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Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean

Towards the creation of better jobs
in the post-pandemic era



**International
Labour
Organization**

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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

In 2021 and 2022, labour markets in Latin America and the Caribbean recovered from the severe impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic crisis in 2020. The improvements in variables such as labour participation rates and unemployment rates that began in 2021 continued in 2022, with key variables mostly returning to levels last seen in 2019.

Nevertheless, the recovery has been uneven across the region, meaning that some countries' indicators have not yet regained pre-pandemic levels. Despite promising labour market trends in 2021 and 2022, there are structural gender gaps in the region in participation and unemployment rates. Average labour productivity in the region declined in 2022, particularly in the industrial, construction and commerce sectors. Real wages were stagnant on average in 2022, following rises in 2021, reflecting the impact of higher inflation.

This improvement in labour markets from 2020 to 2022 is a result of a cyclical recovery in economic growth and is not expected to be long-lasting. In fact, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) projects growth in the region's economy of around 1.2% for 2023. This slower growth will without doubt lead to less buoyant job creation, with the number of employed forecast to rise by less than 2%. Not only is employment growth expected to slow, job quality is also expected to decline, with less social protection and employment growth in sectors that are less productive, causing more poverty and inequality in the region.

Given the situation, this edition of the *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean* report underscores the need for active labour market policies in the region to foster job creation, formalization and more (and better) inclusion of women and young people in the labour market. To achieve this, employment policy instruments must be expanded and better coordinated to prevent disproportionate falls in employment. In 2020, the health crisis demonstrated that instruments such as unemployment insurance, hiring subsidies and telework can complement each other to mitigate contractions in employment and their repercussions. These instruments, together with policies to foster employment that targeted segments such as women and young people, drove a recovery in employment, especially in the sectors that were most affected by the pandemic. This report highlights that sector policies are needed to transform the region's labour markets and provide workers and companies with the tools to face the challenges of innovation, digitalization and automation of production processes, and to seize the related opportunities. Such policies must also be accompanied by efforts to develop the region's care economy.

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I. The employment situation in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2022

Introduction

In 2022, the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean faced a complex external context with substantial repercussions on the region's performance. There was a significant slowdown in economic activity and trade worldwide, as well as an increase in inflation globally, which, in turn, led to significant changes in monetary policy, with a corresponding increase in financial volatility and a decrease in capital flows to emerging economies, including those of the region.

Amid these external uncertainties, growth in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean stood at 3.8% in 2022, significantly lower than the 6.7% in 2021. Following a strong first half of 2022, economic activity in the region slowed significantly in the second half of the year, reflecting both the end of the rebound effect or normalization of activities and the results of restrictive monetary policies, greater constraints on fiscal spending, lower consumption and investment, and a further deterioration of the external context. In 2022, rising food and energy inflation and greater exchange rate volatility led to increased inflationary pressures in the region, accentuating challenges for macroeconomic policymakers in reconciling policies to boost economic recovery through inflation control and ensuring the sustainability of public finances.

In this complex macroeconomic environment, there was a recovery in the region's main labour market indicators: participation rate, unemployment rate, employment rate and number of employed. As the second part of this report shows, this improvement saw these indicators return to the values registered before the crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and gaps between the labour force participation and unemployment indicators for men and women narrowed. However, this first part of the report warns that the lag in the recovery in labour participation may create a downward bias in unemployment rates and, consequently, an upward bias in employment rates.

A return to pre-pandemic levels is far from a desirable outcome, since, despite improvements in 2022, the recovery of countries and activities has been heterogeneous, with high levels of informality and persistent gender and age inequalities. Similarly, this first part of the report shows that in 2022 there were falls in productivity and stagnation in real average wages.

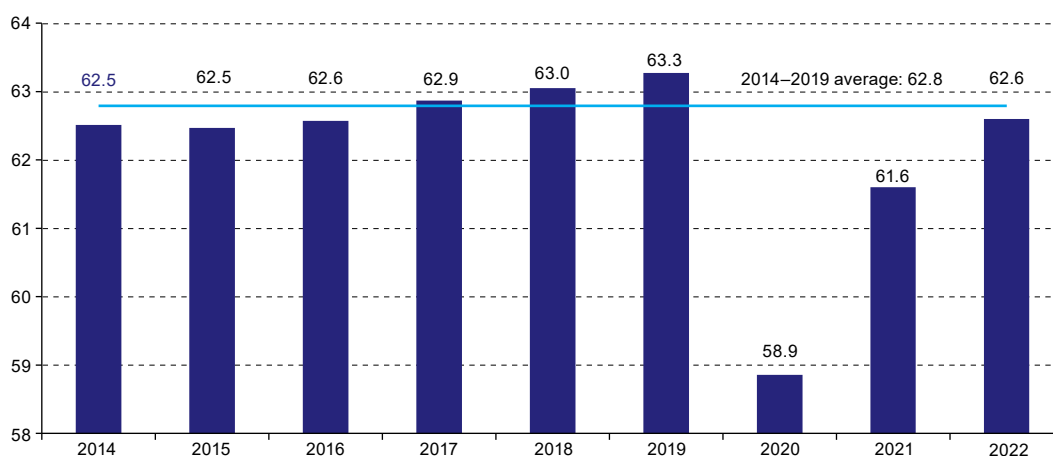
The scenario of lower future growth and relatively high inflation rates does not augur well for Latin American and Caribbean labour markets. Slower growth in economic activity will result in a slackening in employment growth. ECLAC (2022) and ILO (2023) estimates for 2023 are that employment will grow between 1.0% and 1.9%. Similarly, the quality of employment that will be generated against a backdrop of low growth is of concern, as there is a high probability that workers will be more vulnerable, have lower social protection and be employed in less productive sectors, which will increase poverty and inequality in the region.

A. Incomplete and uneven recovery in labour participation in the region's economies

In 2022, the labour participation rate increased in the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean for the second consecutive year since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. That year, the weighted regional average for labour participation rose by one percentage point year-on-year, to 62.6% (see figure I.1). Despite the aforementioned recovery, the regional participation rate is still shy of pre-pandemic levels, the 2022 figure being lower than the average for this variable for the period 2014–2019 (62.8%) as well as the 63.3% value registered 2019 (see second part of this report).

Figure I.1

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a average annual participation rate, 2014–2022
(Percentages)



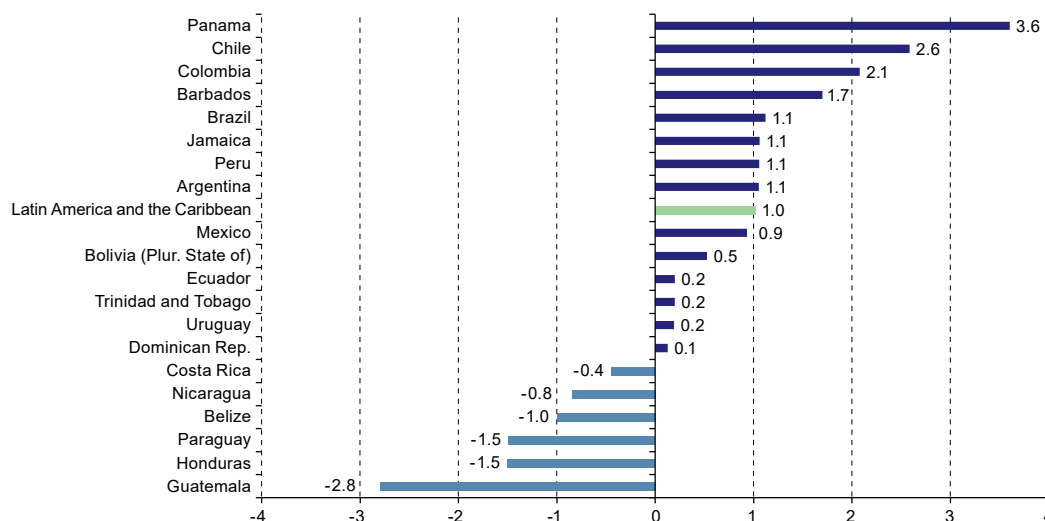
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

In 14 of the 20 economies for which information was available at the time of writing, there was an increase in the participation rate, which was more than 2 percentage points in the cases of Chile, Colombia and Panama. However, the rate fell in six countries, most notably Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay, which chalked up declines equal to or greater than one percentage point (see figure I.2). This may reflect a possible overreaction in 2021 by jobseekers following the rapid recovery in economic activity that year, the pace of which was not sustained in 2022.

Figure I.2

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries): change in participation rate, annual average, 2021–2022
(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.

B. Despite a persistent gap of more than 20 percentage points, the increase in women’s labour participation outpaced men’s

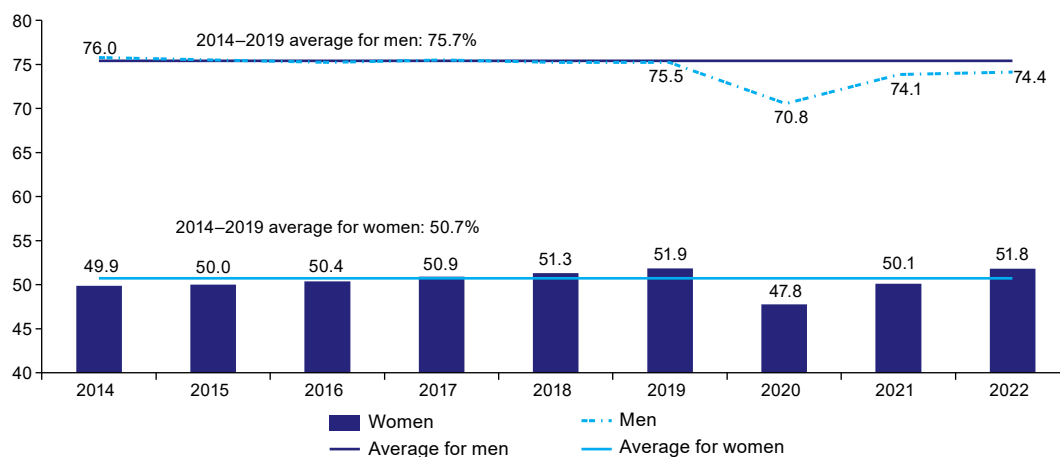
The recovery of the participation rate in the region was greater for women than for men, thus reducing the wide gap between the two groups. While female participation increased by 1.7 percentage points in 2022 (51.8%) compared to 2021 (50.1%), male participation increased by 0.3 percentage points in 2022 (74.4%) compared to 2021 (74.1%) (see figure I.3). This difference means that the female participation rate returned to pre-pandemic levels, while the male participation rate was one percentage point lower than in the same period.

Due to the differences in the pace of recovery of the participation rate, the gap between men and women in this variable was 22.6 percentage points in 2022 (1.4 percentage points less than in 2021). Despite the improvement in 2022, 48 out of every 100 working-age women in Latin America and the Caribbean do not participate in the labour market.

The male participation rate rose in 12 countries in 2022, with increases of more than 1 percentage point seen in Barbados, Chile and the Dominican Republic; however, the male participation rate fell in 5 countries, with a decrease of 1.8 percentage points in Paraguay. The female participation rate went up in 11 countries—with increases of more than 3 percentage points in the cases of Chile and Colombia—but fell in 6 countries, by more than 1 percentage point in the cases of Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic.

Figure I.3

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a male and female participation rates, annual average, 2014–2022
(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

C. Decrease in the unemployment rate in the region's economies

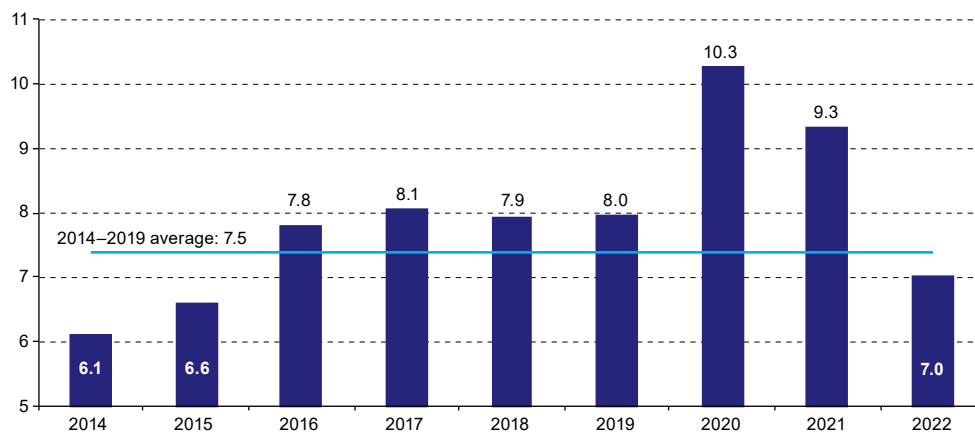
In 2022, the average unemployment rate in the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean fell by 2.3 percentage points, from 9.3% in 2021 to 7.0% in 2022. That figure was the lowest since 2016, when it reached 7.8%. Figure I.4 shows that the unemployment rate was down by 3.3 percentage points from the levels during the pandemic. It must be mentioned that the lag in the recovery of participation rates at the regional level could result in an underestimation of unemployment rates.¹

At country level, in 2022, the unemployment rate fell in 19 of the 20 countries for which information is available, with the steepest declines —of more than 4 percentage points— in Belize, Barbados and Costa Rica (see figure I.5).

¹ The underestimation would arise because, assuming a similar proportion of people were participating in the labour market as before the pandemic, the proportion of unemployed persons would be higher since the number of employed persons would not necessarily change.

Figure I.4

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a average annual participation rate, 2014–2022
(Percentages)

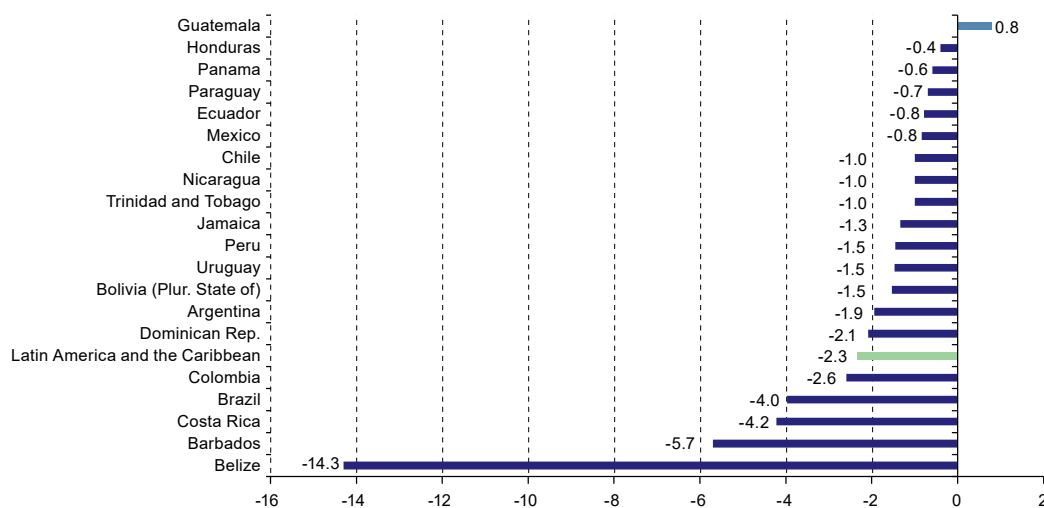


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

Figure I.5

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries): change in the unemployment rate, annual average, 2021–2022
(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.

