



# PISA

## Latin America and the Caribbean

By María Soledad Bos, Alison Elías, Emiliana Vegas and Pablo Zoido

### HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE LOW PERFORMERS?

Half of the students in the region present low levels of performance. If all 15-year-olds who are outside of the education system or still in primary education were included, this proportion would be even greater.

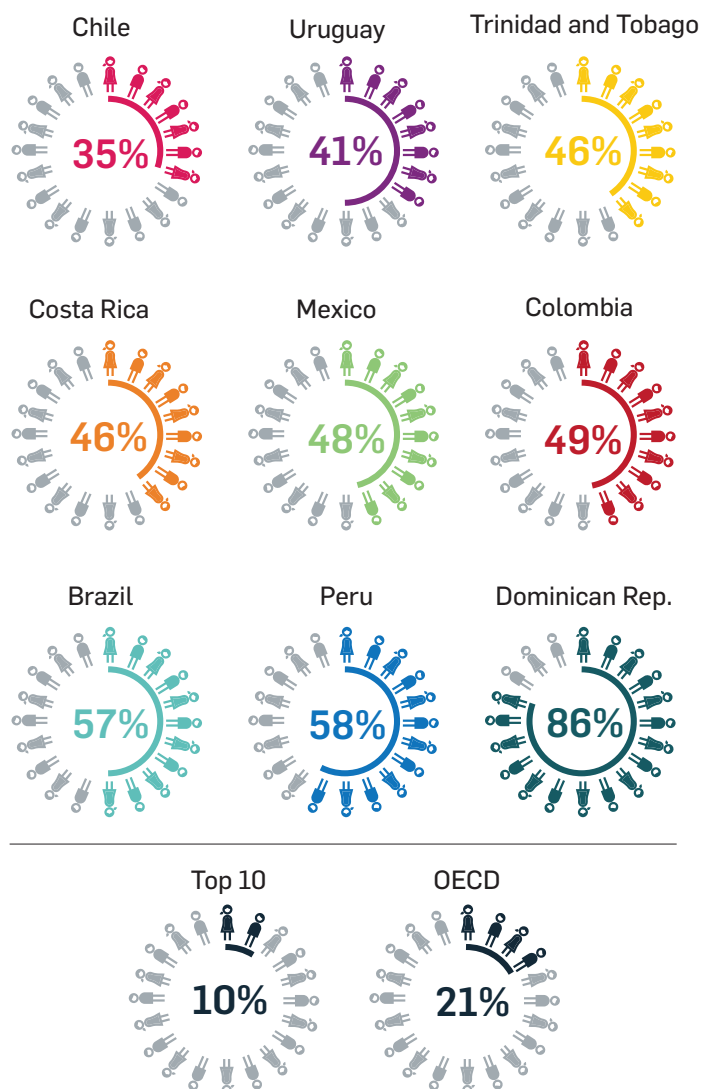
#### A high percentage of students perform poorly in science

- On average, half of the students in the region do not achieve the basic level of learning in science (defined by PISA as level 2).
- Chile is the country with the lowest percentage of low performing students (35%). The Dominican Republic has the highest proportion of low performing students in science (86%).
- In comparison, the average of low performing students in OECD countries is 21%.
- In Uruguay, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica, Mexico and Colombia, the percentage of low performing students is double than the OECD average. In Brazil and Peru, this percentage is almost three times greater than the OECD average, and in the Dominican Republic it is four times greater.
- Within the 10 countries that lead the global ranking in science, low performers make up only 10%.

#### Students with low performance levels are unable to complete basic tasks

- In science, they cannot explain common phenomena, or make inferences based on simple research.
- In reading, they cannot identify the main idea of a text, understand relations, or infer information that is not directly provided in the text.
- In mathematics, they cannot use basic formulae, procedures, or rules to resolve problems with integers.

