

Who are the public officials of subnational governments?



An overview of subnational bureaucracies



Gender and ethnic gaps in public employment and elected positions



Challenges in building high-quality subnational bureaucracies



Regulatory framework



Entry mechanisms for public service, wage premiums, and training



Local electoral systems



Key messages

1 Bureaucracy is a critical dimension of state capacity. A quality bureaucracy consists of capable public officials motivated by public service, operating within a framework that prioritizes merit and promotes effort and the development of competencies.

2 Building high-quality bureaucracies at the subnational level can be more challenging than at the national level. Subnational institutions tend to be weaker, facilitating the political use of public employment, and many localities lack specialized human capital.

3 In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), there are few data sources with detailed information about public officials that identify the level of government in which they work. Only Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, and Uruguay have national surveys that include this information.

4 Salaries in subnational governments are competitive. In Bolivia, Brazil, and Mexico, the subnational public sector offers an average wage premium of around 17% compared to formal private-sector employment. This wage premium is comparable to that of the national public sector.

5

Subnational governments in these countries have a smaller proportion of professional and technical positions and a larger share of elementary roles compared to national governments. Their officials are more likely to have temporary contracts, shorter tenures, and less likelihood of having tertiary education in managerial or professional roles.

6

The legal frameworks governing subnational public employment in the region establish merit as a cornerstone for recruitment, promotion, and retention in public service. However, this *de jure* framework often does not align with the *de facto* realities.

7

Countries in the region have legal provisions to control the wage bill of subnational jurisdictions, either through fiscal rules or more directly by regulating workforce size and salary structures.

8

Competitive local electoral systems promote the selection of better-prepared leaders and the development of professional bureaucracies because they limit the incentives and capacity of elected officials to sidestep merit and use public employment for political purposes.

Who are the public officials of subnational governments?¹

High-quality bureaucracies and development: The subnational dimension

Bureaucracy is a cornerstone of state capacity. It encompasses the body of public officials within institutions and the rules and structures guiding their performance. A quality bureaucracy is defined by its skilled and motivated public officials who operate within a framework that prioritizes merit, encourages effort, and fosters the development of competencies. This definition aligns with the one adopted by Latin American and Caribbean countries in the Ibero-American Charter for the Public Service (CLAD, 2003).



A quality bureaucracy is defined by its skilled and motivated public officials who operate within a framework that prioritizes merit, encourages effort, and fosters the development of competencies

The consensus on the importance of bureaucracy quality for development has been long established, but the challenge lies in translating this into practice. Building professional bureaucracies is a complex process. For instance, evidence indicates that a significant gap in the quality of national bureaucracies persists today between developed and developing countries (Besley et al., 2022).

¹ This chapter was written by Ricardo Estrada with assistance from Daniela Goyheix.

There are strong reasons to believe that establishing high-quality bureaucracies at the subnational level poses even greater challenges than at the national level. First, weaker institutions at the subnational level create conditions that favor the political use of public employment. Second, developing regional and local bureaucracies requires specialized human capital, which may be unavailable in many localities.

A high-quality bureaucracy must attract, select, retain, develop, and motivate capable individuals committed to their work and the public good. Central to this agenda are personnel policies related to recruitment, compensation, retention, and professional development. However, broader policies also influence the composition of bureaucracies through occupational decisions. For instance, anti-corruption policies affect the potential for illicit rent-seeking in public service and shape public perceptions of bureaucratic integrity. This, in turn, influences whether individuals with varying levels of integrity pursue public-sector employment (Brassiolo, Estrada, Fajardo and Vargas, 2021).



A high-quality bureaucracy must attract, select, retain, develop, and motivate capable individuals committed to their work and the public good

Bureaucracies operate under the leadership of public officials elected by citizens. These elected officials determine policies and make decisions that shape the bureaucracies they oversee. Extensive research highlights the role of institutions and electoral processes in shaping the profile and performance of leaders and their relationship with bureaucrats (Fajardo et al., 2019).

Measuring the quality of subnational bureaucracies presents significant challenges. For example, there is no established indicator that synthesizes bureaucracy quality. Available information on public officials' profiles and the characteristics of the processes that determine the bureaucratic career is limited, often focused on the national level, or fails to differentiate by level of government.² This chapter is developed within these constraints.

An overview of subnational bureaucracies

Scale

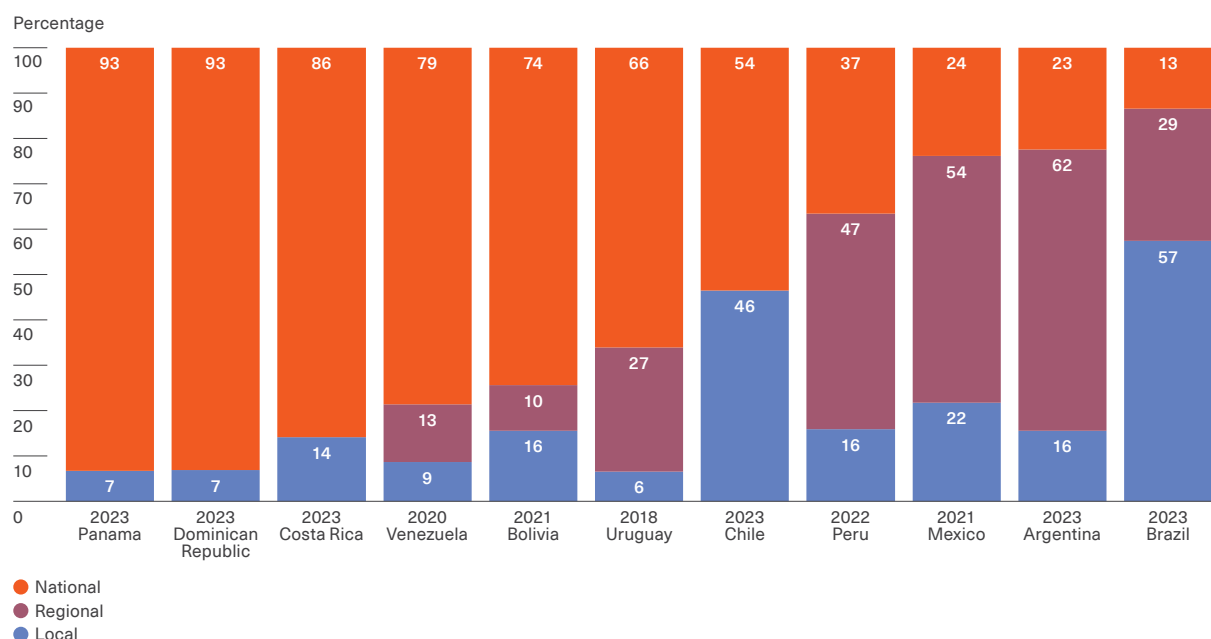
The importance of subnational public employment as a proportion of total public employment varies significantly across countries depending on their degree of decentralization (see Graph 7.1). Among the 11 countries with available data, subnational employment is most prevalent in Brazil (86%), Argentina (78%), and Mexico (76%), all federal states. In contrast, in Venezuela, the other federal country in the region, subnational employment accounts for only 22% of public employment.

Among unitary countries, subnational employment plays a larger role in Peru (63%) and Chile (46%), primarily because education and health services—sectors that are labor-intensive—are decentralized in both countries. In less decentralized countries like the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, subnational employment represents only 7% and 14% of public employment, respectively.

² Cortázar Velarde et al. (2014) demonstrate, based on expert assessments, that most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress in the functioning of their national bureaucracies. However, no comparable study exists for subnational bureaucracies.

Graph 7.1

Public sector employment by government level in Latin American and Caribbean countries



Note: Data from the International Labour Organization (ILO) is based on standard international definitions from the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), 13th revision. These data include employment within general government (as defined in the 1993 System of National Accounts) at the central, regional, and local levels, excluding publicly owned enterprises and companies. In Brazil, Uruguay, and Venezuela, these figures include employment in social security, based on ILO criteria related to the administrative and financial integration of this sector with the corresponding government levels. For further details, refer to the descriptions in the Labour Force Statistics (LFS, STLFS, RURBAN Databases) provided by ILO (n.d. a).

Source: ILO (n.d. b) for all countries except Argentina and Chile. For Argentina, Iacoviello et al. (2024), and for Chile, Applied Audit Unit (2024).

The share of subnational public employment within total public employment has grown alongside the decentralization process. For instance, Iacoviello et al. (2024) report that the number of national government employees in Argentina increased by 10% between 1980 and 2022, while the number of regional government employees rose by 250% and local government employees by 160% during the same period. In Brazil, the number of national government employees fell by 3% between 1985 and 2021, whereas regional government employees increased by 38% and local government employees by 327% (IPEA, 2024).

