

LACRO COVID-19 EDUCATION RESPONSE: UPDATE 30

STATUS OF SCHOOLS' REOPENING

[Released on November 15, 2021]

I. INTRODUCTION

As of November 15th, 10 countries have fully reopened their schools, 23 have partially closed them, and 4 have fully closed them. This means an improvement in the reopening of schools with respect to the previous report (#29). Some countries that still had all their schools closed have now begun the process of reopening, as in the case of Antigua & Barbuda, Trinidad & Tobago, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and St. Lucia, while others that had their schools partially closed have now managed to open them completely, as in the case of Chile.

However, despite all efforts, still 71 million (48%) children and adolescents in the region continue to be affected by the total and partial closure of schools, which is equivalent to 158 days without classes since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the fact that schools are open again in a specific country does not necessarily mean that all children and adolescents have access to face-to-face classes since in some countries a maximum capacity has been established in classrooms, attendance is voluntary and there is still much fear of contagion.

It is important to note that some countries have developed their own systems for monitoring the reopening of schools. Mexico, for example, has developed the [comprehensive analysis dashboard](#) and Ecuador a [monitoring table](#).

Update 30 presents the latest progress in the reopening process and access to vaccines for teachers and students as of early November.

UPDATE HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNICEF Press Release:** [At least 200 million schoolchildren live in countries that remain unprepared to deploy remote learning in future emergency school closures](#)
- **Case Study (Peru):** [Assessing children's reading in indigenous languages](#)



©UNICEF/UN0546699/Vera

II. REOPENING OF SCHOOLS' MAP

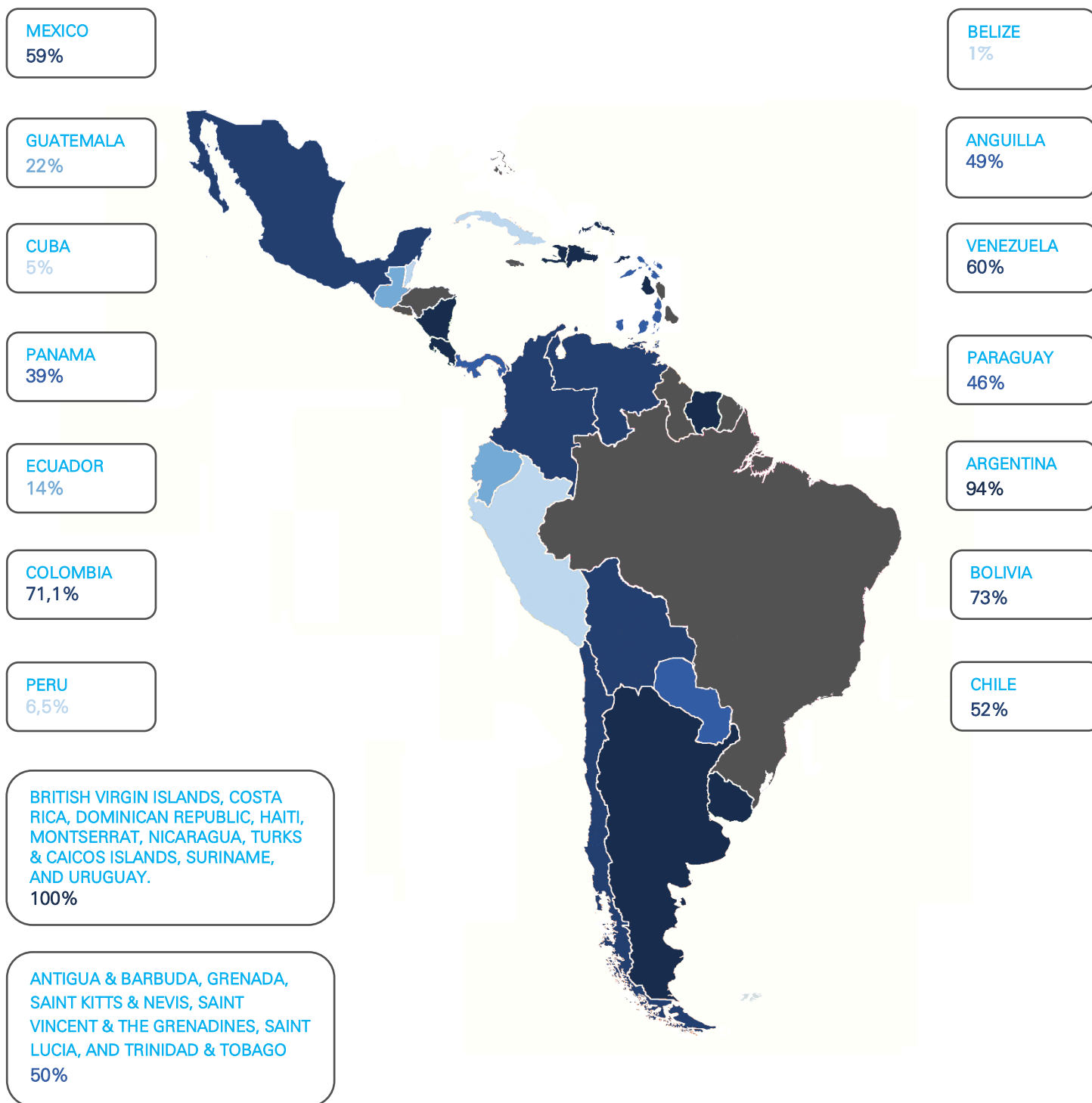
This report uses UNESCO's definition of school closures. Schools are considered:

- **"Fully closed"** when the closures affect most or all the schoolchildren enrolled at pre-primary, primary, lower, and upper secondary levels.
- **"Partially closed"** refer to situations in which schools are either closed in some of a country's administrative units, for some grade levels, or are operating with limited capacity.
- **"Fully open"** means that classes are held in-person for all schoolchildren and at all grade levels.



Note for the map: Please note that we have only included information about the countries for which we have received the data on number of schools open and number of children benefited by the reopening of schools. Information received by COs and updated until early November 2021.

III. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS BENEFITED BY FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES



LEGEND

- >75%** Argentina, British Virgin Islands, Costa Rica, Dom. Rep., Haiti, Turks & Caicos Islands, Nicaragua, Montserrat, Suriname, Uruguay.
- 51% - 75%** Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela.
- 25% - 50%** Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, Paraguay, Panama, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago.
- 10% - 24%** Ecuador, Guatemala.
- <10%** Belize, Cuba, Perú.
- No data** Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Dominica, El Salvador, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica.

Note: The percentage has been calculated based on the total enrolment of students from pre-primary to secondary school and the number of children and adolescents benefiting from face-to-face classes.

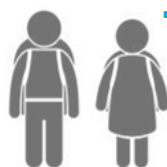
Sources of information: Data obtained from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics ([Welcome to UIS.Stat](#)), and the information provided by UNICEF COs until early November 2021.

IV. SITUATION OVERVIEW

This section was prepared based on information received by COs and updated until early November 2021.



4 country with schools **fully closed** (Barbados, Bahamas, Dominica and Jamaica).



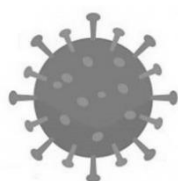
71M children affected by schools' closures.²

890.750K children affected in countries where schools are fully closed.

70.4M children affected in countries where schools are partially closed.



10 countries have all their schools **fully open** (Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Turks & Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Suriname, and Uruguay).



An average of **158** school days **without face-to-face classes** between March 2020 and early November, 2021.³



23 countries have their schools **partially closed** (Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago and Venezuela).



18 countries and territories have prioritized teachers in the **vaccination process**.



27 countries and territories continue school lessons through **remote learning** via online or television, radio, WhatsApp, printed materials and/or **hybrid models**.



18 countries and territories have prioritized students in the **vaccination process**.



71% of countries and territories have decided on a **date for school reopening**.¹

Sources of information:

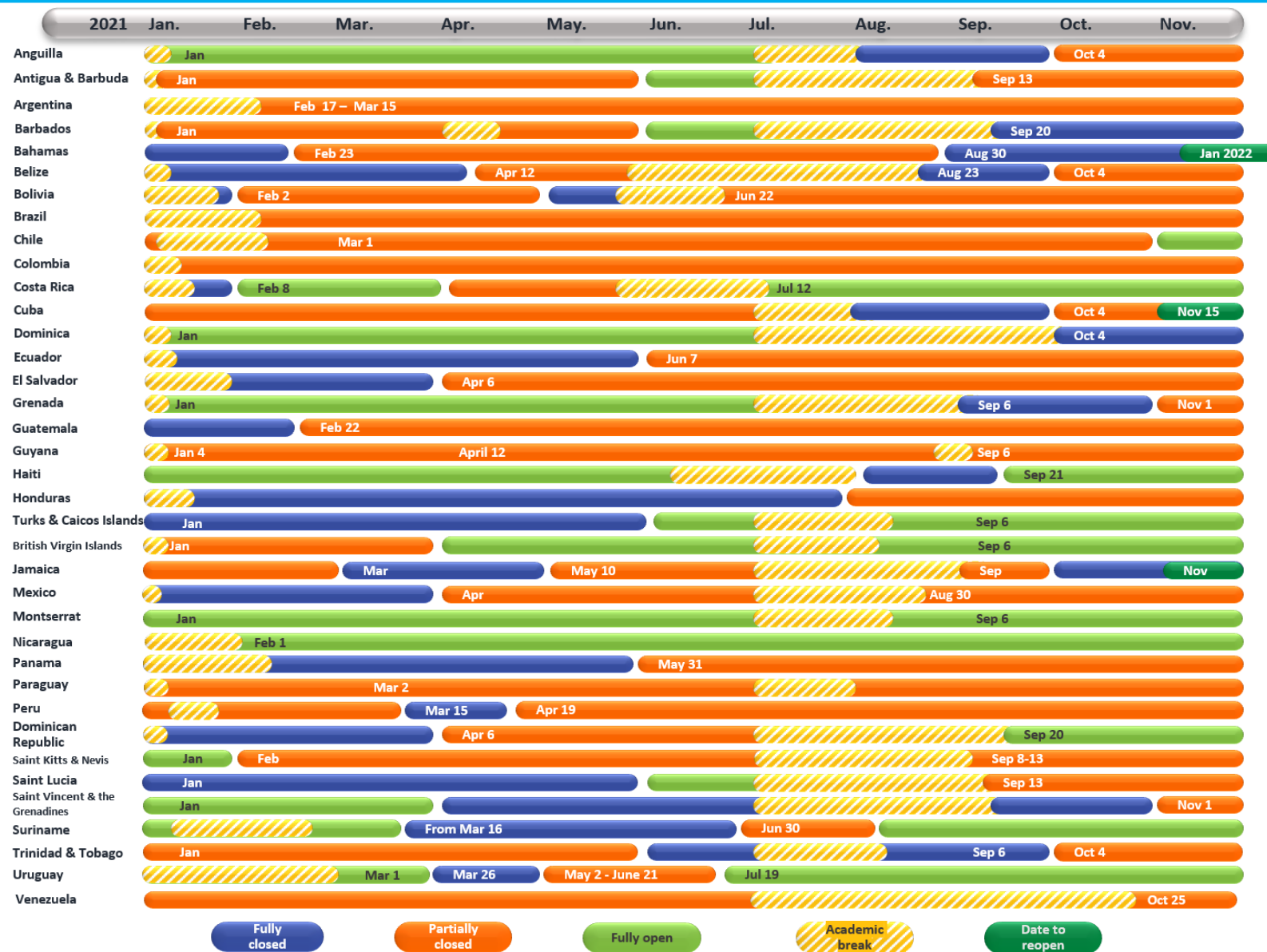
¹ This percentage was calculated by information provided by COs.

² Data extracted from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute of Statistics, '[Welcome to UIS. Stat](#)', and information provided by UNICEF COs until early November 2021.

The figure of 71 million has been calculated based on the number of children affected by schools that are partially or fully closed. In the case of Brazil, the number of children affected by schools' closures has been calculated using data on the total of students in Brazil and an approximate figure provided by the CO of the number of children that have received distance or hybrid classes.

³ Figure calculated using the schools' closures information from the Timeline (page 5). The information of the timeline has been provided by UNICEF COs from March 2020 until early November 2021.

V. 2021 REOPENING OF SCHOOLS' TIMELINE⁴



Note: The label for 'Academic break' represents the holiday period in all countries.

⁴ Data reported by UNICEF COs from January 2021 until early November 2021.

