

Priorities for social security

Trends, challenges
and solutions



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INTRODUCTION

The report *Priorities for social security – Global 2022: Trends, challenges and solutions* presents a global perspective on social security developments and trends, challenges and innovations, based on the series of reports for Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe.

The global report is presented in a new and interactive format, a digital, web-based publication that allows members of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) to easily navigate between sections of interest. The new format enables quick access and deep dives into the topics of interest including convenient links to relevant country examples, facts and trends, good practices, articles and reports prepared by the ISSA Secretariat and its collaborators, with an emphasis on the 2020–2022 triennium. Access to a wide range of online information as well as linked references to relevant ISSA Guidelines, webinars and other events further enrich the experience. A simpler printable format is also available.

Global trends and challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has made its indelible mark on the 2020–2022 triennium even as social security institutions continued to respond to persistent as well as evolving challenges in social security.

The unprecedented challenge of the pandemic demonstrated the importance of social security to a country's resilience in times of crisis. Social security systems cushioned the socio-economic shock on individuals and societies, and mitigated the economic slowdown. The continuity of social security services despite lockdown measures helped stave off difficulties for citizens. At the same time, COVID-19 underlined the importance of extending coverage to vulnerable population groups such as the self-employed, migrant workers, women and youth. This invigorated and reinforced efforts towards a more inclusive society, with new policies and programmes to close coverage gaps and support social inclusion.

Demographic ageing is an inexorable trend that has wide-ranging and diverse impacts on different regions. The graying of the population has highlighted the urgent and increasing needs of the elderly, the importance of rethinking pension and long-term care models, and the imperatives of promoting healthy ageing. With old age comes the realities of gender-based inequalities, as women are less protected than men by pension systems because of gender pay differences, shorter and interrupted careers due to family responsibilities and other disadvantages rooted in socio-cultural norms and practices.

Social security is essential to protect individuals against certain contingencies as they go through the lifecycle. Despite significant efforts however, less than half of the global population is effectively covered by at least one social security benefit. Extending coverage is a tenacious challenge in social security for a number of reasons. First, the implementation of social protection floors remains challenged by shrinking fiscal spaces. Second, the coverage issue is compounded by the continued growth of the informal economy, whose workers are often referred to as the missing middle because they are not protected by contributory or social assistance programmes. Third, increasing population mobility and the gig economy are giving rise to new forms of informality to the extent that the employee status of migrant workers and platform workers continues to be ambiguous.

Social security systems across the world are working to respond to these developments and trends by innovating their institutional and management capacities. As the global community recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, social security institutions are initiating or accelerating their digital transformation of their operations. The speed and scalability of digital technologies provide a unique capacity to amplify the reach of institutions and meet dramatic increases in demand for social security benefits and services, including those caused by extreme events, as evidenced by recent experience. Expanding the range of services to the digital realm leads to concomitant efforts to reskill, upskill and diversify the skillsets of institutional staff to continuously deliver excellently on the institution's mandate of service.

The 2022 report on *Priorities for social security* highlights the main trends and challenges in social security in the following sections:

Section 1. *Evolving management practices*

Section 2. *Extending and maintaining social security coverage*

Section 3. *Meeting the needs of an ageing population*

Section 4. *Promoting inclusive growth and cohesion*

Section 5. *Social security responses to the COVID-19 pandemic*

Moving forward into the future

Expectations that the world economy would start to recover from the COVID-19 crisis, already subdued at the start of this year, have been scuttled by global unrest. The effects on commodity and energy markets have lowered the global growth forecasts of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank (WB), at least for 2023. Rising inflation rates caused by higher prices for food and energy are making life even more difficult, especially in countries where the pandemic has reversed decades of progress on poverty, health care and education.

Amid these challenging times, it is well worth remembering the Philadelphia Declaration of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1944 that stated, “Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere”. More than ever, social security is proving to be a fundamental policy instrument to support, on the one hand, the immediate needs of citizens as governments strive to build back better and stabilize economies in the short run; and, on the other hand, to promote inclusion, social justice, peace and prosperity over the long haul. Thus, governments are deliberately expanding contributory programmes that protect the rights and well-being of the working population and simultaneously intensifying the scale of non-contributory programmes that address poverty and the roots of economic dependency.

The potency of social security to contribute to these goals rests on its inherent capacity to influence both sides of the economy. The demand side effects are immediate as the income multipliers of social security expenditures ripple through the economy. While the supply side effects may not be as forthcoming because these are essentially the returns on investments to develop the productivity and employability of the country’s population, the outcomes may nonetheless be far more enduring and long-lasting. Social security spending to transition people out of poverty through education, training and capacity building, for example, will take some time to yield results but the acquired skills can lead to gainful employment, improved income security and, over time to social mobility and an end to poverty.

In addition to providing meaningful benefits and quality services, there is thus a momentum for social security institutions to be more value-driven and to leverage inter-institutional coordination that takes advantage of synergies and economies of scale in programme implementation. More importantly, recent coordination initiatives aim to ensure the continuity of programme implementation at the ground level and to address the gaps that people may encounter as they transition through the different phases of the life course. While most contributory programmes provide against certain contingencies for individuals who are already employed, there are still significant gaps that can preclude their entry or re-entry into the labour market, including the periods when they are supposed to learn and acquire skills for employability; transition from school to the world of work, or from unemployment to employment; or from non-contributory to contributory programmes. Proactive and preventive approaches to social security are as pertinent as ever in protecting and supporting people throughout the life-course including efforts to promote employability through upskilling and reskilling, or to prevent work-related accidents and diseases.

The management and administration of social security will continue to evolve and will keep on developing institutional capacities to respond to these challenges, including those that loom large in the horizon. Globalization, population ageing, technological change, extreme health risks and climate change underscore the urgency of extending social security coverage, in terms of increasing the numbers of people covered as well as the types and scale of benefits provided. The burgeoning needs of ageing populations must be anticipated and provided for, as should the needs of migrants, women, children, youth, elderly, minorities and the poor.

To be an effective instrument for inclusive growth, social security must continue to strive to serve the unserved, even as it serves with excellence those who are already covered.



01

EVOLVING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The last few years have been characterized by a sweep of innovations across management practices, institutional responses and the application of technology in social security organizations, which have gone hand in hand with the dynamic nature of administrative and digital transformation. A breadth of goal-driven strategies to improve social security services in a digitized work environment has been accompanied by innovation in improving service delivery and the adoption of new and emerging technologies, with substantial gains in efficiency, business operations, cost savings, and velocity and connectivity, to name a few.

Globally, social security institutions invested significant effort and resources in re-skilling and building staff capacities and information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, leveraging staff's digital know-how, and strengthening business processes to ensure institutions would continue to provide services in a digitalized ecosystem where face-to-face interactions were limited, if not almost eliminated, in most organizations.

The momentum toward value-driven social security organizations has been consolidating, focused not only on providing services within the scope of institutions but

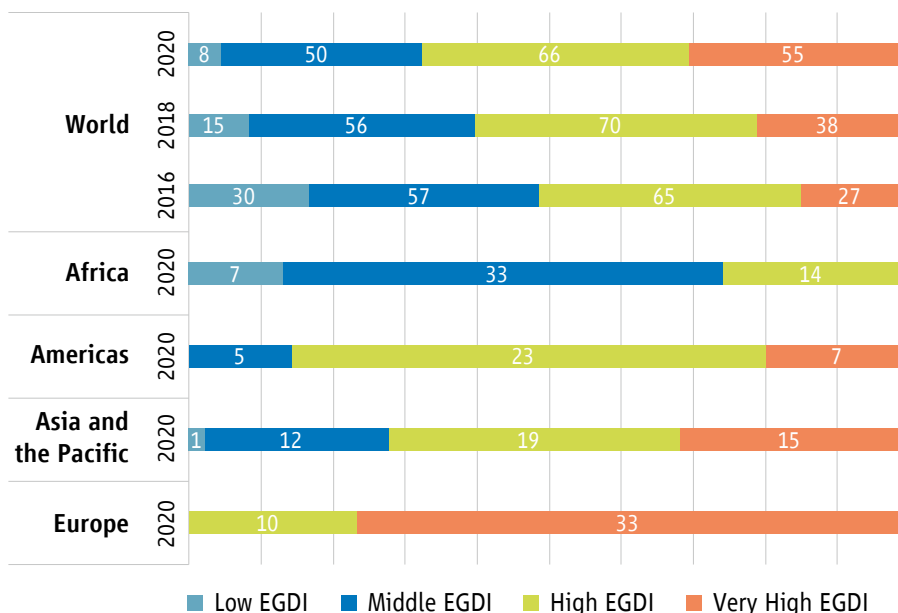
leveraging inter-institutional coordination and public-private partnerships to provide more comprehensive and effective social security services. Organizations have focused on results-based, re-structuring roles to benefit their members.

Administrative and digital transformations have been and continue to be dynamic and non-linear processes. This is supported by evidence reflected in an abundance of analysis, symposia, webinars, regional forums and good practices presented in the following sections, in which regional emphasis can be observed. Social security administrators are applying new strategies to improve the effectiveness of their institutions' operating systems and to achieve excellence and leadership in providing the best services to its citizens, investing in staff capacities as well as in novel technologies while development methodologies are enabling innovations that combine human-and-digital solutions. Good governance, risk management and compliance continue to be strengthened by leveraging technology and restructuring business processes to work in a teleworking environment.



Evolving management practices in a global perspective

Figure 1. Distribution of countries by EGDl* level, 2020



Source: UNDESA (2020).

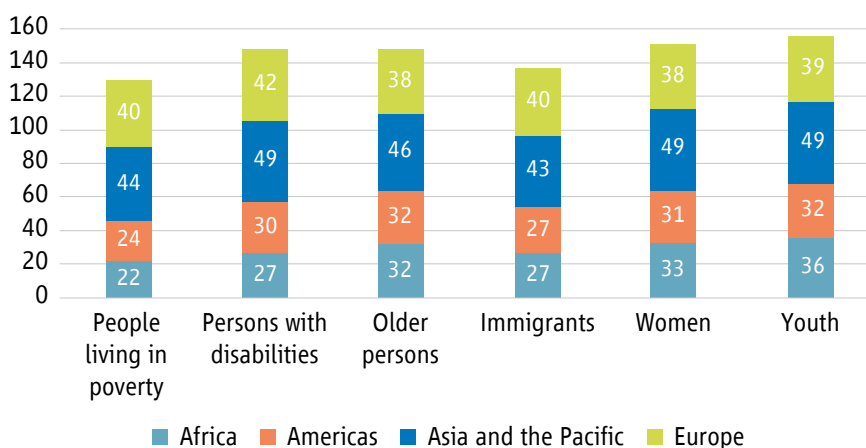
* E-Government Development Index

- At the global level, from 2018 to 2020, 18 countries moved from the high to the very high EGDl group, 16 moved from the middle to the high group, and 8 moved from the low to the middle group.
- At the regional level, positive changes were most apparent in Africa, where 15 countries (28%) moved to a higher EGDl group.
- The Americas had the second highest proportion of countries attaining higher EGDl levels in 2020 (26%, or 9 countries), with Asia (23.4%, or 11 countries) and Europe (16.3%, or 7 countries).
- In 2020, Europe accounts for the highest proportion of countries in the very high EGDl group (33), followed by Asia (15), the Americas (7) and Oceania (4%).

Source: UNDESA (2020).

Digital inclusion development and access to online services

Figure 2. Number of countries providing online services for vulnerable groups, 2020



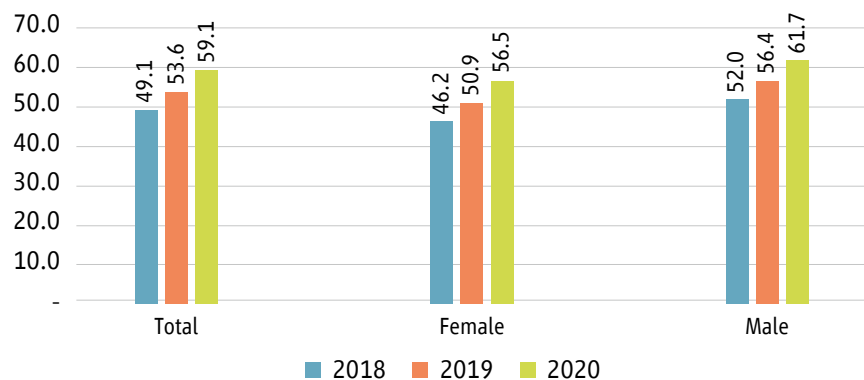
Source: UNDESA (2020).

- Asia and the Pacific has the largest proportion of countries offering services to vulnerable populations, followed in descending order, by Europe, the Americas and Africa.
- While most countries provide services for youth, in contrast people living in poverty, immigrants and persons with disabilities appear to be less well served by online services provision.
- In all regions, the most notable increases in the provision of online services over the past two years have been in registering a business, applying for a birth/marriage certificate, a driver's licence and a personal identity card.

Source: UNDESA (2020).