As shown in Chapter 3, public employment can represent a significant portion of subnational government budgets. For instance, spending on bureaucracy averages 36% of total expenditures for regional governments in eight countries of the region and 32% for local governments in 13 countries.³

³ This figure includes the combined expenditure on "personnel" and "social security," covering both active public officials and retirees. See details in Table 3.1.

Profile and working conditions of public officials

There is extensive information about the profile and working conditions of public officials in general, but it often lacks distinctions by level of government. For instance, compared to private sector employees, public sector employees in the region tend to have higher levels of education and more work experience, are more likely to hold professional and technical positions (and less likely to work in elementary roles), and on average, benefit from better working conditions, including higher salaries, shorter work hours, and longer tenure (Báez et al., 2022; World Bank, 2022d; Gasparini et al., 2015). However, there is limited data specifically on officials in subnational governments.

This knowledge gap is due to the scarcity of databases that identify the government level at which public officials work and provide detailed information on their profiles. National employment or household surveys are the primary sources of data on a country's workforce. However, in the region, only the surveys conducted in Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, and Uruguay enable the identification of the level of government to which public officials are assigned. Furthermore, this analysis can be fully carried out in these four countries only for the public administration subsector, excluding service delivery-related subsectors such as waste management, water supply, urban cleaning, education, health, and security.

The public administration subsector constitutes a significant portion of total public employment. According to the author's estimates, employees in this subsector account for approximately 30% of public employment in Bolivia and Uruguay and 40% in Brazil and Mexico. One advantage of focusing on this subsector is that it includes core activities essential for any jurisdiction, such as tax collection, economic and social planning, and public expenditure management.

In the four countries analyzed, the occupational structure of the public administration subsector varies significantly by government level (see Table 7.1). Compared to the national government, subnational governments have a smaller proportion of professional and technical positions and a higher proportion of elementary roles.⁴



Subnational governments have a smaller proportion of professional and technical positions and a larger proportion of elementary roles compared to the national government

Consistent with these differences in occupational structure, subnational public employees tend to have lower levels of education and receive lower salaries compared to their national counterparts. For instance, the gap in the proportion of employees with tertiary education between national and subnational levels ranges from 33 percentage points in Brazil to 13 percentage points in Mexico. Conversely, the average age—a proxy for work experience—is similar for employees at both levels.

At the subnational level, a smaller proportion of employees in managerial and professional roles have tertiary education. In the four countries, at least 90% of national employees in these positions hold tertiary education qualifications, with nearly all meeting this criterion in Bolivia and Brazil. The gap between national and subnational levels is 3 percentage points in Mexico, around 10 percentage points in Bolivia and Brazil, and 17 percentage points in Uruguay.

Subnational employees in all four countries are more likely to hold temporary contracts and, in Brazil in particular, tend to have shorter tenure compared to their national government counterparts.

4 In a study commissioned for the preparation of this report, Martínez et al. (2024) show that the prevalence of assistants varies significantly across local jurisdictions in Colombia, with a positive correlation between the proportion of assistants and the size of the local bureaucracy.

Table 7.1

Characteristics of national and subnational public administration employees

	Bolivia		Brazil		Mexico		Uruguay	
	National	Subnational	National	Subnational	National	Subnational	National	Subnational
Female (%)	42	37	41	49	48	45	57	43
Age	39	39	45	43	41	42	46	46
Ethnicity (%)								
White	-	-	60	49	-	-	96	96
Mestizo	48	58	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	2	1	-	-	0	0
Afro-descendant	0.2	0.01	38	50	-	-	2	3
Indigenous	52	42	0.4	0.3	-	-	1	1
Educational Level (%)								
Incomplete secondary education or less	3	18	2	16	8	23	17	46
Complete secondary education	8	16	18	37	29	28	38	36
Complete tertiary education	90	67	80	47	63	50	46	18
Type of Occupation (%)								
Managers	8	12	4	5	12	10	5	4
Professionals	30	16	37	17	24	17	31	10
Technicians	28	25	32	26	18	17	16	15
Clerical	24	19	25	28	38	37	42	42
Elementary	9	28	2	24	8	18	6	29
Working conditions								
Hours worked per week	42	42	39	39	42	41	38	38
Tenure (in months)	-	-	171	129	140	127	198	193
Monthly salary (as a percentage of the private sector)	139	110	240	132	133	112	143	117
Temporary contract (%)	48	63	12	26	19	24	-	-

Note: Details about the sample composition can be found in the chapter appendix, included in the online edition of the RED report. For the “ethnicity” category, Uruguay does not include mestizo-origin populations. In Bolivia, the “mestizo” category includes Asians and Whites due to survey design limitations. The “Afro-descendant” category includes individuals self-identifying as “parda” (Mestizo) or “preta” (Black) in Brazil, as having “Black” or “Afro” ancestry in Uruguay, and as “Afro-Bolivian” in Bolivia. The “tertiary education completed” category includes both completed and incomplete tertiary education in Bolivia. Data comes from national employment surveys in Bolivia (ECE), Brazil (PNAD-C), Mexico (ENOE), and Uruguay (ECH).

Source: Author based on data from IBGE (n.d. b), INE (n.d.; 2022), INEGI (n.d.), and methodology by Báez et al. (2022).

Several factors may explain the documented differences in occupational structure and employment stability by government level. For instance, weaker subnational public finances could account for the higher prevalence of temporary contracts. However, this pattern is also consistent with the greater political use of public employment in subnational governments (see the next section for more on this topic).



Subnational employees are more likely to hold temporary contracts and have shorter tenure compared to their national government counterparts

Gender and ethnic gaps in subnational bureaucracies

The region is marked by persistent gender and ethnic inequalities in the labor market (Berniell et al., 2024). Reducing these gaps is imperative for equity. Additionally, removing barriers to participation and career development for a large segment of the population brings significant efficiency gains. Bureaucracies can particularly benefit from this talent pool. The public sector offers conditions that may lead to greater participation of women and minority groups than in the private sector. However, it is not immediately evident how this participation varies across levels of government.

The results show that women's representation in public employment, particularly in managerial positions, is indeed higher than in the private sector across the four analyzed countries (see Panel A of Graph 7.2, where private employment is restricted to formal salaried workers for comparability). However, within the public sector, women's representation at the subnational level is generally lower than at the national level. Furthermore, in most (sub)sectors, female participation remains below their share of the population.

A similar pattern emerges when comparing the wage gap between women and men, adjusting for differences in education level, age, occupation type, hours worked, and region of residence. Overall, the gender wage gap is smaller in the public sector than in the private sector but larger at the subnational level than at the national level (see Panel A of Graph 7.3). In terms of magnitude, women earn on average about 20% less than men in the private sector in Brazil and Uruguay, while the gap is 13% in Bolivia and Mexico. In the subnational public sector, the gap ranges from about 5% in Mexico and Uruguay to 17% in Brazil.

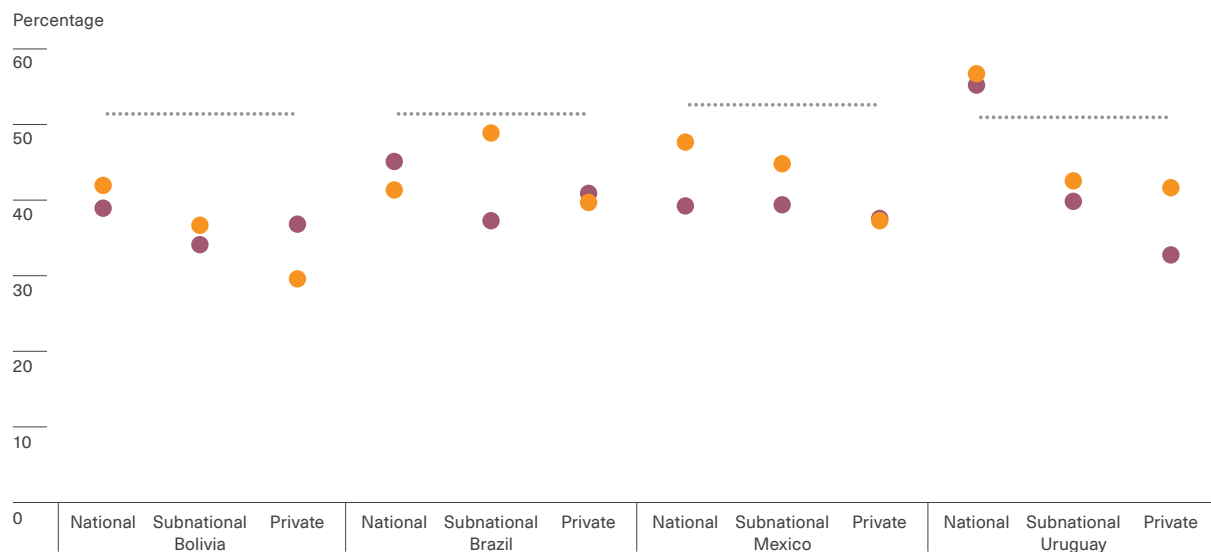
To examine ethnic gaps, information on self-identified ethnicity from surveys in Bolivia, Brazil, and Uruguay is used (Mexico does not include ethnicity in its survey). The analysis focuses on Indigenous individuals in Bolivia (52% of the working-age population), Afro-descendants in Brazil (57%), and both Afro-descendants and Indigenous people in Uruguay (6%).

