OECD PISA Survey to Provide Country-by-Country Data on Student Attainment

How well equipped are today’s school-leavers to meet the challenges of the knowledge economy? Can they penetrate complex texts and understand what they are reading? What are the differences in levels of attainment from one country to the next, and what are their causes? Answers to such questions will be provided in the first results of a 32-nation OECD survey out on 4 December 2001.

The OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), launched in 2000, sets out to assess young people’s ability to use their knowledge and skills in order to meet real-life challenges, rather than to see how well they master a specific school curriculum. Approximately 265,000 students in 32 countries took part in the first round of the survey, which will be repeated at three-year intervals.

The first results of this survey are to be published at 11.00 a.m. Paris time (10.00 a.m. GMT) on 4 December 2001. Journalists are invited to an embargoed media briefing at 10.15 a.m. on 3 December 2001 at the Foreign Press Association, 11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1, with the main co-ordinator of the survey, Andreas Schleicher of the OECD’s educational statistics and indicators division.

The survey covers literacy in reading, mathematics and science as well as student attitudes and approaches to learning. It also provides insights into the factors that influence the development of literacy skills at home and at school, and examines how these factors interact and what the implications are for policy development. By providing internationally comparable information on student outcomes, it will provide policy makers with a unique benchmarking tool on which to base future policy choices.

Further information about the PISA project can be found at http://www.pisa.oecd.org/. Journalists wishing to register for the media briefing or to obtain an electronic copy of the report under embargo are invited to contact Nicholas Bray in the OECD’s Media Relations Division (tel. [33] 1 45 24 80 90 or nicholas.bray@oecd.org).