



#YoungVoicesOfChange

**Voices of youth are heard and participate
in the transformation of the
European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean**

U-Report survey results



United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2023

#YoungVoicesOfChange: Voices of youth are heard and participate in the transformation of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean - U-Report survey results

Cover illustration: Matías Daviron.

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The contents of this document reflect the opinions of adolescents and young people from the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean who participated in the consultation. This publication was produced with the financial contribution of the European Union. The ideas expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of UNICEF or the European Union.

This document is presented as a contribution to the debate on important issues affecting adolescents and is intended to help UNICEF broaden and deepen the range of consultations in which the organization is involved.

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Contents

Executive Summary	6
Key findings	11
Introduction	13
I. Objectives of the U-Report survey, methodology and participant profiles	16
II. Findings related to digital transformation	24
2.1. Main consequences of the lack of access to digital technologies	24
2.2. Actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology	28
III. Findings related to social transformation	33
3.1. Main issues that governments should address urgently	33
3.2. Gender-based discrimination	40
IV. Findings related to environmental transformation	45
4.1. Main problems associated with the environment in communities	45
4.2. Actions that should be prioritized to conserve the environment	50
V. Findings related to youth participation	56
5.1. Youth perceptions of whether political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account	56
VI. Findings related to migrant, refugee, and displaced adolescents and youth in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru	58
VII. Relationship of results to the findings from previous U-Report surveys	62
Youth Advocates at the EU-CELAC Summit	66
Conclusions	67
Annex. Data collection instrument	72



Executive Summary

The European Union and UNICEF's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean joined forces to engage adolescents and young people in the two regions to raise awareness of the issues that they consider most important and to hear their recommendations for action.

To accomplish these objectives, a survey was conducted using the U-Report platform, which remained open from March 30 to April 19, 2023, in Latin America and the Caribbean and until April 23, 2023, in the European Union.

The survey aimed to engage adolescents and young people aged 12 to 30 in a consultation to gather their opinions and perceptions regarding digital, social, and environmental transformation. These three topics form part of the preparatory agenda for the Summit between the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

With this process, reaching 20,679 people in 60 countries, the European Union and UNICEF seek to amplify the voices of youth and provide inputs for the strategic cooperation priorities of the two regions, which will be addressed at the EU-CELAC Summit.

Findings related to digital transformation

Main consequences of the lack of access to digital technologies

Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that the lack of or limited access to digital technologies hinders their opportunities to learn, educate themselves or get information.

The participants identified difficulty in learning and educating themselves (48 per cent) and obtaining information (17 per cent) as the main consequences of not having access to, or limited access to digital technologies. There are no relevant variations between genders and areas of residence. However, the perception of having fewer opportunities to find a decent job increases with age: from 10 per cent among U-Reporters between 12 and 19 years of age, to 14 per cent between 20 and 24 years of age, and 17 per cent between 25 and 30 years of age.

The analysis by subregion of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) indicates that participants from South America (19 per cent) and from Central America-Mexico (17 per cent) expressed more significant concern than those from the Caribbean (12 per cent) about fewer opportunities to find a decent job due to lack of access or limited access to digital technologies. In contrast, 16 per cent of adolescents and young people in the Caribbean prioritized difficulties in exercising citizen participation, compared to 13 per cent in South America and 11 per cent in Central America-Mexico.

Actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology

Almost half of the 20,000 adolescents and young people consulted in a U-Report poll want to see more investments in digital infrastructure and equipment, as they consider digital opportunities an essential part of their development.

As for other priorities, 35 per cent of respondents called for more education in the use of technologies for parents, teachers, students and youth. Twenty-three per cent identified the need to improve safe use of the internet and protection mechanisms for children.

Forty-seven per cent of men considered that improving the connection infrastructure and access to equipment is a priority, while 39 per cent of women preferred this action. In contrast, 27 per cent of women prioritized actions to improve safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children, compared with 17 per cent of men.

Actions related to investment in connection infrastructure and access to equipment, as well as education in the use of technologies, gradually become more important as age increases. The opposite occurs with actions to improve the safe use of the internet and protection mechanisms for children since they lose priority as participants get older.

Forty-three per cent of adolescents and young people in both urban and rural areas want to see more investment in connection infrastructure and access to equipment to improve access to and use of digital technology. However, 37 per cent of adolescents and young people in rural areas prioritized education in the use of technology versus 33 per cent in urban areas. In comparison, safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children was more important for participants in urban than rural areas (24 per cent vs. 20 per cent).

Respondents from the Caribbean gave much greater importance to investment in infrastructure and access to equipment (48 per cent) and education in the use of technologies (40 per cent) than their peers from Central America-Mexico (38% and 34%) and South America (41% and 30%). In contrast, improvement of the safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children registered higher levels of preference among adolescents and young people in South America (29 per cent) and Central America-Mexico (28 per cent) than among their peers in the Caribbean (12 per cent).

Findings related to social transformation

Main issues that governments should address urgently

Adolescents and young people consulted prioritize the social agenda, identifying education, health, employment and poverty as areas that require urgent government attention. Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that violence and security are also priority issues.

It is evident that young people prioritized issues related to social transformation more than environmental transformation (13 per cent) and digital transformation (nine per cent). It is worth mentioning that in this question the participants could choose three topics, so the sum of the answers does not give 100 per cent.

Education was considered a priority issue by almost four out of 10 respondents (38 per cent). Nearly one in five adolescents and young people indicated that governments should also urgently address access to basic services, gender-based violence, as well as discrimination, equity, and diversity.

The largest gender differences were observed in health (physical and mental), gender-based violence, discrimination, equity and diversity, and poverty, where women were 12, seven, six and five percentage points respectively above those reported by men.

The issue of discrimination, equity, and diversity was more of a priority for women and people grouped in the “Other” category¹ compared to men. While 23 per cent of women and 25 per cent of people grouped in the “Other” category expressed greater concern about gender-based violence, only 15 per cent of men reported this issue as requiring urgent attention.

The adolescent population expressed greater concern about health and poverty both with 32 per cent, compared to the 20-24 age group (30 and 25 per cent), and the older age group (27 and 23 per cent), respectively. Employment was a more critical issue for 20 to 30-year-olds (33 per cent) than for adolescents (29 per cent).

Regarding the order of priorities according to the area of residence, it was found that in both rural and urban areas, violence and security was the main issue reported. Education was the second issue, with the second highest proportion of responses in both zones of residence. However, it registered a higher percentage in urban areas than in rural areas (40 vs. 35 per cent). While 29 per cent of rural participants’ third priority was employment, 33 per cent of their peers in urban areas health ranked third. In both areas of residence, poverty was the fourth priority among respondents, with a higher proportion of responses in urban than in rural areas (30 vs. 26 per cent).

Gender Discrimination

Two out of three of the young people who participated in the poll have witnessed gender discrimination in their community, with the workplace being the most common setting.

Nearly one in five adolescents and young people consulted demand that governments take greater action on gender-based violence (19 per cent) and discrimination, equity, and diversity (18 per cent).

Access to employment opportunities was the form of discrimination most frequently observed by U-Reporters (32 per cent), followed by decision-making within families and communities (13 per cent), wage differentials and opportunities to access and remain in school (both eight per cent) and lastly, access to health services (six per cent).

Nine per cent of men and seven per cent of women reported having observed discrimination in opportunities to access and remain in school. People grouped in the “Other” category most frequently reported having observed some type of discrimination associated with gender. Specifically, 23 per cent of those grouped in the “Other” category reported having observed gender discrimination in decision-making within families and communities, compared to 15 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men.

By age group, adolescents who participated in the survey were less likely to observe some type of discrimination than their older peers. Although in all age groups the perception of less access to job opportunities was the most frequently observed form of discrimination, the percentage increases considerably with age (25 per cent between 12 and 19 years old, 38 per cent between 20 and 24 years old, and 43 per cent between 25 and 30 years old).

Perceived discrimination associated with decision-making within families and communities was higher among 12 to 19-year-olds (15 per cent) than among 20 to 24 years old (11 per cent) and 25 to 30-year-olds (nine per cent).

¹ “Other” groups responses from the options “other” and “prefer not to say”.

Findings related to environmental transformation

Main problems associated with the environment in the communities

Three out of 10 adolescents and young people consulted say that air and water pollution is the main environmental problem in their communities. For two out of 10, mainly in urban areas, garbage is the main issue.

Both men and women gave equal priority to air and water pollution (30 per cent), followed by garbage (21 per cent), as the main environmental challenges in their communities.

Concern about air and water pollution (rivers, seas, and water reservoirs) decreases with age (32 per cent between 12 and 19 years old, 28 per cent between 20 and 24 years old, and 26 per cent between 25 and 30 years old). One in four adolescents mentioned garbage as the main environmental problem, compared to one in seven for young people ages 25 to 30 years old. Nearly two in 10 25 to 30-year-olds were concerned about food insecurity, compared to one in 10 adolescents.

Air and water pollution was the most pressing environmental problem in both urban (31 per cent) and rural (28 per cent) areas. For 24 per cent of urban adolescents and young people, garbage was considered the second most important environmental problem in their communities, compared to 15 per cent of their rural peers. Almost twice as many rural adolescents and young people expressed concern about food insecurity (21 per cent), as well as drought and water scarcity (12 per cent), compared to urban participants (11 per cent and seven per cent), respectively.

Among the LAC subregions, there are important differences in terms of the environmental challenges. In South America and Central America-Mexico, air and water pollution stood out as the main problem, with 35 and 33 per cent, respectively. Food insecurity in the Caribbean was five times more frequently reported than in South America and Central America-Mexico (30 per cent versus six per cent in both subregions). Drought and water scarcity were considered a more pressing problem in the Caribbean (14 per cent), compared to Central America-Mexico (six per cent) and South America (five per cent).

Actions that should be prioritized to conserve the environment

Adolescents and young people consulted say that environmental education (26 per cent) and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities (25 per cent) are priority actions to protect the environment.

After environmental education (26 per cent) and policies and laws on sustainable communities (25 per cent), the top priorities for adolescents and young people were creating solutions with affected communities and populations (18 per cent), changing practices of environmentally non-responsible companies (17 per cent) and environmentally sensitive technology development (10 per cent).

For both men and women, the most urgent measures to conserve the environment were environmental education (27 and 25 per cent) and policies and laws promoting sustainable communities (27 and 23 per cent) respectively.

With increasing age, some measures become more of a priority, such as environmental education (from 25 per cent to 27 per cent and up to 29 per cent) and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities (from

24 per cent to 25 per cent and up to 27 per cent). Meanwhile, changing practices of environmentally non-responsible companies (from 19 per cent to 17 per cent and down to 13 per cent) and environmentally sensitive technological development (from 11 per cent to 10 per cent and down to eight per cent) lose importance.

Creating solutions with communities and affected populations was more relevant for adolescents and young people in rural areas than for their peers in urban areas (20 vs. 17 per cent). At the same time, changing the practices of non-environmentally responsible companies was more important for urban than for rural participants (19 vs. 13 per cent).

The proportion of adolescents and young people in Central America-Mexico who prioritized environmental education was considerably lower (13 per cent) compared to the Caribbean (30 per cent) and South America (27 per cent). The importance of changing practices in non-environmentally responsible businesses in Central America-Mexico was 21 per cent and in South America 20 per cent, double that reported in the Caribbean (10 per cent).

Findings related to youth participation

Youth perceptions of whether political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account

The vast majority of adolescents and young people consulted (86 per cent) think that political leaders should listen to them more and better take into account their needs.

Although the proportion is similar among all respondents, men had a slightly more positive perception than women (16 vs. 13 per cent).

It appears that the perception of being listened to and taken into consideration by political leaders decreases with age (from 15 per cent in adolescence to 13 per cent between 20 and 24 years of age and drops to 12 per cent in the older age group). Among the LAC subregions, U-Reporters from the Caribbean (16 per cent) and South America (14 per cent) are relatively more highly rated than those from Central America-Mexico (nine per cent).



Key findings

1 Findings related to digital transformation

Main consequences of the lack of access to digital technologies

Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that the lack of or limited access to digital technologies hinders their opportunities to learn, educate themselves or get information.

Actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology

Almost half of the 20,000 adolescents and young people consulted in a U-Report poll want to see more investments in digital infrastructure and equipment, as they consider digital opportunities an essential part of their development.

2 Findings related to social transformation

Main issues that governments should address urgently

Adolescents and young people consulted prioritize the social agenda, identifying education, health, employment and poverty as areas that require urgent government attention. Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that violence and security are also priority issues.

Gender Discrimination

Two out of three young people who participated in the survey have witnessed gender discrimination in their community, with the workplace being the most common setting.

Nearly one in five adolescents and young people surveyed demand that governments take greater action on gender-based violence (19 per cent) and discrimination, equity and diversity (18 per cent).

3 Findings related to environmental transformation

Main problems associated with the environment in the communities

Three out of 10 adolescents and young people consulted say that air and water pollution is the main environmental problem in their communities. For two out of 10, mainly in urban areas, garbage is the main issue.

Actions that should be prioritized to conserve the environment

Adolescents and young people consulted say that environmental education (26 per cent) and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities (25 per cent) are priority actions to protect the environment.

4 Findings related to youth participation

Youth perceptions of whether political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account

The vast majority of adolescents and young people consulted (86 per cent) think that political leaders should listen to them more and better take into account their needs.



LA CRISIS
CLIMÁTICA
ES UN ASUNTO DE
DERECHOS HUMANOS

#ONE
GENERATION

LET'S MAKE
SOME
ELECTRICITY

Introduction

In the framework of the preparation of the Summit between the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in July 2023, the European Union and UNICEF have joined forces to involve adolescents and young people from the two regions, to hear directly from them on issues that they consider most important and to hear their recommendations for action.

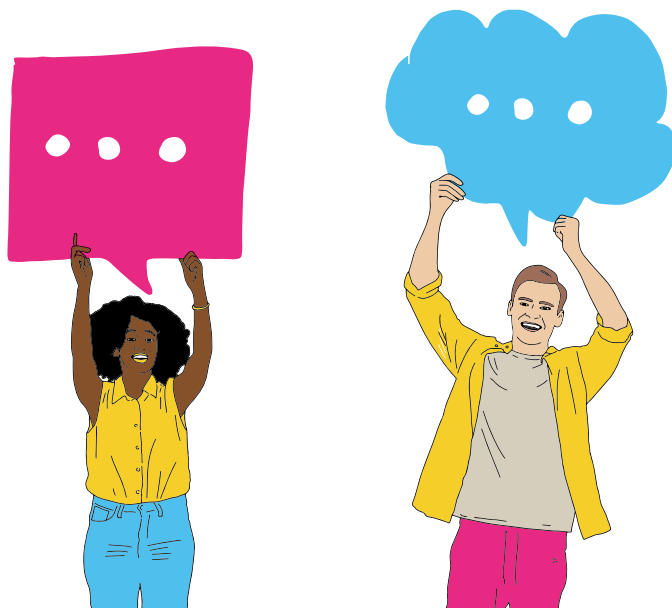
The topics associated with digital, social, and environmental transformation, aligned to central issues expected to be addressed at the EU-CELAC Summit, guided this consultation through the U-Report platform, with which we managed to reach 20,679 people aged 12 to 30 in 60 countries.

This report amplifies the voices of youth and provides inputs to shape the priorities for the strategic cooperation of the two regions.

In this way, we contribute to shaping proposals relevant to the lives of millions of adolescents and young people in both regions.

The survey was open from March 30 to April 19, 2023, in Latin America and the Caribbean and until April 23, 2023, in the European Union. During this period, adolescents and young people expressed their opinions and recommendations for actions on issues they consider to be of most importance, understood as:

- ◆ Access to digital technologies to learn, be informed, exercise citizenship, and participate in the labour market, with recommendations for actions such as investment in connection infrastructure and access to devices, and education to use technologies and online safety.
- ◆ Promotion of a social agenda where governments prioritize education, health, employment, and poverty; safe environments free of violence and discrimination, where it is possible to achieve gender equality and live in harmony with the environment.
- ◆ Commitment to reduce air and water pollution, food insecurity, overexploitation of resources and loss of ecosystems, as well as to improve waste management, with proposals such as strengthening environmental education, policies and laws that promote sustainable communities, as well as changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies.

