2026 DINA UPDATE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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2026 Regional Update for Latin America and the Caribbean

Technical Note

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2026 update

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1 Introduction

This technical note documents the October 2026 update of the pre-tax national income series for 11 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in the World Inequality Database (WID). We measure the share of national income received by each group of adults, dividing a couple's income equally between its two members. We adopt the definitions of income and the adult population in the 2025 Distributional National Accounts (DINA) Guidelines (Chancel et al., 2025). Following Alvaredo et al. (2022) and De Rosa et al. (2024), we combine household surveys, administrative records and national accounts to estimate these shares. Throughout the note, we compare the results with the 2025 regional update (Flores & Zúñiga-Cordero, 2025).[1]

This update extends survey coverage through 2024 in all 11 countries. Brazil and Chile also add administrative data for 2024, and six countries incorporate new detailed national accounts. The estimates presented here cover pre-tax income. Post-tax income is computed at a later stage, allocating taxes, transfers and public spending across households. Gethin (2024) documents the government revenue and expenditure data used in that work.

Ecuador accounts for the largest revision to the historical series. We incorporate Nabernegg's (2026) estimates for 1990–2022 and use changes in the World Inequality Lab's (WIL) own estimates for Ecuador to extend the series through 2024. Compared with the 2025 release, the new estimates assign more income to both the top 10% and the bottom 50%, and correspondingly less to the middle 40%. Nabernegg (2026) also finds much more stable levels of pre-tax income inequality than De Rosa et al. (2024), despite similar estimates of the Gini coefficient at the start of the period.

Elsewhere in the region, revisions to surveys, national accounts and methods produce more localised changes in particular years and income groups. In Argentina, revised household income data account for most of the upward revision of the top 1%. These data include revised survey records and income adjustments. In Costa Rica, correcting a coding error in the treatment of the highest incomes changed the historical top shares.

An important innovation this year is the publication of a data quality grade alongside each country's annual pre-tax income estimate in WID. Readers can use it to distinguish years supported by surveys and tax records from years estimated using information from other dates or countries (Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al., 2026, Sections 1–2).

Sections 2 and 3 describe the sources and methods. Section 4 analyses income shares, Section 5 presents data quality grades, and Section 6 concludes. Appendix A reports additional shares and revisions by country.

[1] Flores and Zúñiga-Cordero (2025, Section 5.2) document the harmonisation of the regional estimation code and provide its public repository.

2 New data sources

Table 1 summarises the new sources used in the pre-tax estimates. All 11 countries now have a household survey for 2024. In Chile and Mexico, where surveys are conducted every two years, we interpolate the 2023 distribution between the 2022 and 2024 observations. In the other nine countries, the previous survey was in 2023. We also incorporate detailed national accounts for 2024 in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru, and for 2022 in Uruguay. For Ecuador, these additions accompany the historical series discussed in Section 3.1.

Brazil and Chile incorporate administrative data for the 2024 survey year. Mexico adds its 2024 survey and national accounts while retaining the comparisons with wage-tax data for 2010, 2012 and 2014.

Where tax records are unavailable for the survey year, we continue to draw on years with tax data for the same country to adjust the upper end of the survey distribution (Flores & Zúñiga-Cordero, 2025). A different procedure applies in countries with no distributional data of their own. In those cases, WID estimates the distribution using regional information (Chancel & Piketty, 2020).

Table 1: New data sources used for pre-tax income series

Region	Country	Last survey in 2025 update	New data sources		
			Detailed national accounts	Household survey	Administrative data
South America	Argentina	2023	—	2024	—
South America	Brazil	2023	—	2024	2024
South America	Chile	2022	2024	2024	2024
South America	Colombia	2023	2024	2024	—
South America	Ecuador	2023	2024	2024	—
South America	Peru	2023	2024	2024	—
South America	Uruguay	2023	2022	2024	—
Central America and the Caribbean	Costa Rica	2023	—	2024	—
Central America and the Caribbean	Dominican Republic	2023	—	2024	—
Central America and the Caribbean	El Salvador	2023	—	2024	—
Central America and the Caribbean	Mexico	2022	2024	2024	—

Source: WIL, October 2026 update. A dash means that the update adds no new source of that type for the country. Section 3.1 describes the historical series incorporated for Ecuador.

