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**TITLE: “Social Vulnerability and population dynamics in Argentina,
2001-07”**

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the social evolution of Argentina Republic after economic crisis of late 2001 and later years. It discusses the main social characteristics (poverty, employment) and demographic (fertility and mortality) patterns, of national total and six provinces from different geographic regions.

Economic crisis led to an unprecedented degree of poverty (55% in 2002). Regional differences maintained throughout the period of analysis, due to structural inequality. The economic growth of period 2003 - 2007 improved levels of income and employment, although there is stagnation in life expectancy, increased infant and maternal mortality rates and continuous increase in adolescent fertility. It proposes the hypothesis that in Argentina poverty could reduce, but not social vulnerability.

KEYWORDS: SOCIAL VULNERABILITY - POVERTY - POPULATION DYNAMICS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

1 - INTRODUCTION

This article explores the social evolution of the Republic of Argentina after the economic crisis of late 2001. It proposes the approach to social vulnerability, which seeks to understand the multiplicity of risks that affect the living standards of all people, not only to characterize impoverished segments. ECLAC defines social vulnerability as:

"Combination of: i) events, processes or traits that involve potential adverse to exercise of various types of civil rights or the achievement of the projects for communities, households and persons; ii) the inability to respond to the materialization of these risks; and iii) the inability to adapt to the consequences of the materialization of these risks" (ECLAC, 2002b: 21).

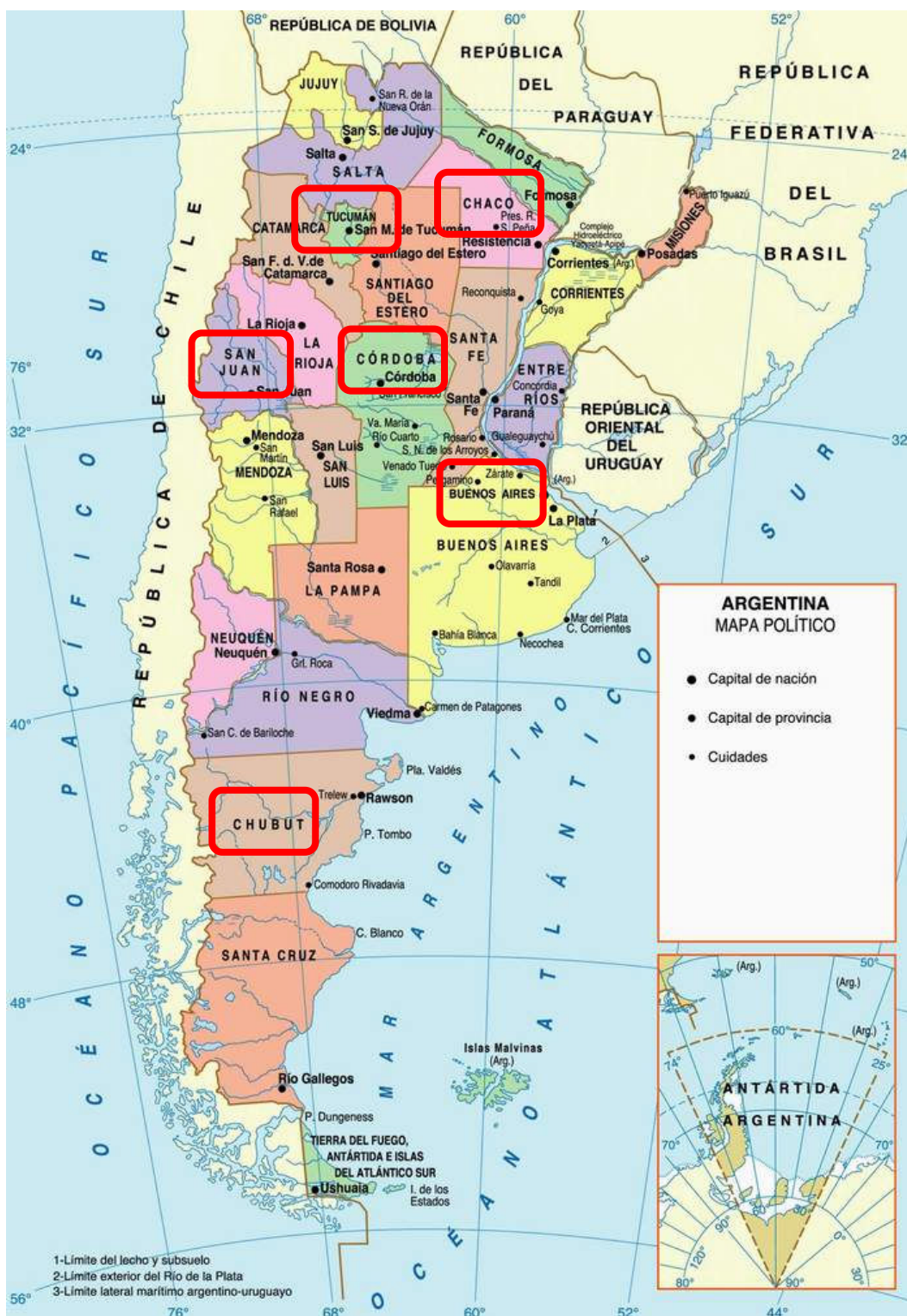
Some demographic characteristics are associated with accumulation of social disadvantage, which may threaten the ability of response or lead to negative adaptive processes (ECLAC, 2002b: 29). Rodríguez Vignoli says *"the lag in demographic transition is debilitating to communities, households and individuals (...)* the fact is that delay is characteristic of the most disadvantaged socioeconomic groups and enhances their social vulnerability " (2001:47).

