

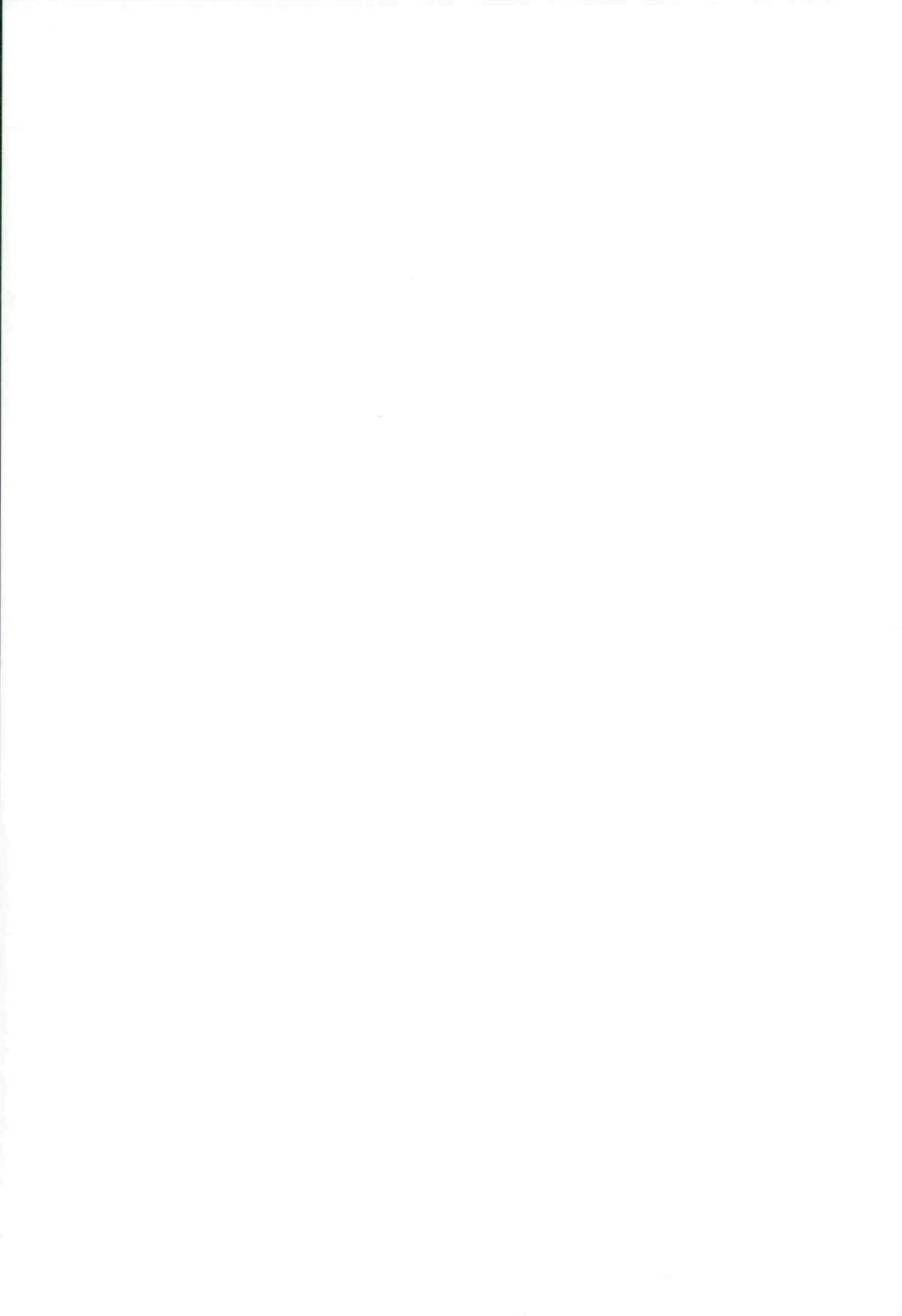
ESTUDIOS E INFORMES

instituto nacional  
**ince**  
de calidad y evaluación

# Diagnosis of the educational system

The last stage of the compulsory school  
1997









# Diagnosis of the Educational System

**Global Report**



# INCE

## Diagnosis of the Educational System

The educational system in the last cycle of  
compulsory schooling

The last stage of the compulsory school. 1997

José Luis García Garrido  
Álvaro Buj Gimeno  
Juan González Anleo  
José Antonio Ibáñez-Martín  
Arturo de la Orden Hoz  
José Luis Pérez Iriarte  
José Luis Rodríguez Diéguez



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE**  
SECRETARIAT GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR QUALITY AND EVALUATION  
Madrid, 2000

This work of diagnosis would not have been possible without the support and participation by diverse institutions and numerous people, who we wish to thank here.

The institutions involved with the INCE were the Senior Council for Evaluation of the Educational System of the Educational Department of the Regional Government of Catalonia, the Directorate General for Educational Organisation and Vocational Training at the Regional Government of Galicia, the Directorate General for Educational Organisation and Innovation and Linguistic Policy at the Regional Government of Valencia, the Office of the Vice-Councillor of Education of the Basque Regional Government, the Directorate General of Education of the County Community of Navarra, the Canary Institute for Educational Evaluation and Quality and the Directorate General for Educational Evaluation and Teacher Training of Andalusia, as well as several Directorates General and services at the Ministry of Education and Culture, especially the Sub-directorate General for Educational Inspection, the Provincial Directorates and the Territorial Technical Inspection Services for Education in the field of management at the Ministry of Education and Culture, at the Regional Governments of Galicia, Navarra and the Basque Country and the Regional Government of Valencia.

As to the persons involved, the list is too long for this table, so we have included in as a final Addendum. We wish to thank them all for their time generously spent, their competence and enthusiasm.

We also wish to record the encouragement we have received from the members of the Board of Governors of the INCE throughout the process, as well as the technical assistance and sincere criticism provided by the Scientific Committee at the Institute and each one of its members.



© MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN Y CULTURA  
SECRETARÍA GRAL. DE EDUCACION Y FORMACION PROFESIONAL  
Instituto Nacional de Calidad y Evaluación (INCE)

Edita: SECRETARÍA GENERAL TÉCNICA, Centro de Publicaciones.

NIPO: 176-99-181-7  
I.S.B.N.: 84-369-3298-6  
Depósito legal: M. 49.923-1999

Imprime: Imprenta Fareso, S. A.  
Paseo de la Dirección, 5. 28039 Madrid

## ACRONYMS

AMPAS:	Asociaciones de Madres y Padres de Alumnos (Students' Parent's Associations)
BUP:	Bachillerato Unificado Polivalente (Spanish High School or Secondary School "Baccalaureate")
CAP:	Certificado de Aptitud Pedagógica (Pedagogical Skill Certificate)
CE:	Consejo Escolar (School Council)
CENIDE:	Centro Nacional para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Educativo (National Centre for Educational Research and Development)
CERI:	Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
CIDE:	Centro de Investigación y Documentación Educativa (Centre for Educational Research and Documentation)
DEP:	Dirección de la Evaluación y de la Prospectiva (Evaluation and Prospect Management (France))
EGB:	Educación General Básica (Primary School Education)
ESO:	Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (Obligatory Secondary School Education)
IEA:	International Association for the Evaluation of Evaluation Achievement
IES:	Institutos de Educación Secundaria (Secondary Education Institutes - High Schools)
INCE:	Instituto Nacional de Calidad y Evaluación (National Quality and Evaluation Institute)
INCIE:	Instituto Nacional de Ciencias de la Educación (National Institute of Educational Sciences)
INES:	International Indicators of Education Systems
LODE:	Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación (Organic Educational Entitlement Act)
LOGSE:	Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo ( Educational System General Organisation Act)
LOPEG:	Ley Orgánica de Participación, Evaluación y Gobierno de Centros Docentes (Organic Act on Participation, Evaluation and Administration of Teaching Centres)
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONCE:	Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles (Spanish National Blind Organisation)
PAS:	Personal de Administración y Servicios (Administration and Services Personnel)
PC:	Proyecto Curricular (Syllabus Project)
PEC:	Proyecto Educativo de Centro (School Educational Project)
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
REM:	Reforma de Enseñanzas Medias (Middle Educational Reform)



## CONTENTS

Introduction	11
<b>Chapter 1. Previous studies of diagnosis and evaluation of the Spanish educational system</b>	<b>13</b>
Diagnoses of education in Spain, commissioned by the political authorities (1968-1996)	14
Evaluation of the Spanish educational system according to the Annual Reports by the National School Council	18
Evaluations of schools and educational programmes carried out by the Educational Inspectorate	22
Research aimed at diagnosis of the Educational System	27
<b>Chapter 2. School achievement</b>	<b>37</b>
Introduction	37
Academic performance in the basic areas	40
Differences in performance	58
<b>Chapter 3. Syllabi and teaching methods</b>	<b>67</b>
Introduction	67
Objectives, contents, resources	69
The fundamental processes	74
The academic environment	78
Differences according to school	81
The Autonomous Regions	84
Different approaches	85
<b>Chapter 4. School Functioning</b>	<b>91</b>
Introduction	91
Management and management function	94
Participation in the schools	100
Life at schools	103
<b>Chapter 5. The teaching profession</b>	<b>109</b>
Introduction	109
The Obligatory Secondary Education teaching staff: analysis of its identity and responsibilities	111
Basic factors that configure the teaching profession	112
<b>Chapter 6. Family and School</b>	<b>123</b>
Introduction	123
Family educational resources	124
The family and children's education	129
Family and education in ethical values	132
Family, school and participation	138
<b>Chapter 7. Conclusions and recommendations</b>	<b>143</b>
Five approaches to the educational system	143
Reflections on academic performance	144

The teachers opinion of the syllabuses and teaching methods	149
The opinion the teaching staff has of itself	151
School operations seen by its most direct managers	154
View of the school from the family point of view	157
Entering the 21st Century	160

Addendum	165
----------	-----



# Introduction

In September 1996, the Ministry of Education and Culture proposed that a diagnosis be carried out through the National Institute for Quality and Evaluation (INCE), that would provide an adequate view of the situation of the Spanish school system at a crucial moment, when completion of the process to devolve educational management competencies to the Regional Governments is foreseen.

As this task was not included in the first Plan of Action by the Institute, designed to cover the period from 1994 to 1997, it was necessary to prepare an update for the plan in order to add the necessary tasks. After detailed studies, the Management of the INCE proceeded to prepare an update document to present to the Board of Governors of the Institute. Considering the scarcity of time and available resources, it did not seem possible to carry out a diagnosis of all the levels, modes and aspects of the system; it was rather more necessary to select the level that could provide the best overview of its global needs. The decision was thus taken to concentrate the diagnosis the final stage of obligatory education, as this is understood as the phase when most consideration of the results obtained must be made. On the other hand, the INCE had recently assessed the stage immediately before that, for the period that, in international terminology, covers primary education. To continue with the effort, the diagnosis of obligatory secondary education could well provide the Spaniards a more or less sufficient outline of the present day reality of their non-university educational system.

The aim of the project presented to the Board of Governors, in addition to including the widest possible approach to the academic system, was to avoid a judgement of it solely in terms of the results obtained by students in the fundamental subjects studied. As this is an important aspect for reflection, it seemed, however, that the diagnosis could and should be enriched by other overall perspectives, in such aspects as analysis of the

present syllabus and teaching methods, school management, the teaching tasks and school-society relations.

The diagnosis project conceived in this light was submitted for consideration by the Board of Governors in October. As the main objective was to evaluate the situation of the school system, especially in the Regions where management was to be devolved in 1998, this time the criteria was adopted, that was undoubtedly exceptional at its very conception by the INCE, to allow the remaining Regional Governments full freedom (that is to say, those which already had full competencies in educational matters) to participate in the diagnosis or not, according to the real availabilities and indeed scarce time available. The Board of Governors approved the diagnosis project and mainly expressed its desire for all the Regions to take part in it but, due to its optional nature, it could not avoid the Council of Education and Science of the Regional Government of Andalusia declining to participate, claiming - as set forth in the relevant Minutes - that the evaluation process then under way in the Region made it unfeasible to participate simultaneously in a similar project of such a great scope.

The diagnosis then proceeded. To prepare and implement it, five Specialised Committees were set up, one for each one of the aspects to be assessed, specifically:

- Committee I: on the academic performance of students aged 14 and 16
- Committee II: on teaching plans and methods and learning in obligatory secondary education
- Committee III: on school functioning
- Committee IV: on the teaching role
- Committee V: on school and society

Each Committee was established with participation by nine specialists, some appointed at the instance of the Regional Governments with fully

devolved competencies, and others proposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the INCE, which appointed, among others, the Chairman. Andalusia also appointed an observer on each of the Committees.

Due to scarce time and resources, and to allow the scientific autonomy they were granted, the Committees had to carry out the initial effort at planning, concentrating their activities on the aspects that could provide the most significant data. They all had to set a limit to their field of action. Thus, Committee I decided to administer Spanish Language and Mathematics tests nationwide (except in Andalusia), on one hand, and Nature Sciences and Geography and History only to students in the 10 Regions then included in what was then called the "Ministry of Education and Culture Territory". Committee II, although its subject matter was more limited, also had to restrict its activities to a wide survey of the teaching staff, ignoring other sources of information and study, which would undoubtedly have yielded results of considerable interest, but which it would have been difficult to process within the deadline set and available resources. Committee III chose three matters related to school functioning: management, participation and social aspects at schools. Committee IV was formed slightly late due to some technical problems and decided to concentrate on motivation and initial and ongoing training of the teaching staff. And Committee V, faced with the very wide ranging theme it had been commissioned, considered it fitting to deal specifically with the matter of relations between the family and school.

When the work had begun throughout the set of Committees, the Board of Governors of the Canary Institute of Educational Evaluation and Quality took the decision not to administer the

evaluation instruments that were being prepared in the Canaries, except in the case of Committees IV and V. This decision prevents this *Report* from providing data on that Region, just as in the case of Andalusia. Thus, in strict terms, it also prevents general application of the results obtained from the diagnosis to the whole of the Spanish State. However, due to the considerable number of people - students, teachers, management, parents - who have participated in the diverse tests and surveys and the variety of the geographic samples, as well as the scientific rigor taken in preparation and administration of the analytical instruments, the diagnosis undoubtedly provides sufficient analysis of the situation of the Spanish educational system in the aspects studied.

The following *Report* is just a summary of all the effort made at diagnosis, a summary that, logically, may do nothing further than show the substantial aspects, without providing a detailed analysis of the results nor, even less, considerations of a methodological nature. Persons who are interested in obtaining greater knowledge of these aspects would thus have to resort to each one of the Reports prepared by the respective Committees.

The main body of the report concentrates on summarising the results of each one of these surveys. However, it did seem appropriate to previously connect this further attempt at repeated self-evaluation that, especially in recent decades, have taken place in our country. The last chapter is an attempt at linking the set of contributions; and as it and in general the whole of the diagnosis is all made with the will to bring about qualitative improvements, we have included some conclusions and recommendations one may extract from the study.



# Previous studies of diagnosis and evaluation of the Spanish educational system

It is well known that the tasks of control and evaluation system of a whole educational system still have a brief history in all countries. One may affirm, in general terms, that it was the stream of reform that swept the educational systems after the Second World War that brought about the striving to ascertain the base educational reality in order to improve it. Sometimes, with the aid of international organisations, and others through their own initiative, countries have allowed reports and analysis of their starting point to precede educational reforms and innovation. This trend has increased as the years have gone by, and has undoubtedly intensified in the last decade, due to the growing attention paid by all governments to improvement of the quality of education, generally understood in terms of the real performance of the educational system and its close relation to the increasingly more substantial public funds dedicated to it.

Spain could undoubtedly single out individual tasks to examine the educational reality at diverse moments of the past, although it seems clear that, as in other countries, it was mainly the reform movement of the sixties that brought about the first steps. Also, as in other countries, the successive governments have had the initiative of self-evaluation tasks although, sometimes thanks to their actions, and on occasions due to other social instances, diverse mechanisms have been created that have contributed to the same aim. Enactment of the LODE (Spanish Education Act) gave rise to the State School Council which, from the mid eighties, year by year, has gauged the educational system and issued reports on the situation. The Educational Inspectorate has provided abundant information on academic results, syllabuses, school management, etc. Since the National Centre for Educational Research and Development (CENIDE) was founded in 1970, considerable research has been carried out by the institution and by those that later continued its work under other names (INCIE, CIDE). The Regional Governments that are fully devolved in

educational competencies have worked in the same fashion on evaluation tasks, on occasions through public bodies (School Council, etc.) and on others by collaborating in preparation of diverse studies. Universities, especially through their Pedagogy and Educational Sciences, Sociology and Psychology Departments, have made a significant contribution to improving knowledge of the circumstances of our educational system, its functions, drawbacks and problems. Thanks to all these important contributions, made over almost three decades, the task recently entrusted to the National Quality and Evaluation Institute is now able to draw on an important base of previous research and evaluation, supplied with the experience and critical certain of academic and professional sectors that are already used to such tasks and are demanding as to their quality.

Due to these reasons, we have believed it appropriate to provide a few introductory pages to this study to link the new attempt at evaluation to previous efforts. Obviously, the syncretic nature of this *Report* does not allow us to extend ourselves further on the point, which is also introductory as to the main objective set herein. As it is not possible to mention all the sectors in which there have been significant contributions, we have chosen only the four of those we make immediate reference to, as we consider their mention may not be delayed. We are aware that these alone perhaps do not provide us a complete view of the virtues and deficiencies of the system as, over the same period, research commissioned by some of the Regional Governments, from the scope of the universities or other fields and, even more so, information and articles that have been published in the social media, have pointed out lacunae and have provided regular criticism of specific individuals and social groups that it would be most appropriate to record here, although it is a task that greatly exceeds the objectives of this brief chapter. To sum up, we believe that the four areas covered here may be provide, if not a properly compensated view of the achievements

and shortcomings of the system, at least a minimal catalogue of its most repeated trends in failings.

## Diagnoses of education in Spain, commissioned by the political authorities (1968-1996)<sup>1</sup>

### THE WHITE BOOK OF 1969

It is common knowledge that the General Education Act of 1970 was preceded, the year before, by a document that, in spite of initial scepticism, was a real success, due to its diffusion and the seriousness and rigor of its preparation. It is known as the "White Book", which was really titled *Education in Spain: Bases of an educational policy*. The White Book was undoubtedly the first critical report produced in Spain on the overall educational system.

It referred with notable harshness to the main deficiencies in education in Spain at that time, as for example the low rates of schooling in kindergarten, primary and, most especially in secondary education (where, however, there had been an explosion in the student population), as well as severe structural problems, in the foreground of which there was the "double track" offered to Spanish children as of the age of ten, which discriminated children, above all due to their resources and social and family background.

Many of the problems criticized in the White Book may be considered inherent to that time and were solved to a greater or lesser extent by enactment of the General Education Act and, later, through other legal measures. Thus, we shall not refer to these here. What we are now interested in is to pinpoint some of the trends noted then that may, at least partially, still exist nowadays. Specifically as to secondary education, the White Book then emphasised:

- high rates of drop-outs between the beginning and completion of secondary education;
- high student-teacher ratios in the public sector;

- appreciable differences between the public sector and private sector in certain aspects related to quality, such as, for example, student-teacher ratios;
- overcrowded syllabuses;
- teacher training excessively aimed at level of scientific and specialist knowledge;
- scarce social appreciation of vocation training;
- inadequacy of vocational training for the reality of the labour market and productive trends.

The White Book also emphasised failings of the academic system for which, as could be expected, it did not offer a solution to please everybody. This is especially applicable to the matter of school segregation of 10 to 14 year old students. By proposing elimination of the preexistent bipolarity and establishment of a common channel for all students, a solution that was fully accepted and adopted by the Act of 1970, some sectors of society and the educational sector (especially in secondary and university education) clearly reacted against the measure, insisting that it led to a flawed interpretation of democratisation of education and hindered selection and adequate training of the more skilled students with an interest in higher education. Another important point worth pointing out is the denouncement in the document that teaching - at all levels, but specially in middle or secondary education - was too memory based. This may also have favoured a policy tending toward syllabuses that reinforced instrumental knowledge and cultivated the memory to a lesser extent, as then and later frequently pointed out.

To conclude this brief reference to the White Book, one must add that the Report published in the same period through private initiative (the so-called *2nd Foessa Report*, in 1970) substantially validated the critical observations of the White Book, although pointing out that some of the data provided in it, in spite of their severity, were rather optimistic (such as those related to schooling and drop-out rates). The most substantial criticism in the *2nd Foessa Report* as to the White Book concerned matters of funding, due to the inade-

<sup>1</sup> The INCE commissioned a study on this theme and title by Manuel de Puelles Benítez, Professor of Educational Policy at the Spanish National Open University. The lines included here are based on that study, which may be requested from the INCE by those with a special interest in the matter.



quate financial calculation of the needs the reform announced aimed to cover.

## THE EVALUATION REPORT OF 1976

Six years after approval of the Act, a new Report was commissioned by the ministerial authorities. This was requested in 1976 by the Minister Robles Piquer, by a Committee presided by Fernando Suárez, which was not published, although it did have a restricted circulation (*Report presented by the Committee to Evaluate the General Education and Educational Reform Funding Act pursuant to Decree 186/76/ of 6th February*). As its very name states, it aimed to evaluate implementation of the said Act and, in conclusion, to appraise its achievements and deficiencies at a time when the political situation, after the death of Franco, was undergoing a profound change.

The first of the three large volumes comprising the Report was dedicated to recording the quantitative evolution of the academic system from 1969, and it records the great growth at all levels, which is especially notable in secondary education (which almost tripled its number of students over those seven years) and also notable, although to a lesser extent, in Vocational Training (VT) (which was doubled). It also recorded practically universal application of General Basic Education (EGB) (that is to say, obligatory primary education up to the age of 14). It pointed out the great expansion in the public sector, especially in secondary education (much above that which took place in the private sector), although also at other levels.

The second volume is dedicated to evaluation of the different levels and modes. As to the matters of special interest to us, we may say that the Report backs the Act of 1970 as a "success" in unifying schooling between the age of 7 and 14, adding that "under no circumstances may one accept a return to the previous discriminatory situations which divided the school population at basic level into diverse groups" and that "if there is anything lacking in the present system, it is precisely a premature discrimination in educational treatment as of age 13-14 and an excessively radical division into predominantly humanistic, pretechnological and professional education". On the other hand, although it records the criticism raised in various sectors as to the drop in the

quality of upper secondary education (high school baccalaureate "Bachillerato Unificado Polivalente - BUP"), it clearly favours the form established in the Act, emphasising the convenience of reinforcing its "unified" and "multiple-purpose" core.

Among the failings noted in the scope of secondary education (general and vocational, lower and higher level), some have to a fair extent been dealt with in later years, as for example the reference to free obligatory education (to a great extent "still an aim", according to the Report), or there still being deficient classrooms at primary schools. Other failings may perhaps have lasted same years after the Report, as for example:

- high student-teacher ratios in certain areas and certain schools;
- overcrowded syllabuses (in higher secondary);
- scarce secondary education teacher staff training and refreshment;
- vocational training turned into a "double track" in Baccalaureate, and into a "discriminatory alternative" against the recommendations of the White Book.

Puelles summarises that the Committee considers that, pursuant to the Act of 1970 special attention had to be paid to the following realities:

- a) a new political, economic and social situation;
- b) the growing process of urbanisation of the Spanish society and consequent isolation of the rural areas;
- c) insufficient gratuity of primary education;
- d) insufficient public spending on education;
- e) the urgent demand for decentralisation of the educational system;
- f) the demands for the principle of equal opportunities;
- g) the increasingly pressing demand for quality teaching".

In other aspects, the *Report* by the Committee also insisted that many of the remaining difficulties are due to insufficient funding of the Act of 1970.

In the *Updated synthesis of the 3rd Foessa report*, published in 1978, the observations were not much different from the previous ones. It made

particular emphasis on educational expenditure still being notably below the needs and usual practice in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.

### THE 1981 DOCUMENT ON SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Report *Secondary Education in Spain* published in 1981 also contains, apart from its proposal for reform, an evaluation of the Baccalaureate and Vocational Training more than ten years after enactment of the Act of 1970. On the basis of the great increase in the number of students in both educational groups (above all in Vocational Training, which duplicated from 1975, although amounting to half those enrolled in Baccalaureate then), the Report referred amply to "severe failings" and "anomalies requiring urgent correction". A summary of the deficiencies and anomalies stated in the Report is, mainly, as follows.

- the high degree of school drop-outs at the end of Primary Education, stating the high number of pupils who do not obtain the (Primary) School Graduation Certificate;
- the high drop-out level in Vocational Training, mainly due to the following two reasons:
  - due to imposed, not chosen subjects;
  - those dragged down by their lack of previous training which prevented achievement of the (Primary) School Graduation Certificate;
- consolidation of the Baccalaureate as a mere preparation to enter higher education;
- the failure of the University Orientation Course (COU), at least in its implementation.

Once more, the *4th Foessa Report*, published two years later, also points out such anomalies as those already stated in the official Report in 1981.

### THE OECD REPORT OF 1986

A report that was also commissioned by the political authorities is that of 1986, carried out by the OECD on Spanish educational policy (*Survey of Spanish educational policy*, OECD 1996). This Re-

port begins by pointing out the great thrust education has received in Spain since the General Education Act of 1970, due to which there was growth throughout the educational system overall which the surveyors considered "was more spectacular than in any other OECD country".

The OECD Report emphasises some points of the criticism above, such as, for example, those concerning the faulty approach to Vocational Training, in the first grade (due to the type of students it takes in, and due to its scarce social appreciation) and at the second (due to the scarce proportion of high school students who chose it, not greater than 20% then, as well as the considerable number of drop-outs). However, it also mentions other key points such as:

- deficient teacher training, above all in secondary education, which staff, it states, has "practically no training in educational theory and practice";
- deficient training of the school principals, who "do not receive any specific training in the administrative and management tasks they have to carry out".

Of course, the OECD survey also covers matters related to funding, stating that "it would be useful to prepare more systematic estimates of the medium and long term requirements for resources".

### THE WHITE BOOK IN 1989

As Puelles points out in the study taken as reference, the White Book published in 1989 (*White Book for the Reform of the Educational System*), also as a prologue to the Act to be enacted a year later (Educational System General Organisation Act, LOGSE), is much briefer than the one twenty years before as to diagnosis of the situation and sets more directly about presenting the reform it wishes to implement. However, its first part provides a fairly ample analysis of the achievements and shortcomings of the Act of 1970 which, twenty years later, must be properly implemented.

This is not the stage to examine what the new White Book considers many important "achievements". Among the shortcomings that have lasted until the end of the eighties, the document specifically emphasised the following ones, which it



considers the effect of the new Act must address specifically:

- deficiencies in the field of kindergarten education, which detracts from its enormous importance in preventing educational lack of equality;
- important rate of drop-outs at the end of primary education;
- early discrimination remains (at the age of 14) among the school population, due to the double qualification obtained at the end of primary education (EGB);
- important limitations of the Baccalaureate, due to its lack of multiple purpose (in spite of the intentions of the 1970 legislators), its academically oriented approach and status as a non terminal gangway;
- failure of the first grade of vocational training, as it does not cover or provide the appropriate qualifications for all the students who are not promoted to baccalaureate;
- lack of flexibility in second grade vocational training, in spite of the important quantitative and qualitative increase achieved in recent years;
- absence of a properly articulated syllabus, from the early years of schooling till conclusion.

In addition to these shortcomings, the White Book also points out the need to bring about a general adaptation of the Spanish educational system to present day circumstances, pointing out the following related factors:

- inadequacy of the draft of the Act of 1970 to the Constitution of 1978, above all as to the new territorial organisation of the State;
- lack of matching between the needs of the population (as to cultural and vocational training) and the possibilities provided by the system;
- lack of endorsement of the Spanish educational system to suit the structures and quality levels of the countries in the European Community.

## ON THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

Another important document was published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 1994,

this time titled *Schools and teaching quality: proposal for action*, considering 77 measures to improve the quality of the educational system, an objective set mainly by the LOGSE. Its first part is "description of the present day problems", but what specific problems does it refer to?

The document by the Ministry mainly concentrates on those affecting organisation of schools and their main resources, which are its human ones (teaching and management staff), although it suggests that priority be given to "scopes or main indicators of a quality education": education in values and equal opportunities, of which a glimpse is provided by the ministerial authorities when they state the lack of attention to these matters by the schools.

The fundamental guidelines to structure and organise schools were handed down in the Organic Educational Entitlement Act (LODE) in 1985. One must thus understand that what is proposed in the ministerial document of 1994 is an amendment or adjustment of this act in "the aspects in which the objectives set have not been achieved". The following list shows the points that the document considers require the greatest criticism and reform:

- lack of candidates for the management roles, lack of selection procedures for the most appropriate candidates and a lack of specific training for the post;
- in any case, the scarce authority of the principal at schools,
- motivation and training lacking (above all ongoing) among the teaching staff;
- lack of autonomy of schools as to management of the teaching staff;
- scarce autonomy of schools as to their economic and administrative management;
- insufficient treatment of matters related to evaluation of the educational system, including evaluation of the actual administration, of the teaching staff, the reform process, etc.;
- lack of an adequate system for access to the inspection function, lack of legal measures to ensure greater stability of the inspectors, greater demands for training and a change in the means of intervention at the school.

The *5th Foessa Report (5th Sociological report on the Social Situation in Spain)* was also published in 1994. This report contains critical observations as

to the situation of the educational system that partially coincide with the two ministerial documents published in 1989 and 1994, although there is also a hint of criticism.

For example, it makes a net allusion to what it nettly considers "difficulties and failings" caused by the LODE and its later implementation, considering it necessary to reform some of its principles, as well as those relating to school management. With reference to the document of 1994, it blames that excessive dimension and questionable feasibility on the measures proposed.

The 5th Report also pays considerable attention to the matter of funding the educational apparatus, *considering continued growth of expenditure correct*, although it regrets the persistence of such financial problems and, definitively, "the restriction on public funds assigned to education due to the general economic crisis and the specific crisis of the social Welfare State". The Report also regrets the gradual decrease in State expenditure from 1991 to 1994, the year of its publication.

### Evaluation of the Spanish educational system according to the Annual Reports of the State School Council<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of his study, Marín Ibáñez points out that the Annual Reports by the State School Council are a privileged source of information as to the trends, hopes and shortcomings of the Spanish educational system and, thus, provide an ongoing effort at evaluation of the system. Their main feature is not so much that they provide scientifically verified information, as their providing the view of system and its operation held by the main sectors that are in fact involved in the every day running of Spanish education: Trade Unions, employer's associations, administration, parents, students, prestigious characters. Due to such an amount of different opinions, these must be more descriptive than analytical, although they also include recommendations by the relevant politicians, in a most emphatic way. One of the

most solid and much repeated complaints as to the Reports is that the relevant politicians do not attend to fulfilment of the recommendations by the Council in the way expected.

This is how Marín Ibáñez sums up the general tone as to educational policy adopted by the School Council since it was created:

"Before enactment of the Educational System General Organisational Act (LOGSE, 1990), there was a tone of general approval of all initiatives undertaken by the government, the only remarks being that they should be assessed and more funds assigned to each programme. A great number of the proposals and recommendations were aimed in the same line as that to be implemented by the coming Act. In the first five year period there was a general tone of agreement and applause of the governmental proposals. The second five year period brought more criticism and the Report of 1995 was a head-on rejection of the Organic Act on Participation, Evaluation and Administration of Teaching Centres (LOPEG), recording the fundamental opinion of the Trade Unions".

This is all correctly shown by the usual inherent approach of the Council and its reports, although in these pages we must concentrate on the points considered as the most substantial shortcomings of the system. One must point out as to this that, although LOGSE received a general majority backing from the Council, its members were very careful to state that they did not consider it the definitive solution to all the ills, some of them endemic, of the school system. The 1989-90 Report specifically states that "it would be a serious mistake to consider the Act as cure-all containing the solution to all the problems of the educational system". Such problems as school drop-outs, lack of motivation among the teaching staff, or irregular operation of the participation bodies, are considered by the Council members as factors that will be difficult to improve just by implementation of the new Act.

We shall now attempt to summarise the main lines of the shortcomings detected in the reports, in all cases according to the Marín Ibáñez study, although concentrating on those that to a greater extent affect the diagnosis these pages concern.

<sup>2</sup> The INCE commissioned a study on this theme and title by Ricardo Marín Ibáñez, Emeritus Professor at the Spanish National Open University. The lines included here are based on that study, which may be requested from the INCE by those with a special interest in the matter.



One must say that in this brief summary we do not intend to reproduce the rich information and critical remarks set forth in the Reports, which undoubtably deserve a more exhaustive treatment elsewhere, but simply to see to what extent they point out some more or less chronic shortcomings of the system in the chapters we have examined in depth. On the other hand, the points we cover here affect the "official content" - accepted by the majority of the councillors - of the Reports, and not the numerous individual votes that frequently accompany them and which, in one way or another, are a response to the majority declarations or opinions collected.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCE

In general terms one may say that this is the chapter that the Council Reports scarcely consider. However, the 1991-92 Report showed its concern for 14 year old students who do not fulfil the objectives set for the end of obligatory education and, thus, do not qualify to enter the Baccalaureate or the Vocational 2 Modules. The high rates of drop-outs, especially at the end of Primary Education, are emphasised in almost all the reports, although they also clarify that there has been a favourable evolution in this aspect: in 1980 only 62.4% of the students obtained the (Primary) School Graduation Certificate, while in 1995 the percentage had risen eighteen percent, that is to 80.1%. However, the fact that one fifth of the students still do not achieve the minimum objectives is a cause for deep concern. The percentages of drop-outs particularly affect children and youths in depressed areas and sectors, so there must be permanent insistence on the matter of compensatory education.

On the other hand, this and other reports refer to performance evaluations carried out by the Technical Inspection Service pursuant to the General Plan for Action approved in 1991, which we shall discuss later on.

## SYLLABUSES AND TEACHING METHODS

As aforementioned, the members of the State School Council overall have stated their substantial agreement with the syllabus approach of the LOGSE, and the Reports does not contain major

criticism of the provisions enacted thereafter as to the syllabuses. In general, the remarks and criticism by the Councillors are more aimed at guaranteeing the human and material resources required for the new study plans and programmes to indeed be carried out satisfactorily. Thus, for example, the 1993-94 report echoes, with no further comment, the wide range of material prepared by the Ministry for Primary Education, although it does "consider the lack of specialist teachers in Physical Education and Music established in the LOGSE in the first cycle of primary education very concerning".

The Council also approved the syllabus provisions established by the Ministry, and their greatest warnings were initially aimed at avoiding early implementation of the ESO (Obligatory Secondary Education) until the schools had fulfilled the minimum requisites for teaching staff and material resources, also providing a reminder of the importance the Act grants to the Orientation Departments, and the slow, insufficient implementation of these in the relevant schools. It also warns as to the disproportionately high number of optional subjects and lack of specialists to cover these leading, among other things, to it being impossible to teach such subjects at many High Schools.

As to specific subjects, the 1994-95 Report refers to the need of reinforcing foreign language teaching in obligatory education, even proposing that one of them may begin optionally during infant's education, and obligatory from the first year of Primary, which would perhaps make introduction of a second foreign language widespread during Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO).

Frequent reference is made to Religion as a subject, and to religious education overall, noting that in the years prior to the LOGSE there was a posture largely opposed to it being included in the syllabuses as a normal subject (the 1986-87 report expressly states "it must not be part of the school syllabus"). Although always from a similar viewpoint, the 1992-93 Report details the matter even more: "diffusion of religious faith should not necessarily have a place in school syllabuses and it is expected to take place outside the school timetable. On the contrary, one considers that emphasise should be placed on ethical training and on historical and social knowledge of the religious phenomenon, in general terms at all schools".

Very interesting remarks are made by the Council as to the need of reinforcing the actions and content of intercultural education. This matter, which is covered at great length in the 1990-91 Report, and is also mentioned in other later ones, insists on the inevitable increase in immigration rates and in the adequate treatment still received by minorities such as, for example, the Gypsies, among which there is a high rate of school leaving or drop-outs at the end of obligatory schooling.

Some Reports, especially those in the years previous to the enactment of the LOGSE, insist on the importance of physical education for health and regret the shortcomings in such matters at most of the public and endorsed institutions. Meanwhile, they praise the investment dedicated to this in 1988 and the following years.

Although Vocational Training is one of the sectors that has attracted the greatest interest among the councillors in recent years, especially after approval of the LOGSE, their reflections, however, are scarce as to basic vocational training, which is what fundamentally affects the content of *the diagnosis we are now performing*. However, one may consider the insistence of the councillors as to the difficulties involved in article 23.2 of the LOGSE as background criticism, this providing that pupils who do not achieve the objectives of the ESO may only obtain access to the Social Guarantee programmes. To sum up, it seems to miss these students receiving adequate vocational training for them also to be able to join the labour market, in spite of their insufficient general results, through some types of vocational modules.

### EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND SCHOOL FUNCTIONING

An important percentage of the content of the Reports by the Council refer, in one way or another, to this vast sector. Firstly, it concerns the councillors that such a low proportion of public funds are assigned to education, lower than that in the countries around us, above all those in the European Union. However, over the years, the councillors have noted a gradual increase, which was cut back in 1993 and not sufficiently compensated in the years following, and they recommend that the percentages of the GDP achieved up to now (according to the years) be about 6%, which

would surely place us among the standard for developed countries.

The process of devolution has given rise to many comments over the years. Deep concerns have been noted from the early days, as to the possibility of the new State structure allowing discriminatory circumstances between the Regions in educational matters. The 1986-87 Report insists on the need for "non discrimination and solidarity in a treatment that avoids the present circumstances to the contrary". It also insists on completion of the process of devolution to the Autonomous Governments so all of them may reach the same competency ceilings, while attempting to avoid overlapping and duplication of the services with relation to the actual bodies of the Central Administration.

A great deal of attention is also called to the legal and real failings in participation by the local corporations. The 1986-87 Report suggests that this matter has not been duly solved by the LODE, or by other legal provisions, although later reports praise some initiatives taken by factual means, specifically specific agreements entered into for collaboration between the Ministry and numerous municipalities. In this sense, there was a special welcome for the Royal Decree 2274/93, which allows state schools to be used by the Local Governments after school hours for educational, cultural, artistic, sports or social activities.

Due to their importance as Educational Administration instruments, these reports contain frequent references to the Technical Inspectorate, expressing general dissatisfaction as to its activities, although without providing completely coherent guidelines thereon, especially in the reports prior to 1990. On the one hand, these state that "there should be a time limit on their function" (1986-87 Report), which guarantees the legal provisions established beforehand, as of the LODE; and on the other, it provides a crowded list of functions and demands professionalisation of the service. After the new regulation of the service brought about in the Royal Decree 1524 of 1989, the 1990-91 Report again referred to the matter in a very ample manner, suggesting a series of improvements, among them those related to advice and evaluation of the schools.

As to the actual schools, the Reports by the State School Council go into very few details as to their functioning. In general, the greatest concerns expressed in the reports are to favour an



increase in the public sector and hardly mention the progressive decrease in the number of endorsed schools.

In this line, the important matter of school management is generally considered in the context of democratic participation, there always being those who regret the scarce or insufficient payroll of principals really chosen by the School Council and, thus, the persistence of numerous appointments by the respective Authorities. In all the Reports, there is an explicit or implicit reiteration of defense by the Council of the democratic model of election by schools (state and endorsed). On the occasion of the Organic Act on Participation, Evaluation and Administration of Teaching Centres (LOPEG), the council considered it did not agree with the previous accreditation required of the candidate to become principal because, in its opinion, this would limit the capacity of election and would imply "a setback in the degree of participation that had made our educational system one of the most advanced in the world in that aspect" (1994-95 Report). However, there are also references to important tasks entrusted to the principal (bureaucratic, management, pedagogical encouragement, teacher training, external relations, etc.)

Likewise, the Reports provide abundant considerations as to participation by all the educational community in organisation of schools. As Marín Ibañez writes, "perhaps the point that has taken up most pages in the Reports by the State School Council is that of participation in the decisions of the schools through the Councils. The political model hovers over the recommendations and reflections by the Council. When a difficult matter arises, a debate is invariably proposed". In other matters, the Reports detect existing anomalies in the operation of the School Councils, especially the scarce participation in the elections to these by, above all, parents and students (a participation that, curiously, is greater at endorsed schools).

School life is scarcely covered by the Reports, although it seems more, directly or indirectly in the latter. In general, it does not seem that it should be a matter for deep concern, at least at present. Compared with problems of life together, the Council proposed increasing training in certain values. Thus, for example, in the Report of 1987-88, one reads that the Council "wishes to express its conviction that the safest and most

solid instrument to achieve school life is training action in the values of tolerance, mutual respect and solidarity".

## THE TEACHING STAFF AND THEIR TRAINING

On the basis of the Report on academic year 1989-90, Marín Ibañez summarises some of the main shortcomings then found by the State School Council as follows:

"From academic year 82-83 to 88-89, there has been a 36% increase in staff. Teachers were required for languages, physical education, music, as well as substitutes. There is an evident disproportion between teaching staff and posts. Moreover, the high number of intern teachers awaiting posting or provisional posting, who teach related subjects, creates uneasiness among the teaching staff. One must gain access by competition and not by serving in the posts stated in relation to the jobs available. The mobility and lack of stability among the teaching staff contributes in the annual competitions to scarce consolidation of the teams. In academic year 88-89, more than 10,000 teachers obtained new postings thus and there were at least three times more applicants. Stability among the teaching staff should be encouraged".

Even though one may admit that the student-teacher ratio in secondary education at the beginning of the nineties reached a percentage somewhat above 16/1, the Reports then and after have continued to call for an increase in staff and for access to permanent posts for the intern teachers, although without these blocking the way for other candidates. Considerations as to salary rises and working conditions are frequent and such measures as the approach to the retributive analogy between the state and endorsed sectors were positively valued.

Along with this general, repeated opinion, the Council has also repeatedly called for unification of all the non university teaching staff in a sole body, to which there must be access with identical initial preparation and initial qualification. Thus, the approach of the LOGSE was not positively valued as to initial training, which was rather an attempt at avoiding the matter, leaving it the way it was. Thus, the Report of 1989-90 points out that "the (legal) text does not deal with the matter of initial training of the teaching staff. By ignoring

the matter, a chance is lost to facilitate the way to achieving a sole body of teachers, which requires the same qualifications". The demand on the teaching staff, by the Act, of a professional qualification in Didactic and Psychopedagogical Specialisation seems to the Councillors to be a repetition of the present Pedagogical Skill Certificate (CAP), and they offset this against real integration in university studies (at second cycle level) of teaching specialisations, for secondary teachers and the others.

On the contrary, the Reports have usually referred in positive terms to the service or practice training model provided by the Teacher Training Schools, being satisfied with the increase in available resources for these institutions and insisting that the majority of teacher improvement must be carried out within the teaching timetable. No reference is made to such actions also carried out by the Educational Science Institutions and Universities in general.

### RELATIONS BETWEEN FAMILY AND EDUCATION

This is another of the matters in which the Reports do not provide too much data. The considerations made mainly provided within the framework of participation by families through Parent's Associations. These usually regret that the subventions granted to these Associations are small and that, moreover, they drop by percentage in some years, as happened in 1993.

There are also some references to the need the orientation teams have, apart from their duties of psychological evaluation and advice to the students, to also liaise with families.

\* \* \*

A final consideration: the evaluations by the State School Board, as shown in its annual Reports, are greatly due to the composition of the Council itself and the real distribution of strengths by the sectors represented within it. There is no doubt that the Reports provide elements that are

of great interest when detecting the achievements and shortcomings of the educational system, and it will be most useful to carry out a deeper study of that aspect, a matter that cannot, and may not, be attempted here. However, there is no doubt either that such achievements and shortcomings are mainly defined by the specific political, social and professional expectations of the majority sectors within the Council.

### Evaluations of schools and educational programmes carried out by the Educational Inspectorate<sup>3</sup>

The fact that evaluation of schools is one of the fundamental duties of the Inspectorate is simply proof, in Spain as well as in practically all countries. As schools form the most visible part of the institutional and functional grid we usually call *the schooling or educational system*, it is not difficult to conclude that, as expressly affirmed in this legislation, it is an important function of the Inspectorate to "participate in evaluation of the educational system" (art. 61.2.b of the LOGSE). The Organic Act on Participation, Evaluation and Administration of Teaching Centres (LOPEG) perhaps defines it in a more precise fashion: "to participate in evaluation of the educational system, especially as to schools, to the management function, and the teaching function, through analysis of the organisation, functioning and results of these" (art. 30).

The following lines are a brief summary of some of the evaluation actions carried out by the Education Inspectorate in recent years, with special emphasis, as in the previous cases, on the main shortcomings detected in the different sectors of the school system.

### SCHOOL RESULTS

As the period concerned here for specific analysis is that at the end of obligatory education, that is

<sup>3</sup> The INCE commissioned a study with this same theme and title by Samuel Gento Palacios, Incumbent Professor of Didactics and School Organisation at the National Open University, and Julio Puente Azcutia, Technical Inspector of Education and Head of the National Institute for Quality and Evaluation. These lines included here are based on this study, that may be requested from the INCE by those who are especially interested in the matter.



to say that legally constituted by Obligatory Secondary Education, we shall concentrate our considerations on this, not without previously pointing out that since academic year 1986-97 the Subdirector General of Educational Inspection has published an annual report on the results of the evaluation of students in EGB, BUP-COU and Vocational Training and, since 1989-90 a report, also annual, on the grades by areas or squares in the same levels and sectors. From 1993 onwards, it also began, pursuant to the new legal structures, the publication of annual reports on the results of evaluation of primary and secondary education (obligatory and baccalaureate).

The following is a summary of the main data provided by these evaluations:

- Up till academic year 1994-95, less than 70% of the students in seventh year of EGB obtained a positive grade in all the subjects comprising the course.
- Due to the "end of course effect", the results in eighth year of EGB are somewhat better, although only four out of five students in that year obtained the (Primary) School Graduation certificate at the end of the academic year.
- Implementation of teaching based on the LOGSE has not brought about an improvement on the indexes considered (in 1994-95). Thus, the third cycle of Primary Education promotes 95% of the students, although 17% needs reinforcement measures or syllabus adaptation; in ESO, 87% of the students are promoted from first cycle to third year, although at least 60% with a positive evaluation in all areas. Only 70% is promoted from third to fourth year (a similar percentages to those proposed for the (Primary) School Graduation certificate in eighth year of EGB in 1994-95), although only one third of the students in third year is promoted in all the areas with a positive grade.
- It is very noticeable that in fourth year of ESO less than 40% of the students obtains a positive grade in all the areas, although 70% is proposed for the relevant qualification.
- As to specific areas of knowledge, for ESO overall, less than 70% of the students passes in the areas of Nature Sciences, Social Sciences, Spanish Language and Literature, English and Mathematics.
- The number of students repeating is high at the levels most concerned: more than 30% in EGB, with the consideration that more than 20% of the students obtained the (Primary) School Graduation certificate after repeating one or more years.
- In ESO, only 87% of the students evaluated in the first cycle are promoted, so 13% have to spend a further year in the cycle. Approximately one out of three students has to repeat the third year of ESO and thus one out of three students do not achieve the Secondary Education Graduation.
- Due to this situation of generalised "academic failure" at all levels, the indexes of drop-outs are very high in non obligatory education.
- The studies about the results of student evaluation based on the grades granted by the teachers have always shown a difference between state and private schools. It is significant how constant the difference in grades has been over the years between schools in the two sectors, always in favour of the private sector. The statistic representation of the difference, as well as the notice of the phenomenon, lead to the conclusion that, whatever factors cause this, these are not random but stable factors, which act in a systematic, generalised, differential way. Among the explanations the Inspectorate announces as possible, there are, first of all, the fact that students from the lowest social strata - who have, on average, lower percentages of academic success - mainly attend state schools; and secondly, private schools are mainly located in urban surroundings, where cultural stimulation is greater, while state schools cover the whole country, including the more depressed areas.

It is important to point out the precautions taken by the Educational Inspectorate as to these results, stating that, on the contrary to what is usually done, academic success or failure may not consist only of the academic performance measured in grades or marks and courses passed. "Beyond academic performance - write Gento and Puente citing a publication from 1996 - the

Inspectorate has noted that the students develop in general lines of positive civic and social attitudes: collaboration among them and their teachers, tolerance for opinions other than their own, non discrimination, interest for social problems, respect for rules of life together". In any case, one must bear in mind that there are many causes that have an effect on that considered as academic failure, that are not always imputable to academic factors, but quite often to others of an economic or social, administrative, psychopedagogical nature, etc. and it is by combatting all such causes that they may be solved.

Great interest must be paid to considerations that Gento and Puente state in their study in relation to the diverse areas of study, once the data supplied by the Inspectorate are analyzed. Attention noting that the lowest success indexes are in Mathematics, Spanish Language, English and Nature Sciences (especially Physics and Chemistry), they refer to the possible factors that may have a special effect on these results. As to Mathematics, they remind one of the rejection and consequent psychological blockage many students have as to this, but they also refer to possible factors of inadequate programmes and syllabuses, to the school timetable, to the use of inadequate methodology. In Spanish Language "it has been noted that there is no increase in linguistic competence: knowledge is repeated in different years, but there is no progress in practical mastery of the language"; thus, it is in oral expression and comprehension where the greatest levels of deficiency are noted. As to foreign language (English in most cases), factors to take very much into account would be the high number of students per class and the different levels of knowledge and interest shown by them. Lastly, the lack of mastery of the basic operations of calculation and elementary mathematical basics, along with the lack of practical activities at many schools with the consequent scarce development of habits of observation and experimentation, are probably the base causes of scarce performance in Physics and Chemistry.

### METHODOLOGY AND SYLLABUSES

Three fundamental differences are detected in the diverse reports issued by the Inspectorate concerning the *syllabuses*:

- lack of adjustment between the contents proposed in the syllabuses and the real capacities and interests of students of a certain age;
- lack of adjustment between the obligatory stages, applicable to the previous EGB and the present Primary Education, always in reference to later secondary studies;
- lack of adjustment among the optional subjects organised by the schools and the educational needs and real interests of the students, a lack of adjustment that has increased in recent years.

As to the different areas of knowledge contained in the study plans, one must remember that the overloaded content frequently denounced by teachers is more due to specific scheduling of teaching by themselves, out of long-standing habit, rather than to the actual official plans, that in reality just provide an index of content accompanied by brief methodological guidelines. In any case, the deficiencies fundamentally contrasted may be summed up as follows:

- In *Mathematics*, more importance is usually given to abstract themes than to basic geometry and numerical calculus. Above all in the previous EGB, more encouragement was given to structures and formal constructions of sets than to calculation procedures or basic descriptive geometry.
- In *Spanish Language*, more importance is usually given to theoretical aspects than to practical ones. For decades linguistic knowledge has been more highly valued than expression and oral and written comprehension.
- In *Nature Sciences*, there has been decades of neglect for matters related to the nature of science, the relations between science, technique and society, and for scientific methodology. The existing relations between diverse subjects have also been neglected: mastery of elementary mathematical procedures in Physics and Chemistry, basic chemical knowledge in study of Biology and Geology, etc.
- In *Social Sciences*, some important aspects have been neglected, such as History of Art, basic events in the history of Spain, elementary geographic knowledge, etc.



Let us now set aside the study plans and programmes and their content and refer to the *teaching methodology* that is normally used in class. In the Inspectorate opinion this is one of the most deficient aspects of teaching in our country, which will require a greater need for recycling of the teaching staff. It is true that the patterns of teaching-learning generally respond to the principles of significant learning and that the relations between the teachers and students are approached correctly on the basis of work and mutual respect, but the approach to teaching is frequently excessively abstract and scarcely matches the age and characteristics of the students and, moreover, substantial parts of the subjects are frequently left unexplained. On the other hand, one seldom seems to resort to stimulæ and activities that may motivate the students, and the teaching resources used are scarcely varied. The different rates of work by the students is frequently unknown in practice, as well as such procedures as group work, flexible grouping, etc. There is too much dependence on the "text book", sometimes presented as a "reference book", or "activity book". In spite of all these shortcomings and others that may be pointed out, one must not forget either that important steps have been taken in teaching methodology, and many teachers have apparently attempted to improve their task. However, one would have to intensify action in this sense.

*Student evaluation* also has abundant lacunæ. A general lack of preparation in evaluation techniques is detected among the teaching staff, which frequently means prior evaluation or promotion criteria are not established, nor are the minimum contents required set, nor are adequate, varied instruments used, nor are self-assessment exercises by the student encouraged, etc. As to ongoing evaluation, the divorce between theory and reality is complete at too many schools. A curious fact is also noted which is that there is a tendency to fail more students the larger schools are, which perhaps may be due to the fact that coordination between teachers is more complex at large schools.

Many of these deficiencies could perhaps be decreased if more attention were paid to correct preparation of such significant documents as the *Educational Project and the syllabus projects* in the different stages. The Inspectorate has repeatedly pointed out the risk that this type of documents may become a merely bureaucratic resort.

## THE EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

The study used here as a source and reference is especially rich in this aspect, referring to fundamental components included in the heading (the role of the Public Authorities, Educational Inspectorate, etc.). Although the consideration of these components will undoubtedly be of great use in later actions by the INCE, we now wish to take only the points from the study that affect the work carried out by the Committee III for Diagnosis which, as was clarified above, had to be limited to only examining matters related to school management, participation and the climate of life together. Now, as the school management is in charge of organising and running schools, and as the Educational Inspectorate carried out an important assessment of this point through the School Evaluation Plan (EVA Plan), we consider it most appropriate to mention its main conclusions on the matter here.

As to the school management, the Gento and Puente study began by mentioning some features that are inherent to the procedure before the LODE, in force in 1982, among which they point out participation by the teaching staff, resorting to candidates with prior management or organisational experience, the trend in "lifelong principals" etc. This obviously all underwent a substantial change after approval of the LODE in 1985. After that date, the Inspectorate carried out a monographic study of the operation of School Councils in the so-called "Ministry of Education and Culture Territory", including data on appointment of the principals. Then the number of principals appointed provisionally by the Provincial Directors must have amounted, in global terms, to almost 30%, with a greater effect in Primary Schools (33.6%) than at High Schools (21.6%). This means that, in numerous cases, the School Council did not manage to proceed to appoint the Principal, generally due to absence of candidates.

Certain characteristics related to school management have been pointed out in later studies, specifically in the one published by the Inspectorate in 1996, due to implementation of the EVA Plan. Three of these characteristics are recorded:

- "In operation of the personal bodies, *team work* was noted; generally well coordinated, so the members of the management teams - with a few exceptions - were recognised and considered by their colleagues".

- *Dedication* by the single person governing bodies generally has a set timetable that, however, must be extended during certain periods of the academic year.
- Principals usually have good, fluent relations with the educational community, although they neglect their *relations with the institutions of the social agents* at the school.

As to *organisation and running state schools*, the Report published in 1995 by the Subdirector General for Educational Inspection at the Ministry of Education and Culture, after implementing the aforementioned EVA Plan, recorded the main strengths and weaknesses detected in the 50 schools that were included in the sample and subject to evaluation. The *strengths* emphasise those related to existing teaching resources, effective implementation of the Syllabus Projects, preparation of the general annual programme for the school, satisfactory administrative and economic management, progress in the team work among the teaching staff, to the existence of the School Council within it, to the correct relations between teachers and students, to correct patterns of teaching (see above) and the positive civic-social attitudes noted among the students. The *weaknesses* emphasised are as follows:

- There is the risk of such important documents as the Educational Project and the Syllabus project becoming bureaucratic instruments that do not inspire the pedagogical tasks at the schools.
- The tutorial act is not being carried out in the way it should, as on occasions it has lapsed into a series of formalist, routine acts that detract from its very nature.
- The Boards of Teachers and the School Councils do not deal with the pedagogical matters in sufficient depth.
- Neither ongoing nor training evaluation is being carried out as foreseen in the by-laws to develop the LOGSE.
- The teaching staff has not yet undertaken the practice of self-assessment and evaluation of the teaching-learning processes.
- Pedagogical criteria are not predominant in preparing the timetables.
- The parents participate very little in the choice of their representatives on the School Councils.

The influence of the aforementioned EVA Plan on state schools was also considered in the Report of 1995, which stated a *dynamic of reflection* sparked off by the Plan, as well as the gradual diffusion of an evaluation culture and consequent stimulus and support for self-evaluation activities at schools. Difficulties encountered in implementation of the Plan were also pointed out (the need for too many visits, work instruments too numerous and formal, lack of logistic support and impossibility to deal with the teaching processes sufficiently).

*Organisation and running of private state-subsidized schools* was given special consideration by the Inspectorate in the years prior to the 1995 Report, specifically in 1986-97 and 1987-88. Then *fairly faithful fulfilment of the current rules* by these schools was noted as to constitution and operation of School Councils, appointment of the principal, etc. Among the deficiencies recorded, the reports mention the lack of participation by parents in the appointment processes.

The previous paragraphs have already mentioned remarks on the matter of participation and the *participation and management bodies* in school life. With specific reference to the School Council at state schools, the monographic study carried out in 1986-97 showed that:

- participation in the election process was high among the teaching staff, the service staff and students, while it was low among the parents;
- the matters dealt with by the School Councils were mainly of an administrative and economic nature;
- the schools had little relation with the community.

As to the atmosphere of school life, Gento and Puente have not collected information on the matter in their study, surely as they considered there was nothing particularly important to mention. They make a passing reference to some school drug abuse detection schemes, but without providing details and suggesting the scarcity of actions with regard to this.

## THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND ITS CONTEXT

It seems clear, from the study by Gento and Puente, that the actions by the Inspectorate as to



*training practising teachers* has notably dropped in the last decade, especially as of creation of the Teacher Training Schools and Programme Units, as to which little is said in the Inspectorate memoranda, except for some details related to the number of existing schools. Something similar also happens as to the matter of professional incentive schemes for the teaching staff. On the contrary, as cited in the Report "the Educational Inspectorate has had an outstanding role in *evaluation of teaching staff at private High Schools*, as well as *interns at state schools*, to check their academic and professional qualifications", as shown in the memoranda by the service.

## FAMILY AND SCHOOL

This is also an aspect that is scarcely analyzed. It indeed seems, from the memoranda of the Inspectorate that the ordinary supervision carried out by the inspectors of participation by parents in school life, generally considered as one of the areas in which most improvement is required. One of the reports referring to the EVA Plan (that of 1993) states that:

"there are parents, mostly members of the Students' Parents' Associations, who collaborate correctly, very actively in the schools. However, a considerable number of parents does not have enough information, either because there are not adequate channels of transmission, or due to a lack of interest among the parents themselves".

## Research aimed at diagnosis of the Educational System

Considering that, as said at the beginning, the limits to this chapter prevent detailed treatment of such a large matter, we shall restrict this in the following lines to demonstrate a certain fact; the attention paid in the last decades in Spain to educational research and, within it, to matters related to the situation and possibilities of improvement

of more or less large sectors of the academic system. A fair part of this work has been possible thanks to direct support from the educational authorities of the country, especially since the National Centre for Educational Research and Development (CENIDE) began its operations in 1970. It began a policy of stimulation and aid for research themes since then, more related to educational theory and practice, that has not ceased till present, with phases of greater or lesser activity<sup>4</sup>. The institutional forerunners of the first CENIDE, that is to say, the National Educational Sciences Institute (INCIE) and, later, the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CIDE) were those commissioned to materialise this effort that, one must say, they have not carried out alone. Other institutions, such as the former Institute for Pedagogy at the Higher Council for Scientific Research, or some such as the Institute of Educational Sciences at the Universities, also carried out important research. Particular mention must be given to the Schools of Education or Educational Sciences, which have intensified their research tasks as the years go by and, through works by the Professors, doctoral theses, etc., have increasingly influenced matters related to diagnosis and improvement of the educational system and, perhaps especially, in deeper study and diffusion of the appropriate methodologies.

