

A Demographic Sampling of Law Firms in Latin America

Executive Summary
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Walker Clark, LLC
*Performance Consultants to the
International Legal Profession*
www.walkerclark.com

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This paper summarizes the results of research conducted by Walker Clark, LLC, in January and February 2004. Walker Clark examined the professional biographies of 5,538 lawyers in 240 law firms in the region, organized into representative samples of law firms in 19 countries. Firms included in the samples each were considered to be mid-size or large for their respective markets. Each firm also had a substantial practice providing commercial and corporate legal services to international clients. The national samples were then analyzed to identify regional and national trends that will affect the composition of lawyer staffing of law firms in the next ten years.

The results of the study support several points, each of which will have important implications for long range planning and management of law firms in Latin America:

- The legal profession in Latin America, as well as in most of the countries in the region, is a young profession. Half of the lawyers are 35 years old or younger.
- It is also a relatively junior profession in terms of experience. Half of the lawyers in the region have nine years or less experience since qualification. This reflects the substantial growth of Latin American law firms in the past ten years.
- The legal profession in Latin America is becoming much more diverse with respect to gender. Women comprise 32.8% of the legal population throughout the regional sample, ranging in the various countries from 21% to 51% of the lawyers in law firms. The percentage of women is much higher, however, among younger lawyers. This predicts that within as soon as ten years, the legal profession in many of the Latin American countries will be predominantly female. Even in countries with relatively lower percentages of female lawyers currently, women will achieve representation in the legal profession that will approximate their representation in their countries' populations overall.

The national samples were constructed from data from these jurisdictions: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The data from other jurisdictions in the region was insufficient to construct reliable representative samples.

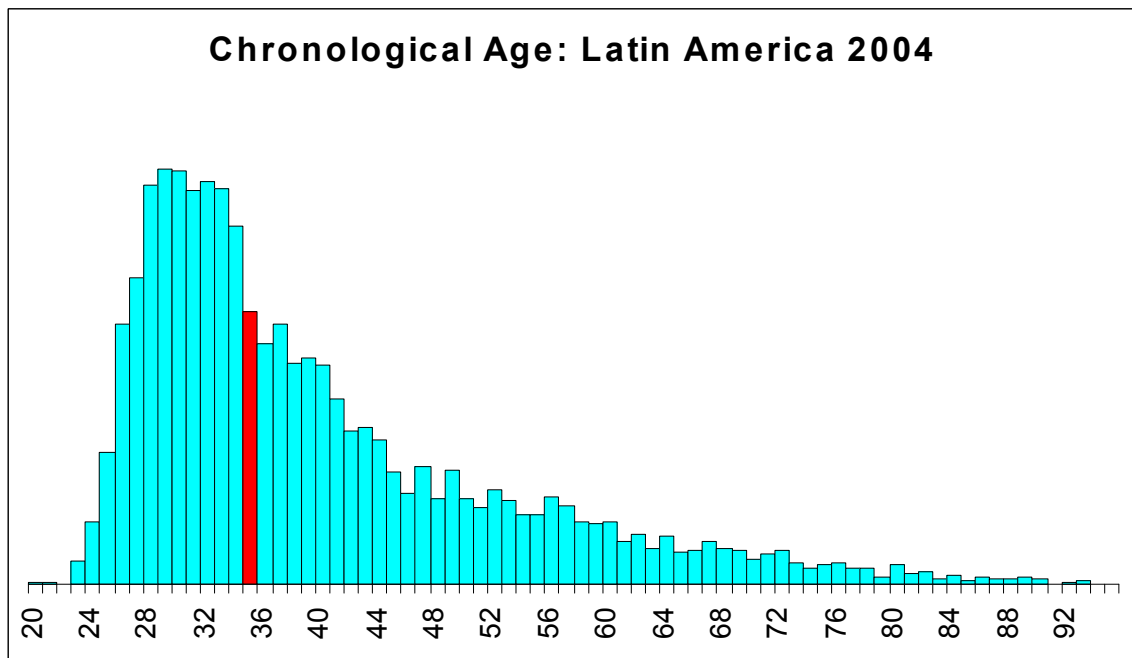
This is an ongoing research project of Walker Clark, LLC, and will be updated as new data warrant.

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Regional data

Sample size: 5,538 lawyers in 240 law firms

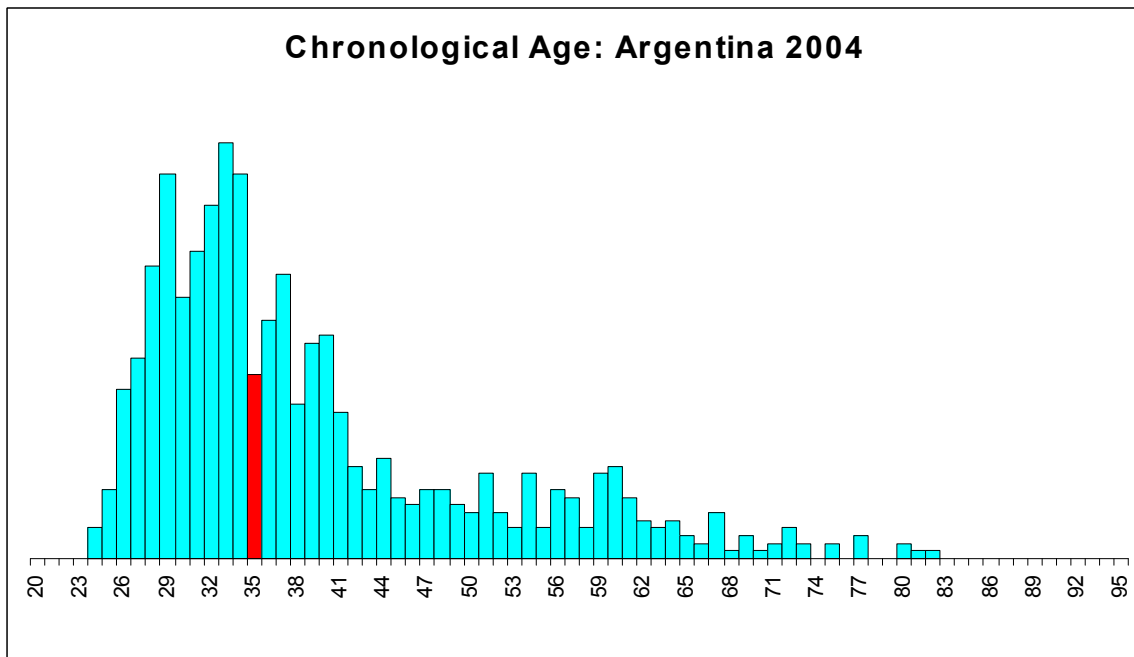
These charts display the distribution of professional ages and chronological ages for the entire region. The red bars indicate the median age.



Median professional age: 9
 Median chronological age: 35
 Women: 32.08%

Argentina

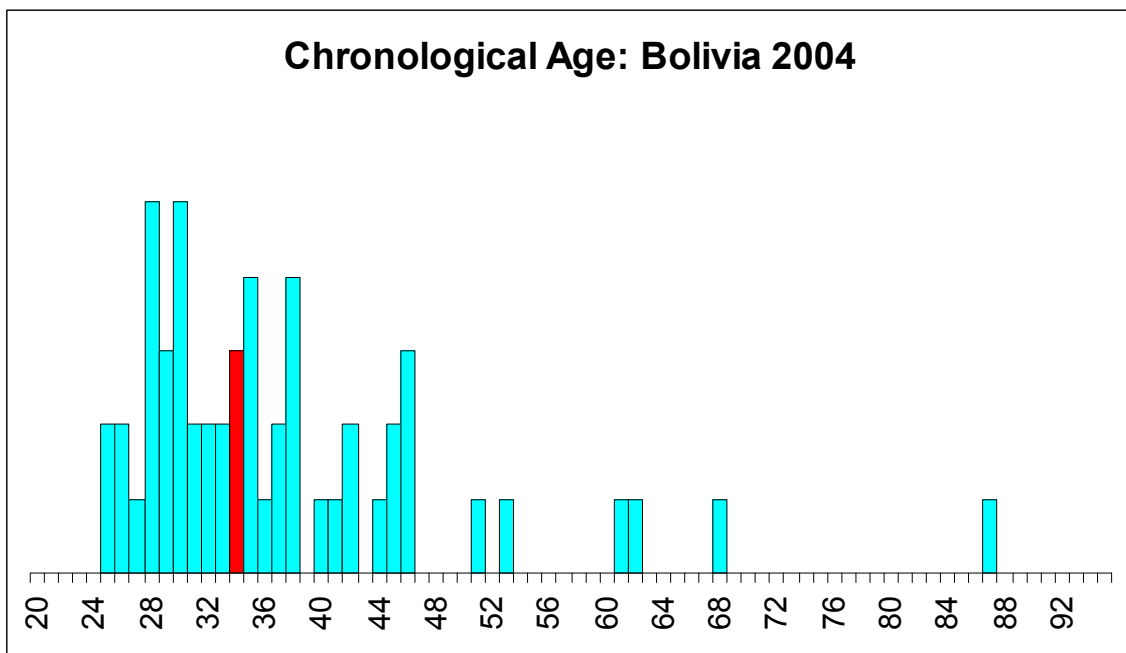
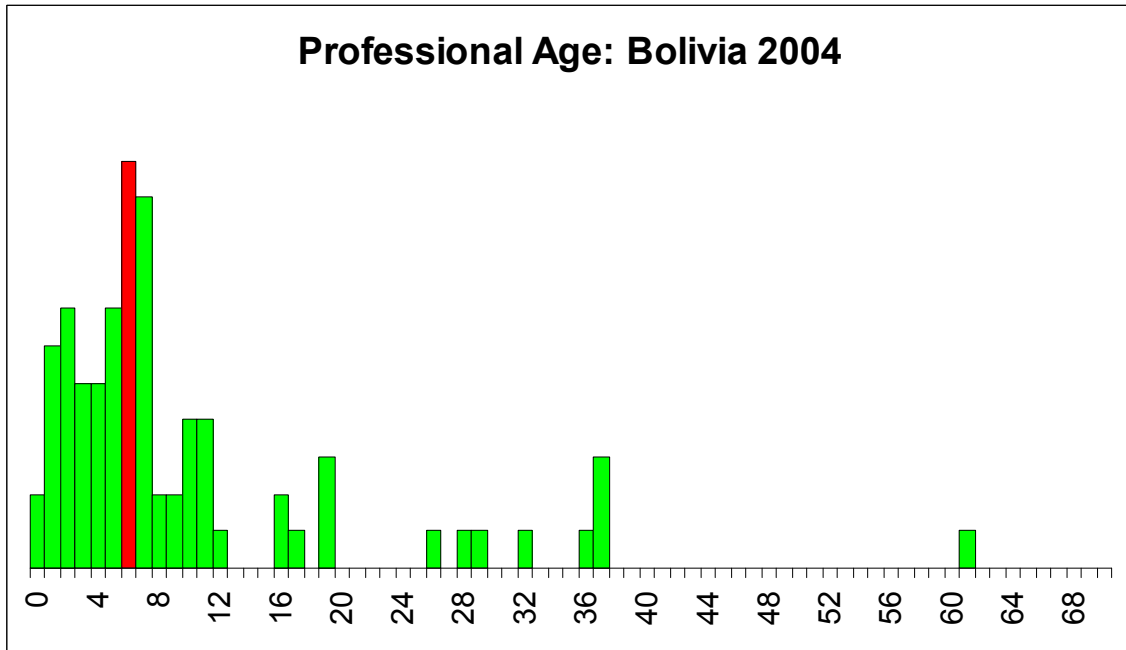
Sample size: 797 lawyers in 31 law firms



