Building an Inclusive Mexico

POLICIES AND GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

OECD

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OECD
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

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Foreword

The OECD has been championing gender equality on many grounds for many years. We have not only provided evidence of why gender discrimination is bad for individuals, for families and for society as a whole, and the level of well-being they aspire to, but also how it negatively affects the growth potential of our economies. The strong support that the OECD has provided, as well as the diligent work carried out by the Sherpas (including the OECD), have elevated the importance of the gender agenda and have led to strong commitments by both G20 and G7 Leaders. This work has helped to further advance the G20 gender target, aiming to reduce the gap in labour force participation rates between men and women by 25% by 2025.

Building an Inclusive Mexico: Policies and Good Governance for Gender Equality, prepared in collaboration with INMUJERES, is our effort to "go national" on the gender agenda. It provides a detailed analysis of where Mexico stands on gender equality, and advances specific recommendations to improve outcomes. It confirms that, in recent years, Mexico has taken very important actions at the policy level to promote gender equality. This includes the National System of Equality between Men and Women – headed, for the first time, by President Peña Nieto, and with the representation of the OECD in its public session in 2016 – and all the important measures that derived from it. The presence of the President showed renewed commitment to allow a better integration of gender considerations into the policy cycle, in line with the original objective outlined in the National Development Plan 2013-2018. It also meant strong engagement to achieve better outcomes in the gender agenda and reaffirmed Mexico's commitment to the G20 gender target.

Now that all these measures and tools are in place, we need to make them count in order to ensure effective change. Mexico needs to invest in institutions and capacities to ensure that the framework delivers. Effective implementation and a change of cultural settings are crucial, as the country, in some areas, lags behind not only OECD countries, but also Latin American countries with similar levels of development. Mexico still has one of the lowest rates of female participation in the labour market. Only 47% of working age Mexican women are part of the labour force, compared with an OECD average of 67% and levels of around 60% in Chile, Colombia, Peru and Brazil. The country also experiences one of the biggest gaps between male and female NEETs (not in employment, education or training) and has the highest adolescent pregnancy rate in the OECD. Even though there has been important progress in the number of women elected to the federal Chamber of Deputies, women are still underrepresented in the public sphere at the subnational level. Even worse, violence against women still profoundly affects the social fabric of the country and gender stereotypes are widespread. In many cases, mass media, including television, reproduces these biases, which results in even higher levels of gender inequality and gender discrimination.

These inequalities not only have moral and ethical implications, but also economic ones. OECD analysis has shown that halving the gender gap in labour force participation

between Mexican men and women by 2040 could increase per capita GDP by nearly 0.2 percentage points, per year, over baseline projections. Mexico's decisive actions to narrow gender gaps must therefore remain a priority. INMUJERES has played a substantive role in further enhancing gender related policy frameworks and promoting measures such as gender quotas, which have proven to be very effective and have placed Mexico as the second country in the OECD (only behind Sweden) with the highest share of women in national parliaments: 42%, well above the OECD average of 28%. Scholarships for girls to remain in school and better childcare facilities are other measures than go in the right direction and should be expanded.

The recommendations put forward in this report build on the OECD Gender Recommendations on Employment, Education, and Entrepreneurship (2013) and Gender Equality in Public Life (2015). They all focus on the well-being not only of women, but of society as a whole. Widening the affordability and access to child care, for example, is not only good for women, but also for families, and it is one of the most important equalisers in a highly unequal society. Improving productivity (through higher efficiency, but fewer hours spent at work) and reducing informality will provide parents with the possibility of balancing family and work responsibilities, and enjoying a more fulfilling life. More importantly, ensuring access to efficient and effective judicial systems, to avoid violence against women, will impact the provision of protection for the society as a whole. All of these recommendations are part of a comprehensive package that we hope will support Mexico's efforts to achieve a more inclusive society and economy.

We hope that this report and its recommendations make an important contribution to reducing gender gaps and improving the empowerment of women. Mexico faces many challenges, and has advanced an important agenda for structural reform. Empowering women, Mexico's most underutilised resource, will help advance an effective agenda to promote development and well-being. Mexico can count on the OECD to accompany it in this journey.

Angel Gurría

OECD Secretary-General

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Building an Inclusive Mexico: Policies and Good Governance for Gender Equality was prepared by the OECD in the context of an agreement with the Government of Mexico, in order to assess gender inequality and women's empowerment in economic and public life in Mexico. This project was overseen by the OECD Chief of Staff, Special Counsellor to the OECD Secretary-General, and Sherpa to the G20, Gabriela Ramos.

The report was prepared jointly by teams in the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour, and Social Affairs and the OECD Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development, as supervised by Willem Adema and Tatyana Teplova, respectively, and under the overall supervision of Rolf Alter, Director of the OECD Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development; Stefano Scarpetta, Director of the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour, and Social Affairs; and Monika Queisser, who leads the OECD Horizontal Project on Gender Equality.

The lead author of Chapters 2, 3, and 4 was Valerie Frey. The lead author of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 was Pinar Guven. Chris Clarke, Addie Erwin, Elena Gentili, and Apolline Jaoui made key contributions.

The preparation of this report was initiated in February 2016, when a research team comprised of Valerie Frey, Pinar Guven, and Tatyana Teplova, of the OECD Secretariat, and Pamela Murphy, a peer reviewer representing Status of Women Canada, conducted field research and interviewed key stakeholders in Mexico. This mission was undertaken with the assistance of the National Women's Institute of Mexico (INMUJERES), and with the support of Adriana Montejano, of the OECD Mexico Centre, who discussed with different institutions the need for the OECD to prepare this report. The mission included informative meetings and interviews with policymakers and officials from Mexico's Secretariat of Public Administration (SFP), INMUJERES, the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE), the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (SHCP), the National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women (CONAVIM), the Secretariat of Economy (SE), the Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare (STPS), the Ministry of Education (SEP), the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary, the Women's Institute of Mexico City, the Gender Equality Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, the Gender Equality Commission of the Senate, the Federal Regulatory Improvement Commission (COFEMER), and the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL).

The mission team was fortunate to have the opportunity to meet with many high-ranking officials, including Federal Justice María del Carmen Alanís Figueroa, SFP Secretary Virgilio Andrade, STPS Under Secretary José Adán Ignacio Rubí Salazar, SE Under Secretary Rocío Ruiz Chavez, SEDESOL Under Secretary Vanessa Rubio Márquez, SEP Under Secretary Rodolfo Tuirán, key Senators and Deputies, and their invaluable staff members, many of whom sent relevant materials and responded to questions after the mission concluded. The research team also interviewed knowledgeable experts in academia and civil society. The Mexican Institute of Social Security (IMSS)

provided useful information post-mission. These conversations, and the information provided, significantly informed this report. Roberto Martinez of the OECD Mexico Centre provided support during the mission.

This review also benefited from the wise counsel of the senior peer reviewer Ms. Pamela Murphy, Senior Policy Analyst, Status of Women Canada. The authors are grateful to experts who commented on an earlier draft of this report: Willem Adema, Maria Huerta, Mabel Gabriel, Paolo Falco, Monica Orozco, Gabriela Ramos, Tatyana Teplova, and Monika Queisser. The authors also appreciate the suggestions and recommendations of experts at the OECD and in Mexico during the process of research and writing, including Maya Camacho Davalos, Daniela Cardozo, Sean Dougherty, Adrian de la Garza, Ian Forde, Pauline Fron, Daniel Hernandez, Ernesto Herrera, Eliana Pérez, Maxime Ladaique, Paul Lagunes, Juan Rebolledo, Cuauhtemoc Rebolledo-Gómez, Alessandra Sanchez Godinez, Jane Stacey, Héctor Tajonar de Lara, Olivier Thevenon, and others. Nathalie Bienvenue, Natalie Lagorce, and Elma Lopes provided logistical support, and Lucy Hulett, Ken Kincaid, Kate Lancaster, and Marlène Mohier provided editing and publication support.

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Preface

In the context of the worst financial crisis in a lifetime, the gender agenda has acquired more visibility and importance as it provides us with answers in our quest for a more balanced and sustainable growth model. It is therefore not surprising that gender is often at the top of leaders' agendas, with meaningful outcomes in both the G20 and the G7. The OECD has been a proud partner in these efforts.

As Secretary-General Angel Gurría highlighted in the foreword to this work, this report is tailored to the needs and agenda of Mexico, a country whose gender outcomes are poor. Mexico has placed gender high in its growth agenda and is pursuing several paths to improve women's conditions and status in society. Based on comparative perspectives and experiences from other OECD countries, this report provides interesting insights and policy recommendations. Interestingly enough, while many of the recommendations put forward by the report are tailored to women's conditions, their potential impact extends to the whole of society. By pursuing them, Mexico will achieve a more balanced and human development, where all can contribute and where all can enjoy a better level of well-being. The specific recommendations include:

Further the efforts on education not only to address school drop-outs by girls, or the very high rate of teenage pregnancy – which is at a rate of 74 births per 1 000 women between 15 and 19 years of age, compared to an OECD average of 15 births – but also to enhance self confidence in girls and encourage them to pursue STEM education. On a broader topic (that is linked to education but that will impact the whole society) the report makes a call for the education system to avoid gender stereotyping in schools and in textbooks; strengthen measures to train teachers to recognise and eliminate gender biases; and help connect young women to role models. To support Mexico on this front, we are working with the Ministry of Education and several institutions to launch a network of Mexican women role-models that can both inspire young women and help them elevate their ambitions. There is also a call to improve upper-secondary school completion for young women and young men, as both sexes drop out of school at high rates. Enabling young women to complete schooling by ensuring sufficient support in secondary through higher education, including by improving sexual education and ensuring access to affordable and modern contraceptives, is also key, as well as prioritising the provision of accessible and good quality childcare to young parents.

Advance measures in the labour market to facilitate parents' reconciliation of work and family life, both in the private and public sectors, so that mothers and fathers can earn income around childbirth and when their children are young. Maternity and paternity leave are two areas that need improvement. The addition of at least two weeks of paid maternity leave – equalling a total of 14 weeks – would bring Mexico closer to international best practice. Mexico could also consider shortening the social security contribution period which determines maternity leave eligibility to ensure that more women are eligible for publicly-funded (rather than employer-funded) maternity leave. These adjustments could be funded through a reduction in, or cap on, the maternity leave

wage replacement rate for the highest earners, as Mexico's practice of paying 100% of wages for all eligible workers – including high earners – is well above the OECD average. Although Mexico took an important step by recently introducing paternity leave, the leave period (currently five days) is too short compared to the OECD average of eight weeks. Mexico should publicly fund the paternity leave period and increase efforts to encourage fathers to take the leave for which they are eligible.

On a broader scale, intensifying efforts to reduce informality in the labour market would go a long way towards ensuring that women and men are fully incorporated into the social protection system, earn fair wages, and have higher job quality. Although both sexes face high rates of informality in Mexico, there is nevertheless a large gender gap: 49.7% of men and 57.2% of women held informal (non-agricultural) jobs in early 2016. These rates have unfortunately changed little over the past decade.

Improving access to affordable and good-quality early childhood education and care, particularly for children under the age of three, is another necessary action. Infants and toddlers are underserved by guarderías and estancias infantiles and are too young to attend (the relatively well-provided) preschool, where Mexico has already achieved almost 90% coverage for children age four, above the OECD average of 86%. Equally important is ensuring that men and women have the same amount of time to combine work and family responsibilities, both in the private and public sector, by reducing Mexico's culture of excessively long work hours, enabling access to flexible work arrangements, and reducing women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid household labour.

Gender-based violence is another area where urgent action is needed. Raising awareness of violence against women at home, at work, in television, in public spaces and in politics is crucial. This could be accompanied by other measures, such as drawing a holistic and customised outreach programme co-ordinated by the government; designing measures to prevent assaults on women using context-specific knowledge; working to change norms through socio-emotional education in schools; and improving women's access to justice and security. Training police forces to deal with gender offences and ensuring that the judicial system delivers is another example that will work for women, but that will bring about a collective benefit. Strengthening legislation to eradicate violence against women in the political sphere, or sexual harassment in the workplace (public and private) is also important.

The review also shines a light on gender equality in the public sector, including at top management levels. To support gender equality in this area, the report recommends – among others – to establish measures, targets and quotas, as needed, in the senior civil service and judicial appointments. The report also recommends strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat of Public Administration, as well as individual ministries and agencies, to systematically and effectively monitor gender balance, including in leadership positions and different occupational groups.

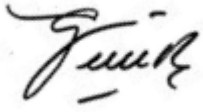
The governance of the system to promote gender equality is another focus of this report where several recommendations have been outlined. The report recommends strengthening, with the support of INMUJERES, the requirements and capacities of line ministries and other public institutions to apply a gender analysis in the design and implementation of sectoral policies, programmes and budgets as part of the core policy-making and resource allocation processes at all levels of government. Establishing requirements and enhancing the capacities of the centre of government to monitor (e.g. the Secretariat of Finance and Credit), and the Parliament to oversee – through

gender impact assessments − the responsiveness of proposed policies and budgets to the diversified needs of men and women could support the delivery of gender-sensitive policy results.

The OECD also highlights the need to further strengthen the National System for Equality between Women and Men (SNIMH) and support INMUJERES in fulfilling its mandate to co-ordinate among federal agencies and with civil society, while also strengthening gender equality co-ordination and co-operation at the state level and between federal and state institutions. INMUJERES has upscaled its ambition to level the playing field for women, and deserves full support at the highest political level.

Supporting the implementation of the National Program for Equality of Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Against Women (PROIGUALDAD) − which constituted the key strategy in Mexico's National Development Plan 2013-2018 to promote gender equality − by developing regular delivery plans with success indicators, guidelines, and manuals to provide further guidance to the administration in the implementation of gender mainstreaming is also key. This objective could be supported by expanding the collection and availability of sex-disaggregated data, in coordination with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), to a wide range of sectors, and raising awareness among line ministries on the use of these data to inform sectoral policy making, monitoring and evaluation.

Mexican women offer the country's most powerful opportunity to thrive. Gender policies are not only about women, they are about the well-being of all Mexicans. They are a secure way to build a more balanced society, where individuals can succeed without confronting discrimination, having to face a difficult or unstable work environment, or feeling insecure when walking in the streets. Applying a gender lens to policymaking and further developing family friendly policies will also have a long-lasting effect in families and societies. The OECD stands ready to support Mexico in the implementation of these measures so that its women can fulfill their potential and, in doing so, promote more sustainable and inclusive growth.



Gabriela Ramos

OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CCT	Conditional cash transfer
CEAV	Executive Commission of Attention to Victims (*Comisión Ejecutiva de Atención a Víctimas*)
CEPAL	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (*Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe*)
COFEMER	Federal Regulatory Improvement Commission (*Comisión Federal de Mejora Regulatoria*)
CONAIF	National Council for Financial Inclusion (*Consejo Nacional de Inclusión Financiera*)
CONAVIM	National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women (*Comisión Nacional Para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres*)
CONEVAL	National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy's (*Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social*)
CONOCER	National Council for Standardization and Certification of Occupational Competencies (*Consejo Nacional de Normalización y Certificación de Competencias Laborales*)
DIF	Comprehensive Family Development agencies (*Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*)
ECCO	Organizational Culture and Equality Survey
ECEC	Early childhood education and care
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENDEMS	National Survey on Secondary School Drop-Outs (*Encuesta Nacional de Deserción en la Educación Media Superior)*
ENAPEA	National Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy among Adolescents (*Estrategía Nacional Para la Prevención del Embarazo en Adolescentes*)

ENIGH	National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (*Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogages*)
ENOE	National Survey of Occupation and Employment (*Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo*)
EU-LFS	European Union Labour Force Survey
EU-SILC	European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FPA	Federal Public Administration
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GDP	Gross domestic product
IMSS	Mexican Institute of Social Security (*Instituto Mexicano de Seguridad Social*)
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía*)
INEGI ENADID	National Survey of Demographic Dynamics (*Encuesta Nacional de la Dinámica Demográfica*)
INMUJERES	National Women's Institute of Mexico (*Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres*)
ISSSTE	Institute of Social Security and Services of Workers of the State (*Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado*)
LARC	Long-acting reversible contraceptive
LFS	Labour force survey
LFP	Labour force participation
MXN	Mexican peso
NEET	Young people not in employment, education or training
OSH	Out-of-school hours
PAAM	Nutrition Transfer for Senior Adults (*Pensión Alimentaria para Adultos Mayores*)
PEI	Programme of Childcare Facilities to Help Working Mothers (*Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras*)
PEMEX	Mexican Petroleums (*Petróleos Mexicanos*)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PPP	Purchasing power parity
PROIFF	Integral Programme of Financial Inclusion (*Programa Integral de Inclusión Financiera*)

PROIGUALDAD	National Programme for Equality and Non-Discrimination
RCT	Randomised control trial
SE	Secretariat of the Economy (*Secretaría de Economía)*
SEDESOL	Secretariat of Social Development (*Secretaría de Desarrollo Social*)
SEGOB	Secretariat of the Interior (*Secretaría de Gobernación*)
SEP	Secretariat of Education (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*)
SFP	Secretariat of Public Administration (*Secretaría de la Función Pública*)
SHCP	Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (*Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público*)
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
STPS	Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare (*Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social*)
TEPJF	Federal Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación*)
VAW	Violence against women

Executive summary

Women are Mexico's most undervalued resource. Although their educational attainment now matches men's, only 47% of working-age Mexican women are in the labour force. Nearly 60% of Mexico's working women hold informal jobs, with little social protection and low pay. Mexico's adolescent pregnancy rate remains high, and the share of young women not in employment, education, or training is nearly four times the rate for young men. Across all age groups, Mexican mothers are less likely to be employed than mothers in most OECD countries.

Many factors drive Mexican women's outcomes. Gender stereotypes and discrimination continue to restrict their choices, and women perform over three-quarters of all unpaid housework and childcare. These unremunerated hours restrict the time women can spend in paid work, while long paid work hours make it hard for mothers and fathers to balance work with family life. Women continue to encounter high rates of violence at home and in public, and access to justice remains uneven.

Aside from the moral imperative, gender inequality brings high economic costs. Even halving the gender gap in labour force participation between Mexican men and women by 2040 could increase growth in per capita GDP by nearly 0.2 percentage points, per year, over baseline projections. This is one of the largest projected growth increases in the OECD and equals an additional USD 1 100 in GDP per capita by 2040, relative to the baseline.

Despite these challenges, there is cause for optimism. Mexico is building an advanced legal and policy framework aimed at achieving substantive gender equality. The 2006 General Law of Equality between Women and Men, the establishment of gender mainstreaming requirements in the Planning Act and Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act, and the National Programme for Equality and Non-Discrimination (2013-2018) demonstrate increasing commitments to equality. Mexico is a global leader in the representation of women in the national legislature, in part due to quotas in the electoral process.

The Government of Mexico has placed gender equality as a transversal axis of the National Development Plan, and recently committed to raise at ministerial level the National System for Equality between Women and Men. The President of Mexico chaired the 2016 inaugural meeting of this National System, where he announced important equality measures (including better gender mainstreaming in the Federal Public Administration) and reaffirmed Mexico's commitment to ending gender-based violence. INMUJERES is playing a crucial role in supporting and promoting this gender equality agenda.

Mexico has made good progress in social programmes, as well, especially in education. Universal pre-school enrolment is nearly achieved, scholarships are keeping more adolescent girls in upper-secondary school, and university enrolment rates are now similar for men and women. Investments in *estancias infantiles* have helped give working

mothers childcare options. Policy makers are working to eradicate violence against women, for example by building justice centres and support systems for victims. While gender stereotyping persists, surveys reveal that younger Mexicans hold more progressive views towards women than their elders. The introduction of paternity leave may encourage fathers to participate more actively in childrearing.

These are crucial changes, but Mexico must not lose momentum. Many women do not yet feel the effects of these policies at home, at work or in public. Major advances are needed in mainstreaming gender in policy design *and* in policies' effective implementation, enforcement, and evaluation, with the involvement of all state actors. With strong mandates and resources, Mexico can ensure that policies' intended effects are fully realised.

Informed by the OECD Gender Recommendations on Employment, Education and Entrepreneurship (2013) and Gender Equality in Public Life (2015), this report proposes that Mexico:

- ***Ensure that boys and girls have equal access to high-quality education*** by eliminating gender stereotyping in textbooks and teaching; encouraging girls to study STEM; and supporting upper-secondary school completion for both sexes through continued financial incentives for school attendance, among other measures.
- ***Better support the reconciliation of work and family life*** so that both mothers and fathers can earn income when children are very young, for example by providing additional weeks of maternity leave and more than the current five days of paternity leave; incentivising fathers to use leave; and improving access to affordable, good-quality childcare and preschool.
- ***Promote equal sharing in work and family responsibilities*** by addressing labour market structures and long work hours; enabling flexible work arrangements; and reducing women's responsibility for unpaid work. Family-friendly policies are crucial for ensuring that women can excel in the labour market *and* men can equally participate in family life.
- ***Reduce violence against women*** by raising awareness of violence, preventing assaults, and improving women's access to justice.
- ***Improve women's access to formal employment and employment-related social security*** by incentivising formal jobs, enforcing labour laws, and reinforcing links between social security contributions and pay-outs.
- ***Eliminate gender inequalities in private and public sector workplaces*** by systematically monitoring gender balance across occupations, as well as discrimination in pay, recruitment, training and promotion to leadership, among other measures.
- ***Promote gender equality in public decision making*** by applying measures such as disclosure requirements, target setting or quotas, and managerial performance agreements; promoting female role models; and ensuring that decision making incorporates women's voices.
- ***Enable all state actors to apply a gender perspective to policy making and budget making*** by requiring gender analysis of proposed policies and budgets; clarifying requirements across government to monitor implementation and impose sanctions; and evaluating policy effects across men and women.

- ***Strengthen gender units to become strategic policy branches*** by supporting their Secretariats in developing, implementing, and evaluating policies from a gender perspective.
- ***Expand the collection and availability of sex-disaggregated data*** to a wide range of sectors to fill knowledge gaps, and raise awareness among ministries about using these data for policy making and evaluation.

Gender equality is good not only for women, but also for men and families. The effective implementation of the measures above, across all regions of Mexico, will certainly improve all Mexicans' well-being.

Chapter 1

Gender, growth and government: Reaching Mexico's potential

This chapter presents an overview of Building an Inclusive Mexico: Policies and Good Governance for Gender Equality. *This report finds that Mexico has a long way to go on the road to gender equality. Mexican women's economic outcomes, including labour force participation, continue to lag behind those in most other OECD countries. Mexico's adolescent pregnancy rate remains high, and the share of young women not in employment, education, or training is nearly four times the share for young men. Mexican women continue to suffer from high levels of violence and face pervasive gender stereotyping. Despite these challenges, however, there is cause for optimism. Mexico is building an advanced legal and policy framework aimed at achieving substantive gender equality, has seriously committed to gender mainstreaming in government, and has become a global leader in the representation of women in the national legislature, in part due to quotas in the electoral process. Mexico has made good progress in social policies, as well, particularly in early childhood education and care, and has committed to eradicating gender-based violence. These are crucial improvements, but major advances are still needed to mainstream gender in policy design, implementation, enforcement, and evaluation. With strong mandates and resources, Mexico can ensure that policies' intended effects are fully realised. Chapter 1 closes with a summary of policy recommendations aimed at promoting gender equality in Mexico.*

1.1. Introduction

Mexico has a long way to go on the road to gender equality. Social and economic outcomes for Mexican women and girls continue to lag not only behind outcomes for women in the rest of the OECD, but also behind women's outcomes in many other middle-income Latin American countries (OECD, 2016a). Fewer than half (47%) of working-age Mexican women participate in the labour force, a rate far below the average for Mexican men (82%) and the OECD average for women (67%). Women face barriers in advancing to leadership roles, and experience occupational and sectoral segregation in both private and public sector jobs. The problems inherent in the development process hit women especially hard: nearly two-thirds of Mexico's working women are trapped in informal jobs, which offer low pay, inadequate social protection and little safeguard against poverty. Women also continue to experience high levels of violence at home, in the workplace, and in public spaces.

Young women and mothers, in particular, face high barriers to paid work. Mexico's adolescent pregnancy rate remains the highest in the OECD, and Mexico's share of young women not in employment, education, or training (so-called "NEETs") is 35% – the second-highest rate in the OECD. Young women are nearly four times as likely as young men to be NEETs in Mexico. Motherhood is a key driver of NEET status, and across age groups, Mexican mothers are far less likely to be in paid work than mothers in most OECD countries. This has implications not only for gender equality, but also for children. Maternal employment is strongly negatively correlated with child poverty across countries, and, indeed, Mexico has one of the highest child poverty rates in the OECD.

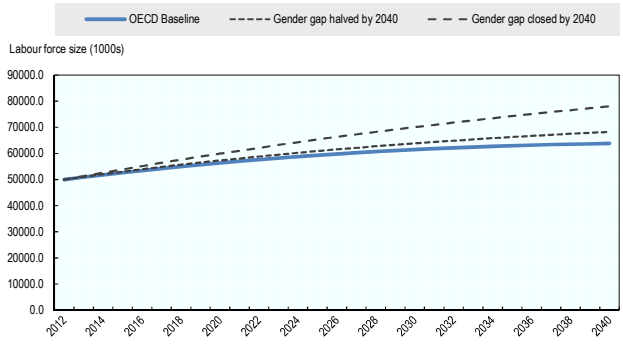
Many factors drive these inequalities. Stereotypes, social norms, and discrimination still limit women's and girls' choices in Mexico, as they do throughout the world. Mexican women perform over three-quarters of all unpaid housework and childcare in their homes – one of the greatest burdens of unpaid work in the OECD – and these hours in unremunerated work restrict time that could be spent in paid work.

Gender inequality comes at a high cost. Aside from the moral and ethical imperative, the economic implications are significant. The participation of women in the labour force is crucial for promoting and sustaining economic growth, and the gains are largest in countries where large gender gaps persist, like Mexico. OECD models project a sizable impetus to growth in Mexico if women are able to engage in the labour market at rates similar to men (Figure 1.1). In Mexico, halving the current gender gap in labour force participation among 15- to 74-year-olds by 2040 could potentially add 0.16 percentage points to the projected average annual rate of growth in per capita GDP for the period 2013-40, boosting the projected average rate to 2.46% per year.

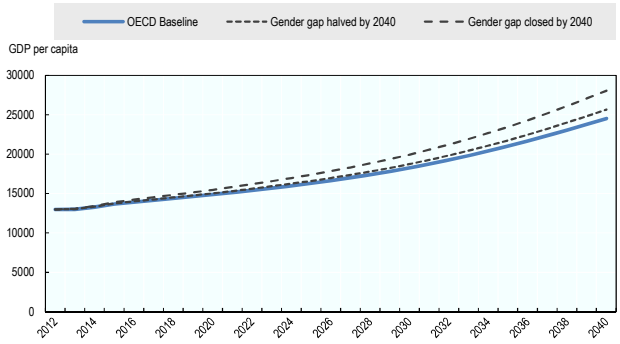
By 2040, this potential extra growth would translate into an increase of around USD 1 100 in GDP per capita, relative to the baseline scenario. This is one of the largest projected pay-offs to gender equality in the OECD (Adema et al., 2015). Given Mexico's sizeable (and growing) pool of well-educated women, the losses are enormous if these women – and their valuable human capital – are not fully incorporated in the economy.

Figure 1.1. Women's labour force participation is essential for boosting economic growth in Mexico

A. Projected size of the total labour force (15-74 year-olds) under different LFP gender gap scenarios, 2012-40



B. Projected GDP per capita (USD 2005 PPP) under different LFP gender gap scenarios, 2012-40



Note: Methods and data are detailed in Chapter 2, Annex 2.A1. *Panel A*: "Baseline" scenario: Labour force participation (LFP) rates for men and women are estimated using the OECD's standard dynamic age-cohort model, which projects participation rates (by gender and five-year age group) based on current (2003-2012) rates of labour market entry and exit. "Gender gap halved by 2040" scenario: male participation rates are projected (by five-year age group) based on current (2003-2012) rates of labour market entry and exit; female participation rates are projected so that the current (2012) gap between male and female participation rates within each five-year age group falls by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2040. "Gender gap closed by 2040": male rates are projected based on current rates of entry and exit; female rates are projected so that the current gap between male and female participation rates in each age group falls by 50% by 2025 and 100% (i.e. is fully closed) by 2040. *Panel B*: Estimates of GDP per capita for each scenario are achieved by adjusting projections from the OECD's long-term growth projections according to changes in the size of the 15-74 year old labour force that follow assumed LFP changes. "Baseline" scenario: LFP rates for men and women are estimated using the OECD's dynamic age-cohort model, which projects participation rates (by gender and five-year age group) based on current rates of labour market entry and exit. "Gender gap halved by 2040": male participation rates are projected based on current rates of entry and exit; female rates projected so that the current gap between male and female rates in each age group falls by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2040. "Gender gap closed by 2040": male rates are projected based on current rates of entry and exit; female rates projected so that the current gap between male and female rates in each age group falls by 50% by 2025 and 100% by 2040.

Source: OECD estimates based on *OECD Economic Outlook No. 95* Long-Term Baseline Projections Database, the *OECD Population and Demography Database*, and the *OECD Employment Database.*

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Mexico is on the right path

Despite these challenges, there is cause for optimism. Over the past two decades, Mexico has demonstrated its commitment to gender equality by adopting gender equality frameworks, ensuring that female politicians are well represented on ballots, and better embedding the different concerns of men and women in policy making.

Mexico is building an advanced legal and policy framework aimed at achieving substantive equality between men and women, and is strengthening efforts to develop and implement policies to address many of these inequalities. Recent laws and policies have the potential to transform the status of women and girls in Mexico for the better. The 2006 General Law of Equality between Women and Men, the establishment of gender mainstreaming requirements within the Planning Act and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act, and the National Programme for Equality and Non-Discrimination (PROIGUALDAD) 2013-2018 demonstrate increasing legal and political commitments to gender equality. These measures have been crucial for setting a foundation for equality. Mexico's National Women's Institute, INMUJERES, has taken strong measures to raise awareness of and address gender inequalities. Gender quotas in the electoral process have

helped make Mexico a global leader in women's representation in the national legislature: women hold 42% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 34% in the Senate of Mexico.

Mexico has also made good progress in social programmes in recent years, particularly in education: universal pre-school enrolment has been almost fully achieved, scholarships are helping to keep adolescent girls in upper-secondary school, and participation rates in university are now similar for boys and girls. Investments in *estancias infantiles* have helped to increase childcare coverage for the young children of working mothers. Mexico's conditional cash transfer programme, now entitled *Prospera*, has given mothers more control over resources entering the household. The government has initiated a high-level initiative aimed at preventing adolescent pregnancy, and policy makers are making good efforts to raise awareness of, prevent, and eradicate violence against women. While gender stereotyping persists, surveys reveal that younger Mexicans hold more progressive views of women's roles than their elders do.

Gender equality efforts must not lose momentum

While Mexico is making good efforts, many Mexican women still do not feel the effects of these policies at home, at work, or in public spaces. Mexico must continue to invest in social and labour market policies that empower women and reduce gender gaps in education, labour force participation, job quality, unpaid work, and leadership positions. This will require better gender mainstreaming in government.

In designing and reforming policies, policy makers must carefully consider whether (and how well) government programmes and institutions empower women. As this report details, Mexico has – to some extent – filled gaps in social protection and social development with women's unpaid and informal work. Mothers, as the beneficiaries of conditional cash transfers, are responsible for spending hours ensuring that children meet the criteria necessary to receive the transfers. Women make up the overwhelmingly informal workforce in at-home day-care centres (*estancias infantiles*), and millions of women work informally in households to provide essential care for children, the elderly, and people with disabilities – groups which are fundamentally underserved by the state. Programmes and structures intended to benefit women may actually disempower them, in unintended ways.

Within the government, all policies and budgets must be examined in terms of their different impacts on men and women and boys and girls. This requires strengthening the capacities and mandates of gender-specific institutions, as well as clarifying the responsibilities and improving the capacity of public organisations to apply a gender lens to their activities. Even when policies *are* designed and evaluated with gender in mind, the sound implementation of policies remains far from ensured. The widespread assumption that policies, laws and government programmes are gender-neutral may prevent officials from meeting gender-diverse needs. Major advances are still needed in the effective implementation, enforcement, and evaluation of all policies, laws and government programmes, as well as the ability to regularly embed a gender perspective within them. To realise these advances and see effective change on the ground, all federal and state actors in Mexico must share a collective responsibility with strengthened mandates, capacities, and resources.

True change requires not only inclusive public policies and effective implementation, but also a fundamental reshaping of gender stereotypes and attitudes at home, at school, in workplaces, and in public spaces. This will require integrated and long-term efforts in policy, civil society, and the media.

Gender equality is both a target and a tool for building inclusive societies in which both men and women contribute. Whether Mexico's political will and policy reforms can concretely advance equality between men and women relies on the continued intensity and expansion of government efforts. "Unlocking Mexico's full potential", as Mexico's National Development Plan prescribes, will depend crucially on how well Mexico closes existing gender gaps in political, social and economic life and promotes real social change.

This report evaluates gender equality in Mexico from two angles. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 assess key policy areas in education, employment, and social policy in which Mexico must increase its engagement. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 evaluate opportunities and gaps in the implementation of gender equality objectives within government policy-making frameworks and processes, across diverse players. This introductory chapter presents motivation for the study of gender equality in Mexico (Section 1.2), a chapter-by-chapter overview of the report (Sections 1.3-1.8), and concludes with a summary of policy recommendations to promote gender equality in Mexico (Box 1.1).

1.2. Gender equality for inclusive growth and better lives

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right. Women's empowerment in social, economic, and political spheres has important consequences for women, families, and economic growth. Policy makers throughout the OECD are debating whether – and how – to level the playing field for women in paid and unpaid work. Given that women's education now matches or outpaces men's education in most OECD countries, including Mexico, there are potentially large losses when a woman drops out of (or never enters) the labour force.

The OECD has conducted extensive research on how women's paid employment positively affects macro-level outcomes like economic growth and socioeconomic equality (see, for instance, OECD, 2012 and 2015b). As indicated above (Figure 1.1), incorporating more women into the economy would likely produce a high pay-off to economic growth in Mexico – one of the largest projected increases in the OECD. The stakes are just as high at home for individual women, their partners, and their children.

Women's paid work helps total household income

Women's labour force participation is often essential to a family's economic viability, as two incomes are now increasingly needed for economic stability. The introduction of a second income has been an important factor in reducing economic hardship in families over the past few decades across OECD countries. During the Great Recession, for instance, women's earnings helped families compensate for income losses in more vulnerable, male-dominated sectors (OECD, 2014). And although marriage rates remain high in Mexico compared to other OECD countries, the number of single mother households in Mexico is on the rise (Chapter 2). These female-headed households experience higher poverty risks and instability, and a mother's workforce participation often provides the only earned income in the family.

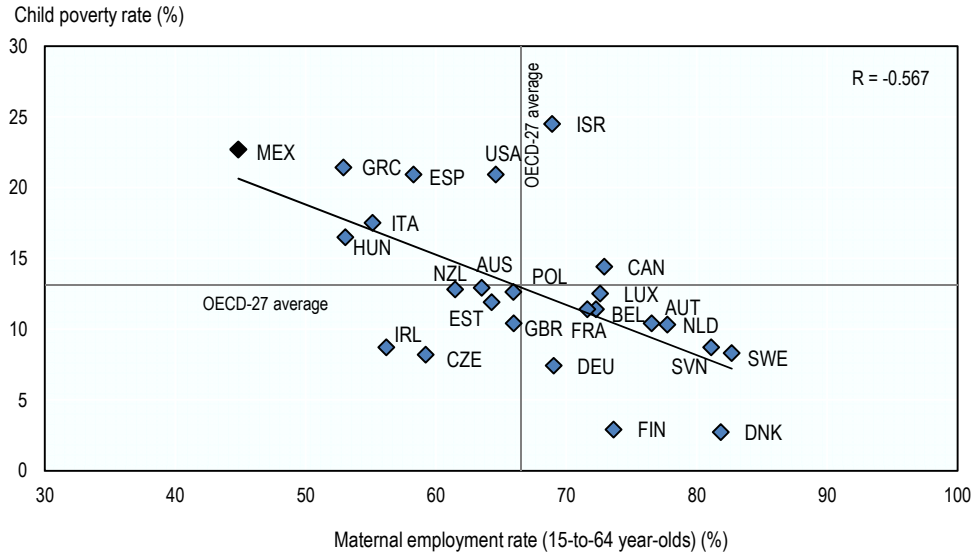
Mothers' participation in the market changes the distribution of resources at home

Aside from raising family income, mothers' labour force participation can influence the within-household distribution of resources in couple families. Women's participation in paid work helps with bargaining over unpaid labour, as dual-earner households have more egalitarian approaches to housework: across countries, women tend to decrease their housework as their earnings increase, at least to the point where both spouses contribute equal incomes (OECD, 2016b). However, female partners still do many more hours of unpaid housework than their male partners across countries, and especially in Mexico (Chapter 4). There is even evidence from Australia and the United States that women take on a greater share of housework when they earn more than their male partners, perhaps to compensate for their divergence from traditional gender norms in pay – an example of so-called "doing gender" behaviour (Bertrand et al., 2015; Bittman, 2003).

It is now almost conventional wisdom that children do better when their mothers control a larger share of household resources (Chapter 3). The income controlled by a father versus a mother has significantly different effects on family spending and outcomes such as child health, as women tend to allocate more resources to their children than men do. Much of this evidence comes from the development economics literature (see, for example, Bobonis, 2009; and Duflo, 2012). These lessons have been reflected in policy design, including the decision to disburse conditional cash transfers (CCTs) to mothers in many regions of the world. Mexico was a global leader in this policy approach with the roll-out of the CCT programme *Progresa* (now called *Prospera*) in the late 1990s (Chapter 3). Cross-nationally, there is a negative correlation between child poverty and female labour force participation: a greater number of mothers in the workforce is associated with lower child poverty, though, of course, many causal factors affect both of these outcomes. Mexico conforms to this trend, as it has a low share of women in work and relatively high child poverty (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2. Child poverty rates are lower in countries with higher maternal employment

Percentage of children (0-17) that live in poor households, and employment rates (%) for mothers (15-to 64 years old) with at least one child aged 0-14, 2012



Note:
For Australia, data on maternal employment refer to 2011. For Canada, data on maternal employment refer to women with at least one child aged 0-15, and data on both maternal employment and child poverty refer to 2011. For the United States, data on maternal employment refer to women with at least one child aged 0-17. For Sweden, data on maternal employment refer to women aged 15-74 with at least one child aged 0-18.

Children living in relative income poverty are defined as those with an equivalised post-tax and transfer household income of less than 50% of the national annual median equivalised post-tax and transfer household income.

Source: OECD Family Database (2016), http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm, and *OECD Income Distribution Database* (2016), http://www.oecd.org/social/income-distribution-database.htm.

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Women need economic alternatives

Women's participation in paid work affects more than just family income. Spouses and partners must consider what the economic consequences would be if their union fails. Divorce rates have increased since 1970 in almost all OECD countries (albeit only slightly in Mexico), and marriage rates have declined as more and more couples decide not to marry (OECD Family Database, 2016). This provides an incentive for women to enter paid work, as a paying job can serve as insurance against future poverty risks as a single person. Earnings power is also valuable for remarriage prospects (Iversen and Rosenbluth, 2010).

Working mothers change gender norms

There are intergenerational effects on future gender inequality when mothers work, as gender attitudes are shaped both at home and in public. When mothers participate in the labour force, children may be socialised to expect that women have as equal an opportunity to work as men – with all of the implications for childcare and housework at home.

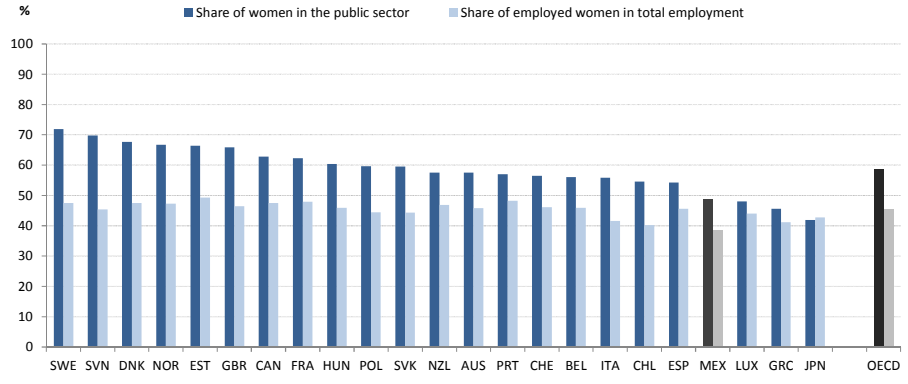
Consistent with earlier research, a recent 24-country cross-national study finds that the adult daughters of employed mothers are more likely to work, hold management roles, and earn higher wages than women whose mothers stayed home full-time, ceteris paribus. In terms of unpaid labour, men whose mothers worked grew up to spend more time caring for family members than men who had stay-at-home-mothers. Daughters raised by an employed mother spend less time on housework than women who had a stay-at-home-mother (McGinn et al., 2015). Working women also vote differently than women who stay at home. Women who participate in the labour market – especially in countries with high divorce rates – are more likely to support public employment policies, perhaps because women are disproportionately represented in public sector jobs (Iversen and Rosenbluth, 2010).

Women in government contribute to inclusive policy outcomes

OECD studies find that gender diversity in public decision making fosters more inclusive policy making and confidence in public institutions (OECD, 2014). Within countries, there is increasing evidence that female politicians are more likely to invest in programmes that deal with social and gender equality issues (Raghabendra and Duflo, 2004; Hannagan and Larimer, 2009). At the cross-national level, data also show a positive correlation between the number of women ministers and confidence in national governments (OECD, 2014). In Mexico, a glance at recent legislative initiatives shows that higher numbers of women in policy making are linked with more proposed reforms aimed at fostering more inclusive social and economic outcomes and gender equality. These include initiatives related to the elimination of violence, reduction of the gender wage gap, and enhancing access to health care.

The public sector also plays an important role in female employment. The high number of women employed by public administration not only increases women's ability to earn income, but also fosters inclusiveness in public service delivery and public procurement. These activities provide a major contribution to the national GDP (e.g., in Mexico, public procurement constitutes 5.2% of GDP).

Figure 1.3. Women in the public sector compared to women in total employment, 2013



Note: Data for New Zealand are expressed in full-time equivalents (FTEs). Australia, Greece, Hungary and Slovenia: 2012 instead of 2013. Denmark, Luxembourg and New Zealand: 2011 instead of 2013.

Source: ILOSTAT database. Data for Italy are from the National Statistical Institute and the Ministry of Finance. Data for Portugal are from the Ministry of Finance.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933422901

1.3. The status of women in Mexico

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the status of women in Mexico. Mexico faces a changing demographic landscape, which presents both opportunities and challenges for women. On the one hand, fertility rates have declined and now nearly align with the population replacement rate of 2.1 children per woman. Fewer children means potentially reducing the hours mothers spend on childcare and allowing women to have more opportunities outside of the home. At the same time, high rates of adolescent pregnancy, a rising share of single mother households, and increases in life expectancy – with a growing need for elderly care, most of which is provided by women – present ongoing challenges for women's empowerment.

Schooling in Mexico presents a partial success story. Mexico has closed gender gaps in primary, secondary, and tertiary education enrolment, but both girls and boys face challenges in the educational system. Mexico suffers from the highest upper-secondary[1] school drop-out rates in the OECD and educational quality is a concern, as evidenced by Mexican students' performance on the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Many young women are lost in the transition from secondary school to tertiary education and/or the labour market, resulting in high female NEET rates. Like elsewhere in the OECD, not enough girls and women enter the potentially lucrative fields of science, technology, education, and math (STEM). Mexico's much-needed educational reform shows promise, but faces obstacles in implementation.

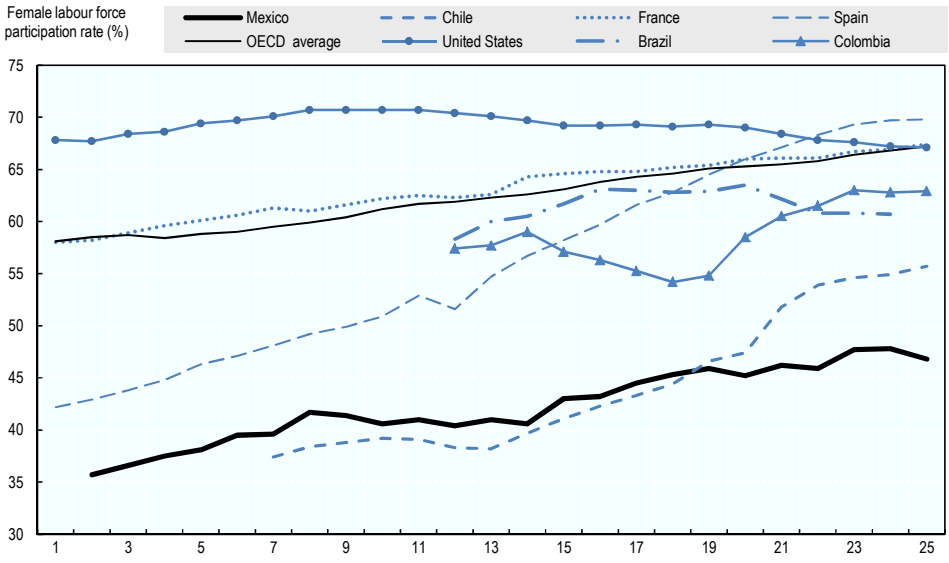
Despite girls' progress in schooling, large gender gaps persist in engagement in the workforce, as evidenced by a 35.3 percentage point gap between Mexican women and men's labour force participation (LFP) rates. Mexican women have entered the labour force in high numbers since the early 1990s, but even today fewer than half (46.8%) of 15- to 64-year-old Mexican women participate in the labour market. This rate is well below the OECD average LFP rate of 67.2% for prime working-age women, and below the rates in many other middle-income Latin American countries (Figure 1.4). The gender pay gap persists, and nearly 60% of working women in Mexico are trapped in informal jobs with little social protection. The informality rate and gender gap in informality have changed little over the past decade (Chapter 2).

Women's representation in the public sector is better than in the private sector. Women hold 51% of public sector jobs, although women are still underrepresented at management levels. Many women find these positions more attractive due to greater job stability, better benefit packages, and anti-harassment policies, although wages are generally lower than in the private sector.

High shares of Mexicans are self-employed (25% of women and 27% of men) relative to the OECD average (10% of women and 18% of men). Both men and women face challenges to growing their business in Mexico, including inadequate access to credit and a difficult business environment, but male self-employed workers are more likely to be employers and to be formally registered with the government. In contrast, self-employed women tend to be own-account workers and are more likely than men to work informally, often as domestic workers or street vendors.

Figure 1.4. Mexican women's labour force participation rate is improving, but lags behind most of the OECD

Female labour force participation rates, 15-64 year-olds, selected countries, 1990-2014



Note: Data for Brazil and Colombia in 2006 are interpolated.

Source: OECD Employment Database (2016).

Another major issue affecting women in Mexico is violence. Violence remains one of the most pressing issues to be addressed by policy makers, as it is pervasive and characterised by high rates of assault, homicide, kidnapping and sexual violence. More than half of all Mexican women report being victims of some kind of violence in their lifetime, yet many of these cases are not reported to the police, reflecting public mistrust of police and the justice system (Chapter 2). Evidence suggests that violence against women not only negatively affects women's participation in economic and public life, but also imposes an economic price and productivity loss (World Bank, 2014; UN Women, 2013; European Union, 2014).

1.4. A closer look at NEETs and mothers in Mexico

Although Mexican women have increasingly entered the workforce over the past two decades, they continue to fare worse than men in most measures of labour force participation, wages, and quality of work. Young women not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) and mothers face particularly high barriers to workforce engagement in Mexico (Chapter 3).

Young women in Mexico are nearly four times as likely as young men to be NEETs, a status that hurts their current economic condition and future work prospects: 35% of 15- to 29-year-old Mexican women are NEETs – the second-highest rate in the OECD, after Turkey. The gender *gap* in NEET rates in Mexico is 26 percentage points, also the second highest figure in the OECD. In contrast, the NEET rate for young Mexican men (around 10%) is below the OECD average (14%).[2]

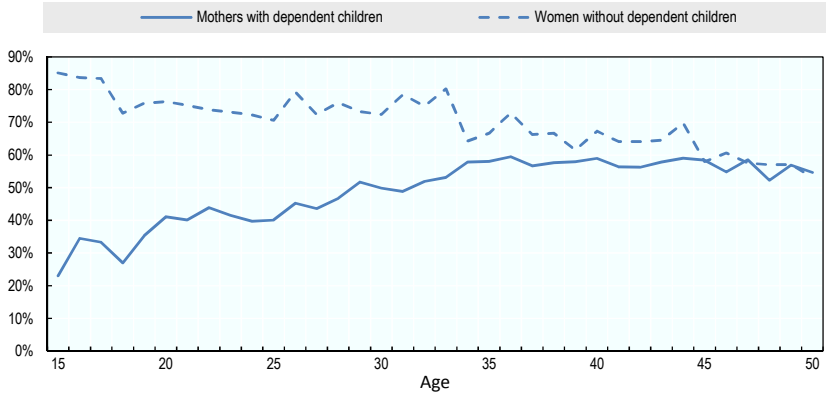
Nearly two-thirds of female NEETs are mothers, who spend significant time in unpaid housework and caregiving. These responsibilities present additional barriers to

completing school or entering the labour market. Leaving school or the workforce to care for children can have long-term effects: mothers' and fathers' decisions around childbirth about who will provide care and who will enter the workforce often turn into long-lasting habits as children age (OECD, 2016b). The first ten years in the labour market are crucial for career prospects (OECD, 2015a), and young mothers missing out on this time are at a serious disadvantage.

Motherhood-related gaps in labour force participation exist across age groups in Mexico (Figure 1.5), and mothers who do work face barriers reconciling work and family life. Maternity leave, paternity leave, and early childhood education and care (ECEC) supports are weak in Mexico compared to those in most other OECD countries. Mexico also has no system of shareable parental leave after the maternity and paternity leave periods end. These types of social supports are crucial for improving gender equality in caregiving and increasing women's opportunities to stay (and advance) in the labour market.

Figure 1.5. Mothers are far less likely to work or attend school than non-mothers, especially when young

Share of the female population in employment and/or education, by age and motherhood status, Mexico, 2014



Note: Mothers of dependent children are defined as women with at least one child aged 14 or younger. Distribution of women with and without dependent by age presented in Chapter 3.

Source: OECD calculations of ENIGH (2014).

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Social policies can help mothers enter and progress in the workforce. A key determinant of a mother's likelihood of engaging in paid work is the *age* of her child. In Mexico and, indeed, across OECD countries, mothers are less likely to work when children are younger. Mexico has made significant investments in ECEC programmes that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life.

The most impressive effort has been the implementation of compulsory universal preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds, which the Secretariat of Education is overseeing. ECEC coverage is high among 3- to 5-year-olds in Mexico: 80.7% of children in this age group were enrolled in pre-primary or primary school in 2014, up from only 62.5% of children in 2005. This 18 percentage point change is the fourth-largest increase in this period among OECD countries with comparable data. The enrolment of 3- to 5-year-olds in Mexico is now comparable to the OECD average (80.9%).

In contrast, under ten percent of children under age three are enrolled in ECEC in Mexico, a rate which is at the low end of OECD countries. While the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL) dramatically increased childcare coverage for low-income

children aged three and younger with the 2007 implementation and subsequent expansion of the largely home-based *Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras* (PEI), the childcare capacity of *estancias infantiles* and *guarderias* remains insufficient to meet demand.

1.5. Time poverty, informality, and women's jobs in Mexico

Gender gaps also exist in the *quality* of jobs in Mexico (Chapter 4). The OECD Job Quality Framework provides useful guidance on measuring the features of a job that affect well-being, such as earnings quality, labour market security (e.g., risks of unemployment and benefits in case of unemployment), and quality of the work environment (e.g., nature of work performed and working-time arrangements) (OECD, 2016c). Jobs in Mexico are characterised by high rates of informality and long hours. These factors, combined with a highly unequal distribution of unpaid labour at home, have gendered effects on engagement in the labour market: women face difficulties combining long hours of unpaid work with the long time commitment expected in many jobs. Women are also more likely than men to work informally, which sometimes offers flexibility but also economic risks.

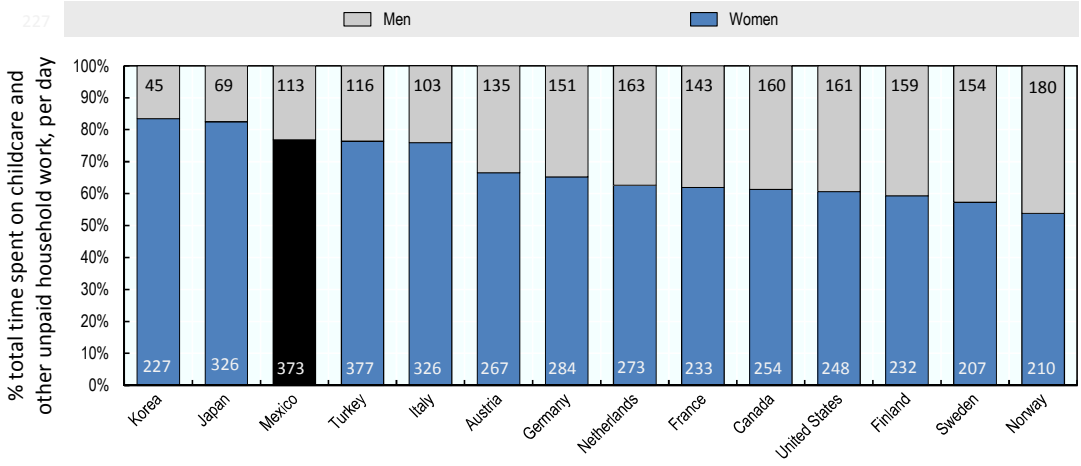
Gender inequality in *unpaid* work at home is crucial in explaining gender inequality in *paid* work. In every OECD country, and indeed throughout the world, women do more unpaid work than men. Women in Mexico face one of the highest burdens of unpaid labour in the OECD: Mexican women shoulder nearly 77% of all unpaid housework and childcare in their households, on average, which is a higher share than women nearly all other OECD countries (Figure 1.6). Women in Mexico also spent more *total* minutes each day on unpaid labour than women in most other OECD countries. On average, Mexican women spend over six hours each day on unpaid work, while Mexican men spend less than two (Chapter 4).

This unpaid work burden affects labour market outcomes. Time is a finite resource. Long hours at home spent cooking, cleaning, and caring for children limit the amount of time women can spend in paid work. A disproportionate burden on women to care for children can deter mothers from entering full-time jobs. It can also lead employers to discriminate against hiring women of childbearing age given the risk that they will leave their job to care for children in the future.

At the same time, by many measures, Mexicans are overworked in the labour market. Mexicans spend more time in paid work than most workers elsewhere in the OECD when measuring average weekly work hours, average annual work hours, and the share of workers spending over 40 hours per week on the job. In addition to putting in long hours each week, Mexico has the second lowest entitlement to paid time off in the OECD. Excessively long hours on the job are bad for workers' health, bad for employee productivity and – importantly for an analysis of gender – bad for work-life balance.

Figure 1.6. Mexican women carry a heavy load in unpaid housework and childcare

Proportion and total minutes of unpaid labour per day carried out by men and women, selected countries, most recent year



Note: OECD estimates based on harmonised time use surveys available since 2006. The years covered are: Austria: 2008-09; Canada: 2010; Finland: 2009-10; France: 2009; Germany: 2012-2013; Italy: 2008-09; Japan: 2011; Korea: 2009; Mexico: 2009; Netherlands: 2006; Norway: 2010; Sweden: 2010; Turkey: 2006; United States: 2010. Total minutes per day, for men and women, are listed in the bars.

Source: OECD Gender Data Portal.

The culture of long work hours has gendered effects on behaviour in the labour market. Because women are disproportionately responsible for unpaid childcare and housework, especially in Mexico, it is difficult for women to engage fully in a labour market that expects (and rewards) long hours as part of the workplace culture.

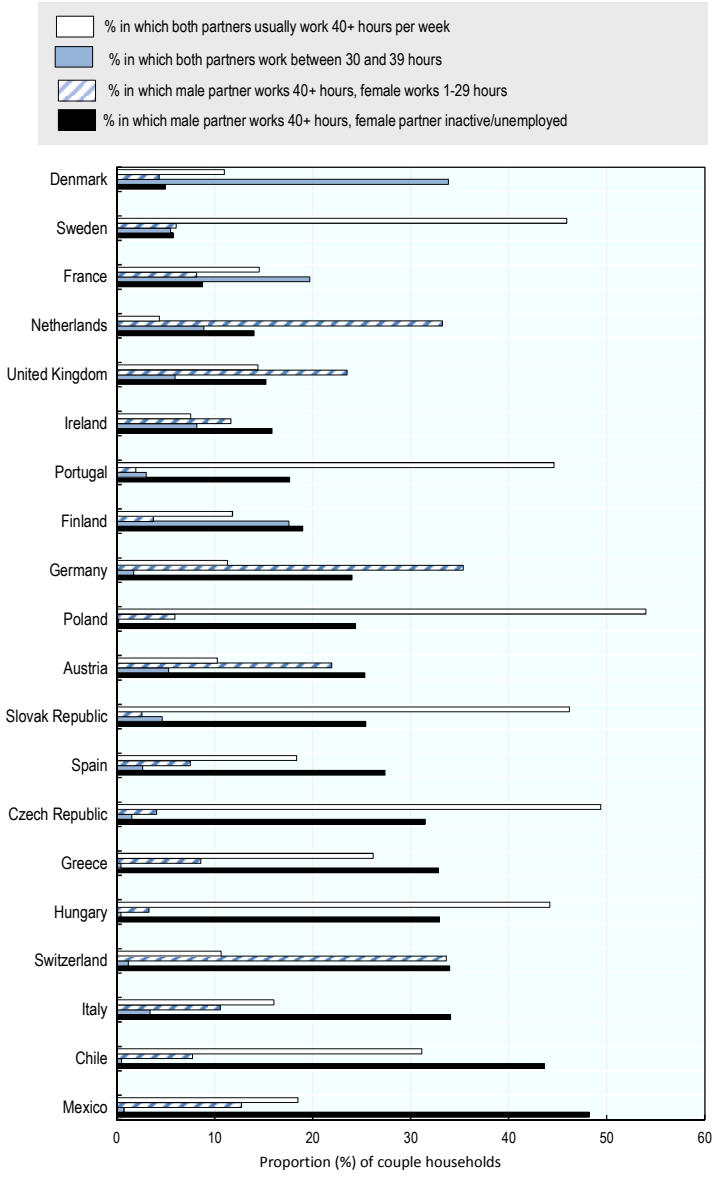
In Mexican families with children, the most common work-hour combination is that in which the male partner works *over 40* paid hours per week while the female partner works *zero* paid hours per week (Figure 1.7). 48% of couples with children fall into this category. The second most common work-hour combination is both parents working over 40 paid hours per week: 18.5% of couples with children fall in this category.

The high share of Mexican households with this unequal engagement in paid work – in which the male partner works very long hours and the female partner works zero – is uncommon in the OECD. While the male breadwinner model predominates across countries, in continental Europe, for example, it is more common for the male partner to work over 40 hours per week while the female partner works closer to 30, or for both partners to spend similar hours in paid work. The high share of Mexican homes with men working long hours (and women working zero hours) suggests that many parents face an "all or nothing" choice in the labour market.

The time commitment required for many jobs – in both the private and public sectors – makes it hard for parents to reconcile work and family care. Long hours have negative effects on fathers, who lose valuable time with their family, as well as negative effects on mothers, who are more likely to leave the labour market to care for children.

Figure 1.7. Mexican mothers spend either very few or very many hours in paid work

Percentage of couples (female partner aged 25-45, with at least one child) in different work-hour arrangements, selected countries, most recent year



Note:

Usual working hours of the employed for European countries, actual hours worked for Chile and Mexico. Data refer to total hours worked in all jobs, except for Chile where only hours worked in the main job are considered. Percentages do not sum to 100 because some work-hour combinations are omitted from this chart.

Source: OECD estimates based on the Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey 2014, the *Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional* (CASEN) 2013 for Chile, the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2012 for European countries, and the *Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogages* (ENIGH) 2014 for Mexico.

In many countries, the public sector serves as a role model in ensuring equal opportunities for both men and women by facilitating effective work-life balance practices. Yet even Mexico's public sector has a culture of long hours, especially at senior levels, despite formally regulating the length of the working day. In the public sector there are possibilities for flexible working hours, especially for unionised workers, which help explain the high representation of women in the public workforce. Yet the legal framework does not facilitate part-time or teleworking arrangements for public sector employees, which is unusual compared to most other OECD member countries. The legal right to request (at least temporary) part-time work, flexible work, and remote work arrangements could help to improve workers' hours in the public and private sectors, but change must also occur at the organisational level: managers must learn to value output and productivity more than time in the office, and follow organisational rules about work hours and flexible working arrangements (Chapter 4).

Another key barrier to job quality is informality, which is pervasive in Mexico. Although both men and women hold informal jobs at high rates, Mexican women are much more likely than men to work informally: 49.7% of men and 57.2% of women held informal (non-agricultural) jobs in the first quarter of 2016. In addition to being more likely to work informally, women are also more likely to have lower-quality informal jobs. Among informal workers, employers and wage workers tend to be better off, while own-account workers and domestic workers fare worse in terms of wages, job precarity, and social protection. Mexican women are more likely to work in the second category than the first.

Importantly, these gender gaps in informality are linked with gaps in employment-related social protection. Men are more likely to report having paid any social security contributions in their working lives, and on average men contribute to social security longer than women do in Mexico (Chapter 4). Policies to address informality must increase the benefits of formalisation for employees and employers, reduce the costs of formalisation, improve enforcement mechanisms, and strengthen the link between contributions and social benefits (such as paid maternity leave) that are tied to employment.

1.6. Women's access to decision-making roles: A glass half-full

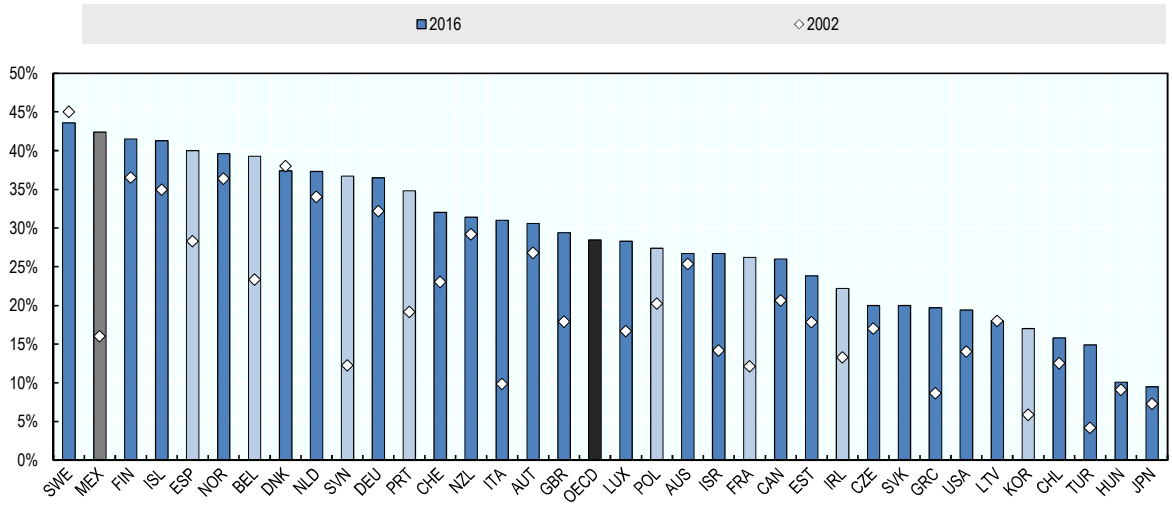
Mexico has made significant progress in increasing women's representation in elected bodies in recent years, placing Mexico among the top countries in the OECD and in seventh place in the world in terms of women's representation in the national legislature in 2016 (Chapter 5). Women are well represented both in the federal (42% in the Chamber of Deputies) and state-level legislatures (38% on average). This represents major progress in women's access to elected bodies, both in comparison to the situation in Mexico a decade ago (when women filled 22.5% of seats in the legislature) and to the OECD average (in which women represented 28.6% of the lower house seats in 2015).

The progress in women's representation is mostly related to the successful implementation of gender quotas in electoral laws over the past two decades, as well as to the parity measures established in Mexico's Constitution in 2014 (Chapter 5, Box 5.3). Since 1993, electoral laws have urged political parties to promote a greater participation of women in politics through their nomination for elected positions. In 2002, political parties were prohibited from including more than 70% candidates from the same gender; in 2008, the women's quota increased to 40% for principal candidates; and in 2014 the Constitution established that all candidate lists for federal and local legislative bodies

must be filled by 50% women and 50% men. Quotas are also symbolically important as they enable citizens to see many more women in political office, thus helping to generate a shift in traditional gender roles. The quota system has been reinforced by the important participation of the Federal Election Tribunal, which has been actively monitoring quota implementation by closing loopholes in the electoral law which permitted parties to bypass quota requirements. Furthermore, the Federal Election Tribunal was successful in ensuring that female MPs would not be pressured to resign in favour of their male alternates by establishing the requirement that primary candidates and alternates must be the same sex.

Figure 1.8. Share of women parliamentarians and gender quotas in OECD, 2016

Lower or single house parliaments, 2002 and 2016



Note. Bars in light blue represent countries with lower or single house parliaments with legislated candidate quotas as of 2015. Data refer to share of women parliamentarians recorded as of September 2016 and October 2002. Percentages represent the number of women parliamentarians as a share of total filled seats. 2002 data for the Slovak Republic are unavailable.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) PARLINE (database), and IDEA Quota Project (database).

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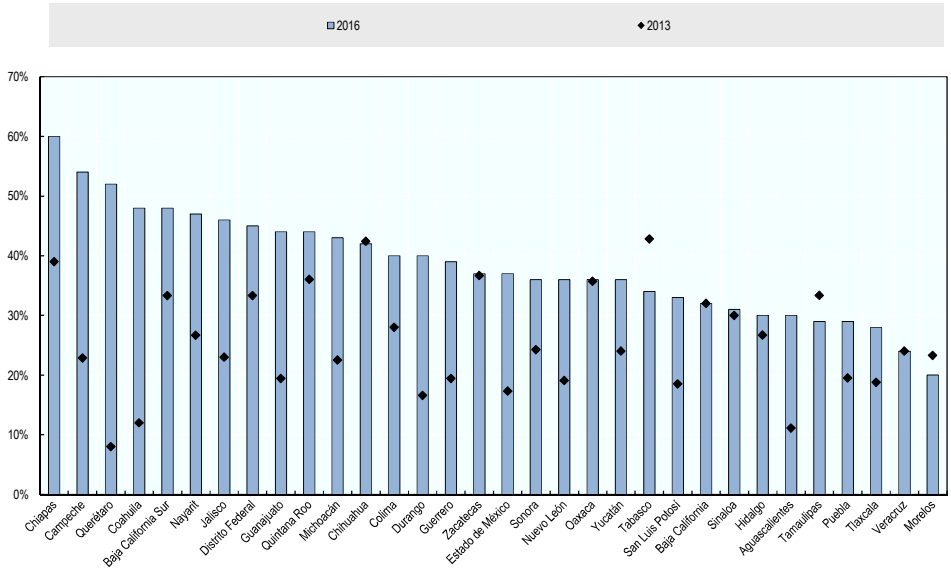
While women's representation in Congress has increased, their relative participation in decision-making positions has room for improvement. For example, in the Chamber of Deputies, only 16 out of 56 ordinary commissions are presided over by women (29%).[3] This rate is slightly higher in the Senate, in which women preside over 31% of ordinary commissions. While committees lead by women predominantly deal with issues related to gender equality, social welfare, education, family and human development, women are not completely absent in traditionally male-dominated portfolios: women serve as the presidents of energy, interior and foreign affairs committees. Improvements will be necessary if Mexico is to fully implement its Constitutional commitment to parity.

States also have a requirement to adopt and implement gender parity legislation.[4] In recent years, all 32 states in Mexico have adopted similar parity requirements in their electoral laws. As a result, 27 out of 32 states had reached or exceeded the rate of 30% women in local congresses as of 2016, compared to only 11 states which reached or exceeded the 30% threshold in 2013, with none of them reaching the parity level. Figure 1.9 shows the evolution of women's representation in local congresses between 2013 and 2016.

Figure 1.9. Women's participation in local congress

Female share of seats in state-level congresses, 2013 and 2015, Mexico



Source: OECD calculations based on *Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos* (2016) http://www.cndh.org.mx/Igualdad_Monitoreo_Programas.

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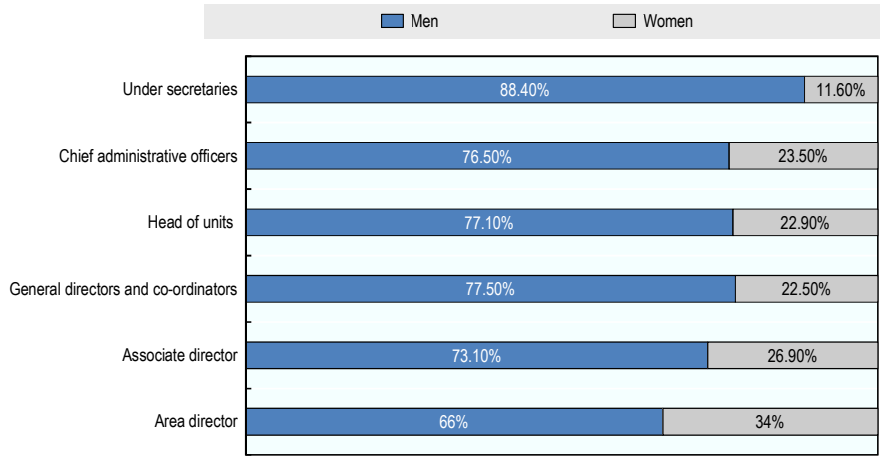
Notwithstanding these gains, the participation of women in leadership roles that are not subject to gender quota legislation tells another story. The gender gap in the executive branch is significantly wider than that in representative bodies in Mexico, and women still hold far fewer political decision-making positions than their male counterparts at all levels of government. At the federal level in 2016, only two of 18 ministerial positions were held by women (the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and the Secretariat of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development). At the state level, only one of 32 states in Mexico was governed by a woman in 2015. In state-level cabinets, on average, women represent only 16.8% of available seats.[5] There is also a wide disparity between states, ranging from all-male cabinets in Sonora and Yucatán to a female representation rate of 55% in Morelos.

Many barriers restrict women's access to public decision-making positions. Political harassment and violence against women holding office – tactics used to deter political participation – remain crucial issues that need to be tackled within the broader campaign to prevent and eliminate violence against all women in Mexico. Another challenge relates to sexual harassment, including in the public civil service. The results of the 2015 Organizational Culture and Equality Survey (ECCO) carried out across the Federal Public Administration revealed that more than 77% of female respondents believe women civil servants experience harassment at work with the promise of better job opportunities.

Violence targeting women in public life undermines citizens' right to political participation, but also compromises countries' democratic exercise and good governance, thus creating a democratic deficit. To respond to the rising number of cases of political violence against women being reported to local electoral tribunals, and to address the gap in this area within the existing legislation on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence, several Mexican institutions (led by the Federal Electoral Tribunal) developed

in 2016 a regulatory Protocol to Address Political Violence Against Women. The regulatory tool helps to increase knowledge and understanding of the issue, define stakeholders' roles and responsibilities and, above all, identify the actions needed to prevent violence and protect the victims and their families. Following the creation of the Protocol, the Special Prosecutor's Office for Electoral Crimes reported 38 reported cases of political violence against women raised in eight Mexican states.