3 Methodological changes

From household surveys to pre-tax national income

Where tax records are missing for a survey year, we continue to use tax evidence from other years in the same country to adjust the incomes reported at the top of the survey. Argentina and Costa Rica, for example, retain the correction estimated from their tax reference years for the years to which it applies. In contrast, when a country's national accounts do not report an income component, we estimate it using relationships observed in other countries. In El Salvador and Uruguay, some income components are missing from the national accounts. We use the updated accounts for the rest of the countries to estimate these components.

The adjustments to the top 0.1% and top 0.01% were a major methodological innovation in the 2025 update. The estimates for the top 1%, 0.1% and 0.01% continue to draw on the benchmarks introduced in that update. For Brazil, Palomo et al. (2025) derive their estimates from administrative records. For Chile, Fairfield and Jorratt De Luis (2016) use tax records to allocate business profits to their owners. Both studies also inform the estimates for the other countries where we apply the regional adjustment (Flores & Zúñiga-Cordero, 2025, Section 5.3).[2]

Revisions to earlier years

As in previous updates, we revise historical estimates when additional information becomes available or national agencies revise previously published sources. Most of the upward revision to Argentina's top 1% share comes from changes to the household income data used to estimate the distribution. These include revised survey records and the adjustments used to bring household incomes into line with national income.

In Costa Rica, we corrected a coding error in the 2025 release that had prevented the adjustment for the richest 0.01% from taking effect. For 2000–2009, we use Costa Rica's estimated 2010 distribution. Revising the estimate for 2010 therefore also changes the shares reported for those earlier years. Section 4 describes the resulting revisions at the top.

In Colombia, revised national accounts contributed to lower estimates of the top income shares. The revisions relative to the 2025 release are reported in Section 4. For Brazil, revised survey weights also affect the estimates for 2016–2023.

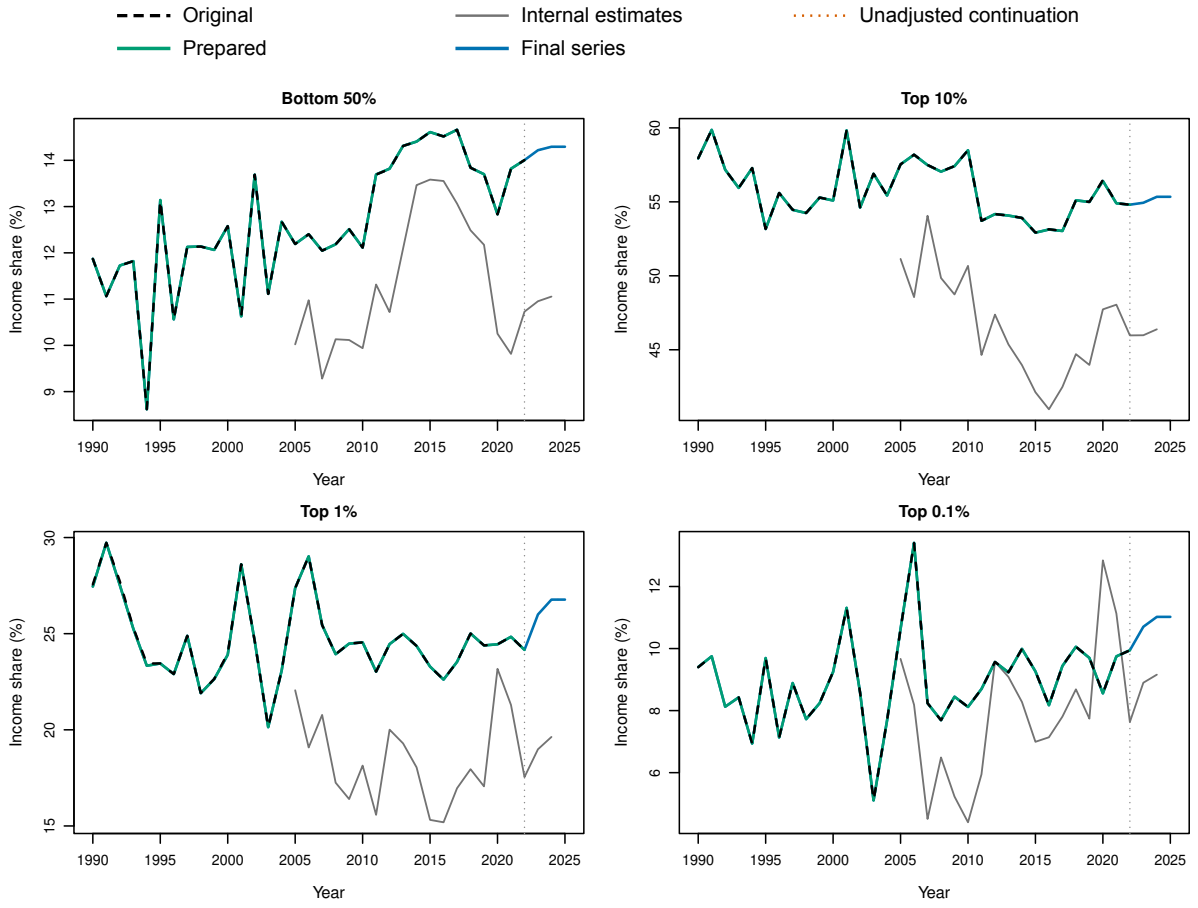
[2]The 2025 update benchmarked the Brazilian and Chilean top shares against Palomo et al. (2025) and Fairfield and Jorratt De Luis (2016), respectively.

