Governing Board

SUMMARY RECORD
30th meeting of the PISA Governing Board

1-3 November 2010
Vienna, Austria
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Introduction

The 30th meeting of the PISA Governing Board was held on 1-3 November 2010 in Vienna, hosted by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture. The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- Finalise the arrangements for the public release and dissemination of Volumes 1-5 of the report with initial results from the PISA 2009 assessment and review plans for the preparation of Volume 6 (digital literacy) as well as the PISA 2009 Technical Report.
- Finalise the frameworks for the PISA 2012 assessment and review progress with the development of field trial instruments.
- Provide directions for maintaining the balance between establishing longer-term trends and adapting the PISA assessments to changing needs, as well as the prospective move towards computer-delivered assessments.
- Finalise plans for the international call for tender for the PISA 2015 assessment as well as the terms of reference for the components relating to the assessment and questionnaire framework that will be issued in December 2010.
- Prepare an action plan in response to the recommendations from the external evaluation of PISA carried out by the OECD Council.
- Review progress with the development of the PISA thematic reports as well as the R&D strand.
- Finalise the work programme and budget for 2011-2012.

Assessment of progress with the development and implementation of PISA

Following the opening of the meeting by Heidrun Strohmeyer, Director General of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture, as well as the adoption of the agenda [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB/A(2010)2/REV2] Mr. Schleicher provided members of the PISA Governing Board with an update on progress with the development and implementation of PISA since the 28th meeting of the PISA Governing Board.
4. The PISA Governing Board:

- **WELCOMED** the ways in which the decisions which the PISA Governing Board had made at and since its 28th meeting had been implemented.

- **ASKED** the PISA Consortium to address the imbalance towards North American and European expertise when positions in the groups become vacant.

- **UNDERLINED** that arguments about technical standards should be about the quality of PISA data and that meeting numeric targets would be a means to this but not an end in itself and **ASKED** the PISA Consortium to re-examine the sampling standards for PISA, considering also the approach PIAAC was pursuing to shift emphasis from meeting response rate targets towards minimising non-response bias.

- **UNDERLINED** the relevance of the international reading components option to improve the information value of PISA at the lower end of the performance distribution and to help developing countries benchmark their own assessments against PISA.

- **WELCOMED** progress with the development of the international option for assessing financial literacy as well as the high level of country participation that has been achieved; recalled its decision to retain the services of ACER to carry out the entirety of the PISA 2012 assessment, after a thorough market consultation procedure was undertaken in accordance with the OECD procurement requirements, but that it had not been possible at the time to include the work in the contract with ACER; **AGREED** that ACER should be designated to carry out the necessary additional work concerning the Financial Literacy option because no other supplier could ensure the effective integration of this option without introducing risks to quality and comparability, creating substantially higher costs than the fees requested by ACER; and **ASKED** the OECD Committee on Financial Markets which has found the necessary funding for the Financial Literacy Option to take whatever steps are necessary to amend the contract with ACER to include the assessment of financial literacy on the terms proposed by ACER, in accordance with the OECD procurement requirements.

5. Mr. Schleicher then presented proposed revisions to the Global Relations Strategy of the PISA Governing Board [doc. ref. **EDU/PISA/GB/(2010)32**]. The PISA Governing Board:

- **AGREED** to maintain the two existing forms of co-operation with non-OECD countries, namely survey participation and full participation in the survey and Governing Board.

- **AGREED** to maintain the existing criteria for full participation by non-OECD countries in PISA.

- **AGREED** to the proposed actions to strengthen engagement with OECD’s ‘enhanced engagement countries’ (EE5) and to provide the Secretariat with advice for the implementation of these actions as well as with advice to strengthen collaboration with other non-OECD countries not currently covered by PISA.

- **ADOPTED** the proposed updates of the Global Relations Strategy.
6. Mr. Schleicher then reported on progress with the development of the PISA compatible test [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB/(2010)14]. The PISA Governing Board:

- Mostly WELCOMED the development of an additional pool of PISA assessment material that countries could use as a two-hour test instead of the confidential PISA items for research, development and school-level benchmarking purposes, funded through grants and voluntary contributions.

- CONSIDERED the extent to which the PISA Governing Board should engage in the development and implementation of the test and AGREED to retain oversight over the technical quality of the instrument, as well as the technical standards for its appropriate implementation and the use of results (Option 2); ASKED the Secretariat to clarify to what extent the international contractor charged with the development of this option would support countries with the national implementation and the certification of national contractors, but AGREED to defer decisions on an engagement of the PISA Governing Board in the implementation of this test in participating countries (Option 3) to a future meeting.

- AGREED that ACER should be designated to carry out the necessary additional work concerning the development of this additional test because no other supplier could ensure its development without introducing risks to quality and comparability; and ASKED the OECD Secretariat to include the development of the assessment pool into the existing PISA contract with ACER.