In general, the historical disadvantages faced by ethnic groups are reflected in lower participation in public and private employment relative to their population share and a lower likelihood of holding managerial positions (see Panel B of Graph 7.2). However, differences between (sub)sectors vary across countries.

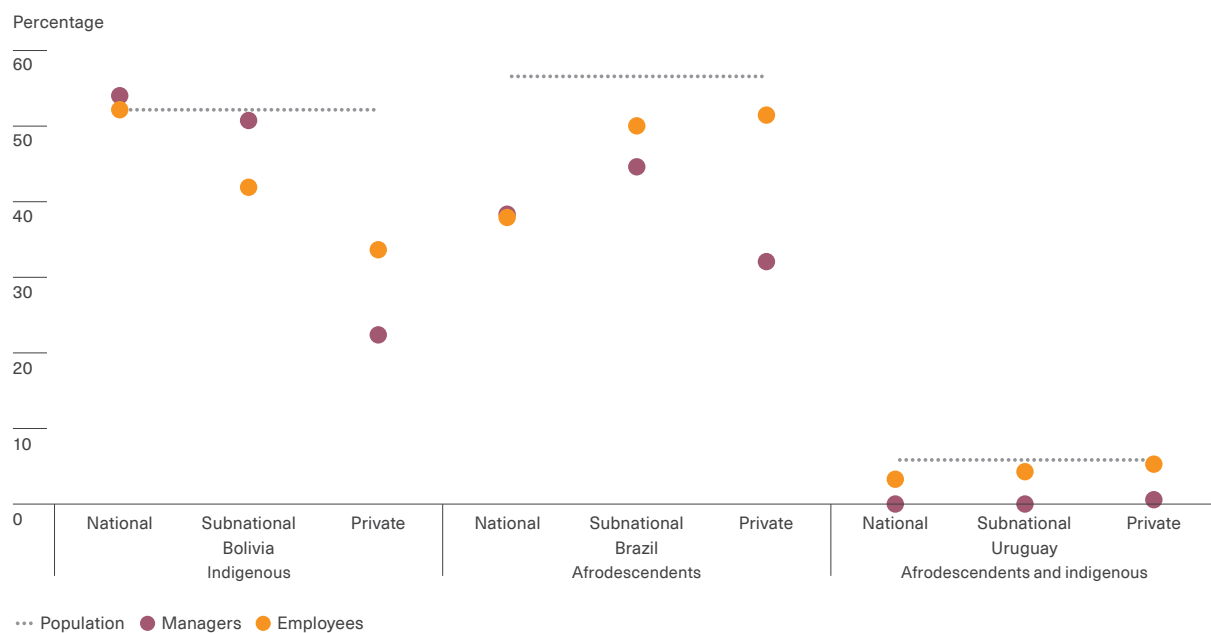
Graph 7.2

Participation in employment and managerial positions in public and private sectors by gender and ethnicity

Panel A. Women



Panel B. Main disadvantaged ethnic group

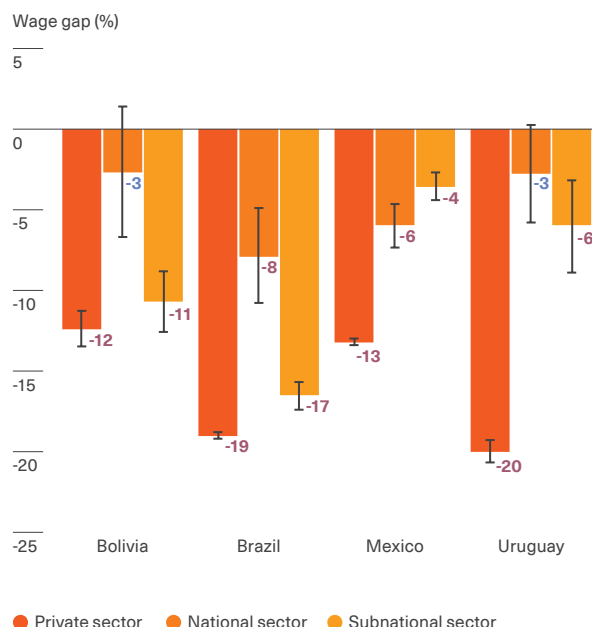


Note: The category "Afro-descendants" includes individuals self-identifying as "pardas" (Mestizo) or "pretas" (Black) in Brazil and those of "Black" or "Afro" ancestry in Uruguay. Details about sample composition can be found in the chapter appendix, included in the online edition of the RED report.

Source: Author based on data from IBGE (n.d. b), INE (n.d.; 2022), INEGI (n.d.), and methodology by Báez et al. (2022).

Graph 7.3
Gender and ethnic wage gaps

Panel A.
Gender wage gap by sector



Panel B.
Ethnic wage gap by sector



Note: The category “Afro-descendants” includes individuals self-identifying as “pardas” (Mestizas) or “pretas” (Black) in Brazil. A negative value indicates that the group of interest has lower average hourly wages than the rest of the population. Purple labels denote statistically significant differences at the 5% level, while blue labels indicate non-significant differences. Details about sample composition can be found in the chapter appendix, included in the online edition of the RED report.

Source: Author based on data from IBGE (n.d. b), INE (n.d.; 2022), INEGI (n.d.), and methodology by Báez et al. (2022).

● ● The historical disadvantages faced by ethnic groups are reflected in lower participation in public and private employment relative to their population share and a lower likelihood of holding managerial positions

For wages, the analysis is limited to Bolivia and Brazil due to insufficient statistical precision in Uruguay. As with labor participation, ethnic wage gaps are not consistently smaller in the public sector than in the private sector, and in Bolivia, they are even larger (see Panel B of Graph 7.3).

In Bolivia, Indigenous public employees—both national and subnational—earn on average 4% to 7% less than non-Indigenous employees (adjusting for age, education, occupation type, gender, hours worked, and region of residence). By contrast, no significant gap is observed in the private sector in that country. In Brazil, Afro-descendants face wage gaps of 9% in the subnational public sector, 4% in the national public sector, and 7% in the private sector.



In the canton of Santo Domingo, Costa Rica,
all households have access to improved water sources.

Gender and ethnic gaps in elected positions

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the representation of women and ethnic minority groups in elected positions has historically been low compared to their proportion in the population. To address this disparity, most countries have implemented gender quotas for electoral candidates and, to a lesser extent, ethnic quotas.

Evidence shows that when gender quotas increase the proportion of women holding elected positions, the composition of elected officials tends to improve, as more capable women replace less qualified men (Fajardo et al., 2019). Studies from India demonstrate that greater political representation of women leads to increased investment in their stated priorities, such as access to clean water (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004), early childhood health services (Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras, 2014), and reporting crimes against women (Iyer et al., 2012).

In the region, evidence highlights the impact of electing women to lead local governments. In Brazil, electing a female mayor shifts spending priorities from transportation and urban development to education, health, and social assistance (Funk and Philips, 2019). Furthermore, during the COVID-19 emergency, local jurisdictions led by women experienced fewer deaths compared to similar jurisdictions led by men (Bruce et al., 2022). Female mayors in Brazil are also less likely to engage in corrupt practices and are less inclined to increase public employment during election years (Brollo and Troiano, 2016). In Chile, electing a female mayor reduces the size of local bureaucracies and increases women's representation (Alberti et al., 2022). In Colombia, during the armed conflict, the rise to power of female mayors led to a reduction in acts of violence carried out by guerrilla groups (Eslava, 2020).

