

# THE FIRST 100 DAYS OF THE MILEI ADMINISTRATION

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## Introduction

As President Javier Milei nears 100 days in office, Amnesty International intends to analyse the impact of his government's measures on people's rights. This is a common practice for Amnesty International around the world, and our intention is to reflect on his first quarter in office as a preview of the next four years.

We are aware that such a short period is not enough to make big changes, translate ideas into policies or provide a full picture of the future of this government. However, in this time, there have been changes that have had a profound impact on people's lives and the fulfilment of their rights.

### I. Context: Argentina is going through a severe social and economic crisis

At the end of 2023, 47.1% of the population lived below the poverty line, and unemployment during Q3 reached 5.7% according to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina. Year-on-year inflation peaked at 211.4%. The economic and social crisis over the last few years, the unequal distribution of wealth, corruption, the lack of transparency and accountability, the barriers to access justice and the weakening of institutions **called for an urgent and necessary change of course.**

However, the first 100 days of the new government did not do much in this respect. On the contrary, **we have noticed the following developments:**

- A) Violent and dogmatic **confrontation** with people who think differently – This is inherent to authoritarian practices that resort to hate speech, violence and disinformation as a perfect recipe to silence and censor those who think differently. This includes journalists, opposition politicians and social organizations.
- B) **An austerity agenda** – The devaluation of the Argentine peso prompted a price hike that has directly impacted working- and middle-class households. As a result, poverty rose to 57.4% (data from the Argentine Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina).<sup>1</sup> This came hand in hand with austerity measures that have punished not the “caste” (as promised), but instead the millions of people who yearned for a change. This includes pensioners, as they are claimed to be the “least poor sector” of the population.

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<sup>1</sup> Argentine Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina. Condiciones materiales de vida de los hogares y la población (2004-2023): evidencias de una pobreza monetaria estructural. 2024.

[https://wadmin.uca.edu.ar/public/ckeditor/Observatorio%20Deuda%20Social/Presentaciones/2023/Observatorio\\_Pobreza\\_ingreso\\_5\\_12.pdf](https://wadmin.uca.edu.ar/public/ckeditor/Observatorio%20Deuda%20Social/Presentaciones/2023/Observatorio_Pobreza_ingreso_5_12.pdf)

C) A decline of **institutions** – New policies and measures are pushed forward without regard for the institutional processes enshrined in the Argentine Constitution.

1. **A narrative of confrontation: us vs. them**

Just like in magic, distraction is a key tool in politics. It causes citizens to lose track of what is important and focus on a secondary focal point, like confrontation, hatred or fighting.

This phenomenon is neither new nor exclusive to Argentina. Political leaders around the world – from the United States of America to India, from Brazil to Hungary, from Türkiye to the Philippines – have peddled, and still peddle today, narratives of demonization and division to gather popular support – for example, by blaming entire groups for social, economic or security grievances. Their targets include women, migrants, LGBTQI+ people and more.

As inequality rises around the world, politicians use this strategy to peddle simplistic narratives that pinpoint scapegoats to sow popular discontent, often targeting certain groups and minorities.

So what is the purpose? The purpose is to create an enemy to antagonize, delegitimize and destroy by blaming on them all evils and ills, thereby justifying all sorts of measures and interventions. For example, that is how refugee and migrant populations became the direct “cause” of the economic crises in Europe. Women’s progress towards ending abuse and violence became a threat to men and to traditional values in certain countries (like Putin’s Russia).

The constructs of *casta* (the caste or political establishment), *los mismos de siempre* (the usual suspects) and *con la nuestra* (with our money) pursue the same end: to prompt a plethora of insults and discourse that fuels violence and hate and hinders dialogue. You are either with them or against them. It is all or nothing. Dissent is not an option.

a) **Confrontation**, therefore, serves as the means to divert attention from real problems like the rise of poverty and extreme poverty, hunger and the lack of access to life-critical medicines, like cancer treatments. The constant bickering and insults aimed at the political opposition – including calling Congress “a rat’s nest” – conceal the major challenges Argentina faces today.

A good example of this is the public harassment of opposition lawmakers who voted against the *Ley de Bases y Puntos de Partida para la Libertad de los Argentinos* (Law on the Foundations and Starting Points for the Freedom of Argentines), otherwise known as the “Omnibus Bill”. An official government account on social media posted a list of lawmakers that was later reposted by the Argentine president with the following caption: “This is a list of loyal leaders and traitors who used the narrative of seeking change to snatch a seat in Congress... Come and see the enemies of a better Argentina.” During an event in the province of Corrientes, President Milei attacked the Congressman Ricardo López Murphy by calling him “a real piece of trash... who poses as a

liberal”.<sup>2</sup> Carla Carrizo, Mónica Fein, Esteban Paulón and Martín Lousteau, to name just a few, were all deliberately attacked as well.

b) **Hate speech, intolerance and discrimination work as key vehicles for their goal to eliminate the other.**

Twitter has become this administration’s weapon of choice for finger-pointing and accusations. Other branches of government, public figures, state officials, journalists, members of the media and other organizations are all targets. It is open season on anyone who has opposing views or criticism.

But when the person spearheading the attacks is none other than the president, it is easy to see how this can have a silencing effect. This is where there is a problem with the right to free speech. The goal is to silence other voices through threats, harassment and exposure to violence.

During his [speech](#) at the opening of Congress on 1 March 2024, the Argentine president once again said journalists had been “bribed” and “paid for” with public media funds and were “fierce defenders of the privileges” they do not want to relinquish. Following the speech, he also criticized at least two renowned journalists: **Martín Rodríguez Yebra** and **Marcelo Bonelli**. This follows prior incidents where Milei has attacked women journalists. On 8 January 2024, **Silvia Mercado** was called a “serial liar” after she shared information about his dogs. Ten days later, **Luisa Corradini**, Paris correspondent for La Nación, became a target after saying the president’s speech at Davos received “surprised and astonished” reactions. On 19 January, **María O’Donnell** was accused of lying and trying to slander the president after she said – and later retracted – that he would go from the local airport in the City of Buenos Aires to the presidential residence in Olivos by helicopter instead of by car. This malice against women journalists is also not new. As well as being exposed to the same risks as their male counterparts when researching and sharing information, women face gender-specific challenges.

