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# **SEEL**

## **The Educational System in the Czech Republic and the Target Group of the Czech Researchers**

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# **SEEL – The Educational System in the Czech Republic and the Target Group of the Czech Researchers**

## **Pre-primary Education**

Pre-primary Education is provided by nursery schools and it is for children between the age of 3 to 6.

Nursery schools are usually established by municipalities or groups of municipalities.

The share of private and church founders is very low.

The pre-primary education is regulated by the Framework Educational Programme for Pre-primary Education, on the basis of which each school has to develop its own educational programme. The main components of the programme are spontaneous games and physical activities, including outdoor activities and games, walks and excursions. Educational areas of this programme are: the child and his/her body; the child and his/her psyche; the child and others; the child and society; the child and the world

In school term 2010/1011 there were 4 800 nursery schools in the Czech Republic and 328 612 children in them.

## **Compulsory Education**

Compulsory school attendance is for all children at the age from 6 to 15 years.

Classes are coeducational.



All pupils start their primary education in a comprehensive basic school which last 5 years. During the second stage (lower-secondary education) it is possible to:

- continue at the basic school
- proceed to multi-year secondary general school, which is a kind of secondary school providing a general education
- proceed to eight-year conservatoire

Majority of children continue at the basic school until the age of 15.

Children with a severe mental disability, multiple disabilities or autism can attend special basic schools.

Basic school has two levels:

- The first stage covers the first to fifth grades and all subjects are usually taught by a generalist teacher.
- The second stage covers sixth to ninth grades and subjects are taught by teachers specialising mostly in two subjects.

In school term 2010/1011 there were 4 123 primary schools in The Czech Republic and 789 486 children in them.

There are a great number of small municipalities in the Czech Republic, which implies also a large number of small-sized schools (35% of basic schools have fewer than 50 pupils). Catchment areas are defined, but the choice of schools is free.

The number of pupils per class is between a minimum of 17 and a maximum of 30.

In 2010/11, the average class size was 20.

The co-educational classes are made up of pupils of the same age, but small communities can organise schools (primary stage only) with one or more classes of mixed age.

The main document for education in basic school is the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education. On the basis of it, schools have to prepare their own school educational programmes.

The educational areas are: (1) Language and language communication, (2) Mathematics and its application, (3) ICT, (4) People and their world, (5) People and society, (6) People and nature, (7) Art and culture, (8) People and their health, (9) People and the world of work.



The cross-curricular topics comprise: Personal and social education, Education for democratic citizenship, Education towards thinking in the European and global context, Multicultural education, Environmental education, and Media studies.

The curriculum is divided into particular years and into subjects.

Teaching of a foreign language starts in the 3rd year, but the school head can include it in the 1st year if pupils are interested and parents agree.

Teachers can choose their own teaching methods, within the scope of the proposals or recommendations articulated in the educational programme and according to the general policy of the school.

Each school has a free choice of textbooks.

## **Assessment**

The general principles of assessment of pupils' educational results are set out in the Education Act. The rules of pupils' assessment are defined by each school in the School Code. Continuous assessment is provided by teachers and 5-point scale is most commonly used. Continuous assessment results are summarized in a school report at the end of each semester. The 5-point scale, verbal assessment or a combination of both may be used in the school report. Final school reports are issued with proof that the required level of basic education has been reached. Pupils who have not succeeded in all compulsory subjects can repeat a year once at every stage.

## **Special educational needs (SEN)**

In general, the emphasis is on integrating SEN pupils into regular classes, which is an important principle of inclusive education. If required by the nature of the disability, schools, eventually classes, departments or study groups using adapted educational programmes are established for disabled children, pupils or students. Pupils with serious mental disability, pupils with multiple disabilities, and autistic pupils are entitled to be educated at special schools, which exist from the pre-primary to upper secondary level. Their curriculum and qualifications are as close as possible to those of mainstream schools and the methods are appropriate to the specific educational problems.



At the compulsory level, the basic special school can be established for pupils with medium and severe mental disabilities and multiple mental disabilities and a basic practical school for pupils with mild mental disabilities.

## Teachers

Teachers at a primary and lower-secondary level of education must reach a university qualification at Master's level (usually at a faculty of education).

Teachers at the primary level are generalists, at lower-secondary specialists. Their prescribed teaching load is 22 lessons per week.

## Post-Compulsory General and Vocational Education

*(Upper Secondary and Post-Secondary Level)*

Upper secondary education is a highly differentiated.

The starting age of study is determined by the completion of compulsory education, but generally is for children aged 15 to 19 years.

There are several types of secondary schools:

- Secondary general schools
- Lyceums
- Secondary technical schools
- Conservatoires

These four type of schools last 4 years and are finished with leaving examination.

- Secondary vocational schools
- Secondary vocational schools or practical schools

They are practically oriented and lead to get an apprenticeship certificate. Some of these schools alternate a week of theoretical education and a week of practical training. Some of them lasts 2/3 years, some of them 1/2 years.

All upper secondary schools organise their own final examination.

Secondary general schools provide secondary education which aims to provide pupils with key competencies and a broad outlook, preparing them above all for higher education and other types of tertiary education, for professional specialisation, as well as for life in society.



There are three types of secondary general schools in the Czech Republic:

- 4-year courses for pupils who have completed their compulsory school attendance
- 6-year courses for pupils who have completed the 7th year
- 8-year courses for pupils who have completed the 5th year.

In addition to general courses, there are 12 fields of study (for example languages, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, physical education etc.) with a special focus on these subjects in the curriculum. Some six year courses and one eight-year courses provide instruction in some or all subjects in a foreign language – CLIL (so-called bilingual secondary general schools). However, the majority of these schools are general in their orientation.

The Framework Educational Programme for Upper Secondary General Education (for secondary general schools) consists of 8 educational areas, 5 cross-curricular subjects and also the key competences of a school leaver. The school head determines the optional subjects as well as the use of the disposable lessons.

## **Conservatoires**

The conservatoire is a special type of school, providing artistic education, which can be acquired through studies in dance, music, singing and musical-dramatic art courses. Courses last either 6 or 8 years - admitting pupils who have completed their compulsory school education or pupils who have successfully completed 5 years of basic school. The admission procedure requires candidates to demonstrate their talent in the form of an aptitude test.

In school term 2010/1011 there were 1 423 secondary schools and 18 conservatoires in The Czech Republic and 536 478 children in them.

Secondary schools are usually public, generally established by regions, with the education free of charge. But there are also private or denominational secondary schools where fees are paid. Classes are co-educational (except for physical education lessons).



## Tertiary Education

Tertiary education in the Czech Republic consists of:

- Conservatoires

and

- Tertiary professional schools

both lead to an Absolutorium (specialist with a diploma)

- Higher education institutions
  - Universities or non-university types of schools:
    - Bachelor and Master's studies
    - Doctoral studies

In school term 2010/1011 there were 182 post-secondary colleges in the Czech Republic with 29 800 students on them.

## Our target group for project SEEL

Our target group is students from multi-year secondary general school, which is a kind of secondary school providing a general education. We would like to concentrate on students from 6th to 9th grade, age 11 – 16.

*The main source for this excerpt was the publication officially quoted at The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports website: GERGLOVÁ ŠTEIGROVÁ, Leona. The education system in the Czech Republic. 1st ed. 35 pages. ISBN 8087601009. Available online: <http://www.msmt.cz/mezinarodni-vztahy/the-education-system-in-the-czech-republic>*