

CÓRDOBA, ARGENTINA

Advancing Strategic Priorities through the SDGs in Córdoba, Argentina



OECD Regional Development Papers

Advancing Strategic Priorities through the SDGs in Córdoba, Argentina



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This paper was authorised for publication by Lamia Kamal-Chaoui, Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD.

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Foreword

The OECD and the Province of Córdoba, Argentina, are delighted to introduce the results of the policy dialogue conducted to strengthen a territorial approach to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Province of Córdoba.

The provincial government has initiated a decade-long process to connect its policies with the UN 2030 Agenda, and building on prior analysis and recommendations from the OECD report on “*A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Córdoba, Argentina*” (2021), it has identified four strategic axes for action to achieve the SDGs: i) gender and employment, ii) education for employment, iii) housing and access to services, and iv) the digital divide.

In today’s highly uncertain policy environment marked by the fallout from the COVID-19 crisis, Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and the climate emergency, the SDGs offer a clear, stable and effective framework to address the main challenges in the four strategic axes of the province. This new report provides guidance on how to harness the implementation of the SDGs to respond to these challenges in a holistic and effective manner.

Throughout the policy dialogue underlying this report, we shared our experience with a wide variety of stakeholders in the Province of Córdoba and learned from international peer policy makers from Colombia and the Basque Country and Catalonia (Spain). The OECD and the Province of Córdoba also benefitted from the experiences and insights of numerous municipalities and institutions from public, private and non-profit sectors in developing the policy recommendations included in this report.

Both our institutions are proud of this journey and the results achieved. We now look forward to continued collaboration to translate the policy recommendations into action for a better future.



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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACC	<i>Agencia Conectividad Córdoba</i> , Córdoba Connectivity Agency
ARS	Argentine peso (national currency)
ATM	<i>Aulas Talleres Móviles</i> , Mobile Workshops Classrooms
CAD	Canadian Dollar
DGEyC	<i>Dirección General de Estadística y Censos</i> , General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses
EU	European Union
FUA	Functional urban area
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICT	Information and communication technology
INDEC	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos</i> , National Institute of Statistics and Census of Argentina
INET	<i>Instituto Nacional de Educación Tecnológica</i> , National Institute of Technological Education
INTI	<i>Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Industrial</i> , National Institute of Industrial Technology
ISP	Internet service provider
ISPC	<i>Instituto Superior Politécnico Córdoba</i> , Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIP	Professional Insertion Programme
SDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNC	<i>Universidad Nacional de Córdoba</i> , National University of Córdoba
UNRC	<i>Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto</i> , National University of Río Cuarto
USD	United States Dollar

Executive summary

Córdoba is Argentina's second-largest province in terms of population and fifth largest in terms of territory, counting more local governments than any other province in the country. The province has adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a holistic framework to promote social inclusion and well-being and to address its territorial development challenges in an integrated way. It has also made further efforts to promote evidence-based policy making for greater transparency and accountability by measuring progress against all 17 SDGs across 115 indicators. Building on the recommendations from an earlier OECD paper "A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Córdoba, Argentina" (2021), Córdoba's policies have focused on the following four strategic axes: i) gender and employment; ii) education for employment; iii) housing and access to essential services; and iv) bridging the digital divide.

Key findings

Employment and unemployment gender gaps persist despite some recent progress

- The gender gaps in employment (21 percentage points) and unemployment (2.6 percentage points) at the beginning of 2022 in Córdoba are larger than in OECD regions on average (15.6 for employment and 2.0 percentage points for unemployment) (SDGs 5 and 8).
- The gender gap in youth unemployment is half what it was before the COVID-19 pandemic, narrowing from 14 percentage points in the second half of 2018 to 7 percentage points at the beginning of 2022 (SDGs 5 and 8).
- Long-term unemployment is higher among women (3.1%) than among men (1.8%) in Córdoba. However, the gender gap has halved from 2.7 percentage points in the second semester of 2018 to 1.3 at the beginning of 2022 (SDGs 5 and 8).
- In 2021, the share of women employed in the sector of "Human Health and Services" in Córdoba stood at 69%, compared to 31% men. In other sectors, such as "Industry", the share of women in employment was 24% compared to 76% men, and "Services" more largely employed 37% women against 63% men (SDG 5).
- Among the 129 500 people in paid employment in the care sector (which includes care work and domestic tasks within households), who are mostly (98.6%) female, only 37% were registered with the social security bureau (ANSES) in 2021. More than half (51%) of all workers in the care sector have not completed secondary school (SDGs 4 and 5). In addition, workers in the care sector (54.2%) are less likely to have health coverage than employed women overall (65.6%). Workers in the care sector also report low levels of perceived health (13.9% perceive their health to be fair to poor, compared to 12.7% of employed women) (SDGs 3 and 5).
- The government has started addressing challenges related to the care economy, for instance the formalisation of the sector and the social vulnerability of workers, through different programmes such as Aula Mamá, Salas Cuna and xMí, providing formal training and support to women to help

them complete primary and secondary education. It has also launched the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector to help improve the quality of care services and create more opportunities for career advancement for women (SDGs 3, 5 and 8).

Despite relatively high levels of educational attainment in Córdoba, inequalities remain a concern

- The province has implemented various programmes to enhance educational and employment opportunities (e.g. the Professional Insertion Programme and the Mobile Workshop Classrooms), including in collaboration with technical schools and the province's Polytechnic Higher Institute to provide nationally recognised certifications, vocational training pathways and professional internships (SDG 4).
- In 2021, 27% of people aged 25-64 years in Córdoba had completed tertiary education, against 21% in other Latin American regions and 31% in OECD regions on average (SDG 4).
- However, there are spatial inequalities in access to education across the province, with, for example, a gap of 6 percentage points in educational attainment of the adult population between the provincial capital region Gran Córdoba and Río Cuarto-Las Higueras (SDG 4).
- In contrast to the unemployment rate, the gender gap in educational attainment is in favour of Cordoban women: 73% of women had completed upper secondary education in 2022 compared to only 66% of men (SDGs 4 and 5).

Housing affordability and housing conditions could be further improved in Córdoba

- In terms of housing affordability, the province focuses on optimising land use and facilitating affordable housing options for low-income families, access to essential services, including safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and universal access to energy (e.g. by setting up Neighbourhood Councils for Prevention and Coexistence addressing social problems that affect coexistence and security in neighbourhoods and the Seed Housing programme that supplies families who own a plot of land with basic infrastructure with all the necessary construction materials to build their own accommodation) (SDG 11).
- Nevertheless, in 2022, Cordobans were spending around 27% of their household income on rental payments, compared to the average of OECD regions of 22% in 2019 (SDG 11).
- Housing quality has improved in Córdoba since pre-pandemic years. For example, the share of the population who lived in dwellings without private access to an indoor flushing toilet dropped from 9.2% in 2018 to 8.2% at the beginning of 2022. However, there is still a margin for improvement compared to the OECD area, where on average 97% of households have an indoor flushing toilet for their sole use (SDGs 6 and 11).

Increasing access to high-speed Internet in underserved areas is crucial for bridging the digital divide and enabling remote work opportunities in the province

- Between 2018 and 2022, the share of households connected to broadband Internet in Córdoba increased from 70% to almost 84% in the first half of 2022, close to the average of OECD regions of 85% in 2021 (SDG 9).
- However, there is still a lack of Internet access in areas of the northwest of the province, in the mountainous areas (known as the Sierras de Córdoba) and in peri-urban municipalities (SDG 17). Over a third (34%) of poor households do not have access to broadband, of which 7% do not have access to Internet via a mobile device either. On average in OECD countries, two in three households in rural areas have access to high-speed broadband.

- A digital divide is also visible across people with different levels of education. Individuals with a primary level of education are over 4 times more likely not to have access to the Internet than those with a higher level of education (25.9% versus 6.1%) (SDGs 4 and 17).
- To address the digital divide in Córdoba, the provincial government has set up a collaborative platform for public and private programmes aimed at developing women's technological skills (the Espacios Mujeres Tec programme). It also created an Internet connection programme providing students with free Internet access and expanded the provincial fibre optic cable network (*Conexión a Internet Estudiantil Gratuita*, CIEG), opening up access to digital services for beneficiaries (such as access to telemedicine and the possibility to work remotely). Other key programmes for bridging the digital divide by improving Internet connectivity in the province include the Córdoba Digital Network and the ABC Digital programme that provide meeting spaces equipped with devices and Internet connectivity to improve the population's digital literacy, implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency (SDGs 9 and 10).

Key recommendations

The Province of Córdoba should continue to use the SDGs as a forward-looking framework to address territorial challenges that impact its sustainable development. In the context of Córdoba's four strategic priorities, the SDGs and their related targets have helped identify strengths and areas for improvement, define synergies and formulate interconnected recommendations and actions across the four axes, such as between digital divides (SDGs 9, 10 and 17) and education (SDG 4), education (SDG 4) and employment (SDG 8), employment (SDG 8) and gender equality (SDG 5), education (SDG 4) and access to services (SDG 11), among others. The SDGs should continue to guide the province in the implementation of the following recommendations:

- **Ensure equitable access to services such as quality education throughout the province, through targeted measures to close the geographical gap between municipalities and gender inequalities in the labour market.**
 - Improve educational infrastructure in vulnerable municipalities. A first step would be to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the existing infrastructure in different municipalities to identify areas with inadequate facilities and resources linked to the phenomenon of "atomisation" of the population in the provincial territory – i.e. the existence of small scattered populations and in geographical areas with difficult access to transport. The consequent allocation of adequate funding and resources would be used to upgrade and modernise schools in vulnerable areas, with the objective of improving technology equipment, connectivity and digital skills. In this regard, it will be important to develop further programmes such ABC Digital in tandem to infrastructure improvement in schools to train students to become digitally literate (SDGs 4 and 9).
 - Enhance the efficiency and availability of training opportunities by developing a province-wide educational plan that focuses on addressing specific skill gaps and aligns with the needs of the provincial labour market (SDG 4).
 - Increase the participation of women in other sectors, where they are currently under-represented (e.g. industry and services) by building on programmes such as the Espacio Mujeres TEC. This could be achieved by developing more mentorship and networking initiatives in specific sectors and support female-led entrepreneurship and small business development (SDG 5).

- **Support the care economy to narrow the gender gap in employment.**
 - Further invest in education and training programmes for care workers, such as the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector, to help improve the quality of care services and create more opportunities for career advancement for women (SDGs 3, 4 and 8).
 - Collaborate with national authorities and employees to ensure adequate working conditions for care workers. In this endeavour, consider the provincial cost of living while also promoting provincial initiatives and benefit packages to enhance the overall compensation and working conditions within the care economy (SDGs 3, 4 and 8).
 - Expand the construction and renovation of care facilities in close co-ordination with local actors in underserved areas, namely in the rural inner areas of the province, in order to provide deprived communities with adequate access and encourage female participation in the labour market (SDGs 3 and 9).
- **Invest in vocational and technical education programmes to provide students with practical skills tailored to the local and global job markets.**
 - Consider further developing short-term and flexible training (from non-formal and formal educational systems), such as those proposed by the Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba, to facilitate mobility across firms, lifelong learning and worker reintegration into the labour market following the COVID-19 pandemic (SDGs 4 and 8).
 - Collaborate with industry experts, employers, public educational institutions, private training providers, and community leaders to leverage their respective strengths and resources in designing and delivering a curriculum that aligns with the needs of the local and global job markets. The collaborative framework could take the form of a provincial skills board with representation from relevant stakeholders. The curriculum should include both hard skills (e.g. technical), soft skills (e.g. communication) and transversal/transferable skills (e.g. problem-solving), along with real-world work experiences for students that feed into vocational and technical education programmes and enhance work-based learning (SDGs 4 and 8).
- **Implement a comprehensive, affordable housing programme to increase the supply of affordable housing units and improve the quality of existing ones.**
 - To tackle housing affordability, consider inclusionary zoning policies, which involve setting minimum thresholds for the share of low or moderate-income housing that developers must provide in the design of development proposals (SDG 11).
 - Establish fair and clear rules for land-use value capture in the province through legislation, legal definitions, and effective law enforcement to expand the supply of affordable housing. To ensure that land-use value capture is accepted by landowners in urban, peri-urban and rural areas alike, the provincial government could consider deriving charges from the amount of land value uplift that public improvement generates, as opposed to charging based on public costs. The socio-economic status of landowners may be considered by differentiating charges based on income levels, in view of addressing territorial inequalities in housing – particularly in the northwest of the province (SDG 11).
 - Ensure residences are well-connected to transport networks and utility systems throughout the province, thereby improving overall infrastructure and access to basic amenities and services. Target the low-income and minority households that have been hit hardest by recent shocks (SDG 11).
- **Deliver high-quality broadband services across the entire province to bridge the digital divide through a comprehensive policy approach, focusing on education and training.**
 - Work in close collaboration with the national level to bridge the connectivity gaps and ensure that networks are deployed in all underserved areas. This could also contribute to closing the

- social gaps in Internet access by education level, help realise the full potential of remote working and help close potential gaps in access to public services (SDG 17).
- Strengthen digital literacy programmes, including those already in place and implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, targeting specific population groups, particularly the rural population, individuals with lower socio-economic status and the elderly. Programmes such as ABC Digital could be improved through better co-ordination with other government agencies (such as the Córdoba Youth Agency, which designs policies for young people of the province) but also with municipalities to make sure courses offered are tailored to specific needs. To go beyond the channels opened by the government to enhance digital skills, incentives could be given to businesses to offer employees opportunities to volunteer as mentors or instructors (SDGs 4 and 17).

1 Introduction

Córdoba is Argentina's second-largest province in terms of population and fifth-largest in terms of territory, counting more local governments than any other province. The provincial government has initiated a decade-long process to connect its initiatives with the 2030 Agenda, considering this alignment as a tool to strengthen its management approach.¹ In particular, the Province of Córdoba has established three axes of action linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): social justice, sustainable economic growth and strengthening institutions. The social justice axis and reducing inequality (SDG 10) are the priorities of the provincial government. The sustainable economic growth axis (SDG 8) aims to promote social inclusion through multiple sectors of the economy. For example, providing affordable housing, addressing the gender gap in unemployment, reducing air pollution and improving water quality are ways to advance both economic growth and social inclusion simultaneously. Finally, the axis on strengthening institutions (SDG 16) focuses on promoting dialogue and partnerships (SDG 17) (OECD, 2022^[1]).

To harness the 2030 Agenda as a policy-making tool, Córdoba has developed a matrix to identify synergies across the SDGs. In 2019, the province brought together a wide range of territorial stakeholders (from the government, academia, civil society and the private sector) to develop strategies to adapt the 2030 Agenda to the provincial reality. This localisation process of the SDGs has taken place in three stages: first, adapting the SDGs to the local context; second, linking priority goals to the 2030 Agenda and establishing relationships between them; and third, devising action plans and designing concrete initiatives. Through a matrix relationship analysis conducted in collaboration with territorial stakeholders, the Province of Córdoba has been able to identify the most important areas for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Córdoba's endeavours to localise the SDGs also build upon prior collaborative efforts with the OECD on the topics of regional well-being and sustainable development, such as the publications *OECD Territorial Reviews: Córdoba, Argentina* (OECD, 2016^[2]), *How's Life in the Province of Córdoba, Argentina?* (OECD, 2019^[3]) and *A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Córdoba, Argentina* (OECD, 2021^[4]) (Box 1.1).

The OECD analysis conducted in 2021 revealed how the SDGs can help respond to interlinked challenges, set up collaboration between government departments and implement public policies to enhance people's well-being. The first recommendation from this analysis was to "design concrete policies for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda that take advantage of the synergies identified between the social SDGs and the 42 priority targets" (OECD, 2021^[4]). The ensuing lines of action were to: i) build a vision of multi-dimensional economic development; ii) reduce the housing deficit through sustainable construction; iii) generate sustainable work for the most excluded; iv) establish sustainable water management; and v) deepen the process of co-ordination and transparency (OECD, 2021^[4]). Building on this OECD recommendation, Córdoba's policies have focused on four strategic areas, which this report will focus on: i) gender and employment; ii) education for employment; iii) housing and access to essential services; and iv) bridging the digital divide (Box 1.2).

Box 1.1. Key findings and recommendations from “A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Córdoba, Argentina” (2021)

In 2018, the OECD conducted a policy dialogue with the Province of Córdoba on a territorial approach to the SDGs to help the province strengthen its social inclusion agenda. The policy dialogue engaged different actors, including the private sector, academia and civil society, through workshops to prioritise goals and ensure a shared, inclusive and innovative process towards the 2030 Agenda in Córdoba, resulting in a report published in 2021.

Sustainable development strengths and challenges in Córdoba from 2021

The OECD 2021 report assessed Córdoba’s performance towards achieving the SDGs based on the OECD localised indicator framework for the SDGs (<https://www.oecd-local-sdgs.org/data.html>), following the structure of the five key dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. The assessment was based on a selection of 36 indicators covering key aspects of 13 out of the 17 SDGs. While some indicators cover the whole Province of Córdoba, others cover only the average performance of four main agglomerations of the province (Gran Córdoba, Rio Cuarto-Las Higueras, San Francisco and Villa María-Villa Nueva), which represent over 50% of the provincial population. In specific cases when data at the provincial level were not available, indicators for the four agglomerations were used as a proxy for the entire province. The assessment included comparisons with regions from OECD countries and from a selection of Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru) (OECD, 2021^[4]).

When compared to the average of OECD regions, Córdoba performs relatively well on low gross income inequality and the availability of cropland areas for food security (SDGs 10 and 2 respectively). The province’s accomplishments are close to those of OECD regions in terms of child mortality (SDG 3), satisfaction with life as a whole (SDG 3) and the perception of Córdoba as a welcoming place for gay or lesbian individuals (SDG 16). However, Córdoba trails the average of OECD regions across various dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, such as high levels of air pollution (SDG 11), low satisfaction with housing affordability (SDG 11), safety (SDG 16) and limited trust and confidence in the judicial system and political institutions (SDG 16) (OECD, 2021^[4]).

At the same time, the province generally outperforms the average of Latin American regions in numerous SDG indicators. Córdoba excels in comparison to its peer regions from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru in areas such as mortality rates (SDG 3), respect for women (SDG 5), the proportion of secondary education degrees among the labour force (SDG 9), air pollution levels (SDG 11) and the percentage of the population with Internet access (SDG 17). However, Córdoba still needs to make progress to reach the average of Latin American regions across various SDGs, including satisfaction with efforts to address poverty (SDG 1), the gender gap in unemployment (SDG 5), the loss of water bodies (SDG 6), satisfaction with efforts to protect the environment (SDG 13) and the loss of tree cover (SDG 15). Across these indicators, Córdoba ranks in the bottom 20% of regions in Latin America (OECD, 2021^[4]).

Policy recommendations from 2021

- Design concrete policies for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, namely by promoting diversified economic development, bridging the housing supply gap, generating decent work and enhancing sustainable water and sanitation management.
- Use the SDGs to develop a Vision 2030 for the Province of Córdoba, jointly with all key territorial stakeholders. Such a vision should contribute to the elaboration of a formalised regional

development strategy aimed at diversifying the provincial economy, strengthening participation in global value chains and sustaining well-being.

- Strengthen both vertical and horizontal co-ordination of the SDGs. A co-ordinated approach to the implementation of the SDGs, building on the agreement with the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies, could create synergies between provincial and municipal actions and the development of best practices.
- Use the SDGs as a budgeting tool and leverage public procurement to introduce sustainability criteria such as International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) certifications and incentivise public and private actors' initiatives for sustainable development.
- Enhance the public availability of data through the collection and dissemination of up-to-date SDG-relevant metrics and evidence to raise awareness and call for action.
- Provide platforms to co-ordinate the actions of the private sector and civil society on the SDGs. The establishment of the Córdoba SDG Forum is a good example that could be incorporated into the framework of a "2030 vision for Córdoba" to share good practices and boost collaboration (OECD, 2021^[4]).

Source: OECD (2021^[4]), "A territorial approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in Córdoba, Argentina", <https://doi.org/10.1787/f11a65c2-en>.

Box 1.2. Methodology for the policy dialogue between the OECD and the Province of Córdoba (2022-23)

1. Multi-stakeholder workshops and interviews

To ensure a comprehensive and multi-dimensional perspective, a collaborative and multi-stakeholder process was carried out over the course of 2022-23. Civil society actors, academia, the private sector and other non-governmental entities were actively involved in the diagnostic phase, co-creation of actions and policy recommendations. This inclusive approach aimed to harness the expertise and insights of various stakeholders and foster innovative solutions to development challenges. The involvement of non-governmental actors varied depending on each priority axis. For example, the engagement of communal leaders, mayors, territorial organisations and co-operatives was crucial in the context of the third strategic axis on housing and access to essential services.

2. Analysis of existing indicators and programmes

The OECD has first conducted a diagnostic to analyse existing indicators and programmes in the province, as a foundation for discussions among stakeholders. During an in-situ three-day mission, the OECD Secretariat conducted face-to-face meetings with interest groups representing different sectors for each axis, including academia, the private sector, unions, local governments and civil society. These meetings facilitated in-depth discussions to identify the challenges faced by the province in each priority axis, including the most affected groups and the geographic locations of the problems. Moreover, the discussions highlighted the interconnections and synergies among the four strategic axes, namely by leveraging the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda to achieve comprehensive responses.

3. Thematic surveys on the four strategic axes

For each specific axis and in collaboration with the Ministry of Coordination of the province, the OECD has developed a survey targeting key stakeholders in order to capture their views, experiences and insights on the challenges faced. The responses to the surveys were analysed and presented by the OECD at the beginning of each workshop to serve as a basis for discussion. The surveys on gender and employment and education for employment had 34 respondents each, the survey on housing and access to services had 22 and the survey on the digital divide had 30.

4. Knowledge exchange

Throughout the process, international best practices have informed the discussions. The OECD has provided a set of best practices and international peers from Colombia, the Basque Country and Catalonia (Spain) were invited to share successful collaboration experiences among different stakeholders.

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Note

¹ The Province of Córdoba uses its Government Management Report (*Memoria de Gestión Gubernamental*) – a document that encapsulates the provincial government’s progress, projects and initiatives – to demonstrate its connection to the SDGs. Since 2016, the province of Córdoba has been documenting its SDG-related actions annually in the report, using the methodology of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), a framework used worldwide to facilitate comparison (OECD, 2021^[4]).

2 Strengths, challenges and interlinkages in the Province of Córdoba across its four strategic priorities

Although the gender employment gap in Córdoba, Argentina is lower than that of other regions in Latin America, it remains wider than the OECD average. The province also has higher educational attainment and better housing availability than other Latin American regions. However, it faces challenges in housing affordability, essential service accessibility, and healthcare, especially in non-metropolitan areas. Limited access to services hinders educational and employment opportunities, while the lack of internet access in certain areas limits job opportunities and the shift to remote work.

The gender employment gap in the Province of Córdoba, Argentina, is smaller than in the majority of Latin American regions despite being wider than in OECD regions on average. The province's relatively high rates of educational attainment stand out positively in comparison with Latin American regions, as does its higher level of housing availability compared to the Latin American regional average, which can be leveraged to improve housing affordability. The percentage of households with Internet access was relatively high in Córdoba prior to the pandemic, approaching the average reached in OECD regions of three-quarters of households.

Córdoba faces challenges in terms of housing, accessibility to essential services, Internet access and healthcare. Inadequate access to essential services, particularly in non-metropolitan areas, limits educational and employment opportunities for individuals in rural and peripheral areas. Limited public transportation options hinder students, workers and elderly individuals from reaching educational institutions, workplaces and healthcare centres. Additionally, the lack of Internet access in certain areas, such as mountainous regions and peri-urban municipalities, hampers access to employment opportunities and the transition to remote working. There is also a need to improve healthcare access in peri-urban and rural areas, where a number of municipalities lack health centres and face long distances to access essential healthcare services.

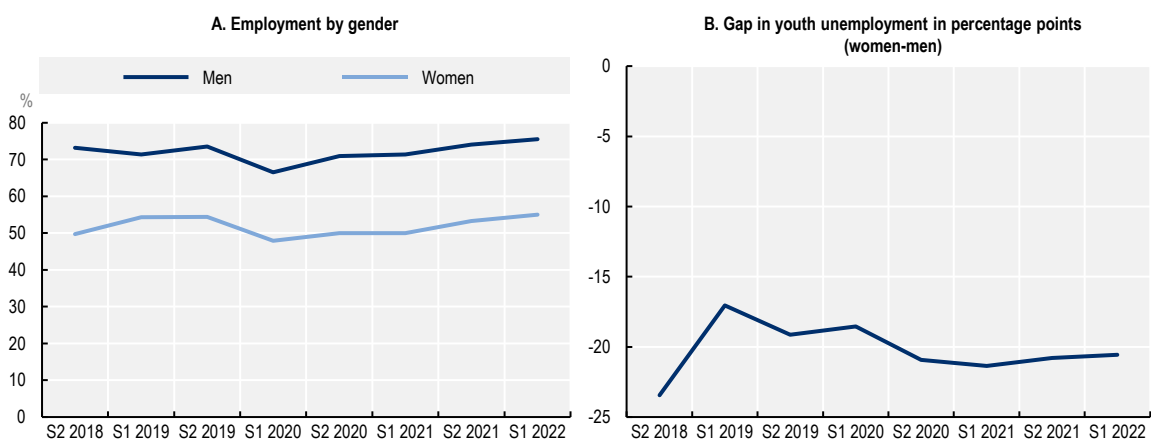
Gender and employment: Focus on the care economy

Córdoba's progress and challenges in the face of a persisting gender gap in employment

After dropping slightly at the beginning of the pandemic period, employment rates in Córdoba at the beginning of 2022 were slightly higher than those of the second half of 2018, both for men (76%) and women (55%) (Figure 2.1). Yet this 21 percentage point gender gap is larger than in OECD regions on average (15.6) and very far from the end value of 0 percentage points, which would represent full gender equality for this indicator (Figure 2.2), in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Target 5.1. "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere" (OECD, 2021^[1]).¹ However, among Latin American regions, Córdoba performs better than the majority (55%) of its peers (OECD, 2021^[1]).