From all this wide range of items, we must be content here to show only those financed directly by the educational authorities through the institutional group CENIDE-INCIE-CIDE. We hope that in future studies, at the instances of the INCE itself, or other institutions, we may also emphasise the important effort made in other settings.

## DIAGNOSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE OVERALL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

First of all, one must point out that the mainstream research commissioned by said institutional group was aimed at research themes applied to

<sup>4</sup> The INCE has taken advantage of two specific studies on this important aspect: the first of these (*Aportaciones de la investigación al diagnóstico del sistema educativo español* - Contributions by research to diagnosis of the Spanish educational system) is due to the generosity of the Research Service at the Centre for Educational Research and Documentation, coordinated by Mercedes Muñoz Repiso and Javier Murillo Torrecilla, a very ample study that provides considerable detail of much of the research carried out by this institution and by institutions that, under another name, preceded it; the second is a summary of the former, which the INCE commissioned Ángel Lázaro, Incumbent Professor of Educational Orientation and Diagnosis at the Complutense University of Madrid, under the title of *Contributions by research to diagnostic study of the Spanish educational system*. The lines included here are based on those studies, which may be requested from the INCE by those who are especially interested.

classroom action and educational processes and techniques, there being few studies aimed directly at diagnosis and evaluation research.

The study document prepared by the Research Service at the CIDE was based on an ample sample of the total research carried out by the institutional group. The sample covers 346 studies out of a total 870, which is almost 40% of the total production. In their choice, they took into account criteria set at the specific request of the INCE, such as referring only to pre-university levels, the possibility of generalising diverse contexts, the nature of applied and not basic research, etc. In order for the reader to be able to understand the themes covered by the sample as well as the specific volume of the research dedicated to each theme, we reproduce one of the graphs from the CIDE document (graph 1).

If we had to predict where research into diagnosis and/or evaluation of the educational system were to fit into this thematic distribution, in general, or in any of its levels or modes, it would be logical to look first at the group labelled "Evaluation and inspection" and perhaps also, in second place, that on "General structure and organisation of the system".

As to the first group, the thematic classification is that shown on graph 2, which shows the scarce interest dedicated to it.

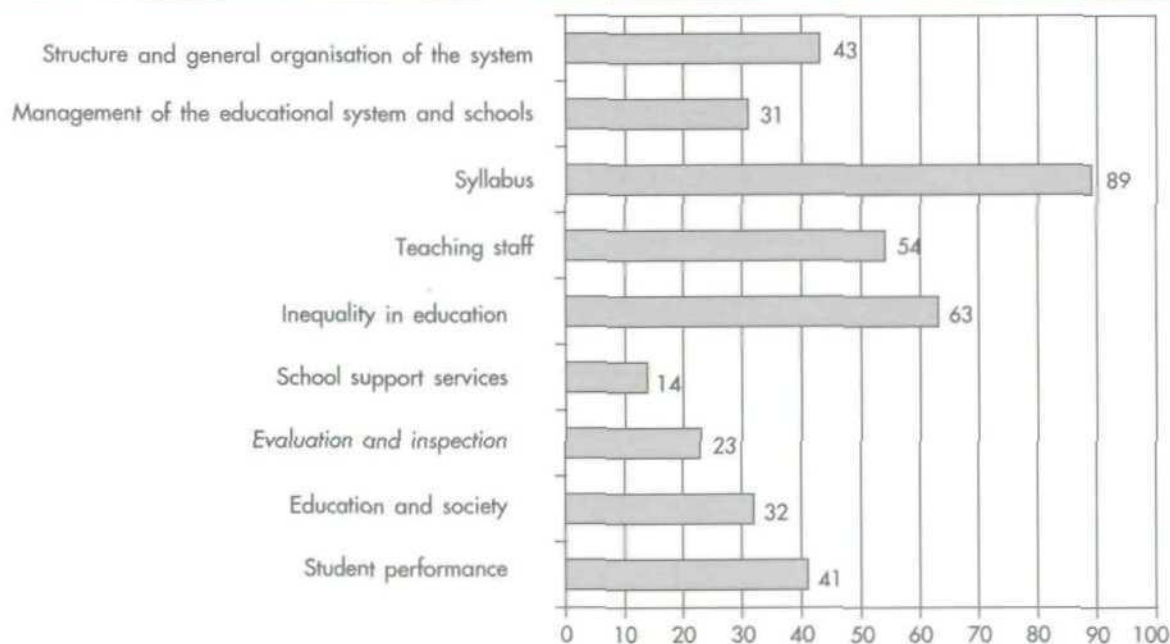
As we may see, the greatest part of the evaluation effort has concentrated on the part that is surely furthest from all aimed diagnosis: programme evaluation. The studies affecting this sector are substantially dedicated to analyze reform programmes or experimental programmes in general; and in other cases, specific programmes (integration, drug prevention, press-school, etc.) and syllabus programmes.

As reads the summary prepared by Ángel Lázaro, "the evaluation of schools and evaluation of teachers are matters that are scarcely covered, as evaluation of these scopes gives rise to rejection and, even more, is identified with matters of control, and even more so if an external evaluation".

Throughout the period, there is only one study dedicated to evaluation of the educational system which, in Lázaro's opinion, is not significant in number or results.

There may be greater interest for our purposes in the set of research studies that the main reference document brings together under the heading "General structure and organisation of the educational system", the content of which is shown in graph 3. As may be seen from this, a certain number of research studies have been dedicated to studying the situation of the levels of schooling, and one must emphasise the fact that the level that attracts the greatest attention of the researchers is

Graph 1: Number of researches comprising the sample by specific theme

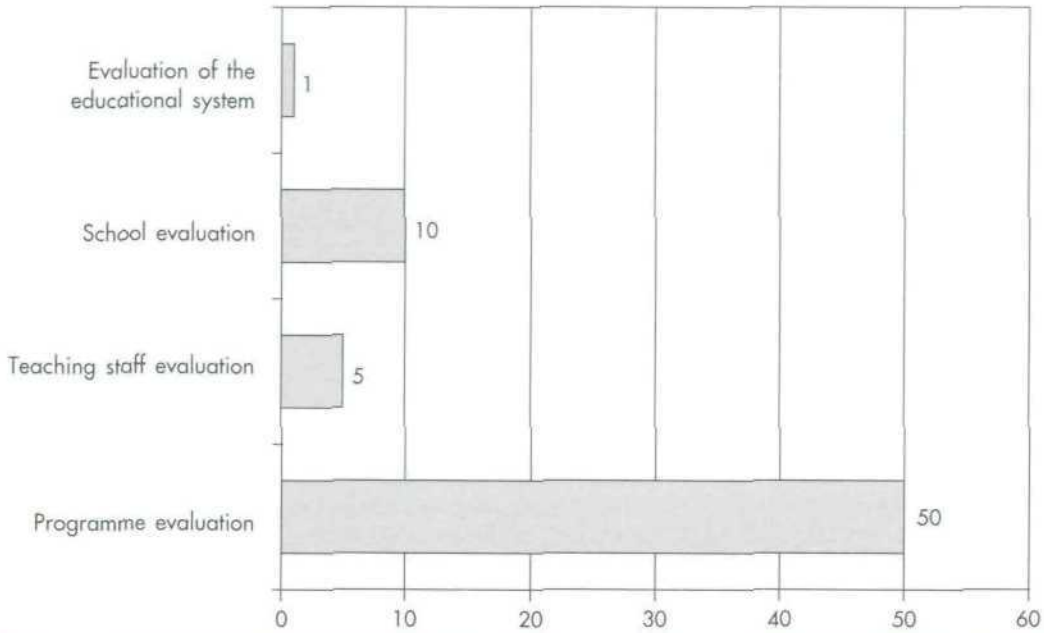




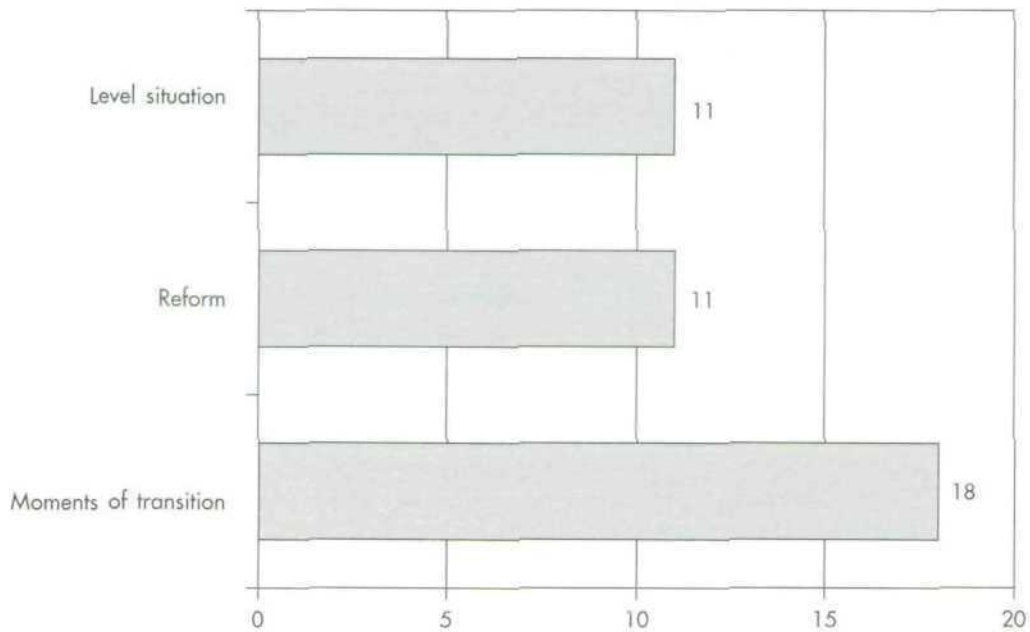
secondary education. However, none of the studies carried out seems to cover the situation of secondary education overall or in any of its two cycles (lower and upper), but specific aspects. As to the research into implementation of the educational

reforms, an appreciable number of those follows the line of comparing experimental groups with control groups taken from the previous educational reform. There is a particular interest in those included in the analysis of attitudes of diverse

**Graph 2: Number of research studies on evaluation (and inspection) by specific theme**



**Graph 3: Number of research studies on structure and organisation of the educational system in each thematic scope**



groups to the draft reform that led to the LOGSE; and as to these concerning "moments of transition", most are dedicated to the always controversial matter of university entrance.

After this brief approximation, the conclusion that must be reached is that the attention paid to diagnosis and evaluation actions for the education system by educational researchers has been quite scarce, hardly comparable in quantitative and qualitative terms to that spent on other items. However, this does not mean that the contributions made due to the research efforts are scarcely significant in the scope concerned. On the contrary, they form a source of reflection and even of data to which it will be indispensable to resort for more in-depth study, one by one, into the different aspects.

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF DIAGNOSIS

#### ACADEMIC RESULTS

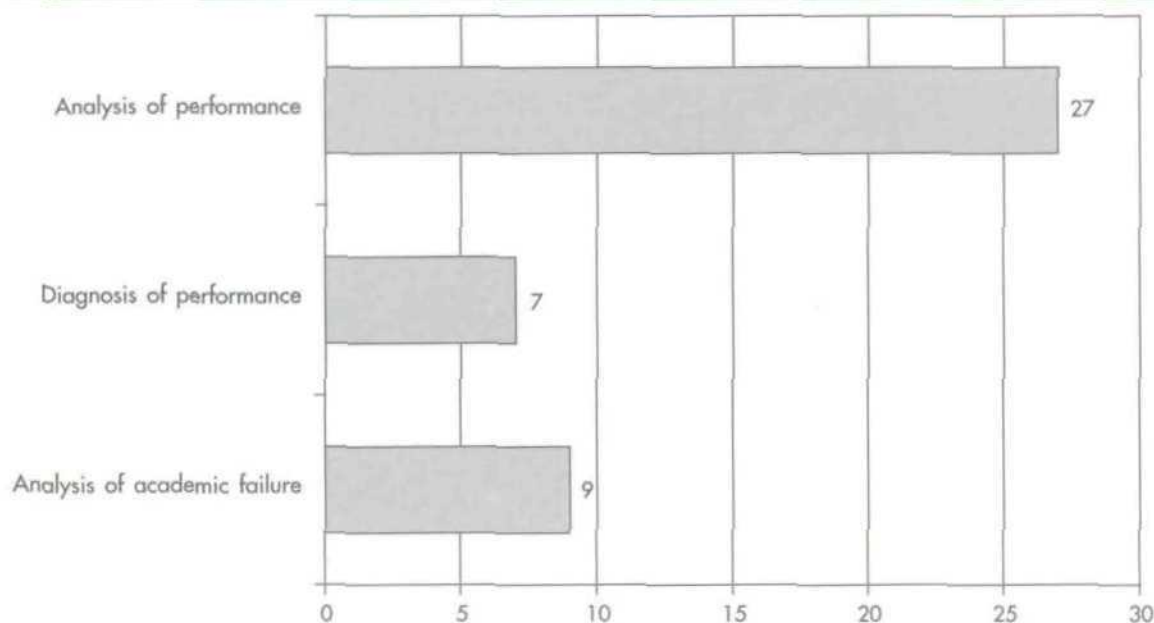
Although these are not as numerous as one could perhaps expect, the research into *student performance* forms a body of special importance within

the objective concerned here. The document taken as reference orders them in three fundamental chapters ( graph 4).

As to *performance analysis*, to which the greatest attention is paid, the studies provide interesting data and considerations on the features of academic performance and on the variables affecting this, of a personal nature and of the contextual type, the latter subdividable into "school" and "social-family". Although a general diagnosis action, such as that now performed in Spain and forming the object of this work must make special emphasis on the really existing situation and in principle is not aimed at detecting the main variables that affect this situation, there is no doubt that study of these may not be postponed till later steps. It will then be the moment to look back over the research performed up to present.

In spite of there being many less, the studies on academic *performance diagnosis* are also very important. As one might expect, they concentrate above all on classroom actions and one may obtain suggestions of undoubtable methodological usefulness from these. There are also few - above all if one takes their great social influence into account - studies concerning *academic failure* which, in any case, show the high rates of unsatisfactory results obtained in diverse terminal stag-

Graph 4: Number of research studies into student performance by specific theme



es, particularly at the end of Primary Education (EGB).

### SYLLABUSES AND TEACHING METHODS

There is a particularly considerable number of financed research studies concentrating on the curricula or syllabuses. A considerable percentage of the sample presented in the study of the CIDE (25%) was dedicated to secondary or intermediate education. If one also bears in mind that among those dedicated to EGB, there is also an appreciable number that concentrate on its last phase (which in international terms is also part of lower secondary education), we may conclude that the secondary level in general has been the preferred object of research for decades and, thus, an evaluation of present syllabuses at that level and the immediately preceding ones would require contact with at least some of the research studies referred to.

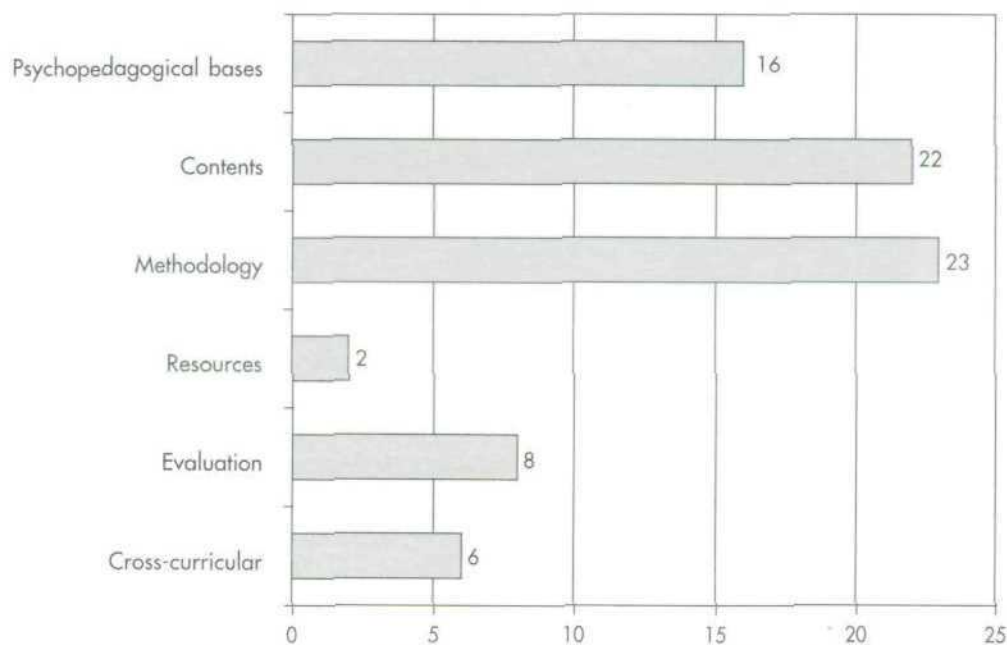
As to the specific themes the curriculum related research concerns, see graph 5.

As may be seen, the *teaching objectives and contents* form a very important zone, where one may note lacunae or deficiencies in certain approaches; specifically, there are interesting studies into

vocabulary, language, foreign language, mathematics, etc. There are even more studies on the *methodology* of teaching-learning processes. However, there are very few on *learning resources* (printed material, computer resources, etc.), and some more dedicated to *evaluation of learning* (evaluation systems, diagnosis instruments, etc.). *Cross-curricular* have also been the subject matter of a few studies.

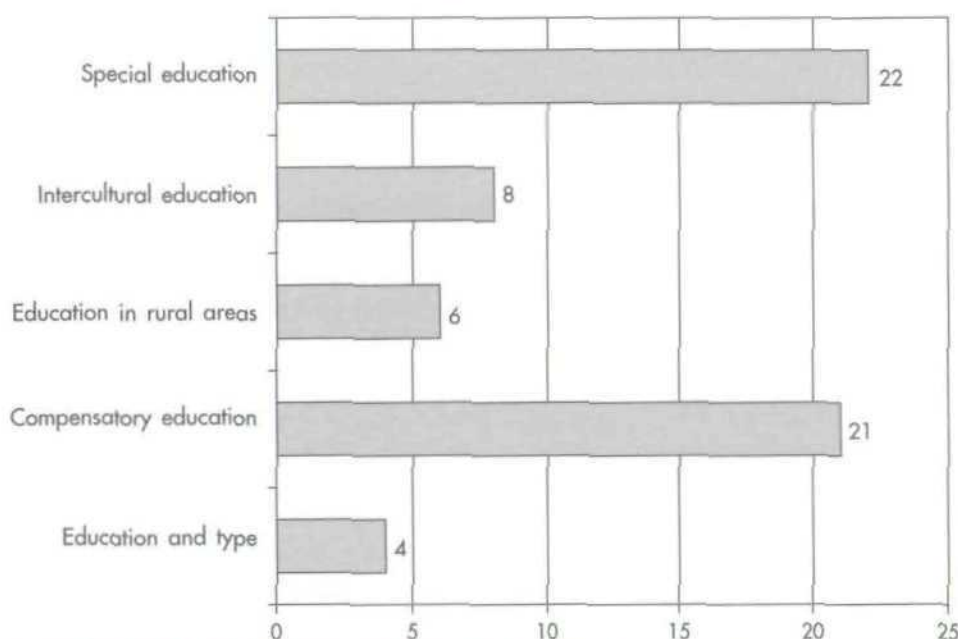
After those dedicated to syllabus, the following ones in number (graph 1) is research organised under the heading of *inequalities in education*, that perhaps may also be included in the general section dedicated to the syllabus, as they affect some of its modes. As may be seen on graph 6, they mainly concern two matters: special education and compensatory education. As Ángel Lázaro says, they are generally "a posteriori" studies, that is to say, aimed to check the result of implementation of innovations and to monitor these; definitively, far from any aim of diagnosis. However, some of these concerning compensatory education may provide interesting data as to quantitative and qualitative schooling deficiencies among some fringe populations (Gypsies, immigrants, refugees). For similar reasons, one must bear in mind studies on intercultural education.

Graph 5: Number of research studies on the syllabus by specific theme





Graph 6: Number of research studies on inequality in education by specific theme



### SCHOOL FUNCTIONING

The sample taken in the reference document includes 19 research studies that may fall under this heading. The majority are related to matters of *management and participation* and almost always consist of studies of a descriptive nature. Ángel Lázaro considers that these are studies which "have hardly influenced the administrative and legal decisions related to organisational and pedagogical functioning of schools", adding that "it is more probable that diverse social groups (associations of parents, Trade Union organisations) have had more influence on the management tendencies, embodied in legal regulations, than the actual results of research into the management function of schools".

This heading may also include some studies on school financing, that undoubtedly provide most interesting data on the cost of each place at school.

### THE TEACHING PROFESSION

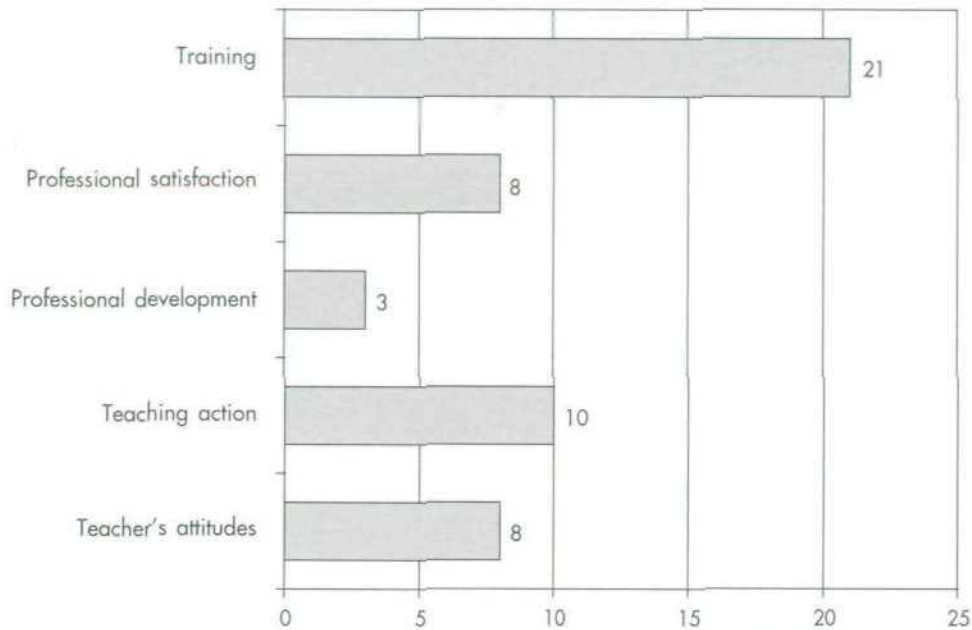
Graph 7 shows the research efforts dedicated to the *teaching staff*, in which one may see which aspects were preferred.

We see the most outstanding is the one on *training*, with particular reference to initial training. The studies clearly show how many of the training problems still detected by teachers have been dragged down over the years such as, for example, that concerning the scarce amount of practical training, the deficient link between this and theory, etc. The following ones in number of studies are those related to *action by the teaching staff*, undoubtedly of great interest for decisions as to possible modification. The greater or lesser extent of *professional satisfaction* among the teaching staff has also been taken the subject for interesting studies, showing diverse manifestations of what is sometimes known as "teacher's uneasiness". Particularly in recent years, research has frequently been aimed at detecting *teacher's attitudes*, either in general (emphasising, for example, the frequent resistance to innovations), or such matters as sexism, *integration of students with difficulties*, etc.

### EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

The set of research studies shown on graph 1 under the heading *education and society* does not initially seem as large as one might have expected. The studies mainly (two out of three) deal

Graph 7. Number of research studies on teaching staff by specific theme



with the relations between the educational system and labour market, while there are few dedicated to *family and education*, that, moreover, concentrate almost exclusively on kindergarten level.

### PRECEDING EVALUATION STUDIES CARRIED OUT BY THE INCE

Since it began its activities in 1994, the National Quality and Evaluation Institute started a programme of actions aimed at providing Spanish society solvent, periodic evaluations of the educational system overall and the different levels that comprise it. This is not the place to describe that programme which, on the other hand, is easily accessible to anyone who is interested in it, but rather to make a concise reference to the actions that may be a precedent, to a certain extent, to the effort of diagnosis now being carried out. We shall make specific reference to three precise lines of action: Evaluation of Primary Education, collaboration in preparing the International Indicators set by the OECD and, lastly, The International Study on Teaching English as a Second Language. In the three cases, the only aim is to emphasise the data that may be significant for better understanding of the new diagnosis.

### EVALUATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The aim of the study was to ascertain the results obtained by students aged 12 (6th of EGB) in tests set for this purpose in the fields of Language, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. These tests were administered to 10,500 students from a sample 438 schools distributed according to three variables: ownership, size and Autonomous Region. The study also used questionnaires for parents, teachers and principals and tests for the students in the first cycle of Primary Education, to ascertain the effects of implementation of the new system in the educational processes and school operation.

Among the very varied conclusions of the study, the final Report of which was published by the INCE, one must emphasise the following:

- The average percentage of correct answers per student in the Mathematics test, considered globally, 50.1%; 64% in Language; 60.6% in Social Science; 63.6% in Natural Sciences. The traditional difficulty the students have in Mathematics and also in other studies was confirmed.
- The average performance by girls was higher than that for boys in Language and Mathematics. the students who began



schooling at the age of three have a higher average performance in all the subjects. Students whose families have a large number of books obtain better results.

- Student performance drops in the following cases: bad relation with parents, less interest of parents in their children's studies, untrusting relationship between parents and their offspring.
- Students who never or almost never do homework have a lower performance than those who frequently do.
- The levels of teacher satisfaction as to their relations at school coincide with higher student results.
- The teaching staff calls for training in attention to diversity and syllabus adaptation.
- Families have a special appraisal of providing specialist music, physical education and foreign language teachers as novelties in the system.
- 70% of the parents state they are satisfied with the relation they have with their children concerning their education. Moreover, mothers are more involved than fathers in supporting their children's education.
- The teaching staff is satisfied to practice their profession, but less so with the support they say they receive from the relevant educational authorities. On the other hand, they mainly agree that it is necessary to remain at a school for more than two years to achieve sufficient levels of cohesion.
- Most of the principals support formulas to professionalise the management function; most of the teachers do not. Neither one nor the other support creation of a specific body (in the case of state schools).

### THE INES PROJECT BY THE OECD

In spite of the long tradition in collecting statistical information on the different aspects of educational systems in OECD countries, when the matter of the quality of education and the efficiency of educational systems began to become a key aspect in most countries, the dilemma of how to provide those responsible for educational decision making a type of useful information to plan the educational offer, so efficient steps are taken on that road to quality. In this sense, since the beginning of the

eighties, the demand for data to make international comparisons between educational systems has increased as, moreover, such comparisons also provide very valuable national information.

This demand for information gave rise to many technical problems, so it led the authorities of the OECD countries to consider new ways of comparing their educational systems. Due to this, an agreement was reached to prepare an international set of indicators that would show the main aspects of the educational systems in the member countries, on the basis of high quality statistical data, to allow comparative monitoring of their evolution.

The Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) at the OECD responded to this demand for compared information by launching the International Indicators of Educational Systems (INES Project), which was planned in three phases: *exploratory* phase (between 1988-1991); a *start-up* phase of the project to set up the operational networks (1991-96), in which it aimed to prepare and propose a system of educational indicators; and the definitive phase, in which it aims to produce an annual publication with the constantly updated data from the different countries with the definitive indicators.

The indicators will provide information that is regularly updated on organisation and functioning of the educational systems and provide information on the way the systems react to changes in policy priorities and the present development in society. That information is published in a work called *Education at a Glance*, that has been produced annually since 1992.

To carry out this work, the CERI established an international consulting mechanism - the Technical Group and the Operational Networks - to exchange points of view and reach a common conception of matters related to definition, measurement and organisation of the indicators. These bodies cooperate with the OECD Secretariat to develop indicators of common interest, according to the political priorities of the member countries and the conceptual framework prepared by the INES Project. Since it was founded, the INCE has been the Spanish institution in charge of collaboration with the OECD in this task.

The last edition of *Education at a Glance* published indicators of the following educational fields:



- Demography, social and economic context of education
- Human and financial resources invested in education
- Access to education, participation and progress
- The setting of learning and school organisation
- Social and labour results of education
- Student performance
- Number of graduates at the different educational levels

This set of indicators aims to provide a panoramic view of the comparative functioning of the educational systems (through reflection on the context and resources, as well as on the processes and results), to allow each educational system to find its weaknesses, as well as to identify the aspects that work best and may go unnoticed in internal debates.

Finally, it is necessary to bear in mind that the future of the INES will not consist only on the preparation of a limited number of indicators, but rather its framework will be extended to also include a set of related activities, among which links will be established to provide a unity to the project: the *International Adult Literacy Study* (on the level of literacy of the adult population), investment in education, the transition from school to active life, etc.

#### INTERNATIONAL STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Directorate for Evaluation and Prospective (DEP) at the National Education Ministry of France, the National Education Agency (SKOLVERKET) from Sweden and the National Institute for Quality and Evaluation (INCE) from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain<sup>5</sup> participated in this study.

The first objective of this international evaluation study was to evaluate the English language knowledge and skills among students aged 15 and 16 in those three countries in the European Un-

ion, in addition to obtaining information from each of the three countries on the efficiency of English language teaching in their educational systems, show the convergences and divergencies of the pedagogical option adopted by each of these countries as to the content of the programmes, pedagogical practices of the teachers and the students' process of learning English, and provide data that may be useful as the basis, in each of the three countries, for the necessary decision making to develop efficient English teaching.

There were two key moments in organisation of the study. First of all, the DEP proposed that the INCE participate in a bilateral study to allow, on one hand, checking of the results of students at the end of the obligatory stage using a linguistic proficiency test that France had prepared for use in general and periodic evaluation of its educational system, which took place in June 1995; and on the other hand, obtain data on the factors that would influence English language learning, so two questionnaires were prepared in Spain, one for the students and the other for the teaching staff, which were administered with the test in April 1996.

Sweden later decided to participate in the study, so in 1996 it administered a specific linguistic skill test with France for this evaluation, featuring several test questions previously used in Spain and France, the same as several questions in the student and teacher questionnaires designed by those responsible for the study at the INCE. Thus, some of the data Spain obtained from the international study not only could be compared with that from France, but also with that from Sweden, as the three countries had a common core in the performance test as well as in the student and teacher questionnaires.

The results obtained as to performance by the students shows a great similarity between French and Spanish students. The average percentage of correct answers overall in the performance test was 60% for Spanish students and 59% for the French ones. As to the different blocks of content forming the test, the French students obtained an average percentage of correct answers in linguis-

<sup>5</sup> The relative results of the comparison between the three countries were published in the Report *Evaluación comparada de la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa: España, Francia, Suecia - Comparative evaluation of English language teaching and learning: Spain, France and Sweden* (INCE, 1997) and in the Report *Espagne, France, Suède: Évaluation des connaissances et compétences en anglais des élèves de 15-16 ans* (DEP, 1997).

## DIAGNOSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

tic knowledge of 65% and the Spanish students 64%. In written comprehension, the Spanish students obtained 65% of right answers and the French ones 61%. In oral comprehension the Spanish students obtained 49% of right answers and the French students 47%. In written expression, the French students obtained 41% of right answers and the Spanish students 39% of right answers.

As to the results obtained from the common core of the performance test for France, Spain

and Sweden, the average mark of right answers was 61% for Swedish students, 48% for French students and 49% for Spanish students. In the two blocks of contents where equal items were included for the three countries, the average percentages of correct answers were, as to linguistic knowledge, 61% of right answers for the Swedish students, 52% for Spanish students and 50% for the French. In the written expression block, the Swedish students obtained 60% of right answers, the Spanish 35% and the French 37%.



# Academic performance

# 2

## Introduction

The analysis of the academic performance is a key factor in the diagnosis of any educational system, in the stage of ESO as well as in others. Although the fact is that the results of education come to light above all in the long term and must not be limited to acquiring knowledge and skills in certain subjects, it is no less certain that the degree to which such acquisition takes place provides most reliable information on the real efficiency of schools as to their most obvious objective: to teach the youth. Evaluation of academic performance in fact has a double aim: on the one hand it shows to what extent the students achieve the specific learning the main effort is aimed at; on the other, it provides us a certain symptom of the efficiency of schooling, as it is difficult for schools to achieve difficult, abstract objectives - such as acquisition of values, forming the character, creation of study and work habits, love of culture, etc. - if one does not achieve at least the more easy, specific objectives, such as the objectives of learning, which in any case is always required of them by society.

Thus, the first effort in diagnosis must be aimed, as is in this case, at checking what the students learn at school in relation to the main subjects. As already explained, these are specifically the students in the last stage of obligatory schooling.

Now, there are special difficulties in ascertaining what the students learn in the school system. It is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the effects caused in them by school learning, that is to say received at school, in relation to the more general and diffuse learning arising from the student's own immersion in the social system, their families, their diverse social surroundings, the media, etc. Moreover, in the present situation of the Spanish educational system at secondary education level, when major changes are being made

due to implementation of the relevant LOGSE reform, it is especially difficult to calculate what the students learn in general. The main reason for this is that different approaches to curricula exist together in the system, some from the old structure of the educational system (EGB, BUP, the Middle Education Reform and traditional Vocational Training) and others due to implementation of the LOGSE (ESO and the new Vocational Training).

## TESTS, POPULATIONS, SAMPLES

Due to the existence of these different curriculum approaches, it is complicated to prepare valid tests to calculate the learning by all the students in secondary education, on the basis of the curriculum schemes for each one of the educational options. Due to this, the decision was taken to evaluate not the content of the different curricula, or their minimum common factors, but what the team that designed the tests for the study considered basic, desirable learning for 14 and 16 year old students. Thus, the aim of the study is not to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the curricula. It is not an attempt to know whether the teaching programme followed by the students - very diverse indeed - allows the objectives to be achieved, or to what extent, but to achieve a diagnosis of the learning by Spanish adolescents in the subjects stated. Specifically, administration of the tests is aimed at determining what students of 14 and 16 know and know how to do in the basic fields of Language, Mathematics, Nature Sciences and Geography and History.

However, the different curricula have been considered as implicit expressions of a general common standard, although preparation of the tests was based on what the experts in each one of the fields consider a desirable, correct mastery of the subjects evaluated for the 14 and 16 year old age groups.



As to the population of students examined, *one must bear in mind that, when the study refers to students of 14 and 16 years, the population considered is that of students in the relevant courses for 14 and 16 years in the formal scheme of the educational system, that is to say, 8th of EGB and 2nd of ESO on the one hand, and on the other 2nd of BUP and 4th of ESO, 2nd of VT and 2nd of REM.* Due to this, the sample of students is based on a mixed definition of the population based on age and academic year. Thus, in 8th of EGB and 2nd of BUP there are students over 14, normally repeating, while there are also 14 year old students in lower years. Likewise, 2nd of BUP, 4th of ESO, 2nd of VT and 2nd of REM have students older than 16, while there are also students of 16 repeating previous academic years. *In fact, in the sample examined of 8th of EGB and 2nd of ESO, there is 74.1% of students born in 1983, the foreseen for that academic year, and 24.1% of older students born before 1983, logically students who have repeated a year.* The sample for 16 years old has 64.4% of students in the theoretical age for that academic year, that is those born in 1981; 35.3% of students born before 1981, presumably repeaters, and 0.3% of advanced students born in 1982 or 1983.

It is necessary to refer to the number of students who comprised the diverse samples established. *In evaluation of Reading Comprehension, Grammar and Literature, and Mathematics, 46,535 students were examined, 20,642 of 14 from 761 schools and 25,893 of 16 from 913 schools.* Fifteen Autonomous plus Ceuta and Melilla participated in this evaluation. The Regions of Andalusia, the Canaries did not participate. The Basque Country, claiming technical reasons, only participated in the study for 14 year old students. The samples, of course, were established according to proper scientific criteria, without any kind of bias, with active intervention by experts from all the Administrations involved.

The study of Nature Sciences and Geography and History was implemented in the Autonomous that, at the time of application had still not received their full devolved competencies in education, that is the 10 Autonomous Regions known as the "MEC Territory". Tests were administered to 6,560 students in these areas, 3,374 of 14, who studied at 127 schools and 3,186 of 16, enrolled at 122 schools.

Spelling and written expression were evaluated in a sample of 3,460 students, 1,680 of 14 from 69 schools, and 1,780 of 16 from 73 schools.

## METHODOLOGICAL LINES

To present the results of evaluation of the academic performance of the 14 and 16 year old students, the methodology used was based on the latest measurement schemes in Psychology and Education, that have many advantages over the traditional techniques. In spite of its novelty, it is a proven, successful methodology that is gradually being implemented by countries which perform periodical evaluations of the educational system; in fact, some of these resources have already been taken advantage of in previous studies by the INCE, although combined with other more conventional ones.

The *Report on Academic Performance* prepared by the relevant Committee provides a full explanation of the methodology used. Readers who are interested must thus refer to it, as these pages may only provide a very elementary notion of it.

For each one of the subjects aforementioned, the tests for 14 and 16 had some common items that later, thanks to the calculation method used, allowed expression of the performance by the 14 and 16 year old students on a common scale and evaluation of the change between the two points.

Traditionally, performance results have been presented in terms of percentage of correct answers. In order to facilitate understanding of the results this chapter (like the Preview of Results initially published) partially resorts to such presentation. However, the interpretation of that procedure must be made while bearing in mind some exceptions that shall be mentioned hereunder.

The average percentage of correct answers indicates the percentage of correct answers by the students in the items of the different tests. One must not consider 50% of correct answers as a "pass". If the same students had answered another, somewhat easier or more difficult test, they could have obtained different correct answer percentages. It is wrong to identify a certain value of the proportion of correct answers with failure or success in a subject. There is no *a priori* value that may be considered as insatisfactory performance.



The average percentage of correct answers does not indicate what the students do or do not know. Only a more detailed analysis of the results would be able to determine this to that extent. The percentage of correct answers does not take into account the difficulty of the items. Two students with a same proportion of correct answers may have very different levels of knowledge. A student may have answered the 10 most difficult items correctly and another the 10 easiest. The both would have the same marks and, even worse, the same degree of certainty as to their marks.

The percentage of correct answers may not in any way refer to the content. The percentage of correct answers may be obtained from items with totally different contents. Due to that, one may not say what cut-off point there must be for a satisfactory level of performance. The percentage of answers does not indicate the importance of the items not correctly answered, nor how many of the subjects have not answered them.

Although each subject in the tests for 14 and 16 year olds shared some items, the percentage scales do not allow comparisons to be made between age groups. In this sense, for example, it would be wrong to consider that the results of Grammar and Literature for 16 years old (average percentage of correct answers of 51) is lower than that for 14 years old (average percentage of correct answers of 53). In fact, as checked on the performance scale, the average for 14 years old is 41.38 points lower than that for 16 years old.

All the reasons stated and some of a more technical nature led to adoption in each one of the subjects of the so-called "performance scales". This methodology is based on the Item Response Theory and provides the results on a scale that overcomes many of the disadvantages of those based on the Classical Test Theory.

The performance scale shows the results for each subject that any student would have obtained if he had answered a theoretical test of 500 items. This test would be common for subjects 14 and 16 years old. It is very important to point out that it is a common scale for both age levels and thus may not be interpreted as a satisfactory level on reaching the midway point and the scale, that is 250, or considered insatisfactory if not reached, as the level of adequacy in each group is difficult. To value the results one must know what the students "know" and "know how to do".

It is evident that the greater the mark obtained by a subject in a field, the more tasks he will be able to solve satisfactorily. To give an idea of the types of capacities linked to the different levels on each scale, cut-off points have been established and the tasks defined which subjects who reach those levels are able to perform. In this case, those points are those for the marks 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400 and 450. Assignment of meaning to the different points on the scale introduces an element of criteria to evaluation. Attention is no longer paid to the results of the group, but the study concentrates on the different level of achievement of the objectives involved in the process.

These points or levels do not represent judgement of the desirable knowledge and skills of the students. They are not performance criteria or standards. However, by knowing how many subjects pass a certain level and knowing what knowledge and capacities are linked to that level, one may obtain a clear virtue of the performance obtained by the students evaluated. This will allow comparison of what students "know" and "what they know how to do" and what is considered satisfactory performance in the educational system, that is to say, the criteria that represent the desirable knowledge and skills.

As the scale is common for 14 and 16 year olds, the desirable level for those aged 16 must necessarily be higher than one would expect at age 14. Setting that level is a matter of opinion, which will depend on the special circumstances of each group of students. Considering the cut-off points set for the different subjects, one may say than in any case, 14 year old students who do not reach the 200 level have a fully unsatisfactory performance, as what they "know" or "know how to do" is far below what should be expected of them. The same may be said of 16 year old students as to the 250 level. In other words, students aged 14 and 16 who do not pass the respective cut-off points of 200 and 250 clearly seem to have an unsatisfactory performance in the relevant area. However, this does not mean that those who are above these levels, even minimally, may be considered as students with a satisfactory performance. The Scientific Committee at the Institute considered that, once the capacities and skills shown on the performance scales for each subject are evaluated, the average values that would be desirable in a developed educational system, such

as the case of the Spanish educational system, would rather have to be at the 250 level for students of 14 and at 300 for those of 16. In other words, only those above those two levels should be considered, according to the Scientific Committee, as students with an undoubtably satisfactory performance level.

## Academic performance in the basic areas

### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SPANISH LANGUAGE

#### READING COMPREHENSION

Evaluation of reading comprehension was based on presentation of diverse types of texts to the students, then asking questions that imply and demonstrate prior comprehension of these. Three

which implies activity by the reader. The informative texts provide, in turn, information that does not require any immediate action by the reader, although they do not have a literary aim either. Lastly, literary texts are those aimed at providing the reader aesthetic pleasure, without having an immediate practical purpose.

Table 1 shows the average percentage of correct answers among 14 and 16 year old students.

By type of texts, the utility texts are the easiest to understand and the literary ones the most difficult, the informative ones lying between. This result perhaps shows that not enough attention is paid to literary texts in class, so there should perhaps be an increase in the emphasis on more frequent use of such texts.

In Reading Comprehension the national average obtained from the tests on 14 year old students was 220.52 points, located between the anchor points of 200 and 250. This means that the average 14 year old student is able to perform the tasks linked to level 200 and has not yet reached

Table 1: Average percentage of correct answers according to type of text

Reading comprehension		
Type of text	Average percentage of correct answers	
	14 years old	16 years old
Utility texts	65%	76%
Informative texts	61%	67%
Literary texts	43%	63%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>67%</b>

types of texts were used: utility, informative and literary. The capacities of the students were also taken into account to determine the meaning of the content of the texts, to provide a personal interpretation, and to perform a critical analysis of these.

The utility texts were defined as those that describe a sequence of operations aimed at achieving a certain goal, or to determine the way in which a product or appliance should be used, recording a sequence of instructions that must be followed, or an information that implies rules for action; these texts may be imperative in nature,

those for point 250. As to the 16 year old students, the national average was 271.15, disc is almost 51 points above that for age 14, thus lying between 250 and 300.

Table 2 shows the definitions of the performance levels in Reading Comprehension specifying what the students are able to comprehend in each one of the levels. It also shows the percentages of students located in each level and the percentage of students who exceed each level and the previous ones (it is always understood that a student placed on a specific level passes the skills of the lower levels).



Table 2: Reading Comprehension Levels. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level

Level	Reading comprehension capacity The students are able to understand...	Students on each level (%)		Students exceed the level (%)	
		Aged 14	Aged 16	Aged 14	Aged 16
400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the abstract ideas of utility and informative texts</li> <li>the precision of ideas</li> <li>the theses defended in informative texts</li> <li>the meaning of rhetorical procedures in literary texts</li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the abstract ideas in informative texts</li> </ul>	—	2	—	2
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secondary ideas</li> <li>complex syntax structure in informative texts</li> <li>figured sense and double meaning in informative and literary texts</li> </ul>	2	21	2	23
250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of abstract or unusual words</li> <li>double meaning in utility texts</li> <li>the literal sense (the central idea, the characters, the thesis by the author)</li> <li>the main ideas</li> <li>rhetorical values in informative texts</li> <li>information in informative and literary texts to obtain a new one</li> </ul>	23	50	25	73
200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of specific words</li> <li>the main theme or idea</li> <li>the time sequence of the texts used</li> </ul>	44	22	69	95
150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of the specific structures in utility texts</li> <li>the information in the text to solve problems presented in informative texts</li> </ul>	26	5	95	100
100		5	—	100	—

On the other hand, the results show that the easiest tasks for **students aged 14** are those related to identification of the meaning of words, main themes and ideas related to texts with a simple construction. The most difficult tasks for these students are identification of the implicit meanings and double meanings which are not clearly stated therein.

**Aged 16**, the easiest tasks are those requiring identification of the meaning of the theme in the sample text, or of the main ideas set out in par-

agraphs or texts, as well as those implying recognition of the author's thesis or posture. The most difficult tasks for students aged 16 are those related to understanding of idioms, that are not very usual in the daily context of these students.

The most important result, **aged 14**, is that stating that 69% of the students passes performance level 200, which implies that they are able to understand the meaning of specific statements in utility texts, the information in informative texts to solve problems, the meaning of specific

words, the theme or main idea of texts and the time sequence in utility texts. However, 31% does not reach that level, which implies that almost a third of the students are not able to recognise the main theme of a text and finds it difficult to establish a time sequence in the action in utility texts.

The percentage of students aged 14 who do not reach the level of 250 is 75%. Three quarters of Spanish students aged 14 thus have difficulties in integrating the information in the texts and to produce a new one, as well as to interpret the main ideas or evaluate the elements of rhetoric.

A positive evolution is noted between 14 and 16, although the levels reached at that age do not imply a consistent improvement. Thus, 73% of the students aged 16 pass the level 250, so they are able to understand the meaning of abstract or infrequent words, the double meaning used in literary texts, the literal meaning (the central idea, the characters, the author's thesis), the main ideas in texts, the rhetoric values in informative texts and the information in informative and literary texts to obtain a new one. One must not forget, however, that 27% of the students do not achieve these objectives.

The percentage of students of 16 who do not reach level 300 amounts to 77%. These students have difficulties in interpreting secondary ideas

or in recognising double meaning and the figured sense of some texts.

Attention will also have to be paid to the marginal percentages, upward and downward. We ascertained, for use 14 and 16, the presence of a minority of students (5% in both cases) who seem completely beyond any reading learning and thus in severe inferiority. At the high end of the scale, scarcely 2% of the students of both ages clearly seem to stand out from the whole.

### GRAMMAR AND LITERATURE

Evaluation of Grammar and Literature was based on analysis of the morphology, syntax, lexis and semantics, and knowledge of types of texts. The morphology block concerns the form and function of words. Syntax is the structure and type of sentences. The lexical and semantic concerns vocabulary, classes of words and lexical levels (technical, cultured and vulgar vocabulary, etc.) and the meaning of words (monosemy, homonyms, synonyms, etc.). Text typology covers the subject of text classification according to purpose (description, narration, argumentation, etc.).

Table 3 shows the average percentage of correct answers by students aged 14 and 16 in Grammar and Literature.

Table 3. Average percentage of correct answers in Grammar and Literature

Grammar and Literature		
Areas	Average percentage of correct answers	
	Age 14	Age 16
<b>GRAMMAR</b>		
Morphology	52%	65%
Syntax	55%	51%
Lexico-semantic	72%	53%
Text typology	37%	52%
<b>LITERATURE</b>		
Theory	49%	47%
History	51%	48%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>52%</b>

In Grammar and Literature, the national average obtained from the tests administered to the students aged 14 was 225.73 points, lying between the anchor points 200 and 250. This means that the average 14 year old student is able to perform the tasks linked to level 200, although he still has not reached the competencies of point 250. As to students aged 16, the national average was 267.11, that is to say, somewhat more than 41 points

above that for those aged 14, thus lying between 250 and 300.

Table 4 shows the definitions of the performance levels in Grammar and Literature, specifying the schools and knowledge the students are able to master in each one of the levels. They also show the percentage of students located in each level and the percentage of students who pass each level and the lower ones.

**Table 4: Levels in Grammar and Literature. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level**

Level	Skills and knowledge in Grammar and Literature The students are able to understand...	Students on each level (%)		Students exceed the level (%)	
		Aged 14	Aged 16	Aged 14	Aged 16
400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing the meaning of words in figured sense in an idiom</li> <li>Knowing the meaning of infrequent terms</li> <li>Assigning the function of the subject to a subordinate proposal in a complex sentence</li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the subject in simple sentences with personal pronouns in a tonal and atonal forest with the complement function</li> <li>Knowing the meaning of a latin colloquial phrase</li> <li>Knowing the object of the type of argumentative text</li> <li>Knowing the name of the specific poetic forms (elegy, lyric)</li> <li>Knowing the elements that characterise the dramatic genre</li> <li>Recognising a simile as a literary figure in analysis of a text</li> <li>Associating Romanticism with the type of atmospheres recreated in the works of that period</li> <li>Matching the first Spanish Grammar with the name of its author</li> </ul>	—	3	—	3
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying nouns as a morphological category, regardless of the context of the sentence</li> <li>Identifying words as classifiers when in the context of a sentence</li> <li>Identifying subordination in complex sentences</li> <li>Assigning the function of attribute to noun clauses in simple sentences</li> <li>Knowing the main elements of a narration</li> <li>Applying rules to the analysis of verses to calculate the syllables, determine the rhyme and type of stanza</li> <li>Identifying the epic genre</li> </ul>				



(Cont.) Table 4: Levels in Grammar and Literature. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level

Level	Skills and knowledge in Grammar and Literature The students are able to understand...	Students on each level (%)		Students exceed the level (%)	
		Aged 14	Aged 16	Aged 14	Aged 16
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying personification as a literary figure</li> <li>Recognise significant poets of the 17th Century as contemporaries</li> <li>Identify, among different classical works written up to the 16th Century those which are earlier in time</li> </ul>	2	21	2	24
250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing the non personal verb forms in irregular conjugation</li> <li>Knowing the phenomena of polysemy and antonyms, identifying the latter in text analysis</li> <li>Understanding logical-semantic parallelisms</li> <li>Identifying the grammatical sentence as a linguistic unit</li> <li>Knowing the modes of sentences</li> <li>Assigning the subject and direct complement functions to noun clauses in simple sentences</li> <li>Knowing the definition of the verse in major poetry in -Spanish metre</li> <li>Knowing the identifying features of the fable and comedy</li> <li>Associating the title of a classical novel with the literary subgenre to which it belong (Picaresque)</li> </ul>	26	40	28	64
200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying words as nouns in the context of the sentence</li> <li>Recognising synonyms</li> </ul>	46	28	74	92
150		24	8	98	100
100		2	—	100	—

In this area, the easiest tasks for students aged 14 were those related to the dimension of linguistic rules (that is to say, recognition of synonyms of familiar words, associating words, identification of the noun in a sentence, etc.). The more difficult tasks were shown to be interpretation of figures of speech, the knowledge of the meaning of argumentation and knowledge of concepts in the literary field. The students aged 14 also had difficulties in tasks requiring knowledge of the non personal verbal forms of irregular conjugation, knowledge of polysemy and antonyms, identifica-

tion of a grammatical sentence, adequate assignment of functions of the subject and complement in simple sentences and recognition of the literary subgenres and identification of their characteristics.

Among those aged 16 the easiest tasks were those involving recognition of whole sentences, knowledge of synonyms of specific words and identification of adverbs and transitive verbs. However, these students had difficulties to deal with matters requiring some syntactical functions (mainly when faced with subordinate or complex

sentences), substitution of sentences of similar content, the content of theory and history of literature (especially to recognise the characteristics of the literary periods and the dramatic and poetic genres). In general, it seems to be easier for students aged 16 to deal with cognitive operations related to application of rules than those related to knowledge of different contents.

The analysis of the results on the performance scale is not positive. Although 74% of the students aged 14 obtained more than 200 points, the fact is that only 46% are able to solve related matters that require identification of words in sentences as nouns and recognition of synonyms, and 26% showed no skill or knowledge whatsoever in these areas. The result shows that, evidently most of the students do not reach the minimum level required for that age. Otherwise, almost 72% of the students do not reach level 250, what means they have difficulties in grammar to recognise the non personal verb forms of irregular conjugation, polysemy, antonyms, to identify a grammatical sentence or properly assign the functions of the subject and direct complement in simple sentences. As to literature, they have difficulties to recognise the literary subgenres and identify their characteristics.

A certain amount of progress is noted in the situation at the age of 16, as the average rises 41 points. However, only 64% of the students of that age are able to recognise the non personal verb forms of the irregular conjugation and the phenomena of polysemy and antonyms, identifying the latter in text analysis, of understanding logical-semantic parallelisms, of identifying the grammatical sentence as a linguistic unit, of knowing the modules of sentences, of assigning direct subject and complement functions to the nominal syntagma in simple sentences, to know the definition of major verse in Spanish metre and the features that identify fable and comedy, of associating the title of a classical novel with the subgenre to which it belongs. This also means that almost 36% do not reach this level, thus ignoring all these points. If the target we set were that for level 300, 76% of the students would not reach it, as they show their difficulties in identify-

ing nouns, assigning the function of attribute to a nominal syntagma, identifying subordination in complex sentences or knowing the main elements of a narration; and as to literature, they have difficulties in applying the rules to calculate the syllables in verses, or to determine the rhyme and type of stanza, or to recognise significant poets of the 17th century as contemporaries.

In general, the results must be qualified as alarming, as, along with the 26% of students aged 14 mentioned, 8% of the students aged 15 show no capacity or knowledge in these areas. At the highest end of the performance scale, only 3% of the students aged 16 reach the 350 level, which involves more complex tasks and relatively solid Grammar and Literature content.

## SPELLING

One must remember what was stated at the beginning: that evaluation of spelling covered a limited sample of students, and not all evaluated in general terms in the previous scopes.

The standard of spelling among students aged 14 and 16 was measured through a dictation test consisting of a 71 word test (the test may be seen in the relevant *Report*). The text contains 20 words with spelling difficulties related to accents, 8 words with "h", 6 with t lengths "b"/"v", 6 with the letters "g"/"j", 3 with the letters "x"/"s", 3 with the letters "y"/"ll", 4 with use of capital letters and 3 concerning word linking or separation, involving a total of 53 spelling difficulties.

For analysis, the errors were classified in four categories: actual spelling mistakes, which are those involving spelling mistakes in the use of the letters "d", "b"/"v", "g"/"j", "x"/"s" and "y"/"ll"; mistakes in upper or lower case and use of the hyphen to separate words; mistakes in graphic accents related to use of the *tilde*; punctuation mistakes; and other mistakes related to adding or leaving letters out of words, changing letters or words, etc.

Table 5 shows the average number of mistakes and their typical deviation for the samples aged 14 and 16 by type of mistake.



**Table 5: Spelling (MEC Territory)**

Types of mistake	Average number of mistakes and their typical deviation			
	Age 14		Age 16	
	Average	Typical deviation	Average	Typical deviation
Spelling mistakes	6.29	4.08	3.81	2.86
Accent mistakes	7.56	4.42	5.27	3.67
Punctuation mistakes	0.94	1.75	0.42	0.90
Other mistakes	1.81	3.22	0.66	1.29

This table shows that the students, those aged 14 as well as 16, have notorious difficulties with accents, as well as in correct spelling using the letters "d", "b"/"v", "g"/"j", "x"/"s" and "y"/"ll", the use of upper or lower case, and the hyphen to separate words. It is obvious that the average number of mistakes in these categories, more than 6 spelling mistakes and almost 8 wrong accents on average at the age of 14 in a 71 word text shows very poor performance in the learning of

spelling. At the age of 16, the average mistakes decrease, so there is thus progress between these two ages. However, the averages of spelling and accent mistakes, almost four for the former and more than five for the second, for a 71 word text, also shows a much lower performance than would be desirable.

Table 6 shows the average number of mistakes and percentage of students who fail according to the type of spelling difficulty for ages 14 and 16.

**Table 6: Average number of spelling mistakes and percentage of students who fail in each type of mistake**

Types of difficulty	Age 14		Age 16	
	Average	Percentage	Average	Percentage
<b>Accents</b>	7.56	98.0	5.27	95.3
<b>Actual spelling mistakes</b>				
Upper/lower case	0.56	36.8	0.30	24.2
B/V	0.61	44.3	0.29	24.4
G/J	0.32	27.2	0.19	17.0
H	2.30	89.1	1.31	72.3
Y/LL	0.62	60.1	0.53	53.0
X/S	0.25	17.4	0.17	14.3
GU	0.25	24.2	0.20	19.2
<b>Punctuation</b>	0.94	37.8	0.42	26.2
<b>Other mistakes</b>				
Letters exchanged	1.01	67.2	0.69	51.4
Words exchanged	0.91	50.1	0.43	31.0
Letters or words left out	0.72	26.3	0.13	9.2
Letters or words added	0.20	15.2	0.11	9.0
Word joining or separation	0.38	29.6	0.15	13.3



The results are proven to be very poor in terms of the mistake average by type of mistake. Moreover, they show that the majority of students have severe difficulty in the use of accents and the letter "h". This is clear if one bears in mind that, on one hand, 98% of students aged 14 and 95% of students aged 16 made at least one mistake related to the *tilde*, and on the other, 89% of the students aged 14 and 72% aged 16 made at least one mistake related to the use of the "h". They also have considerable difficulties with the letters "y"/"ll" and mistakes in changing letters and words.

### WRITTEN EXPRESSION

The evaluation of written expression, as in the case of spelling, was restricted to the sample stated at the beginning of this chapter.

The objective of the test was to evaluate the level of skills among the students in writing an articulated narration. After a pilot test, narrative essays were noted to provide more information to evaluate skill levels, narrative texts being considered those formed by a description of sequences of facts or related events, concerning

personal experiences or fiction. Due to this, the following instructions were used to concentrate and start off the task of written composition.

For 14 year old students: *Write a letter to a summer friend telling him or her what happened at a party you had a lot of fun at.*

For 16 year old students: *Once upon a time there was a child who was very fond of animals ... Continue the tale to tell it to a small child.*

Forty minutes were granted to write the essay. The time was set on the basis of the experience on the pilot test. The use of a maximum of three sheets was allowed, and the possibility of using half a sheet as a draft prior to the definitive version.

The same scale was used to classify the compositions for the students aged 14 and 16. The scale consists of 6 points defined by the amount of events or details of the story, and the quality of the narrative, considering the problem raised and the way to solve it, as well as the relation and sequence between ideas.