Despite these advancements, gender gaps in elected positions persist. On average, only 11% of local jurisdictions in Latin America and the Caribbean are governed by women (see Panel A, Graph 7.4). The proportion of female mayors ranges from 27% in Suriname and 24% in Mexico to 0% in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. While

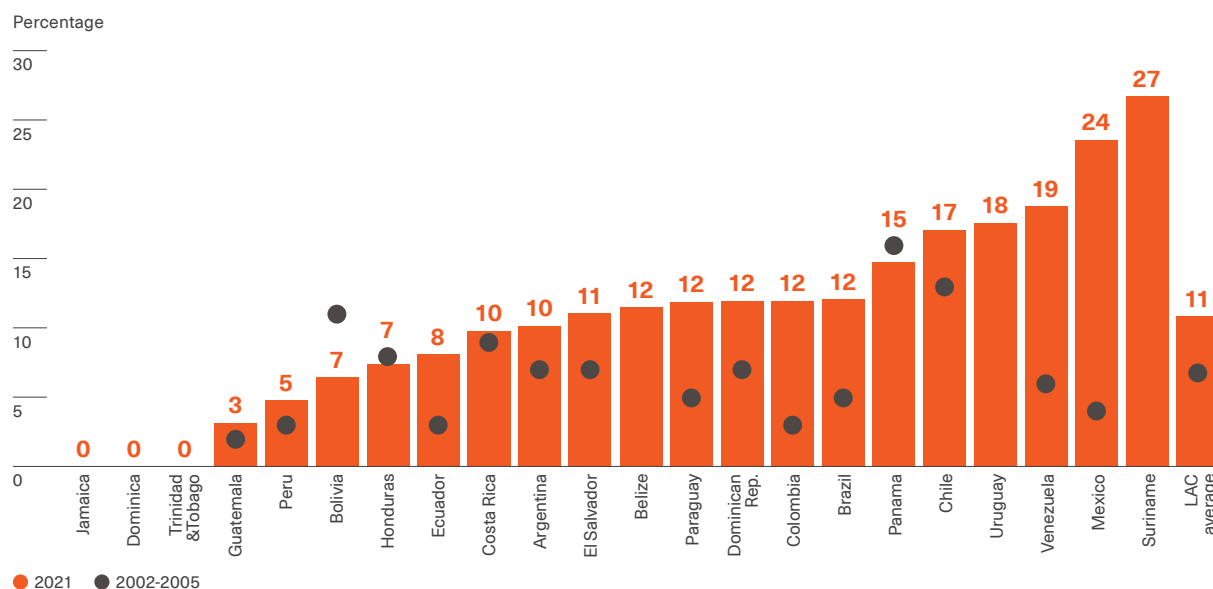
representation has generally increased over the past two decades, it has done so from a very low baseline. Women's representation in local councils across the region is higher but remains underrepresented relative to their share of the population (see Panel B, Graph 7.4). As expected, the presence of gender quotas for candidates is associated with greater representation of women in deliberative bodies of local governments. However, the effectiveness of quotas depends on several factors, ranging from their design (e.g., whether they only establish a minimum percentage for candidates or also introduce requirements affecting election probabilities) to the characteristics of the electoral system that make it more or less likely for women candidates to win (Tripp and Kang, 2008).

There is less information on political representation by ethnic group, particularly at the subnational level. Available evidence indicates a widespread ethnic representation gap at the national level, with Bolivia and Guatemala being the countries where the Indigenous population has the highest representation in national legislative bodies relative to their share of the population (Global Americans, 2017). These two countries, along with Mexico, are among the few to implement political representation quotas for Indigenous populations, while no country in the region has quotas for Afro-descendant populations. This phenomenon is reflected in local-level political representation figures. In Brazil, only 32% of mayors elected in 2020 identified as Afro-descendants, despite these groups accounting for 56% of the population in those municipalities on average (TSE, 2020; IBGE, 2022). Starting in 2022, candidacies of women and Afro-descendants in the country receive increased public funding in order to reduce their underrepresentation in elected positions. Indigenous and Afro-descendant women may face additional obstacles, as evidence suggests that the intersection of gender and ethnic inequalities amplifies disadvantages (Piscopo and Wylie, 2020).

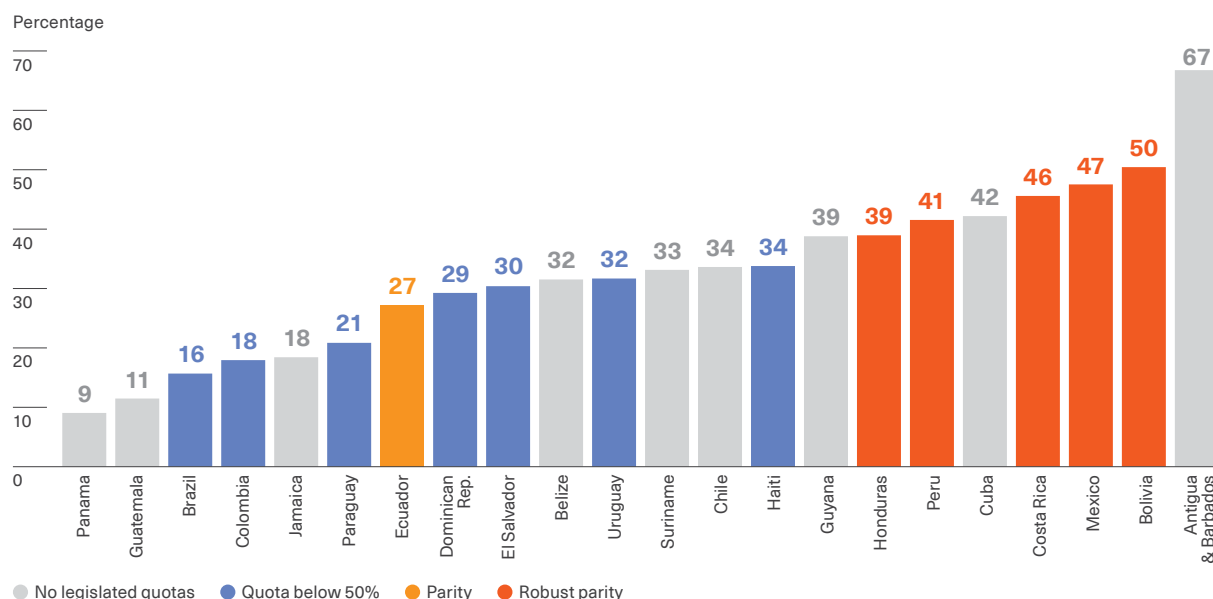
Graph 7.4

Mayors, councilors, and gender

Panel A.
Percentage of female mayors in local governments in Latin America and the Caribbean



Panel B.
Elected seats held by women in deliberative bodies of local government in 2023



Notes: The type of quota referred to is for candidates, which establishes the minimum proportion of women to be included on electoral lists. "Robust parity" refers to 50% participation goals for women, including classification or placement rules and strict sanctions, such as rejection of lists that fail to meet quota requirements. In Ecuador, parity quotas only apply to candidate lists for multi-member constituencies, and in Colombia, quotas apply only to deliberative bodies with more than five seats.

Source: Author based on ECLAC (2021; 2023), UN Women and ECLAC (2023), and Urban et al. (2008).

Challenges to building high-quality subnational bureaucracies

The political use of public employment and the quality of local institutions

One of the main obstacles to developing professional bureaucracies is the political use of public employment, particularly through clientelism, a practice known in the region as patronage. Patronage involves the discretionary allocation of public jobs in exchange for votes and electoral support. This practice differs from the authority of government leaders to directly appoint a small group of close collaborators to lead the administration.



One of the main obstacles to developing professional bureaucracies is the political use of public employment

For patronage to function, political control over hiring and retention in public employment is required (Robinson and Verdier, 2013). The scope of patronage tends to expand as bureaucracies grow, potentially leading to excessive increases in public employment.

Like with other forms of favoritism, as a result of patronage, opportunities for entry into public service are not the same for everyone. By prioritizing connections over merit, it results in the recruitment of less qualified officials. It also erodes the prestige of public service, making it less attractive to individuals highly motivated by public service. Additionally, it fosters clientelist networks, undermining the independence of the bureaucracy and the checks and balances between elected officials and the administrative apparatus (Fajardo et al., 2019). Furthermore, the excessive growth of bureaucracies due to patronage can strain public finances and reduce private-sector job creation.

Research in Brazil and Ecuador shows that having a political connection with the winning party increases the likelihood of obtaining a local

government job (Brassiolo et al., 2020; Colonnelli et al., 2020). A significant proportion of these jobs are in non-managerial positions, suggesting that they result from clientelist practices rather than the selection of qualified individuals to implement electoral mandates. Moreover, individuals who obtain these positions often have lower qualifications than those hired without political connections (Colonnelli et al., 2020).

One indication of the political use of public employment is the rise in staff turnover around election periods. In addition to the negative effects of patronage mentioned earlier, this excessive turnover can directly harm the quality of public services by disrupting the management and operations of organizations, as shown in studies on Brazil's education and health sectors (Akhtari et al., 2022; Toral, 2023).

