

South Korea tops digital literacy rankings

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South Korean university students enjoy their time at a free internet cafe in Seoul 13 March 2001. Internet surfers in South Korea are the most active in Asia, spending twice as much time in cyberspace than their regional neighbours according to a survey released 13 March. AFP PHOTO/KIM JAE-HWAN

Young South Koreans, and girls, learn the best from computers and the Internet according to a survey of 15 year-olds in 19 countries, the OECD said on Tuesday.

The OECD, which groups 34 of the world's most advanced economies, tested the digital literacy of students in 16 member countries as well as Colombia and the Chinese cities of Hong Kong and Macao as part of its Programme for International Assessment.

In most countries, the results were in line with the results of a 2009 [survey](#) in print [reading skills](#), the OECD said.

But students performed "significantly better" in digital reading than print in Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Iceland and Macao, the survey demonstrated.

The opposite was true in Poland, Hungary, Chile, Austria, Hong Kong and Colombia.

The Paris-based Organisation for [Economic Cooperation](#) and Development said that boys improved their performance when compared to the print survey, but still trailed the girls.

When using computers, "girls scored an average of 24 points more, compared to a difference of 39 points in print, the equivalent to one year of schooling," the OECD said.

The OECD said [computer use](#) at school had a small impact on results, while home-use proved influential.

Educators should better integrate computers into curricula and classrooms and policy-makers should invest more "in training teachers to use computers for teaching," the organisation said.

"Digital technologies provide a great opportunity to make students more active participants in classroom learning," Barbara Ischinger, director of education at the OECD said.

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