

Reader's Guide

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

Organisations

The following abbreviations are used in this report:

ACER	Australian Council For Educational Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
TCMA	Test-Curriculum Match Analysis
TIMSS	Trends in Mathematics and Science Study

Country codes

OECD Countries			
CODE	COUNTRY	CODE	COUNTRY
AUS	Australia	MEX	Mexico
AUT	Austria	NLD	Netherlands
BEL	Belgium	NZL	New Zealand
CAN	Canada	NOR	Norway
CZE	Czech Republic	POL	Poland
DNK	Denmark	PRT	Portugal
FIN	Finland	KOR	Korea
FRA	France	SVK	Slovak Republic
DEU	Germany	ESP	Spain
GRC	Greece	SWE	Sweden
HUN	Hungary	CHE	Switzerland
ISL	Iceland	TUR	Turkey
IRL	Ireland	GBR	United Kingdom (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
ITA	Italy	SCO	Scotland
JPN	Japan	USA	United States
LUX	Luxembourg		

OECD Partner Countries and Economies			
CODE	COUNTRY	CODE	COUNTRY
BRA	Brazil	PER	Peru
HKG	Hong Kong-China	RUS	Russian Federation
IDN	Indonesia	YUG	Serbia
LVA	Latvia	THA	Thailand
LIE	Liechtenstein ¹	TUN	Tunisia
MAC	Macao-China	URY	Uruguay

1. Liechtenstein's results are not included in results requiring a separate national scaling of item values as the sample size in the country was too small to provide an accurate result.

TECHNICAL DEFINITIONS

Item difficulty – Historically, item difficulty is the proportion of those taking an item, or test, which get the item correct. Within situations employing item response theory (IRT) modelling of response to items relative to the underlying trait (*e.g. mathematical literacy* in the area being measured), item difficulty is the value on the trait scale where the slope of the item's corresponding item response function reaches its maximal value.

Fifteen-year-olds – The use of fifteen-year-olds in the discussion of the PISA sample population refers to students who were aged between 15 years and 3 (complete) months and 16 years and 2 (complete) months at the beginning of the assessment period and who were enrolled in an educational institutions regardless of grade level or institution type or if they were enrolled as a full-time or part-time students.

OECD average – Takes the OECD countries as single entities, each with equal weight. Hence, an OECD average is a statistic generated by adding the country averages and dividing by the number of OECD countries involved. The OECD average provides data on how countries rank relative to the set of countries within the OECD.

OECD total – Takes the OECD countries merged as a single entity to which each country contributes in proportion to the number of its students in the appropriate population. The computation of the OECD total involves the sum total of the outcome variable of interest divided by the total number of data-related students within the OECD countries. The OECD total provides a comparison statistic for the total human capital present with the OECD countries.

Rounding of numbers – Because of rounding, some columns or groups of numbers may not add up to the totals shown. Totals, differences, and averages are always calculated on the basis of exact numbers and then rounded after calculation.

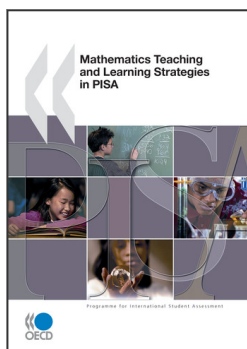
SYMBOLS FOR MISSING DATA

Six symbols are employed in the tables and charts to denote missing data:

- a* Data is not applicable because the category does not apply.
- c* There are too few observations to provide reliable estimates (*i.e.* there are fewer than 3% of students for this cell or too few schools for valid inferences). However, these statistics were included in the calculation of cross-country averages.
- m* Data is not available.
- n* Magnitude is either negligible or zero.
- S.E.* Standard error.
- w* Data has been withdrawn at the request of the country concerned.
- x* Data included in another category or column of the table (*e.g.* *x*(2) means that data are included in column 2 of the table).

FURTHER DOCUMENTATION

For further documentation on the PISA assessment instruments and the methods used in PISA, see the PISA 2003 Technical Report (OECD, 2005), the Australian Council of Educational Research PISA site (www.acer.edu.au/ozpisa) and the PISA web site (www.pisa.oecd.org).



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