



Symposium In Children's Best Interests: Advancing a Fundamental Standard for the Treatment of Immigrant Children, American University's Center for Latin American & Latino Studies and Washington College of Law and the American Immigration Lawyers Association

Structural causes of migration and the response and capacity of the CA governments: impacts on children and gender gaps

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Washington DC, February 13th, 2020

Why? What causes this powerful bravery, desire and energy? From where it comes?



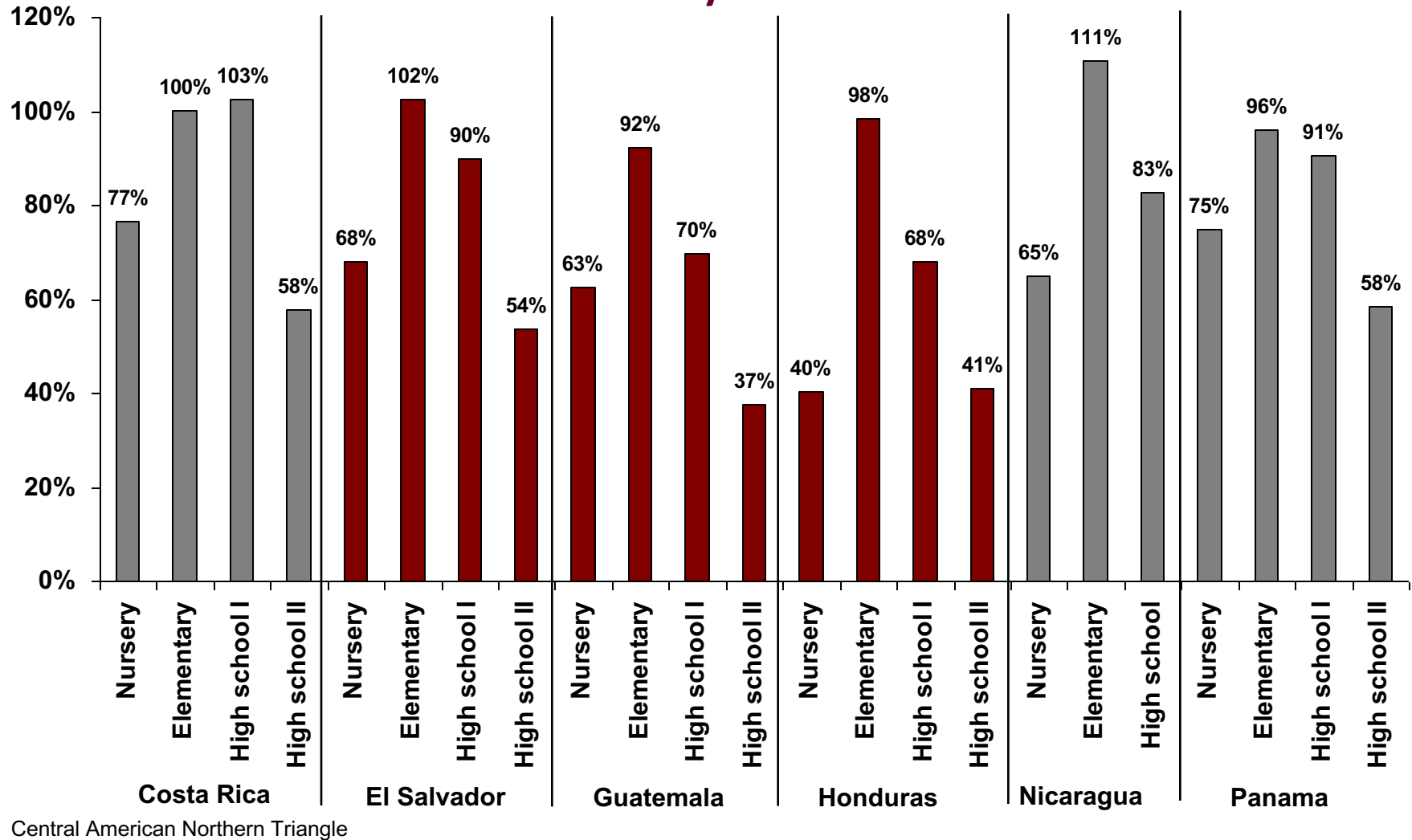
Source: retaken from the website of *The Orange County Register*, with takes it from AP Ramón Espinosa, with the following caption: "A migrant woman helps carry a handmade U.S. flag up the riverbank at the Mexico-U.S. border after getting past Mexican police at the Chaparral border crossing in Tijuana, Mexico, Sunday, Nov. 25, 2018, as a group of migrants tries to reach the U.S. The mayor of Tijuana has declared a humanitarian crisis in his border city and says that he has asked the United Nations for aid to deal with the approximately 5,000 Central American migrants who have arrived in the city." <https://www.ocregister.com/2018/11/26/mexico-to-up-security-at-border-after-migrants-try-to-cross/>

Should be straightforward: for them, the natural desire to be better off, to have a good life means running away from their countries

- This logic reason leads to the study and understanding of the [structural causes of migration](#)
 - But in the case of the Central American Northern Triangle (NT), it seems to be some kind of fatigue, some times looks like the topic is worn out
- But, those structural causes are still there, probably worsening
 - Proof of that is that the desire to migrate is more intense and strong
 - They keep trying, even knowing the –mortal- dangers they will endure and the hostility of the US Government
 - Including unaccompanied children!
 - For women and girls, almost certainty of rape and other horrendous suffering
- So, let's take a look on the Guatemalan, Salvadorian and Honduran rooted barriers to children's well-being and the weakness of their Governments

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT children? Education should be a must, but ...