3.1 Ecuador's historical series and its continuation

Nabernegg's (2026) estimates extend Ecuador's series back to 1990 and revise the historical income distributions published in earlier WID releases. Therefore, we use Nabernegg's pre-tax national income series for equal-split adults, consistent with the population unit used throughout this note. Figure 1 shows how we use this history. The Original series contains the estimates supplied by Nabernegg. To obtain the Prepared series, we corrected small numerical inconsistencies and used generalised Pareto interpolation to express the distribution in the standard 127 income groups used across our Latin American and Caribbean estimates.

The dashed black line shows the Original series and the green line the Prepared series. We use the prepared distribution throughout 1990–2022, and the common WID national income mean to express incomes in monetary terms. WIL's internal estimates (grey) incorporate the revised 2023 national accounts and the new 2024 accounts. The blue line extends the prepared 2022 distribution using changes in WIL's Ecuador estimates. The flat segment at the end carries the 2024 distribution into 2025.

Figure 1: Ecuador's supplied series and WIL continuation



Sources: Nabernegg (2026) and WIL, October 2026 update. The vertical line marks 2022, the last year of the supplied history. Shares are expressed in per cent. The dotted orange line shows the continuation before the adjustment for income ranking. In all four panels, it coincides with the final series (solid blue) and is therefore hidden.

The sources of the upward revisions differ at the two ends of Ecuador's distribution. In the comparison with De Rosa et al. (2024), Nabernegg (2026, Appendix B, pp. 70–71) identifies the use of detailed individual tax records as a source of improved measurement of high incomes, particularly property income. For the bottom half, he attributes most of the difference in the pre-tax share between the two studies to imputed rent. He uses housing survey evidence to allocate the rental value of owner-occupied housing across households.

4 Changes in levels and trends

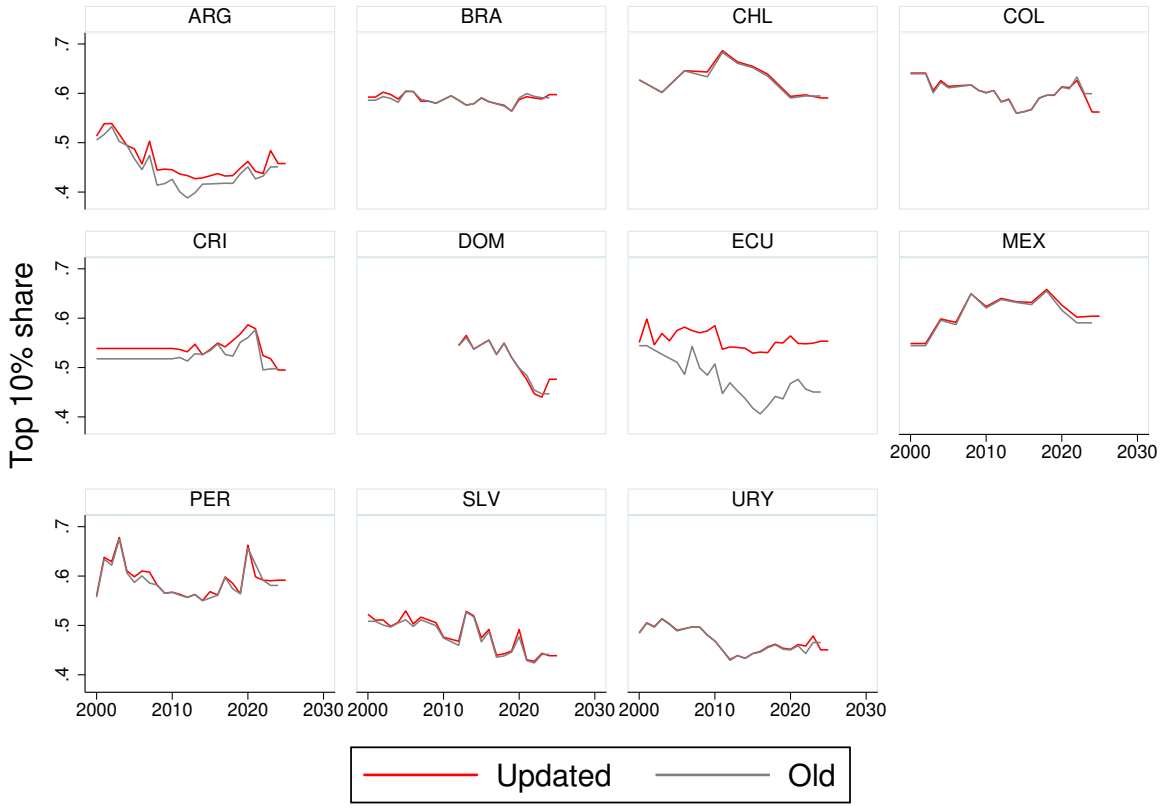
We compare 2023 and 2024 within the current series to describe recent movements, and compare estimates for the same year across releases to measure revisions. Table A.1 reports the revisions relative to the 2025 release for all 11 countries. For each top share, it shows the revision for 2024 and the largest difference over common years.

The top 10%

The top 10% share fell between 2023 and 2024 in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica and Uruguay, while it rose in the Dominican Republic (Figure 2). The Dominican increase partly reversed a decline since the mid-2010s. Brazil's top 10% share changed little between 2023 and 2024. Chile's top 10% share also changed little between 2023 and 2024.

Revisions to the top 10% share are largest in Ecuador and extend across much of its series. Relative to the 2025 release, the Ecuadorian share is 12.5 percentage points higher in 2016 and 10.3 points higher in 2024 (Figure 2). The next largest revision across the 11 countries was 4.5 points in Argentina in 2012. By comparison, the absolute difference between releases was below one point in Brazil and Chile in every year covered by both releases (Table A.1).

Figure 2: Top 10% share of pre-tax national income



Source: WIL, October 2026 update. Updated (red) and 2025 release (grey). The vertical axis is the fraction of pre-tax national income. The last flat segment carries the 2024 share into 2025. Figure 4 identifies each country's annual source coverage.