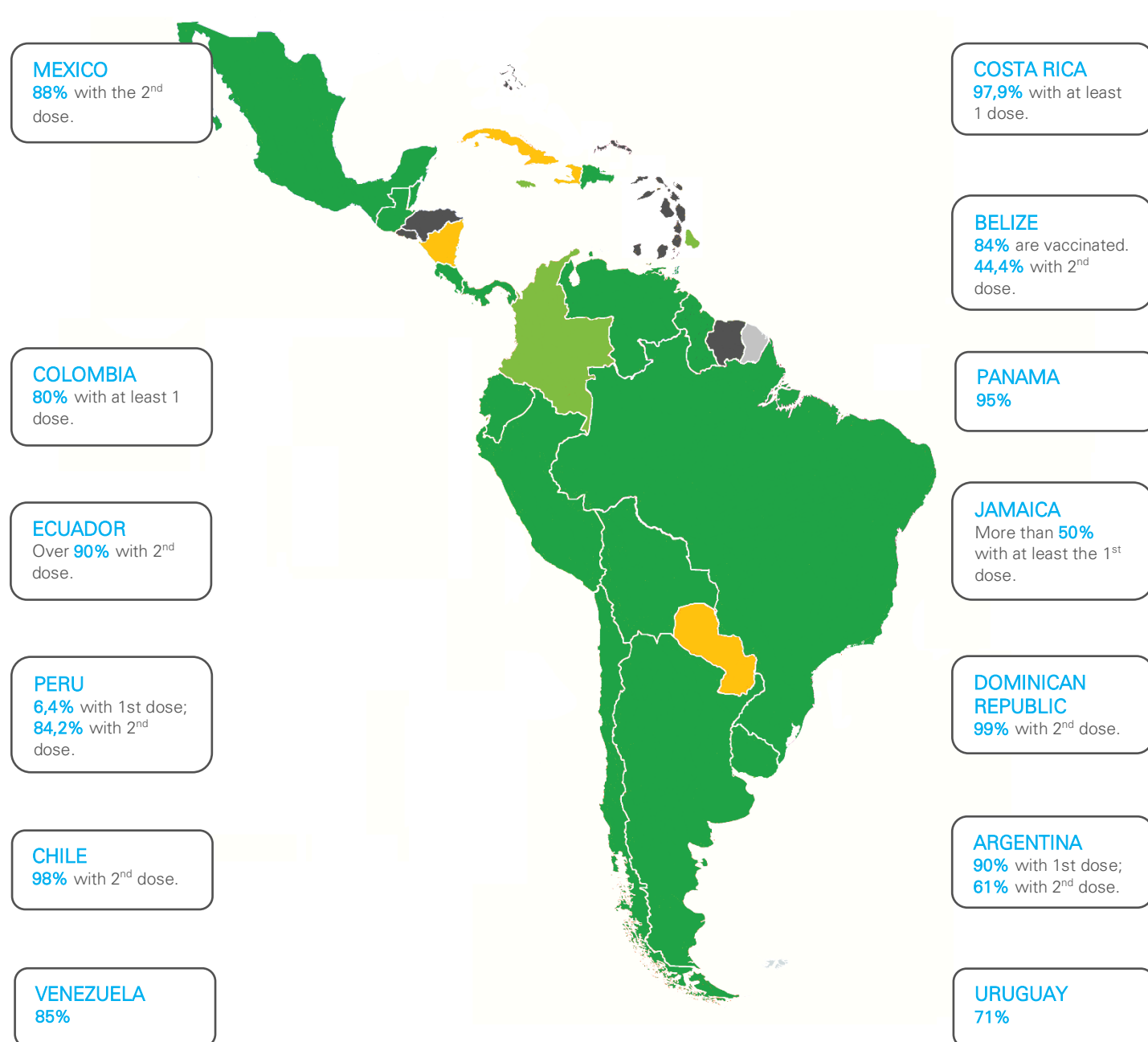
⁵ Access [here](#) the 2020 Reopening of Schools' Timeline.

VI. PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS VACCINATED

The below map provides a mapping of the prioritization of teachers' vaccination in the Latin American and the Caribbean region from April 2021 to the present for the countries and territories that have sent us information.

LEGEND

- 3 countries with teachers vaccinated with the 1st dose
- 15 countries with teachers vaccinated with the 2nd dose
- 4 countries without prioritization of the vaccination
- 15 countries without available data

