



# The Role of International Assessments in Educational Improvement: ICCS and the Challenges in LAC

*Dr Wolfram Schulz*

KIX LAC Webinar, 30 January 2024



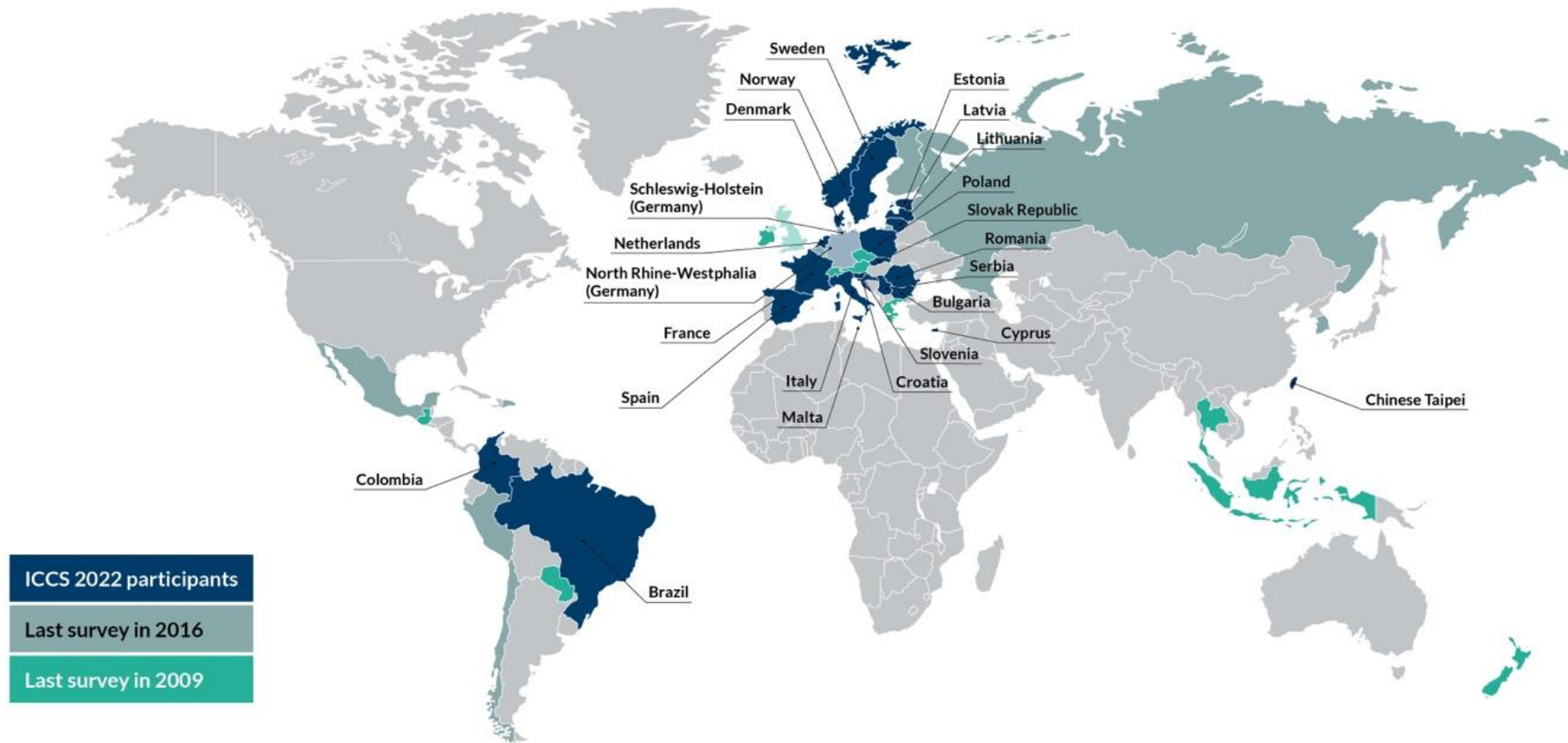
# The IEA Civic and Citizenship Education Study: Aims and purposes

