



# MEGA- CITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE IN LATIN AMERICA

what its people think

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# THE LATIN AMERICAN REALITY

*For more information:*

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# LATiN AMERICA

is the development region with the highest worldwide urbanization rate. Today, the urban population in the region accounts for more than 82% of the total population and this percentage is expected to reach 90% in 2050. Consequently, cities in the region show a significant concentration of economic activity.

Cities with a population larger than 10 million people, also known as megacities, have turned into the focal points of Latin American development. They play a key role in innovation, the concentration of expert workforce, the dynamic development of economic activities and the provision of educational, cultural and recreational services.

However, this rapid growth poses significant challenges on environmental and social sustainability: high levels of inequality, unEmprego, insecurity, environmental pollution and poor public services. In turn, extreme climatic events are becoming more widespread, increasing the vulnerability of cities and, in particular, the vulnerability of the most disadvantaged people. In addition, urban life accelerates climate change: the cities, collectively, are responsible for the consumption of more than 75% of the distributed energy and generate between 75 to 80% of greenhouse gases. All of these challenges are affecting and will continue to affect the quality of life of the cities' inhabitants.

Urban infrastructure and the provision of public services that depend on it, play a crucial role in improving the quality of life, equity and social inclusion in our cities. Through these, people can have access to a steady supply of drinking water, electricity without frequent power cuts, well lit neighborhoods, clean and drained streets, clean air, safe and rapid transport, solid educational and hospital buildings and access to parks, rivers or bays free of pollution.

As the populations and economies of Latin America grow, the demand for adequate, equitable, high quality infrastructure that respects the environment, increases. Answering and meeting the demands of the citizens of the region requires innovative and sustainable solutions focused on the quality of the service that urban infrastructure offers.

**IN LATE 2013,** the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) conducted a multisectoral public opinion survey in five Latin American cities to better understand the way citizens perceive the quality of life, the needs of urban infrastructure and the standards of public services. Of the five surveyed cities, three are megacities (Mexico City, São Paulo and Buenos Aires) and two will soon become megacities (Bogotá and Lima). For this exercise, the IDB adapted the methodology developed by its [Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative](#) that has used these types of surveys in more than 15 cities, paying special attention to cities with populations between 100,000 and 2 million.

The survey aims to understand the current situation of urban infrastructure and the provision of public services that depend on it. With this survey, it is possible to:

- Identify the most problematic issues for the sustainable development of cities
- Prioritize the issues with the biggest impact on the quality of life of its inhabitants
- Get more in-depth knowledge of the basic needs of its inhabitants

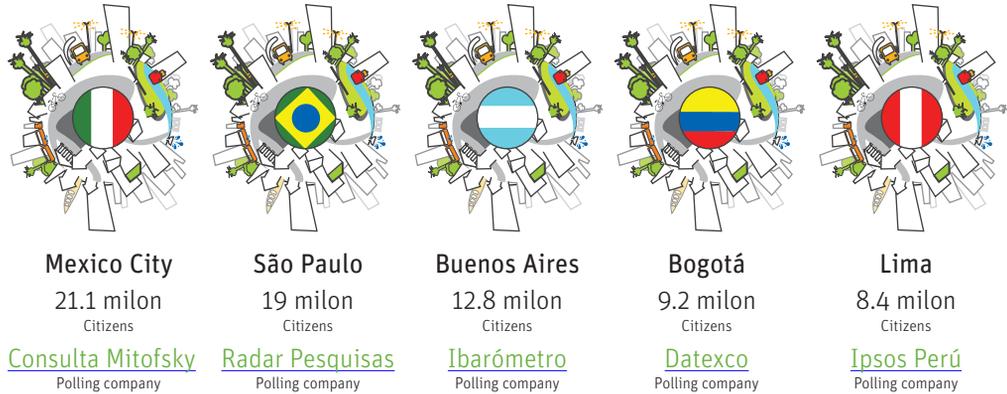
The survey focuses on 20 key issues allowing a multisectoral framework for analyzing the quality of infrastructure services.

## KEY ISSUES

- Water
- Sanitation
- Solid waste management
- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Employment
- Energy
- Connectivity
- Transport
- Climate change mitigation
- Land use (public spaces)
- Air quality
- Vulnerability to natural disasters (heavy rain)
- Noises
- Urban inequality
- Public safety
- Transparency
- Modern public management (bureaucracy)
- Participative public management (participation)

5 CITIES 20 ISSUES 109 QUESTIONS  
5000 INTERVIEWEES

**AS** part of the research effort, we selected 5 cities in Latin America. In October and November 2013, expert interviewers conducted 1,000 surveys in each city.



