

PISA

Latin America and the Caribbean

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¿HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE TOP PERFORMERS?

Only a small percentage of students in the region perform well in science, reading, or mathematics. An almost insignificant number of students are top performers in all three subjects.

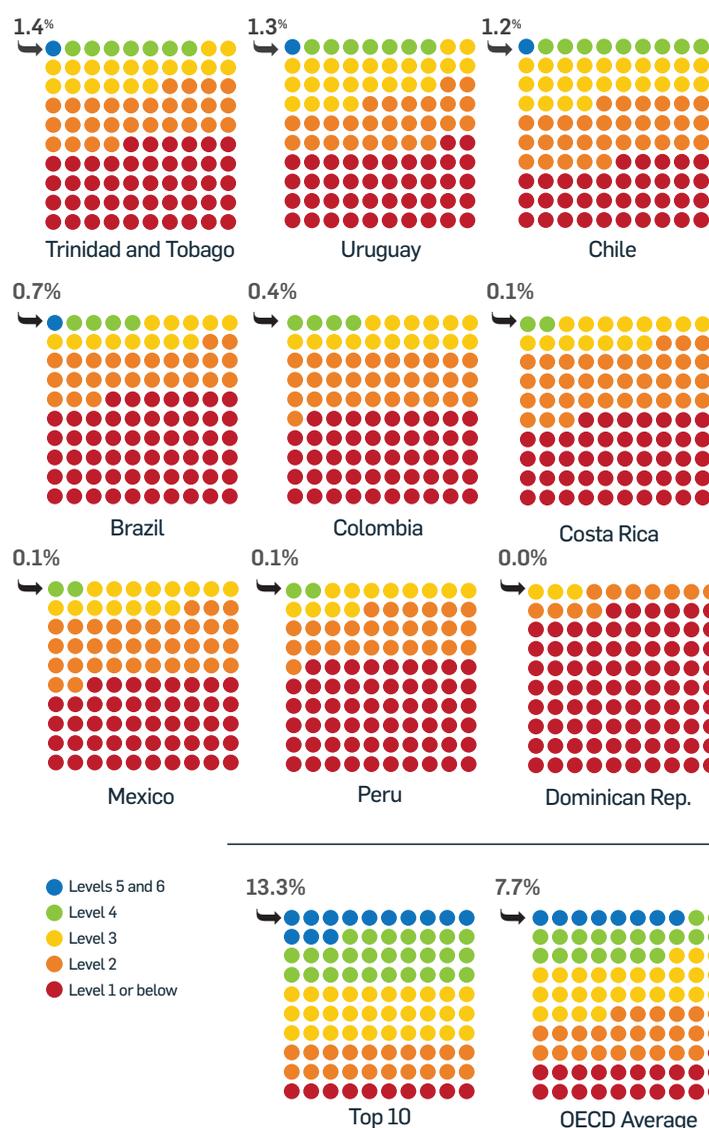
Very few young people in the region are top performers

- In most countries of the region, fewer than 1% of students are top performers (levels 5 and 6) in science.
- Trinidad and Tobago, Chile, and Uruguay are the countries with the highest percentages of top-performing students, though none of them reach 2%.
- On the other hand, 24% of students in Singapore, the leading country in the ranking, are top performers.
- On average, 13% of students in the 10 best-performing countries are top performers, while 8% of students in OECD countries are top performers.

Top students are able to apply their knowledge in a variety of situations

- Students who achieve higher levels of proficiency in science are sufficiently competent and knowledgeable to creatively and independently apply their knowledge and skills in a wide variety of situations, including unknown ones.
- In reading, these students can locate and organize information that is not explicit in a text, make inferences, and compare and contrast information.
- In mathematics, students at this level have advanced mathematical thinking and reasoning skills. They can conceptualize, generalize, and use information based on research and model complex situations.
- These exceptional skills can provide a significant advantage in a competitive and knowledge-based global economy.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL IN SCIENCE, PISA 2015

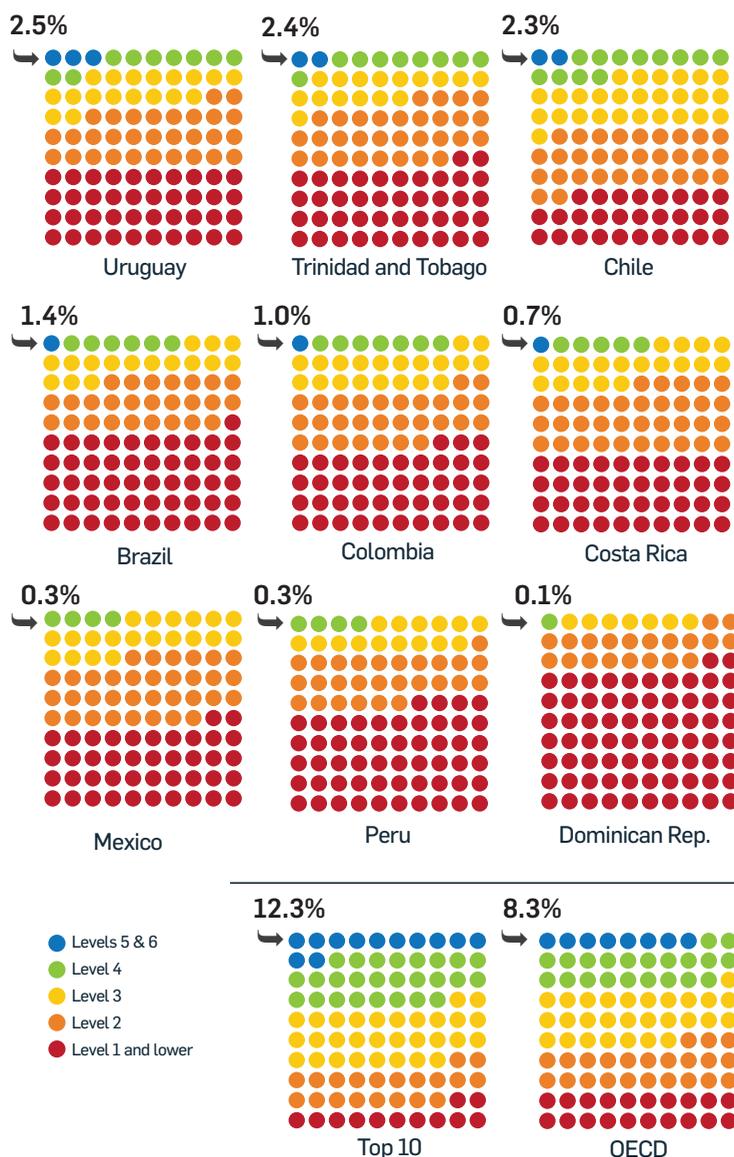


Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol. I, Table I.2.1a

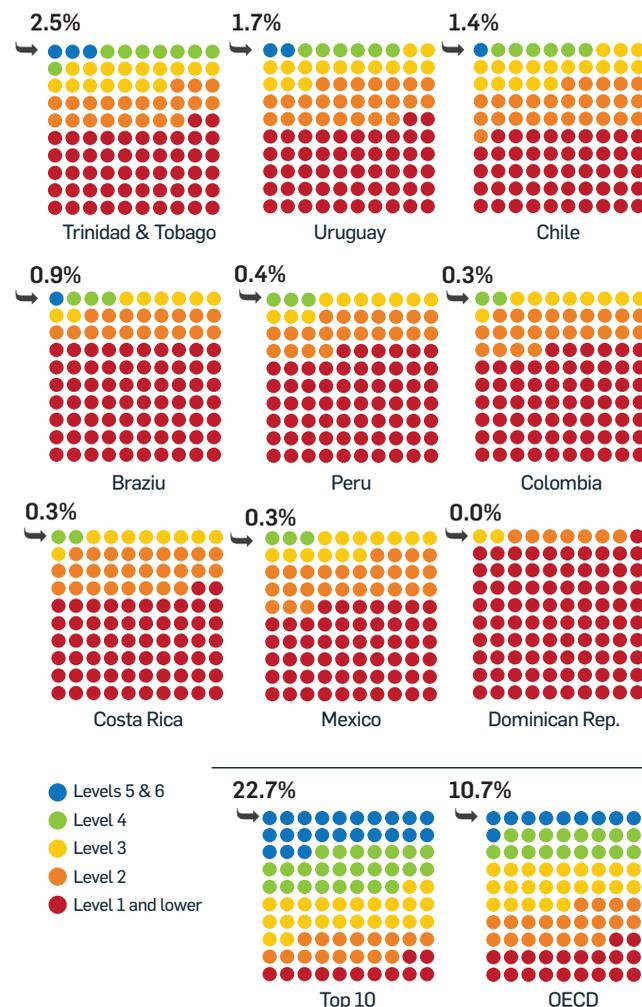
In reading, a slightly higher percentage of students are top performers, though no country reaches 3%

- In Chile, Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago, between 2.3% and 2.5% of students are top performers in reading.
- In Brazil, 1.4% of students are top performers, while other countries in the region fail to reach 1%.
- On the other hand, 8.3% of students in the OECD and 12.3% of students in the 10 best-performing countries are top performers. In Singapore, the leading country in the ranking, 18% of students are top performers.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL IN READING, PISA 2015



