Priority policies for reducing inequalities among adults

The need to close equality gaps in access to decent and sustainable employment with secure and adequate income, demands various types of actions.

Steps must be taken to avoid informality, provide certainty in the event of economic risk or natural or health disasters by strengthening labor laws and regulations, expand social security access and achieve better salaries through measures such as increasing the minimum wage.

It is also necessary to properly regulate the new forms of unpaid work and plan for training and updating adults for a changing and technified working world.

Other measures to be considered include promoting participation in work with a gender focus, promoting recognition of unpaid work, and moving towards public care systems that also serve to expand the availability of decent jobs.
Policies for reducing social inequality

Just a few of the concrete policies that countries in the region have implemented to reduce social inequality in the adult population include:

- **Basic income security** including programmes for creating jobs that guarantee sufficient incomes
- **Transfer programmes** such as those dealing with basic emergency income
- **Unemployment insurance**

Other actions are geared toward expanding social protection coverage such as programs that register self-employed individuals or monitor labour rights protections.

There also exist diverse training programs in response to changes in the world of work, including dual education policies that allow adults to engage in real-world activities while they are being trained.
Lastly, we can mention other universal access programmes on care services and preventive programs for health, access to culture, sport and a life free from violence.
This document contributes to the activities of the project “Leaving no one behind in Latin America and the Caribbean: strengthening institutions and social policy coherence and integration at the country level to foster equality and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”, financed by the eleventh tranche of the United Nations Development Account, and its implementation was coordinated by Simone Cecchini, Senior Social Affairs Officer of the Social Development Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Raúl Holz, Consultant of the same Division, and Humberto Soto de la Rosa, Social Affairs Officer of ECLAC’s subregional headquarters in Mexico. More information on the project, including other relevant materials, can be found at: igualdad.cepal.org/en

Based on the text: S. Cecchini, R. Holz and H. Soto de la Rosa (coords.), A toolkit for promoting equality: the contribution of social policies in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/TS.2021/55), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2021.

ECLAC staff members Humberto Soto, Elsa Gutiérrez and Mustafa Al Gamal, with the support of consultants Susan Skinner, Gabriela Ibarra and Ericka Arambarri, participated in the preparation of the document. The support of the Documents and Publications Division for their guidance is gratefully acknowledged. Icons from “The Noun Project” platform and photographs from the Adobe Stock platform were used in the preparation of the contents, with the proper authorizations. Photographs from the United Nations have also been used.

The opinions expressed in this document, which has not been subjected to editorial review, are the sole responsibility of the authors and may not coincide with those of the Organization.

Copyright © United Nations, 2021
All rights reserved

Permission to reproduce all or part of this document should be requested from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Documents and Publications Division, publicaciones.cepal@un.org. Member States of the United Nations and their governmental institutions may reproduce this work without prior authorization. They are only requested to mention the source and inform ECLAC of such reproduction.