

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a triennial survey of 15-year-old students that assesses the extent to which they have acquired the key knowledge and skills essential for full participation in society. The assessment focuses on proficiency in reading, mathematics, science and an innovative domain. In 2018, the innovative domain was global competence.

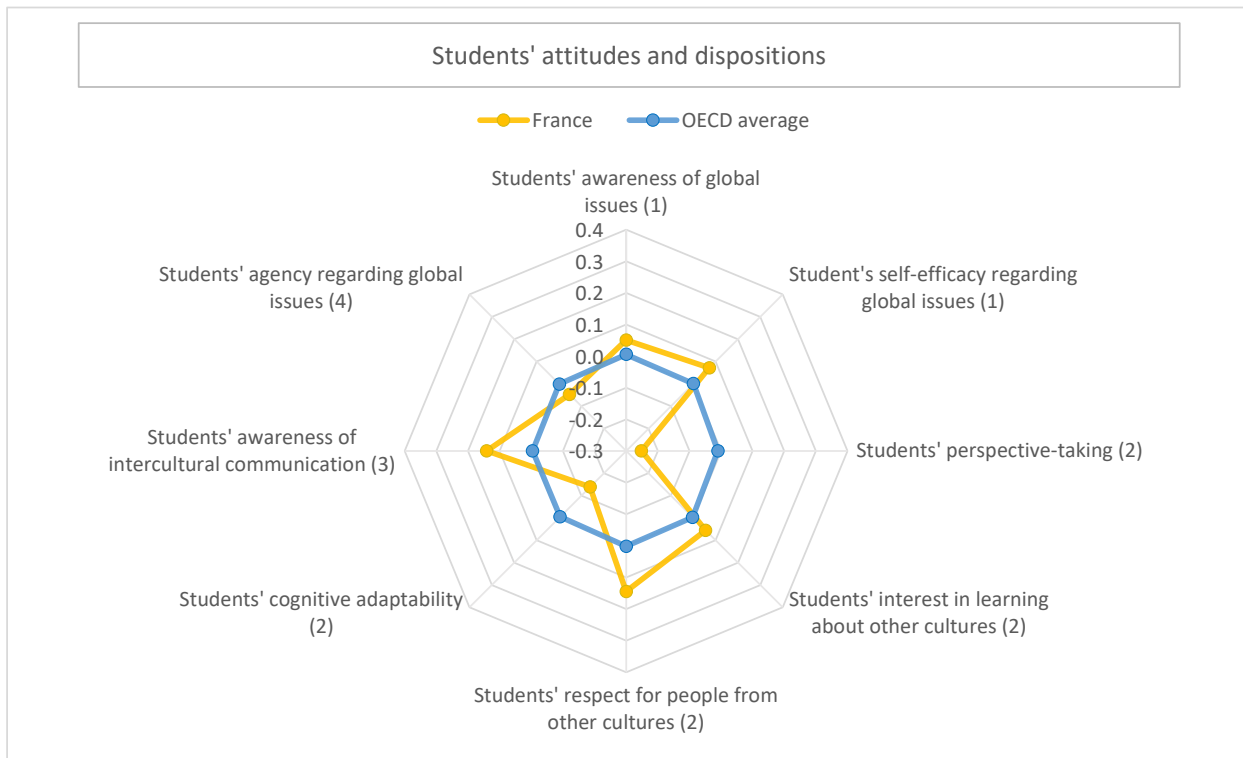
## France

In its 2018 cycle of data collection among 15-year-old students, PISA assessed the global competences needed to live in an interconnected and changing world. Global competence is defined as a multidimensional capacity that encompasses the ability to: 1) examine issues of local, global and cultural significance; 2) understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others; 3) engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions across cultures; and 4) take action for collective well-being and sustainable development. Students in 27 countries and economies both sat the global competence test and completed the global competence module in the student questionnaire. Students in a further 39 countries and economies completed the global competence module in the questionnaire only. Students in France completed the questionnaire only.

### Key Findings

- Students in France reported levels of awareness of and self-efficacy regarding global issues and interest in learning about other cultures that are similar to the OECD averages of those three attitudes and dispositions. They reported higher than the average levels of respect for people from other cultures and awareness of intercultural communication.
- By contrast, students reported levels of cognitive adaptability and capacity to understand the perspectives of others that are below the OECD average.

