

## ***EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN MULTILATERAL COMENIUS PROJECT***

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## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### **When do we start with education?**

In the Czech Republic we have 9 years of compulsory education from the age of 6 to 15. We start our education at basic school. Of course smaller children may attend crèches or nursery schools where they can learn some basic skills like recognizing colours, animals, plants etc. There are two grades of the basic school, in the first one children learn to read and write and of course they have PE and arts. In the higher one they have more specialized subjects like foreign languages, chemistry, biology, history etc.

### **How is an academic year organised?**

The academic year starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> September and ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> June. There are several breaks throughout the year, autumn, Christmas, spring and Easter. The summer holidays are two months long. School breaks up for feast days, and the headmaster can make the holiday a day or two longer. All schools are coeducational. Children do not have to wear uniforms and handicapped children are educated separately. The average number of lessons at a secondary is around thirty a week, primary schools have fewer lessons. Classes begin between 7.45 and 8 and there are 4 to 6 lessons in a row, followed by a lunch break, usually 45min long, which is one period, and then afternoon classes begin. They end between 4 and 5 at the least. Breaks between the lessons last from 5 to 15 minutes. Pupils have time to move from one classroom to another and prepare their things for the following subject. There is a timetable for each class for the whole year but sometimes there might be changes, e.g. when the teacher is ill or leaves the school. Pupils and students are evaluated by marks from 1 to 5, 1 is the best, 5 is the worst. Each term students get their school report with marks from both compulsory and elective subjects.

### **Do we pay schools fees?**

Most Czech schools are run by the state. These schools are free of charge. In addition, there are private schools (primary, secondary schools as well as universities) where tuition fees are charged. Most of them offer a specific type of education, specializing, for example, in foreign languages or sports. It is entirely up to the parents to decide what school is the best for their child. Education is provided by religious schools, too.

### What are the types of secondary schools?

After finishing primary school, children can enrol at grammar schools, apprenticeship centres, vocational or other professional schools.

- a) At **apprenticeship centres**, the training takes three years, and days spent in school alternate with those that the trainees spend doing practical work, in their specialisation under the supervision of a master. At the end, trainees get a certificate and become qualified workers and craftsmen.
- b) There are many types of **vocational or professional schools**: mechanical engineering school, electro-technical, building, agricultural, nursing schools, business, medical school or music and art schools. At secondary vocational schools students get the right qualifications for their future work. They also obtain a school leaving certificate which is necessary for a degree in engineering or technical university studies.
- c) At **grammar schools**, students get a school leaving certificate, but with no specific qualifications. These schools prepare students for university education generally.

### How can you get to the university and what can you study there?

If you want to go to university, you must first pass an entrance examination in the subjects in which the university specializes. The examination consists of a written test and an interview. In the Czech Republic there is a variety of universities and colleges so students have a wide choice. They may apply for a place at one of the faculties that are part of universities (faculty of arts, medical, law, natural science, teaching or theology) or at technical universities. Some students also choose to go to a college of art (for actors, singers, painters etc.).

### What is the university life like? How is it finished? What degrees do you know?

If you get a place at university, the tuition (= teaching) is free and some students also get a grant (= money to pay for living expenses, e.g. food and accommodation). All students receive an accommodation benefit. Students have a difficult life because rooms in halls of residence at most universities are open to first year students only, older students are expected to find their accommodation. Halls of residence is the cheapest alternative, as far as living is concerned, and if this fails, they have to rent a room or flat which two (or more students) share.

Undergraduate students study for three years to obtain their **bachelor's degree** (BA = Bachelor of Arts or BSc = Bachelor of Science). Some students go on to do a second course or degree – these students are called postgraduates. They study two more years for the **master's degree** (MA = Master of Arts, MSc = Master of Science, MPhil = Master of Philosophy). Medical degrees take six years. Some students remain to study for their **doctor's degree** (PhD = Doctor of Philosophy).

The university study is finished with a state exam. Students also must write a **thesis** in order to receive a **diploma** in a certain **field of study**. The diploma is **handed over** at a **graduation ceremony**.



## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

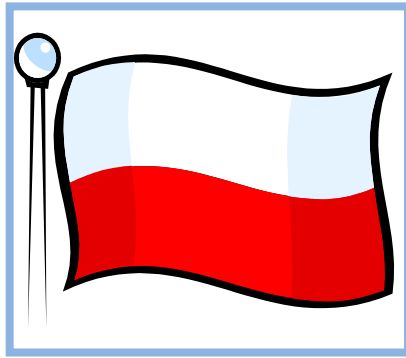
The current Romanian educational system consists of pre-school education ( kindergardens from 3 to 5-year-old children, not compulsory), primary education, gimnasium education, high schools or technical schools, and higher education ( colleges and universities).

