

LEARNING FOR LIFE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS AND THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

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Children and young people need to develop cognitive and socio-emotional skills to reach their full potential and achieve personal and professional success in the 21st century. Education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean have made efforts to develop the socio-emotional skills of their students.

The current situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the need for skills such as **stress management, adaptability, and empathy**, as these are crucial to cope with the new normality and mitigate the negative impacts of the crisis.



>>> In *Learning for Life: The Development of Socio-Emotional Skills and the Role of Teachers*, we analyze the inclusion of socio-emotional skills in 12 education systems in the region and the training that teachers receive to develop these skills in their students.

We analyze the following education systems: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay.

In recent years, important progress has been achieved in incorporating socio-emotional skills in the region's education systems.

- Almost all the education systems analyzed incorporate socio-emotional learning into their learning standards or curricula.
- Several of them have even developed guidelines to implement the standards and thus promote the development of these skills in schools.
- Some countries have also made efforts to train teachers in socio-emotional development and to measure students' socio-emotional skills.

Despite progress, the region still faces **challenges to effectively incorporate socio-emotional learning in schools**. In the study, we highlight four main challenges:



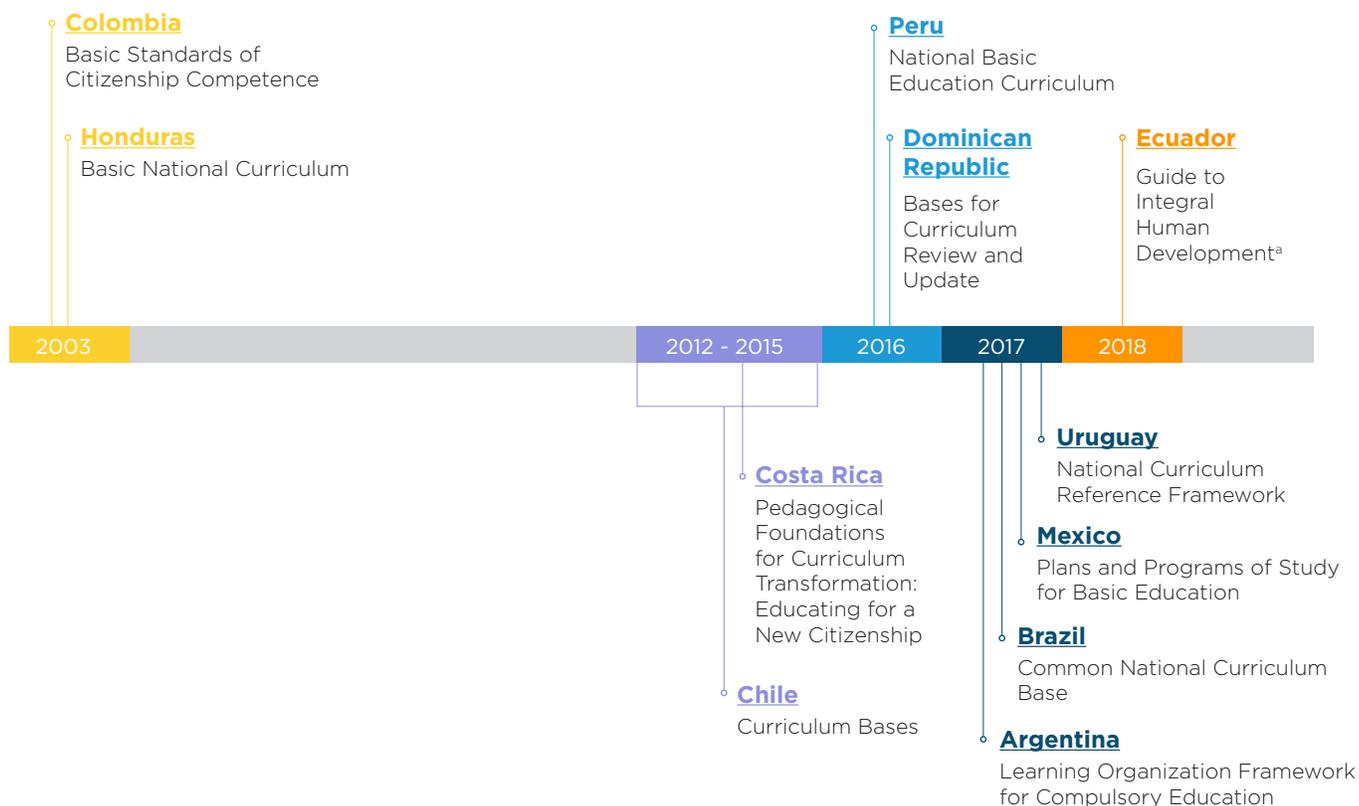
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CLEARLY DEFINING IN THE LEARNING STANDARDS WHAT SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED IN EACH EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE EXPECTED LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT.

