



Latin American Experience with Enhancing Quality and Measuring Quality

READ Global Conference

Moscow, October 1, 2009

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Current Situation in Latin America Assessment Systems

- Most countries have at least an incipient national assessment system based on standardized student achievement test, periodically applied to samples or all students of certain key grades in core academic subjects
- Some countries have sub-national assessments systems
- Most have participated in one or more international test
- A few countries and sub-national entities have been producing school- and system-report cards



Assessment Systems: What kinds of results are found?

- Quality lower than expected
- Huge differences in averages between rural and urban population, public and private schools, poor and non-poor, indigenous and non-indigenous populations
- Increasingly small, if any, differences between girls and boys
- Slow change in outcomes

Assessment Systems: What kinds of results are found? Positive results

Important inputs: school climate, high expectations, principal's leadership and permanence, homework, peer effects, educational materials, teacher's satisfaction and knowledge of subject matter, active pedagogy, parents' SES and participation, use of classroom assessment as a pedagogical tool, time on homework, interest in subject, student perception of relationship with teacher, understanding that science & math associated w/ better job opportunities & future financial security, parent's (especially mother's) education, home educational resources, assessment systems, school autonomy (process and human resources), less influence from unions,

just like everywhere else!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Assessment Systems: What kinds of results are found? Negative results

The following characteristics have a negative impact:

- Memorization, rote learning
- Mother's employment
- Number of siblings
- High student-teacher ratio
- Frontal teaching method
- Technology has mixed results