### **Violence against women journalists**

Several international human rights organizations have condemned attacks specifically targeting women journalists fulfilling their duty, including discrimination and sex- and gender-related violence, intimidation, and online and offline harassment. They have also called on states to address and tackle the threats women journalists face due to their gender.<sup>3</sup>

The violence and the abuse many women journalists face on social media lead them to self-censor their posts, limit their interactions and sometimes abandon the platforms altogether, despite these being a critical space to share their work. All this ultimately leads to a lack of diversity in the public debate and a violation of both individual and collective freedom of

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ambito.com/politica/el-sorpresivo-ataque-javier-milei-ricardo-lopez-murphy-lo-tildo-basura-y-traidor-n5948948>

<sup>3</sup> In 2016, the United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously adopted Resolution 33/2 on the safety of journalists. EN A/HRC/44/52, 6 May 2020, p. 70). There has also been a joint statement by the UN’s Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression and Violence Against Women, published on 8 March 2017.

speech.

A survey by Amnesty International Argentina showed that 70% of women who suffered abuse or harassment online have changed the way they use social media, while 36% stopped posting or sharing content where they expressed their views on different topics. At the same time, these forms of violence are intended to teach a lesson to those who witness the consequences of openly sharing their criticism, deterring them from speaking up. This not only directly contributes to silencing voices in the public debate, but also affects the health of the people who are targeted.

In a similar vein, a report by the United Nations highlights the impact of gender-based violence on women with a public voice. Among respondents, 80% said they limited their participation in social media and 40% self-censored by avoiding commenting on a topic they knew well. One out of three changed job roles and one out of four experienced dismissal or non-renewal of their contracts.<sup>4</sup>

In October 2023, the Argentine Congress passed the *Ley Olimpia*, which classifies digital violence as a form of gender-based violence. This regulation affirms the need for public policies to address this issue and establishes rights and basic guarantees for administrative and legal procedures for cases of gender-based violence in digital environments.

Some of these incidents have been condemned by organizations like the Association of Argentine Journalistic Organizations (ADEPA), which groups 180 journalism organizations in the country. ADEPA spoke up about their belief that **“when the attacks come from the country’s highest officials, asymmetry increases, together with the risks of altering the conditions that preserve free speech”**.

c) Among the common practices of demonization and manipulation of public opinion, **fake news** has acquired an omnipresent role. Misinformation is shared as verified news to trick people and is amplified through traditional media, social media and other platforms.

**Completely false data and facts trump the truth**, becoming more influential than objective facts. Fake news is usually supported by stigmatizing narratives, charged with implicit assessments and emotive language. In a relentless push, it has taken over the public debate and directly impacts the way problems are manipulated and perceived.

Moreover, technology’s ability to blur the lines between fact and fiction becomes increasingly powerful, hindering people from accessing public information.

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<sup>4</sup> Regional Alliance for Free Expression and Information and UN Women, *Online Gender-Based Violence Against Women with a Public Voice. Impact on Freedom of Expression*, 2022.

This is how, instead of addressing the real problems people are facing, lawmakers get carried away in the battle for headlines, memes and outrageousness, drifting from working towards the common good.

d) Lastly, these narratives are intended to **spread fear**. Once again, this is far from new around the world. Fearmongering is used as a tool for governance, as a means to subdue and dominate others. Behind the discourse and the insults, there is an exemplary punishment of what could happen to you if you go against the grain. This not only places everyone with different views in the “**traitor**” camp, but also deters whoever wants to express their opinions freely. **Silence** and censorship triumph, which means losing a basic right: freedom of speech.

**With this foolproof recipe of confrontation, hate, fearmongering and fake news, President Milei has managed to push all boundaries. And by doing so, he reaches a new level where there are no rules and everything goes.**

#### **Urgent action.<sup>5</sup> The criminalization of social media use**

Amnesty International launched an [urgent action \(UA\)](#) to call on the authorities of the province of Jujuy to drop the criminal charges against Nahuel Morandini, Roque Villegas and Lucía González, who had been accused of altering and suppressing the identity of an underaged child and causing psychological harm. Morandini and Villegas also faced aggravating charges for gender-based violence.

The charges were filed by Tulia Snopek, wife of the former governor of the province of Jujuy Gerardo Morales. Charges against Nahuel Morandini, a 45-year-old teacher and engineer, are based on his post on X (formerly known as Twitter) commenting on Snopek’s alleged infidelity with a singer.<sup>6</sup> Roque Villegas, a 42-year-old self-employed silk-screen printer, was charged after sharing similar posts on Facebook on the same topic. They both remained **in prison for 54 days** at the Gorriti jail in the province’s capital, San Salvador de Jujuy. Jujuy authorities also issued an arrest warrant for Lucía González for a comment she made on the same topic in a private WhatsApp group.

Article 139 par. 2 of the Penal Code of Argentina imposes a two- to six-year prison sentence for anyone who, by any act whatsoever, renders uncertain, alters or suppresses the identity of a child under 10 years, and for anyone who retains or conceals it. This is a criminal offence whereby the identity of a child is altered, erased or suppressed as a result of the perpetrator’s actions. The accused were also charged with causing psychological harm.

This investigation and the charges against the three defendants are extremely alarming. Besides

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<sup>5</sup> An urgent action (UA) is a solidarity strategy led by Amnesty International whereby thousands of people from around the world rally to demand the assurance of human rights. When it comes to Amnesty’s attention that one or more individuals are in a high-risk situation, the organization activates a network of tens of thousands of people who amplify their capacity to exert pressure by sending letters and emails as quickly as possible to the country in question. In this case, the UA was addressed to the prosecutor in charge of the case.

<sup>6</sup> The infidelity allegations were interpreted as a denial of paternity, inferring that Snopek’s child’s identity was being altered. This is what prompted the charges, to which the court was receptive. However, the social media posts did not make any references to the child or her parentage.

infringing on their freedom of speech, they could act as a deterrent for the rest of the population.

Amnesty International reminds the Argentine state, both at the provincial and national levels, of its international obligations to respect, protect and ensure human rights, including freedom of expression.

## 2. Poverty, austerity and conflict management

The silencing effect that all this is intended to have on the public debate in the media and on social media is also spilling into the streets. The shrinkage of civic space helps advance the government's narrative and feeds its strategies for not managing conflict.

As mentioned earlier, Argentina is in a dire situation: the most recent data published by the Argentine Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina show poverty reached **57.4% in January 2024**. This means that **27 million people** in Argentina are poor.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, the latest available data from INDEC show that the basic food basket (BFB) – which includes basic and essential food – increased by **34.1%** during January and February 2024.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the total basic basket (TBB) – that is, basic goods and non-food services including clothes, transport, education, healthcare and more – accrued a **39.4%** increase in the same period. **In February 2024, a person needed 223,592 Argentine pesos to stay above the poverty line.**

Meanwhile, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimates that during the first quarter of 2024 **70.8% of children in Argentina** would be poor, with extreme poverty rates at 34.4%. In absolute terms, this means 8.8 million children live in economic poverty, with 4.3 million living in extreme economic poverty.<sup>9</sup> This projection is based on records from the end of 2023, when over 7 million children lived in households earning below minimum income and around 2.4 million in households unable to cover the BFB.

