

CIVIC ACHIEVEMENT

Key Findings: England, Germany, Italy, Russian Federation, United States

Ninth-grade students in the United States and Italy had the highest average scores on the test of civic knowledge of the five countries participating in the International Civic Education Assessment in 1999. Assessment of civic knowledge is based on the assessment of ninth-grade students' performance in two areas: civic content and civic skills. The score on civic knowledge of U.S. ninth-graders was higher than the scores of ninth-graders in England, Germany, and the Russian Federation (figure 19a).

U.S. ninth-graders had a higher average score on the civic skills portion of the Civic Assessment than their counterparts in

England, Italy, Germany, and the Russian Federation. Students in the Russian Federation had the lowest average score of these five countries, and German students had the second-lowest average score on the civic skills portion of this assessment (figure 19b).

On the civic content portion of the assessment, no difference was detected between the scores of ninth-graders in the United States and ninth-graders in Italy, Germany, and the Russian Federation. However, U.S. ninth-graders had a higher average score on this part of the assessment than their counterparts in England (figure 19c).

Definition and Methodology

This indicator provides performance scores of 14-year olds (ninth-grade students in most countries) on 13 civic skills assessment items and 25 civic content assessment items on the International Civic Assessment in 1999. The combination of these two item sets makes up the total civic knowledge question set.

The total civic knowledge scale comprises the civic content scale and the civic skills scale. Civic content refers to the content knowl-

edge of civic principles or pivotal ideas (e.g., the knowledge of what constitutes a democracy), whereas civic skills refer to the interpretive and thinking skills needed to make sense of civic-related information (e.g., the skills needed to make sense of a newspaper article or a political cartoon).

Table 19a. Average achievement scores of 14-year-olds in total civic knowledge, by country: 1999

Country	Total civic knowledge
England	99
Germany	100
Italy	105
Russian Federation	100
United States	106

NOTE: Countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study. In the United States, this was 9th grade. Light shading represents a statistically lower score than the U.S. score. No shading shows no statistical difference from the U.S. score.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study*, 2001, Figure 2.2.

Table 19b. Average achievement scores of 14-year-olds in civic skills, by country: 1999

Country	Civic skills
England	105
Germany	101
Italy	105
Russian Federation	96
United States	114

NOTE: Countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study. In the United States, this was 9th grade. Light shading represents a statistically lower score than the U.S. score. No shading shows no statistical difference from the U.S. score.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study*, 2001, Figure 2.3.

Table 19c. Average achievement scores of 14-year-olds in civic content, by country: 1999

Country	Civic content
England	96
Germany	99
Italy	105
Russian Federation	102
United States	102

NOTE: Countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study. In the United States, this was 9th grade. Light shading represents a statistically lower score than the U.S. score. No shading shows no statistical difference from the U.S. score.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study*, 2001, Figure 2.3.

Civic Achievement – Data Tables

Table A-19. Average achievement scores of 14-year-olds in total civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic content, by country: 1999

Country	Total civic knowledge	Civic skills	Civic content
England	99 (0.6)	105 (0.7)	96 (0.6)
Germany	100 (0.5)	101 (0.5)	99 (0.5)
Italy	105 (0.8)	105 (0.7)	105 (0.8)
Russian Federation	100 (1.3)	96 (1.3)	102 (1.3)
United States	106 (1.2)	114 (1.0)	102 (1.1)

NOTE: Countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study. In the United States, this was 9th graders. Standard errors are in parentheses.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study*, 2001, Figure 2.2; National Center for Education Statistics, *What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study*, 2001, Figure 2.3.