



## *PISA 2018 in Spain*

Paris, 15 November, 2019

The OECD has decided to defer the publication of the PISA 2018 reading results, both national and sub-regional, for Spain. These will not be included in the initial set of PISA reports that will be published on 3 December 2019; however Spain's results in mathematics and science will be included.

Spain's data met PISA Technical Standards with no apparent technical errors or manipulations identified. However, the data show implausible student-response behaviour. Consequently, the OECD is unable to assure full international comparability of Spain's results at this moment. Spain has agreed to follow the OECD's recommendation to defer the publication of its results and data while possible sources of those anomalies are investigated.

A large number of Spanish students responded to a new section of the reading test (the reading-fluency section) in a manner that was obviously not representative of their true reading competency. Since the assessment was computer based, student actions were recorded and tracked. In a number of instances, students rushed through the reading-fluency section, spending less than 25 seconds in total over more than 20 test items. In comparison, students who expended adequate effort on these tasks typically spent between 50 seconds and more than two minutes on this section, depending on how quickly they could read. In addition, these students gave patterned responses (all yes or all no, etc.). This response behaviour was not uniform throughout the Spanish sample, but was observed predominantly in a small number of schools in some areas of Spain. The extent and concentration of rapid and patterned responses are unique to Spain, and affect the data on reading performance.

OECD and Spain are working closely together to identify the causes of such student-response behaviour in order to avoid it happening again in the future. An initial review has shown that suboptimal behaviour (i.e. test responses that do not reflect the true level of students' competence) is most apparent in the reading-fluency section and has the most impact on reading results, although further analysis will confirm if other parts of the reading test were affected as well. Results in the mathematics and science domains appear less affected by this anomalous response behaviour. Further review will confirm this.

Once the full extent of the problem, its causes and its consequences are understood, the OECD will decide on the most appropriate way to publish Spain's results in reading. Until then, Spain's reading results and related data should not be released.