

Residential exclusion of the urban indigenous population in the Northwestern region of the Argentine Republic

At the Northwestern region of the Argentine Republic (NOA, formed by the provinces of Catamarca, Jujuy, Salta, Santiago del Estero and Tucumán) the volumes of indigenous population are variable: comparatively scarce in Catamarca, they are much higher in Salta and Jujuy. The levels of urbanization of this population are also variable: in the NOA as a whole, 59,5% of the 169,501 indigenous people registered live in urban settlements. The provincial percentages are very different; the lowest percentage is found at Santiago del Estero, where only 40.7% of the indigenous people are urban; the highest corresponds to Jujuy, where more than two thirds (in particular 66.9%) of the indigenous population live in cities. In addition, these provinces are among the most disadvantaged in the Republic and, within them, the indigenous population, along with peasants and inhabitants of slums, have been identified as one of the three major contingents affected by poverty in the region.

In this context, in our contribution the indigenous status of a segment of the urban population converges with the material conditions of their houses. We start from the hypothesis that due to the fact that the indigenous population is among the most disadvantaged ones in the region, their capacity to obtain a dwelling with a minimum of material standards in urban areas will be compromised; therefore, we can wonder if, as it seems reasonable to suppose, their housing conditions will be proportionally worse than those corresponding to the non-indigenous population. In this context, the objective of this contribution is to compare the levels of residential exclusion that affected the urban indigenous popula-

tion of the NOA in 2010, with those related to the non-indigenous population.

The source of the data that we have used is the 2010 Population, Household and Housing Census, data that have been obtained from INDEC's own webpage, through REDATAM application. The variable we have selected to carry on our research is people living in dwellings located in urban areas, discriminated according to the constructive quality indicator, and differentiated between their indigenous and non-indigenous condition, at departmental level of spatial disaggregation. In order to measure the levels of residential exclusion, we have selected a simple statistical instrument, the Sargent-Florence Index, which allows us to identify situations of over-representation and infra-representation of a subgroup of the population in relation to the general situation. A final clarification that must be made regards to the departments selected: we have selected those departments in which the indigenous population accounts for at least 2.4% of their total population (2.4% is the percentage that the indigenous population supposes on the total of the Argentine population), focusing on the portion that lives in urban areas. We have added the capitals of Salta, Jujuy and Tucumán provinces, where more than 5.000 indigenous people live (in each of them), a figure that, despite being very high, does not reach the minimum of 2.4% of the total of the population of these highly populated departments. 27 departments reach this threshold: 2 from Catamarca, 8 from Jujuy, 11 from Salta, 3 from Santiago del Estero and many others from Tucumán. Together, they have 133.506 indigenous peo-

ple, 78.76% of the total of those registered in the region, of which 84.937 resided in urban areas, 84.2% of the total NOA.

The values of the Location Quotient allow us to verify the fact that in two thirds of the departments (19 over 27) the indigenous population living in houses of insufficient constructive quality is overrepresented. In addition, in five of them the location quotient value is higher than 1.5. So, the over representation of indigenous in this type of dwelling is not only widespread, but it is very acute. In contrast, only at two departments non indigenous people is over represented (although very slightly, values of 1,02) at the dwellings with worse constructive qualities. At the other end of the scale, the population that recognizes itself as indigenous has very little presence in the dwellings considered as having satisfactory constructive quality in the vast majority of the departments. At twenty of them, location quotient values do not reach value of 1; moreover, at six departments the values do not even exceed 0,5, and at four, despite location quotient values exceed this threshold, they remain below 0,75. Therefore, the scarce representation of indigenous people in these houses with satisfactory material conditions is not only widespread, but also very deep. In contrast, the situation of the non-indigenous in these satisfactory homes is the opposite: only 4 departments show underrepresentation, extremely light (LQ values vary between 0,97 and 0,99).

The figures of the non-indigenous population are also better when referred to the basic constructive quality of housing; although we can find a very slight underrepresentation in six departments, it is also the case that this number increases to 16 among the indigenous population. In this sense, it must be taken into account that the basic constructive quality involves access to water and a toilet inside the house, but, at the same time, the roofs are made of sheet metal or fiber cement, or do not have insulating elements. In fact, these are dwellings with very basic qualities, and the fact that an important segment of the urban indigenous population is even unable to access them magnifies the general precariousness of their housing conditions.

Finally, there is another element we want to refer, and it is related to the levels of residential exclusion according to the size of the city in which the indigenous reside. It is not possible to access to the information of the expanded census questionnaire referred to individual localities, so we can only propose very general considerations about this question, but we believe that they are of interest.

In the departments of Ledesma and San Pedro (Jujuy province), and Capital, General San Martín and Orán (Salta province) the quotient of localization of the indigenous population living in houses with insufficient quality reaches its highest values, always above 1,5. In addition, in all of these departments can be found an inverse relationship between the value of the location quotient and the quality of the dwelling; extreme infra representation of indigenous people in housing with satisfactory constructive quality, a little more moderate infra representation in those with basic quality, and greater over representation in dwellings with worse conditions. It must be remarked that all the above departments contain one of the largest urban centers of Jujuy and Salta: Ledesma, city of Libertador General José de San Martín (46,642 inhabitants); San Pedro, San Pedro city, (50.183); in department Capital, Salta province, is located the nucleus of Gran Salta, capital of the province; General José de San Martín, Tartagal (64,530 registered), and finally, Orán, which contains San Ramón de la Nueva Orán, with 82.413 inhabitants. Therefore, we could say that the situation of residential exclusion suffered by the indigenous population is worse in the large urban centers of Jujuy and Salta, at least according to the distribution of location quotients.

On the other hand, the departments that contain small urban localities like Cochinoca, Tilcara, Cachi or Guachipas, despite the fact that residential exclusion is actually present, it does not show the depth that it has in the departments that contain the large urban centers of the provinces.

To summarize, we could say that the volume of indigenous population residing in the Northwestern region of the Argentine Republic is high, as are its levels of urbanization: just under two thirds of the population that themselves recognized as belonging to or descendant of an indigenous people lives in urban areas. These important levels of urbanization are derived, in part, from the processes of expulsion from their rural areas of origin that have suffered, and that have increased in the current context of expansion of the agrarian frontier. Once arrived to the city, these rural immigrants have increased their difficulties, adding their indigenous status to the disadvantages that all rural immigrants experience when they join the urban population.

In this context, we have verified their residential conditions are, overall, deficient. This is deduced from the consideration of residential exclusion, identified in the 2010 Census from the Housing Constructive Quality Index. Calculated the Location Quotient of the indigenous population based on the quality of their homes, the val-

ues point to an underrepresentation in practically all the departments when it is satisfactory, while the over representation is widespread when the quality is basic or, especially, insufficient, an over representation that we have described as extensive and deep.

These results do not resist the comparison with those corresponding to the non-indigenous population: among them, the cases of underrepresentation are testimonial in the homes with satisfactory quality, and also very scarce when this is basic. In contrast, there are only two departments in which dwellings inhabited by non-indigenous people are overrepresented, and in an extremely light way, when the quality index is insufficient.

However, the deficient situation of the indigenous people worsens when they reside in the departments where the largest urban centers of the provinces of Jujuy and Salta are located. The source does not allow working the variables at the locality level, but the fact that the values of the quotient are much higher in these departments than in the rest could be related to the fact that indigenous residential exclusion increases in large cities. Whereas it takes smaller proportions in the minor urban settlements. This is a situation that should be addressed in further research, necessarily using alternative sources of a qualitative nature, due to the insufficiency of the quantitative ones.