

# The Aging Readiness & Competitiveness (ARC) 4.0

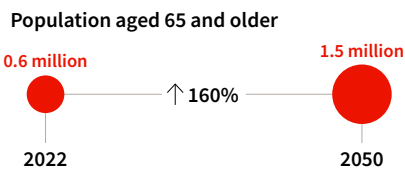
# Bolivia



Despite Bolivia's history of providing social programs for older adults, these programs are challenged by typical problems of access, particularly relating to the urban-rural divide and shifting networks of care. Location plays a large role in the lived experience of older age—those living in rural areas are often isolated without knowledge of the resources available to them and face dwindling support from their communities and families. However, an active civil society and an organized population of older persons hold potential for improving equity in the future.

## Demographic

The share of the population aged 65 and older will more than double from 5% to 9% in 2022-50.



Sources: UN, International Labour Organization, World Inequality Database, Economist Impact.

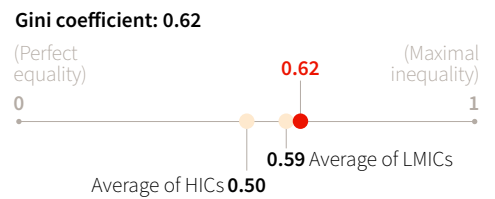
## Informal employment

The majority of workers are employed informally, who do not have secure employment contracts or workers' benefits.



## Income inequality

The income inequality is higher than both the averages for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and high-income countries (HICs).



## Ecosystem for equitable healthy aging:

		Very unfavorable				Moderately unfavorable				Moderately favorable				Very favorable			
		Strength				Strength				Strength				Strength			
		1	2	3	4	4	3	2	1								
Public institutions	<b>Health financial protection:</b> The government provides basic health insurance for older adults aged 60 and over through a limited policy enacted in the early 2000s. <sup>1,2</sup>	→				←				<b>Healthcare access:</b> The basic health insurance provisions for older adults do not cover illnesses requiring special treatment, which older persons tend to experience at higher rates. In addition, those in rural areas struggle to access even basic medicines. <sup>7</sup>							
	<b>Social protection:</b> Bolivia has a long history of providing economic programs to support both its poor and older populations—dating back to the social and economic reforms implemented by the government during the 1990s. These include a universal non-contributory pension program along with a contributory pension program. <sup>3,4</sup> Official statistics suggest that these programs reach all older adults in the country. <sup>5</sup>  Even so, despite the existence of economic programs aimed at alleviating poverty, older adults often lack the relevant documents (such as identification), which complicates access. <sup>6</sup>	→				←											
Legislative and policy landscape for aging	<b>Aging policy:</b> The rights of older persons are enshrined in law, demonstrating an awareness of the needs of older adults. The General Law on Older Persons, enacted in 2013, aims to regulate and promote the rights, guarantees, and duties of persons aged over 60. <sup>8</sup> There is also a government agency where people can raise complaints pertaining to rights violations or abandonment. <sup>9</sup>	→				←				<b>Policy implementation:</b> Despite the existence of an agency where people can raise complaints of rights violations or abandonment, locations for such reporting exist mainly in urban areas, leaving rural older dwellers without such support. As a rule, older adults in rural areas have more limited access to assistance from the state when they are in need, and less access to information on the laws and programs that can help them. <sup>10</sup> Finally, little has been done to implement or update the General Law on Older Persons since its approval. <sup>11</sup>							
Age-friendly society	<b>Civil society:</b> There is evidence of active civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Bolivia advocating for older persons. During the pandemic, an “adopt a grandparent” campaign paired young neighbors with older Bolivians who needed support such as obtaining food and collecting aid packages sent to them by the government. <sup>12</sup> Other NGOs have worked to reduce poverty and increase the visibility and representation of older persons. <sup>13</sup> Despite only representing a small percentage of the current population and struggling to be heard on a national level, older adults in Bolivia have set up advocacy organizations and vocally lobby the government. <sup>14</sup>	→				←				<b>Networks of care:</b> The increasing migration of younger people to urban areas exacerbates vulnerabilities for the older adults who are left behind. While some younger adults send remittances to their older relatives, older adults are often forced to work after the point at which they wanted to retire. <sup>15</sup> A significant proportion of the oldest older persons live either alone or with a singular spouse, poignantly illustrating the shift in traditional networks of care that were historically reliant on families. <sup>16</sup>  <b>Geographic divides:</b> Inequity in geographic location is experienced along racial and ethnic lines, as rural areas tend to be more populated with indigenous populations. <sup>17</sup>							
		→				←											

**Methodology:** As part of the ARC 4.0 initiative, Economist Impact employed a technique to evaluate the ecosystem for achieving equitable healthy aging in 10 countries based on Kurt Lewin's force field analysis. This approach compares forces that either promote or resist change, allowing for analysis of factors that may not be readily comparable within and across all countries. Building on our desk research and supplemented by expert interviews, we outline the forces that enable and hamper aging equity. We then conduct a qualitative assessment to score their relative strength on a scale from 1 (“weak”) to 4 (“strong”). All scores were independently assessed by two raters (with an inter-rater reliability—Cohen's kappa—of .72), who then reconciled differences.

Lack of inclusion of a force does not necessarily indicate its absence from a country. It typically means that we decided to focus elsewhere or that there was not adequate research available on the particular subject. Moreover, because of the nature of evaluation—complex matters are collapsed into simple scores—we note that not all readers will agree with all scores. Further, these scores are not intended to facilitate explicit rating or ranking, but rather to foster qualitative examination of complex dynamics through simplified heuristics. It is our hope that these overviews will encourage reflection and action.

1. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, Executive Director, Sumaj Panchay, May 2022.  
 2. <https://academic.oup.com/heapol/article/31/1/114/2363218>  
 3. <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?id=53949>  
 4. <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2018-2019/americas/bolivia.html>  
 5. ILO, World Social Protection Data Dashboards.  
 6. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, May 2022.  
 7. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, May 2022.  
 8. [https://www.nyulawglobal.org/global/Bolivian\\_Legal\\_Framework1.html](https://www.nyulawglobal.org/global/Bolivian_Legal_Framework1.html)  
 9. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, May 2022.  
 10. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, CEO, Sumaj Panchay, May 2022.  
 11. Economist Impact interview with Karina León Delgadillo, May 2022.

12. <https://www.nydailynews.com/coronavirus/ny-coronavirus-bolivia-adopt-a-grandparent-campaign-elderly-young-20200516-atgzjogfcbkhghlcd3fsl6qm-story.html>  
 13. <https://www.iaf.gov/content/data-report/advocacy-for-highland-seniors-in-bolivia/>  
 14. Economist Impact interview with Dr. Tanja Bastia, Professor of Migration and Development, Global Development Institute, University of Manchester, May 2022.  
 15. <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publishing/review/27/migration-and-older-people-bolivia-between-opportunities-and-new-vulnerabilities>  
 16. <https://publications.iadb.org/en/panorama-aging-and-long-term-care-how-do-older-adults-latin-america-and-caribbean-live>  
 17. Economist Impact interview with Dr. Tanja Bastia, May 2022.