

# Sobral (Brazil)

This site note provides an overview of how social and emotional skills are distributed among different student groups and how they relate to students' health, well-being, educational outcomes, and future aspirations in Sobral. It draws on data from the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) 2023.

Sobral is a municipality in the state of Ceará in the northeast region of Brazil.

SSES 2023 measured the following skills among 10- and 15-year-old students in Sobral:

- Task performance skills (persistence, responsibility, self-control and achievement motivation)
- Emotional regulation skills (stress-resistance, emotional control and optimism)
- Engaging with others skills (assertiveness, sociability and energy)
- Open-mindedness skills (curiosity, creativity and tolerance)
- Collaboration skills (empathy and trust)

Results for Sobral (Brazil) in this note are compared to the average across participating sites. This average includes:

- Sites that participated in SSES 2023 in all analyses: Bulgaria, Bogotá (Colombia), Chile, Delhi (India), Dubai (United Arab Emirates), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Gunma (Japan), Helsinki (Finland), Jinan (China), Kudus (Indonesia), Mexico, Peru, Sobral (Brazil), Spain, Turin (Italy) and Ukraine
- The following cities that participated in SSES 2019, where possible: Daegu (Korea), Houston (United States), Istanbul (Türkiye), Manizales (Colombia), Ottawa (Canada), Sintra (Portugal) and Suzhou (China)

Data for achievement motivation between 2019 and 2023 are not comparable, therefore analyses for this skill only include SSES 2023 sites.

All SSES 2019 sites surveyed both 10- and 15-year-olds, whereas surveying 10-year-olds became optional in SSES 2023. The average across sites for 10-year-olds therefore includes data from all SSES 2019 sites who did not participate in 2023 and the following SSES 2023 sites: Bogotá (Colombia), Helsinki (Finland), Jinan (China), Kudus (Indonesia), Sobral (Brazil) and Ukraine.

The target population in Sobral includes 10-year-old and 15-year-old students in public schools only. In most sites, the target population includes both public and private schools. Differences by socio-economic background in Sobral should therefore be interpreted with caution, including comparisons to other sites and the average across sites, as the full range of student backgrounds in the site is unlikely to be represented.

The OECD collaborated with the Ayrton Senna Institute as the national project partner to implement the SSES in Sobral.



For further analysis and information, refer to 'Social and emotional skills for better lives: Findings from the OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023' and the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023 Technical Report (forthcoming).

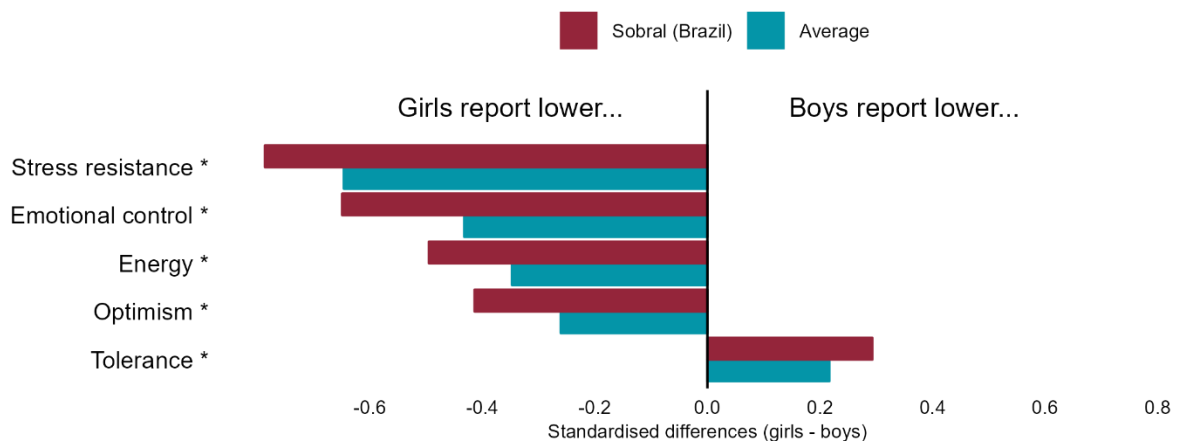
## How are students' social and emotional skills distributed across socio-demographic groups in Sobral?