Figure 2.1. Córdoba has a gender gap to close in terms of employment

Employment rate (people aged 15 to 64)

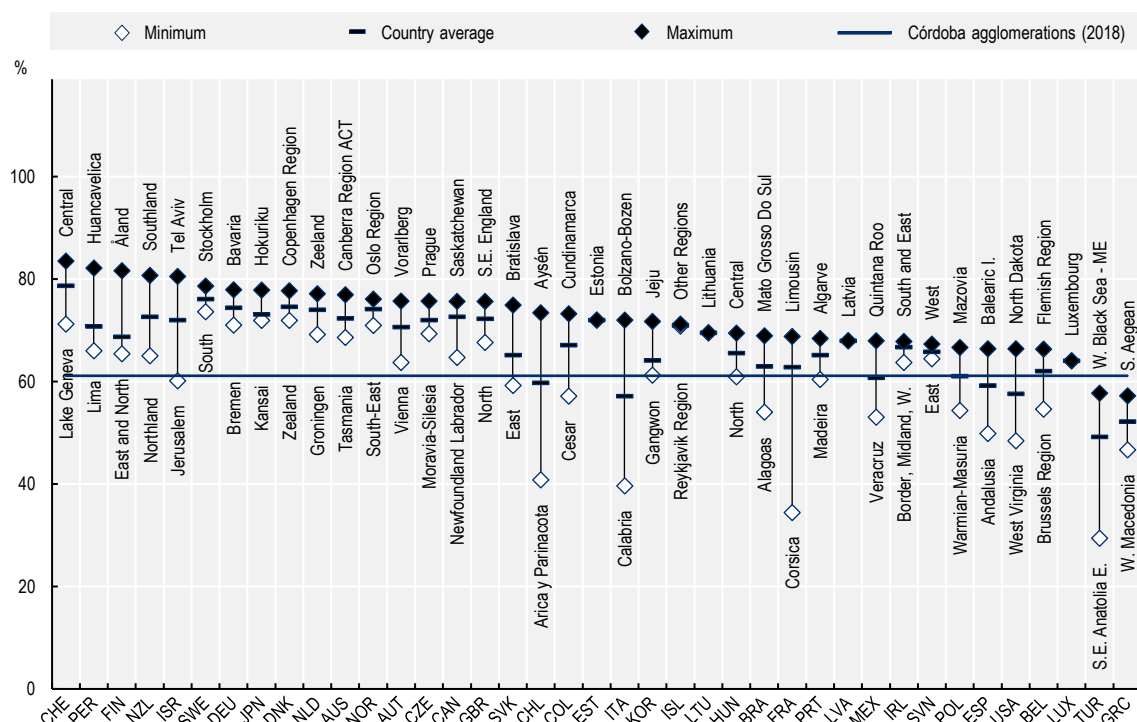


Note: S stands for semester.

Source: DGESyC (2023^[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/>. (accessed on 4 December 2023)

Figure 2.2. The gender gap in the employment rate is larger than in most OECD regions

Difference between the employment rate of men and the employment rate of women, circa 2018



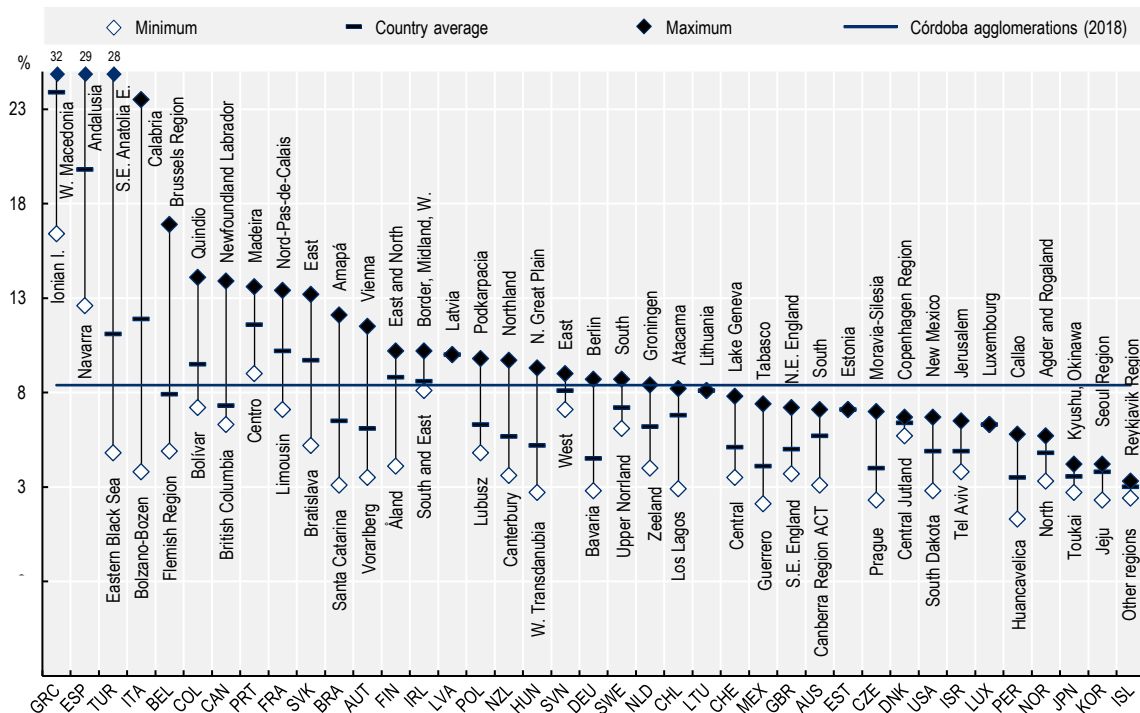
Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

The lower level of employment among women compared to men is combined with a higher level of unemployment among women in Córdoba. Prior to the pandemic, unemployment rates in Córdoba were similar to the average of OECD regions. SDG 8 is among the core areas of the United Nations 2030 Agenda dimension Prosperity and aims, among other things, to promote productive and full employment, as well as decent work for all. Córdoba still has progress to make in order to reach all of these objectives (OECD, 2021^[11]). In the second semester of 2019, the unemployment rate in Córdoba's 4 main agglomerations of 7.6% was equal to the average of OECD regions (7.6%) but stood 2.6 percentage points above the suggested end value of 5% (based on the best performers) (OECD, 2021^[11]). Overall, around two-thirds of OECD regions recorded lower unemployment rates than Córdoba back then. Furthermore, Córdoba's unemployment rate slightly exceeded the unemployment rates of peer regions in Chile and Mexico (Figure 2.3).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment rose more among women than among men in Córdoba. Between the second semester of 2019 and the second semester of 2020, female unemployment increased by 4.6 percentage points, compared to +2.8 for the male unemployment rate. Between 2018 and 2022, the unemployment gender gap has narrowed by approximately one percentage point (from 3.6 to 2.6, against 2 percentage points in OECD regions on average), although it has begun to widen again since the first semester of 2021 (Figure 2.4). Women still experience slightly higher unemployment rates than men (7.7% vs. 5.1% at the beginning of 2022) across the province's 4 urban agglomerations (DGEyC, 2022^[5]).

Figure 2.3. Unemployment rates in Córdoba are similar to that of most OECD regions

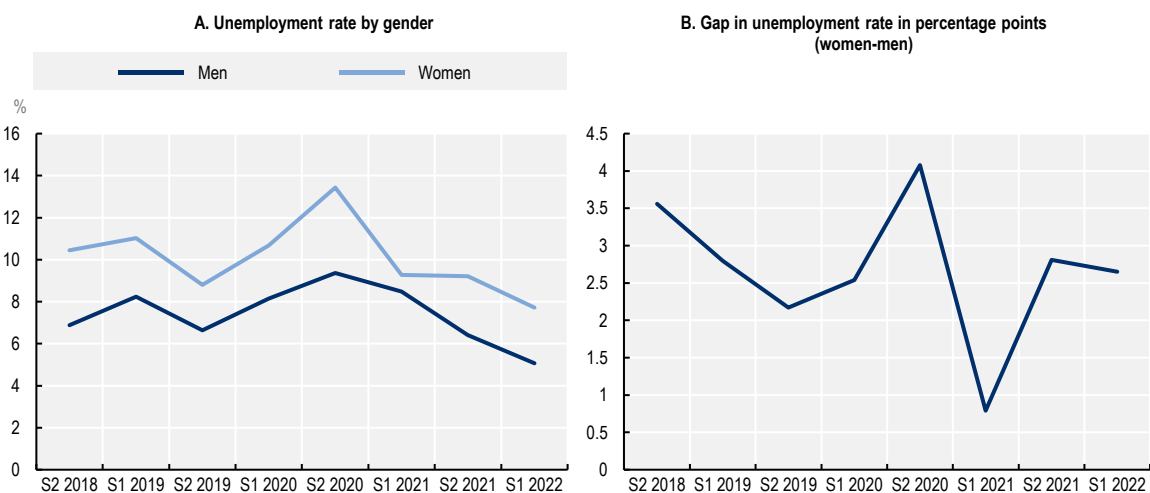
Number of unemployed people aged 15 to 64 as a percentage of the labour force of the same age, circa 2018



Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey], Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), OECD Regional Statistics (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Figure 2.4. Unemployment rates of men and women in Córdoba have improved since 2018 but the gender gap persists

Unemployment rate (people aged 15 to 64)



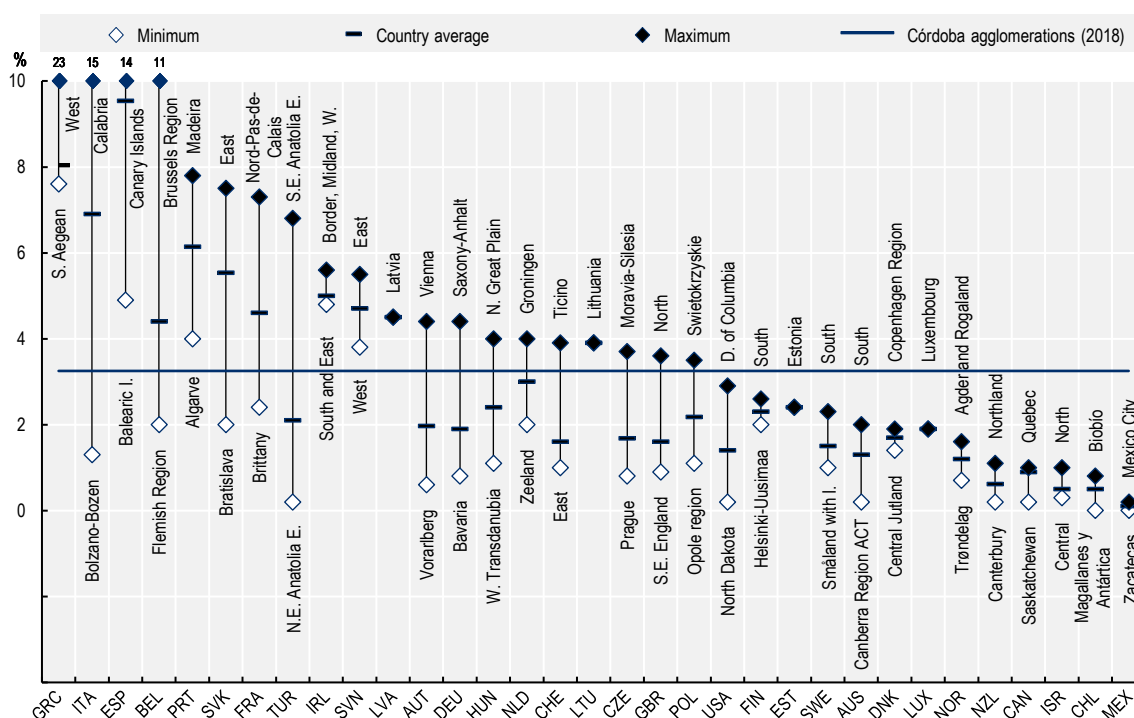
Source: DGEyC (2023^[2]), Datos Abiertos, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

In 2018, almost half of Córdoba's total unemployment rate (47.4%) came from long-term unemployment – i.e. people unemployed for 12 months or more (Figure 2.5). This stood in contrast to Latin American peer regions in Chile and Mexico, where incidences of long-term unemployment were very low (approximately 4%) (OECD, 2021^[11]). However, long-term unemployment dropped to 38.7% of total employment in 2022. Although long-term unemployment is still higher among women (3.1%) than among men (1.8%) in Córdoba, the gender gap has halved from 2.7 in the second semester of 2018 to 1.3 at the beginning of 2022. Rates for both sexes are now lower than pre-pandemic levels (4.8% for women and 2.1% for men in the first semester of 2018) and are recovering from the uptick recorded at the height of the pandemic (Figure 2.6).

One of the core challenges of many OECD regions regarding SDG 8 is the integration of youth into the labour market, captured by the OECD framework through the indicator of youth unemployment of 18-24 year-olds (OECD, 2021^[11]). In 2018, prior to the pandemic, in the 4 main agglomerations of Córdoba, approximately 25% of youth was unemployed. Córdoba's youth unemployment rate was, therefore, higher than the average of OECD regions (16.7%) and higher than the average of Latin American regions (13.5%) (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.5. Prior to the pandemic, Córdoba's long-term unemployment rate was relatively high compared to Latin American peers

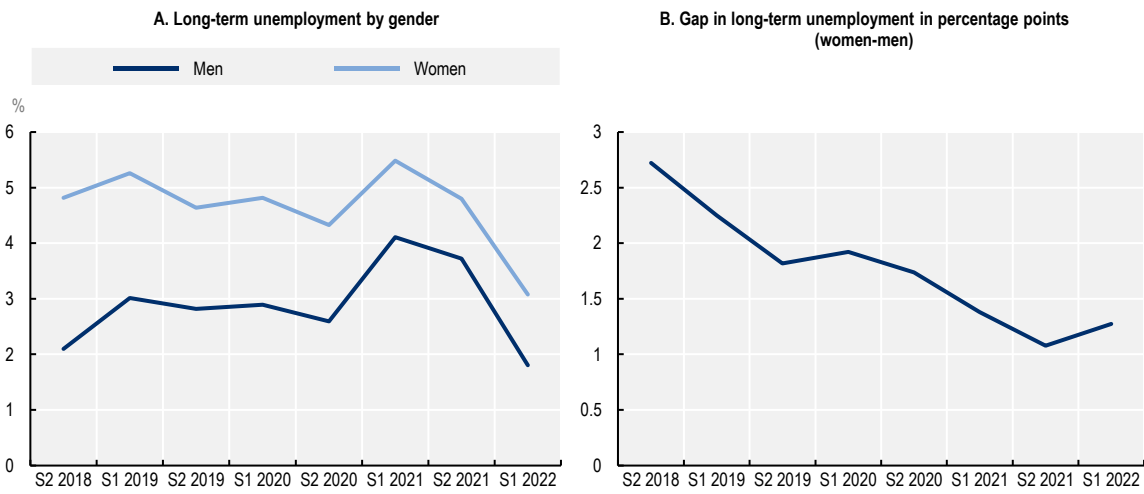
Number of people aged 15 to 64 unemployed for one year or more as a percentage of the labour force of the same age, circa 2018



Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey], Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), OECD Regional Statistics (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Figure 2.6. The gender gap in long-term unemployment has narrowed since 2018

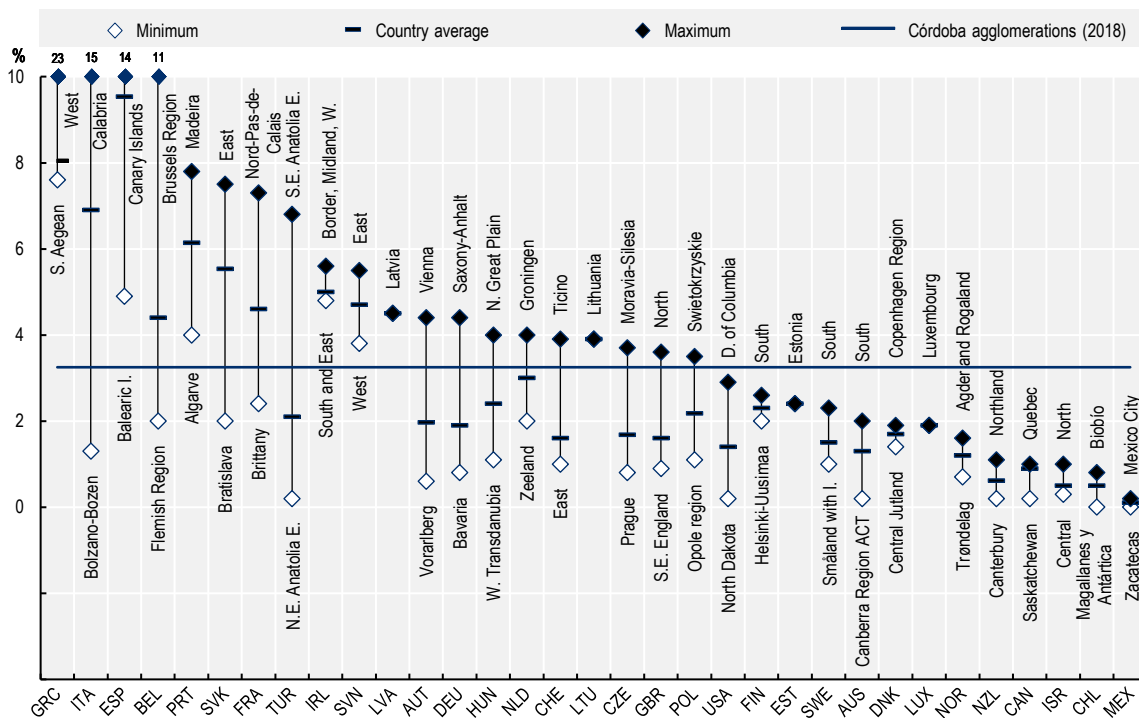
Long-term unemployment rate (people aged 15 to 64)



Source: DGEyC (2023_[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

Figure 2.7. In 2018, one-quarter of the Cordoban youth was unemployed

Number of unemployed people aged 15 to 24 as a percentage of the labour force of the same age, circa 2018

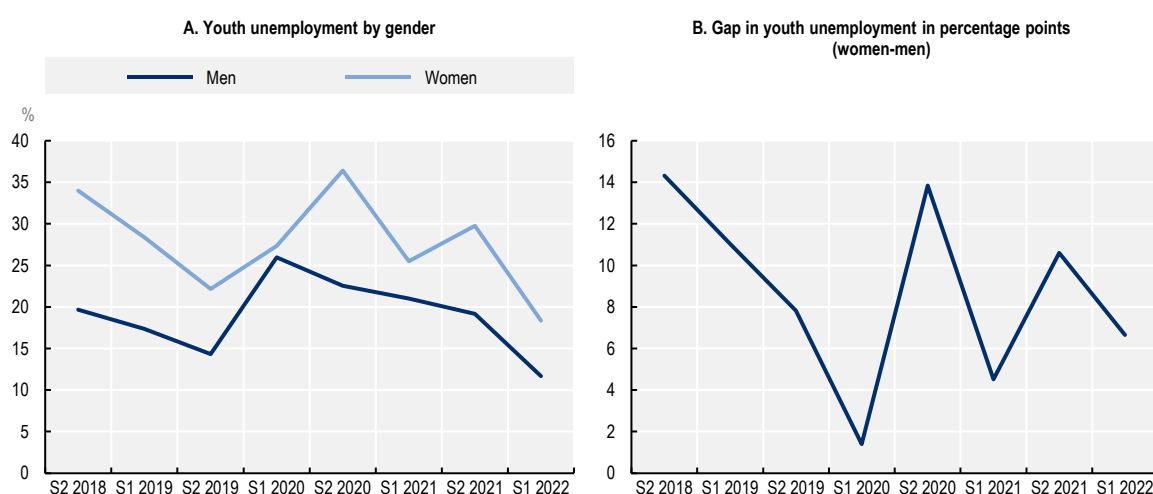


Source: DGEyC (2018_[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018_[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Nonetheless, by the first semester of 2022, the rate of unemployed youth had improved, accounting for just 14.3% of the total population in that age range. At 11.7% for young men and 18.3% for young women, the situation has improved for both sexes since 2018, despite spikes at the beginning of 2020 that lasted longer for women than for men (Figure 2.8). As a result, the gender gap is half what it was before the COVID-19 pandemic, narrowing from 14 percentage points in the second half of 2018 to 7 percentage points at the beginning of 2022. In 2020, the latest year available for OECD regions, the average stood at 15.2%, against 27.5% in Córdoba (OECD.Stat, 2022^[6]).

Figure 2.8. Youth unemployment rates for men and women have dropped and are currently closer than in 2018

Youth unemployment rate (people aged 15 to 24)



Source: DGESyC (2023^[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

The central role of the care economy in promoting gender equality in employment

Beyond factors related to the job market – such as occupational segregation, discrimination or education and skills – a significant reason for the decline in women’s employment, their participation in the workforce and their working hours during the COVID-19 pandemic is the increased unpaid childcare responsibilities that mothers typically took on more than fathers and those without children across OECD countries (OECD, 2021^[7]). Women shouldered more of the extra unpaid childcare duties during the COVID-19 outbreak than men and this increased load of unpaid work is associated with a lower likelihood of being in paid employment by the third quarter of 2020 (OECD, 2021^[7]). Pandemic outcomes like these reflect long-lasting inequalities in unpaid work and women’s lower wages, on average, compared to men, contributing to many women becoming “default” caregivers when the pandemic hit (OECD, 2021^[7]).

In order to advance on the 2030 Agenda – namely SDG 5 – through women’s equal access to paid work, it is key to recognise the critical importance of unpaid care work, making it less burdensome to increase productivity and free up time for those involved, and redistributing the work between women and men within and between families as well as other institutions providing care (UN Women, 2018^[8]). Globally, women perform 76% of all unpaid care work, which is more than triple the amount carried out by men (Addati et al., 2018^[9]). In addition, over the past three decades, the gap between women’s and men’s contributions to unpaid care work has only decreased by seven minutes per day (Addati et al., 2018^[9]). This disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women is hence increasingly acknowledged in

mainstream economic policy debates as a barrier to both economic growth and the economic empowerment of women (Folbre, 2006^[10]; World Bank, 2012^[11]; UN, 2016^[12]; OECD, 2019^[13]).

In 2021, the share of women employed in the sector of “Human Health and Services” in Córdoba stood at 69%, compared to 31% men. In other sectors, such as “Industry”, the share of women in employment was 24% compared to 76% men, and “Services” more largely employed 37% women against 63% men (DGEyC, 2022^[14]). Among the 129 500 people in paid employment in the care sector (which includes care work and domestic tasks within households), who are mostly (98.6%) female, only 37% were registered with the Social Security Bureau (“*Administración Nacional de la Seguridad Social*”, or ANSES) in 2021 (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). More than half (51%) of all workers in the care sector have not completed secondary school. SDG Target 5.4² provides four priority policy areas in addressing unpaid care work: infrastructure, public services, social protection and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family (UN, 2015^[15]). Depending on the extent to which governments formulate comprehensive strategies around these areas, options can be broadened for men and women alike in the care economy (i.e. services such as childcare, eldercare and healthcare) (OECD, 2019^[13]). Policies related to care, social protection, the labour market, migration and macroeconomic structure can indeed provide an enabling framework for decent care work, facilitating the recognition, redistribution and, where necessary, the reduction of unpaid care work, as well as promoting the representation care workers (Addati et al., 2018^[9]). Therefore, the care economy can ultimately contribute to a more equitable workforce by addressing the barriers and imbalances that disproportionately affect women.

- A major challenge for the province is the training and professionalisation of carers: 51% have not completed secondary school and 63% of women in the care sector are not formally registered and hence have no right to a pension discount (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). Building on existing programmes discussed below, further investment in education and training programmes for care workers would help improve the quality of care services and create more opportunities for career advancement. In turn, this can contribute to greater gender equality by ensuring that women in care professions have access to the same opportunities for growth and development as their male counterparts.
- A second challenge the province faces regarding the care economy is the provision of social protection for carers. Workers of the care sector (54.2%) are less likely to have health coverage than employed women overall (65.6%). Workers of the care sector also report low levels of perceived health (13.9% perceive their health to be fair to poor, compared to 12.7% of employed women, overall).
- Formalising the sector of the care economy constitutes a third challenge that would need to be addressed in tandem with national authorities. A significant portion of care work, particularly domestic work and informal childcare, occurs in the informal sector (Addati et al., 2018^[9]). Informal care work often lacks legal protections, decent working conditions and social security coverage (Addati et al., 2018^[9]). The absence of regulations and oversight tends to leave care workers vulnerable to exploitation, low wages and unsafe working conditions. The informal nature of care work also makes it challenging to ensure consistent quality and accountability in service provision (Addati et al., 2018^[9]).
- A fourth challenge for the development and impact of the care economy in Córdoba concerns services and infrastructure, namely in the inner areas of the province, calling for prioritisation in terms of investment. For instance, according to the most recent data available, 40 municipalities out of 427 (approximately 9%) do not have a health centre and their residents have to travel between 10 and 30 km to get to one (INDEC, 2010^[16]). Hence, some communities lack adequate access to affordable care services, which restricts women’s participation in the labour market and perpetuates gender inequality. In specific rural areas, there is also insufficient public infrastructure, including physical facilities and transportation systems, impeding the provision of care services. Expanding the construction and renovation of care facilities in close co-ordination with local actors in underserved areas could help respond to this challenge.

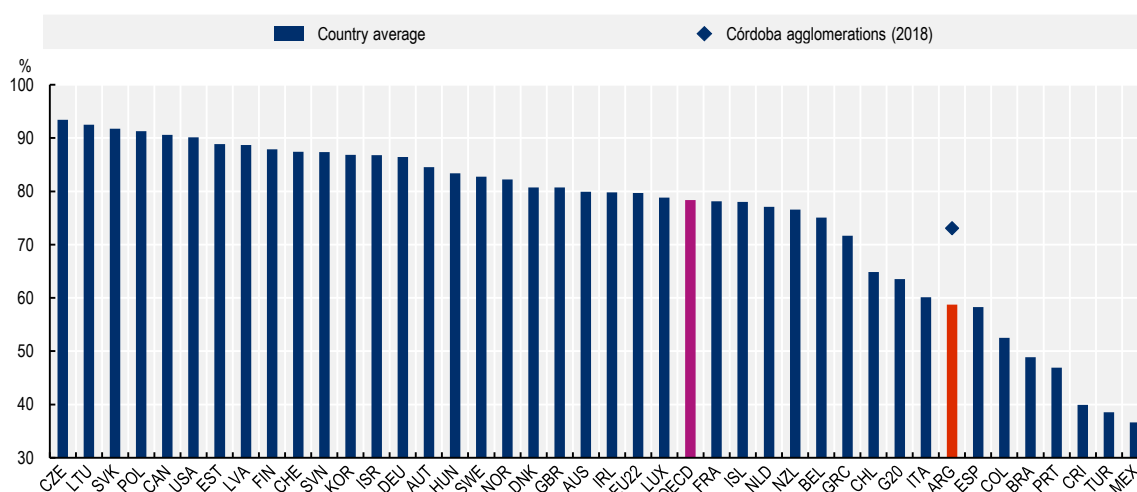
Education for employment

Despite relatively high levels of educational attainment in Córdoba, inequalities remain a concern

A skilled workforce is crucial for achieving the goals of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) (OECD, 2021^[11]). As a result, the OECD's localised framework includes an indicator measuring the percentage of the labour force with at least upper secondary education. In 2018, prior to the pandemic, 73% of individuals aged 25-64 in Córdoba's 4 main agglomerations had at least upper secondary education, which was slightly below but close to the OECD average of 78% and over 20 percentage points higher than the average of Latin American regions (Figure 2.9). In 2021, 27% of people aged 25-64 years in Córdoba had completed tertiary education, against 21% in other Latin American regions and 31% in OECD regions on average (OECD, 2022^[17]; DGEyC, 2022^[5]; OECD.Stat, 2022^[6]).

