

Gender equality, employment and green transition: policies for inclusive development

Bolivia in the «Fair transition energy and green job creation» study

COUNTRY
BOLIVIA



1. Public Policy Review

In Bolivia, the energy transition is being carried out through a comprehensive approach that combines energy sovereignty, the promotion of renewable energies and import-substitution industrialization. The country has reaffirmed its commitment through its Economic and Social Development Plan 2021-2025, entitled “Rebuilding the Economy to Live Well, Towards Industrialization with Import Substitution”. This plan, which represents the medium-term strategy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, contributes significantly to the construction of a cleaner energy matrix, together with the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and the Sectoral Integral Development Plan (PSDI) Living Well in the [Energy Sector 2021-2025](#).

1.1. National policies for a fair and energy transition

* The [Economic and Social Development Plan \(PDES\) 2021-2025](#) and the [Patriotic Agenda 2025](#) promote the use of renewable sources such as solar, wind and hydro energy, with the aim of achieving universal energy coverage and reducing polluting emissions.

* The [Plurinational Climate Change Policy](#), updated in 2023 by Ministerial Resolution No369/2023, has as its main objective to promote the management of the climate crisis at all levels of the State. This policy is aligned with the [updated](#)

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for 2021-2030 and incorporates principles of climate justice, intergenerational equity and a gender approach. It is structured around four strategic axes: Integrated Management for the Climate Resilience of Life Systems, Decarbonization of the Economy towards Integral Development, Culture of Life to Face the Climate Crisis and Strengthening the Integrated Management of Climate Change and Climate Governance. This policy prioritizes the development of institutional capacities, intersectoral and multi-level articulation, transparency in climate management, and the integration

of a gender perspective, interculturality and climate justice into decision-making. Although it considers the gender approach as a cross-cutting principle, it does not specify quantifiable targets or clear mechanisms for implementing labour inclusion.

* [Alternative Energy Policy](#) (2011, updated by the Ministry of Hydrocarbons and Energies). The Alternative Energy Policy for the Electricity Sector was approved in 2011 and establishes the main guidelines for the development and use of renewable energy sources in the country. This policy seeks to diversify the energy matrix, contribute to energy security and promote universal access to electricity service. Focuses on the development of projects using sources such as solar, wind, biomass and geothermal, promoting research and the use of clean and sustainable technologies.

1.2. Planning instruments and tools to promote the integration of women into green jobs

The following are instruments that articulate mitigation and



adaptation policies incorporating a gender approach, although they do so in an incipient manner. The current policy framework recognizes the need for participatory and inclusive governance, although monitoring and reporting mechanisms disaggregated by sex are still limited.

* [Sectoral Plan for Integral Development to Live Well](#) (PSDI Energy 2021-2025) is a management instrument that seeks to harmonize the vision and action of the Plurinational State in the field of energy. This plan articulates the planning of hydrocarbons, electricity, alternative energies, renewables, nuclear energy, hydrogen and evaporics. Its purpose is to contribute to the diversification of the energy matrix, ensure energy security and sovereignty, and promote universal access to electricity service, in line with the principles of “Living Well”.

* [The National Green Hydrogen Strategy \(2024\)](#) sets out a roadmap for diversifying the energy matrix, encouraging decarbonization, stimulating industrial development and boosting energy exports. This strategy, projected to 2050, anticipates the generation of thousands of jobs linked to green hydrogen, opening up new job opportunities, especially for women. Includes a methodology for estimating employment potential by gender. Although it does not set quotas, it proposes the



development of technical skills in vulnerable populations, which can be used to generate female employment. In order to finance these projects and overcome the current difficulties, a financing strategy has been designed that addresses identified investment needs. This strategy considers the possibility of government support, the participation of multilateral and development financial institutions, as well as the issuance of green bonds. These funding schemes are aligned with the stages of technology and project development, ensuring adequate financial support.