The top 1%

The revisions to the top 1% share in 2024 were particularly large in Colombia and Uruguay. Revised national accounts contributed to the downward revision of Colombia's top income shares. Compared with the 2025 release, the estimated 2024 share fell by 6.5 percentage points for the top 1% and 3.7 points for the top 10%. Uruguay shows the same pattern, with reductions of 4.6 and 1.5 points, respectively (Figure A.2).

In Ecuador and Argentina, the richest 1% accounts for most of the upward revision to the top decile in the years discussed above. In Ecuador, 8.9 points of the 10.3 percentage point upward revision to the top 10% share in 2024 accrued to the top 1% (Figure A.2). In Argentina in 2012, the top 1% and top 10% shares were both revised upwards by about 4.5 percentage points.

Correcting the error in the adjustment introduced in 2025 raised Costa Rica's estimated top shares. Compared with the 2025 release, the 2024 share is 2.4 percentage points higher for the top 0.01% and 4.4 points higher for the top 0.1% (Figures A.3–A.4).

4.1 Changes across the rest of the distribution

The middle 40%

In Ecuador, the higher shares at both ends of the distribution account for the full downward revision to the middle 40% in 2024. The top decile received about 10.3 percentage points more than previously estimated, and the bottom half about 3.1 points more. Since the three groups account for all pre-tax national income, these revisions together reduce the middle share by roughly 13.4 points (Figure A.1). Each figure compares two estimates of how income was distributed in the same year.

In Argentina and Costa Rica, the downward revision to the bottom-half share partly offsets the upward revision to the top decile. In Argentina in 2012, the top-decile share was revised up by about 4.5 points, and the bottom-half share down by about 0.9 points, leaving the middle 40% with about 3.6 points less. In Costa Rica in 2018, the corresponding revisions were an increase of about 3.2 points at the top and a decrease of about 0.6 points at the bottom, reducing the middle share by about 2.6 points. The Costa Rican revisions for 2024 were much smaller. A modest upward revision for the bottom half slightly outweighed the downward revision for the top decile.

The bottom 50% and bottom 20%

Ecuador stands out in Figure 3. Its bottom 50% share for 2024 is 3.1 percentage points higher than in the 2025 release. In most other countries the two series lie close together. The revision also reaches Ecuador's poorest fifth, whose estimated share in 2024 is 3.6 percentage points higher than in the 2025 release (Figure A.5).

Figure 3: Bottom 50% share of pre-tax national income



Source: WIL, October 2026 update. Updated (red) and 2025 release (grey). The vertical axis is a fraction. Figure A.1 shows the corresponding middle 40% share.

5 Data quality and interpretation

The data quality grades describe the distributional evidence available for each country and year. Estimates combining household surveys and tax microdata receive grade 5, while those combining surveys with tax tabulations receive grade 4. Grade 3 applies when only one type of distributional source is observed for that year (Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al., 2026, Table 1).

Ecuador's historical series for 2008–2022 combines surveys and tax microdata and receives grade 5. Brazil and Chile receive grade 4 in 2024, when both survey and administrative information enter their estimates. Colombia's 2024 distribution receives grade 3 because the survey is the only distributional source observed in that year. Its correction for high incomes draws on Colombian tax evidence through 2023.

When distributional sources are unavailable for a particular year, we use observations from other years to complete the series. Grade 2 indicates interpolation between observations, and grade 1 indicates that the distribution has been carried forwards or backwards from another year. Grade 0 applies when the distribution is imputed from regional evidence (Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al., 2026, Table 1 and Section 3).

In 2024, Brazil and Chile receive grade 4, and the other nine countries receive grade 3. All 11 receive grade 1 for 2025 because their distributions are carried forward from 2024. In Ecuador, the years before the tax microdata become available, 1990–2007, receive grade 3. WIL's continuation receives grade 3 for 2023–2024.

