



# Report on the activities of the Commission

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UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC



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ECLAC

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# Foreword



For more than 73 years, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has been fully committed to the sustainable development of the countries of the region. This report on the activities of the Commission highlights its key achievements and contributions in 2020 and is hereby submitted for the consideration of member States in light of the accountability and transparency framework promoted by the United Nations.

During the year, the Commission continued to offer its value proposition to member States by combining its three main functions: its think tank and thought leadership role in performing analytical, normative and knowledge management work; its convening power by fostering intergovernmental platforms that provide space for policy dialogues, consensus-building and peer learning; and its operational role, by providing policy advice and technical cooperation, at the request of member States, to implement capacity development activities at the regional, subregional and national levels, anchored in data and rigorous evidence-based analysis and understanding of the realities of the region.

Latin America and the Caribbean, the developing region that has been hardest hit by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, has faced the most severe crisis in recent decades, with profound health, social, environmental, economic, and political effects. This crisis has also exposed the failings of weak and fragmented social protection systems, health services and welfare schemes. Hence, a “new normal” is not the way forward. The development model must be rethought, and the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development must be consolidated to leave no one behind and bring about a profoundly transformative recovery to avoid regression in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The impact of the crisis is compounded by the fact that the region is mostly comprised of middle-income countries, and a significant number of them are small island developing States of the Caribbean, which are increasingly excluded from the international cooperation system that uses per capita income as the main indicator of development and are thus unable to access concessional financing and trade benefits. ECLAC has also continued to lend a strong voice to the region’s sole least developed country and to its landlocked developing countries.

As an organization fully committed to the development of the countries of the region, in 2020 ECLAC responded quickly to support governments, decision makers, the business community and civil society at large with analysis and proposals to assess the full socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide policy advice and recommendations for a transformative recovery. ECLAC also continued to serve as technical secretariat for various subsidiary bodies in the areas of statistics, women and development, population and development, planning and public management, social development, South-South cooperation, and development cooperation in the Caribbean. The Commission's most recent analysis and public policy proposals have helped to stimulate discussion on key regional development issues. It has performed its role as a universal and impartial forum for the fostering of public policy debate, the exchange of good practices and the promotion of regional positions in global forums, as well as in regional and interregional high-level meetings and summits of heads of State and government.

The Commission would like to reiterate its profound gratitude to ECLAC member States for the ongoing support and trust they have placed in the institution.

**Alicia Bárcena**

Executive Secretary

Economic Commission for Latin America  
and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

# Introduction

## About ECLAC

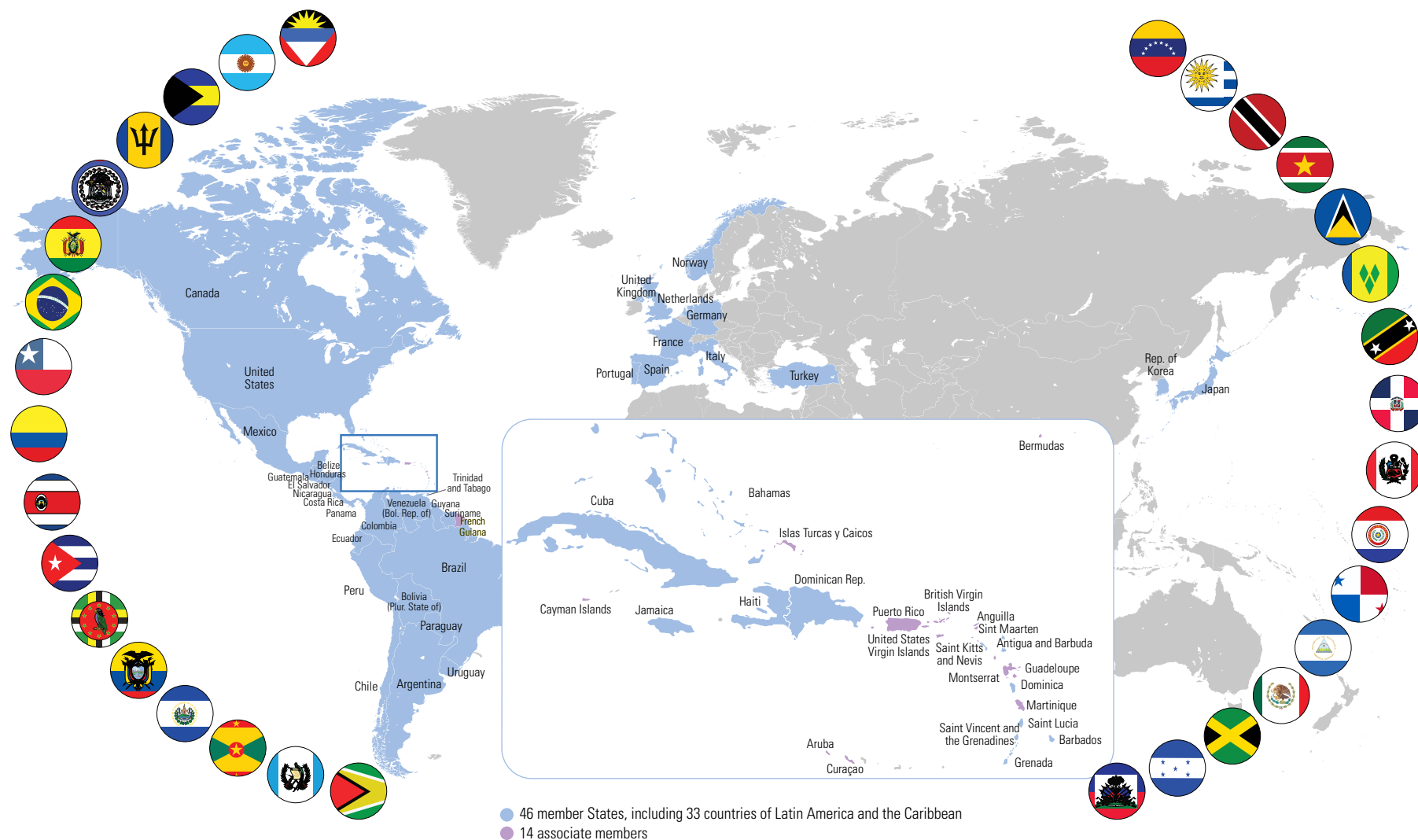
The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) —the Spanish acronym is CEPAL— was established by Economic and Social Council resolution 106(VI) of 25 February 1948 and began to function that same year. By resolution 1984/67 of 27 July 1984, the Council decided to change its name to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), to include the countries of the Caribbean; the Spanish acronym, CEPAL, remained unchanged.

ECLAC is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. Headquartered in Santiago, it was founded with the purpose of contributing to the economic development of Latin America. In June 1951, the Commission established the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico City, which serves the needs of the Central American countries, together with Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico, and in December 1966, the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean was founded in Port of Spain, to serve the Caribbean subregion. In addition, ECLAC has country offices in Bogotá, Brasília, Buenos Aires and Montevideo, as well as a liaison office in Washington D.C. The 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, together with several Asian, European and North American countries that have historical, economic and cultural ties with the region comprise the 46 member States of ECLAC. Fourteen non-independent territories of the Caribbean are associate members of the Commission.

## Mission statement

*"To function as a centre of excellence charged with collaborating with member States in a comprehensive analysis of development processes geared to the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and the resulting provision of operational services in the fields of specialised information, technical cooperation services, (advisory services) training and support for regional and international cooperation and coordination."*

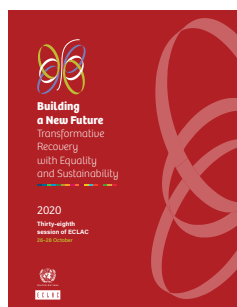
*Resolution 553(XXVI) of the twenty-sixth session of the Commission, San Jose, 1996*



**Note:** The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

# 1 Highlights in 2020

## Thirty-eighth session of the Commission



In October 2020, the Commission held its [thirty-eighth session](#), attended by both the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Deputy Secretary-General. At the meeting, held virtually, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries of the region adopted the [Political Declaration on a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Recovery in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). The Declaration reflects a broad consensus that the pandemic has exposed the inequalities and fragilities within and among countries, and that the international community must take account of the specific problems of the region's middle-income countries and, in particular, the small island developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean. At the session, ECLAC presented the document [Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability](#), which calls for a big push for sustainability based on the 2030 Agenda as the way forward for the region. The document was endorsed by all member States of the region and includes concrete proposals focusing on renewable energies, sustainable mobility, the digital revolution, the health-care manufacturing industry, the bioeconomy, sustainable tourism and the circular economy, with sustainable consumption and production patterns.

## Support to Latin American and Caribbean countries to address the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic



To support member States on issues related to the pandemic, and in response to a request from Mexico, in its capacity as President Pro Tempore of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), ECLAC developed the [COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). The Observatory, which includes a geoportal displaying the information at the country level, tracks and analyses national responses implemented in the region to address the pandemic. ECLAC continues to work closely with resident coordinators throughout the region and with the Regional Desk of the Development Coordination Office (DCO) to ensure that this

information, which is publicly available on the ECLAC website, is updated continuously. Over the course of the year, the Commission also published eight special reports with a focus on the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic and convened virtual intergovernmental meetings and policy dialogues with ministers and high-level authorities of areas such as finance, social development, science and technology, women's affairs and statistics.

## SDG Gateway: a regional knowledge management platform in support of the 2030 Agenda



**2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
Regional knowledge management platform

In April 2020, ECLAC launched the Regional Knowledge Management Platform for the Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean (SDG Gateway). This regional knowledge management hub—developed in response to the needs and demands of member States by ECLAC, in collaboration with all the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with a presence in the region—is a one-stop shop to access all information on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There are two complementary components: the first has general information and content on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the global, regional and national levels, including voluntary national reviews, the work of the United Nations development system at the regional level, and that of national governments and civil society in support of the SDGs; the second is dedicated to the statistical follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## Santiago Commitment: accelerating the implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda



The fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in January 2020. Organized by ECLAC with the support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the session was attended by representatives of the 33 member States and 6 associate members, 365 civil society organizations, 14 agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and 11 intergovernmental organizations. The Vice-Presidents of Colombia, Costa Rica and El Salvador, and some 20 ministers of women's affairs and high-level authorities of machineries for the advancement of women in the region were among the notable participants. At the session, the countries of the region adopted the Santiago Commitment, in which they agreed to "take all necessary measures to accelerate the effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Regional Gender Agenda, strengthening gender institutions and architecture through the prioritization of machineries for the advancement of women and gender mainstreaming at all levels of the State."

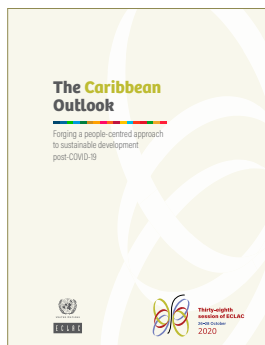


## Adoption of the national policy on social protection and promotion in Haiti



ECLAC has been supporting the Government of Haiti in the development of a coherent national social protection strategy. Together with the World Food Programme (WFP), ECLAC assisted the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour of Haiti in the conceptualization, drafting, discussion, and costing of the strategy. The activities built on work carried out in previous years to strengthen the capacities of government officials, especially those in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, and other stakeholders in the area of social protection. The support provided involved advisory services and contributions to the drafting of and discussions on the national policy on social protection and promotion. In addition, ECLAC prepared a report on the costs of implementing the cash transfers proposed under the policy. In June 2020, the Government of Haiti adopted the national policy on social protection and promotion and an agreement on the costing of the implementation of cash transfer programmes.

## Advances under the “Caribbean first” strategy



The “Caribbean first” strategy, launched by ECLAC in 2018, aims to address the specific and enduring challenges of the Caribbean subregion. At the thirty-eighth session of the Commission several events were fully dedicated to the Caribbean and ECLAC presented [The Caribbean Outlook: forging a people-centred approach to sustainable development post-COVID-19](#), which offers perspectives for dealing with the challenges of response, recovery and resilience-building in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, including strategies to ensure that member States fulfil their commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. The countries of the subregion received extensive support in tackling the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and in development areas, such as the preparation of their voluntary national reviews, statistics, climate change and disaster risk management, gender, social development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. High-level dialogues were conducted with ministers of social development and ministers of finance, on 21 and 28 April 2020 respectively, to discuss the particular needs of Caribbean SIDS in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. With regard to the debt for climate adaptation swap initiative proposed by ECLAC, the Commission put forward additional [specific recommendations](#) tailored to the specific needs of the Caribbean countries. These recommendations were also discussed at the [twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee of ECLAC](#), held in September 2020. On that occasion, the measures proposed by the Commission included a special dispensation to facilitate Caribbean countries’ access to concessional financing, debt relief and an enhanced Debt Service Suspension Initiative, the issuance and reallocation of special drawing rights, negotiations with bilateral creditors, including the Paris Club, and the establishment of a Caribbean Resilience Fund.

