Latin American Women: Democracy & Society from Gender Perspective

Latinobarómetro 1995-2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Executive Summary

The pandemic and the economic crisis have taken a huge toll on Latin American women, affecting a gender equality process that was advancing slowly but steadily. The loss of civil and political liberties and social guarantees and the increase in discrimination, poverty and inequality have impacted women’s daily life more than that of men.

Latin American women are, therefore, harsh in their evaluation of democracy, albeit showing less support for authoritarianism than men. In general, women in Latin America are less satisfied with their life than men, and have less trust in “others” and institutions.

Education is key in explaining the differences in women's and men's perceptions of democracy since, when they have the same level of education, their opinions are similar. Women’s attitudes differ from those of men because, on average, they have less education.

Latin American women are not interested in politics and participation. Their agenda is different from that of men and, in general, is not given the same importance. Women are skeptical about the authorities but are the first to take collective action. They are less convinced that there is equality before the law and are more disposed to demand their rights than fulfill their obligations.

Money divides men and women more than politics or domestic tasks. Women believe they will have problems if they earn more than the man. Latin American societies still have an important burden of traditionalism that hampers gender equality. This is the key trait to observe when examining progress in this field. The more open a society, the more favorable attitudes are towards gender equality.

Introduction

Drawing on the 453,817 interviews conducted over the last quarter of a century by Latinobarómetro in 18 Latin American countries, we have looked for the first time at differences in opinions, attitudes and behavior by sex among the region’s 600 million adult inhabitants.

Who is the “Latin American woman”? What does she have to say to us? How does she see society, the economy, politics and values? What does the data tell us about gender equality/inequality and where it is headed?

The latest data was gathered in October 2020 at the end of the first wave of the pandemic and, therefore, reflects its initial impact.
We must first consider what we already know generally from previous reports (www.latinobarometro.org). Since 1995, Latin America has experienced a substantive change in values. This has had three main triggers of which the first is a change in religious beliefs: the percentage of Latin Americans who describe themselves as without religion has almost quadrupled from 6% to 21% in the 25 years since 1995. Catholicism alone has declined from 80% to 56%. The second trigger is the arrival of democracy and civil liberties, and the third is economic growth.

Together with the process of secularization, the arrival of democracy has produced mass demand for rights, with the consequent empowerment of the population and questioning of authority. Economic growth, in turn, has reduced the fertility rate, leading to an aging of societies.

These are only some of the most important changes at which we will be looking in this report. Some of their consequences are the formation of middle classes, an increase in educational levels and women's incorporation into the labor market... all signs of a shift towards more open societies. At the same time, we will also be looking at what is most interesting: the aspects that do not change.

**The Economy**

During the period studied, women have tended to be less satisfied with their life than men. This is the case in most countries although, in 2020, there were six countries where women were more satisfied than men.

Women are also more pessimistic about the future. It is only when pessimism increases around the region that women and men are equally pessimistic. The exception is El Salvador where women are far more optimistic than men. Interestingly, in countries like Paraguay, where women show high levels of satisfaction with life, they are, at the same time, more pessimistic than men about the future. In general, we find that there is little relation between the economic situation and satisfaction with life.

Women’s dissatisfaction is also seen in the case of the economy. Since 1995, they have been far more dissatisfied with the economy than men.

Women’s political and social demands differ from those of men. They weight problems differently, putting them in a different order of importance. We find that women’s demands are not perceived to be as important as those of men. The news agenda is generally a masculine agenda. These differences become more marked when looking at data by country. It would be advisable to address women’s agenda simultaneously with that of men. Governments would do better if they distinguished between women’s and men’s demands.
**Expectations:** Historically, the economic expectations of both men and women have increased. Latin Americans’ expectations for themselves personally are better than for the country. Women are particularly skeptical about the country’s prospects, although the pandemic appeared to level expectations between men and women in 2020. We do not find a pattern of differences by sex; it is necessary to look at each country. However, we do see that the region’s poorer countries have higher expectations than its better-off countries. This puts enormous pressure on governments to deliver.

When comparing the perceived levels of wealth of three generations: the survey respondents themselves, their parents and their children, we see that the current generation believes its parents were better-off than they are now, and expects its children to be considerably better-off in the future. In other words, the current generation sees itself as squeezed between its parents and its children. This perception persists over time. In general, women are more optimistic for their children than men.

Countries with the largest gap between the situation of the current generation and expectations for its children are the most vulnerable to populism. This is the case of El Salvador where expectations bear no relation to the country’s situation. In Colombia and Paraguay, there is also a large gap with respect to expectations for the future generation. In Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, Paraguay and Brazil, women’s higher expectations for their children only widen the gap. Are women in these countries fostering populism through high expectations for their children’s generation?

In general, we will see more differences between women and men on politics than on democracy.

**Democracy**

Democracy has been declining since 2010, although the data for 2020 shows that it was surprisingly resilient and stable in the face of the pandemic. The verdict on democracy is clear: only 6% of Latin Americans think there is full democracy in their country.

Historically, since 1995, support for democracy has been lower among women than men. In 2020, it reached 51% among men and 47% among women. The two exceptions are Chile and Uruguay where support is higher among women than men.

Weaknesses in democracy are seen around the region and matter more to women. At the same time, however, women are less favorable to authoritarianism than men, with the exception of Guatemala where more women than men would prefer an authoritarian regime.

Two countries stand out: Chile, where more women than men support democracy and more men than women support authoritarianism, and El Salvador where, on the contrary,
men support democracy more than women and, at the same time, have one of the highest levels of support for an authoritarian regime observed among men.

The growing proportion of the region’s population that is indifferent to the type of regime also represents a threat for democracy.

The decline in preference for a democratic regime seen in these indicators is fertile ground for populism. It is the younger generations that distance themselves most from democracy while those with a higher level of education tend to support it more strongly.

Since women have, on average, a lower level of education than men, they tend to support democracy less. However, at the same level of education, support is similar across women and men.

**Authoritarianism and political machismo:** A significant majority of Latin Americans reject military government, while support for elected populism has increased over time, particularly among men. Men show more support for authoritarianism in a kind of political machismo. By contrast, authoritarian attitudes among women are reflected in higher support for control of the media.

**Satisfaction:** Satisfaction with democracy has shown a sustained decline since 2009 and, in the vast majority of countries, women are less satisfied than men.

For Latin American women, the democratic balance is negative because older women, with less education, will not increase their educational level. The good news, however, is that the new generations of women, empowered to demand their rights, are leveling the playing field.

Women’s greater dissatisfaction is also related to the fact that their agenda is not given the same importance as that of men.

Women are more critical because more of them think their country is governed in the interests of the few, not the majority. They are overwhelmingly critical of the unequal distribution of wealth and scarce access to health care, while men are more critical of access to justice.

Men and women differ significantly in their perception of who has power. Women see the government, the political parties and the parliament as having most power while men consider that big companies, businesspeople, banks and the media have most power. Men and women only agree on their perception of the power of trade unions and the military.

**Trust:** Latin America is the region of the world with the lowest level of interpersonal and institutional trust.
Interpersonal trust is lower among women (11%) than men (14%). In the case of institutions, women have greater trust than men in the church and the police and less than men in the armed forces, the government, the judiciary and the electoral institution. There are no differences by sex on trust in the president, the parliament and the political parties.

When comparing trust in other institutions, we find that this is lower among women, except in the case of media. Mistrust in Latin America is a barrier to development and gender equality and is more prevalent among women.

Beyond the differences by sex, trust has fallen over the past decade to its lowest level, confirming the decline of democracy observed since 2010.

**Politics**

On the left-right scale, women mostly place themselves to the right of men, albeit with some exceptions. However, the difference widens when we look in greater depth at other political attitudes.

Interest in politics is higher among men except in Honduras, where more women than men are interested, and Costa Rica, where there is no difference.

This pattern of lack of interest in politics is reflected in all the other political indicators. Women feel less close to political parties than men and vote less for a party. They are also less inclined to participate in protests.

The weakness of women’s engagement with politics can be addressed by making politics more accessible and friendlier for women. Politics has to go to women, not women come to politics. To increase women’s participation in politics, more education and civic culture are needed.

The introduction of social media as a means of participation in politics is worrying. Almost two in ten Latin Americans see social media as a substitute for participating and voting. This view is more prevalent among men than women.

Participating in a protest of any type is something that men do more than women (49% of women and 56% of men or, in other words, almost half the region’s population). However, willingness to protest depends on the issue. Women are more willing to protest about health care and education while men are more inclined to do so on corruption and equality. Once again, we see the difference between the agenda of women and that of men.
Democratic guarantees

Their perception of guarantees gives Latin Americans many reasons to protest.

The pandemic has undermined the quality of civic and political guarantees such as freedom of expression and participation in politics while social and economic guarantees have stagnated or declined. This has affected women more than men.

Credibility and public policies

The vast majority of Latin Americans, and women more than men, believe that the authorities do not listen to them. At the same time, they are very willing to join with others to solve problems in their neighborhood. Moreover, half the population would not report a crime to the police.

Public policies become a very difficult task when the population is skeptical in its attitude towards the authorities, and does not trust them enough to report a crime.

In answer to a general question about migration, we observe rejection. However, great differences emerge when specifying migrants’ origin. There is rejection of Venezuelans and Haitians but this diminishes for migrants from other parts of the world. Rejection is higher among women than men.

Values

There is an almost unanimous perception in most countries that citizens do not obey the law. This view is more prevalent among women. Clues as to the reasons for this attitude lie in the perception that power is exercised for the benefit of a few, that the distribution of wealth is unfair and that there are no social guarantees, among other arguments.

In the first year of the pandemic, there was an important increase in the perception of inequality before the law. During the pandemic, Latin America lost ground on rights, more so for women than men. In other words, the pandemic has weakened not only the fulfillment of obligations but also demand for rights.

Latin Americans demand their rights more than they fulfill their obligations; while 67% do not fulfill their obligations, 49% demand their rights.

Women are less inclined to fulfill obligations, but demand their rights, and to perceive higher levels of inequality before the law. Regardless of the indicator, the conclusion is the same: there is a wider gap in access for women than for men.
Changes in religious values have had an important impact on the evolution of societies. Together with the arrival of democracy, they help to explain the social phenomena that have occurred in the region over the past quarter of a century. Secularization occurred first among men and women have shown a greater tendency to maintain their religious beliefs.

**Freedom of expression**

Seven in ten Latin Americans believe that people do not say what they think, a view more common among women. Over half the population considers that saying what you think can have negative consequences, again a view that is more prevalent among women.

The perception that one has the right to speak out and actually doing so are not the same and, in Latin America, they do not necessarily go hand-in-hand. This is an important barrier and willingness to protest is so high because it is a way of speaking out anonymously.

These questions about freedom of expression provide us with a picture of the deepest problems of our societies.

Latin America reveals its darkest side when most of the population and, particularly, women dare not say what they think. Democracies cannot function properly if their citizens do not express their sovereign will. Certainly, it is not possible to achieve greater equality and lower levels of discrimination if those affected do not express their opinions.

**Attitudes Towards Women**

Gender equality is much harder to achieve in traditional societies than in open societies.

When testing attitudes towards women, we find that money divides opinions between men and women more than politics or domestic tasks.

In 15 of the 18 countries surveyed, almost half of women believe they will have problems if they earn more than the man.

The same phenomenon appears in the question about work outside the home, which is seen as more appropriate for men than women.

Societies’ attitudes towards women vary according to the level of traditionalism. In Central American societies, attitudes are less egalitarian than in the Southern Cone.

However, attitudes that are detrimental to gender equality persist in most of the region’s societies. This is also manifested in the differing levels of women’s incorporation into the
labor market and their participation as candidates in elections (in the latter case, with the exception of Chile where there have been elections with gender parity).

The most important barrier to women’s incorporation into the labor market is childcare.

The map of inequalities reflects the precariousness of daily life in Latin America. When inequalities are mentioned, poverty and racism take precedence over gender inequality.

Perceptions of discrimination and inequality have remained unchanged over the past decade.

As this data shows, the dismantling of inequalities in Latin America, including gender inequality, calls first for recognition of the existence of the problem as such. It is not that the problem does not exist or not matter, but rather that it is less apparent within the immensity of other problems. Being poor, old or indigenous are conditions that allow gender inequality to remain hidden from the eyes of many.
I. INTRODUCTION
I. Introduction

The 1995-2020 Latinobarómetro surveys, presented here from a gender perspective, are the result of 25 years of measurements across 18 Latin American countries. Comprising a total of 453,817 interviews, this database is the largest currently existing in Spanish and available to the public. Using comparable public opinion surveys, Latinobarómetro has monitored the 18 Latin American societies, their democracy, economy and values for a quarter of a century.

The Latinobarómetro database, which uses Spanish JDSsystem technology, broke an Anglo-Saxon monopoly, becoming the first online database in Spanish and the first in the southern hemisphere.

Technical data: Latinobarómetro conducted an in-person survey in 17 countries between October 26 and December 15, 2020. In the case of Argentina, the pandemic prevented the survey’s in-person application and it was finally decided to apply it online between April 26 and May 16, 2021. A total of 19,004 in-person interviews and 1,200 online panel interviews took place. Latinobarómetro surveys are applied in Spanish and the questions were subsequently translated into English for the purposes of this report.

In ten South American countries and Mexico, samples of 1,200 cases representative of each country were used, covering citizens aged 18 and over (16 years in Brazil) and, in the six Central American countries and the Dominican Republic, samples of 1,000 cases. In Argentina, 1,200 cases were taken from an online panel with a representative sample of the national population with access to Internet. In total, 20,204 interviews were conducted in the 18 countries. The margin of error of the samples for each country is 3% and the margin of error of the total database is 1% (www.latinobarometro.org).

The 2020 Latinobarómetro study measured the mood of the region’s citizens at the end of the first year of the pandemic, ahead of the second wave and the promise of vaccines.

