

Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19

Towards comprehensive systems to strengthen response and recovery

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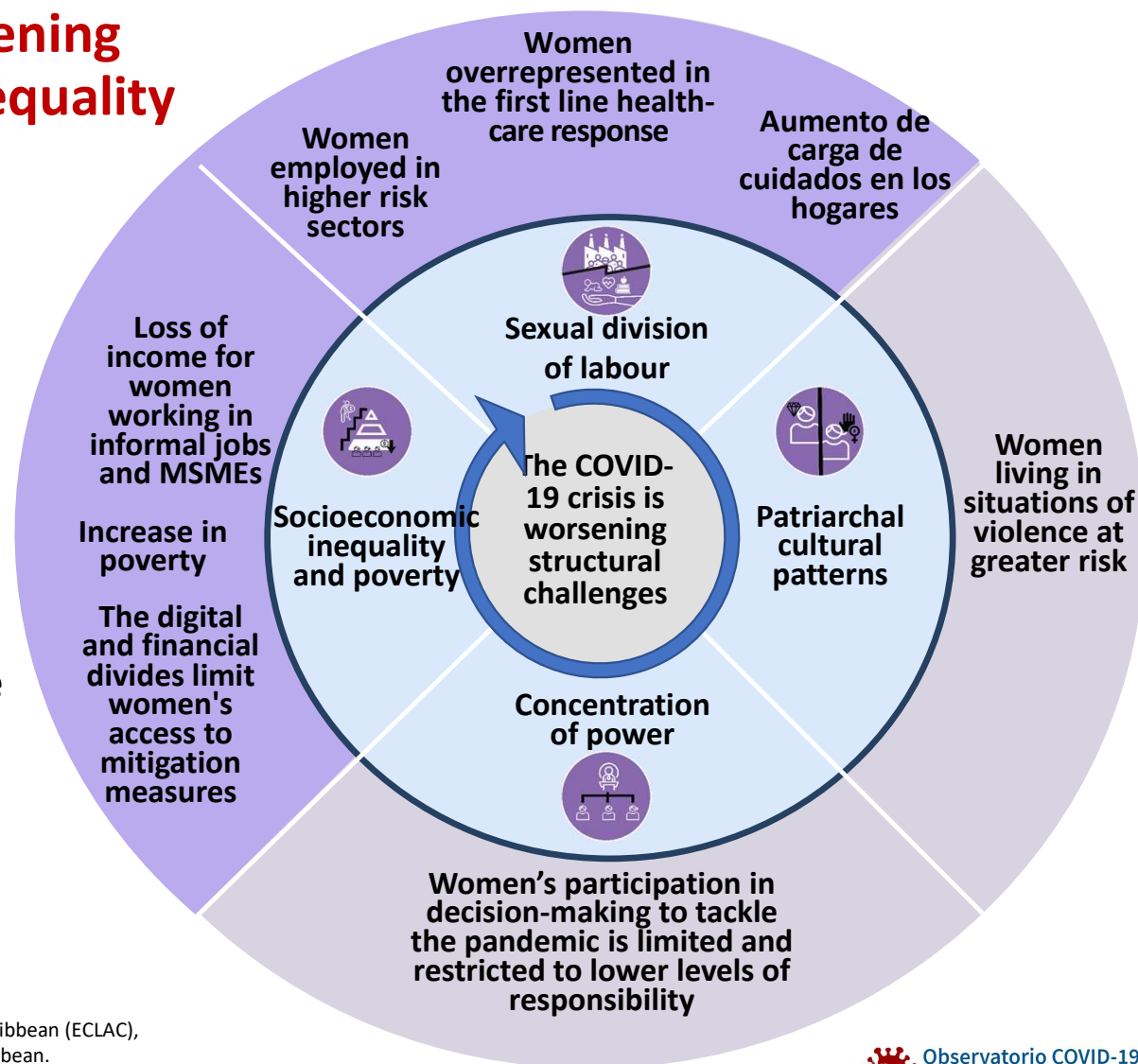
Messages

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to **the worse economic contraction of the last 100 years**.
2. **Women will be disproportionately affected by the higher unemployment and poverty rates and burden of care, especially** in households in the lowest income quintiles.
3. **Governments are taking steps to respond to the care crisis** exacerbated by the pandemic, but challenges remain.
4. **The care economy is key to a sustainable economic recovery** and a fiscal pact, with a focus on women, will be required to direct resources to investment, job creation, and digital and financial inclusion.
5. **The Santiago Commitment serves as a guide to promote mitigation and reactivation strategies** from a gender perspective at the regional level.