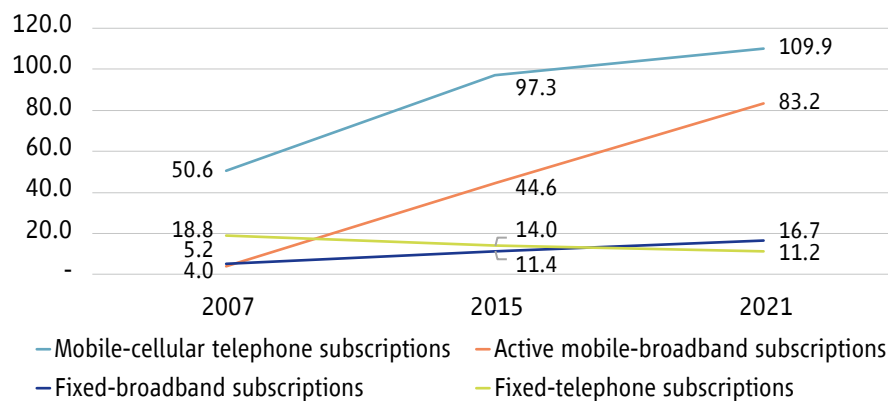
Access to the Internet – Mobile connectivity

Figure 3. Percentage of individuals using the Internet, by gender



Source: ITU (2021).

Figure 4. Mobile and fixed broadband and telephone subscriptions per capita, 2007–2021, global estimates



Source: ITU (2021).

- Globally, in 2020, 62% of all men were using the Internet, compared with 57% of all women.
- Globally, the percentage of households with access to the Internet at home in urban areas (72%) is almost twice that of rural areas (38%).
- In 2020, 71% of the world's youth (aged between 15 and 24 years) were using the Internet, compared with 57% for other age groups. At the regional level, 97% of youth and 83% of the rest of the population were using the Internet in Europe, while in Asia and the Pacific these rates reached respectively 72% and 53%.
- At the global level, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions has been higher than that of fixed telephony since 2017.
- 95% of the world population now has access to a mobile broadband network. Between 2015 and 2021, 4G network coverage doubled to reach 88% of the world's population.

Source: ITU (2021).

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Accelerating digitalization

This triennium has been characterized by a wealth of innovation surrounding the digitalization of social security institutions in all regions, building and strengthening institutional capacities to respond with confidence to the national and global challenges, especially in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Social security administrators are applying new strategies to improve the effectiveness of the institutions' systems and processes going beyond digitizing processes but re-positioning institutions' digital capabilities to better respond to beneficiaries' expectations.

Africa

Analysis: Strategic partnerships and ICT solutions in extending social security coverage in Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Technological transition and social security administration – The role of digital and mobile solutions

ISSA Webinar: openMIS – A global good to manage health and social protection schemes

Good practice (award winning): “e-Cotisations” app for employers' social security contributions, IPS-CNPS, Côte d'Ivoire

Americas

Analysis: Online one-stop shops – Good practices in Latin America

Analysis: The application of chatbots in social security – Experiences from Latin America

Analysis: Telemedicine – Good practices from Latin America

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Strengthening institutional technological capacities to improve service delivery

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Digital transformation for customer-centric services in Asia and the Pacific

Analysis: Data-driven innovation in social security – Good practices from Asia and the Pacific

ISSA Webinar: Digitalization in social security – Services and coverage in South Asia

Good practice: Accelerating the transformative digitalization, Social Security System, Philippines

Europe

ISSA Webinar: Digital transformation strategies in Europe

ISSA Webinar: Interoperability in social security

Good practice (award winning): Withdrawal Planner, Swedish Pensions Agency, Sweden

Good practice: Efficient access to electronic documents using innovative solutions, ZUS, Poland

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Management practices in social security administration are rapidly evolving to respond to new demands on service delivery, based on the digital transformation and human-digital interaction. ”



Improving service delivery

Organizations in all regions have prioritized customer services and client-centric solutions, showing significant improvements in service delivery both in terms of leveraging digital channels as well as strengthening and improving service delivery processes via design-thinking methodologies and innovations to ensure that service delivery would continue to provide benefits to individuals, often in the absence of human contact. Improving service delivery has been accompanied by digital inclusion initiatives to ensure individuals are not left behind.

Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Plenary session:
The future of social security management in Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session 3:
Institutional capacity and crisis preparedness – The role of
leadership and innovation

Good practice (award winning): “*e-Cotisations*” app for
employers’ social security contributions, IPS-CNPS, Côte d’Ivoire

Americas

Analysis: The application of chatbots in social security –
Experiences from Latin America

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel
session: Strengthening institutional technological capacities to
improve service delivery

Social Security Virtual Summit for the Americas – Parallel
Session 4: COVID-19 and ICT – An accelerating paradigm shift
in social security service delivery

Good Practice (award winning): Service transformation:
Design-thinking and the Acceleration Hub, ESDC, Canada

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: ICT-enabled coordinated service delivery – Experiences
from Asia and the Pacific

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific
– Parallel session: Strengthening service delivery, trust
and communication

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific - Parallel
session: Fostering innovation in social security administration

ISSA Webinar: Improving customer services through
intelligent chatbots

Good practice: Disbursing social transfers to citizens with
customer centricity, operational efficiency and agility,
CPF, Singapore

Europe

Publication: Digital inclusion in social security
(UNU-EGOV, ISSA)

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel sessions:
Innovative approaches to delivering excellence in social security
administration (part 1)

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel sessions:
Innovative approaches to delivering excellence in social security
administration (part 2)

ISSA Webinar: Improving customer services through
intelligent chatbots

Good practice: Kela chatbot – Bilingual help for online
customers, 24/7, Kela, Finland

Strengthening strategic planning and risk management

In times of crisis, it is characteristic that short-term priorities take precedence over longer-term planning. However, this was not the case during the COVID-19 crisis when risks became more visible. Risk assessments to support and improve governance structures took an important place, especially in regions where there has been a significant strengthening of the integration of services between social security agencies. Digital operational resilience strategies continue to evolve and be leveraged to support greater resilience in institutions.

Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel Session 3: Institutional capacity and crisis preparedness – The role of leadership and innovation

Webinar: Operational governance and risk management in social security administration

Good Practice: Roll-out of a good governance approach, CNSS, Tunisia

Good Practice: Remote oversight of activities, CNPS, Cameroon

Americas

ISSA Webinar: Operational governance and risk management in social security administration

ISSA Webinar: Risk management – Resilience in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic

Good Practice: Management of operational and strategic risks, CCSS, Costa Rica

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Business Continuity Management for resilient social security in Asia and the Pacific

ISSA Webinar: Operational governance and risk management in social security administration

Good Practice: Establishment of risk function, Civil Service Employees Pension Fund, Oman

Good Practice: Improvement of risk profile reliability as basis for formulating organizational strategic risks and risk-based budgeting, BPJS Kesehatan, Indonesia

Europe

Publication: Digital operational resilience (ISSA)

Good Practice: Automatic and risk-based review of activity reports, Public Employment Service, Sweden

Investing in staff skills

Organizational change and digitized workspaces have meant significant investment in skills for staff to manage change and work in the digital workspace. Some regions, such as Europe, witnessed a shift in human resource management to include digital capacity as an integral part of training and hiring standards, while in Africa investment in staff emphasized continuous improvement and e-learning. Changing accountability and trust relationships within the organizations has “rebooted” human resources functions and practices.

Africa

Good Practice: Staff capacity-building in reception and customer relation skills, ONPR, Burundi

Good Practice: Signing individual performance contracts, ONPR, Burundi

Good Practice: Staff training at the Social Insurance Institute, IPS-CNPS, Côte d’Ivoire

Good Practice: Structural modernization through results-based management, CNSS, Guinea

Americas

Publication: Rebooting the social security workforce (ISSA)

Analysis: Human-and-digital social security in the Americas

Analysis: Rebooting the social security workforce: The future is upon us

ISSA Webinar: Transitioning the workforce to a human-and-digital environment

ISSA Webinar: Capacity building and training in social security institutions

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Rebooting the social security workforce (ISSA)

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Digital transformation of social security institutions

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Strengthening service delivery, trust and communication

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Fostering innovation in social security administration

ISSA Webinar: Reimagining the social security workforce – The future is today

ISSA Webinar: Evolving the social security workforce to a digital environment

Europe

Publication: Rebooting the social security workforce (ISSA)

ISSA Webinar: Managing human resources in an ever-evolving context – A European perspective

ISSA Webinar: Digital inclusion – The skills challenge and good practice solutions

ISSA Webinar: Evolving the social security workforce to a digital environment

Improving compliance

Compliance has been key to ensuring that social security administrations could continue to receive contributions. Digitalization significantly strengthened the transparency and compliance capabilities that administrators had, including the use of emerging technology that has allowed institutions to improve internal processes. Complementing enforcement-focused solutions, the adoption of new technology and behavioural tools by using different channels and interfaces has raised awareness, and facilitated and encouraged compliance.

Africa

Analysis: Administrative and digital solutions in tackling error, evasion and fraud in contribution collection in Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Administrative and digital solutions for combating errors, evasion and fraud

Webinar: Error, evasion and fraud during COVID-19 – African perspectives

Good Practice: CIMR DIALCOM – Facial recognition, CIMR, Morocco

Americas

Analysis: Contribution collection and compliance in the Americas

Analysis: Addressing error, evasion and fraud in social security – Good practices from the Americas

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Increasing quality and efficiency in the collection and recovery of contributions

Good Practice: Contributions Control System (SICA) – Integrated personal and employer contributions system, AFIP, Argentina

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Behavioural insights and social security

Webinar: Behavioural insights and social security

Webinar: Data sharing among social security institutions

Good Practice: Compliance practice in government entity, GOSI, Saudi Arabia

Europe

Analysis: Behavioural insights and social security

Analysis: COVID-19 and social security contributions – Evolution in Europe

Webinar: Data sharing among social security institutions

Good Practice: Importass – The new Social Security General Treasury portal, General Treasury of Social Security, Spain



KEY MESSAGES

Global

- Innovations in social security management practices reflect institutional governance capabilities based on leadership, communication, strategic planning and risk management, as well as inter-institutional collaboration to achieve smarter, more transparent and more responsive social security. Innovation and digital transformation have proven to be dynamic and non-linear processes where institutions continue to evolve from different starting points.
- Digital solutions in social security widen the opportunities for excellence in service delivery. Client-centric service means members and beneficiaries are at the centre of innovations at all times. The offer of human and-digital solutions requires anticipation and a deep appreciation of user needs. Understanding the digital capacities of clients, or their lack of these, ensures the best client service for everyone and leaves no one behind.
- Transitioning to a digital environment requires a clear vision of the goals to be achieved. Leadership, a strategic plan, and a whole-of institution approach are key factors to enable a successful transition. Change management and staff capacity building are essential to ensure alignment and commitment amongst all stakeholders.

Regional

- Experiences in Africa and the Americas show that the application of ICT solutions is a success factor that also involves new risks and challenges such as potential network fallouts, application (in)stability, system maintenance, security and privacy of personal data. This requires business continuity and risk management plans on both technical and operational levels, to mitigate service delivery disruptions and to ensure institutional resilience. In this regard, Asia and the Pacific offer a number of good practices.
- Experiences in the Americas and in Asia and the Pacific show that digital technologies enable evolution towards data-driven social security. Data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence can vastly improve institutional operations, better inform decision making processes, as well as control compliance, error and fraud, among other things. Becoming a data-driven institution requires a comprehensive strategy on data governance and data management.
- Experiences in Europe show that the analytical power of digital technologies must be supported and balanced with qualitative data, clear and up-to-date regulatory decision rules, and human oversight. At all times, automated decisions require human oversight and accountability.

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02

EXTENDING AND MAINTAINING SOCIAL SECURITY COVERAGE

The extension of social protection is part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG target 1.3) that calls all countries to urgent action on improving social protection systems. As part of a human-centred approach to the future of work, extending protection to uncovered workers is one of the 2019 recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Commission for the Future of Work.

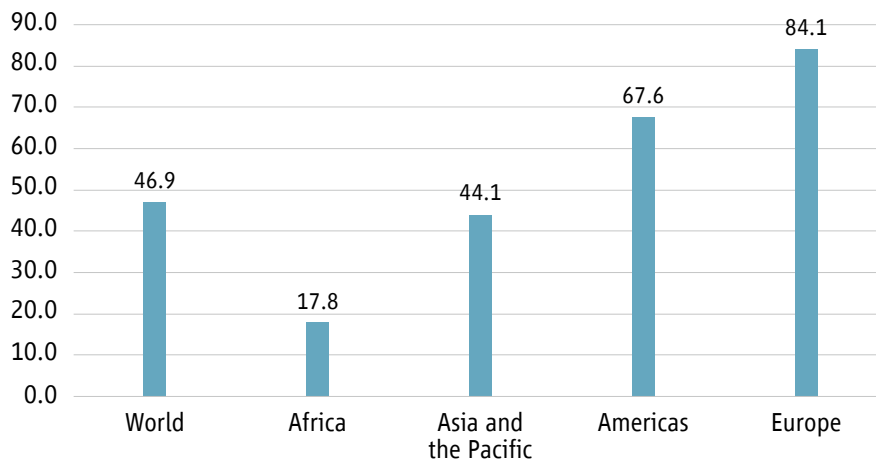
Based on ILO estimates (2021a, p. 47), only 46.9 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit (excluding health care and sickness benefits), and 26.4 per cent of children receive childcare benefits. About 77.5 per cent of people above retirement age receive pensions; 35.4 per cent of active employees are protected against work injury and occupational diseases; and 33.5 per cent of persons living with severe disabilities receive social protection benefits. Only 18.6 per cent of unemployed population receive social protection benefits and social assistance covers 28.9 per cent of vulnerable persons.