Gross enrollment by educational level

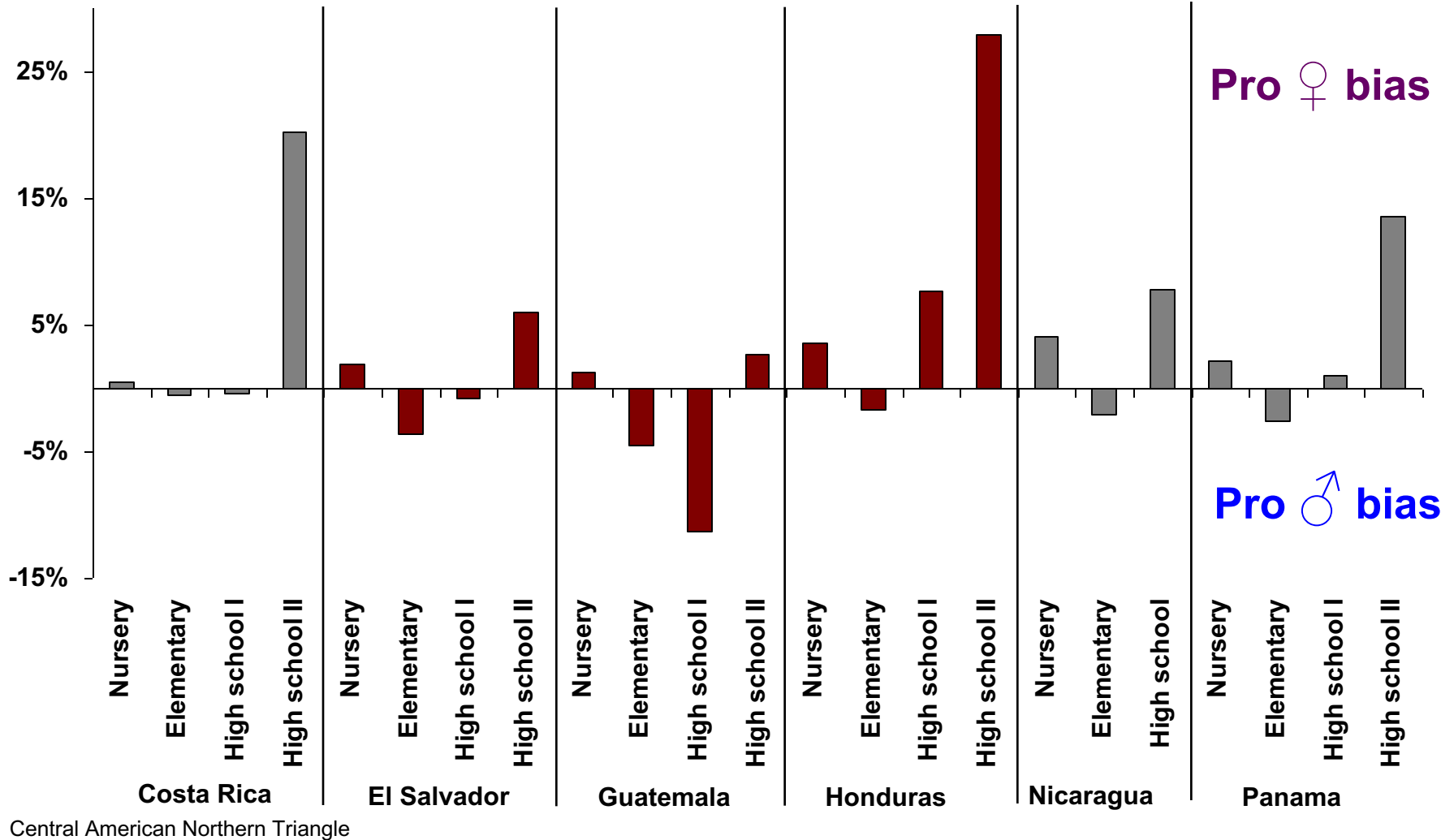


Source: Icefi based on official education statistics.

Note: Costa Rica: 2014; El Salvador: 2016; Guatemala: 2016; Honduras: 2016; Nicaragua: 2016; Panama: 2015. In Nicaragua, the lack of detailed statistics makes impossible to make the difference between high school I and II.

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT children? Education should be a must, but ...

Gender parity deviation by educational level



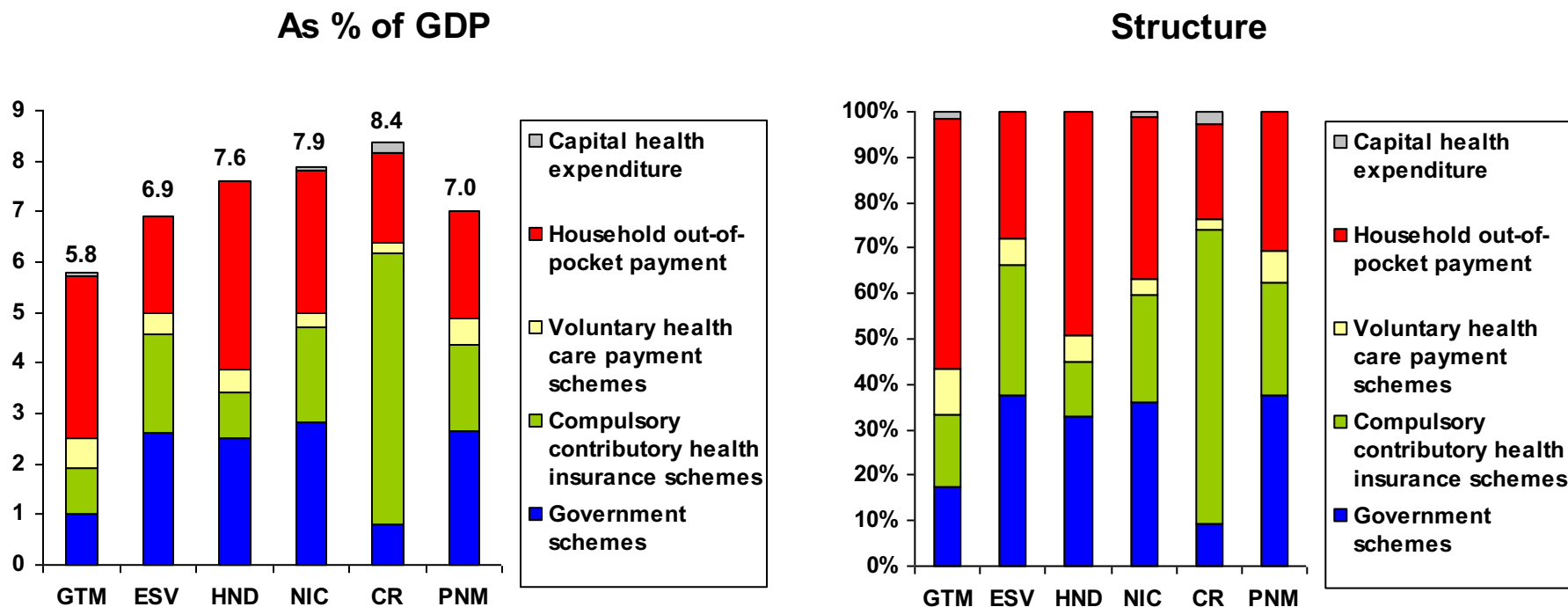
Source: Icefi based on official education statistics.

Note: Costa Rica: 2014; El Salvador: 2016; Guatemala: 2016; Honduras: 2016; Nicaragua: 2016; Panama: 2015. In Nicaragua, the lack of detailed statistics makes impossible to make the difference between high school I and II.

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT children? Health also should be a must, but ...

Due to low social security and government health services, in the NT to access health services people must pay for it: if you are poor, you cannot pay private health services and a simple illness can be catastrophic

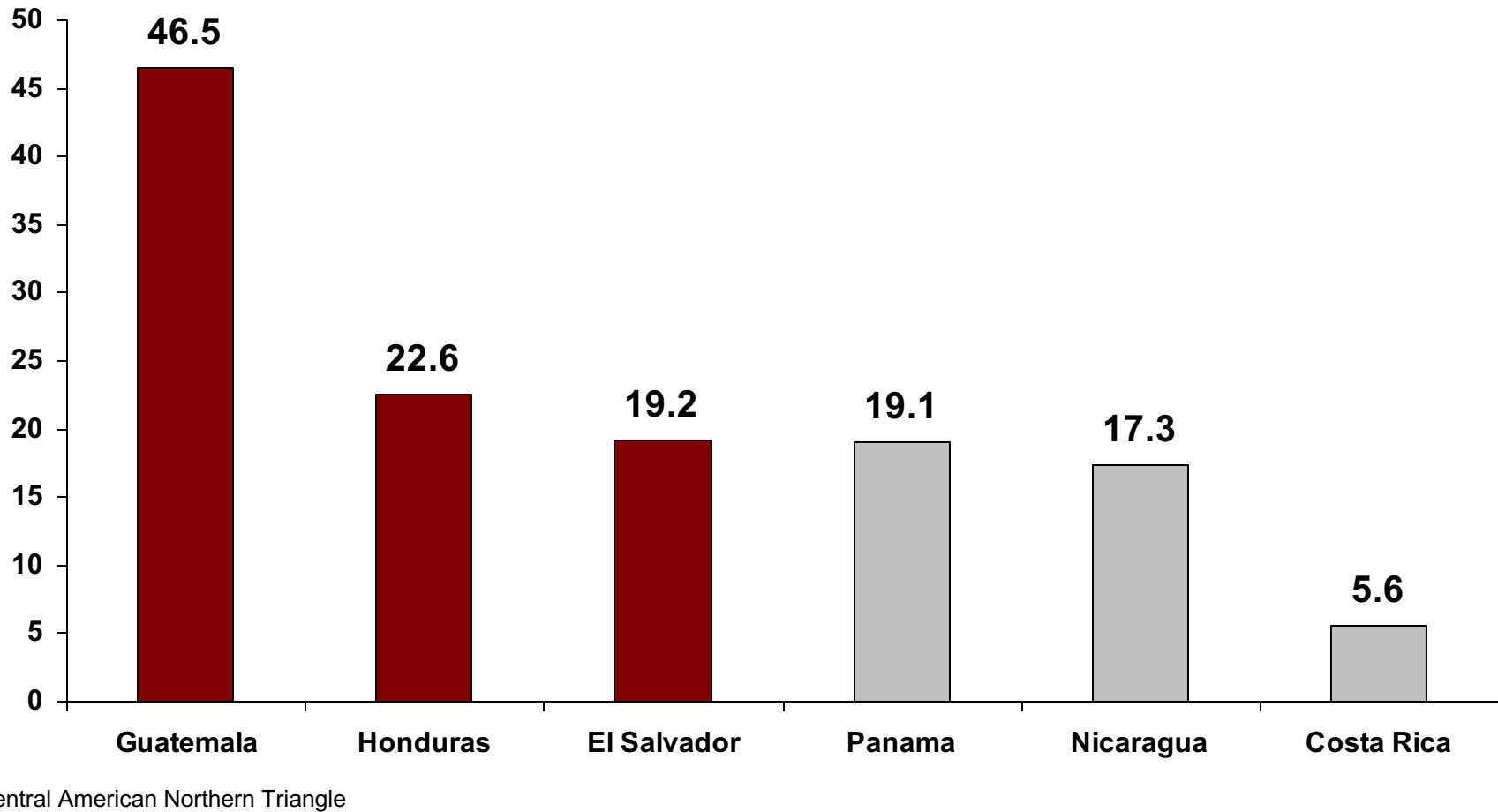
Health services by financial source in Central America



Source: Icefi, based on the WHO global database of health expenditures (2018)

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT children? Undernutrition, a humanitarian calamity in Guatemala