We analyze here the demographic characteristics that relate directly to disadvantaged segments of society: higher mortality (measured by life expectancy at birth, infant and maternal mortality rates), higher fertility (total fertility rate), early reproductive pattern (adolescent fertility rate) (cf. VIGNOLI RODRÍGUEZ, 2001: 39-41). In addition, we consider social factors that impact indirectly on fertility and mortality level, as education of mothers and weight of children at birth.

Within this perspective, it seeks to describe the factors that led to the impoverishment of the population from the social crisis of 2001, and to detect the persistence of risk until 2007. To describe the living conditions of population are selected indicators of poverty and destitution, as well as unemployment and underemployment rates.

The analysis will take national and provincial indicators. Six provinces selected representing the different geographical regions in Argentina: Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (Metropolitan Area), Córdoba (Pampeana Region, in the center of country), Chaco (Northeast), Tucumán (Northwest), San Juan (Cuyo Region, West) and Chubut (Patagonia, South). These indicators will attempt to show the differences existing in the country and socio-economic changes from crisis of 2001. Total country and provinces are taken as units of analysis, considering the vulnerability of communities as a whole (CEPAL, 2002b:17,20-21).

Argentina Republic and selected provinces



2- MAIN REMARKS:

Socio-economic crisis of 2001 caused a major social deterioration, which was evident in the unprecedented level of poverty that struck most of the population (55% in 2002). From this point of view, large segments of society were at that time in a situation of great vulnerability, especially in health and income level. The worsening of employment conditions and the sharp increase of familiar basket prices yielded important sectors of middle class below the poverty line (18% of population was impoverished between 2001 and 2002), while living conditions visibly worsened in terms of mortality and fertility.

While the process of deterioration of income and employment pauperization comes throughout the 1990s, the new century finds more than one third of the population in poverty, unemployed or underemployed. Devaluation of currency and inflation finally realized the risks that had been slowly showing up over previous years. Direct action of State was needed to sustain a minimum income of poor households, to ensure social order and slowly recover the level of economic activity.

Regional differences existing at the beginning of the decade remained throughout analysis period, due to their structural nature. The historical backwardness of Northeast and Northwest regions is ongoing, and exacerbated in times of economic crisis. Not only poverty is highest in those regions, also relative share of indigent on the total poverty was much higher than Buenos Aires city, Pampeana and Patagonia regions. That means that not only there are more poor people in north of Argentina, they are also poorer in terms of deprivation.

Less developed regions like the Northeast, Northwest and Cuyo (West) have shown progress in the socio-demographic indicators, despite their relative disadvantage compared to other regions. Life expectancy at birth increases while child and maternal mortality decreases. Chaco is the only province where there is a decline in adolescent fertility, but still has the highest rates among the jurisdictions studied.

Economic recovery showed by Argentina from 2003 to 2007 has improved income and employment levels, as poverty and indigence decreased. Despite this, the socio-demographic indicators show an unstable living conditions and the persistence of risk factors for health. Recent years (2006-07) show stagnation in life expectancy at birth, increases in rates of infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as a continuous increase in adolescent fertility.