Median professional age: 10
 Median chronological age: 35
 Women: 30.36%

Bolivia

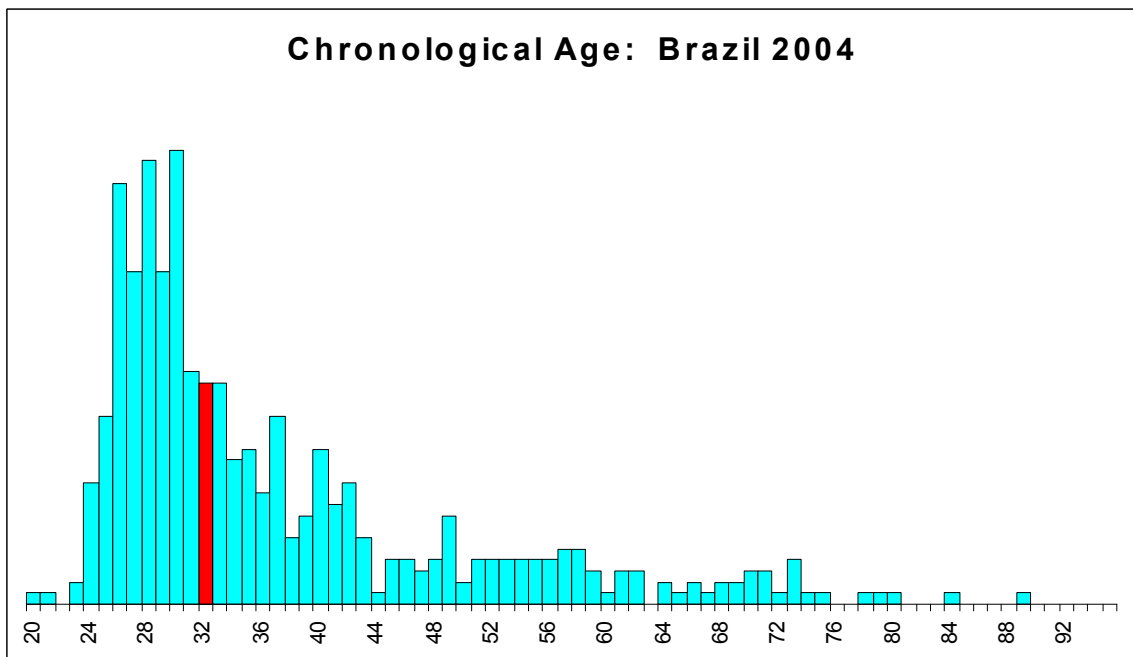
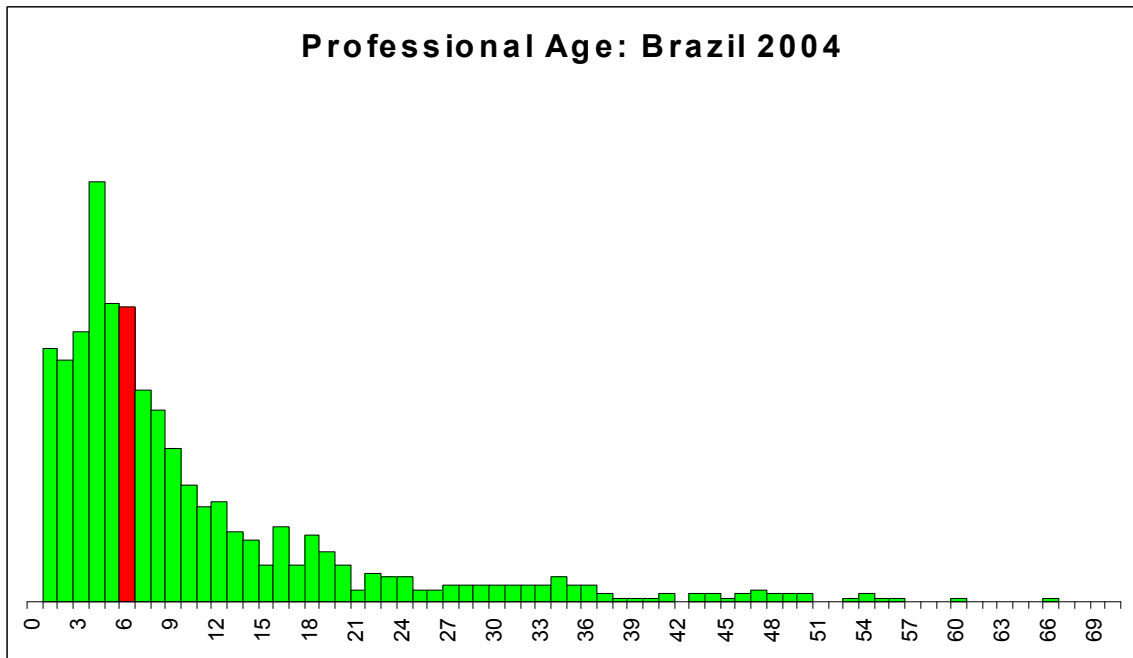
Sample size: 81 lawyers in 9 law firms



Median professional age: 6
 Median chronological age: 34.5
 Women: 32.10%

Brazil

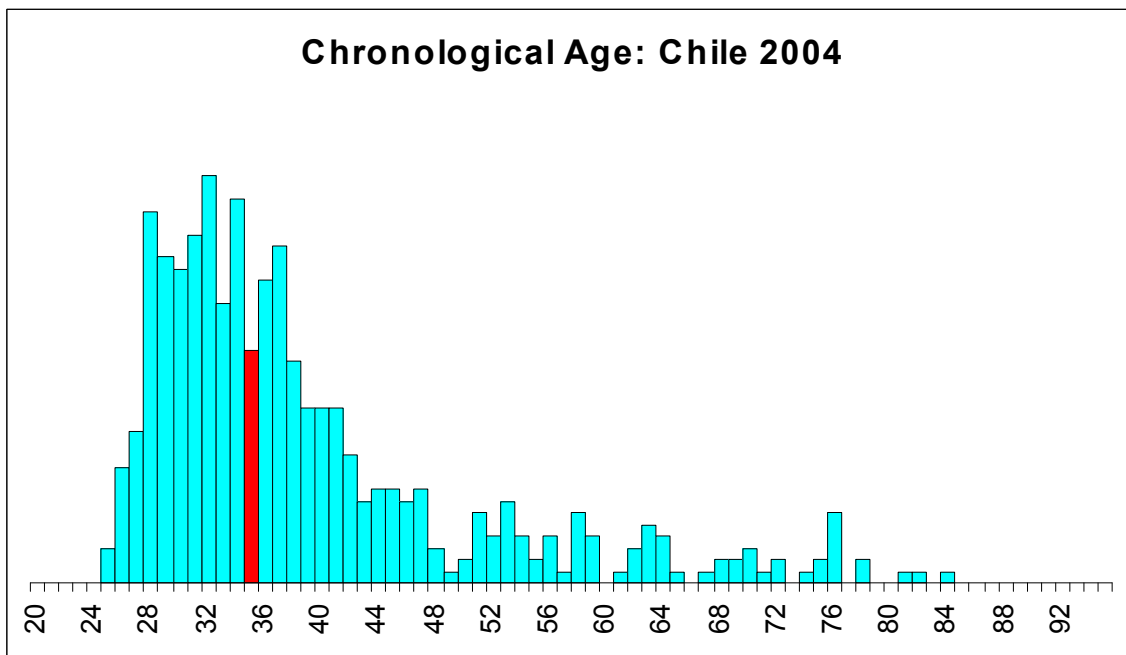
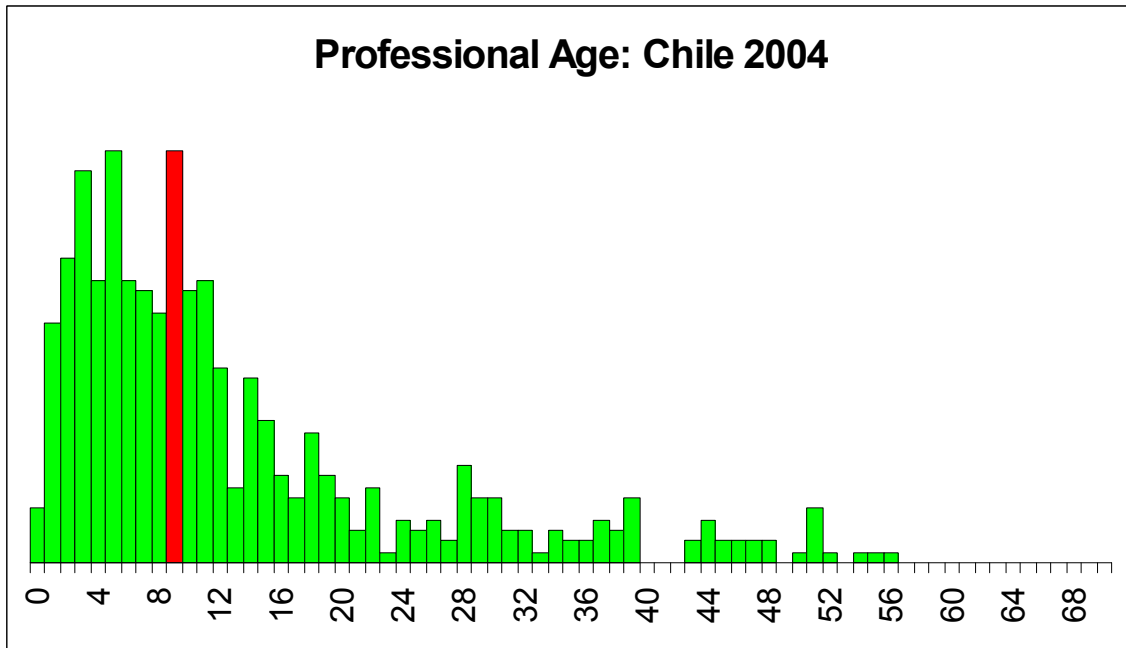
Sample size: 845 lawyers in 22 law firms