1.3. Inclusion of the gender dimension in public policies

* [The National Plan for Equal Opportunities](#) (2008), approved by Supreme Decree No. 29850, is the instrument to structure public actions towards gender equity. Within its economic, productive and labour fields, it promotes women’s access to decent work, productive property, technology

and training. Recognizes the importance of women and how they are treated, since they form at least half of the population, so policies should aim to transform the structural conditions of gender inequality.

* [Law 348](#) (“Comprehensive Law to Guarantee Women a Life Free of Violence”), and the aforementioned Equal Opportunities Plan: although they are not energy policies, they provide the basis for ensuring the participation of women in all sectors, including training, Decent employment and access to resources.

* Update of the PNCC: In 2022, gender guidelines were developed that qualify in climate change policy, in a participatory process with people linked to agricultural systems, food security and water security, as well as with local leaders and national policy managers/s. In July of 2022 the meeting was held «[Building roads for life. Women facing change](#)» with the participation of more than 200



energy planning is key. It is recommended that gender indicators be incorporated into all energy and climate programmes, allowing the impact of transition on labour equity to be measured, including quotas for inclusion in technical training programmes and recruitment in emerging renewable energy sectors. It is also recommended to make explicit and increase the links between the

Equal Opportunities Plan and the different energy plans, ensuring cross-sectoral coherence. On the other hand, it is important to secure funding for women-led projects in green economy through climate funds and rural development programmes, as well as ensuring access to care through policies of social co-responsibility to enable women's full participation in green jobs.

women representatives from production organizations in the country, with the objective of raising information and proposals for the design of gender guidelines in the Plurinational Climate Change Policy. The document resulting from the meeting systematically provides information on the gender situation, provides inputs for the proposal and collects testimonies from women representatives of production organizations and political managers.

2. Recommendations to improve the inclusion of gender in public policies

Bolivia has a normative and programmatic framework for energy transition that can be used to promote a just transition, including women in green jobs. Institutionalizing the gender approach in

Practices to highlight

- **The Andes Resilient to Climate Change Regional Project (Phase 2)** seeks to strengthen the resilience and adaptability of rural Andean populations in situations of poverty and vulnerability, improving their food and water security. To this end, it articulates actions with public and private actors responsible for rural development in the Andean regions of Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. As a facilitator, the project impacts policies, strengthens interventions, innovates processes, transforms practices and improves services. It operates at three levels: national, regional and global, with specific activities in pilot learning territories. Incorporate a gender perspective in climate adaptation and family farming, fostering women's rural leadership. Linkages with green economies still need strengthening.
- **The Green Entrepreneurship Bolivia Project** aims to support green entrepreneurship in sectors related to the circular economy and the fight against climate change, create decent jobs and improve working conditions in the circular economy and climate change. Although its main focus is on youth, it promotes productive and commercial innovation by encouraging the participation of young women in sustainable economic activities.

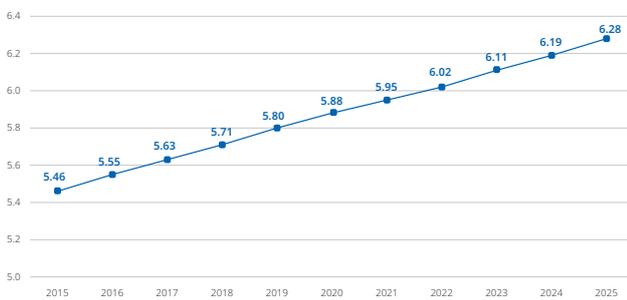


3. Statistical data

A. Demographic data

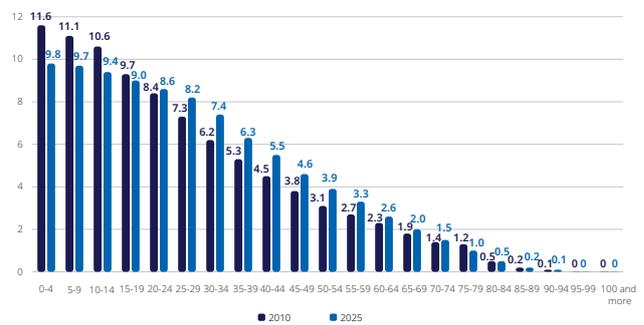
Estadísticas de distribución poblacional