**Figure 1. Students' attitudes and dispositions**



**Note:** (1) is for the first dimension of global competence, (2) is for the second dimension, (3) is for the third dimension and (4) is for the fourth dimension.

**Source:** OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table VI.B1.6.6.

## Examine issues of local, global and cultural significance

The first dimension of global competence focuses on students' ability to combine knowledge about the world and critical understanding when they form opinions about a local or global issue.

- Students in France reported an average level of self-efficacy regarding global issues similar to the OECD average and to that observed in Australia, Croatia, Lithuania and Panama. In particular, they were the most confident when discussing the different reasons why people become refugees with 77% of them saying that they could do the task easily or with some effort (OECD average 77%). Students were also very confident in explaining why some countries suffer more from global climate change than others (73%, compared to the OECD average of 72%).
- On awareness of global issues, students reported levels that are similar to those observed on average across all OECD countries and those observed in Germany, Peru, and Spain. Students were the most aware of gender equality with 85% of them reporting that they know about the topic or are very familiar with it (OECD average 83%). This was followed by awareness of hunger and malnutrition in different parts of the world (82%, compared to the OECD average of 78%), climate change and global warming (81%, compared to OECD average of 79%), and migration (81%, compared to the OECD average of 79%).

## Understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others

The second dimension of global competence focuses on students' ability to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others.

- When asked to describe their ability to understand the perspectives of others, 63% of students reported that they try to understand their friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective (OECD average 64%). About 54% of students reported that they believe that there are two sides to every question and they try to look at them both (OECD average 63%). Some 53% reported that before criticising someone, they try to imagine how they would feel if they were in their place (OECD average 55%), and about 52% reported that they try to look at everyone's side of a disagreement when they make a decision (OECD average 59%). Only 32% of students reported that when they are upset at someone, they try to take the perspective of that person for a while (OECD average 40%). On the scaled index of perspective taking, students in France reported levels that are well below the OECD average similar to students in Italy and the Slovak Republic.
- Students reported levels of interest in learning about other cultures that are similar to the OECD average and to those observed in Argentina, Indonesia, Poland and Serbia. About two-thirds of the students reported that they want to learn how people live in different countries and to find out about the traditions of other cultures. Slightly fewer students (56%) reported that they are interested in how people from various cultures see the world, and fewer (44%) said that they want to learn about the religions of the world.
- Students in France expressed a heightened sense of respect for people from other cultures. The France average on this index was positive and higher than the OECD average and similar to values observed in Germany, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates. The proportion of students responding positively exceeded 80% on all questionnaire items used in constructing this index with the exception of one statement: "I value the opinions of people from different cultures" (76%, compared to the OECD average of 78%). The largest proportion was for respecting people from other cultures as equal human beings with 87% of students reporting that the statement reflects their beliefs (OECD average 82%).
- Students in France reported levels of cognitive adaptability that are below the OECD average. About half of the students or slightly more were confident in their ability to overcome difficulty interacting with people from other cultures, to adapt to different situations even when under stress or pressure, to deal with unusual situations and to resolve difficult situations with other people. About 66% of students reported that they can change their behaviour to meet the needs of new situations.

## Engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions across cultures

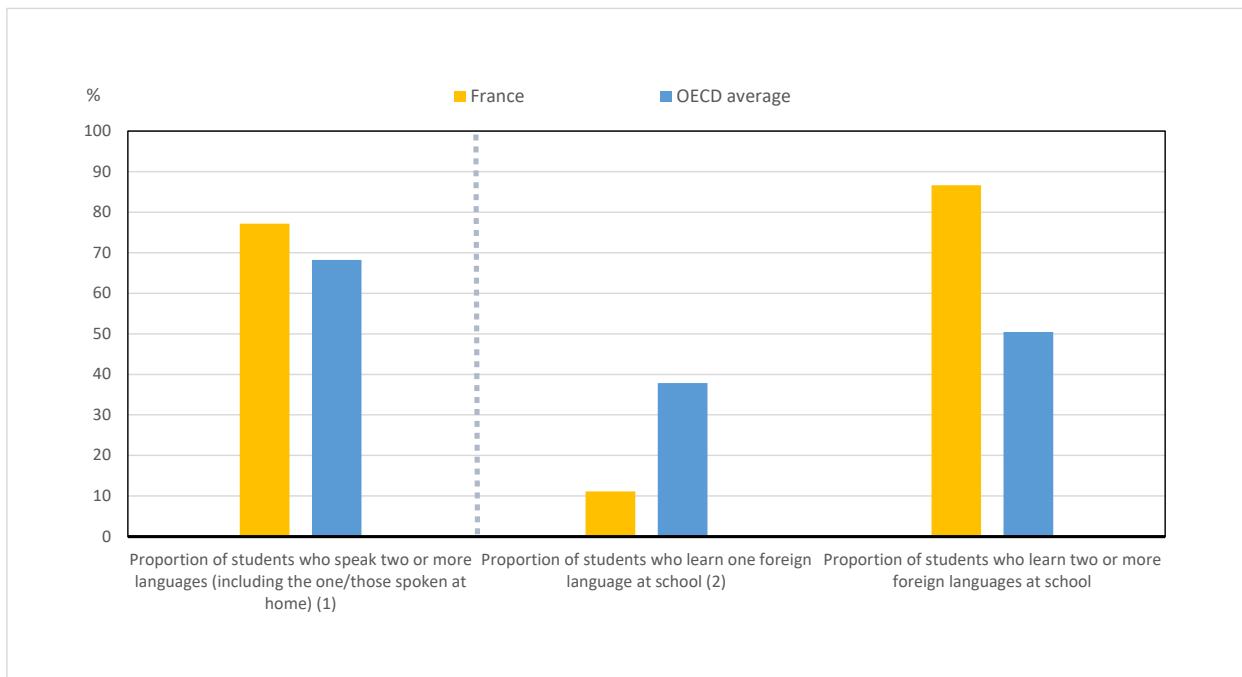
The third dimension of global competence is the ability to engage in effective communication across cultures. Students who are proficient in this aspect of global competence are likely to be aware of the nuances of intercultural communication, to be multilingual and to have contact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

- Students in France reported levels of awareness of intercultural communication that are slightly above the OECD average and similar to levels observed in Canada, Kosovo and Malta. Out of the seven questionnaire items used in constructing this index, a majority of students exceeding 80% agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: "I frequently check that we are understanding each other correctly"; "I listen carefully to what others say"; "I carefully observe their reactions"; "I give concrete examples to explain my ideas"; and "If there is a problem with

communication, I find ways around it". The proportions on these statements varied around 80% across OECD countries.

- A majority of students in France are multilingual with 77% of them reporting that they speak two or more languages (OECD average 68%). About 11% of them reported that they learn one foreign language at school (OECD average 38%) and 87% reported that they learn two or more (OECD average 50%). Only 2% reported that they do not learn any foreign languages at school.
- Speaking and learning multiple languages is positively and sometimes strongly associated with students' global and intercultural attitudes and dispositions, even after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profiles.

