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Czech Presidency
of the EU 2009



The Education System of the Czech Republic

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic
at the occasion of the Czech presidency in the EU Council

Prague 2009

The Education System of the Czech Republic

Institute for Information on Education
Prague 2009



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Introduction

The Institute for Information on Education and its Czech EURYDICE Unit present a description of the Czech education system. The last description was prepared in 2005, after new legislation had come in force on 1 January 2005, mainly the Education Act on Pre-primary, Basic, Secondary and Tertiary Professional Education and the Act on Educational Staff. This description was updated in August 2008. It includes all changes occurring to this date and resulting from the new legislation and curricular reform.

The description is set out in accordance with a common structure prepared by the European EURYDICE Unit to facilitate inter-country comparisons while ensuring that special features peculiar to each system are duly emphasised. The national contributions are part of the publication *Structures of Education, Vocational Training and Adult Education Systems in Europe* available on the website <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice>.

The first chapter is devoted to a short presentation of the country concerned, together with the basic principles governing its education and training, the division of responsibilities and then more specific information (relating to administration, inspection, financing, private schooling and advisory bodies). Major reforms of education systems are also considered.

The other chapters deal in turn with pre-primary education, compulsory and post-compulsory education (general, technical and vocational provision entirely within schools). A brief description of the aims and structure of the level of education concerned is followed by further headings devoted to the curriculum, assessment, teachers and statistics.

This is followed by a chapter on tertiary education, in which a summary description is supplemented by sections on admission, tuition fees, the academic year, courses, qualifications and assessment.

The last chapter deals with continuing education and training for adults (whether in or out of the labour market, employed or unemployed). It provides information on the political, legislative and financial framework for this kind of education, on the authorities concerned and their responsibilities, as well as on the general organisation of training for adults (types of institution, access requirements, programme objectives, the curriculum and quality assurance). There is also a brief description of guidance/counselling services, as well as of questions relating to assessment and accreditation including the recognition of non-formal kinds of learning.

The situation regarding teachers is dealt with in a specific section for each level of education discussed. Also provided are national statistics on the number of pupils, students, teachers and educational institutions and, where figures are available, on pupil or student/teacher ratios, attendance and attainment rates or, yet again, on the choice of branches of study or areas of specialisation.

The Czech Unit of EURYDICE has drafted the descriptions of different educational levels, and the information on initial vocational education and training and on adult education has been prepared in close collaboration with the National Institute for Technical and Vocational Education within the CEDEFOP REFER Network.

The extent and content of this description offer an easy orientation to the education system and enable comparisons of the education systems of European countries. We hope that it will be a very useful tool for educational experts, teachers, students and the whole public.





Organisation of the Education System in the Czech Republic 2008

- final examination
- final examination with apprenticeship certificate
- school-leaving examination*
- absolutorium
- state examination, state rigorous examination
- doctoral examination
- basics of education
- basic education

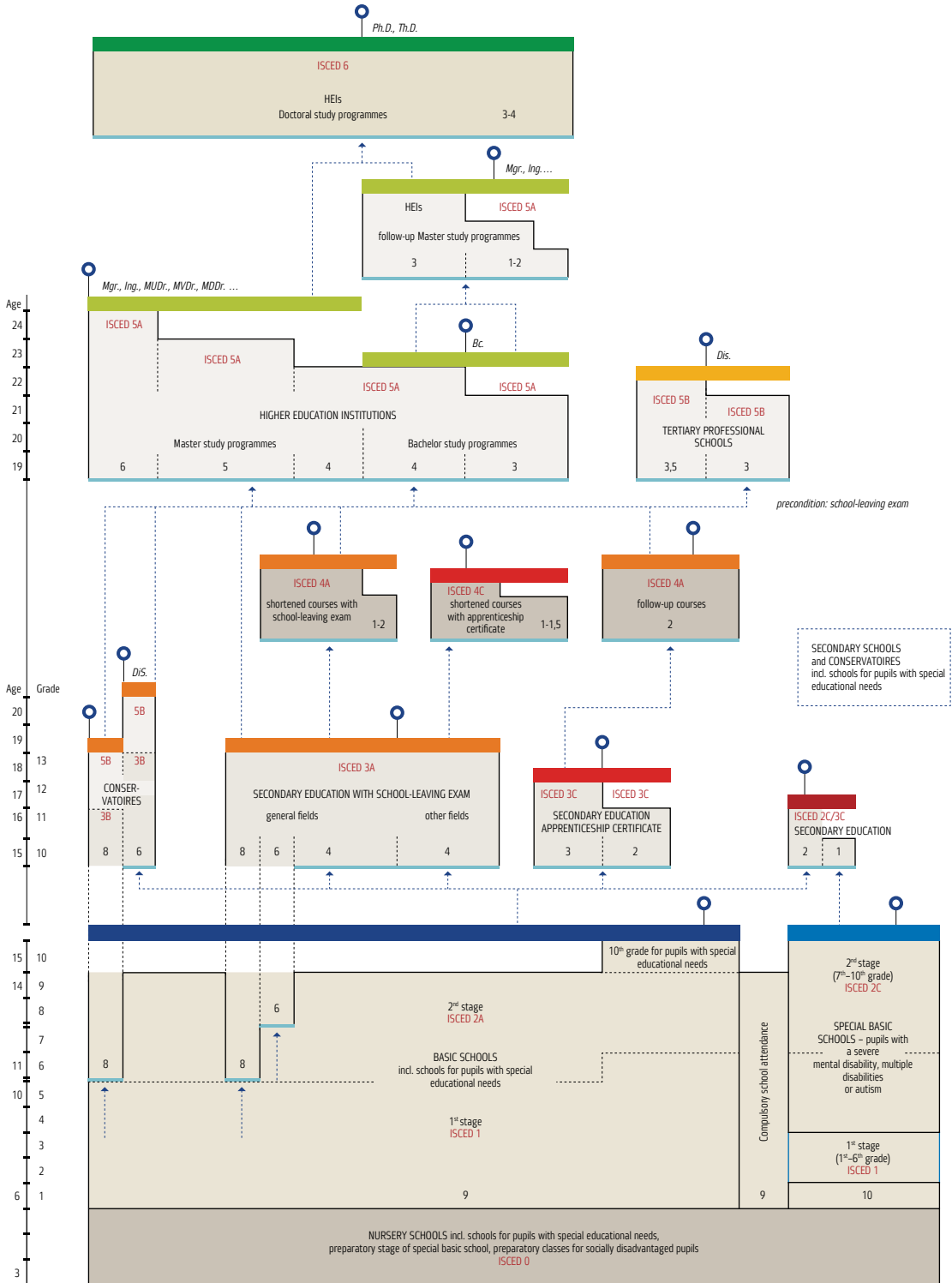
* Pupils of conservatoires can sit for a school-leaving examination also, but no sooner than after 4th grade, in the field of dance after 8th grade.

↑ next educational level

○ labour market

— admission procedure





Responsibilities and Administration



1



1.1 Background

The Czech Republic came into existence when the former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic split into two states in January 1993. It is still in the throes of the transformation from a socialist society with centralised administration and a planned economy to one operating according to the principles of a market economy and political pluralism, i.e. the process which was launched by the political revolution of November 1989. In 1995 the Czech Republic became a member of the OECD, in 2004 it became a member of the European Union.