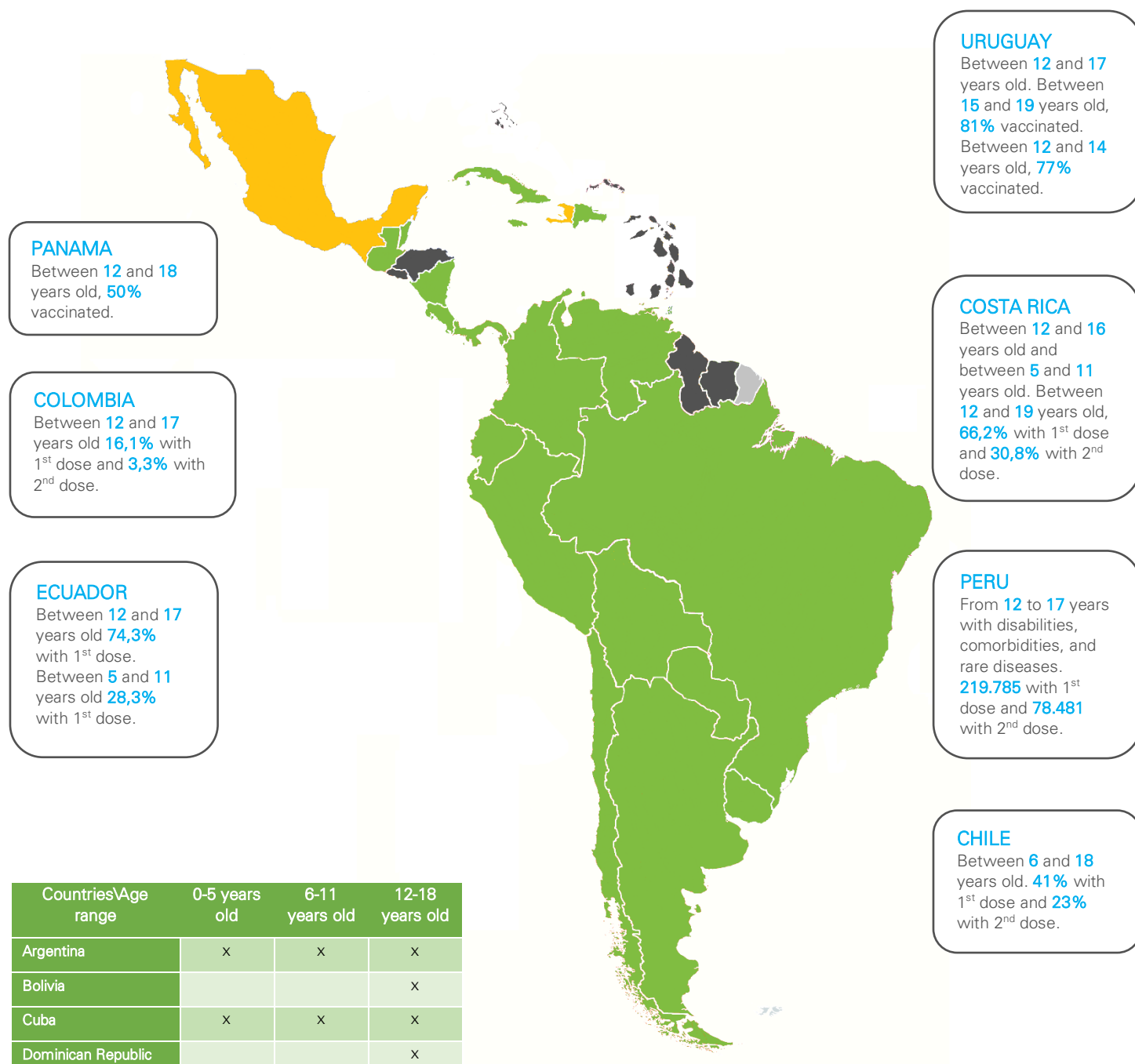


VII. MAPPING OF THE PRIORITIZATION OF STUDENTS' VACCINATION

The following map shows the prioritization of vaccination of children and adolescents in the Latin American and Caribbean region as of the beginning of November 2021 for the countries and territories that have sent us information.

LEGEND

- **48,65%** of countries have prioritized the vaccination
- **5,41%** of countries have not prioritized the vaccination
- **45,95%** of countries with no data available



Countries\Age range	0-5 years old	6-11 years old	12-18 years old
Argentina	x	x	x
Bolivia			x
Cuba	x	x	x
Dominican Republic			x
Guatemala			x
Jamaica			x
Nicaragua			x
Paraguay			x
Venezuela			x

VIII. OVERVIEW OF THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS BY COUNTRY

ARGENTINA

School reopening has been staggered by jurisdiction. According to official information from the Observatory of Face-to-Face Return to Classrooms, as of September 16, 1,803 (3%) schools are partially or totally closed. 10,802,904 students are attending on-site classes.

BAHAMAS

On November 8, the Minister of Education informed that the schools would reopen the second week of January 2022 in hybrid mode to gradually move to full face-to-face under the reopening procedures and policies of the Ministry of Health and Welfare.⁶

BELIZE

46 out of 630 schools are open for face-to-face teaching, which includes preschool, primary, secondary and vocational schools; the remaining schools use the hybrid modality. In total, 920 students benefit from face-to-face classes

BOLIVIA

At the moment there is a partial closure of schools with 9,075 schools offering face-to-face classes, 3,795 semi-face-to-face classes and 3,465 distance classes.

BRAZIL

All of Brazil's 27 states reopened their on-site schools, with the exception of some municipalities that still maintain a hybrid education model. The schools have resumed most of their activities since October.

CHILE

In total, 14,442 schools in the country are fully open: 8,994 are at the primary and secondary levels and 5,448 at the preschool level. Of the total number of schools open, only 50% of students have had access to face-to-face activities, due to various factors such as permitted capacity, voluntary class attendance or the fear of families to send their children to classes.

COLOMBIA

At present, there are 47,230 educational centers fully open, corresponding to 88.4% of the total number of centers nationwide. The reopening benefits 7,070,145 (71.1%) children and adolescents attending on-site classes

COSTA RICA

A total of 5,369 educational centers are fully open in the hybrid modality. In addition, 1,266 early childhood centers that are part of the National Child Care and Development Network are fully open, benefiting 1,189,839 students (582,234 boys and 607,605 girls) in the face-to-face mode.

CUBA

A partial closure of educational centers is maintained. As of October 29, 794 (8%) schools and more than 900 (83%) early childhood centers remain fully open providing face-to-face education to more than 84,000 students. The remaining students continued with distance learning until November 12.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

There is a mandate to reopen fully face-to-face at the national level for both public and private schools. Most of the public schools with many students offer the semi-presential modality, and some are closed as they do not meet the minimum conditions for reopening. In total, 1,395,279 boys and 1,365,839 girls benefit from the semi-presential modality.