Table 7 shows the characteristics of the essays by the students which define each one of the six points on the scale called, from the lowest to the highest, "Description of events", "Story not deve-

Table 7: Performance levels in written expression. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level

Performance level	Characteristics of writing by the students	On each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
Elaborated Story	• Describes a sequence of episodes in which all the elements are developed well				
	• Problem solving is elaborate				
	• The events arise and are elaborated in a coherent, well expressed way				
	• Are adapted to the receiver	2%	15%	2%	15%
Developed Story	• Describes a sequence of episodes in which the majority of the elements are clearly developed with a simple solution to the objectives or problems				
	• There may be one or more problems				
	• May include many details	18%	38%	20%	53%
Extended Story	• Describes a sequence of episodes including details of most of the elements in the story				

DIAGNOSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

(Cont.) Table 7: Performance levels in written expression. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level

Performance level	Characteristics of writing by the students	On each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
Extended Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The stories are confused or incomplete (at the end, the objectives of the persons or problems not adequately solved are ignored, the beginning is not related to the rest of the story and the internal logic or veracity of the actions by the characters is not maintained)</li> </ul>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are some problems with syntaxis</li> </ul>	35%	30%	55%	83%
Basic Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes a series of events, giving details on some aspects of the story</li> </ul>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The story lacks cohesion, because problems with syntaxis, sequencing, omission of events or the end not being developed</li> </ul>	30%	14%	85%	97%
Undeveloped Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consists of a list of linked events</li> </ul>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes more than one event</li> </ul>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little detail is given as to the context, the characteristics or the event</li> </ul>	13%	3%	98%	100%
Description of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consists of a list of minimally related sentences</li> </ul>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consists of a list of sentences that describe a unique event</li> </ul>	2%	—	100%	—

The results show that, at age 14, 85% of the students are able to write a basic story, that is to say, one describing a series of events, providing details on some aspects of the story (the events, the aims of the characters or the problems they are to solve), although there may be a lack of cohesion to the story because problems of syntaxis, sequencing, omission of events and an undeveloped end are detected; one must not forget that 15% of those students did not achieve that aim, as their narration was a series of related events without a detailed description of what happened or the contexts. At 16, almost all the students, approximately 97% were able to develop at least that type of story.

55% of the students aged 14 and 83% of those aged 16 are able to write long stories, which are characterised by those describing a sequence of episodes, including details on most of the elements of the story (the context, the episodes, the characters' aims, or the problems to be solved), although the stories are confusing or incomplete (at the end they ignore the aims of the characters, or the problems are not properly solved, they

do not link the beginning to the rest of the story, the internal logic or veracity of the actions by the characters is not maintained) and there are some problems with syntaxis.

At the higher end of the scale, the stories that describe a sequence of episodes in which most of the elements are clearly developed (the contexts, the episodes, the aims of the characters or the problems to be solved) with a simple solution to the aims or problems, in which there may be one or two problems, or many details or extended stories may be included, are written by 20% of students aged 14 and by 53% of students aged 16. However, only 2% of the students aged 14 and 15% of the students aged 16 write elaborate stories. These compositions are characterised by being adapted to the receiver and describing a sequence of episodes in which all the elements are developed well (the contexts, the episodes, the aims of the characters or the problems to be solved) in which the problem solving is elaborate and the events take place and are elaborated in a coherent, well expressed way.



In any case, clear progress is noted in the students' skills between age 14 and 16, there being a notable increase in the complexity of the texts the students are able to produce at 16 compared with those at 14.

### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics tests were designed to take five subareas into account:

- numbers and operations;
- measurement;
- geometry;
- data analysis, statistics and probability;
- algebra and functions.

Within the scope of "numbers and operations", an attempt was made at evaluating the competence of students in use of different types of numbers and operations and in handling pro-

portionality along with estimation and rounding up. The block "measurement" considered the skills in use of different conventional measurement procedures and systems and in estimation of lengths, surfaces and volumes. "Geometry" included the spatial skills of the students and their application to solving every day problems. The block "data analysis, statistics and probability" estimated the students' skills to interpret and represent sets of statistical data and information in a simple way, and to predict probability results. Lastly, the subarea "algebra and s" aimed to evaluate student skills in understanding and use of algebraic language, as well as interpretation and construction of functions.

The questions were designed within these blocks to allow estimation of the knowledge and skills of the students and their ability to apply procedures and solve problems.

Table 8 shows the average percentage of correct answers in the area of Mathematics and relevant subareas, for students aged 14 and 16.

**Table 8: Average percentage of correct answers by subareas in Mathematics**

Subareas	Average percentage of corrects answers	
	Age 14	Age 16
Numbers and Operations	46%	54%
Measurement	40%	39%
Geometry	44%	44%
Data analysis, Statistics and Probability	44%	47%
Algebra and Functions	40%	60%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>49%</b>

The subareas in which there seems to have been better mastery by the 14 year old students are numbers and operations, geometry and data analysis, while those of measurement and algebra provide worse results. At 16, the questions most easily solved are those in numbers in operations, and in algebra and functions, while in average the have a fairly low result. It is thus clear that most students have greater difficulties in dealing

with measurement related questions. It would thus be convenient to reflect on what causes there may be for such low performance and carry out detailed analysis of the time spend on real practice in class on this area of the subject, as well as the space assigned to it in the text books.

The national average obtained after tests administered to students aged 14 was 226.1 points, this lying between the anchor points of 200 and



250. This means that the average 14 year old student is able to perform the tasks linked to level 200 and still has not reached the skills of point 250. As to the students aged 16, the national average was 263.1, that is to say, somewhat less than 37 points above that for 14 years, thus lying between 250 and 300.

The definitions of the performance levels in Mathematics are shown on Table 9, specifying, for each one of the performance levels, the skills and knowledge the students are able to master. It also shows the percentages of students in each one of the levels and those who pass their respective level and, thus, the previous ones.

**Table 9: Mathematics levels. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level**

Level	Skills and knowledge in Mathematics The students are able to ...	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a high spatial capacity to allow an estimation of the size of flat surfaces and regular surfaces</li> <li>• Use basic algebraic tools to handle expressions with symbols to solve problems</li> <li>• Interpret and assign probabilities to complex <i>random phenomena</i></li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluently use representations of figures, bodies and geometric configurations using the measurement measures to solve problems of surface and volume estimation and perform geometric transformations</li> <li>• Correct use of the powers to solve problems</li> <li>• Solving simple problems in daily life using basic algebraic tools</li> <li>• Knowledge and interpretation of basic statistical concepts</li> <li>• Estimate samples in simple situations</li> <li>• Mastery of the relation of proportion</li> <li>• Fluent use of proportions and percentages in solving complex problems</li> </ul>	—	3%	—	3%
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of algebraic language to solve practical problems</li> <li>• Operations with fractionary numbers in problems in daily life</li> <li>• <i>Fluent handling of the concept of numerical proportion and its application to practical situations</i></li> <li>• Know lengths and surfaces of spaces and objects</li> <li>• Use rounding up or down</li> <li>• Have notions of rounding up</li> </ul>	4%	20%	4%	23%
250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solve simple problems in daily life that include <i>relations of numerical proportion and percentages</i></li> <li>• Knowledge of flat bodies</li> <li>• Have notions of geometry of the triangle and of <i>similarity between figures</i></li> </ul>				

(Cont.) Table 9: Mathematics levels. Percentages of students aged 14 and 16 by level

Level	Skills and knowledge in Mathematics The students are able to ...	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solve simple linear equations</li> <li>• Have notions of probability</li> <li>• Estimate probability in simple equations (Laplace's Law)</li> <li>• Draw simple graphs</li> <li>• Interpreting frequency tables</li> </ul>	24%	39%	28%	62%
200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solve simple problems in daily life with simple algebraic operations, estimations and rounding up, and intuitive statistics concepts</li> <li>• Interpret simple graphs</li> <li>• Express and recognise easy problems in algebraic language</li> </ul>	44%	28%	72%	90%
100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform basic algebraic operations with simple fractionary numbers</li> </ul>	27%	10%	99%	10%
			1% -	100% -	

The students aged 14 had difficulties in answering questions involving performance of operations with fractions, calculation of areas, memorisation of certain basic formulas, handling units of volume and representing functions. They also had difficulties in solving problems involving relations of proportionality or percentages, application of knowledge to triangle geometry and in solving simple linear equations. As to students aged 16, the most difficult tasks seemed to be performance of operations with powers and those requiring a spatial view of figures, such as representing functions, and handling conventional measurement units to calculate areas and volumes.

At the **age of 14**, the global result showed that 72% of the students passed level 200, which means they are able to solve simple problems in daily life through simple algebraic operations, estimations and rounding up, and intuitive concepts of statistics, interpret simple graphs, express and recognise simple problems in algebraic lan-

guage. However, 27% only knows how to handle basic algebraic operations with simple fractionary numbers and 1% is not able to achieve the most basic skills specified in the performance levels.

Likewise, it was also noted that 28% of the students achieve the relevant skills for level 250, that is to say, are able to solve simple problems in daily life that include relations of numerical proportionality and percentages, to know flat bodies, have notions of probability and geometry of the triangle and similarity of figures, to solve simple linear equations, estimate the probability of simple situations (the Laplace Law), construct simple graphs and interpret tables of frequencies. However, when the contrary is considered, this also means that 72% of the students aged 14 do not reach that level.

At the highest end of the performance scale, 4% of the students exceed the 300 cut-off point, so in addition to the aforementioned, they are able to use the algebraic language to solve practical problems, perform operations with fraction-



ary numbers in problems in daily life, fluently handle the concept of numerical proportionality and apply it to practical situations, to knowledge the lengths and surfaces of spaces and objects, to handle the measurement systems for lengths, space and object surfaces, over or underestimation and have knowledge of rounding up.

At the age of 16, 10% of the students is only able to perform basic algebraic operations with simple numbers. Moreover, 28% is only able, in addition to the above, to correctly solve the matters described above at level 200. This result is obviously unsatisfactory, as more than a third of the sample of students aged 16 only masters the four most basic skills defined in the performance levels.

If the 300 level on the scale is taken, scarcely 23% of the students aged 16 are skilled enough to solve the questions included. There are few students (3%) who reach level 350 and, thus, the aspects defined.

Overall, the results in Mathematics may not be considered satisfactory. The performance levels achieved at 14 and 16 years old are under no circumstances near to the desirable ones. On the other hand, although there is progress of 37 points between the two ages, it seems to be insufficient progress.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Evaluation of the areas of Geography and History, like in the cases of Spelling and Written Composition, was restricted to the MEC Territory, that is to say, the ten Autonomous Regions undergoing full devolvement in educational matters.

In the area of Geography, the knowledge of Physical Geography and Human Geography was appraised. The test includes items from Physical Geography related to the weather, topography, surface waters, vegetable formations and the physical regions. In to Human Geography, it appraised matters of human and environmental impact, cultural change, the characteristics and distribution of the urban and rural population, the economic factors, political organisation and

the cultural regions. Along with these contents, an attempt was made at estimating the student's capacity to know, understand and locate contents, and to applied diverse techniques and tools to these.

The blocks of History concern the time period covered by their title and include Prehistory, Ancient History, Medieval History, Modern History and Contemporary History. These also consider the capacities of knowing, understanding and explaining, along with application of different techniques and skills.

Table 10 shows the average percentage of correct answers in the area of Geography and History and relevant subareas for students aged 14 and 16.

The sample aged 14 and that aged 16 obtained results showing the students were able to answer 46% of the answers correctly in the tests. One must remember that the test for age 16 is at a higher level than the one for age 14. In both cases, the results in the area of Geography are also better than those in History, as the students aged 14 answered 51% of the answers in Geography correctly, and those aged 16 53%, while in History the average percentages of correct answers were 42% and 41% respectively. Within the field of History, although the results were relatively balanced, Ancient History and Contemporary History seem to have the lowest results, and Medieval and Modern History better. in Geography the results are fairly similar, perhaps with a slight tendency for the results in Human Geography to be slightly better.

The resulting average (MEC Territory) after the tests administered to 14 year old students was 228.26 points, lying between the anchorage points of 200 and 250. This means that the average 14 year old student is able to perform the tasks linked to level 200 and has not yet reached the skills at point 250. As to students aged 16, the resulting average was 269.59, that is to say, somewhat more than 41 points above that for 14 years old, thus lying between 250 and 300.

Table 11 shows the skills and knowledge in the area of Geography and History for each one of the performance levels, as well as the percentages of students who pass each level.



Table 10: Average percentage of correct answers by subareas in Geography and History

Areas	Average percentage of correct answer	
	Age 14	Age 16
<b>HISTORY</b>	42%	41%
Prehistory	38%	46%
Ancient History	38%	41%
Medieval History	47%	39%
Modern History	42%	44%
Contemporary History	42%	38%
<b>GEOGRAPHY</b>	51%	53%
Physical Geography	49%	53%
Human Geography	52%	54%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>46%</b>

Table 11: Performance in Geography and History. Percentage of students per level

Level	Skills and knowledge in geography and History	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
	The students are able to ...				
400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know original place names of spots of historic interest</li> <li>Know the people responsible for the important political changes in modern and contemporary Spain</li> <li>Place periods the History of Spain in chronological order</li> <li>Know the plans of cities from a historic point of view</li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a detailed knowledge of the History of Spain since the Moorish invasion, in art and social-political and economic evolution, in the setting of European evolution</li> <li>Interpret graphs of the population and maps</li> <li>Use global information on the present day world</li> <li>Know the characteristics that define the past and present political systems</li> <li>Relate characters, peoples and specific languages with historical events</li> </ul>	—	2%	—	2%
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know geographic, climatic and economic facts about America, Eastern Europe and Asia</li> <li>Master historical time as to the evolution of ideas and the most outstanding events from the 14th century till present in Europe and Spain</li> </ul>				

(Cont.) Table 11: Performance in Geography and History. Percentage of students per level

Level	Skills and knowledge in geography and History The students are able to ...	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
300	* Identify the main climatic and orographic features of the world				
	* Know the important landmarks in Spanish art and literature				
	* Know the most important effects and the presence of Spain in America	6%	19%	6%	21%
250	* Know the climatic features of the Mediterranean region				
	* Know the main historic and cultural developments of the Mediterranean basin				
	* Know the production features of underdeveloped countries				
	* Identify the location of far away events or countries				
	* Know important features of the Spanish people	27%	50%	33%	71%
200	* Know the features of the Spanish production system				
	* Know the most outstanding European historic moments and characters				
	* Establish simple relations between facts and consequences	38%	26%	71%	97%
150	* Know basic data concerning the European climate				
	* Identify the features of the Spanish orography				
	* Know the activities of prehistoric man	23%	3%	94%	100%
100		6%	—	100%	—

71% of students aged 14 are able to understand the characteristics of the Spanish production system, the most outstanding moments and characters of European history, as well as the basic facts of European weather and the activities of the prehistoric man, and are also able to establish simple links between facts and consequences and to identify characteristics of the Spanish orography, passing the 200 performance level. However, nearly 29% do not reach this level. At the 250 level, 23% of the students reach it and 67% do not reach it. The high mark zone (300 points or more) is only reached by 6% of the students of that age, while a further 60% is located at the lowest end of the scale, showing full incapacity to successfully perform in the minimum learning foreseen.

At the age of 16, the results show clear progress compared with those at 14. However, those at 16 are not fully positive either, if one bears in mind that only 71% reach the aforementioned level of 250 and, thus, there is 29% what does not reach it, 26% of which remain on the previous level, that is 200, and 3% even below that. At the high end of the performance scale, only 2% obtain outstanding results. In what could be considered satisfactory performance, 21% of the students pass level 300 and are able to know the geographic, weather and economic facts of America, Eastern Europe and Asia, to master the historic time as to the evolution of ideas and the most outstanding events from the 19th Century to present in Europe and Spain, to identify the main climatic and orographic features of the world, and to know important events in

Spanish art and culture and the most important effects of Spain on America.

Overall, it seems that these results are far from desirable. There is no doubt that it is important to increase all the measures and actions to manage to raise them.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NATURE SCIENCES

As in the case of Geography and History, administration of the Nature Science tests was limited exclusively to the territory of the ten Autonomous Regions managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The study of Nature Sciences covered analysis of the capacities of the students in Biology,

Geology, Physics and Chemistry. In Biology the contents concentrated on themes related to animals, the human body, the cell, ecology and ecosystems, and vegetables; in Geology, the tests covered contents on geomorphology, meteorology, minerals and rocks, soils and plate tectonics, and the universe; in Physics, they covered electricity, magnetism, energy, force, matter, movement, optics and sound; and in Chemistry, the chemical changes, the structure of matter and carbon chemistry. The capacities of the students were considered to ascertain, understand and interpret, apply and generalise these areas of knowledge.

Table 12 shows the average percentage of correct answers in the area of Nature Sciences and its relevant subareas, for students aged 14 and 16.

Table 10: Average percentage of correct answers by subareas in Geography and History

Areas	Average percentage of correct answer	
	Age 14	Age 16
Biology	43%	52%
Geology	47%	41%
Physics	36%	35%
Chemistry	38%	38%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>41%</b>

The global results show that both students aged 14 and 16 were able to correctly solve 41% of the questions in the tests. Biology and Geology are the subjects in which the best results were obtained, while those in Physics and Chemistry were worse, not reaching 40% correct answers in either of the latter.

The resulting average (MEC Territory) after the tests administered to students aged 14 was 230.17 points, these lying between the anchorage points 200 and 250. This means that the average 14 year old student is able to perform the tasks related to level 200 and has not yet reached the skills at point 250. As to the students aged 16, the resulting average was 267.43, that is to say, somewhat more than 37 points

above that for 14 years, thus lying between 250 and 300.

Table 13 shows the skills and knowledge in the Nature Science area for each one of the performance levels, as well as the percentages of students who above each level.

The global results indicate that 78% of the students **aged 14** are over the performance level 200, reaching at least the knowledge and skills defined in it. However, there are 49% of these who only achieve that knowledge and skill, and no higher target. Moreover, 22% do not even reach that minimum level, and thus do not deserve to be assigned any competence at all in the matter. One must also point out the scarce number of students (3%) at this age who reach level 300.



Table 11: Performance in Geography and History. Percentage of students per level

Level	Skills and knowledge in geography and History	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
	The students are able to ...				
450	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an advanced knowledge of land tectonics (folds and rifts)</li> <li>• Relate the plate tectonics to geological phenomena</li> <li>• Identify and analyze the energy transformations that take place in everyday machines and instruments</li> <li>• Extrapolate knowledge of the behaviour of dissolutions to new situations in which there has been a modification in the initial conditions</li> <li>• Relate the chemical changes that have taken place in a reaction with its speed to apply knowledge of the theory of collisions</li> <li>• Understand and interpret the existing relationship between the characteristics of the elements and the types of chemical links that may be formed using these</li> <li>• Infer characteristics of the dissolution of a compound in water</li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare several explanations given to ecological problems and choose the most adequate one</li> <li>• Interpret topographic maps and be able to translate that information in real scale</li> <li>• Identify and analyze situations in everyday life in which work and energy exchanges take place</li> <li>• Effectively distinguish kinetic and potential energy and relate them to other physical concepts such as movement</li> <li>• Calculate the linear acceleration of a moving body</li> <li>• Use techniques to solve complex problems related to effort, mechanical energy, heat and power, being able to use the information obtained to draw graphs</li> <li>• Master the procedures related to mixtures and dilutions</li> </ul>	—	—	—	—
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the changes in relief due to external and internal geological agents</li> <li>• Provide geological explanations of the features of rocks and identify their possible use in daily life</li> <li>• Know the origin, consolidation and structuring of the layers of the Earth</li> <li>• Master the processes of feeding and nutrition at cell and organism level, in the different groups of animals, vegetables, bacteria, algae, fungi, etc.</li> <li>• Solve complex problems (in which two or more concepts are related) of forces and movement</li> <li>• Propose simple experiments to check that values obtained from different measuring apparatuses are correct</li> </ul>				

(Cont.) Table 11: Performance in Geography and History. Percentage of students per level

Level	Skills and knowledge in geography and History The students are able to ...	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the forces involved in different situations in daily life</li> <li>Recognise the importance of chemical reactions in relation to processes requiring energy consumption, in biological processes and in material synthesis processes</li> </ul>	—	3%	—	3%
300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and analyze soil components</li> <li>Explain the mechanisms for folds and rifts to appear, related to the different types and their causes</li> <li>Prepare hypotheses on the movement of the planets</li> <li>Have basic knowledge of the transmission of hereditary characteristics, applying simple laws of genetics</li> <li>Understand the flows of matter and energy in diverse ecosystems</li> <li>Associate different animal and vegetable taxonomy with the procedures for their vital functions</li> <li>Identify the forces involved in the different daily life situations</li> <li>Master the concepts related to electric phenomena (charges and electric power)</li> <li>Have consolidated the principles and rules of formulation, applied to organic and inorganic chemistry</li> <li>Understand the meaning of chemical equations (knowledge of the energy exchanges in chemical reactions, interpretation and representation of chemical equations and equation adjustment)</li> <li>Identify chemical reactions in daily life situations</li> <li>Know the states of matter, identifying it by its most important properties</li> </ul>	3%	21%	3%	24%
250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine different ways to crop on all kinds of soil</li> <li>Identify existing types of rock from the forms of relief</li> <li>Understand the displacement of the tectonic plates and their relation to the geological changes in the continents and their influence on the evolution of living beings</li> <li>Explain the levels of organisation of the different ecosystems</li> <li>Establish relations between vegetable morphology and physiology</li> <li>Integrate knowledge of energy and movement, being able to derive characteristics of the bodies according to changes of energy</li> <li>Apply simple rules of chemical nomenclature and formulation</li> <li>Know the characteristics of the different materials</li> </ul>	26%	4%	29%	65%

(Cont.) Table 11: Performance in Geography and History. Percentage of students per level

Level	Skills and knowledge in geography and History The students are able to ...	One each level		Exceed the level	
		Age 14	Age 16	Age 14	Age 16
200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret weather maps</li> <li>• Relate series of data, as meteorological data and their relevant simple graphs</li> <li>• Establish relations in the sky to allow geographic orientation</li> <li>• Provide plausible explanations as to different types of relief being formed to characterise a landscape</li> <li>• <i>Associating negative dietary habits to their consequences for one's health</i></li> <li>• Describe the function of nutrition in the human being</li> <li>• Identify the major taxonomic groups of animals and plants</li> <li>• Solve simple problems involving the movement of bodies</li> </ul>	49%	29%	78%	94%
150		20%	6%	98%	100%
100		2%	—	100%	100%

At age 16, 65% of the students are above level 250 with the relevant knowledge and skills. Again, one must note that 49% of them remain at that level without greater achievement. A very high percentage (29%) still remains below the 200 level, that is, with frankly insatisfactory results, and a minority (6%) seems completely beyond all learning of the subject, not having achieved any of the skills measured by the test.

It is obvious that these results cannot be considered positive, in spite of the progress between one age and the other, which on the other hand is not excessively high (37 points), as we have seen.

### Differences in performance

A diagnosis of academic performance in the educational system would evidently remain incomplete if it did not provide some clues as to the existing differences within it. If the fundamental objective aimed at is to discover possible failings, in order to deal with them properly, it does not

seem logical to then stop short at mere generalisation, without going into the detail of to what extent these may be applied to the different contexts and areas of action. Statistical averages and general valuations are undoubtedly most useful, as they provide an global view of the problems and their possible solutions which is valid to orient overall educational policy and for schools and educational agents to reflect on. However, the measures are always calculated from diverse results, and they may on occasions conceal extremely varying situations. It is thus necessary to go into each case in detail, at least in sectors and areas of action that are inherently natural to the actual educational system.

The design of evaluation of school results was conceived, from the offset, in order to be able to cover this differential study in the sectors and areas that especially affect the Spanish educational system. Our educational system is, above all, a system that has already been decentralised and is about to undergo further decentralisation; in a short time, all the educational management will in fact be greatly regionalised, which means,



among other things, that the task of correcting shortcomings detected to date in academic results will mainly be assigned to the Regional Authorities. Our educational system is also, by express constitutional mandate, a system in which the public and private sector live together peacefully; it is not a matter of scarce relevance to note the contrasts, as to results, that there may be between these. In more conjunctural terms, our educational system is now the stage for diverse approaches to curriculum, as the reform enacted in 1990 has not yet been fully established nationwide in a similar manner; although precisely due to this, it has been premature to attempt to diagnose the effects of the reform; the data the evaluation performed provides us as to this is not lacking in interest or appropriateness either. Lastly, there is also the possibility of obtaining comparative information on the possible usefulness, by cross indexing the results and certain personal variables as, for example, that relation to the sex of the students.

In the following pages, we shall provide a very brief description of these four sectors or areas of differentiation. In the presentation we have chosen, in reverse order from that just listed, which is not the same as that used in the *Report on "Evaluation of Academic Performance"* either. One must remember, before undertaking this task, what was stated to a certain extent in the introduction: just as we are not able to explain the reason for the different results obtained in the different subjects, neither are we able to explain

the differences in results between both territorial fields or sectors of action. This is an extremely complex task, which may and surely must be carried out, although it is far beyond the objectives of this diagnosis - a situational diagnosis - we have been commissioned. The *Report* we have taken as a reference makes only one exception to this rule, and not with the intention of explaining the in depth, but rather to provide a merely indicative answer to a frequent question: that of to what extent the family social-cultural context influences academic results, and to what extent that fact may explain some differences, such as for example those between public and private schools. We shall thus refer to the matter at the appropriate place.

### DIFFERENCES IN PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO SEX

It is well known that the rates of development among male and female students are different, as to the development of their skills and in their interests in different subjects, as to the actual process of study and learning. Thus, it is usual to note differences in the academic performance of the students according to whether they are male or female.

Table 14 shows the differences in male and female student performance for all the subjects evaluated in this study.

Table 14: Average performance in the areas evaluated according to student sex and age

Areas	Reading comprehension		Grammar and Literature		Mathematics		Nature Science (MEC Territory)		Geography and History (MEC Territory)	
	14	16	14	16	14	16	14	16	14	16
Male students	216	269	220	265	228	269	230	271	230	278
Female students	226	274	232	270	225	259	231	265	226	263
Difference	-10	-5	-12	-5	3	10	-1	6	4	15

One may see from the results of the table that the female students have a systematically higher level of knowledge in Reading Comprehension and Grammar and Literature at both ages, while the male students obtain better results, also in both ages, in Mathematics and Geography and History. In the area of Nature Sciences, female students had a better performance at 14 and the male ones at 16.

The greatest difference was found at 16 in Geography and History, where the male students were 15 points ahead of the female ones on the performance scale. Another notable difference is to be found in Mathematics, where the male students are 10 points ahead, a result which is usually obtained for such study, as is the greater linguistic development shown by female students of that age.

### DIFFERENCES IN PERFORMANCE BY CURRICULUM APPROACH

As mentioned in the introduction, diverse modes of curriculum coexist in the Spanish system, which may be taken by students aged 14 and 16, due to the overlapping of different formal structures in the system, due to the LGE of 1970 and the LOGSE of 1990.

In spite of this not being one of the fundamental objectives of the study, establishment of comparisons between the different curriculum approaches may be of interest. However, these comparisons must be interpreted with great caution due to two reasons. Firstly, between one must bear in mind that the new ESO is in the process of being implemented, and the grade at which it is already implemented is very difficult according to such variables as the educational authorities to which the schools are assigned in each Autonomous Region, the size of the schools and their location, their holders, their regime of endorsement, etc. Secondly, because the centres that have already changed over from the old secondary education (LGE) to the new system (LOGSE) probably have different characteristics and situations to those which still teach within the framework of the LGE.

Due to this, one must consider that these comparisons perhaps do not faithfully reflect the de-

gree of performance that may be achieved in the new system. Moreover, due to the recent start up, as of creation of the INCE in 1994, of the global evaluation work on the educational system, a reliable reference is lacking as to the functioning and performance of students from the old system of the LGE aged 14 and 16 to compare against the results of the new system, even in the case of being able to evaluate the new system in spite of its limited implementation.

Moreover, some of the data and its variability is surprising and does not seem to have a simple explanation. For example, the fact that, at the age of 14, EGB obtains better results than ESO in Grammar and Literature while ESO is proven superior to EGB in mathematics seems, to say the least, unexpected. Thus, these facts and their analysis must be considered in provisional terms until future evaluations confirm the trends and differences pointed out here.

#### AT 14 YEARS OLD

Table 15 shows the average performance in all the subjects evaluated, according to the different educational modes for students aged 14: 8th of EGB and 2nd of ESO. It also points out the cases in which the differences between the modes are significant and in which direction.

At age 14, the results appear as equivalents for 2nd of ESO and 8th of EGB in Reading Comprehension, Nature Sciences and Geography and History. However, there are two significant differences. On one hand, the results show better performance among EGB students than those in ESO in Grammar and Literature, and on the other hand, show better performance by ESO students than those in EGB in Mathematics.

#### AT 16 YEARS OLD

Like in the preceding table, table 16 shows the performance measurements for all the subjects evaluated according to the different educational modes for students aged 16; 2nd of BUP, 4th of ESO, 2nd of VT and 2nd of REM, along with the cases in which the differences between these modes are significant.



Table 15: Measurement of performance in the areas evaluated by curriculum approach at age 14

Syllabus lines	Subjects				
	Reading comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Science (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
2nd ESO	221	222	231	230	229
8th EGB	220	227	225	230	228
Average	221	226	227	230	228
Significant differences	1	-5 EGB > ESO	6 ESO > EGB	0	1

Table 16: Measurement of performance in the areas evaluated by curriculum approach at age 16

Syllabus lines	Subjects				
	Reading comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Science (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
2nd BUP	283	293	279	276	283
4th ESO	273	265	267	274	271
2nd VT	246	224	228	226	233
2nd REM	252	231	258	—	—
Average	271	267	263	267	270
Significant differences	BUP > ESO REM, VT ESO > REM, VT	BUP > ESO REM, VT ESO > REM, VT	BUP > ESO REM, VT ESO > REM, VT	BUP > ESO > VT	BUP > ESO > VT REM, VT

At age 16, the results seem more coherent, as the BUP students perform better in all subjects, than the students in the rest of the curriculum modes (ESO, VT and REM). In turn, students studying ESO also obtain better results in all subjects than students in VT.

### DIFFERENCES IN PERFORMANCE ACCORDING TO THE SCHOOL HOLDERS

It is necessary to begin by mentioning the care with which this data must be interpreted in its

provisional nature. One must bear in mind that the degree of implementation of the new syllabus due to enactment of the LOGSE is not the same at public and private schools. Due to this, when establishing comparisons between teaching by public and private institutions, one must consider that the results of the comparisons would probably be different if the degree of implementation of ESO were complete at both types of schools. Moreover, it is well known that the socio-cultural background of students attending both types of schools is generally different, in terms of the average cultural level of the students' families, as



well as in terms of the range and diversity of the population each attends. This implies that the initial data, although inherently interesting, must be complemented by additional studies and reports to relate the academic results obtained to the school, family, social background etc., in which these are produced.

### STUDENTS AGED 14

Table 17 shows the measures of performance by students aged 14 in all the subjects evaluated according to the holders of the schools, while pointing out the significant differences in performance between public and private schools.

It is noted that, for the sample aged 14, private schools obtain better results than state schools in all subjects. It is interesting to note that the differ-

ence between both, in terms of performance scale, is very constant for the set of areas evaluated, and the performance achieved by private school students is approximately 14 points higher.

### STUDENTS AGED 16

Table 18 shows the measures of performance by students aged 14 in all the subjects evaluated according to the holders of the schools, while pointing out the significant differences in performance between public and private schools.

The results obtained at age 16 are initially surprising. On one hand private teaching is superior in Grammar and Literature, while no significant differences are detected in the area of Geography and History. On the other hand, public education obtains apparently better results in

Table 17: Measurement of performance by school holders at age 14

Ownership	Subjects				
	Reading comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Science (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
State	216	220	221	226	223
Private	228	235	236	239	238
Average	221	226	227	230	228
Significant differences	-12 Priv > State	-15 Priv > State	-15 Priv > State	-15 Priv > State	-15 Priv > State

Table 18: Measurement of performance by school holders at age 16

Ownership	Subjects				
	Reading comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Science (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
State	272	266	264	269	270
Private	270	269	261	263	270
Average	271	267	263	267	270
Significant differences	2 Priv > State	-3 Priv > State	3 Priv > State	6 Priv > State	0 Priv > State

three areas: Reading Comprehension, Mathematics and Nature Science.

It is not easy to understand how the appreciable differences in favour of private schools at age 14 in Reading Comprehension, Mathematics and Nature Sciences turn to differences in favour of state schools at age 16. The *Report* by the Commission explains that the most probable cause of this anomaly lies in the spurious effects caused by aggregation of data in very general categories (which in scientific terminology is usually called "Simpson paradox"). The hypothesis deserves at-

tention, as when the data is examined broken down into curriculum approaches or by Autonomous Regions, this superiority is not noted in state schools at age 16, rather quite the contrary.

As may be seen in table 19, there are significant differences in favour of private schools in all the subjects in 2nd of BUP, and in Nature Sciences in 4th of ESO. There are significant differences, although lesser, in favour of state schools only in Mathematics in 4th of ESO and 2nd of VT. The other differences, whether favourable to one sector or another, are not significant.

**Table 19: Measurement of performance by school holdership and curriculum approach at age 16**

Syllabus lines	Subjects, sectors, differences								
	Reading comprehension			Mathematics			Nature Sciences (MEC Territory)		
	State	Priv.	Dif.	State	Priv.	Dif.	State	Priv.	Dif.
2nd BUP	282.68	286.34	-4.66	276.86	283.91	-7.05	271.21	281.25	-10.25
4th ESO	273.1	271.35	1.75	267.27	263.63	3.64	273.79	289.13	-15.34
2nd VT	246.22	246.27	-0.05	230.26	225.92	4.34	226.46	225.73	0.73

Table 19 includes only a reference to the subjects which were previously especially surprising. However, one must add that also in the case of another two (Grammar and Literature, and Geography and History) the significant differences, when there are any in the breakdowns, are in favour of the private sector.

To sum up, one may conclude, at least provisionally, awaiting later research to check this more fully, that academic performance in the subjects evaluated is usually superior in the private sector, at age 14 as well as age 16.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON PERFORMANCE

In comparison between the public and private sectors, it is traditional to question the degree of incidence of socio-cultural factors on academic performance by the respective students.

As this is research that fundamentally concentrates on diagnosis, that is to say, on describing

the present situation and not on explaining its causes, the Committee in charge did not wish to put forward conclusive explanations as to the hypothetical relations between these variables, in-depth study of which would require more time, dedication and use of additional methodology. The research has collected sufficient data for the study to be carried out at any time, and the INCE will encourage performance of the specific tasks in that direction, based on the existing data. The *Report* prepared by the Committee already has an addendum as a preliminary approach to the matter, thanks to which we have been able to bring together the following tentative reflections:

- Indeed, as seems to be proven once more by research, socio-cultural factors have a clear incidence on student performance, at state as well as private schools.
- The socio-cultural conditions considered in the questionnaires (studies of the father and mother and cultural resources in the home) generally score higher for private than state



schools. In other words, according to the data collected, the socio-cultural level of the students at private schools is, setting aside exceptions, higher than at state schools.

- The differences between state and private schools as to academic performance by the students seems to be partially explained by these differences in socio-cultural level.
- However, once the said socio-cultural differences are subtracted or removed, there is still a remainder of net difference between state and private schools that is statistically significant, in favour of the latter, the reasons for which may not be put forward at this stage of research.
- Lastly, when the incidence of socio-cultural factors on student performance is considered separately for state and private schools, greater differences seem to be noted in performance due to these factors, within the public sector than in the private sector. It could thus seem that private schools protect the effect of these factors on student performance to a greater extent.

### DIFFERENCES IN PERFORMANCE BY AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

An important component of all evaluation of the educational system is comparison of the results in terms of the territories forming the State overall. This comparative information provides data on the degree of difference between academic results arising in the different educational subsystems. This is especially important to the Autonomous Regions presently undergoing the process of devolution to full educational competencies. One must bear in mind that, as of 1st January 1998 - once study of the diagnosis is almost complete - the Balearic Isles already has full competencies in education.

#### STUDENTS AGED 14

Table 20 shows the measurement of performance in Reading Comprehension, Grammar and Literature and Mathematics for the 15 Autonomous Regions (in addition to Ceuta and Melilla) which participated in the study of students aged 14, as

well as the average performance in Nature Science and Geography and History in the 10 Autonomous Regions of the MEC Territory.

The Regions that obtained the best performance in Reading Comprehension at age 14 were Aragón, Galicia and Castilla-León. Valencia, Ceuta and Melilla and Murcia are at the other end of the scale, with the worst performance.

In Grammar and Literature, Aragón and Galicia also stand out with the best performance, while Catalonia, Navarra and Murcia are last on the scale for age 14 in these subjects.

Aragón leads the regions with the best performance in Mathematics, followed by La Rioja, the Basque Country and Navarra. The Balearic Isles, Valencia, Murcia and Ceuta and Melilla had the lowest results in this subject.

Within the MEC Territory, in Nature Sciences, Aragón again, and Castilla-León achieved the best performance, while La Rioja, Ceuta and Melilla obtained low results. In Geography and History, Castilla-León, Aragón and Asturias had outstandingly high performance. Catabria, the Balearic Isles and Ceuta and Melilla obtained results way below the average.

#### STUDENTS AGED 16

Table 21 shows the measurements for performance in Reading Comprehension, Grammar and Literature, and Mathematics for the 15 Autonomous Regions which participated in the study of students aged 16, and the measurements for performance in Nature Science and Geography and History in the 10 Autonomous Regions of the MEC Territory.

In Reading Comprehension, the Regions of Madrid and Castilla-León are at the positive end of the scale with the best performance at that age. The students from Valencia and Ceuta and Melilla obtain low results in these skills.

In Grammar and Literature, Madrid, Castilla-León and Galicia obtained the best results. The results in Valencia are on the negative side, being notably below the average for all the Regions involved in the study.

The students in Castilla-León, La Rioja, Aragón, Navarra and Madrid obtained the most outstanding results in Mathematics, while Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia were at the bottom of the scale. Ceuta and Melilla are at the extreme of



Table 20: Measurement of performance in the areas evaluated by Autonomous Regions. Age 14

	Reading Comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Sciences (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
ARAGON	232	237	245	238	236
ASTURIAS	225	231	228	226	236
BALEARIC ISLES	216	219	215	225	209
CANTABRIA	222	229	229	230	212
CASTILLA LA MANCHA	216	222	220	226	222
CASTILLA LEON	227	232	232	238	239
CATALONIA	218	216	224	—	—
CEUTA / MELILLA	212	223	208	201	205
EXTREMADURA	215	223	222	226	219
GALICIA	230	241	231	—	—
LA RIOJA	224	232	242	211	223
MADRID	223	233	232	232	232
MURCIA	210	213	213	222	219
NAVARRA	218	215	239	—	—
VALENCIA	213	219	215	—	—
BASQUE COUNTRY	224	226	242	—	—
AVERAGE	220	226	227	230	228

Table 21: Measurement of performance in the areas evaluated by Autonomous Regions. Age 16

	Reading Comprehension	Grammar and Literature	Mathematics	Nature Sciences (MEC Territory)	Geography and History (MEC Territory)
ARAGON	275	266	274	262	266
ASTURIAS	276	267	266	248	259
BALEARIC ISLES	270	261	261	258	257
CANTABRIA	267	260	262	254	261
CASTILLA LA MANCHA	274	269	268	287	276
CASTILLA LEON	278	276	275	269	273
CATALONIA	266	260	256	—	—
CEUTA / MELILLA	263	269	245	268	250
EXTREMADURA	269	268	264	270	263
GALICIA	274	277	265	—	—
LA RIOJA	273	261	275	294	295
MADRID	279	278	272	270	276
MURCIA	266	261	253	257	254
NAVARRA	273	263	274	—	—
VALENCIA	262	255	251	—	—
BASQUE COUNTRY	—	—	—	—	—
AVERAGE	271	267	263	267	270

insufficient performance, with results notoriously far below the average.

In Nature Sciences in the group of MEC Territory Regions, La Rioja and Castilla-La Mancha obtained the best results. At the opposite end, Cantabria obtained scarce results and Asturias stands out for its significant result, very much below the average for the rest of the Regions. In Geography and History, La Rioja is outstanding in the high band, while Murcia and Ceuta and Melilla are notably low.

In Reading Comprehension, the Regions of Madrid and Castilla-León are at the positive end of the scale with the best performance at that age. The students from Valencia and Ceuta and Melilla obtain low results in these skills.

In Grammar and Literature, Madrid, Castilla-León and Galicia obtained the best results. The results in Valencia are on the negative side, being notably below the average for all the Regions involved in the study.

*The students in Castilla-León, La Rioja, Aragón, Navarra and Madrid obtained the most outstanding results in Mathematics, while Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia were at the bottom of the scale. Ceuta and Melilla are at the extreme of insufficient performance, with results notoriously far below the average.*

In Nature Sciences in the group of MEC Territory Regions, La Rioja and Castilla-La Mancha obtained the best results. At the opposite end, Cantabria obtained scarce results and Asturias stands out for its significant result, very much below the average for the rest of the Regions. In Geography and History, La Rioja is outstanding in the high band, while Murcia and Ceuta and Melilla are notably low.

## OVERVIEW

Overall, Aragón, Asturias, Castilla-León and Galicia obtained higher results in Reading Comprehension, at age 14 and 16, while Ceuta and Melilla, Murcia and Valencia obtained the lowest results at both ages. In Grammar and Literature, Castilla-León, Galicia and Madrid obtained the best results in both populations; the Balearic Isles, Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia obtained the worst for both ages. In the area of Mathematics, Aragón, Castilla-León, La Rioja, Madrid and Navarra are at the positive end of the scale for the sample aged 14 and that aged 16, while the Balearic Isles, Ceuta and Melilla, Murcia and Valencia are systematically located on the negative side.

Within the MEC Territory, the students from Madrid have the best overall results for ages 14 and 16 in Nature Sciences; the Balearic Isles and Murcia obtained the lowest results for both ages. In Geography and History, Castilla-León and Madrid obtained good results at age 14 and 16; the Balearic Isles and Ceuta and Melilla are the lowest on the scale in both cases.

## OTHER COMPARATIVE DATA

The *Report on Evaluation of Academic Performance* provides other interesting comparative data, taking the Autonomous Regions as a fundamental reference point and by crossing such variables as *school holdership and curriculum approach*. Due to the nature of the global study presented here, we are not able to go further into them, but simply inform the readers of their existence, availability and maximum interest.

# Syllabus and teaching methods

# 3

## Introduction

One of the five specific objectives pointed out within the Diagnosis of the Educational system is as follows: *What and how are the students being taught (Evaluation of the syllabus and teaching methods). The aim is to analyze whether the syllabuses in force are the most suitable for the needs of the students and Spanish society at large.* The INCE entrusted this objective to a Specialised Committee, commissioning it to study those aspects of ESO (Obligatory Secondary Education).

After a realistic analysis of the existing possibilities according to the time and resources available, the Committee considered it should concentrate on an internal evaluation, taking the ESO teacher as the main informer, aimed at optimising teaching. The following work scheme was thus adopted:

- Preparation of a survey to be answered by the ESO teaching staff, in the Autonomous Regions devolved in educational competencies and those operating in what is known as the "MEC Territory".
- Collection of verbal information from a series of Diagnosis Group sessions, to be attended and participated in by teachers, management and other professionals related to ESO.
- Preparation of a summary report using the data supplied by both the sources cited.

As to the survey, it consists of a total 325 questions on a set of 47 themes. The vast majority of the items require an appraisal on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating different degrees of agreement or frequency. They were initially grouped in a series of categories aimed at providing a response to the different aspects involved in the syllabus evaluation. Specifically, it was structured in nine sets or groups of variables, each one of which matches a

conceptual core of evident interest from a syllabus viewpoint, as follows:

- Intentions, contents and goals of ESO.
- The pre-active phase: syllabus design and scheduling.
- Teaching means and resources.
- The teaching process: strategies and methods.
- Diversity in ESO.
- Integration of students with special educational needs.
- The evaluation procedures.
- The academic atmosphere and culture.
- The means of support and aid for the teacher's professional tasks.

The target population for the study is the set of teachers who gave classes to students in ESO during academic year 1996/97 in any of the following five subjects: Spanish Language, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Technology. Due to diverse reasons, the territories of Andalusia, the Canaries, Ceuta and Melilla were excluded. The population was stratified by school holdership variables (state and private), teaching experience, Autonomous Region and the aforementioned subjects.

Table 1 shows the number of teachers in the samples: that designed (1) and achieved (2):

Due to the design of the sample, each teacher in the sample represents a significantly different number of teachers according to the region to which he belongs. To correct this fact, a weighting was calculated, so each teacher contributes to the population estimates according to the proportion of the Autonomous Region represented in the full population.

The high number of variables in the survey - 325 as stated - and their characteristics - a view that encouraged participation and collaboration by the Committee - demanded a statistical treat-



Table 1: Sample of teachers in the study

	Population	%	Sample 1	Sample 2	%	Weighting
Catalonia	28448	19.42	500	458	91.6	1.56
Galicia *	13431	9.17	500	542	108.4	0.62
Navarra **	3495	2.39	500	427	85.4	0.17
Valencia *	17128	11.69	500	528	105.6	0.8
Basque Country	10450	7.13	500	441	88.2	0.49
MEC Territory	73531	50.2	100	891	89.1	1.71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146483</b>		<b>3500</b>	<b>3287</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>—</b>

\* These regions extended their sample by the staff teaching the language of the region answering an extra questionnaire.

\*\* The 427 teachers in Navarra were the whole population teaching ESO in the region during academic year 1996-97.

ment to allow an overview of the problems. Thus, it was considered that the most adequate treatment could be, in general terms, factor analysis.

The second step was to determine the meaning of the differences in measurements between each one of the groups of teachers making up the sample. These sets by groups required the following teacher identification variables to be taken into account:

- Sex (differences between points provided by male and female teachers in the sample).
- Teaching body they form part of: Primary School Teachers assigned to ESO, Secondary Education Teachers and Vocational Training Technical Teaching Staff.
- Subject taught. In this case it was limited to the following disciplines: Spanish Language and Literature, Language and Literature of the Autonomous Region, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Technology.
- Holdership of the school where taught: state or private.
- Teaching experience: more than 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years and more than 20 years.

The quantitative data was obtained by collecting the information provided by teachers and "management" (principals, inspectors, university teachers, Trade Unionists...) at group work sessions using the technique called Diagnosis Groups.

The need to provide a flexible definition of

the scopes of the interrogatory was seen to be an urgent requisite by the Diagnosis Groups. In the case of ESO syllabus evaluation, the inventory of questions it aimed to cover - not necessarily in each session, but as a guideline to complete the different sets of group sessions - was as follows:

- The objectives defined in the current laws on ESO, as well as the areas intended for performance during that period of schooling.
- The tasks, functions and instruments required and used to prepare the classes.
- The teaching resources and means most frequently used.
- The techniques and strategies normally used by the teacher in class.
- The problems arising from integration, diversification and syllabus adaptations.
- Evaluations of ESO and the problems involved.
- Promotion from one academic year to another within ESO.
- The atmosphere at the school: tone, sense and functionality of the teacher relations with students, colleagues, parents ...
- The functions of the Orientation Department, their sense and effectiveness.
- The design of the tutorials and ability to provide a response to demands related to them.
- The functions of the Pedagogical Coordination Committee and their possible effectiveness.

- The most urgent needs that must be responded to in order to increase the quality of teaching in ESO.
- The time per week dedicated to each one of the areas.

A total of 37 Group Diagnosis sessions were held, 33 of which were used. The remaining four were eliminated from the start due to diverse problems of a technical nature. The participants in these Group Diagnosis sessions amounted to 252 persons, plus their respective coordinators.

## Objectives, contents, resources

### INTENTIONS, CONTENTS AND OBJECTIVES OF ESO

The appraisal in the survey by the teachers of the objectives, areas and cross-curricular themes are very high, located between the appraisal "fairly important" and "very important" (graph 1).

The appraisal made of the **objectives** of ESO, just as expressed in the LOGSE (art. 19) do not give rise to significant discrepancies in the data

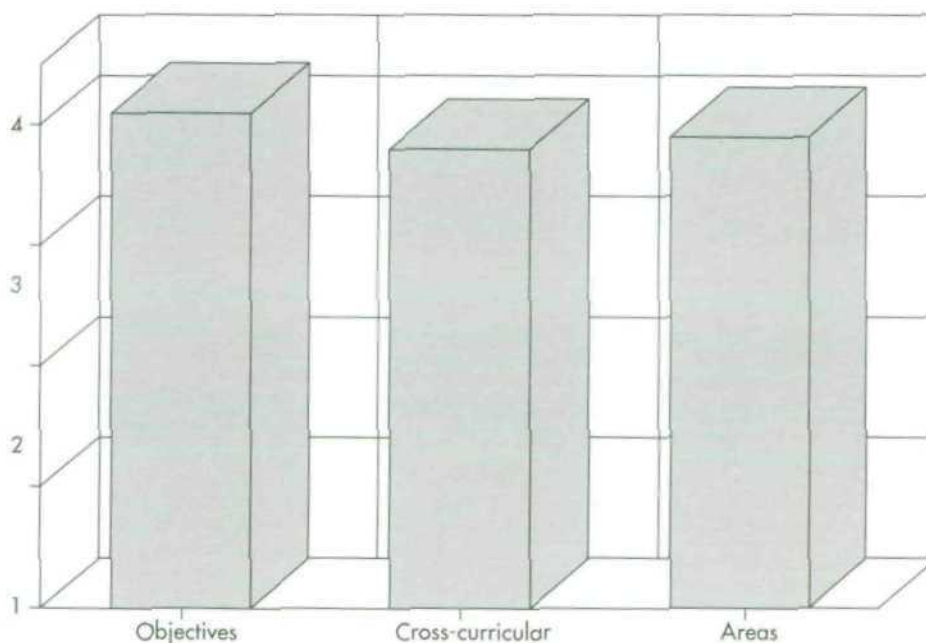
collected in the survey, nor in the Diagnosis Groups. The criticism made of the objectives refer mainly to the formal aspects, not to their sense: appraisals of the objectives as scarcely realistic and general, and the difficulty involved in their application to academic reality. In general terms, one must emphasise the level of the existing agreement.

The appraisal of the **areas** is also positive. There is critical analysis of the characteristics and peculiarities of the ESO syllabus, especially as to the high number of disciplines. The areas of the ESO obtain the Highest appraisal according to the importance granted by the teachers: they exceed 4 points on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 (graph 2).

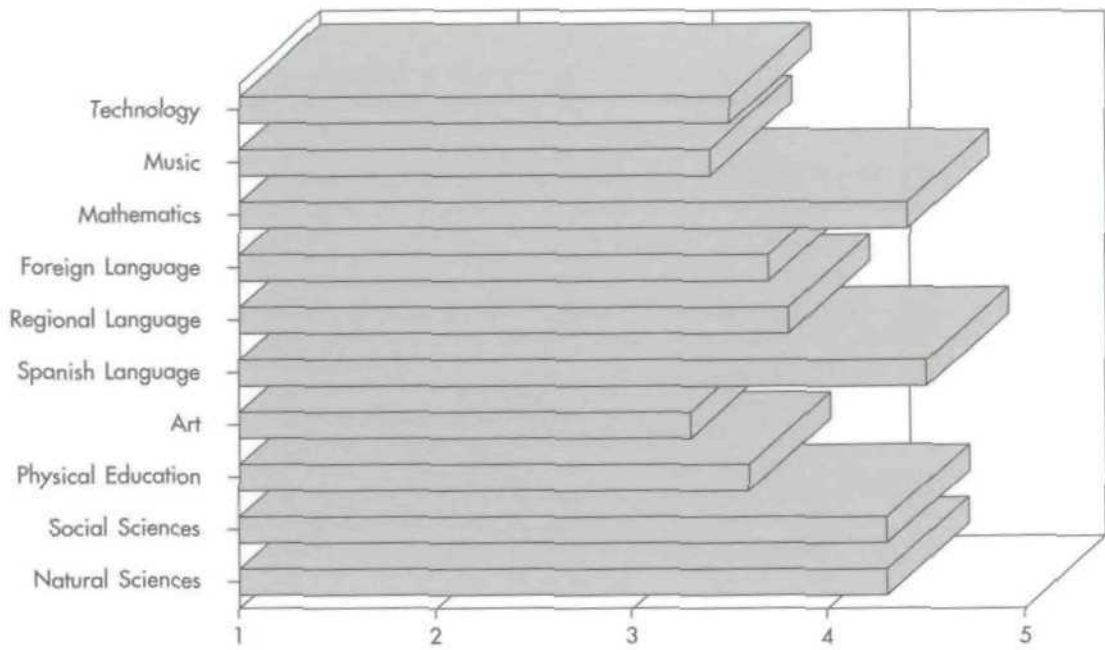
A problem that is especially relevant is the time assigned to each one of the areas. Diverse interests are factors in this decision, from those attributable to the importance and appraisal of the contents of each area in the students' training to corporatist claims (graph 3).

It is curious that there is hardly a relation between the importance granted to each area and the timetable they consider must be assigned to teaching the subject. Timetable and importance do not match.

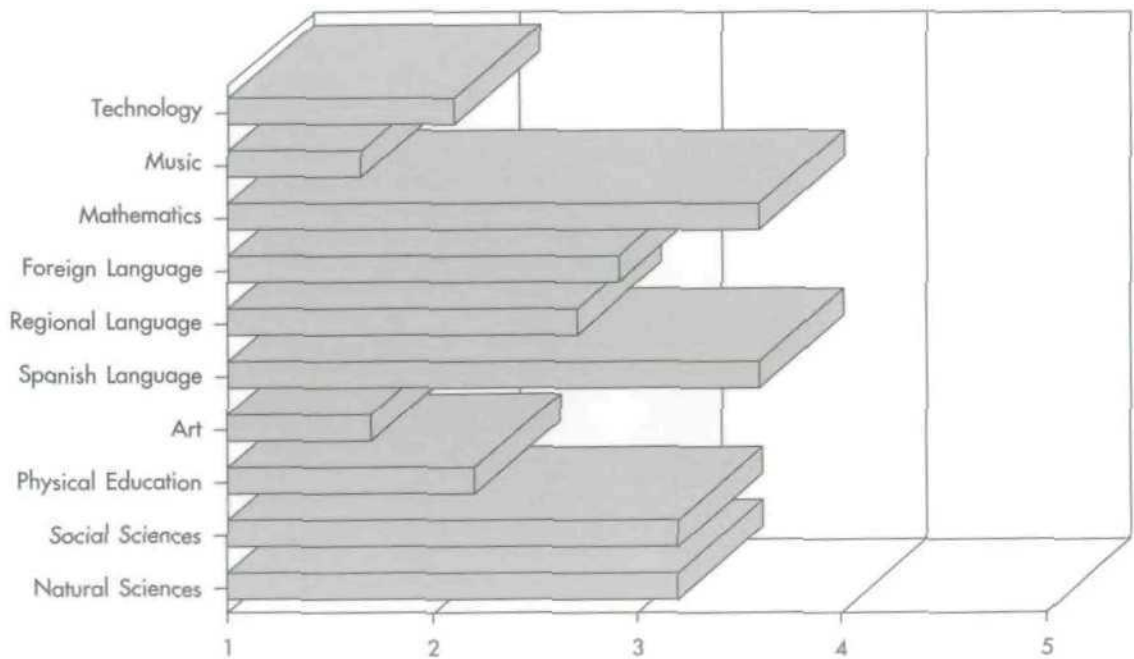
Graph 1: Appraisal of the intentions of ESO



Graph 2. Importance of the areas



Graph 3. Hours of class per week stated by the teaching staff





The discrepancies between appraisal and timetable seem to be modulated by assignment of the teachers to the areas: the teachers in each area tend to demand a greater number of hours for their own subjects.

Greater attention to the time dedicated to the instrumental subjects is frequently claimed.

Activities considered as alternative teaching, such as Religion are closely related to timetabling problems. These activities that are playful at times, generally have a doubtful consistency and use up a considerable amount of the timetable. Inclusion of these activities on the timetable gives rise to disagreement. Emphasis is made on the lack of coherency of the time spent on these when so little time is dedicated to other disciplines considered essential.

The **optional subjects** also cause particular problems at schools, such as those related to teaching aspects (teaching quality, student performance, content of these disciplines, possibilities of diversification, teacher qualification). Administrative problems are also mentioned, such as scheduling, the conjunction of optional and obligatory status, or corporativist factors implicit in their optional nature at the schools. There is a very wide range of cases: from "obligatory optional subjects" at schools with a sole syllabus approach, to an offer of subjects that may be considered irrelevant. In any case, at the time the field study was carried out, the offer was considered excessive.

The solutions proposed for the problems detected as to their optional nature concentrated on the following basic groups:

- Encouragement of the material resources to attend to the optional subjects.
- Preparation of a sufficiently clear, explicit set of rules.
- Determination of clearly oriented itineraries.
- The formulas to select the optional subjects.

As to the last matter, selection of the optional subjects, there is a series of proposals of notable interest, that may be summarised as follows:

- Pointing out the priorities in the different optional subjects according to their interest.
- Delegation of selection - or priority setting - of the optional subjects by certain bodies at the School.

- Performance of surveys among the students.
- Simple functioning of the market laws.

The **cross-curricular themes** are evaluated and their contents considered important. However, in syllabus projects at schools and in putting them into practice, attention to these is scarce. These are not seen as a priority by teachers, who are more involved in implementation of their specific area. The great difficulty, or conditioning argued is for essential coordination by the diverse teachers so they may make a contribution from their area, that is coherent with the contributions by the others, in the cross-curricular theme concerned. This is recognised to be too complicated.

The work the centres perform as to the cross-curricular themes is carried out under several formulae: monographic day conferences, short period aimed at attempting treatment of a cross-curricular theme from different areas, interdisciplinary treatment of a cross-curricular theme during a year, and another the following year, inclusion among the tutorial plan themes, etc.

## THE CURRICULUM PROJECT AND THE SUBJECT PLANNING

These objectives and contents must be set down in some planning instruments for the academic tasks. Notebooks to prepare lessons, cards, schedules and syllabus projects are some names given to these resources that have a lot in common, in a ceremony that to a great extent has a rhetorical dimension.

The analysis made shows the coexistence of four modules foreseen as for immediate implementation of the syllabus, identified as:

- *Conventional planning*, which requires use of individual and departmental programming, syllabus adaptation, with priority consideration of the objectives the students aim to achieve, the teaching material and resources available. It supposes an acceptance of coherent, valid programming, although with a certain separation from the programming modes proposed by the educational reform.
- *Planning based on experience*, characterised by use of the teacher's personal notes and material, taken from previous courses, the text book and didactic book normally taken

as a guideline. it involves attention to teaching early foresight, although on the basis of more functional, more traditional methods, that perhaps may not have the technical dimension of those included in the conventional planning, nor the sense of up-to-date-ness of the programming based on the Reform.