In 2007, the Czech Republic had a population of 10 381 130 and a total surface area of 78,866 square kilometres, giving it a population density of 131 inhabitants per square km. Recently the population has started to show an increase.

The Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy with a President elected by a Parliament, which exercises legislative power. The Parliament is divided into two Chambers, an Assembly of Deputies and a Senate. Members are elected to the Assembly of Deputies under the proportional system and to the Senate under the majority system. Executive power is held by the National Government.

Public administration has undergone extensive reforms. It is carried out by the central state administration and self-governing regional and local authorities.

The territorial administration has two levels: the basic self-government units are municipalities, with regions providing a higher level of territorial self-government (14). Regions were established in December 1997 with effect from 1 January 2000. They assumed their responsibilities gradually until the end of 2002.

The law sets special cases when self-government bodies can carry out the responsibilities of the state administration and when the self-

government units also function as administration districts.

Municipalities and regions have dual spheres of authority – independent authority to carry out allocated agendas including education, and delegated authority to carry out state administration.

Some of the responsibilities that should be accessible to citizens were transferred to the so-called municipalities designated as having an extended sphere of action (205).

The language of instruction is Czech. Pupils of ethnic minorities are guaranteed the right to education in their mother tongue to an extent appropriate to the development of their ethnic community. Schools for national minorities can function up to the upper secondary school level. With the exception of Poles, the minorities are scattered throughout the republic, which is why the only minority-language schools are Polish. There are 24 nursery schools, 22 basic schools and 3 upper secondary schools (one *gymnázium* and two vocational/technical schools).

The State is denominationally neutral and freedom of religion is guaranteed. The number of people practising a religion is low. 32% of inhabitants declare themselves to be believers, there are 21 registered churches and religious societies. Over 83% of believers belong to the Roman Catholic Church (over 26% of the population), with 7% believers (2.2% of the population) belonging to the two biggest Protestant Churches.



1.2 Basis of the school system: principles and legislation

The Constitution of the Czech Republic, adopted on 16 December 1992, provides a general legal framework for future legal development.

The rights of citizens and the obligations of the State with regard to education were laid down in Article 33 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (the constitutional law approved by the Federal Assembly of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic on 9 January 1991 and incorporated into the legal system of the Czech Republic).

Legislative authority belongs to the Parliament. A deputy, a group of deputies, the Senate, their Cabinet or a regional assembly may initiate new legislation. A bill is submitted to the Cabinet for comments, passed by the Chamber of Deputies and then by the Senate.

On 1st January 2005 a new Education Act (No. 561/2004) On Pre-primary, Basic, Secondary and Tertiary Professional Education came into force. It replaced not only the previous School Act, but also the Act on School Establishments and the Act on State Administration and Self-government in Education. It sets out the principles and aims of education, a two-level structure of educational programmes defining the aims to be attained, and the education system which has to implement them. The education system is composed of schools, which organise education according to framework educational programmes (see 1.3), and school facilities, which provide education and services complementing or supporting education at schools. The Act sets out the rules to be followed within long-term policy objectives and annual reports through which the strategy of education policy both at national and regional levels is implemented and monitored. It stipulates the duration of compulsory schooling, entry requirements, organisation of education and what constitutes the ending of study for different educational levels. It redefines special educational needs, giving preference to integration into mainstream classes. The Act also regulates administration

– the legal status of schools, their registration, financing, status and responsibilities of different levels of administration, e.g. municipalities, regions, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, or other relevant ministries.

The Act (No. 563/2004) on Educational Staff and on the Amendments of Several Acts (in force from 1 January 2005) regulates requirements for the performance of educational staff's duties, their in-service training and career progression.

The Act (No. 306/1999) on Providing Subsidies to Private Schools and Pre-school and School Establishments replaced the previous government regulation of subsidies.

The Act on Institutional Education or Protective Education in School Provisions and on Preventive Educational Care (No. 109/2002) stipulates the requirements for the education of children and adolescents lacking proper family support or those with behavioural problems.

The Higher Education Act (No. 111/1998, amended several times) extended the non-university and private sectors of higher education. The majority of these are no longer state institutions (with the exception of military and police higher education institutions which are entirely state-funded) but public institutions (state-subsidised) that manage their own property and have wide-ranging autonomy.

In May 2006 (in full force from August 2007) the Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes (No. 179/2006) came into force. This law opened up a new pathway for adults to obtain a certificate for a qualification attained in practice without formal education.



1.3 Distribution of responsibilities for the organisation and administration of the education and training system

State administration in the education system is provided by heads of schools and school facilities, municipal authorities of municipalities with an extended sphere of action, regional authorities, the Czech School Inspectorate, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other central institutions (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence etc.) in the case of schools and school facilities founded by them.

Self-government in education is performed by school councils, municipalities and regions.

Central level

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (*Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy*) is in charge of the majority of state administration activities concerned with education, prepares legislation and is responsible for the conception, the state and development of the education system as a whole.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (further referred to as the Ministry of Education) prepares legislation relating to executive and operational activities. The Ministry of Education identifies central educational policy and develops overall strategy, and in particular it develops and promulgates Long-term Development Policy Objectives of Education and the Development of the Education System, and submits them to the Government (in each odd-numbered year) for approval. The Government then submits them to the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The first such plan was developed in 2003. The Ministry of Education provides methodological guidance and co-ordination of the long-term policy objectives of education and the development of the education system at regional levels. Based on annual reports drawn up by regions it submits an annual report on the state and development of education system to the Government.

The Ministry of Education sets the content of education. It formulates a National Educational Programme as a policy document developed in co-operation not only with experts in education but also with central trade union bodies, employers' representatives and regions. The National Educational Programme is submitted for discussion to the Government, which subsequently submits it for approval to both Parliamentary Chambers. This document has not yet been prepared.

The Ministry of Education develops framework educational programmes for every educational level (up to upper secondary), for different fields at those levels and for language and basic art education. They define binding scopes of school education programmes. The Ministry accredits educational programmes for individual tertiary professional schools.

In the area of funding the Ministry of Education is responsible for state funding policy in the education sphere (see 1.5).

In the terms of labour relations the Ministry of Education

- determines the workload of teachers;
- sets the requirements for the professional and pedagogical competence of educational staff;
- sets principles for the forming of open competition commissions for selected educational posts;
- appoints and withdraws heads of institutions that are directly run by it, and the Chief School Inspector.

The Ministry of Education has lost most of its direct responsibilities for educational establishments. The Ministry retains control of a few dozen establishments for institutional and preventive care. In some special cases it can be the organising body of some schools and directly administered organisations engaged in statistics, curricula, educational guidance, in-service training of teachers etc.

With regard to the obligation of the State to assure the functioning, efficiency and coherence of the education system of the Czech Republic as a whole, the Ministry of Education maintains the Register of Schools and School Facilities of all organising bodies. Being recorded in the register means that the school is entitled to provide education in the chosen field and form and to receive funds from corresponding public sources within the limit specified in the record. The maintenance of the Register of nursery schools and some school facilities with a local sphere of action is delegated to the regional level.

In higher education the Ministry of Education appoints the Board of Trustees of public higher education institutions (after consultation with the head of the higher education institution – the rektor who is appointed by the President of the Republic). It is responsible for registering the internal regulations of higher education institutions, which only become valid after registration. The Ministry of Education also evaluates the Long-term Plan of the Educational, Scientific, Research, Developmental, Artistic and Other Creative Activities of higher education institutions, discusses and evaluates the long-term plan of individual public higher education institutions and the updating of these. It allocates financial resources from the state budget and controls their use, and on the basis of the Accreditation Commission's advice decides on the accreditation of the study programmes of higher education institutions.