The survey is produced by Latinobarómetro Corporation, a private non-profit organization based in Santiago, Chile. It receives funding from numerous international organizations, countries and private funds that, for a quarter of a century, have renewed their trust in it in order to permit annual measurements. Latinobarómetro’s network of researchers includes Latin American academics, pollsters and political scientists who have worked remotely with the initiative for 25 years. The 2020 survey was supported by Norway, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and also received private contributions.
1. Latin American Women

In this report, we analyze the data looking at its evolution and that of the 18 countries with their differences and economic cycles and the impact on opinions.

General analysis of the data published in the Latinobarómetro Reports provides a clear overall picture of the evolution of values. The region is undergoing a process of secularization, with the percentage of the population that declare themselves Catholic dropping from 80% in 1995 to 56% in 2020. This has been accompanied by a migration to other positions and those who indicate they have no religion rose from 4% to 16% over the same period while those who classify themselves as Evangelical increased from 6% to 21%.

As a result, the dominant religion has changed in a number of countries. There are, moreover, enormous differences between countries. The country with the most Catholics is Paraguay (84% of the population) and the country with the fewest is Uruguay (32%).

The evolution of religion has a domino effect on political and social attitudes. The hierarchical, pyramidal Catholic religion marks society and political systems. It is no accident that, at the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the region’s equally hierarchical and pyramidal presidential systems began to lose strength and citizens, empowered by democracy, slowly dared to challenge power. The so-called hyper-presidents of the first decade of the millennium, with approval ratings that reached up to 80% and averaged 60%, are gradually disappearing and, in 2010-2020, the region saw a decade of protests, followed by a wave of changes of governments during the pandemic. Pyramidal power is questioned and the average approval rating of presidents fell to 30%, half its level in the previous decade.

This year, still with the pandemic, the wave of presidential elections continues with Costa Rica, Colombia and Brazil.

Not surprisingly, protests in Chile occurred in a context in which 39% of citizens say they have no religion. In 2019, the feminist revolution also came to the forefront, with hundreds of thousands of women on the streets and a Chilean song - “A rapist in your path” - gaining international fame in the wake of protests against violence against women. Those are just a sample of the changes that are occurring simultaneously with profound changes in the religions of Latin Americans.

What is the relationship between Catholicism, secularization and the strong expansion of feminism, a previously minority issue that becomes mainstream? We do not yet have empirical data against which to test the different hypotheses. Seymour Martin Lipset suggested that Catholicism held back gender equality because, under it, a woman is not the equal of a man. All clergy are men and women do not have any role in the Catholic Church. It preferred to recognize Galileo after 400 years and Martin Luther, rather than
address the issue of women. There are events in contexts that suggest a hypothesis of this type about the role of Catholicism in gender equality as a societal value. In a region where, only 25 years ago, Catholicism held sway, it is a valid question.

Despite secularization, the Catholic religion has been and remains the framework of values for Latin American societies, even those where the majority of citizens are no longer Catholic. The ethos of Catholicism will take much longer to disappear than the religious practices of its faithful. At a time of institutional and political crisis, the Catholic Church remains the most trusted institution in the region, with a legitimacy several times greater than that of the institutions of democracy.

Secularization was accompanied by the arrival of democracy and the resulting citizen empowerment, accentuating changes in values. What political, social or economic actor in Latin America would dare not to support gender equality today? Discourse and language at least have changed radically, although, as we will see in the data, this is not directly matched by the reported behavior of either women or men. A change in discourse clearly comes first, followed by a change in attitudes. In the 11 presidential elections that have taken place in the region since 2019, it is difficult to find candidates who dare not to be in favor of gender equality, at least to some extent. In Chile, regressive declarations about women by the right-wing candidate and some of his representatives may have cost
him the run-off ballot that took place on December 19, 2021. That would have been unthinkable a decade ago. Gender is a central issue in elections today in Latin America.

The changes in values seen in Latin America is well documented in the World Values Survey, where religion is not the only factor. Economic growth inevitably leads to changes such as a decrease in the fertility rate and an evolution towards more rational societies. The last quarter of a century has brought a transformation of Latin American societies.

Economic growth unleashed a wave of materialism, the reduction of poverty, the formation of middle classes and their material improvement. The reforms implemented by democratic governments have increased access to education and, therefore, the population’s educational level. More women have joined the labor market, albeit with important differences between countries.

The change in values has expanded from particularism to universalism, accentuated by the pandemic, which has put the world on the screens of smartphones, even those of the poorest Latin Americans. A fifth of the poorest young people, who have only one meal a day, have a smartphone, preferring a window on the world to a second meal. That is the pressure of expectations in the region. In all this process of change, women gain ground, although not fast enough for some. Women can be said to have driven most of the societal change that has taken place, all this in the context of a pandemic that, at the same time, undid many of their earlier gains.

In the past quarter of a century, Latin America has suffered two main value shocks: the decline of Catholicism, which is no longer the dominant religion, and the arrival of democracy, bringing with it rights and the empowerment of citizens. Both processes contribute to progress on gender equality in the region. The third impact is, of course, economic growth.

This report will allow us to visualize the changes that have taken place in the last quarter of a century and their speed as well as the lags and the aspects that have changed little or not at all. Opinion studies allow us to observe hidden aspects of societies, those that cannot be seen through the window. The corollary of this data shows the road that Latin American societies still have to travel in order to achieve development and gender equality.
II. THE ECONOMY & EXPECTATIONS
II. The Economy and Expectations

The region’s economic growth faces expectations that create a challenge in terms of the image of progress and evaluation of the present. Despite the advances that have been achieved, current generations tend to believe that the past was better and that their children will achieve what they themselves have not achieved. In other words, the current generation is not satisfied with what has been achieved and pins all its hope on its children.

1. Satisfaction with Life

The first indicator of well-being is satisfaction with life.

Between 1997 and 2018, satisfaction with life in Latin America was higher among men than women. The difference ranged from one to three percentage points, with a margin of error of 1%, implying that the difference is statistically significant. However, in 2018 and 2020, there was no difference between men and women.
In 2020, women were less satisfied with life than men in nine countries: Peru, Costa Rica, Bolivia and Panama, with a difference of one percentage point, Mexico and Ecuador, with two percentage points, and the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Brazil, with three percentage points.

In six countries, women were more satisfied with life than men: Paraguay, with a difference of four percentage points, Venezuela and Chile, with two percentage points, and Nicaragua, Guatemala and Uruguay, with one percentage point.

In Argentina, El Salvador and Colombia, there was no difference between men and women.

The greater pessimism found among women compared to men in half of the region’s countries is related to perceptions of their society as seen throughout this report.

Image of progress

Between 1995 and 2020, women were more pessimistic than men about their country’s progress but, in the second half of the 2010s, as the perception of progress in the region weakened, the difference narrowed, reaching one percentage point in 2020.

Women are more pessimistic about the country’s progress in 15 of the 18 countries studied. In Mexico, there are ten percentage points of difference, with 17% of women considering that the country is progressing compared to 27% of men. In the Dominican Republic, the difference reaches eight points. It is followed by Panama (7 points), Brazil (6), Bolivia (5), Colombia, Guatemala and Venezuela (4) and Peru, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay (2).

By contrast, a perception of progress predominates in El Salvador where it is shared by 67% of women and 63% of men. El Salvador and Nicaragua are the only countries where more women than men think the country is progressing.

Interestingly, women are on average more critical than men, albeit with differences between countries that are not necessarily consistent. Paraguay is, for example, the country where the difference in satisfaction with life between women and men is largest and also one of the countries where women are more pessimistic about its progress than men. In other words, the economy and progress are not the factors that make for satisfaction with life.

2. Satisfaction with the Economy

This is further borne out by satisfaction with the economy.

Over all the measurements taken between 2002 and 2020, women were more dissatisfied with the economy than men.

This greater dissatisfaction was seen in 16 of the 18 countries in 2020. In the other two, Argentina and Costa Rica, there was no difference between women and men.

The countries with the largest differences were El Salvador, with a difference of eight percentage points, followed by Brazil (7 points), Bolivia and Honduras (6) and Peru (5).
This dissatisfaction with the economy and pessimism about progress are consistent with women’s less optimistic perceptions about numerous issues discussed in this report.

3. Men’s and Women’s Agenda

In 2020, women had an agenda different from that of men.

On average, economic problems were cited as a country’s most important problem by the region’s citizens (16%), with women (18%) giving them more importance than men (15%). As the second most important problem, both women and men cited unemployment (12%).

In third place, women cited the political situation (8%), albeit giving it less importance than men (12%). Among women, it was followed by corruption, the pandemic, crime and health (all with 7%) while men gave far more importance to corruption (11%) and less importance to crime (6%) and health (5%).

There are also differences in the importance that women and men attach to poverty, with women giving it more importance (6%) than men (5%), while both put education in last place, with no difference between them.
It is important to remember that the study analyzed a sample of 20,000 cases and has a margin of error of 1%, implying that a difference of one percentage point is significant.

Economic problems reached their greatest importance in 2009 when they were cited by 18% of interviewees (16% of women and 19% of men). This followed the eruption of the subprime crisis at the end of 2008.

In 2013, economic problems dropped back to 6% (6% of men and 7% of women) but have since shown a sustained increase in the importance attached to them, reaching 16% in 2020, when 15% of men and 18% of women identified them as the country’s most important problem.
Identification of economic problems as the country’s most important problem differs widely by country. Venezuela is the only country where more men (36%) than women (32%) see them as the country’s most important problem. In Nicaragua, 30% of women and 20% of men identify them as the most important problem and, in Costa Rica, 28% of women and 22% of men.

Chile is the country where economic problems are mentioned least as the most important problem (4% of women and 3% of men). In next lowest place is Brazil (7% of women and 6% of men).

In other words, when analyzing the surveys’ results in each country at the level of the information agenda, it is important to distinguish between the priorities of men and women who clearly have different agendas. Women care more about the economic situation, poverty, and public policies on crime and health than about politics and corruption. In addressing citizen demands, the authorities should take these differences into account in order to provide a more balanced response. Instead, when we observe protests in the region that express the demands of the general public, they do not differentiate between women and men.
4. Expectations

On expectations, we compare expectations about the country’s future economic situation and about interviewees’ personal economic situation, differentiating between women and men.

The first important finding is that people always expect their personal economic situation to be better than that of the country, with differences that ranged from five and 13 percentage points between 1995 and 2020. This implies that, over this quarter of a century, personal expectations have on average never been fulfilled.

Secondly, expectations about personal economic situation and that of the country have been increasing. Over this period, the percentage of interviewees who anticipate a better personal future rose from 37% to 47% and, in the case of the country’s future, from 27% to 36%.

In 2020, the pandemic produced an increase in expectations of a better economic future for the country, narrowing the gap with expectations of a better personal future from 13 percentage points in 2018 to nine points in 2020.
When analyzing these personal and country expectations by sex, it is difficult to identify differences. They exist, but seem not to have any noteworthy significance as regards vision, trajectory or interpretation.

Over time, the data shows a greater expectations gap among women regarding a better economic future personally and for the country. Women have slightly lower expectations for the country, with a gap of between eight and 15 percentage points with respect to their expectations for themselves, while the gap for men ranges from six to 13 percentage points. However, in 2020, the gap for both women and men was ten percentage points.

When comparing expectations by country and sex, it is more difficult to reach conclusions that can be generalized beyond each country in particular.

Men have higher expectations for the country than women in ten countries and women have higher expectations in nine countries. In other words, there is no clear pattern of differentiation of women’s and men’s expectations by country.
Two countries are particularly pessimistic about both personal economic future and that of the country: Argentina, where only 15% of women and 19% of men anticipate that the country’s future economic situation will be better, and Chile, where this view is held by 17% of men and 22% of women.

At the same time, in Argentina, 21% of women and 20% of men and, in Chile, 19% of women and 23% of men expect their personal economic situation to be better.

The most optimistic countries are El Salvador, where 65% of women and 69% of men believe the country’s economic situation will be better, and the Dominican Republic, where 59% of women and 57% of men hold this view. In the case of future personal economic situation, 68% of women and 71% of men in the Dominican Republic and, in El Salvador, 61% of men and women expect it will be better.

In all countries, expectations of a better personal economic future exceed those for the country’s economic future. The gap is smallest in Uruguay where 39% of women and 41% of men anticipate a better economic future for the country and 41% of women and 42% of men expect a better personal economic situation.

The most optimistic countries are precisely those with the greatest difficulties. This puts enormous pressure on politics, governments and states. Ultimately, the data tells us that
expectations about the future bear little relation to a country’s past capacity to produce wealth since they are higher in the region’s poorest countries than in its less poor countries.

5. Perception of Wealth - Intergenerational Poverty

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is poor and 10 is rich, Chileans put themselves at 4.2, their parents at 4.3, and their children at 5.0. The generalized perception in the region is that parents, that is, the previous generation, were less poor than the current generation while expectations of children’s progress on the poverty-wealth scale are enormous.

Analysis of this indicator by sex shows that women are more optimistic than men about their children’s future.

**TABLE 1. Poverty-wealth scale by sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POVERTY SCALE, BY SEX TOTAL LATIN AMERICA 2020**

Q. Imagine a staircase with 10 steps where the poorest are located on the first step and the richest on the tenth step. Where would you put yourself on this staircase? Q. Where would you put your parents on this staircase? Q. Where do you think your children will be on this staircase?

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
In 2020, women were more optimistic than men about their children’s future, but this was not necessarily the case in all the survey years. In 2009, for example, men were more optimistic than women and, in some years, there was no difference by sex.

As shown by this data, the economic situation influences generations’ expectations and their vision of the past. However, the most significant finding is the persistence of distances between the generations.

Most interestingly, the parents’ generation has, at many points in the past 25 years, been seen by both men and women as having been better off than the current generation. This does not necessarily refer to access to material goods, which is clearly greater for the current generation, but rather to aspects of quality of life, such as stress, violence, etc.

Only in Chile and Peru does the current generation believe that its parents were worse off than they are now. This is most marked in Chile where the current generation puts itself at 4.5 on the poverty-wealth scale and its parents at 4.1. In Chile, expectations for children (5.3) are also above the regional average (5.1).

