SolMi!

Do-re-mi around the world

Primary-school children in countries where school music uses do-re-mi (solmization)

Children

313 million

primary-school children in 36 countries where music is part of school and do-re-mi is documented: about 40% of the world's 781 million primary pupils. 104 million in the 14 countries with the strongest evidence.

Source: World Bank / UNESCO Institute for Statistics enrollment data, latest year 2023–25[1]; country selection by SolMi! (page 2)

Choirs

50 million+

adults sing in church, school, community and professional choirs in North America and Europe alone: 43 million in the U.S. and 1.8 million in Canada, with millions more across Europe.

Sources: Chorus America, Chorus Impact Study (2019, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts)[38]; Choral Canada census (2017)[39]; European Choral Association (2015)[37]

Country	*Music in primary school*	*How do-re-mi is used*	*Evidence*	*Year*	*Students*
Asia					***148.2 M***
China[1,3,4,5] *National choir campaign: 93,000 teams (2024)*	Required, grades 1–7 (arts 1–9)	Numbered notation sung do–ti	*Moderate*	2024	108.6 M
Indonesia[1,2] *Not in the total: each school picks one art*	Arts required; music one option	Numbered notation sung do-re-mi	Strong	2025	*28.7 M*
Philippines[1,6]	Required (Music and Arts)	So-fa syllables, Kodály hand signs	*Moderate*	2024	13.1 M
Vietnam[1,7]	Required, grades 1–9	Đô–Rê–Mi in approved textbooks	Strong	2024	8.9 M
Japan[1,8,9] *NHK school choir contest: 2,564 schools (2016)*	Required, every grade	Solmization in national curriculum	Strong	2023	6.2 M
Thailand[1,10]	Required (Arts area)	Thai note names ด-ร-ม = do-re-mi	*Moderate*	2025	4.4 M
Malaysia[1,11]	Required, Years 1–6	Solfa singing in ministry guides	*Moderate*	2024	3.1 M
South Korea[1,12]	Required, grades 3–6	계이름 do-re-mi names in curriculum	Strong	2024	2.5 M
Taiwan[13]	Required (Arts domain)	Solfège names in curriculum	*Moderate*	2024	1.2 M
Singapore[1,14]	Required, P1–P6	Solfège, hand signs in school lessons	*Moderate*	2023	0.2 M
Latin America					***50.6 M***
Brazil[1,15]	Required by law (2016)	Fixed do: the note names	Strong	2024	15.1 M
Mexico[1,16]	Arts required, music included	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2025	13.2 M
Argentina[1,16]	Arts required, music an option	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2023	4.6 M
Colombia[1,17]	Arts required	Fixed do (documented)	Strong	2022	4.1 M
Peru[1,16]	Arts 3 h/wk, music included	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	3.7 M
Venezuela[1,16]	Arts required	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	3.5 M
Guatemala[1,16]	Required (Educación Musical)	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	2.4 M
Ecuador[1,16]	Arts required, music included	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	1.7 M
Chile[1,16]	Required, 2 h/wk (grades 1–4)	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	1.5 M
Cuba[1,16]	Required, grades 1–6	Fixed do (regional tradition)	*Moderate*	2024	0.7 M
Europe & Middle East					***31.4 M***
Russia[1,18]	Required, grades 1–4	Fixed do: до-ре-ми	Strong	2023	7.6 M
Turkey[1,36]	Required, grades 1–4	Fixed do note names	*Moderate*	2023	5.5 M
United Kingdom[1,19]	Required in England, ages 5–14	Do-re-mi in DfE model curriculum	*Moderate*	2023	4.9 M
France[20,21] *231,947 middle-schoolers in 6,072 school choirs*	Required (éducation musicale)	Fixed do: the note names	Strong	2024	4.1 M
Spain[20,22]	Required (Educación Artística)	Fixed do	Strong	2024	2.8 M
Italy[20,23]	Required	Fixed do: home of the syllables	Strong	2024	2.6 M
Poland[20,24]	Required	Solmization with letter names	*Moderate*	2024	1.6 M
Israel[1,35]	Ministry minimum 1 h/wk	Curwen hand signs common; fixed do	*Moderate*	2024	1.0 M
Romania[20,25]	Required, 1–2 h/wk	Fixed do	Strong	2024	0.9 M
Hungary[20,26]	Required, 2 h/wk	Kodály relative solmization	Strong	2024	0.4 M
Africa					***54.0 M***
Nigeria[1,27]	Required (Creative Arts)	Solfa notation in national curriculum	Strong	2023	33.4 M
Kenya[1,28] *Music Festival: 130,000+ participants (2024)*	Required (Creative Arts)	Sol-fa, hand signs in curriculum	Strong	2023	8.0 M
South Africa[1,29] *Schools choral eisteddfod: 7,000+ at 2024 nationals*	Required (Creative Arts)	Tonic sol-fa in national curriculum	Strong	2023	7.5 M
Ghana[1,30]	Required (Creative Arts)	Tonic sol-fa in ministry manual	*Moderate*	2024	5.0 M
Americas & Oceania					***28.5 M***
United States[1,31,32] *41,000+ school choruses*	94% of public schools (2009–10)	Kodály (movable do) a top method	*Moderate*	2023	23.8 M
Canada[1,33]	Set by province	Solfège hand signs (Ontario)	*Moderate*	2023	2.4 M
Australia[1,34]	Arts required, music one of five	Kodály movable do in some schools	*Moderate*	2024	2.3 M
Total, 36 countries					**313 M**

