

Quarterly Americas
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In its third year, AQ's Social Inclusion Index continues to track rights, access to markets and education, and political participation in the region. While countries such as Chile and Uruguay consistently rank high, strong GDP growth in Peru moved it up one spot to sixth place. This year's index also looks at disability rights and access to justice.

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Social inclusion is more than the reduction of poverty and inequality. It is about opportunity and voice and comprises political accountability, political, civil and human rights, and access to public and private goods, all issues that contribute to an individual's capacity for a safe, productive life as a fully integrated member of the society, the economy and the political system—without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. *Americas Quarterly* identified 21 variables that make up social inclusion, measuring access to markets, social services, formal jobs, popular attitudes toward the government and personal empowerment, and participation in civil society—by race/ethnicity and gender—as well as political, civil, women's and LGBT rights. This year AQ also examines and ranks countries along two new measures, disability rights and access to justice. Below is a country-by-country scorecard of how the region measures up when it comes to social inclusion.


- » [Read a full overview to find out more about the Social Inclusion Index.](#)
- » [How did countries rank last year? Access the 2013 Social Inclusion Index.](#)

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GRADING THE COUNTRIES

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Name of Country <i>Argentina</i>		Overall Score <i>N/A</i>		 SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX 2014	
GDP Growth 2003-2013		6.90 %		Percent Living on More than \$4 per day	
GDP Spent on Social Programs		10.4 %		by gender male 88.2 % female 87.9 %	
Enrollment Secondary School				by race non-minority N/A % minority N/A %	
by gender male 89.6 % female 92.3 %				Personal Empowerment	
by race non-minority N/A % minority N/A %				by gender (1-7) male 3.98 female 3.68	
Political Rights 0 10 20 30 31 40				by race (1-7) non-minority 3.86 minority 3.79	
Civil Rights 0 10 20 30 40 49 50 60				Government Responsiveness (Efficacy)	
Women's Rights 0 7 14 21 28 29 35				by gender (1-7) male 3.32 female 3.19	
LGBT Rights 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 7				by race (1-7) non-minority 3.23 minority 3.29	
Civil Society Participation				Access to Adequate Housing	
by gender (1-6) male 0.91 female 1.27				by gender male 92.5 % female 92.9 %	
by race (1-6) non-minority 1.03 minority 1.17				by race non-minority N/A % minority N/A %	
Financial Inclusion				Percent Access to a Formal Job (age 25-65)	
by gender male 34.61 % female 31.82 %				by gender male 74.9 % female 67.8 %	
				by race non-minority N/A % minority N/A %	
<p>COMMENTS</p> <p>Argentina ranks relatively high on percentage of GDP spent on social programs, access to adequate housing by gender, and percent living on more than \$4 per day by gender. However, perceptions of government responsiveness by race are low in comparison with other countries, and it scores very low on civil society participation by both race and gender.</p>					