Regional level

Regions assumed their responsibilities fully on 1 January 2003. Regional representation is elected and is headed by a governor. The Regional Council appoints and dismisses the head of the educational department of the regional authority. The regional representative body always establishes a Committee for Education and Employment (*Výbor pro výchovu a vzdělávání*), which has at least five members.

Regional Authorities draw up their long-term policy objectives of education and the development of the educational system of the respective region, in compliance with the long-term policy objectives of education and the development of the education system of the Czech Republic. The objectives are based on an analysis of the educational development, demographic expectations, labour market development and economic achievements in the region. They set goals for individual areas of education, the structure of education available, mainly the structure of individual educational fields, and their capacity. They also prepare a proposal for funding. Each Regional Council submits the part of long-term policy objectives concerning education provided by its schools to the respective Regional Assembly for its approval. It is then submitted to the Ministry of Education for its opinion and only then are the objectives published (in each odd-numbered year). This procedure was followed for the first time in 2003.

The regional authority prepares and publishes annual reports on the state and development of the education system in the region.

Regions are the organising bodies of tertiary professional schools, upper secondary schools and school facilities for children with special educational needs (including nursery and basic schools), upper secondary schools with the language of instruction of a national minority, language schools authorised to organise state language examination, basic art schools, and school facilities serving them, including facilities for special interest education and other institutions.

As the number of municipalities in the Czech Republic is rather high (some of them are very small), an intermediate element was introduced: the so-called municipalities with extended sphere of activity. They fulfil some functions of the state administration for schools and school facilities founded by municipalities, especially in funding (see 1.5).

The regional interests at higher education level are expressed by the regional representatives in the Boards of Trustees of higher education institutions.

Local level

Municipalities form an important component of public administration (currently they do not carry out state administration). Within the framework of self-government they are responsible for assuring the necessary conditions for compulsory school attendance and for pre-primary education in the year preceding compulsory school attendance. Municipalities or unions of municipalities establish and financially administer nursery schools and basic schools (including schools with the language of instruction of a national minority), and possibly other schools (usually the basic art schools). In larger municipalities, they ensure that school meals are provided and that younger pupils are cared for outside school hours (with considerable financial assistance from the State).

School autonomy

The law gave all schools the status of independent legal entities and thus a higher degree of autonomy. School heads are appointed by an organising body (municipality, region or the Ministry) on the basis of a competitive recruitment process. According to the Education Act they can be dismissed only for reasons stipulated by the law.

The school heads have full responsibility not only for the quality and efficiency of the educational process (including adjustment of educational programmes, choice of textbooks) but also for the financial management of the school, for appointing and dismissing teachers and for relations with the community and the public. For reason of accessibility, some basic schools and other school facilities are established even for small numbers of pupils. Minimal school and

class sizes are set by law. The organising body may grant exceptions provided it is ready to bear the increased costs.

Under the Education Act, a school's organising body has to establish a School Council (*školská rada*) enabling parents, pupils, staff, citizens and others to participate in the administration of schools.

Public higher education institutions were granted autonomy at all levels of management. Internal management of institutions, the establishment of self-governing academic bodies, content and organisation of study, labour relations and financing is exercised by the Academic Senate (a representative body with at least one third and at most half of the members students), the head of the higher education institution (*rektor*), the Academic (Art) Board and a Disciplinary Commission. Other bodies are the Board of Trustees that safeguards public interest in the institution's activities and good management of the property, and a manager (*kvestor*). There are autonomous bodies even at the faculties, but they are not legal entities. Higher education institutions also have a representative body, the Higher Education Council, made up of representatives from the academic community.

State higher education institutions (University of Defence and Police Academy) are established by the relevant ministries. Their autonomy is limited: they do not have a Board of Trustees, they have no autonomy in salaries, and their budget is linked to the budget of the relevant ministry. The University of Defence is not a legal entity.



1.4 Quality assurance

Maintenance of quality is reflected in the long-term policy objectives of education and the development of the education system and annual reports on state and development of education system (see 1.3).

The evaluation of schools and school facilities is carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate (*Česká školní inspekce*) – one of the key institutions of the state administration in education. It falls within the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. This central control body is responsible for monitoring activities in pre-primary, basic (primary and lower secondary), upper secondary and tertiary education (with the exception of institutions of higher education) and school facilities. It is responsible for studying and evaluating the results of education, the quality of professional and pedagogical management, working conditions, teaching materials and equipment for public legal auditing, the use of the funds from the state budget and monitoring the observance of generally binding regulations. The head of the Inspectorate is the Chief School Inspector (*ústřední školní inspektor*) appointed by the Minister of Education; starting from 2009 he/she will be subject to the Service Act. The Czech School Inspectorate comprises a central office and inspectorates. Inspections are organised in accordance with a plan proposed by the Chief School Inspector and approved by the Minister of Education, or on the basis of complaints or other stimuli. Results of inspections are inspection or topic reports, control protocols and also the annual report comprising the summary evaluation of the education system. In 2007/08 there were 281 inspectors.

The Education Act (and corresponding regulation) requires schools to carry out a self-evaluation at least once in two years which then constitutes the background for the evaluation and for the annual reports of the Czech School Inspectorate. Most of schools prepared their self-evaluation for the first time in 2007.

The organising body can carry out evaluation of its schools and school facilities under criteria published in advance.



1.5 Financing

Expenditure on education in the Czech Republic comes mainly from public funds.

In line with administrative responsibility, the major part of state (central) funding comes from the budget of the Ministry of Education. Other funds are provided to the organising bodies of schools and school facilities: regions and municipalities from their budgets. Their income comes from the taxes gathered usually at the central level and allocated to regions and municipalities according to given percentages. For financing of schools founded by church and private providers see 1.7.

The Ministry of Education

- determines basic principles governing the funding of schools and school facilities;
- submits background information for the drawing up of the state budget;
- sets binding principles for the allocation of financial resources within the education sector;
- allocates funds to schools and school facilities under its direct control or under the direct control of the church;
- allocates through regions funds for institutions under the direct control of regions, as well as for schools run by other authorities;
- allocates funds beyond the set level to schools and school facilities run by all authorities, providing that they carry out a pilot verification of new forms and methods of teaching, as well as funds for development programmes announced by the Ministry of Education;
- allocates funds to public and private higher education institutions;
- checks the use of allocated funds.

Since 1992, the system of financing is on a “per capita” basis rather than according to the type of institution, and most of the resources are allocated from the educational budget.

Financing of schools and school facilities founded by regions and municipalities

Capital expenditure of schools and school facilities and those running costs that are not direct educational costs is met by their organising bodies.

The Ministry of Education covers direct educational costs, especially for salaries of teachers and other staff and teaching aids. These resources are allocated through regional budgets according to the number of pupils and per capita amount. The Ministry sets the central per capita amounts for four age categories corresponding to individual educational levels: ages 3–5, 6–15, 16–18, and 19–21 years. The fifth per capita amount is set for children/pupils in institutional education. Based on principles and indicators specified by the Ministry of Education, regional authorities set the regional per capita amounts of direct educational costs per pupil depending on the type of school and relevant educational programmes. In doing so they consider how long-term policy objectives are met, how demanding educational programmes are etc. Regional per capita amounts include increased costs for persons with special educational needs. The regional authority directly allocates the resources (determined by multiplying the relevant regional per capita amount by the number of pupils) to schools and school facilities for which it is responsible and to basic schools and nursery schools that are run by municipalities.

