

Dear parent(s)/guardian(s)

Your child has been selected to participate in the PISA study in Flanders. Please read the key information about the study and your child's participation in this letter.

What is PISA?

PISA stands for Programme for International Student Assessment and is the largest educational survey in the world. It assesses the knowledge and skills of more than half a million 15-year-old students from 91 countries. Your child is one of approximately 7,000 pupils in Flanders who were selected to participate in the study.

The PISA2025 survey is conducted in Flanders by Ghent University, commissioned by the Department of Education and Training and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

What is the purpose of the PISA survey?

We examine what 15-year-old pupils know and can do in mathematics, science and reading. PISA primarily investigates to what extent pupils have skills that are important to participate in society. For example, we look at whether pupils can find information in texts or can calculate a discount on a product. Based on a comparison of results between different countries, we can identify strengths and weaknesses of education systems. Policymakers can use this knowledge to work on improving education in Flanders and other countries and regions.

What does participation in the PISA survey involve?

The study will take place at school in April and May 2025 and consists of:

- **An online test** with questions on various domains (science, mathematics and reading) of approximately **1,5 hours**.
- **An online questionnaire** about students themselves and their school of approximately **25 minutes**.

The participation of your child in the study is important to evaluate and optimise Flemish education. Your child's result on the PISA test does not count toward his/her grades at school. Participation in the study is voluntary. You can refuse your child's participation by sending an e-mail to the school of your child. You do not need to provide any further explanation for a refusal. Non-participation will not affect your child's grades at school or your or his/her relationship with teachers, other school personnel or the researchers of the study.

What happens to the data collected in the study?

During the study, some personal data will be collected from you and your child. These data are:

- Student responses to questions from the test
- Some background characteristics of students (e.g. date of birth, gender, type of education)
- Some background characteristics of parents (e.g. level of education)

The processing of these personal data is necessary for the performance of a task in the general interest and for the purpose of scientific research. Specifically, we want to use the personal data to obtain a good understanding of overall student performance in Flanders and to understand differences in performance between students. Personal data are processed on the legal basis of 'public interest'. We always treat personal data confidentially and take measures to protect your privacy and that of your child. No one outside the research team will be able to link answers from the test or questionnaires to your child or to you personally. Data will not be passed to external parties. PISA will keep anonymised data indefinitely to enable further PISA research in the future.

Further questions?

- Send an email to pisa@ugent.be
- If you want to exercise your rights under privacy laws, such as reviewing or modifying responses, you can also contact us at pisa@ugent.be.
- For more information on the protection of your personal data, contact the OECD's Data Protection Officer (dpo@oecd.org) and Data Protection Commissioner (dpc@oecd.org). A complaint can be filed with the Data Protection Authority or Flemish Supervisory Commission.

Thank you very much in advance for supporting your child's participation in the PISA study!

Dr. Liesbet Berlamont
National Project Manager PISA Flanders
Liesbet.Berlamont@ugent.be

Prof. Dr. Johan van Braak
Supervisor PISA Flanders
Johan.vanBraak@ugent.be