

BEING A WOMAN IN MEXICO

ABUSE. VIOLENCE. INEQUALITY. FEMICIDE. DISCRIMINATION.



MAY 2021

SIGNOS **VÍDEOS**

Image: UNICEF/Sandra Sebastian en <https://tinyurl.com/3hsbvpwxw>



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The Council is structured with an Executive Committee, and Advisory Committee of Specialists and a Communication Advisory Committee, and a Executive Director coordinates the operation of these three Committees.

One of the main objectives is the collection of reliable and independent information on the key variables of our economic, political and sociocultural context in order to diagnose, with a good degree of certainty, the state where the country is located.

Vital Signs intends to serve as a light to show the direction that Mexico is taking through the dissemination of quarterly reports, with a national and international scope, to alert society and the policy makers of the wide variety of problems that require special attention.



Weak or absent pulse can have many causes and represents a medical emergency. The more frequent causes are the heart attack and the shock condition. Heart attack occurs when the heart stops beating. The shock condition occurs when the organism suffers a considerable deterioration, which causes a weak pulse, fast heartbeat, shallow, breathing and loss of consciousness. It can be caused by different factors.

Vital Signs weaken and you have to be constantly taking the pulse.

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Image: <https://golpormexico.org/noticias/gol-por-mexico-femenil-ha-beneficiado-a-845-mujeres-mexicanas-en-temas-de-empoderamiento/>

*Feminism isn't about
making women strong.
Women are already strong.
It's about changing the way
the world perceives that strength.*

GD Anderson

INTRODUCTION

Women in most of the world, as well as in Mexico, live in a terrible situation: there is abuse, discrimination, inequality, violence, and in some countries, femicides. Many of them live in conditions of inequality due to structural factors with respect to men in all stages of their lives and practically all aspects of it, from the economic field to political participation, passing through access to education, health, and a decent job. Many others face discrimination and violence of all kinds that go to the extreme of femicide.

Although some governments have made an effort to close gender gaps and fight gender violence, the results show a long way to reduce their vulnerability and achieve true equality between men and women.

Since their early infancy and childhood, although the indicators they have advanced the most are concerning their access and permanence to education, they continue to represent a huge challenge. On the other hand, the family violence they face is a constant that has worsened; and access to a decent life is far from reality.

During their adolescence and youth, women are faced with the challenge of survival. The wave of violence that has hit the country has affected both men and women. Even though most of the murders have had men as victims, it is necessary to recognize that women experience various types of violence, such as femicides, for the simple fact of being women. Their access to justice is full of obstacles. The impunity

levels are almost 100%, and their prison conditions -if they are accused of a crime- are comparatively worse. Women also face the enormous challenge of accessing, staying and growing in a decent job at this stage of life. In the field of public decisions, women have made outstanding progress, occupying more and more positions of power, although major choices continue to be concentrated in the hands of men.

In old age, the main differences between men and women refer to the care burden as a disadvantage by gender remains, mainly in the home where the care of (dependent) minors and elders continue to be delegated to women. Also, given the lower participation they had in the labor market during their youth, women tend to have less access to a decent retirement or pension, which contributes to reinforcing their situation of dependency and greater vulnerability.

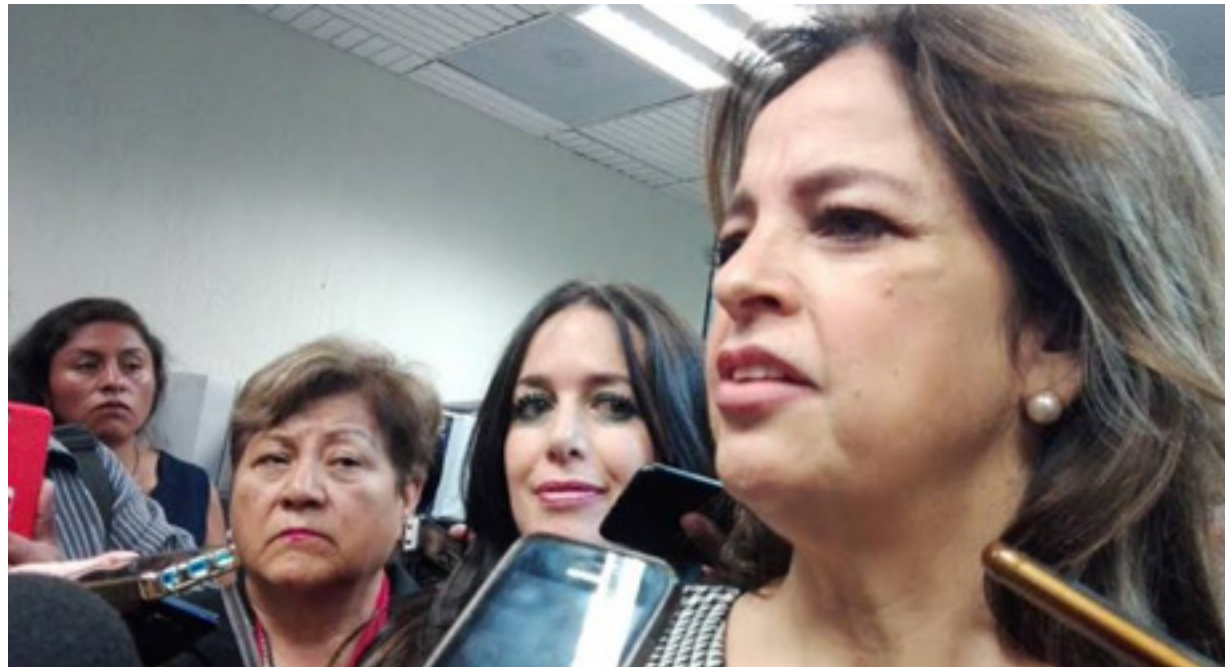


Image: Lorena Villavicencio, speaker for Mujeres de Hierro at <https://www.elsoldetoluca.com.mx/local/por-violencia-politica-insistira-mujeres-de-hierro-en-sancion-a-priistas-287751.html>



Image: <https://www.cepal.org/es/articulos/2012-dia-mundial-toma-conciencia-abuso-maltrato-la-vejez>

WOMEN IN MEXICO

Overall context

According to the United Nations (UN) (nd), gender inequality is a widespread phenomenon in which women lack access to decent employment and face gender pay gaps. Around the world, women and girls are systematically deprived of access to education and health care. They are underrepresented in economic and political decision-making and are victims of violence and discrimination simply because they are women. In Mexico, this type of situation has become more visible, so that the integral development of women has been systematically affected.

The situation of vulnerability faced by women in the world varies between regions and countries. In Mexico, the reality that most women face is critical. Despite the fact that they represent 51.2% of the national population, a total of 64,540,634 persons (National Institute of Statistics and Geography INEGI for

its acronym in Spanish, 2020), the quality of life to which they usually have access is limited by a series of structural factors in the economic, political, cultural and social spheres, as well as attitudes based on openly discriminatory prejudices towards them that end up hampering their life projects. As UN Women (nd) comments, there can be no sustainable development without gender equality. In addition, wasting the potential of half the population has large-scale negative implications for the country. Contradictorily, until now, the administration has not been able to design and implement a strategy to improve the inclusion of women and girls to reduce the gaps between men and women and move from rhetoric to reality.

One way UN Women have measured progress in gender inclusion around the world is through the monitoring of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In

*There can be
no sustainable
development without
gender equality*

UN Women

them, it is evident that the inequality between men and women persists because the public policies of many countries have not yet been designed and implemented with a proper gender perspective. More than 25 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which includes different goals on the rights of women and girls around the world, little has been achieved in this regard (UN Women, 2015).

According to UN Women (2019), there is a high prevalence in levels of violence against women, including its most extreme form, femicidal violence. All this despite significant progress in some areas. For example, since 2000, different countries have created laws that seek to reduce gender-based violence levels by incorporating measures related to the prevention of violence, the support, and protection of victims. / survivors and the prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators.¹ The Organic Law of Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence (2004) was created In Spain, the Law Against Violence Against

¹ Building on the lessons learned from the lack of full implementation of previous legislative reforms, these comprehensive laws often include provisions to ensure their effective implementation, including the creation of a monitoring mechanism, requirements for the training of relevant officials, and budget provisions.

In Mexico there are still many deficiencies that prevent women from actively exercising all their rights in Mexico

The current government has been especially lax in the way it has addressed and prioritized this subject on its agenda.

Women and their Children (2004) was enacted in the Philippines, the Act on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence was passed and in Mexico (2007) and the San Marino Law on the Prevention of Violence against Women (2008) (UN Women, 2009).

Despite these formal breakthroughs, which also include public policies, as in the rest of the world, there are still many deficiencies that prevent women from actively exercising all their rights in Mexico, which is why they continue to constitute a vulnerable group.

While this is not a new problem but comes from decades ago and has persisted throughout different federal administrations, the current government has been especially lax in the way it has addressed and prioritized this subject on its agenda.

Being a woman in Mexico implies being immersed in a complex scenario full of disadvantages, in which limitations are faced in practically all the components of life. Without an open culture to give women a predominant position in the country's development and without decisive actions on the part of the different power actors, among which the State stands out. Customs and vices that affect the establishment of an even floor for women and men will continue to be brought about is foreseeable.



Image: Women asking to open schools in Queretaro and transform to a hybrid mode at <https://noticiasdequeretaro.com.mx/2021/03/13/piden-se-abran-escuelas-en-queretaro-y-se-trabaje-un-modelo-hibrido/>

Being a woman in Mexico implies being immersed in a complex scenario full of disadvantages, in which limitations are faced in practically all the components of life.

Women in Mexico and the world

According to the Global Gender Gap Index² of the World Economic Forum 2020, Mexico has a gender gap of 75.4%. With this percentage, the country is ranked 25th in the ranking of 153 countries. In Mexico, the differences between men and women have decreased in previous years. In 2015 the country was in 71st place and 2010 in 91st place. However, in the included sub-indices, Mexico is several positions lower. In economic participation and opportunities in 124th place, in educational attainment in 54th, health, and survival in 46th. However, in political empowerment, the country is considered one of the five countries with the greatest improvement. It occupies position 14th, mainly thanks to the fact that in 2019 the presence of women in political institutions increased.

² The Gender Gap Index analyzes the following areas: Economic participation and opportunity: wages, participation, and highly skilled employment; Education: access to basic and higher levels of education; Political participation: representation in decision-making structures and, Health and survival: life expectancy and male-female ratio.

Mexico's position among 153 countries in various indices according to the Global Gender Gap Index, 2020:

Economic and opportunities: 124th place

Educational attainment: 54th place

Health and survival: 46th place

The UN Women 2019 report confirms that with the constitutional reform of June 2019, better known as “Parity in Everything” (DOF, 2019). Mexico became the first country in Latin America to guarantee that half of the public positions in the three levels of government and powers of the Union and autonomous bodies are held by women. In this sense, Mexico ranks 5th in the World Ranking of Women in Parliament carried out by UN Women in 2020, having women in 48.2% of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 49.2% of the Senate’s seats. However, this data

should not be the cause of an exacerbated celebration, since out of a total of 193 nations, only 22 have a woman as Head of State or Head of Government. Regarding the participation of women in ministerial cabinets, Mexico again occupies 5th place (36.4%), behind Colombia (50%), Costa Rica (55.2%), Nicaragua (56.3%), and Spain with 63.2% of women who hold positions in presidential cabinets.

According to the World Bank's Women, Business and Law Index³ 2021, which measures equality between men and women, Mexico is ranked 45 out of 190 countries evaluated. The country's rating went from 83.8 to 88.8 points⁴ due to progress on the rights in marriage. The marriage indicator assesses the legal restrictions related to this aspect, such as discrimination that includes the obstacles women face in running a home and family. However, the lowest scores for Mexico are found in the laws that affect the women's salary (75), laws that affect the work of women after having children (60), and laws that affect the amount of the pension of women (75).

³ Women, Business and the Law, WBL

⁴ The highest possible score is 100. The overall score for Mexico is higher than the regional average observed in Latin America and the Caribbean (80.1), but within the region the maximum score observed is 95 (Peru).

The lowest scores for Mexico are found in the laws that affect the women's salary (75), laws that affect the work of women after having children (60), and laws that affect the amount of the pension of women (75).



Image: <https://cuestionone.com/nacional/trabajo-no-remunerado-de-mujeres-vale-mas-que-el-petroleo-o-el-turismo/>

According to ECLAC,⁵ the average time spent on paid work in the population over 15 years of age, Mexico is the country with the worst indicator, where 42.6% of

⁵ According to the last available period of each country.

women's working time is unpaid. Argentina follows it with 42.4%, Chile with 42.1%, Peru with 39.8%, and Costa Rica with 39.6%. Only 22.1% of women's working time is paid in Mexico, while in Argentina (15.2%), Chile (19.8%), Peru (22.6%), and Costa Rica (10.8%), the percentages are equally catastrophic. ECLAC also assures that the pandemic generated a two-decade setback in the economic participation of women. The progress made on equality in the last 50 years could be erased. If these basic principles of inclusion of women in the government Agenda are not promoted, the GDP in 2030 would only be 5% higher. According to the Center for Formal Employment Studies (CEEf for its acronym in Spanish), the challenge is to incorporate 8.2 million women into the economically active population (EAP) to achieve a Gross Domestic Product 15% above 2020.

For its part, the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, published in its 2019-2020 report, on which are the countries with the best conditions for women on issues of well-being, economic, social and political inclusion, justice, security, and empowerment in the world. The research yields results on the policies and institutions that guarantee equal rights and opportunities for women. Of the 167 countries analyzed, the best rated were: Norway,

Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland. Mexico ranks 103rd in the study since despite having excellent parliamentary representation policies and anti-discrimination standards, it has one of the worst ratings in security (femicides), financial inclusion, and access to justice.

Despite the issuance of recommendations made by different international organizations, both to advance recommendations and promote the empowerment and leadership of women in Mexico, valuable opportunities to truly meet these objectives have been lost. The current federal government has been reluctant to respond to demands and delays that millions of women have denounced; consequently, compliance with agreements and program monitoring at the international level becomes even more complicated. The López Obrador government has prioritized its attention to political and electoral issues, missing national and international opportunities to make amends to women.

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Important information about women in Mexico

Today, women and girls who experience multiple interrelated forms of discrimination are most often left behind (UN Women, 2018). The average number of children born alive to women aged 12 and over⁶ has been declining since 2000. This trend is probably due to reasons having to do with economics or employment, even though, between 2010 and 2019, the percentage of registered births of adolescent mothers (under 20 years of age) reported an increase in the first five years of the last decade; As of 2016, this trend began to decline, reaching 17% in 2019 (INEGI, 2019a).

According to the National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (ENIGH for its acronym in Spanish), in 2018, it was observed that within the population over 15 years of age, 6 out of 10 people without education are women. There is evidence that children

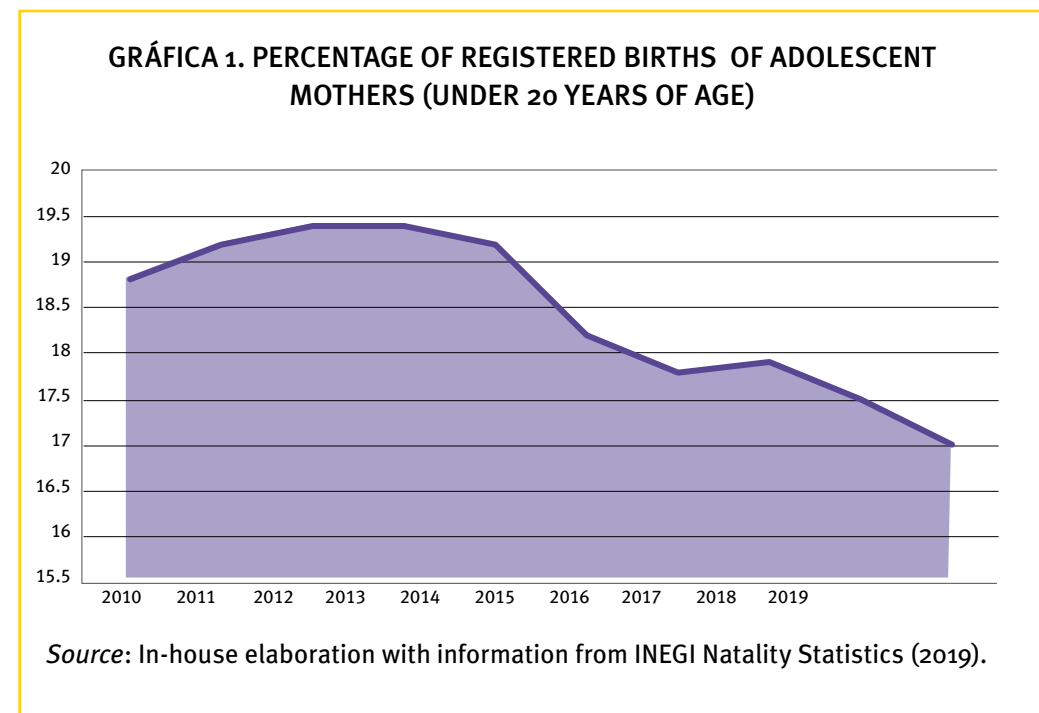
⁶ It excludes women who did not specify whether they have had children and those who have had children, but did not specify the total of them.

Image: <https://diario19.com/2018/12/11/nias-y-adolescentes-mexicanas-ocupan-el-primer-lugar-de-embarazos-en-el-mundo/>



cared for by fathers, mothers, and caregivers with higher education have an earlier development (De Ávila, 2004). However, in Mexico, of the 2 million 162,535 births that were registered in 2018 (INEGI, 2018), 774,973 (35.8%) were of babies with mothers who only have a 9th-grade degree or its equivalent, and 497,386 (23%) were babies with mothers who only have a 12th-grade degree or its equivalent. In other words, a little more than 58% of mothers in Mexico do not have a university degree. Similarly, the highest proportion of fathers have an education level that does not exceed high school level, 683,600 (31.6%) have completed 9th-grade or equivalent, 1,426,723 (9.7%) completed 12th-grade or equivalent, 358,552 (16.6%) with 6th-grade and only 41,105 (1.9%) do not have some level of schooling, elements that condition earlier development in children.

In this same sense, there is still a high percentage of women who, being mothers, continue to be vulnerable since only 89.3% of the births (1,932,085) registered in Mexico were attended in hospitals or clinics, 3.8% (81,585) of these were in private homes. In comparison, 6.9% (149,215) were treated in another site or an unspecified one. Doctors attended 88.6% (1,916,555); those who were cared for by nurses



and midwives represented 4.3% (92,023), and 7.1% (153,540) were cared for by unspecified personnel. The mothers' age group where the highest number of births is concentrated is the one that goes from 20 to 24 years with 611,532 cases (28.3%), followed by the group from 25 to 29 years with 542,570 cases (25.1%). A group with fewer events is that of children under 15 years of age, in which 8,862 instances

were recorded, equivalent to 0.4% of them (INEGI, 2019b). Likewise, the number of births in women ranging from 30 to 39 years has decreased. While in 2010, there were 624,198 (INEGI, 2010) births, in 2019, there were 543,328 (INEGI, 2020) of these. It represents a decrease in births of 15% in 9 years

In Mexico, as of 2019, living with a significant other but being unmarried is the marital status predominantly declared by mothers at the time of registering the minor in the Civil Registry office, since they represent 51.2% of cases (1,107,24), followed by those who said they were married, they represent 28.5% (615,49). Finally, to complement this information, it is worth commenting that 69.1% (1,493,757) of the mothers at the time of registration declared not to work, while 22.1% (477,979) reported that they do. Only 8.8% (190,799) did not specify their condition (INEGI, 2019b). According to the National Occupation and Employment Survey (ENOE for its acronym in Spanish) (2019), the employed population aged 25 years and over women (34.7%) have a lower presence than men (65.3%), and from the age of 45 this gap becomes wider, considering those whose occupation is civil servants and managers of the public, private and social sectors.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION RATE

2008	2018
WOMEN LIVING IN POVERTY	
34.5%	47.4%
WOMEN NOT LIVING IN POVERTY	
50%	55%

In terms of economic participation, between 2008 and 2018, women's economic participation rate grew, especially for those living in poverty, while the labor participation of men remained unchanged. For women living in poverty, the economic participation rate was 34.5% in 2008, and for 2018 it rose to 47.4%. In the group of women who are not in poverty, the rate was 50.5% for 2008 and 55.0% for 2018. These percentages reflect the need for women to work, especially among them who are in a situation of poverty with an additional 12.9% points, compared to those who are not in that situation (4.5 additional points) (National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy CONEVAL for its acronym in Spanish, 2019a).

In 2018, in contexts of poverty, the economic participation of mothers aged 25 to 44 was 54.6%, while for women without children, it was 64.5%. In the absence of poverty, the respective rates were 66.9% and 85.2%. These data tell us that within the population aged 25 and over, the economic participation of mothers is lower compared to that of women without children. For the 45 years old or over group living in poverty, the respective percentages for women with and without children were 44.7% and 46.3%; and in non-poverty conditions, 46.1% and 52.3%, respectively (CONEVAL, 2019a). These percentages make it clear that the context of poverty affects a greater extent of women's economic participation, a figure that increases when they reach maternity.

