

# REGIONAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

WESTERN HEMISPHERE



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DEPARTMENT

## Outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean

OCTOBER 2021

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# Prospects

# Key Messages

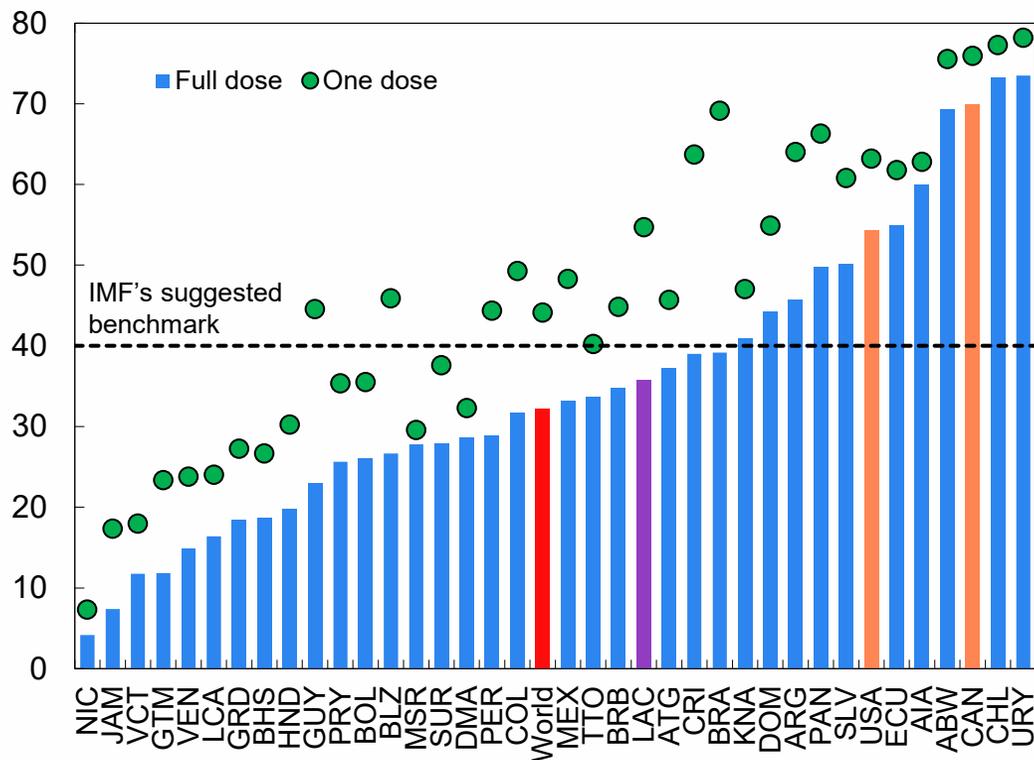
- **A race between vaccinations and variants**
- **Slow and uneven recovery of employment**
- **Monetary policy having to respond to anchor inflation dynamics**
- **Public debt dynamics necessitating withdrawal of fiscal support**
- **Policy contraction implies a heavy reliance on a private-sector recovery**
- **Limited policy space and social pressures exacerbate vulnerabilities**

# Rising vaccination rate but pandemic still taking a heavy toll

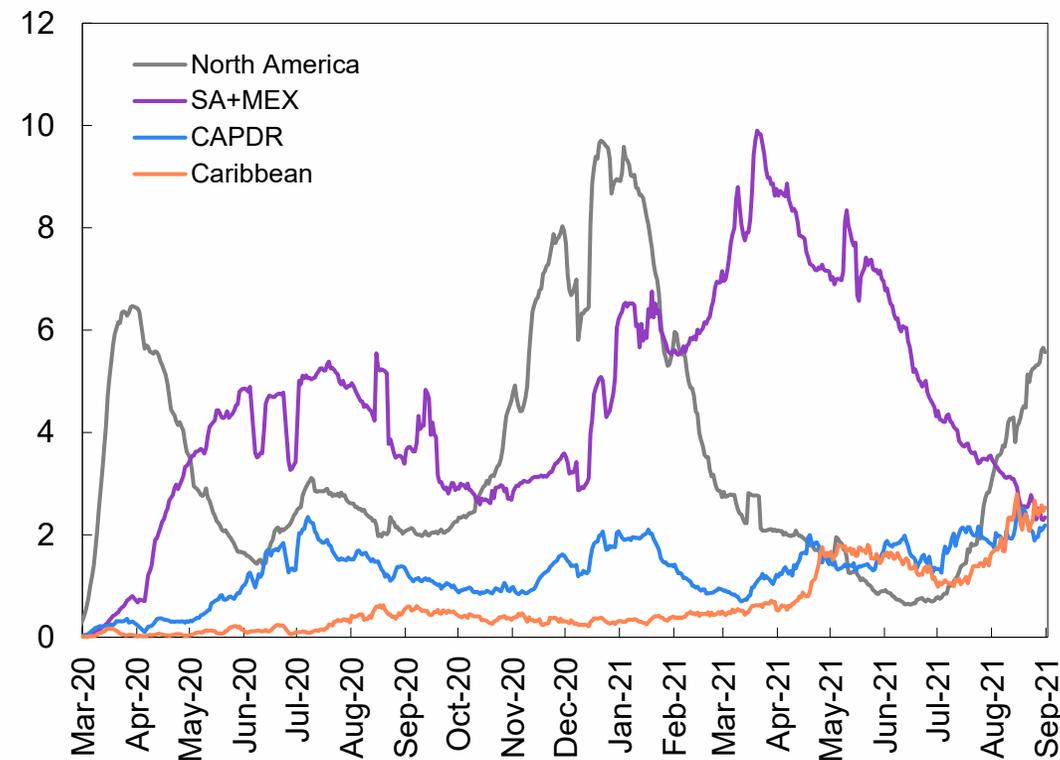
Rapid vaccination campaigns in some LAC countries...

... have helped mitigate the impact of the pandemic, with new deaths per million declining in SA+MEX though still high

**Share of People Vaccinated Against COVID-19**  
(Percent; as of September 23, 2021)



**New COVID-19 Deaths per Million**  
(7-day moving average; as of September 23, 2021)



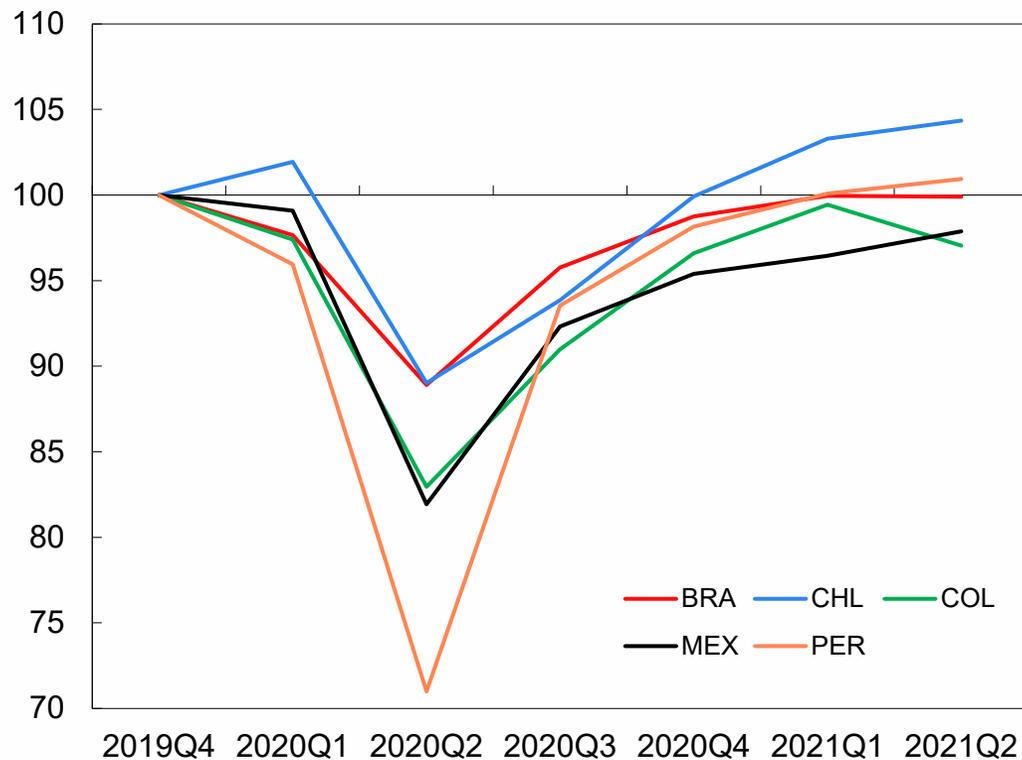
Sources: Johns Hopkins University; Our World in Data database; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Forty percent suggested benchmark comes from the IMF Staff Discussion Note on "A Proposal to End the COVID-19 Pandemic" by Ruchir Agarwal and Gita Gopinath.

Sources: Johns Hopkins University; Our World in Data database; and IMF staff calculations.

# Fast rebound of demand, upswing in inflation

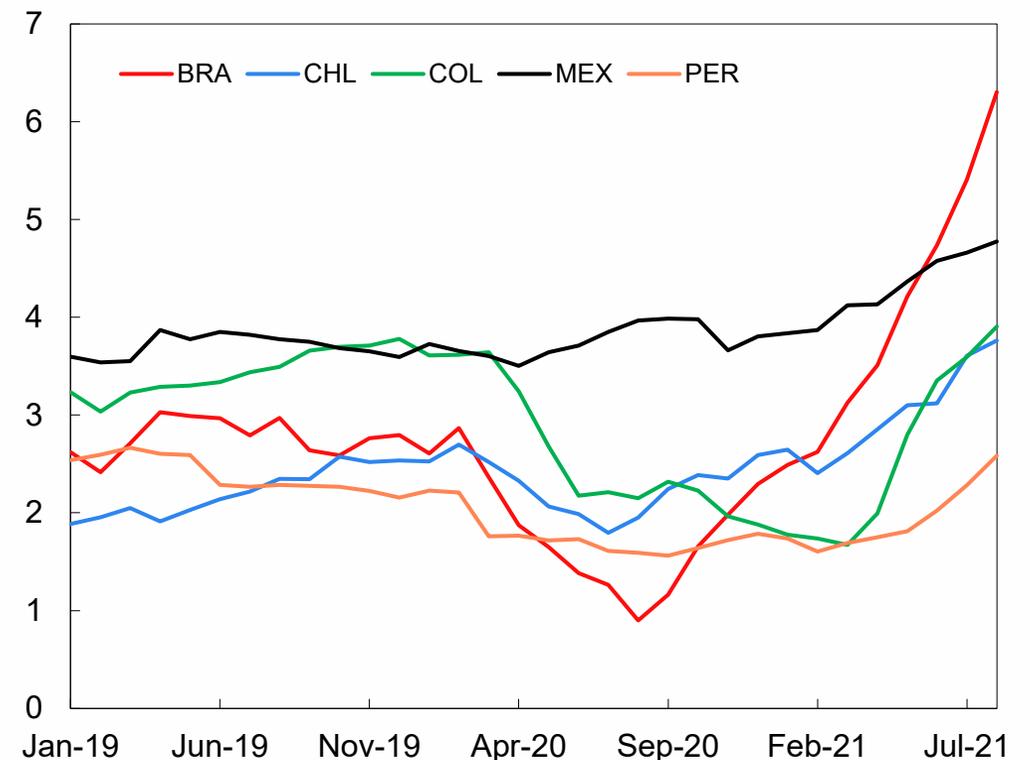
Rapid recovery in CHL/PER on the back of strong private consumption; recovery in Brazil and Peru supported by rebound in investment

**Real GDP**  
(Index: 2019Q4 = 100)



Sources: Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: LA5 is purchasing-power-parity GDP-weighted average of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.

**Core Inflation**  
(Year-over-year percent change)

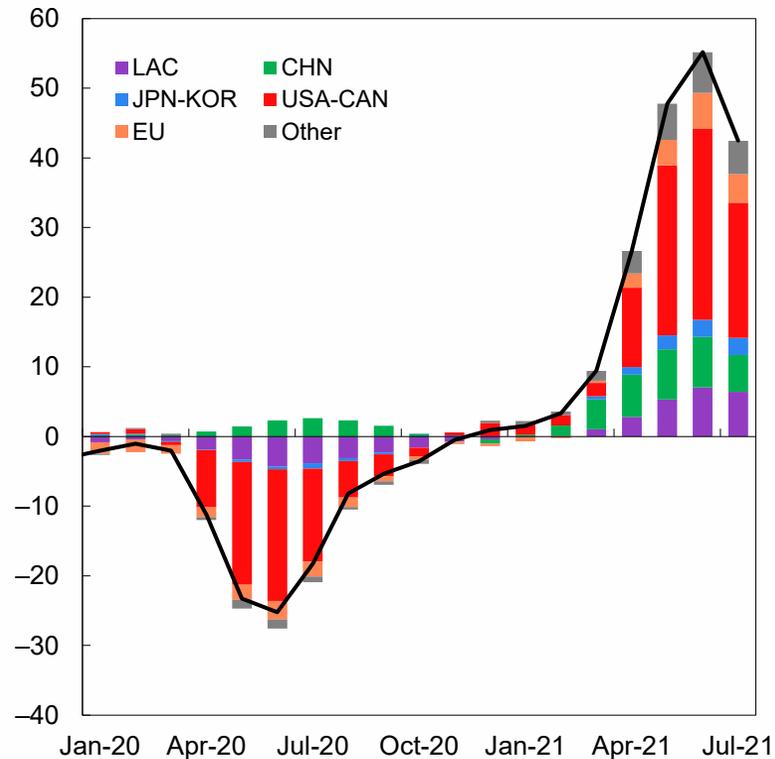


Sources: Haver Analytics; and national authorities.  
Note: Peru refers to Lima.

# Supportive external conditions

*The recovery in trading partner growth (US/China), ...*

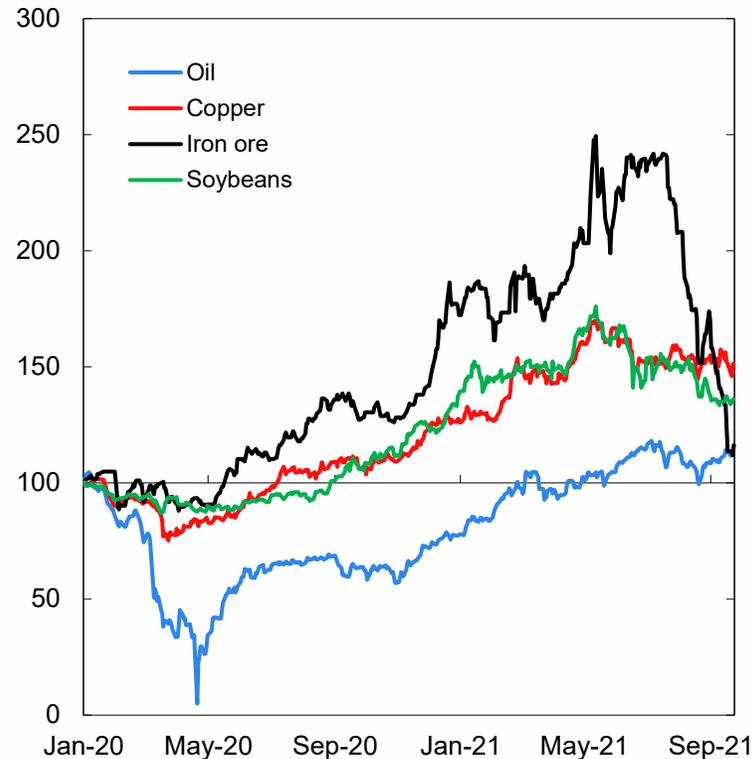
**Contributions to Merchandise Exports Growth**  
(3-month moving sum; year-over-year percent change)



Sources: Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay.

*... commodity prices (now abating), ...*

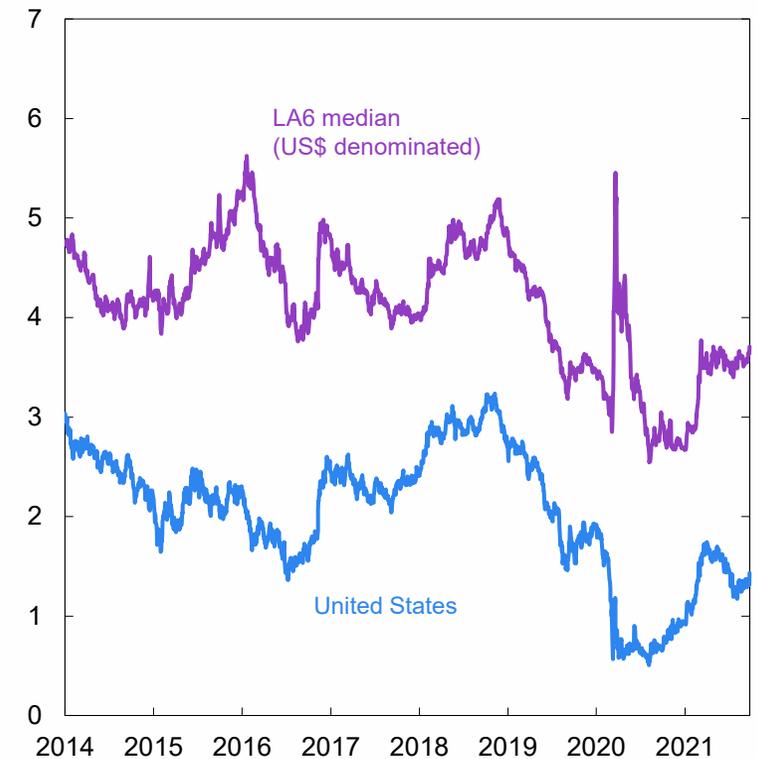
**Commodity Prices**  
(Index: January 1, 2020 = 100)



Sources: Bloomberg Finance L.P.; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Oil prices refer to the average petroleum spot prices: Brent, West Texas Intermediate, and Dubai Fateh.

*... and favorable financing conditions (now tightening) have created tailwinds for LAC*

**Ten-year Government Bond Yields**  
(Percent)

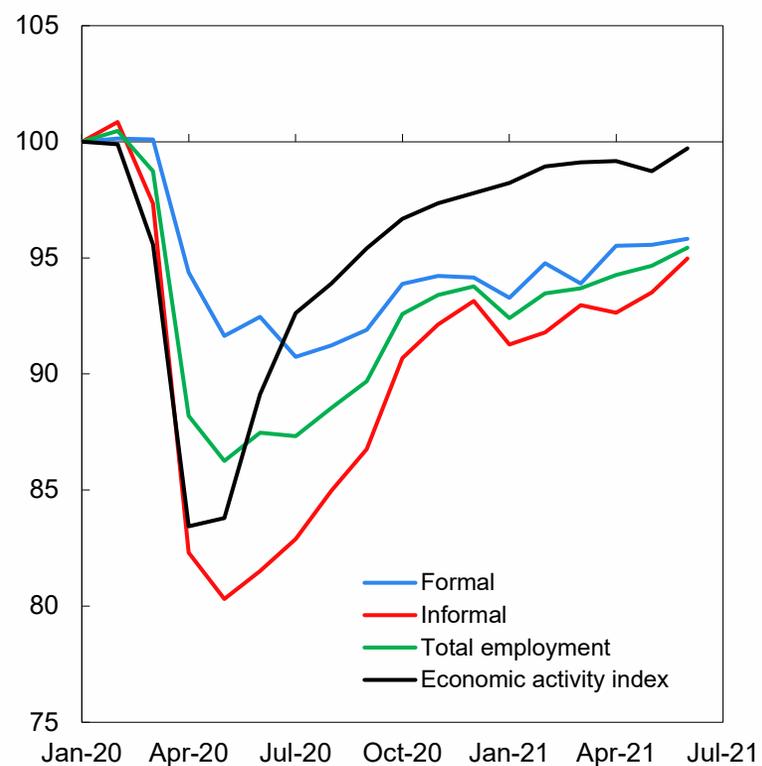


Sources: Bloomberg Finance, L.P.; Haver Analytics; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: LA6 = Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay.

# Pandemic continues to exert uneven impact on labor markets

The recovery in the labor market has been lagging that in activity...

