

NEVER TOO LATE TO COMPLETE SCHOOL

Results of the UIS survey on adult education and literacy programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean



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1. Introduction

One of the commitments adopted by the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education held in Belém, Brazil (2009) was to “regularly collect and analyse data and information on participation and progression in Adult Education programmes, disaggregated by gender and other factors, to evaluate change over time and to share good practice”.

In order to increase the availability of statistics in an area where often international comparison is problematic, and help put into practice the decisions of CONFINTEA VI, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) developed a regional survey in collaboration with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. This exercise enabled the UIS database to be enriched with relevant and comparable information about the participation of young people and adults in specific educational programmes. This is a first step in improving the coverage of data on adult education.

With this aim, in 2011 the UIS developed the Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, providing definitions to clarify the data collection. The questionnaire was answered with valid data by 30 out of 43 countries and territories, representing 98% of the regional population.

This report aims to analyse the results of the regional questionnaire on statistics of adult education and to highlight the main conclusions derived from those results.

The report contains five sections: Sections 1 and 2 contextualise the questionnaire; Section 3 specifies the terms used in the area of adult and youth education; Section 4 analyses the results, and Section 5 provides some conclusions. The annexes summarize the scope, methodology and coverage of the survey, in addition to presenting statistical tables of the latest data available.

2. The importance of adult and youth education

In Latin America and the Caribbean, as in other developing regions, the importance of education as an essential factor in improving competitiveness is emphasised. Therefore, in the context of globalisation with rapid changes affecting all aspects of life and society, characterised by large population groups who had far fewer educational opportunities than those available today, Adult and Youth Education (AYE) have become crucial.

Furthermore, a number of events and institutionalised procedures at an international level have made the attainment of AYE a challenge and the area needs some fine-tuning.

Within the region, policies on AYE have been influenced by five important events: the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990); the Delors Commission Report on Education for the Twenty-first Century (1996); the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) (Hamburg, 1997); the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000); and the CONFINTEA VI (Belém do Pará, 2009).

The conference held in Jomtien committed to fulfilling basic learning needs of children, youth and adults in different areas. It defined these needs as both essential learning tools and the basic learning content required by human beings “to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning. The scope of basic learning needs and how they should be met vary with individual countries and cultures, and inevitably, changes with the passage of time” (World Declaration on Education for All, Jomtien, 1990).

The Delors Commission Report was prepared in the context of the 21st century. In addition to proposing the Four Pillars of Education (learning to be, to know, to do and to live together), the report placed particular emphasis on learning throughout life. In fact, it explicitly states that the progress of humanity and the shaping of its future depend to a large extent on education.

CONFINTEA V recognised lifelong learning not only as a basic human right but also as one of the keys to the 21st century. “Adult learning can shape identity and give meaning to life. Learning throughout life implies a rethinking of content to reflect such factors as age, gender equality, disability, language, culture and economic disparities” (The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning, CONFINTEA V).

The World Education Forum in Dakar raised well-founded criticism of noncompliance with the “Education for All” goals agreed in Jomtien. Pleas were made to salvage AYE as a global priority and to integrate literacy and other programmes into the so-called second generation educational reforms. Among several other goals, it was agreed to “[achieve] a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults” (The Dakar Framework for Action, 2000).

CONFINTEA VI had several objectives: to push forward the recognition of lifelong learning (the foundation of which is literacy); to highlight the crucial role of learning and education in the realisation of current international education and development programmes; to renew political commitment; and to develop the implementation tools that can help move from rhetoric to action. The Belém Framework for Action was accepted as a guide to exploit the power and potential of adult learning for a viable future for all.

The understanding of the role of AYE has changed and evolved over time. Beyond previous notions, and in the context of lifelong learning, AYE is seen today as a key factor in the economic, political and cultural transformation of individuals, communities and societies in the 21st century. In Latin America and the Caribbean, AYE is a response to a common background of poverty and exclusion; the intent is to use AYE to address the secular delays of educational, economic and cultural advances for a number of population groups. In some cases, AYE becomes an education for survival.

3. Conceptual definitions

In order to have a proper framework to interpret the survey results, it is important to clarify the different concepts related to adult and youth education and analyse their evolution.

a) Adult and youth education

The most recent International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI, Belém, 2009) endorsed the definition of adult education outlined for the first time in Nairobi (1976), noting that it denotes “the entire body of ongoing learning processes, formal or otherwise, whereby people regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, and improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction to meet their own needs and those of their society”.

When referring to people “regarded as adults by the society to which they belong” the definition includes in some way young people who, for various reasons, receive an education different from the one usually offered to children.

Moreover, considering global changes in the workplace, new information and communication technology (ICT), the growing importance of the issue of multiculturalism, the predominance of young people enrolled in these programmes, as well as the state of literacy and basic education in the world, the concept for AYE¹ was developed in Latin America under the leadership of UNESCO.

Improving the definition and scope of AYE is linked to realities seen in the present day: i) the importance of AYE to marginalised sectors; ii) the link between AYE and professional training, regardless of whether this is integrated to curricular components or to institutions; iii) the focus on training youth and adults seen as citizens with increasing autonomy, capable of organising and participating within their own spaces, and also capable of creating forms of solidarity; and iv) the strengthening of links and shared commitments between the state and civil society.

b) Longlife learning

The shift from ‘education’ to ‘learning’ is a major transformation in conceptualisation. Adult learning promotes formal, non-formal and informal processes of education throughout the life of a person. The horizon of what is associated with education, educational institutions and learning mechanisms is expanded by the concept of learning.

Lifelong learning is now the guiding principle behind policy strategies designed to reach objectives ranging from a country’s economic welfare and competitiveness to personal fulfilment and social cohesion. Theories and models about how learning could work in a knowledge society range from proposals based on the market and economic profit to personal wellbeing, active citizenship and personal empowerment in the sense of becoming capable of making authentic choices (ILO, 1998).

¹ During the development process of the regional report in preparation for CONFINTEA VI, an online consultation was organised on the subject and it was decided that the term to be used would be “Adult and Youth Education” (AYE), which is the term that has been used in the follow-up documents of CONFINTEA V in Latin America. See Torres, 2009.

The demands of society require every individual to have key skills which can be acquired through lifelong learning. This is referred to as “learning to learn”, the opportunity and the means to look for and exploit existing information, quality performance, a responsible life in relation to himself, to others, to society and to the environment. Hence the “learning to live together” as a fundamental demand of the present time, manifested through understanding other people, carrying out joint projects, solving conflicts peacefully and analysing together the risks and challenges of the future (Delors, UNESCO, 1996).

c) Literacy, illiteracy and literacy education

Literacy as a concept – and illiteracy as its opposite term – has been defined and interpreted in many ways, influenced over time by research papers, international conferences, as well as national and international policies.

Literacy education refers to the action of providing basic literacy training, while literacy refers to the effective use of the writing code. In some contexts, literacy education and literacy are interchangeable.

The term literacy, in the sense of having reading and writing skills, is perceived as a continuum that can be developed over a lifetime. It is characterised by several levels of skill mastery.

Literacy is associated with the social practice of reading and writing in a society or a given culture; therefore, it falls within the set of practices that create and reproduce the social distribution of knowledge. A high level of literacy is associated with the ability to apply writing and reading skills to specific purposes in certain contexts.

However, despite the recognition that literacy is associated with a set of skills that can have different degrees of development, the conventional and still current way to measure literacy is based on a dichotomous view of it. Consequently, most censuses and household surveys ask questions intended to determine whether the respondents can “read and write”, and depending on their “yes” or “no” answers, the respondents are respectively categorised as “literate” or “illiterate”.²

d) Basic education

In the 1990s in Latin America and the Caribbean, the concept of basic education was associated with primary education for children excluding basic education for youth and adults. It is therefore important to outline an expanded vision of basic education, which should meet the basic learning needs required in the social and work environments.³

² The recognition of the complexity associated with the measurement of literacy has led to various initiatives aimed at assessing more accurately the literacy skills of the population. One of the most recent projects in this area is the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP). For more information on this subject, see UNESCO (2009).

³ It is important to mention that the 1997 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) referred to basic education as the equivalent of ISCED levels 1 and 2, corresponding to primary education and lower secondary education. The duration of these stages varies by country, but the typical duration is nine years of schooling since the beginning of primary education. However, the 2011 version of ISCED has removed the concept of basic education, referring to it only as an example of national terms used in educational programmes covering ISCED levels 1 and 2.

e) Formal education

Formal education for youth and adults takes place in institutional settings within regular systems designed as a continuous path of schooling. The curriculum for youth and adults is usually linked to the children's curriculum and adapted accordingly. The qualifications are equivalent to those obtained through regular education and the levels correspond to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Persons attending formal adult education did not have the opportunity to access or complete regular school for children and teenagers.

f) Non-formal education

Non-formal education varies considerably across countries. Depending on national contexts, programmes can be alternative, open, flexible, popular or community-based. Depending on the national context, non-formal education may include literacy programmes, basic education, job training, life skills and general knowledge development. ISCED 2011 states that "non-formal education mostly leads to qualifications that are not recognised as formal or equivalent to formal qualifications by the relevant national or sub-national education authorities or to no qualifications at all".

g) Popular education

Popular education is a political-pedagogical movement that brings together a variety of educational practices that have their own identity, as opposed to other ways of perceiving and doing education. The political, ethical and pedagogical purpose of popular education is usually linked to personal and social transformation with a critical view of society and traditional education. The conception and development of popular education are based on Paulo Freire's ideas and work.

4. Analysis of findings

4.1. The importance of statistics on adult and youth education

The analysis of the educational characteristics of the adult population has mainly focused on observing the situation of literacy and the levels of study, in the context of the formal education system. Thus, the most cited indicators to measure adult education are literacy rates and educational attainment (or the highest level of education an individual has successfully completed). Today, almost all countries have population censuses and household-based surveys that collect these indicators on a regular basis.

Nonetheless, the merging of information systems on education over the last decades in Latin America and the Caribbean has allowed data on access to education systems to be made available, as well as to understand their role in certain contexts, mainly for formal education programmes designed for children and young people who move from pre-primary to tertiary education.

However, information systems on adult education programmes are less developed. Available data cover formal qualifications only, even though adult education includes a wide range of programmes organised for different purposes, many of which do not lead to a formal qualification. Among these programmes, we can highlight job training, literacy programmes or campaigns, and skills development programmes in healthcare or community participation.

Unlike formal education for children and youth, adult education programmes are often provided by different institutions. Some, like literacy programmes and campaigns, are implemented directly by the presidential offices or social planning ministries, while many job training programmes are promoted by labour ministries. Programmes and initiatives supported by civil society also need to be considered. Since adult education programmes do not depend exclusively on ministries of education, it becomes much more complex to compile comparative statistics.

All these factors have an impact on the availability of reliable, timely and accessible information that provides a basis for the design of AYE policies and action plans. Therefore, in order to fulfil the mandate of international conferences and compile comparable statistics for countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, the UIS developed and implemented a regional survey on statistics of adult education, focusing on literacy programmes and primary and secondary education.

The results of the questionnaire on the availability of literacy programmes and AYE primary and secondary education programmes are discussed in the following sections. In order to provide a better understanding of the results, an overview of the status of literacy and the population's educational attainment precedes the analysis of the results.

4.2. Overview of literacy in the region

In recent decades, a moderate improvement was observed in the levels of literacy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The adult literacy rate (for the population aged 15 years and older) rose from 86% in 1990 to 92% by 2011. As seen in **Table 1**, this increase follows the general global trend and brings Latin America and the Caribbean closer to the literacy rates reported in regions with higher development levels.