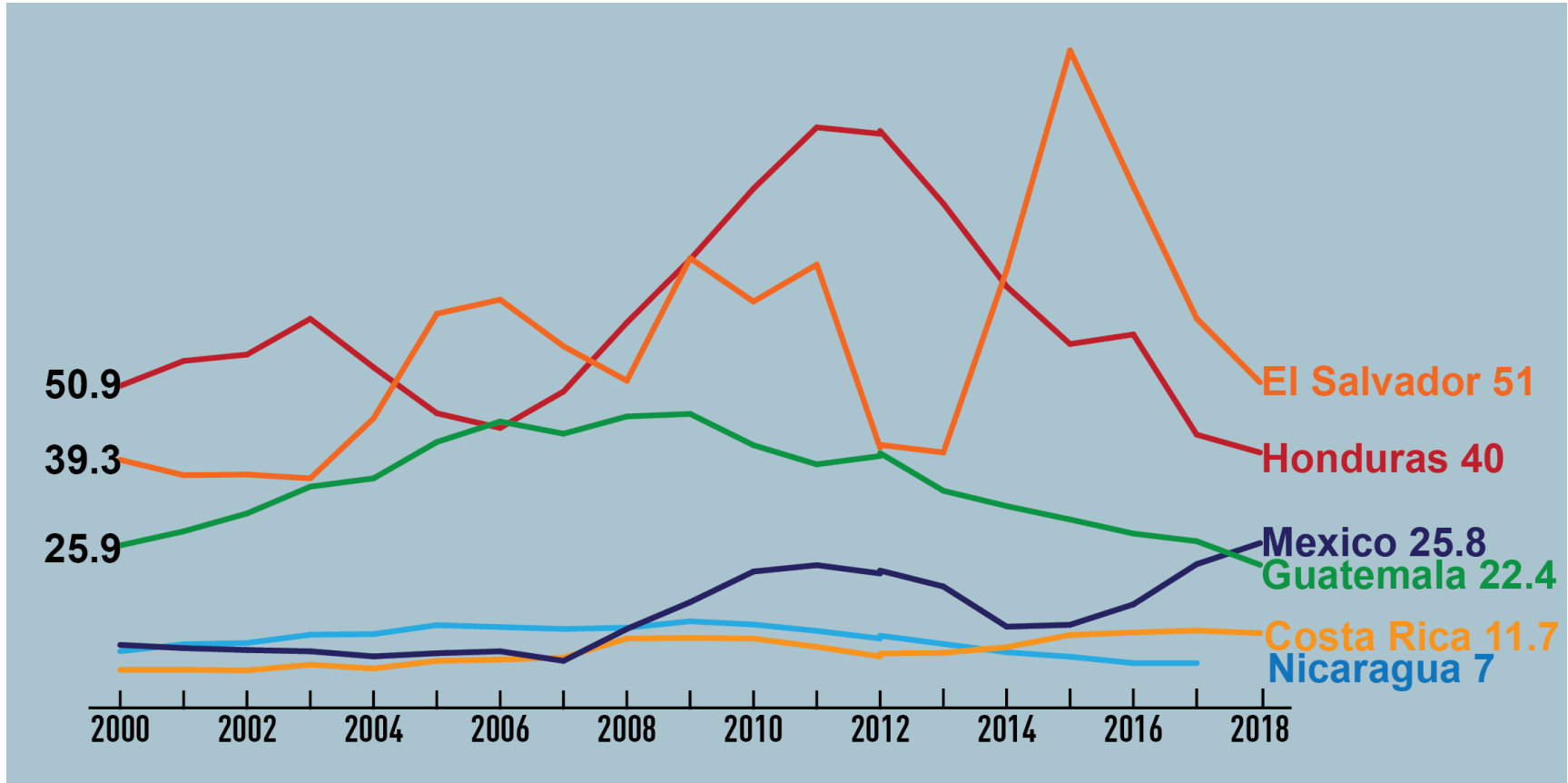
Prevalence of Children* Chronic Undernutrition



Sources: Guatemala, National Institute of Statistics (2014/2015); Honduras, Devinfo Initiative (2011/2012); El Salvador, National Family Health Survey (2008); Panama, Central America and Panama Institute of Nutrition (2008); Nicaragua, National Institute of Development Information (2011-2012); and, Costa Rica, Pan American Health Organization (2008)

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT children? Violence, although declining, still serious

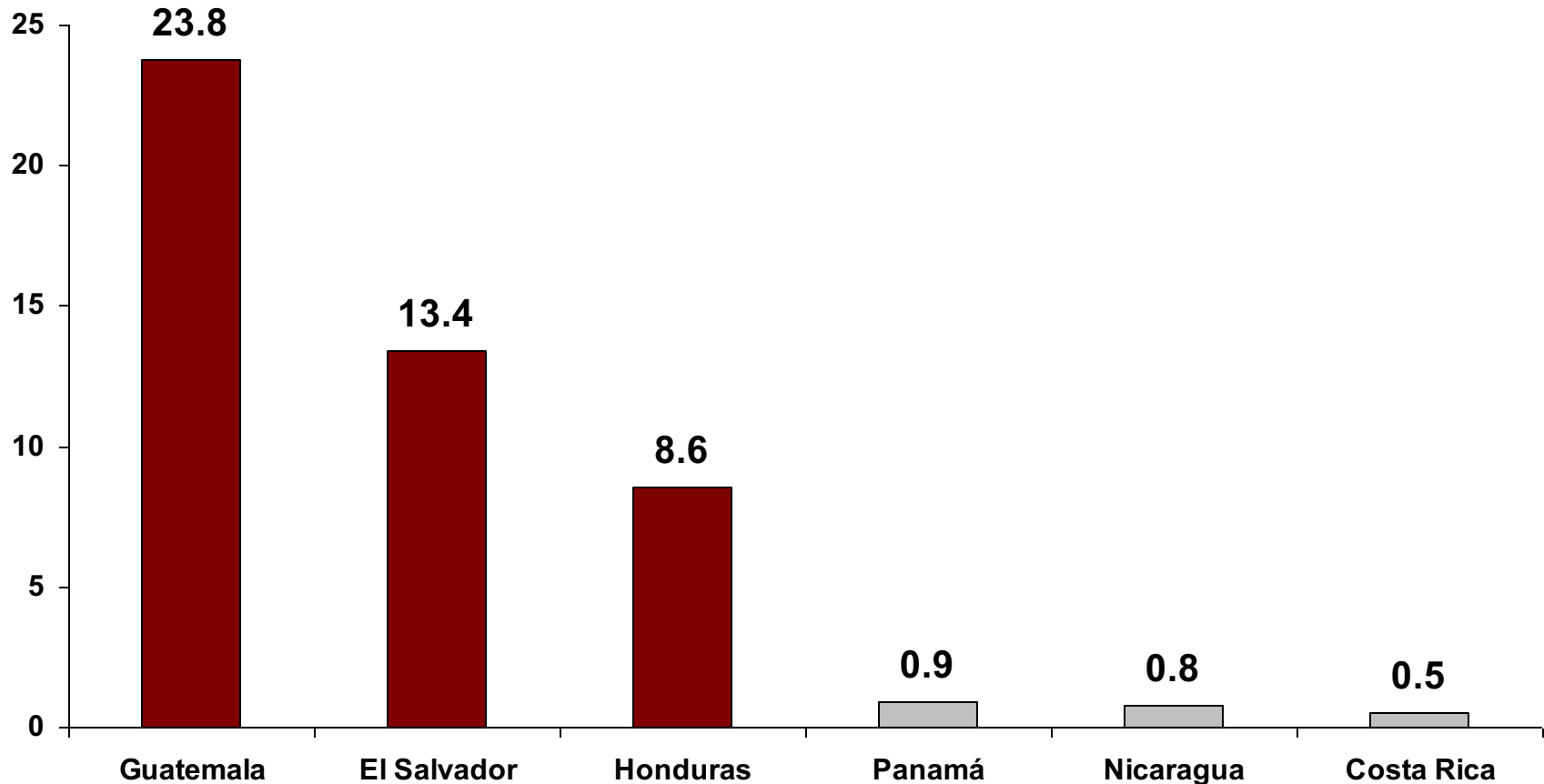
Homicide Rates by Country, 2000-2018



Source: from CLALS/American University, based on United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Study on Homicide 2013*; InSight Crime 2015, 2016; WOLA 2017.