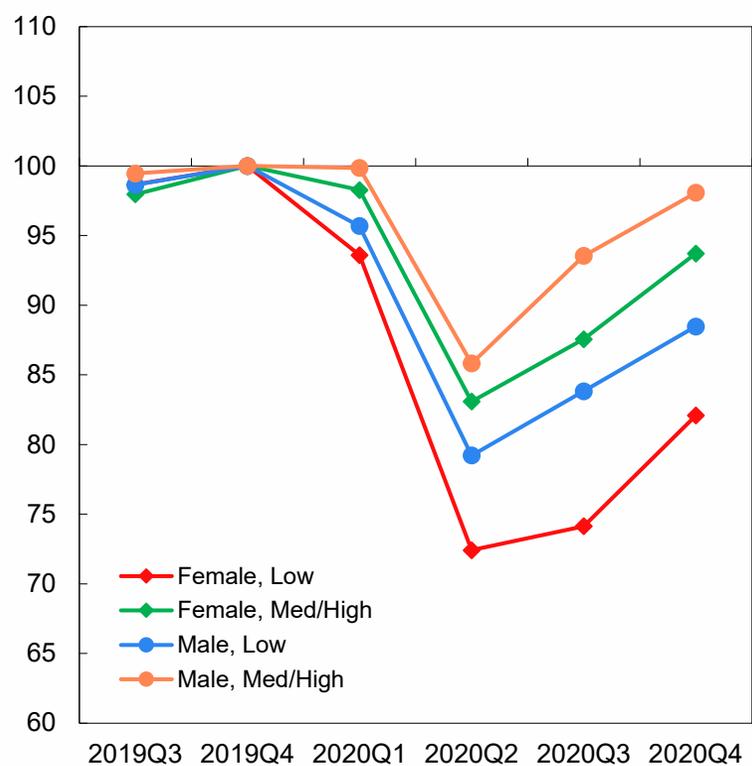
**LA4: Employment and Economic Activity Index**  
(Index: January 2020 = 100)



Source: Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations. Note: Includes Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. Employment is labor force-weighted average; data for Brazil and Chile are three-month moving averages as reported by the authorities. Economic activity is purchasing-power-parity GDP-weighted average.

... with the disproportionate impact on female and less-educated workers, ...

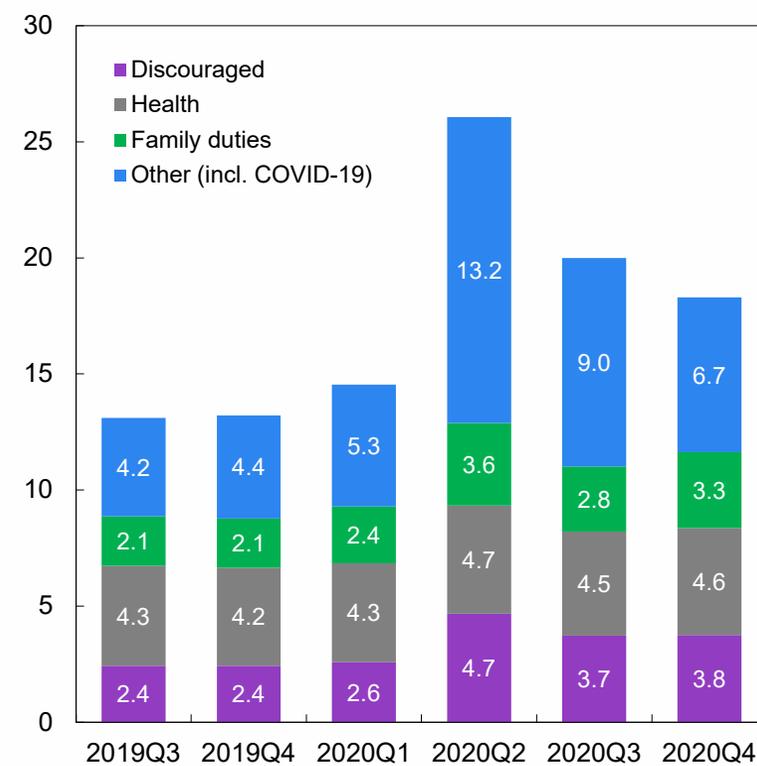
**LA5: Employment by Gender and Education**  
(Index: 2019:Q4 = 100)



Sources: National authorities; and IMF staff calculations. Note: LA5 = Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru.

... with the main reason behind labor inactivity being concern about the pandemic

**LA5: Reasons for Labor Force Inactivity**  
(Male; millions)



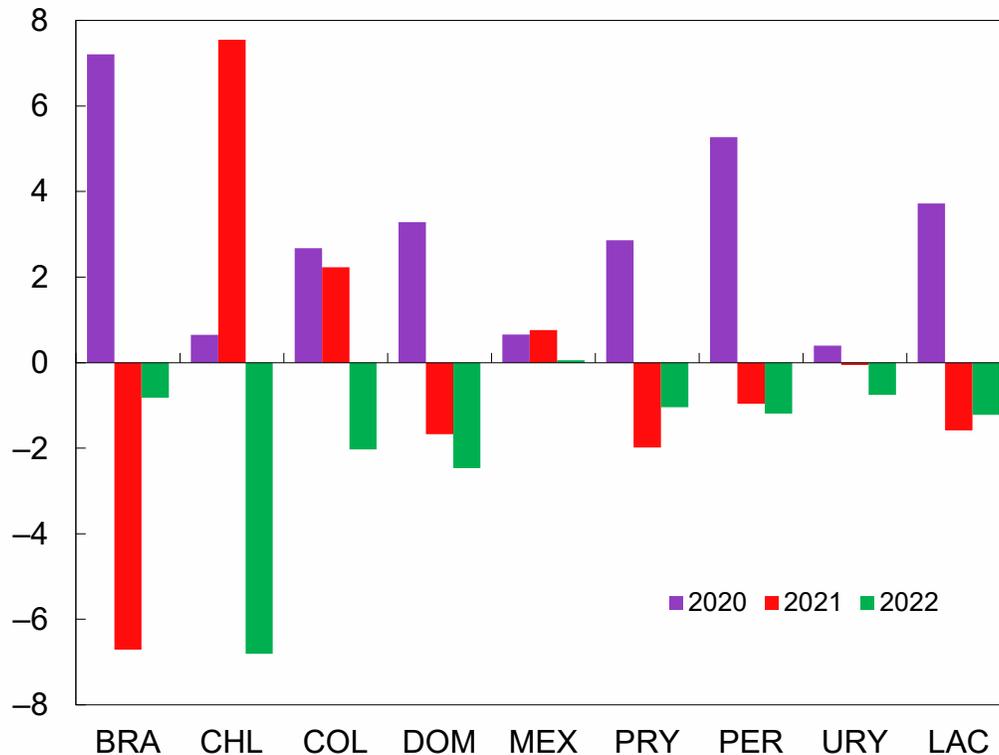
Sources: National authorities; and IMF staff calculations. Note: LA5 = Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru.

# Ongoing or imminent withdrawal of policy support

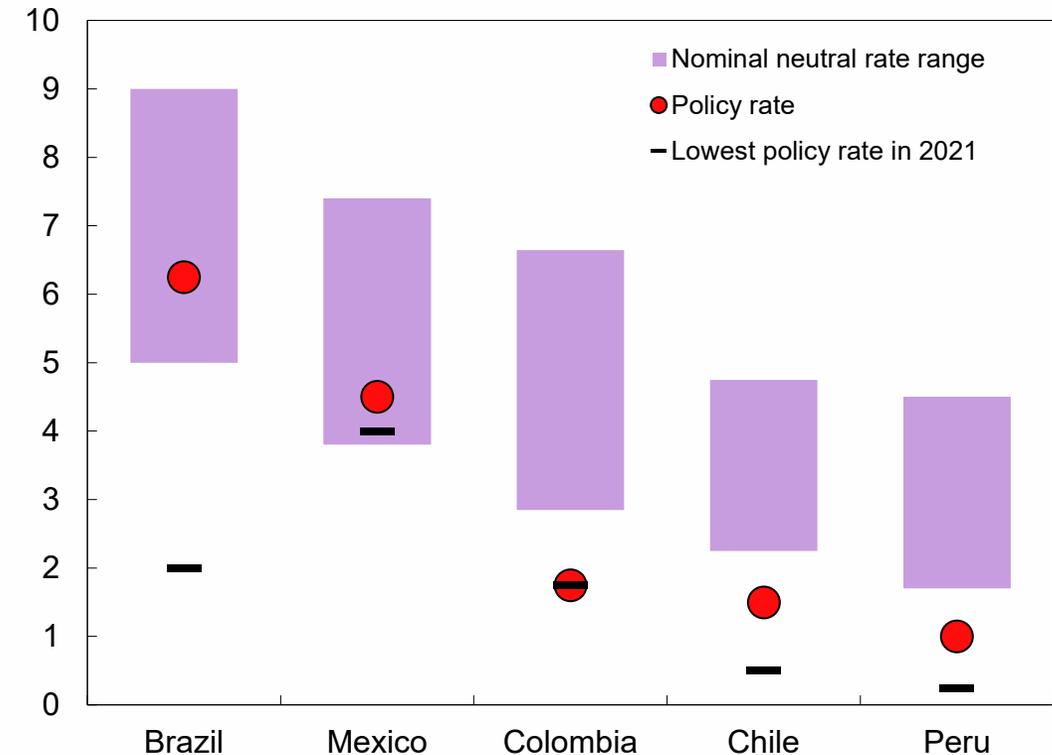
Large fiscal stimulus in BRA, DOM, PRY, and PER is expected to be largely withdrawn; still large fiscal stimulus in CHL, COL in 2021

Monetary policy has been accommodative in most LA5 countries though the tightening cycle has started

**General Government Fiscal Impulse**  
(Percentage points of GDP; +/- = loosening/tightening)



**Nominal Neutral and Policy Rates**  
(Percent)



Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Defined as the change in structural primary deficit. Chile refers to the change in structural non-mining primary balance. Colombia refers to the consolidated public sector's change in structural non-oil primary balance.

Sources: Consensus Economics; Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations following (Magud and Tsounta, 2012).