In such a context of deep crisis – which includes public spending cuts, the decline in economic activity, the rise of poverty, the fall of real wages, the evaporation of pensions and other welfare services, mass layoffs and plummeting purchasing power versus rising inflation – the Argentine

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<sup>7</sup> Argentine Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina. Condiciones materiales de vida de los hogares y la población (2004-2023): evidencias de una pobreza monetaria estructural. 2024. [https://wadmin.uca.edu.ar/public/ckeditor/Observatorio%20Deuda%20Social/Presentaciones/2023/Observatorio\\_Pobreza\\_ingreso\\_5\\_12.pdf](https://wadmin.uca.edu.ar/public/ckeditor/Observatorio%20Deuda%20Social/Presentaciones/2023/Observatorio_Pobreza_ingreso_5_12.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> The BFB in February 2024 (to stay above the extreme poverty line) was valued at 104,482 Argentine pesos per adult equivalent. This means that the BFB quadrupled year-over-year, as the value in February 2023 was 26,046 Argentine pesos. The TBB recorded a 290.2% increase year over year, after reaching 223,592 Argentine pesos in February 2024.

<sup>9</sup> The data above belong to the second half of 2023, based on estimates and projections by UNICEF. UNICEF, *Pobreza monetaria y privaciones vinculadas a derechos en niñas y niños*, March 2024. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/argentina/informes/informe-pobreza>.

state **should not respond with austerity measures** that fail to take into account people, their fundamental rights and the international commitments the country has taken on.

**There is no shying away from this brutal reality, no matter what restrictions or repression are deployed.** Instead of discussing whether people should stay on the sidewalks during demonstrations to keep traffic flowing, whether a permit should be requested or whether the authorities should be informed, we should be discussing how to articulate public policies to lower poverty and extreme poverty rates. In other words, we should be discussing how to get 7 million children in Argentina out of this vulnerable situation. Instead of focusing on people who protest, the focus should be on the state, which is being asked to guarantee no one goes hungry and no one dies a preventable death for not being able to afford their medicines. The necessary efforts must be made to create policies to address this context, **manage this crisis and avoid reinforcing people's silence with more violence.**

Protest is a response to the unsustainable tension created by this conflict. This is not about whether we want conflict or not, as the president suggested during his Congress opening speech: **"If conflict is what you want, then conflict you shall have."**<sup>10</sup> No one wants to live in conflict. The politics of fear seek to build a negative image that stigmatizes and dehumanizes certain groups – the *planeros* (welfare recipients), the *ensobrados* (people who have been bribed), the *vagos* (slackers) – to justify unacceptable repression and silencing.

However, hunger cannot be fought with conflicts or hard-line policies. Managing this conflict is key to ensuring that pensioners have a decent quality of life and children get out of poverty.

The right to protest is facing increasing and unprecedented threats around the world. More and more countries adopt laws and measures to restrict the right to protest, criminalize protesters, enable excessive use of force and expand illegal surveillance, both at selective and mass scales. In this respect, limiting the right to protest is nothing new. In an increasingly unequal and unfair world, Amnesty International has found that by 2021 at least 67 countries had introduced new laws to restrict freedom of expression, association or assembly.<sup>11</sup>

### **Restrictions to the right to protest during the first 100 days of the Milei administration**

On 14 December, the Argentine Security Ministry passed Resolution 943/2023, establishing the "Protocol for Maintaining Public Order in the Event of Road Closures", with the additional Resolution 949/2023 introduced on 21 December. In accordance with relevant international standards, the protocol poses several threats to people's rights, fuels violence and social conflict and ultimately endangers lives and physical integrity.

In a [letter](#) sent to the current administration, UN Special Rapporteurs requested all necessary measures were taken to review the resolution and ensure it complies with relevant international

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ambito.com/politica/javier-milei-la-oposicion-si-lo-que-buscan-es-el-conflicto-conflicto-tendran-n5958353>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/WEBPOL1048702022ENGLISH.pdf>

human rights standards, without imposing undue restrictions on the right of freedom to peaceful assembly.<sup>12</sup>

### Issues identified with the protocol approved by the Argentine Ministry of Security

- **Social protest is deemed a crime:** The protocol sees peaceful protest as a crime, instead of an alternative form of civic engagement or an expression of dissent or complaint. Thus, exercising the right to protest constitutes a crime, and police and federal law enforcement are meant to intervene in the event of a partial or full road closure as the result of a demonstration, without any room for evidence to the contrary.
- **False antagonism between the freedom of movement and the right to protest:** The protocol antagonizes these rights. People making use of their right to social protest do so to demand one or more rights they have been denied. Social protest does not intend to attack or antagonize the rights of others. On the contrary, it addresses the state, and this is the light under which social protest must be analysed. The Argentine legal system does not place any right above others: freedom of movement is not more important than the right to protest, and the right to protest is not more important than freedom of movement. Banning social protest because it could potentially affect freedom of movement is not in line with constitutional rights or human rights standards.
- **Use of force:** The protocol establishes guidelines for police and state intervention that expressly violate the right to freedom of assembly and association and freedom of speech. The underlying premise is that all forms of social protest are a threat to security and law and order. According to the protocol, the use of force **is** the first and only possible state response to social demands on the street, when it should actually be used as an exception and last resort.
- **The use of less-lethal weapons:** Although the protocol establishes that law enforcement will “**always use less-lethal weapons**”, it includes no clear guidelines in line with international human rights standards on the use of force, to avoid serious risks to life and physical integrity. A clear example of this was the intervention of police forces during the protests outside Congress during 31 January and 1 and 2 February 2024. Numerous people were harmed – some with serious and permanent injuries, like Matías A., who is still blind in one eye after being hit by a rubber bullet.
- **Criminalization, persecution and stigmatization of protesters, organizations and specific social groups:** This is especially focused on social and political leaders, social and political organizations and unions, as well as human rights defenders. The protocol establishes that police and law enforcement must gather information on and take photographs of protesters and the organizations they belong to. This was challenged in the courts, and

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<sup>12</sup> <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=28732>



the Ministry has been asked to adapt “police and federal law enforcement interventions to act within the boundaries of the constitutional system.”<sup>13</sup>

- **Accountability for operational costs:** Social organizations that participate in protests could be held accountable for the operational costs incurred by the state in its efforts to open up road closures. They could also be liable for damages to people and state assets.