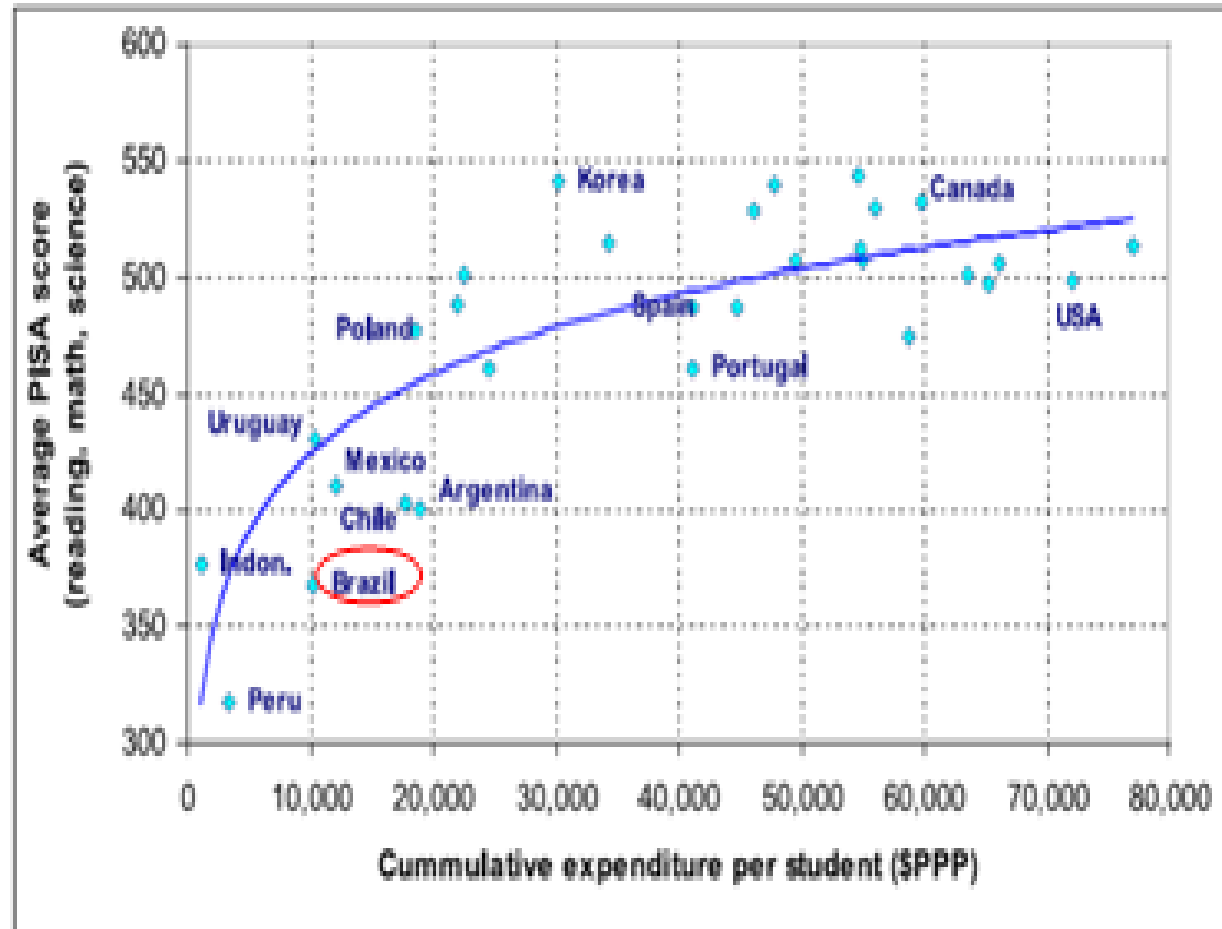
Assessment Systems: Big Challenge

Quality of Education is the challenge

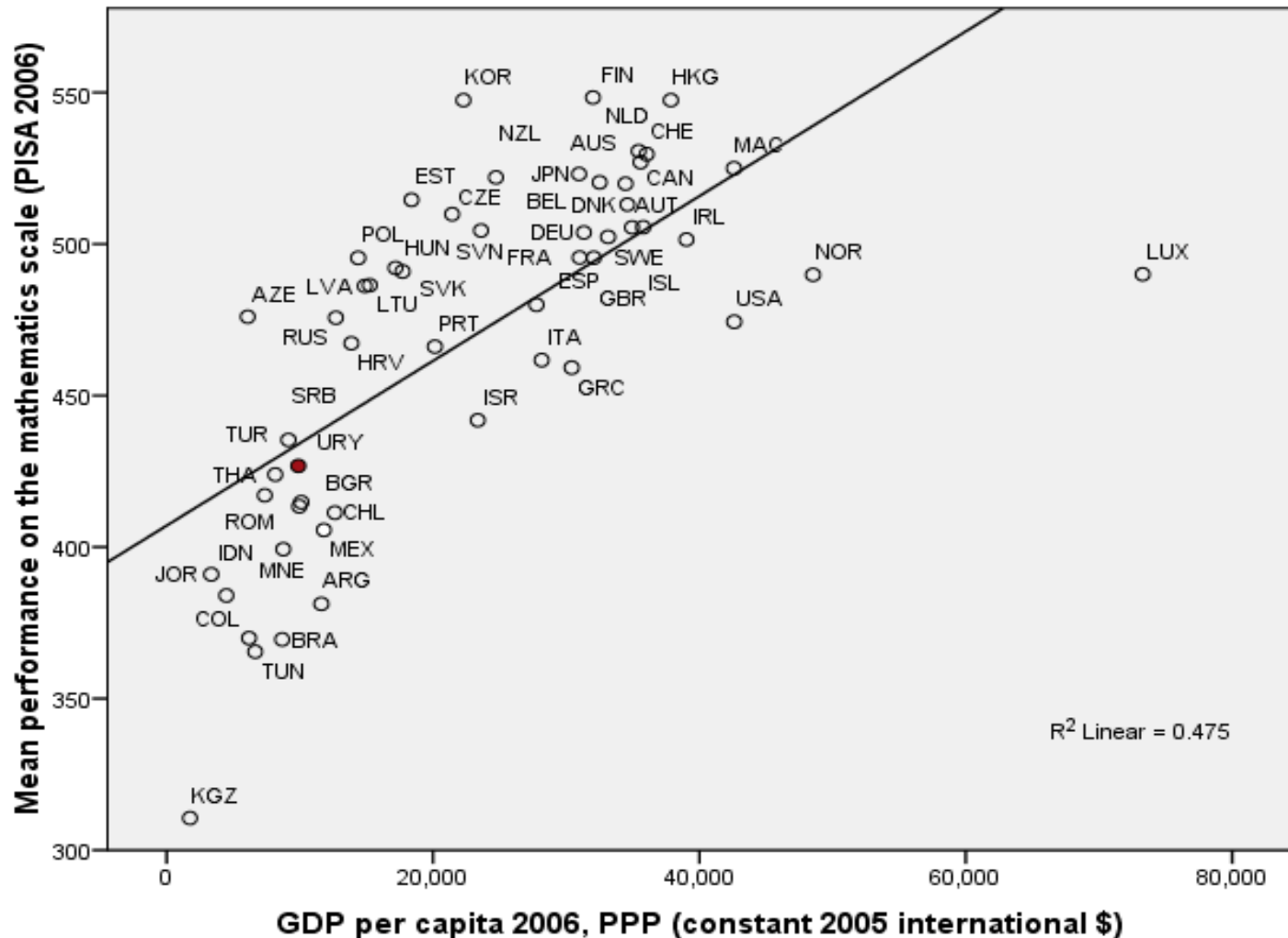
It should take 2 to 3 (at very most) grades to learn to read. If it is taking 4 to 6, are systems working at about 50% effectiveness? Poorest 53 countries spend \$16 billion on primary education, are they “wasting” \$8 billion of it?

International Comparisons

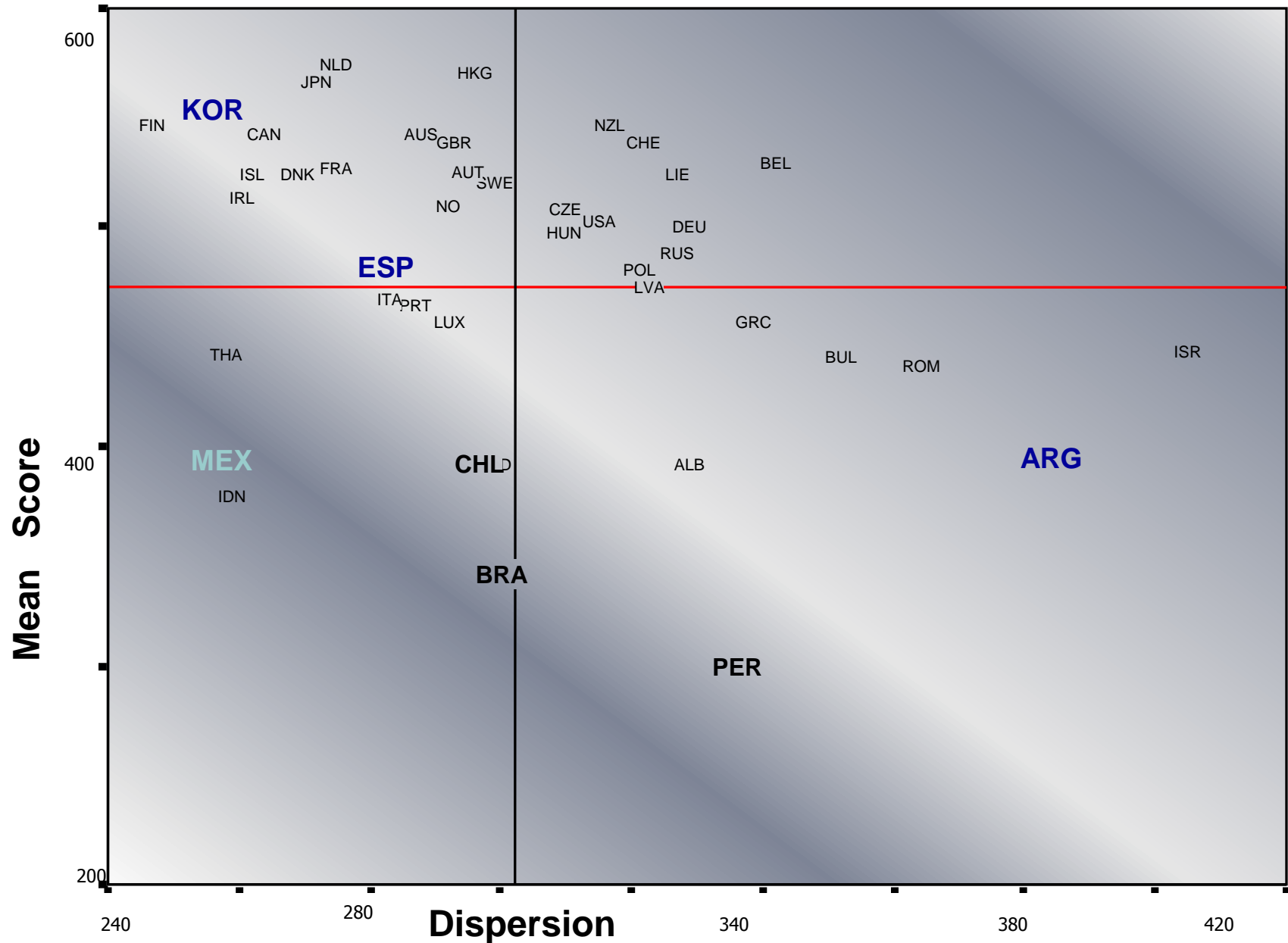
Spending per student compared with average PISA scores (Literacy, Math and Science) 2000