- Investigate ways in which young people are prepared to assume their role as citizens
- Monitor trends in lower-secondary students' civic knowledge, attitudes and engagement over time
- Capture relevant contexts for civic and citizenship education
  - National/sub-national level, schools, classrooms, home
- Address persisting and new challenges of educating young people
  - Continuous changes in contexts of democracy and civic participation
  - Development of new focus areas for each new cycle

# Background

- Long tradition of IEA studies on civic and citizenship education:
  - Civic Education Study 1971 (part of six-subject study)
  - Civic Education Study 1999 (CIVED)
  - ICCS (2009, 2016, 2022)
    - International Study Centre at Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
- Participation in the Latin American region:
  - CIVED 1999: Chile, Colombia
  - ICCS 2009: Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay
  - ICCS 2016: Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru
  - ICCS 2022: Brazil, Colombia
    - Drop-out of 3-4 countries throughout study cycle!

# Country Participation



ICCS 2022 participants  
 Last survey in 2016  
 Last survey in 2009

**Participating countries**

Bulgaria	Croatia	France	Malta	Poland	Slovak Republic
Brazil	Cyprus	Italy	Netherlands	Romania	Slovenia
Chinese Taipei	Denmark	Latvia	North Rhine-Westphalia*	Schleswig-Holstein*	Spain
Colombia	Estonia	Lithuania	Norway	Serbia	Sweden

\*German benchmarking participants

**22 participating countries & 2 German benchmarking participants in 2022**



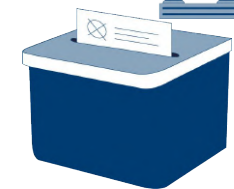
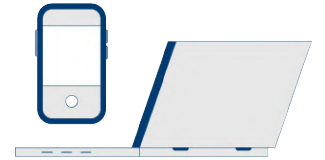
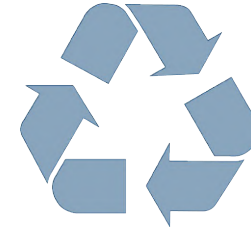
# Research Questions in ICCS 2022

1. How is civic and citizenship education implemented in participating countries?
2. What is the extent and variation of students' civic knowledge within and across participating countries?
3. What is the extent of students' engagement in different spheres of society and which factors within or across countries are related to it?
4. What beliefs do students in participating countries hold regarding important civic issues in modern society and what are the factors influencing their variation?
5. How is schooling in participating countries organized regarding civic and citizenship education and what is its association with students' learning outcomes?