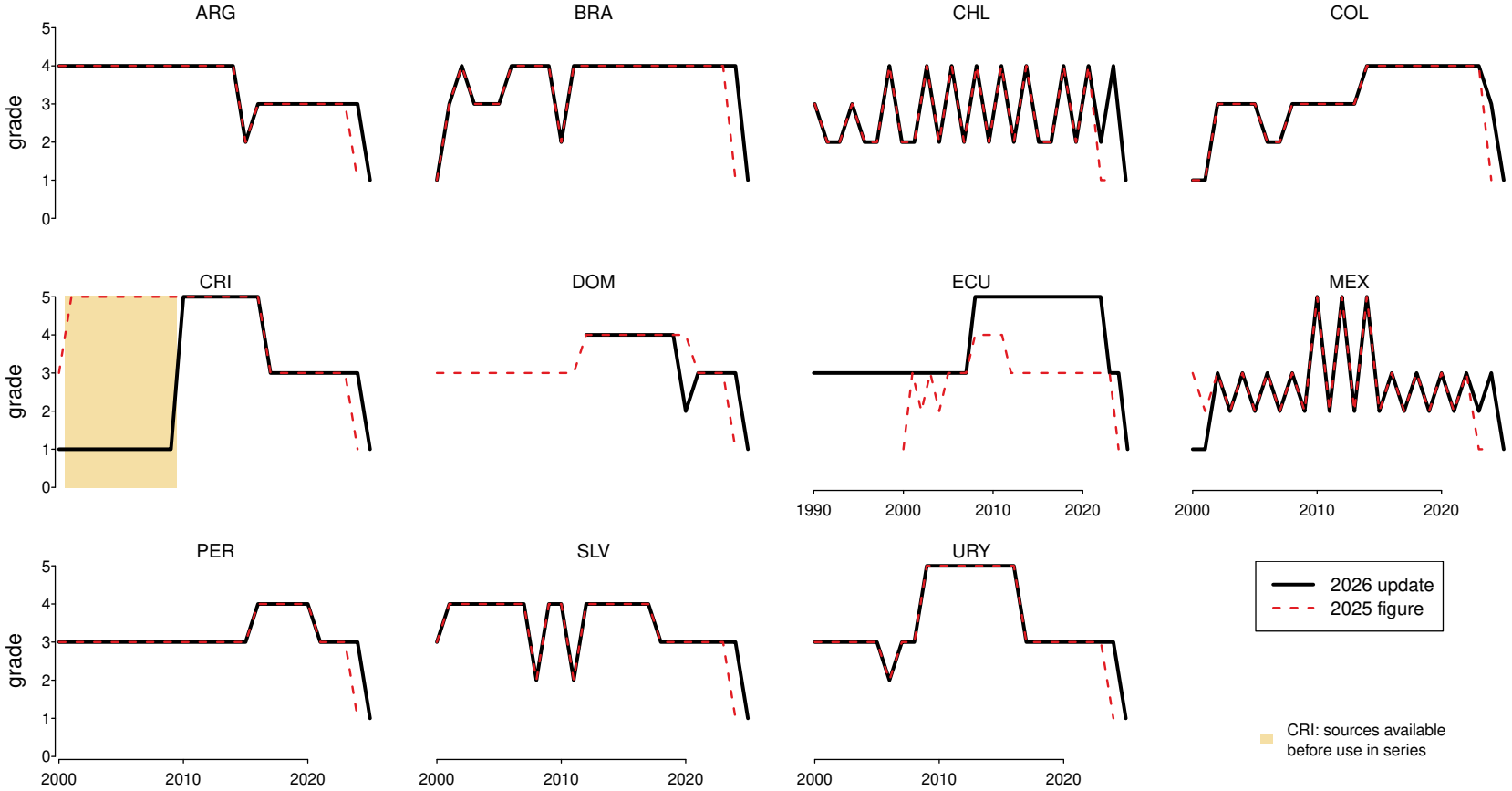
Following the country-by-year approach introduced in the 2025 regional update, Figure 4 compares the annual grades in the current and 2025 releases. WID records the grade in the `data_quality` variable, which users can download alongside the income shares through WID.world, Stata, or R (Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al., 2026, Sections 1–2).