## ECLAC contributions to the Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond



In September 2020, in the framework of the seventy-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, ECLAC co-convoked a side event with the Government of Costa Rica to present that country's proposal to establish the Fund to Alleviate COVID-19 Economics (FACE) as a vehicle for international solidarity amid the pandemic-induced economic recession and as an instrument to drive a transformative sustainable recovery. This proposal was developed in the context of the Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond, led by the Secretary-General and convened by the Governments of Jamaica and Canada. The side event sought to discuss mechanisms and build partnerships with a view to operationalizing and implementing FACE as a viable option for addressing the social and economic impacts of the pandemic in developing countries.

## Adoption of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2022)



The [Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (eLAC2022) was adopted by the countries of the region at the Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean. The eLAC2022 agenda is intended as a catalyst for regional cooperation on digital matters and a mechanism to promote policy design, capacity-building and political dialogue on the challenges and opportunities that the digital transformation creates for society and the economy. It includes eight areas of action for the next two years, in addition to a specific section on the fight against the pandemic and facilitating economic recovery. Countries agreed on a number of goals, one of which was to promote a regional digital market strategy that facilitates cross-border e-commerce and digital trade through integration of digital infrastructure and regulatory harmonization; and regulatory frameworks that encourage innovation in digital payment services. To combat the pandemic, the eLAC2022 agenda calls for the design of strategies for economic recovery and reactivation based on productive digital transformation and the use of information and communications technologies.

# 2 COVID-19 Response



**COVID-19  
RESPONSE**

COVID-19 Response: ECLAC support to Latin American and Caribbean countries to address the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic

## COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean

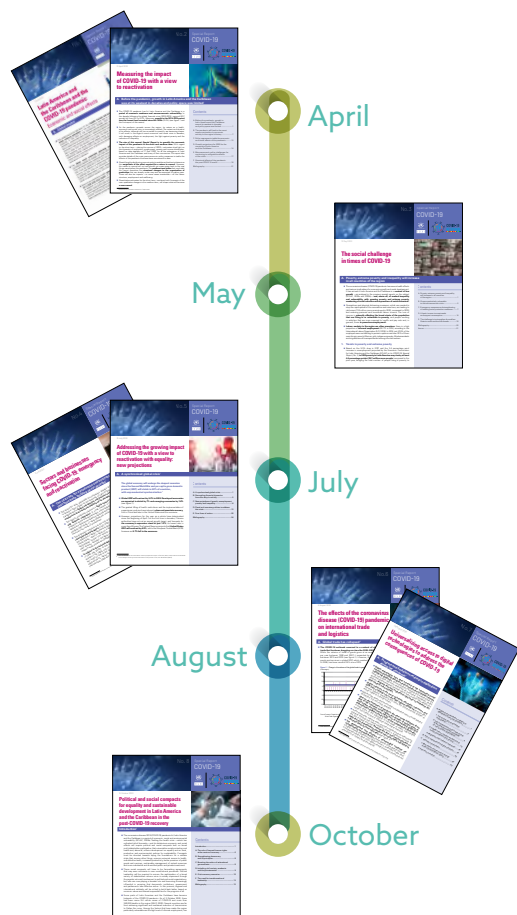
The global scenario amid COVID-19 pandemic made it necessary to take urgent measures and assess their impacts. As mentioned in section 1 above, ECLAC built the Observatory to track the public policies that the 33 countries of the region are implementing to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and offer analyses of the economic and social effects that these policies will have at the national and sectoral levels. Visitors can explore an interactive map for a clear view of the actions taken in each country regarding movement restrictions, health, economics, employment, social protection and education. The Observatory also contains reports and documents examining the economic, social and sectoral impact of the pandemic in the short and medium term.



**COVID-19 Observatory**  
in Latin America and the Caribbean  
Economic and social impact



## Eight COVID-19 Special Reports published in 2020



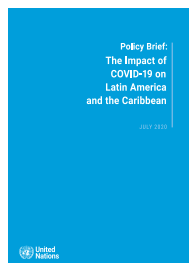
## Publications on the COVID-19 pandemic

ECLAC launched new publications and refocused some of its research towards documenting the impact of the pandemic in the region. In 2020, eight COVID-19 Special reports were published, covering the evolution and effects of the pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean. Some of these reports provided brief sectoral notes on the effects of the pandemic in the region and the challenges related to the care sector, statistics, persons with disabilities, exports of medical supplies, older persons, and violence against children and adolescents, among others; others were joint inter-agency reports on the challenges posed by COVID-19 in education (with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), health and the economy (with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)), food security (with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), the care sector (with UN-Women), and employment (with the International Labour Organization (ILO)). In addition, ECLAC produced a series of short publications assessing the impact of the pandemic in a number of areas, such as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the attainment of the SDGs, household surveys, the consumer price index, national accounts, the balance of payments and foreign trade, to mention a few. The Commission successfully and swiftly secured agreements with cooperation partners to refocus activities under projects financed by extrabudgetary sources in order to address the challenges and opportunities that the pandemic has generated in areas such as, inter alia, the productive structure, biotechnology, financing for development and sustainable tourism.

## COVID-19 Reports

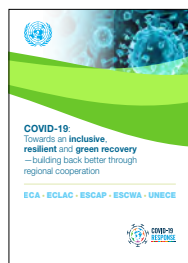


## Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean



During 2020, the Secretary-General presented the *Policy Brief: The Impact of Covid-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean*, which analyses the challenges and impacts of the pandemic in a region already characterized by inequality gaps, high levels of labour informality and fragmented health services and social protection systems. The document, prepared under the joint coordination of ECLAC and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, contains a set of proposals stemming from the Commission's analyses and engagement with the countries of the region, offering concrete policy recommendations to address the unprecedented social and economic impacts of the pandemic as well as the most urgent and longer-term steps for recovery and building back better by redefining the development model towards one with equality and sustainability at its core.

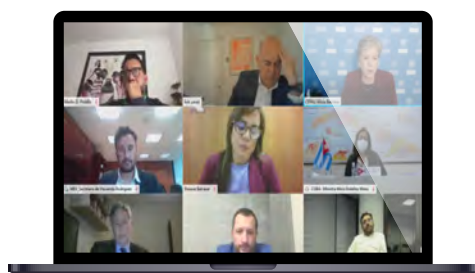
## COVID-19: Towards an inclusive, resilient and green recovery— building back better through regional cooperation



This document, jointly prepared by the five regional commissions, provides key policy messages and highlights the vital role of regional cooperation in an effective recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The document argues that in view of the disruption to lives and economies caused by the COVID-19 crisis and the questioning of current globalization patterns, the regional level will become vital in dealing with cross-border problems. It is at this level that reconnecting economies, reversing the disruption of trade and transport links, and addressing transboundary risks will offer more immediate benefits. The document also emphasizes that the potential of regional collaboration should be fully leveraged to build back better and meet the promise of the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, regional commissions can be catalysts for such action, as they engage a variety of actors across common goals in the five regions.

## Virtual meetings and dialogues with high-level authorities

To support national authorities' efforts to mitigate the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic, ECLAC convened, throughout 2020, virtual intergovernmental meetings and policy dialogues with ministers of finance, social development, science and technology, women's affairs and authorities of machineries for the advancement of women, and heads of national statistical offices from the region. The active engagement of all resident coordinators in the region and representatives of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes was promoted in each of these meetings.

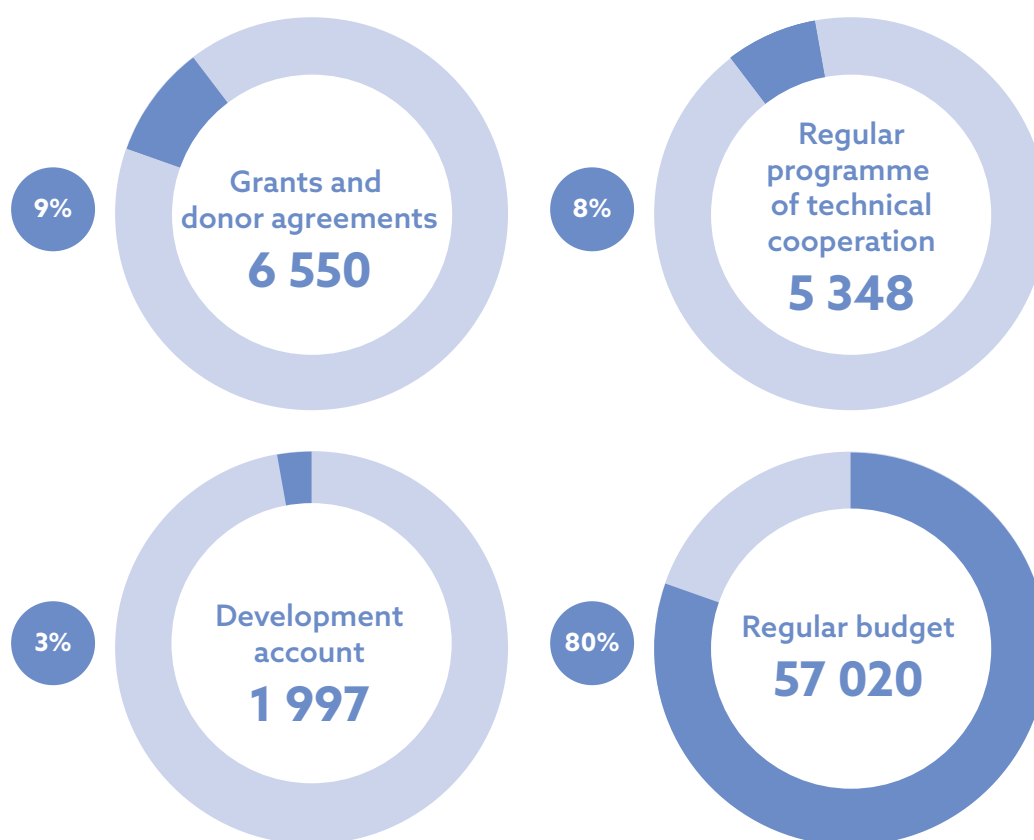


# 3

## Financial resources

**Figure 1**

General overview of ECLAC funding by source, 2020  
(Thousands of dollars and percentages of total resources)



**Figure 2**

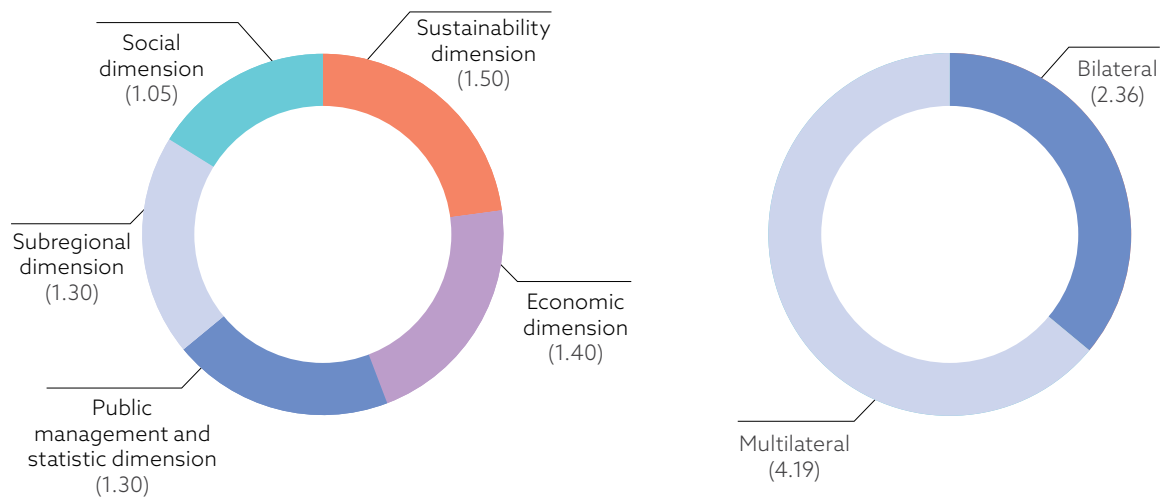
Breakdown of extrabudgetary resources, 2020