Median professional age: 6
Median chronological age: 32
Women: 40.71%

Chile

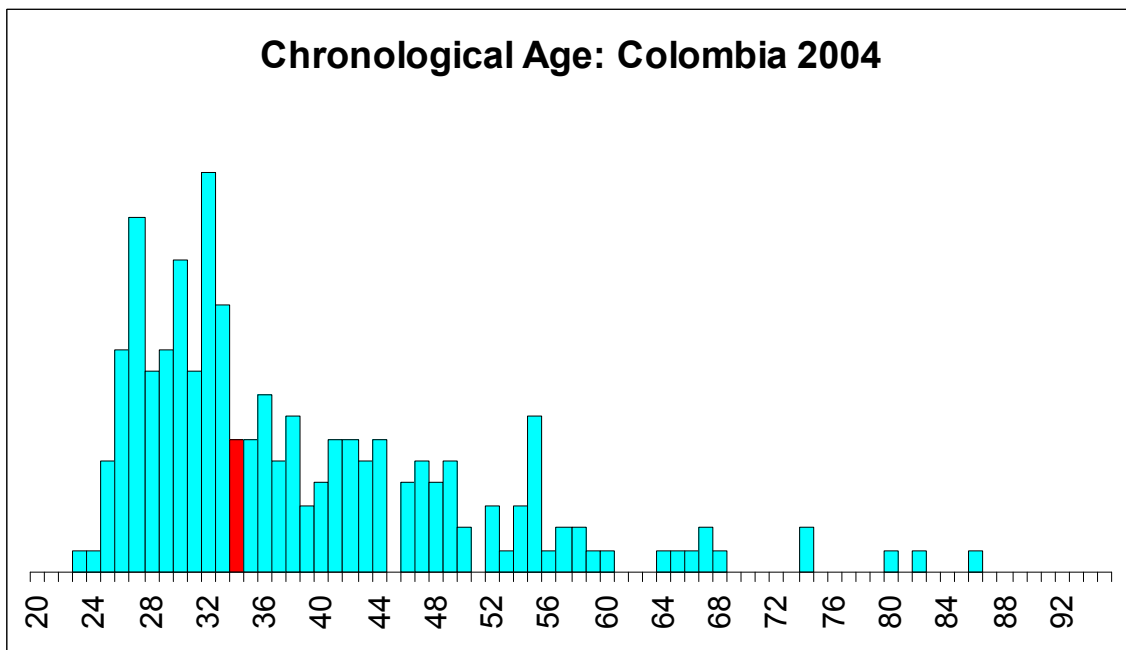
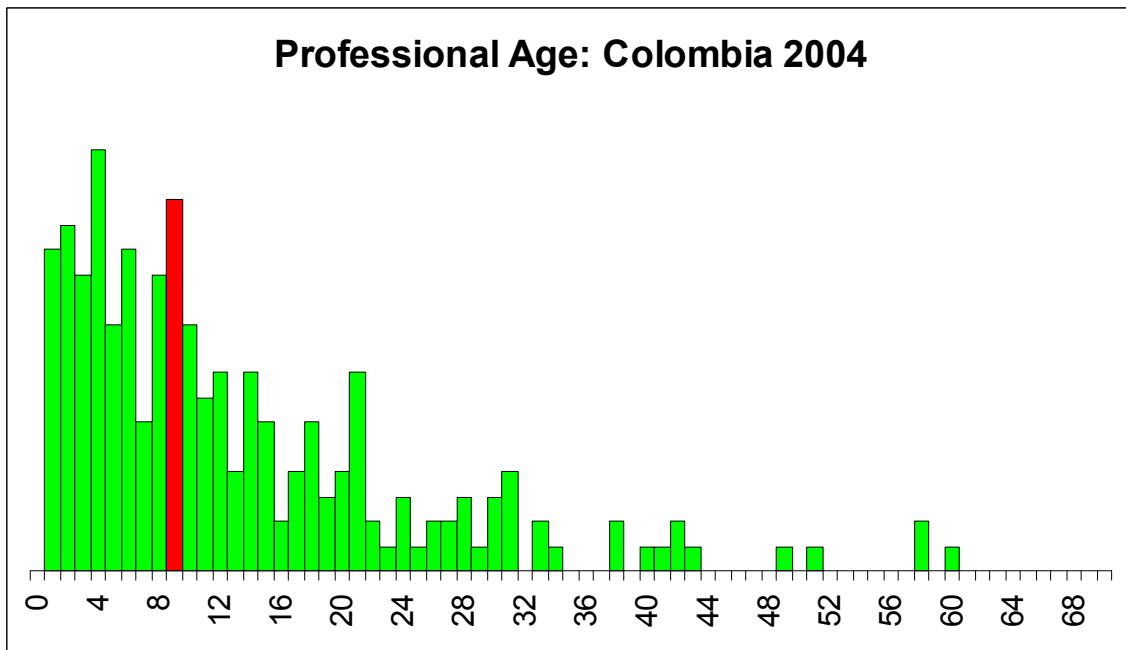
Sample size: 516 lawyers in 19 law firms



Median professional age: 9
Median chronological age: 35
Women: 21.32%

Colombia

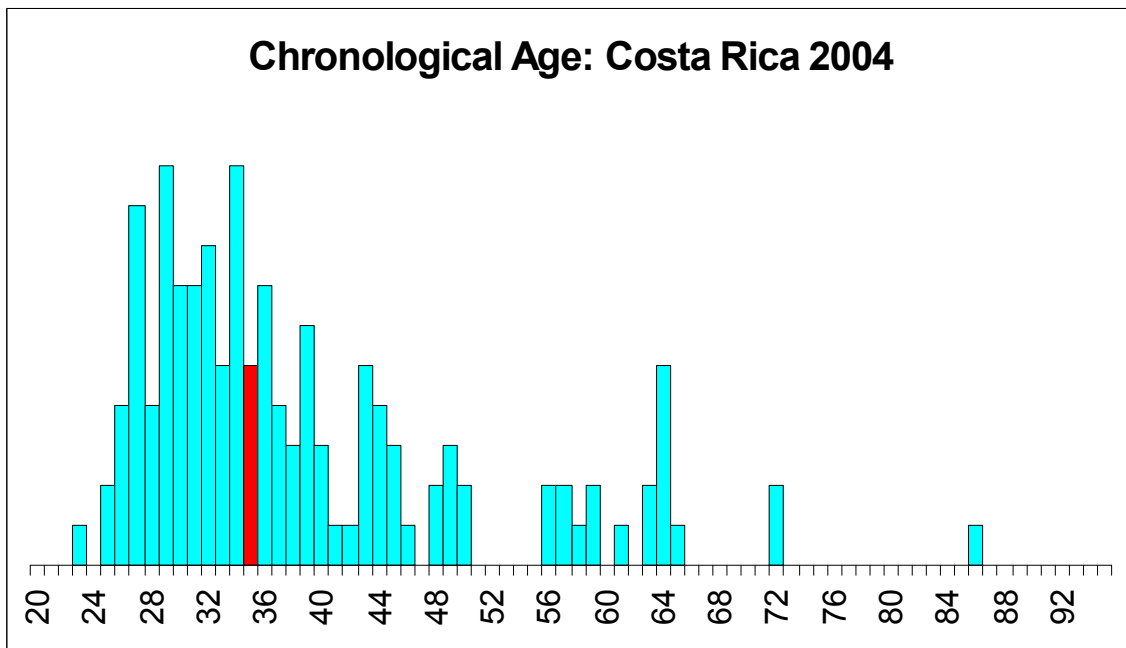
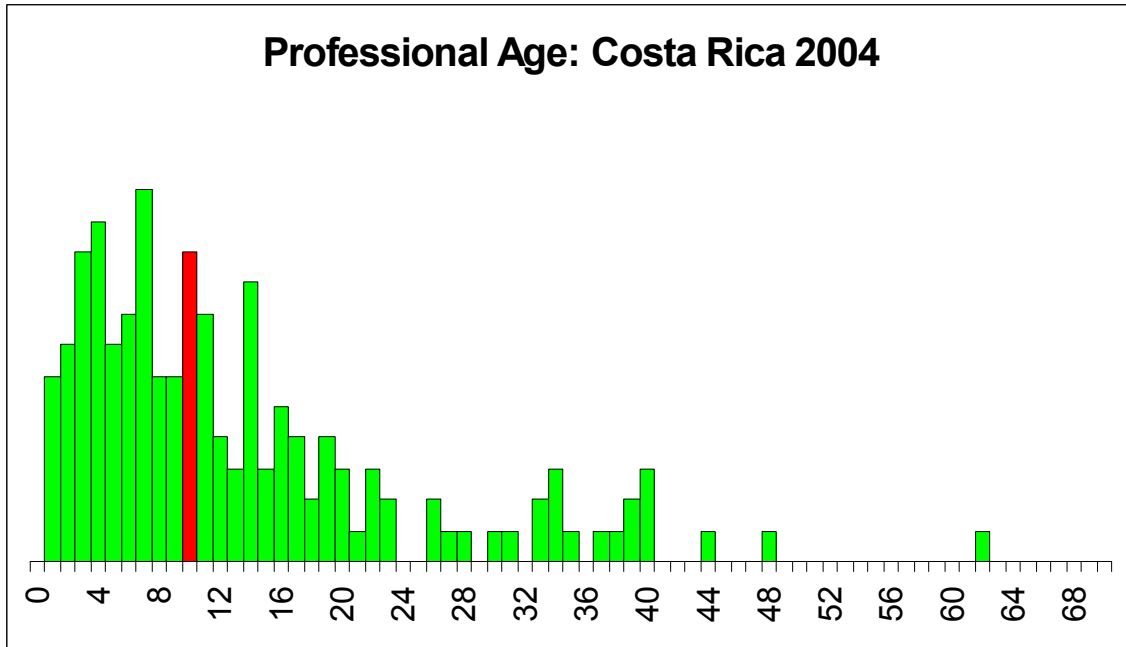
Sample size: 220 lawyers in 11 law firms



Median professional age: 9
Median chronological age: 34
Women: 44.55%

Costa Rica

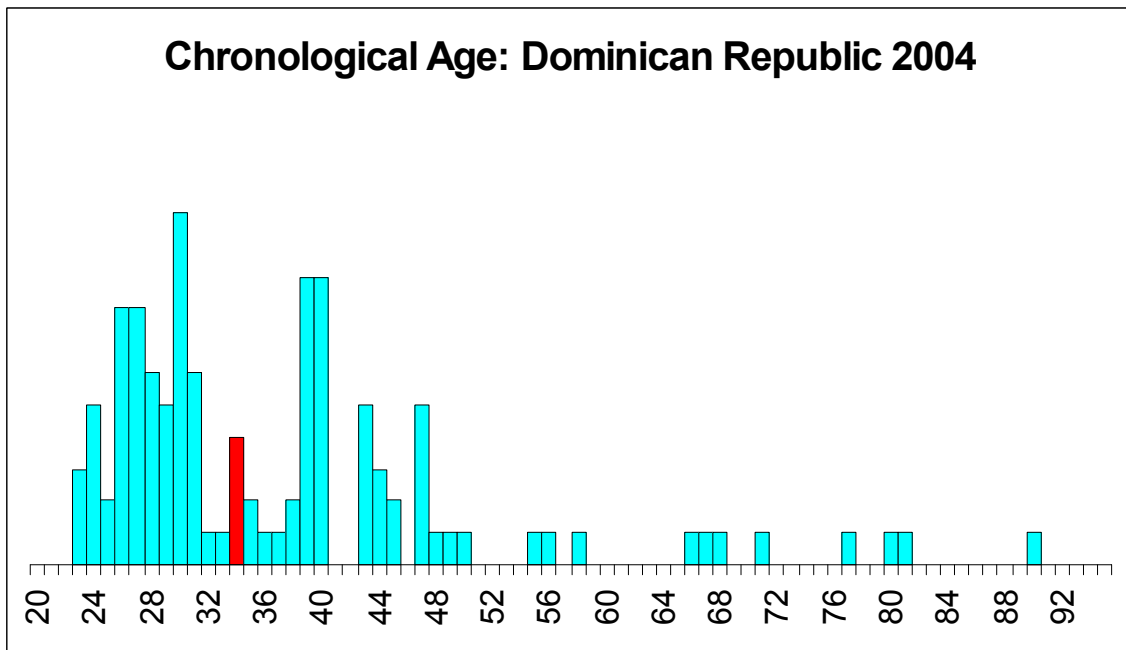
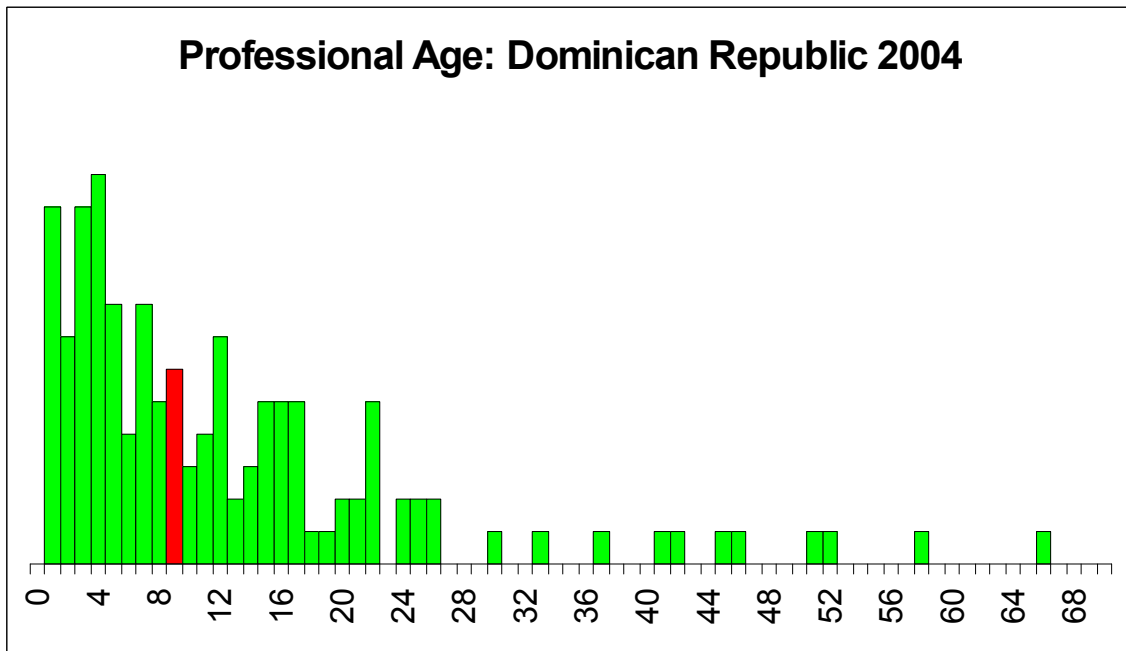
Sample size: 156 lawyers in 9 law firms