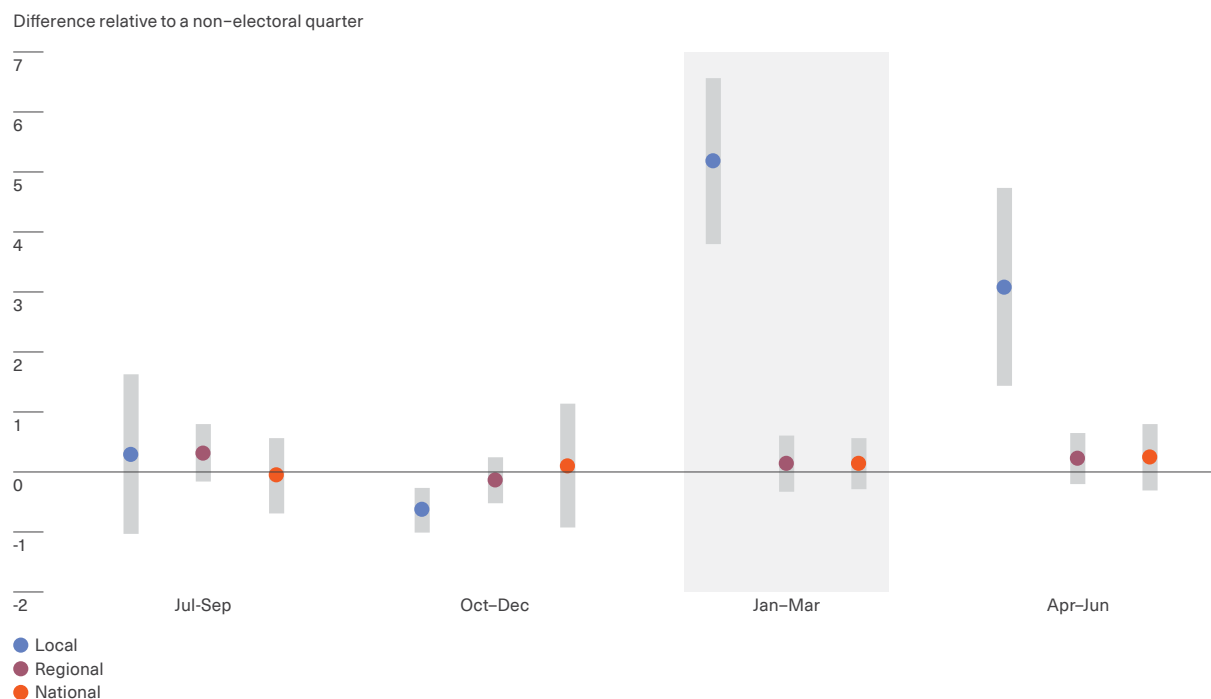


One indication of the political use of public employment is increased staff turnover during election periods

Graph 7.5 (taken from Brassiolo et al., 2024) provides evidence of the difference in public employment turnover in Brazil during election years compared to non-election years. As shown, employee turnover in Brazilian municipalities is significantly higher in years when local elections take place. In the six months following the inauguration of new authorities, quarterly turnover increases on average by 3 to 5 percentage points compared to the 4.5% average in a non-election year, effectively doubling. Additionally, it is noteworthy that turnover related to the electoral cycle is clearly observed only in local governments and not in regional or national governments.

Graph 7.5

Change in the percentage of new employees by government level around electoral cycles in Brazil



Note: The figure shows the difference in the percentage of new public sector hires for each quarter around elections compared to the same quarter in non-election years, by government level. The grey bar represents the quarter when elected officials assume office. The coefficients come from separate regressions for municipal, state, and national employees. Vertical lines represent 95% confidence intervals. For more details, see Brassiolo et al. (2024).

Source: Brassiolo et al. (2024).

The same study by Brassiolo et al. (2024) found that election-related turnover is higher in jurisdictions with lower scores on the Municipal Institutional Quality Index (IQIM, by its Portuguese acronym), which combines measures of citizen participation in public management and the management and financial capacities of municipal governments. This evidence supports the hypothesis that the political use of public employment is less likely to occur in jurisdictions with stronger formal and informal institutions that promote accountability between leaders and citizens. Examples of such institutions include government agencies responsible for

auditing public accounts, the media, and civil society organizations.

Another manifestation of clientelism is the excessive use of temporary contracts, private-regime contracts,⁵ and exceptions for direct appointments. As noted earlier, temporary contracts are significantly more prevalent at the subnational level than at the national level in the four countries analyzed. Notably, the use of temporary contracts is higher in Brazilian municipalities with lower IQIM scores.⁶

5 For example, the self-employment regime in Argentina, service provision in Colombia, and fees-based contracts in Mexico.

6 According to the author's calculations, a one-standard-deviation increase in a local jurisdiction's IQIM score is associated with a 5-percentage-point decrease in the proportion of employees with temporary contracts, controlling for GDP, population, and the geographic area of the jurisdiction.

A lack of merit in hiring decisions can lead to other forms of favoritism. Brassiolo, Estrada, Fajardo and Martínez-Correa (2021) and Riaño (2021) document widespread nepotism in hiring within Mexico's judiciary and Colombia's public sector, respectively,

and find a negative correlation between nepotism and labor productivity. These findings reinforce concerns about the detrimental effects of favoritism on the quality of public services.

Challenges in hiring qualified workers at the subnational level

Decentralization and the establishment of subnational bureaucracies involve a geographic redistribution of public employment, shifting jobs from national capitals to the capitals of regional and local jurisdictions. Consequently, the development of subnational bureaucracies depends not only on the availability of specialized human capital in local labor markets but also on their ability to attract and retain it.



Decentralization and the establishment of subnational bureaucracies involve a geographic redistribution of public employment

The public sector is characterized by a relatively high demand for qualified personnel. For example, 61% of public employees in Latin America and the Caribbean have tertiary education, compared to 25% in the private sector (World Bank, 2022d). As noted in the previous section, the prevalence of officials with tertiary education tends to be lower at the subnational level than at the national level. However, part of this gap may stem from structural constraints. Given regional inequalities in economic development and educational attainment, many subnational governments, particularly at the local level, may struggle to find the personnel they need.

Graph 7.6 illustrates the inequality in the distribution of adults with tertiary education across 18 countries in the region. On average, 14% of the population in the median jurisdiction (50th percentile) has tertiary education, compared to 27% in jurisdictions with the highest educational levels (90th percentile) and only 8% in jurisdictions with the lowest educational levels (10th percentile). These figures

vary significantly across countries; however, a substantial number of local jurisdictions generally have low proportions of tertiary-educated residents. For instance, in 10 of the 18 countries analyzed, at least half of the jurisdictions have no more than 15% of adults with tertiary education. This data underscores the very low availability of specialized human capital in many cases.

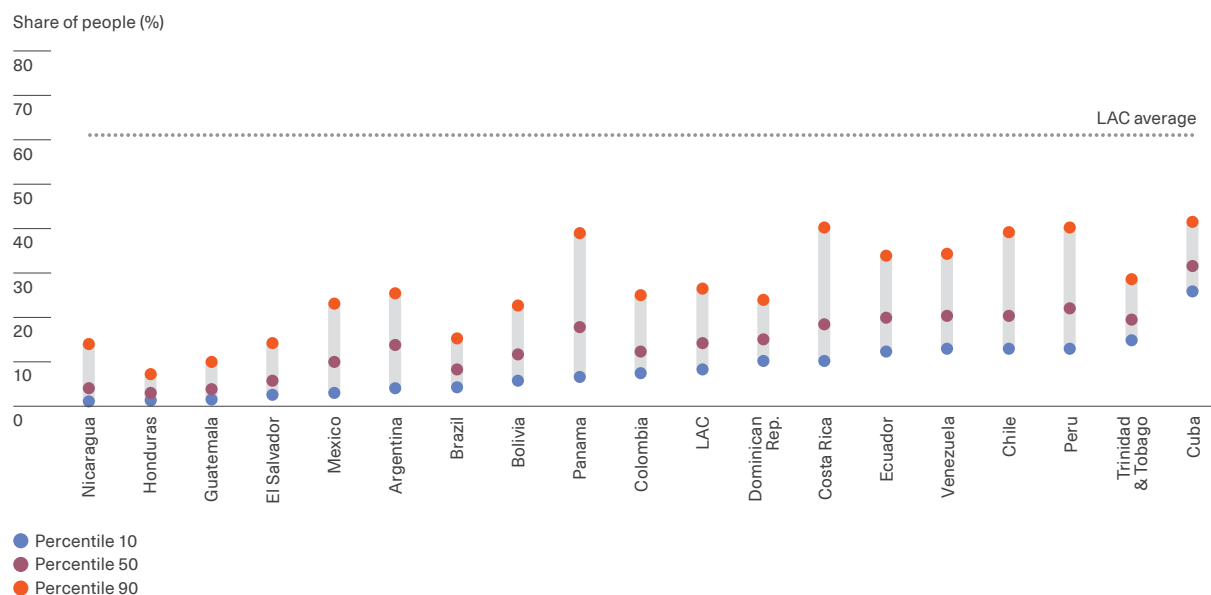
The lack of amenities in rural and poorer localities makes it even more challenging to attract qualified personnel. Evidence from national programs for assigning doctors and teachers in Brazil and Peru supports this conclusion (Costa et al., 2024; Bobba et al., 2021). Both groups of service providers show a strong preference for working in urban areas with better amenities. As a result, personnel assigned to rural and poorer localities tend to have lower qualifications, and a significant proportion of positions in these areas remain unfilled. Programs offering salary bonuses in marginalized areas help mitigate this issue, but their impact is limited by the strong geographic and quality-of-life preferences of these professionals.



