

# Americas

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## THE SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX 2015

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THE SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED  
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EDUCATION

GDP GROWTH

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

RACE/ETHNICITY

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

SOCIAL PROGRAMS

CIVIL RIGHTS

LGBT RIGHTS

PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT

HOUSING

POLITICAL RIGHTS



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## 16 INNOVATORS SPECIAL SECTION: Afro-Descendant Leaders

Latoya Nugent, Marco Antonio Ramírez, Christiane Taubira, José Santos Caicedo, Alessandra Ramos, Edgardo Ortuño, and Gregoria Flores

Uruguay ranks on top—again—and two of the countries in Central America’s Northern Triangle—Honduras and Guatemala—rank at the bottom of the pack in the fourth annual 2015 *Americas Quarterly* Social Inclusion Index. Our comprehensive approach compares 22 variables—including economic and social data, as well as public opinion results—across 17 countries, providing a detailed portrait of a region that is making progress while grappling with unique challenges.

**T**hink of it as a 3-D movie that captures movement, texture and color. Measuring development in the hemisphere requires more than tracking economic growth or poverty reduction. Our fourth annual *Americas Quarterly* Social Inclusion Index monitors public policies and highlights gaps—while identifying variables such as access to goods and the protection of civil and political rights, to create an accurate portrait of the Americas region. The Index is generously supported by the Seattle International Foundation, dedicated to supporting worldwide poverty alleviation efforts through grant-making and other activities, with a strategic focus on Central America.

Some highlights: Uruguay remains in first place for the second straight year. The Southern Cone country is a champion in LGBT rights and in access to formal jobs, and continues making improvements in areas such as the amount of GDP spent on social projects and financial inclusion. Placing second in the 2015 rankings—moving up two places—is the United States, which scored high across several indicators: women's rights, financial inclusion and personal empowerment by gender and race. Argentina placed third, lagging in ethnoracial inclusion and civil society participation by race and gender. Nevertheless, it outranks several of its peers in indicators such as GDP spent on social programs.

Two of the countries in the Northern Triangle—Guatemala and Honduras—continue to rank at the bottom of the pack across the majority of indicators. High poverty rates, lack of opportunities, gender and race disparities, and very low access to formal jobs and education paint a challenging picture. El Salvador—a bright spot in the Northern Triangle—made gains in almost all categories this year, climbing three positions in the overall ranking.

At *Americas Quarterly* we consider social inclusion to be more than the reduction of poverty and inequal-

ity. It covers factors that contribute to an individual's capacity to enjoy a safe, productive life irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.

This year's Index ranks 17 countries across 22 variables. For a list of the sources used, please see pages 5 and 6. We have added a new ethnoracial indicator with assistance from the Gender and Diversity Division at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). This variable is based on three criteria: the existence of race and ethnicity questions in national census or household surveys; the existence of inclusion legislation; and the existence

of affirmative action laws for Indigenous and Afro-descendant populations. The top five, in order of rank: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, the U.S., and Panama.

Zooming in on country-by-country results is one way of reading the Index. The scorecards and rankings by variable contained in pages 5 to 15 provide a snapshot of each country's level of inclusion, how it compares to others in the hemisphere, where progress has been made, and where public policies are still lagging. But a deeper dive reveals how entire segments of the population in some countries are crippled by unequal access to formal jobs, education, income, and rights. Women and Indig-

enous and Afro-descendant communities lag behind in almost every variable—despite the high growth rates of the recent past.

Still, there are encouraging signs everywhere.

The majority of the countries included in the Index improved in access to adequate housing—most significantly Paraguay. All countries except Nicaragua and Guatemala scored over 50 percent across both race and gender, with nine countries scoring 80 percent or higher in male and female coverage. Minorities, however, are much less likely to have access to adequate housing compared with nonminorities in many countries, including Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Peru.

**WOMEN AND  
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Poverty is receding across the board, notably in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. Yet in Honduras—second to last among the 17 countries in the overall Index—poverty has actually increased. Minorities are more vulnerable to poverty than nonminorities, usually by at least 10 percentage points.

Access to a formal job remains sketchy in the region. There were improvements in Bolivia and Ecuador across both gender and race. However, Colombia and Peru saw decreases; and Honduras continues to score abysmally in terms of access to a formal job, increasing only from 5.1 percent to 5.6 percent for males, and from 10.8 percent to 11.6 percent for females. In comparison, Uruguay has 91.8 percent male coverage and 88.6 percent female coverage. All Central American countries where household survey data was available, except for Costa Rica, scored under 60 percent this year.

Some of the variables in the Social Inclusion Index enable us to measure the actual results delivered by governments. But public perceptions of government responsiveness also have an impact on citizens' sense of empowerment. Most countries in the region made progress across these indicators. Men tend to feel more politically empowered than women, while minority groups feel less politically empowered than nonminority groups in all countries—with the notable exceptions of Peru, Chile, Colombia, and El Salvador. Additionally, authorities in Colombia and Mexico may want to explore the reasons behind the marked decrease in their citizens' perception of government responsiveness by both gender and race.

When it comes to financial inclusion, every country improved its score in this year's Index except for Paraguay—for which updated data was not available. Between 2011 and 2014, bank account ownership dramatically increased in the region. Growth was strongest in Brazil and in Mexico. There is still room, however, for women and those under the poverty line to have greater access to the financial system.

The region's champions of women's rights are the U.S., Uruguay, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Colombia.

But the picture is far from rosy. While 13 of the 17 countries examined in the Index allow for the termination of pregnancy in some circumstances, a large majority of abortions in the region still take place illegally and in unsafe surroundings. Other factors in our women's rights variable remained almost unchanged—such as the assistance provided to working families with children—or presented only slight improvement, such as the percentage of women in political power.

Yet we saw great improvement in all countries in decreasing the maternal mortality rate, compared to 2014 (except for the U.S. and Uruguay, which already had low rates). In Bolivia, the rate dropped spectacularly from 8 percent to 1 percent.

No social inclusion index would be complete without

looking at the sweeping changes in LGBT rights throughout the region. The top five, ranked in order, are Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador. The exception is Paraguay, which shares the bottom of the scale with countries in the Northern Triangle, particularly Honduras and Guatemala. This year's LGBT rights variable included an extra indicator on hate crimes, which slightly altered the scale we used in previous years.

As Latin America enters its fifth straight year of slow growth, it is more important than ever to monitor, preserve and expand the social gains of recent decades. We hope the 2015 *Americas Quarterly* Social Inclusion Index can serve as a tool for policymakers, multi-

lateral agencies and others concerned with evaluating the impact of public policies—particularly those that affect the poorest and most vulnerable in our hemisphere.

**METHODOLOGY NOTES:** Some country scores remained similar to last year in absolute numbers, but rankings changed in comparison to other countries. Others improved in raw numbers in variables, but were penalized because of the disparity between male and female access. Because some countries lacked data on certain variables, such as race-based household survey data, our overall country ranking accounts only for the variables every country had full data on.

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THE REGION.**

# RANKINGS BY VARIABLE

## PERCENT GDP GROWTH (2004-2014)

PANAMA	1
PERU	2
URUGUAY	3
ARGENTINA	4
BOLIVIA	5
COLOMBIA	6
PARAGUAY	7
ECUADOR	8
COSTA RICA	9
CHILE	10
HONDURAS	11
NICARAGUA	12
GUATEMALA	13
BRAZIL	14
MEXICO	15
EL SALVADOR	16
UNITED STATES	17

A country can reduce poverty and inequality only if it grows economically. This measure looks at each country's average growth from 2004 to 2014 using data from the International Monetary Fund.