**Figure 2. Language speaking and learning**



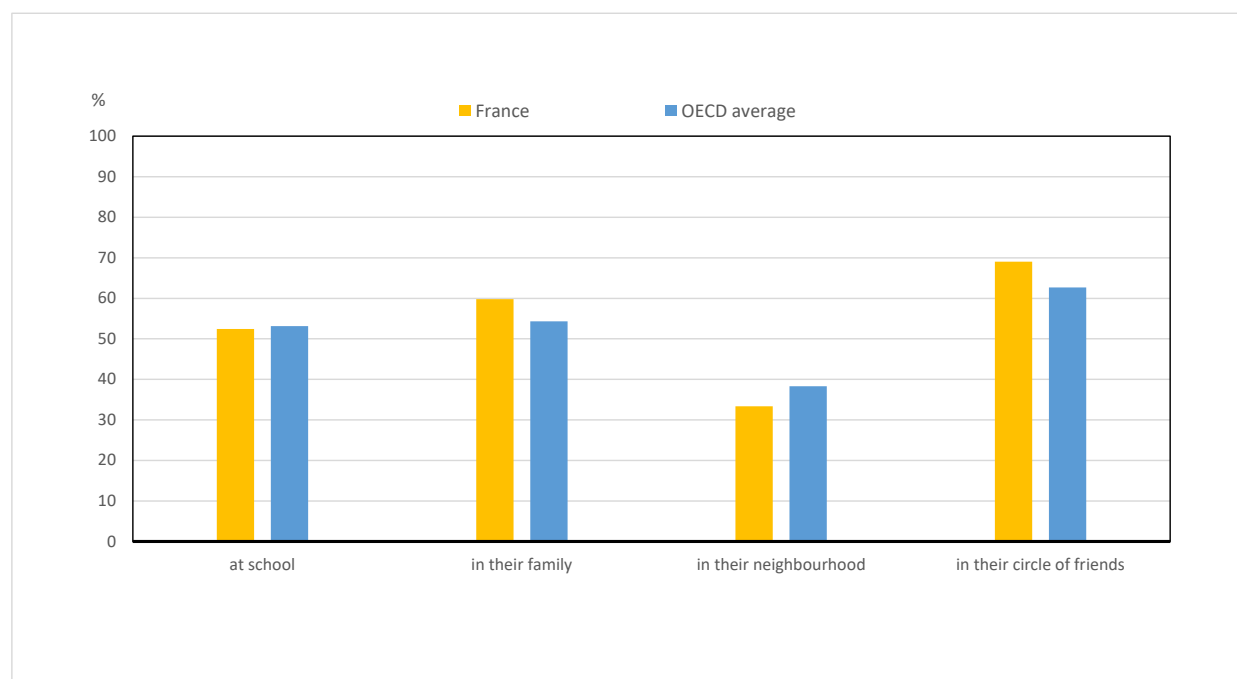
**Notes:** 1. Students were asked the following question: "How many languages, including the language(s) you speak at home, do you and your parents speak well enough to converse with others?"

2. Students reported on the number of foreign languages they learned at their school in the year they sat the PISA test.

**Source:** OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table VI.B1.4.10.

- Students reported that they have contact with people from other countries at school (52%, compared to the OECD average of 53%), in their circle of friends (69%, compared to the OECD average of 63%), in their family (60%, compared to the OECD average of 54%) and in their neighbourhood (33%, compared to OECD average of 38%).
- In France, having contact with people from other countries at school is positively correlated with students' global and intercultural attitudes and dispositions even after accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profiles.

**Figure 3. Contact with people from other countries**



Source: OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table VI.B1.4.4.

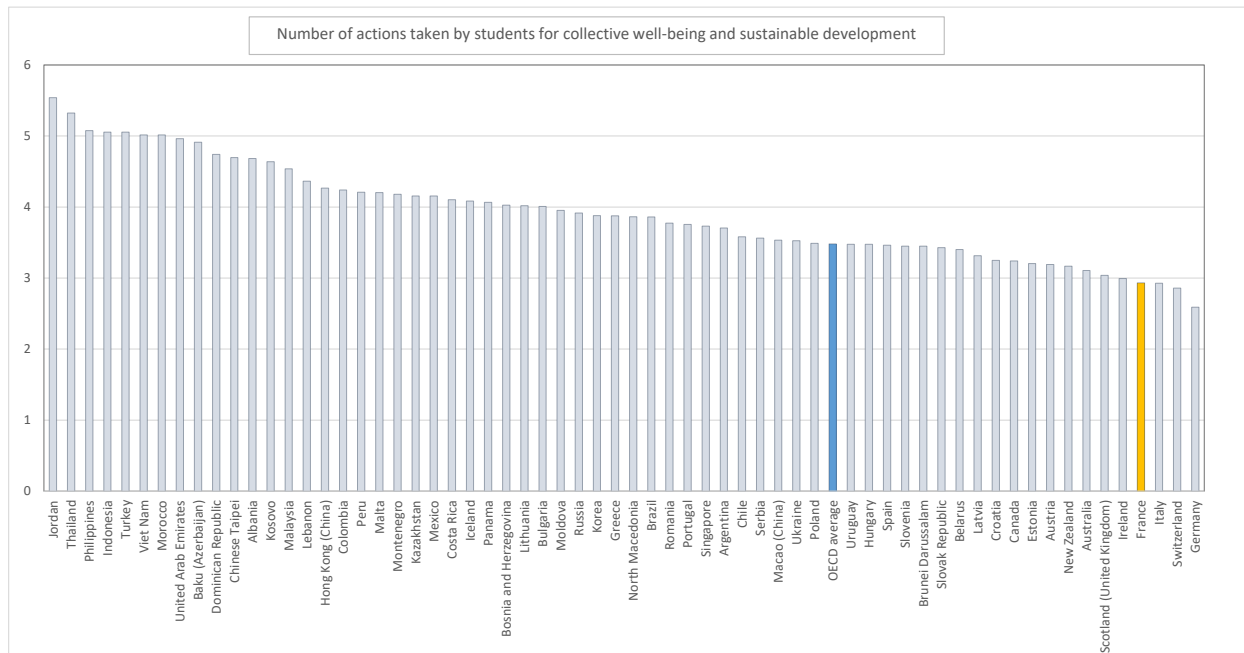
### Take action for collective well-being and sustainable development

