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**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION
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PISA Strategic Development Group

DISCUSSION PAPER FOR THE PISA 2015 TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Introduction

1. At the 28th meeting of the PISA Governing Board, the PGB adopted the Strategic Development Group's recommendations for modifying the structure of the call for tender for the PISA 2015 assessment. The PISA Governing Board requested to explore this further through a written consultation, asking for further country input on alternative ways to structure the PISA 2015 call for tender. Eight replies were received in response to the consultation and this document collates these responses and these are presented in Annex A. Annex B shows the current structure of the terms of reference for PISA

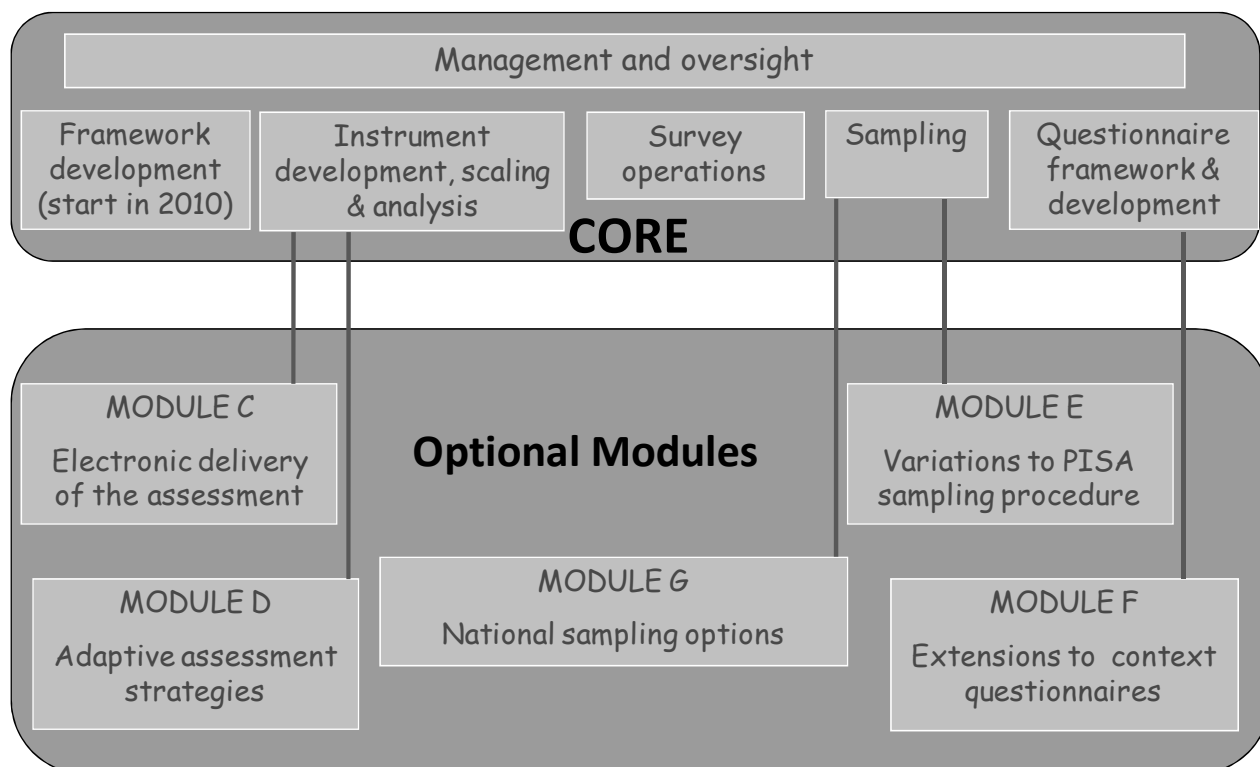
2. This paper discusses the proposed new structure for the terms of reference in light of the comments received in the consultation.

Proposed new structure for the terms of reference

In line with the PGB's decision at the Bratislava meeting, the proposed structure separates the development of the assessment framework from the remaining parts of the call for tender. The call for tender for science framework development is scheduled to be released in 2010. Figure 1 gives the proposed structure, with separate terms of reference for:

- Framework development of the cognitive instruments;
- Instrument development (including translation), scaling and analysis;
- Survey operations;
- Sampling;
- Questionnaire framework and development; and
- Management and oversight.

Figure 1. Proposed new structure for PISA 2015.