The incidences of poverty in households increase as the heads are younger or older, but there are no differences by sex. For 2018 it is observed that, as their age increases, the proportion of women as heads of household grows. In the same year, regardless of the poverty situation, of the total household's head aged 14 to 44, just over 20% were female. This participation rises to about 30% in the heads of 45 to 64 years, and almost 40% in those aged 65 years or more. (CONEVAL, 2019a).

The wage gap is accentuated in contexts of poverty; however, it has been reducing over time. In 2008, the ratio was 67 pesos received by women in poverty for every 100 pesos by men. For 2018, women in this same poverty situation received 73 pesos for every 100 pesos paid to men. In the absence of poverty, the difference is reduced to 90 pesos for every 100. During the study period (2008 to 2018), the gap wideness remained in the population that was not in poverty. In the people that present this deprivation, there was limited progress. In the absence of poverty, being

Image: "Mexican women earn less than men in the manufacturing sector". Cepal at <https://mujermexico.com/noticias/mexicanas-ganan-menos-que-los-hombres-en-el-sector-manufacturero-cepal/>



employed is the second most frequent activity for adolescent males, while being employed and working at home is for teenage females. In 2018, the main activities of male adolescents who are not in a situation of poverty were: their studies, with 72.8%; followed by employment with 23.1%; and house-work, which only represented 3.7%. On the other hand, in adolescent females, 80.4% said they were studying, 11.6% had a job, and 10.8% were engaged in housework, almost triple that of men (CONEVAL, 2019a).



Image: “Women schooling is higher than Mexican men, pero they still earn 34% less than men” at <https://www.sinembargo.mx/12-01-2019/3518796>

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THE STAGES OF WOMEN'S LIFE



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The situation of women varies according to the stage of life in which they are. At first, the differences between male babies and female babies are not very notorious, but as time passes, the gaps begin to grow from childhood, especially from adolescence. This situation takes on various nuances regarding security, discrimination, or cultural roles during motherhood and the mature stage of women. And at the end of life, the differences between older men and women still keep gaps. Naturally, the stage of life shows increasing differences, but they can also be observed by rural and urban environments, regions in the country, or ethnic groups. This second section of the report is therefore structured according to the various life stages of women.

Image: Getty en <https://www.dineroenimagen.com/2016-10-11/78847>



EARLY CHILDHOOD

The beginning of life, although it can be associated with moments of fun, learning, and growth, many children are not lucky enough to be born in dignified conditions that allow them to obtain the necessary tools to face the future. Although the conditions of disadvantage at this stage compared to adults are shared by both men and women, the latter face further lags from an early age that becomes relevant later on. Damage to health, food insecurity, educational gaps, and violence significantly affects this age group and lays the foundations for inequality between men and women accentuated throughout their lives.

Effects of poverty in early childhood

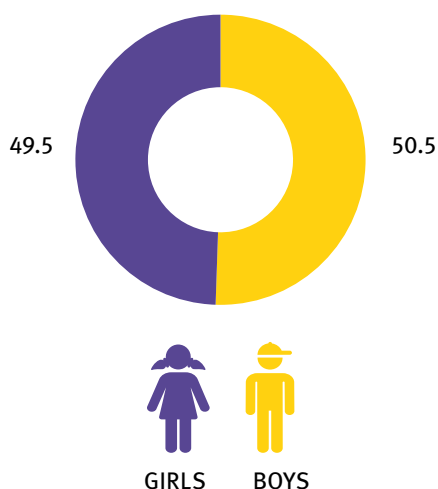
From the first years of life, particularly from pregnancy and up to 3 years, children require nutrition, protection, and stimulation for the brain to develop correctly (UNICEF, 2018). Therefore, the importance of early childhood development lies in the fact that, in the first years of children's lives, all needs of their growth for the future are covered.

Poverty is one reason children do not receive the nutrition, protection, and stimulation they need. According to UNICEF, in middle-income countries (such as Mexico), the risk that babies under the age of five, regardless of their gender, to not reach their development potential due to poverty and extreme poverty is higher. Consequently, this impact is even more significant for minors who are in low-income countries. In Mexico, the challenge of child poverty includes just over 10 million infants between the ages of 0 and 4⁷ (CENSUS, 2020), of which 51% are men and 49% are women (Graph 2).

7 Population and Housing Census (2020). Accurate figure 10,047,365 infants between 0 and 4 years of age.

In Latin America, children are twice as likely to be poor as adults (World Bank, 2016). In 2014 alone, child poverty⁸ reached 36 percent, almost double

GRAPH 2. NUMBER OF CHILDREN BETWEEN 0 AND 4 YEARS OF AGE IN 2020



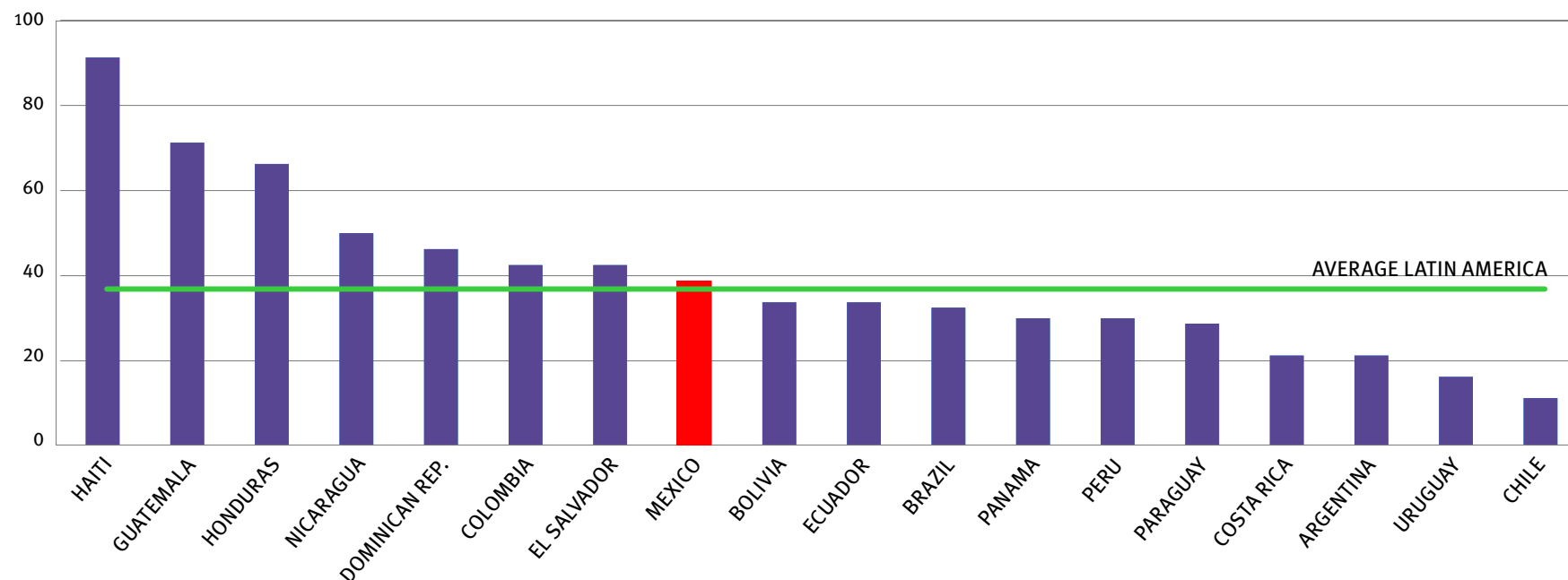
Source: In-house elaboration with information from Population and Housing Census (2020).

⁸ According to the World Bank (2014), child poverty, defined as the percentage of children under the age of 15 who live on less than US \$ 4 a day, fell from 54 percent in 2004 to 36 percent in 2014.

the rate for adults (19%) (World Bank, 2014). For the same year in Mexico, 38.3% of the children were poor. Almost four out of every ten children lived on less than \$4 a day, being above Latin America's average (36.4%) (Graph 3), an element that determines their nutrition, health, and optimal development in the future. In addition, poverty can impede the child's school progress (UNICEF 2017) since the associated risks, such as malnutrition or poor sanitation, can cause delays in their development.

There is evidence that learning begins in childhood, long before formal education begins, and continues throughout life. Early learning breeds later learning, and early success breeds later success, just as early failure breeds later failure (Heckman, 2004). Success or failure at this age sets the stage for success or failure in school, leading to success or failure in post-school teaching. Therefore, the inheritance of poverty is such an important component that it determines the living conditions of the next generation, where it even predetermines the infant's well-being and its possibilities to grow or develop fully.

GRAPH 3. PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS AND BOYS WHO LIVED ON LESS THAN US\$ 4.0 A DAY (2014). COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA



Note: Children are defined as those 14 years of age or younger. US\$ 4.0 a day (2005 PPP). These poverty rates are based on harmonized information from 18 countries, using data from the nearest year. The data for the following countries is not from 2014: Chile, Dominican Republic (2013), and Haiti (2012). An interpolation was applied when the country information was not available for a given year to analyze the same set of countries for the entire LAC. Due to information limitations, Haiti has not been included in the LAC total.

Source: In-house elaboration with information from World Bank (2014).

Health effects

Early childhood has been the most crucial developmental phase of the entire life cycle. Healthy child development has been related to levels of nutrition and eating habits, reflected in the reduction of problems such as obesity, sedentary lifestyle, difficulties in psychomotor development, among others (Camargo and Pinzón, 2012).



Image: “The barriers to breastfeeding” at <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/05/las-barreras-para-la-lactancia-en-mexico-segun-save-children/>

In Mexico, health during the first stage does not show significant differences between girls and boys, but eating habits affect them at that stage of life, predisposing their future well-being. During early childhood, breast milk is the best food for babies, as it provides them with all the nutrients they need and helps prevent many diseases. In addition to providing benefits to mothers (UNICEF, 2018), however, only 3 out of 10 babies are fed only breast milk during their first six months of life in Mexico. This situation is reflected in the low levels of nutrition since 1 in 8 girls and boys under five years of age suffer from chronic malnutrition, which occurs mainly in southern Mexico and rural communities more than in urban ones. It is worth mentioning that indigenous households are the most affected (UNICEF, 2018).

Another serious health problem that occurs from early childhood is related to obesity and being overweight. According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in 2016, Mexico ranked first in childhood obesity and second in adult obesity. The National Health and Nutrition Survey records (ENSA-

NUT for its acronym in Spanish) revealed that in 2016 the index of overweight and obesity in children and adolescents is one of the highest in the world since it occurs in 3 out of 10 people who were of school age. Those in preschool are the ones who consume the highest amount of calories from processed products (about 40% of the calories they eat per day compared to 26% in the diet of adults) (PAHO, 2019). This, as already mentioned, has placed Mexico among the first places in childhood obesity worldwide, a problem that occurs more often in the northern states and urban communities.

Likewise, according to ENSANUT, in 2018, the group with the highest prevalence of overweight was girls aged eight (23.2%) and eleven years old (21.9%). For the obesity category, the most prevalent age was nine years in children (29.9%). This condition is a variable that predisposes children to develop further complications in the future.

Under this scheme, families in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty that have children are most affected. This situation harms the diet of minors and, therefore, on their nutrition state, health, and well-being (PAHO, 2019), where protection in health services is necessary from the first years of life.



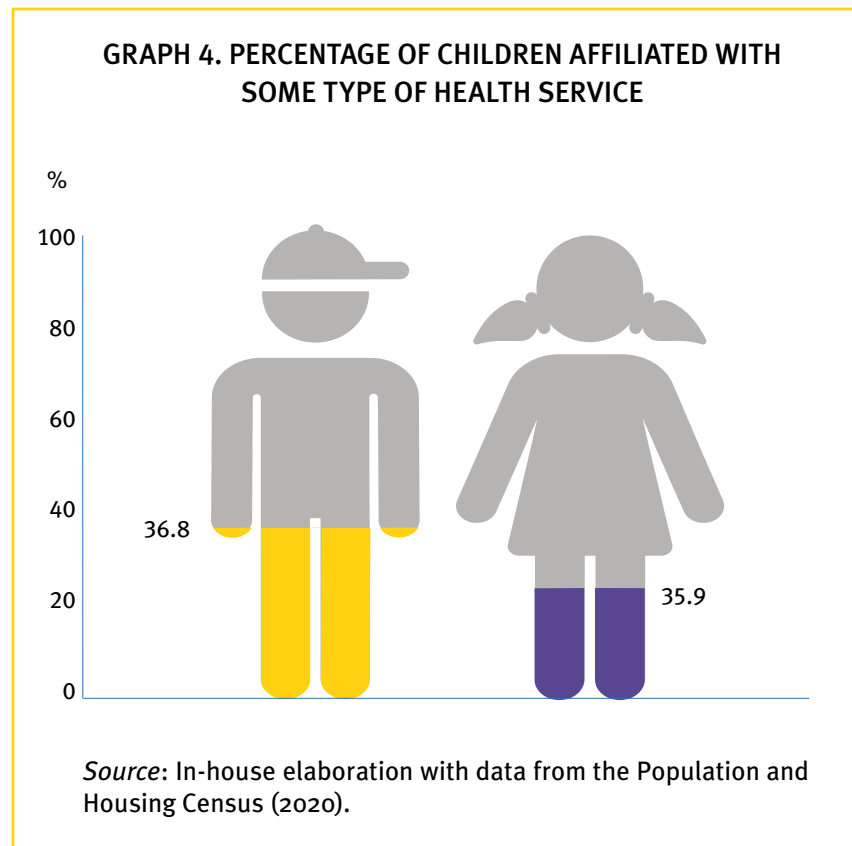
Image: “It is urgent to develop policies to avoid overweight in Mexico” at <https://udgtv.com/noticias/nacional/politicas-combatir-obesidad-infantil-mexico/>

However, according to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, of the more than 10 million girls and boys between 0 and 4 years old in Mexico, only 7 out of 10 have some affiliation to health services (72.7%) the ratio is lower in girls (35.9%) compared to boys (36.8%) (Graph 4).



Image: Mexico leads children's overweight at <https://plumasatomicas.com/noticias/mexico/la-enfermedad-que-mas-aqueja-a-los-ninos-mexicanos-es-la-obesidad/>

According to ENSANUT, in 2018, the group with the highest prevalence of overweight was girls aged eight (23.2%) and eleven years old (21.9%).



Food security

On the other hand, the most common effects on exposure to poverty involve: sacrificing nutritious foods such as vegetables, an essential source of vitamins, minerals, and other protective compounds, in addition to not allowing oneself to regularly eat high-quality proteins, which are necessary nutrients for optimal growth of children (UNICEF, 2014).

Food insecurity already predicted a complicated outlook for Mexico in previous years. A study on the effects generated by the 2008 recession reveals that: in the case of Mexico, 14% of households with children under 18 years of age reported that they ate once a day or stopped eating for a whole day, while the families that experienced severe food insecurity went from 8% in 2008 to 17% in 2009, given the increase in unemployment and the hardening of working conditions, especially affecting households with two or more children, as they represented a cost 40% higher than that of families without children.

In this sense of chronic malnutrition, the lack of nutrients can cause a recurrence of diseases and cause

poor school performance. In this way, affected children tend to drop out of school earlier and work in occupations below the poverty line, if they can find work at all.

Affected girls and boys tend to drop out of school earlier and work in occupations below the poverty line, if they can find work at all.

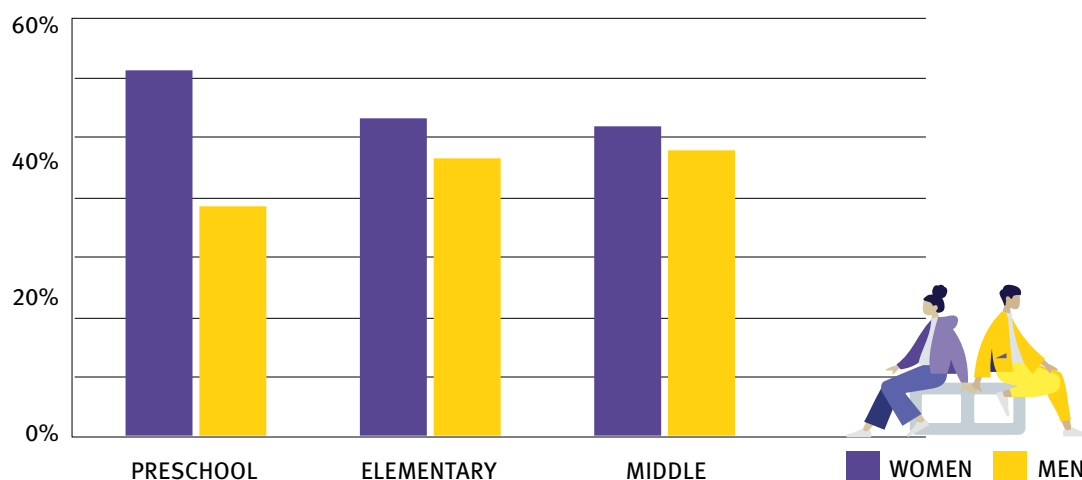
CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

Educational gaps by gender, social condition, region

Specific socio-economic indicators, such as the education of parents and the economic resources of the family, have essential effects on the education of children and adolescents. Likewise, the inequality of opportunities relative to school progression changes over time. There is less inequality in the transition from elementary to middle school, but it increases high school and higher education access. That is, inequality increases as the stages of the school career progress (Solís, 2013).

Educational inequality is one of the main problems around the world, and Mexico is no exception. Although the population over 15 years of age who reached a higher level of education during childhood and adolescence (preschool, elementary and middle school) were women (Graph 5), 60% of those who do not have any level of education within the population of more than 15 years of age are also women, unlike men (40%).

GRAPH 5. PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION OVER 15 YEARS OF AGE BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED, AND BY SEX 2018

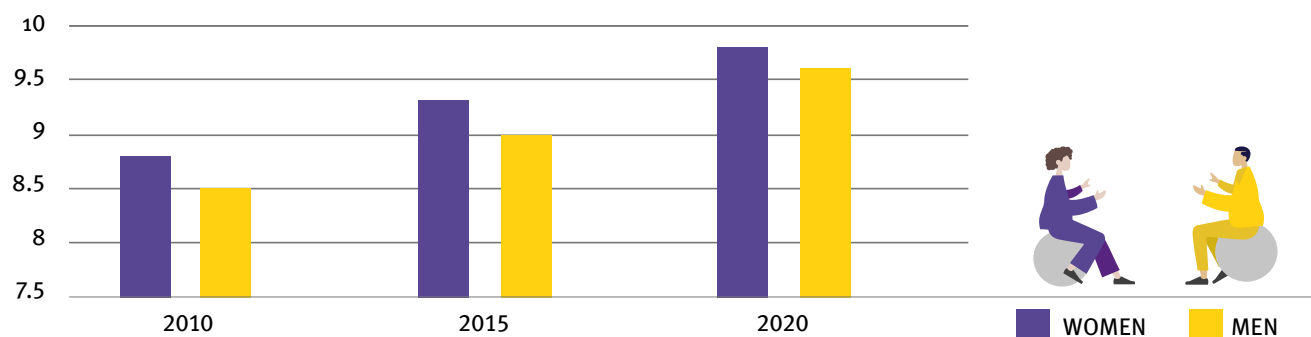


Source: In-house elaboration with data from the National Survey of Household Income and Expenditure (2018) Database.

Under this scenario, men and women older than 15 years of age in Mexico obtained, on average, 9.7 years of schooling⁹ at the national level, higher figures than those obtained in 2015 and 2010 (9.2 and 8.6 years completed, respectively). However, the average level of education is lower for women than for

men (Graph 6) because older women have lower education attainment than men. Women under 35 years of age have higher education attainment than men, and those older than 35 is the reverse: men have more education than women, reaching at least high school and many times university degrees (Graph 7).