In an increasingly charged social and economic context, the state should promote a dialogue to reach joint solutions instead of proposals that fuel criminalization and punishment. The peaceful exercise of the right to social protest is fundamental for ensuring a diversity of voices and for democracy itself.

**The anti-protest protocol has already been implemented during the numerous social protests around the National Congress in the City of Buenos Aires.**

Matías Aufieri, a 42-year-old lawyer, participated in the 1 February demonstrations against the Omnibus Bill. As a result of excessive use of police force, he lost his vision in one eye after being hit by a rubber bullet. Aufieri said that protesters were exercising their right peacefully. Most of them were on the sidewalks of the park outside Congress when police started shooting and firing tear gas to break up the group. Several people were injured as a result.

Ivanna Bunge (52) attended the protest on 31 January. Without explanation she was taken in, together with three other women, by police while she was peacefully protesting by singing the national anthem. They were released the following day and, to this day, are still being charged with resisting police authority.

Numerous journalists were also injured due to police repression on 31 January and 1 and 2 February. According to data recorded by Amnesty International, most of the journalists and camera operators injured by rubber bullets and tear gas could be recognized as such, either because they wore their badges and credentials or because they had their cameras on them. Media workers’ unions have filed criminal charges for the attacks on journalists and camera operators.

At least 285 people were injured according to the healthcare unit placed in the park outside Congress (run by doctors and nurses).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> La Plata’s Federal Court on Criminal and Correctional Matters No. 3, under judge Ernesto Kreplak, allowed the filing of a collective writ of habeas corpus to prevent illegal actions from law enforcement forces, which are under the National Ministry of Security, on the 24 January protests. The court ordered the Ministry “to refrain from giving law enforcement under its command any orders that would imply filming or intercepting people on the streets – especially on public transport or when boarding trains – in the context of the protest on 24 January, with the intention of identifying them or carrying out a body search without a warrant and without any of the necessary circumstances covered in Art. 230 bis of the Criminal Procedural Code.” The court also ordered that “law enforcement be instructed that if the circumstances covered in Art. 230 bis of the Criminal Procedural Code were deemed to be present... the relevant judicial proceedings must be recoded for later court controls.” On similar lines, the Federal Court on Criminal and Correctional Matters No. 7 of the City of Buenos Aires granted the precautionary measure requested as part of a motion for unconstitutionality. On 6 February 2024, the court called on “the Ministry of Security of the nation to i) ensure police and federal law enforcement interventions are within the provisions of the constitutional system; ii) instruct police forces and federal law enforcement regarding the court’s awareness on the matter; and iii) acknowledge the protections afforded by international human rights standards, as explained in detail by the Special Rapporteurs to the UN Human Rights Council on 23 January 2024.”

Furthermore, unions and other social organizations denounced the Argentine state to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur for freedom of expression for failing to meet freedom of expression standards.

## The use of force: the Ministry of Security's new regulations

On 14 March, the National Ministry of Security published Resolution 125/2024 in Argentina's Official Bulletin,<sup>15</sup> enacting the *Reglamento General para el empleo de las Armas por parte de los miembros de las Fuerzas Federales de Seguridad* (General Regulations on the Use of Weapons by Federal Law Enforcement), applicable to federal law enforcement and police forces. This resolution loosens and extends the context in which police and law enforcement can use firearms.

Amnesty International expresses our main concerns regarding these regulations:

- These guidelines do not state as a general principle that firearms must be used **only** as a **last resort** and **to protect lives**; that is, when using a firearm is the only way to prevent the loss of another life which is under imminent danger.
- These guidelines resort to **vague and ambiguous** hypothetical scenarios to enable the use of firearms, leaving the ultimate decision to law enforcement.
- They enable the use of firearms under mere **assumptions** or potential possession of a weapon.
- They expand the range of situations deemed as “**imminent danger**”, when police and law enforcement are enabled to use firearms.
- They restrict law enforcement **accountability**. By advising that no administrative investigation will be opened “in cases where it has been credibly proven that the actions of a police or law enforcement agent followed these regulations and as long as there is, otherwise, no solid judicial ruling to the contrary”, the regulations state that the relevant leadership will not need to take any precautionary or disciplinary administrative measures. In other words, there will not be any internal investigations to verify whether officials are applying excessive use of force.

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<sup>14</sup> Comisión Provincial por la Memoria. The report is available at: [https://www.comisionporlamemoria.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2024/02/Nota-4248\\_-Informe-a-la-Camara-de-Diputados-sobre-la-represion-en-el-Congreso.pdf](https://www.comisionporlamemoria.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2024/02/Nota-4248_-Informe-a-la-Camara-de-Diputados-sobre-la-represion-en-el-Congreso.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Security, Resolution 125/2024, RESOL-2024-125-APN-MSG. Available at: [BOLETIN OFICIAL REPUBLICA ARGENTINA - MINISTERIO DE SEGURIDAD - Resolución 125/2024](#)

Law enforcement forces must take all necessary and timely pre-emptive measures to avoid the loss of life (under the principle of proportionality), as established by the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Pensioners: an urgent need put on hold

According to the 2022 population census, there are 8,845,985 people in Argentina who receive some form of benefit from the national pensions system. Among them, 56.6% receive only their old-age pension (retirement), 6.9% get only surviving spouse benefits, 13.2% receive both retirement and surviving spouse benefits and 23.3% get other types of benefits.<sup>17</sup>

The minimum old-age pension per month in March reached 134,445.30 Argentine pesos,<sup>18</sup> a 27.2% increase compared to the previous three months (105,713 pesos). This is the result of the current pension formula set out in Law 24,241, which establishes that pension updates are to be adjusted based on the sum of 50% of the quarterly rise in the National Social Security Agency's (ANSES) revenue and 50% of wage variations. Pensioners have also been given an additional bonus of up to 70,000 pesos. It is a step up from the 55,000-peso monthly bonus given to minimum pension beneficiaries between December 2023 and February 2024.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, the sum of the minimum pension and the March bonus granted beneficiaries 204,445.30 Argentine pesos. People who received less than that but more than the minimum pension (134,455.30 pesos) were also given a one-time proportional bonus in March to level them up.<sup>20</sup>