While economic activity is beginning to deteriorate from 2008, following the government's conflict with farmers and then with the international recession of 2009, the population dynamics seems to show some deterioration in living conditions since 2006. Although the social background of each region has its peculiarities, the indicators of mortality and fertility provide warning signs even in more developed jurisdictions like Buenos Aires city and Córdoba province.

Although the severity of social crisis of early decade has decreased, there remain risks in population that can materialize again before than undertake economic activity. A hypothesis could propose that in Argentina poverty can descend, but not social vulnerability. Perhaps the consequences of the serious social crisis of 2001 are gradually showing (malnutrition, inadequate health care, informal labor, educational backwardness and insecurity), while maintaining a high inequality in access to benefits of economic activity (growth without development).

Statistical records of next years will be crucial to confirm or reinterpret the warning signs that provide sociodemographic indicators of 2006-07. Passage of time also will reveal the severity and duration of the recession cycle that takes place in Argentina and the world, as well as its impact on the living conditions of the population.

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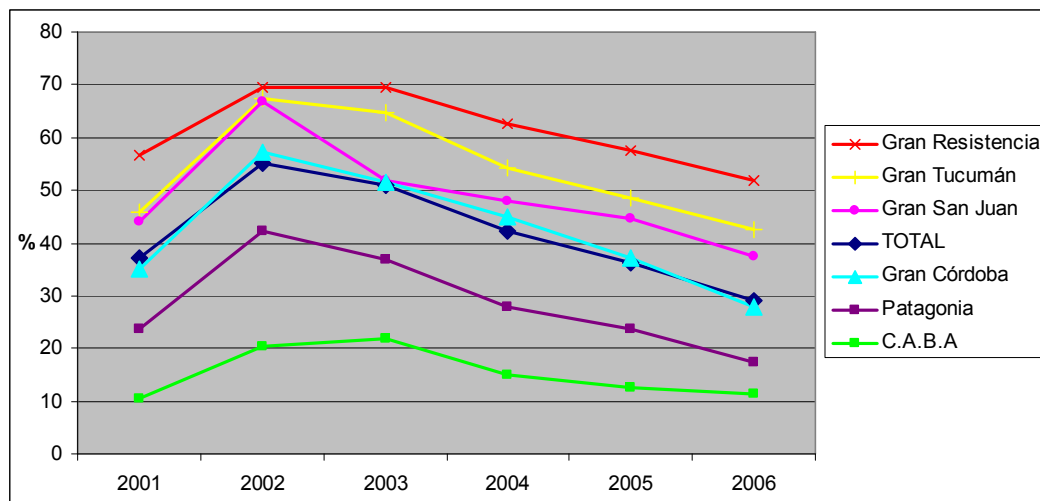
STATISTICAL ANNEXE

Table 1: Population under poverty line. Urban population, 2001-06. Annual percentage average.

AÑO	TOTAL URBANO	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Gran Córdoba	Gran Resistencia	Patagonia	Gran San Juan	Gran Tucumán
2001	37.1	10.4	35.1	56.6	23.6	44.2	45.8
2002	55.3	20.5	57.1	69.7	42.4	66.8	67.3
2003	50.9	21.8	51.4	69.5	36.9	51.7	64.6
2004	42.3	14.9	45.0	62.7	27.9	48.0	54.3
2005	36.4	12.7	37.1	57.4	23.7	44.6	48.4
2006	29.2	11.4	28.0	51.9	17.4	37.6	42.7

Source: Based on "Incidencia de la pobreza e indigencia", INDEC, 2001-06.

Graphic 1: Population under poverty line. Urban population, 2001-06. Annual percentage average.