The fourth dimension of global competence is about taking action for sustainable development and collective well-being which is the ultimate goal of the three dimensions explored previously.

- On agency regarding global issues, students in France scored slightly lower than the OECD average and similar to students in Argentina, Brazil and Montenegro. More than 60% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements: “Looking after the global environment is important to me”; “It is right to boycott companies that are known to provide poor workplace conditions for their employees”; “When I see the poor conditions that some people in the world live under, I feel a responsibility to do something about it”; and “I think of myself as a citizen of the world”.
- Students were asked eight questions about actions they take for sustainability and collective well-being. In France, students took on average about 3 actions which is similar to the average across all OECD countries (3.5 actions). The actions that were most common in France were: reducing energy use at home with 66% of students reporting that they do so (OECD average 71%); keeping oneself informed about world events using social media (59%, compared to the OECD average of 64%); choosing certain products for ethical and environmental reasons (44%, compared to the OECD average of 45%); and reading websites on international social issues (33%, compared to OECD average of 46%). The least common actions taken by students in France were: boycotting companies for political, ethical or environmental reasons (26%, compared to the OECD average of 27%); participating in activities promoting gender equality (22%, compared to the OECD average of 33%); and signing environmental or social petitions (20%, compared to the OECD average of 25%).

- The number of actions for sustainability and collective well-being was positively associated with students' attitudes and dispositions. This association was not attenuated when students' and schools' socio-economic profiles were accounted for.

**Figure 4. Taking action for sustainability and collective well-being**



**Note:** The global competence sample from Israel does not include students in ultra-Orthodox schools and, thus, is not nationally representative. See PISA 2018 Technical Report (OECD, forthcoming) for details.

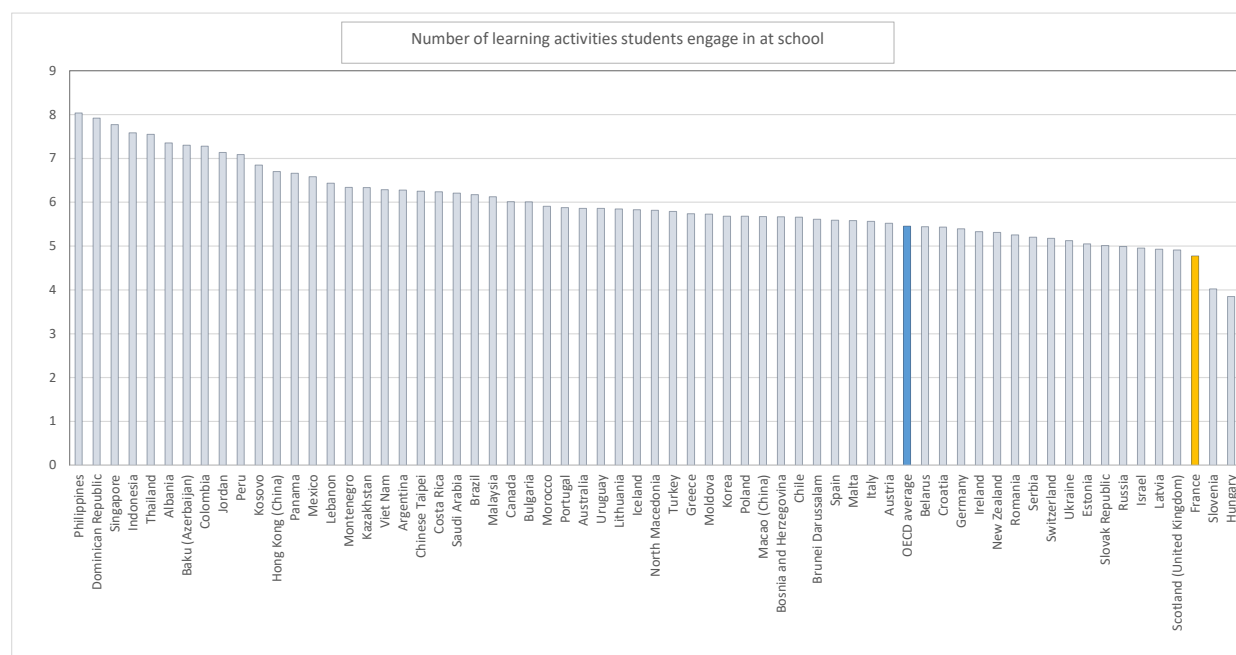
Countries and economies are ranked in descending order of the number of actions taken by students for collective well-being and sustainable development.