# Focus areas for ICCS 2022

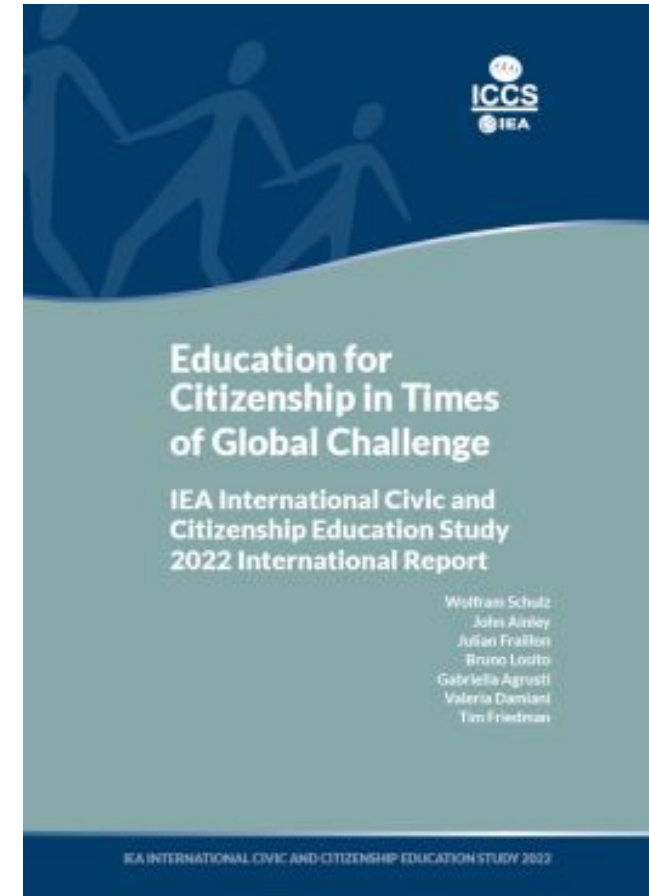
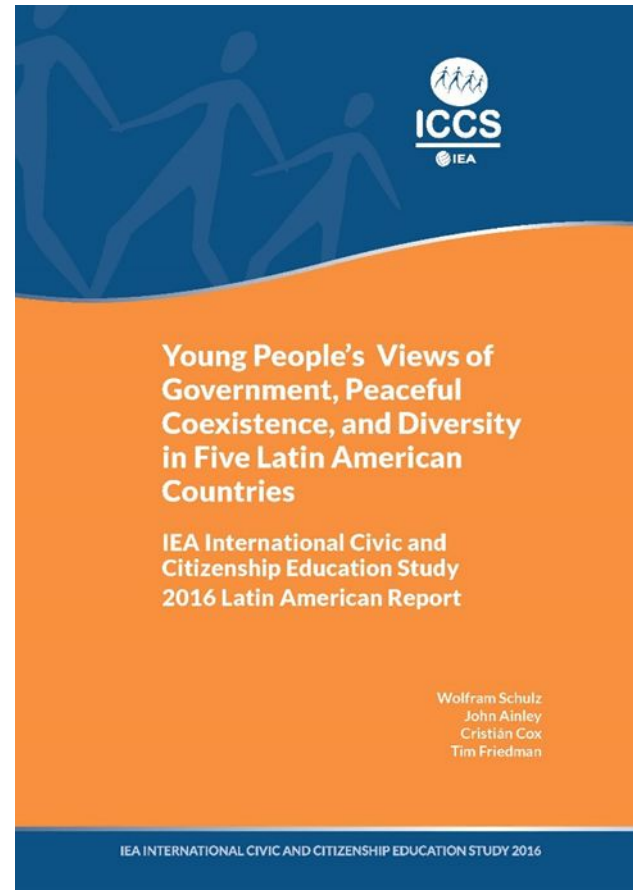
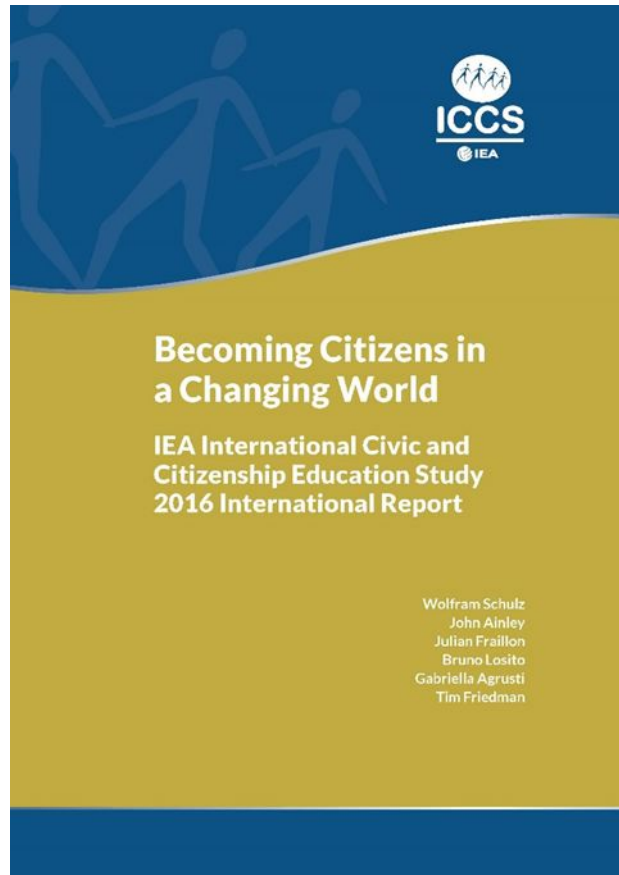
- **Environmental sustainability**
  - Growing concerns about climate change and increasing importance of education for sustainable development as a learning area
- **Engagement with digital technologies**
  - Recognition of changes of how citizens inform themselves, interact with others and engage in society
- **Diversity**
  - Increasing levels of diversity across societies and within schools, related to issues like migration, gender diversity, or socioeconomic differences
- **Views of the political system**
  - Growing instability of political systems and alienation of citizens from democratic processes
- **Global citizenship**
  - Increasing interconnectedness of societies and recognition as important aspect of student learning in many education systems



