d). This large disparity in the time spent on unpaid care work during youth shows how early in life the sexual division of labour takes root. This restricts the time women have available for vocational training, paid work, self-care and personal life.

The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant job losses. Young people experienced the steepest decline in employment, and those with the least education were the hardest hit. In the case of young women, this loss exacerbated an already low employment rate, which dropped from 29% in the second quarter of 2019 to 20% a year later (Espejo and others, 2023; ECLAC/ILO, 2020). In addition, school closures increased the risk of school dropout for girls and adolescents, especially in lower-income or rural households. Access to distance education by women and girls was also limited by their increased participation in domestic and care work, compounded by the lack of suitable infrastructure (ECLAC, 2022c). Lockdown and school closure, together with the longer time people were at home, added significantly to the burdens of domestic and care work. As a result, many young women were relegated exclusively to these tasks (Espejo and others, 2023; Kabeer Razavi and Y. van der Meulen 2021; Phillips and others, 2020; ECLAC/ILO 2020).

In the post-pandemic period, youth employment recovered faster than that of adults, although much of that recovery was through informal jobs (ILO, 2022a). The data for 2022 show that the gaps in participation and employment rates between men and women, and also between the young and adult population, are slightly narrower than in 2019, the last year before the pandemic (ECLAC/ILO, 2023). This slight narrowing of gaps also occurred specifically between young women and men.

However, the gaps in labour participation remain wide and stand in contrast to the educational achievements of women in the region in terms of access, permanency and completion of studies. In 2020, 67.4% of women aged 20–24 in 18 Latin American countries had completed secondary education, compared to 60.9% of men in the same age group. Moreover, the proportion of women accessing and completing higher education has, on average, exceeded that of men. This suggests that the challenges that women face in the labour market are not the result of differences in schooling (ECLAC, 2022c). The main gender inequalities in education start at an early school stage and are subsequently manifested in the choice of fields of study and development in tertiary, technical and vocational education. Women tend to be concentrated in the fields of education, health, social sciences and humanities, but participate much less in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers (ECLAC, 2022c; Sevilla, 2021). This educational segregation translates into a clear occupational divide, which results in women working in lower-paid jobs, many of which are associated with caregiving tasks (ECLAC, 2019a; ECLAC/ILO, 2022).

New technological devices provide an opportunity to close the gaps by creating new jobs linked to highly specialized occupations that respond to the increasing technological integration. In this situation, it is essential to encourage young women to participate in areas that benefit from digitalization and innovation, and thus overcome the existing segregation. At the same time, recent demographic changes open up opportunities to strengthen the care sector in the labour market. This could generate new jobs and reduce household reliance on women's unpaid work. It is also necessary to recognize and value the work in care economies, by understanding this as an opportunity to create decent employment. In addition, it is essential to promote more egalitarian participation between the genders and cease to view these activities basically as women's work.

In view of the above, this section addresses the dynamics that connect the labour market with the work needed for social reproduction, which, despite being unpaid, sustains both life and economies. It is essential to integrate care policies with women's labour and digital inclusion; and

here the region has the opportunity to redefine the path towards sustainable development, placing the care of people and the planet at the centre (ECLAC, 2022a; ILO, 2023b). The concept of the care society proposed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is nurtured by the contributions made by the feminist economy and movements, and by the “good living” paradigm proposed by the region’s Indigenous and Afrodescendent Peoples, together with multilateral and constructive social dialogue (employers and unions) with governments.⁷

Lastly, it is striking that few countries in the region have ratified the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Ratification and implementation of these instruments would enable progress to be made on key issues, such as the formal recognition of maternity leave, in line with international standards (ILO, 2022c).

A. The unequal labour market participation of young women and men⁸

In recent years, the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced a slowdown and reversal in their patterns of growth. Although labour participation rates have regained pre-pandemic levels, the pace of this recovery seems to have stalled at levels that are far from the desired outcome, marked by the wide gender gaps and high levels of informality that characterize the region (ECLAC, 2023c; ECLAC/ILO, 2022). Moreover, entering the labour market in a period of crisis or low growth can have a negative impact on young people’s occupational prospects (von Wachter, 2020). In these scenarios, unemployment affects women disproportionately (ECLAC, 2022a; Espejo and others, 2023; Viollaz and others, 2022). This situation is particularly worrisome for young people (especially women) who are entering the labour market for the first time, and whose career development can be greatly affected by precarious conditions at the outset.

Although the lower labour participation rates of young people compared to those aged 30–60 reflects their presence in the education system, young people who participate in the labour market have higher unemployment rates (see figure II.1). In addition to being a structural feature of the region, this employment panorama among young people (aged 15–29) displays specific features that vary according to the economic upswings and downswings of the countries in question.

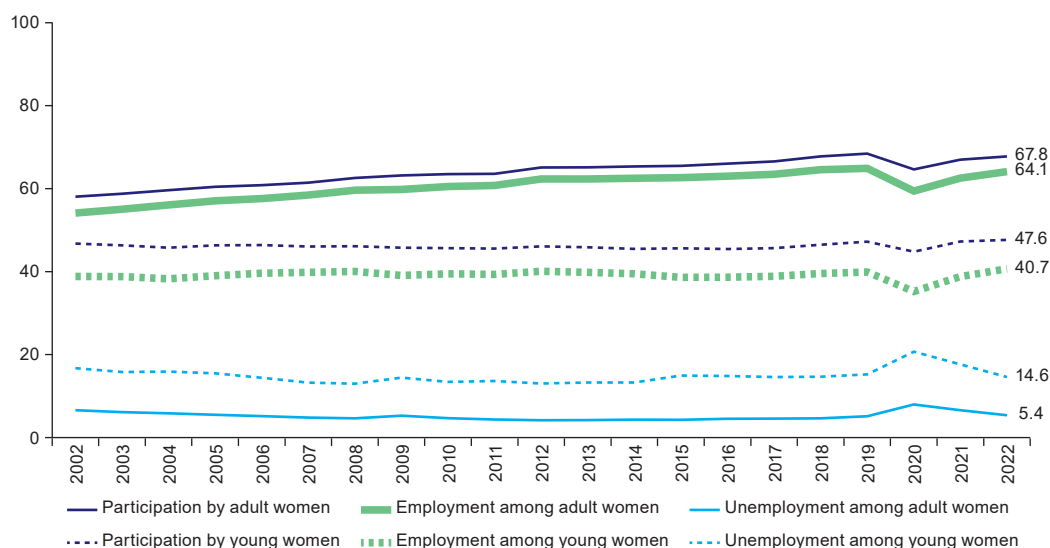
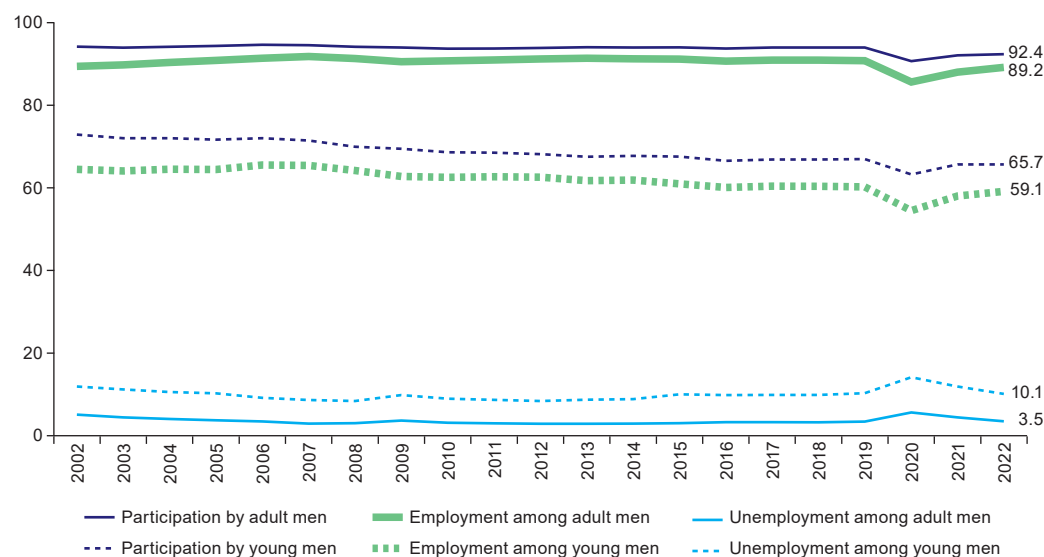
In 2002–2012, the participation rate dropped by 5 percentage points in the case of young men, but by about 1 percentage point among women. Slight differences in employment and unemployment were also observed during this period. While the employment rate rose by 1 percentage point for young women and fell by 2 points for young men, unemployment dropped by 4 percentage points and 3 points, respectively.

⁷ The Buenos Aires Commitment, agreed upon by ECLAC member States and adopted at the fifteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, incorporates the notion of the care society into the Regional Gender Agenda (ECLAC, 2023b).

⁸ The term “young people” as used in this chapter means persons aged 15–29.

Figure II.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (18 countries): a participation, employment and unemployment rates, young people aged 15–29 and adults aged 30–60, simple average, 2002–2022
(Percentages)

A. Women**B. Men**

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of national sources available in the ILOSTAT database and Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay. The data for Jamaica are available since 2008 and those for Trinidad and Tobago since 2010.

Subsequently, between 2012 and 2022, young women's participation rate rose by 2 percentage points while the rate for young men fell by the same amount. At the same time, women's employment rate rose by 1 percentage point, while that of men fell by 3 points, reflecting two factors. Firstly, the period prior to the social and health crisis (2012–2019) is one of declining and flatlining participation, where the employment rate of young women remained stalled at around 39%, while that of young men decreased by 2 percentage points. In contrast, the unemployment rate rose by about 2 percentage points for young women and young men alike. Secondly, the magnitude of the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the employment of young people and women is clearly discernible. Several studies (Espejo and others, 2023; ECLAC/ILO, 2022) note that, although the unemployment rate rose across the board, it affected young people and especially women the most. During the second and third quarters of 2020, almost one out of every three young women was unemployed. Then, in the period of recovery from the pandemic, between 2020 and 2022, participation rates increased, leading to a rise of 5 percentage points in the employment rate for young women and young men alike, and a reduction in unemployment of 6 percentage points for young women and 4 points for young men. Although the last two years signal a recovery, the drop in unemployment is due, in part, to the time taken for participation rates to regain their pre-pandemic levels.

In general, youth participation and employment rates are lower than those of adults. In addition, significant gender gaps of around 18 percentage points persist in participation and employment rates. Young women have higher unemployment rates and lower rates of employment than their male counterparts. These disparities reflect the distribution of unpaid work between men and women. Due to the interrelationship between the employment and unpaid work subsystems, a lower labour participation rate for women may mean—in addition to an insufficient supply of jobs—that domestic and family work takes up a large proportion of individual time (Carrasco and Mayordomo, 2000).

In short, during the last two decades young women's employment rates have flatlined, displaying relatively similar levels in 2002, 2019 and 2022. Among adult women, on the other hand, this indicator has been trending up, with the exception of 2020, and has risen by approximately 10 percentage points. The employment rate among young men has been falling, and the 2022 rate is lower than that of 2002, while for adult men it remains broadly constant. The magnitude of the differences in these rates between young and adult men and women reveals a structural and persistent gender gap.

The social benefits for countries with demographic dividends depend on the circumstances and the support provided in the transition to the labour market. In Latin America, while young women account for 36% of the female working-age population, the equivalent male figure is 38% (see figure II.2). There are also similarities and differences in the composition of the main activities undertaken by young people. The distribution is relatively similar among men and women who only study, and also among those who combine training with employment.⁹

The largest gender differences are found among those not in education or paid employment, which reflects the time they have available, although there are differences between countries. In the region, 33% of young women and 50% of young men only participate in the labour market. In addition, 18.1 million young women (28%) and 8.7 million young men (14%) are not in paid work or in educational activities. This panorama exhibits a number of changes for women and trends that are maintained in the case of men. According to estimates reported by ECLAC (2019b), 12% of young men and 36% of young women, aged 15–29, were not in paid employment or educational activities in 2002, compared to 12% and 31%, respectively in 2016.

