

EDUCATION

New technologies and old debts

References

CURRENT SITUATION
(latest available data)

- Better situation
- Above average
- Below average
- Worse situation
- Insufficient data

EVOLUTION
(since 1990 or closest available year)

- ➔ Significant progress
- ➔ Slight progress
- || Stagnant
- ➔ Regression
- ➔ Major regression

Complete table at: www.socialwatch.org/statistics2008

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES (BCI value, 0-100)	LITERACY (15-24 years old, %)	PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATE (net, %)	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE (%)	SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATE (net, %)	TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATE (gross, %)
	Afghanistan (52)	34.3				1.3
➔	Albania (94)	99.4 ➔	93.6		72.8* ➔	19.1 ➔
➔	Algeria (94)	90.1 ➔	96.6 ➔	95.6	66.3* ➔	21.3 ➔
	Andorra (—)		80.3 ➔		76.4* ➔	8.3 ➔
	Angola (62)	72.2				2.9
➔	Anguilla (—)		88.6 ➔	97.1	80.8* ➔	3.3
➔	Argentina (98)	98.9	98.6	96.9 ➔	78.9* ➔	64.7 ➔
	Armenia (96)	99.8	78.8 ➔		84.9*	28.0 ➔
	Aruba (—)	99.0	99.5	96.7	73.7* ➔	31.5 ➔
➔	Australia (99)		96.5 ➔		86.4* ➔	72.6 ➔
➔	Austria (—)		96.9 ➔			48.9 ➔
	Azerbaijan (85)	99.9*	84.8 ➔		77.8* ➔	14.8 ➔
➔	Bahamas (99)		90.2	99.1 ➔	83.8* ➔	
➔	Bahrain (99)	97.0	98.2	98.9 ➔	92.3* ➔	33.1 ➔
➔	Bangladesh (57)	63.6 ➔	88.9 ➔	65.1 ➔	41.0* ➔	6.0
➔	Barbados (99)		93.6 ➔	97.8 ➔	87.6* ➔	37.2* ➔
➔	Belarus (99)	99.8*	89.4 ➔		89.2* ➔	63.7 ➔
➔	Belgium (99)		97.6		96.7* ➔	62.4 ➔
➔	Belize (93)		99.5 ➔	92.2 ➔	71.3* ➔	2.6 ➔
➔	Benin (68)	45.3 ➔	77.7 ➔	51.6 ➔	17.1* ➔	3.0*
	Bermuda (—)		97.9	89.8		61.2* ➔
➔	Bhutan (78)		73.9 ➔	91.0 ➔	35.5* ➔	3.1*
➔	Bolivia (80)	97.3 ➔	95.0	84.8 ➔	72.7* ➔	40.6 ➔
—	Bosnia and Herzegovina (—)	99.8				
➔	Botswana (92)	94.0 ➔	86.2	90.5 ➔	61.1* ➔	5.1
➔	Brazil (92)	96.8 ➔	94.7 ➔		77.7* ➔	23.8 ➔
➔	Brunei Darussalam (100)	98.9	93.4	99.5 ➔	87.3* ➔	15.0 ➔
➔	Bulgaria (99)	98.2	92.9 ➔		89.1* ➔	43.7 ➔
➔	Burkina Faso (64)	33.0 ➔	44.1 ➔	75.5 ➔	11.0* ➔	2.2
➔	Burma/Myanmar (76)	94.5 ➔	99.0	69.9 ➔	43.0* ➔	11.9* ➔
➔	Burundi (58)	73.3 ➔	58.3 ➔	66.9 ➔		2.3
➔	Cambodia (66)	83.4 ➔	96.5 ➔	63.1 ➔	23.9* ➔	3.6 ➔
➔	Cameroon (70)			63.7 ➔		5.7
➔	Canada (99)		99.5*			62.4 ➔
➔	Cape Verde (93)	96.3 ➔	90.1	92.5	57.5* ➔	6.9 ➔
	Cayman Islands (—)		81.1 ➔	77.8 ➔	95.6* ➔	18.8* ➔
➔	Central African Republic (65)	58.5 ➔				1.6
	Chad (42)	37.6 ➔	60.2 ➔	33.2 ➔	10.5* ➔	1.2
➔	Chile (100)	99.0	89.7	99.7 ➔		47.8 ➔
➔	China (90)	98.9 ➔				21.6 ➔
➔	Colombia (90)	98.0 ➔	88.5 ➔	81.7 ➔	64.9* ➔	30.8 ➔
➔	Comoros (79)		55.1*	80.3 ➔		2.3 ➔
	Congo, DR (69)	70.4				1.3*
	Congo, Rep. (79)	97.4 ➔	52.9 ➔	66.3 ➔		3.7*
	Cook Islands (90)		77.4* ➔		64.4* ➔	

