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Technical Change and Polarization of the Labor Market: Evidence for Brazil, Colombia and Mexico

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We use occupations descriptions for Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, to build computer-use related tasks intensities, and link then to series of cross sections of data of each country in order to empirically assess to what extent the observed empirical regularities, and the reallocation of workers across occupations that require different tasks intensities, are consistent with the SBTC or polarization models. We find an increase of both wages and workers at the extremes of the wage or skills occupations distribution, the less routinaire/computerizabe, particularly pronounced in the period since personal computers began to be introduced in the region. This finding, along with other empirical regularities, provides support for some of the main implications of the polarization model in the cases of Colombia and Mexico.

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