By Oh Kyu-wook

Korea will play a major role in the UNESCO’s plans to build a global network of lifelong learning, according to an expert adviser to the organization.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation is currently working to establish a network of cities advanced in lifelong education in October.

“Korean cities will be part of the network and will have the opportunity to show the rest of the world what they’re doing,” Michael Osborne, professor of adult and lifelong learning at Glasgow University, told The Korea Herald.

The renowned British scholar is one of a group of experts advising the UNESCO on its Global Learning Cities Network. The network is expected to be launched in October.

Osborne has worked with many governments and international agencies, including the Council of Europe and the U.K. and, most recently, German governments.

One of the projects he is currently engaged in is analysing implications of a survey called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, or PIAAC.

Developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the survey is designed to measure adult competencies, such as reading, numeracy, teamwork and communication, in countries participating in the survey, including Korea.

The first results will be released in October, he said. “My hypothesis is that countries which put a big emphasis on lifelong education will show the strongest results in PIAAC,” he added.

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“Korea is key partner in promoting lifelong education”

By Oh Kyu-wook

More than 100 practitioners, academics and policy planners in education discussed how to help people continue learning throughout their lives at an annual forum in Suwon, Gyeonggi Province, Monday.

The forum hosted by the state-run National Institute for Lifelong Education in Korea in cooperation with the Gyeonggi Provincial Institute for Lifelong Learning drew international experts, including Arne Carlsen, director of UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning, and Luis Escos, director of lifelong education at the Organization of Ibero-American States.

Under the theme of “The power of learning cities to change the world,” they participated in a series of presentations and discussions on various lifelong learning models in different countries.

“The forum is a unique opportunity to share new ideas and promote international cooperation,” Choi Un-shil, the president of NILE, said in his opening remarks.

Since 2009, NILE has been hosting the annual forum in an effort to learn from advanced countries and to help spread best practices in lifelong education around the world.

This year, in particular, the forum was followed by a consultative meeting on Jeju Island for establishing a global network of cities to promote lifelong learning.

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning is planning to establish the new initiative in October this year, and before that it plans to make a list of “key features,” a set of indicators for monitoring and assessing cities wishing to be part of the network.

Forum discusses learning throughout lifetime

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