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SOURCE:
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Definition of indicators at the end of this table.

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES (BCI value, 0-100)	LITERACY (15-24 years old, %)	PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATE (net, %)	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE (%)	SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATE (net, %)	TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATE (gross, %)
	Costa Rica (94)	97.6		86.6		25.3
→	Côte d'Ivoire (79)	60.7 →	54.9 →	87.6 →	19.8* →	6.5*
→	Croatia (99)	99.6	87.3 →		85.0* →	38.7* →
→	Cuba (99)	100.0	96.6	97.2 →	87.0* →	87.9 →
→	Cyprus (99)	99.8	99.3 →	99.1	94.1* →	33.2 →
→	Czech Republic (99)		92.5 →	98.4		47.8 →
→	Denmark (98)		95.8	93.3	91.2* →	80.8 →
→	Djibouti (75)		34.4 →	76.7* ←	21.5* →	2.2 →
	Dominica (97)		84.0 ←	92.7 →	91.8* →	
→	Dominican Republic (88)	94.2 →	77.5 →	68.4 ←	52.1* →	34.5 →
	Ecuador (83)	96.4	97.3	76.3 ←	55.4* →	
→	Egypt (88)	84.9 →	93.7 →	94.5 ←	82.7*	34.7 →
→	El Salvador (79)	88.5 →	94.5 →	69.4 →	54.9* →	20.1 →
	Equatorial Guinea (59)	94.9 →	87.1 ←	32.6	25.3*	2.7*
	Eritrea (67)		48.6 →	79.2 ←	24.1* →	1.0
→	Estonia (99)	99.8	94.7 ←	98.8	90.8* →	66.0 →
→	Ethiopia (54)	49.9 →	66.4 →		31.8* →	2.7
→	Fiji (99)		93.5 →	98.7 →	80.9* →	15.4 →
→	Finland (100)		98.5	99.5	95.3*	91.9 →
→	France (99)		98.6	98.0*	99.0* →	56.1 →
	Gabon (82)	96.0 →	88.0* ←	69.3		7.1*
→	Gambia (70)		72.4 →		43.3* →	1.1
	Georgia (89)		86.7 →	79.4	80.2* →	46.1 →
	Ghana (66)	70.7 ←	63.6 →	63.3 ←	37.7* →	4.7 →
→	Greece (100)	98.9	99.6 →	99.0	91.1* →	90.4 →
→	Grenada (92)		84.6	79.0	79.3* →	
→	Guatemala (68)	82.2 →	93.5 →	68.0 →	35.4* →	9.5*
→	Guinea (66)	46.6	69.4 →	76.0 →	24.8* →	3.0
→	Guinea-Bissau (61)		45.1* →		8.7*	
	Guyana (81)			64.3 ←		10.8 →
→	Honduras (78)	88.9 →	93.2 →	70.1		17.2 →
	Hong Kong (—)		90.7 ←	99.5	77.1* →	32.1 →
→	Hungary (99)		88.8		89.9* →	65.3 →
→	Iceland (100)		98.1	99.7	88.7* →	70.4 →
→	India (71)	76.4 →	88.5 →	73.1 →		11.0 →
→	Indonesia (84)	98.7	94.5	89.5 →	57.4* →	17.0 →
→	Iran (91)	97.4 →	95.3 →	87.8	77.3* ←	24.1 →
→	Iraq (83)	84.8 →	88.6 →	80.6 →	38.4* →	15.8 →
→	Ireland (100)		94.6 →	99.8	86.7* →	58.2 →
→	Israel (100)		97.4 →	99.8	89.1* →	58.1 →
→	Italy (99)	99.8	98.6	99.8 →	92.5* →	65.3 →
→	Jamaica (95)		90.3 ←	90.3 →	78.3* →	19.0* →
→	Japan (99)		99.8		100.0*	55.3 →
	Jordan (97)	99.0	91.3 ←	96.2 ←	78.8* →	39.9 →
→	Kazakhstan (98)	99.8*	91.0 →		88.8* →	52.0 →
→	Kenya (71)	80.3 ←	75.8 →	82.9 →	41.5* →	2.7
←	Kiribati (88)		97.4*	81.9 ←	67.6* ←	
→	Korea, Rep. (100)		97.6	99.1	93.9* →	91.0 →
	Kuwait (98)	99.7 →	83.5 →	95.8	78.3* ←	18.8 ←
	Kyrgyzstan (95)	99.7*	85.9 →		80.5* ←	42.7 →
→	Lao, PDR (58)	78.5 →	82.7 →	63.0 →	35.6* →	7.9 →
	Latvia (99)	99.8	90.1 ←			74.9 →
→	Lebanon (95)		81.9 →	90.9	73.0*	46.3 →
→	Lesotho (72)		75.2 →	73.3 →	24.0* →	3.4
→	Liberia (65)	67.4 →	66.2* →		17.1*	15.6* →