Figure 2.9. Córdoba's rates of educational attainment stand out in comparison with Latin American regions but remain below the OECD average

Percentage of the population aged 25 to 64 having completed at least upper secondary education, circa 2018

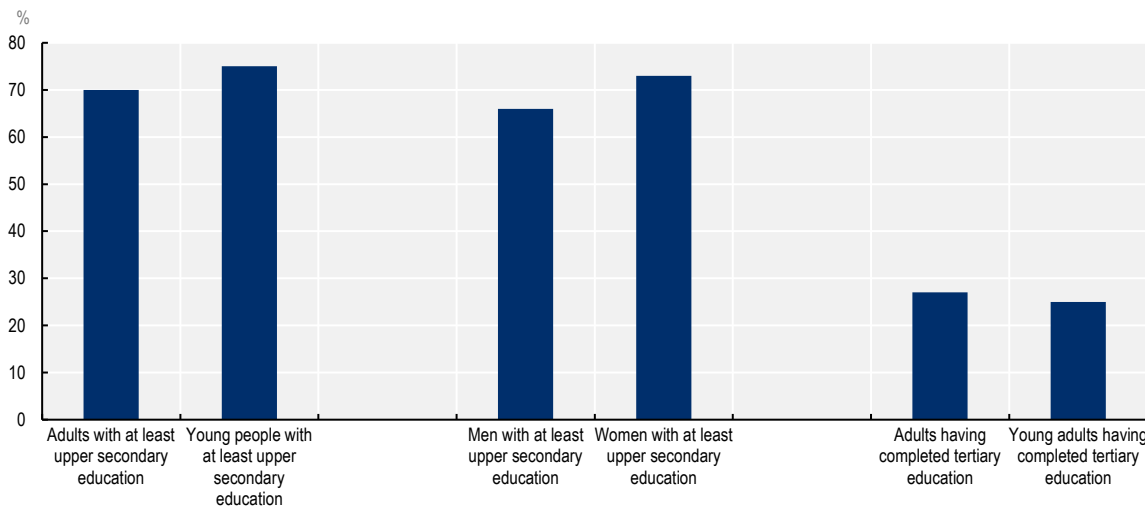


Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Current rates of educational attainment in Córdoba show that certain groups of the population may struggle more in the labour market than others, hence facing worse social outcomes. One-quarter of young adults (25-34) in the province completed higher education, 2 percentage points lower than the wider adult age group (25-64) (Figure 2.10). Nonetheless, completion rates for at least secondary education tell a more positive story, in which the generational gap is reversed: while 70% of Cordoban adults aged 25 to 64 had completed at least upper secondary education, this is now the case for 75% of the younger generation aged 19 to 24 (Figure 2.10). However, this also means that one-quarter of young people in Córdoba still fail to complete upper secondary education and face the highest risk of being neither employed nor in formal education or training (NEET). These young people not only miss out on immediate learning and employment opportunities but they are also more likely to suffer from long-term effects such as lower employment rates and lower earnings later in life, poor mental health and social exclusion (OECD, 2022^[18]).

Contrary to the unemployment rate discussed above, the gender gap in educational attainment is in favour of Cordoban women. Seven percentage points separate upper secondary completion rates for men (66%) and women (73%) as of the beginning of 2022 (Figure 2.10), a gap that matches the one reached at the height of the pandemic (first semester of 2020). These differences are reflected in the share of people who are economically active and who have completed at least upper secondary education: 65% of Cordoban men, against 79% of Cordoban women (for a population total of 71%) in 2022 (DGEyC, 2022^[5]).

Figure 2.10. Higher and secondary educational attainment rates in Córdoba show inequalities by age group and by sex (first semester of 2022)



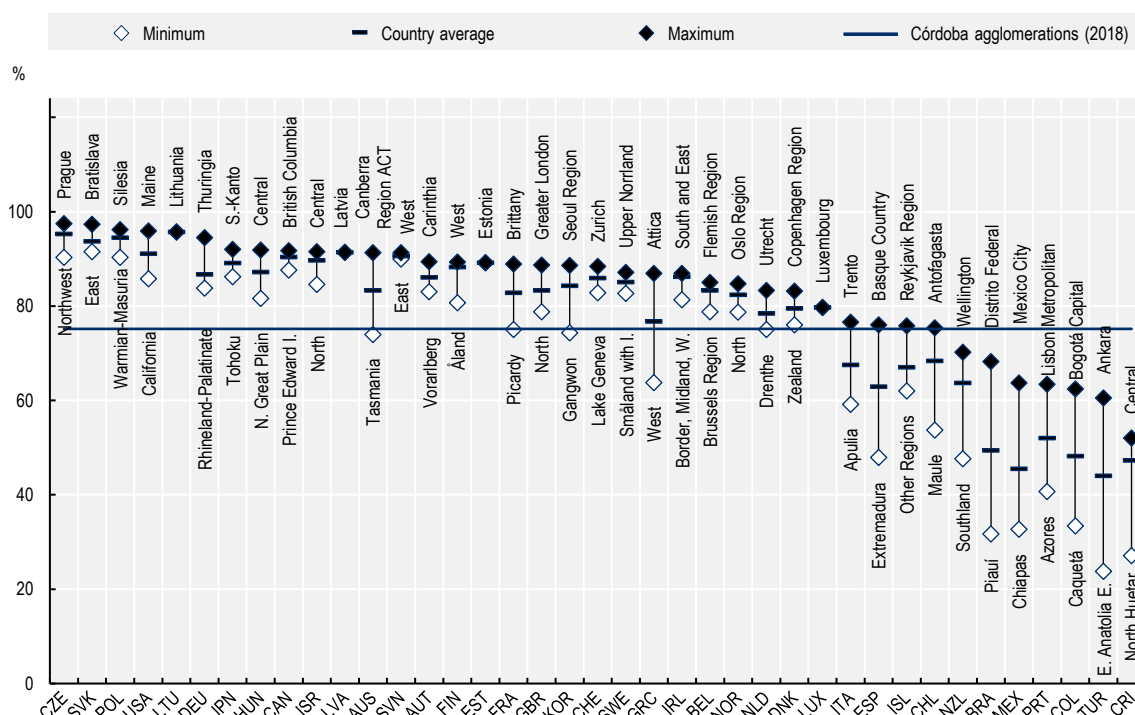
Note: Higher education refers to *educación superior* in Argentina, i.e. the education dispensed by universities, university institutes and institutes for higher education. For higher education, the adult age group is aged 25 to 64 and young people correspond to those aged 25-34. In Argentina, secondary education is mandatory for students aged 11 to 17. In this education category, adults refer to those aged 25 to 64 and young people to those aged 18-24.

Source: DGEyC (2023^[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, in Córdoba the percentage of the labour force aged 15 to 64 having completed at least upper secondary education was relatively high compared to regions in other Latin American countries. At 75%, education in the labour force stood at approximately the same level as the best-performing region in Chile (Antofagasta) and higher than all regions in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico (Figure 2.11). By the first semester of 2022, the performance of Córdoba on this indicator had decreased by almost 4 percentage points, to 71.3%. This may be linked to different impacts of the pandemic on the education system, resulting in learning losses, such as school closures, teacher absences and the disruption of national examinations (OECD, 2022^[18]). Moreover, the difference between men and women is stark: while 79% of adult women in the labour force have completed at least upper secondary education, this is the case for only 65% of men (DGEyC, 2022^[5]).

Figure 2.11. Educational attainment in Córdoba's labour force is relatively high compared to Latin American peers

Percentage of the labour force aged 15 to 64 having completed at least upper secondary education, circa 2018



Note: Upper secondary education in Argentina is unlikely to be completed at 15 or 16 years old, which could generate a negative bias in the performance of Córdoba.

Source: DGEyC (2018_[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018_[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Youth unemployment rates highlight the importance of education in preparing individuals for the job market in Córdoba

Across all 60 regions within the 7 OECD countries that provide regional data, youth unemployment rates surpass those of other adults in the working-age bracket. In 2021, the median gap was 11 percentage points throughout OECD regions (21% for youth vs. 10% for the overall working-age population) (OECD, 2022_[19]). The discrepancy between youth and overall unemployment tends to be more pronounced in regions with high levels of unemployment overall. During periods of business cycle downturn, young individuals seem to encounter more significant challenges compared to their older, more experienced peers, particularly in weaker local job markets. This point holds for the Province of Córdoba. Although youth unemployment in the Province of Córdoba at the beginning of 2022 (14%) was half its level at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic (28% at the end of 2020) (DGEyC, 2022_[5]), this is still over double that of adults, which stood at 6%, and is also relatively high compared to the OECD average of 10.5% (DGEyC, 2022_[5]; OECD, 2023_[20]).

Both the quality and length of the schooling that people receive have an impact on their transition from education to work, as do other factors such as labour market conditions, the economic environment and the cultural context (OECD, 2022_[18]). Yet, regardless of the economic climate, education systems should aim to ensure that individuals have the skills the labour market needs to improve this transition. One way is to counterbalance unemployment whilst investing in future economic growth by building the necessary

skills through public investment in education (e.g. in instructional services in education institutions such as classrooms or teachers or in ancillary services such as meals or transport to schools). Alternatively, public support can go towards employers through the creation of incentives to hire young people (OECD, 2022^[18]).

Unemployment can result in enduring repercussions for individuals, particularly when they undergo extended periods of unemployment or inactivity, leading to discouragement. The issue of young people falling into the NEET category is a significant global policy concern, as it adversely affects their future work opportunities and social outcomes, even in the long run. As a result, it is crucial to implement policies that not only prevent young people from becoming NEET initially but also assist those who have become NEET in reintegrating into the education system or employment (OECD, 2022^[18]). Across OECD countries, approximately 16% of 18-24 year-olds are NEET, while in Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica, the share is over 25% (OECD, 2022^[18]). According to the most recent data available in Córdoba, 15.3% of young people between 14 and 24 years of age fell in the NEET category in 2010 (INDEC, 2010^[21]).

Considering the current challenges the province faces in terms of education for employment, several policy areas are key for better preparing individuals for the job market in Córdoba, highlighting the importance of education for employment.

- A first challenge that the Province of Córdoba is facing is to ensure that the educational offer responds to the demands of employers. An adequate educational system helps equip all individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform well in their chosen careers. This includes technical skills, problem-solving abilities and critical thinking, which are essential for success in the modern job market. However, in Córdoba, many individuals are not in a position to aspire to pursue higher levels of education, namely in rural areas and in peripheral areas of cities where issues such as a lack of digital connectivity and economic vulnerability hamper their exposure to academic opportunities and what the educational system can offer them.
- Second, Córdoba needs to incentivise further training opportunities within the productive sector, including for youth, people with disabilities and adults seeking professional reconversions. To take the example of youth, as stated above, 14% of young people aged 15 to 24 are unemployed: 12% of young men and 18% of young women as of the beginning of 2022 (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). The importance of this challenge was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing job crisis (OECD, 2020^[22]): more short-term and flexible training (from non-formal and formal educational systems) has been required to facilitate mobility across firms and worker reintegration to the labour market. However, lifelong learning – measured as the share of the adult population enrolled in any form of training or learning – is still low in most OECD regions and unequal within one-third of OECD countries (out of 22 with available data) (OECD, 2020^[23]).
- Third, Córdoba needs to make its school curriculum future-proof by integrating skills that will be in demand in the years to come, such as “soft skills”. As digital technologies displace labour in daily tasks, they also create new opportunities for workers with non-routine cognitive skills, such as social and emotional skills and creativity. To remain competitive, workers will, therefore, need to acquire new skills progressively, demanding a certain degree of flexibility, as well as a positive attitude towards lifelong learning (OECD, 2022^[24]). Skills such as co-operation, tolerance and empathy are also crucial for citizens and nations alike to achieve the SDGs and to participate and contribute effectively towards building democratic institutions (OECD, 2021^[25]). In the United Kingdom, among the 30 most transversal keywords across online job postings, there are communication skills, teamwork collaboration and planning skills (OECD, 2021^[25]). However, several barriers have been identified in the uptake of this shift by the educational system, such as the lack of training for teachers in this regard, high drop-out levels in formal education and rigidity of school curricula, particularly in secondary education.

- Last but not least, the Province of Córdoba is confronted with inequalities in access to education, and, therefore, in access to employment. These inequalities are both social and spatial. The social groups suffering from unequal access to education include people with disabilities, individuals who dropped out of secondary education, the elderly and people with low socio-economic status (Annex A, Figure A A.6). Spatial inequalities mainly affect populations from the inner areas of the province, as well as in the Northwest, due to weak or little Internet access. There is also a clear urban/rural divide in favour of those living in big cities and, within cities, poorer neighbourhoods have less access to opportunities in the formal education system. Data from 2010 (the most recent available) showed that while 85% of young people aged 12-18 were enrolled in school in the department of Punilla, this was only the case for 74% in Pocho (INDEC, 2010^[26]). The largest difference between the province's four main agglomerations in educational attainment for the adult population is around 6 percentage points between the capital region Gran Córdoba and Río Cuarto-Las Higueras (OECD, 2019^[27]). Giving individuals greater flexibility and capacity to determine their own educational paths in line with their evolving needs, contexts and interests provides them with the best chance of fulfilling their potential – maximising opportunity and enhancing equity (OECD, 2023^[28]). This can demand education systems to be more dynamic in the face of economic and societal challenges (OECD, 2023^[28]).

Housing and access to services

Housing is a key component of people's well-being that has also been identified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the 2030 Agenda (SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities).³ For all individuals, housing is not only important for shelter but also for offering a sense of privacy, personal space and safety (OECD, 2011^[29]). Decent housing conditions are key for people's health and have an impact on childhood development (WHO, 2018^[30]; OECD, 2023^[31]).

In metropolitan areas across the OECD, purchasing a home in the city centre is, on average, 30% costlier than in suburban areas (OECD, 2022^[19]). In Mexico, for example, while house prices in metropolitan areas are 11% higher than the country average, houses far away from a metropolitan area are 15% lower (OECD, 2022^[19]). Nevertheless, following the COVID-19 pandemic and the surge in remote work, housing prices have experienced a more rapid growth in suburban locations compared to central districts. Although there still is debate about whether the rise in teleworking opportunities will prompt individuals to depart from major cities completely to settle in smaller towns or rural regions, the appeal of urban areas remains intact due to job prospects and access to various services and facilities (OECD, 2021^[32]).

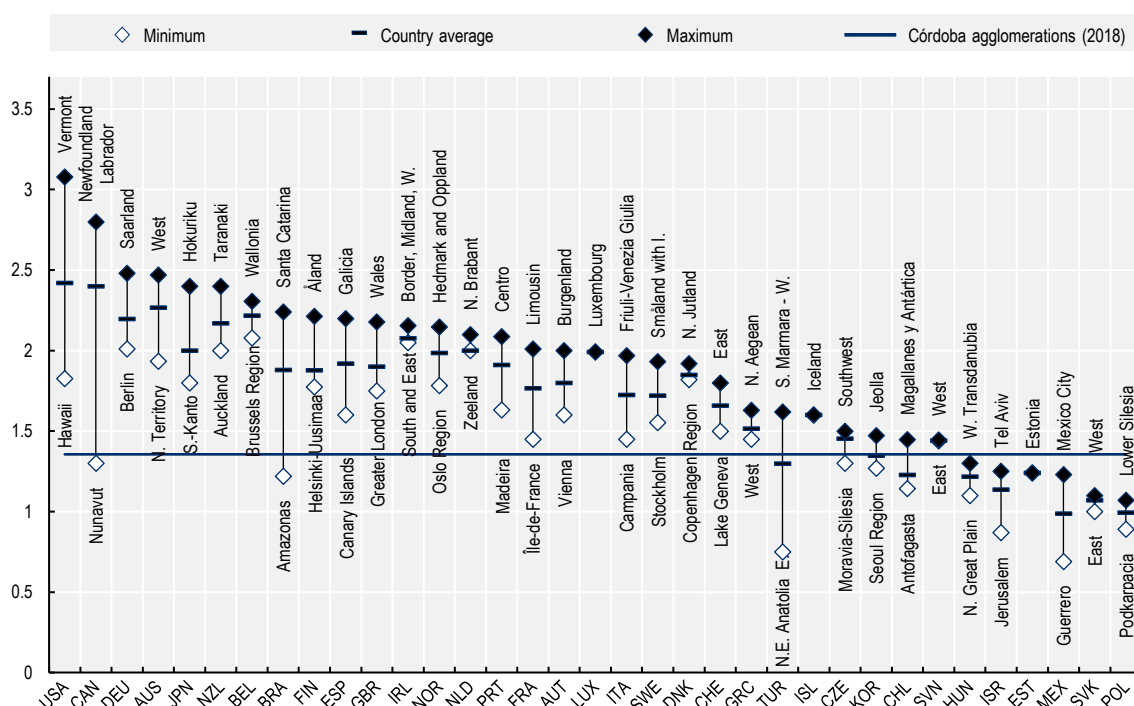
These services include health services, which the COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted. From the onset of COVID-19, a change in policy has been put in place to allow healthcare workers other than doctors (such as nurses) to perform teleconsultations. Yet even before the pandemic, OECD data showed that telemedicine services have the potential to have a positive impact on various aspects of health system performance (for example equity, efficiency, access, cost-effectiveness and quality, including effectiveness, safety and patient-centredness) (Oliveira Hashiguchi, 2020^[33]). In Córdoba, the provincial government has been implementing the Si Salud programme in provincial public hospitals since 2018, with the aim to modernise hospital care and management processes throughout the provincial health network (Government of Córdoba, 2020^[34]). Nonetheless, the rapid uptake of remote care services during the pandemic has the potential to exacerbate inequalities in access to care – namely in terms of housing and area of residence (OECD, 2023^[35]).

Housing affordability, housing conditions and access to services could be further improved in Córdoba

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the average number of rooms per person in Córdoba fell short of the majority of OECD regions, although it was in line with the Latin American average. Poor quality or inadequate housing is a serious challenge for cities, with economic, social and environmental consequences (OECD, 2023^[31]). Overcrowded living spaces, for example, can adversely impact child development and adult health, among other aspects of well-being (Tunstall, 2013^[36]). Within the OECD localised indicator framework for the SDGs, the rooms per person metric serves as a proxy for household overcrowding conditions. In the four 4 agglomerations of Córdoba, residents had approximately 1.3 rooms available to them in 2018. This is about 0.5 rooms fewer per person compared to the OECD regions' average (nearly 1.8 rooms per person). In roughly 4 out of 5 OECD regions, individuals had access to a greater number of rooms than in Córdoba. However, Córdoba's figure is consistent with the regional average in Latin America (1.3 rooms per person in Brazil, Chile and Mexico) (Figure 2.12).

Figure 2.12. The average number of rooms per person in Córdoba is close to that of other Latin American regions

Rooms per person, circa 2018



Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

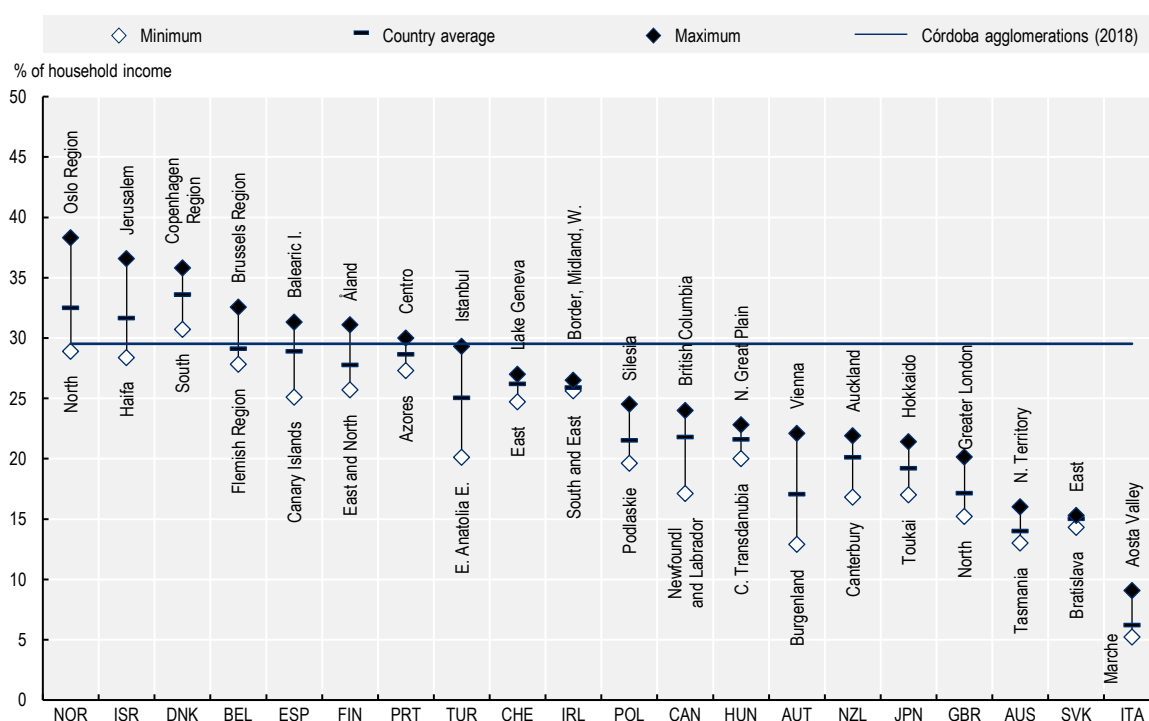
In the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic, improving housing affordability was a challenge for Córdoba. SDG Target 11.1 seeks to guarantee access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all, an area where Córdoba can make progress. In the 4 primary agglomerations of Córdoba, housing expenses (rental costs only) constituted approximately 30% of the total household gross income in 2018, as opposed to 20% on average in OECD regions, where housing expenses also encompass services (Figure 2.13).⁴ Consequently, housing expenses in Córdoba agglomerations were higher than those in 86% of the

observed OECD regions. Although Córdoba agglomerations represent the province's urban territory and housing expenditure may be expected to be higher than in regions with extensive rural areas (as is the case for numerous OECD TL2 regions),⁵ several urban areas in OECD countries, such as Vienna (Austria), Auckland (New Zealand) or Greater London (United Kingdom) have housing expenses that account for less than a quarter of the total household disposable income (OECD, 2019_[27]; 2021_[11]).

Nonetheless, the most recent data available suggest that housing affordability has improved in the Province of Córdoba since 2018. At the end of 2021, Cordobans spent a quarter of their household income on rental payments (25%), i.e. 5 percentage points less than pre-pandemic levels at the end of 2018. However, they witnessed a slight uptick in 2022, taking expenses back to the levels endured during most of the pandemic, at around 27% (Figure 2.15).

Figure 2.13. Housing expenditure in Córdoba was higher than in many OECD regions pre-pandemic

Percentage of total household gross income used to pay rent, circa 2018



Note: In OECD regions, housing expenditure includes, besides rent, expenditure on electricity, gas and water and it is expressed as a share of disposable income. For this reason, the comparability of this indicator between OECD regions and the Córdoba agglomerations is limited. In this graph, the value for Córdoba should be seen only as a preliminary approximation of total housing expenditure.

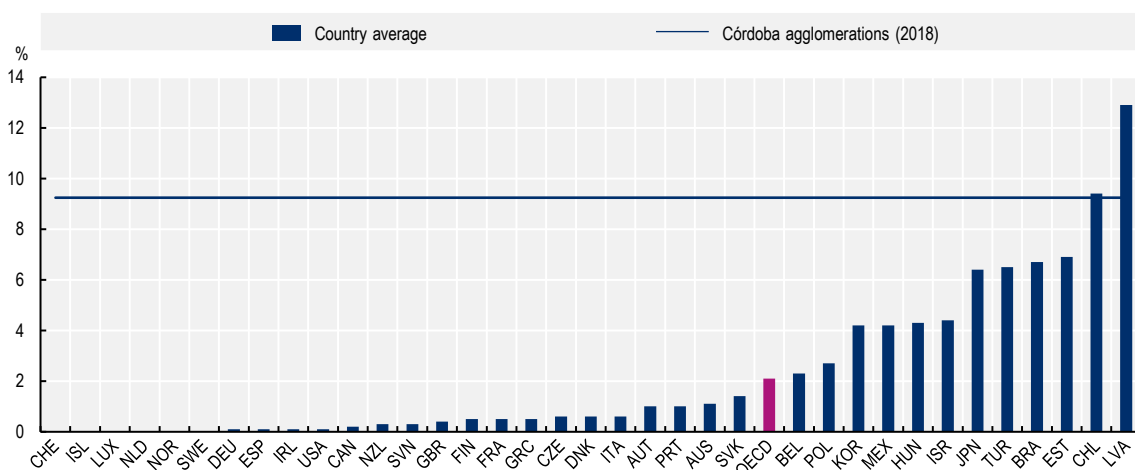
Source: DGEyC (2018_[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018_[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Beyond the size and cost of housing, the quality of housing is also important when evaluating the broader impacts of housing on sustainable development. One of the measures of housing quality is the presence (or not) of basic sanitary facilities: a lack of basic sanitary facilities, such as an indoor flushing toilet, is a clear sign of poor quality of housing and poses a high risk to health (Eurofound, 2016_[37]). While considerable progress has been made in terms of increasing access to sanitation services in Latin America in general (OECD, 2021_[38]), millions still lack these services, particularly in rural areas (World Bank, 2019_[39]). The share of population who lived in dwellings without private access to an indoor flushing toilet dropped from 9.2% in 2018 to 8.2% at the beginning of 2022 (Figure 2.14 and Figure 2.15). However, there

is still margin for improvement compared to the OECD area on average where 97% of households have an indoor flushing toilet for their sole use (OECD, 2022^[40]).

