



Working with the International Contractors

May 2026

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Key Stakeholders in PISA	3
2.1 The OECD and PISA Governing Board.....	3
2.2 The PISA 2029 International Contractors	5
2.3 Expert Groups	5
2.4 PISA Participants.....	5
3. PISA 2029 International Contractors – Key Personnel	7
4. Communication and Collaboration in PISA 2029.....	8
4.1 Communication and resources in PISA 2029.....	8
4.2 International meetings and training.....	9

1. Introduction

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an initiative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA 2029 is the tenth cycle of PISA and will be implemented through close collaboration between participating countries and economies and a consortium of International Contractors, under the guidance of the OECD Secretariat.

The International Contractors are responsible for the design, delivery, coordination, and quality assurance of key components of PISA 2029, while National Centres (NCs) are responsible for implementing the assessment at the national level in accordance with agreed standards and procedures.

This document:

- describes the role of the PISA 2029 International Contractors, outlining who they are, and their key areas of responsibility
- explains how National Project Managers and National Centres will work and collaborate with the International Contractors throughout the PISA cycle.

2. Key Stakeholders in PISA

PISA involves many stakeholders, each of whom play a crucial key role in implementing the programme. Many of these are referred to by acronyms. For participating systems (countries or economies), there are several key terms. These are defined here, with acronyms given as required.

2.1 The OECD and PISA Governing Board

The OECD oversees the project under the governance of the PISA Governing Board (PGB) and administers the project through a Secretariat based in Paris, France. For each survey administration period, the OECD appoints external contractors to implement the project following an open and competitive tendering process. Figure 1 shows the various organisations involved in the international implementation of PISA 2029.