## PERCENT GDP SPENT ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS

COSTA RICA	1
UNITED STATES	2
ARGENTINA	3
BOLIVIA	4
URUGUAY	5
BRAZIL	6
COLOMBIA	7
PARAGUAY	8
NICARAGUA	9
PANAMA	10
MEXICO	11
CHILE	12
EL SALVADOR	13
ECUADOR	14
PERU	15
GUATEMALA	16
HONDURAS	17

There are no measures of the effectiveness of state spending on social programs. We used a simpler measure of percent of GDP spent on education and health care from the World Bank.

## ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

GENDER		RACE	
CHILE	1	CHILE	1
BOLIVIA	2	ECUADOR	2
ARGENTINA	3	BOLIVIA	3
ECUADOR	4	PERU	4
PARAGUAY	5	URUGUAY	5
PERU	6	MEXICO	6
UNITED STATES	7	BRAZIL	7
COLOMBIA	8	PARAGUAY	8
URUGUAY	9	NICARAGUA	9
COSTA RICA	10	GUATEMALA	10
MEXICO	11		
BRAZIL	12		
GUATEMALA	13		
EL SALVADOR	14		
HONDURAS	15		
PANAMA	16		
NICARAGUA	17		

This score uses data from the Socioeconomic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEDLAS and the World Bank). There is near-universal enrollment in primary schools in the region, so we looked at secondary school enrollment. Nonminority refers to respondents who did not identify as Indigenous, Afro-descendant or other similar terms. For the U.S., we used the U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey, and for Panama, data from the Ministry of Education's *Departamento de Estadística*.

## POLITICAL RIGHTS

URUGUAY	1
CHILE	2
COSTA RICA	3
UNITED STATES	3
EL SALVADOR	5
PANAMA	5
BRAZIL	7
ARGENTINA	8
PERU	9
BOLIVIA	10
COLOMBIA	10
MEXICO	12
PARAGUAY	13
ECUADOR	14
GUATEMALA	14
HONDURAS	16
NICARAGUA	17

These scores, ranging from 0 to 40, are from Freedom House's survey, *Freedom in the World 2014*. They evaluate respect for 10 political rights in 3 categories: electoral process (3 questions); political pluralism and participation (4); and functioning of government (3).

## CIVIL RIGHTS

URUGUAY	1
CHILE	2
UNITED STATES	3
COSTA RICA	4
ARGENTINA	5
BRAZIL	6
PANAMA	7
PERU	8
EL SALVADOR	9
BOLIVIA	10
PARAGUAY	11
MEXICO	12
ECUADOR	13
NICARAGUA	13
COLOMBIA	15
GUATEMALA	16
HONDURAS	17

These scores, ranging from 0 to 60, are from Freedom House's survey, *Freedom in the World 2014*. They evaluate respect for 15 civil liberties in 4 categories: freedom of expression and belief (4 questions); associational and organizational rights (3); rule of law (4); and personal autonomy and individual rights (4).

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

UNITED STATES	1
URUGUAY	2
COSTA RICA	3
ARGENTINA	4
COLOMBIA	5
MEXICO	6
BRAZIL	7
CHILE	7
ECUADOR	7
PERU	10
PANAMA	11
EL SALVADOR	12
NICARAGUA	12
PARAGUAY	14
HONDURAS	15
BOLIVIA	16
GUATEMALA	17

These scores account for maternal mortality rates, reproductive rights, women in political power, laws criminalizing violence against women, and tax provisions for childcare. The data is compiled by Joan Caivano and Jane Marcos-Delgado. The score ranges from 0 to 28.

## LGBT RIGHTS

URUGUAY	1
ARGENTINA	2
BRAZIL	2
COLOMBIA	4
ECUADOR	4
MEXICO	4
UNITED STATES	4
BOLIVIA	8
CHILE	8
PERU	10
COSTA RICA	11
EL SALVADOR	11
NICARAGUA	11
HONDURAS	14
PARAGUAY	14
GUATEMALA	16
PANAMA	16

These scores reflect the permissibility of same-sex relationships, related antidiscrimination laws and laws on same-sex relationships, and protection from hate crimes, based on Javier Corrales' Gay Friendliness Index. Scores range from 0 to 8.

## NEW VARIABLE: ETHNORACIAL INCLUSION

BRAZIL	1
COLOMBIA	2
ECUADOR	2
UNITED STATES	2
PANAMA	5
BOLIVIA	6
NICARAGUA	7
URUGUAY	7
ARGENTINA	9
HONDURAS	9
COSTA RICA	9
GUATEMALA	12
CHILE	13
PERU	13
PARAGUAY	15
MEXICO	16
EL SALVADOR	17

The collection of race-based data is imperative to measuring Afro-descendant and Indigenous inclusion. To account for the lack of household survey data disaggregated by race in some countries, we created a new indicator, in coordination with the IDB, that scores ethnoracial inclusion based on race questions in national censuses and surveys, the existence of inclusion legislation, and affirmative action laws in the education and labor sectors. Scores range from 0 to 12.

## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

GENDER		RACE	
PARAGUAY	1	PARAGUAY	1
ECUADOR	2	HONDURAS	2
GUATEMALA	3	ECUADOR	3
BOLIVIA	4	NICARAGUA	4
HONDURAS	5	EL SALVADOR	5
PANAMA	6	COLOMBIA	6
NICARAGUA	7	BRAZIL	7
EL SALVADOR	8	PERU	8
COLOMBIA	9	CHILE	9
PERU	10	MEXICO	9
MEXICO	11	PANAMA	11
BRAZIL	12	COSTA RICA	12
UNITED STATES	13	UNITED STATES	12
COSTA RICA	14	BOLIVIA	14
CHILE	15	URUGUAY	15
URUGUAY	16	ARGENTINA	16
ARGENTINA	17		

Based on Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) *AméricaBarómetro* 2014 survey, this measures the average number of associations respondents said they participated in, out of a possible 5.



## FINANCIAL INCLUSION/GENDER

UNITED STATES	1	This score is calculated using the 2014 Global Findex Database of the World Bank, measuring access to an account at a formal institution. It measures the percentage of respondents with an account at a bank, credit union, another financial institution, or the post office, including respondents who have a debit card.
BRAZIL	2	
COSTA RICA	3	
CHILE	4	
ARGENTINA	5	
MEXICO	6	
PANAMA	7	
URUGUAY	8	
ECUADOR	9	
BOLIVIA	10	
COLOMBIA	11	
GUATEMALA	12	
EL SALVADOR	13	
PARAGUAY	14	
HONDURAS	15	
PERU	16	
NICARAGUA	17	

## PERCENT LIVING ON MORE THAN \$4 PER DAY

GENDER		RACE	
CHILE	1	CHILE	1
URUGUAY	2	URUGUAY	2
ARGENTINA	3	BRAZIL	3
COSTA RICA	4	PERU	4
UNITED STATES	5	PARAGUAY	5
BRAZIL	6	ECUADOR	6
PARAGUAY	7	MEXICO	7
PERU	8	BOLIVIA	8
ECUADOR	9	NICARAGUA	9
BOLIVIA	10	GUATEMALA	10
MEXICO	11		
COLOMBIA	12		
EL SALVADOR	13		
HONDURAS	14		
NICARAGUA	15		
GUATEMALA	16		

This score uses data from the Socioeconomic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEDLAS and the World Bank) disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity. According to the World Bank, over \$4 per day is defined as above moderate poverty—for our purposes, a better measure than being out of absolute poverty (\$2.50/day). For the U.S. we use the American Community Survey on Poverty Status. We did not find an equivalent source for Panama.

## PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT

GENDER		RACE	
UNITED STATES	1	UNITED STATES	1
PANAMA	2	EL SALVADOR	2
EL SALVADOR	3	ARGENTINA	3
ARGENTINA	4	URUGUAY	4
HONDURAS	4	CHILE	5
URUGUAY	4	HONDURAS	5
COSTA RICA	7	PANAMA	7
ECUADOR	7	ECUADOR	8
CHILE	9	COSTA RICA	9
PARAGUAY	10	NICARAGUA	10
BOLIVIA	11	MEXICO	11
PERU	12	PARAGUAY	12
GUATEMALA	13	COLOMBIA	13
BRAZIL	14	BOLIVIA	14
NICARAGUA	15	BRAZIL	15
MEXICO	15	PERU	16
COLOMBIA	17		

Based on Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) *AmericasBarometer* 2014 survey, this is the standard measure of what is called "internal efficacy" in political science. It is based on the statement, "You feel that you understand the most important political issues of the country," asking respondents to disagree or agree on a scale of 1 to 7.

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS

GENDER		RACE	
ECUADOR	1	URUGUAY	1
URUGUAY	2	ECUADOR	2
BOLIVIA	3	PANAMA	3
EL SALVADOR	4	BOLIVIA	4
NICARAGUA	5	EL SALVADOR	4
PANAMA	6	ARGENTINA	6
ARGENTINA	7	NICARAGUA	7
CHILE	8	CHILE	8
PERU	9	PERU	9
COSTA RICA	10	BRAZIL	10
BRAZIL	11	HONDURAS	10
GUATEMALA	12	PARAGUAY	12
PARAGUAY	13	COSTA RICA	13
HONDURAS	14	MEXICO	14
MEXICO	15	COLOMBIA	15
UNITED STATES	16	UNITED STATES	16
COLOMBIA	17		

Based on Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) *AmericasBarometer* 2014 survey, this is the standard measure of what is called "external efficacy" in political science. It is based on the statement, "Those who govern are interested in what people like you think," asking respondents to disagree or agree on a scale of 1 to 7.

## ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

GENDER		RACE	
COSTA RICA	1	URUGUAY	1
CHILE	2	BRAZIL	2
URUGUAY	3	CHILE	3
UNITED STATES	4	MEXICO	4
BRAZIL	5	PARAGUAY	5
ARGENTINA	6	ECUADOR	6
MEXICO	7	PERU	7
COLOMBIA	8	BOLIVIA	8
ECUADOR	9	GUATEMALA	9
PARAGUAY	10	NICARAGUA	10
PERU	11		
HONDURAS	12		
BOLIVIA	13		
EL SALVADOR	14		
GUATEMALA	15		
NICARAGUA	16		

This score uses data from the Socioeconomic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEDLAS and the World Bank) disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity. It includes 3 indicators of adequate housing: access to water; access to electricity; and lack of severe overcrowding. For the U.S. data, we used the 2009 Center for Disease Control's report on inadequate housing. We did not find an equivalent source for Panama.

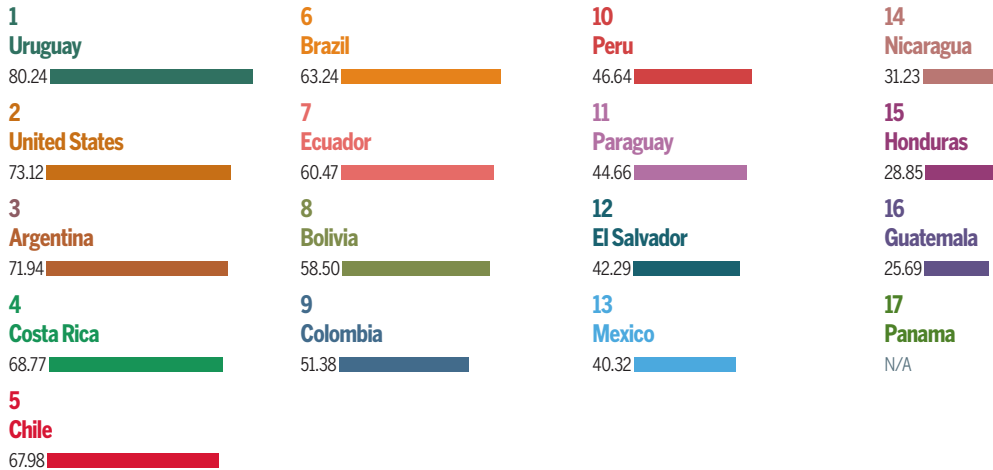
## ACCESS TO A FORMAL JOB

GENDER		RACE	
URUGUAY	1	CHILE	1
CHILE	2	URUGUAY	2
BRAZIL	3	BRAZIL	3
UNITED STATES	4	BOLIVIA	4
COSTA RICA	5	PERU	5
ARGENTINA	6	ECUADOR	6
COLOMBIA	7	NICARAGUA	7
BOLIVIA	8	MEXICO	8
EL SALVADOR	9	PARAGUAY	9
PANAMA	10	GUATEMALA	10
PERU	11		
ECUADOR	12		
PARAGUAY	13		
MEXICO	14		
GUATEMALA	15		
NICARAGUA	16		
HONDURAS	17		

This score uses data from the Socioeconomic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEDLAS and the World Bank) disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity. An individual between 25 and 65 is considered to have a formal job if he/she will receive a pension. For the U.S., we used 2014 Labor Force Statistics Current Population Survey. For Panama, we used the latest employment report from the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censo*.

## SI COUNTRY SCORES

This is how countries stacked up across the 22 variables. To see a full list of rankings by all the variables, please visit [www.americasquarterly.org/socialinclusionindex2015](http://www.americasquarterly.org/socialinclusionindex2015)



## SCORECARDS

Country		Overall Score	
Argentina		71.94	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		5.23%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		12.14%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	88.0%	female 91.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights	0	10	20 30 31 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 40 49 50 60
Women's Rights	0	7	14 21 22 28
LGBT Rights	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	7
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4 6 7 8 10 12	
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	0.89	female 1.13
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	0.94	minority 1.14
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	49.46%	female 50.85%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	89.3%	female 89.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.34	female 3.92
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.14	minority 4.08
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.53	female 3.42
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.44	minority 3.54
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	93.2%	female 93.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	73.6%	female 68.1%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
<b>Comments:</b> Argentina ranks third place overall, improving this year in financial inclusion and personal empowerment, yet lagging in ethnoracial inclusion and civil society participation by race and gender. It continues to rank in the top three in GDP spent on social programs, enrollment in secondary school by gender, LGBT rights, percentage of population living on more than \$4 a day by gender, and personal empowerment by race.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
Bolivia		58.50	
GDP Growth 2004-2014		4.90%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		11.04%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	88.7%	female 87.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	89.3%	minority 85.0%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1-5)	male	2.07	female 2.13
BY RACE (1-5)*	non-minority	1.47	minority 2.14
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	43.97%	female 37.62%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	73.4%	female 72.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	80.0%	minority 55.7%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.97	female 3.56
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	4.21	minority 3.73
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.68	female 3.71
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.55	minority 3.70
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	68.7%	female 68.8%
BY RACE*	non-minority	73.6%	minority 57.0%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25-65)			
BY GENDER	male	53.8%	female 55.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	56.2%	minority 48.3%
<b>Comments:</b> Bolivia progressed in the overall rankings this year, improving in government responsiveness by gender, financial inclusion and GDP spent on social programs. It also scored above average in ethnoracial inclusion. However, the country continues to rank low on women's rights, and its scores decreased significantly in civil society participation by race and personal empowerment by race.			