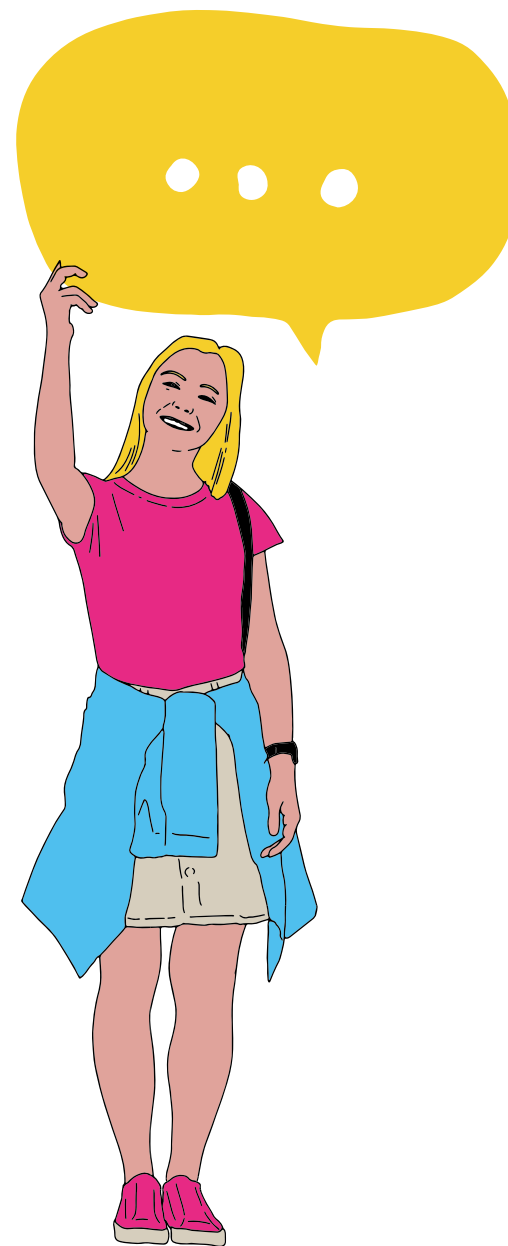


This publication is structured in seven sections. The first part presents the objectives of the survey, the methodology and the profiles of the participants. The second section addresses the results associated with digital transformation, identifying negative effects caused by a lack of access to technologies and priority actions to overcome the digital divide.

The third section presents the issues governments should urgently address to promote a youth-centred social transformation. The fourth section indicates the main problems related to the environment in the communities, along with actions that should be prioritized to address the current environmental crisis.

The fifth section reveals the perception of adolescents and young people consulted about whether political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account. Finally, considering the three thematic topics, the sixth section reports the opinions of migrant, refugee and displaced adolescents and young people; and the seventh section establishes a relationship with the results of previously conducted U-Report surveys.

We hope that findings will contribute to formulating a cooperation agenda that will help transform the living conditions of children, adolescents and youth now and in the future.





I. Objectives of the U-Report survey, methodology and participant profiles

The objective of the consultation was to gather the opinions and perceptions of adolescents and young people on three central issues that have been the focus of preparations for the EU-CELAC Summit: digital, social, and environmental transformation.

Analysis of responses from the youth who participated in the consultation is expected to provide information **to leaders and teams** of the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

In this way, **youth participation is promoted**, while their voices are amplified to reach **decision-making spaces** regarding issues that are important for their present and future.



About U-Report

U-Report is UNICEF's flagship digital platform that encourages participation and engages adolescents and young people in programmes, emergency response and advocacy. This messaging platform has more than 29 million U-Reporters and is active in 95 countries, growing at a rate of one participant every four seconds.

About U-Report data

U-Report is a key tool for sharing information, raising awareness and collecting quantifiable data on specific areas affecting adolescents, young people and communities, especially the most vulnerable populations.

- U-Report data reflects information provided by respondents and is not statistically representative of young people worldwide or of any specific country or region.
- As a community, U-Report does not aim for statistical representativeness among its members and does not employ any sampling stratification.
- No post-stratification weighting was applied during the analysis of this survey.
- U-Report data, rather than a sole source of information in decision-making, can be used to complement more statistically sound data collection methods.

UNICEF values the voices of young people and seeks to acknowledge their experiences and views. U-Report data is considered a reliable reflection of the information that respondents have provided on the platform.

For more information, visit www.ureport.in.

Methodology

Data collection

Consultation through the U-Report virtual platform was carried out from March 30 to April 19 in Latin America and the Caribbean and until April 23, 2023, in the European Union. The questionnaire was designed to inquire about the opinions of adolescents and young people on three topics: digital transformation, social transformation, and environmental transformation.

For that, the survey included seven multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question² where participants could express the issues and actions, they consider to be of urgent attention by governments in these three areas.



Data collection instrument³

1. What issues do you think governments should urgently address?
2. In your community, have you observed gender discrimination in any of the following situations? (Check up to three options)
3. For you, what is the main consequence of not having access to digital technologies or having limited access?
4. What are the actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology?
5. What is the main problem related to the environment in your community?
6. What action should be prioritized to conserve the environment?
7. Do you think political leaders listen to youth and take their needs into account?

² The results of the open-ended question will be presented in a subsequent report due to time constraints. The qualitative methodology will be conducted using the Atlas.ti software and will delve deeper into the actions that the consulted adolescents and young people propose to address the situations they consider to be of urgent concern to governments.

³ The complete survey questionnaire can be found in the Annex.

Data processing

The data was processed using the statistical software STATA, which involved merging the databases, standardizing response categories, cleaning invalid data or data outside the target population, as well as creating variables based on gender, residential area, age groups, region, and subregions of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The final database allowed for the generation of graphs that depict the distribution of frequencies and percentages for each of the seven sets of responses.

Analysis

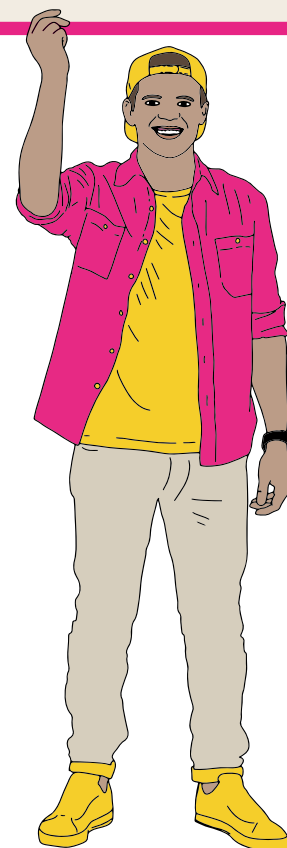
The analysis was based on the distribution of responses to each question. The denominator used to calculate the percentages was the number of valid responses for each group or subgroup analyzed, as shown in the following example.

Example of the percentage calculation:

2,032 women between the ages of 12 and 30
who reported “safe use of the internet and
mechanisms to protect children” as a priority
(Question 4).

7,618 women between the ages of 12 and 30 who
responded to Question 4.

$\times 100$

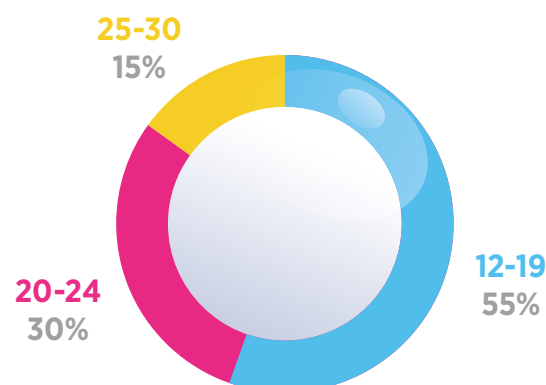


Profiles of adolescents and young people participating in the survey

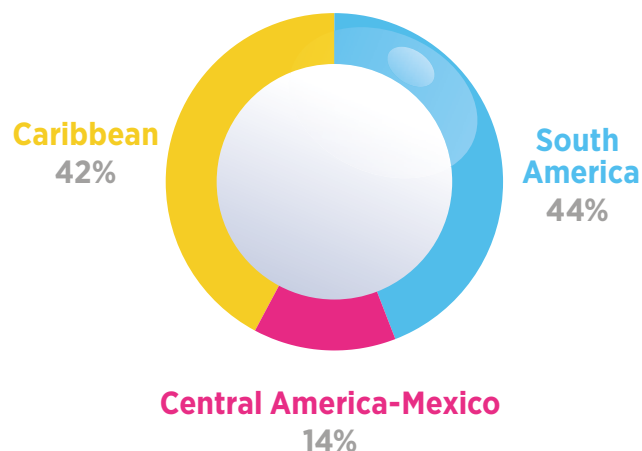
LAC	EU
93%	7%

20,679 people
between 12 and 30 years
old with at least one
response.

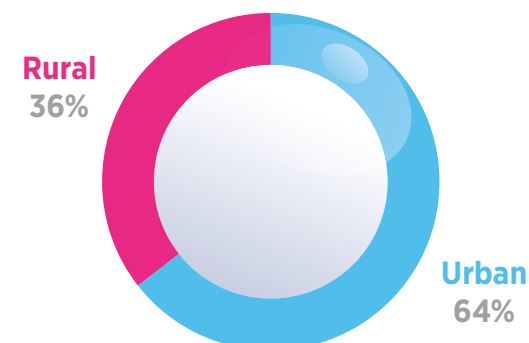
Age groups



LAC Subregions



Area of residence



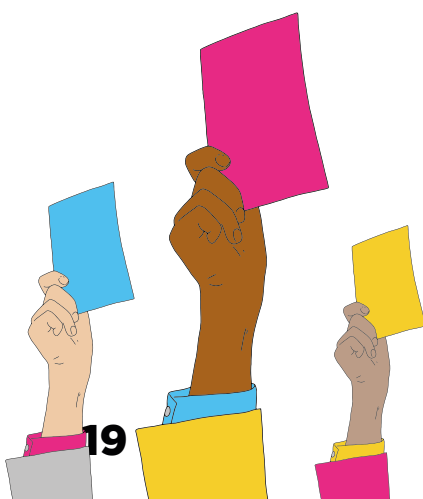
Female	12.196
Male	8.111
Other	94
Missing	278
Total	20.679

Notes

* Other groups answers from the options "other" and "prefer not to say".

** In addition, the survey was answered by 21 adolescents and young people from Norway (20) and Georgia (1), both non-European Union countries. Nonetheless, the percentage of the EU remains at seven per cent.

*** Missing refers to participants who did not indicate one of the gender options: "male", "female" and "other".



Considerations regarding the consulted adolescents and youth

◆ Since the survey is not based on a representative sample, some population groups are over or under-represented.

- The percentage of participants from LAC countries is 93 per cent (19,135).
- Participants from the European Union accounted for seven per cent (1,523), with a predominance of adolescents and young people from Romania (693) and Greece (492).
- By LAC subregion, 44 per cent of respondents were from South America, 14 per cent from Central America-Mexico and 42 per cent from the Caribbean. In the latter subregion, the Haitian population is 6,705 adolescents and young people, equivalent to 32 per cent of the total sample.
- In this regard, the interpretation of the results should consider the over-representation of adolescents and youth voices from LAC, and the opinions of the Haitian participants in the Caribbean subregion.

◆ The results may show some selection bias.

- Most adolescents and young people in the sample (64 per cent) indicated that they reside in urban areas, compared to 36 per cent who reported living in rural areas.
- However, there were no significant differences in the responses provided by adolescents and young people living in urban areas and those living in rural areas.
- Of those in the sample, 55 per cent were between 12 and 19 years old, 30 per cent were between 20 and 24 years old, and 15 per cent were between 25 and 30 years old.
- Most adolescents and young people who responded to at least one question were female (59.78 per cent) and male (39.76 per cent). Those who indicated “other” (0.11 per cent) and “prefer not to say” (0.33 per cent) were grouped in the analysis variable “Other”. The “Other” category is shown in the graphs only when there are significant differences.
- The U-Reporters were not randomly selected, as their participation is self-selected. Consequently, the sample may not necessarily reflect the sociodemographic diversity of adolescents and young people in LAC and European Union.
- The administration of the U-Report surveys is virtual, so it is possible that populations without internet access or with limited connection may have difficulty participating.

Latin America and the Caribbean⁴

93%

of participants

14%

Central America-Mexico

42%

Caribbean

44%

South America



Notes: This map is stylized and it is not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.

In countries with high participation but low response rates, only records where it was possible to identify the age of the respondents were considered.

⁴ Through the U-Report platform aimed at the migrant, refugee and displaced population, we collected the voices of 281 adolescents and young people aged 12 to 30 from the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru (see section 6).

European Union⁵

7%
of participants



Notes: This map is stylized and it is not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.

In countries with high participation but low response rates, only records where it was possible to identify the age of the respondents were considered.

⁵ This map does not include Georgia (1 response) and Norway (20 responses) as these countries do not belong to the European Union.

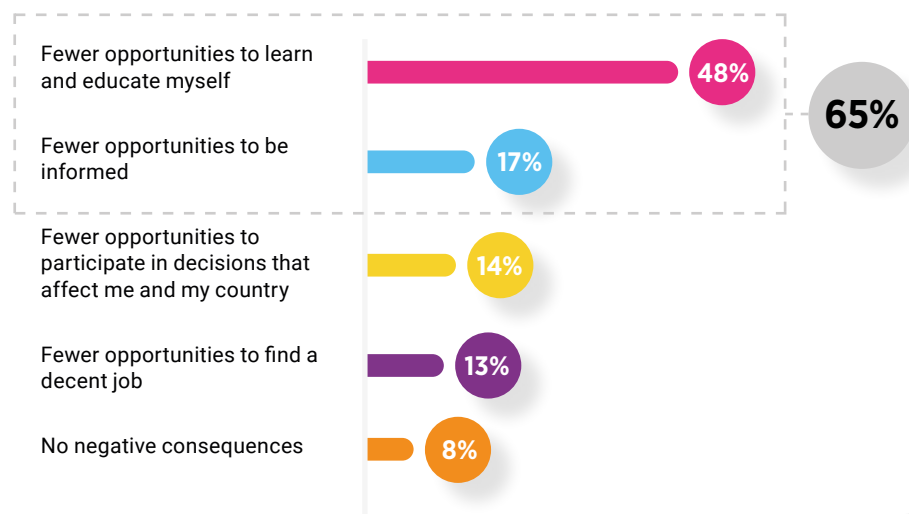
"I hope that people have access to the internet and technologies as it helps in education and work. Nowadays, when the internet is our biggest help, its access should be a human right."

15-year-old female, Costa Rica

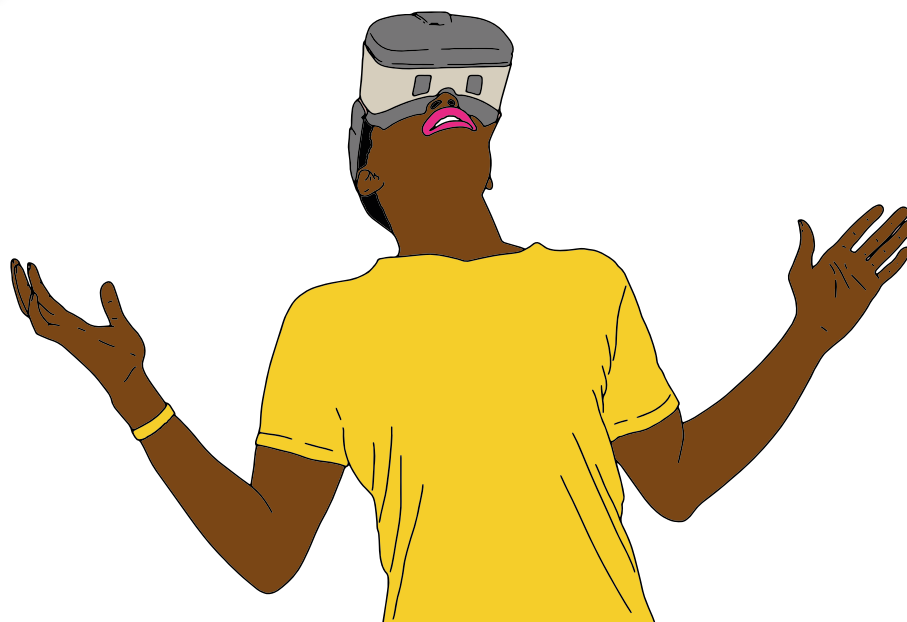
II. Findings related to digital transformation

2.1 Main consequences of the lack of access to digital technologies

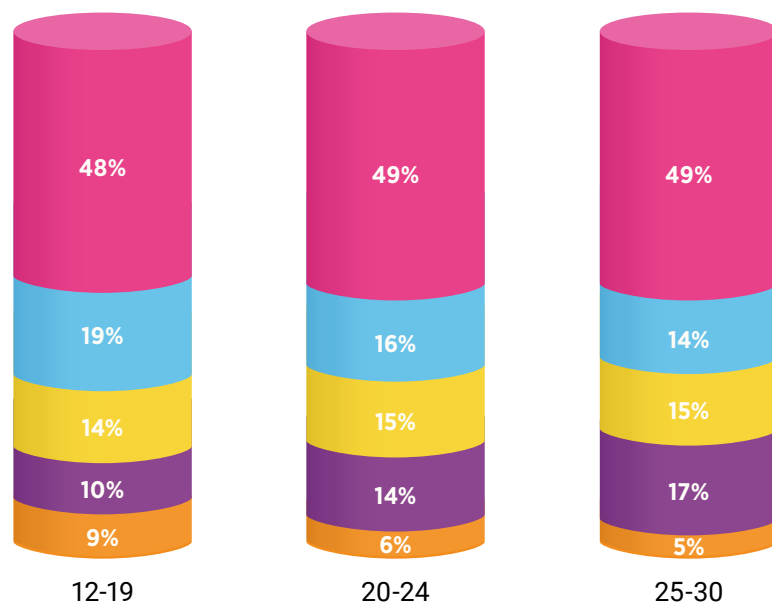
Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that the lack of or limited access to digital technologies hinders their opportunities to learn, educate themselves or get information.



Difficulty in learning and educating oneself was the main consequence of not having access to or limited access to digital technologies. The second consequence was fewer opportunities for obtaining information. There is no significant variation between genders on the consequences of not accessing digital technologies or having limited access, with the difficulty of learning and educating oneself being the primary concern.

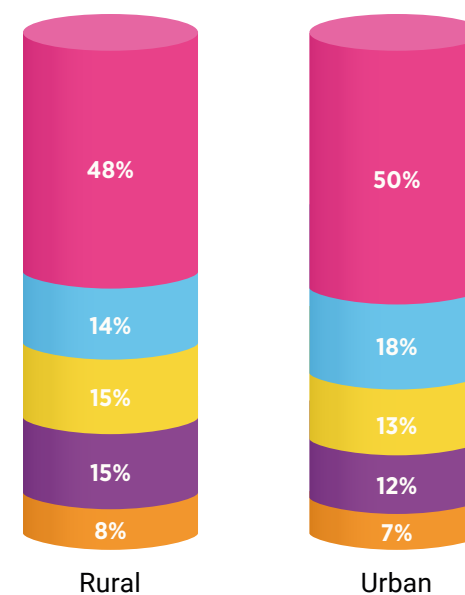


Age groups



As a result of the lack of access to digital technologies, the perception of having fewer opportunities to find decent employment increases with age.

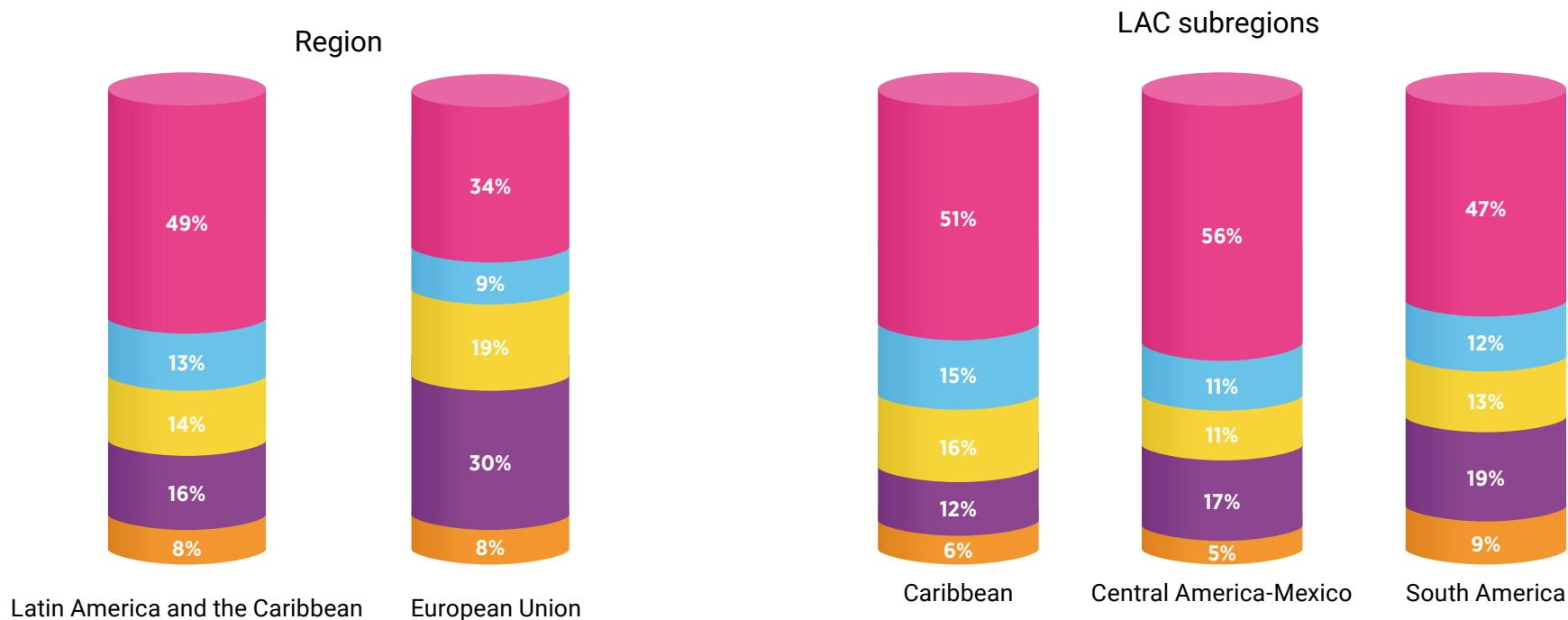
Area of residence



Differences between U-Reporters residing in rural and urban areas were not significant.

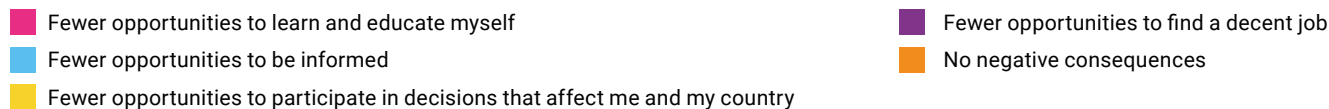
- Fewer opportunities to learn and educate myself
- Fewer opportunities to be informed
- Fewer opportunities to participate in decisions that affect me and my country


- Fewer opportunities to find a decent job
- No negative consequences



Participants from South America and Central America-Mexico expressed greater concern than those from the Caribbean about having fewer opportunities to find decent employment due to the lack of access or limited access to digital technologies.

For adolescents and young people in Central America-Mexico and South America, the second most significant difficulty resulting from limited access to technology was associated with restrictions in finding decent employment. In the Caribbean, difficulties in exercising citizen participation ranked second.



A young man and woman are standing outdoors in front of a corrugated metal wall. The man, wearing glasses and a dark blue t-shirt, is holding a smartphone and looking at it with a smile. The woman, also wearing glasses, has her arm around his shoulder and is looking at the phone with a smile. The t-shirt has the word "Report" in large white letters, with "GUATEMALA" and "MI OPINIÓN IMPORTA" in smaller white letters below it. A white speech bubble is positioned in the upper right corner of the image, containing a quote. A yellow rectangular box is located below the speech bubble, containing text. The background is a corrugated metal wall.

“For me it is important to have a mobile phone or computer that allows me to connect to the internet and continue researching and learning to get a better job.”

18-year-old female, Costa Rica

2.2. Actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology

Almost half of the 20,000 adolescents and young people consulted in a U-Report poll want to see more investments in digital infrastructure and equipment, as they consider digital opportunities an essential part of their development.

Connection infrastructure and access to equipment



Education in the use of technology to mothers, fathers, teachers, students and young people in general

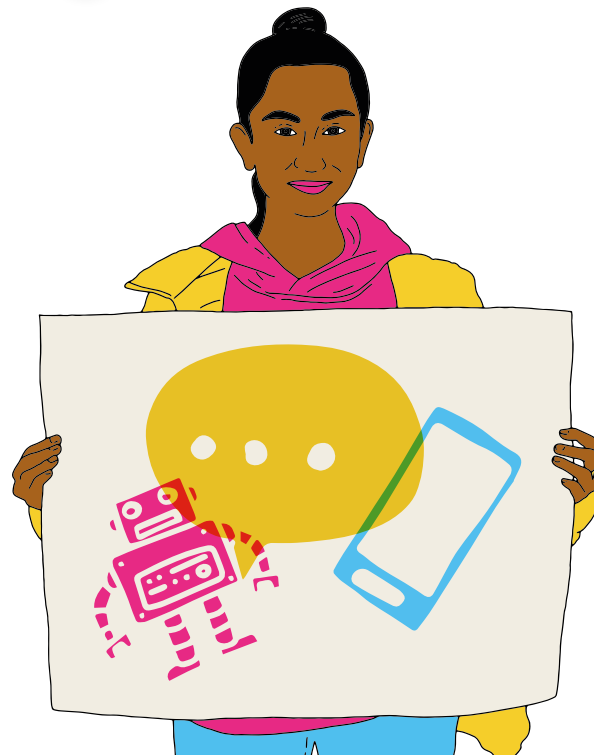


Safe use of internet and mechanisms to protect children

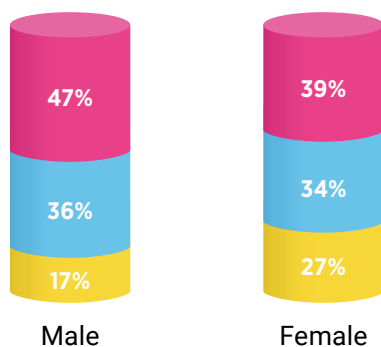


After investment in connectivity infrastructure and access to equipment, the second most prioritized action was education in the use of technologies for mothers, fathers, teachers, students, and youth.

Improving the safe use of the internet and protection mechanisms for children was the third action that U-Reporters identified as a priority.



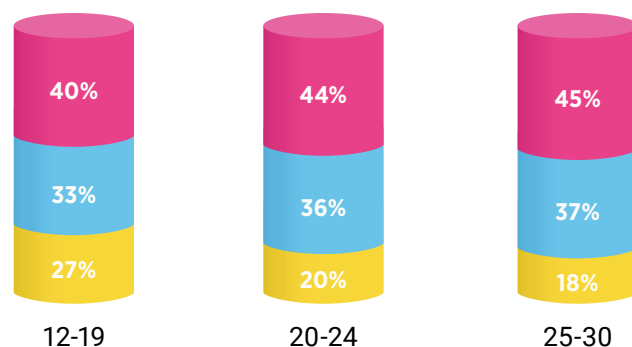
Gender



While a higher proportion of men considered improving the connection infrastructure and access to equipment a priority, women gave this action lower levels of preference.

In contrast, a higher proportion of women prioritized actions to improve the safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children.

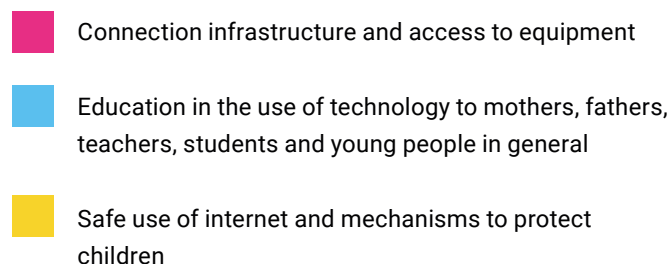
Age groups



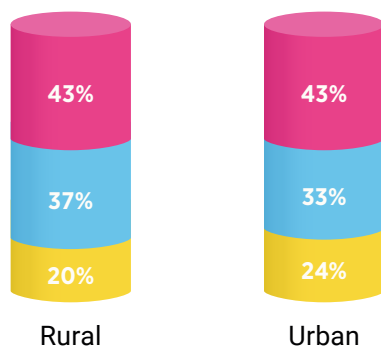
The three age groups maintain the same trend of priorities to improve access to and use of digital technology.

The importance of improving the connection infrastructure and access to equipment, as well as education in the use of technology, are actions that gradually become more of a priority as age increases.

For adolescents, improving the safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children was more important than for older participants.

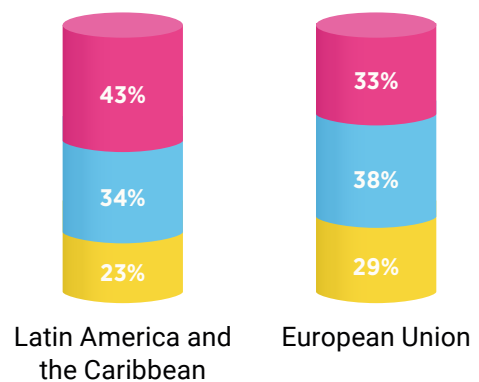


Area of residence



More adolescents and young people from rural areas prioritized education in the use of technology. In contrast, safe use of the internet and child protection mechanisms was a more important action for participants from urban areas.

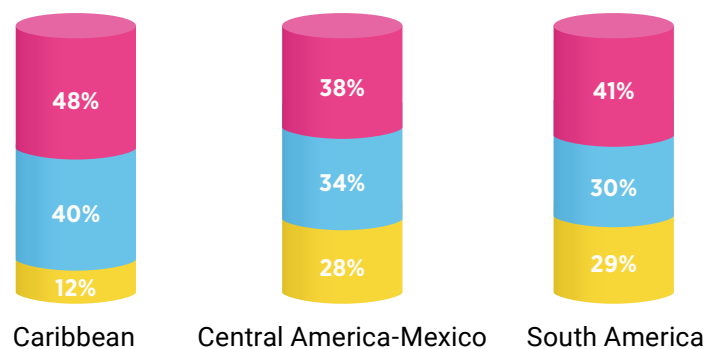
Region



- Connection infrastructure and access to equipment
- Education in the use of technology to mothers, fathers, teachers, students and young people in general
- Safe use of internet and mechanisms to protect children



LAC subregions




- Connection infrastructure and access to equipment
- Education in the use of technology to mothers, fathers, teachers, students and young people in general
- Safe use of internet and mechanisms to protect children

Respondents from the Caribbean gave much greater importance to investment in infrastructure and access to equipment and education in the use of technologies than their peers in Central America-Mexico and South America.

Improving safe internet use and mechanisms to protect children registered higher levels of preference among adolescents and young people in South America and Central America-Mexico than among their peers in the Caribbean.





"I think that health is very important, especially mental health, because nowadays youth face many challenges that affect performance in studies and work."

16-year-old male, Ecuador

"I believe that employment and education are the most important priorities, because if these are improved, other things will automatically improve. I hope that governments will change so that they serve their people and provide more job and educational opportunities."

23-year-old female, Guatemala

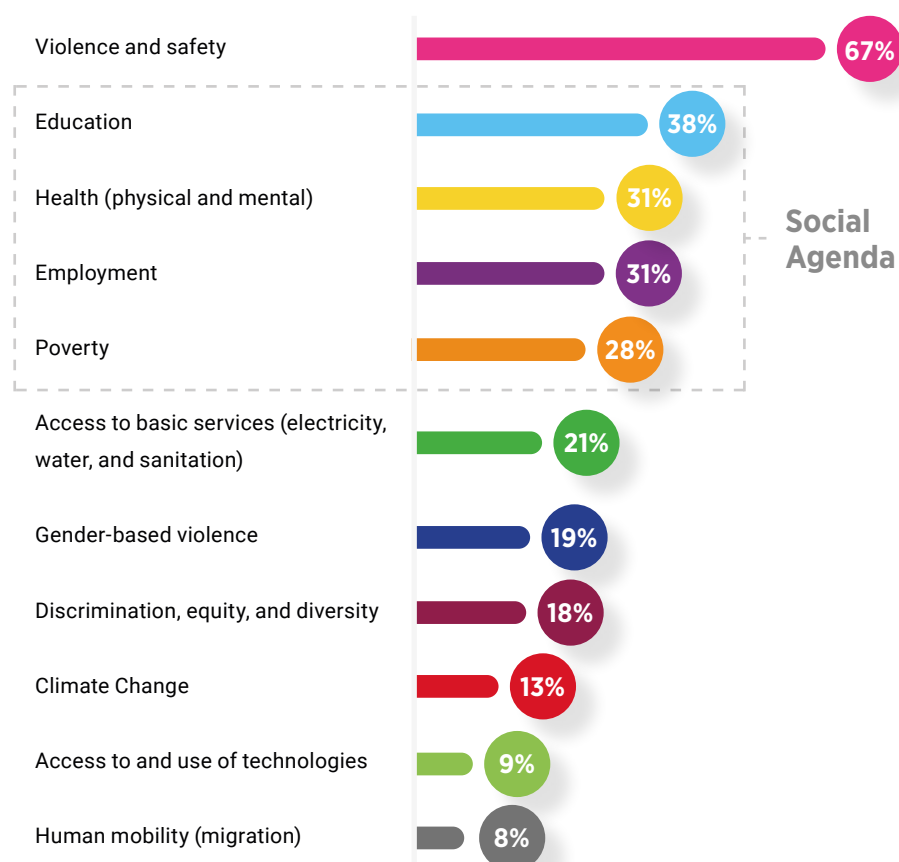
"I hope governments and all people provide more safety for women, girls and boys who experience abuse. Because it is unfair that we can no longer go out on the streets for fear of being raped or even abused."

15-year-old female, Ecuador

III. Findings related to social transformation

3.1. Main issues that governments should address urgently

Adolescents and young people consulted prioritize the social agenda, identifying education, health, employment and poverty as areas that require urgent government attention. Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that violence and security are also priority issues.



It is evident that young people prioritized issues related to social transformation over environmental transformation (13 per cent) and digital transformation (nine per cent). It is worth mentioning that in this question the participants could choose three topics, so the sum of the answers does not give 100 per cent.

Education was considered a priority issue by almost four out of 10 respondents (38 per cent).