Median professional age: 10
 Median chronological age: 35
 Women: 33.97%

Dominican Republic

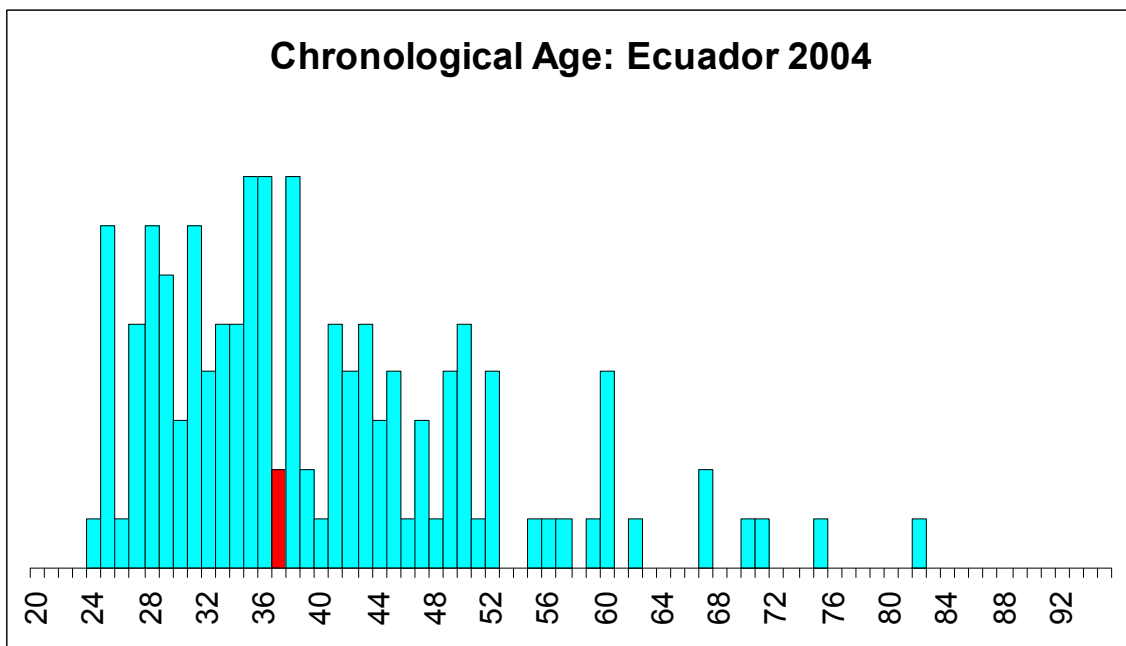
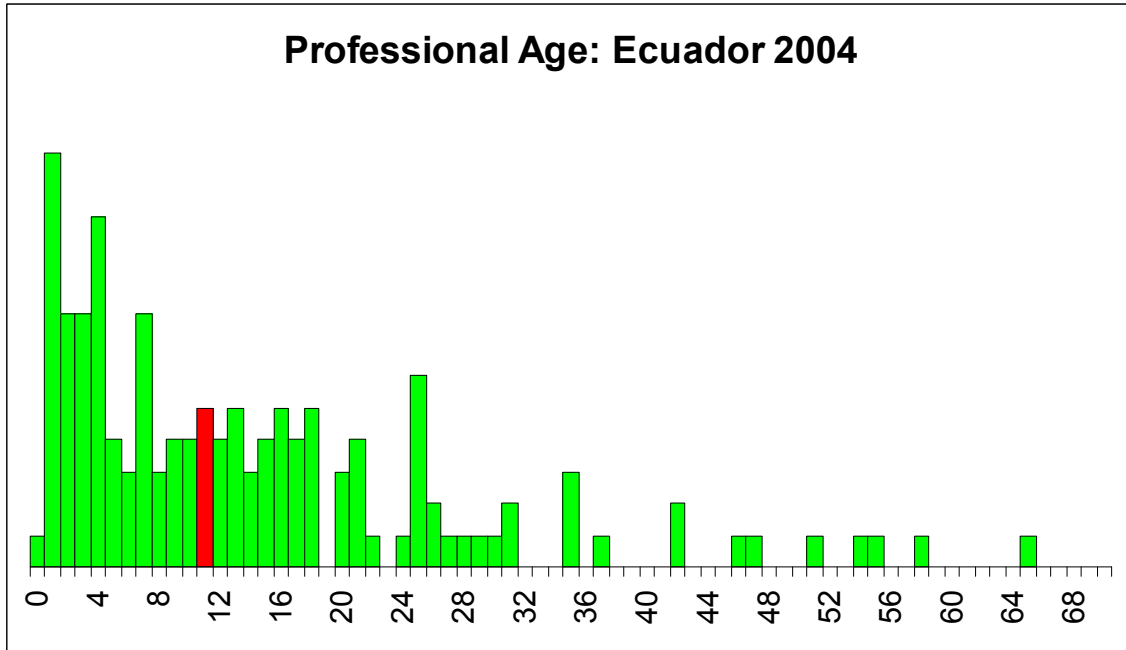
Sample size: 108 lawyers in 8 law firms



Median professional age: 9
 Median chronological age: 34
 Women: 51.49%

Ecuador

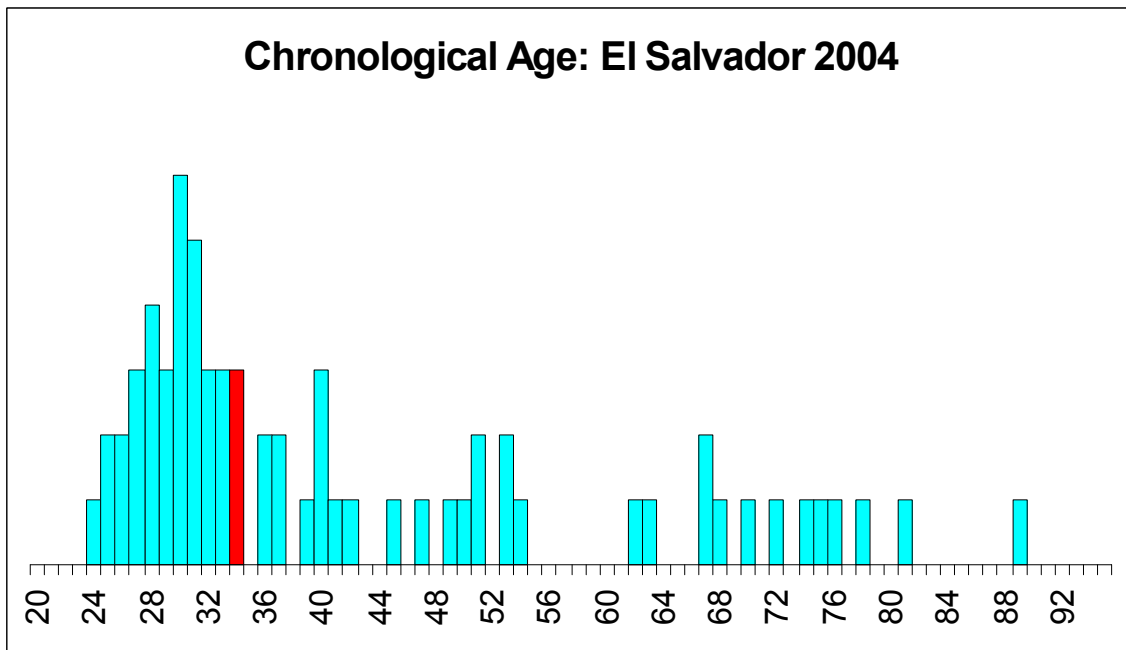
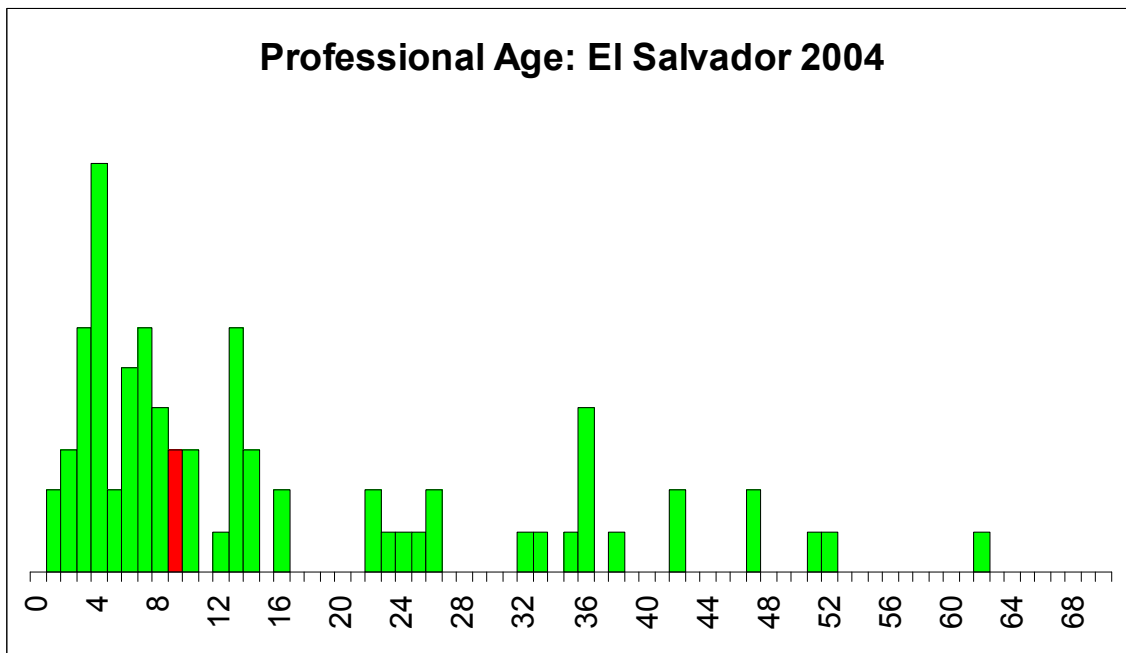
Sample size: 139 lawyers in 9 law firms