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL IN MATHEMATICS, PISA 2015

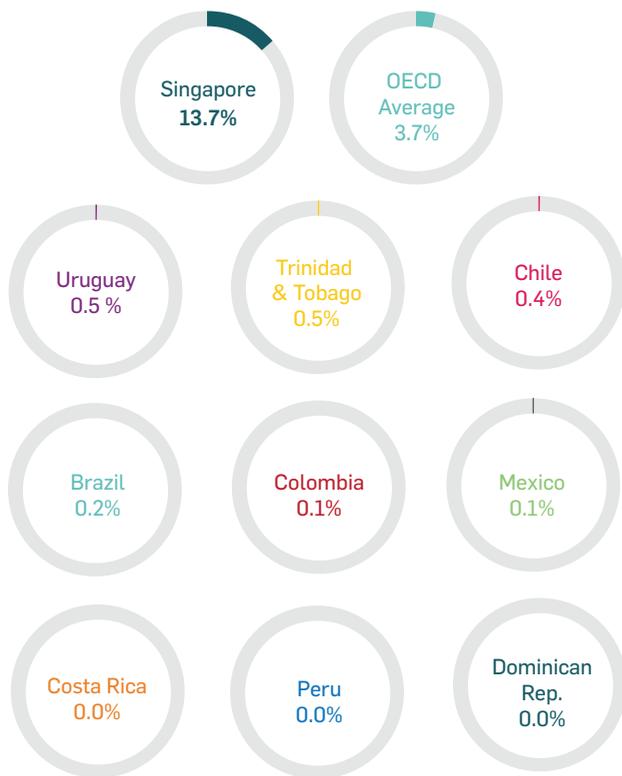


Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.5.1a

In mathematics, top performers in the region are scarce

- Trinidad and Tobago leads the region with 2.5% of its students performing well in mathematics.
- 1.7% and 1.4% of students in Uruguay and Chile, respectively, are top performers in mathematics.
- Fewer than 1% of students in the other countries in the region qualify as top performers.
- 22.7% of students in the 10 best-performing countries qualify as top performers. Singapore leads the international ranking with 35% of students qualifying as top performers in mathematics.
- In OECD countries, 11% of students are top performers in mathematics.

TOP PERFORMING STUDENTS IN ALL SUBJECTS, PISA 2015



Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.2.9a.

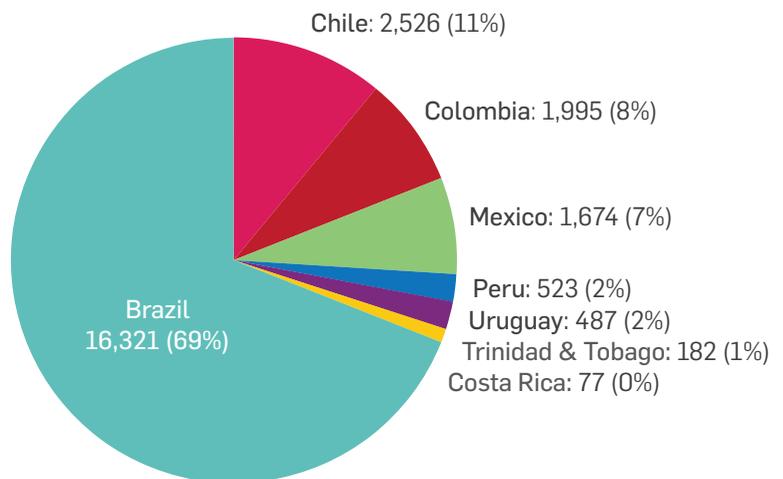
Almost no students in the region qualify as top performers in all three subjects

- Students who qualify as top performers in all three subjects are those who achieve level 5 or 6 in science, reading, and mathematics. These students can use information from multiple indirect sources to solve complex problems and integrate knowledge from different areas. These exceptional skills can provide a significant advantage in a competitive and knowledge-based global economy.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, fewer than 0.5% of students qualified as top performers in all three subjects. 0.5% of students in Uruguay and Trinidad and Tobago qualified as top performers in all subjects, followed by Chile, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. In Costa Rica, Peru, and the Dominican Republic, no students qualified as top performers in every subject area.
- On the other hand, 14% of students in Singapore, the leading country in the ranking, qualified as top performers in each of the three subjects. That percentage falls to 4% in OECD countries.

