

Improving a Country's Education


Nuno Crato
Editor

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PISA 2018 Results in 10 Countries

 Springer

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Nuno Crato 

Mathematics and Statistics, ISEG

University of Lisbon

Lisbon, Portugal



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Preface

This book is probably one of the first to be published, or even the first, about the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018. It discusses how PISA results in ten different countries have evolved and what makes countries change. Information on each country's educational system contextualizes the discussion about PISA and other Large-Scale International Assessments' results, such as TIMSS, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies.

One reason only made it possible for us to present this work to the reader with such a short delay after PISA results were published in December 2019: we were very fortunate to be able to gather an exceptionally knowledgeable and generous group of international experts.

The ten countries discussed in this volume represent a wide variety of educational systems, from Australia and Taiwan, in the East, to England, Estonia, Finland, Poland, Portugal and Spain, in Europe, and to Chile and the USA, in the Americas. We have high-performing countries, countries that are around the OECD average, and countries that are struggling to attain the OECD average. Each country has its history that reflects efforts to improve educational achievement.

After the introduction, each chapter of this book concentrates on one country. Countries are presented by alphabetic order. Each one is discussed by one of its foremost national experts, some of them with experience in government or in advising governments, many of them with experience in international organizations and quite a few served as national representatives for international assessments. If the reader peruses the biographic notes of each contributor, I'm sure he or she will be as pleased as I was honored when all of them accepted my invitation to contribute.

The idea for this book came about when I had the privilege of convening a roundtable on TIMSS and PISA results at LESE, the Lisbon Economics and Statistics of Education meeting in January 2019. It took place at the Lisbon Economics and Business School of the University of Lisbon, ISEG, where I work. It was the fifth meeting of this biennial conference, and five authors of this book were present. We immediately felt that the diversity of experiences and the independence of spirit of the participants enriched tremendously the analyses presented

for individual countries. We had the idea of preparing a contribution that could help interpret PISA 2018 results and started preparing our work even before the results were released. The outcome is this collective work.

The book is organized as follows. Each chapter is a data-based essay about the evolution of a specific country, discussed and supported by PISA results and other data, and represents the personal stance of the authors. Thus, each author represents his or her own views and not those from his or her institution or government. Each author draws on published data, as well as on a vast set of information and supports his or her view with data and reliable information.

The introductory chapter gathers my reading of the ten chapters. It follows the same principles: I express my views freely, but support them with the best information available. I do not claim to voice the opinion of the authors, and I am the sole responsible for what I wrote.

A final chapter introduced following a Springer referee suggestion provides the necessary background in order to understand what PISA measures and how. It shows examples of PISA and TIMSS questions that convey a better idea on what the results of these surveys mean about students' knowledge and skills.

I am honored to edit this book, and I am sure it will be useful to all those interested in understanding what it takes to improve a country's education system.

Lisbon, Portugal
April 2020

Nuno Crato

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Mónica Vieira, Iniciativa Educação, Lisbon

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Contributors

Arto K. Ahonen Finnish Institute for Educational Research, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

Luisa Araújo Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências, ISEC, Lisbon, Portugal

Patrícia Costa European Commission Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy

Nuno Crato Cemapre/REM, ISEG, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal

Montse Gomendio Spanish Research Council, Madrid, Spain

Eric A. Hanushek Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, USA

Pi-Hsia Hung Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Tainan City, Taiwan

Maciej Jakubowski Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

Emilia Lagos PISA National Coordinator, National Agency for Educational Quality, Santiago, Chile

Su-Wei Lin Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Tainan City, Taiwan

I-Chung Lu Department of Education, National Pingtung University, Pingtung City, Taiwan

João Marôco ISPA—Instituto Universitário, Lisboa, Portugal

Tim Oates Director Assessment, Research and Development, CBE, Cambridge, England

Sue Thomson Australian Council for Educational Research, ACER, Camberwell, VIC, Australia

Gunda Tire Education and Youth Authority, Tallinn, Estonia

Huey-Ing Tzou Department of Education, National University of Tainan, Tainan City, Taiwan

Acronyms

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment, and Reporting Authority
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
BCN	Library of the National Congress of Chile
CIVED	Civic Education Study (Chile)
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
ERCE	Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (Chile)
ESCS	PISA Economic Social and Cultural Status Index
ESSA	Every Child Succeeds Act, the federal program for school accountability from 2015 to present (USA)
EU	European Union
FONIDE	Fund for Research and Development in Education (Chile)
GIS	Geographic Information System
Head Start	Federal program to provide early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-old disadvantaged children (USA)
IALS	International Adult Literacy Survey
ICCS	International Civic and Citizenship Education Study
ICILS	International Computer and Information Literacy Study
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IELS	International Early Learning and Child Well-being Study
ILSA	International Large-scale Students Assessment
INEE	Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa (Spain)
IRT	Item Response Theory
LESE	Lisbon Economics and Statistics of Education conferences
LGE	General Education Law (Chile)
LOGSE	Ley Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo (Spain)
LOMCE	Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa (Spain)
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (Australia)

NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress, a regular set of tests for representative samples of U.S. students conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (USA)
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
NCLB	No Child Left Behind, the federal program for school accountability from 2002 to 2015 (USA)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QAS	Quality Assurance System (Chile)
SES	Socioeconomic background
SIMCE	National Learning Outcomes Evaluation System (Chile)
SRS	Schooling Resource Standard
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
Title 1	Federal program to find extra funding for disadvantaged students (USA)
UEG	Gender Unit of Ministry of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization