Governing Board

SUMMARY RECORD

27th Meeting of the PISA Governing Board

5-8 April 2009
Bratislava, Slovak Republic
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Introduction

1. The 27th meeting of the PISA Governing Board was held on 5-8 April 2009 in Bratislava, the Slovak Republic. The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- review progress with the development and implementation of PISA;
- assess the outcomes of the call for tender for the PISA 2012 assessment, in particular the technical quality of proposals, the organisational and management capabilities of the bidders, as well as expected innovation and efficiency gains, and to establish guidelines for the contractual arrangements for the implementation of the PISA 2012 assessment;
- exchange views with Education International, the organisation of educational unions, on the impact of PISA on educational policy and practice;
- review plans for the second phase of the OECD Council in-depth evaluation of PISA;
- establish a work programme for the new research and development strand for PISA;
- review progress with the PISA thematic reports and provide directions for their further development; and to
- establish an initial outline for the initial PISA 2009 report;

2. The meeting was attended by all OECD member countries except for Mexico, as well as by the partner countries/economies Chile, Croatia, Estonia, Hong Kong-China, Indonesia, Israel, Lithuania, Macao-China, Qatar, Slovenia and Chinese Taipei. The European Commission was represented by Mr. Deiss. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Watanabe (Japan) and Ms. Wester (Sweden).

3. The meeting was opened by the State Secretary Mrs. Bibiana Obrimakova (Slovak Republic), who welcomed participants and explained the central role that PISA was playing in educational reform in the Slovak Republic.
3. Following the adoption of the agenda by PISA Governing Board [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB/A(2009)1], Mr. Schleicher (OECD) reported on the implementation of the decisions which the PISA Governing Board had made at its last meeting as well as on progress with the development, implementation and dissemination of PISA.

4. The PISA Governing Board:
   - **Welcomed** the progress achieved and the ways in which the decisions which the PISA Governing Board had made at its last meeting had been implemented.
   - **Congratulated** the Secretariat to the successful launch of the first set of PISA 2006 thematic reports and **Asked** the Secretariat to provide final versions of the thematic reports through the secure PISA website 10 days prior to their launch.

**Programme of work for PISA 2012**

5. Mr. Schleicher provided an overview of the process and outcomes from the international call for tender for the PISA 2012 assessment [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)1]. A representative of the bidding consortium presented the proposal, and Mr. Shiel presented the outcomes from the evaluation which the PISA Governing Board’s Technical Review Panel had undertaken of the proposal [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)2].

6. The PISA Governing Board:
   - **Expressed** its disappointment about the outcomes of the PISA 2012 call for tender that had resulted in only one proposal.
   - **Noted** the conclusion of the Technical Review panel that the proposal submitted by the bidder was technically acceptable but not in terms of its costs.
   - **Noted** the view of the Secretariat that the PISA Consortium had shown a slide in value for money as well as in substantive innovation in the core work programme over the last two assessments.
   - **Noted** that countries varied in their views as to whether the Secretariat should enter into contract negotiations with the bidder or re-open the tender.
   - **Noted** that substantive reductions in the scope of work for the core PISA work programme would change the ground rules under which the call for tender had been administered in ways that would call for another opportunity for other organisations to submit proposals, and therefore **asked** the Secretariat to enter into contract negotiations with the bidder only if the bidder was prepared to implement the core work programme under the zero-volume growth budget stipulated in the call for tender, and otherwise to re-open the tendering process.
   - **Underlined** the importance for the PISA 2012 mathematics framework to reflect state-of-the-art thinking in the field, including solid evidence on the external validity of the framework, as requested by the Technical Review Panel, and **asked** the Secretariat to address this in contract negotiations with the bidder, if these go forward, but also to explore the possibility of developing
the framework through an external expert group under the auspices of the Strategic Development Group.

- **ASKED** the Secretariat to ensure that the Technical Review Panel’s advice concerning substantive weaknesses of the bidder’s proposal would be addressed as best as possible and to consult countries in writing on the outcomes of the contract negotiations, if these go forward.

- **DECIDED** to separate the development of the assessment framework and possibly also the tests for PISA 2015 from the remaining parts of the call for tender and to issue this part of the call for tender as early as next year.

- **ASKED** the Strategic Development Group to consider ways to modify the structure of future calls for tender as well as the evaluation criteria with the aim to facilitate the entry of new bidders and, in particular, to reduce the weight that the evaluation criteria had given to prior experience of bidders with large scale surveys and international projects.