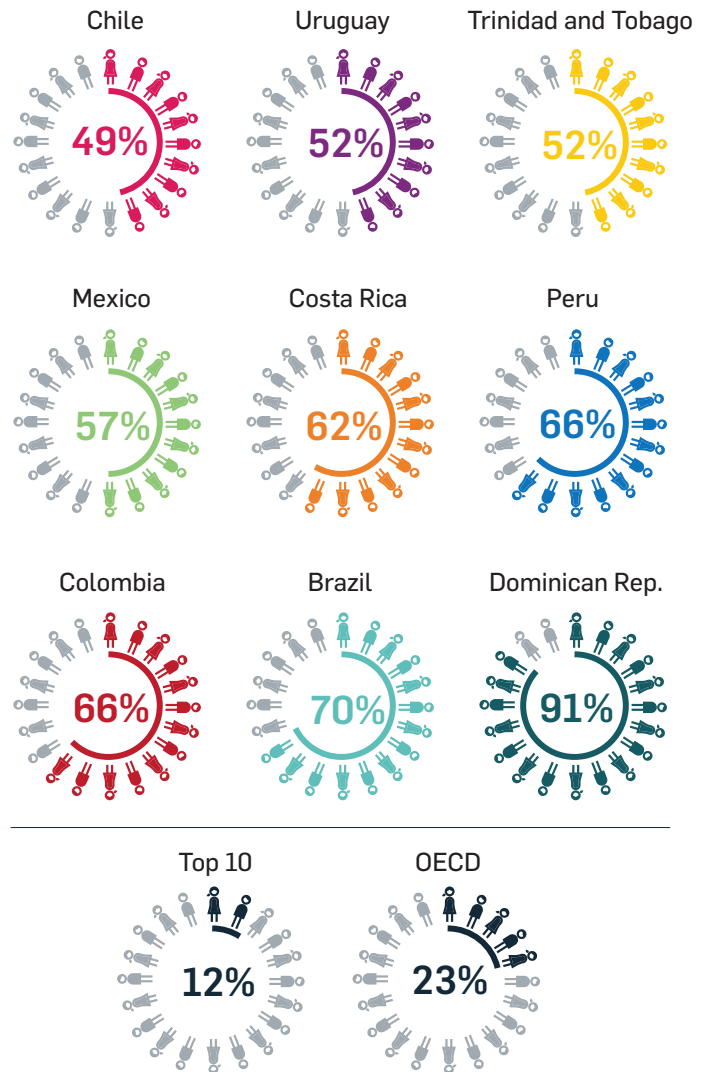
#### PERCENTAGE OF LOW PERFORMING STUDENTS IN SCIENCE, PISA 2015



## Half of all students in the region do not have basic reading skills

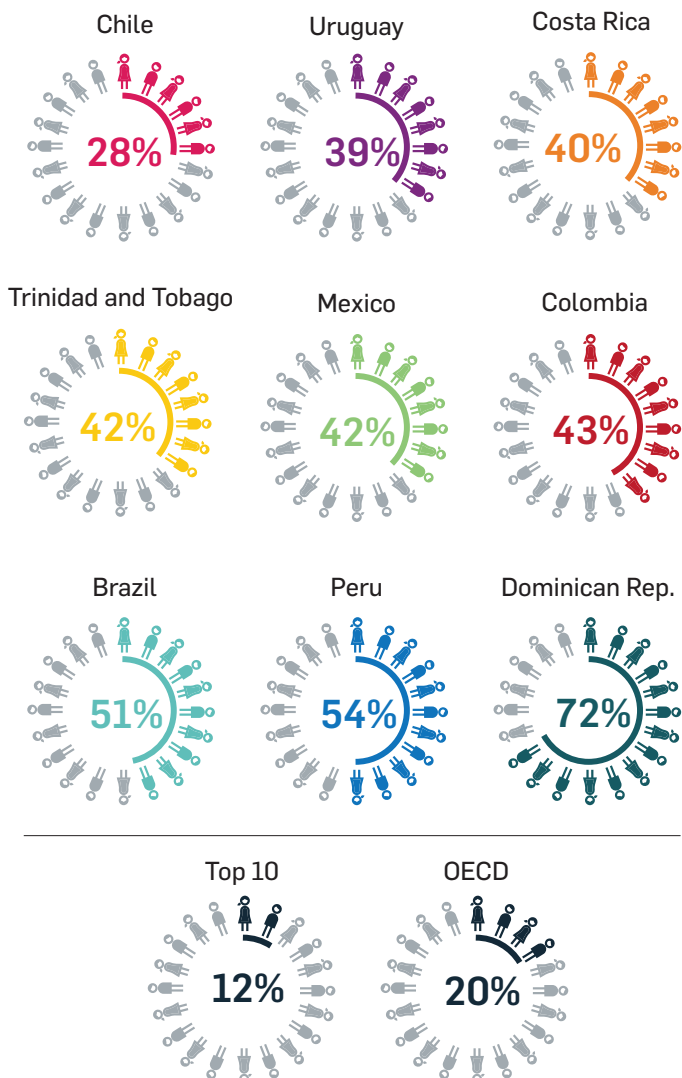
- The percentage of low performing students in reading was slightly lower than in science, yet it is still very high (46%).
- In reading, Chile again registered the lowest percentage of low performing students (28%), while the Dominican Republic has the highest percentage of low performing students (72%).
- In comparison, only 20% of students from OECD countries lack basic reading skills.
- Of the 10 countries that lead the ranking in reading, low performing students make up only 12%.

## PERCENTAGE OF LOW PERFORMING STUDENTS IN MATHEMATICS, PISA 2015



Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.2.4a

## PERCENTAGE OF LOW PERFORMING STUDENTS IN READING, PISA 2015



Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.2.4a

## An even higher percentage of students in the region do not achieve basic mathematics skills

- 63% of students in the region do not achieve basic mathematics skills (level 2)
- The percentage of low performing students in mathematics is higher than in science or reading.
- The Dominican Republic has an alarming proportion of low performing students (91%).
- In comparison, low performing students within OECD countries make up 23%, and only 12% of students underperform in the 10 countries with the best results in mathematics.