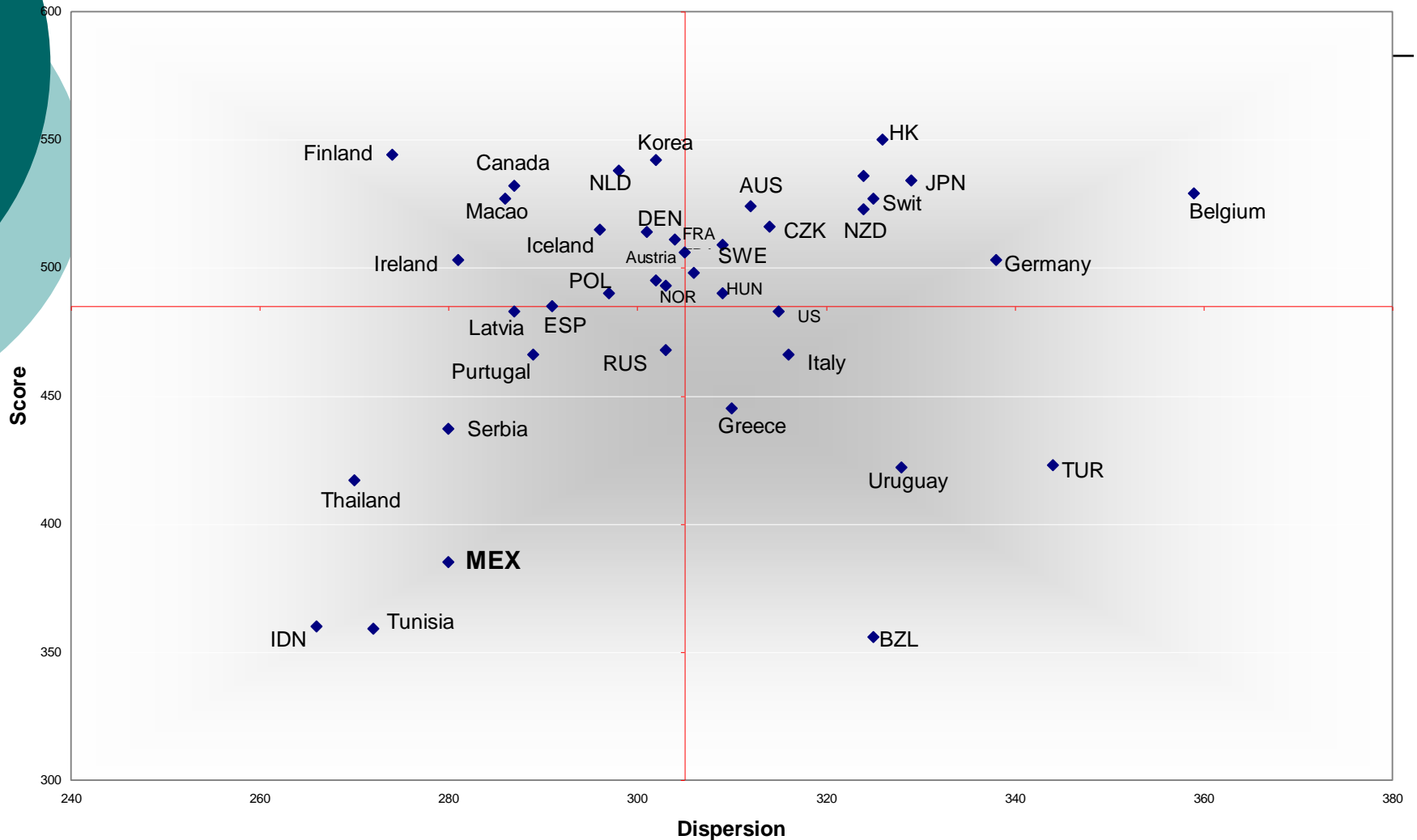
GDP per capita versus PISA scores (Math 2006)



PISA 2000: Math Scores & Dispersion



PISA 2003: Math Scores & Dispersion





Assessment and Accountability

The Uruguay Experience (1)

- **Participation**, consensus building and face to face discussion with teachers, principals, and supervisors (sample, all schools get results, all teachers can apply the test to their students, and can compare with national results)



Assessment and Accountability

The Uruguay Experience (2)

- **In-service teacher training** as the first consequence of the assessment (starting with assessments' results, voluntary and collective --involves the teacher team of a school--, exchange of experience with other teams, all year round—once a fortnight; participants receive 20% of salary; schools in poor areas are priority; focus on how to teach; and emphasis on practical activities in the classroom)



Assessment and Accountability

The Uruguay Experience (3)