Country		Overall Score	
Brazil		63.24	
GDP Growth 2004-2014		3.44%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		10.14%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	74.9%	female 79.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	77.5%	minority 70.9%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1-5)	male	1.53	female 1.76
BY RACE (1-5)*	non-minority	1.59	minority 1.67
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	71.69%	female 64.77%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	80.5%	female 80.1%
BY RACE*	non-minority	80.6%	minority 76.3%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.76	female 3.40
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.69	minority 3.52
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.24	female 3.22
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.16	minority 3.26
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	93.5%	female 94.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	94.1%	minority 92.8%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25-65)			
BY GENDER	male	81.6%	female 79.2%
BY RACE*	non-minority	80.8%	minority 78.1%
<b>Comments:</b> Brazil's overall score increased this year, ranking first in ethnoracial inclusion, largely due to legal protection and affirmative action laws for its Indigenous and Afro-descendant populations. It outranks most countries in financial inclusion, LGBT rights, access to adequate housing by gender and race, and access to formal employment by race and gender, yet scores low in GDP growth and perceptions of personal empowerment by race and gender.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score



Country		Overall Score	
Chile		67.98	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		4.50%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		8.00%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	93.6%	female 92.8%
BY RACE*	non-minority	93.3%	minority 92.7%
Political Rights	0	10	20 30 39 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 40 50 56 60
Women's Rights	0	7	14 19 21 28
LGBT Rights	1	2 3 4	5 6 7 8
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4 6	8 10 12
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.12	female 1.49
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.31	minority 1.32
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	67.82%	female 59.10%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	93.7%	female 92.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	93.6%	minority 90.0%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.44	female 3.78
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.04	minority 4.13
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.31	female 3.32
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.29	minority 3.33
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	97.6%	female 97.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	98.4%	minority 91.4%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	89.1%	female 84.2%
BY RACE*	non-minority	87.2%	minority 83.5%
<b>Comments:</b> Chile ranked fifth again this year, coming in first across several indicators, including the percentage of the population living on more than \$4 per day by gender and race, formal jobs by race, and secondary school by both gender and race. However, it ranked in the bottom third in ethnoracial inclusion, and scored toward the bottom of all countries in civil society participation by gender.			

Country		Overall Score	
Colombia		51.38	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		4.81%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		9.56%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	81.6%	female 83.1%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.71	female 1.84
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.71	minority 1.80
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	43.48%	female 33.58%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	70.6%	female 69.1%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.21	female 3.31
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.66	minority 3.79
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	2.79	female 2.56
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	2.68	minority 2.68
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	85.7%	female 86.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	68.1%	female 64.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Comments: Colombia continues to rank in the middle of the region, although it improved its standing by two places this year. It placed second in ethnoracial inclusion and improved in areas such as civil society participation by race, and financial inclusion and personal empowerment by race. However, Colombia experienced low rankings in civil rights, and decreased significantly in government responsiveness by race and gender as well as in perceptions of personal empowerment by gender.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
Costa Rica		68.77	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		4.57%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		13.84%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	80.5%	female 86.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights	0	10	20 30 37 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 40 50 53 60
Women's Rights	0	7	14 21 23 28
LGBT Rights	1	2	3 4 5 6 7 8
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4	6 7 8 10 12
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.18	female 1.43
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.24	minority 1.39
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	69.22%	female 60.24%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	87.7%	female 87.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.22	female 3.80
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.10	minority 3.91
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.29	female 3.24
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.41	minority 3.09
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	98.3%	female 98.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	77.2%	female 69.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
<b>Comments:</b> Costa Rica ranks fourth this year overall, placing first in access to adequate housing by gender and GDP spent on social programs, and ranks consistently high in political rights, women's rights and financial inclusion. However, it lacks race data for secondary school enrollment, percent living on more than \$4 a day and access to a formal job. It also ranks in the bottom half of the countries for civil society participation by race and gender and government responsiveness by race.			

Country		Overall Score	
Ecuador		60.47	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		4.72%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		7.22%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	87.6%	female 85.8%
BY RACE*	non-minority	87.2%	minority 84.3%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	2.30	female 2.34
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	2.78	minority 2.28
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	51.87%	female 40.82%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	75.9%	female 74.3%
BY RACE*	non-minority	77.1%	minority 59.8%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.22	female 3.80
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.31	minority 3.99
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.83	female 3.81
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.96	minority 3.81
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	84.8%	female 85.8%
BY RACE*	non-minority	87.2%	minority 70.8%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	54.2%	female 67.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	60.3%	minority 46.1%
<b>Comments:</b> Ecuador ranks first in government responsiveness by gender, scores high on civil society participation, government responsiveness and secondary school enrollment—in all cases by gender and race—and places third in ethnoracial inclusion. Despite some growth across several indicators, it struggles with access to formal employment by gender, percent of GDP spent on social programs and percentage of population living on more than \$4 per day by gender.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
El Salvador		42.29	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		1.83%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		7.63%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	49.1%	female 51.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.73	female 1.87
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.86	minority 1.80
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	40.28%	female 29.36%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	68.1%	female 68.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.53	female 4.00
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.17	minority 4.25
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.53	female 3.51
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.55	minority 3.51
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	60.9%	female 63.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	53.7%	female 55.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Comments: El Salvador improved its score in nearly every variable this year, most significantly in financial inclusion, percent living on more than \$4 a day and access to adequate housing. Despite these improvements, it still ranks low in several indicators when compared with other countries, notably decreasing by two points in civil rights and coming in last place in ethnoracial inclusion.			

Country		Overall Score	
Guatemala		25.69	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		3.55%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		5.32%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	59.6%	female 54.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	65.0%	minority 45.0%
Political Rights	0	10	20 24 30 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 31 40 50 60
Women's Rights	0	7	11 14 21 28
LGBT Rights	1	2 3	4 5 6 7 8
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4	6 6.5 8 10 12
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	2.34	female 2.18
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	N/A	minority 2.26
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	47.72%	female 34.56%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	38.2%	female 37.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	49.0%	minority 21.2%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.62	female 3.41
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	N/A	minority 3.51
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.19	female 3.14
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	N/A	minority 3.17
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	43.2%	female 44.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	53.1%	minority 30.3%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	33.8%	female 40.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	43.5%	minority 17.4%
<b>Comments:</b> Guatemala ranked last in the Index again this year, consistently ranking in the bottom half of all indicators, despite ranking third in civil society participation by gender. Its ranking slightly decreased in LGBT rights and dramatically fell in secondary school enrollment. However, it saw a marginal increase in financial inclusion, percent living on more than \$4 a day and government responsiveness by gender.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
Honduras		28.85	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		3.98%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		4.33%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	46.3%	female 46.2%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	2.02	female 2.12
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	2.10	minority 2.06
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	35.39%	female 24.87%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	41.9%	female 42.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.27	female 3.88
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.17	minority 4.05
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.06	female 3.19
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.14	minority 3.12
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	72.1%	female 74.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	5.6%	female 11.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
<b>Comments:</b> Honduras continues to have a low overall score, despite ranking second in civil society participation by race. Consistent with last year, it lags in civil, political and women's rights; and less than 6 percent of males and 12 percent of females have access to a formal job. However, Honduras made improvements in some indicators, such as financial inclusion, personal empowerment and access to adequate housing.			