Textbooks (if approved) and other teaching materials are provided (lent) free of charge to pupils at basic schools. At secondary schools and tertiary professional schools they are lent free of charge only to socially disadvantaged pupils.

All schools can also opt to make use of other sources of funding for the purchase of textbooks and teaching aids (sponsors, prospective employers, rental of rooms or sports facilities, etc.).

Financing of higher education institutions

According to the Higher Education Act of 1999, public higher education institutions are entitled to manage their own property although a substantial part of their activity is directly financed by the state. Funds for higher education institutions are set annually by the Act on State Budget. In 2006 the relative proportions of running and capital costs were about 75:25. The funds are provided in the form of grants, any balance of which is transferable to the next year, or subsidies which are (with certain exceptions) set by the Higher Education Act. Rules for allocating grants change to make it possible to influence the activities of higher education institutions in accordance with the priorities of the long-term plans for higher education, for example support of structured study, of successful completion of studies in time, increasing the number of students.

Education is funded through per capita amounts (cost units) set per student and since 2005 also per graduate and increase in the number of students. Study programmes are divided into seven groups according to the relative cost, with a cost coefficient between 1 and 5.9. The total sum is calculated as a product of the basic per capita amount per student or graduate which is set annually by the Ministry of Education, the cost coefficient of programmes and the fixed number of students/graduates on programmes. Students who exceed the normal duration of study by more than a year are not included in the calculation. Any increase in the number of students must be in accordance with individual higher education institutions' contracts with the Ministry of Education. This system provides higher education institutions with more than 80% of total non-investment costs.

According to special rules, higher education institutions are also given funds for research, catering and accommodation of students and

capital expenditure. Since September 2005 accommodation subsidies go directly to commuting students, not to student hostels. In September 2006 social scholarships were introduced awarded according to the income of the student's family.

Higher education institutions receive income from their property and from fees, and this is mainly used for covering expenses of admission proceedings. The students pay for any extension of their studies beyond the standard time or if they wish to follow a second study programme. Students also pay for studying in a foreign language. Further income comes from lifelong learning programmes, which are not studies in the sense of the Higher Education Act.

State higher education institutions are financed by their responsible bodies – the University of Defence by the Ministry of Defence and the Police Academy by the Ministry of the Interior.

For private higher education institutions see 1.7.



1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

The highest advisory body at the national level is the Council of Economic and Social Agreement (*Rada hospodářské a sociální dohody*; tripartite: government – employers – unions). The Ministry of Education is assisted by several advisory bodies in deciding on the development of education and different levels of the educational system, recognition of educational institutions, economic issues, etc. Various interest groups – experts in particular areas (representatives of scientific branches, teachers, psychologists) and also trade unions, employees associations with nationwide authority, professional associations, regions, teachers' and parents' associations, etc. – are also represented. The Education Act specifies situations in which the opinion of interest groups is required. Sometimes other ministries have to be consulted.

The scope of activities of institutions providing education-related services under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education is restricted.

The Research Institute of Education in Prague (*Výzkumný ústav pedagogický v Praze*) focuses on the concept, the development strategy of general education including special pre-primary education, on preparing draft versions of educational programmes, forming evaluation criteria and instruments, and assessing existing educational models.

The National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education (*Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání*) is a co-ordinating, consultative, expert and research institution concerned with secondary vocational/technical and tertiary professional education, and co-ordination between education, labour market and career centres.

The Institute for Educational-Psychological Guidance of the Czech Republic (*Institut pedago-*

gicko-psychologického poradenství ČR) provides support for educational guidance centres.

The Institute for Information on Education (*Ústav pro informace ve vzdělávání*) collects, processes and provides information on education (statistics, analysis, surveys, prognoses). It represents the Czech Republic in international information networks on education. It also runs the main educational library, the Comenius National Library of Education (*Národní pedagogická knihovna Komenského*).

The Centre for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (*Centrum pro zjišťování výsledků vzdělávání – CERMAT*) prepares evaluation tools for the maturitní zkouška examination and supports pupils' assessments at basic school.

The National Institute for Children and Youth (*Národní institut dětí a mládeže MŠMT*) is concerned with research and the provision of educational, information and consultancy services related to leisure activities for children and young people. It also provides support for gifted children and children with learning difficulties.

The National Institute for Further Education (*Národní institut pro další vzdělávání*) was established in 2004, developing out of pedagogical centres. It consists of thirteen regional stations and co-ordinates and organises courses of in-service training for teachers and school management. It also plays an important role in implementing framework educational programmes into schools.

Within the higher education sphere, a similar role to that of the organisation under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education is played by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (*Centrum pro studium vysokého školství*) which has the status of a public research institution.

It conducts comparative analytical and conceptual studies on tertiary education; is responsible for quality assurance, and internationalisation processes; it examines governance mechanisms and the financing of higher education institutions, and problems of students. The Centre acts as the national centre for recognition of academic qualifications and is involved in a well-functioning distance education system.

A special consultative role is also played by Accreditation Commissions (*akreditační komise*): for tertiary professional education, for higher education and for in-service training of teachers. They work for the Ministry of Education and are appointed by the Minister.

Other advisory bodies operate in regions, such as regional councils for human resource development.

The School Council (*školská rada*) is an advisory body at the school level. It enables pupils, educational staff, the organising body (founder) and other persons (often representing employers) to participate in school governance.

1.7 Private schools

An amendment to the previous School Act in 1990 allowed the establishment of private and denominational schools. The role of private schools is to offer a range of educational options, corresponding to the interests of the pupils and the needs of the labour market, and to create a competitive environment throughout the education system. The Higher Education Act of 1998 enabled the establishment of private higher education institutions. There are few denominational schools, none of which is a higher education institution.

Private schools and school facilities can be established by individuals or corporate bodies. No legal format is prescribed. The decision-making powers of private schools are set by the legal framework.

In 2007/08 private and denominational schools made up 2.1% of all nursery schools and they accounted for 1.4% of the total number of children, 2.4% of all basic schools with 1.2% of pupils, 25.2% of schools at upper secondary level with 15.3% pupils, and 33.4% of tertiary professional schools with 35.4% of students.

Private and denominational schools are free to charge fees, although denominational schools do not usually do so.

Private schools receive a state contribution towards their running costs from the Ministry of Education through the regional authorities. Capital expenditures are covered from school fees and other private sources. Public funding makes up the larger part of their overall resources.

Per capita amounts for individual types of private schools and educational programmes are set annually by the Ministry of Education based on the Act on Providing Subsidies to Private Schools. Subsidies can be granted to a private school on the basis of a contract with the rele-

vant regional authority. The contract includes the extent of educational activity and the percentage of the per capita amount. Schools receive either a basic subsidy (as a certain percentage of the per capita costs of an analogous public institution) to which every institution in the network is entitled as long as it applies for it, or institutions may apply for an increased subsidy. Both the basic and the increased percentages of the subsidy are set down by law. The basic subsidies range from 80% for special schools, to over 60% for nursery schools, basic schools, upper secondary and tertiary professional schools to 50% for other schools and school facilities. According to the contract, the subsidy may be raised up to 90% of the appropriate per capita funding in the case of upper secondary and tertiary professional schools, and 100% in the case of nursery, basic and special schools. Certain conditions must be met to obtain an increased subsidy: the school must already have received the subsidies for at least one year, must have received an average or higher than average evaluation of the school's results by the Czech School Inspectorate, have the legal structure of a public benefit corporation or (in the case of another legal form) an obligation to invest the school's whole profits in education. The subsidy is set according to the actual number of pupils in fields and forms of education put in the school register (see 1.3).

