

# Participation in Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 CROATIA

## Timeline



ID number 29352

## Background

The ministry responsible for education designated the Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO) as the national body responsible for carrying out the survey of the Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC) in the period 2018-23 in Croatia.

## Objectives

The PIAAC survey aims to assess the level of basic skills – literacy, numeracy and adaptive problem solving – of the adult population aged 16 to 65 years. This will offer Croatian policymakers, key stakeholders in education and experts better insight in the skills acquired through formal education and adult learning. The survey results would serve as a valuable tool for evidence-based policy-making and comparison of adult skills in the international perspective. The results would also be used to advance the quality of adult education in Croatia and to promote lifelong learning.

## Description

In 2018, Croatia committed to participate in the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) for the first time. In 2018, ASOO implemented preparatory activities for participation in PIAAC, including a proposal for financing the implementation in Croatia from the European Social Fund.

### 2018 Design

### 2019 Design

Main activities in 2019 involved adaptation, translation, review and verification of the background questionnaire and cognitive instruments for the pilot and the main survey. A pilot survey was foreseen for 2020 but has been postponed.

## 2020 Design

In preparation for the pilot survey, rescheduled to 2021, sampling was underway in 2020, as well as the preparation of testing and training materials for field staff conducting the survey.

## 2021 Implementation

A pilot survey was successfully conducted. Croatia was one of PIAAC countries that submitted collected survey data on time (Batch1). The main survey will take place in 2022.

## 2022 Implementation

The main PIAAC survey started in September 2022.

## 2023 Implementation

The main PIAAC survey was completed in 2023, data were submitted to the OECD and data processing began.

## 2024 Completed

In 2024, main activities involved data processing, cleaning and analysis. The main survey results were published and presented to the public in December 2024. According to the first PIAAC results for Croatia, the country performed close to, yet slightly below, the OECD average in literacy (-6 points) and numeracy (-9 points), and significantly below the OECD average in adaptive problem-solving (-28 points). On average, younger adults (aged 24–35) performed significantly above those aged 55–65. Women outperformed men in literacy, while no significant differences were observed in numeracy—distinguishing Croatia from most other participating countries. Adults with higher education performed significantly better than those with no or only elementary or lower secondary education. However, education level was not as strong a predictor of performance in Croatia compared to other countries; the differences in skill levels between adults with higher education and those with lower levels of education were smaller. The results indicated a strong positive correlation between skill level, employment status, and well-being (health and life satisfaction). In fact, skill level was the main predictor of well-being, irrespective of other variables. Conversely, performance had no significant impact on social trust or political efficacy. Overall, the highest performers, particularly in problem-solving, were employed. In contrast, the unemployed almost never scored high in problem-solving and frequently scored low in numeracy. Among all participating countries, higher performers were less likely to experience unemployment compared to those with lower skill levels. However, this difference was smaller in Croatia (1%) than the OECD average (5%). Croatia performed well in terms of skills mismatch (31%), below the OECD average (38%), as well as in positive health outcomes (55%), compared to the OECD average of 41%. PIAAC Cycle 2 ended in 2024.

## Bodies responsible

- Agency for VET and Adult Education (ASOO)

## Target group

### Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Adult learners

Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)

# Thematic categories

## Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

## Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

# Subsystem

CVET

# Further reading

[PIAAC survey in Croatia \(website\)](#)

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Roncevic, N., Gregurovic, M. (2024). PIAAC 2023: Rezultati istrazivanja vjestina u odrasloj dobi u Hrvatskoj - Sazetak [PIAAC 2023: Results of the Assessment of Adult Competencies in Croatia - Summary]. Agency for VET and Adult Education. (in Croat

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Roncevic, N., Gregurovic, M. (2024). PIAAC 2023: Rezultati istrazivanja vjestina u odrasloj dobi u Hrvatskoj [PIAAC 2023: Results of the Assessment of Adult Competencies in Croatia]. Agency for VET and Adult Education. (full report in Croatian)

# Related policy developments

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## 2025 Implementation

### Development of a quality assurance system in adult education

The project Development of a quality assurance system in adult education is financed under ESF Operational programme Effective human resources 2014-20. The implementation period of the project is 40 months beginning from January 2019.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

CVET

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### “ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Participation in Programme for the international assessment of adult competencies (PIAAC): Croatia. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/29352>