In Peru, the current generation is locates itself at 3.9, the parents’ generation at 3.8 and expectations for children at 4.7.
Chile is much higher on the poverty-wealth scale than Peru but, as we will see, what matters is the expectations gap, rather than each country’s level of wealth.

By contrast, in five Central American countries, the current generation says it is worse off than the generation of its parents.

In Honduras, the parents’ generation is at 4.2 on the poverty-wealth scale and the current generation at 3.8, marking the greatest difference between the two generations. In the Dominican Republic, the parents’ generation is at 4.3 and the current generation at 4.0 while the equivalent figures for Nicaragua are 4.0 and 3.7, for Panama 4.4 and 4.2 and, for El Salvador, 4.4 and 4.2. These five countries view the past as having been better than the present. Honduras, Panama and El Salvador also have the strongest expectations for the future generation (with child-myself differences of 1.1 and 1.2, respectively) and, on this, are surpassed only by Brazil (1.8).

The case of Brazil is important not only because the current generation (4.6) thinks its parents lived better (4.7) but, above all, because expectations for its children’s future, at 6.4, are excessively high. This partly explains the election of the current populist president, Jair Bolsonaro. In other words, Brazilians are willing to accept a politician who promises this future, without weighing the consequences.

**TABLE 2. Poverty-wealth scale by generation and country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Myself</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Parents-myself difference</th>
<th>Children-myself difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These are the countries with the greatest difficulties in terms of a population that is very disappointed with the present and has extreme expectations of the future. This combination explains, for example, the rise to power of Nayib Bukele whose populist and autocratic position is a response to the pressure of expectations of a population willing to try any possible solution in order to move forward.

From this standpoint, Colombia and Paraguay are also vulnerable to populism, given excessive expectations for the wealth of the future generation compared to its current level. Interestingly, it is not the level of wealth that influences the option for populism, but the expectations gap.

In this aspect, differences by sex exist but do not change the result. In other words, the vision of men and women about the past and the future is the same and is related to the country, its trajectory and its current situation.

In the main difference by sex, women’s expectations are more pronounced in some countries, principally those with very high expectations about the future of their children. This is the case of Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, Paraguay and Brazil. This is reflected in the children-myself difference column of the table below where the difference is larger among women than men.

In the case of the difference between the parents’ and the current generation, there are no differences between women and men that throw further light on this aspect of expectations.
This data shows how, as seen throughout this report, differences between women and men are far more marked on political than economic matters.
III. DEMOCRACY
III. Democracy

A number of indicators are used to measure democracy. The central indicator offers interviewees three options: support for democracy, preference for an authoritarian regime, and indifference to the type of regime.

1. Support for Democracy

Over the past quarter of a century, support for democracy has fluctuated in line with economic cycles. During the Asian crisis, it dropped from 65% to 52% before recovering to a peak of 63% in 2010 at the end of a virtuous five years to which the subprime crisis put an end. Since 2010, it has again declined, dropping to a low of 48% in 2018 before stabilizing in the first year of the pandemic at 49%.

Since Latinobarómetro measurements began in 1995, support for democracy has been lower among women than men. In 2020, it was running at 51% among men and 47% among women.
There are also important differences between countries. In 16 countries, support for democracy is lower among women than men, with differences that range from one to 16 percentage points.

The exceptions are Chile, where support for democracy among women reaches 68% compared to 52% among men, and Uruguay, with 75% support among women and 73% among men.

**TABLE 3. Support for democracy by sex and country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences between women and men are largest in El Salvador and Honduras where they reach 12 and 13 points, respectively. These countries are followed by Colombia, Guatemala, Bolivia and Paraguay (9 points), Costa Rica (8), Brazil (7), Ecuador (5), Venezuela and the Dominican Republic (4), Argentina and Mexico (3) and Peru and Nicaragua (1).

The differences in support for democracy by sex are large and reveal the region’s democratic deficiencies with more weight among women than men.
2. Preference for an Authoritarian Regime

In the case of the question’s second alternative, preference for an authoritarian regime, the differences by sex are much smaller than in support for democracy.

This indicator has shown little variation between 1995 and 2020. When measurements started in 1995, it was running at 17% and, in 2020, at 13%, with a peak of 18% in 2020 and a low of 11% in 2011.

Throughout the period, preference for an authoritarian regime has been lower among women than men. In 2020, it reached 13% among women.

However, there are important differences between countries. In five countries, the preference for an authoritarian regime is higher among women than men: Guatemala, with a difference of five percentage points, Honduras, Paraguay and Argentina (2 points) and Ecuador (1).
**TABLE 4. Preference for an authoritarian regime by sex and country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of Costa Rica, Colombia and Uruguay, where there are no differences by sex, preference for an authoritarian regime is higher among men than women. The difference is most marked in Chile (7 percentage points), Peru (6 points) and El Salvador (5 points).

The case of Chile is interesting. More women than men support democracy and, at the same time, more men than women would prefer an authoritarian regime. In El Salvador, the opposite is the case. It has a deficit of women who support democracy (a difference of 12 percentage points) and a high percentage of men (17%) who would prefer an authoritarian regime (above the regional average of 14%). This is a combination that weakens democracy.

Brazil, for example, has a 7-point deficit of support for democracy among women and total support of 40% as well as 12% support for an authoritarian regime among men. In other words, all its indicators show intermediate weaknesses that, together, present a worrying picture of the state of democracy in this country.

The case of Mexico is even more worrying since 24% of men would prefer an authoritarian regime and it has a 3-point deficit of support for democracy among women and only 43% average support for democracy.
By contrast, Uruguay has the lowest level of preference for an authoritarian regime (8%) and the highest support for democracy: 73% among women and 75% among men.

3. Indifference to the Type of Regime

The deterioration of democracy over the past decade is reflected mainly in the growing number of citizens who are indifferent to the type of regime. Between 1995 and 2020, this increased from 16% to 27%, together with the decline of democracy.

As in the other indicators, there are differences between women and men, although what is most significant is that indifference has increased equally among women and men. On average, there is a difference of one percentage point between them, with indifference reaching 27% among women and 26% among men.

The largest differences are in El Salvador, where 27% of women are indifferent compared to 21% of men, and in Chile where, reversing the positions, 25% of men and 18% of women are indifferent to the type of regime.

This indifference to the type of regime is fertile ground for acceptance of populism and other forms of authoritarianism, such as autocracies.

in Honduras, 44% of men and 41% of women are indifferent to the type of regime and, in Panama, 39% women and 40% men while, in Ecuador, there is no difference by sex, with indifference reaching 38% among both women and men, and, in Brazil, it reaches 37% among women and 35% among men. These high percentages of indifference render the democracies of these countries vulnerable.

At the other extreme are the countries where indifference is lowest: Costa Rica, with 13% of women and 11% of men; Uruguay, with 12% of women and 14% of men; and Argentina, with 12% of women and 16% of men.
4. Sociodemographic Profile of Women and Men in Support for Democracy

Age

When examining these indicators by age and sex, we see that, among both women and men, indifference to the regime and preference for an authoritarian regime increase as age drops. In other words, support for democracy is weakest among younger people but increases with age.

Interestingly, among 16-25 year-olds, support for democracy is higher among women (47%) than men (43%) but, as age increases, this changes. Among 26-40 year-olds, support for democracy is three percentage points higher among men than women, a gap that widens to nine points for 41-60 year-olds and narrows again to eight points for over-60s.
This widening gap as age increases is a result of education since, as discussed below, older women have, on average, less education than younger women.

**Education**

Education clearly explains support for democracy. Among both women and men, support for democracy increases with educational level. Among Latin Americans with higher education, it is very similar by sex, reaching 60% among men and 61% among women. At the secondary education level, there is a difference between men (51%) and women (47%) and, at the primary level, this widens to 46% among men and 40% among women.
The differences by age that we see in support for democracy by sex largely reflect generational differences in women’s level of education. The youngest generation of women have almost the same educational level as men and show more support for democracy than men.

This profile of democrats and non-democrats serves as a map of vulnerabilities that we will look at in more detail below.

5. How would you describe democracy in your country?

A majority of Latin Americans consider that democracy has great problems in their country (44%) or is not a democracy (13%). Only 6% say that the country has a full democracy (5% of women and 6% of men).

At 14%, the proportion of women who opt not to express an opinion about democracy is larger than among men (9%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full democracy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A democracy with small problems</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A democracy with great problems</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not a democracy</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t understand what is a democracy</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of Latin Americans who consider that democracy has great problems increased from 40% in 2017 (39% of women and 41% of men) to 44% in 2020 (45% of women and 46% of men).

Some countries have many more problems with their democracy than others. The countries where the perception that it has problems is most widespread are Argentina, where it is shared by 59% of women and 60% of men, Peru (54% of women and 58% of men), Ecuador (54% of women and 55% of men) and Chile (51% of women and 57% of men). Percentages of around 50% are common around the region and the figures is below 40% in only three countries.

In Uruguay, only 21% of women and 17% of men perceive democracy as having problems. This is also the only country in which a significant minority (25% of women and 27% of men) say there is a full democracy.

In Nicaragua, 20% of women and 22% of men say that democracy has great problems and a majority say the country does not have a democracy. However, 10% of women and 15% of men say there is full democracy (supporters of the dictator, Daniel Ortega).

Guatemala is the other country in which less than 40% of the population (34% of men and 39% of women) view democracy as having great problems.
ASSESSMENT OF DEMOCRACY: A DEMOCRACY WITH GREAT PROBLEMS, BY SEX
TOTAL LATIN AMERICA 2017-2020 - TOTALS BY COUNTRY 2020

Q: How would you describe democracy in your country?
Here: “A democracy with great problems.”

ASSESSMENT OF DEMOCRACY: A FULL DEMOCRACY, BY SEX
TOTAL LATIN AMERICA 2017-2020 - TOTALS BY COUNTRY 2020

Q: How would you describe democracy in your country?
Here: “A full democracy.”
The percentage of Latin Americans who consider there is full democracy in their country increased from 5% in 2017 to 6% in 2020, a result that is significant given the 1% margin of error.

With the exception of Uruguay and Nicaragua, this indicator is very low around the region, confirming that, in Latin America, citizens do not believe that their country functions as a true democracy. This goes a long way to explaining support for democracy: it should be interpreted as a desire for democracy, rather than support for the democracy that actually exists in the country.

6. Churchillian Democracy

Churchill famously said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others, hence the survey question about a preference for democracy as the least bad system of government.

Democracy may have problems, but it is the best system of government.

Agreement with this statement increased from 60% in 1995 to 80% in 2013 before dropping back to 63% in 2020. Throughout this period, it was lower among women than men, reaching 60% for women and 66% for men in 2020.

![CHURCHILLIAN DEMOCRACY BY SEX TOTAL LATIN AMERICA 2002-2020 - TOTALS BY COUNTRY 2020](image)

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
This indicator serves to clarify opinions about democracy and acts as a compound summary of its advantages.

Agreement with the statement is highest in Uruguay (84% of women and 87% of men), followed by Costa Rica (75% of women and 76% of men); Chile (73% of women and 75% of men); El Salvador (67% of women and 76% of men), a result that is somewhat surprising given support for the autocratic regime of Nayib Bukele; and the Dominican Republic (68% of women and 70% of men).

Agreement is lowest in Honduras (42% of women and 44% of men), Ecuador (43% of women and 47% of men) and Guatemala (45% of women and 56% of men). These are the countries that are least satisfied with their democracy and where it is most vulnerable.

The drop in this indicator confirms the seriousness of the decline in democracy in the 2010s, which culminated with the 2019 protests in Colombia, Chile, and Ecuador. Political and social actors failed to pay sufficient attention to this decline and only now, at the end of the pandemic, are raising their voices to warn about the fragility of democracy. These same indicators show that the years prior to the pandemic were the most critical and that, in 2020, democracy remained surprisingly stable compared to 2018.

### 7. Authoritarianism - Political Machismo

We use three indicators to look at authoritarianism in greater depth.

Disposition towards populism: “I wouldn’t mind if an undemocratic government came to power if it can solve the problems.”

Control of the media: “In the case of difficulties, it is alright for the president to control the media.”

Support for military government: “Would you support a military government instead of the democratic government if things got very difficult, or would you not support a military government in any circumstances?”

First of all, it is important to point out that, in 2020, 62% of Latin Americans indicated they would “not support a military government in any circumstances”. This represented an increase from 55% in 2004. Paraguay and Guatemala are the only countries in the region where less than half the population rejects military government. In Paraguay, more men (49%) do so than women (39%). This is also the case in Guatemala but with a much smaller difference (46% of men compared to 45% of women).
In the other countries, more than 50% of the population rejects the military, although with great differences by sex depending on the country. There is not a pattern in rejection of the military by sex.

Secondly, support for populism, understood as a civilian government that uses democracy to gain office and then overrides the rules of democracy to seize all power, has increased over time. Indeed, in 2002, 44% of Latin Americans said they “wouldn’t mind if an undemocratic government came to power if it can solve problems” and, by 2020, this had increased to 51%, with Chile as the only country in the region where less than 40% took this view.

In four Central American countries, this attitude receives more support from men than women: the Dominican Republic (66% of women and 67% of men); El Salvador (62% of women and 64% of men); Honduras (61% of women and 64% of men) and Guatemala (53% of women and 61% of men). These are the countries where democracy is most vulnerable precisely because of the combination of indicators that open the door to undemocratic attitudes. Indeed, in El Salvador, President Nayib Bukele has already received applause, despite having broken the rules of democracy and becoming an autocrat.
The two countries with the lowest support for populism are Chile (26% of women and 34% of men) and Uruguay (39% of women and 43% of men).

Finally, on the question about the media, in 2020, 34% of Latin Americans, up from 30% in 2002, agreed that “in the case of difficulties, it is alright for the president to control the media.”