### Differences in skills between boys and girls

- 15-year-old girls in Sobral reported lower levels of stress resistance, emotional control, energy, optimism, self-control, trust, sociability, and creativity than 15-year-old boys, on average. Gender differences at age 15 in all these skills except trust were larger in Sobral than on average across sites.
- Gender differences in some of these skills emerge earlier in Sobral compared to other sites. In most sites, there were no gender differences at age 10 in optimism, emotional control, trust, or sociability, with these differences not emerging until age 15. However, 10-year-old girls in Sobral reported lower levels of these skills, as well as stress-resistance and energy, than 10-year-old boys, on average.
- 15-year-old boys in Sobral reported lower levels of tolerance, empathy, and achievement motivation than 15-year-old girls, on average. Gender differences in tolerance at age 15 in Sobral were larger than the average across sites.
- On average, 10-year-old boys did not report lower levels of any skills compared to 10-year-old girls in Sobral. In most other sites, however, boys reported lower levels of empathy, responsibility, tolerance, self-control, and creativity than girls at age 10.

### Figure 1. Largest gender differences in skills in Sobral at age 15

Standardised differences between the scores of 15-year-old girls and boys in Sobral compared to the average across sites



Note: The five skills with the largest gender differences in Sobral are included, ordered from the largest to smallest difference. All standardised differences between boys and girls are statistically significant with a threshold  $p < 0.05$ . Differences in Sobral that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

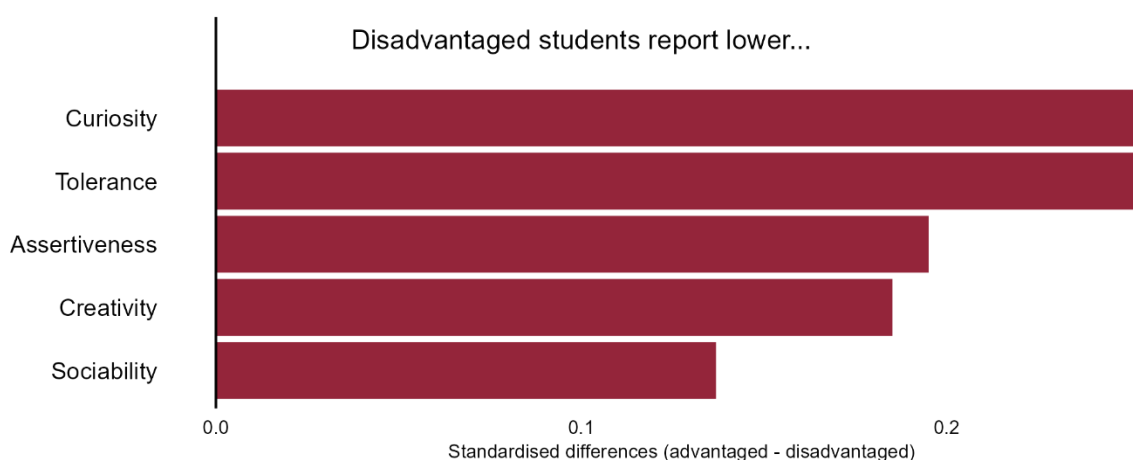
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B2.4

### **Differences in skills between advantaged and disadvantaged students**

- On average, disadvantaged 15-year-old students in Sobral reported lower levels of open-mindedness skills (curiosity, tolerance and creativity) and most engaging with others skills (assertiveness and sociability) than advantaged students.
- Disadvantaged 10-year-olds reported lower levels of most skills than advantaged students, on average: most task performance skills (persistence, responsibility, self-control), open-mindedness skills (tolerance, creativity and curiosity), emotional regulation skills (stress resistance, emotional control and optimism) and most engaging with others skills (energy and sociability).
- Unlike most sites, the target population in Sobral did not include private schools. Therefore, differences in socio-economic background may be smaller or not found in Sobral compared to the average across sites because the full range of student backgrounds in the geography is not represented.

**Figure 2. Largest differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students in skills in Sobral at age 15**

Standardised differences between the scores of 15-year-old advantaged and disadvantaged students in Sobral



Note: The five skills with the largest socio-economic differences in Sobral are included, ordered from the largest to smallest difference. All standardised differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students are statistically significant with a threshold  $p < 0.05$ .