Figure 2.14. A relatively large portion of the Cordoban population lacked basic sanitary facilities prior to the COVID-19 pandemic

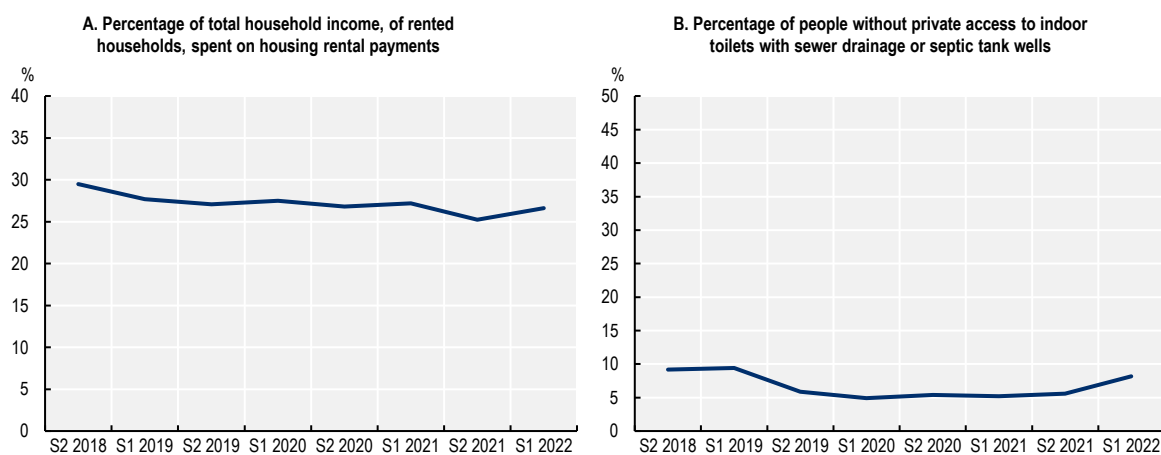
Share of the population who live in dwellings without private access to an indoor flushing toilet connected to sewer lines or to a septic tank, circa 2018



Note: In Córdoba, this indicator refers to the absence of an internal toilet for the exclusive use of the household via sewerage or a cesspit with a septic tank. People who live in a household with an internal bathroom for exclusive use, with a cesspit but who do not have a septic tank, are included in the percentage shown by this indicator (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). Data for Brazil, Canada and Korea refer to the percentage of households. Data for Mexico refer to the percentage of people living in private dwellings without a toilet, those for South Africa refer to the percentage of households not having access to a flushing toilet connected to public sewerage system or septic tank; and those for the United States to the percentage of total occupied dwellings with no flush toilet (OECD, 2017^[41]).

Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

Figure 2.15. Housing affordability has improved slightly in the Province of Córdoba since 2018, whereas housing conditions still show room for improvement



Source: DGESyC (2023^[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

Sustainable development in Córdoba requires improved access to services, whilst considering the benefits of telemedicine and teleworking in a post-pandemic era

As laid out in SDG 11, sustainable housing development aims to create communities where residents have easy access to essential services such as healthcare, education, public transportation and recreational facilities. The areas where people live determine the availability of many different services and by ensuring that these services are within reach for everyone, local governments can reduce the need for long commutes, decrease traffic congestion and lower greenhouse gas emissions (OECD, 2021^[42]).

However, access to certain services has shifted online since the COVID-19 outbreak. Regional policy has evolved to better co-ordinate policy areas such as housing, connectivity, healthcare, employment and transportation, particularly in non-metropolitan areas that are underserved in terms of access to the Internet. For instance, connectivity has played a major role in access to telemedicine, which involves the remote delivery of healthcare services through digital communication technologies. The pandemic has also accelerated the rise of remote working, providing new opportunities for regions outside large cities to mitigate population decline and ageing by attracting new residents through more affordable housing and lower costs of living to revitalise communities (OECD, 2021^[42]). Across 28 countries surveyed, employees work an average of 1.5 days from home and desire to telework an average of 1.7 days in the future (OECD, 2023^[31]). As a result, there is renewed interest in converting underused commercial buildings and office space into residential housing in cities despite implementation difficulties due to financial, technical and regulatory challenges (OECD, 2023^[31]). Moreover, the greater adoption of remote working will imply new commuting patterns for some workers. As a result, in some cities, the relocation of certain workers and others getting left behind could lead to new, increased demand for transport connections. If not well-managed, such patterns could have an impact on a number of areas, including public service delivery (e.g. health and education) (OECD, 2021^[42]).

Several policy areas are key for improving sustainable housing development in Córdoba, highlighting the importance of access to certain services in a post-pandemic world. Access to services, telemedicine and teleworking play essential roles in sustainable housing development in the Province of Córdoba. By incorporating the following elements into housing development plans, the provincial government can create more environmentally friendly, economically viable and socially inclusive communities that improve the quality of life for Cordoban residents and contribute to the province's overall sustainability.

- The first important challenge in this regard is insufficient access to essential services in the province, namely due to its relatively large surface area and the number of small towns and villages that require services for their populations. The Province of Córdoba covers an area of 165 321 square kilometres (km²) and is the fifth largest province in the country in terms of territory, representing 5.94% of the total national surface area. It is the province with the largest number of local governments, with a total of 427 (INDEC, 2010^[26]). Students and workers from the different municipalities have unequal access to public transportation to reach their centres of study and places of work respectively, making private vehicle hire common practice – namely in the inner areas of the province. The inter-urban transport service in the province reaches 352 municipalities, all of which are in urban areas: in other words, 75 municipalities are deprived of transportation services (18%) (INDEC, 2010^[16]). In addition, this deprivation affects elderly people from rural areas in need of a means of mobility to reach healthcare centres, as seen in communes such as Las Isletillas in the department of Tercero Arriba. This phenomenon has also been observed across the OECD in 2018: in the urban cores of metropolitan areas, 87% of the population had access to a hospital within 30 minutes of driving, against only 57% of the people living in the commuting zones (OECD, 2018^[43]).⁶ As mentioned previously, almost 1 in 10 municipalities of the province (approximately 9%) does not have a health centre and their residents have to travel between 10 and 30 km to get to one (INDEC, 2010^[16]). These difficulties encountered by a share of the population highlight the need to improve accessibility to quality services, particularly in non-

metropolitan areas, namely by developing housing and transportation policies that are forward-looking and well-co-ordinated with other areas, such as education and healthcare, and across different levels of government (national, provincial and local).

- The second challenge is to increase Internet access in certain areas to expand access to employment opportunities in the framework of SDG 8 and the uptake of remote working. Bridging the regional divide in access to the Internet will become increasingly important as households, governments and businesses transition to the digital terrain. In OECD countries, analysis of the access to high-speed broadband reveals a clear urban-rural divide (OECD, 2020^[23]) and the same phenomenon is increasingly visible in the Province of Córdoba. In Córdoba, there is a clear lack of Internet access in areas of the northwest of the province, in the mountainous areas (known as the Sierras de Córdoba) and in peri-urban municipalities. In the area of Gran Córdoba alone, 15% of the population lacked Internet access in the agglomerations of over 500 000 people at the end of 2021 (INDEC, 2021^[44]).
- Third, Córdoba's peri-urban and rural areas are priority areas for the province's achievement of SDG Target 3.8: "Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all" (UN, 2015^[15]). According to the 2010 population census, of the 264 municipalities with less than 2 000 inhabitants, 40 municipalities have no health centre and the distance to other health centres ranges between 10 and 30 km (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). A potential solution to these disparities in access to healthcare is being explored in the province through enhanced connectivity in underserved areas with a view to provide telemedicine, understood as the provision of health services through information and communication technologies. As mentioned above, OECD data collection showed that telemedicine services have the potential to have a positive impact on various aspects of health system performance (e.g. equity, efficiency, access, cost-effectiveness and quality, including effectiveness, safety and patient-centredness) (Oliveira Hashiguchi, 2020^[33]).

Bridging the digital divide

The term "digital divide" is a broad concept commonly used to refer to different levels of access and use of information and communication technology (ICT) and, more specifically, to the gaps in access and use of Internet-based digital services. Broadband access, as a general-purpose technology, provides the physical means for using these services (OECD, 2018^[45]; 2021^[46]). The significant surge in remote work due to COVID-19 restrictions imposed in many countries has intensified the demand for fast and reliable Internet access, as well as essential digital equipment. Nevertheless, certain regions within countries lack adequate infrastructure to fully capitalise on the benefits brought about by digitalisation. Narrowing the regional disparities in accessing high-speed broadband connections and necessary devices will grow in importance as households, governments and businesses increasingly transition their operations to the digital realm (OECD, 2020^[23]). In December 2020, the OECD area underwent a record addition of 21 million new high-speed broadband subscriptions. In parallel, businesses have increased their reliance on communication networks to support emerging digital applications and enterprises (OECD, 2022^[47]). Although the growing demand for digital infrastructure is helping bridge some regional digital gaps, regions and cities continue to have unequal capabilities to fully capitalise on digitalisation (OECD, 2022^[19]).

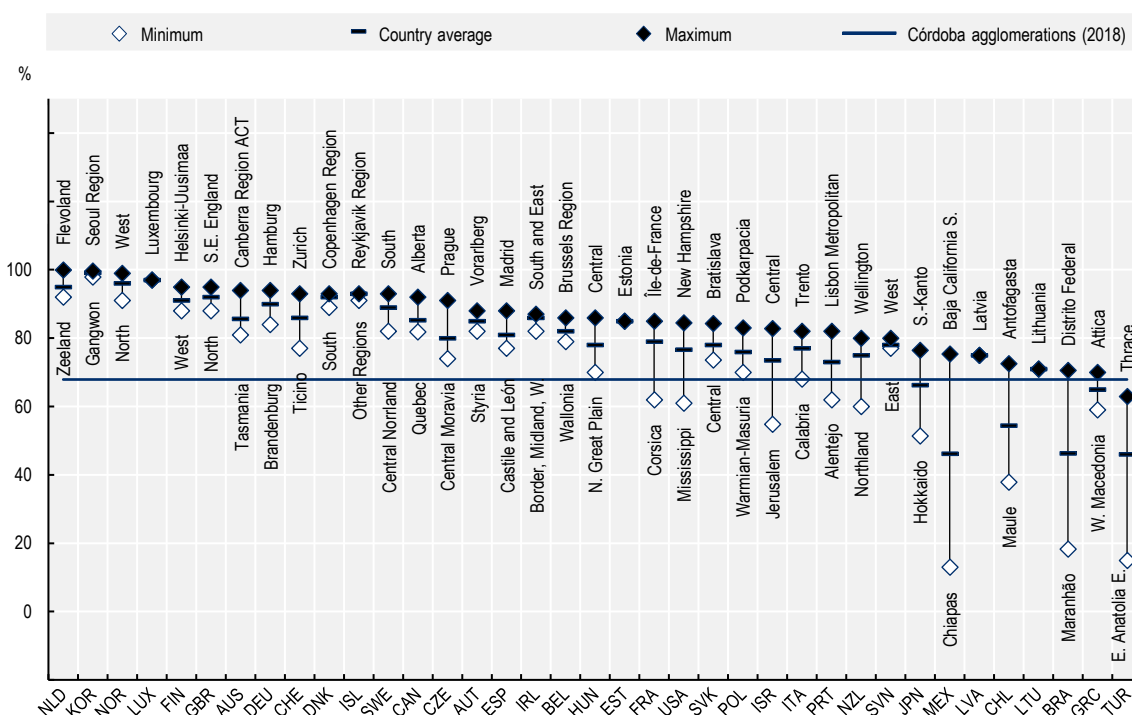
Increasing access to high-speed Internet in underserved areas is crucial for bridging the digital divide and enabling remote work opportunities in the province

In 2018, Internet connectivity in Córdoba was marginally below the level in most OECD regions (Figure 2.16) (OECD, 2021^[1]). The aim of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals) is to bolster the means of

implementation and reinvigorate the worldwide alliance for sustainable development (UN, 2022^[48]). ICT is a crucial element that promotes this global partnership for sustainable development, as highlighted in SDG Target 17.8. In this regard, the OECD uses the share of households with Internet access as an indicator for the use of “enabling technologies”. Before the pandemic, almost 70% of households in the 4 largest agglomerations of Córdoba had broadband Internet access in 2018, which was near the OECD regions’ average of 74% (OECD, 2021^[1]). In comparison to other Latin American regions, the percentage of households with Internet access was relatively high in Córdoba: for example, Internet access in Córdoba’s agglomerations surpassed the national averages in Brazil, Chile and Mexico (OECD, 2021^[1]). Despite a slight decrease in the percentage of households with broadband Internet access during the first half of 2020 due to the pandemic, the latest data from the first half of 2022 show a significant increase to 83.6%, close to the average of OECD regions of 85% in 2021 (DGEyC, 2022^[5]).

Figure 2.16. In 2018, the connectivity to Internet in Córdoba was slightly lower than in most OECD regions

Percentage of households with Internet access, circa 2018



Note: While this indicator refers to broadband Internet access for most OECD regions, this restriction does not apply for the Córdoba agglomerations.

Source: DGEyC (2018^[3]), *Encuesta de Bienestar [Well-being Survey]*, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos; OECD (2018^[4]), *OECD Regional Statistics (database)*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

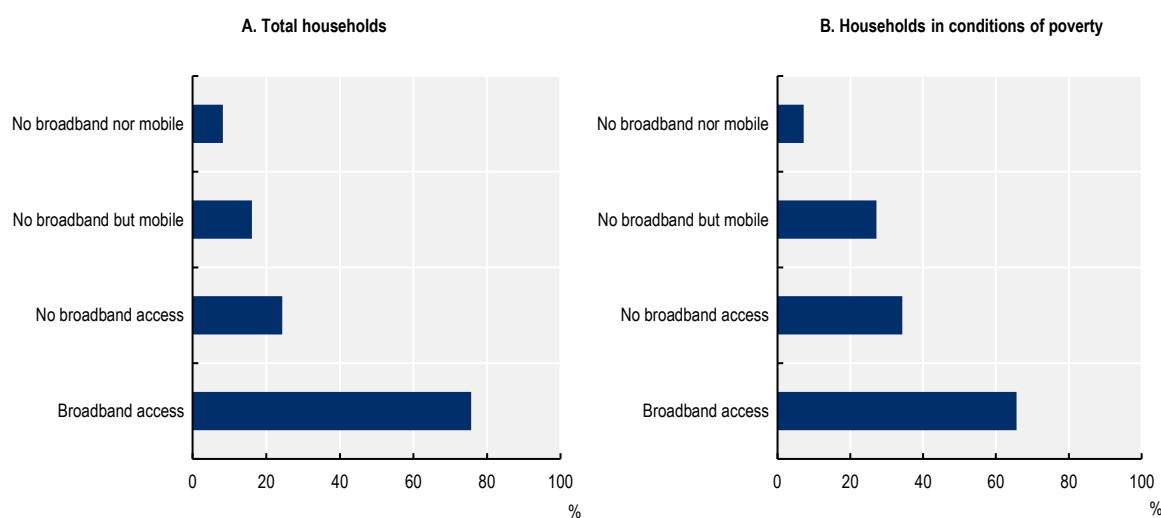
Internet access at home is not always a prerequisite to using the Internet. Mobile Internet, which is increasingly widespread, allows people to use the Internet without a connection in their home. For example, in the OECD, the share of people using the Internet is higher than that of households with access to the Internet (OECD, 2019^[49]). In Córdoba, the 24% of households who do not have access to broadband include 16% who do have access to the Internet via a mobile device and 8% who have neither broadband at home nor access to the Internet via a mobile device (Figure 2.17).

While the majority of Cordoban people now have access to the Internet via broadband or a mobile device, the digital gap persists. The province has seen a significant increase in the number of kilometres of fibre optic cables laid, from 5 549 in 2019 to 5 700 by 2022 (Agencia Conectividad Córdoba, 2023^[50]). However, at a socio-economic level, over a third (34%) of poor households do not have access to broadband, of which 7% do not have access to Internet via a mobile device either (Figure 2.17).⁷ As a comparison, on average in OECD countries, two in three households in rural areas have access to high-speed broadband (OECD, 2020^[23]). In terms of gender, access to Internet via broadband is 5 percentage points lower in female-led households (73%) than in male-led households (78%) in Córdoba (DGEyC, 2022^[5]).

Across the OECD, the digital gap also exists at a spatial level: a metropolitan vs. non-metropolitan digital divide exists in all OECD countries and regions. In the first quarter of 2022, people from OECD countries living in metropolitan areas experienced, on average, 40% faster fixed Internet connections than those in regions far from metropolitan areas (OECD, 2022^[19]). Beyond access to Internet, this also means that a non-negligible portion of the population cannot develop the digital skills necessary for opening job prospects, in particular for working remotely. Time-saving opportunities, new ways to access information and social networking all depend on people's ability to take advantage of the various possibilities provided by high-speed Internet (OECD, 2019^[49]).

Figure 2.17. The digital gap persists in the Province of Córdoba

Access to Internet via broadband and mobile devices, first semester of 2021



Source: DGEyC (2023^[2]), *Datos Abiertos*, <https://datosestadistica.cba.gov.ar/> (accessed on 4 December 2023).

Improving digital connectivity and skills is key to achieving inclusive digital transformation and sustainable development in the province

Reliable digital connectivity is a critical component of digital transformation, acting as an “invisible thread” across various economic sectors (OECD, 2021^[46]). It is particularly important as governments increasingly rely on remote work and broadband connectivity for public service provision (OECD, 2021^[46]). However, digital disparities can hinder this transition, influenced by population density, demographics, proximity to urban areas and socio-economic aspects. These disparities can also be affected by business characteristics such as size (OECD, 2021^[46]).

In the Province of Córdoba, digital connectivity is vital for achieving SDGs as it enables access to education, health information and market opportunities, thereby promoting quality education, good health

and economic growth. It also fosters economic growth and innovation by allowing small and medium-sized enterprises to access global markets, encouraging e-commerce and facilitating entrepreneurship. This can lead to job creation, poverty reduction and sustainable economic development. Digital technologies can also have positive environmental impacts despite their resource requirements. Importantly, in regions like Córdoba with strategic governance priorities, digital connectivity can bridge the digital divide and promote social inclusion, enabling marginalised communities to access essential services and participate in civic activities. By reducing inequalities and promoting inclusivity, digital connectivity contributes to building more equitable societies (OECD, 2021^[46]; 2022^[51]).

Nonetheless, the Province of Córdoba is currently facing several challenges in narrowing the digital gap and hence in its progress on the 2030 Agenda. These challenges include a lack of infrastructure for digital connectivity in rural and peri-urban areas of the province, the lack of digital skills among certain segments of the population and a lack of digital equipment.

- The lack of digital infrastructure in the Province of Córdoba is at the root of the socio-economic gap in access to the Internet, of which many rural and peri-urban areas are deprived. While in October 2023, departments such as Marcos Juárez counted with the commercial presence for Internet access in 21 of 24 municipalities, this was the case for just 1 of 8 in the department of Minas, 3 of 7 in Pocho and 4 of 11 in San Javier, highlighting a deprivation in the northwest of the province and the Traslasierra (Agencia Conectividad Córdoba, 2023^[50]). To promote an inclusive digital transformation in Córdoba, policies should expand high-quality broadband connectivity, target existing spatial gaps, as well as offer meaningful opportunities to equip everyone with the skills to use digital tools. Where private funding is not enough, analysis in Group of Twenty (G20) countries has shown that some initiatives to bridge connectivity divides in rural and remote areas may require government financing or a focus on public management that can increase coverage and reduce costs (OECD, 2021^[46]). Beyond reducing deployment costs and promoting market forces, initiatives to bridge connectivity gaps may include demand aggregation models based on local knowledge through community networks, for example (OECD, 2021^[46]).
- In certain neighbourhoods and rural areas of Córdoba that are deprived of essential services, there is a strong tendency for residents to lack digital infrastructure and, consequently, digital skills. In order to reap the benefits of digitalisation, access to digital infrastructure needs to be complemented by a widespread adoption of technologies and users equipped with digital skills (OECD, 2020^[23]). In the OECD, almost 11% of people do not use the Internet or do not have access to a computer (OECD, 2020^[23]). There are also large regional disparities in the use of digital technology within countries, as the share of people using the Internet in the regions with the highest use is 10 percentage points higher than in the region with the lowest use, on average (OECD, 2020^[23]). In Córdoba, digital skills are particularly rare among the elderly, people with severe handicaps, women and those who are economically vulnerable. For example, individuals with a primary level of education are over 4 times more likely not to have access to the Internet than those with a higher level of education (25.9% versus 6.1% (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). These inequalities are also visible by sector of employment: Cordobans working in the construction sector are 10 times more likely to lack access to the Internet than those working in human health and social services (41.7% as opposed to 4.1% respectively) (DGEyC, 2022^[5]). To bridge skill gaps and ultimately advance on SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), Córdoba should consider ensuring further access to quality education, reskilling and upskilling programmes to gain the digital skills needed for the future, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged and elderly populations. Addressing the digital gender gap requires tackling gender stereotypes, enabling enhanced, safer and more affordable access to digital tools, and removing barriers to girls' and women's participation in the digital world (OECD, 2022^[52]).
- In areas of the province with few devices allowing Internet access, the population has less potential to take advantage of online educational content, information from media outlets from other

provinces and social networks. Increasingly, products and services are going online; yet in the city of Córdoba, 15% of people claim to not have a mobile phone, in a country where it is an increasingly important channel to access the Internet (Fernández, 2021^[53]; INDEC, 2023^[54]). This digital transformation is arguably as significant and ground-breaking as earlier industrial transformations, driven by general-purpose technologies such as steam or electricity (OECD, 2020^[55]). Along with the spread of high-speed broadband (see previous subsection), digital equipment and technologies can introduce new growth opportunities, improve productivity (e.g. three-dimensional printing), facilitate social connections (e.g. virtual reality) and change the way economic activities affect the environment and how services are delivered (e.g. tele-education and telemedicine) (OECD, 2020^[55]).

Spotlight on co-benefits and potential policy tensions across the four axes: Using the SDGs to address interlinked sustainability challenges

The Province of Córdoba can use the SDGs as a forward-looking framework to address global challenges and trends that impact its sustainable development. In the context of Córdoba's four strategic priorities, the use of the SDGs as a lens through which synergies can be identified is of utmost importance, contributing to further advancing a comprehensive and balanced approach to sustainable development. This section highlights the province's main interlinked sustainability challenges and their relevance to the SDGs (Figure 2.19).

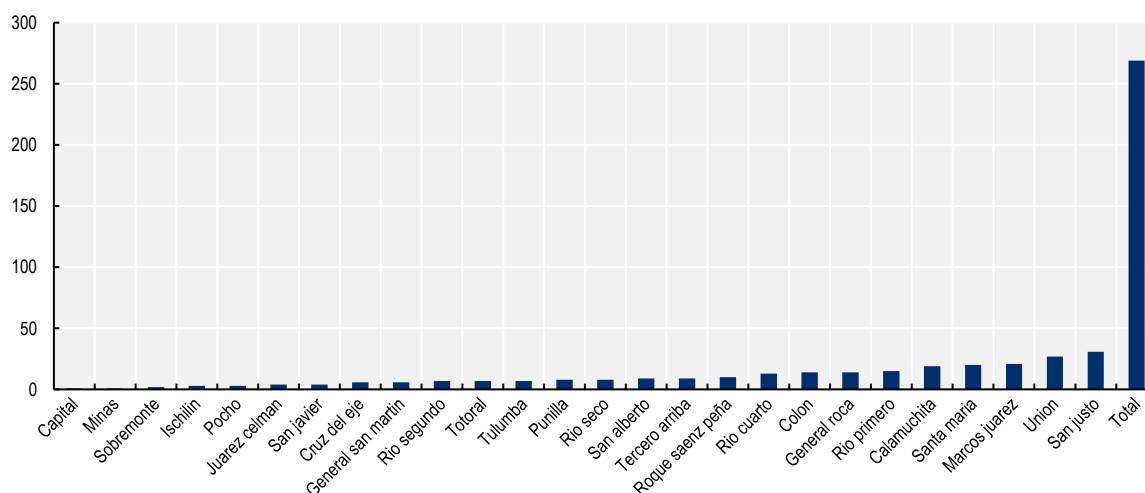
A first important synergy to identify among Córdoba's four strategic areas is that of the digital divide with education for employment. SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) come together to address the digital divide. On the one hand, SDG Target 4.4 specifically aims to "substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship" by 2030 (UN, 2015^[15]). This includes digital literacy, which is crucial in the modern job market (OECD, 2021^[56]). SDG Target 9.c, on the other hand, aims to "significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020" (UN, 2015^[15]). This target directly addresses the digital divide, ensuring that individuals, regardless of their location or economic status, have the tools necessary to participate in the digital economy, for instance, through e-learning (OECD, 2022^[57]).

In light of this synergy, in the Province of Córdoba, various sectors of the population face challenges due to a lack of digital tools and skills. As seen above, inequalities in access to the internet exist by sector of employment but also by level of education, leaving many students without the necessary resources for virtual education. Territorial differences by department compound this digital divide: while in departments in the east of the province, such as Marcos Juárez, San Justo and Unión, count over 20 municipalities with commercial presence for Internet access, this is only the case for 1 municipality in Minas, 2 in Sobremonte and 3 in Ischilin, all located in the northwest of the province (albeit being smaller in terms of surface, as well) (Figure 2.18).

In short, a lack of digital infrastructure in certain areas and gaps in the level of digital skills among the population perpetuate existing inequalities and hinder socio-economic development for those who are already vulnerable, given that inadequate access and skills can lead to missing out on the opportunities and benefits that come with technology and innovation.

Figure 2.18. Departments in the northwest of the province lack infrastructure for digital connectivity compared to the east

Number of municipalities with commercial presence for Internet access (have a node) by department, as of November 2023



Note: There is a single municipality (City of Córdoba) in the Capital department of the province, hence its low ranking on this chart.
Source: Agencia Conectividad Córdoba.

A second key synergy that can be identified between Córdoba's four strategic areas is between education for employment and housing and access to services. SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) are interlinked through Targets 4.3 and 11.1. On the one hand, SDG Target 4.3 aims to "ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university" by 2030 (UN, 2015_[15]). This target, therefore, promotes education for employment, equipping individuals with the skills necessary to secure decent work. SDG 11.1, on the other hand, aims to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums" by 2030 (UN, 2015_[15]). This target recognises that access to sustainable housing and basic services is a fundamental human right and is crucial for individuals to maintain employment and improve their economic status.

As explained previously, in terms of education in Córdoba, there is a clear urban/rural divide in favour of those living in big cities and, within cities, poorer neighbourhoods have less access to opportunities in the formal education system. The interlinkage between SDG Targets 4.3 and 11.1 can, therefore, be found in the populational risk of being deprived according to both targets, providing an area for policy action. Considering the geographical gap in education in the province, particularly in terms of asymmetric development between inland municipalities, policy action should be taken to focus on bridging the training access divide for people residing in inland and rural areas. The primary emphasis should be on improving infrastructure in these regions to enhance the efficiency and availability of training opportunities. By implementing targeted measures to bridge this gap, the province can accelerate progress towards SDGs 4 and 11, empowering residents in all municipalities to acquire the necessary skills and opportunities for personal and economic growth.

Third, gender and employment and education for employment are interlinked through SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 5 (Gender equality), in Targets 4.5 and 5.5. On the one hand, SDG 4.5 aims to "eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in

vulnerable situations" by 2030 (UN, 2015_[15]). This target thereby acknowledges that education is a key tool in promoting gender equality in the workforce. On the other hand, SDG Target 5.5 aims to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life" (UN, 2015_[15]). In other words, this target seeks to reduce gender employment inequalities by promoting women's participation in the workforce, an endeavour which intrinsically requires eliminating gender disparities in education. These two targets may, therefore, be of particular relevance for co-ordinated decision making and sustainable policies in these two strategic areas in Córdoba.

As seen above, differences in educational outcomes by gender persist in the Province of Córdoba. (Figure 2.10). These differences are reflected in the share of economically active people who have completed at least upper secondary education: 65% of Cordoban men, against 79% of Cordoban women (DGEyC, 2022_[5]). There is, therefore, a need to develop training programmes tailored to the labour market's needs, specifically targeted towards women. Strengthening the integration of women into the labour market has synergetic potential with the People (namely SDG 1) and Prosperity (SDGs 8 and 10) dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and could contribute to a decrease in female poverty leading to a reduction in the gender gap in unemployment, which is one of the province's main challenges, as previously identified.

Fourth, the SDGs pinpoint a key synergy between housing and access to services and the digital divide, through SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), particular Targets 9.c. and 11.1., both mentioned previously. While Target 9.c recognises the importance of digital access in promoting sustainable development, in Target 11.1, it is difficult to ignore the fact that digital services are increasingly important in the modern world and arguably constitute a basic service when considering adequate housing. In this regard, phenomena such as teleworking and telemedicine are critical aspects of the digital revolution that are directly linked to the synergies between SDGs 9 and 11, and, in the context of the Province of Córdoba, improving access to services and narrowing the digital divide. For example, teleworking, made possible through high-speed broadband access, can make jobs accessible to those who may have difficulty commuting, such as people living in remote areas.⁸ Nonetheless, the current productive matrix of the province allows 20% of the employed population to work from home, mainly those working in the knowledge economy (DGEyC, 2022_[5]). In the case of telemedicine, access to ICT enables more people to access healthcare services remotely, which is particularly important for people living in underserved areas such as the interior of the Province of Córdoba. In this regard, it is important to consider the heterogeneity of the territory of the province, as each area and health centre has unique needs that must be addressed to ensure the effective provision of telemedicine services.

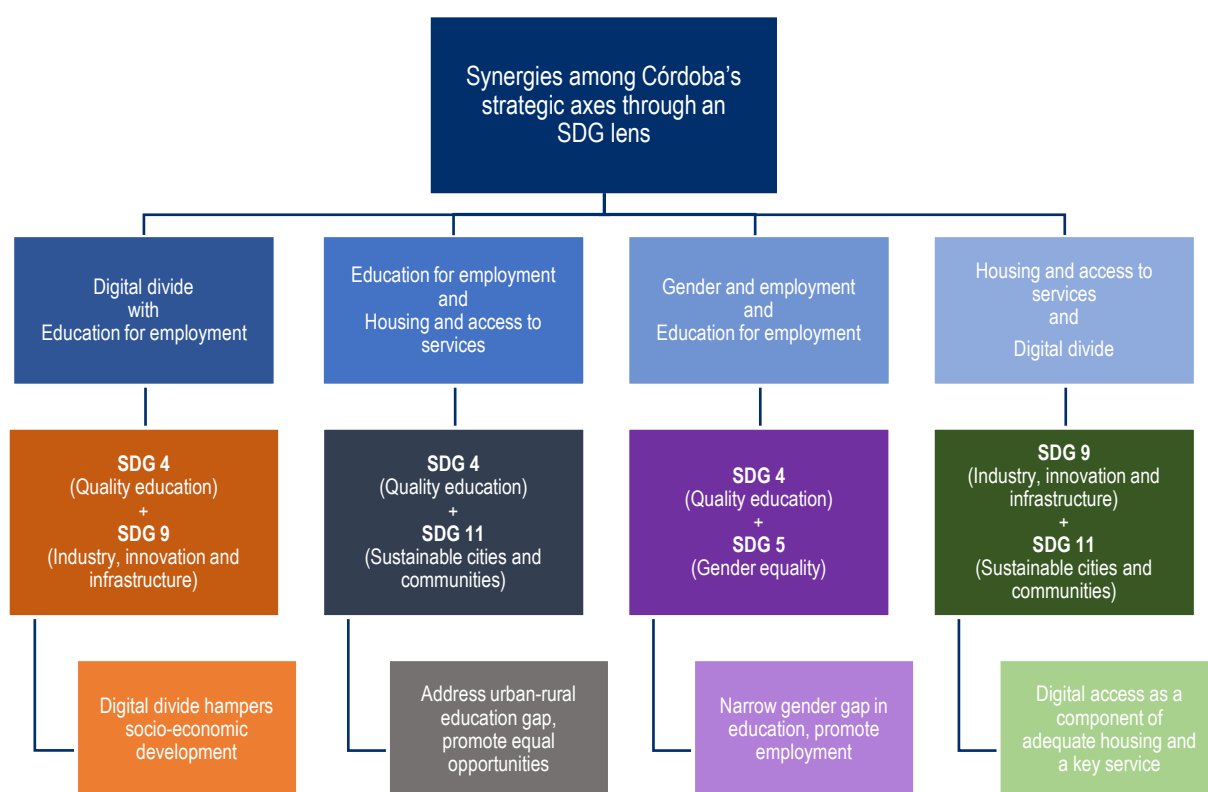
Finally, it is important to highlight a relevant aspect of the 2030 Agenda for the two components of one of Córdoba's strategic areas: gender and employment, and the care economy. SDG 5 (Gender equality) interlinks with the care economy through Target 5.4, which aims to "recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate" (UN, 2015_[15]). This target specifically acknowledges the often-overlooked contribution of women in the care economy and seeks to reduce gender employment inequalities by ensuring that this work is recognised and valued, particularly considering that 41% of Cordoban women with children aged 0-3 years are outside the labour market and therefore have no formal income of their own (DGEyC, 2022_[5]).

This, in turn, highlights yet again the importance of SDG Target 9.c. (significantly increase access to ICT and strive to provide universal and affordable access to Internet in least developed countries) in Córdoba's strategic priorities, given that the digital divide can impact the ability of care providers and recipients to access essential digital resources, such as telehealth services, online educational materials and remote caregiving tools. Care providers who lack access to digital resources or have limited digital literacy may face challenges in acquiring new skills, staying up-to-date with industry trends and accessing professional

development opportunities. This can lead to disparities in the quality of care provided by different workers (Saeed and Masters, 2021^[58]).

The impact of difficult access to training for care workers in Córdoba and the fact that the absence of an Internet connection can strain access to virtual courses and digital materials are important challenges for the province. The importance of counting on skilled public service professionals in the care sector was highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Province of Córdoba needs to focus not only on attracting but also on retaining them. Part of the solution can involve providing targeted assistance to workers who are interested in transitioning to the care sector, such as offering career guidance and digital training, building on initiatives such as the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector (see following chapter). Furthermore, offering additional incentives, whether financial or otherwise, can help motivate professionals to pursue employment opportunities in underserved areas (OECD, 2023^[59]).

Figure 2.19. Synergies among Córdoba's strategic axes through an SDG lens



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Notes

¹ In order to evaluate the achievements of a city or region on the SDGs, the OECD localised framework defines end values to shed light on the global trends in OECD regions and cities towards achieving the SDGs, based on available indicators and to provide technical guidance for governments on a possible way to use the SDG indicator framework as a tool to advance local development plans and sustain evidence-based policies. By defining end values for 2030, regions and cities can assess where they stand today and understand how far they are from the intended end value. When they are not inferable from the United Nations framework, the OECD defines end values for indicators based on the knowledge of experts in the field or based on the best performance of regions and cities in that indicator (OECD, 2021^[1]).

² “Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate”.

³ See <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights> and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>.

⁴ Given the limited comparability of the housing expenditure indicator between Córdoba agglomerations and the OECD, these comparative findings should be considered as a preliminary approximation.

⁵ Regions within the 38 OECD countries are classified on 2 territorial levels reflecting the administrative organisation of countries. The 433 OECD large (TL2) regions represent the first administrative tier of subnational government, for example, the Ontario province in Canada (OECD, 2022^[61]).

⁶ The definition of urban areas in OECD countries uses population density to identify urban cores and travel-to-work flows to identify the hinterlands whose labour market is highly integrated with the cores. An urban core consists of a high-density cluster of contiguous grid cells of 1 km² with a density of at least 1 500 inhabitants per km² (OECD, 2013^[62]).

⁷ In Córdoba's well-being survey, a household is considered poor when its total monetary income is less than the household's total basic food basket (which is determined by the total basic food basket for an adult) (DGEyC, 2023^[63]).

⁸ In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, telework also intersected with SDG 5 on gender equality, to a certain extent, as evidence suggests it helped protect women, especially mothers, from completely leaving the workforce. In many countries, the gender gap in the change in paid hours worked was largest among people who had to go to work on site (OECD, 2021^[7]).

3

Main programmes implemented by the province across its four strategic priorities to achieve the SDGs

The provincial government has implemented programmes and initiatives to address key priorities across the four axes. Firstly, gender equality in employment is promoted through strategic alliances and integrating a gender perspective. Programmes such as the "Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector" aim to support women facing social vulnerability. Secondly, education and vocational training are prioritised through initiatives like the ProA Schools and the Peer Tutor Programme. Thirdly, the province focuses on improving housing conditions through the "Seed Housing" programme, for instance. Lastly, to bridge the digital divide, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency has established the Córdoba Digital Network and implemented the ABC programme, offering access to devices and internet connectivity, as well as digital literacy courses. Despite the positive results that these programmes have provided for many Cordobans, specific challenges remain for each axis, highlighted in this section.

In the Province of Córdoba, Argentina, the government has implemented a range of programmes and initiatives to address key priorities in each of its four strategic axes. First, efforts are made to promote gender equality in employment through the integration of a gender perspective and strategic alliances with local, national and international governments. Programmes such as the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector aim to elevate the status of the care economy and provide support to women facing social vulnerability. Second, education and vocational training are prioritised through initiatives such as ProA Schools and the Peer Tutor Programme. Third, the province focuses on improving housing conditions through initiatives such as the Seed Housing programme. Fourth, to bridge the digital divide, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency has established the Córdoba Digital Network and implemented the ABC Digital programme, offering digital literacy courses and access to devices and Internet connectivity. The following section provides a more detailed overview of the main actions taken by the province in each of these four strategic axes.

Despite the positive results that these programmes have provided for many Cordobans, specific challenges remain for each axis. In terms of gender and employment, government programmes addressing challenges in the care economy such as adequate working conditions for carers face obstacles like low public awareness and lack of financial resources. Programmes focusing on education for employment need further impetus to address long-term unemployment and disproportionately affected population groups, as well as the need for inclusive access to higher education and lifelong learning for employment. While provincial programmes related to Housing and Access to Services could benefit from further targeting affordability, basic services, and public-private partnerships, those related to the Digital Divide could gain from focusing on specific population groups (e.g. the rural population, individuals with lower socio-economic status, and the elderly) and addressing challenges related to digital infrastructure and skills, as well as fostering collaboration for digital inclusion.

Gender and employment: Focus on the care economy

The Provincial Ministry of Women's Affairs is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing various gender policies and programmes with the aim of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 for gender equality. Their efforts involve integrating a gender perspective and establishing strategic alliances with local, national and international governments, as well as co-operation agencies. The Inter-ministerial Gender Roundtable ensures co-ordination and collaboration among different government bodies. The Province of Córdoba focuses on reducing gender gaps, promoting women's economic autonomy and addressing the care economy. Additionally, the province emphasises the rights and well-being of children, older adults and people with disabilities. To increase women's autonomy and participation in decision-making, the province has implemented specific initiatives and safe spaces and centres have been established in various towns to cater to the needs of women in their communities (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[1]).

Córdoba's government programmes on gender and employment include the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector, the Aula Mamá programme, the Salas Cuna programme and the xMi programme (Box 3.1). They have addressed several challenges related to the care economy, such as the formalisation of the sector and the social vulnerability of workers, but face important obstacles, including the low level of public awareness, a lack of financial resources and weak co-ordination among different implementing actors. According to a survey on gender and employment conducted by the OECD (see Annex A), the province's key challenges in the care economy include the need for training and professionalisation of carers, social protection for carers and the recognition and strengthening of care work at the community level. The survey has also revealed that the unequal distribution of caring responsibilities, predominantly falling on women, is a result of socially constructed norms, highlighting the importance of promoting co-responsibility for care. To achieve a better gender balance in the care economy, provincial government programmes should focus on solutions that address the supply side of the sector, particularly in formalising employment for salaried workers. However, one notable concern is the lack of awareness among

respondents regarding government actions, indicating the need for increased visibility and impact of these programmes. Several impediments to programme implementation were identified, including a lack of financial resources, insufficient co-ordination between governmental actors and limited collaboration between governmental and civil society actors. The absence of legislation regulating the care economy emerges as a significant challenge, emphasising the need for the province to reflect on regulatory measures that can facilitate the formalisation of workers in the sector.

Box 3.1. Gender and employment programmes in the Province of Córdoba

Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector

The Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector (*Programa de Fortalecimiento del Sector de Cuidados*), which was launched in 2023, aims to elevate the status and professionalism of the care economy in Córdoba. It recognises care as a necessity, a profession and a fundamental right. The programme has specific goals, including ensuring proper training and professionalisation of care activities, supporting the academic progression of individuals at various levels of care training and facilitating the formalisation of the sector by assisting in the establishment, regularisation and financial inclusion of collective care spaces. Additionally, the programme seeks to guarantee the rights of children, teenagers, people with disabilities and the elderly so that they receive respectful and adequate care. In 2023, the province counted 1 183 enrolments, of which 96% were women. Two-thirds of enrolments were from the capital city and 96% were women. The municipalities with the most enrolments are Balnearia (23), Río Cuarto (21), Villa Carlos Paz (12), Alta Gracia (14), Villa María (9), San Francisco (8) and Bialet Massé (7) (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[2]).

The Aula Mamá programme

The province offers support and assistance to women facing social vulnerability, including mothers attending daycare centres and women from the wider community, to help them complete their primary and secondary education. In collaboration with the Provincial Ministry of Education, the programme provides educational materials and study modules to these women. As of 2022, the programme had registered over 450 mothers. In 2018, in conjunction with the Provincial Ministry of Education, the Secretariat for Equity and Employment Promotion launched Aula Mamá, an initiative designed to enable mothers of all ages to complete their primary and secondary education. Currently, 720 women are participating in this programme, which is conducted in 12 day care centres located in the city of Córdoba. Many of these women learned about Aula Mamá through their children's enrolment in these early childhood spaces, primarily serving vulnerable populations (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[3]).

The Salas Cuna programme

Established in 2018, the provincial network of Salas Cuna day care centres is a collaborative public policy involving municipalities, communes and community-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It aims to provide free childcare across 489 centres – of which 184 are in the capital city of the province – for children aged 45 days to 3 years from vulnerable backgrounds. The objectives of these centres focus on promoting the psycho-social development of children through early stimulation, supporting women's social and labour integration by offering a safe space for their children, strengthening the role of families in child development and ensuring comprehensive healthcare with a preventive approach. Trained human resources implement the policy and include the provision of fortified milk, nutritional supplements, hygiene and childcare items and equipment for care and recreation. Additionally, the centres offer comprehensive social assistance to address social issues and provide pedagogical advice and training to the staff to enhance the quality of care and educational activities (Province of Córdoba, 2020^[4]; 2023^[5]).

The xMí programme

The Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training has implemented a programme with the objective of facilitating work placements for women in Córdoba who are the primary providers for their households, unemployed women over the age of 25 or women under 25 with dependent children. The programme aims to provide these women with training and practical experience, ultimately preparing them for future employment in the formal labour market. The beneficiaries of the xMí programme have access to job training of 20 hours per week over a period of 12 months, during which they are trained in specific skills to be carried out simultaneously with work experience lasting 12 months. Since 2016, 58 000 jobs have been provided to mothers and women over 25 years old (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[1]; Province of Córdoba, 2023^[6]).

Source: Province of Córdoba (2023^[2]), *Programa de Fortalecimiento del Sector de Cuidados*; Province of Córdoba (2023^[3]), “Cumplir el sueño pendiente: 720 mujeres estudian a través de Aula Mamá”, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/cumplir-el-sueno-pendiente-720-mujeres-estudian-a-traves-de-aula-mama/>; Province of Córdoba (2020^[4]), “Salas Cuna”, <https://legislaturacba.gob.ar/salas-cuna/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[5]), *Salas Cuna*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/programa/salas-cuna/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[6]), “La Provincia lanzará el Programa XMÍ con 10.000 oportunidades de empleo y formación”, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/la-provincia-lanzara-el-programa-xmi-con-10-000-oportunidades-de-empleo-y-formacion/>; Government of Córdoba (2023^[1]), *Voluntary Local Report - Córdoba 2023*, https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/08/cordoba_2023_en_1.pdf.

Education for employment

The province has implemented various programmes to enhance educational and employment opportunities, in line with SDGs 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender equality) and 8 (Decent work and economic growth) (Box 3.2). These programmes include technical schools, ProA Schools that focus on software development and biotechnology, new secondary schools with vocational training and the Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba (ISPC), all of which offer educational programmes. The primary objective is to provide nationally recognised certifications, vocational training pathways, professional internships and recognition of acquired knowledge. Collaboration with the National Institute of Technological Education (INET), the Ministry of Education, the Córdoba Youth Agency (*Agencia Córdoba Joven*, which designs policies for young people of the province) and the National University of Córdoba is instrumental in developing these educational programmes (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[1]).

Equipping citizens with technological tools whilst promoting inclusive access to education is a key priority for the Province of Córdoba. The main causes of unemployment identified in a survey conducted by the OECD (see Annex A) include a lack of education or qualifications, economic conditions and technological advances. One key synergy highlighted by the survey is the relationship between education for employment and the digital divide. In this sense, it is crucial for government programmes to focus on equipping deprived citizens with basic technological tools to enhance their confidence and willingness to participate in training programmes. The Córdoba Well-being Survey revealed that 39% of unemployment in the province corresponds to long-term unemployment (i.e. those who have been continuously unemployed for at least one year) (DGEyC, 2022^[7]), with certain population groups being disproportionately affected such as people with disabilities, those with incomplete compulsory basic education and adults over 60 years of age. Inclusive access to higher education is therefore important, as higher educational attainment is associated with lower long-term unemployment rates in OECD countries (OECD, 2023^[8]). The survey also emphasised the importance of skills such as adaptability to new technologies and working environments, communication skills and lifelong learning for employment in Córdoba. Additionally, the design of lifelong learning policies should involve collaboration between higher education professionals, adult education professionals and social partners, fostering partnerships between public and private actors. It is worth noting that government programmes on education for employment have a relatively good level of public awareness compared to other axes, as per the OECD survey findings: only one in five respondents was not aware of any government programme in terms of education for employment.

Box 3.2. Education for employment programmes in the Province of Córdoba

The Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba (ISPC)

The ISPC, overseen by the Directorate General of Technical Education and Vocational Training of the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, focuses on providing technical education. Its primary goal is to train adaptable technical professionals equipped with digital skills. The institute collaborates with other institutions to meet specialised sectoral demands. The courses offered by the ISPC provide students with a flexible learning path accessible from anywhere in the province. The availability of virtual courses enables students to access high-quality technical-professional training, fostering innovation, creativity, an entrepreneurial mindset and collaborative work. Additionally, the ISPC offers onsite professional internships near students' places of residence, allowing them to apply their acquired knowledge to real-world needs. As of 2022, the ISPC had 9 185 enrolled students and had signed over 40 specific co-operation agreements with municipalities, 30 internship agreements and 33 agreements on academic co-operation (ISPC, 2023^[9]).

The Professional Insertion Programme

The Professional Insertion Programme (PIP) aims to support recently graduated professionals residing in the Province of Córdoba by providing them with opportunities for professional practice, allowing them to gain experience and apply their academic knowledge. Led by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the PIP aims to facilitate the participation of beneficiaries in training courses for professional graduates. Interested professionals can apply to various companies, studios and practices to offer their services, and the provincial government will encourage employers to participate and publish their requirements on the employment portal of the Secretariat of Equity and Employment Promotion. The programme also collaborates with professional councils, associations and academic institutions to connect young professionals with potential employers and training opportunities. The PIP is open to professionals of any age who have graduated up to two years before the internships, with extended time limits for specific groups such as women with dependent children or disabled/transplanted individuals. In the 2021-22 edition of the programme, 3 000 job opportunities were created for professionals from all over the province (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[10]).

Mobile Workshop Classrooms

Mobile Workshop Classrooms (*Aulas Talleres Móviles*, ATMs), are transportable structures that replicate classroom workshop or laboratory settings, providing necessary equipment and comfort for training purposes. These classrooms are part of a federal initiative by the INET, addressing the need for accessible training and education spaces in remote areas. Currently, there are 9 ATMs reaching 39 municipalities in Córdoba, which travel throughout the province, offering skills training in various fields such as gastronomy, metal mechanics, renewable energy, automation and digital knowledge. These workshops are a collaborative effort between the national government, the INET, the Ministry of Education of the province and municipal authorities, ensuring courses with official certification are recognised nationwide (Province of Córdoba, 2022^[11]).

ProA Schools

Overseen by the Ministry for Education, ProA Schools in Córdoba are educational institutions that specialise in training young individuals in software development and biotechnology, which are crucial skills for the productive growth of the region. Students engage in a curriculum that includes science clubs, art, sports, applied English workshops and subject-specific classes. The schools also provide personalised tutorials to support individual learning paces and annual workshops on socially relevant

topics to foster critical, creative, collaborative and responsible thinking. Currently, there are over 40 ProA Schools in the province with 5 058 registered students. The province is also constructing 34 new buildings exclusively for ProA secondary schools, offering high school degrees in computer science with specialised software training and natural sciences with biotechnology training (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[12]).

The Peer Tutor programme

The provincial Tutores Pares programme, a government initiative implemented by the Córdoba Youth Agency, aims to support first-year students entering public, free and state universities in the province. The programme contributes to helping these students transition into higher education by providing tutorials that develop tools for making autonomous and responsible decisions regarding their academic and personal growth. The selected tutors offer support during this stage to ensure the students complete their academic and professional training (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[13]).

Source: ISPC (2023^[9]), *Institucional*, <https://www.ispc.edu.ar/institucional/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[10]), *Programa para la Inserción Profesional*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/programa-para-la-insercion-profesional/>; Province of Córdoba (2022^[11]), “Córdoba suma un Aula Taller Móvil de Saberes Digitales”, <https://prensa.cba.gov.ar/educacion-3/cordoba-suma-un-aula-taller-movil-de-saberes-digitales/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[12]), *Escuelas ProA*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/escuelas-proa/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[13]), *Programa provincial Tutores Pares*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/programa-provincial-tutores-pares/>.

Housing and access to services

The province is currently implementing a range of programmes and policies with the objective of enhancing housing conditions and improving access to services (Box 3.3). These initiatives are primarily focused on addressing housing needs, guided by the provision in the provincial constitution that guarantees the right to adequate housing (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[1]). The government’s efforts are directed towards optimising land use and facilitating affordable housing options for low-income families. Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on ensuring access to essential services, including safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and universal access to energy through efficient and sustainable management practices. The government actively promotes the expansion of water and sanitation infrastructure, as well as the development of energy systems based on renewable sources (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[1]).

Nonetheless, programmes in Córdoba related to housing and access to services could benefit from further targeting affordability, basic services and public-private partnerships. According to a survey conducted by the OECD (see Annex A), despite the programmes in place, areas for improvement in the government’s response to the challenges of housing availability, affordability and access to services include policies that encourage the development of affordable housing options, improving basic services to enhance residents’ quality of life and economic mobility and promoting mixed-income housing to create communities with a blend of affordable and market-rate housing. The survey also revealed the need to strengthen equal access to essential services, particularly in the North, Northwest and rural areas of the province. To address this, stakeholders emphasise the importance of encouraging public-private partnerships to provide services in remote and underserved areas.

Box 3.3. Programmes in the Province of Córdoba on housing and access to services

Neighbourhood Councils

The Government of the Province of Córdoba has launched a plan to strengthen the Neighbourhood Councils for Prevention and Coexistence (*Consejos Barriales de Prevención y Convivencia*) as part of the *Córdoba Se Encuentra* plan for public safety and crime prevention. With citizen participation, these councils address social problems that affect coexistence and security in neighbourhoods, and they aim to work collaboratively with the community and the provincial and municipal governments to respond effectively with concrete actions. Under the overall supervision of the Ministry of Liaison, Protocol and Communication, each council is co-ordinated by a local Neighbourhood organiser (*Promotor Barrial*) and represents the collective effort and consensus of the community to solve neighbourhood issues. The Neighbourhood Councils serve as meeting places for various institutions and organisations, including neighbourhood centres, NGOs, police, educational and health centres, sports clubs, religious groups, work co-operatives, businesses and food canteens, fostering a safer and more inclusive environment for residents (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[14]). In 2022, there were 102 councils in the province, benefitting over 700 000 inhabitants (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[14]).

The Seed Housing programme

The Seed Housing (*Vivienda Semilla*) programme aims to reduce the housing deficit for vulnerable families by providing them with the opportunity to access housing through their own efforts and mutual help. The government of Córdoba, specifically the Ministry of Habitat and Family Economy, supplies families who own a plot of land with basic infrastructure with all of the necessary construction materials to build a 32.70 metre-square housing module consisting of a bedroom, bathroom and kitchen-dining room. Eligible families must not own any other property, form a family group and have an income below two minimum living and mobile salaries. The programme aims to assist 3 300 families, with the materials provided by the province covering various aspects of construction, including foundations, roof structure, flooring, cladding, plastering, carpentry, installations and painting. The programme is financed through a specific fund, with the province allocating USD 495 million for the necessary materials for the 3 300 “seed” houses to date (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[15]).

The programme for a More Dignified Life

Led by the Ministry of Habitat and Family Economy of the Province of Córdoba, the *Más Vida Digna* plan provides economic assistance to families in need, specifically those living in overcrowded conditions or without bathrooms in their homes. Eligible households must either own or possess the property or have a relative’s property on loan. The plan involves providing credits of ARS 40 000 in 2 stages: ARS 20 000 at the start of the work and another ARS 20 000 once the progress is verified. There are 3 types of assistance based on the household’s poverty level: full loan for households above the poverty line, 50% subsidy and a loan for households below the poverty line, and 100% subsidy for households in extreme poverty (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[16]).

Social Sports Centres

This initiative, known as *“Polideportivos Sociales”* in Spanish, aims to use sports facilities as meeting places and places that increase community participation in specific neighbourhoods via free access to educational, sporting, cultural and leisure activities open to individuals of all ages. The target population is people living in low-income neighbourhoods of Córdoba, with a view to promote social inclusion. The initiative is led by the Ministry of Community Outreach, Protocol and Communication of the Province of Córdoba, with the participation of the Córdoba Sports Agency, the Ministry of Housing and Family Economy of the Province of Córdoba and several civil society organisations. By mid-2023, 98 social

sports centres had been designed and constructed throughout the province (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[17]).