To effectively incorporate them, one must be explicit about the specific skills to be developed, set learning objectives appropriate to the student's age or grade, and integrate these learning goals across the curriculum.

Although almost all the countries analyzed in the region incorporate socio-emotional development in the learning standards, there is great heterogeneity in the way in which socio-emotional skills are defined and organized.

LEARNING STANDARDS THAT INCLUDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS



Notes:

a. In Ecuador, the agreement MINEDUC-MINEDUC-2018-00089-A establishes the "Hour for Integral Human Development" in the curriculum.



DEVELOPING MEASUREMENTS THAT ALLOW ESTABLISHING A DIAGNOSIS OF STUDENTS' SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS AND MONITORING THEIR PROGRESS.

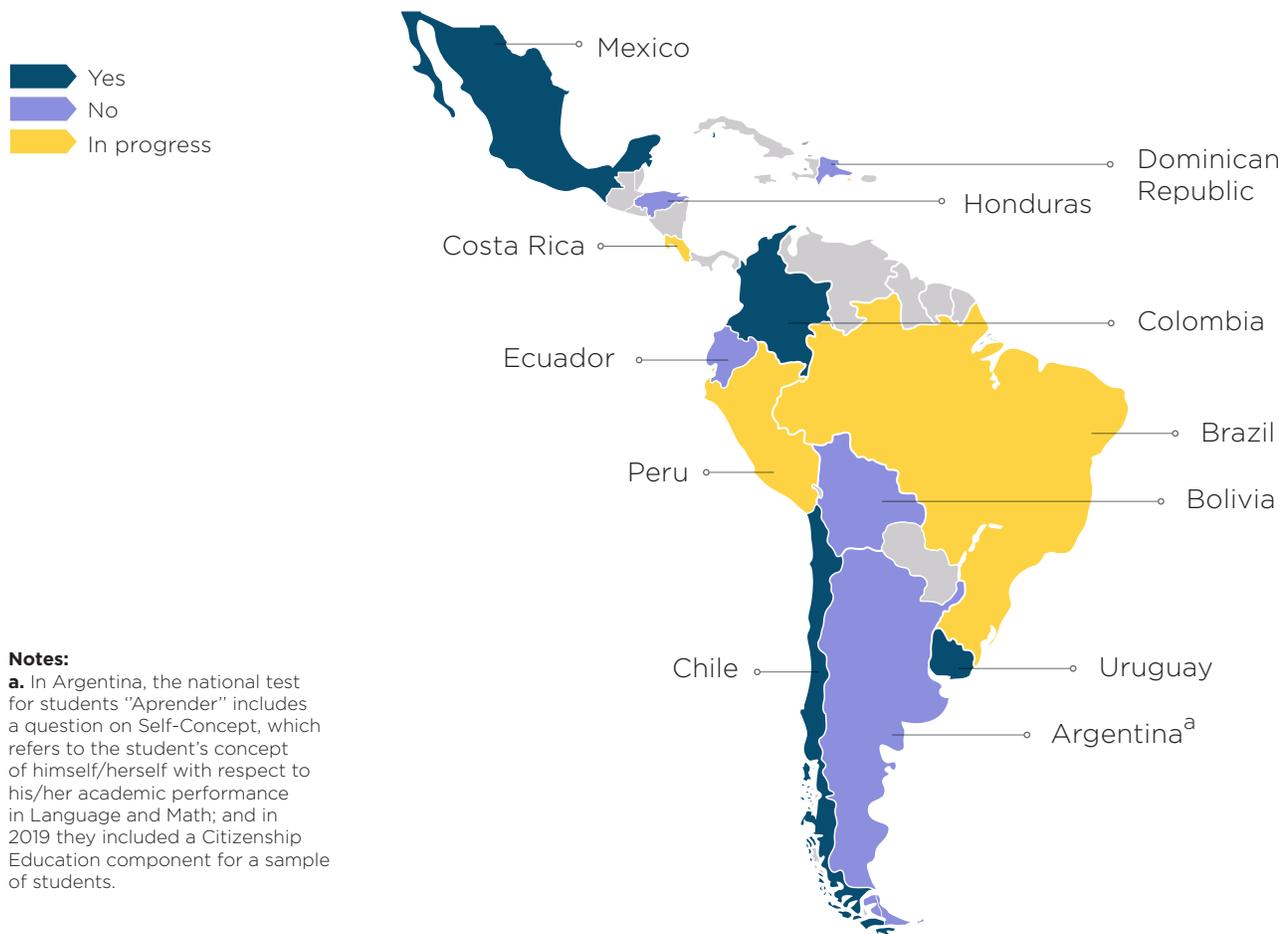
The lack of clarity in the definition of socio-emotional skills in some learning standards, in addition to the limited knowledge about the most appropriate instruments to measure them, has made it difficult to develop standardized and systemic measurements.