Median professional age: 11
 Median chronological age: 37
 Women: 28.06%

El Salvador

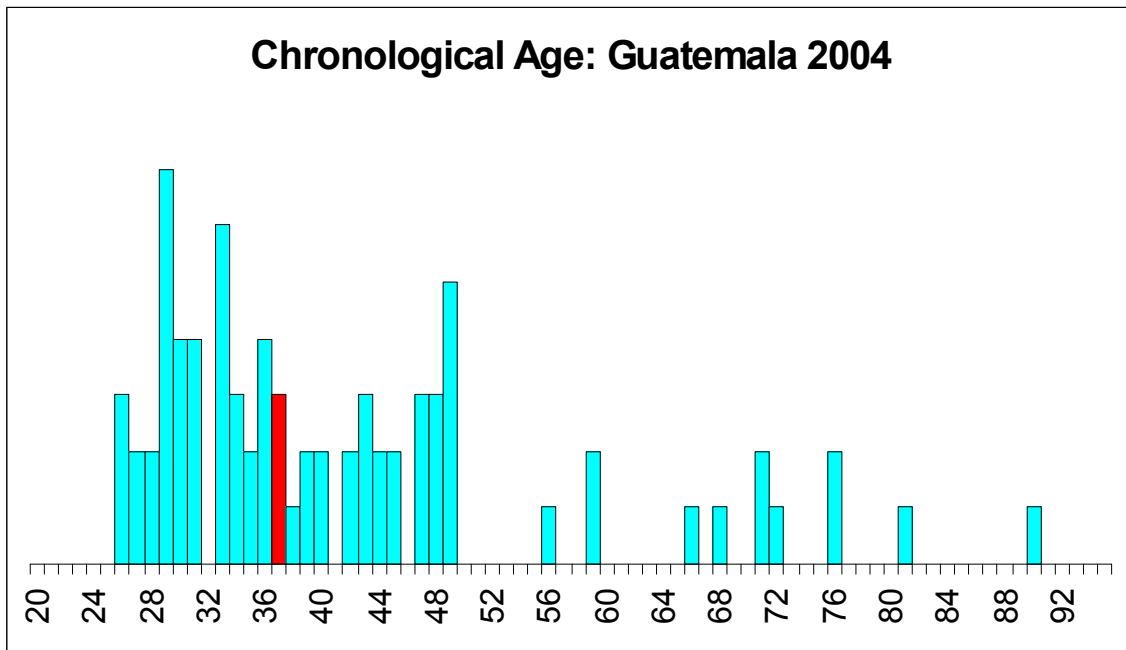
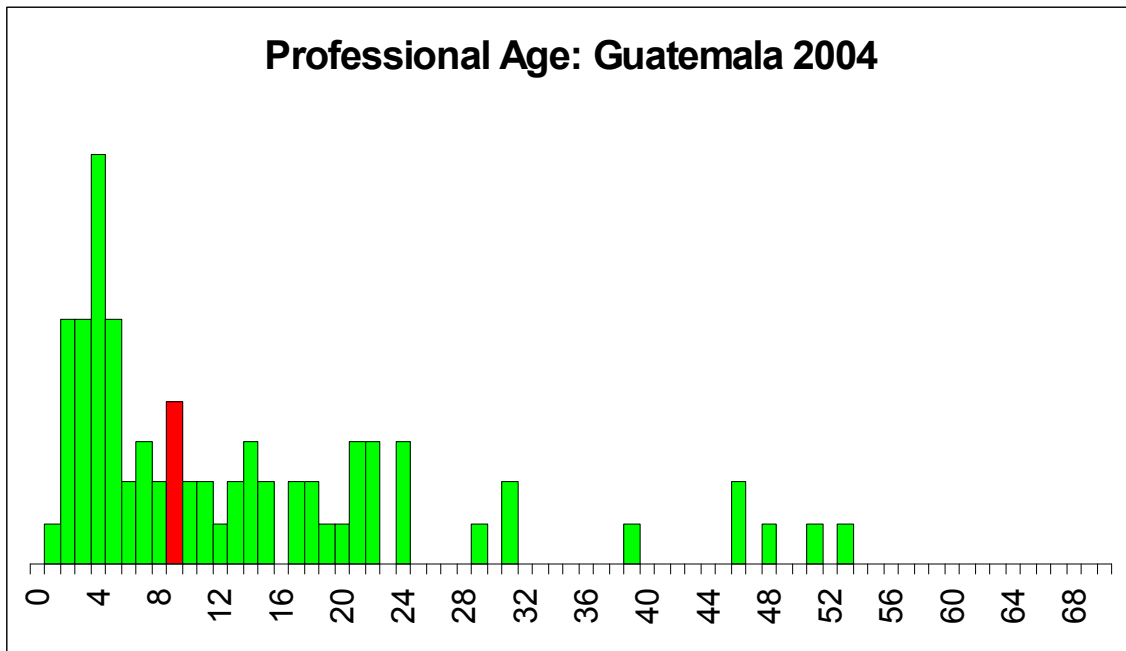
Sample size: 84 lawyers in 7 law firms



Median professional age: 9
 Median chronological age: 34
 Women: 30.95%

Guatemala

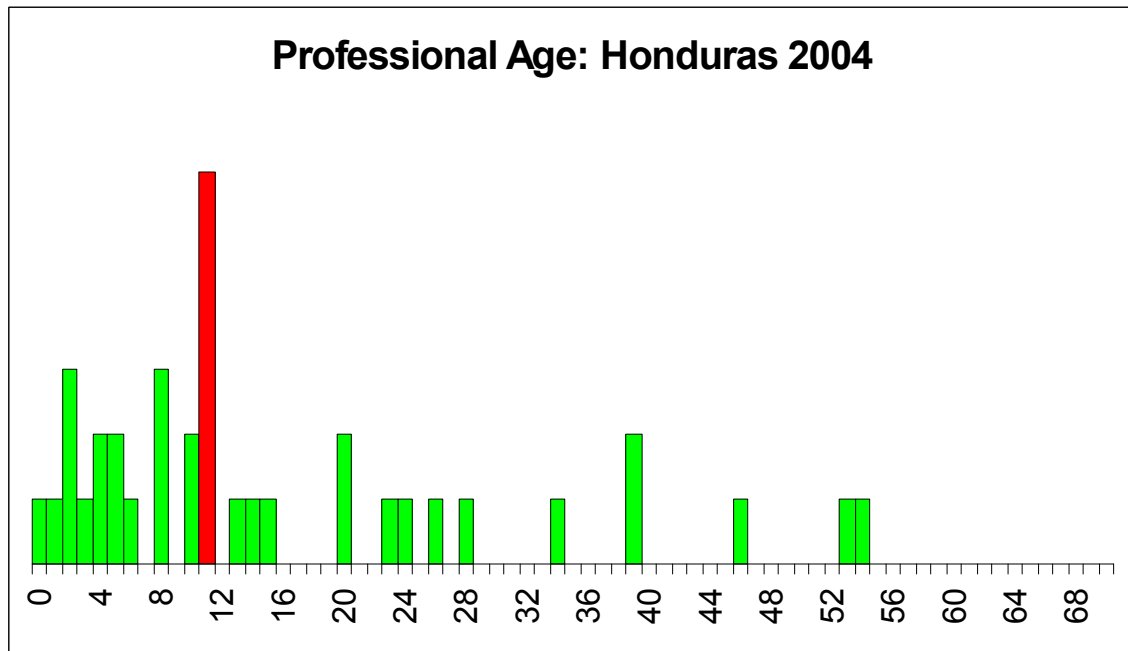
Sample size: 78 lawyers in 6 law firms



Median professional age: 9
 Median chronological age: 37
 Women: 33.33%

Honduras

Sample size: 41 lawyers in 8 law firms



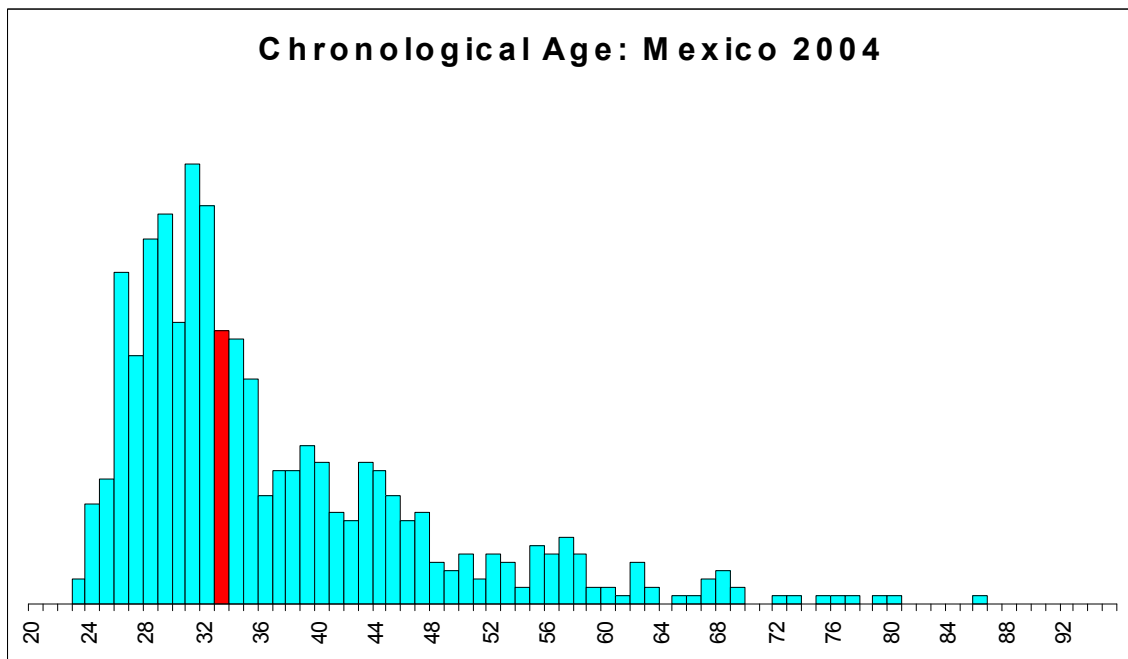
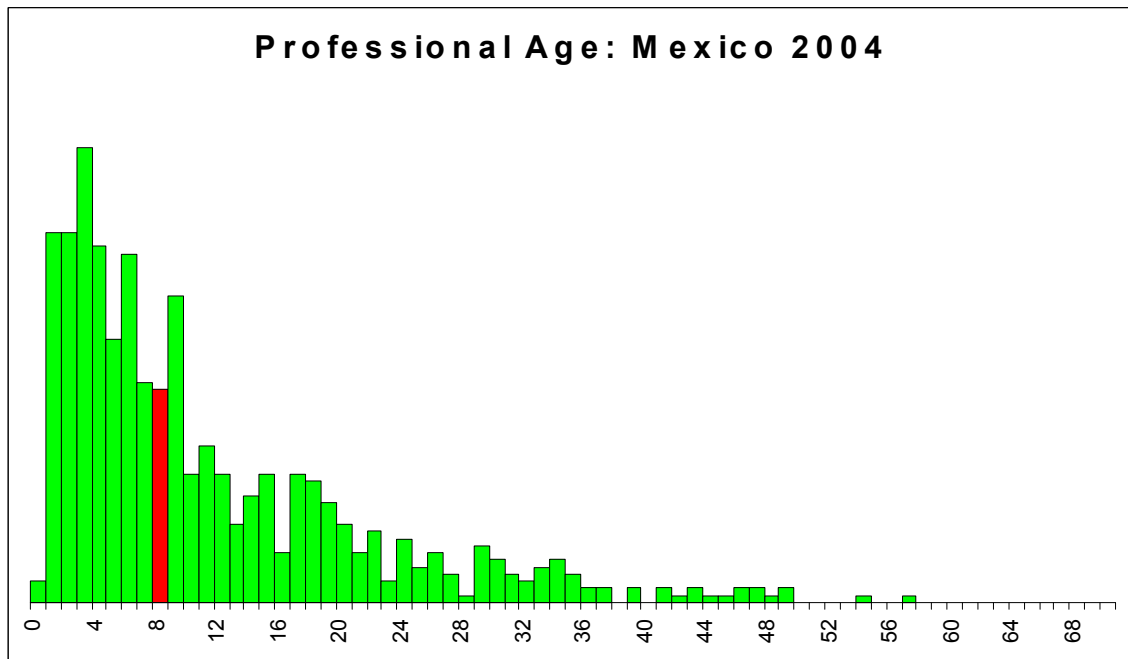
Note: Due to the relatively small size of the sample from Honduras, it was not possible to calculate a reliable sample distribution of chronological ages of lawyers in Honduran law firms. The above distribution of professional ages was compared to data from law firms not in the sample, and was found to be reasonably representative.

