

# Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean

Inclusion and rights  
of older persons

Simone Cecchini

Chief, Latin American and Caribbean Demographic  
Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of the  
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)



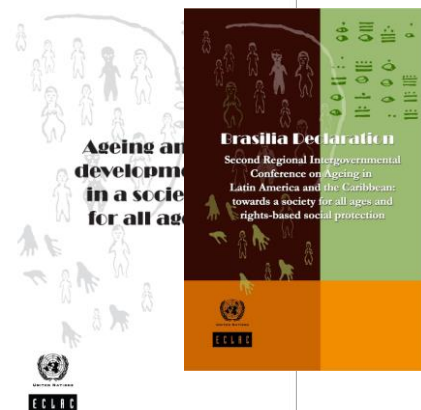
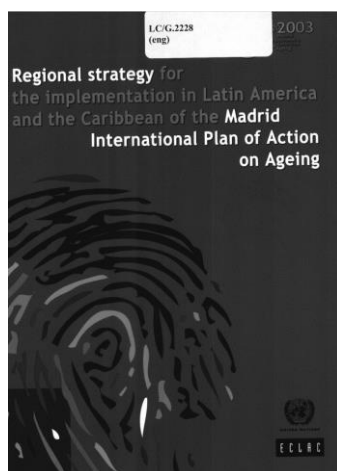
# Twenty years after the Second World Assembly on Ageing and adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002



# Regional review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action

## Santiago

2003

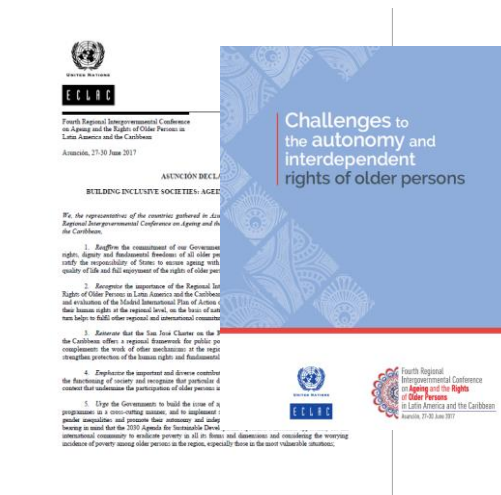
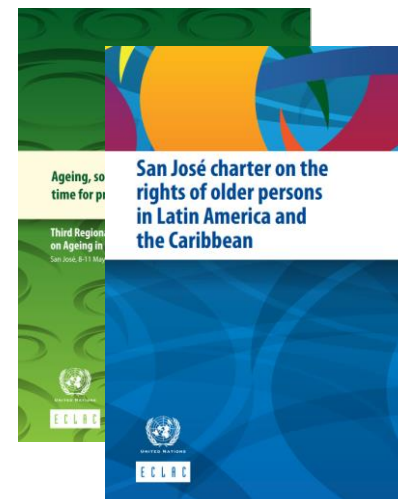


2007

## Brasilia

## San José

2012



2017

## Asunción



# Fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action

**2020**

Resolution on the format of the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action

**2021**

Preparation of country reports

**2022**

**Fifth Regional Conference**

**2023**

Presentation of results to the United Nations Commission for Social Development



**Decade  
of healthy  
ageing**

# The Madrid Plan of Action calls for construction of a society for all ages

- **Participation** by the State, the private sector and older persons.
- Larger proportion of older persons and longer lives: **new opportunities and challenges** for societies and public policies.
- **Progress:** countries' public agendas have increasingly focused on ageing and its multiple forms.
- **The pandemic** has had a very severe effect on older persons.

# Contents of the regional report for the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

## Introduction

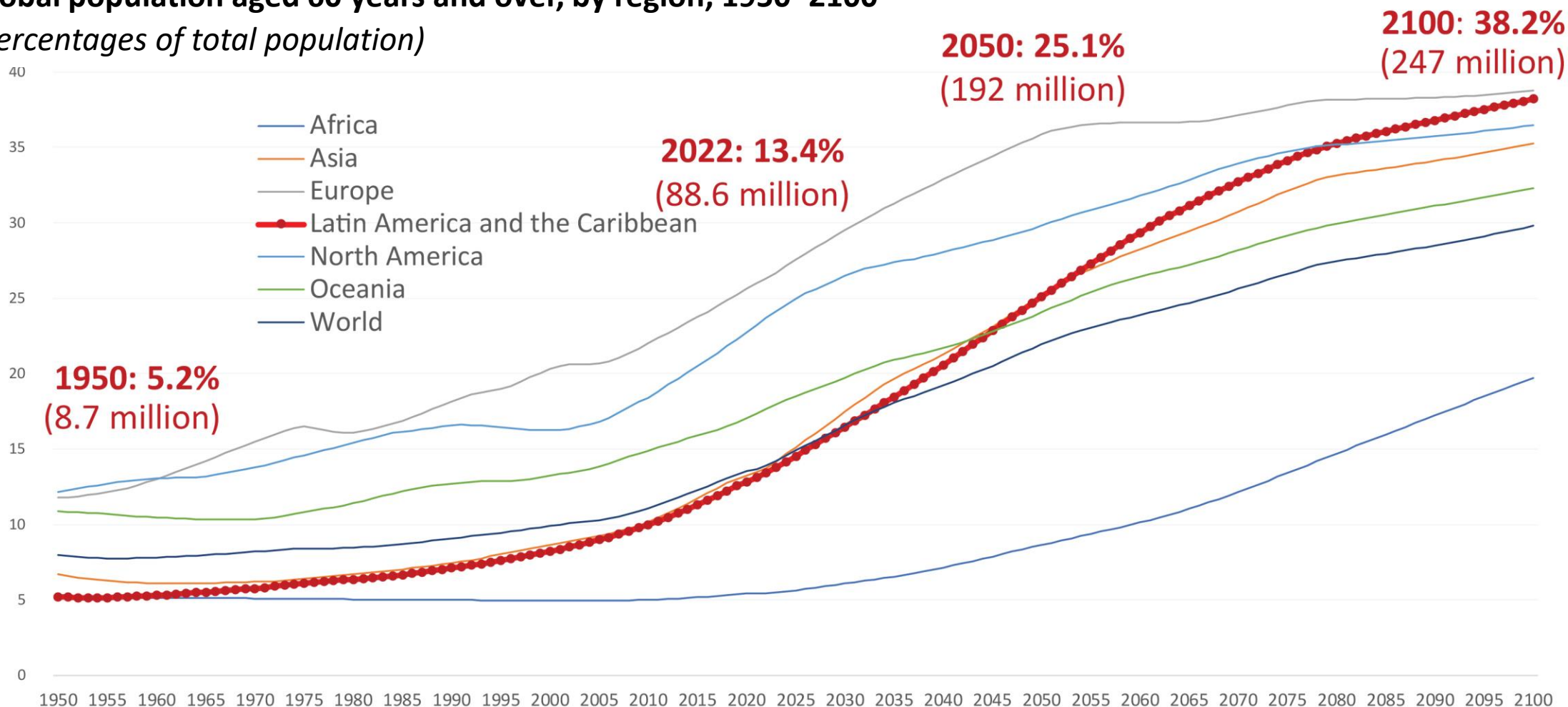
- I. Overview of ageing and demographic trends in Latin America and the Caribbean
  - II. Public institutional framework for older persons from the human rights perspective
  - III. Older persons and development
  - IV. Promoting health and well-being in old age
  - V. Creation of enabling and supportive environments in ageing
  - VI. Older persons' right to care
- Conclusions and recommendations

# **I. Overview of ageing and demographic trends in Latin America and the Caribbean**

# Latin America and the Caribbean is undergoing rapid population ageing: by 2050 there will be 2.1 times as many older persons as there were in 2022

## Global population aged 60 years and over, by region, 1950–2100

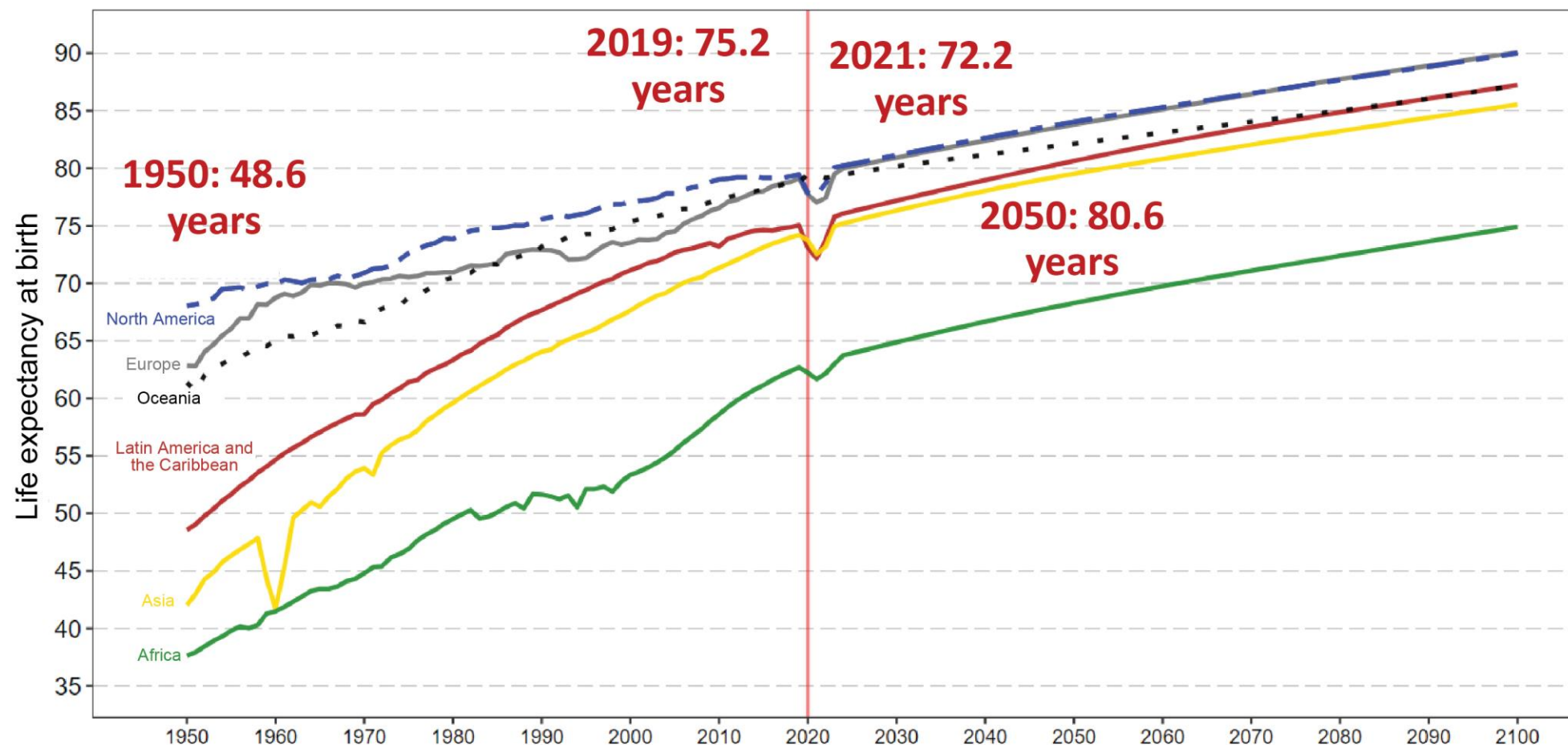
(Percentages of total population)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of United Nations, *World Population Prospects 2022*, New York, 2022.