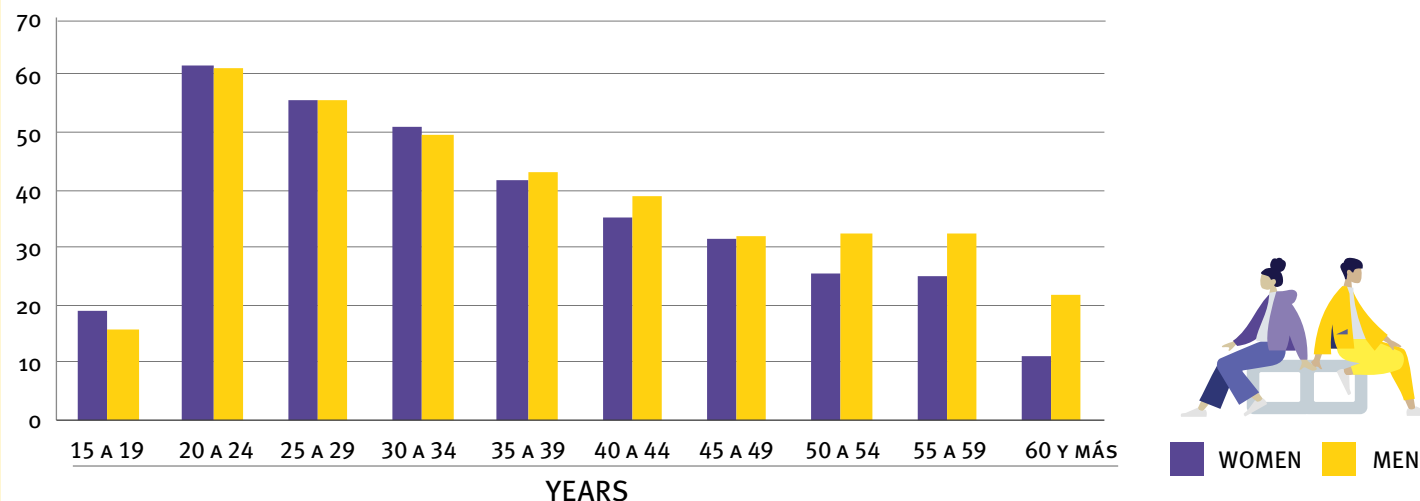
GRAPH 6. AVERAGE LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE POPULATION AGED 15 AND OVER, BY SEX, SELECTED CENSUS YEARS 2010-2020



Source: In-house elaboration with data from the Population and Housing Censuses (2010, 2015 and 2020).

⁹ Number of years that, on average, people aged 15 and over completed in the National Educational System. It is the result of dividing the sum of the completed years from the first grade of elementary school to the last year reached of the people aged 15 years and over by the total of the population aged 15 years and over.

**GRAPH 7. SHARE OF THE POPULATION WITH HIGHSCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY LEVEL EDUCATION
BY SEX AND AGE, 2020**



Source: In-house elaboration with information from ENOE.

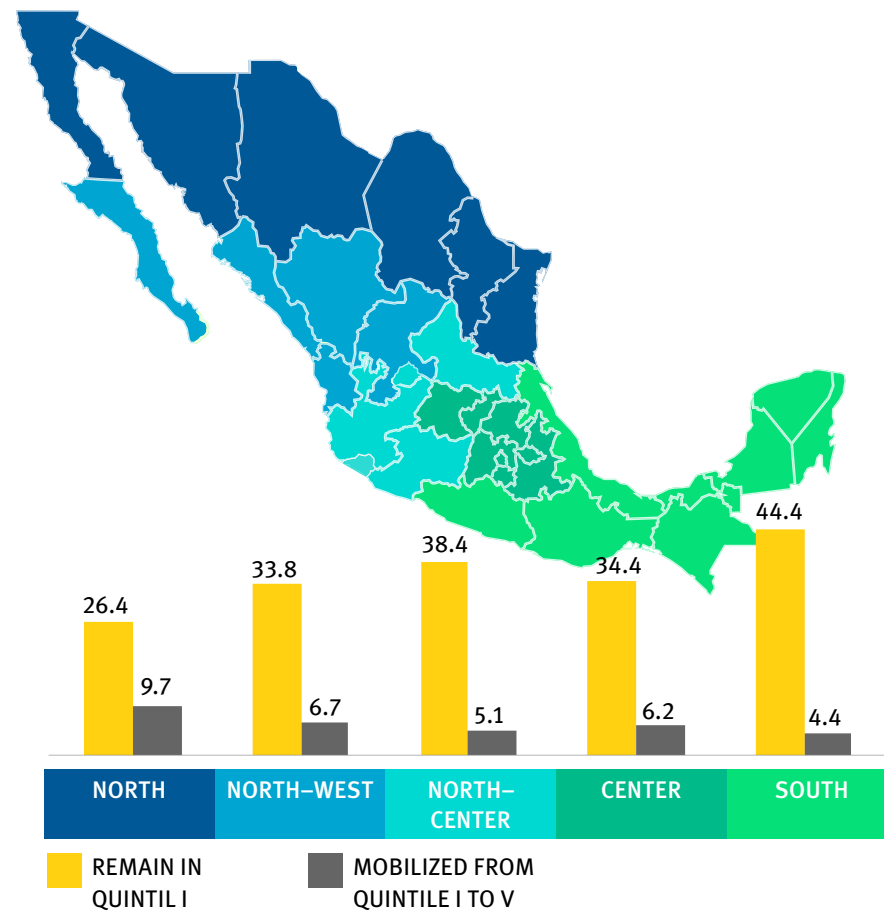
The states below the national average (9.7 years completed) for 2020 coincide with the country's most impoverished region (southern region), including Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero Veracruz, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo. (Graph 7) In addition, schooling is lower for women (9.0) than for men (9.3), which conditions job opportunities in the future.

Thus, education is one of the indicators that allows inferring the permanent in-come potential of people and reflects, in some way, the opportunities that will be had from childhood to youth. These same could be hampered in the Central and Center-North regions of the country given the level of schooling in these areas.

Despite the progress in years of schooling in recent decades, the persistence of educational disadvantages from one generation to another and between women and men is, in general, high. Continuation in the lowest stratum of origin is more significant for women than for men (38.1% versus 33.9%, respectively).

In this sense, mobility is still low for women, especially in the south of the country. The greatest persistence in the most disadvantaged group is found in the south-ern region. On the other hand, the lowest persistence and the highest upward mobility correspond to the northern region (Graph 8). This information suggests that in the south and north-central part of the country, the family condition where one is born is transmitted to a greater extent from parents to children. The north presents better conditions to break the origin-destination dependency (where one is born and where life ends).

GRAPH 8. PERCENTAGE OF PERSISTENCE IN THE LOWEST STRATUM (QUINTILE 1) OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS MOBILITY OF WEALTH TO THE HIGHEST STRATUM (QUINTILE V)



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the Espinosa Yglesias Study Center (CEEY for its acronym in Spanish) Educational Social Mobility Report (2020).

According to De la Torre (2020), the weight of the educational inheritance can begin to be reduced by improving the performance of public schools and, to a lesser extent, through monetary transfers to the most vulnerable households.

Social programs without perspective: affecting mothers and children

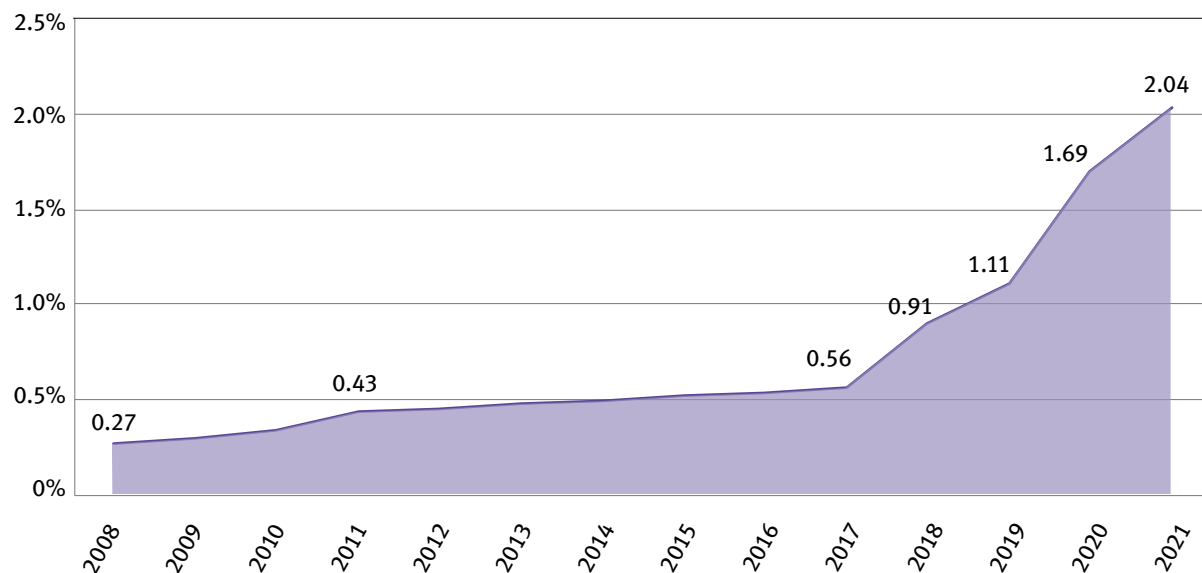
The issue of gender equality on the social policy agenda has several perspectives. Its success is directly related to subjective realities of the population, such as social context, socioeconomic status, geographic positioning, history, and gender (De la Cerda and Sánchez, 2017). It is worth mentioning that although there have been advances in gender matters by incorporating women in the design of public policies; The results of their implementation are still far from a balance of opportunities that considers the integration of women in the reformulation of social, cultural, and family responsibilities.

According to a sexual division of labor, the assigned roles are left intact, and new programs that are promoted for women are added. This situation results in a double shift for women and difficulty ensuring care for dependents in the homes within the country's social policy (Tepichin, 2010).

In an effort to include the gender perspective in government, a budget has been allocated to actions that promote gender equality since 2008. Although the percentage allocated to Annex 13, called "Expenditures for Equality between Women and Men," has been increasing (Graph 9), this has not improved the conditions and access to social policy for women.

In this sense, advances in social policy and gender equality in the 2012-2018 period focused on policies with implications for the well-being of women were related to child care services, Life Insurance for Heads of Family, and the Pension for Older Adults. Evidence suggests that, although these efforts favored care for women in an economically vulnerable situation, the emphasis on combating poverty prevailed over an approach based on social rights. Therefore, objectives such as gender equality in social protection or socialization of care and early education were still pending subjects (Altamirano *et al.* 2020).

GRAPH 9. PERCENTAGE PARTICIPATION OF ANNEX 13 IN THE EXPENDITURE BUDGET OF THE FEDERATION (PEF FOR ITS ACRONYM IN SPANISH)



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the PEF (2008-2021).

The gender perspective within the Social Programs of the current government is limited to money transfers that reproduce the fragmentation scheme of social policies. This element results in low levels of institutionality. In addition, the reflection of the attention to women in social policy is denoted in the budget exercise. For example, since the beginning of the current administration, the budget cut includ-

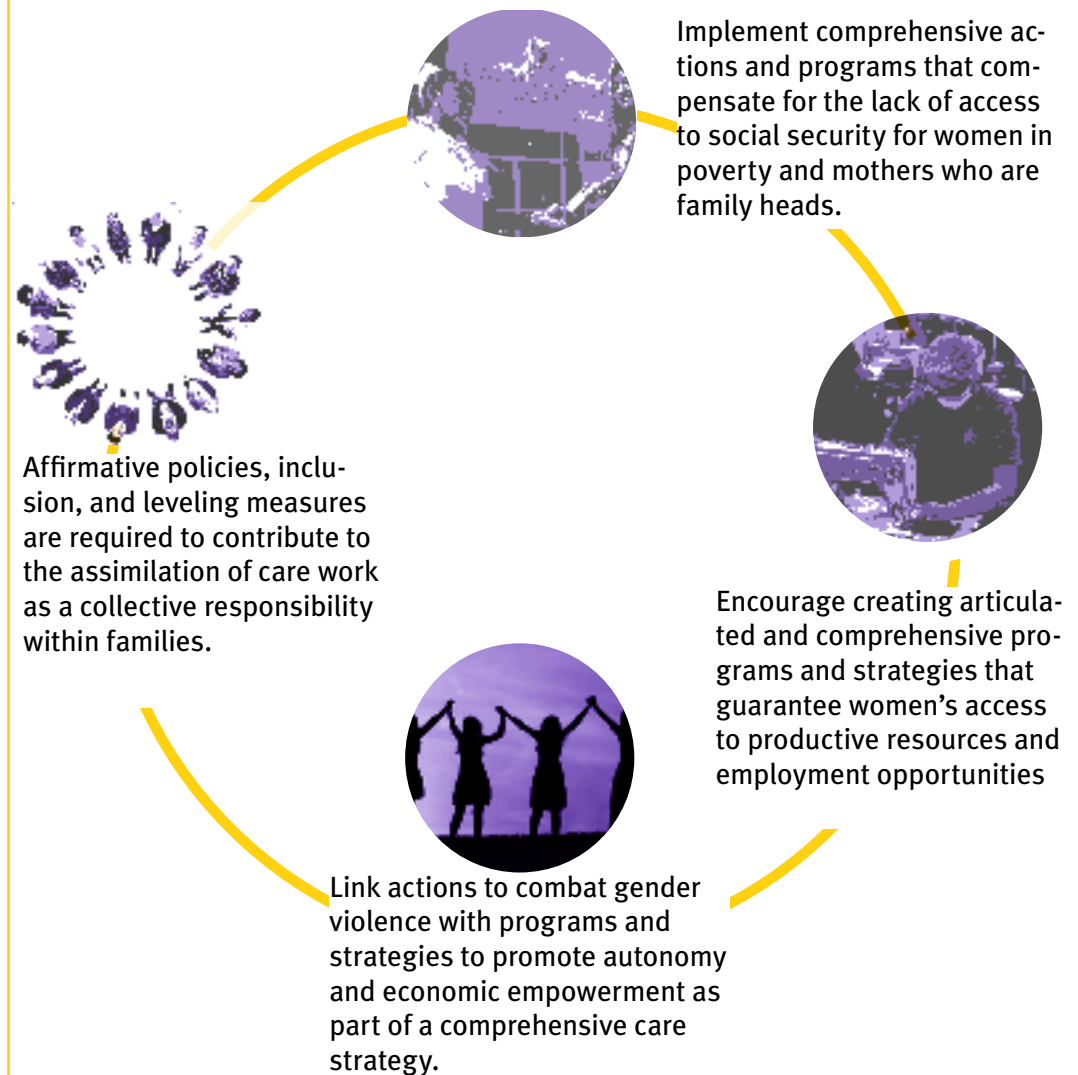
ed almost 50% of the children's daycare program¹⁰ in 2019, and it was later canceled in its entirety. This program supported mothers, single fathers, or guardians who worked, looking for work, or studying; whose per capita income per house-hold did not exceed the Welfare Line (LB for its acronym in Spanish).

¹⁰ In 2019 resources were cut by 50%, going from 10,189 million pesos to 5,100 million by 2020.

They also did not have access to child care services through public institutions of social security or other resources (Ministry of Welfare, 2015). The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH for its acronym in Spanish) (2019) warned that the budget cut to the subsidized childcare program could cause working mothers and fathers to be forced to leave their children in the care of unqualified people. It also stated that alleging corruption does not exempt the federal government from complying with its obligations.

The Center for Public Finance Studies (CEFP for its acronym in Spanish) of the Chamber of Deputies analyzed the 102 programs found in Annex 13 of the Federation Expenditure Budget (PEF) that only 29 actions are aimed at empowering women. The other 73 programs deal only with social rights and not gender. Additionally, CONEVAL's recommendations for priority programs continue to refer to the inclusion of gender in what is assumed to be the basis of equity between men and women (Table 1).

TABLA 1. CONEVAL RECOMMENDATIONS



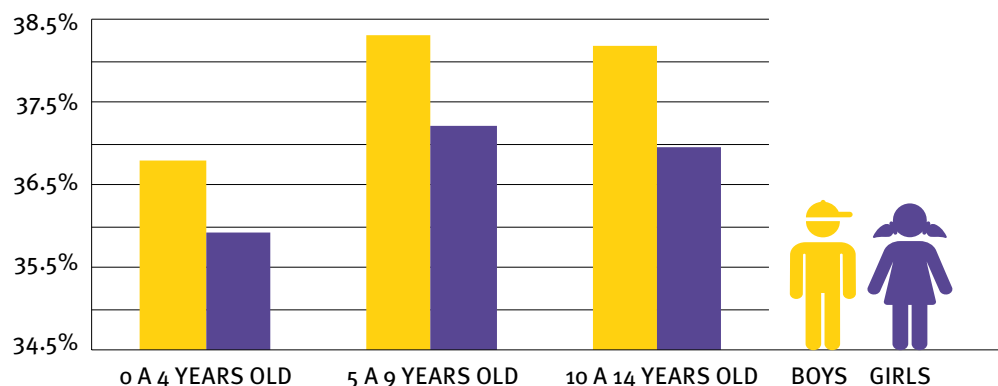
Source: In-house elaboration with information from the CONEVAL Social Development Policy Evaluation Report (2020).

Health gaps

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), gender equality means a fair distribution of benefits, power, resources, and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes differences between men and women in terms of health needs, access, and control of resources. These differences must be addressed to correct imbalances between men and women. Gender inequality in health refers to the unjust, unnecessary, and preventable disparities between women and men in the state of their health and healthcare.

Access to health services is one of the most important human rights. In our country, the 2020 Population and Housing Census figures indicate that 7 out of 10 children and adolescents have some type of social security (73.4%). The statistics show that in girls, the percentage is lower than that of boys, limiting their full access to the social right to health (Graph 10).

GRAPH 10. PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS AND BOYS AFFILIATED WITH SOME TYPE OF HEALTH SERVICE



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the Population and Housing Census (2020).

According to ENSANUT (2018), women who have the highest rate in health services, both outpatient and inpatient, represent 62.7% and 66.53%, respectively, of the total care. Evidence indicates greater use of hospital outpatient services by the groups of women aged 18 to 44 compared to the group aged 45 and over; this can be explained by Inpatient care related to reproductive events (Krasnik *et al.*1997).

At the regional level, the state differences in healthcare services are explained by the stories of socioeconomic development and the provision of health services; greater socio-economic development corresponds to greater availability and accessibility. Likewise, there are availability and accessibility factors in marginalized areas associated with specific social programs to expand coverage and offer health services that favor greater service use (Molina *et al.* 2006).

Health is a determinant of human capital and is correlated with better income and educational outcomes. Given medical advances, some health and mortality indicators in Mexico have improved, but the quality and performance of health services in our country still need to be refined. According to ENSA-NUT (2018), diabetes is the leading cause of death in women and the second cause of death in men. In addition, it is the most common reason for premature disability, blindness, and non-traumatic limb amputations. It is one of the five diseases with the most significant economic impact on the health system.

For the total population in 2018, 11% of people reported some health problem, with 10.2% for men and 11.7% for women. The prevalence of some health

problems identifies the highest number in women between 70 and 74 years of age, reaching a prevalence of 20.8%. The prevalence in people aged 0 to 4 years was 14.7% and 20.8% in those aged 80 and over by age groups. The lowest report of illness occurs between the ages of 10 to 24.

In terms of hospital services, it was estimated that 4.6 out of every 100 inhabitants used hospital services at the national level. The percentage among women was 5.8, higher than that of men 3.3. The groups of 5 to 9 years and 10 to 19 years are those with the lowest percentage of use, with 1.8 and 2.5 per 100.

Diabetes is the leading cause of death in women and the second cause of death in men. It is one of the five diseases with the most significant economic impact on the health system.

Differentiated well-being

One aspect observed as favorable is that women under 15 years of age have increased their school attendance in recent years (at least since March 2005); the attendance rate is higher than that reported by men in the same age group. This attendance could make it possible to close the gap in education in the near future, increasing the probability of accessing better-paid jobs.

However, with information from the 2019 National Child Labor Survey (ENTI for its acronym in Spanish) (as of the fourth quarter of 2019), we know that in Mexico, 3.27 million people were working between 5 and 17 years of age, 11.5% of the population in that age group. For their part, 13.6% of the men worked while 9.2% of women were in the same condition.

In this same survey, substantial differences are observed in the reasons why they do not attend school. While 7.8% of women between 5 and 17 years of age do not attend school due to assuming responsibility for housework, only 1.4% of men in the same age group do not participate for the same reason. On the other hand, it is reported that the reason why 13% of

men of that age do not attend school is for work; that is because they are integrated into the labor market. This cause of school dropout represents only 5% among women.

Likewise, the supports received at this stage of life are similar for both men and women. At the national level, 40% of this age group receives aid, mainly scholarships and some other government program (90.8% of total support). 39.9% of men and 40% of women receive help. The group with the most significant benefit is women between 15 and 17 years old, since 43.2% of the population in that age receives some support, and 66.9% correspond to scholarships.

Therefore, it is likely that the reasons related to traditional gender roles why adult women do not participate in work activities (such as assuming responsibility for household chores) are perpetuated from second childhood and women's work inside the home increases.

One of the aspects that most influences the future of people is their nutritional quality during childhood.

In Mexico, almost two-thirds of the population from 0 to 9 years old did not receive vitamin A (64.2%), which is of great importance in the development of sight, the immune system, and reproduction, as well as helping the proper functioning of kidneys, heart, lungs, and other organs. 63.8% of girls did not receive this vitamin, whereas 64.5% of the men in that population group did not receive vitamin A. By locality size, 38% of the population at this age in rural locations received said vitamin 34.9%¹¹ of the population of urban locations. In general, both boys and girls have low consumption of this vitamin in Mexico.

Likewise, of the population between 0 to 14 years old, 83.3% of the total (26.93 million) is affiliated with or enrolled in medical services, of which 13.3 million are women, and 13.63 million are men. Although the figure is higher for men in absolute terms, in relative terms (concerning the total population), women show a slight difference in their favor, since while 83.7% of women in this age group have access to services, 82.9% of men also have such a service.