Figure 1.10. Share of civil servants according to the level of the post and gender, Mexico, 2015

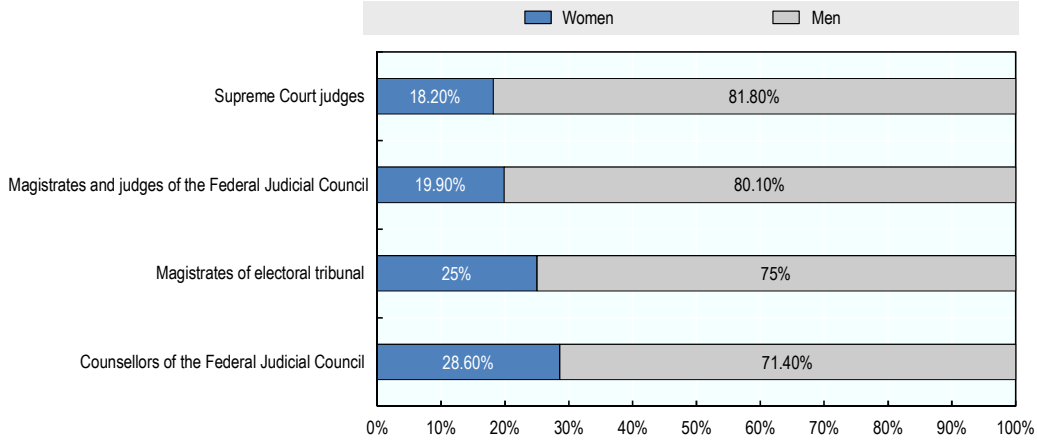


Source: INEGI-INMUJERES Mujeres y Hombres (2015).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933422975

In the executive branch, despite the equal share of women overall, their representation decreases at higher levels of the career ladder, as women fill less than one third of high-level managerial positions (Figure 1.10). Similar to the executive branch, in the judiciary, women filled less than one third of judicial decision-making positions in 2015, occupying only 2 out of 11 seats in the Supreme Court (Figure 1.11).

Figure 1.11. Gender distribution in judicial decision making positions, Mexico, 2015



Source: INEGI-INMUJERES Mujeres y Hombres (2015).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933422981

Difficulties in balancing work and life is another challenge undermining women's representation not only in the private sector, but also in politics and other top public jobs. Political and public leadership are areas which in Mexico, along with many OECD countries, are considered predominately for men. Within this cultural framework, measures to increase the flexibility and gender-responsiveness of the work place both in elected bodies and in the public administration remain insufficient and are often perceived as unnecessary. Similar to many OECD countries, working hours of parliamentarians are difficult to predict and voting times are not known in advance, leading women to opt out of high-ranking careers due to the perceived lack of work-life balance. Mirroring the private sector, a culture that rewards long working hours (Chapter 4), coupled with only five days of paternity leave, inadequate maternity and parental leave, and insufficient childcare services (Chapter 3), complicates efforts to reach gender equality in public employment. Similarly in the judiciary, a recent study of work environment in the Electoral Court identified that some practices such as limited family-friendly policies and work-life measures tend to generate institutional bias against women.

Mexico has taken steps to overcome some of these barriers. The Institutional Culture Programme developed by INMUJERES aims to encourage all public institutions to undertake an assessment of the state of gender equality in their respective administrations (e.g. equality in the selection of staff, use of time by gender, capacity building opportunities, sexual harassment, etc.) and create action plans to integrate gender perspective in personnel management processes. Another example is the Mexican Standard on Equal Employment Opportunities and Non-discrimination. The non-binding standard is intended to serve as a guideline to evaluate and certify equal employment opportunities and anti-discrimination practices in the public and private workplace, although it is too soon to evaluate the success of these initiatives. However, while line ministries annually report to INMUJERES their activities and measures undertaken to implement national commitments to gender equality, multiple institutional responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation and lack of specific output and outcome objectives risk producing inadequate reporting of both achievements and gaps.

In the judiciary, the Inter-agency Committee on Gender Equality of the Judicial Power of the Federation was established in 2015 to promote gender equality in the field of judicial decisions and internal policies. Agencies in the Federal Public Administration are also implementing measures to promote work-life balance, such as granting extra paternity leave in SEDESOL, INMUJERES, SEGOB and the Federal Electoral Tribunal, which serve as a good example for other public institutions and the private sector.

1.7. Embedding a gender lens in all policies

All policies impact women and men, often in different ways. OECD well-being indicators in Mexico point to gender differences in terms of housing, employment, health, safety and work-life balance, typically in favour of men. As this report details, Mexican women face barriers to employment, experience gender-based violence, and perform the vast majority of unpaid work in their households. These and other gender gaps are often a result of gender-blind policies and programmes that may have disadvantaged women in different ways. Addressing these gaps requires the integration of a gender lens in all policies and programmes (Chapter 6).

Indeed, including timely assessments (through the use of gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data) of the different needs of men and women as part of the general policy

cycle can help policy makers to find long-lasting solutions to redress inequalities. Conversely, at the crafting stage, if policy makers assume that policies are gender-neutral and will thus impact women and men equally, the results may reinforce existing gender inequalities rather than redressing them. For example, while Mexico's conditional cash transfer programme (CCT) gives women stable income and a better within-household bargaining position, the conditional nature of the CCT has had the unintended effect of adding an undue unpaid work burden on women. Mothers are responsible for ensuring their children's school attendance and preventative health visits, which reinforces women's roles as caregivers (Chapter 3).

Mexico set an ambitious goal to integrate a gender perspective into all government actions in order to deal with gender gaps in a comprehensive manner. Over the past decade, the country made both national and international legal commitments to achieve substantive equality between women and men through the adoption of the 2006 General Equality Law between Women and Men and the National Programme for Equality between Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD), which represents major progress over many OECD member and partner countries. Since then, Mexico has been making progress in strengthening the integration of gender requirements through the Planning and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Acts, as well as the National Development Plan of Mexico, which is in effect until 2018. The National Development Plan includes gender equality as a cross-cutting principle in support of Mexico's goal to "*unlock its full potential*".

Despite the multiplicity of efforts, the implementation of these commitments lags and many gender gaps remain in Mexico (Chapter 2). The implementation gap, which undermines efforts to deliver inclusive growth and sustainable development, is rooted in the broad perception of legislators and public administrators that laws, policies and government programmes can be gender-neutral. This perception – which translates into lack of awareness and knowledge of what it takes to make public policies and programmes relevant to both men and women – hinders the adoption of specific tools and processes that would instead ensure that final policy and government outcomes are carefully tailored to the different needs of men and women.

Gender issues therefore remain perceived as *add-on* initiatives relevant "for women only" in both law and policy making processes in Mexico, despite the commitment to apply a gender equality lens to all policies. This risks marginalising gender equality efforts, and fails to acknowledge that policies have a gender dimension and may perpetuate inequality and discrimination. Looking at recent legislative outcomes, out of 1 523 initiatives discussed in Congress in 2015-16, only 42 (2.75%) were submitted to the Gender Equality Committee for consideration. Almost all of these initiatives are exclusively focussed on making amendments to the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence – General Law for Equality between Women and Men. Without doubting the importance of these amendments, this example unequivocally shows that most policies and laws are perceived as having an undifferentiated impact on women and men. Another example of the fact that policies are generally perceived as gender-neutral can be found in the executive branch, where the gender perspective is often absent when developing performance and result indicators to monitor sectoral policies as part of the National Development Plan (Chapter 7).

Related to the way legislators and public administrators work, many other dimensions illuminate why the gender equality discourse remains affected by substantial lack of implementation. These include the underdeveloped roles and responsibilities of key

government stakeholders on gender mainstreaming; limited institutionalisation of accountability and implementation mechanisms (Chapter 7); limited use of and lack of awareness on policy tools such as gender-impact assessments; lack of *know-how* across the public administration to embed gender considerations into mainstream activities; and lack of sufficient resources and uneven availability of gender-disaggregated data, especially across sectors. On this last point, it is worth mentioning that Mexico is one of the leading countries in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region in collecting gender statistics, and most of the surveys conducted by INEGI provide gender-disaggregated information. Notwithstanding these achievements, a number of important gaps remain when it comes to systematic collection and use of sex-disaggregated data at the crafting and evaluation stage of many sectoral policies that are perceived to be gender-neutral, but instead are gender blind (Chapter 7.)

Mexico has put in place different tools and mechanisms to deliver its gender mainstreaming commitments, but these measures could be further improved (Chapter 6). Gender analysis (or applying a gender lens), among other tools, helps to estimate the effects of any policy, legislation, regulation or individual practice on gender equality. There is currently no systematic requirement for the application of gender analysis/lens in developing new policies or laws in Mexico, which may hinder the country's ability to develop policies tailored to citizens' actual needs and thus to achieve its full potential. Yet there is strong momentum for progress in this area, including the recent reform to include a "gender filter" in regulatory proposals that concern human rights matters.

Since every ministry and level of government has a budget, analysing budgets from a gender perspective can be a very effective way of exposing gender differences within policies and programmes. Gender budgeting requires robust approaches for gender analysis, sex-disaggregated and gender-specific data, as well as clear roles and responsibilities for the application of such an analysis to proposed budgetary allocations for all existing and new government programmes and policies. Mexico has been very successful in establishing a legal framework for allocating funds for women's initiatives and in continuously increasing associated budget allocations. This is laudable, particularly when compared to other OECD countries. Yet gender analysis is still missing from the mainstream budgetary process and women's initiatives are seen as "add-ons". This approach complicates efforts to assess how budget allocations affect gender equality, and risks resulting an inequitable allocation of resources. Rather than only allocating specific amounts to women-focused programmes, an effective commitment to gender-responsive budgeting would instead require line ministries to consider the different impact of all proposed budget allocations on men and women and to include this exercise within annual routine budgetary processes. Effective gender-budgeting would also require that agencies mandated to verify the quality of proposed budgets, such as the Minsitry of Finance and Credit, the Office of the President and the Parliament, would integrate the inclusion of gender impact assessments as a requirement within any stage of quality control. This commitment should show tangible results in terms of resource re-prioritisation and re-allocation decisions across sectors, and ultimately result in better public spending, for the benefit of both men and women.

1.8. Closing the implementation gap in gender equality policies

Government capacity to overcome gender gaps – such as those found in employment, unpaid work, violence, and access to decision-making roles – and deliver gender inclusive policy results depends on the quality of the institutional framework for

designing and, most importantly, implementing gender sensitive policies (Chapter 6; OECD, 2014b).

Like many other OECD countries, Mexico established an institutional framework for gender equality through the 2006 General Law on Equality between Women and Men. The General Law tasks the federal government with the design and implementation of gender equality policies, and institutionalised INMUJERES as the central gender institution co-ordinating gender equality actions at the federal, state and municipal levels (local governments are also responsible for designing and implementing gender equality and mainstreaming policies). Specifically, IMMUJERES aims to promote conditions to eliminate gender-based discrimination, equality of opportunity and treatment, and women's equitable participation in the political, cultural, economic and social life of the nation both in the public and private sectors (Chapter 5).

INMUJERES functions as an autonomous, decentralised body – not located in any unit or agency of the Mexican Government – and has a standing status in the Executive Cabinet. This means that the President of INMUJERES is called to Cabinet meetings on an ad hoc basis. In recent years, INMUJERES has been very successful in raising awareness of gender discrimination and situating gender equality high in the political agenda. Still, its position and influence among Cabinet members is not the same as, for instance, the Secretariat of Public Administration. While INMUJERES' autonomous structure provides significant flexibility and autonomy in terms of activities and focus, the distance from the apex of decision making may – in the long run – limit its resource base and ability to influence other institutions, sectoral policies and budget allocations. The absence of institutional links between INMUJERES and line ministries is also another factor limiting INMUJERES's ability to support ministries in applying a gender lens in the general policy cycle.

In Mexico, the integration of a gender perspective in policy and programme design is and should remain the responsibility of all government institutions and agencies, as defined in national political commitments. In view of complying with the provisions of its legal framework and its national development objectives, Mexico set a goal to establish gender units in all public institutions to increase the sense of ownership of the entities of the Federal Public Administration on gender equality initiatives. In the framework of PROIGUALDAD, 16 gender units have been established within Federal Public Administration institutions out of 17 secretariats. Gender units have also been established within the Office of the Attorney General and in the Mexican Social Security Institute. This highlights important progress as the number of gender units has more than doubled from seven since 2012. Yet, there is often no standardised approach to determine the mandate, authority, and responsibility of these gender units across the public administration. In practical terms, their work seem to focus mainly on promoting gender balance within institutions, with little attention given to supporting the public institutions in embedding gender considerations into sectoral policies and services. Gender units also seem to face various challenges related to capacity issues, limited budgets, human resources and access to decisions making authority.

At the subnational level, the "Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas" (IMEF) were created – mainly since 2008, and with different institutional identity and leverage – from the status of ministry, decentralised body, general directorate and autonomous body. Their purpose is to co-ordinate and drive gender equality policy. Through collaboration agreements with state governments and IMEFs, INMUJERES supports the delivery of gender equality programmes at the state level by channelling

federal funds. However, according to a 2014 survey carried out by INMUJERES[6] in 2014, 23 of the 31 existing IMEFs reported that their budget allocation is inadequate and 25 report that their staff is insufficient to carry out their programmes and services. This is related to the fact that many state governments are not adequately funding the IMEFs. These factors limit key activities at both state and municipal levels. If in general states' development plans incorporate a gender perspective, for sectoral programmes the allocation of the states' budget for the equality of men and women remain limited and uneven. In 2014, gender equality budgets in states were allocated within health and education, but less so in other sectors having a clear impact on women, such as housing and basic services. Overall, in 18 states there is no budget assigned for the promotion of equality between men and women (information provided by IMMUJERES, referring to 2014).

Robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are linchpins to ensure that gender equality initiatives achieve their intended impacts. Mexico faces two key challenges in this regard. First, the evaluation of many sectoral policies does not yet include a gender perspective. There is no requirement to include gender sensitive indicators in the sectoral planning documents. Consequently, at present, there is no institution that can ensure that all policies duly take into account gender impacts. Second, many actors are involved in monitoring, which complicates measuring the impacts of gender equality efforts. Indeed, the responsibility for evaluating sectoral programmes – which include a gender equality component, either stemming from PROIGUALDAD or beyond – is shared between CONEVAL and the Ministry of Finance (SHCP), while the gender equality portion is reported to INMUJERES. INMUJERES, however, has no evaluation function and no authority to impose sanctions in case of non-compliance. Rather, it is responsible for collecting information from line ministries on progress made and preparing achievement reports through a digital platform on the implementation of PROIGUALDAD, for the purposes of transparency.

To overcome this double challenge, Mexico is increasing efforts to put in place a harmonised approach for evaluating policies through a gender lens. As such, INMUJERES and SHCP joined efforts to implement Article 24 of Expenditure Budget Decree for 2016, which tasks INMUJERES with supporting SHCP by developing criteria for incorporating gender perspective in the evaluation of sectoral policies. In this endeavour, it will be crucial to build the capacity of SHCP to assume its functions effectively. Further, pursuant to a recent agreement signed between INMUJERES and the Secretariat of Public Administration, the latter is now assuming the follow-up of the work of the Federal Public Administration in implementing transversal strategies of the National Development Plan, including PROIGUALDAD.

Box 1.1. Key policy recommendations to promote gender equality in Mexico

Motivated by the principles in the OECD Gender Recommendations on Employment, Education, and Entrepreneurship (2013) and Gender Equality in Public Life (2015), this report proposes the following policy measures aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the economic and public spheres in Mexico. These recommendations are more fully elaborated within the chapters of this report.

Key policy recommendations to improve gender equality in education and in the labour market:

- Ensure that boys and girls have equal access to high-quality education, including access to diverse fields of study, such as STEM fields. Avoid gender stereotyping in schools and in textbooks, strengthen efforts to train teachers to recognise and eliminate gender biases, and help connect young women to role models.
- Intensify efforts to improve upper-secondary school completion for young women and young men, as both sexes drop out of school at high rates. Support young women in completing schooling by ensuring sufficient supports in secondary through higher education, including affordable access to modern contraceptives; prioritising the provision of affordable and good quality childcare supports to young parents; and a continued commitment to financial incentives for school attendance, among other measures.
- A range of policies should facilitate parents' reconciliation of work and family life, so that both mothers and fathers can earn income around childbirth and when children are young. Mexico should shorten the social security contribution period which determines maternity leave eligibility to ensure that more women are eligible for publicly-funded (rather than employer-funded) maternity leave. This adjustment could be funded through a reduction in, or cap on, the maternity leave wage replacement rate for the highest earners. Adding at least two weeks of paid maternity leave – equaling a total of 14 weeks – would bring Mexico closer to international best practice. Mexico should provide more than its current five days of paternity leave to fathers, publicly fund the paternity leave period, and incentivise fathers to take the leave for which they are eligible. Mexico should ensure that new mothers have adequate supports when they return to work, including their legally-mandated right to lactation breaks to support breastfeeding.
- Improve access to affordable and good-quality early childhood education and care. For 3- to 5-year-olds, this entails increasing spaces in preschool and/or increasing the length of the preschool day, as most programmes are currently only a half-day long. For infants and children under age three, childcare supply must expand and the quality of care must improve.
- Ensure that men and women have equal time to combine work and family responsibilities (in the private and public sectors) by reducing Mexico's labour market culture of excessively long work hours; enabling access to flexible work arrangements; and reducing women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid household labour. This requires changing gender norms at home, involving the private and public sectors as stakeholders, and investing in time-saving technology and public infrastructure.
- Ensure greater access to formal employment in both private and public sectors and employment-related social security by incentivising formal employment, enforcing labour laws, and reinforcing the link between contributions and social security pay-outs.
- Eliminate gender inequalities in the private and public sector workplace, including the gender wage gap and horizontal occupational segregation, discrimination in pay, recruitment, training, and promotion. Various measures can help ensure pay equality, including performing regular and objective desk audits on gender wage gaps in the public and private sectors, targeting low-paid and/or female-dominated sectors, getting more women into lucrative fields, and ensuring that men and women have equal opportunities and supports to take career breaks and return to their jobs after family-related career interruptions.

Box 1.1. Key policy recommendations to promote gender equality in Mexico *(cont.)*

- Raise awareness of violence against women at home, at work, in public spaces and in politics through holistic and customised outreach programmes co-ordinated by the government; take measures to prevent assaults on women using context-specific knowledge; work to change norms through socio-emotional education in schools; and improve women's access to justice and security. Strengthen legislation to include violence against women in the political sphere.
- Plan ahead to evaluate impacts on women and men when implementing social programmes, and embed gender considerations in policy design. As much as possible, plan for externalities in transfers to households. Embed these and related policies in a comprehensive and holistic approach to social protection growth. Lessen state reliance on women as social policy actors, for example in unpaid care and informal paid caregiving, which limits their ability to pursue good-quality paid jobs.
- Consider establishing measures and targets to promote gender equality in the senior civil service and judicial appointments. These measures may include disclosure requirements, target setting or quotas and integration into managerial performance agreements to enhance executive accountability for gender balance at all levels and occupational groups.
- Strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat of Public Administration (SFP), as well as individual ministries and agencies, to systematically and effectively monitor gender balance, including in leadership positions and different occupational groups, by conducting regular surveys and collecting data.

Key policy recommendation for gender-sensitive policy making

- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, mandates, expectations and lines of accountability of entities of the Federal Public Administration to apply a gender perspective in their regular activities.
- Consider establishing a requirement for all ministries and public entities to assess the potential impacts of all policies, programme and budget proposals and modifications on women and men from diverse backgrounds. Such gender analysis would entail collecting, reviewing and analysing sex-disaggregated data; gender indicators; consultation with potentially relevant stakeholders; and risk mitigation measures to address potential inequalities in outcomes of the initiative. This should be accompanied by awareness raising activities on gender mainstreaming as well as establishing respective training requirements for civil servants to apply the proposed measures.
- Expand the collection and availability of sex-disaggregated data, with the support of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), to a wide range of sectors, and raise awareness among line ministries on the use of these data to inform sectoral policy making, monitoring and evaluation.
- Reinforce the role of central administration (i.e. the centre of government, the Ministry of Public Service, Ministry of Finance and other related agencies) in verifying that all sectoral policy or programme proposals and budgets are accompanied by an assessment of their potential impacts on women and men from diverse backgrounds (i.e., gender impact assessments). INMUJERES can play a key role in supporting the central administration by providing technical support and targeted advice on gender equality matter.
- Define and standardise the functions of gender units, and consider making gender units strategic advisors supporting their Secretariats in the development, implementation and evaluation of sectoral policies and programmes through gender analysis, taking into consideration gender-disaggregated data. At the same time, empower all Secretariats and public officials with increased capacities and mandates to apply a gender perspective in their daily policy work. Increase the capacity and widen the mandate of state-level institutions (IMEF) tasked to co-ordinate, guide and monitor the implementation of gender equality activities and measures.
- Strengthen the National System for Equality between Women and Men (SNIMH) by systematically appointing high-level representatives across FPA and supporting IMMUJERES in fulfilling its mandate to co-ordinate the operations of the system. Strengthen gender equality co-ordination and co-operation at the state-level and between federal and state institutions.

Box 1.1. Key policy recommendations to promote gender equality in Mexico *(cont.)*

- Strengthen line ministries' capacity to report effectively on sectoral gender equality activities and measures while defining relevant gender indicators, as well as gender-sensitive output and outcome objectives. At the same time, strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat of Finance and CONEVAL in applying gender analysis in the evaluation of policies and programmes through a results-based approach.
- Support the implementation of the PROIGUALDAD by developing regular delivery plans with success indicators, guidelines, and manuals to provide further guidance to administration in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Notes

1. Throughout this report, and consistent with other OECD work, the term "upper secondary school" refers to schooling in grades 10-12 (roughly age 15-17). In Mexico, this level of schooling is called *educación media superior*, and is sometimes referred to (in English) as "higher middle education". Lower secondary school (*educación secundaria básica*) refers to grades 7-9 (roughly age 12-14).
2. The OECD definition of NEET (all 15- to 29-year-olds not in employment, education, or training) differs from the definition some suggest using in Mexico, which does not include young mothers detached from the labour market (OECD, 2013).
3. Information provided by INMUJERES and available online at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/.
4. Available online at http://www.cndh.org.mx/sites/all/doc/programas/mujer/6_MonitoreoLegislacion/6.0/25_ParidadGeneroLegislacionElectoral_2015dic.pdf
5. Information provided by INMUJERES.
6. INMUJERES (2014), *Relación de las Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas con los ejecutivos estatales*, October 2014.

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Chapter 2

The status of women in Mexico

Mexican women have made significant progress in labour force participation, education, and political representation in recent years. Despite these gains, Mexico's female labour force participation rate remains among the lowest in the OECD, the gender gap in workforce participation is high, and Mexican women generally have lower-quality jobs than their male counterparts. The challenges common to the development process hit women particularly hard: female workers are much more likely than male workers to hold informal jobs, and many women live in poverty. Public opinion polls reveal that society's expectations and attitudes towards women are changing, as younger Mexicans take a more egalitarian view towards women's roles. Nevertheless, Mexican women continue to face gender stereotyping, discrimination, and very high rates of violence.

The data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

2.1. Introduction

Mexican women have made significant progress in labour force participation, education, and political representation in recent years. Yet the share of Mexican women in the workforce remains among the lowest in the OECD, the gender gap in labour force participation is very high, and Mexican women tend to have lower-quality jobs than their male counterparts. The challenges common to the development process hit women particularly hard: female workers are much more likely than male workers to hold informal jobs, and many women live in poverty.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the status of women in Mexico. This includes a bird's-eye view of gender gaps in education, the labour market and political life, and discusses how attitudes and stereotypes – while evolving – still impede women's opportunities and empowerment.

Main findings

- Mexico's demographic landscape is changing. Fertility rates are declining, potentially giving women more options outside of the home. However, the share of female-headed households is on the rise, and Mexico's adolescent pregnancy rate is higher than rates in many other OECD countries.

- Mexico has successfully closed gender gaps in primary, secondary, and tertiary education enrolment, but the educational system faces ongoing challenges. Mexico has the highest upper-secondary drop-out rate in the OECD and underperforms on the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Many young women are lost in the transition from secondary education to tertiary education or the labour market, and girls and women are underrepresented in potentially lucrative fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

- Large gender gaps persist in workforce engagement, as evidenced by a 35.3 percentage point gap between working-age Mexican women and men's labour force participation rates. Nearly 60% of working women are trapped in informal jobs without social protection – a rate that has changed little over the past decade.

- Mexican women are slightly more likely to be poor than men. Poverty rates are especially pronounced for rural and indigenous women.

- Mexican women recently achieved gender parity in access to formal bank accounts, in part due to new linkages between Mexican development banking institutions and the conditional cash transfer programme *Prospera*. However, both male and female Mexicans engage in formal banking at rates less than half of the OECD average.

- Mexico's self-employment rates (25% of employed women and 27% of employed men) are higher than the OECD averages (10% of employed women and 18% of employed men). Both men and women face challenges to growing their business in Mexico, including inadequate access to credit. However, self-employed men are more likely to be employers and to be formally registered in the tax and social security system. Self-employed women tend to be own-account workers and are more likely to work informally, often as domestic workers or street vendors.

- Mexican women have made enormous progress in reaching political leadership positions, partly as a result of gender quotas in the electoral process. Women fill 42% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 33.6% in the Senate, compared to 22.6% and 17.2%, respectively, in 2006. At the sub-national level, women comprise over 30% of legislators in 28 of the 32 states.
- Public opinion surveys suggest that society's expectations and attitudes towards women are changing, as the younger generation takes a more egalitarian view towards women's roles. Nevertheless, women in Mexico continue to face gender stereotyping, discrimination, and very high rates of violence.

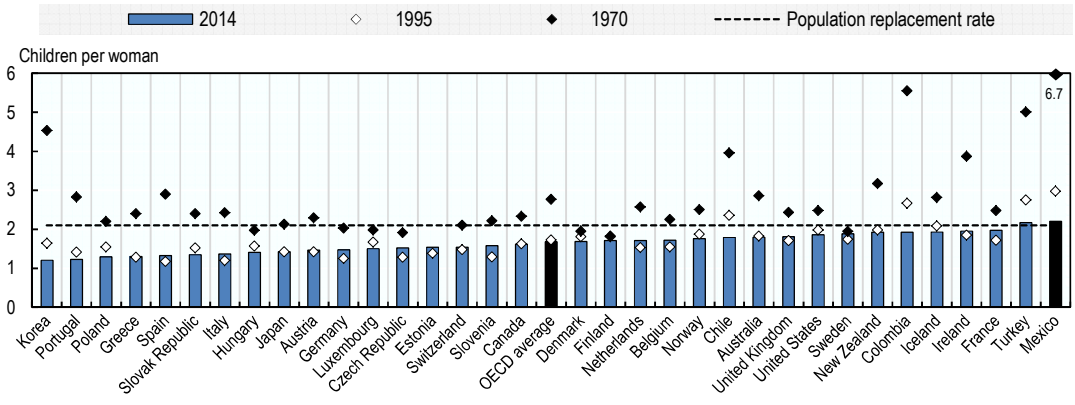
2.2. Family structures are changing

Demographic changes in Mexico present opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, fertility rates are starting to align with the population replacement rate (2.1 children per woman), reflecting greater reproductive autonomy. This should reduce women's hours spent caring for children and allow women to make use of more opportunities outside of the home. At the same time, three demographic factors present challenges to women's empowerment: persistently high rates of adolescent pregnancy, a rising share of single mother households, and increases in life expectancy, which imply more hours spent on eldercare. These changes in family structure can affect women's abilities to undertake good-quality paid work.

The number of children born per woman has declined dramatically since 1970. In 1970, Mexico averaged 6.7 children per woman. This rate dropped to 2.2 children per woman by 2014 (Figure 2.1), which is just slightly above the population replacement rate of 2.1. This national average conceals important geographic and socioeconomic variation in fertility: more children are born per woman in rural areas than urban areas, and among women with less education (INEGI ENADID, 2014).

Figure 2.1. Fertility rates in Mexico are declining

Total fertility rate, selected countries, 1970, 1995 and 2014



Source: OECD Family Database (2016).

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933422993

While fertility rates have declined across the population, they have decreased most slowly among teenagers, in part due to their low rates of contraceptive use (Government of the Republic of Mexico, 2015). Adolescent pregnancy is a pressing concern in Mexico

and is reflected in federal public policy, including Mexico's National Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy among Adolescents (Chapter 3). Mexico has the highest rate of adolescent fertility among OECD member countries, at a rate of 73.6 births per 1 000 females aged 15-19. In 2013, nearly half of a million women and girls under age 20 became mothers, equal to almost one in five births in Mexico. Almost half of the pregnancies among 15- to 19-year-olds in 2014 were unintended (INEGI ENADID, 2014). Teenagers with lower socioeconomic status and/or indigenous backgrounds are far more likely to become adolescent mothers than better-educated, wealthier, and non-indigenous teenagers (Ward et al., 2015).

The number of female-headed households is also on the rise. The percentage of households headed by women was 29% in 2014, a share that has steadily risen from 13.5% in 1976 (INEGI, 2015). These are largely single mothers.

Box 2.1. A snapshot of women's health in Mexico

Health is a positive predictor of labour force participation, especially among older female workers (Boulhol and Scarpetta, 2015). For both men and women, Mexico lags behind the OECD average in many chronic health outcomes, such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. Mexico's obesity rate, the highest in the OECD after the United States, rose from 24% of the adult population in 2000 to 32% in 2013. Almost one in six adults suffer from diabetes, more than double the OECD average. Mexico also continues to have the lowest life expectancy of all OECD countries. While life expectancy increased by an average of three years across OECD countries between 2000 and 2013, it increased by only 1.3 years in Mexico (OECD, 2015a).

Women face a few gender-specific barriers to good health. Mexico holds the highest maternal mortality rates in the OECD, with 38.2 maternal deaths per 1 000 live births in 2013. It also has relatively low rates of screening for cervical cancer and breast cancer, which are routine parts of preventative care for women in other countries. Fewer than 25% of women aged 50 to 69 in Mexico are screened, compared to over 50% of comparably-aged women in most other OECD countries (OECD, 2015a). Based on reported data, mortality from breast cancer in Mexico is lower than in most OECD countries, but mortality from cervical cancer in Mexico is the highest in the OECD. 10.2 deaths per 100 000 women were attributed to cervical cancer in 2013 in Mexico, compared to 3.5 deaths per 100 000 women, on average, in the OECD (OECD, 2015a). While deaths caused by cervical cancer have decreased over the past decade, improvements in screening rates would likely help to reduce mortality further. Cervical cancer is highly preventable if precancerous changes are detected and treated before they progress (*ibid*.).

The health care system in Mexico is overly complicated and inefficient for both men and women. Health care is provided through a variety of disconnected systems which offer different levels of care, different prices, and unequal outcomes depending whether an individual is employed in the private sector, employed in the public sector, informally employed, or unemployed (OECD, 2016a). Individuals are required to change benefit packages when they change jobs, which disrupts continuity of care, and survey evidence suggests that many Mexicans are unaware that they are eligible for health insurance (OECD, 2016a). The structure of this system can make it harder for certain subgroups – such as individuals with less education and less attachment to the labour force, like older and indigenous women – to take up the health benefits available to them. A full discussion of recommendations for reform in the Mexican health care system can be found in the *OECD Reviews of Health Systems: Mexico 2016*.

2.3. Girls are doing well in school relative to boys, but the educational system faces challenges

Education is one important tool for getting well-trained workers in the formal labour force, improving productivity, and levelling the playing field in opportunities to advance. Looking at education through the lens of gender presents a complex image in Mexico. Among its successes, Mexico has achieved gender parity in ensuring that both boys and girls complete primary school. Gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education completion rates are nearly non-existent, and Mexican women in university do better than the OECD average in graduating from some traditionally male-dominated disciplines. However, these success stories conceal serious problems. Upper secondary school[1] drop-out rates remain very high for both boys and girls, gender gaps exist in school performance, and significant gender segregation remains in certain fields of post-secondary study, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Young women are also far more likely than young men to be NEETs – not in employment, education, or training (Chapter 3).

Secondary school drop-out rates remain high among teenage boys and girls

Mexican girls and boys now stand a nearly equal chance of attending preschool and primary school, and enrolment rates are high, at around 80% in preschool and over 95% in primary school (UNESCO, 2016). These enrolment rates are on par with OECD averages and exceed the rates in most other Latin American countries (OECD, 2015b). Between 1990 and 2012, school dropouts at the primary level virtually disappeared (Bentauouet Kattan and Székely, 2014).

Mexico also has a small gender gap in upper secondary school attendance. The gender gap in upper secondary school completion in Mexico was less than 1 percentage point among 25- to 34-year-olds in 2014, in favour of young men. This stands in contrast to most of the rest of the OECD, where females are more likely to complete secondary education than males.

Mexico has been making progress over time in ensuring upper-secondary school completion for boys and girls. The share of 25- to 34-year-olds who completed upper secondary education increased by 8 percentage points from 2005 (38% graduated) to 2012 (46% graduated). This is a sizeable change in a short period of time. In 2012, Mexico extended compulsory education beyond lower-secondary education to include upper secondary school, with the goal of making it universal by 2022.

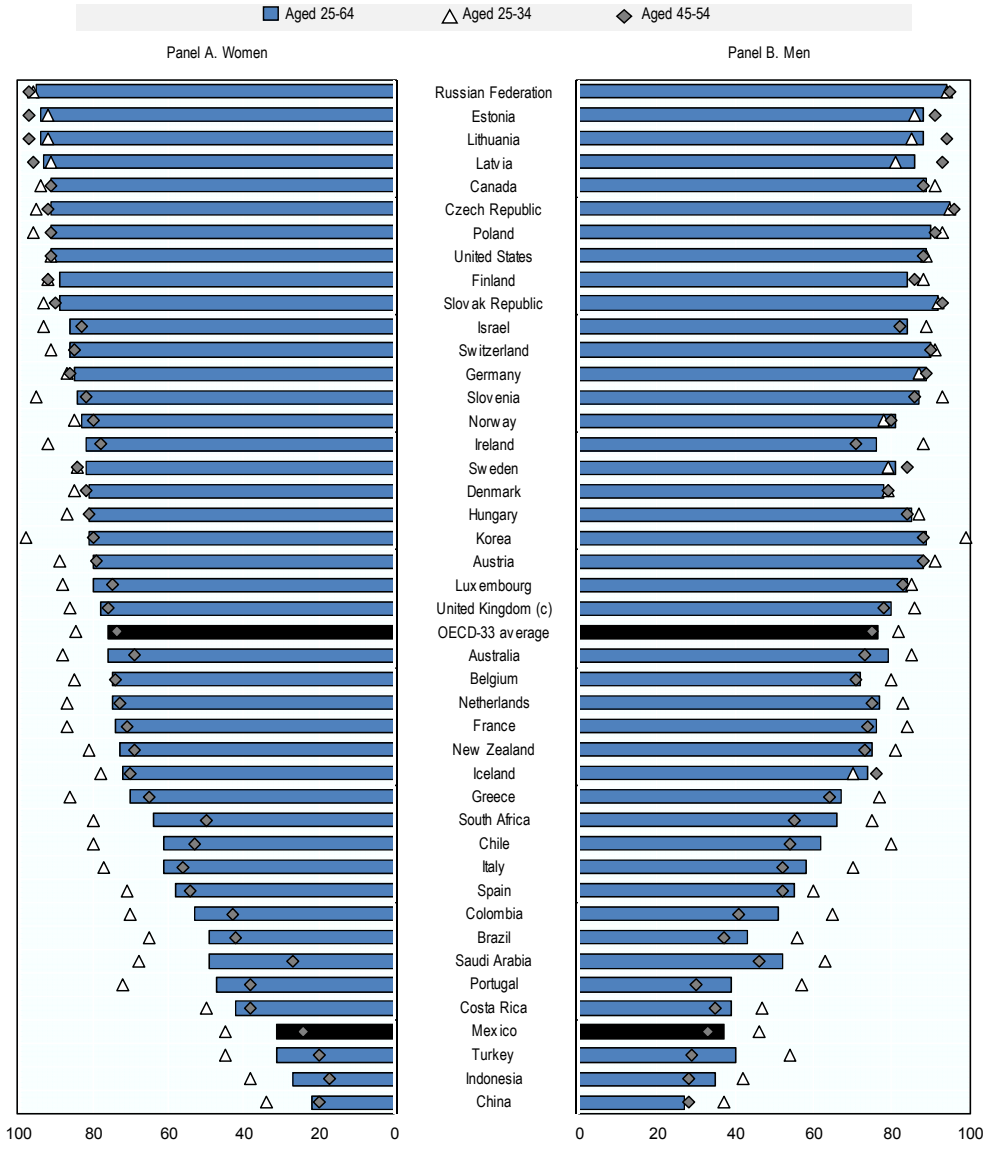
Nevertheless, despite these gains, Mexico continues to have one of the lowest secondary school completion rates in the OECD for both males and females. Drop-outs remain an important issue, and one that has attracted considerable public attention. Indeed, Mexico has one of the smallest proportions of 15-19 year-olds enrolled in education among OECD and partner countries, with more than 40% of 15-19 year-olds *not* enrolled in education in 2013, and has the lowest upper secondary graduation rates in the OECD (OECD, 2015b). The main reasons students cite for dropping out are lack of financial resources to cover the expenses of attending school, lack of interest in studying, and pregnancy (ENDEMS, 2011; OECD calculations of ENADID, 2014).

Girls and young women were much more likely to drop out of the education system in the 1980s, but now the marginal effect of gender is estimated to be quite small. Girls' retention in school may be related to increased labour force opportunities, shifts in cultural attitudes towards girls' schooling, and the incentives offered by Mexico's

conditional cash transfer programme, which provides higher levels of financial support conditional on girls' school attendance (Bentauouet Kattan and Székely, 2014). Over the past decade the Secretariat of Education (SEP, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*) began offering a number of scholarships aimed at improving retention in upper secondary school, some of which have a gender component (Chapter 3).

Figure 2.2. Mexico has closed the gender gap in upper-secondary completion, but both sexes have relatively low levels of completion

Percentage of population that has attained at least upper secondary education, by sex and age group, 2014



Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of female educational attainment for the age group 25-64. a) Data for most countries are based on ISCED 2011. For Brazil, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, data are based on ISCED 97. b) Data for China refer to 2010, for Indonesia to 2011, for South Africa to 2012, and for Chile, France, Brazil, the Russian Federation, and Saudi Arabia to 2013. c) For the United Kingdom, data on upper secondary attainment includes completion of a sufficient volume and standard of programmes that would be classified individually as completion of intermediate upper secondary programmes (18% of the adults are under this group).

Source: OECD (2015), *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators.*

Significant inequalities exist in schooling outcomes across ethnic subgroups and geographic regions. Women who speak an indigenous language spend about *half* as many years in schooling as non-indigenous men. Across the total population, indigenous women spent 4.5 years, on average, in school, compared to 5.6 years of school for indigenous men, 8.5 years for non-indigenous women, and 8.8 years for non-indigenous men. Indigenous women are also the least likely to be in school between the ages of 15 and 19 (61.3% were not enrolled in school in 2010, compared to 42% of non-indigenous women). They also have high rates of illiteracy: in 2010, 34.5% of indigenous women were illiterate (SEP, 2015). However, these rates have been improving across cohorts: by 2015, only 1.2% of women aged 15 to 29 were illiterate (INMUJERES data provided to OECD).

Despite improvements, average test scores are low and gender gaps persist

In 2012, Mexican high school students scored 413 points in mathematics, on average, in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), much lower than the OECD average of 494 points in mathematics. Mexico also underperforms in reading: Mexico's average score is 72 points below the OECD average. The percentage of low achievers among boys and girls in Mexico is also twice as high as the average percentage in the OECD across subjects, but the figures may mask even greater differences; many disadvantaged 15-year-olds leave school and are thus not captured by these statistics.

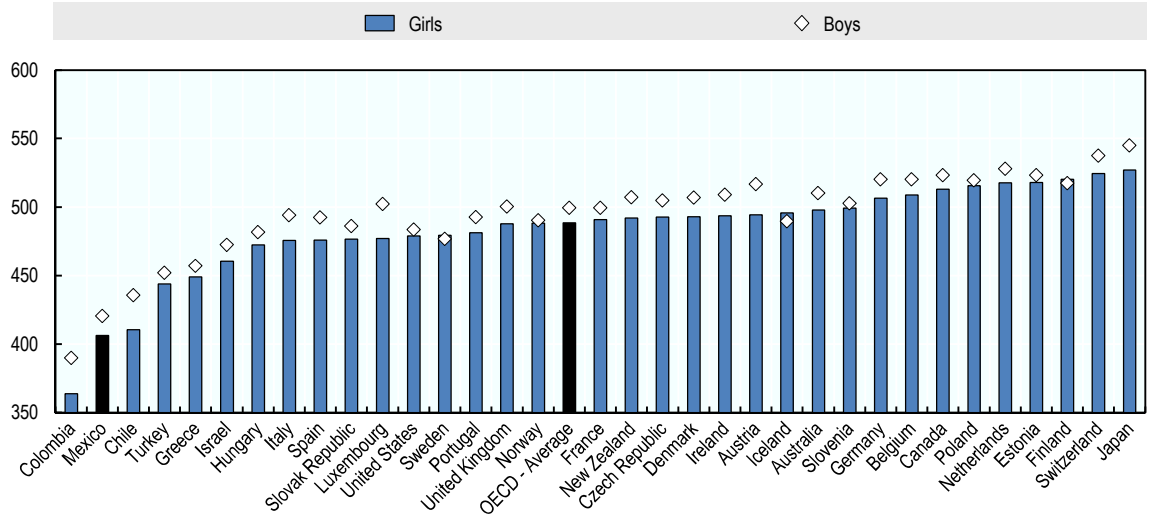
Nevertheless, Mexico was one of the few countries where both boys and girls improved their mathematics performance between 2003 and 2012. Mexico's mathematics score represented an increase of 28 points over its performance in PISA 2003, and was the largest improvement in the OECD. Still, the gender gap persists. Boys scored 30 points higher in 2012 than in 2003, while girls scored 26 points higher. In contrast, across the OECD boys scored 3 points lower in 2012 than in 2003, on average, and girls scored 4 points lower (OECD, 2014).

Notwithstanding the improved performances across sexes, the gender gap in mathematics in favour of boys remains larger in Mexico than in other OECD countries (Figure 2.3). And although girls outperform boys in reading in Mexico, the gender gap in favour of girls is not as large as the difference seen in most other OECD countries.

Mexico began implementing important structural reforms aimed at improving the quality and efficiency of the educational system in 2013. Legislation mandated higher teacher standards, the establishment of new evaluation mechanisms, and the modernisation of information management. Implementation has been challenging, as powerful teachers' unions – particularly in the states of Oaxaca, Michoacán and Guerrero – have resisted reforms related to mandatory evaluations for hiring, promotion, and retention of teaching staff.

Figure 2.3. Low PISA scores combine with gender gaps in Mexico

Average PISA scores of boys and girls in mathematics, OECD countries, 2012



Note: Countries are ranked in ascending order of girls' performance on PISA tests.

Source: OECD (2012), *Mathematics Performance on PISA,* https://data.oecd.org/pisa/mathematics-performance-pisa.htm.

Mexican women have decent coverage in diverse fields in tertiary education

Related to high drop-out rates in upper secondary education, young adults in Mexico are also far less likely than adults in other OECD countries to be enrolled in and complete tertiary education. Only about 25% of current 25- to 34-year-olds in Mexico hold at least a bachelor's degree, compared to an OECD average of about 40% in the same age group. Mexico also has a high share of young women who are NEETs (Chapter 3).

Among students who do continue on to tertiary education, there is nearly gender equality in enrolment. 51% of Mexican students enrolled in tertiary education in 2013 were men, and 49% were women (UNESCO, 2016). In every OECD country except Germany, Mexico, Switzerland, Turkey and Japan, women are more likely than men to be enrolled in tertiary education.

However, the gender gap reverses when it is time to graduate: women make up a slight majority of all graduates with bachelors' degree[2] in Mexico (53%). For doctoral degrees, the gender gap is slightly in favour of men: 53% of doctoral students are men, and 47% are women (UNESCO, 2016).

Mexican women often shy away from pursuing STEM degrees. Field segregation by gender can have negative effects on women's future earnings and career progression, as male-dominated professions (such as those in STEM) tend to offer more lucrative pay than many of the female-dominated professions. Women in Mexico earn less than half of all tertiary degrees in STEM fields, except for life sciences (Figure 2.4).

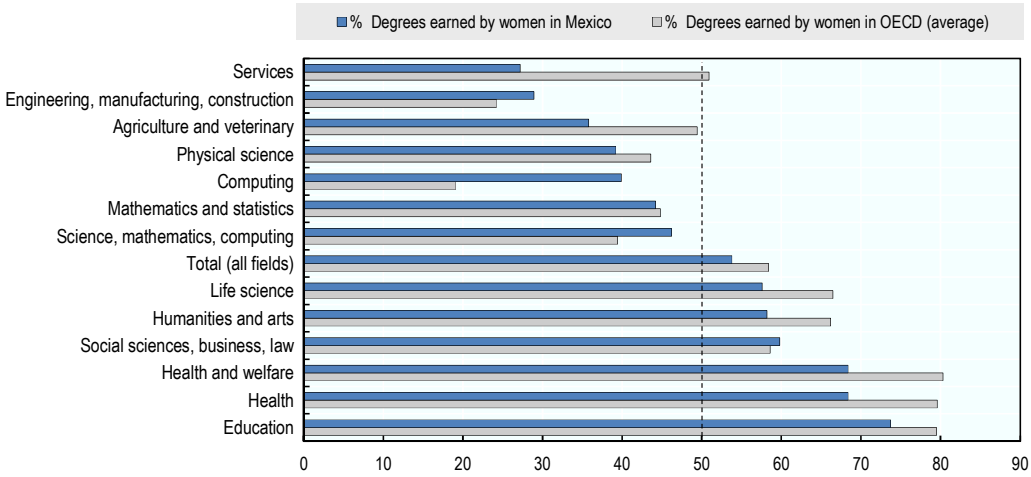
Many factors discourage girls and women from undertaking studies in STEM, but stereotypes and parents' expectations play a crucial role (OECD, 2015b). The gender gap in expectations about field of work is large. Mexican parents of boys are more than 20 percentage points more likely to expect their sons to work in STEM occupations, compared to Mexican parents with daughters. Even when comparing boys and girls with

similar results in mathematics, reading and science performance, the difference is still 13 percentage points in favour of boys (OECD, 2015b).

At the same time, the share of women graduating with bachelor's degrees in science, mathematics and computing is a noteworthy 7 percentage points higher in Mexico than the OECD average. Although it is a small area of study, women account for 40% of bachelor graduates from computing in Mexico, compared to 20%, on average, across OECD countries (Figure 2.4). The fact that women are nearing gender parity in this field is a promising sign, given the importance of computing in the growing and globalised digital economy (OECD, 2015c). However, the total number of graduates in computing is small among all fields of education in Mexico; it makes up just 2.8% of bachelor's level degrees and 2.4% of all tertiary education.

Figure 2.4. Mexican women have decent coverage in diverse fields of study

Share of degrees earned by female students at the bachelor or equivalent level (ISCED 2011 Level 6)



Source: OECD (2015), *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators.*

Education expenditure per student is low

Mexico's spending on education as a percentage of GDP is in line with the OECD average: public spending on primary through post-secondary (non-tertiary) education was 3.4% of GDP in 2012, compared to the OECD average of 3.5% (OECD, 2015b). However, Mexico also has a large population of children in school, relative to other OECD countries, and Mexico's expenditure per student remains low. In total public and private expenditure per student, Mexico spent less than the other 25 OECD countries with available data (OECD Education Statistics, 2015). Mexico spent USD 2 801 (at purchasing power parity) per student in primary through post-secondary (non-tertiary education) in 2012. The next lowest rate was Latvia's USD 3 559 (PPP) per student, whereas Belgium, the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States spent over USD 10 000 (PPP) per student (*ibid.*).

More than 92% of the total budget for primary, secondary, and post-secondary education in Mexico goes to staff compensation – the largest proportion in OECD countries, where on average 79% of the total budget goes to staff compensation (OECD, 2014).

2.4. Mexican women have not yet reached their potential in the labour market

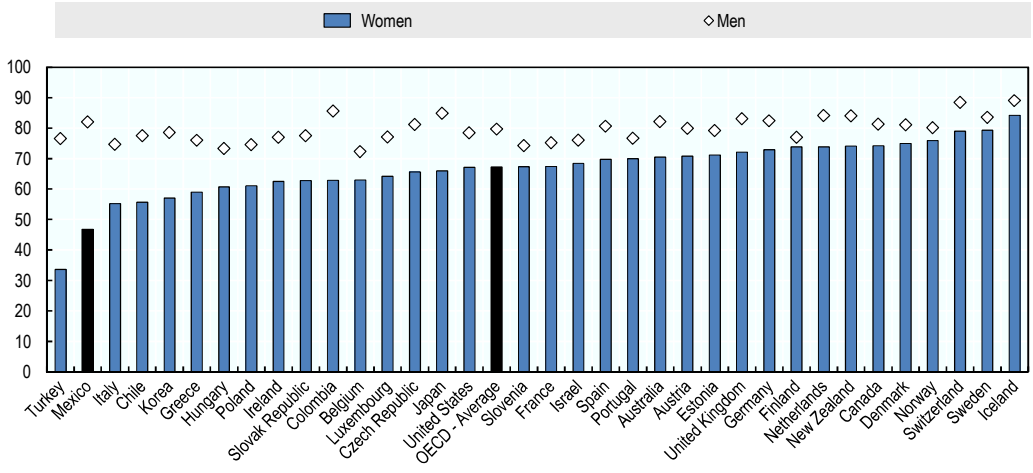
Corresponding with their rising levels of education, Mexican women have gradually improved their labour force participation rate (LFPR) over the past 25 years. The share of prime working-age women (age 15 to 64) in the labour market rose from 35.7% in 1991 to 46.8% in 2014 (Chapter 1, Figure 1.4). The share of all women in the labour market (age 15 and over) grew from 33.9% in 1991 to 43.3% in 2014.

Although Mexico has experienced a faster rate of women's entry in the workforce than most other OECD countries since the early 1990s, women's participation in the Mexican labour market is still well below the OECD average labour force participation rate of 67.2% (Figure 2.5). Indeed, Mexico has the second-lowest rate of (working age) female labour force participation in the OECD, after Turkey. Mexican women also participate at lower rates than women in Colombia and Peru, two other upper-middle income Latin American countries (OECD, 2016b).

In contrast, a high share of Mexican men is in paid work: 82.1% of 15- to 64-year-old men are in the labour force, which is slightly above the OECD average of 79.7%.

Figure 2.5. Mexican women's labour force participation rate lags behind most of the OECD

Labour force participation rates for women aged 15 to 64, OECD countries, 2014



Source: OECD Employment Database (2016).

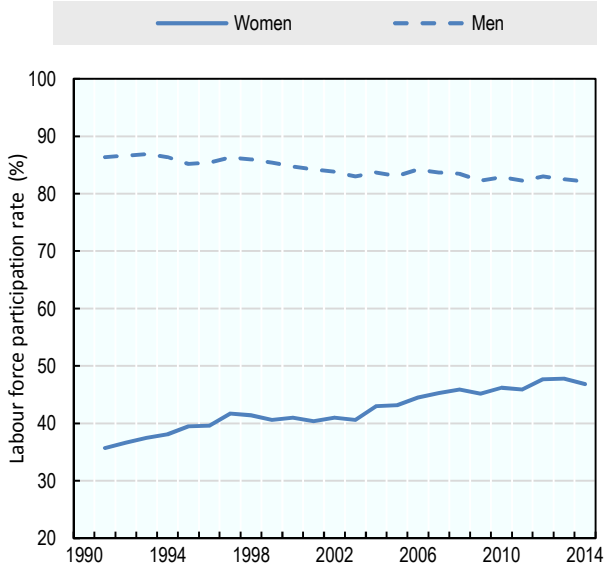
StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933423039

Although gender gaps in LFPR have narrowed as the number of female workers has risen, Mexican women still trail far behind men in participation in the workforce (Figure 2.6). There is a 35.3 percentage point gap between Mexican women and men's labour force participation rates. This is one of the highest differences in labour force participation in the OECD, where the average difference is 12.5 percentage points. Only Turkey has a higher gender gap among prime age workers, with a difference of 43 percentage points.

Gains have been uneven across Mexican women. While women have improved their rates of labour force participation on average, groups such as young women and mothers are not faring well, and face systematic barriers in obtaining and keeping good-quality jobs (Chapter 3).

Figure 2.6. Gender gaps persist in labour force participation in Mexico

Labour force participation rates for women and men, age 15 to 64, 1990-2014



Source: OECD Employment Database (2016).

Mexican women do relatively well in reaching management positions when looking at the share of employed workers who are managers by gender. 3% of employed women are managers compared to 3.4% of employed men in Mexico, which is the smallest measured gap in the OECD (OECD Gender Portal, 2016). This is likely related to the relatively small share of women who choose to enter paid work, i.e., those for whom the expected payoff merits participation. Overall, women make up 35.9% of all management positions in Mexico, which compares favourably to the OECD average of 30.9% (OECD Family Database, 2016).

Box 2.2. Mexican women are less likely to be employed than men, especially after becoming parents

What is the relationship between an individual's gender and their probability of employment in Mexico? Figure 2.7 presents the predicted probabilities of a logit regression estimating the relationship between gender and employment, with a focus on the different labour market outcomes for mothers and fathers of dependent children. The dependent variable is a binary variable for being in employment versus being unemployed or inactive. The independent variables are sex, parental status (with a dependent child), the interaction between sex and parenthood, and relevant controls (age, education level and indigenous status). To evaluate the heterogeneous effects of being in a couple, the model is run three times on different sub-samples – for all men and women, for partnered men and women only, and for single men and women only.

Box 2.2. Mexican women are less likely to be employed than men, especially after becoming parents *(cont.)*

The model illustrates that Mexican women are less likely to be in employment than men, regardless of parental status. However, the difference is greatest between mothers and fathers with dependent children. Mothers are nearly half as likely to be in employment as fathers. Parenthood is associated with an increased probability of employment for men, and a decreased probability of employment for women. Fathers have a 0.14 higher probability of being employed than men without dependent children, whereas mothers are 0.11 less likely to be employed than women without dependent children.

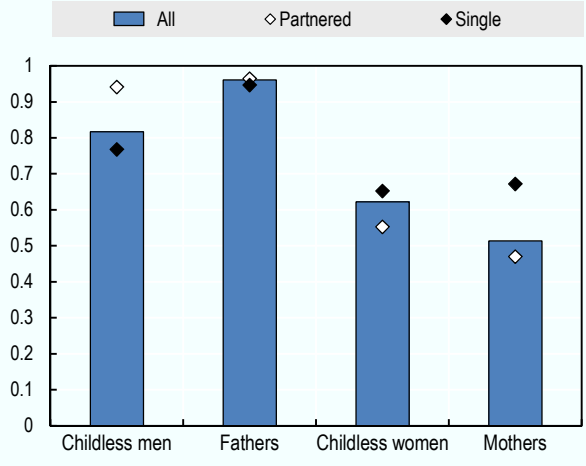
Age and education significantly increase the probability of being in employment. For instance, the probability of a highly educated and non-indigenous 30-year-old father being employed is 0.96, compared to a probability of 0.64 for a low-educated and childless 20-year-old man. The employment probabilities of their female counterparts are 0.51 and 0.39, respectively.

Motherhood is most negatively correlated with the probability of employment when the mother lives with a partner. Mothers in couples are 8 percentage points less likely to be in employment compared to their childless counterparts. Single mothers have a relatively high probability of employment, compared to other groups of women. Single mothers are more likely, by 20 percentage points, to be in employment compared to partnered mothers. Men in couples – both childless men and fathers – are more likely to be in employment than single men.

Of course, this relationship must be interpreted cautiously, as the logit results presented here cannot identify the causal mechanisms linking childbearing and female labour supply. Omitted variable bias and "self-selection" into motherhood also drive labour force outcomes, as women who choose to become mothers differ from women who choose not to become mothers in (observed and unobserved) ways that likely also affect employment. Nevertheless, inadequate public supports for parents in Mexico – including an undersupply of good-quality childcare and low levels of maternity and paternity leave – likely influence mothers' decisions about whether to stay home or enter the labour force (Chapter 3).

Figure 2.7. Partnered mothers are unlikely to be in paid work in Mexico

Predicted probability of employment from logit regressions, men and women aged 20 to 45, Mexico, 2014



Note: Full results of the regression are presented in Annex Table 2.A.2. Sample consists of men and women aged between 20 and 45 without missing values for employment. "Partnered" men and women refer to those who are married or living with a partner. "Fathers" and "mothers" refer to parents of children age 14 and younger. Parenthood, sex, and the interaction between parenthood and sex are all significant at the 1% level. Control variables included in the regression are age, education level and indigenous status.

2.5. Gender gaps in job quality in Mexico

To paint a more complete picture of gender gaps in the labour market, it is important to measure not simply the quantity of jobs, but also the *quality* of jobs. The OECD Job Quality Framework provides guidance on measuring the features of a job that affect well-being, such as earnings quality (a metric that combines average earnings and earnings inequality), labour market security, and quality of the working environment (OECD, 2016c). In Mexico, long work hours, low pay, and high rates of informality present persistent obstacles to good quality work for women – though informality and time poverty also present challenges for many men.

Long work hours affect men and women

Time poverty is an obstacle to good quality jobs, especially for women. Mexican men and women work very long weekly hours, enjoy far less annual paid leave, and have longer commutes than workers in most other OECD countries, on average (Chapter 4). Mexican women also spend much time on unremunerated childcare and housework: they have one of the highest unpaid work burdens in the OECD when measuring both their share of unpaid labour (relative to men) and the total number of minutes spent on unpaid labour each day (Chapter 4).

The culture of long paid work hours and women's disproportionate responsibility for childcare and housework has adverse and gendered effects on behaviour in the labour market. The most common work-hour combination in families with children is the father working very long (over 40) hours each week, while the mother spends zero hours in paid work. It is difficult for women to engage fully in a labour market that expects (and rewards) long hours, and the stereotype that women are more committed to childcare raises the risk of gender discrimination by employers.

Long hours persist in both the public and private sectors. Though the Law of the Professional Career Service System of Mexico's Federal Public Administration (SPC) caps work hours at eight hours per day, it is customary for employees to work a minimum of ten hours. This "culture of sacrifice" was validated in field research by the OECD in 2016, as well as the UNDP (UNDP, 2011).

The gender pay gap persists

In Mexico, as in every other country in the OECD, women earn less than men for every hour of work they do. Many factors explain gender gaps in wages, including women's higher probability of career interruptions, occupational and sectoral segregation, gendered preferences (and/or constraints) for shorter or longer paid work hours, employer discrimination, and women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid work at home, which restricts the time women can spend in paid work (OECD, 2012). In Mexico, gender gaps have been found to exist both in wages and in employer-provided benefits (De la Cruz Toledo, 2016).

The average monthly gender pay gap for all full-time workers (those working over 30 hours per week) is 16.7% in Mexico, compared to the OECD average of 15.3%[3] (OECD Employment Database, 2016). The gap in monthly earnings reflects both gender differences in hourly wages and in hours worked. When looking at the *hourly* gender wage gap, however, Mexico performs better: the hourly wage gap of full-time workers is 6.0%, compared to 14.1% on average the OECD (OECD estimates of labour force surveys). This result should be interpreted with care. To some degree the relatively low

hourly wage gap reflects women's increasing human capital and annual increases in the legal minimum wage, which affects the income of low-paid workers. Mexico's relatively low gender pay gap also likely reflects selection effects around the relatively small share of women whose expected payoff incentivises participation in the labour market. A recent decomposition of the gender wage gap in Mexico attributes about half of the gap to differences in women's and men's endowments (including human capital) and employee characteristics; the other half remains unexplained (De la Cruz Toledo, 2016).

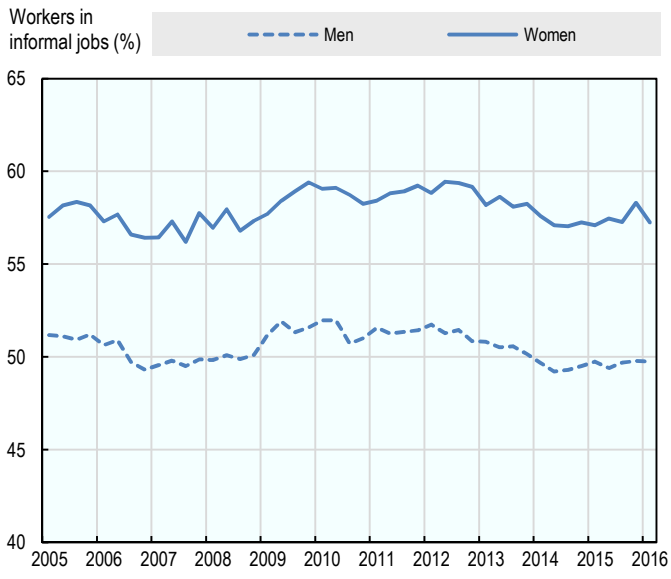
In many countries, the public sector serves as a role model in ensuring equal pay and opportunities for female and male workers. In Mexico's public sector, however, few efforts have been made to address pay inequality. The predominance of women versus men in job classes has not been identified, there are no regular pay assessments to ensure equality in pay, and there are no audits to ensure pay equality as well as equity (i.e. in promotions or to ensure gender balanced representation in job classes). Should a public sector employee wish to lodge a complaint challenging a gender gap in wages or inequity between male and female employees, there is no specific procedure for doing so.

A high share of women work in informal jobs

Although both sexes face high rates of informality in Mexico, women are more likely than men to work informally: 49.7% of men and 57.2% of women held informal (non-agricultural) jobs in the first quarter of 2016. These rates have changed little over the past decade (Figure 2.8). Between 2005 and 2016, informality rates for women have fluctuated between a quarterly low of 56.2% and a high of 59.4%, while men's rates have stayed in the range of 49.2% to 52%.

Figure 2.8. High rates of informality persist for both sexes

Informality rates for men and women in Mexico, 2005-16



Note: Rate is defined as the share of self-reported non-agricultural workers in informal jobs, measured quarterly. This rate includes workers in informal economic units as well as workers in analogous activity, such as paid domestic workers without social security and workers without social security whose services are used by registered economic units (ENOE, 2016).

Source: National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE, *Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo*), 2005-2016.

Not only are women more likely to work informally, they are also more likely to have lower-quality informal jobs. Among informal workers, employers and wage workers tend to be better off, while own-account workers and domestic workers fare worse in terms of wages, job security, and social protection. Mexican women are far more likely to work in the second category than the first.

Importantly, gender gaps in informality imply gender gaps in access to social protection (Chapter 4). While 48.8% of male workers (aged 15-64) in Mexico report never having paid any social security contributions in their productive lives, the figure is 64.6% among women (OECD estimates of ENIGH, 2014). Men also contribute to social security longer than women in Mexico. Among all self-employed workers (over age 15) who are women, 77.5% have never paid social security contributions, compared to 65.1% of own-account workers who are men (OECD estimates of ENIGH, 2014). Coverage is even worse for marginalised groups like domestic workers, who are overwhelmingly female. The ILO (2016) estimates that only 0.1% of the approximately 2 million domestic workers in Mexico are enrolled in a social security programme.

2.6. Among entrepreneurs, gender gaps appear when it is time to hire workers or go formal

A high share of women and men are self-employed in Mexico, and many of them work in the informal sector. Across the OECD, on average, 10% of employed women and 18% of employed men were self-employed in 2014 (using the combined count of own-account workers and employers). Rates are much higher in Mexico: 25% of employed women and 27% of employed men in Mexico were self-employed in the same period (OECD Gender Portal, 2016).

Across countries, gender gaps exist in workers' self-employment earnings, their ability to hire employees, and the capacity for business growth (OECD, 2012). These patterns hold in Mexico, as well: earnings from self-employment are significantly lower among women and most of them do not hire any employees. These challenges are magnified by high rates of informality. The earnings gap[4] between self-employed men and women in Mexico is 47.6% – one of the highest gaps in the OECD, and well above the OECD average of 33.2%. Part of the gender gap in earnings can be attributed to women's preferences for self-employment: women more than men are more likely to self-employ out of a desire for work flexibility, which fosters a gender gap in hours worked and affects earnings (OECD, 2012).

In Mexico, female workers are far more likely to be own-account workers than employers (i.e., able to hire employees). 2.1% of female workers in Mexico are employers, a rate that is comparable to the OECD average for women (2.2%). However, 22.6% of female workers are own-account workers – a share that is far higher than the OECD average of 8.1%. (For male workers in Mexico, 5.3% are employers and 22% are own-account workers.). Self-employed women are also much more likely to work informally than self-employed men, for instance as domestic workers or street vendors.

Even when female entrepreneurs do want to hire employees and grow their business, one of the biggest barriers they face (across countries) is access to credit. This is especially true in countries where women lack crucial assets (e.g., experience, capacity, cash flows, collateral) that are valued by lenders, as well as in countries where there is a cultural bias against women's ability to be business owners (OECD, 2012). Although participation in formal banking has improved in Mexico, access to formal credit remains low for both men and women. In 2015, 10% of the population acquired a loan from a

formal financial institution (CONAIF, 2016). Although micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises account for almost all of the companies in Mexico, the financing they receive is quite low in comparison to larger firms, and the interest rates for these smaller companies tend to be higher than what their levels of risk should imply (CONAIF, 2016).

The vast majority of both men and women in Mexico report feeling credit constrained: 89.5% of women and 88.9% of men replied negatively to the Gallup survey question, "Do you have access to the money you would need if you wanted to start a business?" Similarly, only 16.5% of women and 15% of men answered "Yes" to the question "Do you have access to training on how to start or grow a business?" (OECD Gender Portal, 2016). Thus, although there is almost no gender gap in perceived access to credit or access to training (in contrast to most OECD countries), it is clear that all Mexicans face serious obstacles to business expansion.

One pilot programme identified as promising by INMUJERES[5] is Women Moving Mexico (*Mujeres Moviendo a México*), a public-private partnership which supports female entrepreneurs and businesswomen from socially and economically marginalised communities. Owners of small and medium enterprises can access network support, technical assistance, counselling services, and loan assistance.

2.7. Poverty rates are high for women and men

The OECD estimates that 16.7% of all Mexicans live in relative income poverty after taxes and transfers. This is one of the highest rates in the OECD. Similar to other Latin American countries, income inequality in Mexico is also very high: in 2012, the average income of the top 10% in Mexico was 30.5 times greater than that of the bottom 10%. This is the largest difference in the OECD, and compares unfavourably to an OECD average of 9.6 to 1 for the highest versus lowest decile (OECD, 2015d).

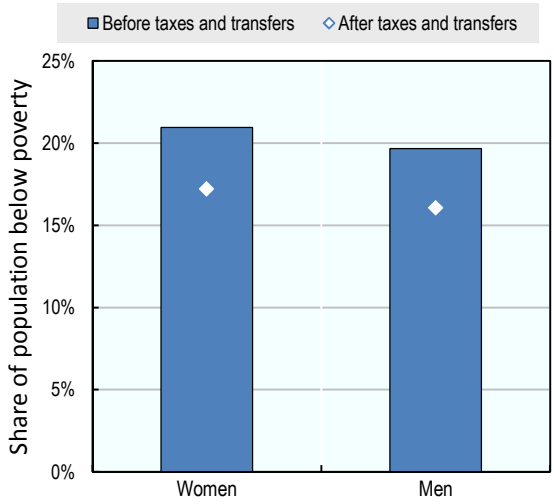
Given Mexican women's weak attachment to the labour market, their lower earnings than men, and their greater likelihood of working informally, it is not surprising that a higher share of women than men live in poverty (Figure 2.9), but the difference is not very large. Poverty is more pronounced in female-headed households (USAID, 2012). Corresponding with mothers' weak labour force attachment, Mexico also has relatively high rates of child poverty (Chapter 1).

Taxes and transfers do not do enough to bring households out of poverty, even in the presence of a conditional cash transfer programme and a non-contributory pension scheme for the elderly. Using the relative income poverty measure, the OECD estimates that 17.2% of women and 16.1% of men remain in poverty after accounting for taxes and transfers (OECD Income Distribution Database, 2016). These numbers compare unfavourably with the average (un-weighted, post-tax and transfer) poverty rate across OECD countries for both men and women, which was around 11% in 2012 – a decrease from an average pre-tax and transfer poverty rate of 28.5% (*ibid.*). The effects of redistribution in Mexico are therefore weaker than in most other OECD countries.

Mexican Government statistics present an even starker picture. Mexico estimates that almost half of the population lives in poverty. In 2014, 55.3 million Mexican children, men, and women lived below the poverty line, out of a total population of nearly 120 million (CONEVAL, 2015). This was a 0.7 percentage point increase in poverty from 2012 to 2014, and women have slightly higher poverty rates than men (46.3% vs. 46.0%). The difference between the Mexican Government's and the OECD's rates are explained by methods used to calculate poverty: the OECD definition focuses on income, whereas the Mexican definition uses income plus other indicators.[6]

Figure 2.9. Women are more likely than men to live in poverty in Mexico

Poverty headcount for total population, where poverty is measured as 50% of current median income, before and after taxes and transfers in Mexico, 2014



Note: Based on pre- and post-tax and transfer household income.

Source: *OECD Income Distribution Database* (2016).

Indigenous women face compounding disadvantage

Mexico has a sizable indigenous population: nearly 7% of Mexicans aged five and older speak an indigenous language, and of course a higher share of the population is of indigenous origin. Indigenous people live throughout Mexico but are concentrated in the poorer south. In Chiapas and Oaxaca, for example, around one-third of the population speaks an indigenous language (INMUJERES, 2006).

Indigenous women face multiple disadvantages. Gender gaps in literacy rates, rates of economic participation, and municipal leadership are generally larger in southern than northern states. Women of indigenous origin have lower levels of education and are far more likely to be illiterate than indigenous men and non-indigenous men and women (Section 2.3). Indigenous women also have a higher number of children, on average, and worse maternal health outcomes, including mortality (INMUJERES, 2006). Indigenous Mexicans in rural areas are often beyond the reach of the state and consequently struggle to access important social services such as health and education (USAID, 2012).

An important factor affecting indigenous women is their disadvantage in land tenure, inheritance rights, and membership in *ejidos* (areas of communal agriculture). This is a key source of income and wealth in rural areas. Although inheritance law in Mexico treats men and women equally, land inheritance occurrences in 2011 were about four times higher for sons than daughters (World Bank, 2011). Women's *ejido* rights were eroded with the early 1990s transition of *ejido* land tenure to individuals rather than households, and women make up a small share of *ejido* members and leaders (USAID, 2012). One serious obstacle to property ownership among indigenous women is language. The land registration system can be difficult to use, and indigenous women are half as likely as indigenous men to speak Spanish (*ibid*.).

Women have made gains in financial inclusion

Financial inclusion is another measure of socioeconomic disadvantage. In 2016, only 39% of Mexicans had banking accounts, far below the OECD average of 94% (CONAIF, 2016). Women, low-income populations, and rural residents are traditionally disadvantaged in access to banking, but women in Mexico have made tremendous gains in accessing accounts in the past five years. In 2011, only 22% of women held accounts, but by 2014 that rate that increased to 39% (CONAIF, 2016). Women are now at parity with men in the percentage holding bank accounts nationwide.

What drove this progress? A range of government agencies have addressed this issue by co-ordinating policies on financial inclusion, by modifying regulations to enable institutions to offer products and services to low-income populations (such as basic accounts, mobile banking, and simple account records), and by implementing programmes focused on increasing social inclusion (e.g., banking for social programme beneficiaries and those on government payroll). One important measure is the Integral Programme of Financial Inclusion (PROIFF, *Programa Integral de Inclusión Financiera*) offered by one of the federal development banks, the National Savings and Financial Services Bank (*Banco de Ahorro Nacional y Servicios Financieros*). PROIFF has an implicit gender slant: it provides financial education, savings, credit, insurance, and financial services to the recipients of *Prospera* transfers, the majority of whom are female heads of household. By 2016, a total of 626 000 beneficiaries had contracted savings accounts, and 639 000 had acquired basic credit (CONAIF, 2016).

2.8. Younger Mexicans hold more progressive views of women's education and work

Public policies can only go so far in promoting gender equality if inegalitarian attitudes, sexism, and misogyny persist in society. Yet norms and expectations around gender are hard to change. Public opinion about the role of men and women has shifted very slowly over time, especially in emerging and upper-middle income countries (OECD, 2016d). Among other actors, the media in Mexico widely contribute to perpetuating gender stereotypes, inequalities, and the "traditional" role of women (Aguilar, 2012).

While representative public opinion polls reveal the strong persistence of patriarchal gender norms in Mexico, the younger generation gives cause for optimism. Young Mexicans are more gender progressive than their older counterparts across many measures, but especially so in acceptance of women's equal role in the labour market and access to education. When similar survey questions are asked in consecutive waves (e.g., the question on priorities regarding boys' versus girls' higher education, and on child well-being when mothers work), there is also evidence that attitudes are evolving with time across age cohorts.