The COVID-19 pandemic is worsening structural challenges to gender equality and curbing women's autonomy

- The worst crisis in history. In 2020, regional GDP will fall by **-9.1%**
- Trade in Latin America and the Caribbean will shrink by almost a quarter in 2020 (**-23.9%**)
- Unemployment will reach **13.5%**, with **44 million** unemployed: increasing the risk of labour market segmentation, precariousness and polarization
- Some **2.7 million** formal companies have closed

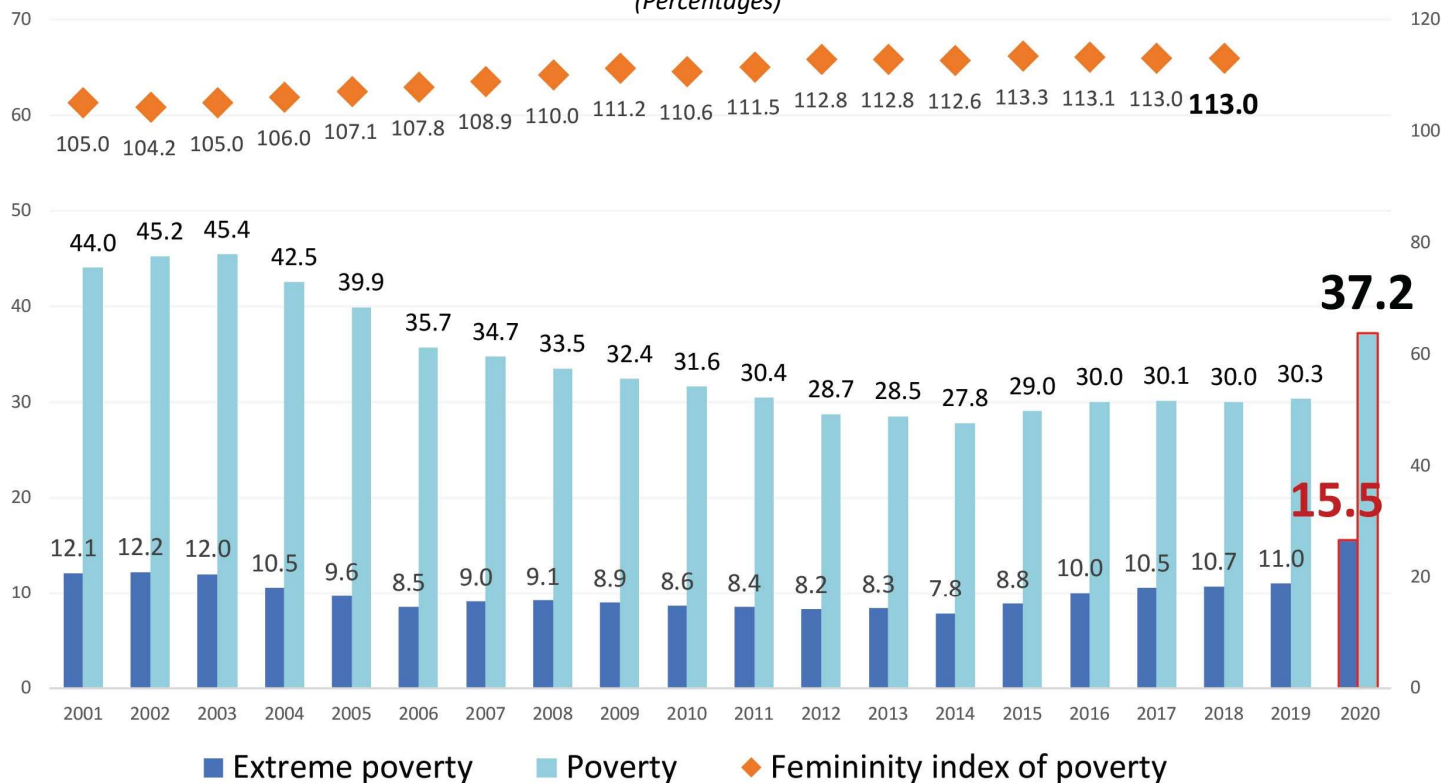


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.



The poverty rate among women is expected to increase to 37.4%, a year-on-year increase of 22%

LATIN AMERICA (WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF 18 COUNTRIES): POVERTY AND EXTREME POVERTY RATE AND FEMINITY INDEX OF POVERTY, 2001–2020
(Percentages)



Some 118 million women in the region will fall into poverty

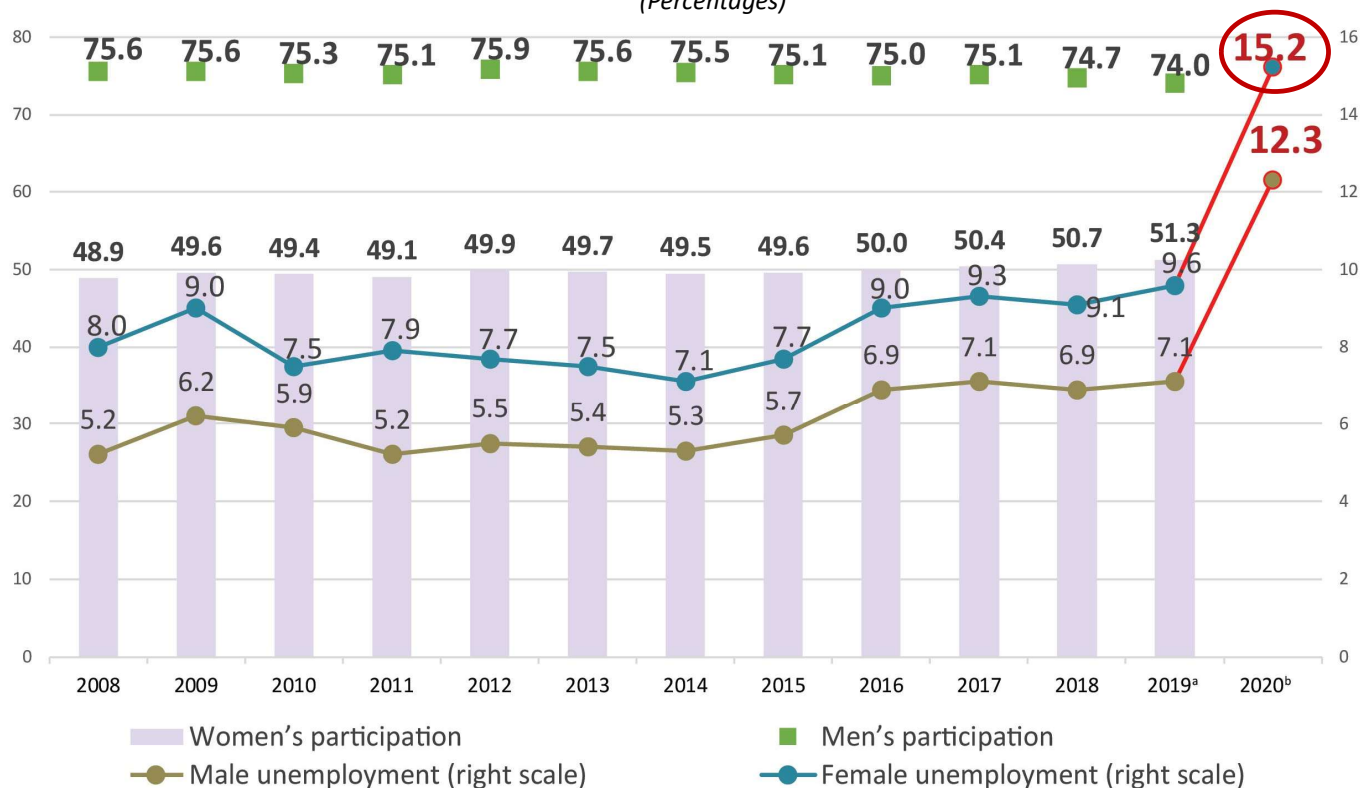


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).