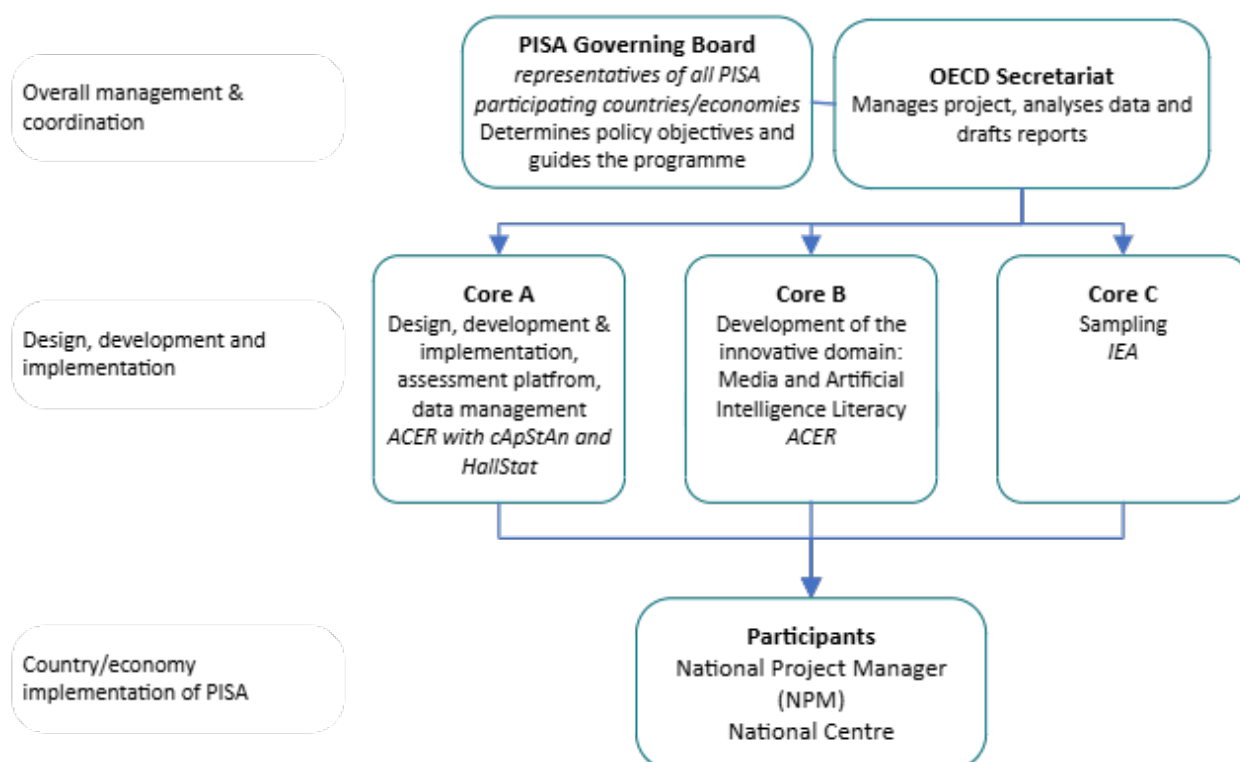


Figure 1: International Coordination of PISA 2029

The **PISA Governing Board** (PGB):

1. determines PISA's policy objectives, its governance and funding, establishes priorities for indicators, analysis, and data-collection instrument development.
2. guides the preparation, review, and completion of all programme-related reports, and ensures compliance with the policy objectives and design parameters at milestones during PISA's implementation.
3. includes a representative from all participating countries and economies.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the PGB representative (that is, the person who represents a country/economy on the PGB) to nominate the National Project Manager (NPM) for PISA. This nomination is made to the OECD Secretariat. Any change in NPM must be made by the PGB representative to the OECD Secretariat, who will then notify the International Contractors.

The **OECD Secretariat**

- is responsible for PISA's overall management, serves as the secretariat of the PGB and as the interface between the PGB and the International Contractors during all stages of PISA 2029.
- monitors the project's implementation and builds consensus at the policy level among Participants through the PGB.
- produces indicators and analyses and prepares the international PISA reports in collaboration with the participating countries/economies.
- for PISA 2029, the OECD Secretariat is also responsible for the frameworks for Reading, the Background Questionnaires, the Innovative Domain (Media and Artificial Intelligence Literacy), and the Financial Literacy Assessment optional domain.

2.2 The PISA 2029 International Contractors

A group of **International Contractors** is leading all aspects of PISA 2029 implementation, under the close guidance of the OECD Secretariat.

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) is the lead contractor for PISA 2029. ACER is a not-for-profit, independent, international educational research organisation that has been active for more than 95 years creating and promoting research-based knowledge, products and services to improve learning.

ACER is responsible for the management and coordination, survey design, all test and questionnaire development, survey operations, quality control, liaison with National Centres, development and maintenance of the communication portal (PISA Connect), development and maintenance of the PISA 2029 assessment platform, and data handling, analysis, and scaling.

ACER will deliver PISA 2029 alongside the following organisations:

- **cApStAn** is responsible for linguistic quality assurance and linguistic quality control in PISA. cApStAn operates as an independent linguistic quality assurance and quality control agency, specialising in advanced translation, adaptation, and verification methods for data collection instruments in large-scale multilingual and multicultural surveys.
- **HallStat** performs the role of Translation Referee, carrying out a range of translation-related activities, including adjudicating verifiers' interventions, reviewing Participants' adaptations, and addressing Participants' requests or concerns regarding translation and adaptation. HallStat specialises in translation equivalence in international educational studies.
- **IEA** - The Sampling Team at IEA is responsible for managing all aspects related to school and student sampling, as well as the creation of sampling weights and non-response adjustments. The Team has extensive experience of all sampling and weighting activities within the context of large-scale educational assessments.

2.3 Expert Groups

Various expert groups have been established to provide substantive and technical advice on specific aspects of PISA:

- The **Technical Advisory Group** (TAG) provides advice on the technical aspects of the assessment, such as scaling and sampling methodologies, and plays a role in ensuring the technical quality of the data.
- The **Subject Matter Expert Groups** (SMEG) and **Questionnaire Expert Group** (QEG) provide overall direction, oversee the development of the assessment frameworks, and review all assessment instruments for their respective assessments.

2.4 PISA Participants

Participants are the countries or economies participating in PISA.

