

## GLOBAL EDUCATION DIGEST 2011

### Regional Profile: Latin America and the Caribbean

#### Overview

The Latin American and Caribbean group of countries has achieved universal enrolment and completion at the primary education level and, increasingly, at the lower secondary level. Gender parity has also been attained at the primary level, but girls in the region are more likely than boys to participate in secondary education. However, in some countries of the region, poverty and geographic location compound the challenge of equal access to school. Overall, girls make up 50% of the out-of-school population at the primary level and 49% at the secondary level.

#### Key indicators

##### **Primary school enrolment and completion**

The adjusted net enrolment rate (ANER) for Latin America and the Caribbean is 95%, and the primary completion ratio stands at 100%. Over the past decade, the Caribbean has seen a slight decline in primary enrolment ratios.

##### **Transition from primary to lower secondary school**

The effective transition rate from primary to lower secondary education, a new indicator developed by the UIS to measure demand for secondary education, ranged from 88% (Granada and Uruguay) to 100% (Argentina and the Bahamas), with the exception of Suriname at 68%.

##### **Enrolment in lower secondary education**

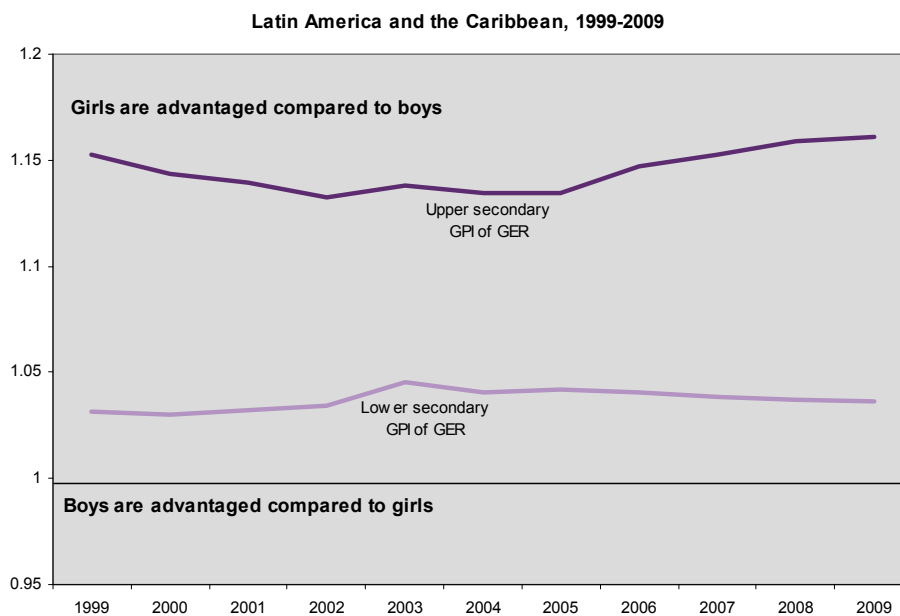
The achievement of universal primary education in Latin America and the Caribbean has spurred demand for lower secondary education. Gross enrolment at the lower secondary level was 102.3%.

In 25 countries in the region, lower secondary school is compulsory; however, in reality few countries are achieving full enrolment. In Guatemala, for example, the gross enrolment ratio for lower secondary education was 62%.

##### **Enrolment in upper secondary education**

After East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean made the most progress in gross enrolment ratios at the upper secondary level, climbing from 62% to 75% between 1999 and 2009.

**Figure 1. Gender disparities in lower and upper secondary education**



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

### **Gender parity in secondary education**

Historically both girls and boys have had equal access to secondary education. Nevertheless, since the mid-1980s, a disparity against boys has emerged. In 2009, the secondary GER for girls was 93%, while the ratio for boys stood at 86%.

### **Out-of-school children of lower secondary school age**

A modest proportion of the world's out-of-school children of lower secondary school age, approximately 5%, live in Latin America and the Caribbean. This represents substantial progress, since this proportion was 11% in 1999. Unlike children in the Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa, many of these children can be expected to attend school in the future as late entrants.

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