# Substantial setback in life expectancy owing to the pandemic, but the upward trend will continue

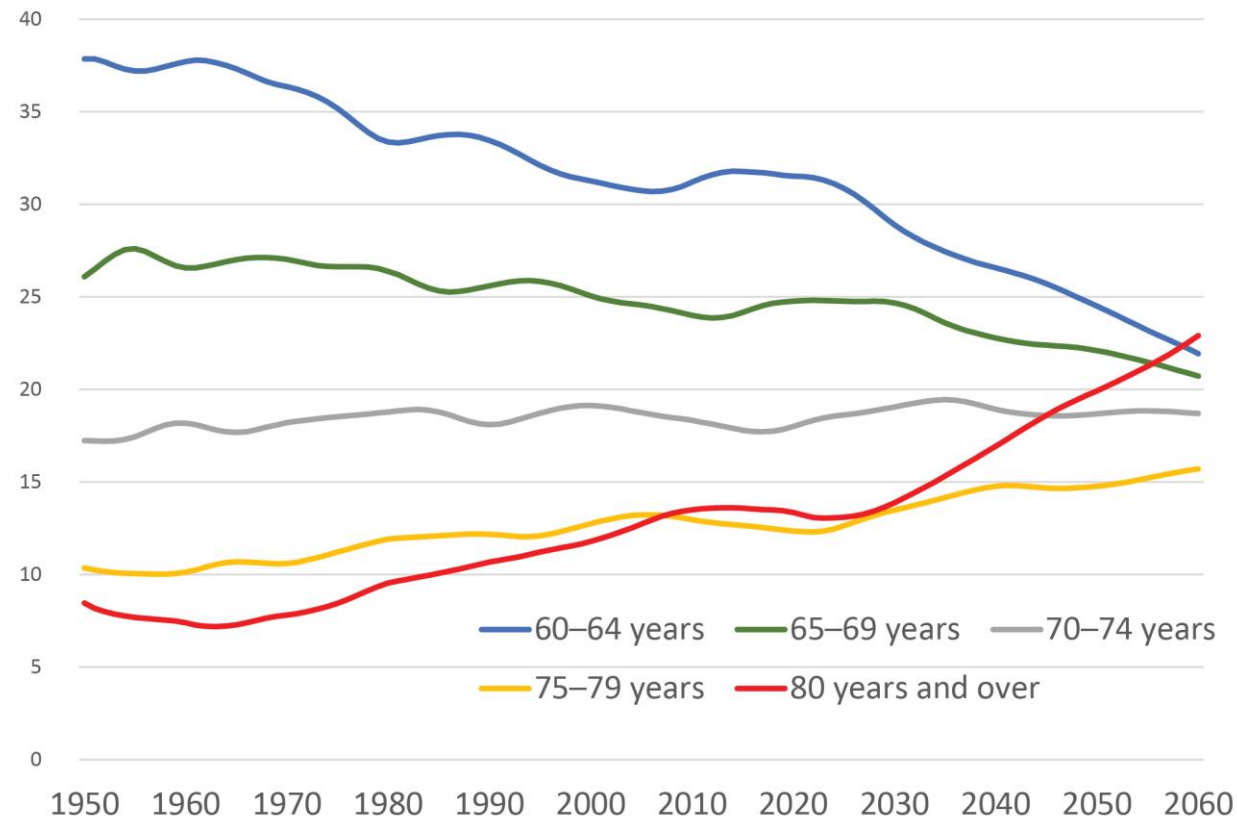
Regions of the world: estimated and projected life expectancy at birth, by year, 1950–2100  
(Years)



Source: Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2022 revision and United Nations, *World Population Prospects, 2022* [online] <https://population.un.org/wpp/>.

# The 80 and over age group is the fastest-growing

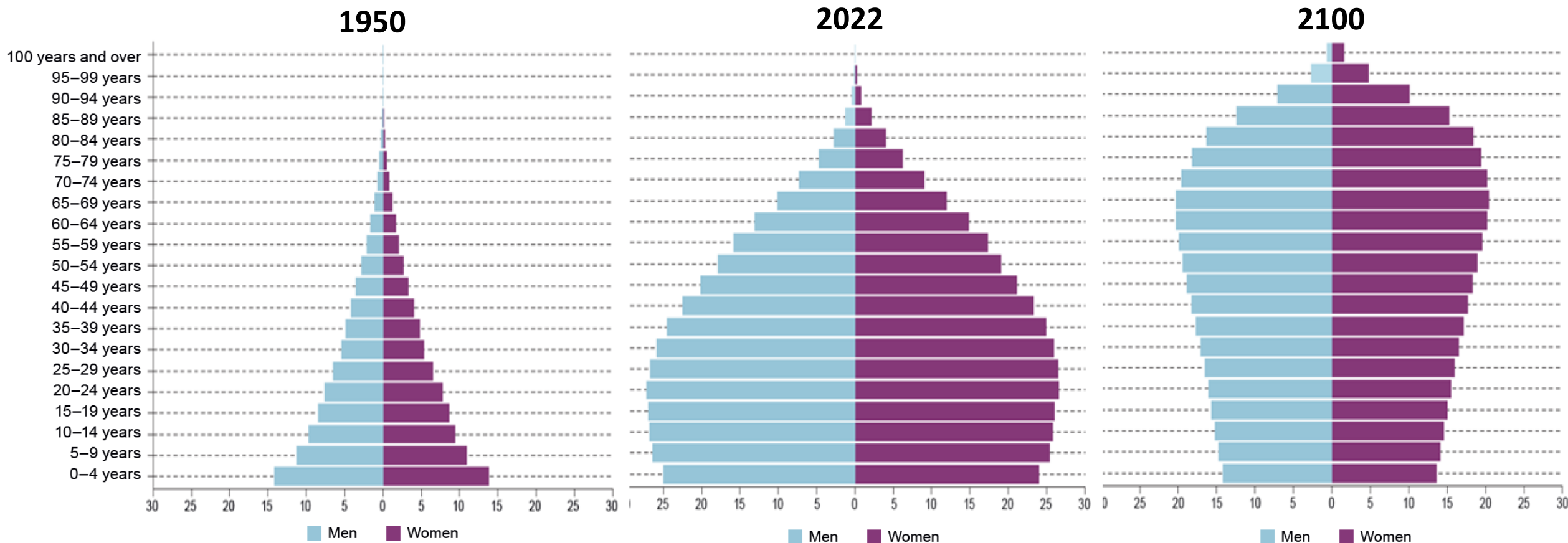
**Latin America and the Caribbean (50 countries and territories):  
relative distribution of older persons by age group, 1950–2060**  
*(Percentages of population aged 60 years and over)*



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of United Nations, *World Population Prospects 2022*, New York, 2022.

# Transformation of population structures by age and sex

Latin America and the Caribbean: population by sex and age, 1950, 2022 and 2100  
(Millions of persons)

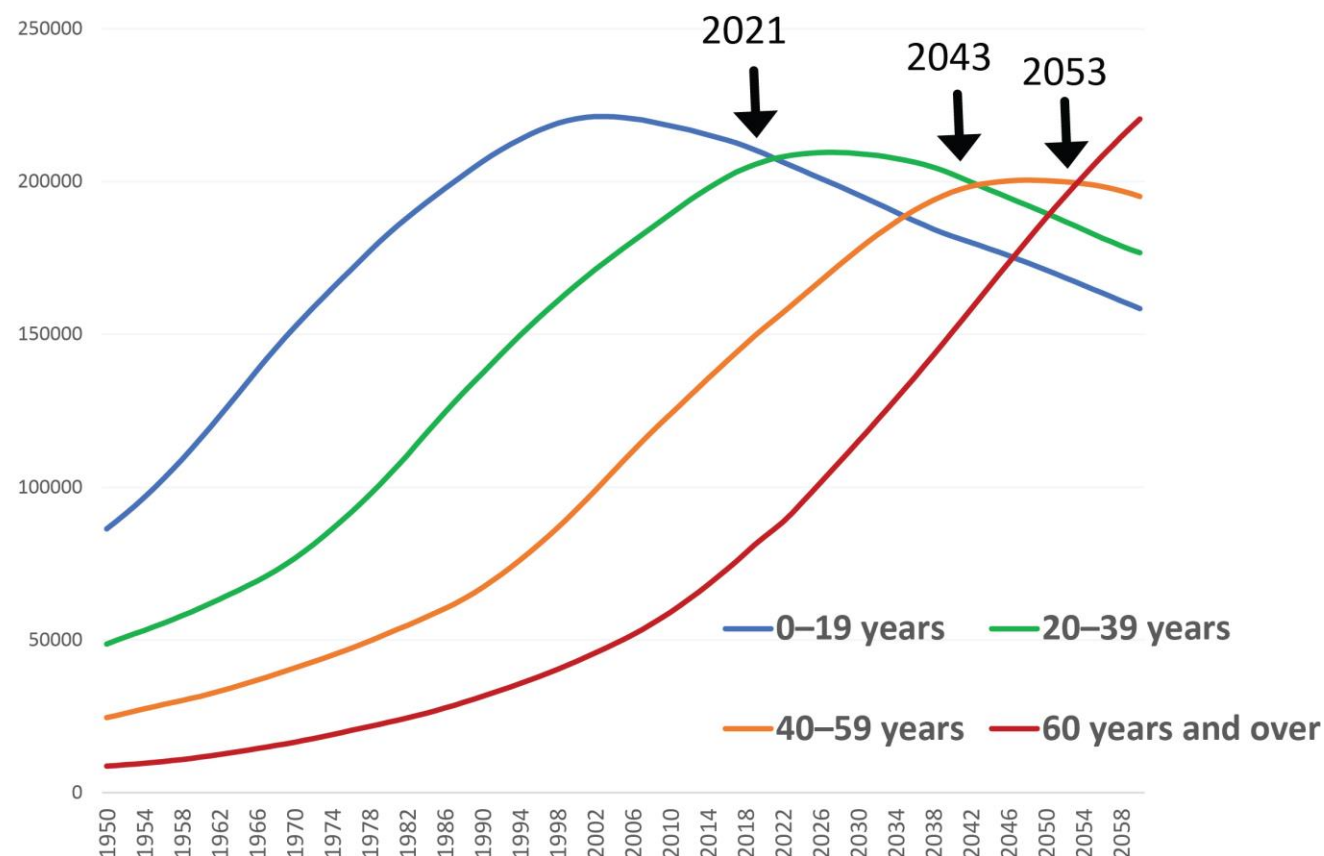


**Source:** Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2022 revision, and United Nations, *World Population Prospects*, 2022 [online] <https://population.un.org/wpp/>.