The public sector is characterized by a relatively high demand for qualified personnel

Graph 7.6

Adult population with tertiary education in local jurisdictions of Latin American and Caribbean countries



Note: The figure illustrates the percentage of adults aged 23 to 60 with either incomplete or complete tertiary education—both non-university and university—by local jurisdiction. The colors of the points indicate the 90th, 50th, and 10th percentiles of the distribution, as shown in the legend. The dashed line represents the share of public employees with completed tertiary education, calculated based on the simple average of World Bank (2022d) data from 16 Latin American and Caribbean countries, 14 of which are included in the graph.

Source: Author based on census data from the countries analyzed (see Table A.7.6 in the chapter appendix, available in the online edition of the RED report).

Areas of action

Regulatory framework

In their efforts to professionalize public service, countries in the region have developed legal frameworks and agencies at both the national and subnational levels with regulatory authority over various aspects of subnational public employment. At the heart of this regulatory framework lies a tension between national government control and the autonomy of subnational governments.

In a document prepared as input for this report, Pérez Chiqués et al. (2024) review the main characteristics of the regulatory framework in 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Broadly speaking, the authors identify similarities in how unitary and federal states regulate subnational public employment. However, within each group, there are notable differences between countries and in the delegation of various powers. For example, subnational governments in some unitary countries



Uru Chipaya is one of the four jurisdictions with autonomous indigenous governance in Bolivia.

have the same level of autonomy—or even greater—than those in federal countries when it comes to expanding their workforce.

In general, the legal framework for subnational public employment comprises national legislation applicable to all public employment and laws specifically aimed at regulating employment in subnational governments. In federal countries, regional governments have the autonomy to define the legal frameworks regulating public employment within their jurisdictions, increasing the heterogeneity and complexity of the overall framework. In both federal and unitary systems, national agencies regulating employment and public finances exert some influence over subnational public employment, though the degree of involvement varies. Additional details on national and subnational agencies with authority over subnational public employment are provided in Table A.7.1 in the online appendix, available in the online edition of the RED report.

The legal framework for subnational public employment in Latin America and the Caribbean establishes merit as the guiding principle for decisions on hiring, promotion, and retention in public service (see Table 7.2). Most countries also include provisions against patronage and nepotism, and in some cases, these principles are embedded in their constitutions. However, the *de jure* framework may not reflect the *de facto* situation in many subnational bureaucracies.

The importance of employment stability is recognized by the legislation in every country in the region. It plays a critical role in reducing the connection between labor turnover and political cycles and in curbing patronage by severing bureaucrats' dependence on politicians for job security. However, strict dismissal protections can discourage effort, potentially affecting employee performance and the quality of public services. This issue is particularly significant when entry into public service does not follow merit-based processes. For example, a recent reform in Chile granted permanent contracts to teachers with temporary contracts and at least three years of service. As a result, retention of poorly evaluated teachers increased, while their performance, as reflected in their students' learning outcomes,

declined (Estrada and Lombardi, 2022). Excessive regulation of employment and career service systems may also encourage reliance on temporary and private-regime contracts.



The legal framework in LAC countries clearly mandates that merit serve as the guiding principle for decisions regarding recruitment, promotion, and retention in subnational public service

A central element in the professionalization of bureaucracies is the process of entry into public service and the mechanisms employed for this purpose. Broadly, these mechanisms can be grouped into three categories: 1) competitive examinations with public and open calls, where criteria, weighting factors, and evaluation methods are transparently disclosed; 2) simplified processes that incorporate merit-based elements in hiring decisions but do not mandate public tenders or explicitly define the criteria, weighting factors, or evaluation methods to be used; and 3) the direct appointment of officials by designation. Each of these mechanisms has distinct advantages.

Competitive selection processes are generally the most suitable option for selecting permanent public servants in non-managerial roles, as they provide economies of scale, transparency, and reduced risks of manipulation. Simplified processes, by contrast, may be more appropriate for hiring temporary employees, given that the shorter duration of these contracts makes the more extensive and costly competitive examinations less appealing. Direct appointments and removals are desirable for leadership and support roles, where trust and ideological alignment with elected officials are essential to fulfilling their electoral mandates.

Table 7.2

Provisions related to merit in subnational public employment legislation

Country	Subnational public employment legal framework	Establishes career civil service	Requires merit for entry	Requires merit for promotion	Requires evaluation for retention	Ensures job security*	Includes anti-nepotism provisions	Includes anti-patronage provisions
Argentina	Constitution							
	Provincial legislation	✓	92% of the provinces	88% of the provinces	75% of the provinces	✓	21% of the provinces	83% of the provinces
Bolivia	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brazil	Constitution	✓	✓			✓		✓
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Chile	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Colombia	Constitution	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Costa Rica	Constitution	✓	✓			✓		
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ecuador	Constitution	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
El Salvador	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Honduras	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Jamaica	Constitution and other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Mexico	Constitution					✓		
	State legislation	✓	97% of the states	97% of the states	94% of the states	✓	69% of the states	75% of the states
Panama	Constitution	✓	✓			✓		
	Other legislation	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Paraguay	Constitution	✓				✓		
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Peru	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Dominican Republic	Constitution	✓						
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Trinidad & Tobago	Constitution and other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Uruguay	Constitution	✓				✓		✓
	Public servant statute	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Departmental statutes	✓	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
Venezuela	Constitution	✓	✓	✓		✓		
	Other legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: The asterisk (*) indicates whether the legal framework establishes that public officials can only be dismissed for just cause, as stipulated in the legislation. In Uruguay, the Public Servants' Statute applies to departments that have not enacted their own statutes. Appendix Table A.7.2 of the chapter, included in the online edition of the RED, lists the legal documents consulted.

Source: Author based on Pérez Chiqués et al. (2024).

Evidence from the region highlights the impact of using competitive examinations instead of discretionary methods on the profile of new hires and the quality of public services. In Mexico, teachers hired through discretionary processes controlled by the teachers' union tend to have lower competencies, and their students learn less compared to those selected through competitive examinations (Estrada, 2019; Bedoya et al., 2023). Similar findings have been documented in Colombia and Ecuador (Brutti and Torres, 2022; Araujo et al., 2020). In Mexico, competitive examinations were introduced to address concerns about abuses related to the inheritance and sale of teaching positions under the discretionary process.

Table 7.3 outlines the mechanisms specified in the legal frameworks of 18 countries for hiring new public servants in permanent, non-managerial roles. In most unitary countries (11 out of 14), regulations mandate the use of competitive examinations. In Bolivia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela, hiring is governed by simplified processes with merit-based elements. In Brazil, the federal constitution mandates competitive examinations for hiring officials at all levels of government. In Argentina and Mexico, each regional jurisdiction has its own legislation, resulting in significant variation in selection mechanisms, including direct appointments in some cases.

Table 7.3
Mechanisms for entry into subnational public service for non-managerial permanent positions

Country	Competitive examination	Simplified process with merit-based elements	Direct appointment
Argentina	✓	✓	✓
Bolivia		✓	
Brazil	✓		
Chile	✓		
Colombia	✓		
Costa Rica	✓		
Ecuador	✓		
El Salvador	✓		
Honduras		✓	
Jamaica		✓	
Mexico	✓	✓	✓
Panama	✓		
Paraguay	✓		
Peru	✓		
Dominican Republic	✓		
Trinidad & Tobago		✓	
Uruguay	✓		
Venezuela		✓	

Note: Countries mentioned in more than one category allow for multiple entry mechanisms under their legislation. It includes public officials with permanent contracts in either civil service career positions or public official positions when the first category does not exist. The "simplified process" category includes cases where legislation mandates a selection process that considers merit-based elements but does not specify the evaluation criteria or their weighting. It also includes cases where the process is not public, open, and transparent.

