

RESEÑA: MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL (2023): PIRLS 2021. ESTUDIO INTERNACIONAL DEL PROGRESO EN COMPRENSIÓN LECTORA.

REVIEW: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING (2023): PIRLS 2021. PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL READING LITERACY STUDY.

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DATA SHEET

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Resumen

PIRLS 2021. Estudio Internacional de Progreso en Comprensión Lectora presenta los resultados obtenidos en España del estudio PIRLS, que evalúa la comprensión lectora del alumnado de cuarto curso de Educación Primaria. Se presentan los principales datos del último ciclo, PIRLS 2021, en el que participaron 57 países, con 8 participantes de referencia. España ha participado desde 2006 y en esta edición amplió su muestra para obtener

datos representativos en nueve comunidades autónomas. En esta última edición se destacan dos aspectos importantes: la transición a la evaluación digital y el diseño adaptativo por grupo. El estudio se sustenta en unos marcos de evaluación claramente definidos y, no solo proporciona información sobre el rendimiento, sino que, además, proporciona información detallada sobre los contextos educativos en cada país participante por medio de la enciclopedia.

El conocimiento de estos estudios y sus resultados por parte de la inspección educativa ayuda a entender mejor la evaluación. Esta es una pieza clave del sistema educativo que permite conocer el impacto del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: *5802 Organización y Planificación de la Educación, 5802.06 Análisis, realización de modelos y planificación estadística, inspección de educación, evaluación, PIRLS.*

Abstract

PIRLS 2021. Progress in International Reading Literacy Study presents the results obtained in Spain from the PIRLS study, which assesses the reading comprehension of students in the fourth year of Primary Education. The main data from the last cycle, PIRLS 2021, in which 57 countries participated, with 8 reference participants, are presented. Spain has participated since 2006 and in this edition, it expanded its sample to obtain representative data in nine autonomous communities. This latest edition highlights two important aspects: the transition to digital assessment and adaptive design by group. The study is based on clearly defined assessment frameworks and not only provides information on achievement, but also provides detailed information on the educational contexts in each participating country through the encyclopedia.

The knowledge of these studies and their results by the educational inspectorate helps to better understand the assessment. This is a key piece of the

educational system that allows knowing the impact of the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: *5802 Educational Organization and Planning, 5802.06 Statistical Analysis, modelling and planning, education inspection, assessment, PIRLS.*

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE REPORT

The report presents the results obtained in the latest edition of **PIRLS, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study**, which is conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and evaluates the reading comprehension of students in the fourth grade of primary school.

This study has been carried out every five years since 2001 to analyze trends in student learning. Spain has participated in PIRLS since 2006 and the latest edition was the 2021 edition, the results of which are presented in this report. The national results were published on May 29, 2023. In 2021 the study has assessed students' reading comprehension in almost 500 schools in Spain (Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa, 2023; Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2023).

The assessment starts from the definition of the **PIRLS conceptual framework**, which establishes what aspects are evaluated and how the assessment is carried out (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2020). The PIRLS approach focuses on reading to achieve two main purposes: having a literary experience and acquiring and using information. Within each of these, four distinct comprehension processes are integrated, including locating and obtaining explicit information, drawing direct conclusions, interpreting, and integrating ideas and information, and analyzing and evaluating content and textual elements.

In addition to the performance assessment, PIRLS also includes **questionnaires** that collect information at the family, school, student, classroom, national and regional levels on the curriculum (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2020).

A third key element of the evaluation is the **encyclopedia** (Reynolds et al., 2022), which provides information on the educational policy and reading curricula of the participating countries. On the one hand, a questionnaire on the curriculum provides a detailed analysis of reading and language instruction in the countries and regions participating in PIRLS 2021, allowing for a comparative analysis. On the other hand, it includes a chapter by participating country or region that describes the educational system and the reading curriculum, as well as the challenges and educational innovations that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both parts provide a concise portrait of reading education worldwide.

In the PIRLS 2021 edition, data collection was conducted at different times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This data collection period was spread over 22 months, from October 2020 to July 2022, to ensure adequate participation from all countries. Most countries assessed students at the end of the fourth school grade, although some delayed the assessment until the beginning of the fifth grade, and others conducted the assessment a year later than planned given the exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic.

This latest edition highlights the transition to digital format, including Spain and other countries in the digital option with the ePIRLS add-on. This **digital assessment**, called **digitalPIRLS 2021**, uses a computerized system that facilitates student access to assessment materials without the need to print paper booklets. Students can navigate through the texts and answer questions in an interactive user interface. On the other hand, the **ePIRLS** test is an innovative online assessment that simulates situations related to science and social studies topics through a web-based environment. The digital assessment offers advantages such as increased motivation for students due to interactivity and an attractive design, as

well as improved operational efficiency in test creation, correction, and data collection.

To ensure a reliable transition to the digital environment, a data collection design involving two samples of students was implemented: a main sample taking the digital assessment and an additional sample responding to the PIRLS 2016 paper-based trend items. This allows for comparison of results and unification of trend scales between the PIRLS 2016 paper assessment and the PIRLS 2021 digital assessment.

More than 10,000 students in the fourth year of Primary Education in Spain participated in the study, of which 8,500 took the test in digital format. Nine autonomous communities and cities have expanded the sample to obtain regionally representative data: Andalusia, Principality of Asturias, Canary Islands, Castile and Leon, Catalonia, Ceuta, Community of Madrid, Melilla, and Community of Navarre.

The report first presents the bases on which the study is based, then analyzes the results in Spain compared with those of other participating countries, followed by an analysis according to the social, economic, and cultural context (ISEC) and finally an analysis of the learning context related to students, teachers and schools. It also includes the texts that have been released and that serve to know how they are used in this type of tests.

From the **results obtained**, we observe that the estimated average reading comprehension score in Spain is 521 points, which is significantly lower than the OECD-28 average (533) and the EU total (528). This overall average is obtained by comparing the mean scores in reading purposes (informational and literary) and comprehension processes (obtaining information and making inferences).

This overall result brings to light a reversal in the evolution of performance from 2011 to 2016, with a significant decrease. However, when analyzing the data on a country-by-country basis, Spain has experienced a smaller decline compared to other OECD and EU countries. The report also examines the relationship between school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the decline in performance and variations in results.

Some aspects in which Spain stands out are equity with respect to the social, economic, and cultural index (ISEC), equality in the results by gender given by boys and girls who reach a high level in reading comprehension and the sense of belonging of the students to the educational center.

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