ECA (Eastern Caribbean Area)

Schools are now fully open in the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks & Caicos Islands, but remain fully closed in Barbados and Dominica. In the remaining territories, schools are partially closed, combining face-to-face learning with the distance learning model

ECUADOR

Of a total of 16,290 educational centers, 6,950 have approved plans to make use of their educational facilities, and 6,539 have returned to on-site classes. The reopening process benefits 583,195 students and 69,015 teachers. Approximately 1,917 early childhood centers remain completely closed.

EL SALVADOR

Students continue to attend classes on a blended and distance basis.⁷ The Ministry of Education implemented the Links to Education strategy, whose objective is to provide access to technological resources to both teachers and students for the continuity of learning. This initiative is adapted to a multimodal teaching system.⁸

⁶ Bahamas Ministry of Education [press conference](#), published on November 8, 2021.

⁷ Information extracted from the [official web page](#) of the Ministry of Education of El Salvador on Facebook.

⁸ Ministry of Education of El Salvador: [Links to Education](#)

GUATEMALA

Currently 24,687 educational centers are partially closed, with 931,853 children and adolescents attending classes through a combined or hybrid education model. All early childhood centers are totally closed.

GUYANA

Students in grades 10, 11 and 12 returned to face-to-face instruction during October 2021. No specific date was set for the reopening of all secondary schools as the reopening process is dependent on the vaccination program.

HAITI

All schools in areas not affected by the earthquake and urban violence in the country have been open since September 21. As of October 4, schools in the areas affected by the earthquake began the reopening process⁹. In total, 4 million children and adolescents are benefiting from the reopening process.

HONDURAS

Schools remain partially closed. According to data from the ODK COLLECT platform, as of October 27, 48% of rural schools offer blended learning classes¹⁰. The Ministry of Education indicated that the start of blended learning classes in schools nationwide in 2022 will depend on the vaccination of the entire educational community¹¹.

JAMAICA

All educational centers, approximately 1,000 primary and secondary schools and 2,300 early childhood centers, are totally closed. Only private schools are open, the rest are offering classes online, via television, radio and printed educational packages.

MEXICO

Schools are partially closed. As of November 8, 72,111 schools in the country offer face-to-face classes, offering a combined education model or hybrid model (face-to-face and distance education). Access [here](#) the comprehensive analysis dashboard that monitors the process of reopening schools in the country.

NICARAGUA

To date, all the country's 9,125 educational centers are fully open offering face-to-face and combined education. All 1,800,293 children and adolescents benefit from the opening of schools.

PANAMA

2,360 schools out of a total of 4,587 are open under the semi-presential education modality, and only 133 early childhood centers out of 1,450 are open. In total, 324,929 students are benefiting from the reopening of schools.

PARAGUAY

According to data provided by the Ministry of Education report, as of October 12th, 6,578 of the 10,339 educational institutions in the country offer on-site classes, benefiting a total of 714,184 students.

PERU

According to data as of October 27, 11,627 schools and educational services out of a total of 111,640 are open offering semi-face-to-face services. This represents 10.6% of the schools and other services open, with an increase of 2.6% since the previous report. 94% of these educational centers are in rural areas and only 6% in urban areas.

SURINAME

All schools in the country are fully open, so that all children and adolescents are now receiving classes in person. Evaluations of learning loss have been happening.

URUGUAY

All educational centers in the country are fully open (2,756 public and 842 private), so that all students (772,463) from Kindergarten to High School benefit from face-to-face classes.

VENEZUELA

Of the 29,103 schools (4,775 private and 24,328 public), it is estimated that 85% of them opened on October 25, while the rest are undergoing rehabilitation. It is expected that at the beginning of the new 2021-2022 school year, 8,182,309 students will benefit from face-to-face classes.



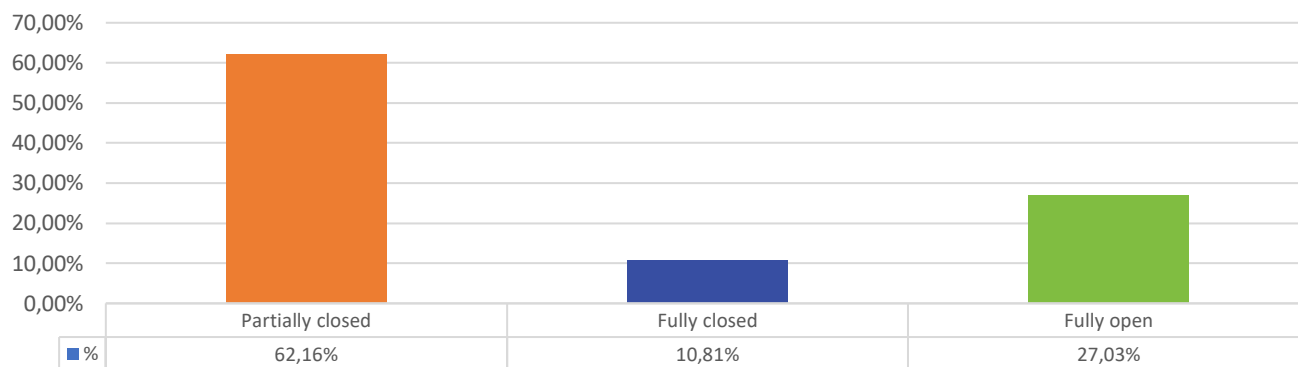
⁹ Information extracted from Haiti's official Facebook page.