Image: "Girls and boys are 54.7% of Liconsa beneficiaries" at <https://www.gob.mx/liconsa/articulos/ninas-y-ninos-son-el-54-7-del-padron-de-liconsa>

¹¹ ENSANUT, 2018.

Violence in childhood

In all age groups of women, the crime rate is high, although it is precisely adolescence when many crimes against women increase in an obvious way. Family violence has women and children as primary victims. As UNICEF reported in 2019, 4 out of 10 women and 2 out of 10 men admit to hitting their children when they get angry or upset. Similarly, 2 out of 10 women say that their partners have physically assaulted their daughters or sons. Although this type's incidence of physical aggressions is slightly higher in rural contexts, the difference with urban spaces is marginal.

Childhood is one of the most vulnerable stages for people and a period in which violence has become normalized, as it is disguised as an effective disciplinary method. The National Survey of Children and Women (ENIM for its acronym in Spanish) (2015) reported that 5.1% of children aged five years or less did not receive adequate care but were partially or totally delegated to other children under ten years of age. Similarly, almost two-thirds of people under 14 years of age are disciplined violently, among which psychological aggressions stand out. As UNICEF reports, psychological aggressions against infants are

Family violence has women and children as primary victims. In the family sphere, 91% of the attacks are directed at women and 9% at men. Between January and March were reported 59 mil 303 cases.



Image: Propose to include children in street situation as beneficiaries of social programs at <https://www.diariojuridico.com/mexico-programas-sociales-para-ninos-en-situacion-de-calle/>

directed to a greater extent towards women, while extreme physical violence is directed against men. In the 10 to 17 years of age group, 70.3% of the attacks are against women, while 29.7% are directed at men. In the family sphere, it is reported that 91% of the attacks are directed at women and 9% at men.

The delicate situation of violence suffered by children has not improved during the current administration. During the two years of the current government, the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (SESNSP for its acronym in Spanish) has reported the highest figures related to family violence since this institution records this crime. While in the last two years of the Peña Nieto government, there were 349,766 cases of family violence between 2019 and 2020, there were 430,229 cases for the same crime. In other words, the growth was 23%. This trend seems to be continuing since only between January and March 2021, 59,303 of these cases were reported. Regarding the crime of rape, 2019 had an increase of 13.1% compared to 2018.

Although 2020 had a decrease of 4.6% compared to the previous year, between January and March 2021, 4,808 instances were reported, a comparable figure

TABLE 2. REGISTRY OF ALLEGED CRIMES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND RAPE 2017-2021* (SESNSP)

YEAR	FAMILY VIOLENCE	RAPE
2017	169,579	13,520
2018	180,187	15,322
2019	210,188	17,342
2020	220,041	16,544
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021	35,609	2,789

Source: In-house elaboration with information from the SESNSP (2017-2020).

to the same period, but from 2020 4,440 cases were reached. As with the crime of family violence, the crime of rape had its historical maximum in March 2021, when 2,020 cases were counted.

YOUTH AND MOTHERHOOD

Evidence indicates that there are different ways of going through youth according to the social class of origin, education, and sex (Margulis and Urresti, 2000; Salvia, 2008), elements that predispose the social mobility of both men and women. However, the vulnerabilities to which women are exposed during youth are greater given the social, economic, health and safety risks to which she is subjected. One of them has to do with misinformation and little or no knowledge of sex education, which leads to early pregnancies and imminent health risks, both for the baby and the mother, which can lead to death. In addition, the abandonment and educational backwardness associated with adolescent pregnancy represent very high economic and social costs for the country.

Among other associated risks limiting and impeding full women's development and widening gender gaps in this age group is housework overload. Women have a predominant role in the care system globally, to such an extent that they constitute, for example, 70% of the workforce of the socio-health systems.

The educational, economic and health risks of adolescent pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy has a high price for society (UNFPA, 2020). Preventing a girl or adolescent from becoming pregnant is a matter of human rights. It is the key to accessing many other rights, such as the right to health, continuing studying, and having better job opportunities (UN, 2020), among others.

In recent years, an increase in the early onset of youth sexual activity has been observed, causing an increase in the incidence of adolescent pregnancy. This phenomenon has led Mexico to occupy the first place in this matter among the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with a fertility rate of 77 births for every thousand adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age. Likewise, in Mexico, 23% of adolescents begin their sexual life between 12 and 19. Of these, 15% of men and 33% of women did not use any contraceptive method in their first sexual encounter (INEGI, 2019). Thus, according to these data, approximately 340,000 births occur per year in women under 19

years of age, which is currently considered a severe medico-social problem. Although this is not the only explanation for this increase in adolescent pregnancies, it is undoubtedly a public health problem that has economic and educational implications, which widens the social gap and permanently conditions the lives of young people.

In 2020, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) presented a calculation of the socioeconomic costs of adolescent pregnancy and early motherhood, where it is found that: In Mexico, the educational gap is very significant among women who were mothers at an early age and those who were mothers in adulthood. Those who have been teenage mothers have lower educational attainment than they were not. While women who were mothers in adulthood have higher levels of education, 13.4% have professional studies, those who experienced an adolescent pregnancy, only 3.8% reached this educational level (UNFPA, 2020).

Also, those who have experienced early motherhood earn a lower income. In general, women who were mothers in adolescence receive a lower income of 31.6%. And in labor matters, women who have been teenage mothers have more precarious jobs. 67.4%

of adolescent mothers have never contributed to social security institutions, while in women who experienced pregnancy in adulthood, this indicator was 56.8%. In addition, within the macroeconomic costs: Dropout and educational backwardness linked to adolescent pregnancy represent an annual cost or loss



Image: “Mexico is the country with more girls and adolescent pregnancy in Latin America” at https://wradio.com.mx/radio/2018/05/10/nacional/1525978471_012113.html

for the country estimated at 31 billion Mexican pesos.¹² This amount is equivalent to 1.6 billion dollars.

According to the same report, teenage pregnancy also involves both social and political problems. The total economic impact of adolescent pregnancy for society (due to loss of income and jobs) is almost 63 billion pesos and more than 11 billion pesos of loss of tax revenue for the State, a cost that represents 0.27 percent of GDP. Sex education for preventing adolescent pregnancy is a human and constitutional right that must be universally guaranteed (UN, 2020).

Risk factors in early pregnancy are associated with adverse gynecological-obstetric and psychosocial outcomes. In the former, there are intrauterine growth retardation, anemia, urinary tract infection, premature labor, and complications of childbirth, and the main psychosocial consequences found were school dropout, dysfunctional families, and financial problems (Buvinic, 1998).

¹² This value results from considering the labor income that premature mothers would receive if they had been mothers in adulthood. To calculate it, the educational level of the women was considered, according to whether they had children as adolescents or in adulthood, and the income level of women, in general, has also been computed for each educational level (without education, primary, secondary, post-secondary tertiary, and post-tertiary).

Within the macroeconomic costs, dropout and educational backwardness linked to adolescent pregnancy, represent an annual cost or loss for the country estimated at 31 billion Mexican pesos.

According to the Statistics on Births presented by the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI), in 2019, 2.1 million births were recorded. Of these pregnancies, 16.2% corresponds to adolescent women between 15 and 19 years of age. Likewise, there were 8.5 thousand births among those under 15 years of age, equivalent to 0.4% of the total.

According to data from the 2018 National Demographic Dynamics Survey (ENADID for its acronym in Spanish), there are 5.5 million adolescent women in the country between the ages of 15 and 19, representing

16.7 percent of all women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years) and have the following characteristics:

- » The median age at first sexual intercourse was 17.5 years.
- » 60.4% of the adolescents used some contraceptive method in their first sexual encounter. Of those who did not, the main reason was that they did not plan to have intercourse (36.4%), ignorance of its use or where to obtain it (17.3%) and that they wanted to become pregnant (16%).
- » 17.9% of adolescents are sexually active.
- » 15.8% have been pregnant. In localities with less than 15 thousand inhabitants, this percentage increases to 19.8% and decreases to 13.3% in localities with 15 thousand and more inhabitants.
- » 12.2% have had at least one child born alive.
- » 3.3% were pregnant at the time of the interview, of which 46.2% wanted to wait or did not want to get pregnant.

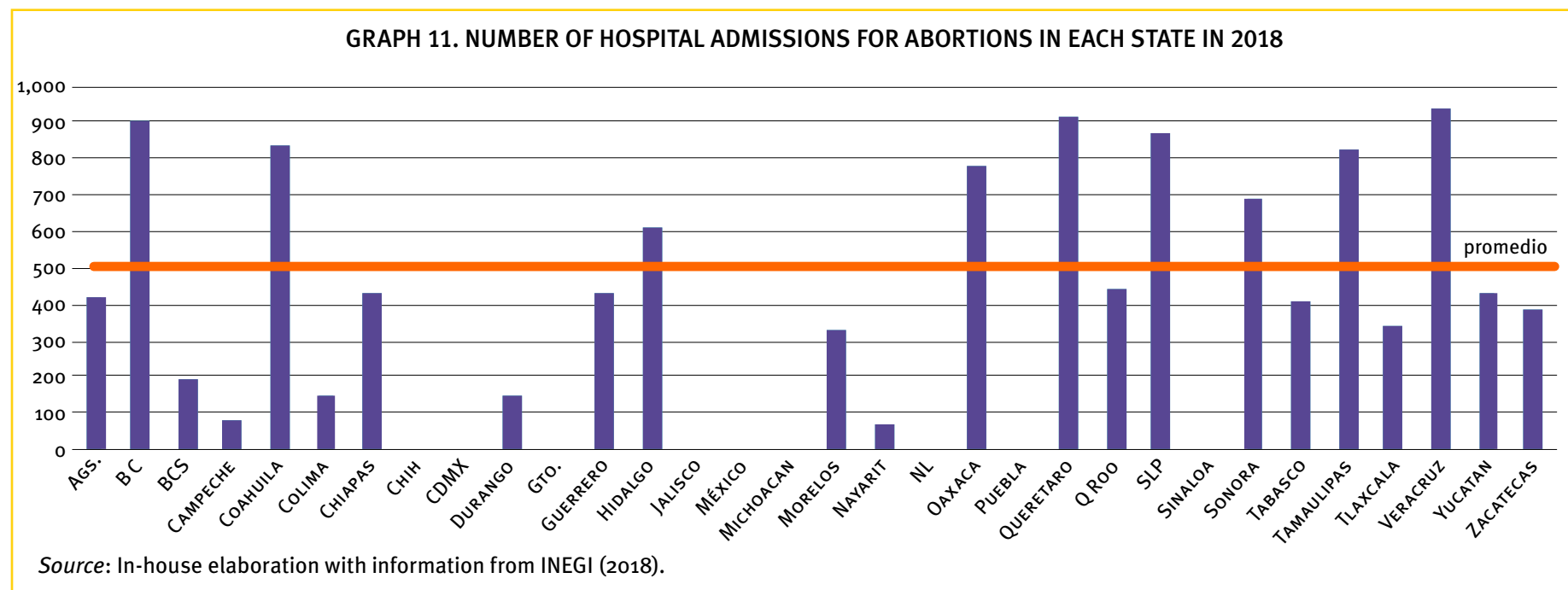
In 2019, 2.1 million births were recorded. Of these pregnancies, 16.2% corresponds to adolescent women between 15 and 19 years of age. Likewise, there were 8 thousand 5 hundred births among those under 15 years of age, equivalent to 0.4% of the total.

Teenage abortions

According to INEGI, for 2018, there were a total of 31,279 abortions nationwide, and the entities with the highest number were: Veracruz (940), Querétaro (913), Baja California (905), San Luis Potosí (870), and Coahuila (835) (Graph 11).

Several studies assure that the early initiation of sexual intercourse, the non-use of contraception, and the lack of sexual and reproductive education contribute

to teenage pregnancies. On the other hand, as part of the social determinants, sexual education has lacked a comprehensive vision in Mexico. The transmission of knowledge on biological aspects of reproduction and the promotion of sexual abstinence have been privileged, without a culture of prevention from the perspective of sexual health, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive rights (Cuenca *et. al.*, 2013).



Maternal health and maternal death

It is troubling that, despite advances in medicine, there are still high mortality rates for women in Mexico due to various causes. Additionally, with a health system crisis like the one, we are currently experiencing, its prevalence has increased again.

Regarding maternal mortality, this continues to be one of the leading causes of death related to extreme poverty. Mexico did not meet the Millennium Goals (UN, 2015), the purpose of which was to reduce maternal mortality. Mexico should go from 89 deaths per 100,000 live births (Maternal Death Ratio registered in 1990) to 22 deaths by 2015, but it did not happen. The accurate maternal mortality ratio was 34.7 per 100 thousand live births when the Millennium Goals should have no more than 22.3. We were 12.4 points above, which is a tragedy because it is an entirely avoidable situation with the medical knowledge and the treatments available within the health system (Acción Ciudadana, 2020). Mexico was one of the 69 countries that did not reach the goal of reducing maternal mortality, according to the report *Count-down to 2015*, which evaluated compliance with the Millennium Goals.

Mexico should go from 89 deaths per 100,000 live births (in 1990) to 22 deaths by 2015, but it did not happen. The accurate maternal mortality ratio was 34.7 per 100 thousand live births when the Millennium Goals should have no more than 22.3.

The mortality rate from breast cancer in women shows an increase from 14.3 to 19.4 deaths per 100,000 women aged 25 and over between 2001 and 2018 (Table 3). On the contrary, in the same period, the death rate from cervical cancer decreased from 18.0 to 11.2 for every 100,000 women of the same age group. Unfortunately, another setback was caused by the elimination of the “Seguro Popular” by the federal government, which covered breast and cervical cancer, among many other high cost conditions.

For 2018, of the 758 cases of deaths during pregnancy, childbirth, or the puerperium, 214 (28.2%) were due to indirect obstetric conditions, that is, pre-ex-

TABLE 3. MATERNAL MORTALITY, BREAST CANCER, AND CERVICAL CANCER			
YEARS	MORTALITY RATE (PER 100,000 WOMEN 25 AND OVER)		MATERNAL MORTALITY (DEATHS OF WOMEN DUE TO PREGNANCY, CHILD-BIRTH, OR THE PUERPERIUM PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)
	BREAST CANCER	CERVICAL CANCER	
2001	14.3	18.0	68.9
2002	14.9	16.8	56.1
2003	14.7	16.4	56.5
2004	15.4	15.7	53.5
2005	15.2	15.4	54.0
2006	15.7	14.5	50.9
2007	16.0	13.9	48.1
2008	16.4	14.1	49.2
2009	16.3	13.7	53.3
2010	16.3	13.6	44.1
2011	16.5	12.8	43.0
2012	17.3	12.4	42.3
2013	16.7	11.8	38.2
2014	17.6	11.7	38.9
2015	18.1	12.0	34.6
2016	18.8	11.5	36.7
2017	18.9	11.5	ND
2018	19.4	11.2	ND

Source: Ministry of Health. Cited in: Presidency of the Republic. Sixth Governmental Report 2017-2018. In: www.presidencia.gob.mx (September 4, 2018). First Governmental Report 2018-2019. Mexico Presidency of the Republic. In: <https://www.gob.mx/presidencia> (September 9, 2019).

isting conditions or diseases that evolved during this period, not due to direct obstetric causes, but physiological effects of pregnancy aggravate them. Hypertensive disorders with 21.8% are the second cause of death, followed by complications of labor and delivery, which represent 18.5% of all deaths. 9.8% is due to pregnancies terminated in abortions and 7.9% due to complications related to the puerperium; 7.7% for maternal care related to the fetus and the amniotic cavity 6.1% due to other disorders of pregnancy.

The behavior of the maternal mortality ratio is uneven among the states. While in Chiapas and Guerrero, the highest values of the maternal mortality ratio are registered (43.0 to 58.3 deaths per 100 thousand live births); in Aguascalientes and Baja California Sur, the ratios with the lowest values are presented (8.3 to 22.8 deaths per 100 thousand live births).

In 2017, 759 maternal deaths were registered in the country, of which 99 (13%) correspond to children under 20 years of age, including four cases of girls aged 10 to 14.

Caregiving: Women's burden of caring for children and the elderly

Among the challenges women face, motherhood is one of the greatest for female economic empowerment (OECD 2017); This is mainly due to how gender roles place a heavier workload on women. This, because although women increasingly access paid jobs, this does not mean that they are no longer the main ones responsible for domestic and care work, which generates “double working hours.”

According to the ILO Observatory, women are in charge of 76.2% of all hours of unpaid care work: more than triple that of men, where inequality in the precariousness of the care economy is present.

In the case of women, the precariousness of working conditions in the Latin American region represents a setback of more than ten years in their participation in the labor market (ECLAC, 2021). Women take a predominant role in the care system throughout the world to such an extent that they constitute, for example, 70% of the workforce in social and health systems. This situation has placed them at the forefront

of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, increasing its risk and consolidating its dual role of social care and private care within homes.

In Mexico, according to INEGI figures,¹³ only women contribute 70.3% of the equivalent economic value of unpaid work in health care, which is equivalent to 230.9 million pesos (at current prices of 2017). They are the main ones in charge of caring for household members (51.4%) and supporting the health care of other household members (18.9%). Regardless of the degree of illness or disability that people they assist present, elements that impede social mobility in women more often than men.

In Mexico, unpaid domestic work was equivalent to 22.8% of GDP in 2019. Although it has a market value, the women who provided it did not receive any monetary compensation in return (García, 2018). Considering the health care type, specialized care within the home has the highest proportion. Women participate with 35.9% of the equivalent economic value of unpaid work in health care, almost three times more than men 13.7%.

In preventive healthcare within the home itself, it also has the highest contribution from women (6.6%) than men (4.0%). Something similar occurs with temporary healthcare (8.9% for women and 3.6% for men). When it comes to providing help to other households, women participate with 16.4% of the equivalent economic value of unpaid work and men with 6.6%.¹⁴ More minor differences are observed in the participation of the sexes in voluntary healthcare within other households: 1.9% of men and 2.5% of women (INEGI, 2019).

¹³ Satellite Account of the Health Sector.

¹⁴ According to the figures of the Satellite Account of the Health Sector in Mexico.

Social mobility

Different factors make social mobility impossible for women beyond the socially imposed role, such as precariousness in the labor market and the overload of women in the care economy. These factors influence the economic remuneration they manage to reach comparatively with men.

Social origin is a determining circumstance: women in a more vulnerable situation have fewer promotion possibilities than women with a better socioeconomic status. It is more difficult for them to get rid of the ties that arise from being born in a low economic position.

Social mobility by gender indicates that 75 out of 100 women born on quintile I do not manage to overcome poverty, while this number drops to 71 out of 100 in the case of men (CEEY, 2019). Likewise, the difference between those born in households of the highest wealth group, 50 are women, compared to 57 men, who remain there for the rest of their lives.

Likewise, the percentage of people who reach a higher level of income in adulthood is lower in the

southern region of the country (2%). This percentage includes the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero, Tabasco, and Veracruz, unlike the area north (8%) comprised of the states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas.

Under this scheme, it is more difficult for women to get out of poverty, and it is more difficult for them to stay in the wealthiest groups. Therefore,

being a woman in our country implies living in fear of high levels of violence. It also means having to do so with little probability of accessing opportunities that facilitate greater resources and better socioeconomic results.

MATURITY AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE

During this stage of life, gender inequalities are accentuated undeniably. Although most men and women do not generally have the necessary conditions to exploit their human rights, comparatively fully, women are still forced to overcome many more obstacles if they want to develop fully. Both social mobility and labor inequality are higher in women, while women's precariousness and political participation are lower than men's. Faced with this reality, the current administration has been insensitive and has been ignorant of the differentiated needs that women have to continue with their full development. It is also at this stage that women most clearly face the challenge of survival. Gender-based violence in all its dimensions is multiplying and in recent years has reached record highs.

Image: Working for a brother Foundation at <https://udgtv.com/noticias/nacional/oit-mercado-laborar-brecha-genero/>

The current administration has been insensitive and has been ignorant of the differentiated needs that women have to continue with their full development. Gender-based violence in all its dimensions is multiplying and in recent years has reached record highs.



Social gender inequality in poverty and food insecurity

According to CONEVAL, from 2008 to 2018, around a third of household's current monetary income corresponded to women's contribution, both in the presence and absence of poverty context. Compared to men, the lower-income share of women reflects the lower labor perceptions, the lower economic participation, and, in general, the lower economic autonomy that women have compared to men.

Women depend more on income from indirect sources: monetary resources from other households or government programs exacerbated in poverty contexts. From 2008 to 2018, around 8% of women's income not in poverty came from indirect sources, while women in poverty represented around a third of their income. The percentage was 2% in poverty and 5% in its absence for men in the same period.

Poverty also leads to the sacrifice of a healthy diet. The access lack to food is differentiated according to poverty and the head of the household's sex. From 2008 to 2018, in poverty absence, it amounts to around 10% regardless of the household head's gender. It was 38% in households headed by wom-

en within poverty and approximately 30% in those headed by men.

Severe food insecurity occurs to a greater extent in households headed by women in poverty so that 2 out of 10 of these households present it.