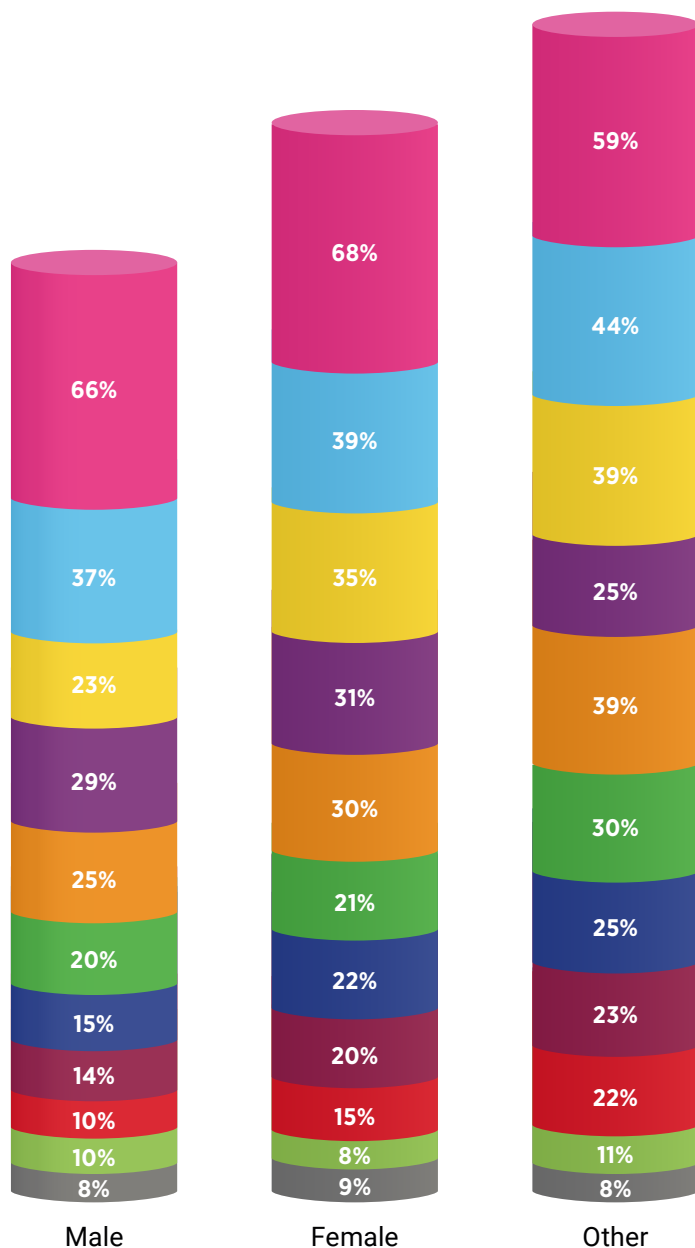
Nearly one in five adolescents and youth indicated that governments should also urgently address issues such as access to basic services, gender-based violence, as well as discrimination, equity and diversity.

Notes:

* The question allowed the selection of three options, so the sum of responses is not 100%.

** Given the high percentage of responses regarding violence and security, and to highlight any potential bias related to the over-representation in the LAC population sample, particularly Haiti, an estimate was made excluding this country. Nevertheless, the observed result shows that violence and security continue to be the main issue that adolescents and young people reported as requiring the most urgent attention from governments.

Prioritized issues by gender

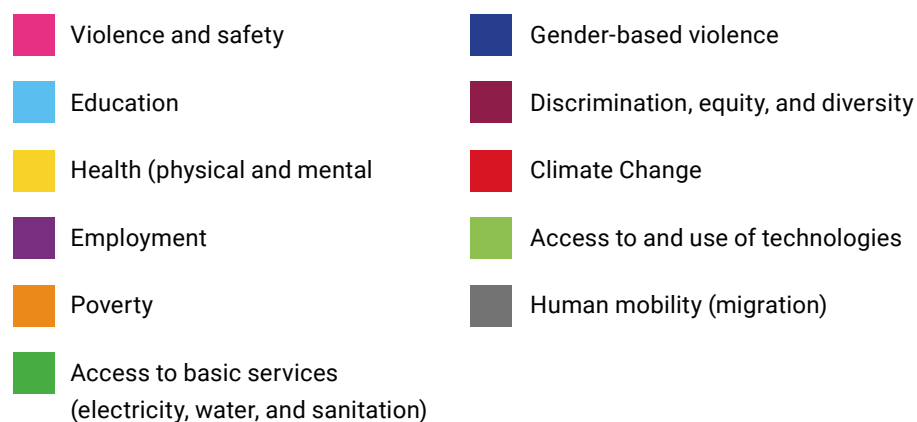


The most significant differences observed between genders were in relation to health (physical and mental), gender-based violence, discrimination, equity and diversity, and poverty, where women were 12, seven, six and five percentage points respectively above those reported by men.

As issues of urgent attention, women gave greater importance to health and poverty than men, who –after violence and security– prioritized employment above the rest of the issues.

The issue of discrimination, equity and diversity was more of a priority for women and people grouped in the “Other” category than for men.

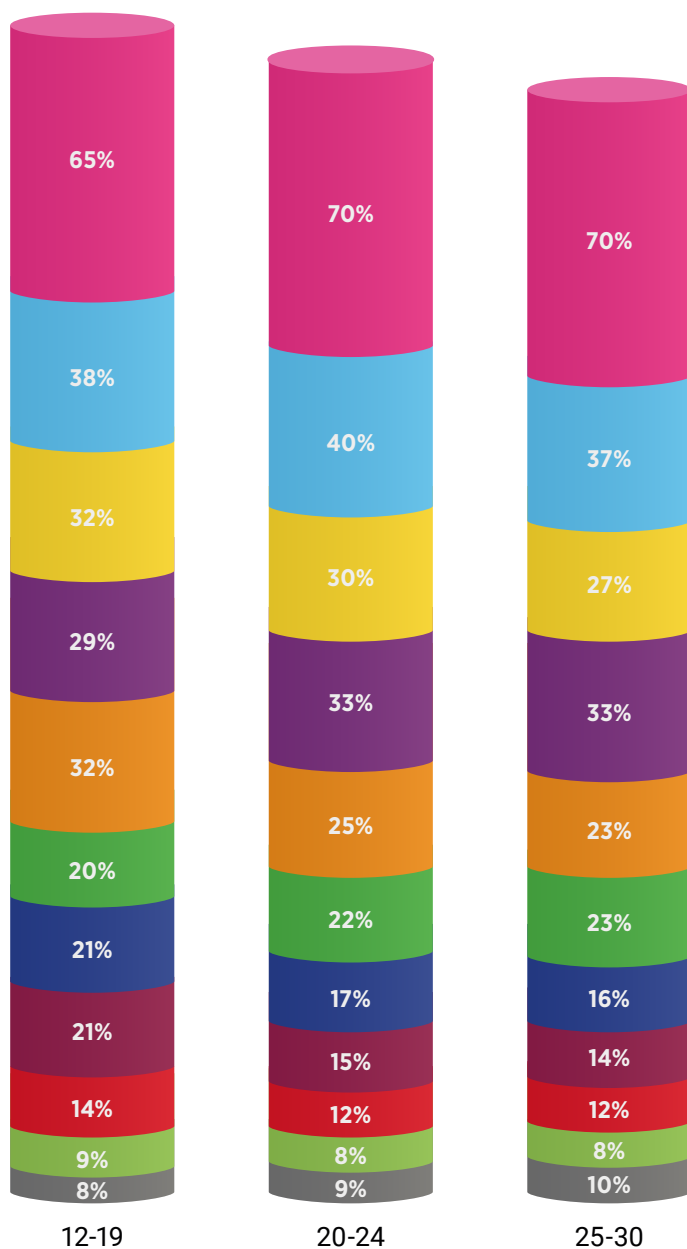
While 22 per cent of women and 25 per cent of people grouped in the “Other” category expressed greater concern about gender-based violence, only 15 per cent of men reported it as a matter of urgent attention.



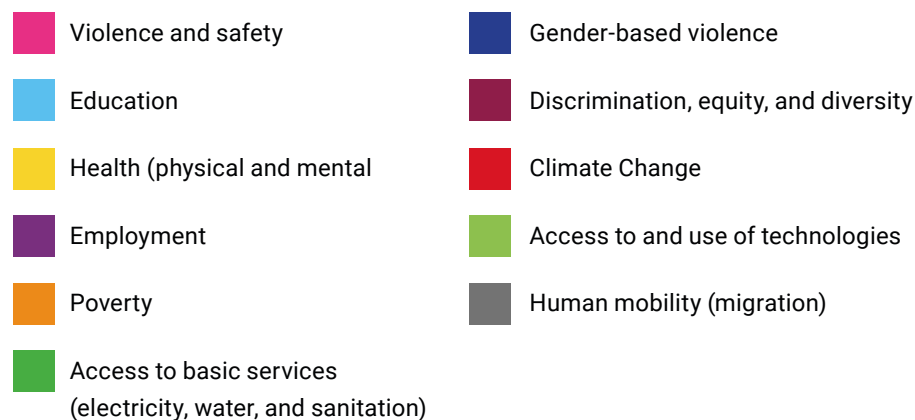
Note:

*** The question allowed the selection of three options, so the sum of responses is not 100%.

Prioritized issues by age groups



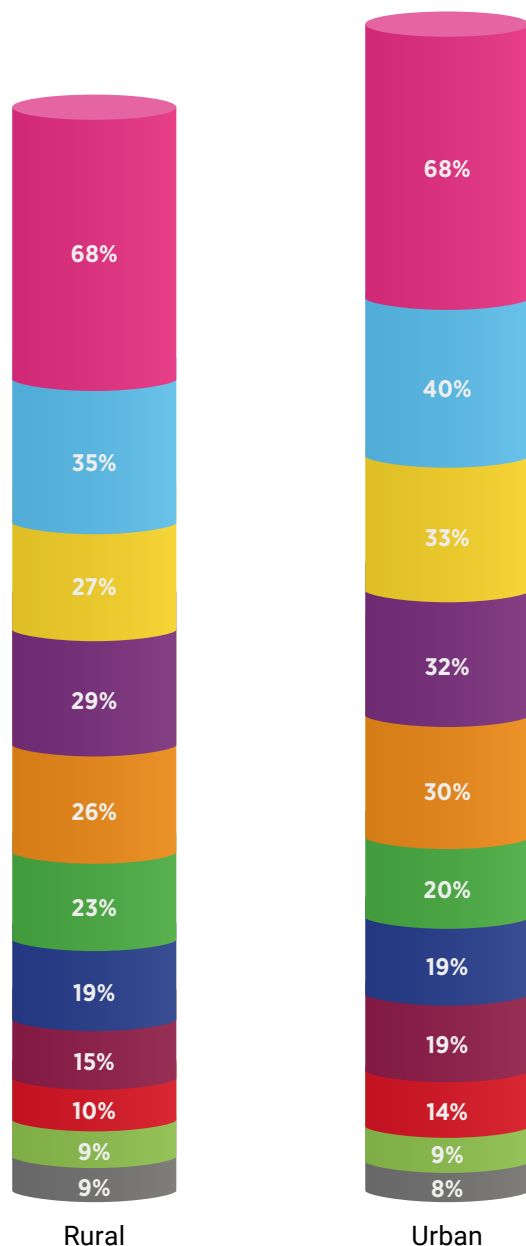
The adolescent population expressed greater concern about health and poverty compared to the two older age groups. Employment was a topic more in demand by young people between 20 and 30 years of age (33 per cent) than by adolescents (29 per cent).



Note:

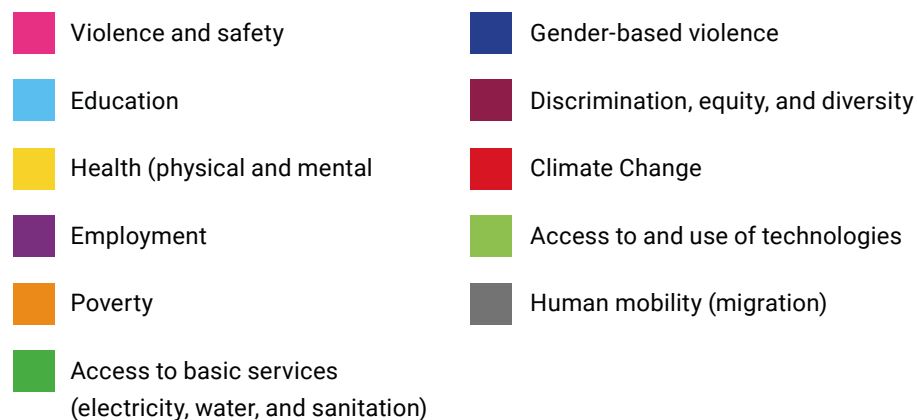
*** The question allowed the selection of three options, so the sum of responses is not 100%.

Prioritized issues by area of residence



Regarding the order of precedence according to the area of residence, it was found that:

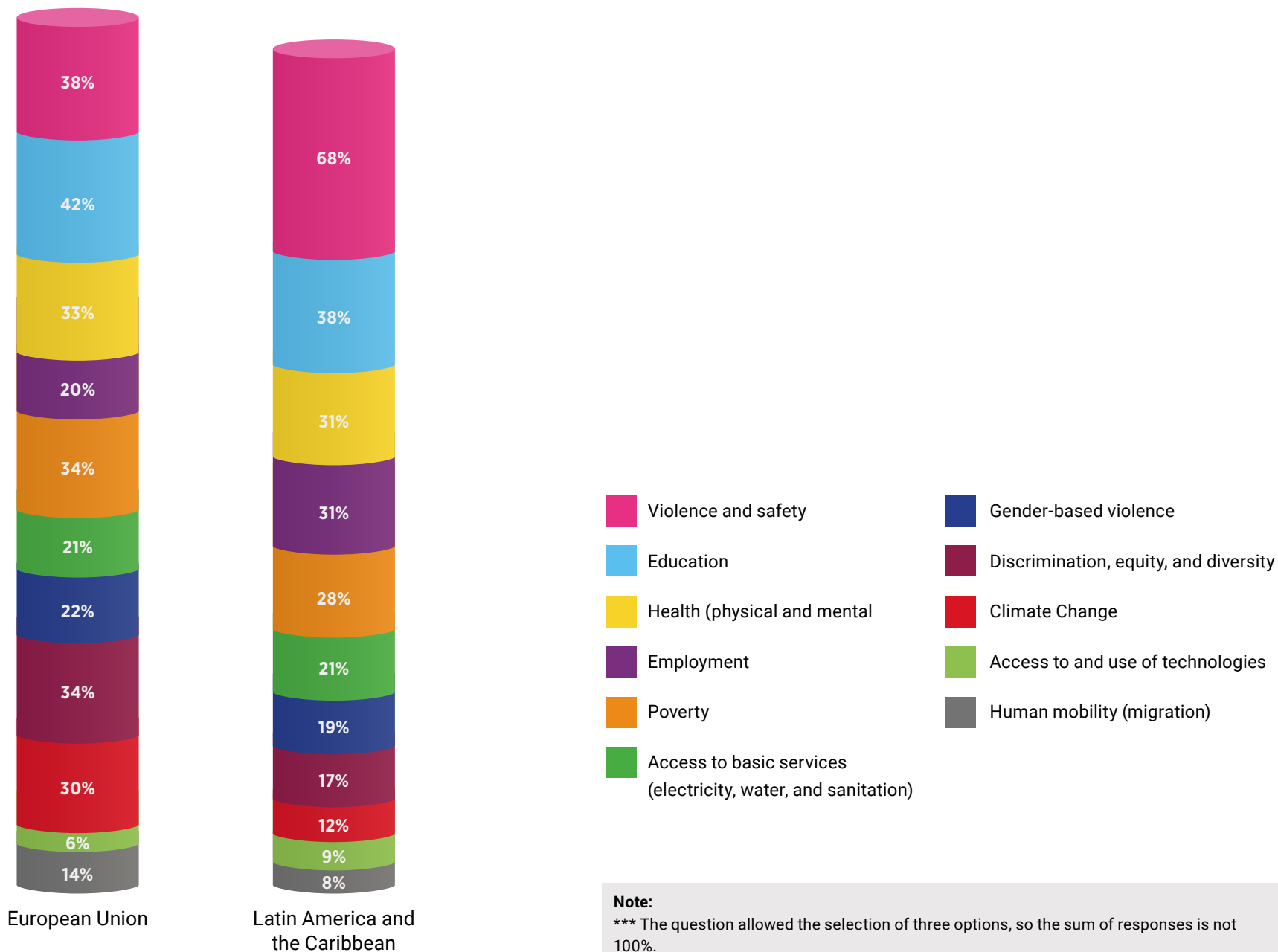
- violence and security were the main issue reported, both in rural and urban areas;
- education was the issue with the second highest proportion of responses in both zones of residence, although in urban areas, it registered a higher percentage than in rural areas;
- while for rural participants, the third priority was employment, for their urban peers, health was the third priority;
- in both areas of residence, poverty was the fifth priority among respondents, with a higher proportion of urban responses than rural ones.