- **DECIDED** to modify the evaluation criteria such that, in the future, among proposals that are rated equally in terms of their technical quality and costs the more innovative proposal would be chosen.

7. In a subsequent written consultation, the PGB designated ACER to implement all parts of the PISA 2012 assessment except for the framework and designated the Executive Group to work with the Strategic Development Group to decide on a solution for the framework that combines the elements of the ACER and ACHIEVE proposals in order to achieve a rigorous and transparent validation of the framework and a revision of the framework that reflects development in the mathematical demands of young adulthood in OECD countries, while retaining enough consistency over time to support the maintenance of trends.

**Use and usefulness of PISA**

8. Mr. Catlaks, Ms. Figazzolo and Mr. Bangs (Education International) presented a study on the policy impact of PISA which Education International had undertaken on behalf of educational unions.

9. The PISA Governing Board

- **WELCOMED** the study which Education International had undertaken to assess the policy impact of PISA as a useful complement to the PISA Governing Board’s own efforts to assess the use and usefulness of PISA as well as the opportunity to exchange views with Education International on the longer-term development of PISA.

- **DISCUSSED** the merits of better articulating PISA with national standards and curricula to enhance its value for pedagogical practice, without reducing the focus of PISA on the capacity of students to use what they have learned and to extrapolate from what they know, as opposed to restricting the assessment to the common denominator of what is taught across countries.

- **NOTED** the concerns of Education International about some interpretations of student performance rankings in the media and **AGREED** to hold a subsequent joint session with Education International on how such issues could best be addressed in the context of the initial PISA 2009 report.
• **NOTED** the importance which Education International attaches to incorporating a teacher perspective into PISA, and that Education International considered the OECD Teacher and Learning International Study (TALIS) an appropriate instrument for this if the methodological challenges involved in such linkages can be appropriately addressed.

10. Ms. Zimmer then presented the second and final track for the in-depth evaluation of PISA that would examine the operations and internal efficiency of PISA and be carried out by the OECD Council Secretariat [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)3].

11. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** the proposal to assess the operations and internal efficiency of PISA.

• **NOTED** that the estimated budget for this, 53 000 euro, is to come from the PISA budget.

• **ASKED** the Council Secretariat to work towards a less subjective set of questions for the country survey.

• **UNDERLINED** the importance of addressing questions on the costs-effectiveness of PISA as part of this evaluation, using comparisons over time as well as comparable programmes as possible benchmarks.

**PISA research and development**

12. Ms. Roth (Intel) presented an initiative which Cisco, Intel and Microsoft had launched to underwrite independent research for the computer-based assessment of competencies that are currently beyond the reach of large scale assessments.

13. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** the initiative, **UNDERLINED** the relevance of this work for PISA and **ASKED** the Executive Group to establish options for whether and how collaboration between PISA and the group could be taken forward, both with a view to facilitate the development of the 2012 computer-based assessment of problem-solving skills and to explore the assessment of a wider range of competency areas in the longer term.

14. Ms. Bertrand (United Kingdom) presented the work programme proposed by the Strategic Development Group for the new Research and Development strand of PISA.

15. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** and **ADOPTED** the work programme proposed by the Strategic Development Group to advance the longer-term agenda for PISA but asked the Strategic Development Group to also: explore how the literature review of the comparability of computer-based and paper-based assessments can be complemented with pilot studies on the psychometric equivalence of different modes of delivery in PISA; and carry out a survey among participating countries as to policies and practices for the adaptation of national assessments for students with special needs, as a basis for the development of a policy for PISA in this area.

• **REQUESTED** that the R & D work on electronic assessments is aligned with the work of Core A in the developmental phase of PISA 2012.
PISA analysis, reporting and disseminations plans

16. Mr. Roca Cobo (Spain) presented a report which the Ibero-American countries had prepared on their performance in PISA, Mr. Drazdzewski (Poland) and Mr. Zoido (OECD) reported on progress with the development of the PISA thematic reports and introduced proposals to strengthen international collaboration in the area of analysis, research and dissemination [doc. refs. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)4, EDU/PISA/GB(2009)5 and EDU/PISA/GB(2009)6] and Ms. Cosgrove (Ireland) reported on preparations for the PISA research conference.

17. The PISA Governing Board

- **CONGRATULATED** the group of Ibero-American countries for the successful completion of the comparative analysis of the performance of the Ibero American countries in PISA.
- **NOTED** that the organisers of the PISA research conference asked interested members of the PISA Governing Board to identify and register two delegates from each of their own countries by the end of April.
- **WELCOMED** progress with the analytical work and the thematic reports and **THANKED** the Editorial Group for guiding this work.
- **AGREED** to rename the Editorial Group to the Analysis and Dissemination Group, to assign greater emphasis to strategic goals and policy relevance of the reports and to strengthen the links between the Strategic Development Group and the Analysis and Dissemination group.
- **WELCOMED** the proposal to create a PISA Research Network to collect and share information and ideas, support policy-relevant research on PISA, and to build capacity in analysing PISA.
- **NOTED** further opportunities including a PISA fellows programme, the establishment of an electronic repository for relevant literature along the model of the NBER, the establishment of a research prize for PISA, as well as further research conferences but **UNDERLINED** the need to prioritise the different options, also in light of their resource implications, and to avoid duplication of efforts with a number of ongoing activities and programmes.
- **WELCOMED** the revised draft of the report on student resilience towards social disadvantage; **ASKED** the Secretariat to work with the authors to finalise the report and strengthen its conclusions and implications for policy; and **CONSIDERED** the report merely a first step in the development of future reports on equity and social mobility in education.
- **WELCOMED** the proposed thematic report that will study patterns of private tutoring across countries and **ASKED** the Secretariat to produce an outline of the report and a schedule for discussion within the Analysis and Dissemination Group and the PISA Governing Board.

18. Mr. Schleicher then presented a first outline for the initial report from PISA 2009 that is scheduled to be published on 7 December 2010 [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)7]

19. The PISA Governing Board:

- **WELCOMED** the outline for the PISA 2009 report as an appropriate basis for developing the report, but **ASKED** the Secretariat to explore giving the chapter on trends a more prominent place in the report; extend the estimation of trends to the non-cognitive outcomes measured by
PISA as well as to equity-related aspects (including between-school variation); and explore producing an accompanying CD ROM or website that would illustrate the electronic assessment of reading.

- **ASKED** the Secretariat to share the statistical programming code used for analysing the data for the international reports through the PISA website and to encourage other authors to do the same.

- **CONSIDERED** the regression-based estimation of trends a promising option for measuring improvements in student performance standards but **NOTED** that such methods should complement but not replace reporting on individual data points, given the interest of policy makers in short-term changes in outcomes; **CONSIDERED** that adjustments for social and economic dimensions could be made at the analytical stage but should not replace the reporting of baseline data; **ASKED** the Secretariat to elaborate the methods for this in greater detail in consultation with relevant experts in the field, including the question of whether differential weights should be assigned to the major and minor domains; and to **CLARIFY** whether such estimates could be produced for countries that had not participated in all PISA assessments.

**Progress with PISA 2009**

20. Mr. Turner (ACER), Mr. Noijons (CITO) and Mr. Glas (CITO) reported on progress with the development and validation of the PISA 2009 assessment instruments and questionnaires [doc. refs. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)8 and EDU/PISA/GB(2009)9].

21. The PISA Governing Board

- **WELCOMED** the successful implementation of the assessment of reading electronic texts, despite serious technical difficulties that had been encountered in a number of countries with, in one case, adverse effects on school response rates.

- **EXPRESSED** concerns about the difficulties associated with implementing the electronic assessment of reading in certain languages and underlined the importance of ensuring that PISA instruments are available for all participating countries and languages.

**WELCOMED** the analysis the Consortium had undertaken to validate the cross-cultural equivalence of the PISA questionnaires.

**Financing of PISA**


23. The PISA Governing Board

- **NOTED** the report on expenditure for PISA in 2008.

- **REITERATED** its concerns about the increase in management overheads of the Education Directorate for PISA in 2009, **ASKED** the Secretariat to provide more detailed explanations on this; and **ASKED** the Secretariat to clarify why the benefits and contributions of PISA to other parts of the Education Directorate’s work programme were not accounted for in reverse overheads to the Education Directorate.
Conclusions and other business

24. Mr. Schleicher reported on a meeting that had taken place with the Secretariat of the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme to discuss how IB programmes could be benchmarked against PISA.

25. The PISA Governing Board:

- NOTED the interest of the ‘International Baccalaureate’ (IB) programme to benchmark the performance of its schools and programme against PISA, either through administering PISA in these schools or through a set of common items across both instruments and asked the Executive Group to develop proposals for how co-operation could be taken forward.

26. Mr. Schleicher then presented the conclusions from the meeting, as reported in this document, and Mr. Watanabe adjourned the meeting. The next meeting of the PISA Governing Board will be held on 1-4 November 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey.