Normative framework for equality in youth
A. Normative framework

As young people transition to adulthood, individual autonomy takes on more and more importance. Unlike the situation for children, there is no globally accepted international legal instrument that refers specifically to this age group. There is however, a regional instrument on the human rights of young people, the Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Youth, which sets forth the commitment of the States parties to that treaty to recognize the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of young people. The Convention also serves as a guidepost for the design and implementation of policies, programmes, projects and other types of initiatives.2

A number of different studies are also available that provide a variety of perspectives on the nature and issues facing this segment of the population. For example, the Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIJ) has carried out studies in conjunction with ECLAC on such subjects as gender differences, identities and attitudes around discrimination and tolerance, and the right to a quality education. Other organizations, such as the Ibero-American Youth Observatory,3 have also done work in similar areas on the basis of the studies carried out by the Fundación SM with a view to fostering further research on youth, education and culture in the region.4

The work undertaken by ECLAC5 in this field has been based on its definition of the young population as persons between the ages of 15 and 29 years,6 which differs from the definition used in the Ibero-American Convention.7 While the concept of youth is a social construct that is influenced by the prevailing historical context and is not necessarily bounded by a set age range (Trucco and Ullmann, 2016), since the average age at which people complete higher education and enter the labour market is 23 or 24 years, the Commission feels that it is important to look at young people up to the age of 29 years in order to be able to analyse how they position themselves within the labour force.

2 All the countries of the region also have national policy instruments for safeguarding and promoting the rights of young people that draw on elements of the Convention to varying degrees.
3 See [online] https://www.observatoriodelajuventud.org/.
4 See [online] https://www.observatoriodelajuventud.org/categoria/nuestros-estudios/.
5 See, for example, Trucco and Ullmann, (2016) and Muñoz and Rojas (2019).
6 The chapter on childhood defines that stage of the life cycle as encompassing persons between the ages of 0 and 18 years; therefore, the recommendations made there that apply to people between the ages of 15 and 18 also apply to the adolescents included in the age bracket dealt with in this chapter.
7 The Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIJ) and the Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Youth define young people as those between the ages of 15 and 24 years.