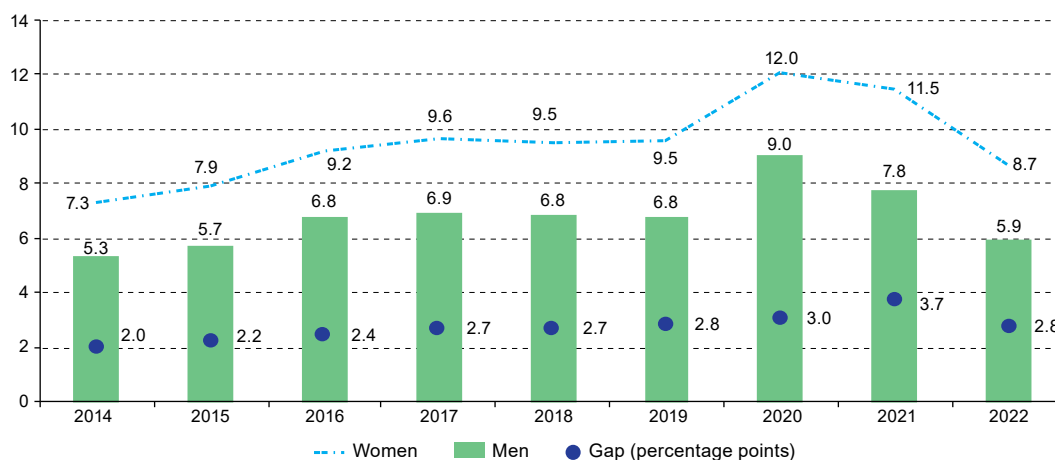
D. Fall in unemployment rates for both men and women, although a significant gender gap persists

A gender breakdown of unemployment rate trends in 2022 shows that the unemployment rate for women fell more sharply, down on average by 2.8 percentage points (from 11.5% in 2021 to 8.7% in 2022). The male unemployment rate fell by 1.9 percentage points (from 7.8% in 2021 to 5.9% in 2022).

On the back of different trends in the unemployment rates of men and women, the gap between the two narrowed, from 3.7 percentage points in 2021 to 2.8 percentage points in 2022 (see figure I.6). Though similar to the 2019 value, it is 0.3 percentage points higher than the average gap of 2.5 percentage points for 2014–2019.

Figure I.6

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a male and female unemployment rates, annual average and rate gap, 2014–2022
(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

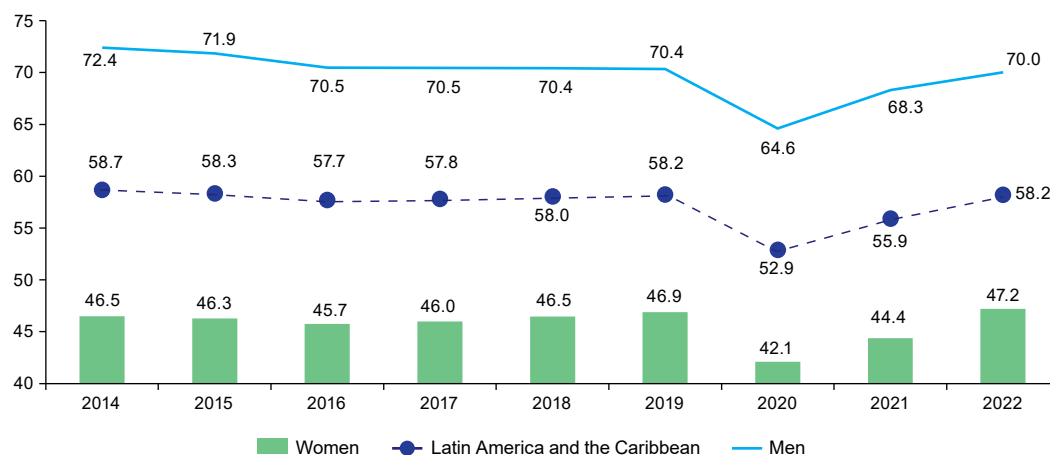
E. Rise in employment rates in the region, especially among women

Unlike unemployment rates, in 2022 employment rates went up throughout the region, with the regional average rising from 55.9% to 58.2%, an increase of 2.3 percentage points (see figure I.7).² The employment rate recorded in 2022 was slightly higher than that of 2019.

² As with the unemployment rate, the values of the employment rate could be biased, in this case upward, due to the lag in the recovery of the regional participation rate.

Figure I.7

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a total employment rate, men and women, annual average, 2014–2022
(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

As with other labour market indicators, in 2022 the female employment rate recovered more significantly than male employment, the former increasing by 2.8 percentage points and the latter by 1.7 percentage points (see second part of this report). This increase brought the female employment rate to its highest level in the last decade.

F. Domestic workers and wage earners: categories with the highest employment increases

In 2022, the number of employed grew by 5.9% year-on-year, and while this growth was seen in most employment categories, it was highest among domestic workers and the wage earners, with rates of 11.6% and 8.5%, respectively. The only category in which there was a drop (-3.9%) in 2022 was that of unpaid family workers (see figure I.8).

The trends described above led to an increase in the share of wage earners and domestic workers in the total number of employed increased in 2022. In the case of wage earners, their share was the highest in the last five years (61.7%); in the case of domestic service workers, the share of 3.7% of the total number of employed continued to lag behind pre-pandemic levels (see second part of this report).

Figure I.8

Latin America and the Caribbean (10 countries):^a change in the number of employed, by employment category, 2021–2022 (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.

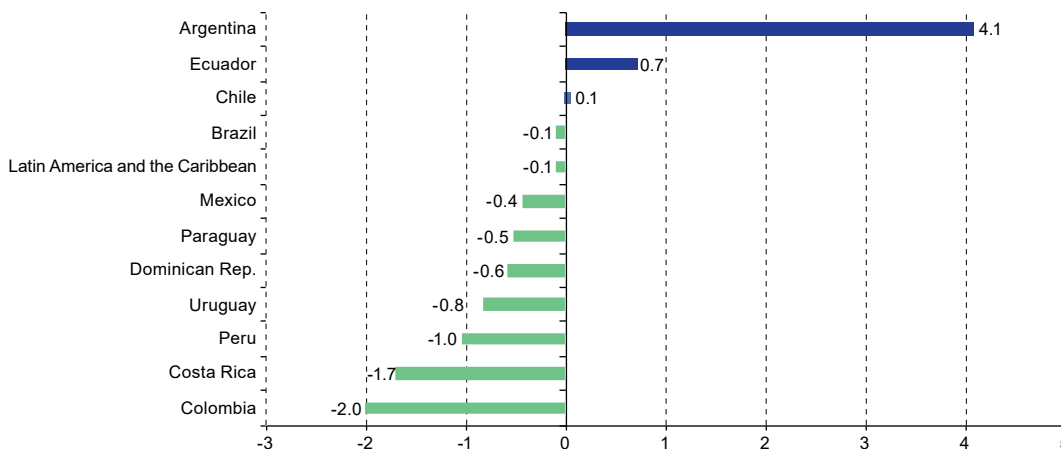
^a The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

G. Slight reduction in the informal employment rate

In line with the increase in the number of wage earners and based on figures available at the time of writing, the average informal employment rate in the region dipped slightly in 2022, from 48.8% in 2021 to 48.7% in 2022. Informality decreased in 8 of the 11 countries for which information is available, notably in Colombia (2.0 percentage points) and Costa Rica (1.7 percentage points). Three countries reported an increase in the informality rate, in Argentina it rose 4.1 percentage points (see figure I.9).

Figure I.9

Latin America and the Caribbean (11 countries): change in the informal employment rate, 2021–2022 (Percentages)



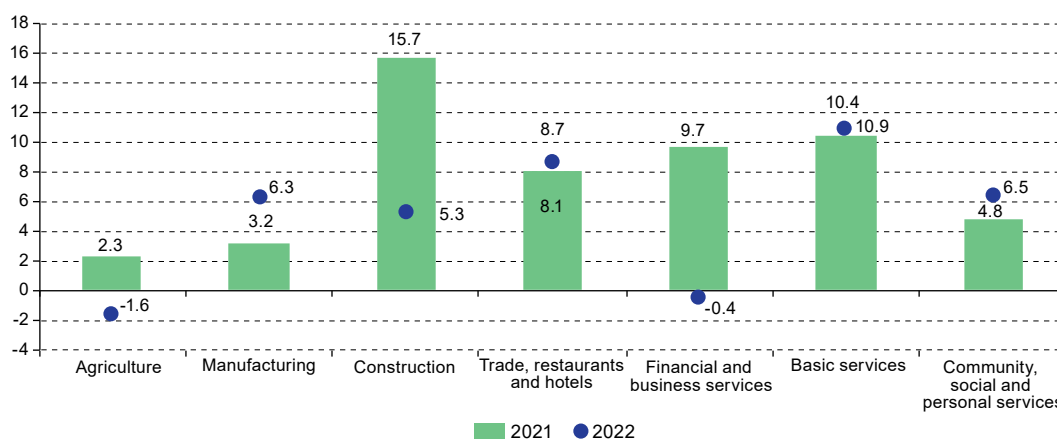
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

H. Higher growth in employment in service industries

A breakdown of the growth in number of employed by sector shows that the highest increases came in services industries, with 10.9% in basic services, 8.7% in Trade, restaurants and hotels, and 6.5% in community, social and personal services (see figure I.10). Those three sectors account for more than 60% of total employment in the region and, as a group, their share of total employment has increased over the last 5 years. Other sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, also had positive growth rates in 2022 (6.3% and 5.3%, respectively). Meanwhile, the number of employed in activities such as agriculture and financial and business services fell in 2022 compared to 2021 levels, and in agriculture to levels lower than those reported in 2019.

Figure I.10

Latin America and the Caribbean (10 countries):^a change in the number of employed persons, by sector, 2021–2022 (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 The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

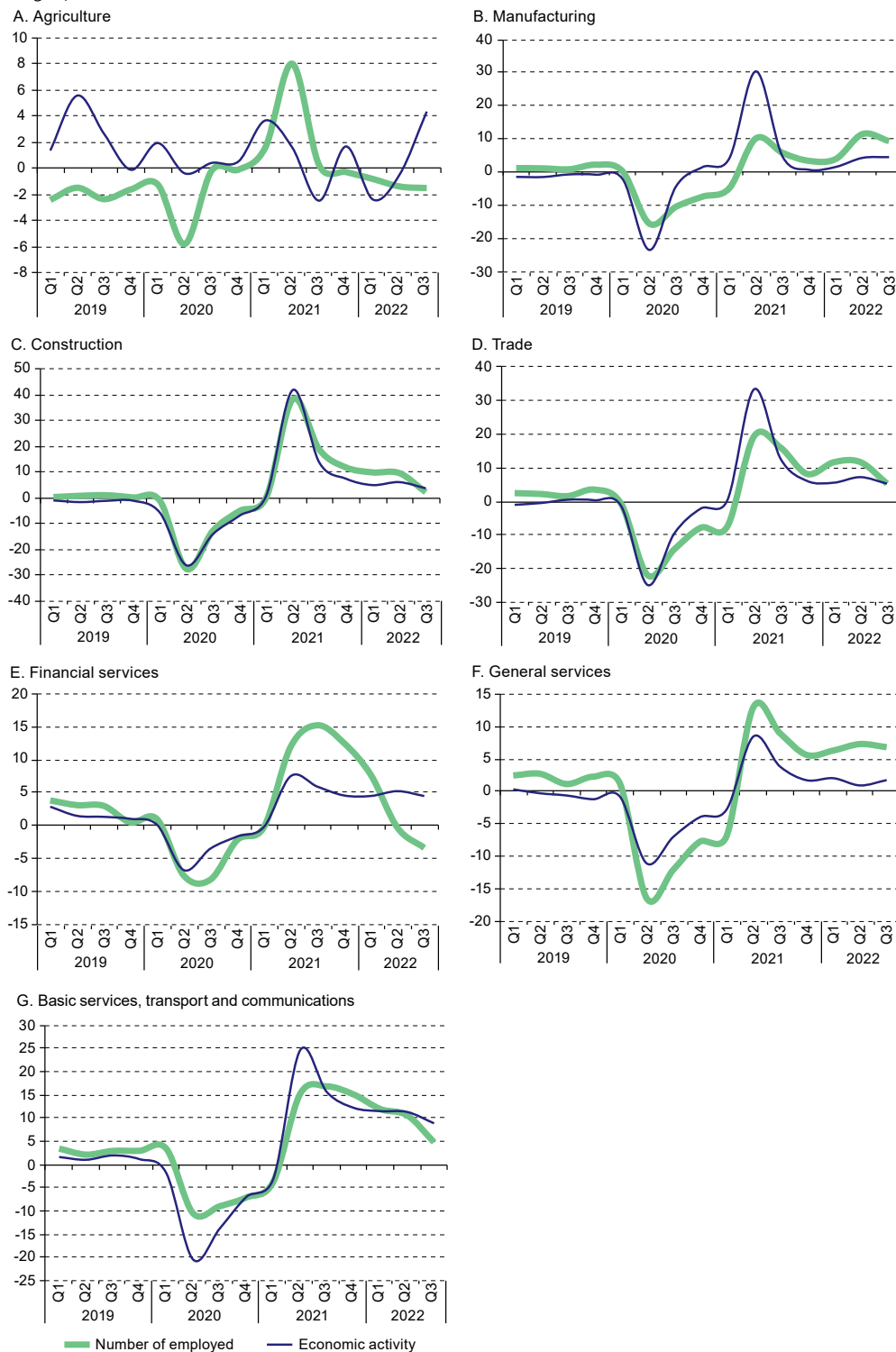
I. Growth rates for the number of employed and economic activity converge following the reopening of the region's economies

Following the slump in economic activity in 2020, as a result of lockdowns and physical distancing measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it recovered more robustly than the number of employed, where growth rates trailed those of production. This asymmetry between the two variables was repeated across all sectors of economic activity. The lag in the number of employed narrowed in 2022, as growth rates for this indicator outpaced those of economic activity (see the second part of this report).

