

**THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION IN LATIN  
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**EL DERECHO A LA EDUCACIÓN EN  
AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE**

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# CLADE REPORT

1. The right to education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Conceptual precisions and regional characteristics
2. Lifelong learning: an overview of access to formal education
3. Public education at the crossroads: between guaranteeing the right and privatizing advancements
4. Education, inclusion and inequalities
5. Teachers in Latin America and the Caribbean: A complex picture
6. Education financing in Latin America and the Caribbean: debts, progress and setbacks
7. The right to education and participation of civil society: a field in tension
8. Disputes over the meanings of education
9. To conclude

# CYCLES IN RELATION TO THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Mid-twentieth century: cycle of expansion of the right to education as a social right

Last three decades of the 20th century: cycle of setbacks due to dictatorships and authoritarian governments (annulment of rights) and neoliberal governments (commodification of education and erasure of the right to education).

First years of the 21st century: new cycle of expansion (recognition of the right to education, expansion of enrolment, increase in funding).

Current context: new process of contraction of the right to education (defunding, substantial advance of privatization, weakening of the right to education).

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS BETWEEN GUARANTEEING RIGHTS AND PRIVATIZATION ADVANCES

International regulatory framework: establishes the main role that States must assume in relation to the fulfillment of the right to education.

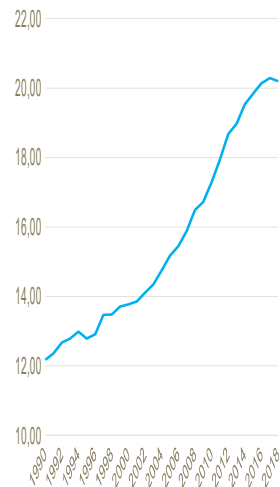
However, as we know, privatization trends in education have been expanding, complexifying and deepening for decades:

- Erosion of public education in legal frameworks.
- Expansion of the private sector
- Privatization of the public sector: privatization of and in education
- Privatization of public policy
- Symbolic privatization

# PRIVATE SECTOR EXPANSION

## LA EXPANSIÓN DEL SECTOR PRIVADO

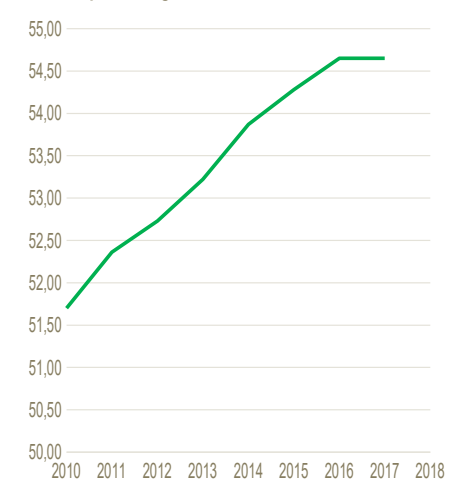
Percentage of enrolment in private primary level institutions in Latin America 1990 – 2018



Percentage of enrolment in private secondary institutions in Latin America 1998 – 2018



Percentage of students in private higher education institutions in Latin America 2010 - 2017



Source: Prepared by the authors based on information from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2020) and Red ÍndicES (2020)

## THE NEW EDUCATION - MARKET RELATIONS: BUSINESS SECTOR'S INVOLVEMENT

- Companies marketing educational services on a transnational level.
- Corporations acting in the field of education on their own or through foundations or other organizations.
- Business alliances at regional or global level agreeing on strategies and purposes.
- Business leaders in public policy positions.

Economic and political interest (doing business): influencing the directions and meanings of education.

# EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND INEQUALITIES

Schooling has expanded in the region and enrolment rates have steadily increased at all levels.

