

Initiatives boosting digital transformation

Although the officially announced national strategy for the digital transformation of education saw a delay of over 2 years, three engaging initiatives demonstrate promising bottom-up developments.

Promoting school digital transformation

The permanent conference of education stakeholders – [SKAV SR](#) – is made up of representatives of parents, secondary and tertiary students, directors, teachers, professional staff and school founders, universities, scientists, non-profit organisations, companies and other supporters of quality education in Slovakia. Inspired by international partners from Iceland, Czechia and Finland, it monitors the development of policies and legislation to support the dissemination of examples of good practice and to put forward proactive proposals for improving education.

At the conference '[Quo Vadis Education 2030+](#)', organised by SKAV under the auspices of the Head of the EC Representation in Slovakia Vladimír Šucha on 25 and 26 March 2022, information was presented on retraining school staff to become digital coordinators, who will be capable of adjusting to the challenges of the schools' digital transformation. The retraining was developed and delivered within the ESF project '[IT Academy - Education for the 21st century](#)'.

A total of 166 trainees from VET schools have already completed training and 47 more started training in February 2022. The training is based on the newly created [professional standards of a school digital coordinator](#). Retrained digital coordinators familiar with the [SELFIE tool](#) and the [European framework for the digital competence of educators \(DigCompEdu\)](#) are expected to support change through a school digitalisation action plan, aiming to achieve gradually 26 identified features of excellence of the digital school.

Attracting girls and women into IT

At the EPALE conference 'How to motivate adults to learn throughout life', organised by the [State Institute of Vocational Education](#) on 17 March 2022, the [Aj Ty v IT \('You in IT, too'\)](#) civic association presented progress in attracting girls and women into IT. The initiative boasts helping adult females to change their profession, and attracting girls to study IT. The initiative contributed to mitigating the gender gap in IT. In 2021, the number of females in IT studies almost doubled compared to 2011 (193%) and the share increased from 7.4% to 13.1%, according to national statistics. In cooperation with the antivirus giant company ESET, the newest 'Security girls' action focused on retraining 40 secondary school girls selected from a pool of 200 previously retrained girls, to support cyberspace safety for users from their school communities. The [Security Decalogue](#), developed in collaboration with trainers and trainees, presents first aid information on preventing cyberattacks.

Improving knowledge on cybersecurity

The pandemic increased the risk of cyberbullying and cyberattacks; the need for improving knowledge on cybersecurity also stems from the long-term results of the [IT Fitness test](#). Developed 10 years ago, this test is now offered in [4 Visegrad country languages](#), as well as in English. Each teacher, student and pupil from these countries completing the test until 31 July 2022 will receive an electronic certificate with results indicating areas to be improved. In the pre-history of the use of the internet, Slovakia was the only EU Member State

featuring a higher volume of internet hits from internet cafés than from schools. History is repeating: national policies lag behind the dynamics of the population and initiatives.

The 'Security girls'



Source: Aj Ty v IT, Dáša Šimeková Photography

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