Denominational schools and school facilities receive funds directly from the Ministry of Education to cover their non-investment costs, which are based on the same funding formula as for public schools.

Evaluation of private and denominational schools is carried out by the Czech School Inspectorate under the same rules as for public schools.

Private higher education institutions started to be established after 1998 as rather small institutions. Their number has increased rapidly and they now outnumber public higher education institutions (61% of institutions with 11.9% of students in 2007/08). They can apply for state subsidies only if they are public benefit corporations or if prior to receiving state consent to become private higher education institutions they were tertiary professional schools and they were allocated a subsidy. They can get a subsidy only for study programmes that are deemed to be in the public interest.



Pre-Primary
Education



2



Nursery schools (*mateřská škola*) have a long and special national tradition, influenced among other things by the ideas of Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius) in the 17th century. The beginning of institutional pre-school education dates back to 1832 and the Education Act of 1869 already mentions pre-primary establishments. Soon, a distinction was made between day-care centres and pre-school educational institutions. Pre-primary education was incorporated as a full-blown part of the education system in 1948 and the quality of pre-primary education increased considerably in the post-war period. At the same time, however, it became an instrument for increasing the number of women in the country's work force, whilst enforcing the principles of collective education and weakening the influence of the family over the children's education.

After 1989, a lively debate developed over the role of nursery schools, their new role in the education system and their educational function. The personality-oriented model of pre-primary education was encouraged. Nursery schools contribute to an increase in social and cultural development of children and lay the foundations for their future education.

According to the 2004 Education Act nursery schools are considered to be a type of school whereas they had previously been considered as educational establishments. Attendance is not compulsory, but 79.2% of 3 year olds, 92.6% 4 year olds and 95.8% 5 year olds attend nursery school (data for 2007/08). The municipality ensures the place in nursery school to a child with a permanent residence in the municipality in the last year before their entrance to compulsory schooling. In exceptional cases, where parents have no other alternative, it is possible to accept younger children. Currently there are also 6 year olds and older children (about 20%, in proportion to age group of 6 year olds) whose attendance at basic school has

been deferred, usually at their parents' request. Recently the number of unsettled applications has been growing.

Schools can charge parents a contribution of up to 50% of the cost per child (except for educational costs). Last school year of pre-primary education is free of charge. Parents contribute to meals, which are subsidised.

Preparatory classes are established in basic schools (see Chapter 3) for socially disadvantaged children during the year prior to their starting compulsory school, these correspond to pre-primary level of education.

The traditional institutions caring for children under 3 years are crèches (*jesle*) generally administered by large municipalities, which finance them. These come within the sphere of Ministry of Health. Since 1990 there has been a big decrease in the number of crèches and in 2006 there were 48 of them with 1537 places. The State supports mainly the care for the youngest children in the family; namely through maternity leave and parental leave benefit.



2.1 Organisation

Nursery schools are generally independent legal subjects administered by municipalities or unions of municipalities, which also fund them (except for salaries and teaching aids). For the number of private and denominational nursery schools see 1.7.

Nursery schools can be full-day (the majority) or half-day care centres; they can also be established as boarding facilities. In addition to teaching, nursery schools provide playing games, walking, rest (sleep), and meals.

An average sized nursery school has 61.4 children (2007/08). Classes are coeducational. They should have a minimum of 18 children on average (15 if there is only one class in a school) and a maximum of 24.

Classes may be organised according to age or, according to the degree of adaptability or progress. Alternatively, children may be put into groups with mixed ages and progress levels. The integration of children with physical disabilities into mainstream schools also exists. In these cases, the fixed maximum number of children per class is reduced accordingly (between 12 and 19).

Nursery schools are usually open 10 to 11 hours a day, and parents can use their services as needed by mutual agreement with the school. Schools can opt to close during July and August. The attendance of children in another school can be arranged.

2.2 Programme of activities

In 2004 the Ministry of Education published the Framework Educational Programme for Pre-primary Education, on the basis of which nursery schools developed their own educational programmes.

Pre-school education has the following main objectives: to facilitate the children's development and their ability to learn, to enable children to acquire the basic values on which our society is based, to become independent and able to express themselves as individuals in relation to their surroundings. The Framework Educational Programme is divided into following educational areas: the child and his/her body, the child and his/her psyche (Language and speech, Cognitive abilities and functions, imagination and fantasy, thought operations and Self-concept, emotions and will), the child and others, the child and society, and the child and the world. The main components of the programme are spontaneous games and physical activities, including outdoor activities and games, walks and excursions. Sleep is also an important element of the routine. Personal development and socialisation are also supported by activities related to literary, artistic and moral education. All activities emphasise emotional involvement and encourage a spirit of participation. Nursery schools are moving towards internal differentiation and individualisation of their programmes. Foreign language teaching, swimming courses, artistic activity, speech therapy and programmes for gifted children are also offered. On the basis of an agreement between the Ministry of Education and IBM since 2002 some nursery schools have taken part in a programme for the introduction of computers in schools (Kid Smart Early Learning Programme).

2.3 Assessment

Teachers provide a professional assessment of the development of children, but this is not an assessment of child's performance in relevance to a given standard, or a comparison of children and their performance. Every nursery school, and indeed every teacher, can choose or prepare a system for monitoring and assessing children's development. If any irregularities or problems occur during attendance the nursery school will, with the agreement of parents, provide educational, psychological or medical consultations and offer remedial and developmental programmes tailored to the child's individual needs.

For transition to compulsory education see introduction to the Chapter 3.

2.4 Teachers

Nursery school teachers obtain a full qualification from a four-year upper secondary school course with a final secondary leaving examination (*maturitní zkouška*). Nursery school teachers can also be trained in courses offered by faculties of education at universities or tertiary professional schools.

A group of children has one or two teachers depending on the number of the children in the group and duration of the teaching.

The total work load of nursery school teachers is 40 hours per week, with a teaching load of 31 hours. They usually work full-time. The teaching load of a school head or deputy head is reduced, depending on the school size (13–24 lessons a week). Virtually all teachers of the nursery school are women, although the profession is open to both genders.

For in-service training see 4A.5.



2.5 Statistics 2007/08

Nursery schools: Schools, classes, children, teachers and corresponding ratios:

Children	291 194
Schools	4 808
Classes	12 698
Child/class ratio	22.9
Teachers*	22 744.3
Child/teacher ratio*	12.8

* Full-time equivalent, including school heads and counsellors (*výchovní poradci*).

Participation rate in pre-primary education in the *mateřské školy* (%):

	2002/03	2004/05	2006/07	2007/08
Age group 3 years	76.4	77.1	76.5	79.2
Age group 4 years	90.8	93.4	90.3	92.6
Age group 5 years	94.9	94.1	93.1	95.8
Under three years of age*	24.5	26.4	23.4	24.8
Six years of age and older**	22.5	22.4	22.1	22.8

* Participation rate of 2 year olds and younger children to 2 year olds.