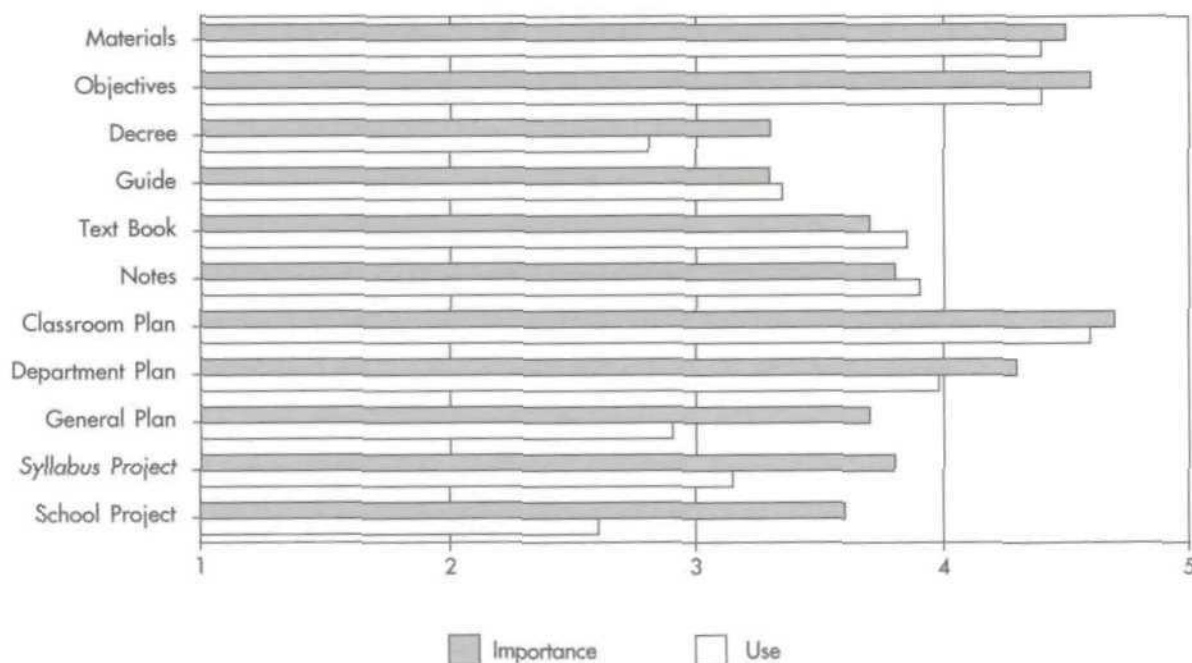
- *Planning based on the Reform*, which involves use of the instruments designed on the basis of the educational reform: the school educational project, the syllabus project and the annual planning.
- *Adapted planning which reflects a rejection of the reform*, which involves an attitude of lesser

acceptance of the Decree on the ESO syllabus and a certain opposition to use of the School Educational Project and the Syllabus Project and the annual planning of the school.

The resources comprising these four types of planning have been evaluated on the basis of two matters. One requested expression of the teachers' opinion as to the importance of each of the planning methods. The other requested them to point out the frequency of their real use in teaching (graph 4).

The School Educational Project and the Syllabus Project are valued in a discretely positive way.

Graph 4. Average appraisal of documents and instruments for programming



However, they declared that their use is very low. It is quite to the contrary with more conventional instruments, which are appraised at a much lower level than used. Personal notes and the text book above all have a low rating, but are used a lot. This discrepancy, along with the information collected from the Diagnosis Groups seems to emphasise that bureaucratic nature and disfunctionality affect the resources proposed as alternatives, just as happened with others in their time.

The Syllabus Project nowadays - as were the Lesson Preparation Notebooks or the Long and Short Subject Plannings - have become an administrative requisite: they are prepared, sent to the relevant body, approved and then ignored. These instruments do not seem to respond to a heartfelt need.

However, the teaching staff recognises the need to prepare a forecast of activities to be carried out (4.6 average mark on a scale of 1 to 5).



Functional, efficient instrumentation for teaching planning is a problem that evidently has not been solved.

There is also the accusation of lack of coordination between the requisite levels of ESO and the Baccalaureate.

## TEACHING MEANS AND RESOURCES

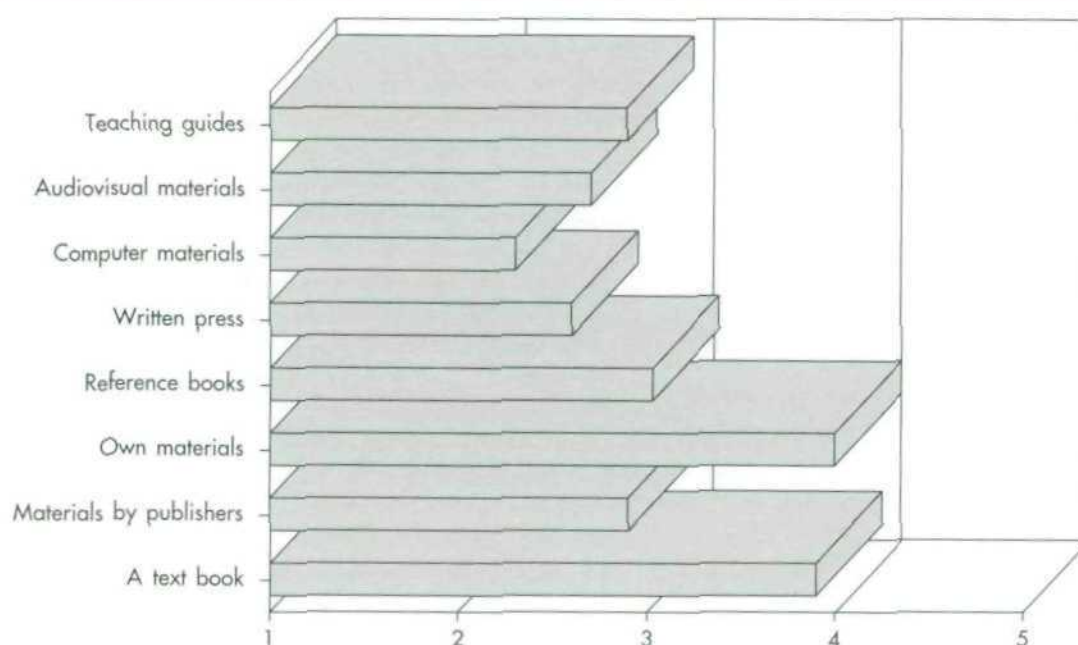
The appraisal the teachers make of the teaching materials and resources shows that materials pre-

pared by themselves and the text books are the most used by the teachers, fairly far ahead of the remaining resources (graph 5).

If one bears in mind that in most cases the material the teachers prepare themselves is similar to the text book - photocopies, some slides obtained from books, notes, etc. - one must recognise the dominant role the verbal-iconic material has and, especially, the text book in ESO and teaching in general.

These results seem to point towards the fact that the controversy as to the text book has come

Graph 5. Use of syllabus materials and teaching resources



to an end, at least at present, through massive adoption and use. After overcoming some criticism during the first phase of the Reform, its use has been recovered and has become general. Such generalisation gives rise to a series of problems detected by the Diagnosis Groups, specifically:

- The Syllabus Decree, thanks to the flexible, open view with which ESO was conceived, facilitates the possibility of an approach to the areas through development, at the same level, of different contents, which each publishing project orients and modulates in a different way. This flexible orientation is

appraised generically, but pointing out that it may become dysfunctional, for example in cases of student transfer.

- The value attributed by teachers to the book as the planning guideline - already seen in the syllabus design - means closing the syllabus, that in theory is open and flexible, and it may only be understood as such until deciding on the book to be used.
- An external aspect noted is the volume and weight - physical and economic - of the books and teaching material for each course.

As to the remaining resources, the press and computer media are the least used. In spite of

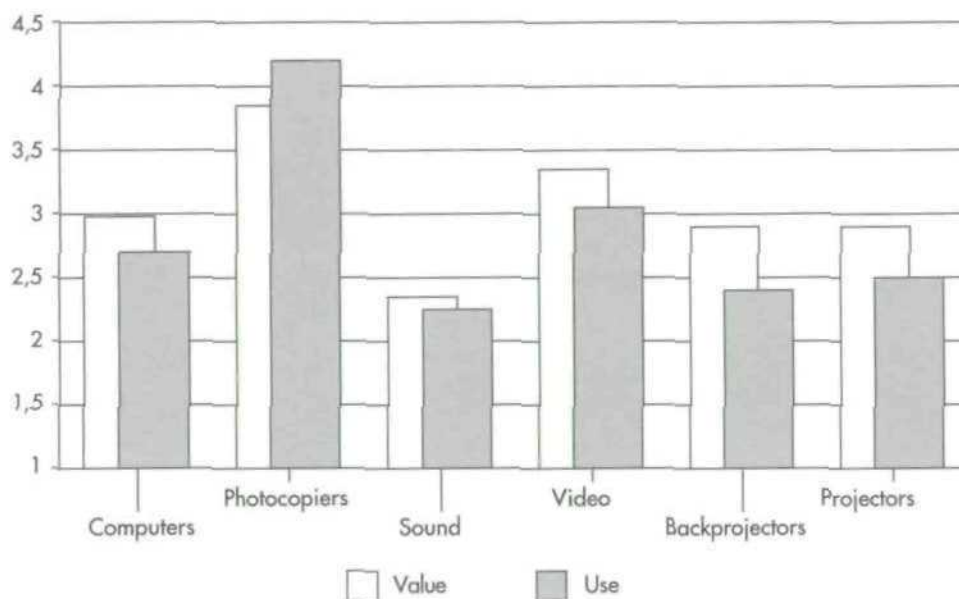


one and the other having programmes aimed at their dissemination and use, it seems that the result is not what was expected.

Improvisation in the transfer of the first cycle of ESO from Primary Schools to High Schools has not brought about improvement in some case, but rather a reduction in resources.

There seems to be a certain relation between availability and use of materials. The use of media may be performed according to their availability. The fact that personal material is the most frequently used is perhaps due to the available resources not being sufficient to deal with the demands of the school.

Graph 6. Appraisal and use of teaching materials



## The fundamental processes

### THE TEACHING PROCESS

The teaching process, to paraphrase one of the main defenders of the process-product paradigm, is that which teachers perform in the classroom with the collaboration by the students.

An educational reform involves an implicit change in teaching processes, a change in methodology. The change in contents is evident, although the methodological modification is too.

On the basis of the results of the survey, it is noted that the most significant methodologies of the ESO may be identified as follows:

- *Innovative and participational methodology.* This means the teacher has organisational flexibility to carry out the classes, frequently

in groups, and uses an active, participational methodology to encourage debates and exchange of opinions. This coincides to a great extent with the methodology proposed in the reform.

- *Conventional methodology.* This is aimed at alternating, in development of the themes, between explanation, answering the students' questions, individual work, homework and its correction in class. The main intention is to facilitate student learning.
- *Lecturing.* This consists of complete explanation of a theme without participation by the students, who just take notes and do exercises.

These three methodologies, as with the planning modes, coexist in ESO, with a relatively similar importance.

Two methodological problems the teachers point out as important ones are those arising from heterogeneous classes, without considering an adequate set of means and the difficulty Secondary Education teachers have to adapt to students in the first cycle of ESO.

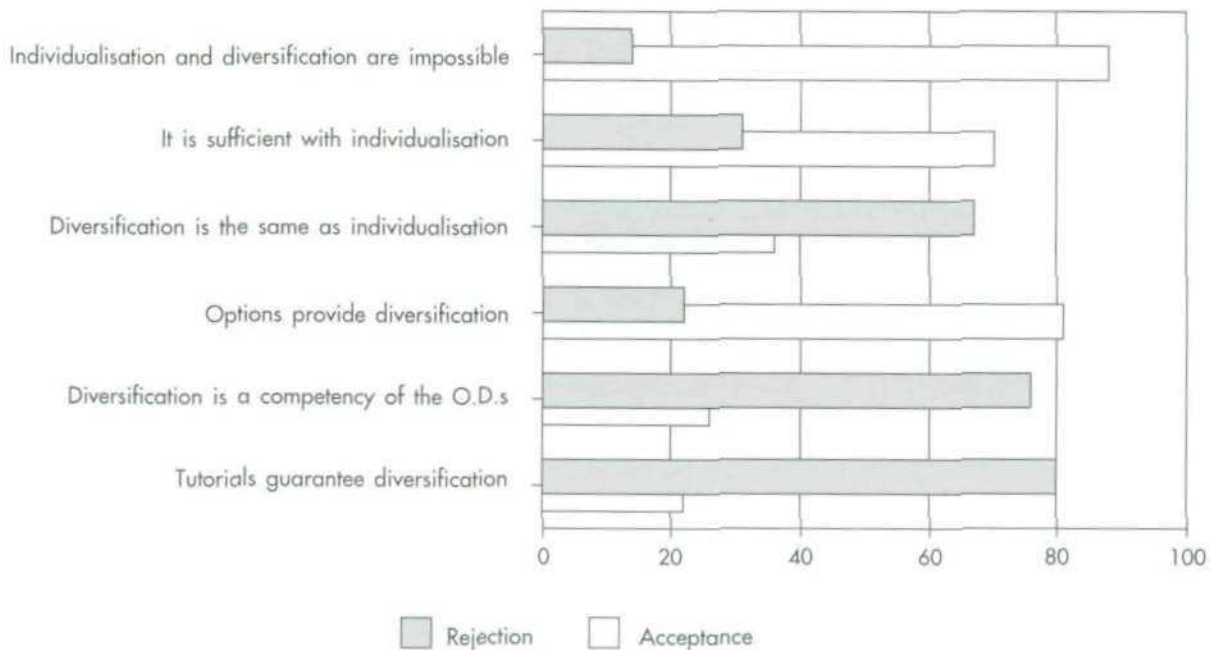
### DIVERSITY IN ESO

Diversity, closely related to the perspectives arising from consideration of this educational stage as a comprehensive school, seems to be a concept

that is not excessively clear to the teaching staff. Moreover, its operative projection - syllabus adaptations - gives rise to notable difficulties, without producing reasonably satisfactory results. The heterogeneousness of the students also gives rise to class management problems that are difficult to solve, above all for Secondary Education teachers, who are used to more homogeneous groups.

The opinion given by the teaching staff, in terms of acceptance and rejection, as to certain aspects of the diversity, may be seen in graph 7.

Graph 7. Teaching staff opinion of the aspects of diversification



The syllabus diversification and compensatory vocational education programmes do not seem to provide an efficient solution for the large number of students, partially as these are minority, and partially as this is offered too late (age 14-16).

The presence of a significant number of students who could be called "academic objectors" has been noted: those who openly declare their rejection of schooling, although they have no alternative but to attend school. They show a problem generated by the ESO, that has no solution at present.

### INTEGRATION IN ESO

Integration is a peculiar derivation of comprehensiveness and heterogeneity. It is understood as providing schooling to students with special educational needs at ordinary schools and is a controversial matter.

The balance one may make at present is that of a not theoretical too difficult acceptance, even with a global appraisal of the benefits the integration would provide not only the students integrated, but also the school in general Terms.

However, the practical difficulties arising in integration, due to which in many cases there has been a "savage integration", are becoming notably evident: there are not adequate resources, or sufficient support, there is no reduction of the ratio ...

The most evident difficulties are those related to students who are mentally handicapped, although this is not so in the case of students with special educational needs of a physical or neurological nature. Frequent reference is made in these cases comparing the support provided by the Spanish National Blind Organisation (ONCE) for students who are visually impaired, compared with *the rest of educational needs*.

A matter of special importance in certain regions is that of ethnic minorities. There is a punctual dimension and study is required in cases in which an ethnic minority relatively increases its presence at the school and "segregates" the remaining students. This situation frequently gives rise to school drop-outs among subjects who theoretically are majority, due to the cultural strength of practice with the majority and its strong group awareness.

## THE EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Evaluation may be described as the process and result of collecting information on a student or class group which, in comparison to a reference, is aimed at taking decisions that affect situations of teaching that student or group. These decisions are based on achieving the forecast objectives or intentions.

Six forms of evaluation have been identified:

- *Evaluation and promotion based on the Reform.* This involves acceptance of the most characteristic factors of evaluation in the educational reform implemented by the LOGSE. Greater importance is given to on-going evaluation, appraisal of the processes more than the results, evaluation of procedures and attitudes, to the scales of observation of the individual learning, to knowledge of the initial level of the students, to involvement by the family and to actual self-evaluation by the teaching staff. The evaluation tests also pay more attention to clarity of ideas, the ability to relate subjects, of synthesis, to

solve problems, of verbal expression and creativity.

- *Rationalist evaluation.* This is a viewpoint that concentrates more on technical models, assessing some innovative aspects. It is not considered to be of special interest to evaluate students while working on each one of the themes and its is based to a greater extent, to evaluate such learning, on the average level of the group. It considers that evaluation must concentrate on the conceptual contents and not on the attitudes, values and standards.
- *Traditional evaluation.* Conventional examinations and tests are used to a greater extent to evaluate the students; it assesses the level of learning by the students against the text book or other syllabus materials. It also considers an initial and final examination it sufficient.
- *Product evaluation.* This refers to evaluation by observation and analysis of the student work and notebooks, and to individual work in class or at home.
- *Criteria evaluation and promotion.* This seems to agree better with the postulates of the educational reform as to evaluation and the criteria related to this set in the syllabus and *emphasised as the most important in teaching practice*, to assess the level of learning by each of the students, the objectives set in the planning, the criteria for evaluation and the promotion criteria agreed by the teaching staff board.

Evaluation thus forms a first level at which the contradictions between theoretical approaches and practical difficulties arise. This is the situation noted in this paper.

Theoretical acceptance of the principles of evaluation and promotion in ESO - criteria evaluation, team evaluation, consideration of concepts, procedures and values, functions and sense of the evaluation - have a global acceptance that must be classified positively by the teaching staff. However, there are a series of expressions of discontent as to the problems arising from application to the real situation. There is coexisting acceptance and explicit recognition of the formal difficulties involved in evaluation.

The problems the teachers note are, among others:

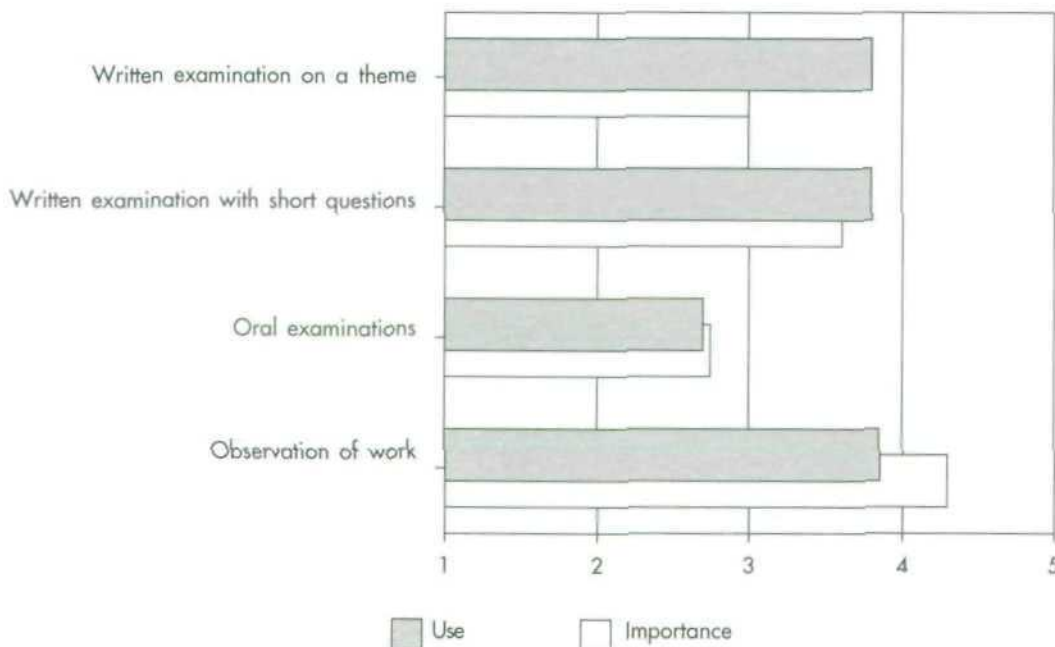


- Explicit teaching problems: such as:
  - Approximate observation of a hypothetical drop in student performance.
  - Lack of precision in the criteria for student evaluation and promotion.
  - Lack of accessible, usual instruments to evaluate attitudes, standards and values.
  - Ambiguity in the terms used to guide the teacher as to aspects to be considered in promotion. It is not easy to convert such formulas as "achieve the objectives of a cycle or course in global terms" to minimally operative factors.
  - The repercussions noted as to automatic promotion, due to the legal requisite which is predominantly valued as negative.
- Organisational problems, such as:
  - The confusing, protracted rules of assessment.
  - The difficulties involved in the formal and bureaucratic complexity of the documentation to be filled in.
  - The notable increase in the number of students to be evaluated. As the timetables of the groups are reduced, they have had the effect of extending the number of groups of students to be attended by each teacher to maintain the lecturing hours. Thus, the number of evaluations is increased.
  - The difficulties in coordination between High Schools and Primary Schools which teach ESO.

To sum up, it seems that theoretical acceptance of the innovating approaches to evaluation do not have a clear correlation in modification of the modes and techniques to be evaluated.

Information has been obtained on the importance and use the teaching staff gives to and makes of, respectively, of four evaluation procedures. Observation is the most important procedure, way ahead of the rest. However, observation and written examinations perform the same purpose. One must point out that verbal examination rates very low and, thus, is scarcely used to evaluate the students (graph 8).

Graph 8. Importance and use of different procedures



## The academic environment

### THE ATMOSPHERE AND ACADEMIC CULTURE

Academic conflict is a problem that concerns the teaching staff. There are some causes that go beyond strictly academic problems: the problems of present day youth, the lack of labour perspectives and consequent devaluation of effort ...

Other causes may be found within the school: the overcrowding of schools linked to what may be called the phenomenon of "school transplantation".

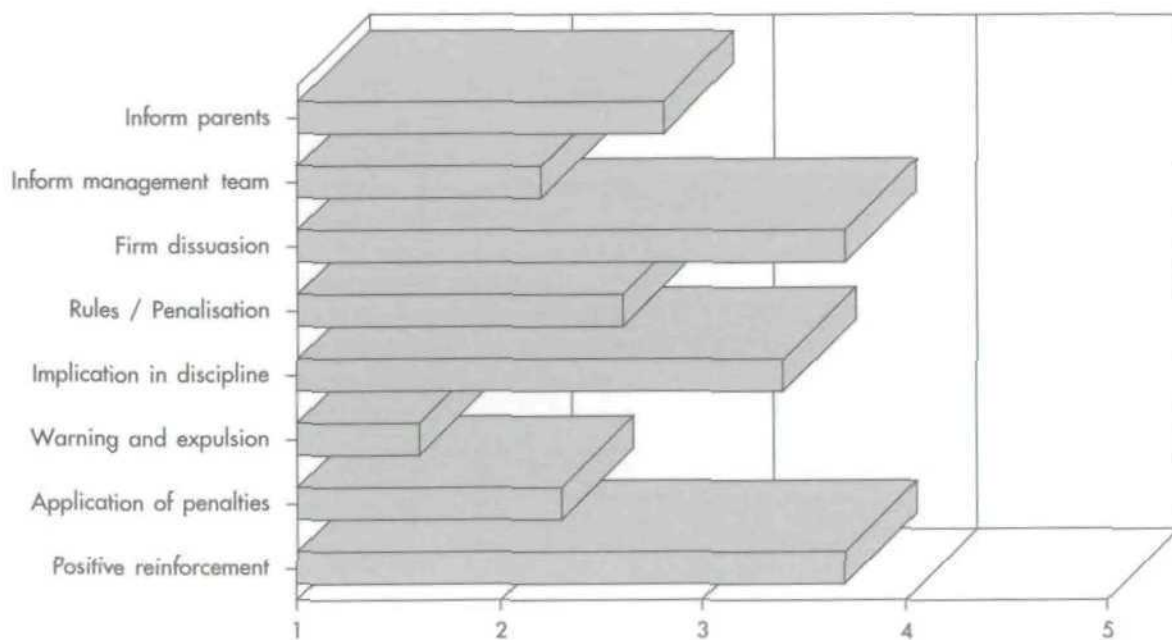
The transfer - transplantation - of students from the previous second cycle of General Basic Education (EGB) to the present Secondary Education Institutes (High Schools) involves a quite significant modification in the elements of the social-educational context. High Schools are too complex and, almost always, too large, even overcrowded, where anonymity may aid anti-social behaviour. On the other hand, the concurrence of much older students, with very different activities and habits, due to the age difference, leads

to a certain sense of emulation and even of competition. Students aged 12 share the facilities with 18 and even 20 year old students. The "transplanted" student may tend to emulate students in the upper years. To all this one must add the atmosphere the so-called "academic objectors" may bring about.

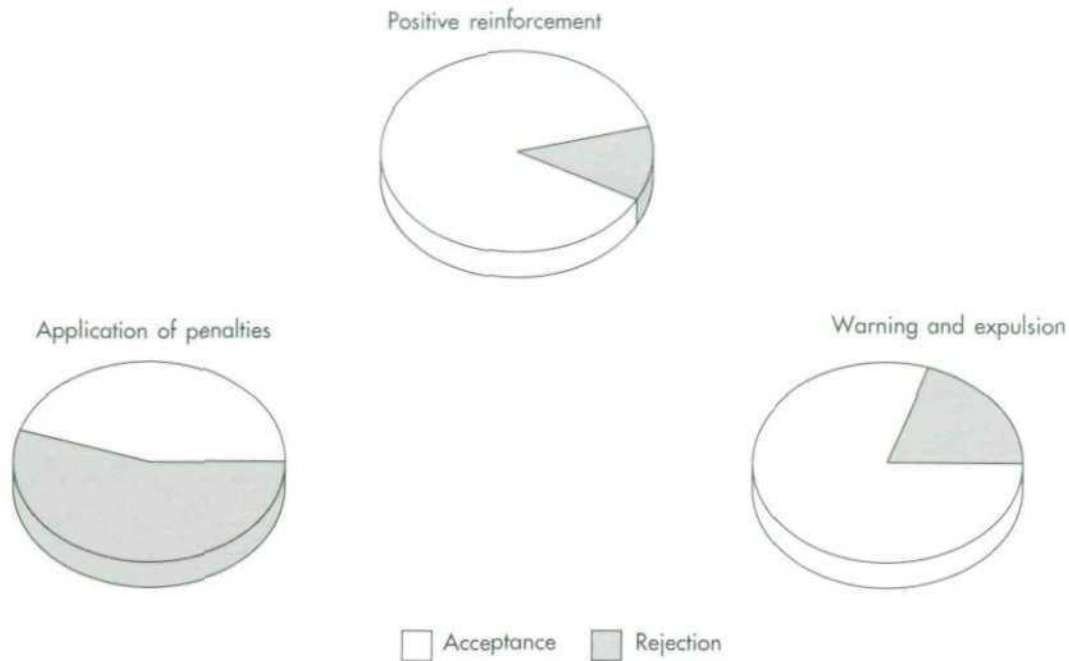
These situations give rise to difficulties that, on occasions, are considered extremely severe by the teacher. Inhibition is sometimes related to concern and even, in very specific cases, to fear. There is an awareness that the internal rules of the schools do not provide an answer to these problems. On the other hand, the diverse situations have a modulated presence according to the social and cultural surroundings of the school concerned.

The procedures the teaching staff uses to maintain discipline in class and restore order are shown in graphs 9 and 10 respectively. As may be seen, firm dissuasion is the most frequently used procedure to restore order. Warnings and expulsion are lower rated than all the other disciplinary resources. Positive reinforcement and implication of the group in discipline are very highly rated.

Graph 9. Frequency of use of procedures to maintain discipline



Graph 10. Most frequent procedures to restore order



From the point of view of the atmosphere among the teachers, a trend towards cooperative culture is noted, although emphasising the difficulties for team work according to time limitations.

Parent-Teacher relations have changed substantially. Parents have become "customers" of the school, with a whole series of modifications in behaviours and relations with the teachers, the most significant of which are usually their demanding requests and unconditional support for their child.

### THE MEANS OF SUPPORT AND FACILITATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL TASK FOR THE TEACHING STAFF

A greater attention and orientation is requested for the teaching tasks. The appraisal of the bodies that traditionally performed such tasks is not excessively high. Two bodies for which notably high hopes have been created are the Departments of Orientation and the Pedagogical Coordination Committee.

The Orientation Departments are required to define their functions and specify their action and obligations from a more pragmatic point of view. The position they hold and the activities they carry out change significantly from school to school. In spite of this, as may be seen in graph 11, the average rating of the different functions performed by the Department of Orientation exceeds the category of "important".

There is critical recognition that a fair part of the energy of the management team is taken up by establishing order, that detracts from other aspects related to planning and pedagogical improvement.

The Reform encourages the activity of pedagogical planning performed within a newly created specific body: the Pedagogical Coordination Committee, becoming one of the instruments in which the greatest hopes are placed. In general terms, it is an acceptance of possibilities, more than an appraisal of reality, as it has hardly had time to perform.

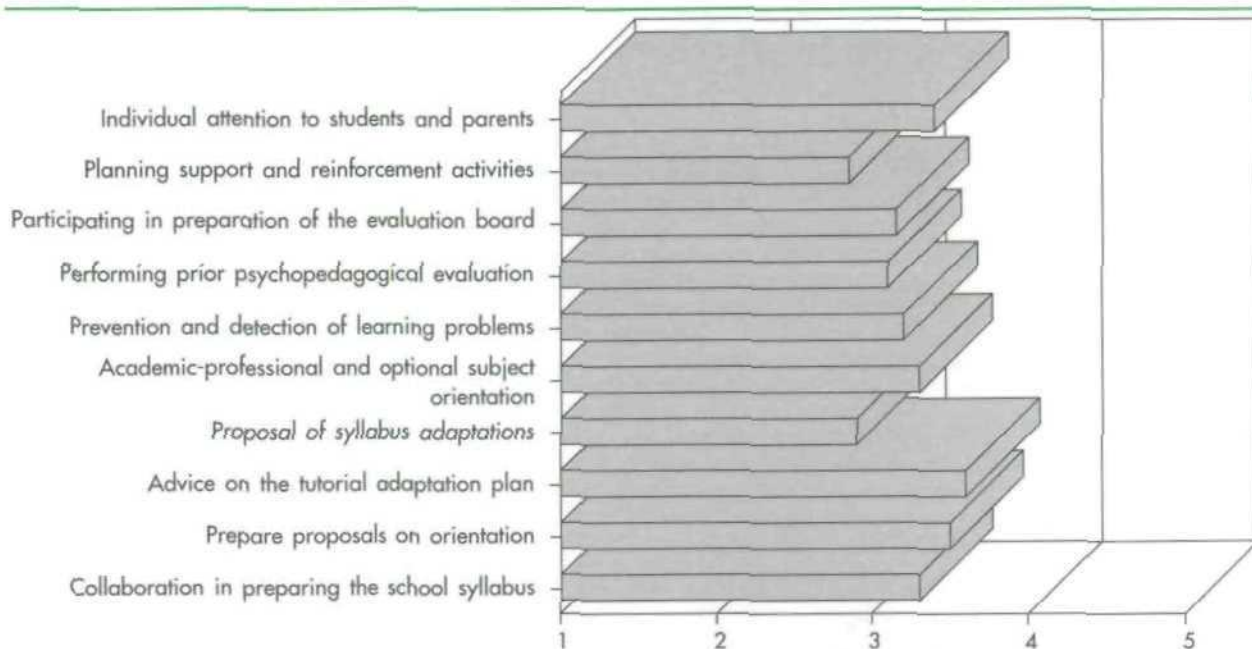
The teaching staff also stated its degree of agreement with a series of items related to the tutorials and the function of the tutor. As shown in graph 12, it considers tutorial indispensable in



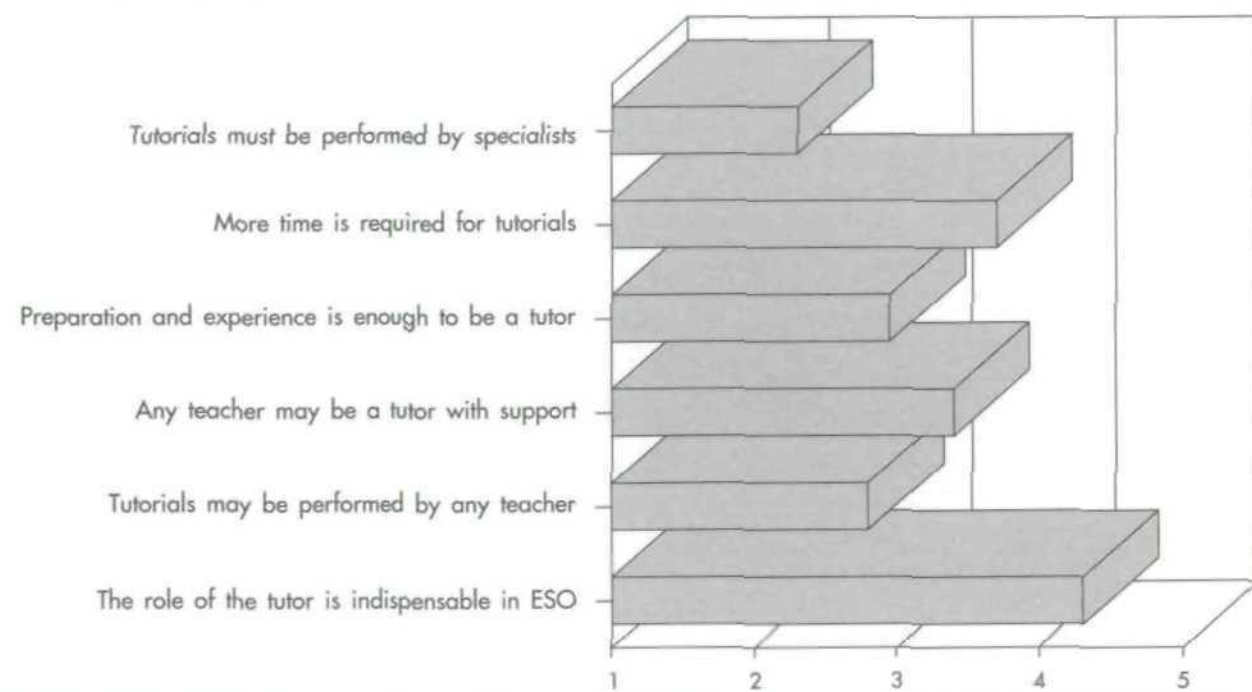
this phase of education, which requires more time to be dedicated to it, and must be performed by the actual teaching staff, with the advice or support of an orientation officer. The opinions between agreement and disagreement range from

those who consider the teaching staff sufficiently able to act as tutor, that the tutorial should be performed exclusively by the teaching staff or, on the contrary, by specialists in psychology or pedagogy.

Graph 11. Appraisal of the Orientation Department



Graph 12. The teachers' opinion as to tutorials



Lastly, the teachers mentioned a series of items lacking at schools which they understand may be the causes for the drop in student performance and teaching quality.

The demands for resources that guarantee a minimum of teaching quality are broken down into personal factors and material facilities. Some of the demands are as follows:

- Sufficient teaching staff at schools so the ratio is not a desire or a “statistical reality”, but has an operative, realistic projection.
- Provision of support teaching staff.
- Increase in the quality of tutorials, through sufficient valuation and recognition of the time spent.
- Greater attention to providing material resources, such as:
  - Increase in the resources and teaching material for each subject.
  - Encouraging creation of specific halls for each area.
  - Creation of sufficiently flexible, versatile spaces at schools.

## Differences according to school

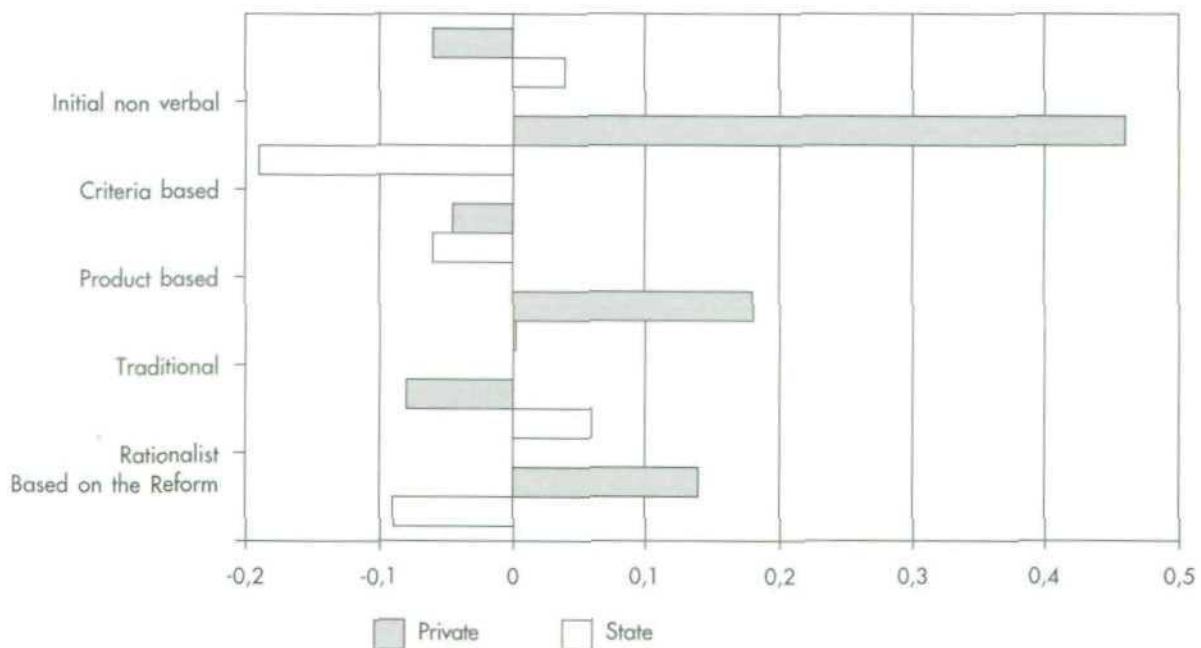
### DIFFERENCES BASED ON HOLDERSHIP. THE INTERSCHOOL CULTURE

There are differences provided by different dominant subcultures at privately held schools and public schools.

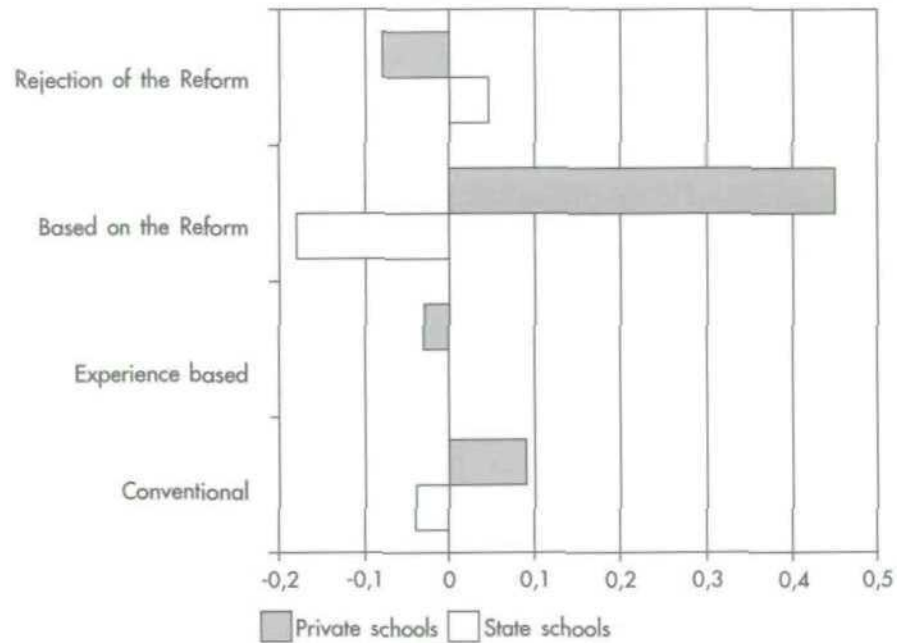
Teachers at private schools are noted to teach on the basis of the instrumental areas and conceptual contents. Greater attention is paid to the officially set planning modes (educational project, syllabus, etc.) as graph 13 shows.

They use and value the texts books more. They have more resources available. They have a greater acceptance of syllabus adaptation and strategies to attend to diversity. They bid in a more determined way on integration of students with special educational needs. They favour evaluation and promotion of students based on the Reform, although their background is that of traditional evaluation and criteria promotion evaluation (graph 14).

Graph 13. Differences in evaluation, according to type of school



Graph 14. Differences in subject planning by holdership



The opinion is that there is a "functional atmosphere" in these schools consisting of greater use of a discipline based on positive reinforcement. These also express a "cultural optimism" which is defined by a lesser amount of disciplinary problems and a greater interest by the parents in the educational process of their children. Lastly, they have a much greater appreciation of the orientation departments as support from the *institutional bodies and consider tutorials an inherently function for which the teachers are sufficiently qualified.*

State schools value flexible content less, and seem to have greater difficulties in bringing about integration of students with special educational needs, are more in favour of an evaluation based on conceptual contents.

The teaching staff at state schools clearly shows its posture of greater separation from the supposed reality portrayed in the educational reform. The teachers at privately owned schools show a greater involvement in the reform approach.

These notes may be used to describe two different cultures, two different ways of understanding teaching. They are two types of interpretation and intervention in reality, which exist independently, one from the other. There are differences

between schools, in which contacts between teachers are purely conjunctural.

### MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS. INTERSCHOOL CULTURE

The situation between male and female teachers is different. The interaction is more intense. They are relations within the school. Their functionality as to the need for a certain coordination seems to be greater. Moreover, the differences are not so intense.

Women show themselves to be better innovators, value the general elements of the contents and objectives of the reform and the instrumental areas better. They have a better appraisal of conventional along with experience based programming (graph 15). They have a greater appraisal of text books and thus use them more and optimise the available resources. They use more than one conventional methodology. They are in favour of evaluation and promotion based on reform, also of criterias and, lastly, of traditional evaluation.

Male teachers have a more traditional view of academic reality and accept the Reform proposals related to subject planning less. They are more in favour of lecturing and product evaluation (graph 16).

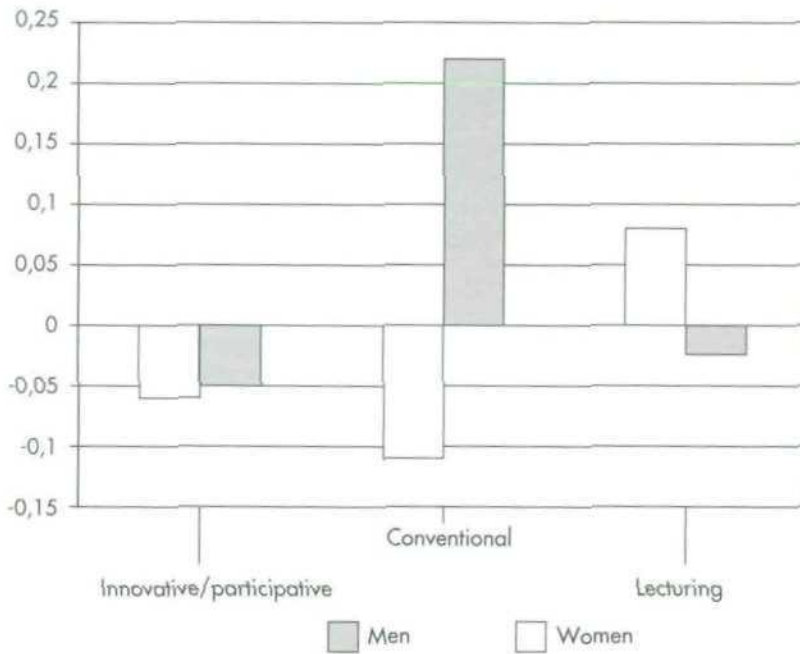


The cultural differences between these two groups, except in these aspects, are much more contrasted

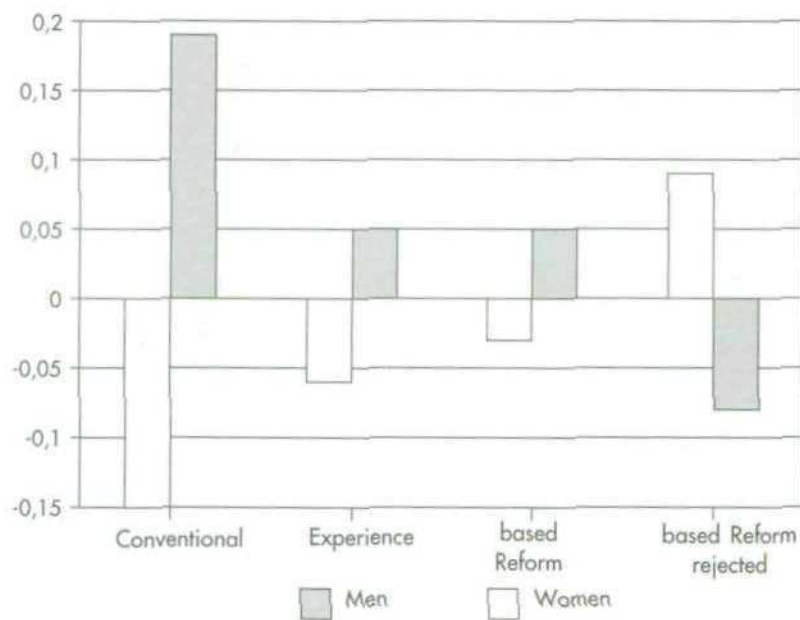
One may raise a series of questions based on this analysis of two lines of teacher approach. Perhaps the central matter may be to what extent

the educational system accepts disagreement between its groups as an optimising factor. It also seems that the "margins for tolerance", the slack that may be assumed, is greater in cases of disagreement between schools than in cases within a school.

Graph 15. Averages obtained in methodologies by sex



Graph 16. Differences in subject planning by sex



The problem consists of evaluating those margins for tolerance.

### The Autonomous Regions

The differences that may arise between the different Autonomous Regions, as well as between these and the heterogeneous set called the "Ministry of Education and Culture Territory" are not as important as those which arise between different types of teachers. There are differences between schools. Relations between Secondary Education teachers, Primary School teachers assigned to ESO and Vocational Training Technical Teachers are interschool differences, differences between sets that are physically much nearer.

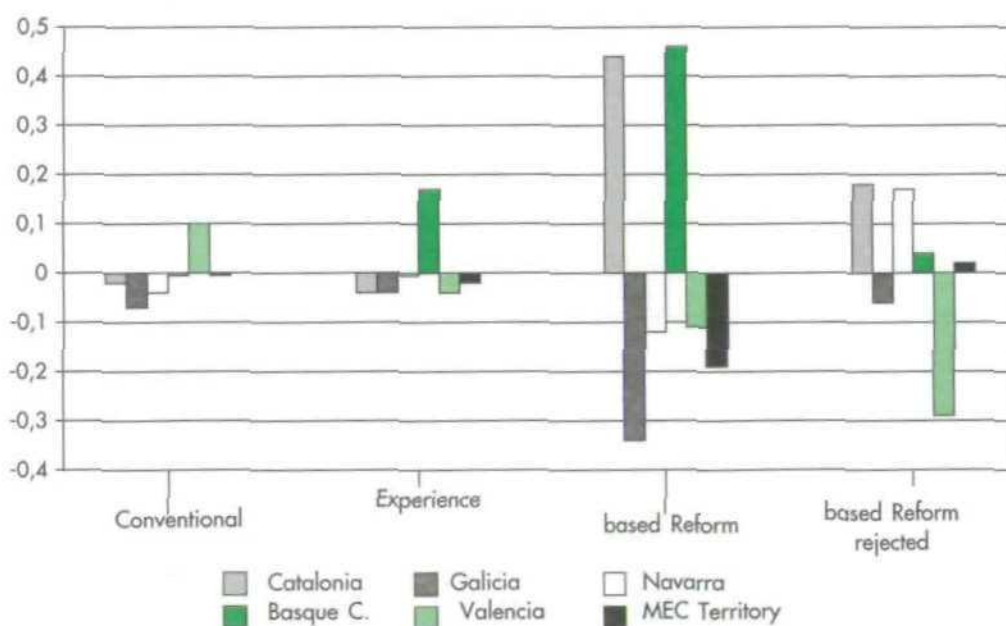
From the point of view of groups by Autonomous Regions, there seem to be scarce differences in the aspects related to evaluation and acceptance of the theoretical components of the educational reform. Galicia seems to accept the intentions expressed in the syllabus the most, the same as Catalonia. However, the former has less acceptance of the convenience of flexible

contents and the latter does not have such a positive opinion of integration of students with special educational needs. The greatest discrepancies when planning based on the reform arise between Catalonia and the Basque Country, which are more favourable to such planning, and Galicia and the MEC Territory, that are the least favourable (graph 17). The Basque Country and Valencia are the regions that most favour an innovative and participative methodology and Valencia the least in favour of lecturing. The teachers in the "MEC Territory" accept the institutional advisory bodies, but not the intentions of the LOGSE.

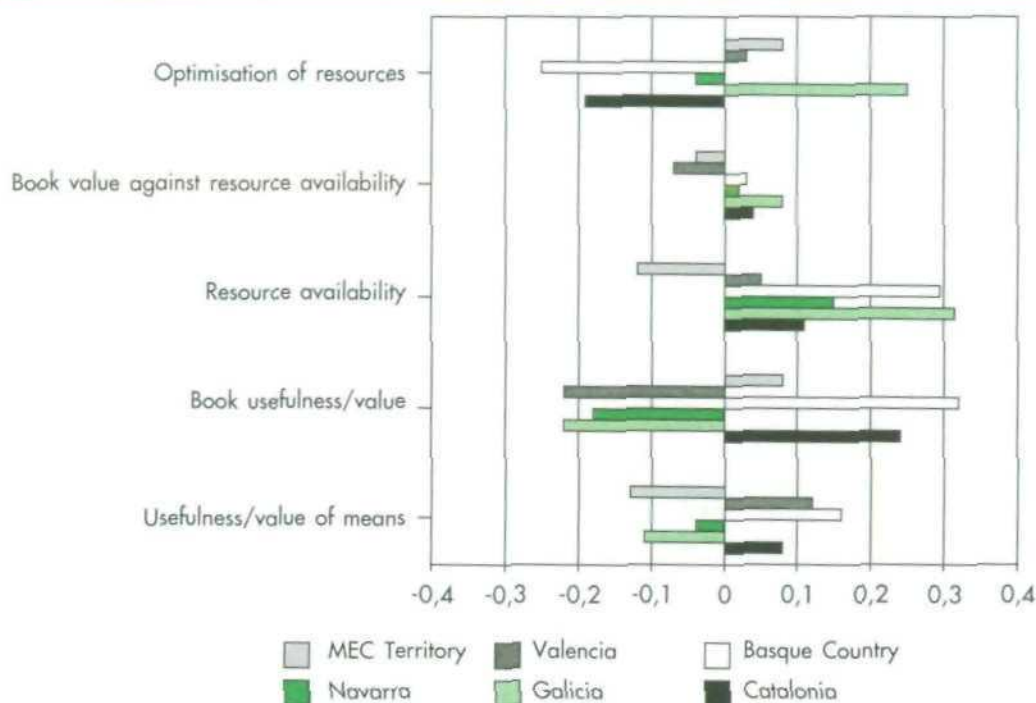
The differences, however, are more evidently shown by the use of teaching techniques and resources. In this sense, the teachers in the Basque Country are those with the greatest appreciation of the technical elements forming the syllabus that are innovative in nature, followed by teachers from Valencia. Galicia and the MEC territory have the greatest appreciation of the traditional and conventional means and resources (graph 18).

The characteristics of the differences and their interschool nature are the prevailing factors of dimension appraisal by Autonomous Regions.

Graph 17. Differences in subject planning by Autonomous Regions



Graph 18. Differences in use/appraisal of resources by Autonomous Region



## Differences in approach

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Appraisals of the remaining groups of teachers supposes prior consideration of the differences within the schools. The differences due to experience are not excessive. On the contrary to what was initially expected, a technically more innovative talent was noted among the older teachers with more than 20 years experience.

The text book is highly valued and used by teachers with more than 20 years experience, while to a lesser extent than among those who have only been teaching for five years. Teachers with more than 20 years experience are more willing to accept and carry out syllabus adaptations and join the less experienced in the search for strategies to provide diversity (graph 19). These teachers are also those with the greatest appraisal of traditional and criteria evaluation (graph 20), the functional atmosphere and advisory bodies of an institutional nature. There is scarce difference in profile between the remaining categories by experience.

## TEACHERS AND AREAS

Organisation of teachers in groups according to the areas taught gives rise to considerable differences.

The distances are not expressive in such aspects as generic valuation of teaching objectives and contents, with the sole exception of the discrepancy already stated between appraisal of the importance of each area and its timetable, which was stated above (graphs 2 and 3). This disparity has no projection on the results at statistical level.

There is no significant difference between the groups by subjects in the planning instruments and modes, nor in appraisal of comprehensiveness. The differences appear intensely in the facets related to resources, the teaching and evaluation activities and processes. This calls ones attention to the problem of special teaching methods.

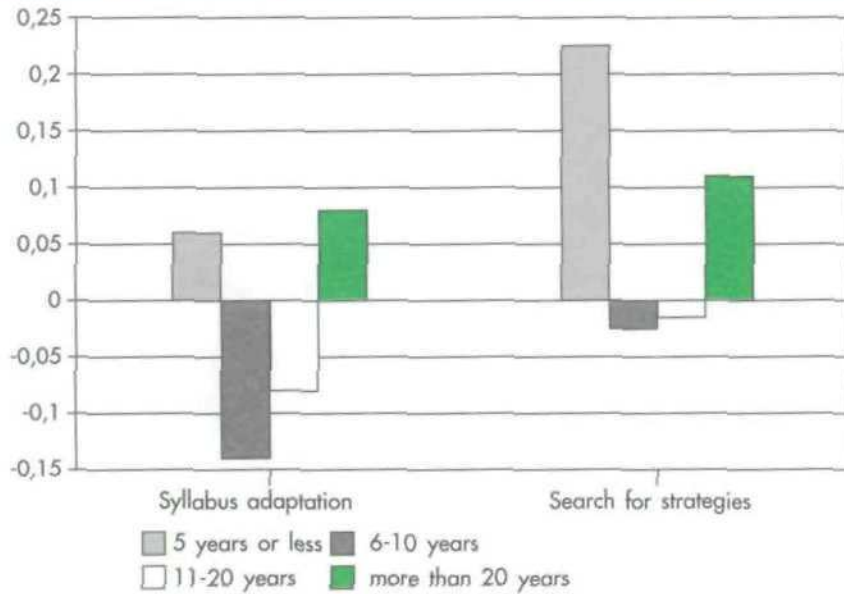
Mathematics teachers are those who value and use material means the least: audiovisual, photocopiers, computers ..., and those who use them most are those in the area of technology. Text books, above all according to the greater or lesser



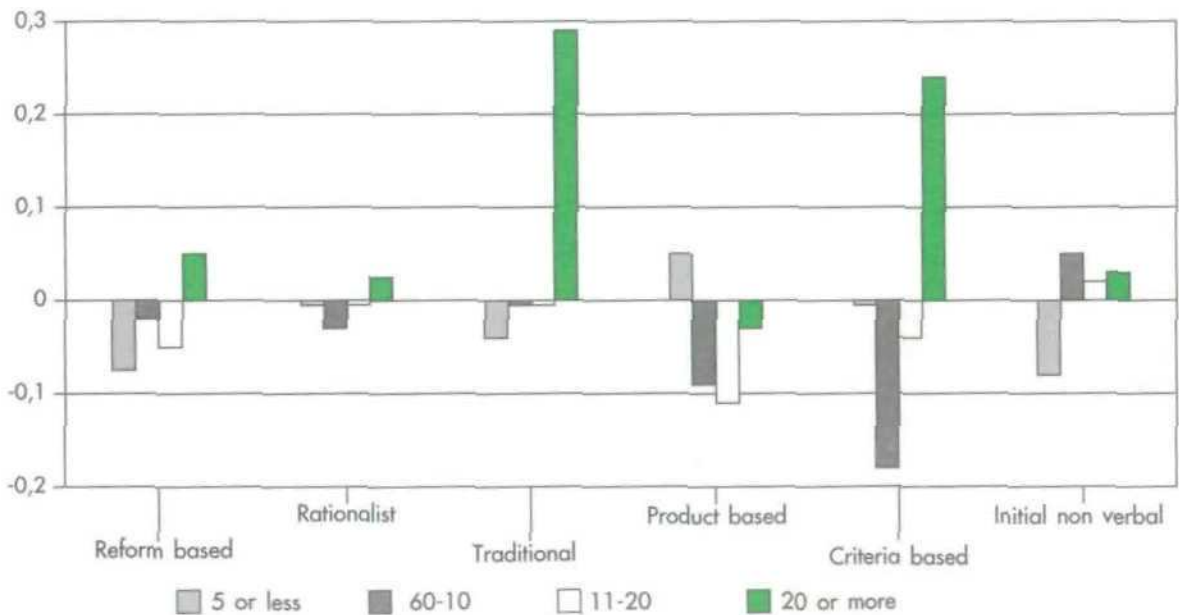
availability of means, are more valued and used by language teachers.

