Reader's Guide

Data underlying the figures

The data referred to in Chapters 1 to 3 of this report are presented in Appendix A and, with additional detail, on the PISA website (*www.pisa.oecd.org*). Five symbols are used to denote missing data:

a The category does not apply in the country concerned. Data are therefore missing.

c There are too few observations to provide reliable estimates (*i.e.* there are fewer than 30 students or less than 3% of students for this cell or too few schools for valid inferences).

m Data are not available. These data were collected but subsequently removed from the publication for technical reasons.

w Data have been withdrawn at the request of the country concerned.

x Data are included in another category or column of the table.

Calculation of international averages

An OECD average was calculated for most indicators presented in this report. In the case of some indicators, a total representing the OECD area as a whole was also calculated:

- The OECD average corresponds to the arithmetic mean of the respective country estimates.
- The OECD total takes the OECD countries as a single entity, to which each country contributes in proportion to the number of 15-year-olds enrolled in its schools. It illustrates how a country compares with the OECD area as a whole.

In this publication, the OECD total is generally used when references are made to the overall situation in the OECD area. Where the focus is on comparing performance across education systems, the OECD average is used. In the case of some countries, data may not be available for specific indicators, or specific categories may not apply. Readers should, therefore, keep in mind that the terms OECD average and OECD total refer to the OECD countries included in the respective comparisons.

Rounding of figures

Because of rounding, some figures in tables may not exactly add up to the totals. Totals, differences and averages are always calculated on the basis of exact numbers and are rounded only after calculation.

All standard errors in this publication have been rounded to two decimal places. Where the value 0.00 is shown, this does not imply that the standard error is zero, but that it is smaller than 0.005.

Reporting of student data

The report uses "15-year-olds" as shorthand for the PISA target population. PISA covers students who are aged between 15 years 3 months and 16 years 2 months at the time of assessment and who have completed at least 6 years of formal schooling, regardless of the type of institution in which they are enrolled and of whether they are in full-time or part-time education, of whether they attend academic or vocational programmes, and of whether they attend public or private schools or foreign schools within the country.

Reporting of school data

The principals of the schools in which students were assessed provided information on their schools' characteristics by completing a school questionnaire. Where responses from school principals are presented in this publication, they are weighted so that they are proportionate to the number of 15-year-olds enrolled in the school.

Abbreviations used in this report

The following abbreviations are used in this report:

ISCED International Standard Classification of Education

SD Standard deviation

SE Standard error

Further documentation

For further information on the PISA assessment instruments and the methods used in PISA, see the *PISA 2006 Technical Report* (OECD, 2009b) and the PISA website (*www.pisa.oecd.org*).

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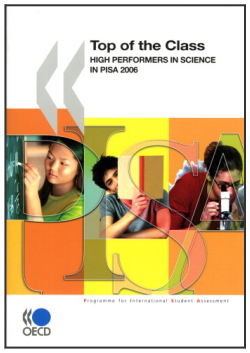

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