Median professional age: 11

Women: 29.27%

Mexico

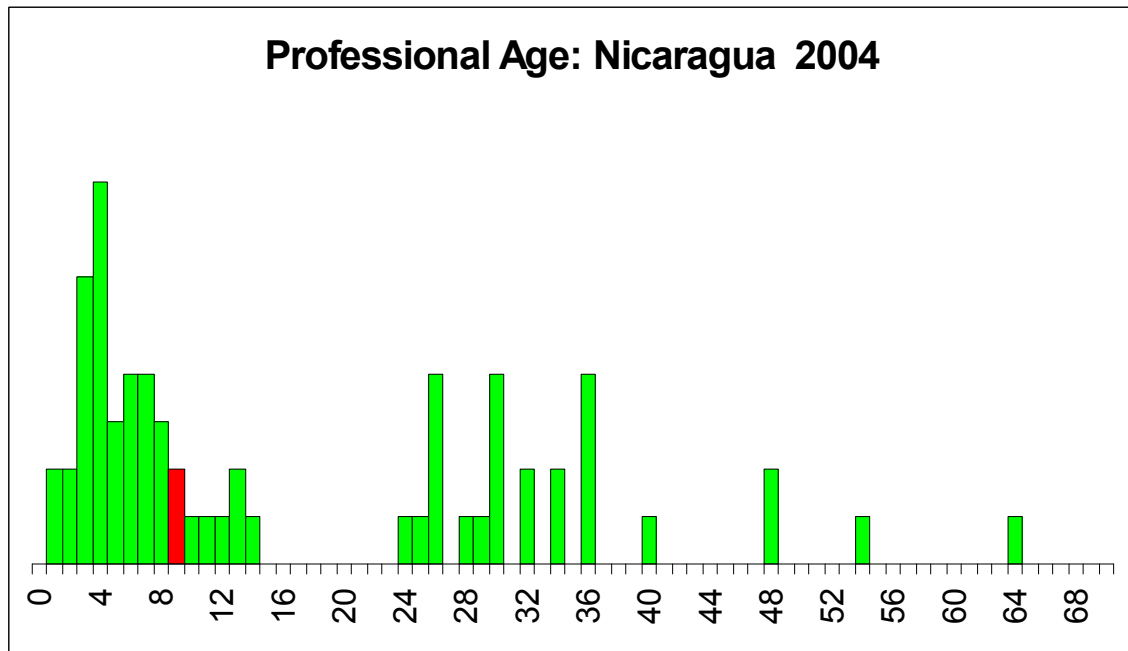
Sample size: 760 lawyers in 31 law firms



Median professional age: 8
Median chronological age: 33
Women: 21.98%

Nicaragua

Sample size: 65 lawyers in 6 law firms



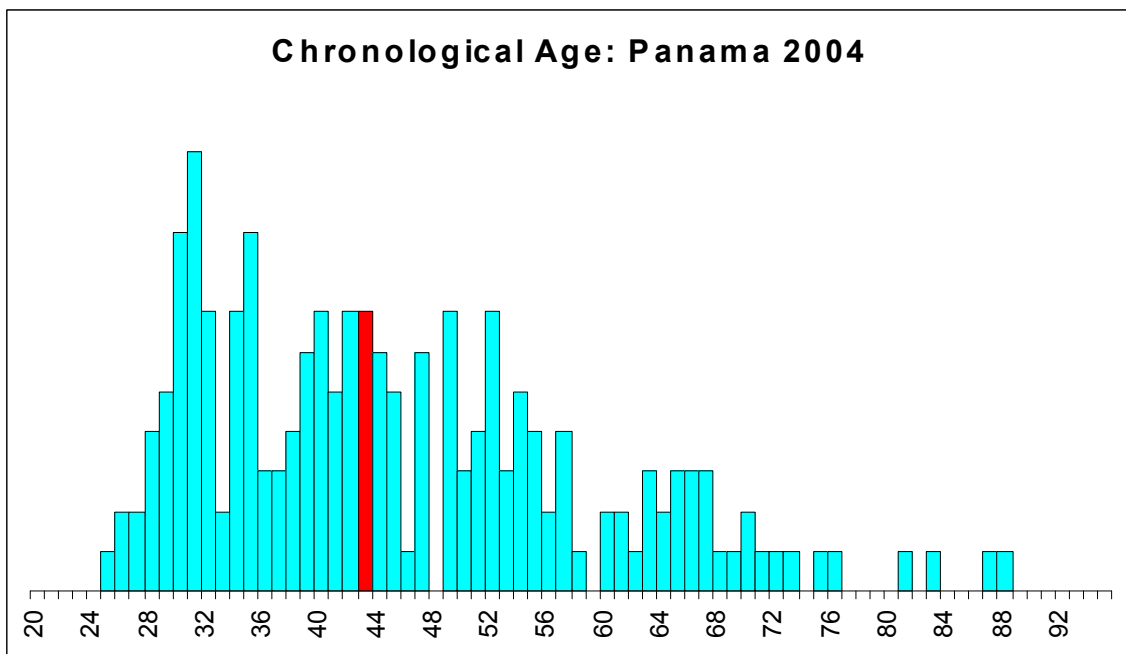
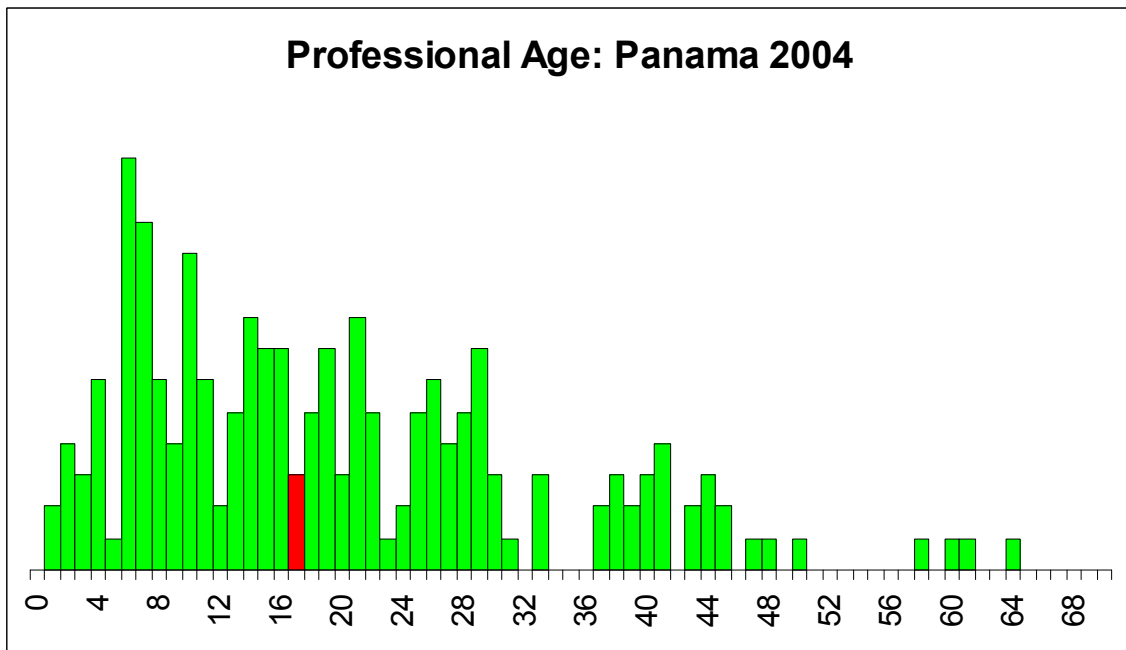
Note: Due to the relatively small size of the sample from Nicaragua, it was not possible to calculate a reliable sample distribution of chronological ages of lawyers in Nicaraguan law firms. The above distribution of professional ages was compared to data from law firms not in the sample, and was found to be reasonably representative.