Female unemployment rate forecast to reach 15.2%

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF 24 COUNTRIES): LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, BY GENDER, 2008–2020
(Percentages)



Increase of almost 6 percentage points in the unemployment rate compared to 2019

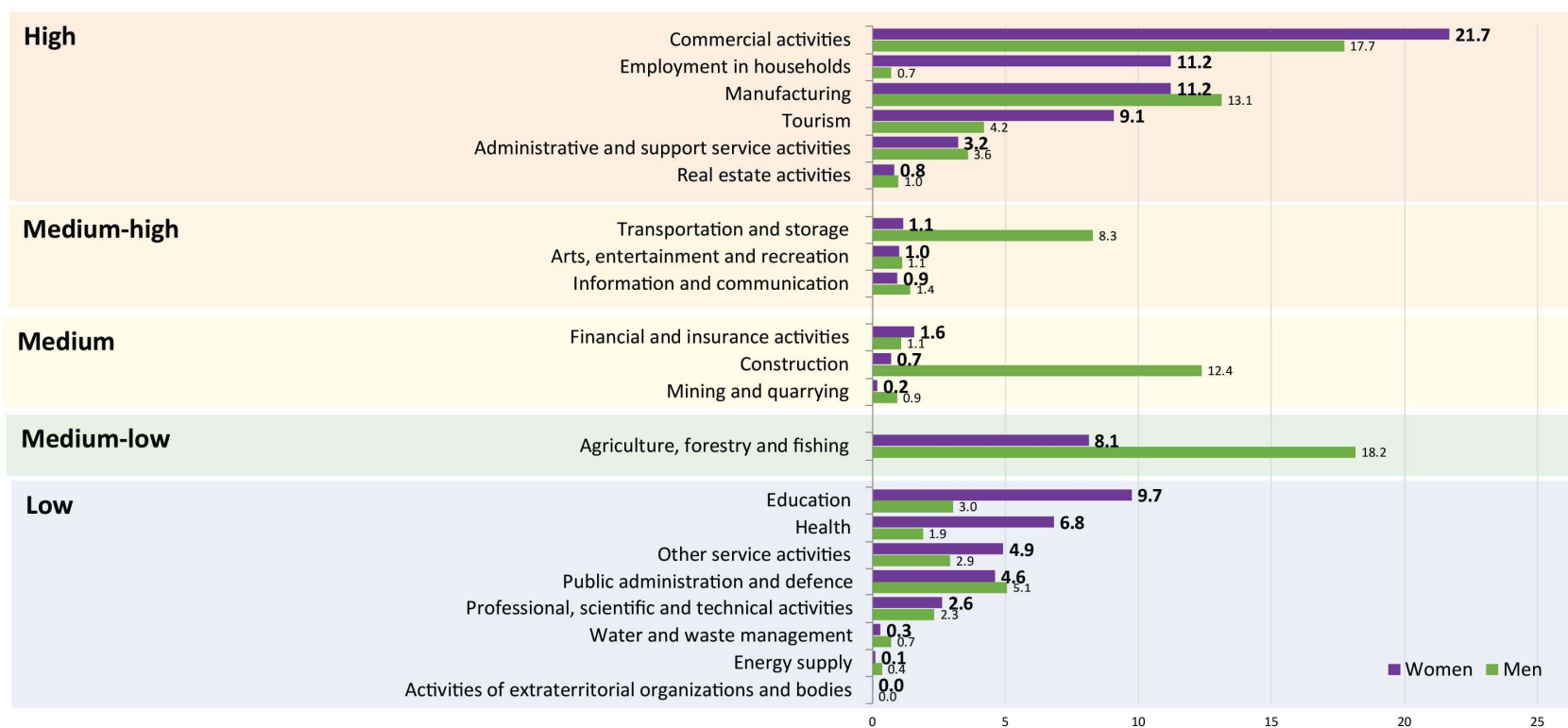


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/International Labour Organization (ILO), "Work in times of pandemic: the challenges of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)", *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean*, No. 22 (LC/TS.2020/46), Santiago, 2020 and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official figures. ^a Preliminary figures ^b Projections

More than half of women are employed in sectors facing the greatest risk of economic contraction



LATIN AMERICA (WEIGHTED AVERAGE OF 16 COUNTRIES): DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED POPULATION BY ECONOMIC RISK AND GENDER, MOST RECENT YEAR FOR WHICH DATA ARE AVAILABLE
(Percentages)