50% of all top performers are in the United States, the Chinese provinces, and Japan

- In the countries that participated in PISA, 1.38 million students qualified as top performers. 22% of all top performers are from the United States, with an additional 13% each in the Chinese provinces and Japan. The remaining 50% are spread across the remaining countries.
- Within Latin America and the Caribbean, only 23,785 students qualify as top performers. These students compose only 2% of all top performers globally.
- Seventy percent of the aforementioned top performers are from Brazil. Eleven percent are from Chile, along with 8% from Colombia, 7% from Mexico, and the remaining 5% from a combination of Peru, Uruguay, Trinidad and Tobago, and Costa Rica.
- There are no top-performing students in the Dominican Republic.

NUMBER OF TOP-PERFORMING STUDENTS, PISA 2015



All Countries: 1.38 million
Latin America and the Caribbean: 23,785 (1.7%)

Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol I, Table I.2.9c

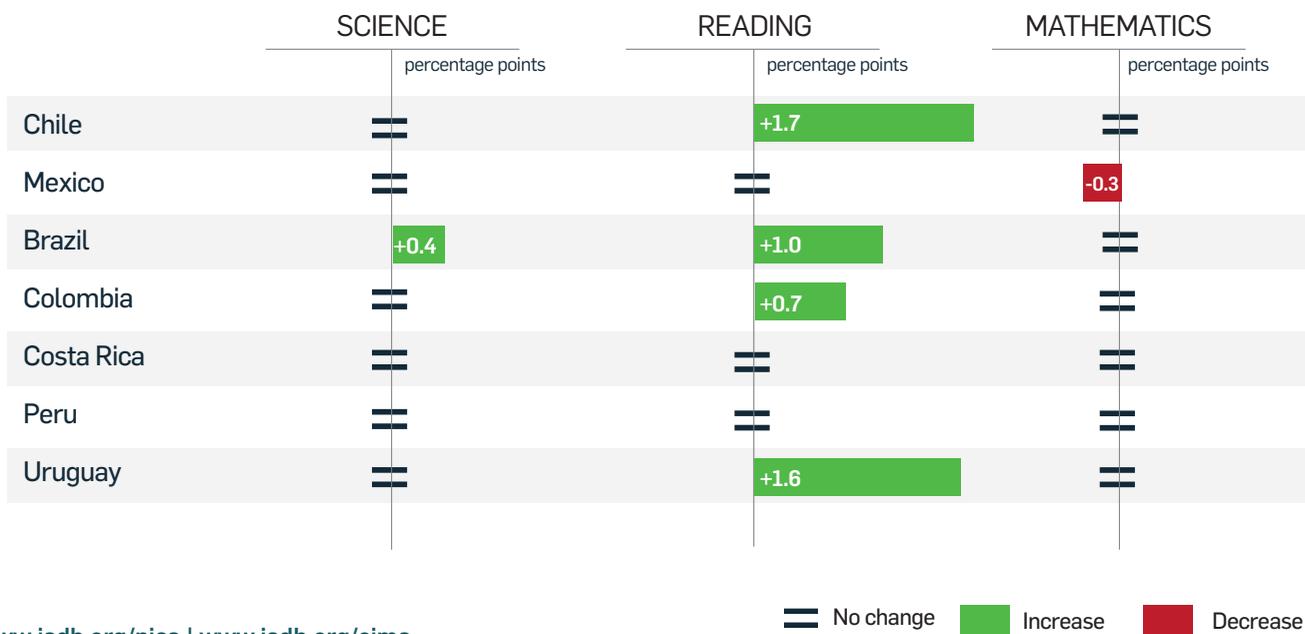
The percentage of high-performing students has changed very little in the region

- Since the last round of PISA in 2012, countries in the region have failed to consistently increase the number of top-performing students.
- Brazil is the only country in the region that managed to increase its percentage of top performers in science, though it did so only in science.
- Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay were able to increase their percentages of top-performing students in reading, though they succeeded in doing so only in reading.
- In Mexico, the percentage of top performers in mathematics decreased.
- The other countries of the region did not observe significant changes in the number of top-performing students in any subject.

There are not significantly more males than females among top-performing students in science

- In the region, the percentage of male top performers is significantly higher than the percentage of female top performers only in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay. In the remaining countries in the region, the gender gap between top-performing students is not significant.
- In OECD countries, the percentage of male students who are top performers (8.9%) is significantly higher than the percentage of females (6.5%) who qualify as the same.
- In 33 of the 75 participating countries, the proportion of high-performing students is higher among boys than among girls. Out of all the countries where more than 1% of students qualify as top performers, males compose 2 out of every 3 of the top-performing students in only six (including Chile and Uruguay). Finland is the only country where girls compose a higher percentage of top-performing students than boys.

CHANGE IN THE PERCENTAGE OF TOP-PERFORMING STUDENTS, PISA 2012–2015



Source: OECD, PISA 2015, Vol. I, Table 1.2.2a, Table 1.4.2a, Table 1.5.2a

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



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