

# The path to gender equality in Colombia: Are we there yet?

Download Other Working Papers Keep in mind

The series Working Papers on Economics is published by the Office for Economic Studies at the *Banco de la República* (Central Bank of *Colombia*). It contributes to the dissemination and promotion of the work by researchers from the institution. This series is indexed at Research Papers in Economics (RePEc).

On multiple occasions, these works have been the result of collaborative work with individuals from other national or international institutions. The works published are provisional, and their authors are fully responsible for the opinions expressed in them, as well as for possible mistakes. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Banco de la República or its Board of Directors.

AUTHOR OR EDITOR Ana María Iregui-Bohórquez Ligia Alba Melo-Becerra María Teresa Ramírez-Giraldo Ana María Tribín-Uribe

The series Borradores de Economía (Working Papers on Economics) contributes to the dissemination and promotion of the work by researchers from the institution. On multiple occasions, these works have been the result of collaborative work with individuals from other national or international institutions. This series is indexed at Research Papers in Economics (RePEc)

Publication Date: Thursday, 10 of September 2020

The opinions contained in this document are the sole responsibility of the author and do not commit Banco de la República or its Board of Directors.

## Abstract

This document analyzes the historical process of women transformation in education, employment, fertility, civil rights and political participation in Colombia during the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. Four stages of this transformation were identified in this article. The first stage, from 1905 to 1935, was characterized by high fertility and maternal mortality rates, low enrollment rates in education, low labor participation and few civil and political rights. In the second stage, between 1936 and 1965, high fertility rates and low labor participation continued to be observed; however, enrollment in education increased, although it was still low. During this stage, women achieved the right to vote and the right to be elected. The third stage, between 1966 and 1985, stood out for the demographic transition, for a greater education of women and for an increase in their labor participation. In the fourth stage, from 1985 to the present, there is a significant increase in the enrollment of women in higher education, exceeding that of men. Maternal mortality and fertility rates continued to decline, women's labor participation kept increasing, although since the beginning of the 21st century it stagnated, and the wage gender gap still persists. Also, a greater presence of women in politics is observed; however, they are a minority in this area. Finally, despite the progress made by women throughout the period analyzed, gender inequalities are still entrenched and persist over time, especially in labor and political participation.