** Participation rate of 6 year olds and older children to 6 year olds.

Source: Institute for Information on Education





Compulsory
Education

0%



3



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Before the 1990/91 school year compulsory school attendance lasted 10 years – 8 years of uniform education at basic school (*základní škola*), and at least two years at an upper secondary school (which were usually from two to four-year schools).

Following a decision of 1990 the number of years at the basic school was increased to 9, and at the same time compulsory school attendance was shortened to 9 years. Pupils could attend basic school, a multi-year *gymnázium*, and until 1995 the last year of the compulsory nine-year schooling could be taken in the first year of an upper secondary school. This meant a major change in the concept of uniform basic education and in the differentiation of institutions. In addition to the traditional 4-year *gymnázia* (upper secondary education) which pupils proceed to after completing basic school (see Chapter 4), multi-year *gymnázia* were established aimed at providing more demanding education for more intellectually gifted pupils within their compulsory school attendance. In 1995 multi-year *gymnázia* were reduced to 8-year (lower and upper secondary education; on completion of year 5 of the basic school) and 6-year (on completion of year 7 of the basic school) *gymnázia*.

Since 1996/97 the length of the basic school equals the length of compulsory school attendance. Children of compulsory school age (6 to 15 years) mostly attend basic schools. Pupils can, upon their parents' request and if they meet the admission requirements, complete their compulsory education beginning from the sixth or eighth grade at a multi-year *gymnázium* (see 3.2 and 4A.) or 8-year conservatoire (*konzervatoř*) (see 4D). Since 2005 pupils acquire the level of basic education (*základní vzdělání*). Having successfully completed compulsory school education (the educational programme of basic education) they obtain certificates with a supplement confirming that they have acquired this level of education.

In September 1998 home tuition was approved on an experimental basis. At the beginning of the experiment about 60 pupils of the first stage (primary level) were participating. Since 2005 this type of education has been codified by the new Education Act as individual tuition (*individuální vzdělávání*). The head of the school providing compulsory education in which the pupil is enrolled gives permission to organise this type of education. Only pupils in the first stage (primary level) can opt for home schooling. Since the 2007/08 school year there has been pilot verification of individual education of pupils of the second stage of basic school (ISCED 2). In 2007/08 school year 376 pupils were being educated at home.

Basic schools accept pupils who have reached 6 years of age by 1 September of the year in question. Children turning 6 between the beginning of the school year and the end of the calendar year can be admitted if they are sufficiently mature, physically and mentally, and if their legal guardian applies for admission.

The maturity of pupils is assessed during their enrolment to school. If a pupil is not considered mature enough to attend school he/she continues to attend either a nursery school or a preparatory class. From 1997 to 2005 these classes were established in basic, nursery or special schools, but since 2005 they are only within basic schools. These classes have fewer children, each child is given individual tuition and teachers can use the help of teacher's assistants. Around 2% of pupils move into compulsory education from these classes.

Basic school has two levels: the first stage now covers the first to fifth grades (ISCED 1), and the second stage the sixth to ninth grades (ISCED 2). In the first stage, all subjects are usually taught by a generalist teacher, while at the second stage, subjects are taught by teachers specialising in two subjects or, exceptionally, in one. Classes are coeducational.

Since 1990, basic schools have been established by municipalities. Nursery schools can be integrated into basic schools.

All people have the right to basic education free of charge.

Pupils obtain textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education free of charge. Pupils of the first grade and in preparatory classes do not return the textbooks. Apart from textbooks they also get basic school aids according to a defined extent.

Parents contribute

- to additional requirements of pupils within the framework of the curriculum, some other teaching materials, courses outside the school (swimming, skating, skiing) and school camps in rural environments;
- outside the curriculum to meals that are largely subsidised, to school clubs, special interest courses.

3.1 Organisation

In order to ensure access to schools, there are schools with only the first stage (or exceptionally with only the second stage) in small municipalities (according to last data from 2004/05 school year such schools made up 37.6% of all basic schools with about 12% of all first-stage pupils). These are usually schools with several grades in one class (only within the first stage).

School buildings are usually used for one shift per day. The school head decides on the availability of the school building (e.g. outside school hours). Pupils attend school from Monday to Friday. There are no classes at weekends. In addition to morning classes there are also afternoon classes once or twice a week.

The school year begins on 1 September and ends on 31 August of the following year. The main holiday is in July and August. There is a one-week holiday in spring, with other short holidays in the autumn, at Christmas, at Easter and at the end of the first semester. The dates of main holidays are laid down by regulation, other holidays are specified by the Ministry of Education each year.

The compulsory number of lessons per week by the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education is as follows:

1st stage	2nd stage
Year 1 - 18-22 lessons	Year 6 - 28-30 lessons
Year 2 - 18-22 lessons	Year 7 - 28-30 lessons
Year 3 - 22-26 lessons	Year 8 - 30-32 lessons
Year 4 - 22-26 lessons	Year 9 - 30-32 lessons
Year 5 - 22-26 lessons	

3.2 Curriculum

A lesson lasts 45 minutes. The timetable allows for intervals of less than one lesson (i.e. less than 45 min.) and a block teaching can be used.

The maximum number of pupils per class is 30. If a class integrates pupils with special educational needs, the number is reduced; the minimum average number is 17. For schools with only the first stage the minimum average number of pupils per class is 10 for schools with one classroom, 12 for schools with two classrooms, 14 for schools with three classrooms and 15 for schools with four and more classrooms. The minimum average number of pupils in classes for minorities is 12 and separate classes for these pupils must have at least 10 pupils. In 2007/08 the national average of pupils per class was 21.7 and 219.4 per school.

Classes are coeducational. Pupils are divided into classes by age. At the first stage there can be classes with pupils of mixed age.

The Education Act (2005) set a two-level structure for educational programmes. Framework Educational Programmes specify the concrete objectives, form, length and compulsory content of education and some general conditions for their implementation, as well as conditions for the education of pupils with special educational needs. The school head draws up a school educational programme in accordance with the Framework Educational Programme and the school's conditions.

Since September 2007 teaching according to the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education (FEP BE) has been binding in the first and sixth years of basic education and in the first year of eight-year *gymnázium*. The second most important document is still the Standard for Basic Education, which was a binding document for creating the Basic School, National School and General School educational programmes. These programmes can be followed until the end of 2011 (in year 5), or 2010 (in year 9) school years at the latest.

The FEP BE sets the aims of basic education as follows: pupils should acquire necessary learning strategies on the basis of which they should be motivated for life-long learning. They should learn how to think creatively and solve appropriate problems, communicate effectively and cooperate, protect their physical and mental health, creative values and the environment. They should learn how to be considerate and tolerant towards other people, different cultures and spiritual values, to recognise their abilities and real possibilities and to apply these together with knowledge and skills acquired in deciding on their life path and professional career.

Basic education aims to help pupils create and gradually develop key competences and provide them with a reliable foundation in general education focused especially on everyday life situations and practical behaviour.

In basic education, the following competences are considered to be key: learning; problem solving; communication; social and personal competence; citizenship; and work.