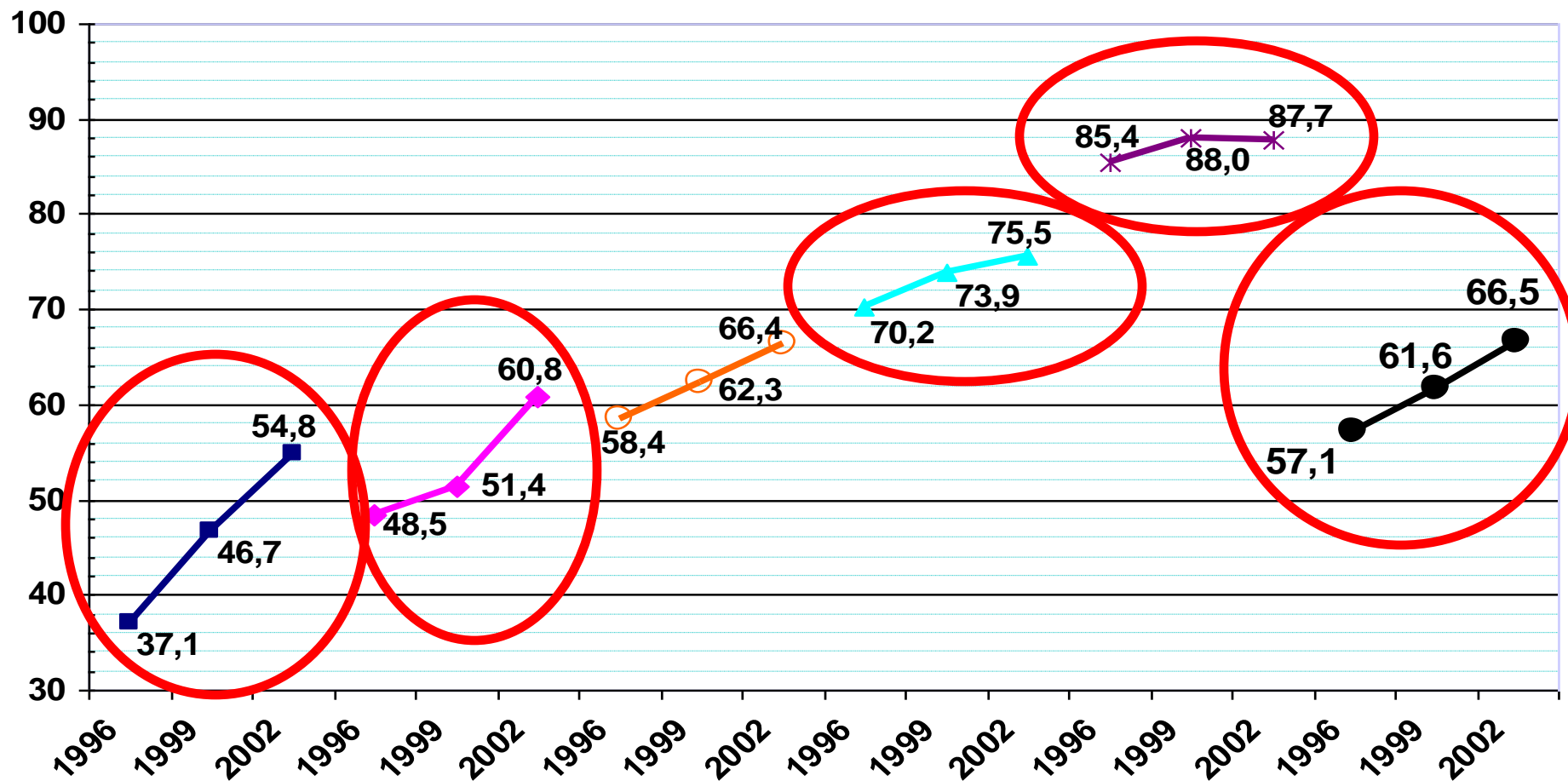
- **Evidence on the impact**

- 70% of teachers support national assessment
- 70.2% read MOE's publications
- 55% changed teaching and evaluating practices
- 78% apply school based assessment

“When MOE appeared I had a brick in each hand... Little by little they convinced us... Now it is a valuable experience. We have changed our practice”

Language, percentage of students achieving an acceptable level in the test /Primary 6th grade. The Uruguay experience (4)

PoorRich



EVOLUTION OF THE RESULTS BY SOCIAL CONTEXT



Assessment and Accountability

The Mexican Experience (1)

- **Increase Autonomy**

To improve quality, efforts are needed to move decision-making to the school level, thus increasing school autonomy.

Increasing school autonomy can compensate disadvantaged schools.

Autonomy can help raise the schooling outcomes of indigenous peoples.

School autonomy reinforces the role of homework, learning styles and future value of education.

With more autonomy, schools could determine the appropriate mix of technology for their students.



Assessment and Accountability

The Mexican Experience (2)

- **Improve Accountability**

Accountability mechanisms can improve school quality.

Accountability mechanisms that put people at the center of service provision can go a long way in making services work and improving outcomes.

Flexible and wide-ranging accountability mechanisms could encompass various types of services.

To improve quality, efforts are needed to move decision-making to the school level, thus increasing school autonomy.



Assessment and Accountability

The Mexican Experience (3)

- **Continue learning from the assessment**

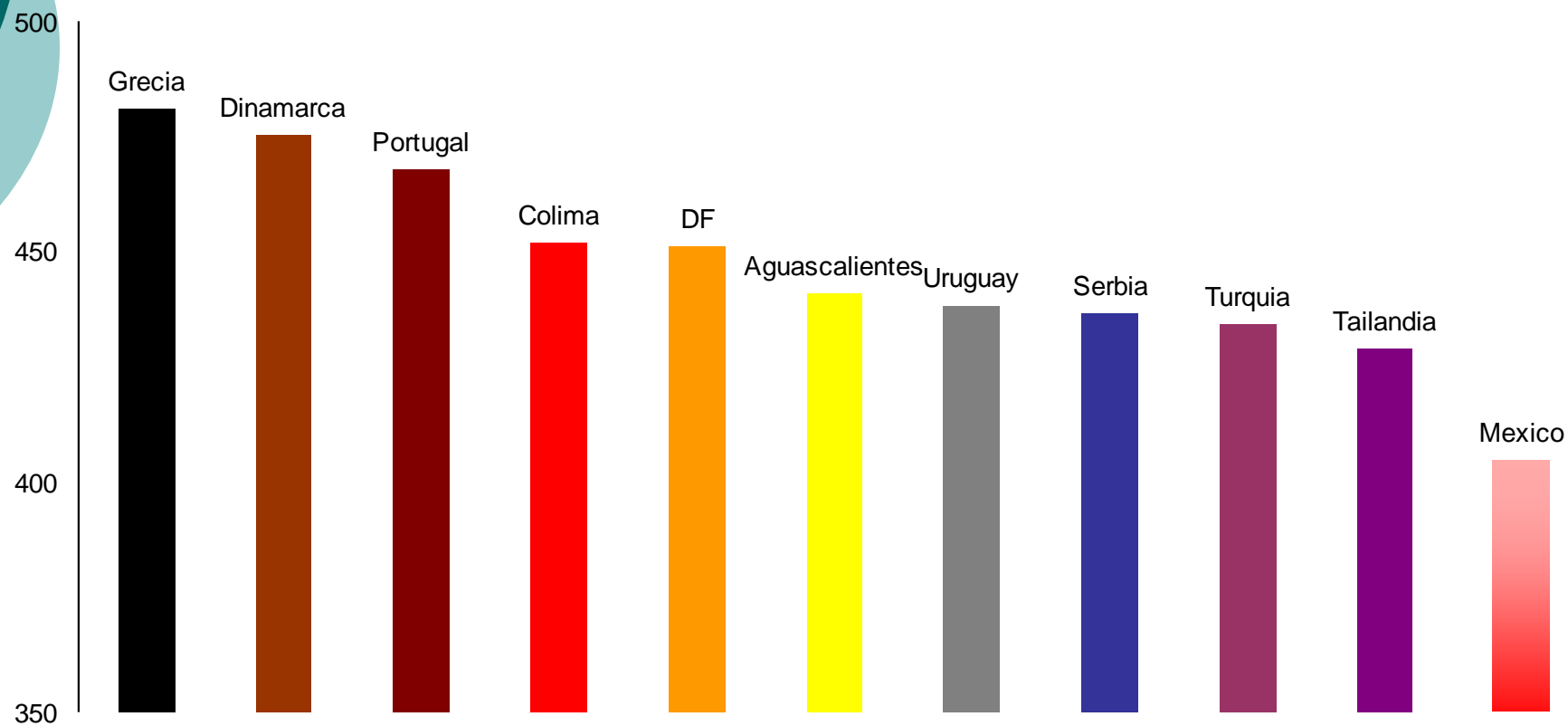
Assessment testing can be used to inform policy decisions.

