

SUMMARY

OF THE PRESS RELEASE

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- Analysis of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results in Catalonia has revealed a worrying high academic failure rate among Spanish-speaking children, which doubles the ratio among their Catalan-speaking fellow classmates.
- Specifically, in the latest edition of PISA in 2015, 20.3% of Spanish-speaking students could not surpass the lowest PISA level (level 1) in mathematics whereas only 10.1% of Catalan-speaking pupils were in that situation. Similar results were found in reading and science.
- Failure rate among Spanish-speaking children in Catalonia is significantly higher than in other Spanish regions with similar per capita income and social development level like Navarre, Aragon and Madrid, where they can learn all subjects in their mother-tongue, Spanish.
- Gap in academic results between Spanish- and Catalan-speaking children affects boys and girls similarly and widens in public schools.
- Results from PISA 2015 show also that the number of Spanish-speaking students in Catalonia who repeat one grade in secondary school is almost three times higher than that of their Catalan-speaking fellow classmates in that situation. And this proportion increases even more and is nine times higher when more than one grade is repeated.
- It should be noted that PISA 2015 has not only monitored the extent to which students near the end of compulsory schooling have acquired the knowledge and skills essential for full participation in society but also asked them for their opinions, attitudes and perceptions regarding the educational system and, in particular, their sense of belonging to school.
- PISA results indicate that Catalonia is the autonomous community of Spain where Spanish-speaking students feel less integrated in their school. 21% of Spanish-speaking students in Catalonia recognize that they do not feel integrated, a percentage that doubles that of Spanish-speaking students in other regions.

- The poor performance of Spanish-speaking students in Catalonia and their low sense of belonging to school seem related to the peculiar educational system imposed by the Catalan regional Government that denies Spanish-speaking children (more than 50%) their right to education in their mother tongue whereas makes compulsory the so-called language immersion system, that is, the obligatory use of Catalan as the sole medium of instruction in schools.
- In education it is widely accepted that students learn faster and better when they receive education in their own mother tongue. This has been demonstrated by numerous studies from prestigious international organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF. However, Catalan Government has never accepted international pedagogical recommendations.
- PISA results show that the current monolingual immersion-education system is creating a major fracture and educational inequality between Spanish- and Catalan-speaking populations in Catalonia.

Convivencia Cívica Catalana is a non-governmental organization created in 1998 which defends citizens' rights and gives insight into Catalan reality from an independent point of view.