A common cross-national survey measure of gender inequality explores whether men should receive preferential treatment during job hiring. The survey question is phrased as follows: "When jobs are scarce, should a man have more right to a job than a woman?" In most countries, young people are more likely than their elders to answer "no". Younger Mexicans are much more egalitarian than their older counterparts on this measure: 22.6% of Mexicans over the age of 50 believe that men should get priority when jobs are scarce, whereas only 14% of 18- to 29-year-old Mexicans support the preferential hiring of men (OECD, 2016b). The younger generation's egalitarian attitudes towards the preferential hiring of men are moving closer to those in European and Anglophone OECD countries.

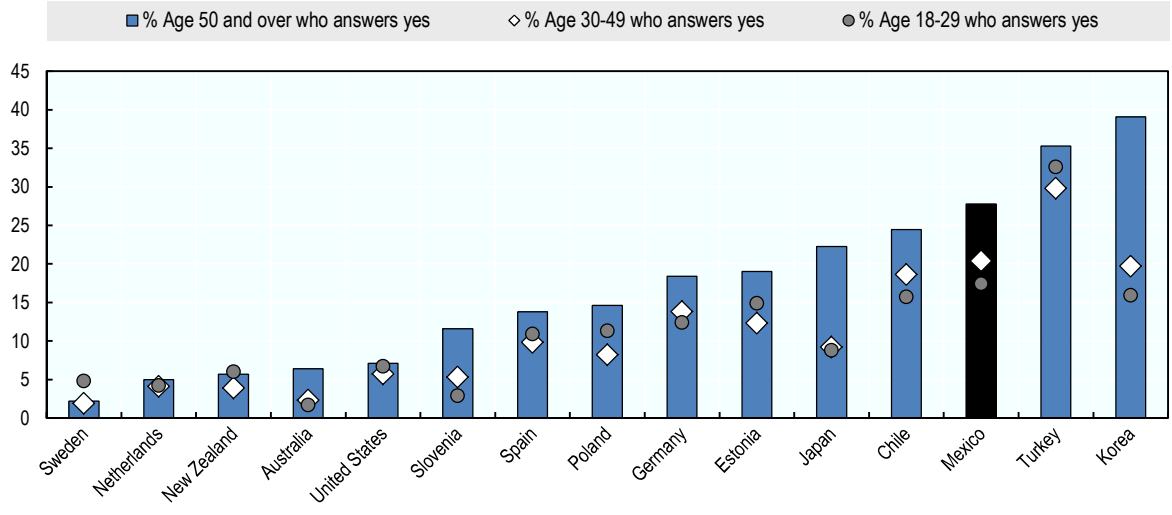
In fact, on this measure, young adults in Mexico are more progressive than their counterparts in Germany, where generational change has been less pronounced: 15.3% of young German adults support the preferential hiring of men when jobs are scarce, a figure that barely differs from their older counterparts (OECD estimates based on the World Values Survey, 2010-2014).

Younger Mexicans are also more likely than their elders to believe that a university education is equally important for boys and girls (Figure 2.10). There is a 10 percentage point gap between the share of Mexicans over age 50 (27.8%) and the share of Mexicans aged 18 to 29 who believe a university education is more important for a boy than a girl.

The fact that a relatively high proportion of Mexicans think a university education is more important for a boy than a girl is problematic for gender equality in education access. Taking a short-sighted view of the labour market, as it exists today, it may make sense for families to invest more in boys' higher education. However, women's gains in labour force participation reveal that this is not a sustainable approach, and it is encouraging to see gains in young women's persistence in secondary and tertiary education. As women continue to progress in education and the labour market, families should view the payoff to investments in girls' higher education to be at least as high as that of boys.

Figure 2.10. Mexicans increasingly value university education for women

Percentage of respondents who answer "yes" when asked if a university education is more important for a boy than for a girl

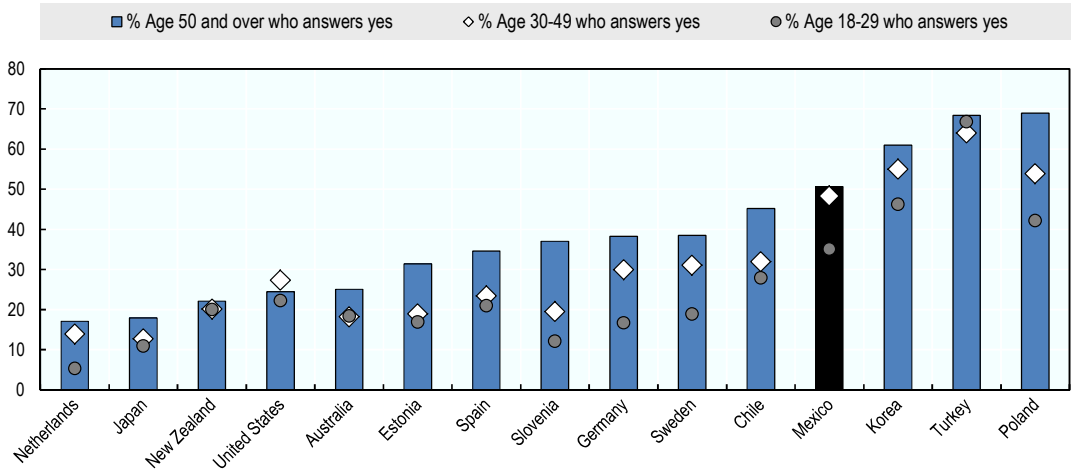


Source: OECD estimates of World Values Survey (2010-2014 wave).

Young adults tend to be more gender-progressive than their older counterparts in perceptions of how work affects behaviours at home, but strong patriarchal norms linger. A relatively high share of Mexicans (43.6% overall) believe that children suffer when mothers work (Figure 2.11). In this regard, improvements in the quality of childcare in Mexico (Chapter 3) could help alleviate families' reluctance to outsource some care responsibility and give mothers more options outside of the home.

Figure 2.11. Many Mexicans still believe that when a mother works, her children suffer

Percentage of respondents who answer "yes" when asked if children suffer when a mother works

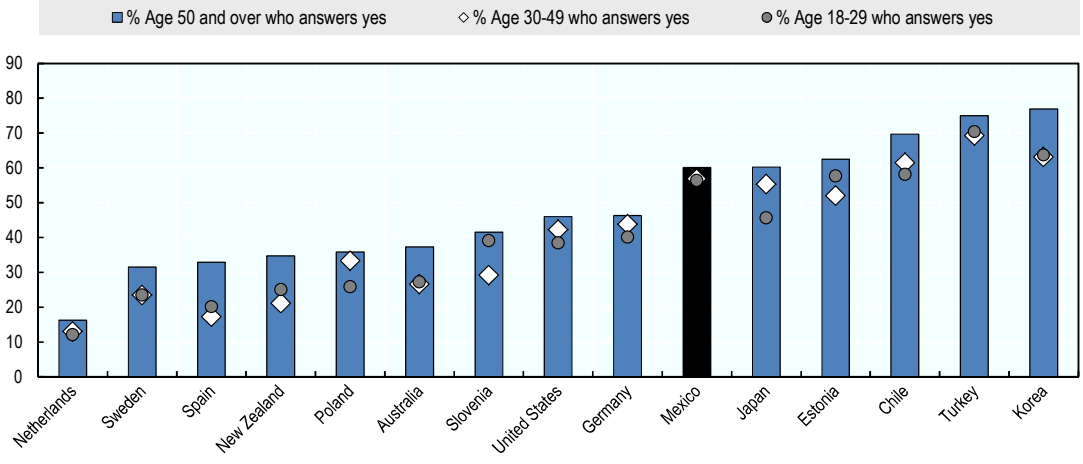


Source: OECD estimates of World Values Survey (2010-2014 wave).

Finally, while Mexicans increasingly value women's education, and few believe men should receive preferential treatment in hiring, norms and attitudes penalise female breadwinners. Women's success in the labour market – perceived as a woman earning a higher income than their spouse – is still viewed as threatening the stability of a household (Figure 2.12). The share of people who believe that a woman earning more than her husband causes problems is concerning: around 60% of Mexicans believe this, with little variation across age groups. Unfortunately, negative perceptions of female breadwinners are a global phenomenon, and are especially common outside of Western Europe (OECD calculations based on the World Values Survey, 2010-2014).

Figure 2.12. Female breadwinners are viewed negatively

Percentage of respondents who answer "yes" when asked if a woman earns more money than her husband, it is almost certain to cause problems



Source: OECD estimates of World Values Survey (2010-2014 wave).

2.9. Women in political life

Mexican women have made significant gains in accessing political leadership, particularly in the national legislature, where their representation has nearly doubled over the past decade. Women fill 42% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 33.6% of seats in the Senate, compared to 22.6% and 17.2%, respectively, in 2006. At the sub-national level, 28 out of 32 states have surpassed the 30% critical mass threshold considered to be the tipping point for women to provoke real change in policy agendas, with women's representation at 38% on average overall.

These improvements correspond with rules that require parties to nominate candidates to federal and congressional elections based on a gender parity principle. The 2014 amendment to Article 41 of the Federal Constitution requires political parties to develop "rules to ensure gender parity in the nomination of candidates in federal and local congressional elections" (Chapter 5).

Increasing numeric representation in legislative bodies is a great feat and a critical stepping stone to women's increased participation in politics. Nonetheless, it comes with challenges that still must be overcome, and women find that winning an election or political appointment is only half the battle. As the Mexican legislature has been a male-dominated arena since its inception – with behavioral and procedural norms set by those (men) who have classically dominated the space – women often face difficulty in substantively participating. Female politicians report that sexual and political harassment are a reality for women holding public office. The unpredictable and long working hours associated with high political office also take a toll on women's health and their ability to fully engage. Societal expectations consign women to take on the brunt of unpaid care work regardless of their employment status, which is a real challenge within the current modus operandi of representative bodies (Chapter 5).

Women's contributions are often further marginalised by their being assigned to legislative committees that deal with what are classically considered "soft issues" such as health and education, which limits their holistic contribution to issues across the board and to topic areas such as defense, trade, foreign policy, and finance that have sweeping effects on society. Women's involvement in leadership roles within the legislature is also uneven, especially when it comes to chairing committees. It is worth evaluating how present norms and procedures of representative bodies – both at the national and sub-national level – could be improved so as to foster a gender-sensitive work environment conducive to the needs of both men and women.

In the upper echelons of political power, where quotas do not exist, women's participation is very low, similar to many other countries around the world. Women fill only two of the 18 ministerial positions in the Presidential Cabinet. At the gubernatorial level, only one of the 32 states is governed by a woman.

2.10. Women's lived experiences in Mexico

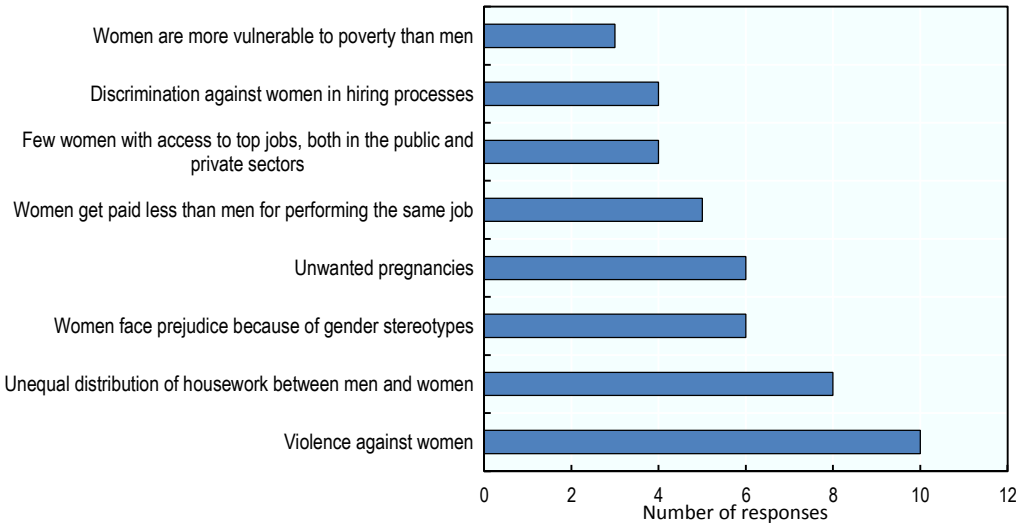
National surveys help illuminate Mexican women's views on issues affecting their lives. 56.6% of women believe that the rights of women are not respected in Mexico (INEGI ENADIS, 2010). When asked, "What do you believe is the principle problem facing Mexican women today?" a plurality of women (24.6%) stated problems related to employment and/or the economy (INEGI ENADIS, 2010). The next most common

answers were delinquency and crime (14.9%); problems of abuse, assault, maltreatment, and violence (11.4%); and discrimination (10%).

In preparing this report, the OECD surveyed the Women's Institutes in Federal Entities (*Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas*), which are the agencies in Mexican states that co-ordinate and drive gender policy at the local level. The OECD Questionnaire on Gender Equality in Mexican States results corroborate women's concerns registered in public surveys. The Women's Institutes more highly prioritise issues of violence against women (VAW), perhaps due to their regular contact with victims and advocates' efforts to publicise the issue.[7] All but two responding Mexican states prioritised VAW as the most pressing issue in their state; the other two states listed it as the second most pressing issue.

Figure 2.13. Women's Institutes in Federal Entities are highly concerned about violence

Distribution of responses to the question, "From the following list of issues that women face in Mexico, what are the top priority issues that need to be addressed in your state?"



Note: Women's Institutes in Federal Entities (*Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas*) were asked to rank their five highest issue areas. Responding states included Ciudad de Mexico, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Durango, Sinaloa, Hidalgo, Puebla, Colima, Jalisco, and Estado de Mexico.

Source: OECD Questionnaire on Gender Equality in Mexican States (QGEMS) 2016.

2.11. Violence against women is pervasive

Violence against women (VAW) is a public health and human rights crisis in Mexico. VAW remains one of the most pressing issues to be addressed by policy makers in Mexico, as it is pervasive and characterised by high rates of assault, homicide, kidnapping and sexual violence (Amnesty International, 2016). Sexual harassment against women is also widespread. In 2011, 63% of Mexican women over 15 years of age declared that they had been victims of some kind of violence in their lifetime (INEGI, 2015).

As in other parts of the world, women in Mexico are more vulnerable to violence carried out by their own husbands, boyfriends, or partners than by people outside of their household. 47% of women who have had at least one intimate partner have been victims

of violence perpetrated by him (INEGI, 2015). Women aged 30-39 are the most vulnerable, as 68% have reported being a victim of some type of violence, suggesting that high rates occur while families are rearing children. The State of Chihuahua has the highest incidence of VAW for this particular group, at 80%, followed by Estado de México, at 78% (INEGI, 2015).

Many of these crimes go unreported for various reasons, including fear of further victimisation and threats (towards the woman and her loved ones), stigma, lack of means for self-support, and lack of institutional protection. One major factor behind underreporting is mistrust in the criminal justice system. It is inherently difficult to estimate rates of violence and rates of underreporting, but the National Survey of Victimization and Perceptions of Public Security (INEGI ENVIPE, 2015) offers a baseline. Fewer than 10% of all kidnappings, sexual harassment, sexual assaults, attempted rapes, and rapes[8] were reported to authorities in 2014 (*ibid.*).

VAW often goes hand in hand with violence against children, as children can be the direct target of abuse or witness abuse against their mother and siblings. From 2006 to 2014 almost 100 000 girls aged 15 years old and younger became pregnant in Mexico, while in 2013-14 394 ten-year-old girls gave birth (Save the Children, 2016). These pregnancies are assumed to be the result of sexual violence. Sexual violence against adolescents is still not universally penalised in Mexico. (For a review of variation across states in laws against sexual violence, see CEAV, 2016). In one egregious example, in four states – Sonora, Campeche, Durango and Baja California – criminal actions against sexual offenders are precluded or closed if the offender marries his victim, as marriage legalises the crime (*ibid.*).

Femicide, defined as violent female deaths motivated by gender, remains a serious issue. Most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involve ongoing abuse in the home, threats, intimidation, or sexual violence, or occur in situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner (WHO, 2012). In 2013, seven women were killed each day, on average, in Mexico (UN Women, 2016). In 2014, the highest femicide rates were in the states of Guerrero, Chihuahua and Oaxaca, which had 6-10 femicides for every 100 000 women. In absolute numbers, the case of Estado de México was particularly concerning, with 359 femicides total in 2014, compared to 176 in Guerrero and 167 in Chihuahua (UN Women, 2016). From 2007 to 2012, the national femicide rate grew by 138%. The rate decreased from 2012 to 2014, but the numbers continue to be alarming. The recent reduction can be attributed to fewer femicides in public spaces. The rate of femicides in domestic spaces remains unchanged, revealing the strong persistence of intimate partner violence (UN Women, 2016).

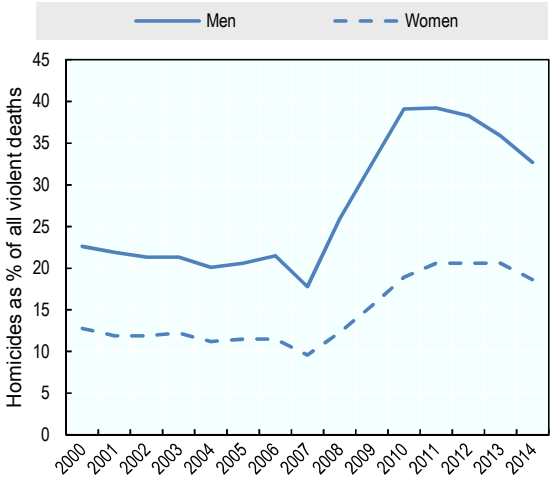
Gender-related violence in the political domain partially explains why women remain underrepresented in politics and can be limited in exercising their political agency (Cerva Cerna, 2014). Political violence against women can take many forms, including assaults and threats during campaigning and while in office, the destruction of personal or family property, intimidation, pressure to resign in favour of male substitutes, and being prevented from voting. This can stymie women's political participation and has led some to abandon their political careers after election, at high personal, professional, and emotional costs. Indeed, as women's representation in politics increases, so too does the risk of becoming victims of violence, as women's presence challenges the (male-dominated) status quo of power in politics.

Gender-based violence in Mexico is grounded in gender inequalities and patriarchal norms, but it also takes place in a context of widespread violence that affects both sexes.

Homicide rates in Mexico are extremely high compared to other OECD countries, and Mexican men are more vulnerable than women to violent deaths (Figure 2.14), often as a by-product of gang violence. In 2013, Mexico registered 18.9 intentional homicides per 100 000 people (World Bank DataBank, 2016). European OECD countries such as Germany, Italy and Spain each registered less than one intentional homicide per 100 000 people in their most recent year of data collection (*ibid.*). Mexico also has more homicides than Canada (1.4 homicides per 100 000 people) and the United States (3.8), as well as Latin American countries such as Peru (6.7 homicides per 100 000 people), Chile (3.1), and Costa Rica (8.4). Brazil and Colombia fare worse, with 26.5 and 31.8 intentional homicides, respectively, per 100 000.

Figure 2.14. Men are more likely to be homicide victims

Homicides as a percentage of all accidental or violent deaths, Mexico, 2000-14



Note: Accidental or violent deaths are defined as all deaths due to environmental events and circumstances, such as injuries, poisonings, or other adverse effects. They are classified as accidents, homicides, and suicides.

Source: INEGI (2014), Mortality Statistics (*Estadísticas de Mortalidad*).

Policies to prevent, sanction, and eradicate violence against women

Mexico is making progress on measuring VAW, as well as prioritising its prevention and eradication. The two main legal documents that protect women against violence in Mexico are the *Norma Oficial Mexicana* NOM-046-SSA2-2005 on family and sexual violence against women (*Violencia Familiar, Sexual y Contra las Mujeres*) and the general law on women's right to a life free of violence (*Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia*).

To measure how many women are affected by violence, and in what form, INEGI periodically conducts surveys on VAW, such as the National Survey on Victimization and Perceptions of Public Security (*Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública*) and the National Survey on Household Relationship Dynamics (*Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares*).

The Mexican Government has rolled out a multi-pronged approach to addressing VAW, entitled the Integrated Programme to Prevent, Address, Sanction, and Eradicate Violence Against Women (*Programa Integral para Prevenir, Atender, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres* 2014-2018). This programme proposes several

strategies and policies to eradicate VAW, and has included a range of government actors, including the Attorney's General Office, INMUJERES, the National System for the Integral Development of the Family (*Sistema Nacional Para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*), the Secretariat of Education (SEP), the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL), the Secretariat of Treasury and Public Credit (*Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público*), and, most importantly, the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women (CONAVIM, *Comisión Nacional Para Prevenir y Erradicar la Violencia Contra las Mujeres*).

CONAVIM is perhaps the most important body in this campaign, as it is the lead actor in the design of national policies and strategies to prevent and eradicate VAW. CONAVIM, created in 2009, is a decentralised organ of the Secretariat of the Interior (SEGOB, *Secretaría de Gobernación*), which co-ordinates cross-government action to prevent, draw attention to, sanction, and eradicate violence against women. CONAVIM and INMUJERES are attempting to ensure that VAW receives government and public attention at the national, state, and local levels.

One of CONAVIM's most striking policy levers is its ability to issue "gender alerts" via the Secretary of the Interior. These alerts were legislated in 2007, and oblige authorities to implement measures that protect women's rights and physical security, conduct more comprehensive investigations into acts of VAW, and increase efforts to address the problem. Gender alerts attract considerable public attention. As of June 2016, 41 municipalities had a gender alert in effect, in an area covering about 15% of Mexico's female population. Federal alerts were activated in 33 municipalities in the State of Mexico, Morelos, and Michoacán, and the State of Jalisco implemented its own gender alert in eight locations.

The gender alerts send a strong statement about the severity of the problem, and publicly-funded justice centers (*centros de justicia*) that have been set up in many Mexican states are helping some women locally. These local, multi-purpose anti-violence centers are intended to offer psychological, legal, and medical care; temporary shelter; consultation with child development experts; and workshops on social and economic empowerment to support women in breaking the cycle of violence and starting a self-sustainable life free from violence. In practice, however, stakeholders say that these centers are underfunded and need more resources.

The educational system has also taken indirect approaches to violence prevention. For instance, SEP developed the programme *Construye T*, which has been implemented in some public high schools to promote socio-emotional skills in students, teachers, and principals. The programme's goal is to encourage them to better assess the consequences of their actions, develop pro-social behaviours, and improve interpersonal relationships in order to improve the schooling environment. The educational system plays an important role in changing attitudes towards women, which can go a long way towards reducing violence against women. The educational system should strengthen and expand these efforts.

One interesting approach is the *Un Cuarto Más* ("One More Room") strategy.[9] *Un Cuarto Más* has addressed overcrowding, urban poverty, and related domestic violence against women by building about 500 000 additional rooms where women and young people have their own sleeping space. Administered by the Secretariat of Agricultural, Territorial, and Urban Development (*Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial, y Urbano*), *Un Cuarto Más* situates VAW within a broader strategy to reduce overcrowding in 2.5 million Mexican homes and foster growth and employment in the housing sector.

State and city governments are also taking steps to address VAW. The Mexico City Government, for instance, is trying to improve the incorporation of victims of violence into the labour market. Mexico City has agreed to give priority public sector hiring to victims of domestic violence who have completed courses offered by the Programme of Social Reinsertion for Female Victims of Family Violence (*Programa de Reinserción Social para Mujeres Víctimas de Violencia Familiar de la Ciudad de México*). Many Mexican states have units dedicated to the prevention of, and attention to, female victims of violence, as well as state-level legislation guaranteeing a woman's access to a life without violence. Nevertheless, the high rates of non-reporting for rapes and related crimes suggest that state and federal legal protections are inadequately enforced.

Mexico has participated in international efforts to address the emerging phenomenon of political violence against women. As part of the Tenth Session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Quito, Ecuador in 2007, member countries – including Mexico – agreed to adopt "legislative and institutional reforms to prevent, punish and eradicate political and administrative harassment against women who reach decision-making positions through electoral means or by appointment, both nationally and locally as well as in political parties and movements" (ECLAC, 2007).

As it seeks to meet this commitment, it is important that Mexico better identify political VAW within its legal framework, regularly document cases of VAW in the political arena, and ultimately establish and implement standards of intervention to ensure the full and equal participation of women in political life – safeguarding them from threats to their physical and emotional integrity. In 2015 and 2016, several institutions held a working group to define the different manifestations of political violence, and introduce these definitions into the legal framework to ensure ththat women can participate in politics without discrimination. Many federal institutions collaborated in the creation of the Protocol on Political Violence Against Women, which reveals an increased awareness and a strong commitment (Chapter 5) of relevant stakeholders towards eradicating this form of VAW, which threatens not only the lives of women but truly the exercise of democracy in Mexico.

VAW affects multiple aspects of the lives of victims, which touch upon many parallel policy and service delivery spheres such as education, social protection, justice, security, and health. It is consequently crucial for Mexico to invest further political commitments, financial means, qualified human resources, and co-ordination efforts in the standardisation of multi-purpose services for VAW prevention, as well as for the protection and empowerment of victims. Government actors must build specialised capacity and work together to effectively prevent VAW, but – when violence happens – they must also successfully protect victims, support victims' reintegration in society, and hold perpetrators accountable. Mexico's performance on these measures will demonstrate the effectiveness of the legal and institutional frameworks to eradicate VAW.

However, real change cannot come only from the top down. Patriarchal attitudes that impede women's rights are a root cause of VAW. Mexico must fundamentally alter attitudes towards women, and this starts at a very young age, at school and at home. SEP is trying to decrease stereotyping through fairer representations of women in educational materials, and has introduced socio-emotional education programmes for children and adolescents. These are important steps. But it is equally important for families to set a good example for children in order to break the cycle of violence. This is a challenging task, but it is a necessary one.

Notes

1. Throughout this report, and consistent with other OECD work, the term "upper secondary school" refers to schooling in grades 10-12 (roughly age 15-17). In Mexico this level of schooling is called *educación media superior,* and is sometimes referred to (in English) as "higher middle education". Lower-secondary school (*educación secundaria básica*) refers to grades 7-9 (roughly age 12-14).
2. Graduation rates are the estimated percentage of an age cohort that is expected to graduate over their lifetime. This estimate is based on the total number of graduates in 2013 and the age-specific distribution of graduates.
3. Earnings refer to the monthly earnings of full-time employees and self-employed workers, i.e. persons usually working at least 30 hours per week, and are measured as the unadjusted difference between median earnings of men and women relative to the median earnings of men.
4. The gender earning gap is unadjusted and defined as the difference between male and female average self-employment incomes, divided by the male average self-employment income.
5. INMUJERES is the *Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres* (National Institute of Women), a Mexican federal government agency that co-ordinates the implementation of a national policy on substantive gender equality.
6. The poverty definition used by Mexico's National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy's (CONEVAL, *Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social*) is broader than the definition used by the OECD. CONEVAL uses a multidimensional approach incorporating income and other measures, while the OECD measures poverty using exclusively household income data that have been harmonised across countries. CONEVAL's measure defines the population in poverty as people who have at least one indicator of social deprivation plus an income below the well-being threshold, which for urban individuals is MXN 2 542 and for rural individuals is MXN 1 615 per month. The income threshold is determined using a defined basket of alimentary and non-alimentary goods (CONEVAL, 2015). Indicators of social deprivation include education level, access to health services, access to social security, access to food, quality of the living space, and access to basic household services. The OECD defines relative income poverty as the share of the population with an income of less than 50% of the respective national median income, adjusted for differences in household size. International comparisons are more straightforward when using only income.
7. Selection bias in response rates, at least with regard to violence, is not a major concern; responding states' homicide rates are distributed evenly above and below Mexico's average (INEGI, 2016).
8. Survey respondents are male and female. Crimes are defined in Spanish as "*secuestro o secuestro exprés, delitos sexuales, tales como hostigamiento, manoseo, exhibicionismo, intento de violación, y violación sexual*" (kidnapping and "express" kidnapping, sex crimes such as harassment, groping, exhibitionism, attempted rape, and rape).
9. Reflecting women's concerns, "Un Cuarto Más" was originally called "Cuarto Rosa" ("Pink Room").

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Annex 2.A1

Estimating the effects of changes in female labour force participation rates on the size of the labour force and GDP per capita in Mexico

With reference to Chapter 1, Figure 1.1:

Promoting greater gender equality and encouraging female labour participation could produce large economic gains in Mexico. To illustrate the potential effects, research conducted for this report makes use of the OECD's in-house labour force projection and long-term growth models to project both the size of the labour force (15-74 year-olds) and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Mexico under hypothetical scenarios whereby, between 2012 and 2040, women's labour force participation rates increasingly close in on those of men. Three scenarios were considered in total:

- The "*baseline*" scenario: labour force participation rates for men and women of all ages are estimated using the OECD's standard dynamic age-cohort model, which projects participation rates (by gender and by five-year age group) based on current (2003-12) rates of labour market entry and exit.

- The "*gender gap halved by 2040*" scenario: male participation rates are projected (by five-year age group) based on current (2003-12) rates of labour market entry and exit; female participation rates are projected so that the current (2012) gap between male and female participation rates within each five-year age group falls by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2040.

- The "*gender gap closed by 2040*" scenario: male participation rates are projected (by five-year age group) based on current (2003-12) rates of labour market entry and exit; female participation rates are projected so that the current (2012) gap between male and female participation rates within each five-year age group falls by 50% by 2025 and 100% (i.e. is fully closed) by 2040.

Estimates of the size of the labour force under each of the three scenarios were produced by combining the assumed labour force participation rates with projections of the size of the working age (15-74 year-olds) population from the *OECD Population and Demography Database*. In each case the labour force was projected individually by gender and five-year age group, with the overall labour force size being the sum across both genders and all five-year age groups. Estimates of GDP per capita were calculated using a modified version of the long-term growth models presented in *OECD Economic Outlook*, No. 95. These growth models estimate GDP based on a standard Cobb-Douglas production function with the usual long-term growth determinants (i.e. physical capital, human capital, potential employment, and labour efficiency). Potential GDP across the projection period (here, 2012-40) is estimated by projecting trends and changes in the various input components, with projections of the components themselves based on both

long-term dynamics within the given country and on convergence patterns between countries (see OECD, 2014c; and Johansson et al., 2013, for details on the measures, data and assumptions used to project the individual components).

Estimates of changes to GDP per capita under each of the three scenarios were produced by adjusting projections from these long-term growth models according to the assumed change (relative to the baseline) in the overall labour force participation rate (which enters the model as a sub-component of potential employment). No change is assumed in the "baseline scenario", so the resulting baseline estimates of GDP per capita are the same as those provided in *OECD Economic Outlook No. 95*. In each case changes and developments in all other factors of production – such as physical and human capital, productivity, and the remaining sub-components of potential employment – were held steady at the baseline.

Annex Tables 2.A1.1 and 2.A1.2 show the resulting estimates of the size of the total labour force (15-74 year-olds) and GDP per capita under each of the three scenarios. Although both series are projected for all years between 2012 (the last observed year) and 2040, due to space constraints, data are shown for the years 2012, 2025 and 2040 only.

Table 2.A1.1. Summary of the estimated effects of changes in female labour force participation on the projected size of the labour force in Mexico

Total size of the labour force (15-74 year-olds) in 2012 (last observed year), 2025 (projected) and 2040 (projected) under each of the three hypothetical scenarios, Mexico

	Total size of the labour force (15-74 year-olds, thousands)		
Scenario	2012	2025	2040
Baseline	50 035	59 305	63 808
Gender gap halved by 2040	50 035	60 884	68 247
Gender gap closed by 2040	50 035	65 336	78 012

Source: OECD estimates based on the *OECD Population and Demography Database* and the *OECD Employment Database*.

Table 2.A1.2. Summary of the estimated effects of changes in female labour force participation on projected GDP per capita in Mexico

GDP per capita in 2012 (last observed year), 2025 (projected) and 2040 (projected) and the projected average annual rate of growth in GDP per capita for the period 2013-40 under each of the three hypothetical scenarios, USD 2005 PPP, Chile and Mexico

	GDP per capita (USD 2005 PPP)			
Scenario	2012	2025	2040	Projected average annual growth (%)
Baseline	12 992	16 316	245 37	2.30%
Gender gap halved by 2040	12 992	16 604	25 662	2.46%
Gender gap closed by 2040	12 992	17 404	28 055	2.79%

Source: OECD estimates based on OECD (2014), "Long-term baseline projections, No. 95 (Edition 2014)", *OECD Economic Outlook: Statistics and Projections Database* (http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00690-en), the *OECD Population and Demography Database* and the *OECD Employment Database*.

It should be pointed out that these projections are purely mechanical, insofar as they assume changes in female participation do not interact with other labour inputs – such as male labour participation, or male and female working hours – or any other production

factors, including physical or human capital or productivity. It is possible that increases in female labour participation may lead to decreases in male participation and male or female working hours – so that paid work becomes more evenly shared across individuals – in which case these scenarios may overestimate the potential change in overall labour supply that would follow from an increase in female participation. It should also be noted that the estimates of change in GDP take no account of the possible effects of increases in female participation on household production. Again, to the extent that an increase in female labour participation leads to a decrease in household production or to a shift from unmeasured to measured activity, the estimates shown here may overestimate the effects of a change in female participation on GDP. With these limitations in mind, the projections should be read only as estimates or approximations of the impact that changes in female labour supply will have on economic output.

Annex 2.A2

Determinants of employment in Mexico

Figure 2.7 in this chapter presents the point estimates for partnered and single mothers and fathers from the following logit regression.

$$Y^* = \beta_{cons} + \beta_{sex}SEX + \beta_{parent}PARENTHOOD + \beta_{sex\ x\ parent}SEX * PARENTHOOD + \beta_{age}AGE + \beta_{educ}EDUCATION + \beta_{indig}INDIGENOUS + \varepsilon$$

The full set of results is listed in Table 2.A2.1:

Table 2.A2.1. Logit regression estimating relationship between gender and probability of employment

Logit regression with robust standard errors, men and women aged 20 to 45, Mexico, 2014. Dependent variable is an indicator variable for being employed

		All		Partnered		Single	
Demographics[1]	Sex	-1.023	***	-2.617	***	-0.602	***
		(0.044)		*(0.125)*		*(0.051)*	
	Parenthood	1.735	***	0.531	***	1.722	***
		(0.072)		*(0.131)*		*(0.460)*	
	Interaction between sex and parenthood	-2.196	***	-0.873	***	-1.628	***
		(0.081)		*(0.143)*		*(0.464)*	
	Age	0.048	***	0.036	***	0.071	***
		(0.002)		*(0.003)*		*(0.004)*	
Education level	Low education	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
	Middle education	0.395	***	0.121	***	0.806	***
		(0.038)		*(0.048)*		*(0.068)*	
	High education	0.826	***	0.826	***	0.826	***
		(0.044)		*(0.064)*		*(0.068)*	
Indigenous status	People without indigenous origin	Ref.		Ref.		Ref.	
	People with indigenous origin	0.193	***	0.256	***	0.145	***
		(0.033)		*(0.045)*		*(0.052)*	
Constant		-0.381	***	1.333	***	-1.293	***
		(0.079)		*(0.154)*		*(0.128)*	
Number of observations		27 896		17 510		10 386	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001.

1. The reference group is childless men. Sample consists of men and women aged between 20 and 45 years old without missing values for employment; column (2) reduces the sample to people in couples (married or living with their partner) and column (3) reduces the sample to single people (not married or living in a couple). Control variables included in the regression are age, education level and indigenous status. Education levels correspond to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997. For "Low education", the highest level of educational attainment at ISCED 1997 Levels 0-2 (pre-primary, primary, lower secondary); for "Moderate education", the highest level of educational attainment at ISCED 1997 Levels 3-4 (upper and post-secondary); and "High education" indicates the highest level of educational attainment is ISCED 1997 Levels 5-6 (tertiary education).

Source: OECD estimates based on ENIGH (2014).

Chapter 3

Facing high barriers to paid work: Young women and mothers in Mexico

This chapter examines barriers to women's participation in paid work in Mexico. Some women fare worse than others in entering, remaining, and progressing in the labour force. Mothers and young women face particularly high barriers. Mexico's female NEET (not in employment, education, or training) rate is the second highest in the OECD, and young women are nearly four times as likely to be NEETs as young men in Mexico. One key challenge is that more than half of these young women are mothers. The gap between mothers and non-mothers' labour force participation rates is relatively large in Mexico during the main working-age years: 25- to 54-year-old mothers are about eight percentage points less likely to be in paid work than comparably-aged women without dependent children. The barriers to labour market participation are especially high when children are very young, as Mexico has relatively weak public supports in parental leave and early childhood education and care (ECEC). Although ECEC services in Mexico have grown enormously over the past two decades, especially following the introduction of compulsory preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds, demand for ECEC still far outpaces supply for infants and toddlers. Fewer than ten percent of children under age three have access to formal care, and quality of care remains a concern. Chapter 3 concludes with a call for improved investments in social supports for families, rigorous evaluations of social policies, embedding gender considerations in planning and evaluation, and better assessments of how policies, laws, and institutions interact to affect women and girls.

The data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

3.1. Introduction

Although Mexican women have increased their labour market engagement at impressive rates in recent years, women continue to fare worse than men in most measures of workforce participation. Certain subgroups of women face particularly daunting barriers to work. This chapter focuses on obstacles faced by young women not in employment, education, or training (NEET) and working mothers.

Mexican women are far more likely than men to be NEETs, a condition which hurts their current economic condition and future work prospects. Over half of all Mexican female NEETs are mothers. Relatively high rates of adolescent pregnancy contribute to this problem. When Mexican mothers of any age *do* want to engage in paid work, they face higher barriers than mothers in most other OECD countries, as parental leave allowances and early childhood education and care (ECEC) supports are relatively weak. The lack of social supports, combined with Mexican women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid work (Chapter 4), inhibits women's labour market entry, permanence, earnings, and career progression.

Main findings

- Young women are nearly four times as likely as young men to be NEETs in Mexico. 35% of 15- to 29-year-old Mexican women are NEETs – the second-highest rate in the OECD, after Turkey. The gender *gap* in NEET rates in Mexico is 26 percentage points, also the second highest figure in the OECD. The vast majority of female NEETs are inactive (32.4% of young women) rather than unemployed (2.6% of young women).
- There is a very strong relationship between NEET status and motherhood in Mexico. Most female NEETs are mothers,[1] whose caregiving responsibilities present additional barriers to entry into the labour market. Mothers make up 61.4% of female NEETs and about half of all NEETs in Mexico.
- The Secretariat of Education (SEP) is making a solid financial commitment to keeping at-risk students (including teenage mothers) in upper-secondary school by offering small scholarships with a gender component. From 2013 to 2015, SEP offered over 700 000 scholarships aimed at school retention.
- Although Mexico has made good strides in increasing access to family planning in recent decades gains, there is much room for improvement. Among all 15 to 49-year-old females in Mexico, only about half report currently using any type of contraceptive method. Mexico's rate of unmet need for family planning is higher than rates in many other OECD countries with available data, and Mexico's adolescent pregnancy rate is the highest in the OECD. Access to abortion is prohibited or severely restricted in most of Mexico.
- Mothers of all ages face difficulties combining childrearing with participation in the labour force. The gap in labour force participation rates between women with and without dependent children is relatively large in Mexico: 25- to 54-year-old mothers are about 8 percentage points less likely to be in paid work than comparably-aged women without dependent children. Mexico's motherhood labour force participation gap is larger than most countries in the OECD, including Chile (4 percentage points) and Colombia (about 3 percentage points). In contrast, fathers with dependent children are more likely to work than men without dependent children in Mexico.
- Paid parental leave is inadequate. Mexico offers 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, well below international best practice. Maternity leave is largely restricted to formal workers –

i.e., less than half of working women – and, among them, only workers who have contributed to social security for 30 weeks in the 12-month period prior maternity leave. If an employee does not reach the minimum contribution period before the start of maternity leave, her employer is obliged to pay the full salary. This raises the risk of discrimination against childbearing-aged women at the time of hiring – a risk that the 2012 outlawing of pregnancy tests at the time of hiring did little to resolve. Fathers in the formal sector are entitled to five days of employer-sponsored paid paternity leave.

- Participation in early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Mexico has grown enormously over the past decade, especially following the introduction of compulsory preschool. Children aged three through five years old are now enrolled in preschool at rates comparable to the OECD average. SEDESOL's Programme of Childcare Facilities to Help Working Mothers (*Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras*) offers a useful example of rapidly expanding childcare access, at low cost, for very young children. Notwithstanding this progress, demand for ECEC still far outpaces supply, especially for children under age three, and quality of care remains a significant concern.

Box 3.1. Key policy recommendations to improve the status of NEETs and mothers in Mexico

The following policy recommendations build on the principles in the *OECD Gender Recommendation on Employment, Education, and Entrepreneurship* (OECD, 2013a) and are elaborated further in this chapter:

- Give boys and girls equal rights and opportunities to complete upper secondary schooling and make educational choices. Raise awareness of gender-stereotypical attitudes towards academic performance, as well as the likely consequences of educational choices on employment opportunities.
- Incorporate gender considerations in policies to help NEETs, as most Mexican NEETs are female. Help young women complete schooling by ensuring sufficient supports in secondary through higher education, including affordable access to modern contraceptives; prioritising the provision of affordable and good-quality childcare supports to young parents; and continuing financial incentives for school attendance, among other measures.
- Expand working mothers' employment-protected paid maternity leave to at least 14 weeks. To improve access and reduce the risk of employer discrimination against childbearing-aged women, reduce the social security contribution period required to qualify for maternity leave so that women are better able to qualify to receive publicly-funded (rather than employee-funded) paid leave before giving birth. The shortened contribution period could be funded through a reduction in the wage replacement rate for highest-income earners. Such changes should be accompanied by broader strategies to increase formalisation (Chapter 4), so that more workers have access to maternity leave.
- Expand and publicly fund the paternity leave entitlement (currently five days), and incentivise fathers to take the leave for which they are eligible.
- Ensure that new mothers have adequate supports when they return to work, including their legally-mandated right to lactation breaks to support breastfeeding.
- Ensure that parents of infants and young children can access affordable, good-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC). Mexico should invest in increasing spaces in preschool and/or increasing the length of the preschool day, as most programmes are currently only a half-day long. For infants and children under age three, childcare supply must grow and the quality of care must improve.
- Well-designed social policies and institutions can help level the playing field between men and women. It is important to evaluate education, social and employment policies rigorously, ensure that gender considerations are included in planning and evaluation, consider positive and negative externalities, and evaluate how policies, laws, and institutions may interact to affect women and girls.

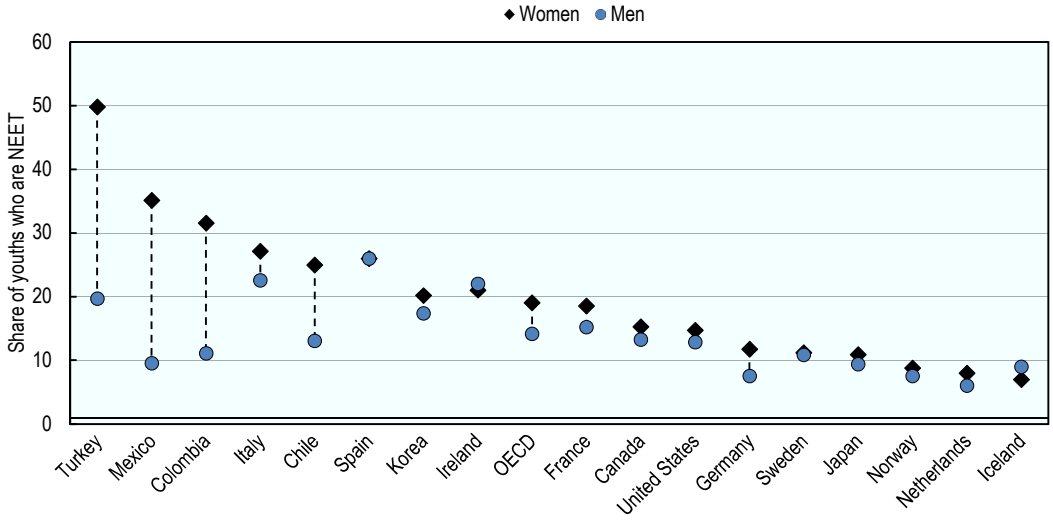
3.2. Young women are nearly four times more likely to be NEETs than young men

Although Mexican girls do as well as boys in years of schooling (Chapter 2), many young women in Mexico do not fare well economically or educationally after they leave school, either as graduates or drop-outs. An alarming share of young women in Mexico are not in education, employment or training (NEETs, or, as the term is known in Spanish language, "*NiNis*": those who "*ni estudia ni trabaja*").

Young women are nearly four times as likely to be NEETs[2] as young men in Mexico. 35% of 15- to 29-year-old Mexican women are NEETs – the second-highest rate in the OECD, after Turkey. The NEET gender *gap* in Mexico is 26 percentage points, again the second highest figure in the OECD. Among female NEETs, the vast majority are inactive (32.4% of all young women) rather than unemployed (2.6%). In contrast, the NEET rate for young men in Mexico is around 10% – 4 percentage points below the OECD average of 14% – and nearly evenly split between the inactive and unemployed (OECD estimates of ENIGH, 2014).

Figure 3.1. Young women are much more likely than young men to be NEETs in Mexico

NEET rates across men and women aged 15 to 29, selected OECD countries, most recent survey year



Note: OECD is the unweighted average of the 34 OECD member countries.

Source: OECD calculations of CASEN (2013) for Chile, ENCV (2015) for Colombia, and ENIGH (2014) for Mexico. Other OECD countries and OECD average estimates taken from OECD (2016a).

NEET youths face many challenges. Many NEETs live in poverty due to inadequate income, and NEET status tends to reinforce intergenerational inequality, in part because NEET status is most common among the most vulnerable groups in society. Many NEETs face "scarring effects" in the long-run (OECD, 2016a). That is, workers who experience unemployment as young adults are more likely to be affected by unemployment later in their careers (Doiron and Gørgens, 2008; Schmillen and Umkehrer, 2013; Möller and Umkehrer, 2014) or have lower earnings, even after accounting for traits like sex, family status, and level of education (Gregg and Tominey, 2005; Mroz and Savage, 2006). The high costs of youth unemployment and inactivity thus accumulate over time, and exceed the immediate consequences of foregone earnings and decreased well-being. Indeed, the first

ten years of a worker's life are considered especially critical for long-term career prospects (OECD, 2015a). NEET periods may thus affect the gender gap in old-age pensions, as well (Chapter 4, Box 4.3).

At the societal level, large numbers of NEETs can contribute to crime, addiction, disruptive behaviour, social disintegration, and decreased labour productivity – a crucial driver of economic growth (de Hoyos et al., 2015). In Mexico, high numbers of male NEETs have been linked with crime and social disintegration in states where violence is already a serious problem. A growing share of male NEETs, insufficient employment opportunities for youths, and increases in the size of the illegal market have corresponded with criminal demand for youth labour (de Hoyos et al., 2015).

Over half of Mexico's NEETs are mothers

The gender gap in NEETs is large, both in terms of NEET rates and behaviour. *Las NiNis* (female NEETs) spend significant time in unpaid housework and caregiving, and a common barrier to their entry (or re-entry) into education or paid work is motherhood.

In Mexico, there is a very strong relationship between NEET status and motherhood. The majority of female NEETs are mothers.[3] Mothers make up 61.4% of female NEETs and about half of all NEETs in Mexico (OECD estimates of ENIGH 2014). Mothers make up about one-third of all 15- to 19-year-old NEETs, 62.6% of 20- to 24-year-old NEETs, and 82.1% of 25- to 29-year-old NEETs.

Although most NEETs who are mothers are in the upper-20s age group, OECD calculations of NEET rates *among* mothers reveals that younger women are the most likely to leave school or the labour market if they have dependent children: 62.3% of all 15- to 19-year-old mothers are NEETs, compared to 54.35% of all 25- to 29-year-old mothers.

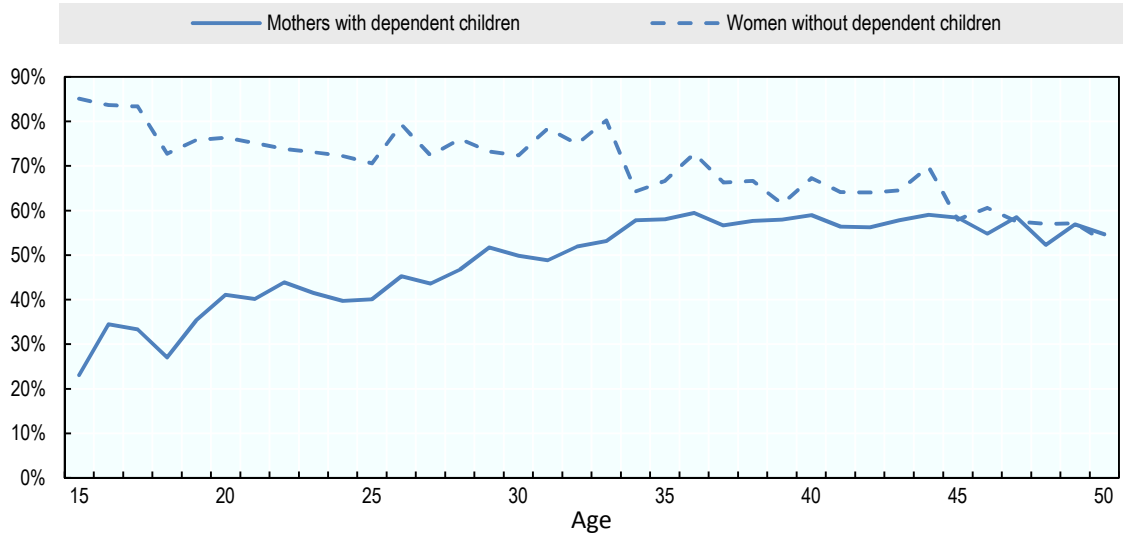
Among 15- to 29-year-old female high school drop-outs, nearly 8% listed pregnancy or having a child as their primary reason for leaving school, and nearly 11% listed getting married or entering a union as their primary reason (OECD calculations of ENADID, 2014). (The most common reason for dropping out was insufficient money or resources to stay in school, at 30.4%.)

Including mothers as NEETs is somewhat controversial in Mexico. Some critics argues that including mothers and unpaid caregivers as NEETs implies that opting to do unpaid care is less valuable than participating in the labour market (see, for example, Prieto and Parra, 2013). While abstaining from education or paid work to stay home to care for a child should be a woman's personal choice, it is imperative to debate whether it is always truly a choice. The freedom to choose one's activities after becoming a mother can be highly constrained. For instance, mothers may have to stay home in cases where they do not have viable paid work prospects (either due to inadequate training or to a lack of suitable work opportunities); when good-quality and affordable childcare for young children is not accessible; or when partners, families, and/or society restrict women's decisions.

Leaving school or the workforce to care for children can have long-term effects. Decisions made around childbirth about who will provide care and who will engage in paid work have consequences for future within-household earnings inequality and relative bargaining in the home (OECD, 2016b). The high correlation of NEET status and young motherhood is particularly problematic given the prevalence of teen pregnancy in Mexico.

Figure 3.2. Young mothers are far less likely to work or attend school than other women

Share of the female population in employment, education, and/or training, by age and motherhood status, Mexico, 2014



Note: The decomposition of women with and without dependent children, by age, is presented in Annex Figure 3.A1.1. Mothers defined as having at least one dependent child aged 14 or younger.

Source: OECD calculations of ENIGH (2014).

3.3. Teen pregnancy rates in Mexico are high, signalling future poverty risks

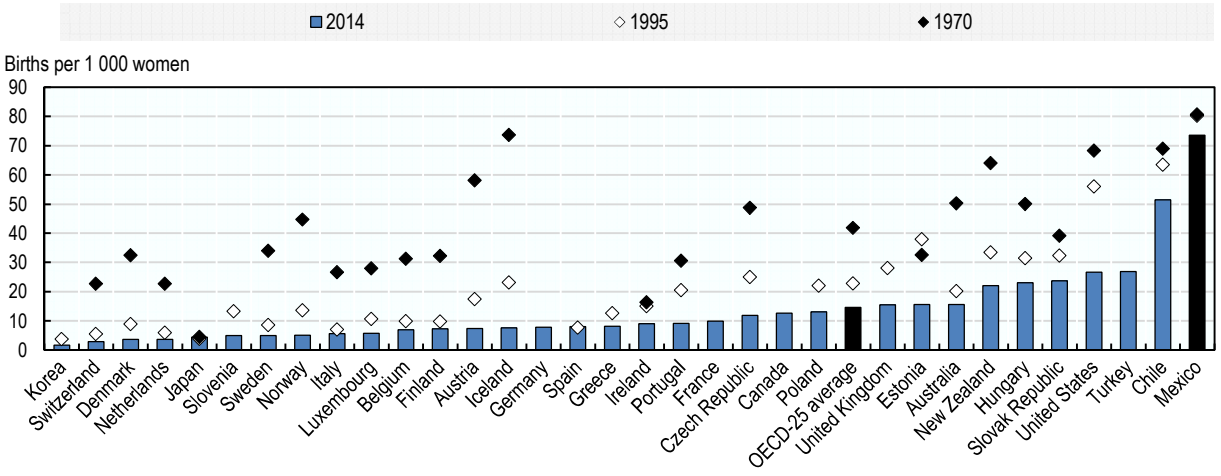
Mexico has the highest rate of adolescent fertility among OECD member countries, at a rate of 73.6 births per 1 000 females aged 15-19 (Figure 3.3). This rate has fallen by only 7 percentage points since 1970 – the slowest fertility rate change for any age group in Mexico.

In 2013, nearly half a million women and girls under age 20 became mothers, equal to almost one in five births in Mexico. This estimate includes 11 000 girls between the ages of 10 and 14 (INMUJERES, 2015). Nearly half (48.4%) of the 15- to 19-year-olds who were pregnant in 2014 did not want to become pregnant at that time (INEGI ENADID, 2014). Teenagers with lower socioeconomic status and/or indigenous backgrounds are far more likely to become adolescent mothers than better-educated, wealthier, and non-indigenous teenagers (Ward et al., 2015).

Throughout the world, early and unintended pregnancy has many negative effects on health, education, employment, and future socioeconomic mobility. Pregnant adolescents are more likely to have preterm or low birth-weight babies, and babies born to adolescents have higher rates of neonatal mortality (WHO, 2015). Early pregnancy has economic effects, as well, as teenagers who become pregnant often drop out of school and do not return. Child caregiving responsibilities make it difficult for them to finish school or hold regular jobs, and they often start their careers on the wrong foot in irregular, low-paid, and/or informal work. When these young mothers do find paid work, their mothers or grandmothers frequently stop working their own jobs to take over caregiving.

Figure 3.3. Mexico's adolescent fertility rates are the highest in the OECD

Births per 1 000 women, 1970, 1995 and 2014, 15-19-year-olds



Note: Data for Colombia and South Africa refer to 2007, for China, India and Indonesia to 2009, for Canada, Mexico, Brazil and Peru to 2011, for Australia and Chile to 2012, and for Israel, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, the United States, the Russian Federation and Costa Rica to 2013. Data for Brazil, Colombia, China, India, Indonesia, Peru and South Africa are estimates and/or are based on survey data rather than register data. See the UNDESA webpage for more detail: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/fertility/.

Source: Eurostat Demographic Statistics for European countries, United Nations 2015 Update for the Millennium Development Goals Database: Adolescent Birth Rate for Brazil, Colombia, China, India, Indonesia, Peru and South Africa and United Nations World Fertility Data 2015 for adolescent birth rates in all other countries.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933423138

3.4. Family planning in Mexico

Reproductive autonomy is an important part of a woman's health and independence – socially, politically, and economically. A woman's ability to control if and when she becomes pregnant depends upon her ability to access methods of fertility regulation. Access to contraception helps to protect women from unwanted pregnancies, lowers the risk of abortion-related deaths and disabilities, and allows for better spacing between births, which greatly benefits mothers' and children's health (OECD, 2014a; WHO, 2015). The U.N. Sustainable Development Goals target universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services and reproductive rights, including family planning, information and education, and the introduction of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2015).

Mexico has made great strides in ensuring women's reproductive health by increasing access to family planning since the mid-1970s, when pro-natalist development policies began to wane and the country started developing national family planning strategies (Ward et al., 2015). As part of *Seguro Popular*, Mexico's public health insurance programme, the centralised procurement of contraceptives has helped ensure the availability and quality of contraceptives in different states of Mexico in recent years. Modern contraceptive prevalence rates for married and partnered women increased by about 20 percentage points from 1987 (52.7%) to 2009 (72.5%) (Ward et al., 2015).

Despite these gains, there is room for improvement. Across the total female population, the use of contraception to prevent pregnancy is low. Access to abortion is prohibited or

severely restricted in Mexican states, with greater legal rights limited to Mexico City (Guttmacher Institute, 2015; *Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida*, 2015).

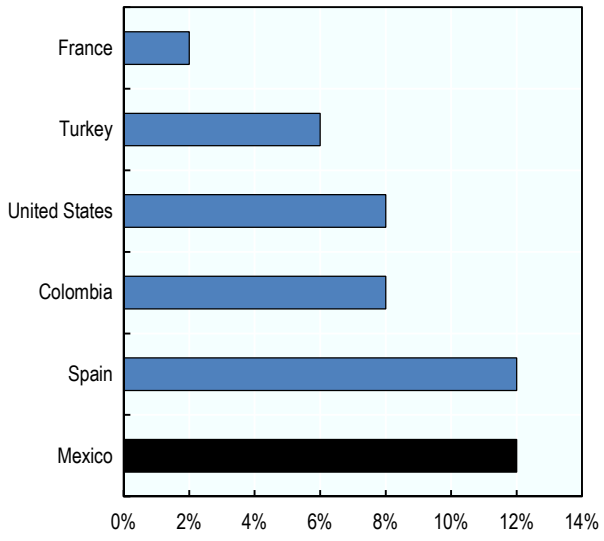
Women who experience violence, especially intimate partner and sexual violence, are also more likely to have unintended pregnancies (Bott et al., 2012). In 2010, 10.9% of Mexican women, on average, asked their partner's permission before using contraceptives; this rate rose to 14% for low-income women (CONAPRED, 2010).

Among all 15- to 49-year-old females in Mexico, 51.6% report that they are currently using any type of contraceptive method. 15.3% report being former contraceptive users, and 33.1% report never using contraceptives (INEGI ENADID, 2014). This compares unfavourably to the Latin American and Caribbean average of 67% of 15- to 49-year-olds reporting using modern contraception (WHO, 2015). Among the 51.6% of Mexican women using contraception, nearly half protect against unwanted pregnancy through the use of tubal occlusion, a surgical sterilisation procedure considered nearly permanent. Female sterilisation was the most commonly used method for preventing pregnancy in Latin America in 2012 (Darroch and Singh, 2013), but data suggest the female sterilisation rate for Mexico is relatively high in international comparison (United Nations, 2015).

Just over half (54.5%) of 15- to 19-year-olds in Mexico report using protection during their first sexual encounter, though this is significant progress over older cohorts (INEGI ENADID, 2014). Nevertheless, various indicators suggest unmet need for family planning. In 2014, 63.6% of pregnant women in Mexico intended to become pregnant; the other 36.4% wanted to wait or did not desire to become pregnant (INEGI ENADID, 2014). The share of women who report not wanting more children yet not using contraception is another indicator (Figure 3.4). Although the share of married/partnered Mexican women with an unmet need for family planning is relatively low (12%) in global comparison, it is higher than rates in many other OECD countries with available data.

Figure 3.4. Unmet need for family planning among married and partnered women

Percentage of married women aged 15 to 49 years old who do not want any more children for the next two years, yet are not using contraception, selected OECD countries



Source: OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (2016), http://www.genderindex.org/.

Among the 3.29 million women (15- to 49-years-old) who reported having more children than desired in 2014, 33.5% cited not using contraception as the reason. The share of undesired pregnancies caused by non-use of contraception was greatest among teenagers: nearly 55% of 15- to 19-year-olds had at least one more child than intended because they did not use a contraceptive method. Interestingly, this younger cohort was also the most likely to be aware of contraceptive methods: only 3.3% of unintended pregnancies in this age group were the result of a lack of awareness of contraceptive methods, a much lower share than in older cohorts (INEGI ENADID, 2014).

Access to family planning methods varies by region. Poorer states, such as Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacán, Guanajuato, and Guerrero, have lower rates of contraceptive coverage. Modern contraceptive use is less common among indigenous populations and adolescents (*ibid*.; Ward et al, 2015), raising families' risks of unintended pregnancy, intergenerational poverty and social immobility.

The issue of adolescent pregnancy attracts considerable public attention in Mexico. To address teenage pregnancy, the Office of the President of Mexico launched in 2015 the National Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy among Adolescents (ENAPEA, *Estrategía Nacional Para la Prevención del Embarazo en Adolescentes*). ENAPEA has the long-term goal of cutting the current pregnancy rate of women 15 to 19 years of age in half, and eradicating pregnancies in girls 10 to 14 years old, by 2030. The strategy, which operates across government and includes civil society partners, includes a set of activities, policies, and public campaigns to ensure that teenagers complete obligatory education, can find labour market opportunities, have access to better information[4] about pregnancy prevention, and make informed and autonomous decisions. ENAPEA calls for new legislation addressing violence against women and sexual abuse, better access to sexual health services and contraceptive methods, and support for research in order to develop better social and cultural practices.

The United States also has high rates of adolescent pregnancy, by OECD standards, though its rate is lower than Mexico's. One strategy that has worked well in the state of Colorado is making long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) widely available and cost-free to women and girls who want them. LARCs typically come in the form of hormonal implants or intrauterine devices. From 2009 to 2013, following the introduction of free LARCs, Colorado's teenage birth rate dropped by 40% and its abortion rate fell by 42% among 15- to 19-year-olds. Colorado experienced the most rapid decline in teen pregnancy in the country in this period, and saved an estimated USD 49 million to USD 111 million in public, means-tested health-related childbirth costs (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 2015).

3.5. Education and employment policies can improve girls' and young women's prospects

Education and employment policies are important in supporting girls and young women in school and in preparation for the labour market. Ensuring that all girls and boys have sufficient access to good-quality education is a cornerstone of fostering economic growth and closing gender gaps. In recent years, considerable efforts have been made to improve the coverage, quality, and equity of education in Mexico. Mexico increased the number of compulsory education years by making early childhood and upper secondary education mandatory, which has led to large increases in school enrolment at both levels. Yet challenges remain in achieving higher graduation rates in upper secondary and tertiary education (Chapter 2).

Building upon the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship (OECD, 2013a), policies to improve girls' and female NEETs outcomes should focus on the following main goals:

- ***Ensure that boys and girls have equal access to good-quality education.*** Developed under the *Pacto por México*, the 2012-13 education reform is now being implemented to strengthen the quality of education. The new Professional Teaching Service Law (*Ley de Servicio Profesional Docente*) lays the groundwork for the professionalisation of teachers and staff, establishing the terms for their selection, assessment, training and incentives throughout their careers. For the first time, national competitions are being conducted for jobs in lower and upper secondary schools, and promotion examinations are held for management posts in upper-secondary schools. Moreover, results will be monitored via an autonomous national assessment agency (*Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación*). This should help improve the quality of education for all students, though it is too early to evaluate fully the impact of these reforms.

- ***Give boys and girls equal rights and opportunities to complete schooling and make informed educational choices.*** Improving female and male graduation rates from upper secondary and tertiary education remains a challenge in Mexico. Many students leave school with an inadequate level of education in Mexico (Chapter 2), even though they struggle to gain a good foothold in the labour market if they lack sufficient human capital and work-relevant skills (OECD, 2015b).

As part of its strategy to make secondary school universal by 2022, the Secretariat of Education in Mexico (SEP, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*) has implemented a range of promising programmes:

1. SEP has demonstrated a good financial commitment to improving upper secondary school completion by delivering over 700 000 scholarships[5] between 2013 and 2015 to high school students considered at risk of drop-out. To put this in perspective, there were approximately 4.73 million 15- to 17-year-olds in school in Mexico in 2015 (INEGI *Encuesta Intercensal*, 2015). These scholarships are aimed at covering the costs associated with attending school – such as transportation, school supplies, and meals – and come in the form of bank cards.

   The drop-out prevention scholarship has an explicit gender component, as girls receive a higher amount of money than boys. Girls receive MXN 725 (compared to boys' MXN 650) in the first semester, and scholarships values increase for both sexes each year, though at all stages girls receive MXN 75 more each semester. In a smaller and more specific scholarship programme aimed at minimising transport costs between home and campus, priority is given to young fathers or mothers (to promote shared responsibility between parents), pregnant women, and students considered marginalised by indigenous heritage, income, or rural residence.

   Given that economic motives are cited as a primary reason for dropping out of school in Mexico (along with factors like school engagement and poor academic achievement), scholarships and conditional cash transfers are a good tool for keeping teenagers in school and reducing their probability of becoming NEETs. Having received a CCT scholarship in secondary education, for example, was found to have a positive effect on school permanence in Mexico (Bentauouet and Székely, 2014).

2. The national Movement against School Drop-Outs (*Movimiento contra el Abandono Escolar*) is a programme of information dissemination, participatory planning, and

community outreach. Activities include the physical distribution of handbooks (starting in school year 2013-14), the provision of permanent online copies, and yearly workshops in schools (starting in 2013) on drop-out prevention. This programme involves the integrated participation of federal and state educational authorities, school directors, teachers, parents, and students to achieve higher rates of access, retention, and completion of high school.

3. The programme Construct Yourself (*Construye T*) attempts to encourage students to stay in high school and reduce risks of social exclusion by providing teacher training, support for students in preparing a diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses, a school project to respond to their challenges, and guidance for students. It aims to better develop socio-emotional skills in public upper-secondary schools, focusing on students' capacity to identify, understand, and manage emotions. There are more than 2 million students enrolled in this programme, and half of them are women between 15 and 19 years of age.

- ***Eliminate gender discrimination and stereotyping through school content.*** Educational systems must adapt school and early childhood education curricula, teaching, and school practices to eliminate gender discrimination and stereotyping. Stereotypes are learned, and they can be changed. Starting early in school it is important that textbooks and other educational materials avoid presenting stereotypical expectations of women and men's behaviour. Many OECD countries, including Germany, Iceland, and Ireland, have launched official guidelines for educational materials to ensure that they foster gender diversity. Teachers, too, should be trained to become aware of gender stereotypes.

  In Mexico, the *Programa Sectorial de Educación 2013-2018* explicitly addresses gender stereotyping. It takes the good step of calling for the elimination of sexist or misogynist images and content in textbooks, as well as the inclusion of gender equality perspectives in curriculum and anti-discrimination messages in course materials.

- ***Make the study of STEM, financial, and entrepreneurship issues, as well as education, arts, and the humanities, equally inclusive and attractive to boys and girls***, and promote the development of strong reading habits among students of both sexes. In the short term, getting more students to study mathematics and science could involve making mathematics more interesting and applied to real-world problems, identifying and eliminating gender stereotypes in course materials, promoting female role models, and using learning materials that appeal to girls. Over the longer term, narrowing the gender gap in mathematics performance will require the combined effort of parents, teachers and society to change expectations of what boys and girls can (and should) achieve.

- ***Raise awareness of gender-stereotypical attitudes towards academic performance, and the likely consequences of educational choices for employment opportunities***. The OECD Gender Recommendation (OECD, 2013a) calls for raising awareness among girls, boys, parents, teachers and employers about gender-stereotypical attitudes towards academic performance, as well as the likely consequences of educational choices for employment opportunities, career progression, and earnings. Governments should also encourage women who have completed STEM training to pursue professions in these fields. The educational system should ensure that all students are aware of what opportunities are available in the labour market and which fields of study are most promising in terms of employability and pay. Career counselling, career orientation programmes, internships, and apprenticeships can help in this regard.

Drawing on experiences in the private sector, countries across the OECD have tried a variety of strategies to raise awareness of possibilities in STEM careers. Countries like Belgium (Flemish Community), Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, and Poland organise "girls" days at workplaces, during which companies and research institutions invite girls for visits to introduce them to non-traditional technical jobs and careers, though these projects are often small in scale. In Germany, the Go MINT! Initiative ("MINT" is the STEM acronym in German) was launched in 2008 to increase young women's interest in scientific and technical degree courses and attract female university graduates to careers in business. The Go MINT! Initiative brings together politics, business, science and the media: 180 partners support the programme, with a wide range of activities and initiatives to advise young women on their studies and career.

Women should be also offered fair access to career development opportunities, training, and mentors, and businesses should provide training to root out implicit gender biases. In Mexico City, the local "Economic Autonomy Project" (*Proyecto de Autonomía Económica*) seeks to change gender stereotypes about jobs by training disadvantaged women (of all ages) to develop skills in non-traditional trades (OECD Questionnaire on Gender Equality in Mexican States, QGEMS, 2016). To help women grow their businesses, the programme also offers advice on financing. From 2008 to 2014, INMUJERES of Mexico City administered training to more than 3 500 women in plumbing, electricity, welding, mobile phone repair, auto body painting, appliance repair, artisanal blacksmithing, and computing.

- ***Incorporate gender considerations into policies to help NEETS.*** The NEET crisis in Mexico disproportionately affects women, and policies should be designed accordingly. Mexico should help female NEETs transition into higher education and employment by ensuring sufficient supports in secondary education, including adequate preparation for post-secondary education and skills-matching for careers.

  One example of this in Mexico is SEP's programme *Capacita-T*, which targets NEETs aged 15 to 29 years old. It offers different trainings to help young people enter the labour market, become an entrepreneur, or go back to school. More than 85 000 young people were enrolled in this programme in 2016 and, among them, 60% are women. The majority of the women enrolled are aged 20 to 24 years old and have graduated from secondary education. Many choose professional training in "styling and personal well-being" (*estilismo y bienestar personal*), a trade comparable to cosmetology.

  For adolescents at risk of becoming mothers, school-based programmes to prevent teenage pregnancy and programmes to keep teenage mothers in school, such as SEP's scholarships for secondary school students, are good measures. These efforts should be expanded. Mexico should better support young parents (and, indeed, parents of all ages) with affordable and quality childcare options (Section 3.7.).

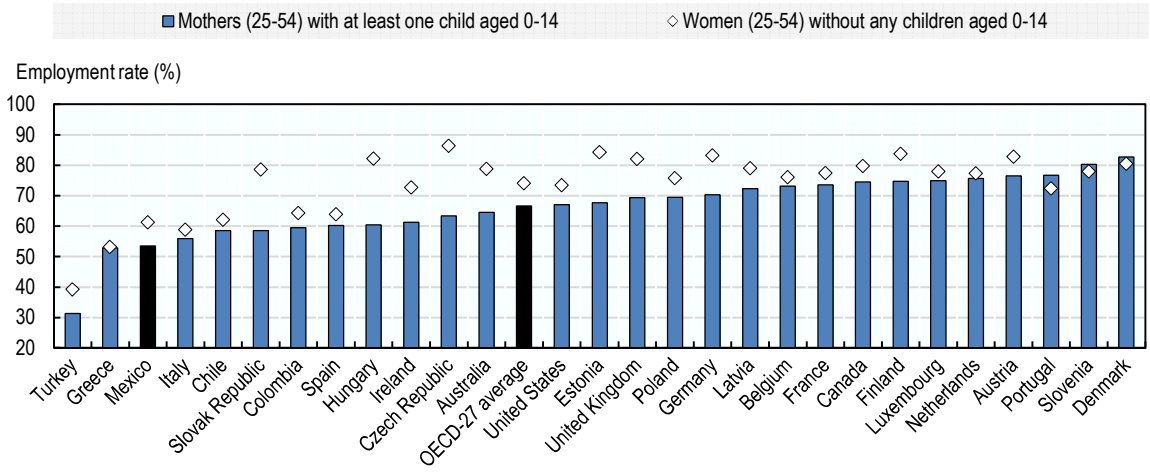
3.6. Motherhood presents challenges for working women

Motherhood is a major issue for women's economic empowerment in Mexico. It is likely to become an even bigger challenge in coming years, as the number of female-headed households is on the rise and teenage pregnancy rates are high. Women who are mothers of dependent children (age 0-14) are much less likely to be in the labour market than women without dependent children in Mexico. Descriptive evidence reveals that 25- to 54-year-old mothers (of at least one dependent child) are about 8 percentage points less likely to be in paid work than comparably-aged women without dependent children. The observed

motherhood employment gap in Mexico is larger than in many countries in the OECD, and larger than the gap in Chile (4 percentage points) and Colombia (about 3 percentage points) (OECD, 2016c).

