Regional Monitoring Report on Progress Toward Quality Education for All in Latin America and the Caribbean, EFA 2012

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Regional Bureau of Education for
Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO Santiago

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PREFACE

The first intergovernmental meeting of the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) was held on 14–16 November 2002 in Havana, Cuba. The ministers of education in attendance at the meeting approved the Havana Declaration, which ratified their political support for the Project.

At the second PRELAC intergovernmental meeting, held in Buenos Aires on 29–30 March 2007, the education ministers in attendance reaffirmed the need to intensify support to achieve quality education for all as a common good, basic human right, and responsibility of society as a whole.

During the discussions, the ministers pledged to support UNESCO actions to coordinate and follow up on PRELAC and called for the continuation and strengthening of its role as a driving force in building cooperation among countries in the region to achieve the right to quality education for all. The ministers also asked that information be collected to orient decision making on educational policies and practices, under the assumption that information on the state of education in the region is crucial for designing, executing and evaluating such policies and for advancing the public debate on education.

This document was prepared in response to this mandate. It is intended to contribute to national efforts in this area by offering a regional perspective on the state of education with regard to the accomplishment of the right to Education for All (EFA). It also seeks to strengthen regional cooperation between the Regional Bureau of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, Chile and its member states, in order to further common educational goals.

Without a doubt, education is an area facing major challenges that affect the present and future of millions of people in our region. This document supports the design of educational policies by offering a baseline of what has been achieved to date and identifying work that still needs to be done.

Jorge Sequeira
Director
OREALC/UNESCO Santiago

READER´S GUIDE[1]

1. Reference period

The reference period for the educational and financial data presented herein is the academic or fiscal year ending in 2008, or the most recent year available within the 2005-2007 period. Where historical comparisons are presented, the data of reference is from the academic year ending in 2000 or that available for the 2001 or 1999 school year.

Literacy indicators are based on the most recent data available within the 2005-2008 period or are estimates calculated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

Where a given reference period is spread across two calendar years, the later year is cited. For example, the 2007/08 school year is presented as 2008.

The reference period for data obtained from the Human Development Report 2009 or the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2010 is 2007.

Data from the OECD's PISA study refers to 2009.

2. Data Sources

a) Education

Literacy, finance and enrolment data come from the international database on education maintained by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). For more information on the data disseminated by the UIS, please consult the GED reader's guide at:

http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL_ID=5456&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

The socioeconomic data used for completion rates and parity indices are from household surveys conducted and processed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). For more information on the sources of data processed by ECLAC, see the Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean 2009:

http://websie.eclac.cl/anuario_estadistico/anuario_2009/eng/default.asp

Also presented herein are some of the results from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE) conducted by the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE), which is coordinated by OREALC/UNESCO. For more information on SERCE, please visit:

http://portal.unesco.org/geography/en/ev.php-URL_ID=10876&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

The LLECE web page can be found at:

http://portal.unesco.org/geography/en/ev.php-URL_ID=7732&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

The publication also shows data from the OECD's PISA Study (year 2009), which covers nine countries of the region. For more information, please visit:

1 This reader's guide contains some of the same information as the Reader's Guide in Global Education Digest 2009, an annual publication of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_32252351_46584327_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

Additional sources of data include the UNDP Human Development Report 2009 and the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010.

All data presented in these publications has been processed according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 97) to ensure comparability among countries in regard to educational levels. (See also section a) of the Technical notes).

Additional information on the documentation review in the chapters addressing Relevance and Pertinence in education may be found in Annex C at the end of this publication.

b) Population

Population data are based on the United Nations Population Division (UNPD) 2008 revision data, which are used by the UIS to calculate indicators. The UNPD does not provide data by single year of age for countries with total populations under 100,000. Where no UNPD estimates are available, national data or UIS estimates are used. For more information on UNPD estimates, please visit:

http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm

c) Economy

Economic data comes from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). For more information please visit:

http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/default.asp?idioma=IN

http://www.cepal.org/estadisticas/default.asp?idioma=IN

3. Technical notes

a) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 97)

In order to ensure international comparability, educational stages are classified according to the UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education, ISCED 97. Definitions of education levels contained in this report correspond to this classification, as countries have adapted their own systems in order to report statistical information to the international database maintained by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), through that institution's own questionnaires or through those used by UIS, Eurostat, and/or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). For more information on ISCED 97, please visit:

http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev_en.php?ID=7433_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

b) Education data and indicators

To ensure comparability, we have used UIS indicators and calculation methods, following the accepted international standards set forth in the Education Indicators Technical Guidelines. The guide is available online at:

http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5202_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

Indicators and calculation methods of the Summit of the Americas' Regional Education Indicators Project (PRIE) have also been used. The 2009 guide 'Methodology for Building and Use' can be accessed online at:

http://portal.oas.org/Portal/Topic/SEDI/Educaci%C3%B3nyCultura/PRIE/Documentos/tabid/1380/language/en-US/Default.aspx

Tables and graphs contained herein show the information available for each indicator used, and therefore not all countries are represented in all tables and graphs.

c) Country average

To obtain reference values with which to compare national averages and rates, in this publication national figures are averaged without being weighted by population. These reference values are therefore not regional averages, which are usually calculated by weighting national figures according to the pertinent reference populations before averaging.

The decision to use unweighted country averages rather than regional averages as reference values reflects a desire to give each country's situation equal importance in the different dimensions analysed, regardless of its demographic weight within the region. The "country averages" mentioned throughout this document therefore refer to unweighted averages of national figures.

d) Net enrolment rates

Net enrolment rate (NER) corresponds to the number of children in the official age group for a given education level as a percentage of the total corresponding school-age population. It is used as an indicator of access to pre-primary and secondary education.

The present publication uses *adjusted* net enrolment rate to monitor access to primary education. This represents primary school students enrolled at the primary level who are of official primary-school age, *plus* children in that age range who are already in secondary school, as a percentage of the total population of primary school age.

A high NER denotes a high level of coverage among the official school-age population. Its theoretical maximum value is 100%. Rising trends can be considered evidence of improved coverage at specified educational levels. Comparing NER with GER (gross enrolment rate) provides the incidence of under-aged and over-aged enrolment. If the NER is below 100%, then its complement (the distance from 100%) provides a measure of the proportion of children not enrolled at the specified educational level. However, since some of these children or young people may be enrolled at other levels, this difference should in no way be considered a measure of the percentage of students not enrolled in the system. To measure progress toward universal primary education, for example, adjusted primary NER is calculated based on the percentage of children in the official primary-school age range who are enrolled in either primary or secondary school.

Difficulties may arise when calculating an NER that approaches 100%, however, if:

- the reference date for primary school entry does not coincide with the birth dates of the entire cohort eligible to enrol at this educational level
- a significant portion of the population starts primary school earlier than the prescribed age, and consequently finishes earlier as well
- the entrance age to primary education increases, but the duration of schooling remains unchanged[2]

2 UNESCO-UIS. 2009. Education Indicators, Technical Guidelines. UNESCO-UIS, Montreal.

e) Completion rates for educational levels

The completion rates for primary and secondary education cited herein represent the percentage of the population that has completed primary or secondary education as a percentage of the total population in the relevant age group.

The reliability of this indicator is based on the fact that the information used to calculate it derives from a single source. Temporal analysis can be carried out using different waves or years of household surveys or by comparing the data on different age groups from the same information source.

Although this indicator is appropriate for determining educational levels in the population, it has at least two limitations, namely that it produces findings based entirely on past efforts to reach the objective and does not take into account current developments in an educational system. Also, since not all countries conduct regular household surveys, the indicator cannot necessary be followed over time.[3]

f) Parity indices for completion of educational levels

Parity indices are used to analyse the equity of educational opportunity. They are calculated by dividing the size of the typically disadvantaged population by the size of the traditionally advantaged group. Parity indices are therefore dichotomous, using one number to compare two sub-populations. They are intended to standardize a given parameter for two sub-populations when the population is divisible into two segments.

When the value of a parity index approaches unity (between 0.95 and 1.05), parity is considered to be present, i.e., the situation is close to equal for the two sub-populations and equity is therefore present in the combined population. However, a value farther from unity represents a situation in which the two groups are relatively advantaged/disadvantaged.

A parity index below 0.95 indicates a disadvantaged population in the numerator and an advantaged one in the denominator. An index above 1.05 shows the reverse. Traditionally, the numerator is used to represent the disadvantaged group.[4]

g) Ethnic categories

The following definitions are used for parity indicators on educational completion for different ethnic groups. Eight countries report statistical information for this aspect. It is important to emphasize that the terms "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" are used not in an anthropological sense but in an instrumental sense to differentiate ethnic groups that have been historically disadvantaged in terms of access to and completion of educational levels, as well as those that have been advantaged.

Bolivia: Indigenous includes: Quechua, Aymara, Guarani and other indigenous groups.
Non-indigenous includes: Spanish origin, foreigners and others.

Brazil: Indigenous includes: indigenous or mixed race.
Non-indigenous includes: European origin, African origin or other.

3 PRIE. 2009. *Methodology for Building and Use*. OAS, SEP (Mexico) and UNESCO.
4 Ibid.

Chile: Indigenous includes: indigenous population.
Non-indigenous includes: non-indigenous population.

Ecuador: Indigenous includes: indigenous population.
Non-indigenous includes: European origin, mestizo, African origin or other.

Guatemala: Indigenous includes: indigenous population.
Non-indigenous includes: non-indigenous population.

Nicaragua: Indigenous includes: Miskito, Mayagna, Sumo.
Non-indigenous includes: Spanish, English and other origin.

Panama: Indigenous includes: indigenous population.
Non-indigenous includes: non-indigenous population.

Paraguay: Indigenous includes: exclusively Guarani-speaking.
Non-indigenous includes: Spanish-speaking, bilingual Guarani/ Spanish-speaking, and speakers of other languages.

h) Educational attainment indicators

Educational attainment data are presented by ISCED level. The data presented refer to the percentage of the population 25 years and over that has completed a given education level. These data come from household surveys, and as they are based on samples that are subject to sampling error, therefore caution is advised when interpreting differences smaller than 5%.

The reference period for these data is the most recent year available. The period varies within the 2000-2007 period for the countries discussed.

4. Countries participating in the report

This report covers 41 UNESCO countries and territories, which are listed below with their identifiers (used in graphs and tables).

Latina America		Caribbean	
AR	Argentina	AI	Anguilla
BO	Bolivia	AG	Antigua and Barbuda
BR	Brazil	AW	Aruba
CO	Colombia	AN	Netherland Antilles
CR	Costa Rica	BS	Bahamas
CU	Cuba	BB	Barbados
CL	Chile	BZ	Belize
EC	Ecuador	BM	Bermuda
SV	El Salvador	DM	Dominica
GT	Guatemala	GD	Grenada
HN	Honduras	GY	Guyana
MX	Mexico	HT	Haiti
NI	Nicaragua	KY	Caiman Islands
PN	Panama	TC	Turks and Caicos Islands
PY	Paraguay	VG	British Virgin Islands
PE	Peru	JM	Jamaica
DO	Dominican Republic	MS	Montserrat
UY	Uruguay	KN	Saint Kitts and Nevis
VE	Venezuela	VC	San Vincent and the Grenadines
		LC	St. Lucia
		SR	Surinam
		TT	Trinidad and Tobago

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The *Regional Monitoring Report on Progress Toward Quality Education for All in Latin America and the Caribbean, EFA 2012* is intended to describe the current condition of education in the region. It considers education as a basic human right and taking into account the goals of Education for All (EFA).

Socioeconomic context and demand for education

2. Between 2002 and 2008, Latin America and the Caribbean experienced sustained growth, which improved the well being of the region's population, with both poverty rates and income disparity decreasing. This upswing was interrupted by the global economic crisis in late 2008, which affected different countries of the region to different degrees.
3. Countries with a high demand for primary education and lower demand for secondary education face greater budgetary pressures, and often have the lowest levels of development.
4. The demand for upper secondary education varies less from country to country. Nevertheless, less developed countries face greater challenges in addressing the potential demand for secondary education.

Investment in education

5. The economic upswing between 2002 and 2008 resulted in increased public spending on education, albeit at lower rates than GDP growth, meaning that over the period in question, public spending on education as a share of GDP actually decreased slightly. In 2008, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean allocated about 4.7% of their GDP to education. Although this percentage is quite close to average spending on education among OECD countries, it should be noted that the spending rate has not risen over time, and indeed has even dropped in comparison to the rate of 5% averaged for 2000. In effect, few countries have increased investment in education over the period studied; in most of them, spending on education as a percentage of GDP has remained the same or is slightly lower than before.
6. Private spending on education also increased, especially in countries with lower public investment on education. This figure tends to increase as the number of students attending private establishments increases. The available information indicates that private spending on education already accounts for 1.2% of GDP in the region.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

7. Net enrolment rates in pre-primary education reflect a consolidation of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) offerings in the region. Average net enrolment among countries[5] was 65.3% in 2008, 11% more than in 2000. This is particularly important, as pre-primary attendance is positively

5 To obtain reference values with which to compare national averages and rates, in this publication national figures are averaged without weighting them by population. For more information see part c) of the Technical Notes of the Reader's Guide.

correlated with progress in primary school, as well as advancement to other educational levels and school performance in general.

8. Major disparities in pre-primary enrolment rates persist among countries, however, as well as among socioeconomic groups and place of residence (rural versus urban).
9. Countries also vary widely in the number of years that children attend pre-school.
10. Many countries still have a shortage of qualified pre-primary teachers.

Primary education

11. The net enrolment rate indicates what proportion of children enters primary school at the theoretically appropriate age. It also provides information on the efficiency of educational systems. Among the countries studied, the average net enrolment rate was 72% in 2008, indicating that timely entry into primary school is still less than optimal.
12. For many years, the region's countries have shown relatively high adjusted net enrolment rates for primary education, averaging 95.3% in 2008, up from 93.5% in 2000. This represents the percentage of children of official primary school age who are actually enrolled in primary school. Despite this high rate, there has been virtually no advancement over the last eight years, a fact that is not surprising given the difficulty in engaging the final tenth of out-of-school children.
13. Repetition of the first grade is still high, averaging 9.1% in the region's countries, and is attributed basically to a lack of quality in education. There is still a lack of consensus on whether repetition is pedagogically useful at all, whether it helps to improve poor school performance or in fact increases the likelihood of dropout, as indicated in the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE).[6] Repetition rates are also a reflection of inefficient educational spending, which hinders improvement in education.
14. With regard to completion of primary school, it should be noted that countries with low rates of schooling among older generations have shown significant increases recently. The average completion rate across countries has increased by 4.6% over the last ten years, as measured by comparing an older population (25–29 year olds) with a younger age group (15–19 year olds). In 2008, the average for the region's countries was 90.1%, though there are major differences among countries.

Secondary education

15. According to available information, net enrolment in secondary education increased by an average of 7.8% between 2000 and 2008. The average net enrolment rate in 2008 was 72.8%. Although this shows a clear rise in access to secondary education, coverage is still low in many countries.
16. Among the region's young people 20 to 24 years of age, 71% (country

6 UNESCO/OREALC. 2010a. *Factores Asociados: Al logro cognitivo de los estudiantes de América Latina y el Caribe*. Santiago, Chile. OREALC/UNESCO Santiago.

average) have completed lower secondary education, while 51.8% have completed upper secondary school. However, only three countries (Barbados, The Bahamas and Chile) have attained a completion rate of 75% or higher.

17. It is noteworthy, however, that countries with lower secondary school completion rates among the older generations have shown very significant increases among the younger generations, indicating some progress over the above-mentioned period.

Tertiary education

18. In most of the region's countries, tertiary education enrolment rates increased significantly between 2000 and 2008, with the country average rising from 2,341 to 3,573 students enrolled in some form of tertiary education per 100,000 inhabitants between 2000 and 2008.

Literacy

19. Major improvements in literacy can be observed in the region's younger generation. The positive trend in countries where older generations are less literate merits special emphasis. Overall, the literacy rate in the region rose by 4.9%, measured as the difference between older (24+) and younger (15–24) age segments. In 2008 the younger population (15 to 24 years) had a literacy rate of 96.8%, while the adult population (15 years and over) had a literacy rate of 91.1%.

20. The trend toward gender parity in literacy among the younger age group is also a noteworthy advancement in the countries analyzed, with the average across countries showing almost perfect equity in both younger and adult population segments.

Social disparity in the completion of education

21. Completion of primary education rates still vary, not only among countries but also among different social groups within countries, with disadvantaged groups having lower completion rates. Despite some movement toward greater parity, the situation remains unequal, with inhabitants of rural areas, low-income populations (lowest income quintile) and members of ethnic groups at a disadvantage.

22. Completion of secondary education is even less evenly distributed among certain social groups than is completion of primary education, with very low completion rates for inhabitants of rural areas, poorer social sectors and members of ethnic groups. Another trend that is observable in many countries and therefore worth mentioning is gender disparity, usually in favour of women, who have traditionally been in a disadvantaged position.

Learning achievements

23. Learning achievements in primary education are low. The SERCE study shows that 36% of third grade students are not meeting minimum reading comprehension standards (based on various country figures; like other figures throughout this document, this is an unweighted average of country rates).

At the sixth-grade level, 23.3% of students fall short of minimum standards.

24. Performance in mathematics is just as discouraging, with a country average of 49.2% of third graders unable to solve basic problems in addition, subtraction and multiplication, and 19.4% of sixth graders unable to use the four basic mathematical operations strategically when provided with explicit information.
25. Similar calculations show an average of 43.9% of students at the sixth-grade level failing to meet minimum standards in science.
26. Results of the PISA study – which measured the achievements of 15-year-old students in nine countries of the region in 2009 – showed that 48.9% of students in the region scored below basic reading levels (country average).
27. In the area of mathematics, the PISA study also reported that 61% of students on average are incapable of using elementary algorithms, formulas, procedures and conventions.
28. In science, an average of 51.7% of students fails to meet the most basic standards, being unable to provide plausible explanations for common situations or draw conclusions based on simple investigations.
29. Even Chile, which has the highest average scores among countries of the region, is still below the average OECD score in all subject areas (Language, Mathematics, and Sciences).

Teachers

30. The student/teacher ratio at the primary level ranges from 8.3 (Bermudas) to 33.3 (Honduras), with a country average of 20.1 for the region. At the secondary level, it ranges from six (Bermudas) to 28.6 (Nicaragua), with an average of 15.7.
31. Country figures for 2008 show that 78.8% of primary school teachers in the region meet official national requirements, on average, and are certified to teach at that level. Here again, disparities among countries are high, with national figures ranging from 36.4% to 100%.
32. At the secondary level, 71.4% of teachers are duly certified, on average, with national figures ranging from 29.3% to 100%.

INTRODUCTION

International milestones such as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948)[7] and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989)[8] called attention to the right to education as an essential factor in human development and in overcoming deep-rooted social inequality among peoples.

The *World Declaration for Education for All (EFA)*, approved by the *World Conference for Education for All* held in Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990, reiterates the basic right to education for all people of all ages, affirming that education should contribute to building a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally sound world, while advancing social, economic, and cultural progress, tolerance and international co-operation.

Ten years later, at the *World Education Forum* held in Dakar, Senegal, the *Dakar Framework for Action*[9] was laid down, establishing six goals and a deadline of 2015 for achieving them in each participating country. These six goals are:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring the excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The *Regional Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC)*[10], which was approved in Cuba by the ministers of education of the region in 2000, reiterates the importance of quality education as a right of all individuals.

The *Regional Monitoring Report on Progress Toward Quality Education for All in Latin America and the Caribbean, EFA 2012* attempts to provide a picture of education in the region from the lens of 'quality education for all', analyzing the advances that have been made toward the Dakar Framework for Action's six EFA goals.

In terms of its structure, the report first offers a contextual analysis of educational systems of the region that looks at factors affecting educational

7 http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/

8 UNICEF. 1989. Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc.pdf

9 World Declaration on Education for All, 1990. In: World Education Forum. 2000. Dakar, Senegal, *The Dakar Framework for Action*. París, UNESCO.

10 PRELAC. 2002. Follow-up model of the Regional Project of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC): support, monitoring and assessment. Santiago, Chile, OREALC/UNESCO.

development, such as demographic and socioeconomic trends, living conditions (Chapter 1) and investment in education (Chapter 2).

The following six chapters (chapters 3 to 8) offer what is basically a progress report on the six Education for All goals laid down in the Dakar Framework for Action from the perspective of three of the five abovementioned dimensions of quality education for all, namely: efficacy, efficiency and equity. It should be emphasized that Chapter 7, which refers to the fifth objective of the Dakar Framework for Action, goes beyond gender parity to include information on equity related to place of residence (urban/rural), socioeconomic level and ethnic group. Chapter 8 engages the sixth EFA goal on the quality of education, focusing exclusively on learning outcomes. The results of the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE)[11] and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)[12] are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 9 is the final chapter providing some quantitative information on teachers.

In summary, this publication addresses a broad range of topics including the progress of educational systems in the region and major trends and challenges that need to be faced to achieve quality education for the entire population. Overall, it constructs a general picture of education in the region over the last decade using available information and comparative analysis of its countries.

This document is intended to contribute to our understanding of the state of the education in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to enrich the debate on this topic and provide input for decision making on educational policy design, management and assessment.

11 UNESCO-OREALC. 2008b. *Los Aprendizajes de los Estudiantes de América Latina y El Caribe. Primer reporte de los resultados del Segundo Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (SERCE)*. Santiago, Chile, Laboratorio Latinoamericano de Evaluación de la Calidad de la Educación (LLECE), OREALC/ UNESCO Santiago.

12 OCDE. 2010a. *PISA 2009 Results: What Students Know and Can Do - Student Performance in Reading, Mathematics and Science (Volume I)*. Paris, OECD Publishing.

1. THE SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION OF THE REGION

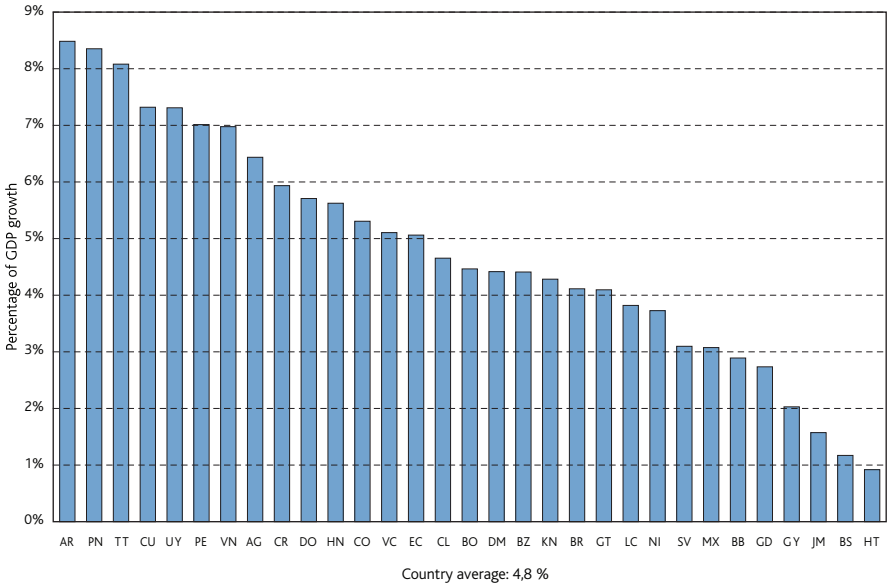
As a prelude to analyzing the state of education in Latin America and the Caribbean, we present the following description of the region's demographic, economic and social context, which is intended to provide an overview of the context in which educational systems operate and identify some parameters that impact those systems.

The analysis also includes information on the future demand for primary and secondary education in the region based on demographic projections.

1.1. The 2002-2008 economic expansion

In the first decade of the XXI century the Latin American and Caribbean region experienced a lengthy period of sustained economic growth, the highest recorded in the past four decades. Between 2002 and 2008, the region's average GDP rose by 4.8% annually. This trend was facilitated by the favourable international context of global economic expansion, especially by large emerging economies, which benefited Latin America and the Caribbean by expanding exports of goods and services from the region to international markets. The significant increase in Terms of Trade is perhaps the most obvious indicator of this development. The improvement in international financial conditions also promoted economic growth in the region by making foreign capital much more available.

Graph 1.1 **Annual GDP Growth, 2002-2008**



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

In addition to favourable external conditions, major changes in economic policy management fostered macroeconomic stability internally. In contrast to previous decades, in the period studied several LAC countries were successful in controlling inflation, accumulating reserves, decreasing public debt and increasing fiscal surpluses.

Despite the fact that many countries of Latin America and the Caribbean experienced economic expansion in the first decade of the 21st Century, the intensity of this growth varied widely. South American countries had the highest GDP growth, averaging 5.5% per year, while the Caribbean economies experienced a more moderate increase in GDP of 3.8%, and Mexico and Central America grew by 3.5%.

Remarkably, despite this sustained economic growth, the gap between countries of the region and developed countries remained very wide. In 2008, for example, the average GDP per capita of LAC countries amounted to just 27% of the average GDP per capita of the G-7 group of countries, and only 23% of the average GDP per capita of the United States.[13]

Nonetheless, the economic advances mentioned above also led to improvements in the labour market, with steady growth in employment levels in the region. ECLAC estimates reveal that the employment rate increased from 52.5% in 2002 to 55.1% in 2008, or a more than 2% annual increase in the net quantity of jobs. This reduced unemployment in the region from 11% to 7.4% over the same period.

It is important to mention that the favourable economic situation in the region between 2002 and 2008 also enabled sustained increases in public spending on social programmes in all countries. The section on public spending on education below addresses this issue in greater detail.

1.2. Social changes

In Latin America and the Caribbean, poverty and social inequality are complex structural problems that are rooted in the region's geography and history. This legacy has led to the consolidation of socioeconomic, territorial, ethnic and gender inequalities that are closely linked to regional educational challenges. These disparities are expressed in major differences among population segments in access to quality education and educational success.

Notwithstanding the above, recent years have witnessed some improvements in the living conditions of people in the region, expressed in lower levels of poverty and extreme poverty and a reduction in income disparity. The graph below shows the drop in poverty rates in Latin America from 2002 to 2008 that accompanied the reduction in income disparity.

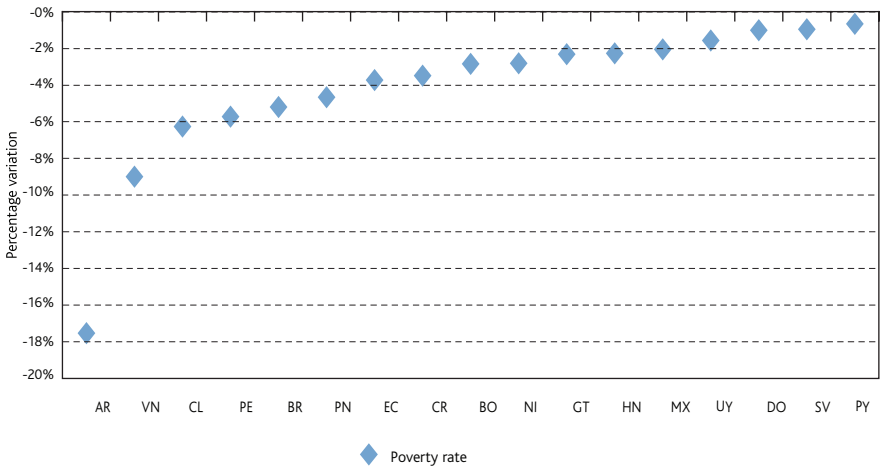
In 2008, all countries in the region had poverty levels below those of 2002. Argentina, Venezuela, Chile, Peru and Brazil achieved the most progress, while Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Uruguay showed less significant reductions.

Despite the advances achieved during the first decade of the 2000s, however, poverty remains a major challenge in the region. In 2008, more than 180 million Latin Americans were in a situation of 'material deprivation', unable to meet their basic needs and/or fully exercise their rights.[14]

13 ECLAC. 2010a. Time for Equality. ECLAC. Santiago, Chile.

14 ECLAC. 2010b. *Social Panorama of Latin America 2010*. ECLAC. Santiago, Chile.

Graph 1.2 Annual percentage variation in poverty levels, 2002-2008



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

1.3. The 2008 crisis

The international financial crisis that erupted in September 2008 put an end to the longest and most intense phase of economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean since the 1970s. The first contraction of the global economy since World War II occurred in 2009, and amounted to 2.2%, according to ECLAC estimates. Regional GDP also registered a contraction of 1.8%.[15]

This financial crisis was transmitted to Latin America and the Caribbean through the traditional channels of credit and exports and the contraction of foreign trade, reflected in the volume and price of exports. This sudden about-face after six consecutive years of growth caused a setback in the improvement of social indicators that had been recorded in previous years. In effect, the impact of the crisis on the most vulnerable population has meant that in 2009 more than nine million people in the Americas have fallen under the poverty line, including an increase of five million in the number living in extreme poverty.

While the impact of this international crisis on the region has not been as dramatic as in previous crises, some countries have experienced it more intensely than others. Similarly, the ability to return to the path of economic and social growth has also varied from country to country, depending on the specific features and problems present at the national and sub-regional levels. For example, South America recorded the most growth in 2010 owing to the size of some of its economies and the further diversification of its export products and markets. Slower growth is expected in Mexico and Central America, which rely more on the US economy. Caribbean economies face a more complex financial outlook, one element of which is their high dependence on tourism, which fell sharply in 2009 and will take time to recover.

15 ECLAC. 2010a. Op.cit.

1.4. Demographic changes

Latin America and the Caribbean have undergone significant demographic changes in recent decades. While there are differences among individual countries, at the regional level a new profile has emerged: slower population growth and a slight aging of the population.

According to estimates of the Latin-American Centre for Development (CELADE) of ECLAC, the last 50 years have seen an unprecedented decline in fertility rates in the region, from some of the highest in the world to levels below the global average. In this scenario of declining fertility, which was preceded by a decrease in mortality rates, annual population growth displayed a persistent downward trend, dropping from 2.8% in the mid-20th Century to around 1.3% over the past five years (2005 to 2010).[16]

The process described above is known as demographic transition, and in the LAC region it has resulted in lower demographic dependence, owing to a drop in the younger population that has not yet been offset by a rise in the older population. This demographic 'looseness', which also has been called the "demographic bonus", can reduce the tax burden and provide governments, at least in the short term, with more resources to invest in eradicating poverty and improving education, health and social protection.