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→	Libya (98)	98.0 →				55.8* →
	Liechtenstein (—)		88.2 ←		65.2* ←	25.1 →
	Lithuania (99)	99.7	88.0 ←		94.2* →	76.5 →
	Luxembourg (97)		96.7	92.0 ←	83.3*	11.8 →
→	Macao (—)	99.6 →	96.3 →	99.7	77.5* →	57.4 →
→	Macedonia (96)	98.7	91.8		81.3* →	29.8 →
→	Madagascar (61)	70.2 ←	92.9 →	42.7 →	11.3*	2.6
→	Malawi (62)	76.0* →	92.8 →	42.1 ←	23.1* ←	
→	Malaysia (99)	97.2 →	99.2 →	98.4	72.0* →	30.6 →
→	Maldives (86)	98.2	97.6	92.1	64.1* →	
→	Mali (69)	24.2* ←	59.1 →	86.9 →		3.0
	Malta (100)	96.0* ←	86.3 ←	99.3	84.8* →	31.5 →
	Marshall Islands (93)		89.6 →		74.4*	17.0*
→	Mauritania (66)	61.3 →	76.7 →	52.9 ←	15.6* →	3.2
→	Mauritius (98)	94.5 →	95.0 →	97.0	81.7* →	16.9 →
→	Mexico (94)	97.6	97.7	93.8 →	68.6* →	25.3 →
—	Micronesia (—)					14.1*
←	Moldova (96)	99.7	82.6 ←		74.8* ←	35.9
→	Mongolia (95)	97.7	91.4		81.5* →	47.2 →
→	Montserrat (—)		96.3 →		95.8* →	
→	Morocco (79)	70.5 →	87.5 →	79.2 →	34.5* →	11.4
→	Mozambique (66)	47.0* ←	76.6 →	62.4 →	7.0* →	1.5
→	Namibia (85)	92.3 →	76.5 →	86.1 →	38.7* →	6.2 →
—	Nauru (—)			30.8		
→	Nepal (65)	70.1 →	79.2 →	78.5 →		5.6
→	Netherlands (100)		97.9	99.4	86.6* →	59.0 →
	Netherlands Antilles (—)	98.0	96.5*	84.2	81.0* ←	21.2* →
→	New Zealand (98)		99.2		91.9* →	82.2 →
→	Nicaragua (72)	86.2 →	87.0 →	53.5 →	42.8* →	18.1* →
→	Niger (52)	36.5 →	42.5 →	64.8	8.6*	1.1
→	Nigeria (63)	84.2 →	63.4 →	72.6 ←	25.5* →	9.7 →
→	Niue (—)		98.5*		93.4*	
→	Norway (100)		98.0	100.0	95.8* →	78.5 →
→	Oman (99)	97.3 →	74.1 →	100.0 →	77.3* →	18.3 →
→	Pakistan (64)	65.1 →	67.2 →	69.7	20.3* ←	4.5
←	Palau (99)		96.4* ←			40.2* ←
→	Panama (91)	96.1	98.5 →	85.3	63.8* →	43.9 →
	Papua New Guinea (68)	66.7		67.8		2.0*
→	Paraguay (85)	95.9	93.8	81.2 →		24.9 →
	Peru (86)	97.1	96.4 ←	90.3 →	70.2* →	33.9
→	Philippines (77)	95.1	92.9 ←	74.9 →	60.2* →	28.0
→	Poland (100)		96.7	99.3	92.9* →	64.1 →
→	Portugal (99)	99.6	98.0		81.6*	55.1 →
→	Qatar (96)	95.9 →	96.1 →		87.1* →	18.6 ←
→	Romania (96)	97.8	91.3 →		80.8* →	45.2 →
	Russian Federation (98)	99.7	92.5 ←			70.5 →
	Rwanda (53)	77.6 →	73.3 →	45.8 ←		2.6
	Samoa (97)	99.3	90.4 ←	93.8 →	66.0* ←	7.5* ←
→	Sao Tome and Principe (82)	95.4	96.2 →	76.3 →	32.6* →	
→	Saudi Arabia (97)	95.8 →	87.3 →	96.3 →	70.8* →	29.2 →
→	Senegal (71)	49.1 →	69.6 →	73.0 ←	17.5* →	5.5
	Seychelles (—)	99.1	99.4	98.7 →	97.1* ←	
	Sierra Leone (61)	47.9				2.1*
←	Singapore (91)		76.9* ←		64.4* ←	