In Romania children usually start school at 5 years old. **Primary education** lasts 5 years ( 0 to 4 grade- children between 5 – 10 years old) . During this period of time they learn writing, reading, mathematics and basic social and technical skills. They are taught by one teacher. In the second and the fourth grade all the children are tested to determine their levels of knowledge and skills and not to classify them.

**Gymnasium education** lasts 4 years ( 5 to 8 grade- children between 10 and 14 years old). During this period of time they learn Mathematics, Romanian, basic Science ( like Geography, History, Biology ,Chemistry, etc). For these subjects they have different teachers. In the eighth grade all the children are tested . The results are very important because they may allow them , or not to follow a certain high school . The ones with low results follow a technical school that lasts 3 years.

**High schools** last 4 years and they can have different specialities ( 9-12 grade- children between 14-18 years). High schools can also be vocational ( music, coreography, P.E etc).

**Universities and technical colleagues** continue to offer five-year masters degree programmes. In addition, there is a two-stage educational programme . The first is a three-years programme leading to a bachelor degree. After obtaining a bachelor degree, students have the option of enrolling in a two-years master degree programme and after that in a three years doctorate programme



## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN POLAND

**Primary education** - Primary education lasts six years and is split in half. Children start primary school at the age of 6. During the first three years, children learn writing, reading, mathematics and basic technical and social skills. This first level is directed towards integrated teaching. They are taught by one teacher. During the following three years, children learn subjects, which fall into broader topics such as nature (instead of biology and geography), history, science and art so the second level cover teaching modules. They are taught by different teachers. After the first six years of school, all children are tested to determine their levels of knowledge and skills. The test serves not to classify children but to forecast further education needs.

**Lower secondary education** - After six years of primary schools, 12/13-years olds enter a junior high school to learn traditional subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology and geography. In addition, the aim of junior high schools is to develop students' capacity to think independently and to shape their interests and abilities. Lower secondary school ends with a pre-orientation test, which aims to help students to decide where to continue their education.

**Secondary schools** - The obligatory education ends at the age 15/16. Students then decide whether to enter a 3-year high school, which will lead to a diploma and then to a university education, or to enrol in a 2-year vocational school. One of the main aims of high schools is to form the features of character that are essential in our modern world. High school diplomas are granted nation-wide by a state commission. This opens the way to a university education without further exams (high schools announce the minimal grade accepted for university entrance). Vocational schools offer a wide range of training in specific skills. They are to educate qualified workers and the education ends with a professional exam that should be assigned by employers. After that young people can start working. However, with a view to promoting a long-life learning and to providing equal opportunities for all, students after vocational school are able to continue their education in a 2-year secondary complementary school, which lead to a diploma and then to a university education

**Universities** - Universities and technical colleges continue to offer five-year masters degree programmes. In addition, there is a two-stage educational program. The first is a three-year program leading to a bachelor degree. After obtaining a bachelor degree, students have the option of enrolling in a two-year master degree program. Elementary schools and junior high schools are financed by local governments, high schools are financed by provincial governments, and higher education remains within nation-wide budget expenditures. Presently, elementary and high school education is dominated by public schools. About 10% of schools are private.



## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN GERMANY

The German educational system surely is the most complex in the world. The reason is, that each state has similar but in details own systems. Wikipedia shows an excellent summary: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\\_in\\_Germany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Germany).

The responsibility for the German education system lies primarily with the states (Länder) while the federal government plays a minor role. Optional **Kindergarten** (nursery school) education is provided for all children between two and six years of age, after which school attendance is compulsory. The system varies throughout Germany because each state (Land) decides its own educational policies. Most children, however, first attend Grundschule from the age of six to ten, in some states six to 12 until grade 6.

**German secondary education** includes five types of school. The Gymnasium is designed to prepare pupils' education and finishes with the final examination Abitur, after grade 12, mostly year 13. The Realschule has a broader range of emphasis for intermediate pupils and finishes with the final examination Mittlere Reife, after grade 10; the Hauptschule prepares pupils for vocational education and finishes with the final examination Hauptschulabschluss, after grade 9 and the Realschulabschluss after grade 10. There are two types of grade 10: one is the higher level called type 10b and the lower level is called type 10a; only the higher-level type 10b can lead to the Realschule and this finishes with the final examination Mittlere Reife after grade 10b. This new path of achieving the Realschulabschluss at a vocationally oriented secondary school was changed by the statutory school regulations in 1981 – with a one-year qualifying period. During the one-year qualifying period of the change to the new regulations, pupils could continue with class 10 to fulfil the statutory period of education. After 1982, the new path was compulsory, as explained above. Other than this, there is the Gesamtschule, which combines the Hauptschule, Realschule and Gymnasium. Since 2010 in Rheinland-Pfalz Hauptschule and Realschule were fused as a combination of Hauptschule and Realschule, named Realschule plus. There are also Förderschulen/Sonderschulen. One in 21 pupils attends a Förderschule. Nevertheless, the Förderschulen/Sonderschulen can also lead, in special circumstances, to a Hauptschulabschluss of both type 10a or type 10b, the latter of which is the Realschulabschluss. Most German children only attend school in the morning. There are usually no provisions for serving lunch. The amount of extracurricular activity is determined individually by each school and varies greatly.