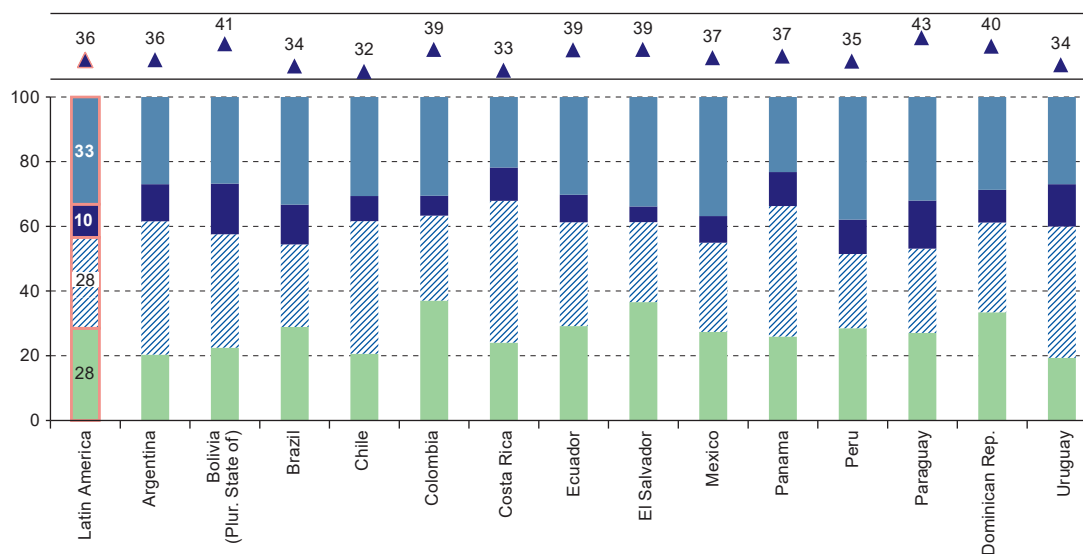
⁹ Nonetheless, the efforts involved in combining paid and educational activities, and the adverse effects that excessive work time may have on dedication to studies should also be considered (ECLAC/ILO, 2017).

Figure II.2

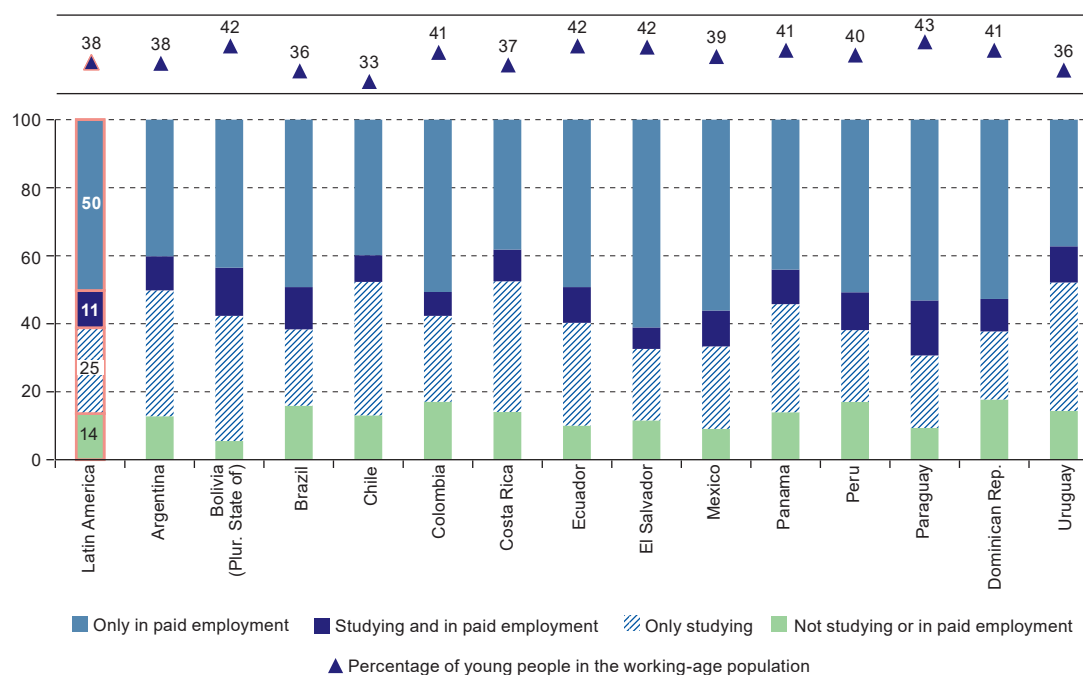
Latin America (14 countries): young people in the working-age population and composition of the activity of young people aged 15–29, 2022

(Percentages)

A. Women



B. Men



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

Note: The upper part of the graph shows the proportion of young people (aged 15–29) in the working-age population, defined as the population aged 15–60. The figures for Latin America refer to the weighted average of the countries. The data for Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia correspond to 2021.

B. Differences in labour participation and unpaid work among young men and women

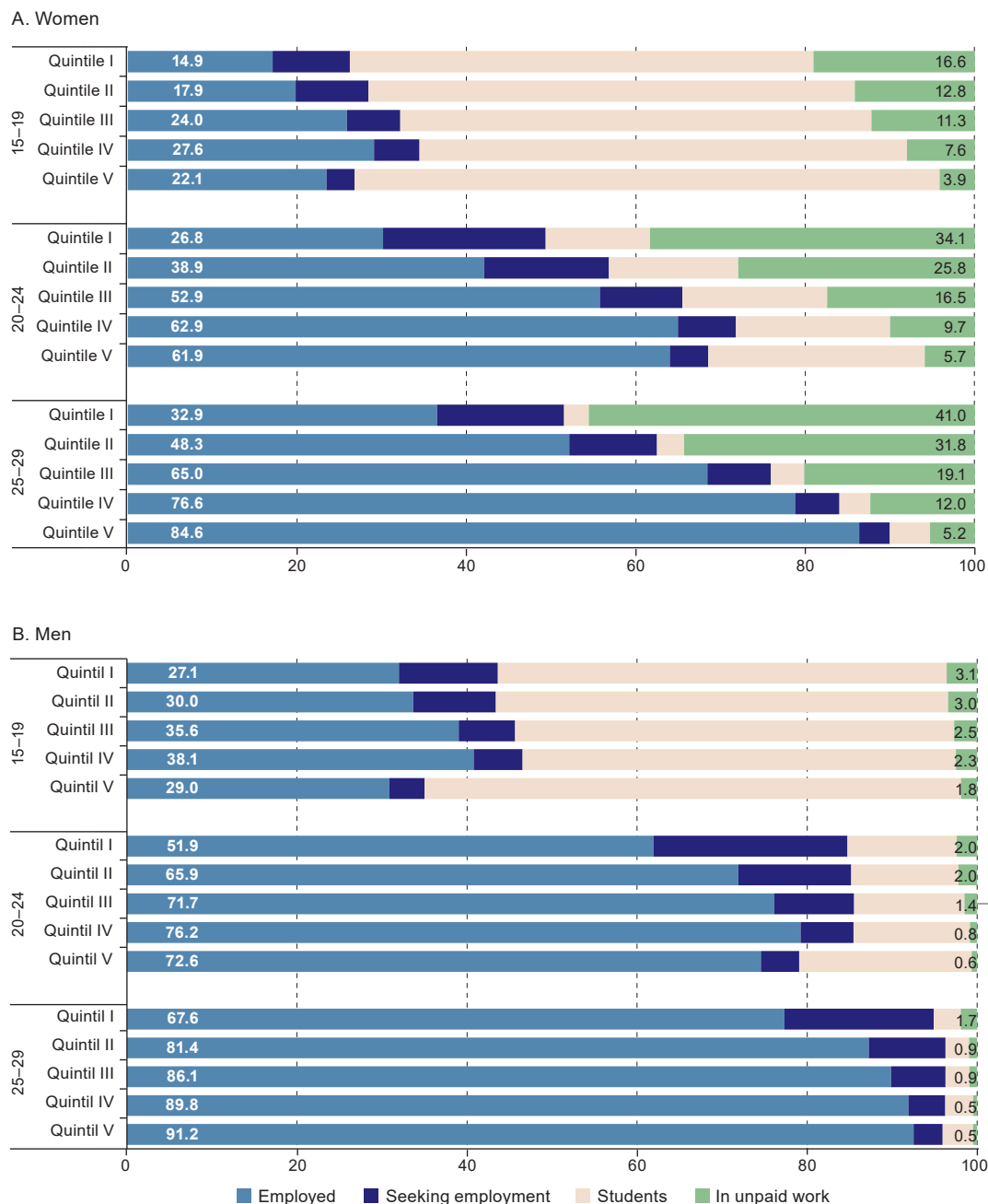
To analyse the dynamics and composition of the youth labour market from a gender perspective, it is necessary to consider participation comprehensively, through the relationship between paid and unpaid work, by studying the distribution of domestic and care work between young men and women (Abramo and others, 2021; Miranda and Arancibia, 2017). It is important to consider the impact that time dedicated to care-giving has on adolescent and young women's participation in paid or educational activities, as well as the factors that influence development of their full autonomy.

The sexual division of labour, which affects women disproportionately, is one of the main obstacles to their inclusion in the labour market and leads to disparities in their participation and opportunities to access decent work throughout their lives. In particular, early marriage and union, along with adolescent pregnancy, can have major consequences for the educational pathways and labour market engagement of girls and young women at a key stage in their transition to adulthood. This is related directly to the greater burden of unpaid care work assumed by married or unmarried girls and adolescents, who spend the equivalent of a working day (more than 40 hours per week) dedicated to such tasks in some countries (ECLAC, 2022b). According to Abramo and others, (2021), in Latin America the gender gap in the labour market is greater among young women who are mothers than among those who are not. Moreover, a global survey conducted by ILO and analysed by Elder and Kring (2016) showed that, on average, less than half of young women who are mothers are employed in the labour market, compared to over 80% of young men who are fathers. The study also found that approximately 40% of young women in Latin America who were outside the labour market cited pregnancy or family care needs as the reason. More than 80% of those who were also not in school expressed the desire to enter (or re-enter) the labour market (Elder and Kring, 2016). The above should be complemented by an intersectional approach to the careers of young women and the fact that they are exclusively engaged in unpaid work. Días and Vasconcelos (2020) consider the influence of traditional gender and family roles on the transition to adulthood, and highlight the strong link between motherhood and early unions, and being outside the educational system and the labour market in Brazil.¹⁰ The experience of maternity had a differential effect on non-white young women from poor backgrounds, who represent the majority of people in this condition. The relationship between domestic and care work and the reproduction of inequalities and poverty is particularly important, since the unemployment rate and the proportion of people who are neither in the labour market nor engaged in educational activities in the region rises by as much as threefold in lower-income households (Camarano and Kanso, 2012; ECLAC, 2022a; Gontero, 2023). The unemployment rate among young people decreases as income rises; and it becomes more visible after the age of 20 (see figure II.3).

¹⁰ The study, conducted with the National Household Survey (PNAD) 2014, notes that many young women in this condition were identified as "wives", based on their relationship with the reference person in the household. Meanwhile, young men who were not participating in employment or education were identified mostly as "sons" of the household reference person.

Figure II.3

Latin America (14 countries):^a main activity of young people aged 15–29, by income quintile and age group, weighted average, 2022
(Percentages)



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

Note: Excludes persons with disabilities, retirees, pensioners and other inactive persons.

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay. The data for Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia refer to 2021.

Although the proportion of women whose main activity is unpaid work exceeds that of men in households generally (16.1% compared to 1.6%, on average), gender inequalities are greater in the lower income groups, considering the different stages of youth. While 4 out of 10 women aged 25–29 in the first income quintile report domestic and care work as their main activity (34.1% of women aged 20–24 and 16.6% of adolescent women), the equivalent figures are below 6% in all of these age groups in the highest income quintile. In the case of adolescent girls under 18, this situation coincides with the greater prevalence of child marriages and unions in households in the poorest quintiles (ECLAC, 2022b). This harmful practice reproduces the sexual division of labour at an early age and places a heavy burden of domestic and care work on young girls and adolescent women who are married or in unions. In general, more than 60% of all men report their main activity as employment in the labour market (except in the lowest quintile), which is much higher than the equivalent figure for women. In the case of young women, socioeconomic differences are a decisive factor in the chance of entering the labour market; and women from higher income quintiles experience higher rates of employment. This is explained by a combination of factors, among which deficiencies in the coverage and quality of policies, compounded by the shortage of equipment, infrastructure, public care and transportation services, are determining factors, since higher-income households can access these services through the market (ECLAC, 2022a).

Barriers to labour market entry become crystal-clear when analysing the labour participation of women who are caring for children. Raising children from birth to five years of age demands a large amount of time and usually overlaps with the start and consolidation of the woman's educational and employment pathway. In the case of pregnant adolescents, despite the implementation policies and measures to enable them to stay in school, dropout rates for this reason remain high (ECLAC, 2019c). Thus, the unequal social distribution of unpaid work and the lack of comprehensive care systems in most countries of the region¹¹ are reflected in the labour participation rates of women, who, faced with motherhood or childrearing, have to interrupt or postpone their job careers, or else are unable to progress in them.

Among other factors, child care involves dedication of time and resources, which generates a tension between care-giving and a woman's potential inclusion in the labour market. This conflict often turns into a major obstacle to women's inclusion in the labour market and a consequent loss of autonomy and restriction of opportunities.