# A heterogenous recovery across the LAC region

Latin America and the Caribbean: Real GDP Growth  
(Year-over-year percent change)

	Year of return to		Projections				
	End-2019 level	Pre-COVID trend	2019	2020	2021	2022	Avg. 2023–26
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	<b>2022</b>	...	<b>0.1</b>	<b>-7.0</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>
LAC excl. Venezuela	<b>2022</b>	...	0.9	-6.7	6.5	3.1	2.5
South America	<b>2022</b>	...	-0.1	-6.6	6.3	2.3	2.3
Argentina	<b>2023</b>	...	-2.1	-9.9	7.5	2.5	2.0
Brazil	<b>2021</b>	...	1.4	-4.1	5.2	1.5	2.1
Chile	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	1.0	-5.8	11.0	2.5	2.2
Colombia	<b>2021</b>	...	3.3	-6.8	7.6	3.8	3.4
Peru	<b>2022</b>	...	2.2	-11.0	10.0	4.6	3.5
Mexico	<b>2022</b>	...	-0.2	-8.3	6.2	4.0	2.1
CAPDR	<b>2021</b>	...	3.2	-7.1	7.7	4.6	4.0
Caribbean							
Tourism dependent	<b>2024</b>	...	-0.0	-9.5	2.3	4.1	2.2
Commodity exporters	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>	0.4	4.0	5.6	21.1	5.6

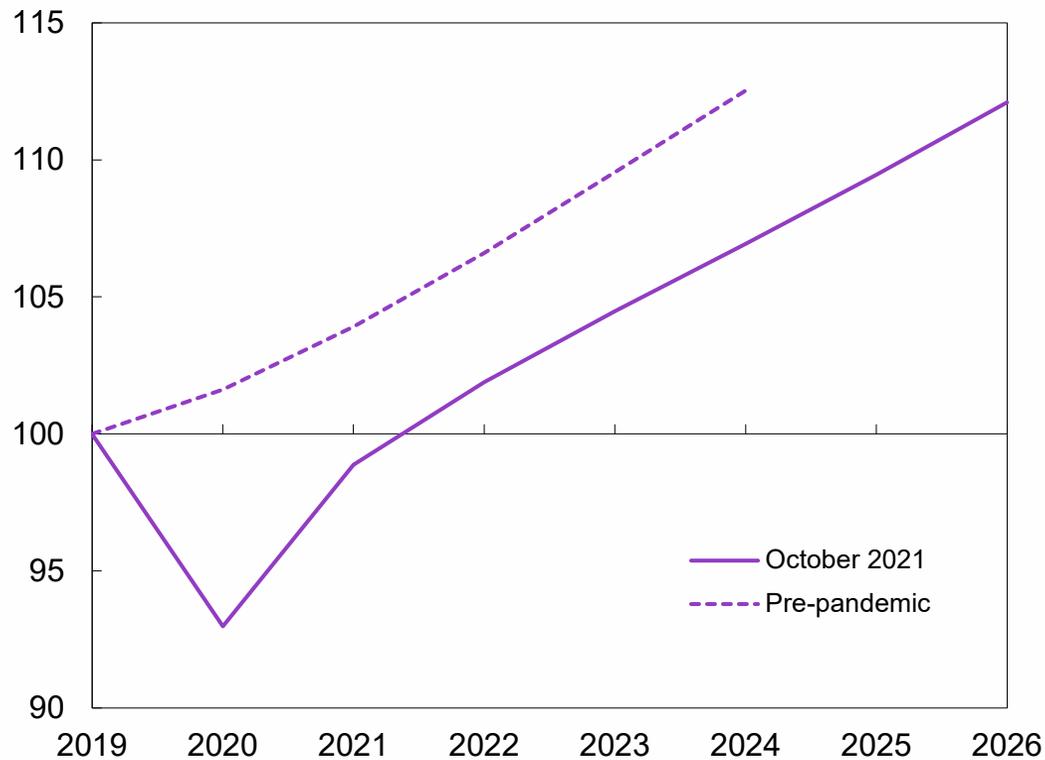
Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; and IMF staff calculations.

Note: PPP GDP-weighted average. Green/red denotes upward/downward revision compared with the April 2021 World Economic Outlook forecasts.

# Long-term negative consequences of pandemic

LAC's real GDP is not expected to return to the pre-pandemic trend...

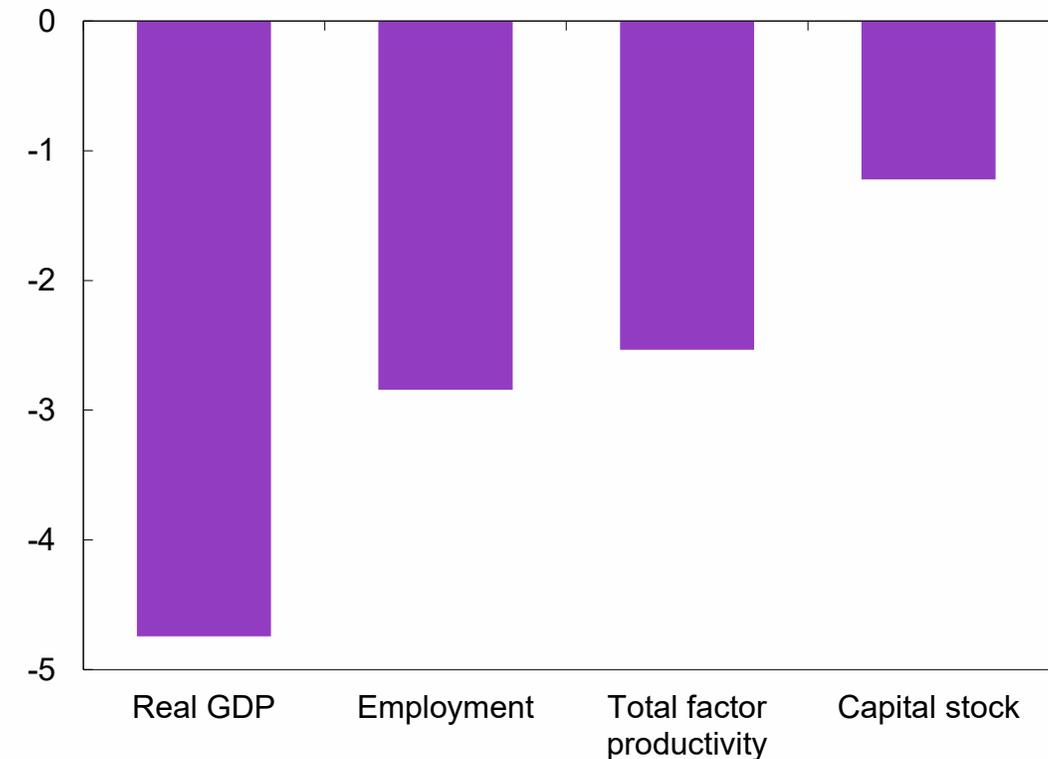
**LAC: Real GDP**  
(Index: 2019 = 100)



Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Pre-pandemic WEO refers to the January 2020 WEO vintage.

... largely due to expected productivity and employment losses

**LA7: Potential Output and Production Factors**  
Post-pandemic Relative to Pre-Pandemic  
(Percent of pre-pandemic projection)

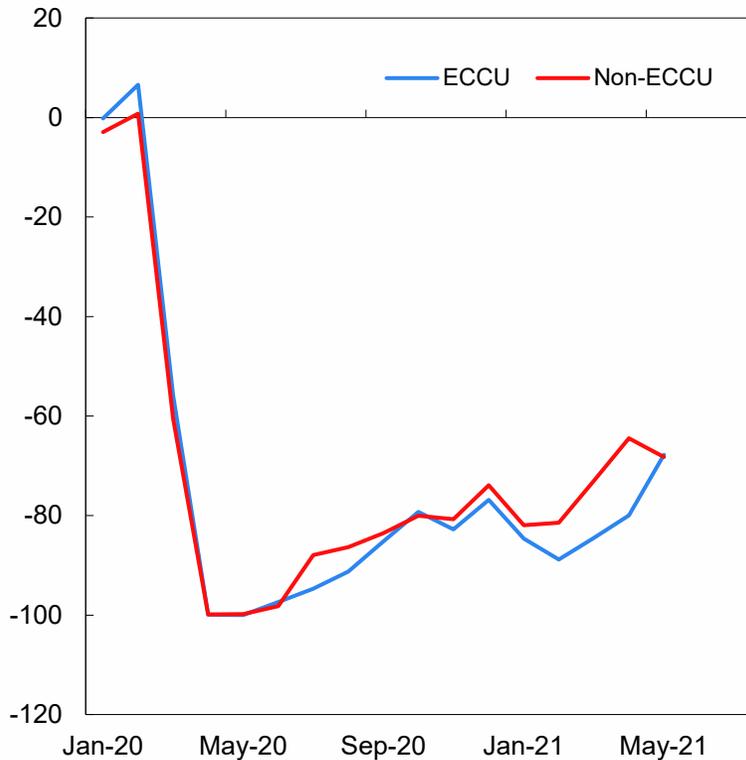


Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; PWT 10.0; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Comparison of January 2020 and October 2021 WEO projections in 2024. PPP GDP-weighted average of LA7 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay).

# Significant concerns about the Caribbean

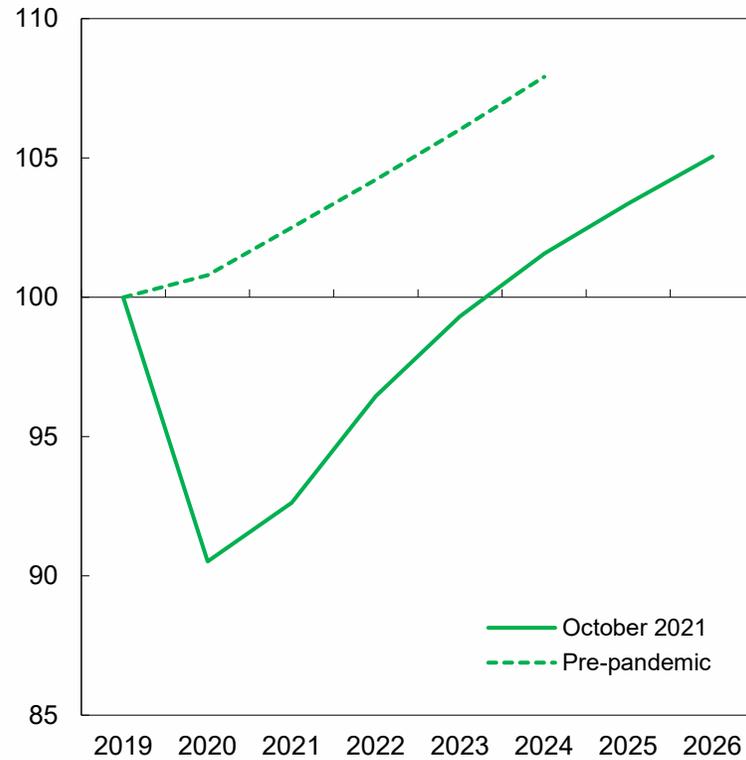
Tourism recovery in the Caribbean has been slow...

