

# LATIN AMERICA: HIGH ADOLESCENT FERTILITY AMID DECLINING OVERALL FERTILITY

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- Menarche

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**Introduction:  
Why are we  
concerned with  
adolescent  
fertility?**

# Disadvantages

Infant and mother's health risks

Lower educational achievement

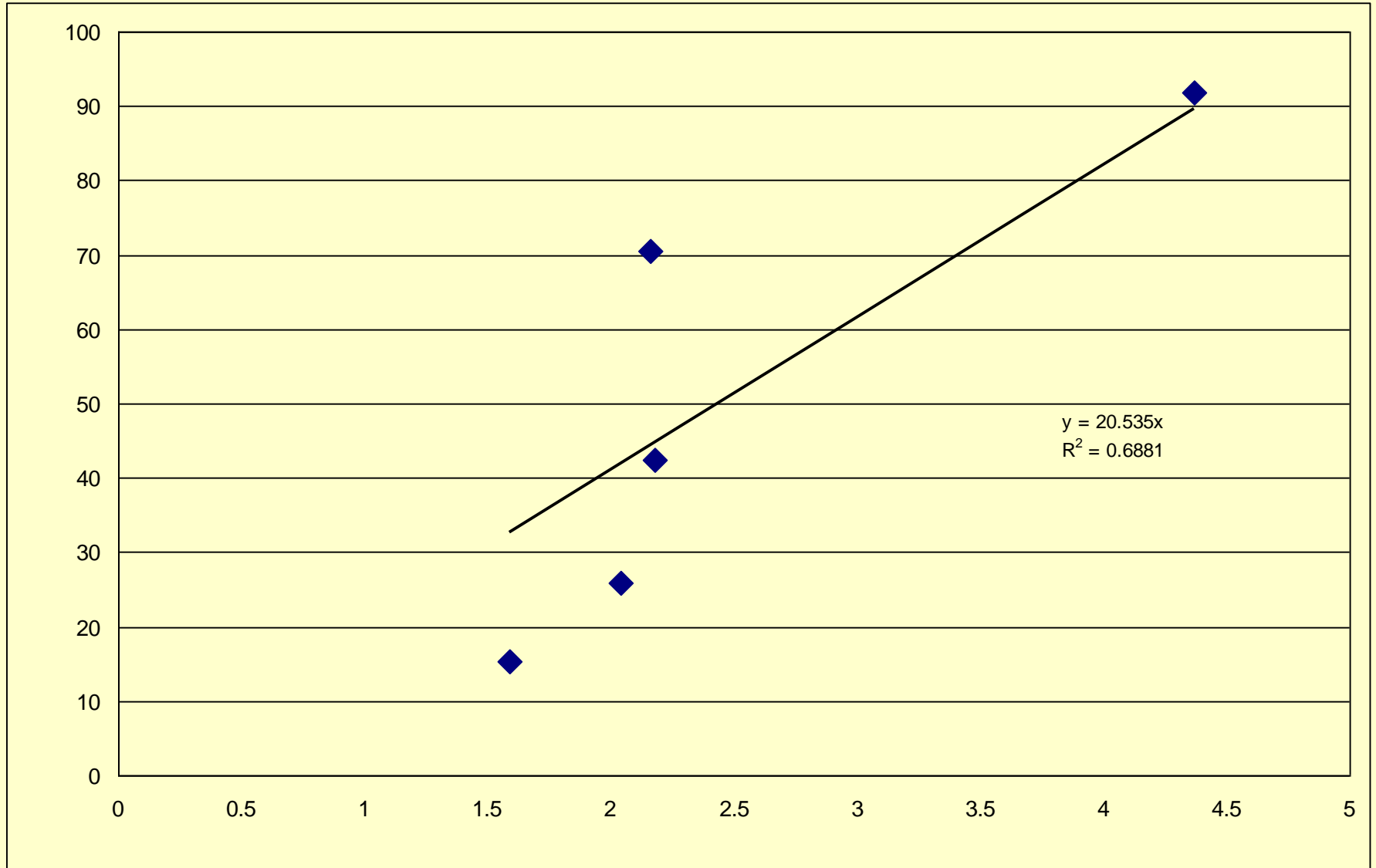
Psychological immaturity for childrearing