These demographic changes in the region have happened very rapidly, more rapidly than in the rest of the world, as mentioned. Within the region, however, countries have undergone different stages of demographic transition; however, all exceeded the level of "emerging" for reducing population growth below 3%. Exceptions to the general trend include Guatemala, the only country with "moderate" growth, even though its rates are above 2%; and Cuba and Uruguay, which are situated in the "more advanced" category, with less than 1% population growth. All other countries are currently in the "advanced" category, with annual rates between one and 2%.[17]

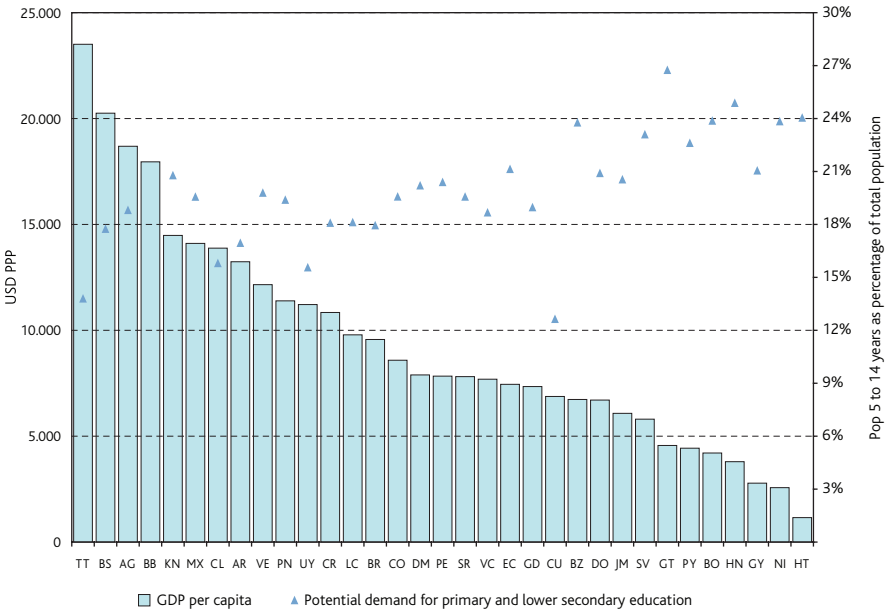
The demographic transition that is occurring in countries of the region is particularly important in determining the size of the school age population, which represents the potential demand for education. For countries with slower population growth, as the child population gradually decreases, so will the demand for education.

Graph 1.3 shows the potential demand for primary and lower secondary education in the region. The indicator used here reflects the percentage of the 5 to 14 year old population that was eligible to be enrolled in school at each of these levels in 2008. These segments' potential demand for education at these two levels will play into how countries are able to face the challenge of making at least primary education universal in the coming years.

Another issue relevant to the analysis is the fact that demographic transitions are usually associated with processes of economic development and modernization, with the development indicator (usually GDP per capita) normally growing in inverse proportion to population growth. In other words, countries with lower per capita income levels tend to have higher population growth and therefore, over time, will face the largest potential demand for education.

16 ECLAC/CEPALSTAT www.eclac.org/estadisticas/default.asp?idioma=IN
17 Ibid.

Graph 1.3 **Potential demand for primary and lower secondary education and GDP per capita, 2007**



Source: Human Development Report, 2009 and population estimates of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division (UNPD), 2008 revision.

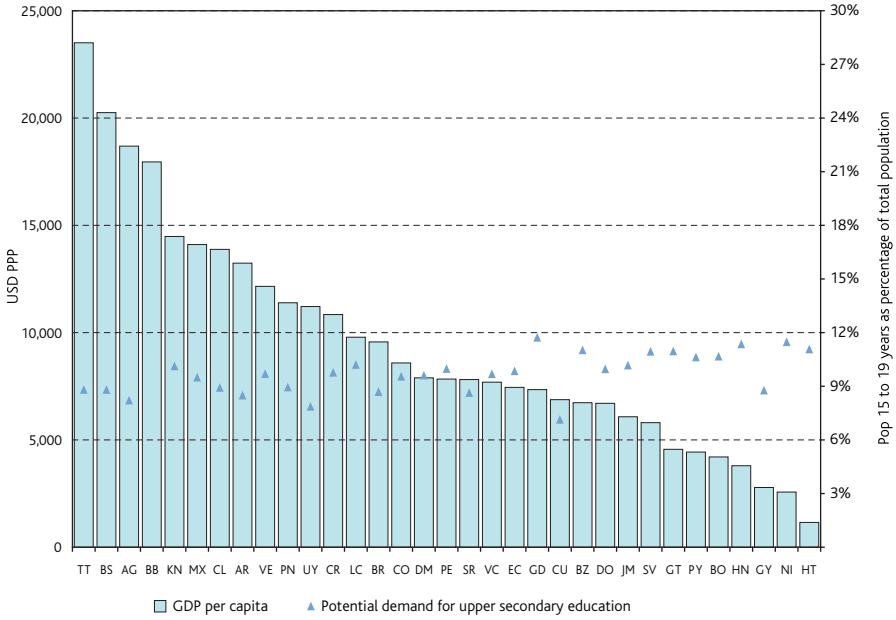
Countries with a higher demand for primary and lower secondary education face greater budgetary pressure than do countries with lower demand, at least in theory. This is a particularly complex issue for the region, because the countries with the greatest demand for these two levels of education are precisely those with the lowest per capita GDP. In other words, countries that are most challenged in terms of expanding access to and successful completion of primary school are also countries with lower levels of economic development.

Graph 1.5 shows the potential demand for upper secondary education in the region; i.e. the number of young people in the age range appropriate for this level of education (15–19 years old) as a percentage of the total population, in relation to the country's per capita GDP.

Unlike the situation at the primary and lower secondary levels, the potential demand for upper secondary education is relatively even throughout the region. The fact remains, however, that preparing educational systems for upcoming upper secondary demand will be a hefty challenge for countries with lower per capita GDPs.

Graph 1.4 Potential demand for upper secondary education and GDP per capita, 2007

Source: Human Development Report, 2009 and population estimates of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division (UNPD), 2008 revision.



1.5. Regional heterogeneity

Disparities in productivity, which can be approximated by GDP per capita, are striking among the countries of the region. First there is Haiti, which is the only LAC economy classified as low income under the World Bank's scheme, with GDP per capita standing at less than $1,000 per year. At the high end of the spectrum is a group of Caribbean countries (Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Netherlands Antilles, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands) with per capita incomes exceeding $12,000 annually. Nine other countries (Belize, Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay) are ranked in the middle-income category by having per capita incomes between $1,000 and $4,000 dollars a year. The remaining 24 countries of the region are classified as medium-high income because they report GDP per capita between $4,000 and $12,000 U.S. dollars annually.[18]

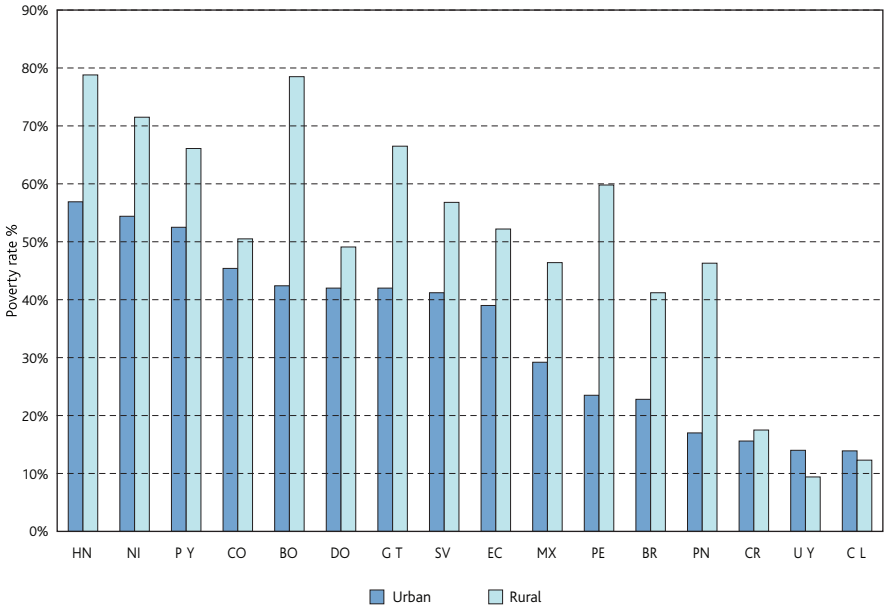
In terms of social indicators, the glaring gaps and asymmetries in the region are reflected in the differences among countries in relation to poverty rates and income inequality. It was noted earlier that in 2008, 33% of the region's population lived below the poverty line, but that in some countries such as Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Guatemala, and Bolivia, this condition affected more than half of all inhabitants. Only Uruguay, Chile and Argentina have poverty levels at or below 20%.

As the above graph shows, poverty levels also vary widely among countries and affect rural areas more intensely than urban ones, with the former being nearly double the latter in 2008.

Despite some closing of the income distribution gap in recent years, Latin America is still the region with the highest level of income inequality in the world. As

18 World Bank. www.worldbank.org

Graph 1.5 Poverty rate in rural and urban areas, 2008.



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

a way of comparing the disparity of that distribution, we can look at how different socio-economic groups figure as a percentage of total national incomes.

Income distribution differences among countries can also be compared, as shown in the figure below. Bolivia, Honduras and the Dominican Republic are situated at one end of the scale, with the poorest 40% of the population receiving only 12% of all income, while the richest 10% captures about 35%. The distribution is less concentrated in countries such as Venezuela and Uruguay, where the poorest 40% of the population generates 20% of total revenues and the wealthiest 10% earns 25%.

Lastly, the region's multi-ethnic and multicultural character must be addressed. According to ECLAC[19] estimates, based on population censuses of the 2000 round, in the early twenty-first century the indigenous population of Latin America amounted to just over 30 million people, concentrated mainly in Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru. In all, 642 indigenous groups are officially recognized by States across the region, and approximately 860 languages and dialects are spoken.

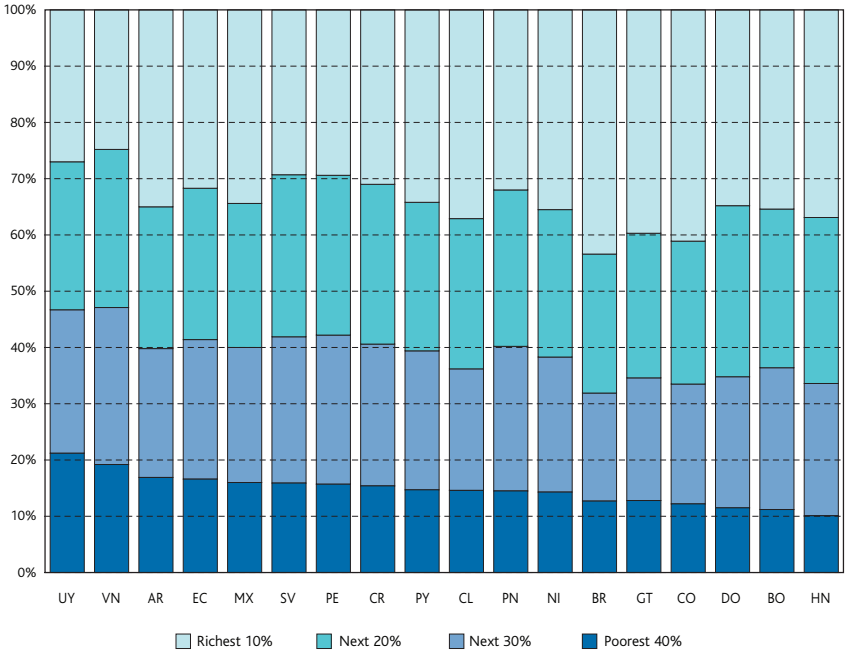
According to the same source, the population of African descent in the region is projected to grow much larger, to around 120 million people, or 23% of the total population. The countries with the largest Afro-descendant populations are Brazil, Cuba and Colombia.

As noted earlier, for structural reasons rooted in the region's history, rural inhabitants, indigenous people and those of African descent experience greater social vulnerability, being more likely to fall into poverty and to be excluded from the benefits of economic and social development. In particular, they encounter greater difficulty in accessing quality education and completing primary education, and face even greater barriers to completing secondary school.

19 ECLAC. 2006. *Social Panorama of Latin America 2006*. Santiago, Chile, ECLAC.

Graph 1.6 Income distribution in 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



2. INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

The availability of financial resources, combined with the demand for education, brings us to the subject of investment in education as part of social expenditure in Latin American and Caribbean nations. While financial expenditure is not the only factor in the performance of the educational systems, it does have an obvious impact on their effectiveness and quality.

The paragraphs below will first examine public social spending in the region and then analyze public and private expenditure in education.

2.1. Evolution of public social expenditure

Beginning in the early 1990s, public social expenditure in the region has grown steadily. Though such spending has had some very slow periods, it has not reverted at any time. This situation contrasts markedly with the 1980s, when the region faced a severe financial crisis that resulted in deep cuts in social spending to offset budget deficits.

According to ECLA estimates,[20] in the 2006-2007 year public social spending per inhabitant reached 820 USD (at 2000 prices), which was double the average recorded for the 1990-1991 fiscal year. This figure for 2006-2007 represented an increase of around 18% over public social expenditure in the 2004-2005 period, an increase that was closely tied to the greater availability of public resources in the region's countries from the financial bonanza that began in 2002.

However, countries of the region show significant differences in their levels of public social spending per inhabitant. In the countries of Latin America – those for which information is available – six countries (Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama) report a very low level of around 200 USD per inhabitant, and only four countries (Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Uruguay)[21] have a level of social spending per inhabitant that is higher than 1,000 USD.

Public social expenditure in the region follows a markedly procyclical behaviour, which is to say it grows in periods of financial expansion and contracts sharply in periods of crisis. This tendency increases the impacts of crises and economic downturns on poor and vulnerable segments of the population; in effect, while crises aggravate social problems, they also lead to a reduction in public resources needed to face these challenges.

It was therefore to be expected that the crisis of late 2008 would lead to the cutbacks on social expenditures that we have witnessed recently in countries of the region. Moreover, countries with the lowest rates of social expenditure per inhabitant have the hardest time adopting countercyclical measures during times of economic slowdown.

2.2. Public expenditure on Education

The indicator for public expenditure on education, calculated as a percentage of GDP, gives us an idea of the level of priority education has in a country's allocation of resources. In 2008, Latin American and Caribbean countries allocated an average of 4.7% of their GDP to education, a figure that is quite close to the

20 ECLAC. 2009. *Social Panorama of Latin America 2009*. Santiago, Chile. ECLAC.
21 Ibid.

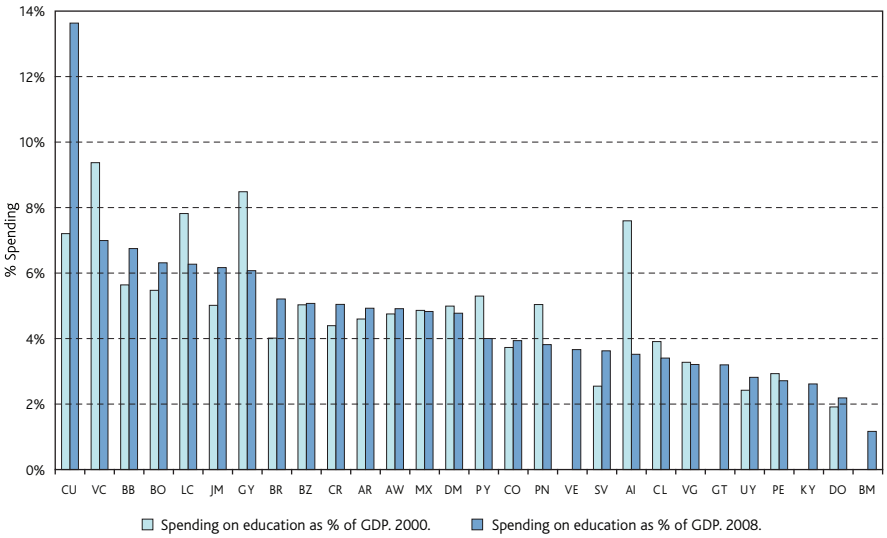
average investment in education observed in OECD countries, which stands above 5.7% of GDP.[22]

As the following chart shows, at 13% Cuba invests the most in Education, while the remaining countries show a much more conservative level of expenditure. Only six countries (Saint Vincent, Barbados, Bolivia, Santa Lucia, Jamaica and Guyana) spend between six and 7%, while in another 13 countries investment in education stands at more modest levels of two to 4%. The most extreme case is Bermuda, which allocates barely 1.2% of its GDP to education.

The chart below also shows that social expenditure in education fell from 5% of GDP in the year 2000 to 4.7% in 2008, possibly because education spending grew at a slower rate than the economy as a whole. The growth rates of individual countries show some dissimilar trends, however, with some experiencing growth of one to two percent in this indicator (Barbados, Bolivia, Jamaica and Brazil), while Cuba experienced exceptional growth of 6%. In other countries of the region, educational spending (% of GDP) remains at levels similar to or slightly lower than those seen in the year 2000, except in Santa Lucia, Guyana, Paraguay and Panama where the rate dropped between one and two percent.

Graph 2.1 Public Expenditure on Education as a percentage of GDP, 2000-2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

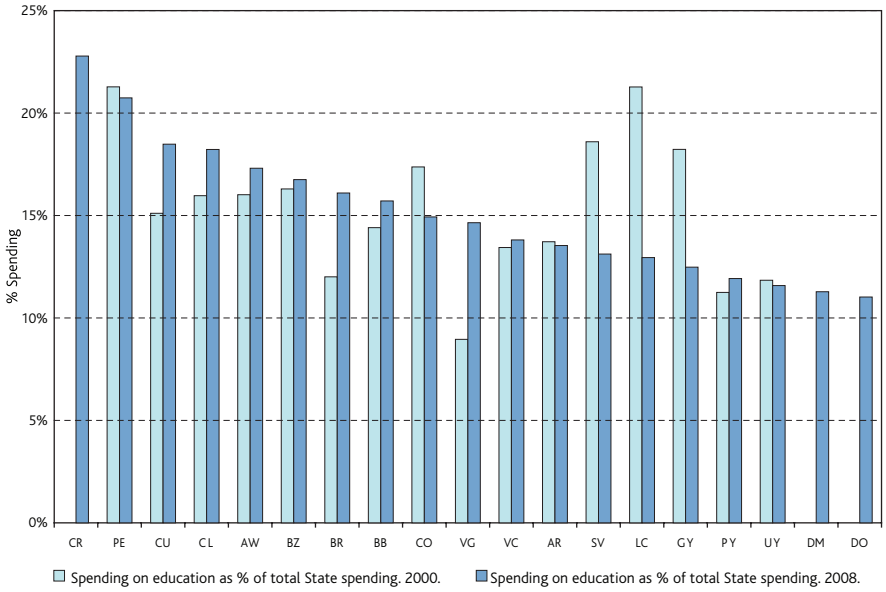


It is also important to know how much is spent on education in relation to social spending as a whole. In 2008, around 15% of public social expenditure was earmarked for education. In the graph below, two nations (Costa Rica and Peru) stand out for allocating over one-fifth of their entire social budget to education; these are followed closely by Cuba and Chile, at 18%. At the opposite extreme we find countries that allocate less than 12% of their budgets to education, namely Paraguay, Uruguay, Dominica, the Dominican Republic and Anguilla.

22 OECD. 2009a. *Education at a Glance*. Paris. OECD.

Average regional expenditure on education also dropped slightly between 2000 and 2008. Among countries for which we possess information (see the table below), this rate dropped from 15.4% in 2000 to 14.9% in 2008. Colombia, El Salvador, Santa Lucia, Guyana and Dominica all experienced significant contractions greater than 4%, while the remaining countries of the region maintained a level similar to that of 2000. Only Cuba and Chile showed stronger growth, with around three and two percent, respectively.

Graph 2.2 **Public Expenditure on Education as a percentage of Total Public Expenditure, 2000-2008**



Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

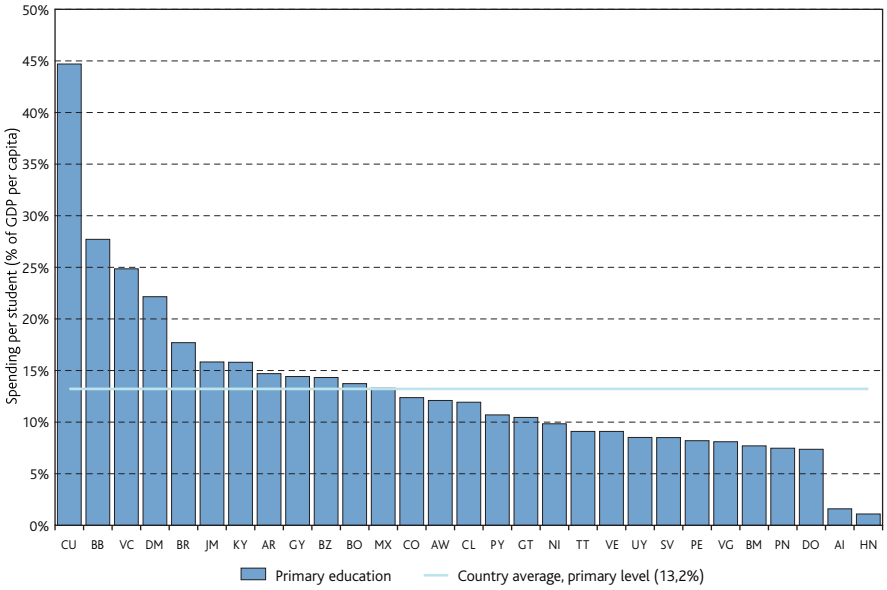
Another approach that is useful for analyzing the importance of investment in education in the region looks at average expenditure per primary student as a percentage of GDP per capita. This indicator allows us to compare how much each country spends on education in relation to the size of its economy.

On average, the region spends around 13.8% of its GDP per capita on each primary school student, though with wide variations among countries. In 2008, as observed in the following table, these percentages ranged from 1.1% in Peru to 44.7% in Cuba. Four countries are seen to have an average expenditure over 20%: Cuba, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica.

In the case of secondary education, as the graph below shows, expenditure per student as a percentage of GDP per capita ranges between 1.1% in Honduras and 51.9% in Cuba, with an average of 16%. In eight of the countries for which information is available (Cuba, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Anguilla, the Cayman Islands, Argentina and Belize), this expenditure is greater than 20% of GDP per capita.

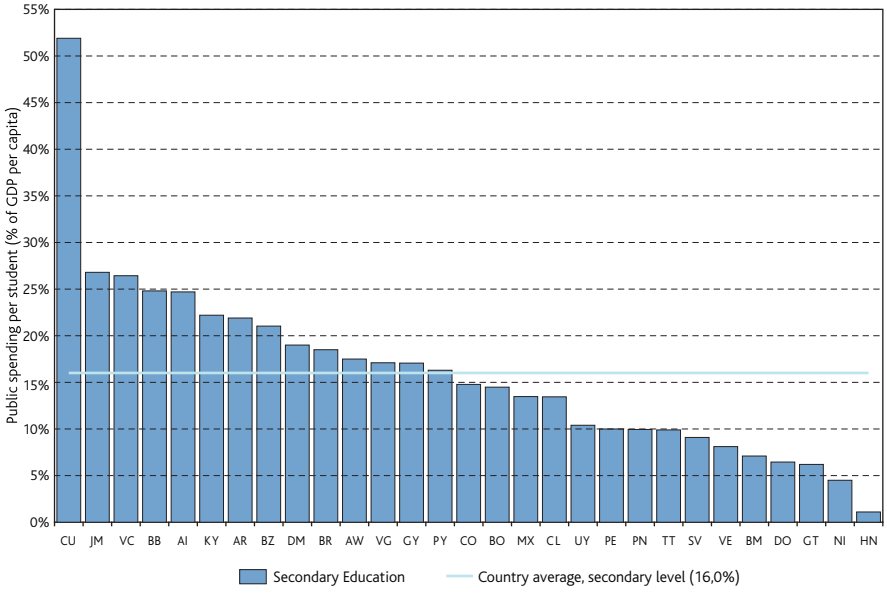
Graph 2.3 Expenditure per primary school student as a percentage of GDP per capita, 2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Graph 2.4 Expenditure per secondary school student as a percentage of GDP per capita, 2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



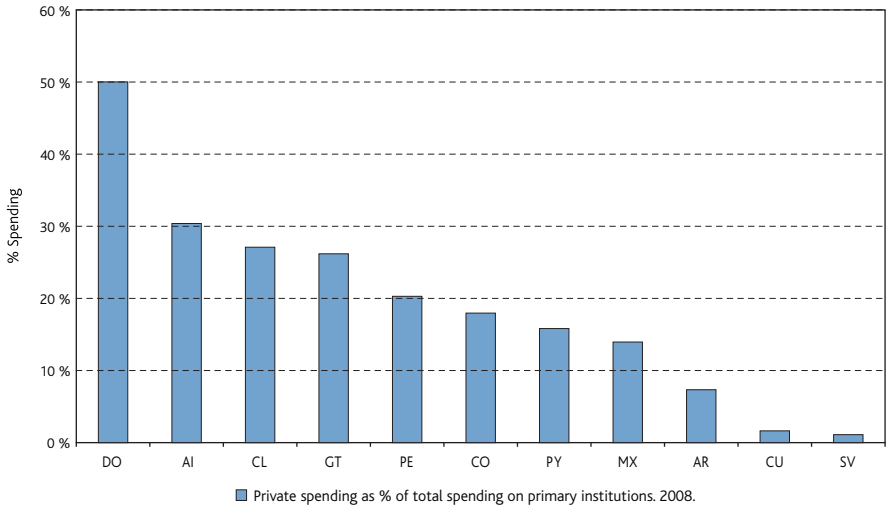
2.3. Private expenditure on Education

In addition to being funded by public resources allocated by the State, educational establishments in the region also receive contributions from individual households and other private entities. These contributions pay for private school

tuition, books, school supplies and other items related to attendance at school. Not surprisingly, private expenditure tends to increase as the number of students attending private school expands, though in some countries a significant amount of private spending also occurs within public education systems also. As information on private spending on education is scant, information can only be provided for a few countries.

On average, in the 11 countries for which information is available, around 20% of all primary school expenditure is contributed by the children's families. On the high end of the scale is the Dominican Republic, where private participation in primary school funding is 50%, while in Argentina, Cuba and El Salvador private funding falls below 10%.

Graph 2.5 **Private spending on primary institutions as a percentage of total expenditure on primary institutions, 2008**



Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

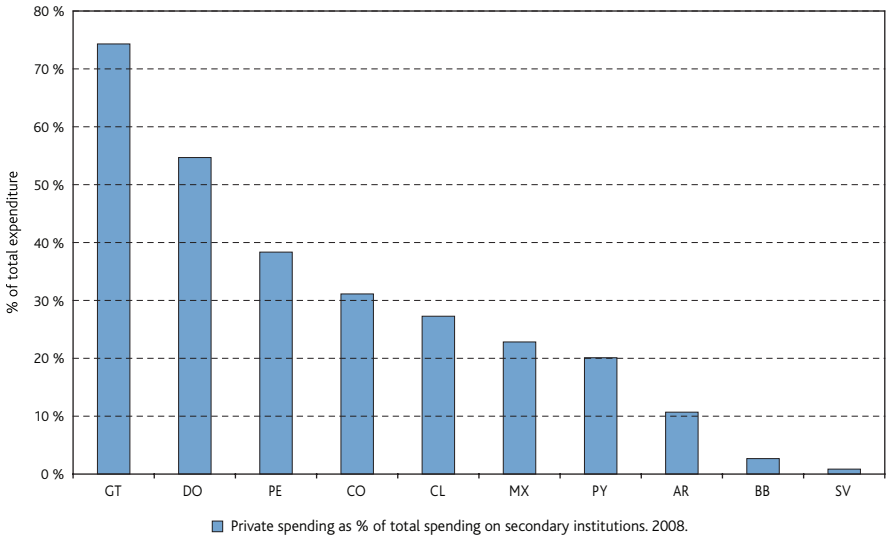
As mentioned above, private spending at the secondary level is higher than at the primary level (about eight per cent higher). In fact, in countries for which information is available (see Graph 2.6), average private expenditure amounts to 28.9% of the total spending on secondary establishments. In some countries, such as Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, private expenditure exceeds 50% of the total; at the other end of the scale are Barbados and El Salvador, where private expenditure stands below 10% of all spending on secondary education establishments.

Breaking down spending by education level reveals that private spending is less relevant in primary than in secondary education, likely owing to the commitment of governments of the region to offering free, universal primary education, which is a clear reflection of the importance of primary education on their political agendas.

Indeed, an inverse relationship has been observed between public spending on education in a given country, and private spending on education in the same country. Guyana, Barbados, Argentina, Mexico all display this trend; all of these countries allocate a high percentage of their GDP to public spending on education

Graph 2.6 **Private spending on secondary institutions as a percentage of total expenditure on secondary institutions, 2008**

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



and have low rates of private investment in education. Inversely, Chile, Guatemala and Peru have lower public spending on education and higher private funding.

3. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Recent research on certain aspects of child development[23] has shed new light on the topic of early childhood care and education (ECCE), affirming its importance in building a strong foundation for lifelong human development.

There is general agreement that comprehensive, high quality care in the first few years of life improves later educational development, and especially school performance. This means that ECCE can potentially reduce social inequality. ECCE has the potential to improve educational outcomes, including reducing grade repetition, school desertion, and aggression and violence, and enhances socialization in general, allowing citizens to participate in their country's development in the broadest sense. More above, early childhood education reduces malnutrition and infant mortality.[24]

Based on these findings, the Dakar Framework for Action calls for the expansion and improvement of comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.[25]

Almost all countries expressly incorporate Early Childhood Care and Education into their education laws, policies and programs. ECCE is normally defined as education targeted to children between birth or three months of age and five or six years of age, depending on the country's official age for entry into primary school. This level of education is referred to by different names in different countries but, like primary education, is generally divided into two or three cycles. The earlier cycles are known as "nursery" (*parvularia*), "initial" (*inicial*) or "infant" (*de la infancia*) education, and the later one as "preschool" (*preescolar*) or "pre-primary" (*preprimario*) education.[26]

As there is very little comprehensive statistical information on ECCE for the region, the following analysis is based only on the pre-primary cycle.

While pre-primary enrolment in the region has increased gradually over the last few years, the numbers reflect a need for greater coverage. Average net enrolment in countries for which information was available was 54.1% in 2000 and 65.3% in 2008, an increase of around 11%. Six countries have pre-primary enrolment rates lower than 40% and only eight have rates above 80%. It should be noted that these figures do not include children attending informal pre-primary educational programs.

23 See, for example, publications by neuroscientists such as Fraser Mustard, economists such as Amartya Sen and James Heckman, educators such as María Victoria Peralta and Maribel Córmack, pediatricians such as Mary Eming Young of the World Bank, and psychologists such as Sara Victoria Alvarado of CINDE, Colombia.