Informality constitutes one of the biggest challenges to social security coverage, particularly to the traditional employer-employee-based models. In Africa, for example, nearly 83 per cent of employment is informal, absorbing many of the continent's young employment seekers. In Asia and the Pacific, close to 70 per cent of workers are in the informal economy. Meanwhile, the digital platform economy is giving rise to new forms of employment, where the legal status of many workers remains in flux and hence impacts on their entitlement to social protection benefits. The continuing state of fragility and vulnerability of the many who remain outside any form of social protection makes imperative policy improvements, better fiscal support and effective strategies to close coverage gaps.

In spite of the negative impacts of COVID-19, social protection systems and social security institutions in different regions have been innovating policy, financing and programme design, enhancing administrative capacities and leveraging ICT solutions, to close up coverage gaps and make sure that no one is left behind in terms of social protection.

Effective and legal social security coverage

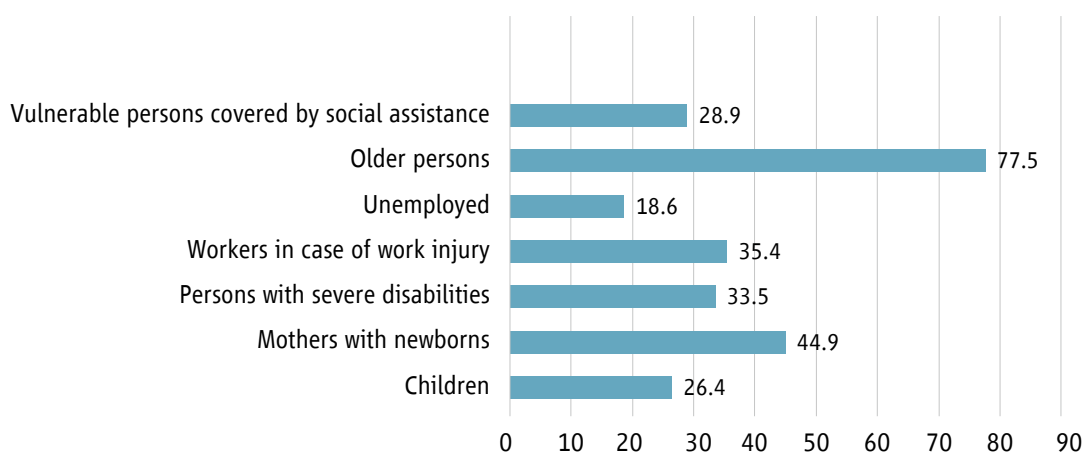
Figure 1. Share of population covered by at least one social security benefit (excluding health), 2020 (%)



Source: ILO (2021a, Table A.4.2).

- As of 2020, only 46.9% of the world population were effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit. (ILO, 2021a, p. 20)

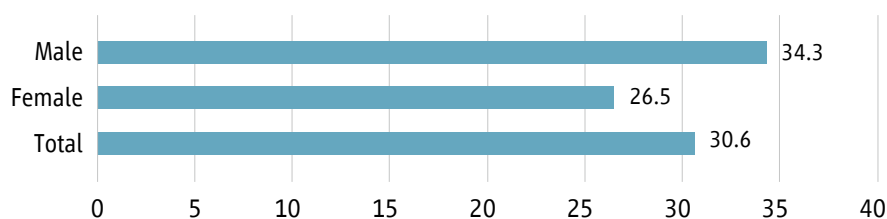
Figure 2. Coverage by population group, global data (%)



Source: ILO (2021a, p. 20).

- Globally, only 26.4% of children receive social protection benefits and only 18.6% of unemployed persons are covered in case of job loss. (ILO (2021a, p. 20)

Figure 3. Working-age population legally covered by comprehensive social security systems, global estimates, (%), 2020



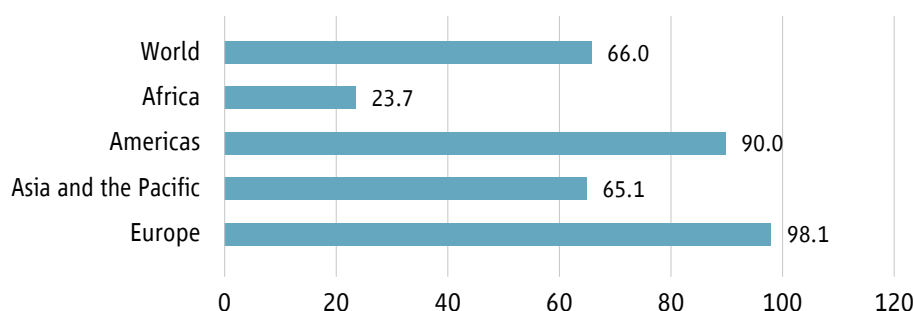
Source: ILO (2021a, p. 56).

- Only 30.6% of the working-age population are legally covered by comprehensive social security systems. 69.4% are only partially protected or not protected at all. (ILO, 2021a, p. 56).



Health social protection

Figure 4. Population covered by a social health scheme, (%), 2020

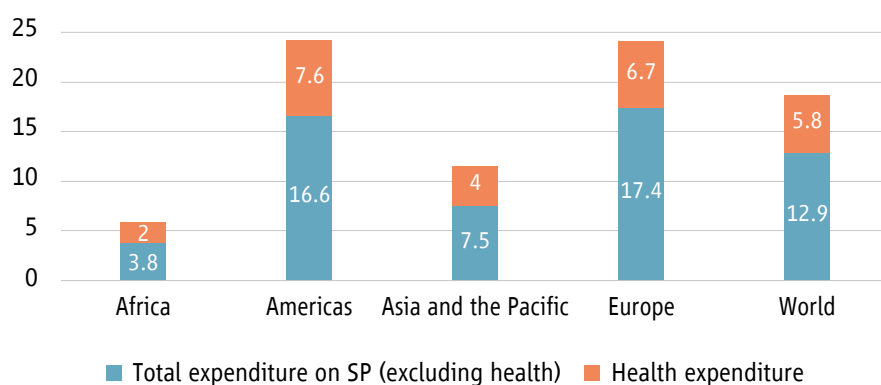


Source: ILO (2021a).

- While almost two thirds (66%) of the global population are protected by a health scheme of some kind, significant coverage and adequacy gaps remain. (ILO, 2021a, p. 42)
- About 930 million people worldwide are at risk of falling into poverty due to out-of-pocket health spending of 10% or more of their household budget. About 90 million people (1.2% of the world population) are still being pushed into extreme poverty (living on \$1.90 or less a day) because they paid for health care out-of-pocket. (WHO, 2021)
- Before 2020, half of the global population did not have access to health services, and about 40% were not affiliated to a national social health insurance system or national health service. (ILO, 2021a, p. 68)

Public expenditure in social security

Figure 5. Public expenditure on social protection, % GDP, 2020 or latest available



Source: (ILO, 2021a)

- Globally, domestic general government expenditure on health care represents 5.8% of GDP. (ILO, 2021a, p. 59)
- Public expenditure on social protection (excluding health care) as a proportion of GDP reveals pronounced differences between regions, ranging from 3.8% of GDP in Africa to 17.4% of GDP in Europe, with 12.9% as a global estimate. (ILO, 2021a, p. 59)
- About one third of total non-health public social protection expenditure, amounting to 3.6% of GDP, is spent on benefits for people of working age. (ILO, 2021a, p. 103)

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Establishing and ensuring the floor of protection

The United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) have given a great impetus to the introduction or extension of a basic social security package incorporating essential health care, child support for school-age children and a minimum pension in many countries worldwide. COVID-19 has once again highlighted the importance of social protection floors, and it has made reaching the global goal of universal social protection more urgent.

Africa

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22. Regional companion report for Africa (ILO)

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional companion report for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (ILO)

Publication: Universal Social Protection – Country Cases (ILO, WB)

Social Protection in Africa (ILO)

Americas

Analysis: Recent developments in social pensions in Latin America

Publication: Social security coverage – The case of China, India, and Mexico (ISSA)

Social Security Virtual Summit for the Americas – Session: Coverage extension: Building on crisis responses and seizing new opportunities

Good practice: Using artificial intelligence (AI) to identify vulnerable Canadians, ESDC, Canada

Publication: Universal Social Protection – Country Cases (ILO, WB)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: The protection we want – Social outlook for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP, ILO)

Publication: Social security coverage – The case of China, India, and Mexico (ISSA)

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional companion report for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (ILO)

Publication: Universal Social Protection – Country Cases (ILO, WB)

Europe

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel session: Enhancing coverage and facilitating access

World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional Companion Report for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ILO)

Publication: Universal Social Protection – Country Cases (ILO, WB)

Policy: Social Protection (EU)

”

Social security institutions are innovating to address persistent coverage gaps linked to the informal economy and the digital platform economy, as well as to protect vulnerable groups. ”



Extending social security to workers in the informal economy

Innovative initiatives such as subsidizing contributions or simplifying tax and contribution collection have been adopted to extend coverage to the “missing middle”, which refers to workers in the informal economy who are neither entitled to join contributory schemes nor poor enough to qualify for social assistance benefits. Breakthroughs have been made in ensuring adequate social protection for digital platform workers as well as workers engaged in other new forms of employment.

Africa

Analysis: Strategic partnerships and ICT solutions in extending social security coverage in Africa

Webinar: Digital transformation and extension of coverage in East Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Enhancing the effectiveness of voluntary insurance

Webinar: The role of communication for coverage in the informal sector

Publication: Social security coverage in a changing world – Formalizing work through efficient incentives (ISSA)

Americas

Analysis: Innovating to extend coverage to difficult-to-cover groups: good practices from the Americas

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers – Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Social Security Virtual Summit for the Americas – Session: Coverage extension – Building on crisis responses and seizing new opportunities

Good practice (award winner): Formalizing enterprises and workers in the shared economy, BPS, Uruguay

Publication: Contribution collection from platform workers (ISSA)

Publication: Social Security coverage in a changing world – Formalizing work through efficient incentives (ISSA)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers – Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Publication: Contribution collection from platform workers ISSA

Publication: Extension of social insurance coverage to informal economy workers in China (ISSR)

Publication: Social security coverage in a changing world – Formalizing work through efficient incentives (ISSA)

Europe

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers: Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Good practice: Personal services and domestic work – Towards a formal economy and the social protection of workers, ACOSS, France

Good practice: Implementation of Transition to Formality Programme (TFP). Social Security Institution, Türkiye

Good practice: Auto-entrepreneur – A streamlined digital system for registering, managing and declaring one’s activities, ACOSS, France

Publication: Contribution collection from platform workers (ISSA)

Policy: Improving working conditions in platform work (EU)

Enhancing social protection for migrant workers

The increasing movement of workers across borders has generated a growing demand for international social security agreements to transfer and preserve the acquired social security rights of such workers. Globally, the number of bilateral social security agreements exceeds 500. In some regions and subregions, the development of increasingly closer trade and economic ties has driven the need to develop regional coordination mechanisms aimed at meeting the needs of migrant workers, such as the European Health Insurance Card.

Africa

ILO-ISSA Webinar: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees, and their families – Guide for policymakers and practitioners

Social protection for migrant workers and their families in ECOWAS states (ILO)

Americas

Webinar: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees, and their families – Guide for policymakers and practitioners

Publication: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families: A guide for policymakers and practitioners (ILO, ISSA, ITC)

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers: A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ILO, ISSA)

Good practice: (award winner) International Agreements System – SIACI, INSS, Brazil

Asia-Pacific

Webinar: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees, and their families – Guide for policymakers and practitioners

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers in ASEAN – Developments, challenges and prospects (ILO)

Good practice: Concluding Memorandums of Understanding to improve the application procedures for immigrant workers, NPS, Republic of Korea

Good practice: Maintenance of rights through social security agreements. ISSO, Islamic Republic of Iran

Europe

Analysis: Frontier workers, COVID-19 and telework – Programmatic social security responses in the European Union

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel session: Enhancing coverage and facilitating access

Good practice: Service for employers – Social insurance contributions in international situations, FCP, Finland

Good practice: Ensuring access of migrant workers to social security benefits through social security agreements, NOSI, Moldova

Webinar: Fighting fraud and error in cross-border benefits payments

Setting up new contributory schemes

Quite a number of new contributory social security programmes have been established over the past few years, including separate schemes for non-salaried workers and new forms of workers, work injury insurance programmes for informal workers as well as new unemployment insurance schemes. Some governments have announced a road map aiming at gradually extending the coverage of a contributory social insurance programme to all workers within the next couple of years.

Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Extending pension coverage and strengthening old-age income security

Webinar: Closing the coverage gap – The expansion of social security coverage

Publication: Boosting resilience – The future of social security in Africa (WB)

Publication: Social protection in East Africa (OECD)

Americas

Analysis: Innovating to extend coverage to difficult-to-cover groups – Good practices from the Americas

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Strengthening prevention, work injury compensation and rehabilitation

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Addressing the challenges for pension systems

Publication: Overview of social protection systems in Latin America and Caribbean – Progress and setbacks in the face of the pandemic (ILO)

Asia-Pacific

Webinar: Closing the coverage gap – The expansion of social security coverage

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Building and strengthening unemployment insurance systems

Good practice: The extension of social and health insurance coverage in Viet Nam, VSS, Viet Nam

Good practice: Insurance coverage for university students, ISSO, Islamic Republic of Iran

Publication: Employment injury and invalidity insurance – Malaysia (ILO)

Europe

Webinar: Rural workers and social security in Europe

Good practice: Establishment of a family benefits scheme for self-employed workers, Monaco social security Funds, Monaco

Publication: Recent pension reforms in Europe: More challenges, new directions – An overview (Social Policy Administration)

Publication: Integrated social protection systems in Europe and Central Asia region – Policy Brief (UNICEF)

Moving towards universal health and social protection

Through the combination of contributory and non-contributory mechanisms, the coordination of private and public schemes, international cooperation as well as national programmes and community-based schemes, and by subsidizing the contributions of disadvantaged social groups and addressing the administrative challenges to coverage, many countries have realized universal or nearly universal health as well as social protection, laying a solid foundation for achieving SDG Target 1.3.

Africa

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage and service quality

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Financing strategies and administrative arrangements for universal health coverage

Webinaire: Assurance maladie universelle – défis et perspectives

Publication: Integrating social health protection systems – Lessons learned - Costa Rica, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Rwanda, and Vietnam (ILO)

Publication: Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Africa – A framework for action (WB)

Americas

Analysis: Sickness benefit schemes – Challenges and approaches

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Enhancing health coverage and services

Publication: Integrating social health protection systems – Lessons learned – Costa Rica, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Rwanda, and Vietnam (ILO)

Publication: Social panorama of Latin America (CEPAL)

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage and service quality

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Increasing health coverage and health system performance

Good practice (award winner): Managing and governing National Health Security Programme in single payer scheme, BPJS Kesehatan, Indonesia

Publication: Extending social health protection: Accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Asia and the Pacific (ILO)

Publication: Integrating social health protection systems – Lessons learned – Costa Rica, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Rwanda, and Vietnam (ILO)

Europe

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage and service quality

Analysis: Is there a doctor? Addressing the challenge of medical deserts

Analysis: Sickness benefit schemes – Challenges and approaches

Webinar: Social security, health care and environmental protection

Publication: The EU's global action in support of universal health coverage in the time of the pandemic and beyond (The Lancet)



KEY MESSAGES

Global

- Significant coverage gaps remain across different countries, regions and social groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the crucial importance of establishing and maintaining adequate, comprehensive, sustainable and universal health and social protection throughout the world.
- The extension of health and social protection coverage is achievable at different stages of economic development. Coherent and complementary integration of contributory and non-contributory programmes is key to including the “missing middle” in social protection and moving towards universal coverage. More importantly, such coverage extension efforts have to be backed by political will coupled with financial commitments, dove-tailed programme design as well as institutional capacity and excellence in the administration of social protection.

Regional

- In Africa, nearly all countries have adopted comprehensive national social security development plans and strategies, including the introduction or extension of a basic social security package. Innovative approaches including the use of modern ICT solutions are emerging to ensure coverage by existing schemes, especially contributory ones, and to reach difficult-to-cover groups.
- Most countries in the Americas have a good record in maintaining social protection floors, providing non-contributory pensions and essential health care to the older generation, and conditional cash transfers to children and vulnerable families. Meanwhile, the region has also expanded social security coverage to various difficult-to-cover groups through innovative policy design and improved administrative efficacy and efficiency.
- Covering informal workers remains a key challenge for contributory programmes in Asia and the Pacific, which has witnessed an increase of new and non-standard forms of work that share many characteristics of informal employment. The region is making significant progress towards Universal Health Coverage. In recent years, the region has been the global leader in the establishment of new unemployment insurance schemes.
- Europe has not only pioneered in extending and maintaining social protection of migrant workers through bilateral and multinational social security agreements but also made breakthroughs in securing appropriate and adequate social protection for digital platform workers, hence positively influencing developments in other regions.

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ILO. 2021a. *Extending social security to self-employed workers: lessons from international experience*. Geneva, International Labour Office.

ILO. 2021b. *Extending social security coverage to workers in the informal economy: lessons from international experience*. Geneva, International Labour Office.

ILO. 2021c. *World social protection report, 2020–2022: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future*. Geneva, International Labour Office.

ILO; ISSA. 2020. *Social protection for migrant workers: A necessary response to the Covid-19 crisis* (Social Protection Spotlight). Geneva, International Labour Office.

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ISSA. 2019b. *ISSA Guidelines on good governance* (Revised edition). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2019c. *ISSA Guidelines on prevention of occupational risks* (Extended edition). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2019d. *ISSA Guidelines on return to work and reintegration* (Revised edition). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2019e. *ISSA Guidelines on workplace health promotion* (Updated version). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2021. *Health coverage - Regulatory aspects and strategies to tackle inefficiencies* (Webinar). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2022a. *Global overview of international social security agreements*. Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2022b. *ISSA guidelines on administrative solutions for extending coverage* (Revised edition). Geneva, International Social Security Association.

ISSA. 2022c. *ISSA Guidelines on communication by social security administrations* (Revised edition). Geneva, International Social Security Association.





03

MEETING THE NEEDS OF AN **AGEING** **POPULATION**

Population ageing is a global phenomenon, a fact recognized in April 2002 by the United Nations at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, which took place in Madrid. There are no exceptions to the general trend: the common assumption that some continents (such as Asia or Europe) are “older” than others (such as the Americas or Africa) does not reflect the reality. Every region is affected by ageing, although some subregions (East Asia, Western Europe, North Africa, Southern Africa and the Southern Cone) have reached a more advanced stage than in others (sub-Saharan Africa, Central America, South East Asia and the Pacific). In the latter regions, the ageing of the population is less advanced, but will become more pronounced.

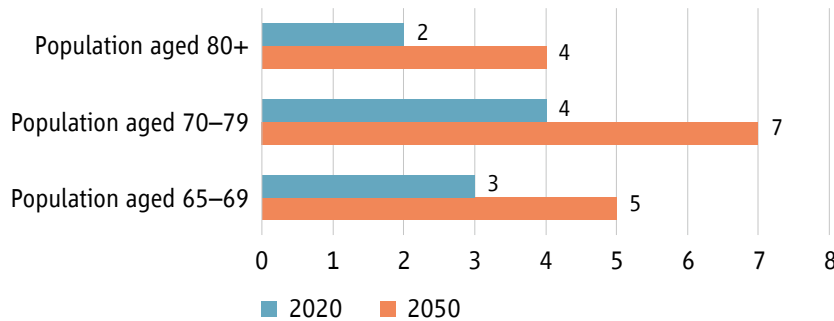
This issue was therefore included in the United Nations Development Agenda. It calls for age-inclusive societies and requires each Member State to take into account the

cross-cutting impact of ageing as they work towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The fight against poverty in old age, age equality and health protection in later life are priority objectives (UN, 2020).

Regardless of the stage of population ageing reached, this development will place an increasing cost burden on social security systems, whatever their institutional backdrop and resulting organizational structure. Concerns arise in connection with longevity risk, such as standards of living among pensioners or the fight against poverty in later old age. Beyond this, however, the ageing population will also entail a shift in population morbidity profiles, requiring adaptation at an institutional level. This adaptation will be easier to achieve if it can build on an existing foundation of resilient institutions. There is a prerequisite for this resilience: the formalization of the economy.

Demographic snapshot and provision of long-term care

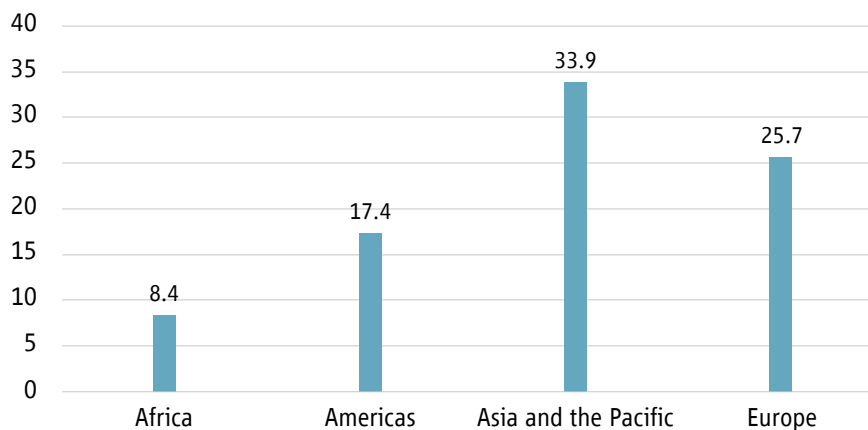
Figure 1. Growth of population aged 65–80+, 2020–2050, in % of the total population



Source: UNDESA (2022).

- Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12% to 22%. (WHO, 2021a)
- The number of persons aged 80 years or older is expected to triple between 2020 and 2050 to reach 426 million. (WHO, 2021a)
- Projected declining fertility rates from 2.42 in 2020 to 2.18 in 2050 are contributing to an increase in the share of the population aged 65 or older. (UNDESA, 2022)

Figure 2. Demographic old-age dependency ratio 2020, global estimates



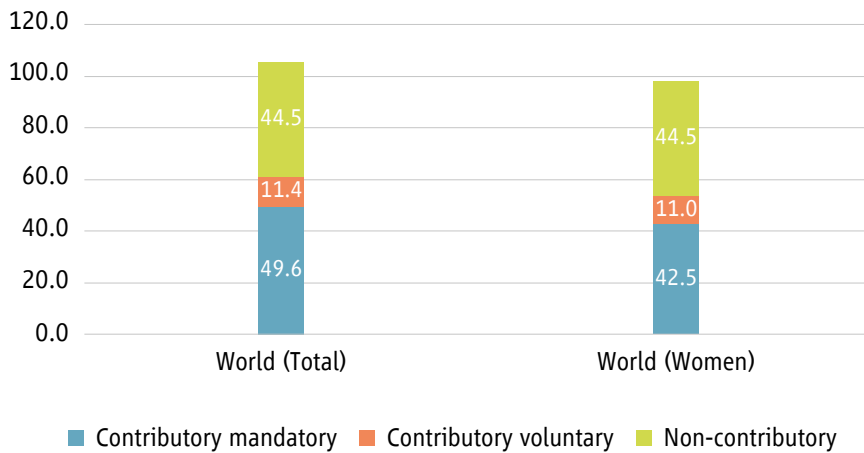
Source: UNDESA (2022).

- There are at least 142 million older persons (aged 60+) worldwide (14% of the global older population living in 42 countries) who lack the functional ability to meet daily needs. (WHO, 2021b)
- Globally, the availability of formal long-term care services is low: 48% of older persons are not covered by any type of formal provision of services. (WHO, 2021c)
- 49% of countries reported to have a long-term care policy or strategy in 2020. (WHO, 2021c)



Effective and legal old-age pension coverage of the working-age population

Figure 3. Legal old-age pension coverage of the working-age population (%)



Source: ILO (2021)

- Globally, 49.6% of the population above the statutory pensionable age receive a contributory old-age pension; 44.5% receive a non-contributory old-age pension.
- 42.5% of women receive contributory pension and 44.5% of receive a non-contributory pension.
- 53.7% of the labour force (aged 15+) are contributing to pension schemes and accumulating rights to a contributory pension.

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Population ageing is affecting all regions of the world and requires a paradigm shift for social security in terms of pensions, health care and long-term care. ”



MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Globalisation of ageing

Population ageing is a global phenomenon. People around the world are living longer and the world in which they are doing so has undergone a number of radical changes. Therefore, a more integrated approach is necessary, focusing on key dimensions of ageing in later life, such as health care, work and financial circumstances. Recognised during the 2016 World Health Assembly, population ageing has been taken up as a political priority by many countries and regional initiatives. Incorporated into the UN development agenda, which calls for an inclusive society for all ages, it requires each Member State to monitor priority sustainable development objectives that consider a cross-cutting perspective of ageing.