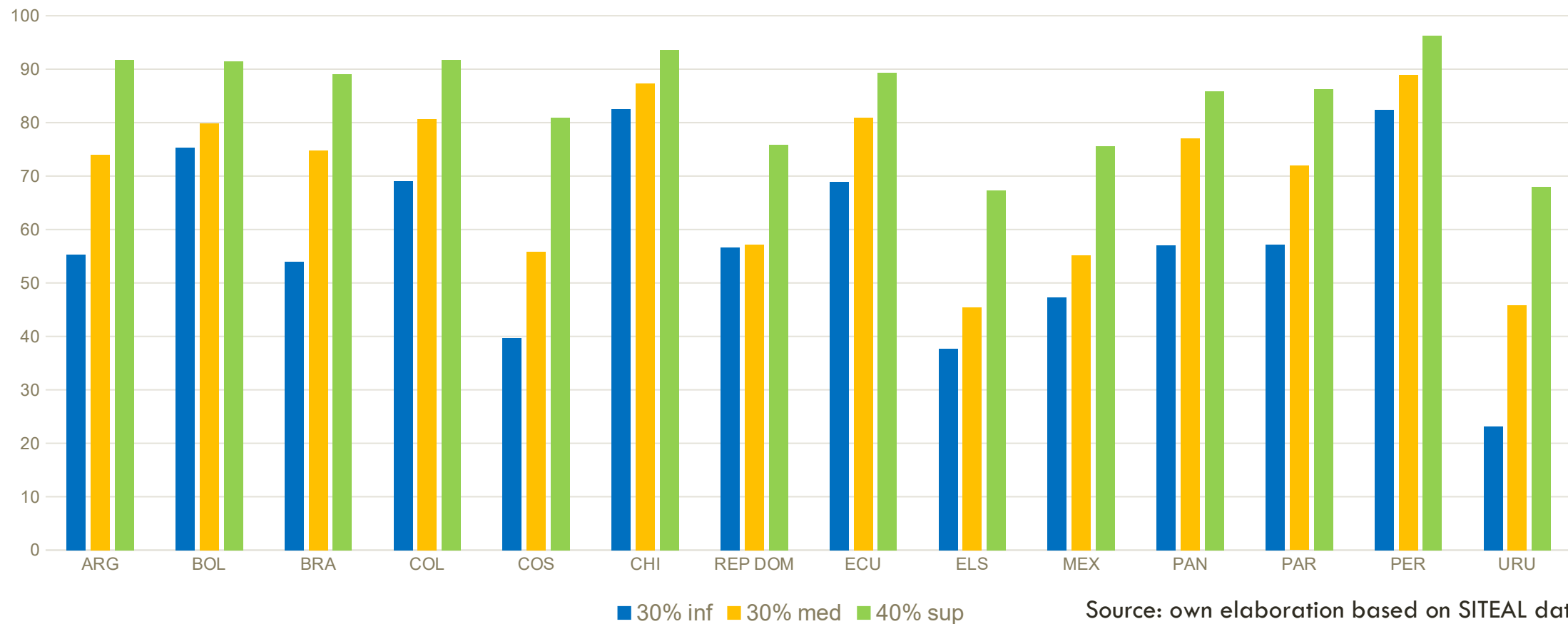
However, this global outlook can hide the existence of great inequalities and social debts:

- 40% of 3- and 4-year-old children in LAC do not have access to schooling, with large differences according to socio-economic status: children from the richest families are 2.5 times more likely to attend than those from the poorest families.
- The primary level is almost universal, but there are still 3.6 million children in LAC out of primary school.
- At the secondary level, expansion is notable, but more than 50% fail to complete the level and there are large inequalities among countries.

Sources: UNICEF (2018) and ECLAC (2017).

# EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND INEQUALITIES

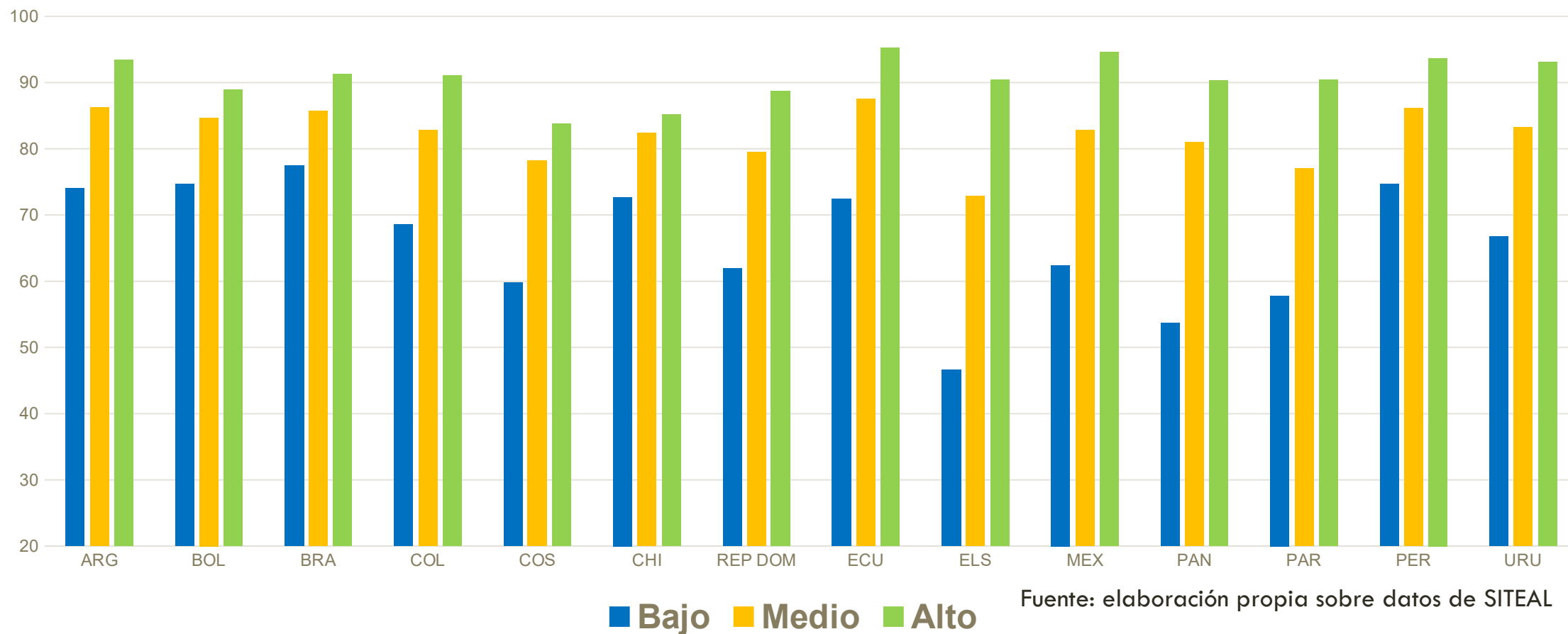
## Secondary education completion rate by income level (2018 or latest)





# EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND INEQUALITIES

## Secondary school net attendance rate by educational climate (2018 or latest)



# IMPORTANCE OF A MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND INTERSECTORAL APPROACH TO INCLUSION AND INEQUALITY

- Territory
  - Income level
  - Educational environment
  - Cultural capital
  - Indigenous peoples
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- Racial discrimination
  - Gender
  - Migration
  - LGTBIQ+ population
  - People with disabilities

# ORIENTATIONS, MEANINGS AND DISPUTES

- Quality understood as the measurement of results in standardized assessments
- From citizenship to entrepreneurship and emotional education
- From the right to inclusion

Shifts and redefinitions of meaning that undermine the right to education as a fundamental human right

# RIGHT TO EDUCATION: DEBTS AND CHALLENGES

The guarantee of the right to education as a fundamental human right and as a social right that should be guaranteed to the entire population under equal and quality conditions is still a debt for large social sectors.

Three tendencies condition the possibility of making progress in its realization:

- Privatization and commoditization of education.
- Persistent educational, social and economic inequalities.
- Redefinitions and shifts in the meanings of education, which, as a whole, are moving in the direction of individualization and weakening its social and political content.

The repositioning of the right to education as a social right and the importance of public education as an area for the achievement of this right, as an arena for the encounter of differences and the construction of what is common and egalitarian. Today more than ever, it is of crucial importance.