Table 1. Adult and youth literacy rates for the population aged 15 years and older, by region (%)

Region	1990	2000	2011
Arab States	55	68	77
Central and Eastern Europe	96	97	99
Central Asia	98	99	100
East Asia and Pacific	82	92	95
Latin America and the Caribbean	86	90	92
South and West Asia	47	59	63
Sub-Saharan Africa	53	57	59

Source: "Adult and youth literacy rates: National, regional and global trends, 1985-2015". UIS Information Paper, June 2013.

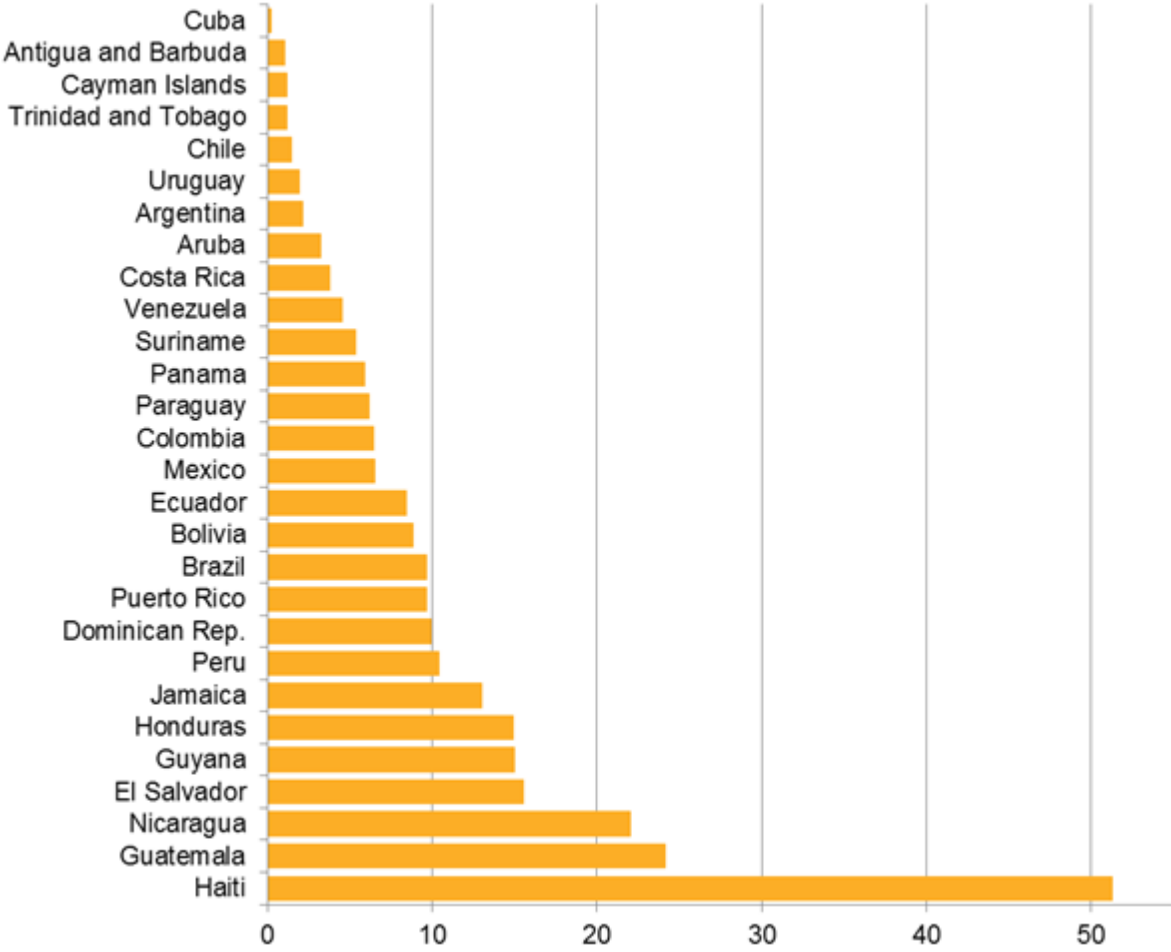
Despite this progress, the illiterate population aged 15 years and older reached 35.9 million in the region. A breakdown by gender reveals that 19.8 million, or 55%, are female. The female literacy rate has increased gradually, narrowing the gap with men.

There are significant differences in illiteracy rates across countries of this region. As shown in **Figure 1**, Haiti has an illiteracy rate of more than 50%, followed by Guatemala (24%) and Nicaragua (22%). At the other end of the spectrum, 12 countries have rates under 5%.

As expected, disaggregating data by age groups revealed a strong correlation between age and literacy. While the overall literacy rate of the population aged 15 years and older was 91.5% in 2011, it rose to 97.1% in the age group 15 to 24 years, revealing that there are still 3.1 million young illiterates in Latin America and the Caribbean. Gender did not make a difference in the literacy rates of this age group.

Rural areas with a high proportion of indigenous populations exhibited the lowest literacy rates. The fact that the illiteracy rate in these areas is up to four times higher than the regional average is largely explained by the isolation, poverty and the cultural and linguistic identity of indigenous communities.

Figure 1. Illiteracy rate of the adult population (aged 15 years or older) (%), in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2005-2011



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Data Centre, May 2013.

4.3 Literacy programmes in Latin America and Caribbean

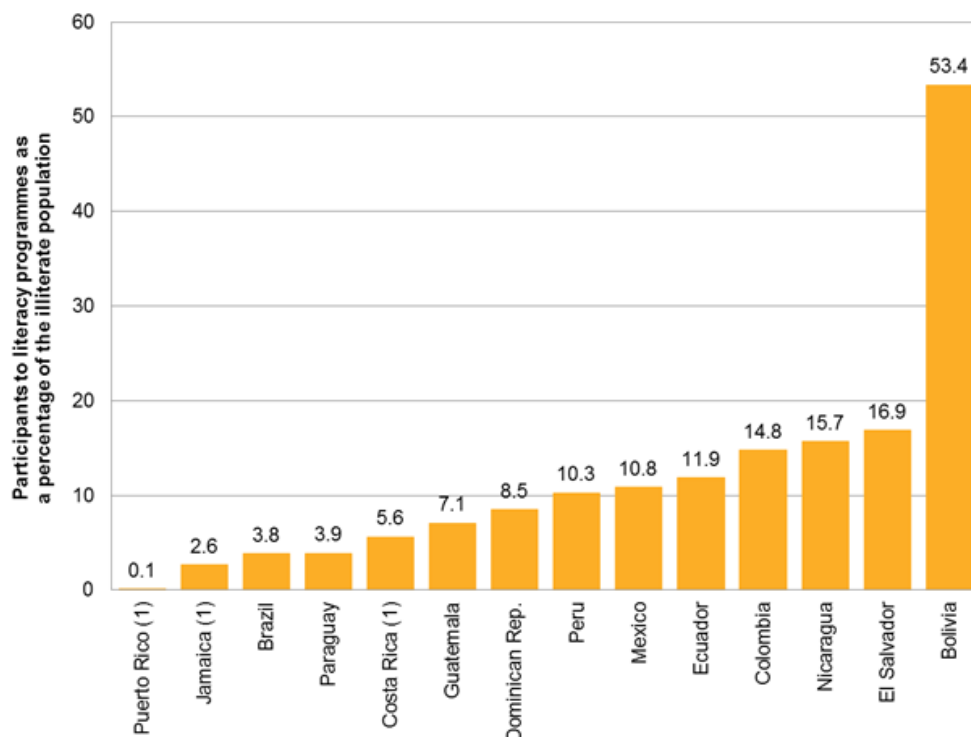
The UIS survey gathered information on literacy programmes in 19 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Three variables were considered in the analysis of these programmes: access, completion and duration.

In terms of access to literacy programmes, data show a total of 2,529,930 youth and adult participants.⁴ The countries that provided records for this variable account for 84% of the total population in Latin America and the Caribbean. Therefore, considering the total number of countries in the region, this figure is, very probably, an underestimate.

The relationship between the number of participants enrolled in programmes during a given period and the total number of illiterate persons over the same period indicates the level of access of the illiterate population to these programmes. In this case, the reference year was 2010.

Figure 2 shows data for all countries that submitted this information.⁵

Figure 2. Access to literacy programmes in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Note: 1): Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for data on participants is 2010 except for Bolivia (2008), Brazil (2009) and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

⁴ Information for the year 2010 or the most recent year available.

⁵ The number of countries for which an access indicator has been calculated is lower than the number of countries that reported data on the number of participants to literacy programmes because not all countries provided data about the total illiterate population. The particular situation of each country is explained in Annex II.

Bolivia is the only country where more than 50% of the illiterate population had access to literacy programmes, followed at a distance by countries such as El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru. The latter countries reported that only 10% to 17% of the target population requiring to literacy programmes actually have access to them.

The high level of access recorded in Bolivia corresponds to the final year of the National Literacy Program (2006-2008), an initiative inspired by the “Yes, I can” programme,⁶ aimed at the entire illiterate population.

A number of countries that reported data on participation in literacy programmes have already achieved high levels of literacy, and therefore, they only have a residual illiteracy problem. Among these countries are: Cuba, Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Uruguay, Cayman Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago, each with literacy rates of 98% or more.⁷

Brazil has a large number of participants (535,034 people) in literacy programmes, representing 20% of the region’s total. However, this number is only 3.8% of Brazil’s illiterate population. As a result, the country’s efforts in this area continue.

A striking feature of the literacy programmes was the high proportion of women participants. As shown in **Figure 3**, 65.5% of participants were women. This percentage is very significant, considering that women represent 55.7% of the illiterate population in the region.

Women’s participation is particularly high in countries such as Guatemala, Peru and Mexico. As already known, rates of illiteracy among indigenous women are higher.

The data on access have limitations as a proxy measure of illiteracy reduction. One of the most obvious is that enrolment does not guarantee the successful completion of a programme.

Completion levels relative to the number of participants who join programmes vary among countries, and almost all countries face a serious challenge with dropouts. **Figure 4** shows that out of every ten persons enrolled in a literacy programme in Nicaragua, Peru, El Salvador or the Dominican Republic, only six or seven completed the programme. In other countries, completion levels are even lower. In fact, there are four countries where less than one-half of participants finished the programme.