Africa

Séminaire technique sur la réforme des systèmes de sécurité sociale au Maghreb

Publication: Ageing, WHO Regional Office for Africa, dedicated page (WHO)

Publication: Social protection in East Africa – Harnessing the future (OECD)

Publication: Protecting the rights of older people in Africa (HelpAge)

Publication: L'Afrique, un continent jeune et hétérogène appelé à vieillir: enjeux en matière de protection sociale (Mondes en développement)

Americas

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Plenary session: Social security for an evolving life-course – strategies and solutions

Publication: Older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL)

Publication: Demographic transition – Opportunities and challenges to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL)

Publication: Aging in Latin America and the Caribbean – social protection and quality of life of older persons (IDB)

Publication: Growing pains – Is Latin America prepared for population ageing? (IMF)

Publication: Preventing ageing unequally (OECD)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: 2020 Older persons in Asean in numbers (UNESCAP)

Publication: Statistical indicators relevant to population ageing and age-disaggregated data in Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Publication: Population ageing and the need for social protection in Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Publication: Climate change and population ageing in Asia-Pacific region – Status, Challenges and Opportunities (UNESCAP)

Publication: Ageing in Asia – Contemporary trends and policy issues (University of Singapore)

Europe

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Plenary session: Social security for an ageing population – Sustainability, activity and new needs

Publication: Green paper on ageing – Developing solidarity and responsibility between generations (EU)

Publication: Report on the impact of demographic change (EU)

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional companion report for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ILO)

Publication: Social aspect of population ageing in Eurasia (ERI)

Diversity of systems, developments and responses

Social security institutions worldwide have carried out reforms and adjustments of schemes and programmes to respond to financial constraints and the needs of the old-age population, through social pensions for instance. Such developments aim to provide adequate benefits while addressing the sustainability challenges. In this line, schemes with still young populations can take advantage of a period of “demographic dividend” to develop their capacity to face the impact of an aged population.

Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Extending pension coverage and strengthening old-age income security

Séminaire technique sur la réforme des systèmes de sécurité sociale au Maghreb

Publication: Social protection for older persons – Policy trends and statistics (ILO)

Publication: Universal social protection. Country cases (ILO)

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional companion report for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (ILO)

Americas

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Addressing the challenges for pension systems

Analysis: Recent developments in social pensions in Latin America

Publication: Incentives for labour force participation in public pensions – International evidence (ISSA)

Webinario: Los desafíos de los regímenes de seguridad social para sectores específicos

Publication: Pension and income transfers for old age – Inter- and intra-generational distribution in comparative perspective (CEPAL)

Publication: Pension funds with automatic enrolment schemes – Lessons for emerging economies (WB)

Asia-Pacific

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Responding to the social security needs of an ageing population

Publication: Incentives for labour force participation in public pensions: International evidence (ISSA)

Publication: The protection we want – Social outlook for Asia and the Pacific (ILO, ESCAP)

Publication: Pensions at a glance – Asia/Pacific (OECD)

Publication: Pensions at a Glance 2021 – OECD and G20 Indicators (OECD)

Europe

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel session: Strengthening preventive approaches and active ageing

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Plenary session: Social security for an ageing population: sustainability, activity and new needs

Webinar: Pension adequacy – A European perspective

Good practice (award winning): Withdrawal Planner, Swedish Pensions Agency, Sweden

Publication: Incentives for labour force participation in public pensions – International evidence (ISSA)

Publication: The changing nature of work and public pension coverage – Evidence from the US and Europe (ISSA)

Publication: Recent pension reforms in Europe – More challenges, new directions – An overview (Social Policy Administration)

Sustainability – A key issue

Sustainability has become one of the most complex challenges for social security systems, particularly due to population ageing and the increase in the dependency ratio. The main approaches to face it have combined an increase in the contribution rate and the seniors' activity by postponing the retirement age. Institutions must also consider other aspects, such as the impact of the green economy transition on social security programmes and new risks, generate uncertainties in actuarial and investment work.

Africa

Analysis: Investing Social Security Reserve Funds amidst competing goals and opportunities in Africa

Publication: World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Regional companion report for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (ILO)

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Building resilience and sustainability through the investment of social security funds

Publication: The ILO Multi-Pillar pension model – Building equitable and sustainable pension systems (ILO)

Publication: Pension patterns and challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa (WB)

Americas

ISSA ACT 2022 – Plenary: Considerations for setting investment and actuarial assumptions

ISSA ACT 2022 – Plenary: Financing of long-term care

Publication: The ILO Multi-Pillar pension model: Building equitable and sustainable pension systems (ILO)

Publication: Social security in the english-speaking Caribbean (CEPAL)

Publication: Pensions at a glance, OECD and the G20 indicators (OECD)

Publication: Pension funds with automatic enrolment schemes: Lessons for emerging economies (WB)

Asia-Pacific

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Enhancing investment processes and strategies

ISSA ACT 2022 – Plenary Financing of long-term care

Publication: The ILO Multi-Pillar pension model – Building equitable and sustainable pension systems (ILO)

Publication: Pensions at a glance – OECD and the G20 indicators (OECD)

Publication: OECD Pensions Outlook 2020 (OECD)

Publication: Pensions at a glance Asia/Pacific 2018 (OECD)

Europe

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Plenary session: Social security for an ageing population: sustainability, activity and new needs

ISSA ACT 2022 Conference – Plenary session: Financing of long-term care

ISSA ACT 2022 Conference – Plenary session: Considerations for setting investment and actuarial assumptions

Publication: The 2021 Ageing Report: Economic and Budgetary Projections for the EU Member States (2019–2070) (EU)

Publication: Pensions at a glance, OECD and the G20 indicators (OECD)

Publication: Pension Reforms in Europe – How Far Have We Come and Gone? (IMF)

A paradigm shift for health

Population ageing has consequences not only for pension schemes, but also for the morbidity profiles observed. Long-term non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, respiratory syndromes, psychiatric disorders, cancers or long and degenerative diseases are increasingly prevalent. This rise in chronic and long-term illnesses also leads to greater vulnerability to epidemics, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which is particularly dangerous for people over 65.

Africa

Publication: Towards long-term care systems in sub-Saharan Africa (WHO)

Publication: Ageing, WHO Regional Office for Africa, dedicated page (WHO)

Publication: Ageing in the Middle East and North Africa: Towards a New Model of Care (International long-term care Policy network)

Publication: Vieillesse en Afrique : santé et qualité de vie (Pensée plurielle)

Americas

Publication: Long-term care – Global efforts and international attention from the health perspective (ISSA)

Webinar: Long-term care from the health perspective - Challenges and opportunities in the Americas

Publication: Aging in Latin America and the Caribbean – Social protection and quality of life of older persons (IDB)

Publication: Health at a glance – Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 (OECD)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Technical report on ageing-in-place and long-term care (ISSA)

Publication: Long-term care – Global efforts and international attention from the health perspective (ISSA)

Webinar: Responding to growing long-term care needs in East Asia

Publication: Health at a glance – Asia/Pacific 2020 – Measuring progress towards universal health coverage (OECD)

Europe

Analysis: Long-term care in ageing societies: issues and strategies

Webinar: The long-term care challenge in Europe – Innovative solutions in a comparative perspective

Publication: Long-term care report - Trends, challenges and opportunities in an ageing society (EU)

Publication: The 2021 ageing report (EU)

Publication: Social aspect of population ageing in Eurasia (ERI)

Loss of autonomy – The need for coordinated responses

The difficulty in caring for the elderly lies in the differentiation between care that is financed by the health insurance system and requires a high level of technical competence, and social support for the activities of daily living (e.g. eating, washing, dressing, toileting). Both elements imply a strong coordination of social security institutions for the development of common programmes, or the development of a social security branch.

Africa

Publication: Ageing, WHO Regional Office for Africa, dedicated page (WHO)

Publication: Long-term care – Global efforts and international attention from the health perspective (ISSA)

Publication: Ageing in the Middle East and North Africa: Towards a New Model of Care (International long-term care Policy network)

Publication: Long term care for older people in South Africa: The Enduring legacies of Apartheid and HIV/Aids (Cambridge University Press)

Americas

Webinar: Long-term care from the health perspective – Challenges and opportunities in the Americas

Publication: Long-term care – Global efforts and international attention from the health perspective (ISSA)

Analysis: Telemedicine – Good practices from Latin America

Publication: Aging in Latin America and the Caribbean – Social protection and quality of life of older persons (IDB)

Publication: Implementing long-term care systems in the Americas – A regional strategy (PAHO)

Publication: Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19 (UN Women – ECLAC)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Long-term care – Global efforts and international attention from the health perspective (ISSA)

Webinar: Responding to growing long-term care needs in East Asia

Publication: Financing long-term care in Asia and The Pacific (ADB)

Publication: Extending social health protection – Accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Asia and the Pacific (ILO)

Publication: Long-term care needs of the elderly with disabilities in China (2021–2050) (Open Journal of Social Sciences)

Europe

Analysis: Long-term care in ageing societies – Issues and strategies

Webinar: Long-term care challenge in Europe – Innovative solutions in a comparative perspective

Publication: Long-term care report – Trends, challenges and opportunities in an ageing society (EU)

Publication: Challenges in long-term care of the elderly in Central and Eastern Europe (ILO)

Prerequisite for an effective response to ageing: Formalisation

The prevalence of the grey economy is an institutional weakness in providing a decent replacement income for older people. This is a major concern in countries where the incomes of older people are largely dependent on universal pension systems financed by public revenue, which depends on the formalisation of the economy. Finally, apart from health services, personal assistance services for daily living are too often voluntary and informal. This particularly applies to women who perform many caregiving tasks in the informal economy.

Africa

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Extending pension coverage and strengthening old-age income security

Analysis: Strategic partnerships and ICT solutions in extending social security coverage in Africa

Webinar: Digital transformation and extension of coverage in East Africa

Publication: Social security coverage in a changing world – Formalizing work through efficient incentives (ISSA)

Webinar: The role of communication for coverage in the informal sector

Americas

Analysis: Innovating to extend coverage to difficult-to-cover groups: good practices from the Americas

Social Security Virtual Summit for the Americas – Session: Coverage extension – Building on crisis responses and seizing new opportunities

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers – Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Publication: Including informal economy workers in contributory social protection – Current challenges in Latin America (ISSR)

Publication: Policies to address the challenges of existing and new forms of informality in Latin America (CEPAL)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Extension of social protection to workers in informal employment in the ASEAN region (ILO)

Publication: Contribution collection from platform workers (ISSA)

Publication: Development and formalization in Asia – Insights from Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore (ILO)

Publication: Extension of social insurance coverage to informal economy workers in China – An administrative and institutional perspective (ISSR)

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers – Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Europe

Publication: Employment and social protection for platform workers: Recent developments and trends (ISSA)

Publication: Non-standard forms of employment in selected countries in Central and Eastern Europe (ILO)

Good practice: Personal services and domestic work – Towards a formal economy and the social protection of workers, ACOSS, France

Publication: E-formalization in Europe (ILO)

Publication: Special Issue – Social protection for digital platform workers in Europe (ISSR)



KEY MESSAGES

Global

- Ageing is a global phenomenon: no region is exempt. At a continental level, some subregions are currently at an earlier stage than others as regards this general demographic trend, but they will have less time to adjust.
- The general trend towards an ageing society will be marked by unprecedented human change. In terms of pensions, it will result in pension system reforms. For all pension systems, there will be five factors to consider that will influence expenditure: the number of elderly beneficiaries, the level and the duration of payments, revenues, the number of persons available to finance these needs and the duration of contribution periods.
- As regards health, the ageing population will lead to a paradigm shift. There will be an increase in age-related chronic illness. Issues such as care needs or the loss of autonomy of older people will become more salient. These two trends will require a significant increase in both budgets and the levels of assistance provided.
- For all countries, the formalization and extension of social security coverage must be priorities in the context of ageing societies and the needs arising as a result. There is a need for formalization of the economy in broad terms, in order to achieve the level of institutional maturity required to respond effectively to this phenomenon. Support for elderly people should also be placed on a more formal footing, in particular support for activities of daily living in those countries where this transition is most advanced.

Regional

- Although it is by far the youngest continent, the transition in Africa is already underway both in the north and in the south. The traditional role and status of older people within the family is not compatible with this ongoing socioeconomic change. An extension of social security coverage and the associated formalization of the economy are prerequisites to prevent hardship in later life, in a context marked by rural depopulation and the relative poverty of geographically remote areas.
- Asia presents a very divided picture. On the one hand, there are advanced, but ageing, economies, in particular in East Asia. But there are also regions in South Asia that continue to be characterized by younger populations and more informal economies. For the ageing economies, the development of dedicated services for older people creates a demand for a well-trained, formalized workforce that could be recruited from areas with younger populations. The same set of issues, and similar solutions, might apply in Europe, where there are very few exceptions to the pervasive trend of an ageing population.
- In the Americas there are also two demographic profiles and two different institutional models, drawing on different approaches. In the north and the far south, the approach to ageing populations has been influenced by economic liberalism. This has led to the increased prevalence of pension savings. However, in the rest of the continent and in the Caribbean, where the population is younger, the approach has been based on universal protection – often minimal and at a flat rate. Ultimately, the inadequacy of pension payments from pension funds has placed a burden on the public purse (requiring, first, an increase in fiscal expenditure and, subsequently, to the widespread recourse to tax-funded universal minimum incomes), and has prompted repeated pension reforms in Latin America.

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04

PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND SOCIAL COHESION

Economic empowerment is a fundamental element in any definition of inclusive growth and social cohesion. Without economic empowerment, it would be difficult for people to feel included in society. Providing income support in periods of specific life contingencies and investing in people's skills and productive capacities are the main pathways through which social security contributes to inclusion and social cohesion. That gainful employment is the best route to economic empowerment underlines the virtuous relationship between social security, employment and inclusion.