Support for control of the media is lowest in Costa Rica (21% of women and 11% of men). In general, women are more inclined than men to support this undemocratic measure. This is particularly the case in Central America: it is supported by 71% of women and 59% of men in El Salvador, 51% of women and 46% of men in Guatemala and 51% of women and 47% of men in the Dominican Republic.
In the table below, the figures in red show that, throughout the region, men are more disposed than women to populism and, with the exception of Mexico and Uruguay, to military government.

Curiously, women are more in favor of controlling the media in almost all countries, except for Venezuela and Chile, as well as Brazil and Mexico where there is no difference by sex.

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
### TABLE 6. Support for authoritarianism by country and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition to populism</th>
<th>Control of the media</th>
<th>Support for military government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Women</td>
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<td>Venezuela</td>
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</table>

This data reveals a type of political machismo in that, in Latin America, men are more inclined towards authoritarianism. It also indicates that women’s political attitudes are not shaped by the local circumstances of each country but rather by traits that are common to all countries. It is no accident that women’s and men’s political attitudes towards democracy differ. This is a subject on which there is little research in the empirical literature.

### 8. Satisfaction with Democracy

Between 1995 and 2001, satisfaction with democracy fluctuated but with differences of no more than one percentage point between men and women, indicating that the Asian crisis, which hit Latin America in the late 1990s, affected women and men equally. After this crisis, differences by sex begin to widen, particularly in the so-called “virtuous five years” between 2001 and 2006/2007 when economies around the region were growing. Indeed, between 2002 and 2005, when satisfaction with democracy fell from 39% to 33%, it was up to three percentage points higher among men than women.
It is interesting to note that, while the economy grew during most of this period, satisfaction with democracy did not. It was only between 2005 and 2006 that it increased among both women and men, rising from 33% to 41%, with only one percentage point of difference between them.

From 2006 onwards, the gap in satisfaction with democracy widened, a trend that persisted until 2020, with women more dissatisfied than men, regardless of whether satisfaction in the region as a whole was increasing (2008/2009) or decreasing (2009-2020). The drop in satisfaction with democracy, which has affected women more since 2009, is reflected in many other indicators about both economic and political goods.

Women are less satisfied than men in all the countries studied, except for Colombia, Argentina and Chile. The differences between women and men range from one percentage point in Uruguay to ten points in the Dominican Republic.
9. Democratic Balance, 2020

The democratic balance is not promising for the region as a whole. Democracy suffered a strong decline throughout the decade that has just ended, leaving some countries particularly vulnerable and with a poor outlook.

Within this context, we find only two indicators on which women’s attitudes are more positive than among men (in green in the table below). In Uruguay, support for democracy is higher among women (75%) than men (73%) and the number of non-democrats is, therefore, lower. In Chile, there is also more support for democracy among women (68%) than men (52%).

In other words, women bear part of the weight of the less democratic attitudes in the region. However, we have seen that, when taking level of education into account, support for democracy among them is on a par with that of men. It is the gender educational gap that plays against women’s attitude towards democracy.

For some decades now, gender equality has been raised as a citizen demand and the significant increase in women’s level of education has given younger generations the same instruments as men. However, several generations of women, over 50 years of

### Table 7. Satisfaction with democracy by country and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
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</table>
age, were left at a disadvantage that affects their attitudes towards democracy. These are the generations that grew up when women did not have access to education and, as the educational gap narrows, the attitudinal gap will also narrow.

At the same time, we see that men are almost unanimously more satisfied with democracy than women. This reveals two different realities. As discussed above, women’s agenda of demands is different from that of men and this partly explains the difference in satisfaction since politics has tended to give priority to men’s demands.

A better balance of the agenda, responding to the demands of both men and women, is necessary to improve women’s satisfaction with democracy, which reveals a deficit in public policies in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Support for democracy</th>
<th>Satisfaction with democracy</th>
<th>Not democrats</th>
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</table>

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
IV. GOVERNMENT FOR WHOM?
The use (and abuse) of power is one of Latin Americans’ deepest complaints about democracy. To measure this phenomenon, we use an indicator about whom the country is governed for: “Would you say that the country is governed by a few powerful groups in their own interest? Or is it governed for the good of all?

Over the past two decades, the perception of government by “powerful groups in their own interest” increased from 61% in 2004 to 73% in 2020, with a peak of 79% in 2018.

The indicator’s evolution by sex remained unchanged over this period, with this perception always higher among men than women by a statistically significant distance of between one and three percentage points.

In 11 of the region’s countries, more than 70% of men and women consider that the country is governed in the interests of a few powerful groups, rather than of the majority of the country. However, there are important differences between women and men.
In 14 countries, more men than women think that government is for a few powerful groups but this perception is higher among women in four countries: Chile (90%), Brazil (74%), Venezuela (82%) and Mexico (68%).

The countries with the largest differences by sex are three Central American countries where we also find great democratic vulnerabilities. The percentage of men who see government as in the interests of the few exceeds that of women by 12 percentage points in El Salvador, ten points in Guatemala and nine points in Honduras.

**TABLE 8. Government by a few powerful groups in their own interest by country and sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

El Salvador is the only country in the region where less than half the population perceives that it is governed in the interests of a few powerful groups. This indicates the level of support for President Nayib Bukele who was elected democratically in a first round with a large majority, but has become an autocrat. Women are less critical than men of his regime and its use of power.

1. **Fairness in the Distribution of Wealth**

A second factor in the decline of democracy is the perception of a lack of fairness in the distribution of wealth. In 2020, only 17% of Latin Americans (16% of women and 18% of men) thought it was fair.
The indicator has remained at around this level since 1997, dropping to 11% in 2001 and 2002 in the midst of the Asian crisis before recovering to 21% in 2007. Its highest level was in 2013 and 2014 when it reached 23% (22% among women and 24% among men).

In Argentina and Chile, a perception of fairness in the distribution of wealth is almost totally absent. In Argentina, only 5% of men and 4% of women take this view while, in Chile, it is held by only 7% of men and 3% of women.

The figure is highest in El Salvador (39% of women and 41% of men), followed by Nicaragua (34% of women and 37% of men).

Women are more critical than men about the distribution of income in the region.

While the perception of fairness in the distribution of wealth has maintained its level over the past few decades, the perception of unfairness has shown fluctuations, albeit remaining basically within the same range.

In 1997, 78% of Latin Americans believed that the distribution of wealth was unfair, with a difference of one percentage point between women and men. In 2017, the figure
dropped to 69% but increased again to 78% in 2020. The difference between women and men held steady throughout the period.

In all countries except the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Honduras, over 70% of the population believes that income distribution is unfair. The difference between women and men varies by country and does not show a homogeneous pattern.

It is precisely the poorest Central America countries where there is least perception of unfairness in the distribution of income. Of course, this is because there is less to distribute and, when the population’s focus is on surviving, everything else is secondary. Chile, on the other hand, has wealth to distribute and complaints about its poor distribution are almost universal, especially among women.

2. Fairness in the Distribution of Health Care and Justice

A majority of the region’s population considers that access to justice and health care is unfair.
In the case of justice, 77% of men and 76% of women consider that access is unfair while, in the case of health care, 65% of women and 63% of men take this view.

In 13 of the region’s countries, over 70% of the population considers that access to justice is unfair and, in 14 countries, over 50% considers that access to health care is unfair.

On both issues, Chile leads perceptions of unfairness, with 94% of women and 88% of men in the case of access to justice and 96% of women and 90% of men in the case of health care.

The perception of unfairness in access to health care is lowest in Uruguay (29% of women and 26% of men) while, in the case of access to justice, it is lowest in Nicaragua (49% of women and 54% of men).
On these two issues, we do not find a pattern of behavior by sex and country and it is necessary to look at each country individually. However, it can be said that men complain more about access to justice and women more about access to health care.

These powerful indicators reveal the almost unanimous complaints against the use of power, the distribution of wealth and access to justice and health that underpin Latin Americans' criticism of democracy.

3. Who Has Most Power

On average, the government is perceived as having most power (57%), followed by big companies (37%) and political parties (33%).

Interestingly, however, perceptions differ between men and women. Women attribute more power to the government, political parties and parliament than men while men attribute more power to big companies, businesspeople, banks and the media.

Indeed, 61% of women say that the government has most power compared to 52% of men. Similarly, 36% of women compared to 31% of men say that the political parties have
most power while 29% of women compared to 28% of men identify the parliament as having most power.

In the case of men, 39% say that big companies have most power (35% of women), followed by businesspeople (22% of men compared to 20% of women) and banks (17% of men compared to 15% of women).

For women, power has more institutional and political components while, for men, its economic components are more important.

It is only on the power of trade unions and the military that the perceptions of men and women are similar.

**a. Power of the Government**

Women have attributed more power than men to the government since measurement of this indicator began in 1995, with around 60% identifying it as having most power. In 2020, 61% of women took this view compared to 52% of men. This phenomenon is common to all the region’s countries, except for Nicaragua (71% of women but 72% of men).
In other words, this is another feature of the differences in women and men’s political attitudes that has endured for a quarter of a century. It is part of women’s different vision of power and institutions.

b. Power of Big Companies

According to Latin Americans, big companies have the second greatest power. However, this perception has been diminishing. In 1995, 47% of the population identified them as having most power (46% of women and 48% of men) whereas, in 2020, the figure was down to 37% (35% of women and 39% of men).
Except for Colombia, where there is no difference by sex, many more men than women identify big companies as having most power.

In other words, in women’s and men’s differing perceptions of power, women think it is the government that has most power and, compared to men, attribute less power to businesspeople.

Women have an image of the world that is different to that of men and is reflected in this data. This information is not well known and there has been little analysis of its role in the transformations that are occurring and demand for gender equality.
V. Trust
V. Trust

Trust is a consequence of a society’s normative framework and institutional structures.

As indicated in our 2020 Latinobarómetro Report, Latin America is one of the world’s most mistrustful regions and its low levels of trust have fallen further over the past decade.

This report focuses on comparing women and men but a more complete analysis of the implications of the evolution of trust can be found in the 2020 Latinobarómetro Report www.latinobarometro.org.

1. Interpersonal Trust

Interpersonal trust is measured as the trust between two people who do not know each other. It dropped from 20% in 1995 to 12% in 2020 (11% among women and 14% among men). This gap between women and men is seen in all the region’s countries without exception.

The case of Brazil is particularly concerning. Interpersonal trust is virtually non-existent, reaching just 3% among women and 5% among men as compared, for example, to 20% of women and 22% of men in Uruguay. In other words, despite its generally low level in the region, there are significant differences between countries.
A lack of interpersonal trust hampers a society’s development by making each transaction more difficult.

2. Trust in Principal Institutions

The church is the institution that inspires most trust in the population (61%). It is followed by the armed forces. The bottom three places go the most important institutions of democracy: the judiciary, congress and, in last place, political parties (13%). Analysis of trust in institutions abounds in the literature and this report refers only to differences between men and women about which less information is available.

Women have more trust in the church (63%) than men (58%), less in the armed forces (37% of women compared to 43% of men) and more in the police (36% of women compared to 35% of men). However, for the president, congress and political parties, there is no difference by sex. Women have less trust in the electoral institution (30% compared to 31% for men), the government (26% compared to 27%) and the judiciary (24% compared to 26%).
a. The Church

Since measurements began in 1995, women have shown greater trust in the church than men. However, it weakened from 72% in 1995 to 63% in 2020, while the gap with respect to men held steady.

This gap exists all the region’s countries and, in 2020, 58% of men expressed trust in the church compared to the 63% of women.

As discussed above, this occurs in a context of secularization and decline in the Catholic Church.

Trust in the church is closely related to the number of citizens in each country who hold religious beliefs and the impact of the corruption scandals, especially in the case of the Catholic Church (see the section on religious values below).

Trust in the church is highest in Paraguay (78% of women and 76% of men), Honduras (77% of women and 71% of men), El Salvador (75% of women and 70% of men) and the Dominican Republic (73% of women and 71% of men).
It is lowest in Argentina (31% of women and 29% of men), Chile (36% of women and 25% of men) and Uruguay (30% of women and 37% of men).

Chile and Uruguay are the region’s two most agnostic countries while Argentina is very distant from the Catholic Church, despite the Argentine pope.

Women have more trust in the church in all the region’s countries, with a gap with respect to men that is widest (11 percentage points) in Chile.

The growth of mistrust in Latin America affects all the institutions measured. However, despite the decline in trust in the church, it remains the most trusted institution. This indicates that secularization is occurring more slowly than the process of change in the case of other institutions, particularly those of democracy.

b. Armed Forces

Unlike the church, the armed forces are more trusted by men (43%) than by women (37%).

Trust in the armed forces has often been interpreted as an indicator of approval of military intervention in government. The Latin American military dictatorships that came to an end in the transition period of the late 1980s were succeeded by democracy in all the region’s countries. In the more than 30 years since that transition, there have been attempted military coup in some countries, such as Honduras in 2009, but what this and other attempts have shown is that Latin Americans do not want to lose the label of “democracy”. This is so much the case that the new dictatorships installed in Nicaragua and Venezuela (not counting Cuba) hold fictitious elections and subsequent ceremonies of assumption of power in a bid to convince the world and their own citizens that they are democracies.

The positive image of the armed forces in Latin America, as the second most trusted institution in the world’s most mistrustful region, should not be interpreted as a call for them to take political power. This is clear in the data on rejection of military government presented above. What has developed in these 30 years of democracy in the region is, instead, a demand for populism or, in other words, democratically elected rulers who, once in power, break the rules of democracy but generally have the people’s approval. The threat hanging over the region today is far more populist than military. The case of Brazil and its handling of the pandemic are an emblematic example of this and other concerns, although Brazil has not reached the point of El Salvador, which has already ceased to be a democracy.

As seen throughout this report, women’s attitudes have played a role in this evolution towards increased demand for populism. The difference in their political attitudes is important in what happens in politics in Latin America, especially because they have a different vision of power.
This different vision is a powerful indicator of the effects of the demands for gender equality that have produced it, a vision far removed from the image of women as dependent on men and holding the same opinions.

In this context, the difference between women and men as regards trust in the armed forces is particularly large in most of the region’s countries.

