

POST 2015 **GENDER EQUALITY** **IN THE FUTURE WE WANT**



*Inter-agency Group on Gender Equality and
Women's Empowerment for Latin America and the Caribbean*

**Inequality and Gender
in Latin America and
the Caribbean**

**Population Dynamics
and Gender**

Education and Gender

**Employment, growth
and gender equality**

**Democratic Governance
and Gender Equality**

**Disaster Risk
Reduction and Gender**

Health and Gender

Population Dynamics and Gender

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

A REGIONAL TRENDS

Population growth, distribution, and composition have experienced important and unexpected changes in the Latin America and Caribbean region (LAC) since the middle of the 20th century. The population in Latin America grew from 167 million in 1950 to more than 590 million in 2010, and it is anticipated to reach 729 million by 2050.¹ Most of this growth has taken place in the cities.²

In fact, today 3 out of every 4 people in the region live in cities. The region has made important advances in addition to its significant economic growth. However, it is also clear that some mortality and fertility indicators reflect important differences regarding age, socio-cultural, and territorial patterns, which indicates an “equality gap” in the region.

The fast reduction in fertility rates provides an interesting window of opportunity for the region, in terms of its current population structure. The demographic transition quickly advances in the region. In the next 15 years, the region’s dependency rates will be at their lowest level, since the population is concentrated in the working-age group.³ Currently, 105 million people are young, one out of every five in the region, and it is estimated that the numbers will reach their peak in the next five years.⁴ However, the LAC region also faces a large population nearing old age. Today, the adults over 60 years old represent almost 10% of the population and will reach 26% in 2050.⁵ At the same time, the flow of migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean has shown a significant increase in the last 20 years. In 2010, 5% of the population in Latin America and the Caribbean (30.2 million people) were migrants.⁶

¹ECLAC CELADE, (2011). Demographic Observatory No. 11: Long-term population projections. Santiago de Chile.

²UNFPA/ISDR/UN Habitat, (2012). Linkages between the demographic dynamics. The urbanization processes and disaster risk: A regional vision of Latin America. Panama.

³ECLAC CELADE, (2011). Demographic Observatory No. 11. Population Aging. Santiago de Chile.

⁴ECLAC, UNFPA (2012). Regional Population Report for Latin America and the Caribbean: Investing in Youth: A rights and inclusion imperative. Panama.

⁵ECLAC CELADE (2011). Demographic Observatory No. 11. Population Aging. Santiago de Chile.

⁶World Bank, (2011). Migration and Remittances Factbook

B. MAIN CHALLENGES

•At older ages the ratio of women is always greater and in most cases they face a precarious old age due to having limited access to health and social security services, in addition to an overload of family responsibilities. A significant link has been observed between poverty levels and older women who are head of households.^{7 8 9 10 11}

•Another important aspect is the feminine migration where there can be an increase of social vulnerability conditions. A high percentage of migrants work as domestic help and have other occupations where they can easily be victims of labor and sexual discrimination, and violation of human rights and fundamental liberties.¹²

•The youth in LAC, which represents 18% of the total population, still faces challenges which limit the full exercise of their rights and their inclusion in the public sphere. Young men and women are one of the most visible faces of poverty and inequality in the region. Around 39% of the young people in Latin America live in poverty; 44% do not finish high school; 16% between the ages of 15-29 are neither in the educational system nor in the labor market. Fifty percent of mothers with low education levels gave birth to their first child before they were 20 years old.¹³

⁷ Barbot, Joëlle, (1999). "Gender Inequality: greater vulnerability of older women". Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Older Persons. Eclac.Santiago de Chile

⁸ Enrique Peláez, (2004). "Population aging in Cordoba province: current situation and future prospects". Centre for advanced studies.Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. ISBN 987-572-004-6. Córdoba

⁹ Pelaez, Martha; Palloni, Alberto y Ferrer, Marcela, (1999). "Perspectives for healthy aging in Latin America and the Caribbean".Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Older Persons. Eclac.Santiago de Chile

¹⁰ Recchini de Lattes, Zulma, (1999). "Tendencies and perspectives of the aging of the feminine and masculine population in Argentina".Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Older Persons.Eclac.Santiago de Chile

¹¹ Robine, Jean Marie, (1999). "Prolonging human life: quantity and quality of life".Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Older Persons.Eclac. Santiago de Chile

¹² Jorge Martínez Pizarro, (2008).Population, Territory and Development: Changes and challenges in the Latin American migration: The Ibero-American example, Teaching Notebooks

¹³ ECLAC, UNFPA (2012). Regional Population Report 2012.Investing in Youth: a rights and inclusion imperative.

C. IN 2015

There are still three years left until the deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It is everyone's responsibility, but especially that of those who are in decision-making positions, to do something to make a substantive difference. If we take the necessary measures to face the challenges related with gender equality and population dynamics, we can imagine a future where...

- Programs and policies are developed guaranteeing access to health, social security, and human rights protection.
- Programs and policies are developed guaranteeing migration and social insertion free of human rights violations.
- Young men and women have access to basic health services, education, and decent jobs in order to develop their capacities, achieve their potential, and break the intergenerational repetition of inequality and social exclusion.

D. RESOURCES

- International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo Programme of Action, chapters IV, VII, VIII (1994)
http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2004/icpd_eng.pdf
- Regional Population Report for Latin America and the Caribbean: Investing in Youth: A rights and inclusion imperative, ECLAC, UNFPA (2012).Panama.
<http://lac.unfpa.org/webdav/site/lac/shared/DOCUMENTS/2012/pagina%20de%20juventud/Informe%20juventud%20pdf%20ingles.pdf>
- ECLAC CELADE (2009). Demographic Observatory No. 8: Urbanization in Perspective. Santiago de Chile.
- ECLAC CELADE (2011). Demographic Observatory No. 11.Population Aging. Santiago de Chile.
http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/2/46772/OD12_WEB.pdf
- ECLAC CELADE (2011).Demographic Observatory No. 11: Long-term population projections.Santiago de Chile.
- UNFPA/ISDR/UN Habitat, (2012). Linkages between the demographic dynamics, The urbanization processes and disaster risk: A regional vision of Latin America. Panama.
<http://eird.org/publicaciones/Linkages-between-population-dynamics-urbanization-processes-and-disaster-risk.pdf>