However, that greater buoyancy weakened from the second quarter of 2022 onwards in most sectors of economic activity, leading to a convergence with output growth rates (see figure I.11). This was due to the fact that all sectors had recovered their pre-pandemic employment levels by then, so the strong growth was no longer the result of a rebound effect, but of specific situations in each country.

Figure I.11

Latin America and the Caribbean (11 countries):^a a quarterly change in the number of employed and value added, by sector of economic activity, 2019–2022
(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.

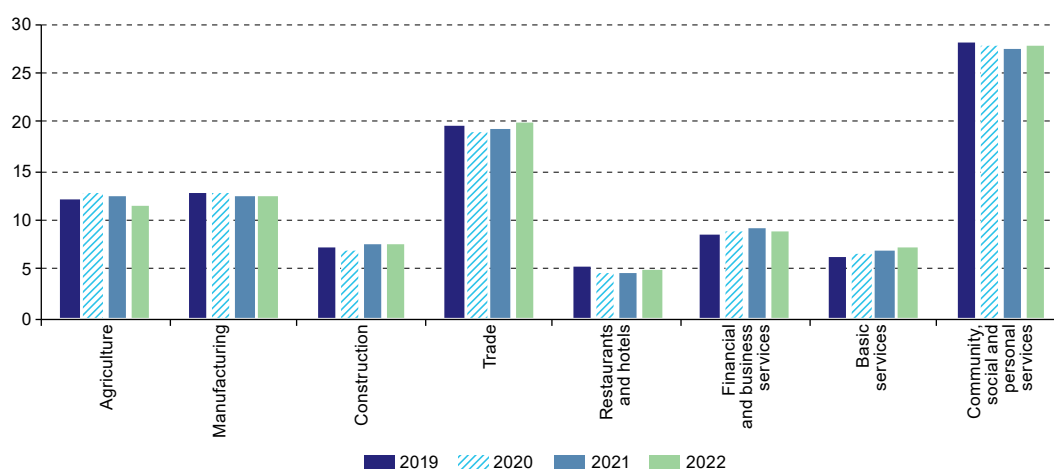
^a The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

J. Despite strong demand and supply shocks, the distribution of employed persons by sector of economic activity remains unchanged

Given the demand and supply shocks recorded in 2020, the number of employed by sector as a share of total employment increased the most in essential activities, where output levels were largely maintained. However, in 2022, as production and employment levels returned to normal, the distribution of employed by sector returned to pre-pandemic levels. Despite severe shocks to production structures, employment distribution proved resilient (see figure I.12).

Figure I.12

Latin America and the Caribbean (11 countries):^a share of employed persons, by sector of economic activity, in total employment, 2019–2022
(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.

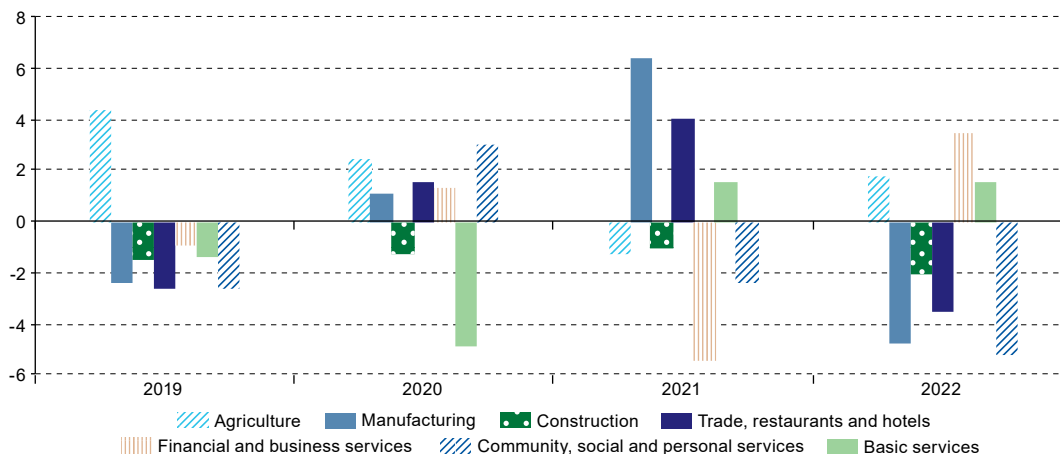
^a The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

The normalization in the growth rates of the number of employed and in their distribution by sector was also seen in labour productivity. After mostly positive growth rates in 2020, in 2022 only two sectors other than agriculture (financial and business services and basic services) registered increases in labour productivity (see figure I.13), as there was a return to the poor performance that has characterized this indicator since 1980, with a 2.0% drop in 2022, as shown in ECLAC/ILO, 2022.

Figure I.13

Latin America and the Caribbean (11 countries):^a change in of labour productivity by sector of economic activity, 2019–2022

(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

K. Stagnation in the purchasing power of the regional average wage amid rising inflation

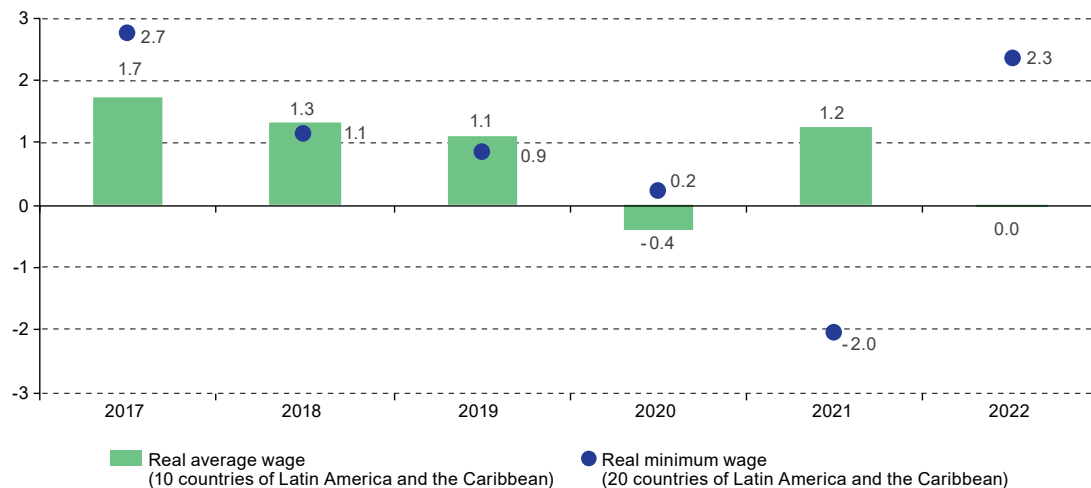
The rise in inflation in 2022, especially during the first half of the year, had a significant adverse impact on the purchasing power of Latin American and Caribbean households. In most of the region's economies, inflation exceeded the averages registered since the global financial crisis (3.9%) and reached 8.6% in June 2022 and 6.5% by the end of the year.³ To offset the effect on low-income workers, nominal minimum wages were increased region-wide, and the median nominal minimum wage change was 9.0% for the region in 2022, well above the changes seen in the 5 years prior to the pandemic. In that regard, the most notable increases were reported in Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico, where the changes reached double digits. In the case of Argentina and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the nominal minimum wage rose by 68% and 1,650%, respectively.

In 2022, interaction between higher inflation and increases in the nominal minimum wage resulted in a 2.3% upswing in the regional median real minimum wage, which contrasts with the 2.0% reduction recorded in 2021 (see figure I.14). In 2022, the real minimum wage rose in 13 of the 20 countries for which information is available, the median rate of increase being 3.1%. In countries where the real minimum wage contracted, the median decline was 2.3%. By contrast, the regional median rate of growth in the average wage was zero, and 5 of the 10 countries for which information is available saw a drop in the average real wage, the median contraction being 1.8%; the other 5 countries saw an increase, with a median growth rate of 2.1%.

³ These regional inflation estimates exclude countries with chronic inflation (Argentina, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Haiti and Suriname).

Figure I.14

Latin America and the Caribbean (selected countries): median rates of change in the average wage and minimum wage, both estimated in real terms, 2017–2022
(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.

Note: Average wage calculations were based on data from: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. Minimum wage calculations were based on data from: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

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II. Towards better job creation in the post-pandemic era

Introduction

With the economies and labour markets of Latin America and the Caribbean recovering in 2021 and 2022 from the effects of the health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the basic participation, employment and unemployment rates in 2022 were at levels very similar to those of 2019, the year prior to the start of the pandemic. The similarity of the 2019 and 2022 aggregate labour data invites a more detailed analysis of the evolution of the structure and quality of employment between the two years.

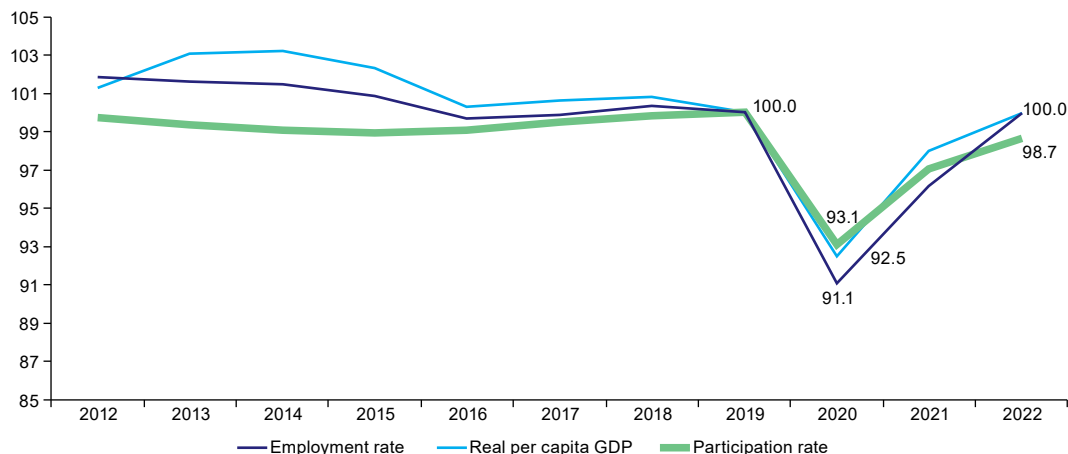
After sharp contractions in gross domestic product (GDP) and labour supply and demand in 2020, there was a rebound in 2021, with a gradual recovery in the region's economic activity and labour market, although there were clear lags in certain sectors and groups. In this transition to a post-pandemic period, the social and labour policies implemented since the beginning of the pandemic and in 2021–2022 played an important role in facilitating the normalization process. However, the lags seen in some vulnerable groups and the emergence of socioeconomic and technological processes, or the acceleration of others that were already in place before the pandemic, pose design and implementation challenges for social and labour policies, which are discussed in this section.

A. Analysis of labour market indicators in the transition to the post-pandemic period

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the economies and labour markets of the region hard, with unprecedented contractions in 2020 in both economic activity and labour participation and employment, particularly affecting the most vulnerable economic sectors and groups of workers (ILO, 2020; ECLAC/ILO, 2020). Since then, as the response to the health crisis and the implementation of economic and social and labour policies enabled a gradual recovery in economic activities, the main labour market indicators have also been normalizing, although initially with lags in the most vulnerable groups (ECLAC/ILO, 2022a; ILO, 2023).

The regional economy and labour market were marked by the harmful effects of the pandemic and the progressive transition back to pre-pandemic levels. A comparison of trends in regional per capita GDP and in employment and participation rates, which have as denominators overall population growth (for the former) and working-age population growth (for the latter), shows that real per capita GDP was actually contractionary in the years prior to the pandemic (see figure II.1). While the contraction in 2020 was stronger in the case of the employment rate, in 2022, both real per capita GDP and the employment rate attained levels almost identical to those seen in 2019.

Figure II.1
Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a real per capita GDP and participation and employment rates, 2012–2022
(Index 2019=100)

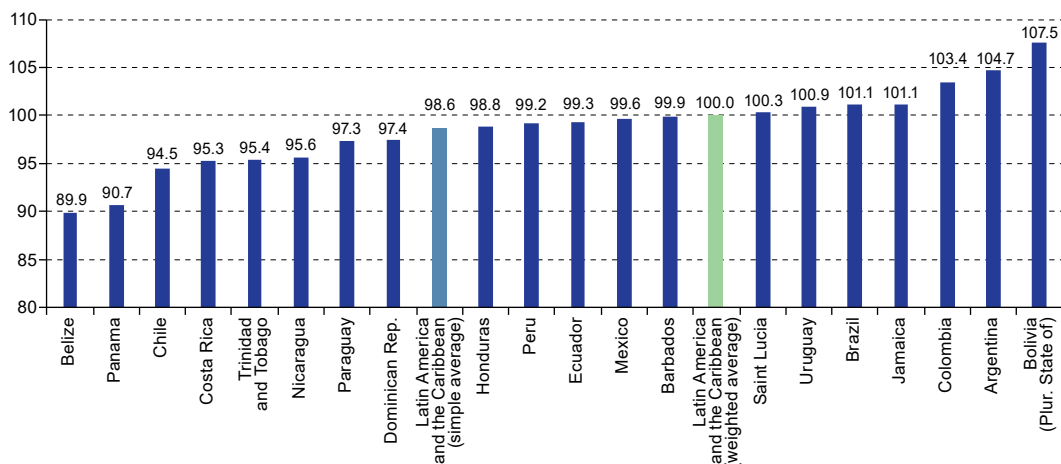


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

Although the trends in the regional employment rate shows that in 2022, as a weighted average, the indicator exactly recovered its pre-pandemic level (2019), analysis at the country level reveals that the recovery remains incomplete for a group of countries. Figure II.2 shows that in 2022, seven countries had surpassed the employment rate they recorded in 2019, with the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Argentina leading the way, while five countries were less than 1.2 percentage points shy of their pre-pandemic levels. However, eight countries lagged further behind, most notably Belize and Panama.

Figure II.2
Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a employment rates by country, 2022 compared to 2019
(Index: 2019=100)

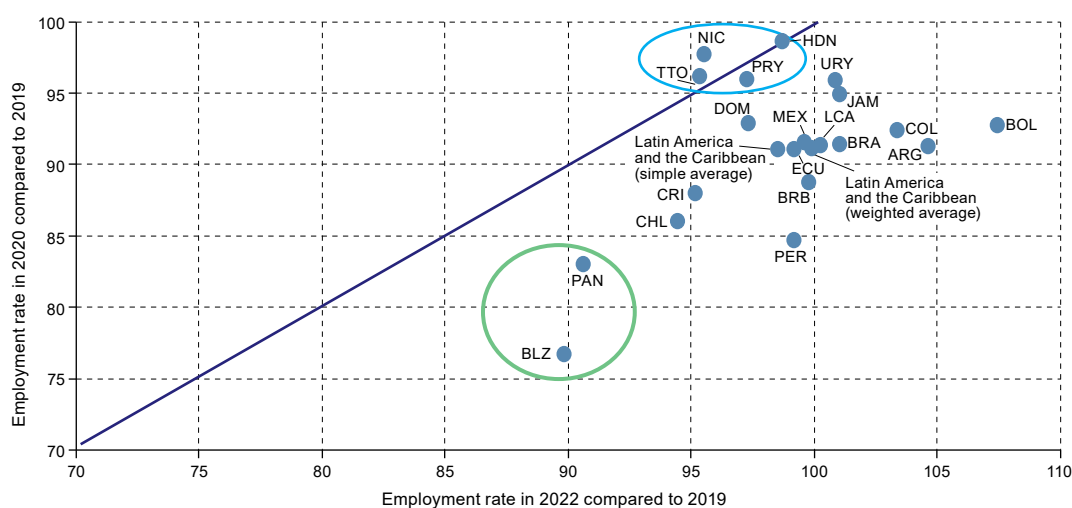


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

As figure II.3 shows, when employment rates by country after the start of the pandemic are compared with those of 2019, the employment rates for 2020 (vertical scale) and 2022 (horizontal scale) illustrate, respectively, the impact of the health crisis in its early stages in each country and the performance of the indicator two years later (2022). Thus, drawing a 45-degree line can show whether in 2022 there was progress (if the country is located below the line) with respect to the 2020 level and how much progress was made in the transition to the post-pandemic era, following the horizontal scale. The figure shows that, although the countries hardest hit at the beginning of the health crisis have seen improvements in their employment rates, they are still below the regional average, particularly in the cases of Belize and Panama. There are also cases in which the initial impact (2020 data compared to 2019) was relatively low, but the employment rate in 2022 worsened compared to 2020 (Trinidad and Tobago and Nicaragua) or hardly improved (Honduras and Paraguay). In the rest of the countries, employment rates in 2022 showed improvements that offset the declines recorded at the beginning of the pandemic, allowing those economies to surpass or come close to their pre-pandemic levels.

Figure II.3

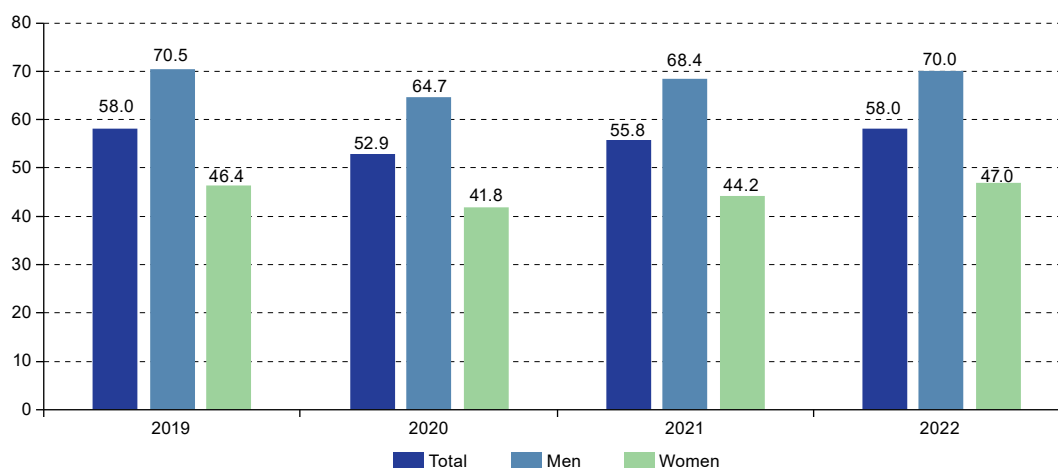
Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries): employment rates by country, 2020 and 2022 compared to 2019 (Index: 2019=100)



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 intensity of this transition varied among different population groups. As figure II.4 indicates, the decline in employment rates in 2020 was more pronounced for men than for women, and the subsequent pace of recovery has been slower for men also. Notably, in 2022 the female employment rate exceeded pre-pandemic levels by 0.6 percentage points. By contrast, in the same year, the employment rate for men lagged that recorded in 2019 by 0.5 percentage points. In that regard, women's return to the labour market was faster than was anticipated at the height of the pandemic. At the same time, the recovery of employment during the transition to the post-pandemic period was faster among young people. As figure II.5 shows, in 2022 the employment rate among 15–24 year-olds was above pre-pandemic levels, while the rate for employed persons aged 25 and older remains below 2019 levels.

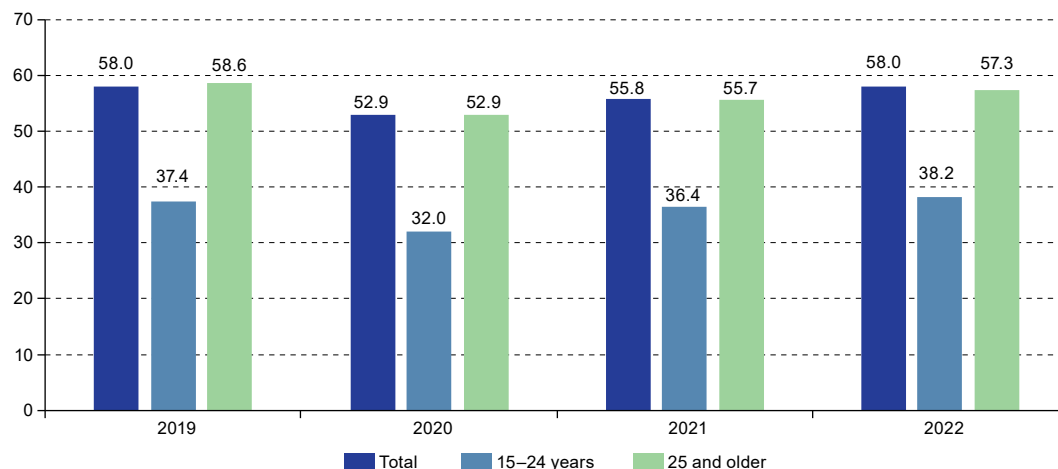
Figure II.4
Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a employment rates, by sex, 2019–2022
(Percentages)



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 The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

Figure II.5
Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a employment rates, by age group, 2019–2022
(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.

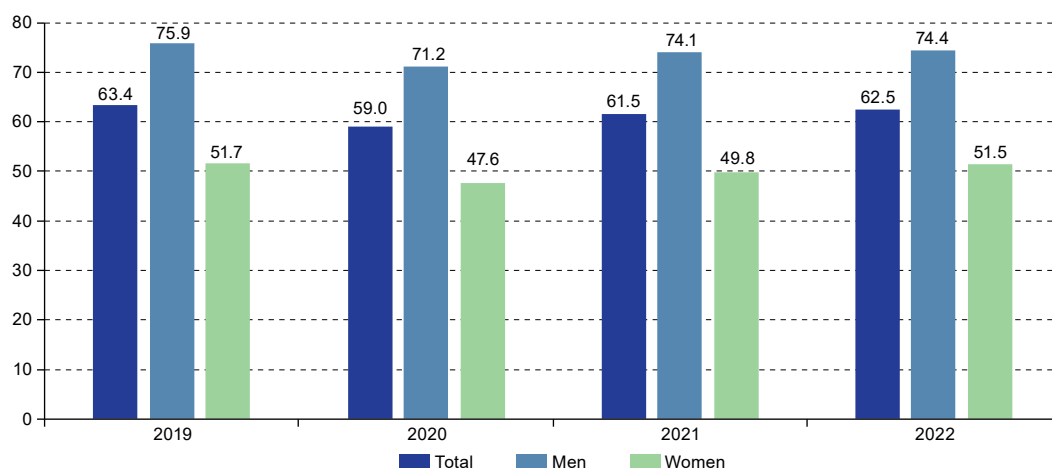
^a The countries included are: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

Analysis of the trends in participation rates also shows that men are lagging behind. While the participation rate for women had virtually returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2022, in the case of men this indicator lagged 1.5 percentage points behind that recorded in 2019 (see figure II.6). As a result, the gender participation gap¹ narrowed from 1.5:1 in 2019 to 1.4:1 in 2022.

¹ Calculated as the ratio of the male labour participation rate to that the female participation rate.

Figure II.6

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a labour participation rates, by sex, 2019–2022
(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

The unemployment rates among men and women showed relatively similar increases in 2020. Subsequently, the effect of the lag in labour participation recovery, together with the rise in the employment rate, which pushed employment levels above pre-pandemic levels, translated in 2022 into a relatively similar decline in the male (0.9 percentage points) and female (0.8 percentage points) unemployment rates compared to 2019 (see figure II.7). However, there was a slight widening of the gender unemployment gap,² from 1.4:1 in 2019 to 1.5:1 in 2022.

Figure II.7

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries):^a unemployment rates, by sex, 2019–2022
(Percentages)



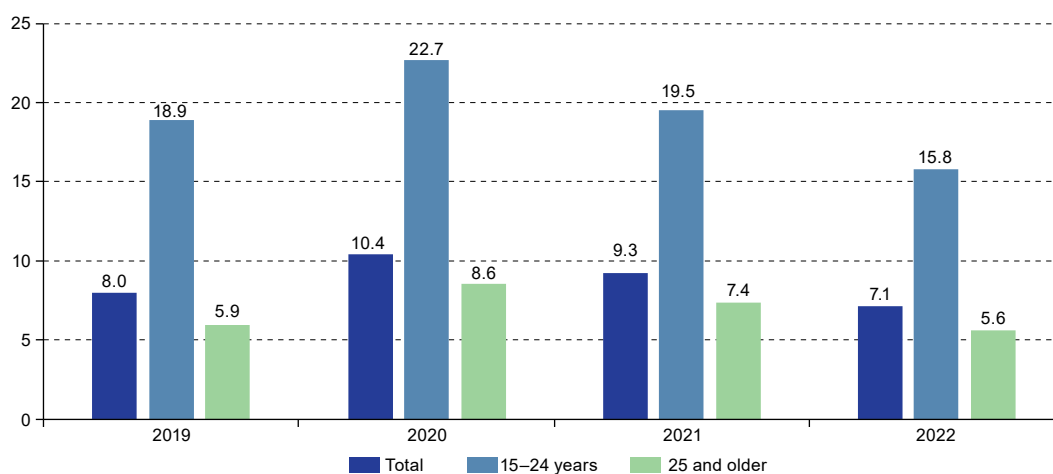
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

² Calculated as the ratio of the female unemployment rate to the male unemployment rate.

An analysis of unemployment rates by age group (see figure II.8) shows that the increase in 2020 was greatest in the 15–24 year group and that the decrease in 2022 was, in turn, relatively more accentuated among young people. Indeed, while in 2022 the unemployment rate in the 25 and older age group was 0.3 percentage points below 2019 levels, in the 15–24 age group the indicator was 3.1 percentage points shy of that level. As a result, the unemployment gap between the two groups narrowed from 3.2:1 to 2.8:1 between 2019 and 2022.³ Therefore, as in the case of women, the return of young people to the labour market was faster than estimated at the beginning of the pandemic.

Figure II.8
Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries):^a unemployment rates, by age group, 2019–2022
(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 The countries included are: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

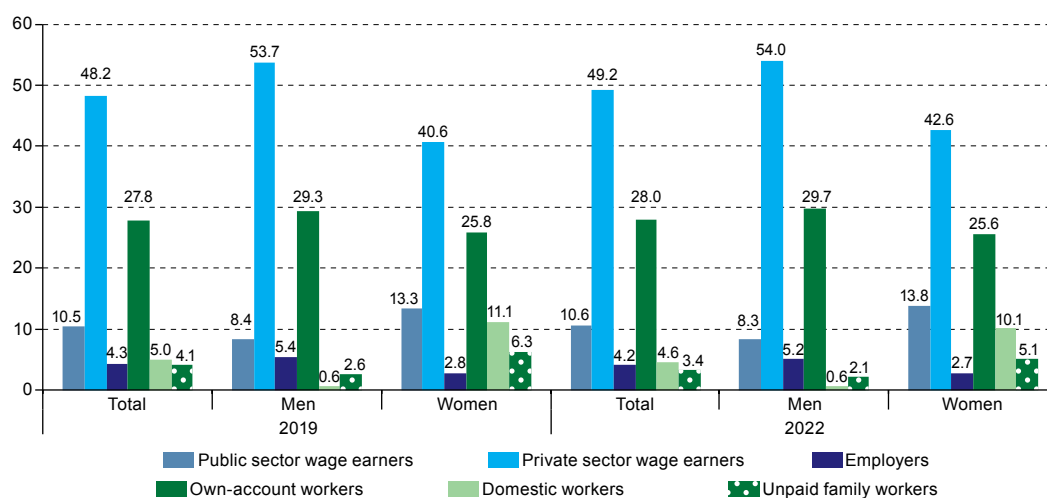
B. Increase in the share of wage earners, particularly women, three years after the onset of the pandemic

In terms of occupational categories, there was an increase in the share of wage employment and a reduction in the categories with higher levels of informality. As figure II.9 shows, between 2019 and 2022, the share in total employment of wage earners in the private sector increased (1.0 percentage point) as did, to a lesser extent, that of own-account workers (0.2 percentage points). By contrast, during the same period, there was a decline in the share in total employment of unpaid family workers (0.7 percentage points) and domestic workers (0.4 percentage points). These changes in employment categories among men and women were nuanced. In particular, the increase in the share of wage earners in the private sector was greater among women (2.0 percentage points) than among men (0.3 percentage points) and, while own-account work rose by 0.4 percentage points for men, among women it fell by 0.2 percentage points. Lastly, there was a sharp drop in women's employment as domestic workers (1.0 percentage point) and as unpaid family workers (1.2 percentage points).

³ Calculated as the ratio between the unemployment rates for the 15–24 age group and the 25 and older age group.