A. Grants and donor agreements,  
by thematic dimension  
(Millions of dollars and number of projects)

B. Grants and donor agreements,  
by development partner  
(Millions of dollars and number of projects)

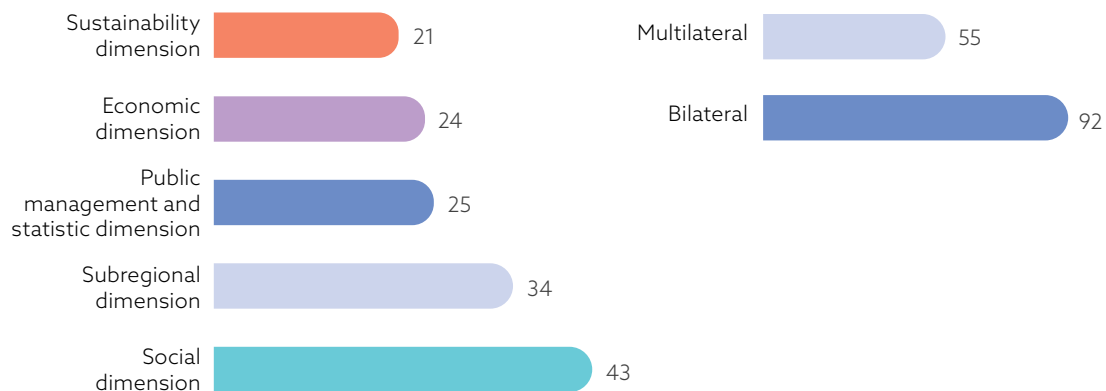
Financial resources in millions of dollars

6.55



Number of projects financed with extrabudgetary  
resources under implementation in 2020

147







# 4

## Subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings

### Thirty-eighth session of ECLAC

Santiago, 26–28 October 2020



Thirty-eighth session  
of ECLAC

At the thirty-eighth session of the Commission (held virtually), the foreign ministers of the region's countries adopted the [Political Declaration on a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Recovery in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). In the framework of the session, the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC held two panels: the first on regional follow-up to the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, and the second on development in transition and the challenges for middle-income countries in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The relevance of the concept of development in transition was highlighted as being instrumental for an evidence-based approach to tackling the development challenges and obstacles to participation in the international cooperation system that are specific to middle-income countries, and new cooperation modalities were proposed, among them ensuring that middle-income countries had a seat at the discussion table. In addition, in the context of the "Caribbean first" strategy advanced by ECLAC, the Executive Secretary presented the document [The Caribbean Outlook: forging a people-centred approach to sustainable development post COVID-19](#). A special session was held with civil society representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean, in which it was underlined that dialogue for engagement, active collaboration and solidarity were more necessary than ever amid the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and for a transformative recovery.

## Fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

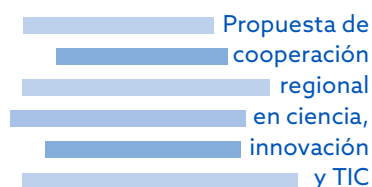
Santiago, 27–31 January 2020



The Conference was jointly organized by ECLAC and UN-Women, in a first that marked a milestone in the reform of the United Nations development system and established a new way of working together on gender equality and women's autonomy in the region. It was attended by representatives of the 33 member States of ECLAC and 6 associate members, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental organizations, who had the opportunity to exchange ideas during the plenary sessions and over 30 side events around the Conference's main theme "women's autonomy in changing economic scenarios". At the session, country representatives from the region adopted the Santiago Commitment, with a view to increasing efforts towards the attainment of the Regional Gender Agenda.

## Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Conference on Science, Innovation, Information and Communications Technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean

2 July 2020



At the meeting (held virtually), Latin American and Caribbean countries discussed and adopted a proposal on regional cooperation in science, innovation and ICT for a science-, technology- and innovation-based response to the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic ([Propuesta de cooperación regional en ciencia, innovación y TIC: Respuesta a la crisis de la pandemia del COVID-19 desde la ciencia, la tecnología y la innovación](#), Spanish only). The Executive Committee also adopted a programme of work for regional cooperation in those areas. Three main priorities were highlighted: coordinating research and development efforts among the countries of the region, reducing gaps in access to and use of critical platforms for social inclusion, and strengthening the health industry at the national and regional level.

## Nineteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC

25–27 August 2020



At the meeting (held virtually), authorities of the national statistical offices of Latin American and Caribbean countries recognized the role of official statistics in public policymaking to mitigate the effects of the health emergency caused by the pandemic and in the post-pandemic economic recovery phase. The countries commended national statistical offices and other agencies producing official statistics for the various actions taken to provide continuity in statistical production during the pandemic, and encouraged them to identify innovations and good practices implemented during this period which could be adopted on a permanent basis to strengthen the efficiency of statistical operations and the quality of official statistics.

## Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean – *Virtual Dialogues*



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Population and Development decided to postpone the fourth session of the Regional Conference until 2021. Notwithstanding, a series of virtual dialogues was organized by the Government of Peru in its capacity as Chair of the Conference, with the support of the Presiding Officers, ECLAC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The objective was to analyse the sociodemographic situation in the countries of the region amid the COVID-19 crisis and the possible impacts—in the short, medium and long term—on the most vulnerable population groups, in light of the priority measures of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.

## Twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee

10 September 2020



Twenty-seventh session  
Caribbean Development and  
Cooperation Committee (CDCC)  
Gros Islet, Saint Lucia, 27 April 2018

The sixth meeting of the Caribbean Development Roundtable and the twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) were held virtually with the aim of taking stock of the progress made in influencing the international community to extend to the Caribbean SIDS the financial support needed, notwithstanding their middle-

income status, and to establish a dialogue on those strategies that would lead the subregion from vulnerability to resilient development and from economic peril to recovery and dynamic growth. The meetings provided an opportunity to consider how to strengthen partnerships responsive to the unique vulnerabilities of the Caribbean, to ensure tangible progress through the application of innovative problem-solving. High-level authorities from more than 25 Caribbean member States and associate members of ECLAC stressed the importance of implementing urgent solutions to support financing for development for the subregion.

## Twenty-eighth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Council for Planning

12 November 2020



At the meeting, high-level authorities from the region examined the scope and challenges of planning for the 2030 Agenda, given the impact of the pandemic, along with the Agenda's ongoing relevance as a blueprint for resilient recovery and for transforming the development model into a more sustainable one. Authorities also analysed the role of planning with a territorial approach in the post-pandemic transformative recovery to reduce inequality gaps at subnational levels, and the planning challenges related to building resilient public institutions.

## Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean

23–26 November 2020



The Conference, jointly organized by ECLAC and the Government of Ecuador, focused on analysing the role of digital technologies in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and on discussing policy priorities on digital matters. Countries of the region stressed the urgency of making progress on inclusion and digital transformation to emerge from the crisis and achieve development with equality and environmental sustainability. Participants adopted the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC 2022), providing continuity to a regional process that began 15 years ago with countries outlining a shared vision on digital technologies and their impact on development.

## Second meeting of the Signatory Countries to the Escazú Agreement

9–10 December 2020



The meeting was held under the auspices of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. The representatives of 24 Latin American and Caribbean nations that have already signed the Agreement discussed strategies and partnerships for its prompt entry into force and implementation. Special sessions were also organized addressing the national actions taken by signatory countries, as well as cooperation for implementation of the Agreement. As part of the meeting, a high-level event on the occasion of the Human Rights Day took place. Authorities from Costa Rica and Mexico, along with senior representatives of United Nations organizations and other prominent figures, highlighted the importance of the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean for defending and protecting human rights and the lives of environmental activists.

## XXIX General Assembly of Ministers and High-level Authorities of the Housing and Urban Development Sector in Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI)

December 2020



At the meeting, member States adopted the Bogotá Declaration, in which they decided to create a technical secretariat within the Executive Committee of the General Assembly and that ECLAC and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) would jointly assume that role. In recognition of the importance of MINURVI as a space for intergovernmental coordination and cooperation to promote the sustainable development of human settlements, the technical secretariat will seek to promote better interaction between the Assembly and the various subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings of ECLAC to establish linkages between the analysis and formulation of sustainable development policies.

# 5

## Publications

In its role as a leading think tank in Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC undertakes research and prepares documents and studies in substantive areas related to the three dimensions of sustainable development in the region. The analytical effort of gathering, organizing, interpreting, and disseminating information and data led to the production of 303 publications and technical materials in 2020.

ECLAC publications were downloaded a total of 10,343,625 times in 2020. An illustrative selection of these publications is presented in this section. All publications are available for download on the ECLAC website.

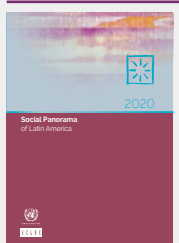
### Six flagships: annual reports that track a comprehensive vision of development



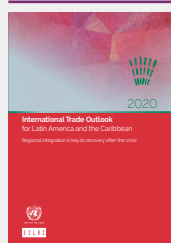
Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020



Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020



Social Panorama of Latin America, 2020



International Trade Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020



Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020



Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020

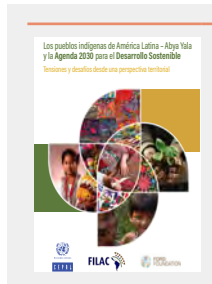
## Downloads of the flagships launched in 2020

(Three months following the launch)

	↓	By language	By gender	By source
Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020		Spanish <b>33 893</b>	<b>50%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>36 169</b>
		English <b>3 539</b>	<b>50%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>710</b>
		Portuguese <b>451</b>		Google <b>1 004</b>
		Total <b>37 883</b>		
Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020		Spanish <b>45 596</b>	<b>52%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>45 990</b>
		English <b>5 725</b>	<b>48%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>440</b>
		Portuguese <b>370</b>		Google <b>5 261</b>
		Total <b>51 691</b>		
International Trade Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020		Spanish <b>9 629</b>	<b>58%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>10 123</b>
		English <b>1 618</b>	<b>42%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>505</b>
		Portuguese <b>124</b>		Google <b>743</b>
		Total <b>11 371</b>		
Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020		Spanish <b>11 069</b>	<b>51%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>11 214</b>
		English <b>840</b>	<b>49%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>213</b>
		Portuguese <b>78</b>		Google <b>70</b>
		Total <b>11 987</b>		
Social Panorama of Latin America, 2020		Spanish <b>14 065</b>	<b>58%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>15 060</b>
		English <b>1 540</b>	<b>42%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>600</b>
		Portuguese <b>125</b>		Google <b>711</b>
		Total <b>15 730</b>		
Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020		Bilingual English/Spanish <b>5 597</b>	<b>66%</b> Female	ECLAC Website <b>5 427</b>
			<b>34%</b> Male	Digital repository <b>150</b>
				Google <b>20</b>
		Total <b>5 597</b>		



## Support for subsidiary bodies and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs



Los pueblos indígenas de América Latina – Abya Yala y la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible: tensiones y desafíos desde una perspectiva territorial



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the new global and regional context: scenarios and projections in the current crisis

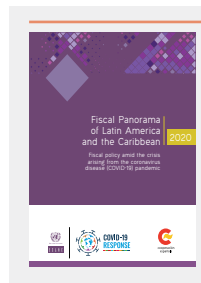


First report on progress in the implementation of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2020–2021, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

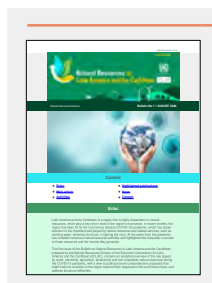
## ECLAC Review and other institutional publications



CEPAL Review



Fiscal Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020



Natural Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean - No.1

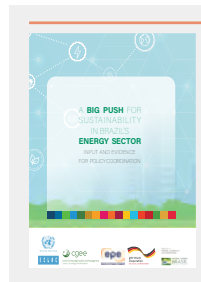


Latin American Economic Outlook 2020: Digital Transformation for Building Back Better

## Selection of thematic publications

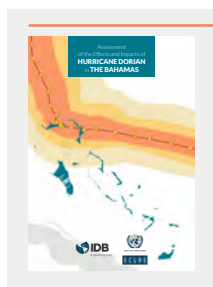


The outlook for oceans, seas and marine resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: Conservation, sustainable development and climate change mitigation



A big push for sustainability in Brazil's energy sector: input and evidence for policy coordination

## Selection of thematic publications



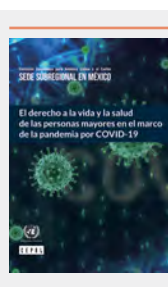
Assessment of the Effects and impacts of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas



Gestión de planes de acción locales de gobierno abierto: herramientas para la cocreación, el seguimiento y la evaluación

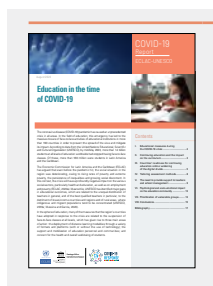


Tracking the digital footprint in Latin America and the Caribbean: lessons learned from using big data to assess the digital economy



El derecho a la vida y la salud de las personas mayores en el marco de la pandemia por COVID-19

## Joint publications with other agencies



Education in the time of COVID-19 (ECLAC and UNESCO)



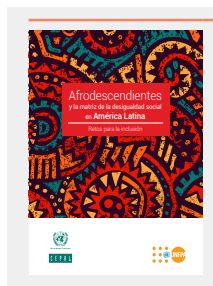
Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19: towards comprehensive systems to strengthen response and recovery (ECLAC and UN-Women)



Health and the economy: A convergence needed to address COVID-19 and retake the path of sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC and PAHO)



Preventing the COVID-19 crisis from becoming a food crisis: urgent measures against hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC and FAO)



Afrodescendientes y la matriz de la desigualdad social en América Latina: retos para la inclusión (ECLAC and UNFPA)



Summary of the first regional dialogue in Latin America and the Caribbean "On the road to equality": 30 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (ECLAC and UNICEF)

# 6 Activities and results

## The economic dimension

Under subprogramme 1, Linkages with the global economy, integration and regional cooperation, a series **of new tools were developed and improved to support international trade and integration**. ECLAC has continued to work with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Asian Development Bank to assemble a [global input-output table](#) which will improve knowledge of interregional production networks, promote the development of value chains and contribute to the formulation of policies for increased integration between both regions. Another achievement was the completion of new input-output tables (IOTs) for the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Through these IOTs, and by assessing the impact of potential trade agreements between Ecuador and the United States of America and Ecuador and the Pacific Alliance, respectively, ECLAC supported countries to improve decision-making tools in the area of trade policy, as well as to analyse links between trade and production. Finally, thanks to its estimation of ad valorem equivalents of non-tariff measures in intraregional trade, ECLAC provides better data in support of regional integration.

ECLAC work on trade was enriched by integrating **cross-cutting gender and environmental perspectives**. Studies analysing gender gaps in international trade were conducted and the [Conference](#) on International Trade and Gender Equality was organized to explore achieving gender equality through trade policies and the promotion of women entrepreneurs. Technical support was also provided to Colombia on how to mainstream gender in trade policy.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in requests for impact evaluations of different types: identification of winning and [losing sectors, trade projections](#), impact on regional value chains, transport and logistics (of vaccines), and the role of regional integration during the recovery phase, among others. **Export restrictions on medical supplies** were imposed by more than 70 countries following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. ECLAC examined the risks this represented for the region, in the light of its high dependency on imports of medical supplies from the rest of the world, and the urgent need to [improve its productive capacity](#) in this strategic sector.

Furthermore, the pandemic highlighted **the strategic nature of transportation and logistics and their role as an engine for regional integration**, incorporating the gender perspective and digital technology, and expanding accessibility and territorial inclusion. In this regard, work under the subprogramme focused on strengthening capacities to



improve the connectivity of international transportation and examined the role of resilience as a key aspect of infrastructure policy. ECLAC delivered a training [course](#) to senior port official in the countries of the Greater Caribbean belonging to the Association of Caribbean States, to address the main trends and future prospects of ports with a strategic vision of the evolution of the port and maritime industry. In addition, the Commission developed a [new methodology to calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in maritime transport](#), using it to obtain a preliminary estimate of emissions from a representative sample of exports from Latin America and the Caribbean.

The socioeconomic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on businesses, and in particular small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The great majority of companies in the region have recorded significant decreases in income and are having difficulty remaining in business. The recovery will be slow and gradual and, despite the programmes put in place by governments, a high level of business and job destruction is expected. In this context, under subprogramme 2, Production and innovation, ECLAC worked to enhance digital transformation and productive diversification in the region through economic reactivation, by conducting [diagnosis and analysis](#) to help governments navigate this uncertain time. The Commission put forward **policy recommendations to support businesses—with a special focus on SMEs**—and prevent capacity destruction, and conducted an analysis of the importance of [digital technology](#) in addressing the crisis. In this connection, at the [Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), countries of the region adopted the [Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean \(eLAC2022\)](#), which aims to promote a regional digital market strategy that facilitates cross-border e-commerce and digital trade. The eLAC 2022 Agenda calls for the design of strategies for post-pandemic economic recovery based on productive digital transformation and the use of ICTs and strengthening distance education modalities in national education systems.



The Commission continued to support **digital transformation** in the region. Technical assistance was provided to the Pacific Alliance for the development of a subregional digital market strategy and to the Central American Regional Telecommunications Commission (COMTELCA) in

the design of a Digital Agenda. ECLAC assisted Argentina in the design of policies to promote the food sector and the medical devices value chain, and supported countries of the region in the use of big data in official statistics to quantify progress in digital development to measure the digital economy. This measurement is key to designing evidence-based digital development policies in the region. In this vein, the Commission built capacity in national statistics offices to pilot the incorporation of big data in the generation of statistics. Under the subprogramme, several studies were also published on specific aspects of the digital economy, SMEs and productive development in the region. The aim of these knowledge products was to strengthen institutional knowledge and capabilities in Latin American and Caribbean countries for formulating sound industrial and technological policies. ECLAC also led a reflection on the importance on [investing for the future](#), looking at foreign direct investment (FDI), small and medium enterprises, smart cities, and the Belt and Road Initiative.

*I am grateful for the support provided by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) through the “Big Data for Measuring the Digital Economy” project, implemented with funds from the Development Account [...]. The project has developed capacity in the use of big data techniques and tools, generating key indicators that are very useful in characterizing and understanding the dynamics of Internet-based companies. This has been especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, in that it has revealed the increased use of digital channels.*

*Alessandro de O. Maia Pinheiro, Coordinator, Structural and special studies and surveys, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)*

Under subprogramme 3, Macroeconomic policies and growth, the Commission undertook real-time analysis of the evolving **macroeconomic impact of the pandemic in 2020**, providing stakeholders with detailed analysis of emerging trends in key indicators such as growth, employment and investment. ECLAC also empowered policymakers in the region, providing unparalleled coverage of policy developments in the fiscal, monetary, and financing for development spheres. To this end, the focus of substantive publications such as the *Fiscal Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020*, the *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020*, and the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020* was shifted to the socioeconomic impact of the crisis. These publications were complemented by two COVID-19 *Special Reports* that provided updated forecasts and analysis during the year. ECLAC also collaborated with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Inter-American Center of Tax Administrations (CIAT) to produce the annual *Revenue Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2020 report—the premiere source of tax statistics in the region—* and with ILO to publish studies on the *employment situation* in the region.

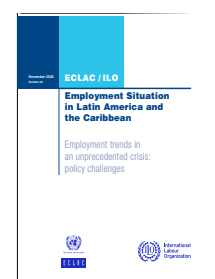
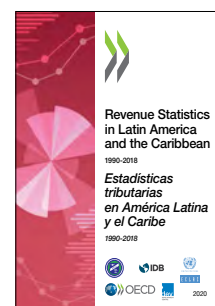
Throughout the year, the Commission created **spaces for South-South cooperation and regional dialogue** on macroeconomic policymaking during the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual *meetings* of Latin American ministers of finance, including in the framework of the XXXII Regional Seminar on Fiscal Policy, provided policymakers the opportunity to share their experiences on enacting fiscal policies to tackle the unfolding human and economic crisis in the region. The discussions established the clear need to expand access to financing on favourable terms and the growing concerns regarding the high cost of debt service in times of crisis. ECLAC has transmitted these concerns to the highest levels of the United Nations system and continues to advocate for financing for development on behalf of Latin American and Caribbean countries at the international level.

The Commission's work on **public spending statistics** has taken on renewed importance as the region responds to rising social demands and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, work under the subprogramme was leveraged with the European Union's Regional Facility for Development in Transition to pilot the OECD social expenditure statistics methodology in 10 countries. Technical assistance was also provided to Brazil and Colombia, with both countries poised to produce these statistics on a regular basis. In the year under consideration, the most comprehensive regional database of statistics of public spending by function was also created under the subprogramme.

The COVID-19 crisis has revealed the growing role that informal and "gig workers" play in economies. However, policy formulation has not kept pace with the rapid evolution of the labour market. ECLAC provided assistance to *Costa Rica*, the *Dominican Republic*, and Ecuador on how to **improve working conditions for digital platform workers**. As digital innovations change the way most workers do their jobs, improving the link between education, training and labour market needs has become crucial. In Colombia, El Salvador and Uruguay, ECLAC helped to **promote investment in the skills demanded by the labour market**. Additionally, ECLAC worked with Costa Rica to support the Environmental Big Push and decarbonization by moving towards **electric public transport**.

*"We express our sincere thanks for the support and assistance provided by the staff of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in the preparation of the study on digital. We are grateful that the Dominican Republic and the technical team representing the country were included in this research project, which is of vital importance for creating and promoting new jobs, as well as for providing input in the public debate on the formulation of regulatory policies on workers' rights."*

*Tania Guenen, Vice-Minister for Coordination of Security and Investment Projects,  
Ministry of the Presidency, Dominican Republic*





## The social dimension

Under subprogramme 4, Social development and equality, ECLAC organized **virtual meetings with ministries of social development**, which provided an unparalleled space for countries of the region to share their responses to the social impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The main focus of these meetings was social protection for poor and vulnerable groups. The Commission also facilitated exchanges and discussions on issues related to the implementation of the Regional Agenda on Inclusive Social Development with a new virtual [“Social Development Community” website](#).



### Observatory on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Through these dialogues, shared opportunities and challenges were identified. For example, after social development ministries pointed out that analyses on social information systems and registries to identify recipients of social protection policies were a key need, a [regional study](#) was prepared on this topic. Several other ECLAC reports on COVID-19 helped to disseminate knowledge on the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic on different social groups, including [children](#),

and to provide key policy recommendations, such as an [emergency basic income](#). Research on digital inclusion has been very relevant in times of the pandemic, focusing on digital citizenship, as well as on [digital skills and gaps among children and adolescents](#). ECLAC also provided a detailed regional panorama of the **social protection measures** adopted by Latin America and the Caribbean countries to face the COVID-19 pandemic, through the COVID-19 Observatory and the [Observatory on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).

The subprogramme provided technical assistance to countries of the region to improve the design of emergency social protection measures, such as the Family Emergency Income in Chile, and to evaluate the cost of expanding social protection (in Chile and in [Haiti](#)). In 2020, with the combined technical support of ECLAC and WFP, [Haiti adopted its national policy on social protection and promotion](#), which represents a major milestone for the country (see section 1).



Official photograph of fourth meeting of Concausa in 2020

In a ceremony held in March 2020 on the occasion of the [fourth version of the Concausa 2030 initiative](#), jointly organized by ECLAC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and *América Solidaria*, adolescents from sixteen countries of Latin America and the Caribbean reaffirmed their commitment to overcoming poverty and inequality in the region. This initiative seeks to identify and disseminate innovative social and environmental projects led by adolescents taking action to change the current realities of their communities.

Under the subprogramme, [research](#) was also conducted on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the exercise of the rights to social protection, health, education and work for **persons with disabilities** in the region. The study showed that the pandemic has exacerbated the pre-existing inequalities faced by persons with disabilities, and put forward a set of recommendations to mitigate the impacts of the health crisis and guarantee their rights.

At the request of the Government of Chile, in 2020 ECLAC participated in the **Advisory Council for Social Cohesion**, whose mission was to provide analysis and guidance to national authorities on the main reasons underpinning widespread social unrest and increasingly deficient social

cohesion. ECLAC also formulated recommendations on how to monitor social cohesion, making it a cross-cutting objective of public policies. An October 2020 [report published by the Ministry for Social Development and the Family of Chile](#) summarizes the main conclusions and policy recommendations of the Council.

*"Allow me to take this opportunity to thank you and the entire ECLAC technical team for your participation and support in the preparation of the Jajapo Paraguay National Poverty Reduction Plan. [...] We believe that the Plan is a powerful instrument for coordinating goods and services in the territory and strengthening social protection, economic inclusion and social promotion programmes."*

*Mario Alberto Varela Cardozo, Minister, Ministry of Social Development, Paraguay*

*"We express our gratitude for the technical assistance that is currently being provided by [...] ECLAC regarding the estimation of the cost of a social protection floor that is sensitive to the children's rights in Chile. This valuable input will undoubtedly contribute to the draft bill establishing a system of guarantees and comprehensive protection of children's rights."*

*María Elena Arzola G., Chief of Planning and Studies, Undersecretariat of Children, Ministry for Social Development and the Family, Chile*

In 2020, work under subprogramme 5, Mainstreaming the gender perspective in regional development, continued on the use of **gender statistics** for policymaking to ensure that no women and girls are left behind, with the organization of [courses](#) for policymakers and events focusing on the [Caribbean](#) and the [COVID-19 context](#). In response to the pandemic, ECLAC and UN-Women held a meeting, "[Briefing of ministers and high-level authorities of machineries for the advancement of women in Latin America and the Caribbean: the response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis from a gender perspective](#)". Authorities shared contingency plans and protocols aimed at coping with the saturation of health systems, lockdowns and social isolation. ECLAC presented an initial mapping of the initiatives announced by the Latin American and Caribbean countries to incorporate the gender perspective in their responses to the pandemic. The mapping led to an updated digital repository available in the Covid-19 Observatory.

The [fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) held in January 2020 was an important milestone. At the meeting, countries of the region adopted the [Santiago Commitment](#), a highly progressive set of agreements to advance gender equality and women's autonomy in Latin America and the Caribbean. Governments also agreed to implement gender-sensitive countercyclical policies to mitigate the impact of economic crises and recessions on women's lives and to promote regulatory frameworks and policies to galvanize the economy in key sectors, including the care economy.

In 2020, research and technical assistance actions related to the **care economy** were also intensified under the subprogramme, with the goal of making the care economy visible as one of the engines of an economic recovery that leaves no one behind. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, women in Latin America and the Caribbean devoted three times as much time as men to unpaid care work, a situation that has been exacerbated by confinement measures. The international online course: [Care policies with a](#)



Fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, 27–31 January 2020



[gender perspective](#), which ran from September 2019–August 2020 and was organized under the subprogramme in partnership with the Latin American Social Science Council (CLACSO), strengthened national capacities in this area.

Further technical assistance delivered under the subprogramme included support provided to the Mayor of Bogotá for the production of a georeferenced [care map](#), and to Costa Rica for the implementation of the [First Action Plan \(2018-2023\) of the National Policy for Equality between Women and Men in Training, Employment and the Enjoyment of the Products of Science, Technology, Telecommunications and Innovation](#).

*“The governments of the region endorsed the Santiago Commitment and reaffirmed their political will to move towards gender equality and women’s empowerment. Through the Santiago Commitment, which was remarkably visionary in anticipating the challenges we are facing today, we agreed to recognize care as a key sector for boosting the economies of the region. Therefore, and in line with the Regional Gender Agenda, this Commitment reaffirms the importance of progress in the design of comprehensive care systems that promote co-responsibility on two fronts: between men and women; and between the State, the market, the family, and the community.”*

*Mónica Zalaquett, Minister of Women’s Affairs and Gender Equity, Chile*



Technical assistance to evaluate the census process in Panama, January 2020

Censuses and population estimates and projections at the national and subnational level are key for economic and social recovery actions and the allocation of resources. In the context of the 2020 round of censuses, ECLAC provided support to the countries of the region in their census processes and in updating population estimates and projections. Under subprogramme 6, Population and development, the Commission provided intensive technical assistance to 12 countries in the region on issues such as the inclusion of populations of African descent in the census (Chile, Mexico and Paraguay) and on the use of technological innovations (Chile, Panama and Plurinational State of Bolivia). The technical assistance provided, combined with the sharing of experiences



and good practices, helped to define the contents of the census in several countries of the region, taking into consideration the new social dynamics and the need to improve key factors such as the updating of cartography, data collection methods and intercultural participation, among others. The update of the Retrieval of Data for Small Areas by Microcomputer (REDATAM) software, developed by ECLAC, has also supported the preparation of analyses by national institutions for evidence-based decision-making.

The [Regional Specialization Course in Demographic Analysis for Sustainable Development \(CREAD-2020\)](#) was successfully delivered virtually to participants from national statistical institutes, other governmental institutions and universities from 12 countries in the region. This 20-week course helped to increase national capacities in terms of the production and analysis of demographic information and the number of trained professionals who can then provide training in demography, thus **widening the pool of demographers able to inform public policy formulation**.

ECLAC responded to requests from the countries of the region by conducting studies and **dialogues to assess the impact of the pandemic on the hardest hit vulnerable population**

**groups**, including [international migrants](#), [older persons](#), indigenous peoples, [Afrodescendent populations](#) and [persons with disabilities](#), among others. The goal was to increase information, knowledge and tools to inform decision-making through [analysis of the impacts of COVID-19 on these groups](#). National policies implemented were also examined to assist in identifying gaps and formulating recommendations thereon. In addition, to disseminate these tools, ECLAC organized high-level and technical dialogues within the framework of the Regional Conference on Population and Development, with the active participation of countries. Also participating and sharing experiences were a large number of representatives from civil society and academia and other interested stakeholders.

ECLAC provided support to several countries in the region in the generation of data on [international migration](#). As part of the preparatory activities for the regional review on the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, a series of thematic webinars on the objectives of the Compact and the review process were organized for governments, civil society and other stakeholders, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other United Nations agencies.

Under the subprogramme, and with the support of the Ford Foundation, research was also conducted on [indigenous peoples and the 2030 Agenda](#), examining in particular the challenges faced from a territorial perspective, which include the intersectionality between forests and climate change and between poverty and unemployment, as well as territorial inequalities in health, education and housing. Another line of research and training was on **national transfer accounts** and the impacts of demographic changes on the sustainability of social protection systems and public finances, and projections of public expenditure on pensions, health and education.

*"I would like to thank you [...] for your kind communication regarding the progress of the Regional Specialization Course in Demographic Analysis for Sustainable Development (CREAD-2020), the first module of which concluded successfully. In this regard, the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics reiterates its commitment to continue providing institutional support to the three professionals who participated in the [...] academically demanding course, with ongoing evaluations and practical work. In this regard, I would like to express once again our gratitude for the sustained capacity-building efforts of CELADE, which help to improve national and regional statistics."*

*Dante Carhuavilca Bonett, Director, National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, Perú*

## The environmental dimension

Under subprogramme 7, Sustainable development and human settlements, the Commission continued to support the **Escazú Agreement** process, assisting countries of the region on issues such as the implementation of the Agreement with clear actions for civil society (Mexico), the management of biodiversity information (Ecuador) and stakeholder engagement for the ratification and implementation of the Agreement (Saint Lucia), among others. At the [second meeting of the countries signatory to the Regional Agreement on Access to information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), held under the auspices of Antigua and Barbuda, discussions centred on strategies and partnerships to improve cooperation for implementation and the celebration of [Human Rights Day and Human Rights Defenders Day](#).

The subprogramme provided analytical tools to support Latin American and Caribbean countries in carrying out a progressive structural change towards lower carbon footprint sectors, which

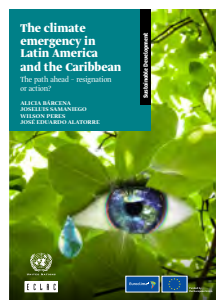


is at the core of the **big push for sustainability**. Specific analyses were conducted for Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic on areas such as the bioeconomy, clean energy, decarbonization, sustainable urban mobility, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The results of these analyses, as well as related policy recommendations, were included in the document *"Building a New Future: Transformative Recovery with Equality and Sustainability"* that was presented to ECLAC member States at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission.

In the Dominican Republic, ECLAC provided inputs for the design of **long-term climate change strategies** and helped to improve projections to support its electricity policy. Under the subprogramme, the countries belonging to the Council of Ministers of Finance of Central America, Panama, and the Dominican Republic (COSEFIN) were given a space to exchange ideas and experiences regarding the use of green fiscal policies and the options and opportunities for moving towards a sustainable recovery, identifying new technical collaborations that could help to integrate climate action in fiscal policies.



The **impact of COVID-19 on cities** has forced local governments to redefine their priorities. There is a significant need to support the drafting of recovery and rebuilding plans and programmes for a sustainable, green recovery. In the framework of a Development Account project, ECLAC has worked with the cities of Guayaquil, Lima and Santo Domingo to map the economic and financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare diagnostic reports. Initial local sustainable urban development proposals were drawn up to illustrate possible action areas that will be comprised within the recovery plans for each city. In addition, the UN Regional Commissions, jointly with UN-Habitat and UNCDF, organized a Global Virtual Workshop, which provided a global platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange to promote the urban economic recovery and build more resilient cities in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.



ECLAC provided support to the General Assembly of MINURVI that took place in December 2020 and published research to inform public policies on climate change, the financing of such policies, and innovations in public policymaking. In this regard, the Commission published the book *The climate emergency in Latin America and the Caribbean: the path ahead - resignation or action?*, which presents the results of more than a decade of work carried out by the Commission on the economics of climate change. It analyses conclusive global data and the impact of climate change in the region, examining sectors such as agriculture, health, transport, and energy.

*"The representatives of the countries [...] thank the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean for its support as secretariat and the progress achieved in the deployment of the Observatory on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean"*

*Report of the second meeting of the countries signatory to the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, 9-10 December 2020*

*"The region has a valuable tool to seek people-centred solutions grounded in nature: the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement). As the first regional environmental treaty that aims to safeguard the right of present and future generations to a healthy environment, the Escazú Agreement provides tools to address the most pressing environmental concerns. By enhancing access to data, knowledge, and information, and by engaging vulnerable groups, it upholds fundamental values of democratic life and fosters responsive public policies. When the agreement enters into force and is implemented, countries will be better placed to preserve their strategic natural heritage through more inclusive and community-oriented actions."*

United Nations, *Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean*, New York, 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to improve the accessibility and affordability of drinking water and energy. In 2020, under subprogramme 8, Natural resources, ECLAC worked with governments of the region to improve their capacity in designing public policies related to water management, renewable energy, natural resources governance, road safety, logistics and mobility. With the support of German cooperation, special efforts were made to study good practices in cross-sectoral coordination

and the water-energy-food nexus. Technical guidelines to design and implement the nexus approach in public policies and investment decisions were developed. In April 2020, the fourth edition of the Regional Nexus for Latin America and the Caribbean was held virtually, attended by more than 170 participants from 23 countries and 70 institutions from the region. The event provided a platform for discussion and analysis of the importance of normative and institutional frameworks for the implementation of the nexus perspective in public policies in the region.

In the area of **energy and energy efficiency**, the Regional Technical Forum of Energy Planners (FOREPLEN) of Latin America and the Caribbean promoted by ECLAC has established itself as a benchmark in energy planning issues, especially in energy transformation and renewable energy. The fourth edition of the Forum was held in June 2020, bringing together more than 80 representatives of 18 countries of the region, as well as representatives of national, regional and global organizations of the energy sector. At the event, Central America was presented as an example of energy integration. ECLAC also developed a proposal for a conceptual framework to address **energy and water security**. The Energy Efficiency Indicators Database – Regional Observatory on Sustainable Energy (BIEE-ROSE) project, launched in September 2020, has become a tool recognized by the governments of the region for its usefulness in the preparation of energy efficiency indicators. In this regard, participating countries agreed on a workplan for 2021 and a set of energy indicators to track progress towards achieving SDG 7 in the region. Furthermore, technical assistance was provided to Argentina, Cuba, Panama and the Plurinational State of Bolivia to strengthen national capabilities in developing and implementing energy indicators and formulating evidence-based public policies.

Under the subprogramme, work on **agricultural development** and on related issues such as innovation, structural change, and the **bioeconomy** continued. Special emphasis was placed on the agricultural sector's ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and guarantee food supply at the



EL DESAFÍO HÍDRICO EN AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE  
EN EL CONTEXTO DEL CAMBIO CLIMÁTICO





regional level, while exporting food products to other regions. Technical support was provided to Costa Rica in the drafting of its national bioeconomy strategy, which was launched in September 2020, and to Colombia, for the launch of the Bioeconomy Mission. Continuous support was provided to the Platform for Climate Action in Agriculture (PLACA), launched at the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 25). In 2020, the first edition of the *Natural Resources Bulletin in Latin America and the Caribbean* was published by ECLAC, focusing on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on natural resource management in the region. This new bulletin will be published on a regular basis with the objective of disseminating progress in governance, policies, management and the use of natural resources and associated basic and ecosystem services. Lastly, good practices in mining activities continued to be shared under the subprogramme through a series of studies to inform policymaker decisions in the areas of mining governance, [mining and development](#), and [closure of mining facilities](#).