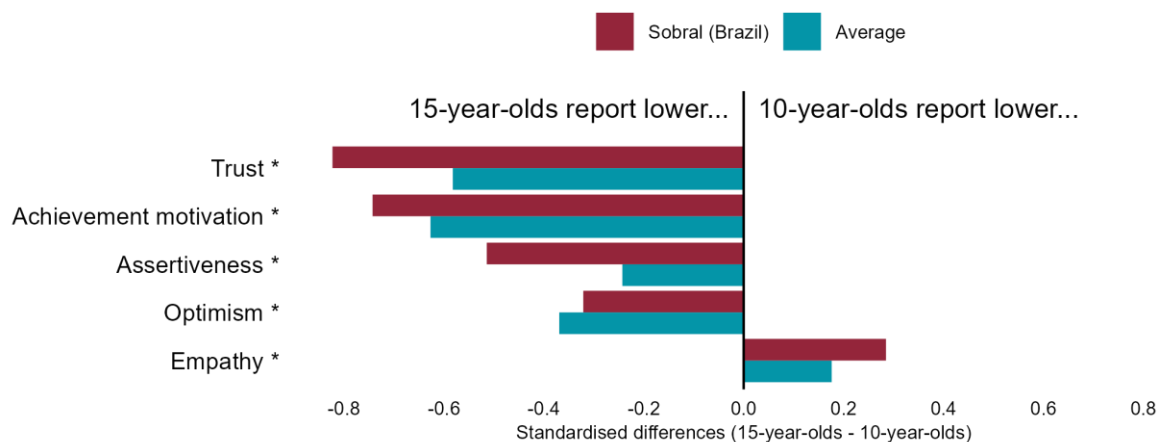
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B2.5

### **Differences in skills between 10- and 15-year-olds**

- 10-year-old students in Sobral reported lower levels of empathy and tolerance than 15-year-olds, on average. Age differences in empathy in Sobral were larger than the average across sites.
- 15-year-old students reported lower levels of most skills than 10-year-olds, on average: trust, engaging with others skills (assertiveness, sociability and energy), most task performance skills (achievement motivation, persistence and responsibility), most open-mindedness skills (curiosity and creativity) and optimism. Age differences in assertiveness and trust in Sobral were larger than the average across sites, while differences in optimism, energy, responsibility, and creativity were smaller than average.
- While age differences in achievement motivation in Sobral were also larger than average across sites, this average only includes a small number of eligible sites (six who surveyed 10-year-olds in 2023).

### Figure 3. Largest age differences in skills in Sobral

Standardised differences between the scores of 10 and 15-year-old students in Sobral compared to the average across sites



Note: The five skills with the largest age differences in Sobral are included, ordered from the largest to smallest difference. All standardised differences between 10- and 15-year-olds are statistically significant with a threshold  $p < 0.05$ . Differences in Sobral that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B2.3

## How are students' social and emotional skills linked to their educational outcomes and career prospects in Sobral?

### **Levels of absence and tardiness and students' ambitions for the future**

- In Sobral, 54% of 15-year-olds had arrived late for school at least once in the two weeks prior to the SSES assessment, above the average across sites (48%). However, levels of skipping classes or a whole day of school were similar or below the average across sites. In Sobral, 18% of students had skipped at least one day of school and 28% had skipped some classes in the prior two weeks, compared to 31% and 29% on average across sites respectively.
- In Sobral, 97% of 15-year-olds expect to complete tertiary education and 60% expect to have a managerial or professional job when they are 30, both above the average across sites (84% and 57% respectively).