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT girls? Gender violence, a huge problem

Rate of femicides (per 100,000 women)

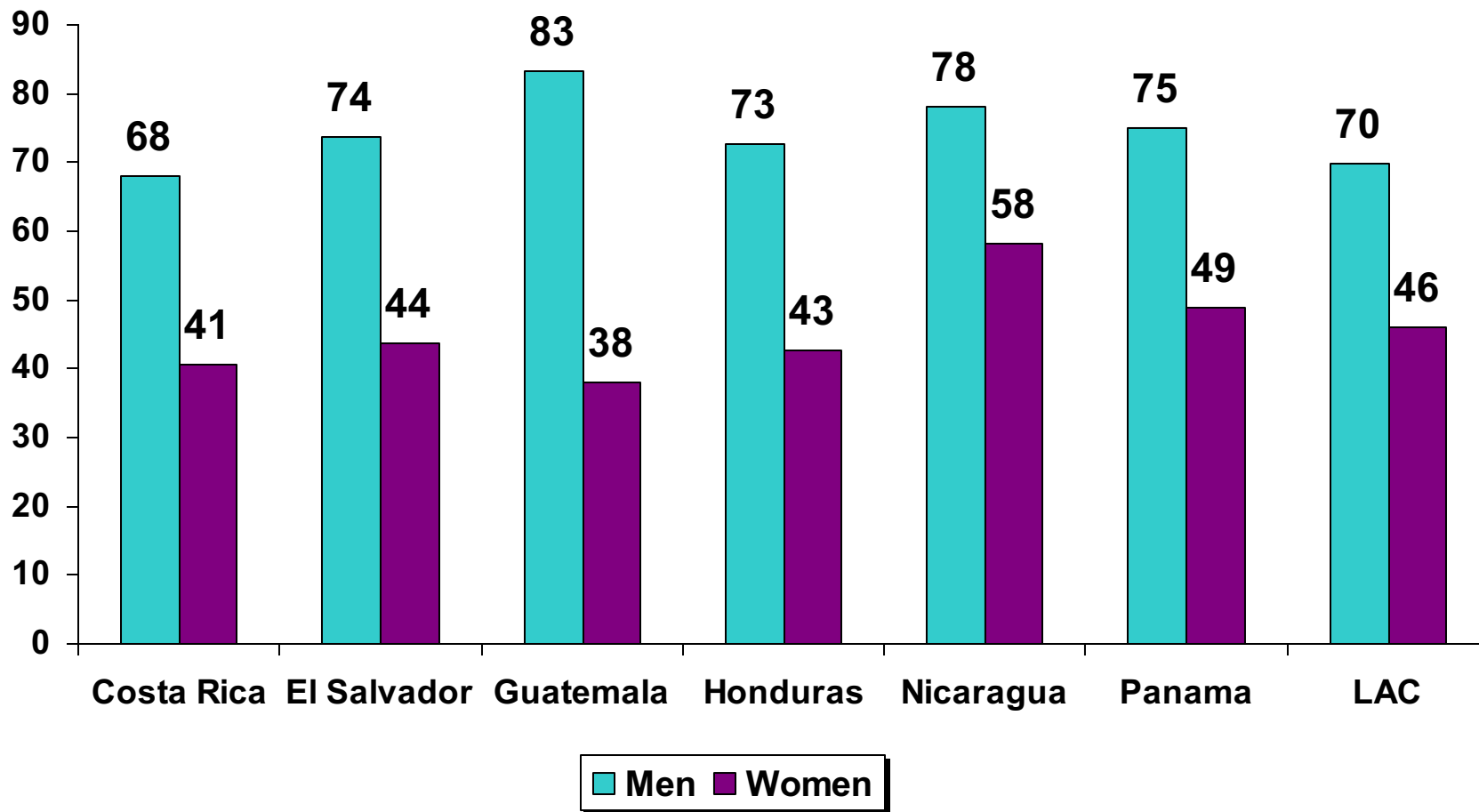


■ Central American Northern Triangle

Source: *Estado de la Nación 2018* report. In Guatemala is the number of cases denounced to the authorities, registered by the National Institute of Statistics. Femicides defined following the *Belem do Pará* amplified definition.

What about life expectations and opportunities for the NT girls? Not much chance to get a good job ...