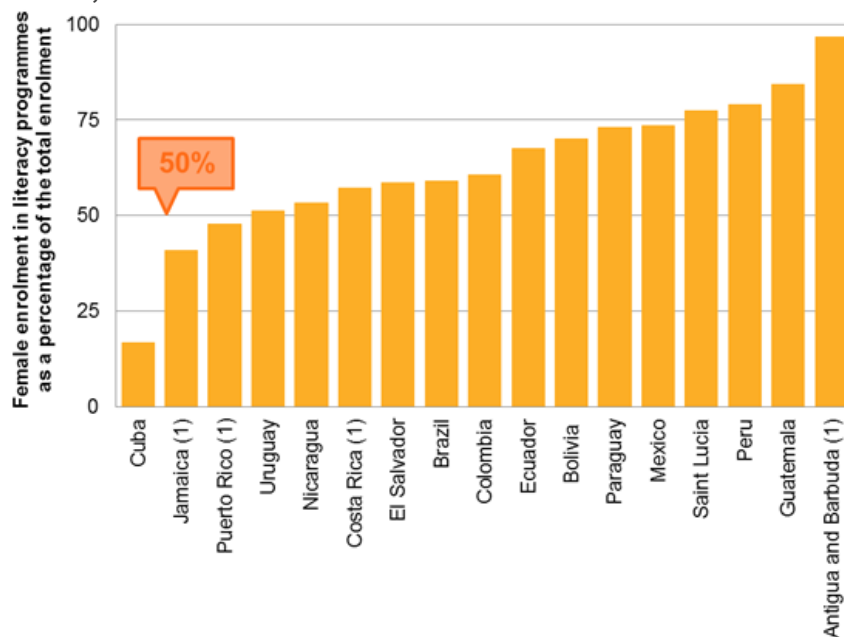
When only looking at the indicator on the number of participants who completed a programme compared to the target population, i.e. the illiterate population, the values obtained are much lower than the access indicators in Figure 2. This indicator, whose values range from under 1% in Puerto Rico and Ecuador to 9% and 11% in Nicaragua and El Salvador respectively, is a more accurate way to measure the effectiveness of literacy programmes in achieving their objective – increasing the literacy levels of the population.⁸

⁶ “Yes, I can” (“Yo, sí puedo”, in Spanish) is a literacy programme developed by Cuba’s Latin American and Caribbean Pedagogical Institute (IPLAC: Instituto Pedagógico Latinoamericano y Caribeño). It combines numbers and letters to teach adults to read and write over the course of seven weeks; audiovisual tools such as television sets and video are also used in this programme. It has been implemented in several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁷ These countries are not included in Figure 2, but the respective indicators are presented in Annex II.

⁸ The values of the indicator measuring the number of participants who successfully completed a literacy programme as a proportion of the illiterate population are presented in Annex II.

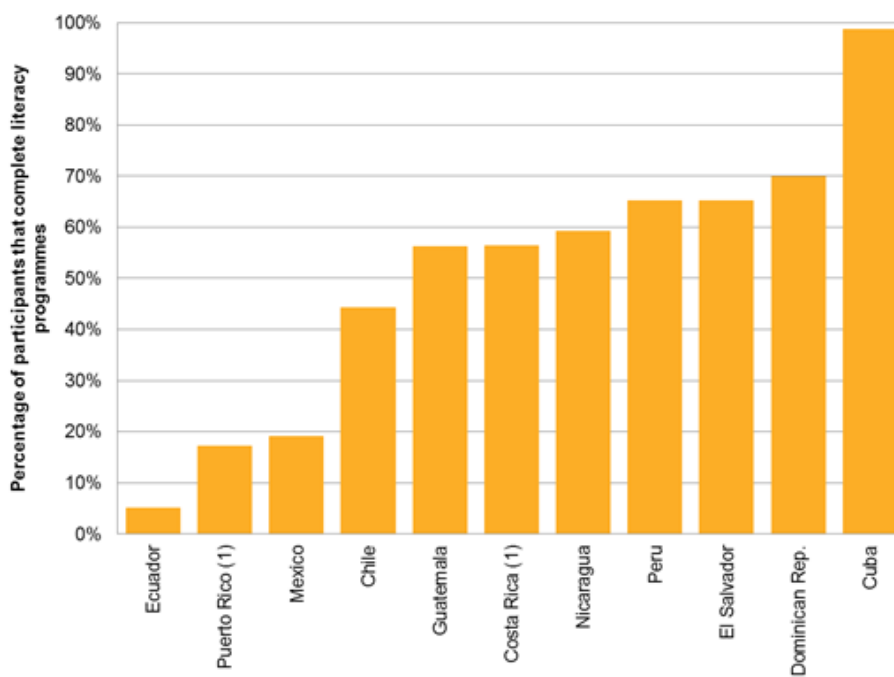
Figure 3. Percentage of female participants in literacy programmes Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for data on participants is 2010, except for Bolivia (2008), Brazil (2009) and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

Figure 4. Completion of literacy programmes in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for data on participants is 2010, except for Chile and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

The cases of Cuba and Chile, two countries that have only residual illiteracy, are exceptional. However, in Chile participants who completed a programme represent less than 2% of the illiterate population. In Costa Rica, another country with low levels of illiteracy, 4,239 participants completed literacy training, but this figure represents just over 3% of the illiterate population.

Other countries face greater challenges given the size of their illiterate population. For example, in Guatemala illiteracy can hardly be reduced in a significant way, considering that the number of participants enrolled in literacy programmes represents less than 10% of the total illiterate population and that the number of participants who actually completed a literacy programme is not significant, compared to the national illiterate population. The case of Mexico is unusual: although 115,368 adults completed a literacy programme, the number loses its shine when compared to the 5.5 million registered illiterates.

Although the number of participants who actually complete a literacy programme is an indicator of the internal efficiency of the programmes, it does not assess the effectiveness of the reading, writing and basic arithmetic skills acquired by participants. Therefore, if literacy is viewed as a *continuum* with different levels of skills, it is necessary to have evaluation methods able to measure the learning achieved in order to ensure that data on illiteracy are valid and reliable.

In this regard, the first results of the UIS Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) show that, even in countries with illiteracy rates significantly lower than 10%, there is a high share of people who have challenges in interpreting even the most basic informative texts.⁹ These results, published in the report summaries of the four countries that implemented LAMP, are consistent with results of similar studies implemented in the past, like IALS and ALL.¹⁰

There is also a general lack of data on the number of people who successfully complete literacy programmes. Only 11 out of the 19 countries that provided information on literacy programmes were able to provide statistics on completion, which are essential for an assessment of the programme's effectiveness.

Finally, an important characteristic of literacy programmes is their great diversity in terms of duration, which varies between 3 and 12 months. This variation is seen across countries of the region and within each country. This is not surprising; previous studies in the region have analysed the varied scopes and durations of literacy programmes, which sometimes are considered equivalent to the country's regular primary education (and may lead to a certification). These disparities coexist within a country and even within a same area (Torres, 2003).

Mass literacy campaigns, generally based on strategies that seek a broad coverage over a short period, have an impact on the duration of programmes. However, usually there is no assessment of retention and/or results achieved within the programmes.

⁹ The first results of LAMP, available for Jordan, Mongolia, Palestine and Paraguay, are available on the UIS website: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Literacy/Pages/lamp-literacy-assessment.aspx>

¹⁰ For more information about these studies, see Educational Testing Service (2001). *The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS): Understanding What was Measured*. Princeton: ETS and Statistics Canada (2003). *Adult numeracy and its assessment in the ALL survey: A conceptual framework and pilot results*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Based on the survey results and using a six-month threshold, **Table 2** groups countries into three categories according to programme duration: countries which implement short-term programmes, countries with longer programmes, and finally countries combining both types of programmes. The columns show the average literacy rates by country and the average participation rates (number of participants divided by total illiterate population).

Table 2. Duration of literacy programmes, literacy rates and access of the illiterate population to literacy programmes

Duration	Countries and territories	Adult literacy rate (%)	Participants / Illiterate population (%)
6 months or more	Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica ¹ , Jamaica ¹ , Mexico, Paraguay, Puerto Rico ¹ , Dominican Republic, Uruguay	93.5	5.2
Both types of programmes	Antigua and Barbuda ¹ , Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru	88.1	11.4
Less than 6 months	Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua	89.7	24.2

Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. Figures correspond to unweighted averages. Information on literacy rates and the illiterate population include the most recent data available for each country (June 2013 update, reference year between 2005 and 2011). The reference year is 2010 except for Bolivia (2008), Chile and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

There is an inverse relationship between programme duration and participation rates. This is particularly true for Bolivia and Nicaragua. In the case of Cuba, literacy programmes lasting less than six months were reported as well, but the number of participants was insignificant because literacy rates in this country reach almost 100%. By contrast, countries that implement programmes of six months and longer had, on average, a lower coverage.¹¹

The relationship between literacy rates, programme duration by country and achieved coverage appears to indicate a clear link between the size of the challenges faced by governments, i.e. the number and proportion of illiterate people, and options available to respond rapidly. This is the case for short-term programmes which are usually implemented as part of literacy campaigns.

Another factor that affects programme length is the existence of bilingual programmes. Countries that develop bilingual programmes, like Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru, report that these programmes need to be longer and are in fact longer than those offered only in Spanish.

¹¹ It is important to mention that some countries were not included in this analysis because they did not provide information on the duration of literacy programmes. However, in the case of Brazil, for example, the varying length of literacy programmes offered by different states prevented its categorisation.

In Ecuador, for instance, Spanish literacy programmes last five months, but programmes aimed at the indigenous population are one month longer. Guatemala developed a literacy programme called “First Phase” (“Fase Inicial” in Spanish) that spans over eight months in Spanish and up to 11 months in the bilingual option. In Mexico, literacy programmes offered as initial education to the Spanish-speaking population last at least five months, but programmes offered in bilingual intercultural contexts are at least 12 months long.

It is important to note that most of the programmes analysed in this study concern the early stages of literacy. Initial literacy is only a gateway to learning throughout life; if people go through an initial literacy process and do not continue moving towards basic education, they have a good chance to forget what they learned and will not overcome illiteracy permanently.

4.4. Educational attainment of the youth and adult populations in the region

In recent years, efforts have been made to increase the access of children and youth to primary and secondary education. In Latin America and the Caribbean, access to primary education is very high, reaching an adjusted net enrolment rate (NER) of 95% in 2011, while the NER for secondary education reached 76% in the same year.

However, despite these efforts, the region still has a large group of adults and youth who, for various reasons, have not been able to complete primary and secondary education successfully.

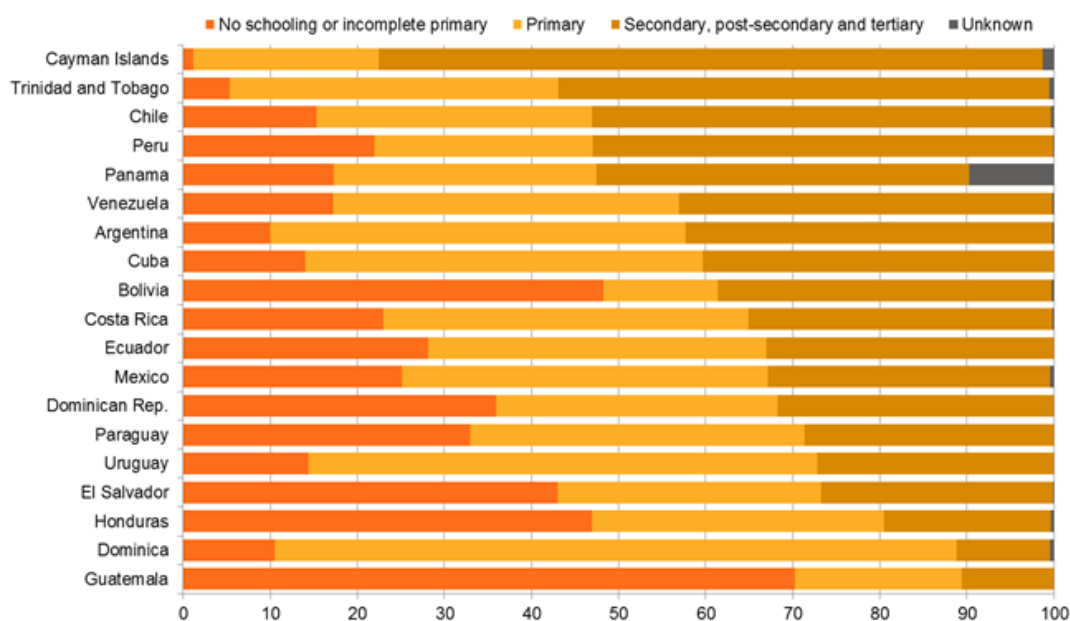
Figure 5 presents data on the educational attainment of the population aged 25 years and older for a set of countries in the region. Three groups of adults can be identified in this figure based on their educational attainment. The first group has no education or failed to complete primary education; the second group completed only primary education; and finally, the third group completed secondary or a higher level of education. The first two groups are part of the population targeted by the programmes studied in this section.