**The Caribbean: Total Tourist Arrivals**  
(Percent change relative to the same month in 2019)



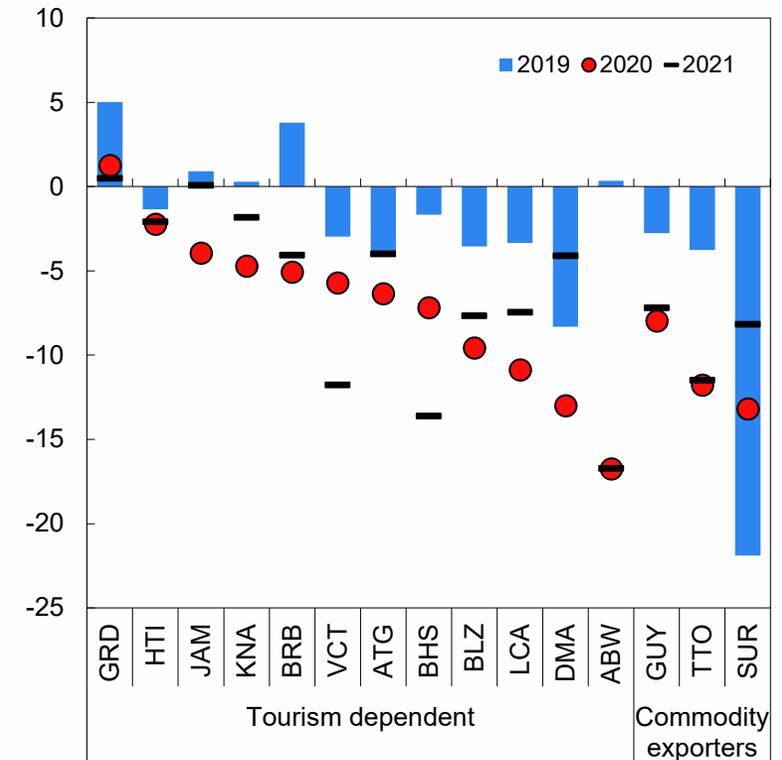
... and is expected to continue weighing on GDP recovery going forward...

**Tourism-Dependent Caribbean: Real GDP**  
(Index: 2019 = 100)



... exacerbating pre-existing fiscal vulnerabilities

**The Caribbean: Overall Fiscal Balance**  
(Percent of GDP)



Sources: Caribbean Tourism Organization; Eastern Caribbean Central Bank; and IMF staff calculations.

Note: ECCU (Eastern Caribbean Currency Union) includes AIA, ATG, DMA, GRD, MSR, KNA, LCA, VCT. Non-ECCU includes ABW, BHS, BRB, BLZ, JAM.

Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; and IMF staff calculations.

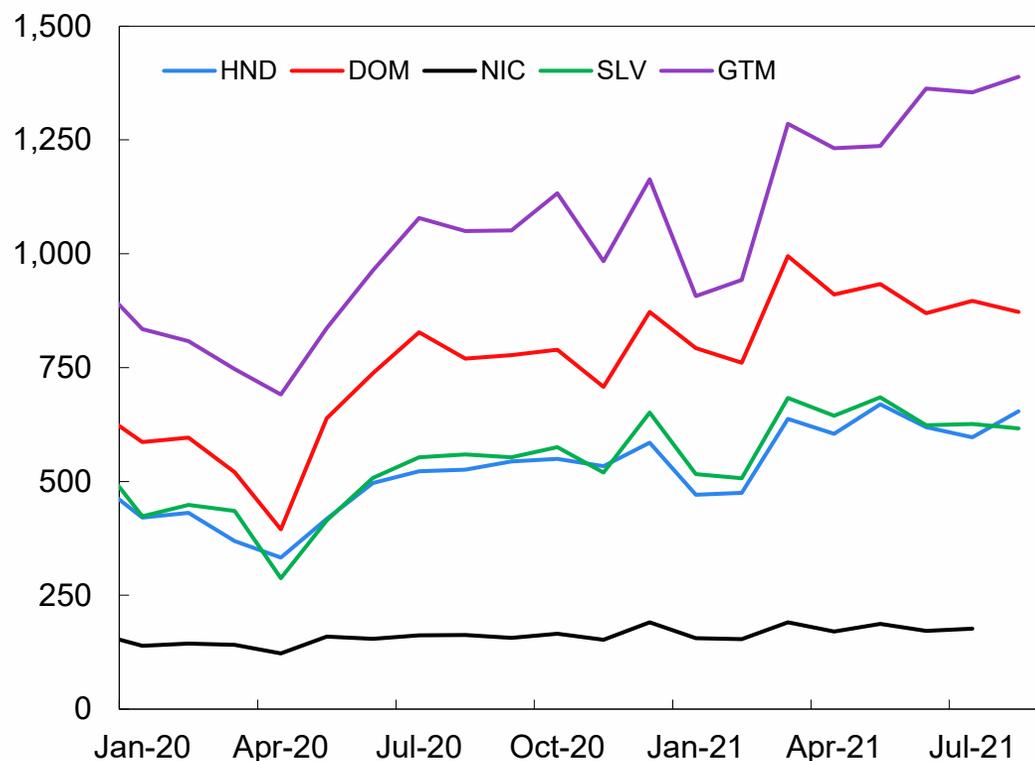
Note: Pre-pandemic refers to the January 2020 WEO vintage.

Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook database.

# Positive spillovers from US supporting Central America

Strong remittances growth, ...

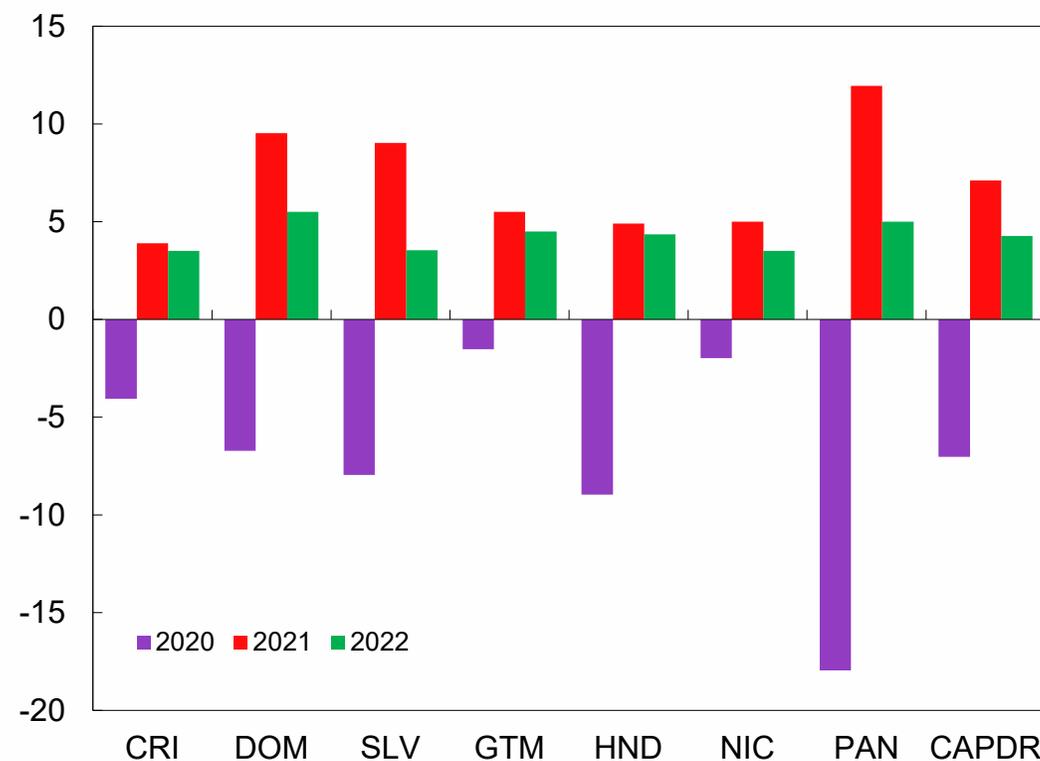
**CAPDR: Remittances**  
(Millions of US dollars)



Sources: Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations.

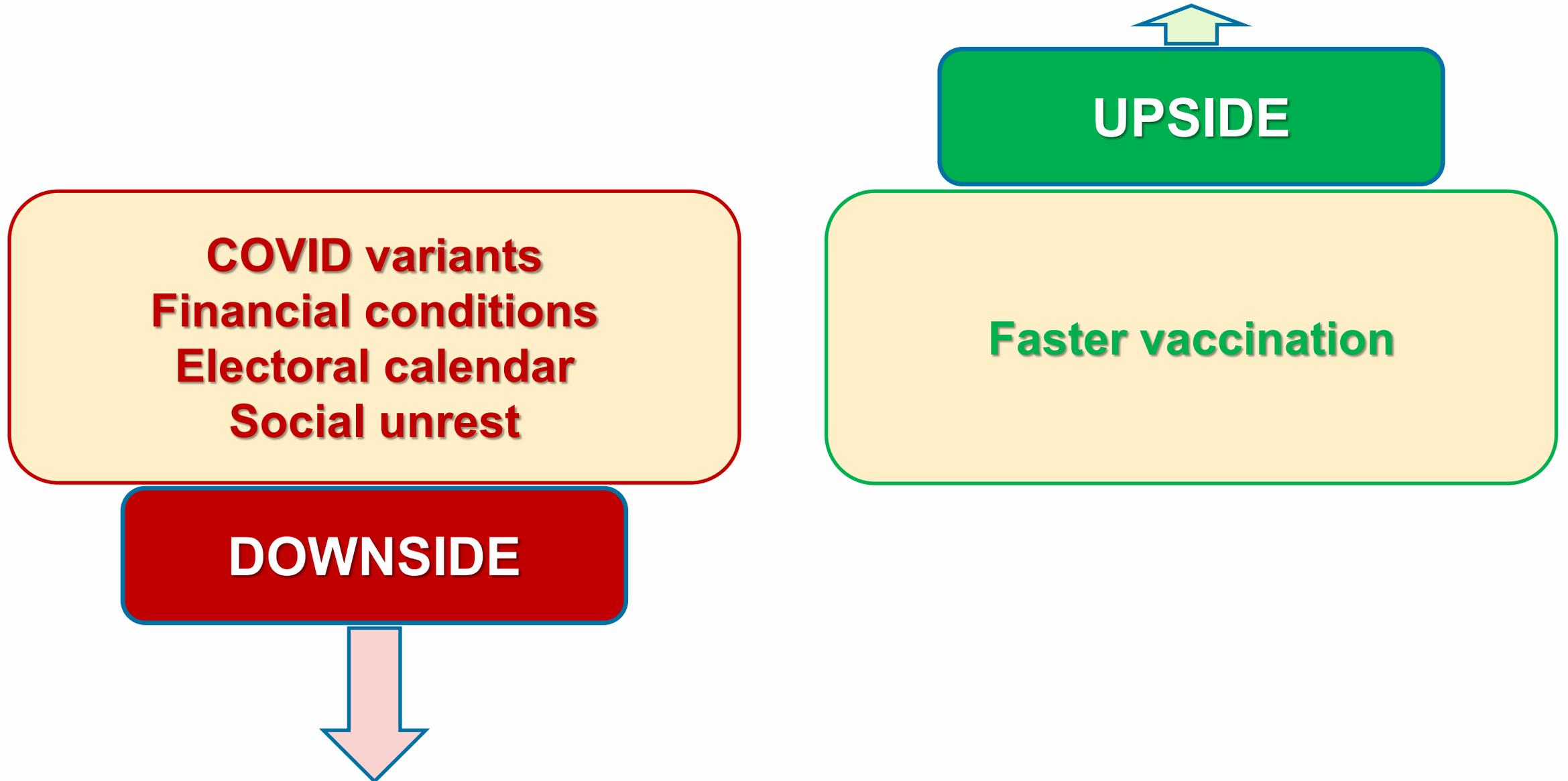
... combined with strong exports growth to the U.S. will continue supporting growth in CAPDR in 2021

**CAPDR: Real GDP Growth**  
(Year-over-year percent change)



Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook database.