*“On behalf of the SNIP Network, I would like to thank the Water and Energy Unit of the Natural Resources Division for its work in organizing the webinar on public investment planning with a water-energy-food (WEF) nexus approach [...] We believe that the “Methodological guide: design of actions with a water-energy-food nexus approach for Latin American and Caribbean countries” developed by ECLAC and presented at the event, can be a very useful tool for the design and evaluation of plans, policies and projects in the water, energy, food and environment sectors, allowing for improved evidence-based decision-making in public management.*

*Francisco Tula, Director of the Public Investment Unit, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Policy of Costa Rica, and Chair, Latin American and Caribbean Network of National Public Investment Systems (SNIP Network)*

## The public management and statistics dimension



The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak has reaffirmed the crucial role of the State in providing emergency responses and drafting sustainable recovery

policies. This requires stronger planning skills, with an effort to **link emergency responses to long-term policies** once the epidemic is over, as well as effectiveness, efficiency and transparency in the implementation of public policies for development. Under subprogramme 9, Planning and public management for development, technical assistance, capacity-building and applied research contributed to the delivery of more and better services to countries of the region, providing support to face the pressing planning and public management needs arising from the pandemic and post-pandemic recovery. Technical assistance to Panama facilitated the creation of a Division of Territorial Development and discussion of the law establishing the Institute of Planning for Development. Technical support was also provided to Costa Rica, Paraguay and Uruguay, as well as to MERCOSUR in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In Mexico, following support in the form of three courses and 26 technical assistance activities to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL), more than 400 public officials received capacity-building in the evaluation of social programmes. Technical support was provided to Honduras in the preparation of its voluntary national review, to be

presented at the high-level political forum. Lastly, after technical assistance and capacity-building activities delivered under the subprogramme, 25 countries of the region have integrated the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in their national planning tools, advancing towards the **convergence of the 2030 Agenda with national development planning processes**.

In view of the travel restrictions and physical distancing measures implemented by countries of the region in the context of the pandemic, and to ensure continuity in the provision of training and the strengthening of technical capacities of national officers in the region, [13 face-to-face courses](#) organized under the subprogramme —on topics ranging from open government and territorial management to planning with gender equality— were shifted to virtual modalities. In the area of **Planning and disaster assessment**, the first course on the ECLAC Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA) methodology with a particular focus on the Caribbean was offered in 2020. In total, over 730 students enrolled in training courses delivered by ECLAC on planning and public management.

During the year, the [Regional Observatory on Planning for Development](#) was enriched with new analytical content and visual tools, as illustrated by the launch of the new SNIP Network portal. New notes on planning relating to open government, disaster risk management, public budgets and the SDGs, climate actions in national development plans and incorporating the social price of carbon in the evaluation of public investments projects were also added to the Observatory. High-level planning authorities from more than 20 countries attended the meeting of the [Presiding Officers](#) of the Regional Council for Planning. Countries shared their experience and perspective in building resilient national planning systems amid the crisis, planning for the post-pandemic recovery, and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



*"I would like to thank ECLAC for the support our country has received with technical cooperation in the area of interoperability [...] with activities such as the State interoperability strategy, the public value proposal, the definition of services and support for Digital Identity."*

*Paola Vega Castillo, Minister of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science, Innovation, Technology and Telecommunications, Costa Rica.*

Under subprogramme 10, Statistics, ECLAC provided support to national statistical offices and central banks in analysing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on national statistical systems and instruments, providing recommendations to address the emerging challenges. From the outset of the pandemic, ECLAC has been **tracking the public policies implemented by the 33 countries of the region**, as an input to the analyses of the economic and social impacts at national and sectoral levels. Actions were categorized in the following areas: movement restrictions, health, labour, economy, education, social protection and gender. To provide detailed access to this information, ECLAC developed the [COVID-19 Observatory](#) in Latin America and the Caribbean in a joint effort with the United Nations agencies, funds and programs and the resident coordinators in the region. The Observatory contains a geoportal section showing the actions and measures, the date on which they were taken, the government organization responsible and the budget allocated to them.

The [nineteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas](#) was organized by ECLAC in August 2020, with the participation of 38 member States, 10 associate members, 20 United Nations entities and specialized agencies, and resident coordinators. The

meeting provided an opportunity to identify the challenges and opportunities posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to national statistical offices, continue the regional discussions on the role of national statistical offices as data stewards and analyse the different methodologies for reporting on progress in the SDGs, in addition to reviewing the progress in the implementation of the 2020–2021 programme of the Conference. Under the subprogramme, support was provided to countries of the region to improve their **environmental statistics** to track the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In Honduras, Panama and Uruguay, with support from German cooperation and a Development Account project, new SDG indicators were developed, and a technical inter-institutional team was trained on how to build, sustain, and update the set of indicators and build new ones in the future. As part of the International Comparison Program (ICP), supported by the World Bank, technical assistance was provided through the subprogramme to countries of the region in the completion of the 2017 ICP cycle. With respect to national accounts, support continued to be provided for the **harmonization of basic economic statistics** and the implementation of the latest revised international nomenclature in Colombia, El Salvador and Honduras, among other countries. In October 2020, thanks to ongoing technical assistance provided under the subprogramme, Uruguay published the results of the update of the base year of its national accounts.



The **measurement and mapping of poverty data** has been a priority area in the subprogramme, even more so in the context of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on poverty indicators in the region. In collaboration with OECD, ECLAC explored the use of perception surveys to measure quality of life in Latin America. During the year, several methodological

documents were published under the subprogramme with recommendations to address the impact of the pandemic on the work of national statistical offices to produce and compile statistics. In view of the travel restrictions resulting from the pandemic, the National Statistical Offices of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and the Plurinational State of Bolivia received remote technical support in the adoption of methodological procedures to correct bias stemming from high no-response rates. As a result, these countries were able to continue publishing unbiased official statistics with information collected through household surveys. In this regard, the subprogramme organized a virtual course on sampling methodologies for household

surveys, attended by national officers, which included a theoretical component and a hands-on, computer-based component, strengthening technical capacities within the NSOs.



*“Thanks to the technical support from ECLAC, the Central Bank has been able to estimate the CPI with the requisite methodological robustness, obtaining a suitable indicator for monitoring consumer prices and tracking inflation in the country amid the health emergency.”*

*Ramón González Hernández, Deputy Manager for National Accounts and Economic Statistics, Central Bank, Dominican Republic*

## The subregional dimension

In 2020, after a long process supported by ECLAC under subprogramme 11, Subregional activities in Central America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico, the countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA) adopted a [new energy strategy](#). The **Central American Sustainable Energy Strategy 2030 (EES-SICA 2030)** was the result a virtuous process of bringing together national and regional energy strategies and plans, building on the complementarities and synergies among these countries to attain SDG 7 by 2030, while ensuring that the energy sector contributes to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of development, and to all the SDGs.



Technical assistance was provided under the subprogramme to Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia in coordination with the Foundation to Promote the Competitiveness of Micro and Small Enterprise in Central America (CENPROMYPE) to **strengthen the regional value chain in digital animation**. The objective was to formulate recommendations for strengthening the value chain and its production policy, and to promote linkages between enterprises and governments to improve the regional industry's competitiveness. The results were presented at the Expo Virtual Panama. An analysis was also provided on the main factors that could drive or inhibit the creation of a digital services market in Central America.

A key area of activities in 2020 was strengthening the national capacities of the countries of the subregion to address the challenges of **population ageing** and incorporating older persons into the COVID-19 response in order to make this population group visible and provide timely information for decision-making.

ECLAC collaborated with the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, and Panama in the design of **alternative methods to measure the rural space**. These methods will make it possible to better capture the increasing complexity of rural territories, with the goal to support the achievement of the SDGs in rural areas. In addition, a [study](#) on **financial inclusion and possible gender-based discrimination in access to financing** in Guatemala was published.

Recipients of ECLAC technical assistance activities included national and subnational institutions responsible for identifying **linkages between SDGs and planning or implementing public policy**. In Honduras, this resulted in the preparation of the voluntary national report, which included a plan to implement specific actions to accelerate compliance with national commitments under the 2030 Agenda. Support was provided to Guatemala in the costing of national public policy priorities, mainly linked to several SDGs. At the request of the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), ECLAC prepared [a proposal for joint action for competitiveness, productive integration and connectivity in the countries of the northern triangle of Central America](#). The Dominican Republic received technical assistance on the strengthening of the coffee value chain in the context of climate change adaptation. Lastly, countries of the subregion were provided with technical assistance in areas such as public investment, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.





*"I wish to express our appreciation for the continued support and technical assistance that has been provided to the eight Member Countries of the System through the UCE-SGSICA. The support in energy matters provided to the Council of Energy Ministers (CME), steering committees and their technical working groups has been invaluable for the work carried out in the framework of the fulfilment of the Central American Sustainable Energy Strategy 2020."*

*Vinicio Cerezo, Secretary-General, SICA*

Under subprogramme 12, Subregional activities in the Caribbean, comprehensive research was undertaken on the impact of the pandemic on the subregion, resulting in publications such as *The Caribbean Outlook 2020: forging a people-centred approach to sustainable development post-COVID-19*; and "The case for financing: Caribbean resilience building in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic". Ministerial-level consultations were also held during the year to discuss sectoral impacts of COVID-19 on the Caribbean subregion, dealing with issues such as the economic and financial impact, social welfare, ICTs, and gender and health.



The sixth meeting of the Caribbean Development Roundtable focused on the multidimensional impact of COVID-19 in the Caribbean and explored strategies to secure urgent financial support for the countries of the subregion facing grave solvency issues given their already heavily indebted status. Heads of State, ministers and other high-level authorities from more than 25 Caribbean countries and ECLAC associate members, along with officials from international and multilateral organizations, stressed

the importance of implementing urgent solutions to support financing for development for the subregion in the era of COVID-19 and beyond. At the meeting, national authorities adopted the recommendations presented by ECLAC and called on the international community to help address the Caribbean's unique vulnerabilities at the proceedings of the High-level Event on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond, as well as other forums, through debt reduction and the establishment of a Resilience Fund, to secure low-cost long-term financing that allows for urgent resilience-building. Another important milestone was the [twenty-eighth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee \(CDCC\)](#), which focused attention on the critical development challenges facing the subregion that must be urgently addressed to promote recovery and resilience in the post-pandemic phase.

In supporting country efforts to achieve Agenda 2030, ECLAC provided technical assistance to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago in preparing their first **voluntary national reviews** chronicling progress achieved in implementation of the SDGs which would be presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in July 2020. Support was also given to Grenada for the establishment of its National Sustainable Development institute. ECLAC also conducted numerous capacity-building exercises on topics such as the formulation of SDG indicators based on population and housing census data processed using the REDATAM software, [evidence-based policy planning](#); [resilience-building through social protection](#), and [financing and planning for disaster risk management](#) in Caribbean SIDS.

The ECLAC **Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA)** on the impact of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas in late 2019, which was reported in January 2020, was used by the government to inform the development of national policies on resilience building, and to update existing legislation regarding the impact of natural disasters and strategies for resilient reconstruction. National officers of the subregion benefited from a training course on financing and planning for

disaster risk management in Caribbean SIDS, and a series of virtual workshops were held to promote the use of gender statistics for policymaking to ensure that no women and girls are left behind.

Much attention was also given to **gender equality**. ECLAC assisted Grenada in culling a confidential microdata file from its 2018 survey on violence against women, for the use of researchers. Saint Lucia received assistance in assessing the implementation of its Gender Equality Frameworks and Practices. ECLAC also undertook an advocacy campaign on child abuse response and prevention as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence activities in Trinidad and Tobago. Data on the Caribbean countries were included in the gender section of the COVID-19 Observatory on containing the measures to benefit women and girls in the subregion, as well as in the publication *"The economic autonomy of women in a sustainable recovery with equality"*.



Throughout the year, ECLAC provided support to regional organizations, under subprogramme 13, Support for regional and subregional integration and cooperation processes and organizations. Although the fourth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was postponed due to the pandemic, ECLAC moved forward with the organization of side events in order to continue **working with civil society at large, the private sector and United Nations system organizations** considering the importance of strengthening the dialogue and work towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**South-South cooperation** continued to play a central role in the Commission's activities. The Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC met in the framework of the thirty-eighth session of ECLAC and held two panels, the first on regional follow-up to the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, and the second on development in transition and the challenges for middle-income countries in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, two virtual expert meetings were organized to present the evaluation of South-South cooperation experiences in Barbados and Jamaica, and in Uruguay and Paraguay, the latter prepared in collaboration with the Social Institute of MERCOSUR.