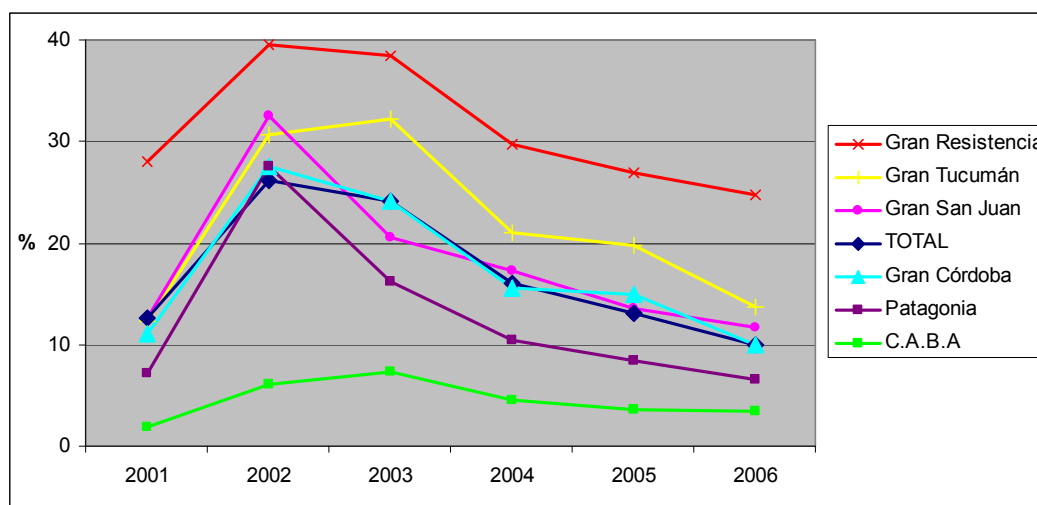
Source: Based on "Incidencia de la pobreza e indigencia", INDEC, 2001-06.

Table 2: Population under indigence line. Urban population, 2001-06. Annual percentage average.

AÑO	TOTAL URBANO	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Gran Córdoba	Gran Resistencia	Patagonia	Gran San Juan	Gran Tucumán
2001	12.6	1.9	11.1	28.1	7.1	12.6	12.3
2002	26.2	6.0	27.6	39.5	27.6	32.6	30.7
2003	24.1	7.3	24.2	38.5	16.2	20.6	32.3
2004	16.0	4.5	15.5	29.8	10.5	17.4	21.1
2005	13.0	3.6	14.9	26.9	8.4	13.6	19.8
2006	10.0	3.4	9.9	24.8	6.6	11.6	13.7

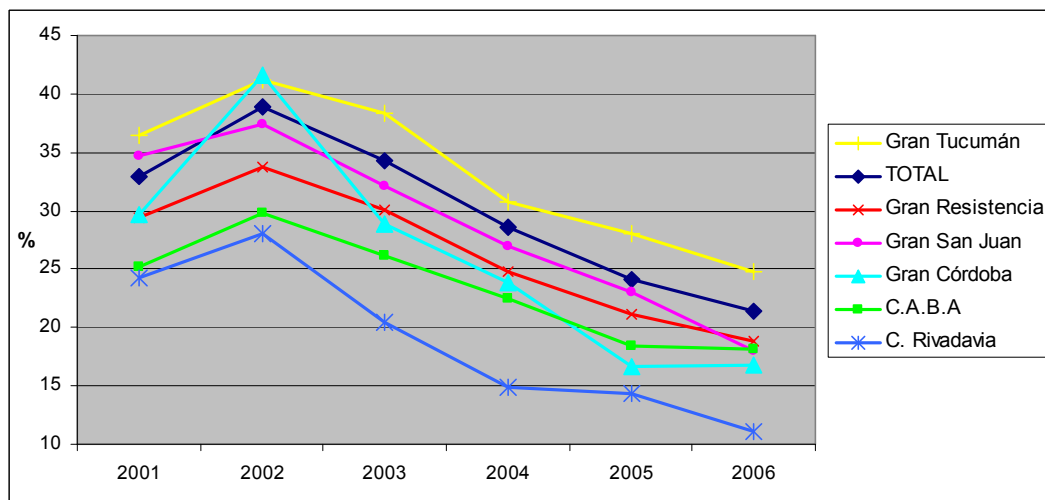
Source: Based on "Incidencia de la pobreza e indigencia", INDEC, 2001-06.

Graphic 2: Population under indigence line. Urban population, 2001-06. Annual percentage average.



Source: Based on "Incidencia de la pobreza e indigencia", INDEC, 2001-06.

Graphic 3: Addition of unemployment and underemployment rates. Urban population, 2001-06. Annual percentages averages.



Source: Based on Permanent Households Survey (INDEC, 2001-06).