Image: Female household heads in Mexico at <https://van-guardia.com.mx/articulo/actualmente-mas-mujeres-son-jefas-de-familia-en-mexico>

Employment inequality

Women's low labor participation is common in Latin America and Mexico is no exception. According to the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), male labor participation in Mexico ranked 5 out of 17 Latin American countries considered in the *Better Jobs Index*.¹⁵ In contrast, women's labor participation in Mexico ranks 12 out of 17 countries. Mexico's gender gap of labor participation was the 5th highest with 33.3 points (difference between men and women), just lower than Guatemala (50.4), Nicaragua (36.8), Honduras (36.5), and El Salvador (35.0).

Before the health crisis, 5.91 million women employed in Mexico received incomes of up to a minimum wage (27 out of every 100). This situation implies that they were on the edge of income poverty. In contrast, only 15 out of 100 men were in the same condition as of December 2019. This gap widens between the center-north and south of the country, 21 out of 100 and

38 out of every 100 women, respectively. There are even more men (as a total proportion) with a minimum wage income in the south of the country than women with the same income in the north-central part. However, the difference between men and women in all country regions is evident; for every 15 men, there are 27 women in this situation in Mexico.

In addition, seven out of every 100 women who were employed did not receive income from their work (1.52 million women). This statistics implies that 7.44 million women had an income of up to a minimum wage before the health crisis or did not receive payment (33.8% of the employed population). Just over a third of the women who were employed had precarious or flatly no income from work.

To make matters worse, 78 out of 100 of these women had at least one child. However, the differences between women who have more than two children and those who do not have children are considerable: only 28.3% of women who do not have children earn an income of up to a minimum wage or have no income. 43.9% of those women who have more than two children were in this condition in December 2019.

¹⁵ The Better Jobs Index measures how are jobs according to two dimensions: quantity and quality. The quantity dimension is composed of two indicators: the rate of labor participation and that of employment. The quality dimension considers the rate of formality and jobs with sufficient salaries to keep out of poverty. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (IDB) 2018. Available at: <https://mejorestrabajos.iadb.org/es>

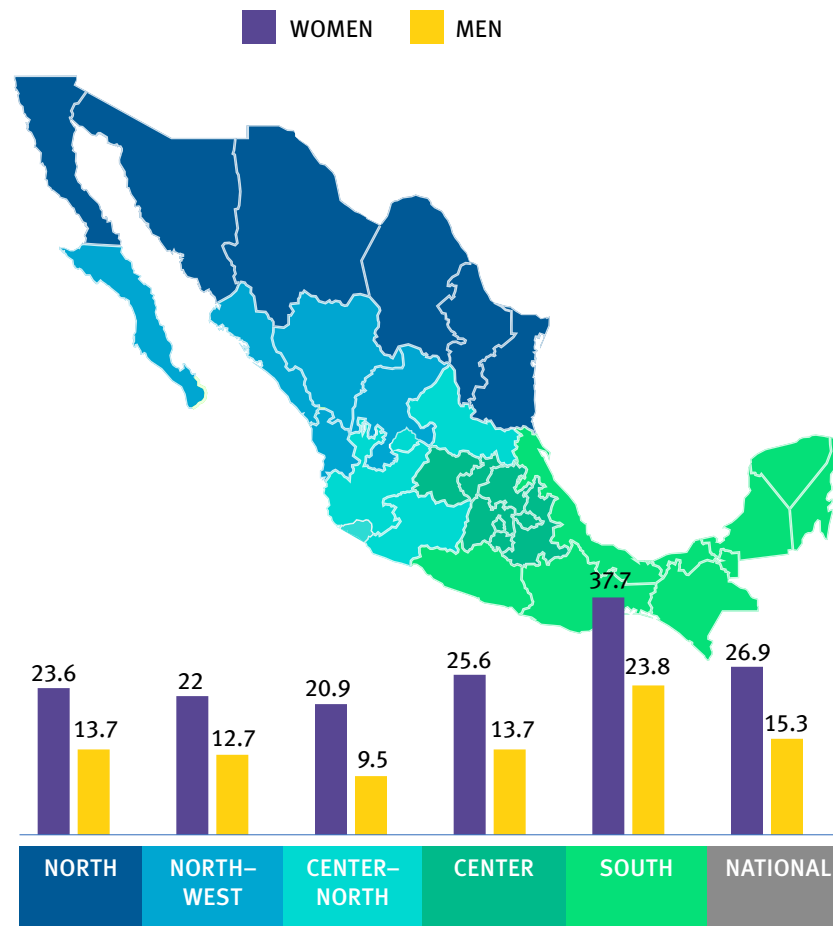
At least since January 2005, women of working age who enter the labor market have more years of schooling on average than men who are also part of that market. As of February 2021, the years of education for women are 10.97, while men have 10.04 years of schooling on average. The difference between women and men is almost one year of education.

This condition (more years of study) likely allows that, on average, the income per hour worked is similar, although lower by 1.7% in the case of women in the period from January 2005 to February 2021. Although as of March 2021, women's income is 45.55 pesos for 43.72 pesos per hour worked by men, according to the ENOE New Edition.

However, since there is a record, women can work fewer hours per week on average than men. As of March 2021, women work 7.34 fewer hours per week (16.2% fewer hours compared to the hours worked by men) and are also 4.5 hours below the total number of employed people.¹⁶

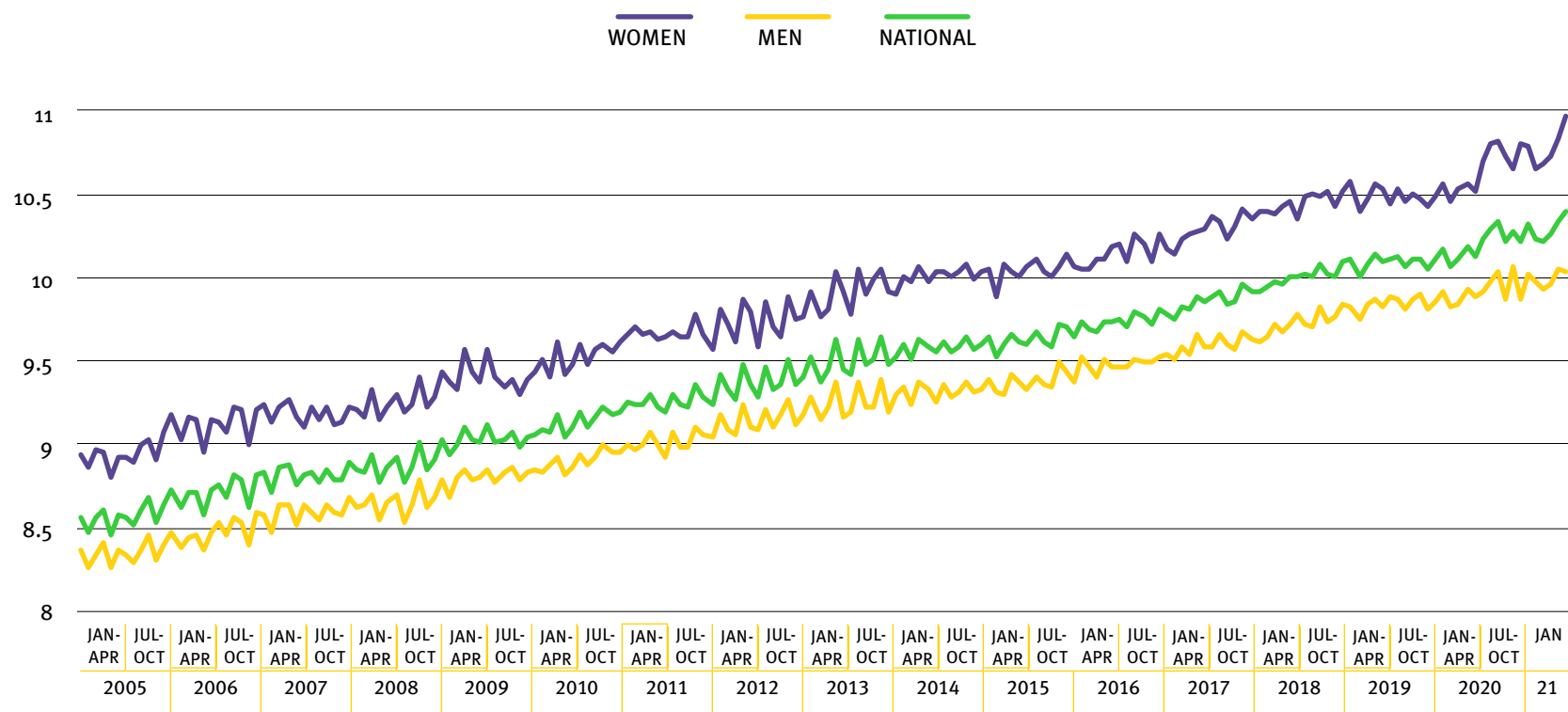
¹⁶ Evidence indicates that the difference in income between men and women is explained by factors such as time use. Women remain employed in a given economic activity for fewer hours on average than men. And the hourly wage level may indicate that it is not a productivity issue.

GRAPH 12. PERCENTAGE OF THE EMPLOYED POPULATION WITH AN INCOME OF UP TO A MINIMUM WAGE BY SEX AND REGION



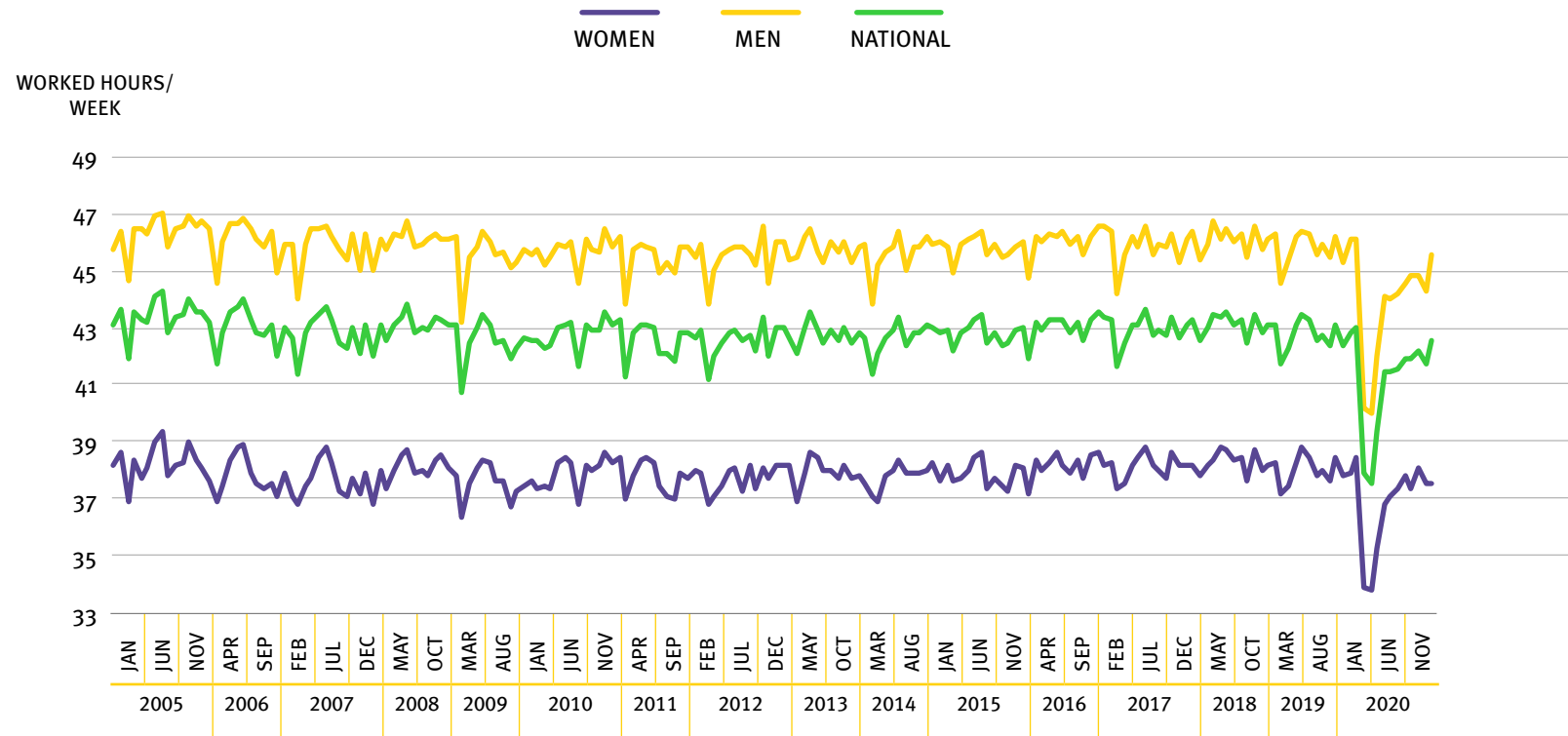
Source: In-house elaboration with information from ENOE, (2019). Information as of the fourth quarter of 2019.

GRAPH 13. AVERAGE YEARS OF SCHOOLING OF THE EAP (WOMEN, MEN AND TOTAL)



Source: In-house elaboraton with information from ENOE a, ETOE y ENOE b. (January 2005-January 2021).

GRAPH 14. AVERAGE HOURS WORKED PER WEEK OF THE EMPLOYED POPULATION (WOMEN, MEN AND TOTAL)



Source: In-house elaboration with information from ENOEa, ETOE y ENOEa (January 2005-January 2021).

On the other hand, according to the ENOE New Edition, as of March 2021, 39.6% of women who are working have access to health institutions (whether public or private)¹⁷ as a result of the economic activity they carry out. 35.92% of men have the same benefit. This gap widened in women's favor due to the health crisis, but this was mainly since women who were in a situation of informal unemployment suffered to a greater extent the ravages of the lockdown. That is, unemployment increased in the informal sector to a greater area than the informal sector's formal sector.

In general, the social benefits available to women in Mexico are scarce. A clear example is that of access to child care services. According to the National Survey of Employment and Social Security (ENESS for its acronym in Spanish) 2017, in Mexico, 3.51 million people between 0 and 6 years old receive care while their mother works. However, 83.7% of said care is obtained from a different person than their mother. Only 16.3% are cared for in a nursery.

¹⁷ Those who purchase popular insurance or have access through a relative who declares them as economic dependents are not considered to have access to health services.

As a result of such a vacuum in childcare service, the Child Stay Program (PEI for its acronym in Spanish) was created. It was aimed at women, single parents, and guardians who worked, looking for work or studying, who did not have social security, and whose household income was below the income poverty line. For its part, in the evaluations carried out



Image: role of the “*estancias infantiles*” or nurseries for children of very low-income families at <https://indicepolitico.com/diputados-por-reorientar-recursos-a-favor-de-estancias-infantiles/>

by CONEVAL (2019b), the Economically Inactive Population (PEI for its acronym in Spanish) offered favorable results, and the following stand out:

1. The beneficiaries of the program, mostly women (98.5%), increased their income by 2%; however, the increase in household income, once they entered the program, was 28%.
2. Households incorporated into the program showed a 28% increase in their income.
3. There was an 18% increase in the probability of low-income women with small children entering a job, accompanied by an increase of six hours of work per week.

The federal government's elimination of this program may lead to less labor mobility since it decreases the time available to women to study, train, increase working hours or seek better job opportunities. The importance of paid work is found in the fact that current labor income represents approximately 70% of total household income, so better working conditions in terms of wages and benefits allow for more significant opportunities for social mobility.



Image: the social context of the “estancias infantiles” at <https://www.mexicosocial.org/el-entorno-social-de-las-estancias-y-guarderias/>

Vulnerables groups:

Migrant women and differently-abled people

In the last 20 years, the flow of Mexican migrants to other countries has increased, from 9.6 million in 2000 to 13.0 million in 2017. The composition by sex of the migrant population has not changed substantially: until 2017, women represented 46.7% and men 53.3%. In 2016, 47.8% of the Mexican migrant population residing in the United States of America were women, of whom just over 12 out of 100 were between 35 and 44 years of age. Although most of the Mexican migrant population in the United States works in the tertiary sector, there are significant differences in their distribution by sex: in women, 81.7% in the tertiary sector, 15.1% in the secondary sector, and only 3.2% in the primary sector. Unlike men, 50.6% are employed in the tertiary sector, 43.1% in the secondary sector, and 6.3% in the primary sector.

Unfortunately, there is evidence that shows that different experiences of violence mark the lives of many women. In the communities where they come from and in places of arrival, how these events are an essential factor by which women decide to mi-

grate, stay to reside in a transit point, or return to their places of origin (Williers, 2016).

Another group that is part of the vulnerable groups is that of differently-abled women. 79.1% of men and 77.3% of women do not have any disability or limitation, while 6.7% of women have a disability and 16.0% have some limitations. These are similar percentages to men's with 5.9% and 15.0%, respectively (Population and Housing Census 2020).



Image: differently-abled at <https://desinformemonos.org/discapacidad-en-mexico-discriminacion-y-le-yes-sin-cumplir/>

Indigenous women

Additionally, the leading social deficiencies in the population with disabilities are associated with educational backwardness (46.9%), access to social security (41.2%), and access to food (27.8%). According to specialists on the subject of women (Acle et al., 2007), it is the duty of those responsible for the public service, health professionals, and the population to guarantee the respect of human rights in this sector. We are talking about a sector of the people that have lived marginalized and invisible. Due to this, these people have limited services offered, and they do not have specialized equipment. They face physical obstacles, in addition to the fact that neither health personnel nor society, in general, is 100% trained to support and reverse these deficiencies. Given this, the population with a disability must be clearly identified, and access and inclusion must be improved for that sector of the population.

The indigenous population of Mexico is part of the poorest and most disadvantaged strata of our society. Their living standards are often below national and regional averages and the minimum well-being that is established internationally. But the fact that they share the same general deficiencies does not mean heterogeneity in indigenous peoples or that all indigenous people are equal; therefore, it is important to recognize their differences (INMujeres, 2006).

The same precarious conditions and possible life alternatives differentially affect the people who make up the different indigenous peoples and communities, and in that sense, they affect women to a greater extent (INMujeres, 2006) when facing discrimination both within (because they are women) and outside their community (because they are both women and indigenous).¹⁸

The various obstacles that indigenous women face are: for example, very few opportunities to access the labor market, unique geographical and econom-

¹⁸ Inside because indigenous cultures are strongly patriarchal and outside because they face the discrimination that women face and that indigenous people face.

ic difficulties in accessing health and education services, limited access to social programs and services, high illiteracy rates, little participation in the political process and social marginalization. The political, social, and economic exclusion of indigenous women contributes to a permanent situation of structural discrimination, which makes them particularly susceptible to various acts of violence.

In this sense, it is indicated that only 1 in 10 indigenous girls finish middle school in Latin America, where, in addition, within the barriers to accessing education, there is the distance from schools, gender roles in the home, teenage pregnancies, and lack of resources to study. Likewise, access to health includes the remoteness of the health centers, the language barrier, the medical staff, the lack of education in sexual and reproductive health, and the lack of financial resources to treat themselves (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights CIDH for its acronym in Spanish, 2017). On the one hand, in Mexico's case, CONEVAL's recommendations within the indigenous population social policy refer to bring medical and preventive care services to isolated communities with difficult geographical access through mobile medical units. On the other hand, to generate strategies that ensure equal opportunities for indigenous people that allow

access to jobs outside of precarious conditions. Also, that guarantees access to social security since more than half of the indigenous population (57.5%) do not have basic utilities at home, and 78.2% do not have social security access (CONEVAL, 2020).

Regarding violence in Mexico, 1 in 2 indigenous women has experienced violence in their relationships (INMujeres, 2006). In addition, there are accusations against "vertical institutions," as in the case of the Mexican army, about the rapes of indigenous women in Mexico. Such is the case of three armed soldiers who came up to Inés Fernández, who was with her four children. The soldiers interrogated her, and when she did not answer their questions, one of them raped her while the other two watched. The Inter-American Court determined in 2009 that the Mexican State was responsible for the violation of the rights to personal integrity, dignity, and private life of Fernández Ortega¹⁹ and issued a series of reparation measures.

Other cases have even led to the death of indigenous women where justice goes unpunished: Laura Ramos, 17; Claudia González, 20; and Esmeralda Herrera, 15, who disappeared from their workplaces and homes between September and October 2001.

19 Series C No. 224 <https://tinyurl.com/tmyhbuxp>

In November 2001, their bodies were found in a cotton field. The evidence from the remains shows that the young women were victims of sexual abuse, with extreme cruelty and animosity (IACHR, 2001). The Inter-American Court of Human Rights held the State responsible for the lack of diligence in the investigations related to his disappearance and death.

Unfortunately, access to social health rights for indigenous women continues to be a very high barrier that reflects its magnitude in the maternal death of indigenous women, who have died despite seeking help from medical health services.