HOW THE COUNTRIES RANK

RANKING BY ALL VARIABLES

PERCENT GDP GROWTH (2003-2013)		PERCENT GDP SPENT ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS		ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOL/GENDER		ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOL/RACE		POLITICAL RIGHTS		CIVIL RIGHTS		WOMEN'S RIGHTS	
PANAMA	1	UNITED STATES	1	BOLIVIA	1	BOLIVIA	1	URUGUAY	1	URUGUAY	1	URUGUAY	1
ARGENTINA	2	COSTA RICA	2	CHILE	2	CHILE	2	CHILE	2	CHILE	2	COSTA RICA	2
PERU	3	HONDURAS*	3	ARGENTINA	3	ECUADOR	3	COSTA RICA	3	COSTA RICA	3	ARGENTINA	3
URUGUAY	4	ARGENTINA	4	ECUADOR	4	PERU	4	UNITED STATES	3	UNITED STATES	3	PERU	4
COSTA RICA	5	COLOMBIA	5	PERU	5	URUGUAY	5	EL SALVADOR	5	COSTA RICA	4	MEXICO	5
PARAGUAY	6	BRAZIL	6	COLOMBIA	6	BRAZIL	6	PANAMA	5	ARGENTINA	5	UNITED STATES	5
COLOMBIA	7	PANAMA	6	PARAGUAY	7	MEXICO	7	BRAZIL	7	BRAZIL	6	CHILE	7
BOLIVIA	8	BOLIVIA	8	URUGUAY	8	PARAGUAY	8	ARGENTINA	8	PANAMA	7	ECUADOR	7
CHILE	9	NICARAGUA	9	MEXICO	9	GUATEMALA	9	PERU	9	EL SALVADOR	8	COLOMBIA	7
ECUADOR	10	URUGUAY	10	BRAZIL	10	NICARAGUA	10	BOLIVIA	10	PERU	9	BRAZIL	10
HONDURAS	11	MEXICO	11	COSTA RICA	10			MEXICO	11	BOLIVIA	10	NICARAGUA	11
NICARAGUA	12	CHILE	12	GUATEMALA	12			COLOMBIA	11	BOLIVIA	10	PANAMA	11
BRAZIL	13	EL SALVADOR	13	HONDURAS	13			PARAGUAY	13	ECUADOR	12	BOLIVIA	13
GUATEMALA	14	PARAGUAY	14	NICARAGUA	14			ECUADOR	14	NICARAGUA	13	EL SALVADOR	14
MEXICO	15	GUATEMALA	15	EL SALVADOR	15			GUATEMALA	14	PARAGUAY	13	HONDURAS	14
										COLOMBIA	15		

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LGBT RIGHTS		CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION/ GENDER		CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION /RACE		FINANCIAL INCLUSION/ GENDER		PERCENT LIVING ON MORE THAN \$4 PER DAY/GENDER		PERCENT LIVING ON MORE THAN \$4 PER DAY/RACE		PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT/ GENDER	
BRAZIL	1	BOLIVIA	1	PARAGUAY	1	UNITED STATES	1	URUGUAY	1	CHILE	1	UNITED STATES	1
URUGUAY	1	PARAGUAY	2	BOLIVIA	2	BRAZIL	2	CHILE	2	URUGUAY	2	CHILE	2
ARGENTINA	1	PERU	3	NICARAGUA	3	CHILE	3	ARGENTINA	3	BRAZIL	3	NICARAGUA	3
UNITED STATES	4	GUATEMALA	3	ECUADOR	4	COSTA RICA	4	COSTA RICA	4	PERU	4	ECUADOR	4
MEXICO	5	ECUADOR	5	HONDURAS	5	ARGENTINA	5	BRAZIL	5	MEXICO	5	ARGENTINA	4
ECUADOR	6	NICARAGUA	5	PERU	6	ECUADOR	6	PARAGUAY	6	BOLIVIA	6	URUGUAY	6
COLOMBIA	6	HONDURAS	7	EL SALVADOR	6	URUGUAY	7	PERU	7	ECUADOR	7	PANAMA	7
CHILE	8	COLOMBIA	8	MEXICO	8	PANAMA	8	COLOMBIA	8	PARAGUAY	8	PERU	8
PERU	8	EL SALVADOR	8	COLOMBIA	8	BOLIVIA	9	BOLIVIA	9	NICARAGUA	9	HONDURAS	8
BOLIVIA	10	MEXICO	10	CHILE	10	COLOMBIA	10	MEXICO	10	GUATEMALA	10	COSTA RICA	10
COSTA RICA	10	BRAZIL	11	BRAZIL	11	PARAGUAY	11	ECUADOR	11			MEXICO	11
EL SALVADOR	10	PANAMA	12	UNITED STATES	11	MEXICO	12	EL SALVADOR	12			GUATEMALA	12
NICARAGUA	13	CHILE	13	PANAMA	13	PERU	13	HONDURAS	13			BOLIVIA	13
GUATEMALA	13	UNITED STATES	14	ARGENTINA	14	NICARAGUA	14	NICARAGUA	14			BRAZIL	14
PARAGUAY	13	COSTA RICA	15	COSTA RICA	15	HONDURAS	15	GUATEMALA	15			COLOMBIA	15
HONDURAS	16	URUGUAY	16	URUGUAY	16	GUATEMALA	16					EL SALVADOR	15
PANAMA	16	ARGENTINA	17	ARGENTINA	17	EL SALVADOR	17					PARAGUAY	17

PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT/ RACE		GOV'T. RESPONSIVENESS/ GENDER		GOV'T. RESPONSIVENESS/ RACE		ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING/GENDER		ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING/ RACE		ACCESS TO FORMAL JOB/GENDER		ACCESS TO FORMAL JOB/RACE	
UNITED STATES	1	URUGUAY	1	URUGUAY	1	COSTA RICA	1	URUGUAY	1	URUGUAY	1	URUGUAY	1
NICARAGUA	2	NICARAGUA	2	NICARAGUA	2	URUGUAY	2	BRAZIL	2	CHILE	2	CHILE	2
CHILE	3	ECUADOR	3	ECUADOR	3	CHILE	3	CHILE	3	BRAZIL	3	BRAZIL	3
URUGUAY	4	COSTA RICA	3	EL SALVADOR	4	BRAZIL	4	MEXICO	4	COSTA RICA	4	PERU	4
ECUADOR	5	EL SALVADOR	5	PERU	5	ARGENTINA	5	ECUADOR	5	ARGENTINA	5	BOLIVIA	5
ARGENTINA	6	MEXICO	6	ARGENTINA	6	MEXICO	6	PERU	6	COLOMBIA	6	ECUADOR	6
COSTA RICA	7	BOLIVIA	7	BOLIVIA	7	COLOMBIA	7	PARAGUAY	7	PERU	7	NICARAGUA	7
MEXICO	8	PERU	7	COLOMBIA	7	ECUADOR	8	BOLIVIA	8	BOLIVIA	8	MEXICO	8
EL SALVADOR	9	CHILE	9	PARAGUAY	9	PARAGUAY	9	GUATEMALA	9	EL SALVADOR	9	PARAGUAY	9
BOLIVIA	10	ARGENTINA	9	CHILE	10	BOLIVIA	10	NICARAGUA	10	ECUADOR	10	GUATEMALA	10
PANAMA	10	COLOMBIA	11	MEXICO	11	HONDURAS	10			MEXICO	11		
PERU	12	GUATEMALA	12	PANAMA	12	PERU	12			PARAGUAY	12		
COLOMBIA	13	PANAMA	13	BRAZIL	13	GUATEMALA	13			GUATEMALA	13		
HONDURAS	14	BRAZIL	14	UNITED STATES	14	NICARAGUA	14			NICARAGUA	14		
BRAZIL	15	PARAGUAY	15	HONDURAS	15	EL SALVADOR	15			HONDURAS	15		
PARAGUAY	16	HONDURAS	16	COSTA RICA	16								
		UNITED STATES	17										

RECOMMENDATIONS

Including race/ethnicity in census questionnaires, focusing on increasing secondary school enrollment of Afro and Indigenous students, passing women's quota laws, improving legal protections for women's economic opportunities, and expanding formal employment are all relatively easy steps countries can take to improve social inclusion.

In this issue, we have included a set of recommendations for policy changes based on our analysis of this year's Social Inclusion Index and the past three years of the index. Improving social inclusion is not easy. Patterns of political, economic and social exclusion are based on structural inefficiencies that are difficult to change in the short term. Lack of institutionalization, exclusionary laws, and a legacy of attitudes concerning race and gender, (affecting even victims' sense of empowerment) are additional hurdles.