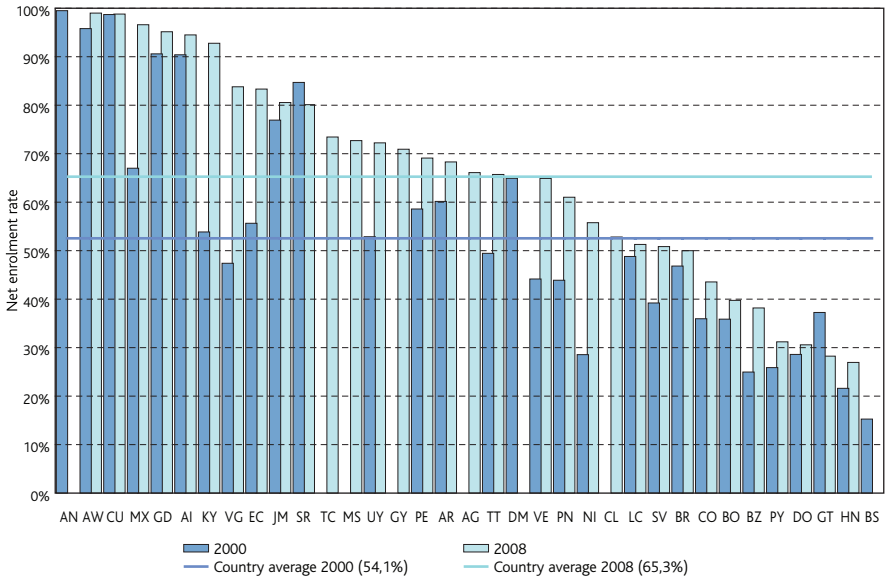
24 See, UNESCO-ORELAC. 2010b. *Early childhood care and education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Report prepared for the World Conference on Early Childhood Education. Moscow. September 2010.* Santiago, Chile, OREALC/UNESCO Santiago.

25 World Education Forum. 2000. Op.cit.

26 UNESCO/OREALC. 2010a. Op. cit.

Graph 3.1 Evolution of net enrolment rates for pre-primary education, 2000–2008

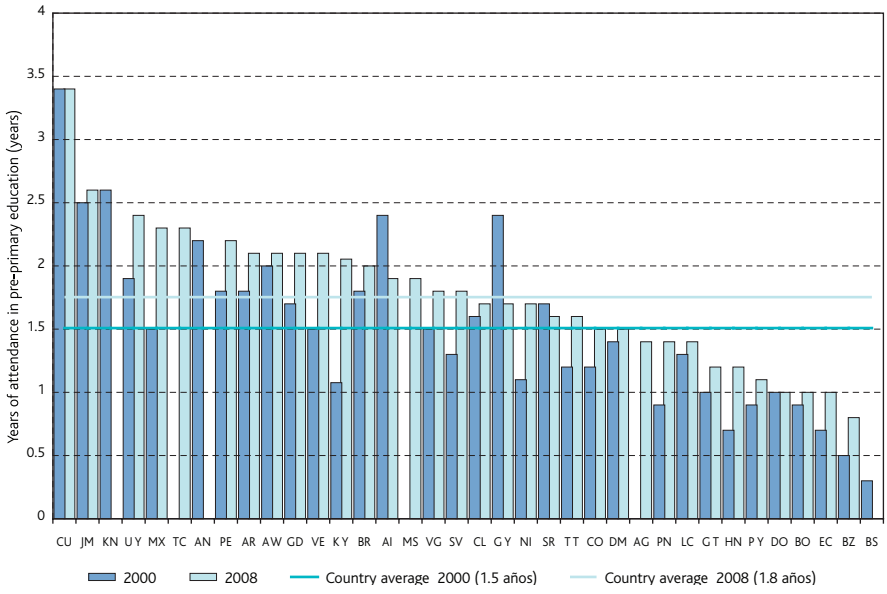
Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



As the following graph shows, countries also vary in regard to the average number of years that children attend pre-primary education. As the figure illustrates, a child in Cuba, Jamaica, Uruguay or Mexico, for example, is likely to attend pre-primary education for two or three years more than a child in Bolivia, Ecuador or Belize.

Graph 3.2 School life expectancy in pre-primary education, 2000 and

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

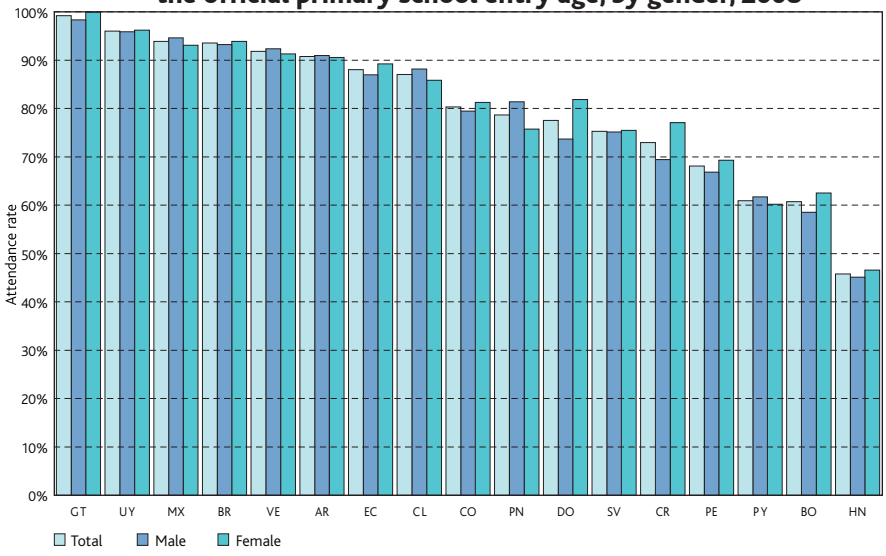


2008

It is obvious, but important to mention, that both enrolment and continued attendance in pre-primary education are affected by educational policies and the availability of ECCE services. For instance, pre-primary schooling is compulsory in some countries but not in others. Furthermore, resistance to pre-primary education exists in some cultures, based on a belief that home education at this age is superior to school education.

One of the goals of ECCE is to give all children access to early educational programmes and the opportunity to advance to higher educational levels. In this regard, one indicator that tracks the transition from ECCE programmes to primary school is the percentage of children attending an educational programme at the age immediately preceding the age established in a country's legislation for entry to primary school. This indicator is presented in the graph below, along with information on gender parity in pre-primary education.

Graph 3.3 **School attendance rates of children one year younger than the official primary school entry age, by gender, 2008**



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

As the graph above shows, marked differences exist in the region. A few countries have attendance rates over 90% (Guatemala, Uruguay, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina), while at the other end of the spectrum Honduras has a rate lower than 50%.

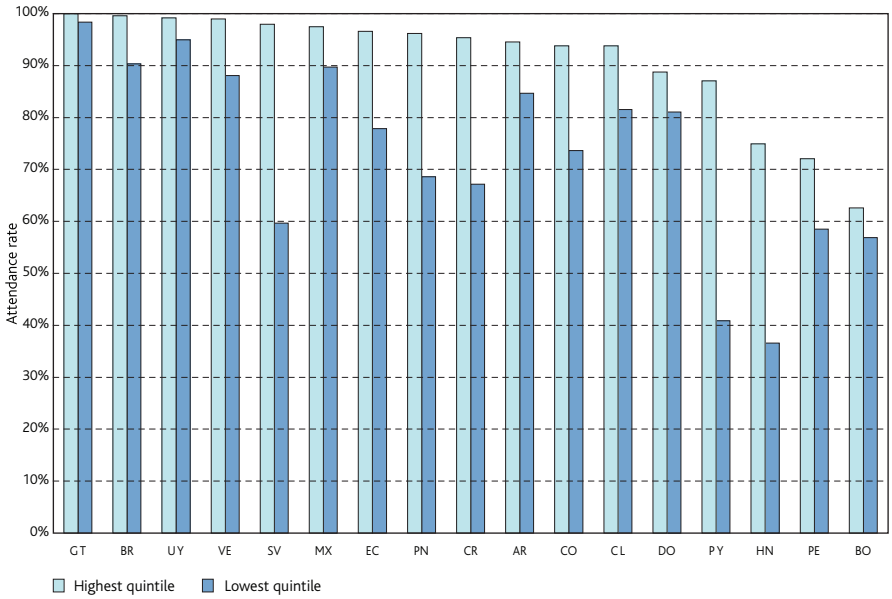
Analysing the indicators in relation to family income reveals inequalities not only among countries but within them as well, as Graph 3.4 below shows.

As the graph shows, in almost all of the countries for which data is available there is a significant gap in pre-primary enrolment between the highest and the lowest income quintiles. This gap is especially evident in Paraguay, Honduras and El Salvador. On the other hand, Guatemala and Uruguay not only have very high attendance rates, but also a high level of parity between the two economic extremes.

Another problem with access to education that the attendance indicator reveals is the disadvantaged situation of rural populations in relation to urban ones, although, as Graph 3.5 shows, the disparity between the two is smaller in this case.

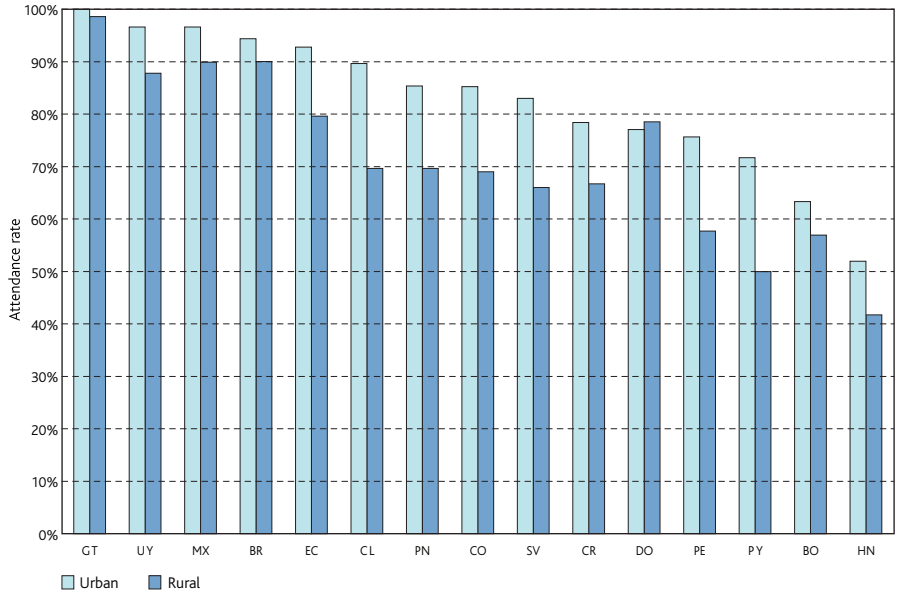
Graph 3.4 **School attendance rates among children one year younger than the official primary school entry age, by income quintile, 2008**

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Graph 3.5 **School attendance rates of children one year younger than the official primary school entry age, by area of residence (urban vs. rural), 2008**

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

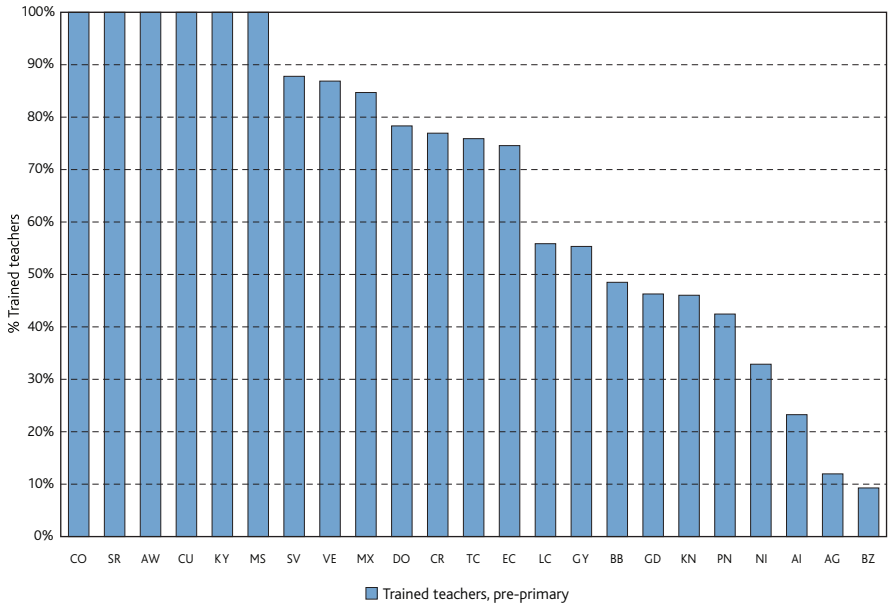


The greatest gaps between rural and urban rates of attendance before the primary school level are found in Paraguay, Chile, Peru, El Salvador and Colombia, while Guatemala again has a high degree of parity between the two populations.

Another aspect of ECCE that was measured is the rate of qualified teachers. In effect, the region still lacks qualified teachers. While standards have been developed

to define qualifications for teaching at this level, as Graph 3.6 shows, there are few countries in which all teachers working at this level are certified; these are Colombia, Surinam Aruba, Cuba, the Cayman Islands and Montserrat.

Graph 3.6 Trained teachers in pre-primary education, 2008



Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

In conclusion, it can be affirmed that, while average country net enrolment rates for pre-primary education have risen in recent years, much work still has to be done in virtually all countries if the first goal of the Dakar Framework is to be achieved in the region.

As this analysis has shown, coverage of pre-primary education does not reach those who could most benefit from it; as the data shows, children from low-income families and from rural areas are less likely to attend ECCE programmes. This reality presents a challenge to closing the socioeconomic and geographical gaps in education, which tend to increase at higher educational levels, especially in secondary education, as will be shown in Chapter 7.

The challenge, therefore, is to invest more in inclusive, quality early childhood care and education programs that prioritize children living in vulnerable situations and to coordinate early childhood policies with national development strategies such as those aimed at overcoming poverty.[27] In this regard, it is crucial to increase training and hiring of certified teachers at this educational level.

Special emphasis should be placed on extending the provision of early childhood programs for children 0 to 3 years of age, in order to establish a more comprehensive concept of ECCE that includes accompaniment of children from birth to the first grade of primary education.

Another pending challenge is the need to establish better information systems for the benefit of the youngest population segment.

27 UNESCO/OREALC. 2007. Op.cit.

4. PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education is an essential factor in human development and is crucial to the progress of all countries. For these reasons, achieving universal primary education is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

The Dakar Framework affirms that all children must have the opportunity to fulfil their right to quality education in schools or alternate programs at whatever level of education is considered "basic". Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international agreements, all states must fulfil their obligation to offer free and compulsory primary education. Meeting the internationally-agreed 2015 target date for achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) in all countries will require a strong commitment and political will from all levels of government. [28]

This chapter deals with some key topics in primary education, including access, grade repetition and completion of primary education.

4.1. Access to primary education

The first-grade net intake rate can be used as an indicator of access to primary education and of the extent of timely entry into school. This rate represents the number of children entering primary school in a given year at the theoretically appropriate age, as a percentage of the total number of children of that age.

As Graph 4.1 shows, in 2008 the average net intake rate for primary education in the countries for which data is available was 72%. This finding suggests that it is a challenge for countries of the region to meet the second EFA goal, as children who lack access to education at the appropriate age and who enter school later than they theoretically should are more likely to drop out before completing primary schooling.

In terms of numbers, close to 100% of all children in Argentina enter first grade on time, while in Dominica, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Dominican Republic and Montserrat, the net intake rate is less than 60%.

A second indicator that measures access to primary education is the adjusted net enrolment rate,[29] which represents the percentage of children of official primary school age who are actually enrolled in either primary or secondary school.

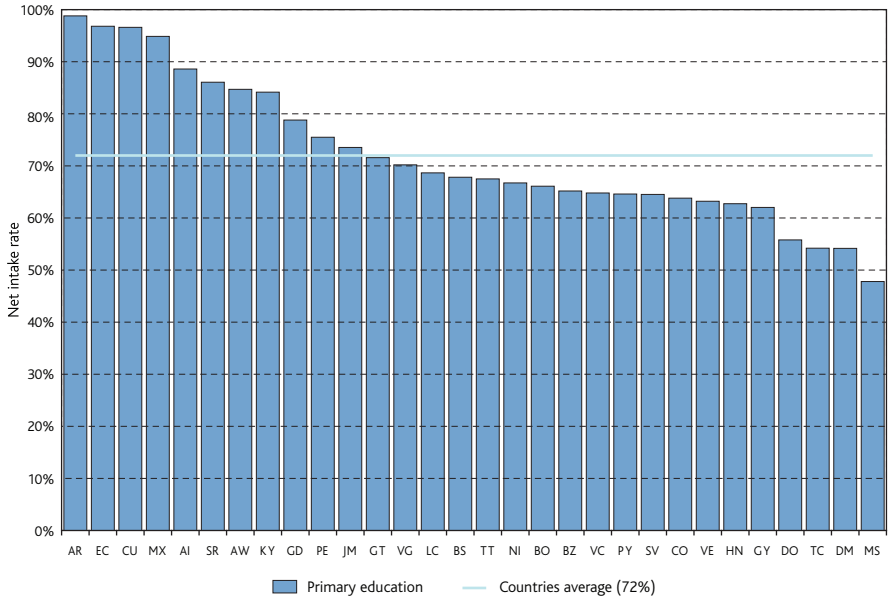
Graph 4.2 shows countries in descending order of their adjusted net enrolment rates for primary education in 2008. The findings indicate that, on average, the region has been successful in this area. Although the average rate remained almost unchanged from 2000 (93.5%) to 2008 (95.3%), as mentioned above it is extremely difficult to increase a net intake rate that is already above 90%, owing to the complex nature of that population that is not yet in school.

28 World Education Forum. 2000. Op.cit.

29 For more information on the adjusted net intake rate, see the Reader's Guide in this report.

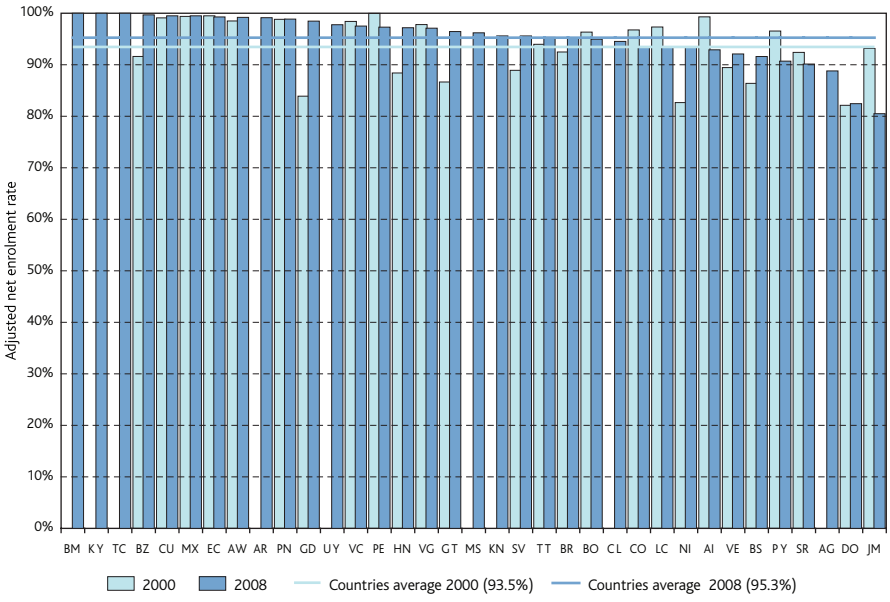
Graph 4.1 Net intake rates for primary education, 2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Graph 4.2 Evolution of adjusted net enrolment rates for primary education, 2000–2008

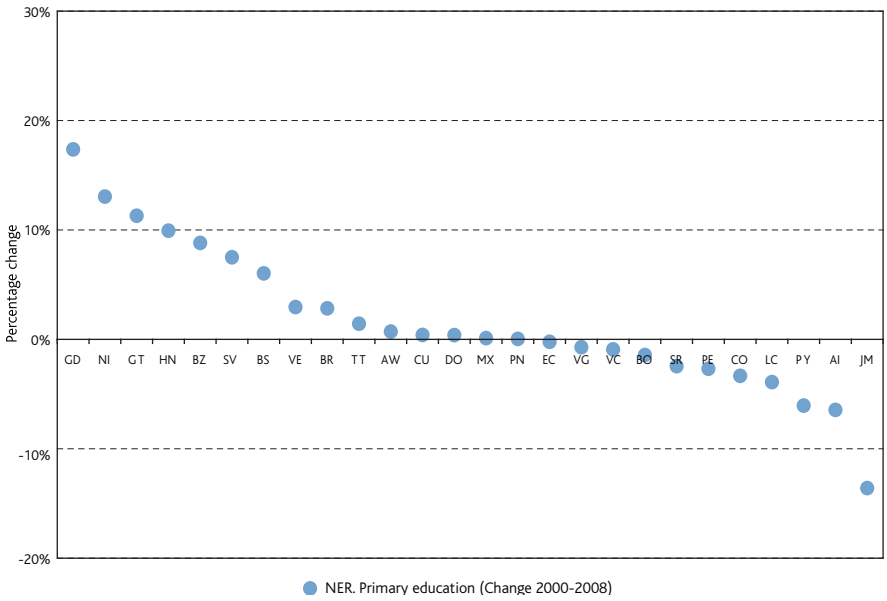
Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Graph 4.3 below shows the percentage variation in adjusted net enrolment rates for the 2000-2008 period, using 2000 values as a baseline.

Countries that merit special attention in this regard include Nicaragua and Grenada, which clearly had the lowest rates in 2000 but had risen well above the regional average by 2008, and Jamaica, Anguilla and Paraguay, all of which experienced a significant drop in net enrolment.

Graph 4.3 Variation in adjusted net enrolment rates in primary education, 2000-2008



Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

It should be noted, however, that a low adjusted net enrolment rate can result from late entry into the educational system, as late-entering students are not factored into the adjusted rate but may be enrolled in pre-primary educational programmes or in an informal educational program.

4.2. Problems with repetition

A child's chances of completing primary education and advancing to later levels are affected by delayed access to primary education and repetition.

However, slow progress in school can also place an economic burden on families, especially the poorest ones. The added expense, coupled with the increased opportunity cost of studying, can ultimately pressure students to take on other responsibilities, which increases the likelihood they will abandon their studies. Delayed academic progress, therefore, makes it more difficult to achieve parity among socioeconomic groups. Additionally, both phenomena waste the resources of educational systems.[30]

This is backed up by the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), which affirms that repeating a grade does not improve learning outcomes for students; on the contrary, it has a negative impact on self-esteem and motivation and carries high economic and social costs.[31] The abovementioned Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE) of the Latin American Laboratory for the Assessment of Quality Education (LLECE) confirm this finding.[32]

Graph 4.4 below shows the percentage of children who repeat first grade in each country, giving an average of 9.1% for countries for which information

30 UNESCO. 2008a. *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2009: Overcoming inequality: why governance is important*. Paris, UNESCO.

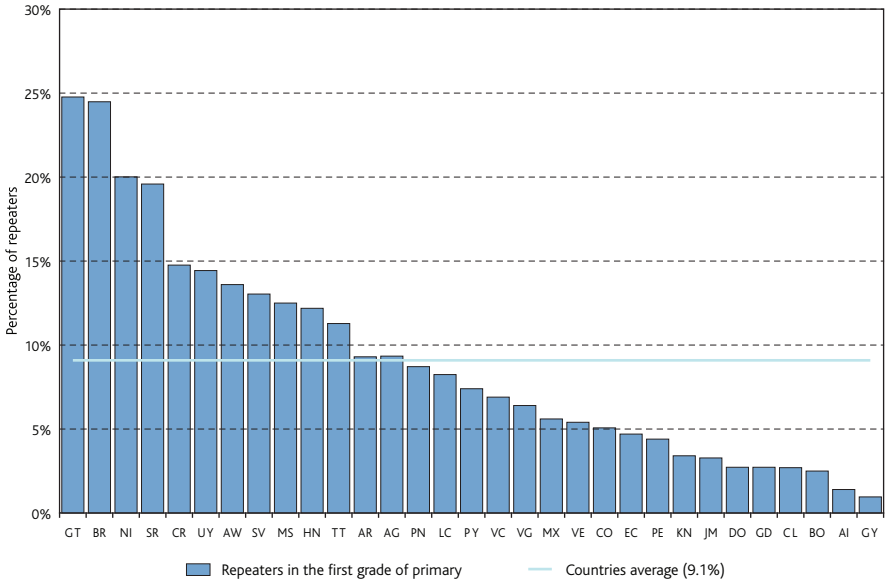
31 PRELAC. 2002. Op.cit.

32 For more information on this topic see Chapter 8.

was available. The prevalence of this problem points to a need for countries to go beyond a case by case analysis and identify defects in the educational system that are behind it.

Graph 4.4 Percentage of repeaters in the first grade of primary education, 2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Despite its importance, this indicator must be considered with caution, because while it may reflect a system's efficiency, it also can be influenced by the particular policies and educational models implemented. For instance, some countries have automatic grade promotion policies, while others promote students on the basis of age. Moreover, the relationship between grade repetition and academic performance is often somewhat tenuous, since learning assessment criteria vary greatly from one country to another, and even within countries that have no national grade promotion provisions. Still, though these considerations may affect the indicator's international comparability, the percentage of children repeating remains a direct and effective measure of the waste of resources that occurs when a child is enrolled in the same grade for two consecutive years.

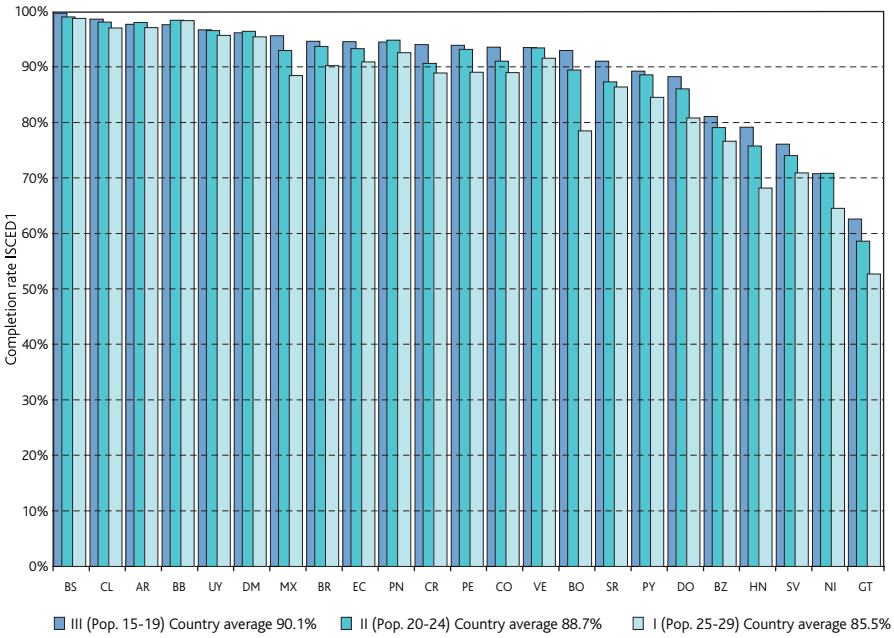
4.3 Completion of primary education

The primary education completion rate measures the percentage of adults who have finished this level of education. This indicator focuses on the educational attainment of individuals whose age qualifies them to have finished primary education. It uses sociodemographic data to report the percentage of the population in various age groups that has completed primary school.

Graph 4.5 below presents data on completion rates for three age groups (15–19, 20–24 and 25–29 years of age). Comparing completion rates for the oldest to youngest age groups provides information on progress over time.

The graph shows the youngest group first, as the members of this group would have completed primary school most recently.

Graph 4.5 **Primary school completion rate (ISCED 1) of three age groups, 2008**



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

For the youngest group (15–19 years of age), seven out of 23 countries have completion rates greater than 95%, higher than in the two older age groups, showing an increase in the efficacy of these school systems over time.

The average rate of completion in the 15-to-19 year old age group is 90.1% for the region as a whole, dropping to 88.7% for the 20–24 age group, and to 85.5% for those in the 25–29 age range. These figures reveal clear progress in primary school completion, although not enough to meet the goal of total universal primary education across the region. As the graph also shows, there are major differences in completion rates among countries.

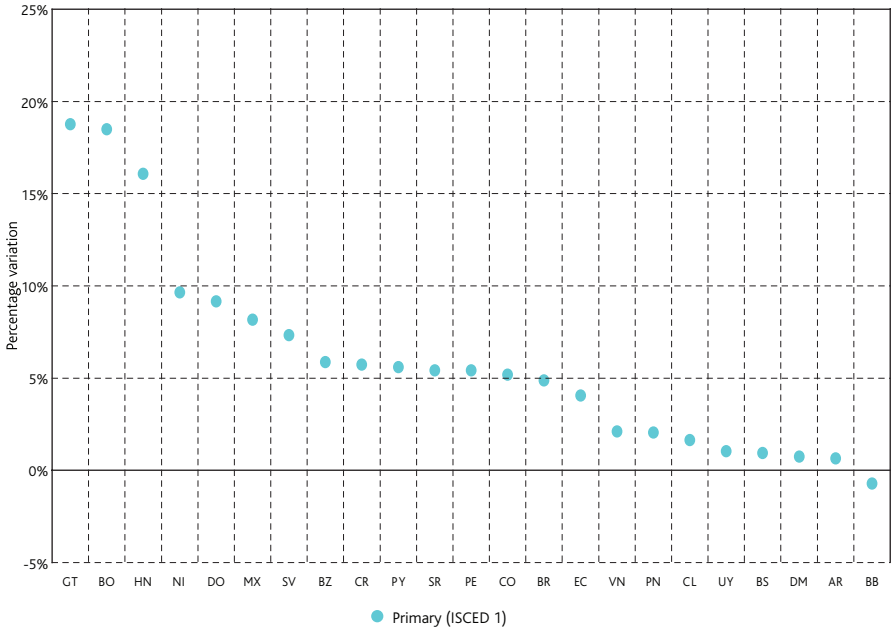
Despite the shortcomings, it should be stressed that countries with low primary education completion rates for the oldest age group have achieved significant progress, including Guatemala, with 18.8%, Bolivia at 18.5% and Honduras with 16.1%. Graph 4.6 below places countries in descending order of most to least variation in completion rates over a ten-year period, illustrating how this indicator has evolved over time in countries for which data is available.

As the comparison of data between the youngest and oldest age groups shows, the significant expansion of primary education in recent years has resulted in higher rates of primary school completion. Major advances are particularly evident in countries with low completion rates for the older age group. It must be emphasized, however, that many countries are still a long away from accomplishing universal primary education.

Indeed, the fact that several countries with low net intake and net enrolment rates have shown little improvement in this aspect over recent years calls into question the achievement of the goal of universal access to primary education by 2015.

Graph 4.6 **Variation in primary education completion rate (ISCED 1) between two age groups, 2008. (Group I: 25–29 and Group III: 15–19 years of age)**

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Though timely entry into the first grade of primary education is far from 100% in many countries, a high proportion of children eventually do gain access, indicating that a significant number of children in different countries enter the educational system late.

Still, late entry and repetition remain serious problems in the region, as they lead to higher drop out rates. More effective approaches to these problems therefore need to be found.

As we have seen, completion rates for primary education have increased in almost all countries, and especially in those with lower rates in the past. Nevertheless, a significant number of countries still have a long way to go to achieve universal primary education.

5. SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

The Dakar Framework for Action affirms that all young people and adults have the right to obtain the knowledge and develop the values, attitudes and skills that will enable them to build their capacity to work, to participate fully in their society, to take control of their own lives and to continue learning.[33]

The following analysis addresses topics such as access to and completion of secondary education, access to tertiary education and educational attainment of the population.

5.1. Secondary education

While successful completion of primary education is the foundation for a lifetime of learning, it alone cannot guarantee opportunities for human development. According to ECLAC,[34] at least 12 years of schooling – the time required to complete secondary education in most countries of the region – constitutes the minimum educational capital for wellbeing, as that amount of schooling offers a more than 80% chance of securing a job that pays enough to provide an adequate standard of living.[35] Secondary education is therefore the key to having work opportunities and to increasing the likelihood of living above the poverty line.

For many young people in the region, greater access to quality secondary education, and thus to more complex skills and knowledge, ultimately increases access to better and more productive jobs. It also offers individuals more opportunities in life and contributes to a country's economic and human development.

This section begins by describing the progress that has been made toward universal access to and retention of students in secondary school and then turns to the question of successful completion of lower and upper secondary school (ISCED 2 and 3).

5.1.1. Access to secondary education

The net enrolment rate (NER) for secondary education is an indicator of access to this level of education. It measures the relative participation of young people of official secondary school age. The secondary education NER includes both secondary school levels included under the term "secondary education" in this document (ISCED 2 and 3).

Graph 5.1 shows the highest to lowest national secondary NERs for the 2008 school year, giving recent levels in the region ranging from 39.9% (Guatemala) to 95.6% (Montserrat), with an average of 72.8%. Between 2000 and 2008, the average increase in net secondary enrolment was 7.8%.

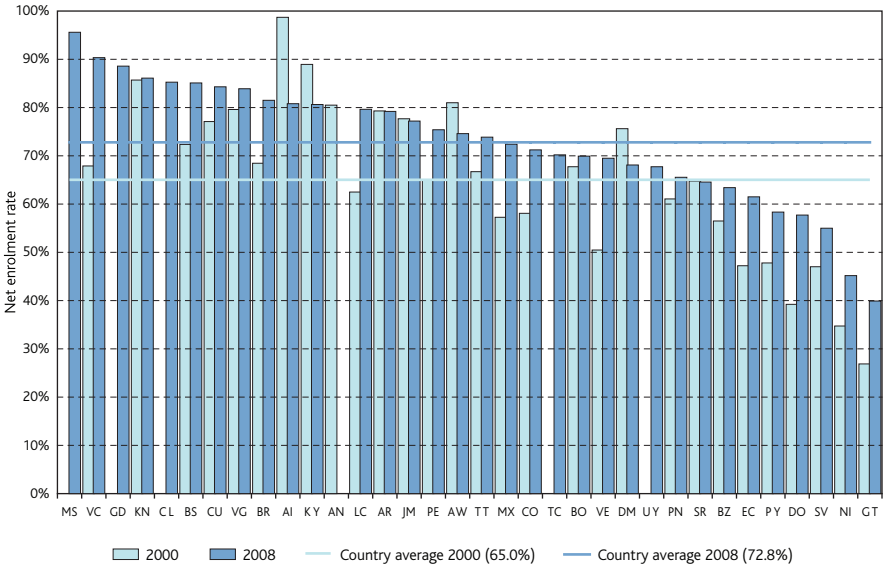
33 Foro Mundial sobre la Educación. 2000. Op.cit.

34 ECLAC (1997) *Social Panorama of Latin America, 1997*.Santiago, Chile, ECLAC.

35 This concept involves an "educational threshold". Operationally, one can measure the threshold necessary for staying out of poverty, which is currently 12 years of formal education. See: ECLAC.2000. *Social Panorama of Latin America 1999-2000*, Santiago, Chile.

Graph 5.1 Evolution in net enrolment rates for secondary education, 2000–2008

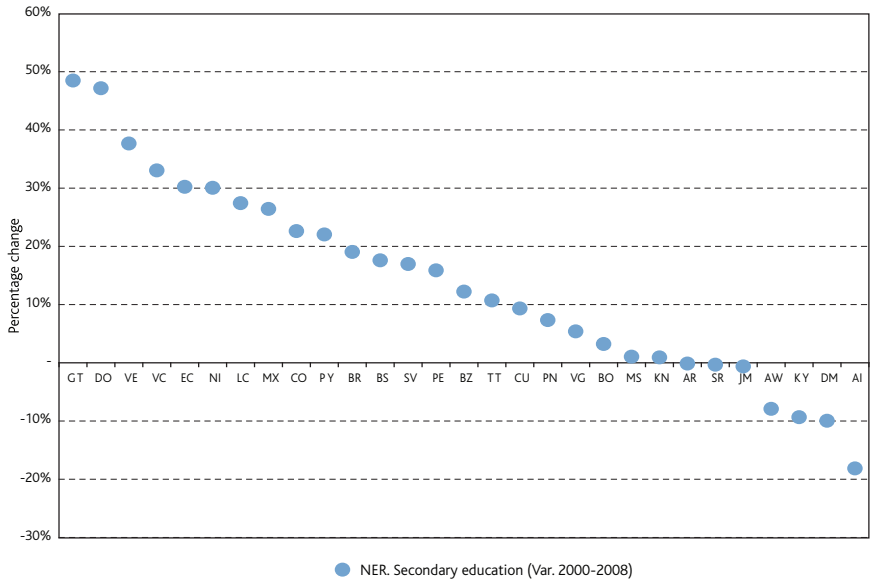
Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



Graph 5.2, below, shows the variation in this indicator for the same period, using 2000 as a baseline. The greatest positive variation was found in Guatemala (48.5%) and the Dominican Republic (47.2%).

Graph 5.2 Variation in net enrolment rates for secondary education, 2000-2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



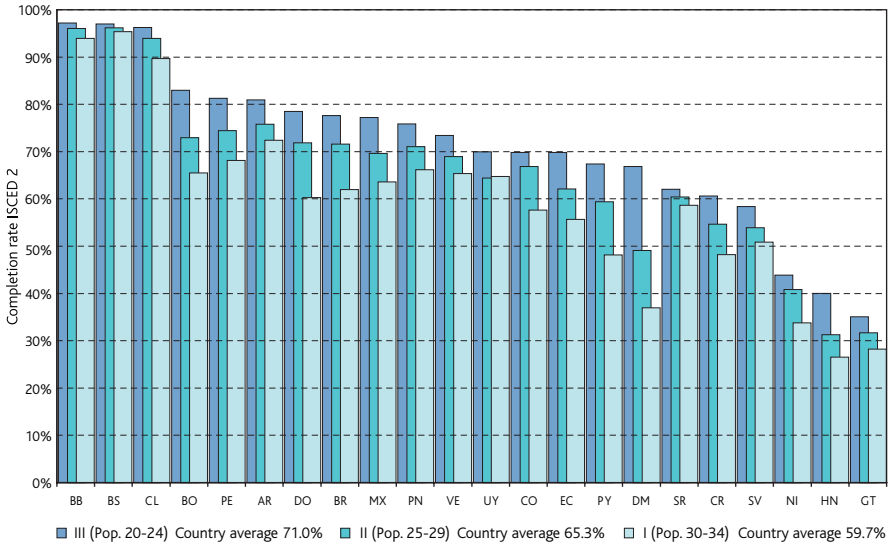
As the above figure shows, access to secondary education rose in most countries for which information was available, although four countries did show a substantial reduction in access.

5.1.3. Completion of secondary education

The section below analyzes completion rates for both levels of secondary education, starting with the lower secondary level (ISCED 2). The following two graphs present information for three age groups (20–24, 25–29 and 30–34 years of age), thereby showing generational changes over time. Twenty years of age has been established as the threshold before which students should have completed their secondary education. As for primary education, a comparison of these age groups shows the evolution of the completion rate over time, as well as intergenerational changes in levels of completion.

Graph 5.3 shows completion rates for the youngest age group in comparison with those of older groups.

Graph 5.3 Completion rates for lower secondary education (ISCED 2) among three age groups, 2008



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

As illustrated above, lower secondary completion rates for the three age groups are as follows: 71% on average for the 20–24 age range, declining to 65.3% for the 25–29 age range and to 59.7% for the 30–34 group.

While the above figures are not very high, the significant increases found in countries with lower completion rates at this level in the youngest age group are noteworthy.

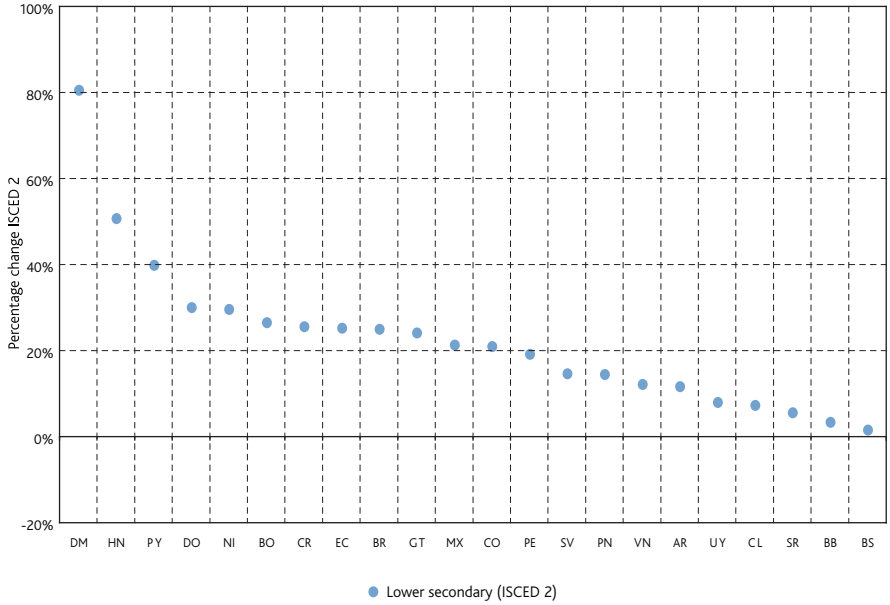
Graph 5.4 presents the variation in national net enrolment rates over a ten-year period, in descending order.

The countries with the greatest variation among different age groups are: Dominica, with 80.6%, Honduras with 50.9%, Paraguay with 40.0%, the Dominican Republic with 30.2%, and Nicaragua, at 29.8%.

Averaging the variation in completion rates between the youngest and the oldest age groups, we find that the net enrolment rate for this educational level increased by 22.7%, which represents a notable advance in secondary school completion rates among young people.

Graph 5.4 Variation in net enrolment rates for lower secondary education, 2000–2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



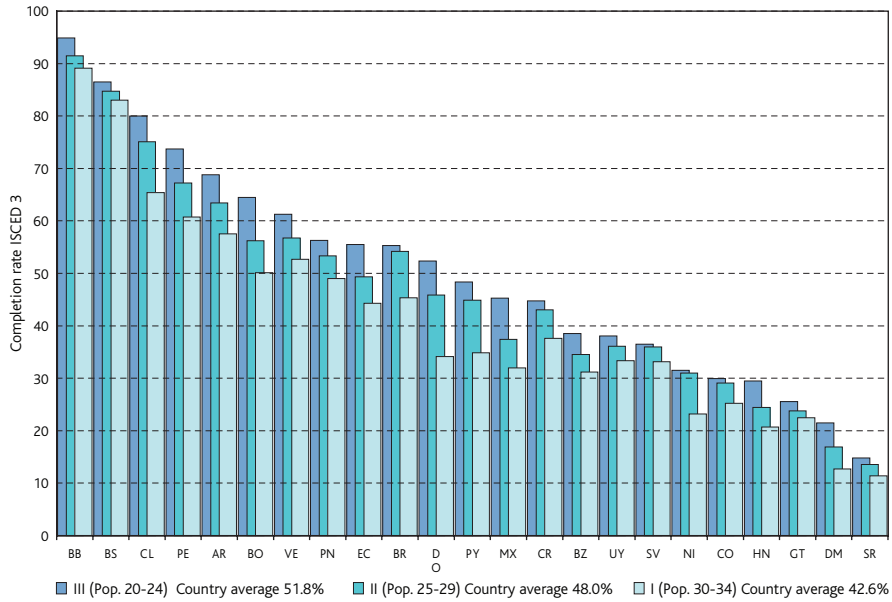
5.1.2. Completion of upper secondary education (ISCED3)

The figure below shows completion rates for upper secondary education (ISCED3), which effectively refers to the completion of the entire secondary cycle, for three age groups (20–24, 25–29 and 30–34 years of age).

Graph 5.5 is arranged to compare completion levels between the youngest group (those who most recently were at the appropriate age for completing this level of education) and the older group (Group III).

Graph 5.5 Completion rates for upper secondary education (ISCED 3) for three age groups, 2008

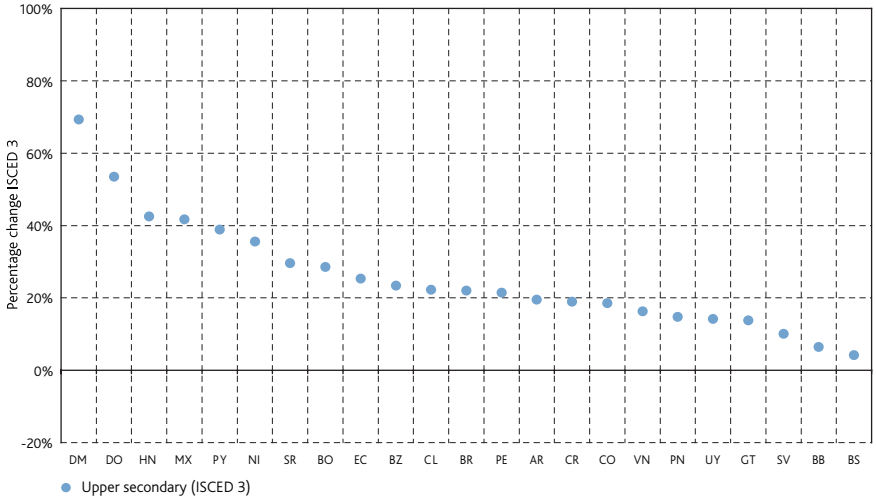
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



As the graph shows, secondary school completion rates for the three age groups are as follows: 51.8% for the 20–24 age range, 48% for the 25–29 group and 42.6% for the 30–34 age range.

Lastly, Graph 5.6 presents the variation in national net enrolment rates over a ten-year period, in descending order, thereby providing a general view of secondary completion rates in countries for which data was available.

Graph 5.6 Variation in completion rates for upper secondary school (ISCED 3) between different age groups, 2008 (Group I: 30–34; Group III: 20–24 years of age)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

It is notable that countries with the lowest completion rates for the youngest age group have made significant progress among this group. The greatest improvement was seen in Dominica (69.3%), followed by the Dominican Republic (53.5%), Honduras (42.5%), and Mexico (41.7%), then Paraguay (38.9%), Nicaragua (35.6%) and Surinam (29.7%).

Comparing differences between youngest- and oldest-group completion rates among different countries, we find an average increase at this educational level of 25.7%.

5.2. Access to tertiary education

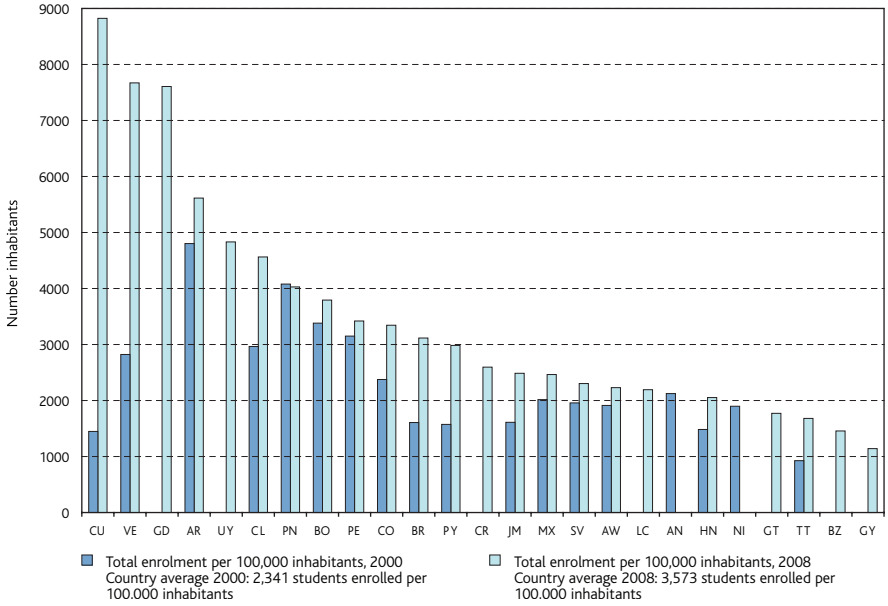
This section presents information on access to tertiary education. The graph below offers data on ISCED levels 5A, 5B and 6, which refers broadly to those having at least two years of study in higher education. The graph focuses on changes in the number of students in tertiary education per 100,000 inhabitants for the 2000-2008 period, including students enrolled in tertiary education abroad.

A comparison of enrolment rates in 2000 and 2008 reveals a significant increase in access to tertiary education over that period in most countries for which information is available. Particularly noteworthy progress was made in Uruguay, where the rate increased by more than 2,000 students per 100,000 inhabitants over the period.

Cuba, Venezuela and Grenada had the most students enrolled in tertiary education in 2008 per 100,000 inhabitants

Graph 5.7 Number of students in tertiary education (ISCED 5A+5B+6) per 100,000 inhabitants, 2000-2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



5.3. Educational attainment in the population

An important indicator for monitoring this aspect of lifelong learning is the educational attainment of the population. The attainment of a certain number of years of schooling is linked to thresholds beyond which the use of basic competencies can be assured and higher educational levels can be accessed and completed.

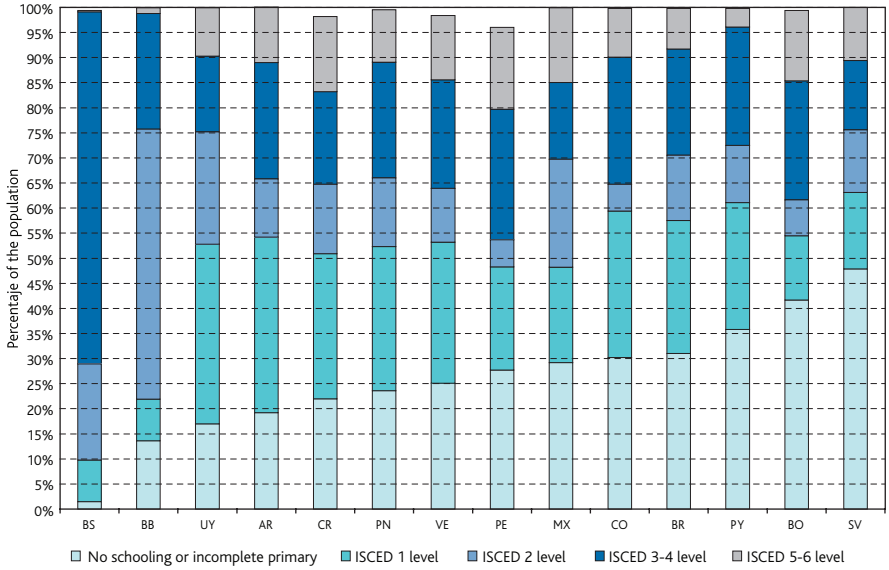
Graph 5.8 presents the highest level of educational attainment among individuals 25 years of age and older as a percentage of total population, for countries of the region. Note that as some of those surveyed did not answer the question, the percentages do not necessarily add up to 100%.

In brief, the data shows that secondary education has evolved from generation to generation in the region, with younger people more likely to have accessed and concluded secondary studies than older generations. This is also true for post-secondary studies.

However, considering that the country average for completing secondary education is just 51.8% for the 20–24 year age group, it is apparent that much work still needs to be done in this area. Another issue of concern is the marked differences in access to and completion of secondary education among countries.

Post secondary access and completion rates remain low in almost all countries, even among the younger age group, showing clearly that lifelong learning for most of the population in Latin America and the Caribbean is still an unattainable goal.

Graph 5.8 Highest educational attainment among the population 25 years and older



Source:
Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

6. ADULT LITERACY

The right to literacy is an inherent part of the right to education and is a prerequisite for personal, social, economic and political empowerment. Literacy is essential for building the abilities required to cope with the emerging challenges and complexities of life, including its cultural, economic and social aspects.[36] [37]

The World Declaration on Education for All, issued in Jomtien in 1990 and ratified in Dakar in 2002, enriched the concept of lifelong learning by defining literacy as a basic channel for learning that allows people to develop the knowledge and skills they need to fully participate in society. Literacy therefore is tied to citizenship, cultural identity, socioeconomic development, human rights and equity, and includes the need to create, sustain and develop "contexts of literacy".[38]

In response to changes in patterns of communication and the demands of the workplace, a broader concept of literacy has evolved that leaves behind the literate/illiterate dichotomy and instead proposes a literacy continuum with a range of degrees and uses based on context. This broader understanding replaces the singular notion of literacy as a skill which one either possesses or not with the idea of multiple literacies.[39]

Measuring such a broad concept of literacy, however, presents enormous methodological challenges, as it involves abandoning the classic literate/illiterate dichotomy and its one-dimensional method based solely on the self-perception of individuals surveyed.

Under this new model, there is an increasingly recognized need to develop specific tests[40] to measure degrees of proficiency in reading, writing and number use. Such tests would build a picture (not presently available) of the proficiency with which people are able to perform certain reading, writing and numerical tasks presented in written form.

As results of such studies are not yet available, the classic concept of literacy will be used in the following analysis.

Literacy rates, the combined achievement of primary education and literacy programmes, are shown below for the region's young adult and adult population. These indicators provide input for policies and organizational initiatives geared to improving adult literacy and quality primary education.

Graph 6.1 shows major improvements in literacy among the youngest population segment. Especially remarkable is the variation in countries with less literate adult populations.

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36 Confintea VI. 2010. Op.cit.

37 In recent years, emphasis has also been placed on the impact of illiteracy beyond social costs. For example, a pilot study by ECLAC and UNESCO claims that the impact of illiteracy on the quality of the workforce, as well as on productivity and labour intake, is high enough that the fight against it could be considered an economic priority. See: Rodrigo Martínez & Andrés Fernández, coord. 2010. *The social and Economic Impact of Illiteracy. Analytical Model and Pilot Study*. Santiago, Chile, ECLAC.

38 World Education Forum. 2000. Op.cit.

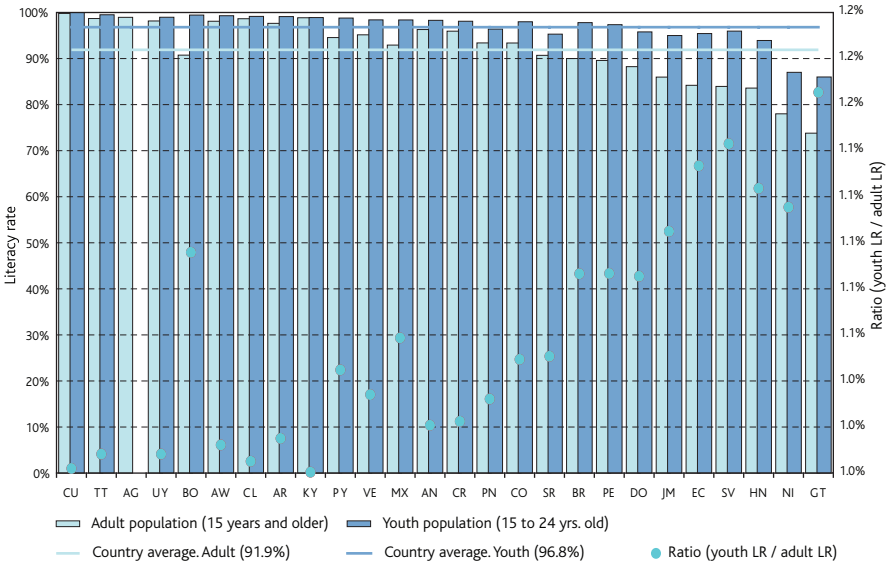
39 UNESCO. 2008. *The Global Literacy Challenge. A profile of youth and adult literacy at the mid point of the United Nations Literacy Decade 2003-2012*. Paris, UNESCO.

40 One of these initiatives is the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP) of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). For more information see: UNESCO-UIS. 2009a. *La nueva generación de estadísticas sobre competencias en alfabetismo: Implementación del Programa de Evaluación y Monitoreo de la Alfabetización (LAMP), Technical Document No. 1*., Montreal, UNESCO-UIS, and UNESCO-UIS. 2009b. *Education Indicators. Technical Guidelines*, Montreal, UNESCO-UIS.

When the ratio of the literacy rate of the relatively young population (15–24) to that of the entire adult population (defined as 15+) is greater than 1, the young adult segment is deemed more literate than the adult segment.

In the LAC region, the country average of this ratio is 1.07, reflecting that some progress has been made. This improvement is consistent across the region, as shown by the comparative literacy rates of younger and older adult populations, with an average difference between the two groups of 4.9%.

Graph 6.1 Comparison of literacy rates between youth and adult populations, 2008



Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

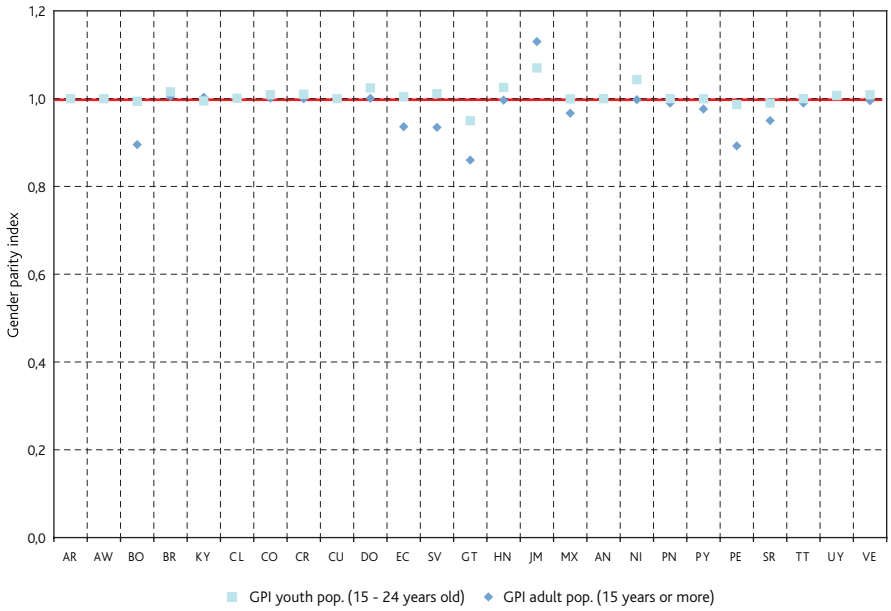
The following graph shows gender parity indices for literacy among the youth and adult population. Following the same logic outlined above, values greater than 1 indicate that literacy is greater among the female population, while those less than one indicate more literacy among the male population.

As the graph illustrates, gender parity in literacy is quite high in the region, especially among younger adults. The country average gender parity for literacy is 0.98 for the adult population and 1.01 for the young adult population.

While some inequity is evident in Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador and Peru, where males in the adult population are at an advantage, all countries exhibit parity in the young adult (youth) population. Jamaica stands out for the persistent advantage enjoyed by its female population.

Overall, the data shows very positive progress towards universal literacy accompanied by high levels of gender parity, achievements that are founded upon the ever expanding universalization of primary education and the increase in literacy programmes for adults.

Graph 6.2 Gender parity index for literacy among youth and adult populations, 2008



Source:
Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

7. SOCIAL DISPARITY IN THE COMPLETION OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The fifth objective of the Dakar Framework for Action calls for the elimination of gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and the achievement of gender equality in education by 2015, with a special focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.[41]

To date in Latin America and the Caribbean there has been a close link between household income, children's educational achievement, and the kind of employment they will obtain, which to a large extent determines the household income level of the following generation, thereby reproducing inequalities from generation to generation. Stronger public school systems characterized by quality that is duly guaranteed by the State can help to decrease educational gaps that exist between students from higher and lower income brackets, between rural and urban students, and between indigenous and non-indigenous populations, making them effective channels of mobility.[42]

The topic of social parity mentioned above in the chapters on early childhood education and literacy will be addressed here in regard to the completion of primary and secondary education, including the following aspects: gender, area of residence (rural/urban), income level and ethnicity.

The graphs below address each of the abovementioned aspects, displaying parity rates for three age ranges in each country in order to illustrate changes over time. For primary education the three age ranges are 25–29, 20–24 and 15–19 years of age, while for secondary these are 20–24, 25–29 and 30–34 years of age.

By definition, a completion rate parity level of 0.95 or below indicates some disparity (higher completion rate) among typically advantaged groups (males, students from urban areas, members of high income families and students of non-indigenous origin). A completion rate parity level of 1.05 or higher indicates some disparity (higher completion rate) among typically disadvantaged groups (females, students from rural areas, members of low income families and students of indigenous origin).

The green strip in the graphs below indicates the parity zone (parity rate between 0.95 and 1.05). The data is presented in descending order, based on the oldest population group.

7.1. Gender parity

The graphs below offer data on gender parity. As explained above, an index of 0.95 or lower indicates a disparity in favour of the male population, while a value of 1.05 or higher indicates that the female population enjoys a comparative advantage.

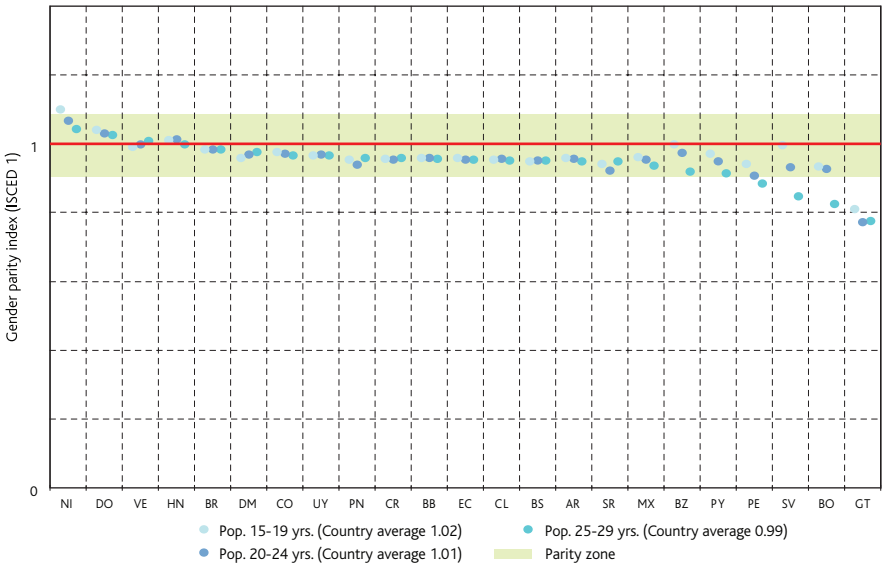
7.1.1. Completion of primary education (ISCED1)

On average, gender parity is within the established margins in most countries, ranging from 0.83 to 1.09 for the oldest age group (with an average of 0.99) and from 0.86 to 1.15 for the youngest group (with an average of 1.02).