In Colombia, 55% of men and 41% of women trust the armed forces, a difference of 14 percentage points. The difference reaches 12 points in Brazil and Mexico, 11 points in Nicaragua and ten points in El Salvador. In another nine countries, there is a difference of between one and nine percentage points.

Women trust the armed forces more than men in only three countries - Uruguay, Honduras and Guatemala - in all of which there is a difference of two percentage points.
### TABLE 9. Trust in the armed forces by country and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### c. Government and the President

Trust in the government and the president shows a similar evolution, with women generally trusting them less than men.

Trust in the government fell from 42% in 1995 to 27% in 2020 and, in the president, from 40% in 1997 to 32% in 2020. Differences between women and men are seen in some years, with women showing less trust than men.

In 2020, trust in the government was one percentage point lower among women compared to men while, in the case of the president, there was no difference.

Trust in both the government and the president increased between 2003/2004 and 2006/2008, the period in which most of the region’s countries experienced their highest economic growth. This indicates that trust is related to performance.

The crisis of democracy and politics is reflected in the drop in trust in the main institutions. As discussed above, satisfaction and support for democracy also fell over the same period.
In this evaluation, women and men seem to tend toward a consensus as trust falls. This is a further indicator that, despite women’s different political positions, they are both equally critical of politics.

Interestingly, in some aspects of political attitudes, women and men show similarities, rather than differences.

Analysis of trust in the president by sex and age in 2020 reveals similarities between the attitudes of women and men. As women’s age increases, trust in the president also increases from 29% among 16-25 year-olds to 39% among those aged 61 or over while, among men, there is an increase from 32% to 38% for the same age groups. Similarly, as age decreases, distrust (little or no trust) increases from 57% among women aged 61 or over to 69% among 16-25 year-old women, with a parallel increase among men from 59% to 66%.
Similarities between women and men also emerge when analyzing trust by self-identification of social class. The higher the social class, the greater the level of trust among both women and men.

Indeed, 43% of women who identify as upper-class trust the president compared to 28% in the lower class while, for men, the equivalent figures are 42% and 29%, respectively. Similarly, distrust mirrors this indicator, with 69% of lower-class women and 68% of lower-class men trusting the president (little or no trust) compared to 54% of upper-class women and 56% of upper-class men.

Similarities between age groups across women and men are also apparent in the case of trust in the government. Older people show more trust and younger people more distrust.

In 2020, 23% of women between the ages of 16 and 25 expressed trust in the government but, among those aged 61 or over, this reached 33% while, for men, the equivalent figures were 25% and 34%, respectively. Distrust, on the other hand, is lower among women aged over 61 (63%) than among 16-25 year-olds (75%) and, among men aged 61 or over, reaches 63% compared to 73% among 16-25 year-olds.
The similarities in trust in the president and the government by age group and social class reflect a criticism of politics that is quite universal and increases from generation to generation. Those who most distrust democracy’s authorities are young people and those of a lower socioeconomic level. This augurs an increase in distrust over time, and certainly not a decrease.

The absence of differences between the behavior of men and women is itself an indicator of equality in appreciation of politics that is in contrast to other aspects of society in which, as seen in this report, there are important differences.

d. Political Parties and the Parliament

In the case of other institutions of democracy - political parties and the parliament - the same pattern is observed.

First, trust declines over time. In the case of political parties, it drops from 26% in 1995 to 13% in 2020 and, in the case of the parliament, from 36% to 20%.

Second, in most of the years measured, women had less trust in these institutions than men, generally with a difference of one percentage point. However, in 2020, for the second consecutive time for both institutions, there was no difference by sex.
It is interesting that it is precisely at one of the lowest points in trust in these institutions that men and women show the same level of distrust. The crisis of politics in Latin America is reflected in this data showing how a consensus between men and women on distrust is produced.

### 3. Judiciary

Trust in the judiciary follows the same trend as in other institutions, decreasing from 36% in 1995 to 25% in 2020.

Distrust of the judiciary is distrust of justice, a very substantive complaint shared equally by the vast majority of Latin American women and men.

However, there are differences between countries. Trust in the judiciary is highest in Uruguay, where it reaches 54% among women and 56% among men, and lowest in Paraguay, with just 16% of women and 11% of men. Uruguay is the only country where more than half of the population trusts the judiciary.
This is further confirmation of a demand for justice on the part of a vast majority of Latin Americans that is also seen in other indicators presented here.

4. Other Public and Private Institutions

To understand the widespread nature of the crisis of trust in institutions, it is useful to look also at institutions of other types.

The data below shows that, out of all the public and private institutions measured, trust exceeds 50% only in the case of private clinics (52%).

The only institution in which a difference in trust is found between women and men is the media, which women trust less than men.

“Relatives you don’t know” rank lowest, inspiring trust in only 15% of women and 22% of men. This indicator attempts to show that blood ties do not suffice to generate interpersonal distrust if the other person is not “known”. This is a form of primary distrust.
of a stranger, albeit a relative, that belies the value of the family as a support network in Latin America, leaving women heads of household in an even more vulnerable position.

The generalized mistrust seen in Latin America, where the church elicits the most trust in both women and men, is a cultural characteristic that holds back development. Because women are more mistrustful than men, the cultural change that the region requires involves dismantling, above all, mistrust.

The cultural gap of women’s lower trust of institutions in general negatively affects demands for gender equality. A change in women is required to achieve further progress on the gender equality agenda.
VI. POLITICS
VI. Politics

Politics is one of the dimensions in Latin America where women have participated as presidents of their country. This section analyzes some central aspects of political attitudes, the left-right scale, interest in politics, attitudes towards political parties and participation.

1. Left-Right Scale

The left-right scale measures where people place themselves on a scale from 1 to 10 on which 1 is the left and 10 is the right.

During the past 25 years for which we have measurements, both men and women have, on average, shifted towards the center, moving from 5.5 on the scale in 1995 to 5.0 in 2020. Within this general trend, there were, however, four cycles, with peaks of 5.9 in 1998, 5.7 in 2001 and 5.4 in 2015. The sharpest decline occurred after 2015 with a decrease through to 5.0 in 2020.
Interestingly, in all but five years when there were no differences by sex (1997, 2002, 2007, 2018 and 2020), women placed themselves further to the right than men, except in 2004 and 2008 when men were further to the right. In other words, the majority of women were, on average, to the right of men on the left-right scale between 1995 and 2020.

**TABLE 10. Left-right scale by year and sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
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<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results by country show that in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru, Mexico and Paraguay, women position themselves more to the right than men.
**TABLE 11. Left-right scale by country and sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Colombia, Ecuador and Argentina, there are no left-right differences between women and men while, in Panama, Honduras, Guatemala, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, women are located to the left of men.

In other words, analysis of left-right trends beyond averages for the region shows that the relative position of women and men varies depending on the situation in each country in particular. However, it is possible to conclude that, over time, Latin America has moved towards the political center although data does not allow us to say whether women are more likely to place themselves to the right or left of men.

It is important to bear in mind that results for the left-right scale do not necessarily coincide with election results in the different countries. The latter depend on the proportion of women and men who turn out to vote and this may, in turn, vary depending on the election in question.

### 2. Interest in Politics

The differences between men and women widen as the depth of analysis of attitudes towards politics increases.
In 2020, 25% of women indicated that they were interested in politics as compared to 30% of men. Interest in politics is higher among men in all the region’s countries, except for Costa Rica, where there is no difference, and Honduras, where women show more interest than men.

Interest in politics has important sociodemographic characteristics that are quite similar across men and women.

Women who place themselves in a higher social class show more interest in politics. Disinterest reaches 73% in the lower class but drops to 53% in the upper class. This same phenomenon is also seen among men, but with a generally higher level of interest. While 23% of lower-class men are interested in politics, the figure reaches 39% for the upper class. Similarly, disinterest, which reaches 75% for the lower class, drops to 58% for the upper class.
It is no surprise that, in Latin America, it is upper-class men who are most interested in politics. This confirms the idea of political machismo as revealed by a couple of other indicators. Lower interest among women is related to their lower average level of education compared to men.

Men’s greater interest in politics has implications for a series of indicators about politics that are discussed below.

3. Political Parties

While 32% of men declare themselves close to a political party, the figure for women, at 26%, is lower by six percentage points. It is higher for men in all the region’s countries, except for Uruguay, where there is no difference between men and women, and Costa Rica, where more women than men declare themselves close to a political party.

In other words, the weaknesses of women’s involvement in politics in Latin America are manifested not only in less interest in politics but also less closeness to political parties. Their lower participation in politics is a reflection of their generally more distant attitude. The use of quotas, or other instruments that target only the front line of participation, are, therefore, insufficient to increase women’s participation in politics. It is necessary not only
to remove entry barriers but also, and above all, to bring politics closer to women to foster a more participatory attitude. As shown above, this is not a problem specific to more conservative or more progressive women but, rather, an issue that goes beyond ideologies and affects the vast majority of Latin American women. Bringing politics closer to women, and not women closer to politics, also implies taking their agenda into account and providing signs of inclusion.

![Closeness to Political Parties by Sex](image)

This phenomenon is also reflected in voting intention by political party, with women (35%) voting less for a party than men (40%). This is the case in all the region’s countries, except for Paraguay where 52% of women, as compared to 48% of men, say they vote for a political party.
Voting for a party shows the same negative evolution as most other indicators about politics. In 2005, 52% of the region’s citizens (50% of women and 54% of men) indicated that they voted for a political party but, by 2020, this had dropped to 37% (35% of women and 40% of men). Latin America’s political crisis is holistic, covering all the spectrum of political attitudes and behavior. The political crisis is deeper among women who distance themselves from politics more than men.

4. Political Participation

Beyond differences by sex, Latin Americans declare a very high level of participation in demonstrations.

As seen above, the role of women in politics is anchored basically in their interest in politics, which is lower than among men.

This also affects the way women participate in politics. Here, we see that they are less inclined to participate in demonstrations. In 2020, 37% of women, as compared to 44% of men, indicated that they have or would participate in authorized demonstrations. Except for Mexico, where there was no difference between women and men, men’s participation in demonstrations is higher than that of women in all countries.
This trend has been seen since 1995 when the indicator reached 43% (38% of women and 49% of men).

Chile is the only country where more women (59%) than men (57%) participate in demonstrations.

Increasing women’s participation in politics, therefore, implies changing not only the rules of the political game, but also women’s educational level and the prevailing civic culture—in other words, a deep cultural transformation.

5. Social Media and Political Participation

There is a suspicion that social media - regardless of who uses them and for what - may serve as a substitute for political participation.

The questions below provide a clear picture of the use of social media for political purposes.

*Which of the following statements is closer to your views?*
“Social media are not useful for participating in politics”, “Social media allow one to participate in politics” or “Social media make one believe that one is participating in politics”.

According to 40% of Latin Americans (with no difference by sex), social media are not useful for participating in politics while 20% of women and 22% of men say that they make one believe one is participating in politics and 21% of women and 24% of men that social media allow one to participate in politics. The rest do not answer.

In other words, close to two-thirds (62%) of Latin Americans (60% of women and 62% of men) consider that social media do not allow them to participate in politics. This is an increase on 2015 when 30% indicated that they were not a substitute for participation in politics and 26% that they create an illusion of participation, giving a total of 56%.

Brazil is the country where most women (37%) believe that social media create the illusion of participating in politics while, among men, the figure drops to 26%. It is followed by Argentina (29% of women and 30% of men) and Uruguay (27% of women and 30% of men). These are the three countries where around a third of the population view social media as creating the illusion of participation in politics.
The three countries where this view is least prevalent are Nicaragua (8% of women and 11% of men), Honduras (11% of women and 17% of men) and Guatemala (14% of women and 16% of men).

In half of the region’s countries, 40% or more believe that social media are not useful for participating in politics. The lowest figures are found in Brazil (26% of women and 34% of men) and Argentina (28% of women and 32% of men).

The countries where the view that social media are useful for participating in politics is most prevalent are the Dominican Republic (37% of women and 43% of men), Chile (30% of women and 23% of men) and El Salvador (28% of women and 34% of men). It is least prevalent in Nicaragua, Colombia and Uruguay where less than 20% of men and women take this view.

Political participation is undoubtedly undergoing a process of transformation and social media are one of the new forms that people are exploring in very diverse ways depending on the country. What we see in this data is also related to level of education, internet penetration and the age of the population as well as to political evolution. The perception that social media can serve as a substitute for political participation is most worrying in those countries where voting is voluntary and can mean that there are citizens who stop voting. It is certainly not good for democracy that citizens view social media as a substitute for democracy.
6. Protests

We saw above that, on average, four in ten Latin Americans have attended demonstrations and, in the next indicators, look at approval of protests as well as willingness to participate in them.

Just over half of the region’s citizens (52%) agree with protests (49% of women and 52% of men).

Agreement with protests is highest in Paraguay (83% of women and 85% of men). It is followed by Chile (70% of men women and 72% of men), Peru (60% of women and 70% of men) and the Dominican Republic (56% of women and 61% of men).

The countries where agreement is lowest are Nicaragua (26% of women and 39% of men), Guatemala (30% of women and 38% of men) and El Salvador (30% of women and 39% of men).

Brazil is the only country in the region where the proportion of women who approve of protests (59%) is higher than the proportion of men (57%).
A majority of men approve of protests in 12 countries while a majority of women do so only in eight countries. In Latin America, both approval of protests and participation in them are more common among men than women.

Protests have become established in the region in a way that will make them difficult to eradicate because the vast majority of citizens are positively disposed towards them.

When measuring willingness to protest about specific issues, we find that, on all of them, there is a majority in favor of protesting.

On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 signifies “not at all willing” and 10 signifies “completely willing”, we ask “how willing would you be to demonstrate and protest for…?”

Willingness to protest for better health care and education reaches 7.3 (7.1 for women and 8.4 for men) while willingness to fight against corruption and abuse reaches 7.2 (6.9 for women and 7.4 for men). These issues are followed by willingness to protest for a more equal society (7.1, with 7.0 for women and 7.3 for men) and for higher wages and better working conditions (6.4, with 6.2 for women and 6.6 for men). On defense of democratic rights, the figure reaches 6.2 (5.9 for women and 6.4 for men) and, on climate change, 5.5 (5.2 for women and 5.8 for men).
The map of protests implicit in this data is a warning for democracy, governments and political elites since 40% of citizens say they have attended authorized demonstrations and a large majority are willing to protest about the central issues that afflict the region’s societies. Regardless of the differences between men and women, Latin Americans are in “protest mood” ready to act.

Willingness to protest has increased over the past decade in a trend that has consolidated, rather than weakened.

In the case of health care and education, it increased from 6.7 in 2013 to 7.3 in 2020, with scant differences between countries in all of which it is a majority position.

Willingness to protest is highest in Paraguay (8.3 for women and 8.2 for men) and lowest in Mexico (6.0 for women and 6.4 for men). There are countries in which men are more willing to protest than women and others where the reverse is true as well as countries where there is no difference (Dominican Republic and Costa Rica).
The protests that erupted in Colombia, Ecuador and Chile in late 2019 were silenced by the pandemic which, in Latin American, began in March 2020. The pandemic is not over yet, so the increased disposition to protest has not yet had a chance to express itself. However, everything indicates that, once the pandemic recedes, Latin American peoples will have more reasons than ever to protest, and new eruptions may occur.

Increased willingness to protest is also seen in demand for higher wages and better working conditions on which it rose from 6.0 in 2013 to 6.4 in 2020.
By country, willingness to protest on this issue ranges from a high of 7.8 among women and 7.9 among men in Paraguay to a low of 4.8 among women and 5.4 among men in Guatemala.

Willingness to protest about public policies is no less strong than willingness to protest against corruption or for a more equal society.

Unusually, in the case of corruption, willingness to protest is fairly similar across all the region’s countries, ranging from 8.1 for women and 8.2 for men in Paraguay to 5.8 for women and 6.2 for men in Mexico.

In the case of demand for a more equal society, the differences between countries range from the Dominican Republic, with 7.9 for women and 8.1 for men, to Mexico with 6.0 for women and 6.4 for men.
Despite wide variations between countries and depending on the issue in question, men are, in general, more willing to protest than women. Women are more willing to protest on issues closer to them such as health care and education while men are more willing to protest about more structural issues of democracy such as corruption and equality. This is another indicator that women and men have different agendas and that the news agenda focuses mostly on matters of more interest to men. The news should start focusing more on women’s agenda if governments are not to fail. Without a response to women’s agenda, it is more difficult for a government to succeed.

What is most striking is the equality of purpose of all the women and men of these 18 societies because it reveals a region with an intention to challenge power that will not take long to materialize as and when circumstances warrant.

The changes in power produced by the last ten of the 11 presidential elections that have taken place in Latin America since 2019 clearly reflect the widespread demand for a solution to problems. If these changes of power do not lead to a solution, there can be no doubt that many protests will ensue.
VII. DEMOCRATIC GUARANTEES
VII. Democratic Guarantees

Perceptions of democratic guarantees can be divided into two spheres: civil and political guarantees, and social and economic guarantees.

We understand demand as the gap in citizens’ perceptions of guarantees.

On civil and political guarantees, freedom to profess any religion is perceived as guaranteed by 68% of the region’s citizens (67% of women and 69% of men).

It is followed by the freedom to choose one’s trade or profession (57%, with 56% of women and 58% of men), freedom of expression (46%, with 44% of women and 49% of men) and freedom to participate in politics (45%, with 43% of women 47% of men). Women perceive less guarantees of civic and political freedoms than men.

![Chart showing democratic guarantees by sex for Latin America 2020.](chart.png)

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
1. Civil and Political Guarantees

The perception that freedom of expression is guaranteed increased from 49% in 2007 to 60% in 2011 after which it began to decrease, dropping to 46% in 2020. The largest drop, from 58% to 46%, occurred between 2015 and 2020. Freedom of expression is just one more victim of the pandemic.

Uruguay is the country where the largest proportion of citizens view freedom of expression as guaranteed (73% of men and 71% of women) and Brazil is the country where it is lowest (28% of women and 32% of men).

In all the region’s countries, men perceive more guarantees of freedom of expression than women. This is another hard indicator of gender inequality. In Latin America, women perceive/have less freedom of expression than men.

Regionally, the perception that freedom to participate in politics is guaranteed increased from 56% in 2007 to 66% in 2011 before dropping to 45% in 2020, following a trend similar to that seen in perceptions of the guarantee of freedom of expression. Another victim of the pandemic?
Similarly, more men (47%) than women (43%) see freedom to participate in politics as guaranteed. Uruguay is again the country where this perception is most prevalent (72% of women and 71% of men) and Colombia is the country where it is least prevalent (29% of women and 34% of men).

Uruguay is the only country where more women than men perceive a guarantee of participation in politics.

The pandemic affected civil and political guarantees in Latin America, creating a gap of fewer guarantees for women than for men. These are hard indicators of gender inequality.

These civil and political guarantees are basic to democracy and the gender gap must be closed in order to achieve greater equity between women and men.

2. Social and Economic Guarantees

The Latinobarómetro surveys measure nine social and economic guarantees:

- Fair distribution of wealth
• Opportunities to find a job
• Protection against crime
• Equality of opportunity regardless of origin
• Social security
• Solidarity with the poor and needy
• Protection of the environment
• Equality of men and women
• Protection of private property.

All these guarantees have two defining characteristics: a majority of the region’s citizens perceive that they do not exist and, secondly, more men than women perceive that they exist or, in other words, women enjoy less social and economic guarantees than men. When addressing gender equality, these gaps must be part of all equations for a solution. This data shows that women lack equality in all the main dimensions of Latin American societies.

a. Guarantee of Equality of Men and Women

In 2007, 47% of Latin Americans considered that equality between men and women was guaranteed (45% of women and 49% of men). This increased to 58% in 2011 followed by a drop to 42% in 2020 (37% of women and 47% of men).

In the first year of the pandemic, perceptions of equality of men and women were down by 16 percentage points on 2011. This may prove particularly difficult to remedy once the pandemic is over and, if the pandemic persists, special policies will have to be designed to at least recover levels prior to 2020.

Between 2011 and 2020, perceptions of a guarantee of gender equality among women decreased by 20 percentage points and, among men, by 13 points. In other words, the inequality gap between men and women has widened, along with a decrease in guarantees in general, and the negative impact of the pandemic is not confined to its economic consequences.
Around the region, more men than women indicate that there are guarantees of gender equality. In the Dominican Republic, there is a difference of one percentage point between men and women while, at 15 points, the difference is largest in Argentina and Chile. The difference reaches 12 points in Brazil, 11 points in El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica and ten points in Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela.
TABLE 2. Gender gap: Guarantees of gender equality by country and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Without exception, women perceive a greater loss of guarantees than men during the first year of the pandemic. This will be a key post-pandemic issue.

b. Guarantee of Equality of Opportunity

Another of the guarantees that suffered a significant deterioration during the first year of the pandemic was equality of opportunity. In 2007, 36% of Latin Americans considered equality of opportunity to be guaranteed (35% of women and 37% of men). This increased to 50% in 2011 (49% of women and 51% of men) but dropped to 34% in 2020 (31% of women and 37% of men).

![Graph showing changes in perception of equality of life chances regardless of origin by sex and country from 2007 to 2020.](image)

Here, we see the same phenomenon as in guarantee of equality between men and women. The important loss of guarantee of equality of opportunity caused by the pandemic is more marked for women than men, with a gap of six percentage points. This is apparent across all the countries of the region.

In 2020, perceptions of both guarantees drop to their lowest level since 2007.

Between 2011 and 2020, other social and economic guarantees such as protection against crime, access to jobs and distribution of wealth also fall to their lowest level.
On protection against crime and opportunities to find a job, the gap between men and women widens from two to five percentage points between 2011 and 2020 while, over the same period, the gap on fair distribution of wealth increases from one to three percentage points.

**TABLE 13. Social and economic guarantees by year and sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protection against crime</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities to find a job</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fair distribution of wealth</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2020, the pandemic produced a significant impact in terms of loss of guarantees in all the region's countries, affecting women more than men. This was the case of both civic and political guarantees and socioeconomic guarantees, and the latter are left particularly vulnerable. In other words, the pandemic deepens gender equality in Latin America across all spheres of society.
VIII. PUBLIC POLICIES
VIII. Public Policies

1. Relations with the Authorities and Crime

Public policies can be successful in a context of access, credibility and trust between the authorities and citizens. It is in this context that the Latinobarómetro surveys ask Latin Americans about this issue in order to measure the validity of public policies.

How likely is it that the authorities will listen to a citizen on a given topic? In answer, 62% of Latin Americans say they are unlikely to be heard, including 64% of women and 60% of men. Only 35% say they are likely to be heard (33% of women and 37% of men). In other words, a majority of Latin Americans and, particularly women, are skeptical of being heard by the authorities.

Uruguay is the country where citizens feel most likely to be heard (47% of women and 48% of men) while the countries where the authorities are seen as least accessible are Bolivia (21% of women and 24% of men) and Peru (21% of women and 25% of men).
Public policies are more likely to fail when citizens feel that the authorities do not listen.

Next, we look at the other side of this issue, that is, citizens’ capacity to organize to present petitions, asking the following question:

Many sidewalks and streets in the city are in bad shape. Imagine the government would give resources for their maintenance to those neighborhoods where the residents get up a petition with 500 signatures. How probable do you think it would be for your neighborhood to collect 500 signatures for that petition?

We find that 58% of Latin Americans say they could organize and collect signatures for the petition (61% of men and 55% of women). The Dominican Republic is the country where most citizens believe they could achieve this (73% of women and 76% of men) while Chile is the country with the lowest figures (40% of women and 54% of men).

The two questions above provide a good clue as to how citizens view their relations with the authorities. In both cases, women are more skeptical and men are more active.

Addressing the issue of crime directly, the surveys ask the following question: “If you are the victim of a minor crime (theft of a bicycle, cellphone, etc.), how probable is it that you would complain to the police?”
In response, 47% of Latin Americans (47% of women and 48% of men) say they would probably file a complaint while 51% (with no difference by sex) say they would not do so.

The probability of filing a complaint is much lower in Ecuador, Bolivia and Honduras, where only 35% would do so, while there are six countries - Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Argentina and Nicaragua (in descending order) - where at least half of citizens would file a complaint. The difference by sex varies from country to country without showing any identifiable pattern.

The probability that a person will report a crime depends on perceptions of the authorities’ credibility and closeness. In Latin America, reporting is low and between at least a third and two-thirds of the population do not report crimes. This represents a major complication for the work of the state, which does not even know about all the crimes committed in its territory.

At the same time, we find a significant level of social capital in that over half the population believe they can gather signatures for a petition to improve their neighborhood. Public policies in a given country have to solve the problem of credibility before they can be effective. The results above show that the authorities are missing opportunities.
Migration

Migration is one of the great problems currently facing people, countries and the globalized world. In Latin America, the migration of more than 5 million Venezuelans has wreaked havoc not only in neighboring countries, but also throughout the region. There has been a massive migration of Haitians in addition to the economic migration produced by the crises. Here, we examine some central aspects of Latin Americans’ attitudes and opinions regarding migration.

The first attitude measured refers to whether the region’s citizens see migration as positive or negative, using the following question: “Now I would ask you to tell me if, from your point of view and that of your family, you believe that the arrival of immigrants in the country benefits you or harms you?”

In 2020, a resounding 54% of men and women rejected the arrival of immigrants to their country. In Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala and Bolivia, the figure reached over 70% and, in all of them, rejection was higher among women than men.

The countries where rejection of immigration is lowest are Paraguay (33% of women and 26% of men), Argentina (34% of women and 35% of men) and Chile (37% of women and 38% of men). Women reject immigration more than men in nine countries.

Paradoxically, women’s rejection of immigration is highest in those countries with most migration to other countries: Ecuador, Colombia and Peru as well as Guatemala and Bolivia.
Opinions about migrants have not always been as negative as in 2020. In 2002, 43% of Latin Americans said that immigrants came to compete for their jobs but this dropped to 39% in 2010, with the difference widening between men (40%) and women (38%), before rising to 57% (55% of women and 59% of men) in 2020. Rejection of migration has increased with the pandemic, probably as a consequence of its hardships.

Opinions on immigration are quite similar across countries. The view that immigrants represent competition for jobs is least prevalent in Venezuela (45% of women and 47% of men) and most prevalent in Ecuador (69% of women and 68% of men).

Rejection of migration differs depending on the migrants’ country of origin as shown by the next indicator, distinguishing between migrants from Venezuela, Haiti, other Latin American countries and non-Latin American countries.

The results show mostly negative opinions about migrants from Venezuela (54%) and Haiti (55%, with 56% of women and 54% of men). Opinions about migrants from Latin America countries and countries outside Latin America are divided: 45% have a negative opinion about receiving migrants from Latin America and from outside Latin America while 49% have a positive opinion.
More men (51%) than women (47%) have a positive opinion about receiving migrants from other Latin American countries. This is also the case of migrants from outside Latin America (52% of men and 47% of women).

Migration is mostly rejected but when testing for migrants from different countries/regions, we find positive opinions in some cases. In other words, rejection is not simply of migration, but also depends on “who” the migrants are. Women have a more negative towards immigration than men.

What should a government do about illegal migration?

According to 11% of Latin Americans, illegal immigrants should be allowed to stay as long as they want while 41% say they should be allowed to stay for a set period and 44% say they should be sent back to their own country immediately. More men agree with the latter two statements (42% and 45%, respectively) than women (41% and 42%).
In the case of the view that illegal immigrants should be repatriated immediately, there are large differences between countries. It is most prevalent in Costa Rica (66% of women and 63% of men), followed by Peru (66% of women and 61% of men) and the Dominican Republic, where more men (59%) than women (55%) take this view. In Guatemala, more women (56%) than men (54%) hold this view and, in Chile, more men (61%) than women (49%).