Nevertheless, whether it is in the collection or availability of data related to social well-being, or within the laws and policies across several

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First, national governments should work to improve national censuses. This includes using—if it is a survey—a statistically valid sampling methodology that will provide an accurate rendering of the country’s population, demographics, and economic and social conditions. A number of countries this year relied on a limited sample frame for their census surveys, including Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia (though for reasons of conflict), and Nicaragua. Using a stratified, national random sample would ensure a more accurate portrayal of the population.

Similarly, countries such as Argentina, Costa Rica, Colombia, El Salvador, and Honduras need to include questions that measure race and ethnicity in their censuses. While these are socially and politically fraught issues—both historically and today—only by having policy and popular access to these realities can social inclusion be effectively addressed. Along those lines, if Panama were to participate in The World Bank SEDLAC project, it could dramatically improve its overall score—given its impressive rates of economic growth. The World Bank provides technical assistance for census data collection methods, and the Inter-American Development Bank is working with countries to ensure that race and ethnic measures are included.

Second, in a number of countries, scores on women’s rights indicate areas in need of improvement. Brazil could improve its score with a greater effort to increase the presence of women in political power, beyond existing quota laws, and through changes in its restrictions on reproductive rights. In Chile, quota laws are only now under discussion, and the country has one of the most restrictive regimes in the region for reproductive rights, prohibiting abortion even in the case of rape, incest or the health of the mother.

Colombia is another country—one of the few—without national quota laws for congressional party lists. And despite improving last year’s score on women’s rights, Colombia still ranks low compared to other countries. It could increase its score by making the top ranks of politics more accessible to women, by improving abortion laws, and by providing assistance for working families with children.

Third, access to formal jobs remains a problem in countries such as Ecuador and Mexico. A 2013 World Bank report revealed that the greatest gains in poverty reduction in Latin America have come from job growth, making it all the more important that countries with vast

discrepancies in access to formal jobs by race and ethnicity direct their attention to these populations. In Ecuador, only 41 percent of the Indigenous or Afro-descendant population has access to a formal job, compared to 54.9 percent of their European-descendant fellow citizens. In Guatemala the difference is a stark 17.4 percent and 43.6 percent. Just ahead of Guatemala is Paraguay, in which only 24 percent of Paraguayans of Indigenous or Afro descent have formal jobs, compared to 47.1 percent of the majority.

Fourth, education remains underfunded and often distant for too many school-age children, regardless of race or ethnicity. Brazil this year made significant improvements in secondary school enrollment of Indigenous and Afro-descendent school-age children. In El Salvador, overall rates of participation were 43 percent—reflecting in large part the low national spending on education (3.2 percent of its GDP).

RANKING BY VARIABLE:
This is how countries stacked up in our two new indicators.

Even in Uruguay, which performed well across almost all variables, the government may want to consider increasing the percentage of GDP spent on education (2.9 percent), which is significantly lower than other high-scoring countries such as the U.S., Chile, Argentina, Costa Rica, and Brazil.

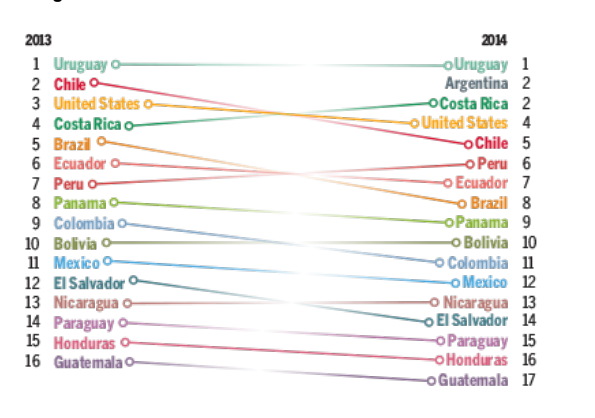
Fifth, the slow pace of financial inclusion in several countries remains surprising. Given the growth of mobile and e-banking, the expansion of microcredit, and the increasing use of banks for financial and social transfers, helping women to get banked in many countries, especially Peru and Bolivia with relatively strong banking and microcredit sectors, should be easy.