**Source:** OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table VI.B1.5.18 and Table VI.B1.5.9.

## Learning for global competence

- Students were asked ten questions about different global and intercultural learning activities they engage in at school. On average across OECD countries, students reported engaging in about 5.5 activities. In France, students engaged in 4.8 activities.
- The most common learning activity students engage in was learning about different cultures with 76% of students reporting that they do so (OECD average 76%). This was followed by participation in classroom discussions about world events as part of regular instruction (58%, compared to the OECD average of 56%); learning how to communicate with people from different backgrounds (56%, compared to the OECD average of 58%), and learning how people from different cultures can have different perspectives on some issues (53%, compared to the OECD average of 62%). The least common activity was participation in events celebrating cultural diversity throughout the school year (26%, compared to the OECD average of 41%).
- In France as in other countries, participating in global and intercultural learning activities is positively associated with all students' attitudes and dispositions.

**Figure 5. Engagement with global and intercultural learning activities**



**Note:** The global competence sample from Israel does not include students in ultra-Orthodox schools and, thus, is not nationally representative. See PISA 2018 Technical Report (OECD, forthcoming) for details.

Countries and economies are listed in descending order of the number of learning activities students engage in at school.

**Source:** OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table VI.B1.7.1.

- About 90% of students in France attended schools where school principals reported that global issues such as climate change, gender equality, causes of poverty, global health, and migration are covered in the curriculum (OECD averages varied around 80%). Topics related to intercultural understanding such as knowledge of different cultures, respect for cultural diversity and critical thinking are also commonly covered in the curriculum.

## Key features of PISA 2018

### The content

- The PISA 2018 survey focused on reading, with mathematics, science and global competence as minor areas of assessment; France implemented the global competence questionnaire only. PISA 2018 also included an assessment of young people's financial literacy, which was optional for countries and economies. Results for reading, mathematics and science are released on 3 December 2019, results for financial literacy on 7 May 2020 and results for global competence on 22 October 2020. France did not implement the financial literacy module.

### The students

- Some 600 000 students completed the assessment in 2018, representing about 32 million 15-year-olds in the schools of the 79 participating countries and economies. In France, 6 308 students, in 252 schools, completed the assessment, representing 756 477 15-year-old students (91% of the total population of 15-year-olds).