The countries where support for immediate repatriation is lowest are Honduras (20% of women and 25% of men) and El Salvador (23% of women and 27% of men).

When Latin Americans are asked generically about migration, attitudes are mostly negative. However, opinions improve when testing for migrants from specific places. Based on this data, it can be concluded that they reject immigration from Venezuela and Haiti and this rejection is stronger among women than men, but that opinions are divided about immigration from other parts of the world.

Although women have a higher general rejection of migration, they are less likely than men to say that migrants should be repatriated. This may be related to women’s lower participation in the labor force.
IX. VALUES
IX. Values

Citizen’s attitudes, opinions and behavior have their roots in the social and political values that constitute the civic culture of the general public.

Here, we review central themes of those values that provide us with a societal cultural map of Latin America, looking at Latin Americans’ opinions about themselves and about the norms that govern them.

1. Compliance with the Law

Compliance with the law is at the heart of peoples’ civic behavior and, when asking Latin Americans about this, we find weaknesses. A predominant 43% believe that “nobody” complies with the law, a perception that is higher among women (44%) than men (42%).

Those seen as showing most compliance are family members known personally to the interviewee, a view held by 33% of women and 34% of men.

Compliance with the law on the part of authorities is seen as low. In the case of the police, 19% of Latin Americans (19% of women and 18% of men) say they comply with the law and, for “politicians in general”, the figure drops to 10%. In between these two extremes are the military (18%), judges (17%) and parliamentarians (11%). Apart from the military, with a difference between women and men of two percentage points, the difference by sex is one percentage point, with fewer women than men saying they comply with the law.
This low perception of compliance with the law reflects a civic culture of a very low intensity that offers weak foundations for the functioning of society and democracy.

In four countries, more than half of the population says that “nobody” complies with the law. In Venezuela, Paraguay, Ecuador and Bolivia, 71%, 60%, 57% and 52%, respectively, of women take this view compared to 65%, 61%, 50% and 51% of men.

By contrast, in Uruguay, only 16% of both men and women say that the law is not respected. It is followed by Brazil, with 24% of women and 22% of men.
Perceptions of compliance with the law vary widely between countries but, in 16 of the 18 countries surveyed, at least a third of the population considers that nobody complies with it, indicating a weak state unable to ensure its citizens’ compliance and a weak civic culture. The view that laws are not adhered to is more prevalent among women than men.

A second indicator, asking explicitly about compliance with the law by citizens in general, confirms the above data. In 1996, 71% said that their country’s citizens complied with the law “little” or “not at all”. This dropped to 67% in 2011 but increased sharply to 84% in 2020.

Certainly, experience during the pandemic has triggered this leap in the belief that practically nobody complies with the law anymore. Vast segments of the population reportedly ignored the restrictions imposed by the authorities in response to the pandemic, and governments experienced great difficulty in enforcing instructions.

The percentage of citizens who believe their compatriots do not comply with the law is below 80% only in Nicaragua (75% of women and 70% of men), Chile (68% of women and 70% of men) and Uruguay (62% of both women and men). In the other 15 countries, the percentage is higher, reaching up to 92% of women and 93% of men in Peru.
In other words, there is an almost unanimous perception in most countries that citizens do not comply with the law, with this view more prevalent among women than men. This report provides clues as to the reasons for this attitude: an almost universal belief that power is exercised for the benefit of a few, that the distribution of wealth is unfair, that there are no social guarantees... and many other arguments that the population has to justify breaching the law.

2. Equality Before the Law

Latin Americans believe there is not equality before the law, partly explaining their non-compliance with it.

Between 2002 and 2020, the percentage of Latin Americans who believe there is equality before the law decreased, with those considering there is little or no equality increasing from 68% to 75% (76% among women and 75% among men).

The figures range from a maximum of 90% for women and 87% for men in Chile to 63% of women and 58% of men in Uruguay. In general, around the region, the figure is higher for women than for men, which is yet another hard indicator of gender inequality.
In the first year of the pandemic, there was a sharp increase in perceptions of inequality before the law. This must be taken into account as one of the pandemic’s impacts and is not confined to the matter of vaccination and those who do not wish to be vaccinated, but also involves a feeling of infringement of basic rights. During the pandemic, Latin America receded on rights, more so for women than for men.

### 3. Obligations and Duties

In an accumulation of negative factors, non-compliance with the law and inequality before it are compounded by a failure to fulfill obligations. The percentage of Latin Americans who believe their compatriots fulfill their obligations “little” or “not at all” increased from 59% in 2011 to 67% in 2020.

This perception is most prevalent in Peru (79% of women and 81% of men) and least prevalent in Nicaragua (54% of women and 51% of men).

In most countries, more women than men see their compatriots as not fulfilling their obligations and duties. The exceptions are Mexico, Paraguay, Venezuela and Chile where more men than women take this view.
4. Demand for Rights

The pandemic weakened not only fulfillment of obligations but also demand for rights.

Latin Americans are not very aware of their duties and obligations, but are more aware of their rights. While 67% do not fulfill their obligations, 49% demand their rights.

Between 1996 and 2020, two different periods can be distinguished: from 1996 to 2011, when demand for rights ranged between 56% in 1996 and a minimum of 51% in 2003/2005, and, secondly, the year of the pandemic when it dropped to 49% among both men and women. From 1996 to 2011, there were between one and two percentage points of difference between women and men, with the former demanding their rights less than men.

In some countries, demand for rights reaches barely a third of the population, as is the case of Brazil where it reaches 28% among both women and men. In other countries, it is very high as in Uruguay (68% of women and 67% of men), Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic (in both cases, 63% women and 61% men).
In Venezuela, Chile, Nicaragua, Colombia and Panama, demand for rights is higher among men than women.

It is particularly interesting to compare demand for rights with the fulfillment of obligations. There are countries such as Uruguay where women demand their rights more (68%) than they comply with their obligations (58%) while, in Chile, less women (43%) demand their rights than comply with their obligations (61%).

In other words, demand for rights is not directly related to the fulfillment of obligations and the relationship depends on the country in question.

What we observe, in general, is that neither men nor women fulfill their obligations but both demand their rights. However, the balance is tilted towards women. They are furthest from fulfilling obligations and complying with the law, believing in inequality before the law and demanding their rights. This indicates a situation of inequality compared to men. All these indicators point to the same conclusion of a gap in access to rights between men and women.

![Graph showing demand for rights by sex in Latin America](image-url)
5. Religious Values

The changes in values produced by the religious evolution of the general population of Latin American are crucial for understanding the social phenomena that have occurred in the region. Here, we look at the two main changes: the decline of Catholicism and the increase in those without religion.

Above, we saw the impact of the decline of the Catholic Church on the region’s process of secularization and, in this section, we examine the evolution of differences by sex and country.

From 1995 through to 2020, more women than men declared themselves Catholics, with a difference that ranged from three to seven percentage points.

Except for Honduras, where 36% of women consider themselves Catholic compared to 40% of men, the percentage of women who are Catholics exceeds that of men in all countries. Catholicism is stronger among women.

![Catholicism by Sex](chart)

The decline in Catholicism has been accompanied by an increase in the percentage of Latin Americans who describe themselves as not having any religion. Over the quarter of
a century from 1995 to 2020, this increased fourfold from 4% to 16%. Throughout the period, this was seen among both women and men, but the percentage of men declaring themselves without religion always exceeded the percentage of women (6% of men and 3% of women in 1995; 19% of men and 14% of women in 2020).

Uruguay is the region’s most agnostic country (35% of women and 45% of men). It is followed by Chile (31% of women and 39% of men) and Argentina (30% of women and 32% of men). The Southern Cone of Latin America is on its way to becoming largely secular.

In Costa Rica, the phenomenon of agnosticism is markedly more prevalent among men, with a difference of almost ten percentage points compared to women (19% of men and 10% of women). A difference of nine percentage points is also found in Mexico and Honduras.

Agnosticism is lowest in Bolivia (6% of both women and men) and Paraguay (4% of women and 9% of men).

Religious values and changes in them have a strong impact on the evolution of societies over time. Together with the arrival of democracy, this helps to explain the social phenomena that have occurred in the region in the last quarter of a century. Secularization
affected men first while women are holding on to their religious beliefs, including Catholicism, longer.

6. Values of Freedom of Expression

The Latinobarómetro surveys ask the region’s citizens where “they usually express their opinions about the country’s problems”. The answers reveal their apprehensions about expressing their opinions and reflect a significant self-censorship and a perception of insecurity.

Regionally, 48% of citizens report that they do not usually express their opinions and the figure is significantly higher among women (51%) than men (44%).

Costa Rica is the only country where more men (45%) than women (41%) do not express their views. Elsewhere, the figure is significantly higher among women.

There are countries in which a majority of the population does not say what it thinks. Nicaragua, now a dictatorship, is the country where the highest percentage of women (72%) and the highest percentage of men (62%) do not express their opinions. The
Nicaraguan government has imprisoned opponents and expressing an opinion can, therefore, pose a threat to a person’s freedom.

Among countries where most citizens do not say what they think, Nicaragua is followed by Ecuador (65% of women and 59% of men), Brazil (64% of women and 58% of men), Honduras (63% of women and 58% of men), Guatemala (63% and 51%), Bolivia (59% and 54%), Panama (58% and 49%), Colombia (56% and 49%) and El Salvador (56% and 47%).

These nine countries, including Brazil, the country with the region’s largest population, represent half of Latin America. In other words, it is a region that does not say what it thinks, particularly in the case of women. How can gender equality be achieved if women do not express their opinions? Open societies are those that fight for their rights; silent traditional societies have no chance to fight for their rights. This report provides extensive evidence of the different dimensions in which we find wide inequality and gaps between men and women but, if they are not willing to speak out, the task is much harder.

There are just two countries in which only a minority of the population does not say what it thinks: Chile (20% of women and 18% of men) and Argentina (28% of women and 22% of men).

In another seven countries - Venezuela, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Peru - between 30% and 40% of the population does not say what it thinks.

This data reveals the value barriers that Latin America must overcome to achieve development and gender equality. To say what you think without self-censorship for fear of reprisals is one of the basic rights of freedom.

The second alternative answer to this question shows that 21% of Latin Americans say what they think within the family (24% of women, ahead of 18% of men). This is followed by 18% who say what they think among friends (22% of men, head of 14% of women). In other words, women feel more comfortable talking within the family and men when talking to friends.

With 9%, social media are in penultimate place (11% of men and 7% of women) as a place to say what you think. Finally, a minority of 3% (4% of men and 3% of women) mention demonstrations as a vehicle for expressing their opinions.

According to 55% of Latin Americans, expressing opinions about the country’s problems can have negative consequences (55% of both women and men).
In 14 countries, over 50% of the population say that expressing opinions can lead to reprisals. Chile is the country where there is least fear of reprisals (33% of women and 28% of men), followed by Uruguay (41% of women and 43% of men), Argentina (43% and 41%) and Paraguay (46% and 44%). Again, attitudes in the Southern Cone differ from those in other countries.

The perception that one has the right to speak out is not the same as actually doing so and they do not necessarily go hand-in-hand in Latin America. The latter is a strong barrier to fighting for one’s rights. High willingness to participate in protests can be explained partly by this self-censorship since the anonymity of participation in a protest serves as a shield against reprisals.

a. Expressing Opinions About Politics

The above questions asked directly about interviewees’ own behavior. The next question asks indirectly about what citizens think their compatriots do. Public opinion surveys use questions of this type to obtain information that people are not prepared to offer about themselves but reflects their position as if it was that of others.
“When people are asked to express their political opinion, do you think that most people say what they think about politics or do you think they usually do not say what they really think?”

Answers to this question show that the number of people who “usually do not say what they really think” increased steadily from 57% in 1995 to 67% in 2020 (67% of women and 66% of men). This reveals the depth of the political crisis in the region, a place where people are increasingly silent, a phenomenon closely related to mistrust.

Across the different countries, an overwhelming majority of people do not say what they think about politics. The percentage of women who do not say what they think about politics is below 70% in only six countries compared to ten countries for men.

Women tend to speak less about politics than men. Again, Chile (47% of women and 41% of men) and Argentina (45% of women and 44% of men) are the exceptions and the only two countries where less than half of the citizens do not say what they think.

These three questions about the freedom that citizens take to say what they think provides us with a picture not only of the societies in which we live, but also their deepest problems.
Latin America reveals its darkest side when most of the population and, particularly, women dare not say what they think. Democracies cannot function well if their citizens do not express their will in a sovereign manner and this starts with them saying what they think. Certainly, it will not be possible to achieve greater levels of equality and an absence of discrimination if those affected do not express their opinions, including gender equality.
X. ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN
X. Attitudes Towards Women

Through to 2009, Latinobarómetro surveys included a battery of questions about attitudes towards women, designed by the ISP International Social Science Programme, a comparative international study. The results are presented below.

*It is better for women to focus on the home and men on work. / Men are better political leaders than women. / If the woman earns more than the man, she will almost certainly have problems.*

These questions provide a map of basic attitudes towards women in Latin America and will be repeated in the 2022 survey to monitor their evolution.

On the issue of money and its impact on the relationship between a woman and a man, the percentage of Latin Americans who think that women will have problems if they earn more than the man increased from 45% in 2004 to 46% in 2009.

The view that it is preferable for the woman to focus on the home and the man on his work held steady at just over a third of the population between 1997 and 2009, reaching 34% in both years.

Money is more of a divide between men and women than politics and domestic chores.
Similarly, in 2009, a third of the population (32%) considered that men make better political leaders than women.

1. The Domestic Function

This question seeks to measure how society values women’s role at home and at work. In 1997 and 2009, just over a third of Latin Americans considered that it is better for the woman to be at home and the man at work, a view characteristic of a traditional society, prior to women’s mass incorporation into the labor market.

In other words, a third of Latin Americans see a woman’s place as at home. The data by country shows that, in all countries, there are more men than women in favor of this alternative, a clear indicator of machismo.