Sixth, in LGBT rights, Honduras and Panama tied for the lowest scores. In these countries, as well as countries like Costa Rica and the U.S., which all score close to the top in other rights—such as political, civil and women’s rights—simple steps can be taken to improve the full inclusion and participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations. That includes recognizing same-sex relationships, legalizing same-sex marriages, giving same-sex couples the right to adopt children, allowing homosexuals to serve in the military, bolstering protection against LGBT discrimination, and passing legislation on gender identity protection.

Last, this year, thanks to the suggestions and advice of our readers, we added two new indices: one concerning disability rights, and the other access to justice. Several recommendations based on those measures are in order.

Our measure of access to justice draws from the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2014, and uses the project’s results for access and affordability of the civil court system, lack of discrimination in the civil and criminal justice systems, and timely and effective adjudication and enforcement, among the total of 10 measures. Not surprisingly, many of the countries leading in the category of access to justice were the same as the leaders in the overall index: Uruguay, Chile and the United States. The lower performing countries

The U.S. rank—below Uruguay, Argentina and Costa Rica—may come as a surprise. While there are clear challenges to social inclusion in the U.S., it’s worth noting that we didn’t have U.S. data for eight of the variables on which we ranked the other countries.



SI COUNTRY SCORES:
This is how countries stacked up across the 21 variables.

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DISABILITY RIGHTS	ACCESS TO JUSTICE
1 Argentina Brazil Costa Rica Mexico Panama Paraguay Peru	1 Uruguay
8 Bolivia Chile Colombia Ecuador El Salvador Honduras Nicaragua United States	2 Chile United States
16 Guatemala Uruguay	4 Argentina
18 Venezuela	5 Colombia
	6 Brazil Panama
	8 El Salvador
	9 Ecuador Peru
	11 Nicaragua
	12 Guatemala Mexico
	14 Bolivia
	15 Venezuela
	Not Available: Costa Rica Honduras Paraguay

of detainees cannot afford legal fees.

Venezuela came in last in the access to justice rankings, but was not included in the overall index because of doubts over the quality of some of its other data.

Unfortunately, Costa Rica, Honduras and Paraguay did not have published figures to include in this measure.

This year we also looked at disability rights. Our measure looks at three variables of whether a country tracks its disabled population through a national census, has a law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with physical and mental disabilities, and whether the country has signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) treaty. The results within the composite index point to some specific steps governments can take to ensure that those with physical and/or mental disabilities do not suffer and can participate in the political and economic system. All of the 18 countries included in the index have signed and ratified the CRPD except for the U.S., which only signed the convention; and Venezuela, which neither signed nor ratified the convention.

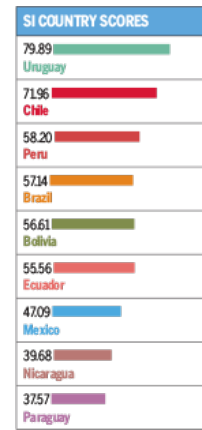
Every country included some information on its census about those with disabilities, but we gave an extra point to those who used the Washington Group (wg) Short Set of Questions on Disability in their censuses: Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and the United States. The wg have been designed to better represent disabled populations.

Finally, every country had some law protecting the physically and mentally disabled from discrimination, with the exceptions of Uruguay and Guatemala, which ranked second to last after Venezuela on our disability rights index and, interestingly, were our top scoring and lowest scoring countries, respectively, on the overall Social Inclusion Index.

This may be due in part to the scaling of our index. Scoring countries based on laws and treaties is helpful as a benchmarking exercise, yet it is much harder to quantify the nuances of disability protection. For example, Paraguay ranks at the top of our disability rights index, but closer analysis indicates that the law is not effectively enforced, infrastructure for the disabled is almost non-existent, and quotas for disabled persons in the public sector workforce are not met.

disabled persons in the public sector workforce are not met.