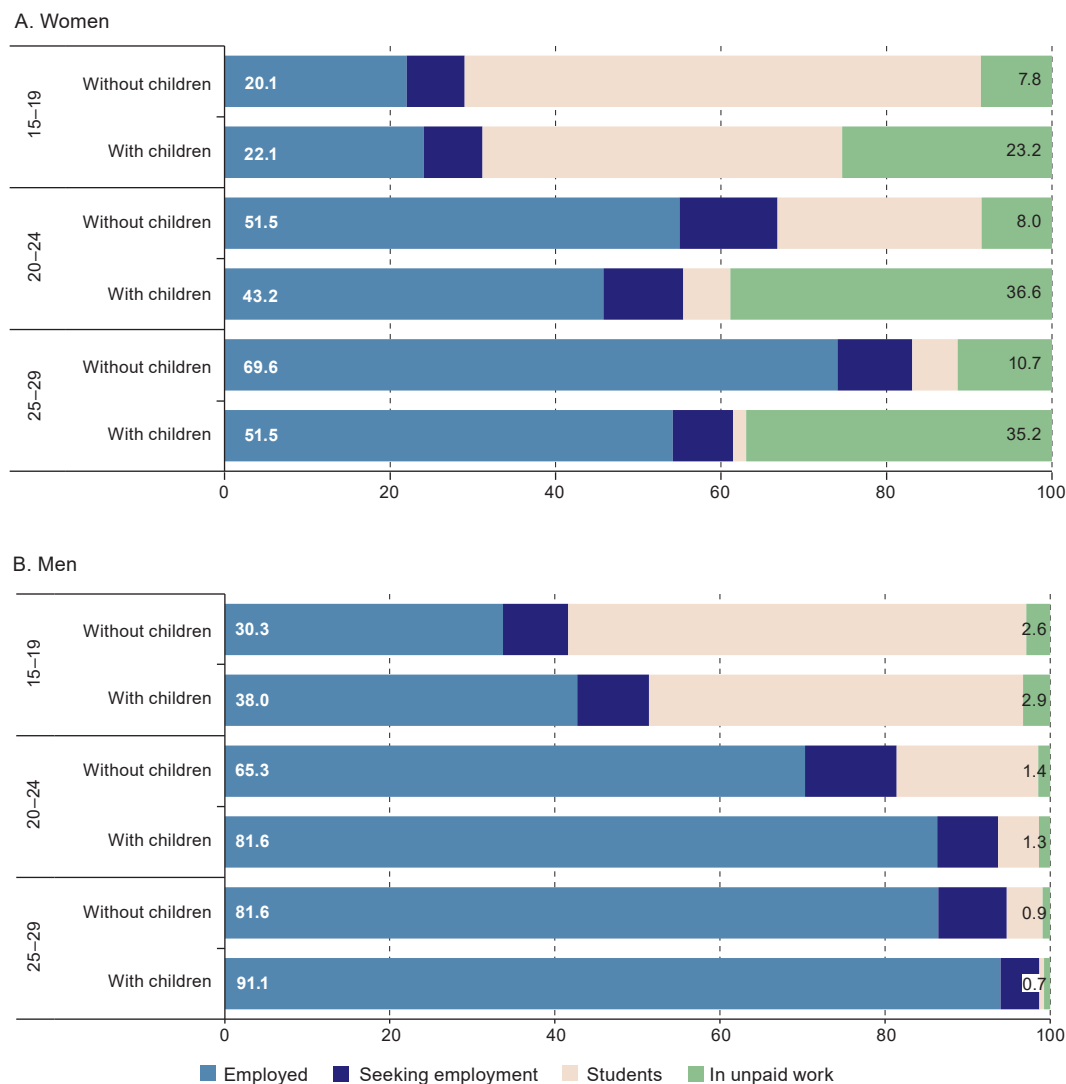
The presence of children under five years of age in the household increases the burden of care and the need for income, which has differential effects on the activities of young women and men. While the presence of children in the household causes young men to increase their labour market activity, young women become more involved in unpaid domestic work, even when they are adolescents and probably have not finished their studies. When there are no children in the household, the percentage of young women aged over 20 who are in the labour market is greater (8.3 percentage points more in the 20–24 age group and 18.1 percentage points more among 25–29 year-olds). Conversely, participation in employment by men between 20 and 24 years of age, without children in the household, is 16.3 percentage points lower than among those who live with children; and in the 25–29 age group this difference is 9.5 percentage points. On the other hand, when there are children in the household, the proportion of young women aged over 20 who are engaged exclusively in unpaid work is double that of women without children in the household. In the case of men, this variable does not seem to affect the time they spend on unpaid work (see figure II.4).

¹¹ Some of the region's countries developed comprehensive care policy proposals in the last decade. Uruguay, for example, has proposed to consolidate a comprehensive care benefits model by creating the National Integrated Care System (SNIC) (ILO, 2022c).

Figure II.4

Latin America (14 countries):^a composition of activities of young people aged 15-29, by presence of children in the household and age group, weighted average, 2022

(Percentages)



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

Note: The expression "With children" refers to the presence of children under 5 years of age in the household. Excludes persons with disabilities, retired persons, pensioners and other inactive persons.

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay. The data for Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia refer to 2021.

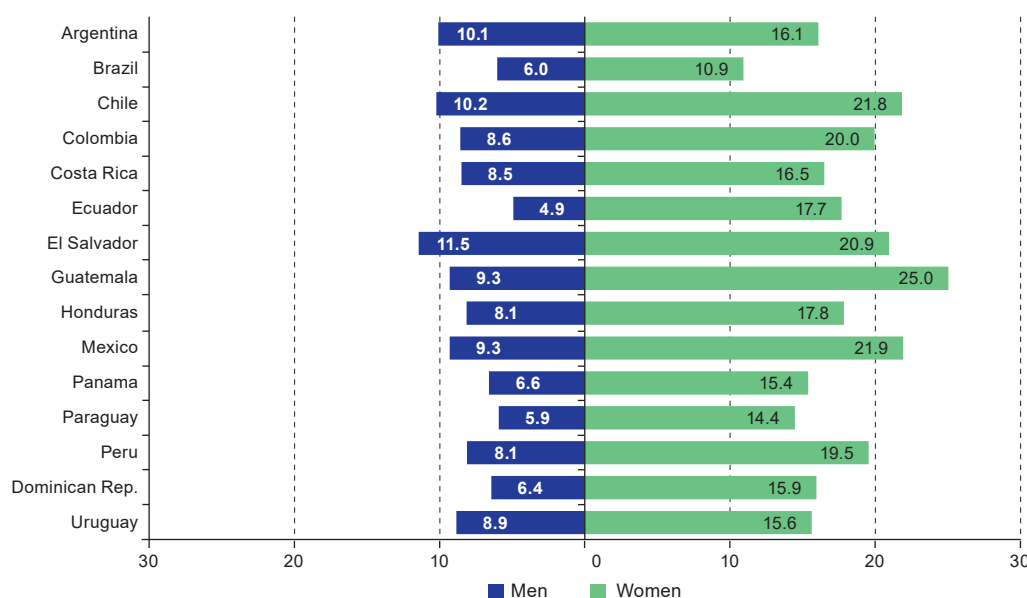
The availability of time thus becomes a key dimension of analysis for understanding gender inequalities, because, as in the case of labour participation, the high prevalence of unpaid domestic and care work tends to exacerbate inequalities in the distribution of time use and leave many women in a situation of time poverty (ECLAC, 2019a).¹² Accordingly, time-use surveys are a valuable input for ascertaining the proportion of time spent on paid and unpaid work, and they reveal significant

¹² Time poverty refers to a situation in which individuals, especially women, have little or no time for rest, leisure and participation in personal and paid activities, or in public life, owing to constant and unpostponable responsibilities, particularly related to unpaid domestic and care work. Time poverty also means reduced capacity to decide how to spend one's time.

differences in the distribution of domestic and care work between young men and women in several Latin American countries. Although the characteristics, periods and methodologies of the statistical surveys differ between countries, so that the information cannot be aggregated, a number of trends can be identified. Young women tend to assume a greater burden of domestic and care work than young men. For example, in countries such as Chile, Guatemala and Mexico, young women spend more than 20% of their time in unpaid work, which severely restricts their ability to participate in the labour market. These figures highlight the persistent gender disparity in the distribution of unpaid work in the region's households, since in no case do young men spend more than 12% of their time on this type of work (see figure II.5). Large segments of the labour market are still organized under the assumption that all of a working person's time is available for labour market activities, thus ignoring the care needs of the population at large (ECLAC, 2022a).

Figure II.5

Latin America (15 countries): time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by young people aged 15–29 (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.4.1), by gender, latest available year (Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from country time-use surveys compiled in "Repository of information on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean" [online] https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2019-10_repositorio_uso_del_tiempo_eng.pdf.

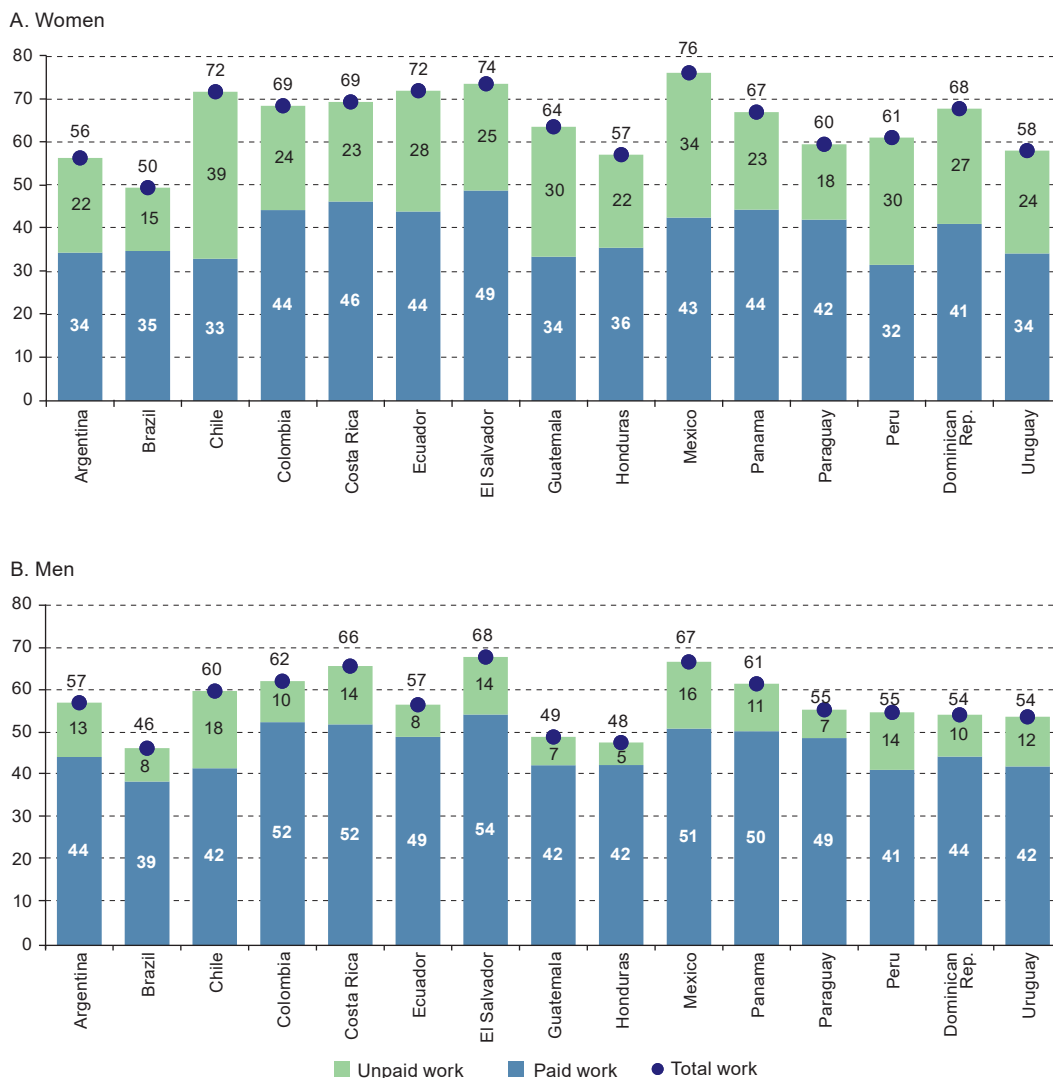
Note: The data refer to 2022 in Costa Rica, Guatemala and Uruguay; to 2021 in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic; to 2019 in Brazil and Mexico; to 2017 in El Salvador; to 2016 in Paraguay; to 2015 in Chile; to 2012 in Ecuador; to 2011 in Panama; to 2010 in Peru; and to 2009 in Honduras. The data for Uruguay are preliminary.

Nonetheless, having a paid job does not guarantee a narrowing of the gaps or a more equal distribution of total working time (see figure II.6). Abramo and others, (2021) show that approximately half of young men (aged 15–24) earn less than the minimum wage, compared to 6 out of 10 women in the same age group. This gender wage gap tends to widen over the working life (Goldin and others, 2017). Early pregnancy is another situation that increases barriers to women's economic autonomy, as it has a direct impact on their educational development, income and labour market participation. A study conducted for six Latin American countries found that, on average, the labour income of women who became mothers during adolescence is 24% lower than that of women who became mothers as adults (UNFPA, 2020).

Figure II.6

Latin America (15 countries): total work time of employed persons aged 15–29, by type of work, latest available year

(Average number of hours per week)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from country time-use surveys compiled in "Repository of information on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean" [online] https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2019-10_repositorio_uso_del_tiempo_eng.pdf.

Note: The data correspond to 2022 in Costa Rica, Guatemala and Uruguay; to 2021 in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic; to 2019 in Brazil and Mexico; to 2017 in El Salvador; to 2016 in Paraguay; to 2015 in Chile; to 2012 in Ecuador; to 2011 in Panama; to 2010 in Peru; and to 2009 in Honduras. The data for Uruguay are preliminary.

At the same time, young women experience longer periods of unemployment and higher rates of underemployment¹³ and part-time employment (Abramo and others, 2021; Elder and Kring, 2016; Gontero, 2023). This distribution is shown in figure II.6, which displays the total workload as the average weekly number of hours of paid and unpaid work for employed young people. Thus, total work time

¹³ The underutilization of the labour force is measured as the proportion of employed persons who worked fewer hours than desired, but are willing and available to work longer.

is similar or higher for women, in some cases exceeding 70 hours of work per week. Although the characteristics of the statistical surveys differ between countries, so that the information cannot be aggregated, there is a clear pattern in the proportion of time that young men and women spend on each type of work. Whereas young men who are employed spend roughly 80% of their time in the labour market, the equivalent figure for employed young women varies from 45% to approximately 70%. In the case of unpaid work, the ratio is reversed and employed women spend up to half of their time on this type of work, compared to about 20% in the case of young men. In terms of paid work, the long hours that young people work on average in the region, particularly in the case of young men, are also a cause for concern. In Latin America, informality and moonlighting are widespread as a subsistence strategy, and long working hours (in addition to commuting time) leave little time available to devote to care (ECLAC, 2022a; ECLAC/ILO, 2022).

C. Gender-based occupational segregation and challenges in social security coverage for young people.

Gender segregation in the labour market is a significant driver of inequality and refers to processes and dynamics of exclusion from sectors, occupations and positions that are more highly valued by the market. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the labour market reproduces the sexual division of labour, as manifested in the overrepresentation of women in occupations of lower productivity, skill and remuneration, as well as in those associated with care (Blofield and Martinez-Franzoni, 2015; ECLAC, 2019a, 2022a; Espino and De Los Santos, 2019). Moreover, in tertiary and technical education, disparities persist in the fields of study chosen: women are concentrated in the areas of education, health, social sciences, arts and humanities, and participate little in STEM careers (ECLAC, 2022c; Sevilla, 2021).

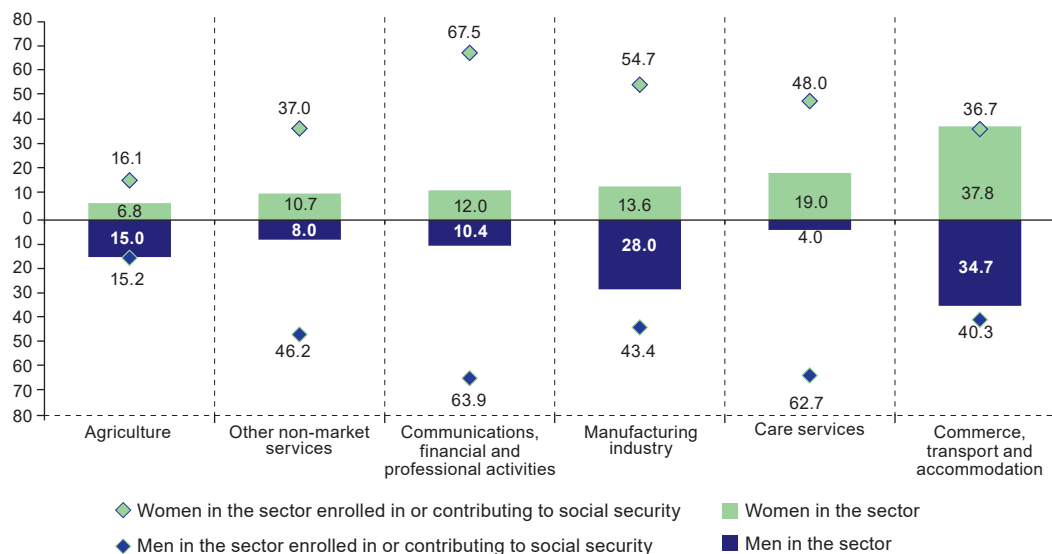
Another structural feature of the region's labour markets is informality, which is accentuated in the case of young people (Gontero, 2023) and restricts access to social protection mechanisms and the guarantees of labour legislation and rights. These include pensions and contributory health insurance, defined working hours, minimum wage, unemployment insurance, paid vacation and weekly rest, paid accident leave and maternity protection, among others.

In this situation, given that the first jobs have an impact on both employment paths and social welfare horizons (ILO, 2019, 2022a), it is important to analyse the composition of young people's employment by major sector of economic activity, and the proportion of employed young people who have labour or social protection in 14 Latin American countries (see figure II.7). Trade, transport and accommodation is the sector that employs the most people, accounting for 38% of women and 35% of men, who also display higher rates of social security contribution. In the agriculture sector, the share of men is 15% (8 percentage points more than that of women), with similarly low levels of contributions (no more than 16% of workers in the sector). Among young people, the heterogeneity in the labour market is reflected in a similar gender distribution in the sectors corresponding to other non-market services and communications, financial and professional activities, albeit with differences in social security contribution rates. The first sector has a smaller proportion of enrolled persons (mainly women), while the second has considerably higher levels compared with the other sectors (except in the case of men in the care sector). In this context, the higher proportion of men contributing in the care sector compared to their low participation rate may reflect access to jobs with greater security in that sector. Conversely, manufacturing industry is highly masculinized, but the proportion of female contributors is larger. The extended care sector employs 19% of young women, but only 48% of them contribute to a social protection system. It should be noted that the care services sector includes paid domestic work in addition to the education and health sectors. All

of these occupations display a high degree of feminization and informality, and hence less access to social security. Considering their diversity, care work and the people who perform it, need to be valued both socially and economically, and the conditions in which it is carried out need to be improved (ECLAC, 2022a; Himmelweit, 2005; ILO, 2018).

Figure II.7

Latin America (14 countries):^a distribution of the employed population aged 15–29 by sector of economic activity and proportion of workers contributing to the social security system, by gender, weighted average, 2022
(Percentages)



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

Note: The sectoral composition of employment is constructed using the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC-4). The economic sectors correspond to the ISIC-4 sections as follows: (i) Industry, which corresponds to sections B (Mining and quarrying), C (Manufacturing), D (Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply), E (Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities), and F (Construction); (ii) Trade, transportation, and accommodation, which corresponds to sections G (Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles), H (Transportation and storage), and I (Accommodation and food service activities); (iii) Communications, financial and professional activities, which corresponds to sections J (Information and communications), K (Financial and insurance activities), L (Real estate activities), M (Professional, scientific and technical activities) and N (Administrative and support service activities); (iv) Care services, which corresponds to sections P (Education), Q (Human health and social work activities) and T (Activities of households as employers); and (v) Other non-market services, which corresponds to sections O (Public administration and defence; compulsory social security), R (Arts, entertainment and recreation) and S (Other service activities).

The social security contribution variable is available for all countries except the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Panama. In these countries, the available variable is social security affiliation.

^a Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay. The data for Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia refer to 2021.

Apart from the cases mentioned above, social security contributions are generally low, which is aligned with the global trend. The international literature shows that casual employment has increased among young people, with high levels of instability and precarious working conditions. This is temporary employment, with no contract or formalization; it is low paid and provides no social security, occupational or health protection, as exemplified by work on digital platforms (Kalleberg, 2020; Yeung and Yang, 2020). In this situation, the care sector, along with activities related to the technological and digital revolution, has the potential to create decent jobs for young people.

D. Young people facing technological transformations and new skills for the future of work

The technological and digital revolution has substantially reshaped the productive structure and the labour market. The transformations in question have involved the automation of tasks, the destruction of certain jobs and the creation of new ones in response to technological integration (ECLAC, 2019a, 2023d; ECLAC/ILO, 2021). However, Latin America displays a mismatch between the demand generated by technological transformation and the supply of skills and capacities. This is reflected in the varied levels of development of infrastructure and factors of production, which hinders the labour market's adaptation to new technologies (ECLAC, 2019a; OECD and others, 2020). The employment effects of digitalization will depend crucially on skills; and it is important that the occupations available to young people integrate digital infrastructure and enable higher-level skills to be developed. Moreover, considering the relationship between the differential male and female employment patterns and the gender-based digital divide (Galperin and Arcidiacono, 2021), it is essential to make sure women participate fully in the burgeoning sectors of the economy, such as the digital industry (Bércovich and Muñoz, 2022, p. 8).

The gender perspective is key to addressing the characteristics needed by the new occupations and their future development, in order to nurture transformations that contribute to achieving equality. The International Labour Organization (2023a) defines skill levels in occupations according to the complexity and range of their tasks and responsibilities, as well as the formal education and training required (see annex II.A1). Occupations requiring a high level of skills and qualifications involve performing technical and specialized tasks, solving complex problems and making decisions. In addition to a high level of literacy, they require extensive factual, technical, procedural and theoretical knowledge in a specialized field. These high-skilled occupations are generally associated with the sectoral diversity of digital transformation and play a key role in driving technological and economic development (OECD and others, 2020). To gain insight into this potential, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Calvino and others, 2018) developed a sectoral taxonomy that was subsequently adapted by ILO (2022a), reflecting the extent to which sectors have become digitalized, based on several dimensions of digital transformation. The objective of this operational tool is to gain a better understanding of the sectoral heterogeneity of the digital transformation and how it relates to various aspects of production.¹⁴ It considers investment in advanced digital assets, the development and embedding of digital technologies into production and operational processes, and the necessary human capital. This does not mean that technology is absent from low digital-intensive sectors, just that it is less significant. These sectors thus provide an opportunity to increase income and productivity through digitalization.

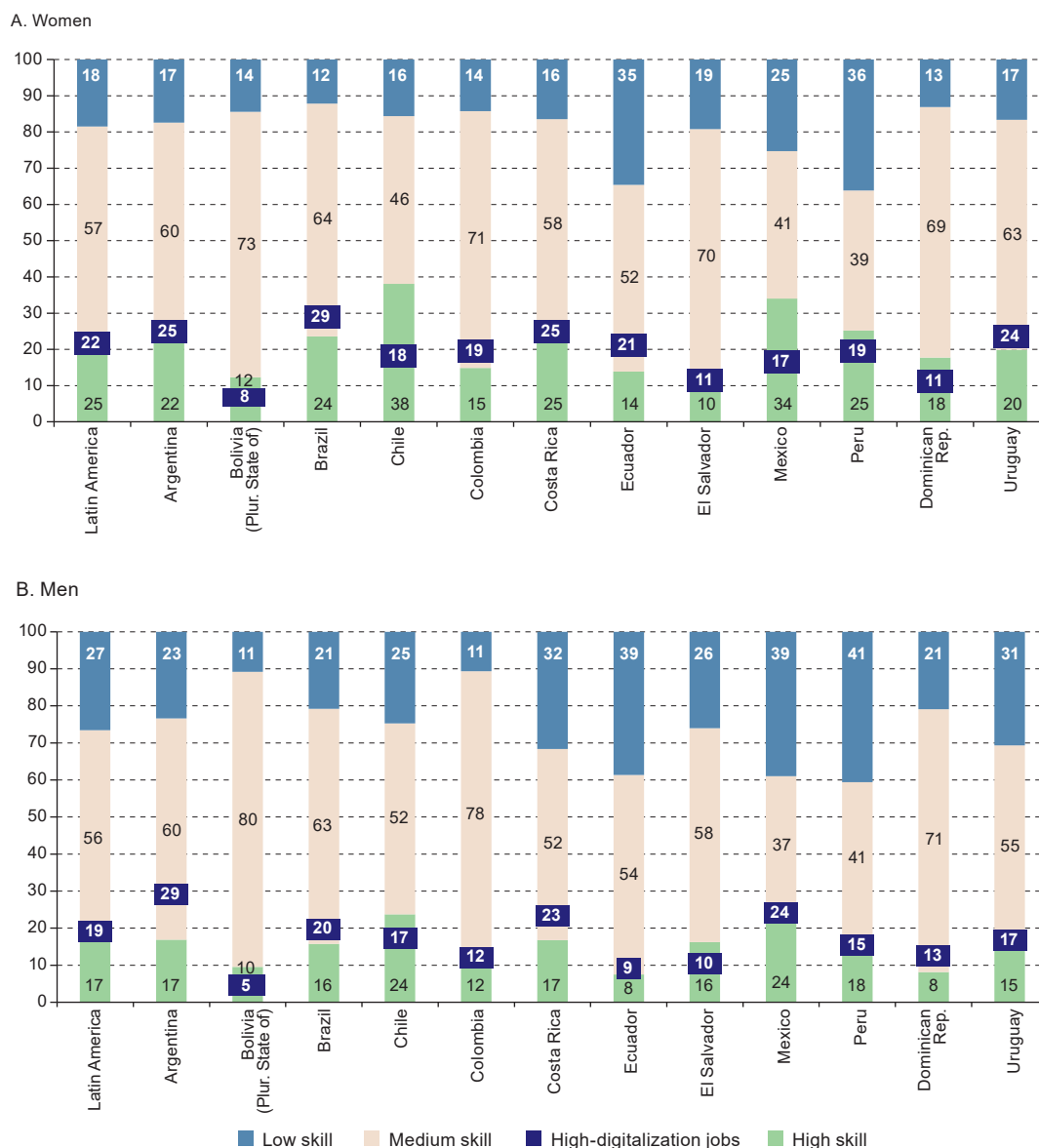
It is crucial to analyse the relationship between the skill levels required in occupations and the proportion of jobs that make intensive use of digitalization in the case of young people. Firstly, the proportion of digitalization-intensive jobs is generally low (it does not exceed 30% of young people's jobs and in several countries it is around 10%) (see figure II.8). In terms of skill levels, most people are employed in medium-skill occupations. There is also a lower prevalence of high-skill occupations, and the proportion of women exceeds that of men, except in El Salvador. However, because of women's lower labour market participation rate, this does not mean that women have a higher absolute number of jobs in these high-skill occupations (ECLAC, 2019a).

¹⁴ While this taxonomy was created from a sample of OECD countries, whose paths may differ from those of developing countries, this study attests to its usefulness since it has been adapted and used for a global analysis (ILO, 2022a). The main classification variable is ISIC, an international standardized classification that encompasses global labour statistics, allowing for comparability and analysis relative to other contexts.

Figure II.8

Latin America (12 countries): young people aged between 15 and 29 working in high digital-intensity sectors, by occupational skill level, 2022

(Percentages)



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

Note: The figures for Latin America refer to the weighted average of the countries. The data for Chile refer to the National Employment Survey (ENE). The data for Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia refer to 2021. Highly digitalized jobs correspond to the following International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) codes: (29-30) Manufacture of motor vehicles and other transport equipment; (61-66) Telecommunications, computer programming, information, financial and insurance services; (69-82) Legal, accounting, consultancy, management, professional, scientific and technical activities, among others; (94-96) Activities of membership organizations, repair of computers, and personal and household goods, and other personal service activities. The classification by skill level is based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 08), for which the details are included in Annex II.A1.

The national patterns observed between the skill levels of occupations and their digitalization reinforce the greater diversity of the region's labour markets, in a dynamic of widespread low productivity. In some cases, countries with a larger number of women in high-skill jobs display higher levels of digitalization, but have a gender gap in this indicator. This gap is to the detriment of both young women (smaller in Argentina and more pronounced in Mexico) and young men (Brazil). Other countries, such as Chile, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic, also have a larger number of women in high-skill occupations, but without a gender gap in digitalization-intensive occupations. Lastly, countries such as Colombia, El Salvador, Peru and Uruguay, and, to a lesser extent, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, have relatively fewer young people in digitalization-intensive occupations. Only in the first country is there no gap, while in the others the disparity tends to favour women. These countries also have fewer people working in high-skill sectors.

Technological transformations will have far-reaching consequences for the dynamics of employment and its characteristics, the skills required and its forms of organization. However, as the data show, few young people are engaged in jobs related to digitalization and high skills. Both elements are important for individuals to develop fully in the labour market, and also for the region's economic and social development. To achieve a sustainable future, it is essential to ensure young people's access to these high-skill, digitalization-intensive occupations, addressing both digital and occupational gender gaps. Promoting youth participation in this field would minimize risks in a stalling economy and adapt to permanent changes in the labour market. This will be impossible without addressing economic and time availability barriers, as well as care responsibilities that continue to restrict the economic autonomy of young women.

E. Opportunities and challenges for the labour market inclusion of young people

The region faces a cascading crisis that threatens to intensify gender inequalities throughout people's life cycle. Although labour participation rates have recovered recently, the region continues to display wide disparities between youth and adults and between women and men. These gaps reinforce structural inequalities that, exacerbated by the care, energy and food crises, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, threaten the sustainability of life. This inequality, rooted in the regional production matrix and labour market, hinders development and the eradication of poverty. In this context, entry into the labour market during periods of crisis can have lasting negative effects on young people's employment trajectories. These challenges are even more pronounced for young women, who assume a much higher proportion of domestic and care work. The current context has highlighted both the centrality of care in the economies and the need to recognize life-reproducing activities outside the labour market. This calls for a broader approach to economics and policy that recognizes interdependence and promotes well-being and sustainability.

The sexual division of labour and the social organization of care perpetuate gender inequalities among young people, restricting autonomy and progress towards sustainable development in the region. Compounding this is the increased demand for care, which is exacerbated by population ageing, changing epidemiological trends and the impacts of climate change. All of this poses a major obstacle to women's inclusion in the labour market, since gender gaps are more pronounced among those who only work for pay and those who are outside the educational and labour domains. The presence of children under five years of age in the household intensifies the burden of care

and the need for income. While young men with children at home are mostly involved in paid work, young women in the same situation tend to engage mainly in unpaid activities. This is particularly grave considering the high prevalence of teenage motherhood, early unions and forced marriages in the region, which have a significant impact on low-income households. In such households, young women tend to experience higher rates of unemployment and engage exclusively in unpaid domestic and care work. It is essential to design universal social protection systems that do not depend exclusively on a person's employment record and are combined with gender-focused care systems that provide opportunities for all young people, in terms of access to the education system and at the start of their working lives.

There are also significant gender gaps in terms of total workload and time available. In the region, young women spend up to 20% of their time in unpaid work, while young men seldom devote more than 10% to these activities. In addition to limiting young women's ability to participate in paid work, the high prevalence of unpaid work in the home generates time poverty among those who do participate. The labour market does not consider the care needs of the population and generally operates under the assumption that working people have unlimited time available. Although young women spend a similar total amount of time on work, or even more, than young men, the proportions of time devoted to paid and unpaid work differ between the two. Long working hours and informality in the region's labour market leave little time for care-giving and pose additional challenges in terms of work/life balance. In addition, low rates of affiliation and contribution to social security, and increasing job insecurity, are worrying trends in the youth labour market.

The technological revolution is transforming the labour market by automating and restructuring jobs. However, the region continues to suffer from low productivity and a shortage of opportunities to integrate technology and advanced skills. It is essential to tackle these deficiencies and promote the inclusion of young people in high-skill occupations that integrate digitalization. This adaptation, together with economic diversification, represents an opportunity for structural change that places equality and sustainability at the centre of development.

The emergence in recent years of jobs associated with digital platforms have enabled work modalities such as teleworking or flexible working hours to become more established. This has generated additional opportunities to access jobs with more flexible schemes, and to combine earning an income with other activities such as vocational training, political participation and care responsibilities. However, this can also serve as a way to avoid challenging gender roles and the near-exclusive responsibility of women in care-giving activities (ECLAC, 2019a, 2022a). Accordingly, it is essential to design measures of co-responsibility, both gender and social, since labour inclusion policies could help reverse the traditional segmentation of sectors and the labour market. This could occur both through mechanisms to provide incentives for women to enter masculinized sectors, with higher degrees of formalization and higher wages, and through measures that encourage men to enter jobs that have historically been feminized owing to their association with care. In this context, it is vital to strengthen the paid care sector by recognizing, rewarding and representing those employed in the sector.

Moving towards a care society means recognizing the work that is needed for social reproduction and how it sustains life and economies. It also seeks to integrate care policies, digital inclusion and women's labour participation as fundamental pillars. The Buenos Aires Commitment, agreed upon by ECLAC Member States, reflects consensus among the countries of the region in reiterating "the call to advance recovery plans with proactive measures to achieve substantive equality that foster comprehensive care systems, decent work and the full, significant and equal participation of women

in positions of leadership in strategic sectors of the economy for a transformative recovery with gender equality aimed at the sustainability of life and for the transition to a care society” (ECLAC, 2023b, p. 7).

In addition to promoting gender equality, care services are investments that boost future productivity and generate returns in the form of jobs and tax revenue, while satisfying the growing demand for care (ILO, 2022c). This idea suggests shifting the focus from market production to a social provision that ensures the sustainability of life and the planet under a welfare paradigm. The potential of the care sector is linked to the opportunities that are emerging for the future of work, particularly in the contribution of young people to development.

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Annex II.A1

Table II.A1.1

Mapping of skill levels to the structure of the International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008 (ISCO-08)

Skill level	ISCO-08 group	
High skill	1	Directors and managers
	2	Scientific and intellectual professionals
	3	Technicians and associate professionals
Medium skill	4	Clerical support workers
	5	Services and sales workers
	6	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers
	7	Craft and related trades workers
	8	Plant and machine operators and assemblers
Low skill	9	Elementary occupations

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), *The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) companion guide*, 2023 [online] https://ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_896661.pdf.

Annex A1

Table A1.1

Latin America and the Caribbean: national unemployment rates by year, by country or territory and sex, 2012–2022 and first half of 2023

(Average annual rates)

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	...	...	...	...	8.5	8.4	9.2	9.8	11.5	8.7	6.8	6.9	6.5
Men	...	...	...	...	7.8	7.5	8.2	9.2	10.8	7.9	6.1	6.0	5.9
Women	...	...	...	...	9.4	9.5	10.5	10.7	12.4	9.9	7.7	8.1	7.3
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	2.3	2.9	2.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	5.0	8.3	6.9	4.7	5.2	4.4
Men	1.6	2.3	1.7	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.4	4.7	8.0	6.3	4.1	4.5	3.7
Women	3.1	3.5	3.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.6	5.4	8.8	7.7	5.5	6.1	5.1
Brazil ^c	7.4	7.2	6.9	8.6	11.6	12.8	12.4	12.0	13.8	13.2	9.3	10.2	8.4
Men	6.0	5.8	5.8	7.3	10.1	11.2	10.8	10.1	11.8	10.7	7.5	8.3	7.0
Women	9.4	9.1	8.5	10.4	13.7	14.9	14.5	14.4	16.3	16.5	11.5	12.7	10.2
Chile ^d	6.6	6.1	6.5	6.3	6.7	7.0	7.4	7.2	10.8	8.9	7.9	7.8	8.7
Men	5.6	5.4	6.1	5.8	6.3	6.5	6.7	6.7	10.6	8.6	7.4	7.3	8.3
Women	8.1	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.2	7.5	8.3	8.0	11.0	9.2	8.5	8.5	9.2
Colombia ^e	10.6	9.9	9.4	9.2	9.5	9.7	10.0	10.9	16.5	13.8	11.2	12.1	10.9
Men	8.1	7.6	7.3	7.0	7.4	7.5	7.7	8.5	13.3	11.3	9.0	9.6	8.7
Women	14.0	13.0	12.2	12.1	12.4	12.6	13.0	14.0	21.0	17.5	14.3	15.6	14.0
Costa Rica	10.2	9.4	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.1	10.3	11.8	19.6	16.4	12.2	12.6	10.1
Men	8.9	8.3	8.1	8.0	8.0	7.5	8.4	9.3	15.6	12.7	9.4	10.0	8.2
Women	12.2	11.1	11.9	12.2	12.1	11.6	13.2	15.3	25.7	22.0	16.4	16.5	13.1
Ecuador ^f	4.1	4.0	4.3	4.3	5.4	4.4	4.1	4.4	8.1	4.8	4.0	4.4	3.7
Men	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.3	3.5	3.4	3.7	6.8	3.8	3.6	4.0	3.2
Women	4.9	4.9	5.2	5.5	6.8	5.7	5.0	5.5	10.0	6.1	4.6	5.0	4.5
El Salvador	6.1	5.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.3	6.3	6.9	6.3	5.0	...	...
Men	7.3	6.8	8.6	8.4	8.1	8.3	7.3	7.0	7.1	6.3	5.0	...	...
Women	4.3	4.7	4.7	5.0	5.3	5.2	4.9	5.4	6.6	6.3	5.2	...	...
Guatemala ^g	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.2	...	2.2	3.0	...	...
Men	2.4	2.7	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.1	4.7	...	1.8	2.0	...	...
Women	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	2.9	1.4	...	2.9	4.5	...	...
Honduras ^h	3.6	3.9	5.3	7.3	7.4	6.7	5.7	5.7	10.9	8.6	8.8	8.9	7.4
Men	2.9	3.3	4.5	4.4	5.1	4.0	4.5	4.2	8.7	7.0	6.5	6.2	5.3
Women	5.0	4.9	6.7	11.8	10.7	10.8	7.4	8.1	13.7	10.7	12.1	12.9	10.7
Mexico ⁱ	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.5	4.5	4.1	3.3	3.3	2.7
Men	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.8	3.3	3.2	3.5	4.7	4.1	3.2	3.3	2.7
Women	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.5	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5	4.1	4.2	3.3	3.3	2.8
Nicaragua	5.9	5.8	6.6	5.9	4.5	3.7	5.5	5.4	5.0	4.5	3.5	3.9	3.4
Men	5.4	5.6	6.2	5.6	4.2	3.5	5.4	5.4	5.2	4.6	3.5	4.0	3.3
Women	6.6	6.0	7.0	6.3	4.8	3.8	5.5	5.5	4.7	4.4	3.5	3.9	3.4
Panama ^j	4.0	4.1	4.8	5.1	5.5	6.1	6.0	7.1	18.5	11.3	9.9	...	...
Men	3.5	3.3	4.0	4.2	4.7	5.0	4.8	5.8	13.6	11.0	8.8	...	...
Women	4.9	5.3	6.0	6.2	6.7	7.7	7.6	8.8	24.7	11.8	11.5	...	...
Paraguay ^k	4.6	5.0	6.0	5.4	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.6	7.7	7.5	6.8	7.6	6.2
Men	3.7	4.5	4.6	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.4	5.5	5.9	5.9	5.9	6.7	5.0
Women	5.8	5.7	8.1	6.1	7.5	7.6	7.4	8.0	10.2	9.7	8.1	8.8	7.7
Peru ^l	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.5	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.1	7.9	5.7	4.4	5.0	5.9
Men	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.7	7.9	5.1	3.6	4.2	4.8
Women	4.4	4.7	4.0	3.6	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.6	7.7	6.4	5.3	6.0	7.1
Uruguay ^m	6.5	6.5	6.6	7.5	7.8	7.9	8.3	8.9	10.3	9.3	7.9	7.8	8.5
Men	4.9	5.0	5.1	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.9	7.4	8.6	7.9	6.9	6.6	7.6
Women	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.9	9.4	9.5	10.1	10.8	12.4	11.0	9.0	9.1	9.6
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) ⁿ	8.1	7.8	7.2	7.0	7.3	7.2	6.8	6.8	...	...	...	...	...
Men	7.4	7.1	6.7	6.6	7.0	6.3	5.9	6.4	...	...	...	...	...
Women	9.0	8.8	8.0	7.7	7.8	8.4	8.1	7.5	...	...	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	3.5	3.3	2.7	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.4	...	...	...	...
Men	3.4	3.1	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.3	...	...	...	...
Women	3.6	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	1.8	1.2	1.6	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic ^o	6.7	7.4	6.7	7.3	7.1	5.5	5.7	6.2	5.8	7.4	5.3	5.8	5.2
Men	5.1	5.3	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.0	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.2	3.5	3.5
Women	9.2	10.5	9.7	10.5	10.5	7.8	8.8	9.3	8.6	12.1	8.2	8.9	7.6
English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas	14.4	15.8	14.6	13.4	12.2	10.0	10.3	9.5	...	...	...	...	...
Men	15.0	15.6	13.5	11.8	10.3	9.0	10.1	9.2	...	...	...	...	...
Women	13.7	16.0	15.8	15.0	14.2	11.0	10.6	9.9	...	...	...	...	...