In general, the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean lead the region in terms of educational attainment, for example Cayman Islands and Trinidad and Tobago, where 76% and 56% respectively of adults completed at least secondary education. In Latin America, the highest levels of education for adults are found in Chile and Peru, where over 50% of the population completed secondary education, followed in descending order by Venezuela, Argentina and Cuba.

With these exceptions, no other country in Figure 5 has more than 40% of its adult population having completed secondary or higher education. This reveals the stark situation in terms of wide education gaps for the adult population in the region. Guatemala faces the most dire situation, since 70% of adults have never gone to school or failed to complete primary education. This is followed by 48% of adults in Bolivia, 47% in Honduras, and 43% in El Salvador. Low educational attainment is also found in countries where the adult populations completed primary education but failed to complete secondary education. More than 70% of the adult populations in Dominica, Uruguay and Paraguay do not have secondary education.

The case of Uruguay is interesting because, while the country has a literacy rate of almost 100%, it still faces a major challenge in terms of reducing the schooling gaps in the adult population, particularly in the attainment of secondary education.

Figure 5. Educational attainment of the population aged 25 years and older in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2003-2011



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013.

4.5 Enrolment in primary and secondary adult education programmes

The UIS Regional Questionnaire on Statistics of Adult Education was completed by 28 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, representing 98% of the regional population. The questionnaire inquired about primary and secondary adult education programmes, equivalent to ISCED levels 1, 2 and 3 (ISCED 1997).

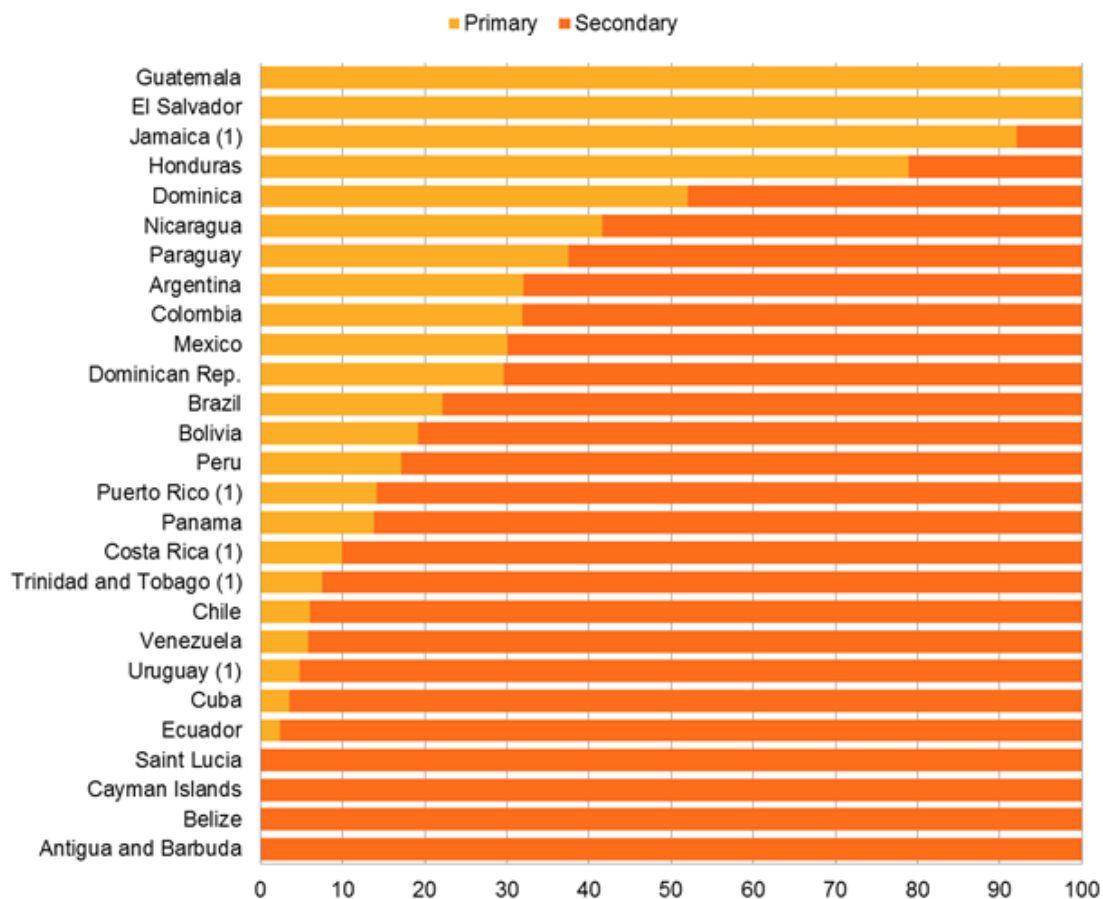
According to the data, 10,354,510 adults were enrolled in a primary education programme (ISCED 1) or a secondary education programme (ISCED 2 and 3) in 2010.

A remarkable feature of the regional structure of these programmes is the clear preponderance of secondary education programmes over primary education programmes. From the total number of adults in these programmes in 2010, 73% were enrolled in secondary education, i.e. three out of every four learners.

In at least 15 countries, the percentage of participants in secondary education programmes exceeded 80% (see **Figure 6**). In the case of a group of English-speaking countries in the Caribbean and Belize, all participants were enrolled at this educational level. In contrast, two Latin American countries – Guatemala and El Salvador – only had participants in primary education programmes for adults. These countries are among those facing the biggest challenges in terms of educational attainment of the adult population.

It is also interesting to evaluate the importance of adult education programmes within national education systems. To this end, enrolment in adult education programmes was compared with total enrolment at each educational level (i.e. regular education programmes in addition to adult education programmes). At the primary level, the adult sub-system represents 4% of total enrolment; at the secondary level, this proportion reaches 12% (see **Figure 7**). Once again, secondary education for adults stands out for its quantitative importance.

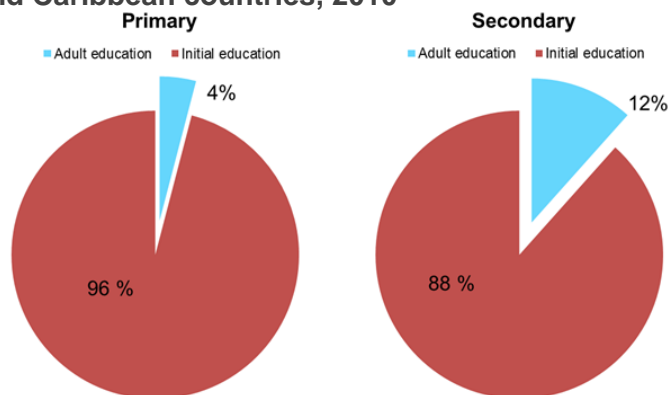
Figure 6. Distribution of enrolment in primary (ISCED 1) and secondary (ISCED 2 and 3) adult education programmes (%) in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009), Chile, Dominica and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

Figure 7. Participation in adult education programmes compared to total enrolment in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Note: The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009), Chile, Dominica and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

The regional values include some countries where the proportion of adult education programmes within the education system is particularly high. In Nicaragua, for example, adult education programmes account for 10% of total enrolment in primary education and for 24% in secondary education. In turn, in Guatemala and Honduras, adult learners represent 8% and 7% respectively of total enrolment at the primary level.

In secondary education, the case of Cuba stands out since adult enrolment represents 28% of total enrolment in secondary education. In this country, AYE is a clear sub-system of the national education system that offers basic and upper secondary education, has trained teachers, and a variety of community and work-related initiatives. A highly-inclusive initiative is the worker-training programme, which provides opportunities for personal and social development.

Indicators comparing enrolment data at each educational level with the corresponding target population were developed in order to assess the extent of access of youth and adult populations to primary and secondary education programmes designed for them. The target population for primary education programmes was defined as individuals aged 15 years and older who did not go through formal education or were unable to successfully complete primary education. In the case of secondary education programmes, the target group is the population aged 20 years and older who did not complete secondary education.

Using these definitions, the enrolment rate in secondary education programmes for adults is 5.3%. In contrast, the coverage of primary adult education programmes is considerably lower, reaching only 2.8%.

It should be highlighted that, while enrolment in secondary adult education was three times higher than enrolment in primary adult education, the difference in coverage measured by the indicators does not make reference to the same population base; the adult population without secondary education is significantly larger than its counterpart without primary education.

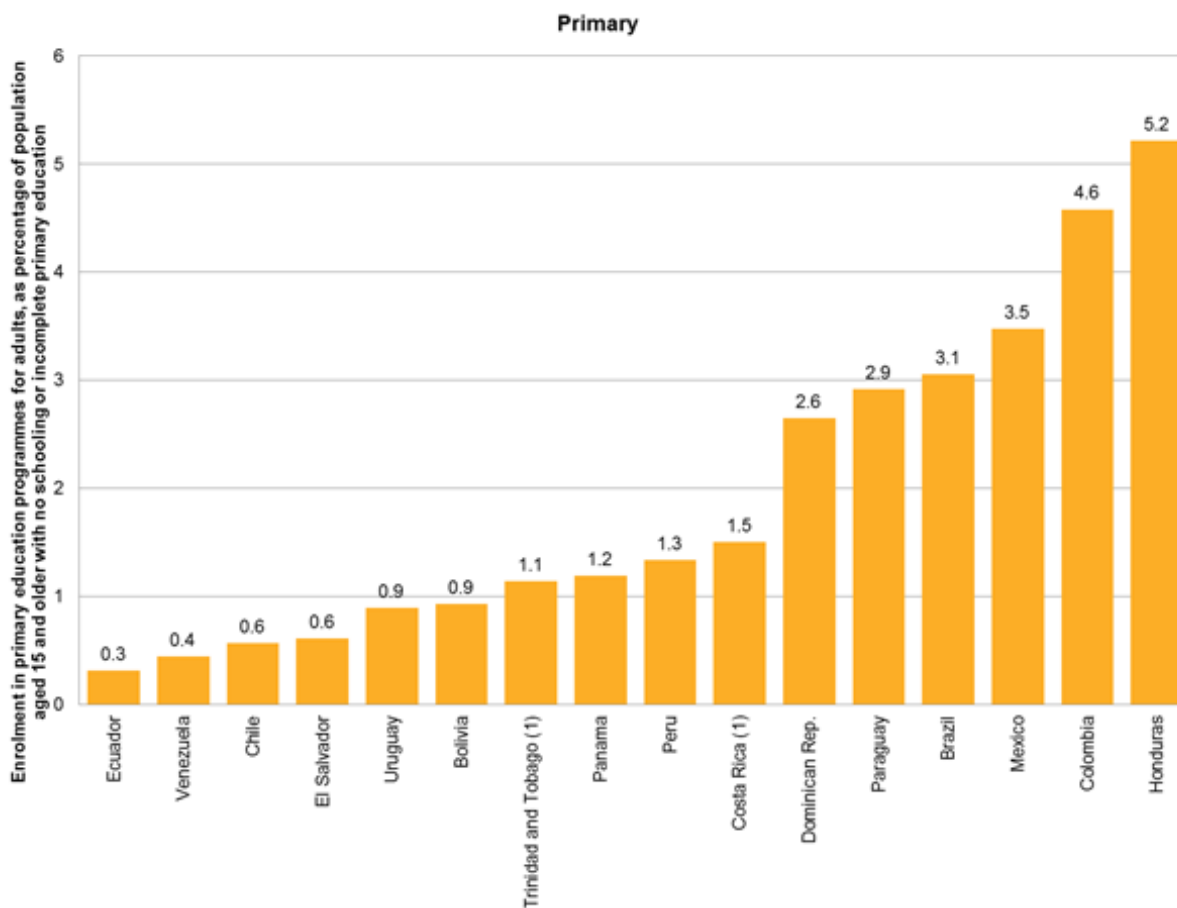
Figure 8 presents the these indicators, i.e. the coverage of primary (Figure 8a) and secondary (Figure 8b) adult education programmes in countries where data were available for both dimensions: enrolment in programmes and target population.