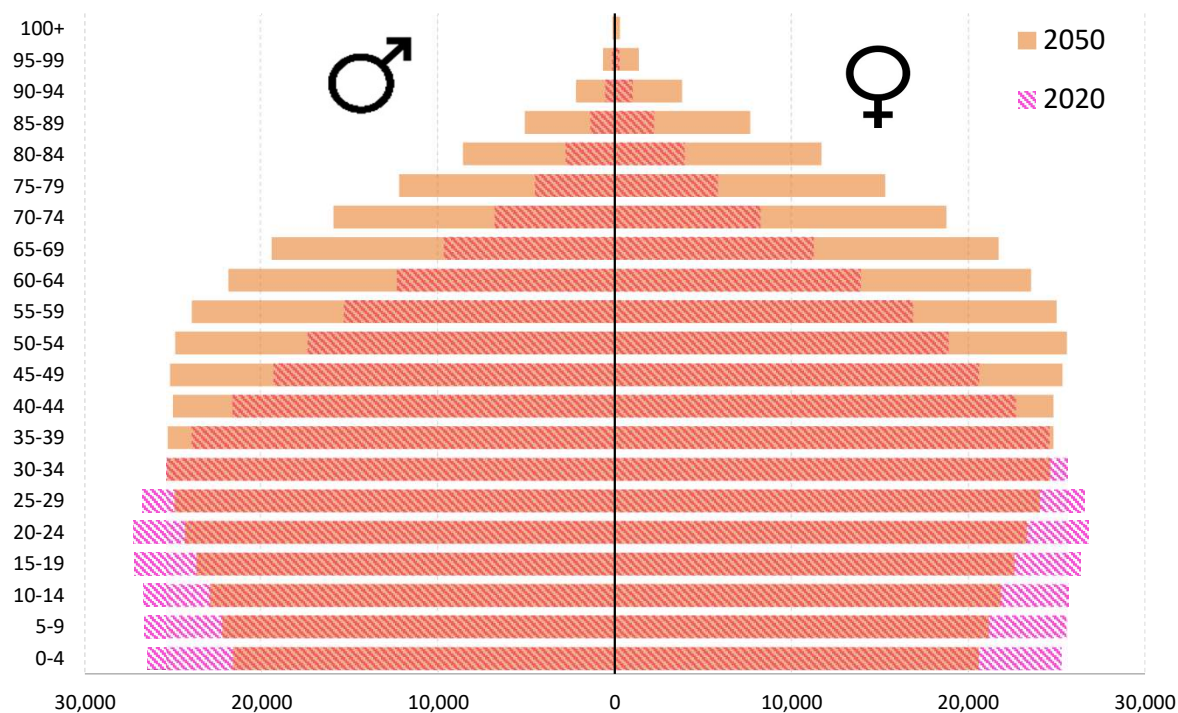
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of information from the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG) (for South America, Mexico and Central America), and International Labour Organization (ILO), ILOSTAT [online database] <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/> (for Caribbean countries).





Before the pandemic, the demographic transition already posed a challenge to the social organization of care in the region

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (38 COUNTRIES): DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION BY AGE AND GENDER, 2020 AND 2050.
(Thousands of people)



Ageing in the region: Argentina, Chile, Cuba and Uruguay are at an advanced stage