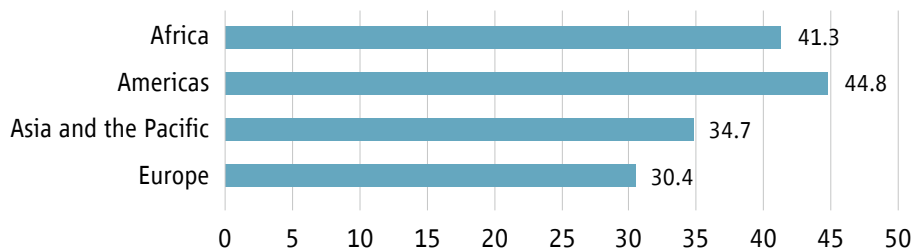
Social security covers event-conditioned contributory programmes that mostly cater to risks during the working life as well as non-contributory programmes that address poverty and its many roots. In addition to emphasizing social security as a fundamental human right, current development paradigms recognize the role of social assistance and income transfer programmes as key enablers for people to escape poverty, prevent its recurrence and enable the social mobility of current and future generations.

A life-course approach to social security underpins these paradigms, which seeks to address identifiable risks in particular periods of the life cycle: The prenatal period, infancy, childhood, adolescence and youth, adulthood (working life), and old age.

This has brought renewed attention to the disadvantages that children are born into, and which tend to be compounded over the life course; and the periods when the young are supposed to learn and acquire skills, and the critical transitions from school to the world of work, or from inactivity to gainful employment. Importantly, there is growing realization of the need for inter-institutional coordination and follow-through measures to ensure programme contiguity on the ground. For example, while training programmes can enhance the employability of the youth and the unemployed, follow-through actions are often required to ensure that they are able to find work, that the jobs they find are more secure and can lead to improved incomes, social mobility and better outcomes over the life course.

Indicators of growth and inequality

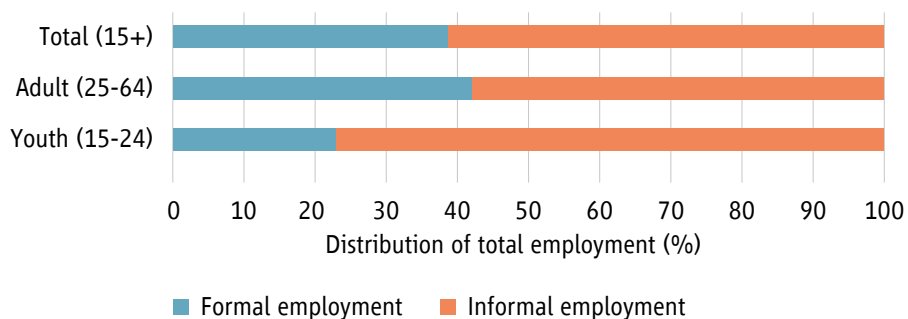
Figure 1. Gini Index by region, 2021 or latest available



Source: World Bank (2021).

Informality levels

Figure 2. Formal vs. informal employment by age group, 2019 or latest year available

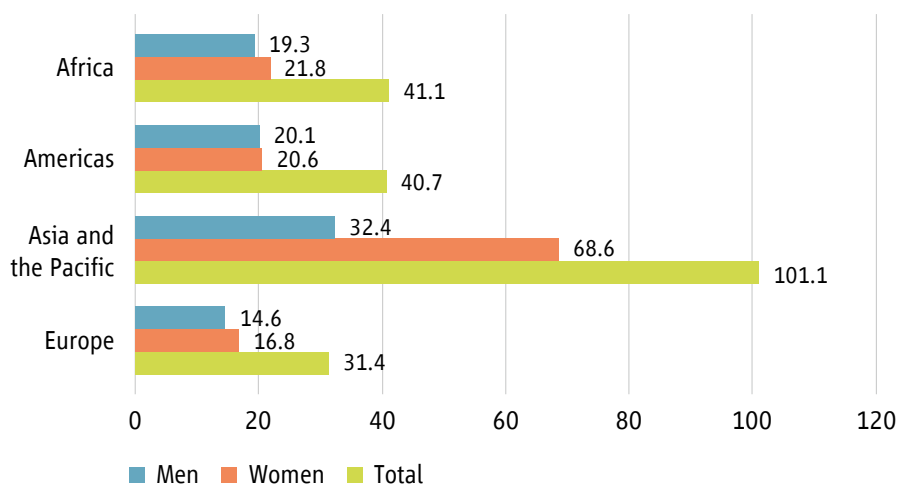


Source: ILO (2021).

- The informal economy comprises more than half of the global labour force and more than 90% of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) worldwide. (ILO, 2022)
- In 2020, the youth informality rate reached 76.7% globally. (ILO, 2020b)
- The informality rate for women in employment is lower than that for men: 61.6% of men (aged 25+) compared to 56.9% of women (aged 25+). (ILO, 2020b)

Unemployment and poverty rates

Figure 3. Unemployment rate by gender, millions, 2021 or latest available

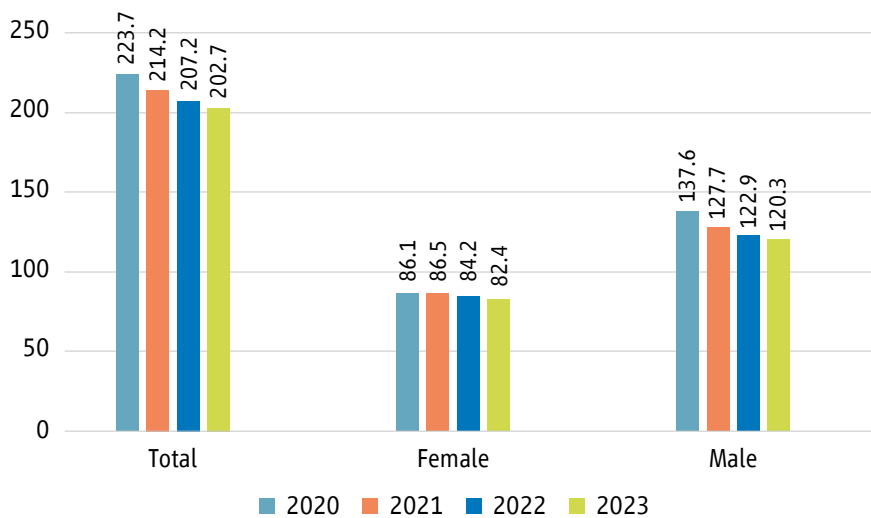


Source: ILO (2021).

- Globally, 18.6% of unemployed workers receive unemployment benefits (including non-contributory benefits). (ILO, 2021a, Fig. 4.29)
- After significant improvements during the last quarter of 2021, the number of hours worked globally fell during the first quarter of 2022, to 3.8% below the pre-crisis benchmark (fourth quarter of 2019). This corresponds to a loss of 112 million full-time jobs. (ILO, 2021b, ILOSTAT, 2021.)
- In 2020, in response to the pandemic, some 95 countries implemented unemployment protection measures and 110 other countries implemented job or income protection measures. (ILO, 2021a, Fig. 4.29)

Vulnerable groups: Women and youth

Figure 4. Expected evolution of unemployment, in millions, 2020–2023



Source: (ILO, 2022)

- Between 2019 and 2020, women's employment declined by 4.2%, representing a drop of 54 million jobs, while men's employment declined by 3%, or 60 million jobs. (ILO, 2021c)
- Global labour income (before considering income support measures) in 2020 is estimated to have declined by 8.3%, which amounts to 3.7 trillion US dollars, or 4.4% of global gross domestic product (GDP). (ILO, 2020c)
- In 2020, youth unemployment accounted for 17.2% of the total labour force aged 15–24. (World Bank, 2022)



MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Investing in the future of vulnerable children

Child vulnerability is rooted in individual factors (e.g., disability, mental health issues, immigrant background), family factors (e.g., material deprivation, family stress and violence), and/or community environments. The OECD estimates that it could take up to 150 years, before a child born into a low-income family would be able to earn a country's average level of income. France, Kazakhstan, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Türkiye, and the United Kingdom are among the countries with early childhood education and care.

Africa

Publication: Preventing a Lost Decade (Unicef)

Publication: Generation 2030 Africa 2.0 (Unicef)

Publication: Extending social protection to children – South Africa (ILO)

Publication: Support during family break-ups (ISSA)

Americas

UN. 2013. "Child poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean" in *Social Panorama of Latin America 2013*. United Nations.

Programme: Promoting strategies to reduce child poverty (Unicef)

Webinario de la AISS: Prestaciones para familias y hogares - desafíos y tendencias

Publication: Changing the odds for vulnerable children: Building opportunities and resilience (OECD)

Publication: The role of social security in inclusion and social cohesion – Connecting the dots (ISSA)

Publication: Support during family break-ups (ISSA)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: More is more. Livelihood interventions and child labor in the agricultural sector (ILO)

Publication: Changing the odds for vulnerable children: Building opportunities and resilience (OECD)

Publication: Support during family break-ups (ISSA)

Europe

Publication: Changing the odds for vulnerable children: Building opportunities and resilience (OECD)

Publication: Support during family break-ups (ISSA)

Good Practice: The Birth Pathway – Support for future and new parents. CNAF, France

Good Practice: Supporting registered employment of women through institutional childcare services, Social Security Institution, Türkiye

Good Practice: Model for child care provision, State Social Insurance Fund, Kazakhstan

”

Social security is an indispensable instrument that alleviates poverty, promotes inclusion and social mobility, and empowers and supports people throughout their lives. ”



Youth employment, women and entrepreneurship

Policy support to enable youth, including women, to start gainful activities, includes access to financial services and training to build relevant skills. The goal is to provide start-ups with access to skills, knowledge, finance, markets and networks that could create jobs for young workers and peers. Start-ups appear to be gender neutral but a lack of education, business skills and access to finance are impediments. Apprenticeships help young workers find jobs in the private or public sector.

Africa

Publication: The role of social protection in young people's transition to work. (ILO, IPC, UNICEF)

Good Practice: Facilitating employment opportunities through innovation, NSSF, Uganda

Publication: From school to business – Policy support to youth entrepreneurship and self-employment (ILO)

Good Practice: Towards sustainable employment creation, SSC, Namibia

Publication: Gender mainstreaming in social protection policies (ISSA)

Publication: African economic outlook 2022 (ADB)

Americas

Publication: The future of work we want. The Voice of Youth and Different Perspectives from Latin America and the Caribbean (ILO)

Publication: The role of social security in inclusion and social cohesion: Connecting the dots (ISSA)

Publication: Gender mainstreaming in social protection policies (ISSA)

Analysis: Gender-sensitive social security in the Americas

Publication: Regulating work experience for young workers (ILO)

Asia-Pacific

Publication: Youth employment in Asia and the Pacific and the Arab States (ILO)

Publication: From school to business: Policy support to youth entrepreneurship and self-employment (ILO)

Publication: Gender mainstreaming in social protection policies (ISSA)

Publication: Transforming challenges into opportunities (Social institutions and gender index) (OECD)

Europe

Publication: Young people and the gig economy (ILO)

Publication: Gender mainstreaming in social protection policies (ISSA)

Good practice: The protection of health and safety at work for students in dual training systems, INAIL, Italy

Publication: Transforming challenges into opportunities (Social institutions and gender index) (OECD)

Digital inclusion and digital connectivity

Digital connectivity offers alternative forms of work that attract especially young people because of limited opportunities to find decent wage employment. Young entrepreneurs in Africa are taking advantage of the region’s wide availability of the Internet. Among Africa’s start-ups, the top three activities are related to IT and the Internet, applications and software, and the creation of audio-visual content and broadcasting. Small growing businesses in Africa are creating pockets of inclusive growth.

Africa

Publication: Digital inclusion: Improving social security service delivery (UNU-EGOV, ISSA)

ISSA Webinar: Fostering digital inclusion in social security services – The state of play and the way forward

ISSA Webinar: Digital inclusion in social security – Accessibility challenges and good practice solutions

E-Government Survey 2020: Digital government in the decade of action for sustainable development (UNDESA)

Americas

Publication: Digital inclusion: Improving social security service delivery (UNU-EGOV, ISSA)

ISSA Webinar: Fostering digital inclusion in social security services – The state of play and the way forward

ISSA Webinar: Fostering digital inclusion in social security services – Challenges and good practice solutions

E-Government Survey 2020: Digital government in the decade of action for sustainable development (UNDESA)

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ISSA Webinar: Fostering digital inclusion in social security services – Challenges and good practice solutions

E-Government Survey 2020: Digital government in the decade of action for sustainable development (UNDESA)

Social inclusion of migrants

There are an estimated 169 million international migrant workers globally. Bilateral or multilateral social security agreements are among the most effective means to protect migrant workers. In Europe, many countries extend social protection to migrant workers in irregular situations. These measures are accompanied by communication and information campaigns to enable migrants to access services without fear of repercussions, on the one hand and, on the other hand, to build acceptance and support among the local population.