The case of a Rarámuri woman shows a delayed arrival at a health facility for adequate treatment culminating in death. Elena, a 26-year-old Rarámuri woman who lived in a municipality where 85.7% of its inhabitants are in poverty and 40.2%, are in extreme poverty, and according to CONEVAL this municipality lacks access to health services. She lived with her significant other without being married, had two children, studied until the third year of elementary school, and spoke Rarámuri. Elena arrived at the General Hospital closest to her town at 2 AM, pregnant with severe abdominal pain (epigastrium), headache, and vomiting. They performed a cesarean section (she was 31



Image: Indigenous women abused in Reforma Agency at <https://www.azcentral.com/story/mexico/2019/08/15/mujeres-indigenas-abusadas-mexico/2024634001/>

weeks pregnant), but by then, the baby had already died (stillbirth). In addition to renal failure, she presented signs of hepatic failure. They decided to transfer her to the state capital (Chihuahua), with the diagnoses of kidney failure and HELLP syndrome.²⁰ This general hospital was unable to communicate promptly with a care center. It did not have an ambulance (they consider this a great obstacle since the hospital has had the same ambulance for 20 years and is not suitable for transferring seriously ill patients). They sought support from health centers for 14 days since Elena's complication presented on January 31, 2010. She, unfortunately, passed away on February 13 of the same year.²¹

Under this framework, violations of women's rights in indigenous communities do not escape criminalization by States and individuals against human rights

²⁰ According to Gutiérrez-Aguirre: "HELLP syndrome is a systemic complication of pregnancy of unknown etiology that affects 0.9% of all pregnancies and is related to high maternal and fetal morbidity and mortality. It is characterized by microangiopathic hemolytic anemia, elevated liver enzymes, and consumption thrombocytopenia. It appears, above all, in the third trimester of pregnancy with an affection that will depend, in part, on the speed with which the diagnosis is established and treatment is started" (Gutiérrez-Aguirre, 2012: 195).

²¹ CNDH: The right to health protection for indigenous women in Mexico. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/8wuz9n78>

(Amnesty International, 2012). On the other hand, this unfair reality also moves many people around the world. More and more societies recognize their rights and defend themselves against those who seek to place their needs and wills before the lives of others.

Regarding violence in Mexico, 1 in 2 indigenous women has experienced violence in their relationships.

In addition, there are accusations against "vertical institutions," as in the case of the Mexican army,

Safety: the cost women pay

As reported by INEGI in the National Survey on the Dynamics of Household Relationships (ENDIREH for its acronym in Spanish 2016), around 66.1% of women aged 15 years or over have suffered some violence during their lives. This is equivalent to almost 31 million women having been attacked in some way. Of the total attacks against women, 49% are emotional violence, 41.3% to sexual violence, 34% to physical violence, and 29% economic violence, property violence, or discrimination at work

Concerning the crimes of femicide and intentional homicide against women, it is recommended for the purposes of this report that they be considered together as murders against women. As has been observed in the last 20 years, murders against men and women, in general, have increased significantly. However, it is essential to mention that this increase is mainly due to the rise in homicides against young people and young adults (those between 20 and 35 years old).

As documented by the Data Cívica organization in its report Keys to Understand and Prevent Murders in Mexico, the increase in murders between 2000 and

2017 was 290% in absolute terms. The rate of murdered men rose 26% and that of women 2.6%. But when approaching the age groups that experienced more increases in murders, it is observed that only the murder rate of men between 20 and 27 years of age went from 33.1 for every one hundred thousand men of this age range to 77 in the same proportion. The rate for 28 and 35 years old went from 34.2 to 88.6, and for 36 and 43 years old, it went from 29.5 to 79.2.

On the other hand, murders increased against women between 2000 and 2017 increased in the age group from 12 to 64 years. Despite this, it continues to be observed that the most significant increase in the murder rate against women per 100,000 of them occurred in women between 20 and 27 years of age. This almost tripled from a rate of 3.1 at 8.9 per 100,000 women in this age range. 28 to 35 years old women followed this; they went from a 3.2 rate per 100,000 women to 8.2 in the same proportion. For its part, the murder rate of women between 36 and 43 years old for every one hundred thousand of them doubled, increasing from 3.3 to 6.8.

TABLE 4. HOMICIDE RATE PER 100 THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP (2000-2017)																
YEAR	0 –11		12 –19		20 –27		28–35		36–43		44–54		55–64		65 ó +	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
2000	1.5	0.9	11.3	2.1	33.1	3.1	34.2	3.2	29.5	3.3	28.8	3.2	26.7	3.7	24.4	5.7
2017	1	0.8	24	4.4	77	8.9	88.6	8.2	79.2	6.8	51.6	5.4	31.6	3.9	22	4.1

Source: In-house elaboration with information from INEGI, (2017).



Image: a memorial located in front of the Palacio Nacional in Mexico City. Cuartoscuro/Andrea Murcia at <https://politica.expansion.mx/presidencia/2020/07/20/feminicidios-alcanzan-en-junio-la-cifra-mas-alta-en-lo-que-va-de-2020>

Institutional weakening of women care

As previously reported, institutional destruction has been a hallmark of the current federal government. In addition to the potential attack on the constitutionally autonomous bodies through their colonization, the reduction of their budgets or their disappearance, and the constant attempts to control the leadership of the Judicial Power, the current administration has disappeared social programs focused mainly on supporting women. The two programs that stand out due to their relevance are 1) children's daycares and 2) the budget reduction for women's shelters.

In February 2019, the operating rules of the Support Program for the Well-being of Girls and Boys, Children of Working Mothers, which replaced the Children's Daycares, were published in the Federal Official Gazette (DOF for its acronym in Spanish). The federal government, claiming that the childcare program was riddled with corruption,²² withdrew support for childcare facilities created in 2013 to encourage an increase in the participation of women in the labor market that, until 2018, provided services to more than 315,000 minors in 1,284 municipalities of the

country. For each girl or boy between 1 and 4 years of age who did not have a disability, the government paid 950 pesos per month to those responsible for the children's daycare, while for each girl and boy with a disability, it paid 1,800 pesos.

The program in question replaced this program. It does not have clear operating rules and contemplates the direct transfer of 1,600 pesos every two months to mothers, single fathers, or guardians of infants be-



Image: Cuartoscuro, shelter for victims of violence at <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/11/pandemia-refugios-mujeres-violentadas-aumentan-solicitudes-ayuda/>

²² A traditional argument of this government to carry out modifications to various policies.

tween 1 and 3 years old (reduction of 15.8 %), and 3,600 pesos in case their children have a disability.

This program does not establish clear transparency criteria. It is only mentioned to guarantee that the money is used to cover a child's daycare expenses. The beneficiaries should not have inappropriate or lucrative use of this resource. Among the causes of temporary or definitive suspension of the subsidy, there is no reference to a minor's absenteeism to the daycare center. Nor is there any guideline that specifies inspections of children's daycare centers that provide services to the children of the 203,262 families that the government reported as affiliated with the program.

Regarding shelters for female victims of violence, it is known that civil society organizations have operated 71.66% of these, and the government subsidy is relevant to support their operations. Despite this, at the beginning of 2019, the president issued a circular indicating to the Federal Public Administration not to make transfers of resources to Organized Civil Society. For this reason, in February 2019, the Ministry of Health reported that women's shelters would no longer receive public resources that year, even though the PEF 2019 did contemplate funds for this

item. The president proposed that the resources be transferred directly to the violated women. However, the various organizations dedicated to protecting women assured that women fleeing violent contexts do not require resources but rather spaces of protection and specialized care that guarantees their safety and helps to restore their rights.

After the demands and exhortations of the organizations dedicated to protecting women who are victims of gender violence, the Ministry of Health reinstated the call. However, the federal administration chose to move to a predominantly state scheme in which the States and Municipalities' protection centers operate. Despite their long experience in caring for women victims of gender violence, civil society organizations were left out. In the 2020 pandemic, the National Shelter Network reported that the amount approved in the PEF for shelters of 405 million pesos for that year was detained at the Ministry of Finance. This violence against women increased, in part, because of the lockdown.

Contradictory to this destruction and weakening of institutions whose main objective is to provide aid to women (the federal government has systematically followed up on this policy), the Federal Congress

carried out reforms to the Federal Penal Code (CPF acronym in Spanish) to decrease violence against women. The reforms approval of article 25th of the Federal Penal Code (CPF for its acronym in Spanish) is of particular notice. This was done to extend femicide crimes penalties to up to 65 years in prison. Also, to article 261 so the sexual abuse crime against a person under fifteen years of age, or who cannot understand the meaning of the event has a 10 to 18 years corporal punishment, instead of 6 to 13 years in prison contemplated in the current code.

Additionally, the amendment to article 325 of the CPF was also approved to stipulate that in the case of public servants who maliciously or negligently delay or hinder the prosecution of justice may be punished with a prison sentence of between three and eight years. In addition, they may be removed from office and banned from running for public office for up to ten years, paying a fine of 1,500 days of minimum wage. Finally, in March 2021, another reform on the matter was approved to add a third paragraph to Article 343 Bis of the CPF, which established that family violence should be liable to public prosecution.

These reforms were designed from a punitive and not a preventive perspective, which various specialists

have criticized. As has been documented, the increase in penalties for high-impact crimes does not reduce the incidence of crime because the level of impunity is high. Regardless of the penalties that the law stipulates for carrying out certain crimes, if the institutions in charge of the prosecution, investigation, and application of justice do not have the human, technical and budgetary tools to fulfill their responsibilities, the crimes will go unpunished adequately.

The Federal Congress carried out reforms to the Federal Penal Code to decrease violence against women. This was done to extend femicide crimes penalties and sexual abuse.

These reforms were designed from a punitive and not a preventive perspective. The increase in penalties for high-impact crimes does not reduce the incidence of crime because the level of impunity is high.

Justice

The administration and impartation of justice are some of the great pending matters of the Mexican State. As previously reported, Mexican impunity is among the highest globally and has both women and men as victims. The Impunidad Cero organization said that by 2019, 51.4% of femicides and 89.6% of intentional homicides went unpunished. Despite this, differences between men and women have been observed in justice administration—the organization. The Reinserta organization has documented that justice for men and women accused of serious crimes is different since women receive 35% higher corporal penalties. On average, men sentenced for serious crimes are sentenced to 17 years in prison, while the average for women is 23 years. It is also documented that, although 78% of women in prison say they have access to a lawyer, they spend more money on their legal defense than men. While women spend an average of 155 thousand 593 pesos, men spend 100 thousand 521 pesos. That is 35.4% less. In the same study, it is observed that 40% of women consider that their legal representative performed poorly.

In its report *There is no justice*, the organization Equis: “Justicia para Mujeres” reports that among the judgments and judicial decisions studied, 85% of these did not consider the influence of gender stereotypes on the identity characteristics of the people involved in this case. 80% of the judges analyzed violent situations against women in an isolated manner and ignored the structural features of gender violence. In 47% of the cases, the judges did not weigh the violence that women explicitly pointed out during their stories. The main crime for which women are detained is damage to health. 51% of the inmates studied are serving a sentence for crimes against health due to the minimal economic perceptions they had and the abuse of criminal organizations that often pressure them to serve as drug transporters. In addition, the Reinserta organization showed in the report *Diagnosis of Maternity and Paternity in Prison* that 36% of the prison population who are mothers in the detention centers studied are facing the first instance of their criminal process, that is, they are in preventive detention at the time of the study.

Arrests against women also occur with multiple cases of abuse. Reinserta documented that 12.4% of the women studied were pregnant at the time of their arrest. However, only 32.5% received a medical evaluation during detention, while 34% of the women with children were with them at their arrest. It was also detected that 11.8% were breastfeeding when they were detained, and 31.1% were menstruating, but in only 9.6% of the cases, they allowed the women to feed their child. In 21.1%, they provided the detainee with pads, respectively.

Concerning coercion and violence, it is observed that, during their detention, 67.5% of the detainees were threatened, 57.4% were beaten, 42.1% of the detainees who were with their children were threatened with harming them 22.3% suffered sexual violence. In addition, 60.5% were not informed of the reason for their arrest, 71.5% were not allowed to make a call to a relative, 72.9% were not told where they were and where they were going, 74.5% did not have their rights read, and an overwhelming 94.4% of women who were with their children were not offered support to protect them.

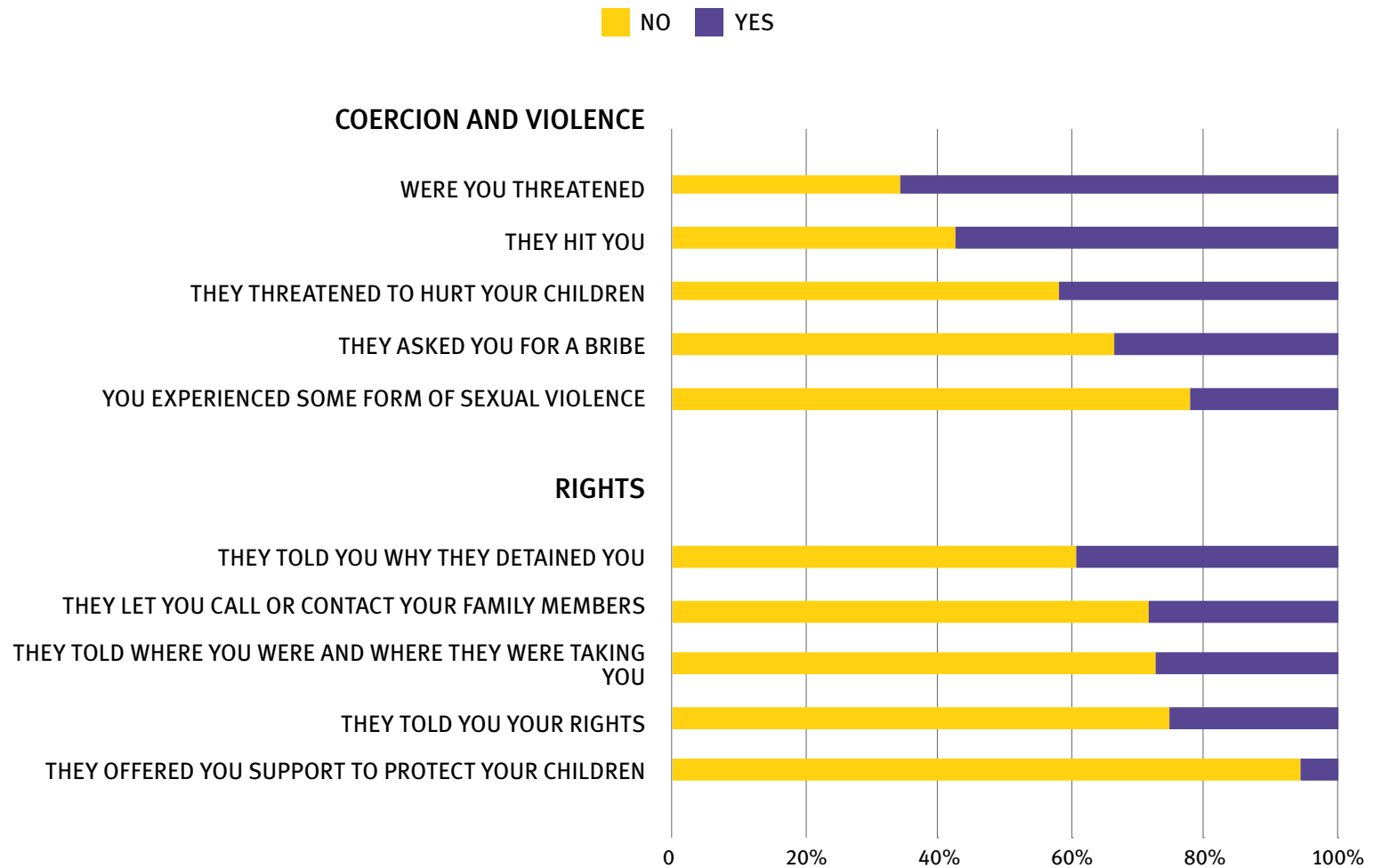
The organization Equis: Justicia para Mujeres also mentioned in its report Violence Against Women and

Impunity that women detained by members of the Armed Forces suffer the crime of rape by the executors of their detention in significantly higher proportions than men. While 5% of the men detained by the Navy were victims of rape, this proportion is 41% in



Image: Animal Político/Cuartoscuro. Women suffer sexual torture from authorities at <https://www.informatico.com/21-11-2018/informe-especial-mexico-8-cada-10-mujeres-detenido-sufren-tortura-sexual-autoridades>

GRAPH 15. COERCION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT THE TIME OF THEIR ARREST



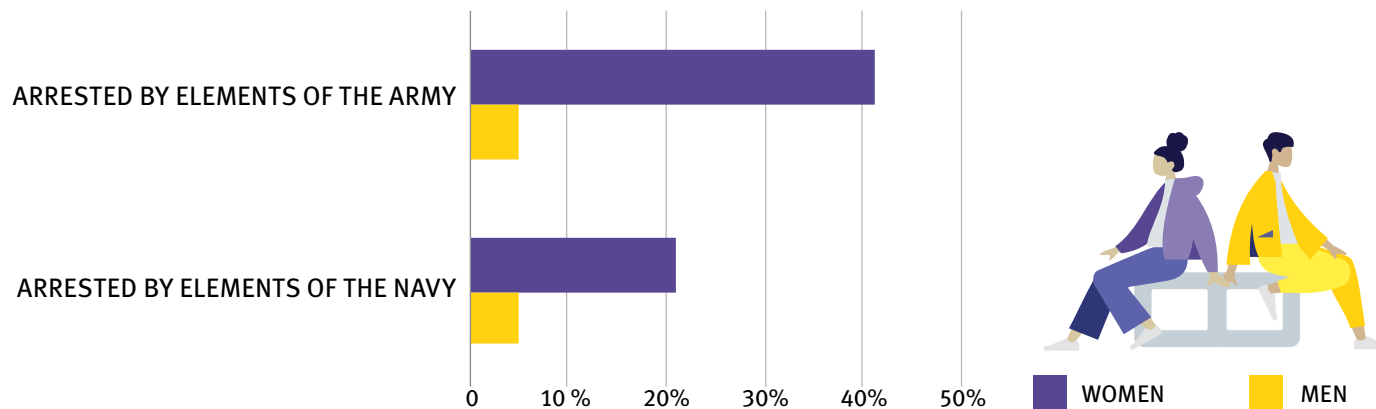
Source: In-house elaboration with information from Reinserta A.C.

women. While 5% of the men arrested by the Army suffered rape, 23% of women suffered the same.

Concerning the boys and girls who live with their mothers inside prison, 58% of these are men and 42% women. Although the Bangkok Rules approved by the United Nations General Assembly established that the space in which girls and boys in prison develop must be as close as possible to a non-penitentiary environment. The National Law of Penal Execution, published in the DOF on June 16, 2016, establishes that

the centers will provide services and spaces for the care of children. This way, women deprived of liberty can participate in social reintegration activities appropriate for pregnant and lactating women. Most of the children who live with their mothers in prisons experience deprivation. 75% of the mothers surveyed by Reinserta reported that the reinsertion center does not provide adequate food for their children for their age. 60% indicated that relatives supply the food outside of the detention center, and 37% said that they buy most of their food within the prison.

GRAPH 16. WOMEN AND MEN VICTIMS OF RAPE AT THE TIME OF THEIR ARREST BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES



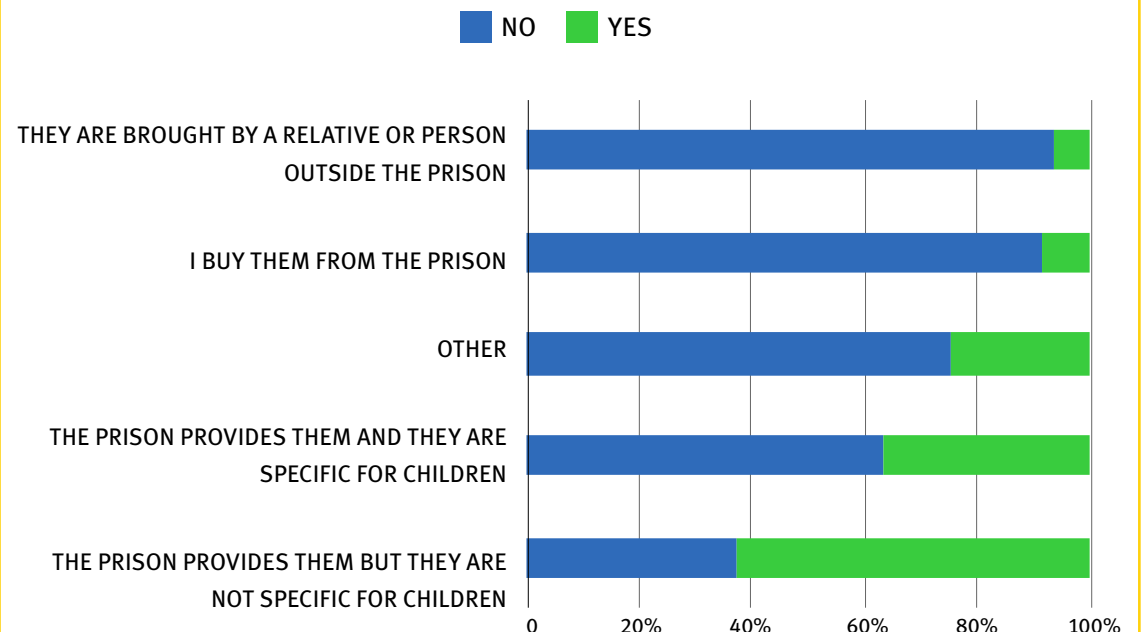
Source: In-house elaboration with information from Reinserta A.C.