Employment rate in 2018

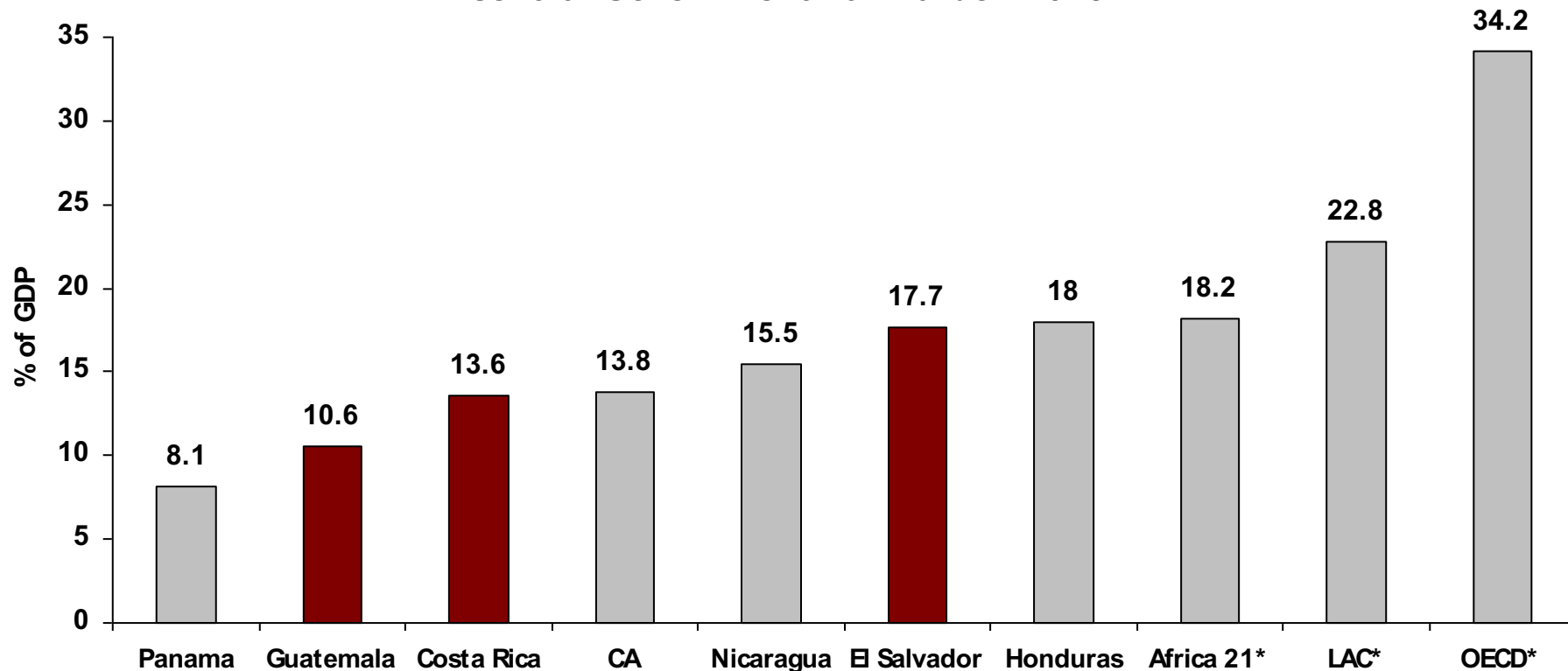


Source: ECLAC, available at <http://www.cepal.org/es/areas-de-trabajo/desarrollo-economico>.

Governments should be the main responsible for children's well-being. How strong are the NT Governments?

An important way to measure a government strength is its fiscal capacity: one is the revenue side

Central Government Tax Burden 2019



■ Central American Northern Triangle

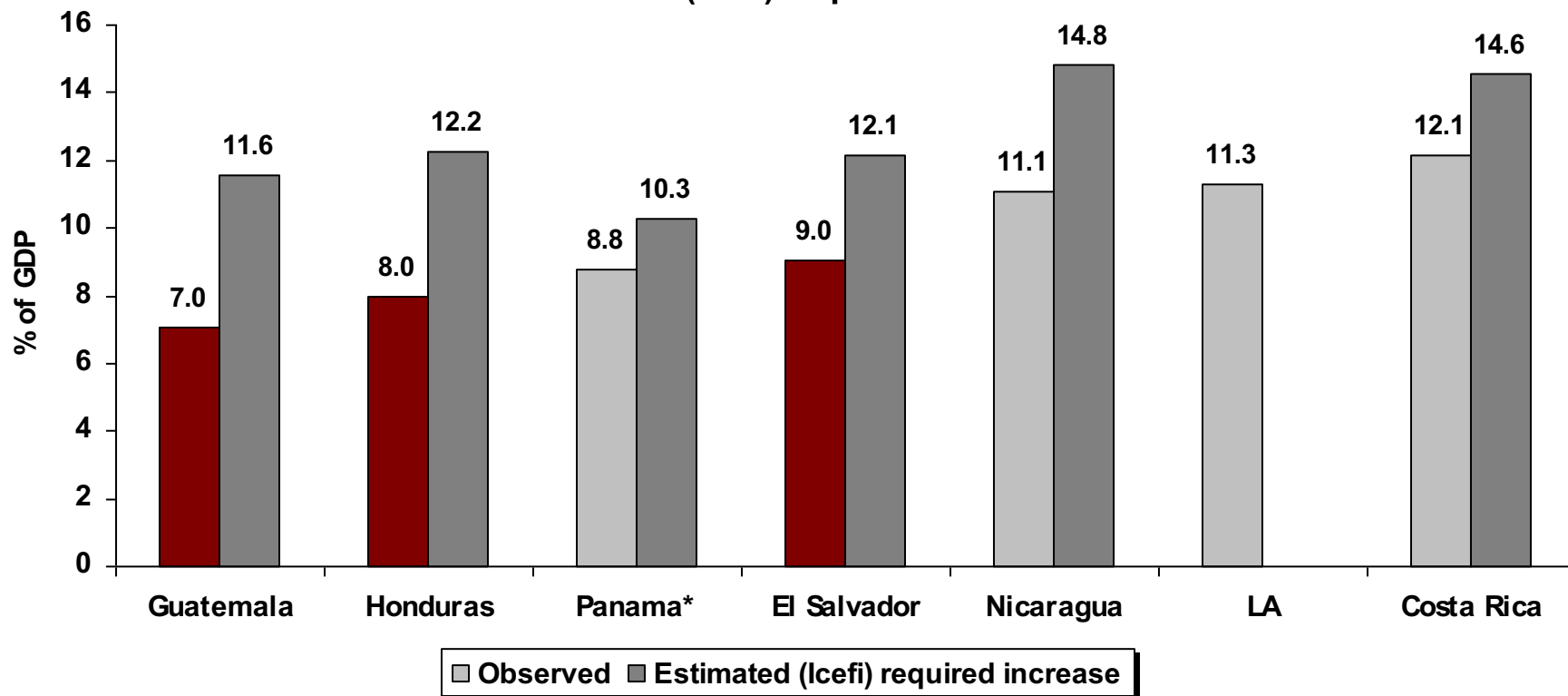
*: Africa 21 refers to the group of 21 African countries for which comparable statistics are available. Data for Africa 21 is for 2016, and for LAC and OECD is 2017.

Source: Central America, Icefi, *Perfiles Macroeconómicos No. 12* (http://www.icefi.org/sites/default/files/perfiles_no.12.pdf), Africa 21, LAC and OECD, OECD, tax statistics global database. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/tax/tax-policy/base-de-datos-global-de-estadisticas-tributarias.htm>

Governments should be the main responsible for children's well-being. How strong are the NT Governments?

