



de las mujeres

Labor market realities for women

Over the last twenty years, the Valparaíso Region has undergone economic, urban, and population growth. Although the region's economy is principally based on the primary and secondary sectors, one of the most dynamic sectors is that of the service industry. This sector includes areas such as tourism, the hotel industry, domestic and personal care work, industrial cleaning, established and informal commerce, and other similar areas. These segments represent an important hub for female employment.

Despite this, the region has some of the highest indicators of unemployment, underemployment, poverty, and homelessness in the country, figures that are even more critical for females. Likewise, the female labor market is more limited than that for males, with fewer available positions, greater informality, less access to social security, lower salaries, and instability. Moreover, in Chilean society, women are almost exclusively responsible for family care and domestic tasks, a factor that limits the time available for working, training, or studying. In some cases, women also lack the support of their children and/or partner.

Considering the low workforce participation of females on a national level, the government has implemented a number of important programs over the last decades to support women. These initiatives include bonuses and monetary subsidies, incentives for hiring women, training programs and workshops, and seed funds for female entrepreneurs. However, few have an economic impact for women, some impact family finances, and the majority provide short- to mid-term support and are difficult to access.

Faced with this reality, Dr. Marco Ceballos, researcher for the School of Sociology of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Universidad Andrés Bello, Viña del Mar Campus, is investigating this phenomenon through the Fondecyt project entitled "Socio-labor trajectories of female workers with assistance and social citizenship in the provincial conurbation of Valparaíso and Marga Marga."

Some aspects analyzed by this project are labor market conditions, the interlinking of some jobs with others, networking, microeconomic strategies, the negation of power within families, the use of aid and public services, and the expectations held by women.

"From the perspectives of the women themselves, our project aims to comprehend how these women experience and resolve their realities. We want to understand, through 40 typical cases across different ages, the directions of their individual paths in light of social factors such as gender inequality and opportunities for development in their provinces. In other words, a study of the social trajectories of women in an emblematic region from various perspectives," explains Dr. Ceballos.