

Major events promoting lifelong learning

Important events took place during the last week of November 2018 on the occasion of the 18th Lifelong learning week, organised by the [Association of Adult Education Institutions \(AIVD\)](#). International experts were also attracted by the fifth international conference of the Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC), held in Bratislava from 27 to 29 November, after the meeting of the board of participating countries in PIAAC.

Lifelong learning week final conference

The final conference of the Lifelong learning week focused on age management and on the need to update current lifelong learning policies. During this international conference, the education minister announced a new OECD project, with a budget of EUR 350 000, which aims to develop an effective national skills strategy. Publication of the *OECD skills strategy diagnostic report: the Slovak Republic* is expected in the first quarter 2020. Subsequently, a new lifelong learning strategy, replacing the old one valid until 2020, will be adopted by the government.

At the end of the conference, AIVD presented its [three annual awards](#), along with a brand new award given by the education ministry. Two individuals received awards for lifetime achievement and two awards were given to the 2018 best projects: both projects focused on educating disadvantaged Roma. In the category best education project, the NGO People in need, Slovakia, received an award for managing a community centre in the Kojatice municipality, aimed at upskilling low-educated Roma. It was an outreach-type project which resulted in improving the basic skills of Roma and led to their registering with labour offices, returning to secondary education or even employment. In the category Promoting lifelong learning, a private secondary VET school in Kežmarok received an award for successful provision of adult learning programmes, particularly for low-skilled unemployed Roma. The school provided alternative learning opportunities, allowing learners to acquire the skills needed to increase their chances of being employed in crafts- and services-related jobs. Both of these projects perfectly fit the new [Upskilling pathways initiative](#) and can feed a new ESF call for demand-driven projects under preparation by an Upskilling pathways team which has been working on new upskilling policies since October 2018.

Fifth PIAAC international conference

The Slovak Minister for education Martina Lubyová and the OECD Director for education and skills Andreas Schleicher opened the [fifth PIAAC international conference](#). The OECD recommendations for Slovakia, and the commitments of the education ministry in supporting lifelong learning, were presented during an [interview](#) with the TA3 news channel. The Slovak education ministry made use of this occasion to announce its intention to exploit better the interlinked PISA, PIAAC and TALIS data for evidence-based policy making. Secondary analyses and collecting new PIAAC data carried out by the National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements will be part funded by an ESF project already in the pipeline.

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