The different polling companies followed similar methodologies:

- Target group: Men and women over 18
- Geographical coverage: Selected cities and the greater areas
- Sampling plan: Random sampling
- Sampling frame: Households from all socioeconomic backgrounds
- Sample size: 1,000 surveys in each city
- Collection technique: Person-to-person interviews at the household
- Margin of error and reliability (accuracy): The measurement error is +/- 3.1%, for a confidence level of 95%

The survey was adapted to the language and specific characteristics of each city. In total, each respondent answered about 109 questions. The used surveys for each city can be accessed using the following links:

[Mexico City](#) | [São Paulo](#) | [Buenos Aires](#) | [Bogotá](#) | [Lima](#)

# CONCLU- SIONS

& PRELIMINARY  
RESULTS

**THIS** diverse and extensive information base allowed a comparison between the megacities of the region and allowed us to identify the most critical challenges of our cities for the future sustainability of Latin America. The survey revealed four general observations on urban infrastructure in Latin America:

- Inhabitants of the urban centers of Latin America are demanding greater transparency and participation.
- The inhabitants of the surveyed cities belonging to the middle class think the quality of **transport** significantly affects their quality of life since they are the largest group of users of public transport.
- General to basic services such as **water, sanitation and electricity** remain a pending issue for the lower economic classes in the megacities of our region.
- Most inhabitants of the surveyed cities believe that the effects of **climate change** affects them directly.

In the same way, the given responses allowed for the classification of the various issues that affect the quality of life of citizens in order of priority.

**SAFETY &  
TRANSPARENCY**

**ARE THE TOP  
PRIORITY ISSUES**  
independent of social classes.

## **ELECTRICITY, SANITATION, WATER & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

are the least prioritized issues across all five cities. However, the lower classes tend to see more value in these areas than the upper and middle classes.

**1 OUT OF 6**

citizens interviewed  
think that

**PUBLIC SPACES**

are among the top four urban priorities

05



# PRIORITIES

	Mexico City	São Paulo	Buenos Aires	Bogotá	Lima	
1	Safety	Transparency	Safety	Safety	Safety	1
2	Transparency	Participation	Inequality	Transparency	Transparency	2
3	Bureaucracy	Safety	Transport	Transport	Transport	3
4	Participation	Transport	Transparency	Noise	Participation	4
5	Climate change	Bureaucracy	Health	Climate change	Health	5
6	Heavy rain	Health	Bureaucracy	Participation	Bureaucracy	6
7	Inequality	Public spaces	Heavy rain	Health	Noise	7
8	Air quality	Climate change	Noise	Bureaucracy	Climate change	8
9	Health	Air quality	Participation	Heavy rain	Public spaces	9
10	Water	Noise	Employment	Air quality	Air quality	10
11	Public spaces	Inequality	Cambio climático	Inequality	Inequality	11
12	Transport	Education	Public spaces	Employment	Employment	12
13	Employment	Heavy rain	Air quality	Public spaces	Housing	13
14	Noise	Employment	Housing	Education	Education	14
15	Sanitation	Conectivity	Solid waste	Housing	Solid waste	15
16	Solid waste	Housing	Conectivity	Conectivity	Conectivity	16
17	Energy	Sanitation	Water	Solid waste	Water	17
18	Housing	Water	Energy	Sanitation	Energy	18
19	Conectivity	Energy	Education	Water	Sanitation	19
20	Education	Solid waste	Sanitation	Energy	Heavy rain	20

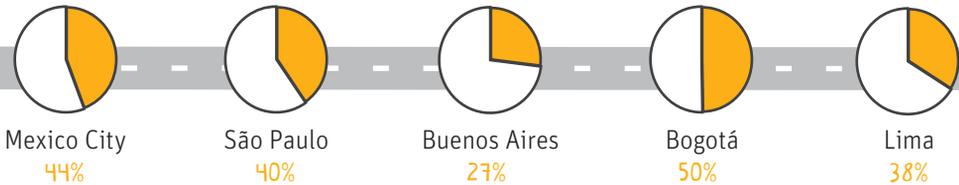
TOP 5

### AVERAGE TRAVEL TIME



On average, inhabitants of the five surveyed cities travel 1 hour and 28 minutes to make their most frequent commute (roundtrip).

### % OF PEOPLE TRAVELING 1:30H OR MORE



In the five surveyed cities, 28.1 million people travel 1 hour and 30 minutes or more a day. This is equivalent to 10 working weeks per year per person.

### PRIORITY FOR THE PEOPLE TRAVELING 1:30H OR MORE



- 1) PUBLIC SAFETY
- 2) TRANSPORTATION

People who travel more than 1 hour and 30 minutes a day consider transportation the second largest urban priority after public safety.