Participants establish a **National Centre** (NC) and nominate a **National Project Manager**. The National Project Manager (NPM) is responsible for implementing PISA in the national context of the participating country/economy. The NPM works closely with the country's/economy's PGB representative to establish

a national perspective on policy matters, project implementation matters, and the analysis and reporting of outcomes that may be of relevance to the country/economy.

The NPM, under the direction of the International Contractors, plans, coordinates and carries out all tasks in strict adherence to the *PISA 2029 Technical Standards* to ensure that the implementation is of high quality and the results can be verified and evaluated at all stages of the survey.

The NPM works with a National Team at the National Centre on activities such as project development, implementation and reporting at the national level. More details about the roles and responsibilities in PISA can be found in the *PISA 2029 NPM and NC Roles and Responsibilities* document.

3. PISA 2029 International Contractors – Key Personnel

PISA 2029 is supported by a large, multidisciplinary team within the International Contractors, bringing a wealth of experience and expertise across international assessment design, implementation, analysis, and quality assurance. Figure 2 shows the key personnel managing the key activities within PISA 2029. These are the experts that Participants will have contact with over the PISA 2029 cycle.

PISA 2029 Executive Programme Management Team Goran Lazendic (International Survey Director) Eveline Gebhardt (International Survey Deputy Director: At-large) Anna Bennett (International Survey Deputy Director: Programme management) Stephen Birchall (International Survey Deputy Director: Technology)	
Instruments <i>Cognitive</i> Dara Ramalingam (<i>Core</i>) Judy Nixon (<i>MAIL</i>) Mark Butler (<i>Financial Literacy</i>) <i>Questionnaires</i> Jonas Bertling Laila Helou <i>Accessibility</i> Sladana Krstic Karin Halpin <i>Linguistic quality assurance and translation verification</i> Elica Kracjeva Stefanos Markianos Wright <i>Translation referee</i> Beatrice Halleux	Sampling Diego Cortes Sabine Meinck Karsten Penon Sabine Tieck Rodrigo Leyton Sabrina Wagner Umut Atasever
Assessment Delivery Felisia Dewi	Survey Operations (Field Operations & Quality Monitoring) and CBIS Lisa De Bortoli Nicole Wernert Naoko Tabata
	Data Management and Analysis <i>Data management and cognitive analyses</i> Han Hui Por Alla Berezner <i>Questionnaire analyses</i> Jonas Bertling

Figure 2: Key International Contractors personnel for PISA 2029

4. Communication and Collaboration in PISA 2029

Successful implementation of PISA depends on the effective communication and collaboration of the PISA Contractors and National Centres.

1. National Centres will provide International Contractors with:
 - a. information about conditions and constraints operating in their countries/economies
 - b. feedback regarding instruments and procedures being developed
 - c. important advice on how the project can best be implemented nationally.
2. International Contractors will provide National Centres with:
 - a. information about project requirements
 - b. draft materials for national consideration and feedback
 - c. training on matters such as within-school sampling, item coding and data processing
 - d. materials to facilitate project implementation.

4.1 Communication and resources in PISA 2029

Successful implementation of PISA requires clear and transparent communication between all of the key stakeholders: the OECD Secretariat, the PGB, NPMs and the International Contractors. Good communication facilitates collaboration, the exchange of knowledge and ideas, and the enhancement of processes and efficiencies.

As all communications will take place in English, NPMs and key National Centre staff are expected to have a high level of proficiency in English.

In PISA 2029, all communications and information exchange between the International Contractors and NPMs and their National Centre will take place in English via **PISA Connect**. It is a secure, online communications portal that supports collaboration and implementation across participating countries/economies that will require single sign-on access to access a range of communication tools and resources.

PISA Connect provides authorised National Centre staff with secure, single sign-on access to key resources and tools required throughout the PISA cycle, including:

- news and announcements
- tools to implement PISA
- file sharing
- all PISA 2029 manuals and key documents
- the **PISA 2029 Help desk**
- resources - manuals, training materials and webinar recordings.