- AGREED that only countries participating in PISA could use the PISA-based international test and that its results should be kept clearly distinct from PISA; and AGREED to consider issues of branding of this international test as well as other PISA derivatives and national options at its next meeting.

Arrangements for the public release of the PISA 2009 initial report

7. Mr. Schleicher provided an overview of key international outputs to support the public release of PISA 2009. He also reported on the plans and progress with the development of Volume VI (digital literacy) [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)15].

8. The PISA Governing Board:

- CONGRATULATED the Secretariat for the timely preparation and finalisation of the draft manuscript and NOTED that materials for the release would include: an international press release; Volumes I-V of the report; executive summaries and a new ‘PISA at a Glance’; the online PISA database with its user interface; PISA videos on selected countries; as well as country notes for countries with OECD events or where otherwise requested and agreed; and a PowerPoint presentation.

- AGREED that all these materials will remain strictly confidential until the end of the embargo on 7 December at 11:00 Paris time and that there would be no embargoed briefings of journalists until 24 hours prior to the end of the embargo; and ASKED that a list of journalists to which the OECD would provide embargoed copies be made available to the PISA Governing Board.

- AGREED that, in the case of an embargo break, countries should inform the Secretariat immediately; the Secretariat would consult with the chair as to whether the break is serious or not
and if so, inform delegates of the PISA Governing Board and afterwards release Volume I with an accompanying international press release.

- **NOTED** that the technical review and validation of the data and results from the digital reading assessment by the OECD will be completed by March 2011 and therefore **AGREED** that: no data from the digital reading assessment would be made public until the technical review and validation is complete (and will therefore not be part of the international database); countries could release their national data after that time (including through multi-lateral arrangements); and that all comparative data as well as the tables and draft manuscript of the international report would remain under embargo until the release of the report in June 2011.

- **NOTED** that OECD’s special study ‘Strong performers and successful reformers’ will be released as soon as possible after 7 December 2010.

- **WELCOMED** the outline and proposal for Volume VI ‘Students On Line: Reading and Using Digital Information’ but **ASKED** the Secretariat to consider taking Chapter 8 further towards comparing population subgroups.

**PISA 2015 – call for tender**

9. Mr. Davidson presented a proposed structure and organisation for the terms of reference for the PISA 2015 call for tender, together with a proposed timeline and arrangements for overseeing the tendering process. He also presented the draft scope of work for the production of the cognitive assessment frameworks, as a separate early call for tender for PISA 2015. [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)16 and 17].

10. The PISA Governing Board:

- **UNDERLINED** the importance of attracting multiple bidders into the competition for PISA 2015 and **AGREED** that, prior to issuing the call for tender, all information about the development, implementation, methods and outcomes of PISA, unless identified as confidential by the Secretariat, be made available to all prospective bidders and that it was legitimate for prospective bidders to seek information and views from PGB members while, after issuing the call for tender, communications would need to be more formalised ensuring, in accordance with OECD regulations, that all bidders receive the same information.

- **WELCOMED** and **ADOPTED** the proposed structure and process for the call for tender.

- **ASKED** the Secretariat to establish a trajectory for moving PISA from a paper-based assessment towards a technology-rich assessment in 2015 as well as from traditional item formats to the kind of innovative assessment formats which computer-delivery would enable; and **ASKED** the Secretariat to establish the decision points at policy and technical levels along the way, together with their resource implications and associated risks.

- **AGREED** that a competitive dialogue with prospective bidders on the development of the electronic delivery platform, to be identified in the first phase of the tendering process, would be the most effective and flexible way to establish a contract for this work.

- **EMPHASISED** the importance of an effective management and oversight role taken by one of the bidders and **ASKED** that the requirements for this are specified clearly in the terms of reference.
• **ASKED** that the evaluation criteria for the different components of the calls for tender are tailored to the specific requirements and emphases of the individual components.

• **SUPPORTED** the launching of the call for tender for the development of the assessment framework and the context questionnaires in December 2010, and **ASKED** for the terms of reference to request bidders to explain the external validation that will be carried out and for the evaluation criteria to seek both technical and operational efficiencies.

• **RECOGNISED** the value in having a sub-group of the PISA Governing Board guide the development of the terms of reference for the PISA 2015 call for tender and **SOUGHT** volunteers for this group.

11. These discussions were followed by an extended session comprising presentations from a number of prospective bidders for the PISA 2015 work. Presentations were made by Mr. Haggie (RM), Mr. Miller, Mr. Twing and Mr. de Jong (Pearson), Mr. Ripley (World Class Arena), Mr. Adams (ACER), Mr. Klieme and Mr. Reef (DIPF).