Figure II.9

Latin America (13 countries):^a composition of employment by occupational category and sex, 2019 and 2022 (Percentages of total)

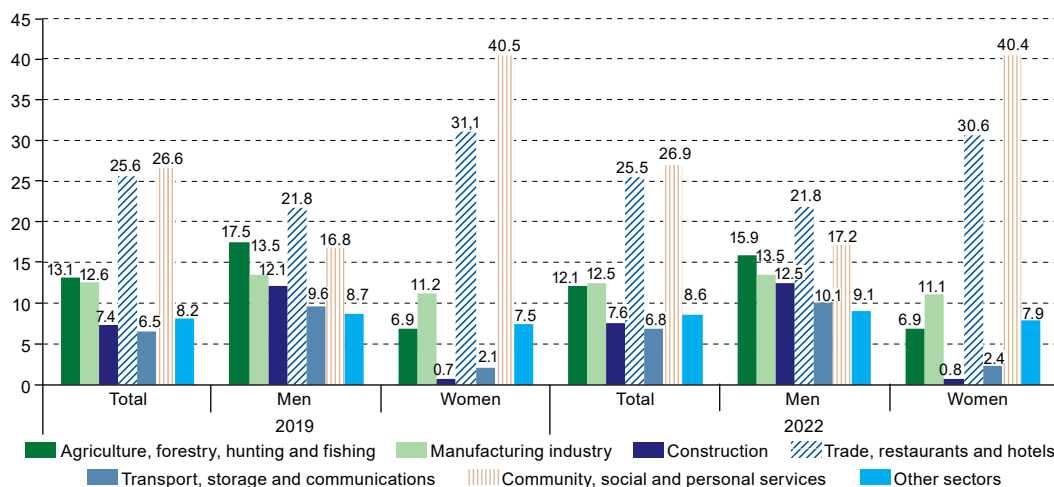


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.

An analysis of variations in employment by sectors reveals that the share of the services sector in total employment has increased compared to pre-pandemic levels. As figure II.10 shows, compared to the 2019 data, in 2022, the agriculture and industry sectors saw declines in their share in total employment of 1.0 and 0.1 percentage points, respectively. This was also the case for some branches of services that were particularly adversely affected by the pandemic, such as the trade, restaurants and hotels sector (whose share dropped by 0.1 percentage points). Meanwhile, the share of the rest of the service sectors, as a whole, in total employment went up by 1.0 percentage point, while the share of construction also grew (0.2 percentage points). Ultimately, this meant that employment growth seen in the service sectors in the past decades continued, accompanied by a recomposition effect related to the service sectors that were relatively more affected by the pandemic. The intensity of this process varied in the case of men and women. For men, the most significant drop in employment share was seen in agriculture (1.6 percentage points), while the share of the service sectors grew; for women, however, the composition of the service sectors changed, with the share of employment in trade falling 0.5 percentage points, while the share of employment in transport and other sectors rose.

Figure II.10
Latin America (13 countries):^a composition of employment by sectors of activity and sex, 2019 and 2022
(Percentages of total)

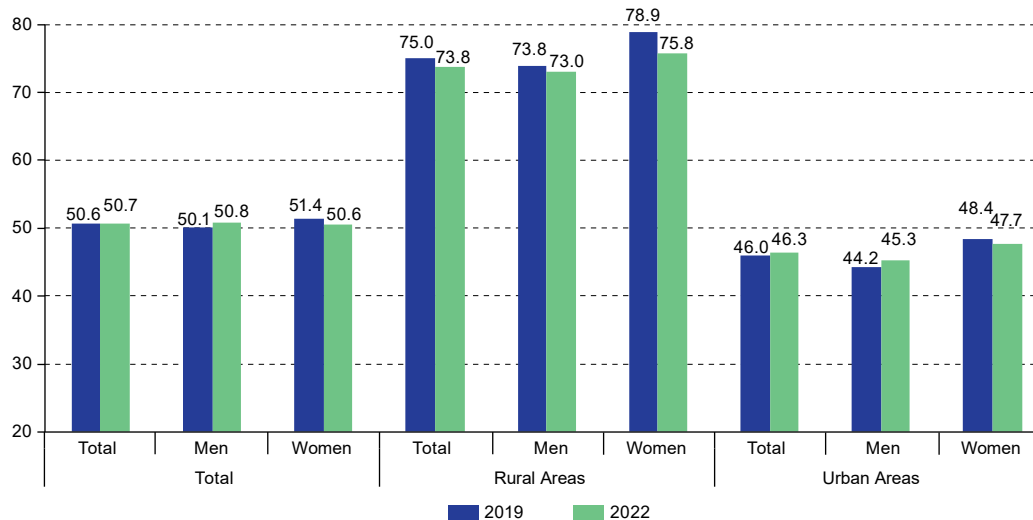


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and International Labour Organization (ILO), on the basis of official information from the countries.

^a The countries included are: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay.

The changes in the structure of employment by occupational categories and sectors of activity during the transition to the post-pandemic era led to a return of the informality rate to pre-pandemic levels. As figure II.11 shows, informality rates in the region remained practically unchanged during the 2019–2022 period, despite the fact that at the beginning of the pandemic the greater impact of the health crisis on informal employment led to a drop in informality levels (ILO, 2020; ECLAC/ILO, 2021). In contrast, during the entire process of progressive recovery in employment between late 2020 and late 2022, informal employment grew more, pushing informality rates upwards (ILO, 2023; ECLAC/ILO, 2022a). As a result, the labour informality rate in 2022 (50.7%) was almost identical to that of 2019 (50.6%).

Figure II.11
Latin America (8 countries):^a informality rates, by sex and geographic area, 2019 and 2022
(Percentages of total employment)



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 The countries included are: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay.

However, three years after the pandemic started, changes were visible in the composition of informality, which increased in the case of men and in urban areas. In particular, between 2019 and 2022, informality rates among men went up, while they fell among women. This could be explained by the more pronounced increase in women's wage employment in the private sector, which was offset a significant drop in employment in domestic work and unpaid family work. Informality rates fell in rural areas overall, although this was the result of the significant reduction in the indicator for women (3.1 percentage points), which far outweighed the increase for men (0.8 percentage points). Conversely, in urban areas, informality rates climbed slightly, as a result of the fact that the increase among men (1.1 percentage points) was greater than the drop among women (0.7 percentage points).

C. A look at the labour policy response in the post-pandemic transition: analysis of the effects of policies implemented

As mentioned in several regional studies (ECLAC/ILO, 2021; ILO, 2023), there are three stages in the implementation of policies in the region from 2020 onwards. The first is linked to measures put in place in 2020 to sustain formal employment and incomes. This stage was characterized by policies to maintain employment, which mainly sought to benefit formal workers and to contribute to the sustainability of production units severely affected by the slump in demand. In addition, the eligibility requirements for and duration of existing unemployment insurance were made more flexible, while the benefits they provided increased. In addition, some job-creation incentive measures were introduced starting in the second and third quarters of 2020, in the form of hiring subsidies and tax incentives. Lastly, economic safety-net policies were implemented for families and workers in the informal economy, generally linked to existing conditional transfer programmes.

In the second stage, mainly implemented during 2021, emphasis was placed on activating job-creation incentives and promoting income protection programmes. Both policies tended to be more targeted, with an emphasis on the groups that were hit hardest by the pandemic, including women and young people. Lastly, the third stage, in 2022, was characterized by greater planning in the design of policies and programmes. Particular emphasis was given to income protection mechanisms—in a context of rapid inflation—and incentives for job creation, including public employment programmes.

Against this background and timeline, five groups of policies implemented between 2020 and 2022 in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean stand out: (i) strategies to maintain employment relationships, (ii) unemployment benefits, (iii) programmes to provide economic security to the individuals and families most affected by the crisis (who were not in formal wage employment relationships or were not covered by contributory social security programmes), (iv) incentives for the creation of formal employment, and (v) training policies, including retraining and reskilling (see table II.1). Although the aforementioned policies and instruments do not exhaust the public initiatives carried out during this period, they serve as a frame of reference to analyse the logic of the implementation of social and labour policies that contributed to the transition to the post-pandemic period.⁴

⁴ At the regional level, public initiatives also took the form of active fiscal responses, flexible monetary policies, direct actions aimed at specific economic sectors, credit and financial support for companies (especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)), support for micro-enterprises, protections for workers in the workplace, telework laws and the use and revival of mechanisms to achieve consensus through social dialogue (see ECLAC, 2020).

Table II.1

Latin America and the Caribbean: the five main types of policies implemented to sustain employment and income since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

Maintenance of employment	Economic security for the unemployed	Economic security for households and individuals in the informal economy	Incentives for creating formal wage employment	Training policies
Payroll subsidies Unemployment insurance in the event of suspension or reduction of work hours Other support to companies conditioned to the employment preservation	Unemployment insurance (contributory)	Conditional benefits Unconditional benefits (emergency) Other cash and non-cash benefits	Access to financing Payroll subsidies Temporary public employment programmes Tax incentives	Optimizing use of existing infrastructure Use of online platforms Telework in dual training Internet data acquisition
Recipients				
Formally employed (full- and part-time, furloughed)	Unemployed with previous unemployment insurance contributions	Unemployed, workers and persons not active in the informal economy Individuals without income or with low income, regardless of employment status	Employers Unemployed young people, women Workers in affected sectors	Working-age population
Examples				
Argentina: Emergency Assistance Programme for Work and Production (ATP) Uruguay: Unemployment Insurance Chile: Unemployment Insurance Paraguay: subsidy through the Social Security Institute (Instituto de Previsión Social – IPS) Cuba: wage guarantee	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Colombia, Uruguay, Mexico City	Chile: COVID-19 grant, Emergency Family Income (IFE) Argentina: Emergency Family Income (IFE) Brazil: Emergency Assistance Costa Rica: Proteger grant	Guatemala: Working Capital Loan Fund (Fondo de Crédito para capitales de Trabajo) Chile: Back to work Line (Línea regresa) Guyana: Part-Time Job Initiative Bermuda: New Hires Relief	Costa Rica: telework in dual training Colombia: Provision of Internet data to students Curaçao, Jamaica and Montserrat: training for tourism workers

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO), 2022 *Labour Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean*, Lima, 2023.

What stands out when analysing the implementation of policies and their impact on labour indicators is their sequencing, focus and intensity during the different stages of the transition to the post-pandemic period. In particular, during 2020, although measures were taken in an attempt to protect the income of informal workers and their families, the bulk of policies were aimed at maintaining formal employment and the economic security of the unemployed (ECLAC/ILO, 2021).

To that end, through adjustments to facilitate coverage, access and flexibility, such policies focused on employees and formal employment conditions. In particular, countries that already had unemployment insurance (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Uruguay) quickly relaxed the application criteria, which made it possible to ensure, or even extend, its coverage. In turn, several of those countries have a relatively higher proportion of wage employment than countries that did not have such policy instruments.

Thus, the application of unemployment insurance mechanisms meant that the impact of the pandemic in terms of job destruction its first year was relatively lower among the more formal groups (men, workers aged 25 and older, goods sectors, wage earners) compared to the more informal ones (women, young people aged 15–24, service sectors, own-account workers). That would explain, on the one hand, the drop in informality rates at the beginning of the pandemic and, on the other, the relatively greater precariousness of the most informal segments of workers in those countries (ILO, 2020); ECLAC/ILO, 2021).

Another policy instrument that was activated at the onset of the pandemic and helped to maintain employment, especially in 2020 and 2021, was the passage of legislation (or activation of existing legal provisions) permitting teleworking, to ensure that companies whose workers could not physically be

at the workplace could operate. Prior to the emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, some countries in the region already had laws governing telework (Colombia since 2008, Peru since 2013, Brazil since 2017 and Costa Rica since 2019), and in 2020 other countries (such as Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay) implemented laws in that regard. In 2021, Paraguay passed Act No. 6738, which recognizes teleworking in the employment relationship, while Colombia enacted Act No. 2088, which governs work from home and introduces other provisions. These legal reforms allowed 20% to 30% of wage earners who were employed to work from home during the period of lockdown (Maurizio, 2021), which undoubtedly helped to mitigate the impact of the health crisis in terms of formal job losses.

Since the end of 2020, as lockdown measures were reduced, and more so in 2021, when the vaccination process began, there was a gradual transition from an emphasis on policies to maintain employment towards instruments that prioritized formal employment creation incentives (ECLAC/ILO, 2021; ILO, 2023). In turn, those instruments were adjusted, from a design that facilitated the general hiring of employees, seen in late 2020 and early 2021, to one that prioritized the hiring of employees from groups most affected by the pandemic, such as women and young people, between the second half of 2021 and 2022 (ILO, 2023), especially in economic sectors relatively more affected by the health crisis.

The design of policies to facilitate the new job creation included tax incentive mechanisms or subsidies for companies (Argentina, Chile, El Salvador and Uruguay) and, to a lesser extent, subsidies for workers themselves (Chile) (ECLAC/ILO, 2021; ILO, 2023). Those mechanisms involved subsidizing a significant portion of the salaries of new workers, initially in a generalized manner and, subsequently, on a differentiated basis, with higher subsidies for more-vulnerable workers, such as women and young people. Although these mechanisms were short-term, most of the countries that used them implemented them in 2021 and most of 2022 (ECLAC/ILO, 2021; ILO, 2023).

In the period 2021–2022, several countries and territories (Bermuda, Ecuador, Guyana and Peru) took advantage of the existence of public employment programmes to mitigate the effects of the employment crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Such programmes focused on the most affected and vulnerable population in the labour markets or expanded to encompass other activities, although most of them targeted temporary jobs in the construction sector (ILO, 2023).

In parallel, during the same period, economic security policies for families and individuals in the informal economy continued, albeit with a different purpose: whereas at the onset of the pandemic such policies were used to guarantee a source of income for informal workers unable to go to work due to lockdown measures, in 2022 they served to offset cost-of-living increases associated with rising inflation (ILO, 2023). Most of the instruments used in this group were unconditional cash transfer policies, although in-kind transfers were also used in isolated cases. A common feature is that in most countries these transfers were expanded to cover more of the population than in previous crises and were implemented within the framework of existing income transfer policies or mechanisms.

Analysis of the possible impacts of these policies and employment trends between 2021 and 2022 shows that there was higher growth in informal employment than in formal employment, which, in turn, explains the progressive rise in the rate of informality in that interval, eventually reaching the pre-pandemic levels mentioned above. However, as the recovery dynamics of wage employment up to 2022 were more pronounced in groups relatively more affected by the pandemic in 2020, such as women and young people, there are indications that policy instruments implemented to encourage hiring from those groups contributed to their better relative performance.

Beyond the continuity of transfer policies for informal workers and their families in a context of rising inflation, most countries did not implement policies targeting groups characterized by informal employment, such as domestic workers, whose share of total employment had declined by 2022, particularly among women. This is in addition to other effects of labour conditions in the sector, such as labour income (ECLAC/ILO, 2022a). In this sense, the reduction in the rate of informality among women seen in 2022 at the regional level would appear to be related to a prioritization in recruitment policies for female employees in private companies, coupled with a relative absence of policies facilitating the reinsertion of female domestic workers in the labour market.

D. Reflections and lessons learned

As discussed throughout this second part, in 2022, the main labour market indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean during the transition to the post-pandemic period recovered from the aggregate levels observed in 2019, i.e. the pre-pandemic baseline. Although the performance of the economy and main labour indicators in the years prior to the pandemic had been affected by slow growth and stagnation, the almost total return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022 is evidence that growth exceeded the expectations held at the beginning of the health crisis, with the region's economy and labour market contracting in 2020 in a manner without precedent in the last century (ECLAC/ILO, 2020).

However, the labour market's performance is nuanced in a several ways, both in terms of how it relates to the performance of the economy, as well as the trends experienced by different groups of employed people. Economic activity clearly returned to pre-pandemic levels much faster than labour market indicators: while regional GDP had already recovered to 2019 levels by 2021 and was 3.2 percentage points higher in 2022, the regional employment rate did not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2022. However, a look at the performance of per capita GDP shows that the trajectories are similar, with both reaching pre-pandemic levels in 2022.

These performances highlight several aspects that need to be taken into consideration in assessing the labour market trajectory in the transition to the post-pandemic period. Firstly, the economic contraction in 2020 (both total and per capita) was smaller than that of the employment rate, so the gap to recover pre-pandemic levels was wider for employment, which, consequently, heightened the need to implement employment maintenance policies at the start of the pandemic. Moreover, the pandemic accelerated processes (teleworking, adjustments in companies' working hours, changes in production processes linked to new technologies) that may have affected both the speed of recovery of economies and the productivity increases generated during the years of transition to the post-pandemic period.

In addition, in 2022 basic labour market rates recovered to pre-pandemic levels (2019), and, contrary to fears, the situation of women and young people showed a slight improvement in 2022 compared to 2019 levels. However, the structural problems existing in the labour markets before the pandemic (informality, gender and age gaps) have not been solved and continue to pose an enormous challenge, which may intensify from 2023 onwards if adequate policy responses are not developed, especially considering that the macroeconomic and labour situation worsened once more in the final months of 2022 and the early months of 2023.

In that regard, social and labour policies face multiple challenges: how to sustain the implementation of productive changes and the necessary productivity improvements in a region with obvious technology gaps (ILO, 2022a; ECLAC/ILO, 2022b); how to ensure that these improvements translate into wage increases and better conditions for workers in a context of high inflation and stagnation of real wages (ECLAC/ILO, 2022a); and how to continue institution building so that, in a context of lower growth, the gaps by gender, age and formality do not widen.

Part of the answer could be to activate institutional instruments, such as collective bargaining, to enable discussion of wage adjustments at the level of production units and sectors of activity in order to meet the needs of both workers (to recover real wage losses due to inflation) and companies and sectors (so that they can adjust wages according to their productivity levels) (ILO, 2022b; ECLAC/ILO, 2022b). Likewise, the sustainability and absorption of technological improvements must go hand in hand with improvements and relevance in the design of training and labour intermediation policies (ILO, 2022b; ILO, 2023).

In turn, an assessment of the performance of labour indicators shows that the recovery of employment levels in 2022 with respect to pre-pandemic levels was stronger in some of the groups worst affected at the beginning of the health crisis, such as women and young people, compared to men and adults. This is good news, since it created a different pattern from other regional recessionary episodes: in the transition to the post-pandemic period, gender and old-age gaps in employment narrowed.

The performance of employment among young people and women, in turn, occurred in a context in which the focus of policies that sought to accelerate job creation in 2021 shifted from being generalized to targeting the hardest hit segments. While there are, as yet, no empirical studies providing detailed evidence of the impact that this policy approach had on the improved performance seen among women and young people, the sequence, timing and targeted structure of the incentives to accelerate the hiring of these groups suggest that a design scheme for policy responses to similar crises in the future should take into account the specificities of the groups most affected.

Another important aspect to highlight in the transition of the labour market to the post-pandemic era is the possibility of having different policy instruments, and the effectiveness of their use will depend on how they are coordinated. In particular, the health crisis made it clear that instruments such as unemployment insurance, hiring subsidies and teleworking entail the need to establish a sequence related to the different stages of recessionary cycles, since each has a different objective: employment maintenance (unemployment insurance, teleworking) and acceleration or facilitation of job creation (hiring subsidies). At the same time, the need to deliver a swift and relevant response at each stage of the recessionary cycle meant having a measure of flexibility to adjust these instruments so that their coverage and duration could be extended and their access facilitated.

However, the effectiveness of these policy instruments depends to a large extent on the size of the target group: wage earners. In that sense, despite the implementation of income maintenance policies for informal workers and their families in the transition to the post-pandemic period, which were necessary in the different contexts of the health crisis (first the lockdown and then the rise in inflation), the importance of formal employment as a key element in facilitating the impact of the set of social and labour policies cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, considering that in 2022 the region registered the same informality levels as in 2019, it is necessary to continue supporting institutional and policy efforts (social and labour, economic and others) that support the transition from labour informality to formality.

Lastly, although the drop in informality rates among women in the region in 2022 relative to 2019 signified a shift from the trends seen in previous crises, this occurred in a context of job destruction in particularly vulnerable employment categories, such as domestic work. The pronounced drop in the share of domestic work in total employment suggests a possible structural change in both supply and demand in this employment category, in a context of lower household income and rearrangements of domestic tasks during the pandemic. It is urgent, therefore, to consider paid domestic workers when formulating social and labour responses in the post-pandemic period and to move forward with institutional and policy efforts aimed at formalization, while at the same time considering the new supply and demand dynamics generated during the pandemic.

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Annex A1

Table A1.1

Latin America and the Caribbean: unemployment, by year, country and sex
(Average annual rates)

Country		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	Total	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.3	6.5	8.5	8.4	9.2	9.8	11.5	8.8	6.8
	Men	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.5	5.7	7.8	7.5	8.2	9.2	10.8	7.9	6.1
	Women	8.5	8.8	8.5	8.4	7.6	9.4	9.5	10.5	10.7	12.4	9.9	7.6
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	Total	2.7	2.3	2.9	2.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.2	5.1	3.5
	Men	2.2	1.6	2.3	1.7	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.5	4.1	4.6	3.0
	Women	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.3	5.6	4.1
Brazil ^c	Total	6.7	7.4	7.2	6.9	8.6	11.6	12.8	12.4	12.0	13.8	13.2	9.3
	Men	4.9	6.0	5.8	5.8	7.3	10.1	11.2	10.8	10.1	11.8	10.7	7.5
	Women	9.1	9.4	9.1	8.5	10.4	13.7	14.9	14.5	14.4	16.3	16.5	11.5
Chile ^d	Total	7.3	6.6	6.1	6.5	6.3	6.7	7.0	7.4	7.2	10.8	8.9	7.9
	Men	6.2	5.6	5.4	6.1	5.8	6.3	6.5	6.7	6.7	10.6	8.6	7.4
	Women	8.9	8.1	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.2	7.5	8.3	8.0	11.0	9.2	8.5
Colombia ^e	Total	10.1	9.7	9.0	8.5	8.3	8.6	8.8	9.1	9.9	15.1	13.8	11.2
	Men	7.9	7.5	7.0	6.7	6.4	6.8	6.9	7.1	7.8	12.3	11.3	9.0
	Women	13.1	12.7	11.7	11.0	10.8	11.1	11.4	11.6	12.6	19.2	17.3	14.3
Costa Rica	Total	10.3	10.2	9.4	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.1	10.3	11.8	19.6	16.4	12.2
	Men	8.7	8.9	8.3	8.1	8.0	8.0	7.5	8.4	9.3	15.6	12.7	9.4
	Women	13.0	12.2	11.1	11.9	12.2	12.1	11.6	13.2	15.3	25.7	22.0	16.5
Ecuador ^f	Total	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.6	4.5	3.8	3.5	3.8	6.2	4.6	3.8
	Men	2.9	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.7	3.0	2.9	3.2	5.3	3.7	3.3
	Women	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.1	4.5	5.8	4.9	4.4	4.6	7.6	5.8	4.5
El Salvador	Total	6.6	6.1	5.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.3	6.3	6.9	...	...
	Men	8.2	7.3	6.8	8.6	8.4	8.1	8.3	7.3	7.0	7.1	...	...
	Women	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.7	5.0	5.3	5.2	4.9	5.4	6.6	...	...
Guatemala ^g	Total	4.1	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.2	...	2.2	3.0
	Men	2.9	2.4	2.7	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.8	...	1.8	...
	Women	6.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	2.9	3.0	...	2.9	...
Honduras ^h	Total	4.3	3.6	3.9	5.3	7.3	7.4	6.7	5.7	5.7	10.9	8.6	8.2
	Men	3.3	2.9	3.3	4.5	4.4	5.1	4.0	4.5	4.2	8.7	7.0	4.7
	Women	6.1	5.0	4.9	6.7	11.8	10.7	10.8	7.4	8.1	13.7	10.7	11.4
Mexico ⁱ	Total	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.5	4.4	4.1	3.3
	Men	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.8	3.3	3.2	3.5	4.7	4.1	3.2
	Women	5.2	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.5	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5	4.1	4.2	3.3
Nicaragua	Total	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.6	5.9	4.5	3.7	5.5	5.4	5.0	4.5	3.5
	Men	5.5	5.4	5.6	6.2	5.6	4.2	3.5	5.4	5.4	5.2	4.6	3.5
	Women	6.6	6.6	6.0	7.0	6.3	4.8	3.8	5.5	5.5	4.7	4.4	3.5
Panama ^j	Total	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.9	4.4	4.9	4.9	5.8	18.6	8.5	8.2
	Men	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.7	3.1	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.8	13.6	8.0	6.9
	Women	3.6	3.9	4.1	4.6	5.0	5.4	6.4	6.4	7.3	24.7	9.3	9.9
Paraguay ^k	Total	5.5	4.6	5.0	6.0	5.4	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.6	7.7	7.5	6.8
	Men	4.3	3.7	4.5	4.6	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.4	5.5	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Women	7.3	5.8	5.7	8.1	6.1	7.5	7.6	7.4	8.0	10.2	9.7	8.1
Peru ^l	Total	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.5	4.2	4.1	3.9	3.9	7.7	5.9	4.4
	Men	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.5	7.6	5.2	3.7
	Women	4.4	4.4	4.7	4.0	3.6	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.5	7.7	6.6	5.3
Uruguay ^m	Total	6.3	6.5	6.5	6.6	7.5	7.8	7.9	8.3	8.9	10.1	9.3	7.9
	Men	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	6.4	6.5	6.6	6.9	7.3	8.7	7.9	6.9
	Women	8.1	8.3	8.2	8.3	8.9	9.4	9.5	10.1	10.7	12.4	11.0	9.0
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Total	8.3	8.1	7.8	7.2	7.1	7.3	7.3	7.3	6.8	...	...	...
	Men	7.7	7.4	7.1	6.7	6.7	7.0	6.4	6.4	6.4	...	...	...
	Women	9.2	9.0	8.8	8.1	7.8	7.7	8.6	8.6	7.5	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	Total	3.2	3.5	3.3	2.7	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.4	...	...
	Men	3.0	3.4	3.1	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.3	...	...
	Women	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	1.8	1.2	1.6	...	...
Dominican Republic ⁿ	Total	6.1	6.7	7.4	6.7	7.3	7.1	5.5	5.7	6.2	5.8	7.4	5.3
	Men	4.7	5.1	5.3	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.0	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.2
	Women	8.3	9.2	10.5	9.7	10.5	10.5	7.8	8.8	9.3	8.6	12.1	8.2

Country		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas ^a	Total	15.9	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	...	...	...
Barbados ^a	Total	11.2	11.6	11.6	12.3	11.3	9.7	10.0	10.1	9.6	15.6	14.1	8.4
	Men	9.8	10.9	11.7	11.8	12.3	9.3	9.8	9.9	11.0	15.6	13.7	8.0
	Women	12.6	12.3	11.6	12.8	10.3	10.1	10.1	10.3	8.1	15.7	14.5	8.9
Belize ^a	Total	...	15.3	14.3	11.6	10.1	9.5	9.3	9.4	9.1	13.7	21.1	6.8
	Men	...	10.5	10.6	6.3	6.8	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.9	11.6	21.1	4.0
	Women	...	22.3	20.0	19.9	15.4	15.6	14.6	14.9	13.5	17.0	21.1	6.0
Grenada	Total	26.2	...	32.2	29.3	29.0	28.2	23.6	19.2	...	...	...	...
	Men	24.8	...	27.0	28.0	26.0	25.6	20.6	15.2	...	...	...	...
	Women	27.9	...	38.1	30.9	32.3	31.2	26.8	23.4	...	...	...	...
Jamaica ^f	Total	12.6	9.3	10.3	9.5	9.8	9.0	7.7	5.6	5.0	6.6	5.2	3.9
	Men	9.3	7.0	7.8	7.2	7.2	6.6	5.6	4.2	3.8	5.8	4.2	3.1
	Women	16.7	12.3	13.6	12.4	12.5	12.0	10.2	7.2	6.5	7.6	6.5	4.8
Saint Lucia	Total	...	21.2	23.3	24.5	24.1	21.3	20.2	20.2	16.8	21.7	23.1	...
	Men	...	19.1	21.3	21.1	21.3	19.4	18.1	18.5	14.9	18.5	21.4	...
	Women	...	23.5	25.5	28.4	27.4	23.5	22.4	22.1	18.9	25.0	24.9	...
Trinidad and Tobago ^g	Total	5.0	4.9	3.7	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.8	3.9	4.3	4.7	5.4	4.9
	Men	3.9	4.1	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.9	4.2	3.2	3.7	4.6	4.8	4.4
	Women	6.3	6.2	4.6	4.0	4.2	4.0	5.6	5.0	5.1	4.8	6.1	5.6
Latin America and the Caribbean ^h	Total	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.1	6.6	7.8	8.1	7.9	8.0	10.3	9.3	7.0
	Men	5.2	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.7	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.8	9.0	7.8	5.9
	Women	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.3	7.9	9.2	9.6	9.5	9.5	12.0	11.5	8.7

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

Note: 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. Data are preliminary.