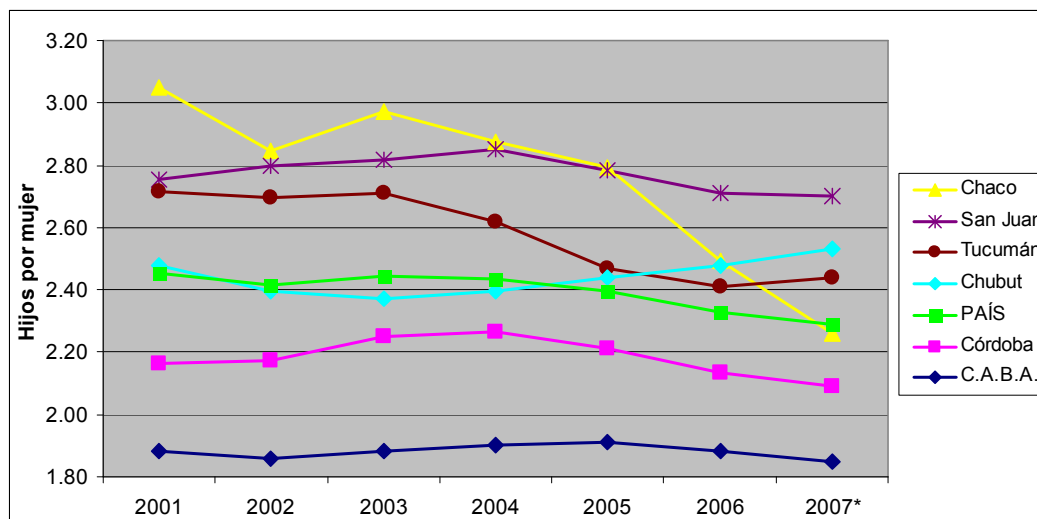
Table 3: Total fertility rate of Argentina Republic y selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages.

AÑO	PAIS	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Córdoba	Chaco	Chubut	San Juan	Tucumán
2001	2.45	1.88	2.16	3.05	2.48	2.75	2.71
2002	2.42	1.86	2.17	2.85	2.40	2.80	2.70
2003	2.45	1.88	2.25	2.97	2.37	2.82	2.71
2004	2.43	1.90	2.27	2.88	2.39	2.85	2.62
2005	2.40	1.91	2.21	2.79	2.44	2.79	2.47
2006	2.33	1.88	2.14	2.49	2.48	2.71	2.41
2007*	2.29	1.85	2.09	2.26	2.53	2.70	2.44

(*) Annual rate.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

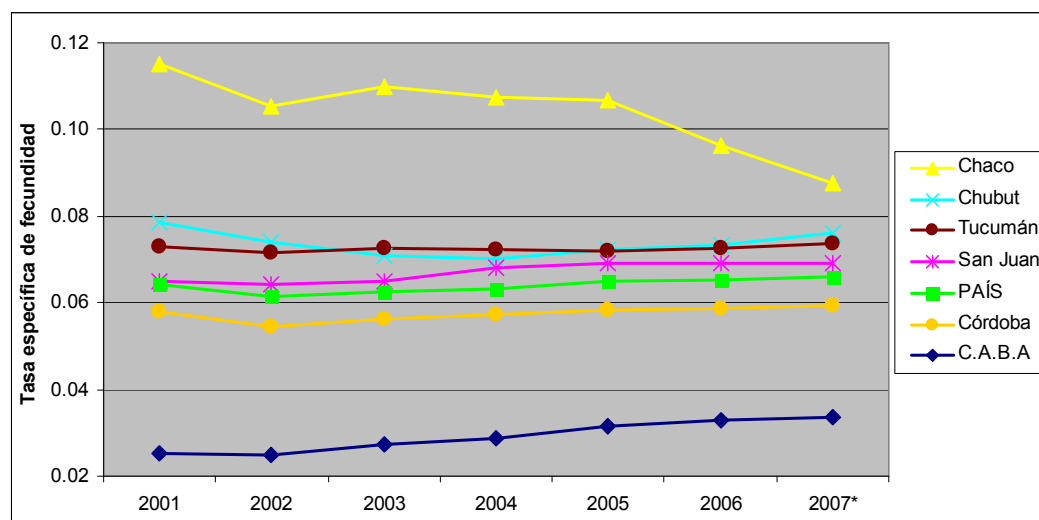
Graphic 4: Total fertility rate of Argentina Republic y selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages.