Measuring socio-emotional skills in a systemic way is a complex process, but it is important that countries

have instruments that allow them to measure the level and progress of these skills in students.

Only four countries (Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay) assess students' socio-emotional skills across the education system. These countries measure socio-emotional skills mainly through student questionnaires that complement their standardized learning tests.

SYSTEMIC MEASURES OF STUDENTS' SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS





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ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY IN IMPLEMENTING THE LEARNING STANDARDS AND DEVELOPING SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN SCHOOLS.

Guidelines and strategies include, for example, those for creating a positive learning environment, pedagogical and didactic strategies for teachers, and guidelines for applying socio-emotional skills in different school environments. Although they have a different focus, they all seek to facilitate the implementation of standards and thus contribute to achieving socio-emotional learning.

Only seven countries analyzed in Latin America and the Caribbean provide specific guidelines and strategies on how socio-emotional skills, defined in the learning standards, can be developed in the classroom or in school.

GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT LEARNING STANDARDS AND DEVELOP SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN SCHOOLS

Chile

Study plan for the subject "Orientation"

Colombia

Guidelines for the institutionalization of citizenship skills

Ecuador

Guide to Integral Human Development

Honduras

Methodological Guidelines: "Caring for my Health and my Life"

Mexico

Indicators of achievement and didactic orientations in "Socio-emotional Education" area

Peru

Strategies for the development of socio-emotional competences for employability in the subject "Education for Work"

Dominican Republic

"Journey on the Learning Train" Strategy: Guidelines to provide support throughout the school year





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SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING THEIR SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS AND THE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES TO DEVELOP THEM IN THEIR STUDENTS, THROUGH PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING.

The success of the initiatives to develop students' socio-emotional skills depends, to a large extent, on the quality of the training and support that teachers receive to effectively implement them. The most effective teacher education programs, in addition to the training *per se*, often include mentoring and feedback.

The inclusion of socio-emotional skills in teacher training is still incipient in the region. Regarding pre-service teacher training, Mexico and Peru have established new curricula that include

courses for the development of socio-emotional skills.

Regarding in-service training, there are different public initiatives: programs that incorporate socio-emotional learning in the classroom and include training for teachers; and specific courses for teachers on the importance of socio-emotional skills and strategies for developing them in the classroom. Most initiatives in the region do not include mentoring and feedback to teachers, which are key components for effective teacher training.

EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS THAT PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Public programs that incorporate socio-emotional skills in the classroom and train teachers

Mexico
Construye-T

Colombia
Classrooms in Peace^a

Courses implemented by governments to train teachers in the development of socio-emotional skills

Argentina
Socio-emotional skills in school, a new challenge

Colombia
The power of emotions in the classroom

Honduras
Taking care of my life and health

Chile
Emotional learning, teacher welfare and classroom climate^b

Notes:

a. In Colombia, although the Classrooms in Peace program is a private initiative, it has public support and funding.

b. Although the course in Chile was designed by a private entity, it is part of the training of teachers in some Local Public Education Services.

Accelerated changes in our society and crises such as the one we are experiencing make it urgent for children and youth to become more resilient and adaptable. Although socio-emotional skills are increasingly present in the education agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, education systems should continue making efforts to guarantee that all children and youth develop the socio-emotional skills needed to succeed.



This brochure is based on the study “**Learning for Life: The Development of Socio-Emotional Skills and the Role of Teachers**” by the Education Division of the Inter-American Development Bank.

[Download the complete publication](#)



All graphs and tables are based on information collected in the “Questionnaire on Socio-Emotional Skills in the Education System”, documents referred to in the questionnaires and official sites of the Ministries of Education and/or the education assessment agencies.

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