For primary adult education, the largest coverages were in Honduras (5.2%), Colombia (4.6%), Mexico (3.5%) and Paraguay (2.9%). Mexico's case is interesting from the institutional perspective, since the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA, by its acronym in Spanish), with more than 30 years of history, is probably the best example of an AYE institution in the region. The programme "Education for Life and Work Model" (MEVyT, by its acronym in Spanish) deserves a special mention, since it focuses not only on employment skills training but also on training for active citizenship, taking into account the aspirations and social constraints of participants.

In Paraguay, AYE is focused primarily on literacy training and basic education. Non-formal education is part of the national education system and it stands out for the training of inmates. The influence of international cooperation through the PRODEPA programme has been crucial in significantly promoting the performance and image of AYE as an important part of the national educational system through several programmes.

Bolivia ranks first in secondary adult education programmes, reaching a coverage of 13%. In this country, the Ministry of Education supports a considerable infrastructure of adult education centres, which include not only buildings but also trained and paid teachers. Participants performing well in a literacy programme are offered the opportunity to pursue learning; thus, after several years of fruitful education combined generally with vocational training, they can obtain a qualification certificate from a professional school. AYE is included in alternative education.

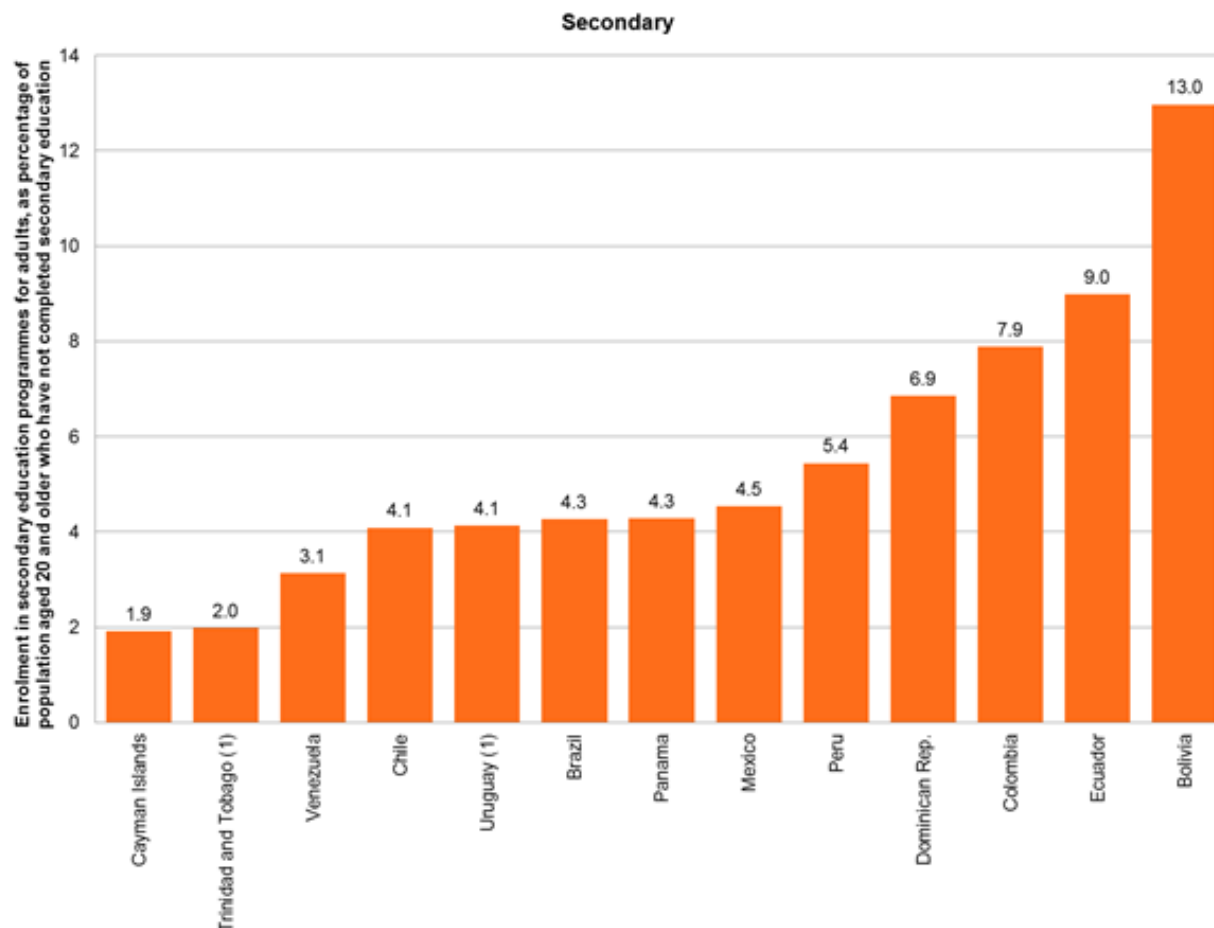
Figure 8a. Access to primary adult education programmes Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009) and Chile (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

Figure 8b. Access to secondary adult education programmes in Latin American and Caribbean countries, 2010



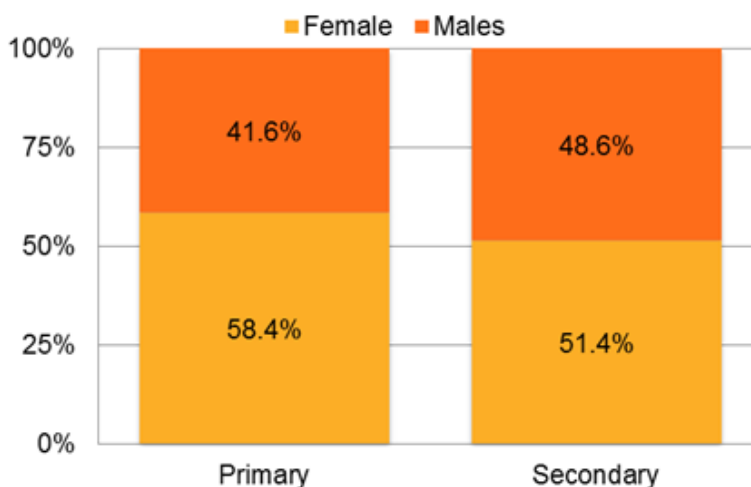
Note: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009) and Chile (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre, May 2013 and Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

Finally, it is pertinent to analyse who has access to AYE programmes, i.e. the characteristics of the participants; to this end, gender distribution is first examined (see **Figure 9**), followed by age profile.

Women's participation is higher than men's in primary education for adults, representing 58.4% of the total enrolment at this level, i.e. almost six out of ten participants are women. However, this difference is not observed in secondary education for adults, where there is virtual parity between men and women; in fact, only a slightly higher proportion of participants, 51.4%, are women.

Figure 9. Enrolment in adult education programmes by gender in Latin American and Caribbean countries (%), 2010



Note: The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009), Chile, Dominica and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

It is important to compare these results with the structure of the target population in order to ascertain whether the higher proportion of women is a result of programme design or reflects a population pattern. Data available for this analysis belong to a smaller set of countries, i.e. 13 countries in the case of primary education and 11 countries in the case of secondary education. The proportion of women without primary education was 54.5%, while the proportion of women without secondary education accounted for 51.3%.

Among these countries, Bolivia, Guatemala and Mexico stand out at the primary education level, since female participation exceeded 65% in all cases. In contrast, men represent a larger share in Cuba (86.8%), Dominica (73.6%), Puerto Rico (69.5%), Chile (67.4%) and Jamaica (62.8%).

For the secondary education level, even if there is parity between men and women at the regional level, a clear trend towards greater participation of women is observed in the Caribbean countries. In Jamaica, Cayman Islands, Dominica and Saint Lucia, for instance, the proportion of women reaches 65%. Among the countries where men lead in secondary education enrolment are: Puerto Rico (59.7%) and Chile (56.7%) and Peru (56.9%).

The age analysis of the participants in these educational programmes confirms the trend towards a greater participation of youth in programmes originally created to serve adults; this phenomenon is clearly observed for the secondary education level.

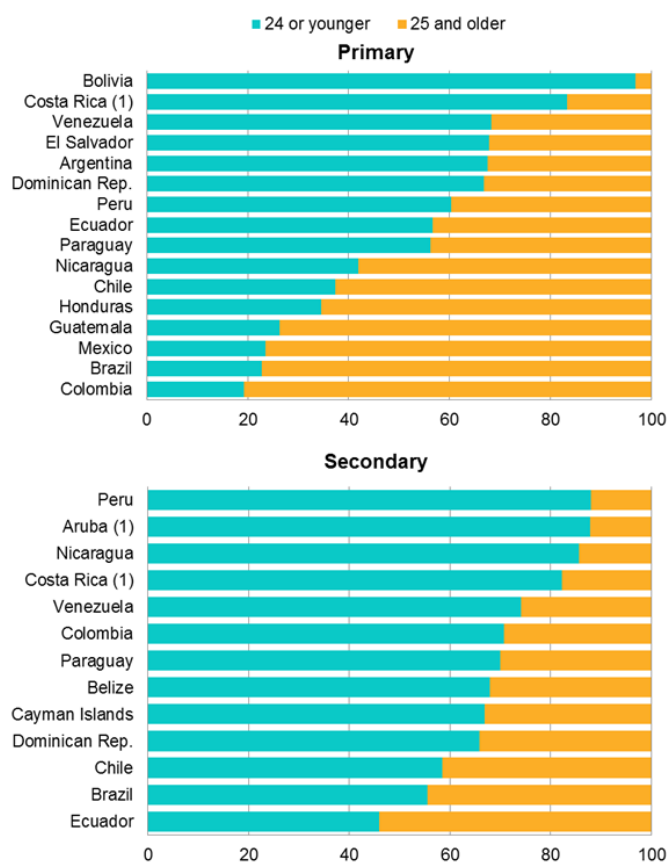
At the secondary level, programmes originally intended for adults attract many young people who are often within the typical age range of regular secondary education. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the causes of this phenomenon considering that alternative education for adults has grown in importance probably due to a greater flexibility that allows young people who have recently left school to resume their educational journey while entering the workforce or attending to family obligations, for instance.

Figure 10 presents the age profile of participants in primary and secondary education programmes for adults by country.

