



Slovakia

OECD: Quality education, healthcare and labor market are three major challenges for Slovakia, showed the OECD comparison. Raising salaries for young teachers, saving almost 200 million euros in healthcare sector and employing thousands of people with lower degree from the Roma communities are the main measures that the government is to implement via the National Program of Reforms in the next two years.

02/04/2019, SITA

TRADE: The European Commission opened an in-depth investigation into the tax on the food retail sector in Slovakia. The Commission has concerns that the respective legislation gives some retailers a selective advantage over their competitors, in breach of EU state aid rules.

03/04/2019, SITA

PROCUREMENT: Low value contracts can be awarded from April 1 through the e-Procurement System (EVO). Those contracts created with this system will be published in the Public Procurement Bulletin and contracting authorities will also be able to send invitations to tender to selected economic subjects.

03/04/2019, SITA

PARLIAMENT: Lawmakers elected six Constitutional Court candidates including Ivan Fiacan, Peter Molnar, Rastislav Kassak, Lubos Szigeti, Daniela Svecova, and Michal Truban. The list of candidates was sent to President Andrej Kiska who selected Ivan Fiacan as the President and Lubos Szigeti as the Vice-President of the Constitutional Court. Peter Molnár was the third selected candidate by the president.

04/04/2019, SITA

SCIENCE: The Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) is launching a new project to combat brain drain from Slovakia abroad called MoRePro (Mobile and Reintegration Program). The first call should be launched in late May; the results of the evaluation of applications will be available at the end of this year.

08/04/2019, SITA

SURVEY: Chief Executive Officers of Slovak companies dramatically changed their opinion on the development of global economy in the coming years, showed Slovak CEO survey 2019 released by the

consulting company PwC. The survey questioned 127 CEOs who expressed their opinion on the growth of their companies in the next years and the factors that may jeopardise business in Slovakia in the future.

09/04/2019, SITA

BUSINESS: Hungary has had the lowest income tax in the EU for already two years. This is attracting many Slovak companies. The figures of the company Bisnode showed that 193 companies have left to Hungary since the beginning of 2019. Last year, the number was only around 600.

09/04/2019, SITA

ECONOMY: In the first quarter of 2019, 54 bankruptcies of business entities were declared in Slovakia while not a single restructuring was approved.

10/04/2019, SITA

ECONOMY: Slovakia's economic growth will be much lower than originally expected, former Finance Minister Peter Kazimir admitted. At the beginning of the year, he estimated that Slovakia's GDP will grow 4.5 percent this year. In February, he slashed his prediction to 4 percent.

16/04/2019, SITA

LABOR: There are approximately 30,000 workers from third countries in Slovakia. Employers, mostly from western Slovakia, hire them to tackle a shortage of skilled labor. Minister of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family Jan Richter said at the opening of the fair Job Expo 2019 in Nitra.

17/04/2019, SITA

LAWYERS: External lawyers who will represent the Slovak Republic in the future will not be able to ask an excessive reward. This stems from the material of the Justice Ministry, which the Cabinet approved. Under the new rules, lawyers' fees will be considerably limited by the percentages they can invoice.

18/04/2019, SITA

MEDIA: Slovakia has less freedom for work of the local media than over the past two years. The organization Reporters Without Borders (Reporters Sans Frontières - RSF) has published its annual media freedom barometer 2019 evaluating 180 countries worldwide.

23/04/2019, SITA

UNEMPLOYMENT: The registered unemployment rate in Slovakia at the end of March dropped to 5.03%, down 0.13 percentage points compared to the second month of this year. Year-on-year, the unemployment rate was 0.52 percentage points lower this March.

24/04/2019, SITA

SR-CHINA: In late April, Slovak Foreign Affairs Minister Miroslav Lajcak paid a working visit to China, accepting the invitation of Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi. Both ministers demonstrated an interest in further enhancing of bilateral cooperation and contacts between Slovakia and People's Republic of China in the political, as well as business-economic field.

25/04/2019, SITA

EU

INFRASTRUCTURE: Commission adopted €4 billion investment package for infrastructure projects across 10 Member States. The EU Cohesion Policy will invest €4 billion of EU funds in 25 large infrastructure projects in 10 Member States. The investment package involves Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal and Romania. The projects cover a wide range of areas including health, transport, research, environment and energy.

02/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

EU PROSECUTOR: Negotiations to pick the first EU public prosecutor are deadlocked after talks between national governments and the European Parliament broke down over the candidacy of Romania's former anti-corruption chief.

04/04/2019, [Politico](#)

AI: A series of ‘critical concerns’ in the development of Artificial Intelligence may have unforeseen “high-impact” ramifications in the future, a European Commission-led project has suggested. The report stated that ‘long-term’ concerns can be ‘hypothesised,’ and then cites “Artificial Consciousness, Artificial Moral Agents, Super-intelligence or Transformative AI” as examples of such long-term issues.

08/04/2019, [Euractiv](#)

ENERGY: As Germany is gradually phasing out nuclear and coal energy, Berlin is increasingly considering gas as key in bridging the gap between a fossil-fuels based and a low carbon economy. “The energy transition is on its way in Germany with the implementation of new technologies and cooperation,” German minister for economy and energy, Peter Altmaier, said in his opening speech at the 5th edition of the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue (BETD).

09/04/2019, [Euractiv](#)

EU-CHINA: The 21st EU-China Summit took place in Brussels. The Summit took place one month after the Commission set out [10 concrete actions](#) to respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by the EU-China relationship, and related [Conclusions by the European Council](#). The Summit also followed a number of other strategic engagements on the topic of EU-China relations over the past months, namely the [High-Level Strategic Dialogue](#), the [March Foreign Affairs Council](#), the [Human Rights Dialogue](#).

09/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

INVESTMENT: The European Commission welcomes vote in the European Parliament on InvestEU, the programme to boost investment in Europe in the next long-term EU budget. This vote brings InvestEU one step closer to its creation.

18/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

ENERGY: Cohesion Policy invests to improve energy security in Poland. The European Commission welcomes the signature of a grant agreement between the Polish government and the Polskie LNG company for the extension of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal in Świnoujście, in north-western Poland on the Baltic Sea coast.

24/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

JUSTICE: The European Commission published the 2019 EU Justice Scoreboard, which gives a comparative overview of the independence, quality and efficiency of justice systems in EU Member States. It provides national authorities with information to help them improve their justice systems. The results are mixed and show relative improvements with regard to the efficiency of justice systems and the quality of justice.

24/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

LABOUR: MEPs approved the creation of a European Labour Authority, as well as several positions that favour the rights of European workers and combat social dumping. However, major changes still need to be made.

25/04/2019, [Euractiv](#)

EU-JAPAN-The [26th Summit between the European Union and Japan](#) provided an opportunity for the EU and Japan to demonstrate their strong support for rules-based international order, to promote multilateralism as well as free and fair global trade, and to coordinate in view of the [upcoming G20 summit in Osaka](#). Leaders reviewed the implementation of the [EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement](#) and the [EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement](#), which were [signed at last year's summit](#).

25/04/2019, [European Commission](#)

DIGITAL INDUSTRY: The cable industry's ambitions of ubiquitous gigabit connectivity have long been hindered by a number of obstacles, including patchy coverage and consumer trust issues. The European Court of Auditors have urged shelving EU targets of providing all Europeans with broadband connection of over 30Mbps by 2020 because of concerns over rural coverage.

26/04/2019, [Euractiv](#)