41 World Education Forum. 2000. Op.cit.
42 OREALC/UNESCO. 2008a. Op.cit.

Graph 7.1 Gender parity index for completion of ISCED 1, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



All countries have achieved gender parity in the youngest age group except for Guatemala, which exhibits persistent inequality against women in primary education completion. Belize, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua, in contrast, display inequality against the male population.

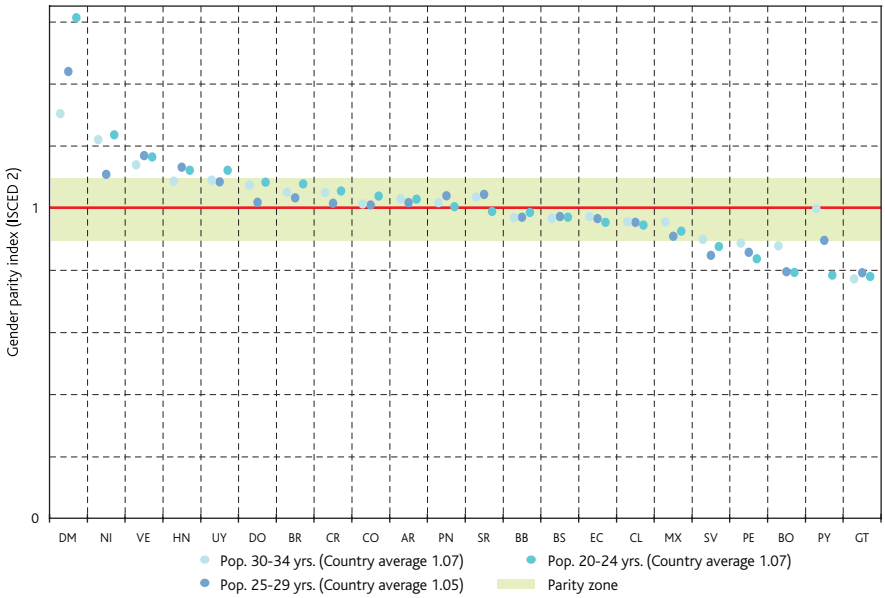
Countries with low gender parity levels among the oldest age group – Bolivia, El Salvador, Peru and Venezuela – show improvement in their younger populations. It should be noted that gender parity has not improved in Guatemala or Nicaragua.

7.1.2. Completion of the first cycle of secondary education (ISCED2)

Only four of the region's countries (Bahamas, Barbados, Chile and Ecuador) show gender parity in the completion of lower secondary education. While the average gender parity index among countries is very close to the minimum value defined as equitable, the index ranges from 0.83 to 1.66 within the oldest age group (averaging 1.07) and from 0.82 to 1.35 among the youngest (averaging 1.06).

Notably, as the graph illustrates, the three age groups have similar gender parity indices. Six countries have achieved gender parity in their overall completion rates or in most age groups. In 13 countries, more women complete lower secondary education in all or most age groups, while in four countries a greater percentage of men complete this level of schooling.

Graph 7.2 Gender parity index for completion of ISCED 2, 2008



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

7.1.3. Completion of upper secondary education (ISCED 3)

Gender parity in secondary school completion varies widely among countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region. Only five (Barbados, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico and Peru) display parity in the youngest age group. Meanwhile, the average gender parity rate across countries barely falls within the threshold for equitability as defined by UNESCO, standing at 1.1 as an aggregate of the three age groups, but ranging from 0.9 to 1.4 in the oldest group and from 0.88 to 1.55 in the youngest.

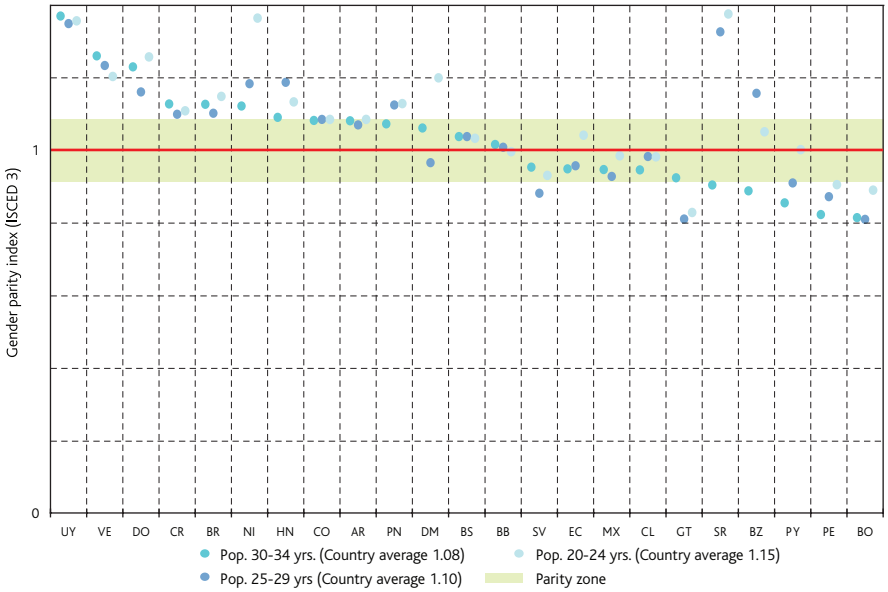
Bolivia and Guatemala show inequity against women in the youngest age group.

Overall, three countries have gender-equitable rates in most age groups analysed. In three others, more men finish upper secondary school than women, and in 14 others, more women complete this educational level in all or most age groups.

Some aspects of gender equity in education in the region are striking: the inequity within the male population, the high level of gender parity in access to and completion of primary education and, at the secondary level, the fact that in most of the region's countries the traditionally advantaged group (males) is at a disadvantage.

Graph 7.3 Gender parity index for completion of ISCED 3, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



7.2. Residential parity

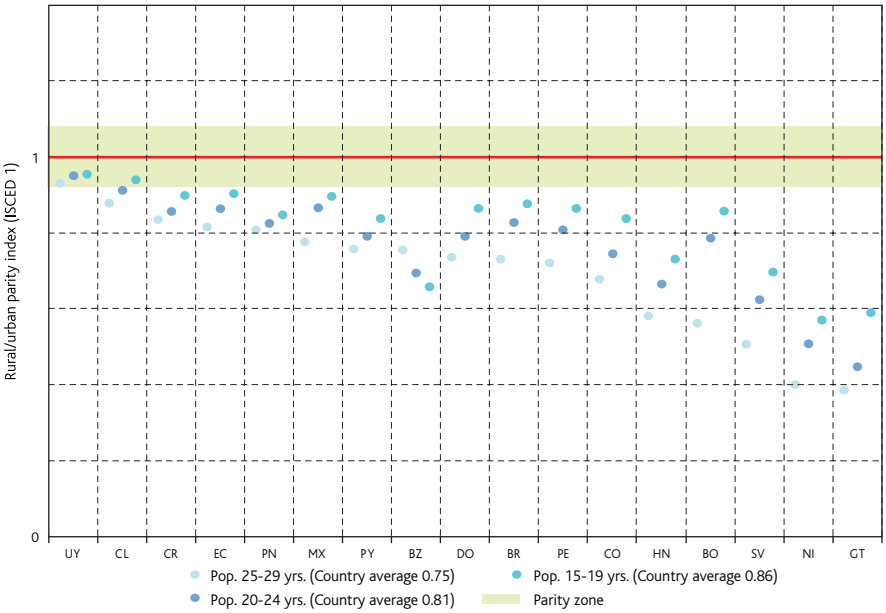
The graphs below present rural/urban parity data, with values above 1.05 indicating a relative advantage for rural inhabitants and values below 0.95 indicating an advantage for urban dwellers.

7.2.1. Completion of primary education (ISCED1)

For primary education, rural-urban parity rates range from 0.62 to 1.0 in the 15–19 age group and from 0.45 to 0.98 among 25–29 year olds. It is important to note that all of the region's countries show progress when the oldest of these age groups (averaging 0.75) is compared to the youngest (averaging 0.86). Bolivia and Guatemala displayed the greatest progress, with differences in parity of 0.3 and 0.21, respectively, between the 15–19 age range and the 25–29 range.

Despite the improvements, the difference in primary completion rates for rural and urban areas continues to be significant. Only Chile and Ecuador show residential parity for the youngest age group.

Graph 7.4 Rural/urban parity index for Completion of ISCED 1, 2008

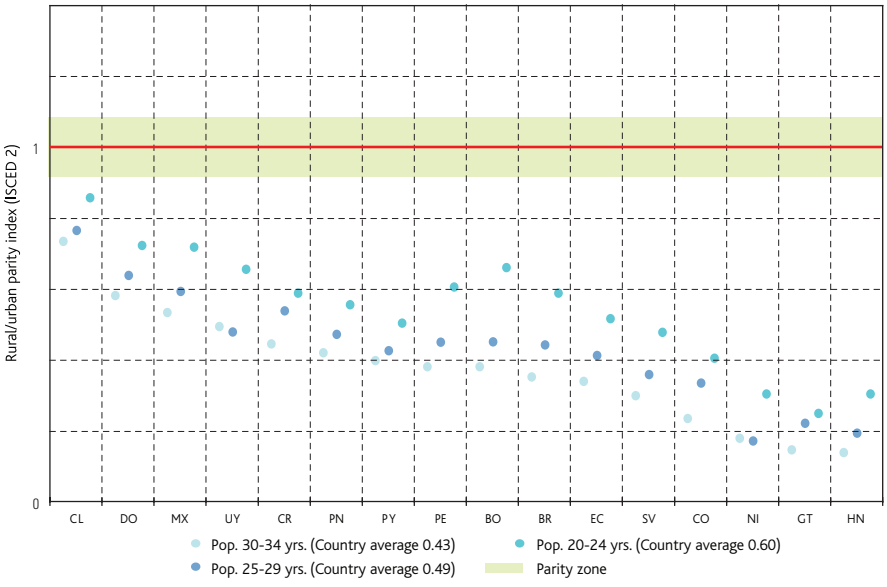


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

7.2.2. Parity in the completion of lower secondary education (ISCED 2)

The rural-urban parity rate for the completion of lower secondary education ranges from 0.36 to 0.91 for the 20–24 year-old population and from 0.19 to 0.79 for the 30–34 age group. Although these are still far from desirable levels, progress is visible in all of the region's countries between the two extreme generations. (The average of the countries' indices is 0.43 for the oldest group and 0.60 for the youngest). However, no country can point to parity in any of these age groups.

Graph 7.5 Rural/urban parity index for completion of ISCED 2, 2008



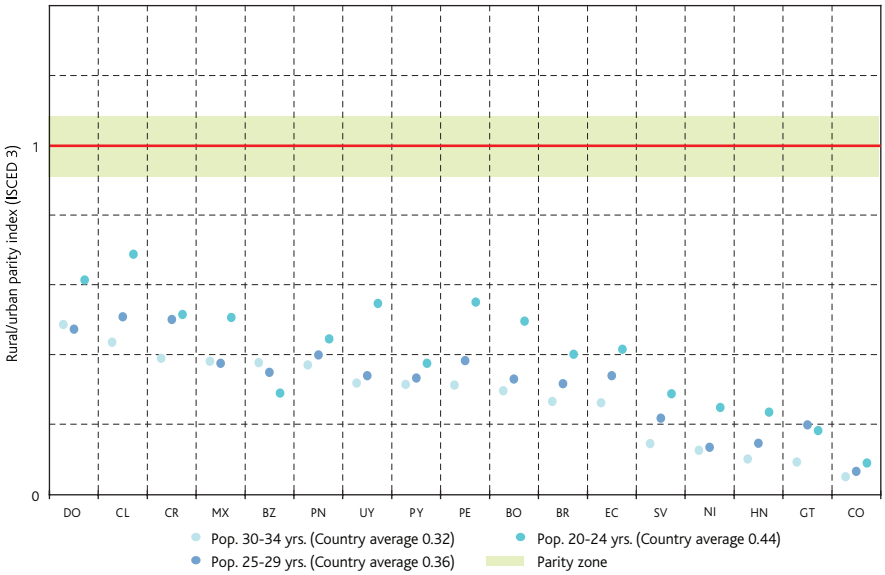
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

7.2.3 Parity in the completion of upper secondary education (ISCED 3)

The urban-rural parity index ranges from 0.23 to 0.74 among 20–24 year olds, and from 0.1 to 0.5 among 30–34 year olds. Though far from the desired thresholds, they reflect the fact that every country in the region has made progress over time. (The index's average value is 0.33 for the oldest group and 0.46 for the youngest).

Graph 7.6 Rural/urban parity index for completion ISCED 3, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



It is important to highlight that in many countries the disparity in secondary school completion between urban and rural areas is caused by the lack of suitable educational establishments in rural areas, coupled with the shortage of secondary school teachers willing to work in rural areas.

7.3. Income parity

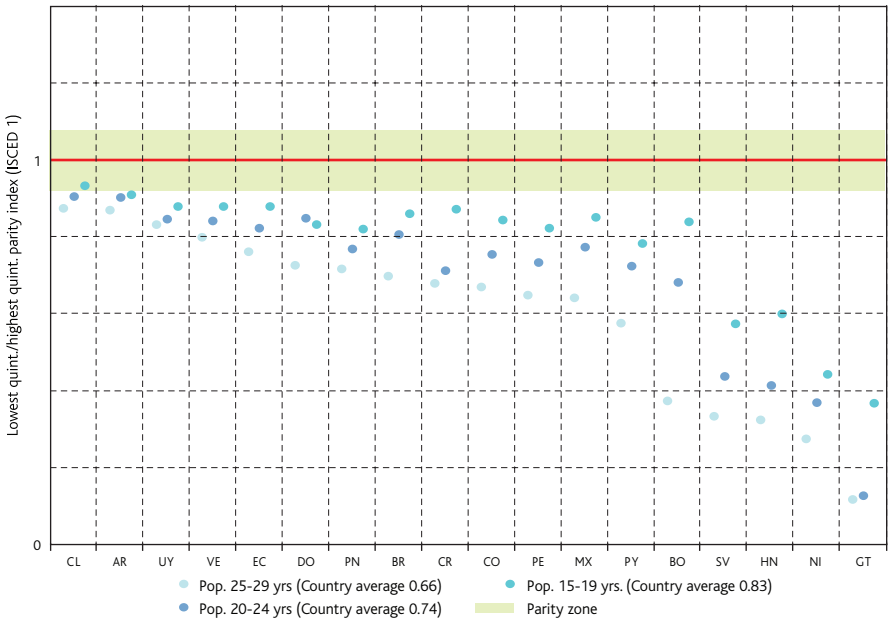
The graphs below present data on income parity, comparing the primary school completion rates of upper-quintile households and lower-quintile households (measured by wage earnings). Values greater than 1.05 indicate that lower income students are more likely to complete secondary school, while values lower than 0.95 indicate that more affluent students are likely to do so.

7.3.1. Completion of primary education (ISCED1)

On average, income parity in the region is far below desirable thresholds, ranging from 0.17 to 0.92 in the oldest age group (averaging 0.66) and from 0.42 to 0.98 in the youngest (with an average of 0.83).

Only Argentina and Chile fall within the desirable range for both age groups. Bolivia, however, has made the most progress, as a comparison of index values for the youngest and oldest age groups shows.

Graph 7.7 **Lowest/highest income quintile parity index for completion of ISCED 1, 2008**



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

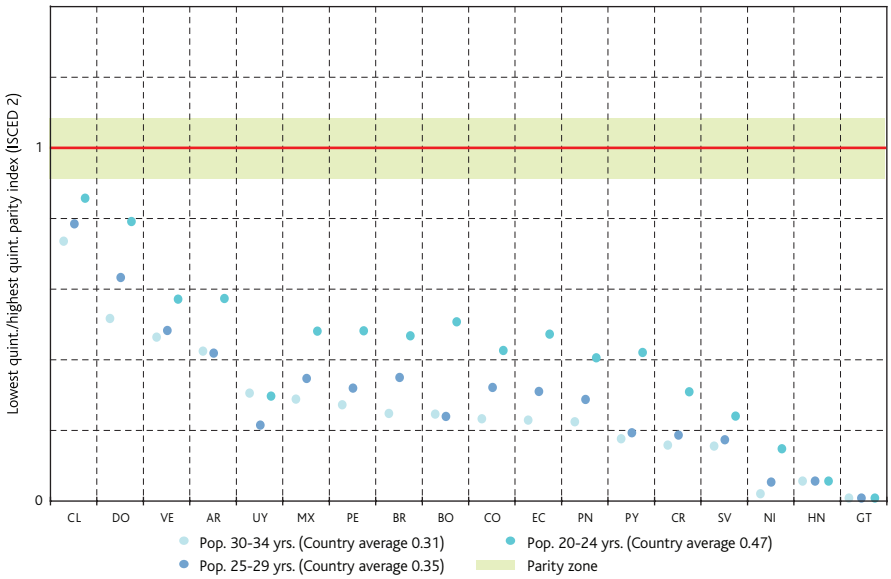
While the country indices shown are far below desirable levels, comparison of the three age groups reveals a notable improvement in the vast majority of countries. This progress is particularly praiseworthy, considering that achieving parity among pupils from different socioeconomic backgrounds is one of the most ambitious challenges in education, and one that has never really been satisfactorily met, even in developed countries.

7.3.2. Completion of lower secondary education (ISCED2)

Parity among income levels is also far below desirable levels on average, ranging from 0.01 to 0.07 for the oldest group (average for the countries is 0.31) and from 0.06 to 0.91 for the youngest (with an average of 0.47). No country displays parity among income levels for any of the groups analysed.

Graph 7.8 Lowest/highest income quintile parity index for completion of ISCED 2, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

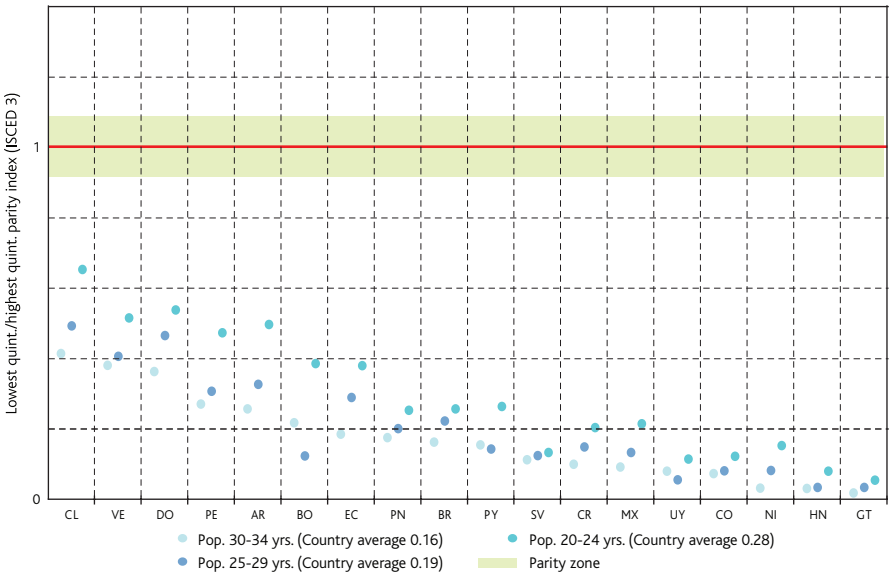


7.3.3. Completion of upper secondary education (ISCED 3)

On average, income parity indices for this educational level are well below desirable ranges, falling between 0.0 and 0.4 for the oldest group and between 0.1 and 0.6 for the youngest group (averages for the two groups in the region's countries are 0.16 and 0.28, respectively). No country displays parity among income quintiles for the age groups analysed, and only Argentina and Bolivia show improvement in parity over 0.2 between the oldest and youngest groups.

Graph 7.9 Lowest/highest income quintile parity index for completion of ISCED 3, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



7.4. Ethnic parity

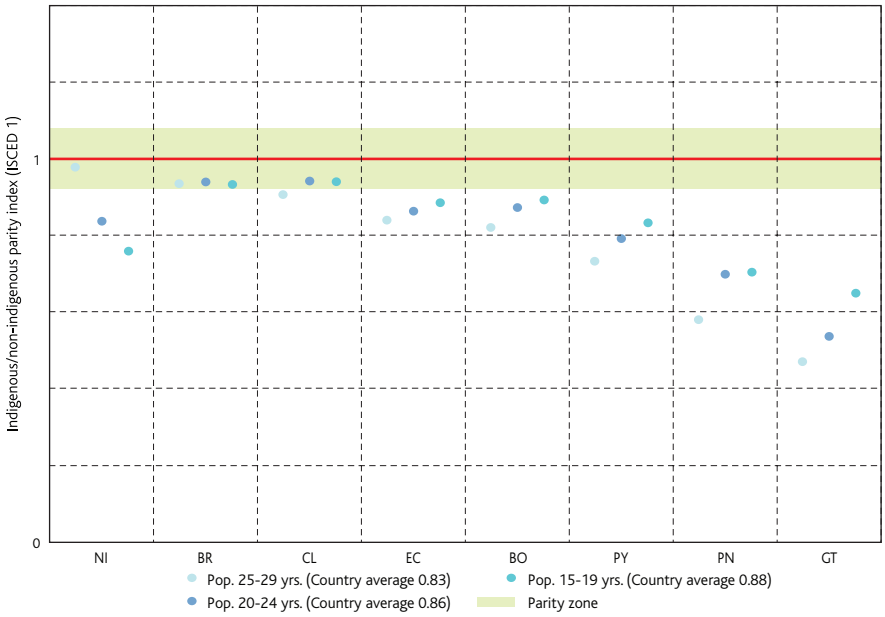
The graphs below present data on indigenous/non-indigenous parity levels.[43] Values above 1.05 indicate an advantage for the indigenous population, while values below 0.95 indicate an advantage for the non-indigenous population.

As few countries collect educational information disaggregated by ethnicity, this indicator can be calculated only for a limited number of them.

7.4.1. Completion of primary education (ISCED 1)

Indigenous/non-indigenous parity indices for the successful completion of primary school range from 0.7 to 0.81 in the 15–19 age group, and from 0.52 to 1.03 in the 25–29 group.

Graph 7.10 Indigenous/non-indigenous parity index for the completion of ISCED 1, 2008



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

Chile and Brazil are the only countries that have achieved ethnic parity in primary school completion for all three age groups studied. In Guatemala and Panama, ethnic parity indices between oldest and youngest age groups have improved over the past ten years, from 0.52 to 0.70 in the former and from 0.63 to 0.75 in the latter country.

Nicaragua shows increased disparity in primary education completion rates among ethnic groups, with the parity index of 1.03 for the oldest age group falling to 0.89 for the middle group and 0.81 for the youngest. This is of particular concern as it represents a significant setback despite efforts to the contrary.

43 It is important to emphasize that the terms "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" are not used in an anthropological sense but in an operative one for the purpose of differentiating ethnic groups that traditionally have been disadvantaged in their access to and completion of educational levels from those that have been in a position of relative advantage. See the Reader's Guide herein for more information.

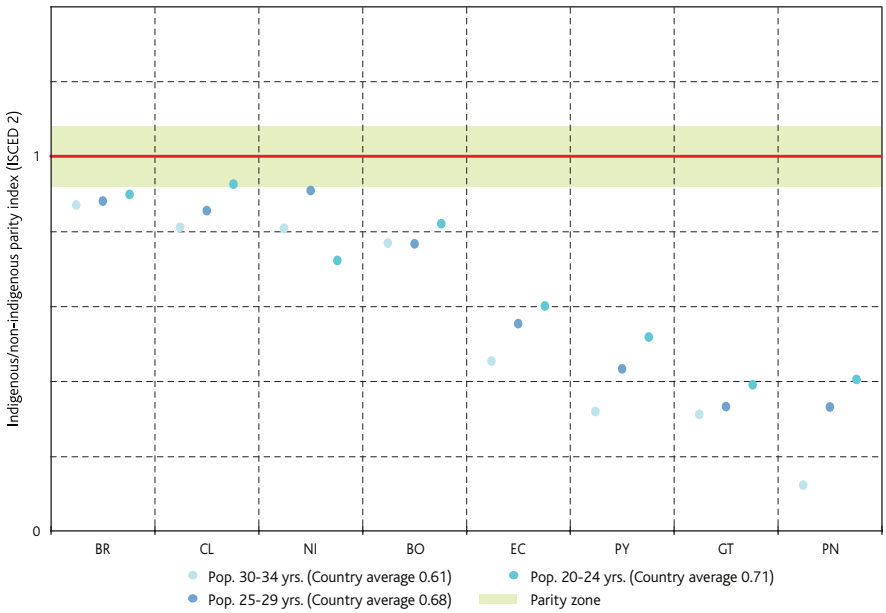
7.4.2. Completion of lower secondary education (ISCED 2)

The parity indices for indigenous versus non-indigenous completion of lower secondary education range from 0.45 to 0.95 for the 20–24 year old population (with a regional average of 0.71) and from 0.17 to 0.92 for the 30–34 age group (with a regional average of 0.61).

Chile and Nicaragua are the only countries to have achieved ethnic parity in the completion of lower secondary education in any of the age groups studied (among 20–24 year olds in Chile and 25–29 year olds in Nicaragua). Meanwhile, Paraguay and Panama show the highest levels of disparity in the oldest age group, but also display the greatest progress toward ethnic parity when comparing oldest to youngest groups (0.37 to 0.57, and 0.17 to 0.45, respectively).

Graph 7.11 Indigenous/non-indigenous parity index for completion of ISCED 2, 2008

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



7.4.3. Parity in the completion of upper secondary education (ISCED 3)

Rates of indigenous/non-indigenous parity in the completion of upper secondary education range from 0.2 to 0.80 for the 20–24 year old population (with an average of 0.58) and from 0.1 to 0.9 for the 30–34 age group (with an average of 0.55).

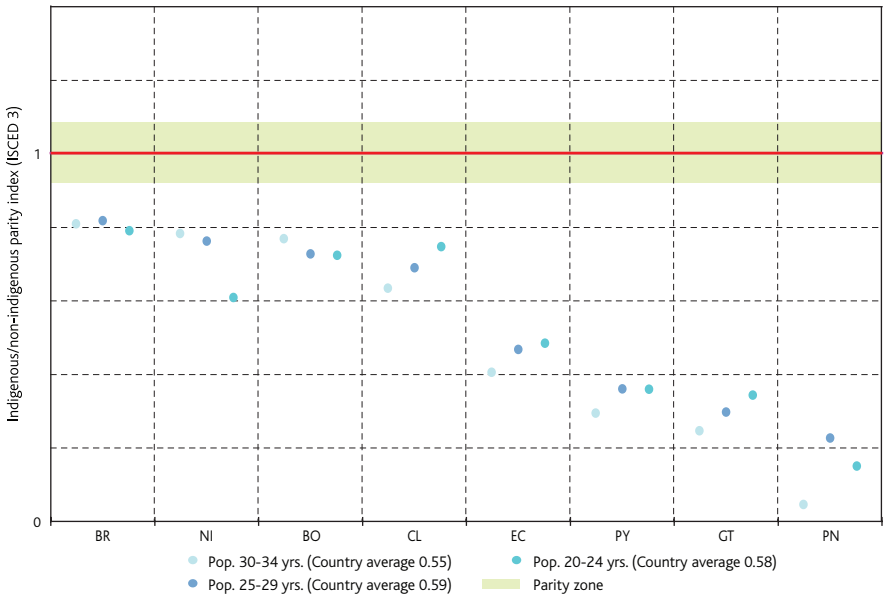
To date, no country in the region has achieved ethnic parity in the completion of secondary education.

In summary, most countries in the region have achieved gender parity in the completion of primary education. At the secondary level, however, there is a disparity that favours girls over boys.[44]

Parity in the completion of primary education has also improved between rural and urban populations, income classes and ethnic groups, though disparities

44 For more information on gender parity see: UNESCO-UIS. 2010. Global Monitoring Report 2010. Montreal, UNESCO-UIS.

Graph 7.12 Indigenous/non-indigenous parity index for completion of ISCED 3, 2008



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

in these aspects are still a concern for the region, particularly in the completion of secondary education.

The highest degrees of disparity in the completion of primary and secondary education can be found between income groups. While parity among socioeconomic groups is higher among the younger age group, there is still a long way to go before those in lower income groups are completing primary and secondary education at the same rate as those in higher income brackets.

8. QUALITY IN EDUCATION

Throughout their lives from early childhood onward, students in the 21st Century need access to quality education. To fulfil this need, educational systems not only have to ensure that children and young people have access to schools and opportunities to complete their education; they also have to guarantee that students develop the knowledge and skills they need to find meaning and make sense out of what they learn, to equip them to face the challenges of modern life.

The Dakar Framework for Action supports this approach by affirming that the activity that takes place in classrooms and other learning environments is fundamentally important to the future well being of children, young people and adults. In other words, efforts to increase enrolment in and completion of educational levels are not enough in themselves; also important is the quality of education, defined as education that meets learners' basic learning needs while enriching their lives.[45] Therefore, efforts must also focus on improving educational quality, which in turn will attract children to school, keep them in the educational system, improve their performance and instil meaning into their educational experience.

Quality in education is a central theme in this report, running through all of the issues addressed herein. In this chapter, however, the concept of quality education will be dealt with in a more limited way, focusing strictly on learning achievements.

Over the last twenty years, after having implemented their national assessment systems, several Latin American countries joined regional and international assessment programmes. These included the SERCE and PISA studies, the results of which will be presented in the sections below.

8.1. Achievement in primary education – the SERCE Study

In 1994 the Latin American Laboratory for the Assessment of Quality Education (LLECE) was founded. Today, LLECE is a network of 16 units, each based in a different Latin American country. These units measure and assess the quality of local education systems. The Laboratory's coordinating unit is housed at the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNESCO Santiago). LLECE is a point of reference in the region, providing a framework for conducting and coordinating assessments of education among its countries. At the same time, LLECE provides a high level of professional support to participating countries seeking technical training in the area of educational measurement and assessment.

LLECE's most recent assessment was the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (Segundo Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo, SERCE)[46] in 2006.[47] This study is a standardized international assessment of achievement among primary level students in 16 Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. In each country approximately 5,000 students –encompassing 200 schools and a total of 140 to

45 World Education Forum. 2000. Op.cit.

46 UNESCO-OREALC/LLECE. 2008. *Los Aprendizajes de los Estudiantes de América Latina y El Caribe. Primer reporte de los resultados del Segundo Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (SERCE)*. Santiago, Chile, OREALC/UNESCO Santiago.

47 The Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (TERCE) will be carried out in 2013. For more information see www.llece.org

370 classrooms– were evaluated at the grade levels studied.