Likewise, it is reported that only 23.8% of the inmates' children receive pedagogical care and only 22.9% nutritional care. On the contrary, 61.9% have been vaccinated. Likewise, only 9.3% commented that there is an exclusive dining area for children. 6.5% said that there is a bed so that their child can sleep alone. 4.6% said that there is an area with exclusive bathrooms for infants, and 0% said that there is a special bedroom area for daughters to sleep separated from their mothers. It is also known that 59% of the daughters of imprisoned mothers also have their fathers in prison.



Image: Being a mother in prison at <https://twitter.com/RadioEducacion/status/1340370643204730881/photo/1>

GRAPH 17. WAYS IN WHICH PRISON MOTHERS GET FOOD FOR THEIR CHILDREN



Source: In-house elaboration with information from Reinserta A.C.

Political parity

The political participation of women has been one of the great feminist struggles since the 20th century. Although participation in public affairs was restricted for various groups throughout history, women were among the last groups to win civil and political rights such as the right to vote and be voted. In Mexico, men have dominated the sphere of public power. It was not until the 2007 reform that included gender quotas and the 2014 reform that mandated gender parity in the candidacies for popularly elected positions. It was only then that women began to balance the use of public positions.

In this sense, 2018 represents a relevant moment in terms of gender parity since the concurrent elections of that year achieved the highest participation of women in popularly elected positions. For the first time in Mexico's history, women held 241 of the 500 seats in the federal Chamber of Deputies (48%) and 63 of the 128 seats in the Chamber of Senators (49%). In addition, 49% of the 1,113 local legislative posts are held by women (542 local legislators).

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It is worth mentioning that, unlike all previous legislatures, women have also had enormous participation in the commissions of both houses of the Legislative Power. Of the 51 commissions and committees of the Chamber of Deputies, 21 are chaired by women and 28 men.²³ Likewise, 26 of the 52 commissions and committees of the Chamber of Senators are chaired by women, while 21 by men.²⁴ Despite this advance in parliamentary parity, there is still a significant gap between women and men in executive and judicial positions. México Evalúa reported that, although among

²³ With a cutoff on April 2021, two commissions do not have presidents.

²⁴ With information from April 2021, five commissions do not have presidents.

the OECD countries, Mexico is the country with the most women in Congress, there are only two female governors and 14% of municipal presidents, only 26% of all trustees are women. There are only 39% of judges and magistrates.

Finally, the López Obrador government indeed is the first to have approached parity in the presidential cabinet. With the current administration, 8 of 19 federal secretariats were headed by women, and until April 2021, nine of these have women as heads after modifications in some agencies. Contradictorily, this composition has not been reflected in the design and implementation of public policies with a gender perspective. In other words, for public policies with a gender perspective to be designed and issued, it is not enough for women to access high positions. However, rather it must be a political decision made by all the people who participate in the deliberative and decision-making processes. In addition to the disappearance of programs that benefited women, the president has resisted commenting on great feminist struggles, as the decriminalization of abortion.



Image: Women participating in López Obrador's cabinet at <https://www.tvazteca.com/aztecanoticias/notas/conoce-aqui-a-las-9-mujeres-integrantes-del-gabinete-de-la-4t-especiales>

Feminism as “political opposition” in times of the 4T (4th Transformation)

As discussed in previous reports, MORENA’s overwhelming victory in the 2018 federal elections dismantled much of the formal political opposition within political parties. Although some governors have confronted AMLO’s government project, the legal and constitutional modifications made in two and a half

years of government have given him enormous centralizing powers in a wide range of areas, such as the budget. Likewise, local executives organized in the Acción Nacional Governors Association (GOAN for its acronym in Spanish) and the Federalist Alliance have not been able to establish effective channels of di-



Image: feminist demonstration, 2019 at <https://www.france24.com/es/20191224-el-a%C3%B1o-del-clamor-feminista-en-m%C3%A9xico>



Image: Photo Reuters “We want us alive” at <https://www.altonivel.com.mx/actualidad/por-que-la-mayoria-de-los-femicidios-quedan-impunes-en-mexico/>

dialogue with the president (Vital Signs, 2021). While they are the most powerful formal political opposition, they remain subordinate, in many ways, to the federal government, in part because of its massive budget and security dependency. In this context, social oppositions arose with legitimate historical claims and without electoral interests. The women’s movement consolidated itself as the significant opposition to the current government.

Although the women’s movement is not unitary, it is heterogeneous. It maintains various demands as the decriminalization of abortion, the release of women imprisoned in the country for having abortions, rec-

ognizing State forces as executors of violence against women, and paying equality. The most potent demand to the State has been the protection of their lives. Although on March 6, 2019, the López Obrador government announced a series of actions of an emergent nature and national scope, the indicators related to women’s safety have not improved.

According to the SESNSP, in two and a half years of the current administration, violent gender crimes have increased exponentially in all other than family violence. While 2,142 of these cases were reported in 2017, in 2018, there were 2,225. In 2019 they reached 3,180 instances, and in 2020 they came up to 4,150 cases. September 2020 was the month with the highest historical record of 400 of these crimes. Between January and February 2021, there are already 629 instances.

Similarly, femicides and intentional homicides against women have increased in recent years. 2019 and 2020 are the years that have registered the most femicides, 943 and 942 respectively, and December 2018, the first month of the current government, reported the historical maximum with 98 of these. Likewise, while during the last two years of the Peña Nieto government, there were 5,298 intentional homicides

against women, between 2019 and 2020, the figure of 5,665 was already reached.

In response to women's claims, López Obrador disqualified the movement on numerous occasions, associating it with what he calls "conservative groups" that in the imaginary he has built are part of the old corruption regime (Forbes, 2020). Although feminist marches are not new, their reach in the last two years is visibly more significant than previously. Among the demonstrations that were most widely known are those carried out in response to various femicides. This situation managed to mobilize hundreds of women, as well as those organized for International Women's Day, which achieved on March 8, 2020, according to data of the Secretariat of Citizen Security of Mexico City, a concentration of at least 80 thousand women solely in the capital of the country. A year later, in a context of apparent confrontation with the federal government and during the pandemic, at least 20 thousand women took to the streets and turned the enormous retaining wall erected in front of the presidential residence into a symbol of resistance and struggle against gender violence. In addition, the government of the capital mobilized 1,700 policewomen to defend the National Palace. This confrontation ended up with 80 injured women.

During the last two years of the Peña Nieto government, there were 5,298 intentional homicides against women, between 2019 and 2020, the figure of 5,665 was already reached.



Image: wall in front of Palacio Nacional at <https://www.sdpnoticias.com/nacional/protesta-muro-de-flores-vallas-de-palacio-8m-dia-de-la-mujer.html>

THE ELDERLY

Once women reach old age, after facing a life full of inequalities, they experience the difficulties of living independently, both in financial and health terms. In addition, they tend to assume more tasks within the home and care, which are traditionally delegated to women in a practically inertial way.

Women make up the majority of older adults in almost every country in the world. This phenomenon, known as the “feminization” of aging (Salgado-de Snyder, 2007), is universally observed because women come to live longer than men. Globally, women numerically outnumber men around the ages of 30 to 40, and this numerical advantage increases as age advances. Data from the United Nations (UN) reveal that globally, around the year 2000, there were 190 women for every 100 men among the elderly.

For this reason, during old age, more women than men are without a partner, which places them in a vulnerable situation given their mainly economic dependence in their youth. More senior women’s participation in social and economic life has been minimal, and their social role largely depends on their status as a daughter, wife, or mother throughout their lives.

No program focuses on promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, especially in this vulnerable stage of life.



Image: “Almost half of the elderly in Mexico do not have internet access” at <https://eltrochile-ro.com/siete-millones-de-ancianos-no-tiene-internet-en-mexico/>

There is a great division between the traditional roles of older men and women in Mexico, and its consequences constitute the gender problem in old age. Women are vulnerable due to their relatively low educational level, little participation in economic activities throughout their lives, and the lack of institutional protection that this may represent. For men, the life trajectory, in general, is summarized as one of high participation in economic activities, relatively little interaction with a social and family network, and little familiarity with the health system. These two trajectories imply a different problem for both sexes in old age, so public actions should be directed at men and women with different emphasis.

Unfortunately, some gender roles are still marked in the family sphere, even in older adults. There is evidence indicating that caring for dependent minors and older adults is less frequent in men. At the same time, there is an increase in the periodicity of carrying out this task in women.

To date, the elderly population, mainly those living in poverty, has received very little attention from researchers, service providers, and public policy-makers. A limited number of studies have focused on the relationship between aging, gender, and pov-



Image: the role of the woman as a caregiver of the elderly at <https://www.m-x.com.mx/al-dia/los-mexicanos-discriminan-mas-a-las-personas-con-discapacidad>

Frequently, women have the role as caregivers of dependent children or elderly.

Men's participation is scarce.

erty. Above all, the persistent worldwide inequality in access to opportunities for a better quality of life among older women living in poverty.

In 2020, there were 15.5 million people over 60 years old in Mexico, representing a little more than 12% of the total population. However, the needs of an adult and an older adult are entirely different since the latter requires more attention and care. Part of these needs is the care of diseases associated with hypertension, diabetes, and overweight. In 2018, it was estimated that 25.8% of the population over 65 had diagnosed diabetes, and 45.2% had hypertension; for people between 20 and 64, both conditions nearly tripled to 8% and 14.1%, respectively.

According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, eight out of ten older adults have some affilia-

tion to health services, distributed in 54.6% for women and 45.4% for men.

According to CONEVAL, the Pension for the Well-being of Older Adults program is the only one that addresses the risk of work inactivity associated with income security. The institution's main needs refer to guaranteeing the universal pension scheme for the population over 65, understood as a social right, and implementing a long-term care system responsible for the proper care of people elderly dependents.

However, no program focuses on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, especially in this vulnerable stage of life, where the contribution of older women goes beyond their social and economic activities.



THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN



THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN

LThe arrival of the pandemic, which undoubtedly worsened most of the people's well-being indicators, was also treated differently by gender. Women lost their jobs more, violence and crimes against them increased significantly, and school dropouts were higher in women than in men. Although the pandemic already represents a very important setback in the economic and social fields for the entire country, the consequences it has had for women have been to a greater degree.

The Covid-19 pandemic has been the event that has most affected the lives of the more than 7 billion women and men living on the planet. This event has affected practically all sectors.

The great lockdown that it brought with it caused the massive loss of jobs, the increase in underemployment, and the exclusion of a large number of people from the labor market. However, these losses are more profound in women than in men, an event that never ceases to surprise but has become common given that the great financial crisis of 2008 and 2009 happened in the same way.

In the same way, the social sector represented, in the face of lockdown for many women and girls, an exacerbation of the unpaid care workload that, in turn, has consequences on their learning. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2018), in “normal” times, women perform three times more unpaid care work than men. With the closure of schools, this

imbalance deepens even more. Many assume multiple simultaneous responsibilities: distance work, caring for children and family members, supervising the learning processes of their children, domestic work not paid, and caring for the elderly.²⁵

According to ECLAC (2020), the lockdown measures practiced in the Latin American regions and the temporary suspension of face-to-face assistance from the educational system have increased imbalances in the work-life balance and family, weighing on the professional development of women. In Mexico, the National Survey on Time Use (ENUT for its acronym in Spanish) (2019) offers data about the time dedicated to caring for the population. In the range of care referring from 0 to 14 years, women dedicate an average of 24.1 hours a week, while men dedicate 11.5 hours. And for the age group 60 years and over,²⁶

²⁵ The informal care of the elderly in a situation of dependency is clearly defined by the gender factor of the caregiver. As shown in several studies, care tasks fall, for the most part, on women, representing 84% of the total. “Male caregivers and female caregivers: The effect of gender in the non-professional care of the elderly”. Available at: <https://fiapam.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Cuidadores.pdf>

²⁶ The survey includes information on activities to support the use of information and communication technologies, transfers, and accompaniment, even if the older person is not dependent or has a disability.

women dedicate 17.3 hours per week to this type of care and men, 14 hours, which shows an excessive care burden for women since there are no co-responsibility policies.

On the other hand, with the health crisis, in under 15 years of age case, it is observed that women’s number who do not attend school increased by 33.1%



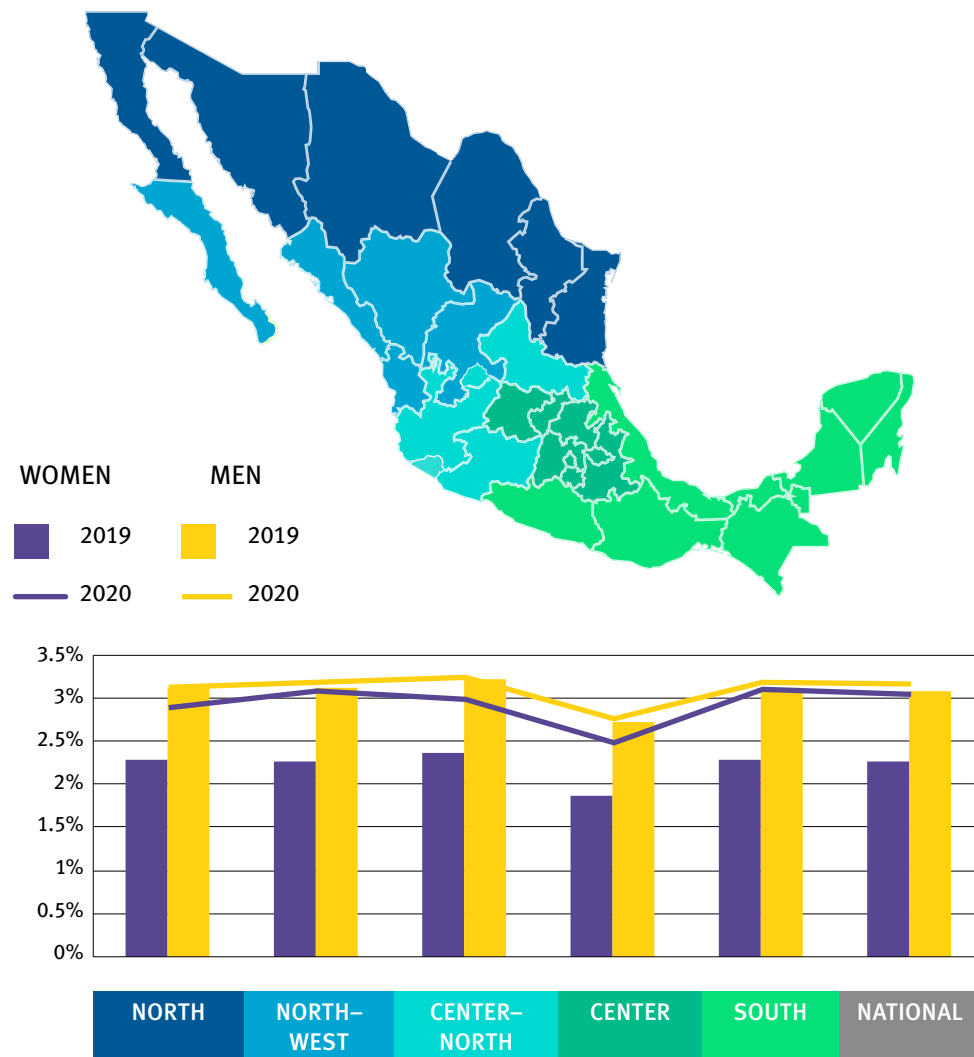
Image: Unemployment during confinement at <https://factorcapitalhumano.com/leyes-y-gobierno/6-millones-de-mexicanos-perderan-su-empleo-por-la-pandemia-proyecta-la-oit/2020/10/>

at an annual rate as of December 2020. In contrast, men's absence remained almost at the prior levels (4.8% at an annual rate). In the last quarter of 2020, the school absence rate has been equal in both population groups, replicating this phenomenon in all country regions (to a greater or lesser extent), mainly in the country's southern area. One of the greatest advantages of women, such as increased school attendance, has vanished.

For their part, in women aged 15 and over, of working age, it is observed that most of the job losses are found in those women with higher and higher education levels (56%) compared to the total of the economically active population (EAP). This data reflects the dramatic nature of the situation that has caused the pandemic in professional women. However, this phenomenon is explained by the increase in the years of education of the Mexican population of working age; that is to say, a greater part of the working-age population that participates in the labor market has a higher level of education. During 2009, most unemployed women were concentrated in those with a middle school education level (42%). The event is similar in the case of men.

However, to analyze the complexity of unemployment in the recent crisis, it is necessary to analyze

GRAPH 18. SCHOOL TRUANCY OF THE POPULATION OVER 4 AND UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE BY REGION AND SEX (%) (2019-2020)

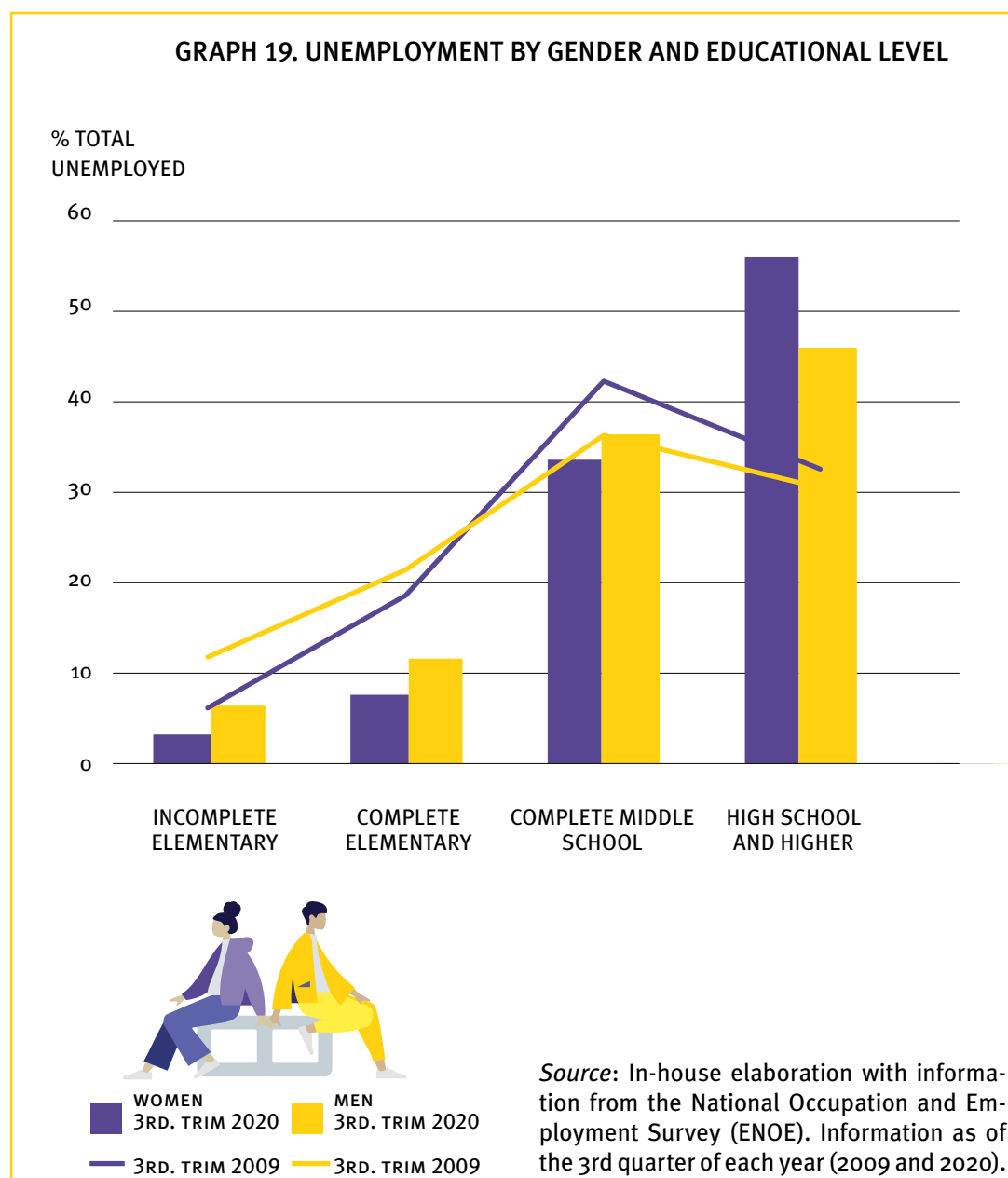


Source: In-house elaboration with information from ENOE. Information as of the 4th quarter of each year (2019 and 2020).