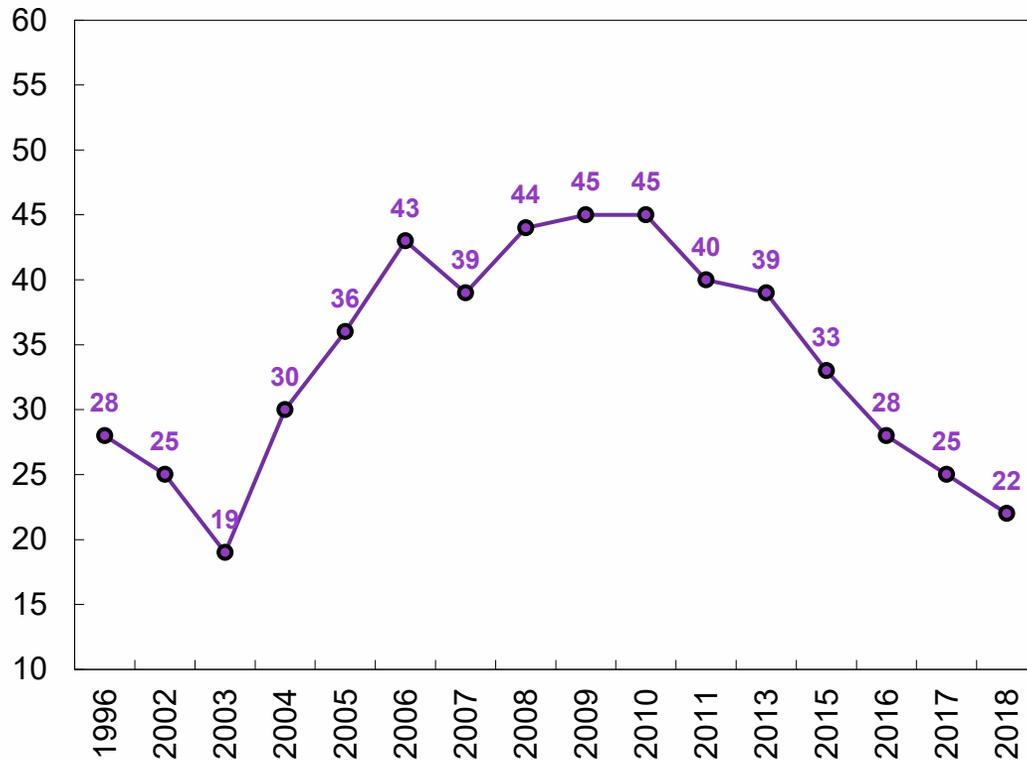
# Risks are tilted to the downside



# Potential for social impact of pandemic feeding into unrest

Even before the pandemic, trust in government in LAC was eroding...

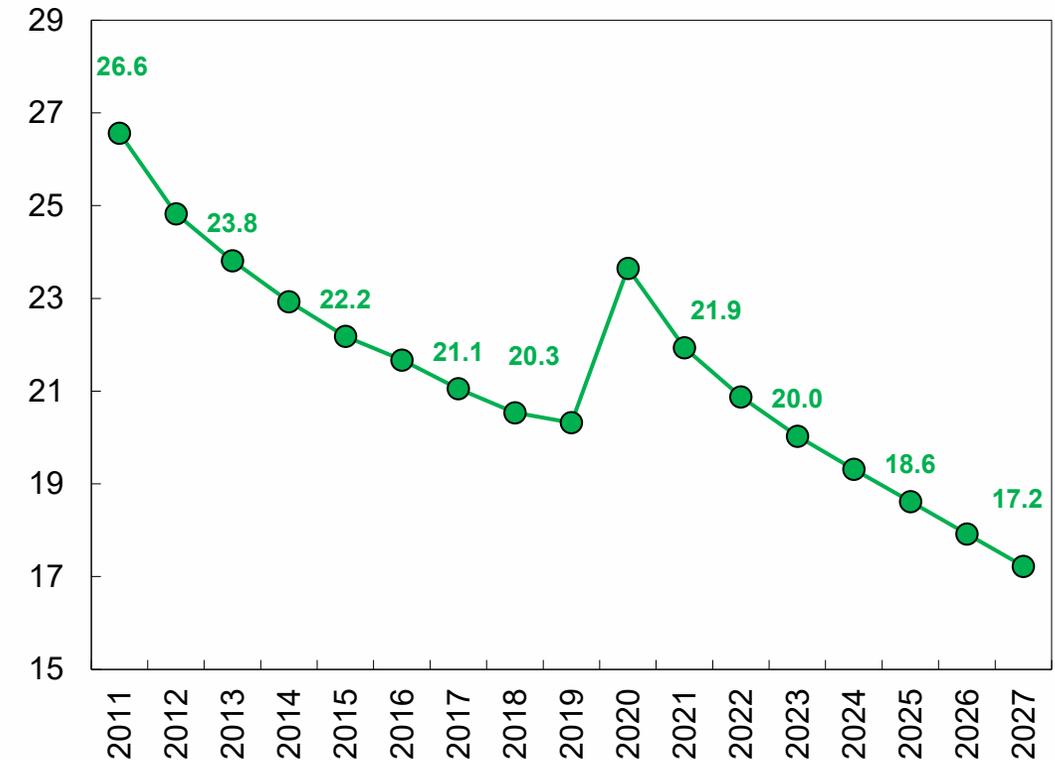
**LAC: Confidence in Government**  
(Percent)



Source: Latinobarometro.

... and the pandemic is estimated to have increased poverty significantly, reversing the gains over the past 8 years

**LAC: Poverty Ratio**  
(Share of population; \$5.5 threshold)



Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; World Bank, World Development Indicators database; and IMF staff calculations.

# Policy Priorities

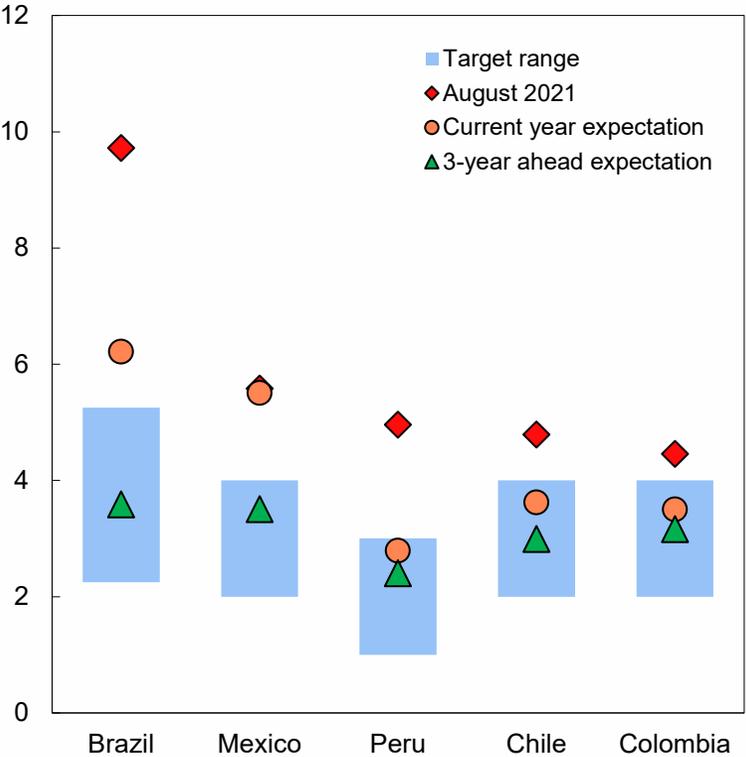
# Key Messages

- **Public health measures to contain the pandemic**
- **Policy rate increases may be needed to anchor inflation dynamics**
- **Targeted fiscal support within credible MT frameworks is needed**
- **Reshaping direct taxes would help**
- **Diversified approach to both climate mitigation and adaptation**

# To anchor expectations may require increases in policy rates

While expectations remain well-anchored, inflation is outside the target range ...

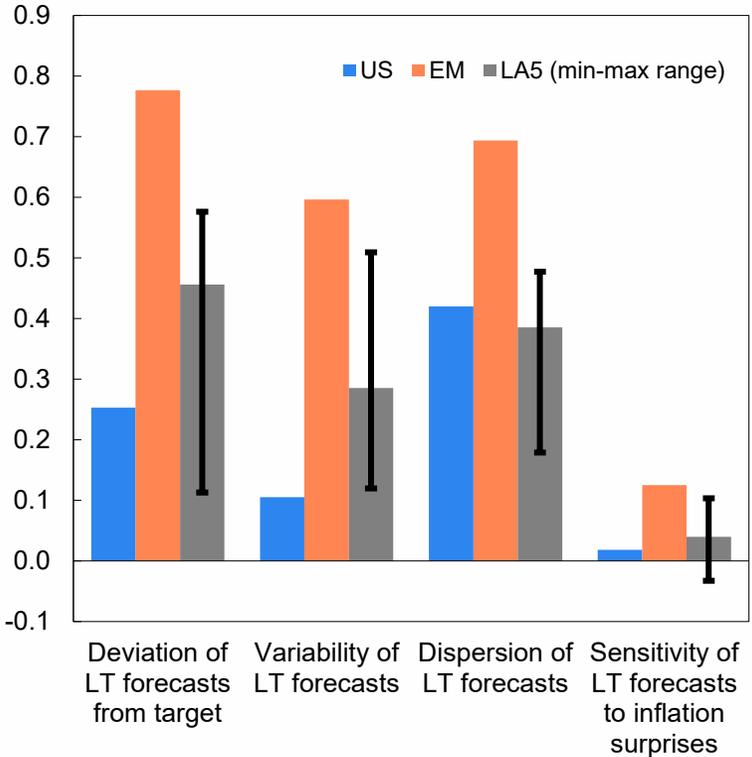
**Inflation**  
(Year-over-year percent change)



Sources: Consensus Economics; Haver Analytics; and national authorities.