The study assessed achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics among third- and sixth-grade students, and science among sixth-graders. The tests take two approaches. The first, which is curricular, focuses on areas of knowledge and processes common to the region's curricula. The other focuses on life skills as defined by UNESCO[48], and is based on the notion that what is taught at school must contribute positively to the creation of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable students to participate actively in society.

8.1.1. Evaluation of levels of learning

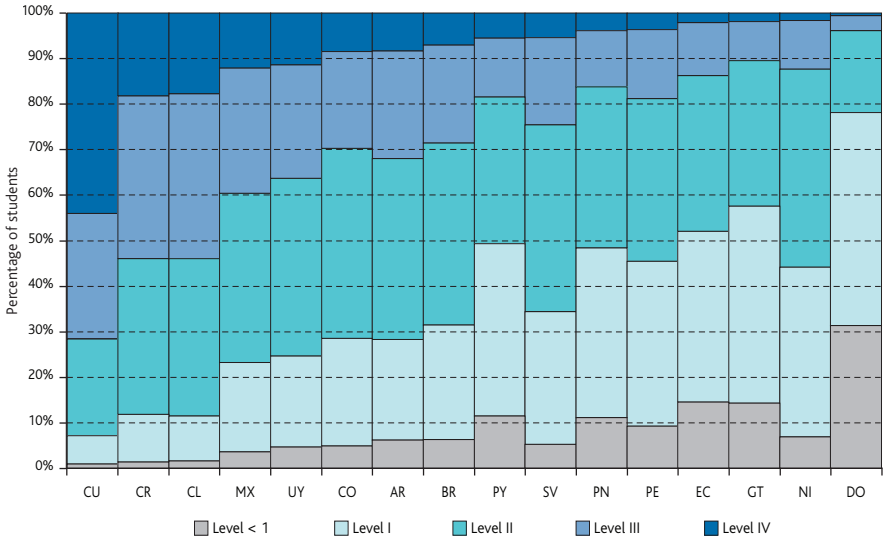
The SERCE assessment offers results based on level and student performance, establishing four performance levels for both of the educational levels assessed (3rd grade and 6th grade). Level I indicates that students can successfully perform the easiest tasks, while Level IV indicates the fulfilment of the most difficult ones. The levels are inclusive, which means that students reaching Level IV are presumed to be capable of performing all previous levels as well. Some students cannot perform even the easiest tasks and are therefore deemed to be below Level I.

The paragraphs below present the SERCE findings in relation to the four proficiency levels mentioned above, which relate to student capabilities in each of the subject areas and grades evaluated. The graphs show proficiency levels for each country, with dark blue indicating the percentage of students at Level IV and light blue the percentage of students who have achieved at least Level I. The appendix includes descriptions of each proficiency level and its meaning for each category.

Graph 8.1 shows the results for Reading Comprehension. As the figure indicates, the percentage of students that has reached the highest level in Reading ranges from 0.6% (Dominican Republic) to 44.3% (Costa Rica), while the percentage that falls below the minimum level ranges from 0.6% (Cuba) to 31.4% (Dominican Republic).

On average, 36% of third graders fail to achieve at least Level II in Reading.

Source: UNESCO-OREALC-LLECE, data from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE), 2006

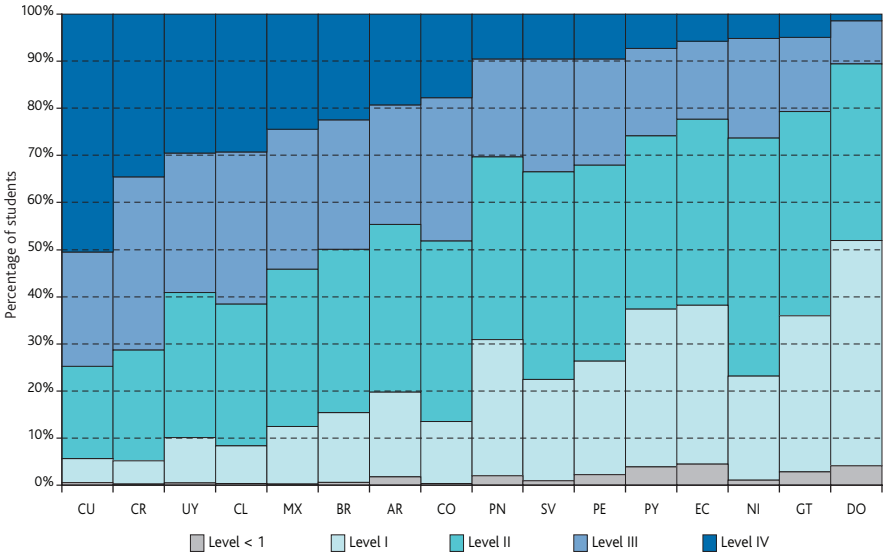


48 UNESCO-OREALC. *Documentos Habilidades para la Vida*. Santiago, Chile. OREALC/UNESCO Santiago.

Graph 8.1 Reading proficiency levels of 3rd grade students (%), 2006

As Graph 8.2 shows, the percentage of sixth-grade students that has reached the highest level of proficiency in Reading ranges from 1.4% (Dominican Republic) to 50.7% (Cuba), while the percentage below the minimum level ranges from 0.2% (Cuba) to 4.5% (Ecuador).

On average, 23.3% of sixth grade students in the countries studied have not reached Level II in Reading.



Source: UNESCO-OREALC-LLECE, data from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE), 2006

Graph 8.2 Reading proficiency levels of 6th grade students (%), 2006

In the area of Mathematics, the percentage of third-grade students performing at the highest level ranges from 0.1% (Dominican Republic) to 54.4% (Cuba), and the percentage of those under the minimum level ranges from 1.1% (Cuba) to 41.3% (Dominican Republic). Graph 8.3 shows these findings.

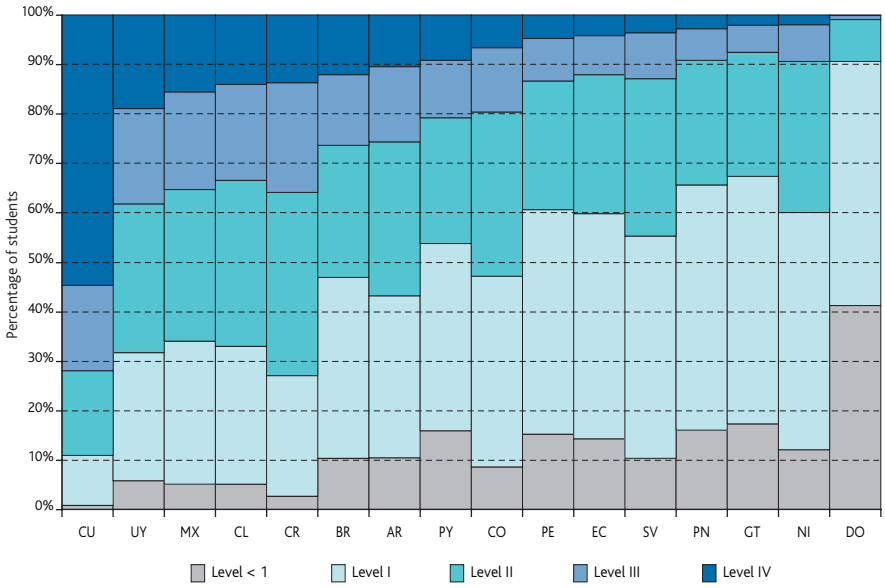
On average, 49.2% of third graders in the countries evaluated have not reached Level II in Mathematics.

In the sixth grade, the percentage of students that has reached the highest level of performance in Mathematics ranges from 0.2% (Dominican Republic) to 51.1% (Cuba), while the percentage of those below the minimum level ranges from 0.1% (Cuba) to 5.7% (Dominican Republic). Graph 8.4 shows these findings.

On average, 19.4% of sixth grade students in the countries evaluated has not reached Level II in Mathematics.

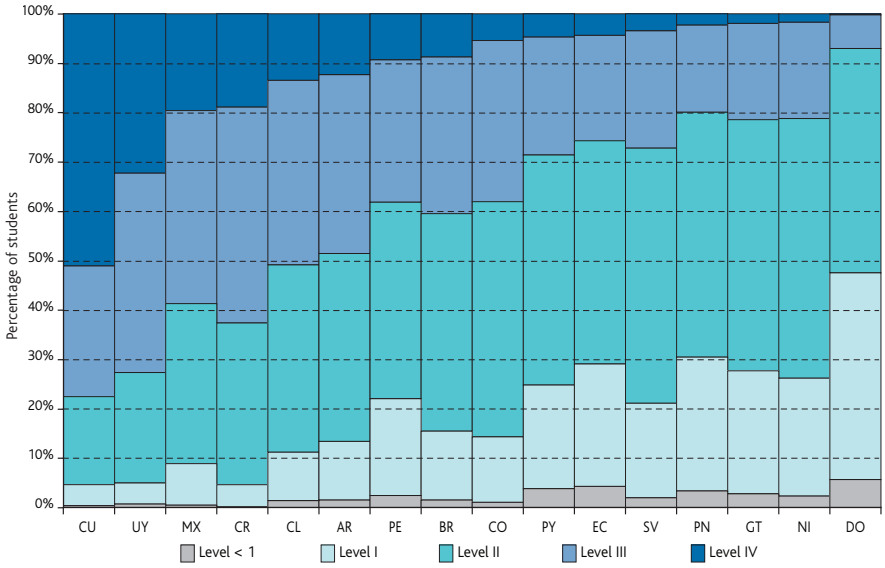
Graph 8.3 Mathematics proficiency levels of 3rd grade students (%), 2006

Source: UNESCO-OREALC-LLECE, data from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE), 2006



Graph 8.4 Mathematics proficiency levels of 6th grade students (%), 2006

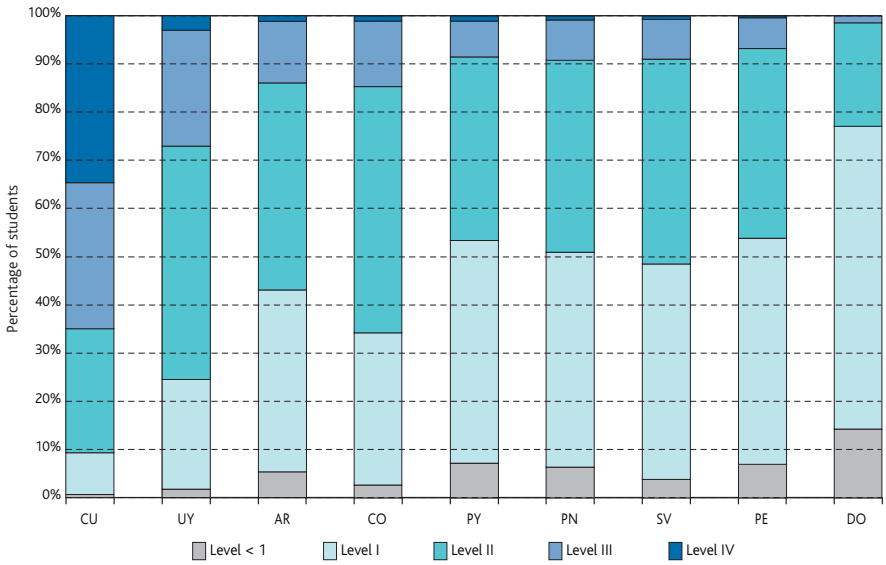
Source: UNESCO-OREALC-LLECE, data from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE), 2006



Only nine countries participated in the evaluation for science: Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. This test was applied only in the sixth grade. As Graph 8.5 shows, the percentage of students that has reached the highest level of proficiency ranges from 0% (Dominican Republic) to 34.7% (Cuba), while the percentage of students under the minimum level ranges from 0.3% (Cuba) to 14.3% (Dominican Republic).

On average, 1% of sixth-graders in the countries studied has reached Level IV in Science, and 43.9% has not reached Level II.

Graph 8.5 Science proficiency levels of 6th grade students (%), 2006



Source: UNESCO-OREALC-LLECE, data from the Second Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE), 2006

8.1.2. Factors associated with learning achievement

SERCE offers a look at the main variables that explain student performance in the region. It is based on the analytical context-input-process-product model, which holds that schools, resources and learning are mediated by the social context in which students learn.

In this sense, SERCE enables an overall analysis of major factors that explain student achievement, pointing to significant relationships between factors and achievement.[49] The most important findings in this regard are the following:

- In regard to educational context, the average socioeconomic and cultural level is one of the most significant variables in explaining achievement. This is true in regard to both schools and individual students. This finding is reaffirmed in similar studies such as PISA and TIMMS.
- School climate contributes the most to student success, and its impact is greatest in sixth-grade Reading and Science and in third-grade Mathematics. This finding underlines the need for harmonious, positive human relationships within schools to foster environments that encourage learning.
- Child labour is a factor that negatively affects learning.
- Children belonging to an indigenous group demonstrate lower achievement than children who do not belong to an indigenous group.
- School management by principals is closely related to learning outcomes.
- Teacher experience has a consistently positive impact on student performance.
- Material and human resources available at school are important for improving academic achievement but do not alone guarantee good student performance. In this sense, resources have to be suitably combined with pertinent educational processes in the classroom.

49 UNESCO-OREALC. 2010a. Op.cit.

Resource management must focus on learning if it is to positively impact academic achievement.

- Grade repetition has a high negative association with learning achievement, which again calls into question the utility of repetition.

8.2. Achievement in secondary education – the PISA Study

Nine countries of the region (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay) participated in the 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study, which evaluated reading, mathematical and scientific literacy among 15-year-old teenagers. Though the study ignored the grade placement of the students involved,[50] it presents us with a snapshot of student performance at the secondary school level, as most members of this age group are enrolled in lower secondary education.

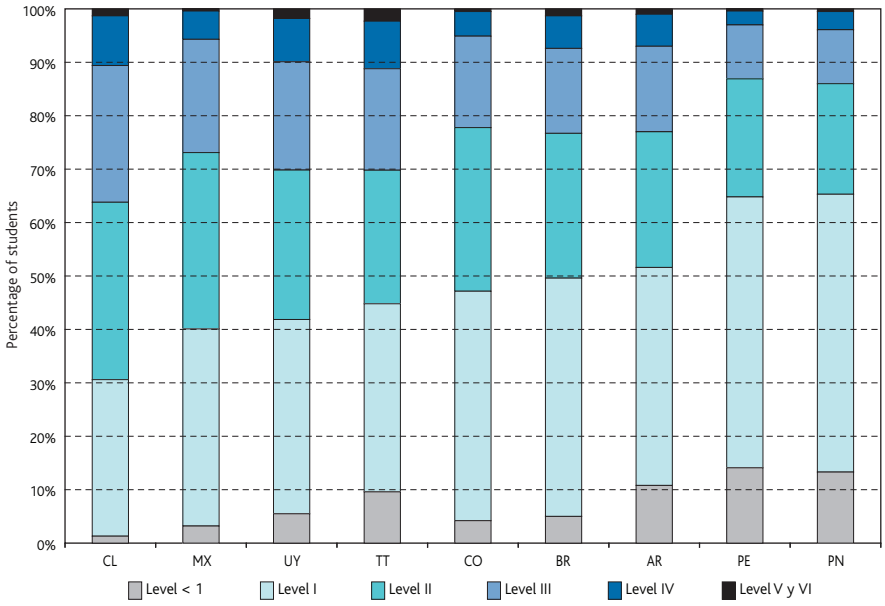
Like the SERCE Study, PISA presents its result in terms of educational performance levels of the students assessed. Level 2 marks an educational threshold that represents the minimum achievement level.

Some of the findings of the PISA study for participating Latin American countries are described below.

In reading skills, in Latin American countries participating in the PISA study, barely 1.1% of assessed students attained a high proficiency level, on average, while 48.4% did not reach even Level 2 (compared to 18.8% among OECD countries).

Graph 8.6 Reading proficiency levels of 15-year-old students (%), 2009

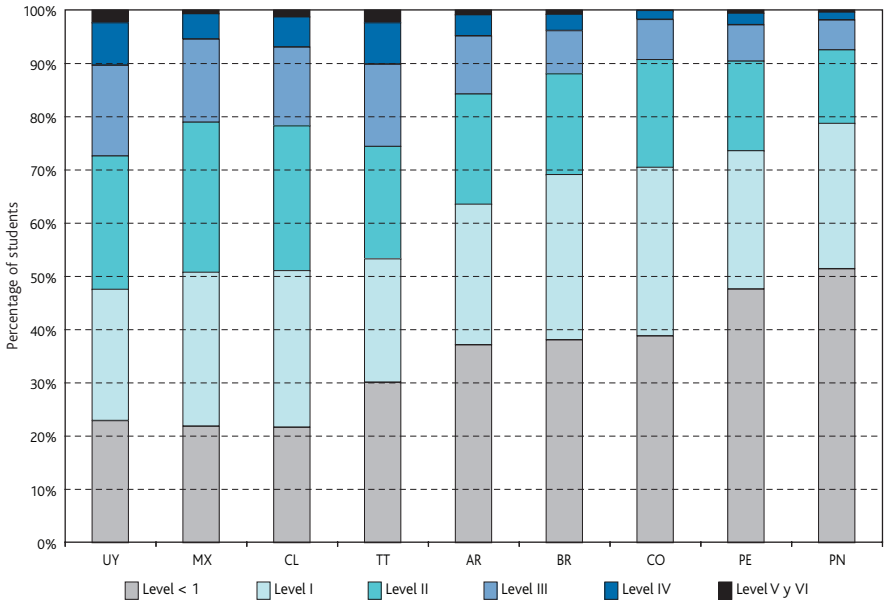
Source: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), data from the PISA study, 2009.



The results for mathematical skills were even worse. According to country averages, 62% of students did not reach Level 2 (compared to the OECD average of 22%), and only 1.1% reached levels 5 and 6.

50 OECD (2009), *Iberoamerica en PISA 2006, Informe Regional,* Santillan, Spain.

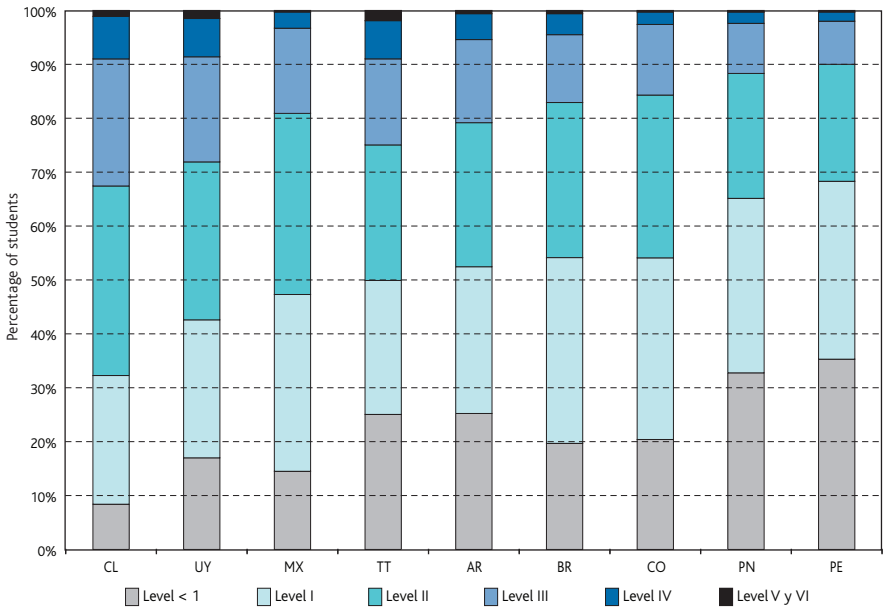
Graph 8.7 **Mathematics proficiency levels of 15-year-old students (%), 2009**



Source: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), data from the PISA study, 2009.

For science skills, the study yielded a country average of 51.8% of students at or below Level 1 (compared to the OECD average of 18%) and an average of 0.9% of students reaching the highest levels.

Graph 8.8 **Science proficiency levels of 15-year-old students (%), 2009**



Source: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), data from the PISA study, 2009.

The PISA study reiterates the finding that the unequal distribution of knowledge among school pupils tends to reproduce the same inequalities found

for income distribution. Like SERCE, PISA also emphasizes that early inclusion in a preschool setting has equalizing effects in this regard.[51]

In summary, the results of both studies are not very encouraging in regard to student academic performance in the region, with the only exception to this rule being Cuba, which shows excellent results in primary education.

In general, these findings point to the need for major political, institutional and programmatic efforts to provide education with quality that can give students meaningful knowledge and skills to improve their lives in both material and human terms.

The SERCE study's analysis of factors associated with learning fit with the findings of the previous chapters. For example, the lack of equity among socioeconomic groups and indigenous and non-indigenous individuals is as evident in learning achievements as it is in the completion of educational levels.

The strong impact of the school climate on student performance is notable, and could be used as a cornerstone of interventions in educational systems. The same is true for school management, which should lead to deeper reflection on school leadership.

The SERCE and PISA studies found that children who have repeated a grade demonstrated lower performance than those who had not repeated, suggesting yet again that repetition is not an effective way of remedying or improving learning.

Lastly, the positive impact of pre-primary schooling confirms the importance of early childhood care and education to quality education.

51 OECD. 2010b. *PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background – Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes (Volume II)*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

9. TEACHERS

Teachers are essential partners in promoting quality education. They are advocates and catalysts of change, and no educational reform is likely to succeed without their active participation and commitment.[52] For these reasons and others, it is crucial that teachers are well trained and enjoy adequate working conditions.

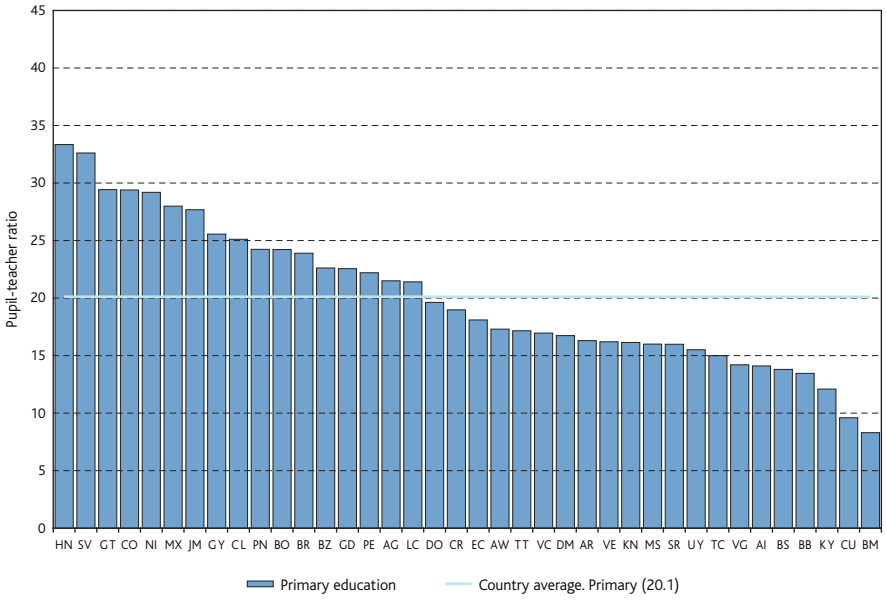
The following paragraphs offer data on two issues related to teachers in the region: student/teacher ratios and teacher certification.

9.1. Student/teacher ratio

The student/teacher ratio – the number of students per teacher – reflects the availability of teaching services and teacher workload.

Among the countries for which data is available, Bermuda has the lowest student/teacher ratio at the primary level (8.3) and Honduras has the highest (33.3). The country average for the region is 20.1 students per teacher. Only two countries have ratios over 30.

Graph 9.1 Pupil/teacher ratio in primary education, 2008



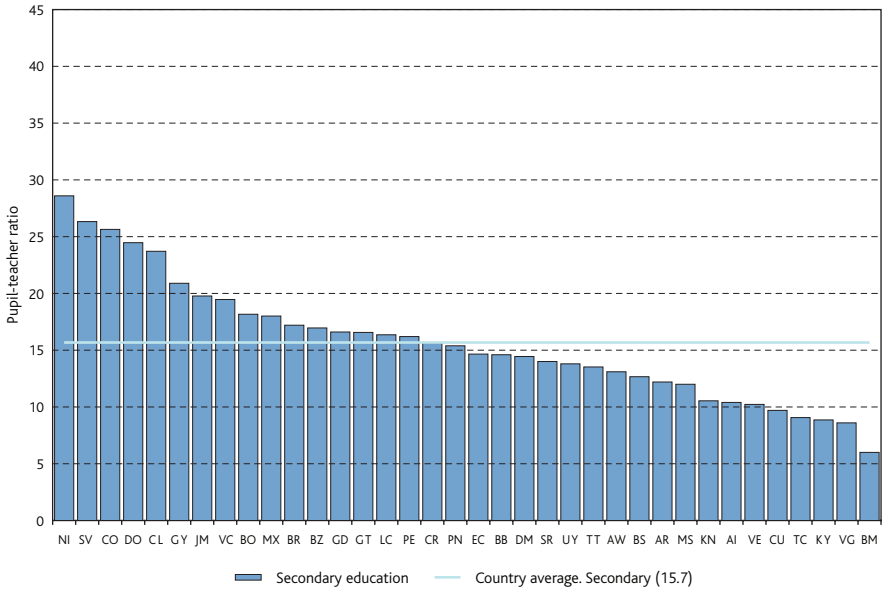
Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

Graph 9.2 shows secondary school student/teacher ratios in countries for which data were available. These figures range from six (in Bermuda) to 28.6 (in Nicaragua), with an average of 15.7 students per teacher.

52 Foro Mundial sobre la Educación. 2000. Op.cit.

Graph 9.2 Pupil/teacher ratio in secondary education, 2008

Source: Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.



9.2. Teacher training requirements

Authorities and experts in the region agree on the importance of having qualified teachers, especially in the context of recent educational reforms. In response to this, governments have made and continue to make significant investments in both initial and in-service teacher training.

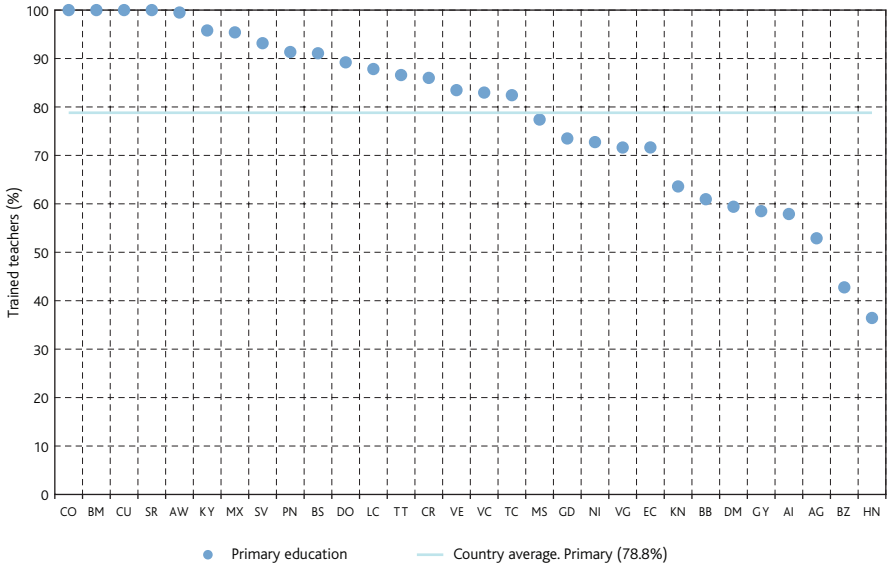
Graph 9.3 shows the proportion of teachers that meets national training requirements for primary education. As of 2008, these percentages ranged from 36.4% to 100% in the countries for which information was available.

Among the countries included, 78.8% of teachers are professionally trained, on average. In ten countries, over 90% of teachers were certified, while in two countries fewer than 50% were certified.

Graph 9.4 shows the percentage of teachers that meet national training requirements for secondary school. The figures range from 29.3% to 100%, with a country average of 71.4% for 2008.

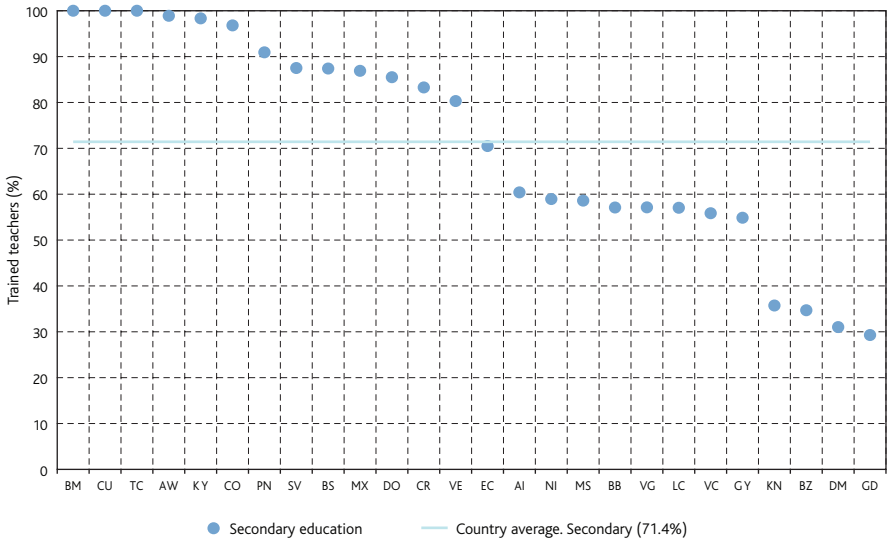
Seven countries stand out with over 90% of secondary teachers meeting training requirements, while in another four countries fewer than 50% of teachers meet those requirements.

Graph 9.3 Percentage of trained teachers in primary education, 2008



Source:
Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

Graph 9.4 Percentage of trained teachers in secondary education, 2008



Source:
Database of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). See data annex for values and explanatory notes.

The two graphs above show that, overall, fewer secondary school teachers meet training requirements than their primary school counterparts. However, it should be noted that in many countries of the region, many secondary school teachers are trained professionals who do not have a teaching certificate.

For student/teacher ratios, marked differences among countries can be observed in the number of duly certified teachers. This points to a pressing need to increase the number of teachers and improve their level of qualification, if education with quality is to be guaranteed.

CONCLUSIONS

The objectives of the Dakar Framework of Education for All (EFA), followed by the principles and focal areas established by the region's Ministers of Education in the Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC), call for intensive follow-up and a report on the state of education in the region to identify strengths and weaknesses, degrees of progress and pending challenges. The purpose of this report, The *Regional Monitoring Report on Progress Toward Quality Education for All in Latin America and the Caribbean, EFA 2012*, is to identify areas in which policies and actions need to be developed in order to achieve the abovementioned objectives. The following paragraphs present the conclusions of this study:

The region's socioeconomic context and investment in education

Between 2002 and 2008, Latin America and the Caribbean experienced a period of sustained growth that increased the well being of the region's population, demonstrated by reductions in poverty and income inequality. The financial crisis in late 2008 ended this period of relative prosperity, impacting different countries to different degrees.