Source: Province of Córdoba (2023^[14]), *El programa Consejos Barriales, finalista en el Premio Internacional a las mejores prácticas de Participación Ciudadana*, <https://gestionabierta.cba.gov.ar/index.php/el-programa-consejos-barriales-finalista-en-el-premio-internacional-a-las-mejores-practicas-de-participacion-ciudadana>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[15]), *Programa Vivienda Semilla*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/programa-vivienda-semilla/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[16]), *Más Vida Digna*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/programa/vida-digna/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[17]), *Polideportivos Sociales*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/polideportivos-sociales/>

Bridging the digital divide

The Córdoba Connectivity Agency is responsible for implementing programmes and initiatives aimed at digital inclusion, working in co-ordination with other departments of the provincial executive branch (Box 3.4). The Córdoba Connectivity Plan describes digital inclusion as equal opportunities for all individuals to participate in society using information and communication technology (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[11]). This in turn opens up possibilities in education, health, employment and citizenship. The province's digital strategy acknowledges that there are various forms of inequality in terms of access to, use and adoption of digital technologies and aims to address these dimensions from different perspectives (Government of Córdoba, 2023^[11]).

Results from a survey conducted by the OECD on this axis (see Annex A) show that Córdoba's government programmes targeting the digital divide could gain from focusing on specific population groups (the rural population, individuals with lower socio-economic status and the elderly), addressing challenges related to digital infrastructure and skills, and fostering collaboration for digital inclusion. The province's digital gap stems from several existing challenges, including a lack of infrastructure for connectivity, limited digital skills among the population and issues related to citizens' uptake of digital tools. To address these challenges, solution-oriented programmes should focus on promoting digital literacy among the most affected sectors, ensuring Internet accessibility for all individuals and providing training for the effective use of the Internet as a work tool. However, there are impediments that need to be overcome for the successful implementation of these solutions. They include the availability of financial resources and improving co-ordination between governmental actors as well as between governmental and non-governmental actors.

Box 3.4. Programmes in the Province of Córdoba on bridging the digital divide

Espacios Mujeres Tec

Led by the Provincial Ministry for Women and the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Espacio Mujeres Tec serves as a collaborative platform for public and private programmes and initiatives aimed at developing women's technological skills and diversity, fostering their entrepreneurial talent in the technology sector and narrowing the gender digital divide. The space has three primary objectives: to strengthen the information and communication technology community of students, entrepreneurs and professionals, promote talent generation in the knowledge economy through technical training and support the development of an entrepreneurial culture and pre-incubation of technological projects led by women and gender-diverse individuals. In 2022, it helped over 5 000 women in the province (Espacio Mujeres Tec, 2023^[18]).

The Free Student Internet Connection programme

Led by the Córdoba Youth Agency, this programme (*Conexión a Internet Estudiantil Gratuita*, CIEG) seeks to reduce the digital divide and guarantee Internet access to students. Concretely, it facilitates access to three gigabytes free of charge for secondary, tertiary and university students in the Province of Córdoba, contributing to the development of their studies. Grants of up to ARS 1 000 are provided for mobile phone top-ups through the virtual wallet called Taca Taca. Implemented in 2023, the programme counts 119 840 student subscriptions (Province of Córdoba, 2023^[19]).

Red Digital Córdoba

The Córdoba Digital Network (“*Red Digital Córdoba*”) is a provincial telecommunications network consisting of over 5 700 kilometres of fibre optic cables spread across the 26 departments of the province, implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency (ACC) in co-ordination with the provincial energy company (*Empresa Provincial de Energía de Córdoba*, EPEC). This initiative is part of Law 10.564 *Plan Conectividad Córdoba*, with the aim of establishing an efficient connectivity infrastructure throughout the municipalities and communes in the province to provide high-quality Internet service. It builds on the momentum gained in 2017, with the agreement between the state telecommunications company ARSAT and the provincial government signing a co-operation agreement for the extension of the province’s fibre optic network. Leading the *Plan Conectividad Córdoba*, the ACC now commercialises telecommunications services at the wholesale level, mainly to private internet service providers (ISPs) like local co-operatives and private companies, who then distribute the service to end users (Agencia Conectividad Córdoba, 2023^[20]).

The Digital ABC programme

The Digital ABC (*ABC Digital*) programme is an initiative implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency throughout the province, which aims to create meeting spaces equipped with devices and Internet connectivity. The nine spaces serve as access points for the ABC Digital Training programme, which offers different literacy courses for the development of digital skills, taught in co-ordination with government departments, institutions and organisations specialising in the different subjects addressed. To extend the programme’s reach, strategic alliances have been formed with local actors, particularly existing co-operatives in the province. The initiative aligns with the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”. Different government actors are involved in carrying out the programme, including the Provincial Ministry of Women, Espacio Mujeres Tec, the Provincial Ministry of Science and Technology, the Provincial Ministry of Social Development, the Provincial Ministry of Health and the Undersecretariat for Disability. In addition, other international and local civil society actors are involved, such as United Nations Argentina (UN Argentina), the Media Chicas organisation, the Faro Digital organisation and the Foundation Plurales. Collaboration agreements have been signed with co-operatives, designating them as “local allies” for promoting the programme and achieving digital inclusion in the province (Agencia Conectividad Córdoba, 2023^[21]).

Additionally, the Conectores programme was launched to train digital literacy promoters who can help citizens in their communities become more connected and proficient in digital tools. The programme is supported by UN Argentina and the Córdoba Youth Agency to enhance the impact of the ABC Digital programme. Conectores has resulted in 33 certified connectors, over 25 workshops reaching 17 municipalities and 170 people trained to become digitally literate (Agencia Conectividad Córdoba, 2023^[21]).

Source: Espacio Mujeres Tec (2023^[18]), *Coworking y Pre incubadora de emprendimientos tecnológicos liderados por mujeres*, <https://espaciomujerestec.cba.gov.ar/>; Province of Córdoba (2023^[19]), *Conexión a Internet Estudiantil Gratuita*, <https://www.cba.gov.ar/internet-estudiantil/>; Agencia Conectividad Córdoba (2023^[20]), *La Red Digital Córdoba*, <https://conectividad.cba.gov.ar/reddigitalcordoba/>; Agencia Conectividad Córdoba (2023^[21]), *Lanzamos Programa Espacios ABC*, <https://conectividad.cba.gov.ar/lanzamos-programa-espacios-abc/>.

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on 31 July 2023).

4 Policy recommendations and action plan

The provincial government should continue to use the SDGs as a framework to address territorial challenges for sustainable development. This paper has leveraged the SDGs to identify strengths and areas for improvement, define synergies, and formulate interconnected recommendations and actions across the province's four strategic priorities, developed in this final chapter. The recommendations include to bridge the digital divide in the labour market, ensure equitable access to services such as quality education, and create an inclusive and supportive environment that empowers women to fully participate in the workforce.


The Province of Córdoba should continue to use the SDGs as a forward-looking framework to address territorial challenges that impact its sustainable development. In the context of Córdoba's four strategic priorities, the SDGs and their related targets have helped identify strengths and areas for improvement, define synergies and formulate interconnected recommendations and actions across the four axes, such as between digital divides (SDG 9, 10 and 17) and education (SDG 4), education (SDG 4) and employment (SDG 8), employment (SDG 8) and gender equality (SDG 5), education (SDG 4) and access to services (SDG 11), among others. The SDGs should continue to guide the province in the implementation of the following recommendations:

Figure 4.1. Five key recommendations to advance strategic priorities through the SDGs in the Province of Córdoba, Argentina

 <p>Strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes</p>	 <p>Recommendation 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Bridge the digital divide in the labour market through a comprehensive policy approach, focusing on education and training B. Ensure equitable access to services such as quality education throughout the province, through targeted measures to close the geographical gap between municipalities and gender equalities in the labour market C. Create an inclusive and supportive environment that addresses structural barriers in education and empowers women to fully participate in the workforce D. Facilitate digital-enabled inclusive communities in Córdoba by integrating digital infrastructure with housing and essential services, supporting digital entrepreneurship, teleworking and telemedicine
 <p>Gender and employment – Focus on the care economy</p>	 <p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Prioritise the care economy by recognising the significance of care work in order to narrow the gender gap in employment</p>
 <p>Education for employment</p>	 <p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Invest in vocational and technical education programmes to provide students with practical skills and knowledge that are directly applicable to the local and global job markets, thereby increasing their employability</p>
 <p>Housing and access to services</p>	 <p>Recommendation 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implement a comprehensive affordable housing programme to increase the supply of affordable housing units and improve the quality of existing housing B. Ensure equitable access to essential services throughout the province
 <p>Bridging the digital divide</p>	 <p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Deliver high quality broadband services at symmetric speeds, across the entire province</p>


Recommendation 1: Strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes

Figure 4.2. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 1 to strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes – Part I


Recommendation 1


Strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes

A. Bridge the digital divide in the labour market through a comprehensive policy approach, focusing on education and training


Actions


- Strengthen digital literacy programmes, including those already in place and implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, targeting specific population groups, particularly the rural population, individuals with lower socio-economic status and the elderly. Programmes such as ABC Digital could be improved through better co-ordination with other government agencies (such as the Córdoba Youth Agency) but also with municipalities, to make sure courses offered are tailored to the needs. The outreach of the programmes could also be enhanced through diversified communication channels, i.e. beyond social media, to better raise awareness in isolated communities (SDGs 9 and 10).
- In order to create new sources of financing for digital literacy programmes, provide incentives for businesses to contribute to them and offer employees opportunities to volunteer as mentors or instructors, to provide the public with more channels for enhancing their digital skills, i.e. beyond those offered by the government (SDGs 9 and 10).
- Upskill the existing workforce in rural and peri-urban areas, building on existing structures such as the Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba (ISPC). This could entail collaborating with industries and businesses to identify digital skills needed in the labour market (namely in the services and commerce sectors) and the offer specialised digital upskilling programmes for the workforce (SDGs 9 and 10).
- Promote lifelong learning by creating awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of continuous professional development. Initiatives such as CBA Me Capacita could be expanded to develop vocational training courses that enhance skills for workforce integration and strengthen employability conditions at all ages. Further engagement from the private sector in this challenge can encourage businesses to invest in the ongoing training and development of their employees, thereby ensuring their skills remain relevant in a rapidly changing digital landscape (SDGs 4,9 and 10).

B. Ensure equitable access to services such as quality education throughout the province, through targeted measures to close the geographical gap between municipalities and gender equalities in the labour market


Actions


- Improving educational infrastructure in vulnerable municipalities in certain municipalities of the Province, such as those in the inner areas and in the northwest. A first step in this direction would be to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the existing infrastructure in different municipalities to identify areas with inadequate facilities and resources, linked to the phenomenon of “atomisation” of the population in the provincial territory – i.e. the existence of small scattered populations and in geographical areas with difficult access to transport. The consequent allocation of funding and resources to upgrade and modernise schools in vulnerable areas would then be key, with the objective to improve technology equipment, connectivity and digital skills. In this regard, it will be important to further develop programmes such as ABC Digital in tandem with infrastructure improvement in schools to train students to become digitally literate (SDGs 4, 10).
- Enhance efficiency and availability of training opportunities by developing a province-wide educational plan that focuses on addressing specific skill gaps and aligns with the needs of the provincial labour market. In addition, individuals throughout the province seeking training need to be able to easily find the training available to them, implying the need for the provincial government and educational institutions to double down on communication efforts. In the decision-making process for educational improvements, it is also important to involve local stakeholders, including parents, teachers and community organisations, to ensure that specific needs are met (SDGs 4 and 10).
- Increase the participation of women in other sectors, where they are currently under-represented (e.g. industry and services) by building on programmes such as the Espacio Mujeres TEC. This could be achieved by developing more mentorship and networking initiatives in specific sectors and support female-led entrepreneurship and small business development (SDG 5).

Figure 4.3. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 1 to strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes – Part II

 **Recommendation 1**


Strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes

C. Create an inclusive and supportive environment that addresses structural barriers in education and empowers women to fully participate in the workforce

 **Actions**

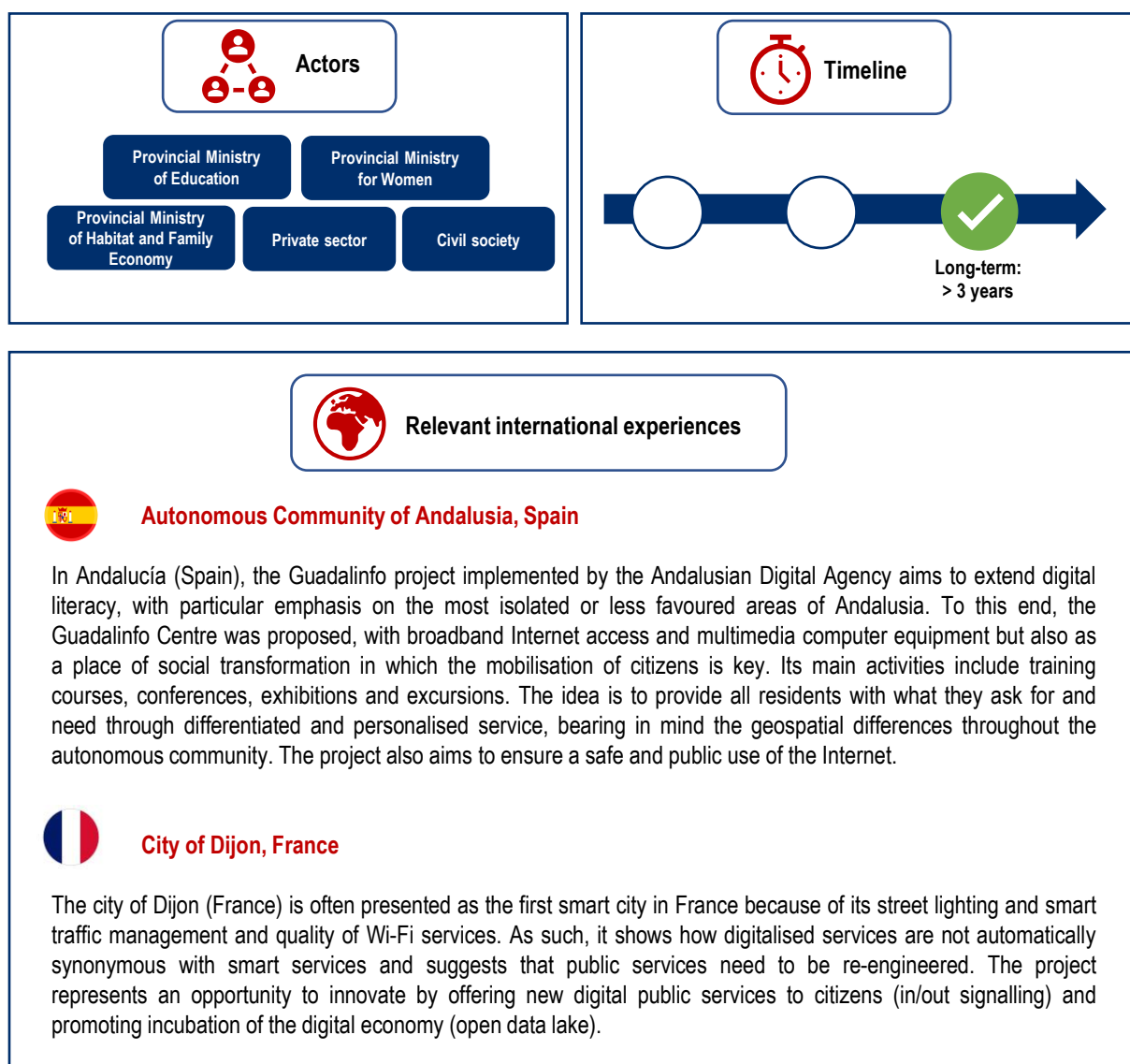
- Invest in education and skill development programmes specifically targeted at empowering women to pursue career paths such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and leadership positions, through the Espacio Mujeres Tec. Private sector engagement could play a central role in this endeavour, namely by providing scholarships and mentorship opportunities for women in STEM disciplines (SDGs 5 and 9).
- Incentivise family-friendly policies such as affordable and high-quality childcare facilities, flexible working arrangements and parental leave to support women in balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. Parental leave policies that provide equal opportunities for both parents to take time off work to care for their children, promoting gender equality in caregiving roles, would also be beneficial to enhance equality in the workforce. Finally, the creation of awareness campaigns to challenge existing gender stereotypes in the province could help overcome the socio-cultural challenges (SDGs 5 and 8).

D. Facilitate digital-enabled inclusive communities in Córdoba by integrating digital infrastructure with housing and essential services, supporting digital entrepreneurship, teleworking and telemedicine

 **Actions**


- In close co-ordination with the Córdoba Connectivity Agency and the provincial energy company EPEC, improve and expand the Córdoba Digital Network across the 26 departments of the province, to ensure efficient connectivity infrastructure in the more remote municipalities and communes of the province for high-quality Internet service (SDGs 9 and 10).
- Implement tailored digital literacy initiatives in collaboration with local governments to empower all residents, including families in isolation, with the necessary skills to access essential services and engage with telemedicine platforms, thereby overcoming barriers to digital adoption and improving connectivity for remote areas of the province (SDGs 9 and 10).
- Promote the adoption of digital technologies by local businesses through grants and incentives, enabling them to thrive in the digital economy and offer teleworking opportunities for their employees in the post COVID-19 era (SDGs 8 and 9).

Figure 4.4. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 1 to strengthen synergies across the four strategic axes – Part III




Recommendation 2: Gender and employment - Focus on the care economy

Figure 4.5. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 2 on gender and employment – Part I


Recommendation 2

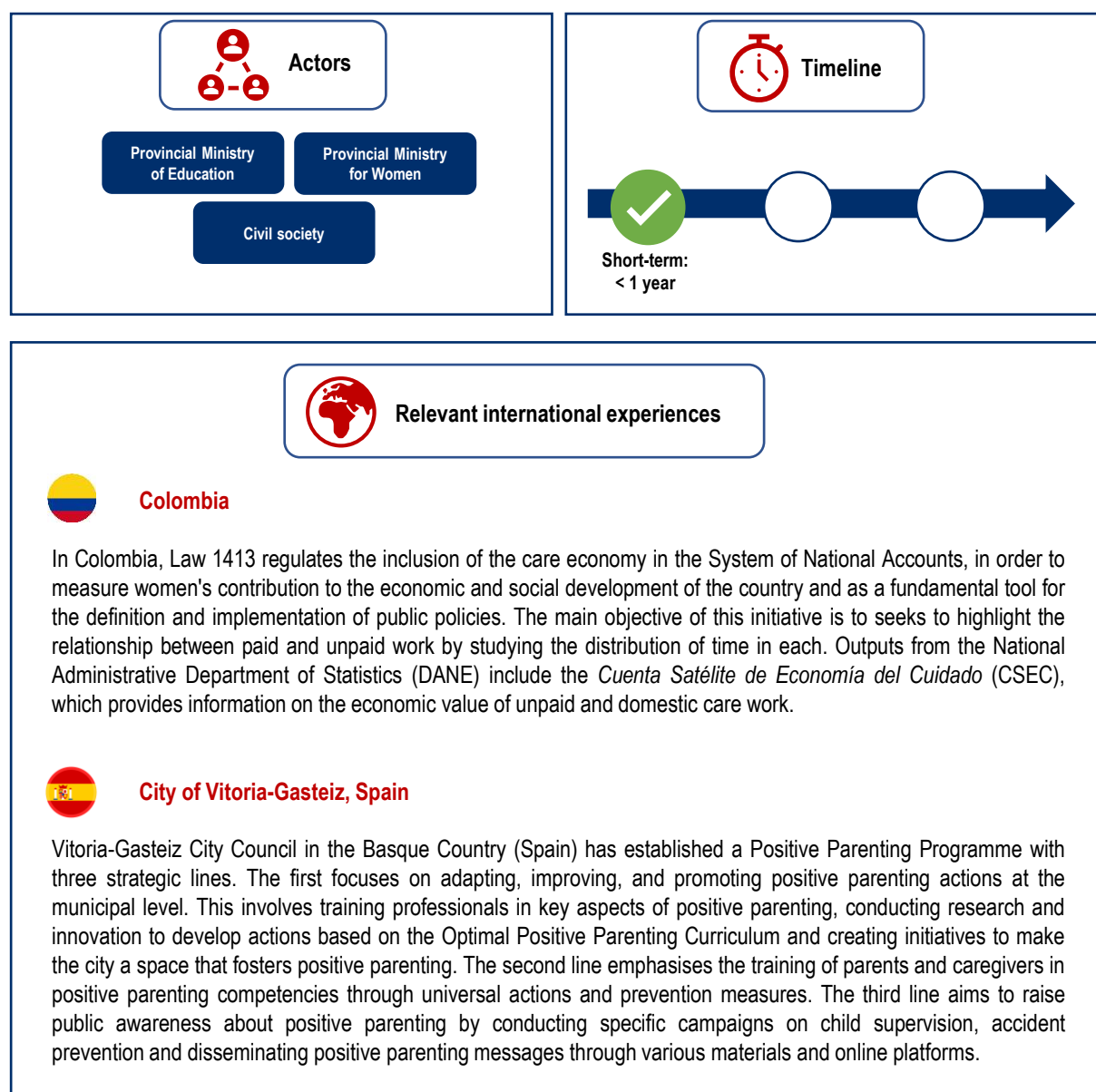
Gender and employment – Focus on the care economy

Prioritise the care economy by recognising the significance of care work in order to narrow the gender gap in employment (SDG 5). By investing in education and training programmes for care workers, the care economy can help improve the quality of care services and create more opportunities for career advancement. In turn, this can contribute to greater gender equality by ensuring that women in care professions have access to the same opportunities for growth and development as their male counterparts. The care economy also has the potential to create a significant number of jobs, many of which can be filled by women. Were the sector to offer stable employment opportunities with fair wages and benefits, it could help narrow the gender pay gap, improve women's economic security and encourage more men to enter care professions, thereby breaking down traditional gender roles in the process.


Actions


- Collaborate with national authorities and employers to ensure adequate working conditions for care workers, taking into account the provincial cost of living and economic conditions, while also promoting provincial initiatives and benefits packages to enhance the overall compensation and working conditions within the care economy. Supporting fair wages and working conditions will help improve the economic security of women working in the care economy and contribute to narrowing the gender pay gap (SDGs 5, 8 and 10).
- Expanding the construction and renovation of care facilities in close co-ordination with local actors in underserved areas, namely in the rural, inner areas of the province in order to provide deprived communities with adequate access to care facilities and encourage female participation in the labour market (SDG 10).
- Further invest in education and training programmes for care workers, such as the Programme for Strengthening the Care Sector, to help improve the quality of care services and create more opportunities for career advancement for women (SDGs 4 and 5).

Figure 4.6. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 2 on gender and employment – Part II




Recommendation 3: Education for employment

Figure 4.7. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 3 on education for employment – Part I


Recommendation 3

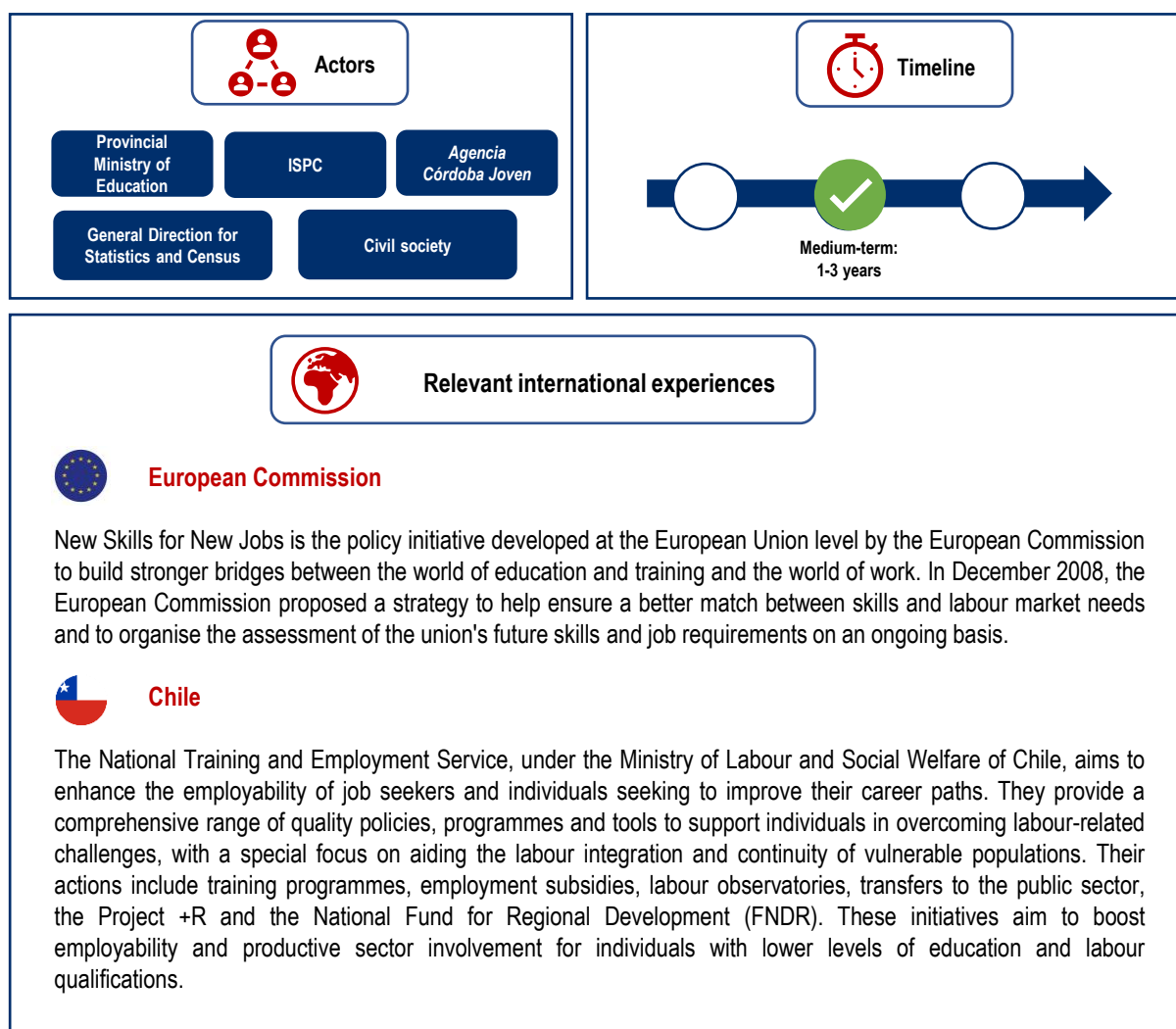
Education for employment

Invest in vocational and technical education programmes to provide students with practical skills and knowledge that are directly applicable to the local and global job markets, thereby increasing their employability, building on existing programmes such as those led by the Polytechnic Higher Institute of Córdoba (ISPC), the National University of Córdoba (UNC) and the National University of Río Cuarto (UNRC).


