Educational system of The Czech Republic

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- 10.38 million inhabitants
- 10,487 schools
- 1,918,421 pupils
- 138,890 teachers
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- ACT No. 561 (2004) on Pre-school, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional and Other Education (the Education Act stipulates:
  - definition of school and quality of schools
  - legal personality of schools, school self-administration; management of pedagogical processes
  - the Registry of Schools
  - evaluation of schools
  - tasks, duties, competencies of the Czech School Inspectorate
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- schools administered within the framework of state administration
- administration: central government, regions (14) and communities
- regions are responsible for education on its territory, formulate long-term strategies every 2 years
- state educational policy in hands of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS)
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School autonomy

• The law gives all schools the status of independent legal entities
  a higher degree of autonomy.

• School head appointed by the school founder (e.g. municipality)
• competitive recruitment process.

• Responsibilities:
  ✓ quality and efficiency of the educational process
  ✓ adjustment of educational programmes
  ✓ choice of textbooks
  ✓ financial management of the school
  ✓ appointing and dismissing teachers
  ✓ PR

• School-founder has to establish a School Council enabling parents, pupils, staff, citizens and others to participate in the administration of schools.
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**Funding**

- **Two sources:**
  - per head and running costs = the founder
  - salaries and teaching aids = the state budget by the MEYS
- Based on the per capita principle
- Private schools running costs (since 1990) funded on the same basis
- Denominational (church) schools receive the same funding as public schools
University

Elementary/basic School – primary level

Elementary School – lower-secondary level

Kindergarten – pre-primary level

Higher Education Institution

Doctoral programmes

Master’s programmes

Bachelor's programmes

University

Tertiary Professional School

Upper Secondary education with School-leaving exam

general fields

4-years course

6-years course

8-years course

other fields

Upper Secondary education with apprenticeship certificate

Upper Secondary education

Dance Conservatoires

Bachelor's programmes

Master's programmes

Doctoral programmes

Upper Secondary education

Conservatoires

Tertiary Professional School

Higher Education Institution

Elementary School – lower-secondary level

Elementary/basics School – primary level

Kindergarten – pre-primary level

age

3-5

6-14

15-19

20+
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Pre-primary education

- education based on the Framework Educational Programme (approved by the Ministry)
- target age group: 3 to 6
- attendance is not compulsory
- the pre-school year must be accessible to all free of charge (for other years parents can be asked to pay a maximum of 50% of running costs covered by community)
Primary education

- school attendance compulsory for 9 years (pupils aged 6 to 15)
- basic school – divided into two stages (first stage: age 6 to 10, second stage: age 11 to 15)
- second stage can be realized at a lower stage of gymnázium („grammar school“, „lycée“) (11/13 to 15) – at the end of the 5th or 7th year pupils can leave the basic school and attend the eight/six-year gymnázium
- the choice of school is free
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**Organization of the process of primary education**

- the school year begins on September 1\textsuperscript{st}, ends on August 31\textsuperscript{st}
- teaching lesson lasts 45 minutes
- max. 22-26 lessons per week at the first stage
- max. 30-32 lessons per week at the second stage
- number of pupils per class is between 17 and 30
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Assessment

- pupils assessed by teachers on a scale 1-5 (marks)
- based on written and oral exams, tests, etc
- the results of continuing assessment summarized in a final report at the end of each of the two semesters of the school year
- Written-descriptive assessment authorized at all educational levels (since 2005) as an alternative to „number marks“.
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Upper secondary and post-secondary education

- Types of schools:
  - General upper secondary (gymnázium) (age 15 to 19)
  - Technical upper secondary (SOŠ) (age 15 to 18/19)
  - Upper Secondary education with apprenticeship certificate (SOU) (age 15 to 17/18/19)
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Criteria for admission to upper secondary education

- Completion of compulsory education
- Pass entrance examination (written/oral) organized by the school
- Pupils usually apply for one or two schools of their choice
- Second round of entrance examination takes place for those who did not pass the first round
- Post-secondary course (nástavbové studium) after completing 3-year study at a vocational upper secondary school available
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Assessment

• Similar to basic school system

• Final examination
  
  • **Maturita exam**, in 4-year courses, standardised final exam, partly state controlled.

  • **Apprenticeship certificate** in vocational schools (2/3-year courses, part of the examination is practical)
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**Tertiary education**

- **Tertiary professional school** (19 to 21/22)
  - Provide students with advanced technical knowledge
  - Not the same value as university

- **University** (higher education institution) (19 to 22/26)
  - Curriculum is prepared by the school and accredited by the Ministry (MEYS)
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• higher education institutions are either university-type or non-university type

• the study programmes are prepared by individual institutions/faculties and approved by the Accreditation Commission

• to access the higher education the Maturita exam certificate is the minimum entrance qualification for all tertiary education programmes

• each institution defines its own admission criteria and determines the content of the entrance examination
Quality assurance

- Education at school facilities is evaluated by the Czech School Inspectorate.

- **School self-evaluation** has become the basis for drawing up the annual report on school activities, and one of the documents to be used for observations made by the Czech School Inspectorate. The Ministry lays down a framework structure, rules and deadlines for self-evaluations carried out by schools in an implementing legal regulation.

- Evaluation of a **relevant school or school facility** may be made by the founder in accordance with criteria published in advance.