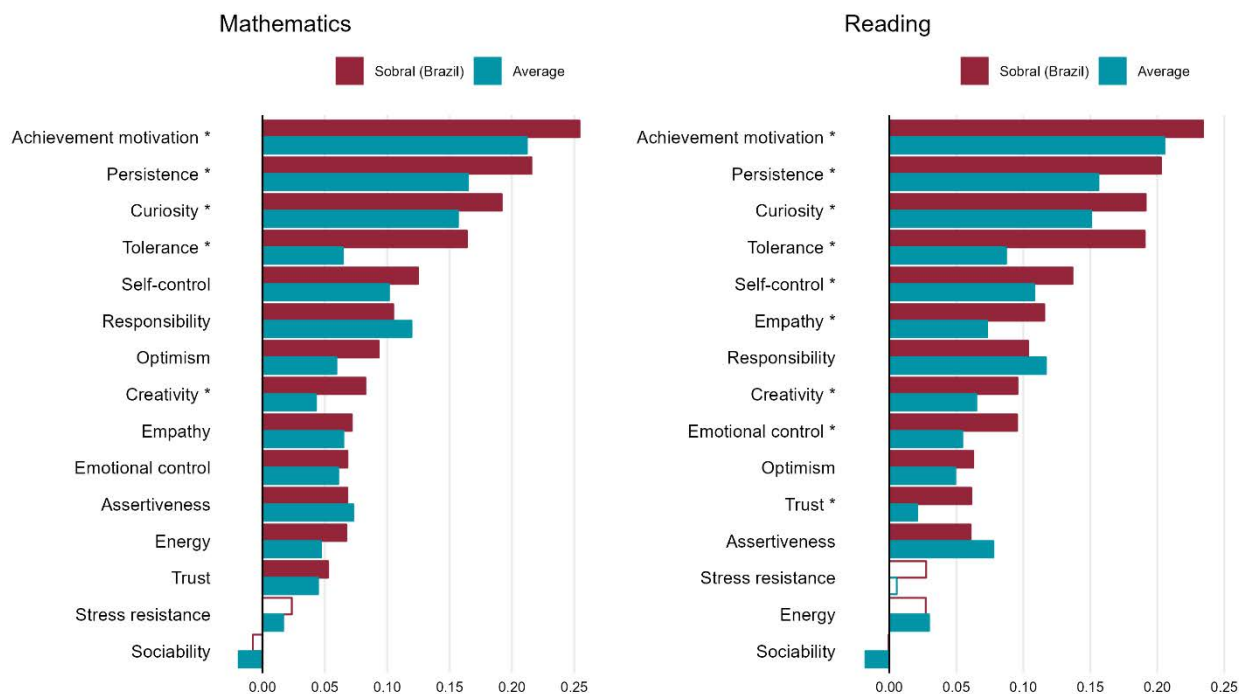
### **Relationships between social and emotional skills and academic outcomes**

- In Sobral, higher levels of most skills were associated with better grades in maths, reading and arts among 15-year-old students: task performance skills (achievement motivation, persistence, self-control, and responsibility), open-mindedness skills (curiosity, tolerance, and creativity), collaboration skills (empathy and trust) and optimism. Students who reported higher levels of energy also tended to achieve better grades in maths and in arts, while students with higher levels of assertiveness tended to achieve better grades in maths and reading.
- Higher levels of all skills except creativity, assertiveness, and sociability – where there was no relationship - were also associated with lower levels of being late and skipping school in Sobral.
- In Sobral, the relationship between the skills of achievement motivation, persistence, curiosity, tolerance and creativity and grades in both mathematics and reading were stronger than the

average across sites while the relationship between tolerance and lower tardiness and absence in Sobral was also stronger than average.

**Figure 4. Relationships between students' social and emotional skills and grades in Sobral compared to the average across sites**

Standardised regression coefficients of individual skills on maths and reading grades among 15-year-olds in Sobral compared to the average across sites



Note: Significant coefficients at a threshold of  $p < 0.05$  are coloured, non-significant coefficients are outlined. Coefficients in Sobral that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