Africa

Publication: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families: A guide for policymakers and practitioners (ILO, ISSA, ITC)

Publication: Decision-Making Under Uncertainty – African Migrants in the Spotlight (Social Inclusion – Cogitatio Press)

Publication: Refugee livelihoods and economic inclusion (UNHCR)

Publication: Inclusion Matters in Africa (World Bank)

Americas

Video: Inclusion of migrants, refugees and displaced persons in schools in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC/ UNESCO Santiago)

Publication: Refugee livelihoods and economic inclusion (UNHCR)

Publication: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families: A guide for policymakers and practitioners (ILO, ISSA, ITC)

ILO-ISSA Webinar: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees, and their families – Guide for policymakers and practitioners

Asia-Pacific

Publication: International Migration in Asia and the Pacific – Determinants and Role of Economic Integration (ADB)

Publication: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families: A guide for policymakers and practitioners (ILO, ISSA, ITC)

Publication: Towards safe, orderly and regular migration in the Asia-Pacific region – Challenges and Opportunities (UNESCAP)

Publication: Refugee livelihoods and economic inclusion (UNHCR)

Europe

Publication: Extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families: A guide for policymakers and practitioners (ILO, ISSA, ITC)

Good practice: Implementation of Transition to Formality Programme (TFP). Social Security Institution, Türkiye

Good practice: Facilitating access to services for refugee groups – Peer film testimonials, CNAF, France

Policy: Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027 (EU)

Publication: Refugee livelihoods and economic inclusion (UNHCR)

Synergies between social security and other government programmes

Social security benefits to people without jobs can be linked with their search for jobs and related opportunities. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the implementation of income support with active labour market policies is more effective than running the programmes in isolation. In Europe and Asia and the Pacific, efforts to capture synergies range from expanding an institution’s network to more elaborate inter-institutional coordination. Meanwhile, Africa’s robust economic growth needs to translate into jobs for the larger population.

Africa

Publication: Governance of social protection systems – a learning journey – Module #1: Coordination (ILO, ISSA)

Publication: Return-to-work incentives and supports for persons on long-term disability (ISSA)

Publication: Social Protection in Africa – A Review of Potential Contribution and Impact on Poverty Reduction (UNDP)

Americas

Publication: The role of social security in inclusion and social cohesion: Connecting the dots (ISSA)

Publication: Return-to-work incentives and support for persons on long-term disability (ISSA)

Publication: Governance of social protection systems – a learning journey – Module #1: Coordination (ILO, ISSA)

Publication: Delivering income and employment support in times of COVID-19 – Integrating cash transfers with active labour market policies (ILO)

Asia-Pacific

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel Session: Fostering inter-institutional and stakeholder coordination

Good practice: Social Synergy Programme - First social security platform in Malaysia, SOCSO, Malaysia

Good practice: Integrated service delivery – A case of the Department of Human Services, Services Australia

Good practice: RAMP-up to help citizens in need – A case of the Central Provident Fund Board, Singapore. Ministry of Manpower, Singapore

Publication: Inequality and social security in the Asia-Pacific region (UNDP)

Europe

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel session: Strengthening social security through inter-institutional collaboration

Publication: Return-to-work incentives and support for persons on long-term disability (ISSA)

Good practice (award winning): United IT of Belgian administrations for social security – A good practice of the public social security institutions of Belgium, CAPAC, Belgium

Good practice (award winning): Intreo – Integrated welfare and employment service. DSP, Ireland

Good practice: *Making work pay*. Ministry for Social Justice and Solidarity, the Family and Children’s Rights. Malta



KEY MESSAGES

Global

- The concept of economic empowerment is fundamental to any definition of inclusive growth and social cohesion. It is through economic empowerment that social security creates important pathways to inclusion and social cohesion. Nonetheless, social security is but one of many policy instruments that promote inclusion and social cohesion. Effective coordination and integration across agencies, social partners and the private sector are essential to realize synergies and to ensure the contiguity of programme implementation on the ground.
- The life-course approach to social security continually enables people to develop capabilities for their improved financial security and social mobility. Breaking the bonds of intergenerational poverty means addressing vulnerabilities, starting from infancy through to childhood, youth, the working life and old age. This has renewed attention to addressing the disadvantages that children are born into and which tend to be compounded over the life course; and the periods when the young are supposed to learn and acquire skills, and then transition from school to the world of work.

Regional

- The demographic dividend of Africa's youth and the participation of women in the workforce are among the region's strength. Their gainful employment will boost Africa's development and create the fiscal space to deepen the reach of social assistance.
- The region of the Americas is drawing from its long experience in cash transfers, taking advantage of synergies between social security programmes and active labour market policies, and motivating the formalization of microenterprises.
- In Asia and the Pacific region, the COVID-19 pandemic reversed decades of progress in reducing poverty. Governments are mobilizing fiscal space to scale up existing programmes and implement new ones to regain lost ground and build back better.
- In Europe, apprenticeships and active labour market policies help the youth to transition to the world of work. Clarifying the legal status of platform workers is important in light of increasing work opportunities in the platform economy.

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CLOSED

Thank you

05

SOCIAL SECURITY RESPONSES TO THE **COVID-19** **PANDEMIC**

COVID-19 and the negative socioeconomic impacts of measures imposed to curb the spread of the virus reaffirmed the imperative of adequate and comprehensive social security protection in the life of every nation.

Primarily, the pandemic brought about an unprecedented epidemiological shock with an insurmountable demand for health care services due to high morbidity rates as well as the severity of infections. These provoked a more than proportionate rise in mortality and hospitalization rates as well as the corresponding need for higher expenditure on health care and sickness benefits in countries.

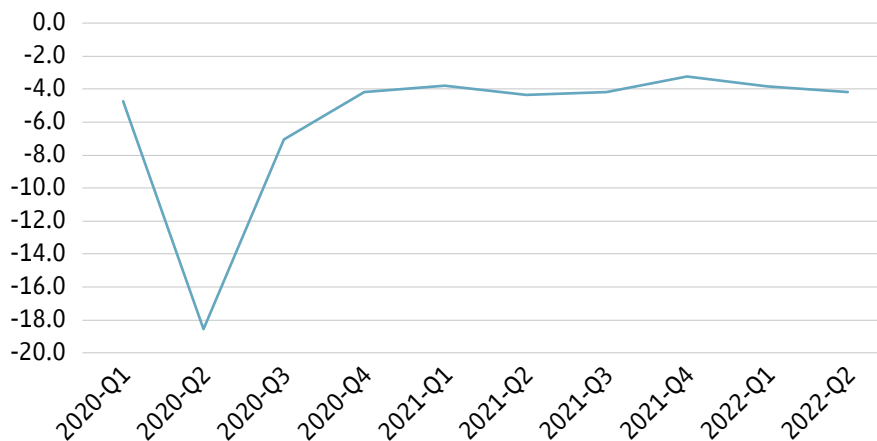
Second, measures imposed by governments to curb the spread of the virus – notably travel bans, work stoppages and widespread quarantines – resulted in a slowdown of global economic activity and massive job losses. These translated into a decline in tax revenue and reduced levels in social security contributions, in other words, the shrinking of fiscal receipts to finance social protection benefits and services. At the same time, these measures resulted in higher unemployment rates, the rise in employment injury/occupational disease burden, and hikes in social security benefit expenditure amidst shrinking government revenue for social protection.

Traditionally, social security cash benefits play the role of providing or replacing income to address want, deprivation and socioeconomic vulnerability. Over and above these traditional roles, social protection interventions played a crucial role in protecting jobs as well as individuals and families exposed to rising socioeconomic precarity due to economic downturns and massive job losses triggered by the pandemic. To achieve that, social security systems had to implement new emergency programmes, extend the coverage and adapt existing ones, such as the partial unemployment schemes and considering COVID-19 as an occupational disease in some countries.

Overall, social security systems cushioned the negative socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic on individuals and societies and absorbed the financial shocks from the economic slowdown, while other measures aimed at building resilience and stimulating socioeconomic recovery. Evidence points to the fact that countries with adequate investments in socio-medical and health care facilities coupled with fully developed and comprehensive social protection systems fared relatively well in navigating a path through the pandemic. Thus, reaffirming the importance of social security in the life of every nation.

Evolution of the world of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Figure 1. Change in global working hours 2020–2022, %

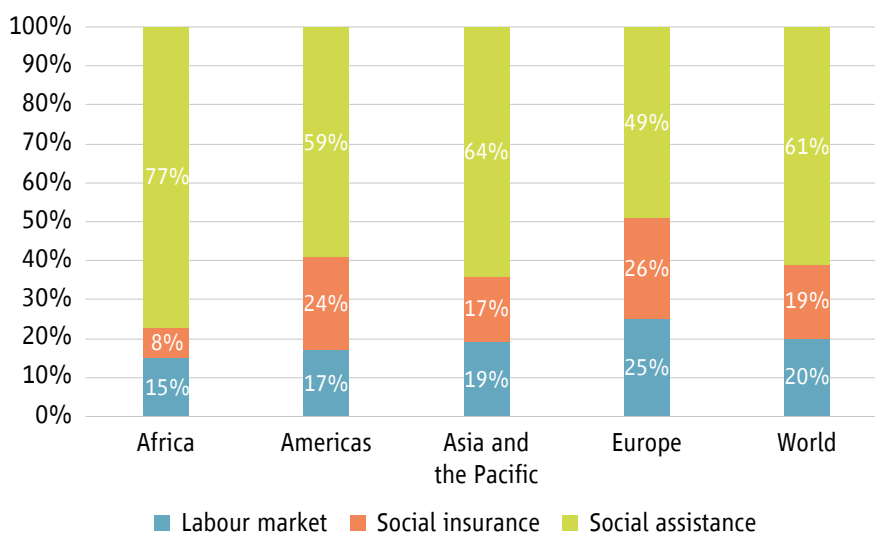


Source: ILOSTAT (2022)

- In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 8.8% of global working hours were lost relative to the fourth quarter of 2019, equivalent to 255 million full-time jobs. Working-hour losses in 2020 were approximately four times greater than during the global financial crisis in 2009. (ILO, 2021a)
- The gender gap in hours worked remains large although some post pandemic improvement has been made in reducing the gap, especially in high-income countries. Currently women globally spend 18.9 hours weekly in employment, or 57% of the average hours worked by men (33.4 hours). (ILO, 2022a)
- After a brief increase at the end of 2021 and early 2022, workplace closures are currently on a descending trend: 70% of workers face either only recommended closures or none at all. (ILO, 2022a)

Social security responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

Figure 2. Social assistance, social insurance, and labour market measures by region

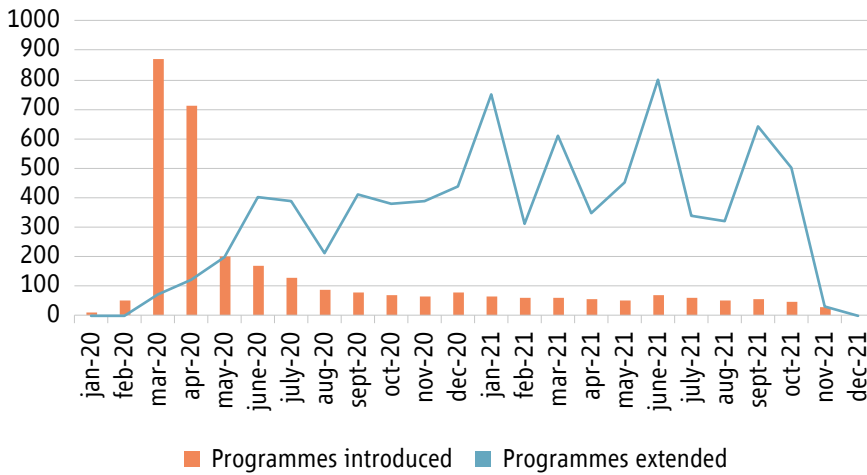


Source: World Bank (2022)



- Social assistance continues to represent the most prevalent form of support across regions and country income groups (61%).
- Even in high-income settings, social assistance represents half of enacted measures. The peak of social assistance is reached in South Asia and low-income countries, where they account for 78% of the social protection portfolio.
- In terms of social assistance component sub-categories, cash transfer programmes are the most widespread social assistance intervention: these correspond to nearly 25% of total social protection measures and 41% of overall social assistance.

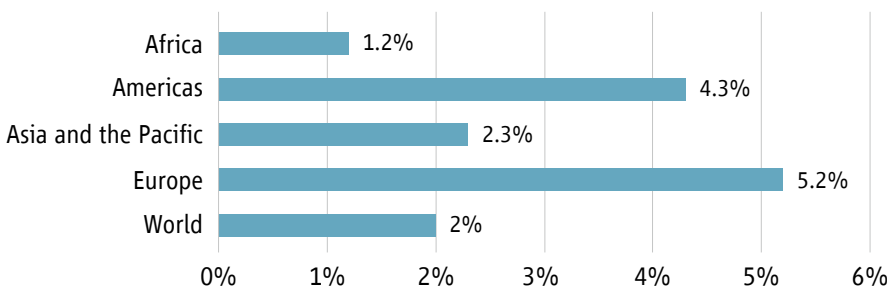
Figure 3. Extension of social protection and labour programmes



Source: World Bank (2022)

- As of January 2022, a total of 3,856 social protection and labour measures were planned or implemented by 223 countries and territories.
- In 2020, in response to the pandemic, some 95 countries implemented unemployment protection measures and 110 other countries job or income protection measures. (ILO, 2021b)
- Figure 3 shows an increasing reliance on programme extension for the large majority of the observed period. Many countries provided additional benefits to current pensioners, such as top-ups, one-off payments, increased indexation or higher minimum pensions.