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Barbados ^a	11.6	11.6	12.3	11.3	9.7	10.0	10.1	9.6	15.8	14.1	8.1	9.1	8.9
Men	10.9	11.7	11.8	12.3	9.3	9.8	9.9	11.0	15.7	13.7	7.8	8.5	7.7
Women	12.3	11.6	12.8	10.3	10.1	10.1	10.3	8.2	15.8	14.5	8.4	9.8	10.2
Belize ^a	15.3	14.3	11.6	10.1	9.5	9.3	9.4	9.0	13.7	10.2	5.0	...	...
Men	10.5	10.6	6.3	6.8	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.9	11.6	6.8	4.0	...	...
Women	22.3	20.0	19.9	15.4	15.6	14.6	14.9	13.5	17.0	15.2	6.8	...	...
Curaçao	...	13.0	...	11.7	...	14.1	13.4	17.4	19.1	...	13.1	...	...
Men	...	10.5	...	10.5	...	12.9	11.3	16.0	17.6	...	11.4	...	...
Women	...	15.4	...	12.8	...	15.2	15.4	18.7	20.3	...	14.5	...	...
Grenada ^a	...	32.2	29.3	29.0	28.2	23.6	19.0	15.4	22.8	17.6	...	...	...
Men	...	27.0	28.0	26.0	25.6	20.6	15.8	13.6	18.9	14.7	...	...	...
Women	...	38.1	30.9	32.3	31.2	26.8	22.5	17.5	27.1	21.0	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	6.2	6.3	4.6	4.2	4.2	4.9	2.8	3.5	5.2	5.7	...	...	...
Men	7.1	6.7	4.7	3.3	4.9	4.3	2.8	3.4	4.2	5.1	...	...	...
Women	5.3	5.8	4.6	5.2	3.5	5.5	2.8	3.5	6.2	6.3	...	...	...
Jamaica ^a	13.9	15.2	13.7	13.5	13.2	11.7	9.1	7.7	10.2	8.4	6.3	6.1	4.5
Men	10.5	11.2	10.1	9.9	9.6	8.4	6.7	5.8	8.7	6.7	4.9	4.7	3.4
Women	18.1	20.1	18.1	17.9	17.4	15.4	11.9	9.9	12.0	10.3	7.9	7.7	5.7
Saint Lucia	21.2	23.3	24.5	24.1	21.3	20.2	20.2	16.9	21.7	22.0	16.8	...	...
Men	19.1	21.3	21.1	21.3	19.4	18.1	18.5	14.9	18.6	20.1	14.8	...	...
Women	23.5	25.5	28.4	27.4	23.5	22.4	22.1	19.0	24.9	23.8	19.1	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago ⁱ	4.9	3.7	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.8	3.9	4.3	5.7	5.4	4.9	4.8	4.9
Men	4.1	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.9	4.2	3.2	3.7	5.4	4.8	4.4	4.2	4.2
Women	6.2	4.6	4.0	4.2	4.0	5.6	4.9	5.0	6.0	6.1	5.6	5.6	5.8
Latin America and the Caribbean ^{u,v}	6.5	6.3	6.2	6.7	7.9	8.2	8.1	8.0	10.4	9.3	7.0	7.7	6.7
Latin America and the Caribbean-Men ^{u,v}	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.8	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.9	9.1	7.8	5.8	6.4	5.7
Latin America and the Caribbean-Women ^{u,v}	7.9	7.7	7.4	8.0	9.4	9.8	9.6	9.6	12.2	11.3	8.6	9.4	8.0

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from household surveys of the countries and territories.

^a 31 urban agglomerates. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for the purposes of comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters. The half-year figure for 2023 refers to the first quarter of 2023.

^b Data from 2016 on refer to the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE) and are not comparable with previous years. Annual data for 2020 and subsequent years are for urban areas. For purposes of comparability, the quarterly data shown for 2019–2022 refer to urban areas.

^c Data from 2012 on refer to the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C) and are not comparable with previous years. New reweighted series published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

^d Series based on projections from the 2017 census.

^e Includes hidden unemployment. New series spliced with the 2018 census sample. The lower limit of the working-age population changes from 10–12 years to 15 and over.

^f Includes hidden unemployment. No survey was conducted in the first quarter (March) of 2020. The average for the second quarter of 2020 refers to May and June.

^g From 2011 on, the lower limit of the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data. No survey was conducted in 2020.

^h The 2020 data are preliminary and refer to the telephone survey conducted in November and December.

ⁱ The data to the first quarter of 2020 are from the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE), those for the second quarter of 2020 are from the Telephone Survey of Occupation and Employment (ETOE), and those from the third quarter of 2020 onward are from the new edition of the National Occupation and Employment Survey.

^j Includes hidden unemployment. Data for 2020 refer to the telephone survey conducted in September and October, and the 2022 survey refers to May for census reasons.

^k Data from 2017 on refer to the Continuous Permanent Household Survey (EPHC) and are not comparable with previous years.

^l Data for 2020–2022 are preliminary. Data for 2023 refer to the Permanent National Employment Survey (EPEN). The figure for 2023 refers to the first quarter.

^m The annual data for 2020 are preliminary. The figures for the first quarter of 2020 come from the Continuous Household Survey (ECH) of January and February and the figures from March 2020–June 2021 come from the telephone ECH. Data for July 2021 on refer to the new 2021 Continuous Household Survey model, which entails methodological changes and the use of a monthly rotating panel survey. The annual figure for 2022 refers to the average of the first and second quarters.

ⁿ The 2020 data refer to the first half of the year.

^o The 2011–2014 series is based on the reweighted National Labour Force Survey (ENFT). New measurements have been used since 2015; the data are not comparable with the previous series. The figure for the first half of 2023 refers to the first quarter.

^p Average figures for 2022 refer to the first quarter. The survey was not conducted in the first or second quarters of 2020.

^q The 2018 figure refers to April, the 2019 and 2021 figures refer to the average for April and September, and the 2020 figure refers to September. The annual data for 2022 refer to the fourth quarter.

^r The survey was not conducted in the second quarter of 2020.

^s Includes hidden unemployment. The survey was not conducted in the second quarter (April) of 2020. The 2020 annual average refers to the figures from the first, third and fourth quarters. The annual figure for 2022 refers to the average of the first, second and third quarters.

^t The 2019 annual average refers to the figures from the first, second and fourth quarters; the survey was not conducted in the third quarter of 2019.

^u Weighted average. Does not include hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica or Panama.

^v Data for 2020 and 2021 may present comparability problems with respect to the data for 2019, owing to adjustments to statistical processes made by national statistical and census offices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary data.

^l Years in which a country has made changes in survey methodologies or in significant variables in their surveys that may result in a lack of data comparability.

Table A1.2

Latin America and the Caribbean: national employment rates by year, by country or territory and sex, 2012–2022 and first half of 2023
(Average annual rates)

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	...	...	...	...	52.6	52.9	53.1	53.3	48.6	53.9	56.0	55.7	56.9
Men	...	...	...	...	64.0	64.4	63.9	63.5	57.9	63.9	65.7	65.2	66.5
Women	...	...	...	...	42.5	42.7	43.6	44.1	40.2	44.7	47.1	46.9	48.1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	59.7	61.5	64.3	58.9	63.8	64.9	68.4	65.1	60.4	67.6	70.0	69.8	69.8
Men	69.2	71.0	73.7	70.0	74.0	74.3	76.4	73.2	68.5	74.7	76.9	76.6	76.1
Women	50.9	52.8	55.3	48.2	53.9	56.0	60.8	57.4	52.6	60.9	63.5	63.3	63.8
Brazil ^c	58.0	58.1	58.0	57.3	55.5	55.0	55.3	56.0	51.1	53.2	56.6	56.0	56.4
Men	70.1	70.0	69.7	68.5	66.4	65.3	65.5	66.1	61.5	64.0	67.0	66.4	66.6
Women	46.7	46.9	47.1	46.7	45.3	45.3	45.8	46.5	41.4	43.1	46.9	46.2	46.8
Chile ^d	57.4	57.8	57.9	58.1	58.0	58.3	58.3	58.3	50.1	52.1	55.1	54.9	55.7
Men	70.3	70.2	69.6	70.0	69.4	69.4	69.2	68.7	60.3	62.6	65.0	65.1	65.1
Women	45.1	46.1	46.7	46.7	47.0	47.7	48.0	48.4	40.4	42.1	45.6	45.2	46.6
Colombia ^e	61.3	61.0	61.1	61.3	60.5	60.0	59.1	54.6	50.4	53.1	56.5	55.8	57.0
Men	74.6	74.2	74.2	74.2	73.3	72.8	72.2	67.9	63.8	67.2	69.6	69.2	70.0
Women	48.9	48.9	48.9	49.3	48.6	48.1	47.0	42.3	38.1	40.0	44.4	43.5	45.1
Costa Rica	56.2	56.4	56.5	55.4	52.8	53.5	54.4	55.2	48.5	50.4	52.5	52.1	51.0
Men	69.2	68.9	69.7	68.3	66.6	67.5	68.0	67.4	61.0	62.7	64.6	63.8	63.5
Women	43.5	43.8	43.2	42.2	38.9	39.4	40.7	42.8	35.9	38.0	40.4	40.3	38.3
Ecuador ^f	60.4	60.3	60.4	63.3	64.6	65.5	64.3	63.7	57.9	62.8	63.2	62.8	62.0
Men	75.3	74.9	75.9	77.6	77.5	78.2	77.0	75.8	70.8	75.5	75.3	75.1	74.8
Women	46.5	46.6	46.0	49.8	52.4	53.6	52.2	52.0	45.6	50.7	51.6	51.0	49.9
El Salvador	59.4	59.9	58.4	57.8	57.9	57.6	57.4	58.2	57.2	57.8	59.6	...	...
Men	75.4	75.1	73.7	73.5	73.6	73.9	73.6	74.9	73.4	74.7	76.8	...	...
Women	45.8	47.0	45.5	44.4	44.7	43.9	43.8	44.3	43.5	43.9	45.5	...	...
Guatemala ^g	63.5	58.7	59.1	59.2	59.2	59.4	59.1	57.9	...	61.6	58.4	...	...
Men	85.5	81.1	81.6	83.0	82.2	83.6	83.2	82.1	...	84.0	81.0	...	...
Women	44.1	39.1	39.2	37.5	38.7	37.8	38.0	36.7	...	42.0	39.6	...	...
Honduras ^h	48.9	51.6	53.1	53.8	53.2	55.1	57.0	54.1	53.3	55.5	53.3	53.4	50.5
Men	67.2	69.7	70.3	70.8	70.2	73.0	72.8	71.9	67.5	69.1	70.6	70.9	70.5
Women	32.2	35.3	37.8	38.8	38.4	39.1	42.6	38.0	41.4	43.5	38.6	38.9	34.0
Mexico ⁱ	57.5	57.3	56.9	57.2	57.4	57.3	57.6	58.0	53.1	56.4	57.8	57.3	58.6
Men	74.9	74.6	74.4	74.7	74.7	75.0	74.9	74.5	68.3	72.6	73.8	73.6	74.2
Women	41.7	41.7	41.0	41.4	41.7	41.4	42.0	43.1	39.3	41.8	43.5	42.9	44.8
Nicaragua	72.3	71.4	69.1	68.1	70.2	70.8	67.7	67.2	65.6	64.5	64.3	64.0	64.8
Men	83.0	82.3	80.5	79.9	81.3	81.7	78.1	77.8	76.4	76.1	76.7	76.3	76.7
Women	62.2	61.2	58.5	57.1	60.1	60.8	58.2	57.7	55.9	54.0	53.5	53.2	54.3
Panama ^j	61.0	61.5	60.9	60.9	60.8	60.1	61.5	61.8	51.3	53.5	56.1	56.1	...
Men	77.4	77.1	76.2	75.0	74.9	73.7	75.0	74.2	64.0	66.2	69.3	69.3	...
Women	45.8	46.8	46.8	47.6	47.7	47.2	48.8	50.2	40.1	41.8	44.0	44.0	...
Paraguay ^k	61.5	59.3	58.6	58.7	58.9	66.7	67.4	67.6	64.8	66.7	65.8	65.4	66.4
Men	72.4	70.7	71.1	70.5	70.8	80.1	80.0	80.2	78.6	79.4	77.7	77.0	78.6
Women	50.6	49.7	46.0	47.2	47.0	53.4	55.0	55.3	51.6	54.2	54.2	54.0	54.5
Peru ^l	70.8	70.3	69.6	69.1	69.2	69.5	69.4	69.4	58.8	66.9	68.8	69.0	66.1
Men	79.8	79.2	78.5	78.2	78.1	77.8	77.7	77.6	67.5	75.4	77.0	77.1	74.8
Women	61.9	61.5	60.7	60.1	60.4	61.1	61.1	61.3	50.1	58.5	60.7	61.0	57.7
Uruguay ^m	59.9	59.5	60.4	59.0	58.4	57.9	57.2	56.6	54.3	56.0	57.1	57.1	57.6
Men	69.8	70.2	70.5	68.4	67.5	66.9	65.8	64.9	62.1	63.7	65.2	65.2	66.1
Women	51.1	50.0	51.3	50.5	50.1	49.8	49.4	49.0	47.1	49.0	49.7	49.7	49.9
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) ⁿ	58.8	59.3	60.4	59.2	59.3	61.5	63.3	60.6	...	...	...	...	...
Men	72.1	72.6	73.8	72.7	72.4	75.0	76.2	74.4	...	...	...	...	...
Women	45.7	46.1	47.1	46.0	46.3	48.3	50.5	47.1	...	...	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	71.6	70.5	70.0	65.4	63.8	62.4	62.7	64.4	65.4	...	...	...	...
Men	86.4	84.4	84.2	78.5	76.7	75.0	75.7	75.1	75.8	...	...	...	...
Women	55.3	55.3	54.6	51.2	49.8	48.6	48.6	52.7	54.0	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic ^o	55.4	54.9	55.5	57.3	57.9	58.7	60.0	61.0	56.7	58.3	59.7	59.6	60.4
Men	70.3	69.9	70.6	72.3	72.9	73.1	75.1	75.3	71.1	72.7	74.4	74.2	73.9
Women	41.1	40.4	41.0	43.1	43.8	45.2	45.9	47.8	43.5	45.0	46.5	46.5	48.0
English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas	62.0	61.6	62.9	64.4	67.7	72.5	74.2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Men	64.4	64.9	67.2	70.1	73.3	76.0	76.9	...	...	...	...	...	...
Women	59.9	58.8	59.0	61.0	62.7	66.8	68.5	...	...	...	...	...	...

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Barbados ^a	58.5	58.9	56.0	57.7	60.0	58.9	58.3	57.6	51.1	52.6	57.6	57.7	58.2
Men	64.1	63.6	59.7	60.2	63.9	62.9	62.5	60.6	54.7	56.3	62.5	61.5	62.9
Women	53.5	54.8	52.6	55.3	56.5	55.2	54.4	54.9	47.8	49.3	53.1	54.3	54.0
Belize ^a	55.7	56.7	56.3	56.8	57.9	58.1	59.4	62.0	47.6	54.6	55.8	...	...
Men	70.9	72.3	73.3	72.5	73.6	73.6	73.9	75.8	60.7	69.4	70.5	...	...
Women	40.9	39.6	39.4	41.2	42.4	42.9	45.1	48.4	35.2	40.4	41.4	...	...
Curaçao	52.2	52.1	47.9	49.2	51.1	49.1	48.1	49.3	45.6	0.0	59.7	...	...
Men	57.7	58.3	52.6	53.9	56.4	52.8	53.5	52.2	48.9	0.0	74.4	...	...
Women	47.9	47.2	44.2	45.5	47.0	46.2	43.8	47.0	43.0	0.0	46.5	...	...
Grenada ^a	48.3	45.3	47.9	48.9	49.0	50.3	54.8	57.9	50.4	55.6	...	...	...
Men	54.1	51.8	51.5	55.2	54.5	56.6	61.6	64.4	58.4	61.0	...	...	...
Women	42.4	38.7	44.3	42.9	43.4	44.3	48.4	54.0	43.0	49.9	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	78.5	77.8	78.6	79.3	79.8	77.4	82.9	80.0	76.2	77.5	...	...	...
Men	80.4	79.9	81.0	81.8	81.9	80.5	85.5	83.0	79.9	81.1	...	...	...
Women	76.7	75.9	76.4	76.8	77.9	74.3	80.5	77.0	72.6	73.8	...	...	...
Jamaica ^a	53.3	53.4	54.2	54.6	56.2	57.5	58.2	59.7	56.6	57.9	60.3	60.3	62.5
Men	61.9	62.1	62.9	63.3	64.3	65.2	65.6	66.9	63.5	65.0	66.9	67.0	68.5
Women	45.0	45.0	45.8	46.2	48.4	50.0	51.0	52.7	49.9	51.1	53.9	53.8	56.8
Saint Lucia	55.6	54.4	54.5	54.8	57.4	57.0	57.0	59.0	53.9	53.7	59.2	59.2	...
Men	60.9	60.0	60.9	61.6	63.1	62.9	63.4	63.4	60.0	59.0	67.2	67.2	...
Women	50.6	49.1	48.3	47.9	51.6	51.4	50.8	55.6	48.4	49.4	51.9	51.9	...
Trinidad and Tobago ^d	58.8	59.1	59.9	58.5	57.4	56.3	56.8	54.9	52.8	51.9	52.3	52.5	52.5
Men	69.2	69.5	70.1	69.2	66.8	66.0	66.2	64.0	61.3	60.1	59.9	60.6	62.8
Women	48.5	48.8	49.7	47.9	48.0	46.7	47.4	46.0	44.4	43.9	44.9	44.6	42.8
Latin America and the Caribbean ^{u,v}	59.1	59.0	58.9	58.5	57.9	58.0	58.2	58.0	52.9	55.8	58.1	57.6	58.1
Latin America and the Caribbean-Men ^{u,v}	72.7	72.5	72.3	71.8	70.8	70.8	70.8	70.5	64.7	68.4	70.3	69.6	69.9
Latin America and the Caribbean-Women ^{u,v}	46.4	46.4	46.3	46.1	45.8	46.0	46.5	46.4	41.8	44.2	46.8	46.5	47.2

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from household surveys of the countries and territories.

^a 31 urban agglomerates. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for the purposes of comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters. The half-year figure for 2023 refers to the first quarter of 2023.

^b Data from 2016 on refer to the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE) and are not comparable with previous years. Annual data for 2020 and subsequent years are for urban areas. For purposes of comparability, the quarterly data shown for 2019–2022 refer to urban areas.

^c Data from 2012 on refer to the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C) and are not comparable with previous years. New reweighted series published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

^d Series based on projections from the 2017 census.

^e Includes hidden unemployment. New series spliced with the 2018 census sample. The lower limit of the working-age population changes from 10–12 years to 15 and over.

^f Includes hidden unemployment. No survey was conducted in the first quarter (March) of 2020. The average for the second quarter of 2020 refers to May and June.

^g From 2011 on, the lower limit of the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data. No survey was conducted in 2020.

^h The 2020 data are preliminary and refer to the telephone survey conducted in November and December.

ⁱ The data to the first quarter of 2020 are from the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE), those for the second quarter of 2020 are from the Telephone Survey of Occupation and Employment (ETOE), and those from the third quarter of 2020 onward are from the new edition of the National Occupation and Employment Survey.

^j Includes hidden unemployment. Data for 2020 refer to the telephone survey conducted in September and October, and the 2022 survey refers to May for census reasons.

^k Data from 2017 on refer to the Continuous Permanent Household Survey (EPHC) and are not comparable with previous years.

^l Data for 2020–2022 are preliminary. Data for 2023 refer to the Permanent National Employment Survey (EPEN). The figure for 2023 refers to the first quarter.

^m The annual data for 2020 are preliminary. The figures for the first quarter of 2020 come from the Continuous Household Survey (ECH) of January and February and the figures from March 2020–June 2021 come from the telephone ECH. Data for July 2021 on refer to the new 2021 Continuous Household Survey model, which entails methodological changes and the use of a monthly rotating panel survey. The annual figure for 2022 refers to the average of the first and second quarters.

ⁿ The 2020 data refer to the first half of the year.

^o The 2011–2014 series is based on the reweighted National Labour Force Survey (ENFT). New measurements have been used since 2015; the data are not comparable with the previous series. The figure for the first half of 2023 refers to the first quarter.

^p Average figures for 2022 refer to the first quarter. The survey was not conducted in the first or second quarters of 2020.

^q The 2018 figure refers to April, the 2019 and 2021 figures refer to the average for April and September, and the 2020 figure refers to September. The annual data for 2022 refer to the fourth quarter.

^r The survey was not conducted in the second quarter of 2020.

^s Includes hidden unemployment. The survey was not conducted in the second quarter (April) of 2020. The 2020 annual average refers to the figures from the first, third and fourth quarters. The annual figure for 2022 refers to the average of the first, second and third quarters.

^t The 2019 annual average refers to the figures from the first, second and fourth quarters; the survey was not conducted in the third quarter of 2019.

^u Weighted average. Does not include hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica or Panama.

^v Data for 2020 and 2021 may present comparability problems with respect to the data for 2019, owing to adjustments to statistical processes made by national statistical and census offices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary data.

^l Years in which a country has made changes in survey methodologies or in significant variables in their surveys that may result in a lack of data comparability.