^a Includes data for 31 urban centres. Owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^b New measurement methodologies have been used since 2016, through the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE); the data are not comparable with previous series. The 2020 figure refers to the first quarter.

^c New measurement methodologies have been used since 2012, through the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C); the data are not comparable with previous years.

^d Series based on 2017 census projections.

^e Does not include hidden unemployment.

^f Does not include hidden unemployment. The average for the second quarter of 2020 refers to May and June, and that of the third quarter of 2020, to September.

^g From 2011 onward, the bottom threshold for the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data.

^h The 2020 data are preliminary and were gathered through a telephone survey conducted in November and December.

ⁱ The averages for the second and third quarters of 2019 come from the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE); those for the second quarter of 2020 come from the Occupation and Employment Telephone Survey (ETOE); and those for the third and fourth quarters of 2020 come from the new ENOE.

^j Does not include hidden unemployment, except for 2020. The 2020 figure comes from a telephone survey conducted in September and October. The 2021 figure is from October. The 2022 figure is from April.

^k New measurement methodologies have been used since 2017, through the Continuous Permanent Household Survey (EPHC); the data are not comparable with previous series.

^l The figures for 2020 are preliminary.

^m The averages for the first quarter of 2020 are from the Continuous Household Survey (ECH) for January and February; March figures are from the ECH conducted by telephone. The averages for the second quarter of 2020 were gathered through a telephone ECH in April, May and June; the averages for the third quarter refer to the July, August and September telephone ECH and those for the fourth quarter are from the October, November and December telephone ECH. The annual average is a preliminary figure.

ⁿ The 2010–2014 series is based on the reweighted National Labour Force Survey (ENFT). New measurement methodologies have been used since 2015, through the Continuous National Labour Force Survey (ENCFT); the data are not comparable with previous series.

^o The 2019 figures are preliminary and refer to May.

^p The 2020 figures refer to the average of the third and fourth quarters.

^q The 2018 figure refers to April, the 2019 figure refers to the average for April and September and the 2020 figure refers to September.

^r Does not include hidden unemployment. No survey was conducted in the second quarter (April) of 2020. The 2020 annual average refers to data from the first, second and fourth quarters.

^s The 2019 figure refers to the average for March, June and December. The 2020 figure refers to the average for March and June.

^t Weighted average. Does not include hidden unemployment in Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Panama.

[†] Years in which changes to survey methodologies or significant variables may lead to a break in the comparability of data.

Table A1.2

Latin America and the Caribbean: participation, by year, country and sex
(Average annual rates)

Country		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	Total	...	...	58.9	58.3	57.7	57.5	57.8	58.5	59.1	54.9	59.1	60.1
	Men	...	...	72.0	70.9	70.1	69.4	69.7	69.6	69.9	64.9	69.4	69.9
	Women	...	...	47.1	46.9	46.4	46.9	47.6	48.7	49.4	45.9	49.5	51.0
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	Total	65.9	61.1	63.4	65.8	61.0	66.0	67.4	70.8	73.0	73.7	76.7	77.2
	Men	74.7	70.4	72.6	75.0	72.1	76.4	76.8	79.1	80.7	81.0	83.4	83.7
	Women	57.5	52.6	54.8	57.1	50.4	56.1	58.3	63.0	65.5	66.7	70.3	71.1
Brazil ^c	Total	60.0	62.7	62.6	62.4	62.7	62.8	63.1	63.2	63.6	59.3	61.3	62.4
	Men	70.8	74.5	74.4	74.0	74.0	73.8	73.6	73.4	73.5	69.8	71.6	72.4
	Women	50.1	51.6	51.6	51.5	52.2	52.4	53.3	53.6	54.3	49.5	51.6	53.0
Chile ^d	Total	61.5	61.5	61.6	61.9	62.0	62.1	62.7	63.0	62.8	56.1	57.2	59.8
	Men	74.8	74.5	74.2	74.1	74.4	74.1	74.3	74.2	73.6	67.3	68.5	70.2
	Women	48.8	49.1	49.6	50.2	50.3	50.7	51.6	52.3	52.5	45.3	46.4	49.8
Colombia ^e	Total	63.1	64.1	63.7	63.8	64.3	64.1	64.0	63.6	62.9	58.6	61.5	63.6
	Men	74.8	75.2	74.6	74.7	74.9	74.6	74.5	74.4	73.7	70.7	75.7	76.5
	Women	52.0	53.5	53.3	53.5	54.2	54.0	53.9	53.2	52.5	47.3	48.4	51.8
Costa Rica	Total	59.0	62.8	62.3	62.5	61.2	58.4	58.8	60.7	62.5	60.2	60.3	59.8
	Men	73.6	75.9	75.1	75.9	74.3	72.4	73.0	74.3	74.4	72.2	71.8	71.5
	Women	44.2	49.5	49.3	49.0	48.1	44.3	44.5	46.9	50.6	48.1	48.7	48.5
Ecuador ^f	Total	61.8	62.4	62.3	62.6	65.6	67.7	68.1	66.7	66.2	62.5	66.1	66.3
	Men	77.2	77.5	77.0	78.2	80.0	80.5	80.6	79.3	78.3	73.8	78.4	78.2
	Women	47.3	48.3	48.3	47.9	52.1	55.6	56.4	54.6	54.5	51.3	54.4	55.0
El Salvador	Total	62.7	63.2	63.6	62.8	62.1	62.2	61.9	61.3	62.2	61.4	61.4	...
	Men	81.2	81.4	80.7	80.7	80.2	80.1	80.6	79.5	80.5	79.0	79.0	...
	Women	47.0	47.9	49.3	47.8	46.7	47.3	46.3	46.1	46.8	46.6	...	...
Guatemala ^g	Total	61.8	65.4	60.6	60.9	60.7	60.8	61.0	60.6	59.2	...	63.0	60.2
	Men	84.6	87.6	83.4	83.8	84.7	84.0	85.3	85.0	83.7	...	85.6	...
	Women	40.4	45.7	40.6	40.6	38.9	40.1	39.2	39.1	37.9	...	43.3	...
Honduras ^h	Total	51.9	50.8	53.7	56.1	58.1	57.5	59.0	60.4	57.3	59.5	60.7	58.2
	Men	70.4	69.2	72.1	73.6	74.0	74.0	76.0	76.3	75.1	73.3	74.3	75.5
	Women	34.9	33.8	37.2	40.5	43.9	43.0	43.8	46.0	41.4	47.8	48.7	43.3
Mexico ⁱ	Total	59.8	60.4	60.3	59.8	59.8	59.7	59.3	59.6	60.1	55.6	58.8	59.8
	Men	78.5	78.8	78.5	78.3	78.0	77.7	77.6	77.4	77.2	71.7	75.7	76.3
	Women	42.8	43.9	43.9	43.1	43.4	43.4	43.0	43.5	44.7	41.0	43.6	45.0
Nicaragua	Total	75.6	76.8	75.8	74.0	72.4	73.6	73.5	71.6	71.1	69.1	67.5	66.7
	Men	87.9	87.7	87.2	85.8	84.6	84.9	84.7	82.6	82.3	80.6	79.8	79.5
	Women	64.0	66.6	65.1	63.0	60.9	63.1	63.2	61.6	61.0	58.7	56.5	55.5
Panama ^j	Total	60.9	62.7	63.5	63.2	63.4	63.7	63.1	64.7	65.7	63.0	58.7	62.3
	Men	77.9	79.3	79.1	78.3	77.4	77.8	76.6	78.0	77.9	74.0	72.2	...
	Women	45.2	47.5	48.8	49.1	50.1	50.4	50.4	52.2	54.2	53.2	46.2	...
Paraguay ^k	Total	61.1	64.4	62.4	62.3	62.1	62.6	71.0	71.9	72.4	70.2	72.1	70.6
	Men	73.2	75.1	74.0	74.6	74.1	74.5	84.4	84.6	84.8	83.5	84.4	82.5
	Women	49.0	53.7	52.7	50.1	50.2	50.8	57.8	59.4	60.2	57.4	60.1	59.0
Peru ^l	Total	73.9	73.6	73.2	72.2	71.6	72.2	72.4	72.3	72.7	62.3	70.9	72.0
	Men	82.7	82.4	82.0	81.3	81.0	81.2	81.0	80.7	81.1	72.1	79.5	80.0
	Women	65.2	64.8	64.5	63.2	62.3	63.3	64.0	64.0	64.5	53.2	62.5	64.2
Uruguay ^m	Total	64.8	64.0	63.6	64.7	63.8	63.4	62.9	62.4	62.2	60.5	61.8	62.0
	Men	74.7	73.5	73.9	74.3	73.0	72.2	71.6	70.7	70.1	67.9	69.1	70.0
	Women	55.8	55.6	54.4	55.9	55.4	55.4	55.0	54.9	54.9	53.8	55.0	54.6
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Total	64.4	63.9	64.3	65.1	63.7	63.9	66.2	66.8	65.1	...	...	...
	Men	78.6	77.8	78.1	79.1	77.8	77.9	79.9	80.1	79.4	...	...	...
	Women	50.3	50.1	50.6	51.3	49.9	50.2	52.7	53.7	50.9	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	Total	76.1	74.2	72.9	71.9	67.1	65.2	63.4	63.8	65.2	66.4	...	...
	Men	90.0	89.5	87.1	86.2	80.4	78.2	76.2	76.9	76.0	76.8	...	...
	Women	60.5	57.4	57.3	56.3	52.6	50.9	49.4	49.5	53.3	54.9	...	...
Dominican Republic ⁿ	Total	58.2	59.4	59.3	59.5	61.8	62.3	62.2	63.6	65.1	60.2	63.0	63.1
	Men	73.1	74.1	73.9	74.2	76.3	76.6	76.1	77.8	78.4	74.0	75.7	76.8
	Women	43.7	45.3	45.1	45.4	48.1	48.9	49.0	50.4	52.6	47.6	51.2	50.7
English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas	Total	72.1	72.5	73.2	73.7	74.3	77.1	80.5	82.8	80.3	...	...	...
	Men	...	75.8	76.9	77.8	79.5	81.7	83.6	85.5	83.0	...	...	...
	Women	...	69.5	70.1	70.1	71.7	73.1	75.1	76.7	75.5	...	...	...

Country		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Barbados ^a	Total	67.6	66.2	66.7	63.9	65.1	66.5	65.4	64.8	63.7	60.6	61.2	62.9
	Men	72.7	71.9	72.0	67.7	68.7	70.4	69.7	69.4	68.0	64.8	65.3	67.3
	Women	63.0	61.0	62.0	60.4	61.7	62.8	61.5	60.6	59.7	56.7	57.6	59.0
Belize ^b	Total	...	65.8	64.2	63.6	63.2	64.0	64.1	65.5	68.1	55.1	59.7	58.7
	Men	...	79.2	78.4	78.2	77.8	78.0	78.2	78.3	80.5	68.7	72.9	...
	Women	...	52.6	50.1	49.2	48.8	50.2	50.2	52.9	55.9	42.4	47.0	...
Grenada	Total	69.5	...	66.7	67.8	68.8	68.2	65.8	67.6	68.4	65.1	...	...
	Men	75.0	...	70.9	71.5	74.5	73.3	71.3	73.1	74.6	71.8	...	...
	Women	63.9	...	62.6	64.1	63.4	63.1	60.6	62.5	62.6	59.0	...	...
Jamaica ^c	Total	58.7	58.8	59.5	59.9	60.4	61.8	62.3	61.5	62.8	62.5	63.2	64.3
	Men	67.1	66.6	67.4	67.9	68.2	68.8	69.1	68.5	69.6	69.2	69.7	70.4
	Women	50.6	51.2	52.0	52.2	52.8	55.0	55.7	55.0	56.3	56.0	57.0	58.4
Saint Lucia ^d	Total	...	70.6	71.0	72.2	72.2	72.8	71.4	71.4	71.0	68.8	69.9	...
	Men	...	75.3	76.2	77.1	78.3	78.3	76.5	77.8	75.7	74.1	...	...
	Women	...	66.1	66.0	67.4	66.0	67.4	66.8	65.2	66.5	64.3	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago ^e	Total	61.3	61.9	61.4	61.9	60.6	59.7	59.2	59.1	57.4	56.6	54.8	55.0
	Men	72.3	72.1	71.6	72.2	71.2	69.5	68.9	68.4	66.1	65.4	63.1	62.7
	Women	49.4	51.7	51.1	51.8	50.0	50.1	49.5	49.9	48.7	47.8	46.8	47.6
Latin America and the Caribbean ^f	Total	61.9	63.2	62.7	62.5	62.5	62.6	62.9	63.0	63.3	58.9	61.6	62.6
	Men	75.3	76.8	76.2	76.0	75.8	75.6	75.7	75.6	75.5	70.8	74.1	74.4
	Women	49.3	50.4	50.1	49.9	50.0	50.4	50.9	51.3	51.9	47.8	50.1	51.8

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

Note: 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.

^a Includes data for 31 urban centres. Owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^b New measurement methodologies have been used since 2016, through the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE); the data are not comparable with previous series. The 2020 figure refers to the first quarter.

^c New measurement methodologies have been used since 2012, through the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C); the data are not comparable with previous years.

^d In this edition of the *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean* report, the series for Chile from 2011 onward was adjusted on the basis of 2017 census projections.

^e Does not include hidden unemployment.

^f Does not include hidden unemployment. The average for the second quarter of 2020 refers to May and June; the average for the third and fourth quarters of 2020 refers to September and December.

^g From 2011 onward, the bottom threshold for the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data.

^h The 2020 data are preliminary and were gathered through a telephone survey conducted in November and December.

ⁱ The averages for the second and third quarter of 2019 come from the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE); those for the second quarter of 2020 come from the Occupation and Employment Telephone Survey (ETOE); and those for the third and fourth quarter of 2020 come from the new ENOE.

^j Does not include hidden unemployment, except for 2020, and is therefore not comparable with the rest of the series. The third quarter 2020 figure is from a telephone survey conducted in September and October. The 2021 figure is from October. The 2022 figure is from April.

^k New measurement methodologies have been used since 2017, through the Continuous Permanent Household Survey (EPHC); the data are not comparable with previous series.

^l The 2020 figures are preliminary.

