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# Introduction to Ageing and old age inequalities

The Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons defines this group as those persons over the age of 60, unless otherwise specified in the laws of each country.

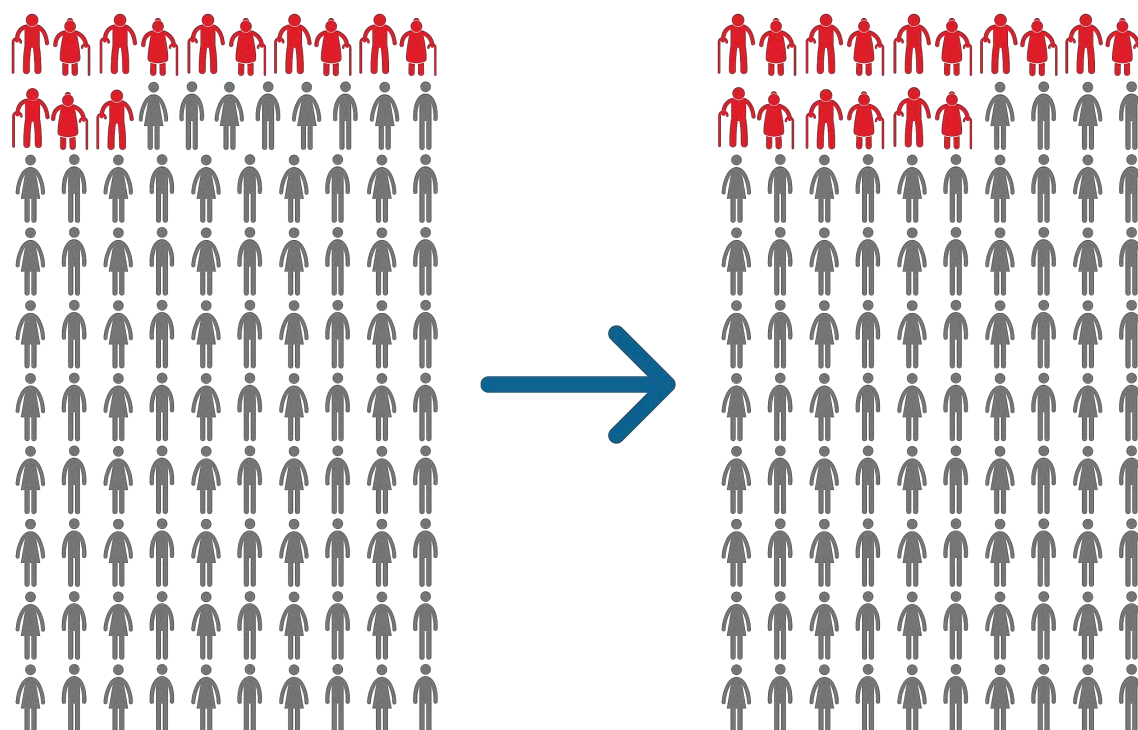
With this age delimitation, it is possible to quantify and characterize the older persons present in a country or region.



The population aged 60 years and older is increasing in all countries compared to previous decades.

Life expectancies have also risen.

It is estimated that the number of people over the age of 60 in Latin America and the Caribbean will grow from roughly 85 million or 13% of the entire population in 2020 to close to 200 million or 26% of the population by 2050.





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# Inequality gaps diagnosis

Based on approaches contained in the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, an analysis of the inequality gaps for this population group should be focused on three major spheres:



Economic security



Health and well-being



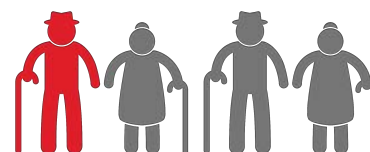
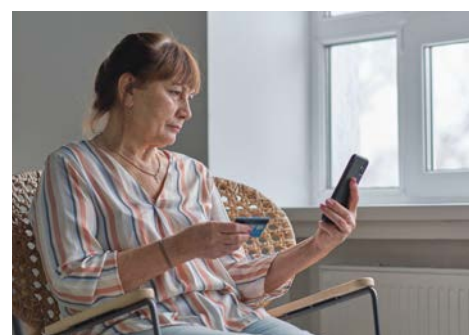
Long-term care

## Economic security

**Economic security** refers to the ability to access and independently use a steady amount of economic resources in sufficient **quantities to ensure a good quality of life during old age.**

Many older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean have no access to **old-age pensions** that assure their economic security in their later years. In fact, one out of every two persons over 60 years of age in the lowest income quintile is in this condition, a proportion that rises to half of the low income population.

Moreover, social security coverage is highly unequal for the working population, thereby underscoring the odds of reaching old age devoid of economic security.



one in four has no access to social security nor retirement funds



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## Health and well-being

Health and well-being refer to the ability to maintain functional autonomy for as long as possible.

Among elderly adults noncommunicable diseases tend to replace communicable ones as the main cause of morbidity, disability and death.

Cardiovascular disease, malignant neoplasia, diabetes, respiratory disorders and sensory impairments have become the major reasons for the loss of years of healthy life and of premature death.

Many of these diseases are associated with a lack of preventive health care during earlier stages of the life cycle.



Difficulties in accessing health care increase as the socioeconomic level of older persons decreases to the extent that people in lower socioeconomic strata are more likely to die or lose their functional autonomy from preventable causes.

## Long-term care



Long-term care includes a range of services for meeting the medical and non-medical needs of persons suffering from a chronic condition or disability that renders them unable to care for themselves for long periods of time.



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The Pan-American Health Organization estimates that as of 2019 more than 12% of persons over 60 years of age in the Americas were dependent as a result of disease or disability and required long-term care.



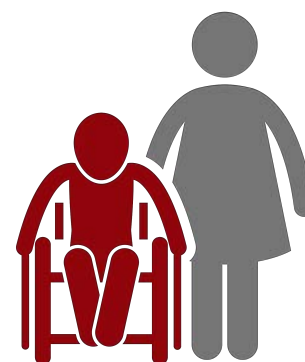
Dependents due to illness or disability



could raise

Estimates also project that figure will grow in the coming years.

Long-term care services in the region cannot attend demand and families, especially their women members, continue to act as the main caregivers.



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](http://igualdad.cepal.org/en)

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