Median professional age: 9

Women: 35.38%

Panama

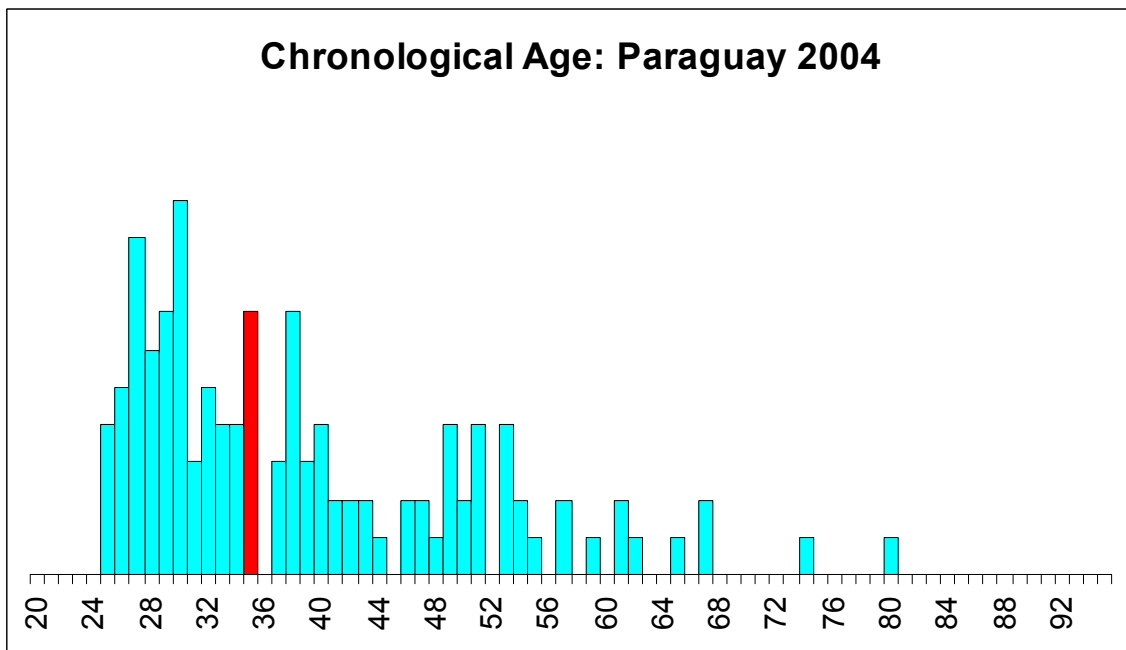
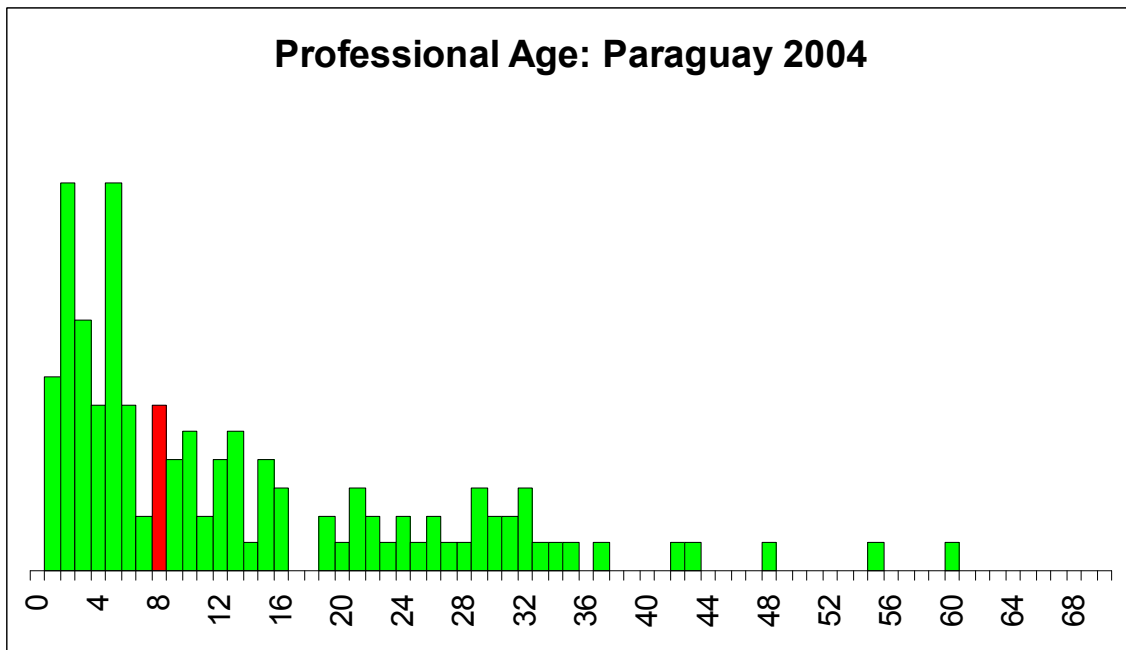
Sample size: 192 lawyers in 10 law firms



Median professional age: 17
 Median chronological age: 43
 Women: 27.60%

Paraguay

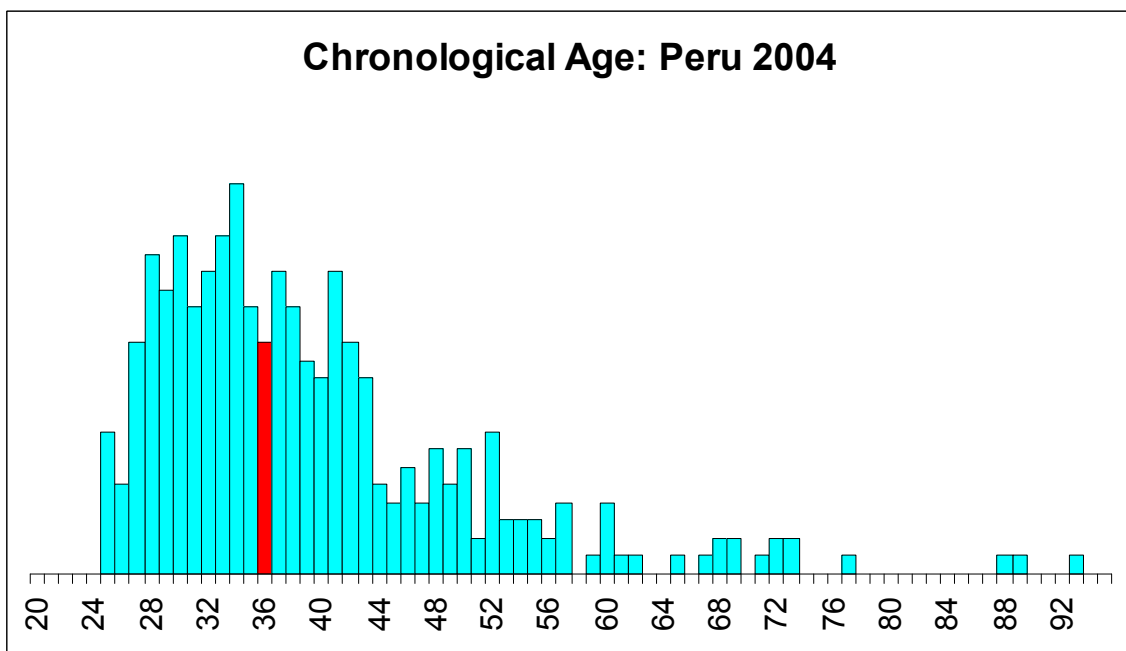
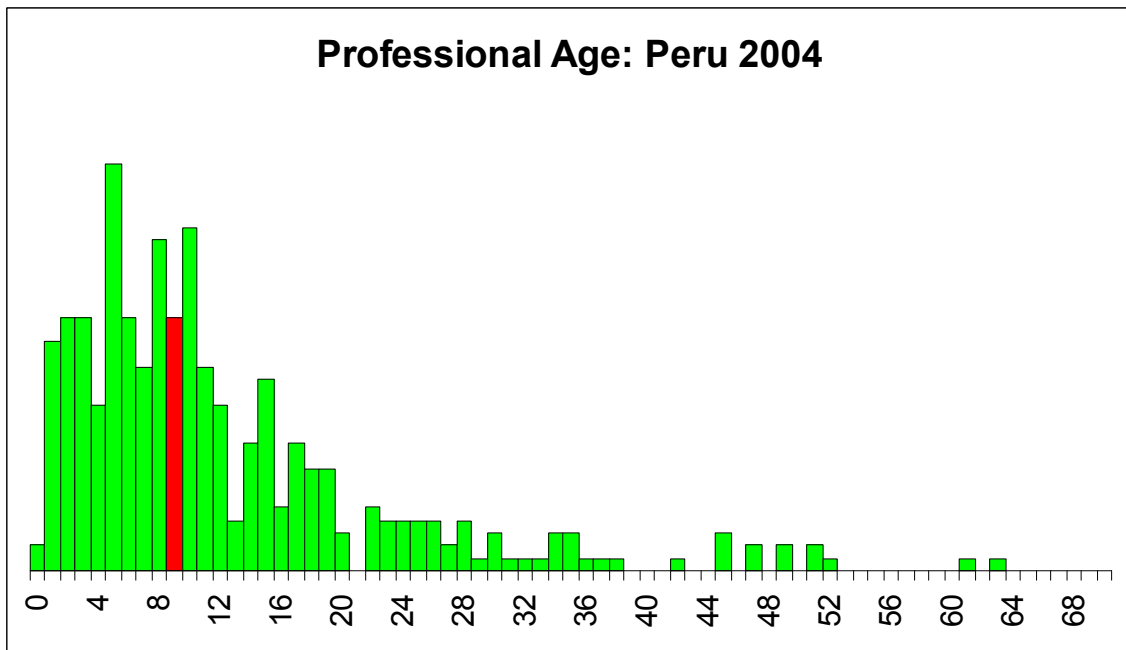
Sample size: 127 lawyers in 6 firms



Median professional age: 8
 Median chronological age: 35
 Women: 49.61%

Peru

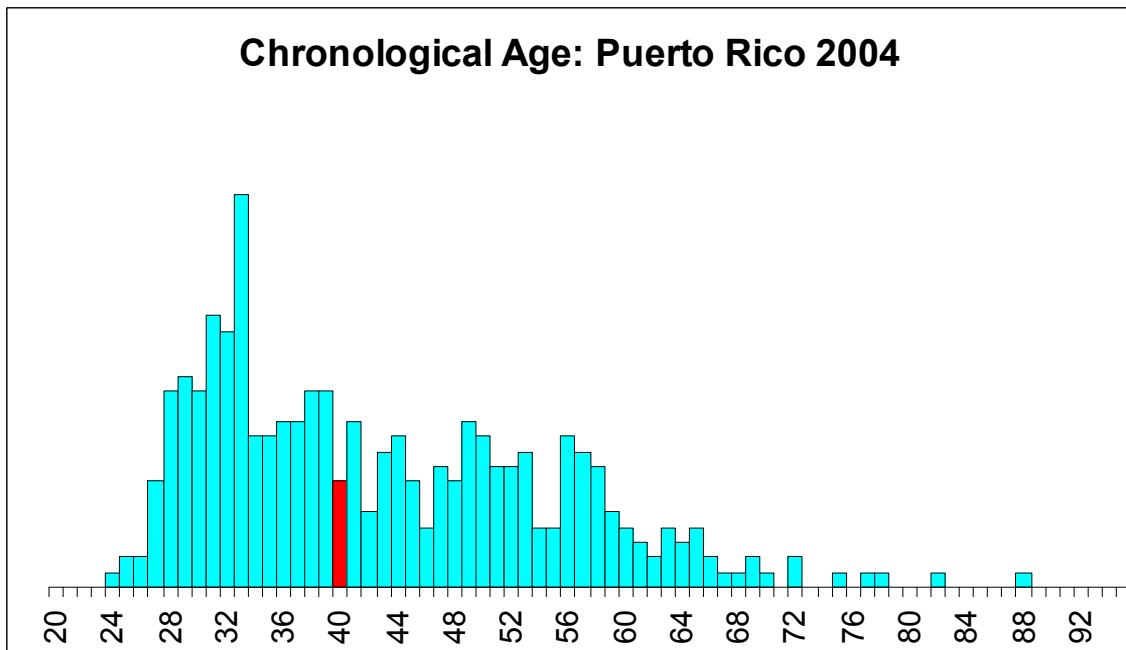
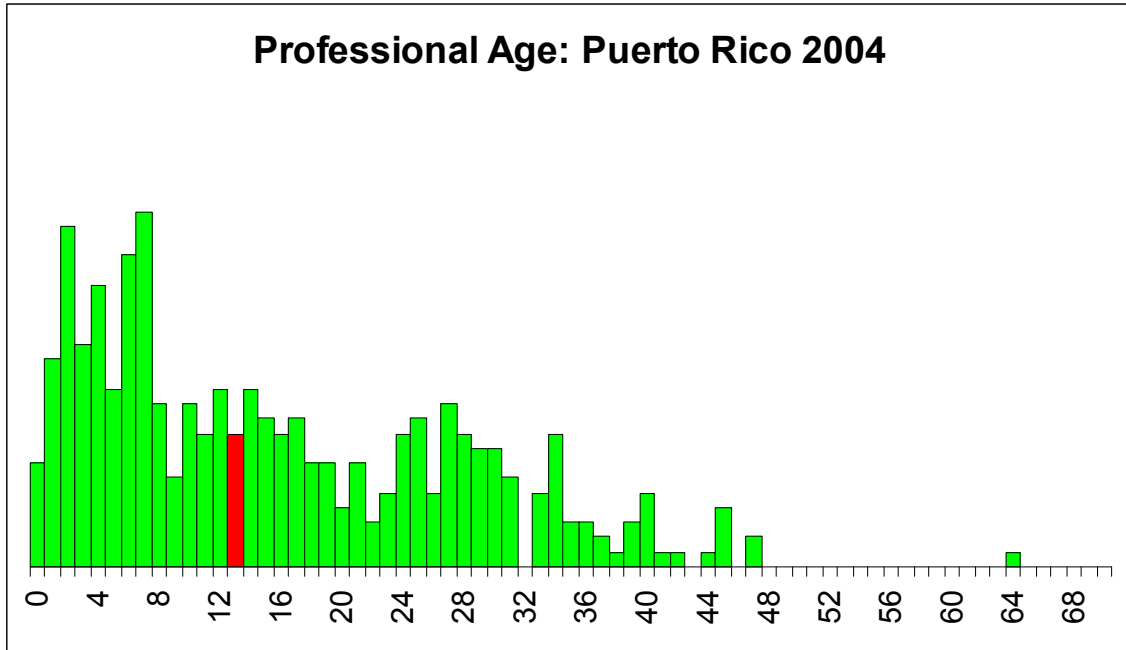
Sample size: 367 lawyers in 17 law firms