**PISA 2012 – assessment frameworks**

12. Ms. Forgione (Achieve), Mr. Adams and Ms. Mendelovits presented a report on progress in finalising the 2012 assessment frameworks for mathematics, problem solving and financial literacy. Ms. Forgione also reported on the outcomes of the external consultation on the draft mathematics framework and the proposed changes arising from the consultation. [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)2/REV2, 19, 20, 4/REV1, 21].

13. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** the mathematics framework but **UNDERLINED** the need to establish the field trial item pool such that it would support the new framework and process-based reporting categories as well as for empirical validation of the viability of the new reporting categories.

• **WELCOMED** the external consultation process and supported the proposed other amendments arising from the consultation; but **ASKED** to strengthen the research base underpinning the framework, beyond an increase in the number of citations supporting the existing approach.

• **NOTED** that the primary reporting dimension will be mathematical processes, though reporting by content categories would also be desirable.

• **EMPHASISED** the need for the 2012 mathematics assessment to appropriately reflect the intentions in the new framework and **ASKED** the Consortium to ensure that the 2012 assessment would not show ceiling effects for high performing countries.

• **AGREED** to use the most appropriate and relevant items to illustrate the framework, irrespective of their use in earlier PISA assessments.

• **NOTED** that there was still work required on terminology, including a decision on whether to use the term ‘competency’ or ‘literacy’.

• **SUPPORTED** the development of a set of frequently asked questions for both a technical and a general audience.
• **NOTED** the developments that the problem solving framework had undergone and supported the draft presented.

• **CONGRATULATED** the PISA Consortium for the impressive progress achieved with the development of the PISA assessment of financial literacy in the short time available; **UNDERLINED** the need to avoid that the individual context in which students find themselves interrelates with their performance on specific test items; and **ASKED** the Consortium to clarify how financial literacy would be distinguished from mathematical literacy, both conceptually and in the way both constructs are measured.

**PISA 2012 assessment instruments**

14. Mr. Adams presented progress on the development of field trial instruments for the assessment of reading, mathematics, science, problem solving and financial literacy, taking into account the PISA Governing Board’s and National Project Managers’ reviews and comments and presented proposals for the field trial[doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)22].

15. The PISA Governing Board:

• **AGREED** to extend the time for framework development for future PISA assessments in order to provide more lead time for item development, but **WELCOMED** the confidence of the Consortium that the size of the field trial item pool was sufficient to support the PISA 2012 reporting categories.

• **NOTED** that the proportion of assessment material generated from national submissions was fairly limited and, with a view to future assessments, the PISA Governing Board would need to consider trade-offs between efficiency gains (recognising that a diverse group of professionals would be able to develop the item set more effectively and efficiently) and the benefits of country involvement in the development process for both countries and PISA.

**PISA 2012 context questionnaires**

16. Mr. Klieme and Mr. Kyllonen reported on progress with finalising the analytical and questionnaire framework for PISA 2012 and proposed analytical constructs for the context questionnaires to be retained across successive PISA assessments [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)23, 24 and 25].

17. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** the 2012 framework for the context questionnaires, including the consideration that had been given to maintaining general and subject-related trends on inputs, processes as well as behavioural, affective and motivational outcomes.

• **WELCOMED** the opportunities the field trial provides to evaluate new methods and constructs.

• **UNDERLINED** that decisions on the scope, orientation and prioritisation of the questionnaires should be made by the PISA Governing Board on the basis of policy consideration rather than be driven by research interests and that the timing of discussions on the questionnaires in the PISA Governing Board should be such that the PISA Governing Board can steer the work of National Project Managers, rather than react to their proposals; and **AGREED** to schedule a longer session on key decision-points for the establishment of the main survey questionnaires at its next meeting.
• **AGREED** that the measurement properties of the questionnaire constructs should be subjected to similar standards of technical quality than the cognitive assessments and that, for each construct, careful consideration needs to be given on who the most appropriate respondents are to yield valid and reliable information.

• **SUGGESTED** that there should be better documentation of constructs that have been used in successive cycles and how the constructs may have changed.

**PISA 2012 and beyond: maintaining trends**

18. Mr. Adams presented options for how PISA could maintain trends following the introduction of electronic delivery mechanisms [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)26].

19. The PISA Governing Board:

• **AGREED** that key variables in the context questionnaires should not be considered for change except through decisions by the PISA Governing Board.

• **NOTED** that the outcomes of computer-delivered and a pencil-and-paper delivered assessments were likely not to be directly comparable but **AGREED** that computer-delivery would be imperative to improve the coverage of the constructs that PISA values and **DISCUSSED** different scenarios with which computer-delivery could be introduced, either at once or progressively.

• **SOUGHT** further clarification on how PISA would deal with changes in technology in-between major PISA assessments.

• **AGREED** that a well-structured decision-making process and further expert advice was needed to resolve these issues and asked the Secretariat to prepare the ground for this.