(*) Annual rate.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

Graphic 5: Adolescent fertility rate. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07.



(*) Annual rate.

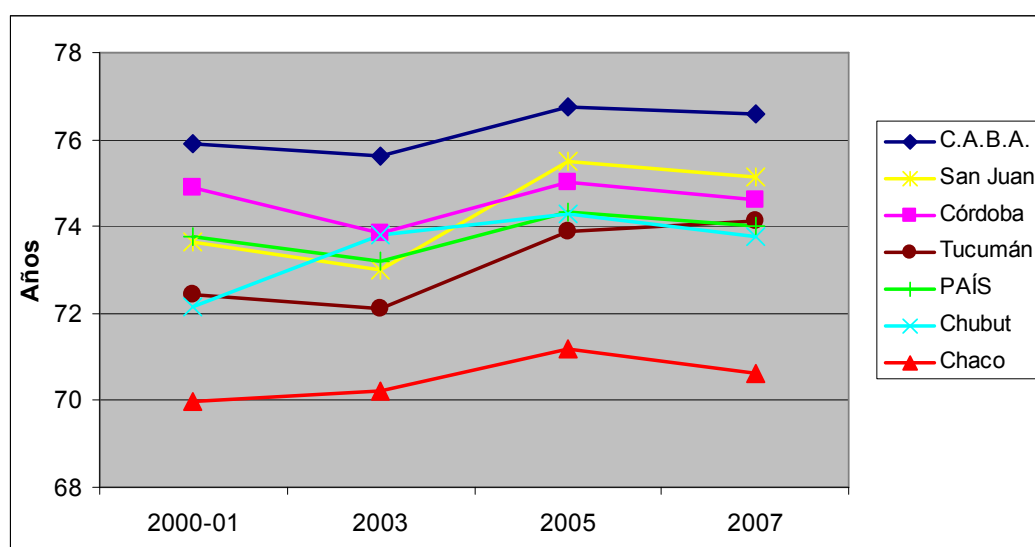
Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

Table 4: Life expectancy at birth. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07.

AÑO	PAIS	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Córdoba	Chaco	Chubut	San Juan	Tucumán
2000-01	73.77	75.91	74.90	69.97	72.16	73.63	72.42
2003	73.20	75.63	73.86	70.23	73.80	73.00	72.13
2005	74.35	76.74	75.02	71.20	74.29	75.50	73.88
2007	73.99	76.60	74.62	70.61	73.78	75.15	74.11
Diferencia 2007-2001	0.22	0.69	-0.28	0.64	1.62	1.52	1.69

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07) and life tables of INDEC (2001-02).

Graphic 6: Life expectancy at birth. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07.



Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07) and life tables of INDEC (2001-02).

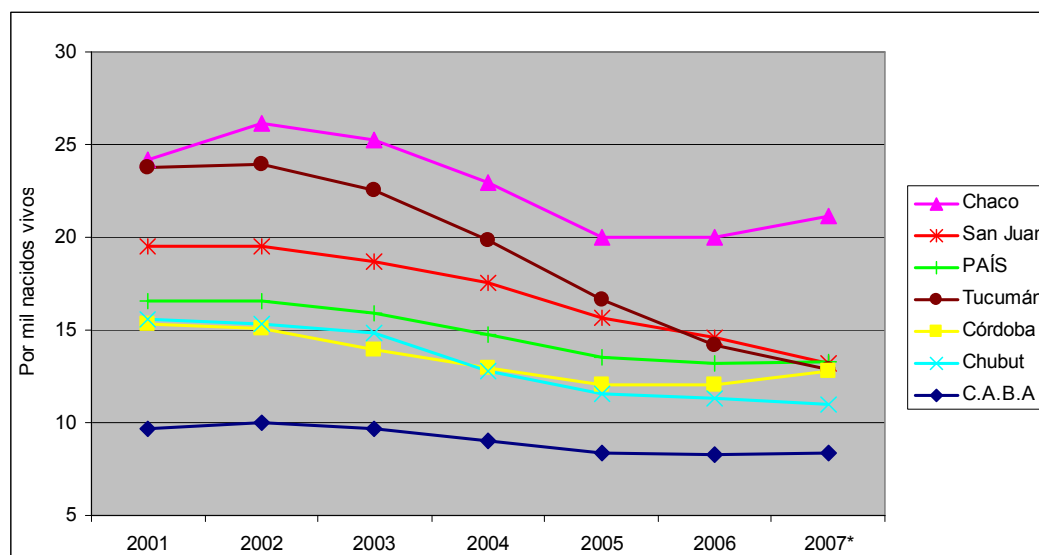
Table 5: Infant mortality rate. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages, per thousands live births.