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→	Slovakia (97)		92.0 →			40.7 →
→	Slovenia (99)	99.8	95.7		91.0*	79.5 →
→	Solomon Islands (82)		63.3		27.3* →	
→	South Africa (89)	93.9*	88.3	82.4 →	62.3* →	15.4 →
→	Spain (99)		99.6	100.0	93.9* →	66.2 →
←	Sri Lanka (98)	95.6	96.7 ←			
←	St Kitts and Nevis (95)		93.4 ←	86.5	86.1*	
	St Lucia (98)		97.9	95.9	69.4* →	7.1
→	St Vincent and Grenadines (93)		90.4	81.8	63.9* →	
→	Sudan (76)	77.2 →	41.2*	78.6 ←		6.2* →
→	Suriname (86)	94.9	94.4 →		74.7* →	12.4*
	Swaziland (77)	88.4 →	76.3	76.8	32.5*	4.5
→	Sweden (100)		97.1		99.3* →	81.6 →
→	Switzerland (97)		89.9 →		82.2*	45.4 →
→	Syria (94)	92.5 →	94.5* →	92.4 ←	61.8* →	
→	Tajikistan (85)	99.8	97.3 →		79.8* →	18.6 ←
→	Tanzania (73)	78.4 ←	97.8 →	85.0 →		1.4
→	Thailand (96)	98.0	94.2 →		71.0*	45.9 →
←	Timor-Leste (60)		68.1		22.8*	9.6*
→	Togo (71)	74.4 →	77.5 →	74.6 →	22.2* →	3.6*
	Tonga (95)	99.3*	95.4 →	88.6 ←	66.4*	6.0 →
	Trinidad and Tobago (95)	99.5	84.6 ←	91.0 ←	65.1* ←	11.4 →
→	Tunisia (95)	94.3 →	97.0 →	97.0 →	64.5* ←	30.1 →
→	Turkey (92)	95.6 →	90.2	96.9	66.0* →	31.0 →
—	Turkmenistan (—)	99.8*				
←	Turks and Caicos Islands (—)		78.0 ←	45.9	70.2* ←	
—	Tuvalu (89)			69.9 ←		
→	Uganda (59)	76.6 →		48.7 →	14.8* →	3.5
→	Ukraine (99)	99.8	90.2 →		83.8* ←	72.8 →
→	United Arab Emirates (99)	97.0 →	85.6 ←	96.8 →	77.2* →	23.2* →
→	United Kingdom (99)		98.7		95.3* →	59.4 →
	United States of America (99)		91.6 ←		88.4* →	82.2 →
	Uruguay (96)	98.6*	93.8 →	91.2 ←		42.0 →
—	Uzbekistan (—)					15.3 ←
→	Vanuatu (87)		92.5	77.7 →	38.1* →	4.8
→	Venezuela (95)	97.2	91.1 →	92.0 →	63.0* →	41.2 →
→	Vietnam (90)	93.9*	86.6 ←	86.8 →	68.8* →	15.9 →
→	Virgin Islands (UK) (—)		95.1		88.2* →	75.5 →
→	West Bank and Gaza (—)	99.0 →	76.0 ←		89.6* →	37.8 →
→	Yemen (61)	75.2 →	73.8 →	73.2 ←	33.5* →	9.4
→	Zambia (73)	69.5* →	92.0 →	94.2 →	28.1* →	2.3*
	Zimbabwe (80)	97.7 →	81.7	69.7 ←	34.4* ←	3.6*