What they achieve with the available revenues: the current social public expenditure and the increase required for eradicate extreme poverty, achieve full education enrollment, basic health coverage, drinking water and sanitation in 2030

Central Government Social Public Expenditure as % of GDP, observed 2018 and estimated (Icefi) required increase



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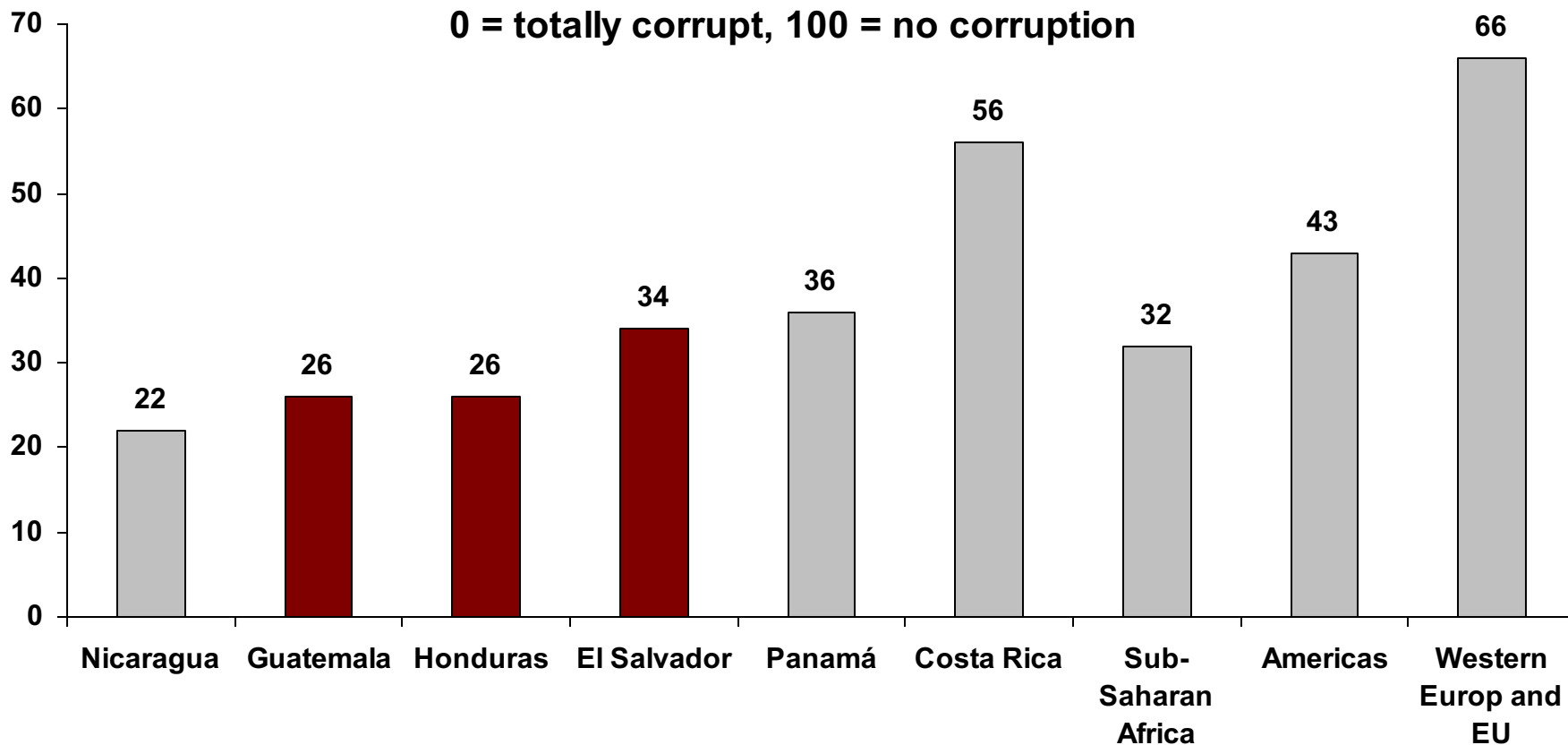
*: 2017.

Source: ECLAC, cepalstat.

Governments should be the main responsible for children's well-being. How serious is corruption?

When corruption is perceived as a serious problem, citizens distrust towards Government increases

2019 Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index
0 = totally corrupt, 100 = no corruption



■ Central American Northern Triangle

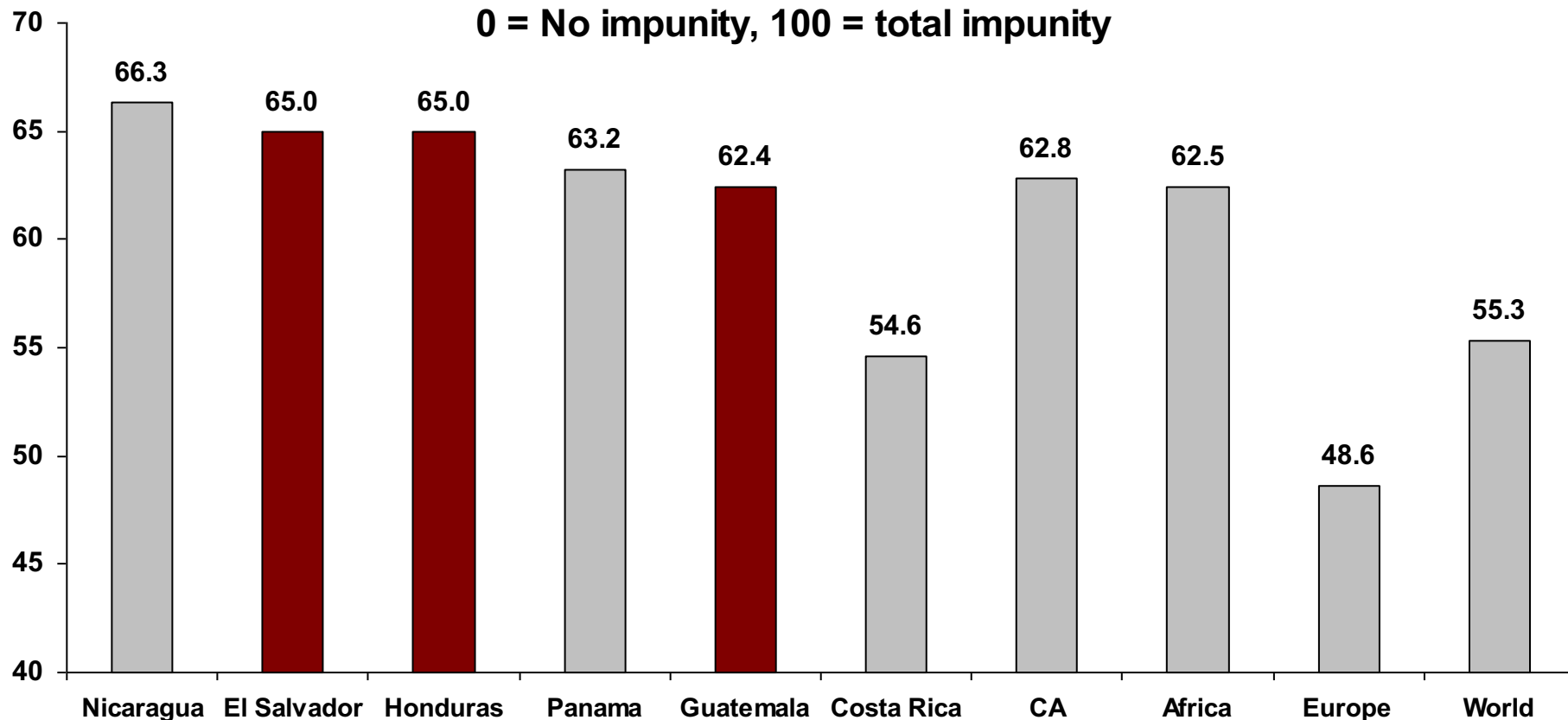
*: 2017.