# From a young society to an ageing one

Latin America and the Caribbean: population  
by major age group, 1950–2060  
(Millions of people)

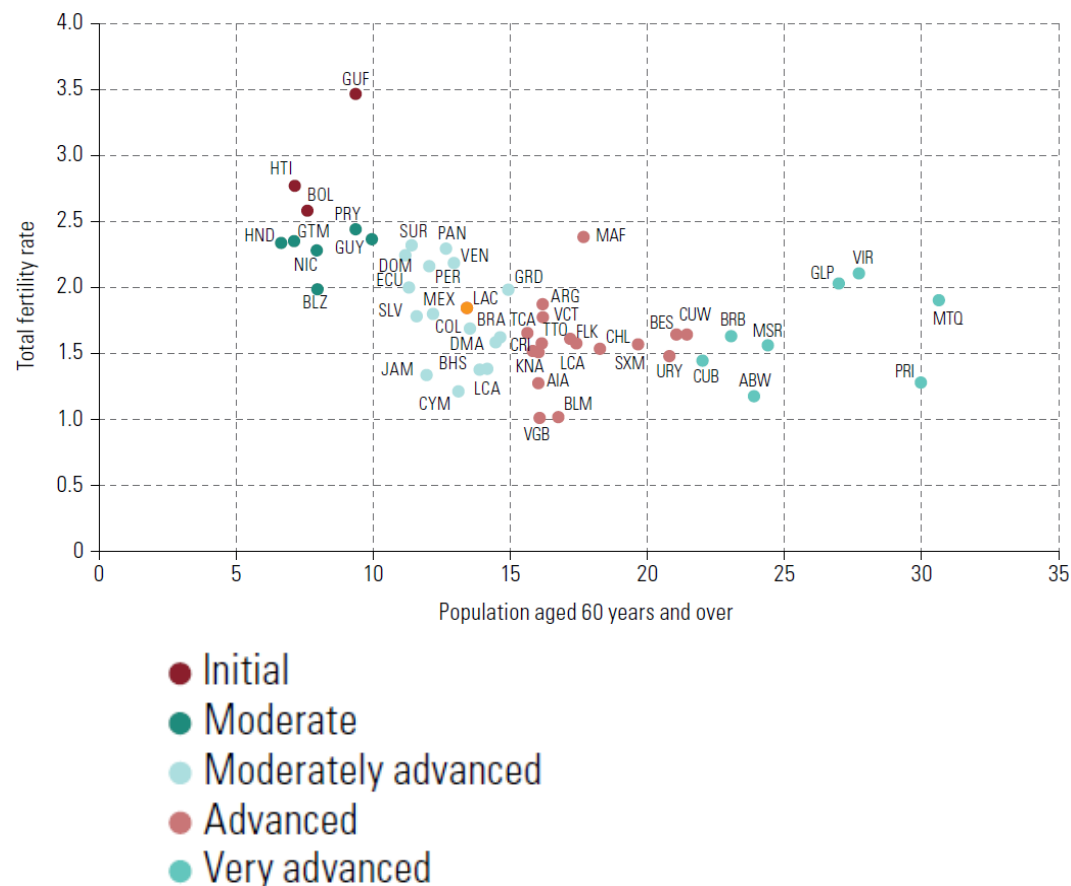
- Latin American and the Caribbean changed from being a **young society** to being a **young adult** society in 2021.
- In 2043, the region will become an **adult society**.
- In 2053 it will become an **ageing society**: the group of persons aged 60 and over will be larger than any other age group.
- This will have enormous **public policy** repercussions. **Medium- and long-term planning** is needed for policies on issues such as work, health, social protection and care.



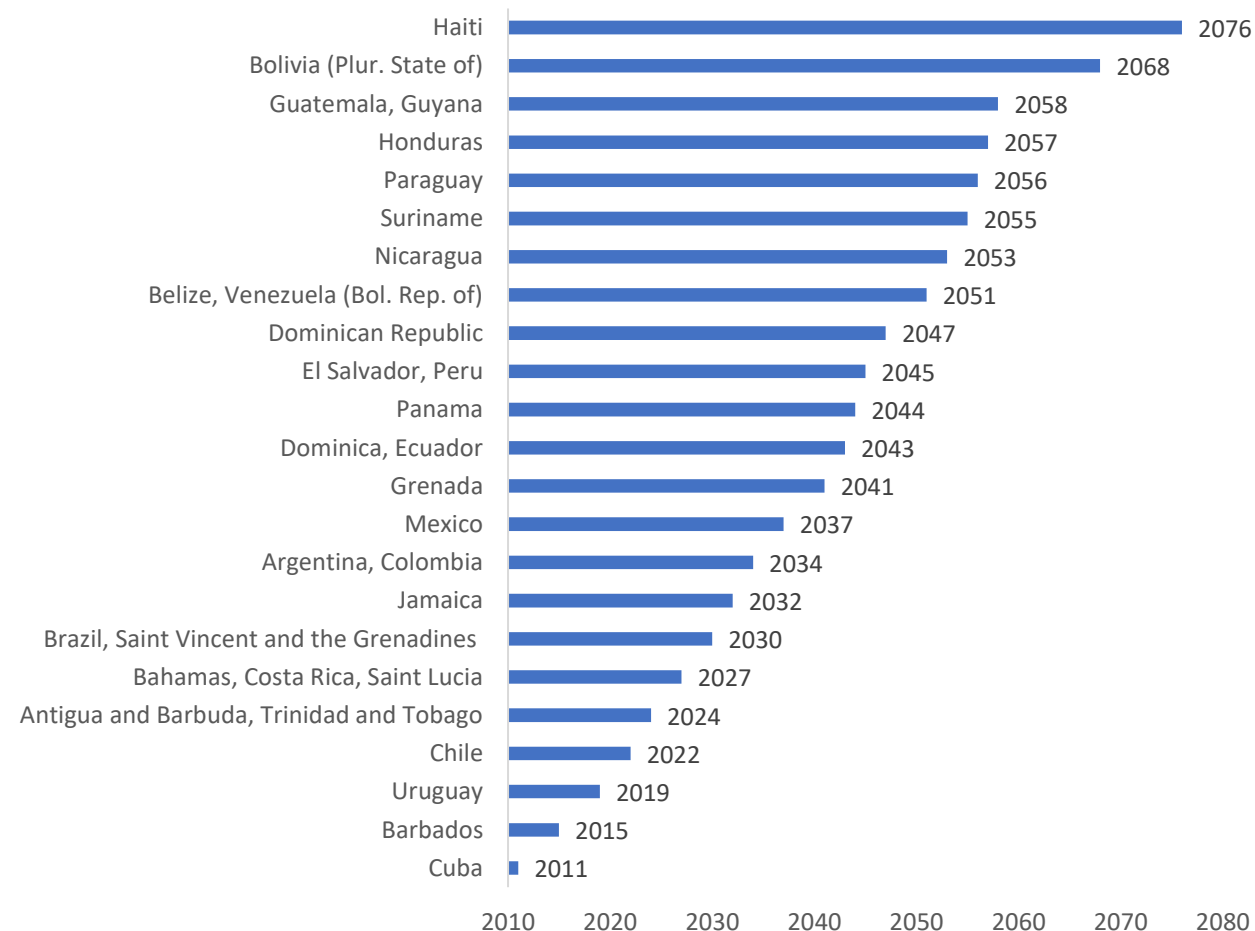
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of United Nations, *World Population Prospects 2022*, New York, 2022.

# Ageing: the situation of the countries in the region

**Latin America and the Caribbean: total fertility rate, stage of ageing and population aged 60 years and over, 2022,**  
(Number of live births per woman and percentages)



**Latin America and the Caribbean: year in which the proportion of persons aged 0–15 years of the total population equals the proportion of persons aged 60 years and over**



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of United Nations, *World Population Prospects 2022*, New York, 2022.

## **II. Public institutional framework for older persons from the human rights perspective**

# Progress in strengthening the public institutional framework for older persons

- Madrid Plan of Action: create **agencies and national councils on ageing**, with representatives from civil society; improve coordination.
- **Challenges** remain in giving due status to issues involving older persons in the State apparatus. Requirements include institutional and budgetary autonomy, an appropriate position in the institutional hierarchy and the availability of trained work teams.
- The preparation of national reports reflects **stronger participation of different sectors and levels of government**.
- **New institutions** are now involved, such as those focused on the protection of human rights, the pursuit of justice and the defence of the rights of women, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

# Institutions responsible for older persons are located mainly within ministries of social development

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries): ministerial area of institutions tasked with preparing the national report on ageing and the rights of older persons

Country	Office of the President	Social development and well-being	Health	Women	Justice	Other areas
Argentina		X				
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)					X	
Brazil				X		
Chile		X				
Colombia			X			
Costa Rica	X					
Cuba						X
Dominican Republic			X			
Guatemala		X				
Honduras		X				
Jamaica						X
Mexico		X				
Panama		X				
Paraguay			X			
Peru				X		
Uruguay		X				
Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)						X

**Source:** Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of each country's national report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing submitted by governments to the Technical Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Regional Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

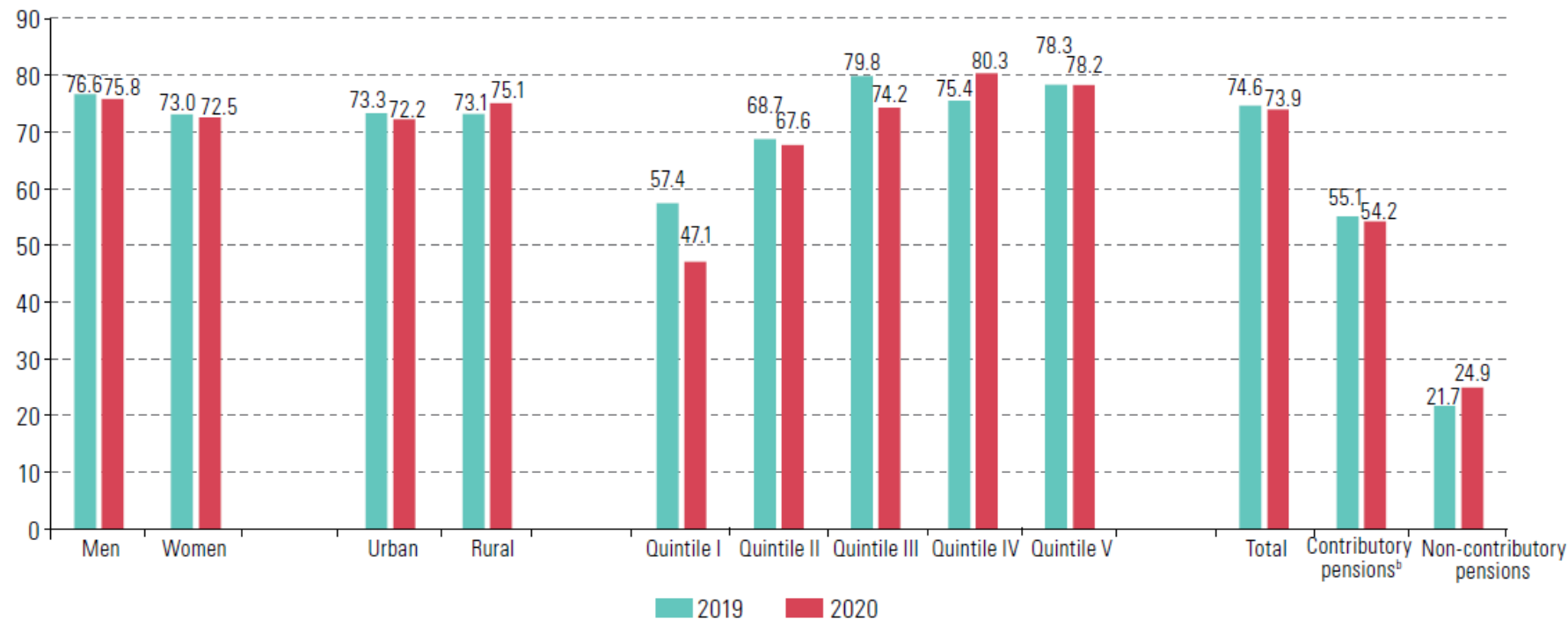
# Progress in legislation and accession to the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons

- At least 19 countries have **national legislation to protect the human rights of older persons** (compared to only 14 countries in 2013).
- **Laws on emerging themes:** palliative care, long-term care institutions, the prevention of and response to violence, technological inclusion and elimination of labour discrimination.
- Signing or ratification of, or accession to, the **Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons**: nine countries.
- The Convention is the first **legally binding instrument** in the world adopted to protect the human rights of older persons, in order to contribute to their full inclusion, integration and participation in society.

# **III. Older persons and development: social protection, labour market participation and lifelong education**

# Challenges of social protection coverage for older persons

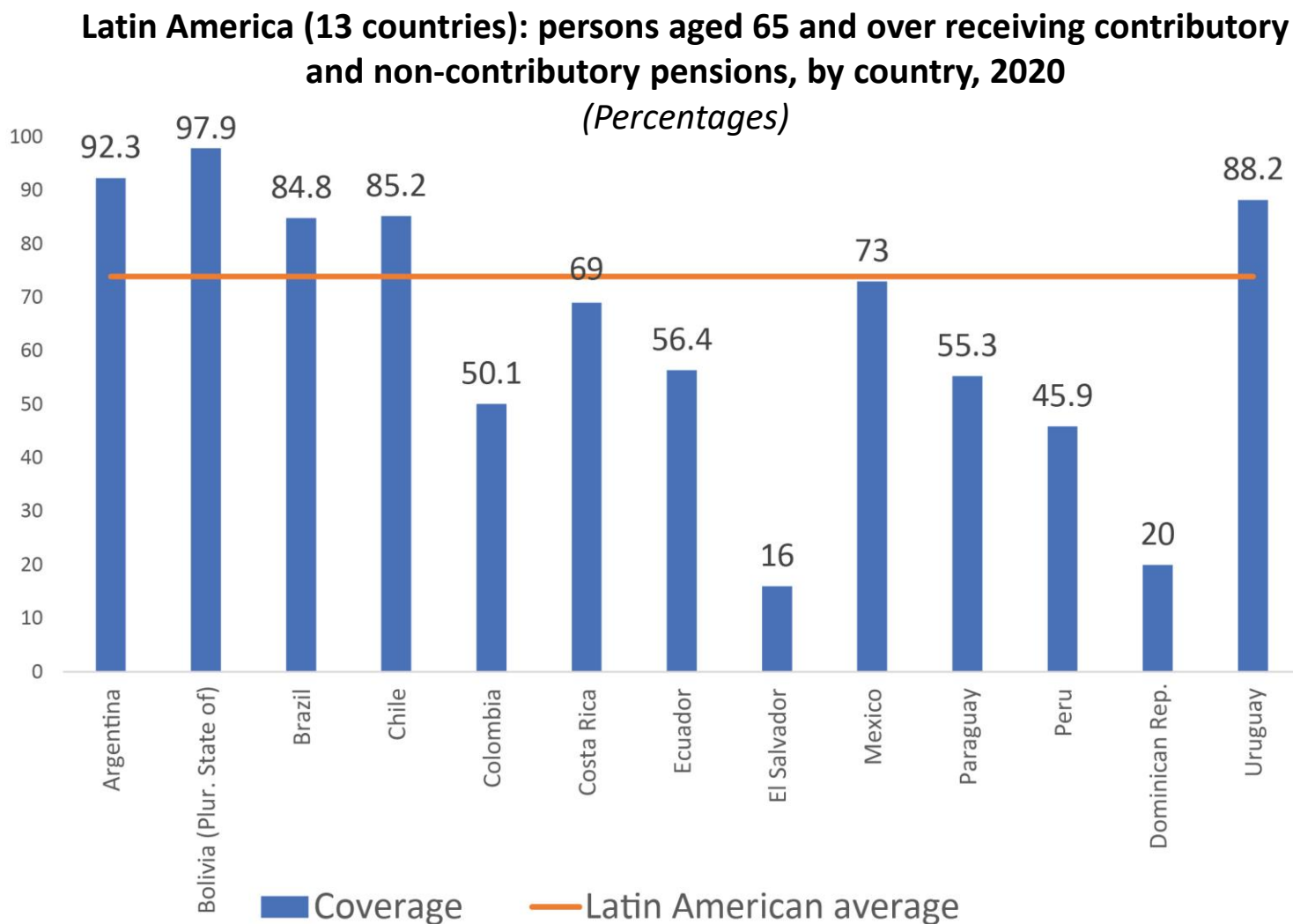
Latin America (13 countries): persons aged 65 and over receiving contributory and non-contributory pensions, by sex, area of residence and income quintile, 2019 and 2020  
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2021* (LC/PUB.2021/17-P), Santiago, 2022, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).

- **25 countries** in the region have **non-contributory pension programmes** for older persons.
- Some pension programmes are **almost universal**, while others exclusively target **the poor**.
- In 2020, the pensions received by older persons in 13 Latin American countries offset a 34.9 percentage point increase in poverty and a 22.9 percentage point increase in extreme poverty.

# Large gaps between countries in social protection coverage for older persons

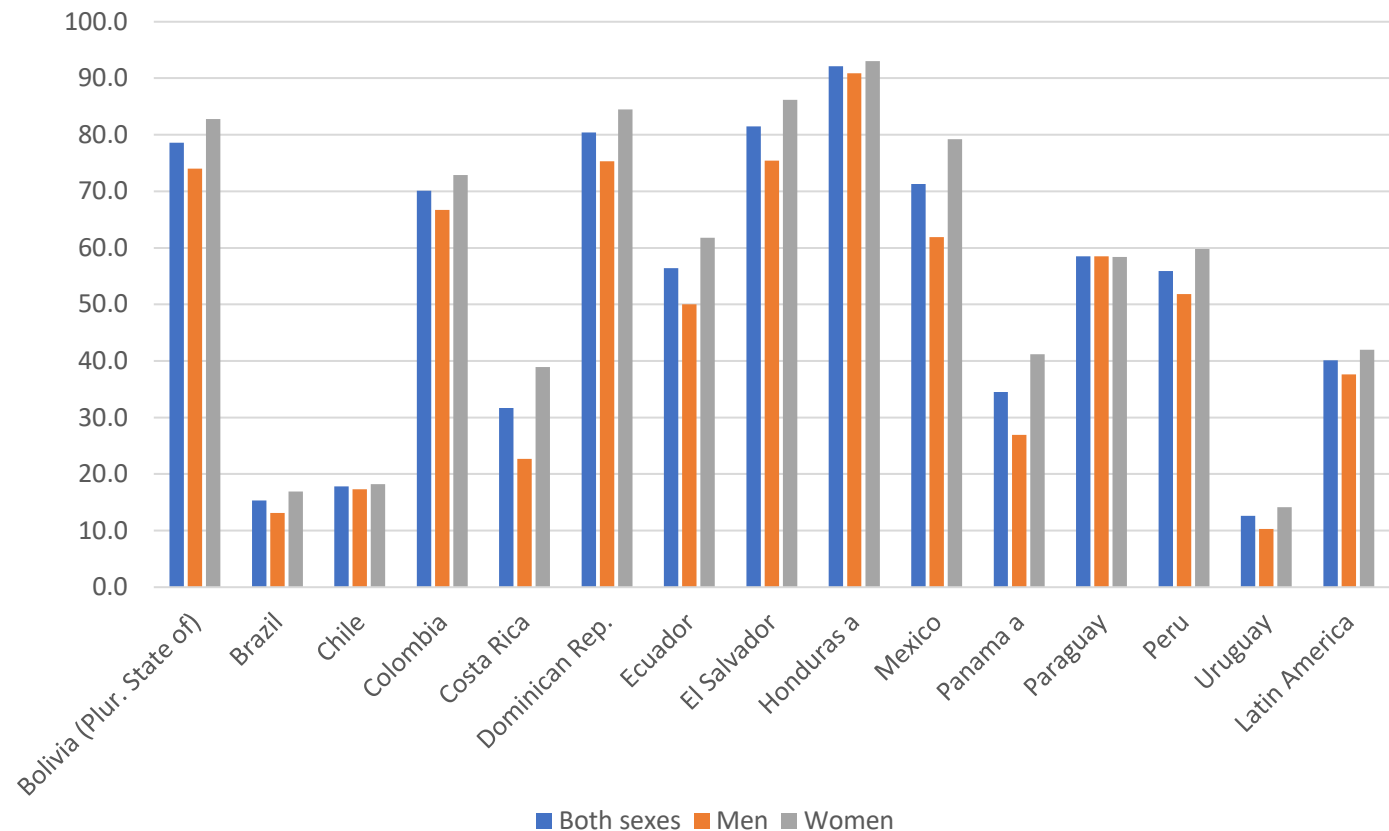


- In seven **Caribbean** countries, less than 50% of the population of legal retirement age received a contributory or non-contributory pension.
- In **Haiti**, coverage was 0.4%.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2021* (LC/PUB.2021/17-P), Santiago, 2022, on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG).

# Pension coverage problems are compounded by inadequate pensions

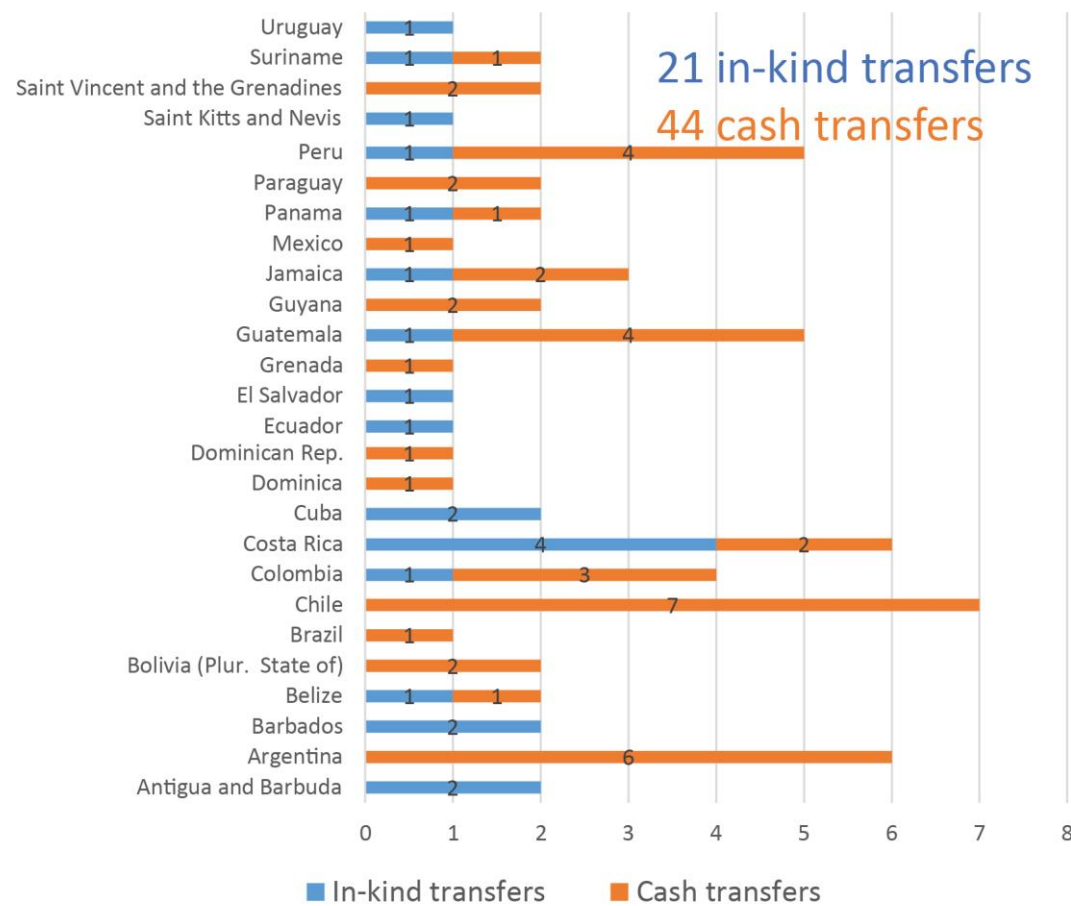
Latin America (14 countries): persons aged 65 and over receiving no pensions or inadequate pensions, by sex, around 2020  
(Percentages)