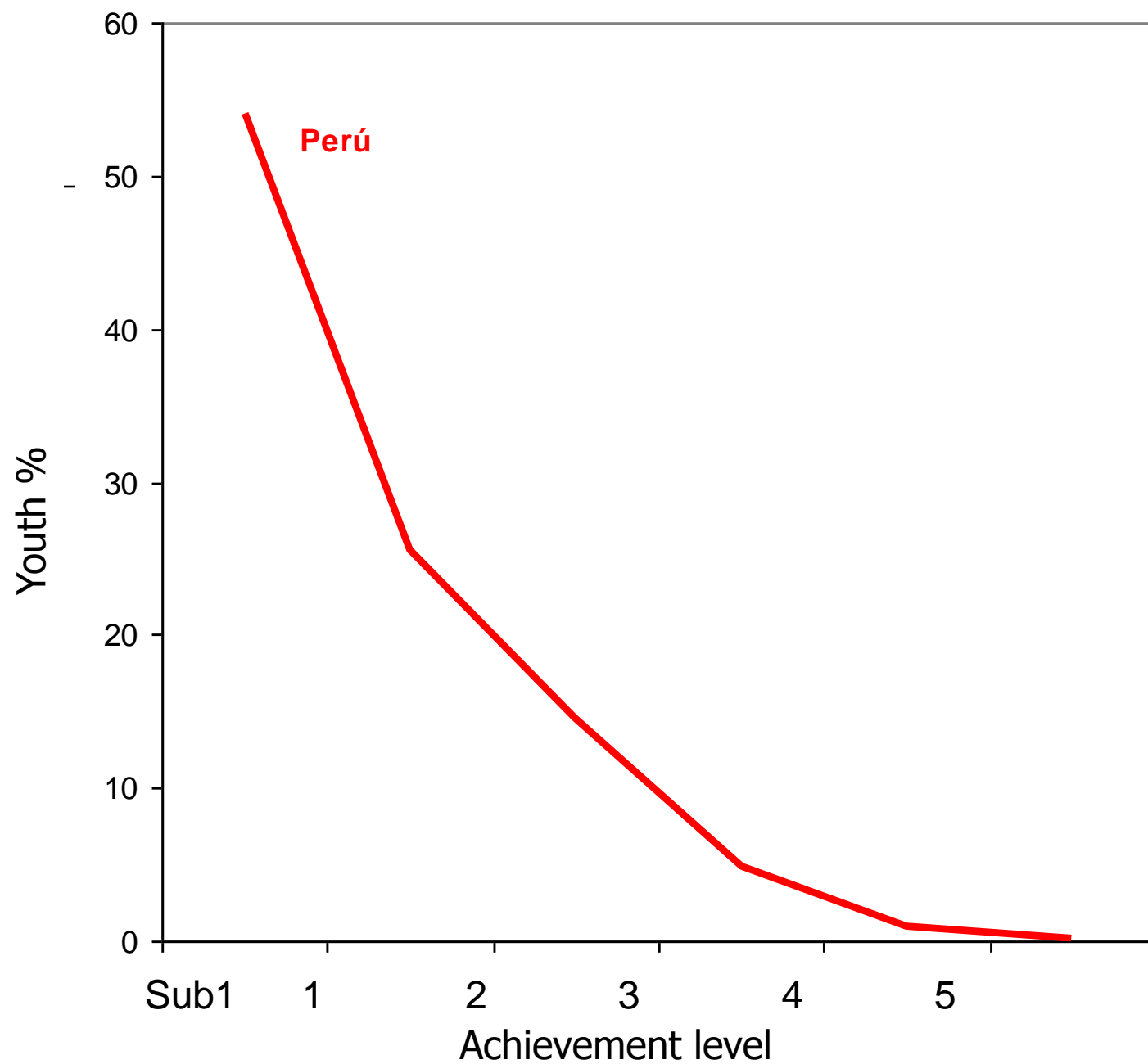
Analysis of assessments can foster public and civil society involvement in education reform.

