

March - April 2003

Results of the 2002 Census in Chile

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SANTIAGO DE CHILE- Last week, the Chilean National Statistics Institute [El Instituto Nacional de Estadística] (INE) released the 2002 Population and Housing Census, which shows very interesting data. The study shows that Chile's total population has now reached 15,116,435 inhabitants, that is, almost five times greater than at the beginning of the 20th century. Taking into account the last censuses, it can be stated that between 1992 and 2002, the Chilean population grew at an average annual rate of 1.2 persons per one hundred inhabitants.

Regarding the distribution by sex, the total population is made up of 50.7% of women and 49.3% of men. The 2002 Census shows that in the last 10 years Chilean women have increased their schooling and their presence in the labor market. Actually, 10 years ago, 28% of women worked outside the home, and today this figure reaches 35.5%. Nevertheless, in spite of this reality, the salary gap between men and women is 30%, not taking into account the branch of activity or the size of the business

Another aspect that was measured in the last census refers to the marital status of women: 44.9% are married, whereas 53.6% stated they had a partner, which implies an increase in the number of people living together and a decrease in marriages.

PARAGUAY

Paraguayan opposition presidential candidate accidentally shot.

The former Vice President of Paraguay, Mr. Julio César Franco, the candidate for the Liberal opposition Party, was accidentally shot in the leg, when he took part in a campaign activity. "There was an accident. When Mr. Franco took part in a producers fair, one of the security guards dropped his gun and it went off accidentally wounding him in the right leg", explained Luis Dávalos, Liberal Party press manager.

According to the most recent polls, Franco is in third place in voters' preferences for the next presidential election in April, after businessman Pedro Fadul, of the independent movement *Querida Patria* (Beloved Homeland), and attorney Nicanor Duarte Frutos, of the governing Colorado Party, who is ahead in the polls.

Source: *CNNenEspañol* 028/03/2003

On the other hand, between 1992 and 2002, there has been an ageing of the population: while in 1992, 9.8% of the population was over 60 years old, in the last census this increased to 11.4%. At the same time, the juvenile population decreased: 11 years ago, 29.4% of the population was under 15 years old; now, in 2002, this figure went down to 25.7%. On the other hand, 24.2% of Chilean households have a person over 60 years old as the head of the household. Fifty-six percent of older adults are women, and the number grows as age increases: in the 80 to 89 year-old bracket, they make up almost 63%; and in the 90 to 99 year-old bracket, more than 68%.

As to religion, the census showed that 70% of the population stated they were Roman Catholics, 15.1% protestant, and 8.3% said they had no religion, or were atheists or agnostics.

Source: *INE, Chile The Chilean National Statistics Institute [El Instituto Nacional de Estadística]. Censo de Población y Vivienda 2002 (2002 Population and Housing Census).*

PERU

Fujimori starts his presidential campaign from afar.

LIMA – The dismissed former President of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, from afar, started his campaign for the 2006 presidential elections in an Andean city. Fujimori was dismissed as President in 2000 because of "moral incapacity" and was barred from seeking any public office in Peru for 10 years, after he fled to Japan using his double nationality. This happened shortly after the greatest corruption scandal in the history of Peru broke out with the arrest of Vladimiro Montesinos, Fujimori's ex-chief of espionage and advisor, the main protagonist in the affair. Presently, Interpol has issued an international mandate to arrest Fujimori for supposedly being responsible for the murder of 25 people while he was President. In a video that was shown to hundreds of his supporters in Huancayo, a city in Peru's central highlands at 3000 meters of altitude, Fujimori assured them that he would retake Peru to "carry out the tasks that were left undone".

Source: *CNNenEspañol*, 30/03/2003

ARGENTINA**Shortly before the elections, social plans are reinforced**

The Argentine government granted a hundred thousand new allocations to the unemployed in Buenos Aires, so that the 647,135 beneficiaries in January grew to 742,221 in March. An important fact is that, of the 135 districts in Buenos Aires, La Matanza received the lion's share: In January, there were 58,894 beneficiaries of State allocations and two months later there were 85,964, a 31% increase.

La Matanza is the most populated municipality in Argentina, with 1.5 million inhabitants. Because of this, it has acquired importance. La Matanza is the key bastion of President Eduardo Duhalde because of the number of voters (46% of all registered voters). The Administration not only expects Néstor Kirchner (the candidate backed by the present Administration) to win in Buenos Aires in general, and specifically in La Matanza, but also wants his victory to be a landslide.

Source: El Clarín, 31/03/2003

COLOMBIA**Colombian Police occupy 78 municipalities that had no police force.**

Starting on Monday, about 4,500 new police officers began to occupy 78 of the 157 Colombian municipalities that did not have any police presence at all, as part of a governmental strategy to recover control of the national territory. The officers have been trained in counter-guerrilla, and counter-terrorist techniques, and will be posted in the provinces or departments of Antioquía, Atlántico, Boyacá, Caldas and Nariño. This strategy seeks to reinforce government control in areas where there have been guerillas and paramilitaries, and goes hand in hand with the Rural Soldiers Program carried out by the Army and the Navy. The Rural Soldiers are members of the Armed Forces that have the mission to protect the municipalities that they originate from. Presently, 5000 Rural Soldiers have been recruited, and it is hoped that the number will grow to 12,000 by the end of 2003.

Source: CNNenEspañol, 31/03/2003

MEXICO**Mexico assumes the presidency of the UN Security Council**

The Ambassador of Mexico to the United Nations (UN), Mr. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, assumed the presidency of the UN Security Council this Tuesday for the month of April. According to Mr. Aguilar Zinser, México is concerned with "fundamentally maintaining the UN presence in Iraq, to comply with its humanitarian responsibilities and to continue to bring the establishment of peaceful conditions". The work program, that was finally defined together with Mr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, contemplates that, besides the subject of the war against Iraq, the UN will continue to pay attention to crises in other parts of the world, such as the conflicts between Israel and Palestine, the reunification of Cyprus, the follow-up on the mission in Kosovo, as well as the internal problems of several African countries such as Somalia, Liberia and the Ivory Coast

Source: El Universal 01/04/2003

COSTA RICA**The Administration presents its income tax plan to Congress**

This Tuesday, the Administration presented its project seeking widespread reforms in the income tax system as one of the solutions to the permanent imbalance in public funds. The head of the Internal Revenue Department, Mr. Adrián Torrealba, reaffirmed the intention of the Administration to tax the income of both natural persons and legal entities with a global tax, and in the cases that justify it, with a universal tax.

The global tax model consists of taxing the total of all incomes that a natural person or a legal entity that are residents of Costa Rica may have without making any distinctions on the origin of the incomes. Nevertheless, this change necessarily implies having the country negotiate and sign treaties with other countries to exchange information and to avoid having a person being subject to double taxation (both in Costa Rica and abroad).

Source: CNNenEspañol 02/04/2003.

Responsible for this publication: COPA-Executive Secretariat México.

English version: COPA - Québec Secretariat

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