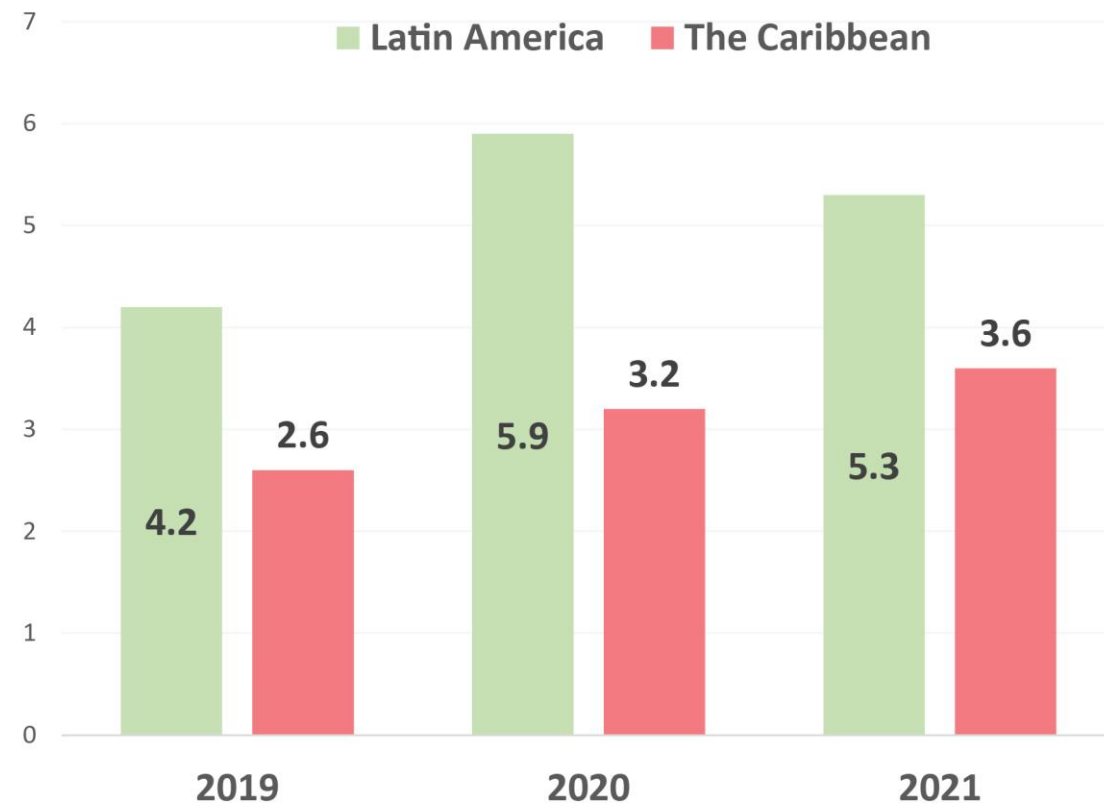
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of the Household Survey Data Bank (BADEHOG) and CEPALSTAT [online database]  
[https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?lang=en&indicator\\_id=4624&area\\_id=931](https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/dashboard.html?lang=en&indicator_id=4624&area_id=931).

# Emergency transfers, along with pensions, allowed many older persons to face the crisis

Latin America and the Caribbean (26 countries): number of emergency cash and in-kind transfers introduced in response to COVID-19 whose target population includes older persons, March 2020–October 2021



Latin America (17 countries) and the Caribbean (5 countries): central government spending on social protection, 2019–2021  
(Percentages of GDP)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of "Social Development and COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean" [online] <https://dds.cepal.org/observatorio/socialcovid19/en/>.

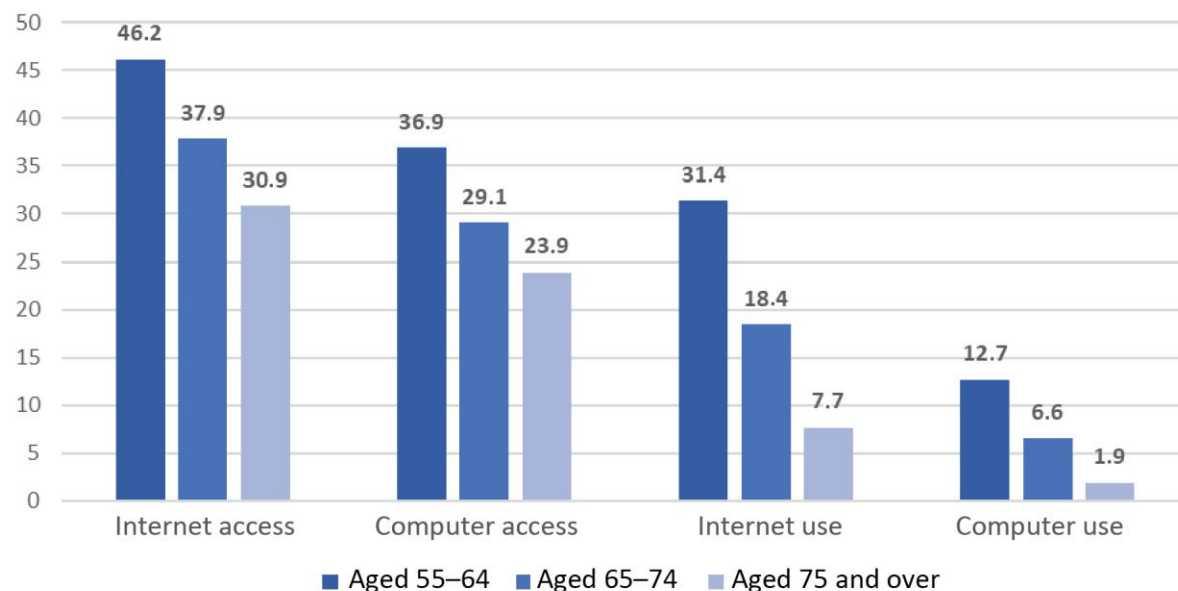
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.

## Remaining in the labour market should be an option, but is an obligation for many older persons

- **Employment rates** of older men and women are **closely correlated with inadequate pensions**.
- **Discrimination based on age** (ageism) and **gender** remains one of the main challenges for older persons to finding decent work.
- Prejudices and stereotypes against older persons, which deepened during the pandemic, exacerbate **inequalities** from an intersectional perspective, making it difficult for them to access decent employment.
- Some countries have implemented major **legislative reforms** aimed at combating discrimination in firms' employment arrangements and removing age criteria for access to **training programmes**.

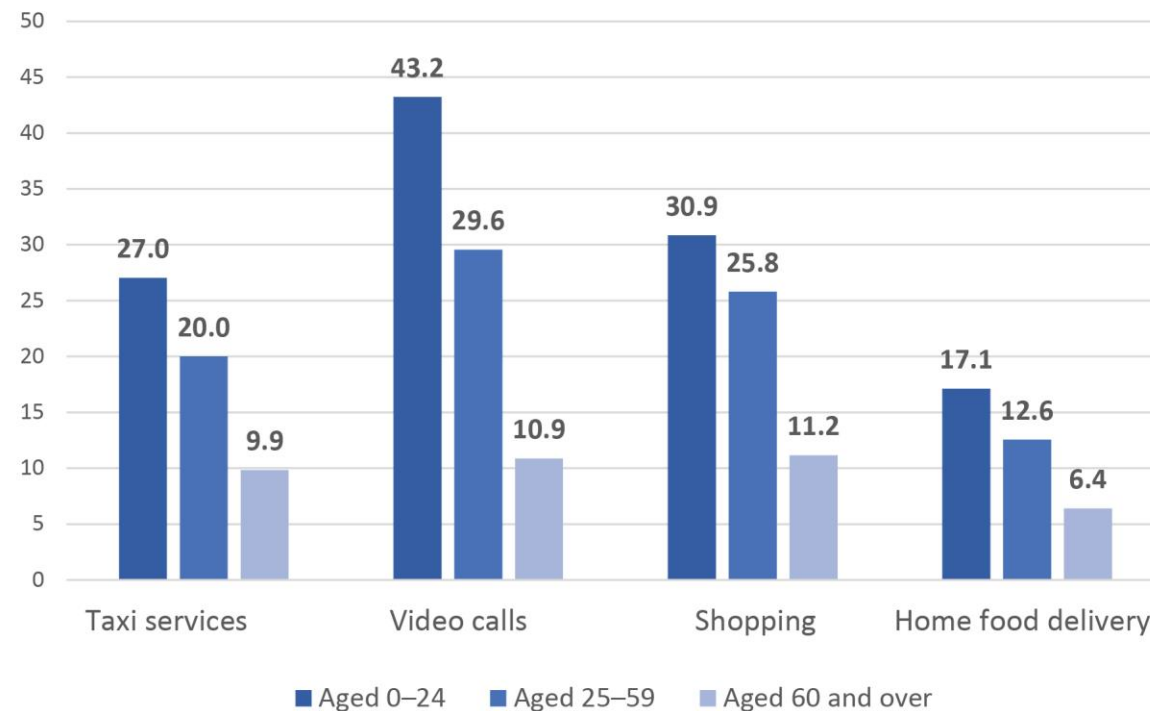
# Older persons struggle more with digital inclusion. Access does not guarantee use or ownership

**Latin America (10 countries): persons aged 55 and over who have access to and use the Internet and computers, by age group, around 2018**  
(Percentages)



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and others, *Latin American Economic Outlook 2020: Digital Transformation for Building Back Better*, Paris, OECD Publishing, 2020.

**Latin America (18 countries): main web and mobile applications used, by age group, 2020**  
(Percentages)



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of special tabulations of data from opinion surveys conducted by Corporación Latinobarómetro in the respective countries.