At the primary level of adult education, youth participation is not as strong as at the secondary level. However, more than 50% of participants at this level are 24 years old or younger in 9 out of 16 countries that provided data. Bolivia is the most extreme case, since more than 90% of learners enrolled in primary education programmes are young people. In Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, countries with large populations, the majority of participants are adults (25 years old and older). These three countries account for two-thirds of the total enrolment in primary school programmes for adults in the region.

The majority of people enrolled in a secondary education programme for adults tend to be younger people aged 24 years or younger. They represent more than 60% of participants in 11 out of 14 countries that reported data. Brazil is once again among the countries where youth participation is lower (although young people still represent more than 50% of total enrolment). Finally, Ecuador is the only country where the participation of youth in secondary education for adults is under 50%.

Figure 10. Enrolment in adult education programmes by age group in Latin American and Caribbean countries (%), 2010



Notes: 1) Data cover the public sector only. The reference year for enrolment data is 2010 except for Bolivia (2009), Chile and Guatemala (2011).

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education, 2011.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Findings

This first survey is a step in addressing the data gap on adult and youth education. Its results validate a series of observations that have to be taken into consideration by policymakers; they also contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives included in the Belém Framework for Action (CONFINTEA VI).

The study highlights the diversity of adult and youth education in terms of educational programmes (literacy, primary and secondary education) and the characteristics of the participants (age, gender and ethnic origin).

The results of the survey confirm trends observed in coverage and characteristics of literacy programmes. In general, coverage of the programmes is low compared to potential demand. Despite climbing literacy rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, data available show that 35.9 million people aged 15 years or older remain illiterate, which is the potential demand for adult literacy programmes. However, the data reported by countries show that there were a total of 2,529,930 participants in literacy programmes in 2010, which represents 8.3% of the illiterate population in these countries. The data indicate that the current supply of literacy programmes is largely inferior to the needs of the population.

Furthermore, access to literacy programmes does not guarantee that participants will become literate. As the survey results show, one-third or more of participants normally abandon the programme, but in some cases the dropout rate is as high as 50%. Although beyond the scope of this study, it is necessary to point out that normally the programmes do not include evaluation systems capable of testing the progress made by participants. This is a pending challenge, even more today, when it is agreed that literacy is the gateway to lifelong learning.

Since the length of programmes varies, countries were grouped into three categories for the purpose of the analysis: those with programmes with a maximum duration of six months, those with programmes with a minimum duration of six months and countries offering both types of programmes. However, a large number of countries did not provide this information, since the variability in the length of national programmes did not allow them to supply complete information.

The analysis of the data available reveals that the longer the programme, the smaller its coverage of the target population. On the other hand, countries with programmes shorter than six months display some of the highest illiteracy rates. The latter is probably caused by the political necessity to negotiate a rapid reduction to national illiteracy rates; however, it does not necessarily mean that learners participating in these programmes manage to develop the skills required for an acceptable level of literacy.

Additionally, it is important to note that the duration of programmes also depends on the type of population targeted, i.e. programmes for indigenous populations are generally longer. Countries like Guatemala, Ecuador, Mexico and Paraguay, for instance, offer shorter programmes to Spanish-speaking participants than to indigenous populations.

Another notable aspect is female participation in the programmes: they represent 65.5% of the total number of participants in countries that reported data. This percentage is even higher than the proportion of women within the illiterate population of these countries, which is 55.7% of the total. This would indicate an effort to balance gender inequalities, which have been specifically targeted in various developing regions around the world in recent years.

The survey also revealed that 10,354,510 young people and adults were enrolled in a primary or secondary education programme for adults in 2010. From this total, 73% of participants were enrolled in a secondary education programme, which demonstrates the importance of this level of education within adult and youth populations.

The variation in the volume of participants by educational level is also evident when enrolment in adult education programmes is compared to enrolment in regular education programmes at each educational level. In fact, in 2010, the number of adults enrolled in primary education represented, on average, 4% of the total number of learners at this level. By contrast, enrolment of adults in secondary education represented 12% of total enrolment at this level. However, in countries like Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua, the number of adults enrolled in a primary education programme represented close to 10% of the total number of learners at this level.

Consequently, it can be inferred that in countries with the lowest levels of schooling, which are also the countries with the highest percentage of rural and indigenous populations, there is a larger participation in primary education. This reveals a serious educational deficit that has to be taken into consideration by education and international cooperation policies.

The adult and youth education programmes reached only a modest part of the target population. In the case of primary education, only about 2.8% of persons aged 15 years and older without education or with incomplete primary education attended a primary education programme. For secondary education, the enrolment rate was 5.3% of persons aged 20 years and older without completed secondary education.

In primary adult education, women's participation (58.4%) was larger than men's participation. However, at the secondary level, there was essentially gender balance, the proportion being slightly higher for women (51.4%). At the country level, women had lower educational attainment in countries where enrolment of women in primary education was higher.

In terms of age, the results clearly indicate that youth participation was the greatest, especially for secondary adult education programmes. Although the survey does not explore the causes of this increased youth presence, it should be pointed out that adult education alternatives are able to offer a more adequate type of education to young people who have recently dropped out of school due to financial concerns or family obligations. Thus, those aged 24 years old or younger account for over 60% of learners in secondary education for adults in 11 out of 14 countries with data available.

5.2 Priorities for the future development of statistics

Adult and youth education, particularly in the context of lifelong learning, includes many types of programmes including non-formal education and popular education. Thus a future survey on AYE should include these programmes. Organizationally, this will prove complex since data will need to be collected not only from official institutions but also from numerous supporters of civil society programmes.

It is important to evaluate the level of learning attained by participants in educational programmes. Within the regular education system, the majority of countries have quality measurement systems in place, assessing students through international tests, such as the ones developed by the UNESCO Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education, PISA or TIMSS. In contrast, it is rare that learners in youth and adult education programmes are tested. In the future, it would be important to further promote research and programmes aimed at creating comparable statistics on learning achievement in literacy training and in primary and secondary education programmes for youth and adults.

It is apparent that generating quality data on literacy programmes needs to be reinforced in many countries. Although several countries have records of persons enrolled in literacy programmes, they do not have accurate information on successful completion rates, which is essential to evaluate their efficacy. These programmes lack the structure and experience for reporting that can be found in the production of data on basic education through education ministries, for example. Often these programmes are organized in institutions outside of education ministries or the public sector, since they are initiated by private actors. This creates more complex challenges for the production of reliable statistics consolidated at the country level.

Although beyond the scope of the study, illiteracy levels needs to be measure beyond illiteracy rates. On the one hand, household surveys in some countries have already introduced methodological changes that replace the usual question about whether the interviewee is literate by a judgment made by the interviewer about the literacy skills of the respondent while listening how this person reads a short text. On the other hand, the implementation of more sophisticated studies could try to characterise people according to their level of literacy skills based on an assessment realised in households. One such example is the LAMP household-based assessment implemented by UNESCO in 2011 (UNESCO 2009, op. cit.).

An important aspect to consider is the link of AYE with job training. Assuming the continuity of adult and youth education along the dimensions of comprehensive training and job training involves facing two overlapping problems: what to bring together in terms of content and skills, and how to give credit for knowledge acquired in various areas, formal or not. Envisaging adult and youth education in the context of lifelong learning requires the fulfilment of various aspects of the life of learners, including work.

Finally, in the context of the accelerated technological changes of the 21st century, it appears necessary to widen literacy concepts to include new aspects related to the digital age. The digital divide and technological illiteracy should be taken into account by future surveys measuring the literacy level of the population. Information about access to and use of technologies will enable policies to be aimed at training the workforce, while in parallel integrating digital literacy and new linguistic codes.

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Annex I

Scope, structure and coverage of the Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education

In August 2011, the UIS sent the Regional Questionnaire on Statistics of Adult Education to countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The general purpose of the survey was to increase the availability of statistics in a specific area of adult education, characterised by challenges in international comparability. The aim was to ensure that a significant number of countries were able to provide quality information that would fill this void of information.

In an effort to address this challenge, the Belém Framework for Action ratified the need to “regularly collect and analyse data and information on participation and progression in adult education programmes, disaggregated by gender and other factors, to evaluate change over time and to share good practice” and called upon UNESCO and its structures “to support the follow-up and monitoring at the international level”.

At the regional level, the importance of the issue was ratified by education ministers gathered at the Second Meeting of the Board of the Regional Intergovernmental Committee of the EFA/PRELAC in Río de Janeiro, Brazil, on 25 November 2010, which supported “the development of a system of indicators on literacy and adult education, combining the efforts of the institutions involved, as a direct follow-up to the Declaration stemming from the World Conference CONFINTEA VI”.

The regional survey focused on collecting data on participation in and completion of three types of educational programmes: literacy, primary education for adults (equivalent to ISCED97 level 1) and secondary education for adults (equivalent to ISCED 97 levels 2 and 3) The table below provides a summary of the survey structure.¹²

¹² The survey, which also includes the definitions used, is available in both English and Spanish on the UIS website (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>), in the section “UIS Questionnaires”.

Structure of the Regional Questionnaire for Latin America and the Caribbean on Statistics of Adult Education

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1. Reference period for Section 2 of the questionnaire
- 1.2. Reference period for Section 3 of the questionnaire
- 1.3. Name and ISCED level of programmes covered in Section 2
- 1.4. Name and theoretical duration of programmes covered in Section 3

SECTION 2: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR ADULTS (ISCED97 LEVELS 1, 2 AND 3)

- 2.1 Enrolment in primary and secondary education programmes for adults by type of institution, ISCED level, programme orientation and sex
- 2.2 Enrolment in primary and secondary education programmes for adults by age, ISCED level, programme orientation and sex
- 2.3 Graduates from primary and secondary education programmes for adults by type of institution, ISCED level, programme orientation and sex

SECTION 3: ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

- 3.1 Participants in adult literacy programmes by type of centre, duration and sex
- 3.2 Participants who have completed adult literacy programmes by type of centre, duration and sex

APPENDIX

Type of centre (public or private)
Bilingual literacy programmes
Participants in adult literacy programmes
Participants who have completed literacy programmes

The survey was completed with valid data by 30 of the 43 countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean; they represent 98% of the regional population.¹³

¹³ Bermuda and Montserrat reported that the programmes requested were not applicable to their national education systems. For this reason, these two countries were not included in the statistical tables.