# Particular policy issues

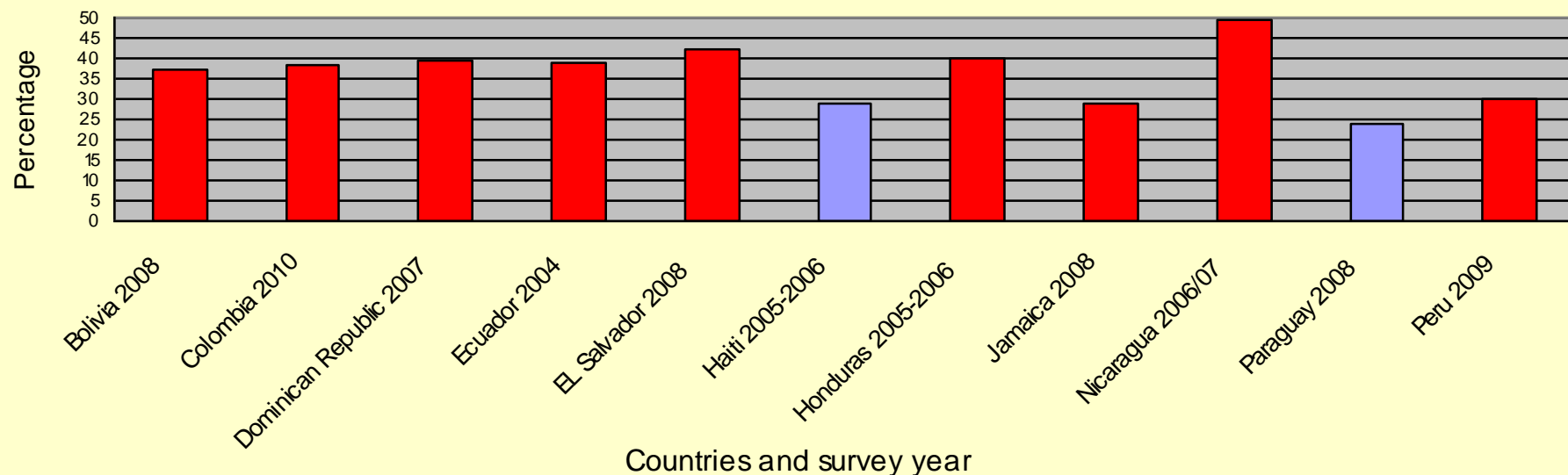
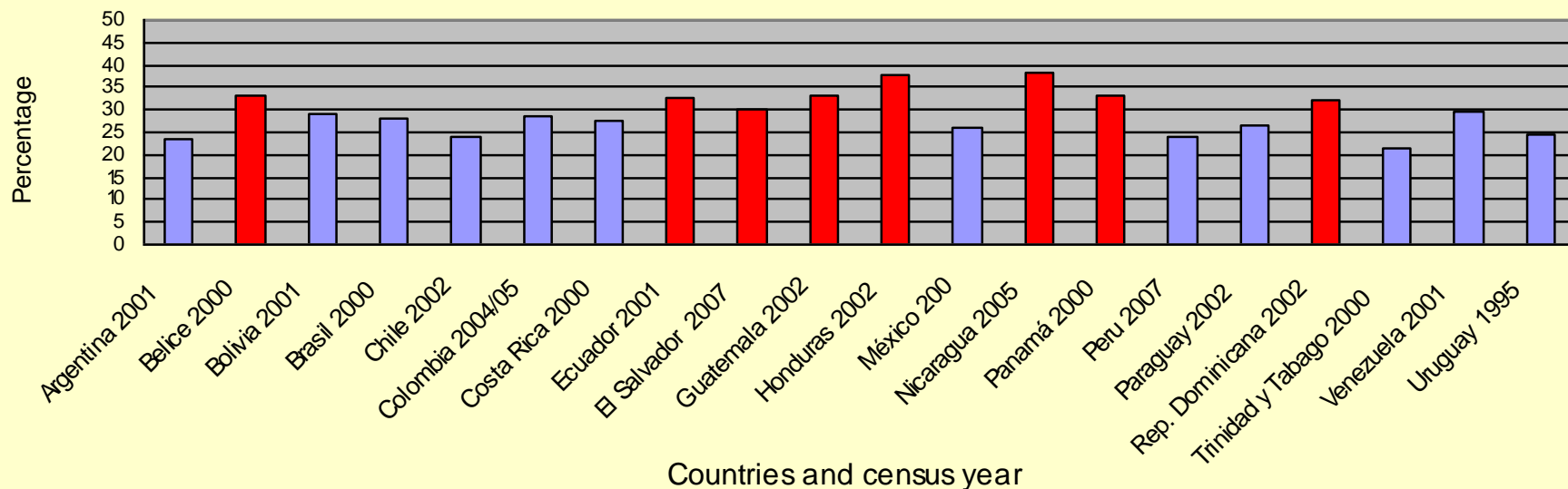
# Adolescent fertility levels :