... and LA5 central bank credibility falls short that of the US Fed though higher than that of EMs on average

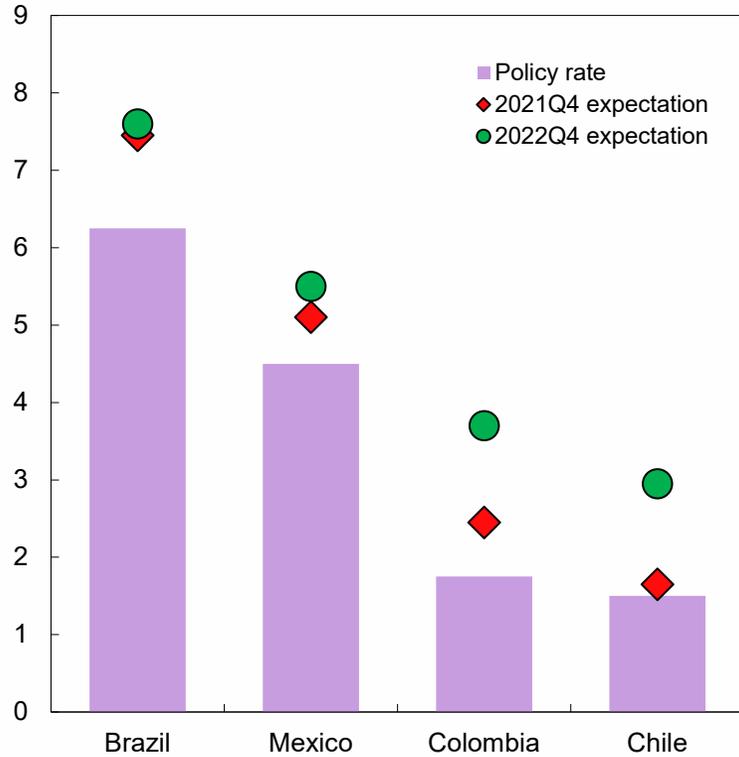
**Inflation Expectations Anchoring, 2011–21**  
(Index; lower means better anchored)



Sources: Consensus Economics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: EM = emerging markets; LT = long term.

Market expectations point to additional rate hikes this and next year

**Policy Rates and Expectations**  
(Percent)



Sources: Bloomberg Finance L.P.; Haver Analytics; national authorities; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Expectations refer to the Bloomberg weighted average.

# Targeted near-term fiscal support with a framework for deficit reduction over the medium-term

## **Brazil:**

- A positive to extend the targeted cash transfers into 2021
- Going forward, pace of consolidation should be guided by existing fiscal rules

## **Chile:**

- Withdraw fiscal stimulus, while targeting support to the most vulnerable
- Put in place a consolidation plan guided by the fiscal rule

## **Colombia:**

- Prioritize public investment and social spending as the planned consolidation proceeds
- Over the medium term, further tax reform will be needed to durably raise additional revenues

## **Mexico:**

- Scope for additional spending on social safety nets, education, health, and quality public investment
- Over medium-term, a comprehensive tax reform that permanently raises revenues

## **Peru:**

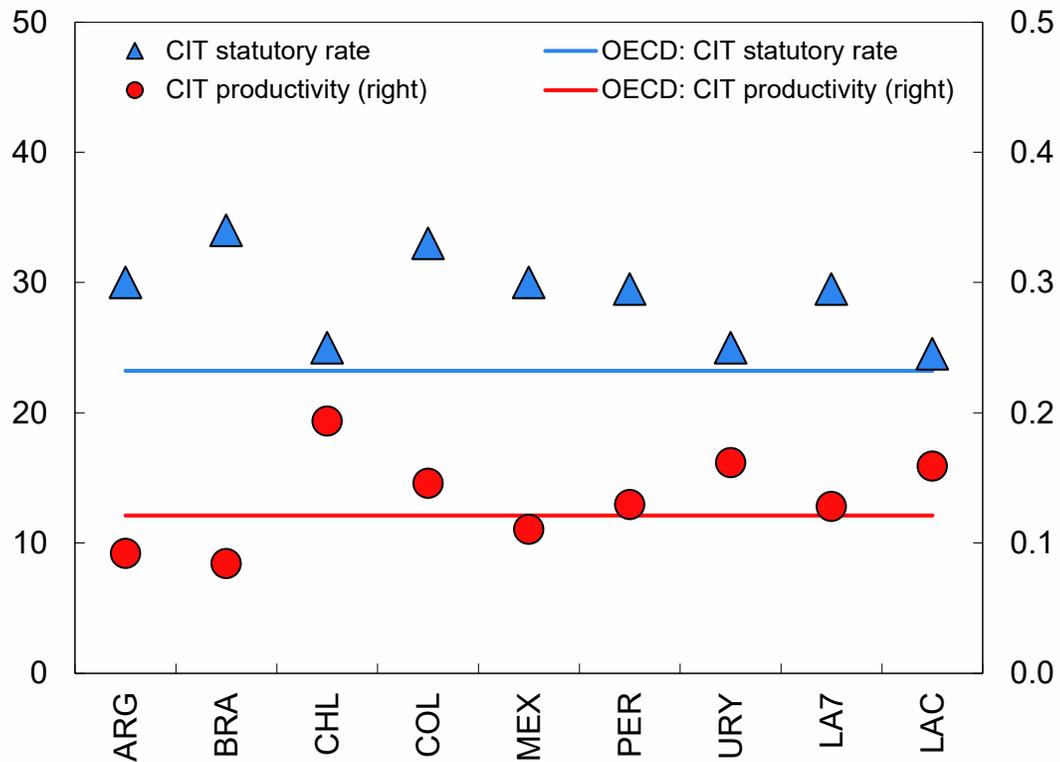
- Continue to gradually remove the fiscal stimulus by raising tax revenues while accelerating high-quality investment and maintaining support for households
- Identify a realistic path and the necessary measures to support a return to the fiscal rules

# Significant scope to redesign direct taxes

LA7 statutory CIT rates are much higher, while CIT productivity in the three largest economies is lower than peers and OECD average, pointing to significant base erosion

Eliminating deductions and adding an EITC substantially increases PIT revenues while reducing inequality in LA5

**Statutory Rates and Productivity, 2019**  
(Percent)



**LA5: Micro-simulations of PIT Reforms, 2019**  
(Percent)

Scenario	Revenue change relative to baseline	Average effective PIT rate		Gini change relative to baseline
		All tax payers	Top 10% of earners	
Baseline	...	4.3	9.2	...
No deductions	137	6.1	14.3	-1.6
No deductions + EITC	106	6.2	14.3	-3.6

Sources: IMF, World Economic Outlook database; OECD Tax Revenue Statistics database; Tax Foundation Corporate Tax Rates around the world; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: Group averages reflect simple average. CIT = corporate income tax; LAC = Latin-America and Caribbean (excluding LA7); LA7 = ARG, BRA, CHL, COL, MEX, PER, URY; OECD = members as of end-2019 excluding LAC countries.

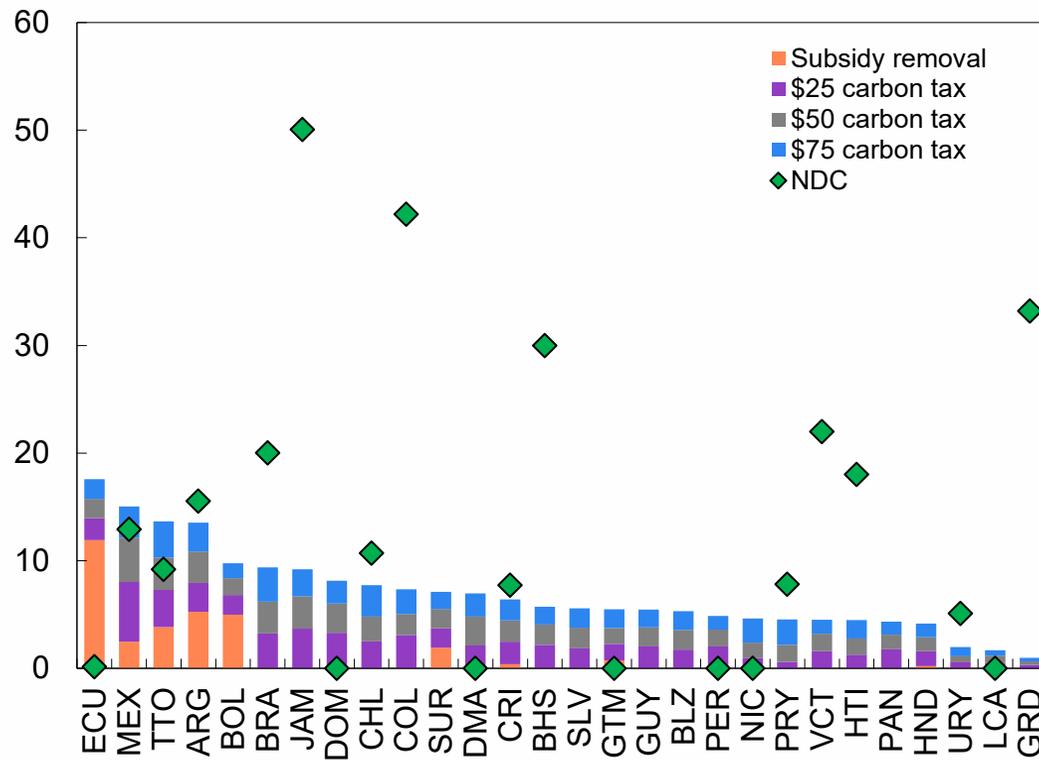
Sources: National household surveys; and IMF staff calculations.  
Note: The Gini coefficient and the income percentiles are based on the distribution of labor earnings among formal workers only. LA5 refers to the simple average of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru.