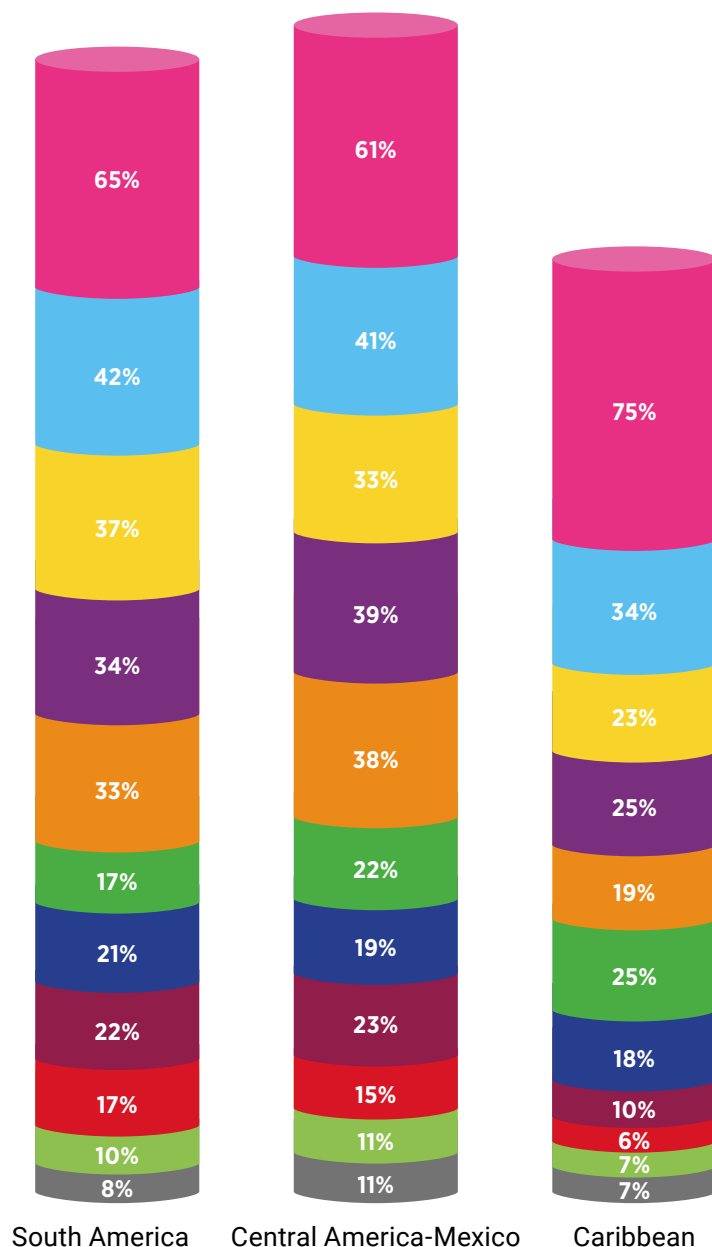
Note:

*** The question allowed the selection of three options, so the sum of responses is not 100%.

Prioritized issues by region



Prioritized issues by LAC subregions

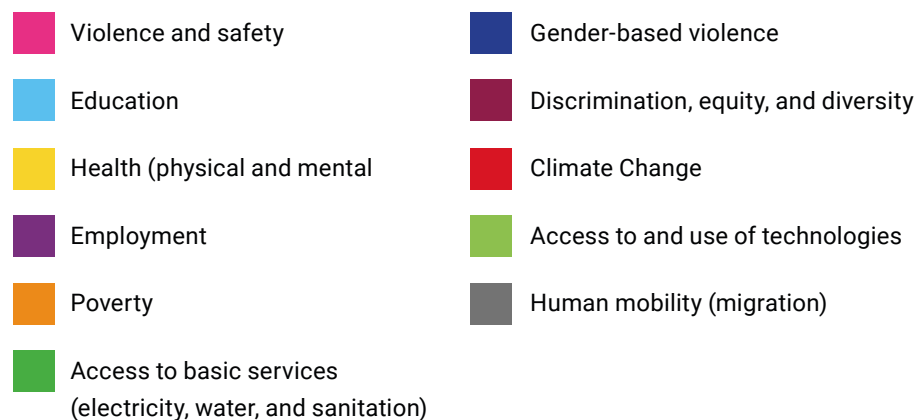


For U-Reporters in the Caribbean, violence and security were a higher priority than for their peers in South America and Central America-Mexico.

Education was the second most urgent issue in all LAC subregions, although it was a higher priority in Central America-Mexico and South America than in the Caribbean.

Three and four out of 10 adolescents and young people in Central America-Mexico and South America identified health, employment, and poverty as issues requiring urgent government attention, compared to about two out of 10 participants in the Caribbean.

For 25 per cent of adolescents and youth in the Caribbean and 22 per cent in Central America-Mexico, access to basic services (electricity, water, and sanitation) is a more urgent issue than for their peers in South America (17 per cent).



Note:

*** The question allowed the selection of three options, so the sum of responses is not 100%.

"We are always pushed aside because we are women and because they don't want us to be in opinion spaces, but today more than ever we must unite and assert our opinions and views on all the issues that matter to us."

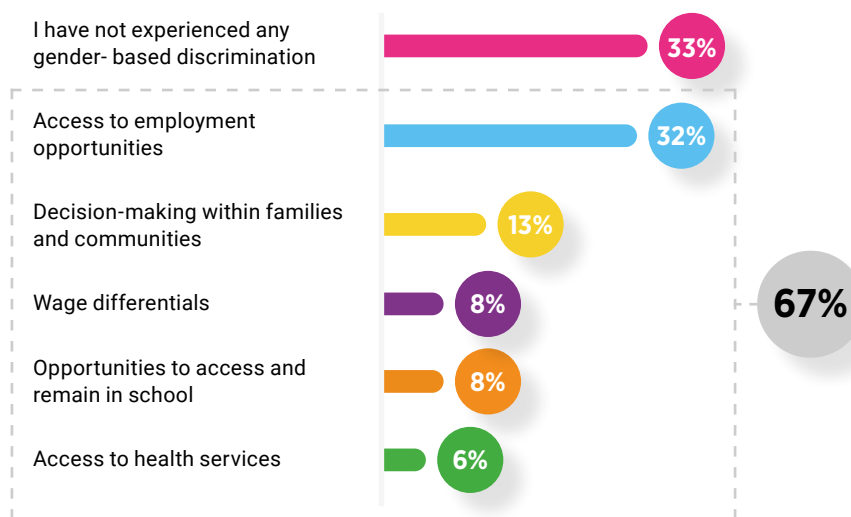
21-year-old woman, Jamaica



3.2. Gender-based Discrimination

Two out of three young people who participated in the poll have witnessed gender discrimination in their community, with the workplace being the most common setting.

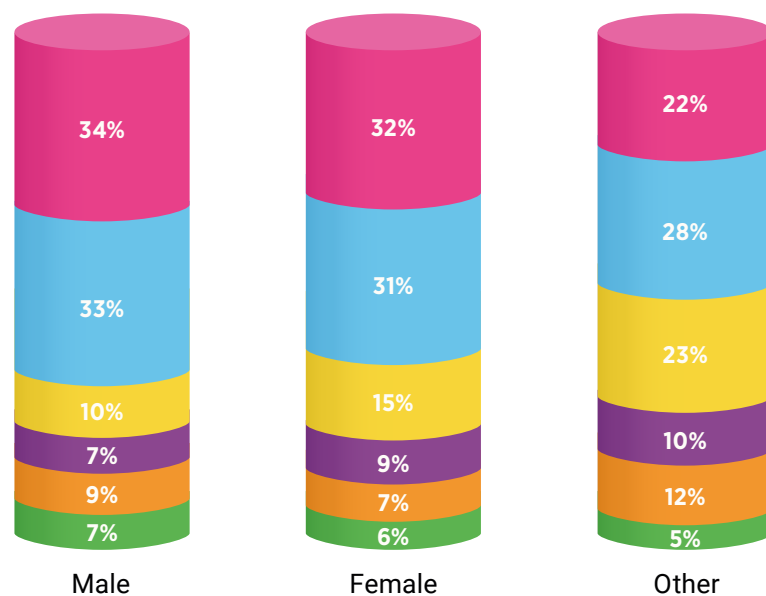
Nearly one in five adolescents and young people consulted demand that governments take greater action on gender-based violence (19 per cent) and discrimination, equity and diversity (18 per cent).



Access to employment opportunities was the form of discrimination most frequently observed by U-Reporters, followed by decision-making within families and communities, wage differentials and opportunities to access and remain in school and, lastly, access to health services.

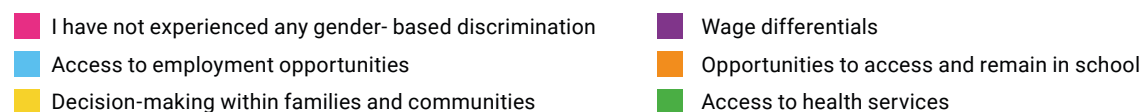
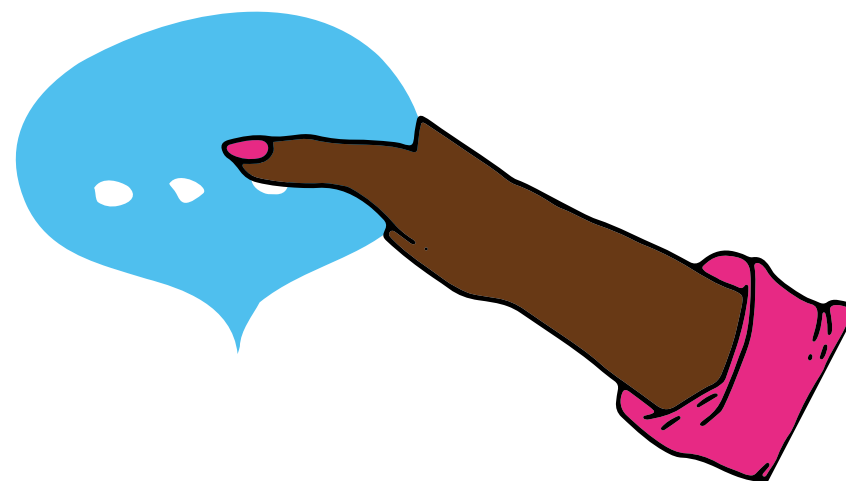


Gender

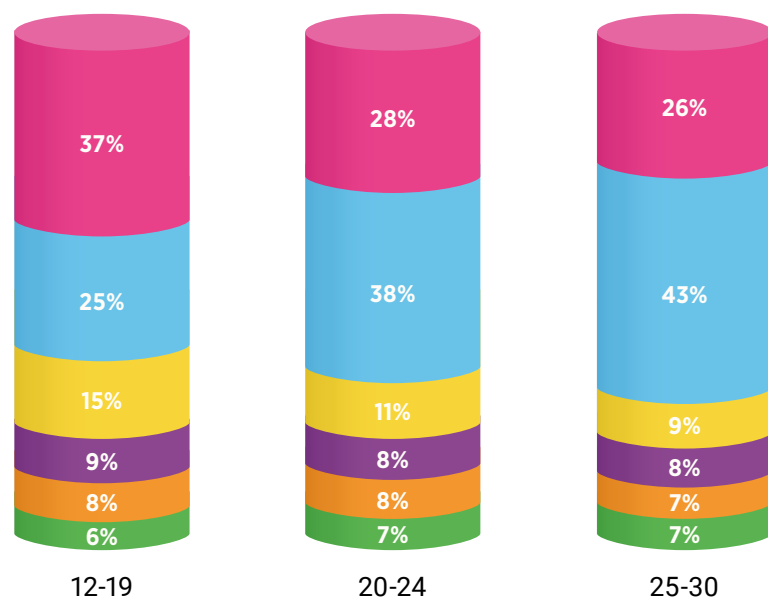


Men and women reported similar incidences, having observed discrimination in opportunities to access and remain in school.

People grouped in the “Other” category most frequently reported having observed some type of discrimination associated with gender. In particular, a higher proportion of people grouped in the “Other” category expressed having observed gender discrimination in decision-making within families and communities compared to women and men.



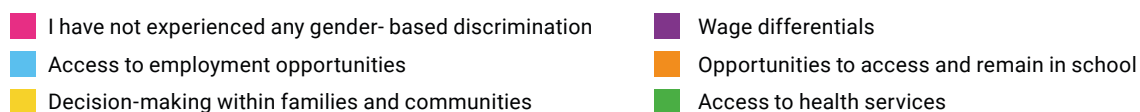
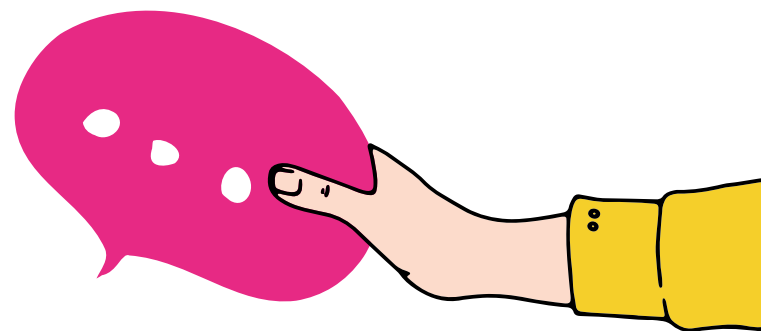
Age groups

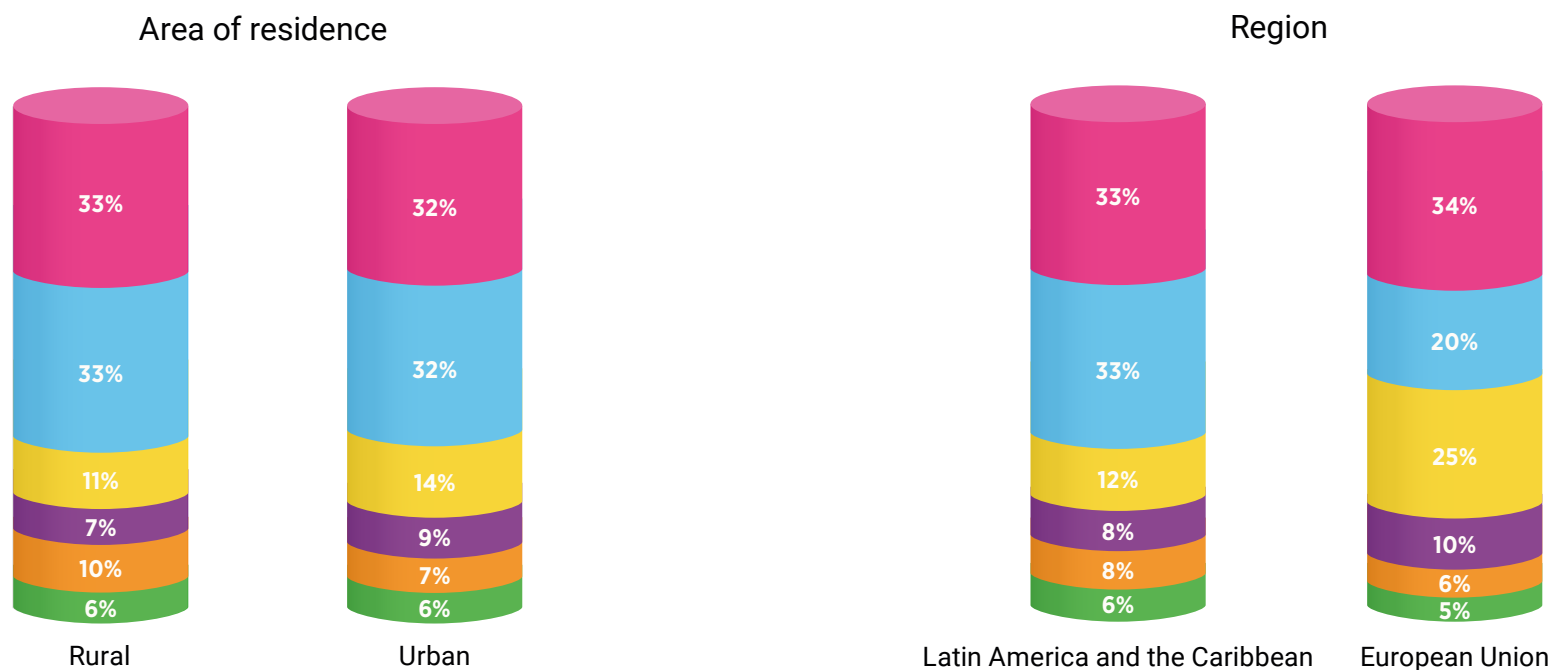


For the adolescents who participated in the survey it was less common to have observed any type of discrimination compared to their older counterparts.

Although the perception of discrimination in access to employment opportunities was the most frequently observed form of discrimination in all age groups, the percentage increases considerably with age.

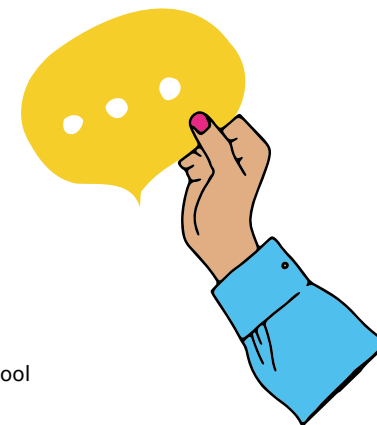
The perception of discrimination associated with decision-making within families and communities was higher among adolescents between 12 and 19 years of age than among older youth.






Discrimination in decision-making within families and communities was perceived more frequently by U-Reporters residing in urban areas than by those living in rural areas.