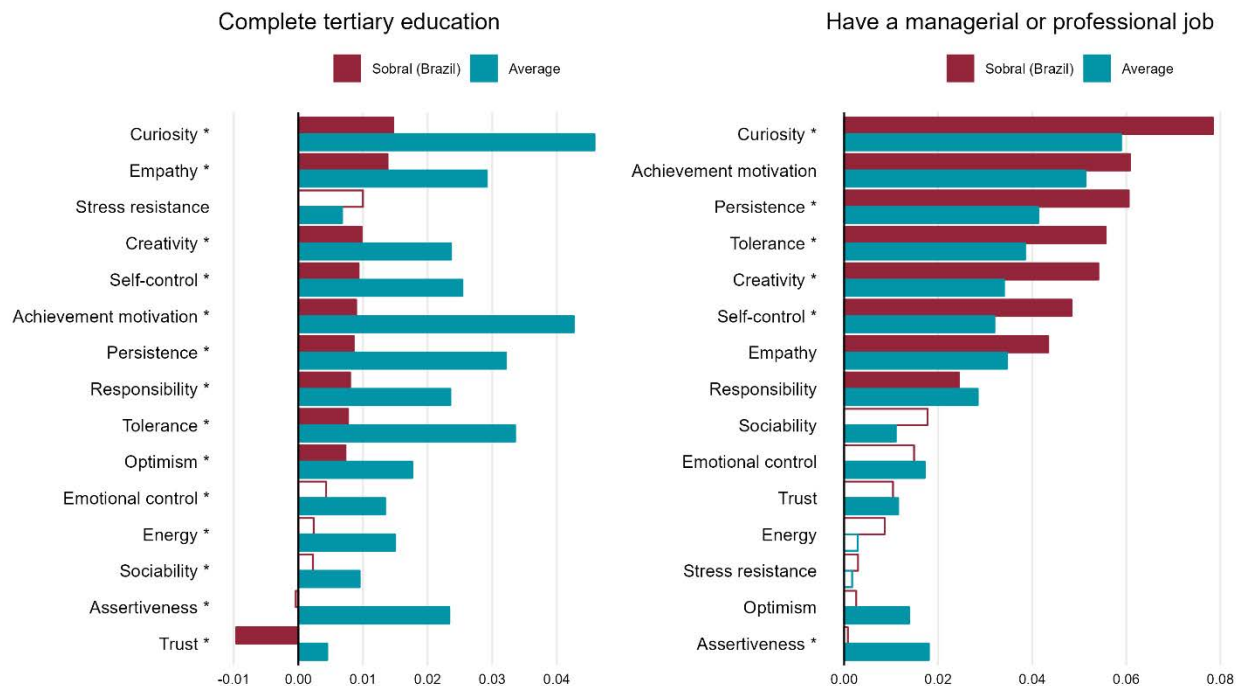
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Tables B4.1 and B4.4

### ***Relationships between social and emotional skills and students' ambitions for the future***

- In Sobral, higher levels of task performance skills (achievement motivation, persistence, responsibility, and self-control) and open-mindedness skills (curiosity, creativity, and tolerance) were each associated with higher expectations of both completing tertiary education and having a managerial or professional job at age 30. Students with higher levels of optimism also had higher expectations of completing tertiary education.
- The relationships between skills and students' expectations to complete tertiary education were weaker in Sobral than on average across sites. In contrast, the relationships between several skills (persistence, self-control, curiosity, creativity, and tolerance) and students' expectations to have a managerial or professional career were stronger than on average across sites.

**Figure 5. Relationships between students' social and emotional skills and their future aspirations in Sobral compared to the average across sites**

Standardised regression coefficients of individual skills on students' expectations to complete tertiary education and have a managerial or professional job in the future among 15-year-olds in Sobral compared to the average across sites



Note: Significant coefficients at a threshold of  $p < 0.05$  are coloured, non-significant coefficients are outlined. Coefficients in Sobral that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

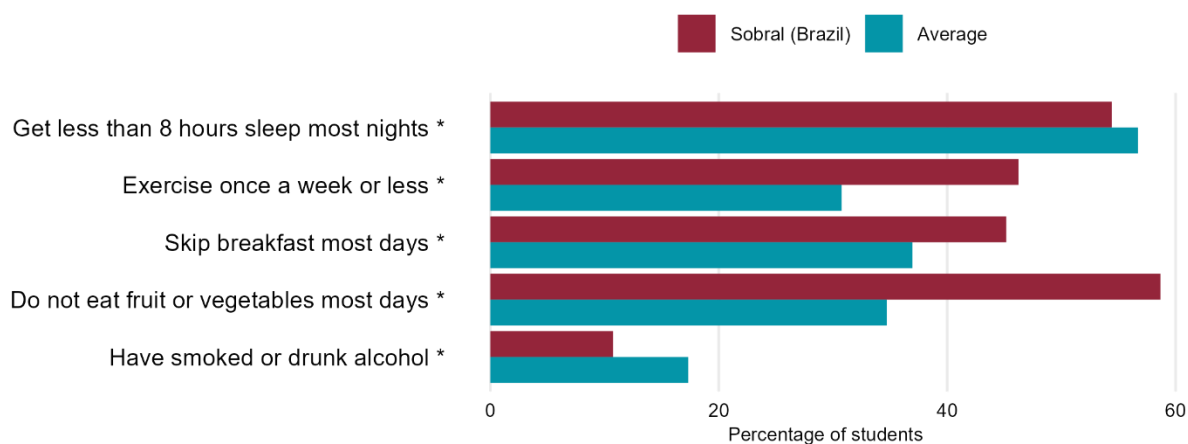
Source: OECD, SSSES 2023 Database Tables B4.19 and B4.30