# Country-specific responses needed to reduce emissions and build resilience

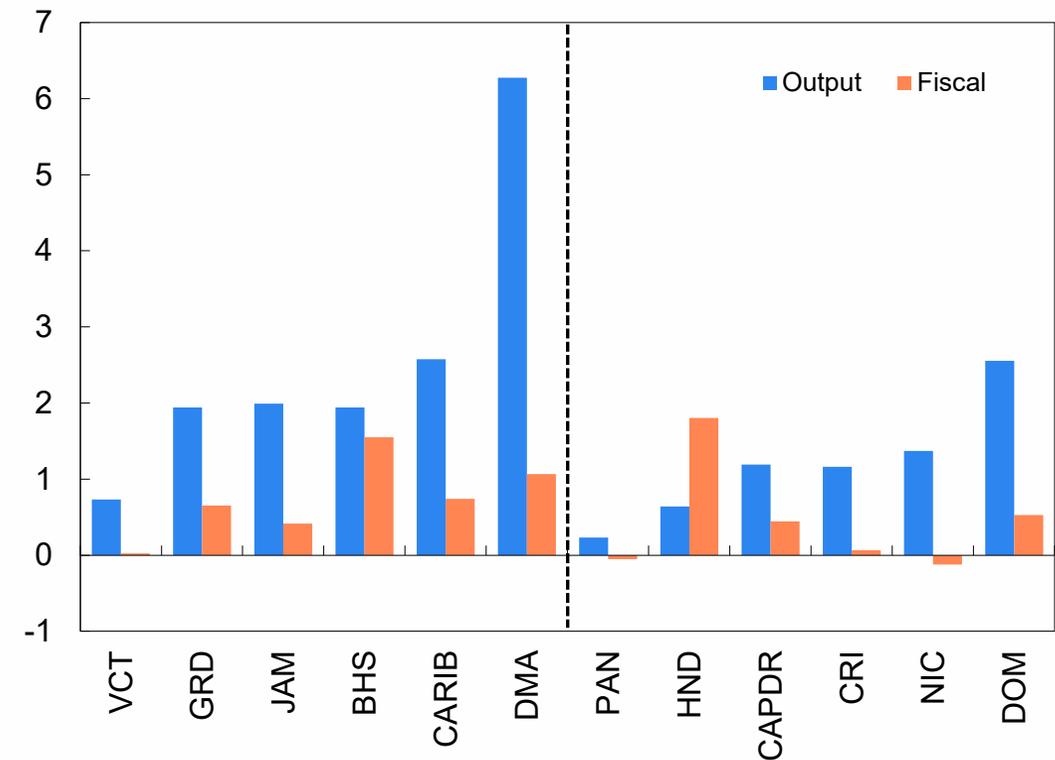
Strong mitigation policy actions are needed to reach LAC's NDCs. They could include carbon taxes, removal of fuel subsidies, feebates, ETS, NbS, and others

Scaling up investment in structural and financial climate resilience could support macroeconomic performance of the economies in the Caribbean and Central America

**Reduction of Gross Greenhouse Gas Emissions (excl. LULUCF) from Illustrative Scenario of Subsidy Removal and Carbon Tax (Percent of 2030 BAU)**



**Output and Fiscal Gains from Resilient Investment (Percent)**



Sources: Carbon Pricing Assessment Tool; and IMF staff calculations.  
 Note: BAU = business as usual; LULUCF = land use, land-use change, and forestry; NDC = nationally determined contributions.

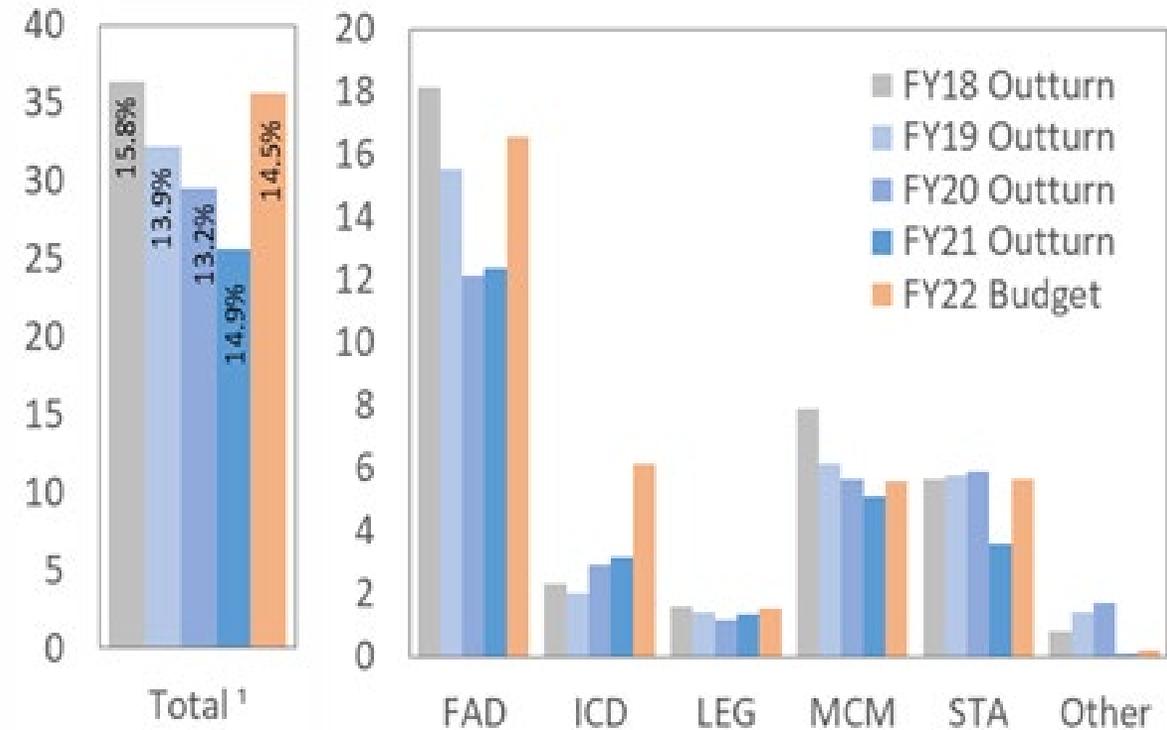
Sources: Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility; EM-DAT; and IMF staff calculations.

# Capacity Development

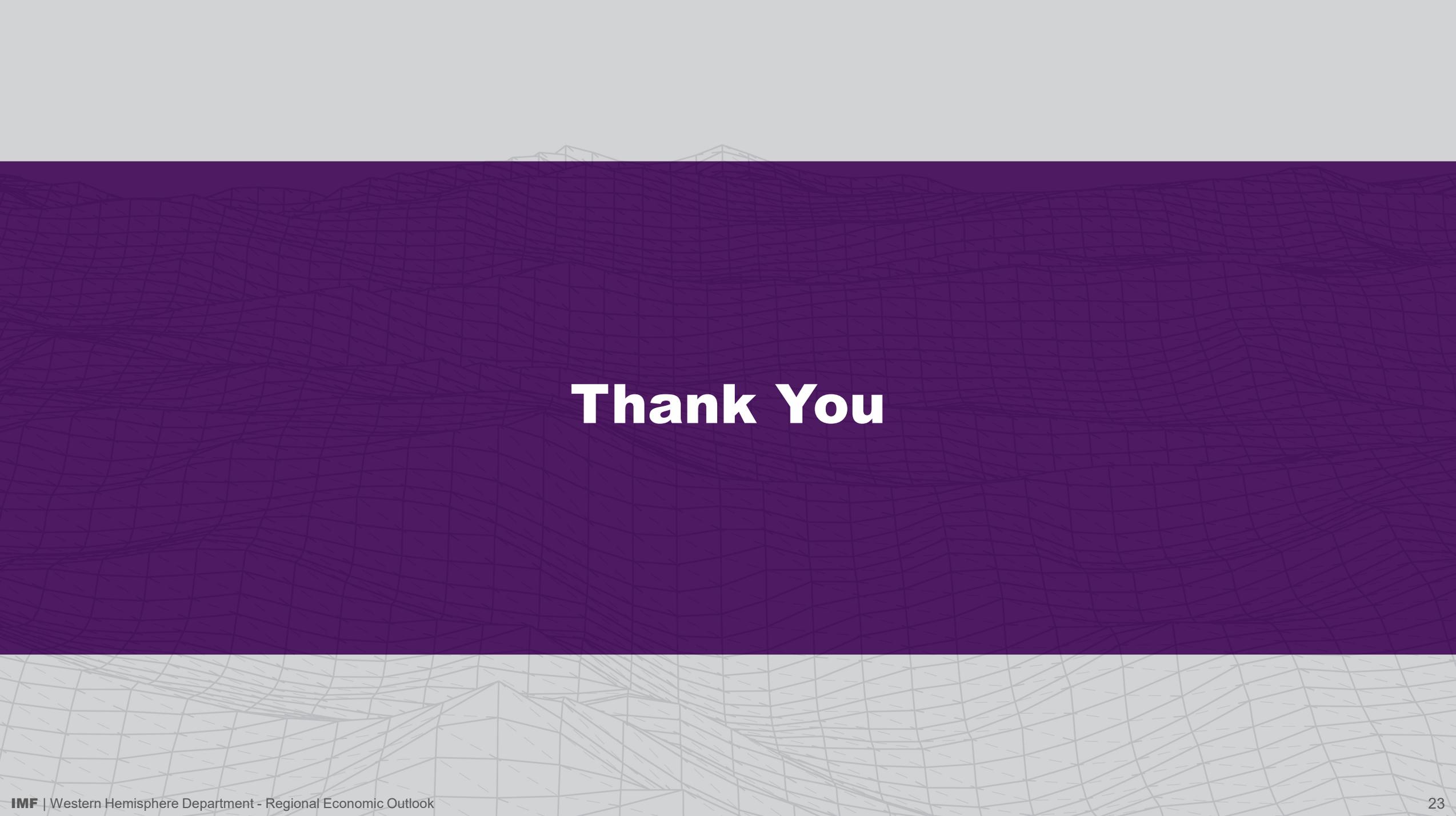
# Projected recovery in CD activities to the region, including in new and cross-cutting topics

- ❖ CD delivery fell substantially in FY21, but it is expected to recover in FY22 and over the medium-term.
- ❖ CD in new and cross-cutting topics benefits from acquired expertise and experience:
  - ❖ E.g., CARTAC's PFM, Macroeconomic, and Debt Management programs
- ❖ Upcoming activities in these areas include:
  - ❖ Regional seminars on climate change, financial sector risks, Fintech regulation, use of big data
  - ❖ TA missions on CBDC adoption, digital money legislation

**Composition of CD Delivery to WHD Countries**  
(Millions of US dollars)



<sup>1</sup>Percentages refer to WHD share of total direct spending to all area departments.



# Thank You