Another area of intervention was to encourage **multi-stakeholder dialogues and participation in the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda**. In May 2020, ECLAC organized a webinar on the significance of the 2030 Agenda in times of COVID-19 pandemic with the participation of the civil society. A meeting of the civil society mechanism with resident coordinators was also organized. In this regard, such dialogues took place under the subprogramme through participation in virtual meetings with the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Supreme Audit Institutions (OLACEFS), ParlAmericas, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (Parlatino), the Central American Parliament (Parlacen), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and other relevant stakeholders.



During 2020, ECLAC organized several training courses on its **Methodology for Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA)** to strengthen national and regional capacities in addressing the impacts of natural phenomena and extreme events. In collaboration with PAHO, a course on guidelines for the assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic was delivered, attended by 50 officials from 10 countries of the region. A similar course was organized with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

(UNDRR), attended by more than 70 officials from disaster risk reduction offices of 16 countries of the region, and a training course was delivered to the National Office for Emergencies (ONEMI) of the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security of Chile, attended by 54 national officers.

*"On behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and ParlAmericas [...] we would like to thank you for your participation [...] in our working session of the 17th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas: towards a circular economy [...]. The recommendations and experiences shared by ECLAC and its vibrant moderation of the discussion on the steps that parliaments can take to support the transition to a circular economy allowed parliamentarians and parliamentary officials to learn in greater detail about public policy and legislative options that can enable a fair and sustainable economic recovery."*

*María Inés Solís, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Costa Rica,  
Member of the Board of Directors, ParlAmericas*

*Elizabeth Cabezas Guerrero, Member of the National Assembly, Ecuador,  
former President, ParlAmericas*

*Eduardo Cruickshank, President of the Legislative Assembly, Costa Rica,  
host parliament of the 17th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas*

## National offices

The **ECLAC office in Washington D.C.** provided relevant and timely analysis of developments in the United States economy and global financial markets to assist countries of the region in evaluating key analytical and policy challenges in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. A special report on the impact of the pandemic on the United States economy was [presented](#) by the Executive Secretary. Emphasis was placed on the country's macroeconomic, financial, trade, investment and migration policies in the context of the pandemic and the evolution of international financial markets with a focus on the Caribbean. In terms of liaison with international organizations, the Office contributed to the implementation of the Joint Summit Working Group mandates and provided inputs to the new administration in preparation of the IX Summit. The Office also collaborated with the Government of Canada, the Organization of American States (OAS) and several other institutions through its participation in the Inter-American Task Force on Women's Leadership, and with PAHO on a joint declaration on non-communicable diseases.

The **ECLAC office in Bogotá** has been working on the issue of territorial inequality, through its Development Account project on rural-urban linkages. Despite the lockdowns, many regional development stakeholders participated in the project's virtual activities and discussions, proposing strategies to enhance the linkages between rural and urban areas in economic, social, institutional, environmental and cultural spheres, for a more equitable, sustainable and shared development that builds peace in the territory. The office carries out technical cooperation exercises with the Committee of Experts in Poverty Measurement of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE); in matters of subnational taxation with the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit; in social protection systems in the framework of the Employment Mission in Colombia led by the National Planning Department (DNP); and in the transformation of education in Bogotá by 2038, through the *Misión de Educadores y Sabiduría Ciudadana* education programme launched by the Bogotá Mayor's Office.

The **ECLAC office in Brasília** set up the [Repository](#) of case studies on the big push for sustainability in Brazil. Following an open call for case studies on sustainable development investments in the country, the repository was launched with over 60 cases in May 2020, and the 15 cases

selected as the most transformative towards the big push for sustainability were announced in a [webinar](#) that was attended by experts and high-level authorities. The Commission's work in Brazil inspired the Brazilian Federal Senate to [launch](#) a subcommittee to propose public policies, structural reforms, and economic and social development that support the "big push for sustainability". In the new context imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the subcommittee was a forum for debate and presenting proposals for a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, positioning the big push for sustainability as a hub for a [sustainable recovery](#) in Brazil. Within this framework, the office also started working on specific projects on [gender](#) and on employment, and published a study on [green fiscal policies](#), [a report on electrification of transport in Brazil](#) and [four technical reports on sustainable energy transition in Brazil](#).

The **ECLAC office in Buenos Aires** responded to demands for assistance that rose steadily in 2020. With backing from German cooperation, the office provided support to the Government of Argentina in designing policies to bolster the medical equipment sector, identified as a key sector for development. This culminated in a proposal for the institutional design of an agency for the promotion of medical technologies bringing together various actors in this sector. Within the framework of cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, ECLAC conducted a series of technical assistance activities in the field of fiscal policy planning, which helped to enhance the country's capacity to identify fiscal loopholes. Lastly, the recently created Ministry of Women, Genders and Diversity of Argentina requested technical assistance from ECLAC to prepare a federal map of care services, an innovative virtual platform to document and locate the public and private care institutions available that cater to different groups (early childhood, the elderly and persons with disabilities). ECLAC assisted with the conceptual design and technological infrastructure for the map, training of public officials on geographic information systems and studies on the impact of COVID-19 on care organization.

*"I am pleased to confirm receipt of the Study on Harmonization of Federal Taxes in Argentina prepared by ECLAC. I am grateful for the contribution and collaboration on a subject that is very useful for the tax simplification and harmonization strategy being carried out by the Secretariat for Tax Policy. [...] These valuable inputs were included in the last Fiscal Consensus 2020, signed by the governors and the President of the Republic last December, which set forth a proposal to work on a comprehensive programme for federal tax simplification and coordination."*

*Roberto Arias, Secretary for Tax Policy, Ministry of Economy, Argentina*

The COVID-19 crisis has left Uruguay, like the rest of the region, in great need of urgently designing economic and social policy measures to deal with this situation, with limited fiscal space. The work of the **ECLAC office in Montevideo** sought to support those efforts, on both the economic and social fronts. The office ensured continuity and progress through a research agenda fundamentally linked to international integration, to the regional and global economy, social development and inequality. It continued its line of research on gender inequalities, both through the study of [wage inequalities](#) in Uruguay (with UN-Women) and inequalities in employment trajectories in technologically intensive sectors, especially in digital technologies in Latin America. The ECLAC office in Montevideo has also been working on statistics in poverty measurement, offering assistance to the Uruguayan authorities in that domain. Studies on structural change, social policy, inequality and trade and economic integration have been published. The nature of the office's work has required close collaboration with the Government of Uruguay and with entities such as UNICEF, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in the framework of joint work with the Resident Coordinator Office and the United Nations country team.

# 7 Strategic partnerships for development

In 2020, ECLAC demonstrated a rapid response capacity to sudden changes in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling the Commission to continue contributing to the sustainable development of countries in the region, through development cooperation projects in close association with bilateral and multilateral partners from within and outside the region. Hence, the Commission adjusted its resource mobilization strategy, mainly by:

- Extending the duration of current projects to allow for additional time for the execution of activities severely impacted by lockdowns, closure of national borders and other travel restrictions, while adapting to virtual modalities of execution;
- Reprogramming existing projects to include activities and modalities to support member States' efforts to manage the crisis and promote a better, more sustainable and resilient recovery; and
- Mobilizing additional resources for projects aimed directly at supporting member States in the post-pandemic, transformative recovery phase.



This strategy builds upon donors' confidence that in times of competing financial priorities, investing in multilateral cooperation at the regional level through ECLAC is an efficient course of action for attaining concrete and sustainable impact on development with fewer resources. The Commission's agile and solid reaction generated interest in several cooperation partners for new projects, with special emphasis on supporting the countries of the region in crisis mitigation and transformational recovery.



Despite the impact of the pandemic on normal project operations, particularly regarding delivery of technical assistance activities in the field and face-to-face meetings to exchange experiences, disseminate good practices and provide policy advice, in 2020 ECLAC maintained a high level of implementation of cooperation activities.



In terms of resource mobilization, 44 new framework agreements and 49 projects (some with a horizon of 2023) were signed during 2020, for a total value of approximately US\$ 15.3 million. This represents an increase of 13% compared to the US\$ 13.5 million signed in 2019, a remarkable achievement in such an adverse context and a clear reflection of the recognition of the Commission's capabilities and performance as an efficient development agent in the region.



## Framework agreements and technical cooperation projects 2020

Table 1 shows the number of framework agreements signed during 2020, i.e., those agreements that have been signed with governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions in order to start a working relationship that do not involve the transfer of financial resources.

Table 2 shows the number of technical cooperation projects signed in 2020 which involve the transfer of financial resources between the subscribing institutions.

Table 1 ECLAC technical cooperation framework agreements signed in 2020		Table 2 ECLAC technical cooperation projects signed in 2020	
Bilateral agreements		Bilateral projects	
Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean	14	Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean	5
Governments outside the region	5	Governments outside the region	21
Non-governmental organization in Latin America and the Caribbean	3	Non-governmental organization in Latin America and the Caribbean	2
Non-governmental organizations outside the region	3	Non-governmental organizations outside the region	0
Academic institutions in the region	2	Academic institutions in the region	0
Academic institution outside the region	0	Academic institution outside the region	0
Private Sector	1	Consortium	1
<b>Total bilateral agreements</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Total bilateral projects</b>	<b>29</b>
Multilateral agreements		Multilateral projects	
Agencies of the United Nation system	8	Agencies of the United Nation system	16
Development Bank	1	Development Bank	0
European Commission	2	European Commission	3
Intergovernmental and other organizations	5	Intergovernmental and other organizations	1
<b>Total multilateral agreements</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>Total multilateral projects</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total framework agreements signed</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Total framework projects signed</b>	<b>49</b>

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



At the bilateral level, ECLAC continued to consolidate its cooperation with countries in the region including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Suriname and Uruguay. In the case of Colombia, the collaboration initiated in 2019 was expanded to support South-South cooperation in the region on administrative records, and statistical capacities in general, to enhance the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

ECLAC also continued to strengthen its partnerships with countries outside the region, such as France, Germany, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Spain. ECLAC partnered with Norway to prepare "The outlook for oceans, seas and marine resources in Latin America and the Caribbean: conservation, sustainable development and climate change mitigation". This was an important regional contribution to the global debate on sustainable oceans. France also supported the Commission's work on marine and terrestrial



Norwegian Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs



biodiversity, through several expert meetings. With the support of German cooperation, ECLAC was able to provide fast, tangible support to countries in the region to cope with the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through the implementation of 14 specific activities from March/July 2020, in areas such as social protection, health industry capacity and tools for contact tracing, amongst others. In Argentina, for example, support was provided to the Ministry of Health in linking health policies with science and technology and productive development to improve universal access to health and mitigate the impact of health crises. Another important result was a comprehensive study with estimations of the impacts of the pandemic in the tourism sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC also launched a new large, multidimensional project with Germany entitled "Inclusive and sustainable smart cities in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean". This project sets a milestone by applying the big push for sustainability to one of the sectors that ECLAC has identified as a key driver of sustainable development: sustainable mobility and urban space. In addition, German cooperation also supported ECLAC with a new technical assistance programme for energy transformation in the public sector to achieve sustainable development and climate change goals (GET.transform).

Cooperation with the Republic of Korea was oriented towards strategic issues for its relationship with Latin American and Caribbean countries, in particular the small and medium-sized enterprises sector, the relationship with the Community of Latin American and the Caribbean States (CELAC), the Pacific Alliance countries as well as other emerging topics like smart factories or nature-based-solutions for a sustainable post-COVID-19 recovery.

ECLAC continued its work with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) on key thematic issues related to gender equality, planning and public management for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the promotion of fiscal policies and the implementation of the Comprehensive Development Plan for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and south-southeast Mexico. The partnership with Spain allowed ECLAC to provide countries with crucial information on how the region was responding to the unequal impacts of the pandemic on women through the COVID-19 Observatory in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regarding multilateral cooperation, the consolidation and strengthening of the strategic alliance between ECLAC and the European Union is a remarkable achievement, which allowed both institutions to deepen the debate on the need to adapt the development cooperation system to cater for the particular needs of middle-income countries as they struggle on the path towards sustainable development. In November 2020, an addendum to the agreement establishing the Regional Facility for Development in Transition for Latin America and the Caribbean, was signed, which will enable the implementation of projects in several key areas with an emphasis on innovative approaches to deal with structural gaps in middle-income countries. In addition, ECLAC launched a new project with the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) to



prepare a study on the contribution of culture to economic development in Ibero-America. Successful collaboration with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) led to the implementation of projects related to economic statistics and institutional strengthening of the ministries of finance of the region, respectively. ECLAC also signed new agreements with two important regional intergovernmental organizations: the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Supreme Audit Institutions (OLACEFS according to its Spanish acronym) and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO).