Those most in favour of an innovative and participative methodology are Technology teach-

Graph 19. Differences due to diverse teaching experience



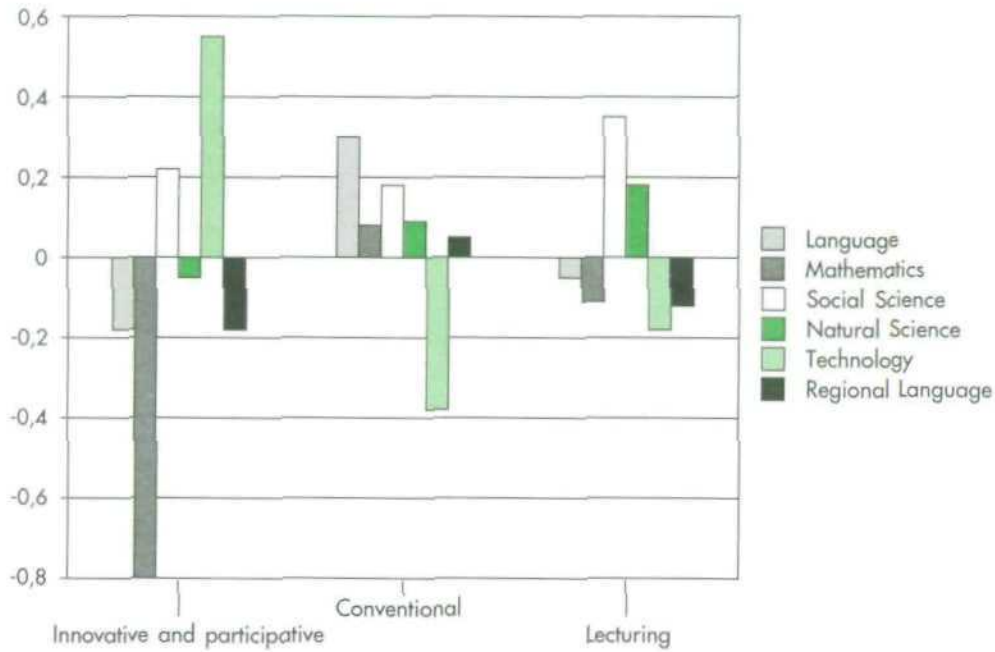
Graph 20. Differences in evaluation by experience



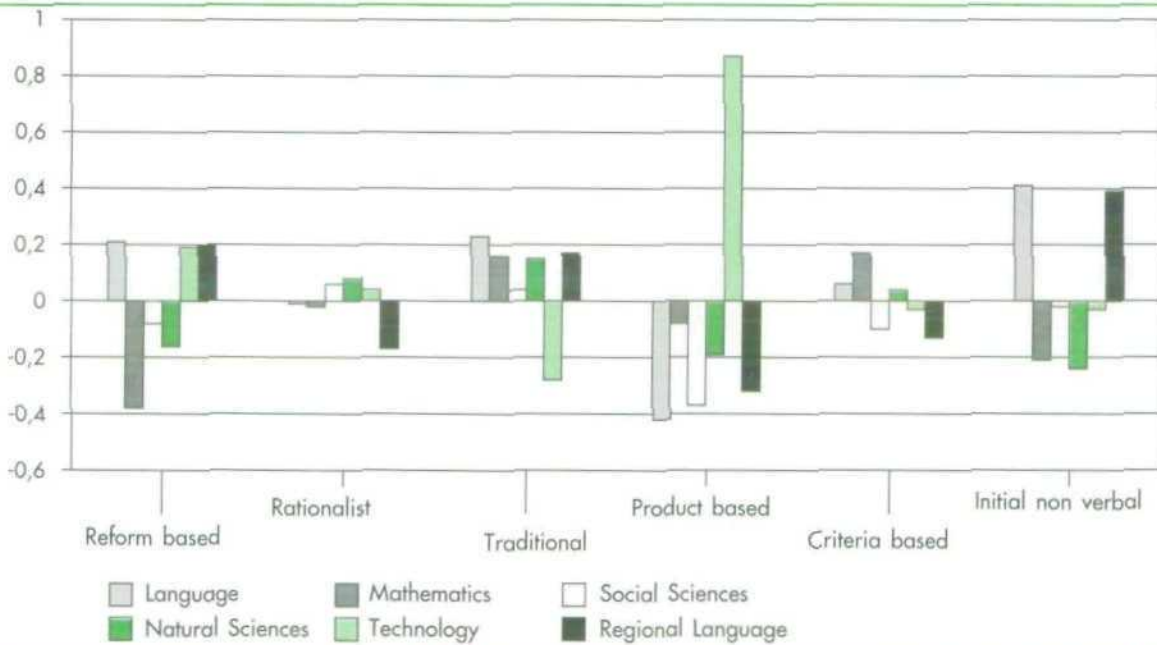
ers, and the least Mathematics teachers. Those most in favour of a conventional methodology are Language teachers and the least, Technology ones. The teaching staff which is most in favour of lecturing is that in Social Sciences (graph 21).

Mathematics teachers are less inclined and promotion of students based on the reform. The most favorable to traditional evaluation are Language teachers and the least Technology teachers, who are openly in favour of product evaluation (graph 21).

Graph 21. Differences in methodologies by areas



Graph 22. Differences in evaluation by area taught



## THE TEACHING GROUPS

The most important differences between the groups of teachers come to rise in the comparison of the results according to the professional groups of origin. As aforementioned, the ESO has three coexisting groups according to the administrative body of origin and, even as to qualifications: Primary School Teachers, Secondary School Teachers and Vocational Training Technical Teachers.

The greatest contrast is that between the group of Secondary Teachers and Primary Teachers. If one considers the concordances or discrepancies arising among the 31 dimensions obtained, in an evaluation that is essentially approximate in nature, the correlation between Primary and Secondary Teachers is negative, with a value that exceeds 0.60. This is a clearly divergent view between the two groups mentioned. It is not an exaggeration to conclude that the organisational culture of one group and the other, in terms of size, is very far apart.

The Primary School teacher has a greater appreciation - in a significantly different way to the Secondary School teacher - of the intentions of the LOGSE syllabus, flexibility of content (graph 23) and programming based on the reform. Lecturing as a teaching technique is accepted by secondary but not by primary school teachers. The latter have a positive appreciation of the factor known as "conventional methodology", while the others value it less. To be in favour of that methodology, according to the definition of the relevant dimension, implies acceptance of effort by the teacher to facilitate the students' learning.

Primary teachers are more inclined to accept and perform syllabus adaptations and to accept integration than secondary teachers. From the viewpoint of evaluation and promotion, primary teachers are more in favour of evaluation and promotion based on the Reform and of performing a criteria based evaluation (graph 24). Lastly, they have a greater appreciation of provision and optimization of means and resources and understand the tutorial to be a fundamental teaching function in this stage of education that they consider themselves sufficiently qualified for.

The correlation between Primary Teachers and Vocational Training Technical Teachers is similar in nature. The discordancies are similar to those seen between primary and secondary school teach-

ers. They also hold clashing, distant postures. However, there is no common ground between Vocational Training Technical Teachers and Secondary Education Teachers either: there is practically no correlation between these two groups.

The presence of three professional cultures that are so different may give rise to peculiar problems. The secondary culture is regulated, as may be seen, predominantly by transmission rather than participation, due to a sense that is selective more than generalising, a vision requiring effort by the student rather than facilitating matters. These adjectives, as a simple and scarcely detailed contrast, are nothing more than a synthesis of the differences in second level factor marks detected through analysis of the variance. Moreover, they have a reference one may consider identifiable as traditional features of a propaedeutic Baccalaureate for other levels of education. To compare ESO with Basic General Education (EGB) or Primary Education is not a whimsical identification. ESO and Primary are levels of obligatory education. Baccalaureate is especially aimed at achieving "entrance to higher education".

If these disparities are added to the series of differences based on professional functions to be performed by some and others, in remunerations and working timetable, internal discrepancies within the schools could lead to situations of cultural fragmentation: it would be a derivation caused by the relatively low permeability between the groups rendered, the different ways of working noted, and the presence of a certain "group awareness".

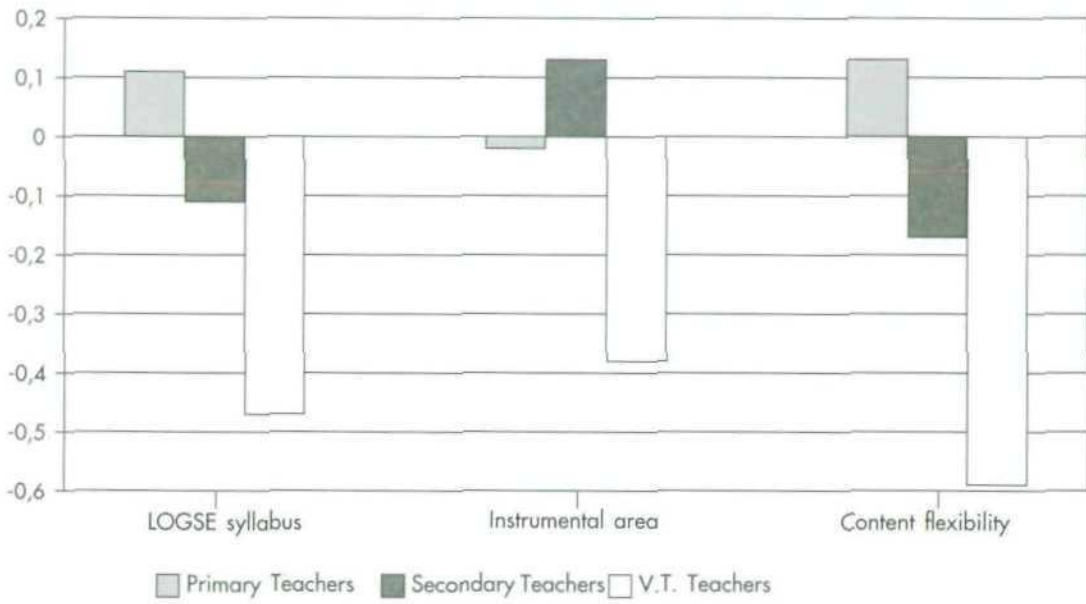
Yet another factor must be pointed out. Secondary school teachers are not only caught up in the conflict mentioned within the schools. Their simultaneous involvement with the two modes of Secondary Education, the Obligatory and Baccalaureate, may require them to perform difficult double natured professional duties. One would have to perform individual evaluation of a session in Baccalaureate and a group one for those in ESO. One would have to act in a participative and facilitating manner in one class and transmissive and selective in another.

This almost instant change in the modal context is not easy to assimilate.

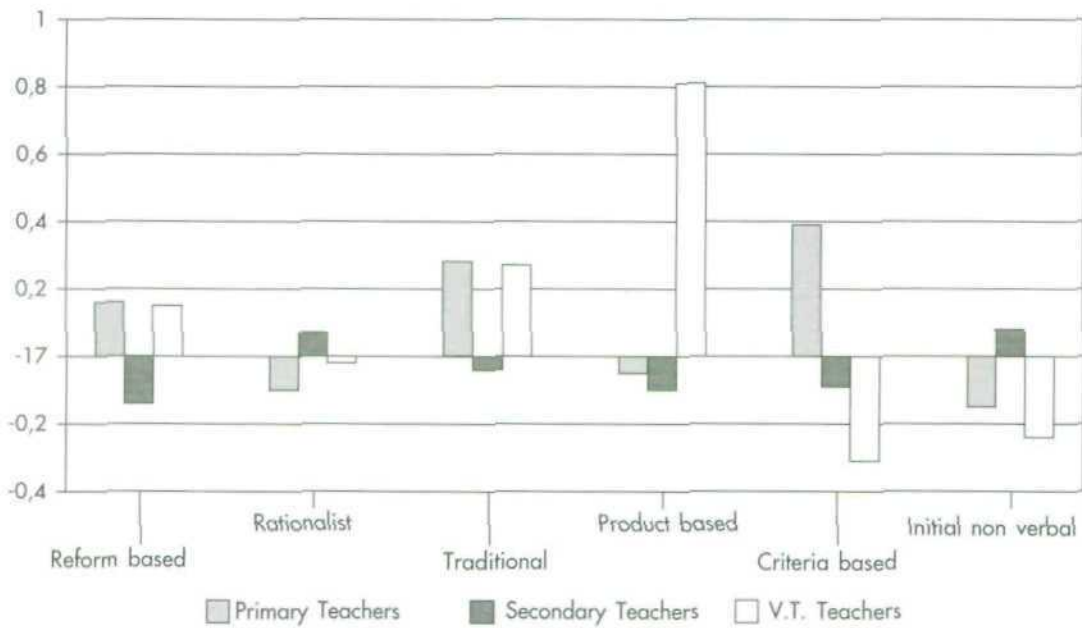
This problem of coexistence of subcultures within the school may be an interesting way of enriching the group of teachers, if it may be adequately managed. However, it may also become the basis for a concerning disfunction.



Graph 23. Differences in "intentions" of the Reform by teaching groups



Graph 24. Differences in evaluation according to the teaching group





# School functioning

# 4

## Introduction

The general objective of Committee number III was to analyze *where and under what circumstances students learn*, among those presently in schooling at Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO) level.

## INITIAL DECISIONS

The first task the Committee had consisted of setting the scope of the research, due to it being called "Educational administration and school management". The Committee based its activities on the request by the INCE to attend to "urgent needs" and decided that the principle of realism should preside its actions and work. From the first meetings, all the members of the Committee, whether representatives of the Autonomous Regions that are educationally devolved, or those within the management scope of the Ministry of Education and Culture, noted that full evaluation of the educational administration and school management would be almost an impossible task to carry out, as in order to proceed and collect information one would have to obtain from each territorial member of the educational system, and one could fall into a dynamic of continual initial asking or uncertainty.

The diversity and heterogeneousness of the situations to be considered in the description and evaluation of the different Administrations responsible for education, as well as the complexity provided by the organisation of the educational system, due to their relation and dependence on educational policy, administration, planning and legislation, showed that study of the Educational Administration in itself is a unique field for research, far from approaching it as just another aspect of what is intended. It is from schools, that is to say, from the microsystems, that one may approach the matter of "where and in what circumstances do students learn".

Having made all the preceding considerations, and also taking into account the scopes that the press specialised in educational matters and the rest of the media take as major topics, Committee III took the decision to analyze the following three categories: **Management, participation and life at schools**, so it emphasised the proposal made as to this in the name of the Committee, which changed "School administration and management" to **School functioning**.

## METHODOLOGICAL LINES

The Report issued by Committee III under the name of *School functioning* contains abundant preliminary information on the methodology used (preparation of the questionnaire, selection of the sample, application, analysis, drafting the report, etc.). We refer readers who are interested in further details to the actual report.

For the purposes of this global report, it will be sufficient to provide some brief particulars to give an idea of the main lines agreed by the Committee.

As to the diagnosis instrument, a questionnaire was drawn up with 51 items, chosen from the more than 200 that initially comprised it. It consists of three parts: the management function, participation and life at schools, plus the complementary sheet of questions for the principal. It contains two introductory parts to identify the groups surveyed and the school, respectively. As to the specific persons involved, the questionnaire was anonymous, although it requested some personal particulars required for research purposes, such as the post held, age, sex and seniority at the school.

The population studied was comprised of all the state and endorsed private schools in the State of Spain where at least one year of Obligatory Secondary Education is taught. The state and private schools have a homogeneous organisation and functioning that allows joint study at these of



the chosen theme cores. The data was provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture and by each one of the Autonomous Regions with full competencies in educational matters. To set the sample service, the consideration was for the number of schools to be sufficiently large to guarantee a representative sample nationwide, although, in turn, to keep it within reasonable limits to make the process of administration of the diagnosis instrument, data collection and later processing feasible. The Committee expressly excluded the sample representing each of the Autonomous Regions, because it preferred to deal with the study in general terms, without breakdown to Regional results or comparisons between the Regions.

With these criteria it agreed that the sample would consist of six hundred centres where Obligatory Secondary Education is taught, which is equivalent to 7.4% of the population of schools. To achieve adequate representation of the different types of schools included in the population studied, it decided to stratify the sample, considering the three variables relevant: territorial scope, juridical regime of the school (state/private) and educational level (primary/secondary).

As to the territorial scope, the strata were formed by area of management by the Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Regions with competencies in educational matters, except for Andalusia, which decided not to participate in the study. Within each territorial scope, it was agreed

to perform a proportional distribution of the sample in each one of the provinces, according to the respective numbers of centres.

Once the questionnaires and the administration instructions were prepared, the Autonomous Region of the Canaries decided to withdraw from the study, so 35 schools were removed from the original sample.

The resulting sample of 565 schools was considered sufficient from the technical point of view to represent the scope of the study: the set of the territory managed directly by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Autonomous Regions of Catalonia, Galicia, Navarra, the Basque Country and Valencia. For intervals with a reliability level of 95% considering each school as a sample unit, the new size of the sample gave rise to sampling errors of  $\pm 4.0\%$  in the percentages.

Also after designing the sample and preparing the questionnaires, the Autonomous Region of Catalonia decided to participate only in the aspects related to the management function and participation, but it withdrew from the studies related to life at schools alleging it could interfere with the studies on academic atmosphere being carried out by the Higher Council of Evaluation of Catalonia. Thus, the sample was limited to 495 schools for the study on school life.

Due to this, the sample of schools to which the questionnaires were finally applied was the following table:

Table 1. Sample of schools foreseen

Territorial Scope	Number of schools	
	Management function and participation	Life together at the schools
Andalusia	0	0
Canaries	0	0
Catalonia	70	0
Galicia	59	59
Navarra	6	6
Basque Country	25	25
Region of Valencia	89	80
MEC	316	316
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>495</b>

After determining the number of schools in each stratus in the different territorial scopes, the selection was performed by a random procedure among the schools fulfilling the specific categories for each stratus.

It was decided that each school would administer the questionnaire to ten persons from each of the sectors of the educational community. This number would provide knowledge of the opinion of all the sectors represented on the School Council, and also that of teachers who are not members of the Council, in order to compare the different points of view as to the matters studied. Specifically, the ten people selected in each case were the following:

- State schools: the principal, head of studies, a representative of the teachers on the School Council (SC), a representative of the Local Government on the SC, two representatives of the parents on the SC, two representatives of the students on the SC, the representative of the Administration and Services Personnel on the SC and a teacher who is not a member of the SC.
- Private schools: the principal, a representative of the holder of the school on the SC, the head of studies or person who holds the equivalent post, a representative of the teachers on the SC, two representatives of the parents on the SC, two representatives of the students on the SC, the representative of the Administration and Services Personnel on the SC and a teacher who is not a member of the SC.

As to the procedure to administer the surveys, this was assigned to the Inspectorate Service in the scope of MEC management, and also in the Autonomous Regions, except in Catalonia, where it was performed by mail.

The Committee prepared the instructions to administer the questionnaires, which were sent to all the persons in charge of administering them. Versions of the questionnaire were prepared in the relevant regional languages by the Autonomous Regions of Galicia, the Basque Country, Navarra, Catalonia and Valencia. The deadline to administer the questionnaires was 20th June 1997 and 30th June to return them to the INCE.

There were 4,661 responses to the 5,650 questionnaires administered, which is a global response rate of 80%.

The generalisation of the results may not be extended further than the population studied. The data analysis is aimed mainly at describing a situation and performing certain inferences within the inherent scientific framework of research of a descriptive and descriptive-correlational type.

On analyzing the data, one must bear in mind that no scientific hypotheses have been made as to identification of specific research problems and, thus, the aim is not to use the data to verify or confirm hypotheses within the framework of the hypothetical deductive method. The data from the questionnaire does not allow any kind of generalisation and even less provides a channel for generalisations that determine a cause-effect type relation. The aim is to obtain real descriptions of the

Table 2. Response rate

	Sample foreseen	Definitive sample	Schools who responded	
MEC Territory	316	316	300	(95%)
Andalusia	0	0	0	
Canaries	35	0	0	
Catalonia	70	70	56	(80%)
Galicia	59	59	58	(98%)
Basque Country	25	25	25	(100%)
Navarra	6	6	6	(100%)
Valencia	89	89	89	(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>(95%)</b>



management operation, participation and life at the schools. Far from reductionist, analytic approaches, the results of the questionnaire have been analyzed from the global perspective given by the territorial scope on which the research has been based, and considering that the sample used represents the population.

## Management and management function

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRINCIPAL

Most of the members who responded considered the principal should be chosen by the School Council (45%), or by the Teaching Staff (34%). There is also 13% who consider appointment by the holder of the school, who logically are from private schools. There are very few who consider direct appointment by the Educational Administration.

A greater percentage of teachers than in the rest of the sectors consider the principal should be chosen by the Teaching Staff (52% of the teachers). (See graph 1). On the other hand, the greatest percentages in favour of choice by the School Council are among the representatives of the Local Government, parents and principals (60%, 54% and 53% respectively). A significant 68% of the representatives of the holder of the school on the School Council favour the principal being appointed directly by the holder of the school.

There is a greater percentage of those in favour of the principal being chosen by the Teaching Staff at Primary Schools than at Secondary Schools (40% against 28%). On the contrary, the opinion that the principal must be appointed by the holder of the school is inverted (5% in Primary against 21% in Secondary).

There is a majority opinion (78%) that the term of office set for the principal is appropriate. Only 3% of the respondents consider the office of principal should be permanent.

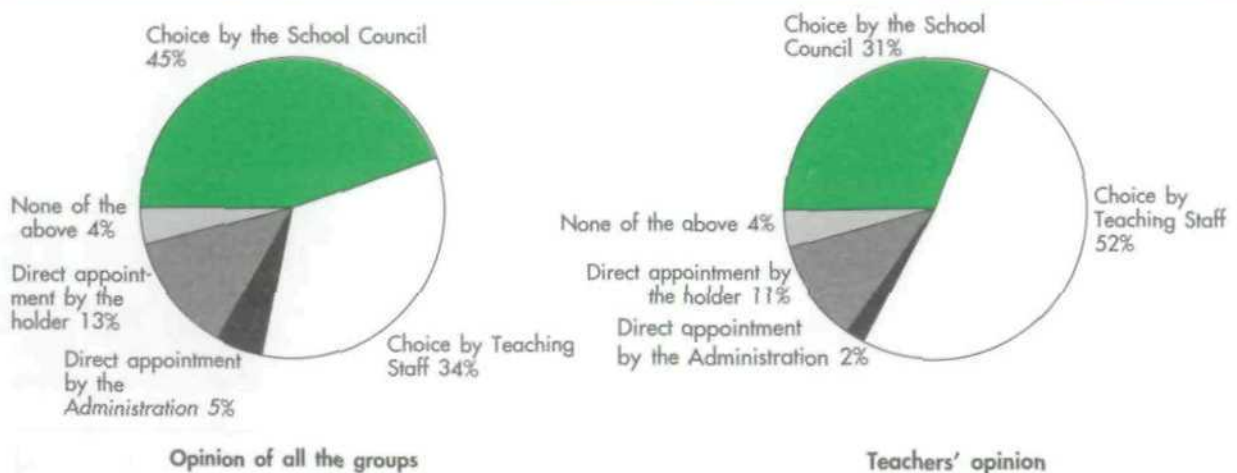
Only 19% of the respondents considered the principal should not teach. The rest consider the principal should spend part of his day teaching, either the same amount as other teachers (6%), or somewhat less (40%), or a short time (35%). That is to say, the majority (75%) consider the principal must spend some of his working day teaching, although less time than the rest of the teachers. The Heads of Study, Principals and representatives of the school holder are those more in favour of the principal teaching, although very little time (57%, 56% and 56%, respectively).

The majority opinion is that the principal must be a teacher from the same school (92% of the respondents affirm this).

87% of the answers state that the principal must receive specific vocational training, through more or less extensive activities; there are minor differences between groups, as may be seen in graph 2.

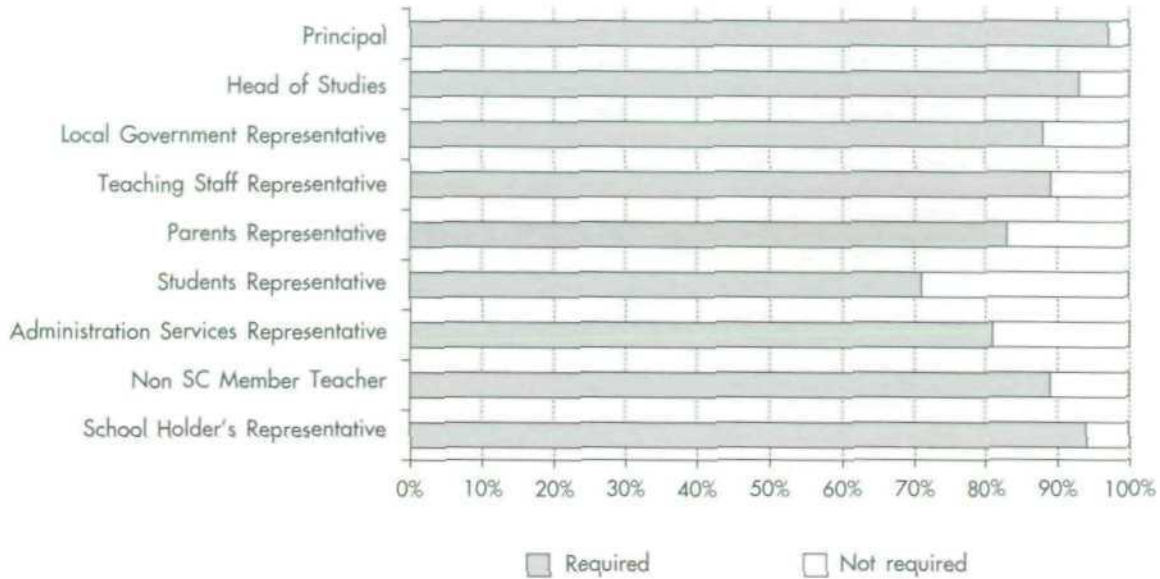
The training for principals may be obtained on a specific course, according to 61% of the respondents. Only 14% considered any long train-

Graph 1. What procedure do you consider appropriate to appoint the principal?





Graph 2. Must the principal receive vocational training?



ing activity, lasting 200 hours or more, convenient.

One must emphasise that the greatest percentages in favour of short vocational training are among the teaching staff (65%) and among the representatives of the school holder (70%), although a higher percentage consider long training activities, over 200 hours, necessary for principals. On the contrary, a greater percentage of students than other groups (29%) affirm that the principal need not specific training.

To sum up, the characteristics of the principal preferred by the majority are: principal chosen by the teachers at the school, with a term in office similar to the present one, who teaches but less than the other teachers, and who has had training for the post on a not very long specific course.

## DEGREE OF EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNCTIONING

The questionnaire included a question on the degree of efficiency of functioning of the School Council. 80% of the respondents are fairly or very much in agreement with the statement *The School Council at this school operates efficiently*. Only 3% do not agree to this at all. Overall, the functioning of

the School Councils has an average rating of 3.98 on a scale from 0 (do not agree at all) to 5 (agree very much).

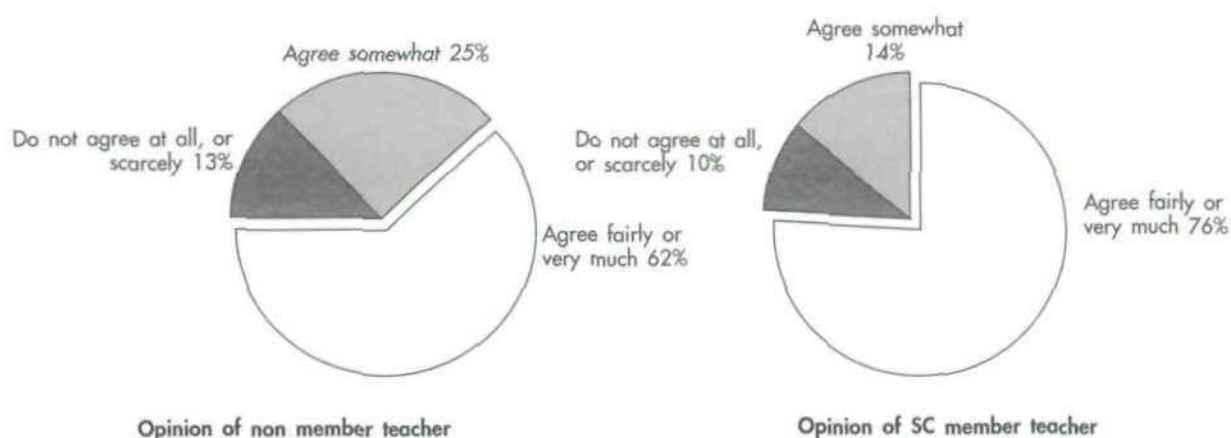
The representatives of the school holder, followed by the Administration and Services staff, are the groups that globally seem to agree most as to the efficient functioning of the School Council. On the contrary, teachers who are non members of the Council have a much lower average opinion, with significant differences compared with the rest of the groups, although most of them (63%) is very or fairly in agreement with the School Council functioning (See graph 3).

Considering the educational level, Secondary Education schools agree significantly more as to the efficient functioning of the School Council (average 4.06) than Primary Education schools (average 3.90). Moreover, small schools, (less than 380 students) and large schools (more than 650 students) agree more as to the efficient functioning of their School Councils than medium sized schools

## THE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

Seventeen questions were set in order to detect the degree to which actions related to manage-

Graph 3. Do you agree with the following affirmation: "The School Council at this school operates efficiently"?



ment functions are performed. For this purpose the respondents must express themselves, so at each school, while the principal responds as to his own actions, the rest of the respondents respond as to what they consider the principal does.

#### GENERAL EVALUATION OF THE DUTIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

All the member respondents had a positive opinion of the dedication by the principal to the duties evaluated. The arithmetic average of opinions range from 3,92 to 4,60 on a scale of 5. When the responses in the highest categories are grouped together ("a lot", "fairly") in this block they range from 74% to 96% of the estimates. One may thus conclude that the evaluation of the dedication to the duties stated by the principal is positive. Within this evaluation, the lowest average is that for dedication to "encourage training procedures for the teachers at the school" and the highest, for "availability to listen to suggestions" by the members of the school community (table 3).

It was noted that the most intense dedication by the principal was for duties related to higher bodies and those concerning school life. With less intensity (although not far behind) there are the duties of administration, management and improvement of the school and those concerning relations with families.

One must point out that the duties of the principal related to the teaching staff obtain the lowest average mark, although this itself is relatively high (with a value near to 4 on a scale of 1 to 5); these are the duties such as encouraging advantage to be taken of teacher skills, information on teaching and orientation efficiency, encouragement of team work, procedure generation and teacher training at the school.

#### DIFFERENCES IN APPRAISAL OF THE PRINCIPAL'S DUTIES BY THE SECTORS INVOLVED

As described above, the appraisal of the principal's duties by all the respondents lead to the general conclusion that the assessment is fairly high in practically all the duties on which an opinion was requested, although there are differences between these. However, in addition to these general particulars, it seems appropriate to refer to the estimates on these functions issued by the diverse sectors asked. In order to offer this sectorial viewpoint, the differences in appraisal of the different management functions have been noted among the following sets of groups:

- Assessment of the principal (self-assessment), compared with the rest of the member respondents (hetero-assessment).



Table 3. Evaluation of all the principal's duties

Principal's duties	Average opinion	Answers of "a lot" or "fairly"
Availability to receive and hear suggestions	4.60	95%
Respond to bodies at a higher level	4.51	96%
Execute resolutions by collegiate bodies	4.50	94%
Application and control of the school budget	4.44	92%
Intervention to solve conflicts	4.43	91%
Collaboration with the Administration in teaching quality	4.42	93%
Encouraging a good atmosphere & relations	4.40	90%
Identifying the needs of the school	4.38	92%
Communication with Parents Associations	4.38	91%
Parent information	4.37	90%
Guaranteeing fulfilment of the school rules	4.36	91%
Control of the improvement projects	4.34	92%
Assure proper use of installations and resources	4.32	90%
Ensure advantage is taken of teacher and administrative staff skills	4.17	85%
Information on teaching and orientation efficiency	4.07	82%
Encouragement of team work	3.99	77%
Encouragement of teacher training procedures at the school	3.92	74%

- Assessment by the principal, compared with the joint one by the students, teachers and parents.
- Assessment of the principal's duties at Primary Schools, compared with those at Secondary Schools.
- Assessment of the principal's duties at schools with a female instead of male principal.

The self-assessment by the male or female principal of his or her own management tends to be greater than the external assessment by the rest of the members asked as to the functions related to school life, followed by those related to management of the school and its improvement. On the contrary, the principal considers less time is spent than others do on functions related to the Administration and higher bodies. The two types of assessment are equal as to the functions related to teachers and parents.

When self-assessment of the principal's duties is compared with the assessment of same by stu-

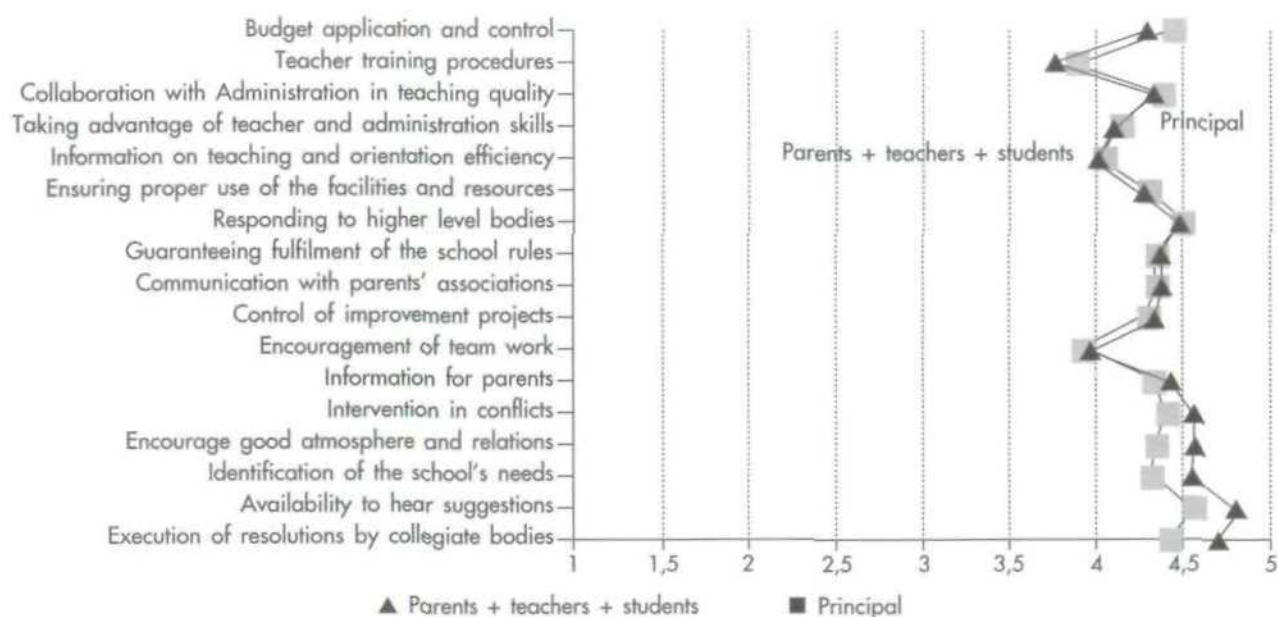
dents, parents and teachers, the differences encountered are very similar to those described before between the principal's self-assessment and assessment by the rest of the members asked (see graph 4).

When the appraisal is differentiated according to the educational stage of the school, few differences have been found between Primary and Secondary Schools, as the twelve duties of the principal were valued in the same way at both types of school. Only the time spent by the principal on maintaining agile relations with the parents' associations is more highly valued at Primary Schools than at Secondary Schools. On the other hand, Secondary Schools have a better appraisal of dedication by the principal to: identifying the needs of the school; controlling the improvement projects; obtaining information on the teaching and orientation efficiency of the teachers, and guaranteeing fulfilment of the school rules.

On the other female principals were noted to receive a higher average rating in their duties



**Graph 4. Self-assessment of the principal's duties, and joint assessment by parents, students and teachers**



than male ones as to the school in general and its improvement and in duties related to school life, with teachers and the Administration. However, no differences were noted as to duties concerning students' families.

**FACTOR GROUPING OF THE APPRAISAL OF PRINCIPAL'S DUTIES**

The seventeen variables on which an opinion was requested as to the principal's duties as discussed in the previous sections provide detailed information. Due to this, the need was considered to study whether the whole block of questions had an underlying structure that articulated its composition in a logical manner and which, at the same time, summarised the information provided by the original variables. Due to this, factorial analysis was used in order to discover the existence of latent factors or variables that summarise the information provided by the original ones without a substantial loss in that information. The description of the factors is as follows.

Factor 1 could be defined as *functions that officially are attributed to the principal*. This factor forms several original variables that refer to func-

tions which, in a certain way, are officially expected of the principal. In order from greater to lesser importance in the factor there are the following: *availability to hear and deal with suggestions from the different sectors of the school community; execution of resolutions by the collegiate bodies; intervention in conflicts; encouragement of a good atmosphere of relations; responding to higher bodies, identification of the needs of the school; guaranteeing fulfilment of the school rules; control of improvement projects; collaboration with the Administration as to teaching quality; maintaining communication with parents' associations; application and control of the budget; and assuring proper use of facilities and resources*. Overall, they may be considered the classical functions expected of the person appointed principal of a school.

Factor 2 may be defined as the *management function directly related to the teaching staff*. This factor includes the variables that state the opinion as to time spent by the plural on matters related to the teaching staff such as, in order from greatest to least importance attributed: *to generate procedures for teacher training and refresher courses at the school; encouraging teamwork among the teachers; being informed of teaching and orientation efficiency of the teachers; ensuring the skills, qualities, experience and knowl-*

Table 4. Factor grouping of the principal's duties

Principal's duties	Factor 1	Factor 2
Identification of the needs of the school	0.539	—
Control of improvement projects	0.530	—
Training procedures for the teachers at the school	—	0.829
Encouragement of team work	—	0.767
Information on teaching efficiency and orientation by teachers	—	0.718
Intervention in conflicts	0.676	—
Availability to receive and hear suggestions	0.719	—
Encouragement of a good atmosphere and relations	0.549	—
Guaranteeing fulfilment of the school rules	0.533	—
Collaboration with the Administration in teaching quality	0.519	—
Execution of resolutions by collegiate bodies	0.687	—
Responding to higher bodies	0.546	—
Encouragement of parent information procedures	—	0.521
Communication with parent associations	0.490	—
Ensuring proper use of the facilities and resources	0.468	—
Application and control of the budget	0.484	—
Ensuring advantage is taken of teacher and administrative staff skills	—	0.642
<b>Self-assessment</b>	<b>7.283</b>	<b>1.081</b>
<b>Percentage of variance explained</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>

edge of the teaching staff and administrative staff and services of the school are taken advantage of, and to encourage procedures for the parents to obtain information on the circumstances of their children.

The first three most important of the variables in this factor are duties of the principal clearly related to the teaching staff; as these depend more on the personal talent of the principal, they may not be so much expected of management action as the functions in the previous factor (which rather are included within the concept of the principal as a management authority). In this second factor, these are the functions of the principal that are very much related to the personal style of management: to facilitate teacher updating at the school, to facilitate team work dynamics among the teaching staff and remain informed of the teaching and orientation efficiency of the teachers (either directly or through the relevant departments).

The two main factors mentioned define two different models of management:

- One, more aimed at performing the *duties officially assigned* to the principal, such as: being available to receive, hear and deal with suggestions; to execute resolutions by the collegiate bodies; to intervene in conflicts, to encourage a good atmosphere and relations, to respond to higher bodies, to identify the needs of the school, to guarantee fulfilment of the school rules, to control improvement projects, to collaborate with the Administration in the quality of teaching, to maintain communications with the parents' associations, to apply and control the budget and ensure proper use of the facilities and resources.
- *Management functions in relation to the performance by the teaching staff*, includes: generation of training procedures and teacher refresher courses, encouraging team work, being informed of the teaching and orientation efficiency of the teachers; ensuring advantage is taken of the skills, qualities, experi-



ence and knowledge of the teaching staff, and to encourage procedures for the parents to obtain information on the circumstances of their children.

The self-assessment by the principal of the duties officially expected is significantly higher than the assessment by the rest of the members responding. On the contrary, the self-assessment by the principal as to time spent on activities directly related to the teaching staff is less than that by the set of members responding.

The principals of Primary Schools spend the same amount of time as those in Secondary Schools on performing the duties expected of the office as on those directly related to the teaching staff.

The time spent by the principal on duties officially expected is regardless of whether a male or female principal. On the other hand, in management duties directly related to the teaching staff, female principals are more highly valued than male ones.

At small schools, the principal spends more time than at large schools on all the officially expected duties, although there are no significant

differences as to the size of the school between measurement of assessment of the principal's duties in those directly related to the teaching staff.

## Participation in the schools

### AREAS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHOOL

Fourteen questions on the questionnaire are aimed at ascertaining two aspects of participation, one as to the real way in which participation takes place in the diverse aspects of the functioning of the school and the other, the way in which it is understood to be desirable. Five options are presented for each one of the fourteen aspects queried: that of not being informed of the decisions, being informed after the decisions are taken, being consulted prior to the decisions, taking part in group decision making and personal decision making; when decisions are not made in the area or aspect queried, a sixth response option must be available.

Table 5. Participation in the areas of life at a school

	Real participation	Desirable participation	Difference	Significance level	Correlation
Teacher training	2.62 (14)	3.28 (14)	-0.66 (1)	****	0.632 (7)
Educational quality evaluation	2.98 (9)	3.52 (4)	-0.54 (2)	****	0.557 (14)
Solution of student suggestions	2.99 (8)	3.50 (7)	-0.51 (3)	****	0.558 (13)
Organisational aspects	3.02 (6)	3.51 (5)	-0.49 (4)	****	0.560 (12)
Collaboration by parents	2.82 (13)	3.31 (12)	-0.49 (5)	****	0.656 (4)
Informative, training activities, etc. with parents	2.92 (10)	3.40 (10)	-0.48 (6)	****	0.627 (8)
Creation of workgroups	3.00 (7)	3.45 (9)	-0.45 (7)	****	0.669 (2)
Use of space and resources	3.05 (7)	3.50 (6)	-0.45 (8)	****	0.619 (9)
Annual budget	2.87 (12)	3.32 (11)	-0.45 (9)	****	0.668 (3)
Complementary activities	3.06 (4)	3.49 (8)	-0.43 (10)	****	0.604 (10)
Student evaluation	2.88 (11)	3.30 (13)	-0.42 (11)	****	0.723 (1)
School educational project	3.18 (2)	3.58 (2)	-0.40 (12)	****	0.580 (11)
Improvement projects	3.14 (3)	3.54 (3)	-0.40 (13)	****	0.650 (5)
Disciplinary problems	3.23 (1)	3.58 (1)	-0.35 (14)	****	0.643 (6)

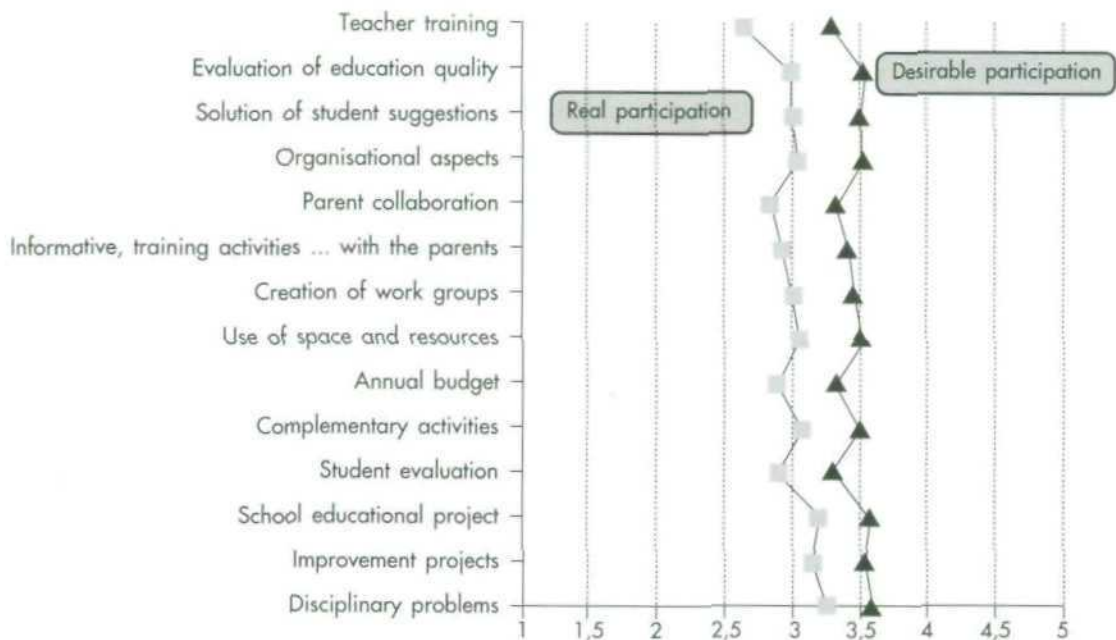
\*\*\*\* Significant differences at 1%



The averages of real participation in each one of the fourteen aspects of the school asked about range (on a scale from 1 to 5) from 2.62 for participation in training and improvement of the teaching staff at the school, to 3.23 for participation as to severe discipline problems among the students. The *global average* of the fourteen varia-

bles of real participation is 2.98. It could be considered as a participation located at the centre of the scale matching the option "I am consulted before decisions are made". The second column of Table 5 shows how the areas are organised according to the averages of real participation expressed.

Graph 5. Averages of real, desirable participation in the areas of life at a school



The averages of desirable participation in each one of the aspects cited in school life range from 3.28 for participation in teaching staff training and improvement at the school to 3.58 for desirable participation in the educational project of the school and desirable for disciplinary problems. The *global average* of the fourteen questions on desirable participation is 3.44: it is thus in average terms, in the scope near to group decision making. Thus, as to participation in schools, the answers show a greater degree of participation than at present is desired, above all in matters related to teacher training, the evaluation of educational quality, the school organisational aspects and activities with students' parents.

As may be seen on table 5 and graph 5, the desirable participation for the members asked is higher than the real participation in all the aspects, all of the differences being significant.

However, the order established between the areas of participation, in real and desirable participation, is practically the same. This fact is also explained by the high correlations found between real and desirable participation.

Aspects related to the school, the students and the educational action, such as disciplinary problems, the educational projects of the school and the improvement projects, are areas in which there is more participation than others, although those in which the wish to participate is also greater than in the remaining ones.

### DIFFERENCES IN THE DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION

The differences between real participation and desirable participation in the different areas of

life at the school and as to the following groups have been analyzed:

- Participation by each one of the groups surveyed.
- Participation by the principal and the non School Council member teachers.
- Participation by the principal and the rest of the members of the School Council.
- Participation at Primary Schools and at Secondary Schools.
- Participation at state schools and private schools.
- Participation according to the size of the school.

Participation in the different areas of the life of the school expressed by groups surveyed is shown on table 6, which states the global measurements of opinion of each one.

The principal, the head of studies, the representative of the holder of the school and the teaching staff (whether members of the School Council or not) state that they participate, to a greater extent, in this order, than the rest of the members asked. In another group, with lesser participation, there are the representative of the Local Government, the representatives of the parents, and representatives of the students and the representative of the administrative and services staff. These groups are practically ordered in

the same way as to desirable participation. The groups that participate the more also wish to participate even more.

The degree of participation, whether real or desirable, stated globally by the principal was significantly greater than that stated by the School Council non member teachers; the difference in the global measurements between both groups is greater in real participation than in desirable participation, so the teaching staff experiences a greater difference than the principal between its real participation and that it would like to have.

The degree of real and desirable participation is significantly greater for the principal than the rest of the members of the School Council: the difference in the global measurements between both groups is greater in real participation than in desirable participation. The difference between real and desirable participation is thus greater among the rest of the members of the School Council than for the principal.

There are no differences in real participation between state and private schools; however, greater participation is desired at the former than the latter so, logically, the members at state schools experience a greater difference between real and desired.

There are significant differences as to real global participation, expressed by all the members asked, among those from Primary Schools

Table 6. Participation by each of the groups

	Real participation	Desirable participation	Difference	Significance level
1. Principal	3.69 (1)	3.81 (1)	-0.12 (9)	****
2. Head of Studies	3.63 (2)	3.79 (2)	-0.16 (8)	****
9. School owner's representative	3.37 (3)	3.60 (5)	-0.23 (7)	****
4. School Council member teachers' representative	3.26 (4)	3.68 (3)	-0.42 (5)	****
8. Non School Council member teachers' representative	3.13 (5)	3.61 (4)	-0.48 (4)	****
3. Representative of the Local Government	2.69 (6)	3.29 (7)	-0.60 (3)	****
5. Representative of the students' parents	2.67 (7)	3.33 (6)	-0.66 (2)	****
6. Representative of the Administration and Services staff	2.43 (8)	2.78 (9)	-0.35 (6)	****
7. Representative of the students	2.42 (9)	3.12 (8)	-0.07 (1)	****

\*\*\*\* Significant differences at 1%

\*\*\* Significant differences at 5%



and from Secondary Schools, there being greater participation by the former. The difference is repeated, and in the same sense, as to desirable participation among members at both types of schools. The difference or variation between the real and desired participation is practically the same at both.

For correct interpretation of the differences analyzed concerning participation, one must bear in mind that some variables covary with each other.

## Life at schools

### RELATIONS WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

The usual relations between the teaching staff and students have a prevailing 69% of good atmosphere of companionship and mutual support. Only 1% of the responses by the whole group affirm that there are continual conflict at their schools between the teaching staff and a tendency toward individualism.

The relations with students may be classified as positive. From almost four thousand valid answers, only 2% (n = 62) affirm that during academic year 1996-1997 the level of collaboration between students was bad. On the contrary, the remaining 98% is comprised of regular, good or excellent atmosphere.

The students consider the relations among themselves in a worse light than the rest of the sectors of the educational community.

Graph 6 shows the data obtained as to relations, among the teaching staff as well as among the students.

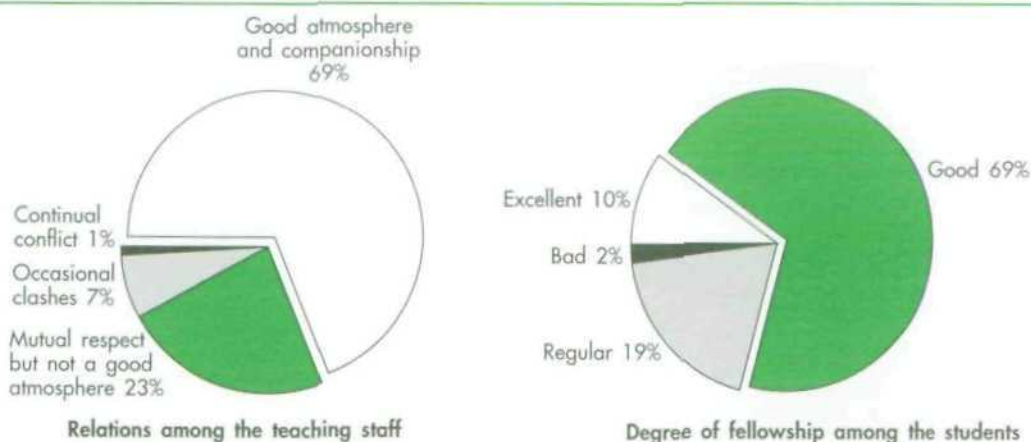
The question "Is the school setting a reason for concern among parents due to the levels of violence?" has four categories of answers, ranging from severe concern to denying that there is violence at the school. The latter category and no concern as to the increase in violence amount to 68%. The fact that 8% of the respondents state that it is a matter for severe concern and 25% say they are somewhat concerned, should be a cause for social concern and further investigation to obtain a more detailed description of the situation. In other words, the situation described by the data is not one of manifest severity, but one must not underestimate that stated, above all the aforementioned 8% who express severe concern.

### RULES FOR SCHOOL LIFE

As to the levels of information the members of each sector themselves state they have, one may note on Graph 7 that the percentages are high and the general situation may be classified, at least, as good. The data broken down shows significant differences between the opinion of the different sectors forming the group.

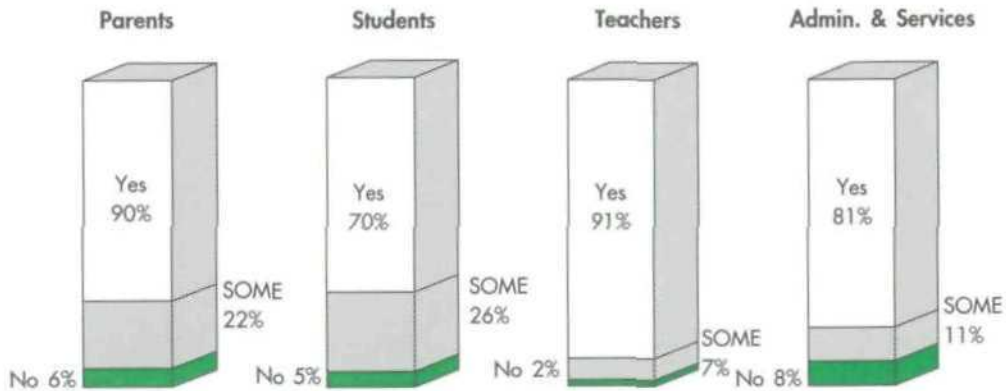
The percentage (84%) of favourable opinions stating Yes as to the information given to the students according to all the members, is much greater than that stated by the students themselves (70%). The students, according to what they state themselves, do have information on their rights and duties, although it is noticeable that a quar-

Graph 6. Relations among the teaching staff and students at the schools





Graph 7. Information on the rights and duties of the students



According to: Parents - Students - Teachers - Admin. & Services

ter (26%) of the students place the information in the category of "some". This fact may be interpreted as a demand for more information.

One must note first of all that out of the total number of responses (4.661) 206 cases (absolute values) state that the school has no School Rules. there is the possibility that some sectors of the group asked had no knowledge of its existence. The sector that contributes most to forming this figure is that of the parents representatives. Secondly, data on the efficiency of the School Rules is clear: The School Rules improve life at schools. If the answers are taken on a dichotomy basis, that is answers that stated whether it is efficient or not, we note that the School Rules are efficient according to 97% of the answers and inefficient in the remaining 3%. Thirdly, on the basis of answers that affirm the efficiency of the School Rules, one should now aspect whether the efficiency is limited, or really unlimited, being effective to improve school life.

The answers to the question "To what extent do the school rules decrease problems of discipline and order?" clearly show that the school rules are a way to decrease problems of discipline and order. Excluding the answers "I do not know" and "there are no rules", and taking the four categories "a lot", "fairly", "little" and "none", we note that there is only one per cent of the answers that affirm that the school rules are not

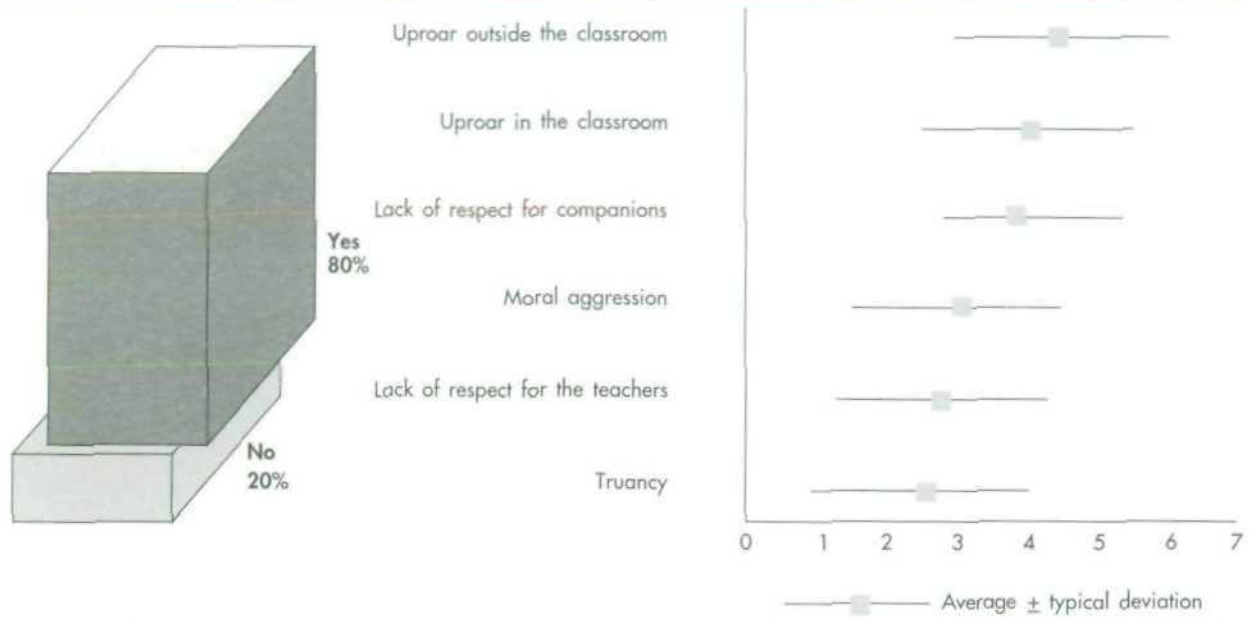
a means to decrease problems of discipline. 19% of the answers state that they contribute little and the remaining 80% considers that the school rules are a means to decrease problems of order and discipline "a lot" (21%) or "fairly".

## DETERIORATION IN SCHOOL LIFE

### SITUATIONS OF LACK OF DISCIPLINE

Respondents amounting to 80% affirm that, in the last three years, there have been situations of lack of discipline at their schools (see graph 8). Among the remaining 20%, those who affirm in higher percentages that there are no situations of lack of discipline are the representatives of private school holders. They are followed in this sense by representatives of the parents, representatives of the Local Government and the administration and services staff. On the other hand, the lowest percentages on the non existence of situations of lack of discipline are reported by the principals (13%), head of studies (13%), students (15%), non School Council member teachers (17%) and School Council member teachers (20%).

Graph 8. Existence and frequency of situations of lack of discipline at the school



The answers show that the situation of lack of discipline "uproar outside the classroom" is by far the most frequent, the second situation in frequency is that of "lack of respect for companions", followed by "uproar in the classroom", "moral aggression: jeering, insults, threats ...", "lack of respect for the teachers" and "truancy". As may be seen, the first three situations of lack of discipline: uproar in and out of the classroom and lack of respect for companions arise with a frequency that may be considered high; moral aggression (jeering, insults ...) with an average frequency and the last two, lack of respect for the teachers and truancy have very low average frequency levels.

Considering the last three years, the answers as to how the discipline related situations are evolving are fairly heterogeneous and divided opinions are noted. There is 32% which affirms that the situation is gradually improving, 41% states that the situation is more or less the same and 27% considers lack of discipline is increasing. Considering that 27%, the main cause lies in the students' lack of interest, followed by family problems and the presence of repeating students. The presence of closed or intolerant groups, or there being teachers who do not perform their duties properly or are disinterested in practice of their profession is less important in the order of possible causes of lack of discipline. The greatest significant

differences between the sectors of the group are to be found in the answers by the teaching staff (including the principal and head of studies) and parents. Also between the teaching staff, principal, head of studies and the students' opinion.

Over the last three years (1994-97), at the schools included in the sample that answered the Questionnaire (534), there were 207 schools that have imposed a penalties without a disciplinary record, and 161 schools have imposed penalties after inchoating a disciplinary record. The courts have had to intervene at 19 schools. There was an average of four penalties per school over the three year period, amounting to 1.3 penalties per annum. Those with a disciplinary record amount to 0.6 penalties per school per annum and a much lower number in the case of penalties with intervention by the courts.

The actions by unipersonal bodies at schools in disciplinary matters do not seem to have been very numerous. The average per school per annum is almost 13 written warnings, 19 appearances before the head of studies, 9 before the principal and 8.5 summons for the parents of indisciplined students.

As may be seen on table 7, 79% of the schools have had not suffered any considerable vandalism during school hours.

Over the three years, on 113 there has been considerable vandalism during school hours, van-



dalism that has been referred to the School Council or Teachers' Assembly. Vandalism has taken place on 151 occasions outside of school hours. Not enough information is available to be able to

compare these figures to be able to note whether the situations are deteriorating and increase year after year, or if on the contrary they are decreasing.

Table 7: Schools where vandalism to the facilities has been recorded. Time reference: Academic years 1994/95, 1995/96 and 1996/97

	None	1-2	3-5	> 5	Average
In school hours	79% (n=419)	9% (n=45)	9% (n=45)	6% (n=30)	1.96
Outside school hours	72% (n=381)	13% (n=69)	13% (n=69)	6% (n=33)	1.30

Finally, as to whether it has been necessary to adopt corrective measures due to severe offenses during this academic year, almost half the principals said they did not have to take such measures. The other half (53%) said it had to take them.

#### SITUATION OF AGGRESSIVENESS

As to the information bearing answers in one sense or another, and without taking abstention into account, 41% says, as to the last three years, that there have not been any aggressions among the students and 59% (n that 2167 members) affirm that there have been aggressions at their schools (see table 8 and graph 9). As to the last percentage, those who contributed most to forming the 59% opinion were the principals and heads of studies, and the least, the representatives of the holder of the school. Faced with such a yes or no dichotomy, significant differences are noted according to the group, the school ownership, the surroundings and sex. There is more aggression at state schools, in suburban settings and among boys.

The table and graph cited show that the frequency of aggressions is low. It is mainly thought that the frequency of aggressions is a matter of an isolated episode (73%, n=1475) and high according to 7% of the respondents (n=140), ("high" means more than 10 aggressions in the last three years).