## How are students' social and emotional skills linked to their health and well-being outcomes in Sobral?

### Students' health behaviours

- 15-year-old students in Sobral reported lower frequencies of eating fruit and vegetables, eating breakfast, and exercising compared to the average across sites. In Sobral, 59% of 15-year-olds said they do not eat fruit and vegetables most days and 45% said they skip breakfast most days. In terms of exercise, 46% said they do 20 minutes of physical activity only once a week or less often.
- Students in Sobral reported lower levels of having smoked cigarettes or drunk alcohol compared to the average across sites (11% compared to 17%).

**Figure 6. Percentage of 15-year-old students engaging in unhealthy behaviours in Sobral compared to the average across sites**



Note: Frequencies of each behaviour that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by an asterisk against the behaviour.  
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B3.3

### **Gender differences in health and well-being outcomes**

- In Sobral, as in almost all sites, girls report worse levels of all six measures of health and well-being (life satisfaction, current psychological well-being, test and class anxiety, health behaviours, relationship satisfaction and body image) than boys, on average.
- Gender differences in life satisfaction, current psychological well-being and test and class anxiety were larger in Sobral than the average across sites, while gender differences in body image were smaller than average. Gender differences in health behaviours and relationship satisfaction in Sobral were similar to the average across sites.

### **Relationships between social and emotional skills and students' health and well-being outcomes**

- In Sobral, 15-year-old students with higher levels of all skills – particularly optimism – reported better health behaviours, life satisfaction, current psychological well-being, and relationship satisfaction. Higher levels of most skills (all except empathy and tolerance) were associated with higher body image in Sobral.
- While higher levels of most skills (all except achievement motivation and empathy) were associated with lower text and class anxiety among 15-year-old students on average across sites, only higher levels of emotional regulation skills (stress-resistance, emotional control, and optimism) and energy were associated with this well-being outcome in Sobral. In Sobral, higher levels of curiosity, achievement motivation, tolerance, empathy, and persistence are associated with greater test and class anxiety.

## Key features of SSES 2023

### ***What is the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills?***

The Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) is an international survey designed by the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation to improve understanding of social and emotional skills among 10- and 15-year-old students. The Survey aims to understand how levels of these skills differ among students with different characteristics; how these skills matter for important student outcomes; and how students' school and home environments influence skill development.

### ***Which social and emotional skills are covered in the Survey?***

The 15 skills measured in the Survey were selected to provide a comprehensive coverage of those that are relevant for children's and adolescents' success and well-being. Further information on why and how these skills were selected can be found in the SSES assessment framework (Kankaraš and Suarez-Alvarez, 2019<sup>[1]</sup>).

### ***How were these skills measured?***

All students complete a questionnaire where they indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Examples of statements include: 'I keep working on a task until it is finished', 'I stay calm even in tense situations' and 'I am able to defend my interests when they are challenged'.

### ***Who participated in the Survey?***

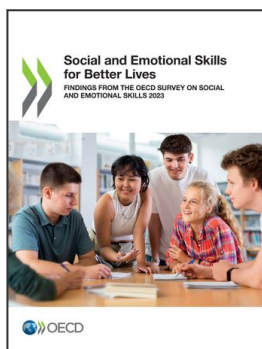
All sites in SSES 2023 surveyed 15-year-olds and surveying 10-year-olds was optional. Students in sixteen sites – six countries and ten sub-national entities - participated in SSES 2023. Data from seven sites who participated in the first round of SSES in 2019, but not in 2023, are also included in analyses in this report wherever possible to expand the coverage of the international average.

Some 18,000 10-year-old and 52,000 15-year-old students took the SSES assessment in 2023, representing about 630,000 10-year-olds and 3 million 15-year-olds in the schools of the 16 participating sites. In Sobral 2,200 10-year-old and 2,300 15-year-old students completed the assessment, representing about 2,300 10-year-old and 2,600 15-year-old students.

## References

- Kankaraš, M. and J. Suarez-Alvarez (2019), "Assessment framework of the OECD Study on Social and Emotional Skills", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 207, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5007adef-en>. [1]





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