Country		Overall Score	
Mexico		40.32	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		2.62%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		8.38%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	76.5%	female 77.3%
BY RACE*	non-minority	78.9%	minority 71.5%
Political Rights	0	10	20 28 30 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 36 40 50 60
Women's Rights	0	7	14 20 21 28
LGBT Rights	1	2	3 4 5 6 6 7 8
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4	6 8 10 12
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.54	female 1.75
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.44	minority 1.70
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	38.54%	female 38.84%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	73.6%	female 72.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	78.2%	minority 59.1%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.04	female 3.40
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.83	minority 3.69
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	2.89	female 2.94
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.05	minority 2.88
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	89.2%	female 89.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	91.9%	minority 82.6%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	39.7%	female 38.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	42.7%	minority 28.7%
<b>Comments:</b> Mexico increased the percentage of its population living on more than \$4 per day by race and gender and improved significantly in financial inclusion—with female inclusion improving from 21 to over 38 percent. Yet government responsiveness by gender fell by six places and it ranks in the bottom three in ethnoracial inclusion, GDP growth, personal empowerment by gender, and government responsiveness by gender.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
Nicaragua		31.23	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		3.79%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		9.04%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	47.6%	female 59.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	54.2%	minority 44.9%
Political Rights	0	10	19
Civil Rights	0	10	35
Women's Rights	0	7	16
LGBT Rights	1	2	3
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4	8
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.97	female 2.19
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.96	minority 2.11
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	23.90%	female 14.06%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	40.9%	female 41.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	41.8%	minority 31.5%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.25	female 3.47
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.05	minority 3.80
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.59	female 3.48
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.73	minority 3.48
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	40.7%	female 44.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	44.4%	minority 11.5%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	34.9%	female 50.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	40.4%	minority 50.2%
Comments: Despite improvements in access to formal employment by race and gender and percent of GDP spent on social programs, Nicaragua continues to rank low in most categories, including civil rights, financial inclusion and enrollment in secondary school by gender. It ranks last in political rights, and perceptions of government responsiveness and personal empowerment worsened.			

Country		Overall Score	
Panama		N/A	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		8.49%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		8.70%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	46.5%	female 52.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.92	female 1.91
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.57	minority 2.11
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	46.57%	female 40.26%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	N/A	female N/A
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.03	female 3.82
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.93	minority 3.92
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	3.62	female 3.47
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.58	minority 3.53
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	N/A	female N/A
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	44.9%	female 25.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Comments: Panama ranks first in GDP growth and second in personal empowerment by gender after the U.S., and above average in ethnoracial inclusion. However, it falls short in variables such as secondary school enrollment and LGBT rights, where it comes in last, tied with Guatemala. Panama did not receive an overall score this year due to the lack of data collection for several variables.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score

Country		Overall Score	
Paraguay		44.66	
GDP Growth 2004-2014		4.78%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		9.14%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	85.4%	female 85.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	91.2%	minority 72.6%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1-5)	male	2.32	female 2.30
BY RACE (1-5)*	non-minority	2.38	minority 2.26
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	20.68%	female 22.71%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	80.2%	female 79.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	87.6%	minority 63.5%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.84	female 3.52
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.73	minority 3.64
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.18	female 3.11
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.07	minority 3.20
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	80.8%	female 82.8%
BY RACE*	non-minority	86.8%	minority 71.1%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25-65)			
BY GENDER	male	45.7%	female 46.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	52.1%	minority 25.7%
Comments: Paraguay's overall ranking increased by four places from last year, ranking first in civil society participation by gender and race, and improving significantly in access to adequate housing and poverty alleviation. However, it ranked low in ethnoracial inclusion, LGBT rights, women's rights, and financial inclusion.			

Country		Overall Score	
Peru		46.64	
GDP Growth 2004-2014		6.16%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		5.75%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	83.2%	female 83.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	82.2%	minority 85.1%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1-5)	male	1.72	female 1.90
BY RACE (1-5)*	non-minority	1.53	minority 1.84
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	35.66%	female 22.50%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	79.3%	female 78.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	83.5%	minority 69.4%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.95	female 3.54
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.47	minority 3.78
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1-7)	male	3.34	female 3.28
BY RACE (1-7)*	non-minority	3.19	minority 3.33
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	73.2%	female 74.3%
BY RACE*	non-minority	77.3%	minority 66.2%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25-65)			
BY GENDER	male	57.5%	female 51.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	57.3%	minority 48.3%
Comments: While Peru improved its score in variables such as GDP spent on social programs and enrollment in secondary school, its ranking fell due to decreases in areas such as civil society participation and personal empowerment by gender, where other countries made greater advances. Improvements continued to be undermined by the disparities between males and females, and between minorities and nonminorities.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score



Country		Overall Score	
United States		73.12	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		1.76%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		13.73%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	83.7%	female 87.1%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Political Rights	0	10	20 30 37 40
Civil Rights	0	10	20 30 40 50 55 60
Women's Rights	0	7	14 21 27 28
LGBT Rights	1	2 3 4	5 6 6 7 8
Ethno-Racial Inclusion	2	4	6 7 8 10 12
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	1.33	female 1.22
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	1.23	minority 1.37
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	92.36%	female 94.80%
Percent Living Above Poverty			
BY GENDER	male	85.9%	female 83.4%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.95	female 4.58
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.83	minority 4.68
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	2.86	female 2.93
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	2.59	minority 3.45
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	95.1%	female 94.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	57.1%	female 42.9%
BY RACE*	non-minority	N/A	minority N/A
Comments: The U.S. rose two places this year to second place in the overall rankings. It ranks first across several indicators, including women's rights, financial inclusion and personal empowerment by gender and race. Consistent with last year, it scored last for GDP growth and ranked at the bottom of all countries for perceived government responsiveness across both race and gender.			

Country		Overall Score	
Uruguay		80.24	
GDP Growth 2004–2014		5.29%	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		10.59%	
Enrollment Secondary School			
BY GENDER	male	81.2%	female 87.5%
BY RACE*	non-minority	84.7%	minority 78.7%
Political Rights			
Civil Rights			
Women's Rights			
LGBT Rights			
Ethno-Racial Inclusion			
Civil Society Participation			
BY GENDER (1–5)	male	0.92	female 1.05
BY RACE (1–5)*	non-minority	0.96	minority 1.06
Financial Inclusion			
BY GENDER	male	50.07%	female 41.27%
Percent Living on More than \$4 per Day			
BY GENDER	male	92.4%	female 92.0%
BY RACE*	non-minority	92.8%	minority 82.7%
Personal Empowerment			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.67	female 4.03
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	4.41	minority 4.15
Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)			
BY GENDER (1–7)	male	4.00	female 3.85
BY RACE (1–7)*	non-minority	3.96	minority 3.82
Access to Adequate Housing			
BY GENDER	male	97.2%	female 97.7%
BY RACE*	non-minority	97.6%	minority 94.4%
Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25–65)			
BY GENDER	male	91.8%	female 88.6%
BY RACE*	non-minority	90.6%	minority 83.8%
Comments: Uruguay once again ranks in first place in this year's index, leading in many indicators, including LGBT, political and civil rights. It also improved in many areas since last year, including GDP spent on social programs, financial inclusion and access to formal employment by gender. It continues to struggle, however, with civil society participation and can improve on ethnoracial inclusion, where it ranked in the middle of the pack.			