Number of woman, millions

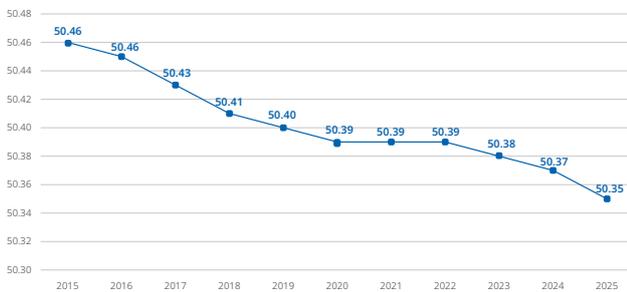


Estadísticas de distribución de edades

Age distribution of the female population

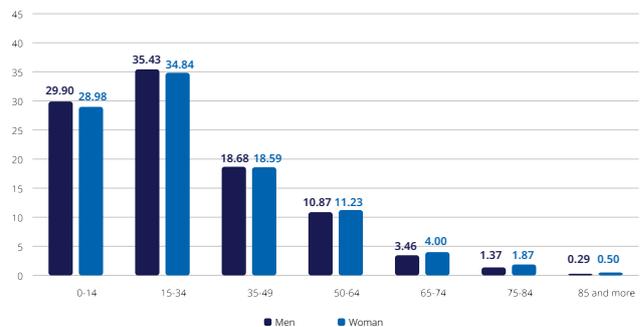
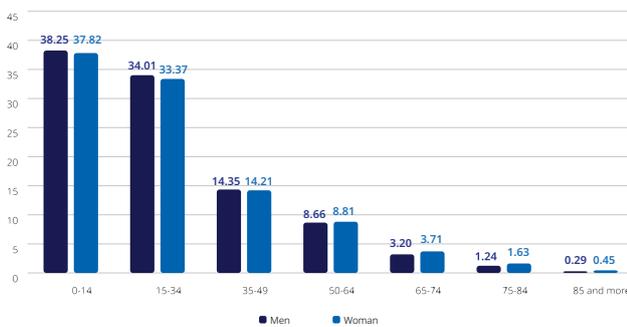


Percentage of woman



Population distribution statistics by age

Age distribution by sex, percentage





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Ages	Women			Men		
	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points
0-14	37.82	28.98	-8.84	38.25	29.90	-8.35
15-34	33.37	34.84	1.47	34.01	35.43	1.42
35-49	14.21	18.59	4.38	14.35	18.68	4.33
50-64	8.81	11.23	2.42	8.66	10.87	2.21
65-74	3.71	4.00	0.29	3.2	3.46	0.26
75-84	1.63	1.87	0.24	1.24	1.37	0.13
85 and more	0.45	0.50	0.05	0.29	0.28	-0.01

Interpretation of demographic data

Distribution of the population by age and sex (2000 vs. 2025): Demographic projections for Bolivia reflect a significant transition in the age structure. In 2000, the 0-14 age group represented 37.8% of women and 38.3% of men. By 2025, it is estimated that these percentages will decrease to 29.0% and 29.9%, respectively, marking a reduction of approximately 8.5 percentage points, indicating a clear process of population ageing.

The older age groups, especially those between 35-49 and 50-64, show considerable increases. Women aged 35-49 will increase from 14.2% to 18.6%, and those aged 50-64 from 8.8% to 11.2%. This change implies greater needs in terms of health services, pensions and care for the elderly.

Evolution of the percentage of women in the total population (2015-2025): the percentage of women in the Bolivian population remains practically stable, with a slight decrease from 50.46% in 2015 to 50.30% in 2025. However, as in other countries of the region, women tend to be concentrated in the more advanced age groups, suggesting the need for gender-sensitive policies in old age.