131 million more where notes have other names (India, Germany): adapt with a regional voice pack. Students = all primary enrollment; method and sources on page 2.

How to read this. "Primary students" is every child enrolled in primary school (UNESCO definition, about ages 6–11), not a count of children who sing do-re-mi; no country publishes that number. A country is counted only when music (or arts with a music strand) is part of the national primary curriculum *and* do-re-mi use is documented. **Strong** = named in the national curriculum or official textbooks, or do-re-mi are the everyday note names. **Moderate** = documented in ministry materials, teacher surveys or academic studies. Numbers are rounded; superscripts refer to the sources on page 2.

Choirs. National surveys count 43 million U.S. adults (Chorus America 2019) and 1.8 million Canadian adults (Choral Canada 2017) who sing regularly in a choir: 44.8 million. Europe counts an estimated 37 million choral singers of all ages (European Choral Association 2015), with no separate adult figure; adults need to be only 14% of them to bring the total past 50 million (about 81% of the singers in that study's survey were 16 or older). Counts cover any choir: church, school, community or professional; most U.S. choruses are church choirs (216,000 of nearly 270,000 in 2009). No reliable worldwide count exists.

Not counted, and why

Country	*Students*	*Reason*
India	126 million	Uses sargam (sa-re-ga-ma), its own syllables *(adapt with a regional voice pack)*
Germany, Netherlands, Czech Republic	5.0 million	Letter names (C-D-E) in school *(adapt with a regional voice pack)*
Greece, New Zealand	about 1 million	Music is taught; do-re-mi in schools not documented (New Zealand's Pacific church choirs do sing it)
Ukraine, Portugal, Belgium, Dominican Republic, Uganda, Zimbabwe	about 16 million	Do-re-mi likely, but music's place in the curriculum could not be confirmed
Iran	9 million	Music is restricted in state schools

Adapting to other note names. The baton's game doesn't depend on the syllables. A voice pack and printed keys can sing **sa-re-ga-ma** for India (126 million primary students), **letter names** for Germany, or **numbers 1–7** for China's numbered notation, which is already sung as do-re-mi and counted above. Same hardware, same game.

Sources

1 World Bank / UNESCO UIS, "Primary education, pupils" (SE.PRM.ENRL), data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.ENRL (pulled 2026-10-27); world total 780,852,608 primary pupils (2024)

2 Indonesia Kemendikbudristek, Buku Panduan Guru Seni Musik SD Kelas IV (2021, ISBN 978-602-244-319-3): pupils "membaca not angka sesuai dengan solmisasinya" (read numbered notation by its do-re-mi syllables), Kodály hand signs; Permendikbudristek 12/2024, curriculum structure (amended by Permendikdasmen 13/2025): arts compulsory, school offers at least one of music, visual art, dance or theatre

3 China MOE, 2022 compulsory-education curriculum plan and standards (China News Service/CCTV, 2022-04-21, chinanews.com.cn/gn/2022/04-21/9734982.shtml: arts grades 1–9; music and fine art the main strands in grades 1–7); Frontiers in Education 2024, doi 10.3389/feduc.2024.1480946