¹⁰ Information obtained from the [official website](#) of the Ministry of Education.

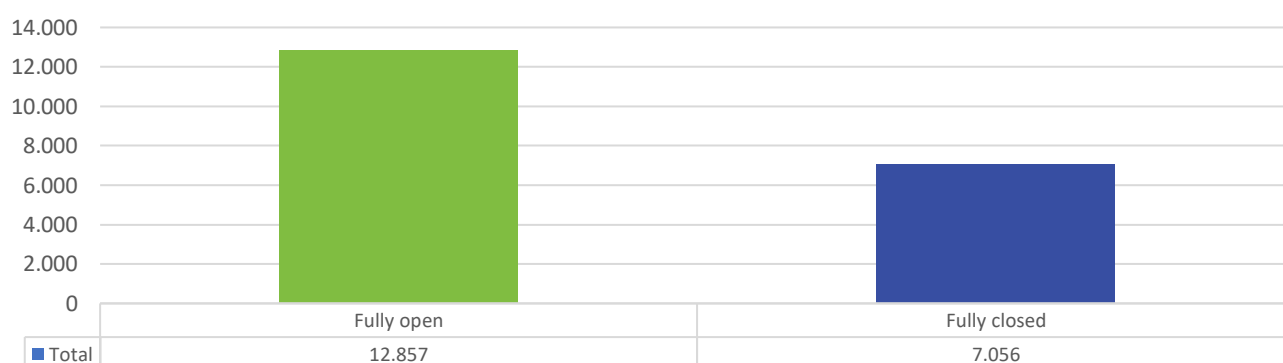
¹¹ Information obtained from the [official website](#) of the Ministry of Education of Honduras.

IX. THE SCHOOLS' REOPENING PROCESS IN FIGURES

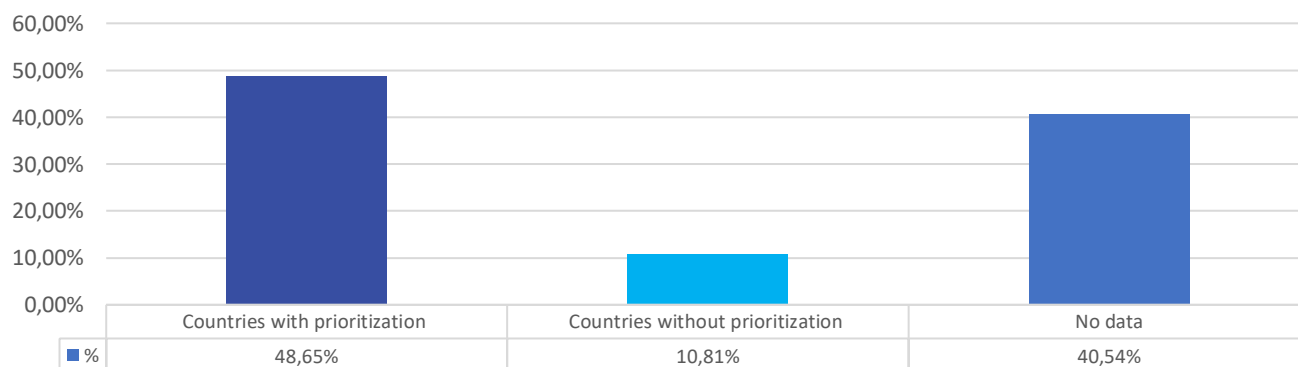
STATUS OF SCHOOLS' REOPENING



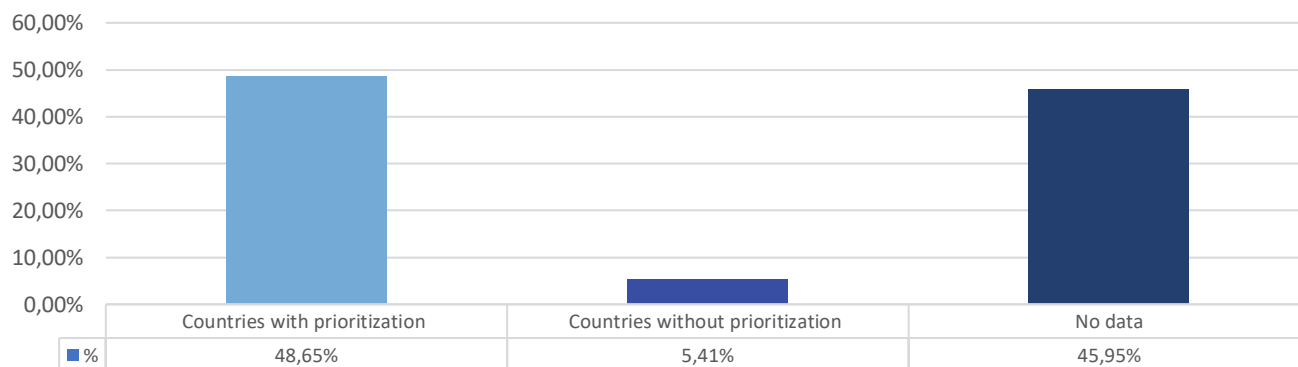
REOPENING STATUS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS



PRIORITIZATION OF TEACHERS' VACCINATION



PRIORITIZATION OF VACCINATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS



X. UNICEF'S REGIONAL SUPPORT

EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES (EiE)

- **2nd Meeting of Coordination Mechanisms of the Education Sector.** On October 29 was held the second meeting of coordination mechanisms of the region organized by the Regional Education Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, a meeting that brings together the members of these mechanisms in order to support the exchange of experiences and lessons learned among them. This second meeting focused on the theme of reopening schools, including the topics of diagnosis and recovery of learning and well-being and psychosocial support, and included the experiences of the coordination mechanisms of Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela.
- **1st Forum of the Safe Schools Global Initiative of the SICA region.** On November 12, 15 and 16, the SICA Region Safe Schools Forum was held, organized by CECC-SICA in cooperation with the UNICEF-LACRO regional office. This first virtual forum of the Safe Schools Initiative of the SICA Region, is a space that will bring together the Ministers of Education of the Region, civil protection/risk management agencies, risk management professionals, national and international organizations working in the education sector and risk management, among others, in order to identify gaps and opportunities for policies, strategies and plans that lead to reduce risks and increase the resilience of the educational population. For more information, please click [here](#).
- Nicaragua is starting a 6 weeks (24 hours) online training workshop on Inclusive education, Universal Design for Learning, and the implementation of the ADT project. Participants come mainly from MINED and UNAM Managua and trainings will be given by members of the Regional Task team on Disability and Inclusion.
- Uruguay: The first ADT has been finalized this month and will be tested in schools in March 2022.
- Paraguay CO and the Ministry of Education are currently pilot testing the first ADT. We are taking this opportunity to also test the new developed methodology for data collection during this piloting phase.
- An Advocacy & Communication Strategy consultant has been hired to develop the regional strategy for the ADT project and will be supporting all 4 COs in contextualizing it together with the respective Communication teams.
- **Part of the Solution:** We have completed a regional study on bullying and mistreatment of children with disabilities. On November 29 the main results will be shared with children and adolescents that have took part in the assessment and discuss with them the next steps to respond to the problem. Children and adolescents participating will have the opportunity to engage in an exchange with UNICEF Disabilities Advisor, Rosangela Berman Bieler, LACRO Focal point for disability, Cynthia Brizuela, and the UN Special Envoy Ma Soledad Cisternas to explore future collaborative action in this area.
- **December 3rd, International Day of Persons with Disabilities:** In celebration of disability rights, UNICEF LACRO and Special Olympics are launching the exhibition "Painting Inclusion in a house with Many windows!", a result of a series of workshops with children and families that seek to represent inclusion through art and music and directed by the artist Gusti.



INCLUSION

- **Update on the Regional Accessible Digital Textbook (ADT) Project:**
 - Jamaica is concluding a partnership with a local publisher to produce and disseminate 10 story books for the ADT project.
- **Task Team Assistance to Panama Country Office:** In Panama, the Task Team has collaborated to develop a roadmap for Inclusive Education. The final document will be presented to the Minister of Education on November 17, including the recommendations of local experts and the UNICEF Disability Advisors technical assistance in the areas of disability data, standards, good practices, teacher training and partnerships.

SECONDARY EDUCATION & LEARNING

- **Regional Webinar on Learning Assessment:** The regional webinar on "Diagnostic and formative assessment, the key to learning recovery" was celebrated on Tuesday November 2nd. Co-organized by UNICEF LACRO and the Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE) of UNESCO, the webinar was based on 4 experiences of the region and aimed to promote and discuss key elements of diagnostic and formative assessment as a key strategy for learning recovery. The regional experiences presented were the following:

1. Independent Measurement of Learning-MIA (Mexico)
 2. Diagnostic Assessment (Mexico)
 3. Formative Evaluations of the Evaluation System for Learning (Uruguay)
 4. Comprehensive Learning Diagnosis (Chile)
- The recording as well as the presentations can be accessed [here](#).



©UNICEF/ECU/2021/MishaVallejo

For additional information or any queries please contact:

Ruth Custode, rcustode@unicef.org; Tania González Veiga, tgonzalez@unicef.org; María José Melo, mmelo@unicef.org.