Latin America and the Caribbean in comparison with other regions

# Major regions of the world: Adolescent fertility rate and total fertility rate: the Latin American outlier



Motherhood during adolescence: still a common experience in Latin America, but with differences across countries. **Percentage of 19 year old women with reproductive experience** (censuses = mother; survey = mother or pregnant with first child)







A WORRYING TREND DURING THE LAST TWO DECADES: ALMOST ALL COUNTRIES INCREASED ADOLESCENT MOTHERHOOD, ACCORDING TO CENSUS DATA. FERTILITY SURVEYS SHOW LESS

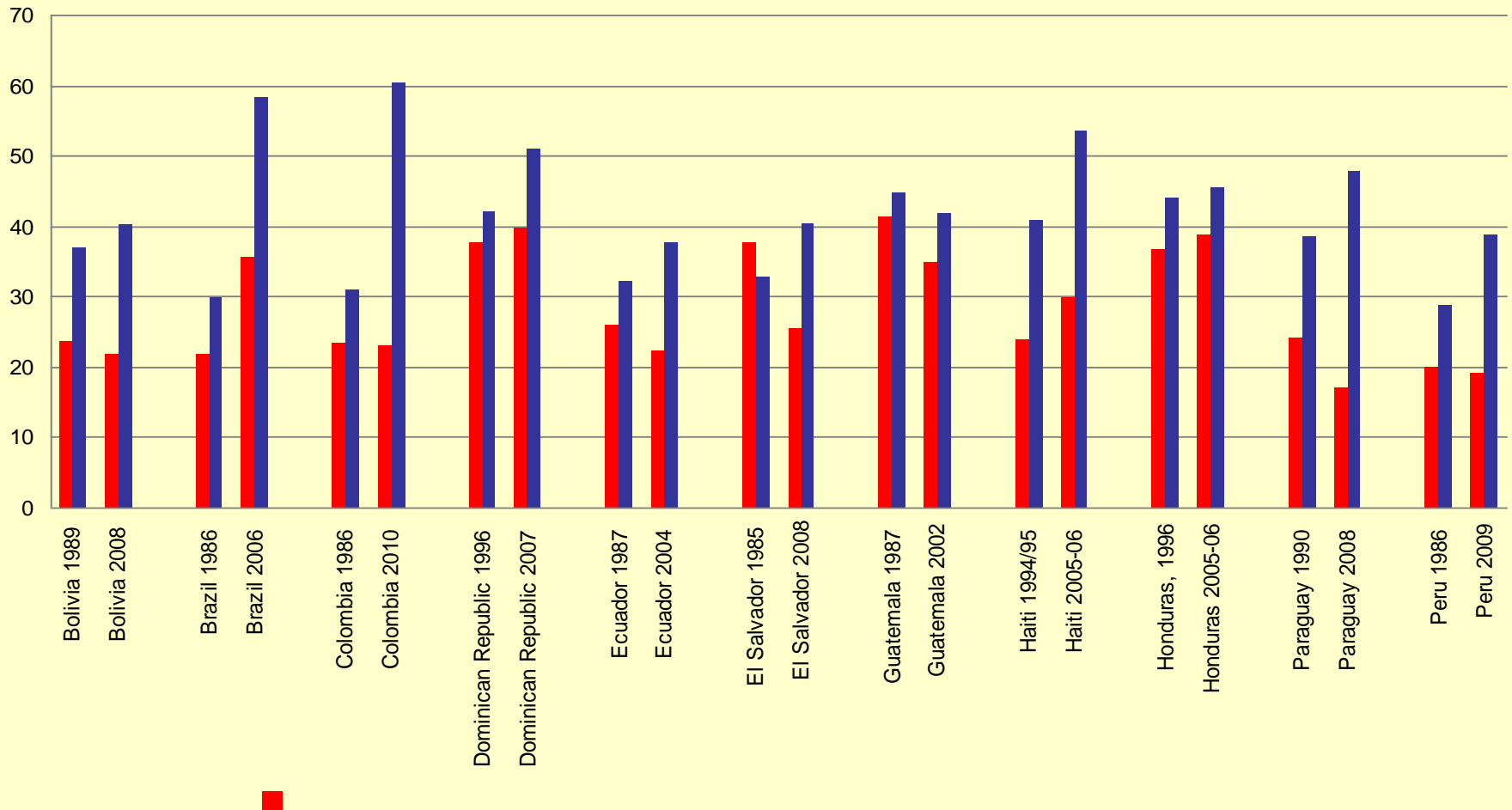
# Proximate determinants

Menarche is happening earlier (biological and social causes)