- I have not experienced any gender-based discrimination
- Access to employment opportunities
- Decision-making within families and communities
- Wage differentials
- Opportunities to access and remain in school
- Access to health services





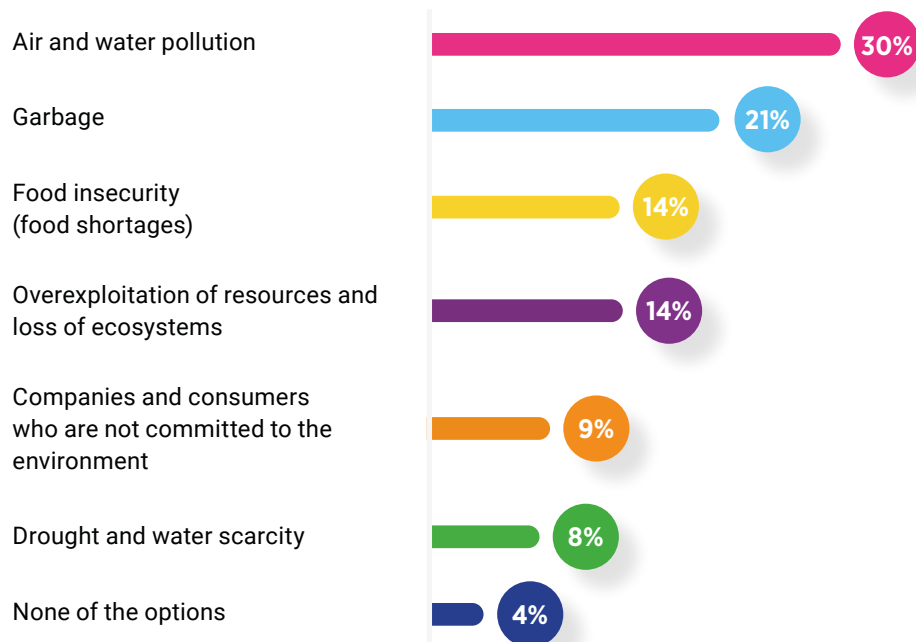
"Climate change is affecting the daily lives of all people. For example, poor people are becoming homeless due to dry season rains and landslides."

17-year-old female, Trinidad and Tobago

IV. Findings related to environmental transformation

4.1. Main problems associated with the environment in communities

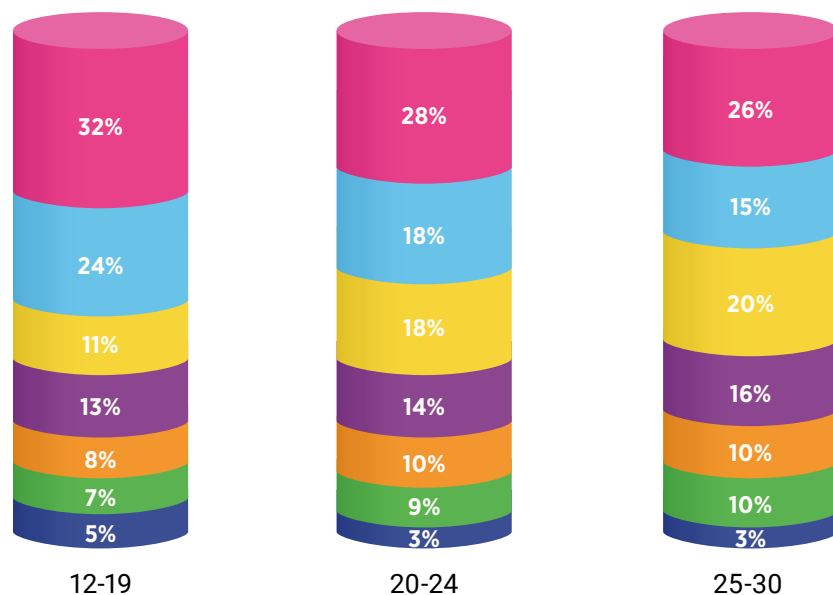
Three out of 10 adolescents and young people consulted say that air and water pollution is the main environmental problem in their communities. For two out of 10, mainly in urban areas, garbage is the main issue.



All genders indicated the same prioritization, considering the main environmental problem in their communities to be air and water pollution followed by garbage.



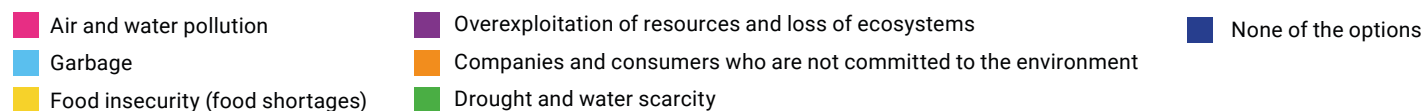
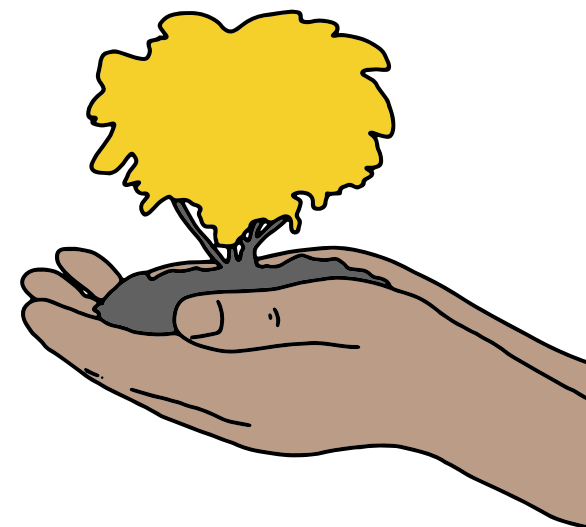
Age groups



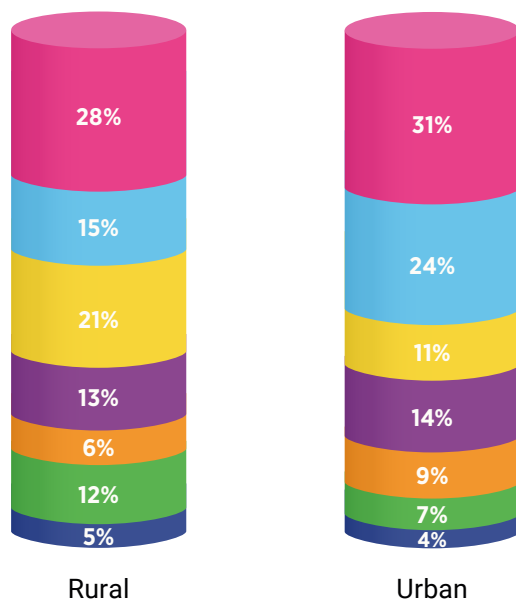
Although air and water pollution (rivers, seas and water reservoirs) were identified as the main environmental challenge in communities across all age groups, their importance decreases as age increases.

One in four adolescents mentioned garbage as the main environmental problem, compared to one in seven young people ages 25 to 30.

Nearly two in 10 young participants 25 to 30-year-olds were concerned about food insecurity, compared to one in 10 adolescents.



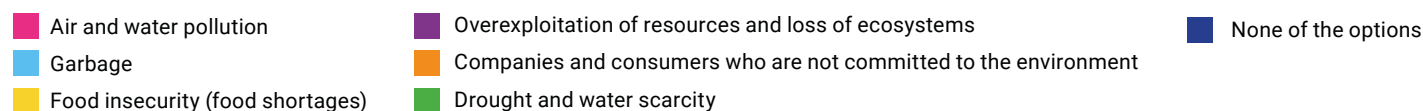
Area of residence

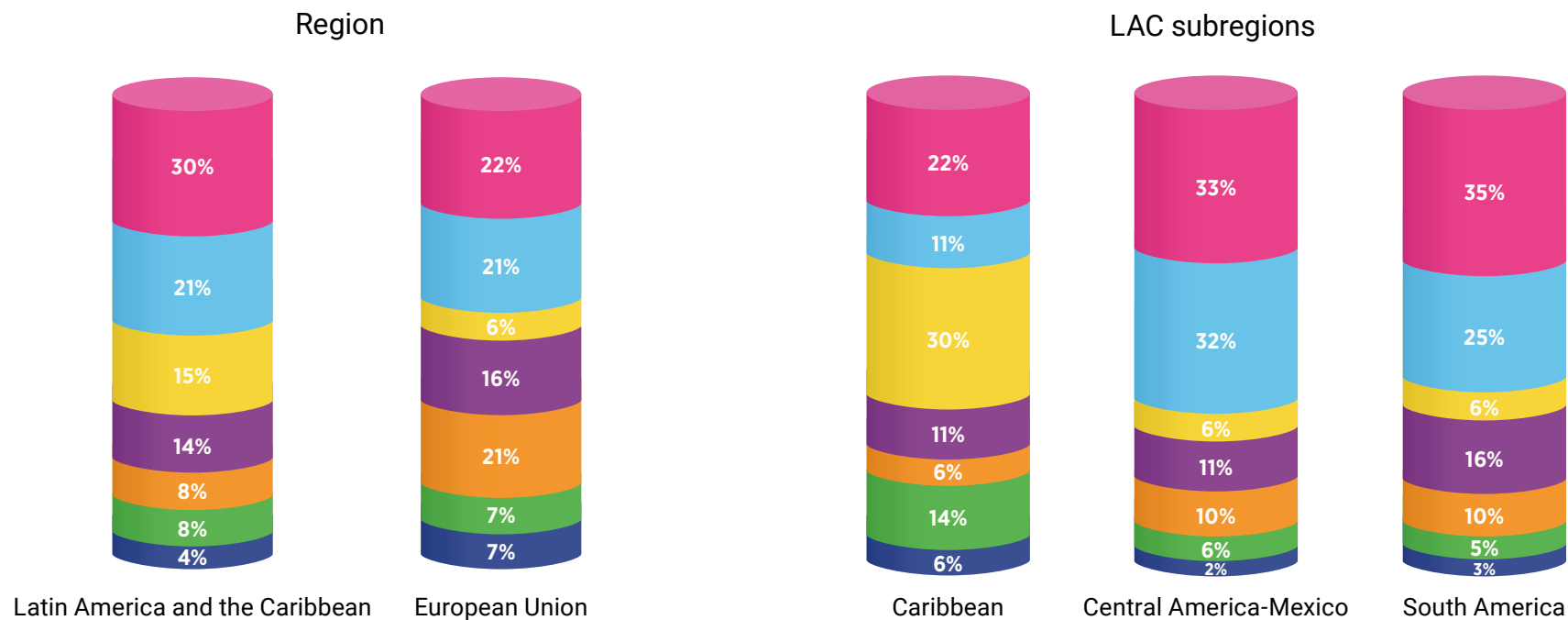


Air and water pollution were the most pressing environmental problems in both rural and urban areas.

For adolescents and young people in urban areas, garbage was considered the second most pressing environmental problem in their communities compared to their peers in rural areas.

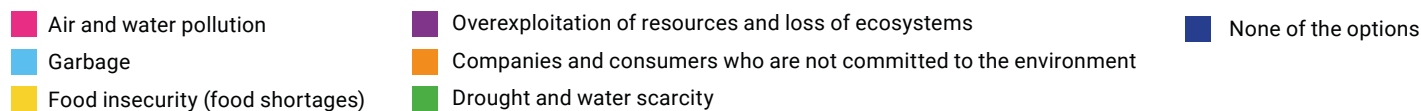
Almost twice as many rural adolescents and young people expressed concern about food insecurity, drought and water scarcity, compared to urban participants.





Among the LAC subregions, there are important differences in terms of the environmental challenges. Air and water pollution stood out as the main problem in South America and Central America-Mexico. In the Caribbean, food insecurity was five times more frequently reported than in South America and Central America-Mexico.

Drought and water scarcity was considered a more pressing problem in the Caribbean compared to Central America-Mexico and South America.



"Imagine a government anywhere in the world whose citizens can grow economically, which can eradicate all forms of violence, and which can even provide the best services and eliminate poverty. But without the right environmental conditions, how can we enjoy all these benefits?"

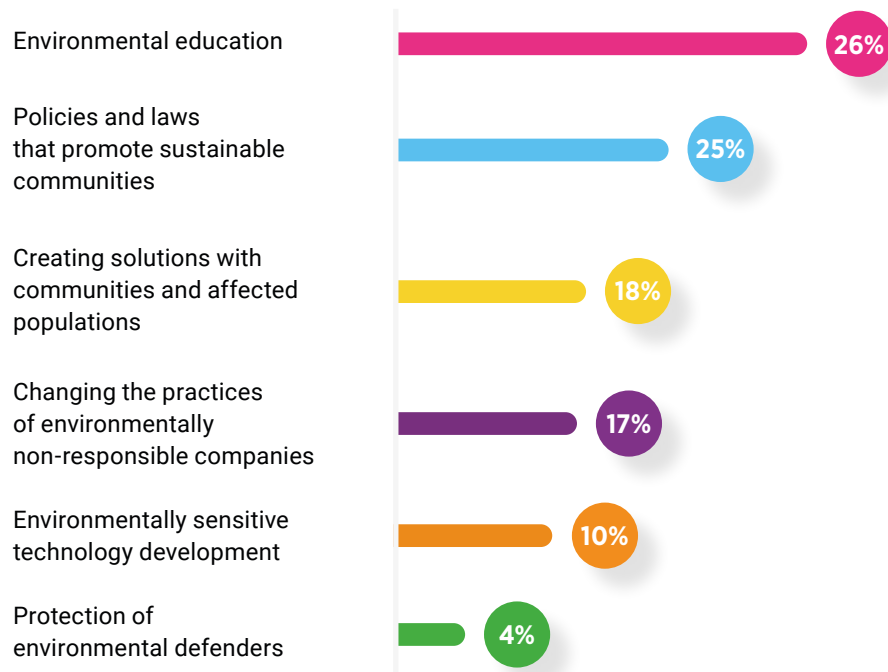
For decades, industrialisation has negatively impacted our environment. Without a plan for sustainable growth and development it is impossible to imagine a healthy planet in the short or medium term. ACTION IS NEEDED NOW!"

20-year-old female, Mexico

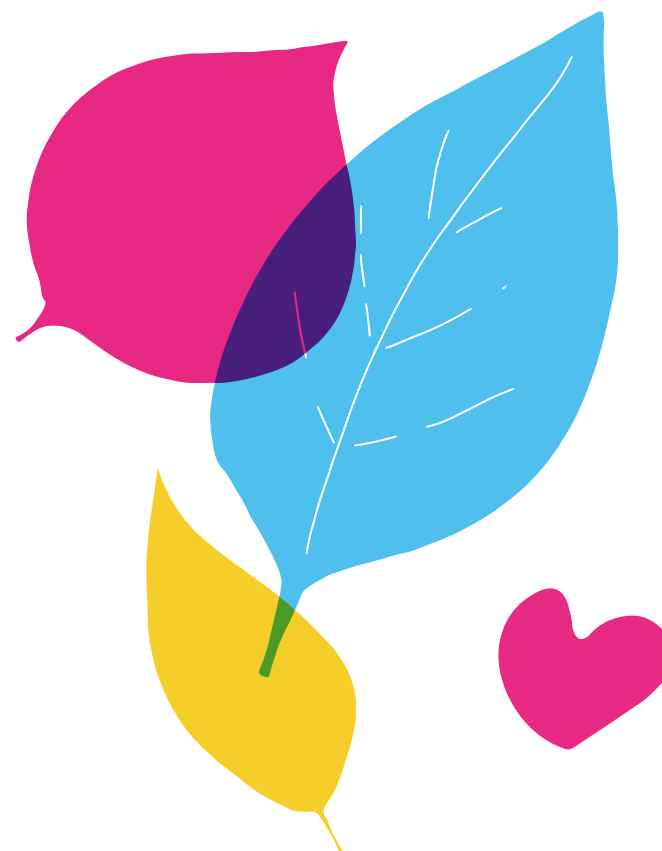


4.2. Actions that should be prioritized to conserve the environment

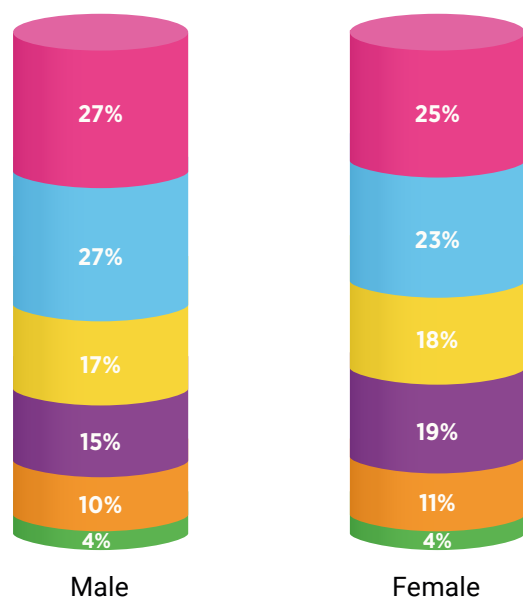
Adolescents and young people consulted say that environmental education (26 per cent) and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities (25 per cent) are priority actions to protect the environment.



Following environmental education and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities, the main actions that adolescents and young people identified as priorities were creating solutions with affected communities and populations, changing practices in non-responsible companies, and developing environmentally-sensitive technological advancements.