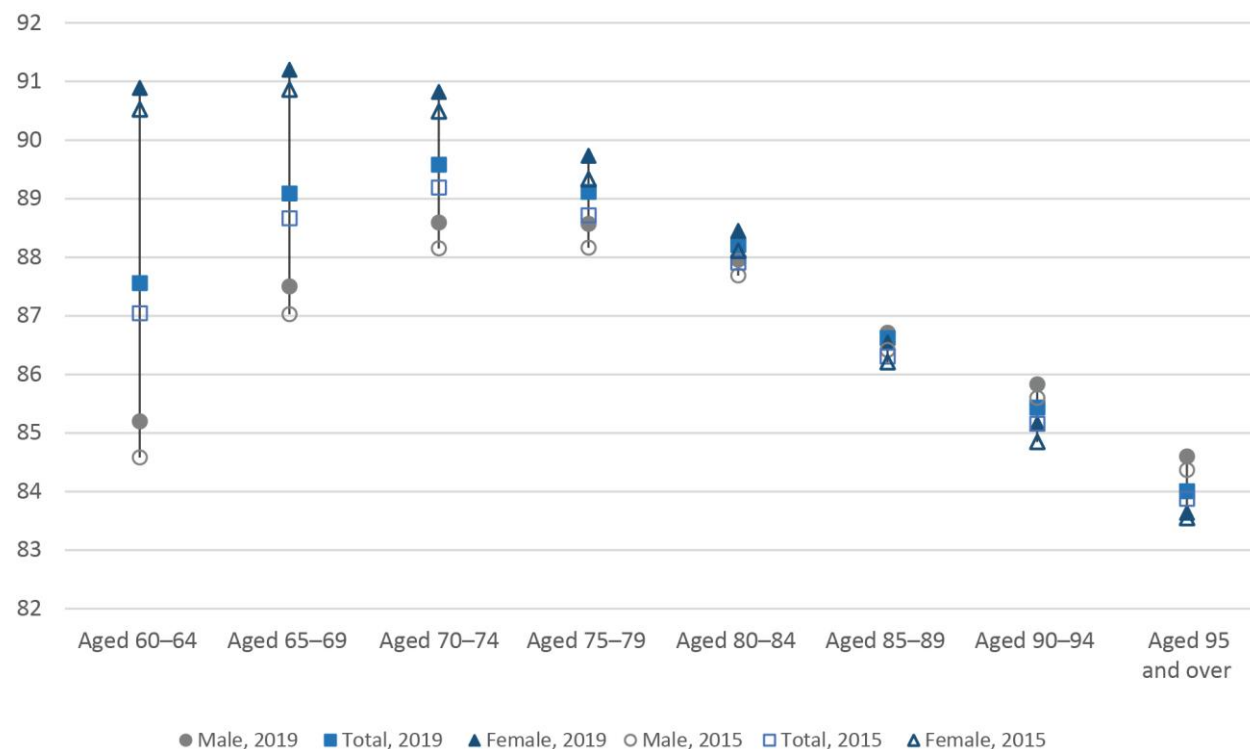
## **IV. Promoting health and well-being in old age**

# The Madrid Plan of Action states that older persons are fully entitled to access to health promotion

- **Disease prevention** throughout life, **primary care** (including sexual health services), **more complex and specialized care, rehabilitation and palliative care, and curative services.**
- **Until the onset of the pandemic**, older persons in the region had been experiencing an **improvement** in living conditions, leading to an increase in life expectancy and a decrease in mortality. However, progress was not uniform.
- The challenges of countering **communicable and non-communicable diseases** have increased. In 2019, non-communicable diseases were the leading cause of death among persons aged 55 years and over (87.6%), followed by communicable diseases (8.2%) and accidents (4.2%).

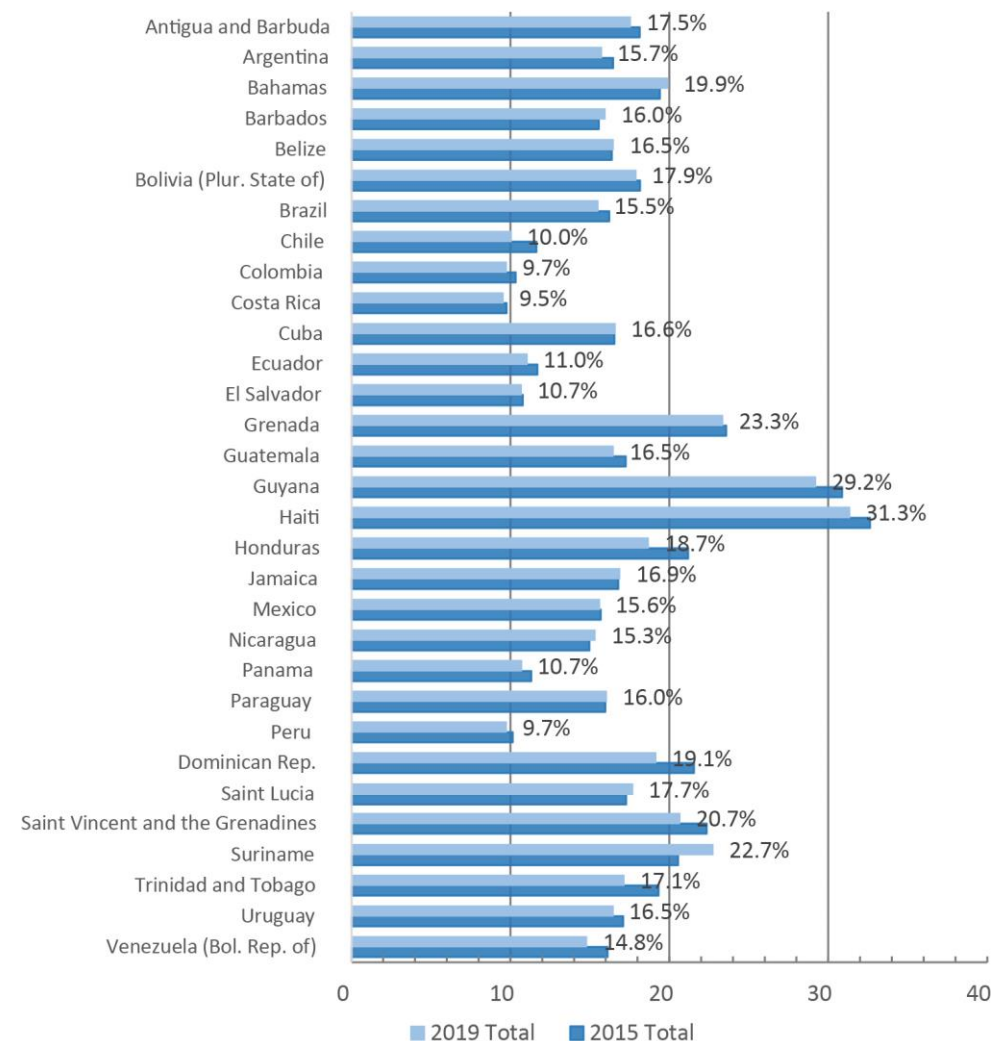
# Deaths from non-communicable diseases

Latin America and the Caribbean: deaths from non-communicable diseases among persons aged 60 and over, by sex and age group, 2015 and 2019  
(Percentages)



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), “Results”, *The Global Burden of Disease Study 2019*, Global Burden of Disease Collaborative Network [online] <https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-results/> [accessed in October 2022].

Latin America and the Caribbean: probability of a person aged 30 dying before the age of 70 from cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes mellitus or chronic respiratory disease, 2015 and 2019  
(Percentages)

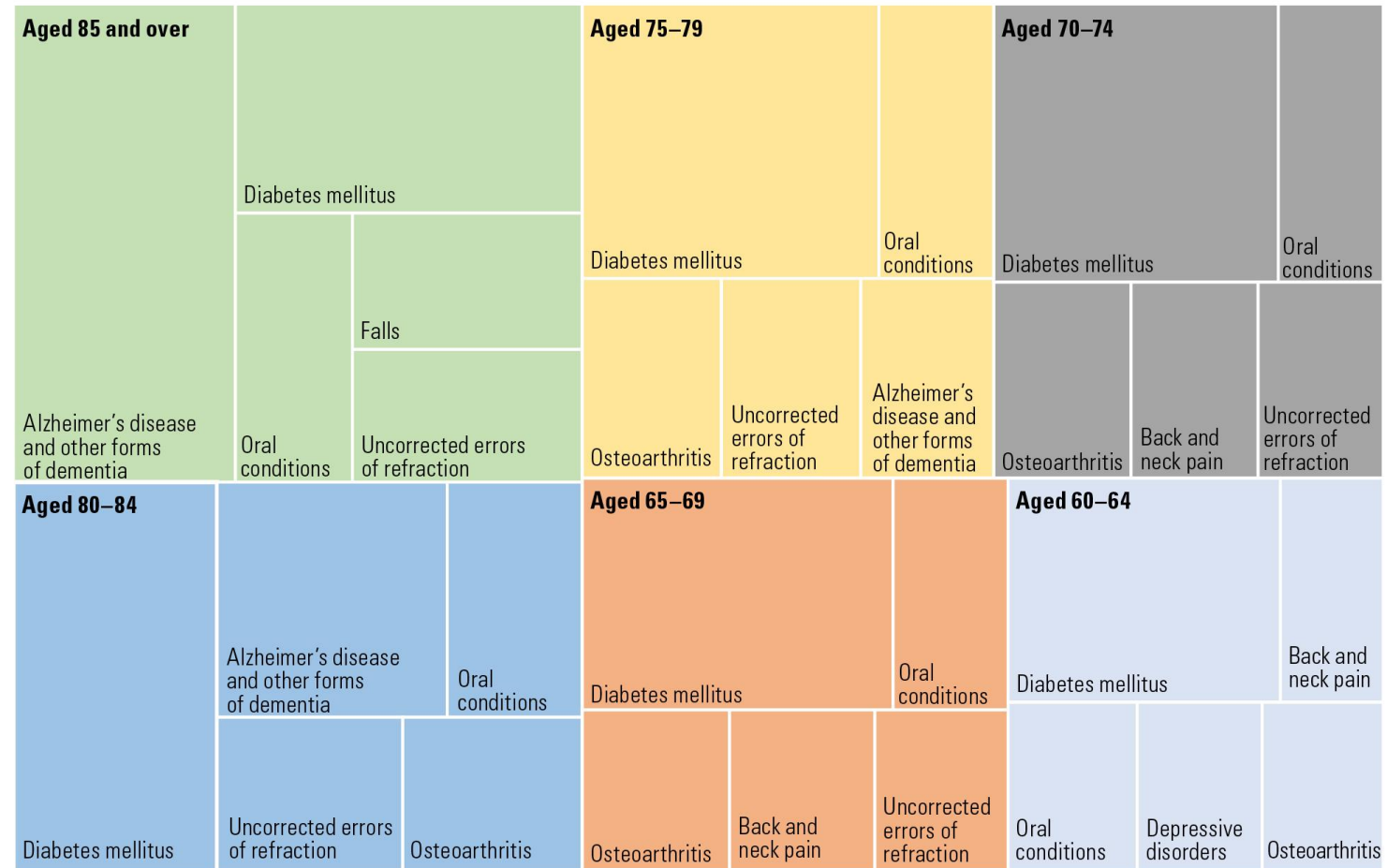


**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), “Risk of Dying Prematurely from NCDs” [online] <https://www.paho.org/en/enlace/risk-dying-prematurely-ncds> [accessed in November 2022].