**PISA 2015 – external validation work**

20. Ms. Kaye Forgione and Ms. Christine Tell presented options to validate the PISA 2015 assessment frameworks. These included one strand of which would seek to identify the mathematics skills and knowledge that students need to master at the secondary level to be prepared for the post-secondary education and training that will qualify them for careers in high-demand, high-growth occupations, and a second strand that would comprise an analysis of three additional sets of vocational standards in mathematics to add to the vocational standards of England, Belgium and Singapore that were studied for the PISA 2012 mathematics framework.

21. The PISA Governing Board:

• **WELCOMED** the proposed validation studies but considered that further reflection on the nature and scope of the work was required as well as on whether such studies would be best taken up in the context of PISA or PIAAC; and **DECIDED** to establish the components for the validation activities to be included in the PISA 2011-2012 work programme and their financing through a written consultation.

• **SOUGHT CLARIFICATION** on how in the proposed options job requirements for adults would translate into decisions on an assessment framework for 15-year-olds.
Analysis and publication plans

22. Mr. Zoido reported on progress with the analytic work and thematic reports [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2009)27] and Ms. Cosgrove reported on the outcomes of the meeting of the PISA Analysis and Development Group on 31 October 2010.

23. The PISA Governing Board:

   • **ADOPTED** the recommendations of the Analysis and Development Group relating to analytical work, namely to: proceed with the production of a thematic report on career expectation; limit work on social background to a working paper until the work is further advanced; limit work on private schooling to a working paper until the work is further advanced and focus more on description and trends; proceed with the production of a thematic report on learning gains; proceed with the production of a thematic report on the children of immigrants, but underlined that due account needs to be taken of cohort effects; produce policy notes on the basis of PISA 2009 for review; and to develop a funding strategy for the training fellowship and research grants.

   • **ASKED** the Secretariat to consider the inclusion of sub-national data in the thematic reports.

   • **ENCOURAGED** the Analysis and Development Group to feed any relevant insights for the terms of reference of the PISA 2015 call for tender on questionnaires to the Strategic Development Group.

PISA research and development strand

24. Mr. Bjornsson reported on progress with the work of the PISA Strategic Development Group and in particular the research and development strand.

25. The PISA Governing Board:

   • **WELCOMED** progress with the work of the Strategic Development Group.

   • **NOTED** that accommodations for students with special education needs were currently allowable in order to comply with the maximum exclusion rates in PISA; **AGREED** that it was necessary to define which accommodations were allowable in PISA beyond complying with the maximum exclusion rates; and **AGREED** that further work was needed to establish desirable and acceptable accommodations for children with special education needs.

OECD in-depth evaluation of PISA

26. Mr. Davidson presented a summary of the four recommendations arising from the in depth evaluation of PISA and the proposed action plan to address these recommendations [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)28/REV1].

27. The PISA Governing Board:

   • **THANKED** the chair for the contribution to the in-depth evaluation of PISA

   • **WELCOMED** and **ADOPTED** the proposed action plan but **AGREED** to remove references to specific ‘users’ of PISA data.
Work programme and budget for 2011-2012

28. Mr. Schleicher presented the PISA programme of work and budget for the biennium 2011-2012 [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)29 and 33].

29. The PISA Governing Board

- **APPROVED** the request for the supplementary appropriation and adjustment of the estimated income for PISA in 2010 [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)33] and **REQUESTED** the Secretariat to submit this to the Budget Committee of the OECD.

- **APPROVED** the PISA budget for 2011 and 2012 [doc. ref. EDU/PISA/GB(2010)29] and **REQUESTED** the Secretariat to submit the budget to the Budget Committee of the OECD.

Other business and conclusions

30. The PISA Governing Board:

- **ELECTED** Dan McGrath (United States) as vice chair of the PISA Governing Board.

- **ELECTED** Michal Beller (Israel) and Mojca Straus (Slovenia) as members of the Strategic Development Group.

31. The PISA Governing Board reiterated the policy for publishing sub-national data in PISA reports and asked for it to be included on the PISA website. Namely that:

- Subnational data for OECD countries would not be included in main data tables but published in separate annexes only.

- Subnational data from non-OECD countries with full geographic coverage would not be included in main data tables but published in separate annexes only.

- Subnational data from non-OECD countries with partial geographic coverage (China and India) may not be included in the main tables until full geographic coverage is achieved.

- Aggregated results for regions reported of countries having partial geographic coverage should not be regarded as comparisons of full national effort.

32. In preparation for the renewal of the mandate at the end of 2011, the PISA Governing Board considered its current mandate as adequate and did not request any changes to its content and structure.

33. Mr. Schleicher then presented the conclusions from the meeting, as reported in this document, and Ms. Bertrand adjourned the meeting, thanking the Austrian hosts for the excellent organisation and hospitality. The next meeting of the PISA Governing Board will be held on 11-13 April 2011 in Santiago, Chile.