Gender



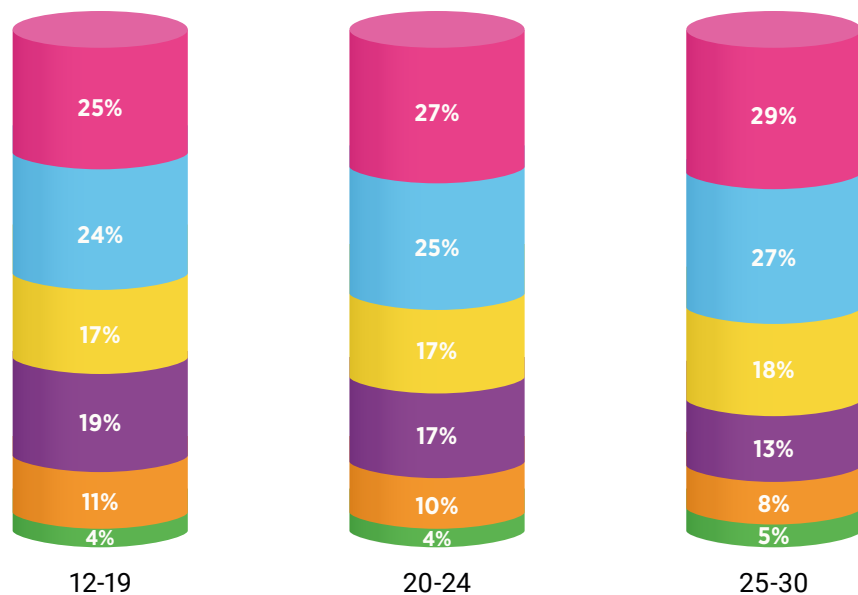
For men and women, the most urgent measures to conserve the environment were environmental education as well as policies and laws promoting sustainable communities.



- Environmental education
- Policies and laws that promote sustainable communities
- Creating solutions with communities and affected populations

- Changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies
- Environmentally sensitive technology development
- Protection of environmental defenders

Age groups



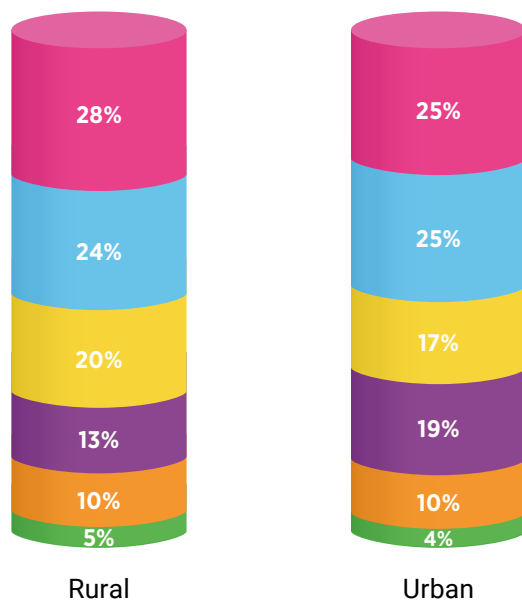
At older ages some measures, such as environmental education and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities, become more of a priority, while changing practices of non-responsible companies and environmentally sensitive technological development become less critical.



- Environmental education
- Policies and laws that promote sustainable communities
- Creating solutions with communities and affected populations

- Changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies
- Environmentally sensitive technology development
- Protection of environmental defenders

Area of residence

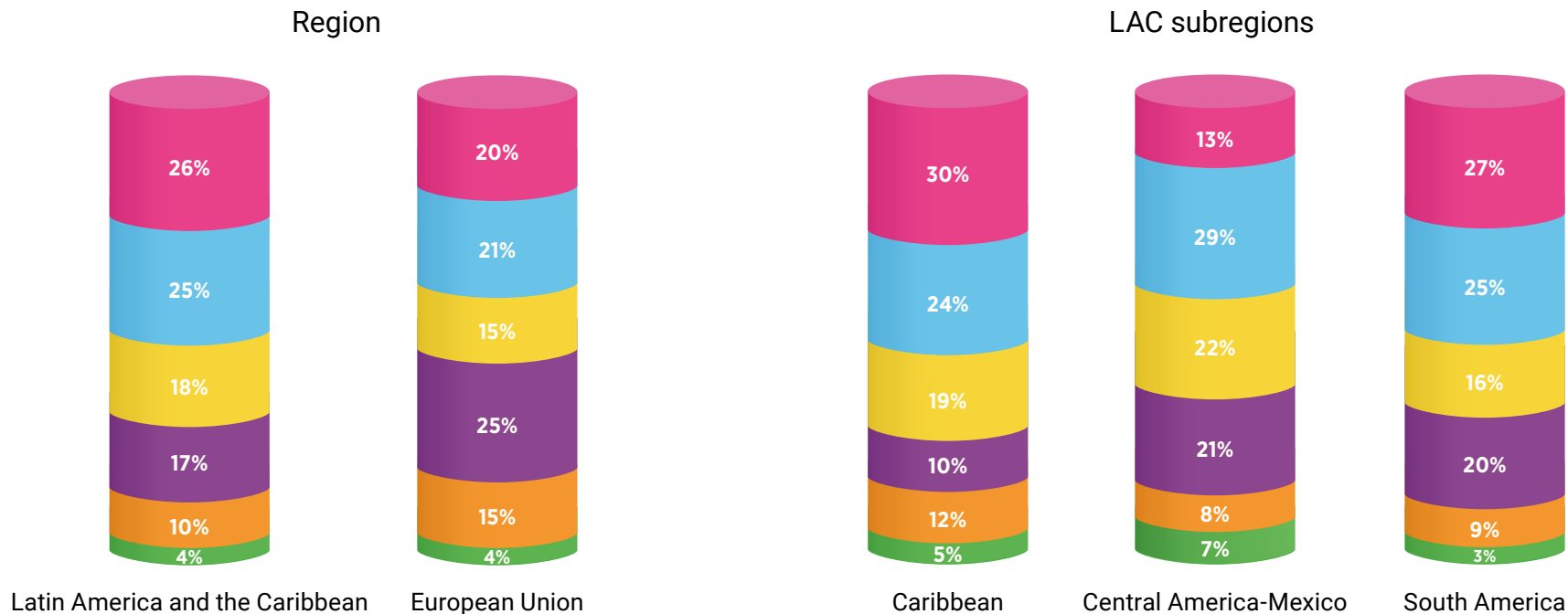


More adolescents and young people in rural areas proposed environmental education as the prioritized recommendation for action, while in urban areas this measure was as important as policies and laws promoting sustainable communities.



- Environmental education
- Policies and laws that promote sustainable communities
- Creating solutions with communities and affected populations

- Changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies
- Environmentally sensitive technology development
- Protection of environmental defenders



The proportion of adolescents and youth in Central America-Mexico who prioritized environmental education was considerably lower compared to the Caribbean and South America.

The importance of changing practices in non-environmentally responsible businesses was twice as high among adolescents and youth in Central America-Mexico and South America compared to their peers in the Caribbean.

- Environmental education
- Policies and laws that promote sustainable communities
- Creating solutions with communities and affected populations

- Changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies
- Environmentally sensitive technology development
- Protection of environmental defenders



"They always come to my community to ask me what we need and promise to make changes, but we never see them."

14-year-old male, Haiti

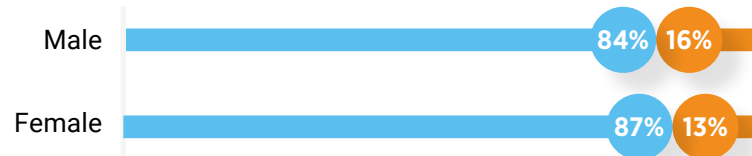
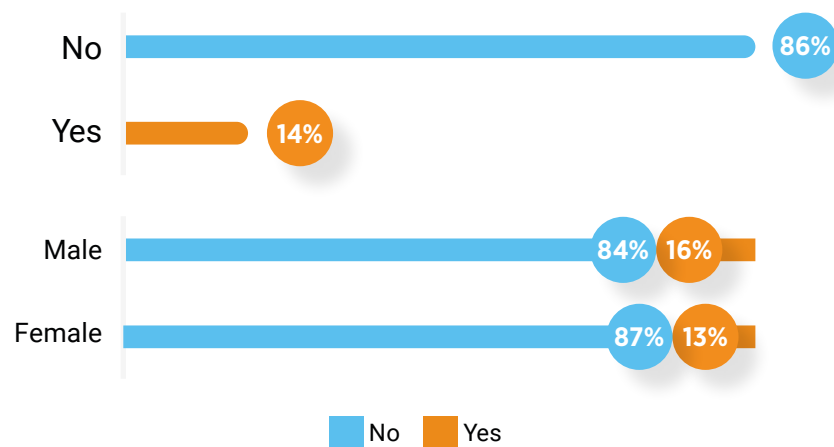


V. Findings related to youth participation

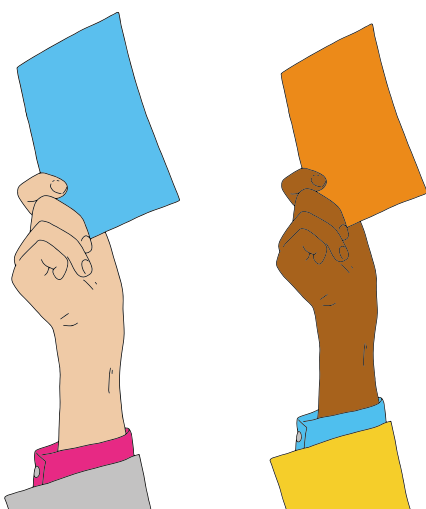
5.1. Youth perceptions of whether political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account

The vast majority of adolescents and young people consulted (86 per cent) think that political leaders should listen to them more and better take into account their needs.

Do you think political leaders listen to youth and take their needs into account?



No Yes



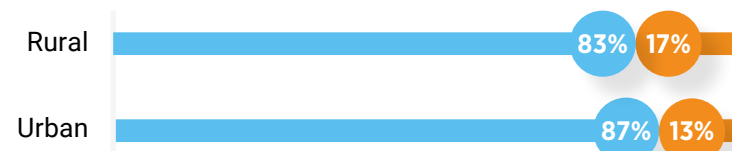
Age groups



LAC subregions



Area of residence





VI. Findings related to migrant, refugee, and displaced adolescents and youth in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru.

U-Report has a platform aimed at migrant, refugee and displaced⁶ adolescents and young people shared by the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. Through this platform, the voices of 281 adolescents and young people between the ages of 12 and 30 were collected to learn about the issues that they consider should be urgently addressed by governments.

1 Findings related to digital transformation

For four out of 10 adolescents and youth on the move, having less access to opportunities to learn and study is the main consequence of not having access to digital technologies or having limited access.

- For adolescents and young people on the move, the main consequence of the lack of access to digital technologies was fewer opportunities to learn and study (39 per cent).
- The proportion of women who mentioned having observed gender discrimination in family and community decisions was more than three times higher than that of men (14 vs. four per cent).
- An equal proportion of migrant women and men (22 per cent) cited difficulty getting information as the main consequence of not having full access to digital technologies.
- One in five adolescents and young people on the move pointed to fewer opportunities to find decent employment as the main consequence of lack of access to digital technologies.

To improve access to and use of digital technology, almost half (45 per cent) of adolescents and young people on the move, especially men, propose investing in connectivity infrastructure and access to equipment.

- The majority of respondents on the move indicated investing in infrastructure and equipment such as Wi-Fi, accessible data, computers, and telephones as the primary measure to improve access to and use of digital technologies. This percentage was considerably higher for men (54 per cent) than for women (36 per cent).
- Approximately one-third of human mobility respondents proposed improving the safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children as a priority action (31 per cent). Almost twice as many women as men prioritized this action (38 vs. 21 per cent).
- One in four adolescents and young people on the move, both men and women, considered it a priority to improve education in the use of technology for mothers, fathers, teachers, students and young people in general.

⁶ For the sake of conciseness, migrant, refugee and displaced adolescents and young people will be referred to as adolescents and young people on the move.

2 Findings related to social transformation

Adolescents and young people on the move consider that the priority issues to be addressed by governments are violence and safety, employment and education.

- Seven out of 10 adolescents and young people on the move indicated that governments should urgently address violence and safety.
- While almost half (47 per cent) prioritized employment, 42 per cent prioritized education, and 30 per cent health.
- Women expressed greater concern than men regarding violence and safety (73 vs. 64 per cent) and employment (50 vs. 43 per cent).
- Twice as many women as men (24 vs. 12 per cent) indicated the need to include gender-based violence as a priority issue on government agendas.

Seven out of 10 adolescents and young people on the move have observed some type of gender-based discrimination in their community.

- The proportion of women who mentioned having observed gender-based discrimination in family and community decisions was more than three times higher than that of men (14 vs. four per cent).
- Nearly four out of 10 adolescents and young people reported having observed gender discrimination associated with lack of access to employment opportunities. Notably, a considerably higher percentage of males than females reported having observed this form of discrimination (47 vs. 32 per cent).



3 Findings related to environmental transformation

Air and water pollution was reported by nearly four out of 10 adolescents and young people on the move as the main environmental problem in their communities.

- Garbage was the second most reported environmental problem by the population on the move (23 per cent), with a higher concentration of females (26 per cent) than males (20 per cent).
- Overexploitation of resources and loss of ecosystems was the third most frequent response (15 per cent), with no significant differences between the two genders.

To conserve the environment, human mobility participants propose policies and laws promoting sustainable communities (23 per cent), creation of solutions with affected communities and populations (22 per cent) and changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies (22 per cent).

- Proportionately, more men than women prioritized policies and laws that promote sustainable communities as an environmental conservation measure (28 vs. 19 per cent).
- One in five adolescents and young people on the move proposed environmental education as the main action to conserve the environment.

4 Youth participation

Among youth on the move, there is a predominantly negative perception of being heard and having their needs addressed by political leaders.

- Eight out of 10 adolescents and young people on the move considered that political leaders should listen to them more and better take into account their needs.





VII. Relationship of results to the findings from previous U-Report surveys

The three main topics of this U-Report survey are complemented by findings previously obtained from other consultations: "[We want to learn what will be useful for us in life](#)". [Reimagine skills development: Voices of adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) and [Try harder! How young advocates advise on Climate Action in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).

1 Digital Transformation

In the U-Report survey *We want to learn what will be useful for us in life* U-Reporters were consulted about the type of digital skills that will help them to achieve their future goals. They demand to acquire knowledge about:

- data, information and computer literacy,
- digital communication and collaboration,
- online safety and wellness, and
- digital content creation.

The survey concluded that it is essential to continue strengthening digital education in school and community environments based on established competency frameworks and emphasizing those associated with online safety and well-being.

2 Social transformation

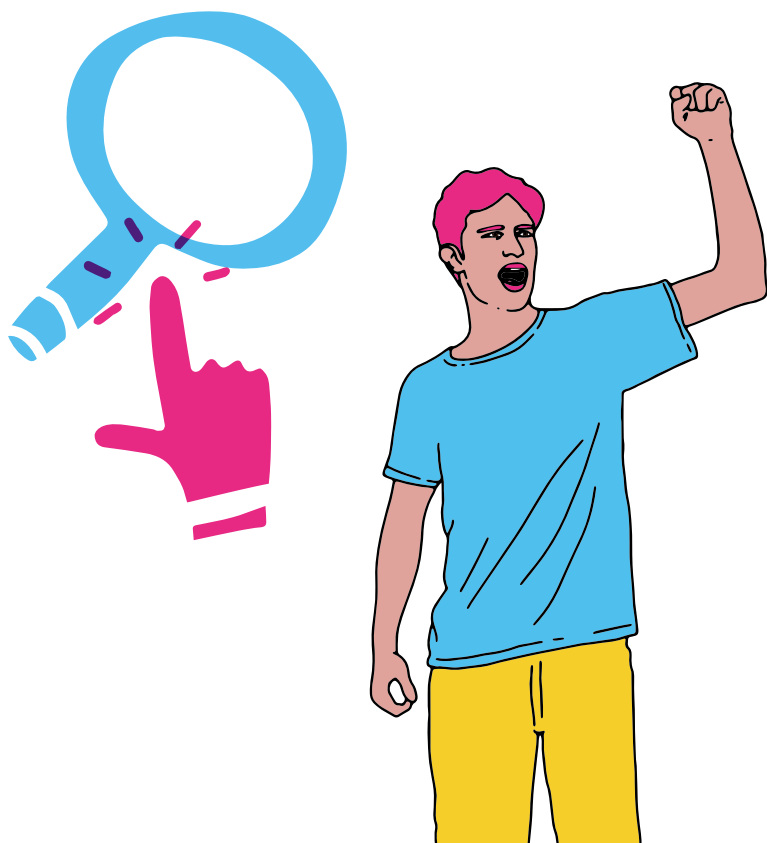
The U-Report survey *We want to learn what will be useful for us in life* inquired about the skills that adolescents and young people consider strategic for their future.