B. Education level data

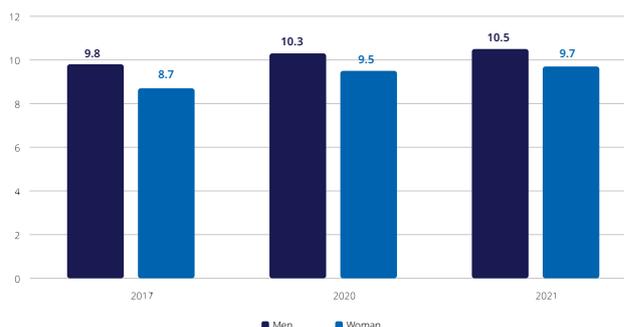
Educational attainment statistics

Percentage of bachelor, population 25+



Statistics on years of study

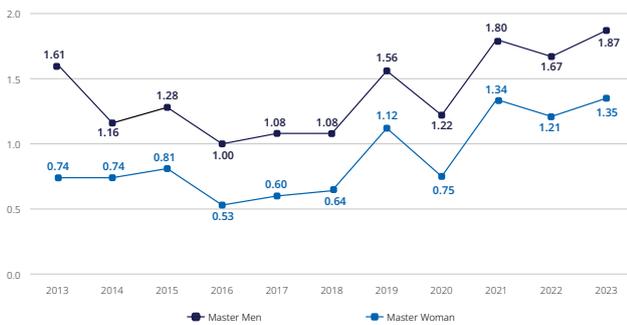
Years of education



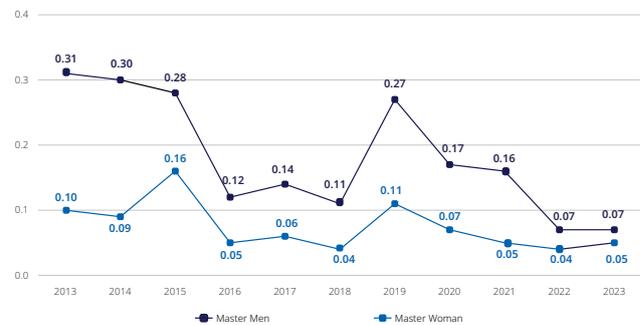
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Percentage of master, population 25+



Percentage of PhD, population 25+



Interpretation of training data

Access to tertiary education: the gross tertiary enrolment rate has shown a gradual improvement over the last decade. By 2023, women show higher levels of access than men in higher education, with graduation rates steadily rising. This reflects an increase in female access to education, although still limited at post-graduate levels.

Level of education achieved (bachelor's, master's, doctorate): in terms of higher-level degrees, women outnumber men in the percentage of graduates since 2017. However, female participation in master's and doctoral programmes remains low, suggesting the persistence of structural and cultural barriers to women's academic advancement at higher levels.

Average years of formal education: the average years of schooling also favours women, who, since 2017, have equaled or slightly outperformed men. In 2021, both sexes have averages close to 10 years of schooling, indicating a trend towards formal educational parity.