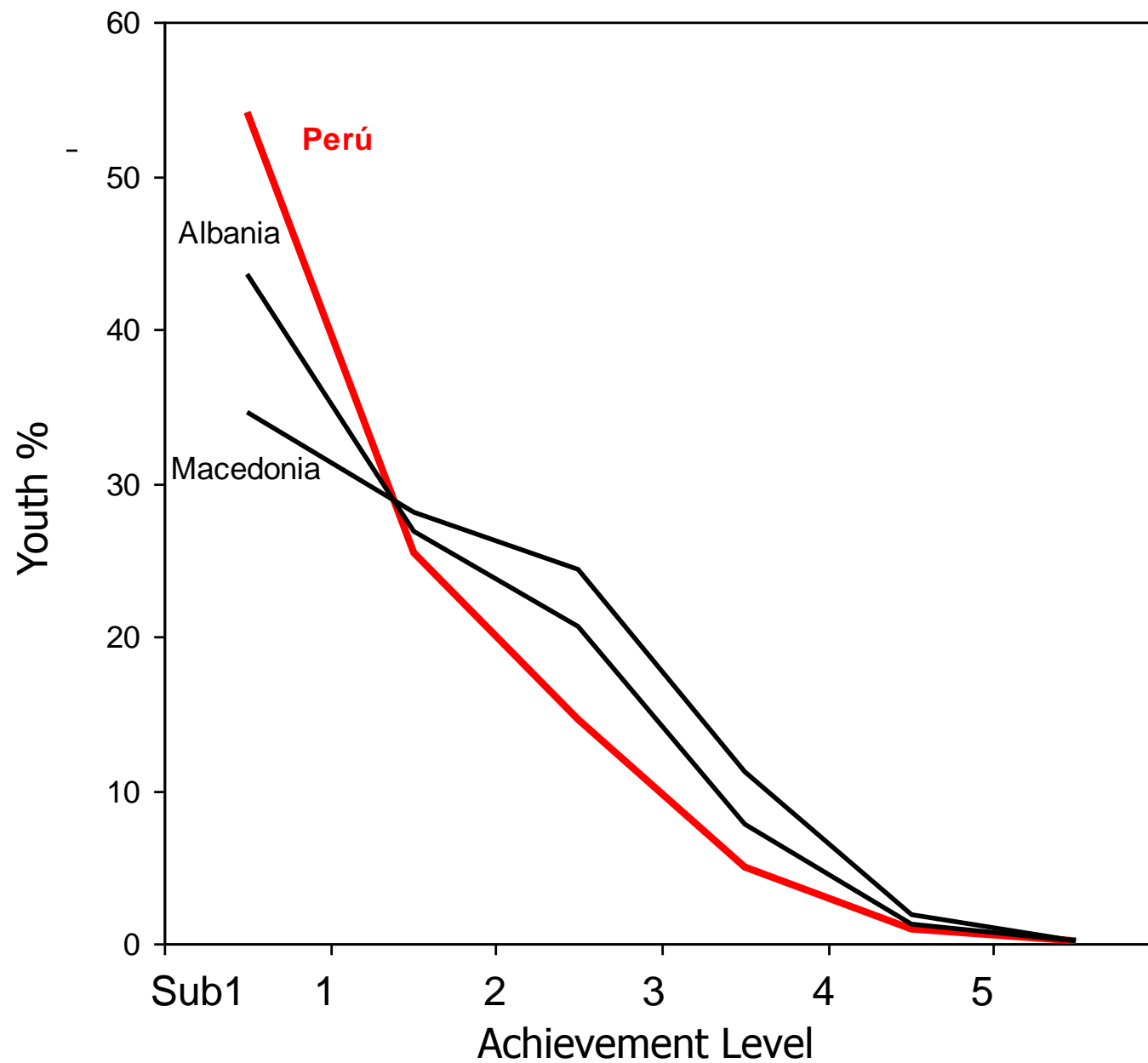
However, governments must be proactive in encouraging public debate using assessment results.

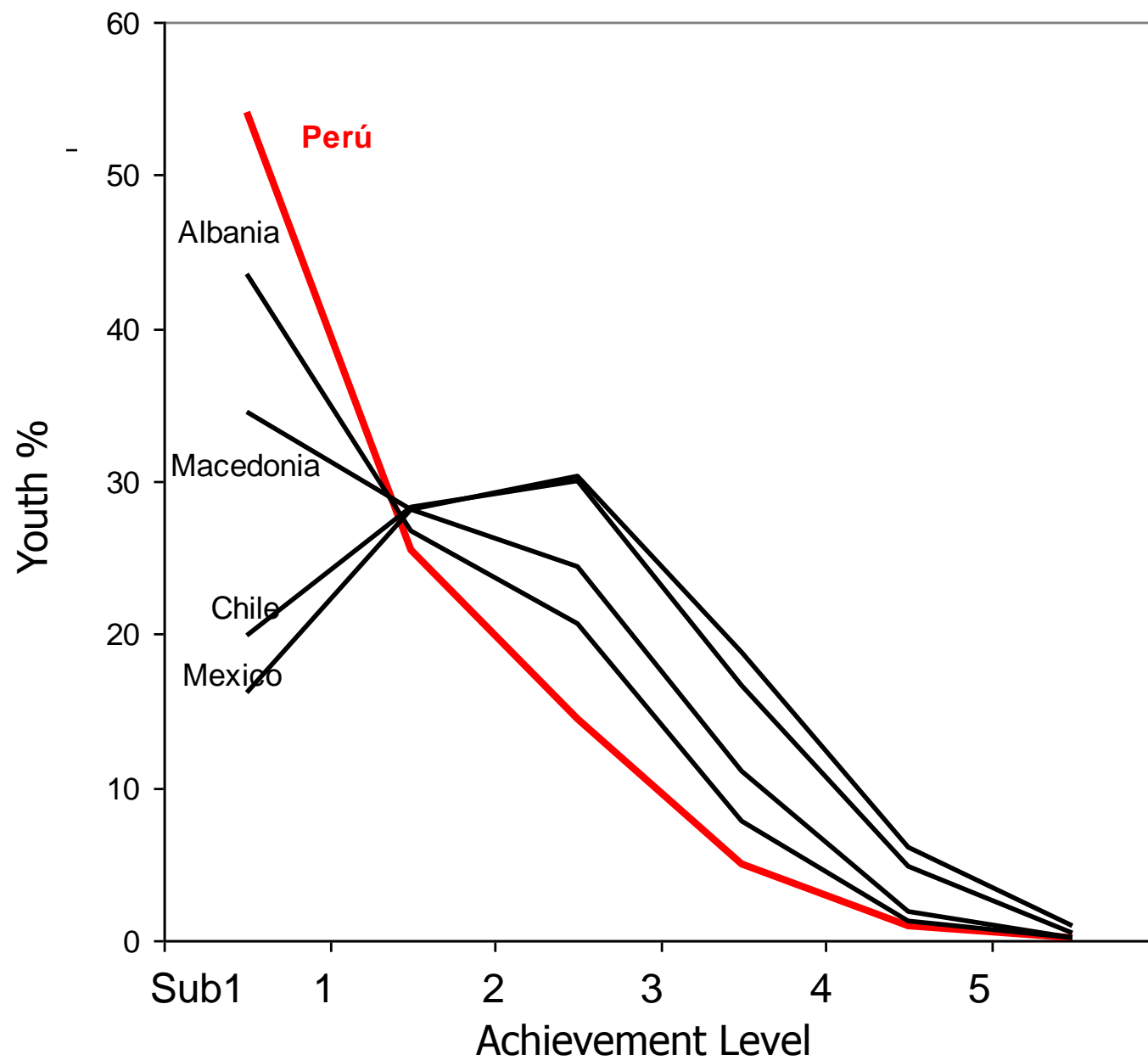
Expand coverage of the national assessments. National and international assessments could be used to inform school reform process.