This shows the evolution of pensions has remained far behind the inflation accrued over the last three months. The consumer price index (CPI) calculated by INDEC in February was 71.4% higher than that of November 2023 – far higher than the above-mentioned increase for pensions in March. Inflation levels can be largely explained by the strong devaluation of the peso carried out during the first week of the Milei administration. This decision fuelled an increase in the already high inflation rates inherited from the previous administration. As a result, **the sum of the minimum pension and the bonus has lost around a quarter of its purchasing power in barely three months.**

This drastic fall in pensioners' real income just adds to the sustained decline pensions benefits have suffered in the last few years based on the different formulas applied to update them. The trend seems to show that pension rises have lagged behind the high inflation rates that are now a staple of Argentina's economy. According to an analysis carried out by the Mirador de la

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<sup>16</sup> United Nations, *Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials*, 7 September 1990. Available at: [Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ambito.com/informacion-general/censo-2022-cuantos-argentinos-son-jubilados-alquilan-o-usan-la-salud-publica-n5881168>

<sup>18</sup> DNU 177/2024 <https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/302948/20240223>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> [Aumento para jubilaciones, pensiones, asignaciones y bono de hasta \\$70.000 | ANSES](#)

Actualidad del Trabajo y la Economía using data from INDEC and ANSES, the purchasing power of pensioners who get the minimum has fallen by more than a third (35%) between January 2015 and January 2024.<sup>21</sup> And without taking into account the additional bonuses (given since 2022), the real value of minimum pensions in January 2024 is less than half (43%) what it was in 2015 and 17% lower than average levels in the 1990s.

This process has led to an unprecedented result. Since January 2024, for the first time since INDEC implemented a new measuring methodology in 2016, the minimum pension (including additional bonuses) has not managed to cover the TBB per adult equivalent. The TBB reached 193,146 pesos in January and 223,592.74 in February, which exceeds the 160,713 pesos a month pensioners received in that period. In other words, **according to official statistics, the minimum pension today is below the poverty line.**

The situation worsens when considering indicators from organizations other than INDEC. According to the Defensor de la Tercera Edad of the City of Buenos Aires, in October 2023, the basic basket for pensioners<sup>22</sup> was already valued at 313,185 pesos. Considering the inflation rates accrued between October 2023 and February 2024 (93.3%), that basic basket would now be estimated at around 600,000 pesos. This means that **pensioners today barely reach a third of the income needed to be above the poverty line.**

Meanwhile, the measurements by the Southern Institute of Social and Economic Research (IIESS), part of the Universidad Nacional del Sur, show that the basic food basket for old-age people in Bahía Blanca rose to 136,631 pesos in February 2024.<sup>23</sup> Unlike INDEC's, IIESS's methodology considers particular nutritional recommendations and food products that are largely specific to older adults. Based on this, the TBB for old-age adults in Bahía Blanca in February ranged between 311,232 and 420,403 pesos, depending on the survey of household expenses taken as a benchmark. It is clear that **both sums are significantly higher than the minimum pension for the same period, making all those pensioners statistically poor.**

All in all, **the fall of pension benefits has been one of the main pillars of the fiscal adjustment carried out by the Milei administration since its first day.** According to the Argentine Institute of Fiscal Analysis, 43% (1,682 trillion pesos) of the total reduction in primary spending during the first two months of 2024 (3,869 trillion pesos, at the value in February) is based on pension cuts.<sup>24</sup> In real terms, pension expenditures dropped by 33% compared to the first two months of 2023.<sup>25</sup> This shows that, **far from affecting the “caste”, a significant part of the current spending cuts is based on drastically reducing the income of the elderly.**

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<sup>21</sup> [06-576x1024.png \(576x1024\) \(mateconomia.com.ar\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> **GERONTOVIDA:** this basic basket takes into account housing, transport, clothing, leisure, utilities, food, cleaning and medicines. It has a similar composition to the total basic basket measured by INDEC.

<sup>23</sup> [PowerPoint presentation \(conicet.gov.ar\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Economic report \(iaraf.org\)](#)

<sup>25</sup> [ANALYSIS ON THE BUDGET EXECUTION OF THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION FOR FEBRUARY 2024 - Oficina de Presupuesto del Congreso \(opc.gob.ar\)](#)

All this considered, it is concerning that the government's measures do not provide an immediate solution to guarantee a decent quality of living for pensioners. **Instead of addressing this situation, the government has presented** counterarguments based on the motto "there is no money" and on pensioners being "the age group with the fewest poor people in Argentina". Strictly speaking, **pensioners are not a "sector" or an "age group"; they are those who have consistently lost not only purchasing power, but also their calm and dignity over the last few decades.** Imposing cuts on those who have already been affected does not reflect a fiscal plan prioritizing the human rights imperative of working on a proposal that gives them their purchasing power back and shows support for future economic variables.

In fact, the Executive branch included a reform for the pensions scheme in the Omnibus Bill, which proposed updating pension benefits based on monthly CPI-based inflation rates starting on 1 April 2024. It is worth noting that, even if the bill had been passed, that would not have solved the dramatic fall in pensioners' purchasing power.

So what is the prognosis? To analyse the evolution in pensioners' purchasing power, it is necessary to look at the bigger picture surrounding the social security benefits paid by ANSES. Beneficiaries use this money to cover both their regular expenses (estimated based on the pensioners' basic basket) and their extraordinary expenses (a factor that, at an advanced life stage, can increasingly spiral for myriad reasons). Therefore, a proposal for pension reform to guarantee pensioners' right to social security must at least:

- Guarantee that all measures substantially improve the living conditions of older people by ensuring them access to quality services and resources.
- Progressively increase pension payments to the maximum level of available resources, with a special focus on those who receive the minimum pension. The goal should shift from ensuring pensioners do not "lose" against inflation – they have already lost too much in previous years, to the point where the minimum does not cover the basic basket. The goal should be to effectively "win" against inflation and improve their purchasing power, which would require reframing their income levels based on their needs. The formulas under discussion do not explicitly state how pensioners would gradually increase their purchasing power beyond "matching" inflation.
- Take urgent measures to ensure pensioners' wages gain back their purchasing power to guarantee enough resources for a decent quality of life.

Once again, the biggest losers are pensioners. They are always at the top of the cuts list. No administration has so far prioritized pensioners.

**Signature collection:**

**In January, Amnesty International launched a global action to collect signatures to request lawmakers that any reform proposal** must substantially improve living conditions for pensioners by ensuring quality services and resources so that the cuts do not fall yet again on them.

## Reporting as a basis for lawmaking: transparency and accountability

Amnesty International maintains that any reform that can affect people's rights should be supported by a **social impact report**. But what does that mean? It means that when recommending or proposing reform policies – like that of the pensions scheme – this should be supported by an assessment explaining, projecting and reporting how that measure would benefit or produce the intended effect on people's rights. **This is a fundamental requirement in contexts of economic and financial crises, where states focus their efforts on stabilizing the economy by reducing public spending. In that process, population needs go unmet, especially among people at risk of or living in poverty.**

In this sense, other countries have put in place mechanisms that state the need to issue a social impact report before introducing a regulatory reform. These reports are intended to measure the real-life effects of the policies under debate from multiple perspectives (fiscal, economic, social, environmental and more). Thus, they can provide decision-makers (both policymakers when it comes to bills and Executive branch authorities for administrative regulations) with as much information as possible in a timely manner.

Argentina has been facing a dire social and economic situation for many years – the country cannot take any more improvised measures. A diagnosis could even venture to say that the negligent approach to public policymaking, based on poor prior empirical analysis, is precisely one of the reasons for the current decline in the social fabric, regardless of the current political party in charge. A prior assessment of the social impact of a policy could help promote analysis- and evidence-based decision-making, and mitigate the risks of ill-fated measures taken spontaneously without proper consideration.

### **4. Unregulated private healthcare and the potential effects on the public healthcare system**

In December 2023, a few days after taking office, the national Executive branch issued decree 70/2023 (DNU 70/23), which – among many other things – repealed decree 743/2022, which limited price rises for private healthcare. It also repealed some articles from Law 26,682, which granted the Ministry of Health (through the National Superintendence of Healthcare Services) the power to monitor compliance of the Mandatory Medical Programme and of service contracts and to ensure that plans were reasonably priced based on the services offered. This eliminated the cap on price rises for private healthcare companies, as well as the ability of the Ministry of Health to control them.

These measures had an immediate effect: most private healthcare companies raised their monthly prices, on average, by 40% in January, 30% in February and 23% in March.

According to data from the 2022 national census, 64% of the population have some form of healthcare coverage, whether through social security or private healthcare. Around 14.7% are covered by regulated private healthcare companies: 40% have joined personally, while the remaining 60% transfer their contributions from other schemes (either through corporate plans or the deregulation of social security entities).<sup>26</sup> Almost 36% of the population (over 16 million people) do not have private or social security coverage (PAMI and union-run entities) and rely exclusively on the public healthcare system.<sup>27</sup> In other words, more than three out of 10 people only have access to the public healthcare system.

As many private healthcare members cannot afford these increasing prices, they have filed complaints against the state and private healthcare companies or joined ongoing cases questioning the price rises and the constitutionality of the articles in the DNU 70/23 that support them. Based on the records of two of the class actions on this matter, dozens of people join every day, while others prefer to file individual complaints.

For example, a 78 year-old woman claimed that with her pension – which barely exceeded 300,000 pesos – it would be impossible to afford the price increases of her private health coverage of 40% in January and later 29.5% in February, and that this would affect her right to health, to life and to private property.<sup>28</sup> On 15 January, the courts ordered the healthcare provider Hospital Italiano to nullify the increases expressly based on the DNU 70/23, and to limit the price updates to those authorized by the competent authority. On 27 February, the judge extended the measure to more than 100 members and their families, who “are mostly old-age pensioners, with pre-existing conditions, people with disabilities, and who have been affiliated to the provider for many years”. Similarly, on 13 March, the courts issued a precautionary measure in favour of a member of the provider OSDE and determined that such measure would be applicable to all cases of future members who are in the same circumstances and face similar price rises from OSDE.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, DNU 70/23 ordered the integration of private healthcare companies to the social security system (known as *obras sociales*). This means that people will be able to decide to which organization they want to assign their contributions, without having to transfer their funds from an assigned social security organization.

The previous scheme was based on the principle of solidarity to ensure funding for social security organizations that cover workers who make smaller contributions. Thus, dismantling this system

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<sup>26</sup> National Population, Households and Housing Census 2022. Definitive results. Healthcare and pensions. Available at: [https://censo.gob.ar/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CNPHV2022\\_RD\\_Salud-y-prevision.pdf](https://censo.gob.ar/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CNPHV2022_RD_Salud-y-prevision.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Federal Court on Civil, Commercial and Administrative Matters No. 2 of San Martín. This is the first case so far that has been filed as a class action to the National Supreme Court of Justice, “Brauchi”.

<sup>29</sup> Federal Court No. 2 of Concepción del Uruguay, “MORSENTTI, FERNANDO ISMAEL c/ORGANIZACIÓN DE SERVICIOS DIRECTOS EMPRESARIOS – OSDE- s/AMPARO LEY 16.986”, Expte. No. 1461/2024

could lead to the defunding of social security entities, leaving workers who cannot afford to go private without healthcare coverage.

**The public healthcare system – defunded and overburdened.** On 26 December 2023, the Executive branch issued decree 88/2023, which extended the 2023 budget to 2024. According to data published by the National Ministry of Health, the healthcare budget for 2023 totalled 390,585,849,846 pesos.<sup>30</sup> This same budget has also been allocated for 2024, without any consideration for high inflation rates and rising costs in different areas of healthcare. Thus, extending the budget as it is, represents a clear step towards defunding the public healthcare system.

It is essential that the state, as guarantor of access to healthcare, allocates the necessary budget to meet the potentially higher demand on the public healthcare system. The state must guarantee access to healthcare from the perspectives of both solidarity and equality.

## 5. Violence against women

### Termination of pregnancies

In December 2020, the Argentine National Congress passed Law 27,610, legalizing the voluntary termination of pregnancy. The current law on abortion rights is the result of one of the most democratic and robust debates Argentina has seen. More than 700 experts in different fields participated and shared their views, both for and against. It was a historic milestone for the human rights of women and people who can get pregnant, rooted in a deep democratic process.

Three years after the law was passed, there is overwhelming evidence of its huge positive impact on the health of women, adolescents and girls. Between 2021 and October 2023, 245,015 people had access to a safe abortion through the public healthcare system.<sup>31</sup> According to the latest records, abortion-related deaths decreased by 56% between 2020 and 2021.<sup>32</sup> Partly thanks to early access to quality sexual and reproductive health information, resources and services, 90% of terminations occurred in the first trimester.<sup>33</sup>

Despite all this, during the first 100 days of this administration, the national government's initiatives and statements point towards a regressive scenario. During his address at the 2024 World Economic Forum in Davos, President Javier Milei commented on the “bloody abortion

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<sup>30</sup> Available at: [Presupuesto | Argentina.gob.ar](https://presupuesto.argentina.gob.ar)

<sup>31</sup> National Direction of Sexual and Reproductive Health, National Ministry of Health, *Implementar IVE-ILE, Ley 27.610, años 2021, 2022 e informe actualizado a 2023*.