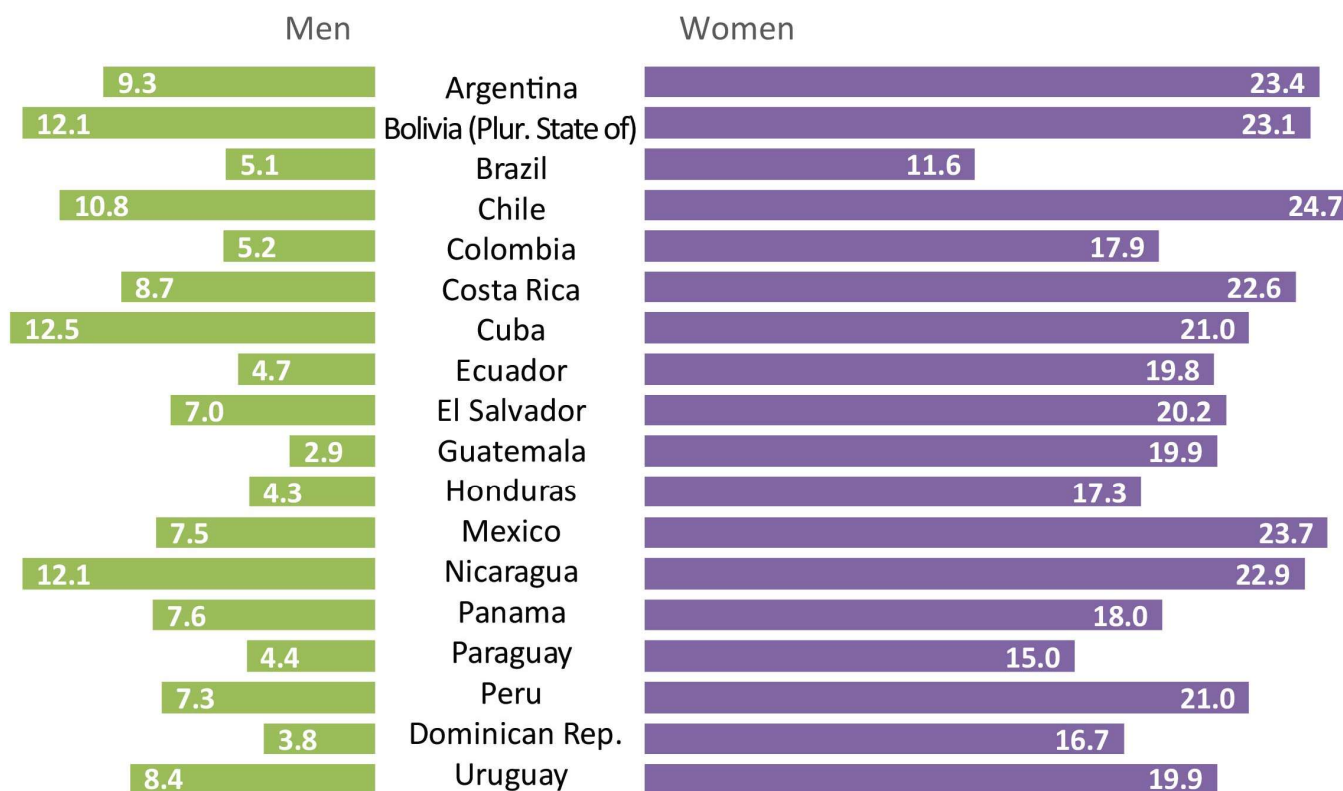
End of demographic dividend: 2020–2025: the dependent population will grow more than the working age population.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of United Nations, World Population Prospects 2019 [online database] [https:// population.un.org/wpp/](https://population.un.org/wpp/)



The burden of unpaid work, which falls mainly on women, is an obstacle to their autonomy

LATIN AMERICA (18 COUNTRIES): TIME SPENT ON UNPAID DOMESTIC AND CARE WORK, BY GENDER, MOST RECENT YEAR FOR WHICH DATA ARE AVAILABLE
(Percentages)



In the region, women spend more than three times as many hours on unpaid care and domestic work than men.