\* Disaggregated race data not included in overall score



**These Afro-descendant leaders  
have made waves in the political,  
economic and social arenas.**



## Innovators SPECIAL SECTION

# True Pioneers



This year marks the beginning of the United Nation's International Decade for People of African Descent. It is only fitting, then, that we honor Afro-descendant leaders from across Latin America and the Caribbean in this issue's special Innovators section. These profiles both celebrate important advances in the political, economic and social inclusion of Afro-descendant populations in the region, and highlight significant challenges that remain.

The seven leaders profiled here hail from a geographically diverse set of countries—Brazil, Colombia, French Guiana, Honduras, Jamaica, Peru, and Uruguay—and have risen to prominence in politics, civil society and community advocacy. Together, they advocate for cultural preservation, greater political representation, and for the rights of the LGBT community and immigrants, among others. It is our hope that throughout this decade, leaders in the Western Hemisphere will continue to fight for recognition, justice and development.





# The Advocate

## Latoya Nugent Jamaica

By Jaevion Nelson and  
Karen Lloyd

A few years after publicly coming out as a lesbian, Latoya Nugent, 33, was defending the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities in Jamaica. In July 2013, she became the education and training manager at J-FLAG—the island’s leading LGBT rights organization. Those who knew her weren’t surprised. Though her career as an LGBT advocate is just beginning, Nugent is already well-known for her dedication to promoting inclusive development and the rights of women and girls. “Latoya Nugent has transformed J-FLAG’s outreach to, and work with, LGBT people—especially lesbian and bisexual women,” Dane Lewis, executive director of J-FLAG said. “She has designed innovative initiatives such as debate competitions, social media campaigns and cultural events to raise awareness about LGBT issues in the community and general public [...] and build ally support.”

Nugent has her work cut out for her. LGBT advocates in Jamaica are few and far between—even more so among women—given the culture of discrimination there and the threat of bodily harm they could face. Her mission is to build and mobilize a supportive community and increase the visibility of a vulnerable minority that faces unique struggles in navigating life in Jamaica. In a society where over 60 percent of the population opposes constitutional protections for LGBT rights—including over 60 percent of businesspersons who do not support workplace protections, and over 50 percent who would not hire someone who openly identifies as LGBT—Nugent knew that

she had to become actively involved in any process that would address and reduce the incidence of discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

Nugent’s training in philosophy and comparative politics in her undergraduate and graduate studies, as well as her experience as an educator and researcher, provide her with a solid foundation for this role. The relative invisibility of issues affecting lesbian and bisexual women and transgender citizens in Jamaica have left them vulnerable to sexual harassment and assault and what some call corrective sexual violence (or rape). Many are also chronically unemployed and underemployed. On a more basic level,

Jamaica has a limited cadre of qualified doctors and medical professionals who understand the health needs of nonheterosexual women. More troubling still, they are marginalized by the larger women’s movement in Jamaica, which appears to pay little attention to their needs, and they have few advocates in positions of power.

But Nugent is optimistic. She believes Jamaica is capable of transforming itself into a society that doesn’t discriminate based on gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.

In November 2014, Nugent co-founded Women’s Empowerment for Change (WE-Change) with 20 other

Latoya Nugent in  
Kingston, Jamaica.







lesbian and bisexual women. All of the founders successfully completed a training program in public policy and advocacy that Nugent both designed and managed. WE-Change is dedicated to increasing the participation of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women in advocacy for their economic, social and political rights, and creating safe spaces for them to vocalize issues, socialize and support one another. WE-Change actively works toward reducing homophobia among authorities, as well as parents and guardians. Much of Nugent's inspiration in this regard comes from her partner and cofounders.

But advocacy doesn't always require taking yourself seriously. Nugent enjoys incorporating her message into the T-shirts she designs and gives to friends with messages like the Stonewall's Education for All campaign popular slogan, "Some people are gay. Get over it!" and J-FLAG's "Show Respect Like Ah Boss." It's no accident that her T-shirts have become a familiar sight at Jamaican soca events.

Despite the challenges, the LGBT movement in Jamaica is stronger than ever. "More and more LGBT people [are] standing for their rights, for equality before the law, for equity in social services and protection, and demanding

that they be treated with the inherent dignity with which they were born. I am one of those LGBT people. And I remain committed to eliminating all forms of stigma and discrimination against my community in general and against the women in my community in particular," she said.

**Jaevion Nelson** is a youth development, HIV and human rights advocate. **Karen Lloyd** is a social justice advocate and postgraduate student in comparative politics.

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# Pushing for More

## Marco Antonio Ramírez

Peru

By Pierre Losson

“In Peru, blacks are soccer and volleyball players, musicians, dancers, or policemen, but they never become doctors, mayors or presidents,” says Marco Antonio Ramírez. “We need to change the mindset.” At just 23, Ramírez is the president of Ashanti—an Afro-Peruvian youth organization dedicated to combating racism and discrimination against Afro-descendants—and believes his community can aspire far higher.

Ramírez, who was raised in El Callao—Lima’s main seaport—is no stranger to the racism that pervades Peruvian society. The only Afro-Peruvian in his private high school class, he often faced insulting comments from both professors and classmates. His concerns about the lack of economic opportunities have been confirmed by a 2013 UN Development Program report, which found that Afro-Peruvians, who comprise about 3 percent of Peru’s population and live primarily in the coastal provinces of Lima, Ica, Lambayeque, and Piura, are on average poorer and have less access to education, formal employment and health care than the rest of the Peruvian population. Their marginalization is further impacted by the lack of data available; the 2017 census will be the first in Peru’s history to include a question about ethnic self-identification.

Given that the Afro-Peruvian community has hardly benefited from the country’s democratic transition and economic growth over the past decade,

organizations like Ashanti aim to empower future leaders who can drive change through advocacy and political action. The organization sponsors workshops, fairs and conferences to promote human rights, citizenship, identity, gender equality, and community values among Afro-Peruvian youth, especially in rural areas. Members of Ashanti also participate in international meetings and conferences, where they

**Concrete policies that address Afro-Peruvians’ specific needs are what the community needs the most.**

meet and network with young Afro-descendant leaders from neighboring countries. Ramírez says the networking has already provided some valuable lessons from the achievements of Afro-Colombian groups. For example, in Colombia, the law reserves two seats specifically for Afro-Colombian candidates in the lower house, legislation that does not exist in Peru.

Ramírez became president of Ashanti in 2011, but first joined the organization at just 16, encouraged by his father, Jorge Antonio Ramírez Reyna—himself an activist and leader within the Afro-Peruvian community. The younger Ramírez studied political science at the *Universidad Peruana de Ciencias e Informática*, and now works as a volunteer coordinator for *Transparencia*, a Lima-based nonprofit that fosters democratic practices and observes national elections.

While several Afro-Peruvians have been elected to congress, Ramírez believes that they have done little to advance the interests of their community. In his opinion, concrete policies that address Afro-Peruvians’ specific needs, such as affirmative action laws, are what the community needs the most. As many as 12 Afro-Peruvian candidates may be running in the first round of the 2016 presidential election, but Ramírez has little faith that they will advocate for the needs of their communities. Real change, he believes, will come from the next generation of Afro-Peruvians. “It is too easy to just denounce corrupt politicians,” he says. “We have to get involved.” Although Ashanti has given him a public profile, Ramírez has rejected invitations from political parties to join their ballots in local elections. He prefers to prepare himself through his community advocacy work before jumping into politics, preferably for a party that would represent multiple minorities, including Indigenous, Afro-Peruvian and LGBT groups.

