

## Estonia and South Korea: Neighbors in the PISA-statistics. What is the Price of Academic Success?

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### **Abstract**

In 2022, in the PISA research, Estonia had the 4. Places in the world, right after Japan, Singapore and South Korea. In previous PISA (2018), Estonia was a bit better, but still the neighbour of South Korea. In 2014's PISA (in the field of science), Estonia had the 6. Places, and South Korea was 7 – neighbours once again. This has been quite interesting evidence, as one country is located in Asia, the other is in Europe. What kind of aspects put us together in the PISA list? As the culture (in general) shapes the statistics, the question is: how? Education is almost the only field where people can influence their quality of life: better education enables one to get a better job with a higher salary – in both countries, the academic achievements are important. Is this a sign of individualism? Or just a hope to cope in the future? To be the neighbours in PISA is not a problem, but despite the high position in this list, students both in Estonia and South Korea are exhausted and depressed. The aim of this article is to find out the price of success: what is beyond high achievements in the PISA context? Is it possible to avoid hard feelings in general education? The research method here is the secondary data analysis of published materials, found from the Internet, especially in the context of Hofstede's culture-comparison theory.

### **Index Terms**

General Education, Culture, PISA, Neo-Liberalism