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DEFINITION OF INDICATORS:

Literacy (15-24 years old, %): Percentage of people aged 15-24 who can, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life.
Last available data: 2000/2005; evolution since 1990.

Primary school enrolment ratio (net, %): Number of children enrolled in primary school who belong to the age group that officially corresponds to primary schooling, as percentage of the total population of the same age group.
Last available data: 2003/2006; evolution since 1991.

Children reaching 5th grade of primary school (%): Percentage of children entering first grade of primary school who eventually reach grade five.
Last available data: 2000/2005; evolution since 1999.

Secondary school enrolment ratio (net, %): Number of children enrolled in secondary school who belong to the agegroup that officially corresponds to secondary schooling, as percentage of the total population of the same age group.
Last available data: 2003/2005; evolution since 1991.

Tertiary education enrolment ratio (gross): Ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. Tertiary education, whether or not to an advanced research qualification, normally requires, as a minimum condition of admission, successful completion of education at secondary level.
Last available data: 2004/2006; evolution since 1991.

Methodological notes and guidelines at the end of the section.

EDUCATION

New technologies and old debts

We are currently in the midst of an intense debate over the importance of access to information and communication technologies (ICT) and to the cooperation that developed countries should provide developing countries so that progress in ICT does not end up reinforcing or increasing North-South inequalities. Nonetheless, although this is a crucial debate, any problem in the field of the 'digital gap' or 'information technologies' should not hide the fact that, well into the 21st century, many old problems are still unsolved.

According to UNESCO data, today one out of every five adults is illiterate and approximately 72 million children are outside the formal education system. Not only is this information alarming in itself, in view of the difficulties of access to education, the indispensable minimum on which to work on other inequalities, but it accounts for a lack of symmetry, particularly in the North-South relation and in the situation of women. A case in point is that, out of those 72 million children, almost two thirds are girls.

Recent trends show that between 1999 and 2006 there was a fall of 25% in the number of children excluded from formal education. Basically, this decrease is countered by improvements registered in Asia, by the policies carried out in India and, in Africa, by Ethiopia and Tanzania. Seventy-five per cent of the fall is due to girls joining the basic levels of formal education, a fact that confirms the extreme injustice of the original situation and fosters hope in the medium term, provided that efforts made by governments, particularly in the South, do not decrease.

The latest available information (Chart 1) shows that in the countries in the worse relative situation, around a third of the population between 15 and 24 years old is illiterate. At the other end of the spectrum, in countries where education is in the better situation, illiteracy has been practically eradicated, affecting barely 1% of the population.

Enrolment in primary education and the proportion of children who reach fifth grade reflect a similar situation. Countries with the greatest education deficiencies are, on average, 30% below the more advanced.