Marco Antonio Ramírez  
at the *Asociación Civil*  
in Lima, Peru.

# Champion of Justice

**Christiane Taubira**

French Guiana

By **Corinne Narassiguin**

**C**hristiane Taubira has been France's minister of justice since May 2012—a position that has turned her into a symbol for the left and a target for the right. She most famously made headlines during the heated debates in parliament and in the streets, leading to the legalization of same-sex marriage in France in May 2013. As the promoter of a bill establishing equal rights for gays and lesbians, Taubira was confronted with openly racist attacks, ranging from insulting caricatures in extreme right-wing news sources like the *Minute* to racist epithets on social media and in political meetings.

Born in 1952 into a large family in Cayenne, French Guiana, Taubira first entered politics as a member of the *Mouvement guyanais de décolonisation* (Guyanese Decolonization Movement) in 1978, after obtaining her economics degree at Paris II-Assas University and additional degrees in sociology and African-American ethnology. In 1981, after socialist candidate François Mitterrand was elected president and pro-independence activism faded in French Guiana, Taubira decided to get involved in French politics. In 1993, Taubira was elected to the National Assembly for the first time as an independent. She quickly joined the radical left and later drew closer to the Socialist Party.

In the Assembly, Taubira was the driving force behind a law recognizing the slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity in May 2001. As a direct consequence of Taubira's legislation, May 10 became a national day of remembrance for the slave trade and slavery. For Taubira, this political achievement was the result of a life-long goal to promote the historical and cultural heritage of French overseas territories and, particularly, that

of her homeland. "My own history is that of slavery, trafficking and *marronage*, of all forms of resistance," she recently tweeted.

French citizens became further aware of her charisma and skillful oratory when she was a candidate for the *Parti Radical de Gauche* (Radical Left Party—PRG) during the first round of the presidential elections in 2002, winning 2.3 percent of the vote.

However, it wasn't until months of harsh public debate about same-sex marriage in 2012 and 2013 that people took the full measure of Taubira's determination to fight for the rights of minorities.

During the five and a half months of legislative debate on the floor of the National Assembly and the Senate, she continuously delighted—or enraged—parliament members and French citizens with her considerable wit in the face of vicious obstruction. Citing the Spanish poet Antonio Machado, she addressed her male colleagues who had verbally attacked her: "Do not worry, gentlemen, there will always be many women who will look at you and will try to crack the armor to find the tenderness hidden in you."

Taubira is a rare entity in the French political landscape: a fiercely independent and proud black woman, and a phenomenal public orator. She can cite poetry as easily as the civil or penal code—something she has played a key role in reforming by ensuring that judges can choose alternative sentences for criminal offenders. "I do not shut up. I have convictions and I stand by them," she writes on Twitter.

**Corinne Narassiguin** is spokesperson for the French Socialist Party and formerly was a representative in the French National Assembly.





Christiana Taubira  
leaves the Elysee Palace  
in Paris after a weekly  
cabinet meeting.









# Freedom Fighter

**José Santos Caicedo**  
Colombia

By Paula Moreno Zapata

**E**thnicity is more than just an identity issue; it's an ethical one. José Santos Caicedo, a national coordinator of the *Proceso Nacional de Comunidades Negras* (Black Communities Process—PCN)—an umbrella group of more than 110 Afro-Colombian grassroots organizations that seek to defend the territorial, cultural and human rights of Afro-Colombians—is a vivid example: “You do not work in the PCN, you are the PCN,” he says, effectively merging his life's calling with his activism. PCN's mission is to bring the full benefits of citizenship to Colombia's Afro-descendant community—representing over 10 million Colombians (20 percent of the population).<sup>1</sup>

Santos, 44, is from the rural municipality of Tumaco, on the Colombia-Ecuador border. He credits his parents with instilling in him a deep sense of solidarity. He learned at a young age that the welfare of his community depended on everyone working together, from clearing the well-worn village paths to cooking collective meals and celebrating important moments with dance. Those principles, he says, have guided his efforts to help minority communities think and act collectively. The PCN works to do just this. When he isn't organizing farmworker strikes or speaking out against racial discrimination, Santos spends much of his time visiting communities along Colombia's Pacific coast—where over 80 percent of the land is collectively owned by Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities—to help them form rural, ethnic community governing councils.<sup>2</sup> Santos' organizing work is crucial in such communities where residents have been displaced by violence.

Afro-Colombians along the Pacific coast live at the flashpoint for the two-

decades-long conflict between the Colombian government and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—FARC). Today, the area is one of the targets of postconflict peacemaking, and Santos has called on the FARC and the government to incorporate the issue of ethnic identity and integration of Afro-Colombian rebels into the ongoing peace talks in Havana.

Displacement of communities is one of the biggest threats to the cultural heritage of southwest Colombia's Afro-descendant communities, which Santos works to preserve through his role at PCN. His own ethnic awareness was sparked by childhood exposure to the arts and discussions about identity at the *Festival del Currulao*—launched in Tumaco in 1987 to celebrate and rediscover Afro-Colombian heritage through dance, music and theater. The cultural movement that gave birth to the festival inspired Santos to develop mobilization techniques aimed at making visible those who had been invisible to most Colombians.

Santos dreams of a future when Afro-Colombian communities can reclaim their territory and live without the fear of violence, and he believes these communities won't experience true freedom until the unity that was once destroyed by slavery is restored. This is his struggle: to reclaim spaces of freedom that are not only at the epicenter of Colombia's conflict, but have been lost over centuries of racial discrimination and bigotry.

**Paula Moreno Zapata** is former minister of culture of Colombia and is president of Manos Visibles.

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[WWW.AMERICASQUARTERLY.ORG/SANTOS](http://WWW.AMERICASQUARTERLY.ORG/SANTOS)

José Santos Caicedo in the streets of Bogotá.

# Finding the Courage to Be Herself

**Alessandra Ramos**

Brazil

By Tom Correia

**“W**e don’t accept your kind here.” For years, Alessandra Ramos, 33, heard variations of that devastating message wherever she went, whether it was delivered explicitly or subtly. After applying for one job and passing through several stages in the selection process, Ramos recalls, “They didn’t hire me [...] because I revealed I was trans.”

Ramos’ professional qualifications are impressive. Born in Brasília and raised in Rio de Janeiro, where she now resides, she taught herself English, French, Italian, and Spanish, and has become a well-known interpreter of Brazilian sign language. Raised as a Jehovah’s Witness, Ramos learned sign language through the church, but subsequently abandoned religion at around age 21, when she began the process of transitioning gender. For six months, Ramos worked as a prostitute on the streets of both Rio and Paris.

“In my day, it was not common to be transgender and to be out in society like a normal person,” Ramos explains. “I suffered a lot when I started transitioning because I thought I had no other options, and that [prostitution] was what I did.”

The desire to show transgender people that they can do anything contributed to Ramos’ activism. She is a member of *Transrevolução*, a Rio-based group that fights discrimination and promotes discussions of lesbian, gay and transgender issues. “At first, *Transrevolução*’s focus was strengthening employment opportunities, but now we’ve begun to be involved in nationwide issues,” she says. One issue that has been personal for Ramos is the right to have her legal name changed on her

personal documents—a right recognized by some Brazilian states since 2009<sup>1</sup>—although, after two and half years, Ramos is still waiting for a judge to make a decision about her petition.

