

Commentary on Bolivia's domain ranks in the 2015 Global AgeWatch Index



Global AgeWatch Index rank

55

out of 96

Bolivia ranks moderately on the Index, at 55 overall.

It performs best in the capability domain (37). This is a decrease from last year (22.) due to revision of educational attainment data.

It ranks moderately in the income security domain (55), with the highest pension coverage rate in its region (95%). However, Bolivia also has a high old-age poverty rate (30.3%).

It ranks lower in the health domain (59), with below regional average values across all indicators. It ranks lowest in the enabling environment domain (78), with below regional average values on three out of four indicators: social connectedness (66%- the lowest in its region), safety (34%) and satisfaction with public transport (60%).

Age Demands Action campaigners in Bolivia will be campaigning on the importance of a UN convention on the rights of older people to protect them as well as the implementation of the Inter-American convention.



Income security

55

62.8/100

Bolivia has maintained its position in this domain (55). Contributory pension income benefits only 17% of the older population, but the 3791 Act (2007) guarantees the payment of the Renta Dignidad, which is US\$430 per year for everyone over 60. In 2015, the 'Renta Dignidad' (Dignity rate) will require public investment of approximately US\$435 million and will benefit more than 1,067,874 adults over 60 years. This income greatly improves the financial situation of older people, especially the poorest families (La Razon, November 11, 2014). Bolivia's per capita GDP reached US\$3,000 (INE, 2014) and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered a cumulative growth of 5.4%. The three activities with the greatest impact on growth were financial, manufacturing and, in particular, the oil sector. During 2015, the impact of the fall in international oil prices will be felt by the country. There will also be a decrease in revenue from the sale of gas, so it is anticipated that, the longer this price fall lasts, there will be a negative impact on Bolivia's economy, which could in turn impact on the low-income population which depends on social policy.



Health status

59

46.4/100

Bolivia's value in the health domain remains at 59 because health services are still inadequate. 82% of the older population use the health service but say that abuse in care and lack of drugs are factors that make it difficult to get good health care.

People over 60, pregnant women, children under five and people with disabilities benefit from comprehensive free health care. However, in old age physical and sensory abilities tend to deteriorate and require specialised care, quality and person-centred assistance that public health services are still not able to provide.



Capability

37

39.9/100

The situation of older people in Bolivia reflects the significant decline in the capability domain, which corresponds to the levels of employment and education. Bolivia's ranking in this domain has dropped from 22 in 2014 to 37 in 2015.

The lack of job opportunities in the country, despite strong GDP growth, mainly affects young women, indigenous and older people. Agricultural activity makes up the income of 83% of older people. However, this activity generates lower than average incomes, and older farmers only receive half the amount that other farmers do (CEDLA, 2013).

Older people have low levels of educational attainment. About 29.8% are unable to read or write, and of these 31.2% are older women. These rates are even higher in rural areas (INE, 2012).

The General Law for Older Persons (2013) considers decent work and the promotion of alternative, technical and higher education to be fundamental rights. However, there are still no mechanisms to implement these provisions.



Enabling environment

78

57.1/100

In this domain, Bolivia ranks at 78, reflecting inter-alia discrimination, lack of legal security, abuse, violence and inadequate transport systems. Allegations of abuse and violence reported to Socio Legal Centres for Older People increased by 8% this year compared to 2014.

The Law on Older People enacted in 2013 regulates preferential treatment in public and private institutions and Integrated Justice Centres to defend older people's rights in municipalities. However, these mechanisms are still being implemented. Only in capital cities are they introducing measures such as preferential windows in banks, and lower rates or discounts on basic utilities and transport, but these are not always fulfilled.

The Global AgeWatch Index ranks countries by how well their older populations are faring.

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