# In older age, the burden of disability is greater and the main causes of disability change

Latin America and the Caribbean (31 countries): top five causes of years lived with disability for the population aged 60 and over, by age group, 2019

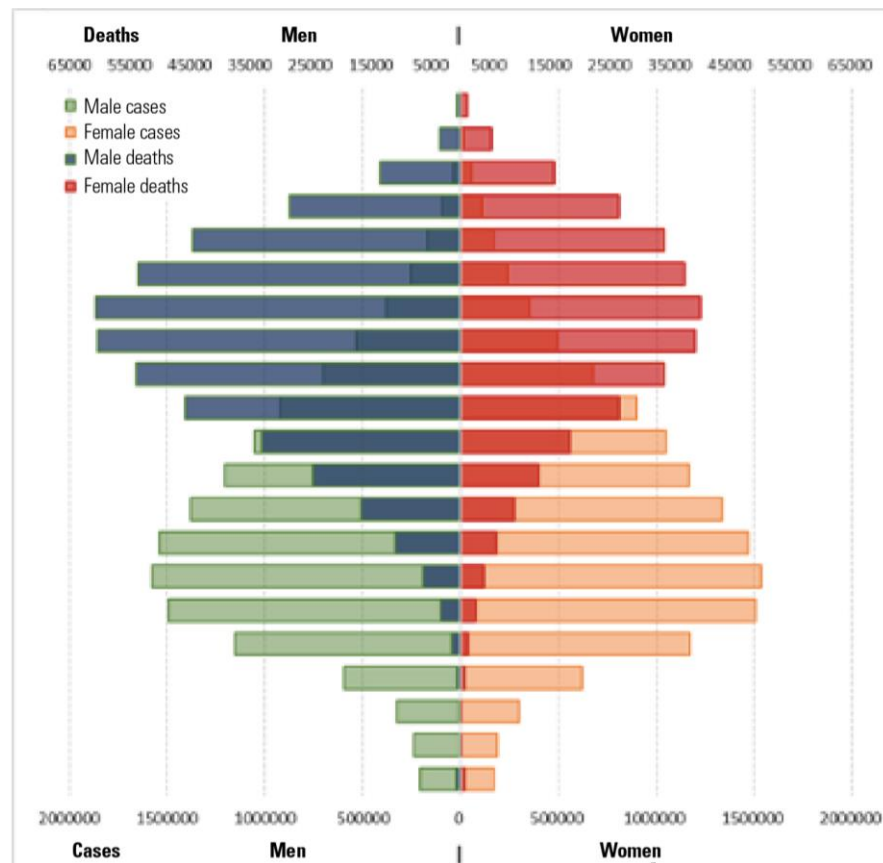
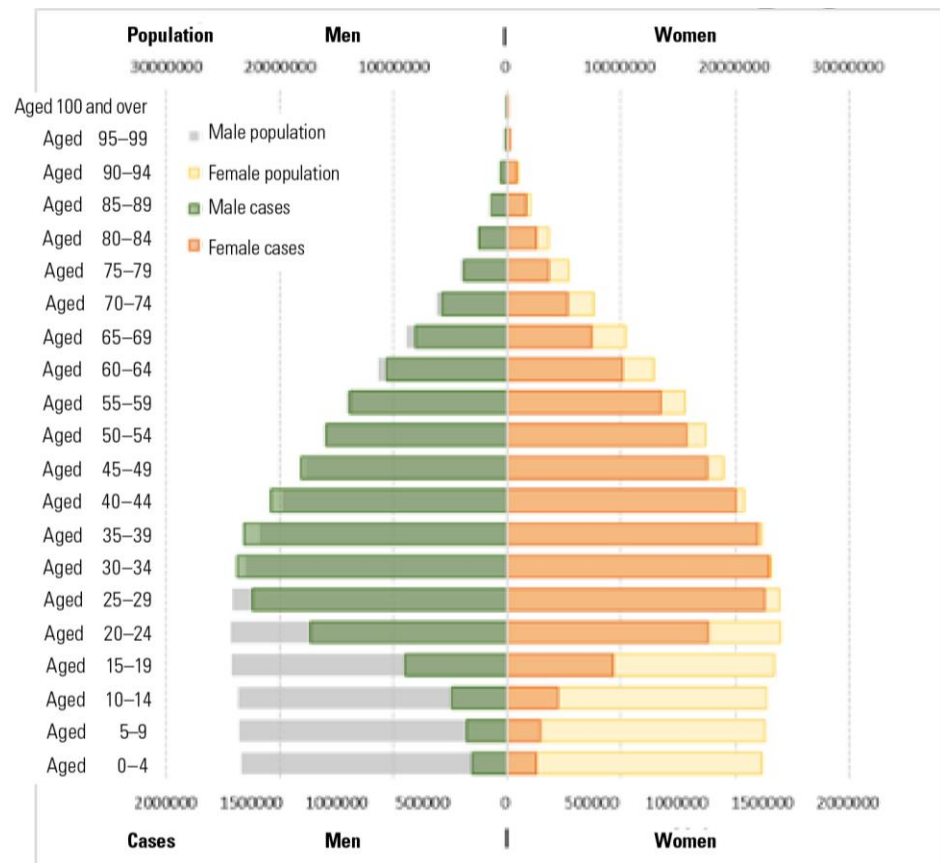
- In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, it was estimated that around **85 million people** were living with some form of disability in 2020.
- Thought must be given to the impact of disabilities on the life course and on policies for **healthy ageing**.



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of World Health Organization (WHO), "Leading causes of death, and disability", 2020 [online] <https://www.paho.org/en/enlace/leading-causes-death-and-disability>.

# Older persons are at greater risk of severe illness or death through COVID-19

Latin America and the Caribbean (19 countries): confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths,  
by sex and age group, 2021



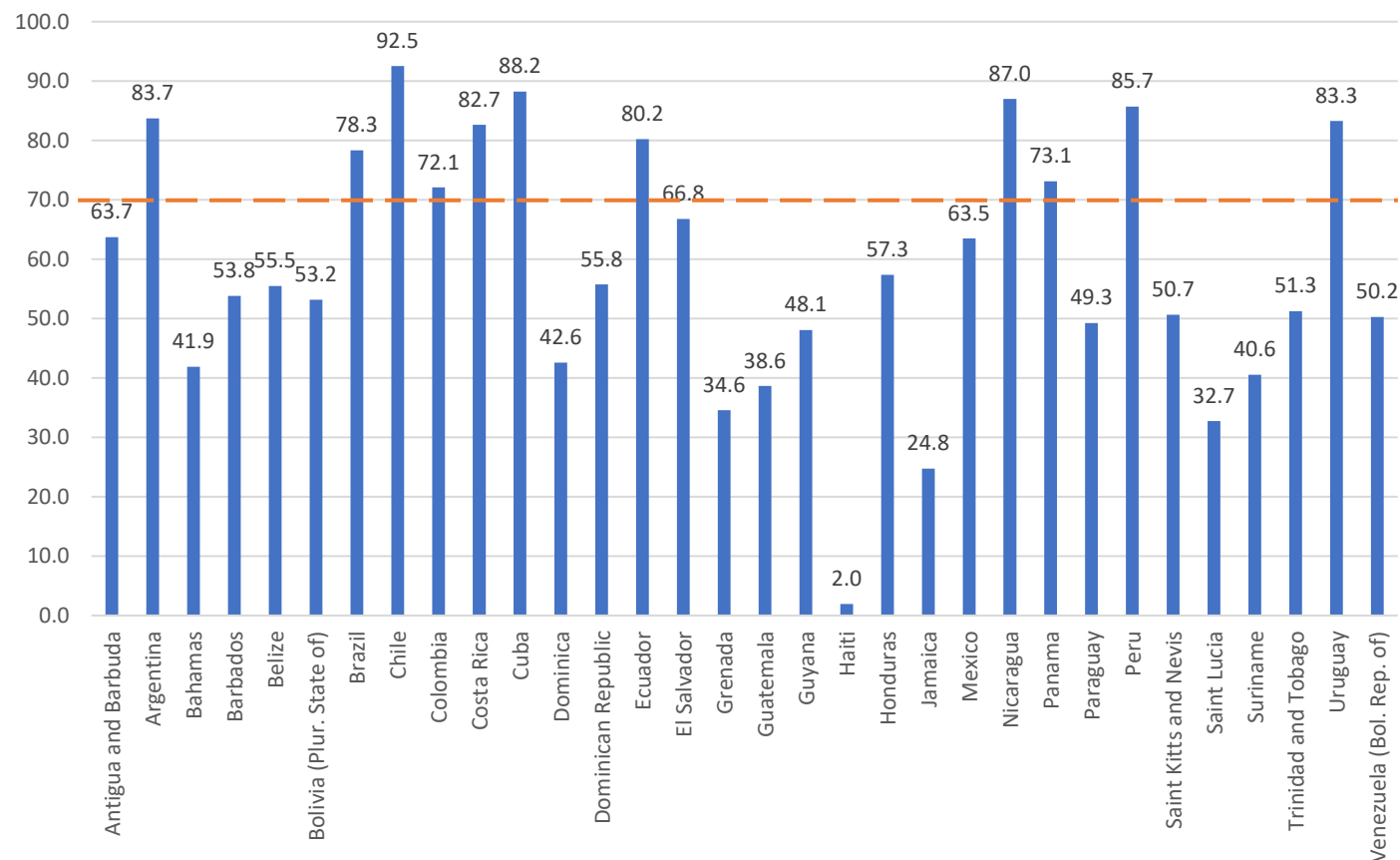
Population aged 60 and over in Latin America and the Caribbean (both sexes) and COVID-19 in 2021:

- 15.7% of cases
- 71% of deaths
- 59% of deaths were men

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of World Health Organization (WHO), *Second round of the national pulse survey on continuity of essential health services during the COVID-19 pandemic: January-March 2021. Interim report*, Geneva, 22 April 2021; ECLAC/Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), "The prolongation of the health crisis and its impact on health, the economy and social development", *COVID-19 Report*, Santiago, October 2021.

# Despite initial difficulties, the region has made good progress with vaccination and prioritized older persons

Latin America and the Caribbean: people fully immunized at 13 October 2022  
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of World Health Organization (WHO), "Vaccination data", WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard [online] <https://covid19.who.int/data>.

## In spite of the pandemic, the countries have reported progress on health-care policies for older persons

- **Access** to public health services; **institutional strengthening** of health systems; formulation, consolidation and integration of national health **strategies**, policies and programmes; expansion of **infrastructure**; **health** legislation.
- Progress is needed on health policies **that take an inclusive approach**. The gender, age and intercultural perspectives must be strengthened. There are few specific measures for the older Indigenous and Afrodescendent populations or for persons with non-binary gender identities.
- **Non-communicable diseases**: prevention, care and rehabilitation have been priorities. Self-care programmes have been implemented in 35% of the countries in the region for older persons with multiple chronic diseases.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), *Plan of Action on the Health of Older Persons, Including Active and Healthy Aging: Final Report* (CD57/INF/9), 16 July 2019.

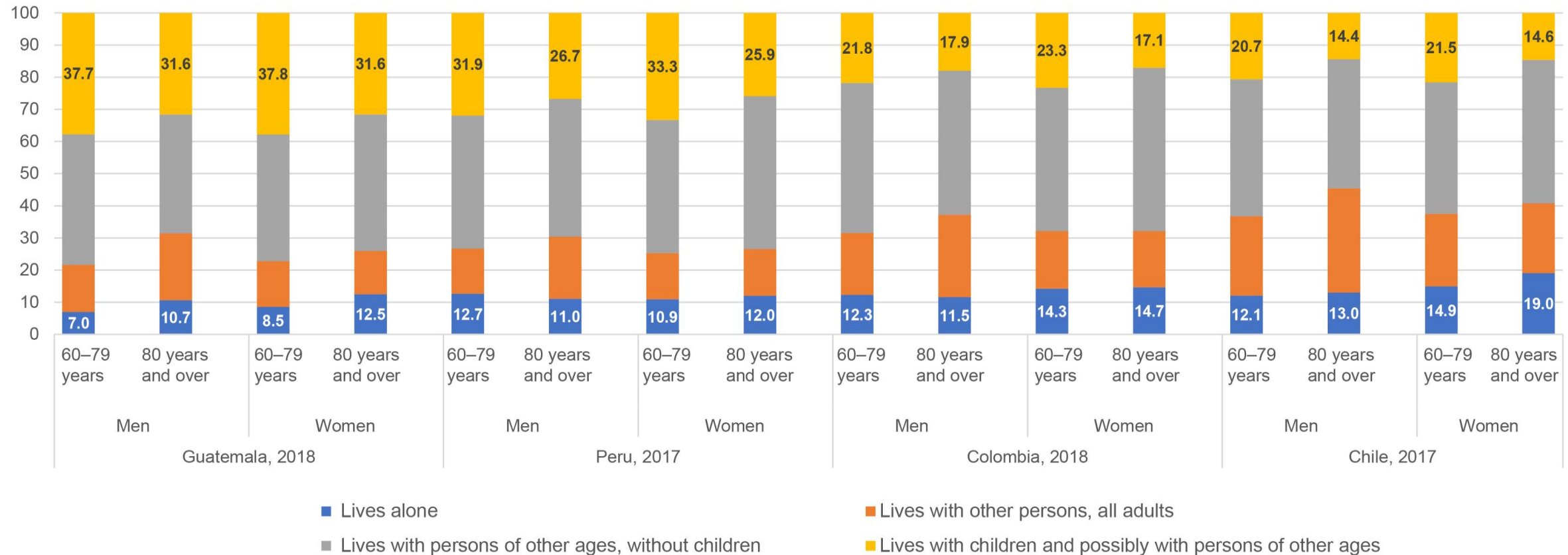
## **V. Creation of enabling and supportive environments in ageing**

## The Madrid Plan of Action: all older persons deserve to live in settings that complement their capacities and foster their participation and autonomy

- **Urban policies** to create enabling and supportive environments.
- **Housing:** subsidies for improvements or construction; allocation of housing under commodatum (loan) arrangements; improvement of construction regulations; schemes for acquisition of affordable housing; support in disaster situations.
- **Access to basic services. Water and sanitation:** improvements to access, but disparities between urban and rural areas. **Energy:** residential rates and subsidies.
- **Public spaces:** aim is to create spaces for care and participation, adapt street furniture, improve preferential signage.
- **Transport:** affordability; need for greater modernization of infrastructure.
- **Justice:** recognition and protection of right to access for older persons.

# Older persons' well-being is linked to support networks in the home and the frequency and intensity of intergenerational ties

**Latin America and the Caribbean (4 countries): distribution of the urban population, 60–79 years and 80 years and over, by sex and living arrangement**  
(Percentages)



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of microdata from the demographic censuses of Guatemala (2018), Peru (2017), Colombia (2018) and Mexico (2020), available at the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC.

# Prevention of discrimination and violence against older persons

- Greater availability of instruments for **measuring discrimination and abuse of older persons**.
- Institutions to **protect older persons** and provide them with **legal aid** have been established or strengthened.
- **Strategies and campaigns** have been implemented to promote human rights, raise awareness of the importance of ending discrimination, boost recognition and acknowledgement of older persons and foster images of ageing that are free from prejudice and stereotyping.
- Older women, older transexual and transgender women are also victims of **feminicidal or femicidal violence**. In the 2019–2021 period, 7% of femicides in the region were of women aged 60 and over.

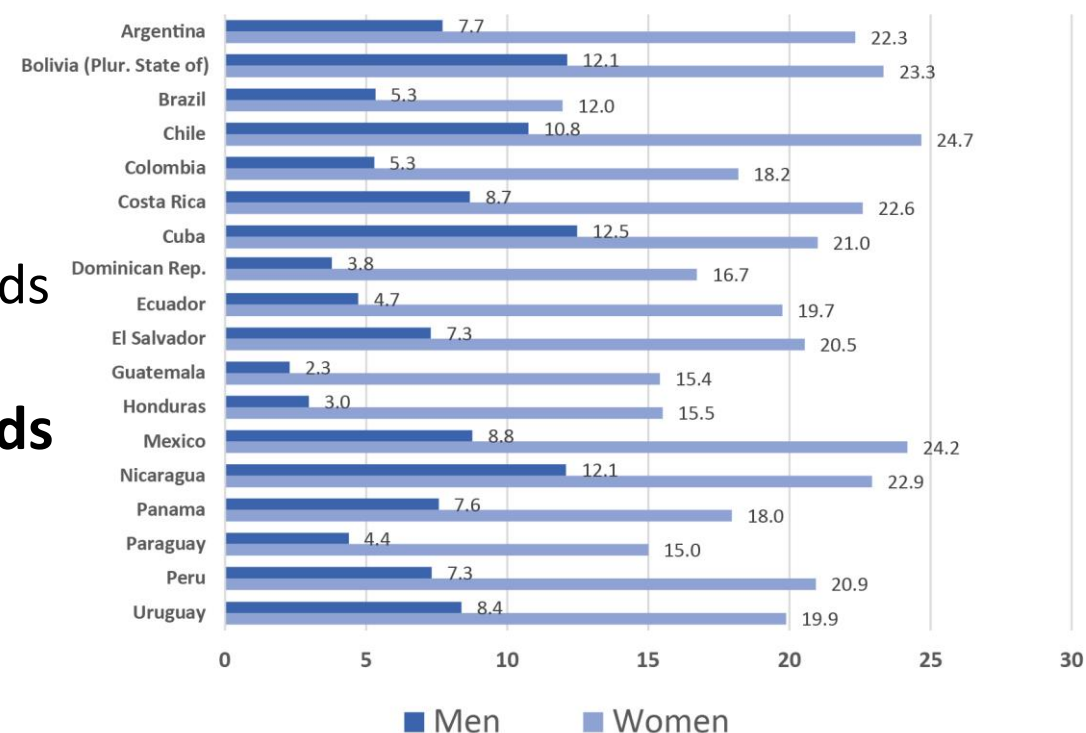
## **VI. Older persons' right to care**

# Care, the central theme for life and development, cuts across all priority directions of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

- Ageing implies a significant increase in care needs: older persons are more likely to experience some degree of functional dependency.
- **The pandemic** has shown that there can be no development without sustainability of life: moving towards a **care society**.
- Historically care has been provided within **households** and by **women**.
- There is need of **co-responsibility** and **State intervention** to ensure comprehensive care systems.

Latin America and the Caribbean: average proportion of time spent on household chores and unpaid care work, by gender, latest available year

(Percentages of total time per week)

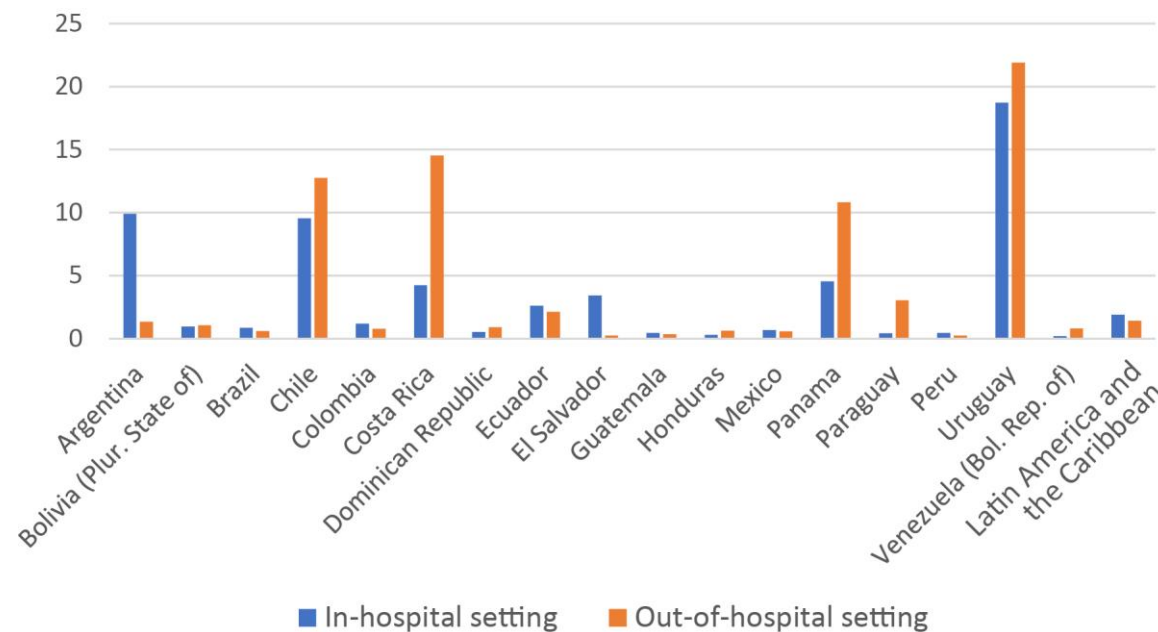


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of CEPALSTAT [online database] <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/index.html?lang=en> [accessed on 20 September 2022].

# Long-term and palliative care

- **Long-term care:** intensive and specific care provided by specialized personnel.
- **High physical, economic and emotional cost** for those requiring and providing care.
- It has been estimated that by 2050, older persons in situations of **functional dependency** (requiring assistance to carry out basic daily activities) will represent more than 3% of the total population.
- **Palliative care: prevent and alleviate suffering** of persons with serious diseases.
- In recent years, the number of **palliative care teams** has grown, but remains insufficient (many teams and services operate exclusively in the hospital setting).
- Eight countries in the region recognize palliative care as a **medical specialty**.

**Latin America: provision of palliative care in the in-hospital and out-of-hospital settings, July 2017–January 2018**  
(Rate per million inhabitants)



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of T. Pastrana and others, *Atlas de Cuidados Paliativos en Latinoamérica 2020*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Houston, IAHPC Press, 2021.

# Progress in care policies

- **Care is increasingly present in public agendas** based on its positioning internationally and recognition of its importance.
- During the **pandemic**, 14 countries of the region adopted 41 measures related to the care economy. Of these, 23 provided direct or indirect benefits to older persons providing or requiring care.
- Country reports describe **progress** in:
  - (i) The design of care **policies and programmes**, e.g. the promulgation of laws and decrees that provide legal support for the creation of comprehensive care systems.
  - (ii) Legal protection of **domestic and care workers**.
  - (iii) **Strengthening of sources of statistical information** on care and time use.
  - (iv) **Education and training** in care skills.

# Conclusions and recommendations

- Include ageing in **government agendas**: modernization of legislation and strengthening of institutions responsible for the coordination of policies on ageing.
- Strengthen national **legal frameworks** for the protection of the rights of older persons.
- **Universalize** older persons' access to **social protection, health services and care**. Provide **education** throughout life and close the **digital divide**. Improve access to **basic services**.
- Overcome **age discrimination**, especially in the labour market.
- Strengthen mechanisms for collecting **sociodemographic data** disaggregated by age, sex, ethnicity, race, morbidity and disability.
- Broaden **older persons' participation** in public policymaking.

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# Thank you



Fifth Regional  
Intergovernmental Conference  
on **Ageing and the Rights  
of Older Persons**  
in Latin America and the Caribbean  
Santiago, 13-15 December 2022