In order to enter **university**, students are, as a rule, required to have passed the Abitur examination; since 2009, however, those with a Meisterbrief (master craftsman's diploma) have also been able to apply. Those wishing to attend a "university of applied sciences" must, as a rule, have Abitur, Fachhochschulreife, or a Meisterbrief. Lacking those qualifications, pupils are eligible to enter a university or university of applied sciences if they can present additional proof that they will be able to keep up with their fellow students through a Begabtenprüfung or Hochbegabtenstudium (which is a test confirming excellence and above average intellectual ability). A special system of apprenticeship called Duale Ausbildung allows pupils on vocational courses to do in-service training



in a company as well as at a state school.



## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN PORTUGAL

Compulsory education in Portugal is up to 18 years and is spread over 3 levels of education:

### 1 - Pre-school education (also called childhood education):

targets children from 3 to 5 years, is optional and there are often private and public-kindergartens. The public ones are free. Most of the times, children end up going to school long before the three years because the majority of mothers work outside and the kids, not having anyone staying with, go to school.

### 2 - Basic Education:

Basic education is divided into:

- 1st cycle, from first to fourth year for children from 6 to 10 years;
- 2nd cycle, that includes the 5th and 6th year for children from 10 to 12 years;
- 3rd cycle, that runs from the 7th to 9th grade for children 12-15 years.

The marks in basic education are 1-5. When a student finishes primary school and will enter the secondary school must choose which school area to follow: scientific and humanistic (which serve to pursue studies), technological, artistic or professional.

### 3 - Secondary Education:

Includes 10, 11 and 12 grades for adolescents between 15 and 18 years. In secondary education the scale goes from 0 to 20. The student has compulsory and optional courses with minimum attendance in 5 subjects. The chosen subjects are related to the higher education that the student wants to follow. At the end of secondary education the student will make the National Examination and is the average of internal and external evaluation that will give access to university courses.



## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN ESTONIA

The current Estonian educational system consists of **pre-school education** (playschools for 2 to 7-year-old children, not compulsory), basic education, general secondary education, vocational education and higher education.

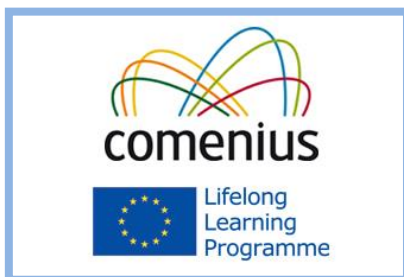
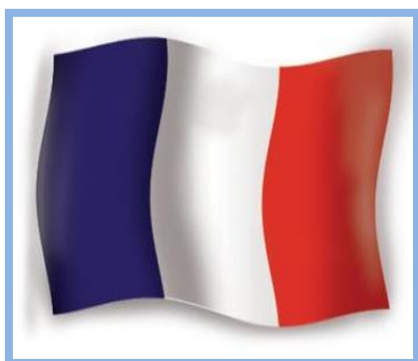
**Basic education** is the compulsory educational minimum which is provided by basic schools (grades 1-9). Children reaching the age of seven have to attend **general secondary education** school.

On completion of basic education, 16-17-year-old students have two options: studies may be continued in an **upper-secondary general school** (gymnasium grades 10-12) or in a **vocational** institution. They can also enter the labour market, but their prospects are not very promising.

Vocational education is offered by **upper-secondary vocational school** (0.5-3 years) and **post-secondary professional school** (3-4.5 years). Post-secondary professional school gives a vocational higher education.

**Higher education** is divided into two parallel sectors, applied higher education (diploma studies) and the academic higher education (bachelor's (3-4 years), master's (1-2 years) and doctorate (3-4 years) studies).





## EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN FRANCE -MARTINIQUE

### The different types of school (taken by age of pupils):

- - Ecole Maternelle (kindergarten) and creches,
- Ecole primaire , or Ecole élémentaire (Primary school, elementary school)
- - Collège, (middle school)
- - And Lycée. (high school)

### FRENCH SCHOOL SYSTEM :

It used to be commonly accepted that the French Education system was one of the best in the world.

Today, though any such a bold overall affirmation must be open to question, it is still true to say that the French education system is one of the more successful in the world, and that in certain fields it remains a world leader.

According to the OECD, France's education system is average, compared to other developed countries. Education is compulsory in France from the ages of 6 to 16, but a large majority of children start school well before the minimum age, often as young as two years old, and over 50% of 18-21 year olds in France are still in full-time education, or else following a vocational training course.

Some 64% of all school pupils in France complete their secondary education, and take the high-school leaving certificate examinations, known as the “baccalauréat “or the “baccalauréat professionnel”. The official target – estimated as necessary for the needs of the nation - is 80%.