Questions to be addressed, and specified, by the SDG in making a recommendation to the PGB:

1. Do the different core and optional modules “make sense” and are they likely to bring about an improved assessment?
2. How can the framework development be improved, in addition to starting earlier, so that we can ensure the science and other frameworks will be developed in time to precede and guide item development?
3. Should framework development be integrated with instrument development, scaling and analysis, or remain as a separate module?
4. How does the management and oversight module relate to the other core modules?
5. How do the optional modules relate to the core modules? Is it optional for bidders to address them, or rather must bidders address these options in bidding on the associated core module?
6. What instructions will be given to bidders about the selection process?
7. How will the Secretariat and PGB effectively monitor possibly multiple contracts, framework and assessment development?

ANNEX A- RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON PISA 2015 CALL FOR TENDER FOLLOWING THE 28TH MEETING OF THE PGB

Overview

The comments are generally supportive of the proposals but with some caution/concerns mainly about co-ordination and management oversight both between the contractors and between the contractors and the OECD/PGB (including some lack of clarity about 'Management and oversight' module) and the costs associated with this. Only Chile makes alternative suggestions about the composition of the modules.

Australia argues the principle that bidders must be able to win some or all of the module contracts and that each module is separately costed to allow comparison of bids.

Australia

On the proposal to restructure the call for tender process for PISA 2015, Australia recognises that there could be advantages in the proposed modular structure, as it may allow a greater depth of expertise in particular areas. However, we consider it important that the tender process encompasses the prospective suppliers offering to undertake some or all of the parts of the call for tender and only support the proposed model on this basis. (This will require bidders to provide costings for each of the components to enable one or more of them to be compared.) In running the process and assessing proposals, it would be important for the PGB to have clear guidelines on how to balance the risks of having different parts of the tender conducted by different organisations, particularly when some may be pre-eminent experts in the field, while others would be new to the work.

As mentioned above, it would also be important for costings to be provided for each of the separate parts, to enable clear comparison of bids that may specify a different cluster of modules.

Australia would also like some clarification on the Management and Oversight module. It is not clear from the paper whether this refers to a tenderer managing all the other modules and perhaps co-ordinating the other tenderers, or if it refers to some other arrangement. Moving to a more modular approach, possibly with a number of contractors involved, will create management challenges to balance the depth of expertise in the various areas with the need to work cooperatively to achieve the overall outcome. Australia would also like more information on what management structures the PGB/OECD will be putting in place to coordinate with the tenderers and how the current governance and oversight arrangements will be adapted to suit the new model for running the project.

I note that your email mentions that the Strategic Development Group will consider comments on the modified structure from members and prepare a revised draft for discussion by the PGB and we look forward to cooperating and working together on this given Tony's new role on the Strategic Development Group.

Austria

We support the proposed structure of the TOR that is more partitioned than in previous cycles.

Belgium (Flemish)

Concerning the structure of the call for tender for PISA 2015, we do have some concerns about the linkages that exist between the different blocks; these linkages will have to be incorporated carefully in the

different TORs. Also the fact that framework development will start earlier has to be taken into account. It would seem necessary to foresee opportunities for co-operation with item development. We specifically worry about the block on Management and Oversight. Will we be able to clearly distinguish the tasks and responsibilities in this block from the other ones?

Belgium (French)

From the point of view of its content, the proposed structure is consistent. However, it allows for many bidders, and this could make the things more difficult. If so many research centres have to share the management and the realisation of the different sides of Pisa, the relationships between them must be very precisely described in the TOR (who has the power to decide about the different topics, who is responsible for a delay, how a possible delay will be managed by the centre in charge of the following step ...). The TOR should anticipate and provide solutions to possible problems and we see this as a condition to afford so many partners.

Chile

a) Test instruments and framework development should be together and have a psychometric advice.
b) I would recommend having Analysis together with Questionnaire framework and development to have a greater consistency in these activities. c) If the two previous recommendations are taken into account, maybe “scaling” by itself would be too little. Then I would suggest joining it to Survey operations.

Denmark

It might be very expensive to finance possibly six contracts of separate terms of reference.

Ireland

We endorse the proposed re-structuring.

Mexico

With the information available is unfeasible to give any comment.

ANNEX B- CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE PISA TERMS OF REFERENCE

The current structure of the terms of reference for PISA is given in Figure 1. It consists of two Cores. Core A includes the cognitive test design, sampling and translation, the implementation of the data collection, scaling and the construction of the data base. Core B focuses on the design and scaling of the context questionnaires. To both Cores, optional modules are attached.

Figure A1. The current structure of the terms of reference for PISA.