C. Employment data

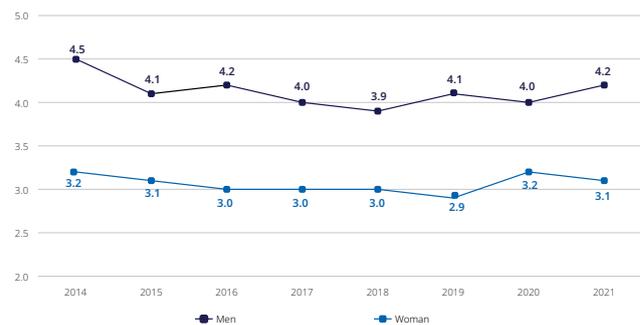
Employment statistics

Economic participation rate, percentage



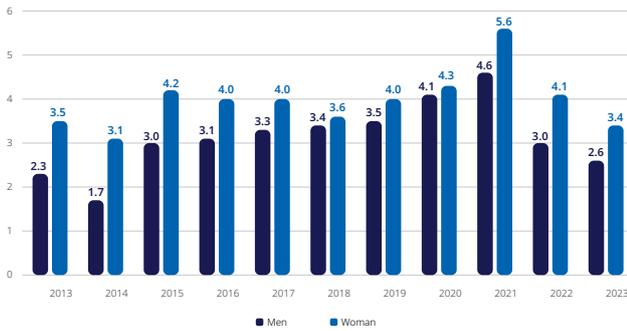
Income Statistics

Average income, in multiples of the poverty line

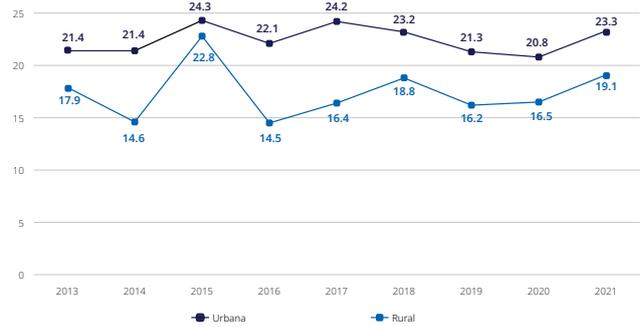




Unemployment rate, percentage



Percentage of adult women dedicated exclusively to unpaid work



Interpretation of employment data

Economic participation rate: the gender gap in labour participation in Bolivia is significant. By 2025, it is projected that only 30 per cent of women will participate in the labour market compared to 70 per cent of men. This 40% point difference reflects structural barriers to female employment.

Unpaid work: A significant percentage of adult women, both in urban and rural areas, report full-time unpaid work. In 2021, 24.3% of rural women and 21.4% of urban women were in this situation, limiting their economic autonomy and employment opportunities.

Unemployment rate: Unemployment also disproportionately affects women. In 2023, the female unemployment rate reached 4.3%, compared to 3.4% for men. This gap persists even in periods of economic growth, revealing a structural vulnerability in female employment.

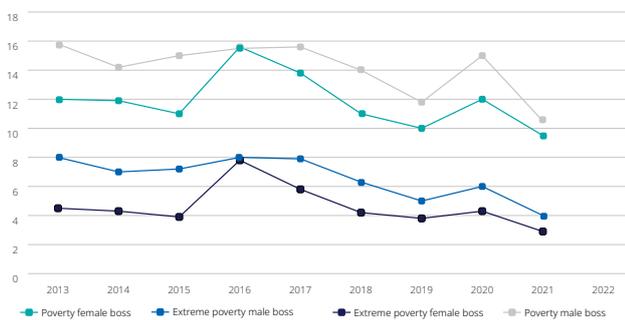
Income: Bolivian women have consistently lower incomes than men. In 2021, male earnings were more than one point higher than the multiple of the poverty line relative to female earnings, highlighting a gender inequality in labor compensation.



D. Poverty data

Statistics on poverty and extreme poverty

Poverty gap coefficient, percentage

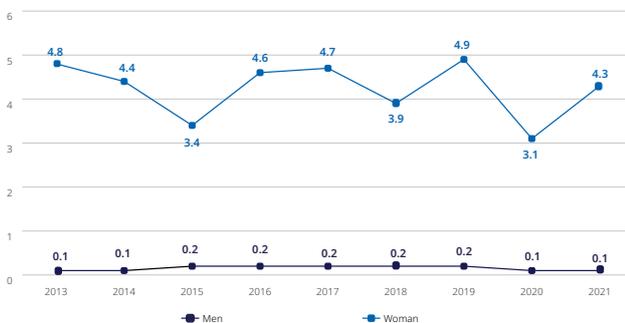


Employment and vulnerability statistics

Total employed in low-productivity jobs, percentage of urban employed population



Employment in domestic work, percentage



Interpretation of poverty and vulnerability data

Low-productivity jobs: Bolivian women are significantly overrepresented in low-productivity jobs. In 2021, 70.5% of urban employed women were in this segment, compared to 63.4% of men. This situation not only limits access to adequate income, but also to social protection mechanisms and opportunities for labour mobility.