^m The averages for the first quarter of 2020 are from the Continuous Household Survey (ECH) for January and February; March figures are from the ECH conducted by telephone. The averages for the second quarter of 2020 were gathered through a telephone ECH in April, May and June; the averages for the third quarter refer to the July, August and September telephone ECH; and those for the fourth quarter are from the October, November and December telephone ECH. The annual average is a preliminary figure.

ⁿ The 2010–2014 series is based on the reweighted National Labour Force Survey (ENFT). New measurement methodologies have been used since 2015, through the Continuous National Labour Force Survey (ENCFT); the data are not comparable with previous series.

^o The 2019 figures are preliminary.

^p The 2018 figure is from April. The figures for the third quarter of 2019 and 2020 are from the September survey and the 2020 figure is from the telephone survey.

^q Does not include hidden unemployment. The 2020 annual average refers to the figures from the first, third and fourth quarters.

^r The figure for the first half of 2020 refers to data from the first quarter.

^s The 2020 annual average refers to the first half of the year.

^t Weighted average.

^u Years in which changes to survey methodologies or significant variables may lead to a break in the comparability of data.

Table A1.3

Latin America and the Caribbean: employment, by year, country and sex
(Average annual rates)

Country		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Latin America													
Argentina ^a	Total	...	55.0	54.7	54.0	53.9	52.6	52.9	53.1	53.3	48.6	53.9	56.0
	Men	...	...	...	...	...	64.0	64.4	63.9	63.5	57.9	63.9	65.7
	Women	...	...	...	...	...	42.5	42.7	43.6	44.1	40.2	44.7	47.1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of) ^b	Total	63.7	59.7	61.5	64.3	58.9	63.8	64.9	68.4	70.3	65.8	72.9	74.5
	Men	73.1	69.2	71.0	73.7	70.0	74.0	74.3	76.4	78.0	74.4	79.6	81.2
	Women	55.7	50.9	52.8	55.3	48.2	53.9	56.0	60.7	62.9	57.6	66.4	68.2
Brazil ^c	Total	56.0	58.0	58.1	58.0	57.3	55.5	55.0	55.3	56.0	51.1	53.2	56.6
	Men	67.3	70.1	70.0	69.7	68.5	66.4	65.3	65.5	66.1	61.5	64.0	67.0
	Women	45.5	46.7	46.9	47.1	46.7	45.3	45.3	45.8	46.5	41.4	43.1	46.9
Chile ^d	Total	57.0	57.4	57.8	57.9	58.1	58.0	58.3	58.3	58.3	50.1	52.1	55.1
	Men	70.2	70.3	70.2	69.6	70.0	69.4	69.4	69.2	68.7	60.3	62.6	65.0
	Women	44.5	45.1	46.1	46.7	46.7	47.0	47.7	48.0	48.4	40.4	42.1	45.6
Colombia	Total	56.8	57.8	58.0	58.4	59.0	58.5	58.4	57.8	56.6	49.8	53.1	56.5
	Men	69.0	69.5	69.4	69.7	70.1	69.6	69.4	69.1	67.9	61.8	67.2	69.6
	Women	45.2	46.7	47.1	47.6	48.3	48.0	47.8	47.0	45.9	38.3	40.0	44.4
Costa Rica	Total	52.9	56.2	56.4	56.5	55.4	52.8	53.5	54.4	55.2	48.5	50.4	52.5
	Men	67.2	69.2	68.9	69.7	68.3	66.6	67.5	68.0	67.4	61.0	62.7	64.8
	Women	38.5	43.5	43.8	43.2	42.2	38.9	39.4	40.7	42.8	35.9	38.0	40.5
Ecuador ^e	Total	59.6	60.4	60.3	60.4	63.3	64.6	65.5	64.3	63.7	58.5	62.7	63.5
	Men	75.0	75.3	74.9	75.9	77.6	77.5	78.2	77.0	75.8	74.5	75.1	75.3
	Women	45.3	46.5	46.6	46.0	49.8	52.4	53.6	52.2	52.0	48.7	51.0	52.2
El Salvador	Total	58.6	59.4	59.9	58.4	57.8	57.9	57.6	57.4	58.2	57.2	...	...
	Men	74.6	75.4	75.1	73.7	73.5	73.6	73.9	73.6	74.9	73.4	...	...
	Women	45.0	45.8	47.0	45.5	44.4	44.7	43.9	43.8	44.3	43.5	...	...
Guatemala ^f	Total	59.2	63.5	58.7	59.1	59.2	59.2	59.4	59.1	57.9	...	61.6	58.4
	Men	82.2	85.5	81.1	81.6	83.0	82.2	83.6	83.2	82.1	...	84.0	...
	Women	37.7	44.1	39.1	39.2	37.5	38.7	37.8	38.0	36.7	...	42.0	...
Honduras ^g	Total	49.7	48.9	51.6	53.1	53.8	53.2	55.1	57.0	54.1	53.0	54.7	54.0
	Men	68.1	67.2	69.7	70.3	70.8	70.2	73.0	72.8	71.9	66.9	69.1	70.3
	Women	32.8	32.2	35.3	37.8	38.8	38.4	39.1	42.6	38.0	41.2	43.5	38.4
Mexico ^h	Total	56.7	57.5	57.3	56.9	57.2	57.4	57.3	57.6	58.0	53.1	56.4	57.8
	Men	74.4	74.9	74.6	74.4	74.7	74.7	75.0	74.9	74.5	68.3	72.6	73.8
	Women	40.6	41.7	41.7	41.0	41.4	41.7	41.4	42.0	43.1	39.3	41.8	43.5
Nicaragua	Total	71.1	72.3	71.4	69.1	68.1	70.2	70.8	67.7	67.2	65.6	64.5	64.3
	Men	83.1	83.0	82.3	80.5	79.9	81.3	81.7	78.1	77.8	76.4	76.1	76.7
	Women	59.8	62.2	61.2	58.5	57.1	60.1	60.8	58.2	57.7	56.0	54.0	53.5
Panama ⁱ	Total	59.1	61.0	61.5	60.9	60.9	60.8	60.1	61.5	61.8	51.3	53.5	56.1
	Men	75.8	77.4	77.1	76.2	75.0	74.9	73.7	75.0	74.2	64.0	66.2	69.3
	Women	43.5	45.8	46.8	46.8	47.6	47.7	47.2	48.8	50.2	40.1	41.8	44.0
Paraguay ^j	Total	57.7	61.5	59.3	58.6	58.7	58.9	66.7	67.4	67.6	64.8	66.7	65.8
	Men	70.0	72.4	70.7	71.1	70.5	70.8	80.1	80.0	80.2	78.5	79.4	77.7
	Women	45.4	50.6	49.7	46.0	47.2	47.0	53.4	55.0	55.3	51.6	54.2	54.2
Peru ^k	Total	70.9	70.8	70.3	69.6	69.1	69.2	69.5	69.4	69.8	58.8	66.9	68.8
	Men	79.6	79.8	79.2	78.5	78.2	78.1	77.8	77.3	77.7	67.4	75.4	77.1
	Women	62.4	61.9	61.5	60.7	60.1	60.4	61.1	61.3	61.8	49.5	58.6	61.4
Uruguay ^l	Total	60.7	59.9	59.5	60.4	59.0	58.4	57.9	57.2	56.7	54.3	56.0	57.1
	Men	71.0	69.8	70.2	70.5	68.4	67.5	66.9	65.8	64.9	62.1	63.7	65.2
	Women	51.3	51.1	50.0	51.3	50.5	50.1	49.8	49.4	49.0	47.1	49.0	49.7
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Total	59.0	58.7	59.3	60.4	59.1	59.2	61.3	61.9	60.6	...	...	...
	Men	72.6	72.1	72.6	73.8	72.6	72.4	74.8	74.9	74.4	...	...	...
	Women	45.6	45.6	46.1	47.1	45.9	46.3	48.1	49.1	47.1	...	...	...
Spanish-speaking Caribbean													
Cuba	Total	73.6	71.6	70.5	70.0	65.4	63.8	62.4	62.7	64.4	65.4	...	...
	Men	87.3	86.4	84.4	84.2	78.5	76.7	75.0	75.7	75.1	75.8	...	...
	Women	58.4	55.3	55.3	54.6	51.2	49.8	48.6	48.6	52.7	54.0	...	...
Dominican Republic ^m	Total	54.6	55.4	54.9	55.5	57.3	57.9	58.7	60.0	61.0	56.7	58.3	59.8
	Men	69.7	70.3	69.9	70.6	72.3	72.9	73.1	75.1	75.3	71.1	72.7	74.4
	Women	40.1	41.1	40.4	41.0	43.1	43.8	45.2	45.9	47.8	43.5	45.0	46.5
English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean													
Bahamas	Total	60.6	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		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Barbados ^a	Total	60.1	58.5	58.9	56.0	57.7	60.0	58.9	58.3	57.6	51.1	52.6	57.6
	Men	65.6	64.1	63.6	59.7	60.2	63.9	62.9	62.5	60.6	54.7	56.4	62.0
	Women	55.1	53.5	54.8	52.6	55.3	56.5	55.3	54.4	54.9	47.8	49.2	53.7
Belize ^a	Total	...	55.7	56.7	56.3	56.8	57.9	58.1	59.4	62.0	47.6	53.0	...
	Men	...	70.9	72.3	73.3	72.5	73.6	73.6	73.9	75.7	60.7	62.5	...
	Women	...	40.9	39.6	39.4	41.2	42.4	42.9	45.1	48.3	35.2	37.5	...
Grenada	Total	51.3	...	45.3	47.9	48.9	49.0	50.3	54.8	57.9	50.5	...	...
	Men	56.4	...	51.8	51.5	55.2	54.5	56.6	61.6	64.4	58.5	...	...
	Women	46.1	...	38.7	44.3	42.9	43.4	44.3	48.4	54.0	43.1	...	...
Jamaica ^a	Total	54.3	53.3	53.4	54.2	54.6	56.2	57.5	58.2	59.7	56.6	57.9	60.4
	Men	63.6	61.9	62.1	62.9	63.3	64.3	65.2	65.6	66.9	63.6	65.0	67.1
	Women	45.8	45.0	45.0	45.8	46.2	48.4	50.0	51.0	52.7	50.0	51.1	53.9
Saint Lucia ^a	Total	...	55.6	54.4	54.5	54.8	57.4	57.0	57.0	59.0	53.9	53.7	...
	Men	...	60.9	60.0	60.9	61.6	63.1	62.9	63.4	64.4	59.4	...	...
	Women	...	50.6	49.1	48.3	47.9	51.6	51.4	50.8	53.9	48.7	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago ^f	Total	58.2	58.8	59.1	59.9	58.5	57.4	56.3	56.8	54.9	53.9	51.9	55.0
	Men	69.5	69.2	69.5	70.1	69.2	66.8	66.0	66.2	63.6	62.4	60.1	62.7
	Women	46.3	48.5	48.8	49.7	47.9	48.0	46.7	47.4	46.2	45.5	43.9	47.6
Latin America and the Caribbean ^g	Total	58.0	58.8	58.7	58.7	58.3	57.7	57.8	58.0	58.2	52.9	55.9	58.2
	Men	71.4	72.7	72.5	72.4	71.9	70.5	70.5	70.4	70.4	64.6	68.3	70.0
	Women	45.4	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.3	45.7	46.0	46.5	46.9	42.1	44.4	47.2

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

Note: 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.

^a Includes data for 31 urban centres. Owing to the statistical emergency declared in 2016, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) recommends disregarding the series published between 2007 and 2015 for comparison and analysis of the labour market in Argentina. The 2016 annual figure is the average of the second, third and fourth quarters.

^b New measurement methodologies have been used since 2016, through the Continuous Employment Survey (ECE); the data are not comparable with previous series. The 2020 figure refers to the first quarter.

^c New measurement methodologies have been used since 2012, through the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PNAD-C); the data are not comparable with previous years.

^d In this edition of the *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean* report, the series for Chile from 2011 onward was adjusted on the basis of 2017 census projections.

^e No survey was conducted in the first quarter (March) of 2020. The average for the second quarter of 2020 refers to May and June, and that of the third quarter of 2020, to September.

^f From 2011 onward, the bottom threshold for the working-age population changed from 10 to 15 years, which may affect the comparability of the data.

^g The 2020 figures are preliminary and were gathered through a telephone survey conducted in November and December.

^h The averages for the second and third quarters of 2019 come from the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE); those for the second quarter of 2020 come from the Occupation and Employment Telephone Survey (ETOE); and those for the third and fourth quarters of 2020 come from the new ENOE.

ⁱ The figure for the third quarter of 2020 is from a telephone survey conducted in September and October. The 2021 figure is from October. The 2022 figure is from April.

^j New measurement methodologies have been used since 2017, through the Continuous Permanent Household Survey (EPHC); the data are not comparable with previous series.

^k The 2020 figures are preliminary.

^l The averages for the first quarter of 2020 are from the Continuous Household Survey (ECH) for January and February; March figures are from the ECH conducted by telephone. The averages for the second quarter of 2020 were gathered through a telephone ECH in April, May and June; the averages for the third quarter refer to the July, August and September telephone ECH; and those for the fourth quarter are from the October, November and December telephone ECH. The annual average is a preliminary figure.

^m The 2010–2014 series is based on the reweighted National Labour Force Survey (ENFT). New measurement methodologies have been used since 2015, through the Continuous National Labour Force Survey (ENCFT); the data are not comparable with previous series.

ⁿ The 2020 figures refer to the average of the third and fourth quarters.

^o The 2018 figure refers to April, the 2019 figure to the average of April and September and the 2020 figure to September.

^p No survey was conducted in the second quarter (April) of 2020. The 2020 annual average refers to data from the first, third and fourth quarters.

^q The annual economic figures for 2019, 2020 and 2021 refer to data from the first quarter.

^r The 2020 annual average refers to the first half of the year.

^s Weighted average.

^t Years in which changes to survey methodologies or significant variables may lead to a break in the comparability of data.

In 2022, the main labour indicators for the region —participation rate, unemployment rate, employment rate and number of employed— recovered and returned to 2019 levels. Employment policies that, since 2020, were aimed at job creation in general shifted in 2021 to target the segments hardest-hit by the pandemic, further boosting the recovery in employment in the economy as a whole and among young people and women in particular.

A return to pre-pandemic levels is not enough. High levels of informal employment and wide gender gaps persist, and wages and productivity have returned to pre-pandemic trends, indicating stagnation at best. The region should therefore pursue public policies that are pro-investment, pro-innovation and increase productivity and macrofinancial stability. This must be complemented by active labour policies for greater job creation and more equitable and formal labour markets.

