

Table I.4.1 [1/2] **Comparing countries' and economies' performance in reading**

	Statistically significantly <b>above</b> the OECD average
	<b>Not statistically significantly different</b> from the OECD average
	Statistically significantly <b>below</b> the OECD average

Mean score	Comparison country/economy	Countries and economies whose mean score is not statistically significantly different from the comparison country's/economy's score
555	<b>B-S-J-Z (China)</b>	Singapore
549	<b>Singapore</b>	B-S-J-Z (China)
525	<b>Macao (China)</b>	Hong Kong (China), <sup>1</sup> Estonia, Finland
524	<b>Hong Kong (China)<sup>1</sup></b>	Macao (China), Estonia, Canada, Finland, Ireland
523	<b>Estonia</b>	Macao (China), Hong Kong (China), <sup>1</sup> Canada, Finland, Ireland
520	<b>Canada</b>	Hong Kong (China), <sup>1</sup> Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Korea
520	<b>Finland</b>	Macao (China), Hong Kong (China), <sup>1</sup> Estonia, Canada, Ireland, Korea
518	<b>Ireland</b>	Hong Kong (China), <sup>1</sup> Estonia, Canada, Finland, Korea, Poland
514	<b>Korea</b>	Canada, Finland, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, United States <sup>1</sup>
512	<b>Poland</b>	Ireland, Korea, Sweden, New Zealand, United States <sup>1</sup>
506	<b>Sweden</b>	Korea, Poland, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Germany
506	<b>New Zealand</b>	Poland, Sweden, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark
505	<b>United States<sup>1</sup></b>	Korea, Poland, Sweden, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Germany
504	<b>United Kingdom</b>	Sweden, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Germany
504	<b>Japan</b>	Sweden, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Germany
503	<b>Australia</b>	Sweden, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Germany
503	<b>Chinese Taipei</b>	Sweden, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Denmark, Norway, Germany
501	<b>Denmark</b>	Sweden, New Zealand, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Norway, Germany
499	<b>Norway</b>	Sweden, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Germany, Slovenia
498	<b>Germany</b>	Sweden, United States, <sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, Belgium, France, Portugal <sup>1</sup>
495	<b>Slovenia</b>	Norway, Germany, Belgium, France, Portugal, <sup>1</sup> Czech Republic
493	<b>Belgium</b>	Germany, Slovenia, France, Portugal, <sup>1</sup> Czech Republic
493	<b>France</b>	Germany, Slovenia, Belgium, Portugal, <sup>1</sup> Czech Republic
492	<b>Portugal<sup>1</sup></b>	Germany, Slovenia, Belgium, France, Czech Republic, Netherlands <sup>1</sup>
490	<b>Czech Republic</b>	Slovenia, Belgium, France, Portugal, <sup>1</sup> Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Austria, Switzerland
485	<b>Netherlands<sup>1</sup></b>	Portugal, <sup>1</sup> Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Croatia, Latvia, Russia
484	<b>Austria</b>	Czech Republic, Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Switzerland, Croatia, Latvia, Russia
484	<b>Switzerland</b>	Czech Republic, Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Austria, Croatia, Latvia, Russia, Italy
479	<b>Croatia</b>	Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Austria, Switzerland, Latvia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Iceland, Belarus, Israel
479	<b>Latvia</b>	Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Austria, Switzerland, Croatia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Belarus
479	<b>Russia</b>	Netherlands, <sup>1</sup> Austria, Switzerland, Croatia, Latvia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Iceland, Belarus, Israel
476	<b>Italy</b>	Switzerland, Croatia, Latvia, Russia, Hungary, Lithuania, Iceland, Belarus, Israel
476	<b>Hungary</b>	Croatia, Latvia, Russia, Italy, Lithuania, Iceland, Belarus, Israel
476	<b>Lithuania</b>	Croatia, Latvia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Iceland, Belarus, Israel
474	<b>Iceland</b>	Croatia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Belarus, Israel, Luxembourg
474	<b>Belarus</b>	Croatia, Latvia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Iceland, Israel, Luxembourg, Ukraine
470	<b>Israel</b>	Croatia, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Iceland, Belarus, Luxembourg, Ukraine, Turkey
470	<b>Luxembourg</b>	Iceland, Belarus, Israel, Ukraine, Turkey
466	<b>Ukraine</b>	Belarus, Israel, Luxembourg, Turkey, Slovak Republic, Greece
466	<b>Turkey</b>	Israel, Luxembourg, Ukraine, Greece
458	<b>Slovak Republic</b>	Ukraine, Greece, Chile
457	<b>Greece</b>	Ukraine, Turkey, Slovak Republic, Chile
452	<b>Chile</b>	Slovak Republic, Greece, Malta
448	<b>Malta</b>	Chile
439	<b>Serbia</b>	United Arab Emirates, Romania
432	<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	Serbia, Romania, Uruguay, Costa Rica
428	<b>Romania</b>	Serbia, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan
427	<b>Uruguay</b>	United Arab Emirates, Romania, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Mexico, Bulgaria
426	<b>Costa Rica</b>	United Arab Emirates, Romania, Uruguay, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan
424	<b>Cyprus</b>	Romania, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Moldova, Montenegro, Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan
424	<b>Moldova</b>	Romania, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Montenegro, Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan
421	<b>Montenegro</b>	Romania, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan
420	<b>Mexico</b>	Romania, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Jordan, Malaysia, Colombia

1. Data did not meet the PISA technical standards but were accepted as largely comparable (see Annexes A2 and A4).

Source: OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table I.B1.4.