### **The assessment**

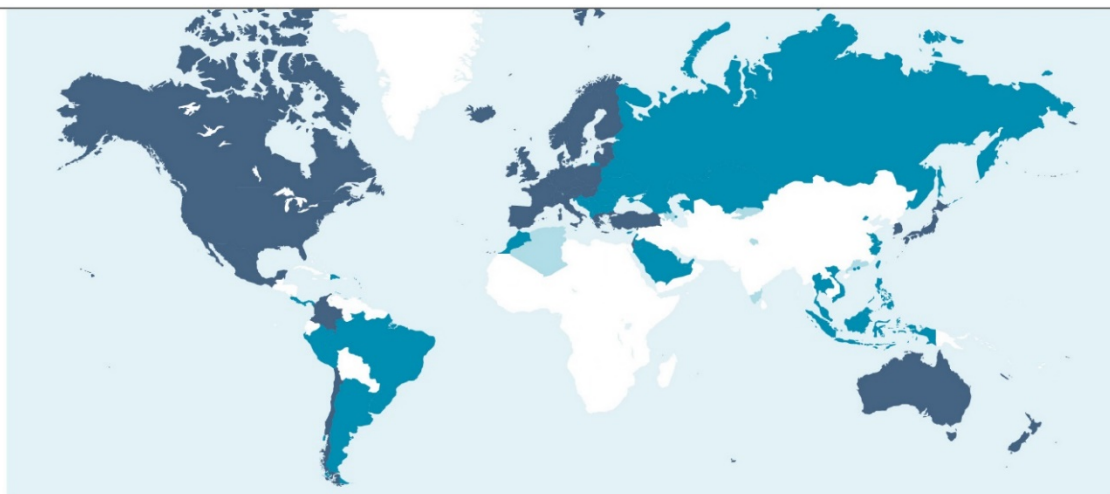
- Computer-based tests were used in most countries, with assessments lasting a total of two hours. In reading, a multi-stage adaptive approach was applied in computer-based tests whereby students were assigned a block of test items based on their performance in preceding blocks.
- Test items were a mixture of multiple-choice questions and questions requiring students to construct their own responses. The items were organised into groups based on a passage of text describing a real-life situation. More than 15 hours of test items for reading, mathematics, science and global competence were covered, with different students taking different combinations of test items.
- Students also answered a background questionnaire, which took about 35 minutes to complete. The questionnaire sought information about the students themselves, their attitudes, dispositions and beliefs, their homes, and their school and learning experiences. School principals completed a questionnaire that covered school management and organisation, and the learning environment.
- Some countries/economies also distributed additional questionnaires to elicit more information. These included: in 19 countries/economies, a questionnaire for teachers asking about themselves and their teaching practices; and in 17 countries/economies, a questionnaire for parents asking them to provide information about their perceptions of and involvement in their child's school and learning. France did not implement the teacher or parent questionnaires.
- Countries/economies could also choose to distribute three other optional questionnaires for students: 52 countries/economies distributed a questionnaire about students' familiarity with computers; 32 countries/economies distributed a questionnaire about students' expectations for further education; and 9 countries/economies distributed a questionnaire, developed for PISA 2018, about students' well-being. France implemented the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) familiarity questionnaire only.

### **References**

OECD (2020), *PISA 2018 Results (Volume VI): Are Students Ready to Thrive in an Interconnected World?*, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d5f68679-en>



## Map of PISA countries and economies



### OECD member countries

Australia  
Austria  
Belgium  
Canada  
Chile  
Colombia  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Japan  
Korea  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Mexico  
Netherlands  
New Zealand  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Slovak Republic  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Turkey  
United Kingdom  
United States\*

### Partner countries and economies in PISA 2018

Albania  
Argentina  
Baku (Azerbaijan)  
Belarus  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Brazil  
Brunei Darussalam  
B-S-J-Z (China)\*\*  
Bulgaria  
Costa Rica  
Croatia  
Cyprus<sup>1</sup>  
Dominican Republic  
Georgia  
Hong Kong (China)  
Indonesia  
Jordan  
Kazakhstan  
Kosovo  
Lebanon  
Macao (China)  
Malaysia  
Malta  
Republic of Moldova  
Montenegro  
Morocco  
Republic of North Macedonia  
Panama  
Peru  
Philippines  
Qatar  
Romania  
Russian Federation  
Saudi Arabia  
Serbia  
Singapore  
Chinese Taipei  
Thailand  
Ukraine  
United Arab Emirates  
Uruguay  
Viet Nam

### Partner countries and economies in previous cycles

Algeria  
Azerbaijan  
Guangdong (China)  
Himachal Pradesh (India)  
Kyrgyzstan  
Liechtenstein  
Mauritius  
Miranda (Venezuela)  
Tamil Nadu (India)  
Trinidad and Tobago  
Tunisia

\* Puerto Rico participated in the PISA 2015 assessment (as an unincorporated territory of the United States).

\*\* B-S-J-Z (China) refers to four PISA 2018 participating Chinese provinces/municipalities: Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang. In PISA 2015, the four PISA participating Chinese provinces/municipalities were: Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Guangdong.


1. **Note by Turkey:** The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

**Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union:** The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

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Data can also be found on line by following the **StatLinks**  under the tables and charts in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using: <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

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