<sup>32</sup> Direction of Health-Related Statistics and Information, National Ministry of Health. *Estadísticas vitales. Información Básica Argentina 2021*. Available at: <https://bancos.salud.gob.ar/sites/default/files/2023-03/serie-5-nro-65-anuario-vitales-2021.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Government of the City of Buenos Aires. Ministry of Health. *Salud sexual y reproductiva en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Situación y respuesta. Actualización 2022. Coordination for Sexual Health, HIV and STIs, 2023*. Available at: [https://buenosaires.gob.ar/sites/default/files/2023-09/Situacion%20y%20respuesta%20-%20Actualizacion%202022\\_0.pdf](https://buenosaires.gob.ar/sites/default/files/2023-09/Situacion%20y%20respuesta%20-%20Actualizacion%202022_0.pdf) y GPBA. Ministry of Health. *Informe epidemiológico. Aborto en la Provincia de Buenos Aires. 2022*. <https://www.ms.gba.gov.ar/sitios/aborto/wp-content/uploads/sites/247/2024/03/INFORME-EPIDEMIOLOGICO-ACCESO-AL-ABORTO-PBA-2022.pdf>



agenda”. A few weeks later, at the start of the school year at a secondary school, he said abortion is a crime, specifically an “aggravated murder” based on the relationship with the victim, a remark at odds with his legal obligations as head of state. This is a very serious stance. The president is responsible for guaranteeing the right to abortion, yet he spreads disinformation, which could intimidate or deter women and people who can get pregnant. These remarks also spread fear among society, making people scared of exercising their right just because the president considers it a crime. Law 27,610 establishes the right to voluntary termination of pregnancy and reaffirms the right to legal termination of pregnancy, which has been in effect since 1921 and is supported by international human rights commitments.

In Congress, the president’s party also introduced a bill to repeal Law 27,610 and promote the full criminalization of abortion, reverting the country to before 1921. Finally, 2024 has been declared – through a presidential decree – as the “Year of the Defence of Life, Liberty and Property”.

This is a great concern for Amnesty International. If the state does not support and strengthen public policies around sexual and reproductive health, it could multiply the barriers to access abortion services, aggravate the lack of information on how and where to access an abortion or even affect the availability of supplies, technical assets and human resources.

### **Impact of an unintended pregnancy in adolescence**

An unintended pregnancy in adolescence has negative impacts on a teenager’s long-term outcomes. When it comes to education, only four out of 10 adolescents who get pregnant finish school. Later on, they face more barriers to enter the job market and access quality employment, and they earn a third less than their peers.<sup>34</sup>

As a result, since 2017, Argentina has been implementing the National Plan against Unintended Teenage Pregnancy (Plan ENIA). Its cross-jurisdictional and inter-ministerial approach has helped provide a coordinated and comprehensive response. It has had a huge impact in reducing teenage pregnancy, with a 49% drop recorded in four years.<sup>35</sup> In other words, records show approximately 24,000 fewer teenage pregnancies.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, unintended pregnancy rates dropped by 30% among adolescents (15–19) and by 14% in childhood (10–15), most of which are the result of sexual abuse and rape.<sup>37</sup>

Considering these results, which make Argentina a regional and global leader in the matter, the lack of clear political support for the Plan ENIA is concerning. During President Milei’s first 100 days in office, the national state suspended the funds allocated to the offices where the Plan ENIA

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<sup>34</sup> UNFPA. Consecuencias socioeconómicas del embarazo en la adolescencia en Argentina, 2020. Available at: <https://argentina.unfpa.org/es/Consecuencias-socioeconomicas-del-embarazo-en-la-adolescencia-en-Argentina>

<sup>35</sup> UNFPA, *Embarazo no intencional en la adolescencia en Argentina*, 2024. Written by Federico Tobar, Senior Advisor working on strengthening healthcare systems and funding. UNFPA. New York.

<sup>36</sup> In 2018, 69,803 teenagers aged 15–19 and 1,938 girls under 15 years old had a child. In 2021, those numbers dropped to 46,236 teenagers aged 15–19 and 1,394 girls under 15.

<sup>37</sup> UNFPA, *Embarazo no intencional en la adolescencia en Argentina*, 2024. Written by Federico Tobar, Senior Advisor working on strengthening healthcare systems and funding. UNFPA. New York.

operated in five provinces. This also disregards the role of the National Health Ministry as the body governing the implementation of Plan ENIA nationwide. The plan requires access to essential supplies, technical assets and human resources for its efficient and proper implementation at a national scale.

Early motherhood contributes to perpetuating intergenerational poverty cycles, affects national aggregate productivity and severely impacts people's health. Girls' and adolescents' human rights must be guaranteed – having them bear the disproportionate brunt of government cuts is unacceptable. The national state has the duty to maintain and strengthen the Plan ENIA, not dismantle it.

### **Femicides: women are still being killed**

Femicides are the worst form of violence against women. According to civil society reports, in 2023 in Argentina, one woman was murdered due to their gender every 28 hours.<sup>38</sup> In the first two months of 2024, 49 femicides have been recorded across the country.<sup>39</sup>

In more than half of cases, the perpetrator is someone who knows the victim, usually their current or former partner.<sup>40</sup> These numbers show that violence against women and gender-diverse people remains a pervasive issue that needs a comprehensive, effective and urgent response by the authorities and society as a whole.

Public policies to prevent, punish and eradicate gender-based violence must be a priority for any government. Therefore, Amnesty International is concerned by the denial of gender-based violence and gender inequality through toxic, abusive and violent narratives shared by the national executive branch. This goes hand in hand with the lack of clarity in public policies and resources to address this issue. In contexts of serious social and economic crises, gender-based violence intensifies, more so when paired with budget cuts. In real terms, the budget has dropped by 33% in comparison to 2023, a larger cut than that suffered by the total national budget (24%). This evidences the targeted defunding of gender-based policies.<sup>41</sup>

Other related policies that have suffered major cuts include the 144 phone line (12%) and the Acompañar programme (69%), which were intended to provide assistance, support, advice and financial aid to women and LGBTQI+ people experiencing violence.<sup>42</sup> At the same time, it is fundamental to maintain other public policies to ensure people's right to justice, as is the case of the **Acercar Derechos programme** or the **Body of State Lawyers**, which guarantee victims of violence free access to legal aid. The **Micaela Law** requires state officials to undergo mandatory gender-based training, and it is essential to guarantee the appropriate cross-jurisdictional and

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<sup>38</sup> Observatorio Ahora que sí nos ven. Available at: <https://ahoraquesinosven.com.ar/reports/femicidios-2023>

<sup>39</sup> Observatorio Ahora que sí nos ven. Available at: <https://ahoraquesinosven.com.ar/reports/49-femicidios-en-los-dos-primeros-meses-del-2024>

<sup>40</sup> National database on femicides, 2022 edition. Women's Office, National Supreme Court of Justice.