PISA 2029 Helpdesk

Individual communication between National Centre staff and the International Contractors will be managed through the PISA 2029 Helpdesk, a ticket-based system, which will be accessed via PISA Connect.

National Centre staff can expect to:

- direct their ticket to a particular team, as well as identify the topic/category and priority level of the query
- receive acknowledgement of their ticket within one working day (85% of tickets assigned as high priority will be responded to within 1 hour; 2 hours for medium priority tickets; and 4 hours for tickets assigned as low priority)
- receive a response to the query within 3 working days (tickets assigned as high priority will be responded to within 1 working day; 2 working days for medium priority tickets; and 3 working days for tickets assigned as low priority), or, where a response cannot be provided within this timeframe, be provided an estimated timeframe for resolution.

National Centres are expected to:

- have suitably qualified staff that are available to respond to requests from the international contractors during all stages of the project (please see the [PISA 2029 NPM and NC Roles and Responsibilities](#) document for more information about the staff roles that are expected within a National Centre)
- acknowledge receipt of tickets from an International Contractor within one working day
- respond to queries from the International Contractors within the requested timeframe (if not stated, within 3 working days), or, where a response cannot be provided within this timeframe, provide an estimated timeframe for response.

4.2 International meetings and training

Meetings and training sessions, which are delivered in-person or online, provide opportunities for PISA 2029 Participants to meet and interact with the International Contractors and with other Participants.

Representatives of National Centres attending international meetings or trainings must be able to communicate in English.

Attendance at meetings is mandatory, and National Centres are expected to review materials in advance and complete any follow-up actions arising from these meetings. *NPMs are encouraged to attend all meetings and trainings, even if not explicitly stated, along with relevant NC team members.*

All costs associated with attendance, including travel and accommodation, are the responsibility of the National Centre.

Online meetings and trainings will be held at least twice to accommodate different time zones. All online sessions will be recorded and made available on PISA Connect for future reference.

Key meetings/trainings in PISA 2029:

Meeting Type	Expected timing	Modality	Who should attend
NPM Meetings	NPM Meeting 1: March 2027 (Vietnam) NPM Meeting 2: September 2027 NPM Meeting 3: September 2028	In-person (locations to be announced 1 year before)	NPM, other National Centre staff, depending on the topics being covered (the agenda will be provided 6 months before, when registrations for the meeting open).
School Sampling Webinar	February 2027	Online	National Sampling Manager

Field Trial (FT) Within-school Sampling Webinar	November 2027	Online	National Sampling Manager
Main Study (MS) Within-school Sampling Webinar	November 2028	Online	National Sampling Manager
FT Coder Training for Reading	January 2028	In-person (location to be announced 1 year before)	Lead coders for this domain
FT Coder Training for science, mathematics and the innovative domain (MAIL) (and Financial Literacy, if participating in this international option)	January 2028	Online	Lead coders for each domain
MS Coder Training for ALL domains	January 2029	Online	Lead coders for each domain
FT Occupation Coder Training	January 2028	Online	Occupation Coders
MS Occupation Coder Training	January 2029	Online	Occupation Coders
FT Data Management Training	January 2028	Online	National Data Manager
MS Data Management Training	January 2029	Online	National Data Manager

In addition to the NPM meetings and international training meetings, pre-recorded presentations/instructional videos, live presentations and Q & A sessions will also be offered to provide additional support to NPMs and their National Centre. These will cover topics such as:

- cognitive instrument translation, adaptation and verification review procedures
- questionnaire instrument translation, adaptation and verification review procedures
- school-level material adaptation procedures
- Test Administrator training.

New to PISA 2029 are the **Thematic Meetings**, which will give Participants the opportunity to consult experts on specific topics relevant to the particular phase of the PISA cycle. The Thematic Meetings will be held online, in webinar format. The aim of the Thematic Meetings is to:

- provide a platform for direct communication with experts
- provide topic target support to Participants
- foster open dialogue and promote mutual understanding
- share knowledge and understanding between Participants.

Some planned topics for the Thematic Meetings are:

- PISA Connect
- Meet the International Contractors.