AÑO	PAIS	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Córdoba	Chaco	Chubut	San Juan	Tucumán
2001	16.6	9.6	15.3	24.2	15.5	19.5	23.7
2002	16.5	10.0	15.1	26.1	15.3	19.5	23.9
2003	15.9	9.7	13.9	25.2	14.8	18.7	22.5
2004	14.7	9.0	13.0	23.0	12.8	17.6	19.8
2005	13.5	8.4	12.1	20.0	11.6	15.7	16.7
2006	13.2	8.3	12.1	20.0	11.3	14.6	14.2
2007*	13.3	8.4	12.7	21.2	11.0	13.2	12.8
Diferencia 2007-2001	-3.3	-1.2	-2.6	-3.0	-4.6	-6.3	-10.9

(*) Annual rates.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

Graphic 7: Infant mortality rate. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages, per thousands live births.



(*) Annual rates.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

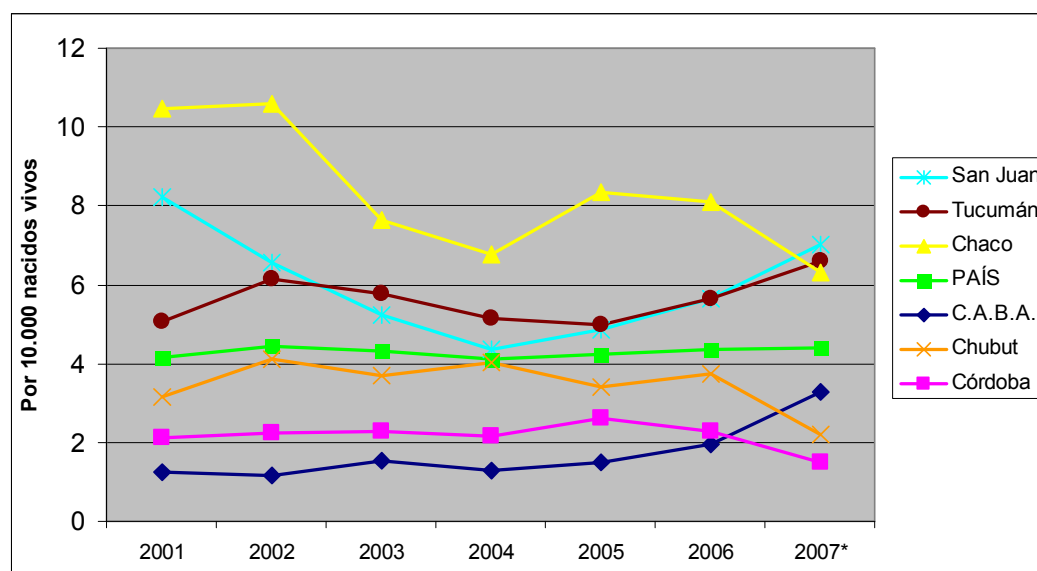
Table 6: Maternal mortality rates. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages, per ten thousands live births.

AÑO	PAIS	Ciudad de Bs. Aires	Córdoba	Chaco	Chubut	San Juan	Tucumán
2001	4.1	1.2	2.1	10.5	3.2	8.2	5.1
2002	4.4	1.2	2.2	10.6	4.1	6.6	6.1
2003	4.3	1.5	2.3	7.6	3.7	5.2	5.8
2004	4.1	1.3	2.2	6.8	4.0	4.4	5.2
2005	4.2	1.5	2.6	8.3	3.4	4.9	5.0
2006	4.4	1.9	2.3	8.1	3.7	5.6	5.6
2007*	4.4	3.3	1.5	6.3	2.2	7.0	6.6

(*) Annual rates.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).

Graphic 8: Maternal mortality rates. Argentina Republic and selected provinces, 2001-07. Adjusted rates by triennial averages, per ten thousands live births.



(*) Annual rates.

Source: Based on vital statistics of National Health Ministry (2000-07).