# General design for ICCS 2022

- Introduction of computer-based assessment for student instruments in ICCS 2022
- Instrumentation
  - Student test (rotated booklet design)
  - Student questionnaire
  - Teacher questionnaire (optional online delivery)
  - School questionnaire (optional online delivery)
  - National contexts survey (online)
  - Regional student questionnaires (Europe and Latin America)
- Two-stage cluster sampling design
  - School selection proportional by size
  - Students in eighth year of schooling
- Link items included to measure change over time

# Some results from ICCS 2016 and 2022



# National contexts for civic and citizenship education (ICCS 2016)

- Latin American curricula tend to be influenced by their respective historical and social contexts
- Only in Mexico and Peru there is a specific subject for this learning area at the target grade (8)
  - In Dominican Republic until 2015
- Aspects related to elections and voting not included in Chilean and Dominican curricula
  - Only in Mexico there was an explicit reference to voting as a right and obligation for citizens

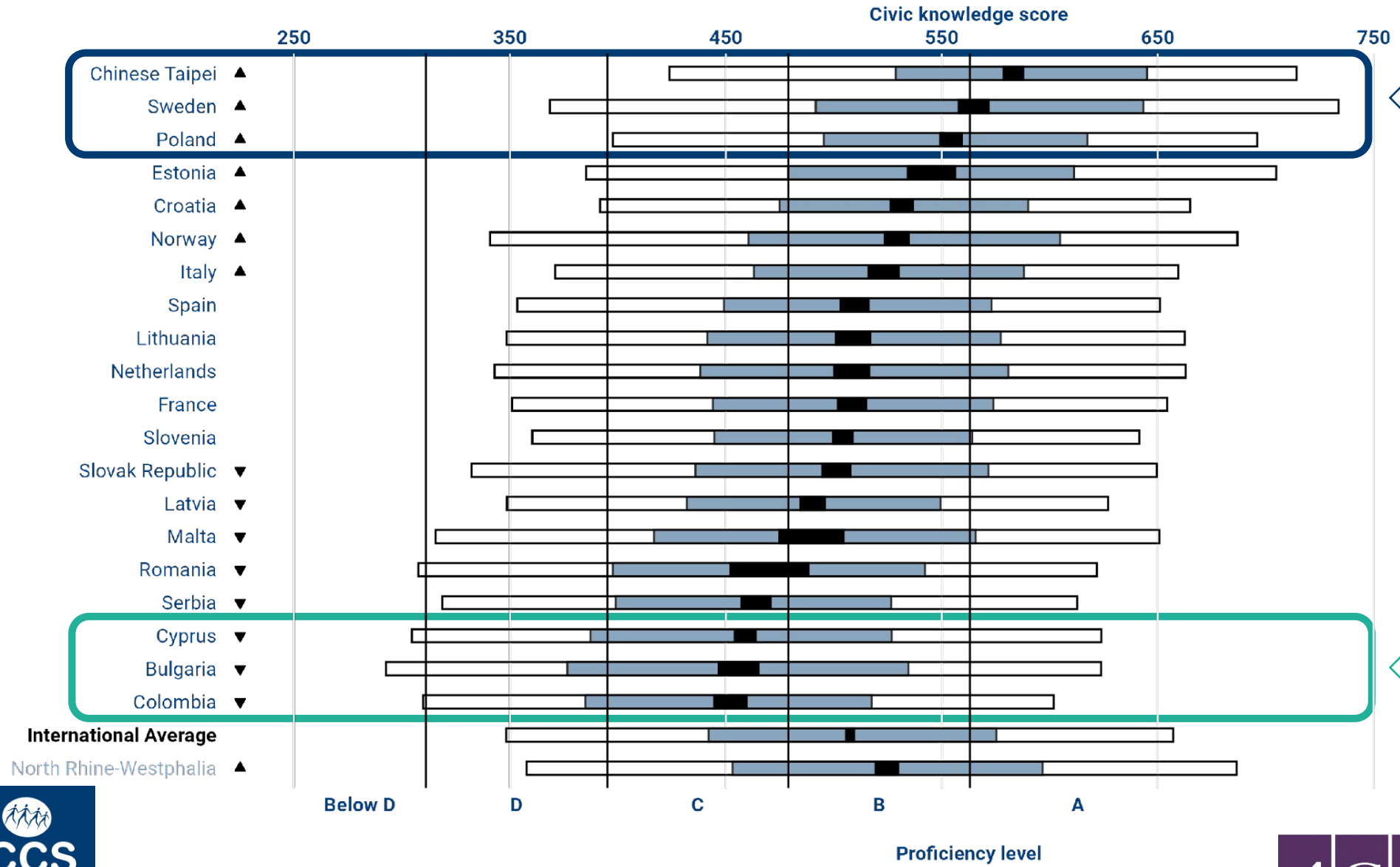
# National civic knowledge averages in 2016

Countries with 35 scale points above average

Countries with 35 scale points below average

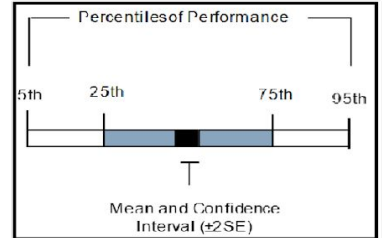
Country	Years of schooling	Average age	250	350	450	550	650	750	Average scale score
Denmark†	8	14.9							586 (3.0) ▲
Chinese Taipei	8	14.1							581 (3.0) ▲
Sweden <sup>1</sup>	8	14.7							579 (2.8) ▲
Finland	8	14.8							577 (2.3) ▲
Norway (9) <sup>1</sup>	9	14.6							564 (2.2) ▲
Estonia <sup>1</sup>	8	14.9							546 (3.1) ▲
Russian Federation	8	14.8							545 (4.3) ▲
Belgium (Flemish)	8	13.9							537 (4.1) ▲
Slovenia	8	13.8							532 (2.5) ▲
Croatia	8	14.6							531 (2.5) ▲
Italy	8	13.8							524 (2.4) ▲
Netherlands†	8	14.0							523 (4.5)
Lithuania	8	14.7							518 (3.0)
Latvia <sup>1</sup>	8	14.8							492 (3.1) ▼
Malta	9	13.8							491 (2.7) ▼
Bulgaria	8	14.7							485 (5.3) ▼
Chile	8	14.2							482 (3.1) ▼
Colombia	8	14.6							482 (3.4) ▼
Mexico	8	14.1							467 (2.5) ▼
Peru	8	14.0							438 (3.5) ▼
Dominican Republic	8	14.2							381 (3.0) ▼
ICCS 2016 average		14.4	Below D	D	C	B	A		517 (0.7)