Table A1.3

Latin America and the Caribbean: national participation rates by year, by country or territory and sex, 2012–2022 and first half of 2023

(Average annual rates)

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	...	...	...	...	57.5	57.8	58.5	59.1	54.9	59.1	60.1	59.8	60.7
Men	...	...	...	...	69.4	69.7	69.6	69.9	64.9	69.4	69.9	69.4	70.3
Women	...	...	...	...	46.9	47.6	48.7	49.4	45.9	49.5	51.0	51.0	51.8
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	61.1	63.4	65.8	61.0	66.0	67.4	70.9	68.6	65.8	72.6	73.5	73.6	73.0
Men	70.4	72.6	75.0	72.1	76.4	76.8	79.1	76.8	74.4	79.7	80.2	80.2	79.1
Women	52.6	54.8	57.1	50.4	56.1	58.3	63.0	60.6	57.6	65.9	67.1	67.4	67.2
Brazil ^c	62.7	62.6	62.4	62.7	62.8	63.1	63.2	63.6	59.3	61.3	62.4	62.3	61.6
Men	74.5	74.4	74.0	74.0	73.8	73.6	73.4	73.5	69.8	71.6	72.4	72.4	71.7
Women	51.6	51.6	51.5	52.2	52.4	53.3	53.6	54.3	49.5	51.6	53.0	52.9	52.1
Chile ^d	61.5	61.6	61.9	62.0	62.1	62.7	63.0	62.8	56.1	57.2	59.8	59.6	61.0
Men	74.5	74.2	74.1	74.4	74.1	74.3	74.2	73.6	67.3	68.5	70.2	70.2	71.0
Women	49.1	49.6	50.2	50.3	50.7	51.6	52.3	52.5	45.3	46.4	49.8	49.4	51.3
Colombia ^e	68.6	67.8	67.4	67.5	66.9	66.4	65.7	64.8	60.3	61.5	63.6	63.5	64.0
Men	81.2	80.3	80.0	79.8	79.1	78.7	78.3	77.3	73.5	75.7	76.5	76.6	76.6
Women	56.9	56.1	55.8	56.0	55.5	55.1	54.0	53.2	48.1	48.4	51.8	51.5	52.4
Costa Rica	62.8	62.3	62.5	61.2	58.4	58.8	60.7	62.5	60.2	60.3	59.8	59.6	56.7
Men	75.9	75.1	75.9	74.3	72.4	73.0	74.3	74.4	72.2	71.8	71.3	70.9	69.2
Women	49.5	49.3	49.0	48.1	44.3	44.5	46.9	50.6	48.1	48.7	48.4	48.2	44.1
Ecuador ^f	63.0	62.9	63.1	66.2	68.2	68.6	67.0	66.6	63.0	65.9	65.8	65.7	64.5
Men	78.1	77.6	78.8	80.5	81.0	81.0	79.7	78.7	75.9	78.5	78.1	78.2	77.3
Women	48.8	48.9	48.5	52.7	56.2	56.9	55.0	55.0	50.6	54.0	54.1	53.7	52.2
El Salvador	63.2	63.6	62.8	62.1	62.2	61.9	61.3	62.2	61.4	61.7	62.7	...	...
Men	81.4	80.7	80.7	80.2	80.1	80.6	79.5	80.5	79.0	79.8	80.8	...	...
Women	47.9	49.3	47.8	46.7	47.3	46.3	46.1	46.8	46.6	46.9	48.0	...	...
Guatemala ^g	65.4	60.6	60.9	60.7	60.8	61.0	60.6	59.2	...	63.0	60.2	...	...
Men	87.6	83.4	83.8	84.7	84.0	85.3	85.0	83.7	...	85.6	82.7	...	...
Women	45.7	40.6	40.6	38.9	40.1	39.2	39.1	37.9	...	43.3	41.5	...	...
Honduras ^h	50.8	53.7	56.1	58.1	57.5	59.0	60.4	57.3	59.8	60.7	58.4	58.7	54.5
Men	69.2	72.1	73.6	74.0	74.0	76.0	76.3	75.1	73.9	74.3	75.5	75.5	74.4
Women	33.8	37.2	40.5	43.9	43.0	43.8	46.0	41.4	47.9	48.7	44.0	44.6	38.1
Mexico ⁱ	60.4	60.3	59.8	59.8	59.7	59.3	59.6	60.1	55.6	58.8	59.8	59.3	60.2
Men	78.8	78.5	78.3	78.0	77.7	77.6	77.4	77.2	71.7	75.7	76.3	76.1	76.2
Women	43.9	43.9	43.1	43.4	43.4	43.0	43.5	44.7	41.0	43.6	45.0	44.4	46.0
Nicaragua	76.8	75.8	74.0	72.4	73.6	73.5	71.6	71.1	69.1	67.5	66.7	66.7	67.0
Men	87.7	87.2	85.8	84.6	84.9	84.7	82.6	82.3	80.5	79.8	79.5	79.4	79.4
Women	66.6	65.1	63.0	60.9	63.1	63.2	61.6	61.0	58.7	56.5	55.5	55.3	56.2
Panama ^j	63.5	64.1	64.0	64.2	64.4	64.0	65.4	66.5	63.0	60.4	62.3	62.3	...
Men	80.1	79.7	79.4	78.4	78.6	77.6	78.8	78.8	74.0	74.4	76.0	76.0	...
Women	48.2	49.4	49.8	50.8	51.1	51.2	52.8	55.0	53.2	47.3	49.7	49.7	...
Paraguay ^k	64.4	62.4	62.3	62.1	62.6	71.0	71.9	72.4	70.2	72.1	70.6	70.7	70.7
Men	75.1	74.0	74.6	74.1	74.5	84.4	84.6	84.8	83.5	84.4	82.5	82.5	82.7
Women	53.7	52.7	50.1	50.2	50.8	57.8	59.4	60.2	57.4	60.1	59.0	59.3	59.1
Peru ^l	73.6	73.2	72.2	71.6	72.2	72.4	72.3	72.4	63.6	70.9	72.0	72.6	70.2
Men	82.4	82.0	81.3	81.0	81.2	81.0	80.7	80.6	73.2	79.5	79.9	80.5	78.6
Women	64.8	64.5	63.2	62.3	63.3	64.0	64.0	64.3	54.2	62.5	64.1	64.8	62.1
Uruguay ^m	64.0	63.6	64.7	63.8	63.4	62.9	62.4	62.1	60.5	61.8	62.0	61.9	63.0
Men	73.5	73.9	74.3	73.0	72.2	71.6	70.7	70.1	67.9	69.1	70.0	69.8	71.5
Women	55.6	54.4	55.9	55.4	55.4	55.0	54.9	54.9	53.8	55.1	54.6	54.6	55.2
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) ⁿ	64.0	64.3	65.1	63.7	64.0	66.3	67.9	65.1	...	...	...	...	...
Men	77.9	78.2	79.1	77.9	77.9	80.0	81.0	79.4	...	...	...	...	...
Women	50.2	50.6	51.3	49.8	50.2	52.8	55.0	50.9	...	...	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	74.2	72.9	71.9	67.1	65.2	63.4	63.8	65.2	66.4	...	...	...	...
Men	89.5	87.1	86.2	80.4	78.2	76.2	76.9	76.0	76.8	...	...	...	...
Women	57.4	57.3	56.3	52.6	50.9	49.4	49.5	53.3	54.9	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic ^o	59.4	59.3	59.5	61.8	62.3	62.2	63.6	65.1	60.2	63.0	63.1	63.3	63.7
Men	74.1	73.9	74.2	76.3	76.6	76.1	77.8	78.4	74.0	75.7	76.8	76.9	76.5
Women	45.3	45.1	45.4	48.1	48.9	49.0	50.4	52.6	47.6	51.2	50.7	51.0	52.0
English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas	72.5	73.2	73.7	74.3	77.1	80.5	82.8	...	...	...	...	...	...
Men	75.8	76.9	77.8	79.5	81.7	83.6	85.5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Women	69.5	70.1	70.1	71.7	73.1	75.1	76.7	...	...	...	...	...	...

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2022	2023
												Averages for first half of year	
Barbados ^a	66.2	66.7	63.9	65.1	66.5	65.4	64.8	63.8	60.6	61.2	62.7	63.5	63.9
Men	71.9	72.0	67.7	68.7	70.4	69.7	69.3	68.1	64.8	65.3	67.8	67.2	68.1
Women	61.0	62.0	60.4	61.7	62.8	61.5	60.6	59.9	56.7	57.6	58.0	60.1	60.1
Belize ^a	65.8	64.2	63.6	63.2	64.0	64.1	65.5	68.2	55.1	60.8	58.7	...	...
Men	79.2	78.4	78.2	77.8	78.0	78.2	78.3	80.6	68.7	74.5	73.4	...	...
Women	52.6	50.1	49.2	48.8	50.2	50.2	52.9	56.0	42.4	47.6	44.4	...	...
Curaçao	58.9	59.9	54.8	55.7	59.0	57.1	55.6	59.7	56.4	0.0	61.6	...	...
Men	63.7	65.2	59.3	60.3	63.9	60.5	60.3	62.2	59.4	0.0	64.6	...	...
Women	55.2	55.8	51.3	52.1	55.1	54.4	51.7	57.7	54.0	0.0	59.2	...	...
Grenada ^a	68.1	66.7	67.8	68.8	68.2	65.8	67.6	68.4	65.0	67.4	...	...	...
Men	72.9	70.9	71.5	74.5	73.3	71.3	73.1	74.6	71.7	71.6	...	...	...
Women	63.3	62.6	64.1	63.4	63.1	60.6	62.5	62.7	58.9	63.1	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	83.7	83.0	82.4	82.8	83.4	81.4	85.3	82.8	80.4	82.1	...	...	...
Men	86.6	85.6	85.0	84.6	86.1	84.1	88.0	85.9	83.4	85.5	...	...	...
Women	81.0	80.6	80.1	81.0	80.8	78.6	82.7	79.8	77.4	78.8	...	...	...
Jamaica ^a	61.9	63.0	62.8	63.1	64.8	65.1	64.0	64.6	63.0	63.2	64.4	64.2	65.4
Men	69.2	70.0	70.0	70.3	71.2	71.3	70.4	71.0	69.5	69.7	70.4	70.3	70.9
Women	54.9	56.3	55.9	56.3	58.6	59.1	57.9	58.5	56.7	57.0	58.6	58.3	60.2
Saint Lucia	70.6	71.0	72.2	72.2	72.8	71.4	71.4	71.0	68.8	70.5	71.2	71.2	...
Men	75.3	76.2	77.1	78.3	78.3	76.5	77.8	74.5	73.7	75.5	78.9	78.9	...
Women	66.1	66.0	67.4	66.0	67.4	66.8	65.2	68.4	64.4	66.0	64.1	64.1	...
Trinidad and Tobago ^d	61.9	61.4	61.9	60.6	59.7	59.2	59.1	57.4	55.9	54.8	55.0	55.1	55.2
Men	72.1	71.6	72.2	71.2	69.5	68.9	68.4	66.4	64.8	63.1	62.7	63.2	65.6
Women	51.7	51.1	51.8	50.0	50.1	49.5	49.9	48.4	47.2	46.8	47.6	47.3	45.4
Latin America and the Caribbean ^{u,v}	63.2	63.0	62.8	62.7	62.8	63.0	63.3	63.4	59.0	61.5	62.4	62.4	62.2
Latin America and the Caribbean-Men ^{u,v}	77.0	76.6	76.4	76.1	76.0	76.1	76.0	75.9	71.2	74.1	74.7	74.4	74.0
Latin America and the Caribbean-Women ^{u,v}	50.3	50.2	50.0	50.1	50.4	50.9	51.3	51.7	47.6	49.8	51.1	51.3	51.3

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of information from household surveys of the countries and territories.

^a 31 urban agglomerates. The National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC), owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for the purposes of comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters. The half-year figure for 2023 refers to the first quarter of 2023.

^b Data from 2016 on refer to the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE) and are not comparable with previous years. Annual data for 2020 and subsequent years are for urban areas. For purposes of comparability, the quarterly data shown for 2019–2022 refer to urban areas.

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^e Includes hidden unemployment. New series spliced with the 2018 census sample. The lower limit of the working-age population changes from 10–12 years to 15 and over.

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^g From 2011 on, the lower limit of the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data. No survey was conducted in 2020.

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ⁿ The 2020 data refer to the first half of the year.

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^p Average figures for 2022 refer to the first quarter. The survey was not conducted in the first or second quarters of 2020.

^q The 2018 figure refers to April, the 2019 and 2021 figures refer to the average for April and September, and the 2020 figure refers to September. The annual data for 2022 refer to the fourth quarter.

^r The survey was not conducted in the second quarter of 2020.

^s Includes hidden unemployment. The survey was not conducted in the second quarter (April) of 2020. The 2020 annual average refers to the figures from the first, third and fourth quarters. The annual figure for 2022 refers to the average of the first, second and third quarters.

^t The 2019 annual average refers to the figures from the first, second and fourth quarters; the survey was not conducted in the third quarter of 2019.

^u Weighted average. Does not include hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica or Panama.

^v Data for 2020 and 2021 may present comparability problems with respect to the data for 2019, owing to adjustments to statistical processes made by national statistical and census offices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary data.

^l Years in which a country has made changes in survey methodologies or in significant variables in their surveys that may result in a lack of data comparability.

After two years of a steady recovery of labour markets in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the first quarter of 2023, labour market performance weakened in a context of slow growth. Moreover, the regional economic slowdown, likely to intensify from the second half of 2023 onwards, is expected to pose greater challenges for the continued increase in the employment rate, and for growth in both formal and wage-earning employment.

This twenty-ninth edition of *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean* analyses the dynamics that connect the labour market to the unpaid, yet critical care work done to support social reproduction, which sustains life and economies. It highlights the importance of comprehensive care policies and the labour market and digital inclusion of women, especially young women. The region therefore has an opportunity to chart a new course towards sustainable development with gender equality, that has at its centre care of people and care for the planet.



Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)



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