Sexual activity is better proximate determinant than marriage because of increasing premarital

*Sexual activity during adolescence is becoming more common: 10 out of 11 countries have higher % of adolescents sexually initiated by age 18 in the more recent surveys. Marriage and sexual activity among adolescents are more weakly associated: 7 out of 11 countries have a lower % marriages by age 18*

Percentage of women aged 20 -24 that were married before age 18 and percentage that had first intercourse by age 18





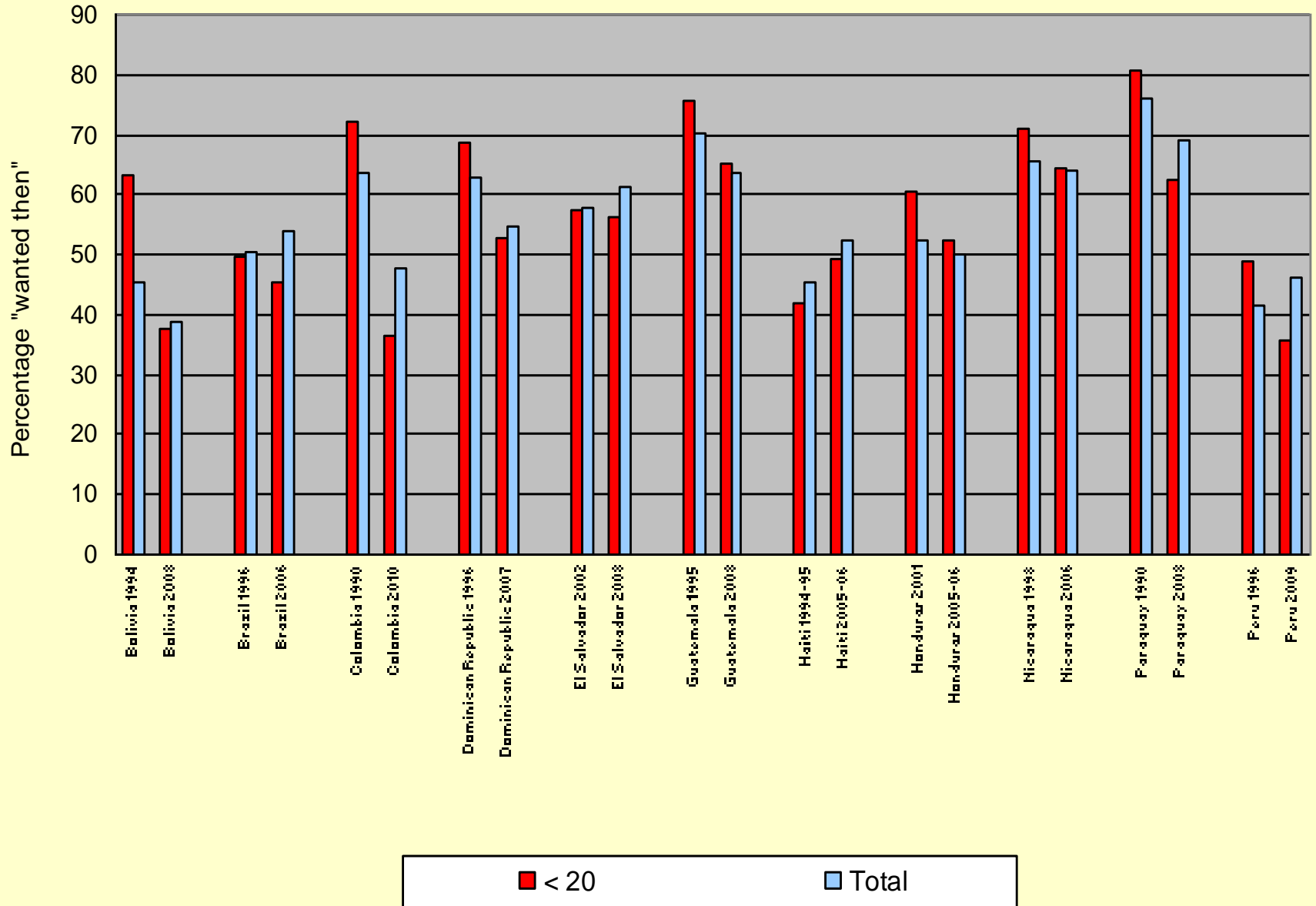
# Wanted motherhood and fertility preferences