In the spirit of the reform of the United Nations development pillar, in 2020 ECLAC redoubled its efforts to optimize synergies with the activities carried out by entities of the United Nations system in the region. In this regard, joint work was undertaken with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNICEF, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Volunteers, UN-Women, with a major project in Colombia, and WFP.



After the significant milestone achieved in 2019 by the first-ever participation of ECLAC in a project financed by a United Nations multi-partner trust fund (MPTF), the year 2020 was an opportunity to consolidate this new path with the signing of five new projects through this mechanism, namely: (i) one under the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund in Cuba, (ii) two projects to support socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis in Argentina and in Chile, financed by the United Nations COVID-19 response and recovery multi-partner trust fund, and (iii) two road safety projects funded by the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund (UNRSF), one in Argentina and another in Brazil.



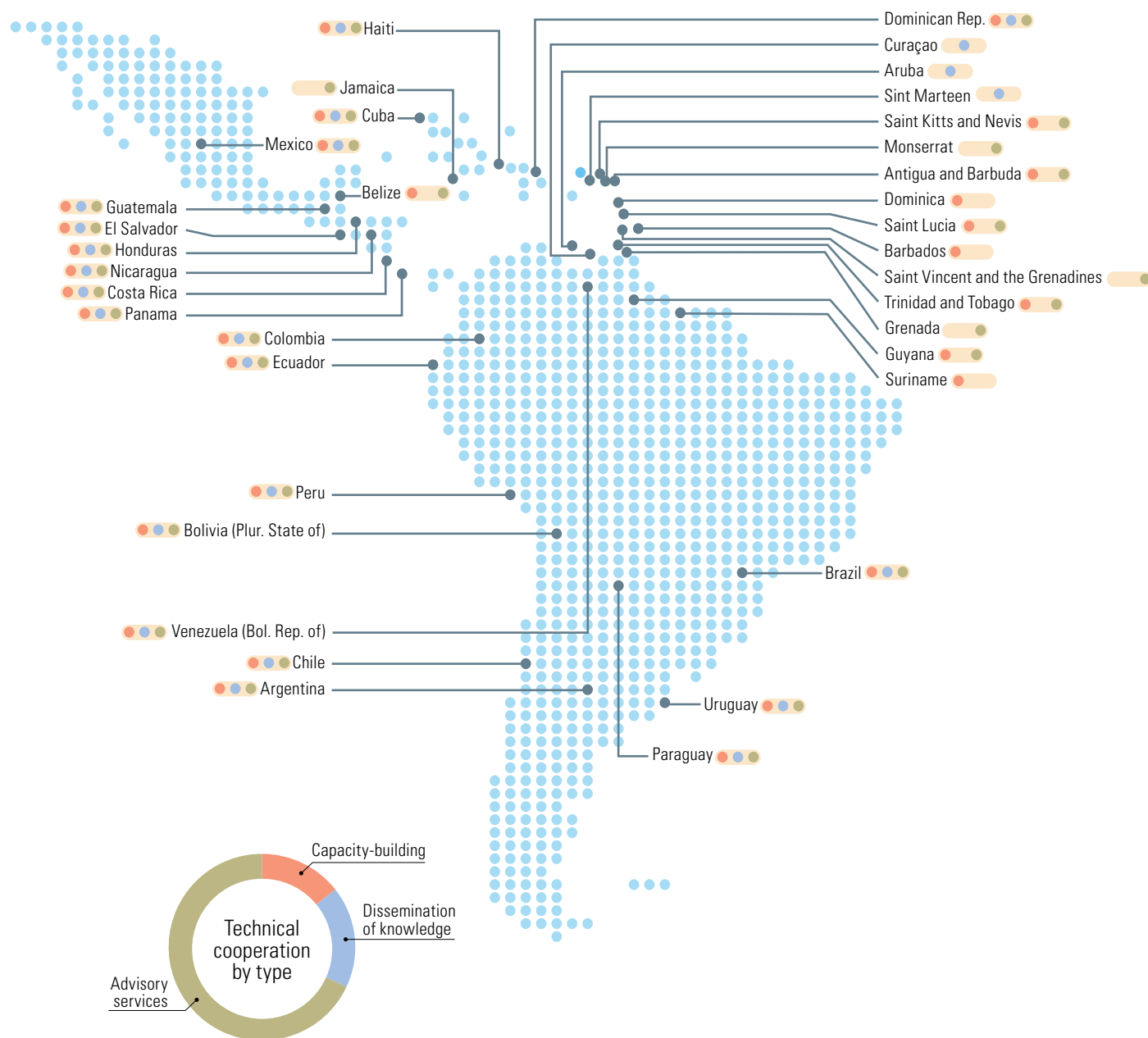
Concomitantly, ECLAC continued to diversify its partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organizations by launching two new projects. The first, financed by the Open Society Foundation, promotes gender mainstreaming in public fiscal, trade and care policies in Latin America, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The second, financed by the Ford Foundation, will facilitate collaboration between the two institutions on the future of workers in the post-COVID-19 era, through a multidisciplinary project that will provide governments and other key stakeholders with knowledge, evidence-based recommendations, skills and other innovative tools to design and implement policies to address the challenges for the future of the workers in the region brought about and exacerbated by the COVID-19.



In the post-pandemic recovery phase, the Commission will redouble its efforts to widen its partnerships for development. The objective is to further expand technical cooperation activities, not only to provide technical assistance and contribute to strengthening national capacity in the region but also to validate the practical application of concepts and new instruments emerging from the normative and analytical work on international cooperation for development from the perspective of middle-income countries.



# 8 Technical cooperation

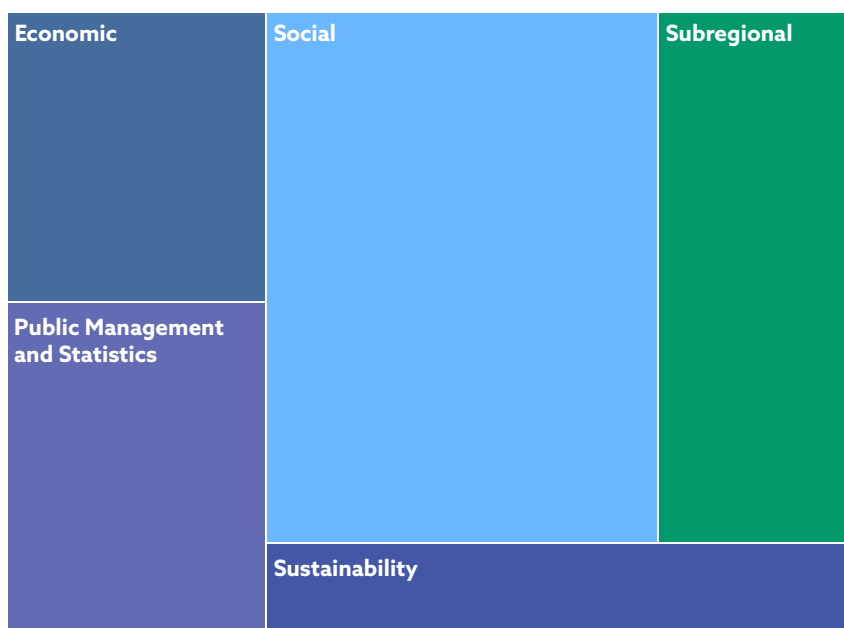


**Note:** The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

### Technical Assistance by thematic area



## Technical Assistance by dimension





# 9 Results-based management and outreach

Starting in 2020, the United Nations switched to an annual budget cycle. ECLAC has adapted its strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting processes and timelines to meet the new demands of the annual cycle while continuing to deliver on its mandate seamlessly during this transition phase.

Throughout the year, senior management convened strategic planning meetings with ECLAC substantive divisions, subregional headquarters and country offices to take stock of the state of implementation of programmatic commitments and reflect on rapidly changing priorities as well as new virtual modalities of operation due to the COVID-19 crisis. ECLAC realigned its programme of work and reallocated the funding to meet the commitments and provide a timely and opportune response to the urgent needs and demands of member States facing the challenges related to the health and socioeconomic crises stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

ECLAC presented the *Draft programme of work of the ECLAC system, 2022* and the *Report on the activities of the Commission, 2019* to its member States at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission, in October 2020. The Commission also prepared, in coordination with the United Nations Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget, the proposed programme budget for 2022, which is being reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and will subsequently be submitted to the Fifth Committee at the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The Programme Planning and Operations Division of ECLAC assisted other areas of the Commission regarding the implementation of the programme of work and reported on the results. The Division also managed the evaluation function and produced assessment reports for two Development Account projects—one addressing demographic transition, and the other focusing on input-output tables—and followed up on the implementation of recommendations made in previous assessment reports.

ECLAC is committed to collaborating with oversight bodies such as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), and the Board of Auditors and implementing their recommendations to improve its accountability and compliance processes.

## Spotlight on gender mainstreaming at ECLAC

Gender mainstreaming was a priority for ECLAC in 2020. In January, the evaluation of the previous gender mainstreaming strategy was completed. The outcome of this evaluation was used throughout the year to guide the design of a new strategy which was built on the lessons learned and the successful implementation of its predecessor. The new and enhanced Strategy for gender mainstreaming at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2020-2025, was launched by the Executive Secretary in a town hall meeting in December 2020. It aims to reinforce the Commission's historical institutional commitment through three key areas of action: making a political commitment to promoting gender equality in the region; incorporating the gender perspective into the ECLAC programme of work; and reinforcing institutional commitment to achieve gender equality. In addition, a strengthened governance framework has been developed with the launch of a network of gender champions across the Commission. The gender champions have been trained to improve their ability to support the Commission's gender mainstreaming efforts.

Finally, ECLAC worked to mainstream gender throughout its programme of work. Examples of this are the [Conference on International Trade and Gender Equality](#), the workshop on [Women's Autonomy in the Digital Economy](#), and the training course [Gender Mainstreaming in the Territory](#).



## Library

### Key figures: Hernán Santa Cruz Library in 2020



#### Digital repository

**42 926**

Digital ECLAC publications

**7**

languages

**116**

collection

**10 057**

individual authors

**10 274 401**

downloads in 2020



#### Research guides

Specialized web portals on particular topics with information resources from ECLAC and other sources

**48**

research guides

**805 316**

times visited in 2020

#### EXPLORA

The new Information and Federated Search Library System



#### Collections and databases in 2020

**406 683**

digital collection titles

**26**

databases

**245 412**

e-books

**93 677**

Journals

**23 200**

specialized journals

**115 197**

print collection titles

**110 492**

books

**4 705**

specialized journals

**11 764**

new acquisitions



#### Training and outreach

**7 000**

Twitter followers

**500**

Youtube followers gained in 2020

**2 240**

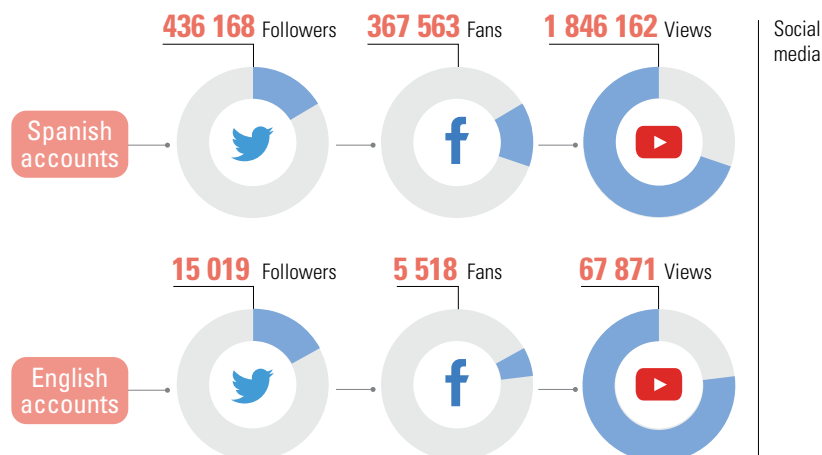
users were trained in 2020

Most of them online:

Webinars and MS Teams

## Press and communication

### Key figures: ECLAC press and communication in 2020



**138**

exclusive interviews given



**60 213**

references in the mass media



Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)  
Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)  
[www.eclac.org](http://www.eclac.org)



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