The FEP BE defines nine main educational areas consisting of one or more educational fields, cross-curricular themes and supplementary educational fields. It also specifies the compulsory content of the fields, i.e. the curriculum and expected outputs at the end of every period (the first stage is divided into first and second periods: years 1–3 and 4–5). It is possible to create one or more subjects from one educational area or integrate the content of more educational areas into a so-called integrated subject. The FEP BE also includes a framework timetable.

Religious education can be taught in accordance with the principles and objectives of education. Religious education is taught as a non-compulsory subject at schools established by a municipality or a union of municipalities, if at least seven pupils of the school request it. Pupils from several years of one school or more schools may be combined in one class, as long as the number of pupils in one class does not exceed thirty.

In both the first and the second stages a fixed number of disposable hours is specified (14 in the first stage, 24 in the second stage); use of these hours is fully at the discretion and responsibility of the school head, and all disposable hours must be used in the school educational programme (SEP) timetable.

Disposable hours can be used:

- to implement cross-curricular themes;
- to increase the number of hours for particular educational areas and fields;
- to introduce other areas of compulsory education which enhance the orientation of the school;
- to introduce supplementary educational fields (e.g. drama);
- to implement the content of an educational field, a second foreign language for at least 6 hours, which must be offered to pupils at least

from year 8 (the school must offer English to pupils who did not choose it as their first foreign language). It may also be used to offer other optional subjects for the same number of hours for pupils, who have not opted for a second foreign language;

- to increase the number of hours for physical education in two successive years of the first stage, where compulsory swimming lessons are offered;
- to introduce teaching to support the education of pupils with special education needs.

The Standard for Basic Education was published in the Bulletin of the Ministry of Education in 1995 and in 1997 a curriculum linked with the integration of the Czech Republic into international structures was added. It divides educational objectives into seven areas: languages, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, aesthetic education, health and life-style education, crafts and technology.

Educational objectives are defined as follows:

- at the cognitive level – pupils learn the basics of the general culture and of communication to help them orientate themselves in the world outside school;
- at the level of skills and competencies – the ability to employ acquired skills in real-life situations;
- at the level of values and attitudes – human moral values that are part of European traditions, values on which democratic society and the legal order depend and values that enable the pupils to form responsible relationships to their own actions are fundamental.

Timetables of the Basic School, National School and General School educational programmes were modified progressively to enable a smooth transition to teaching according to the FEP BE.

Teachers are free to choose methods and teaching procedure. The Ministry of Education grants approval to textbooks on the basis of an assessment as to whether they comply with educational objectives. Schools may also use other textbooks unless these are contrary to the educational objectives. School heads are responsible for the choice of textbooks.

Framework timetable

Educational areas	Educational fields	Minimum number of hours		Additional notes:
		1 st stage	2 nd stage	
		years 1–5	years 6–9*	
Language and language communication	Czech language and literature	35	15	must be taught in every year
	Foreign language	9	12	compulsory from year 3 (at least 3 hours a week in every year); may be taught from the year 1
Mathematics and its application		20	15	must be taught in every year
Information and communication technology		1	1	is taught at least once at the first stage and once at the second stage
People and their world		12		is taught at first stage only, in every year
People and society	History	-	11	
	Citizenship education			
People and nature	Physics	-	21	
	Chemistry			
	Biology			
	Geography			
Arts and culture	Music	12	10	must be taught in every year
	Fine art			
People and their health	Health education	-	10	at the first stage included in the educational area of People and their world must be taught in every year, at least 2 hours
	Physical education	10		
People and the world of work		5	3	must be taught in every year
Cross-curricular themes (Personal and social education, Education for democratic citizenship, Education towards thinking in the European and global context, Multicultural education, Environmental education, and Media studies)		P	P	need not to be included in every year
Disposable hours		14	24	
Total compulsory number of hours		118	122	

P = must be included at the given stage and disposable hours can be used

* or lower years of multi-year *gymnázia*

3.3 Assessment/certification

All pupils are assessed continuously in individual subjects and at the end of each semester, when pupil's behaviour and overall learning outcomes are assessed, as well as their performance in each subject.

Rules for the evaluation of pupils are set in accordance with the regulation by the school educational programme and are also laid out in the school code. The assessment must be unambiguous, comprehensible, comparable to the rules set in advance, factual and versatile. All individuals are approached individually. Marking on a five point scale, verbal assessment, scores (in per cent), pupils' ranking in class and other methods are used. Marking is used in almost all schools, but only less than one quarter of them limit themselves to this. Most often a combination of the above possibilities is used.

Continuous assessment is reflected in the reports that pupils receive at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year. Since 1990, the use of oral assessment has become widespread in many schools, after agreement with parents, especially for younger classes, and was later officially authorised by the Ministry of Education in September 1993. According to the new Education Act the evaluation of a pupil's education results included in a school report is expressed by a mark, verbally, or by combination of both. This concerns both basic and upper secondary schools. Marks used to assess pupils' knowledge are on a scale of 1 (excellent), 2 (very good), 3 (good), 4 (satisfactory) and 5 (fail). There is no final examination at the end of basic school, but in the last year of compulsory school attendance each school issues its pupil with a final evaluation stating how the pupil concerned has achieved the educational objectives stated by the law. This can also occur in the 5th or 7th year if the pupil completes his/her compulsory education at *gymnázium* or conservatory and continues his/her studies at these schools.

3.4 Progression/ guidance/ transition arrangements

Pupils move up from one year to the next on the basis of their results. If a pupil fails in the overall assessment at the end of the year, he/she does not proceed to the next grade. A pupil can move to the next grade even if he/she already has repeated a year within one stage. It is also possible to transfer an extraordinarily gifted pupil to a higher grade on the request of parents and school guidance facility, without his/her completing the previous grade, on the condition that he/she passes an examination covering the required syllabus of the grade that has not been completed.

Czech compulsory school attendance is characterised by its low rate of failure. For a number of years the average number of pupils repeating a grade has been less than 1% (the number is lower at the first stage than at the second). An increasing number of pupils complete their compulsory school attendance before reaching the last year of basic school (for the past four years it has been 3–5%). A number of these pupils continue their studies at secondary vocational schools where they gain a professional qualification. 90% of population in the age group of 25–34 has attained at least upper secondary education – ISCED 3 (2005).

Pupils with special educational needs can be integrated into regular classes. 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 a special basic school if they are not educated otherwise. School leavers of this school attain basics of education (*základy vzdělání*).

3.5 Teachers

Educational staff responsible for guidance services at schools include educational counsellors (*výchovný poradce*), school prevention specialists (*školní metodik prevence*) and sometimes school psychologists or special educators (*speciální pedagog*) who can be employed by the school. Their activities include assistance in preventing pupil failure, dealing with socially pathological phenomena, support to pupils with special educational needs and special talent and career guidance. Schools can cooperate with educational and psychological guidance services (*pedagogicko-psychologická poradna*) or (in case of disabled children) special educational centres (*speciálně pedagogické centrum*).

Training for the teaching profession is provided by higher education institutions. It always includes practical experience of varying duration in schools; the studies end with a thesis and a final state examination on the basis of which students obtain a diploma and a title. In 2007/08 studies were structured (Bachelor's and consecutive Master's study) in the majority of study fields (with the exception of teachers studying for the first stage of the basic school – primary level, which is usually a 5-year Master's course).

Teachers for the first stage of basic school gain a Master's degree after a four or five-year course, usually at a faculty of education. The course includes general humanities subjects, the Czech language, mathematics, and pedagogical and psychological subjects. At some faculties students may specialise in e.g. music, art, physical education, or a foreign language.