This prospect is an alert to the difficulties that may appear, in spite of the progress made in absolute terms, in order to overcome, in relative terms, the differences between countries in the better or worse situation.

Major difficulties can be detected when looking into indicators for superior levels of education. Enrolment in secondary school is barely 23% in countries in the worse relative situation while it reaches nearly 90% in countries in the better situation. In other words, enrolment in secondary school is four times higher in countries in the better relative situation.

This perverse kind of logic by which inequality accumulates according to the level of education reaches its maximum expression in tertiary educa-

CHART 1. Averages by indicator of countries in better and worse relative situations in education

		Literacy (15-24 years old, %)	Primary school enrolment rate (net, %)	Children reaching 5th grade (%)	Secondary school enrolment rate (net, %)	Tertiary education enrolment rate (gross, %)
Worse relative situation	Average	62	66	67	23	4
	Number of countries	33	35	33	29	41
Better relative situation	Average	99	96	98	89	61
	Number of countries	27	55	31	46	50
Total	Average	87	87	83	64	29
	Number of countries	128	172	130	150	168

CHART 2. Current situation in education by region (number of countries)

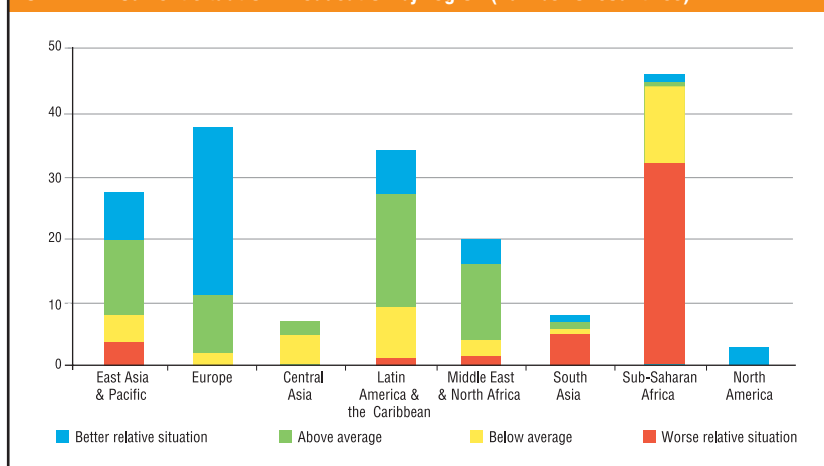


CHART 3. Current situation and evolution in education (number of countries)

	←	↔		→	→	Total
Worse relative situation	1	1	11	22	9	44
Below average	1	0	7	11	10	29
Above average	0	2	19	29	8	58
Better relative situation	0	4	8	39	2	53
Total	2	7	45	101	29	184

tion. Here the differences are simply distressing: while in countries in the better relative situation tertiary education reaches 30% of the population, in countries in the worse relative situation enrolment is barely 4%, so that chances of having access to a university education are eight times lower for countries in the worse relative situation. If we consider the subgroup of European countries within the best placed, matriculation levels are beyond 50%.

But the differences and inequalities in education do not matter only for what they mean in themselves, but because of their relation with other types of inequalities. An example of this is the gender differences in terms of access to education; another is the information presented in

Chart 2, which clearly shows the validity of the North-South criterion when it comes to global inequalities. However it is important to point out the progress made since the latest report in two zones, the Middle East and North Africa and Central Asia,

which have increased the number of countries that are in better relative situation with respect to the general average.

A diachronic reading, on the other hand, confirms that there is a positive trend, since more than 70% of countries have progressed, although in almost four out of five cases the progress detected is small. If to this we add that the proportion of stagnant countries is 24% while in the previous report they did not reach 22%, there are fewer reasons to believe that the minimum necessary capacities to make progress in terms of justice and equity are being generated.

Finally, it is easier to detect that significant progress in education tends to be more frequent when it involves countries in the below average situation, while it is very difficult to find countries that make progress at the extremes of the spectrum – that is, in the worse or better relative situation – or among those that are already above average. ■