Figure 3.5. Mothers are less likely to be in paid work than women without dependent children in most countries

Employment rates (%) for women (25-54 year-olds) with at least one child aged 0-14, and women (25-54 year-olds) without any children aged 0-14, selected countries, most recent year



Note: Data for Denmark and Finland refer to 2012, for Chile, Germany and Turkey to 2013, for Colombia refer to 2015, and for all other countries to 2014. Data for Canada refer to women with and without at least one child aged 0-15, and for the United States to women with and without at least one child aged 0-17.

Source: *OECD Family Database* (2015) and OECD calculations of CASEN (2013) for Chile, ENCV (2015) for Colombia, and ENIGH (2014) for Mexico.

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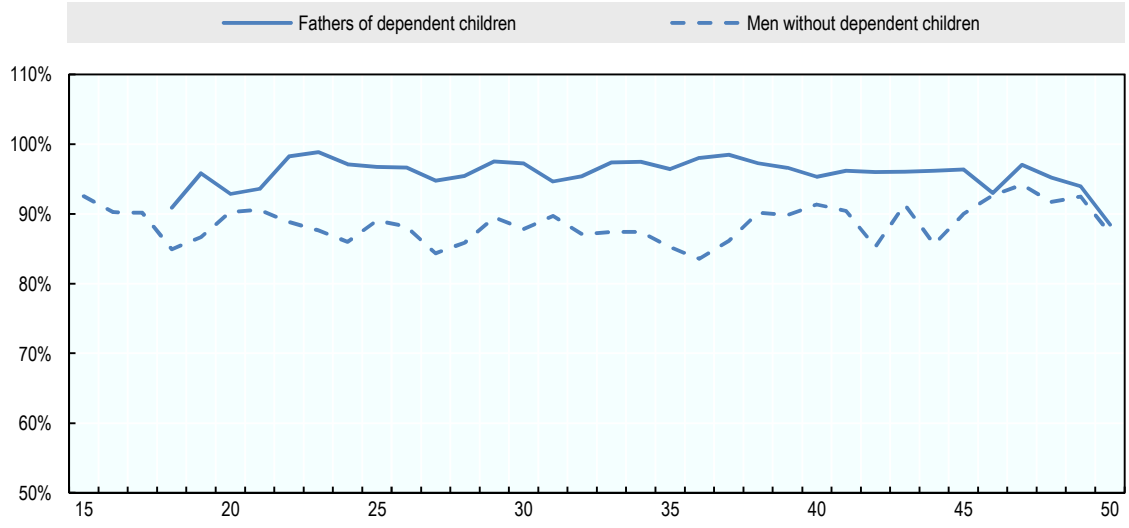
The economic empowerment of mothers is particularly important given the rise of female-headed households in Mexico. The percentage of households headed by women is now 29%, a share that has steadily risen from 13.5% in 1976 (INEGI, 2015). Excluding these women from participating in the labour market risks marginalising nearly one-third of Mexican households.

Mexican mothers' experience is not atypical. Throughout the world, gender inequalities in workforce participation, hours, and pay tend to become more pronounced when women become mothers. While even childless women do more unpaid care and housework than men (Chapter 4), the arrival of children makes it even harder for women to compete equally in the labour force. When mothers *do* engage in paid work, the "motherhood penalty" – meaning that mothers receive lower wages than childless women – remains persistent and strong in OECD countries, even after accounting for "selection effects", i.e., a woman's decision to become a mother (Budig and England, 2001; Gough and Noonan, 2013; Miller, 2011). For instance, in the United States – where women's labour force participation are relatively high – childless, unmarried women earn 96 cents for every dollar a man earns, while married mothers earn merely 76 cents, on average (Budig, 2014). There has been less research on whether (and to what extent) the motherhood penalty exists in wages and participation in Latin America, and conclusions are mixed across countries (Piras and Ripani, 2005; Agüero and Marks, 2008; Ganguli et al., 2014; OECD, 2016c).

Fathers, in contrast, seem to suffer little penalty for becoming a parent. In many countries fatherhood is actually associated with a beneficial effect on men's income and career trajectory (Correll et al., 2007; Hodges and Budig, 2010). Fathers, particularly at the higher end of the income distribution, are viewed as more stable and reliable workers, whereas mothers (particularly those earning low wages) are viewed as unreliable in the face of family care commitments (Budig, 2014). Descriptive evidence from Mexico reveals that fathers have higher rates of employment or education enrolment than men who are not fathers (Figure 3.6), while mothers have lower rates relative to women who are not mothers of dependent children.

Figure 3.6. Mexican fathers more likely to be in education or employment than men without dependent children

Share of the male population in employment, education, and/or training, by age and fatherhood status, Mexico, 2014



Note: Fathers are defined as having dependent children aged 14 or younger. The decomposition of men with and without dependent children, by age, is presented in Annex Figure 3.A1.2.

Source: OECD calculations of ENIGH (2014).

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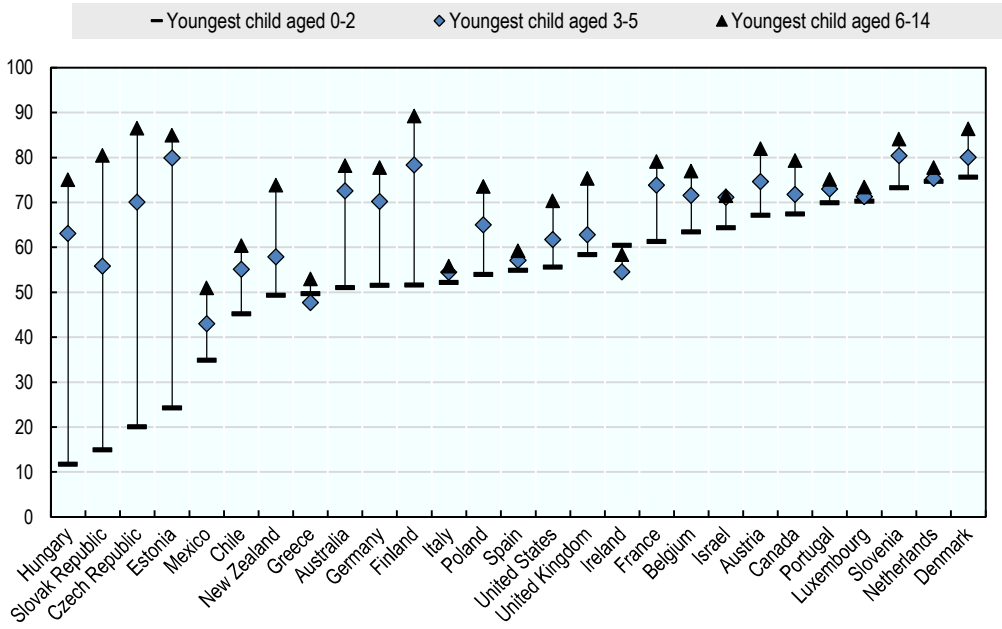
3.7. Mexico has taken important steps to help parents reconcile work and family, but can do more

Social policies can help parents enter, remain in, and progress in the workforce. A key determinant of a mother's likelihood of engaging in paid work is the *age* of her child. Across most OECD countries, mothers are less likely to work when children are younger. This is also true in Mexico: only 40% of mothers (aged 15-64) whose youngest child is aged two or younger are in paid work, compared to 59% of mothers whose youngest child is aged between 6 and 14 (Figure 3.7).

While this result may reflect families' preferences or societal norms for a mother to stay home with a very young child, it also suggests 1) inadequate access to workplace supports like paid maternity leave, paternity leave, and workplace lactation facilities when children are very young, and/or 2) a lack of affordable and good-quality childcare options that give mothers and fathers the equal opportunity to earn income. (Flexible work arrangements – another important work-life balance strategy – are discussed in Chapter 4.)

Figure 3.7. Child age influences maternal employment

Maternal employment rate by age of youngest child, 15 to 64 year old women, 2013, selected countries



Note: Data for Mexico refer to 2014, for Denmark and Finland to 2012, and for all other countries to 2013. For Australia the child age groups are 0-4, 5-9, and 10-14, for Canada they are 0-2, 3-5, and 6-15, for Israel 0-1, 2-4, and 5-14, and for the United States 0-2, 3-5, and 6-17.

Source: OECD Family Database (2015) and OECD calculations of CASEN (2013) for Chile, ENCV (2015) for Colombia, and ENIGH (2014) for Mexico.

Public policies can support working parents as their children age. Across the OECD these supports include maternity and paternity leave around the birth of a new child; lactation supports for mothers of infants who return to work; parental leave (often shareable) to care for a young child after maternity and paternity leave end; and, finally, professional childcare and preschool supports for infants and children age five and younger. Publicly-funded out-of-school hours (OSH) care services are an important feature of many European OECD countries' support for parents of school-aged children (OECD, 2016b), but OSH supports are largely non-existent in Mexico. Providing both parents with flexible work schedules and the possibility of short-term part-time work can also ease tensions between caregiving and work as children age (Chapter 4).

Paid maternity and paternity leave

Over the past three decades, maternity leave, paternity leave, and (often shareable) parental leave have become major features of national support packages for families in OECD countries. Designed to be used around childbirth and when children are very young, employment-protected leave provides job security while allowing mothers to recuperate from childbirth and gives both parents time to care for young children. Paid leave gives families valuable income support at a time of increased stress on household budgets.

Mexico mandates 12 weeks of fully-paid maternity leave to women who (in the private sector) have contributed to social security for at least 30 weeks in the 12 months before the date on which maternity leave starts. Mexico's entitlement is lower than the 14 weeks of

paid maternity leave stipulated by the ILO Maternity Protection Convention (ILO, 2010) and less than the World Health Organization's recommendation of 16 weeks of absence from work after delivery to protect the health of mother and child (WHO, 2000).

Mexico's 12 weeks of maternity leave are also well below the OECD average of 17.8 weeks paid maternity leave (OECD Family Database, 2016). After maternity leave ends, most OECD countries also offer an additional period of paid parental leave, which often either parent can take up. Mexico has no system of parental leave after maternity or paternity leave. Mexico has the second-shortest leave entitlement for mothers in the OECD: only the United States, which offers 12 weeks of *unpaid* leave at the federal level to about 60% of workers, performs worse (Figure 3.8). The Mexican social security programme is funded by employers (70%), employees (25%), and the federal government (5%).

Maternity leave in Mexico

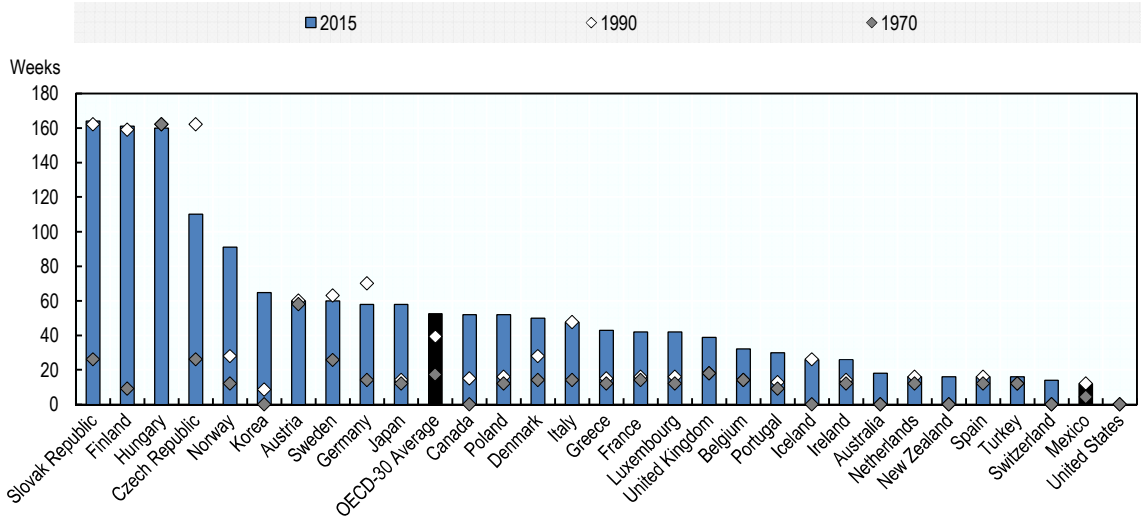
It is important to emphasise that only women in formal employment – less than half of all female workers – have a legal right to paid leave. Among those formal workers, eligibility is contingent upon contributing to social security for the minimum amount of time.

Mexico's maternity leave requirements therefore exclude mothers working in the informal sector, who are subject to their employer's decision to grant them time off (paid or unpaid) and a job to which they can return. These women tend to be low-income workers with precarious jobs – precisely the kind of workers who most need income support around childbirth. Self-employed workers who contribute to a special, voluntary social security system (*regimen voluntario*) do not have any maternity leave benefit, as this voluntary regime does not include maternity leave insurance (Pérez, 2015).

Mexico's 12 weeks of maternity leave are paid by social security at 100% of earnings. Employee contributions to the Mexican Institute for Social Security (IMSS, *Instituto de Seguridad Social*) can accrue across different employers. Employees are expected to take six weeks of leave before childbirth and six weeks after birth, though up to four of the six pre-birth weeks of leave can be transferred to post-birth with medical approval, i.e., maternity leave can start around 38 weeks of pregnancy rather than 34 weeks. Effectively, then, women can take only about a maximum of ten weeks of maternity leave after their child is born.

Figure 3.8. Mexico lags behind much of the OECD in maternity and parental leave

Duration of paid maternity, parental, and home care leave available to mothers, 2015



Note: Figure refers to total weeks of paid maternity leave plus any weeks of paid parental leave and/or paid home care leave (sometimes under a different name, for example, "childcare leave" or "child-raising allowance". For an overview of maternity leave, parental leave, and paternity leave allowances, as well as replacement rates, see the *OECD Family Database* (http://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm).

Source: OECD Family Database (2016).

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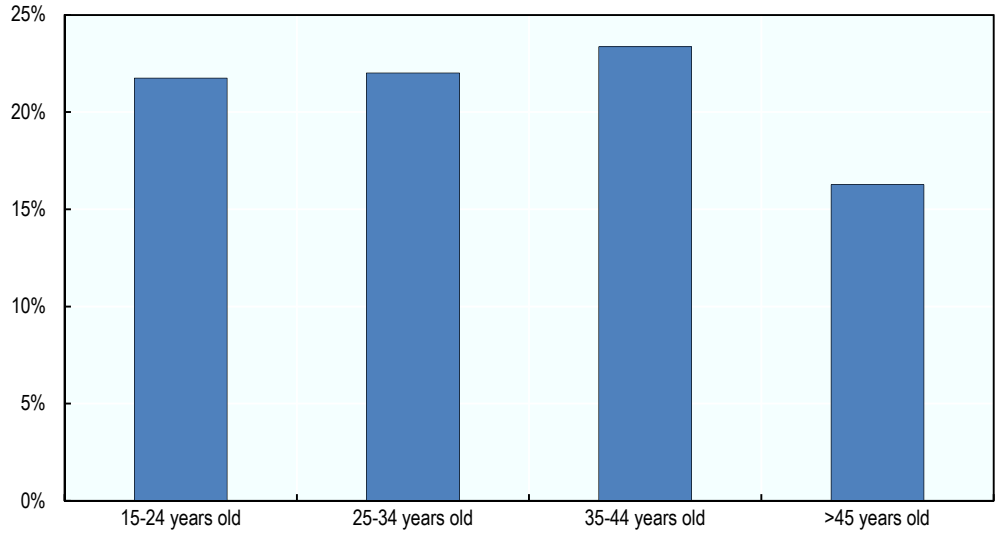
An employer is responsible for paying 100% of an employee's maternity leave when the pregnant employee has *not* met the eligibility criteria of contributing to social security for at least 30 weeks in the designated 12 months before the start of maternity leave. This introduces the real possibility that employers would discriminate against women of childbearing-aged when hiring. There are likely a small number of cases in which a pregnant woman has been hired but has not reached the mandatory 30 weeks of social security contributions needed to receive IMSS-sponsored leave before the start of maternity leave. Under these circumstances, an employer would be required to pay for the pregnant worker's maternity leave.

In a 2011 national survey, 1.1 million women reported having been asked by their employer to take a pregnancy test in the previous year (INEGI ENDIREH, 2013). 20.6% of working women reported having experienced at least one incident of workplace discrimination in the previous year, with rates highest for the 15- to 44-year-olds, an age group that coincides with childbearing years (Figure 3.9).[6] Mexico outlawed pregnancy tests at the time of hiring in 2012, but the practice is still known to occur. Given that employers risk having to pay for maternity leave if they hire a pregnant woman, hiring discrimination remains an issue. Outlawing pregnancy tests is insufficient to reduce the discrimination risks faced by child-bearing aged women.

Figure 3.9. One in five working women in Mexico reports experiencing workplace discrimination

Percentage of working women reporting at least one instance of labour discrimination in the previous 12 months, by age group, Mexico, 2011



Source: *Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares* (ENDIREH) 2011.

Paternity leave in Mexico

An increasing number of OECD countries – currently about three-quarters – also provide fathers with paid leave, in line with the OECD Gender Recommendation (OECD, 2013a). On average across OECD countries, fathers are entitled to eight weeks of leave, measured as the total weeks of paid paternity and parental leave that only fathers may take.

Mexico recently legislated paid leave to fathers working formally in the private sector. (Fathers in some segments of government had pre-existing access to paid leave.) Mexico is on the right track in offering paid paternity leave. However, the current leave period of five days is too short, and an obligation for the employer to pay (rather than social security) may discourage take-up by some fathers. Furthermore, only formal workers – about half of the male workforce – have access to this benefit. Fathers have no legal entitlement to paid or unpaid parental leave after paternity leave ends.

The costs and benefits of paid leave

Maternity, paternity, and parental leave are important for families, employers, and the economy. Across countries, access to paid maternity, paternity, and parental leave has been found to increase female employment. Paid maternity leave incentivises women's work prior to childbirth, and offers mothers employment protection to return to work after childbirth. Paid *paternity* leave can encourage fathers to take a greater role in childrearing, helps mothers return to work after childbirth, and may decrease employer discrimination against hiring childbearing-age women, as men thus represent an equal leave "risk" of taking time off around childbirth. Caregiving patterns developed around birth are also important for ensuring a better sharing of childcare work as children age (OECD, 2016b).

For employers, the pay-off to paid maternity and paternity leave (especially when leave is funded by social insurance schemes) comes in the form of avoiding the replacement costs of finding and training a new worker, which can occur even for low-skilled workers. Even

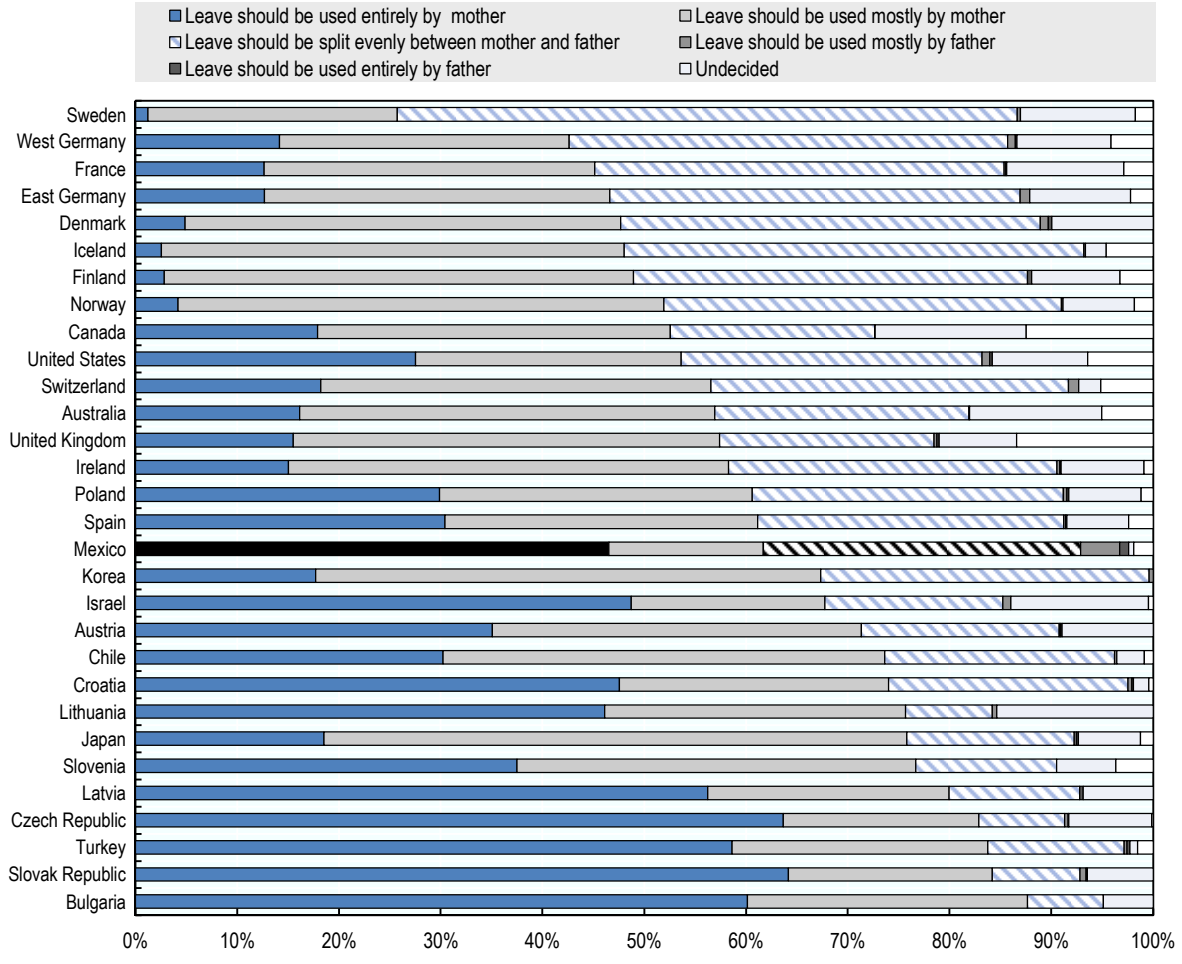
in the United States, which has the least generous parental leave policy in the OECD, national and state-level surveys of employers have found that family leave has had a positive impact on workers' lives without posing an undue burden on employers (Adema et al., 2015). At the federal level, the United States' entitlement of 12 weeks of (unpaid) family leave was associated with higher employee productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower staff turnover, higher morale, and greater business profitability (US Department of Labor, 2012). The majority of worksites reported that the parental leave entitlement had neutral or positive effects on their business, and that employers had little difficulty covering planned absences.

There are likely small costs associated with shifting work or temporarily replacing a worker on leave. However, businesses face higher costs when employees permanently leave their jobs – something new parents are more likely to do when they cannot access adequate, job-protected parental leave. The relatively short paid leave period in Mexico raises this risk of quitting for formal workers, and the complete lack of paid leave raises the issue for informal workers, too. Replacing a worker is expensive. Employers face direct and indirect burdens in the form of, for instance, exit interviews and severance pay; lost productivity while an employee anticipates their departure; productivity losses while a position is unfilled; the costs of recruiting, hiring, and training a new employee; slower productivity until the new worker is fully trained; and lost clients (Boushey and Glynn, 2012; Dube et al., 2010). Research in the United States has found that it costs a business, on average, 21% of an employee's salary to replace her (Boushey and Glynn, 2012). Replacement values are positively associated with the skill level of the employee, but *all* employees – even low-wage and less-skilled workers – are costly to replace. Paying attention to employee retention is thus a smart move for businesses' bottom lines.

Even though fewer than half of Mexico's working women are eligible for paid maternity leave, Mexicans overwhelmingly support parents' access to paid leave when a child is born. In 2012, 95.2% of Mexicans said paid leave should be available. Among those who support paid leave, a relatively high share (35%) also believe that paid leave should be shared evenly between parents or used mostly by the father (Figure 3.10). While mothers continue to be perceived as the primary caregiver, these responses in Mexico suggest an important recognition of fathers' roles in child caregiving that should be reinforced through policy.

Figure 3.10. About one-third of Mexicans say parents should share leave or father should use most of it

Distribution of responses to the 2012 International Social Survey Programme question: "Consider a couple who both work full-time and now have a newborn child. Both are in a similar work situation and are eligible for paid leave. How should this paid leave period be divided between the mother and the father?"



Note: Distribution of responses among those who believe paid leave should be available. In Mexico, this is 95.2% of the population.

Source: OECD estimates based on the International Social Survey Programme, 2012.

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Improving parental leave policies

To close gender gaps, mothers and fathers must have equal opportunities to care for their children and participate in good-quality paid work around childbirth. Public policies in Mexico can help parents balance work and family life in the following ways.

- ***Expand employment-protected paid maternity leave to working mothers*** to – at a minimum – 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. To improve maternity leave access and reduce discrimination at the time of hiring, reduce the social security contribution period so women are better able to qualify for publicly-funded paid leave before giving birth. The current system – in which an employer must pay 100% of wages during maternity leave when a worker has not reached the minimum contribution period – raises the risk of gender-based discrimination in hiring.

Although employment-related pregnancy tests were outlawed in 2012, this ban is not sufficient to prevent hiring discrimination. The risk remains that employers will discriminate against hiring childbearing-aged women, as employers are responsible for paying a full salary during leave if the pregnant worker has not contributed to social security for at least 30 weeks in the previous year (across employers) prior to the start of maternity leave.

At a minimum, ensuring that IMSS's contribution period better reflects the length of pregnancy would be an appropriate step to reduce employers' reluctance to hire (potentially) pregnant women. Reducing the contribution period[7] from 30 weeks to 25 weeks or fewer, for example, would allow more women to reach their contribution requirement during the course of pregnancy if they are hired while pregnant. This may imply higher costs for IMSS as more women become eligible for maternity leave, but IMSS may also earn more revenue as women return to their protected job post-birth. Making it easier for female workers to qualify for publicly-funded maternity leave would ease the burden on employers and probably help to reduce hiring discrimination.

A two-week expansion of the paid leave period and a shorter contribution period may strain the social security budget. To fund these changes, they could be accompanied by a reduction in the wage replacement rate for the highest earners on maternity leave. Currently all qualifying workers at all income levels receive 100% of their salary while on maternity leave. Capping maximum payments or reducing the replacement rate for the highest earners – for instance, decreasing top quintile earners' replacement rate to 75% – should help public coffers, not place an undue burden on workers, and be politically feasible. While most OECD countries' average wage replacement rate for maternity leave is well above 50% of wages, only eleven OECD countries, including Mexico, pay 100% of wages across the earnings distribution during maternity leave.

An additional option would be to add a lower-paid or unpaid employment-protected leave period for both parents, so that parents who want to take more than 12 weeks off with their baby (at their own expense) have a job to which they can return. Female public sector workers in Mexico City, for example, in 2015 were given the option of extending maternity leave for an additional 3 to 4.5 months after the initial leave period, at 30% to 40% of their salary, depending on rank (*Administración Pública del Distrito Federal*, 2015). However, evidence on the effects of unpaid leave extensions is limited.

- ***Encourage fathers to take paternity leave***. Fathers' leave-taking has numerous social, health, and well-being benefits within the household, and fathers' leave-taking is also good for promoting female employment (Adema et al., 2015). Mexico's five days of paid leave to fathers is a good start, but the country should expand the number of days offered and pay for the benefit out of social security to move closer to the OECD average (eight weeks of combined paternity and parental leave reserved for fathers). Again, lower wage replacement rates for Mexico's highest earners would make longer leave more financially viable.

  Ensuring take-up, however, is a challenge, and the government and employers should incentivise fathers to take the leave for which they are eligible. Funding paternity leave through social security (rather than private employers paying, as is currently the case) would likely improve workplace attitudes towards fathers taking leave. In some OECD countries, a portion of *parental* leave (post-paternity leave) is explicitly reserved for fathers: if fathers do not take the days of leave for which they are eligible, the family loses the days entirely. In other countries, families get additional "bonus" days of leave if the father takes a minimum.

- These changes should be accompanied by renewed efforts to ***promote formalisation in the workforce*** (Chapter 4). Barring a complete transformation of Mexico's social security system, IMSS will likely continue to be the main administrator of parental leave benefits. To increase the number of workers with access to paid leave around childbirth, it is thus imperative to bring more workers into the formal social security system (Chapter 4).

Breastfeeding support

Breastfeeding has been found to benefit both infants and mothers. It lowers infants' risk of diarrhoeal disease and respiratory illness in lower- and middle-income countries, and is associated with improved nutrition and neurocognitive development across countries at different levels of development (Victora et al., 2016; Heymann et al., 2013) The benefits of breastfeeding are greater in absolute terms in regions with poverty, poor nutrition, and poor sanitation, where access to safe drinking water is unreliable or unaffordable (as is the case in parts of Mexico). For mothers, breastfeeding is associated with the prevention of breast cancer and is also a tool for increasing spacing between births, which is an important factor in reducing maternal morbidity and mortality (Victora et al., 2016). Breastfeeding is a low-cost, low-tech behaviour with high pay-offs.

In 2012, only 14% of mothers in Mexico exclusively breastfed their infant for six months, a rate which is far below the Latin American average of 31%, as measured across national surveys from 2010-15 (UNICEF, 2015). Some mothers are unable to breastfeed, and others may not want to. Breastfeeding is a significant (unpaid) commitment of time and energy, and the decision of whether or not to breastfeed should be a woman's personal choice. However, one of the most common reasons why women stop or do not start breastfeeding is their need to return to work (Chen et al., 2006; Hawkins et al., 2007). In Mexico, the rise in female labour force participation has correlated with a decrease in breastfeeding rates, suggesting that public policy and employers should be doing more to give mothers autonomy over how they feed their infants. To give mothers more choices when their children are young and to improve breastfeeding rates, Mexico must:

- ***Ensure that new mothers have adequate supports when they return to work***. It is important to enforce mothers' legal right to lactation breaks, as well as raise awareness about rights and benefits of breastfeeding. Lactating mothers must have access to a legally-mandated private and hygienic space for expressing their milk, regular pumping breaks every few hours, and a refrigerated storage space for storing milk.

  Mexican legislation entitles lactating mothers' to two 30-minute breaks per workday until an infant is six months old, with an alternative option of reducing a mother's work day by one hour. This legislation is an important first step. In practice, however, many employers do not respect their employees' need to pump every few hours, hygienic spaces for preparing milk are underprovided, and women are often forced to use restrooms to prepare their baby's milk.

  Well-designed information campaigns could help normalise a culture of breastfeeding, and employers' greater respect for breastfeeding breaks would likely improve breastfeeding rates and average duration. The government also recently banned free baby formula give-aways in hospitals, an initiative similar to policies enacted in many cities in the United States, which may also help cement breastfeeding habits in the early days after childbirth.

Early childhood education and care: Good progress forward, but more must be done

A public commitment to early childhood education and care (ECEC) is essential for ensuring that families have options to make the work-life decisions that fit their needs, and affordable access to ECEC helps drive the labour market participation of parents with young children (Baker et al., 2005; Bauernschuster and Schlotter, 2015; Thévenon, 2015). ECEC policies are, of course, also very important for ensuring children's education, health, and material well-being, as investments made in early childhood have lifelong effects (OECD, 2009 and 2011).

Working mothers in Mexico's formal sector are legally entitled to institutional childcare for children aged 43 days to four years, as mandated by the 1973 Social Security Law (*Ley de Seguridad Social*). Mexico has made good progress in nursery coverage (for children aged 0 to 2) and especially preschool coverage (ages 3 to 5) in the past decade, but access to affordable and good-quality ECEC remains scarce for children in the younger age group regardless of their mothers' work status.

In 2013, Mexico spent about 0.6% of GDP on ECEC. This commitment is below the OECD average (0.7% of GDP going towards ECEC) and far lower than the amount spent in countries like Iceland (1.8% of GDP), Denmark (1.4%), Sweden (1.6%), France (1.3%), and Norway (1.3%) (OECD Social Expenditure Database, 2016).

About 12 million young children aged five and younger live in Mexico. Three main public providers offer early childhood education and care with national coverage for this age group. Infants and children up to age four can be cared for in *guarderías* or *estancias* (daycare), while children aged three through five are expected to attend preschool. There is some overlap between daycare and preschool programmes for 3-year-olds, as Mexico is still phasing in compulsory preschool for 3-year-olds.

- ***Guarderías* administered by IMSS**: The Mexican Institute for Social Security (*Instituto de Seguridad Social*, IMSS) provides daycare ("*guardería*") services to working mothers and fathers[8] enrolled in the social security system of IMSS. IMSS *guarderías* are thus restricted to formal workers. These *guarderías* can be grouped into two models: centers directly provided by IMSS, and centers contracted to private providers under IMSS rules and standards. Children who are between 43 days and (up to) four years old can enrol.

  IMSS administered 1 386 *guarderías* nationwide in 2015, of which 1 244 were privately administered. IMSS *guarderías* enrolled 207 689 children at the end of 2015.

- ***Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras* administered by SEDESOL**: The Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL, *Secretaría de Desarrollo Social*) provides subsidised community-based and home-based daycare to the children of low-income working mothers, single fathers, and guardians through the Programme of Childcare Facilities to Help Working Mothers (PEI, *Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras*). Children must be between one and (up to) four years old, or between 1and (up to) six years old in cases of disability.

  SEDESOL's service is a key childcare option for informal workers who cannot access social security-funded facilities like those administered by IMSS. PEI offers demand- and supply-side incentives by providing grants to individuals and organisations interested in running nurseries, as well as subsidies to clients. In the first quarter of 2016, SEDESOL operated 9 231 childcare facilities. Beneficiaries included 282 839 mothers, single parents

and guardians (who were working, seeking employment or studying), and 299 136 children were enrolled.

- **Preschool administered by SEP**: The Mexican Secretariat of Education (SEP, *Secretaría de Educación Pública*) has overseen an impressive implementation and expansion of preschool for children aged three to five. This followed federal legislation in 2002 which made preschool part of compulsory education. Coverage for 5- and 4-year-olds is now nearly universal, though 3-year-olds are still being incorporated into the system. Most preschools run half-day programmes.

The ECEC provisions of IMSS, SEDESOL, and SEP are part of a patchwork of programmes for young children in Mexico. There are a few other public providers or administrators of ECEC at the national level, but their programmes are smaller. The Ministry of Health (*Secretaría de Salud*) funds some childcare in Mexican states through its Comprehensive Family Development agencies (DIF, *Desarrollo Integral de la Familia*).

For public sector workers, there is also the *guardería* programme administered by the Institute of Social Security and Services of Workers of the State (ISSSTE, *Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado*). In the first quarter of 2016, ISSSTE administered 246 childcare facilities nationwide and enrolled around 30 000 children. In addition to ISSSTE, which is limited to federal public employees, Mexican states have their own separate social security systems for government workers at the state level (e.g., the Institute of Social Security of the State of Tabasco, *Instituto de Seguridad Social del Estado de Tabasco*). Workers in other parts of government, such as Mexican Petroleums (PEMEX, *Petróleos Mexicanos*), have their own social security schemes with some childcare offerings.

Publicly-subsidised care for infants and toddlers has grown

The participation rates of infants and very young children (aged two and under) in ECEC in Mexico is at the low end of the OECD rankings (OECD Family Database, 2016). Measurements of ECEC coverage differ across countries,[9] but range from 67% of 0- to 2-year-olds in Denmark to 3.1% of the same age group in the Slovak Republic. Estimates of ECEC coverage in Mexico for infants and toddlers vary, but multiple sources reveal that fewer than 10% of 0- to 2-year-olds were enrolled in public or private *guarderias* in 2013 (INEGI ENESS, 2013; OECD Family Database, 2016).

Mexico has made gains in publicly providing childcare to very young children in recent years. In 2000, a mere 70 405 (1.2% of) 0- to 2-year-olds were enrolled in public ECEC during their mother or guardian's workday (Table 3.1). In 2013, the number (and percentage) of children in this age group in public ECEC had more than tripled, to 218 219 (3.8% of all) 0- to 2-year-olds. The private provision of ECEC increased very little in this time and remains below 1% of children in this age group. The vast majority of the rest of children aged two and under are cared for by their mothers (78.9% in 2000, decreasing to 73.8% in 2013) or other family members, mainly grandmothers (INEGI ENESS, 2000 and 2013). Informally paid caregivers also provide support in many cases.

A key player in the recent growth of ECEC in Mexico has been SEDESOL, which greatly increased childcare coverage with its 2007 implementation and subsequent expansion of the largely home-based Programme of Childcare Facilities to Help Working Mothers (PEI, *Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras*). In its first two years of existence, PEI created more childcare spaces than IMSS had in 30 years (Staab and Gerhard, 2010). It was designed to fill the gap in coverage for workers

not covered by IMSS, and was part of a larger national strategy to increase female employment and reduce poverty (*ibid.*). SEDESOL specifically targeted mothers' employment in the construction of PEI. The stated objective of the programme is to "help provide social security support to protect the socioeconomic welfare of poor populations by improving access to care services and childcare for mothers, single fathers, and guardians who are working, seeking employment, or studying, in order to improve their *conditions of access and permanence in the labour market*" (SEDESOL, 2016, emphasis added).

Table 3.1. The share of 0- to 2-year-olds in public ECEC has grown in Mexico since 2000

Number of children aged two and under in Mexico by type of ECEC enrolment, 2000 and 2013

Year	Number of 0-2 year-olds	Number of 0-2 year-olds in public ECEC (percentage of age group)	Number of 0-2 year-olds in private ECEC (percentage of age group)
2000	5 862 550	70 405	41 381
		(1.2%)	(0.71%)
2013	5 803 327	218 219	54 254
		(3.76%)	(0.94%)

Note: "Public ECEC" includes children aged two and under who attend *guarderías* or *estancias infantiles* of IMSS, SEDESOL, DIF, or other public institutions which care for them during the working day of their mother or guardian. "Private ECEC" includes children aged two and under who attend *guarderías* or *estancias infantiles*, or private institutions which care for them during the working day of their mother or guardian.

Source: INEGI *Encuesta Nacional de Empleo y Seguridad Social* (2000 and 2013).

In fewer than ten years of operation, SEDESOL achieved an annual enrolment of nearly 300 000 low-income children in its *estancias infantiles* (OECD Questionnaire to SEDESOL, 2016). In 2017, SEDESOL plans to focus half of its new estancias on underserved rural communities. SEDESOL's PEI has room for improvement, particularly regarding quality of care, but it also presents a practical and relatively affordable ECEC model for other countries. Indeed, the basic premise – whereby the government subsidises supply and demand of at-home care by a non-relative caregiver – is similar to programmes in effect in other OECD countries, such as France, as well as the Community Mothers (*Madres Comunitarias*) programme in Colombia.

IMSS has also made gains in enrolment in the past two decades. In 1997, IMSS decided to transition from direct provision of childcare to a mix of direct provision and indirect provision through employers, community organisations, and individual families. Transitioning to some indirect provision is similar to the approach pursued in many other OECD countries. Indirect provision cut IMSS's per-facility costs by about 75% and spurred expansion (Stabb and Gerhard, 2010). Enrolment in IMSS *guarderías* at the end of 2015 is more than three times what it was in 1997 (207 689 children versus 59 000 children, respectively) (Stabb and Gerhard 2010, OECD Questionnaire to IMSS). However, IMSS and SEDESOL's enrolment numbers still fall short of meeting demand.

Preschool and kindergarten coverage shows impressive gains

Mexico's largest and most impressive effort has been the roll-out of compulsory and universal preschool coverage for 3- to 5-year-olds. Although there is insufficient childcare support for infants and toddlers, ECEC coverage is high in the 3- to 5-year-old group in Mexico: an impressive 80.7% were enrolled in pre-primary or primary school in 2014, up from only 62.5% in 2005. This 18 percentage point increase is the fourth-largest increase in this period among countries with comparable data. The enrolment in pre-primary or

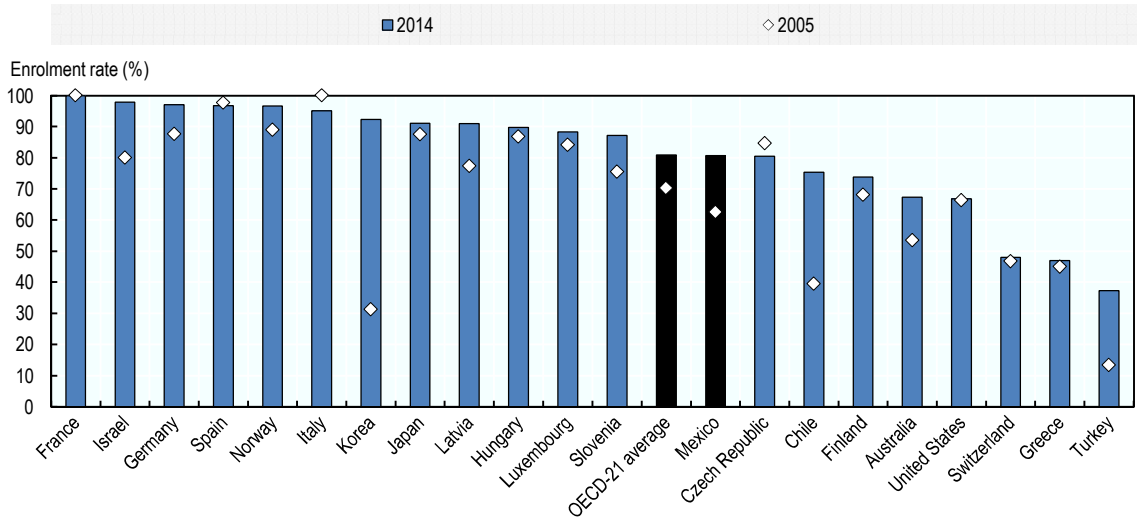
primary school of 3- to 5-year-olds in Mexico is now comparable to the OECD average (80.9%).

This remarkable increase in enrolment reflects the rapid expansion of universal preschool in Mexico during this time period. In 2002, Mexico legislated the extension of compulsory education to include three years of pre-primary school, from age three through five; prior to this, compulsory education consisted of only six years of primary and three years of lower secondary school. The policy originally intended for all children to be integrated and complete three years of preschool before starting primary school by 2008, but these requirements were relaxed as it became clear the target would not be met. Indeed, states are still building infrastructure to incorporate more 3-year-olds into the first year of preschool, and enrolment rates for 3-year-olds are still only around 40% (OECD Education Database, 2016). Low coverage for this age group remains the main obstacle to universal pre-primary school enrolment.

The introduction of preschool in Mexico has produced positive outcomes for the labour force participation of mothers of preschool-age children. De la Cruz Toledo (2015) applies a difference-in-difference approach and finds (in the intent-to-treat model) that a 10 percentage point increase in the preschool enrolment rate of 3- and 4-year-olds increased by 0.8 to 1.9 percentage points the probability of 3- and 4-year-olds' mothers to be employed, relative to several comparison groups: women with younger children, women with older children, and women without children. The positive sign and significance of these results are robust across intent-to-treat and treatment-on-treated specifications.

Figure 3.11. Enrolment of 3- to 5-year-olds in preschool has grown substantially in Mexico

Enrolment rates (%) in pre-primary education or primary education, 3- to 5-year-olds, 2005 and 2014



Note: Data reflect the number of children aged three to five enrolled in pre-primary education (ISCED 2011 level 02) or primary education (ISCED 2011 level 1), as a proportion (%) of the corresponding 3-to-5-year-old population. Potential mismatches between the coverage of the population data and the enrolment data mean that enrolment rates may be underestimated for countries (such as Luxembourg) that are net exporters of students, and overestimated for countries that are net importers. Enrolment rates are capped at 100% where they exceed 100%. Countries shown only if data are available for both 2005 and 2014.

Source: OECD Education Database (2016).

Inadequate supply of childcare for young children

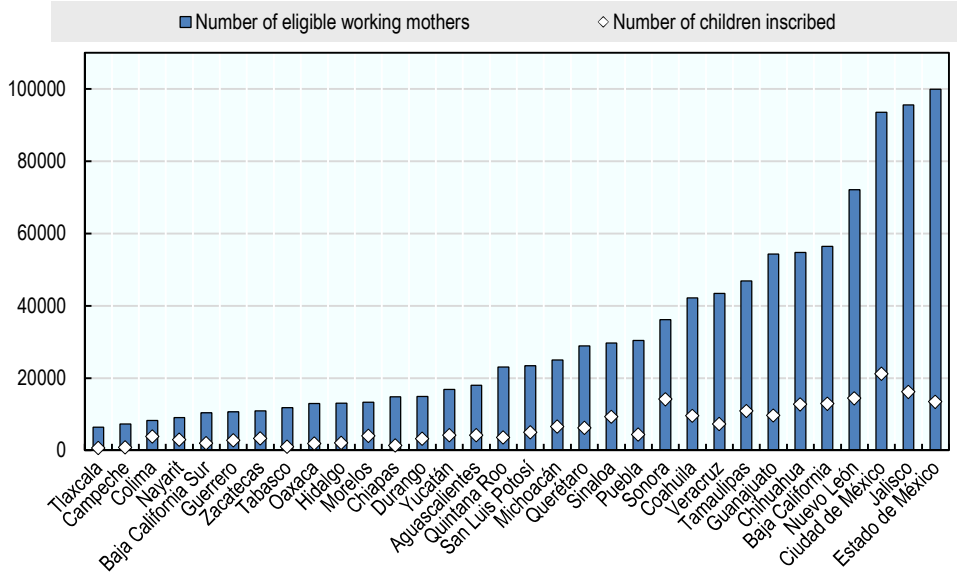
Mexico must continue expanding early childhood education and care (ECEC), as demand for childcare still greatly outpaces supply and federal funding has stalled in recent years. More than 90% of children under age two are excluded from ECEC (Table 3.1). The number of SEDESOL and IMSS facilities has grown dramatically since the creation of both programmes, particularly since IMSS' 1997 incorporation of private providers, but in the past few years the growth rate has slowed.

By various measures the supply of ECEC is inadequate. In 2015, only 16% of private sector working mothers of children aged four or younger reported having access to a *guardería* through their employer. Among formal workers the share was 32%, whereas only 0.5% of informal workers reported having access to childcare through their employer (OECD calculations of ENIGH 2014). Stakeholders have called for greater access of social security-contributing workers to IMSS *guarderías*, as well as more transparent processes for admitting children into IMSS facilities.

Administrative data from IMSS confirm that there is high demand for *guardería* spaces. 214 563 children were enrolled in *guarderías* nationwide throughout 2015; 17 854 additional children were formally wait-listed. IMSS estimates that potential national demand for childcare is 1 035 846 working mothers, a figure that captures those who are inscribed with IMSS, who used their maternity leave, and who have at least one child between the age of 43 days and four years of age. (Of course, mothers may have more than one child, so demand for spaces is likely higher than the number of eligible working mothers.) The state-level distribution of IMSS *guardería* (potential) demand and uptake is illustrated in Figure 3.12.

Figure 3.12. Potential demand is higher than enrolment in *guarderias*

Number of eligible working mothers and number of children enrolled in IMSS childcare facilities across federal entities in Mexico, 2015



Note: "Eligible mothers" are estimated by IMSS. The definition includes those working mothers contributing to/covered by IMSS who have 1) used their maternity leave and 2) have at least one child between 43 days and four years of age.

Source: OECD Questionnaire to IMSS (2016).

In 2013, SEDESOL's PEI had a coverage rate of 30.2% within its estimated *targeted* population[10] of almost 1 million children (CONEVAL, 2013). SEDESOL continues to expand the number of *estancias* annually. However, SEDESOL reports that around 300-400 daycare facilities also close each year, typically because the owner is closing the *estancia* or because the *estancia* does not meet SEDESOL's quality criteria. As a result, the number of children enrolled has increased more slowly than the number of new *estancias* added. Funding is also an issue, of course; even as SEDESOL is publicly committed to expanding the programme, the budget varies from year to year, which complicates planning.

While coverage of 5-year-olds and 4-year-olds in preschool was prioritised by the government and is nearly universal, compulsory preschool in Mexico has not yet fully incorporated 3-year-olds. In April 2016, SEP and SEDESOL announced a plan to provide preschool for 3-year-olds in SEDESOL's *estancias*. It remains unclear how 3-year-olds in PEI will receive educational content or what the educational requirements will be for teachers. Nevertheless, so long as it does not take spaces away from younger children in PEI, the partnership is potentially a good step forward in increasing preschool coverage. Many mothers prefer to keep their 3-year-olds in PEI for the first year of preschool because PEI lasts the length of a working day, rather than the half-day that is typical in traditional preschools, and PEI offers meals.

Eligibility rules introduce other significant gaps in who is able to access different programmes. For instance, SEDESOL's *estancias* do not provide care to infants under age one, but they do offer spaces to children with disabilities. IMSS and ISSSTE *guarderías* accept infants from 43 days old, but rarely provide care for children with physical or mental disabilities (INEGI, 2015). The compulsory preschool programmes run by SEP have good coverage, but often only provide half-days of schooling, which limits the extent to which parents – typically mothers – can participate in the workforce (Staab and Gerhard 2010).

Socioeconomic status also drives ECEC enrolment. A mother in Mexico is still more likely to work the more education she has and the higher her income level is (OECD calculations of ENIGH 2015). Highly-educated and higher-earning women are better able to afford center-based care, and many employ domestic workers to care for children at home. Despite the growth of PEI, the vast majority of low-income families still do not have access to ECEC.

The exclusion of low-income families and children from good-quality ECEC can have harmful effects, and not only in the form of a mother's lost wages. The pay-offs to investing early in children are large, especially for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Heckman, 2006; Heckman et al., 2010). OECD PISA data show that 15-year-old students who attended pre-primary education for at least a year are likely to have higher mathematics scores than those who did not, with the achievement gap equal to almost one year of formal schooling even after accounting for students' socio-economic status (OECD, 2014c).

Childcare quality remains a concern

The quality of ECEC in Mexico is a significant concern for child well-being and development, as well as for parents' willingness to outsource childcare. Low requirements for childcare workers' education and high student-to-teacher ratios are not likely to inspire parents' confidence.

SEDESOL's PEI has been an asset in at least three ways: expanding ECEC, allowing mothers to enter the labour market, and creating childcare jobs. By 2010, PEI had created jobs for over 38 000 women.

Critics emphasise, however, that these jobs are of low quality and workers are largely informal – and thus excluded from important employment-related social protections. The *estancias* owners are self-employed, and in 2016 about two-thirds (~6 000 out of 9 231 *estancias*) had registered their *estancia* as formal enterprises with the government. However, most of these *estancias* do not report their childcare assistants to the government, and the vast majority of childcare assistants do not register themselves. Consequently SEDESOL reports that only about 3 000 childcare assistants are formal workers incorporated in social security, i.e., registered with IMSS. This is a very small share of childcare workers enrolled as formal workers, given that *estancias* are required to have at least one assistant for every eight children and, consequently, there are probably at least 40 000 assistants associated with the programme. Even though SEDESOL is aware of these workers' informal status, and has reported these numbers to relevant ministries, the job of enrolling workers and enforcing formal employment (and subsequent social security inscription) is the responsibility of other parts of government.

SEDESOL's programme costs much less to run than IMSS's, but there are some differences in the quality of care (Staab and Gerhard, 2010). The educational criteria for PEI workers are not very high. The main educational qualification to become a lead child caregiver ("*responsible*") is a lower-secondary education degree, roughly equivalent to finishing school at age 15. Child caregivers must also be certified under the competence standards of the National Council for Standardization and Certification of Occupational Competencies (CONOCER, *Consejo Nacional de Normalización y Certificación de Competencias Laborales*), under the Ministry of Education. The low educational standards required for caregivers have thus led critics to claim that low-income children are receiving second-rate care. SEDESOL does, however, mandate a variety of training courses, such as those focusing on fire prevention, the preparation of nutritious food, first aid, and security and emergency protocols.

IMSS *guarderías* are better recognised as having educational content (Gerhard, 2013), and IMSS reports that facilities often have at least one teacher with an undergraduate degree related to education. Educational assistants must be certified in having knowledge needed to promote the physical, cognitive, and social-affective development of children. Similar to the process for SEDESOL, this certification is given by CONOCER.

Questions have also been raised about the quality of care in the ISSSTE network of childcare centers for public sector workers. In 2012, ISSSTE carried out an assessment to identify deficiencies in the implementation of programmes and resources. One of the risks requiring immediate attention was the risk to the health and physical integrity of children in its Child Welfare and Development Centers (OECD, 2013b).

Mexican preschool teachers (of 3- to 5-year-olds) are required to have at least an undergraduate/bachelor degree, in line with standards in many other OECD countries (OECD Education Database, 2016). However, Mexico performs poorly when compared to the rest of the OECD in pupil-teaching staff ratios in pre-primary education (ISCED level 0). On average across the OECD, there are 14.4 students per teacher in pre-primary education. In Mexico, the ratio is 25.2 students per teacher – one of the highest rates in the OECD (OECD, 2014c).

The 2009 fire at *Guarderia ABC* in Hermosillo, Sonora resulted in the death of 49 young children and injuries to many more. This national tragedy seared the public

conscience. It also weakened public trust in childcare centers, especially as investigations revealed that numerous safety regulations had not been met in the facility, which was one of the private *guarderias* contracted by IMSS.

Improving ECEC in Mexico

Improving ECEC for children aged five and younger should focus on expanding supply and improving quality of care.

- ***Ensure that parents of infants and young children can access affordable childhood education and care (ECEC)***. This is an especially important concern when the obligation for unpaid care work falls disproportionately on women, thus hampering their ability to engage in paid work (Chapter 4). Mexico has taken important steps in helping parents care for young children in recent years with the introduction of universal compulsory preschool education, as well as the growth of the *Estancias Infantiles para Apoyar a Madres Trabajadoras* programme.

  Notwithstanding the gains in ECEC, the supply of childcare in Mexico leaves much to be desired. Less than 10% of children under age three are in childcare, and demand far outpaces supply (Figure 3.12). Mexico must continue to invest in expanding *guarderías* and *estancias infantiles* for very young children, and must continue to invest in the universal preschool system. This can take the form of greater coverage (i.e., more spaces for enrolling students, particularly the underserved three-year-olds) and/or longer hours of preschool.

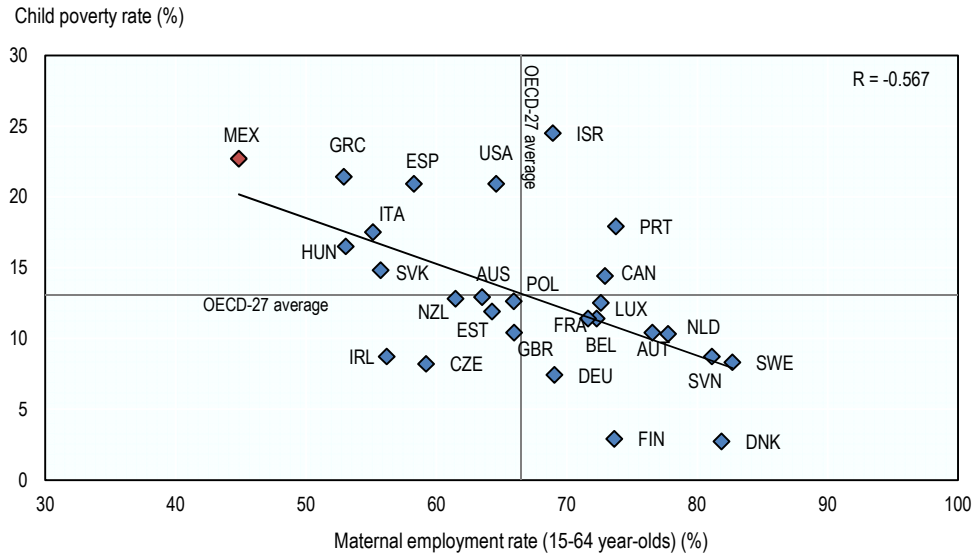
- ***Ensure that existing and new ECEC options provide good-quality care.*** Quality standards must be improved to give poor children equal opportunities and to encourage parents to use ECEC. This should include higher educational requirements for new caregiver assistants in the *estancias* and lower child-to-teacher ratios. The relevant authorities in Mexico must also address seriously the issue of informal workers serving as agents of the ECEC system. These workers should be easy to incorporate into social security, and the government is remiss in not doing so.

3.8. Mothers' economic empowerment is crucial for reducing poverty in families

Women's participation in paid work has many benefits for women (Chapter 1), but it also has important benefits for children. It is now almost a maxim in development economics that children do better when their mothers control a larger share of household resources, as mothers are more likely to transfer to resources to their children. This evidence has been developed through rigorous evaluation within countries. At the cross-national level in the OECD, increases in female employment are associated with a lower incidence of child poverty, although, of course, many causal factors drive both maternal employment and child poverty (Figure 3.13). These lessons have been reflected in policy design, including the decision to disburse conditional cash transfers (CCTs) to mothers to fight poverty in many regions of the world. Mexico was a global leader in the use of this approach with the introduction of *Progresa* in the late 1990s.

Figure 3.13. Maternal employment corresponds with lower child poverty

Percentage of children (0-17) that live in poor households, and employment rates (%) for mothers (15-64 years-old) with at least one child aged 0-14, 2012



Note:

For Australia, data on maternal employment refer to 2011. For Canada, data on both maternal employment and child poverty refer to 2011. For the United States, data on maternal employment refer to women with at least one child aged 0-17. For Sweden, data on maternal employment refer to women aged 15-74 with at least one child aged 0-17.

Poor households are defined as having an equivalised post-tax and transfer income of less than 50% of the national annual median equivalised post-tax and transfer household income.

Source: OECD Family Database (2016) and *OECD Income Distribution Database* (2016).

3.9. Prospera's role in combating poverty in families

The conditional cash transfer programme *Prospera* is Mexico's federal strategy to combat poverty. Mexico initiated this CCT programme, originally called *Progresa,* in 1997. (Subsequent administrations have renamed the programme *Oportunidades* and now *Prospera*.) *Progresa* sought to promote human capital formation among poor rural children by incentivising parents to invest better in children. The government targeted three outcomes: improved school attendance, preventative health care, and nutrition status. Cash income support was given to (overwhelmingly) mothers conditional on their children regularly accessing health care facilities and attending school, with fewer than three absences a month. The cash income transfers gave beneficiary families greater freedom than the pre-existing system of transfers in the form of food subsidies (Levy, 2006).

Originally offered to just over 300 000 beneficiary families in randomly selected poor communities (Levy, 2006), *Prospera* now redistributes income to 6.8 million families (out of a target population of 7.9 million) using a multidimensional poverty threshold as its eligibility criterion (OECD questionnaire to SEDESOL). *Prospera's* current stated objective is to "contribute to strengthening the effective implementation of social rights that enhance the capabilities of people living in poverty, through actions that amplify their capacities in food, health, and education, and improve their access to other dimensions of welfare" (OECD questionnaire to SEDESOL).

Prospera has expanded from its initial three focal areas of education, health, and nutrition and now includes a *componente de vinculación*, i.e., linking with other federal programmes. This entails providing beneficiaries with advice, information, and access to programmes or actions in different government agencies related to productive development, income generation, training, employment, financial literacy, access to savings schemes, life insurance, and credit. The effects of linkages with employment support have not yet been thoroughly assessed, but early evidence suggests that *Prospera's* connection with the *Banco de Ahorro Nacional y Servicios Financieros* (National Savings and Financial Services Bank) has led to gains in access to formal banking (Chapter 2). By 2016, a total of 626 000 mostly female *Prospera* beneficiaries had contracted savings accounts, and 639 000 had acquired basic credit (CONAIF, 2016).

Across various measures, *Progresa/Oportunidades/Prospera* has been a success. Evaluations have found positive effects on school attendance, grade progression, nutrition, and health outcomes,[11] and the programme has been replicated throughout the world both for its design and its evaluation strategy (Section 3.10). Critics of the programme have discussed the efficiency of using relatively large transfers to improve school attendance, whether transfers need to be conditional (or whether unconditional transfers would have similar effects), and how conditional transfers must be accompanied by better access to social services in underserved communities.[12]

Prospera has several inherent gender components. First, cash transfers go directly to mothers, who are responsible for ensuring that their children go to school and attend health check-ups. Second, the programme offers scholarships as a form of affirmative action to counter the historical disadvantage of adolescent girls in the national educational system. Third, after a family qualifies by poverty criteria, priority is given to households with family members under age 22 and households with women of childbearing age.

Evaluating Mexico's CCT through the lens of gender presents a complex picture. On the one hand, the programme has empowered women by giving them control of resources and decision-making capacity in the household. There is suggestive evidence that this realignment in the control of resources has corresponded with less domestic violence in recipient households (Rivera et al., 2006). At the same time, a body of research has investigated how mothers' responsibilities in the programme increase their unpaid work obligations, can restrict their labour market options, and reinforce socially constructed gender norms (Section 3.10). These concerns persist.

3.10. Improving the effectiveness of social policies aimed at gender equality

Although gender gaps are driven by many social, cultural, and economic factors, well-designed policies and institutions can help level the playing field between women and men. It is important for governments to evaluate public policies rigorously, ensure that gender considerations are included in planning and evaluation, consider positive and negative externalities, and evaluate how policies, laws, and institutions may interact to affect women and girls. These actions should be embedded in robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms throughout government (Chapter 6).

The importance of accurate policy evaluations

Accurate evaluations of social policies are necessary to assess whether policies have their intended effects. Evaluations using randomised control trials (RCT) are the "gold standard[13]" in policy research. RCTs are experiments in which some policy intervention is given to a randomly selected sub-population. Outcomes for the recipient group are then

compared to outcomes for a randomised non-recipient group. Because assignment is random, and the groups are (ideally) almost identical, the programme effects can be evaluated independently of participant traits. This helps eliminate the selection problem in programmes where individuals choose or are chosen to participate. (Childcare is a case in point: it is difficult to estimate the effects of childcare provision on child and parent outcomes when parents can choose to participate, as there are fundamental observable and unobservable differences between parents who choose to send their child to childcare and those parents who do not.) Randomised experiments thus provide an important counterfactual: what would have happened *without* the policy intervention?

Mexico has demonstrated strong evaluation practices. SEDESOL's initial design of *Progresa* (which became *Oportunidades*, and is now *Prospera*) in 1997 is known globally as a good example of planning for evaluation. To determine causal effects, planners identified 506 marginal communities in need of income support. *Progresa* was then introduced into 320 randomly selected treatment communities, while 186 communities were used as a control group for comparison (they received the CCT shortly thereafter) (de Janvry and Sadoulet, 2004). The staggered introduction allowed researchers to evaluate effects without having to separate out other factors that might drive outcomes (e.g., lower or higher community resources). Mexico's CCT and its randomised evaluation strategy have been replicated throughout the world, including in New York City. New programmes should be introduced using RCTs or quasi-experimental methods whenever possible, such as regression discontinuity (where "treatment" and "control" groups are defined around an eligibility threshold, such as age eligibility or timing of programme introduction) or difference-in-differences (where the difference in outcomes is measured over time across comparable groups that did or did not receive a policy "treatment"). RCTs enable more accurate evaluations of both the presence and the size of policy effects.

Embedding gender in data collection and analysis

Reliable data collection by national statistics agencies is crucial for policy evaluation, as is embedding gender considerations in data collection and evaluation (OECD, 2014d and 2016d). This should include, at a minimum, evaluating access to policies and outcomes using gender-disaggregated data; creating linkages between women's institutes and national statistics agencies; and better ensuring that ministries actually use these gender-disaggregated data in planning, evaluating, and mainstreaming gender in the policy process (Chapter 6).

INEGI should be commended for conducting and publishing a comprehensive range of surveys across social policy areas – including fertility, health, drug addiction, education, employment, unpaid work, social security, violence, and poverty – and for including gender disaggregation in many of its published statistics. INEGI should continue and expand these efforts, as the systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data by line ministries remains uneven (Chapter 6).

Time-use surveys are especially important for evaluating unremunerated work (Ferrant et al., 2014), most of which is carried out by girls and women and is typically not included in national accounts. Mexico does well in this regard, as it has conducted more time-use surveys than most OECD and many Latin American countries. Mexico's main household (ENIGH) and labour force (ENOE) surveys are comprehensive and in line with other OECD surveys, but one suggested improvement to ENOE would be to adjust the questions on family structure so that parents can be associated with their children and the age of the child can be identified, as is the case in ENIGH. It is currently possible to see whether women are mothers in ENOE, but it is not possible to see which child is theirs in the

household. This restricts understanding the employment behaviour of parents of young children in Mexico's main labour force survey – an important demographic for understanding barriers to female labour force participation.

Identifying policy externalities and interactions between policies

It is crucial for governments to anticipate and evaluate policy externalities and interactions between policies. Mexico could do better in this area. Policies aimed at one outcome may have unintended effects on other outcomes. Additionally, relationships between programmes, laws, and institutions are important, as programmes can conflict – or complement each other – in different ways. These interactions and externalities again point to the need to mainstream gender across sectors and ministries in government.

Public resources aimed at certain subgroups can sometimes have positive spill-over effects, especially in multigenerational households. An inflow of resources can reduce liquidity constraints and increase human capital investments (Edmonds, 2006), which can give family members more options outside of the home. One obvious example is that policies intended to promote early childhood education have been found to have positive effects on women's employment in OECD countries and Latin America, including Mexico (Berlinski and Galiani, 2007; De la Cruz Toledo, 2015). The disbursement of modern gas stoves to households (Chapter 4) – while primarily intended to prevent public health hazards – may also prove to reduce women's hours in unpaid work. Evaluations of social transfers should consider possible externalities and how they may differ by sex.

One interesting example that has already been evaluated in Mexico involves a cash transfer to senior citizens. The state-level, unconditional cash transfer programme for senior citizens in Distrito Federal, entitled Nutrition Transfer for Senior Adults (PAAM, *Pensión Alimentaria para Adultos Mayores*), has had unintended positive benefits on children's school enrolment. Using a regression discontinuity approach, which evaluates differences in outcomes just around an eligibility cut-off, Gutierrez et al. (2016) find that the introduction of this benefit when a senior turns seventy drives a 20 to 33 percentage point increase in the share of co-residing grandchildren aged 13 to 18 enrolled in school. There is also a (smaller and less robust) decrease in children's labour force participation in these households. Considering Mexico's persistent difficulty in ensuring that children complete secondary school, this is an important secondary effect of a cash transfer programmed aimed at other family members. PAAM's effects on paid time use have also been studied. Evidence suggests that 18- to 59-year-old family members increase their labour supply if they live with an age-eligible senior man, but reduce it if they live with an age-eligible senior woman, suggesting that older women are more likely to share their cash transfer with younger family members (Juarez, 2010).

National conditional cash transfer programmes aimed at poverty reduction, such as Chile's *Ingreso Ético Familiar* (IEF, progressively replacing *Chile Solidario*) and Mexico's *Progresa/Oportunidades/Prospera* have had other positive effects on a variety of social outcomes, such as schooling and nutritional status (Section 3.9). In providing transfers to mothers, CCTs have represented a key milestone in governments' recognition of the role of women in the household and have transformed the allocation of public resources within families. Most CCT programmes have been found to be successful in their targets of improving school enrolment or attendance by children, and some countries, like Mexico, have embedded gender considerations by offering higher grants for girls than boys to attend secondary school (Fiszbein et al., 2009).

Of course, unintended effects of policies can also be *negative*. While CCTs give women stable income and a stronger within-household bargaining position, there is an important

caveat: these women are mothers tasked with transforming this cash into improvements in their children's human capital. Moreover, these women are overwhelmingly poor, have little education, and have few formal job prospects.

The contractual conditions of CCT programmes can perpetuate women's roles as caregivers. Complying with these conditions imposes greater time demands on mothers than fathers, particularly when caregivers have to spend time traveling long distances and waiting to access services in areas where public provision is sparse (as is the case in many rural parts of Mexico). As poor women take on more and more unpaid duties, they are often forced to postpone or abandon their engagement, or attempts to engage, in the paid labour market (López and Salles, 2006).

These CCT responsibilities also ill-prepare mothers for life after their children "graduate" from the programme. When children reach the maximum age and are no longer eligible for transfers, many women who have spent years receiving conditional cash transfers find themselves with few meaningful ways to enter the labour market. These women may thus find themselves in a worse financial position than they were before entering the CCT programme (CEPAL, 2012).

Governments have begun to recognise that directing CCTs to mothers can add an undue unpaid work burden on women, who are often solely responsible for ensuring that family members meet the many conditions necessary for receiving funds (CEPAL, 2012; Molyneux, 2008). In Chile, IEF has begun to offer a cash subsidy available for up to four years for women's employment in the formal sector (20% of wages), as well as a subsidy for the employer (10% after two years of employment) (Fultz and Francis, 2013). Mexico, too, has started making efforts to facilitate mothers' participation in the paid workforce through linking its CCT with other government agencies (Section 3.9). The goal is to help improve women's economic self-sufficiency, help break down (or at least not reinforce) traditional gender roles, and better prepare women for graduation out of a CCT programme.

The *estancias infantiles* in Mexico offer another example of negative externalities. While SEDESOL's programme deserves credit for creating hundreds of thousands of childcare spaces and tens of thousands of jobs for women, the vast majority of these jobs are informal and unincorporated in social security (Section 3.7). This introduces a host of new problems. Rather than making women agents of social policy, the government must continue to grow an integrated and holistic social protection system that benefits everyone.

Finally, policies and legislation must be co-ordinated across government so that measures achieve their optimal effects. Mexico's 2012 ban on pregnancy tests at the time of hiring offers an example. While banning pregnancy tests was necessary, it was not sufficient; it was not accompanied by any significant changes in how maternity leave is paid. The fact that employers might still be liable for paying 100% of wages during maternity leave – even in a small number of cases – suggests that there is still a high likelihood of gender discrimination at the time of hiring. Reforming the required contribution period and pay-out of maternity benefits may help alleviate these concerns. Mexico must consider these kinds of interactions across ministries and levels of government when designing inclusive policies and laws.

Notes

1. Mothers here are defined as women who have at least one dependent child under age 14.

2. The OECD definition of NEET (all 15- to 29-year-olds not in employment, education, or training) differs from the definition some suggest using in Mexico, which does not include young mothers detached from the labour market (OECD, 2013) and often does not include young people in training (information from INMUJERES).

3. Mothers are defined as having at least one dependent child under age 14.

4 ENAPEA offers several information tools, including the website www.comolehago.org, which provides information on pregnancy prevention for adolescents. An online course for health care providers entitled "Sexual and Reproductive Health and Teenage Pregnancy Prevention" was launched with the aim of strengthening capacity in this issue from the perspective of gender and human rights. There is also an online course called "Family and Sexuality" aimed at mothers, fathers, and guardians of teenagers.

5 "Scholarship" in this report refers to the Spanish language term "*beca*". Commonly referred to as "scholarships" in Mexico, the *becas* offered by SEP may be considered as grants, as they are distributed by the government and for many *becas* there are no merit-based criteria for receipt.

6. This tabulation is a compilation of several questions about discrimination, such as "Have you been paid less than a man who has the same job or post?" and "Have you received fewer opportunities than a man to advance?", and defined as including women who report having experienced at least one incident of employment discrimination in the previous 12 months (*Mujeres que declararon haber sufrido al menos un incidente de discriminación laboral en los últimos 12 meses*).

7. Contribution requirements for receiving maternity leave vary across OECD countries, but Mexico's requirement of 30 weeks within 12-month period is relatively burdensome. In Spain, for example, all employed women are entitled to maternity leave so long as following conditions are met: the mother needs to be making social security contributions at the beginning of leave (or receiving unemployment benefit) *and* have contributed to social security for at least 180 days in the previous seven years or 360 days in her entire working life (Escobedo et al., 2016). The requirements are more lenient for women under the age of 26 in Spain.

8. In 2016, the Supreme Court of Mexico ruled that fathers contributing to social security can access IMSS daycare services. Previously only mothers and single custodial fathers enrolled in IMSS could enrol their children.

9. Cross-national comparisons are difficult, as data for many European countries generally include children aged 0-2 in public or private centre-based services, organised daycare, and children cared for by a professional childminder – but not unpaid services provided by relatives, friends, or neighbours. This may drive their estimates upwards if, for example, there are a large number of certified individual child-minders or nannies. Countries also vary in the amount of hours a child must spend in ECEC to be counted as enrolled.

10. SEDESOL's targeted population (*población objetivo*) for PEI is 900 759 million beneficiaries. The larger potential population (*población potencial*) is 3.16 million beneficiaries (CONEVAL, 2013).

11. *Progresa/Oportunidades* has inspired an enormous body of research evaluating its effects. See, for example, Dubois et al. (2012); de Janvry et al. (2006); Fernald et al. (2008); and Levy (2006).

12. For a sample of critical reviews of *Progresa/Oportunidades/Prospera* and other CCTs, see, for example de Janvry and Sadoulet (2004) and Pellerano and Barca (2014).

13. The strengths of RCTs are well-documented among social scientists. See, for example, Banerjee and Duflo (2012); Gerber and Green (2012); or Karlan and Appel (2011) for overviews of this long-established method.

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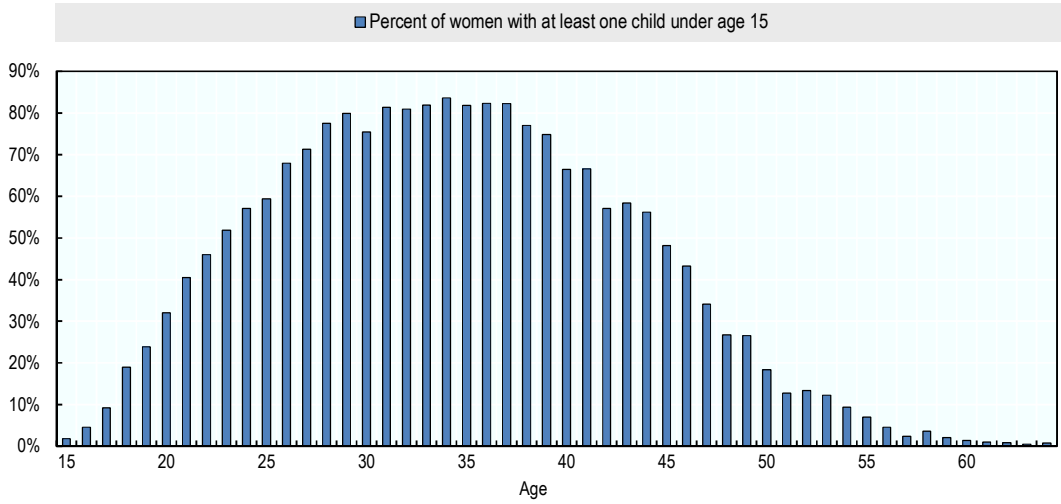
Annex 3.A1

Distribution of mothers and fathers by age

Figure 3.A1.1. The share of women who are mothers, by age

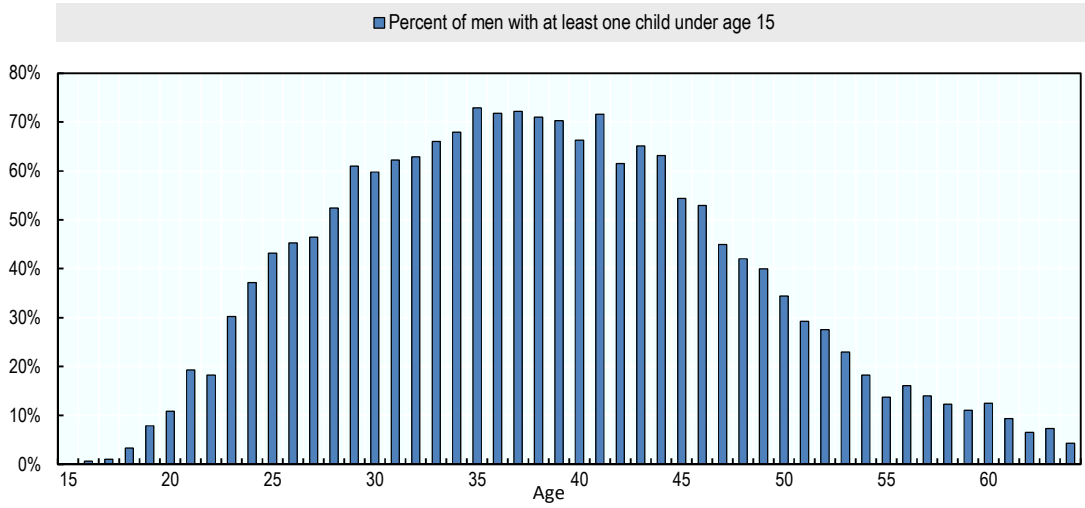
Percentage of women who are mothers to at least one child under age 15, sorted by age, Mexico, 2014



Source: OECD calculations of ENIGH (2014).

Figure 3.A1.2. The share of men who are fathers, by age

Percentage of men who are fathers to at least one child under age 15, sorted by age, Mexico, 2014



Source: OECD calculations of ENIGH (2014).

Chapter 4

Time poverty, informal work and women's jobs in Mexico

Mexican women and men struggle to secure good quality jobs and achieve work-life balance. Nearly 60% of working women and 50% of working men are in informal jobs. These high rates of informality correspond with lower earnings quality, job and income insecurity, and low levels of social protection, especially for women. Compared to workers in other OECD countries, Mexicans also spend very long hours in paid work. The culture of long paid hours, combined with Mexican women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid work, reinforces gendered outcomes in the labour market and at home. Fathers, who are more likely to commit to long hours in the workforce, lose out on valuable time with their family and are less able to contribute at home. Women, who typically devote more time to caring for family members, are more likely to scale back or drop out of the workforce entirely. Addressing these challenges will require the combined efforts of government, employers, and families.

The data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

4.1. Introduction

Mexican men and women face challenges in accessing good quality jobs. Informal employment often implies lower earnings quality, income insecurity, and lower levels of social protection, especially for women. The quality of the work environment is also poor when measuring hours worked: Mexicans work longer average hours and have a higher incidence of very long hours than workers in nearly every other OECD country.

At the same time, Mexican women shoulder one of the heaviest burdens of *unpaid* work in the OECD when measuring housework and care for dependent children, elderly family members, and other relatives. Labour market structures and a culture of long *paid* hours combine with the unequal distribution of *unpaid* hours to reinforce gendered outcomes in the labour market and at home. Fathers – who are more likely to spend long hours in paid work – lose out on time with their family, while mothers – who more commonly care for children – are more likely to drop out of the workforce. Time poverty is taking its toll, and addressing these challenges will require a multifaceted approach involving the government, employers, and families.

Main findings

- Informality rates in Mexico remain high. Nearly 60% of female and 50% of male (non-agricultural) workers work informally. Women tend to have lower-quality informal jobs than men, often working in occupations such as street vending and domestic work.
- Gender gaps in informality are directly linked to gender gaps in social protection. 48.5% of prime-age male workers in Mexico report having never paid any social security contributions in their productive lives, compared to 64.6% of women. Men also contribute to social security longer than women.
- Mexicans work much longer hours than their peers in other OECD countries when measuring usual weekly hours worked (45), annual hours worked (2 250), and the share of workers spending over 40 hours per week on the job (nearly 80%). Mexico also has one of the smallest paid annual leave entitlements in the OECD.
- Mexicans have longer commutes to work than workers in many other OECD countries. Inadequate and unsafe public transportation restricts women's freedom of movement.
- Long work hours do not pay off. Indeed, overly long hours are associated with lower productivity, higher rates of human error and accidents, poor health, and worse family relationships.
- Long paid work hours, combined with women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid work, have gendered effects on mothers' and fathers' participation in the labour market. In about half of Mexican couples with children, the male partner works over 40 paid hours per week, while the female partner works zero paid hours per week. The second most common work-hour combination is both partners working over 40 hours per week (18.5% of couples).
- These work patterns suggest that many Mexican parents face an "all or nothing" choice in the workforce: either they commit to working very long hours in the labour

market, or they do not work at all. Fathers tend to take on very long hours, at the expense of time with the family, while many mothers opt out entirely.

- In every OECD country, women do more *unpaid* housework and care work than men. Mexican women undertake an especially high share of unpaid labour, shouldering nearly 77% of all unpaid work in their households – a higher percentage than women in most other OECD countries. Spending so much time on unpaid work restricts time women can spend in paid work. Care for children largely falls on women, while eldercare is more gender-balanced.
- Rural women spend even more hours on unpaid work than women in urban areas. This reflects inadequate access to social services and time-saving infrastructure, as well as "traditional" gender roles within the family.

Box 4.1. Key policy recommendations to improve job quality and work-life balance

The following policy recommendations are motivated by the principles outlined in the OECD Gender Recommendation on Employment, Education, and Entrepreneurship (OECD, 2013a) and are elaborated in this chapter:

- Policies to reduce informality for both sexes should focus on four main goals: increase the benefits of formalisation for employees and employers; reduce the costs of formalisation; strengthen enforcement mechanisms; and strengthen the link between contributions and benefits in social protection schemes that are tied to employment.
- Mexico should expand information campaigns that promote formalisation and, at least in the short term, the incorporation of informal workers into existing social protection schemes.
- Public policies and private sector policies should encourage flexible work arrangements and enable mothers and fathers of young children to make short-term use of part-time work. Flexible work arrangements should be offered to both mothers and fathers, in order to help break down the societal expectation that mothers will do the majority of care work.
- Organisations should refocus employee evaluations on output rather than "face time" at the job, to help ensure that men and women are treated fairly.
- All levels of government should expand their efforts to raise societal and workplace awareness of gender stereotypes in order to encourage women and men to share paid and unpaid work more evenly.
- Mexico must continue to invest in institutions, infrastructure, and technology that free women's time. For example, ease of access to water and time-saving appliances (such as washing machines) in the home can help to reduce women's unpaid work burden and increase their opportunities outside of the home.

4.2. Reliance on informal jobs causes insecurity for women (and men) in Mexico

Informality in the labour market remains a significant issue for Mexican women and men. Informality has pernicious effects for both employers and employees: informal businesses are typically less productive than formal businesses, informal workers tend to have fewer opportunities for human capital accumulation, and informal jobs are usually of lower quality and less secure than formal ones (OECD, 2015a; OECD, 2016a). Informal jobs also lead to lower tax and social security revenues for the government, and widespread informality can hinder economic growth (OECD, 2016b). Many factors drive informality, and rates vary across Mexican states (Dougherty and Escobar, 2016).

A higher share of women than men are informal workers in Mexico. Estimates from Mexico's national labour force survey (ENOE, *Encuesta Nacional de Ocupacion y Empleo*) find that total informal employment rates, including agricultural workers, were 56.9% of male workers and 58.2% of female workers in the first quarter of 2016.

The gender gap in informality grows when agricultural workers are excluded from the estimates. While the informality rate for male workers falls to 49.7%, for female workers the rate remains very high, at 57.2%. Informality rates have changed little over the past decade: as Figure 2.8 (Chapter 2) illustrates, informality rates for women have fluctuated between a quarterly low of 56.2% and a high of 59.4% since 2005.

Not only are women more likely to work informally, they are also more likely to have low-quality informal jobs. Indeed, there is a "hierarchy of poverty" among different types of informal workers (OECD, 2012). Employers and wage workers tend to fare better in job quality and pay, while own-account, domestic, and family workers usually fare worse. Women tend to work in the second group. In Mexico, informal female workers are concentrated in two types of activity: around half of all women in informal work are concentrated in trade, and about a third work in services other than trade or transportation (ILO and WIEGO, 2013). Home-based work, garment manufacturing, and street vending are common informal occupations in Mexico (*ibid.*).

Domestic work is another typical form of informal activity in Mexico, as it is in the rest of Latin America. Women predominate in providing low-paid cleaning and care services in private homes, and this work is difficult to regulate or formalise: labour inspectors cannot typically enter private homes, domestic workers' hours vary from week to week, and many women have multiple employers (ILO, 2016).

In 2008, there were nearly two million domestic workers employed in Mexico – the second largest number in the region, after Brazil. Women made up more than 90% of all domestic workers in Mexico (ILO, 2013). In 2015, there were 2.3 million domestic workers in Mexico (information provided by the Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare, STPS). Women are sometimes drawn to informal work because the hours are more compatible with care commitments at home (OECD, 2012), and some workers may prefer to take informal jobs for job flexibility or to avoid taxes and regulation (Maloney, 2004).

Other factors also drive informal work: among all domestic workers in Mexico, for instance, 51% are internal migrants and 43% have a relative who works as a domestic worker, suggesting that networks help drive employment patterns (CONAPRED, 2015). Having a low level of education can also influence the decision to work informally as a domestic worker, as higher-quality paid work options may be limited.

Domestic workers face multiple levels of exploitation. They hold a precarious position in the labour market, care work is undervalued, and workers face discrimination based on gender, class, and often race or ethnicity (du Toit, 2013). Domestic workers earn low average wages (relative to comparably-skilled workers), typically work without labour contracts, and have very little access to social protections like health and pension coverage (Tokman, 2010). A 2014 survey of domestic workers and their employers in six representative federal entities in Mexico found compounding disadvantages: 55% of domestic workers had not completed primary education; 21% were not yet legal working age; and 96% reported having only a verbal employment agreement (CONAPRED, 2015).

Importantly, gender gaps in informality imply gender gaps in social protection. While 48.8% of male workers (aged 15-64) in Mexico report never having paid any social security contributions in their productive lives, the figure is 64.6% of women who have

never contributed (OECD estimates of ENIGH 2014). Among those who have contributed, men contribute longer: men contribute to social security, on average, for 10.6 years in their lives, higher than the 8.7 years of contributions by women and 6.8 years of contributions by women who are mothers (OECD estimates based on ENIGH 2014). These estimates reveal a large share of the working population without access to the full social safety net, although access to cash transfer programmes helps women and men maintain a minimum level of income security for at least part of their lives. Important labour protections such as employment-protected maternity leave are also unenforced and largely unavailable to informal workers.

The case of domestic workers illustrates the lack of social protection for informal workers. Mexico offers domestic workers the opportunity to enrol *voluntary* in social security, so long as they work full-time for a single employer, but this scheme is largely ineffective in formalising these women. Mexico has an abysmal rate of social security coverage for domestic workers: the ILO estimates that 0.1% of domestic workers are enrolled in social security (ILO, 2016), which corresponds with STPS's estimate of 1 000 domestic workers in social security (out of 2.3 million workers). Cross-national evidence finds a negative correlation between voluntary enrolment plans and actual social security coverage, whereas mandatory enrolment is associated with much higher coverage rates. Mandatory enrolment is standard practice throughout much of the world. In Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Uruguay – where social security enrolment of domestic workers is mandatory – over 40% of domestic workers are covered by social security (ILO, 2016).

In 2015, Mexico published, printed, and distributed copies of the booklet "Directory of Supports and Services for Domestic Workers" (*Directorio de Apoyos y Servicios para las Trabajadoras del Hogar*). This booklet contains information on federal programmes that this vulnerable group of workers can access, such as the health programme *Seguro Popular*, childcare services *Estancias Infantiles*, and housing and nutrition benefits. Publishing this information in a guidebook is an important step in raising awareness of the benefits that domestic workers can access, but it also illustrates the limited number of resources available to these workers and the patchwork of protections they must navigate. Three thousand copies of the directory were printed and distributed by domestic workers organisations, federal labour offices, and relevant agencies. This falls far short of the approximately two million domestic workers.

Box 4.2. Defining employment in the informal economy

Informal employment is a job-based concept, and encompasses jobs that generally lack basic social protection, legal protection, and employment benefits. Workers may be employed informally by formal enterprises, informal enterprises, and/or households. Workers can be grouped into own-account workers, employers, contributing family workers, employees, and members of producers' co-operatives. Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, in practice, not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (e.g., advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave) (ILO, 2004).

Employment in the informal sector is a production unit-based concept defined as jobs in unregistered and/or small, unincorporated private enterprises. Such enterprises are not constituted as separate legal entities (and are thus not officially registered) and do not maintain a complete set of accounts.

Policies can combat informality

Mexico has made good efforts to curb informality in recent years, as this section illustrates, but many of these measures have not reached marginalised women. Own-account workers are typically more difficult to formalise than employees in the informal sector, and domestic workers offer a prime example, as 99.9% of Mexican domestic workers are not enrolled in social security (ILO, 2016). No mandatory social security registration exists at the federal level for domestic workers; employers are not incentivised to formalise domestic workers; many domestic workers perform cleaning and caregiving in different homes on different days of the week (complicating formalisation with a single employer); and payment is often made at least partially in-kind (e.g., lodging and meals), rather than in wages only.

Regardless of job categories, policies to reduce informality should focus on four main goals:[1]

- ***Increase the benefits of formalisation*** for both workers and employers. At the federal level, Mexico already provides low-wage earners with tax credits to incentivise formal employment. For minimum wage earners, the tax credit is refundable and increased net income by about 17% of earnings in 2013 (OECD, 2015b). This is a relatively large incentive, relative to other countries.

  The comprehensive labour reform law of late 2012 contained measures intended to promote formal employment, and included innovative features such as short-term training contracts intended to help job matching. A new fiscal regime for small firms (*Régimen de Incorporación Fiscal*), which took effect in January 2014, offers various benefits aimed at fostering a taxpaying culture, and later fiscal measures subsidised part of social security contributions made by workers and employers, including a 50% subsidy in the first year that decreases to 10% in the tenth year (OECD, 2015c). The upper limit is three times the general minimum wage, thus benefiting lower-income workers (OECD, 2015c).

  Other countries, too, have taken action to formalise employment in disadvantaged groups. Recent legislation in Colombia, for example, attempts to ensure that the shift to formal jobs is inclusive: the government offered temporary tax relief on income and payroll taxes to encourage hiring workers from vulnerable groups, including women who had not held a job contract in the previous 12 months (OECD, 2016b). Measures targeted to specific groups also exist in Mexican states, such as the "Employment for Youth" programme in Nuevo León, which provided training scholarships to youths without work experience and paid the first month's salary to enterprises that hired them. Nearly three-quarters of the programme's 4 000 graduates found formal jobs (ILO FORLAC, 2014). Measures like these can link the costs to the benefits of formalisation while ensuring the inclusion of disadvantaged groups.

  It is also important to ensure adequate public awareness of formalisation programmes in order to promote take-up, as was learned in Brazil (Bosch et al., 2015). In Mexico, for example, there is a widespread lack of knowledge among employers and employees about domestic workers' legal rights (CONAPRED, 2015).

- ***Reduce the costs of formalisation***. Steep tax schedules (and high social security contributions) tend to discourage employers from formalising employment, and tight labour regulations can discourage firms from hiring workers formally. Mexico's

2012 labour reform law attempted to address the latter concern by easing employers' ability to terminate employment without liability in cases of misconduct, among other measures (OECD, 2015c).

Fiscal incentives can play an important role in encouraging private households to formalise domestic workers. Belgium and France, for example, administer service voucher systems that reduce the contribution rate for participating employers. Germany makes some employer contributions income tax-deductible expenses. Some OECD countries have established contributory exemptions for elderly or socioeconomically vulnerable employers, which can help to reduce gaps in public care service delivery (ILO, 2016). Another strategy is to reduce employers' tax rates when domestic work contracts are for full-time employment (ILO, 2016).

Finally, in considering the gendered effects of policy design, it is important to structure dual-earner tax liabilities in such a way that female spouses of male breadwinners are not discouraged from registering.

- ***Strengthen enforcement mechanisms.*** Labour inspections are an effective way of reducing informality, at least in the short run (McKinsey & Company, 2014), though inspections are best suited to regulate workplaces with employees, not own-account workers. The labour inspection system in Mexico needs sufficient resources to work effectively, including an adequate number of inspectors and an increased effort to eliminate corruption within agencies and among field inspectors (*ibid*.). Government agencies must co-operate with each other in enforcing formality.

  Mexico has increased the number of labour inspectors and inspections in recent years. In 2014, the ratio of workers to labour inspectors was high in Mexico, at 50 000 workers per inspector (ILOSTAT, 2016a), in comparison to ILO benchmarks for inspections (10 000 workers per inspector in developed market economies and 20 000 workers per inspector in transition countries (OECD, 2013b). However, this was a noteworthy improvement from 2010, when the ratio was around 100 000 workers per inspector. Similarly, labour inspection visits to workplaces under federal jurisdiction in Mexico increased from 42 502 in 2009 to 139 061 in 2014 (ILOSTAT, 2016b).

- ***Ensure a stronger and more reliable link between contributions and benefits in social protection schemes***, in order to improve trust in government and a functional social security system. This should increase workers' motivation to join formal employment. Similarly, social support programmes should eliminate potential incentives for beneficiaries to remain informal and establish incentives for transitioning beneficiaries to productive employment (ILO FORLAC, 2014). Mexico's conditional cash transfer programme *Prospera* is working on strengthening these linkages between contributions and benefits (Chapter 3).

  Across countries, mandatory social security registration has incorporated far greater shares of domestic workers into social security programmes than voluntary schemes have. Other OECD countries with higher shares of domestic workers formalised – like Chile (42.3%), France (70%), Italy (42.2%), Spain (63.8%), and Turkey (5.1%) – mandate social security coverage of domestic workers, often with penalties for non-compliance (ILO, 2016). While this certainly does not ensure universal coverage, it is a step in the right direction. Mandatory social security enrolment, accompanied by reliable access to benefits, should be a policy priority for domestic workers in Mexico – most of whom are women.

Mexico's Support and Services Directory for Domestic Workers (*Directorio de Apoyos y Servicios para las Trabajadoras del Hogar*) is an important tool for increasing awareness of the benefits domestic workers can access, as well as how to access those benefits. While Mexico should strengthen its efforts to formalise domestic workers into a more comprehensive social security system, in the short-term it is important to ensure that workers can access existing forms of social protection. The booklet should be updated and printed annually, and more booklets should be printed to better reach the more than 2 million domestic workers and their employers. Mexico should consider broadcasting this information in other media, such as television and radio, to reach women who are illiterate and/or do not have access to the internet or print media.

Box 4.3. Gender gaps in (formal) working years lead to gender gaps in pensions

Gender gaps in pensions exist throughout the OECD and contribute to poverty among elderly women. The number of years worked helps determine retirement income. Across OECD countries, women generally work fewer years than men and are more likely to leave the formal labour force for family-related reasons (e.g. childbirth, parenting, and caring for disabled and elderly relatives). Such career breaks often lower pension entitlements and personal savings.

All OECD countries have set up mandatory or quasi-mandatory pension systems to widen coverage, but countries with high levels of informality, such as Mexico, have lower coverage levels. In Mexico, around 40% of all workers are estimated to contribute to pension systems (OECD, IDB and the World Bank, 2014). Moreover, gender affects the likelihood that a worker contributes: large gender gaps in labour force participation (Chapter 2) and higher rates of informality among female than male workers reduce women's likelihood of contributing to pensions in Mexico. In Mexico, 67% of women are not affiliated with any pension system, compared to, for example, 25% in Chile (OECD, IDB and the World Bank, 2014).

Women in OECD countries who earn the average wage and interrupt their career for five years to care for two young children lose, on average, 4% of their pension income (OECD, 2015d). While pensions are not affected by such a career break in about one-third of OECD countries, the decline in pension entitlements is steepest in Mexico (and Germany) at 11%. Unlike many other OECD countries, in the Mexican pension system there is no specific crediting mechanism for childcare periods (OECD, 2015d).

Moreover, to be entitled to a pension in Mexico at retirement age, the defined-benefit system requires that the individual has not been inactive for more than a fourth of their past contribution period. If these criteria are not met, the worker loses their right to a pension and has to restart contributing. As a result, many workers, especially women, lose their pension rights in the defined-benefit scheme (OECD, 2016c). Women are especially disadvantaged in the event of divorce: while widows can receive the pension of their contributing husband, women often lose social security benefits accumulated by their spouse in the case of divorce (information provided by INMUJERES).

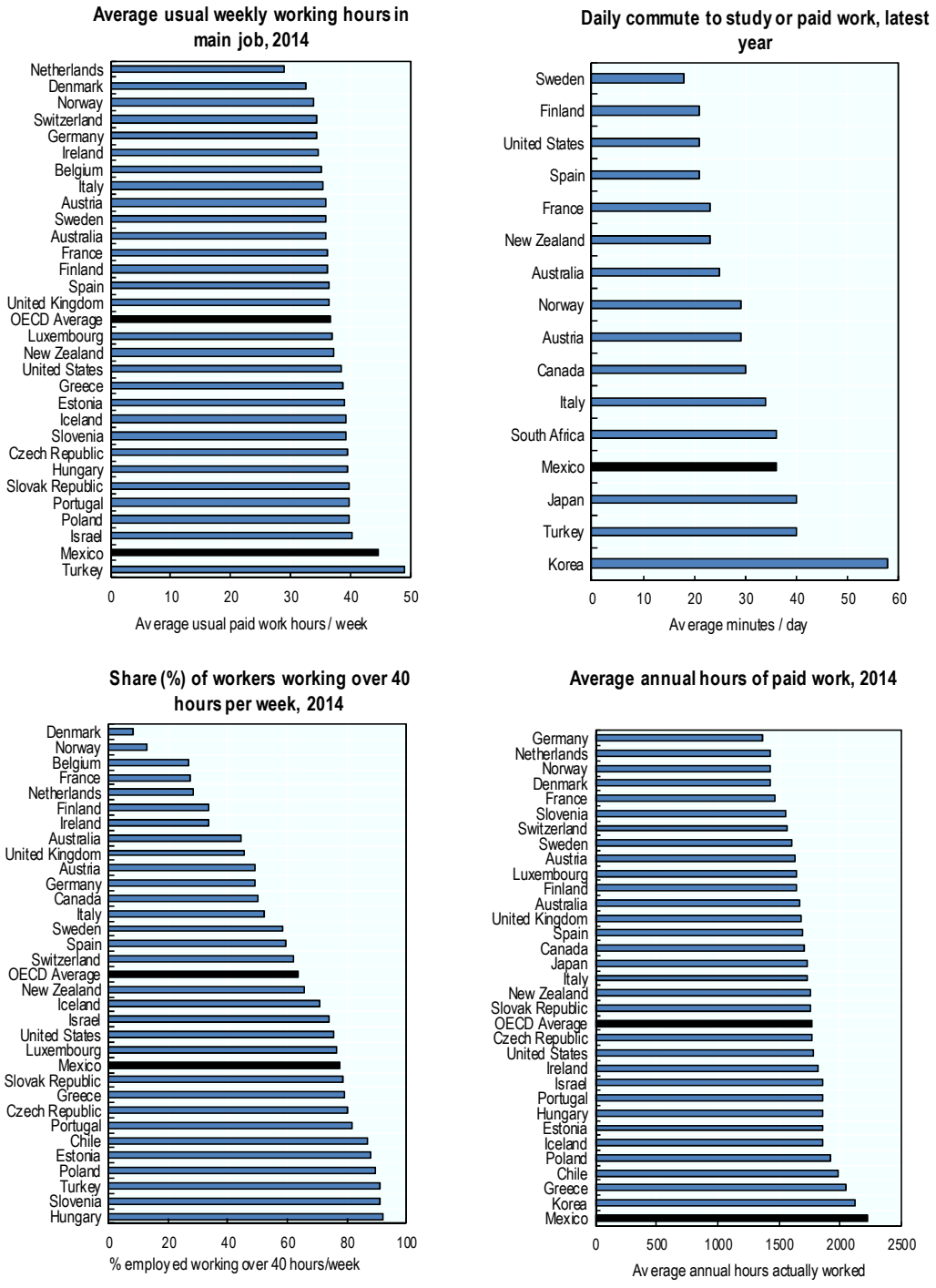
The population aged 65 and over is forecast to more than double across the OECD in the next 50 years, and the largest increase will occur in Mexico (OECD, 2015d). These issues of low coverage and a wide gender gap will thus become increasingly urgent.

4.3. Longer hours make for lower job quality

Another key indicator of job quality is the number of hours worked (OECD, 2016d). Across many measures, Mexico is overworked. Mexicans spend more time in paid work than most workers elsewhere in the OECD (Figure 4.1), even though the Constitution stipulates that the working day should not exceed eight hours. At 44.7 hours per week, Mexico has one of the highest rates of average usual weekly working hours in the OECD. This weekly hour estimate is higher than most other middle-income OECD countries, and

higher than the OECD average[2] of 36.75 hours per week. Importantly, these estimates refer to hours that workers spend on their *main* job, and thus may underestimate the working hours of Mexicans with multiple jobs.

Figure 4.1. Mexico is overworked: Long commutes, long work weeks, and long annual hours



Source: OECD Employment Database (2016), OECD Gender Data Portal (2016).

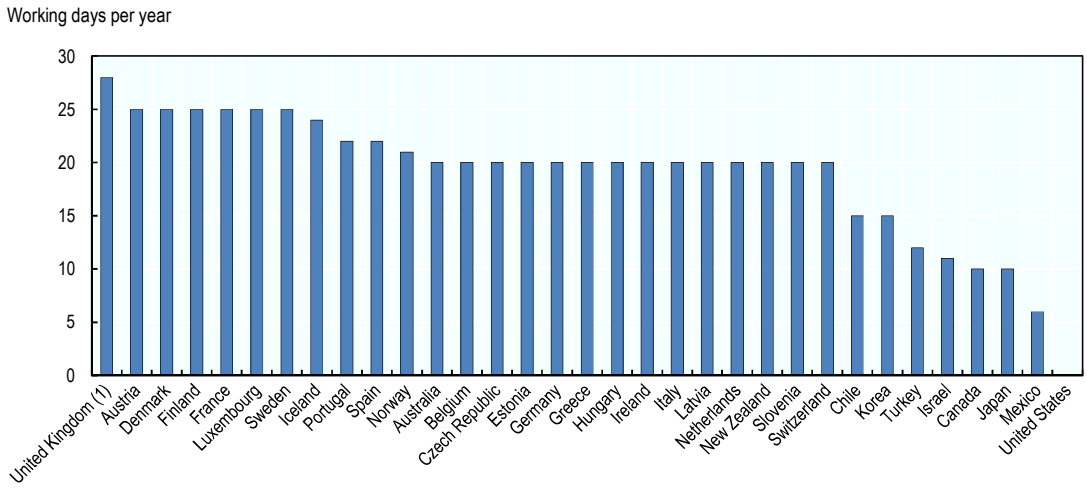
StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933423263

Mexico is also above the OECD average in the share of workers spending over 40 hours per week on the job. 77.8% of employees in Mexico work more than 40 hours per week, compared to an OECD average of 63.5%. Nearly 15% of Mexican workers work more than 60 hours in a usual week, with the share higher among the self-employed (OECD, 2015b), revealing that the high average working hours are thus not driven by a small segment of the population. Fortunately nearly 75% of Mexicans report having good workplace relationships, considerably higher than the OECD average, which helps to compensate for work-related stress (OECD, 2015a).

Mexicans also work more hours *annually* than workers in all other OECD countries (with available data), and have the second lowest entitlement to paid time off in the OECD. In other words, Mexicans put in long hours nearly every week of the year. Only the United States offers less paid leave than Mexico (the United States offers none). Canada performs slightly better than Mexico and the United States, but overall the North American countries are laggards in the OECD in ensuring that workers have paid time off for necessary rest, recovery, and leisure.

Figure 4.2. North American countries guarantee workers little paid time off

Statutory minimum days of paid annual leave, 2015



Note: Entitlements generally reflect those for full-time, full-year private sector employees, working a five-day week, who have been working for their current employer for one year. In some countries (e.g. Finland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Poland and Turkey) the statutory minimum annual leave entitlement varies with tenure. In Hungary, the statutory minimum annual leave entitlement increases with age – the entitlement shown reflects the minimum entitlement for workers aged under 25.

1. In the United Kingdom, an employer can choose to count up to eight public holidays as part of a worker's statutory annual paid leave entitlement, effectively reducing the entitlement to paid annual leave to 20 working days.

Source: *OECD Family Database* (2016).

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Exhausting commutes limit women's paid work options

Long commutes compound long hours on the job. Long commutes take valuable hours from the day, add to work-life conflict, and drive down quality of life. In Mexico, inadequate urban development plans (OECD, 2015c) contributed to poor public transportation services, leading commuters who use public transit to spend more time than they should in buses or metro trains. Inadequate public transit also encourages more

commuters to drive their automobiles to work, thus increasing traffic and car commute times. Spatial segregation of socioeconomic classes means that low-income workers can face especially lengthy commutes, particularly around urban centers like Mexico City.

Many of Mexico's new housing developments did not consider the mobility needs of the new inhabitants, so urban growth in many places has been accompanied by poor access to public transport and other critical urban services (OECD, 2015f). Newer housing developments tend to be located on the outskirts and peripheral neighbourhoods of cities, remote from cities and job centers. Lower-income households tend to trade lower housing prices for higher transport costs; in 2013, new home owners spent on average 14% of their monthly income on transport (*ibid.*).

As Figure 4.1 illustrates, the average Mexican faces one of the longest work commutes in the OECD (when comparing harmonised, cross-national time use data). Mexican workers spend, on average, 36 minutes per day commuting, with significant variation across urban and non-urban commuters and across different urban areas. Among OECD countries with recent time use surveys, only workers in Korea (58 minutes), Turkey (40 minutes), and Japan (40 minutes) have longer commutes than workers in Mexico. In contrast, workers in Spain, the United States, Finland, and Sweden spend 21 minutes or less commuting to work each day.

Poor transportation options can limit women's economic opportunities (World Bank, 2012). In addition to the length of the commute, personal safety in public transportation is an important issue in Mexico. Nearly half (48%) of female users of public transit in Mexico City report having been sexually harassed in transit, according to a recent consumer watchdog survey (*Poder del Consumidor*, 2015). Of those females, 60% were physically accosted. Nationally, 70.9% of women aged 18 and over report feeling insecure when they use public transport (INEGI, 2015a).

"Women-only" cars exist in Mexican metro systems, and women-only seats are reserved in the front of the bus on many bus routes. However, this solution is insufficient in meeting demand, as women-only cars are often overfilled. Spatial separation is not a sufficient long-term solution for ensuring women and girls' safety in transit. Rather, Mexico needs to promote men's respect of women (to prevent harassment in the first place) and improve security in public transit, including the participation of police officers trained in deterring and investigating violence against women and girls. The significant probability of harassment or assault on public transit contributes to women's reluctance to undertake long commutes. Security officers should be better trained in preventing and addressing gender-based violence, and the number of trained security officers in public transit should be increased to ensure that men do not assault female passengers.

Motivated to address violence against women and girls traveling to and from school or work, the Women's Institute of Mexico City (*Instituto de las Mujeres del Distrito Federal*) in 2008 initiated an inter-institutional collaboration promoting women's safety in public transport. The output was to co-ordinate institutional actions across agencies. A range of institutions signed onto the collaboration, including the attorney general of Mexico City, local public security offices, and public transport system administrators (OECD Questionnaire on Gender Equality in Mexican States, 2016). The effects of such programmes are hard to measure, but ensuring the continued participation of stakeholders across government offices is necessary to address the challenges of gender-based violence.

Improving women's security in public transit would have multiple benefits. Not only would it improve women's well-being, their likelihood of engaging in paid work, and the

probability of better job quality (as women would have more geographical areas in which to consider employment), getting more vehicles off the road would also reduce automobile traffic congestion in Mexican cities and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions (USAID, 2012). It may also help to reduce Mexico's road accident mortality rate, which is currently the highest in the OECD and, within Mexico, is much higher for men than women (OECD, 2015e).

Shorter commutes would improve work and leisure time for men *and* women, and could enable a more equal division of labour in the household. In the long term, urban planning that makes public transit routes more accessible, affordable, and safe is a must. In the short term, employers should consider allowing both men and women to have flexible work schedules or the option to work from home, in order to save time commuting.

Longer hours for lower productivity

"Time macho" culture – an English-language term used to describe workplaces where employees aim to be the first and last man standing at the workplace – can be found in organisations throughout the world, including in Mexico. However, the payoff to excessively long hours is not higher productivity. While productivity does increase with hours worked up to a point, considerable research finds that productivity maxes out at around 40 hours per week. After five eight-hour days, productivity plateaus and then decline as workers' anticipate adding extra hours and produce less in each hour. Their risk of accidents and errors increases, and miscommunication and poor decisions are more likely. Workers' health suffers, too, which contributes to diminished productivity. Addressing the issue of excessively long hours requires cultural shifts within organisations and adequate public policies protecting workers. The payoffs to companies are significant in the form of greater productivity and a healthier workforce.

Working more, but working worse

Businesses and economists have long sought to find the ideal number of work hours for maximising production. Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations*, predicted that "in every sort of trade, [the] man who works so moderately as to be able to work constantly not only preserves his health the longest, but in the course of the year executes the greatest quantity of works". By the 1920s, businessmen like Henry Ford were experimenting with various work-hour combinations to maximise productivity. Ford eventually concluded that his workers could produce more in five days than in six, and in eight-hour shifts rather than ten.

Productivity rates decrease after a threshold of hours. Modern econometric evaluations of historical and current worker data confirm that workers can only be productive for a limited number of hours. Even under the exigencies of World War I, British ammunition factory workers' output rose with hours worked but peaked, on average, at 48 hours per week. After that point, the rate of output decreased (Pencavel, 2014). Workers simply cannot produce output at the same rate for a prolonged period of time.

Why does this happen? Fatigue and stress reduce the ability to function, and employees may produce less per hour if they anticipate having to stay at work longer. An oft-cited study of construction workers on overtime found that, after two months, a work schedule of 60 or more hours per week decreased productivity so much that the delay in completion was greater than that which would have occurred with the same crew on a

40-hour week (Business Roundtable, 1980). In addition to lower worker morale and increased errors, the difficulties in providing materials, tools, equipment, and information at the "faster" rate cause efficiency losses (Thomas and Raynar, 1997).

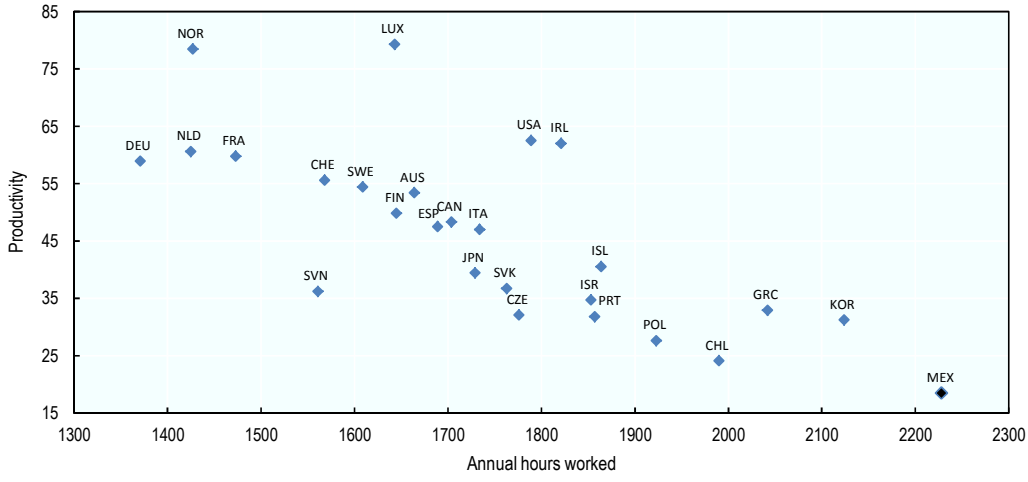
At the aggregate level, long hours are negatively correlated with productivity across countries (Figure 4.3). Plotting hours worked against productivity reveals that Mexican workers put in longer hours for lower productivity than workers in other OECD countries. Some of the most productive countries are those with relatively low average annual hours of work, such as Norway, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

Long hours increase the risk of errors, accidents, and injuries across industries (Pencavel, 2014; Dembe et al., 2005). In the medical field, for instance, doctors, nurses, and medical interns make more errors in treating patients (Rogers et al., 2004; Flinn and Armstrong, 2011) and are more likely to be involved in motor vehicle accidents (Barger et al., 2005) after working long shifts. Performance on tasks that require focus and concentration worsens as a function of time, a phenomenon known as "vigilance decrement" (Ariga and Lleras, 2011). Put simply, it is hard to concentrate on a task for a long time.

Workplace decisions and relationships suffer. Long hours contribute to decision fatigue, as making too many decisions throughout the day deteriorates the quality of choices. Workplace intangibles like emotional intelligence and interpersonal communication are also adversely affected by long hours. Overworked employees are more likely to be sleep-deprived (Faber et al., 2015), which, in turn, reduces empathy towards others, weakens impulse control, diminishes the quality of interpersonal relationships, and makes it harder for people to cope with challenges (Killgore et al., 2008).

Figure 4.3. Long hours and low productivity

Scatterplot of actual annual hours worked and GDP per hour of labour, selected countries, 2014



Source: OECD Productivity Database and *OECD Employment Database*.

Long work hours are also linked to poor physical health, which is bad for workers and for companies interested in retaining healthy employees. One obvious consequence of long work hours is a greater likelihood of workplace accidents, but there are also chronic risks such as increases in coronary heart disease, depressive episodes, and alcoholism

(Virtanen et al., 2012 and 2015). Prolonged exposure to psychological stress, poor eating habits, lack of leisure time, and insufficient sleep take their toll.

Long work hours hurt families and partnerships, as well. Evidence across countries shows that children are negatively affected by their parents' non-standard work schedules, which includes work at night and on weekends. Parents are more likely to be depressed, parenting quality is likely to suffer, children and parents spend less time together, and the home environment is less supportive overall, especially in low-income families (Li et al., 2014).

Long hours persist, despite evidence of their detrimental effects

Given the negative effects of long work hours, why do so many workers across the OECD still spend over 40 hours per week on the job? Both employer and worker behaviour play a role in perpetuating long hours. In many businesses, long work hours are a part of organisational culture and a way for employees to show that they are loyal and "ideal" workers (Cha and Weeden, 2014; Sharone, 2004). For workers with lower incomes or unstable jobs, working additional hours may simply be a financial necessity. Fear of job loss is another key factor.

Employers, in turn, have been slow to realise that additional time in the office does not usually add value. Some research suggests that the wage premium for long hours is actually on the rise (Cha and Weeden, 2014). Leaders and managers in organisations, who likely made time sacrifices to reach their current rank, often have difficulty accepting that work can be done in fewer hours. In some workplaces, "non-compliers" – those employees who opt to take flexible work hours and family leave – may actually be punished via denied promotions, reduced visibility to superiors, or exclusion from important projects. In-office "face time" remains an important metric of evaluating employees, even if it does not correspond with output (Elsbach and Cable, 2012).

Long hours affect both sexes, but have gendered effects. In Mexico, fathers tend to lose time with their families, while mothers often drop out of the workforce entirely. The wage premium to long hours has been identified as a crucial remaining obstacle to gender pay equity (Goldin, 2014). Within the workplace, men and women often break from long hour norms in different ways. In one US consulting firm, for example, researchers found that men pretended to work 60- to 80-hour weeks by strategically timing when to send emails, scheduling phone calls at odd hours, and discreetly taking leave without formal permission. In contrast, female workers were far more likely to make formal requests of reduced hours, and were consequently marginalised within the firm (Reid, 2015).

Diminishing productivity of knowledge workers might be harder to quantify than that of manual workers, but many of the negative effects still exist: long hours contribute to stress, sleep deprivation, disagreements with colleagues, and mistakes on the job. Even software engineers argue that programming errors are more likely to occur (and take longer to fix) after long hours, despite the tech industry's glorification of seemingly endless workdays (Robinson, 2005).

What can be done to prevent overwork?

Work cultures are hard to change, but public policies can help in the form of enforced work hour legislation, the right to request flexible work, and increases in statutory paid leave. The government and employers should also encourage workers to take the leave for which they are eligible. Encouraging fathers to take paternity leave is particularly

important, as fathers' early investment in caregiving has long-term payoffs for fathers, children, and the within-household distribution of labour (Chapter 3). Government can also play an important role in raising employer awareness of the negative effects of overwork. Although the public sector should set a good example by curbing excessive hours, stakeholders in Mexico note that public sector managers largely ignored previous government attempts to end workdays at a reasonable time.

However, for significant change to occur in the work lives of employees, businesses also need to adjust organisational culture and practice. An organisation's overarching goal should be to adjust workplace culture so that managers value prioritisation of tasks, time management, and efficient output over hours in the office. It is important for organisation leaders to recognise that long hours are not necessary for high-quality work and, at a certain point, may run counter to it. Some specific measures employers can take include:

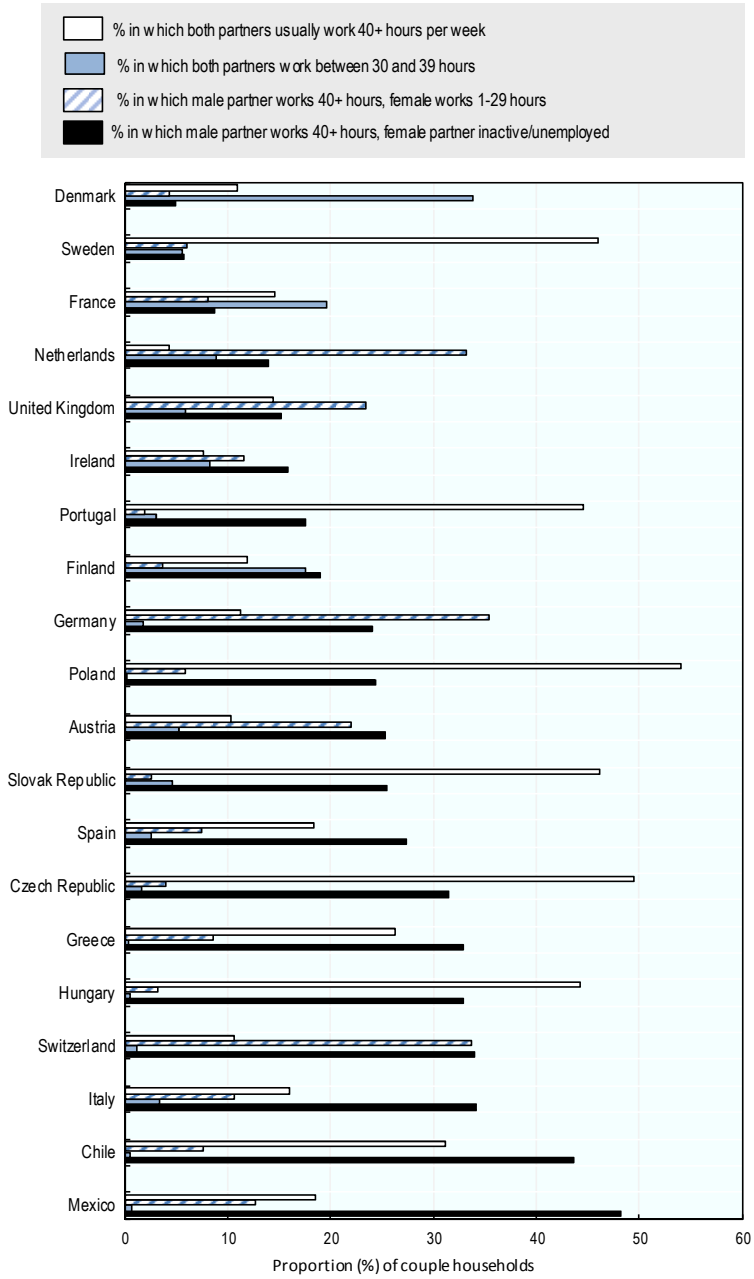
- Weigh objective output more heavily than subjective traits when evaluating employees. Such traits (e.g., co-operativeness) may be unfairly biased by the physical presence of employees, whereas outputs like the number of projects or project quality are arguably more objectively measurable across employees with varied hours in the office (Elsbach and Cable, 2012).
- Keep overtime spells short, as evidence suggests that employees can only work over 40 hours per week for a few weeks before productivity declines.
- Be aware of the effects of overtime. Reconsider scheduling practices and job design, and introduce health protection programmes for employees in jobs that often have overtime hours (Dembe et al., 2005).
- Instituting, publicising, and encouraging flexible work arrangements for both mothers *and* fathers can destigmatise taking time off for family reasons. This can also improve opportunities for women within firms (such as more equal wages and greater women in management) and help the recruitment of a diverse workforce.
- As much as possible, give workers consistent schedules from week to week, so that they can better manage work-life balance. This is especially important for low-income workers, who often struggle to find consistent and reliable childcare when their shifts change erratically.
- Managers should set a good example in working reasonable hours and valuing personal time. Field research in Mexico confirms that employees are reluctant to leave the workplace while their manager is still on-site. Managers play an important role in ensuring that workers feel comfortable ending their workday at a reasonable hour.

4.4. The demand for long hours reinforces existing gender roles

The culture of long work hours has gendered effects on labour market behaviour. Because women are disproportionately responsible for unpaid childcare and housework, as described below in Section 4.5, it is difficult for women to engage fully in a labour market that expects and rewards long hours on the job. In Mexican families with children, the most common work-hour combination is that in which the male partner works *over 40* paid hours per week while the female partner works *zero* paid hours per week. 48% of Mexican couples with children fall into this category (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4 Mexican mothers spend either very few or very many hours in paid work

Percentage of couples (female partner aged 25 to 45, with at least one child) in different work-hour arrangements, selected countries, most recent year



Note: Usual working hours of the employed for European countries, actual hours worked for Chile and Mexico. Data refer to total hours worked in all jobs, except for Chile where only hours worked in the main job are considered. Percentages do not sum to 100 because some work-hour combinations are omitted from this chart.

Source: OECD estimates based on the Household, Income, and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey 2014, the *Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional* (CASEN) 2013 for Chile, the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2012 for European countries, and the *Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogages* (ENIGH) 2014 for Mexico.

The large number of Mexican couples with this unequal engagement in paid work – in which the male partner works very long hours and the female partner works zero – is uncommon in the OECD.

The male breadwinner model predominates across OECD countries, but in the majority of countries the most common work-hour combinations are 1) both partners working full-time or 2) the male partner working full-time and the female partner working part-time.

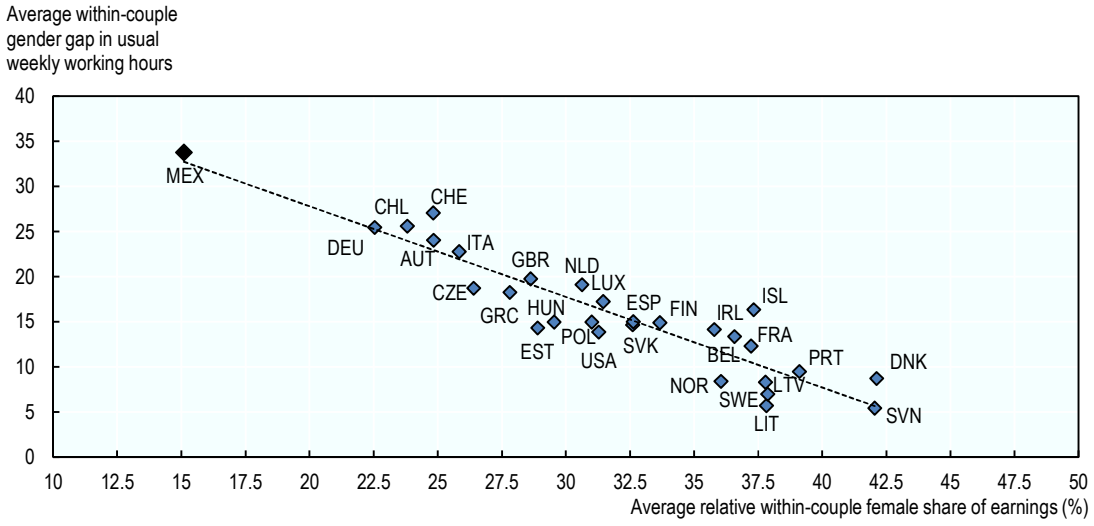
The high share of Mexican households with men working very long hours (and women working zero paid hours) suggests that labour market structures are restricting families' choices. This constraint has negative effects on fathers, who lose valuable time with their families, and negative effects on mothers, who are more likely to leave the labour market to care for children.

The second most common combination in Mexico is both parents working over 40 paid hours per week: 18.5% of couples with children fall in this category. In these households, working mothers face double duty: long hours of paid work followed by intensive hours of unpaid work. (In many higher-income households, however, domestic workers help reduce the unpaid work burden.)

Related to these within-household patterns, the gap between the average usual weekly work hours of Mexican mothers and fathers is the widest in the OECD. Mexican mothers usually work 16.1 hours per week, on average, while Mexican fathers work 49.5 hours. The average earnings gap between coupled mothers and fathers is also the largest in the OECD. (When mothers with zero work hours are excluded from the sample, Mexico's gap remains quite large, but Germany and Switzerland have larger within-parent working hour gaps; see Figure 4.A1.1 in the annex). On average, Mexican mothers in couples contribute just 15% of couples' total earnings.

Figure 4.5. Mothers work the fewest paid hours and contribute least to household earnings in Mexico

Average within-couple gender gap in usual weekly working hours, and average relative within-couple female share of earnings for couples with a female partner aged 25-45 with at least one child, most recent year



Note:

Usual working hours of the (self-)employed for European countries, actual hours worked for Chile and Mexico. Data refer to total hours worked in all jobs, except for Chile where only hours worked in the main job are considered.

Jobless couples where neither partner works (inactive or unemployed) are excluded.

Data refer to the average female share of a couple's total earnings (female partner's earnings divided by male partner's earnings plus female partner's earnings).

Data refer to the average absolute gap in usual weekly working hours between the male member and the female member of a couple (male partner's usual weekly working hours – female partner's usual weekly working hours).

Data for European countries refer to 20102, for Chile to 2013, for Mexico to 2014, and for the United States to 2014. The income reference year is 2011 for European countries, 2013 for Chile and 2014 for Mexico and the United States.

Source: OECD calculations based on *Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional* (CASEN) 2013 for Chile, European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2012 for European countries, *Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares* (ENIGH) 2014 for Mexico, Current Population Survey (CPS) 2014 for the United States.

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4.5. Mexican women spend long hours on valuable unpaid labour

Time is a finite resource. Long hours at home spent cooking, cleaning, and caring for children limit the amount of time women can spend in paid work. Mexican women's disproportionate responsibility for housework and dependent care can deter women from entering full-time jobs and prevent those who do work from advancing in good-quality jobs. Employers, in turn, may discriminate against hiring women of childbearing age due to the risk that they will leave to give birth and/or care for children. The high number of Mexican women asked to take a pregnancy test at the time of hiring – at least prior to the pregnancy test ban in 2012 – starkly illustrates this discrimination (Chapter 3).

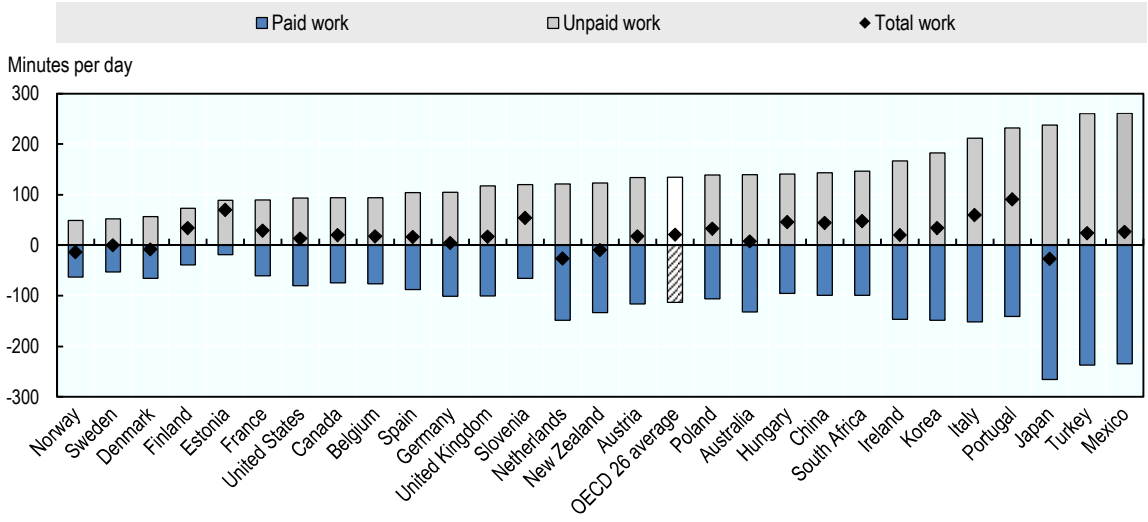
Gender inequality in unpaid work at home is crucial in explaining gender inequality in the labour market. In every OECD country, and throughout the world, women do more unpaid work than men. Women in Mexico face one of the highest burdens of unpaid

labour in the OECD, as they shoulder, on average, nearly 77% of all unpaid housework and childcare in their households (Figure 1.6 in Chapter 1).

The same pattern can be observed when looking at the total amount of time spent on unpaid labour by men and women every day. Mexican women spend more than six hours each day on unpaid childcare and housework, a higher figure than women in most OECD countries, while Mexican men spend less than two hours (Figure 4.5). Across countries, men also tend to have more leisure time than women.

Figure 4.6. Women do more unpaid work than men across OECD countries

Female minus male paid and unpaid working time, in minutes per day, 15-64 year-olds, harmonised survey years



Note: Data for Australia are for 15+ year-olds, for Hungary 15-74 year-olds, and for Sweden 25-64 year-olds. Reference years vary across countries: Australia: 2006; Austria: 2008-09; Belgium: 2005; Canada: 2010; China: 2008; Denmark: 2001; Estonia: 2009-10; Finland: 2009-10; France: 2009; Germany: 2001-02; Hungary: 1999-2000; Italy: 2008-09; Ireland: 2005; Japan: 2011; Korea: 2009; Mexico: 2009; the Netherlands: 2005-06; New Zealand: 2009-10; Norway: 2010; Poland: 2003-04; Portugal: 1999; Slovenia: 2000-01; South Africa: 2010; Spain: 2009-10; Sweden: 2010; Turkey: 2006; the United Kingdom: 2005; and the United States: 2014.

Source: OECD Gender Data Portal.

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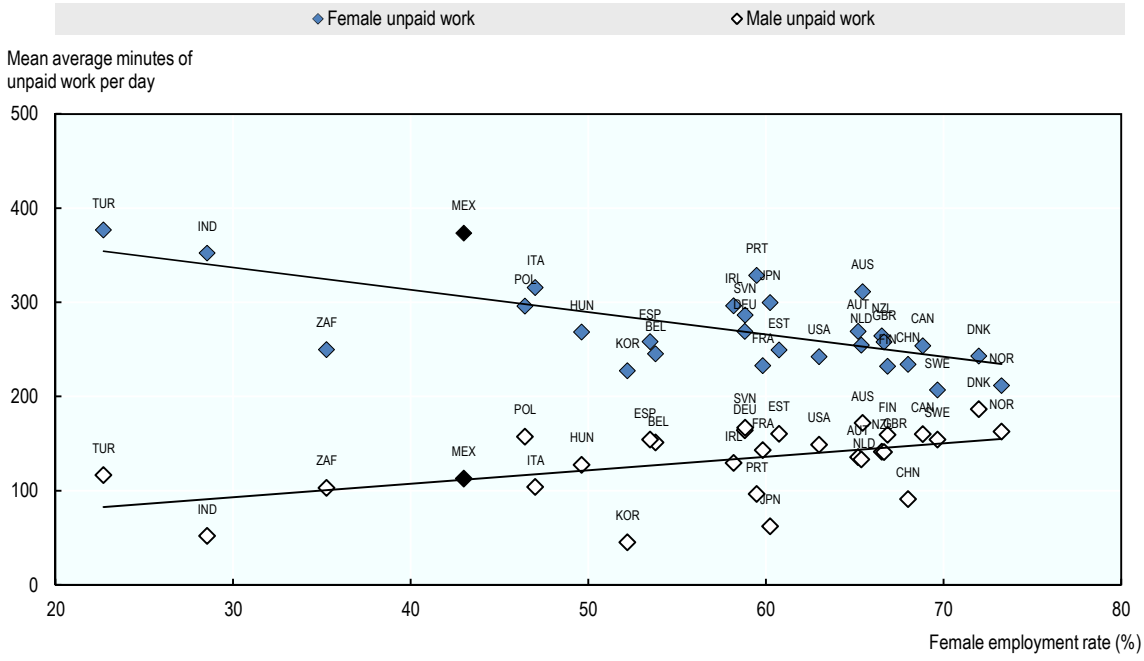
Unpaid labour is valuable. It represents money saved over what a household would have to pay for the same service in the private market. Unpaid work at home increases the overall consumption of goods and services, represents implicit income, and is crucial for enabling the labour force participation of beneficiary household members (Becker, 1965). In rural communities, agricultural production carried out within the household for family consumption has important value (Stiglitz et al., 2007), and consumption and production can be more broadly defined to include the production and rearing of children, as well as maintaining a clean home (Browning et al., 2014). Related to this, OECD research has called for a better incorporation of unpaid work in the estimation of national accounts (Ferrant et al., 2014; Miranda, 2011). The National Institute of Statistics and Geography in Mexico (INEGI) estimates that the economic value of unremunerated domestic and care work was MXN 4.2 billion in 2014 – representing 24.2% of the country's GDP (INEGI, 2015b).

Importantly, women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care activities limits their ability to enter the labour market. Across countries, at the aggregate level, women participate more in the labour market when their male partners take on more (unpaid) housework (Hook, 2006; OECD, 2016e). Women in countries with high female employment rates also spend relatively less time on unpaid work, relative to women in countries with lower female employment rates (Figure 4.6).

The Nordic countries of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden are OECD leaders in promoting the equal sharing of unpaid work. While women in these countries still do more childcare and chores than men, the gender differential in minutes spent on unpaid work is less than one hour each day. The other North American OECD countries also perform better than average in getting men to take on more unpaid work and in promoting women's labour force participation.

Figure 4.7. Better gender balance in unpaid work correlates with greater equality in labour market

Mean average minutes/day in unpaid work, by gender, and female employment rates (15-64 year-olds)



Note: Data on unpaid work are for 15+ year-olds for Australia, 15-74 year-olds for Hungary, and 25-64 year-olds for Sweden. Reference years vary across countries: Australia: 2006; Austria: 2008-09; Belgium: 2005; Canada: 2010; China: 2008 for unpaid work and 2010 for the female employment rate; Denmark: 2001; Estonia: 2009-10; Finland: 2009-10; France: 2009; Germany: 2001-02; Hungary: 1999-2000; India: 1999 for unpaid work and 2010 for the female employment rate; Italy: 2008-09; Ireland: 2005; Japan: 2011; Korea: 2009; Mexico: 2009; the Netherlands: 2005-06; New Zealand: 2009-10; Norway: 2010; Poland: 2003-04; Portugal: 1999; Slovenia: 2000-01; South Africa: 2010; Spain: 2009-10; Sweden: 2010; Turkey: 2006; the United Kingdom: 2005; and the United States: 2014.

Source: OECD Gender Data Portal and *OECD Employment Database.*

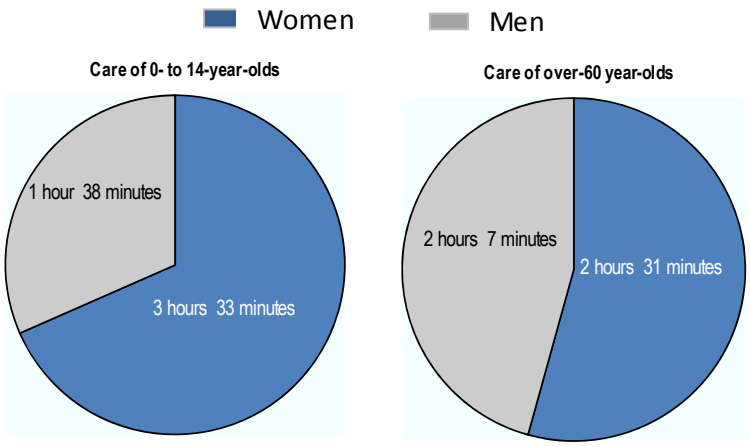
This correlation holds at the household level, as well. In OECD countries, male-breadwinner couples tend to adhere to a more traditional division of paid and unpaid labour: when a male partner works full-time, the female partner predominantly takes on housework and childcare. In dual-earner couples, in contrast, male partners take on a larger share of housework than male breadwinners. Yet even when both partners work

full-time, the division of household labour is rarely a 50-50 split. The female share of unpaid labour in these households varies across countries, for example, from 62%, on average, in Germany to 88%, on average, in Korea (OECD, 2016e). Women generally do less unpaid housework and childcare as their share of household earnings goes up, but the relationship is not linear. There is some evidence from Australia and the United States that high-earning women do more housework in order to conform to gender norms at home, if not in the labour market, an example of so-called "doing gender" behaviour (Bittman, et al., 2003; Bertrand et al., 2015).

In Mexico, the gender gap in unpaid work is particularly wide in childcare activities. 73.7% of women and teenage girls are caregivers to children (under age 15) in their household, compared to only 61.8% of men and teenage boys in Mexico. Among these caregivers, women and teenage girls also put in more hours feeding, bathing, clothing, and watching children: on average, women provide three hours and 33 minutes of care per day to children under age 14 in their household (68.4% of all unpaid childcare hours), compared to 1 hour and 38 minutes of care provided by men and teenage boys. In sum, women spend more than twice as much time as men in unremunerated childcare. While women have some biological advantages in childcare when infants are very young – for instance, in breastfeeding – the persistent gendered division of care labour as a child ages is to some degree a reflection of social norms.

Figure 4.8. Mexican women perform much more childcare, though care for seniors is more balanced

Daily number of hours (and share of total hours) of unpaid care work performed by the population aged 12 and above, conditional on performing some care activities for household members, national average in Mexico, 2014



Note: Population aged 12 and older who perform unpaid care work for household members, in hours and minutes per day.

Source: INEGI *Encuesta Nacional sobre Uso del Tiempo* (ENUT) 2014.

In comparison to women's disproportionate responsibility for childcare, the gendered distribution of unpaid care for seniors is more balanced, similar to the situation in other OECD countries (OECD, 2016e). Across countries spouses tend to care for each other, whereas women tend to care for parents. The rate of elder caregiving is actually higher for men than women, on average, in Mexico: 10.2% of men and teenage boys provide care to household members aged 60 and above, compared to 9.1% of women and teenage girls. However, women who are caregivers spend more time daily on these tasks. Female

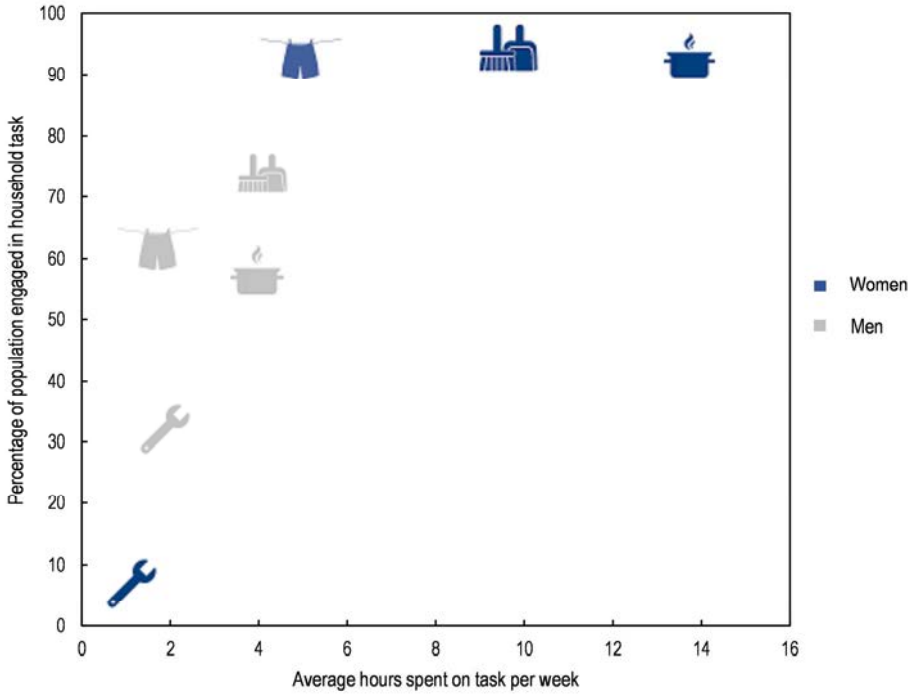
caregivers provide 54.3% of the care for seniors, or 24 minutes more each day than male caregivers.

Women are also more likely to do cooking, cleaning, and laundry than men, and women spend many more hours on these tasks. Mexican women spend more than three times as many hours as Mexican men preparing food, more than twice as many hours cleaning, and nearly three times as many hours on laundry each week. In contrast, men are more likely than women to do home repairs, and spend almost one more hour per week on this chore.

Figure 4.9 illustrates participation rates and average weekly hours spent on four different types of unpaid housework, sorted by sex. The tasks are food preparation; housecleaning; laundry and care of clothing and shoes; and home maintenance, installations, and minor repairs. 93.3% of women and teenage girls prepare food each week, for an average time of 13.7 hours per week, compared to 58.2% of Mexican men and teenage boys preparing food, for an average time of four hours per week.

Figure 4.9. Far more Mexican women cook and clean than men – and for longer hours

Participation rates and hours spent on unremunerated household cooking, cleaning, laundry, and home maintenance in Mexico, by sex, 2014



Note: Population in Mexico aged 12 and older who perform unpaid work for their household in the following categories: food preparation, housecleaning, cleaning and care of clothing and shoes, and home maintenance, installations, and repairs, in hours per week.

Source: INEGI *Encuesta Nacional sobre Uso del Tiempo* (ENUT) 2014.

INEGI estimates that care work (equal to 8.3% of GDP), food preparation (4.6% of GDP), and cleaning and maintenance of the home (3.9%) are the most economically valuable types of unpaid care work in Mexico (INEGI, 2015b). Women are overwhelmingly responsible for these tasks.

4.6. Rural Mexican women do even more unpaid work

Although women throughout Mexico do more childcare and chores than men, the burden on poor rural women is especially heavy. The relative gender balance in national eldercare estimates, for instance, appears to be driven by more egalitarian behaviour in urban areas. There is significant urban-rural variation in the amount of time spent on eldercare, with rural women providing far more eldercare than urban caregivers (male or female) or rural male caregivers. In urban areas (localities with over 10 000 inhabitants), females spend two hours and 15 minutes each day caring for seniors in their household, compared to two hours and four minutes for male caregivers, on average. In contrast, in rural areas (with under 10 000 inhabitants), women spend three hours each day, on average, caring for seniors in their household. Men in rural areas spend two hours and 14 minutes on care (INEGI ENUT, 2014). One factor influencing the extra time rural women devote to eldercare is insufficient social and health supports for seniors in rural areas, though this is also a problem in some urban areas, as well. Women fill these gaps in social protection. Traditional norms around family roles and social expectations that women will care for their elders (who often live in the same home) also drive unequal sharing of unpaid work in rural areas.

Reflecting uneven economic development in Mexico, many poor households do not have access to time-saving water and sewage infrastructure, technology, and appliances. In 2015, 6% of households did not have water available in their home and had to retrieve water from pipes outside the home, wells, rivers, streams, or from other households. A similar share did not have drainage, with rates as high as 16.3% and 23.5% of households without drainage in Guerrero and Oaxaca, respectively (INEGI, *Encuesta Intercensal*, 2015). The OECD estimates that 72% of low-income[3] households in Mexico lack basic sanitary facilities, measured as dwellings without an indoor flushing toilet, compared to fewer than 10% of low-income households in Chile and most other OECD countries (Salvi Del Pero et al., 2016).

Time-saving household appliances like refrigerators and washing machines have historically been important for freeing up women's time, increasing women's autonomy, and enabling women to enter into paid jobs. INMUJERES estimates that having a washing machine in the house saves 1.3 hours of labour each week (INMUJERES data provided to OECD). Yet less than half of rural Mexican households use washing machines: 5.5 million households have washing machines available, and 5.6 million do not, in localities of under 10 000 inhabitants. In contrast, three-quarters of urban households have access to a washing machine (INEGI ENUT, 2014).

Box 4.4. Bargaining within families

Is equal partnership at home a desirable outcome for women and families? Why should policy makers care about men and women having equal opportunities – and obligations – to do housework and paid work?

Motivated by Becker's seminal theory of the division of labour in a family (Becker, 1981 and 1985), scholars have debated intra-household bargaining for decades. In Becker's rational choice model, the family is viewed as having a common preference over a single utility function, and family members participate in a "sexual division of labour". To achieve maximum returns for the family unit, Becker argues, one partner (typically the man) specialises in paid labour, while the other partner (typically the woman) specialises in unpaid household labour. Both partners operate under the assumption that there are increasing returns to human capital with specialisation. While these roles could be reversed, women typically specialise in household labour because of a temporary comparative (biological) advantage in caregiving around childbirth. These initial comparative advantages then turn into long-lasting behaviours because people tend to get better at skills the more they use them. Early socialisation reinforces these gendered roles, Becker argues, as parents try to prepare their children for responsibilities they assume will later benefit their offspring in the marriage market.

While it is easy to dismiss Becker's theory as outdated, it does hold considerable predictive power: across OECD countries, men tend to spend more time in paid work, whereas their female partners tend to spend more time on housework and childcare. Yet these differences have attenuated over time, in part because the sexual division of labour is not necessarily efficient, equitable, or socially desirable.

Sen (1987) is one of many theorists to argue that the sexual division of paid and unpaid labour profoundly influences gender inequality. Systematic biases around who is "earning" income reinforce the inferior economic position of women, even though unpaid labour often makes paid work possible. Furthermore, women's "traditional" roles at home can influence their choices if they do enter the labour market, as they are constrained by their specialised skills and socialisation. When women are able to earn income outside of the home, this income contributes to a family's overall affluence and gives women greater bargaining power over distributional decisions at home.

Motivated by such critiques, economists gradually moved away from "common preferences" models like Becker's and developed bargaining models that attempt to account for divergent preferences within the family, as well as how the within-household distribution of income changes when women earn money (see Lundberg and Pollak (1996) for an overview of this literature). Household bargaining models help illustrate the usefulness of women having their own income and spending less time on unpaid labour.

The debate remains relevant today as policy makers consider whether – and how – to level the playing field for women in paid and unpaid work. Given that women's education now matches or outpaces men's in most OECD countries, and that women and men increasingly "assortatively mate" (i.e., partner with someone who shares their socioeconomic status), there are potentially large losses when a woman stays home. The OECD has conducted extensive research on how women's paid employment positively affects macro-level outcomes like economic growth, socioeconomic equality, and fertility rates (see, for instance, OECD, 2012 and 2015a). The stakes in household bargaining are just as high for the economic and social empowerment of individual women, their partners, and their children (Chapter 1).

4.7. Tackling time poverty to promote gender equality in paid and unpaid work

Social norms and culture are strong drivers of participation in paid and unpaid labour, and they also influence hours spent in the workplace. These factors interact to make life difficult for Mexican parents: when paid work hours are long, women have difficulty participating in the labour market and are more likely to stay home and engage in unpaid care work. Fathers, in turn, put in long hours on the job and have less time with their families.

Under these conditions, the "traditional" division of labour continues. Though younger generations show more progressive attitudes, Mexicans continue to have relatively conservative views of women's work at home and in the labour market (Chapter 2). Breaking down these patterns will require action on multiple fronts: work culture permitting better work-family balance for mothers *and* fathers, and, importantly, men taking equal responsibility at home for childcare and housework.

While the division of household labour is driven by norms, it can still be influenced by policy and labour markets. Countries with high female employment rates, more gender-egalitarian attitudes, widely accessible and affordable early childhood education and care, and out-of-school-hours childcare supports also have more equal sharing of household labour (OECD, 2016e). These social supports enable parents to outsource some care work and combine their own remunerated work with childrearing. In contrast, economic crises and public fiscal consolidation – including cuts in public sector jobs and family benefits – are often offset by women's added time devoted to unpaid caregiving, the "safety net of last resort" (ILO, 2016). Insufficient public spending on social programmes in Mexico continues to leave women and families without much assistance to combine paid work with family responsibilities, be it childcare (Chapter 3) or care for other dependents, such as elderly relatives or family members with disabilities.

The following policy suggestions are motivated by the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship (2013) and the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life (2015). Paid leave and early childhood education and care are also important work-life balance measures (see Chapter 3).

- ***Encourage flexible work arrangements and the short-term use of part-time work among women and men.*** The private and public sectors have an integral role to play in promoting gender equality and work-life balance. In the workplace, human resource options like flexible work hours, the temporary use of part-time work for family reasons, systems to monitor hours worked, and remote work can help women and men combine family responsibilities with paid work (OECD, 2016e). These provisions are especially relevant in countries with long work hours, like Mexico, where weekly work hours are longer, on average, in formal jobs than informal jobs (OECD calculations of ENIGH, 2015).

  Managers should enable (rather than penalise) parents who take leave or request flexible hours to care for family members. Even when fathers do want to play a greater role in caring for their children, it can be difficult to do so in a culture where workplace flexibility around caregiving is frowned upon. It is crucial that both women and men have access to these arrangements. Giving men the option to change their work schedule or reduce their hours levels the playing field, by making men comparably "risky" to employers at the time of hiring, relative to women. More importantly, men also deserve to spend time with their children – including hours in care work. Senior management in all sectors must set a good example by ending the workday at a reasonable hour.

  There are obviously costs associated with reduced hours, flexible work arrangements, and paid leave, as employers may have to temporarily replace workers or shift the workload to other employees (Adema et al., 2015). However, work-life balance measures have been found to enhance employee loyalty, productivity, and morale, and employee retention (Chapter 3).

The German Government offers some examples of how to promote equal sharing in paid and unpaid work. Germany has proposed several measures targeting equal sharing – including public incentives for both parents to reduce their work hours when children are young – and has implemented a legal right for both mothers and fathers to reduce working hours for family reasons (OECD, 2016e). Mexico should consider such measures, but do so with the goal of promoting equal take-up between men and women.

The Mexican Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare (STPS, *Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social*) has sought to encourage companies to improve their employees' work-life balance by offering public recognition of good practice. Since 2006, the STPS has certified companies that are committed to family-friendly workplace policies with the "Family-Friendly Company Distinction" (DEFR, *Distintivo Empresa Familiarmente Responsible*). Workplaces interested in obtaining the certificate must demonstrate good labour practice in three areas: the reconciliation of work and family life, equality of opportunity, and the prevention of workplace violence and sexual harassment (STPS, 2015). In 2015, 431 workplaces were awarded the DEFR, covering 82 696 workers (28 954 of which were women). Although this measure is a light touch, it represents federal recognition of the issue and may encourage more women to apply to these organisations. The 2015 publication of the *Norma Mexicana NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 en Igualdad Laboral y No Discriminación* (Mexican Standards for Labour Equality and Non-Discrimination) offers guidelines for additional evaluation and certification of equal employment opportunities and anti-discrimination practices in the workplace, as well as compliance with national and international laws on employment discrimination (*Secretaría de Economía de México*, 2015).

The public sector in Mexico City introduced several important work-life balance policies in 2015. In an attempt to reconcile work and family life and encourage gender equality, the Government of Mexico City mandated a maximum 40-hour work-week for public sector workers, as well as early closings on two Fridays of the month in city offices that provide customer services. Working mothers are entitled to an extension of paid childbirth-related leave and a fixed (18:00) end of the workday when children are in school; these measures should be extended to fathers, as well. Both mothers and fathers get priority in scheduling vacation or personal days around school schedules for children younger than upper-secondary school age (*Administración Pública del Distrito Federal*, 2015). Mexico City must ensure that managers follow these rules in practice.

There is, however, a caveat to these measures: some of the child-related benefits are targeted at mothers only, rather than mothers *and* fathers. This perpetuates the expectation by society and employers that mothers will do the majority of care work. Nevertheless, despite inadequately supporting fathers, the public sector model in Mexico City presents an affordable and workable example that could be replicated and improved upon elsewhere.

Work-life balance measures are also important for achieving gender-balance in decision-making positions, which typically require long and unpredictable working hours. The public sector can serve as a role-model employer by mainstreaming work-life balance and family-friendly work practices at the top level of public institutions through measures such as flexi-time, work sharing, teleworking, providing incentives for men to take available care leave, and flexible work

entitlements. Part-time employment solutions, teleworking, and compressed work weeks are not an option within the general employment framework of Mexico's public service. Flexible start times and working hours are sometimes used, but typically only by unionised staff who have this right outlined within their collective bargaining agreement.

- ***Raise awareness of gender stereotypes to encourage men and women to share paid and unpaid work more equally.*** Changing behaviours is difficult, but governments can influence norms about the division of paid and unpaid labour through data dissemination and awareness-raising. Mexico is a regional and an OECD leader in regularly financing and administering time-use surveys.[4] This is reflected in the quantity of surveys it has conducted and in its dissemination strategies. Mexico has specialists in INMUJERES who work with academics to analyse time use data collected in representative surveys by INEGI, such as ENUT. Unlike many other countries, Mexico has a mass communication strategy on time use, as well as awareness-raising campaigns highlighting the unpaid work burden women face (Aguirre and Ferrari, 2013).

  Although public awareness of time-use issues remains low, the Mexican Government has tried to link results from time-use surveys to public policy, for example by measuring household activities among recipients and non-recipients of *Prospera*. This reflects the line of action in PROIGUALDAD calling for the development of statistical instruments to recognise women's paid and unpaid economic activities, their relation to domestic life and time use, and their impact on the economy, family well-being, society, and government tax revenue (Aguirre and Ferrari, 2013). Government ministries should co-operate with INMUJERES in incorporating the value of time – in unpaid work, paid work, and transportation – into the design of public policies and public employment.

  Results from the 2016 OECD Questionnaire on Gender Equality in Mexican States (Chapter 1) reinforce the need to change attitudes at home. The questionnaire sent to Women's Institutes in Federal Entities (*Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas*) asked, "What are the most effective ways to encourage boys' and men's participation in unpaid caregiving activities?" Nine out of ten responding institutes said changing boys' and men's attitudes is an effective way to encourage a more equal division of unpaid work, and seven ranked it as most important (Figure 4.10).

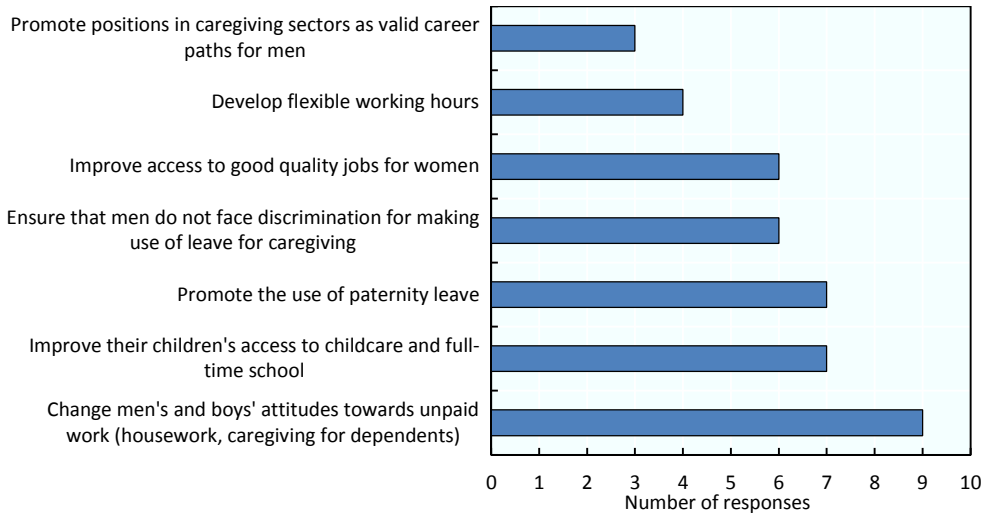
- ***Invest in institutions, infrastructure and technology that free women's time.*** Long hours spent on unpaid housework are partly related to uneven development. Women spend long hours each week on tasks that would be greatly facilitated with modern infrastructure and appliances, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas. Ensuring that every home in Mexico has access to water and sewage infrastructure would go a long way towards reducing the hours low-income women spend carrying water to their homes every week. Technology like washing machines also reduces housework hours (Section 4.6).

  In line with its National Inclusion Strategy (*Estrategia Nacional de Inclusión*), SEDESOL and the Government of the State of Mexico (*Estado de Mexico*) recently delivered more than 38 000 modern gas stoves to Mexican homes that had been cooking with firewood or coal (SEDESOL, 2016). Although the stated purpose of this programme is to improve health, by getting families away from breathing wood or coal smoke, these kinds of measures in underserved communities may also have

pay-offs in reducing unpaid work hours. Future research should investigate the extent to which the introduction of new infrastructure and appliances is associated with a reduction in women's hours spent on unpaid work and, ideally, an increase women's hours spent in paid work – a necessary tool for getting families out of poverty.

Figure 4.10. More equal caregiving requires changing men's attitudes at home

Distribution of state responses to the question, "What are the most effective ways to encourage boys' and men's participation in unpaid caregiving activities?"



Note: *Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas* were asked to rank the five most important strategies for encouraging boys' and men's participation in unpaid caregiving. Responding states included Ciudad de Mexico, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Durango, Sinaloa, Hidalgo, Puebla, Colima, Jalisco, and Estado de Mexico.

Source: OECD QGEMS (2016).

Measures aimed at keeping children in school longer would also help. This could include improving access to good quality childcare (Chapter 3); increasing the number of hours young children can spend in preschool, as most programmes are currently half-day; introducing after-school programmes for school-age children, as is common practice in Nordic countries; and ensuring that the mandated length of full-day primary and secondary school is respected in practice by all schools and teachers.

All of these measures should be embedded in broader strategies to improve the coverage and efficiency of social protection in Mexico.

Notes

1. For a more comprehensive discussion of measures to reduce informality, see OECD (2015a), OECD (2015b), and OECD (2016a).
2. Measured across countries with available data on "usual" hours worked each week in the main job.
3. Low-income is defined in Salvi Del Pero et al. (2015) as equivalised income below 50% of median household income.
4. Although Mexico has harmonised its time-use surveys with other Latin American countries and runs a relatively frequent time use survey, some issues remain in the retrospective manner in which data are collected, compared to other OECD countries. For a more comprehensive discussion of this issue, see Miranda (2011).

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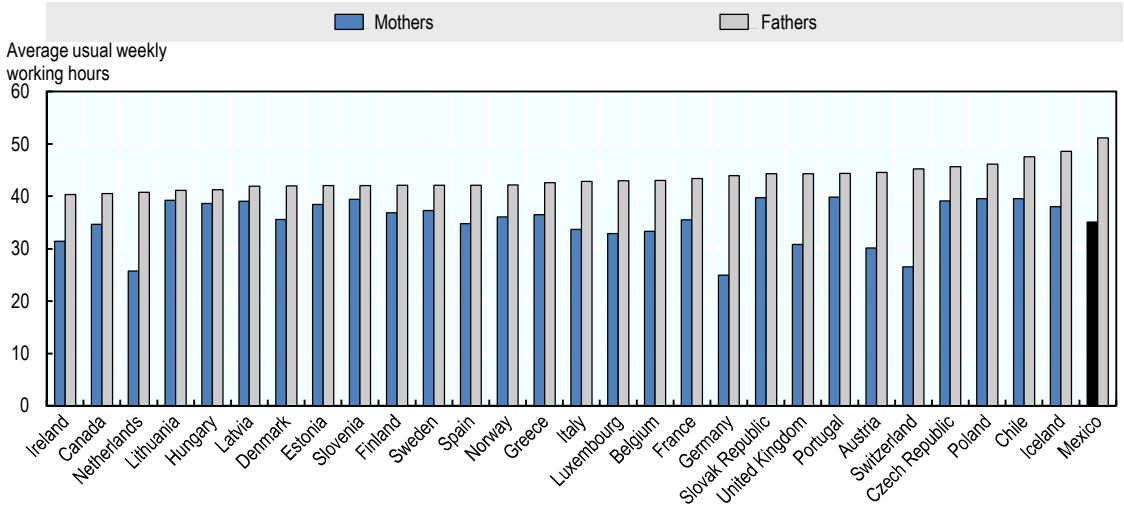
Annex 4.A1

Distribution of mothers' and fathers' working hours

Figure 4.A1.1. Mexico has a large gender gap in average weekly working hours of mothers and fathers

Average usual weekly working hours of mothers and fathers with at least one child under 15, in couples in which the female partner is aged 25 to 45, 2012



1. Usual working hours of the (self-)employed for European countries, actual hours worked for Chile and Mexico. Data refer to total hours worked in all jobs, except for Chile where only hours worked in the main job are considered.

2. Data for Canada refer to 2011, for Chile to 2013, for Mexico to 2014, and for the United States to 2014.

Source: OECD calculations based on Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) 2011 for Canada, *Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional* (CASEN) 2013 for Chile, European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) 2012 for European countries, *Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares* (ENIGH) 2014 for Mexico.

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Chapter 5

Bringing women to the decision-making table

This chapter provides an overview of trends in women's participation in public life in Mexico – in Congress, the courts and the Federal Public Administration. While Mexico has made significant progress in increasing women's representation in elected bodies over recent years – making it one of the top OECD countries for female political participation – their access to positions of power within both Houses of Congress remains uneven. There are still gender gaps in access to leadership in the judicial and executive branches of government, too, and in the Federal Public Administration. The chapter examines the mechanisms and policies in place to support women's access to positions of power. It also explores the barriers to women's participation in public life and in senior positions, such as political violence, a culture of long hours and limited work-life balance policies. It closes with a series of targeted recommendations.

The data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

5.1. Introduction

The presence of women in public decision-making positions is a key indicator of their empowerment and a cornerstone of democratic governance. The make-up of public sector decision-making bodies should be representative of society at large if public needs are to be legitimately articulated and addressed. OECD governments now recognise that gender equality in top positions helps create an enabling environment for inclusive growth. The combined talents and perspectives of both men and women yield a better, more comprehensive understanding of society at large, which in turn improves the quality of policies and delivery of public services. Accordingly, there is mounting awareness in Mexico of the benefits that accrue from the equal participation of women and men in public decision making – in Congress, the political executive, the judiciary and across federal and state public administration.

A closer look at the bills proposed by female deputies in Mexico's Congress of the Union in the past year reveals an emphasis on reform and measures to eradicate violence, narrow the gender wage gap and improve access to health care – all areas that particularly impact women. They have introduced almost 85% of all the proposals that have come before the Gender Equality Committee in the Chamber of Deputies[1] since the LXIII Legislature of the Mexican Congress opened in September 2016.

Beyond the issue of fair representation, women matter in policy making and are central to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment by pushing for changes in legislation. Indeed, OECD data point to a correlation between lower levels of inequality and a greater share of women in parliament and government (OECD, 2014). It is thus crucial to bring women to the decision-making table in order to drive change and achieve inclusive growth.

The status quo in most countries has long been one of men holding a disproportionately high number of key posts in the public sector – be it by appointment or election. Nonetheless, Mexico has made great strides toward striking a gender balance in public policy making, and those efforts have visibly begun to bear fruit.

In 2006, the General Law on Equality Between Women and Men came into force. Art. 36 of this law tasks the government with proposing mechanisms to enable equitable participation between women and men in political and socioeconomic decision making by carrying out the following actions:

- favour parliamentary work with a gender perspective;
- promote the balanced participation of women and men in political parties;
- foster gender equality in senior public posts;
- develop and update gender-disaggregated data on decision-making posts and senior management positions in the public and private spheres;
- promote gender-balanced, discrimination-free selection, hiring and promotion practices in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government and the civil service.

To comply with its legal obligations under the 2006 General Law on Equality Between Women and Men and to help Mexico to reach its full potential, the present administration has committed to increasing women's participation in all spheres of public life. The commitment – formalised in the 2013-2018 National Development Plan and the 2013-2018

National Programme for Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination against Women (PROIGUALDAD) – translated into an amendment to the constitution in 2014. The amendment upholds the principle of gender equality by requiring political parties to draw up rules that ensure gender parity in the appointment of candidates in federal and local congressional elections (Article 41 of the 2006 general law on gender equality).

This chapter looks at the substantial progress Mexico has made over the past decade towards gender balance in politics and public institutions. Nonetheless, the gender gap in policy making is noticeably wider in areas that are not subject to quotas, namely in politically appointed positions. Beyond an increase in the numerical representation of women, there is plenty of room for improving women's access to key positions of power and influence in public life and sustaining existing progress. This chapter explores how Mexico can meet those challenges and the steps it can take to close remaining gender gaps in top public decision-making positions.

Main findings

- The figures on women's representation show that Mexico has made remarkable progress over a short period of time and compares favourably with the representativeness of lower houses in bicameral parliaments and single-house legislatures in other OECD countries. Whereas women accounted for only 22.6% of members of parliament in the *Cámara de Diputados* (Chamber of Deputies) in 2005, they currently hold 42.37% of the 500 seats. In the *Cámara de Senadores* (Senate) they occupy 33.6% of the 128 seats, compared to 17.19% in 2006. Such representation is well above the OECD average of 28.47% of seats in lower houses and unicameral legislatures. At the state level, women held an average of 25.6% of seats in the unicameral congresses in 2013, which rose to 38% in 2016.
- In the Chamber of Deputies, women chair 29% of ordinary commissions (i.e. 16 out of 56) and just over 31% in the Senate. To ensure equality between women and men, Congress could take affirmative action to enable more women to chair commissions, utilise gender-sensitive language in the media and legislation, and review and reform congressional practices and processes to ensure that they, too, are gender-aware
- Gender quotas and affirmative action measures, combined with support from Congress and the National Institute of Women (INMUJERES), have been instrumental in increasing women's representation in representative bodies – at both national and state level. Quotas are also symbolically important in that they help alter negative perceptions of women in power and increase their electability. In bodies which have not taken special temporary measures or affirmative action – which include the executive, the 13 state governments still to adopt parity requirements in their municipal councils, and the judiciary – wide gender gaps persist in women's representation.
- Women's increased representation in Mexico's nationwide *Congreso de la Unión* (Congress) has resulted in an upsurge of proposed bills to prevent gender-based violence, discrimination and accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment. Since September 2015, 37 of the 44 initiatives that have come before the Gender Equality Commission in the Chamber of Deputies were submitted by female deputies, 6 by men, and one jointly by a male and female parliamentarian.

- Women make up 51% of public servants in the Federal Public Administration (FPA). However, there is a wide gender gap in top managerial positions. In December 2015, women held 27.5% of such posts (1 358 in total) and men 72.5% (3 577).
- The scarcity of data in the FPA prevents in-depth analysis of possible gender gaps in pay, the equitable allocation of jobs and what work-life balance mechanisms are available to which employees (given that unionised workers may enjoy benefits specific to their collective bargaining agreements). The data shortage puts the Secretariat of Public Service (SFP) at a disadvantage in identifying areas that require special attention and in tailoring policies for bringing down barriers to equal opportunities and equality between men and women within the FPA.
- Political harassment and violence remain a real barrier to women's full exercise of agency both during and after elections – so much so that it can deter qualified women from partaking in politics or seeking public office altogether. As women increasingly assert their presence in the political domain, there is a risk that gender-based political violence will become more acute. In 2015, there were 38 reported cases of political violence against women in 8 Mexican states. Mexico has taken commendable steps to counter violence and harassment with the introduction of the Protocol on Political Violence Against Women – designed to protect women running for and holding office – and the Protocol for the Prevention, Treatment and Punishment of Bullying and Sexual Harassment in the FPA.
- The lack of work-life balance measures in public sector institutions undermines the fair, sustained representation of women in politics, the judiciary and the civil service. It becomes even more prevalent as they climb the career ladder and have to contend with unpredictable hours and high levels of pressure, while simultaneously attempting to balance work with the family duties that fall predominately to them. The FPA's employment framework does not make use of the effective measures in place in many other OECD countries for reconciling work and private life – such as part-time employment, teleworking, compressed working weeks and flexitime. Currently, there is no gender requirement in the FPA's hiring practices.

Box 5.1. Key policy recommendations

- Take further measures to give women equal access to positions of leadership in both Houses of Congress by considering parity requirements for congressional committee chairs.
- Undertake a gender audit of parliamentary practices, procedures and language, reform them so that they are gender-sensitive, then consider institutionalising such reforms within Congress's Code of Ethics and any other governing documents, such as mission statements.
- Further develop a comprehensive set of measures with the purpose of rooting out political violence against women, continue proactive awareness-raising efforts among legislators and society at large on the benefits of women's participation in politics and policy making, and acknowledge political violence in the General Law on Violence Against Women as a specific form of violence.
- Undertake a gender audit of the FPA's employment practices – including recruitment, evaluation, training, promotion and pay – to ensure gender-sensitivity, meritocracy and transparency.
- Improve the FPA's overall responsiveness to gender equality while implementing the following key gender-related actions:
  - Further introduce flexible working hours and other work-life balance policies in the public sector and collect data on how they are used, even in senior positions;

Box 5.1. Key policy recommendations *(cont.)*

- reinforce anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies and complaints procedures to promote a safe working environment;
- continue raising public sector managers' awareness of gender-equality considerations.

- Consider measures to promote gender equality in the senior civil service and judicial appointments. Such measures may include disclosure requirements, target setting or quotas and the inclusion of the gender perspective in managerial performance criteria in order to improve executive accountability for gender balance at all levels and in all occupational groups.
- Provide leadership development opportunities for both women running for and holding office, including access to leadership development programmes, mentorship, coaching and other development opportunities to enable equal access to senior posts.
- Strengthen the capacity of the SFP and individual secretariats and agencies to constantly and effectively monitor gender balance and collect gender-disaggregated data accordingly. Such data would include variables like contract types and wages and salaries by grade, scale, and occupation.
- Refer, in addition, to the recommendations in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this report.

5.2. Towards equal access to politics

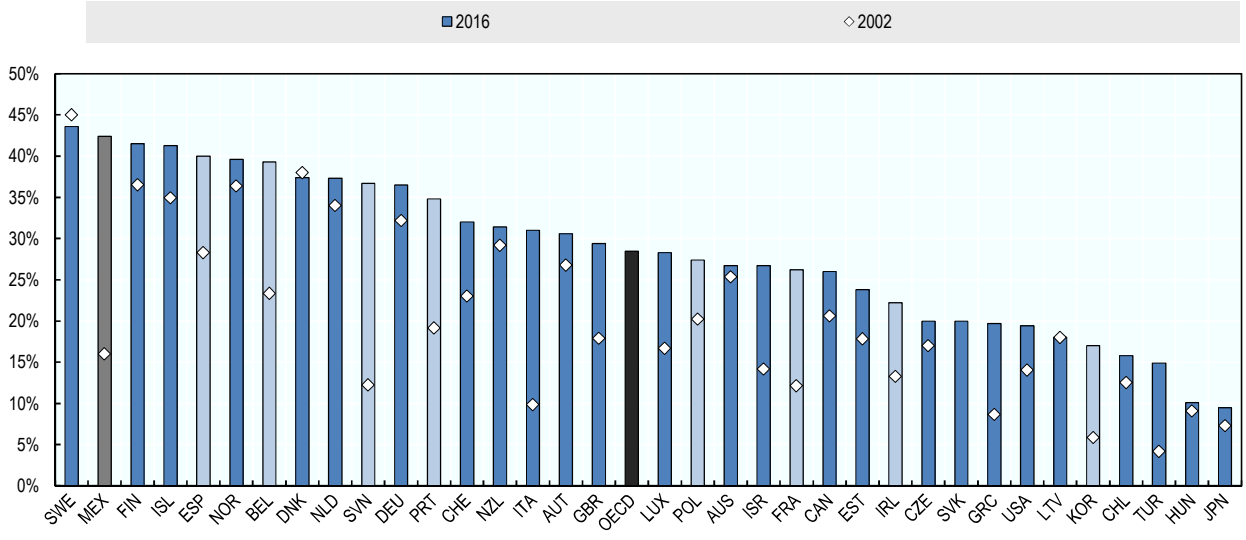
A snapshot of women in politics and the judiciary

The 2006 General Law on Equality between Women and Men (hereafter referred to as the "Equality Law") tasks the Mexican Government with developing policies that enable women and men to take part in political and socioeconomic decision making on an equal footing (Article 36). Indeed, over the past decade, alongside efforts to incorporate the *gender perspective* into all government action, Mexico has embarked upon a series of reforms to narrow the gender gap in public decision making. In 2014, for example, a government amendment to Article 41 of the Federal Constitution institutionalised the parity principle in federal and state congressional elections. Article 41 now requires political parties to draw up rules that guarantee gender parity in their appointments of candidates in federal and state elections.

Since the parity requirement came into force, there are considerably more Mexican women in decision-making positions in representative bodies. And the results of the most recent federal elections – that took place in June 2015 – put Mexico second in the OECD, just after Sweden and ahead of Finland, for the percentage of women in lower chambers and single-house legislatures. Worldwide, Mexico has the seventh-highest proportion of female members of parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2016), with women currently filling 42.37% of the Chamber of Deputies' 500 seats and 33.6% of the Senate's. These figures show remarkable progress both over time (only 22.6% of women were deputies in 2005) and against the 2016 OECD average of 28.47% of seats in lower and single chambers.

Figure 5.1. Share of female parliamentarians in OECD countries, 2002 and 2016

Percentage of women holding seats in lower houses and unicameral legislatures



Note: Bars in light blue represent countries with lower or single house parliaments with legislated candidate quotas as of 2015. Data refer to share of women parliamentarians recorded as of September 2016 and October 2002. Percentages represent the number of women parliamentarians as a share of total filled seats. 2002 data for the Slovak Republic are unavailable.

Source: PARLINE (database); Quota Project (database).

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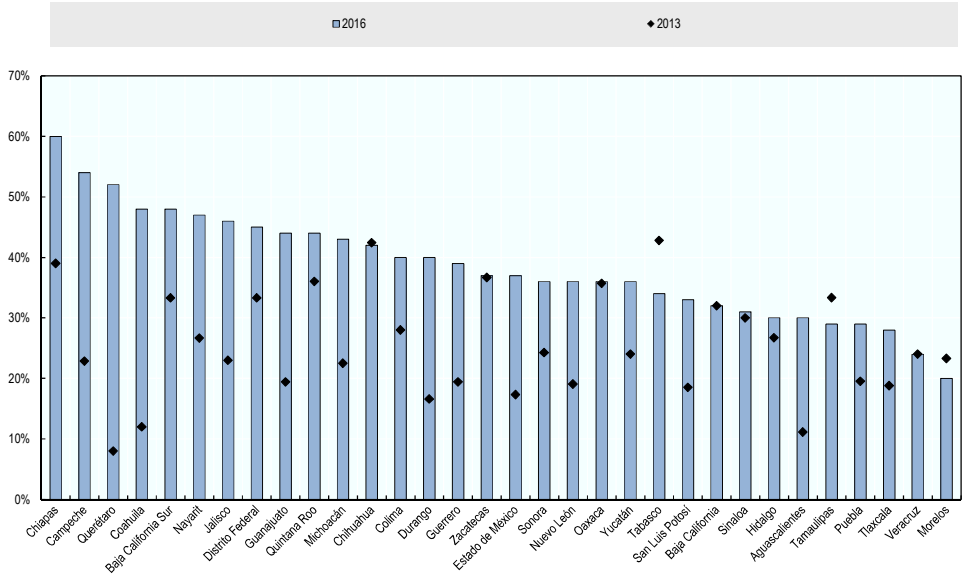
Gains in women's representation at the federal level have trickled down to the state level since the 2014 electoral reform came into force. In the states' unicameral congresses, women held an average of 38% of seats in 2016 and, in 27 out of the 32 states, their representation reached the critical mass of 30%, considered to be the point at which they can bring about real change in policy agendas. And in three states – Chiapas, Campeche and Querétaro – female representatives are now in fact a majority (Figure 5.2).

These impressive gains are in contrast to the situation that still prevailed as recently as 2013, when representation in only 11 states had achieved 30% critical mass and there was parity in none (Figure 5.2). In that regard, the tremendous progress in the Congress of Durango is worth mentioning. The June 2016 elections saw the share of seats held by women skyrocket from 16% in 2013 to 40% in 2016 – a remarkable increase considering that the Durango Congress brought up the rear of the 32 states for women's representation, but now ranks 14th. Nevertheless, women's state-level representation still varies – from 60% in Chiapas to 20% in Morelos.

Figure 5.2. How women's representation in Mexico's state congresses evolved from 2013 to 2016

Female representatives as a percentage of the total number of congressional representatives



Source: State congresses' websites, listed in Mexico's National Human Rights Commission, "Igualdad – Monitoreo de Legislación y Programas de Igualdad y Asuntos de la Mujer" (Equality – Monitoring Equality and Gender-related Legislation and Programmes), www.cndh.org.mx/Igualdad_Monitoreo_Programas and "Ranking de Participación Política de las Mujeres en los Congresos Locales" (Local congress rankings in female political participation), http://www.cndh.org.mx/sites/all/doc/programas/mujer/6_MonitoreoLegislacion/6.0/24_ParticipacionPoliticaMujeresGobiernosEstatales_2015dic.pdf.

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Box 5.2. Where does the 30% "critical mass" for women's political representation come from?

- ***The concept of "critical mass": from physics to social-political science***. Borrowed from nuclear physics where it indicates the quantity of plutonium necessary to produce a nuclear explosion, the concept was first applied to gender in the 1970s by an American scholar, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (Kanter, 1977). She was studying the experiences of women who form small minorities in the corporate sector. Kanter estimated that, when the proportion of minority members reached about 30%, they were able to influence decision making autonomously as a group. In the 1980s, her findings were picked up on by the Danish political scientist Drude Dahlerup (Dahlerup, 1988), who argued that the critical mass phenomenon could also apply to women who constituted a minority group in politics. As for the outcomes that critical mass could produce, Kanter and Dahlerup referred mainly to the possibility that increased numbers would enable women to form supportive coalitions and promote women-relevant policy change.

- ***UN targets and international commitments***. In 1990, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) issued a Resolution E/1990/68 on equality in political participation and decision making. The resolution recommended increasing the proportion of women in positions of leadership by setting incremental targets: 30% by 1995 and 50% by 2000. The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, reported little progress in achieving the ECOSOC target of 30% of women in decision making positions. Accordingly, the Beijing Platform for Action called on governments (as part of strategic objective G1) to "commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, inter alia, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions".

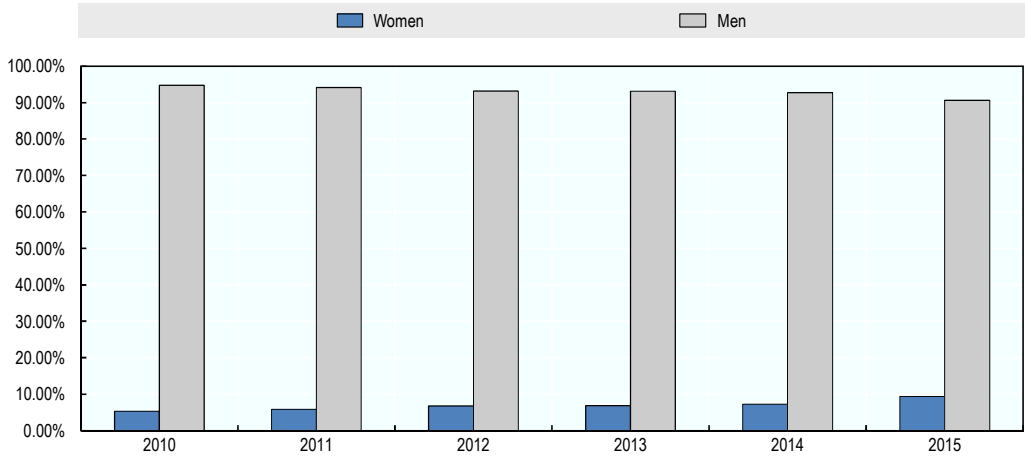
Box 5.2. Where does the 30% "critical mass" for women's political representation come from? *(cont.)*

- ***Gender quotas and emerging trends to boost equitable representation***. The concept of critical mass as applied to women's political representation, and the UN targets that have flowed from it, have played an important role in supporting countries in the adoption of gender quotas in various spheres of the public and private sectors. According to data provided by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU, 2015), the global average of women in national parliaments has nearly doubled in the past 20 years from 11.3% in 1995 to 22.1% in 2015 (a rise of 10.8 points). However, recent socio-political studies (Childs and Krook, 2008), as well as IPU data (IPU, 2015) confirm that the achievement of a critical mass is no longer seen as the sole target of efforts to bring about gender-equal participation in positions of leadership. Efforts emerging in different parts of the world to translate women's presence in leadership positions into meaningful change for men and women, young and elderly, and minority groups have such focal points as:
  - gender parity requirements;
  - complementary legislation and initiatives to strengthen not only numerical representation, but the capacity of women in leadership;
  - increased gender-sensitivity in policy making processes and solidarity mechanisms;
  - efforts to facilitate access to elected office for diverse women's groups (considering variables in age, belonging to minorities, etc.)

Source: Dahlerup, D. (1988), "From a Small to a Large Minority: Women in Scandinavian Politics", *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 11; Kanter, R.M. (1977a), "Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life", *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 82, No. 5; Kanter, R.M. (1977b), *Men and Women of the Corporation*, Basic Books, New York; Childs, S. and M.L. Krook (2008), "Critical Mass Theory and Women's Political Representation", *Political Studies*, Vol. 56; and Inter-Parliamentary Union (2015), "Women in Parliament: 20 Years in Review".

In the third tier of government, only 19 states to date have introduced parity requirements in the municipal councils[2] where women were *regentes* (presidents or chief councillors) in less than 10% in 2015 (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3. Presidents of municipal councils by gender, 2010-15



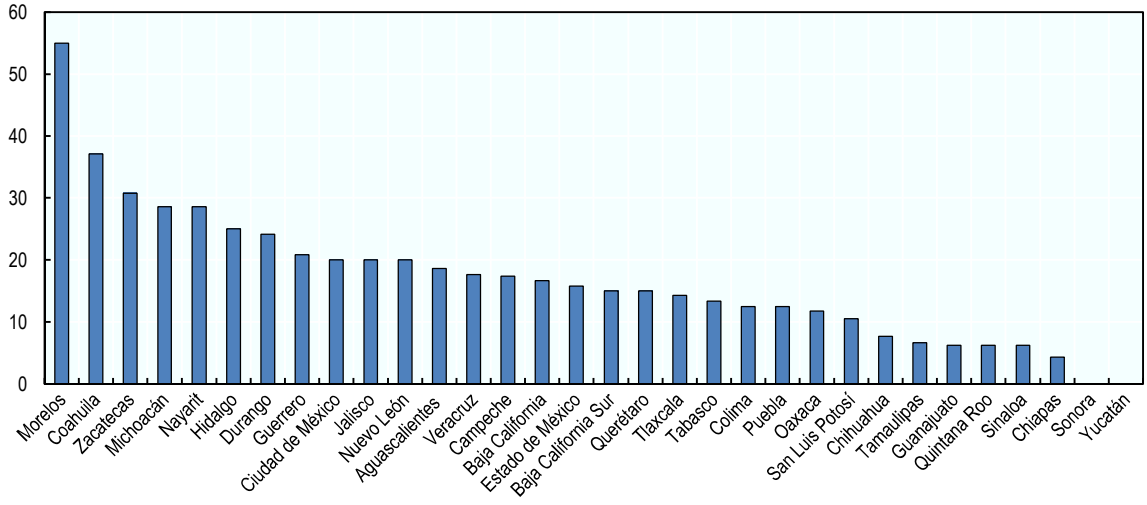
Source: INMUJERES Database
http://estadistica.inmujeres.gob.mx/formas/muestra_indicador_pc.php?IDPrograma=1&IDObjetivo=1&IDNivel1=4.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933423393

Analysis of the proportion of women in decision-making positions, where gender quota legislation does not apply, reveals an entirely different picture. Recent figures point to a significant discrepancy between women's access to decision making in the political executive and in representative bodies. The gender gap in executive branch is significantly wider and women still hold far fewer political positions than their male counterparts at all levels of government. For example, they account for only 2 of the 18 portfolios within the *Gabinete Legal*, or Presidential Cabinet – the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary for Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development. Also under the aegis of the Presidential Cabinet is the Attorney General and head of the federal executive legal office. Mexico's current Attorney General is female, only the second to fill the job. In other cabinet-level administration offices, or *Gabinete Ampliado* (Extended Cabinet), women hold two of the five available posts – Director of the National System for Integral Family Development and President of the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES). Members of the Executive Cabinet are directly appointed by the President of the Republic and, although the number of female secretaries of state has been on the rise since 1975, appointments remain highly political with gender balance far from a requirement – or even a consideration.

At the gubernatorial level, only 1 out of 32 states in Mexico (Sonora) emerged from the 2015 mid-term elections with a woman as governor.[3] In state-level cabinets, women hold an average of only 16.8% of available seats. There is also a wide disparity between states, ranging from all-male cabinets in Sonora (excluding the female governor) and Yucatán to 55% representation of women in Morelos.

Figure 5.4. Women's participation in Mexico's state-level cabinets, 2016

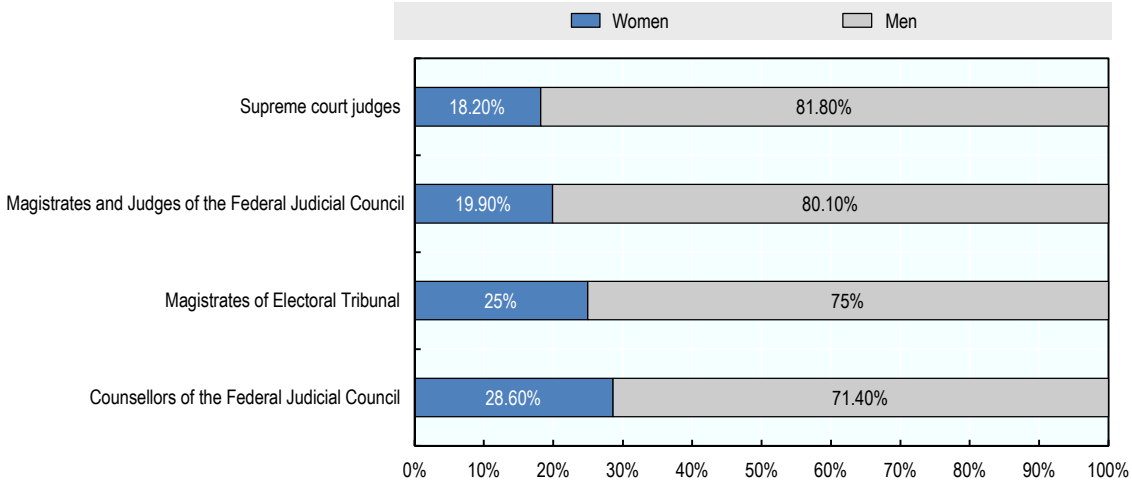


Source: INMUJERES.

The gender gap in high-ranking positions in the judiciary is akin to that of the political executive. The highest court in the land – the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation – consists of 11 judges, referred to as "ministers". When vacancies arise, the President forwards the names of candidates and it is up to the Senate to endorse or reject them. The Attorney General is appointed in the same way. There have only been two female Attorney Generals in Mexico's history. The first held office for less than a year in 2011, while the second, who is the current incumbent, assumed office in March 2015. High judicial appointment records show minimal, if any, consideration, for gender balance as a criterion for selection. The

position of Chief Justice, for instance, has never been filled by a woman. Overall, women held less than one-third of senior positions in the judiciary in 2015 and occupy only 2 of the Supreme Court's 11 seats (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5. The gender share in decision making positions in the judiciary in Mexico, 2015



Source: INEGI (2015).

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Implementing quotas in Mexico: a success story

There is little doubt that the high-level political commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment demonstrated in recent years by the Mexican Government, Congress, the Federal Electoral Tribunal (TEPJF) and IMMUJERES has played a crucial role in the gains in women's representation in legislative bodies. It has also contributed decisively to a series of reforms that have introduced and effectively implemented quota requirements in the Federal Electoral Law. However, the story of how gender equality became a nationwide priority and how quotas were progressively enforced belongs to a more complex framework. It tells how political parties played a primary role and Mexican women's leadership and ability to build cross-party alliances functioned as a catalyst for change, sparking fruitful debate within and between parties, in the national legislature and public opinion.

The ideas of gender quotas germinated in political parties. While women in the parties were the driving force – with some senior officials and powerful figures using their influence to muster support inside and outside the party – they could not have pushed quotas through without the support of their parties. In a dynamic dialogue with their own female representatives, the legislature and the public, parties gradually grasped that gender quotas matched public expectations. The realisation was driven home by mounting evidence as female representation in elected bodies started gradually to grow – in the wake of parties' voluntary adoption of quotas in the 1990s – and to dismantle the stereotypical view of women as incapable of leadership. Reacting to the public and to the legislature's enabling culture, parties came to recognise gender quotas and gender equality as an issue and managed to include it in national legislative debate. All of this led to the successful passage of the quota law through parliament in 2002 and the progressive reinforcement of the concepts of gender equality and gender quotas in subsequent legal instruments.

Affirmative action measures, such as gender quotas and parity principles, are being used in various OECD countries and beyond to accelerate women's representation at all levels of government and among political parties' nominees. In Mexico, quotas and the subsequent introduction of the parity principle ushered in by Article 41 of the Federal Constitution have had a strong bearing on the growing number of women entering elected bodies at both federal and state level (see Figure 5.5). Since 2014, Article 41 has upheld the principle of gender equality by requiring political parties to draw up rules to ensure gender parity in the nomination of candidates in federal and local congressional elections. The first election held after the 2014 constitutional amendment came into force was the legislative election of 2015. It saw 211 women voted into the Chamber of Deputies – 42.37% of the total and up from 36.8% in the previous 2012 election (PARLINE database).

Nonetheless, quota requirements in electoral laws cannot alone increase women's representation in politics. Many of the OECD countries that have statutory gender quotas for their parliaments still fall short of the numerical target set by law. In Mexico, for example, while the 2008 electoral law targeted a gender quota of 40% of women, the 2009 legislative election delivered only 28.2%.

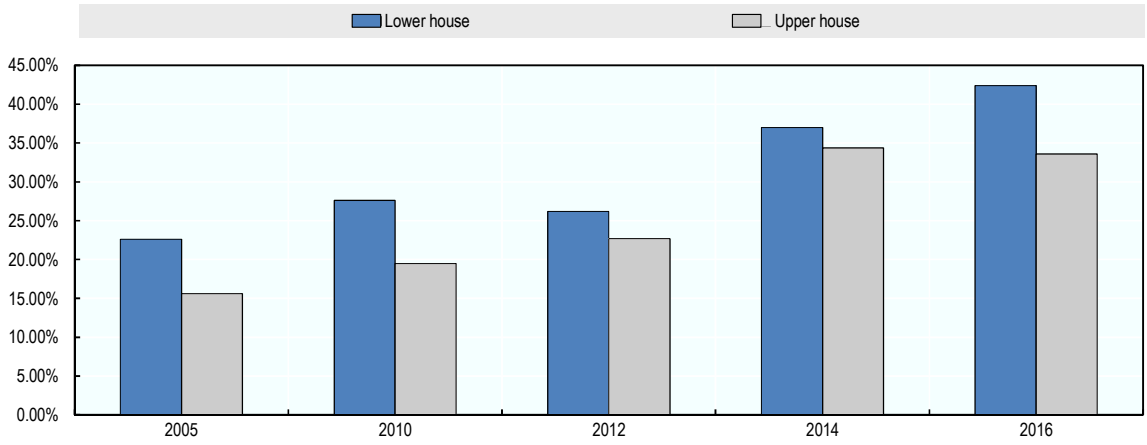
In fact, the effectiveness of quotas is contingent upon factors such as:

- the level of the gender quota,
- the nature of party lists,
- whether penalties for non-compliance act as deterrents,
- the effectiveness of incentives to comply.

The TEPJF has been an important ally in monitoring the implementation of Mexico's quota requirement. Prior to 2011, a loophole in the electoral law allowed parties to nominate less than 40% of women if they did so as a result of a "democratic election process" – as defined by each political party (Box 5.3). In 2011, the TEPJF crucially ruled that the practice was unconstitutional, so closing the loophole. The tribunal argued that any process used by a political party to select candidates must, by definition and by law, be democratic, and that nominations produced by what the party terms a "democratic election process" may actually be a denial of statutory affirmative action.[4]

The ruling set a precedent, prompting both federal and state legislatures to amend their electoral laws accordingly. In the wake of the amendments, the 2012 elections saw women win more than one-third of seats in both houses for the first time in Mexico's history. In 2014, wider-ranging debate on electoral reform led to the revision of Article 41 of the Constitution, which now requires parties to enforce gender parity among their election nominees. Electoral reform was also able to close another loophole when it required candidates and their deputies to be of the same sex so that parties could no longer pressure female parliamentarians into resigning to make way for their male running mate.[5]

Figure 5.6. How women's representation in the Congress of the Union has evolved



Source: PARLINE database.

StatLink http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933423425

Box 5.3. How the gender equality normative framework in Mexico's Congress has evolved: From quotas to parity

The upper house, the *Cámara de Senadores* or Senate, is composed of 128 representatives, 96 of which are elected by a direct popular vote using a single member district system, while the other 32 are elected by proportional representation in a single nationwide constituency.

The Cámara de Diputados, Chamber of Deputies, is the lower house and composed of 500 seats. 300 seats are elected using a single member district system. The remaining 200 representatives are elected using the proportional representation system through closed party lists in five districts of 40 seats each. They are not tied to any district but to the percentage of the national vote each party receives.

- **1990s**: Despite the fact that one of the main Mexican parties, the PRD, had established an informal advisory goal of having 25% female candidates in 1990, the practice across political parties of either removing female candidates from the list entirely or relegating them to the bottom of the ballot steered up discussion on internal gender policies within the main Mexican political parties in the beginning of the 1990s. In the following, two of the three major political parties in Mexico introduced quotas for their own parties' candidates.

- **1993**: The Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD, *Partido de la Revolución Democrática*) included in its party statutes a 30% quota for committees and candidate lists.

- **1996**: The Institutional Revolution Party (PRI, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*) instituted a quota calling for the candidate lists not to contain more than 70% of candidates of the same sex.

  The same year, the PRI-dominated Congress of Mexico passed this advisory quota into the electoral law. However, it was not a mandatory quota, neither containing a placement mandate nor any form of sanction in the event of non-compliance.

- **2002**: A revision of the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE) required lists to both proportional and majority seats for Senators and Deputies not to include more than 70% of candidates of the same gender. Moreover, the new law stipulated that at least one of the top three candidates to proportional seats was to be female. In case of non-compliance, COFIPE foresaw that the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE, *Instituto Federal Electoral*), responsible for organising federal elections, refused parties the right to register their candidates in the respective district. The law, however, contained a loophole as it exempted parties from applying the quota when candidates were elected by direct vote using a primary system.

Box 5.3. How the gender equality normative framework in Mexico's Congress has evolved: From quotas to parity *(cont.)*

- **2008**: A revision of the COFIPE increased the gender quota for candidates from 30% to 40% and changed the make-up of the closed party lists for proportional representation to lists of five candidates, of whom at least two should be women. The direct-vote loophole remained, though, and parties were still able to get round quotas, if they chose candidates through an election procedure defined as "democratic" by party statutes.
- **2014**: Article 41 of the Mexican Federal Constitution was reformed and a new electoral law passed requiring gender parity in the candidate lists of political parties for federal and state legislative elections. In proportional representation lists, the sexes have to alternate, in line with the so-called "zipper system". For the remaining seats to be elected by plurality vote, the electoral law empowers the National Electoral Institute (INE, *Instituto Nacional Electoral* formerly IFE, *Federal Electoral Institute*) to ensure that women are not exclusively assigned to the districts in which the party in question has typically received the lowest percentage of the vote, a tactic that previously diminished the impact of candidacy quotas. INE is also responsible for sanctioning parties that do not comply with the parity requirement by denying registration of their candidate lists.

Source: Information provided by the Federal Electoral Tribunal, Dingmann, Joe (2015), "Legislated Equality: Gender Quotas in a Latin American Context and the Story of Mexico", *Honors Theses,* Paper No. 71, http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1070&context=honors_theses (accessed on 24 October 2016); USAID (2014), *Women's Leadership as a Route to Greater Empowerment: Mexico Case Study*, United States Agency for International Development, Arlington, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/WiP%20-%20Mexico%20Case%20Study.pdf (accessed on 24 October 2016); International IDEA and IDB (2011), *Gender and Political parties: Far from parity*, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and Inter-American Development Bank, Stockholm and Washington D.C., http://www.idea.int/publications/parties_and_parity/upload/Gender-And-Political-Parties_Far-from-Parity.pdf (accessed on 24 October 2016).

In 2014, the same year in which Article 4.1 of the Constitution instituted parity in the nomination of candidates, the Observatory of Political Participation of Women in Mexico came into being, the result of a joint initiative by INMUJERES, TEPJF and the National Electoral Institute (INE). Its purpose is to co-ordinate action to promote the participation of women in areas of public decision making in Mexico. It also aims to monitor whether, outside affirmative action, women are making effective progress in decision-making spheres – to what degree they are an integral part of decision-making processes, for example, and how gender-balanced representation impacts on the political agenda and ways of doing politics. While it is too early to measure the success or potential shortcomings of the Observatory, it provides transparent, easily accessible electoral information to public scrutiny.

As at federal level, quotas are not enough in themselves to foster greater women's participation in high-ranking, decision-making positions at the state level. The introduction of sanctions for non-compliance with quota requirements, such as the rejection of candidate lists, has been effective. In states like Puebla, Morales and Veracruz, where women hold less than 30% of seats in the local congress, there is not yet any provision for sanctions for non-compliance.[6] Although quotas have proven to be effective at the state level in boosting women's representation in elected bodies, parties in some states continue to disagree and argue that greater female participation in elected positions flouts party rights. In such cases, a party usually nominates female candidates in districts where it has little chance of winning. In that way, it is actually meeting the gender quota.

Barriers hindering women's access to decision-making decisions in politics and the judiciary

Violence and harassment

As it pursues the goal of substantive gender equality between women and men, in accordance with the 2006 Equality Act, Mexico has still to overcome some entrenched barriers to women's access to politics and the judiciary. Chief among them are negative attitudes to female politicians, political harassment and violence, and norms and values which consider that unpaid caregiving and housework is women's work.

Political harassment and violence against women in politics remains a daunting obstacle. A survey in 2008 found that 64% of women believed that the sexual harassment of female political office holders indeed took place, while 23% claimed they had been sexually harassed in their work as legislators (Cerva Cerna, 2014). Similarly, a perception survey conducted in 2015 by INMUJERES across the civil service (FPA) revealed that more than 77% of female respondents believed that female civil servants experienced sexual pressure when seeking better job opportunities (INMUJERES, 2015). Moreover, the Federal Electoral Court has also called attention to the apparent impunity enjoyed by those who mob and sexually harass female colleagues.

Traditional views of gender roles, stereotyping and the prevailing patriarchal culture are behind political harassment and violence, particularly at the state and municipal levels of government. Such violence comes in many different forms – from slander (rumours about mental health and personal life) and baseless accusations of corruption to intimidation, threats and kidnapping. During the 2015 elections in the State of Sonora, for example, banners bore slogans to the effect that the female gubernatorial candidate's place was not in the governor's mansion, but pregnant in a corner (Krook et al., 2016). Female politicians have also reported difficulties in asserting their authority when male subordinates who refuse to take orders from a woman seek to undermine them (Krook et al., 2016; Barrera-Bassols, 2014; Escalante and Méndez, 2011).

Table 5.1. Key elements of quota laws and political systems in selected OECD countries

	Quota type			Quota level specified			Penalty	Electoral system (national)			Electoral statistics**	
	Lower House	Upper House	Subnational level	For women	For men	Other quota	For non-compliance	System	Placement	Details	Latest election	First after law
Belgium	☑	☑	☑	50%	50%	No	Rejection of list	PR (Flexi)	yes	top 2	39.3% (2014)	36.7% (2007)
France	☑	☑	☑	50%	50%	Voluntary	Financial	TRS	none	-	26.9% (2012)	12.3% (2002)
Greece	☑	-	☑	33.30%	33.30%	Voluntary	-	PR (Open)	none	-	19,67% (2015)	21% (2012)
Ireland	☑			30%	30%	No, but targets	Financial	STV	none	-	22.15% (2016)	n.a.
Korea	☑	-	☑	30% & 50%	Not specified	Voluntary	Rejection of list	Parallel	yes (50%)	zipp list	17.00% (2016)	13% (2004)
Mexico	☑	☑	☑	40%	40%	Voluntary	Rejection of list	MMP	yes	5-2, zipp	42.34% (2015)	28.2% (2009)
Poland	☑		☑	35%	35%	No	Rejection of list	PR (Open)	yes	top 3	27.17% (2015)	23.7% (2011)
Portugal	☑	-	☑	33%	33%	No	Financial	PR (Closed)	yes	zipp list	31.30% (2015)	28.3% (2007)
Slovenia	☑		☑	35%	35%	Voluntary	Rejection of list	PR (Open)	none	-	35.56% (2014)	13.3% (2008)
Spain	☑	☑	☑	40% (max 60%)	40% (max 60%)	Voluntary	Rejection of list	PR (Closed)	yes	40% -5	39.14% (2016)	36.3% (2008)

Note: Election system: MMP – Mixed-member proportional representation; PR – Proportional representation; STV – Single transferable vote; TRS – Single-member majority systems in two rounds; Parallel – A mixed voting system where voters participate in two separate elections for a single chamber that use different systems; Top 2 – One of the two highest positions in each list is reserved for a woman candidate; Zip list – Zipper-system-type list where men and women alternate; 5-2 zip – For PR elections, each segment of five candidates in the list shall have two candidates of each gender, alternating between men and women candidates; Top 3 – At least one woman must be included in each list's first three candidates; 40%-5 – Quota is applied to the list as a whole and to every five posts. If the number of eligible posts is less than five, then the list must be as close as possible to the 40-60% equilibrium.

* Electoral statistics is the proportion of women in the lower house or the unicameral parliament.

Source: OECD analysis based on data from the Quota Project database, www.quotaproject.com; OECD (2014); National parliament websites.

The elusive work-life balance and gender bias

Another challenge to the fair and sustainable representation of women in both politics and the judiciary is the difficulty of striking a work-life balance (Chapter 3). It is a particularly acute issue in the political sphere, where family-friendly policies are rarely practiced at high-ranking decision-making levels, and women are not always able to take on top positions.

As in many other OECD countries, Mexican legislatures' working hours and voting times are unpredictable, and leading female political figures tend to opt out of careers at the top because they preclude a work-life balance, so reducing the pool of available female candidates. OECD findings accordingly show that, in Mexico, a culture which rewards long working hours in the political sphere is obstructing the goal of gender equality. Indeed, an INMUJERES survey revealed that family duties, which women largely assume, prevented a considerable percentage of respondents from standing as candidates in elections (USAID, 2014). Figures from INMUJERES also show that, in 2014, women dedicated three times more time to domestic activities than men – 36.52 hours per week on average versus 12.18.[7] When it comes to paternity leave, Mexico grants only five days – in stark contrast to the OECD average of 8.2 weeks of total paid leave for fathers (see Chapter 3). If fathers – who may be willing and ready to share – are not afforded the space and time to do so, the burden disproportionally falls on mothers.

In the judiciary, similar patterns are at play. Information provided by the TEPJF reveals that some practices – such as family-friendly policies (albeit limited) and work-life balance measures – tend to generate institutional bias against women. The TEPJF also found that instances of heckling and sexually harassing women were still prevalent across the judiciary.

Beyond the quota debate: enabling women's access to the top echelons of power

In Mexico, when adequately implemented, gender quotas have proven to be effective in significantly increasing women's representation in elected decision-making bodies. Quotas are also symbolically important when they enable women to access political office – citizens see them in action, thus tempering negative perceptions of women in power and helping defeat the idea that politics is a man's world (USAID, 2014). However, gains in women's numerical representation do not necessarily translate into greater access to positions of power and influence, as their uneven presence in leading parliamentary positions shows. In 2016, for example, only 16 out of 56 ordinary commissions (29%) in the Chamber of Deputies are presided by women (29%). This rate is slightly higher in the Senate, where women chair more than 31% of ordinary commissions.

However, while female-headed committees deal chiefly with issues related to gender equality, social welfare, education, family and human development, women are not completely absent from traditionally male-dominated portfolios – the presidents of the Energy, Interior and Foreign Affairs Committees are all female. Still, improvements are necessary if Mexico is to meet its constitutional commitment to parity in full.

Action taken in Mexico to help women get to the top

Mexico is stepping up efforts to narrow persistent gender gaps in access to decision-making positions. Yet there is still room for improvement. Since 2010, for example, the internal rules of both Houses of Congress have called on congressional groups and commissions to include gender equality in their criteria for appointing chairs. The rules are

not mandatory, however, nor do they have provision for sanctions in the event of non-compliance (International Parliamentary Union, 2011). A bill introduced in the Chamber of Deputies that called for quotas to make the distribution of committee chairs between men and women fairer was defeated (Marx and Borner, 2011). That being said, although the bill was unsuccessful, the sheer fact that it was tabled points to heightened awareness and a stronger push to afford women genuine access to decision-making positions.

The OECD experience shows that measures such as effective sponsorship, mentoring, building confidence and access to networks can help empower women in all walks of public life (OECD, 2014). Mexico is stepping up efforts in that regard. For example, political parties receive public funding for ordinary activities from which they are required by law to earmark 3% per year (up from 2% in 2008 when the law came into force) to empowering women, improving their access to leading positions, promoting their case and training. Yet, the law does not spell out how political parties must spend that 3%. A study conducted by an NGO, the *Comité Concuidadano para la Observacion Electoral* (Citizens' Joint Electoral Watch Committee), which analysed political parties' strategies in 2009 and 2010, revealed that some used the budget allotment to buy aprons and hold mother's day celebrations – so perpetuating gender stereotypes.[8]

Similarly, in 2014, as part of PROIGUALDAD, INMUJERES conducted a diagnosis of the statutes of political parties[9] in 2014. Its purpose was to see how parties could make gender a mainstream part of their structures, standards, processes, platforms and policies.[10] INMUJERES also made recommendations on how the parties could align their statutes with the requirements of the electoral law.

Measures taken by Mexico to address political violence against women

Political violence is widespread, probably far more so than official figures suggest. The Special Prosecutor's Office for Electoral Crimes (FEPADE), for example reported that, in 2015, it was aware of 38 cases of political violence against women in eight Mexican states: Baja California, Chiapas, State of Mexico, Guerrero, Morelos, Oaxaca, Sonora and Tabasco. The same source has acknowledged, however, that hundreds of such crimes go unreported.[11] Accordingly, Mexico is increasingly taking action.

Mexico has participated in international efforts to address the emerging phenomenon of political violence against women. As part of the tenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean – held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2007 – member countries, who included Mexico, agreed to adopt "legislative and institutional reforms to prevent, punish and eradicate political harassment against women who reach decision-making positions through electoral means or by appointment, both nationally and locally as well as political parties and movements" (ECLAC, 2007). To tackle barriers to women's access to politics stemming from violence against those who seek or hold office, Mexico passed legislation that formalised the concept of political violence against women:

- the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence,
- the General Law of Institutions and Electoral Procedures,
- the General Law on Political Parties.
- the General Electoral Crimes Act, which set out penalties for acts of violence against women in politics.

The Senate, for its part, approved a bill on harassment and violence against women within the political sphere. It was proposed by Senator Lucero Saldaña as a reform of the

General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence. However, it was ultimately rejected by the Chamber of Deputies.

In response to the rise in cases of political violence against women reported to local electoral tribunals and in a move to address gaps in the law in this area, a number of institutions came together in 2015 and 2016 in a working group.[12] It sought to bring a definition and different manifestations of political violence into the legal framework in order to enable women to participate in political life free of discrimination. As result, the Federal Electoral Tribunal endorsed the working group's work and developed a regulatory Protocol on Political Violence against Women. The protocol seeks to:

- offer guidance to organisations fighting political violence against women, help them identify it, address it at the federal, state and municipal levels and on co-ordinate their action;
- facilitate the implementation of international obligations;
- prevent further damage to female victims of violence, their families and loved ones.

Gender-sensitive language and practices help foster a gender-equal working environment

The use of gender-sensitive language and practices in legislative bodies and the FPA helps foster a work environment that is inclusive of both men and women (see Box 5.4). It can also help increase women's participation and create a more gender-balanced workforce. In that context, even though the Congress of the Union in Mexico has not established a formal provision on the use of language, both chambers have adopted more inclusive phrasing. For example, speakers use both masculine and feminine forms of the Spanish words for "deputies" and "senators" – *diputadas y diputados, senadoras y senadores* – when addressing the whole house. In February 2016, Senator Angelica de la Peña presented a manual for the use of inclusive language produced by the Senate Gender Unit.

In response to obstacles it had identified as deterring women from careers in the judiciary – e.g. limited family-friendly policies, mobbing and sexual harassment – the human resources department of the Federal Electoral Tribunal put in place a Gender Equality Unit to support shorter working hours, the implementation of paternity leave and action to raise awareness of gender stereotypes in the workplace. Yet, the distance of the Gender Equality Unit from the apex of decision making has significantly curtailed its influence. It has been transferred to the Presidential Office of the Court to increase its leverage, but its influence on decision making is still uneven and depends on the personality of the President of the Court.

Two other important reforms carried out in 2015 include:

- The incorporation of the principle of gender parity in the Rules of Procedure of the Electoral Tribunal, which is to be applied to judicial career appointments;
- The establishment of the Inter-Institutional Committee on Gender Equality of the Federal Judiciary. Its task is to assess gender equality in the activities of the three branches of the judiciary (the Supreme Court, the Federal Judicial Council and Electoral Court) and play a co-ordinating role among the three branches of the judiciary.

Box 5.4. Examples of gender-sensitive parliamentary practices in OECD countries

United Kingdom. Parliament uses such gender-sensitive practices as flexible working arrangements and teleworking. It has also strengthened gender equality through proxy voting, in which the votes of MPs on parental leave or unable to cast their vote in the Chamber due to childcare obligations are counted (OECD, 2014)

Sweden. In Sweden, the government has put in place a gender equality plan not only for parliamentary staff, but for members of parliament (MPs). The plan addresses issues such as the use of gender-sensitive language in social media and occupational gender gaps in the Riksdag, Sweden's parliament. The Riksdag has set up an internal audit to determine its institutional gender sensitivity with the aim of developing gender-sensitive measures and flexible working schedules. Accordingly, it now draws up its parliamentary calendar one year ahead, with sittings scheduled on specific days of the week between the months of October and June (OECD, 2014).

Canada. Canada's parliament has developed family-friendly, gender-sensitive infrastructure to bridge the gender divide in the country. Parliament has founded the Children on the Hill Pre-school Centre, an on-site childcare centre to be used by members of parliament and parliamentary staff. This childcare provision has capacity for about 30 children from one-and-a-half to five years of age (Barnes and Munn-Rivard, 2013). The move has been effective in increasing women's representation in parliament, with priority given to senators, MPs, employees of the Senate and House of Commons, Library of Parliament employees, employees of the Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner, and members of the press gallery. The on-site childcare facility for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff has been in place for over 30 years.[13]

Australia. In Australia's parliament, nursing mother MPs may cast their vote by proxy, a practice established by a resolution of the House in 2008. The Australian Breastfeeding Association has also recognised the parliament as a breastfeeding-friendly workplace. Parliament also has a private space for breastfeeding and provides time during the day for MPs to breastfeed (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2015).

5.3. Fostering gender balance across the Federal Public Administration (FPA)

A snapshot of women's representation in the FPA

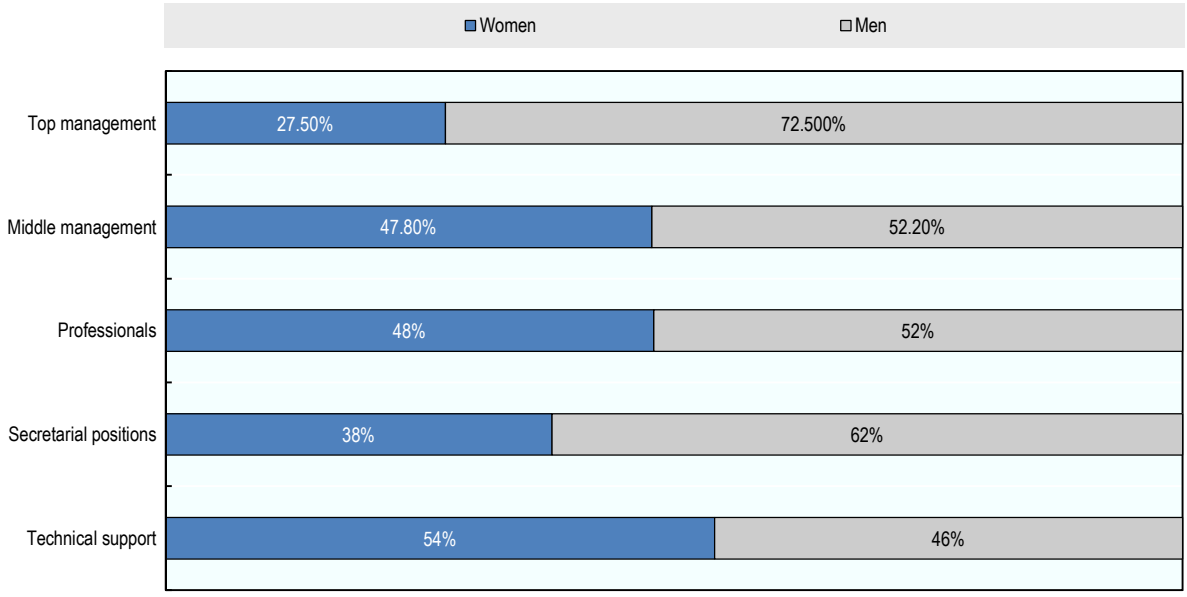
The public sector accounts for much female employment in all OECD countries. Mexico is no exception. Women are better represented in the public than in the private sector, making up 51% of Mexico's public employees. That high proportion is significant, as there is evidence that a gender-balanced workforce offers a greater variety of skills, competencies, perspectives, experiences and backgrounds, which fuels better organisational and financial performance (OECD, 2012; McKinsey & Company, 2013). Achieving substantive equality between women and men in public service employment is also linked to gender-balanced policies and quality service delivery, which prompt perceptions of the civil service as exemplary, responsible, responsive and legitimate and, in turn, contributes to greater public trust in government (OECD, 2009; OECD 2014).

Nonetheless, women's representation in the government workforce is not solely about the number of women employed, but the types of positions for which they are hired, the opportunities they have in such positions to make full contributions, and the share of decision-making positions they actually hold in government departments and institutions. Against those yardsticks, Mexican women are still affected by lower occupational and sector-related segregation. They fill, at best, one-third of public managerial positions (see Figure 5.7) and are better represented, though not necessarily at the senior level, in "soft" departments like education, the environment and tourism (see Figure 5.9). There is also a discrepancy between the number of women in high-ranking public positions and the proportion of women (in the whole population) with the educational qualifications to fill them. Clearly, Mexico has not yet achieved a gender-representative public sector and

reform to its merit-based Professional Career Service System (2003) has yet to offset disparities (OECD interviews in February 2016; UNDP, 2012).

A number of barriers inhibit women's full participation as workers in the public sector and their access to top decision-making posts. They include a culture of long working hours, the lack of flexible work arrangements, inadequate child care services, discriminatory practices and sexual harassment. Mexico's national and international gender equality commitments are not properly converted into public administration policies – especially in such critical areas such as recruitment, promotion, pay, benefits packages and training (*ibid.*).

Figure 5.7. Women's representation as workers in the federal public sector, December 2015



Note: Data on occupational segregation, as well as consultant versus full-time contracts by gender, are not available.

Source: 2016 OECD Survey on the Federal Public Administration in Mexico.

Women in FPA decision making and leadership positions

From 2011 to 2015 the number of women in senior FPA positions increased. However, there were no major differences in the types of positions they filled, with the exception of under-secretaries, where the proportion of women fell slightly from 13.5% to 11.6% (see Figure 5.8). It is noteworthy that secretariats of state headed by women do not necessarily have more female under-secretaries (UNDP, 2012). Data from IMMUJERES reveal that, in 2011, consultancy appointments account for the highest percentage of women working professionally in the FPA – 38.6%. The finding may either indicate acknowledgement of women's qualifications in required areas or the fact that they are being overlooked both for full-time, secure employment and in recruitment processes for senior positions (INMUJERES, 2011). More data on the profile of consultancy positions filled by women are not currently available and the rationale behind hiring them remains unclear. According to information supplied by the Secretariat of the Civil Service, there is no gender distinction in the public service in relation to classes of job.

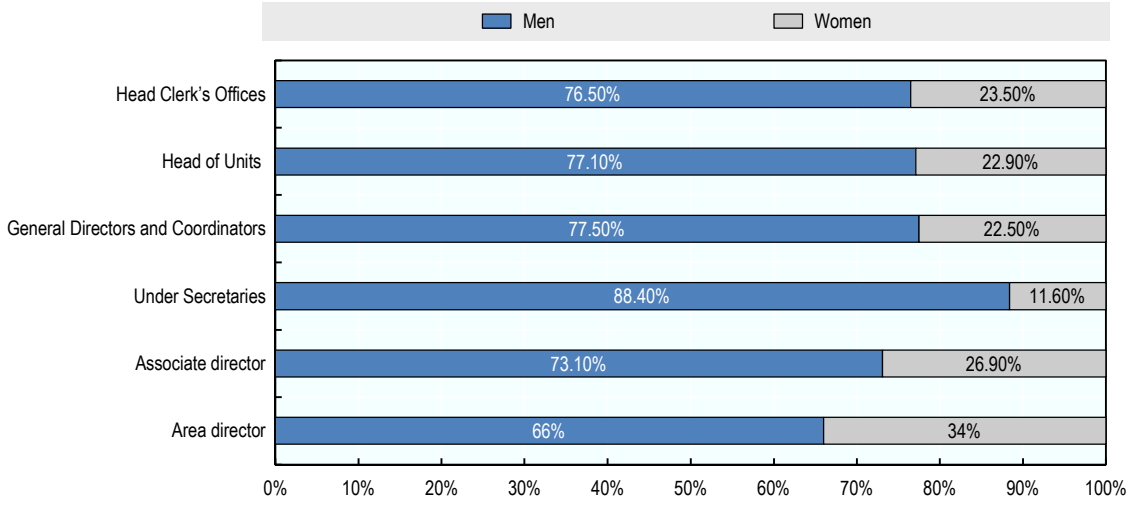
The achievement of gender-equality targets is not currently a criterion in managers' performance evaluations. The OECD found that, when it comes to individuals, only public servants involved in some way with a gender-related programme or project can set

performance targets, though they can add gender-related performance targets to programmes and projects considered to be cross-cutting. Nonetheless, there are currently no incentive or sanction mechanisms in place to enforce gender equality provisions.

However, there are prospects that incentives and sanction will be introduced – through the new co-operation agreement signed on 9 March 2016 between the SFP and the INMUJERES to promote the lines of action in the National Programme for Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination (PROIGUALDAD). The SFP has agreed to define and issue policy guidelines to promote special temporary measures in furtherance of gender parity in management positions and to include affirmative action to promote equality of opportunity and equality between women and men in its regulations. The SFP also plans to reflect those provisions in its human resources and professional career service manuals. It is important that, in the future, action to ensure equality should also include measures to empower women so that they may access positions of leadership (making them role models) and take part in decision making on equal footing with men. Mexico's civil service should consider further policies and initiatives for enhancing the recruitment of women in sectors where they are underrepresented.

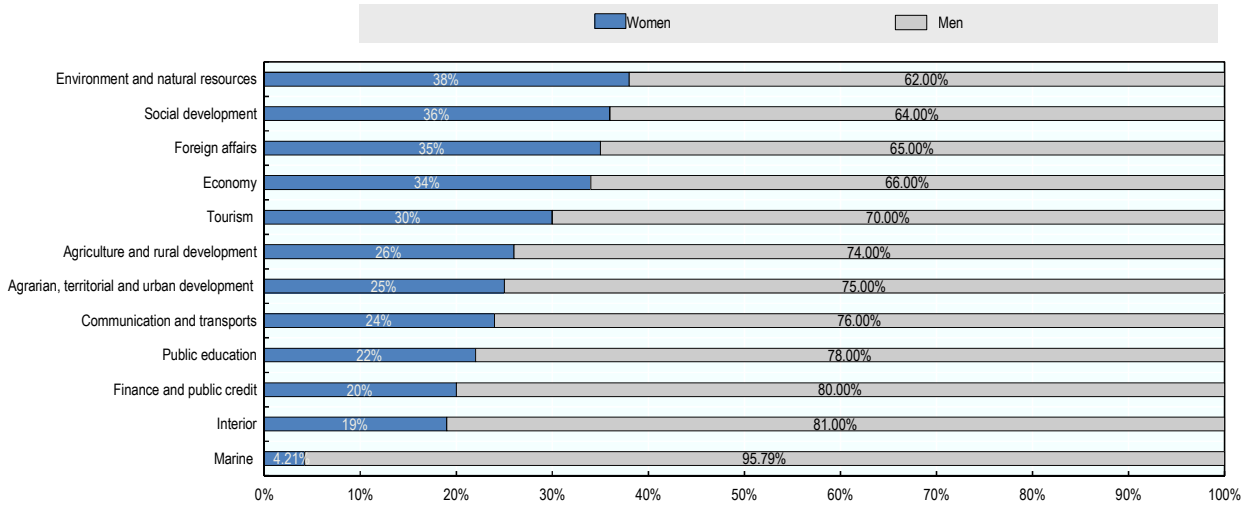
As for women's representation in government departments, the National Human Rights Ombudsman revealed in 2014 – as part of its oversight functions under the 2006 Equality Act – that most of those where women held more than 30% of managerial positions were, with the exception of the Foreign Affairs and Economy Secretariats, traditionally considered female domains – e.g. Social Development and the Environment and Tourism (see Figure 5.9). Managerial positions in departments like the Navy, the Interior and Finance and Public Credit are male-dominated.

Figure 5.8. Shares of federal civil servants in senior positions, by level of post and gender, 2015



Source: INEGI (2015), "Women and Men in Mexico", Instituto Nacional de Transparencia, Acceso a la Informacion y Proteccion de Datos Personales (National Institute of Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data), 15 June.

Figure 5.9. Share of women in management positions in selected ministries, 2014



Note: The figures presented were obtained through requests for information submitted by the National Commission for the first half of 2014.

Source: CNDH (2014).

Barriers and pathways to a gender-balanced professional career service

Although cross-occupational segregation and gender pay gaps are narrower in the public than private sector, they persist. As in the private sector, they are smaller among younger workers and wider at the upper end of the income distribution. According to the SFP,[14] neither regular pay assessments nor audits to ensure pay equality and equity are undertaken. While civil service wages and salaries are not gender-distinct, but determined by job, there may be unknown wage differentials between men and women at various grades or salary scales within a given job. To gain perspective on the question, there is a need for data on wages and salaries by grade, scale, occupation, gender and, perhaps, educational credentials. Only with such data is it possible to compere male and female salaries and job levels and determine whether they match qualifications and their distribution is similar. Currently, the SFP does not collect such information, but it would be a good practice were it do so in order to identify gender gaps and areas that require attention.

As in the political sphere and the judiciary, a number of barriers still restrict Mexican women's participation in the public sector workforce, particularly in top-level positions. They relate to a work culture that pervades the FPA and focuses on the number of hours spent in the office as opposed to efficiency and achievement. Institutional practices and arrangements which prevent men and women from reconciling work and private life and do not ensure women's safety in the workplace hinder their opportunities, experience and career development to a considerable degree.

Difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities perpetuate a culture of "sacrifice to the job" throughout the FPA where time off for annual and parental leave is frowned up. Women in particular pay the price, compelled to choose between work and family. Fathers' lesser involvement in the household, coupled with only five days of paternity leave (in both public and private sectors), complicates their efforts make greater contributions to childcare and perpetuates gender roles (Chapter 3).

Violence, bullying and sexual harassment are also a bane in Mexico's civil service. An FPA-wide perception survey conducted in 2014 by INMUJERES (2015) with some 600 000 public officials found that more than 77% of female respondents believe female public servants experience sexual advances in return for the promise of better job opportunities. The SFP claims there is a standardised complaints procedure against sexual harassment in all FPA departments and agencies, but states that it does not have data on the number, type and outcome of complaints pertaining to gender-based violence or sexual harassment cases. On 30 August 2016, the Secretariat of the Interior (SEGOB), the SFP and INMUJERES signed and published a protocol on the prevention, treatment and punishment of bullying and sexual harassment in the FPA.[15] Although there is provision in the FPA for all types of complaint, there is none – to the OECD's knowledge – for lodging complaints specifically connected to sexual harassment or gender-based violence. The agreement between SEGOB, SFP and INMUJERES could be a launching pad for a dedicated complaint mechanism and the regular collection of statistics on gender-based harassment and violence.

To support working mothers and fathers in the public service, the Law of the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers (ISSSTE) has established employer childcare facilities and subsidies (i.e. maternal and paternal leave on full pay). However, they are currently no data collected on the percentage of employees that opt for the ISSSTE childcare provision as opposed to alternative, institution-specific services, or why (Chapter 3).

Flexible work arrangements (e.g. parental leave, temporary part-time employment, teleworking, compressed weeks, and flexitime) are among the most effective measures deployed across the OECD to underpin women's pathways to top jobs in the public service. In Mexico, there is provision for flexible working hours, but it applies only to unionised workers and depends on their collective bargaining agreement. Part-time workers cannot benefit. The policy framework in place within the FPA does not facilitate teleworking arrangements for public sector employees, which makes Mexico an unusual case in the OECD. And as the SFP does not collect information on the numbers of unionised and non-unionised workers and the differences in rules that regulate their working conditions, it is difficult to determine how many FPA employees actually benefit from work-life balance measures and what those are.

Good practices from OECD countries point to policy options that improve women's equal representation in areas where they are traditionally underrepresented, while maintaining merit-based employment processes. Proactive measures such as gender-equality hiring and promotion targets are increasingly being used (see Table 5.2).

While Mexico, for its part, has not introduced laws or policies that seek specifically to enhance the recruitment and promotion of women in the civil service, it has put in place a number of enabling measures for promoting a gender-balanced public service. The country is currently stepping up efforts to implement policies and programmes to improve gender equality across the FPA. For example, the Institutional Culture Programme developed by INMUJERES is designed to encourage all public institutions to undertake gender equality self-assessments – on issues like equal opportunity practices in hiring, time use by gender, capacity-building opportunities and sexual harassment –and to draw up action plans to integrate the gender perspective into personnel management processes. In 2015, Mexico also issued the Standard on Equal Employment Opportunities and Non-discrimination.[16] A non-binding standard, it is intended to serve as a guideline for evaluating and certifying

equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination practices in public and private workplaces.

Such initiatives are important. However, their non-binding nature seems to give the FPA little incentive to genuinely implement them or monitor their effectiveness. In other words, while FPA institutions increasingly develop action plans to promote gender balance, they do so separately from mainstream human resource management processes and do not make them compulsory. Similarly, the SFP reports that, although the Protocol for the Prevention, Treatment and Punishment of Bullying and Sexual Harassment sets out managerial accountability mechanisms, there should be more such mechanisms for general, personal and institutional accountability to enforce gender equality.[16] There is also a need for more general implementation of measures to empower women in the FPA. Again, the co-operation agreements that the SFP has signed with INMUJERES and SEGOB offer ample provisions for introducing such measures. Similar bilateral co-operation agreements between INMUJERES and individual secretariats would also be useful tools for change, such as the one that INMUJERES signed with the Secretariat for Education (SEP). It focuses on implementing the lines of action from PROGUILIDAD which takes a more sector-specific approach to mainstreaming gender in the workplace – including measures promoting gender balance and work-life balance – and in the development of educational policies, expenditure and programmes.

Table 5.2. Examples of hiring and promotion targets to improve female public sector employment in selected OECD countries

	Target
Hiring targets	
Sweden	50%
Norway	40% (met in 2009)
Switzerland	44% -48% (overall), 16% -20% (top positions)
Japan	30% (met in 2015)
Promotion targets for top positions	
France	40% (of nominations to top positions by 2018)
United Kingdom	39% (of all Senior Civil Service positions by 2013)
Israel	25%
Germany	12.20%

Source: OECD (2014).

Box 5.6. Foundations for gender equality in Mexico's public administration

The 1976 Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration supported decentralisation of management decisions and clearer definitions of roles and responsibilities across secretariats, agencies and staff. It did not include, though, specific gender equality requirements (UNDP, 2012). The 2003 Law of the Professional Career Service System of the Federal Public Administration (SPC)[1] introduced concepts of meritocracy, professionalism, planning and stability, in addition to clearly spelling out (Article 2) the principle of non-discrimination against candidates wishing to enter the FPA on the grounds of gender, age, different capacities (disability), health conditions, religion, marital status, ethnic origin or social condition (OECD, 2012b).

Mexico drew up the Mexican Norm for Employment Equality between Women and Men in 2009. It is a certification tool that requires both public and private institutions to put in place concrete measures to ensure compliance with the law on gender equality, non-discrimination and social security. While Article 3 spells out obligations in non-discriminatory recruitment procedures and the prevention of and responses to violence against women in the workplace, the added value of the 2009 norm is to explicitly highlight the advantages and benefits for the institutions concerned of pursuing gender equality (UNDP, 2012). In 2015, Mexico also issued the Standard on Equal Employment Opportunities and Non-discrimination (NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015).[2] A non-binding standard, it is intended to serve as a guideline for evaluating and certifying equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination practices in public and private workplaces. In August 2016, the President called to all Secretariats of the FPA to be certified on this standard.

Mexico took the right step towards professionalising the federal public sector with the enactment of the 2003 SPC Law (OECD, 2012b). It institutionalises transparent, merit-based recruitment which should eliminate discriminatory practices affecting women's entry into the FPA. However, although the SPC introduces elements of competitiveness and objective competence evaluation, Mexico's civil service is still predominantly career-based and longevity has greater weight than the right skills when it comes to filling positions. As for career development, the SPC does little to further the creation of a specific framework, and personal relations seem still to facilitate career advancement.

The challenge with Mexico in effectively implementing gender-sensitive human resource management policies, as in many other OECD countries, is threefold (OECD, 2012b):

- translate provisions for non-discrimination, merit and the promotion of diversity into daily human resource management practices;
- change the workplace culture, with its frequent gender bias, into one of diversity and inclusiveness;
- effectively design and implement affirmative actions to eliminate discriminatory practices.

1. Government of Mexico (2003), *Ley del Servicio Profesional de Carrera en la Administración Pública* (Federal Law on the Professional Career Service in the Federal Public Administration), www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/doc/260.doc.

2. Standard on Equal Employment Opportunities and Non-discrimination is identified as standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015.

Source: OECD (2012), "Human Resources Management: Country Profiles: Mexico", Public Employment and Management Working Party; and UNDP (2012), "Gender Equality in Public Administration: Mexico Case Study", United Nations Development Programme.

Finally, the Secretariat of the Interior, together with IMMUJERES, has led federal campaigns to raise awareness of sexism and discrimination in the workplace while promoting diversity. The campaigns are part of the programme for the Enhancement of Skills for the Implementation of National Laws on Gender Equality and the Eradication of Violence against Women in Mexico. Launched in 2007, the programme's objective is to align public policies and schemes – at federal, state and municipal level – with legislative gender equality requirements (UNDP, 2012). In 2007, the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) introduced violence prevention and response mechanisms. Then, as the number of complaints gradually increased, IPN came together with IMMUJERES to

establish a Violence Prevention and Care Committee for the prevention violence, care for victims and punishment of perpetrators. The committee also introduced a violence meter for use by women which proved so successful that it was adopted by the Secretariat for Public Education and distributed to school students for awareness-raising and prevention purposes (UNDP, 2012).

Notes

1. Information taken from the official website of the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of the Union, http://www.diputados.gob.mx/.
2. The information is extracted from the website of the National Human Rights Ombudsman who monitors the implementation of PROIGUALDAD, http://www.cndh.org.mx/Igualdad_Monitoreo_Programas.
3. The information is extracted from the official website of CONAGO (*Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores*), http://www.conago.org.mx/Gobernadores/.
4. Information provided by INMUJERES.
5. See Article 234, Ley General de Instituciones y Procedimientos Electorales (LEGIPE).
6. Information supplied by the National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH): www.cndh.org.mx/sites/all/doc/programas /mujer/6_MonitoreoLegislacion/6.0/25_ParidadGeneroLegislacionElectoral_2015dic.pdf.
7. INMUJERES, Gender Indicators System http://estadistica.inmujeres.gob.mx/formas/index.php.
8. http://comiteconciudadano.blogspot.fr/.
9. *El Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI]), *el Partido Accion Nacional* (National Action Party [PAN]) *y el Partido de la Revolucion Democratica* (Democratic Revolution Party [PRD]), *el Partido del Trabajo* (Labour Party [PT]), *el Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico* (Ecologist Green Party of Mexico [PVEM]), *el Movimiento Ciudadano* (Citizens' Movement [MC]) *y el Partido Nueva Alianza* (New Alliance Party [PANAL]).
10. Information provided by INMUJERES.
11. Official online portal of the Government of Mexico: http://www.gob.mx/pgr/prensa/participa-fepade-en-la-mesa-legislativa-contra-la-violencia-politica-de-genero-comunicado-1256-16?idiom=es.
12. The institutions that came together were: the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES); the Special Prosecutor for Electoral Crimes Care (FEPADE); the Special Prosecutor for Crimes of Violence Against Women and Trafficking (FEVIMTRA); the National Electoral Institute (INE); the Human Rights Department of the Interior Secretariat (Secretariat Human Rights); the Executive Committee for Victims (CEAV); the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women (CONAVIM) and the Federal Electoral Tribunal (TEPJF).
13. For information on the source of this information, go to http://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/74aa9f3c-2335-4c43-b584-b97a236c2bae.pdf.
14. 2016 OECD Survey on the Federal Public Administration in Mexico.
15. 2016 OECD Survey on the Federal Public Administration in Mexico.
16. Standard on Equal Employment Opportunities and Non-discrimination is identified as standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015.
17. 2016 OECD Survey on the Federal Public Administration in Mexico.

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Chapter 6

Tools to promote gender equality and inclusive policies

This chapter examines how, over the past decade, Mexico has sought to make the gender perspective an objective that cuts across all policy and budget processes at all levels of government. At present, nearly all institutions in the Federal Public Administration are stepping up their efforts to design policies that are geared to narrowing the gender gap in their sectors of government. For these efforts to take hold and achieve long-lasting impact, it is crucial to systematically maximise the use of policy tools such as gender impact-assessments, gender-responsive budgeting and the collection of gender-disaggregated data that support evidence-based policy making. Accordingly, this chapter examines what tools and mechanisms Mexico is currently using in pursuit of its gender equality objectives. To that end, it references the OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life *to provide further guidance on how Mexico can ensure inclusive, sustainable gender-sensitive policies.*

6.1. Introduction

Mexico's ability to unlock its full potential hinges on its ability to put in place policies and programmes that deliver inclusive outcomes for both women and men from diverse backgrounds. While acknowledging gender equality as a cross-cutting objective that supports the country in achieving its national development goals, Mexico has committed to incorporating a gender perspective in all government actions, policies and laws. In fact, the Federal Public Administration (FPA) has a mandate to make the gender perspective part of its sectoral planning processes.

Accordingly, Mexico's FPA is increasingly shaping policies and allocating resources to promote gender equality, narrow gender gaps and eradicate gender-based violence. Nevertheless, the gender perspective cannot in itself yield comprehensive gender mainstreaming[1] and impactful policies without an understanding of:

- What gender mainstreaming is – i.e. the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, regulations, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels.
- The practices that are integral to bringing it about – i.e. gender impact assessments, gender-responsive budgeting and gender-disaggregated data collection. Such practices need to be a systematic part of policy formulation and budgeting processes if gender mainstreaming is to be comprehensive.

Increasing understanding, building capacities and mobilising resources to capitalise on the tools will be crucial if Mexico is to gain full strategic insight into how policies affect both men and women – which will, in turn, have the knock-on effect of shaping improved policies that are more inclusive and narrow gender gaps. In short, while Mexico has made tremendous progress compared to many OECD countries, it has room for further improving how government bodies understand and put into effect the legal requirement to incorporate the gender perspective.

To comply with that requirement, the FPA has asked all public institutions and agencies to develop and demonstrate – within their sectoral policies – targeted activities which will contribute to the implementation of the National Policy on Equality between Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD). There are two missing components, however:

1. an assessment framework to determine whether sectoral activities and gender equality indicators are actually fit for purpose;
2. a system to ensure that all policies and activities not directly linked to women's empowerment are gender-informed.

As a consequence, ad hoc policies to narrow identified gender gaps (e.g. in the labour market) are not sufficient in and of themselves to deliver inclusive policy outcomes for all. Recent figures show that existing policies have yet to bring about the tangible change necessary for long-lasting impact. Women's labour force participation rates are still far below men's at between 42% and 45% over the past decade among the over-15s, while among males in the same age group over the same period it been 78% and 81% (World Bank, 2014). Women are also more likely to work in the informal sector and are overrepresented among those not in education, employment or training (NEETs) (Chapter 2). Though Mexican women have made impressive gains in legislative bodies,

the civil service and the judiciary – a strong gender imbalance persists in the upper echelons of power (Chapter 5).

A key aspect of stagnating progress stems from the misplaced perception that many laws, policies and government programmes can be gender neutral. Accordingly, policy makers do not give due consideration to the differential outcomes that all policies and programmes can and do have on men and women. Of 1 523 legislative initiatives debated in Congress between 2015 and 2016, only 42 (2.75%) were submitted to the Gender Equality Committee and almost all focused exclusively on amendments to the General Laws on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence and Equality between Women and Men. That tiny proportion illustrates the misconception that, unless policies specifically target women or eradicating violence against women, they do not warrant gender analysis or are gender neutral. The true picture is very different. OECD well-being indicators in Mexico point to gender imbalances in housing, employment, health, safety and the work-life balance – to the advantage of men.

This chapter addresses the main issues that Mexico (like many other countries) faces in its tough quest to fully incorporate and leverage gender mainstreaming tools within the FPA. To identify remaining gaps and close them, it is necessary to look at how public institutions understand and put into practice the gender mainstreaming requirements built into Mexico's legal framework. Also necessary is some comparative analysis of public bodies at state level.

Main findings

- Mexico has demonstrated its growing commitment to substantive equality between women and men through its laws, regulations, policies and development objectives. It has been highly successful in seamlessly aligning its legal, policy and planning documents to build the gender perspective into all government action. Examples include :
  - adopting the 2006 General Law of Equality between Women and Men;
  - incorporating gender mainstreaming requirements in the Planning Act and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act;
  - making the gender perspective a cross-cutting development objective of the 2013-2018 National Development Plan;
  - rolling out the National Program for Equality and Non-Discrimination (PROIGUALDAD) 2013-2018.

  Subnational governments have also adopted frameworks, though not all to the same degree.
- Mexico has adopted a *dual approach* to gender equality by designing targeted programmes to narrow gender gaps and instituting the requirement to make the gender perspective part of all government action. Implementation has not been effective, however. Although line ministries do in practice commit to implementing PROIGUALDAD, they fail to conduct solid gender analyses as part of the policy cycle. There is currently no systematic requirement to include gender analysis in the design and development of new policies, budgets or laws, or as part of regulatory impact assessments. Without a clear governmental mandate, gender impact assessments will remain the exception, rather than the rule.

- The recent collaboration agreement signed between the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) and the Secretariat of Public Administration (SFP) is a practical point of departure for monitoring PROIGUALDAD. The agreement assigns the responsibility of monitoring to the SFP and specifically the internal organs of control in each FPA agency.
- Considering the budget process through a gender lens is a legal requirement in Mexico, mandated by the 2006 Equality Law, the Planning Act and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act. Yet not all budgetary allocations meet their gender commitment:
  - gender equality initiatives seem chiefly to be "add-ons";
  - line ministries still do not have the skills and capacities to integrate gender considerations into budgeting processes;
  - the availability of gender-disaggregated data and other gender-relevant information (reports, research papers, information gathered through stakeholder consultations, etc.) is patchy and affects proper diagnosis.
- Congressional oversight on whether resources are well spent, and if they should be re-allocated, seems to prompt line ministries to effectively implement their commitments to gender equality. Yet, the indicators reported to Congress relate mainly to input and output rather than results, which limits evaluation of the impact of activities earmarked for gender equality.
- The use of indicators is key to measuring progress. But choosing the right ones and calibrating them to specific programmes can be challenging, especially at the state and municipal level. The *Technical Guide for the Preparation of Programmes under the National Development Plan 2013-2018* requires programmes and budgets that request earmarked gender-equality funding to include a maximum of three indicators that are quantifiable and directly linked to objectives. To that end, though, technical support and a focal point for consultation need to be in place to ensure that the indicators make sense and measure progress and impact.
- Mexico is a pioneering country in the Latin America and Caribbean region when it comes to the collection of gender statistics. Still, line ministries struggle with the systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data for mainstream sectoral policies like justice, trade and the environment. And they do not, as a matter of course, use the available gender-disaggregated evidence generated by the National Institute for Statistics and Geography (INEGI) to inform the general design of all sectoral policies. The main reason is the limited ability across government to understand the importance and utility of gender mainstreaming or tools like gender-disaggregated data.

Box 6.1. Key recommendations

- Consider mandating the use of gender analysis in all primary and secondary legislation and in the formulation and implementation of national development programming.
- Embed a requirement for all or all ministries and public entities across the FPA to assess the potential impacts of all policies, program and budget proposals and modifications on women and men (gender impact assessments). An option could be strengthening the regulatory framework governing gender mainstreaming – by building on the Planning and Fiscal Responsibility Acts – to apply gender analysis into all policies and budgets. Encourage the same practices at the state level – more readily achievable if state entities have signed co-operation agreements with INMUJERES.
- Ensure that gender impact assessment (or gender analysis) requirements entail collecting, reviewing and analysing sex-disaggregated data; gender indicator; consultation with potentially relevant stakeholders; and risk mitigation measures to address potential inequalities in outcomes of the initiative. This should be accompanied by campaigns to raise awareness on gender mainstreaming and identifying civil servants' training requirements. Develop clear reporting, accountability and monitoring requirements for implementation of gender analysis across the Federal Public Administration. (Refer to Chapter 7 for detailed recommendations on the role of institutions).
- Strengthen, with the support of IMMUJERES, the capacity of FPA agencies to implement gender impact assessment (or gender analysis) requirements within their daily policy work. Develop relevant guides and manuals to support the implementation of gender analysis.
- Considering applying a gender analysis in the quality assessments of all proposed policies and budgets. Support capacity building within the SHCP to develop expertise in ensuring the quality, design, and application of gender equality indicators as instrumental to pursue gender analysis of the Federal Budget. (Refer to Chapter 7 for the detailed recommendation on the role of the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (SHCP), INMUJERES, as well as the Chamber of Deputies).
- Expand the collection and availability of sex-disaggregated data – with the support of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) – to a wide range of sectors to fill the knowledge gap and raise awareness among line ministries of the use of such data to inform sectoral policy making, monitoring and evaluation.
- Support the implementation of PROIGUALDAD by developing regular delivery plans with success indicators, guidelines and manuals.

6.2. Reducing gender gaps and ensuring benefits for all: A dual approach

The *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* recommends that countries should adopt a dual approach to gender equality:

- make gender a mainstream part of the design, development, implementation and evaluation of all public policies and budgets (see Box 6.2);
- level the playing field between men and women through actions that target specific forms of gender discrimination, and enable progress in the areas affected.

In essence, the approach seeks to produce equal opportunities and benefits and sustain equality between men and women. Indeed, experience in OECD member countries shows that some targeted actions – such as improving female enrolment in education, preventing teenage pregnancy, and increasing women's access to finance and entrepreneurship – are catalysts for narrowing gender gaps. However effective they may be, though, they are not enough to overcome ingrained discrimination – hence the importance of gender mainstreaming throughout the policy-making cycle.

Mexico has made both national and international legal commitments to substantive equality between women and men. First, through the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on 23 March 1981. Second, with the adoption of the 2006 General Equality Law between Women and Men (hereafter the "Equality Act").

Unlike many countries, Mexico has expressed no reservations to the CEDAW. Indeed, it has acted as a positive force by objecting to the reservations that other countries have expressed. It has also gone beyond ratification of the main agreement to ratify CEDAW's Optional Protocol that entitles citizens to lodge direct complaints about violations of their rights with the CEDAW Committee, which then conducts an inquiry. Mexico exercised the Optional Protocol in 2004 when the CEDAW Committee launched an inquiry into femicides in Ciudad Juárez and made public its findings and recommendations. In response, the Mexican Government pledged to spare no effort in resolving the crimes (CEDAW, 2005). The country's commitment to incorporating a gender perspective at all levels, in accordance with the Equality Act, goes beyond the domestic sphere. For instance, under the terms of the EU-Mexico Global Trade Agreement, the two signatories consider gender equality a cross-cutting issue that they should work together to mainstream.

Over the past decade, Mexico has been making great strides in strengthening its dual approach to gender equality by developing laws, policies and programmes to update it. Both the Planning and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Acts mandate gender mainstreaming, while the 2013-2018 National Development Plan[2] (NDP) includes gender equality as a cross-cutting principle in pursuit of the country's goal to "unlock its full potential" (see Figure 6.2). The NDP also calls for the "gender perspective" to be integrated in all public policies as part of a "transversal strategy" that applies across all departments of federal and state government. As a corollary to the NDP, Mexico adopted its National Programme for Equality and Non-Discrimination (PROIGUALDAD). Subsequent and similar frameworks are also in place at the subnational level of government to varying degrees.

It is critical that Mexico put into effect its dual approach of mainstreaming gender and taking targeted action if it is to eliminate discrimination and ensure that men and women share the benefits of all laws and policies equally. For example, as Chapter 4 points out, women are much more likely to work informally than men. The finding shows that, in order to support women's integration in the formal labour market as both entrepreneurs and employees, it is critical to adopt a two-pronged approach:

- Shape active policies – by promoting the certification of skills as recommended in PROIGUALDAD, for example.
- Consider all related laws and policies, such as the Labour and Family Laws, through a gender lens to grasp how they help or hinder women in participating in the formal economy and, if need be, improve matters. A case in point is that, prior to the 2012 reform to the Labour Law, there was no law in Mexico preventing employers from asking female job candidates about their prospective childbearing plans, a practice which restricts women's access to formal markets.

Box 6.2. Consensus among international organisations on the dual approach to gender mainstreaming

Globally, the dual approach to gender equality is promoted by several intergovernmental organisations, such as the United Nations, its agencies, and the Council of the European Union. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action is a framework that supports the dual strategy, too. It complements gender mainstreaming with inputs designed to address gaps and problems in the promotion of gender equality. Accordingly, the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development builds on 17 goals, including a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5) as well as gender-sensitive targets in other goals. The Council of the European Union also advocates a twin-track tack to "continue to improve the effectiveness of gender equality policies by taking the *dual* approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions".

European Commission

The EC's view of gender mainstreaming is the integration of a gender equality perspective into every stage of the policy process – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It entails assessing how policies impact women and men – even taking steps to change policies when deemed necessary. The EC's overall aim is to make gender equality a reality and to fashion policies that are more in sync with citizens' needs.

As part of the process, the European Union (EU) uses statistics, indicators and benchmarks to monitor progress in bringing the gender dimension into an array of policy fields – from employment to health, research and education. In addition to the gender mainstreaming approach, the European Union has used a wide variety of measures – legislation, awareness-raising campaigns and financial programmes – designed to tackle specific problems, such as the gender pay gap or the persistent underrepresentation of women in the labour force and decision-making posts.

UN approach to gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming was established as a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. The United Nations defines it as:

the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

An expert group meeting hosted by UN Women in 2013 concluded that both "integrated and targeted tracks were integral components of gender mainstreaming as long as they [are] guided by sound analysis and policy orientation". The Millennium Development Goal Achievement Fund (MDG-F) reported achieving optimum results in a wide range of countries by embracing the dual-strategy as well.

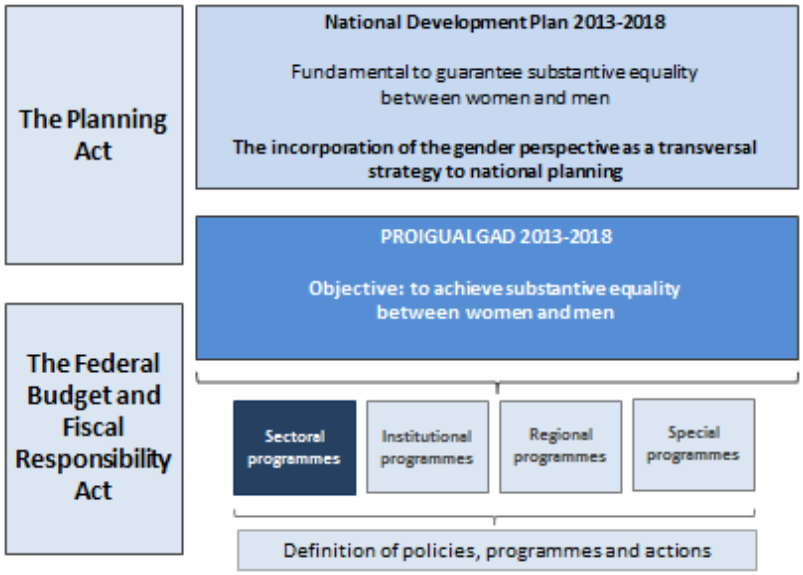
Source: Cohen (2013); European Commission (2010); Council of the European Union (2013).

In the dual approach, gender mainstreaming requirements often skip a step and translate into targeted actions and programmes at the sectoral level rather than integrating solid analysis into policy processes from start to finish. This implementation shortcoming can be explained by governance challenges, chief among which are:

- lack of knowledge across government of what gender mainstreaming is and poor know-how in implementing it;
- the limited use of such gender mainstreaming tools as gender impact assessments;
- the availability of and/or ability with gender-disaggregated data, both of which are in short supply yet key to identifying enablers of and obstacles to gender equality.

(Chapter 7 discusses these governance challenges in greater detail. It also examines the importance of devising a system suited to the long-haul built on robust governance mechanisms, resources and capacities and on smart monitoring and accountability frameworks to spur effective and lasting change in Mexico.)

Figure 6.1. Overview of gender mainstreaming legislation in Mexico



Source: INMUJERES.

The foundations of gender mainstreaming in Mexico

In Mexico, gender mainstreaming requirements are enshrined in law. While Article 1 of the Constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination, Article 4 specifically establishes equality between men and women. In 2006, the Congress drew on the Constitution and Mexico's international commitments, such as CEDAW, to adopt the Equality Act – the country's main legal instrument governing gender equality.

It regulates and guarantees equality between women and men in the public and private spheres and seeks to promote the empowerment of women. It does so through, among other things, affirmative action and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all public policies, programmes and projects. The Equality Act promotes women's participation both in the labour market – at all levels including the highest – and in politics, where it sets out the obligation to:

- strengthen mechanisms for the balanced participation of women and men in all areas of public life;
- promote parliamentary work with a gendered perspective;
- eradicate discriminatory patterns in the selection, recruitment and promotion of personnel in public institutions.

These criteria are also applicable to the executive, legislative and judicial branches.

Similarly, the Planning Act and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act require gender mainstreaming to be a central criterion for the design, development and evaluation of public action. The adoption of the Equality Act was followed by the passage through the Congress of the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, designed to strengthen co-ordination and co-operation between federal and state authorities in response to instances of violence against women (VAW). The Secretariat of the Interior (SEGOB) and the Secretariat of Public Administration (SFP) also signed an agreement on VAW and published a protocol on sexual harassment in the FPA.

At the subnational level, states are responsible for crafting development policies and programmes that align with the gender equality principles, policies and objectives set out in the 2006 Equality Act (Chapter 7). Currently, all 32 states have laws similar to the national Equality Act. Although a tremendous achievement, it did not come overnight. Around half of Mexico's states did not pass their gender equality legislation until between 2010 and 2015. Even now, only 9 have drafted regulations to accompany their laws and implementation remains uneven. To date, 20 states have put in place councils, or some other arrangement, for co-ordinating local policies on gender equality as part of the drive to put the requirements of the equality laws into operation.

6.3. Getting results

The Equality Act's "transversal approach" to gender mainstreaming tasks the federal government with "assessing the implications for women and men of any actionable programme, whether in connection with legislation, public policies, or administrative, economic and cultural activities". The approach is restated in the 2013-2018 National Development Plan and PROIGUALDAD. Legally enshrining this across-the-board approach lends it legitimacy and widens the perception that gender equality is a high priority for Mexico. Nonetheless, gender mainstreaming can translate into concrete action only once it is powered by a strategic plan. Sound policy planning from inception to enforcement is the driving force behind the effective, impactful and sustainable implementation of gender equality and mainstreaming measures. The *2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* highlights the importance of articulating a rationale, action plans, priorities, timelines, objectives and expected outcomes as key ingredients for gender equality laws, policies and programmes.

As for PROIGUALDAD, it is Mexico's flagship strategy for incorporating the gender equality standards set forth in the international conventions of which it is a signatory. PROIGUALDAD standardises, to a certain extent, the federal government's objectives (laid out in the Planning and Fiscal Accountability Acts), which include building the gender perspective into all its planning, programming and budgeting at all levels. Accordingly, line ministries, too, should incorporate gender perspectives in their sector-related strategic planning documents in keeping with the National Development Plan. Examples include the 2013-2018 Sectoral Programmes for Health, Equality for Education, Social Development, Environment and Natural Resources and Financing Development. Sectoral planning documents should also contain gender-sensitive indicators.

The PROIGUALDAD objective of a gender perspective that cuts across government and all sectors of the National Development Plan includes the following components:

- preventing, punishing and eradicating violence against women and girls (VAW) and ensuring redress in the courts;

- promoting women's access to paid, decent work and productive resources within a framework of equality;
- achieving substantive equality between women and men and promoting a cultural change and recognition of the rights of women;
- strengthening women's ability to participate actively in social development and achieve well-being;
- developing safe, friendly social and family environments, leisure facilities and mobility for women and girls;
- incorporating gender equality policies in all the three tiers of government and strengthen its institutionalisation in organisational cultures.

Figure 6.2. The gender perspective as a strategy that cuts across the National Development Plan 2013-2018

Source: INMUJERES.

Effective gender mainstreaming paves the way for gender-sensitive policy formulation (Figure 6.3). Gender mainstreaming cannot be effectively implemented without, from the outset, a clear, action-oriented gender mainstreaming strategy that is steered by goals and guidelines. In Mexico, there are a number of instruments for gender mainstreaming – such as the Planning Act, the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act and the Annual Budget, all of which include sections dedicated to action to enforce equality between women and men. PROIGUALDAD is one such instrument.

From the OECD's standpoint, however, PROIGUALDAD does not provide sufficient guidance as to the role of the federal government and line ministries, nor does it spell out the output expected from them in their bids to implement and monitor gender mainstreaming (also refer to the section below on "Technical Guide to the Development of Programmes Derived from National Development Plan 2013-2018"). To support gender mainstreaming, PROIGUALDAD could supply FPA agencies with guidance on implementing the gender perspective in their strategies, objectives, programming and budgets in compliance with legal requirements. At present, the lines of actions set out in PROIGUALDAD to further the gender perspective entail:

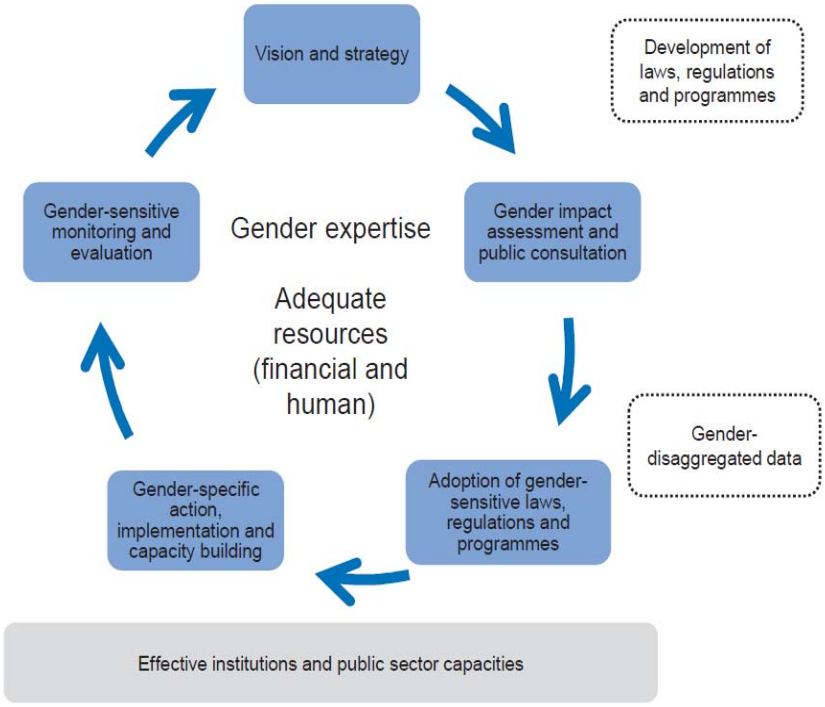
- promoting affirmative action programmes in sectoral policies;
- developing co-ordination mechanisms across government,
- promoting budgets earmarked for gender,
- evaluating programmes aimed at reducing gender gaps,
- integrating gender-equality objectives in budget management,
- consolidating the development of statistics for gender equality.

While the lines of action are an excellent starting point, they do not place enough emphasis on the requirement to embed the gender perspective in mainstream policy and budget processes (i.e., gender analysis).

As a result, PROIGUALDAD also falls short of aligning with the gender mainstreaming provisions in the 2006 Equality Act. In Article 5, it defines the "transversal" approach as

> *the process that makes it possible to guarantee the incorporation of the gender perspective with a view to assessing the implications for women and men of any action programmes, whether in connection with legislation, public policies, or administrative, economic and cultural activities in both public and private institutions.*

Figure 6.3. Key components of gender mainstreaming



Source: OECD (2014a).

Indeed, in its current application, the gender perspective in PROIGUALDAD generally translates only into tacked-on measures for reducing gender inequalities in sectoral policies. In the 2013-2018 Sectoral Strategy for Health, for example, PROIGUALDAD's lines of action (under the transversal objective of gender equality) lists, among other things: strengthen action to detect violence against women and girls in the health system and develop campaigns to raise awareness of the consequences of family violence. However, while such lines of action are worthy, they overlook gender mainstreaming, which demands detailed analysis – of current practices, how budgets are allocated and in what ways gender can affect health and the delivery of health care services. Prior analysis helps to solidify policies, programmes and budgets and to draw up sectoral goals from a fresh perspective – one that is not gender blind.

Mexico does boast some good practices that deserve a mention when it comes to gender mainstreaming. The Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources' sectoral programme 2013-2018 (PROMARNAT) includes lines of actions like:

- promoting a climate-change information system that generates gender-disaggregated data and indicators;
- incorporating gender considerations in the use of land resources in communities affected by disaster;
- ensuring that financial instruments for mitigation, adaptation and vulnerability reduction in the event of disaster benefit women and girls as much as males.

These objectives offer a sound basis for integrating a gender perspective into environmental policy initiatives. The first objective seeks to make the gender disaggregation of data – an excellent gender mainstreaming tool for evidence-based policy making – standard practice. The Secretariat for Education (SEP) and the Secretariat for Social Development (SEDESOL) are also good examples of incorporating gender into policy design and evaluating effects on men and women. For instance, SEDESOL has measured the gendered effects of conditional cash transfers to women – through Mexico's flagship scheme, Prospera – on a variety of outcomes like female employment, time use, and domestic violence. SEP incorporates sex-disaggregated data in its annual statistics and has targeted girls through larger grants in an attempt to improve their upper-secondary school completion rates (Chapter 3).

Nonetheless, in the grand scheme of things, gender considerations in the initial formulation of mainstream policies remain marginal and variable from sector to sector and across government. The true impact of gender equality policies is difficult to measure as a result. It requires robust evidence – gender-disaggregated data and research – combined with performance measurement and assessment frameworks that are institutionally feasible and results-oriented.

The OECD finds that, to date, no federal-level regulations govern the implementation of the Equality Act. *Nor is PROIGUALDAD reinforced with documents*, such as guidelines and manuals or action plans with set deliverables and indicators vital to its administration and implementation on the ground. Experience from OECD countries shows that such guiding documents can help to foster a culture of performance, measurable outcomes and results (Box 6.3).

The Mexican Government has taken steps to drive the implementation and monitoring of transversal objectives in programmes derived from the National Development Plan 2013-2018 – but not exclusively related to gender equality. Agreement 01/2013,

published in the *Official Journal of the Federation* (DOF) on 10 June 2013, declares that guidelines must be issued to govern and monitor National Development Plan programmes. The SHCP is in charge of ensuring that the National Development Plan and its programmes are consistent in their design and content and that the results of implementation are verified (Chapter 7). An important tenet of the agreement is transparency, which compels agencies and entities to post information about programmes on their websites in the first two months of each year and log the achievements of the programmes measured against their indicators and targets.

Accordingly, in 2013, the SHCP published a technical guide on drawing up programmes under the National Development Plan 2013-2018: *Guía técnica para la elaboración de los programas derivados del Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018* (Technical Guide to the Development of Programmes Derived from National Development Plan 2013-2018). It highlights the differences between traditional and strategic planning and cross-cutting lines of action, though it is not exclusive to gender equality programming.

The National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) promotes and channels PROIGUALDAD, advises on standard practices, and provides a technical support role. FPA bodies are expected to incorporate PROIGUALDAD in their own institutional culture, mainstream the gender perspective into their policies and budgets and develop lines of action for implementing PROIGUALDAD. Experience from the OECD countries shows that the supporting role of federal gender institutions – such as INMUJERES – is maximised when they develop guidelines to help government institutions at all levels understand how to identify and address gender perspectives. OECD countries are increasingly devising such guidelines and toolkits to support their national and local authorities to effectively mainstream gender. For example, the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee and the Vienna City Council in Austria have drafted manuals to train government administrators to carry out gender mainstreaming processes (Box 6.3). In 2015, the OECD, for its part, released its *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* that lays the groundwork of OECD guidelines for supporting member and partner countries in creating effective policy and institutional frameworks designed to advance gender equality for inclusive growth.

Box 6.3. Gender mainstreaming manuals from Sweden and Austria

Sweden's Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee has developed a manual to train central government administrators in implementing the gender mainstreaming process. The manual contains the most tried and tested measures in the cross-cutting application of gender mainstreaming. The committee has also drafted a book for managers, gender specialists and public workers entitled *Gender Equality in Public Service* to properly mainstream gender across government.

How it works?

The manual set out step-by-step instructions on how to properly mainstream gender. Underlying them is model approach, "The Ladder", which lists the steps required in gender mainstreaming and the prerequisites for making it sustainable in the long term. There are eight steps:

- Step 1 considers what gender equality is and the background to Swedish gender equality policy.
- Step 2 determines the conditions for gender mainstreaming and accordingly analyses three methods: Study the Operation, the Gender-Equal Operation and Examine the Processes.
- Step 3 includes a checklist and tool for planning and organising work known as "METS". The tool is for a group about to undertake gender-mainstreaming and helps the group identify tasks that can be classified as gender mainstreaming.
- Steps 4 to 6 contain a set of tools for the proper use of surveys, data, and analysis results and for setting objectives from a gender equality perspective.
- Step 7 explains how to implement Steps 4 to 6 comprehensively.
- Step 8 contains a tool for properly evaluating outcomes of measures from a gender perspective.

The Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee recommends that the methods and measures should be adapted to the current context and task in place.

The **City of Vienna** developed the handbook, *Gender mainstreaming made easy: practical advice for more gender equality in Vienna City administration*, to help all public employees implement gender mainstreaming routinely.

How it works?

The handbook was developed as a reference manual for everyday work. It is clearly organised into topic-related sections (events, gender budgeting, meetings, working groups, subsidies, procurement, etc.). with logical answers to questions on how to properly carry out certain tasks. It is not, therefore, necessary to read the whole handbook. Some of the practical questions addressed include:

- What to keep in mind when selecting and establishing gender indicators?
- How to properly use gender-sensitive language?
- How to develop a gender-based budget?
- How to provide gender-sensitive advice?
- How can you improve your gender competence

The handbook establishes up five principles of gender mainstreaming and draws up method of analysis called "4R": **r**epresentation, **r**esources, **r**eality, and **r**ights. In this way, the handbook facilitates the process of gender mainstreaming by guiding the development and expansion of proven methods that underpin it. The five principles are:

Box 6.3. Gender mainstreaming manuals from Sweden and Austria *(cont.)*

- gender-sensitive language
- gender-specific data collection and analysis
- equal access to services
- balanced ratio of women and men in decision making
- equal treatment integrated into steering processes.

The handbook also provides a gender check tool for departments to self-assess how well they are doing in gender equality matters.

Source: "Gender Mainstreaming Manual: A book of practical methods from the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee", www.government.se/contentassets/3d89b0f447ec43a4b3179c4a22c370e8/gender-mainstreaming-manual-sou-200715; "City of Vienna Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming made easy – practical advice for more gender equality in Vienna City administration", https://www.wien.gv.at/english/administration/gendermainstreaming/principles/manual.htm.

A document that provides guidelines solely on incorporating a gender perspective into the workplace and policies was produced by the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE) in 2014 – *Guía Para la Incorporación de la Perspectiva de Género* (Guide on Incorporating the Gender Perspective). The guide, however, is tailored to use within the SRE – though its content provides an excellent template for other agencies – and covers the topics of gender roles and stereotypes, inclusive language, gender mainstreaming, gender-equality policy approaches, national and international regulatory frameworks, the SRE's gender unit, useful exercises and a glossary. As for the lines of action in support of PROIGUALDAD, the SRE has developed a programme for 2013 to 2018 outlining 28 of them. Examples include: "1.2.5. Develop protocols and codes of conduct for service providers to attend to women without discrimination or misogyny" and "Develop actions to incorporate inclusive language in documents, official statements, speeches, policy and planning documents governing". The SRE's activities and action relate to PROIGUALDAD, but there is no evidence of gender analysis motivating them and they appear to be add-ons. They also tend to be more related to human resources management than to the development of gender-sensitive programmes or policies.

When it comes to future sectoral guides – or an overarching national guide to PROIGUALDAD – it would be worthwhile. It should include exemplary case studies of gender equality programming either in Mexico or abroad – at different administrative levels – that detail core components of programmes of policies, how decisions were arrived at, indicators used, the make-up of the budget attaching to the programme or policy, and outcomes. Such practical examples ease the processes of planning and budgeting for non-experts, as they help them fashion their own gender equality policies and programming on the basis of workable models.

As for budgeting, INMUJERES produced a comprehensive *Guía metodológica para la inclusión de la perspectiva de género en los presupuestos públicos* (Methodological Guide for the Inclusion of a Gender Perspective in Public Budgets) in 2005. It covers many topics – from what gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is, why it is important in public budgets, methods and tools to what the indicators are and their different types, e.g. performance and impact indicators. The guide also has sections devoted to considerations of gender-impact assessments in public spending and the implications of the lack of gender-disaggregated data. Clearly explaining such concepts and stating a valid case for their application is important for raising public awareness and provides public servants with instructions and a reference document in response to their frequently asked questions. While gender-responsive budgeting is compulsory by law, the tools needed to smartly implement it and broader gender mainstreaming are not. Yet, unless there is a legal mandate to conduct gender impact assessments in GRB and policy formulation and to collect gender-disaggregated data – these tools are typically under-utilised or overlooked. This chapter looks at them in greater detail later.

The *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* touches on making gender mainstreaming part of regular policy processes from inception to evaluation and monitoring:

- the development and dissemination of gender mainstreaming tools like gender-impact assessments,
- the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data,
- the design of result-oriented measurement indicators.

A good example in this regard comes from Spain's 2014-2016 Equal Opportunities Strategic Plan and its companion document on the framework for monitoring and evaluating the strategy (Box 6.4).

Box 6.4. Example of gender mainstreaming in two OECD countries

Spain's 2014-2016 Equal Opportunities Strategic Plan (EOSP) developed an action plan of seven specific objectives built on a dual approach. The seven objectives are: 1) equality in the workplace between men and women 2) reconciliation of family and work life and the sharing of domestic and family obligations 3) eradication of violence against women 4) women's participation in social, economic and political life, 5) education, 6) development of actions in other sectoral policies, and 7) instruments for incorporating the principle of equality in government policies and action, which is fundamental for clearly understanding how to update the EOSP's tenets across sectors and issues. In this way, Spain has developed methods of strengthening the integration of the gender perspective in all government programmes and policies.

Specific objective 1:	*Specific objective 2:*	*Specific objective 3:*	*Specific objective 4:*	*Specific objective 5:*	*Specific objective 6:*	*Specific objective 7:*
Favour knowledge generation	Develop and adjust research and statistics	Promote training and awareness	Principle of equality and responsible public contracting	Improve gender impact reports	Optimise the functioning of Equality Units and Observatories	Take into account the possible forms of discrimination that may affect certain groups of women

Box 6.4. Example of gender mainstreaming in two OECD countries *(cont.)*

The EOSP provides guidance for relevant stakeholders via its Monitoring and Evaluation Plan which encourages them to develop a set of indicators for each of seven objectives. To that end, it uses the concept of indicators established by the OECD, defined as "parameter, or a value derived from parameters, that points to, provides information about and/or describes the state of a phenomenon and has a significance extending beyond that directly associated with given parametric value". Indicators help monitor objectives. There are three types:

- product indicators which measure the quantity and quality of the goods or services;
- result indicators which describe the medium-term direct effects achieved;
- impact indicators, which measure medium- and long-term indirect effects to which the EOSP contributes, together with other plans and programmes that have repercussions on society at large.

The indicators supply data that can be used to help quantify what is being done in each of the seven specific objectives and the effects of particular measures. Developing the ability to track and appraise the implementation of certain action and to evaluate results is useful for reporting purposes – on execution and interim and ex-post evaluation.

In **Sweden,** gender mainstreaming is the central strategy for achieving national gender equality targets. All ministries in the Swedish Government are responsible for mainstreaming gender into their areas of expertise and responsibility. In 2011, the government introduced a platform to strengthen and develop the practice at central, regional and local levels of government. It involves a strategy for gender mainstreaming in government offices, a development programme for government agencies, support for mainstreaming gender at the regional level, quality assurance of gender mainstreaming at the municipal level, and initiatives to share experience and good practices in putting gender mainstreaming into practice. In that regard, the Swedish Government developed a gender mainstreaming strategy for the period 2012-15 designed for use by all government offices in all areas of government policy. In 2014, it instructed 41 government agencies to work on gender mainstreaming from 2015 to 2018 in a concerted effort called the "Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies Programme".

Source: Instituto de la Mujer (INMUJER), 2014-2016 Equal Opportunities Strategic Plan, www.inmujer.gob.es/actualidad/PEIO/docs/PEIO2014-2016Ingles.pdf; "Facts about Sweden: Gender Equality" (2016), https://sweden.se/society/gender-equality-in-sweden/.

6.4. Gender mainstreaming in action

Since the enactment of the 2013-2018 National Development Plan, Mexico has taken important policy planning steps to ensure that gender perspectives are considered in mainstream policy and budget processes. If they are to take hold across government, though, and deliver concrete outcomes, they will need resources. There are several tools that Mexico is gradually developing to improve implementation: gender impact assessments and gender-responsive budgeting, as well as the systematic development and use of gender-disaggregated data throughout the policy cycle.

Gender impact assessments

Policy decisions that are ostensibly fair to both men and women may have inadvertently differential impacts. To offset any such negative consequences and make smart use of resources, gender impact assessments (GIA) can be a first line of defence. It is one of the core tools at a governments' disposal to support the implementation of gender mainstreaming – sometimes referred to as gender-based analysis or a gender audit – and regularly used by most OECD member countries (Table 6.1). GIAs are specifically mentioned by the 2015 *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in*

Public Life as an important means of bringing gender considerations into dimensions of public governance, such as public service delivery management and public procurement.

GIAs can be, and preferably should be, conducted early in all phases of the policy cycle. They can, for instance, be key to aligning *ex ante* gender impact assessments with broader government-wide policy development processes, such as regulatory impact assessments (RIAs). GIAs seek to estimate the positive, negative and neutral effects of any policy, piece of legislation or regulation of individual practices on gender equality. The EU criteria for GIAs (Box 6.5) take into account both the differences between men and women and the need for action to address and redress gender based-inequalities. Canada, for example, requires any federal department or agency to ask the following basic questions to help identify gender considerations in policy, legislation or programmes under development:

- Who is affected by the issue? How are they affected?
- Are certain groups potentially at a disadvantage?
- Who has been consulted in developing your approach?
- If you consider an issue to be "gender neutral", can this be supported with evidence?

Table 6.1. Requirements for gender impact assessments at the central/federal level of government, 2011

	Requirements for ministries/departments/agencies to conduct gender impact assessments (*ex ante*)			Requirements for ministries/departments/agencies to conduct gender impact assessments (*ex post*)		
	Primary legislation	Subordinate regulation	Government programmes and initiatives	Primary legislation	Subordinate regulation	Government programmes and initiatives
Australia	⊘	⊘	⭘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Belgium	❍	❍	⭘	❍	❍	❍
Chile	⭘	⭘	⭘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Czech Republic	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Finland	●	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
France	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Germany	●	●	●	⊘	⊘	⊘
Greece	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Ireland	⭘	⊘	⭘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Israel	●	●	⊘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Korea	●	●	●	●	●	●
Luxembourg	●	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Mexico	⭘	⊘	⭘	⊘	❍	⭘
New Zealand	⭘	⭘	⭘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Norway	●	⊘	⭘	●	●	⭘
Slovak Republic	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Spain	●	●	⭘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Sweden	●	●	●	●	●	●
Switzerland	●	⊘	⊘	❍	❍	❍

Note: ● Yes, always, ⭘ Yes, sometimes, ❍ No, but planned, ⊘ No, not planned.

Source: OECD (2014a).

Box 6.5. EU criteria for gender impact assessments

The European Commission's report on gender impact assessments lists the steps in a gender impact assessment (GIA). The first step is to establish if gender is relevant to a policy in question by asking two questions. A positive answer to either substantiates gender as relevant to the policy and calls for a possible GIA. The questions examine:

1. Whether the said policy concerns one or more target groups and if it will affect the daily life of part(s) of the population.
2. Whether there are differences between women and men in the said policy field with regard to:
   - the gender participation of the target or population group(s) and the representation of women and men in decision-making positions;
   - resources (the distribution of crucial resources such as time, space, information and money; political and economic power; education and training; jobs and professional careers; new technologies; health care services; housing; means of transportation; leisure;
   - norms and values that influence gender roles, the gender division of labour, the attitudes and behaviour of women and men, and inequalities in the esteem attaching to men and women or to masculine and feminine characteristics,
   - rights pertaining to direct or indirect sex discrimination, human rights (including freedom from sexual violence and degradation) and access to justice in the legal, political or socio-economic environment.

A GIA requires taking into account differences identified in areas like participation, resources, norms, values and rights and asking: How can policies, laws and regulations contribute to the elimination of existing inequalities and promote equality between women and men in participation rates, the distribution of resources, benefits, tasks and responsibilities in private and public life, and in the value and attention accorded to masculine and feminine characteristics, behaviour and priorities?

Some key questions for policy makers on gender-sensitive regulations are:

- Has a commitment to gender been incorporated at a high level in the regulatory reform, or is it an add-on (or absent from the agenda altogether)?
- Does the review process examine whether regulations have differential impacts on men and women, and determine whether corrective measures are needed?
- Are there opportunities for women to participate directly or indirectly through civil society groups, and is there monitoring of actual participation?
- Are there barriers to entry for women-owned firms in all economic areas or in government procurement?
- Are there administrative requirements that, in addition to creating barriers for entrepreneurs in general, are especially prohibitive for women, or are there areas where women's property or other rights are deficient in ways that impede business development?
- Do women face particular barriers in gaining access to credit or employment? Are there barriers to women's access to training, advisory services or other activities that would strengthen their economic participation as employers and employees?
- Are these and other gender linkages identified and are policy makers encouraged to take them into consideration actively in designing policy?

Source: European Commission (n.d.); Bremer (2009).

Although there is currently no systematic requirement to include gender analysis in the policy design and development process or to conduct gender analysis as part of an RIA, there is a strong momentum for reform to that end. And despite the absence of a formal GIA framework, there are several ways in which Mexico could institutionalise GIAs in the regulatory process (Box 6.6). While the Federal Commission for Regulatory Improvement (COFEMER) could play the role in monitoring the *gender filter* in the regulatory process, National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) and the Secretariat of Finance (SHCP) could help incorporate the gender analysis into sectoral programme evaluations (Figure 6.4).

Under the terms of the Federal Law of Administrative Procedure, COFEMER (located in the Secretariat of the Economy) is the oversight body that promotes better regulation. It emphasises transparent practices. Its job is to quality-control new and existing regulations by issuing opinions on the drafts and regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) prepared by line ministries and regulators. It can be seen as the country's regulatory "soft power" and serves as a link between the public, social and private sectors. If RIAs are found unsatisfactory, COFEMER can request that they be corrected or expanded with more information. If the amended RIA is still unsatisfactory, it can ask the lead secretariat to hire an independent expert to evaluate the impact. Although COFEMER's opinions are not legally binding, they are accessible to the public, as are the RIAs. Transparency generally gives line ministries and regulators incentive to follow through on COFEMER's recommendations.

The sound structures of COFEMER's RIA process may be useful for GIAs. The *2014 OECD Regulatory Policy Review of Mexico* found that the country had been applying RIAs for more than a decade and had reformed its impact assessment system to align with OECD best practice. COFEMER and SEGOB have an agreement whereby COFEMER's opinion is sought on human rights matters (such as gender equality, access to information, non-discrimination) arising from regulatory proposals – an important first step in the introduction of gender impact assessments. Whenever human rights implications may be found in a proposal, states the agreement, an RIA should be conducted to assess its impact on human rights. In an effort to strengthen the efforts of quality regulation, Mexico has redesigned RIAs with the addition of a regulatory impact calculator (Box 6.6). A "human rights verification filter" will be a new component in the impact calculator when agencies establish their RIA system, along with a gender equality filter. Care should be taken not to confine gender impact assessment to regulations that could have implications for human rights.

Box 6.6. An overview of regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) in Mexico

Mexico's regulatory policy is formalised in the Federal Law of Administrative Procedure (LFPA). In 2000, reforms to LFPA ushered in the institutional arrangements that govern regulatory policy in Mexico today. They include:

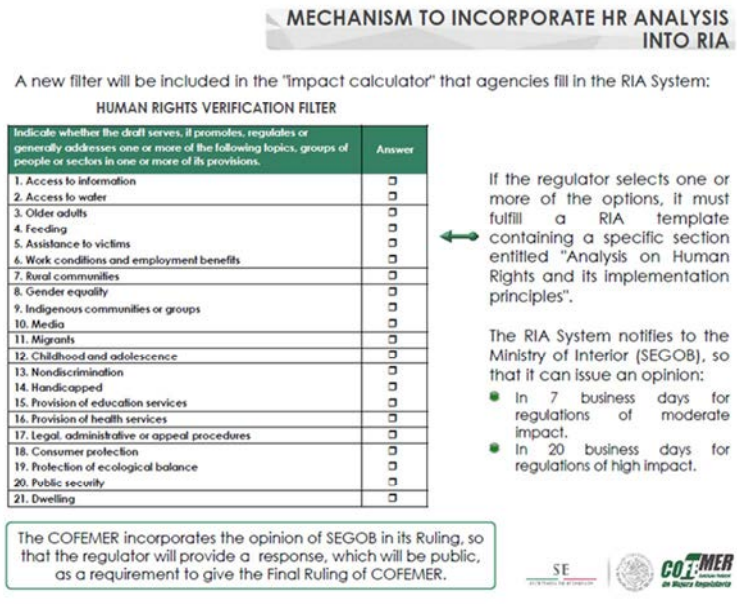
- The establishment of the Federal Commission for Regulatory Improvement (COFEMER) as the oversight body. COFEMER is also in charge of co-ordinating the forward planning regulatory agenda. It advises sub-national governments, reviews regulations, and suggest reforms to the President of Mexico.
- The responsibilities of line ministries and regulators as part of the better regulation policy.
- Tools for regulatory improvement, such as regulatory impact assessment (RIA), administrative simplification, and consultation.

Substantial reforms were made to the Mexican RIA process between 2010 and 2012. They included a distinction between regulations expected to have moderate impacts and those expected to produce strong impacts. An online tool – the regulatory impact calculator – was developed to enable regulators to assess their proposed regulation at an early stage in the process. The RIA Manual was further modified to introduce additional types of RIAs and to focus on competition impact analysis, risk analysis, or a combination of both. Mexico has also issued an agreement that allows COFEMER to request *ex post* RIAs from ministries and decentralised bodies that issued technical standards accompanied by high-risk RIAs. The *ex post* RIA assesses whether regulations objectives have achieved their objectives, how efficiently and effectively, and how impactfully and long-lastingly. The culture of regulatory improvement at federal level in Mexico should also permeate through to other areas of government. Next steps could include RIA and consultation processes for federal states, municipalities and constitutional autonomous bodies, as well as RIAs, *ex post* evaluations and consultation for Congress.

Indicators that measure the impact and stakeholder engagement of primary laws relate only those (roughly 9%) initiated by the executive. There is no formal requirement in Mexico to consult the general public or for conducting RIAs to inform the development of primary laws initiated by Parliament.

Source: OECD (2015), *Regulatory Policy Outlook – Country Profile: Mexico*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure 6.4. Human rights verification filter for regulatory impact assessment (RIA) in Mexico



Source: Information provided by COFEMER.

Mexico already boasts a number of successful examples of the incorporation of cross-cutting issues in broader RIA processes. In the area of competition, for example, COFEMER signed an administrative agreement with the Federal Competition Commission (CFC) that allows it to review competition-related regulations. Competition impact analysis has also been added to the RIA Manual (OECD, 2016c). There are many ways to introduce a similar approach in gender equality. Nevertheless, while RIAs and GIAs have elements in common in Mexico, the monitoring and evaluation framework is not considered the responsibility of COFEMER. That is the job of SHCP and CONEVAL, which also determine monitoring and evaluation criteria.

CONEVAL answers to SEDESOL and is, accordingly, responsible for evaluating the design, performance and impact of programmes related to social development. Some of CONEVAL's functions include:

- drawing up the criteria and guidelines of methodologies for assessing political and social development programmes;
- draw up guidelines for studies and diagnostics that relate to the desirability, feasibility and efficiency of any new social development assessment programme;
- using assessments to ensure transparency and accountability in social policy development and contribute to improving its operations and results;
- promoting and strengthening the culture of evaluation in all areas related to social development policy;
- acting, where appropriate, as a consultative and advisory body to federal government agencies, state and municipal authorities and the social sectors and private on the evaluation of social programmes and poverty measurement;
- promoting mechanisms for accessing assessment databases to properly analyse planning, research, training and education.

CONEVAL thus serves as a point of consultation and information on gender equality policies and programmes developed by FPA agencies that are in line with the government's social development priorities. CONEVAL assessments can also be a point of reference for understanding what gender equality indicators in social programmes work and how they should be calibrated. Nonetheless, whether CONEVAL systematically considers the gender perspective in its assessment of programmes and indicators is unclear, although it has room to do so – especially in the implementation of GIAs. There are a variety of agencies that could, considering their current roles and functions, play a role in strengthening and monitoring gender mainstreaming and monitoring in specific areas of government programming, policies and budgets (see Chapter 7).

Gender-responsive budgeting

Gender budgeting, or gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), is another gender mainstreaming tool for achieving inclusive and the equitable allocation of resources (Box 6.7). Drawing on member countries' practices, the OECD defines gender budgeting as integrating a clear gender perspective within the overall context of the budgetary process through the use of special processes and analytical tools to promote gender-responsive policies (OECD, 2016c). According to the European Commission, gender-responsive budgeting entails a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and

expenditures in order to promote gender equality (European Commission, 2003). Because all governments and ministries have budgets, incorporating gender analysis in them can be a highly effective way of exposing gender disparities within policies and programmes. Accordingly, the 2015 *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* recommends considering building the gender perspective into all phases of the budget cycle to maximise transparency in gender-relevant resource allocation decisions. In 2013, within the framework of the UN-ECLAC Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico renewed its commitment to "budgets with gender as a cross-cutting factor in the allocation of public funds and ensure that sufficient, protected funding is provided in all policy areas to fulfil all the commitments made by states to achieve the goals of equality and social and economic justice for women" (ECLAC, 2014).

Box 6.7. Gender budgeting in practice: an OECD typology

The 2016 OECD study on gender budgeting in OECD countries classifies gender budgeting practices according to the stage at which they intervene.

***Ex ante* gender budgeting approaches**

- *Ex ante* gender impact assessment. Assessing individual budget measures, in advance of their inclusion in the budget, specifically for their impact on gender equality.
- Gender budget baseline analysis. An analysis which is periodically conducted to assess how the existing allocation of government expenditure and revenues contributes (or otherwise) to gender equality.
- Gender-needs assessment. A qualitative assessment, including views and opinions from stakeholders and civil society representatives, of the extent to which government policies and programmes meet gender equality needs, with a view to identifying priorities for policy action in the budgetary context.

Concurrent gender budgeting approaches

- Gender perspective in performance setting. The requirement that a minimum proportion of budget-related performance objectives should be linked to gender-responsive policies.
- Gender perspective in resource allocation. Requirements prescribing that a minimum proportion of overall budgeted resources be allocated to gender-responsive policies.
- Gender-related budget incidence analysis. The annual budget is accompanied by an official assessment, conducted by the central budget authority (or under its authority), of the budget's overall impact on promoting gender equality, which includes a gender-disaggregated analysis of specific policy measures (both revenue- and expenditure-related).

***Ex post* gender budgeting approaches**

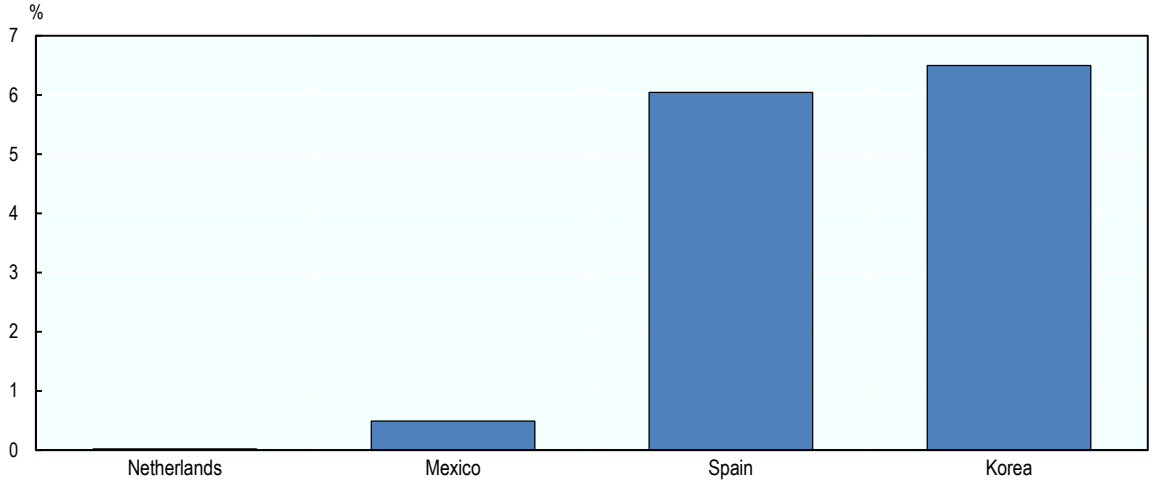
- Ex-post gender impact assessment. Assessing individual budget measures, after their introduction or implementation, specifically for their impact on gender equality.
- Gender audit of the budget. Independent, objective analysis – conducted by a competent authority different from the central budget authority – of the extent to which gender equality is effectively promoted and/or attained through the policies set out in the annual budget.
- Gender perspective in spending reviews. In the context of a comprehensive spending review, gender is routinely included as a distinct dimension of analysis.

Integrating a gender perspective in the budget process is a legal requirement in Mexico. The Equality Act,[3] the Planning Act and the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act assert gender budgeting as a mandatory, central criterion in the

design, development and evaluation of public measures. In 2008, the Federal Expenditure Budget Decree included a provision to promote the incorporation of a gender perspective in the inception, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes across the FPA. An amendment was also made to the Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act in 2012. Article 11 now requires specific indicators to be included in the performance evaluation system that assesses the impact of budgetary programmes on equality between women and men and the eradication of gender violence and any form of discrimination.

Figure 6.5. Level of resources allocated to gender-responsive policies, 2014

As a percentage of total public expenditure



Source: OECD (2016), *Survey of Gender Budgeting*.

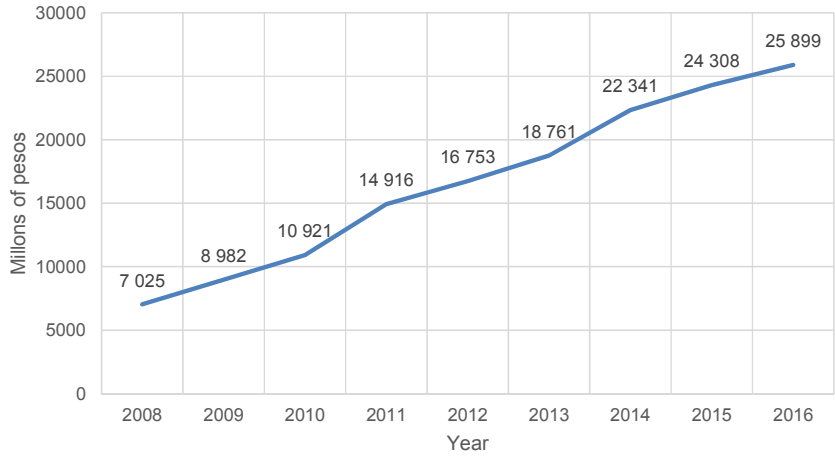
Moving from the legal framework to practical application, the gender perspective is incorporated in an annex to Mexico's national expenditure (Annex 13 in the latest budget) that allocates funds to programmes aimed that seek to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The expenditure outlined in the budget annex span various activities and sectors – e.g. the creation of gender equality units in the FPA, grants for young mothers and indigenous women in higher education and teen pregnancy prevention. Expenditure in the budget annex grew exponentially, by 169.9%, from 2008 (MXN 7 024.8) to 2015 (MXN 24 308.3). In 2015, around 81% of expenditure targeted gender equality, 9.5% gender violence and 7.7% gender-based discrimination. Equality, violence and discrimination are categories that the budget annex uses to earmark gender-related funds, although they can overlap and the programmes under each heading may vary.

OECD experience reveals that, while earmarking funds to targeted initiatives, is necessary, merely tacking them on risks marginalising efforts to promote gender equality and weakening overall impact (OECD, 2016c). If spending in relation to impact could be quantified, a cost-benefit analysis of proposed initiatives would help gauge their hoped-for level of impact. Simply put, some initiatives yield greater impact than others and are arguably more deserving of precious public funds. A more basic analysis of earmarked programmes would seek to determine whether they are included in the budget simply to tick a gender spending box and if there is proper evidence for their inclusion. Accordingly, it is highly important that budget officials understand why they should classify expenditure "for gender equality or women's empowerment" and whether programmes and proposals are accompanied by targets, milestones and policies. Gender

equality cannot simply be a "token gift". Programmes need to be effectively implemented and target the right areas to yield lasting change. Accordingly, the *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* promotes a dual approach – specific and targeted policies to advance gender equality – while also mainstreaming gender into all government action, including budget processes (Box 6.8).

When INMUJERES reviews the national expenditure budget annex, it considers several facets of programmes: beneficiaries, numbers and names, progress towards the achievement of goals (indicators and targets), and inclusive language. Still, INMUJERES' role is limited in that it does not have the legal power to ensure that budgetary allocations include a full gender analysis.

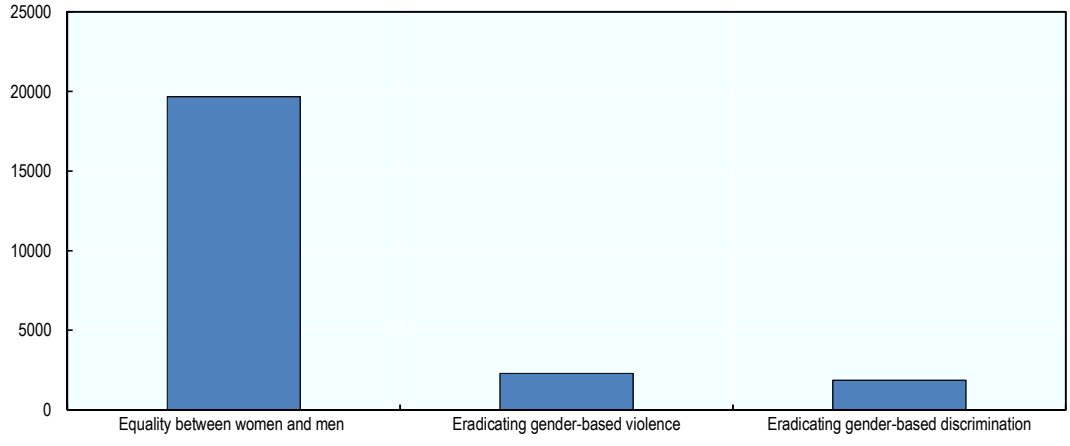
Figure 6.6. How the gender-earmarked resource-allocation annex evolved between 2008 and 2016



Source: Data provided by INMUJERES and SHCP.

Figure 6.7. How the annex classifies budget allocations by type of action

Millions of pesos



Source: Data provided by INMUJERES and SHCP.

To apply for gender-equality-earmarked funds – which are funds outside an agency's regular budget –for programmes that they consider strategic, line ministries and responsible agencies must show, in the SHCP website, that their applications qualify. Though each ministry decides what and how much to include in the annex, it is up to Congress to approve or ask for modifications. The executive, i.e. SHCP, prepares an overall budget proposal that is reviewed and approved by Congress.

Since 2008, INMUJERES has been involved in monitoring the budget on the SHCP website, though on a formal footing only since 2016 (under the terms of Article 24 of the Federal Expenditure Decree). Although INMUJERES champions the incorporation of the gender perspective in the budget process, it does not have the authority or the scope to overview, steer or approve budget proposals. Its role, together with SHCP, is to monitor the earmarked budget. In that capacity, it drafts a quarterly report that goes before Congress's Equality Commission. In the end, though, Congress has final say in approving and allocating budgets.

Line ministries' current capacity to determine gender needs in the mainstream budget items that they submit for budget annex funding – or for general sectoral planning – does not seem adequate. They require practise and proficiency in gender-disaggregated data and other relevant information sources (reports, research papers, stakeholder consultations, etc.) to make informed decisions. At present, SHCP struggles to adequately monitor whether line ministries take gender perspectives into account in their budgetary allocations. Reasons include the restricted availability of gender-disaggregated data in some sectors and the limited ability to analyse expenditure proposals from a gender perspective or to train individuals to do so. As a result, it is difficult to pinpoint possible inefficiencies and determine whether spending to promote gender equality may achieve results. At present, line ministries are under no obligation to substantiate requests with gender-disaggregated evidence. Encouragingly, INMUJERES is now working with SHCP and CONEVAL to plug the data gap by setting criteria for incorporating a gender perspective in diagnostics, monitoring tools (indicator matrices) and different types of evaluation (design, process, results, impact, etc).

Finally, oversight mechanisms such as parliaments and parliamentary commissions are vital for ensuring that the budgetary approval process takes gender perspective into consideration. In Mexico, Congress oversees the budget to check whether resources are well spent and reallocates budget lines if necessary. Oversight by Congress seems to be an incentive for line ministries to act on their commitments to gender equality. Nonetheless, OECD interviews reveal that there is little evaluation of the impact of activities that benefit from earmarked gender-equality budgets, namely due to a broader performance measurement framework which currently focuses on output indicators, rather than impact. In 2015, for example, as part of Congress's oversight function, the Chamber of Deputies' Study Centre for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equity (CEAMEG) analysed the quarterly reporting on the gender-equality-earmarked funds in the annex. Specifically looking at funds earmarked for the communication and transportation sector, CEAMEG analysed whether proposed actions and indicators were coherent, whether there was over/underspending, rather than looking at whether the funds were well targeted to achieve intended gender equality outcomes.

An amendment to the Equality Act in 2012 mandated governments at the state level to allot resources to compliance with local gender equality policies and incorporate such expenditure in states' budgets. In general, states' development plans include a gender perspective, although the same cannot be said for sectoral programmes. INMUJERES'

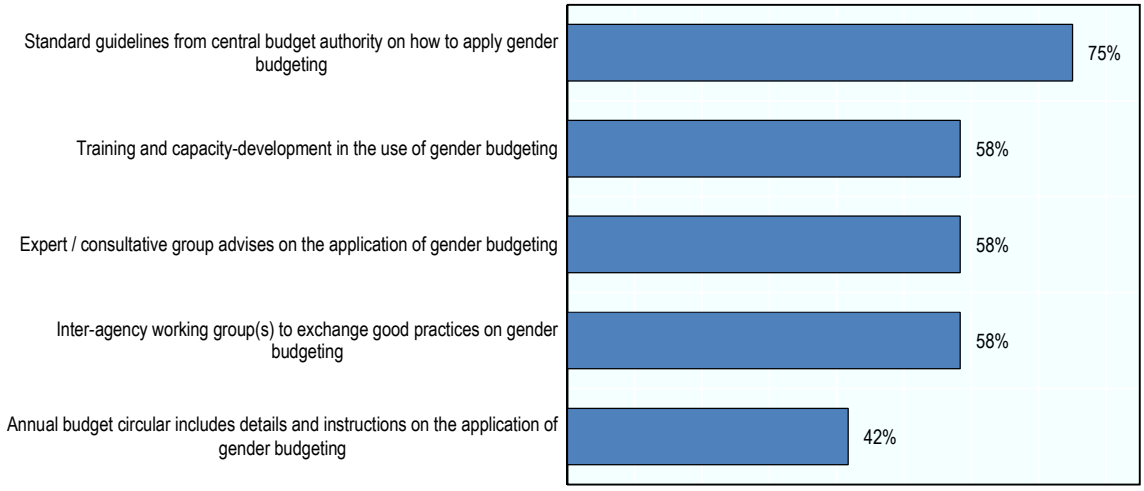
most recent findings (2014) disclosed that only 14 out of 32 states submitted a budget earmarked for gender equality. Of those 14, the sectors covered were minimal – 9 covered health, 8 education, 6 public safety, 5 economic development, 4 the legal system and social protection, 2 the environment, and 1 gender equality spending in science, technology and innovation. While health and education are sectors critical to development and the practice of women's rights, it is desirable to that state budgets spend on other sectors that have an impact, too, especially housing and basic services. The limited scope of state-level gender-equality budgeting could be widened by creating spaces for dialogue that would foster the greater participation of IMEFs in budget and planning processes.

Mexico is stepping up efforts to strengthen the use of tools and mechanisms that will help it comply properly with the requirements of the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act. Since 2008, Mexico has been making growing use of performance information in its budget formulation processes.[4] The Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (SHCP) and its line ministries use performance-based budgeting to take into consideration the impacts of budget decisions on men and women. An important step in this regard was SHCP's move to set performance budgeting guidelines for all federal agencies. The SHCP's Budgetary Policy and Control Unit is responsible for setting budgetary policy and oversees performance-budgeting initiatives. It collects information from line ministries on the expenditure they have earmarked for gender.

Still, Mexico struggles significantly to implement broader performance-based budgeting initiatives. These include designing results indicators, the proficient use of data to design better policies, integrating policies and programmes into budgets, and ultimately measuring their impact. Naturally, challenges in performance-based budgeting also affect gender-equality programmes.

Figure 6.8. Administrative tools to support the implementation of gender budgeting

In 12 OECD countries that report to have gender budgeting



Source: 2016 OECD Survey on Gender Budgeting.

Indeed, performance indicators currently being used by the line ministries and SHCP to monitor the implementation of gender equality measure whether the amounts allocated to certain activities are spent within the agreed timeline and whether they benefit their

target populations. For example, in the communications and transport sector, one gender-earmarked activity is human trafficking training and prevention programmes to help staff detect possible victims in public transport networks. The indicator that gauges the effective implementation of such training is the "percentage of progress in training in and awareness of equality between male and female staff in the field of communications and transport" (SEFIN, 2016). Compulsory quarterly reporting to the Secretariat of Finance on the implementation of the annex that earmarks funds for gender equality includes:

- the number of training and awareness activities conducted,
- whether the numerical target for the number of trainings planned for the period was met,
- the number of people trained.

While such output indicators are important, it is difficult – in the absence of result and impact indicators – to understand whether budgetary allocations are well targeted, well spent, and achieve their intended impact.

Mexico has plenty of room for delivering inclusive policy outcomes to all segments of society. To that end, it could go beyond earmarking budgets for gender equality and ensure that programmes not covered by the annex also deliver gender-equal policy results – in other words, analyse the entire government budget from inception to evaluation through a gender lens. Arguably, the Federal Budget and Fiscal Accountability Act requires precisely that when it refers to building a gender perspective into the overall budget. Thus, while the budget annex is valuable, it does not live up to the article of the law. It is, rather, a fractional application thereof. However, a number of gender-budgeting tools used by other OECD member states (e.g. standard guidelines and advisory or inter-agency groups) could be relevant to Mexico's efforts in this area (Figure 6.8).

Systematic use of gender-disaggregated data for informed policy making

When policy and budget decisions are data-driven and based on robust evidence, their impacts are more likely to be long-lasting. Informed policy making enables governments to create policies more likely to meet specific objectives in support of inclusive growth. In *Strengthening the Evidence Base on Public Governance and Supporting Policy Makers with Comparative Evidence: The Way Forward* (2012), the OECD identifies four tenets of evidence-based policy making:

- generating and gathering reliable basic data;
- using methodologies to turn data into evidence that is actionable for policy making, accuracy and timeliness;
- actually using the evidence in key decision-making processes;
- disseminating evidence and involving stakeholders in sustainable reform.

In other words, policy outcomes that are not only informed, but inclusive, require sector-specific policies that draw on gender-disaggregated data and awareness of the different ways in which policy decisions impact on the lives of women and men (their access to resources, the way they benefit from access, their use of facilities and services, etc.).

To inform policy making from a gender perspective, the first step should be to collect all available gender-disaggregated data from across government sectors and policies –

whether directly related to individuals or not (Box 6.8). Much cross-cutting sectoral data is already gathered across sectors. Adding an extra element – that of male and female – for a particular statistic could add an entirely new dimension and foster awareness of gender dimensions, at little or no cost. Yet, disaggregation of data by sex alone is not sufficient. It is equally important to consider whether there is a need to collect new types of data – particularly with regard to sectors that are considered more gender-neutral, such as infrastructure and transport – and to build data-analysis skills and capacities across government to inform policy making.

Box 6.8. Extract from the 2015 *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life*

The *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* stresses the critical importance of strengthening the evidence base and systematically measuring gender equality performance using gender impact indicators and measurable outcomes. The data collection an evaluation approach to that end should comprise:

- and implementing evaluation, measurement and accountability frameworks and indicators;

  collecting data to regularly assess and report gender equality and mainstreaming strategies, initiatives, public policies and programmes at appropriate levels of government;

  building the capacity of public institutions on the above evaluations, measurements and reports.
- Actively promoting data dissemination;

  ensuring affordable, effective and timely access to performance information on gender equality and mainstreaming that makes it possible to track results against targets;

  monitoring progress towards socio-economic development for the purposes of comparison with international and other benchmarks.
- increasing co-ordination among data-collecting and data-producing bodies and collaboration with relevant stakeholders to develop better gender impact indicators.

Source: OECD (2015), *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life*.

Mexico is a pioneer among Latin American countries when it comes to gathering gender statistics. Indeed, it currently chairs the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and leads its Working Group on Gender Statistics. The working group seeks to "promote the production, development and systematisation of statistical information and gender indicators, as well as their dissemination for use in public policy throughout the region".[5]

In Mexico, mainstream gender indicators are produced by INEGI, an autonomous body that gathers and processes demographic, social, economic, and environmental data. Since 1998, these indicators are to be found in INEGI's annual publication, *Mujeres y Hombres en México*. Gender equality indicators are also publicly available on the INMUJERES online database "Gender Equality Indicators System".[6] Gender-disaggregated data generated by INEGI are available for some basic demographic themes: fertility and mortality, health (including mothers' and children's health), drug addiction, education, and households, employment, unpaid work and time use, social security, violence, access to decision making and poverty.

Building on its international commitments – particularly CEDAW 2010 – Mexico has put in place a Permanent Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Information as part of its National Statistical and Geographical Information System. The committee is the first participatory and consultative mechanism in Latin America which deals with the

production and use of gender statistics.[7] It is chaired by INMUJERES. In addition to INEGI, its members include representatives from the Secretariats of Health, Social Development, Education, Employment, Public Administration, Public Security and from the National Commission for Human Rights.

In addition to the gender-disaggregated statistics generated by INEGI, line ministries are also supposed to gather such data within their sectors. Yet, as reported by INMUJERES, one of the main barriers to effective gender mainstreaming is precisely the limited ability across public institutions in understanding the importance and use of gender-mainstreaming tools, such as gender-disaggregated data. As a consequence, line ministries' collection of gender-disaggregated data remains uneven. What is more, they appear to use the available gender-disaggregated evidence generated by INEGI in an ad hoc manner to inform mainstream policies.

Experience from OECD countries (Box 6.9) highlights the important role that gender units in line ministries play in helping them to gather and use gender-disaggregated data for policy making. The Secretariat of Education (SEP) stands as a good example (see Box 6.10). Its Department of Educational Policy Planning and Evaluation and the gender unit within SEP have worked together to support it in systematically collecting and using gender-disaggregated data:

- generated by the national education system,
- statistics generated by autonomous bodies,
- targeted surveys and skills and performance assessments,
- and research papers and reports.

At the sub-national level, only around half of Mexican states' policy budgets and programmes are underpinned by gender-disaggregated data. Out of 32, 18 require that their institutions and agencies disaggregate data by sex. It is important to encourage and empower state bodies to collect and utilise sex-disaggregated data. Similarly, administrative registers should sort their data by gender, where possible. Going one step further, it would also be desirable that IT systems collected sex-disaggregated data which both public officials and the general public could consult.

Box 6.9. Gender informed policy making in Canada

When it comes to gender-informed policy making an example of good practice is Canada. According to Status of Women Canada, an effective gender-based analysis should consider various factors as part of the policy development process. They include:

- review of data sources (e.g. research papers, gender-disaggregated statistics and related information);
- consideration of the perspectives of different stakeholders, including affected groups;
- analysis of key gender issues raised through the review of data and statistics, including input from stakeholders;
- proposing risk mitigation strategies to address potential inequalities in the outcomes of the initiative

Source: Office of the Auditor General of Canada (2015).

Box 6.10. Mainstreaming gender in educational statistics in Mexico

The Secretariat of Education's Department of Educational Policy Planning and Evaluation and gender unit have come to together to help it incorporate gender mainstreaming in educational policies by promoting and advancing the use of gender-disaggregated data across the education sector. In 2015, the department and gender unit designed a guidance tool to strengthening education civil sectors' ability to build gender considerations into the design, collection, processing and analysis of statistics and the dissemination and publication of results. The guidance tool also seeks to assist users, evaluators and analysts of educational data in incorporating gender perspectives in the design of educational policies and ensuring substantive equality between women and men.

Source: SEP (2015).

Notes

1. The United Nations defines gender mainstreaming as "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, regulations, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf.
2. The National Development Plan presents broad priorities as guidelines for the various federal and state government agencies. In turn, these government agencies develop specific programmes aimed at achieving overall policy goals.
3. Article 17 of the General Law on Equality between Women and Men stresses the need to ensure that budget planning incorporates the gender perspective, supports the transversal approach, and contains provisions for compliance with programmes, projects and actions for equality between men and women.
4. The OECD has defined performance budgeting as budgeting that links the funds allocated to measurable results.
5. www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/5/44745/LCL3378i.pdf.
6. http://estadistica.inmujeres.gob.mx/formas/index.php.
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Chapter 7

Gender equality across the board: Smart implementation for the long haul

Mexico's commitment to gender equality can be fully implemented only if it is underpinned by sound governance structures and mechanisms. Mexico has made headway in developing an institutional framework for achieving gender equality. It consists of a national system for equality between men and women, a national policy and oversight mechanisms to hold government accountable for achieving results. Yet, Mexico's growing efforts to achieve gender equality still deliver only limited results. Inequalities persist between women and men across society, especially at sub-national levels. The gender gap points to some weak or broken links in the gender equality delivery chain. This chapter assesses the overall institutional framework –institutions' mandates, the allocation of resources, institutional capacity and accountability mechanisms – for furthering gender equality in Mexico.

7.1. Introduction

Mexico has embarked on an ambitious gender agenda: to foster a culture of equality between women and men, achieve it substantively and build a society free of discrimination. The institutions and mechanisms established in the framework of the 2006 General Law on Equality between Women and Men are the cogs of the country's system-wide gender machinery. Yet, as shown in the previous chapters, gender gaps still exist – namely in employment, unpaid work, violence, and access to decision-making positions. A fundamental piece of the puzzle is establishing a system than can deliver Mexico's commitments to gender equality. In addition to building a gender perspective into the policy process (Chapter 6), Mexico's capacity to overcome gender gaps depends on the quality of the institutional framework for designing and, most importantly, implementing gender-sensitive policies. This chapter seeks to complement Chapter 6 on gender mainstreaming and to single out the key elements of effective governance for gender equality. Those elements are:

- a system-wide institutional framework stemming from laws and regulations,
- effective co-ordination across all tiers of government,
- the robust measurement of performance,
- the sound oversight of gender equality reform.

Main findings

- Delivering gender equality is a complex, cross-cutting, multidimensional task. It requires the involvement of and buy-in from all government actors. In Mexico, the central government – comprising all secretariats, sub-secretariats, public agencies, parastatal entities and civil servants – is required by law to make the gender perspective a transversal objective that cuts across all sectors of activity.
- The National Institute of Women (INMUJERES) – whose mandate is to support and co-ordinate the federal administration in advancing gender equality – acts as a catalyst across the public sector by supporting both centre of government and line ministries in delivering gender-inclusive policies. The President of INMUJERES is called to Cabinet meetings on an ad-hoc basis, as it does not enjoy the same standing in the Cabinet as, for instance, the Secretariats of Finance or Public Administration.
- In the framework of the National Programme for Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination (PROIGUALDAD), gender units have been created in almost all secretariats of the Federal Public Administration (FPA). While senior managers lead many gender units, some are not allocated large enough budgets to operate to plan. Nor do government departments assign them the same mandates, authority or functions. Mexico is, however, stepping up efforts to establish a unified approach to defining the functions of gender units as advisory units that help FPA departments incorporate the gender perspective into their activity.
- The *Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas* (IMEFs) are state-level women's institutes which co-ordinate and drive gender equality policy. However, the states have no harmonised approach to IMEFs' legal status. However, even though the IMEFs have no formal ties with INMUJERES, it does provide them with strategic and financial support through bilateral agreements. But many IMEFs seem to not to have adequate budgets or the capacity to carry out their programmes or provide services.

Nevertheless, a recently launched online platform helps them to track how well they are managing to mainstream gender in comparison with each other.

- The National System for Equality between Women and Men is an important governance tool for ensuring a system-wide approach to gender equality in Mexico. The system is mandated by law to take measures, mutually agreed with public institutions and secretariats, to promote and achieve gender equality. However, there is not a standard procedure for designating representatives and each secretariat or institution is free to choose whomever they wish to attend equality system meetings, regardless of their position.
- The absence of gender analysis in evaluations of sectoral policies, coupled with the sheer number of actors involved, complicates efforts to measure policy impacts on women and men. The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy (CONEVAL) and the Secretariat of Finance (SHCP) share responsibility for evaluating sector-related programmes, reporting their findings on the gender equality component to INMUJERES. INMUJERES, however, has no evaluation function or authority to apply sanctions in the event of non-compliance. Rather, it is responsible for collecting information from line ministries on the progress made in gender equality and preparing *achievement reports* on the implementation of PROIGUALDAD for the purposes of transparency. Nor is there a requirement to include gender-sensitive indicators in sectoral planning documents. In other words, there is currently no institution mandated to monitor that all policies duly take gender into consideration.
- Mexico is increasing its efforts to systematically incorporate the gender lens in policy evaluation. Accordingly, INMUJERES supports and advises SHCP to implement Article 24 of the 2016 Expenditure Budget Decree. This article tasks INMUJERES with supporting the SHCP by drawing up criteria against which it can evaluate to what degree sectoral policies have incorporated the gender perspective. Further, pursuant to a recent agreement between INMUJERES and the Secretariat of Public Administration (SFP), the latter follows up on the FPA's efforts to implement the National Development Plan's cross-cutting strategies, which include PROIGUALDAD.
- Congress and the National Ombudsman oversee the implementation of gender equality policies. Both Houses of Congress have put in place gender equality commissions to promote reform in issues like violence, health and political participation that especially call for a gender approach. The National Ombudsman also provides some oversight. Its role consists mostly of :
  - requesting information on equality-related programmes and action from all levels of governments,
  - monitoring progress in achieving the objectives set by PROIGUALDAD,
  - issuing non-binding recommendations.

Box 7.1. Key policy recommendations

- Reinforce the role of central administration (i.e. the centre of government, the Ministry of Public Service, Ministry of Finance and other related agencies) in verifying that all sectoral policy or program proposals and budgets are accompanied by an assessment of their potential impacts on women and men from diverse backgrounds (ie., gender impact assessments). INMUJERES can play a key role in supporting the central administration of providing technical support and advice on gender equality matter.

- Increase the leverage of INMUJERES in the process of advancing gender equality and mainstreaming within the FPA through executive instructions. In the medium term, consider increasing the involvement of INMUJERES in meetings of the Legal Executive Cabinet (rather than the extended Cabinet).

- Enhance INMUJERES' resources and capacities – based on clear objectives and plans – aimed to effectively co-ordinate, and follow-up on the agreements of the National System for Equality between Women and Men (SNIMH) with public institutions and secretariats, while also strengthening gender-equality co-ordination and co-operation at the state level and between federal and state institutions. Increasing the number and resources of general directorates within INMUJERES can be effective in this regard.

- Define and standardise the functions of gender units; and consider extending the functions of gender units to become strategic advisors supporting their Secretariats in the development, implementation and evaluation of sectoral policies and programmes through applying gender analysis, taking into consideration gender-disaggregated data (Chapter 6). At the same time, empower with increased capacity and mandate all secretariats, sub-secretariats and public officials to apply a gender perspective in their daily policy work. Increase the capacity and widen the scope of state-level institutions (IMEF) tasked to co-ordinate, guide and monitor the implementation of gender equality activities and measures.

- Develop and implement an ample training provision for gender units across the FPA to enable them to lend cross-cutting advisory support to secretariats' policy and evaluation departments. Public officials, too, should receive training to identify and address gender-related aspects of their agency's remit, work environment and policy making. Developing online training and making it mandatory for all staff would be an important first step in that regard.

- Expand the government's goal of creating gender units in central bodies to all federal public and parastatal institutions in order to ensure that all government action is geared to delivering gender-inclusive results.

- Increase the capacity and widen the mandates of state-level women's institutions (IMEFs) tasked with co-ordinating, guiding and monitoring the implementation of gender equality activities in Mexico's states. Greater capacity and stronger mandates would help the IMEFs harmonise their efforts to narrow the implementation gap of gender equality initiatives at all levels of government.

- Adopt a unified approach – with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities – to effectively monitor the implementation of gender mainstreaming throughout the FPA (refer to Chapter 6 recommendations). Strengthen the capacity and gender expertise of the Secretariat of Finance and CONEVAL in bringing a gender perspective to bear in the evaluation of policies and programmes. Strengthen the capacity of INMUJERES to effectively support and influence the centre of government in monitoring the results of all policies on gender equality.

7.2. Institutional framework for gender equality in Mexico

Mexico has made important strides in developing an institutional framework to translate its gender equality commitments into concrete deliverables. Article 1 of the 2006 General Act on Equality between Women and Men (hereinafter referred to as the "Equality Act") refers to the act as a public order and its provisions as being "for the public benefit". It proposes guidelines for institutional mechanisms to chart the country's course "toward fulfilment of substantive equality in the public and private spheres by promoting the empowerment of women".[1] The Equality Act institutes three national policy instruments: the National System[2] and National Programme on equality between women and men, and the Observance thereof (Article 18). Title II (Chapter 1), on authorities and institutions, assigns responsibilities and spells out inter-institutional co-ordination with Mexico's national gender equality machinery.

The federal executive is in charge of implementing the National System and National Programme (Article 20). INMUJERES is tasked with co-ordinating the system and drawing up the guidelines for public equality policies (Article 21). The National Commission of Human Rights (hereinafter CNDH or the Ombudsperson) has the job of monitoring and evaluating the National Gender Equality Policy (Article 22). It oversees the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality action undertaken by the FPA.[3] The Equality Act devotes specific chapters to the roles expected from the three tiers of government, outlining the responsibilities of the federal government in Articles 12-13, the states and Mexico City in Articles 14-15, and the municipalities in Article 16.

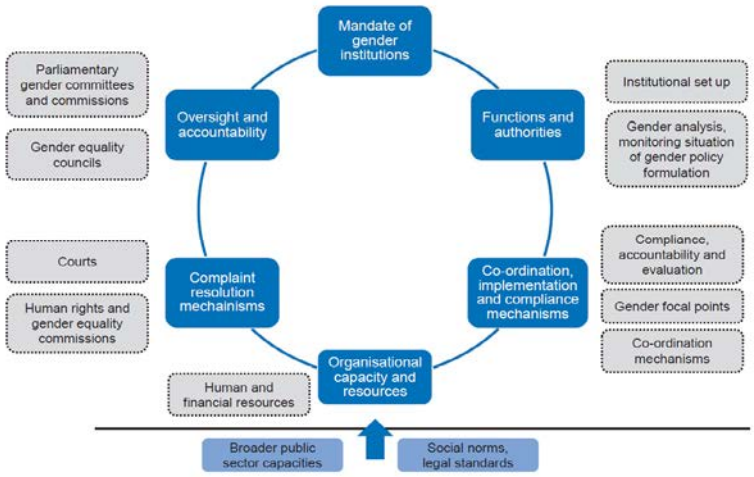
The Equality Act lays out a blueprint for building a gender-equality framework (both across government and at the secretariat level). Its success, however, hinges on:

- how clearly government organisations assigns roles and responsibilities;
- on sound capacities for designing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating gender-equality strategies and reforms, buttressed by sufficient checks and balances, resources and accountability mechanisms.

In fact, the governance structures that are put in place in Mexico, their capacity and the resources allocated to them will either help or hinder Mexico in making good on its commitment to close gender gaps. If structures and mechanisms are not well designed, efforts may fall short of the expected results. Moving from process-driven policy implementation to outcome-focused performance management is a key marker of progress. A stronger focus on results could thus help Mexico boost the efficiency of its gender-equality delivery mechanisms for inclusive, impactful policy outcomes.

Making policies more gender responsive is effective only when responsibility is shared and all public institutions and agencies from different levels of government are involved (Box 7.2 and Figure 7.1). Government-wide sharing and involvement are important for changing standard practice and can exert a cascade effect on gender equality policies. They require methodical planning, co-ordination, and resources, however. The more players are involved, the more complicated it can become to ensure continuity in objectives and compliance. Accordingly, to temper the challenges of such a comprehensive approach, the *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* (2016a) calls for "bolstering the capacities and resources of gender equality institutions to facilitate consistent response at appropriate levels of government".

Figure 7.1. Key elements of effective gender institutions



Source: OECD (2014).

Article 29 of the Equality Act demonstrates Mexico's intention of horizontally applying gender-equality policies, measures and mechanisms across all departments in all three tiers of government. INMUJERES has been assigned the job of drawing up a *national programme* for equality between men and women that takes into account the needs of states, the federal district (Mexico City), municipalities and the particularities of inequality in each region. The programme has been incorporated into the National Development Plan and the sectoral, institutional and special programmes referred to in the Planning Law (see Chapter 6 for more detail).[4] INMUJERES thus acts as the central gender institution for co-ordinating action at the federal, state and municipal level. The federal government has the responsibility of designing and implementing a *national policy* on gender equality. Any programmes submitted by the states and the federal district should, in principle, adhere to the criteria and instruments of the national policy and comply with the objectives, strategies and lines of action governed by a medium and long-term vision.

Gender units have been created in the FPA to support their Secretariats as they seek to incorporate the gender perspective into their fields of work and promote the advancement of women in the public sector at the central government level. At the subnational level, the states and the federal district (Mexico City) are responsible for drawing up and conducting local policies on gender equality, creating and strengthening institutional mechanisms to promote and enforce those policies, and co-ordinating with the FPA to enforce the 2006 Equality Law. As for the municipalities, they (Article 16):

- implement gender-equality policies that match the national and state-level policies;
- contribute to the consolidation of programmes;
- submit to the executive branch of their state requests for budgets that they require to execute their programmes;
- formulate and run awareness-raising campaigns and development programmes;
- foster social, political and citizens' participation in both rural and urban areas

Box 7.2. The OECD whole-of-government approach for the delivery of gender-inclusive policies

Building on the evidence of what works, the *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* endorses a whole-of-government approach to gender equality as the most effective way of achieving gender-equal societies for inclusive growth. Mechanisms for gender equality may include institutions within the different branches of the state (the legislature, the executive and the judiciary) as well as independent accountability and advisory bodies. A whole-of-government approach entails:

- **Central gender institutions** with clearly defined mandates and authority. If they are to carry out their mandates, they will require adequate budgets, resources and staff who are competent in policy analysis, advocacy, communication and monitoring. Such properly resourced, properly staffed institutions would facilitate a consistent whole-of-government response to gender equality, provide advice and guidance to Centre of Government and line ministries, monitor the situation of gender equality and help formulate and implement policies throughout the government. **Centre of Government institutions**, like the Cabinet Office and Secretariat of Finance, also play a key role in verifying and ensuring that line ministries and agencies undertake gender impact assessments in designing their policies, initiatives and budgets.
- **Line ministries and agencies with sufficient capacity and resources** to design and implement relevant gender initiatives and analyse the gender impacts of their mainstream policies and initiatives. Appointing gender focal points across all levels of government would help meet national gender-equality objectives. "Gender focal points" would be permanent staff members responsible for administering laws or regulations related to gender equality, collecting data, developing sectoral plans, training and/or developing gender-sensitive personnel policies.
- **Robust co-ordination** to ensure policy coherence across bodies at all levels of government. Co-ordination mechanisms should also provide for a) government bodies to work with non-governmental stakeholders and citizens; and b) data-collecting and producing bodies with a view to developing and/or improving gender impact indicators.
- **Evaluation, accountability and oversight** in order to encourage compliance with gender-equality policies, pinpoint deficiencies and redress remaining inequalities. To be effective, gender-equality objectives must be linked to concrete policy outcomes and include evaluation of the performance of government action. Evaluations help governments to change their course of action, if need be, and independent and non-governmental stakeholders to hold government to account. Independent monitoring mechanisms, such as gender equality or human rights commissions, can offer channels of redress in the event of gender discrimination and oversee the implementation of the government's gender equality commitments. Legislatures and legislative committees can also check government entities and contribute to the longevity and sustainability of gender equality reform during periods of change in the political environment.

Source: OECD (2014).

Mexico's efforts to build an institutional framework for the advancement of gender-equality are in line with its international commitment under the terms of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), particularly General Recommendation No. 6 on Effective National Machinery and Publicity. It emphasises the need to establish or strengthen national mechanisms, institutions and procedures at the highest level of government with adequate resources, commitment and authority to:

- advise on the impact of all government policies,
- monitor the situation of women comprehensively,
- help formulate new policies and effectively implement strategies and measures to eliminate discrimination.

In 2013, at the UN Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Regional Conference on Women, Mexico committed, alongside its regional peers:

to strengthen institutions advocating public policies on gender equality, such as gender machineries and offices for women's empowerment, by means of legislation and guaranteed, non-transferrable and irreducible budgets and by setting up decision-making bodies at the highest level, and build up their capacity to provide policy guidance on gender equality and women's empowerment by endowing them with the necessary human and financial resources for a cross-cutting impact on public policies and the structure of the state with a view to devising and implementing de jure and de facto strategies for promoting women's autonomy and gender equality.[5]

The role of Centre of Government in delivering gender equality

Centre of Government (CoG)[6] is a group of bodies that direct the priority work of governments from design to effective delivery (OECD, 2015). Delivering gender equality is a complex, cross-cutting, multidimensional task. It requires the involvement of and buy-in from all government actors. In that regard, CoG plays a crucial convening and steering role by providing leadership and ensuring that secretariats and agencies factor gender impacts into the design of their policies, initiatives and budgets.

In Mexico, central government departments (e.g. the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit [SHCP]) play an important role in steering policy towards the three overarching objectives set forth in the National Development Plan 2013-2018:

- democratising productivity,
- modern government that is near to the people,
- incorporating a gender perspective in government action.

To help incorporate the three objectives into sectoral programmes, the SHCP drafted the "Technical Guide for the Elaboration of Programmes deriving from the National Development Plan 2013-18" which contains provisions and recommendations that all FPA entities have to take into account by when developing programmes. The SHCP exercises its steering role, together with the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy (CONEVAL), by vetting the annual evaluation plans submitted by line ministries to ensure that they clearly state – through indicators – how sectoral plans developed within the framework of the National Plan contribute to the cross-cutting gender equality objective. With an eye to the future, INMUJERES is working with the SHCP to strengthen its advisory role in monitoring and evaluating sectoral programmes from a gender perspective (see Section 7.4).

The experience of OECD countries reveals that delivery units within the CoG are also a seamless, system-wide way of implementing such cross-cutting priorities as gender equality (OECD, 2015). In this approach, while the responsibility for delivering on gender equality lies with the line ministries, small delivery units within CoG can be effective in:

- clarifying what the line ministries are expected to do in advancing gender equality;
- developing clear, simple performance measurement and assessment frameworks;
- removing obstacles to implementation;
- using gender-disaggregated data to monitor the progress made.

In the absence of a dedicated delivery unit within Mexico's FPA to steer, co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of gender equality, there is room for further strengthening both legal requirements and the capacity of the SHCP to monitor through a gender lens. For example, in Canada, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat ensures, as part of its challenge function, that departments and agencies incorporate gender considerations, where appropriate, into the design of policies, programmes, initiatives and services. The differential impacts on men and women are to be identified and addressed so that results are equitable for both genders (see Box 7.3).

Box 7.3 Allocation of roles and responsibilities in the implementation of Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in Canada

Canada has a longstanding commitment to gender equality. In 1995 the Government of Canada committed to conducting Gender-based Analysis (GBA) In all future legislation, policies and programmes. GBA is an analytical process used to assess the potential impacts of policies, programmes and initiatives on diverse groups. It takes into account gender and other identity factors, such as socio-economic status, race, class, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental and physical disability, region, language and religion. By understanding the circumstances and needs of diverse groups, it believes that programmes and policies can be tailored to respond to the diversity of the Canadian public. Each federal department is responsible for incorporating the government's commitment to gender equality within its substantive work and mandate – GBA is one of the key methods to that effect. Status of Women Canada is leading the implementation of GBA and building the capacity of federal departments and agencies to incorporate GBA throughout the decision-making process.

GBA+ is everyone's responsibility. Although Status of Women Canada plays a leadership role in the government-wide implementation of GBA+, all departments and agencies share the commitment to GBA+.

All federal officials should incorporate GBA+ into their work by asking some basic questions and challenging personal assumptions about diverse groups of women and men. Through the systematic use of GBA+, federal officials are able to improve their work, ensuring that it includes diverse perspectives.

Status of women Canada

- facilitates transfer of GBA+ knowledge,
- provides technical assistance to departments and agencies,
- develops GBA+ tools and training.

Central agencies

- exercise a challenge function,
- provide guidance on incorporating GBA+ where appropriate.

Federal Departments and Agencies

- conduct GBA+,
- integrate and sustain the practice of GBA+,
- monitor and report on GBA+ practices and outcomes.

Source: Information provided by the Status of Women Canada.

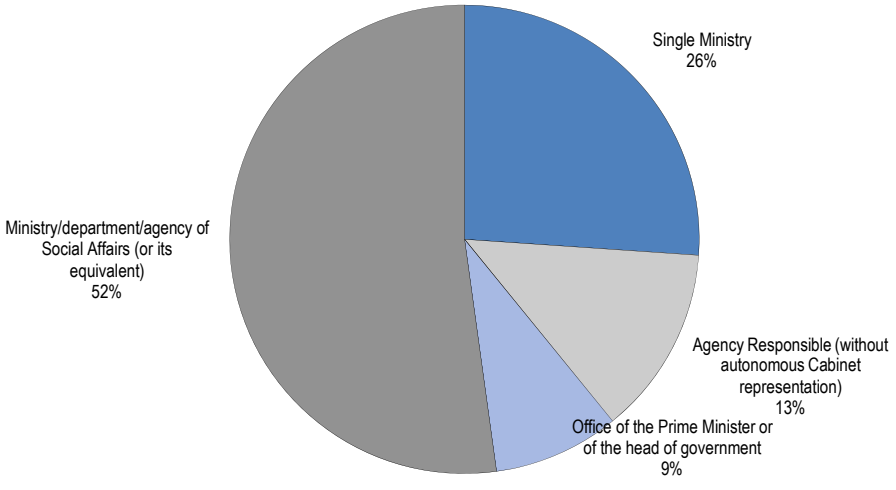
National Women's Institute (INMUJERES)

Almost all OECD countries, including Mexico, have established public institutions or agencies to promote, co-ordinate and support the implementation of their governments' action in the area of gender equality. They act as catalysts in the public sector by helping both the CoG and line ministries to deliver gender-inclusive policies. They have no single identified structure nor operate in the same way. Instead there are different arrangements for incorporating national gender mechanisms into the institutional setting (Figure 7.2). Agencies may act as:

- central gender institutions with the status of ministries in their own right;
- a single ministry with multiple portfolios that combine with gender equality;
- central gender institutions in the office of the head of government or state;
- gender equality councils, or commissions, that function either as autonomous bodies or in consultation with the government.

At the federal level, Mexico's central gender institution, INMUJERES, is similar to the last arrangement in the list above. It has a technical secretariat and a council whose members are drawn from both the government and civil society (see Box 7.4). It operates as a decentralised body with legal personality within the FPA, but is not located anywhere in the Mexican Government. Although it is not part of the Legal Executive Cabinet, it is considered a cabinet-level administrative office and a member of the Extended Cabinet. The President of INMUJERES is called to Cabinet meetings on an ad-hoc basis, as it does not enjoy the same standing in the Cabinet Office as, for instance, the Secretariats of Finance or Public Administration. While its structure gives it significant flexibility that allows it to conduct different activities with different focuses, its relative distance from the apex of decision making may restrict its resource base and influence (OECD, 2014). Indeed, the location of gender equality institutions within government offices and the authority assigned to them are indicative of their status and how important their mandates and work are deemed to be.

Figure 7.2. Central gender institutions in OECD countries, 2012



Source: OECD (2011), Survey on National Gender Frameworks, Gender Public Policies and Leadership.

According to the Law of the National Women's Institute (Article 4), the overall objective of INMUJERES is to foster an environment conducive to non-discrimination, equality of opportunity and treatment between women and men, women's equitable participation in the political, cultural, economic and social life. INMUJERES is to work towards that end in three ways:

3. by supporting and advising the FPA in incorporating a gender perspective into policies and programmes;
4. by supporting sub-national governments in furtherance of gender equality at the state and municipal levels (while abiding by the principle of federalism);
5. collaborating with the legislature and judiciary at the federal and state levels to ensure a holistic approach to gender equality.

It is important to stress that INMUJERES does not function as a regulatory authority. Rather it has a normative and advisory role – as well as many other functions. It provides standards and guidelines to help line ministries adopt a gender perspective and implement the national gender equality policy, PROIGUALDAD. When it comes to the gender perspective as a cross-cutting policy objective, implementation is the responsibility of all the secretariats and under-secretariats across the FPA and, where appropriate, of sub-national tiers of government.

At the federal level, Article 7 of the National Women's Institute Law assigns INMUJERES the task of supporting the FPA in integrating the gender perspective into sectoral policy programmes through training, advice, etc. INMUJERES exercises its support function by drawing up guidelines and striking bilateral collaboration agreements with bodies from across the FPA. Under the terms of the Decree of Federal Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2016 (Article 24), it also formally monitors the government's gender equality budget – together with the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit – and reports to the Gender Equality Commission of the Chamber of Deputies (see Chapter 6). INMUJERES' duties further include tracking progress on how the line ministries have implemented PROIGUALDAD, receiving and consolidating information from them on the progress made.

Finally, in accordance with Article 29 of the Women's Institute Law, INMUJERES is tasked to ensure that gender equality initiatives taken by state and municipal authorities are co-ordinated at all times. Gender institutions at the sub-national levels of government are not formally linked with INMUJERES, a federal body, and it has no authority over state and municipal institutions (Box 7.4). However, it continues to afford them support through bilateral co-operation agreements and various programmes (see below, "Institutional mechanisms at the state level").

Box 7.4. How the Mexican Institute of Women is structured

The Mexican Institute of Women (INMUJERES) is made up of:

- the Governing Board comprising the heads of departments of the Federal Public Administration (FPA);
  - eight members of the Consultative Council;
  - eight members of the Social Council;
  - permanent guest members, who include two representatives of the Mexican Supreme Court and two from the Federal Board of Judges;
  - members of the political parties represented in the Chamber of Deputies.
- a Consultative Council that acts as an advisory body and is representative of political organisations, business, civil society and academic institutions;
- a Social Council that analyses and evaluates public policies and projects and whose members are figures from the public, private and social sectors who have distinguished themselves by their work in fostering gender equity.

Under Article 25 of the General Law on Equality between Women and Men, it is the responsibility of the INMUJERES' Governing Board to:

- propose national policy guidelines;
- co-ordinate gender the equality programmes of the agencies and entities that make up the FPA;
- promote, co-ordinate and review programmes and services related to equality;
- determine a timeframe within which FPA agencies and entities should provide information and the kind of information required;
- formulate proposals for the allocation of resources required by gender equality programmes;
- Support co-ordination among the institutions of the Federal Public Administration in order to educate and train their personnel on the subject of equality between women and men; and
- encourage the greater participation of civil society in promoting equality between women and men.

Source: Government of Mexico (2006a).

The responsibility of line ministries and gender units in mainstreaming

Developing more inclusive policies and programmes is a priority and hence the shared responsibility of all public institutions at all tiers of government. The 2006 Equality Act tasks the federal government with developing policies and programmes to promote gender equality. And under the terms of the 2013-2018 National Development Plan, all government institutions and agencies are required to integrate a gender perspective in their actions. All secretariats, sub-secretariats, public agencies, parastatal entities and the civil service must, by law, make gender a policy objective that cuts across their fields of activity. Indeed, the single agency framework, whereby a central agency has overall responsibility for gender mainstreaming, may marginalise gender equality efforts and hinder the gender equality agenda.

In accordance with the provisions of its legal framework and its national development objectives, Mexico has set in all its public institutions the goal of creating gender units to increase their sense of ownership of gender equality action. As part of PROIGUALDAD, 16 out of 17 secretariats have created gender units, as have the Office of the General Attorney[7] and the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS).[8] This highlights important progress as the number of gender units has more than doubled from seven since 2012. Indeed, it is becoming a common practice across the OECD for countries' line ministries to institute gender units or gender focal points to bring questions of gender equality and gender mainstreaming to the executive table and back the executive in exercising its leadership on the gender issue (OECD, 2014). An important pitfall for public institutions to avoid, however, is assigning their gender units sole responsibility for gender mainstreaming. The experience from OECD countries shows that gender units are most effective when they can act as strategic policy branches, helping their institutions to develop, implement and evaluate policies and programmes through a gender lens. Overall accountability for gender mainstreaming should lie with the senior management. (Box 7.5 describes two good examples of gender units in OECD countries.)

The effectiveness of a newly established gender unit is contingent upon whether:

- it is given feasible, unambiguous mandates;
- their location within an institution (often indicative of the status that the institution accords them);
- it has the human and monetary resources to coax the institution and its management into embedding gender considerations in the activities that are part of the institution's mandate.

Within the framework of PROIGUALDAD, Mexico has paired the success of the gender units with two indicators – their proximity to the highest decision-making echelons in line ministries and their financial resources. Of all 18 gender units, 11 (61%) are led by senior managers – either deputy general director or higher.[9] Some gender units in public bodies that are part of a secretariat have also come together to form a network of gender focal points. When it comes to financial resources, however, a 2014 evaluation by the CNDH of the performance of gender units in the FPA revealed that, while many gender units were now in existence, some had not been allocated large enough budgets to operate effectively.

Being close to senior decision-making levels and enjoying ample financial resources are, indeed, powerful enabling factors in operational gender units. They determine if a gender unit is capable of backing a line ministry seeking to make the gender perspective part of its policy-making process. However, the two factors are not in themselves guarantees of gender unit performance as, In the development of PROIGUALDAD, the mandate, authority and functions granted to gender units were overlooked even though they significantly determine their effectiveness. During the interviews conducted with government officials in Mexico, the OECD assessment team found that there is often no standard governing the gender unit's remit, the authority it has, or the tasks it should perform. In practical terms, their work mainly seems to focus on internally promoting gender equality considerations in human resources and administrative policies. Little of it is devoted to helping public institutions incorporate gender considerations into their sectoral policies and services.

Nevertheless, instances of good practice can be singled out. The gender unit within the Secretariat of Education (SEP), working in co-operation with the Planning and Evaluation Directorate, helped its Secretariat by developing a handbook on the use gender-disaggregated data in its overall policy-making process. As for the Secretariat of Tourism (SECTUR), it has set up a gender mainstreaming branch whose remit includes analysing the differential impacts of public policies on women and men in order to identify priority areas and opportunities for mainstreaming gender in the tourism sector. The secretariat has also given the Deputy Directorate General for Gender Equality the job of working with the Directorate General of Monitoring and Evaluation to design a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating policies that incorporate a gender perspective. While it is too soon to evaluate whether the gender unit has the necessary capacity and is adequately positioned to influence the Secretariat of Tourism's core policy making, its functions seem to have helped bring a gender perspective to bear.

Mexico is stepping up its efforts to overcome the challenges arising from the fact that institutions have failed to assign their gender units clear functions. Under the terms of a recent agreement, INMUJERES and the Secretariat of Public Administration have joined forces to draw up a unified approach to defining gender units' authority, mandate and functions. Moving forward, it will be important consider gender units as strategic advisory branches that help the institution in which they are located to look at the development, implementation and evaluation of the policy-making process through a gender-perspective and, accordingly, to work with gender-disaggregated data. In parallel, it will be important to continue ensuring that all departments in a secretariat work towards gender mainstreaming and that senior management is held accountable for successful implementation. (Box 7.5 offers some examples of good practice in the functions of gender units in Canada and Spain.)

Senior managers in public institutions also have a key part to play, leading by example and ensuring that gender equality is effectively embedded in their institution's mandated activities and workplace operations. Section IV of the *OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* stresses the importance of raising awareness of gender equality considerations among public sector managers. It also calls for greater management and executive accountability to ensure gender balance and deal with gender equality issues in the workplace, which includes management performance frameworks. If managers are strong advocates of gender equality, the chances are they will set the tone and their organisation and staff to follow suit and make gender equality a priority, too.

Box 7.5. Examples of gender units in OECD countries: Canada and Spain

Canada

Evidence shows that biological, economic and social differences between women and men also contribute to differences in health risks, health services use and health outcomes. Accordingly, Health Canada incorporates gender-based analysis throughout the development, implementation and evaluation of its research programmes and policies to ensure that the activities of the ministry deliver gender equal health outcomes. The Gender and Health Unit within the ministry is responsible for supporting the implementation of policies and providing advice across the board to establish sustainable capacity. The unit also plays a role in evaluating and reporting these policies, which it does in collaboration with the Performance Measurement and Evaluation Directorate. However, the implementation of gender analysis within the health portfolio remains a shared responsibility. While senior management leads by example to ensure the implementation of gender mainstreaming, its successful implementation requires the participation of all health portfolio staff. They are accountable in the context of their work and normally assigned duties.[1]

Spain

Both gender units and gender focal points are used as resources to support gender mainstreaming rather than those with overall responsibility for gender mainstreaming. For example, gender units help ensure that gender equality and mainstreaming are brought to the executive table and support the executive in exercising its leadership on the issue.

To make gender a mainstream part of all public policies, Spain introduced equality units in all ministries in accordance with Article 77 of Act 3/2007 of 22 March 2007 for Effective Equality Between Women and Men. All ministries, within the scope of their areas of competence, assign to a single management body duties relating to equality between women and men, particularly:

- providing gender-relevant statistical information;
- conducting surveys to foster equality between women and men in ministries' areas of activity;
- advising the ministry's competent bodies on the formulation of the gender impact report;
- Improving employees' understanding of the scope and significance of the principle of gender equality;
- overseeing compliance policies to effectively implement Act 3/2007 and gender equality.

Spain's Instituto de la Mujer (Women's Institute) has trained staff who work in equality units which are now the focal points for monitoring the progress of gender equality and mainstreaming measures across government. Universities, too, are also starting to create equality units since the 4/2007 University Reformation Act, and nearly 30 are now in place in different public universities.

1. Information taken from the official website of Health Canada. www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/sgba-policy-politique-ags-eng.php.

Source: Information provided by the Government of Spain and Status of Women Canada.

There is a need to build expertise in the gender units

Building the gender units' capacity to support cross-cutting policy making and public officials' ability to identify and address gender-related aspects within their agency's mandate will be a crucial element of success. INMUJERES has reported that it sought to strengthen the know-how of gender units across the FPA through training, guidelines and manuals. Yet, it provides training courses on demand only or through individual partnerships, so they are few and far between. Furthermore, their content

generally focuses on awareness raising, which is important for fostering a gender-sensitive working environment.

From a policy perspective, though Mexico, needs to improve the technical capabilities of its public officials – through mandatory training, for example – if they are to conduct their daily work from a gender perspective. INMUJERES can support capacity building in FPA institutions by identifying good practices and promoting regular cross-sectoral policy dialogue. In fact, to overcome the financial limitations on the provision of training classes in Mexico (as in many other countries), online training could be an initial step in getting secretariats to apply the gender filter to the mainstream policy process (see Chapter 6). Canada, for example, has developed an extensive online platform that provides training in its analytical tool, Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) (see Box 7.3). Ministries typically set target completion rates for staff who take the online course. Building on the completion rates, Canada's central gender agency, Status of Women Canada, supports ministries through additional in-person training where necessary. To help government departments overcome difficulties in implementing GBA+ effectively, Status of Women in Canada also hosts a quarterly interdepartmental committee meeting to facilitate information exchange, discuss challenges, and share best practices.[10]

Institutional mechanisms at the state level

The *Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas* (IMEFs) are state-level women´s institutes that have come into being over the past decade to co-ordinate and drive gender-equality policy. Yet, from one state to another their legal status and institutional standing varies – from ministerial status to decentralised body, general directorate and autonomous body. Mexico's federal system precludes IMEFs from any formal ties with INMUJERES, a federal institution which has no authority over them. INMUJERES therefore uses collaborative agreements with state governments and IMEFs to channel federal funds into gender equality programmes at the state level.

However, an INMUJERES[11] survey in 2014 found that 23 of the 31 IMEFs in place reported that their budgets were inadequate and 25 claimed that they did not have enough staff to carry out their programmes and services. The shortfall in human and financial resources is chiefly attributable to the fact that many state governments have not yet started funding gender-equality policies. As a result, the implementation of key activities at both state and municipal levels has been set back. The work that has suffered includes:

- social support services, especially those that address violence against women;
- specialist support for legal and social issues;
- women's rights campaigns;
- the development of statistics;
- development, follow-up and evaluation of programmes

Although states' development plans generally incorporate a gender perspective, gender-earmarked funding in sectoral programmes remained limited and uneven. In 2014, states allotted gender-related budgets in health and education, but not in other sectors that have an obvious impact on women, such as housing and basic services. Altogether, there was no budget provision for equality between men and women in 18 states.[12]

For almost a decade, INMUJERES has lent financial and technical support to the IMEFs and their municipal counterparts (IMMs) as part of the Programme for Strengthening Gender Mainstreaming. However, in many instances the direct financial aid that INMUJERES awarded was not enough in itself to set the gender machinery in motion at sub-national levels. In 2016, INMUJERES (with UN Women) launched an online platform, "México rumbo a la igualdad" (Mexico on the way to equality).[13] Its aim is to showcase the progress made by 32 states in gender mainstreaming in public policies, state budgets and public accounts. The tool seeks to help states track their progress against each other and identify specific action that they need to take – e.g. harmonise laws and policies.

7.3. Co-ordinating a whole-of-government approach

The OECD *Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* (see Box 7.6) and its public governance reviews argue that a whole-of-government approach is the most effective strategy for advancing the gender equality agenda. Since gender equality has its place in an array of policy areas, policy co-ordination mechanisms, both vertical (at different tiers of government) and horizontal (across the government), would facilitate a whole-of-government approach to gender equality.

Box 7.6. Extract from the 2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life

The importance of a system-wide institutional set-up is endorsed by the *2015 OECD Recommendation on Gender Equality in Public Life* which emphasises the need to ensure that public institutions have the resources and capacity to integrate gender-equality perspectives in their activities.

Establish an institutional framework to ensure the effective implementation, co-ordination and sustainability of the gender equality and mainstreaming strategy, by:

i. establishing clear roles, responsibilities, mandates and lines of accountability of key governmental and oversight bodies in implementing gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives;

ii. bolstering the capacities and resources of gender equality institutions to facilitate a consistent response at appropriate levels of government and to develop, implement and monitor gender-sensitive programmes and policies throughout the government, based on gender-disaggregated statistics and indicators. Effectiveness of gender equality institutions can also be strengthened by placing them at the highest possible level in the government (see also recommendations II.2 and III.2);

iii. ensuring the capacity and resources of public institutions to integrate gender equality perspectives in their activities, for example, by identifying gender equality focal points across governmental bodies, by investing resources in training and promoting collaborative approaches with knowledge centres to produce gender-sensitive knowledge, leadership and communication, by ensuring the collection of gender and gender-disaggregated statistics in their areas of responsibility and by providing clear guidelines, tools, communication and expectations to public institutions in this area (see also recommendations II.2 and III.2); and

iv. strengthening vertical and horizontal co-ordination mechanisms for policy coherence across governmental bodies and levels of government that involve relevant non-governmental stakeholders to ensure synergies and effective implementation of gender equality initiatives.

Source: OECD (2016), "Recommendation I.2", *OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life*, OECD Publishing, Paris, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264252820-en.

In Mexico, one of the governance tools created by the 2006 Equality Law is the National System for Equality between Women and Men (SNIMH or "the System"), an inter-institutional mechanism co-ordinated by INMUJERES. Article 23 of the Equality Act defines it as the institutional framework (a set of structures, relationships, methods, and procedures) that the agencies and entities of the FPA establish among themselves in order to carry out mutually agreed actions for the promotion and achievement of equality between women and men (UNDP, 2014). The System's Rules of Functioning and Operation[14] state that the System ordinarily meets at least three times per year, which does not prevent any of its members from requesting extraordinary sessions that can take place with the approval of the Presidency of the System. The quorum required is half plus one member with and the right to vote. The members of the System, who have voice and the right to vote are: the Presidency of the System (President of the Women's National Institute), the Technical Secretary (Executive Secretary of the Women´s Nacional Institute), all ministries and the Executive´s Chief Legal Officer, representatives of the Consultative and Social Boards of INMUJERES and a representative from the CNDH. Representatives from other institutions may also join the System to make a contribution, but they have a voice they may not vote – e.g. representatives of the Supreme Court, the Equality Commissions of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, the President's Office, and the National Electoral Institute. There is no standard procedure for designating representatives. Each secretariat or institution is free to designate the public servant of their choice to attend System meetings, regardless of their position. As common practice is to chose someone from a gender unit where possible. Experience from OECD countries suggests that if public institutions appointed high-level representatives with power to influence the System's broader policy and priority setting, the System could have a greater impact on gender quality, as its decisions would be more likely to translate into concrete follow-up action.

The System's outcomes consist of agreements. At the end of each session, the Technical Secretary of the System sets out the agreements reached. However, it is up to the member institutions to put them into effect or not, as they are non-binding. Nor is there any established follow-up mechanism to systematically monitor implementation and progress. Nevertheless, it is common practice that INMUJERES follows up by gathering information from the line ministries through official memos. Members of the system are informed at the beginning of each session of progress made. Yet the limited number of general directorates (most suitable to influence the policy process across FPA) or of a dedicated team within the INMUJERES that could act as the System's secretariat curbs effective, continuous follow-up.

In the absence of mandatory agreements and formal follow-up requirements, the effectiveness of the system largely depends on the political will of its representatives. For example, the System's latest public sitting – in August 2016 – was chaired by President of Mexico who instructed the Executive Cabinet to seek certification by the Mexican Standard for Labour Equality and Non-Discrimination and update their internal operating rules to comply with INMUJERES' guidelines on incorporating a gender perspective into their policy processes.[15]

7.4. Robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms: Linchpins of good governance

Monitoring and accountability mechanisms – for evaluation and oversight – support better policy making. They improve transparency, strengthen accountability and foster a culture of performance. Without them, the implementation of gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives will remain declarative statements, with weak policy outcomes.

Policy evaluation remains fragmented and still has no gender perspective

In 2005, Mexico embarked upon performance-based management reform. Key legislative initiatives such as the Fiscal Responsibility Law, the Management Improvement Programme Law, and the Social Development Law have provided frameworks for strengthening evaluation laws already in existence (Fernando Castro et al., 2009). In 2007, an amendment to the Federal Law on Budget and Fiscal Responsibility introduced the Performance Evaluation System. Since 2016, the System has been operated by the SHCP and CONEVAL, with CONEVAL acting as the leading agency in the monitoring and evaluation of social programmes such as Prospera, Mexico's flagship social welfare programme (see Chapter 3). The SHCP leads the performance-based budgeting initiative and monitors the implementation of the National Development Plan.

Until 2015, the Secretariat of Public Administration monitored the performance of federal public officials, and was legally competent to supervise the implementation of programmes by line ministries and regulators and apply sanctions in the event of non-compliance. Currently, CONEVAL and SHCP jointly draw up an annual evaluation programme every year in co-ordination with line ministries and agencies whose programmes are being evaluated. Evaluation units which act as the counterparts of CONEVAL, and SHCP have been established within line ministries to ensure that evaluation work is conducted properly.

Within this broader framework, Mexico has to contend with a double challenge in measuring the impact of policies on gender equality: first, the evaluation of sectoral policies does not yet include a gender perspective and, second, the sheer number actors involved in monitoring complicate efforts to measure the impacts of gender equality efforts. Indeed, CONEVAL and SHCP evaluate sectoral programmes – which include a gender equality component, stemming from PROIGULDAD. The execution of PROIGUALDAD, however, is reported to INMUJERES by line ministries. Yet, INMUJERES has no evaluation function apart from overseeing the execution of PROIGUALDAD or authority to apply sanctions in event of non-compliance. Rather, it is responsible for collecting information from line ministries on the progress made in gender equality and preparing reports on the implementation of PROIGUALDAD for the purposes of transparency. As for CONEVAL, it monitors gender inequality dynamics in relation to societal metrics like per capita income, educational attainment, access to health services and social security, and access to basic housing. The latest such evaluation, however, dates back to 2012. In addition, there is no requirement to include gender-sensitive indicators in the sectoral planning documents. In other words, there is currently no institution that can ensure that all policies duly take gender equality into account.

To overcome this double challenge, Mexico is stepping up its efforts to systematically incorporate the gender lens in policy evaluation. Accordingly, INMUJERES and SHCP have joined forces to implement Article 24 of the 2016 Expenditure Budget Decree. It assigns INMUJERES the task of support the SHCP by drawing up criteria against which it can evaluate to what degree sectoral policies have incorporated the gender perspective. Further, pursuant to a recent agreement between INMUJERES and the Secretariat of Public Administration (SPF), the SPF now follows up on the Federal Public Administration's progress in implementing the National Development Plan's transversal strategies, including PROIGUALDAD.

How Mexico can strengthen the gender perspective in evaluation

To accelerate gender-equal policy outcomes, Mexico could first benefit from strengthening gender expertise of the departments and individuals responsible for evaluating gender equality measures in line ministries – e.g. gender units, upper management and human resources departments. In that regard, the gender units created in the line ministries could act as catalysts, working across silos and ensuring that gender considerations are embedded in all stages of the policy cycle. It is also important to build SHCP's ability to bring a gender lens to bear on regular evaluations of policies and programmes through a results-based approach (Chapter 6). The two partnerships INMUJERES has struck with SFP and SHCP are timely in that respect. As part of its agreement with SFP, INMUJERES plans to kick-start a training course with SFP controllers to ensure that line ministries deliver on their commitments to gender equality.

As Mexico looks to the future, the use of clear indicators to measure progress and success would facilitate monitoring and help the country deliver gender-inclusive policies. Such performance indicators could include information on what outcome a given institution is trying to achieve, accompanied by a clear definition of what will be measured to enable the institution to collect consistent, gender-disaggregated data. Furthermore, clearly assigning roles and responsibilities to various monitoring bodies could help Mexico keep better track of its progress in gender equality as part of its grand goal of reaching its full potential and delivering inclusive growth (see Chapter 6).

Better performance in gender equality and mainstreaming policies can be achieved and sustained only if adequate accountability and oversight mechanisms are in place. Under the terms of the 2006 Equality Act, the National Ombudsman [i.e. the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH)] also exercises some oversight over the implementation of PROIGUALDAD. It consists chiefly of:

- requesting information on programmes and actions on equality from all levels of government;
- monitoring the harmonisation of laws relating to women's right to a life free of violence;
- developing perception surveys on gender equality;
- appraising the states' compliance with their gender equality programmes;
- raising awareness of gender equality through forums, conferences and workshops;
- receiving complaints on alleged violations of gender equality rights.[16]

(It may be interesting to compare the duties of Mexico's Ombudsman with Sweden's, described in Box 7.7). The Ombudsman can also make recommendations and submit special reports on gender equality, pursuant to the provisions of the Law of the National Commission on Human Rights (Article 49, 2006 Equality Law). However, Article 102 of the Federal Constitution specifies that CNDH recommendations are not binding. FPA entities – that are concerned by recommendations – are required to respond to any recommendation stating whether they accept or reject it and should make their responses available to the public.

Box 7.7. Equality Ombudsman in Sweden

In Sweden, the Equality Ombudsman is the government agency whose mandate is to protect equal rights and opportunities for all and fight discrimination. It primarily supervises compliance with the Discrimination Act and develops measures to prevent discrimination at work, in universities and at school. The institution also monitors compliance with parental leave laws, ensuring entitlement and take-up, and that parents who take their leave are not pay the price directly or indirectly in the workplace. Gender equality is part of the Equality Ombudsman's remit. It analyses and evaluates gender gaps in a variety of areas (e.g. education and employment) to find ways of improve equality in the country.

Source: OECD (2014), *Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD Countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

What parliament can do to promote gender-sensitive policies

Finally, legislatures play a critical role in championing gender equality by ensuring that the legislative agenda addresses the issue (Box 7.8). In the absence of effective oversight by the legislature, however, gender equality issues can be overlooked. In Mexico, both Lower and Upper Houses of Congress have gender equality commissions. The Gender Equality Commission of the Chamber of Deputies was established to promote reform on highly gender-sensitive issues – such as violence, health, and political participation – and to encourage state and local governments to adopt public policies on gender equality and equal opportunity. It also lobbies for the approval of budgets that meet the specific needs of Mexican women. Since the lower house's commission came into being, state-level congressional bodies have established similar commissions to promote gender equality at the sub-national level. The Gender Equality Commission of the Chamber of Deputies is also actively campaigning for the use of the budget gender-earmarked for through the elaboration of Annex 13 in the Federal Expenditures Budget (Chapter 6).

As for the Senate's Commission for Gender Equality, it evaluates standards and laws with the aim of improving women's social and legal rights. It is responsible for promoting legislative reforms and organises roundtables and discussions on gender equality. Its aim in so doing is to create a forum where public and private institutions can exchange points of view and work to improve gender equality in Mexico.

Box 7.8. Parliamentary Committees in OECD countries that address gender equality and women's empowerment

The **Norwegian** Parliament (*Storting*) includes a Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs that deals with policies and laws related to families, gender equality, children and youth, consumer affairs and cultural affairs. It answer rs to the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Children and Equality, and comprises 13 members. At its proceedings, it can convene hearings to hear from ministry representatives, organisations and individuals. Reciprocally, organisations and individuals can request to appear before the committee to offer their insight. The committee submits recommendations to Parliament which – though it takes the final decision – usually follows the committee's recommendations.

In the **Canadian** parliamentary system, special committees are appointed by the House of Commons to conduct inquiries, studies or other tasks deemed to be of particular importance. In 2016, the House of Commons adopted a motion to create the Special Committee on Pay Equity (ESPE) to conduct hearings on the matter of pay equity and propose a plan that would enable the House to vote on proactive federal pay equity. Following extensive consultation with experts from across Canada, the committee submitted its report to the House of Commons. The report focused on how the pay equity system was currently being implemented in the federal jurisdiction, how it could be improved, and how to learn from other jurisdictions in order to come up with a fairer, more efficient pay equity regime. At the time of drafting this report, the Canadian Government was in the process of responding to the committee on the recommendations in its report. A special committee ceases to exist once its final report has been presented to the House.

The National Council in **Austria** (*Nationalrat*) elects expert committees at the beginning of each legislative period in all major policy domains, which include the Committee on Gender Equality and the Committee on Family Affairs. The Committee on Gender Equality deals with all bills and legislative proposals related to gender equality, including women's and men's empowerment and the prevention of gender discrimination in all policy areas. The rationale behind the committees is that there must be prior deliberation on any subject before the *Nationalrat* addresses it. It enables members of parliament to examine key issues in a restricted context while calling on external experts to advise them.

Parliamentary committees in **Germany** – deemed "bodies responsible for preparing the decisions of the Parliament (*Bundestag*)" – are formed by a decision of parliament for the duration of the electoral term. They are forums where members focus on a single, specific area of policy, and deliberate upon and revise bills relating to that policy area. A committee then issues a recommendation, which is voted upon in a plenary session of the Bundestag. Committees comprise members from the different parliamentary groups. To probe into policy issues, they collect information from the government and outside experts. Each committee has a chair, deputy chair and spokesperson. The number of members varies with the issue examined. Each member has one vote when decisions are taken. Each ministry has a dedicated Permanent Committee which can set up sub-committees on specific topics. In its 17th electoral term, the Bundestag set up 22 Permanent Committees, including the Committee on Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. It shares its opinion on all bills, motions, reports, resolutions and European Union issues that concern families, senior citizens, women and youth. It focuses on support for children and families, measures to help parents balance their work and family lives, promoting the equal treatment of men and women, helping senior citizens to lead independent lives and seeking to involve young people in the community.

Source: Norwegian Parliament website, page on Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs, https://www.stortinget.no/en/In-English/Standing-Commitees/The-Standing-Committee-on-Family-and-Cultural-Affairs/; Norwegian Parliament website, page on Standing Committees, https://www.stortinget.no/en/In-English/Standing-Commitees/The-Standing-Committee-on-Family-and-Cultural-Affairs/; Status of Women Canada, www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/; Austrian Parliament website, page on National Council Committees, https://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/PERK/NRBRBV/NR/ANR/index.shtml; German Parliament's website, page on the Committee on Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, http://www.bundestag.de/en/committees/a13.

Notes

1. 2006 General Act on Equality between Women and Men, Chapter 1, Article 1
2. Article 23 of the Equality Act defines the "national system for equality between women and men" as "the organic and co-ordinated set of structures, functional links, methods and procedures established among themselves by agencies and entities of the Federal Public Administration with the organisations of the different social groups and with the authorities of the states, the federal district and the municipalities, in order to carry out actions by common agreement aimed at the promotion and enforcement of equality between women and men".
3. http://cedoc.inmujeres.gob.mx/documentos_download/lgimh.pdf.
4. 2006 General Act on Equality between Women and Men, Article 29.
5. http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/40451/Santo_Domingo_Consensus_en.pdf.txt.
6. There is both a narrow and broad definition of Centres of Government (CoG). The OECD (2015 Centre Stage: Driving Better Policies from the Centre of Government) more narrowly describes CoG as "the body or group of bodies that provides direct support and advice to the head of government and the Council of Ministers. The CoG is known under different labels in different countries, such as the Chancellery, Cabinet Office, Office of the President, Presidencia, etc. From its traditional role of serving the executive from an administrative perspective, the CoG now plays a more active role in policy development and co-ordination across OECD members. The centre in many countries now provides services that range from strategic planning to real-time policy advice and intelligence, and from leading major cross-departmental policy initiatives to monitoring progress and outcomes." The extended (or broader) definition of the CoG does not only denote to the Presidency or its equivalent, but also includes key strategic partners, such as the Ministry of Finance (where policy priorities are matched with resources) or a Ministry of Planning (with an important role in designing policy priorities across the administration and how these contribute to an overall strategic plan). As such, and depending on the particular situation of a country in terms of its institutional constellation, several actors can play an important role in CoG co-ordination. Additionally, central agencies responsible for a coherent human resources (HR) policy, e-government policy, regulatory policy, etc. across different departments also contribute to a reinforced cross governmental co-ordination.
7. In Spanish, the *Procuraduría General de la República.*
8. The Secretariat of Culture came into being recently, in December 2015, and there is no record yet of it having created a gender unit.
9. These 11 gender units are in the following secretariats: SEGOB, SRE, SHCP, SEP, SS, SEMAR, SEDATU, PGR, SEDESOL, SECTUR and SFP.
10. Information provided by the Status of Women Canada.

11. INMUJERES (2014), "Relación de las Instancias de las Mujeres en las Entidades Federativas con los ejecutivos estatales", October 2014
12. Information provided by IMMUJERES with reference to 2014.
13. http://sie.cantaloop.mx/.
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16. Information taken from the Offical website of the National Human Rights Ombudsman (CNDH), http://www.cndh.org.mx/Igualdad_Monitoreo_Programas.

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