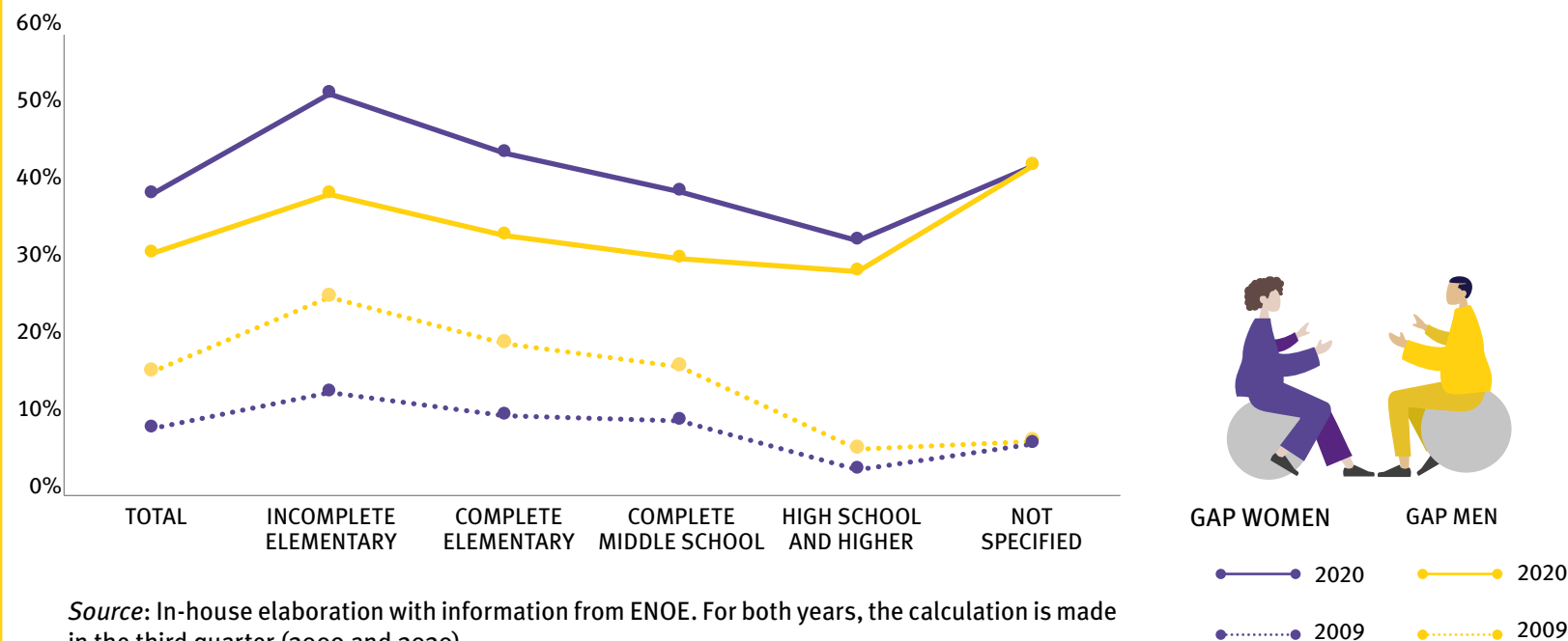
unemployment from its broader perspective, the labor gap. This is since health conditions prevent, in many cases, the population from going out in search of employment. This population is not considered unemployed since they are not looking for a job.

Added to the labor gap is the pandemic component, which, as mentioned, affects this population that has been excluded from the labor market for various reasons. This labor gap is estimated at 40 out of every 100 for those women in Mexico of working age (15 years or more), who face a situation of precarious employment (unemployment, reduction of working hours, or impediment to going out in search of employment), while in the case of men it is 31 out of 100. The Great Lockdown is by far the deepest job crisis on record.

But it is important to point out that precarious employment conditions worsen at a lower educational level, and this phenomenon occurs in the same way in both men and women. However, women who have not completed primary school have the highest employment gap. 52 out of 100 women who do not have completed primary education are unemployed or have reduced working hours, or cannot search



**GRAPH 20. LABOR GAP BY SEX AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
(FINANCIAL CRISIS 2009 AND GREAT LOCKDOWN 2020)**



GAP WOMEN

GAP MEN

—●— 2020

—●— 2020

...●... 2009

...●... 2009

for work even though they consider it necessary. 1.3 million women were in this condition as of the third quarter of 2020. This figure has no comparison, neither with another crisis nor between genders.

One aspect of interest is that the labor gap for those women with a higher and higher education level is

34%, while in the case of men, it is 30% for the same educational level. The differences between men and women are smaller the higher the educational level. However, the labor gap is close to the average in the case of men for all educational levels.

Of the group of women most affected, which are

those in incomplete elementary school, 43.3% received some type of support in the first quarter of 2020 (before the start of the health crisis). This population group receives more as a proportion of its total population. However, only 12.3% of this group of women is part of the potential workforce (seeking employment, employed, or available). The remaining 31% are women who are not within the economically active population (EAP). They are not working, are looking for work, or require a greater number of working hours.

Women most affected have few mechanisms to face the current employment crisis. In general, it is observed that for almost all educational levels (except upper and upper secondary), most of the supports are received by those women who are outside the EAP (not available).

The drama of the pandemic has been devastating for women in the economic sector. By the fourth quarter of 2020, the population of working-age women was 51.0 million, but only 20.7 million were employed. This implies that only 40.6% of women had a job, while the remaining 59.4% was part of the EIP (Economically Inactive Population). This happens because a large majority of them have decided to stop

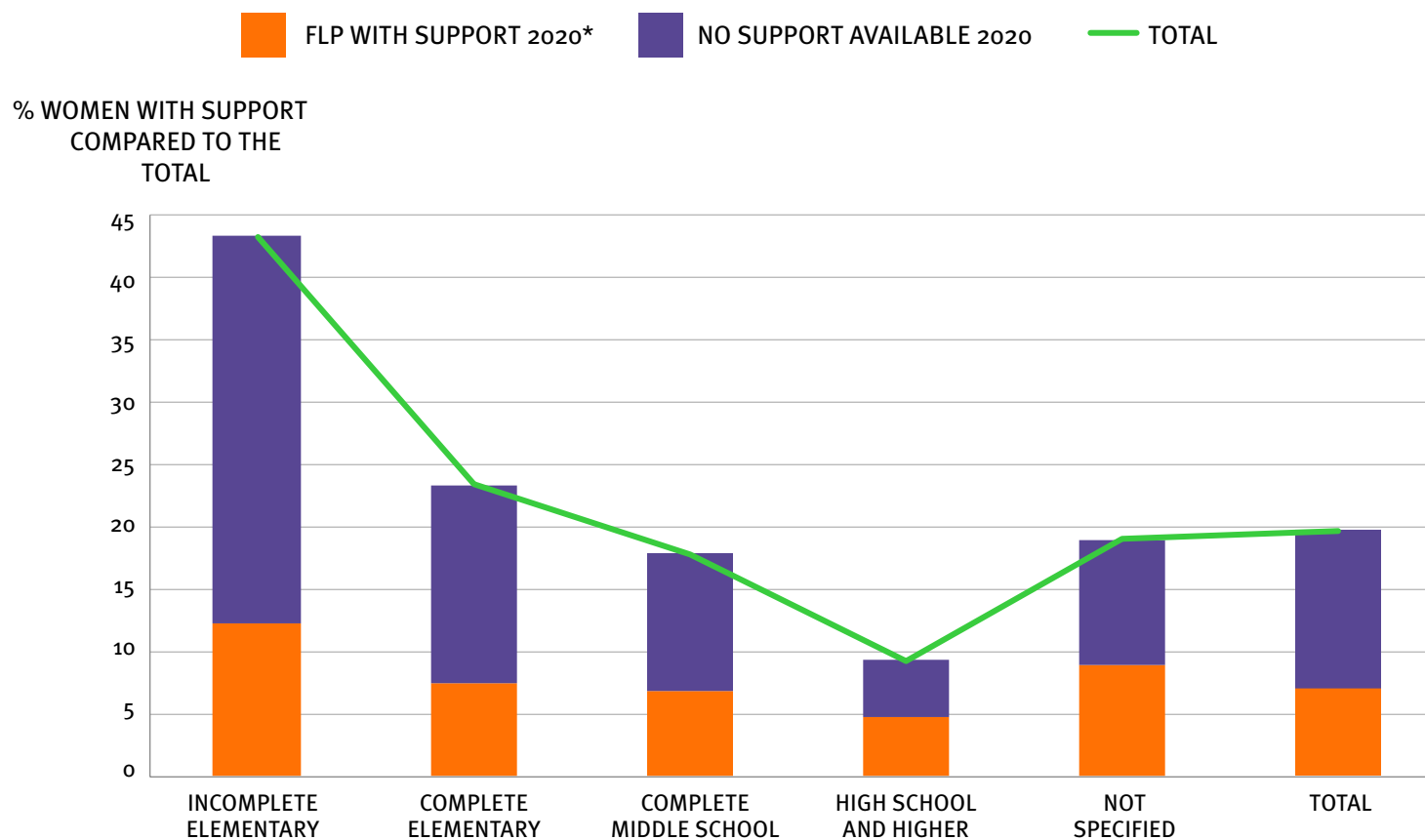
looking for work since the health crisis makes the search impossible for them. And also because they consider that they do not have a chance to obtain it, which excludes them from the labor market naturally and categorically.

During the first months of 2020, just before the pandemic, women's labor participation was 43.4%. 79.2% were employed in the tertiary sector and only 3.5% in the primary sector. The peculiarity of this crisis is that due to social distancing measures and restrictions on mobility, both services and commerce have been the most affected in many ways: business closures, job losses, and a drop in business income, and contraction of consumption of services.

Compared to the same quarter but in 2019, 1.1 million jobs have been lost in the tertiary sector; But only in the service sector, the loss amounts to 880,000 jobs for women, which explains 67.4% of the total loss. In women with a lower educational level, the loss compared to the total was concentrated in the same way in the tertiary sector (70.3%), and the vast majority occurred in services (49.5%).

Therefore, various social and economic conditions restrict women's labor participation in the immedi-

GRAPH 21. WOMEN AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER RECEIVING SOME TYPE OF SUPPORT BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, POTENTIAL WORKFORCE (FLP FOR ITS ACRONYM IN SPANISH), AND POPULATION NOT AVAILABLE. FIRST-QUARTER OF 2020



Source: In-house elaboration with information from the ENOE expanded questionnaire (2020). The first quarter of 2020.

ate future. The prospects for “relative” growth in the service industry and specifically in tourism in Mexico, where most of them were employed, limit the employment possibilities. A possible recovery for both sectors is estimated to take place until 2022.

There is no doubt that women with lower educational levels have been the least favored. The crisis took us all by surprise, but this social group could have suffered permanent damage to their finances because of the limited social protection mechanisms they have available (such as unemployment insurance and access to medical services). For its part, the fact that women have no other option than to leave the EAP makes them vulnerable to clientelistic programs, which most federal government programs are destined to.

Four phenomena that are of interest also stand out due to their implications on the labor market and the well-being of women:

1. Between December 2019 and the third quarter of 2020, the number of women who declared they had physical disabilities that prevent them from working increased by 42.6%, from 298,300 to 40,600 women. The average number of women in this condition between the first quarter of 2005

The drama of the pandemic has been devastating for women in the economic sector. Before the pandemic, women’s labor participation was 43.4%. 79.2% were employed in the tertiary sector and only 3.5% in the primary sector.

and the fourth quarter of 2020 is 227,800. This indicator should have alerted the health authorities in the country.

2. As of the last quarter of 2020, women’s labor force participation was 42.4%, representing a 10-year setback, similar to the participation in the first quarter of 2011. During the third quarter of 2020, said participation was 39.9%, the lowest rate on record.
3. In the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of women who did not study did not work and did not seek employment (that is, not part of the EAP but it does not study either), between the ages of 15 and 59 (excluding those on pension or retirement) was 16.6 million women, and although it is a historical figure (annual variation of 7.9%), it is only surpass-

sed by that of the third quarter of 2020. The September 2020 figure is unprecedented: 17.7 million women (42.8% of this population group).

4. The most worrying thing is that of the 16.6 million women outside the EAP, who were also not studying as of December 2020, 93.2% is because of gender-related reasons (15.43 million women) (housework).²⁷

The foregoing leads us to think about the social and economic gravity of the situation that a large part of the population of women in Mexico is going through. This implies that due to gender reasons, women are excluded from both the labor and educational markets, which in the end generates a vicious circle that intensifies poverty among women. Similarly, said labor exclusion deepens the effect of social mobility caused by the pandemic. According to the Espinosa Yglesias Study Center (CEEY) (2021), such exclusion is a factor that prevents the social mobility of people since it closes opportunities to have income.

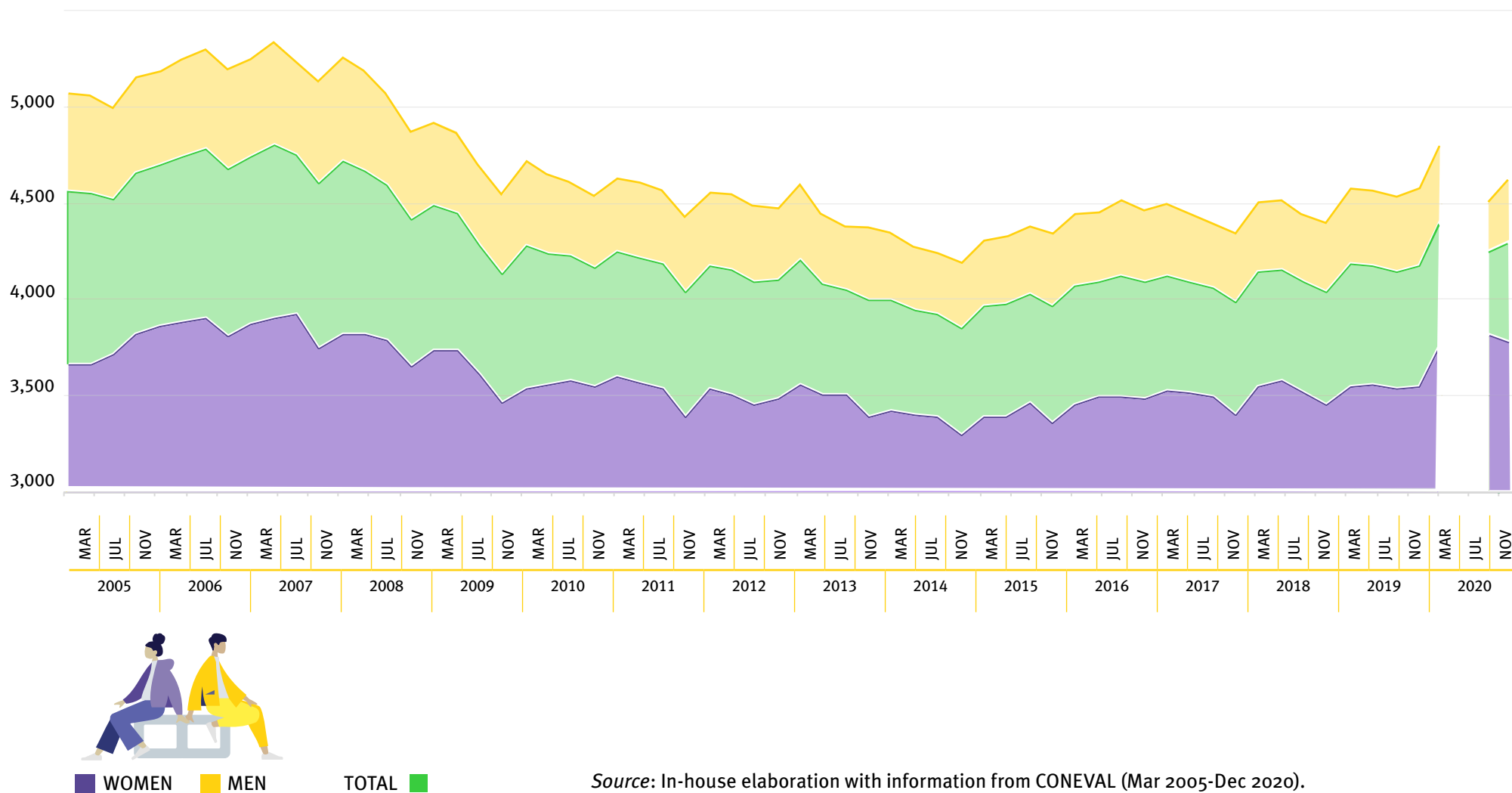
²⁷ The economic literature recognizes marital status, home care or lack of decision-making autonomy as gender reasons. Therefore, domestic chores (reported by INEGI) are considered as a gender reason. For more details see: <https://tinyurl.com/2mv2p4y2>

The great Covid-19 lockdown widened the gap in labor income between men and women. In the fourth quarter of 2020, that gap was 856.52 pesos, while in the third quarter of the same year, the gap was 694.35 pesos. Therefore, the gap increased by 162.17 pesos.

In addition to the aforementioned structural problems, the great Covid-19 lockdown widened the gap in labor income between men and women. In the fourth quarter of 2020, that gap was 856.52 pesos, while in the third quarter of the same year, the gap was 694.35 pesos. Therefore, the gap increased by 162.17 pesos. The reincorporation of women into the labor market has been taking place under the opening of the economies. However, it has not ensured the restoration of wages to pre-crisis levels.

The economic crisis caused by the great lockdown has indeed fallen mainly on women. However, certain preconditions exacerbated the impact of the crisis. Such is the case of the disappearance of childcare facilities, the concentration of the labor force in services, and the few mechanisms available to working

GRAPH 22. AVERAGE LABOR INCOME OF THE EMPLOYED POPULATION IN PESOS, BY SEX



Source: In-house elaboration with information from CONEVAL (Mar 2005-Dec 2020).

women (especially those with less schooling) to face macroeconomic shocks such as the current one. Because of the above mentioned, this has gone from an economic and social crisis to one type of care, worsening mainly in women.

The increase in the years of schooling of women participating in the labor market is mainly explained because 74.4% of those excluded have completed up to middle school level. Therefore, if women entered the labor market, the years of study of the EAP of women would be reduced, approaching the average of years of research for women (9.6 years).

Finally, parallel to the educational, labor, economic, and care crises that women have suffered during the pandemic, the crisis of health and violence are added. One of the multiple collateral damages of the faulty management of the pandemic is the increase in maternal deaths in 2020. With data from the Epidemiology General Direction from the Ministry of Health, the number of maternal deaths increased from 676 in 2019 to 899 in week 51st of 2020, a 32% growth. That number is similar to the one registered in 2010, which means that a whole decade was lost (Frenk and Gómez Dantés, 2020). Also, during the pandemic, crimes of family violence and rape skyrocketed.

Only between March 2020 (the month in which the Covid-19 pandemic began) and March 2021, 245,698 cases of family violence were registered, while a year earlier, between March 2019 and March 2020, they were counted 214,932, that is, 12.5% less. It is worth noting that March 2021 is the month with the historical maximum, reporting 23,709 cases. Similarly, emergency calls to 911 related to incidents of violence against women also increased. March 2020 reported the historical maximum with 26,117 calls, and 2020 is, by far, the year with the highest record of these calls that reached 260,67, 31.5% more than in 2019.

During the pandemic, crimes of family violence and rape skyrocketed. Between March 2020 and March 2021, family violence increased by 12.5%.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

As noted, being a woman and living in Mexico can be terrible and has enormous implications. The opportunities that women can access and the possibility of fully exercising all their rights and living without fear of being discriminated against or attacked are significantly lower than men. Various assumptions condition the educational, work, social, and political life of women. The gap between men and women in practically all aspects of life is large, and it has closed very little in recent years.

Although women in Mexico and the world have undertaken a constant fight against gender inequality and injustice that takes place every March 8 they remind us of their struggle and that the conditions in which most of them find themselves are still critical.

The road ahead in terms of gender inequality is very long. Although building an equal world is included in the 17 Sustainable Development goals in the UN 2030 Agenda, many governments have not made this agenda a priority that allows everyone to enjoy a progressive society in all areas of life.

Unfortunately, the structures that foster inequalities between men and women go beyond the dominant cultural realm. States and societies perpetuate and deepen gender gaps promoted by regulatory frameworks and public policies that lack a gender perspective and social roles that establish that women must fulfill certain activities that lead them to repress part of their potential and remain encapsulated in the atmosphere of the home. A clear example is the unpaid

workload of the household economy assumed by women, which has come to represent up to 22.8% of GDP in Mexico.

Violence against women in any of its dimensions is another of the most serious indicators that shows inequalities in crime and security. Women suffer the most violence from childhood to adulthood. The vulnerability to which they are exposed is differentiated according to the region in which they are born, grow and develop, and their social stratum or even by the conditions they find themselves, such as being a migrant, indigenous, or having a disability. In this sense, violence against women, from the physical to the psychological aspect, has caused their death, taking with them their struggle, dreams, and aspirations. Sadly, the only element that conditions this reality is the mere fact of being born a woman.

Despite the advances in gender policies, women remain by far one of the most vulnerable sectors in the 21st century. Being a woman in Mexico, as in many other countries, is terrible.



The road ahead in terms of gender inequality is very long. Although building an equal world is included in the 17 Sustainable Development goals in the UN 2030 Agenda.

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**BEING A WOMAN IN MEXICO: ABUSE. VIOLENCE. INEQUALITY.
FEMICIDE. DISCRIMINATION**

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