

# Latin America & the Caribbean



**Women, Business and the Law (WBL)** is a World Bank Group flagship initiative providing comparable data on laws and policies impacting women's economic participation to drive jobs, productivity, and economic growth. Economies with higher WBL scores tend to have higher female labor force participation rates, more women business owners and managers, and narrower gender wage gaps.

Women in Latin America & the Caribbean region have less than three quarters (72.2%) of the economic rights afforded to men. Only less than half of mechanisms (46.1%) are in place to support the implementation of laws. Experts in the region perceive that women's economic rights are enforced at just half (55.3%) of their full potential.

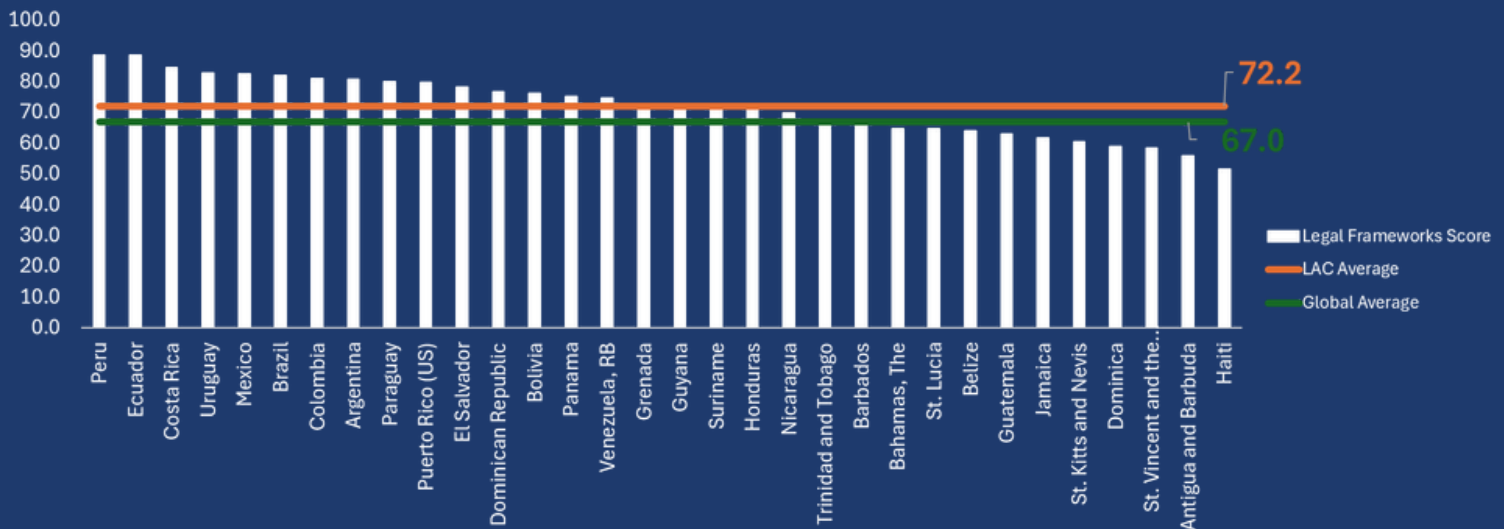
## Reform Highlights from October 2023 to October 2025

**12 economies in the Latin America and the Caribbean region have enacted reforms to provide women with greater access to economic opportunities.**

- ✓ In July 2025, **Brazil** enacted legislation requiring gender quotas for corporate boards.
- ✓ In August 2024, **Uruguay** enacted legislation on cyber-harassment, including criminal penalties for such conduct.

[Click here](#) for a full list of reforms

## Legal Frameworks Index Scores for Latin America & the Caribbean - WBL 2026



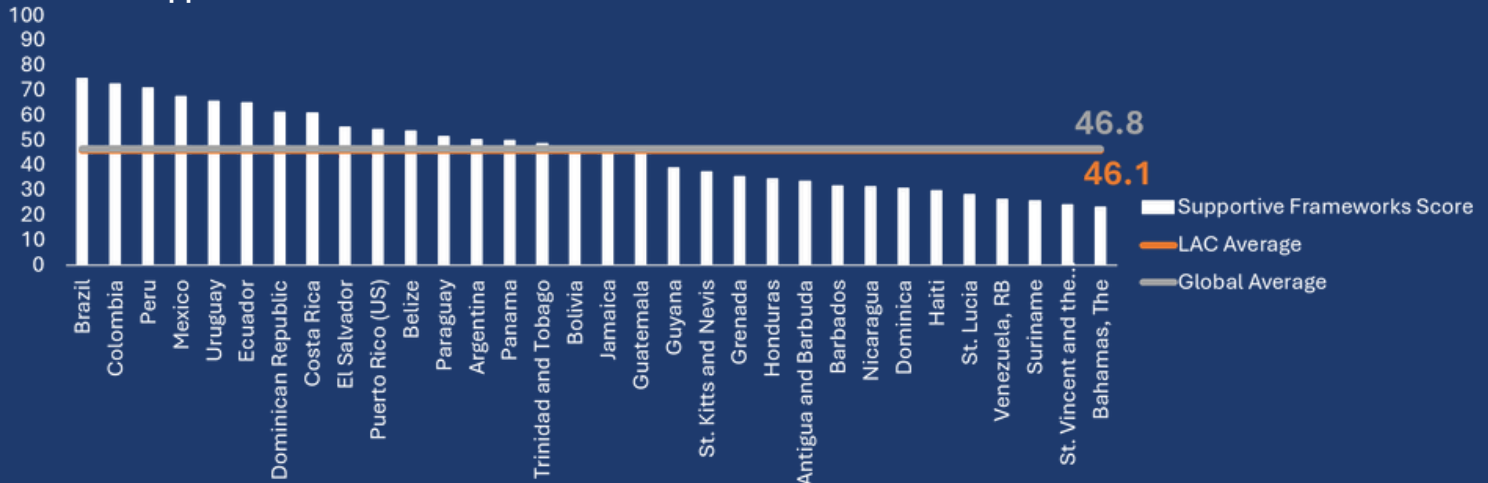
## Legal Frameworks: Measuring equal rights and explicit restrictions on women's work and entrepreneurship