Until 2000: adolescent fertility was more wanted than at other ages

Very different situation according to more recent surveys: births before the age of 20 are least desired (“wanted at the time”)

## wanted at the time

age 20 and total. Currently this percentage is lower for births before the age of 20 in almost all countries



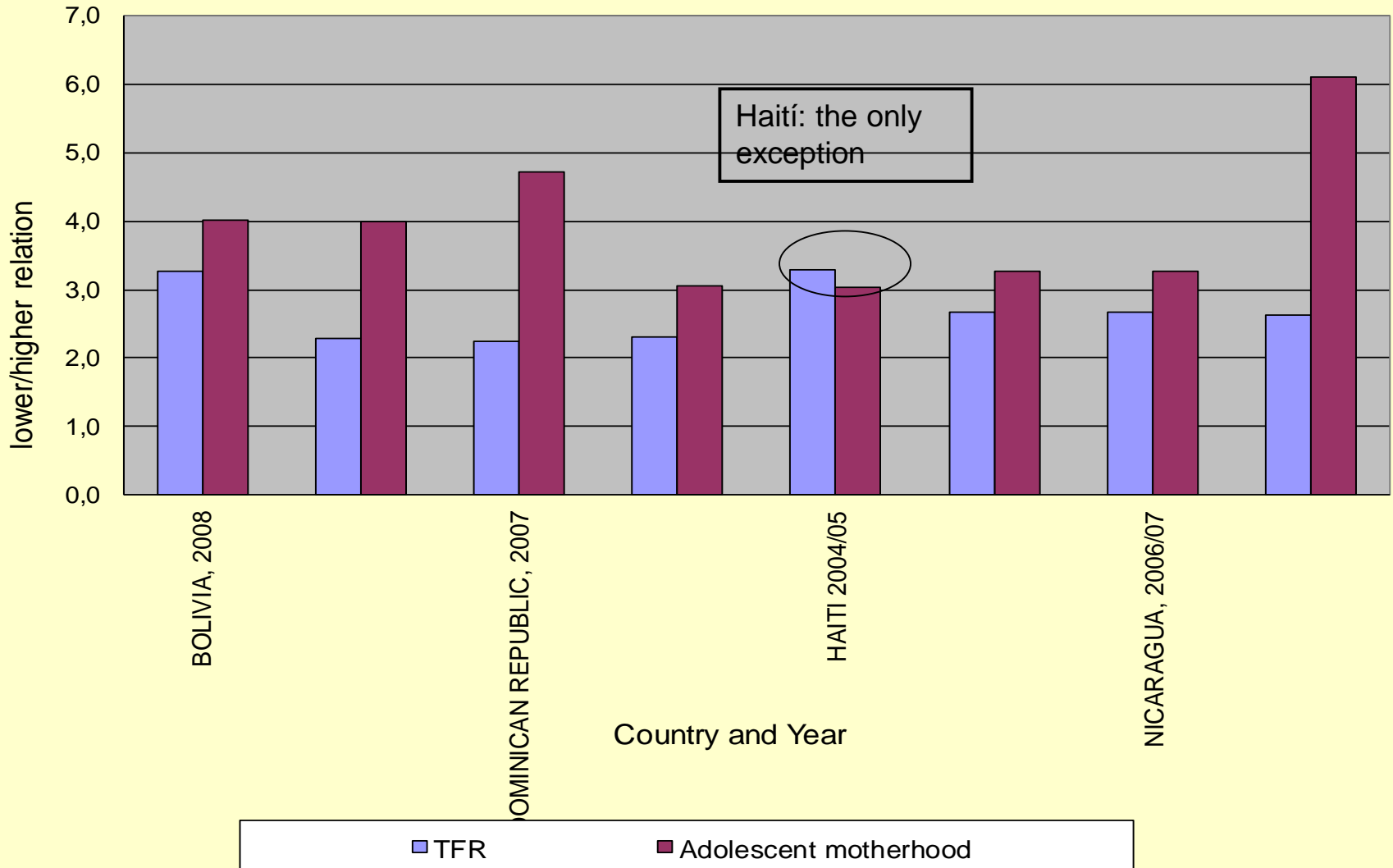
# Social inequality

Fertility differences across socio-economic strata are still sharp, and larger in adolescent motherhood than TFR

Inequality in

# *Inequality is sharper in adolescent motherhood than in TFR*

Ratio of poorest to richest quintile in TFR and percentage of mothers , women aged 15-19





Inequality in age at first intercourse: still very sharp but with some signs of convergence (see negative slope in university-educated women and the slight age slope of women with primary or no education)