4 Barać, "Symbolic density and pedagogical transfer: Kodály hand signs as potentially extraneous load in Chinese music education," Muzikologija 40 (2026): 137–164, doi 10.2298/MUZ2640137B; Zhou Haihong, Guangming Daily, 2024-12-11, m.gmw.cn/toutiao/2024-12/11/content_37731241.htm (school music taught mainly in jianpu, numerals 1–7 = do–xi)

5 Guangming Online / Wenhui Bao, 2025-07-25, m.gmw.cn/2025-07/25/content_38174550.htm ("童声里的中国" 2024: 93,000 choir teams, 20 million+ participations)

6 DepEd K to 12 / MATATAG Music and Arts (deped.gov.ph); DepEd Grade 3 Music Learner's Material (so-fa syllables), lrmds.deped.gov.ph

7 Vietnam MOET Circular 32/2018/TT-BGDĐT (Arts: music and fine art, compulsory grades 1–9); Grade 2 approved textbook Âm nhạc 2 (Chân trời sáng tạo series), p. 21, lesson "Đọc nhạc Đô–Rê–Mi–Pha–Son" with hand signs

8 MEXT, Course of Study for Elementary Schools (music in every grade; sing "in solmization", movable do), 1998 ed. (rev. 2003), mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/cs/1320028.htm; English 2008 edition, mext.go.jp/component/english/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/03/17/1303755_007.pdf

9 ReseMom, 2017-10-10, resemom.jp/article/2017/10/10/40760.html (FY2016 NHK school choir contest: 2,564 schools, incl. 898 elementary)

10 Thailand Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008): Arts (incl. music) compulsory, grades 1–6; Thai note names ด ร ม ฟ ซ ล ท = do re mi fa sol la ti

11 Malaysia MOE, KSSR Pendidikan Muzik, Years 1–6 (DSKP); KSSR Year 3 teaching guide, "Latihan menyanyi solfa"

12 Korea MOE, 2022 revised music curriculum (고시 2022-33, 별책 12), grades 5–6: learn "음이름, 계이름, 율명" (letter names, do-re-mi syllable names, traditional names); music typically 68 h/yr in grades 3–6 (example school timetable, Gyeonggi Office of Education 2024 exemplar)

13 Taipei Times, 2024-06-24, "Taiwan's student numbers plunging, report says" (MOE report: about 1.235 million elementary students); NAER 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum, Arts domain, item 音E-II-3, grades 3–4 (唱名法, solfège names)

14 Singapore MOE, 2023 Music Syllabus (Primary and Lower Secondary), all of P1–P6 from 2024; solfège with hand signs in school schemes of work (e.g., Tampines North Primary)

15 Brazil Lei 13.278/2016 (music a required language of Arte in basic education); INEP; Goldemberg, Revista da ABEM 5 (2000); Freire, Opus 14/1 (2008) — fixed do (dó-ré-mi) is the Brazilian system

16 National curricula: Mexico Ley General de Educación art. 30 fr. XXIII (music teaching); Argentina Ley 26.206 art. 41; Peru Currículo Nacional 2016 (3 h/wk arts incl. music); Chile Bases Curriculares, Decreto 433/2012; Plan de estudios, Decreto 2960/2012 (Música 2 h/wk, grades 1–4); Ecuador Acuerdo MINEDUC-ME-2016-00020-A; Guatemala Currículo Nacional Base (Educación Musical); Venezuela LOE 2009; Cuba Educación Musical grades 1–6 (Revista Varela). Do-re-mi: Zuleta 2005 (above)

17 Colombia Ley 115/1994 art. 23 (arts compulsory); Zuleta, "El método Kodály y su adaptación en Colombia," Cuadernos de Música (Javeriana) 1/1 (2005), redalyc.org/pdf/2970/297023445003.pdf — fixed do "rooted in all Hispanic-American countries"

18 Russia, FGOS NOO (Order No. 286, 2021-05-31) and the federal working program «Музыка»: 1 h/wk, grades 1–4 (135 h total); fixed do (до-ре-ми)

19 England, National Curriculum for Music KS1–3 (gov.uk); DfE Model Music Curriculum (non-statutory guidance, March 2021): "so-mi" singing games, composing with "do, re and mi", solfège "with hand signals"

20 Eurostat, pupils by education level, ISCED 1 (educ_uoe_enra02), ec.europa.eu/eurostat (2024, pulled 2026-10-27)

21 France Éducation nationale, éducation musicale cycles 2–3 (BOEN n°31, 2020; eduscol.education.gouv.fr/4737); DGESCO school-choir survey 2017–18 (231,947 collège pupils in 6,072 choirs); Plan chorale (announced Dec 2017; circular Jan 2019)