7% of the answers to the questionnaire state that there have been more than 10 aggressions at the school or nearby in the last three years. Prob-

ably, these aggressions are sufficient to give rise to the levels of social alarm aforementioned.

As to the evolution of the number of aggressions, the data shows the following figures. An increase in the number of aggressions is stated by 29% of the respondents, 23% say it is decreasing and the remaining 48% say the level of aggressiveness remains more or less the same. The students' sector is most inclined to affirm that the levels of aggressiveness are decreasing, the sector of teachers (including the principal, head of studies and representative of the holder of private schools) contributes most to stating that such levels are increasing, and the sector of the representatives of Local Governments at the school who mostly state that the levels of aggressiveness remain more or less as usual. The data broken down as to the school holdership, educational level and setting of the school show no significant differences.

The existence of aggressions at schools over the last three years, recorded in the Minutes of the School Councils, or in the Minutes of the Disciplinary Committees, stating the aggressors and victims, is shown on table 9. There are practically no aggressions by parents against students or parents against teachers. The same may be said of teachers to students or other teachers. The weak point lies in aggressions among the students (34%, n=180) and students against teachers (812%, n=61); although the period of time to be taken into account is three years, the number of aggressions is worth consideration.

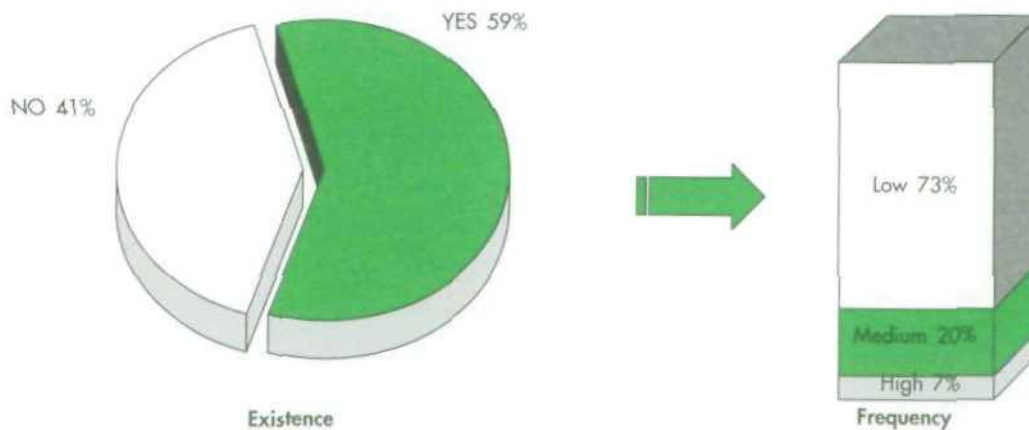
The differences are significant in aggressions among students according to the school holder-



**Table 8. Existence, frequency and evolution of aggressiveness among the students. Time reference: Academic years 1994/95, 1995/96 and 1996/97**

AGGRESSIONS AMONG THE STUDENTS		NO 41% (n=1522)	
		YES 59% (n=2167)	Frequency of the aggressions
	Medium: above five, under ten		20% (n=407)
		High: more than ten aggressions	7% (n=140)
	Evolution of the levels of aggressiveness	Clearly increasing	29% (n=566)
		Remains as always	48% (n=934)
		Tends to decrease	23% (n=455)

**Graph 9. Existence and frequency of aggressions among the students**



ship. There are less aggressions among students at private schools than at state schools. Aggressions by students against teachers show no significant differences in any of the variables broken down.

#### MAIN MEASURE TO BE TAKEN BY THE SCHOOL TO PREVENT POSSIBLE OUTBREAKS OF AGGRESSION AMONG STUDENTS

The respondents were requested to choose one of the four measures proposed as the main one to

prevent possible outbreaks of aggression among the students. The main measure stated was that of students receiving orientation and support. The following was pointed out as the main measure by 56% of the respondents: "It is not a matter of adopting control measures. It is a matter of orientation and support for the students". This measure is called for by the majority of the representatives of the holder of private schools, students and principals. Those who most request this meas-

ure are the representatives on the School Council of the administration and services sector. The following measure called for is that of requesting greater collaboration between the students families and the school. The measures least considered to prevent possible breakouts of aggression among the students, in this order, are control of student entrance and exit, intervention by the

Local Government social services and measures related to greater surveillance during recreation. As to the latter, it is least called for by the teaching staff (including the principal, head of studies and representative of the holder of the school at private schools) and most requested by students, administration and services staff and the parents.

.....  
**Table 9. Number and type of aggressions at schools. Time reference:  
 Academic years 1994/95, 1995/96 and 1996/97**

	Aggressors	Students		Teachers	
		None	Some	None	Some
Parents	98% (n = 523)	2% (n = 9)	98% (n = 98)	2% (n = 2)	
Students	66% (n = 352)	34% (n = 180)	89% (n = 471)	12% (n = 61)	
Teachers	98% (n = 520)	2% (n = 12)	99% (n = 529)	1% (n = 3)	

.....

# The teaching profession

# 5

## Introduction

The conclusive declaration by the 45th meeting of the International Education Conference (Unesco, Geneva, 1996) affirmed its decision to conceive schools "as an active centre of intellectual, moral, spiritual, civic and vocational learning", which will require, among other things, "preparation and implementation of integrated policies aimed at attracting and maintaining motivated, competent men and women in the teaching profession; to reform initial and on-the-job training to put them to service before the new challenges of education; to reinforce the professional autonomy and sense of responsibility of the teaching staff and improve their situation and working conditions". When performing a diagnosis of education, all these elements deserve detailed analysis.

Thus, the Committee in charge of evaluating the teaching function among the teaching staff of Obligatory Secondary Education (ESO) understood that the essential aspects to be studied, due to their influence on the quality of education, are the following: a) initial training of the teaching staff, b) ongoing training and c) vocational and social incentive schemes.

In the first phase a study was carried out of the figure of the teacher in Obligatory Secondary Education according to the legal standards and from a pedagogical point of view. Then, using the prior studies as a starting point, it proceeded to collect information on the reality of the teaching staff (initial and ongoing training, teaching, vocational incentive schemes, etc.), and on the elements required to optimise teaching action. The means used to obtain the information were a questionnaire, several debates and diverse reports by national and international experts.

## METHODOLOGICAL LINES

This is not the appropriate place to provide a detailed explanation of the methodology used. Readers who are interested may read the relevant Report, published by the INCE. All one need say at this point is that the Questionnaire included items referring to the personal and professional particulars of the teaching staff, the data of the school, the professional identity of the teacher, initial and ongoing training and syllabus planning and programming. It was answered by 3,026 teachers from 619 schools throughout Spain, except Andalusia. From the set of schools, 70% were state and 30% privately owned schools. 97% of the teachers were from schools dedicated to Secondary Education, although almost 50% are teachers at schools that also teach Primary Education. Approximately half of the teachers surveyed teachers at schools that have implemented ESO as of 1996-97, the year in which the stage was generalised; the other half is at schools that implemented the level in previous academic years. 80% of the teachers works at schools that have an Orientation Department, and 63% attends to students with special educational needs. More than 80% consider that the families of their students are predominantly middle class and low middle class. Somewhat more than half the teaching staff surveyed are women. Three quarters are aged between thirty and fifty. 65% of the teachers have a Degree as their maximum academic qualification and 27% a Diploma. Three quarters of the teaching staff belong to the Secondary Education teaching body or group and almost a quarter are Primary School Teachers. 57% of the teachers are civil servants - with a definitive or provisional post - and 30% are hired, while the rest are interns or teachers with very diverse professional circumstances. More than 60% of the teachers has more than 10 years of teaching experience. 32% has been at the same school for more than 8 years and 43% from 1 to 3 years. one must bear in



mind that implementation of ESO has involved, although with a different incidence between the Autonomous Regions, obligatory transfer to High Schools of all the teaching staff from the body of Primary School Teachers who teach the first cycle, which has modified the seniority of these members at the state schools. 42% of all the teachers has been teaching ESO for 3 years or more and the rest for a year or two. 19% of teaches in both the cycles of ESO; the rest, equally, only in one of the two cycles. All the areas of Obligatory Secondary Education are represented in a similar proportion to the teaching hours each one has. Lastly, somewhat more than 50% of the teachers are tutors.

The Committee decided to have a Debate in each one of the Autonomous Regions with full competencies that participated in the research, while in the territory managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture there were two, due to the existing diversity of situations: one in Madrid, and another in Valladolid. Each Debate lasted two hours and eight members participated: a person working at the initial teacher training schools, another who taught the course to obtain CAP (Course in Pedagogical Skill), a teacher from the first cycle of ESO, another from second cycle, a school principal, an inspector, an orientation officer and a Professor from the University School of Education or Teacher Training Schools. Participation by state school civil servants and private school employees was encouraged. A moderator, who was sometimes a member of the Committee, coordinated the Debate.

All the participants in the Debates were previously sent a scheme with some questions on initial training, ongoing training and professional and social incentives, matters understood to be the most appropriate for an open discussion.

The opinion of a limited number of experts was also obtained, requesting an original, concise Report from them on the initial training or the ongoing training of the teaching staff. The commission was accepted by seven Spanish and two foreign Professors. The plural activity for which these experts was chosen is shown by the great diversity of approaches discovered when reading their proposals.

On conclusion of all these actions, the Committee carried out a detailed study of the contributions obtained and proceeded to draft this Report. However, before giving a full description

and analysis of the results obtained, one must remember that the Obligatory Secondary Education teachers are required, at least in nominal terms, to perform what is expected of them.

### THE FIGURE OF THE OBLIGATORY SECONDARY EDUCATION TEACHER

There are now teachers in ESO with different training and from different origins, which makes it difficult to speak of a sole professional identity, at least during these first years of its implementation. This does not mean that the image of such teachers is fuzzy.

From a pedagogical point of view, the tasks of all teachers in regulated teaching has three facets. The first as a teacher; the second, tutorial activity among the students at the school; lastly, activity to collaborate in management of the school.

In **teaching**, the teacher's role is to guide and orient the students in the training they are to receive. He is required on the one hand to master the subject taught, its basic scientific and ethical principles, their contribution to cultural, scientific or technological development, etc. On the other hand, he is required to have a sufficient knowledge of the mentality (psychology) of the students before him, a point that is especially important if one considers they are adolescents. He must have sufficient mastery of teaching methodology and of the psychological bases of learning. He must also be able to properly plan the process of instruction and scheduling and sequencing of the lessons he is in charge of, as well as know and apply the most adequate techniques to evaluate the results. Moreover, one must not forget that due to ESO being regarded as the end of schooling for some of the students, the teacher must also perform a key role in training citizens.

As a **tutor**, he is asked to have the necessary training to plan lines of tutorial action and set aims to develop the students; to apply individual and group orientation techniques for personal development; to attend to the cultural, academic and individual diversity of the students as a whole; and, lastly, to know the social setting of the families, so this may contribute efficiently to the education of the students.

However, the teacher is also a member of a group of people, which has been commissioned

to jointly achieve specific educational goals. He is thus **a member of an organisation** aimed at a common end and, as such, must know and nature and functions of that organisation, the competencies assigned to its governing and participative bodies, the rules affecting his work. Most especially, he must be willing to participate and solve problems in day to day school life and be motivated and qualified for team work.

The legal framework of reference - the LOGSE - provides the basic elements to understand that this triple dimension we have referred to does not involve only an object of pedagogical reflection, but also a clear juridical legislation that is thus binding upon the ESO teaching staff.

### The Obligatory Secondary Education teaching staff: analysis of its identity and responsibilities

Among other aspects related to the teaching profession, this Report must provide an explanation, a diagnosis of the present reality of the Obligatory Secondary Education teacher, investigating to what extent a real professional identity is noted among the teachers and how much the teachers fulfil their specific responsibilities. We shall deal with both aspects separately.

### THE PROFESSIONAL ASPECT OF THE ESO TEACHER

After analysis of the answers to the questionnaire, the first thing we noted is the positive attitude practising teachers have towards teaching: the respondents consider teaching is an attractive activity overall (83% between "fairly" and "a lot"), which clearly meets the basic requirement in all professions in which collaboration is a common asset, as 92% considers that it thus provides a service to society. Teachers feel identified with their profession, as they refuse to consider it a transitory task (97% between "little" and "none"). However, they also see teaching as a profession in the strict sense. Indeed, 85% classify it as a vocational task, while 80% deny that it is a labour solution like any other and 90% consider that it is a chance to contribute to the academic training

of the youth, as well as 89% consider it appropriate to contribute to their human training. On the other hand, there is an undoubtable presence among them of the ethical aspect of the profession, as 96% answered that they ensure it is included in their usual practice, just as 87% affirm having discussed the ethical problems that have arisen in their teaching practice with other colleagues. It is of interest to discover that, in spite of the importance of the ethical dimension, 56% affirms it has never received information on the basic ethical criteria for teaching practice, a matter that must be taken very much into account in the teacher training programmes. It is also convenient to know that 90% considers the existence of a Deontological Code for teaching positive, as (80%) affirm that they have not been taught any Code and have not been informed either (95%) the implementation of such a Code in their Autonomous Region is being studied.

Perhaps the panorama we have presented may lead one to believe that Secondary Education teachers are firmly identified with their profession, without any problems. In fact, this is not so. Numerous testimonials - at Debates, etc. - show that they are undergoing what one could call an identity crisis, as they now encounter problems and situations that do not quite fit into their professional project. In addition to other considerations, there is frequent mention of the new demands on their role, as a specifically educational concern, rather than mere instruction, is required of them, aimed not a selection of motivated youths, but at the whole age group. On the other hand, the teachers say they have received insufficient attention from the Public Authorities for years.

### INHERENT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ESO TEACHING STAFF

In the previous section, we presented a synthetic view of the obligations one may basically assign to Obligatory Secondary Education teachers, obligations based on present day pedagogical reflections as well as on what is required of these teachers according to the laws in force, the sum of both factors being the theoretical base on which the questions in the questionnaire administered were posed. We shall now show, by analyzing the results obtained, to what extent such responsibilities are fulfilled. However, as this matter is also cov-



ered in chapter 3, we shall just show some results in a very concise way, relating to three points: *teaching action*, *tutorial action* and *participative and management action*.

As to *teaching action*, the following data must be considered:

- The percentages of positive answers as to attention paid to the purposes of education in the daily teaching duties are fairly high. There is outstanding (96%) attention said to be paid to the objective of making students responsible for obtaining the best possible academic performance. A high number of teachers (from 77% to 90% according to the cases) state that they grant importance in their daily activities to social, vital, affective, ethical, ecological, etc. values, while there is a lesser number that states it is granted to aesthetic values (62% on average) and of a religious nature (reaching 51% in the case of teachers at state schools, far below state school teachers in this).
- There are also high percentages of positive answers as to the attention paid to certain principles, such as the following ones: equal rights between the sexes (87%), respect for all cultures (81%), *democratic behaviour* (88%), integration of students with special needs (79%), etc. On the contrary, there are relatively few positive answers in such matters as the principles involved in cross-curricular matter and the interdisciplinarity (under 50%).
- Team work was noted to still be insufficiently practised in such matters as application of the syllabus projects, planning and scheduling teaching, preparing classes, etc.
- A high percentage of teachers affirm they "always/usually" motivate their students (90%) and "always/usually" encourage a positive atmosphere in class to encourage learning (92%).
- The great majority of the teaching staff (92%) considers evaluation as "an activity to reflect and improve the student's learning process".

As to **tutorial action**:

- In general, the percentages show a high interest by the teachers in tutorial action,

although this is usually higher at private than state schools.

- The three missions those who carry out tutorial work mainly say they perform are as follows: development of basic attitudes and behaviour that favours integration of the students in a class setting (87%), solving academic or disciplinary conflicts (81%) and improvement of autonomy, responsibility, critical capacity and sense of freedom (79%).
- The tutors say they do not have great difficulties in obtaining information on the family background, or in turn informing their families, although they do say they have them to achieve collaboration by parents in school or extracurricular activities. As to collaboration between the orientation department and the teaching staff, in most aspects a greater percentage among teaching staff from the group of primary and private school teachers is noted to state a high degree of collaboration.

As to **participation and management action**:

- The tendency to work in groups is greater at schools located in medium sized towns (10,000 to 100,000 inhabitants) than in smaller or larger towns.
- 85% of the teaching staff considers there is a good atmosphere of collaboration on the management teams, and not so much on the School Council (62%).
- According to 78% of the teachers, communication between the teaching staff and the management bodies is open and fluent.

### Basic factors that configure the teaching profession

The basic factors of all professions in the strict sense are *initial and ongoing training*, the quality and demandingness of which depends on the social consideration of the professionals, in our case teachers. It is also necessary to provide them incentives to encourage improvement by teachers in their professional dedication and to up-date to keep up with the times and adapt to the changes introduced in the laws. We shall thus analyze these three factors.



## INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

More than half of the teaching staff has quarter of a century left till retirement at the age of 65, so if we consider that the birth rate in Spain is far below the replacement rate, and the present high levels of schooling, one may conclude that there will be very few people whose initial teacher training need be attended to in the future. However, one must also bear two other ideas in mind. The first is that if there is a scarce increase in the number of teachers, there is even more reason to carefully consider what initial training they should be provided, as the training design will also have a great importance to attend to the emerging requirements of ongoing training of the present teachers. The second is that the body of teachers may perhaps increase slightly, but, on the contrary, the new demands on the educational system will make it necessary to seek other professionals to collaborate with the present teaching staff to respond to what society nowadays expects of the educational system.

The inherent competencies of secondary education teaching staff were perhaps described with certain passion by a member of the Debates called by this Committee, when he said: "secondary education teachers used education to teach a science and to select the best for that science. As High School teachers we were proud to send our students to University with the best possible preparation. We now have to use science to educate, and nobody teaches us to do that. We no longer educate to teach a science, we teach a science to educate. That is such a brutal change of perspective that, as you have all said, what we were taught at university is now absolutely useless to us. At university, we were taught a science to perform science and make science. Now we have to use our scientific knowledge to educate the young citizens of this country". One may discuss the detail of some of these expressions, but we consider them to be substantially very right: secondary teachers must be set into a scientific field in which they must ensure they teach efficiently, knowing that their objective is not merely to instruct youths, but to educate citizens.

The initial training model established in Spain in the General Education Act of 1970 was the result of adding a degree course, including the higher technical courses or conservatory diplomas, to a Course in Pedagogical Skill (CAP) with a minimum of 150 lecturing hours.

The model of pedagogical training the CAP matched has been negatively evaluated. As Marcelo<sup>1</sup> decisively states, that training was not long enough, was juxtaposed to the degree and set aside by the University, classified as a minor item, aimed at a public without professional identity, taught by a scarcely specialised Professor, with a markedly academic nature in which the practical element is underestimated, in addition to being limited to insufficient content, reduced to a few didactic and psychological concepts. This is a tough judgement, but one must recognise that the member of the Debates and the teachers surveyed coincide as to this, valuing it in a mainly negative way. Indeed, the teachers say they have not been taught about the ultimate aims of education (65% between "nothing and something", nor the type of citizen to be trained (76%), nor as to the essential demands of professional activity, such as the ability to make decisions independently and judge ones own efficiency (59%), nor have they spent the necessary time on practice. They consider they have not been taught enough pedagogy to be a good professional (60%), so that, detailing some fundamental aspects, they answered by expressing their insufficient training in selection and organisation of the contents of the cycles and courses (72% "none" or "some"), selection and design of the activities that contribute to development of the students' skills (70%), treatment of the cross-curricular axes (86%), techniques to work in cooperative groups (81%), tutorial and student orientation skills (75%), procedures and strategies to evaluate student learning (69%) and practical research methods (82%).

After obtaining the data, some suggestions may perhaps be made as to the four basic aspects that definitely must be covered by initial training: a) confirming a professional identity among those who aim to become teachers; b) teaching the set

<sup>1</sup> At the initiative of Committee IV of the Diagnosis, the INCE commissioned Carlos Marcelo, Professor of Didactics and School Organisation at the University of Seville, a study titled *Sobre la formación inicial del profesorado de educación secundaria* (On the initial training of secondary education teaching staff), a study which was used by the Committee and will soon be published.

of necessary knowledge to correctly perform the specific teacher's duties in teaching, as a tutor and as a member of the organisation; c) practical training; and d) care and supervision of the new teacher.

Considering the present possibilities provided in the optional and freely configured subjects, it is very possible that the candidate to become a secondary school teacher may find positive help in initial training at University. It would be sufficient for the schools which are most related to the areas of secondary education to provide subjects that may be of great interest in establishing a professional identity among those aiming to become teachers. The possible subjects may include the following three: 1) the teaching profession; 2) biography of the specific science of each Faculty; and 3) the central content to teach the specific science of each Faculty.

The second aspect the initial training must cover is transmission of the knowledge required to be a good teacher nowadays. A teacher who feels satisfied in his duties and provides his students significant help is not one who only knows certain techniques, but also someone, as Ryan<sup>2</sup> points out, who has discovered that teaching is not merely conduct, but rather a vocation to develop the potential of the students one has a personal relation with, knowing oneself to be responsible for forming their character. When one aims to forget the ethical objectives of education, teachers feel their roots dry up and they cease to have any sort of moral authority in the classroom, which sooner or later leads to severe problems of discipline that are difficult to solve.

The third dimension required in initial training is practice. The time spent on this must not be short. During that period, the candidates must obtain a knowledge of the real problems that arise and consider to what extent they may manage to attain the qualities and capacities required to become a good teacher.

Lastly, the initial training must also include supervision and care, by an expert teacher, during the first year of work by new teachers, supervision that is even more necessary if the candidate has not been monitored during the practice prior to appointment.

There is no doubt that implementation of a system such as that suggested requires a great effort in seeking the most adequate schools and selecting the expert teachers to guide and supervise those taking their first steps in teaching. However, as the problems of large numbers have already been solved, it now seems the moment to seek quality with greater determination.

### ONGOING TRAINING OF THE TEACHING STAFF

Article 56.2 of the LOGSE affirms: "ongoing training is a right and an obligation for all the teaching staff and a responsibility for the Educational Administrations and the actual schools". It is not only an obligation - for fulfilment of which each person is responsible - but also a right, "all the teaching staff" has, without any distinction whatsoever, that the educational authorities and the actual schools are responsible for fulfilling. One must thus see that ongoing training is the process of continual reconstruction of professional knowledge required to respond to the demands of the students, institutions, society and the personal and social challenge each teacher undertakes to for increasing personal fulfilment, in an ethical lifestyle and commitment to the task of education.

The experts consulted consider, from different points of view, that an ongoing training programme must provide full autonomy in individual training; facilitate and stimulate shared training, on terms that make it possible; be integrated in a line of action by the public and private institutions and training services; respond to the demands of teaching practice in the classroom as well as in teaching the specific subjects; impress upon the teaching staff the importance of shared work in the departments and cycle teams; integrate the theoretical reflection and practical application of the principles of teaching and methodological action; diagnose and value what the teaching staff applies with mastery and invite them to replace obsolete forms operation; to analyze the identity, requisites and complexity of the students of ESO and the most adequate styles of

<sup>2</sup> At the initiative of Committee IV of the Diagnosis, the INCE commissioned K. Ryan, at the University of Boston, to perform a study called *Reflexiones en torno a la formacion de profesores en los Estados Unidos* (Reflections as to teacher training in the United States), a study which has been used by the Committee and will soon be published.



educational intervention; to impress upon the teaching staff the importance of integrating the tutorial, educational and academic functions in their professional activity; to encourage individual and collective initiative, as well as the will to overcome and innovative forms; to qualify to design, implement and evaluate the individual and team teaching actions; to provide teachers with new values, societies and intercultural settings in Spain and Europe.

### ONGOING TRAINING OFFERED AND RECEIVED

According to the answers to the questionnaire, up to present the training offers for teachers have concentrated on the needs of the educational

system and the reform (45% and 58% respectively), on professional development (36%) and on the diverse needs and expectations of the students (39%). Table 1 provides more ample information on this point.

The training received, as may be seen from table 2, has concentrated on "selection and organisation of contents, activities and cross-curricular axes", at 46%, 47 and 25% respectively. In these matters it reaches 12% in the former two aspects and 24% in the third among respondents who state that they have never received training ever. In "tutorial, orientation and educational diversity", the percentages of teachers who state they have never received training amount to 45% and 35% respectively, and more than 20% declare they have not received training in this field.

Table 1. The offer of ongoing training available to you is for ...

	None	Some	Fairly	A lot	Average	No answer
The set of needs of the educational system	10%	46%	39%	6%	2.41	7%
The specific reforms and innovations introduced in the educational system	6%	36%	49%	9%	2.60	7%
Planning for professional self-development by teachers	19%	45%	31%	5%	2.22	8%
The demands of the current syllabuses	9%	42%	42%	7%	2.48	8%
The possibilities the schools have of teacher training	12%	38%	39%	11%	2.49	9%
The need to provide a response to the diverse needs of the students	17%	44%	30%	9%	2.30	8%

Table 2: State to what extent you have received ongoing training during your career on the following aspects related to work in class:

	None	Some	Fairly	A lot	Average	No answer
Selection and organisation of the contents of the cycles and courses	12%	42%	40%	6%	2.41	2%
Selection, design and management of the activities that contribute to development of the student's capacities	12%	41%	41%	6%	2.40	2%
Treatment of the cross-curricular axes	24%	48%	24%	4%	2.08	2%
Attention to diversity: syllabus adaptations and syllabus diversification	20%	45%	28%	7%	2.22	2%
Work techniques in cooperative groups	24%	45%	27%	5%	2.12	3%
Tutorial and student orientation	18%	38%	34%	11%	2.38	2%
Procedures and strategies to evaluate student learning	13%	41%	39%	8%	2.42	2%
Methods of practical research	32%	44%	20%	4%	1.96	3%



The most accepted scope is that of selection and design of activities that contribute to development of the student's capacities (47%).

47% declared they had received training in "evaluation of learning" and 13% stated they had not received this. Finally, in "research in practice" the figure of those who declared they had received training hardly reached 24%.

The analysis of the answers given in the questionnaires shows that the differences encountered are significant in favour of private schools as to training received in such matters as organisation and selection of contents, activities and treatment of the cross-curricular axes, tutorials, orientation and attention to diversity, as well as in the evaluation and research procedures in practice. One must emphasise that teachers over 50 are more involved in refresher courses, or have received them to a greater extent.

### MODES OF TRAINING

The answers given to the questionnaire to assess the usefulness (see table 3) and frequency of the training received in the different modes show that:

- Courses of less than 50 hours have been those most requested and performed by the teaching staff. 28% have participated in less than two courses a year, on average, and

these have been assessed positively as to usefulness by 64%.

- Courses of more than 50 hours are those the least teachers have performed; in this case 8% of the teaching staff in secondary education carried out an average of at least two per annum. Long modular courses with a practice phase are valued positively by 57% of the teachers, although those of the same length of a purely theoretical length are only acceptable to 14%.
- Attendance at seminars and congresses, with an average of at least two per academic year, is performed by 16% of the teaching staff. Considering only the values given by teachers who have attended to some extent, 75% consider them useful on the two high grades of the scale.
- 12% of the teaching staff has participated in training groups at the schools, at least two per academic year. This mode of self-training at schools through reflection with colleagues, taking advantage of the space and time at work to facilitate reflection on practice, is considered useful by 78% of the teachers who participated.
- 8% of the teaching staff stated it had carried out innovation projects with an average frequency of at least two activities of this kind per annum. 74% of the teachers participating valued this mode of training positively.

Table 3: State your opinion of the usefulness of the following training modes

	None	Some	Fairly	A lot	Average	No answer
Short, specific courses of less than 50 hours	4%	32%	51%	13%	2.72	1%
Innovation and research projects at the school or schools, carried out by the teaching teams at these, or by different areas	4%	22%	55%	19%	2.89	1%
Self-training at schools, encouraging adequate space and time within the working day, to facilitate reflection on practice	5%	17%	46%	32%	3.06	2%
Long, extensive courses of a theoretical nature	41%	45%	12%	2%	1.75	5%
Long modular courses with a lecturer to make the class phase dynamic and which have a practice phase	10%	34%	45%	12%	2.58	6%
Sabbatical leave	11%	1%	40%	28%	2.86	12%
Attending subsidised teacher seminars and conferences	5%	20%	46%	29%	2.99	1%
Correspondence courses	22%	44%	28%	7%	2.20	1%

To sum up, low participation by the teaching staff is noted in all the training modes asked about, except courses of less than 50 hours. As to usefulness, the most highly valued training activities were: self-training at schools, attending subsidised seminars and congresses and innovation and research projects at the school carried out by teacher teams.

The training offer must integrate the diverse modes, be very flexible, respecting the personal and institutional situations, although linked to the needs of a reflection and creational practice and a committed institutional context. The proposals must concentrate on the plans for self-development and joint professional development, on the demands by schools and the specific needs of the teaching task. The methodology preferred is that which conjugates theory and practice, presents successful experiences and their grounds, provoking the initiative and creative spirit of each teacher.

For the innovative mode of ongoing training at schools, Villar Angulo<sup>3</sup> provides a set of strategies which we sum up as follows:

- Describe the knowledge, beliefs and principles of the practice.
- Train from theories with explanatory-comprehensive potential.
- Compare ideas, experiences and values, characteristics of several social contexts.
- Reconstruct, criticising and emphasising the existing theories in the practice work and with the contexts.
- Present a written or recorded version of the practices evaluated.

Vaniscotte<sup>4</sup> presents other modes:

- Theoretical *university* orientation, long term on specialisation courses.
- *School type* orientation, taught by a recognised institution, adapted to the political changes, linked to public institutions, or which recognise the training given.
- *Contractual* orientation, given by the training institution, according to the type of training.

- *Interactive-reflection* training, linked to solving a problem and to professional practice.
- There is a *trend* for ongoing training to be provided outside the University, at specialised centres, very much linked to practice.

### CONTENTS, INSTITUTIONS, TIMING

The contents cover the different fields of teaching and professional activity, and they must contribute to the teaching staff learning to be and to feel like such, to share their feelings and to find satisfaction in their task. Specifically, training should be provided for:

- the function of diagnosing prior student knowledge;
- individual attention to the students and educational integration of the students in a climate of equality;
- application of cross-curricular and interdisciplinary factors;
- student orientation to integrate and apply the contents learnt;
- utilization of innovating resources in teaching;
- personalisation of values according to the student groups and achievement of coherent behaviour by them;
- development of curiosity, creativity, spirit of dialogue and careful critical listening to arguments;
- achievement of habits and attitudes where will, the ability to make an effort and the spirit of personal and academic striving are positively valued.

As to the institutions, one must remember that ongoing training is a responsibility shared by the Educational Authorities, the University, schools and teachers.

The Educational Authorities are competent and responsible for the design of the training plans, after consulting and valuing the parties involved, and in removing the existing administrative and financial obstacles. Development of these

<sup>3</sup> At the initiative of Committee IV of the Diagnosis, the INCE commissioned L.M. Villar Angulo, a Professor of Didactics and School Organisation at the University of Seville a study titled *Formación permanente del profesorado* (Teacher ongoing training), a study that has been used by said Committee and will shortly be published.

<sup>4</sup> *La formación continua del profesorado* (Ongoing teacher training), a Report also prepared at the initiative of Committee IV on Diagnosis, which the INCE commissioned Fracine Vaniscotte, a researcher at the Centre National pour la Recherche Pédagogique, Paris, France.



plans shall be due to the actual Administration and to all public and private institutions and bodies recognised such capacity. On the other hand, the Administration itself is asked to ensure that the schools decide what training they need, and on what basis they require it, according to items lacking, expectations and projects, to articulate the necessary measures to put all this into practice.

The University carries out ongoing training through the ICEs and the respective Faculties, which act in parallel and sometimes divergent to the Teacher Training Schools. A thorough review of teacher training is required, especially of the teaching staff in middle education.

Teacher Training Schools, as a support to performance of teaching activity, have been positively valued by 28% of the teachers, and very negatively by 24%. The management team and board of teachers have been more positively valued than Teacher Training Schools in this sense.

The experts consider that it a greater problem in determining the times when training may be carried out. This matter was raised by the participants in the Debates. "One of the most important problems is not finding common times and spaces with the rest of the colleagues, as we have proposed ongoing, collaborative training and reflection on practice, but it must be taken from leisure time and this makes it very difficult for colleagues to accept". The moment must be "at least in working hours, because many do not dare to say in teaching hours".

### THE TRAINERS

Someone who trains trainers must have a profile in which the most important feature is to cause self-confidence and autonomy in updating the potentials trained, and to deal with the matters raised combining practical and theoretical aspects.

*The role of trainers is to create space for dialogue, reflection and personal, professional and institutional innovation, so the teachers may be fulfilled as human beings and committed professionals, while the teaching work and educational task, overall, is shared, improved and turned into yet another hope for social progress.*

In general, teachers with consolidated, creative experience, knowledge of classroom dynamics, practical training in adolescent psychology, ease of communication, mastery of general techniques and teaching resources, as well as the specific ones of their subject, may be trainers. Moreover, for particular, specific aspects, support must be provided by prestigious experts from other fields (sociologists, company owners, researchers, etc.).

### INCENTIVES TO IMPROVE PROFESSIONAL DEDICATION AND UPDATING

To research to what extent the teaching profession is attractive, the first thing one must analyze is the social consideration of education in general nowadays, the image of the teaching staff, and that which the teaching staff has of itself. As, moreover, the aim is to reflect on the initiatives that encourage it to improve exercise of actual teaching, one would also have to see what incentives are available at present, concluding with a proposals for incentives that especially take into account the results obtained through the Questionnaire and the Debates. We shall begin with the first section.

#### SOCIAL CONSIDERATION AND IMAGE OF THE TEACHING STAFF

Diverse surveys performed recently by the Centre for Social Research (CIS) has shown that citizens value education highly. 87% of them show that study is fairly or very important in their life, and there is also a majority opinion that investment in education must be high. The image of Spanish education is not, however, very positive, as less than half of the citizens classify it is good or very good, although more than half consider that its quality has increased in recent years.

According to data collected in chapter 6 of this Report, 88% of parents consider the professional work by their children's teachers fairly satisfactory or very satisfactory. This data coincides, in general terms, with that previously obtained in

<sup>5</sup> J.M. ESTEVE. "Las expectativas de la sociedad y la imagen social de los profesores" (Society's expectations and the social image of teachers), *Psicología Educativa*, 1 (1995), p. 46.



the evaluation of primary education performed by the INCE in 1995, according to which 80% of the parents had a fair or high appraisal of the professional work by their children's teachers. In the same sense of good assessment of the teacher's work, in chapter three of the *Spain Report 1996* by the Encuentro Foundation, on family and school, parents classify several aspects of the educational activities by the teaching staff on a scale from 1 to 10, all valued above 7, with a variation between 8.2 for academic preparation and 7.4 for individual treatment.

However, as J.M. Esteve<sup>5</sup> concludes in his analysis of the social image of teachers in the press, "when speaking of teachers and teaching, two strongly contradictory, equally stereotyped discourses overlap: in the first discourse (...) an ideal image is used, which I prefer to classify as idyllic, of the teacher and education. (...) To sum up, they are required to be perfect, or more specifically, to match the current social stereotype of all the qualities considered positive. The second discourse, which it easy to find in the daily media, reproduces a disastrous - equally stereotyped - image of the reality of teaching and the action of numerous teachers: statistics of academic failure, situations of physical violence in class, etc."

The image the teacher has of himself is perhaps somewhere between both stereotypes: feeling that his teaching and social role is important, while considering himself undervalued by society.

Thus, the Debates gave rise to such expressions as, for example, "appreciation of the teaching role is low in society", or rather, "the Administration does not value teachers enough". In any case, the *deprofessionalised* view some citizens have is regretted, specifically that some parents seem to have of their children's teacher, considering in fact that what he does is "something everyone could do".

#### PROFESSIONAL INCENTIVES AT PRESENT

As may be seen in table 4, the measures the civil servant teaching staff members consider affect them to a fairly or to a great degree are as follows: introduction of six year periods in remunerations (60%), transfer selection (46%) and sabbatical leave (45%); on the contrary, what would affect them to a lesser extent is accreditation to act as principal (22%). However, there is a very significantly high percentage of teachers in private education who have answered that some of these administrative measures affect them "fairly" or "a lot"; thus, 30% in the case of the six year periods and 28% in the case of sabbatical leave. A possible explanation of these answer percentages lies in that these teachers have answered according to what they would like to happen rather than what really happens.

After performing the relevant factorial analyses for this question, two associated factors or

Table 4: To what extent is your professional life positively affected by the following administrative decisions? (civil servant teachers)

	None-Some	Fairly-A lot	Average	No answer
Sabbatical leave	56%	45%	2.25	6%
Introduction of six year periods in the retributions	41%	60%	2.71	4%
Restructuring the school staff	63%	36%	2.13	7%
Transfer selection	54%	46%	2.38	5%
Assignment of ESO teachers	61%	39%	2.19	9%
Access to Professorship	74%	26%	1.83	10%
Reorganisation of the teaching bodies	68%	32%	2.04	11%
Teaching "similar" subjects	74%	28%	1.85	12%
Accreditation to act as principal	79%	22%	1.74	9%
Accreditation of linguistic profiles according to the by-laws of some Autonomous Regions *	60%	41%	2.40	4%

\* Only civil servant teachers in Autonomous Regions with their own language

groups of variables were obtained: on one hand, the aspects that would influence a more academic professionalisation, with clear economic compensations, such as sabbatical leave, six year periods and access to Professorship; on the other hand, the aspects of a more administrative nature: restructuring staff at the schools, reorganisation of the teaching bodies, assignment to ESO, transfer selection and teaching similar subjects. Both types of factors, or groups of variables, crossed with the independent variables (age, habitat and group) show a significant difference in averages. Thus, the first factor has a greater acceptance among secondary education teachers, among the younger teachers and among those who live in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. On the contrary, the second factor is more accepted among primary education teachers.

#### SOME SUGGESTIONS ON PROFESSIONAL INCENTIVES

*Organic Act 9/1995 of 20th November, on participation, evaluation and government of teaching centres (LOPEG), articles 27, 30 and 31, discusses the scope of evaluation, valuation of the public teaching front and professional development of teachers at state schools. Specifically, article 31.2 expressly states that "the educational authorities shall pay priority attention to classification and training of the teaching staff, to improvement of their working conditions and stimulation of a growing con-*

sideration and social recognition of the teaching role".

The opinion of the teaching staff and the experts consulted coincide as to the convenience of articulating a teaching career that includes the appropriate professional incentives and ongoing training of the teaching staff. Thus, professional incentive schemes, the fundamental objective of which is to support greater and better professionalisation, seems to be a recurring factor as one of the possibilities and conditions to improve the quality of education.

As on other occasions, it has been considered important to know the teaching staff's opinion as to this. Firstly, their opinion has been obtained as to how it considers the teachers could be compensated to recognise their special dedication and professional quality. As may be seen on table 5, the possible incentives that were most accepted are: improvement of the student/teacher ratio (89% of the teachers answered "fairly" or "a lot"), followed by improvement in retribution (83%) and by the opportunity of personal training on courses (77%). The least valued are: national awards (8%) and honorary local or higher level prizes (14%).

Secondly, as to *what aspects* of their work the teaching staff consider would be the most adequate to value the quality of their task with a view to an incentives scheme, they were asked about the following: teaching-learning strategies, student performance, improvement of the atmos-

Table 5: How would one consider the teacher could be compensated to recognise special dedication?

	None Some	Fairly A lot	Prefer not to answer	Average	No answer
Decrease in number of class hours	32%	61%	7%	2.89	6%
Improve the student/teacher ratio	8%	89%	3%	3.59	5%
Increase the teaching career	48%	40%	13%	2.35	10%
Points for transfer selection *	39%	52%	9%	2.67	4%
Honourary prizes at local or higher level	73%	15%	12%	1.66	11%
National awards	79%	8%	13%	1.43	12%
Opportunity for personal training on courses	19%	77%	4%	3.16	7%
Improvement in retributions	12%	83%	5%	3.43	5%
Recognition of administrative seniority for the purposes of triennials	28%	61%	11%	2.96	10%

\* Only for civil servant teachers.



Table 6: In your opinion, what importance should be given to the following aspects to value the quality of the teacher's work?

	None-Some	Fairly-A lot	Average	No answer
Teaching-learning strategies used	8%	92%	3.32	5%
Student performance	25%	75%	2.93	4%
Improvement in the classroom atmosphere	10%	91%	3.23	5%
Initiative in relations with the families	37%	63%	2.72	6%
Innovative, creative spirit	15%	86%	3.17	5%
Availability to deal with demands at the school	27%	72%	2.89	6%

phere in class, initiative in relations with families, the innovative and creative spirit and availability for demands by the school. Perhaps the most significant result is that all of them were considered most important, the average assessment lying between 2.72 and 3.32 from a total of 4. Table 6 shows that the three most accepted are teaching-learning strategies (answered with "a lot" or "fairly" by 92 respondents), improvement of the atmosphere in class (90%) and innovative and creative spirit (85%).

Thirdly, they were asked *who* should perform the evaluation of each one of these aspects: the Educational Authorities, the School Council, the School Management, the Department for that subject, the Orientation Department, external examiners, the families and parents, or the studies and students associations. The three instances which, in average percentage values, are most accepted by the teaching staff to value diverse aspects of their work are: the School Management (79%), the Department for the subject (78%) and the Orientation Department (75%). Then, there were students and student associations (64%), the School Council (55%) and the families and parents associations (47%) followed, lastly by the Educational Authorities (43%) and external examiners (28%). Thus, the *nearest three instances* to the teacher are formed by their professional colleagues: the Management, the Departments for the subject and Orientation, are the most acceptable to them; secondly, the *instances of social participation*: school council, students and families and, lastly, the *instances furthest* from the teacher, such as educational administration and external examiners.

By *type of school*, the teachers at private schools, in general, are more favourable than state schools as to whether these instances should intervene in

the matters raised, especially the School Management. By *ages*, teachers under 30 are generally more favourable, in general, than the teachers who are older than them to participation by the instances we have called *participative* (always in the case of the students, almost always in the case of families and on occasions the School Council). On the contrary, teachers over 40, and to a great extent, if the cut-off point is located 50, would support intervention by the Educational Authorities, the School Management and Department for the subject, in some aspects. By *habitat*, the teachers in larger areas were more willing than the small ones to accept participation by some instances, mainly by the School Management, when evaluating their work. One must bear in mind that this aspect is correlated to greater presence of private schools in these areas which, as we have seen, are the ones that would most accept intervention by the School Management.

As a general *suggestion*, that covers and articulates the results of the analyses carried out, one would have to arrange a *teaching career* within the framework established by the LOPEG, that has its axis formed by the aspects considered most important to determine the quality of the teacher's work.

To be able to carry out this task, it is fundamental on one hand to know what instances the teaching staff consider the most appropriate to value the most important aspects; thus, the Department for the subject concerned and the Orientation Department should participate in evaluation of teaching-learning strategies; the students and Orientation Department in evaluation of the classroom atmosphere; and the Department for the subject and the School Management in evaluation of innovative and creative spirit. On the other hand, it seems reasonable that there be



external evaluation to objectivise and complete the above data.

Finally, the incentives the teachers prefer would be those that improve the conditions under which they carry out their teaching duties, such as reduction of the student-teacher ratio, an increase in training opportunities in school hours and sabbatical leave as well as, obviously, those related to their retributions. One would have to articulate the latter with the possibilities of promotion through the teaching career to integrate such aspects as appraisal of the most difficult tasks (among them appointment as mentor-tutor to teachers in training or during their first year of professional practice), access to Professorship and encouragement of the possibilities of access to university teaching.

It would be convenient to carry out a campaign aimed at the teaching staff and at society

which would emphasise, among others, the following aspects:

- the importance of education for personal and social development;
- the globally positive appraisal by society of education in general, and the teacher's work specifically;
- the satisfaction the teaching staff obtain from their profession; and
- the willingness shown by the teaching staff to be trained.

This may all form a good starting point for a global policy of promotion of the figure of the teaching staff, that will be of use to attract the most capable youths to the teaching profession as well as to encourage the present teachers to continue to do their best in their work.

# Family and school



## Introduction

Research into the relations in the world of education between families and the educational system are one of the objectives covered by the Diagnosis. This research has been carried out through a survey of sixty four questions, aimed at the parents of students aged 14 and 16 in the relevant studies at those ages, in the system being implemented and that being phased out.

A sample of 17,500 students from 702 state and private schools was designed to administer the survey, distributed in a balanced manner throughout Spain, except for Andalusia, the educational authorities of which did not participate in the study. The number of questionnaires filled in amounted to 11,481, which is 65.60% of those distributed. This percentage is a considerably high response rate for such studies. However, one may presume some bias as to the profile of parents answering the survey compared with those who do not, and this must be taken into account to adjust the data the study provides.

In definition of the object of the research and in checking the results, classical reports by prestigious institutions have been taken as a reference, such as those by the Santillana, Encuentro and Santa Maria Foundations, the Centre for Sociological Research or FOESSA, for example. On the other hand, the Autonomous Regions have contributed specific documentation for their respective territorial areas.

The **sociodemographic profile of the families** consulted coincides in the main features, in variety, attributed to Spanish families in the sociological studies carried out for this purpose. Moreover, both parents have answered the questionnaire jointly in 56% of the cases. When only one of the parents answered, mothers did so in 31% of the cases and fathers in 11%. This circumstance confirms that there is a greater maternal dedication to matters related to children, among which education stands out. This is

in spite of women recently joining the labour market.

In this research, the classical model of family, that is to say the classical nuclear family comprised of mother, father and children, form the immense majority (91%). Single parent homes amount to 8%: 1% of the single parent model "single father with children" and 7% the "single mother with children". The remaining 1% represents other kinds of situations. This distribution or set of models coincides, not without some differences, with the Spanish population: in Spain there is a total of 10,308,765 family units, 24% of which are couples without children, and 76% family units with children.

In the research sample universe, the majority of homes are formed by four members (46%) or five (25%); this is followed by homes formed by three members (12%) or six (10%); the smaller percentages are homes with six members (4%), eight or more (2%) or only two (1%). The data for the whole country represents 22% of homes comprised of two persons, 21% of three, 24% of four, 12% of five and 8% with six or more, although one must bear in mind that this data is prepared from all Spanish homes and those in the survey only counts families with children.

More than half the families surveyed have two children (51%); 24% have three; 11% one; 9% four and 3% five, while 2% have six or more. In Spain the number of children per family unit is 1.54.

In the universe studied - youths between ages 14 and 16 - 55% are girls and 45% boys. 31% attend private schools and 69% state schools. As to the social and cultural level of the parents surveyed, the level of studies by the mothers shows a social category with a low educational level: 59% of the mothers received primary education, whether completed or not; 24% studied secondary, while 14% are university graduates. In the case of the fathers, the difference lies fundamentally in the

percentage of those who studied at university: 18%.

## Family educational resources

The study researched to what extent the families surveyed had certain resources and how the students spend their time outside school, all in relation to their instruction and training. The aspects researched as to this were as follows: a) instrumental resources; b) available space; c) complementary activities; d) use of leisure time.

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

As to the availability of certain material resources, ones attention is drawn to the high percentage of families (49%) who have a computer at home, a fact that coincides, in any case, with the results of other research. However, books are still the cultural resource available to the greatest extent and fortunately in a systematic way, in Spanish homes: 97% of families have reference books and 96% reading books. The number of books shows the

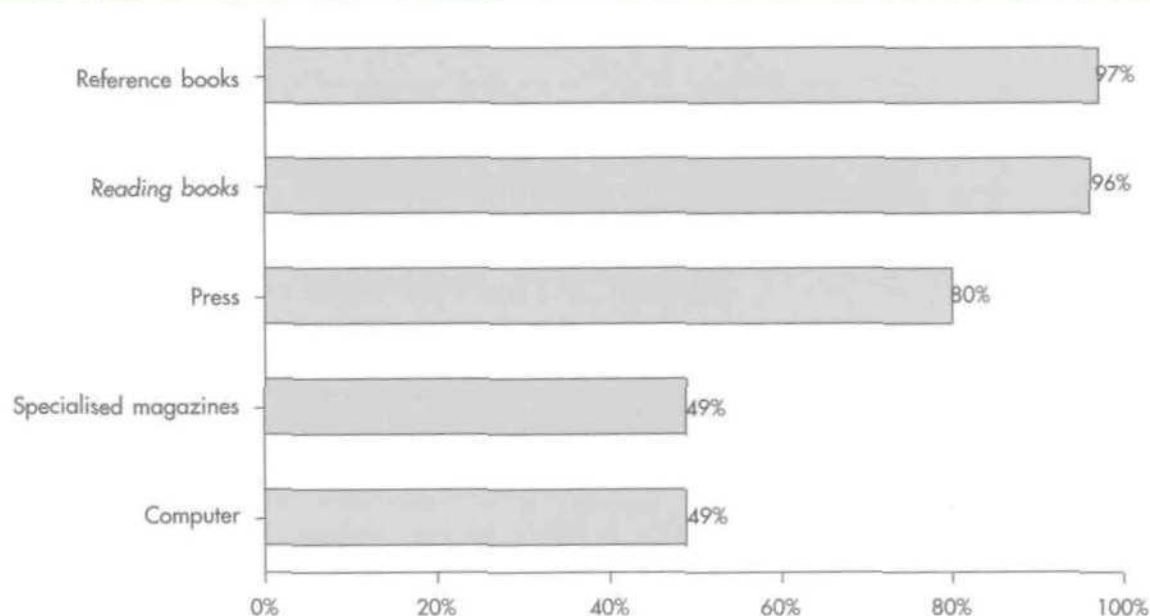
social and cultural level of the families (graph 1). Families who have a greater number of books also have, to a greater extent, other cultural resources available that influence the educational process of their children (table 1).

The level of studies of the parents is also directly related to the greater or lesser availability of educational resources (graph 2). This fact is shown by a greater intention among parents with higher education in relation to their children's education, but also greater real possibilities of providing such resources, to the extent that the level of studies coincides, in general terms, with a higher professional status.

The families of private school students in overall terms have more educational resources than students at state schools. The difference is noted in greater availability of computers, magazines and press, while the presence of books in the home is more generalised (table 2).

The availability of resources also varies according to the different territorial areas studied. As an example, two thirds of the families surveyed in Catalonia say they have a computer at home, while in the Canaries or Galicia, scarcely more than a third say they have one.

Graph 1: Existence of resources in the home (percentages)



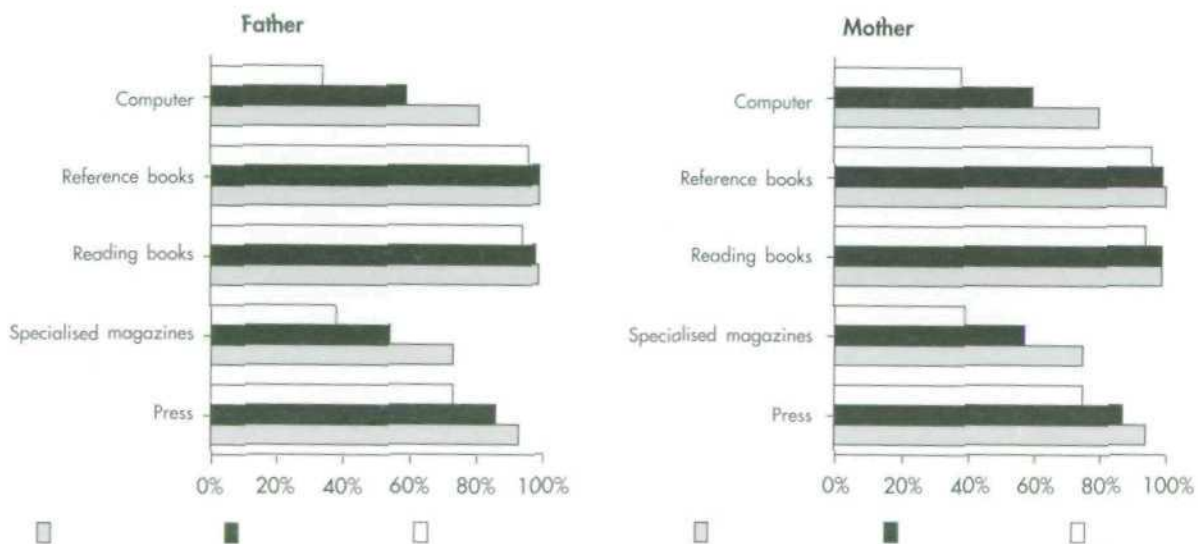
Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.



**Table 1: Resources in the home according to the number of books (percentages)**

Resources	No. of books at home	
	0 to 25	More than 200
Computer	23%	69%
Reference books	84%	99%
Reading books	77%	99%
Specialised magazines	21%	70%
Press	57%	91%

**Graph 2: Resources in the home according to parent's education (percentages)**



**AVAILABLE SPACE**

The space available to students in their houses and the characteristics of their usual place of study are relevant factors in the process of their education. The survey provides the following results: 68.5% of the sons or daughters have their own room; 28% share the room with a single brother or sister, 3% share it with more siblings and 0.5% sleep in a room in the house put to other uses during the day. Graph 3 shows these figures with the total number of children in the family unit. Of course, the proportion of children

with an individual room decreases as the number of siblings increases.

**COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES**

As to complementary activities by children outside school hours, practising other sports and learning foreign languages take first place, at a notable distance from any other activity (table 3).

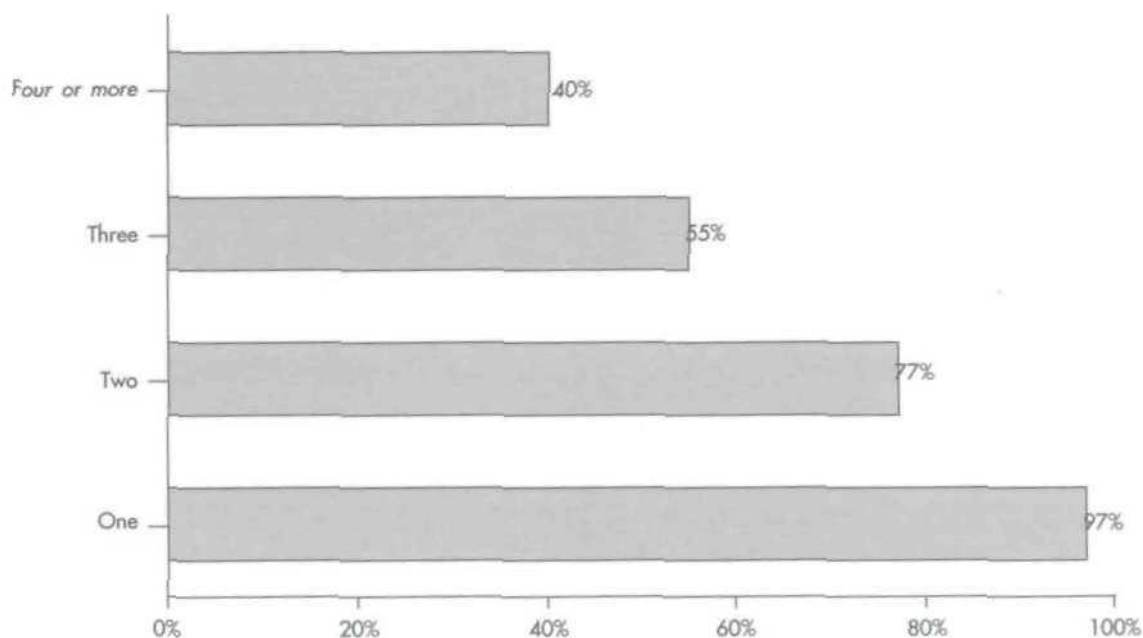
The comparison of the data obtained, according to the sex of the student, provides significant

**Table 2: Resources in the home by type of school attended by the children (percentages)**

Resources	Total	Type of school	
		State	Private
Computer	49%	44%	61%
Reference books	97%	96%	99%
Reading books	96%	95%	98%
Specialised magazines	49%	45%	57%
Press	80%	76%	88%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

**Graph 3: Students who have a room of their own (percentages per number of children in the family unit)**



Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

data (table 4). 70% of the boys practice sport, compared with only 42% of the girls, which confirms the line of male predominance in this field. Boys also surpass girls in dedication to computer science, with 13% compared with 10%, both per-

centages being very low for an activity of such growing importance. Girls, on the other hand, have higher figures in learning music - 14% compared with 10% of the boys - and practising dance - 12% compared with 8% -.

**Table 3: Complementary activities by son/daughter outside school hours (percentages)**

Complementary activities	Answers		
	Yes	No	No answer
Dance	10%	54%	36%
Sport	55%	25%	21%
Languages	24%	43%	33%
Computer science	11%	50%	39%
Music lessons	12%	49%	40%
Others	12%	40%	48%

Due to the format of the question the No Answers may be interpreted as NO.

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

**Table 4: Complementary activities outside school hours by sex (percentages)**

Complementary activities	Total	Sex	
		Male	Female
<b>DANCE</b>			
YES	10%	8%	12%
NO	54%	50%	55%
NO ANSWER	36%	40%	33%
<b>SPORT</b>			
YES	55%	70%	42%
NO	25%	14%	34%
NO ANSWER	20%	16%	24%
<b>LANGUAGES</b>			
YES	24%	23%	25%
NO	43%	41%	45%
NO ANSWER	33%	36%	30%
<b>COMPUTER SCIENCE</b>			
YES	11%	13%	10%
NO	50%	46%	54%
NO ANSWER	39%	42%	35%
<b>MUSIC LESSONS</b>			
YES	12%	10%	14%
NO	40%	46%	51%
NO ANSWER	39%	44%	35%
<b>OTHERS</b>			
YES	12%	9%	14%
NO	40%	39%	42%
NO ANSWER	48%	52%	44%

Due to the format of the question the No Answers may be interpreted as NO.

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.



## DIAGNOSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

There are no significant differences between the students from state schools and those from private ones as to the bigger or smaller grade of

complementary activities fulfilment, except for the learning of foreign languages, where the first overtake the second, as table 5 shows.

**Table 5: Complementary activities outside school hours by type of school attended by the children**

Complementary activities	State schools	Private schools
<b>DANCE</b>		
Yes	10%	10%
No	56%	48%
No Answer	33%	41%
<b>SPORTS</b>		
Yes	55%	55%
No	26%	23%
No Answer	20%	22%
<b>FOREIGN LANGUAGES</b>		
Yes	22%	30%
No	46%	35%
No Answer	32%	35%
<b>COMPUTER SCIENCE</b>		
Yes	10%	12%
No	53%	44%
No Answer	36%	44%
<b>MUSIC LESSONS</b>		
Yes	11%	13%
No	51%	43%
No Answer	37%	44%
<b>OTHERS</b>		
Yes	12%	11%
No	42%	36%
No Answer	46%	52%

Due to the format of the question the No Answers may be interpreted as No.  
Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

## USE OF LEISURE TIME

The use of leisure time by youths is undoubtedly a relevant factor in education. The process of youth socialisation takes place in a context in which a fair part of the values, individuals and groups are in one way or another related to leisure and associated activities. Due to this, the

opinion of parents as to their children's use of free time is due the greatest interest.