<sup>41</sup> CIJ, ELA, Amnesty International, CELS, Economía Feminista, Fundar and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Argentina. *Un ajuste que agranda la brecha. ¿Qué pasa con el presupuesto para las políticas de género?* Available at: <https://acij.org.ar/un-ajuste-que-agranda-la-brecha/>

<sup>42</sup> Idem.

inter-ministerial approach to gender-violence situations. Despite its relevance, the national Executive branch submitted a bill to limit its reach and drain its content.

It is the national Executive branch's duty to maintain and strengthen public policies of prevention, assistance and protection to help women and LGBTQI+ people. Breaking cycles of violence requires guaranteeing women are financially independent. This means not only creating job opportunities but also promoting fair and equal working conditions. Moreover, having access to justice plays a key role in ensuring women and girls have the necessary protection and safeguarding measures when faced with situations of violence and can protest for the recognition of their infringed rights.

### The impact of poverty on women

No one can deny that economic crises have a differential effect on women: two out of three people in the lowest earning tier are women.<sup>43</sup>

At the same time, women are mostly in charge of house chores and care for the 57.5%<sup>44</sup> of children and adolescents living in poverty today. Most of them raise their children on their own.<sup>45</sup> This creates significant challenges for accessing financial resources and job opportunities. In fact, based on information from 2022, over **1,600,000 women** are single parents and heads of their household.<sup>46</sup> As a result, child-raising and care work, which are unpaid, fall exclusively on their shoulders.

Meanwhile, the pay gap between men and women – that is, the difference in salary between genders – is at 27.7%. This means that employed women had to work eight days and 10 hours more than employed men to earn the same over the course of a month.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned above, according to data from UNICEF on the second quarter of 2023, **seven out of 10 children are living in poverty**.<sup>48</sup> Poverty is a structural issue that affects the development, independence and enjoyment of human rights of millions of people. Gender inequality, the challenges to access equal working conditions, the barriers to complete education, the burden of unpaid chores and family obligations are some of the main drivers of poverty among women and girls.

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Women, Genders and Diversity. *La participación de las mujeres en el trabajo, el ingreso y la producción*. second quarter, 2022.

<sup>44</sup> UNICEF. *Situación de niñez y adolescencia: 2023-2024. Pobreza, presupuesto y suficiencia del sistema de protección de ingresos*. March 2024. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/argentina/media/21161/file>

<sup>45</sup> Based on data from the Argentine Social Debt Observatory of the Universidad Católica Argentina, February 2024.

<sup>46</sup> Índice Crianza. Costo de bienes y servicios esenciales y cuidado de niños, niñas y adolescentes. Ministry of Economy, National Direction of the Economy, Equality and Gender. March 2023. Moreover, according to INDEC, women spend twice as many hours a day as men doing house chores and unpaid care work. *Encuesta Nacional de Uso del Tiempo 2021. Resultados definitivos*. Ministry of Economy. INDEC.

<sup>47</sup> National Direction of the Economy, Equality and Gender. Ministry of Economy. *¿Por qué las mujeres ganan menos? Las brechas de género en la economía argentina*, first quarter 2022.

<sup>48</sup> UNICEF, *Pobreza monetaria y privaciones vinculadas a derechos en niñas y niños*, March 2024. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/argentina/informes/informe-pobreza>.

These trends are also fuelled by the budget cuts, defunding policies and austerity measures adopted by the national Executive branch. Eradicating poverty demands comprehensive programmes and strategies addressing the multiple causes aggravating poverty and gender inequality, as well as offering real opportunities for women and girls.

## 6. Climate change denial: exploiting natural resources at all costs

The current government's stance on climate change has been denial: "Global warming is a socialist lie." They have also added: "Ten or even 15 years ago, they argued the planet was going to freeze. Now they say it is warming up. People who know how these simulations are made will understand that some parameters are overstated to spread fear."

Following this reasoning, the Executive branch has proposed modifying cornerstone legislation in a way that throws overboard the land and environmental protection system created through the National Forestry Law, the Protection against Fires Law, the Glaciers Law, the Rural Land Law and the Oil and Gas Law.

### Threats to environmental laws:

The Omnibus Bill included multiple articles with regressive reforms to key legislation for protecting the environment, with a direct impact on people.

1. National Forestry Law: The reform would enable deforestation in currently protected areas.
2. Glaciers Law: The reform would restrict the broad definition of the current legislation, potentially enabling mining in periglacial areas.
3. Law on Minimum Environmental Protection Standards to Control Burning Activities: The reform would enable tacit approval for burning activities after 90 days without any state intervention, and also defund the National Fire Management Service.
4. Oil and Gas Law: The reform would prioritize earnings over the needs of the internal market and the sustainability of reserves by eliminating environmental safeguards.

Although the Omnibus Bill was not passed, these reforms could later be back on the agenda. Therefore, Amnesty International raises again the environmental commitments taken on by Argentina, together with the obligation to assess and analyse the environmental impact of these reforms. Any changes to the legislation regulating key environmental aspects demand an **assessment and analysis of their environmental impact**, as well as the basis for such a proposal.

## 7. Conclusions

In local and global contexts where dehumanizing and divisive discourse and toxic and hostile narratives continue to take root, we need an urgent response to address this recipe that combines **confrontation, hate, fearmongering and fake news with austerity measures and**

**institutional decline.** Now more than ever, people must be the main focus of governmental priorities.

We celebrate the fight against corruption and the denunciation of any illegal business. We celebrate an approach that projects changes to end the many years of crises and distrust.

However, if there is a genuine will to take Argentina down a path where it can guarantee economic stability, freedom and rights for people, then it is the government's duty to do it the right way, without breaking the boundaries of the rule of law.

If that is the path and those are the goals, this government will find an ally and a relentless collaborator in Amnesty International. Amnesty International works every day towards that goal and will continue to do so both here – in Argentina – and around the world.