Also, transportation holds a more important position for the middle class than for the upper and lower classes in the five cities.



# ENERGY



## ELECTRICAL ENERGY AS A PRIORITY

1 OUT OF 17 CITIZENS THINKS THAT ENERGY IS AN URBAN PRIORITY

The middle and lower classes give more priority to electricity services compared to the upper class. Mexico City and Buenos Aires are the cities that prioritize electricity services the most.

### FREQUENCY OF POWER OUTAGES

- EVERY MONTH OR WEEK
- EVERY 2 OR 3 MONTHS
- ONCE A YEAR
- NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER



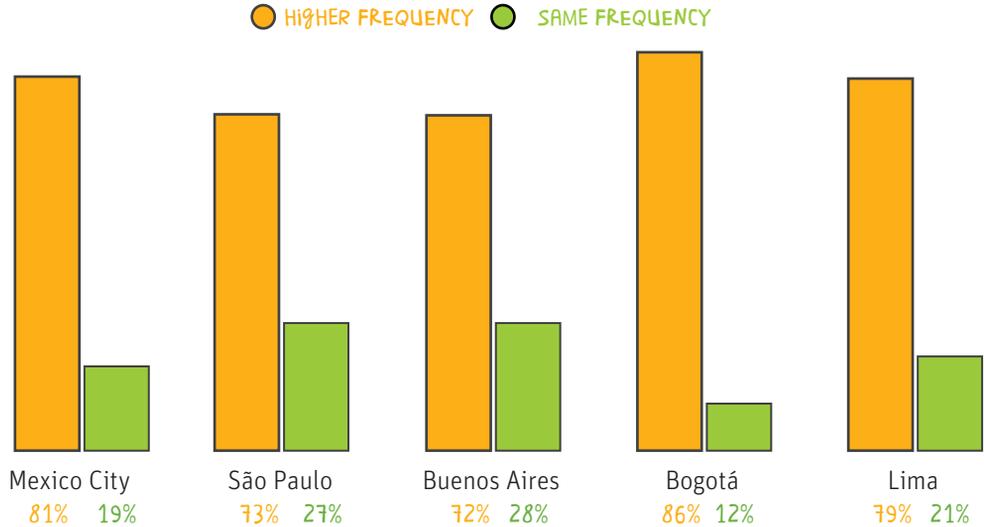
On average, the lower class experiences more power outages and power surges than the upper class. By city, Buenos Aires, Mexico City and São Paulo are the cities experiencing the highest number of power problems.

### THOSE WHO THINK ELECTRICITY SERVICES ARE "EXPENSIVE" OR "VERY EXPENSIVE"?

Mexico City	74%	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ : :
São Paulo	77%	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ : : : .
Buenos Aires	53%	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ : .
Bogotá	63%	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ : .
Lima	65%	\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ : : .

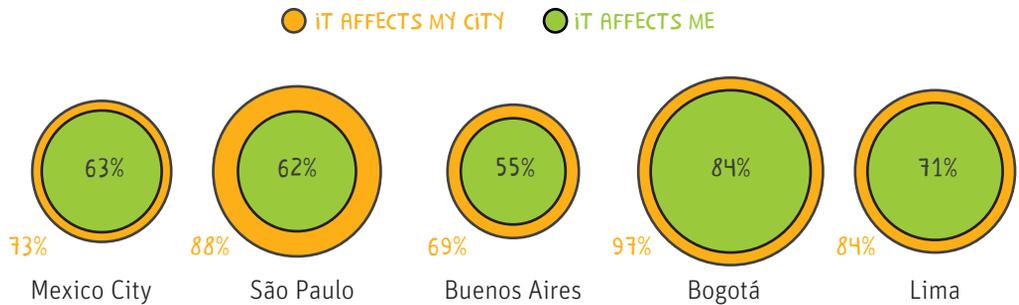
On average, 64% of the surveyed people think that electricity services are "expensive" or "very expensive".

### WHAT IS THE FREQUENCY OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS?



On average, 78% of the respondents in the five cities believe that extreme weather events (floods, heat waves, cold waves, storms...) occur more frequently than before. Only in Bogotá, 3% believe that these events occur with less frequency than before.

### DOES CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECT YOU? AND YOUR CITY?



On average, 82% of the respondents in the five cities believe that global climate change affects the climate of their city. 67% believe that climate change directly affects themselves and their families.