Annex II

Statistical tables

1. Youth and adult literacy rates
2. Educational attainment of the population aged 25 years and older
3. Literacy programmes for the adult population
4. Primary adult education programmes
5. Secondary adult education programmes
6. Graduates of secondary adult education programmes
7. Enrolment in primary and secondary adult education programmes by age

The following symbols are used in the statistical tables

- ... Missing data
- . Not applicable
- Magnitud nil or negligible
- x (c) Data included in column (c) of the table
- ** UIS estimation
- y The reference year for educational attainment data differs from the reference year for enrolment data
- (1) Data cover the public sector only
- (2) Partial data

1. Youth and adult literacy rates

Country or territory	Reference year	Adult literacy rates (15+)			Youth literacy rates (15-24)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Anguilla	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Antigua and Barbuda	2011	99.0 **	98.4 **	99.4 **	...	...	...
Argentina	2011	97.9 **	97.8 **	97.9 **	99.2 **	99.0 **	99.4 **
Aruba	2010	96.8	96.9	96.7	99.1	99.0	99.3
Bahamas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Barbados	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belize	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bermuda	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	91.2	95.8	86.8	99.4	99.7	99.1
Brazil	2010	90.4	90.1	90.7	97.5	96.7	98.3
British Virgin Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	2007	98.9	98.7	99.0	98.9	99.1	98.6
Chile	2009	98.6	98.6	98.5	98.9	98.9	98.9
Colombia	2011	93.6	93.5	93.7	98.2	97.8	98.7
Costa Rica	2011	96.3 **	96.0 **	96.5 **	98.3 **	97.9 **	98.7 **
Cuba	2011	99.8 **	99.8 **	99.8 **	100.0 **	100.0 **	100.0 **
Dominica	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic	2011	90.1	90.0	90.2	97.0	96.1	98.1
Ecuador	2011	91.6	93.1	90.2	98.7	98.6	98.8
El Salvador	2010	84.5	87.1	82.3	96.0	95.7	96.4
Guatemala	2011	75.9 **	81.2 **	71.1 **	87.4 **	89.3 **	85.6 **
Guyana	2009	85.0 **	82.4 **	87.3 **	93.1 **	92.4 **	93.7 **
Haiti	2006	48.7 **	53.4 **	44.6 **	72.3 **	74.4 **	70.5 **
Honduras	2011	85.1	85.3	84.9	95.9	94.9	96.9
Jamaica	2011	87.0 **	82.1 **	91.8 **	95.6 **	92.9 **	98.5 **
Mexico	2011	93.5	94.8	92.3	98.5	98.4	98.5
Montserrat	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nicaragua	2005	78.0	78.1	77.9	87.0	85.2	88.8
Panama	2010	94.1	94.7	93.5	97.6	97.9	97.3
Paraguay	2010	93.9	94.8	92.9	98.6	98.5	98.7
Peru	2007	89.6	94.9	84.6	97.4	98.0	96.7
Puerto Rico	2011	90.3 **	89.7 **	90.9 **	86.6 **	86.1 **	87.0 **
Saint Kitts and Nevis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saint Lucia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Suriname	2010	94.7	95.4	94.0	98.4	98.0	98.8
Trinidad and Tobago	2011	98.8 **	99.2 **	98.5 **	99.6 **	99.6 **	99.6 **
Turks and Caicos Islands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uruguay	2010	98.1	97.6	98.5	98.8	98.4	99.2
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2009	95.5	95.7	95.4	98.5	98.3	98.8

2. Educational attainment of the population aged 25 and older

Country or territory	Reference year	Population (25 and older) (000)			No schooling (%)			Incomplete primary (%)			Primary (ISCED 1) (%)			Lower secondary (ISCED 2) (%)			Upper secondary (ISCED 3) (%)			Post-secondary non-tertiary (ISCED 4) (%)			Tertiary (ISCED 5-6) (%)			Unknown (%)			
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	
		(1)		(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	
Antigua and Barbuda	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Argentina	2003	21,171	10,059	11,111	1.1	0.8	1.3	8.9	8.6	9.3	33.5	33.9	33.1	14.2	16.2	12.3	28.4	28.3	28.5	.	.	.	13.7	12.0	15.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	
Aruba	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belize	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	4,253	2,063	2,190	13.5	7.1	19.4	34.7	34.9	34.5	4.7	5.2	4.3	8.5	9.9	7.2	15.6	18.1	13.4	-	-	-	22.7	24.6	21.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	
Brazil	2010	111,795	53,686	58,110	x(10)	x(11)	x(12)	x(10)	x(11)	x(12)	49.3	50.8	47.8	14.7	14.9	14.4	24.6	24.1	25.0	.	.	.	11.3	9.9	12.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	
Cayman Islands	2008	39	19	20	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.6	7.4	7.1	7.6	13.9	15.8	12.1	31.7	32.5	30.9	7.5	8.2	6.7	37.1	33.8	40.4	1.4	1.7	1.0	
Chile	2010	10,378	5,037	5,341	2.9	2.7	3.2	12.3	11.7	12.9	9.6	8.9	10.3	22.1	22.8	21.5	34.7	35.4	33.9	.	.	.	18.0	18.2	17.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	
Colombia	2011	25,086	11,970	13,116	7.9	8.0	7.8	x(10)	x(11)	x(12)	35.7	36.3	35.2	14.5	14.1	14.7	22.1	22.3	21.9	.	.	.	19.7	19.2	20.2	-	-	0.1	
Costa Rica	2011	2,694	1,355	1,339	5.5	5.7	5.2	17.5	17.0	17.9	34.5	35.1	34.1	7.4	7.5	7.3	16.1	15.9	16.2	-	-	-	18.8	18.4	19.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	
Cuba	2002	7,336	3,650	3,686	0.2	0.2	0.2	13.8	12.4	15.2	17.2	15.6	18.7	28.4	31.2	25.7	31.0	31.4	30.6	-	-	-	9.4	9.2	9.5	-	-	-	
Dominica	2001	38	19	20	3.6	3.8	3.3	6.9	7.7	...	62.5	65.1	60.0	15.7	12.0	19.4	5.7	5.9	5.5	x(16)	x(17)	x(18)	5.0	5.2	4.8	0.5	0.1	0.8	
Dominican Republic	2011	5,090	2,526	2,564	10.8	10.8	10.8	25.1	25.8	24.4	10.2	10.5	10.0	22.1	23.8	20.5	21.4	20.3	22.5	.	.	.	10.3	8.7	11.7	-	-	-	
Ecuador	2010	7,369	3,634	3,735	10.6	8.8	12.3	17.5	17.5	17.5	32.1	34.3	30.1	6.8	6.5	7.1	20.6	20.9	20.4	0.8	0.7	0.8	11.6	11.3	11.8	.	.	.	
El Salvador	2010	2,874	1,262	1,612	4.2	3.8	4.6	38.8	35.9	41.2	15.2	15.5	15.0	15.0	16.9	13.4	19.9	20.3	19.5	-	-	-	6.8	7.5	6.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	
Guatemala	2006	4,825	2,240	2,585	38.9	30.8	45.5	31.3	35.0	28.4	15.0	16.8	13.5	4.2	5.2	3.3	7.2	7.5	6.9	.	.	.	3.4	4.7	2.4	-	-	-	
Honduras	2011	3,299	1,612	1,687	18.7	18.5	18.8	28.3	29.3	27.5	25.1	24.9	25.3	8.4	8.1	8.6	11.1	10.2	11.9	2.9	3.0	2.9	5.1	5.4	4.9	0.4	0.6	0.2	
Jamaica
Mexico	2010	59,643	28,829	30,813	9.3	8.0	10.5	15.8	15.5	16.1	18.3	17.6	19.0	23.7	24.5	22.9	14.8	15.1	14.6	.	.	.	17.6	18.9	16.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	
Nicaragua
Panama	2010	1,889	941	948	7.3	6.7	8.0	9.9	10.4	9.4	21.0	22.6	19.5	9.2	9.9	8.4	20.1	20.4	19.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	21.3	18.3	24.3	9.7	10.4	9.1	
Paraguay	2008	2,807	1,407	1,400	4.5	3.3	5.6	28.5	27.4	29.5	28.2	28.4	28.0	10.2	12.0	8.4	18.2	19.7	16.7	.	.	.	10.4	9.1	11.7	-	-	0.1	
Peru	2010	14,816	7,324	7,492	6.8	2.7	10.9	15.1	12.9	17.2	18.9	19.1	18.6	6.2	6.9	5.6	32.0	36.4	27.7	-	-	-	20.9	21.8	19.9	0.1	0.1	0.1	
Puerto Rico	2008	2,364	1,094	1,270	x(13)	x(14)	x(15)	x(13)	x(14)	x(15)	x(13)	x(14)	x(15)	22.3	23.4	21.3	34.9	37.9	32.3	21.6	21.1	22.2	21.2	17.6	24.2	-	-	-	
Saint Lucia
Trinidad and Tobago	2009	810	382	429	1.3	0.7	1.9	4.0	3.1	4.9	34.8	36.3	33.3	2.9	2.7	3.1	12.7	10.9	14.5	34.1	36.7	31.6	9.6	8.9	10.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	
Uruguay	2010	2,095	976	1,118	1.6	1.4	1.8	12.7	13.1	12.5	36.1	37.3	35.2	22.3	24.0	20.9	12.5	11.5	13.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	9.4	7.4	11.2	-	-	-	
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2009	14,647	7,244	7,403	6.6	6.5	6.8	10.6	11.6	9.6	28.9	30.9	27.0	10.8	11.5	10.1	27.0	26.0	28.0	.	.	.	15.9	13.3	18.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	

3. Literacy programmes for the adult population

Country or territory	Reference year	Participants to literacy programmes		Participants that have completed a literacy programme		Participants to literacy programmes, expressed as percentage of the illiterate population			Participants that have completed a literacy programme, expressed as a percentage of the illiterate population		
		MF	F	MF	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Antigua and Barbuda (1)	2010	31	30	...	...	4.41 ^y	0.20 ^y	14.76 ^y	...	...	...
Argentina	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Aruba	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belize	2010	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2008	296,697	207,688	...	...	53.37	59.24	51.19	...	...	...
Brazil	2009	535,054	316,220	...	...	3.85	3.20	4.48	...	...	...
Cayman Islands	2010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chile	2011	6,543	...	2,895	1,655	3.43 ^y	...	...	1.52 ^y	1.38 ^y	1.64 ^y
Colombia	2010	323,724	196,606	...	...	14.81	11.78	17.75	...	...	...
Costa Rica (1)	2010	7,514	4,295	4,239	2,434	5.62 ^y	4.50 ^y	6.91 ^y	3.17 ^y	2.52 ^y	3.91 ^y
Cuba	2010	559	93	552	93	3.61 ^y	6.29 ^y	1.15 ^y	3.56 ^y	6.19 ^y	1.15 ^y
Dominica	2011	...	...	6	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dominican Republic	2010	60,996	...	42,594	x (3)	8.51	...	...	5.95	...	...
Ecuador	2010	96,920	65,451	4,890	3,162	11.85	9.40	13.55	0.60	0.52	0.65
El Salvador	2010	110,123	64,379	71,803	39,675	16.87	18.37	15.95	11.00	12.90	9.83
Guatemala	2011	148,665	125,499	83,628	70,610	7.09	2.99	9.49	3.99	1.68	5.34
Honduras	2010	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Jamaica (1)	2010	6,712	2,737	...	...	2.64 ^y	2.32 ^y	3.30 ^y	...	...	...
Mexico	2010	603,035	443,318	115,368	85,314	10.84	7.27	13.18	2.07	1.37	2.54
Nicaragua	2010	116,380	62,110	68,940	43,357	15.66 ^y	15.01 ^y	16.28 ^y	9.28 ^y	7.08 ^y	11.37 ^y
Panama	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Paraguay	2010	10,238	7,471	...	...	3.90	2.48	4.95	...	...	...
Peru	2010	204,585	161,701	133,331	105,702	10.28 ^y	8.64 ^y	10.82 ^y	6.70 ^y	5.57 ^y	7.07 ^y
Puerto Rico (1)	2010	343	164	59	x (3)	0.12 ^y	0.12 ^y	0.12 ^y	0.02 ^y	...	...
Saint Lucia	2010	327	253	.	.	...	...	...	.	.	.
Trinidad and Tobago	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Uruguay	2010	1,484	x (1)	...	...	2.95	...	...	...	...	...
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