2030 Agenda: "Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family"

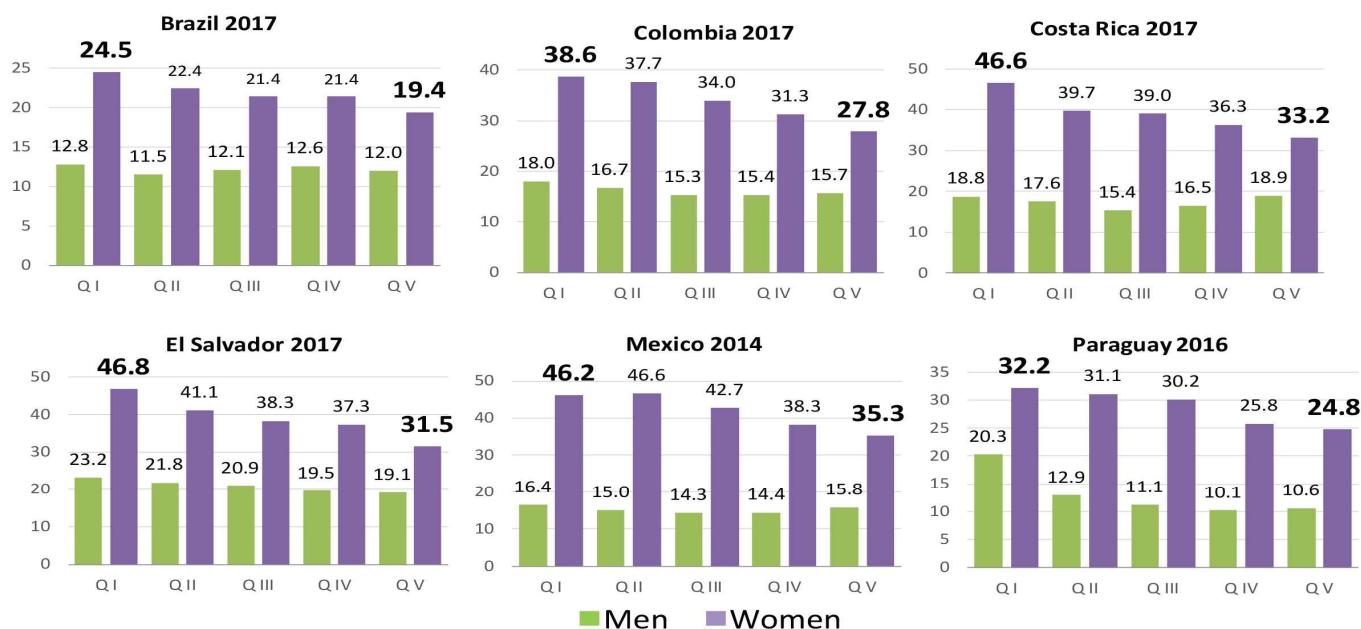


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, Repository on time use in Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en/infographics/repository-information-time-use-latin-americaand-Caribbean>.



Women in poor households bear the heaviest burden of unpaid care

LATIN AMERICA (6 COUNTRIES): UNPAID WORKING TIME OF THE POPULATION AGED 15 OR OVER, BY INCOME QUINTILE AND SEX
(Hours per week)



Women in the lowest income quintile devote about **39%** more hours per week to unpaid work than those in the highest quintile

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



What do we mean when we talk about care?

Recognize

Highlight and revalue care work as a **key job** for the **well-being of societies** and for the **functioning of the economy**

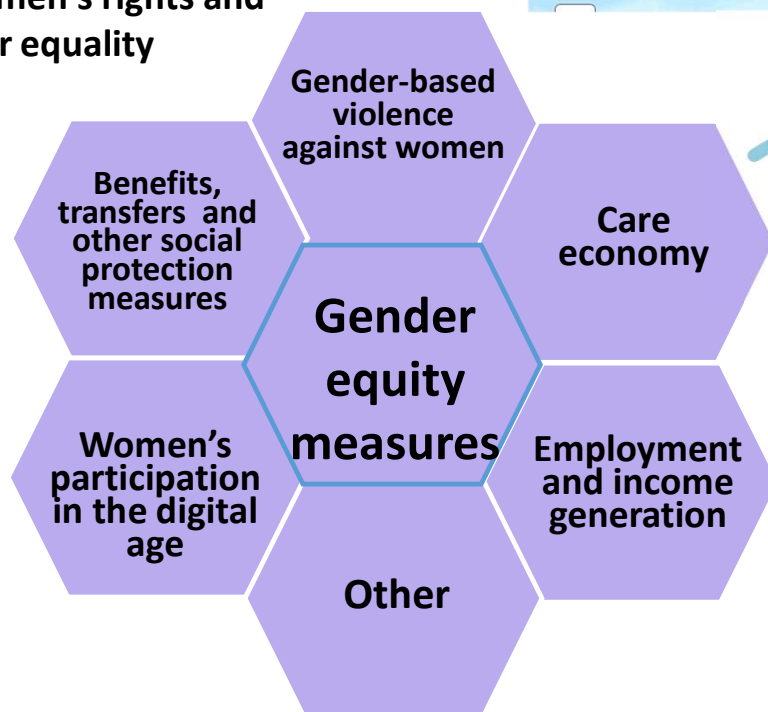
Redistribute

Distribute **unpaid care work, domestic responsibilities** and the exercise of **responsible parenting** in a fairer and more balanced way

Reduce

Reduce the **burden of unpaid work** taking a **rights-based approach** and guided by the principles of **equality, universality and solidarity.**

Types of measures taken to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in the areas of women's rights and gender equality



Government initiatives to address the care crisis in response to the pandemic



ARGENTINA

Right to a leave of absence established for one parent or guardian per household during the suspension of school classes



MEXICO

Campaigns to prevent an excessive burden of care for women as a result of COVID-19 and “*Hombres en sana convivencia: en esta contingencia, cuidar hace la diferencia*” campaign to encourage men’s greater participation in care work.