The different activities that occupy youth's free time and their prefers, differentiated by sexes, are shown on graph 4. As may be seen, parents consider that their children spend a fair amount or a lot of time after school on the following activities: meeting or chatting with friends (82%), talking

to their parents (78%), listening to music (77%) and watching television (59%). Music forms an essential dimension in youths' lives. Apart from this, the amount of time spent watching television shows how the media has penetrated in the home. On the other hand, parents state that their children spend little time on going to the theatre (96%), attending concerts (95%), visiting museums and exhibitions (94%), going to the cinema (88%) or collecting (83%).

Girls spend more time reading than boys (53% against 31%), also spend more time listening to music and talking to their parents. On the contrary, according to them, such activities as sport or video-games seem to attract boys more than girls.

## The family and children's education

The study concentrated on the attitudes, opinions and valuations of Spanish families as to their children's education. The panorama arising from the results of the survey is certainly optimistic. However, one must take a certain amount of care as to evaluation of the data, in which there is a mixture of reality and good wishes, logical, understandable bias in parents' opinion of their offspring.

## HOW CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IS PROGRESSING

Indeed, 70% of parents believe their children are doing well or very well in their studies in comparison with other children of their age; 57% answered that their children are motivated (always or frequently) to study; 76% of fathers and 83% of mothers are satisfied with their relation with their children as to their studies; 70% of the fathers and 71% of mothers are satisfied with their children's academic performance.

The assessment of their children's academic progress is high: a quarter consider it "very good", almost half "good", somewhat less "regular" and only 6% "bad". This situation is a contrast with the results of other surveys, as almost half of Spanish youths recognise that one of the most frequent reasons for conflict with their parents is precisely the matter of their studies, what suggests that ap-

proximately half of Spanish parents with children of those ages have reasons to be unsatisfied.

According to their parents, girls obtain better academic results than boys, which coincides with the data from other research related to the age band researched. On the other hand, the greater the social and cultural level of parents, the better their perception of their children's studies. To sum up, in the same vein, the greater availability of books at home has a motivating effect on children's curiosity (graph 5 and table 6).

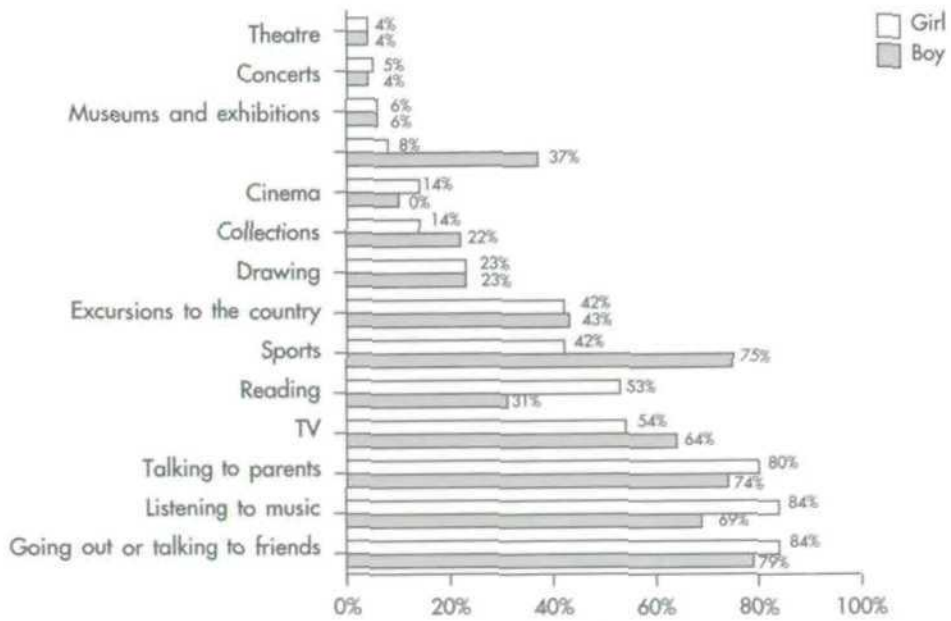
## STUDENT MOTIVATION

Student motivation is a relevant factor in the process of education. The problem of students lacking motivation is a concern in all countries, without our own being an exception, as shown by diverse research into the matter. Such a positive viewpoint provided by the parents is thus surprising, if one considers the answers to the questionnaire on the matter. Indeed, only 5% of parents assume that their children lack motivation and 39% consider this is "sometimes" so, while 56% state that their children are "always" or "frequently" motivated. Girls seem to be more motivated than boys. In families with father, mother and children the degree of motivation is greater (58% compared with other models) and, indeed, the cultural level of the parents has a positive effect on the children's motivation.

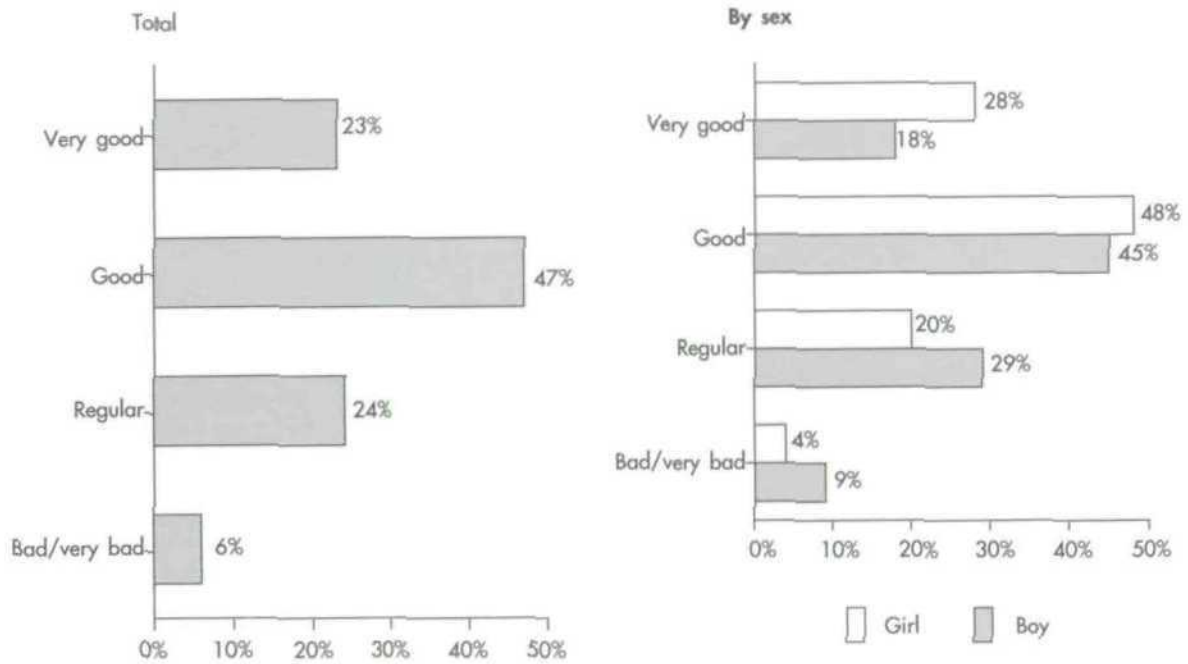
## RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN AS TO EDUCATION

The degree of satisfaction of parents, as to the educational relation they have with their children and the performance of the latter in their studies, is fairly high (table 7). However, this valuation contrasts with the opinion the parents themselves spend studying outside school. Indeed, 75% of boys and 60% of girls spend less than ten hours a week studying. Moreover, private school students spend more time studying than state school ones and children from families with a higher social and cultural position also spend more time studying, especially those whose parents have very qualified higher educational and vocational standard. As to the **educational responsibility** with-

Graph 4: Time spent on activities outside school by sex (percentages of answers "fairly or a lot")



Graph 5: How parents consider their child's academic progress (by educational and professional level)



Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.



Table 6: How parents consider their child's academic progress (by of books at home)

	0-25	26-100	101-200	> 200
Very good	11%	18%	25%	31%
Good	35%	49%	47%	44%
Regular	44%	26%	23%	19%
Bad/very bad	11%	7%	6%	5%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

Table 7: Parents who declare they are "very" or "fairly" satisfied as to their educational relationship and their children's academic performance (percentages)

Parent/Child educational relationship	Children's academic performance
83%	71%
76%	70%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

in the family, the opinion of the parents consulted is almost unanimous in considering it is shared by mother and father. There is a significant fact that the mother always assumes the educational responsibilities, however the educational level, a circumstance that does not arise in the case of the father (table 8).

The majority of the parents (71%) consider that education is a responsibility that must be shared equally with the school. 25% grant greater responsibility to the family and 4% to the school.

## HELPING CHILDREN TO STUDY

53% of father and 60% of mothers personally help their children to do their homework. Private support, by a teacher or equivalent is acknowledged by a third of families. In one case and the other parents with a greater educational and professional level seem to provide more support for their children's education, which confirms the influence of the cultural and economic context on academic performance.

Table 8: Who takes the educational responsibility for the children according to parent's education (percentages)

	Total	Primary or less	Secondary	Higher
Father	4%	3%	4%	4%
Mother	21%	24%	17%	15%
Both	75%	72%	79%	80%
Another person	1%	1%	—	—

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

The family educational strategy is characterised by consistent help and by monitoring of their children's studies. The help takes shape in three usual practices, which may be expressed thus by order of frequency: 97% of parents provide their offspring materials and resources, 92% encourage them to continue to study after obligatory education and 91% encourage them to be constant in their studies. The availability of Spanish parents seems to be unanimous, to the extent that differences as to municipality and school, region of residence, education and profession seem to have a scarcely noticeable influence.

To sum up, the educational potential of the Spanish family may be classified as most positive. The high level of expectation as to their children's education is thus not unrelated to this. The study shows, in this aspect, that 73% of parents wish their children to obtain a university degree.

## CHECKING AND MONITORING THE CHILDREN

Checking and monitoring children's studies receives very serious attention and dedication by the parents (table 9). Families whose children study at private schools, above all if religious, tend to have a greater control and monitoring. In general terms, however, the majority of parents tend to let their children organise their studies and homework themselves: 77% "always" does this, 17% "fairly frequently" and 7% "sometimes" or "never".

There are undoubtedly no lack of conflicts arising from all exercise of control, in educational relationships between parents and children. The solutions are preferably reached through dialogue (table 10). Imposition of paternal criteria is less popular and a third alternative, imposition of the children's own criteria, even less so.

Table 9: Parents who check and monitor their children's studies "fairly often" and "always" (percentages)

	Fairly frequently	Always
Check their studies	32%	48%
Check their homework	29%	40%
Monitor class attendance	10%	76%
Monitor learning progress	21%	67%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

Table 10: Frequency ("always" or "frequently") for the different family solutions to conflict in the studies (percentages by type of school)

Solutions	Total	State schools	Lay schools	Religious schools
Dialogue and joint search for a solution	81%	80%	85%	85%
Parents set the criteria	48%	47%	45%	48%
Children set the criteria	35%	38%	30%	26%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

## Family and education in ethical values

In the early years of a person's life the family plays an exceptionally relevant role in directing

ones relation with the world. Parents form the main reference for their children's socialisation, through transmission of **beliefs, values and attitudes**, which will have an effect on their personal and social development. However, in present so-

ciety, spend a lot of time in contact with other agents of socialisation and the family no longer monopolises that function. This change of situation arises due to diverse reasons, among which one may point out a certain insecurity by adults in setting models for the future for their children.

The withdrawal by some families, who delegate their responsibilities on the school, coincide with the generalised concern parents have for providing their children the necessary instruments to cope on the labour market. In this context, attention to technical training seems to leave training in moral values in a second plane.

It is obvious that, along with the mission of transmitting knowledge, the school has that of training people who are able to prepare a personal project in life oriented towards the values of equity, autonomy and solidarity. In any case, the references to this would be the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the Spanish Constitution of 1978. Within the framework of the latter, the Education System General Organ-

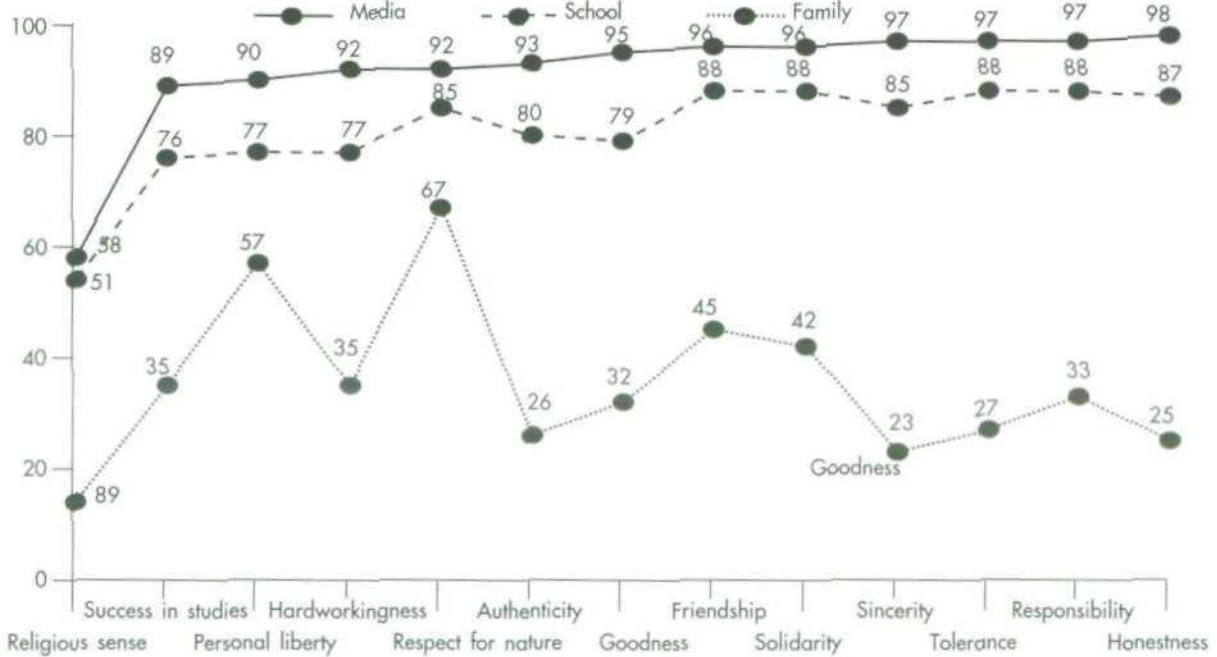
isation Act (LOGSE) of 1990 explains the values on which educational action must be based.

### FAMILY, SCHOOL AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AS TO ETHICAL VALUES

As to the cases mentioned, the questionnaire addressed to the families included questions whose answer allows one to know to what extent the **school, family and media** encourage certain values, in the parents' opinion. Graph 6 shows, in order of frequency of replies, the values concerned. As may be seen, the family has an excellent opinion of itself as a socialising instance for its children while it shows a certain distrust of the role of the media in transmitting values.

According to the answers, **school** encourages the values most positively. Parents of students at private schools have a better opinion than parents at state schools as to encouragement of certain values by the respective schools (table 11).

Graph 6: Families who answer that the following values in the family, school and media are encouraged "a lot" or "fairly"



Source: Family-School Questionnaire, INCE 1997.



**Table 11: Families who answer that the school their children attend encourages certain values "a lot" (percentages according to the type of school)**

Values	Total	State schools	Private schools	Difference
Religiousness	21%	9%	46%	37
Goodness	31%	25%	45%	20
Honestness	37%	31%	49%	18
Sincerity	35%	30%	45%	15
Tolerance	36%	31%	46%	15
Success in studies	24%	21%	33%	12
Hardworkingness	26%	23%	35%	12
Responsibility	38%	34%	46%	12

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

The assessment by parents of participation by the media in socialisation of children and youths is fairly negative. The families consider only the values "respect for nature" and "personal freedom" are encouraged in an adequate way by the media (table 12).

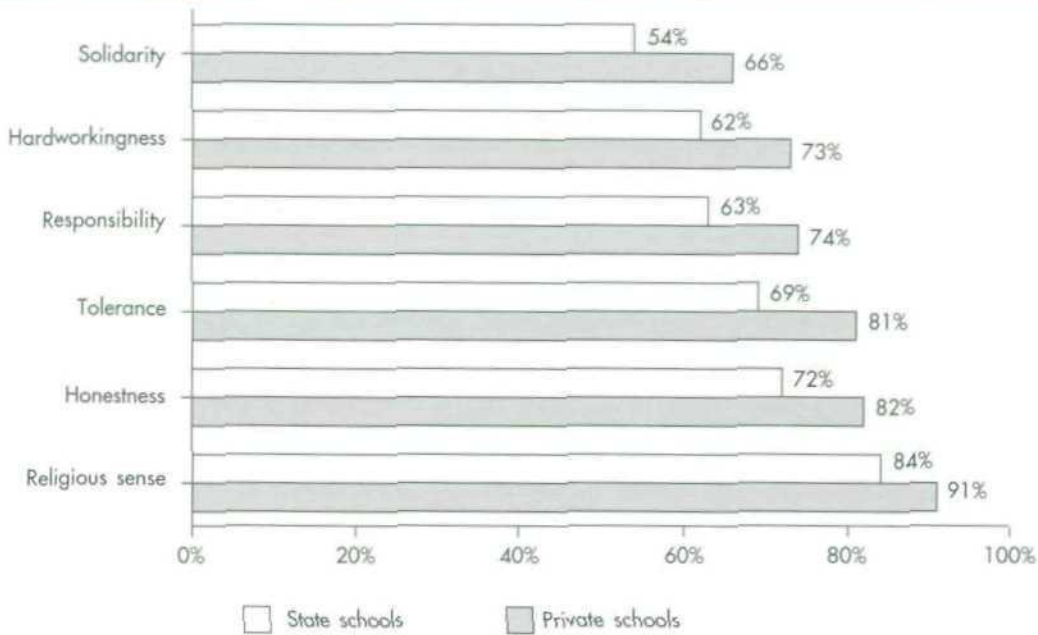
The negative perception as to this increases with the cultural level of the parents and the size of the municipality where they reside. On the other hand, parents of students in private schools are more critical than those in state schools as to the role of the media as to certain values (graph 7).

**Table 12: The families' opinion as to the extent the media encourage values (percentages of "a lot" or "fairly", "little" or "none")**

Values	"a lot" or "fairly"	"little" or "none"	Difference
Respect for nature	67%	33%	34
Personal liberty	57%	43%	14
Friendship	45%	55%	-10
Solidarity / Companionship	42%	48%	-6
Hardworkingness	35%	65%	-30
Success in studies	35%	65%	-30
Responsibility	34%	66%	-32
Goodness	32%	68%	-36
Tolerance and respect	27%	73%	-46
Authenticity and coherence	26%	74%	-48
Honestness	25%	75%	-50
Sincerity	23%	77%	-54
Religious sense	14%	86%	-72

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

Graph 7: Families who believe the media encourage the following values "little" or "none", percentages according to the type of school the children attend.



## EDUCATING ATTITUDES

The study has researched **forming attitudes within the family and at school**. The activities proposed for consideration by the families are usually approached as qualities the parents wish to see in their children. Graph 8 shows a set of activities encouraged by the family and by the school, organised by percentages of answers according to which said activities are encouraged "a lot" or "fairly".

The parents' view seems too optimistic. In any case, the study has also allowed some comparisons in this aspect. For example, the attitudes "development of critical spirit" and "autonomy" are the most favoured by parents with a higher educational level. According to the parents, private schools insist more than state schools on forming the attitudes consulted.

## CIVIC VALUES, LINES OF BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE FAMILY

The family forms the surroundings where the child takes in values, rules and guidelines of

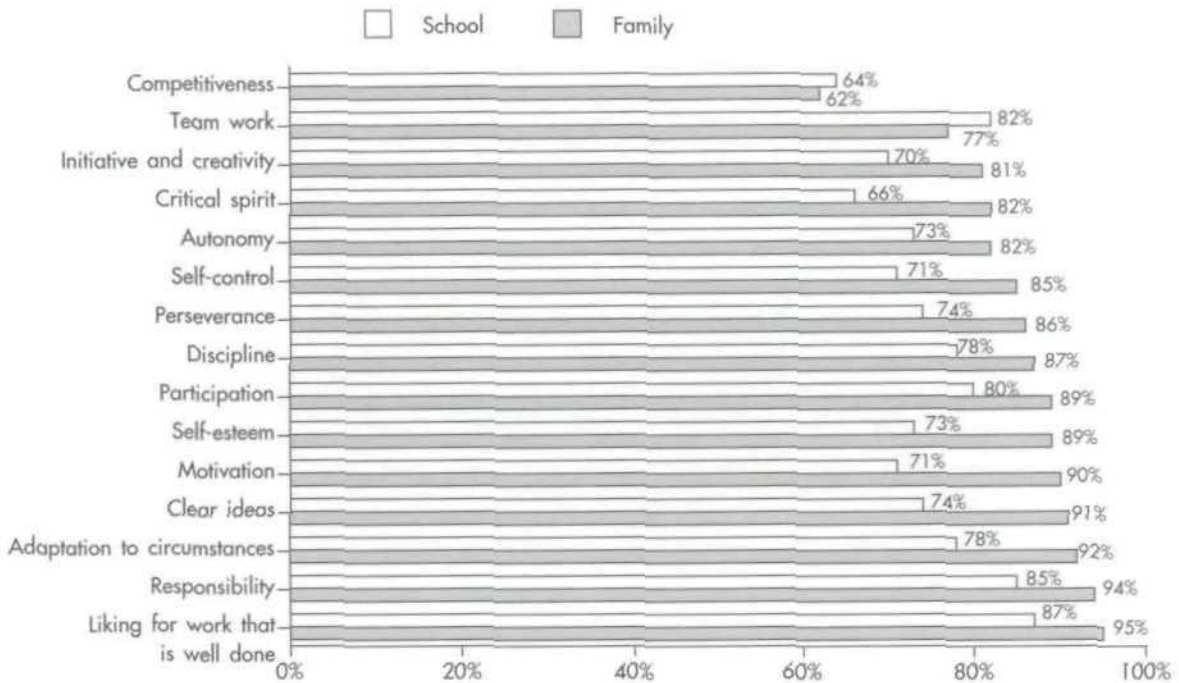
behaviour that affect socialisation. Families consider life together is an optimal fact, as respect between the members, adaptation to the economic circumstances and dialogue are clearly valued (graph 9).

Among the comparisons the study has allowed, one must point out the fact that the greater the municipality in which one lives, the more children take part in decision making and the more they adapt to the economic circumstances of the family. Families whose children attend religious schools show a greater respect for privacy and the spaces and objects in the home. On the other hand, encouragement of values for family life together increases with the educational level of the parents and, finally, the parent's work outside the home also influences greater responsibility among the members of the family in their chores.

## FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION

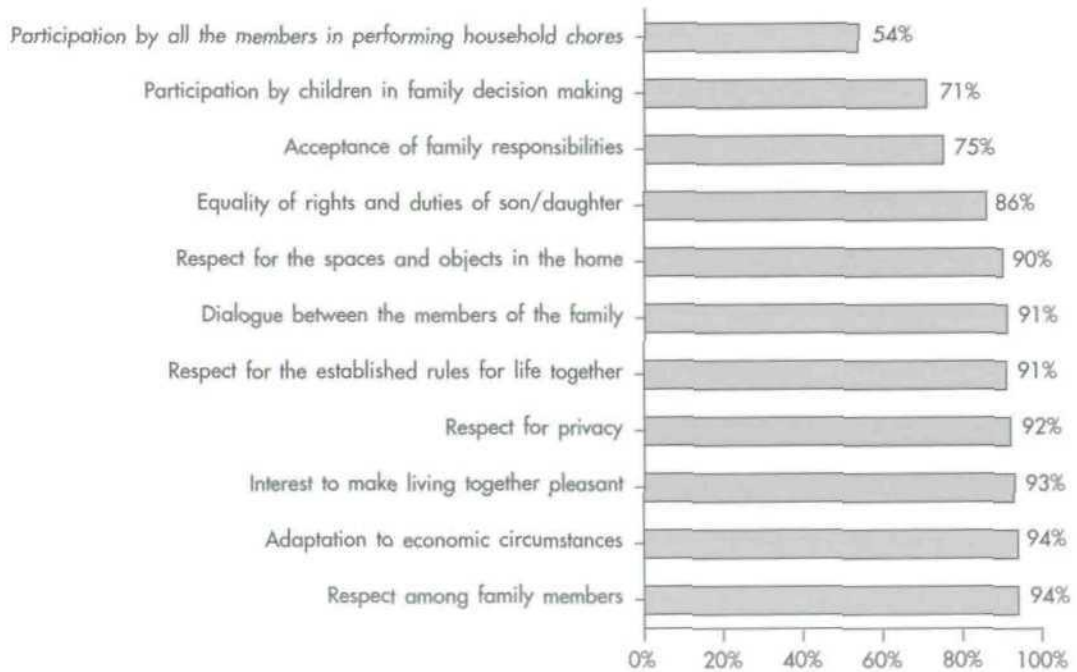
The order of priorities as to the dimensions of education that affect the whole syllabus (those called cross-curricular) is not the same for the family as for the school. Graph 10 shows the aspects which the family and the school grant a

Graph 8: Attitudes encouraged by the family and school (percentages of "a lot" or "fairly")



Source: Family-School Questionnaire, INCE 1997.

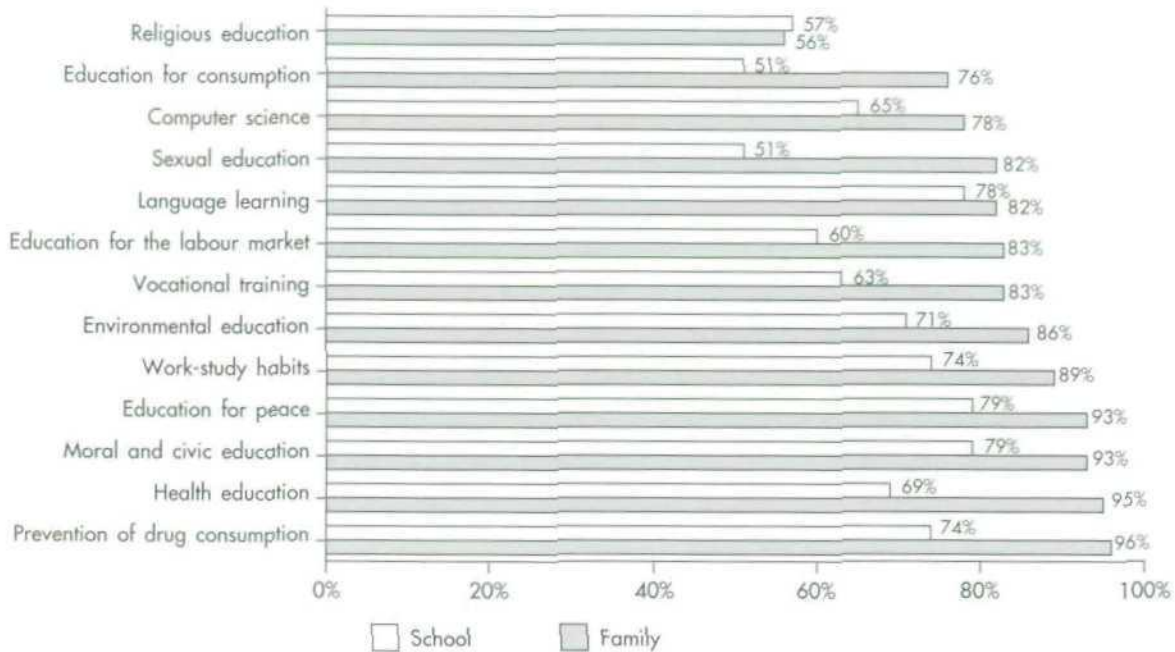
Graph 9: Opinion the families have as to the extent to which the following values of life together arise within the family setting (percentages of "fairly" and "a lot")



Source: Family-School Questionnaire, INCE 1997.



Graph 10: Families who consider the family itself and the school grant a "fair" amount or "a lot" of importance to the following aspects of their son or daughter's education (percentages)



"fair" or "lot" of importance, ranked according to their respective assessment.

The table must be interpreted with care, above all as to the aspects that are apparently less valued. What the parents were really asked is what they really do, that is to say, the importance they grant in their action to those aspects and not the importance they should give them. Indeed, parents seem especially concerned about the problem of drugs and their prevention and fairly little as to education for consumption, the latter being a fact that does not cease to be contradictory to a great extent and perhaps thus discouraging. Even less importance seems to be granted by the family to religious education. The parents, on the other hand, consider that schools pay special attention to education for peace and moral and civic education.

The greatest demand among the educational aspects considered in the study arises in municipalities with a greater number of inhabitants, except in the case of religious education, where the demand is inversely proportional to the size of the municipality.

The parents of students at religious schools show a greater concern for religious education, prevention of drug consumption, learning languages and computer science and encouraging work and study habits.

The parent cultural level factor also introduces significant differences. Parents with higher education have a higher appraisal of moral and civic education, education for peace, environmental education, encouragement of study and work habits and learning languages. Parents with only primary education, on the other hand, grant special relevance to education for the labour market, education for consumption and religious education.

## IMAGE OF THEIR OFFSPRING

84% of parents consider their children are "scarcely" or "not" aggressive and 60% are "scarcely" or "not" consumer oriented. This data item is obtained from the answers to questions on **children's behaviour**. Table 13 expresses to what extent certain behaviour is shown by children, ac-

according to their parents. As conflictive situations have grown with society overall, one might think that children have a sweeter image within the

family setting and that, in this context, there is an appreciable climate of overprotection of children by their parents.

Table 13. Extent to which behaviour is shown by offspring (percentages)

	None	Little	Fairly	A lot
Aggressiveness	34%	50%	14%	2%
Competitiveness	7%	39%	43%	11%
Consumption	10%	50%	31%	9%
Autonomy	4%	21%	54%	21%
Self-esteem	2%	15%	56%	27%
Personal care and hygiene	0%	6%	38%	56%

Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

## Family, school and participation

The study has covered different elements of the involvement of parents in school life: a) participation in activities; b) presence at Parents Associations; c) participation on the School Council; d) direct and personal relations. Overall, the results of the study do not differ substantially from what is concluded by similar research.

### PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES

When asked: "To what extent do you participate in the following aspects of life at your child's school?", the answers by the respondents are mainly grouped in the options for none or **little participation by the parents in the school activities**, except as to meetings or talks in which they affirm 51% of the parents affirm they participate "little" or "a lot". 80% of the respondents state they participate little or not at all extracurricular activities by their children and 50% state they do not participate in such activities at all.

### PARENTS' ASSOCIATIONS (AMPAs)

There are Parents' Associations at 82% of the schools in the survey. This high percentage reveals the consolidation of the parent association

movement. As it is a body with its own initiative and promotion, which does not depend on external instances, its mere existence may be considered as an indicator of participation. AMPAs are associations created due to interest by the parents and sustained by their dedication and financing.

However, the real participation by the parents through the AMPAs is quite low: 35% declare they do not participate in them and 51% just pay the fees. Only 14% of the parents declare they participate actively. Apart from that, satisfaction with their functioning is not unanimous: 62% of the parents are very or fairly satisfied, as to 38%, they are scarcely or not satisfied with functioning of the Association to which they belong.

Some comparisons show significant data. For example, at religious schools, the existence of AMPAs is more generalised than at other kinds of schools. Participation in AMPAs is greater in the case of parents with higher education: 42% of them participate and 8% does so on the governing boards, percentages that are clearly above the average in one case and the other.

As a contrast to participation and satisfaction, it seems that parents who do not participate in the association tend to be little or not satisfied with its operation; those whose link is limited to *paying the fees scarcely or fairly satisfied*, while the management or active members state they are fairly or very satisfied with the functioning of the AMPA.



## THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

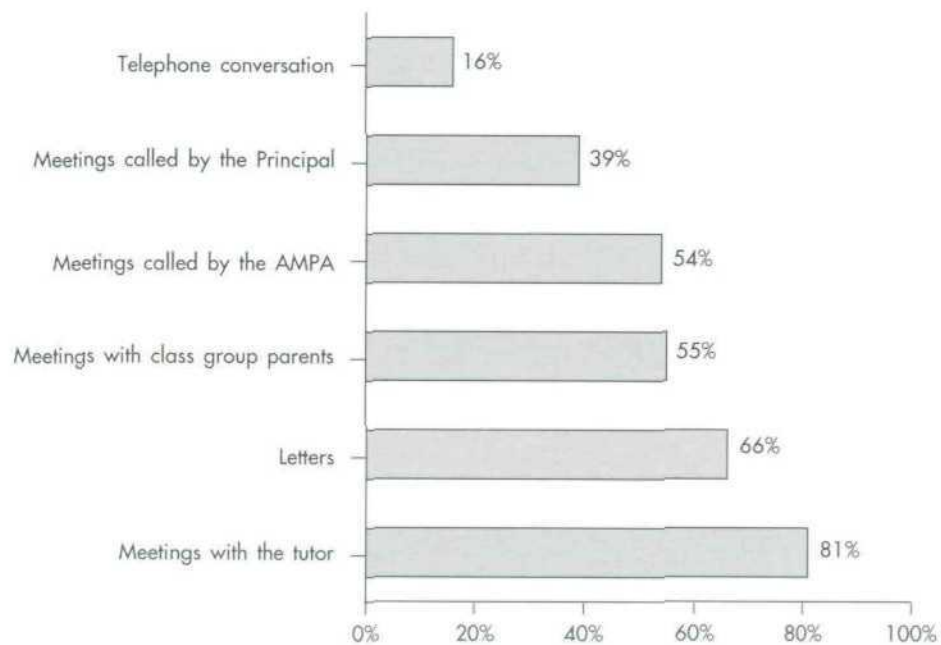
As to the involvement of parents in the School Council, it is surprising that 40% state they ignore its existence, compared with 58% who state they know of it. It seems evident that, as the School Council is the highest body of participation in the school and as it is restricted to a limited number of members for obvious reasons, the parents who are least involved in the process of participation seem to be the furthest from its operation. In any case, 65% of parents state they are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the functioning of the School Council which, however, is a fairly positive fact.

## FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Although the Associations and School Councils are institutional mechanisms of communication and participation, the individual initiatives of the relation between families and schools are especially relevant. The meetings, interviews and written correspondence have the virtual nature of concentrating on the training process of a specific student. As graph 11 shows, the most usual means of communication in this context is the meeting with the tutor and telephone conversations the least frequent.

Parents have a very high appraisal of everything that facilitates their relationship with the

Graph 11: Parents who affirm that they make normal use of the following channels of communication with their son/daughter's school (percentages)



Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

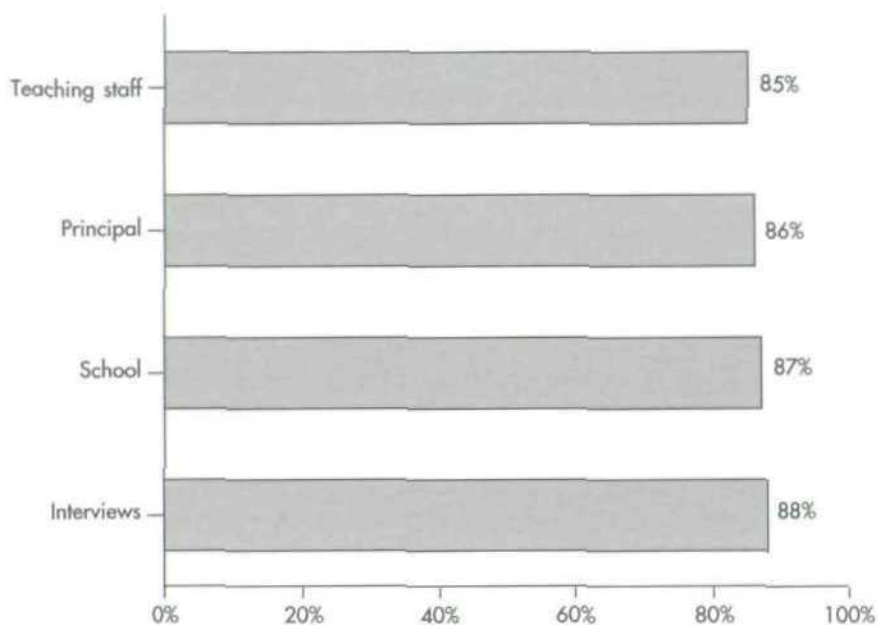
school. The most appreciated mechanism for relations is the individual interview to deal with problems or individual situations (81% consider it very or fairly important). This fact is reinforced by the high degree of satisfaction by parents as to their interviews with teachers, tutors and other instances of the school (graph 12).

There are few conflicts between schools and families and parents' wish for a change of school

seems a minimal percentage of 7% (graphs 13 and 14). To sum up, and as to this scope of the study, the parents' concern is concentrated on their children's direct reality and, more specifically, on them not having problems at school. The concern for school management and orientation is minority. Parents in general do not feel responsible for that task; and it is a widespread attitude, with few differences among the social groups.

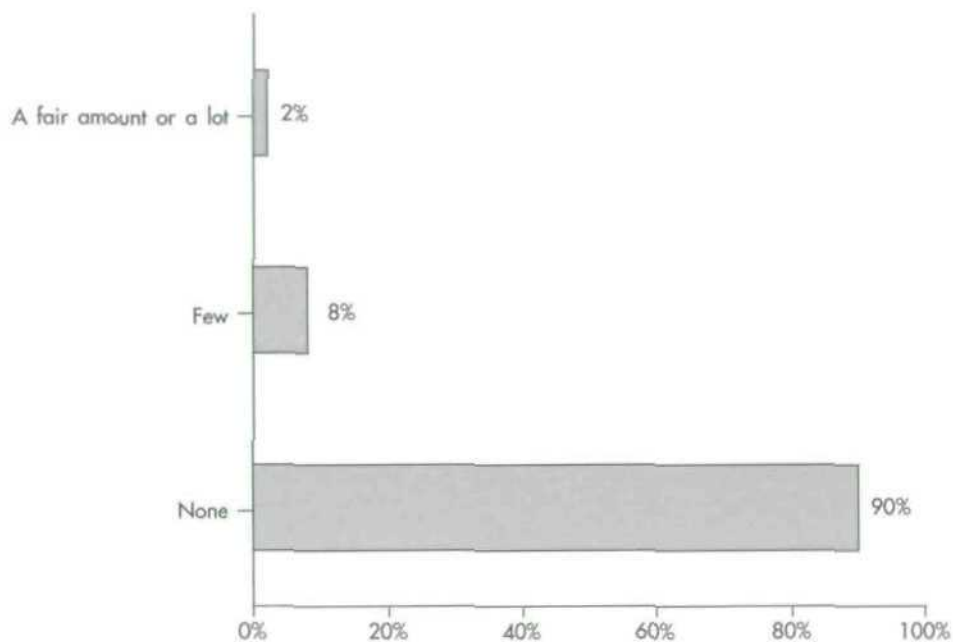


Graph 12: Parents who state they are "fairly" or "very satisfied" with interviews, with the tutor, with teaching staff and with the school (percentages)



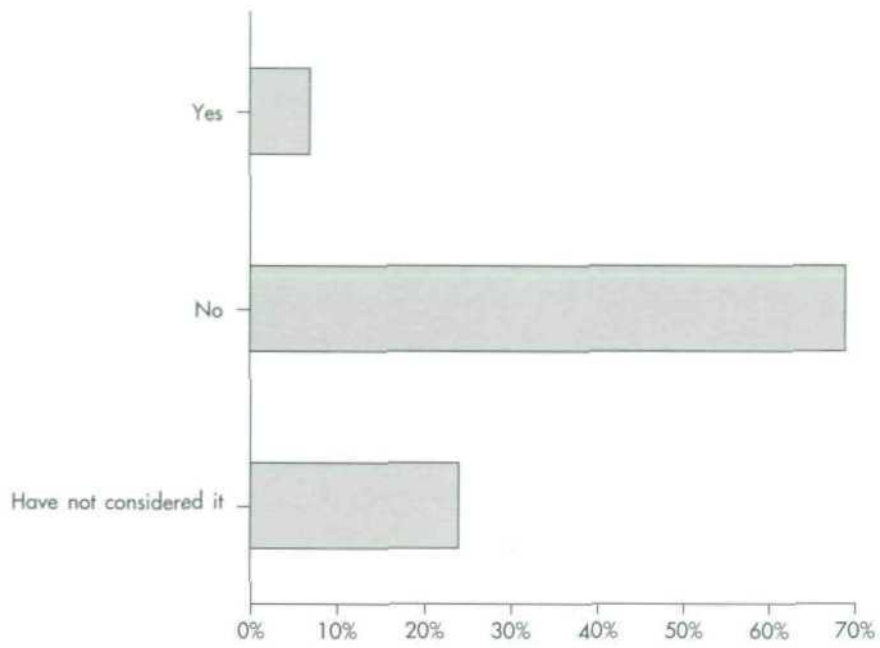
Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

Graph 13: Conflicts with teachers (percentages)



Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.

Graph 14: Parent wish for a change of school (percentages)



Source: Family-School Questionnaire. INCE 1997.





# Conclusions and recommendations



## Five approaches to the educational system

1. The Diagnosis was conceived, from its offset, as a diversified study, and not as a set presided by a research guideline that the different parties necessarily had to fit in with and adapt to. This initial conception was amply discussed from the start, because not all the experts consulted agreed with it. The contrary alternative was that of effectively choosing a specific area for evaluation or particular method of diagnosis, and to attempt to enrich it with complementary, descriptive or explanatory evaluations and methodologies. The specific area of evaluation that seemed to be accepted by the majority was, obviously, that of academic performance, that is to say, the advantage taken by students of certain subjects on the syllabus. Taking that area as a starting point, it seemed possible and convenient to carry out complementary research to allow a better understanding of the differences in performance that may arise (research as to the syllabus, the social and family influence, the efficiency of schools, etc.). This was the same formula the INCE attempted to follow prior to this in some of the preliminary evaluations, specifically that on primary education. It was also the formula most frequently resorted to in other developed countries.

2. This alternative formula has undoubtedly been implemented recently in Spain and abroad. As to our country, the main efforts at diagnosis carried out in recent decades, analyzed in the first chapter, tended to adopt diversified approximation criteria, although perhaps insisting on evaluation of the existing resources and the necessary resources to extend the benefits of education to the Spanish juvenile population overall. What it set out to record was, definitively, the possible lack of sufficient educational resources (as to schools, buildings, teaching staff, teaching methods, etc.) to implement the right of all to education. However, in more or less punctual research,

as well as, above all, in systematic actions carried out by the Inspectorate bodies, there have also been possible actions in our country in evaluation of academic performance as a means of diagnosis and improvement of the quality of the educational services.

3. As far as the international scope is concerned, it is undoubtably due to the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) that evaluation of academic performance was adopted as the basic comparative criteria when providing information on the efficiency of school activities in diverse countries in the world. Later, other international bodies - especially the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - also assumed this methodological criteria, integrating it as a fundamental part within a more ambitious set of educational indicators, among which those concerning quantifiable resources still prevail.

4. In spite of all these considerations, which seem to back the decision to turn academic performance into a procedure in inside information concerning the greater or lesser quality of the educational system, the diagnosis project prepared by the INCE, which was definitively accepted by its Governing Body, was placed in the line of a greater conceptual and methodological opening. The aim was thus to prevent the educational reductionism this would perhaps lead them to, worldwide, in important social sectors and political decision making bodies, desiring to find relatively simplified access to something so complex, so subtle and also so imprecise, as is the quality of education received and to be received by the citizens.

5. Although the extreme importance of academic results in the basic subjects of learning were never doubted as true indicators of quality, it did not seem, however, appropriate to use them - if one may use the expression - as an engine for the whole diagnosis process, making aspects that are of the same or greater strength and meaning

in the quality of training actions subject to them. A plural, relatively independent approach was thus preferred that, far from being limited to providing determinist explanations as to greater or lesser performance in some areas of learning (however important these may be objectively), to aim to diagnose the academic system from other points of view. An attempt was made to overcome the process/product paradigm. To do so, in addition to academic performance, four approaches were chosen that were considered substantial, relative, respectively, to the teaching syllabuses and methods, to administration and management of schools, to the teaching profession and to relations between society and school. Undoubtedly others could have been added, or some of those chosen diversified., although it was considered that the approximative framework was sufficient, considering above all the time and resources available.

6. Does this mean that all kind of correlation was renounced beforehand? Of course not. Although the reader will surely have already noticed it indeed, the main objective of the following pages is to show that all the aspects are closely correlated, although not linear cause-effect relations. Under no circumstances is the aim to underestimate, or even less to disqualify the importance or appropriateness of the latter determinist relations here, but rather to clarify for once and for all that the diagnosis has not used them as a fundamental methodological criteria.

7. In any case, the methodological approach used here does not aim to say the last word in such an arguable and argued matter. It seemed, when it was adopted, that it could offer a means of *integration, that would not be excluding at all*, so it should be a diagnosis of the situation as to educational matters. In fact, the study aspect to academic results collected data and left open interesting results for future research by those who wish to seek cause-effect results in this specific aspect, although that was not its fundamental objective. Something similar may be affirmed in other chapters. The future will tell to what extent it is worth conserving or correcting this approach. In principle, it does not seem to be a good idea to have preferred plurality rather than exclusion here.

## Reflections on academic performance

8. The first reflection we should perhaps make first for the reader is concerning the considerable methodological effect made to obtain the most reliable and valid data possible on academic performance among young Spaniards aged 14 and 16. The evaluation is not limited in the first instance to "grading" the students, but aims to point out what they know and what they do not know as to the areas examined. Nor does it just offer a separate impression of the two age groups, but *relates the knowledge acquired and the progression of learning among them*, so we may notice the effect of schooling on them. Above all, it is not limited to providing an "up-to-date" portrait of what these youths know, that is thus destined to fade over the years, but, on the contrary, to be taken as a reference point in future periodic evaluation, something that has not been possible to date. The methodological option chosen - cautious and daring at the same time - has the virtuality of being particularly useful for comparative purposes, in spatial and time terms.

9. This all does not mean that the methodological option implemented is completely free of risks and shortcomings and that the data provided should not be submitted to later analysis and accepted with the usual caution, as indeed there *may be specific errors and base flaws*. What one must reject a priori is that all the necessary means have not been deployed to prevent any bias or undue manipulation. Experts from all the Educational Administrations involved have participated in adapting the base methodological criteria; the preparation of the questionnaires was aimed at and reviewed by that same variety of experts, and its administration was entrusted to the actual services at the said Administrations, which have undoubtedly taken the greatest care in the usual procedures.

10. The academic performance by the students shown in the diagnosis is not determined according to what is considered "desirable", but according to what is objectively observed. In other words, using the same expression included in the relevant *Report*, the performance scales used show only the "education had" and not the "education wished for". Obviously, what is aimed at must be clearly defined, the sooner the better and, thus, what level must be considered as com-



pletely satisfactory; although this is not the task of the specialists in evaluation, but those responsible for managing the educational system and pointing out its priority objectives (which do not consist only of the so-called "minimum contents"). At present, according to the available data, we must be content to consider only what is presented in a clear, almost unarguable matter as "unsatisfactory" or "satisfactory" (although admitting beforehand that even evident matters are sometimes subject to argument).

### "SCHOOL FAILURE": A RECURRING THEME

11. However much this may be mentioned in recent decades, so-called "school failure" is not indeed an old problem, but a fairly recent problem, due to generalised schooling. At least from a subjective point of view - which indeed is not the only important factor in this field - one fails only in what one attempts to achieve and does not achieve. Thus one may note, among other things, that "school failure" is really a typical phenomenon in countries that have achieved a certain educational development, but not so much in those still struggling to generalise schooling, even at primary school level. In fact, it is so typical in educationally developed countries that almost all of them suffer it to a greater or lesser extent.

12. However, "school failure" in Spain, if not old, has indeed been a recurring theme in recent decades, above all as of the early seventies. Under one name or another, it is referred to in numerous research papers and in most of the diagnosis or situation reports presented to the public at large or to the educational authorities since then, as we have had the opportunity to see in chapter one. It places special emphasis on the technical reports by the Inspectorate, which sometimes provide specific figures, as well as those that, since 1984, has been prepared by the State School Council. According to the Report on Primary Education performed by the INCE in 1995, only 51% of a 64% students aged 12 achieved acceptable results in Mathematics and Spanish Language respectively, which shows there is 49% and 26%, in both cases, which do not achieve these.

13. It is thus not something new what the diagnosis now presented affirms in more general terms and undoubtedly better documented: that

as to the basic subjects of learning, an average of students aged 14 "is on the limit of the distribution with clearly unsatisfactory results", and "33% of the students aged 16 is on the lower limit of the distribution, with results that are very far from the acceptable minimums".

14. These are undoubtedly worrying results, the severity of which must not be ignored. The truth is that the presence of high percentages of school drop-outs is also present in other educational systems around us at our cultural level, although, according to the scarce comparative data not available to us, the figures the developed countries seem to reach do not reach the same levels as ours; according to general impressions, that are merely approximate although documented, this does not usually exceed 20% at both ages. In order to speak of full reliability in comparisons between countries, as to school failure, one would undoubtedly have to start from the basis of methodologies with common principles as to the actual definition and determination of school failure, which has yet to be carried out. To conclude, the differences in margin between some developed countries and others, which is relatively close, does not in any way justify social alarm in the Spanish case, although urgent corrective measures should be taken.

15. In fact, these means of correction could and should have started years ago, as in other countries (and in spite of these being less affected). Due to a series of reasons this diagnosis need not go deeper into, the truth is that this has not happened; we are now facing the urgent need to bring about a significant change to make schools an efficient means of promotion, in one sense or another, for the majority of the Spanish juvenile population, and under no circumstances may it allow systematic failure by at least a quarter of its members.

16. The growth of schooling frequently causes a drop in the global level of teaching. Moreover, an important number of students who fail do so out of full, conscious lack of interest in what school has to offer them, in spite of the pressure that may be put on them by parents and teachers. The latter immediately comes to light in class, although little may be done to overcome the situation. From the teacher's point of view, the Report on Syllabuses and Teaching Methods states the problem in the following, very expressive words: "The presence of a significant number



of students who could be called "academic objectors" has been noted: those who openly declare their rejection of schooling, although they have no alternative but to attend school. They show a problem generated by the ESO, that has no solution at present." It seems obvious that any attempt at solution must involve finding institutional solutions out aiming at it only being teachers who solve the problem - allowing the student's interest to be recovered, as exclusion from schooling must be fully rejected.

17. Interesting the students who have lost interest is not a problem that only affects them, but also their companions (especially others who also, regrettably, have a low performance) and all of the school action. As the Report on School Operation most clearly states, one of the two main causes of the situations of lack of discipline in schools is precisely due to "lack of interest among the students, followed by family problems and the presence of repeating students".

18. To sum up, one of the priority objectives that must be imposed by the Spanish educational system is a determined struggle against school failure from the very beginning of obligatory education (and surely before) although especially during the period of secondary education. To allow this, it is fundamental that Spanish society itself is aware that the problem exists and that it is a severe problem, a matter that is not very clear if we consider the information provided by the families of students in secondary education.

19. According to the answers to the survey administered, included in the Report on School and Family, at least 70% of Spanish parents are satisfied with their children's academic results. One must reconsider the data collected in this sense, pages back "70% of Spanish parents believe that their children are doing well or very well in their studies compared with other children their age; 57% reply that their children are motivated (always or frequently) to study; 76% of fathers and 83% of mother satisfied with the they have with their children as to their studies; 70% of fathers and 71% of mothers say they are satisfied with their children's academic performance. The assessment of children's academic progress is high; a quarter consider it "very good" and almost half "good", somewhat less than a quarter "reasonable" and only 6% "bad". It is evident that the figures do not match, above all the latter two. If,

as the data on performance suggests, we have academic failure rates of about 25% and 30% aged 14 and 16, how is it possible that less than 25% of parents state that their children's performance is only "reasonable", and only 6% admit a situation of real failure? It will be difficult to combat academic failure in a society that, simply, does not admit its existence, at least in real proportions. One would have to go into the causes for this state of opinion; and provide adequate solutions.

### MEDIOCRITY CANNOT CONSTITUTE A COMMON OBJECTIVE

20. According to the *Report on Academic Performance*, only 30% of the students aged 14 and 22.5% of those aged 16 in Spain, on average, achieve results that may be considered fully "satisfactory", without reserves; these percentages also include students who not only obtain "satisfactory" results, but more than satisfactory, one may state brilliant ones, to which we shall refer further on. Setting aside that high band of students and those who usually fail in their studies, we reach the following proof: that a considerable majority of students (about 41 or 42% in both cases) are concentrated in the interval around the average; although not obtaining clearly "unsatisfactory" results, do not seem to obtain clearly "satisfactory" ones either. These are thus located in a wide range of doubtful, arguable results, which in the best of cases we could classify as "mediocre".

21. On the other hand, the number of students who are outstanding, above what is considered fully "satisfactory", seems to be very small on the performance scales. At age 14, that number amounts to 2% in Reading Comprehension and Grammar and Literature and 4% in Mathematics and 6% in Geography and History, and 3% in Nature Sciences. At age 16, the average is even lower, as the percentage is 2% in Reading Comprehension and in Geography and History, and 3% in Grammar and Literature, Mathematics and Nature Sciences. The portrait of the diagnosis of our educational system, in the stretch concerned, thus shows that the number of students with a high performance (no necessarily optimum performance) in our schools is fairly scarce. Is this due to an intrinsic failure in the

scales of performance used, which perhaps have not known how to distinguish the most skilled students adequately? It is possible, and we now recommend further analysis in this sense. However, the probable interpretation that the data initially seems to indicate, is another: that cultivation of excellence at Spanish schools is fairly low nowadays, perhaps partially due to the effort required of the teaching staff to achieve at least reasonably satisfactory levels (partially we insist, as the causes of such a complex phenomenon cannot be simplified).

22. There is a quite surprising lack of reference to this point in the *Report on Syllabuses and Teaching Methods*. The teaching staff shows a great interest in the matter of integration of students with special educational needs, and also as to the matter of diversity, as we shall also see later on, but, considering what may be seen from reading the *Report*, the approach to diversity seems to be governed, above all, by finding solutions for low performance students, and not thus to finding ways to provide proper orientation for high performance students. The impression given is that, in any case, the latter could take care of themselves perfectly well alone.

23. However, discovery and encouragement of high performance students seems to be an objective of enormous interest to the educational system and to the society it serves. The more educationally developed countries have understood this well, as years ago they made excellence a fundamental, almost obsessive reference. Achieving and maintaining cultural, scientific, social and cultural development to keep up with the times, and with the capacity to compete nobly with the societies around us, requires cultivation of excellence in academic settings more than ever, especially in such a decisive moment as precisely Obligatory Secondary Education.

24. Spanish schools nowadays do not seem to seek excellence, nor does Spanish society at large. One must take another look at the optimism shown as to this point by a high percentage of Spanish families, when they consider obviously mediocre results "good or very good", and results that are clearly unsatisfactory "mediocre" ("reasonable" is the term used). Of course, that optimism is also quite positive, as it means there is considerable appreciation for mere schooling and, thus, a possible driving force for future improvement. However, it is obvious that one must

not become bogged down in the present terms of complacency.

25. Mediocrity may not be considered, under any circumstances, as an objective of the educational system. The determined struggle must be put up against the high rates of academic failure we are suffering must be accompanied by institutional solutions and procedure to allow schools and teachers to take the greatest possible advantage of the more skilled students, interest and stimulation to study, in the conviction that this will not only be of advantage to them, but also for the good of the institution itself, for the educational system and the whole of society. At present, the Spanish educational system falls very far short in that sense.

### EMULATION VERSUS COMPETITIVENESS

26. As aforementioned, the methodology used to diagnose academic performance among Obligatory Secondary Education students seems particularly fit to provide spatial and time-frame comparisons. One may expect these present and future comparisons not to encourage rivalry, or irritation, but to be of use to deal with inappropriate differences and, definitively, to improve the quality of education throughout the institutional and territorial scope of Spain.

27. One understands that the partial or biased use that may be made, and has been made of comparative data sometimes gives rise to the temptation among those in charge and managers to avoid this. To succumb to that temptation would be a considerable error of calculation, as it would deprive the political officers and institutions of an excellent instrument for improvement just due to passing problems of image. As to that point, this diagnosis has established an important precedent that shall no longer be done away with under any circumstances. The best virtualities of the methodologies used - particularly, although not only by the Committee dedicated to Academic Performance - are not those stated now, but those that will come to light in future evaluations.

28. Among the comparisons obtained from the study, the most usual is that referring to sexes. Little new information has come to light in this sense. It has confirmed that there are differences between them in the results and processes. Female students are better than male ones in



Language, perhaps due to their early maturity, while the males are better than females in Mathematics. There is the unique fact that the differences between them tend to decrease in the first case and to increase in the second, over the 14-16 year old period. The data as to this point, although important, however seem to be liable to variation, and require attention to be paid to successive evaluation.

29. Among all the differences referred to in the Report on Academic Performance, one must perhaps take greater care in interpreting those referring to diverse syllabus lines followed by students at present, when there is still an overlap of two different sets of laws (those of 1970 and 1990). As repeatedly explained, the degree of implementation of the new teaching is not the same in all the Autonomous Regions, nor at all the state and private schools (even within the same Region), nor has enough time of implementation elapsed for the new teaching to show well defined differential features as to the previous ones. It would thus be most inappropriate to state that the diagnosis evaluates the ESO, that is to say, the new Obligatory Secondary Education established in the LOGSE. In this context, the results are thus these one would have expected: a habitual lack of significant differentiation between the two main syllabus lines among 14 year old students, and a clear significant differentiation in favour of BUP among students aged 16, which is more logical if one bears in mind that the student body in the new ESO contains not only students who previously attended BUP, but also those who attended Vocational Training, and even those who attended no kind of school. At present, there is no reason to state that performance has worsened after application of the LOGSE, although there is none to state that it has improved either. Performance, as we perfectly well know, is fairly low, and what does seem true is that the circumstance of abundant academic failure and generalised mediocrity that has been denounced for some years has not yet found an effective solution.

30. As to the differences in academic performance noted on comparison of the state and private sectors of the Spanish educational system, one may note yet again (as in the evaluation of primary education also performed by the INCE and also backed by other studies) that performance is usually higher in the private sector than in

the state sector, although the differences between one and the other are not abysmal, and in some more specific cases, not to significant. Again it confirms what was already shown by some studies prior by the Inspectorate of Education and the said evaluation of primary, as well as in diverse research: that the social and cultural level of the students' families plays an important role in the differences, this generally being higher among those attending private schools. This diagnosis, however, shows two new and very suggestive details, that the relevant Report states, although not without caution: firstly, that the social and cultural differences partially, although only partially, explain the differences in performance, there thus being other causes of better or worse performance that may not be reduced to social and cultural factors; and secondly, that the private sector acts to a greater extent as a buffer than in the public sector for the effect on the students of those social and cultural variables that are inherent to the family background. The Report presents these two details more as lines of a trend than as conclusions that are fully confirmed by the data. One would have to wait for more precise research to be carried out into the matter.

