

Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions (CEFMU) in Latin America and the Caribbean



OAS MESECVI



BETWEEN INDIFFERENCE AND TOLERANCE

Throughout the region, CEFMUs are not part of the public agenda, registering very little progress in addressing and eradicating the issue through adequate and comprehensive public policies.

Committee of Experts of the MESECVI



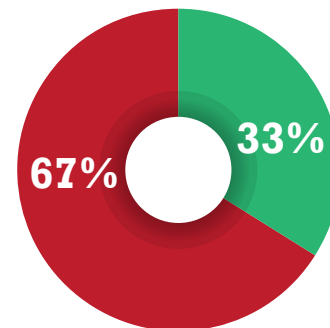
DID YOU KNOW?

Although nearly all countries in the region have established **18 as the minimum legal age** for marriage, practically all maintain exceptions.

In some cases, the minimum legal age is reduced to as low as **13 years with judicial authorization** or maternal, paternal or guardian permission.



Permissive legislation



Countries where the minimum age is **18 years** without exceptions.

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Countries with exceptions that allow marriage before the **age of 18**

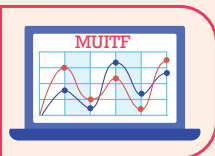
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- Persistence of ambiguous exceptions.
- Tolerance towards traditions and customs.
- Discriminatory rules.
- Legal gaps
- Lack of awareness among justice operators who allow exceptions.

As a result, there is a failure to comply with international standards.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing child marriage and early unions requires a comprehensive strategy that includes:



Generating data and disaggregated statistical information on CEFMU



Moving towards the legal prohibition of exceptions in the law and social and cultural practices that enable or facilitate CEFMU.



Adopting comprehensive public policies for the prevention, attention, punishment, and eradication of CEFMU.



Public policies to end CEFMU should take an intersectional approach and promote the empowerment of girls and adolescents.



Guaranteeing access to education as one of the most effective mechanisms to eradicate child marriage.

Link local, regional, and national entities.



Ensuring care for girls and adolescents who are already in a marriage or union.



Working with boys, adolescents, and men so that they become active actors in gender equality and build positive masculinities.



Strengthening the capacities of states to improve their approach to CEFMU.



Minimum legal age of marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean

Minimum legal age for marriage with exceptions.

Under
16
years
(with parental or judicial authorization)

Argentina, Bahamas, Colombia, Cuba, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Venezuela.

Minimum legal age for marriage with exceptions

16
years
(with parental or judicial authorization)

Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Uruguay

Minimum legal age

18
years
(no exceptions)

Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago



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Find the Hemispheric Report on Child,
Early and Forced Marriage and Unions
in the States Party to the
Belém do Pará Convention