- Across the region, twenty economies, including **Peru** and **Ecuador**, perform above the global average, indicating relatively strong laws promoting women's access to economic opportunities.
- The **Assets** and **Mobility** topics perform well, with average regional scores of 98.4 and 95.3, respectively.
- The **Entrepreneurship** and **Childcare** topics show the most room for improvement, with average regional scores of 42.6 and 48.7, respectively, indicating persistent gaps in laws supporting female entrepreneurship and providing access to childcare. To close such gaps, economies could introduce laws establishing mandatory quotas for women on public corporate boards, provide financial support for childcare services, and set quality standards.

## Good Practice Legal and Supportive Frameworks

- **Costa Rica** is the only economy in the region with a comprehensive legal framework on sexual harassment.
- **Panama** is one of the three economies in the region with a clearly outlined application process for private centers requesting government financial support for childcare services.

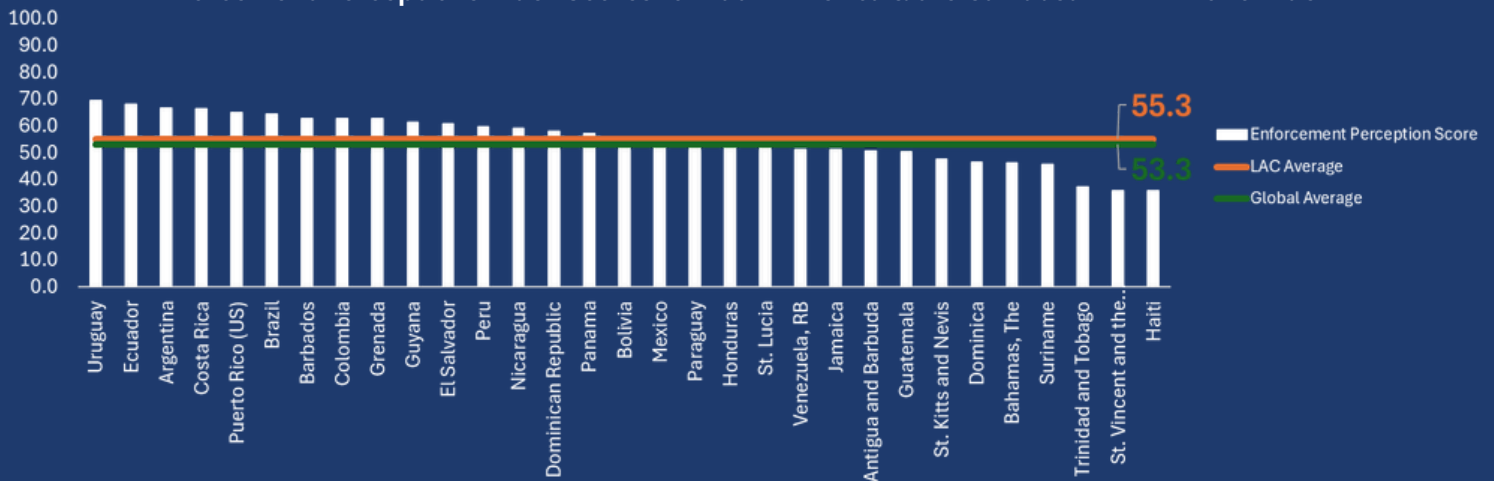
Supportive Frameworks Index Scores for Latin America & the Caribbean - WBL 2026 Index



**Supportive Frameworks: Examining policy instruments designed to support the implementation of laws**

- Across the region, policies and institutions to implement equal opportunity laws are strongest in **Brazil** and **Colombia**. Most room for improvement remains in **St. Vincent and the Grenadines** and **the Bahamas**.
- The **Mobility** and **Marriage** topics perform relatively well with average regional scores of 71.5 and 69.5, respectively.
- The **Childcare** and **Assets** topics show the most room for improvement with average regional scores of 26.2 and 27.0, respectively, indicating gaps in policies and institutions needed to support the availability, affordability, and quality of center-based childcare, and women’s property ownership and registration. To close such gaps, economies could adopt policies needed to support the affordability and quality of center-based childcare.

Enforcement Perceptions Index Scores for Latin America & the Caribbean - WBL 2026 Index



**Enforcement Perceptions: Evaluating expert views of how well public authorities enforce laws in practice**

- **Uruguay** is the highest-scoring economy (69.7%), suggesting that laws protecting women’s economic rights are enforced more than half of the time. Lowest enforcement levels are perceived in **St Vincent and the Grenadines** and **Haiti**.
- Across the region, experts assess the enforcement of women’s right to **Safety** at only 27.4% of their full potential and the enforcement of **Childcare** laws at only 22.6% of their full potential.