Costa Rica illustrates how the grades reflect the sources used to construct each estimate. The tax and survey reference years used for the correction remain 2010–2016 and receive grade 5. Surveys and administrative records were also available during 2001–2009, as shown by the shading in Figure 4. Those years receive grade 1 because the published estimates carry the 2010 distribution backwards.

A further 15 countries use regional distributions over 2000–2025 and receive grade 0.[3] Their estimates change when the underlying country distributions are revised. For example, Cuba uses a separate combination of the distributions for Argentina, Ecuador and Uruguay.

[3]The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Cuba, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.

Figure 4: Data quality grades for pre-tax national income by country and year



The black line shows the annual data-quality grades for pre-tax income in the WIL October 2026 update. The dashed red line shows the grades reported by Flores & Zúñiga-Cordero (2025, Figure 5). Grading rules follow Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al. (2026). Shading in the Costa Rica panel marks 2001–2009, when survey and administrative data were available, but the published estimates carry the 2010 distribution backwards. Ecuador's current series begins in 1990 and the Dominican Republic's in 2012.

6 Concluding remarks

The October 2026 update brings household survey coverage through 2024 in all 11 countries. The largest revision to the historical estimates concerns Ecuador, where the new series draws on detailed tax records at the top and household evidence on housing income at the bottom. The upward revision for 2024 was greater for the top 10% than for the bottom 50%, widening the estimated gap between their shares by about 7.2 percentage points relative to the 2025 release.

The gap between the top-decile and bottom-half shares provides one way to trace Ecuador's distribution over time. Within the updated series, it narrowed from about 46.4 percentage points in 2010 to 38.3 in 2015, then widened to 43.6 in 2020. It stood at 40.7 points in 2023 and 41.0 in 2024 (Figures 2 and 3). For 2024, Ecuador's revised estimates assign a larger share of income to both the top 10% and the bottom 50%. Together, these revisions lower the estimated share of the middle 40% by about 13.4 percentage points relative to the 2025 release.

This update also consolidates the annual data quality reporting introduced in 2025. Last year, we documented how source coverage varied across countries and years. Annual grades are now available alongside the estimates in WID and included in data downloads, following the framework described by Arias-Osorio, Flores, et al. (2026). Readers can therefore distinguish estimates supported by contemporaneous survey and tax evidence from those relying on interpolation, distributions carried from other years, or regional imputations. This information helps assess the evidence underlying observed inequality trends, particularly where source coverage changes over time.

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A Additional income shares

Figure A.1: Middle 40% share of pre-tax national income



Figure A.2: Top 1% share of pre-tax national income



Source: WIL, October 2026 update. All appendix graphs show the updated series in red and the 2025 release in grey. The vertical axes are fractions and use different scales across figures.

The upward revision to Ecuador's top 1% share coincides with a downward revision for the middle 40%. The latter also reflects the increase in the bottom-half share. Section 4.1 discusses the corresponding changes for 2024.