The favourable economic situation between 2002 and 2008 led to an increase in public spending on education, though at a rate lower than Gross Domestic Product growth, which meant that that over the period mentioned public spending on education as a share of GDP actually dropped slightly. Private spending on education also expanded in the region, especially in countries that spent less on education. This figure tends to increase in proportion to increases in the number of students attending private establishments.

Demand for education

Countries with a high demand for primary education and lower secondary education face high budgetary pressure in connection with these educational needs. However, these countries are frequently also the poorest.

The demand for upper secondary education varies less from country to country, but less developed countries still face greater challenges in addressing the potential demand for secondary education.

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Net enrolment rates in pre-primary education reflect a consolidation of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) offerings in the region. Average net enrolment was 65.3% in 2008. This is particularly important, considering that pre-primary attendance is positively correlated with progress in primary school, as well as with advancement to other educational levels and school performance in general.

Most countries have reached gender parity in education, but major disparities in pre-primary enrolment rates persist among countries, as well as among socioeconomic groups and between urban and rural dwellers. Thus, pre-primary education frequently does not reach those who could most benefit from early education.

Moreover, many countries still lack sufficient numbers of qualified pre-primary teachers.

Primary education

A high proportion of children of primary school age access this level of education at some point. Indeed, the majority of countries in the region have net enrolment rates of 95% or higher, although this rate has remained virtually unchanged over the last eight years.

The net intake rate, which shows what proportion of children enter primary school at the theoretically appropriate age, is still lower than desirable.

Repetition of first grade is still a problem in the region's countries. Repetition and dropping out are complex phenomena that are closely related to poor quality in education. It is therefore highly important to establish public policies to overcome this problem.

Despite the challenges mentioned, many countries in the region are close to achieving universal completion of primary education. Almost a third of countries have a completion rate over 95% among the youngest population; however, the problem of incompletion of primary education is still present in some countries, where achieving an 80% primary school completion rate among the youngest population remains a challenge.

Over the period studied, some countries with budget deficits still made progress in improving primary education completion rates from generation to generation. Despite facing difficulties, these countries have been successful in increasing the completion of primary school among the youngest population segments.

Secondary education

The majority of the region's countries made very significant progress in increasing access to secondary education over the period analysed. A third of the countries have reached a rate of 80% or higher for access to secondary education among the youngest group examined. Overall, the country average increased 7.8 percentage points.

As with primary education, the countries with lower secondary education ratings are those facing greater social demands as a result of demographic growth and dependency rates, and those having larger rural populations and relatively low levels of human and economic development. Despite these challenges, some of these countries have increased their secondary education net enrolment rate significantly.

Overall, however, completion rates for secondary education show that much still has to be done to promote completion of this level of education: on average, a little less than half of the youngest generation (15–19 years old) complete secondary education, and in older age groups the rate is even lower.

In addition to this, there are major differences in access to and completion of secondary education among countries.

Tertiary education

The rate of access to post secondary education is still low in almost all countries, making the achievement of lifelong education a pending challenge in the region. However, a comparison of enrolment rates between 2000 and 2008 shows an improvement in access to post secondary education.

Literacy

Illiteracy, though difficult to measure precisely beyond its yes/no dimension, is an obstacle to lifelong learning for many adults. It is noteworthy, however, that in all the countries studied the rate of illiteracy is lower among the younger population, mainly due to the expansion of primary and secondary education coverage in recent decades.

Gender parity in literacy has also improved in recent years.

Inequity in the completion of educational levels

Most of the region's countries have reached gender parity in access to and completion of pre-primary and primary schooling, and with regard to literacy rates, especially in the younger population. Nevertheless, it should be noted that girls increasingly surpass boys in secondary school completion rates.

All of the region's countries have improved parity in primary education in regards to area of residence (urban/rural), income level and ethnicity. Nevertheless, inequalities between certain social groups continue to pose a challenge for the region. Chile is the only country in the region in which the youngest age group enjoys parity in primary education in regard to rural/urban, ethnic/non-ethnic and low-income/high income status. No country, however, has reached parity in the completion of secondary education; these factors continue to display major discrepancies across all age groups.

As many of the region's countries have high levels of economic inequality, it is no surprise that they also display major disparities in primary and secondary education completion rates as a function of income level. Balance between socioeconomic groups in the younger age range is better than in the older age range, but the gaps remain high.

Learning achievements

The SERCE and PISA studies found that learning achievements in primary and secondary education are low in the countries studied. In Reading, Mathematics and Sciences, a high number of children do not reach the minimum level required for future social advancement. Cuba represents an outstanding exception here, with excellent achievement results among primary students.

In general, the findings of both studies show that universal quality education, measured in terms of learning achievement, has not been made available to most children in the region.

The SERCE study's analysis of factors associated with learning achievement shows again the lack of equity among socio-economic levels, as well as between indigenous and non-indigenous populations.

The analysis also shows that factors such as school climate, administration by the school principal and grade repetition strongly impact students' learning achievement. A strong effort to confront these issues would be highly useful for future investigations of educational systems of the region.

Teachers

Significant differences exist among countries in regard to student/teacher ratios and the number of certified teachers. This indicates clearly that, in order to provide quality education, many countries need to put more effort into increasing both the number and professional qualification of their teaching staff.

APPENDICES

A. Proficiency levels in the SERCE study

This appendix provides descriptions of the proficiency levels used in each category and at each level evaluated in the SERCE study.

Table A.1. Description of Reading performance levels for 3rd grade primary school students, SERCE study.

Level Cut-off point	Area: Reading		Processes: Reading		
	Extension	**Class and Genre**	**General**	**Specific Descriptive Texts**	**Meta-linguistics**
	The student shows that that he/she can read:	*The student shows that he/she can read:*	*The student shows that he/she has the ability to:*	*The student shows that he/she has the has the ability to recognise:*	*The student shows that he/she knows:*
IV	• Two related texts	• Descriptions: dual-entry tables and diagrams with three elements • Explanations: from the natural sciences • Plots: commercials	• Integrate and generalise information given in a paragraph or in verbal and graphic codes • Replace non-explicit information • Read a text and identify new information • Translate from one code to another (from numerical to verbal, from verbal to graphic)	• The implicit moral of a story • The implicit topic of a picture story • The protagonist, based on the cover of a story book • The link between sub-topics and sub-sub-topics in the description • The adjectives of persuasion in an argument • The clarifying function of questions and comparisons in an explanation	• The meaning of "picture", the definition of "riddle" • The purpose of an explanatory appeal • That a title provides a summary • The meaning of words that have several definitions, based on knowledge of the language
III	• Relatively long texts (up to seven paragraphs) • Sequenced drawings (up to four)	• Descriptions with sub-topics: encyclopaedic and journalistic (news) texts • Narrations: picture stories	• Locate information and distinguish it from adjacent information • Interpret reformulations that synthesise several pieces of data • Infer information based on knowledge about the world • Discern the meaning of words that have several meanings, based on the text	• The format and intent of a news piece • Secondary characters, character attributes, story line, author and explicit causes in a linear story • The order of the actions in a picture story • The function of font size in a poster	• The meaning of the concepts "news", "intention", "storyline", "author", "paragraph" and "narration"
II	• Paragraphs (up to four) • Short lists (up to two)	• Narrations: stories with a beginning, middle and end • Instructions: recipes and posters • Descriptions of a topic: riddle	• Locate information in a brief text that must not be distinguished from other conceptually similar information • Discern words with a single meaning • Recognise simple sentence reformulations • Recognise redundancies between graphic and verbal codes	• In a linear story, the protagonist and character design • The purpose of a recipe; the topic of a poster • The attributes of an object described	• The meaning of the concepts "solving the riddle", "title", "recipe" and "instructions" • The function of the phrase "Once upon a time"
I	• Words • Sentences • Images in a picture		• Locate different pieces of information with a single meaning in a prominent part of the text, repeated literally or synonymously, and isolated from other information.	• The sender of a letter • The explicit causes and ending of a picture story	• The meaning of the concepts of "letter" and "story"

Table A.2. Description of Reading performance levels for 6th grade primary students, SERCE study.

Level	Areas: Reading		Processes: Reading		
	Extension	**Class and genre**	**General**	**In relation to specific texts**	**Meta-linguistic**
	The student shows that he/she can read:	*The student shows that he/she can read:*	*The student shows that he/she has the ability to:*	*The student shows that he/she can recognise:*	*The student shows that he/she knows:*
IV	• Longer texts (a lengthy text and summary) with many relationships	• Descriptions: poems • Arguments: letters with two arguments • Narrations: complex journalistic articles	• Integrate, rank and generalise information distributed throughout a text • Establish equivalences among more than two codes (verbal, numerical and graphic) • Reinstate implicit information associated with the entire text • Recognise the possible meanings of technical terms or figurative language • Distinguish different tenses and nuances (certainty, doubt) used in a text	• The versions of the facts and causes in an historical account and the function of title, photo caption and image • Definite and hypothetical information in a news piece, and the most important occurrence • The persuasive intent and thesis of a letter • The summary that corresponds to the informative rank of the description • Personification and metaphor in texts with poetic figures	• The meaning of "diagram", "topic", "order of information", "headline", "textual expansion", and "version" • The content of encyclopaedias; the persuasive function • The function of the title and text on the back cover of a book • The explanatory function of parentheses and dashes
III	• Two related texts • Dense paragraphs • Lists of up to seven complex elements • Medium-length texts (up to two paragraphs)	• Descriptions: of the social sciences, dual-entry comparative charts and diagrams with three elements • Instructions: recipes • Narrations: stories with a "psychological" conflict, tales with two protagonists and an implicit moral, both with dialogue	• Locate information and separate it from other nearby information • Interpret reformulations and synthesis • Integrate data distributed throughout a paragraph • Reinstate implicit information in the paragraph • Re-read in search of specific data • Identify a single meaning in words that have several meanings • Recognise the meaning of parts of words (affixes) using the text as a reference	• The implicit characteristics and desires of the characters in psychological stories • The conflict in a legend • The explicit topic or sub-topic, an implicit assessment and the informative purpose of descriptive texts • The location of the ingredients and the function of numbering steps in a recipe • The content that one can anticipate encountering, based on the cover of a story book	• The meaning of "description", "instruction", "purpose", "narrator", "paragraph", "sentence", "conflict", "realist" and "tale", and some common connectors • The purpose of suffixes and prefixes, exclamation points and pronouns • The form of illustration
II	• Front and back covers of books with graphic and verbal codes • Short texts (up to five paragraphs)	• Legends, historical stories • Descriptions of the natural sciences	• Locate information in the middle of a text that must be distinguished from a different piece of information found in a different segment • Integrate information on what is said and illustrated • Identify words with a single meaning	• The intentions of the characters and explicit phenomena explained in a linear legend or story • The explicit causes in a historical narrative • The addressee of a letter • The support material on the back cover of a book	• The meaning of the concept "explanation"
I	• Words • Sentences • Paragraphs • Brief texts (up to four paragraphs)	• Narrations: stories • Descriptions: encyclopaedia	• Locate information with a single meaning in a prominent or central part of a text (beginning or end), that is repeated literally or synonymously and is isolated from other information	• The protagonist and explicit author in a linear story • An attribute of a being described • A catalyzing incident in an historical account • The informative function of a news piece	• The meanings of the concepts "author", "news" and "information"

Table A.3. **Description of Mathematics performance levels for 3rd grade primary students, SERCE study.**

Level	Description	Examples of specific skills
IV	• Students identify an element in a two-dimensional plane and the properties of the sides of a square or rectangle to solve a problem. • Students solve multiplication problems involving one unknown or that require making use of equivalency between the usual measurements of length. • Students recognise the rule governing the formation of a numerical sequence and identify the component.	• Students identify the component of the rule governing the formation of an additive sequence in the field of natural four digit numbers. • Students can solve a problem that requires addition and subtraction of natural numbers. • Students can solve a problem that involves identifying the congruency of the sides of a square and division of a length by a number.
III	• Students identify elements of unusual geometric figures and interpret the different types of figures for extracting information and solving problems using the data. • Students solve multiplication problems or addition problems that involve an equation or require two operations. • Students solve addition problems using units of measure and their equivalents, or problems that include common fractions. • Students recognise the rule governing a graphic sequence or additive numerical sequence and can continue it.	• Students can identify unusual geometric figures with more than four sides. • Students can identify equivalencies between common measures of length: meter and centimetre. • Students can solve a problem that requires subtracting with a sense of complement. • Students can solve a problem that requires division with equitable distribution and a zero remainder among natural numbers. • Students can solve problems that involve interpreting a bar chart or pictogram to extract and use data. • Students can solve a measurement problem that includes the fraction 1/2.
II	• Students recognise the decimal and positional organization of the numbering system and the elements of geometric figures. • Students identify a path on a map and the most appropriate unit of measure for measuring an attribute of a known object. • Students interpret charts and figures in order to extract and compare data. • Students solve addition or multiplication problems involving proportions in the field of natural numbers.	• Students compose three digit numbers, identifying units, tens and hundreds. • Students identify a drawing of a cube in a set of geometric figures. • Students identify the unit for measuring the length of a known object. • Students interpret information presented in a double-entry table. • Students can solve a problem that involves that involves addition (in the sense of "adding") in a field of three-digit natural numbers. • Students solve a problem that requires multiplying with a sense of proportionality among natural numbers.
I	• Students recognise the relationship in the order between natural numbers and common two-dimensional geometric figures in simple drawings. • Students locate relative positions of an object in a spatial representation. • Students interpret charts and figures in order to extract direct information.	• Students recognise the largest number in a set of three-digit natural numbers. • Students recognise triangles and circles. • Students interpret direct information from a bar chart.

Table A.4. Description of Mathematics performance levels for 6th grade primary students, SERCE study.

Level	Description	Examples of specific skills
IV	• Students find averages and do calculations using the four basic operations in the field of natural numbers. • Students identify parallelism and perpendicularity in a real situation, and graphic representations of a percentage. • Students solve problems involving properties of angles, triangles and quadrilaterals as part of different shapes, or involving operations with two decimal numbers. • Students solve problems involving fractions. • Students make generalisations in order to continue a complex graphic sequence pattern.	• Students identify perpendicular streets on a city map. • Students solve a problem that involves calculating the interior angle of a triangle when the other two are known. • Students can solve a problem that involves the concept of a fraction of a whole, and equal distribution. • Students solve a problem that involves calculating the average of five numbers. • Students identify the pattern of, and can continue, a complex graphic sequence.
III	• Students compare fractions, and use the concept of percentages when analysing information and solving problems that require this type of calculation. • Students identify parallelism and perpendicularity in a plane, as well as bodies and their elements without the benefit of graphic support. • Students solve problems that require interpreting the constituent elements of a division or equivalent measures. • Students recognise central angles and commonly used geometrical shapes, such as circles, and use their properties to solve problems. • Students solve problems involving areas and perimeters of triangles and quadrilaterals. • Students make generalisations in order to continue a graphic sequence or find the numerical sequence rule that applies to a relatively complex pattern.	• Students can compare fractions with a denominator equal to one. • Students can recognise perpendicular lines on a map. • Students can solve a problem that requires calculating durations. • Students solve a problem that involves division, and focus on the result. • Students solve a problem that involves calculating the perimeter of a quadrilateral. • Students can solve a problem that requires calculating a percentage. • Students can identify specific geometrical shapes based on their properties. • Students can identify the pattern of a graphic sequence that involves a relatively complex pattern, and continue it.
II	• Students can analyse and identify the structure of the positional decimal number system, and estimate weight (mass) in units consistent with the attribute being measured. • Students recognise commonly used geometrical shapes and their properties in order to solve problems. • Students interpret, compare and work with information presented through various graphic images. • Students identify the regularity of a sequence with a simple pattern. • Students solve addition problems in different numerical fields (natural numbers, decimals) including commonly used fractions or equivalent measures. • Students solve multiplication or division problems, or two natural number operations, or operations that include relations of direct proportionality.	• Students interpret the information in a table and use the data obtained. • Students interpret and compare information from a dual-entry chart. • Students identify the pattern of a simple multiplicative sequence and continue it. • Students solve a problem that involves subtracting from decimal expressions that involve hundredths and using equivalencies between meters and centimetres. • Students solve a problem that requires division of natural numbers. • Students solve a problem that involves two operations: addition and multiplication of natural numbers. • Students solve a problem that involves the notions of halves and quarters. • Students recognise the congruency of the sides of a square and a rectangle in order to solve a problem.
I	• Students arrange natural numbers (up to 5 digits) and decimals (up to thousandths) in sequence. • Students recognise common geometrical shapes and the unit appropriate to the attribute being measured. • Students interpret information presented in graphic images in order to compare it and change it to a different form of representation. • Students solve problems involving a single addition using natural numbers.	• Students interpret direct information from a pie chart. • Students interpret direct information from a bar chart. • Students compare decimal expressions at the hundredths level in order to identify the smallest ones. • Students solve a problem with explicit data, using a solution strategy based on subtraction to calculate the complement in a field of three-digit natural numbers.

Table A.5. Description of Science performance levels for 6th grade primary students, SERCE study.

Level	Description	Specific examples
IV	• At this level, students use and transfer scientific knowledge involving a high degree of formalisation and abstraction to diverse types of situations. • Students are capable of identifying the scientific knowledge involved in a problem at hand. The problems are more formally stated and may relate to aspects, dimensions or analyses that are detached from the immediate setting	• Students interpret information presented in more complex tables than those used at lower levels, and with more variables. • Students detect patterns in order to classify and describe phenomena. • Students name changes of state, recognising the reversibility of the processes involved, and identifying the changes of state that are most present in everyday life. • Students recognise manifestations of different forms of energy in everyday life. • Students use knowledge of human health to interpret simple data such as blood test results. • Students interpret simple optical phenomena to explain shadows. • Students use explanatory models.
III	• At this level, students explain everyday situations on the basis of scientific evidence, use simple descriptive models to interpret natural phenomena, and draw conclusions from a description of experimental activities.	• Students explain the phenomena of day and night, and orient themselves in relation to the sun. • Students recognise changes of state and the reversibility of the processes involved, as well as the conservation of mass and volume. • Students recognise sources of energy and transformations of energy as well as their applications in the home and in everyday life. • Students differentiate physical and chemical phenomena. • Students recognise an electrical circuit and its parts, the role of a battery, and conductive and non-conductive materials. • Students recognise variables and the incidence of one or two variables in a situation. • Students analyse experimental situations and state the question that a situation presented in a text answers. • Students use simple explanatory models.
II	• Students apply school-acquired scientific knowledge, they compare, organise and interpret information, they identify causal relationships and they classify living beings in accordance with a criterion • Students access and discuss information presented in various formats (tables, charts, graphs, pictures).	• Students identify criteria for classifying living beings and the use of taxonomies. • Students establish food relationships among living things. • Students identify a simple trophic chain. • Students interpret and compare information presented in texts, graphs, data tables and figures. • Students analyse the results of simple experiments and draw conclusions. • Students recognise the states of matter and their characteristics.
I	• Students relate scientific knowledge to daily situations that are common in their surroundings. • Students are capable of explaining their immediate world based on their own observations and experiences and establish a simple and lineal relation with previously acquired scientific knowledge. • Students describe simple, concrete events involving cognitive processes such as remembering and identifying.	• Students use knowledge in familiar or everyday situations. • Students demonstrate knowledge and attitudes conducive to promoting healthy living habits with a strong impact on personal and social life. • Students can differentiate plants from animals.

B. Statistical data

Legend:

ISCED 0 :	Pre-primary education
ISCED 1 :	Primary education
ISCED 2 :	Secondary education (lower)
ISCED 3 :	Secondary education (upper)
ISCED 2 and 3 :	Secondary education (lower and upper combined)
ISCED 4 :	Post-secondary non tertiary education
ISCED 5 and 6 :	Tertiary education (non-university and university including doctoral programs)

Conventions:

...	No data available
*	National estimation
**	UIS estimation
.	Not applicable
-n	Data refer to the school or financial year (or period) n prior to the reference year or period.

Country	Source	Resources for education / ISCED 1, 2 and 3. 2008.													
		Public expenditure on education as % of GDP				Public expenditure on education as % of total government expenditure				Public expenditure per pupil as % GDP per capita				Public expenditure per student as a % of GDP per capita			
		2000		2008		2000		2008		Primary education (ISCED 1)		Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)		Primary education (ISCED 1)		Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)	
Anguila	AI	7.6	**,+1	3.5		14.4	-2	10.7		1.6	-1			30.4		...	
Antigua and Barbuda	AG	3.2	-1	...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
Netherland Antilles	AN	...		...		13.6		...		...		...				...	
Argentina	AR	4.6	**	4.9	-1	13.7	**	13.5	-1	14.7	-1	21.9	-1	7.3		10.7	
Aruba	AW	4.8		4.9	-1	16.0		17.3	-1	12.1	-1	17.5	-1	...		...	
Bahamas	BS	3.6	**	...		19.7	**	...		...		...		...		...	
Barbados	BB	5.6		6.7		14.4		15.7		27.7	*	24.8	*	...		2.7	
Belize	BZ	5.0		5.1	-1	16.3	**	16.8	*,-1	14.3	-1	21.0	-1	...		...	
Bermuda	BM	2.2	-2	1.2	-2	17.0	-2	...		7.7	-2	7.1	-2	...		...	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	BO	5.5		6.3	-2	15.8		...		13.7	**,-2	14.5	**,-2	...		...	
Brazil	BR	4.0		5.2	-1	12.0		16.1	-1	17.7	-1	18.5	-1	...		...	
Chile	CL	3.9		3.4	-1	16.0		18.2	-1	11.9	-1	13.4	-1	27.1		27.3	
Colombia	CO	3.7		3.9		17.4		14.9		12.4		14.8		18.0		31.1	
Costa Rica	CR	4.4		5.0		21.1	1	22.8		...		...		...		...	
Cuba	CU	7.2		13.6		15.1		18.5		44.7		51.9		1.6		...	
Dominica	DM	5.0	**,-1	4.8		...		11.3		22.2		19.0		...		...	
Ecuador	EC	1.3		...		8.0		...		...		...		...		...	
El Salvador	SV	2.5		3.6		18.6		13.1	*,-1	8.5		9.1		1.1		0.9	
Grenada	GD	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
Guatemala	GT	...		3.2		...		...		10.5		6.2		26.2		74.3	
Guyana	GY	8.5	**	6.1	-1	18.2	**	12.5	-1	14.4	-1	17.1	-1	...		...	
Haiti	HT	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
Honduras	HN	...		...		...		...		1.1		1.1		...		...	
Cayman Islands	KY	...		2.6	-2	...		...		15.8	-2	22.2	-2	...		...	
Turks and Caicos Islands	TC	...		...		16.8		...		...		...		...		...	
British Virgin Islands	VG	3.3	1	3.2	-1	9.0	1	14.6	-1	8.1	-1	17.1	-1	...		...	
Jamaica	JM	5.0		6.2		10.8		...		15.8		26.8		...		...	
Mexico	MX	4.9		4.8	-1	23.6		...		13.3	-1	13.5	-1	14.0		22.8	
Montserrat	MS	3.9		...		3.1	**	...		...		...		...		...	
Nicaragua	NI	3.9		...		17.8		...		9.8	-2	4.5	-2	...		...	
Panama	PN	5.0		3.8		7.3	1	...		7.5		10.0		...		...	
Paraguay	PY	5.3		4.0	-1	11.2		11.9	-1	10.7	-1	16.3	-1	15.8		20.1	
Peru	PE	2.9	1	2.7		21.3	1	20.7		8.2		10.0		20.3		38.3	
Dominican Republic	DO	1.9	**	2.2	-1	13.1	1	11.0	-1	7.4		6.5		50.0		54.7	
Saint Kitts and Nevis	KN	6.4		...		14.7		...		...		...		...		...	
Saint Lucia	LC	7.8	**	6.3		21.3	-1	12.9		...		...		...		...	
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	VC	9.4		7.0	-1	13.4	**	13.8	1	24.9	-1	...		...		...	
Suriname	SR	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
Trinidad and Tobago	TT	3.8	**	...		12.5	**	...		9.1	-1	9.9	**,-1	...		...	
Uruguay	UY	2.4		2.8	-2	11.8		11.6	-2	8.5	-2	10.4	-2	...		...	
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	VN	...		3.7	-1	...		...		9.1	-1	8.1	-1	...		...	

	Pre-primary education / ISCED 0. 2008.																	
	Education system Pre-primary (ISCED 0)		Enrolment (ISCED 0)				Net enrolment rate (ISCED 0)											
							2000						2008					
Source	Entrance age	Duration	MF		%F		MF		F		GPI		MF		F		GPI	
AI	3	2	450		50.9		90.4	**	...		...		94.5	**	90.9	**	0.92	**
AG	3	2	2.356		48.9		...		...		...		66.3	*, -1	66.2	*, -1	1.00	*, -1
AN	4	2	...		...		99.5		100.0		1.01		...		...		...	
AR	3	3	1 373 577	-1	49.5	-1	60.2		60.7		1.02		66.4	-2	66.9	-2	1.01	-2
AW	4	2	2 740		49.4		95.8		91.6		0.92		99.0		100.0		1.02	
BS	3	2	...		...		15.3	**	15.9	**	1.09	**	...		...		...	
BB	3	2	5 931		50.2	*	...		...		...		...		...		...	
BZ	3	2	5 801		50.5		25.0		24.5		0.96		38.2		39.0		1.04	
BM	4	1	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
BO	4	2	237 957	-1	49.1	-1	35.9		36.2		1.02		39.7	-1	39.9	-1	1.01	-1
BR	4	3	6 784 955		48.7		46.8		46.9		1.00		50.0		49.9		1.00	
CL	3	3	407 418	-1	50.1	-1	...		...		...		52.8	-1	54.1	-1	1.05	-1
CO	3	3	1 312 470		48.8		36.0	**	36.3	**	1.02	**	43.6		43.8		1.01	
CR	4	2	107 941		48.6		...		...		...		...		...		...	
CU	3	3	442 621		48.6		98.7		100.0		1.03		98.8		99.0		1.01	
DM	3	2	2 006		49.2		64.9	**	73.8	**	1.31	**	...		...		...	
EC	5	1	291 059	**	49.4	**	55.6		56.4		1.03		83.3	-1	83.7	-1	1.01	-1
SV	4	3	223 920		49.7		39.2		39.8	**	1.03	**	50.8		51.9		1.04	
GD	3	2	3 808		49.8		90.6	**, +1	91.9	**, +1	1.03	**, +1	95.2		97.2		1.04	
GT	3	4	477 920		49.5		37.3		36.9		0.98		28.2		28.4		1.01	
GY	4	2	27 153		48.8		...		...		...		70.9		70.8		1.00	
HT	3	3	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
HN	3	3	227 394		49.7		21.6		22.1	**	1.05	**	27.0		27.3		1.03	
KY	3	2	1 274		53.5		53.9	*	52.1	*	0.94	*	92.8	*	94.7	*	1.05	*
TC	4	2	...		...		...		...		...		73.4	**,-3	67.8	**,-3	0.85	**,-3
VG	3	2	653	-2	51.6	-2	47.4	*	46.0	*	0.94	*	83.8	*,-2	87.9	*,-2	1.10	*,-2
JM	3	3	133 903		50.3		76.9		77.8		1.02		84.3	-1	85.1	-1	1.02	-1
MX	4	2	4 756 870		49.5		67.0		67.7		1.02		96.9	-1	97.3	-1	1.01	-1
MS	3	2	...		...		...		...		...		72.7	*,-1	63.2	*,-1	0.76	*,-1
NI	3	3	220 529		49.2		28.6		29.1		1.04		55.8		56.1		1.01	
PN	4	2	94 928		49.1		43.9		44.1		1.01		61.0		61.2		1.00	
PY	3	3	152 363	-1	49.3	-1	25.9	-1	26.4	-1	1.04	-1	31.2	-1	31.6	-1	1.02	-1
PE	3	3	1 276 268		49.3		58.6		59.1		1.02		64.2	-1	64.5	-1	1.01	-1
DO	3	3	222 241		49.1		28.6		29.0		1.03		30.6		30.8		1.02	
KN	3	2	1 608		50.5		...		...		...		...		...		...	
LC	3	2	3 882		49.9		48.8		49.9	**	1.05	**	51.3		51.3		1.00	
VC	3	2	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
SR	4	2	17 467		49.5		...		...		...		80.1		79.9		0.99	
TT	3	2	29 585		49.2	*	49.5		50.4	**	1.04	**	65.7	*	65.6	*	1.00	*
UY	3	3	122 089	-1	49.1	-1	52.9		...		...		72.2	-1	72.6	-1	1.01	-1
VN	3	3	1 183 816		49.1		44.2		44.7		1.02		55.1	-1	55.3	-1	1.01	-1

	Pre-primary education / ISCED 0. 2008.																					
	School-life expectancy (ISCED 0)				School attendance rate, children one year younger than the official entrance age for primary												Trained teachers (ISCED 0)					
					By gender						By income quintile				By geographic area							
Source	2000		2008		MF		M		F		Quintile inferior		Quintile superior		Urban		Rural		MF		F	
AI	2.4	**	1.9	**	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
AG	...		1.4	*	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		28.9	-1	28.9	-1
AN	2.2		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
AR	1.8		2.1	-1	90.8	-2	91.0	-2	90.6	-2	84.7	-2	94.6	-2	...		...		...		...	
AW	2.0		2.1		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
BS	0.3		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
BB	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		49.7	-1	51.0	-1
BZ	0.5		0.8		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		9.3	-1	9.4	-1
BM	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
BO	0.9		1.0	-1	60.8	-1	58.6	-1	62.6	-1	56.9	-1	62.6	-1	63.3	-1	57.0	-1	...		...	
BR	1.8		2.0		93.6		93.2		93.9		90.4		99.6		94.4		90.1		...		...	
CL	1.6	**	1.7	-1	87.0	-2	88.2	-2	85.8	-2	81.5	-2	93.8	-2	89.6	-2	69.6	-2	...		...	
CO	1.2		1.5		80.3		79.5		81.2		73.6		93.8		85.2		69.0		100.0		100.0	
CR	0.9		1.4		73.0		69.4		77.1		67.1		95.4		78.4		66.7		80.7	-1	82.1	-1
CU	3.4		3.2	1	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		100.0	1	100.0	1
DM	1.4	*	1.5	**	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
EC	0.7		1.0	**	88.1		87.0		89.2		77.9		96.6		92.8		79.6		74.6	-1	76.4	-1
SV	1.3		1.8		75.3		75.1		75.5		59.7		98.0		83.0		66.0		89.7	-1	92.9	-1
GD	1.7	**	2.1		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		42.3	-1	42.3	-1
GT	1.0		1.2		99.2	-	98.4	-	100.0	-	98.4	-2	100.0	-2	100.0	-2	98.6	-2	...		...	
GY	2.4		1.7		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		52.5	-1	52.6	-1
HT					...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
HN	0.7		1.2		45.8	-1	45.1	-	46.6	-	36.6	-1	74.9	-1	52.0	-1	41.7	-1	...		...	
KY	1.1	*	2.1	*	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		100.0	-2	100.0	-2
TC					...		...		...		...		...		...		...		75.9	**, -3	78.3	**, -3
VG	1.5	*	1.8	*,-2	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
JM	2.5		2.6		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
MX	1.5		2.3		93.9		94.6		93.1		89.7		97.5		96.6		89.9		84.7		...	
MS			1.9	*,-1	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		100.0	-1	100.0	-1
NI	1.1		1.7		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		39.2	-1	39.0	-1
PN	0.9		1.4		78.7		81.4		75.8		68.6		96.2		85.4		69.6		41.0	-1	43.1	-1
PY	0.9		1.1	-1	60.9		61.7		60.2		40.9		87.1		71.7		50.0		...		...	
PE	1.8		2.2		68.1		66.9		69.3		58.5		72.1		75.7		57.7		...		...	
DO	1.0		1.0		77.6		73.7		81.8		81.1		88.8		77.1		78.5		77.1	*,-1	77.3	*,-1
KN	2.6	*			...		...		...		...		...		...		...		46.0	**,-3	46.0	**,-3
LC	1.3		1.4		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		55.9	**,-3	55.9	**,-3
VC			1.6	**,+1	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
SR	1.7	1	1.6		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		100.0		100.0	
TT	1.2		1.6	*	...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	
UY	1.9		2.4	-1	96.0		95.9		96.2		94.9		99.2		96.6		87.8		...		...	
VN	1.5		2.1		91.8		92.4		91.3		88.1		99.0		...		...		86.1	-3	87.1	-3