Source: Author based on the current legislation of each country (see Table A.7.3 in the chapter appendix, included in the online edition of the RED report).

Table 7.4
Regulations on wage bills in subnational governments

Country	Salary scales	Job creation	Wage bill provisions
	Level defined at		
Argentina	Subnational	Subnational	Indirectly limited through caps on current spending growth in regional jurisdictions. Prohibition on increasing jobs per capita in jurisdictions with fiscal deficits.
Bolivia	Subnational	Subnational	Indirectly limited through caps on operational spending and budget preparation under fiscal balance principles in regional and local governments.
Brazil	Subnational	Subnational	Limited to 60% of own revenues in regional and local jurisdictions.
Chile	National	Subnational	Limited to 42% of own revenues in local jurisdictions.
Colombia	Subnational	Subnational	Indirectly limited through caps on operational spending, which cannot exceed 50%-80% of freely disposable current revenues in regional and local jurisdictions, depending on the total amount of such revenues and population size.
Costa Rica	Subnational	Subnational	Indirectly limited through caps on general administrative spending, which cannot exceed 40% of the ordinary revenues of local jurisdictions.
Ecuador	National	Subnational	The Ministry of Labor Relations determines personnel spending in jurisdictions based on general guidelines set by the Ministry of Finance.
El Salvador	Subnational	Subnational	No specific criteria identified.
Honduras	Subnational	Subnational	Indirectly limited through caps on operational spending, which cannot exceed 40%-65% of current revenues in local jurisdictions, depending on the total amount of such revenues.
Jamaica	National	National	The Ministry of Finance and Public Service supervises the wage bill to ensure alignment with budget restrictions and financial policies.
Mexico	Subnational	Subnational	Growth limited to the lesser of 3% real growth in the wage bill or the real GDP growth rate in regional and local jurisdictions; zero real growth if GDP declines.
Panama	National	National	The Directorate General of Civil Service determines the job structure in accordance with the General State Budget.
Paraguay	National	National	The job structure is established in the General National Budget. The Ministry of Finance prepares its proposal after consulting the Public Service Secretariat.
Peru	National	Subnational	Typically limited by austerity, discipline, and quality spending measures imposed in budget laws
Dominican Republic	National	National	The Secretariat of State for Public Administration approves the job structure.
Trinidad & Tobago	National	National	Established by the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government and the Ministry of Finance. The latter ensures alignment with budget restrictions and financial policies.
Uruguay	Subnational	Subnational	No specific criteria identified.
Venezuela	National	Subnational	Indirectly limited by a mandate to allocate at least 30% of the budget to investment spending in local jurisdictions and prepare budgets under fiscal balance principles in regional and local governments.

Note: In Argentina, jurisdictions that achieve a surplus or balanced financial outcome (on an accrual basis) are allowed to increase staffing levels tied to new investments aimed at expanding social services such as education, health, and security. The Federal Fiscal Responsibility Council establishes the optimal ratio of occupied positions (permanent, temporary, and contracted staff) suited to the characteristics of each jurisdiction, enabling exceptions.

Source: Author based on Pérez Chiqués et al. (2024) and national and subnational legislation (see Table A.7.4 in the chapter appendix, available in the online edition of the RED report).

The excessive growth of the public sector wage bill, including at the subnational level, is a frequent concern. Generally, legal frameworks in the region include provisions to control either the wage bill of subnational jurisdictions or its two components: workforce size and salary structures (see Table 7.4).

In most cases, subnational governments have flexibility to expand their workforce—albeit under certain restrictions that vary by country—but must comply with fiscal rules that cap the overall wage bill. For example, in Brazil and Chile, the wage bill cannot exceed 42% and 60% of a jurisdiction's own revenues, respectively. In Mexico, subnational wage bill growth cannot exceed 3% annually and must remain below the annual growth rate of GDP. In Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Honduras, the wage bill is limited by restrictions on operational expenditures for subnational jurisdictions.

In contrast, in Jamaica, Panama, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago, the creation of new positions requires approval from national authorities. In Argentina, regional governments with fiscal deficits are prohibited from increasing the number of public employees per capita.



In most cases, subnational governments have the flexibility to expand their workforce but must comply with fiscal rules that cap the wage bill

National regulations on subnational salary policies can help standardize working conditions across jurisdictions and prevent abuses that damage the reputation of the bureaucracy and strain public finances. However, excessively strict and uniform regulations may constrain jurisdictions' ability to align salaries with local labor market conditions.

The degree of autonomy granted to subnational jurisdictions to set salary scales varies across countries. In eight of the 14 unitary countries analyzed (including Peru, a relatively decentralized country), salary scales for subnational employment are determined at the national level. In the remaining six unitary countries, jurisdictions have the authority to define their own salary scales, although Bolivia and Uruguay require compliance with specific national guidelines. A similar approach is followed in the federal countries of Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico.

Wage premium

Working conditions, including competitive compensation, are critical for attracting and retaining qualified personnel in any organization, including bureaucracies (Dal Bó et al., 2013). However, excessively high salaries in the public sector compared to the private sector can undermine public financial sustainability, damage the government's image among citizens, and lead to inefficient talent allocation between the two sectors, negatively affecting economic growth.

When controlling for differences in education, age, gender, occupation type, working hours, and region of residence, average salaries in the subnational public sector are higher than those in the private sector but lower than those in the national public sector (see Graph 7.7). The salary gap between national and subnational levels varies significantly across countries, ranging from 7 percentage points in Uruguay to 48 percentage points in Brazil.

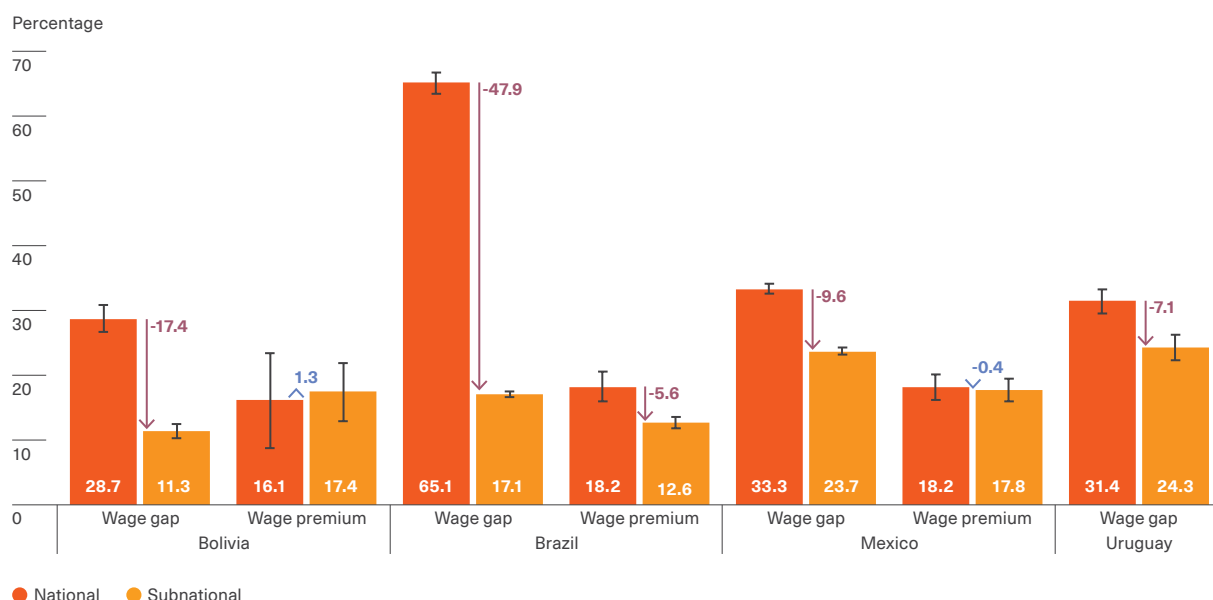
These wage gaps include a wage premium attributable to working in the public sector rather than the private sector, as well as unobserved differences in individual labor productivity. Since the survey structures in Bolivia, Brazil, and Mexico allow for such estimates, the wage premium in the public sector is calculated for these countries (see Graph 7.7).⁷ The results show that working in the public sector offers, on average, a salary about 17% higher, with a similar premium across

government levels. The exception is Brazil, where the subnational level offers a premium of 13%.

The combination of the magnitude of the observed wage premium and the better benefits typically associated with the public sector compared to the private sector—excluding the highest-paying positions—suggests that strengthening recruitment and attraction policies could improve the quality of hires at the subnational level.

Graph 7.7

Wage gap and premium in national and subnational public administration compared to formal private employment



Note: The graph illustrates differences between private sector workers and those in national and subnational public administration, differentiated by bar color. The wage premium estimate accounts for fixed individual effects in the regression. Vertical lines within each bar represent 95% confidence intervals. In all cases, the wage gap and premium between the private sector and the national and subnational public sectors are statistically significant at the 1% level. Labels are shown in purple when the differences between the national and subnational public sectors are statistically significant at the 1% level, and in blue when they are not significant. Details on sample composition can be found in the chapter appendix, included in the online edition of the RED report.

Source: Author based on data from IBGE (n.d. b), INE (n.d.; 2022), INEGI (n.d.), and the methodology of Báez et al. (2022).

7 The wage premium is estimated based on variations in the salaries of individuals who transition between public and private sector jobs. This requires surveys to have a panel dimension, meaning the same individuals are interviewed across multiple periods.

Training

Training is a key mechanism for developing the skills of public officials, improving their performance, and strengthening the institutional capacities of subnational governments in Latin America and the Caribbean. The need for training may be particularly pronounced at the subnational level due to higher staff turnover.



The need for training may be particularly pronounced at the subnational level due to higher staff turnover

There is limited rigorous evidence on the impact of training strategies on public officials' performance and their development of competencies. However, studies focusing on training for teachers and school principals offer some valuable insights. First, not all training programs deliver the expected outcomes. The alignment of the program design with the specific context and the quality of its implementation are critical factors for success. Training is generally more effective when it addresses a well-defined diagnosis of competency development needs and when the work environment supports the application of newly acquired skills and knowledge (Barrera-Osorio and Linden, 2009). The mode of training also plays a significant role. For instance, peer feedback based on workplace observations can be an effective tool for improving the performance of service providers (Álvarez Marinelli et al., 2023).

To reduce costs, the cascade training model replaces professional trainers with trained public officials who replicate the training among their peers. While this model can work well in certain contexts, it may have significantly less impact than direct training in others, as shown by the impact evaluation of a program to improve the management skills of school principals in Mexico (Romero et al., 2022).

Several countries in the region have agencies specifically dedicated to training public sector personnel. For example, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico have national public administration schools that offer a broad array of training programs, including academic courses, for both national and subnational officials. The Chilean case is widely regarded as a model for learning across the region (Corrales Angulo, 2024).

In Chile, the National Directorate of Civil Service (DNSC) has implemented a training management model that prioritizes needs assessment, multi-year planning, and evaluation of training activities. This decentralized model delegates the management and implementation of training plans to organizational units, while the DNSC focuses on system coordination and regulation. Additionally, the DNSC offers an extensive range of training programs through its virtual platform, CAMPUS Servicio Civil. In 2022, the system coordinated by the DNSC trained 218,517 public officials, representing 28% of the total public workforce (Corrales Angulo, 2024).

As part of its efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of subnational governments in the region, CAF — Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean — offers a wide range of training programs for public officials (see Box 7.1).

Box 7.1

CAF training programs for public officials of subnational governments

CAF prioritizes strengthening the institutional capacity of subnational governments in Latin America and the Caribbean. To this end, it offers a diverse range of training programs to public officials in the region, including diplomas, programs targeting senior management and young professionals, and specialized online courses. These courses can take different forms, from long-term massive open online courses (MOOCs) and short-term options (NOOCs) to closed offerings. They include programs relevant to officials at all levels of government, as well as options specifically tailored to subnational governments.

Key CAF training programs include:

- **Diploma in Integration and Development for the Ibero-American Local Sphere:** Designed for subnational government personnel, this program focuses on strengthening the work of strategic local actors in designing and implementing policies. It is conducted in collaboration with the Ortega Marañón Foundation and Fundar.
- **Diploma in Governance and Public Innovation:** This program trains public administration leaders to analyze the political, economic, social, climate, and gender dimensions of public policies. It is implemented in partnership with 18 universities across the region.
- **Leadership for Transformation 2.0 Program:** Aimed at comprehensively enhancing the competencies of public sector leaders, this program places a strong emphasis on developing soft skills. It is delivered with the support of nine academic institutions.
- **Latin American High Leadership Program:** Focused on strengthening high-level government and public management capacities, this program has organized two mayoral summits (Southern Cone and Costa Rica).
- **Closed courses on BIM Methodology (Building Information Modeling):** Targeted at municipal officials in Quito and Bogotá, these courses center on using construction information modeling techniques.
- **Road Safety Engineering Training:** Tailored for officials from 30 Brazilian municipalities, this course emphasizes the application of road safety engineering concepts to road projects.
- **Courses for mayors and local authorities of the BiodiverCities Network:** These courses aim to enhance political communication, leadership skills, and decision-making regarding the integration of biodiversity, natural capital, and ecosystem services into urban planning and management.

CAF also offers a wide range of free MOOCs covering topics of interest for public officials. These include courses on impact evaluation of public management, environmental economics and sustainable finance, road infrastructure provision, cities and climate change, sustainable mobility, and rural water and sanitation.

In collaboration with national and subnational governments and in response to their demands, CAF develops and delivers specialized closed courses on topics such as digital transformation, innovation in citizen participation, public-private partnerships, corporate governance in state-owned enterprises, and financing local investment projects.

Since 2022, around 10,000 participants have taken part in eight diploma programs and the Latin American High Leadership Program, 70% of whom were public officials from 21 countries. Additionally, over 260,000 individuals have enrolled in one of the MOOCs offered since 2017, with 59% being public officials from 40 countries. Finally, more than 980 subnational public officials have been trained through six courses specifically designed for them between 2021 and 2024.



Action CAF.
Scan the QR code to see
CAF's training programs.



The municipality of Ciénaga de Zapata, in Cuba, is the largest local jurisdiction by area in the Caribbean.

Local electoral systems

The characteristics of electoral systems play a significant role in determining the profiles of individuals elected to public office. The RED 2019 report demonstrates that competitive local elections, combined with access to public funding and rigorous mechanisms to control and ensure transparency in campaign financing and spending, result in the selection of better-qualified mayors and legislators (Fajardo et al., 2019). Developing electoral systems that prevent the exchange of public jobs for votes and electoral support is a critical step toward the professionalization of bureaucracies.

In-office incentives also play an important role. One key factor is the possibility of reelection, which, in principle, allows citizens to reward officials who perform well during their terms and penalize those who do not. However, unlimited reelection can dilute these incentives if it fosters collusion between officials and interest groups or reduces electoral competition. Prolonged tenure in office can weaken the independence between elected officials and the bureaucracies they oversee.

Table 7.5
Regulations on mayoral elections in Latin American and Caribbean Countries

Country	Term length (years)	Consecutive reelection allowed	Number of reelection terms
Mexico	3	✓	1
El Salvador	3	✓	Unlimited
Trinidad & Tobago	3	✓	Unlimited
Colombia	4		None
Peru	4		None
Brazil	4	✓	1
Costa Rica	4	✓	1
Ecuador	4	✓	1
Chile	4	✓	2
Argentina	4	✓	Between 1 and unlimited
Guatemala	4	✓	Unlimited
Honduras	4	✓	Unlimited
Jamaica	4	✓	Unlimited
Dominican Republic	4	✓	Unlimited
Venezuela	4	✓	Unlimited
Bolivia	5	✓	1
Paraguay	5	✓	1
Uruguay	5	✓	1
Guyana	5	✓	Unlimited
Nicaragua	5	✓	Unlimited
Panama	5	✓	Unlimited

Note: In Argentina, the number of reelection terms varies by province, with two terms being the general rule.

Source: Author based on ECLAC (n.d.) and national and subnational legislation (see details in Table A.7.5 in the chapter appendix, available in the online edition of the RED).



The characteristics of electoral systems play a significant role in determining the profiles of individuals elected to public office

Evidence indicates that the possibility of reelection creates incentives for mayors to perform better. For instance, it reduces corruption in Brazil (Ferraz and Finan, 2011). However, when reelection extends beyond two terms, it begins to negatively impact performance (De Benedetto and De Paola, 2019; Coviello and Gagliarducci, 2017).

In the region, nearly all countries allow mayors to be reelected, often without term limits. The exceptions are Colombia and Peru, where reelection is prohibited (see Table 7.5).

The concentration of power among local elites has raised concerns about the impact of political dynasties in politics. Studies in Brazil and Colombia provide evidence on this phenomenon (Caputo-Leyva, 2022; Bragança et al., 2015). In both cases, electing a mayor from a dynastic family has no effect on economic growth or the quality of public services, despite increases in infrastructure spending. These findings suggest that political dynasties undermine the quality of governance.

In summary, competitive local electoral systems encourage the election of better-prepared leaders and are essential for fostering professional bureaucracies. They limit the incentives and capacity of elected officials to bypass merit and use public employment for political purposes.



Seat of government for the municipality
of Breves, Pará, Brazil.