## If all 15-year-olds were taken into account, two out of every three would not achieve basic skills

- If in addition to low performing students in PISA (those that do not achieve level 2), all 15-year-olds who did not take the test (15-year-olds who are outside of the educational system or are still in primary education) were included, the total percentage of young people in the region without basic skills would increase from 50% to 66%.
- PISA evaluates 15-year-old students who are in grade 7 or higher, and does not include 15-year-olds who are outside of the education system or still in primary education. It is assumed that young people outside of the system or still in primary education do not have the basic skills measured by PISA.
- Upon including these young people, 20 percentage points are added to low performance rates in Mexico and Costa Rica, 17 in Uruguay, 13 in Chile, Brazil, Colombia and Trinidad and Tobago, 11 in Peru and 4 in the Dominican Republic.
- Chile is still the country with the lowest percentage of low performing young people (48%). Meanwhile, 90% of young people in the Dominican Republic show low performance levels.

## Upon including these young people, the lack of basic skills increases in every country.

- The inclusion of young people outside of the system or still in primary education would increase the percentage of young people without basic skills from 21% to 29% in OECD countries.
- Among the 10 countries that lead the ranking, the percentage of young people without basic skills would increase from 10% to 25%.
- Among the leading countries, the Chinese provinces of Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Guangdong stand out, in which the percentage of low performing young people would increase from 16% to 46%, and Viet Nam, where this figure would increase from 6% to 54%. This larger proportion of young people without basic skills would cause these countries and economies to lose their leading position in the global ranking.
- It should be noted that the OECD's PISA for Development initiative has developed a methodology to measure the skills of young people who are not included in the PISA test, the results of which will be available for Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay in 2018.

### PERCENTAGE OF 15-YEAR-OLDS WITHOUT BASIC SKILLS, PISA 2015



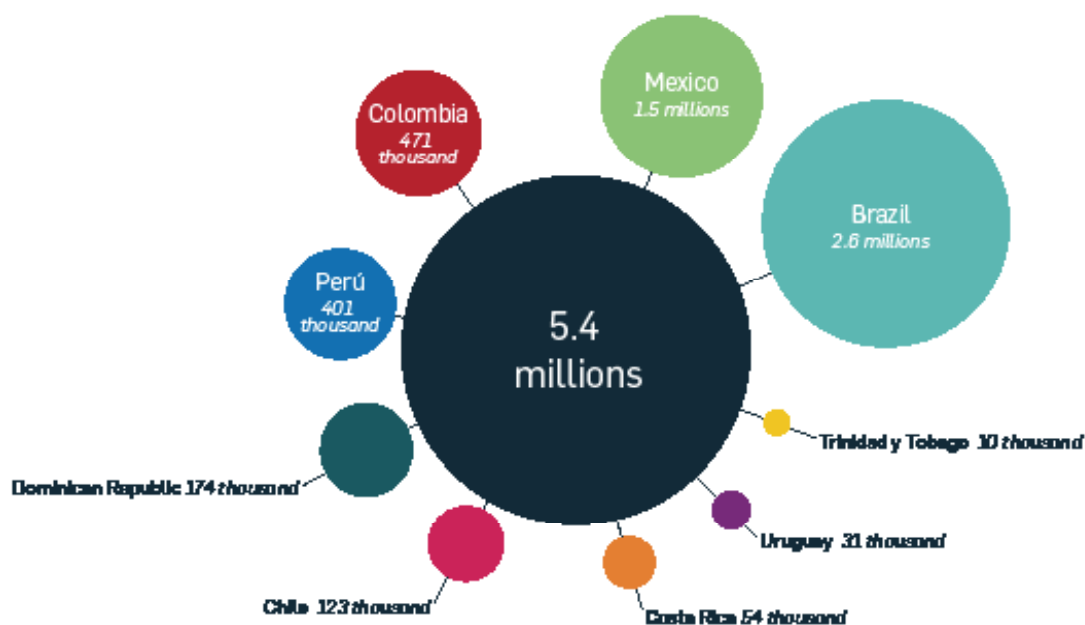
## 5.4 million 15-year-olds in the participating countries from the region do not have basic skills

- In Brazil, 2.6 million young people do not achieve basic skills, either because they are below level 2 (1.6 million young people), outside of the education system or still in primary education.
- In Mexico there are 1.5 million young people without basic skills, while in Colombia and Peru this figure reaches almost half a million young people.
- In the remaining countries, the number of young people without basic skills is lower, but still significant given the size of their populations.

## Few education systems reduced the percentage of low performing students, although many improved inclusion

- Peru has been able to reduce the percentage of low performing students in the three subjects.
- Colombia was able to significantly reduce the percentage of low performing students in mathematics and science.
- The remaining countries did not show significant changes.
- Although many countries in the region were not able to reduce low performance levels, they have increased the percentage of young people assessed. In Costa Rica and Uruguay, this figure increased by about 10%, in Mexico by 13%, and in Colombia and Brazil by 15%.
- The improvements in inclusion make the region's progress even more noteworthy

## 15-YEAR-OLDS WITHOUT BASIC SKILLS, PISA 2015



Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.6.1

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References: OECD (2016). PISA 2015 Results Excellence and Equity in Education (Volume I).



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