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Table I.4.1 [2/2] **Comparing countries' and economies' performance in reading**

Mean score	Comparison country/economy	Countries and economies whose mean score is not statistically significantly different from the comparison country's/economy's score
420	<b>Bulgaria</b>	Romania, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Mexico, Jordan, Malaysia, Brazil, Colombia
419	<b>Jordan</b>	Romania, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Mexico, Bulgaria, Malaysia, Brazil, Colombia
415	<b>Malaysia</b>	Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan, Brazil, Colombia
413	<b>Brazil</b>	Bulgaria, Jordan, Malaysia, Colombia
412	<b>Colombia</b>	Mexico, Bulgaria, Jordan, Malaysia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Qatar, Albania
408	<b>Brunei Darussalam</b>	Colombia, Qatar, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina
407	<b>Qatar</b>	Colombia, Brunei Darussalam, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Argentina
405	<b>Albania</b>	Colombia, Brunei Darussalam, Qatar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Argentina, Peru, Saudi Arabia
403	<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	Brunei Darussalam, Qatar, Albania, Argentina, Peru, Saudi Arabia
402	<b>Argentina</b>	Qatar, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Peru, Saudi Arabia
401	<b>Peru</b>	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Thailand
399	<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Argentina, Peru, Thailand
393	<b>Thailand</b>	Peru, Saudi Arabia, North Macedonia, Baku (Azerbaijan), Kazakhstan
393	<b>North Macedonia</b>	Thailand, Baku (Azerbaijan)
389	<b>Baku (Azerbaijan)</b>	Thailand, North Macedonia, Kazakhstan
387	<b>Kazakhstan</b>	Thailand, Baku (Azerbaijan)
380	<b>Georgia</b>	Panama
377	<b>Panama</b>	Georgia, Indonesia
371	<b>Indonesia</b>	Panama
359	<b>Morocco</b>	Lebanon, Kosovo
353	<b>Lebanon</b>	Morocco, Kosovo
353	<b>Kosovo</b>	Morocco, Lebanon
342	<b>Dominican Republic</b>	Philippines
340	<b>Philippines</b>	Dominican Republic

  Statistically significantly **above** the OECD average  
  **Not statistically significantly different** from the OECD average  
  Statistically significantly **below** the OECD average

1. Data did not meet the PISA technical standards but were accepted as largely comparable (see Annexes A2 and A4).

Source: OECD, PISA 2018 Database, Table I.B1.4.

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In science, the highest-performing OECD countries were Japan and Estonia. In mathematics, the highest-performing OECD countries were Japan, Korea and Estonia. B-S-J-Z (China), Singapore, Estonia, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Japan and Korea scored above the OECD average in all three subjects, as did Macao (China), Hong Kong (China), Chinese Taipei, Sweden, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, Slovenia, Belgium and France (in descending order of mean performance in reading).

Two countries (the United States and Australia) scored above the OECD average in reading and science, but not in mathematics; in the United States, performance in mathematics was significantly below the OECD average, while the performance of students in Australia was not statistically significantly different from the OECD average. Norway scored above the OECD average in reading and mathematics, but close to the OECD average in science. Three countries (the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Switzerland) scored above the OECD average in mathematics and science, but close to the OECD average in reading. Some countries achieved above-average results in one subject only; this was the case of Austria, Iceland and Latvia in mathematics.

Eight countries whose mean scores lay below the OECD average (Argentina, Jordan, Lebanon, the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Saudi Arabia and Ukraine) conducted the PISA 2018 test using pen-and-paper forms, designed initially for the PISA 2012 or earlier assessments. Their results are reported on the same scale as those of the remaining countries, just as PISA 2018 results for all remaining countries/economies are reported on the same scale as past PISA results.<sup>2</sup>

The gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing OECD countries was 111 score points in reading; it was even larger in mathematics and science.<sup>3</sup> But the difference between the highest-performing and lowest-performing education systems that took part in PISA 2018 was about twice as large (Table I.4.1, Table I.4.2, and Table I.4.3), and the gap in mean performance, across all education systems in the world, is likely to be even larger. Indeed, the developing countries that participated in PISA – either as part of PISA 2018 or, in 2017, as part of the PISA for Development initiative (see Chapter 11 and Ward [2018<sub>[2]</sub>]) – represent only a minority of all developing countries. They often participated with the clear understanding that their students were not learning at adequate levels, even when they were in school. By participating in a global assessment of learning outcomes, these developing countries demonstrated a strong commitment to develop an evidence base for future education reforms and to address the international “learning crisis” (World Bank, 2017<sub>[3]</sub>).