These encompass their education, integration into the world of work, as well as skills that are transferable to other dimensions of their lives and allow them to learn with agility, adapt with ease and become citizens capable of navigating through diverse personal, educational, social, and economic challenges⁷. Regarding education, analyzed results show that:

- Nearly 50 per cent of adolescents and young people believe that self-learning skills are necessary to achieve their future goals.
- Fifty per cent of adolescents and young people believe that to achieve their future goals, it is important to learn some transferable skill, such as:
 - > self-management, communication and resilience, which are part of the individual dimension;
 - > creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving in the cognitive dimension;
 - > respect for diversity, empathy and participation from the social dimension; and
 - > cooperation, negotiation and decision-making (leadership and goal setting) from the instrumental dimension.

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Importance of Transferable Skills Development in Latin America and The Caribbean', UNICEF, Panama City, 2021, available at: <www.unicef.org/lac/informes/importancia-del-desarrollo-de-habilidades-transferibles-en-ALC>, accessed 5 June 2023.

- Three out of 10 adolescents and young people want to learn financial skills, placing them in the second most demanded group of skills after transferable skills.
- Interest in acquiring transferable and financial skills doubles with age.
- Adolescents and young people consider that transferable skills (50 per cent), financial skills (27 per cent), job-specific skills (24 per cent) and digital skills (six per cent) are not taught in school.

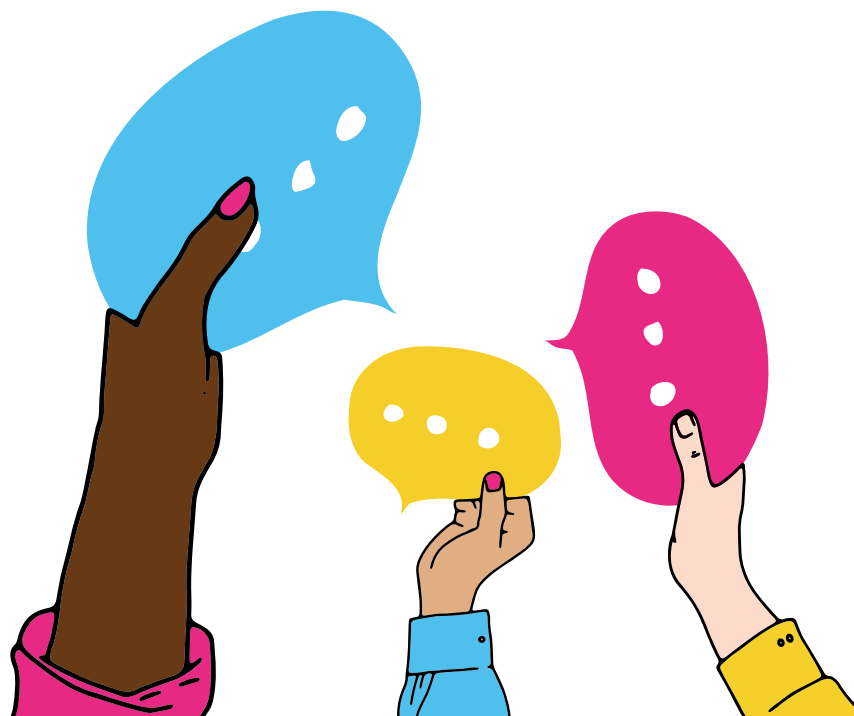


Regarding the integration of youth into the world of work, results showed that:

- Half of adolescents and young people in the future aspire to have a permanent position, and the other half wish to be self-employed or entrepreneurs.
- Adolescents and young people who want to be entrepreneurs in the future are more interested in acquiring financial skills than those who prefer a permanent job.
- One in four adolescents and young people want to learn some job-specific skill that will ease their transition from school to the world of work.
- Over half of youth are unsure whether future employment opportunities will fit their life plans. Uncertainty is more profound among 19 to 24-year-olds and women than adolescents and men.
- Three out of 10 adolescents and young people believe that the private sector requires skills and experience that they do not have.
- Adolescents and young people demand that the private sector provide them with opportunities for skills development and certification and options for internships.

Conclusions from this U-Report survey

- For adolescents and young people to have equal access to opportunities that meet their long-term expectations, it will be necessary to seek a balance in initiatives aimed at preparing and facilitating the transition to the world of work, whether they aspire to have a permanent job or prefer to be entrepreneurs or self-employed.
- Developing strategies to include transferable skills in the school curriculum will be important to meet the demands of adolescents and young people in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Consideration could be given to expanding the Active Citizenship dimension of the Global Transferable Skills Framework to address aspects associated with soft skills, emphasizing human rights, gender equality and participation.
- It is vital to continue building bridges with the private sector to articulate its needs with the demands and aspirations of adolescents and young people, through internships, vocational guidance opportunities and skills certification, among others.
- It is necessary to rethink the skills spectrum to include financial skills development, given the high demand for this group of competencies.
- It is necessary to work on strengthening and expanding education systems that promote skills development in a holistic, lifelong and gender-equitable manner for all students, especially those most excluded.
- Programmatically, this requires working across multiple learning pathways and at all levels of the education system to align teaching and learning practices (curriculum, pedagogies, assessments) and promote enabling environments for skills development.



3 Environmental transformation

Regarding environmental issues, the results of the U-Report survey *Try harder! How young activists advise Climate Action in Latin America and the Caribbean* show that:

- Seven out of 10 youth activists (65 per cent) report not having been consulted during the development of climate change policies, programmes, plans or in adaptation and mitigation actions to address the climate crisis and environmental degradation.
- Seven out of 10 adolescents and young people (72 per cent) indicate that the environmental policies and plans in their country regarding climate change could further take the needs and challenges of youth into account. Meanwhile, two out of 10 (23 per cent) do not have an opinion on the matter.
- Regarding actions that countries should include in policies and plans against the environmental crisis to respond to the needs and challenges of children, adolescents and youth, the activists point out:
 - > education and training (34 per cent),
 - > public participation (33 per cent),
 - > awareness-raising and access to public information (12 per cent),
 - > support for action by and for youth (eight per cent), and
 - > inclusion and individual and corporate regulation, each with seven per cent.
- Forty-three per cent of youth surveyed say that while their governments are acting on climate and the environment, their actions could be more ambitious, while 49 per cent feel that governments are not taking action.
- Top actions governments should take for mitigation and adaptation to climate change and environmental degradation are multilevel climate governance and action for climate empowerment, each with a frequency of 32 per cent among youth activists.
- Fourteen per cent of adolescents and young people indicate that governments should take action in the energy and transportation sectors to address the environmental crisis, followed by sectors associated with biodiversity and ecosystems at 13 per cent and education at 12 per cent.
- Actions such as regulation of business and industry, access rights, production systems, land use change and forestry, and WASH each register 11 per cent preference among adolescents and young climate change activists.
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U-Report Youth Activists #YoungVoicesOfChange - EU-LAC days



Azeneth Guadalupe García
Méndez (Mexico)



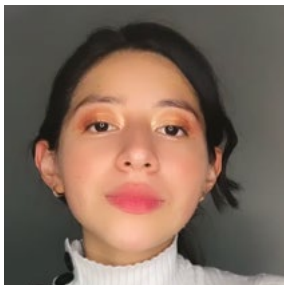
Alejandro Eufrazio Dutil
Martínez (Paraguay)



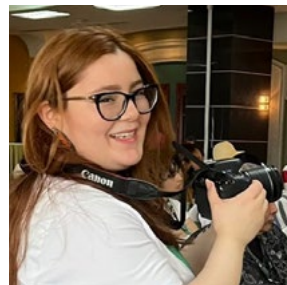
Kelly Lizeth Guevara Estelo
(Peru)



Bia Louise Moraes Franco
(Brazil)



Andrea Ximena López Xutuc
(Guatemala)



Marcela Margarita Tornoé
Oliva (Guatemala)



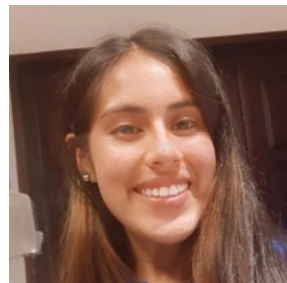
Daniel Enrique Velásquez
Monasterios
(Bolivia/Venezuela)



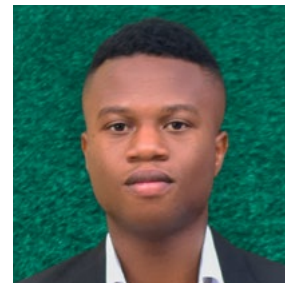
Marla Mercedes Bolvito
Jerónimo (Guatemala)



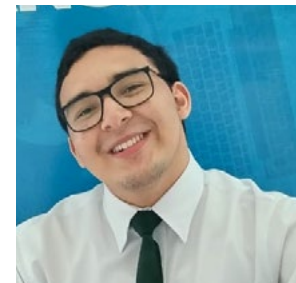
Miguel Montes Enríquez
(Mexico)



Esmeralda Porras Gutiérrez
(Costa Rica)



Martini Montuma (Haiti)



Ricardo Zapata (Panama)

Conclusions

Results from this U-Report survey shed light on the perception of adolescents and young people in Latin America and the Caribbean⁸ on issues they prioritize, and allow us to hear their recommendations for action in the areas of digital, social, and environmental transformation.

Equally valuable are the findings on the perception of young people consulted on whether they consider that political leaders listen to them and take their needs into account.

Digital transformation

Of the three thematic topics included in the survey, issues related to digital transformation registered the lowest prioritization by adolescents and young people (nine per cent), compared to environmental issues (13 per cent) and, mainly, those associated with social transformation.

1 Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that the lack of or limited access to digital technologies hinders their opportunities to learn, educate themselves or get information.

- The perception of having fewer opportunities to find a decent job increases with age, being a problem perceived by one in six young people between 25 and 30 years of age.

- Forty-eight per cent of adolescents and young people residing in rural areas reported difficulties in accessing learning and educational opportunities, compared to 50 per cent of their peers in urban areas.
- A higher concentration of participants from Central America-Mexico (56 per cent) reported limitations to opportunities to learn, compared to those from the Caribbean (51 per cent) and South America (47 per cent).
- Finally, South America and Central America-Mexico participants expressed greater concern (19 per cent and 17 per cent) respectively than those in the Caribbean (12 per cent) about fewer opportunities to find decent employment due to a lack of access to digital technologies.



⁸ Results reflect a high representation of LAC countries since 93 per cent of the adolescents and young people who responded to the survey belong to this region.

2 Almost half of the 20,000 adolescents and young people consulted in a U-Report poll want to see more investments in digital infrastructure and equipment, as they consider digital opportunities an essential part of their development.

- Men attached greater importance to investment in infrastructure and equipment, with nearly half (47 per cent) prioritizing this action, compared to 39 per cent of women.
- Disaggregation by the LAC subregion shows some variations. While almost half of Caribbean U-Reporters (48 per cent) indicated investment in connectivity and equipment as a priority, this action was reported by about four out of 10 adolescents and young people in Central America-Mexico (38 per cent) and South America (41 per cent).

Social transformation

3 Adolescents and young people consulted prioritize the social agenda, identifying education, health, employment and poverty as areas that require urgent government attention.

Education was considered a priority by nearly four in 10 respondents (38 per cent).

- More adolescents and youth in Central America-Mexico (41 per cent) and South America (42 per cent) prioritized education, compared to 34 per cent of Caribbean residents. Something similar occurs with the issues of health, employment, and poverty, reporting lower percentages in the Caribbean than in the other two subregions.
- Physical and mental health, as an area that requires urgent attention by governments, was considered a higher priority by women (35 per cent) than by men (23 per cent).
- Employment was identified as an area that requires urgent government attention by a similar proportion of men and women (29 per cent and 31 per cent). Additionally, employment was a more significant concern for young people (33 per cent) compared to adolescents (29 per cent).

4 Two out of three adolescents and young people consulted think that violence and safety are also priority issues.

- Adolescents and young people who mentioned violence and safety as a priority issue are concentrated in the Caribbean region (75 per cent), compared to 65 per cent in South America and 61 per cent in Central America-Mexico.

Gender Equality

5 Two out of three young people who participated in the poll have witnessed gender discrimination in their community, with the workplace being the most common setting.

- The most frequently observed form of gender discrimination was related to access to employment opportunities (32 per cent), followed by decision-making within families and communities (13 per cent).
- By age range, discrimination in access to job opportunities increases considerably with age as exposure to work environments increases. Only 25 per cent of adolescents reported having observed discrimination for this reason, compared to 38 per cent of 20 to 24-year-olds and 43 per cent of 25 to 30-year-olds.
- Gender-based discrimination associated with access to health services, education and wage differences were generally less reported by participants, with six per cent and eight per cent of responses, respectively.

6 Nearly one out of five adolescents and young people consulted demand that governments take greater action on gender-based violence (19 per cent) and discrimination, equity, and diversity (17 per cent).

When reviewing the results for each issue, it is observed that:

- Only 14 per cent of men considered discrimination, equity, and diversity a priority, while this percentage rose to 20 per cent among women and 23 per cent among people grouped in the “Other” category.
- Something similar occurred with gender-based violence, as this issue was proportionally more prioritized by women (22 per cent) and people grouped in the “Other” category (25 per cent) than by men (15 per cent).
- The percentage of adolescents and young people from Central America-Mexico (23 per cent) and South America (22 per cent) who considered discrimination, equity and diversity as a priority issue is double the proportion of their peers in the Caribbean (10 per cent). In contrast, there is no considerable variation for the issue of gender-based violence, which in the three regions hovered around 20 per cent.

Environmental transformation

- 7** Three out of 10 adolescents and young people consulted say that air and water pollution is the main environmental problem in their communities. For two out of 10, mainly in urban areas, garbage is the main issue.
- By place of residence, more than half of adolescents and youth living in urban areas (55 per cent) expressed greater concern about air and water pollution, as well as garbage in their communities, compared to 43 per cent of participants in rural areas.
 - In terms of order of priority, in both rural and urban areas air and water pollution was the most frequently observed problem. However, the second most reported problem varied between areas of residence. While in urban areas it was garbage (24 per cent), in rural areas it was food insecurity (21 per cent). For participants in urban areas, the latter problem ranked fourth with 11 per cent.
 - There were significant differences in the environmental challenges in the LAC subregions. In South America and Central America-Mexico, air and water pollution stood out as the main problem with 35 per cent and 33 per cent respectively, while in the Caribbean it was food insecurity with 30 per cent.
 - The proportion of adolescents and young people in the Caribbean reporting food shortages was five times higher than that reported by their peers in the other two regions (six per cent).⁹

- 8** Adolescents and young people consulted say that environmental education (26 per cent) and policies and laws that promote sustainable communities (25 per cent) are priority actions to protect the environment.

- The second and third actions that young people indicated as priorities to conserve the environment were creating solutions with affected communities and populations (18 per cent) and changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible companies (17 per cent).
- In contrast to South America and the Caribbean, where environmental education was prioritized for adolescents and young people, in Central America-Mexico policies and laws that promote sustainable communities was the most important action to conserve the environment (29 per cent). In this region, only 13 per cent mentioned environmental education as the primary measure.

Youth participation

- 9** The vast majority of adolescents and young people consulted (86 per cent) think that political leaders should listen to them more and better take into account their needs more.

⁹ It is worth mentioning that the sample has a high representation of LAC countries and within LAC of Haiti, which may influence the results.



Annex. Data collection instrument

The following were the seven questions asked to the adolescents and young people who participated in the U-Report survey.

1. What issues do you think governments should urgently address?

(Check up to three options)

- A. Violence and safety
- B. Gender-based violence
- C. Discrimination, equity, and diversity
- D. Human mobility (migration)
- E. Education
- F. Health (physical and mental)
- G. Climate change
- H. Access to and use of technologies
- I. Employment
- J. Poverty
- K. Access to basic services (electricity, water, and sanitation)

2. In your community, have you observed gender discrimination in any of the following situations?

- A. Access to employment opportunities
- B. Wage differentials
- C. Opportunities to access and remain in school
- D. Decision-making within families and communities
- E. Access to health services
- F. I have not experienced any gender-based discrimination

3. For you, what is the main consequence of not having access to digital technologies or having limited access?

- A. Fewer opportunities to learn and educate myself
- B. Fewer opportunities to be informed
- C. Fewer opportunities to find a decent job
- D. Fewer opportunities to participate in decisions that affect me and my country
- E. No negative consequences

4. What are the actions that should be prioritized to improve access to and use of digital technology?

- A. Connection infrastructure and access to equipment (connections, Wi-Fi, accessible data, computers, telephone)
- B. Education in the use of technology to mothers, fathers, teachers, students, and young people in general
- C. Safe use of the internet and mechanisms to protect children

5. What is the main problem related to the environment in your community?

- A. Air and water pollution (rivers, seas, and water reservoirs)
- B. Food insecurity (food shortages)
- C. Garbage
- D. Overexploitation of resources and loss of ecosystems (deforestation, mining, animal extinction, beach erosion, etc.)
- E. Companies and consumers who are not committed to the environment
- F. Drought and water scarcity
- I. None of the options

6. What action should be prioritized to conserve the environment?

- A. Policies and laws that promote sustainable communities
- B. Environmental education
- C. Changing the practices of environmentally non-responsible businesses
- D. Creating solutions with communities and affected populations
- E. Protection of environmental defenders
- F. Environmentally sensitive technology development

7. Do you think political leaders listen to youth and take their needs into account?

- A. Yes
- B. No

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