Median professional age: 9
Median chronological age: 36.5
Women: 24.25%

Puerto Rico

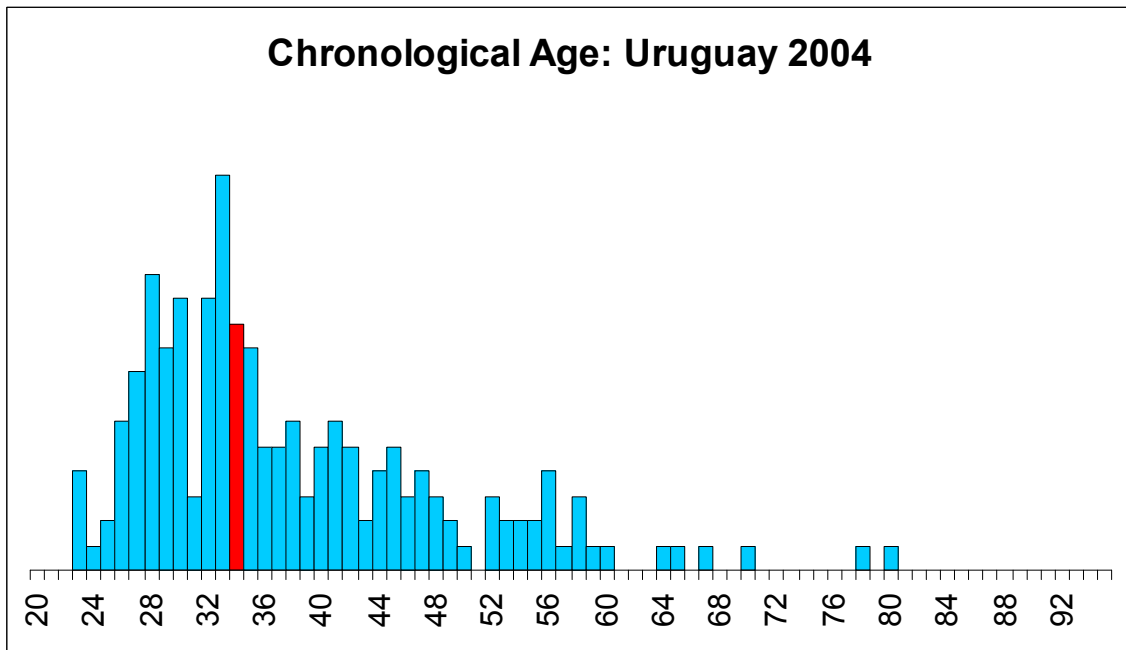
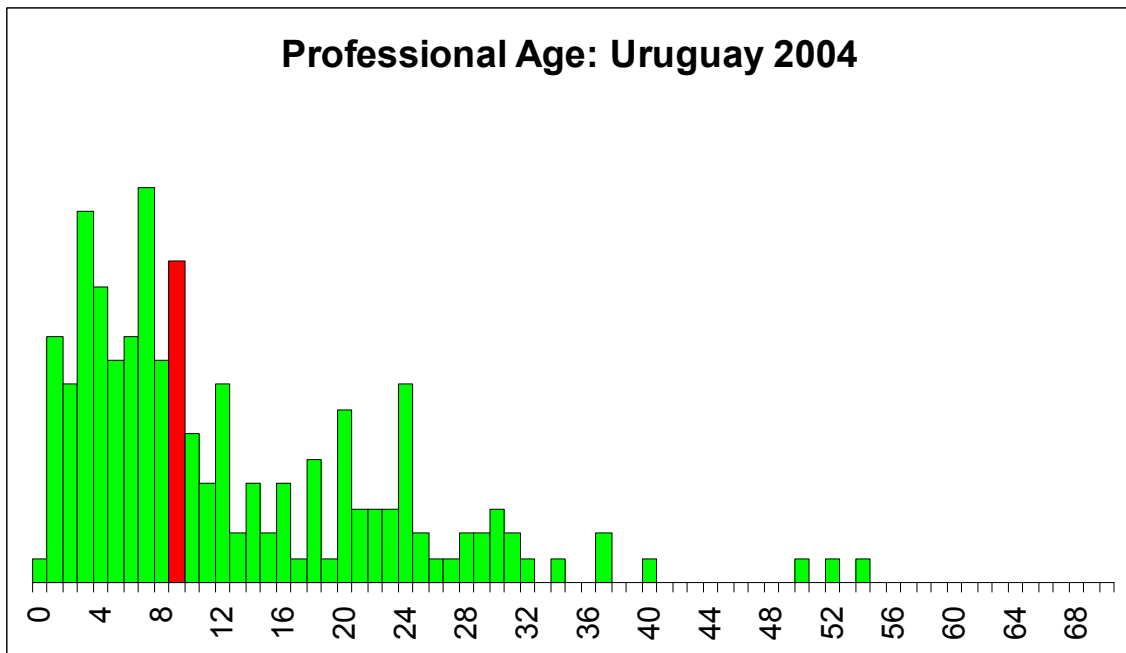
Sample size: 269 lawyers in 11 law firms



Median professional age: 13
Median chronological age: 40
Women: 33.51%

Uruguay

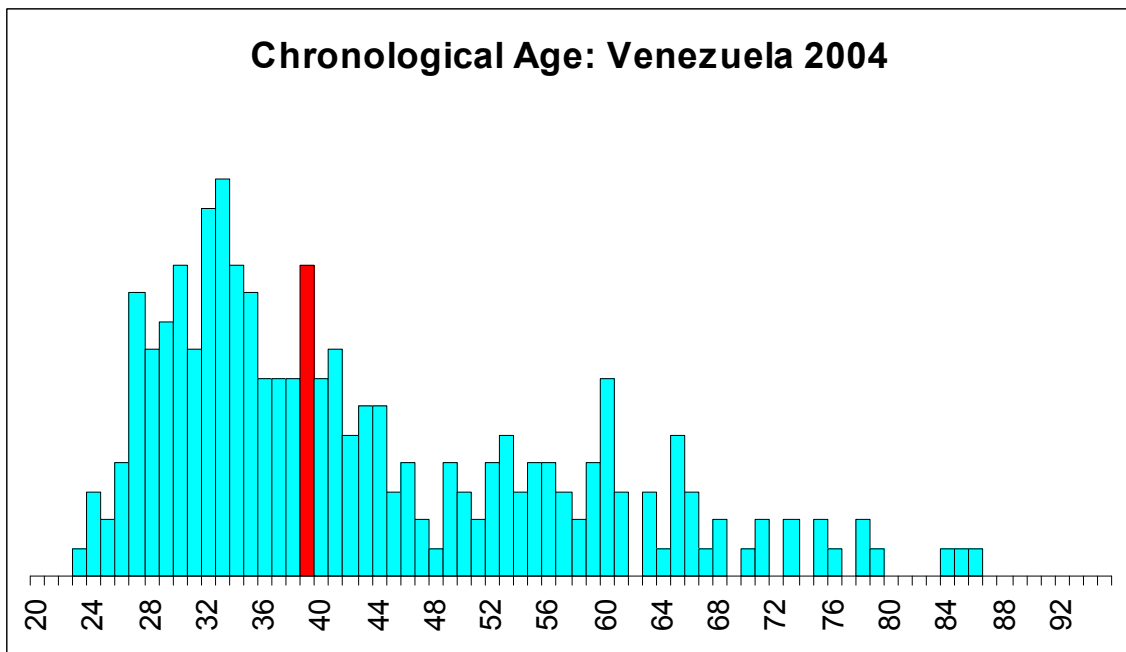
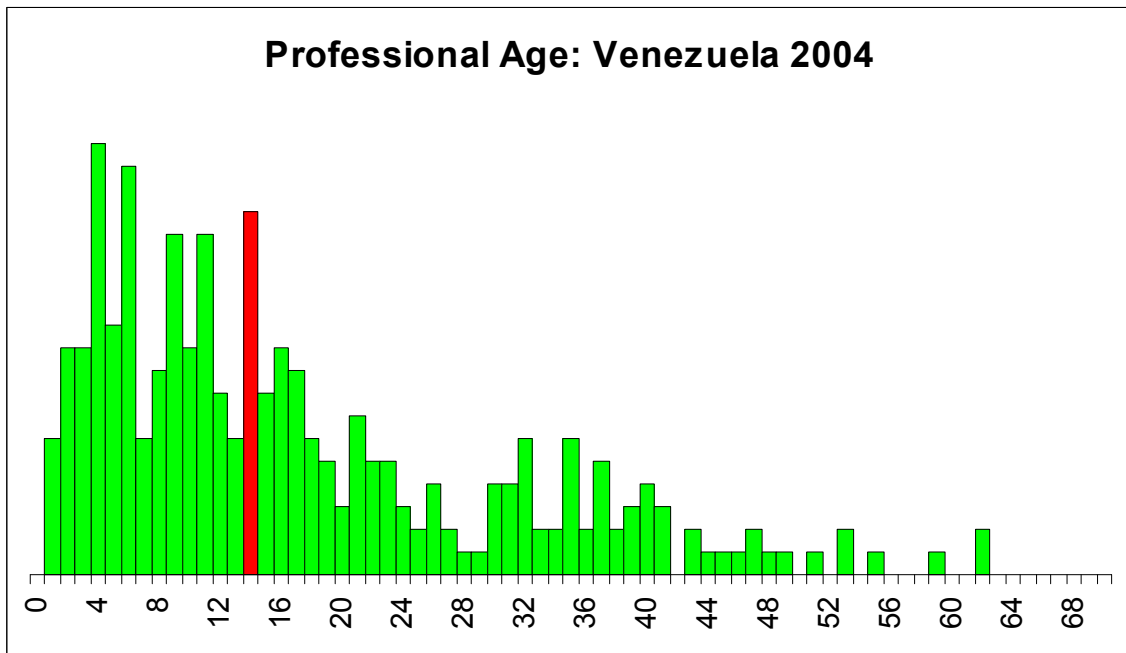
Sample size: 167 lawyers in 7 law firms



Median professional age: 9
Median chronological age: 34
Women: 38.83%

Venezuela

Sample size: 290 lawyers in 14 law firms



Median professional age: 14
Median chronological age: 39
Women: 36.21%