4. Primary education programmes for adults

Country or territory	Reference year	Enrolment in primary education programmes for adults		Graduates of primary education programmes for adults		Enrolment in primary education programmes for adults, expressed as a percentage of the population 15+ with no schooling or with incomplete primary education			Enrolment in primary education for adults, expressed as a percentage of the total enrolment at that level		
		MF	F	MF	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Antigua and Barbuda (1)	2010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Argentina	2010	246,020	125,338	61,275	31,097	...	...	...	5.0	4.8	5.2
Aruba	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belize	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	24,314	16,353	9,058	5,803	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.6	1.0	2.2
Brazil	2010	958,474	507,763	394,989	221,108	3.1 ^y	2.9 ^y	3.2 ^y	5.4	4.8	6.0
Cayman Islands	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Chile	2011	9,372	3,059	3,148	983	0.6 ^y	0.8 ^y	0.3 ^y	0.6 ^y	0.8	0.4 ^y
Colombia	2010	323,724	196,606	...	...	4.6	3.6	5.5	6.0	4.6	7.4
Costa Rica (1)	2010	8,733	4,303	5,758	2,866	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.7
Cuba	2010	11,254	1,486	2,959	564	...	...	...	1.3	2.2	0.4
Dominica	2011	197	54	a	a	...	...	...	2.4	3.3	1.3
Dominican Republic	2010	55,063	26,307	16,033	7,797	2.6	2.7	2.6	4.0	3.9	4.2
Ecuador	2010	5,130	2,704	...	...	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
El Salvador	2010	6,452	2,638	2,191	942	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.6
Guatemala	2011	252,974	199,578	149,998	117,377	...	...	...	8.7	3.8	13.4
Honduras	2010	102,835	52,188	22,936	11,705	5.2 ^y	5.3 ^y	5.1 ^y	7.5 ^y	7.2	7.7 ^y
Jamaica (1)	2010	6,180	2,300	848	x (3)	...	...	...	2.0	2.5	1.6
Mexico	2010	541,872	359,801	184,343	112,625	3.5	2.6	4.2	3.5	2.3	4.7
Nicaragua	2010	105,238	54,136	13,888	7,048	...	...	...	10.2	9.7	10.8
Panama	2010	4,187	2,446	...	...	1.2	1.0	1.4	0.9	0.8	1.1
Paraguay	2010	31,383	17,174	24,403	13,438	2.9 ^y	2.9 ^y	3.0 ^y	3.6 ^y	3.2	4.1 ^y
Peru	2010	47,969	29,970	...	...	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.6
Puerto Rico (1)	2010	3,152	961	900	x (3)	...	...	...	1.0	1.4	0.7
Saint Lucia	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Trinidad and Tobago	2010	491	x (1)	244	144	1.1 ^y	...	...	0.4 ^y	...	...
Uruguay	2010	2,803	1,503	1,024	x (3)	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.9
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2010	12,690	6,459	3,866	2,035	0.4 ^y	0.4 ^y	0.5 ^y	0.4 ^y	0.3	0.4 ^y

5. Secondary education programmes for adults

Country or territory	Reference year	Enrolment in lower secondary education programmes for adults		Enrolment in upper secondary education programmes for adults		Enrolment in secondary education programmes for adults		Enrolment in secondary education programmes for adults, expressed as a percentage of the population 20 and older with primary education or incomplete secondary			Enrolment in secondary education for adults, expressed as a percentage of the total enrolment at that level		
		MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	M	F	MF	M	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Antigua and Barbuda (1)	2010	290	101	758	511	1,048	612	...	...	...	11.1	9.6	12.4
Argentina	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	522,289	269,800	...	...	...	12.4	12.4	12.3
Aruba	2010	...	...	1,201	757	1,201	757	...	...	...	14.1	10.8	17.0
Belize (2)	2010	219	150	211	116	430	266	...	...	...	1.3	1.0	1.5
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	21,883	11,652	80,191	38,178	102,074	49,830	13.0	12.4	13.7	8.8	8.8	8.8
Brazil	2010	1,939,732	925,639	1,427,381	762,033	3,367,113	1,687,672	4.3	4.3	4.3	12.5	12.8	12.2
Cayman Islands	2010	.	.	172	126	172	126	1.9 ^y	1.0 ^y	3.0 ^y	5.0 ^y	2.7	7.4 ^y
Chile	2011	15,266	5,487	129,423	57,200	144,689	62,687	4.1 ^y	4.7 ^y	3.5 ^y	8.8 ^y	9.9	7.8 ^y
Colombia	2010	444,226	245,629	246,753	134,211	690,979	379,840	7.9	7.4	8.3	12.0	11.2	12.7
Costa Rica (1)	2010	51,845	24,232	27,136	14,617	78,981	38,849	...	...	...	16.0	16.2	15.8
Cuba	2010	12,487	4,235	298,588	144,602	311,075	148,837	...	...	...	27.8	28.0	27.6
Dominica	2011	58	53	124	76	182	129	...	...	...	2.7	1.6	3.8
Dominican Republic	2010	43,270	21,714	87,910	51,680	131,180	73,394	6.9	5.7	8.1	12.7	11.8	13.4
Ecuador	2010	126,742	72,862	84,524	42,236	211,266	115,098	9.0	8.2	9.7	12.5	11.4	13.6
El Salvador	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Guatemala	2011	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Honduras	2010	27,398	14,727	.	.	27,398	14,727	...	...	...	4.0	4.1	4.0
Jamaica (1)	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	532	437	...	...	...	0.2	0.1	0.3
Mexico	2010	1,257,088	699,544	.	.	1,257,088	699,544	4.5 ^y	4.3 ^y	4.7 ^y	9.7 ^y	8.9	10.5 ^y
Nicaragua	2010	96,145	47,487	51,359	28,348	147,504	75,835	...	...	...	24.1	24.2	24.0
Panama	2010	11,657	5,034	14,423	7,512	26,080	12,546	4.3	4.1	4.5	8.4	8.8	8.0
Paraguay	2010	15,716	8,245	36,484	19,513	52,200	27,758	...	...	...	8.5	8.1	8.9
Peru	2010	204,648	87,891	27,935	12,364	232,583	100,255	5.4	6.0	4.8	8.1	8.9	7.2
Puerto Rico (1)	2010	7,988	3,206	11,119	4,501	19,107	7,707	...	...	...	6.2	7.3	5.0
Saint Lucia	2010	284	187	536	368	820	555	...	...	...	4.9	3.2	6.6
Trinidad and Tobago (1)	2010	x (5)	x (6)	x (5)	x (6)	6,031	x (5)	2.0 ^y	...	...	6.0 ^y	...	...
Uruguay (1)	2010	13,493	x (1)	42,973	x (3)	56,466	x (5)	4.1	...	...	16.4	...	...
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2010	105,305	51,031	100,640	52,265	205,945	103,296	3.1 ^y	2.9 ^y	3.4 ^y	8.4 ^y	8.5	8.2 ^y

6. Graduates of secondary education programmes for adults

Country or territory	Reference year	Graduates of lower secondary education programmes for adults		Graduates of upper secondary education programmes for adults	
		MF	F	MF	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Antigua and Barbuda (1)	2010	...	...	...	...
Argentina	2010	x (3)	x (4)	50,356	30,239
Aruba	2010	...	...	105	71
Belize (2)	2010	5	3	65	39
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	15,883	8,645	30,385	15,342
Brazil	2010	884,826	467,215	814,142	463,936
Cayman Islands	2010	.	.	172	126
Chile	2011	8,951	3,286	46,620	21,911
Colombia	2010	127,077	x (1)	...	...
Costa Rica (1)	2010	19,084	10,002	10,359	6,099
Cuba	2010	9,327	3,855	120,112	63,628
Dominica	2011	.	.	.	.
Dominican Republic	2010	32,106	16,803	13,117	8,131
Ecuador	2010	...	...	19,661	10,068
El Salvador	2010	.	.	.	.
Guatemala	2011	.	.	.	.
Honduras	2010	5,624	3,261	.	.
Jamaica (1)	2010	...	...	-	-
Mexico	2010	387,650	202,701	.	.
Nicaragua	2010	21,185	11,818	21,118	12,444
Panama	2010	...	...	...	...
Paraguay	2010	13,717	7,268	31,579	17,182
Peru	2010	...	...	...	...
Puerto Rico (1)	2010	2,425	x (1)	2,494	x (3)
Saint Lucia	2010	...	...	...	...
Trinidad and Tobago (1)	2010	...	...	...	...
Uruguay (1)	2010	...	...	...	...
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2010	40,370	20,071	47,372	24,904

7. Enrolment in primary and secondary education programmes for adults, by age

Country or territory	Reference year	Primary education						Secondary education					
		24 and younger		25 and older		Age unknown		24 and younger		25 and older		Age unknown	
		MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F	MF	F
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Antigua and Barbuda (1)	2010	-	-	-	-	-	-	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	1,048	612
Argentina	2010	166,228	x(6)	79,792	x(6)	-	125,338	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	522,289	269,800
Aruba	2010	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,056	657	145	100	-	-
Belize (2)	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	292	167	138	99	-	-
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2009	23,564	15,983	-	-	750	370	99,937	48,654	-	-	2,137	1,176
Brazil	2010	218,473	73,871	739,954	433,864	47	28	1,870,271	765,322	1,496,369	922,113	473	237
Cayman Islands	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	36	21	136	105	-	-
Chile	2011	3,504	928	5,868	2,131	-	-	110,864	45,730	33,825	16,957	-	-
Colombia	2010	62,321	33,104	256,791	161,323	4,612	2,179	401,397	194,329	280,191	180,854	9,391	4,657
Costa Rica (1)	2010	7,271	3,762	1,462	541	-	-	66,221	31,967	12,760	6,882	-	-
Cuba	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	11,254	1,486	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	311,075	148,837
Dominica	2011	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	197	54	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	182	129
Dominican Republic	2010	36,799	14,147	18,264	12,160	-	-	86,332	43,385	44,848	30,009	-	-
Ecuador	2010	2,908	1,304	2,222	1,400	-	-	165,608	88,880	45,658	26,218	-	-
El Salvador	2010	4,375	1,730	2,024	881	53	27	.	.	.	.	.	.
Guatemala	2011	66,625	46,449	178,276	149,760	8,073	3,369	.	.	.	.	.	.
Honduras	2010	35,618	17,364	38,637	19,929	28,580	14,895	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	27,398	14,727
Jamaica (1)	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	6,180	2,300	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	532	437
Mexico	2010	127,605	66,701	414,267	293,100	-	-	556,564	255,449	700,524	444,095	-	-
Nicaragua	2010	44,190	20,208	59,564	33,377	1,484	551	126,257	64,200	21,187	11,601	60	34
Panama	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	4,187	2,446	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	26,080	12,546
Paraguay	2010	17,658	7,824	13,725	9,350	-	-	36,565	17,888	15,635	9,870	-	-
Peru	2010	28,919	15,530	19,050	14,440	-	-	204,689	86,915	27,894	13,340	-	-
Puerto Rico (1)	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	3,152	961	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	19,107	7,709
Saint Lucia	2010	.	.	.	.	.	.	x(11)	x(12)	x(11)	x(12)	820	555
Trinidad and Tobago (1)	2010	x(5)	x(5)	x(5)	x(5)	491	x(5)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	6,031	x(11)
Uruguay (1)	2010	x(5)	x(6)	x(5)	x(6)	2,803	1,503	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	x(11)	56,466	x(11)
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2010	8,668	4,096	4,022	2,363	-	-	152,671	72,784	53,274	30,512	-	-