# Distributions of civic knowledge



~50 points above 2022 average

Achievement significantly higher than international average ▲  
 Achievement significantly lower than international average ▼



~50 points below 2022 average



# Civic engagement aspects

- Young people tended to value student participation at school (especially in Latin America)
- Students who definitely or probably expected to:



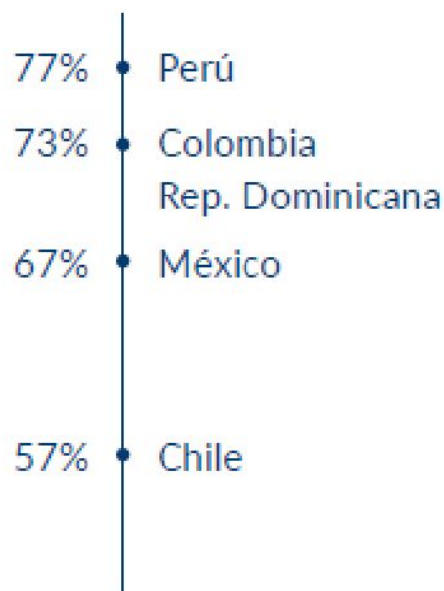
# Attitudes toward important topics

- Differences in perceptions of good or bad situations for democracy
  - For example, in some Latin American countries relatively high proportions agreed that it was good for democracy when political leaders give jobs to family members (ICCS 2016 average: 17%, regional average: 31%)
- There were high proportions of student endorsing gender equality
  - ICCS 2016 data showed relatively low levels of support for gender equality in Mexico and Dominican Republic
- Increasing support for same-sex marriage in Latin America
  - E.g. in Colombia: 49% (2009) > 63% (2016) > 80% (2022)
  - Increases similar between 2009 and 2016 in Chile and Mexico