CHILE

Law on Employment Protection establishes that domestic workers who contribute to the pension system will be able to withdraw a portion of their compensation accounts’ cash, as they do not have unemployment insurance.



COSTA RICA

Strengthening of the National Network of Childhood Care and Development to avoid the care of children falling on older or at-risk persons



URUGUAY

Reinforcement of transfer programmes, such as the Uruguay Social Card, and allowances for dependent children

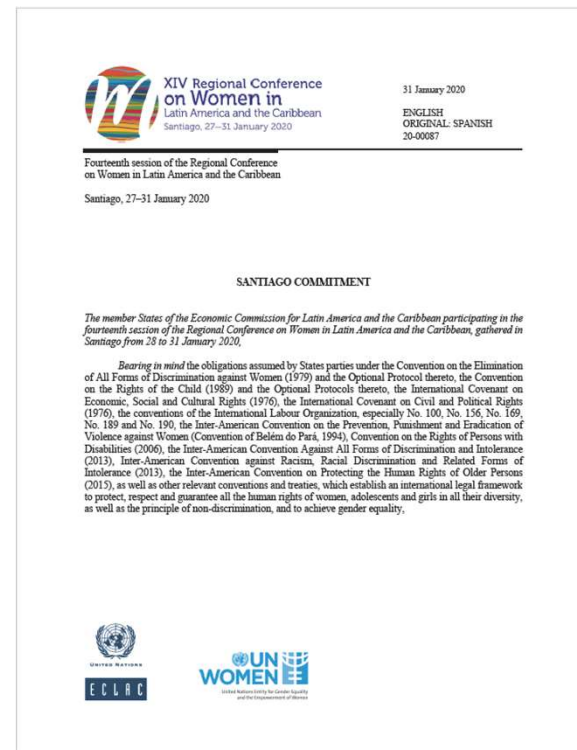


TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Introduction of “*pandemic leave*” and incentives to implement teleworking arrangements for working parents without access to a support system to care for their children during the closure of schools.



The Santiago Commitment as a guide for policies to promote a sustainable return to growth with care at its centre





The Santiago Commitment as a guide for policies to promote a sustainable return to growth

Expansionary macroeconomic policies

- Implement gender-sensitive, countercyclical policies, to mitigate the impact of economic crises and recessions on women's lives

The care economy

- Promote the care economy to stimulate economies
- Design comprehensive care systems, with a gender perspective

Trade

- Pursue programmes to promote the creation of good quality jobs for women and female entrepreneurship in international trade, and gender-impact assessments of trade and investment policies

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)

- Foster women's participation in STEM employment, eliminating occupational segregation and guaranteeing decent work and equal pay

Overcoming the four structural challenges of inequality and bolstering the three autonomies of women

From socioeconomic inequality and exclusionary growth

To development patterns that safeguard women's substantive equality

From a rigid sexual division of labour and unfair social organization of care

To a redistribution of time, work and opportunities

From patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns and a prevalence of the culture of privilege

To a culture of rights and equality

From a concentration of power

To parity-based democracy

Towards a sustainable return to growth that safeguards women's rights and promotes gender equality

1. Pursue a **fiscal and gender pact** to mitigate the crisis and promote a sustainable and fair recovery.
2. **Strengthen financing** of policies for women during the pandemic: comprehensive services for victims of gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health services, and care services, as well as an emergency basic income for women living in poverty.
3. **Invest in the care economy** as a driver of an economic recovery with equality, including formalization, remuneration and social security for all workers.
4. **Redistribute care responsibilities**, move forward with the transformation of labour markets and achieve greater co-responsibility among the State, households, the market and communities.
5. Expand coverage of employment and social protection programmes, to safeguard the rights of **migrant, Afrodescendent and indigenous women, women from rural and grass-roots communities, and women with disabilities.**