	Primary education / ISCED 1. 2008.									
	Education system Primary (ISCED 1)		Enrolment (ISCED 1)				TNet intake rate (ISCED 1)			
Source	Entrance age	Duration	MF		% F		MF		GPI	
AI	5	7	1 610		49.3		88.6	**	1.24	**
AG	5	7	11 569	-1	48.9	-1	...		...	
AN	6	6	...		...		...		...	
AR	6	6	4 685 696	-2	48.8	-2	98.6	-2	0.97	-2
AW	6	6	10 012		48.5		84.7	**, -3	1.02	**, -3
BS	5	6	37 122	-1	49.1	-1	70.7	-1	1.01	-1
BB	5	6	22 849	*	49.0	*	...		...	
BZ	5	6	51 994		48.6		65.2		0.96	
BM	5	6	4 678	-2	46.2	-2	...		...	
BO	6	6	1 512 002	-1	49.0	-1	66.1	-1	1.01	-1
BR	7	4	17 812 436		47.2		...		...	
CL	6	6	1 679 017	-1	47.8	-1	...		...	
CO	6	5	5 285 523		48.8		63.8		0.98	
CR	6	6	534 816		48.4		...		...	
CU	6	6	871 444		48.0		96.6		1.02	
DM	5	7	8 369		48.7		54.2	*	1.25	*
EC	6	6	2 039 168	-1	49.0	-1	90.0	-1	1.01	-1
SV	7	6	993 795		48.2		64.5		1.02	
GD	5	7	13 873		47.7		79.6	-1	0.95	-1
GT	7	6	2 500 575		48.0		71.6		0.98	
GY	6	6	107 456		48.8		62.0	-1	0.99	-1
HT	6	6	...		...		...		...	
HN	6	6	1 276 495		49.0		62.7		1.05	
KY	5	6	3 736		47.9		84.2	**,-1	1.06	**,-1
TC	6	6	...		...		54.2	**, -3	0.90	**, -3
VG	5	7	3 044	-1	48.8	-1	70.2	**, -3	1.12	**, -3
JM	6	6	310 021	-1	49.0	-1	73.5	**, -3	1.00	**, -3
MX	6	6	14 631 498	-1	48.8	-1	94.9		1.00	
MS	5	7	497	-1	49.3	-1	47.9	*,-1	1.37	*,-1
NI	6	6	944 341		48.4		66.7		1.02	
PN	6	6	445 107		48.2		...		...	
PY	6	6	894 422	-1	48.3	-1	64.6	-1	1.02	-1
PE	6	6	3 993 965	-1	49.0	-1	76.4	-1	1.00	-1
DO	6	6	1 305 661		47.4		55.8		0.96	
KN	5	7	6 474		49.8		...		...	
LC	5	7	20 938		49.1		68.7	**, -2	1.02	**, -2
VC	5	7	15 532		47.4		64.8	**, -3	0.89	**, -3
SR	6	6	69 604		48.3		86.1		1.00	
TT	5	7	130 880		48.5		67.5		1.00	
UY	6	6	359 439	-1	48.3	-1	...		...	
VN	6	6	3 439 199		48.3		63.2		1.02	

Primary education / ISCED 1. 2008.																					
Adjusted net enrolment rate (ISCED 1)												Repeaters in grade 1 of primary education (%)						Primary completion rate (ISCED 1)		
2000						2008						2008						2008		
MF		F		GPI		MF		F		GPI		MF		M		F		pob. (15-19)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)
99.3	**,+1	99.6	**,+1	1.01	**,+1	92.9	**	93.0	**	1.00	**	1.4	-3	2.9	-3	...		...	...	...
...		...		...		74.0	*,-1	73.4	*,-1	0.98	*,-1	3.4	-1	4.2	-1	2.5	-1	...	...	...
...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...
...		...		...		99.1	-3	...		...		10.0	-2	11.4	-2	8.4	-2	97.8	98.1	97.1
98.5		97.2		0.97		99.2		98.8		0.99		13.6		15.1		11.9		...	...	...
86.4	**	86.3	**	1.00	**	90.8	-1	92.4	-1	1.03	-1	...		...		...		99.7	99.1	98.8
...		...		...		...		...		...		a		a		a		97.7	98.5	98.4
91.6		91.4		1.00		99.7		99.9		1.00		14.0		15.4		12.5		81.1	79.1	76.6
...		...		...		100.0	-1	...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...
96.3		96.4		1.00		95.0	-1	95.4	-1	1.01	-1	2.5	-1	2.6	-1	2.4	-1	93.0	89.5	78.5
92.5		...		...		95.1		94.3		0.98		24.5	-3	...		...		94.7	93.8	90.3
...		...		...		94.5	-1	94.1	-1	0.99	-1	2.7	-1	3.1	-1	2.1	-1	98.7	98.2	97.1
96.8	**	96.7	**	1.00	**	93.5		93.6		1.00		5.1		5.7		4.4		93.6	91.1	89.0
...		...		...		...		...		...		14.8		16.4		12.9		94.1	90.7	89.0
99.1	-1	...		...		99.5		99.4		1.00		...		...		...		...	...	...
97.4	**	96.8	**	0.99	**	75.6	*	80.0	*	1.12	*	10.8		14.7		6.7		96.2	96.5	95.5
99.5		...		...		99.3	-1	...	-1	...	-1	2.9	-1	3.1	-1	2.6	-1	94.6	93.4	90.9
88.9	1	89.5	1	1.01	1	95.6		96.5		1.02		13.0		14.5		11.4		76.1	74.1	70.9
83.9	**	80.6	**	0.93	**	98.5		99.0		1.01		2.7		3.2		2.2		...	...	...
86.7		83.3		0.93		96.4		94.9		0.97		24.8		26.3		23.1		62.6	58.6	52.7
...		...		...		98.5		98.5		1.00		1.0		1.2		0.8		...	...	...
...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...
88.4		88.8		1.01		97.2		98.3		1.02		12.2		13.2		11.0		79.2	75.8	68.2
99.5	*	...		..		86.9	*	81.5	*	0.88	*	...		...		...		...	...	...
...		...		...		100.0	-1	...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...
97.8	**	...		...		97.1	**,-1	98.5	**,-1	1.03	**,-1	6.4	-1	10.3	-1	2.1	-1	...	...	...
93.2		93.4		1.00		85.5	-1	84.9	-1	0.99	-1	3.3	**,-1	4.1	**,-1	2.4	**,-1	...	...	...
99.4		99.9		1.01		99.4	-1	99.6	-1	1.00	-1	5.8	-1	6.9	-1	4.7	-1	95.7	93.0	88.5
...		...		...		96.2	*,-1	...		...		12.5	-1	14.3	-1	11.1	-1	...	...	...
82.7		83.5		1.02		93.4		93.8		1.01		20.0		21.6		18.2		70.8	70.9	64.6
98.8		98.8		1.00		98.9		98.5		0.99		8.7		9.9		7.5		94.6	94.9	92.7
96.5	-1	96.7	-1	1.00	-1	90.7	-1	90.8	-1	1.00	-1	7.4	-1	8.4	-1	6.3	-1	89.3	88.6	84.6
100.0		...		...		99.7	-1	...		...		3.9	-1	4.1	-1	3.7	-1	93.9	93.2	89.1
82.1		82.7		1.01		82.4		83.3		1.02		2.7		2.4		3.1		88.3	86.1	80.9
...		...		...		...		...		...		3.4		4.9		1.9		...	...	...
97.3	**	96.9	**	0.99	**	93.5		93.2		0.99		8.2		11.2		4.9		...	...	...
98.4	**	...		...		97.5		...		...		6.9		9.6		3.9		...	...	...
92.4	**	94.4	**	1.04	**	90.1		89.6		0.99		19.6		23.6		14.9		91.1	87.4	86.4
94.0		94.3		1.01		95.3		95.1		0.99		11.3		13.2		9.2		...	...	...
...		...		...		97.8	-1	97.9	-1	1.00	-1	14.4	-1	16.8	-1	11.8	-1	96.7	96.6	95.7
89.5		90.2		1.02		92.1		92.5		1.01		5.4		6.5		4.2		93.5	93.5	91.6

	Secondary education / ISCED 2 and 3. 2008.					
	Education system Secondary (ISCED 2-3)		Enrollment (ISCED 2-3)			
Source	Entrance age	Duration	% MF		% F	
AI	12	5	1 008		49.9	
AG	12	5	7 838	-1	51.1	-1
AN	12	6	...		...	
AR	12	6	3 481 085	-2	52.1	-2
AW	12	5	7 270		51.3	
BS	11	6	34 217	-1	50.4	-1
BB	11	5	20 337	*	50.3	*
BZ	11	6	31 120		51.4	
BM	11	7	4 518	-2	51.5	-2
BO	12	6	1 052 014	-1	48.4	-1
BR	11	7	23 423 870	-1	51.7	-1
CL	12	6	1 611 631	-1	49.8	-1
CO	11	6	4 772 189		51.4	
CR	12	5	380 813		50.0	
CU	12	6	865 602		48.6	
DM	12	5	7 309		49.0	
EC	12	6	1 141 866	-1	49.5	-1
SV	13	6	539 277		50.1	
GD	12	5	12 469		47.3	
GT	13	5	902 796		48.3	
GY	12	5	74 673		50.3	
HT	12	7	...		...	
HN	12	5	566 938		55.3	
KY	11	6	3 198		51.9	
TC	12	5	...		...	
VG	12	5	1 921	-1	53.8	-1
JM	12	5	257 186		50.4	
MX	12	6	11 122 276	-1	51.3	-1
MS	12	5	347	-1	46.4	-1
NI	12	5	462 198		52.6	
PN	12	6	266 760		50.9	
PY	12	6	532 103	-1	50.1	-1
PE	12	5	2 861 313	-1	50.0	-1
DO	12	6	909 331		53.7	
KN	12	5	4 396		50.8	
LC	12	5	16 014		50.9	
VC	12	5	11 641		52.3	
SR	12	7	48 134		55.5	
TT	12	5	95 275	**	51.1	**
UY	12	6	294 852	-1	48.8	-1
VN	12	5	2 224 214		51.4	

Secondary education / ISCED 2 and 3. 2008.																		
Net enrolment rate total secondary (ISCED 2-3)												Lower secondary completion rate (ISCED 2)			Upper secondary completion rate (ISCED 3)		
2000						2008						2008			2008		
MF		F		GPI		MF		F		GPI		pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)
98.7	**	...		...		80.8	**, -3	79.1	**, -3	0.96	**, -3	...	...	...	...	...	...
...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...
80.5		85.4		1.13		...		...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...
79.3	-1	81.9	-1	1.07	-1	79.4	-2	83.6	-2	1.11	-2	81.0	75.8	72.4	68.8	63.5	57.6
81.0		83.3		1.06		74.6		77.6		1.08		...	...	...	...	...	...
72.4	**	71.1	**	0.97	**	86.1	-1	88.5	-1	1.06	-1	97.0	96.2	95.4	86.5	84.7	83.0
...		...		...		...		...		...		97.3	96.1	93.9	94.9	91.5	89.1
56.5	**	58.4	**	1.07	**	63.4	-1	66.0	-1	1.09	-1	...	...	...	38.5	34.5	31.2
...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...
67.7	**, 1	67.0	**, 1	0.98	**, 1	69.9	-1	69.7	-1	0.99	-1	83.0	73.0	65.5	64.5	56.2	50.1
68.5		71.0		1.08		77.0	-1	80.9	-1	1.10	-1	77.6	71.6	62.0	55.3	54.2	45.3
...		...		...		85.3	-1	86.7	-1	1.03	-1	96.3	94.0	89.7	80.0	75.1	65.4
58.1	**	60.9	**	1.10	**	71.2		74.5		1.09		69.9	66.9	57.7	30.0	29.1	25.3
...		...		...		...		...		...		60.6	54.7	48.2	44.8	43.0	37.6
77.1		79.0		1.05		84.3		84.7		1.01		...	...	...	...	...	...
75.6	**	81.8	**	1.17	**	...		...		...		66.8	49.1	37.0	21.5	16.9	12.7
47.2		47.9		1.03		59.2	-1	59.8	-1	1.02	-1	69.8	62.1	55.7	55.5	49.3	44.3
47.0	**	46.5	**	0.98	**	55.0		55.8		1.03		58.4	53.9	50.9	36.5	36.0	33.1
...		...		...		88.6		84.6		0.91		...	...	...	...	...	...
26.9	**	25.5	**	0.90	**	39.9		38.7		0.94		35.1	31.7	28.3	25.6	23.8	22.5
...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...
...		...		...		...		...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...
...		...		...		...		...		...		40.1	31.3	26.6	29.5	24.4	20.7
88.9	*	89.2	*	1.01	*	80.6	*	78.4	*	0.94	*	...	...	...	...	...	...
...		...		...		70.2	**, -3	68.7	**, -3	0.96	**, -3	...	...	...	...	...	...
79.6	**	82.7	**	1.08	**	83.9	**,-1	88.7	**,-1	1.12	**,-1	...	...	...	...	...	...
77.7	**	79.0	**	1.03	**	76.7	-1	78.4	-1	1.05	-1	...	...	...	...	...	...
57.3	**	57.1	**	0.99	**	70.9	-1	72.1	-1	1.03	-1	77.3	69.7	63.6	45.3	37.5	32.0
...		...		...		95.6	*,-1	96.2	*,-1	1.01	*,-1	...	...	...	...	...	...
34.7		37.6		1.18		45.2	**	48.5	**	1.16	**	43.9	40.9	33.8	31.5	31.0	23.2
61.1	**	63.7	**	1.09	**	65.6		68.7		1.10		75.9	71.1	66.2	56.3	53.3	49.0
47.8		49.2		1.06		58.3	-1	60.2	-1	1.07	-1	67.4	59.4	48.2	48.4	44.9	34.8
65.1		64.0		0.97		75.9		76.1		1.01		81.3	74.4	68.2	73.8	67.2	60.7
39.2		43.5		1.24		57.7		63.4		1.22		78.5	71.9	60.3	52.4	45.9	34.1
...		...		...		78.7	**	77.3	**	0.96	**	...	...	...	...	...	...
62.5	**	69.7	**	1.26	**	79.6	**	82.1	**	1.06	**	...	...	...	...	...	...
67.9	**	78.4	**	1.36	**	90.3		95.4		1.12		...	...	...	...	...	...
64.8	**, 1	70.5	**, 1	1.19	**, 1	64.6	**,-3	74.1	**,-3	1.34	**,-3	62.0	60.4	58.7	14.8	13.5	11.4
66.7	**	69.8	**	1.10	**	73.9	**	76.4	**	1.07	**	...	...	...	...	...	...
...		...		...		67.7	-1	71.2	-1	1.11	-1	70.0	64.4	64.7	38.1	36.1	33.3
50.5		55.3		1.21		69.5		73.6		1.12		73.5	69.0	65.4	61.3	56.7	52.7

	Tertiary education / CINE 5A-5B-6. educational attainment and literacy. 2008.																	
	Number of students in tertiary education per 100.000 inhabitants (ISCED 5A-5B-6).				Educational attainment of the population 25 years and older					Literacy rate								
					No schooling or incomplete primary	ISCED 1	ISCED 2	ISCED 3+4	ISCED 5+6	Adults (15 years and more)				Young people (15 to 24 years)				
										2008				2008				
Source	2000		2008		% MF	% MF	% MF	% MF	% MF	MF		GPI		MF		GPI		
AI	...		401	**	...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
AG	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
AN	1 408		...		...	...	...	...	...	96.3	**	1.00	**	98.3	**	1.00	**	
AR	4 802		5 615	-1	19.2	35.0	11.6	23.2	11.1	97.7	**	1.00	**	99.1	**	1.00	**	
AW	1 778		2 152							98.1	**	1.00	**	99.3	**	1.00	**	
BS	...		...		1.5	8.3	19.1	70.2	0.3	...		...		...		...		
BB	...		...		13.6	8.3	53.8	23.1	1.1	...		...		...		...		
BZ	...		1 457		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
BM	3 126	*.+1	1 387	**.-1	...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
BO	3 382		3 802	*.-1	41.7	12.8	7.1	23.8	14.0	90.7	-1	0.90	-1	99.4	-1	0.99	-1	
BR	1 607		3 116		31.0	26.5	13.0	21.2	8.1	90.0	-1	1.01	-1	97.8	-1	1.02	-1	
CL	2 965		4 568	-1	...	...	...	...	...	98.6		1.00		99.2		1.00		
CO	2 376		3 344		30.2	29.2	5.3	25.4	9.7	93.4		1.00		98.0		1.01		
CR	...		...		22.0	28.9	13.8	18.5	15.0	96.0	**	1.00	**	98.1	**	1.01	**	
CU	1 435		8 665	1	...	...	...	...	...	99.8	**	1.00	**	100.0	**	1.00	**	
DM	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
EC	...		4 027		...	...	...	...	...	84.2	-1	0.94	-1	95.4	-1	1.00	-1	
SV	1 957		2 303		47.9	15.2	12.5	13.8	10.6	84.0		0.93		96.0		1.01		
GD	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
GT	...		1 771	-1	...	...	...	...	...	73.8	**	0.86	**	86.0	**	0.95	**	
GY	...		1 141		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
HT	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
HN	1 483		2 053		...	...	...	...	...	83.6	-1	1.00	-1	93.9	-1	1.03	-1	
KY	974	**	1 697	*	...	...	...	...	...	98.9	-1	1.00	-1	98.9	-1	0.99	-1	
TC	...		5	**	...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
VG	3 776	**	74	**	...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
JM	1 611		2 486		...	...	...	...	...	85.9	**	1.13	**	95.0	**	1.07	**	
MX	2 016		2 464		29.2	19.0	21.5	15.3	14.9	92.9		0.97		98.4		1.00		
MS	...		997	**	...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
NI	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	78.0	-3	1.00	-3	87.0	-3	1.04	-3	
PN	4 079		4 034	-1	23.6	28.7	13.7	23.1	10.4	93.5	**	0.99	**	96.4	**	1.00	**	
PY	1 574		2 984	-1	35.8	25.3	11.4	23.6	3.7	94.6	-1	0.98	-1	98.8	-1	1.00	-1	
PE	3 150		3 431	**.-2	27.7	20.6	5.4	26.0	16.3	89.6	-1	0.89	-1	97.4	-1	0.99	-1	
DO	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	88.2	-1	1.00	-1	95.8	-1	1.02	-1	
KN	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
LC	...		2 193		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
VC	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	...		...		...		...		
SR	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	90.7	**	0.95	**	95.3	**	0.99	**	
TT	...		...		...	...	...	...	...	98.7	**	0.99	**	99.5	**	1.00	**	
UY	2 799		4 823	-1	...	...	...	...	...	97.9	-1	1.01	-1	98.8	-1	1.01	-1	
VN	...		...		25.1	28.1	10.7	21.7	12.8	95.2	-1	1.00	-1	98.4	-1	1.01	-1	

	Parity in the conclusion of primary and secondary education / ISCED 1, 2 and 3. 2008.											
	Parity in primary completion (ISCED 1)											
	Gender parity			Rural/urban parity			Lowest quintile/highest quintile parity			Indigenous/non-indigenous parity		
Source	pob. (15-19)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (15-19)	pob.. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (15-19)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (15-19)	pob. (20-24)	pob.. (25-29)
AI	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AR	1.01	1.01	1.00	...	...	...	0.96	0.95	0.92	...	...	...
AW	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BS	1.00	1.00	1.00	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BB	1.01	1.01	1.01	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BZ	1.05	1.02	0.97	0.71	0.74	0.81	...	...	...	...	...	...
BM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BO	0.98	0.98	0.88	0.91	0.84	0.61	0.89	0.73	0.43	0.94	0.92	0.87
BR	1.03	1.03	1.03	0.93	0.88	0.78	0.91	0.86	0.75	0.98	0.99	0.99
CL	1.01	1.01	1.00	0.99	0.96	0.93	0.98	0.95	0.92	0.99	0.99	0.96
CO	1.03	1.02	1.02	0.89	0.80	0.73	0.89	0.80	0.72	...	...	...
CR	1.01	1.00	1.01	0.95	0.91	0.88	0.92	0.76	0.73	...	...	...
CU	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
DM	1.01	1.02	1.03	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
EC	1.01	1.00	1.00	0.95	0.91	0.86	0.93	0.87	0.81	0.94	0.91	0.89
SV	1.05	0.98	0.90	0.75	0.67	0.55	0.63	0.49	0.39	...	...	...
GD	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
GT	0.86	0.82	0.83	0.64	0.50	0.43	0.42	0.18	0.17	0.70	0.59	0.52
GY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HN	1.06	1.06	1.05	0.78	0.72	0.63	0.65	0.46	0.38	...	...	...
KY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
JM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MX	...	...	...	0.95	0.92	0.83	0.90	0.82	0.69	...	...	...
MS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
NI	1.15	1.12	1.09	0.62	0.56	0.45	0.49	0.42	0.33	0.81	0.89	1.03
PN	1.00	0.99	1.01	0.90	0.88	0.86	0.87	0.82	0.77	0.75	0.75	0.63
PY	1.02	1.00	0.97	0.89	0.84	0.81	0.83	0.77	0.63	0.88	0.84	0.78
PE	0.99	0.96	0.94	0.92	0.86	0.77	0.87	0.78	0.70	...	...	...
DO	1.09	1.08	1.08	0.91	0.84	0.79	0.88	0.90	0.78	...	...	...
KN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
LC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SR	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
UY	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.00	1.00	0.98	0.93	0.90	0.88	...	...	...
VN	1.04	1.05	1.06	...	...	...	0.93	0.89	0.85	...	...	...

	Parity in the conclusion of primary and secondary education / ISCED 1, 2 and 3. 2008.											
	Parity in lower secondary completion (ISCED 2)											
	Gender parity index			Rural/urban parity index			Lowest quintile/highest quintile parity index			Indigenous/non-indigenous parity index		
Source	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)
AI	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AR	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.63	0.47	0.48	...	...	...
AW	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BB	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BZ	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BO	0.93	0.84	0.84	0.71	0.50	0.43	0.56	0.29	0.30	0.87	0.82	0.82
BR	1.10	1.08	1.13	0.64	0.50	0.41	0.52	0.40	0.30	0.95	0.93	0.92
CL	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.91	0.82	0.79	0.91	0.84	0.79	0.98	0.90	0.86
CO	1.06	1.06	1.09	0.46	0.39	0.29	0.48	0.37	0.28	...	...	...
CR	1.10	1.06	1.10	0.64	0.59	0.50	0.36	0.24	0.21			
CU	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
DM	1.35	1.49	1.66	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
EC	1.02	1.01	1.00	0.57	0.47	0.39	0.52	0.36	0.28	0.65	0.60	0.50
SV	0.95	0.90	0.92	0.53	0.41	0.35	0.29	0.23	0.21			
GD	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
GT	0.82	0.84	0.83	0.30	0.28	0.20	0.06	0.04	0.01	0.44	0.38	0.36
GY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HN	1.14	1.18	1.17	0.36	0.25	0.19	0.11	0.05	0.03			
KY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
JM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MX	1.00	0.96	0.97	0.77	0.65	0.59	0.53	0.40	0.34	...	...	...
MS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
NI	1.27	1.16	1.28	0.36	0.22	0.23	0.20	0.11	0.07	0.77	0.96	0.86
PN	...	...	...	0.61	0.53	0.47	0.46	0.34	0.28	0.45	0.38	0.17
PY	1.05	0.95	0.83	0.56	0.48	0.45	0.47	0.24	0.23	0.57	0.48	0.37
PE	0.94	0.91	0.89	0.66	0.50	0.43	0.53	0.37	0.32	...	...	...
DO	1.12	1.07	1.13	0.78	0.69	0.63	0.84	0.68	0.57	...	...	...
KN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
LC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SR	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
UY	1.14	1.13	1.17	0.71	0.53	0.55	0.35	0.27	0.36	...	...	...
VN	1.19	1.22	1.21	...	...	...	0.62	0.53	0.52	...	...	...

	Parity in the conclusion of primary and secondary education / ISCED 1, 2 and 3. 2008.											
	Parity in secondary completion (ISCED 3)											
	Gender parity index			Rural/urban parity index			Lowest quintile/highest quintile parity index			Indigenous/non-indigenous parity index		
Source	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)	pob. (20-24)	pob. (25-29)	pob. (30-34)
AI	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
AR	1.13	1.12	1.13	...	...	...	0.49	0.32	0.25	...	...	...
AW	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BS	1.25	1.02	1.11	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BB	1.05	1.06	1.07	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BZ	1.10	1.21	0.94	0.34	0.40	0.43	...	...	...	...	...	...
BM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BO	0.94	0.86	0.86	0.55	0.38	0.35	0.37	0.11	0.21	0.77	0.78	0.82
BR	1.20	1.15	1.18	0.45	0.37	0.32	0.25	0.21	0.15	0.84	0.87	0.86
CL	1.03	1.03	0.99	...	...	...	0.64	0.48	0.40	0.80	0.74	0.68
CO	1.13	1.13	1.13	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.11	0.07	0.06	...	...	...
CR	1.16	1.15	1.18	0.57	0.55	0.44	0.19	0.14	0.09	...	...	...
CU	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
DM	1.25	1.02	1.11	...	...	...	0.53	0.45	0.35	...	...	...
EC	1.09	1.01	1.00	0.47	0.39	0.31	0.37	0.28	0.17	0.53	0.52	0.46
SV	0.98	0.93	1.00	0.34	0.27	0.20	0.12	0.11	0.10	...	...	...
GD	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
GT	0.88	0.86	0.97	0.23	0.25	0.14	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.39	0.35	0.30
GY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
HN	1.18	1.24	1.14	0.29	0.20	0.15	0.07	0.02	0.02	...	...	...
KY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VG	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
JM	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
MX	1.03	0.98	1.00	0.56	0.43	0.43	0.20	0.12	0.08	...	...	...
MS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
NI	1.41	1.23	1.17	0.30	0.19	0.18	0.14	0.07	0.02	0.66	0.81	0.83
PN	1.18	1.17	1.12	0.50	0.45	0.42	0.24	0.19	0.16	0.20	0.28	0.10
PY	1.05	0.96	0.90	0.43	0.38	0.37	0.25	0.13	0.14	0.41	0.41	0.34
PE	0.95	0.92	0.87	0.60	0.43	0.36	0.46	0.30	0.26	...	...	...
DO	1.31	1.21	1.28	0.67	0.52	0.54	...	...	...	...	...	...
KN	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
LC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
VC	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SR	1.42	1.38	0.95	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
UY	1.41	1.40	1.42	0.60	0.39	0.37	0.10	0.04	0.07	...	...	...
VN	1.25	1.28	1.31	...	...	...	0.50	0.39	0.37	...	...	...

Source	Teachers / ISCED 1, 2 y 3. 2008.							
	Pupil-teacher ratio				Trained teachers (%)			
	Primary education (ISCED 1)		Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)		Primary education (ISCED 1)		Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)	
AI	14.1		10.4	-1	57.9		60.4	-1
AG	21.5	-1	...		67.286	-1	...	
AN	...		...		...		...	
AR	16.3	-2	12.8	-2	...		...	
AW	17.6	-1	14.9	-2	99.5		98.9	
BS	13.8	-1	12.3	-1	85.140	-1	85.9	-1
BB	13.5	*	14.6	-2	61.0	*	57.1	-2
BZ	22.6		17.0		42.8		34.7	
BM	8.3	-2	6.0	-2	100.0	-2	100.0	-2
BO	24.2	-1	18.2	-1	...		...	
BR	23.9	-1	18.6	-1	...		...	
CL	25.1	-1	23.7	-1	...		...	
CO	29.4		25.6		100.0		96.8	
CR	19.0		15.6		86.0		83.3	
CU	9.4		9.6		100.0		100.0	
DM	16.7		14.4		59.4		31.0	
EC	18.1		21.5		71.6	-1	70.5	-1
SV	32.6		26.3		93.2		87.5	
GD	22.6		16.6		73.5		29.3	
GT	29.4		16.6		...		...	
GY	25.6		20.9		58.5		54.9	
HT	...		...		...		...	
HN	33.3		...		36.4		...	
KY	13.3		10.0		95.8		98.3	
TC	...		...		...		...	
VG	14.2	-1	8.6	-1	71.6	-1	...	
JM	27.7	**,-3	18.5	**,-3	...		...	
MX	28.0	-1	17.9	-1	...		...	
MS	16.0	-1	12.0	-1	77.4	-1	58.6	-1
NI	29.2		28.6		72.7		58.9	
PN	24.2		15.4		91.3		90.9	
PY	...		...		...		...	
PE	22.2	-1	18.0	-1	...		...	
DO	19.6		24.5		89.2		85.5	
KN	16.1		10.5		63.6		35.7	
LC	21.4		16.4		87.8		57.0	-2
VC	17.0		19.5		83.0		55.9	
SR	16.0	-2	14.1	-2	...		...	
TT	17.2	*	13.5	**	86.6		...	
UY	15.5	-1	13.8	-1	...		...	
VN	16.2		10.2		83.5		80.3	

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Regional Monitoring Report on Progress Toward Quality Education for All in Latin America and the Caribbean, EFA 2012 is intended to describe the current condition of education in the region, using the six goals of Education for All (EFA) as a guideline.

The information presented in this publication addresses a broad range of topics including the progress of educational systems in the region and major trends and challenges that need to be faced to achieve quality education for the entire population. Overall, it constructs a general picture of education in the region over the last decade using available information and comparative analysis of its countries.

The publication is intended to contribute to our understanding of the state of the education in Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to enrich the debate on this topic and provide input for decision making on educational policy design, management and assessment.

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