Honduras is the country where there is majority of support for woman staying at home (58% of women and 63% of men). It is followed by Guatemala (49% of women and 54% of men).

This view is least prevalent in Uruguay (20% of women and 27% of men) and Chile (20% of women and 31% of men).
Although this indicator was last measured in 2009, we do not expect to see substantial changes in the order of the countries when it is next measured in 2022 since we already know which countries have experienced the most changes in values, moving towards a more open society, and which countries have remained more traditional. With the exception of Costa Rica, Central American societies are more traditional while those in the Southern Cone are more open. A country’s level of traditionalism determines whether women join the labor market (or not), moving away from their traditional role. What this data reveals is the weight of traditionalism in Latin American societies and its impact on the role of women.

Gender equality is much harder to achieve in traditional societies than open societies.

2. The Role of Money

What happens in a Latin American society when the woman earns more than the man? This was measured in 2004 and 2009 when 45% and 46%, respectively, indicated that “if the woman earns more than the man, she will almost certainly have problems.”

A majority of women hold this view. In Mexico, it is held by 64% of women and 52% of men and, in the Dominican Republic, by 52% of women and 58% of men. The differences by country are not large and the countries where this view is least prevalent are Argentina (45% of women and 34% of men) and Uruguay (49% of women and 32% of men).
In 15 of the 18 countries surveyed, almost half of women consider that money can damage the relationship between a man and a woman. This reflects the same phenomenon seen in the previous question about women and work outside the home: the view, common to a large part of Latin American societies, that both work and money have a place that belongs to men more than women.

Gender equity calls for a modernization of these attitudes.

3. The Role of Politics

The third dimension of attitudes towards women is that of politics. This is where we see the least resistance to women’s participation.

Are men better political leaders than women? This question was measured twice: in 2004, when 27% considered this to be the case, and, in 2009, when the figure increased to 29%. However, in both measurements, it received fewer mentions than the previous two indicators.
Support for this view was highest in the Dominican Republic (46% of women and 57% of men), followed by Honduras (42% of women and 51% of men), and was lowest in Uruguay (16% of women and 21% of men).

It is hardly surprising that, across all countries, support for this view is higher among men than among women, with differences of up to 15 percentage points in Brazil and Argentina.

A society’s attitudes towards women vary according to the level of traditionalism. In Central American societies, attitudes are less egalitarian than in the Southern Cone. However, in all countries, including the less traditional ones, attitudes that are detrimental to gender equality persist among a significant part of the population. This is also manifested in the differing levels of women’s incorporation into the labor market and their participation as candidates in elections (in the latter case, with the exception of Chile where there is parity in the Constitutional Convention that is drafting a new constitution).

4. Entry Barriers in the Labor Market

Latin American women face difficulties when seeking to enter the labor market about which there are obviously more complaints from women than men.
The most important barrier identified to women’s incorporation into the labor market is childcare (45%), followed by employers’ unwillingness to hire women with children (40%), low wages (39%), high unemployment (38%), a lack of training/education (34%), employers’ unwillingness to hire women of childbearing age (31%) and a lack of working day flexibility (24%). Women complain about these issues between two and six percentage points more than men.

At the beginning of this report, we analyzed the difference between women’s and men’s agendas. Here, we see that the agenda of women is not among the priorities of the region’s governments. Similarly, we do not see discussion among businesspeople about women’s incorporation into the labor market. The failure to include these issues in the agenda is not conducive to a recovery of trust or the reputation of politics.
XI. INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION
XI. Inequality And Discrimination

1. Tolerance of Inequality

When looking at inequality and discrimination, it is important to bear in mind the difference between the standards of international organizations and the UN Declaration of Human Rights and, on the other hand, the perceptions of peoples who have experienced centuries of inequality and internalized them in their culture.

Latinobarómetro surveys include the following question: “Would you say that the level of inequality in your country is acceptable or would you say it is completely unacceptable? On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is completely unacceptable and 10 is completely acceptable, where would you place (country)?” The answers confirm that an important percentage of Latin Americans accept inequality.

On the scale of 1 to 10, 26% of men and women position themselves at 1, indicating that they find inequalities totally unacceptable. A further 21% position themselves between 2.3 and 4 and, in other words, have an intermediate level of rejection of inequalities. At 5 - that is, neutral ground between rejection and acceptance - 18% are located and, between 6 and 10, 28%.

The average is 4.3, implying that Latin Americans are somewhat inclined to reject inequalities, with no differences between men and women.

However, analysis of the data by country reveals differences between men and women as well as large differences between countries.

Chile is the country where inequalities are least tolerated, with women (2.1) tolerating them less than men (2.5), while tolerance is highest in El Salvador, with women (5.5) showing more tolerance than men (5.3).

Tolerance of inequalities is highest in Central American countries, but with differences between women and men, with the exception of Nicaragua where, with 5.4, there is no difference by sex while, in the Dominican Republic, men (5.4) show more tolerance than women (5.1).

It cannot be concluded that women tolerate inequalities more than men, or vice versa, since this varies by country. However, it can be said that countries with the most vulnerable democracies are the ones that tolerate inequalities most.
In Uruguay, tolerance reaches 5.0 among women and 4.9 among men. As a country without major cleavages and with a fairly homogeneous population, Uruguay has fewer inequalities than other countries in the region.

The acceptability of inequalities and differences between women and men bear little relation to the objective conditions in each country and are more related to their political and social evolution.

2. The Worst Inequalities

The worst inequalities are measured using a list that is shown to interviewees.

For Latin Americans, the four worst inequalities are access to health care (47%), which is more important to women (48%) than men (46%); education (43%), which is also more important to women (44%) than men (42%); job opportunities (42%), with 43% among women and 40% among men; and inequality of access to justice (40%), with 39% among women and 41% among men.
Inequality between men and women takes ninth place with 24% of mentions (26% among women and 22% among men).

Results by country vary widely. Gender inequality takes top place is Chile where it is mentioned by 44% of women and 35% of men. It is followed by Argentina, with 37% of mentions (40% among women and 33% among men, Uruguay with 32% (30% among women and 34% among men) and Costa Rica with 31% (33% among women and 29% among men).

The countries where gender inequality receives the least mentions are in Central America: the Dominican Republic, with 11% and no difference by sex, and Panama and El Salvador, both with 14% (13% among women and 14% among men).
Perceptions of gender inequality can triple depending on the country in question. In all countries, except for Uruguay, Venezuela, El Salvador and Panama, mentions of gender inequality are higher among women than men. However, gender inequality is not exclusive to women.

Perceptions of gender inequality are higher in the more open societies of the Southern Cone and lower in more traditional societies in Central America.

Inequality between races takes tenth place, with 22% of mentions, and is more important to women (23%) than men (21%).

Political inequalities such as access to power (17%) and inequality in citizenship (9%) come last in the list, although we have seen in other indicators than a majority of the population complain about them. Men give them more importance than women.

When these inequalities are compared to the inequalities of daily life, the latter emerge as far more important. Matters related to public policy - health, education, employment and justice - are seen as the sources of the greatest inequalities. The first three are the most important for women and the last one for men.
The map of inequalities drawn by this indicator portrays Latin America as a region where the precariousness of daily life takes precedence over the intangible conditions of the functioning of society. Women feel more affected by the inequalities of daily life than by problems in the functioning of society. Again, women’s agenda is different from that of men and often not taken sufficiently into account.

3. Discrimination

Discrimination is part of inequalities and this indicator only confirms the above results.

Over the past decade, the percentage of Latin Americans who see themselves as part of a discriminated group has increased from 18% to 21%, with a sustained difference of one percentage point between women and men.

There are very large differences between countries. In Brazil, 42% of women and 36% of men feel discriminated. It is followed by Chile (34% of women and 33% of men), Bolivia (32% of women and 34% of men) and Argentina (28% of women and 27% of men).
Curiously, El Salvador is the country with the smallest percentage of citizens who feel discriminated (12% of women and 15% of men).

In eight countries, men feel more discriminated against than women. The perception of discrimination is, therefore, not a gender equality issue in Latin America. Moreover, it is not defined by economic reasons alone since high levels are not confined to the poorest countries.

To identify the types of discrimination perceived by Latin Americans, we asked who is most discriminated against.

The “poor” take first place with 23% of mentions and no difference by sex. They are followed by “indigenous” people with 9% (8% among women and 10% among men) and “blacks or Afro-descendants” with 7% and no difference by sex.

The list also includes homosexuals, immigrants, old people, women, members of a political party, country dwellers, disabled people and criminals, all of whom receive less than 7% of mentions, with no difference between women and men or mostly a difference of only one percentage point.

As a discriminated group, women receive 2% of mentions (3% among women and 1% among men). It is interesting that, in the spontaneous mention, the word “discriminated” is not associated with women. Discrimination may be a socially very harsh word for referring to “women” in Latin America but, theoretically, demand for gender equality is primarily a complaint against discrimination. However, what the population understands by it is a different matter. It is clear that “gender equality” is a term used positively while discrimination is viewed negatively. It may well be that society accepts that there is a lack of gender equality, but is not ready to accept that there is discrimination. Is it a problem of verbalization or a problem of comprehension of the phenomenon?

We merely pose the question.
Perceptions of discrimination have remained unchanged over the past decade. Here, we look at their evolution as regards three groups - indigenous people, the poor and old people - who are highly discriminated against, with widely varying levels of recognition and little or no difference between women and men.
Democracy undoubtedly brought with it a massive awakening of citizens in terms of their rights and empowerment. However, this does not imply they are fully aware of their conditions and can or want to recognize them.

This data on inequality and discrimination reveals somewhat hidden aspects of the problem of dismantling the inequalities and discrimination that afflict the region, including gender inequality. To dismantle them, it is necessary first to be aware of them.

When a poor person, a woman, an indigenous person and or an old person is asked if they feel discriminated against, what is the correct answer? The superimposition of the different inequalities and types of discrimination that affect an individual makes it almost impossible to measure their number in the general population. Identifying them on a list is not the same as measuring their magnitude. Clearly, it is not possible to do so with a mere mention because poverty stands out over many other forms of inequality, overshadowing the inequities of modern society.

The empowerment of rights that democracy brings with it does not necessarily imply that people are aware of their condition. In countries, such as Cuba, where current generations have never enjoyed freedom, it is not possible to ask people if they miss it. The fight for freedom and equality involves first becoming aware of their absence.

As this data shows, the dismantling of inequalities in Latin America, including gender inequality, calls for recognition of the existence of the problem as such. It is not that the problem does not exist, it is not that the problem does not matter, but rather that it is not clearly distinguished within the immensity of other problems. Being poor, old or indigenous are conditions that permit gender inequality to remain hidden from the eyes of many.
XII. SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF SOCIAL CLASS
XII. Self-Identification Of Social Class

Over the years, the self-identification of social class presented below has shown few differences between women and men but important differences between countries.

Justo over half (55%) of Latin Americans identify themselves as lower-class (with no difference by sex), 32% (32% of women and 33% of men) as middle-class and 8% (7% of women and 8% of men) as upper-class while 5% do not answer (6% of women and 4% of men).

However, within each group, there are important differences by country between women and men.

Source: Latinobarómetro 2020.
In the case of the lower class and difference by sex, the region falls into two groups. In one group, more men than women identify as lower-class and, in the other, more women than men do so.

It is important to bear in mind that self-identification by class does not necessarily coincide with the classification of social classes according to income since it considers all aspects of social positioning, not merely income.

Among the countries where more men than women identify as lower-class, the difference, at six percentage points, is largest in Bolivia. It is followed by El Salvador (5 points), Argentina and Nicaragua (in both cases, 4 points), Venezuela (3 points), Uruguay (2 points) and Guatemala and Costa Rica (in both cases, 1 point).

**TABLE 14. Lower class by sex and country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
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<td>72</td>
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<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Panama</td>
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<td>55</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominican Rep.</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the countries where more women than men identify themselves as lower-class, Brazil shows the largest difference (7 points), followed by Chile and Mexico (in both cases, 4 points), and Ecuador, Paraguay Colombia and the Dominican Republic (2 points) and Honduras (1 point).

There are only three countries in the region where less than half the population identifies as lower-class: Bolivia (44%), Costa Rica (46%) and Guatemala (48%).

In three countries, the figure reaches over 60%: Venezuela (70%), Brazil (66%) and Argentina (63%).
In Latin America, the middle class is far from representing a majority of the population. There are only four countries where 40% or more of the population identifies as middle-class: Bolivia (44%), Uruguay and Costa Rica (41%) and Ecuador (40%). In these countries, the difference by sex is between two and three percentage points.

In nine countries, less than a third of the population self-identifies as middle-class. Brazil, Mexico and Guatemala stand out with a difference of five percentage points between men and women, while in the other countries, the difference is between two and three points. Nicaragua is the country with the smallest middle class, with only 19% of the population self-identifying as belonging to it.

In the case of the upper class, it is striking that it is largest in Central American countries. In Honduras, 15% of the population identifies as upper-class (13% of men and 18% of women). It is followed by the Dominican Republic with 13% (12% of women and 14% of men), Colombia with 11% (12% of women and 10% of men), El Salvador with 11% (10% of women and 13% of men), Nicaragua also with 11% (12% of women and 10% of men), Panama with 10% (10% of women and 9% of men), Costa Rica with 10% (10% of women and 9% of men) and Guatemala with 9% (8% of women and 9% of men).
This data is surprising because these countries are among the most vulnerable in the region. It implies an inequality in the distribution of wealth not observed in other parts of the region.

The opposite occurs in Southern Cone countries where 5% or less of the population self-identifies as upper class, with a difference between women and men that ranges from zero to three percentage points.

Self-identification of social class in Latin America also portrays political processes insofar as inclusion affects citizens’ class positioning. This is exemplified by the case of Bolivia. According to self-identification, it has the region’s largest middle class (44%) and its smallest lower class (44%), demonstrating that non-tangible, non-economic components of social class self-identification can change a people’s image of itself, over and above per capita income.