Poverty gaps by type of household head: female-headed households have higher levels of poverty and extreme poverty than male-headed households. This structural pattern of feminization of poverty is linked to low formal employment, women's concentration in informal sectors and the disproportionate burden of unpaid work.

Employment in paid domestic work: statistics show that women account for almost all employment in domestic work. In 2021, about 4.3% of women were employed in this type of activity, compared to marginal



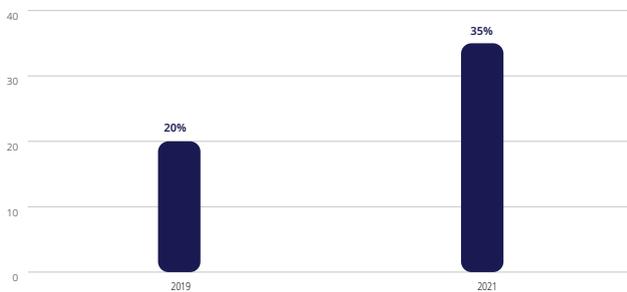
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figures for men. This type of occupation is often associated with precarious conditions, without guaranteed labour rights or economic stability.

E. STEM education and employment data in the energy and transportation sectors

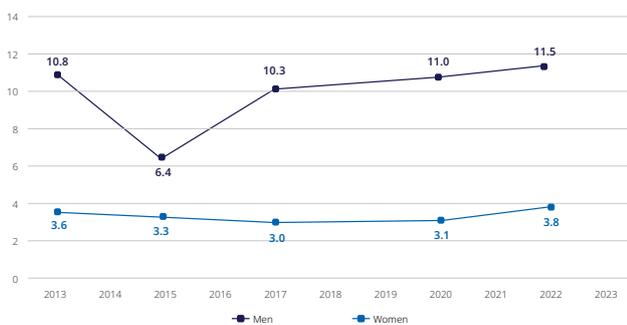
Graduate Statistics

Participation of women in STEM careers



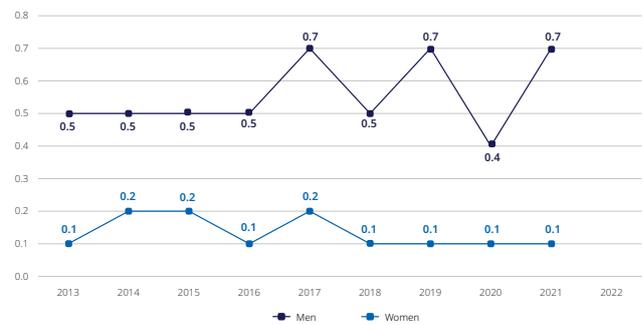
Transportation employment statistics

Population employed in transport, percentage



Energy employment statistics

Population employed in energy, gas and water, percentage



Interpretation of STEM training and employment data in strategic sectors

Female participation in STEM careers: Women’s participation in STEM careers has shown growth, but remains limited. In 2019, only 20% of those pursuing STEM careers were women, a proportion that increased to 35% in 2021. Despite this improvement, significant under-representation persists in key areas of technological development.

Employment in strategic sectors (energy and transport): the presence of women in high economic value sectors such as energy and transport is very low. In 2022, only 0.1% of the total employment in energy was accounted for by women, while in transport this figure was just 3.8%. These figures reflect structural barriers to women’s access to jobs related to infrastructure, applied science and engineering.



General conclusions

Persistence of structural inequality: despite the educational advances of women in Bolivia, these improvements are not reflected in a proportional way in access to quality jobs and equitable remuneration.

Labour segmentation by gender: women are strongly concentrated in low-productivity sectors and domestic work, while their representation in strategic sectors such as energy and technology remains marginal.

Unremunerated work overload: A significant proportion of women, especially in rural areas, are engaged exclusively in unpaid work, severely limiting their economic autonomy and participation in the formal labour market.

Feminization of poverty: Female heads of household face higher rates of poverty and extreme poverty. This vulnerability is associated with cumulative inequalities in education, employment and income, reinforced by social norms that perpetuate the unequal distribution of care responsibilities.