

**Immigrants, educational systems and
background.
Cross-country evidence from PISA 2006**

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Abstract. This paper uses data from PISA 2006 to analyze immigrant gaps in twenty-nine countries, considering school systems - tracking and comprehensive - and background. Results show that gaps are wider in continental Western Europe than in other areas; in European countries with tracking, both school type and background - and their interactions - tend to be highly significant, while in those with comprehensive schools, other segregation mechanisms seem to be at work. Gaps are small in English-speaking countries with comprehensive education. More than the distinction between tracking and comprehensive models, the existence of incentives for improving individual abilities seems to be crucial for the catching up of immigrants in education.

Keywords: International migration, educational systems, PISA.

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