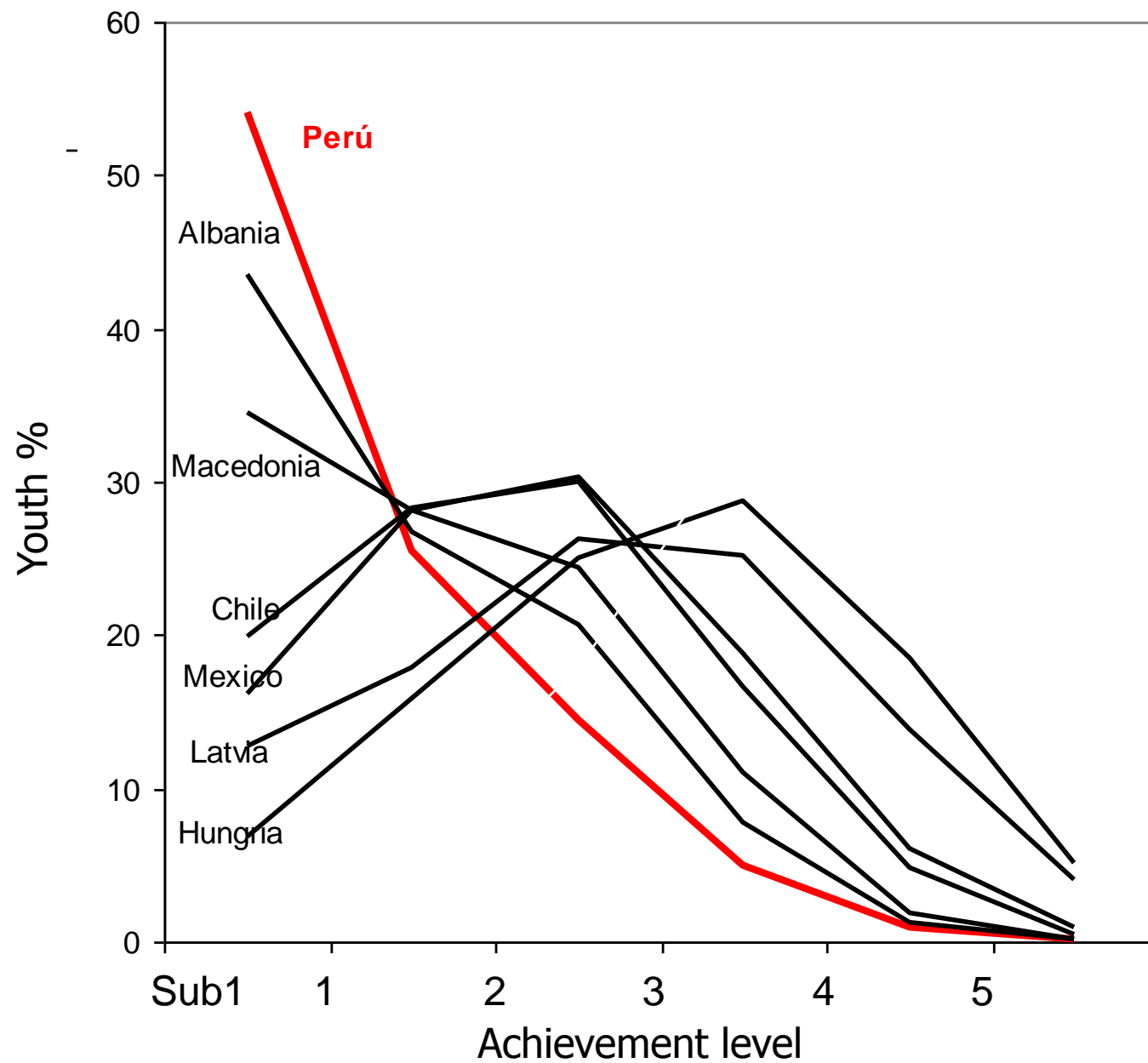
PISA 2003: Mathematics

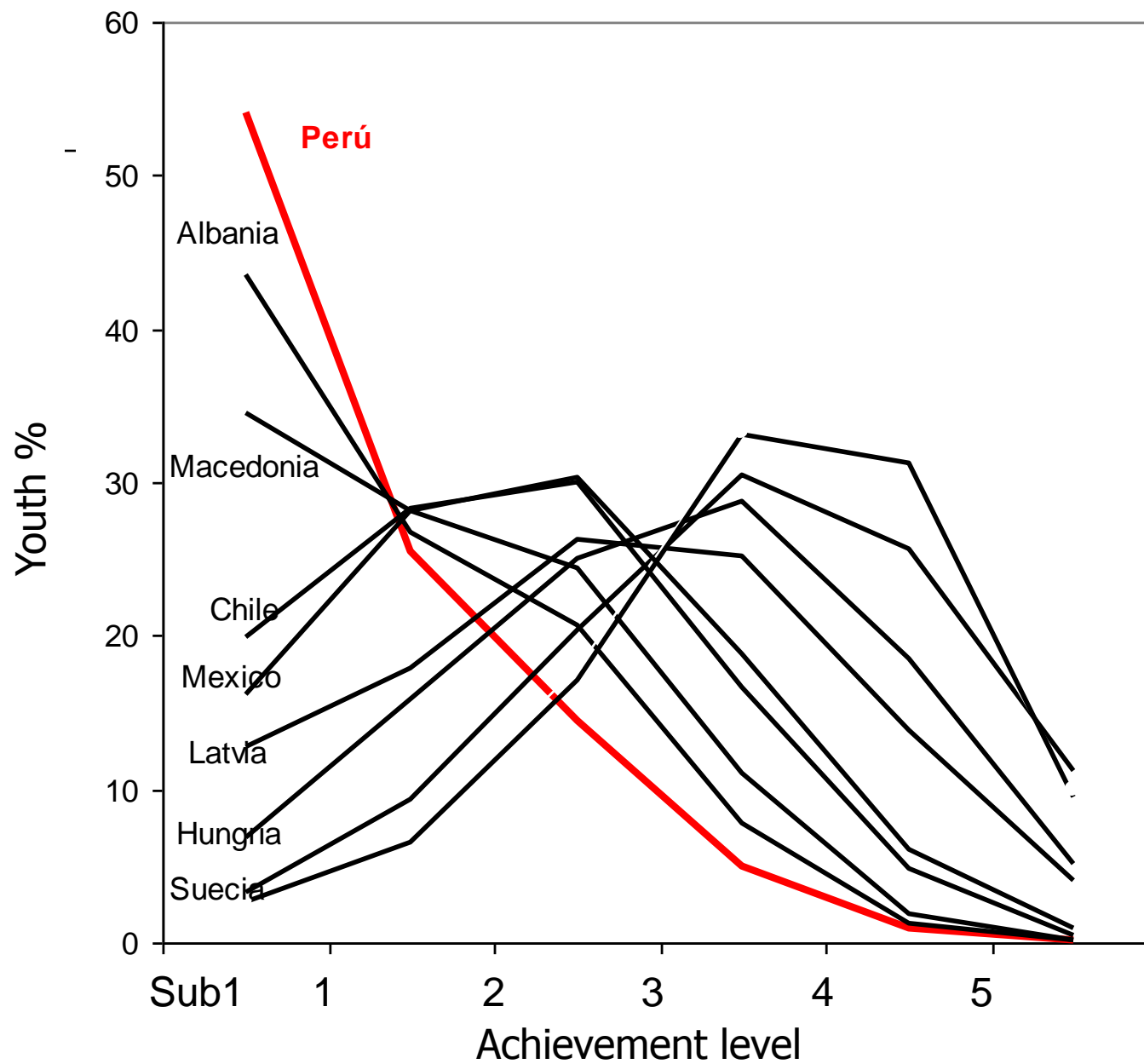


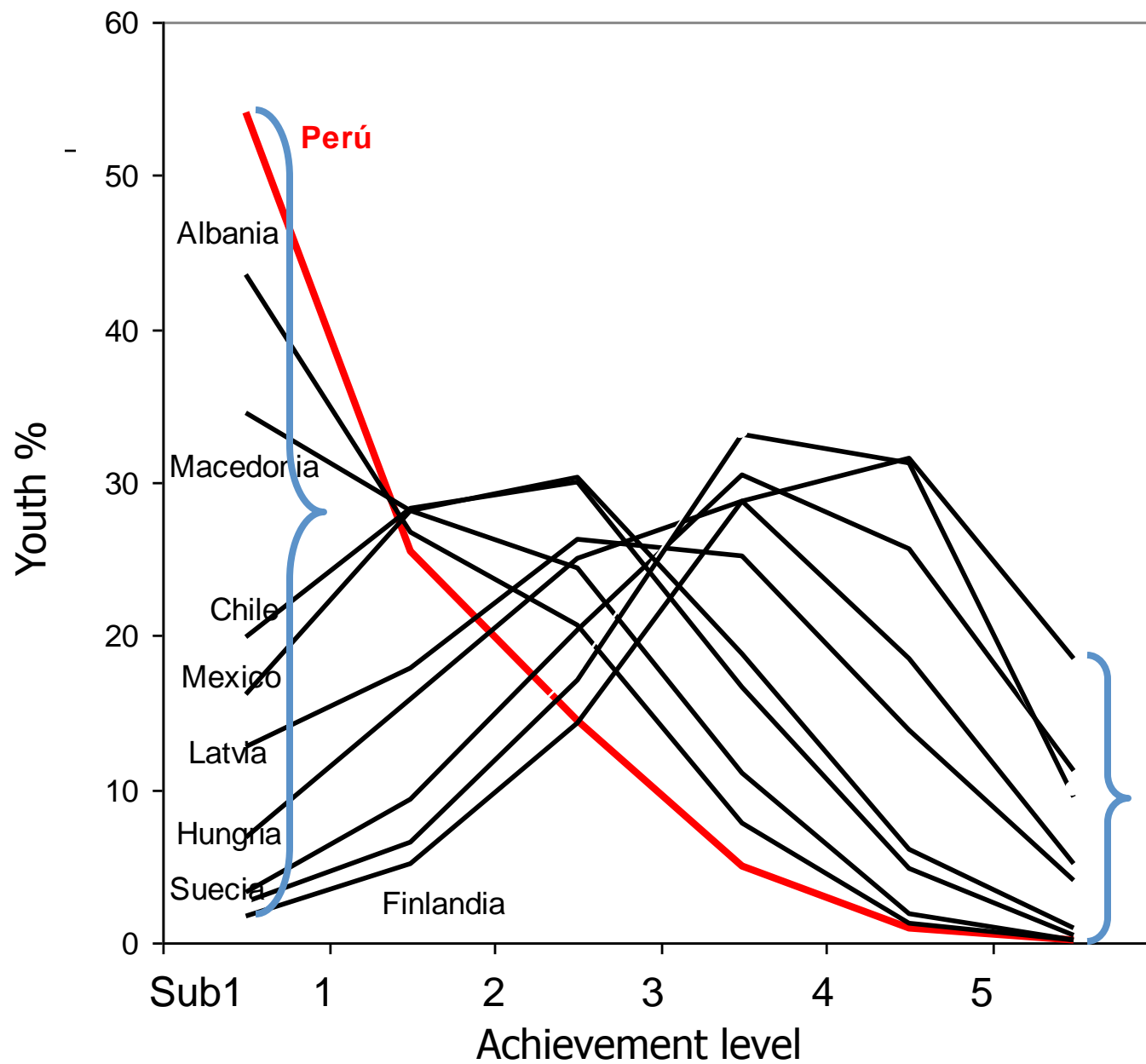














Some Lessons for Assessment Policy

- Implementing units must be committed with producing materials useful for policy-makers, managers, instructor, teachers, beneficiaries with dissemination and use of results. (Reports with useful information about their performance and activities)
- Technical legitimacy of test methodology is crucial
- Timely and accurate data to inform policymaking
- Unit doing it must be autonomous from political interests
- Importance of detailed planning of actions and coherent implementation



Some Lessons for Assessment Policy

- You need an **assessment strategy**, not just to administrate tests... policymakers use the results of evaluation of existing interventions to inform design and implementation of policies
- A “**user-friendly**” **approach** to assessment facilitates its use by teachers and others
- Articulate **dissemination of results** with an effective in-service training program
- Trainers, teachers need **space and time** to meet, study, discuss, try new things



Some lessons for Assessment Policy

- **Autonomy...** with support. With assessment's information more autonomous schools can implement appropriate education policies
- **Accountability.** A more accountable system will encourage more active participation by parents, teachers, and others, which is key to improving learning outcomes
- **Assessment.** A system that is based in constant assessment and participation in international benchmarking exercises will improve cost-effectiveness