Shares at the very top

Figure A.3: Top 0.1% share of pre-tax national income

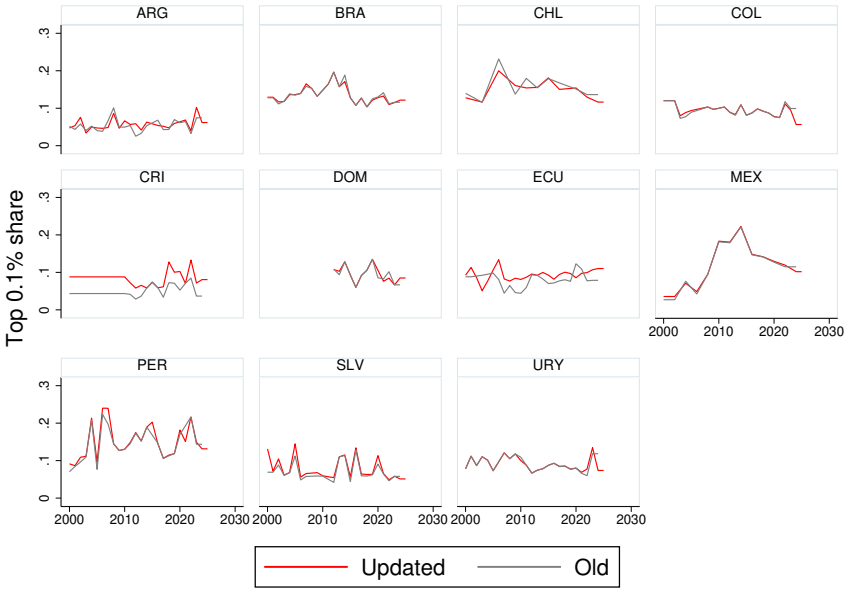
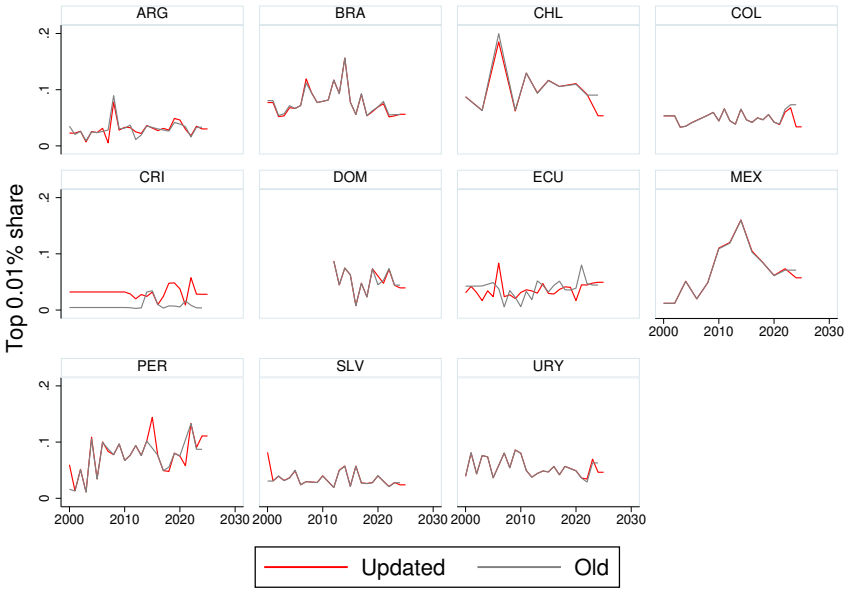


Figure A.4: Top 0.01% share of pre-tax national income



In Costa Rica, the revisions at the very top reflect the correction to the adjustment introduced in 2025 (Sections 3 and 4).

The bottom quintile and revisions by country

Figure A.5: Bottom 20% share of pre-tax national income



Table A.1: Revisions to pre-tax income shares (percentage points)

	Revision in 2024 (pp)		Largest absolute revision across common years			
Country	Top 10%	Top 1%	Top 10% (pp)	Year	Top 1% (pp)	Year
Argentina	+0.67	-2.96	4.53	2012	4.46	2012
Brazil	+0.63	+1.11	0.90	2002	1.29	2021
Chile	-0.40	-0.32	0.98	2009	1.91	2009
Colombia	-3.72	-6.46	3.72	2024	6.46	2024
Ecuador	+10.29	+8.94	12.52	2016	9.93	2006
Peru	+1.07	+2.40	2.55	2021	3.52	2007
Uruguay	-1.49	-4.55	1.53	2022	4.55	2024
Costa Rica	-0.24	+1.25	3.18	2018	4.62	2018
Dominican Republic	+2.95	+3.86	2.95	2024	3.86	2024
El Salvador	-0.25	-2.43	1.81	2005	5.37	2000
Mexico	+1.35	-0.46	1.35	2024	0.88	2020

Source: WIL, October 2026 update. The signed revisions compare the 2026 and 2025 releases' estimates for 2024 (2026 less 2025). The remaining columns show the largest absolute revision for each income group and the year in which it occurred.