Actions

- Consider further developing more short-term and flexible training (from non-formal and formal educational systems), such as those proposed by the ISPC, to facilitate mobility across firms, lifelong learning and worker reintegration to the labour market after the COVID-19 pandemic (SDG 4).
- Collaborate with industry experts, employers, public educational institutions, private training providers, and community leaders to leverage their respective strengths and resources in designing and delivering a curriculum that aligns with the needs of the local and global job market. The collaborative framework could take the form of a provincial skills board with representation from relevant stakeholders. The curriculum should include both hard skills (e.g. technical), soft skills (e.g. communication) and transversal/transferable skills (e.g. problem-solving), along with real-world work experiences for students that feed into vocational and technical education programmes and enhance work-based learning (SDGs 4 and 8).
- Raise awareness of the importance of inter-municipal collaboration for strategic planning to align policies in responding to the spatial and socio-economic challenges of access to education (SDGs 4 and 17).

Figure 4.8. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 3 on education for employment – Part II



Recommendation 4: Housing and access to services

Figure 4.9. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 4 on housing and access to services – Part I

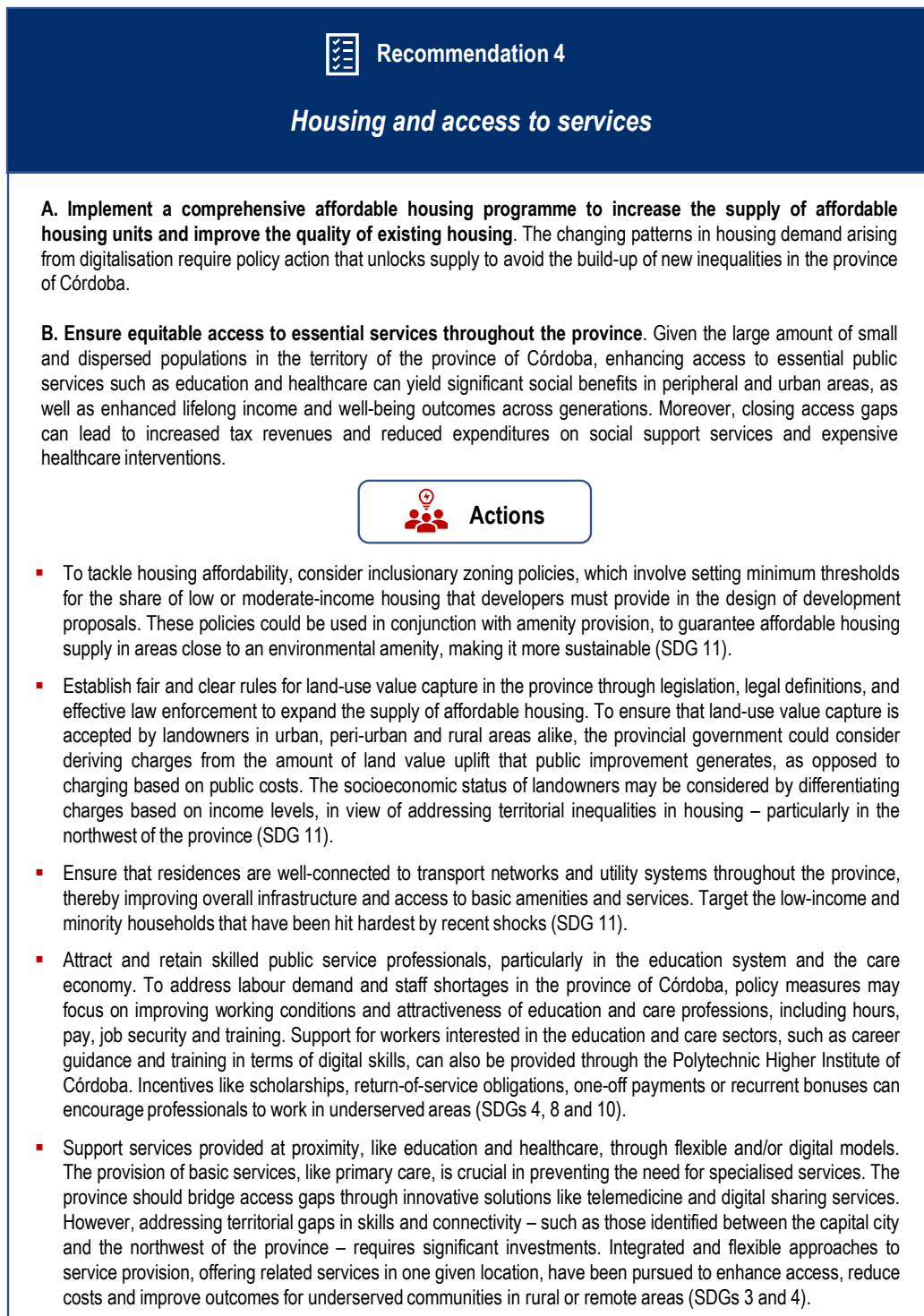
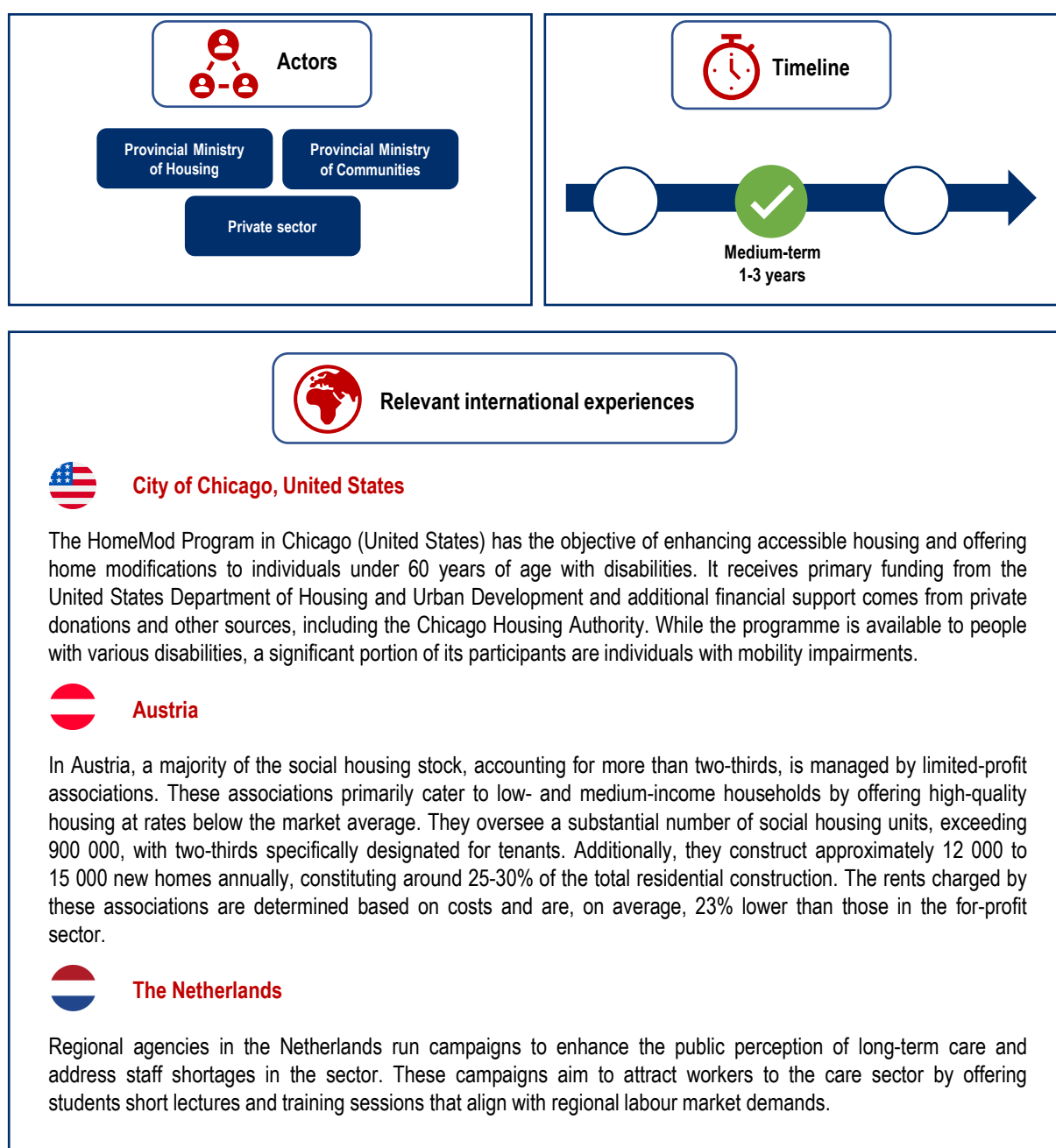



Figure 4.10. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 4 on housing and access to services – Part II




Recommendation 5: Bridging the digital divide

Figure 4.11. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 5 on bridging the digital divide – Part I


Recommendation 5

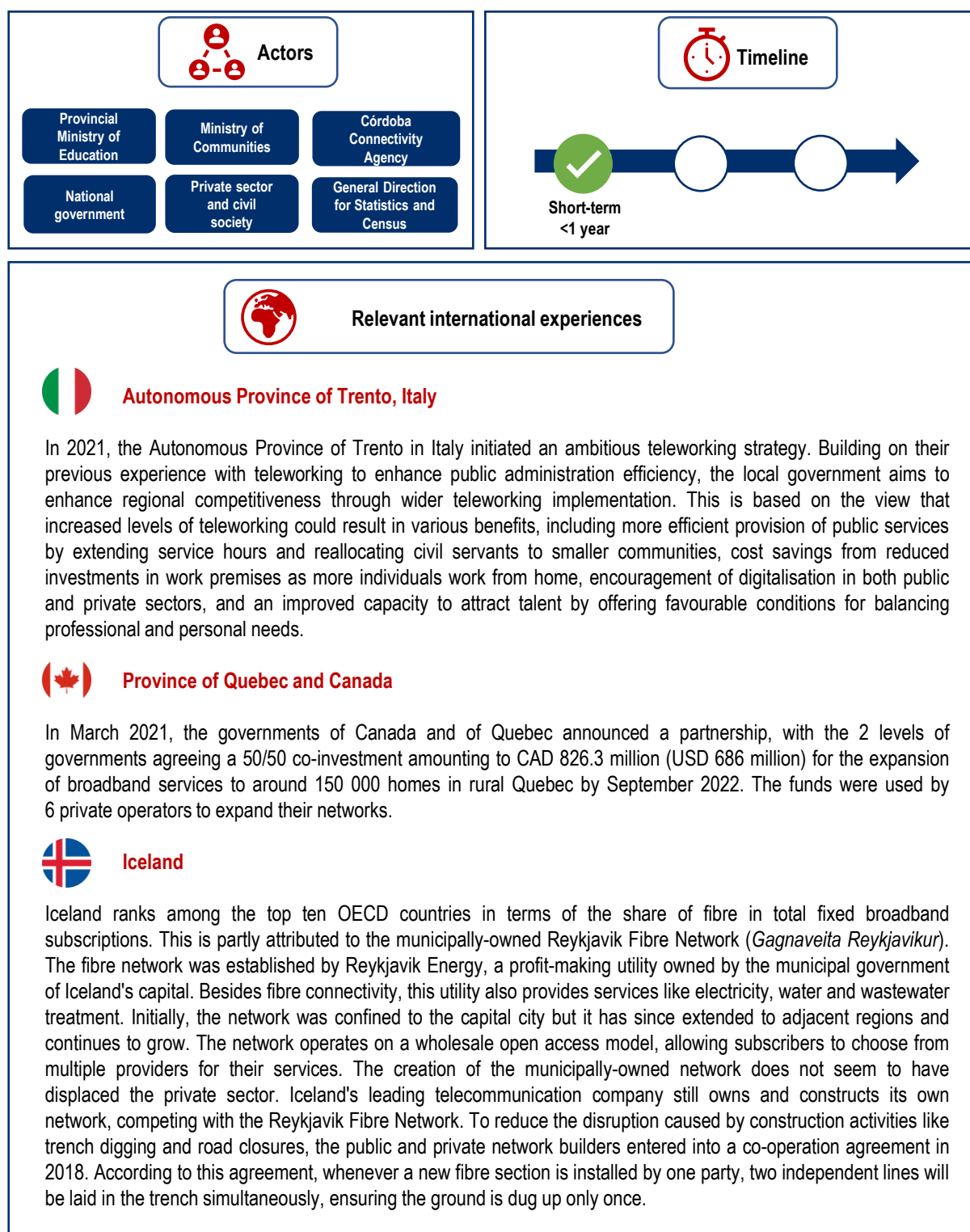
Bridging the digital divide

Deliver high quality broadband services at symmetric speeds, across the entire province. This is necessary to enable the delivery of essential services (such as online learning and telemedicine), to support the local business environment in underserved areas and to level the playing field between people and businesses in rural, peri-urban and urban areas.


Actions

- Work in close collaboration with the national level to bridge the connectivity gaps and ensure that networks are deployed in all underserved areas, replicating and furthering efforts such as the agreement between the province and the national telecommunications company (ARSAT) (SDGs 9, 10 and 17).
- Strengthen digital literacy programmes, including those already in place and implemented by the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, targeting specific population groups, particularly the rural population, individuals with lower socio-economic status and the elderly. Programmes such as ABC Digital could be improved through better co-ordination with other government agencies (such as the Córdoba Youth Agency, which designs policies for young people of the province) but also with municipalities, to make sure courses offered are tailored to specific needs. To go beyond the channels opened by the government to enhance digital skills, incentives could be given to businesses to offer employees opportunities to volunteer as mentors or instructors (SDGs 4 and 17).
- Involve the communities and local companies in efforts to finance and deploy high-speed networks in remote areas, to help them cope with the continuously growing demand for higher broadband capacity. Municipal networks can extend the connectivity in regions where deployment by national communication companies is lacking or deemed unprofitable. This may also support the transition towards a low-carbon economy and contribute to changing how people in situations of socio-economic vulnerability access public services and interact with society (SDGs 9 and 13).

Figure 4.12. Action plan to implement OECD Recommendation 5 on bridging the digital divide – Part II

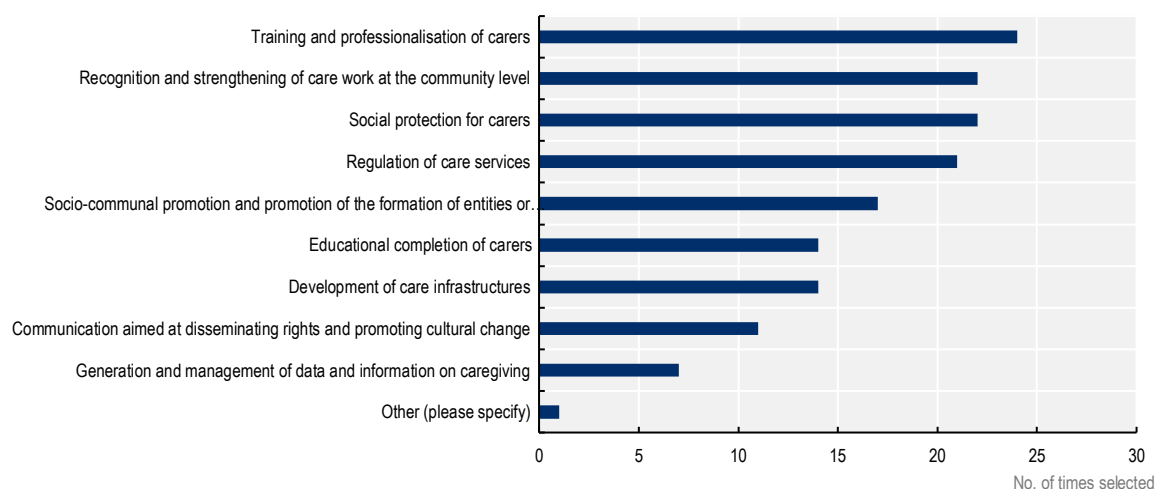


Annex A. Survey results

The following graphs present the results from surveys carried out between December 2022 and April 2023 across the four strategic axes of the province. They were then discussed in roundtables and used as complementary evidence for this policy paper.

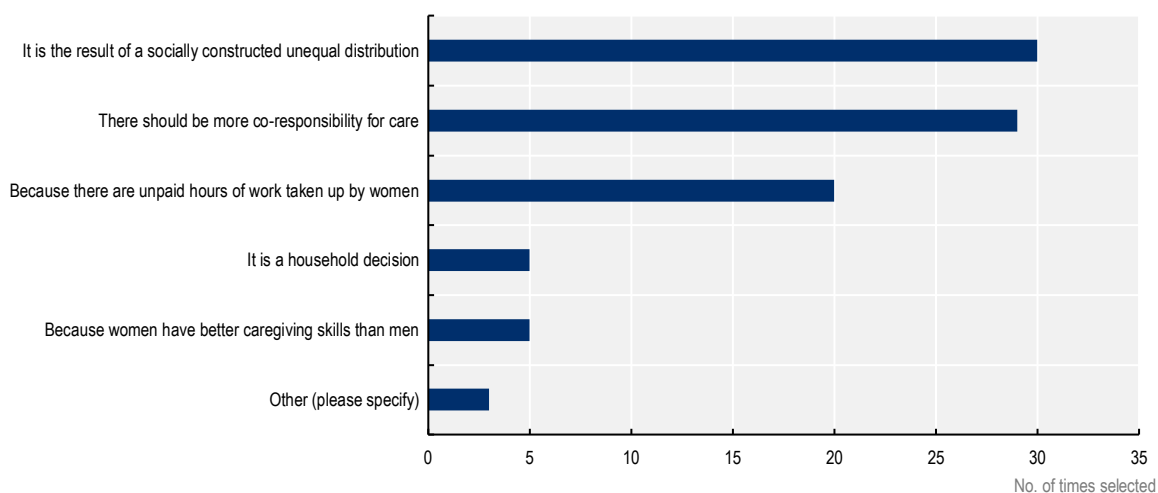
Gender and employment: Focus on the care economy

Figure A.1. What do you consider to be the main challenges for the care economy in the Province of Córdoba?



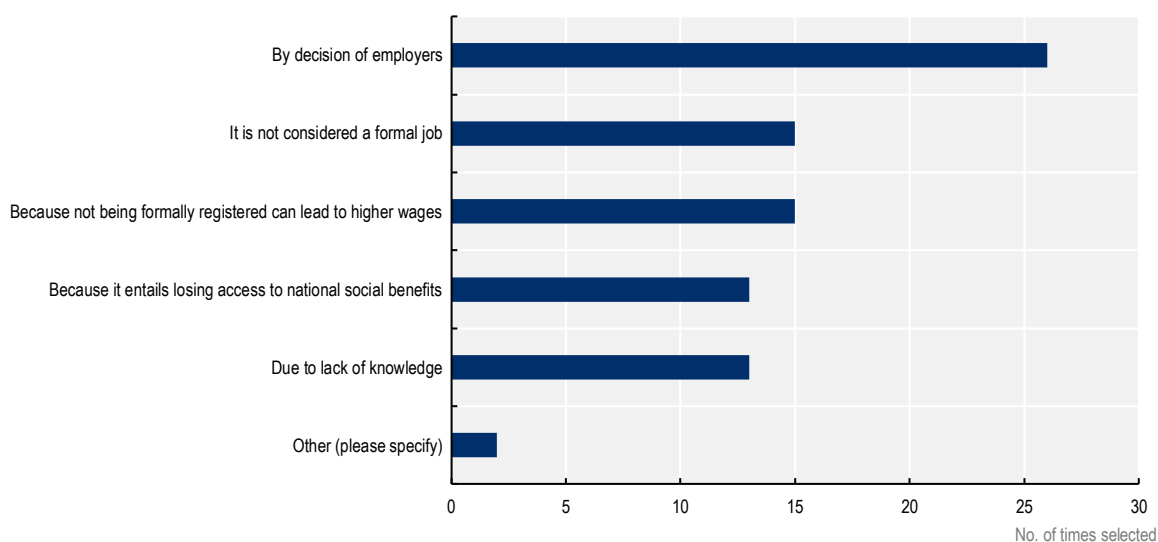
Note: Respondents could select up to 5 answers. Figure based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Chamber of Commerce and Services, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the Faculty of Education and Health of the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Association of Technical Education Teachers (AMET), the *Los Ositos* kindergarten, the Foundation for the Integral Assistance of the Elderly, the *Espacio son Raíces* foundation, the Ministry of Habitat and Family Economy of Córdoba, the Industrial Union of Córdoba and the *Casa Pueblo Sur* association.

Figure A.2. What do you think about the fact that the responsibility for caring falls most often on women (89% of women spend time on caring, while only 58% of men do so)?



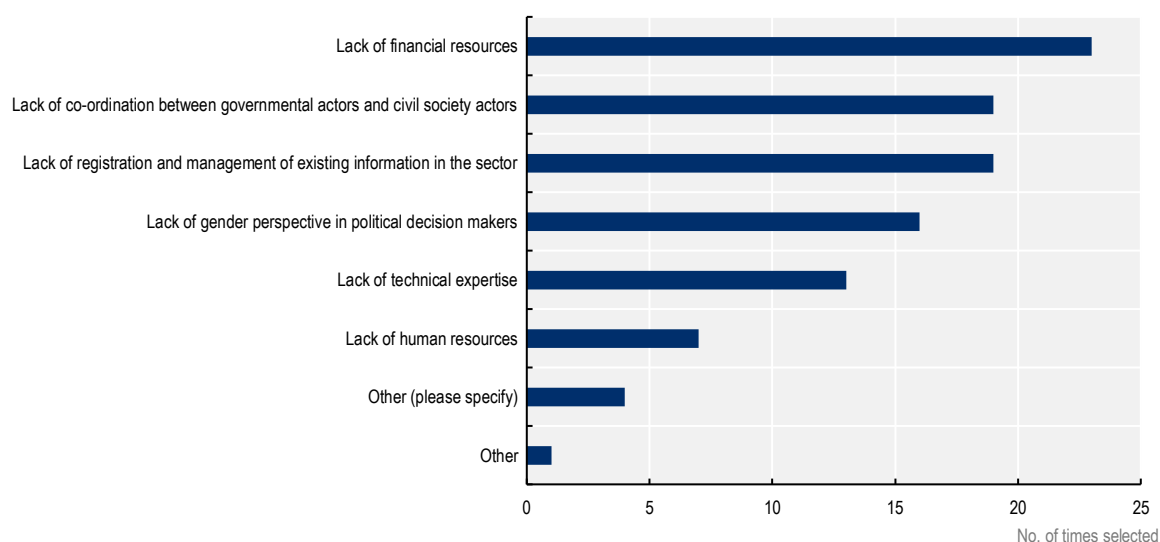
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Figure A.3. What do you think is the reason behind the fact that the vast majority of female domestic workers are not formally registered?



Note: Respondents could select up to 3 answers. Figure based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Chamber of Commerce and Services, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the Faculty of Education and Health of the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Association of Technical Education Teachers (AMET), the *Los Ositos* kindergarten, the Foundation for the Integral Assistance of the Elderly, the *Espacio son Raíces* foundation, the Ministry of Habitat and Family Economy of the Province of Córdoba, the Industrial Union of Córdoba and the *Casa Pueblo Sur* association.

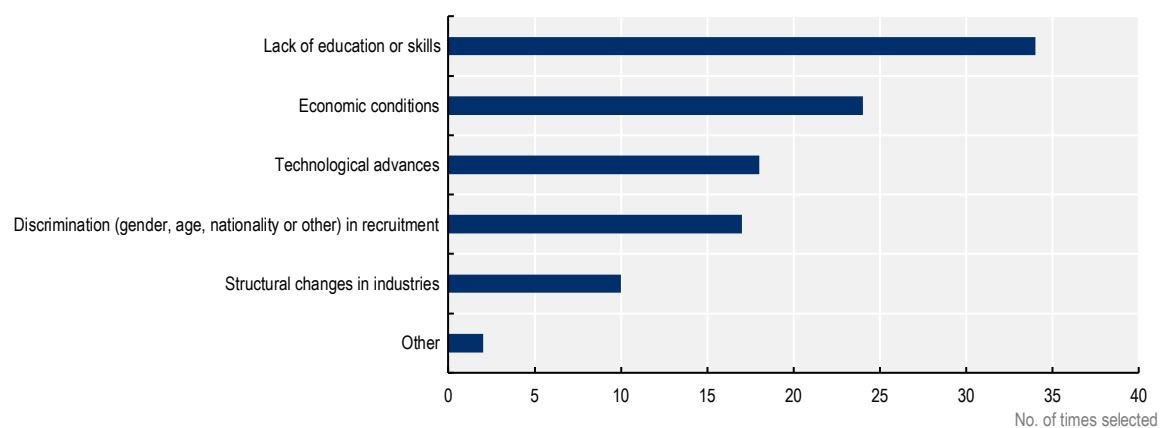
Figure A.4. What impediments/barriers do you identify for the implementation of these care-oriented actions?



Note: Respondents could select up to 5 answers. Figure based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Chamber of Commerce and Services, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the Faculty of Education and Health of the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Association of Technical Education Teachers (AMET), the *Los Ositos* kindergarten, the Foundation for the Integral Assistance of the Elderly, the *Espacio son Raíces* foundation, the Ministry of Habitat and Family Economy of the Province of Córdoba, the Industrial Union of Córdoba and the *Casa Pueblo Sur* association.

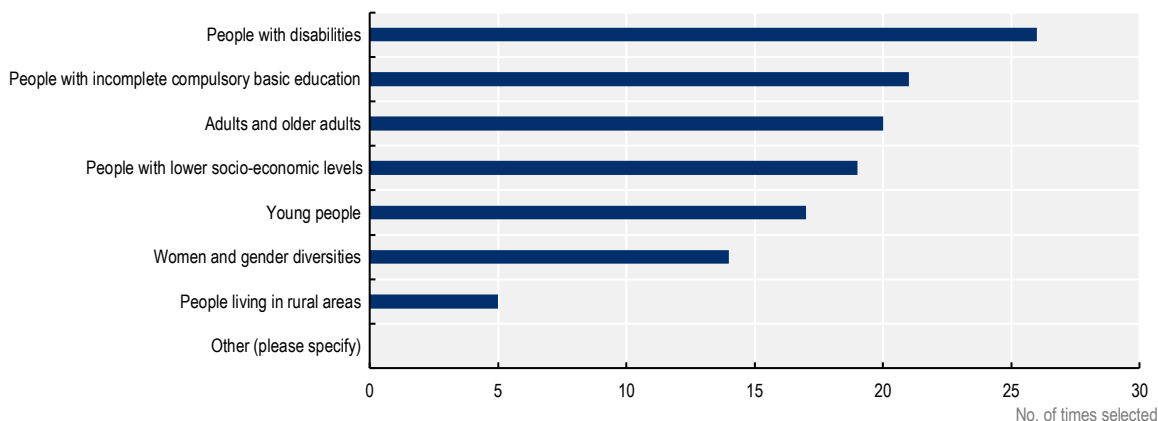
Education for employment

Figure A.5. What do you think are the main causes of unemployment in the Province of Córdoba?



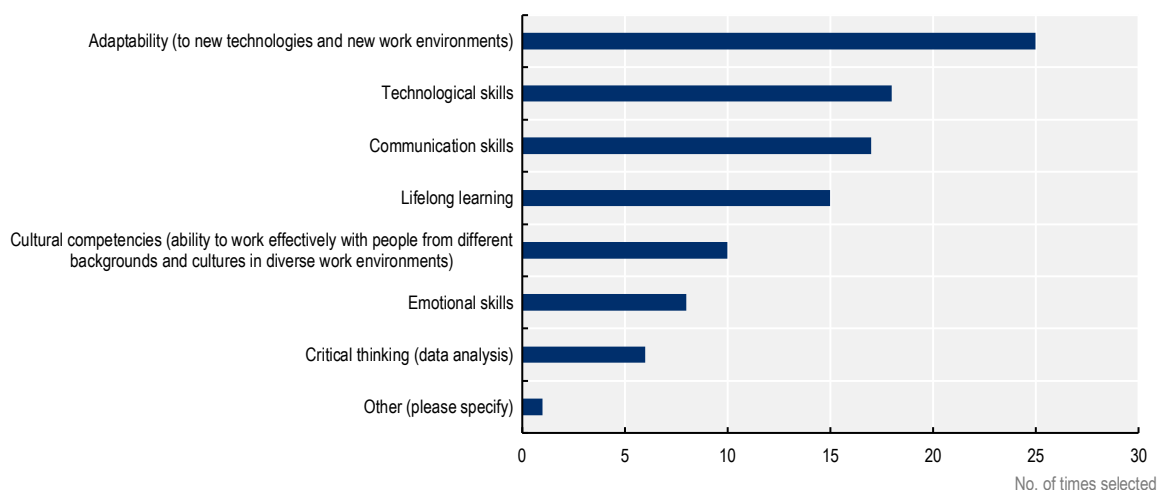
Note: Respondents could select up to 3 answers. Based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Technology Cluster, the Catholic University of Córdoba, the Córdoba Youth Agency, the Ministry of Education of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Province of Córdoba, the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of Córdoba, the Cordoban Trade Association, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the National University of Córdoba, the Argentine Union of Private Teachers (SADOP), the Observatory of Youth, Cooperativism and Popular Initiatives (*Observatorio de Juventudes, Cooperativismo e Iniciativas Populares*), the National University of Córdoba, the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI), the Women's Space Tec- Women's Ministry (*Espacio Mujeres Tec- Ministerio de la Mujer*), the Ministry of Social Development of Córdoba, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of Córdoba, the Córdoba Agency for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Siglo 21 University.

Figure A.6. According to the well-being survey, 39% of unemployment corresponds to long-term unemployment (looking for a job for more than a year) in the 4 main agglomerates of the Province of Córdoba. Which groups of the population do you consider to be the most affected by long-term unemployment?



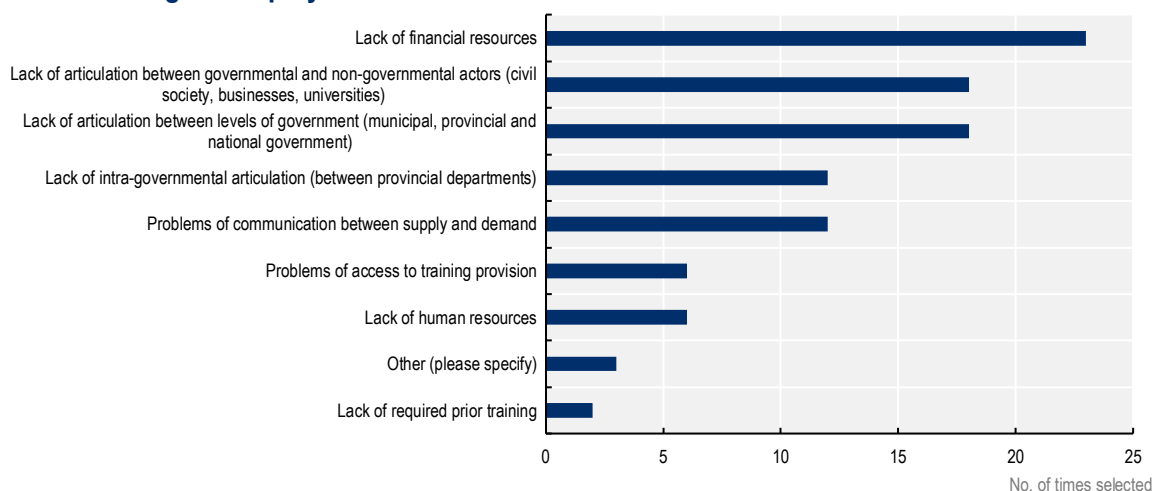
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Figure A.7. What type of knowledge and skills do you consider necessary to get a job?



Note: Respondents could select up to 3 answers. Based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Technology Cluster, the Catholic University of Córdoba, the Córdoba Youth Agency, the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Province of Córdoba, the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Cordoban Trade Association, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the National University of Córdoba, the Argentine Union of Private Teachers (SADOP), the Observatory of Youth, Cooperativism and Popular Initiatives (*Observatorio de Juventudes, Cooperativismo e Iniciativas Populares*), the National University of Córdoba, the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI), the Women's Space Tec- Women's Ministry (*Espacio Mujeres Tec- Ministerio de la Mujer*), the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the Córdoba Agency for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Siglo 21 University.

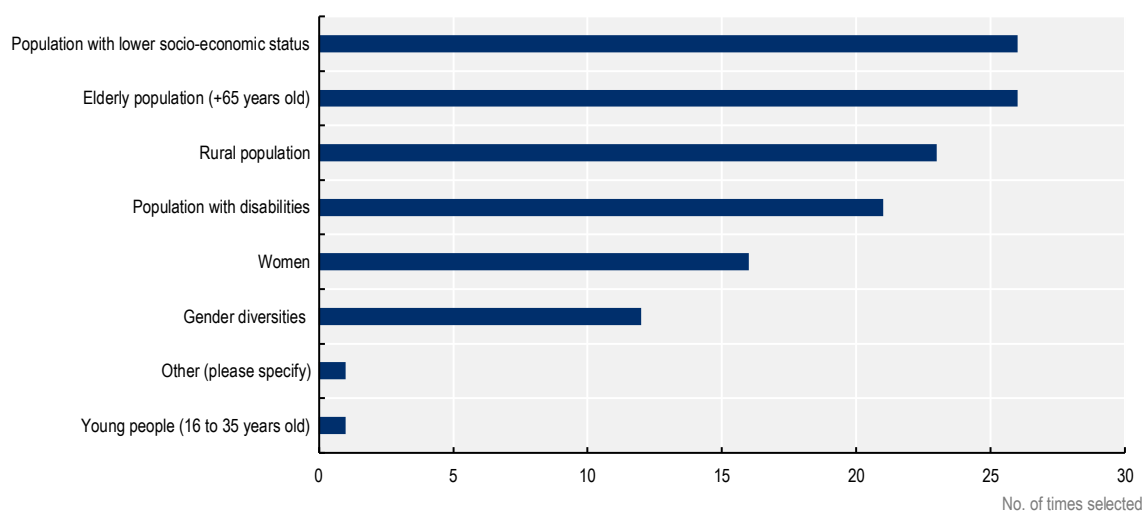
Figure A.8. What impediments/barriers do you identify in the implementation of your actions related to training for employment?



Note: Based on a total of 34 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Technology Cluster, the Catholic University of Córdoba, the Córdoba Youth Agency, the Ministry of Education of the Province of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Province of Córdoba, the Provincial University of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Cordoban Trade Association, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the National University of Córdoba, the Argentine Union of Private Teachers (SADOP), the Observatory of Youth, Cooperativism and Popular Initiatives (*Observatorio de Juventudes, Cooperativismo e Iniciativas Populares*), the National University of Córdoba, the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI), the Women's Space Tec-Women's Ministry (*Espacio Mujeres Tec- Ministerio de la Mujer*), the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training of the Province of Córdoba, the Córdoba Agency for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Siglo 21 University. Bridging the digital divide

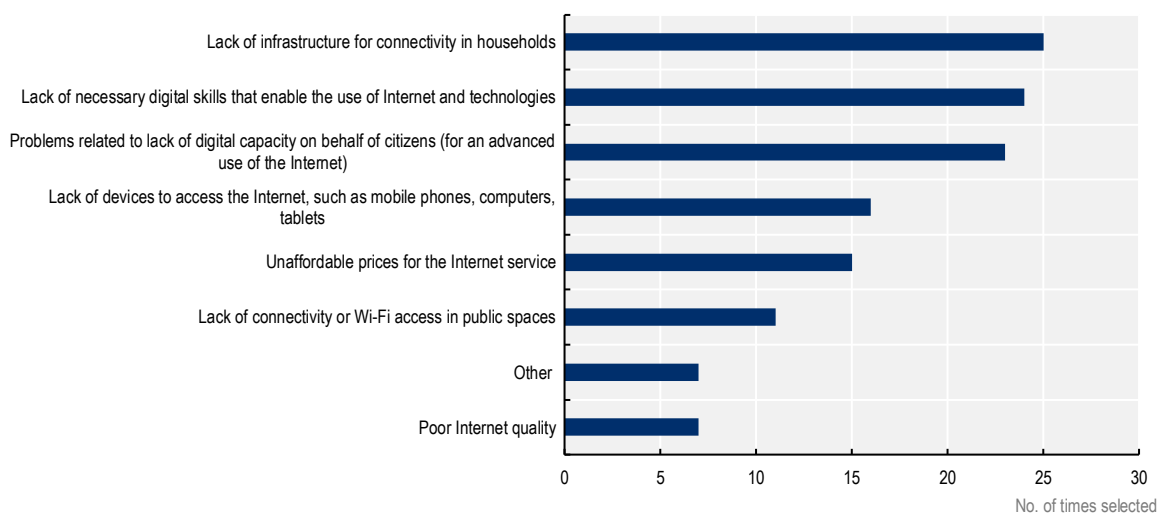
Bridging the Digital Divide

Figure A.9. Which groups of the population do you consider to be the most affected by the digital divide?



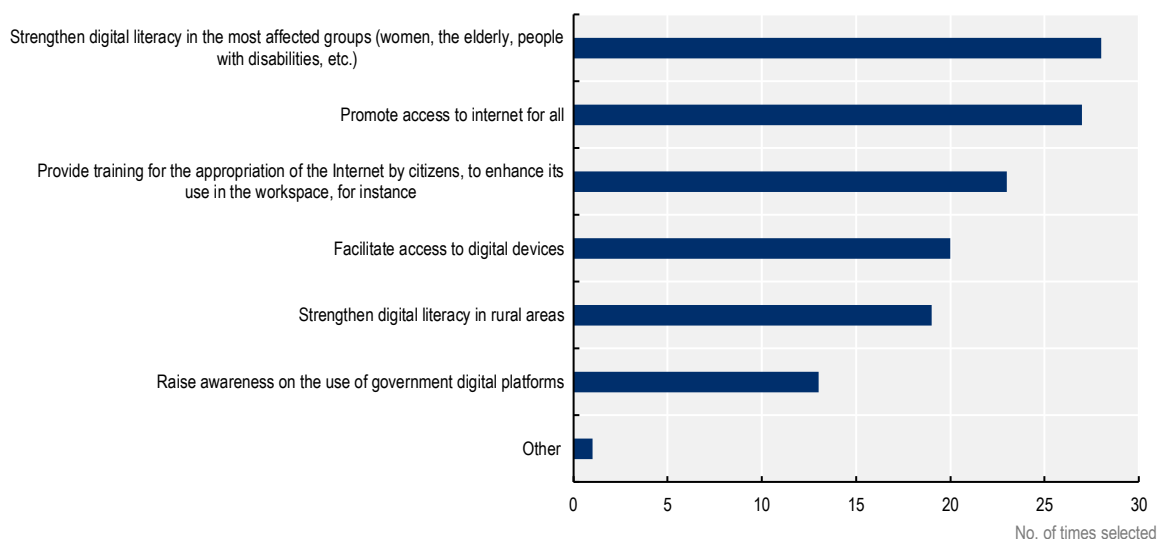
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Figure A.10. What do you consider to be the main challenges of the digital divide in the Province of Córdoba?



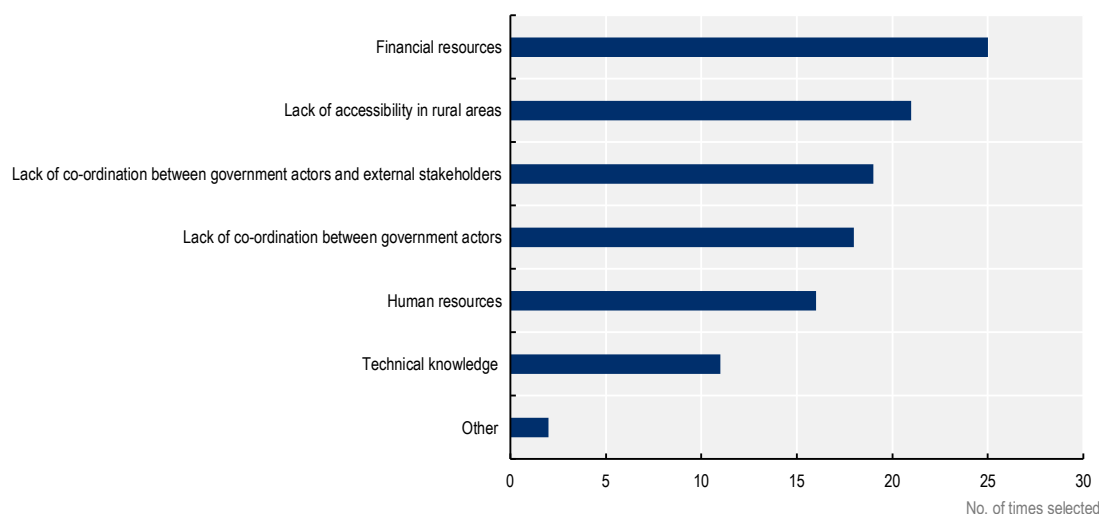
Note: Respondents could select up to 5 answers. Based on a total of 30 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: civil association *Casa Pueblo Sur*, the National University of Córdoba, the *Ensamble Joven-Somos PARES* association, the Undersecretary of Disability of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Women's Affairs of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the *Por Igual Más* foundation, the Accessible Development Latin America (DALAT) foundation, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Secretariat for Management Innovation - Ministry of Coordination of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Community Outreach and Communication of the Province of Córdoba, Blas Pascal University, the Córdoba Union for the Blind, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency and the *Espacio Mujeres Tec*.

Figure A.11. What are the possible solutions that you think could be implemented to solve the problem of the digital divide in the Province of Córdoba?



Note: Respondents could select up to 5 answers. Based on a total of 30 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: civil association *Casa Pueblo Sur*, the National University of Córdoba, the *Ensamble Joven-Somos PARES* association, the Undersecretary of Disability of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Province of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the *Por Igual Más* foundation, the Accessible Development Latin America (DALAT) foundation, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Secretariat for Management Innovation - Ministry of Coordination of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Community Outreach and Communication of the Province of Córdoba, Blas Pascal University, the Córdoba Union for the Blind, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency and the *Espacio Mujeres Tec*.

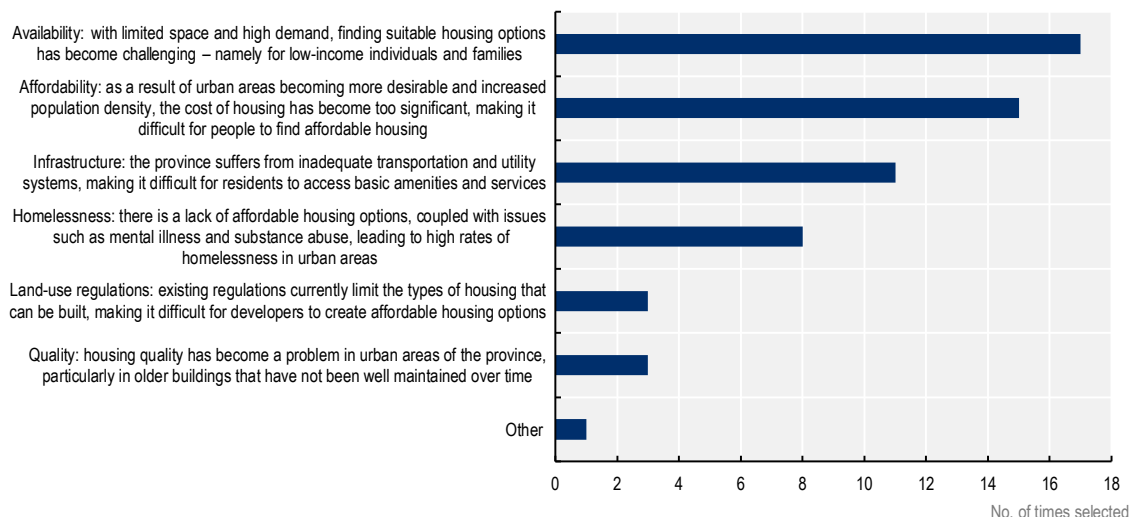
Figure A.12. What impediments/barriers in the implementation of these solutions would you identify in an effort to reduce the digital gap?



Note: Respondents could select up to 5 answers. Based on a total of 30 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: civil association *Casa Pueblo Sur*, the National University of Córdoba, the *Ensamble Joven-Somos PARES* association, the Undersecretary of Disability of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Province of Córdoba, the National University of Villa María, the *Por Igual Más* foundation, the Accessible Development Latin America (DALAT) foundation, the Ministry of Social Development of the Province of Córdoba, the Secretariat for Management Innovation - Ministry of the Province of Coordination, the Ministry of Community Outreach and Communication of the Province of Córdoba, Blas Pascal University, the Córdoba Union for the Blind, the Córdoba Connectivity Agency and the *Espacio Mujeres Tec*.

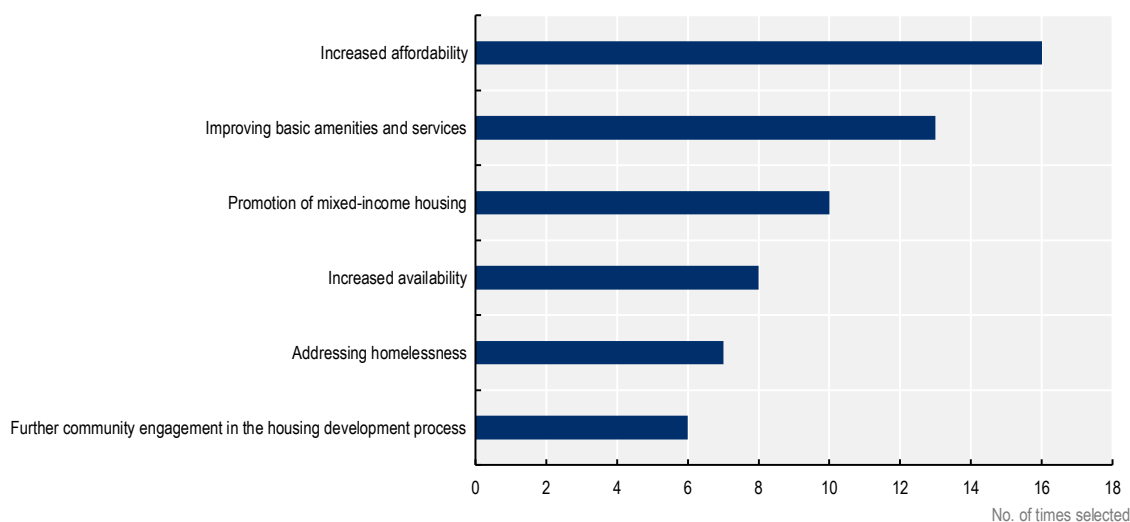
Housing and access to services

Figure A.13. What are the main housing challenges in the urban areas of the Province of Córdoba?



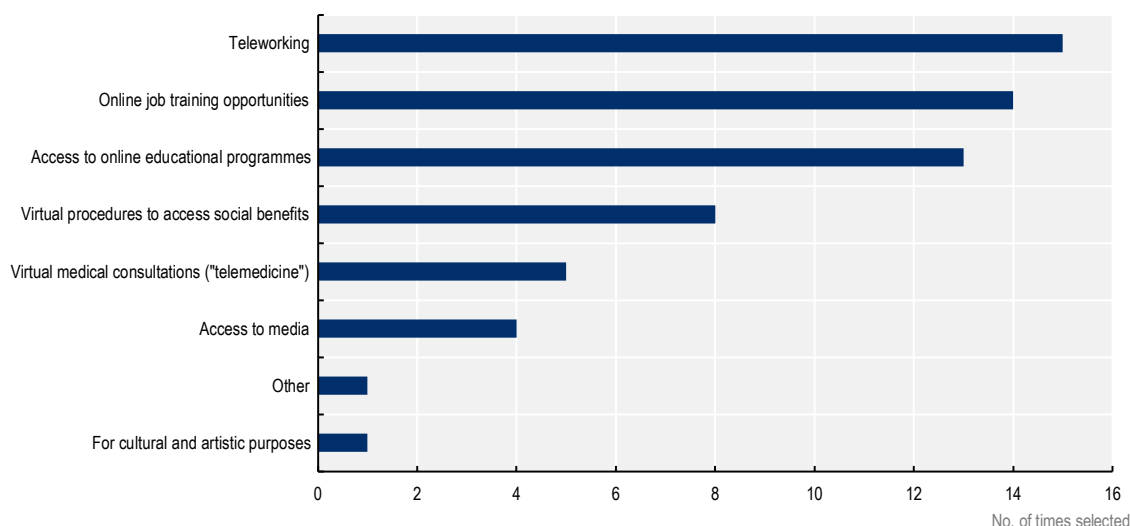
Note: Based on a total of 21 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the Cooperative for the Provision of Broadcasting Services Colsecor Limited (*Cooperativa de Provisión de Servicios de Radiodifusión Colsecor Limitada*), the municipality of Suco, the National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers, the Chamber of Commerce of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Health of the Province of Córdoba - Maternal and Neonatal Hospital, the Plurales foundation, the municipality of Las Isletillas, the Railway Liaison Committee, the Ministry of Coordination of the Province of Córdoba, the municipality of Colonia Vignaud, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of the Province of Córdoba - Sub-Secretariat of Family Farming, the municipality of Las Calles and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Mining of the Province of Córdoba.

Figure A.14. How can housing in the Province of Córdoba be improved for the future?



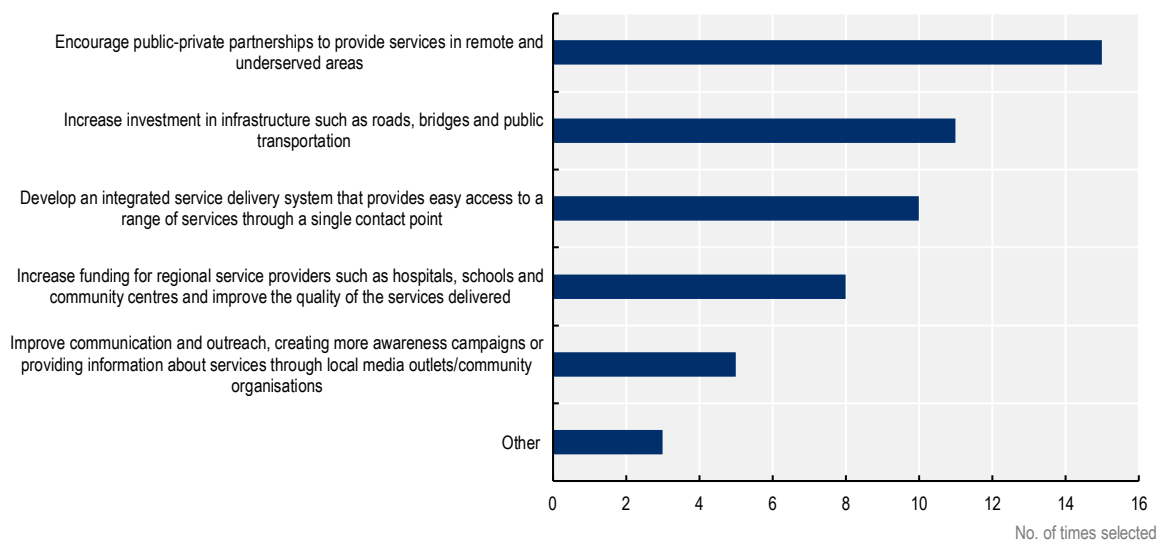
Note: Based on a total of 21 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the Cooperative for the Provision of Broadcasting Services Colsecor Limited (*Cooperativa de Provisión de Servicios de Radiodifusión Colsecor Limitada*), the municipality of Suco, the National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers, the Chamber of Commerce of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Health of the Province of Córdoba - Maternal and Neonatal Hospital, the Plurales foundation, the municipality of Las Isletillas, the Railway Liaison Committee, the Ministry of Coordination of the Province of Córdoba, the municipality of Colonia Vignaud, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of the Province of Córdoba - Sub-Secretariat of Family Farming, the municipality of Las Calles and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Mining of the Province of Córdoba.

Figure A.15. Internet access for the population living in peri-urban areas or those farther away from large urban centres offers the possibility of having new services and benefits to improve their quality of life. In relation to the following options, which do you consider to be the most important services?



Note: Based on a total of 21 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the Cooperative for the Provision of Broadcasting Services Colsecor Limited (*Cooperativa de Provisión de Servicios de Radiodifusión Colsecor Limitada*), the municipality of Suco, the National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers, the Chamber of Commerce of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Health of the Province of Córdoba - Maternal and Neonatal Hospital, the Plurales foundation, the municipality of Las Isletillas, the Railway Liaison Committee, the Ministry of Coordination of the Province of Córdoba, the municipality of Colonia Vignaud, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Córdoba - Sub-Secretariat of Family Farming, the municipality of Las Calles and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Mining of the Province of Córdoba.

Figure A.16. What can the government do to improve access to services in the province?



Note: Based on a total of 21 respondents from different sectors and institutions, including: the Córdoba Connectivity Agency, the Cooperative for the Provision of Broadcasting Services Colsecor Limited (*Cooperativa de Provisión de Servicios de Radiodifusión Colsecor Limitada*), the municipality of Suco, the National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers, the Chamber of Commerce of Córdoba, the Ministry of Labour of the Province of Córdoba, the Ministry of Health of the Province of Córdoba - Maternal and Neonatal Hospital, the Plurales foundation, the municipality of Las Isletillas, the Railway Liaison Committee, the Ministry of Coordination of Córdoba, the municipality of Colonia Vignaud, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Córdoba - Sub-Secretariat of Family Farming, the municipality of Las Calles and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Mining of the Province of Córdoba.

