

Cognitive Abilities are Not Enough: Social and Emotional Competencies of Czech Students¹

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Summary

- The 2022 international PISA survey for the first time monitored the social-emotional skills of 15-year-olds. These are skills such as patience and perseverance, curiosity, goal-orientation, control of emotions, resilience to stress, cooperation, assertiveness, and altruism. These abilities were not verified by testing but simply by self-assessment. In contrast to functional literacy, Czech students did not perform well in social-emotional skills. This is alarming, as these skills significantly influence success in both education and life.
- The findings raise questions about what may be behind the low level of social-emotional skills of Czech pupils? Is it due to teaching methods in schools? Could it be a reflection of generally low self-confidence in Czech society, mirrored in students' self-assessment of their own social-emotional skills? However, self-confidence is also an important social-emotional skill. Should we respond to these findings, and if so, how? What further sociological, pedagogical, and/or psychometric research is desirable?
- Differences in social-emotional skills between Czech boys and girls are similar to those in other countries: boys show significantly higher levels of stress resilience and emotional control, while girls show higher levels of empathy. With the exception of the tendency to co-operate, pupils with stronger socio-economic family backgrounds show significantly higher levels of social-emotional skills, with the largest differences in curiosity, persistence, and empathy. Quantitatively gifted pupils show significantly higher levels of curiosity, persistence, and emotional control than others. Pupils with above average reading literacy show significantly higher persistence, inquisitiveness, and empathy.

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