Ramos says that being both black and trans often means facing discrimination on two fronts—with the added risk of extreme violence. Although Brazil has only recently begun to collect data on hate crimes against the LGBT community, one study, the President’s Human Rights Secretariat report on

**[B]eing black and trans often means facing discrimination on two fronts—with the added risk of extreme violence.**

homophobic violence, revealed a 166 percent increase in reported human rights violations against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Brazilians between 2011 and 2012.<sup>2</sup> A 2013 report by the international human rights organization Global Rights found that the majority of victims of such crimes are Afro-descendant, transgender women.<sup>3</sup>

Addressing violence is complicated by what Ramos describes as the “extreme invisibility” of black trans people. In May, Ramos helped organize the first National Black Trans Forum in Porto

Alegre. The forum included a public presentation of Global Rights’ report on the rights of Afro-Brazilian transgender women, which Ramos translated into Portuguese and which had never before been published in Brazil.

Ramos refuses to accept invisibility any longer. In January, she appeared on the country’s largest network, TV Globo, where she told her story for the first time to a nationwide audience. “I believe that the real winner when I appeared [on TV] was Brazilian society,” she says. “[The program provided] a better understanding of trans issues in a way that didn’t involve stereotypes.”

Ramos’ advocacy also caught the attention of Federal Deputy Jean Wyllys, who recently invited her to work with him as a consultant. Wyllys is an author of a pending bill before the Brazilian congress that would establish legal rights for transgender Brazilians.<sup>4</sup> Among its provisions is a requirement that public and private health plans pay for hormone treatment and sex change surgery for anyone over 18 who requests it—without having to provide evidence of a diagnosis, medical treatment or authorization from a judge.

Ramos’ public profile has given her the confidence to pursue her private ambitions. While translation remains her main source of income, she is now studying at the *Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia* (Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology) in Rio de Janeiro to become a cultural producer and event organizer. “[It] gives me so much pleasure to know it’s possible for a trans person to survive in the real world and be successful,” she says.

**Tom Correia** is a Brazilian writer and journalist. He writes articles on social movements, human rights, arts, and culture. Follow him on Twitter: @tomcorreia.

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**Alessandra Ramos**  
stands proudly in  
Anchieta, Rio de Janeiro.





# Parliamentarian and Cabinet Minister

## Edgardo Ortuño

Uruguay

By Isabel Oronoz

**F**irst black member of parliament, undersecretary and interim minister of industry and energy, champion of Afro-Uruguayan culture—those are Edgardo Ortuño's historic achievements in a country where the marginalization of Afro-descendants, comprising approximately 10 percent of Uruguay's population, remains a major challenge.<sup>1</sup>

Ortuño, 45, who grew up in a working-class neighborhood in Montevideo, leveraged his years of student activism and teaching to become a champion of human rights and racial equality. By 29, he was elected to Parliament as a member of the leftist *Frente Amplio* (Broad Front—FA).

Two years before graduating from the Artigas Teachers Institute, where Ortuño was studying to become a history teacher, his parents separated and his sister took over the household while his mother worked as a maid. Halfway through his university career, he began to teach and never looked back, refusing to be discouraged by racism. Although his election to parliament in 2000—and his subsequent election as a national deputy in 2005—made headlines, he had already shown a dedication to civil service as a political activist—first as a student delegate of his class and later in the *Federación de Estudiantes de Secundaria* (Federation of Secondary School Students—FES).

In the immediate aftermath of Uruguay's 12-year dictatorship, Ortuño was one of many fighting for student transit subsidies, human rights, justice, and the liberation of political prisoners. He rallied against the *Ley de Caducidad de la Pretensión Punitiva del Estado* (Law on the Expiration of the Punitive Claims of the State), a 1986 am-

nesty law that barred the Uruguayan military from prosecution for dictatorship-era abuses, which was later overturned in 2011.

Ortuño says it took time for him to develop a black consciousness.<sup>1</sup> After being elected deputy, activists demanded to know whether he would just be a black politician, or a real voice for Afro-Uruguayan rights. Ortuño didn't hesitate: he chose the latter.

He is the author of the 2006 *Ley del Candombe* (Candombe Law), which established a national holiday honoring the Afro-Uruguayan tradition of *Candombe* drumming on December 3—the same day that military authorities condemned the historic *Conventillo Mediomundo*, an important Afro-Uruguayan cultural center, to destruction in 1978. Ortuño's growing political stature earned him a cabinet position.

Today, Ortuño is president of the *Casa de la Cultura Afrouruguaya*, a cultural center that promotes racial equality. One of its initiatives, a multimedia campaign called *Borremos el Racismo del Lenguaje* (Let's Erase Racism from the Language), featured videos of prominent Uruguayans calling for the *Real Academia Española* to remove racist expressions from its standard dictionary.

Ortuño says that the Afro-Uruguayan community is still “under construction.” By building solidarity for an agenda of social transformation, Afro-Uruguayans, he believes, can take their rightful place in society. As he puts it, “Changing the rules will change the course of history.”

**Isabel Oronoz** is a Uruguayan journalist, writer and researcher.

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Edgardo Ortuño in Palermo, a historically black district in Montevideo.











# Reaching into Her Past

**Gregoria Flores**

United States

By Javier H. Valdés

**W**hile many were surprised when tens of thousands of unaccompanied Central American children arrived at the U.S. southern border seeking asylum last year, it had a sadly familiar resonance for Gregoria Flores.

"I know what it's like to apply for asylum here when you have no one supporting you," said Flores, 47, who arrived alone in the U.S. in 2006 after fleeing assassination attempts due to her work advocating for Indigenous rights in her native Honduras. Flores, now a resident of the Bronx, New York, identifies as Garifuna—of Indigenous Carib, Arawak and West African descent—and recognized all too well the forces driving people out of Central America and the dearth of resources available once they reach the United States.

Seeing the significant, unmet needs of Hondurans young and old arriving in New York City, Flores sprang into action, drawing on her experience as a community activist in Honduras and the personal networks she had developed after nearly a decade in the Bronx. She successfully crafted and executed a plan to help recent arrivals navigate their new environment.

The first step was to identify legal services that could help the new arrivals. She began contacting pastors and priests from various Christian denominations in the Bronx and was able to leverage her relationships with local clergy—many of whom have remained deeply involved as members of her decision-making team—to host legal clinics in their churches.

Because of these relationships, Flores was able to mobilize dozens of volunteers from various congregations and build a team. They have held seven

legal clinics, which have handled approximately 500 cases since last summer, with nearly 30 volunteers.

Flores was able to place 70 percent of the cases with pro bono attorneys, but her legal clinics were just the beginning. Since then, "some of the adults we worked with have obtained work permits and others' cases have moved forward, even though there is a long delay in the immigration system," she said.

As a result of her work, Flores was able to cofound a Bronx-based agency called Garifuna Community Service (GCS), which helps recently arrived immigrants secure food, health referrals and school enrollment (among other needs) through nongovernmental organizations. GCS also refers families and children struggling to integrate into their new surroundings to counseling provided by the clergy with whom she partners. Though it still has no paid staff, GCS works to respond to all of these needs with the hope of bringing services closer to the homes of Garifuna immigrants in the Bronx—where the organizational infrastructure of immigrant communities has historically been weaker than elsewhere in New York City.

Flores recognizes the work is far from finished. Although the number of unaccompanied minors in the U.S. has slowed, immigrants still have little access to the services infrastructure they need. "This is a new segment of the population that doesn't qualify for most government services, so the process to educate everyone about this issue is long," she said. Thanks to activists like Flores, however, the process of adjusting to a new life for many is a little less lonely and terrifying.

**Javier H. Valdés** is co-executive director of *Make the Road New York*.