For the U.S and Venezuela, easy improvements of this indicator could be achieved by ratifying the CRPD (Venezuela must sign it first, of course). In addition, Uruguay and Guatemala should establish laws to protect the disabled.



METHODOLOGY

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GDP GROWTH A country can reduce poverty and inequality only if it grows economically. This measure takes the country's average growth from 2003 to 2013.

ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOL The rate is near-universal enrollment in primary schools in the region, so we looked at secondary school. We used data disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity and analyzed by The World Bank. Non-minority refers to respondents who did not identify as Indigenous, Afro-descendant or other similar terms.

POLITICAL RIGHTS These scores, ranging from 0 to 40, are from Freedom House's survey, *Freedom in the World 2013*. They evaluate respect for 10 political rights in 3 categories: electoral process (3 questions); political pluralism and participation (4); and functioning of government (3).

PERCENT LIVING ON MORE THAN \$4 PER DAY These are based on household data disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity (non-minority/minority). According to The World Bank, over \$4 per day is defined as a above moderate poverty—for our purposes, a better measure than being out of absolute poverty (\$2.50/day).

PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT This is the standard measure of what is called "internal efficacy" in political science. Drawn from 2012 AmericasBarometer survey data, it is based on the statement, "You feel that you understand the most important political issues of the country," asking respondents to disagree or agree on a scale of 1 to 7. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

PERCENT GDP SPENT ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS There are no measures of the effectiveness of state spending on social programs. We used a simpler measure of percent of GDP spent on education and health care from the UNDP's Human Development Report.

CIVIL RIGHTS These scores, ranging from 0 to 60, are from Freedom House's survey, *Freedom in the World 2013*. They evaluate respect for 15 civil liberties in 4 categories: freedom of expression and belief (4 questions); associational and organizational rights (3); rule of law (4); and personal autonomy and individual rights (4).

WOMEN'S RIGHTS These scores account for maternal mortality rates, reproductive rights, women in political power, laws criminalizing violence against women, femicide rates per 100,000, and tax provisions for childcare. The data is compiled by Joan Caivano and Jane Marcos-Delgado. The score ranges from 0 to 35.

LGBT RIGHTS Based on Javier Corrales' Gay Friendliness Index, this score reflects the existence and permissibility of same-sex relationships, related anti-discrimination laws and laws on same-sex relationships, and ranges from 0 to 7.

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION Based on 2012 data from AmericasBarometer, this measures the average number of associations respondents said they participated in, out of a possible 6. Data has a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

PERCENT ACCESS TO A FORMAL JOB Based on household data disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity. An individual between 25 and 65 is considered to have a formal job if he/she will receive a pension.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS (EFFICACY) This is the standard measure of what is called "external efficacy" in political science. Drawn from 2012 AmericasBarometer survey data, it is based on the statement, "Those who govern are interested in what people like you think," asking respondents to disagree or agree on a scale of 1 to 7. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 2.9%.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION This score uses The World Bank's 2012 data on access to an account at a formal institution. It measures the percentage of respondents with an account at a bank, credit union, another financial institution, or the post office, including respondents who have a debit card.

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING Based on household data disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity. It includes 3 indicators of a adequate housing: access to water; access to electricity; and lack of severe overcrowding.

The screenshot shows the 'SOCIAL INCLUSION INDEX 2014' interface. It includes a search bar for 'Name of Country' and 'Overall Score'. Below is a table with columns for various indicators: GDP Growth 2003-2013, GDP Spent on Social Programs, Enrollment Secondary School (by gender and race), Political Rights, Civil Rights, Women's Rights, LGBT Rights, Civil Society Participation (by gender and race), Financial Inclusion (by gender), Percent Living on More than \$4 per day (by gender and race), Personal Empowerment (by gender and race), Government Responsiveness (Efficacy) (by gender and race), Access to Adequate Housing (by gender and race), and Percent Access to a Formal Job (by gender and race). A 'COMMENTS' section is at the bottom.

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