## QUALITY OF WATER SERVICES

● "BAD" OR "VERY BAD"



Mexico City  
28%



São Paulo  
8%



Buenos Aires  
7%



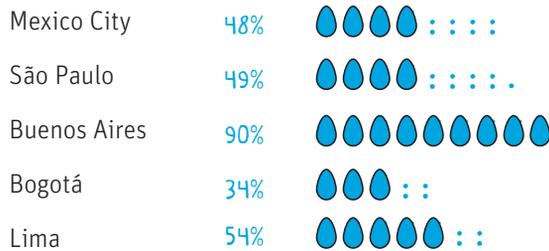
Bogotá  
2%



Lima  
9%

76% of the citizens of these cities are satisfied with the water services. In Mexico City, 28% of the people think that the service is "bad" or "very bad", as opposed to Bogotá where this percentage equals 2%.

## % OF THE POPULATION THAT THINKS WATER IS NOT EXPENSIVE



55% of the people in the surveyed cities think that water is NOT expensive. Only 12% of the people think that these services are "very expensive".

## % OF THE PEOPLE THAT THINK THEY SHOULD REDUCE THEIR WATER CONSUMPTION



Mexico City  
34%



São Paulo  
38%



Buenos Aires  
37%



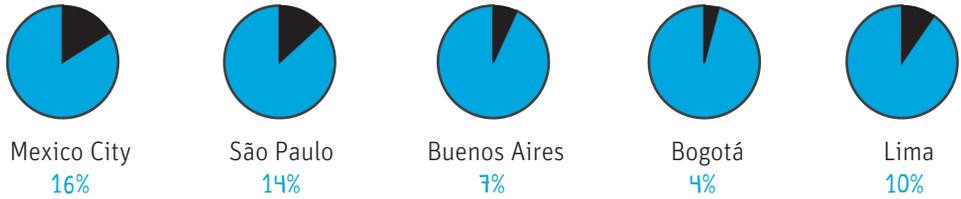
Bogotá  
65%



Lima  
23%

On average, 40% of the population believes that they SHOULD reduce their water consumption at home. Particularly in Bogotá, with an average of 65%.

#### % OF THE POPULATION THAT HAS SEEN SEWAGE WATER RUNNING IN THE STREETS IN RECENT MONTHS



The share of population that has seen sewage water running in their streets is 10% and is similar between socio-economic groups. This pattern is repeated in all of the surveyed cities.

#### WHAT IS 1 OF THE 4 MOST IMPORTANT URBAN PRIORITIES?

### 1 OUT OF 4 MEXICANS SAID – WATER

In Mexico City, one out of four respondents (25%) believes that water is one of the 4 most important urban priorities; a far more significant proportion than in other cities, where the average is 12%.

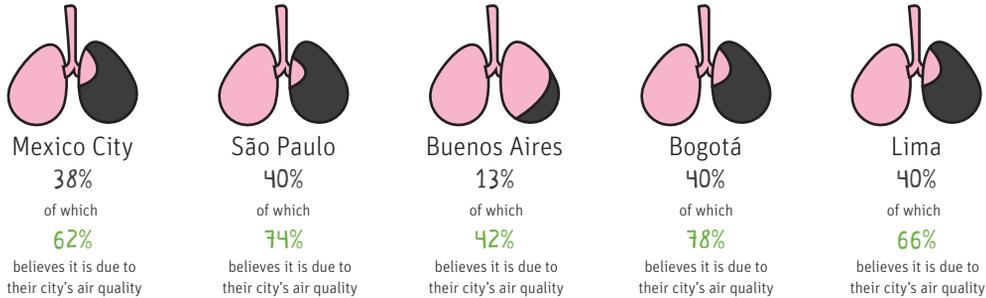
#### % OF THE POPULATION WHOSE NEIGHBORHOOD HAS BEEN FLOODED IN THE LAST YEAR



For some Latin American cities, flooding is an important issue. In Buenos Aires, Mexico City, and São Paulo, 30% or more of the population has seen its neighborhoods flooded due to the rain. In the case of Lima, floods were not registered due to the weather conditions of the area.

# AIR QUALITY

## % OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH MEMBERS WHO SUFFERED A RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN THE LAST YEAR



On average, 34% of the respondents in the five cities reported that someone in their household has had a respiratory disease in the past year. This problem affects the different socio-economic classes evenly.

In the case of Bogotá and São Paulo, over 70% believe that respiratory diseases reported at home are related to the quality of the air they breathe in the city.

## ARE THERE ENOUGH PUBLIC SPACES IN YOUR CITY?



On average, 45% of the population is satisfied with the quality of the public spaces, but only 23% believe that these spaces are safe.

# PUBLIC SPACES

**Cataloging-in-Publication data provided by the  
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**Felipe Herrera Library**

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