Source: ECLAC, cepalstat.

Governments should be the main responsible for children's well-being. How serious is impunity?

Impunity is a serious obstacle for democracy to correct corrupt or ineffective governments

2017 Global Impunity Index
0 = No impunity, 100 = total impunity



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Source: Icefi, based on the Global Impunity Index 2017 report.

But two of the recent really serious efforts to fight corruption and impunity have been shut down... US complaints or sanctions for this?



M A C C I H

Más **derechos** para más **gente**



CICIG Comisión
Internacional contra
la Impunidad en Guatemala

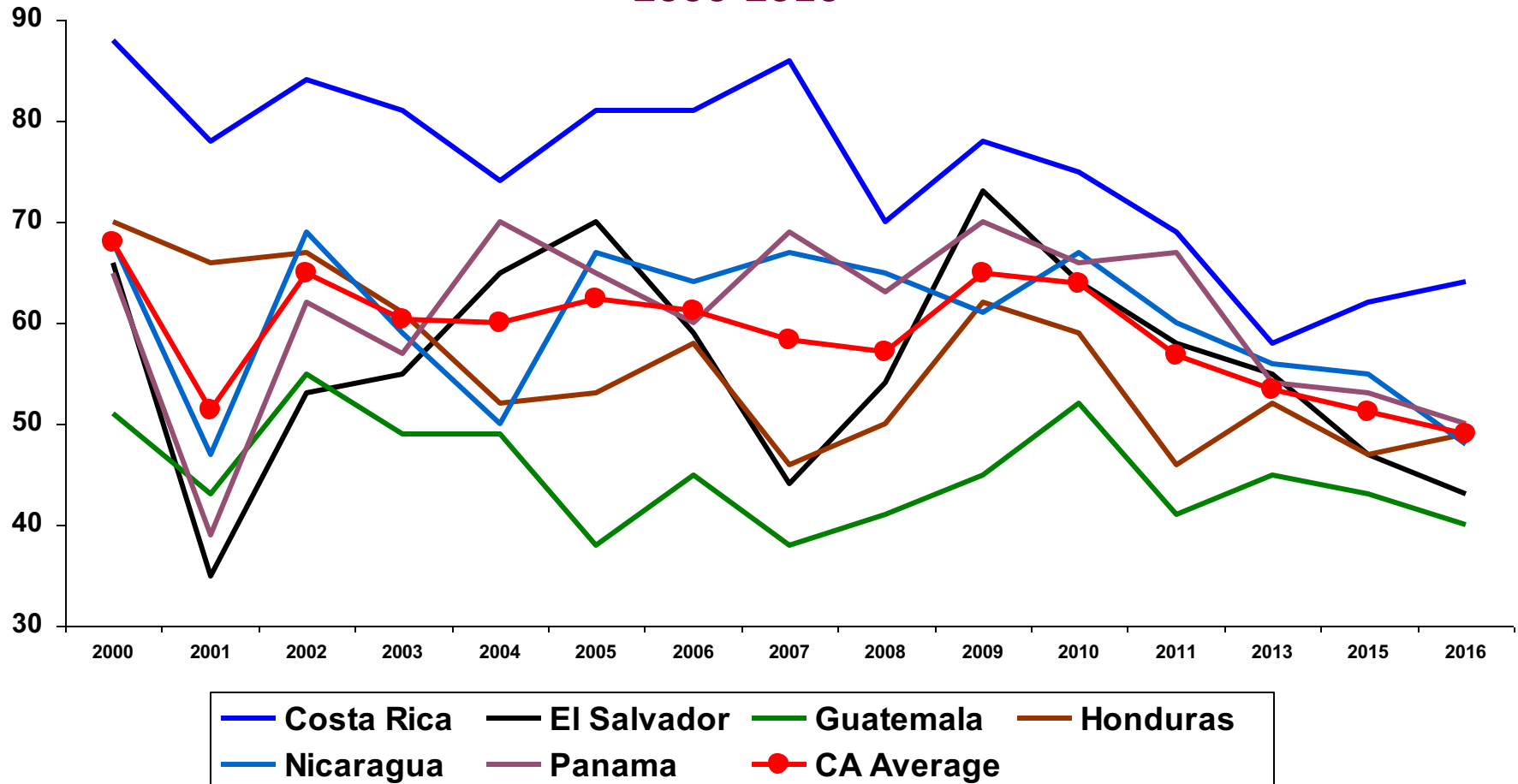


But two of the recent really serious efforts to fight corruption and impunity have been shut down... US complaints or sanctions for this?



Hope is not growing, and Mr. Trump's support to authoritarian attitudes in the region is not helping ...

% of people who believe that democracy is the best form of Government
2000-2016



Source: Icefi, based on data of Cepalstat, Statistics Division, Social Statistics Unit of ECLAC, which makes special tables of the opinion surveys by the Latinobarómetro corporation.



Thank you!

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