# Most students in ICCS 2016 agreed that dictatorships are justified if they bring..

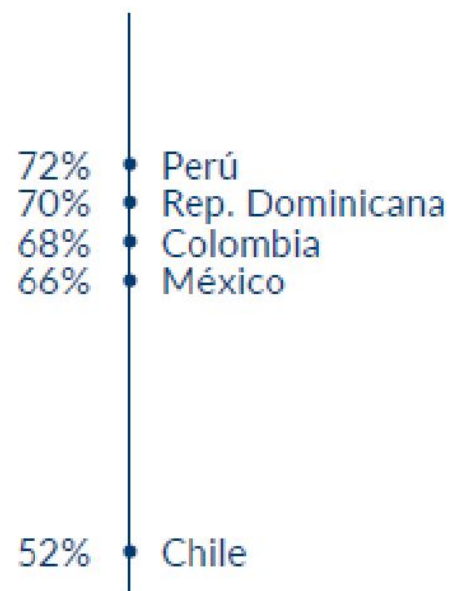
... Orden y seguridad

69%



... Beneficios económicos

65%



# Students' endorsement of corrupt practices and their trust in national institutions (ICCS 2016)

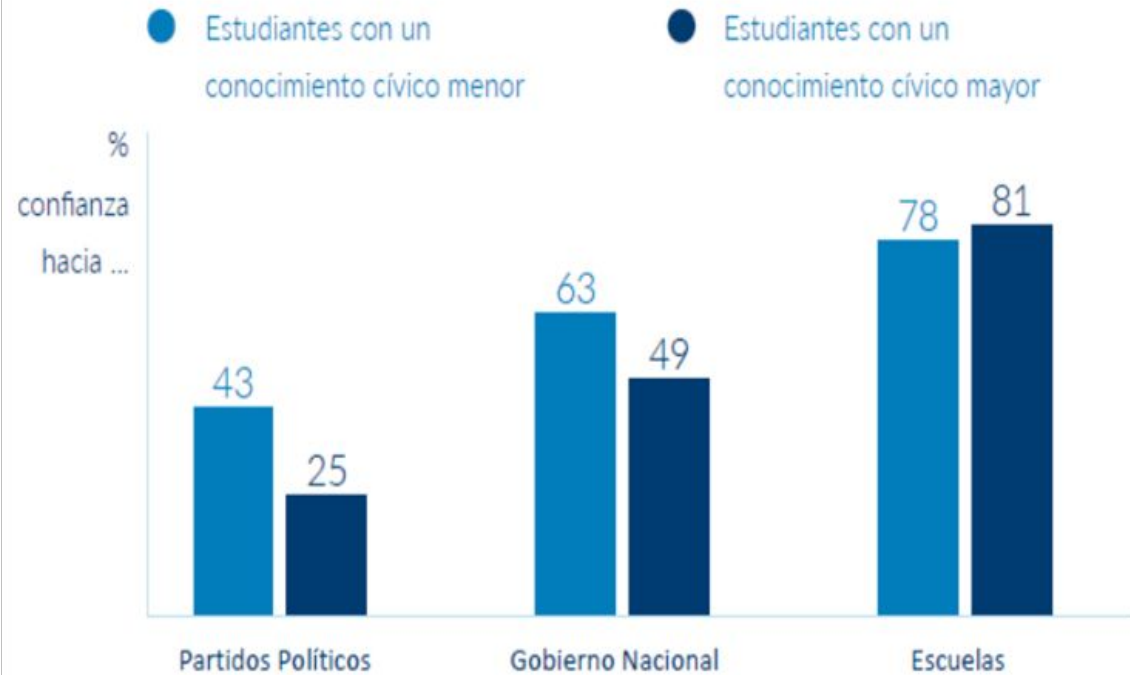
*Un funcionario debería poder aceptar sobornos si su salario es demasiado bajo*

25%



*Un funcionario debería poder ayudar a sus amigos a conseguir un trabajo en su despacho*

53%



# Implications for educational policy and practice in the Latin American region based on ICCS data

- ICCS data have shown limited commitment to democracy and rule of law among Latin American students
  - Similar results were found in adult surveys
  - While only minorities among students endorsed authoritarian government practices, the first two cycles reported high levels of support for justifications of dictatorship
  - Students tended to accept corrupt practices and justification to disobedience to the law for personal reasons
- Students who had less civic knowledge were more inclined to endorse non-democratic practices
  - Important argument for further strengthening of civic learning in the Latin American region
  - There were (statistically significant) increases in civic knowledge in Colombia and Mexico between 2009 and 2016, in 2022 the level of civic knowledge has significantly decreased again in Colombia, and ICCS results have shown generally relatively low levels of civic knowledge in the Latin American region

# Challenges in the Latin American region - 1

- While there is wide-spread interest in the learning area, there is also a lack of consistency regarding country commitment to IEA studies of civic and citizenship education
- Funding through IADB for country participation was available in ICCS 2009 (SREDECC) but no longer available for second and third ICCS cycle
  - Regular funding of European country participation through European Commission potential factor for more consistent participation in ICCS
- Lack of independent evaluation agencies with consistent long-term agendas
  - Government changes, funding issues, political or social development etc. impact on decision-making about participation

# Challenges in the Latin American region - 2

- As other international studies, ICCS tends to be somewhat dominated by countries with relatively high levels of civic knowledge
  - Often range of cognitive abilities not well targeted
- Low levels of reading ability impact on measurement in some countries of the region
  - Visible drop-out of students with lower levels of civic knowledge toward the ends of test and questionnaire instruments
  - Lower scale reliabilities and even implausible findings
- Need to consider how to improve measurement in countries with vastly different levels of student knowledge
  - Regional studies or modules?



Thank you!  
Gracias!  
Merci!

Contact:

[wolfram.schulz@acer.org](mailto:wolfram.schulz@acer.org)