31. As to the difference in performance between the Autonomous Regions, the diagnosis indicates that, while within not excessively contrasted limits, these sometimes show a very significant lack of proportion. They range between 17 and 45 points on the relevant performance scales, and they should provoke serious reflection beyond mere anecdote, to examine possible causes, which the diagnosis, obviously, has not been able to consider. These causes, in any case, are complex and may be avoided, perhaps only middle to long term. Some Autonomous Regions that have a history of considerable attention dedicated to educational, human and material resources do not seem to have obtained the results that would have been foreseeable, while others, apparently less well attended, obtain high marks. There undoubtedly must be reasons to explain these differences, and we hope that in the years to come research may be carried out in that field. At present, the diagnosis provides the political officers data of undoubtable interest, which we hope will come to favour the Autonomous Regions that apparently most require improvement, especially at this moment when the process of educational devolution is going through its last stages.



## The teachers opinion of the syllabuses and teaching methods

32. As the success or failure of the legal provisions related to the syllabus depends greatly on the attitude the teachers have to them, as they definitively are the people who implement them, the Specialised Committee in charge of diagnosing how the students are taught decided to concentrate on them as the main source of information. As a means of access to this, it used not only the questions in a survey that was amply and carefully designed, but also formed diverse Diagnosis Groups in which, in a more informal, relaxed way, the teachers had the chance to explain their points of view. The methodology used by the Committee seemed adequate, as the objective was not to initiate a process of reform in the present syllabuses and the methodological orientations set up around these, but to check to what extent the teachers accepted them and how they interpret and apply them.

33. We are aware that this is not the only possible approach when diagnosing the syllabuses in force. Other means would have been practical and full of interest: adapting the syllabuses to future orientation of the students (surveying, for example, teachers in higher secondary education, university professors, entrepreneurial and trade union agents, etc.); adapting Spanish syllabuses to the prevailing syllabus lines at the same level in developed countries, especially those in the European Union; internal criticism of the content according to the prevalent objectives, etc. However, considering the resources and time available, it seemed that exploring secondary school teachers' opinions could provide a sufficiently expressive view for the moment.

### FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

34. The first conclusion one may perhaps emphasise in the work is the preferably positive attitude of the teaching staff to Obligatory Secondary Education - a teaching staff, as one knows, which comes from two now different syllabus lines: General Basic Education (EGB) and Secondary Education (BUP and VT) - as to the objectives, the

fundamental areas, the cross-curricular themes and, to sum up, the general design established by the LOGSE for this educational level. The assessment the teaching staff theoretically make of the design of ESO is, in general terms, high, although there is criticism and doubt as to the model being applicable in specific school and classroom situations.

35. On the same lines, the fundamental planning instruments introduced by the reform - the School Educational Project and the Syllabus Project - also receive a mainly positive theoretical assessment by the teaching staff, although it is made clear that their use in practice is much below the positive appreciation they seem to have. The Educational Inspectorate has repeatedly pointed out in its latest Reports, as we have seen in chapter 1, the threat of the bureaucratic risks of such documents. The diagnosis now confirms that observation: "The Syllabus Project nowadays - as were the Lesson Preparation Notebooks or the Long and Short Subject Plannings - have become an administrative requisite: they are prepared, sent to the relevant body, approved and then ignored. These instruments do not seem to respond to a heartfelt need." However, as to the School Educational Project, the *Report on School Operation* shows the notable degree of participation the members of the School Council state they have in its preparation and, what is perhaps the most significant, the even more notable degree of participation they wish to have in its participation. Although the groups with which Committees II and IV do not completely coincide in definition, the results may suggest a certain difference of attitude between the School Educational Project and the Syllabus Projects, so that the first may indeed perhaps constitute a "heartfelt need", at least for some of the teachers.

36. The gap between assessment and application, between theory and practice, becomes particularly visible as to the teaching resources normally used by the teacher. Although those proposed in the reform documents are rather well considered, they are clearly relegated to second or third place (or are even inoperative) in the specific teaching tasks, in which traditional resources prevail, most notably text books. The truth is that the most highly valued resource mentioned is "own materials", although such materials are mainly taken from text books. Thus,

the weight of text books in Spanish syllabuses is confirmed once more as an unarguable factor.

37. A last point of comparison, this time in greater detail, between theory and practice, that one should point out, is the reference to student evaluation and promotion. There also seems to be a prevalent theoretical acceptance of the principle of continuous evaluation and automatic promotion, with reference to the ESO, although always accompanied by explicit recognition of the formal difficulties involved in such evaluation and promotion. It definitively seems that the teaching staff has its doubts, in this sense, as to what would surely be desirable, and what would be prudent and realistic. It also seems, in any case, that the evaluation methods and techniques used are not up to the standard required for such needs.

### PROBLEMS REQUIRING A SWIFT SOLUTION

38. The teaching staff considers an especially relevant problem to be the timetable assigned to each of the areas. Of course, the approaches are fairly different according to the subject taught by each teacher. Although everyone has a relatively high appraisal of all the areas foreseen (even the less valued ones, such as Technology and Music), when requesting more time, this is requested above all for their own area. In any case, there is great agreement as to requesting more time for the basic and instrumental subjects, specifically Spanish Language and Mathematics. It is foreseeable that the clearly unsatisfactory results obtained by the students in these subjects reinforces this opinion, which is already present among most of the teaching staff.

39. The optional subjects also give rise to peculiar problems at schools, in some cases due to excessive offer, and at others due to difficulties to attend to the demand. The latter depend on whether the teaching staff is properly qualified to teach them, as well as on the resources to be assigned to them, and the greater or lesser convenience or opportunity to organise them.

40. There are two methodological problems the teaching staff especially notice. One concerns heterogeneous classes, the model the ESO reinforces by also applying it to students aged between 14 and 16; it seems clear that extending the model without having adequate resources may be a

source of conflict and cause a drop in quality. The second problem is the difficulty the teachers from the previous Secondary Education have to adapt to the ESO students; this is a problem that is closely related to the deficiencies in the initial training and ongoing training that are also reported by the teaching staff, which is abundantly discussed in the part of the diagnosis on the teaching profession.

41. The ways forward to diversity are also, within the context of the present laws, a fair dilemma to the teaching staff. Most specifically, the teaching staff does not consider that the syllabus diversification and compensatory vocational education programmes provide an efficient solution for a great number of studies, partially due to their being minority and inadequate, and partially because it is offered too late. The opinions seem to be in favour of opening up wider channels for diversification, perhaps facilitating greater opening in the syllabus options, especially in the 2nd cycle of ESO; other teachers clearly suggest forming differentiated groups, of the itinerary kind, in 3rd and 4th, or at least in 4th grade.

42. In general terms, the teaching staff considers that the Educational Authorities and their supporting bodies grant insufficient attention and orientation to the role they play.

43. The lack of definition there seems to have been, since their creation, among some important bodies to support schools is also considered as a problem that should be solved as soon as possible. Specifically, this affects particularly the Orientation Departments. According to the teaching staff, which in any case values the novelty of its existence, one would have to clearly define its functions and specific its scope of action and obligations from a more pragmatic viewpoint. For the present, the position they occupy and the activities they carry out vary significantly from school to school.

### DIFFERENTIATED SITUATIONS AND POSTURES

44. A comparative approximation to the attitude of state and private schools to the reform provides initial signs of a more favourable attitude among private sector teaching staff. To provide some examples, the teaching staff at state schools does not have a positive opinion of the planning



formulas introduced in the reform, nor does it have a high opinion of the performance evaluation procedures set; on the other hand, it frequently notices the practical difficulties as to integration of students with special educational needs. At private schools, on the contrary, these matters do not give rise to so much argument and, in general, a greater tendency to act according to the rules of the reform is noted.

45. It is also interesting to observe certain difference in attitudes between male and female teachers as to the reform. In general, the latter seem more innovative and have a better appreciation of some of the principles of the LOGSE. Male teachers, on the other hand, have a more conventional, traditional viewpoint as to academic reality, perhaps a more pragmatic one.

46. There seem to be few differences between Autonomous Regions as to valuation and acceptance of the theoretical components of the reform. However, as to use of teaching techniques and resources, or to the specific way to apply certain principles (for example, that of integration of students with special educational needs), the differences are sometimes considerable and deserve more detailed study.

47. The most significant differences as to the Syllabuses and Teaching Methods may be noted in those related to the two groups of teachers now assigned to ESO: those from the body of General Basic Education (EGB) teachers, and those from the body of Secondary Education teachers. The viewpoint of both groups as to the different matters concerned differs substantially, and undoubtedly this could give rise to certain conflicts in the years to come, however much this is, pursuant to the laws, a transit situation.

### The opinion the teaching staff has of itself

48. As one could surely expect, it provides a mainly positive view of its identity and activities. All the research methodologically carried out on self-evaluation formulas must ensure that the resulting image is inevitably improved. In this diagnosis, we were able to note that, not only in this case, but also in that related to family and school relations and, to a contract extent, as to school operation. Although there are statistical tech-

niques to neutralise this glowing self-assessment effect to some extent, the Committees preferred not to use them, above all because they trust that the good sense of the readers will instinctively implement certain reduction mechanisms, thus openly overcoming the somewhat artificial and always arguable efficiency of such techniques.

49. In any case, neither the survey prepared contained only aspects of self-assessment, nor was it the only resource used methodologically by the Committee in charge of studying the teaching profession. Resorting to debates for open discussion and consultation among notable experts was one of the contrasting elements to provide a more balanced interpretation of the answers to the questionnaire. One is conscious, however, that other exploration and diagnosis methodologies could have been used, such as for example, the evaluation performed by the main "customers" the teacher has (students and parents), that performed by specialised bodies (the Inspectorate, for example) or by outside observers (teachers from other schools, university experts, international observers, experts in human resources, etc.), in analyzing the tasks according to objectives, etc. The Committee considered, however, that to start from an exercise in self-reflection and self-assessment was the most pertinent under the present circumstances.

### THE IMAGE OF THE TEACHER: FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY

50. There are many reasons to consider that the image society has of the teacher in general, and that Spanish society in particular has of the Spanish teacher, is not negative at all. However, the Spanish teachers - especially perhaps those in secondary education - do not see it that way. They rather think that, apart from more or less interested or opportunistic rhetorical statements, society preferably portrays - above all in the media, but also in the despising treatment and usual lack of social appreciation - a negative image, inclined more to emphasise occasional conflicts than the positive daily actions; and also think that when negative information on teachers arises, nobody usually does anything to defend them: neither the authorities nor parents. One may read in the relevant *Report*: "we are faced, at least, with a prob-



lem of hypersensitivity as to the criticism that appears in the media".

51. As a contrast to this image, Spanish secondary education teachers have a solid, good opinion of themselves. According to the answers provided in the survey, they do not initially show, at least in most cases, a self-image or vocational identity crisis. They consider themselves, first of all, attracted by and identified with their profession, which they mainly qualify as a vocational task of high social impact (instructive, pedagogical and ethical). They consider themselves very dedicated to their profession, concerned with rigorous fulfilment of their responsibilities. They show a considerable desire to improve themselves professionally and understand that, with the necessary precaution, their teaching task as may and must be evaluated. Definitively, the Spanish teachers in the Secondary Education appear to be professionals competent, joyful and dedicated to their work; and, although it may be necessary to tone this down a little bit, their answers seem sincere and convincing. In general terms, although without excessive differences between each other, teachers in the private sector seem more convinced of all this than those in the state sector. In the latter, those original from Primary Education seem to be more convinced than those from Secondary Education. In any case, these would be a case of detailed specification, to which not much relevance must be granted. The main point is that teachers express professional self esteem and appreciation of their work, which undoubtably is an important asset when considering the important shortcomings that, as we have seen, are considered in the results of schooling in our country. One must state the existence of an identity crisis among a sector of the teaching staff that has also come to light, above all at the Debates, due board all to the new requirements society continually seems to burden the teachers with, by turning certain social problems (unemployment, drugs, crisis of values, juvenile delinquency, etc.) into educational problems.

52. The majority feeling of self esteem shown by Spanish teachers definitely must not be received with indifference or scepticism, but rather, on the contrary, be reinforced, especially at such moments as the present ones. This is not only due to it being convenient, but rather because it is strictly fair and matches the truth of the facts. As one may see from this global diagnosis *Report*,

an overwhelming majority of Spanish parents have a highly positive concept of the teachers of their adolescent offspring, who they appreciate and with whom they have relations that perhaps are not close or frequent, but almost always cordial and peaceful (situations of conflict with teachers are very scarcely referred to by the parents in their answers). This is an astounding fact, which must be well known to the teaching staff. One must also add, to previous appreciations in the same tone, as for example, some made by the Inspectorate, or those already stated in the *Report* on primary education published by the INCE in 1997. The *Report* on School Operation also included in this diagnosis, indirectly provides some data on the matter when, for example, it shows how the majority of the members of the educational community apart from the teaching staff do not consider there are conflicts between the teachers, or when stating that there are generally very few clashes between parents and teachers.

53. Everything said is of special importance at a time when, indeed, teachers are being required to perform increasingly more ample and difficult duties, for which, moreover, they have not been trained sufficiently, indeed on occasions at all. This is, for example, the case of the tutorial function, or the duties to participate in school management, or adequate treatment of students with special educational needs, or the correct approach to diversification and individualisation of teaching in a comprehensive context, etc.

### LEARNING THE TEACHING PROFESSION: DEFICIENCIES AND POSSIBLE MEANS OF SOLUTION

54. As aforementioned, teachers generally consider themselves competent, although this does not mean they conform of any kind as to the initial training received. Much to the contrary, they are very much aware of their deficiencies in this sense, and have emphasised these abundantly in their answers to the survey as well as during the Debates. As expected, the different groups refer to their specific problems, which only partially coincide. While those from EGB miss specific aspects of training, those from Secondary denounce the practical absence of training in key pedagogical, theoretical and above all practical aspects, such as those related to programming and evalu-

ating teaching, dealing with adolescents, school organisation, etc. The courses leading to the Certificate in Pedagogical Aptitude (CAP) organised pursuant to the previous legislation (and not even required in all cases) are mainly considered unsatisfactory, scarce on time and content, not practical at all, separated within the university, taught by an unstable teaching staff, hardly motivating. They have little to say about the new Pedagogical Qualification Course at present, because it has scarcely been implemented. It is thus not possible to predict whether this new course will provide a valid alternative to the previous CAP.

55. There is no lack of suggestions to improve things. It seems clear to all that there is a demand for a solid general training in the matter to be taught, carried out by the universities, also open to titles that in turn allow non teaching professional alternatives. However, it seems useful that, as optional or freely configured subjects, the university may also offer subjects to facilitate later dedication to teaching. One must not underestimate the need for a postgraduate course aimed, above all, at providing the teacher with the appropriate pedagogical knowledge, as in fact is usual in all or almost all European countries, and is also foreseen in Spain; the matter lies in finding a satisfactory solution to the term, intensity, objectives and contents of this course, granting it, in any case, the place deserved by practical training, linked to reality. In all other aspects, it seems in any case necessary not to establish a complete rift between ending that course and beginning professional activity at an institution; during the first period of such, it is important for the teacher to be duly tutored by an expert colleague and to have someone to turn to in order to solve theoretical and practical doubts. To sum up, the Educational Authorities should study the matter most carefully, ensuring they do not repeat old failings, and as urgently as required by the newly formed body of teachers.

56. However, as the *Report* on the Teaching Profession points out, due to the present demographic evolution of ESO teaching staff, it will substantially have to cope with its present resources, which means it is even more urgent to solve the matter of updating, readaptation to new tasks, of their vocational improvement. Evaluations by the teachers in the survey by Committee II and the opinions provided during the Committee IV debates, express the need to reconsider the di-

verse types of Teacher Training Schools and to allow the university a greater role in the training activities.

57. In fact, as to institutions, the secondary education teaching staff considers the university institution the most ideal to prepare training update programmes. However, this is not the usual procedure for the ongoing training they recommend to a great extent. Perception of the usefulness of the different modes of training shown in the questionnaire and at the debates was very diverse, although that considered most useful was undoubtedly "training at schools", that is, self-training at the actual schools during the working day, to thus allow reflection on the practice. This opinion, that tends to coincide with trends that are now very active in countries with a high educational development, should be paid special attention by the competent authorities and by the respective officers in charge. Nowadays, thanks to the existing technological resources, this means of training and improvement could be especially appropriate and efficient.

### BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND DEMAND

58. In fact, a great deal of the desirable ongoing training could take place through greater help or support for the teaching role. Teachers in general have the impression that the support they receive from their respective Administrations and their specialised bodies is very scarce in this sense. The solution is not to flood them with printed paper or more or less ruling or orienting provisions, but to motivate them to act better by granting them the indispensable time and resources. This support would have to be provided, from the offset, to solve the main problems they face, especially in this period of transition, such as those related to better performance of the tutorial tasks, to the practical way to solve specific cases of differentiation or individualisation in teaching, the forecast and planning systems in teaching and syllabus development.

59. To sum up, teachers seem to expect that greater or lesser motivation is not something they are to bear on their own, but favoured by specific measures by those responsible for educational policy. In answer to the question as to how one may compensate the teaching staff to recognise their special dedication and professional quality,



the most widely accepted proposals are: to improve the student/teacher ratio, followed by an improvement in retribution and by the opportunity of vocational training on courses. The fact is that the student/teacher ratio has dropped drastically in recent years, but it is also true that there are situations in which teachers still have to deal with heterogeneous groups of 25 and 30 students, and this leaves little margin for attempts at diversified and, much less, individualised education. In any case, this is a matter one would have deal with in a flexible manner, in communication with those concerned, to avoid over or underprivileged situations.

60. *If the support required is really provided*, the teaching staff does not seem to shy away from ongoing or periodic evaluation of its work. Interesting clues may be obtained from the answers to the questionnaires and the debates as to this. The first of these is, perhaps, that evaluation of the teaching staff must be considered in a more ample framework of evaluation, which considers the overall efficiency of the school. The second is mainly related to training, that is to say, aimed above all at improvement in the teaching functions of each teacher. The third, is for it not to be imposed by coercion from outside, but rather preceded by a culture of evaluation and self-assessment to make each teacher see his usefulness and convenience. Within this setting, the teaching staff seems to admit the diagnosis function of these evaluation processes, as long as carried out in an absolutely transparent way and if the repercussions it will have are known beforehand. Perhaps considering all these reflections one may understand the distrustful attitude to such matters shown by the teachers better, as to the far away instances, most specifically the Education Authorities and external evaluators, who they place last when asked who they consider should evaluate the teaching staff. Their preference for colleagues at work, for the school management, for the teaching and orientation departments and, then, the School Council, must be understood in the light of the foregoing.

### **School operation seen by its most direct managers**

61. Faced with objective difficulties as to time, resources and opportunity, the Specialised Com-

mittee on Educational Administration and School Functioning proposed that the management of the INCE cut back the task commissioned. Once the proposal was approved by virtue of the reasons stated, the Committee concentrated on the matter of School Management. Evaluation by the Education Authorities thus continues to be an important matter pending, which will be necessary to raise as soon as the circumstances allow.

62. Once it began its tasks, the Specialised Committee on School Functioning decided to use self-assessment as a fundamental instrument for diagnosis. At least part of the survey prepared for these purposes would have to be considered as a self-assessment survey, as the great majority of the respondents were members of the main School Council responsible, by law, and operation of each school; only one person (teacher) among, the ten consulted at each institution was not a member of the School Council. Thus, when interpreting the results, one must consider the caution considered above, as to possible overvaluation. However, the great care taken by the Committee in preparing the questionnaire left little margin for background distortions.

63. The methodological option chosen does not reject different alternative approaches. In a certain way, the opinion the teachers have in general, for example, as to school management, is indirectly shown in the survey administered to them, concerning the teaching profession and, according to that data, one may catalogue it as substantially positive. One may say something similar as to the parents; as we saw in the relevant chapter and will repeat further on, their opinion on the management and functioning of schools is, likewise, mainly favourable. However, it would surely be worth further exploration of the opinion of the teaching staff not involved in the management tasks as to the matters of functioning (perhaps not so much that of the parents, more than already done, as their direct participation and knowledge of these matters seems very limited at present). Otherwise, other lines of exploration would surely have been feasible, for example, by persons from outside the schools, experts and management and service quality, principals from other countries, inspectors, etc. Due to their objective interest, one may expect the INCE to undertake these in the future.



## SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY AS TO THE PRESENT GUIDELINES ON SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

64. As, pursuant to the laws in force, the School Council is the key body at the school in functioning and participation, one must note the majority acceptance it seems to have. In none of the surveys administered to its members, the teaching staff on the whole, or the parents, are there signs of its existence being questioned. The majority acceptance even includes its operation, at least in the opinion of its members. The truth is that the teachers who are not members are more reluctant to consider that it works well or very well, but even in this case there is a majority favourable opinion. The conclusion one may reach is that, in general terms, the school community overall seems to be substantially content with the operational framework the present system aims at in schools, and this is true of the state sector and the private (state-subsidized) sector. According to the answers, the percentage of agreement as to appropriateness of the system seems to be even greater in the private than in the state sector.

65. The aforementioned in general terms is also applicable to the case of the principal. Firstly, there are few who doubt that the principal should be chosen, instead of appointed by the Authorities or any other instance. In spite of this, there are some points to be emphasised as to this. Although the majority of the members of the School Council prefer to be the party choosing, the teachers seem to wish the decision to be made by the of Teachers' Assembly. This is so above all in the public sector, because in the private sector a high percentage of answers (39%) were in favour of the choice being made by the owner of the school (which also means an even greater percentage overall would be in favour of the School Council or Teachers' Assembly). In one case and the other, the immense majority considers the principal should be chosen by teachers at the actual school, and there are also many who consider that the present term of office is adequate. To sum up, one may conclude that, as the years go by and the laws change, Spain has become favourable to the principal election system and scarcely sensitive in principle to the need for professionalisation, considered with distinctive features as opposed to a merely teaching or edu-

cational function. In fact, the great majority of answers indicate that the principal must alternate teaching and management tasks.

66. The above does not mean that no specific professional training or qualifications are requested for the principal. On the contrary, most of the respondents consider that such qualification is necessary, although in general prefer it to be acquired through short term courses. Those who most call for such training are precisely the principals themselves, who frequently even suggest that they be sufficiently long.

67. For a correct approach to this necessary qualification, one must especially bear in mind the tasks required in management duties. It is fair initially to recognise that present principals are, in general, highly valued by their colleagues on the School Council (and by the teachers) in their performance of such tasks, particularly those columned to administration, management and improvement of the school, to life within it and to relations with higher bodies and with the parents, while the lowest assessment refers to the tasks concerning the teaching staff (its training and updating, team work, taking advantage of human resources, etc.). This shows that teachers perhaps miss a greater dedication and qualification by the principal as to the latter aspects. In any case, the correct definition of management tasks and the necessary resources to carry them out (including prior qualification of the principal in the tasks) seems to be an item for preferential attention among the educational policies in the years to come.

## PARTICIPATION: A MATTER THAT IS BEING DEALT WITH, BUT NOT SOLVED

68. It seems clear that the setting of participation within the academic institution has increased considerably in Spain in recent years, as shown by the very existence and more or less consistent functioning of the School Councils. The members of these generally consider they are consulted when decision making is due, although they also consider that they should have a greater role in participation, especially in some aspects. In terms of real participation, there do not seem to be significant differences between the state and private sectors, although there do seem exist be-

tween primary and secondary schools (in favour of the former). In terms of desirable participation, the desire for greater participation is more common in state schools than in private ones, and in primary rather than secondary ones.

69. Considering the answers to the questionnaire, one may say that, in general, greater participation is desired precisely in the matters in which the greatest amount is now recognised: those related to the Educational Project of the School, the general planning, the annual improvement plans, quality evaluation, etc. On the other hand, although theoretically the wish to participate a lot is expressed, the fact is that a lower degree of participation actually takes place as to aspects related to the families (activities, collaboration, etc.) and the teaching staff (training, work groups, etc.).

70. However, perhaps the weakest point is that concerning those who really participate. As in the study on family and school, one may clearly note that real participation by parents in school life is very minority, and is generally assumed by small groups or individuals who do not necessarily represent the whole. Within the actual School Council these parents are not the most active participants either (although somewhat more than the students and representatives of the administrative and auxiliary staff). To sum up, the management offices and teachers are the ones who continue to participate in the most full and effective way. There is thus a long way to go in matters of participation among the educational community on the whole.

### LIFE AT SCHOOLS: ONE MAY NOT LOWER ONES' GUARD

71. The data provided by the Specialised Committee on School Functioning is confirmed, at this point, by that provided by other previous studies and evaluations (by the Inspectorate, the State School Council, research teams, etc.), and within that same diagnosis, by the study dedicated to family and school. From all these, one may conclude that, in general terms, the atmosphere of school life is mainly good. Among teachers and students, and in the relations between both groups, there is a prevailing current of companionship, support and mutual respect.

However, some clashes arise, especially in the setting of some schools, above all suburban state schools.

72. Due to the nature of the people consulted in the survey (almost all of them members of the School Council), it would have been logical to have expected a massive response in favour of there being sufficient instruments to provide information on rights and duties and on school rules. This massive response arises only in a sector of the academic community: among teachers. In the sector of parents and that of students, almost a third consider that the existing information on such is at least scarce. A small minority of participants on the School Council (about 4%) affirms that their school has no School Rules. On the other hand, high percentages among the respondents seem convinced of the efficiency of there being rules for life together and abundant information as to these. In general, the private sector seems more sensitive to such matters than the public sector. This all makes it easy to conclude that it is necessary to intensify the efforts, especially in state schools, for there to be explicit rules for life together, for these to be reviewed frequently and for them to be profusely known to all and demanded by the management bodies.

73. The lack of prior studies that are sufficiently precise prevents us from knowing whether the circumstances of lack of discipline at schools have increased or not in recent years in Spain. According to the data shown in the survey applied in our study, it also seems difficult to reach a conclusion as to this point, as the relatively *majority opinion is that matters remain more or less the same* (41%) and those who consider they are getting worse or are not improving are distributed in relatively high proportions (27 and 32%), although not far apart in number and fairly divided. Perhaps due to all this, the most appropriate would be to concentrate not so much on evolution as at present, at least just as shown in the survey. Four of each five answers confirm the existence of situations of lack of discipline at schools. Those who state that these do not exist are mainly representatives of owners of private schools. Those who state their existence most are, on the contrary, managers of state schools and the students themselves. Thus, it seems evident that lack of discipline is recognised as a frequent, important problem the academic community overall. What situations of lack of discipline are



recognised as the most frequent? The greatest, "uproar outside the classroom", followed quite far behind by "lack of respect for companions", and "uproar in the classroom". There is also mention of "moral aggression (jeering, insults, threats)" and, to a lesser extent, "lack of respect towards the teaching staff".

74. However, it is important not to limit this to the scope of subjective impressions, however limited these may be in statistical terms. In the answers to the questionnaire, the principals claim that there have been penalties with and without a disciplinary file at many schools (the numbers may be seen in the appropriate chapter) and that, on a few occasions, they have had to resort to the courts. Students summoned before the principal, calling parents for disciplinary reasons, temporary expulsion, etc., are recorded as measures also recorded in a considerable number. One may not ignore the amount of major vandalism at schools either. This all indicates that, although not severe, the situation is not at all reassuring and measures will be required not only to contain it within the photo limits, but also to improve it considerably.

75. It is difficult for situations of lack of discipline not to involve outbreaks of violence in one way or another. In fact, almost 60% of the respondents affirm that there has been aggression among the students at their schools and, in figures, there is a written record of such aggression, of 34% at schools. Those who most confirm aggression are the principals at state schools and the least, the representatives of the owners of private schools. These are more frequent in suburban settings, and among male rather than female students. Fortunately, these are rather sporadic incidents than frequent situations, although the tatter seem to take place in a considerable proportion (8% at state schools and 3% at private schools). Not only are aggressions recorded among students, but also by students against teachers; specifically, 12% of schools have recorded such incidents, which is undoubtably a concerning fact.

76. The need to go into such matters in depth, in social and political terms, is more than justified. It will be necessary to implement practical measures, although above all, to deal with the possible causes in a determined manner. According to key members of the academic community, the main causes that contribute to a conflictive

atmosphere are lack of student interest in study and the existence of family problems. Neither of the two is a strictly academic problem.

## View of the school from the family point of view

77. As in the case of some other Committees, the initial commission for the Specialised Committee on Society and School was much more ample and included study of the main social partners, outside the school, who have a decisive effect on juvenile education. Due to the great importance of all these and due to restrictions on time and location similar to those experienced by the other Committees, the Committee finally decided to concentrate on relations between Family and School, awareness of their primordial relevance. However, we cannot now omit our conviction as to how convenient it would have been to cover other scopes in turn, especially two that have a special effect on juvenile attitudes: the world of employment and the world of communication. It is obvious that the relation between both areas of schooling is, under the present circumstances, especially meaningful for the purposes of diagnosis. The hopes of employment, or unemployment, on one hand, and the pressure by the social media (television especially), on the other, have a great deal to do with academic performance, with syllabuses and with all the other aspects considered here. The fact that this time we have not been able to undertake study of these relations makes it impossible for us to recognise here that these are extremely important lacunae, which must be filled in as soon as possible. As the setting of obligatory secondary education also has a powerful role in the student's surroundings, it would have been just as appropriate to study its main forms, as well as those related to the rural setting (that has deserved so much attention in implementation of ESO), the urban and suburban setting, etc. We hope that the INCE will be able to provide research diagnosis in all these fields.

78. The response by Spanish families to the survey prepared by the relevant Specialised Committee was undoubtably a surprise, due to the considerable number of questionnaires indeed filled in and returned, something that was not very frequent in previous research of this nature.



Apart from other considerations, this suggests from the offset that the interest Spanish families show in their children's schooling is not fictitious or transitory, but real and increasing. This fact is especially appropriate as, by administering a questionnaire that is mainly self-assessment, there is the risk of interpreting the optimising trend in the answers as a bias. In other words, if the number of answers amounted, as in previous experiences, to about a third, one would consider that these were from the third of the families who are really interested, and that the remaining two thirds had no interest and that the majority were critical. As exactly the reverse happened (the responses reach, and even exceed two thirds), the bias that may be left over for such an item is minimal; even if the silent third is that of uninterested and/or critical parents, it seems clear that the responses we have provide a correct image of what the majority think.

79. The first thing the study shows is the considerable improvement in living conditions and standards experienced by Spanish families. However much imagination is put into the answers, one may not doubt that effectively, half of them have a computer at home (although an old or not very powerful one), and the great majority of them may have their adolescent son or daughter in a room of their own (in fact the families still have an average of 2-3 children). There is more room for subjectivity in such answers as, for example, the number of reading and reference books at home (most say they have more than 100). All this is especially notable if one considers that, at present the majority of the parents answering the survey (59% of mothers, 51% of fathers), did not study beyond primary education. In any case, the distribution of living standards is not the same throughout Spain: as to the computer, for example in Catalonia two thirds of the families say they have one, while in the Canaries or Galicia, a third or scarcely more say they have one (which suggests that this is not very determining either, at least at present, as to academic performance). In other factors, as was expected, families who send their children to schools in the private sector declare they have more resources (computer, rooms, books, etc.) than those who send them to state ones. In any case and, to sum up, it seems that families nowadays are able to provide their children fairly comfortable circumstances under which to study.

## A HAPPY VIEW

80. This is how the *Report* classifies the parents' view of their children's studies. Specifically, the majority considers their children are doing well if compared with others, that they have sufficient motivation, that they keep them informed as to their progress and that, to sum up, they are satisfied with their performance. We already stated that, if these impressions are compared with the real figures of academic failure among aged 14 and 16 in Spain, the numbers do not match. One would thus have to consider this contrast in greater depth, as it is perhaps partially due to many parents considering schooling as an asset in itself (perhaps because they were not able at the age of their children) and they tend to overestimate mediocre results; or perhaps due to the information they receive from the school being limited or faulty.

81. It is interesting to point out some differentiating factors to the reader, within this generally positive view. For example, parents consider that girls have a greater interest in studying than boys, which does not have a significant translation in terms of performance (except in Spanish Language and little else). Parents who have had higher education tend to interpret their children's results more positively than those who have not. The family model comprised of a father, mother and a single child seems to have more "optimistic" parents ... or children who are really doing well at school. The differences between Autonomous Regions as to parents' opinion of their children's academic progress, are scarcely significant, and this is even more so if compared the average percentages of academic performance obtained by the students in those Regions. There do not seem to be significant differences as to this, between the state and private sectors.

82. According to the answers provided in the questionnaires, families do not seem to assign the fundamental responsibility of education to schools. They rather seem to have a clear idea that the family is fundamental as to this point (only 4% say that the school is more responsible than the family for such matters), and the majority recognise shared responsibility. It is thus not strange that, according to parents, the majority of them admit to providing their children direct help to perform their homework; and a third of

the families also declare they arrange outside help (private classes, etc.) for their student children.

83. *The best I can give them is education*: this phrase is not stated exactly that way in the Report, although it properly expresses one of the most important convictions Spanish parents have at present. This is undoubtedly very hopeful and shows that - this time it is stated exactly thus - "the educational potential of the Spanish family may be rated very positively".

## BACKGROUND EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS

84. In these aspects, more specifically those related to the scope of ethical values, the Spanish family values its educational contribution far above that considered by the school, and much above that by the social media (which are generally disqualified in this respect). Considering the thirteen specific values chosen in the questionnaire, the average mark the parents assign to their family, school and media (out of 10 points) would be as follows: family 9.2; school 8.1; media 3.4. That is, outstanding for the family, very good for the school and clear fail for the media. Does this not show a clear overestimation of the family, and perhaps of the school too? Does this really lie between desire and reality, or between what we would like to do and what we really do? In the order of the "values attended to" by the three institutions, the situation "head value" would respectively be "honestness" in the case of the family; "solidarity" in the case of school; and "respect for nature" in the case of social media. The value least attended to of all, at the bottom of the list, is the same for the three institutional areas, being specifically "religious sense". Before it, but also at the bottom, for the family and for school, there is "successful study". How may such data be interpreted? We suggest that the reader examine the *Report* for the differences as to these values between Autonomous Regions, or between state and private schools. To do this would undoubtedly provide an interesting factor for reflection, for those in political and educational charge, as well as for the families themselves.

85. Family life is another aspect that the study has gone into in depth. Among the items included for the purposes of the survey, parents valued "respect among the members of the family" first, and last "participation by all the mem-

bers in performing domestic tasks", the latter aspect seems to be one to which more attention is paid by families whose children attend state schools, than others with children at private schools.

86. The concerns affecting parents to a greater extent nowadays are well expressed in some aspects they say priority is given to, within the list suggested to them. Specifically, first item they say a fair amount or lot of importance should given to is "preventing drug consumption", and then "health education"; and they say less attention is granted to "religious education" and "consumer education". Once more, the set of answers provides a great deal for reflection.

87. It is logical that parents have a good image of their children. There are answers in the questionnaire that make this clear, as for example, the almost unanimous opinion that their children are outstanding in personal care and hygiene, in absence of aggressiveness, in self esteem and in personal autonomy. However, some of these impressions clash with the information obtained from other fields, specifically from the school.

## MORE CUSTOMERS THAN ACTIVE COLLABORATORS

88. Although the answers to the questionnaire may also lead show a certain amount of optimism among parents when self-assessing their relations with the school, the conclusion almost instantly obtained is that, in spite of their positive appreciation of the institution, its management and teachers, parents have very little relation and are hardly involved in the tasks of collaboration with the schools their children are educated at. The results of the study thus coincide with other studies, research and performs prepared by different instances, and those we already referred to explicitly in the first chapter of this paper.

89. In order to duly evaluate the importance of this matter, we must bear in mind two lines that flow together, both arising from the diagnosis performed: firstly, that the impression the parents have of their children's progress and academic performance is excessively benevolent and positive, and in any case clashes with the objective evaluation data obtained; secondly, their direct



relations with the school and the knowledge of its functioning, rules, syllabus and work, etc., they show they have mostly seem limited and imperfect and, in most cases provided by their children themselves. It thus seems obvious to predict that these two lines may flow together to favour imperfect, dysfunctional treatment of specific educational problems.

90. The parents showed no enthusiasm whatsoever to participate in the associations through with their usual collaboration is legally foreseen: the Students' Parent's Associations (AMPAs). Although these associations exist at the great majority of state and private schools, most of the parents declare they do not participate in their activities nor, thus share their concerns. The people actually involved in their functioning and activities does not exceed 14%. There are appreciable differences between some Autonomous Regions and others, and between state and private state-subsidized schools (in favour of the latter, especially religious schools). Previously, using the words from the Report, we recognised that the educational potential of the Spanish family was very positive. We must now recognise that, if its participative attitude does not change, in runs the risk of continuing to be a perpetual mere "potential" of scarce or no incidence on the qualitative improvement of the system. To benefit the institutions and Spanish education overall, one would have to achieve a substantial increase in the figures of participation and an improvement in the present participation styles. Those responsible for educational policy and management must consider how to achieve *the objective, which perhaps will require a complete reconsideration of the matter.*

91. The same as with what takes place in the AMPAs, parent participation in the School Councils is very scarce. First of all, many parents (almost half) even ignore the existence of these essential bodies for operation and participation and, even more so, also ignore that they may use them to have a decisive influence in important decisions to be taken as to their children's education. This indeed means that the student's parents who are candidates for election are not backed by a sufficiently relevant number of families. As the years go by, the matter does not seem to improve, and one may thus ask whether there is a real will for such improvement among the main parties responsible for the academic system and management of schools.

92. Sporadic, informal relations between families and the school provide other channels for participation, that parents perhaps take advantage of to a greater extent, although this is always scarce. Of all these activities, the one that is proven to be most appreciated and frequented is the meeting with the tutor. However, that same channel is not taken advantage of by half of Spanish parents. We also know that there are those who do so in a sporadic, non systematic way, frequently to clarify low results or specific conflicts to prevent one and the other. If one really wishes to improve general performance and specifically that of Spanish adolescent students, the tutorial tasks will have to be generalised for all of them, so these include a regular relation with the families. One could ask, first of all, whether state and private schools are indeed ready, nowadays, to provide such a service efficiently (not only due to the number of educators available, but also due to their real training to deal adequately with this task that is not easy). However, one would also have to ask how to convince parents that regular use of this channel is vital for their children's academic success.

## Entering the 21st Century

93. The preceding pages are an attempt at extracting and interrelating the content of the five diagnosis reports, and as we have seen, conclusions may be reached to provide for reflection and action. In a last effort, it would still perhaps be convenient to emphasise the main strengths and weaknesses that, as the overall diagnosis suggests, there seem to be in the Spanish educational system in the 21st Century, at the end of the 20th Century that, undoubtedly has done a lot for schools in our country. We only shall refer, as we said, to the strengths and weaknesses suggested by the diagnosis (referring mainly, one must not forget it, to the last stage of obligatory schooling), however, we are aware that others may be added to these (of both types) which the diagnosis has not covered, that are perhaps as or even more important for a correct approach to the future of Spanish education.

94. Throughout the study, we have attempted to keep to the facts as much as possible, and not to risk interpretations that could be considered ungrounded or scarcely backed. According

to that same principle, we wish to make two disclaimers in this last statement. The first, not even to speak of "strengths" and "weaknesses", in spite of this being the traditional terminology that is accepted in evaluation work. Both nouns refer, in principle, to fully contrasted realities, based on rigorous facts. Although we are convinced that this is the case of those we have already presented and will present again here, we should like, however, to adopt a less indicative language, and to thus catalogue them more as (positive and negative) "symptoms" than as "realities". The second disclaimer is that we will only include the symptoms we consider amply proven in both groups. This obliges us to allow for a third opening in the classification, dedicated to other points also covered by the diagnosis, that could well be catalogued as "matters pending due clarification", before taking decisions as to these which, in any case, should be taken, and taken soon, as soon as possible.

### THE CONCERNING SYMPTOMS

95. The first concerning symptom is the low academic performance by Spanish students throughout obligatory schooling, previously shown and most amply demonstrated in the evaluation we have just carried out. This means not only that they have scarce academic performance, but above all that our schools have a performance far below what would be expected and demanded according to the resources assigned to them. Whether greater or lesser importance is given to specific performance in specific subjects learned (as we do), the problem consists of this scarce performance being a symptom of a more general, low quality of schooling. The diagnosis definitively leads one to conclude the need to raise academic performance, which means most of the students would have to be concentrated in the ranges satisfactory, fully satisfactory and excellent.

96. In spite of the predominantly positive atmosphere in obligatory secondary education school life, there are worrying symptoms that the situation could worsen in the coming years, as the scenarios of lack of discipline, vandalism on the facilities and moral and physical aggression have ceased to be occasional episodes, above all at certain schools, more generally in the public sector and more frequently suburban. The fact that

our situation is relatively better than in other countries around us does not mean we may cease to take action to deal with such an important matter.

97. The great majority of Spanish secondary education teaching staff denounce insufficient initial and ongoing training, scarcely adequate for the tasks and virtualities society demands. As qualitative improvement in Spanish education depends very much in the first instance on the human and professional quality of its educators, the persistence of the present situation (that has dragged on for years) one must consider it especially harmful and deserving prompt, efficient measures.

98. Different diagnosis activities have brought to light that a major scenario of lack of communication has arisen between families (parents) and the schools their children attend. In this context, it is not strange to find traces of self-complacency or, if one prefers, the deficiencies in realism shown by Spanish parents concerning their children's academic performance. Nor do the frequent claims lodged in defense of parents and children against the teachers. The most worrying symptom shown by this data is, perhaps, that both institutional groups have become accustomed to working apart, and in general they do little to avoid this. One would have to explore ways to achieve a greater degree of relation with and participation in schools by the families.

### LEVERS FOR IMPROVEMENT

99. Spanish education now has a legal framework that, according to the analysis carried out by Committee II, is accorded by most of those performing tasks in education in the state and private sectors, without there seeming to be substantial differences between one Autonomous Region and another. There is varied and even abundant criticism of the present laws, but this does not seem aimed at their replacement by other laws, but rather at improving them, in conceptual terms as well as, above all, their enactment. This means that, on entering the 21st Century, Spain will have an educational legislation considered sufficient, the stability of which will not be questioned from the base, although it will require some amendment that may well affect obligatory secondary education. This state of things may, if adequately



interpreted, form a lever for qualitative improvement of the system.

100. In spite of the shortcomings in initial and ongoing training regretted by it, the Spanish teaching staff provides an image of solidity and great interest and dedication to their task. The Spanish educational system thus already has, to a great extent, the main resource it needs to bring about its qualitative improvement.

101. Almost all Spanish families without exception, appreciate and favour the schooling plan for their adolescent and juvenile offspring. Once schooling for all is achieved, it seems logical to gradually expect quality schooling to be demanded, which will undoubtedly create an important driving force to improve the educational system.

### IN THE TWILIGHT ZONE

102. The survey system, the teaching staff and the families allow us to glimpse that the educational system and, surely the whole of the Spanish social system still has not yet defined the values and fundamental objectives for education and the schools must aim as a priority at a pluralist, democratic, globalised society. It seems necessary for Spanish society to arrange debate on this important matter, demanding in any case a spirit of mutual comprehension and specific, practical analysis. It would be difficult to reach higher levels of quality if an agreement as to what these are is not reached.

103. It seems necessary to clarify and harmonize, in Spanish obligatory secondary education, relations between the decision to provide students with a common educational sequence and life together to offer training channels to adapt to their personal characteristics. From the point of view of equality in substantial matters, it seems necessary and fair for the obligatory secondary school to open channels of differentiated treatment for students who are, in fact, different in capacities, interests and attitudes. In this sense, it is essential to obtain regular knowledge of the real, not approximate or supposed performance of each student, and to offer each one adequate means of improvement.

104. The acquiescence by most of the school management, numerous teachers and some parents (at least those involved in the School Councils) to the legal provisions in force as to school

management, should not be interpreted as a factitious consecration of the status quo and, thus, as a revitalisation of the great importance of the matter of educational leadership to the efficiency of schools. The existing difference in approach is obvious, as to this, between our educational system and that of all or almost all the countries with a high educational development. The data included in the diagnosis cannot demand that the matter be definitively silenced but, on the contrary, it must be opened up to public debate among diverse sectors of society and, in any case, apply the measures foreseen in the laws in force (the LOPEG) as to this point more strictly.

105. According to their statements, Obligatory Secondary Education teachers do not feel sufficiently supported and valued by the relevant Educational Authorities. Although, as we saw, the diagnosis this time could not include a study on the role and functioning of said Authorities, one would have to reflect on the changes that perhaps must be included in their relations with the teaching staff to improve quality.

106. The diagnosis carried out shows the existence of diverse inequalities. There is, for example, apart from some minor exceptions, greater academic performance in the private sector than in the state sector. This mainly suggests to the writers of this *Report* that it is necessary to raise the quality of learning and, thus, the academic performance at state schools, studying the causes properly and providing the necessary means. There are also differences as to this point, as well as in specific matters of application of the reforest, between some Autonomous Regions and others. This observation must also be taken advantage of to improve the situation of the apparently more deficient ones. We consider that this is the context in which the differences must be raised, considering very much, on the one hand, that the educational system already is and will be to a greater example, a territorially regionalised and sectorially plural system, and on the other, precisely due to that, it is becoming necessary to create compensatory mechanisms for the logical differences that may arise. This point should also give rise to profound reflection and debate.

107. This has not been a diagnosis of "resources", but rather a diagnosis of "functions". However, the reference to resources has been present in the surveys and at many of the meetings held. As resources are, by nature, and

will always be limited, an agreement as to these cannot be put off, attempting to ascertain without prejudices and utopias which are indispensable if one seriously wishes to improve the quality and performance of the educational services. This is also be another important factor in the debate.

108. One of the most regretted lacunae in this diagnosis is that concerning relations between the school and the media which, as we have seen, could not finally be covered. However, the answers to the questionnaire administered to the parents most clearly show that, in their opinion, the social media have an important role to play in educational influence on our children, especially in the field of values. Although later evaluations by officers at the INCE intend to deal with the matter, we must now state how appropriate it is when duly approaching qualitative improvement of education in Spain. Right at present, one never knows, even as to pure academic knowledge, what students at school should and should not do, and through which of the said media, particularly television, which they spend so many hours watching. Society on the whole must definitively take note of this influence, making the media understand that their positive collaboration is unavoi-

able and, in the ultimate instance, call for the appropriate responsibilities.

109. Our last reflection should be aimed at what we have really aimed to diagnose here. According to the objective we set ourselves, what we aim to know is the present situation of the Spanish educational system at this key moment, taking the last stage of obligatory secondary education as this specific subject for observation. At the end of our work, we realised that, after such a difficult, although imperfect portrait of schooling, operating even through any effort at diagnosis, there is a whole society that pressures and encourages it; that perhaps expects too much of it; that demands undefined results that so often are contradictory. A society that, to sum up, aims to burden schools with all its intransferrable educational responsibility. Thus, it has been so easy to confuse "educational policy" with "school policy". However, a careful look back at these pages will show that nowadays it is impossible to improve the quality of education, even of school education, if the educational policy goes no further than the walls of the classrooms and school buildings and is not determined to deal with other complex agents, whose real influence escapes diagnosis.





# Addendum

## Persons who have participated in the Diagnosis

A list is provided of those who collaborated in the set of actions to perform the Diagnosis, participating as members of the Special Committees. The reports by the different specialised committees mention those who had a specific role in them.

### 1. INCE Governing Body

#### CHAIRMAN

- Eugenio Nasarre Goicoechea (Min.Ed.)

#### SPOKESMEN

- Xabier Agirre Elorza (Basque Country)
- Marino Alduán Guerra (The Canaries)
- Santiago Arellano Fernández (Navarra)

- Rafael Bosch i Sans (Balearic Isles)
- Josep Vicent Felip Monlleó (Valencia)
- Octavi Fullat i Genis (Catalonia)
- Teófilo González Vila (Min.Ed.)
- Isabel de Haro Aramberri (Andalusia)
- Francisco López-Rupérez (Min.Ed.)
- José Luis Mira Lema (Galicia)
- Antonio Peleteiro Fernández (Min.Ed.)

### 2. INCE Scientific Committee

#### CHAIRPERSON

- María Rosario Martínez Arias

#### SPOKESMEN

- Blas Cabrera Montoya

- Agustín Dosil Maceira
- José Ginés Mora Ruiz
- Josep Montané i Capdevilla
- Ángel Ignacio Pérez Gómez
- Juan Carlos Tedesco

### 3. Members of specialised committees, except for the Chairpersons.

- Carlos Arribas Alonso
- Vicente Barberá Albalat
- Reyes Berruezo Albéniz
- Rafael Bisquerra Alzina
- Rogelio Blanco Martínez
- Inmaculada Bordas Alsina
- Guillem Bou Bauzá
- Demetrio Castro Alfin
- Antonio Feijoo Freitas
- Gonzalo Fernández Fernández
- Eduardo Fernández Ares
- Bernardo Gargallo López
- José Luis Gaviria Soto
- Samuel Gento Palacios
- Guillermo Gil Escudero

- José Antonio González Sáinz
- José M<sup>a</sup> Gracia Galilea
- Fernando Hernández Guarch
- Aniano Hernández Guerra
- David Isaacs
- Jesús M. Jornet Meliá
- Francisco A. López Freire
- Joan Mallart i Navarra
- Marius Martínez Muñoz
- Antonio Medina Revilla
- Rafael Mendía Gallardo
- José Montoya Sáenz
- Fernando Muñoz Vitoria
- M<sup>a</sup> Jesús Pérez Zorrilla
- Gloria Pérez Serrano



- Julio Puente Azcutia
- Faustino Salgado López
- Jaime Santoalla Varela
- Josu Sierra Orrantia

- Javier Tourón Figueroa
- Francisco Trancón Pérez
- Magdalena Velasco Kindelán

#### 4. Other relevant collaborators

- Manuel Ávila Suárez
- Ildefonso Damas Hurtado
- Esther García González
- Ignacio Gil-Bermejo Bethencourt
- Rafael Hernández Bautista
- Dolors Iduarte Despuig

- Catalina Ortega Tenor
- M<sup>a</sup> José Pérez Díez de los Ríos
- Josefa Sánchez Díaz
- M<sup>a</sup> del Carmen Sánchez Villafaina
- Jordi Saura i Valls

#### 5. INCE Staff

- Isabel Alabau Balcells
- Miguel Ángel Alcázar Corcoles
- Nina Álvarez Menéndez
- Margarita Cabañas Corihuela
- José Ángel Calleja Sopena
- Sonia Castro García-Muñoz
- Blanca de Juan Herrero
- Pilar Díaz-Plaza Mendoza
- Mercedes Díaz Aranda
- Isabel Frutos Escudero
- Jaime García-Gallo Pinto
- María Jesús García Martín

- Jesús García-Mascaraque G<sup>a</sup>-Parrado
- Flora Gil Traver
- Paloma Hernández Gil
- M<sup>a</sup> del Carmen Izquierdo Nebreda
- José Antonio López Varona
- Joaquín Martín Muñoz
- M<sup>a</sup> Luisa Moreno Martínez
- Ramón Pajares Box
- Santiago Piñas Rodríguez
- Antonio Reviriego García
- Mercedes Serrano Parra
- Juan Carlos Suárez Falcón

#### 6. Inspection Services in the Ministry of Education and Culture Territory and Devolved Regional Governments

- Marc Adell Cueva. *Valencia.*
- Genaro Alonso Megido. *Oviedo*
- Adolfo H. Alonso Abella. *Santander*
- Francisco Arteaga Ruiz. *Navarra*
- Manuel Bellido Torres. *Teruel*
- Francisco Javier Carrascosa Baeza. *Cuenca*
- Dolores Cebollada Romea. *Alcalá de Henares, Madrid*
- Ángel de Miguel Casas. *Soria*
- Camilo Docampo Gómez. *Ourense*
- Santiago Esteban Frades. *Valladolid*
- Demetrio Fernández González. *Collado Villalba, Madrid*
- María Teresa Fernández Veloso. *Madrid*
- José de Andrés Fernández Mariscal. *Salamanca*
- Francisco García Moles. *Palma de Mallorca*
- Lisardo Garrote de Pedro. *Burgos*
- María del Pilar Goded Javierre. *Huesca*
- Roque Gómez Jaén. *Ceuta*
- María del Pilar González Ocaña. *Guadalajara*

- Ángel Heras Mateos. *Ávila.*
- Jesús Hernando Cuadrado. *Cáceres*
- Manuel Iglesias Martínez. *Ciudad Real*
- José C. Illana Rubio. *San Sebastián de los Reyes, Madrid*
- Ángel Lorente Lorente. *Zaragoza*
- Jacinto Lozana Escribano. *Segovia*
- Ángel Marcos González. *Melilla*
- Amparo Millán Delso. *Valladolid*
- José Muñoz García. *Madrid.*
- José Antonio Pérez Mariscal. *Salamanca*
- Jesús Pérez Parrillas. *Toledo*
- Santos Protomártir Vaquero. *Badajoz*
- Arturo Rodríguez Cordero. *Palencia*
- José Luis Sáenz Larrea. *Logroño*
- Clamades Sarmiento Franco. *León*
- José Pablo Saura Soler. *Murcia*
- Francisca Serrano Adán. *Leganes, Madrid*
- Gabriel Sevilla Saura. *Albacete*
- Juan Andrés Vaquero Peña. *Zamora*

## AUTHORS

### José Luis García Garrido

Professor at the Spanish National Open University, Department of Education, where he is usually assigned to teaching and research tasks in the scope of Compared and International Education. He presently holds the post of Director of the National Quality and Evaluation Institute, at the Ministry of Education and Culture. He is the Chairman of the Spanish Compared Education Society, a Member of the European Academy of Art and Science, a Member of the World Council of Compared Education Societies. He belongs to several international associations and was Chairman of the Comparative Education Society in Europe from 1985 to 1988. Among his written works (20 books and more than 200 articles and essays, published in national and international magazines and publications, in several languages), one must emphasise the following ones: *Fundamentos de la Educación Comparada* (Dykinson 1982, 1986, 1991), *Problemas Mundiales de la educación* (Dykinson 1982, 1987, 1992), *Sistemas educativos de hoy* (Madrid 1984, 1987, 1993), *Primary Education on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century* (in English, French and Spanish, Paris 1986, 1987, 1988), *Reformas educativas en Europa* (Madrid 1994) and *Diccionario Europeo de la Educación* (Madrid, 1996).

### Álvaro Buj Gimeno

University Professor. Professor of Educational Theory at the Complutense University of Madrid. Graduate in Philosophy and Literature, National Graduation Prize in Philosophy and Literature in 1961. Doctor in Pedagogy. State School Teacher and Educational Inspector (retired from both Bodies). Head of Department of Didactic Documentation and Orientation Centre in Primary Education of the MEC (1963 to 1969). Central Inspector at the Ministry of Education and Culture from 1972 to 1983. Now lectures in second and third cycle at the Complutense University in "Theory of Education", "Social Pedagogy" and "Structure and functioning of the educational system". He also holds an academic post as Inspector of Services at the Rectorate of the Complutense University of Madrid.

Author or co-author of several books, usual speaker at congresses and seminars; his lines of research, explained in more than a hundred articles, are: the role of control in the educational administration, teacher training and improvement, equal opportunities and education, social training and educational institutions, intercultural education.

### Juan González Anleo

Professor of Sociology at the University of Alcalá de Henares and Dean of the "León XIII" School of Political Sciences and Sociology at the Pontifical University of Salamanca. Researcher on education and family; education, religion and youth. Collaborator in the FOESSA Report on the social situation in Spain and Madrid (1970, 1972, 1973, 1984, 1994) and the research by the Santa María Foundation. His recent publications include: *Enseñar en Ávila* (co-author), *Sociología para educadores, Introducción a la Sociología, Catolicismo Nacional, nostalgia y crisis, Estudio sobre libertad e religio em Portugal, Nivel ético del profesorado español, Perfil de la Sociedad de Consumo, La emigración española en la encrucijada* (co-author), *El sistema educativo en España, La cultura organizacional de los centros educativos, Para comprender la Sociología, El profesorado en la España actual, Religión y sociedad en la España de los 90*. He is now on the management team of the survey on *Spanish Youth, 1999* by the Santa María Foundation.

### José Antonio Ibáñez-Martín

Professor at the Complutense University, where he has lectured on "Philosophy of Education", "Ethics and Politics of Education", "Politics and Educational Legislation" and "Civic Education". The awards he has received for his publications include the Raimundo Lulio National Prize for Essay Writing, from the Senior Council for Scientific Research (CSIC), and the Royal Academy of Moral and Political Sciences Prize, Fellow of the American Philosophy of Education Society, member of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, etc. He is the Director of the magazine *Revista Española de Pedagogía* and Chairman of the European Institute for Educational Initiatives. His lines of research concentrate on study



of the anthropological bases and critical-philosophical suppositions of the educational processes, in educational policy and legislation, with special reference to the European dimension, in civic training within the democratic systems and in professional deontology for educational activities. He has published more than ninety works in five different languages on this set of concerns.

#### Arturo de la Orden Hoz

Professor of Experimental and Differential Pedagogy at the Complutense University, at the School of Education, where he directs the Educational Research Methods and Diagnosis Department. He is Chairman of the Spanish Pedagogy Society and a member of the Executive committee

of the European Educational Research Association. He is a member of several international pedagogical research and educational evaluation associations and was Chairman of the World Association of Educational Research from 1985 to 1989 and of the Inter-university Association of Experimental Pedagogy (1990-1994). He is the editor of the magazine *Bordón* on Educational Sciences and a member of the editorial boards of several Spanish and international pedagogical research magazines. He was also editor of the magazines *Revista de Investigación Educativa* and *Revista Complutense*. Among his publications (four books and more than 300 articles in national and international magazines), one must emphasise: *Investigación Educativa* (Anaya, Madrid, 1985), *Evaluación Educativa* (Docencia, Buenos Aires, 1983), *El agrupamiento de alumnos* (CSIC, Madrid, 1975), *Evaluación e innovación educativa* (University of Granada, Granada, 1997). His present line of research concentrates on systematic models of educational evaluation. He has directed 56 doctoral theses.

#### José Luis Pérez Iriarte

Educational Inspector and High School Professor, presently assigned as Area Head to the National Quality and Evaluation Institute. He has acted as Secretary to the Coordination Committee of the study this Report concerns.

#### José Luis Rodríguez Diéguez

Professor of Didactics at the University of Salamanca. Former State School Teacher and Educational Inspector. He has published more than twenty books, about a hundred and fifty articles and monographic works and has directed diverse collections of educational studies. His main lines of research are: A) Evaluation, syllabus design and teaching programming, with such works as; *Didáctica General. Objetivos y Evaluación*. Editorial Cincel, Madrid, 1985. *Curriculum, acto didáctico y teoría del texto*. Ediciones Anaya, Madrid, 1985. *La programación del curso escolar*. Editorial Escuela Española, Madrid, 1983 (collaboration with Rosario Beltrán de Tena). B) The use and assessment of the mass media as an instrument and teaching content: *Las funciones de la imagen en la enseñanza*. Editorial Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 1978. *El cómic y su utilización didáctica. Los tebeos en la enseñanza*. Ed. Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 1988. *Lenguaje y rendimiento académico*. Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, 1992 (collaboration with S. Gallego Rico). He is Vice-Chairman of the Spanish Pedagogy Society, editor of the magazine *Enseñanza*, member of diverse national and international scientific associations, and he is a member of the editorial board of several professional magazines.





ESTUDIOS E INFORMES

instituto nacional  
**ince**  
de calidad y evaluación



**Ministerio de Educación y Cultura**  
Secretaría General de Educación y Formación Profesional  
Instituto Nacional de Calidad y Evaluación - INCE