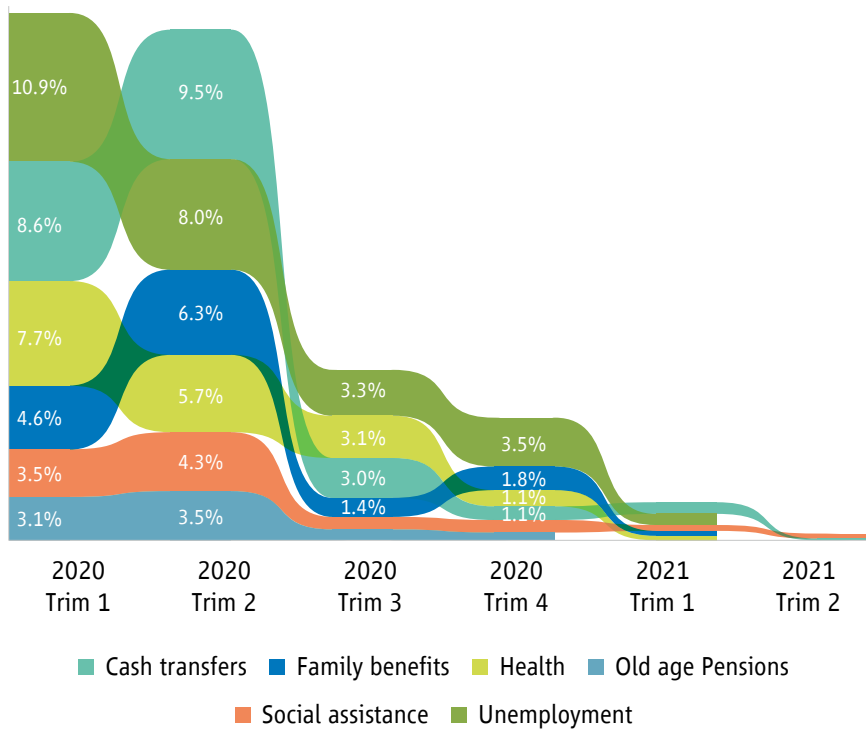
Figure 4. Social protection and labour spending by region, 2020–2021, %



Source: World Bank (2022)

- From December 2020 to May 2021, total spending on social protection rose by almost 270 per cent, to 2.9 trillion US dollars. (UN news, 2022)
- In general, countries have devoted an average of 2% of GDP to social protection COVID-19 responses, ranging from about 1.3% in low-income countries to 2.5% in high income settings.
- Heterogeneity is observable in spending across regions. European expenditures reached 5.2% of GDP while Africa only devoted an average of 1.2% of GDP to COVID-related social protection and labour responses.

Figure 5. Types of measures registered in the ISSA COVID-19 Monitor



Source: ISSA (2022).

- Unemployment measures accounted for 10.4% of enacted measures during the first quarter of 2020.
- Despite cash transfers having been the most applied measures during the second quarter of 2020 period, reaching 9.5% of the total measures, the provisions of cash transfer dropped to 3.0% in the third quarter.
- Health-related measures accounted for 7.7% of the total measures at the outbreak of the pandemic.

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Analysing the impacts of inadequate investment in socio-medical and healthcare facilities

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pressures on health care systems in developing and developed countries alike. This hindered the imposition of preventive lockdowns to curb the spread of the virus especially in countries with inadequate investments in socio-medical and health care facilities.

In response, countries engaged in crisis-investments in makeshift health care and hospitalisation facilities to address the shortfalls. However, infection and hospitalisation rates were lower than anticipated especially in countries of the Global South. Thus, resulting to wasteful spending in the crisis-response strategy.

Africa

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage, and service quality

Publication: The COVID-19 pandemic and healthcare systems in Africa (BMJ Global Health)

Call for action: Africa – COVID-19 Exposes Healthcare Shortfalls – Prioritize Investment to Improve Access to Care for All (HRW)

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: Financing strategies and administrative arrangements for universal health coverage

Americas

Webinario: Sistemas de salud resilientes en las Américas

Webinar: Improving health insurance systems – Trends and challenges from a regulatory perspective

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: Enhancing health coverage and services

Analysis: Telemedicine: Good practices from Latin America

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage, and service quality

Analysis: Building more resilient health systems

Analysis: COVID-19 crisis – Renewed attention to sickness benefits

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: Health coverage, cost containment and health service efficiency

Europe

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage, and service quality

Analysis: Is there a doctor? Addressing the challenge of medical deserts

Analysis: COVID-19 crisis – A renewed attention to sickness benefits

Webinar: Improving health insurance systems – Trends and challenges from a regulatory perspective

Exposing the need for adequate and comprehensive social security coverage

In addition to the pressures on health care systems, the COVID-19 pandemic had a heavy toll on jobs. Additionally, the recognition of COVID-19 as an occupational disease resulted in the rise in employment injury/occupational disease burden. Furthermore, the contagious nature of the virus provoked hikes in sickness rates.

These catalysed the materialisation of contingencies and countries with incomprehensive social protection systems were confronted with the daunting task of simultaneously responding to the health care concerns and negative socio-economic impacts of the pandemic.

Africa

Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Analysis: Migrant workers and COVID-19

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel session: COVID-19 and social security

Publication: The impact of COVID-19 on the informal economy in Africa and the related policy responses (ILO)

Americas

Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Analysis: Migrant workers and COVID-19

Virtual Social Security Forum for the Americas – Parallel session: COVID-19 and protection of vulnerable groups

Publication: Extending social protection to informal workers in the COVID-19 crisis – Country responses and policy considerations (ILO)

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Analysis: Migrant workers and COVID-19

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: COVID 19 and protection of vulnerable groups

Publication: Extending social protection to informal workers in the COVID-19 crisis – Country responses and policy considerations (ILO)

Europe

Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Analysis: Meeting the employment challenges of the second wave of COVID-19 – The case of Europe

Analysis: Migrant workers and COVID-19

Publication: Assessment of the Social Security Responses to COVID-19 (ILO)

”

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, social security programmes and institutions have demonstrated their crucial roles in limiting social and economic impact, fostering a rebound and improving resilience. ”



Mitigating the negative socio-economic impacts of the pandemic

Countries with fully developed and comprehensive social protection systems were more resilient to the negative socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. By activating the social protection lever, they were able to respond to the needs of workers and their families.

On the other hand, countries with limited access to social security protection responded through a series of ad hoc interventions notably the introduction of new and expansion of existing social assistance programmes, the adoption of new financing arrangements, and labour market interventions to protect jobs.

Africa

Analysis: COVID-19 – Protecting vulnerable groups through emergency benefits

Analysis: Supporting families through the crisis

Analysis: The social security response to COVID-19 – The case of North Africa

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers – A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

Americas

Analysis: COVID-19 – Protecting vulnerable groups through emergency benefits

Analysis: Supporting families through the crisis

Analysis: Unemployment benefits during COVID-19

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: COVID-19 – Protecting vulnerable groups through emergency benefits

Analysis: Supporting families through the crisis

Analysis: Unemployment benefits during COVID-19

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers – A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

Europe

Analysis: Supporting families through the crisis

Analysis: Childcare benefits and compensation during COVID-19

Analysis: Social security measures for the self-employed during the COVID-19 crisis

Analysis: Unemployment benefits during COVID-19

Analysis: COVID-19 and social security contributions – Evolution in Europe

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers – A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

Rethinking the social security response and socio-economic recovery

The social protection policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic played the dual role of protecting people and economies. However, these were generally short-term measures with mixed long-term impacts.

The negative socio-economic impacts of the pandemic imposed liquidity constraints on social security schemes which may crystallise in insolvency with the prolonged stay of the virus. Additionally, improved provision of benefits during the pandemic echoed a strong message of the affordability of social protection. Thus, subjecting governments to greater public scrutiny with respect to fulfilling the human right to social security for all.

Africa

Analysis: Beyond COVID-19 – Towards inclusive and resilient social protection systems

Analysis: Strategic partnerships and ICT solutions in extending social security coverage in Africa

Analysis: Investing Social Security Reserve Funds amidst competing goals and opportunities in Africa

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers – A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

Publication: Mutual benefit societies and their role in universal social protection (ISSA)

Americas

Analysis: Beyond COVID-19 – Towards inclusive and resilient social protection systems

Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage, and service quality

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers – A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

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Analysis: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19

Publication: Social protection for migrant workers: A necessary response to the COVID-19 crisis (ISSA, ILO)

Publication: Mutual benefit societies and their role in universal social protection

Europe

Analysis: Beyond COVID-19: towards inclusive and resilient social protection systems

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Plenary session: COVID-19 and social security in Europe: Long-term effects and transition to a new normal

Analysis: Improving health insurance systems, coverage, and service quality

Analysis: Frontier workers, COVID-19 and telework - Pragmatic social security responses in the European Union

Publication: Mutual benefit societies and their role in universal social protection (ISSA)

Ensuring business continuity and addressing new risks

The scale up of provision and the adoption of teleworking arrangements prompted the rapid adoption of modern information and communication technology (ICT) solutions in social security administration. These include the acceleration of digitalization processes, automation and dematerialisation of operational processes and the widespread adoption of electronic and online solutions to ensure business continuity. These naturally come with exposure to new forms of risks, notably cybercrimes as well as the erosion of audit trails, which amplify the risks of errors, evasion, and fraud.

Africa

Analysis: Administrative and digital solutions tackling error, evasion, and fraud in contribution collection in Africa

Analysis: Keeping the promise amidst adversity: Institutional processes and human resources during COVID-19

Virtual Social Security Forum for Africa – Parallel Session: Institutional capacity and crisis preparedness – The role of leadership and innovation

Webinaire: La communication adaptée au contexte de la COVID-19 - l'exemple de l'Afrique du Nord

Webinar: Contribution collection in the context of COVID-19 – Case of Southern Africa

Americas

Analysis: Keeping the promise amidst adversity – Institutional processes and human resources during COVID-19

Analysis: The use of analytical technology in social security systems during the pandemic

Analysis: Telemedicine – Good practices from Latin America

Analysis: Online one-stop shops – Good practices in Latin America

Analysis: Addressing error, evasion and fraud in social security – Good practices from the Americas

Asia-Pacific

Analysis: Keeping the promise amidst adversity: Institutional processes and human resources during COVID-19

Analysis: ICT-enabled coordinated service delivery: Experiences from Asia and the Pacific

Analysis: Business Continuity Management for resilient social security in Asia and the Pacific

Virtual Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific – Parallel session: COVID 19, social security and national resilience

Webinar: Building resilience through unemployment insurance

Europe

Analysis: Keeping the promise amidst adversity – Institutional processes and human resources during COVID-19

Analysis: COVID-19 and social security contributions – Evolution in Europe

Publication: ICT response to COVID-19: Digital transformation to build better and more resilient social protection (ISSA)

Regional Social Security Forum for Europe – Parallel session: Enhancing client orientation, automation and integrity

Analysis: Artificial Intelligence in social security – Background and Experiences

Webinar: Enhancing efficiency and customer services through advanced process automation



KEY MESSAGES

Global

- COVID-19 and the negative socioeconomic impacts of measures imposed to curb the spread of the virus reaffirmed the importance of adequate and comprehensive social security protection in the life of every nation.
- The pandemic exacerbated pressures of health care systems with a heavy toll on jobs. These prompted an unprecedented demand for health care and hospitalization services alongside a growing need for improved access to social security protection for all.
- The social protection policy response to the pandemic echoed a strong message of the affordability of basic social security with improved access to benefits and services through an appropriate blend of programmes and combined use of contributory and non-contributory financing in both developed and developing countries.
- Countries with fully developed social protection systems with adequate and sufficient coverage levels proved to be more resilient to the negative socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic.
- The escalating demand for benefits and services as well as the exigencies of safety at work played in favour of the adoption of teleworking arrangements and new service delivery channels by social security administration which accelerated automation, dematerialization and digitalization of core business and operational processes.
- The widespread adoption of digital and electronic solutions by social security institutions in response to the pandemic brings about new forms of risk, notably cybercrimes, with a greater exposure to the risks of error, evasion, and fraud.
- The capacity of social security institutions constituted a critical factor in ensuring the continuity of social security services and adapting and implementing new measures, notably as part of national responses.

Regional

- Several governments in the Americas extended the coverage to existing programmes and implemented measures to protect vulnerable groups.
- New developments in Asia and the Pacific focused on job retention and unemployment protection policies.
- African countries innovated on financing approaches to fund the COVID-19 social measures.
- In Europe, EU Member States put into practice many forms of cross-border social solidarity in the medical and cross-border regulations areas.

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