

## **(Mis)use of national assessment results in Slovenia**

**Darko Zupanc**

*National Examinations Centre, Slovenia*

National assessment of students' knowledge is frequently carried out in school systems throughout the world and different countries participate in international comparative studies such as TIMSS as well. The elementary reporting on results is a demonstration of the achievement of multi-level benchmarks. This article deals with the distribution of results in mathematics of 13 and 14 year-old students in systems of national assessment in Sweden, England, the USA, Canada, Australia and Slovenia, and aims at comparing these with the results of the international study TIMSS 2003. In national assessment Slovenia shows a pronounced discrepancy: the majority of students are very good at mathematics and the number of those that do not attain basic knowledge is negligible. But is the fact that more than one half of the students in Slovenia achieve excellent or very good grades in mathematics in national assessment good or bad? What is the case in other countries? How do other countries compare in their distribution of grades, or levels of achievement in their systems of national assessment? Do international measurements of knowledge confirm this anomaly revealed by school grades and national assessment in Slovenia? Isn't this embellished demonstration misleading and in reality all about lowering standards of knowledge and inflation of grades? The function and use of national assessment results in the last few years have been questionable.