22 Spain, Real Decreto 157/2022 (LOMLOE), Educación Artística incl. music, boe.es/eli/es/rd/2022/03/01/157; fixed do

23 Italy, Indicazioni nazionali (DM 254/2012; replaced from 2026/27 by DM 221/2025), music a primary subject; fixed do is the Italian note-name system

24 Poland, core curriculum for music, grades 4–7: pupils name the notes of the scale and use solmization hand signs (fonogestyka); standard textbooks teach both solmization and letter names

25 Romania, Muzică şi mişcare, preparatory–grade IV (OMEN 3418/2013, OMEN 5003/2014); fixed do

26 Hungary, National Core Curriculum (Govt Decree 5/2020), music 2 h/wk grades 1–5 (Eurydice); curriculum built on the Kodály method (relative solmization)

27 Nigeria NERDC 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum, Cultural and Creative Arts (compulsory); NERDC Primary 4–6 Cultural and Creative Arts curriculum: "Creating Music with Solfa Notation" (Primary 5), nerdc.gov.ng/content_manager/primary/pri4-6_cca.pdf

28 Kenya KICD Creative Arts Curriculum Design, Grades 4–5 (rev. 2024): solfa syllables and Kodály hand signs; Kenya Music Festival 2024: "over 130,000 participants … all levels of education" (President's speech, State Lodge Eldoret, 16 Aug 2024, president.go.ke)

29 South Africa DBE, CAPS Creative Arts Senior Phase Gr 7–9: "sight singing … using tonic sol-fa" (education.gov.za); ABC Motsepe SA Schools Choral Eisteddfod (7,000+ participants at the 2024 nationals, per Inside Education)

30 Ghana NaCCA Creative Arts curriculum; Ministry of Education/NaCCA, Year 1 Teacher Manual: Music for Senior High Schools (2025): John Curwen hand signs and tonic sol-fa

31 NCES 2012-014, Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999–2000 and 2009–10 (94% of public elementary schools offered music, 2009–10); Taylor (2018), Univ. of Oklahoma dissertation, OAKE member survey; Mynatt (2018), Univ. of Delaware thesis (Orff and Kodály the most common frameworks)

32 Chorus America, Chorus Impact Study (2009, inlandchorus.com/PDFs/2009-ca-study.pdf): at least 41,000 K–12 school choruses, nearly 270,000 choruses, 216,000 religious choirs; Chorus Impact Study (2019): 54 million adults and children sing in choruses

33 Ontario Ministry of Education, The Arts, Grades 1–8 (2009): solfège hand signs from Grade 1, "do–re–mi–fa–so–la–ti–do"

34 ACARA, Australian Curriculum v9, The Arts F–10 (music one of five arts subjects, F–6); Kodály Australia submissions to federal and NSW inquiries (not independently verified)

35 Israel Ministry of Education, Music curriculum for elementary school grades 1–6 (2011, revised 2020), meyda.education.gov.il/files/Curriculum/music1-6.pdf: Curwen hand signs ("the singing hand") are "common tools" in schools; Ministry music rubric for elementary school, meyda.education.gov.il/files/Mazkirut_Pedagogit/Music/mehvan.pdf: minimum 1 weekly hour per class; fixed-do note names (Wikipedia, "Solfège")

36 Turkey MEB weekly timetable 2022–23, ttkb.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2022_01/19093950_ilkogretim-hdc-karar-ve-eki-2022-2023.pdf: Müzik 1 h/wk, grades 1–8; fixed-do note names (Wikipedia, "Solfège")

37 European Choral Association, Singing Europe (2015): an estimated 37 million collective singers (4.5% of the population, all ages, European continent incl. Russia) in about 1 million choirs, europeanchoralassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/singingeurope_report.pdf

38 Grunwald Associates and Chorus America, The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime (2019; lead support incl. the National Endowment for the Arts; also at arts.gov/sites/default/files/Research-Art-Works-ChorusAmerica.pdf): "more than one in six Americans over the age of 18—over 43 million—sing in one or more choruses or choirs," chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

39 Hill Strategies for Choral Canada, National Choral Census (2017): 3.5 million Canadians (10%), including 1.8 million adults (7%), sang in a choir (2017 survey); about 28,000 choirs, hillstrategies.com/2018/02/28/choral-singing-choral-attendance-and-the-situation-of-choirs-in-canada/