Training of teachers for the second stage of basic school is similar to that for teachers of general subjects at upper secondary schools – see the section 4A.5.

Teachers at the first stage are generalists. At the second stage teachers are specialists, usually qualified to teach two subjects.

The working conditions are ruled by the Labour Code. Teachers are recruited through an open recruitment process. If a teacher meets general and professional requirements the school head will sign a permanent contract with him/her.

The working week of all employees in the education sector is the same as for all other employees in the Czech Republic, i.e. 40 hours. The working week of teachers is divided into direct teaching load and hours required for activities related to the educa-

tion process, i.e. preparing lessons, assessment of pupils/students, consultancy and guidance, supervision, informing parents of their children's progress, attending meetings, managing departments, libraries, collections, etc. The school head decides on the distribution of working hours.

The prescribed teaching load for teachers at both stages of basic school is 22 lessons per week.

The teaching load is reduced by one to five hours if a teacher also performs other activities, such as educational guidance. For school heads or their deputies, the amount is reduced depending on the size of the school.

For in-service training see 4A.5.



3.6 Statistics 2007/08

Compulsory education: pupils

Pupils participating in compulsory education total	888 000
Basic school	844 863
- first stage (ISCED 1)	458 046
- second stage (ISCED 2)	386 817
ISCED level 2 in total (basic schools, <i>gymnázia</i> , conservatoires)	429 954
Gymnázia – ISCED level 2	42 829
Conservatoires – ISCED level 2	308

Basic school: Pupils, schools, classes, teachers

	Both stages (ISCED 1+2)	First stage (ISCED 1)	Second stage (ISCED 2)
Pupils	844 863	458 046	386 817
Schools	4 155	-	-
Pupil/school	203.3	-	-
Classes	43 433	24 324	19 109
Pupil/class	19.5	18.8	20.2
Teachers*	60 973.2	27 520.0	33 453.2
Pupil/teacher ratio*	13.9	16.8	11.6

* Full-time equivalent including school heads and counsellors (*výchovní poradci*).

Source: Institute for Information on Education

Post-Compulsory General and Vocational Secondary Education



4



“

- 4A** | *Gymnázia* (general education) . . . 26
- 4B** | Technical secondary education completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination . . . 27
- 4C** | Vocational secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate and other secondary education . . . 28
- 4D** | Conservatoires . . . 29

Upper secondary education is a highly differentiated system guaranteeing education and vocational training for almost the entire population of young people between completion of compulsory school attendance and taking up employment or continuing in higher education.

Pupils attending upper secondary schools are generally aged 15 to 19 years. The starting age of study is set by the completion of compulsory education. Some secondary schools (multi-year *gymnázia*) also provide a programme of compulsory education and therefore even younger pupils attend them.

Education is not compulsory for 15–18 year olds, but in 2007/08 96.5% were in education (see 4.6).

The 2004 Education Act reflects the development within secondary education. Its goal has been newly defined and levels of education have been defined according to the length and types of educational programmes, not types of school.

The aim of secondary education is to develop knowledge, skills and values attained within basic education in either broader general education or vocational education connected with general education. Secondary education creates conditions for fair personal, civilian and professional life and continuing education, independent acquisition of information and life-long learning.

Fundamentals covered by general subjects and the theoretical part of technical subjects in four-year technical education have been reinforced. Thus education is no longer divided into general (so called full secondary education – *úplné střední vzdělání*) and full secondary technical education (*úplné střední odborné vzdělání*); both types are now considered to “secondary education completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination” (*střední vzdělání s maturitní zkouškou*). The existing classification of schools – secondary general school (*gymnázium*), second-

ary technical school (*střední odborná škola*) and secondary vocational school (*střední odborné učiliště*) has been preserved. These types are not defined by law; many schools provide more courses of different level of education and various specialisations, so such divisions are not applicable to them.

Through successful completion of the relevant type and length of educational programme the following levels of education can be acquired at secondary school:

- a) secondary education – *střední vzdělání* (1–2 years) (ISCED 3C/2C);
- b) secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate (*střední vzdělání s výučním listem*) – two to three years (ISCED 3C) or a shortened study programme (1–1.5 year) for those having completed secondary education with a *maturitní zkouška* examination (ISCED 4C);
- c) secondary education completed by a *maturitní zkouška* (school-leaving) examination (*střední vzdělání s maturitní zkouškou*). Study programmes are of various length, e.g. a four-year study (ISCED 3A), six or eight years of study at multi-year *gymnázium* (ISCED 2A+3A) or, for those with an apprenticeship certificate, a two-year follow-up course (*nástavbové studium*) (ISCED 4A) or possibly by a shortened study for those attaining secondary education completed with *maturitní zkouška* examination in other field of study (1–2 years) (ISCED 4A).

The length of the study corresponds to full-time study programmes. The same level of education can also be attained through other part-time forms of education (see 4A.1); in this case the study may be one year longer. Education attained in all forms is equal.

Governmental provisions specify courses in which the above educational levels can be attained.

One- to two-year courses are usually intended for special education or for those pupils who have not successfully completed basic school. Such courses prepare pupils for less demanding professions.

Courses leading to an apprenticeship certificate are very practically oriented and they are traditionally organised by secondary vocational schools (*střední odborná učiliště*).

Technical courses completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination are mostly provided by secondary technical schools (*střední odborné školy*), in case of some more practically oriented fields by secondary vocational schools. General courses are usually provided by secondary general schools (*gymnázium*). A new type of study is lyceum courses – technical, economical, pedagogical etc., which offer a broader general vocational education.

Follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*) are usually organised by secondary vocational schools provided the school also organises secondary level courses completed by a *maturitní zkouška* examination. The Education Act newly introduced shortened study (*zkrácené studium*) programmes for acquiring secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate (for those with a *maturitní zkouška* examination) or earned by attaining a *maturitní zkouška* certificate (for those with a *maturitní zkouška* examination in another field).

The structural development of upper secondary education has been one of the most important changes in the Czech education system since 1989. In that year the ratio of leavers from courses leading to the *maturitní zkouška* examination (which is a prerequisite for higher education) to those without this exam was around 40:60. By 1997, this ratio had reversed; in 2006/07 it was around 70:30 in favour of courses completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination. The position of technical and vocational education at the upper secondary level is

still extremely high. Around 80% of the population complete their upper secondary education at these schools. Nevertheless, many leavers of technical courses completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination are admitted to higher education institutions.

Interest in other than full-time courses (earlier referred to as on-the-job courses – *studium při zaměstnání*) has fallen considerably since 1989 because of the availability of full-time courses. In 2007/08 6.2% of all pupils studied in other forms of study. The exception is follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*), which have increased in number, with more than one half of the learners attending other than a full-time course.

Secondary schools are usually public (generally established by the regions), but can also be private, or denominational (see 1.7).

Education is free of charge. Fees are paid only at private or possibly denominational schools. Parents contribute to different courses organised outside the campus (e.g. swimming, skiing courses). They also contribute to meals taken in the school catering facilities (which are subsidised) and extracurricular courses.

Responsibility for creating curricula still lies with the Ministry of Education. It entrusts this task to the relevant bodies, coordinates their work and approves the final documents. Informal groups of teachers, teacher organisations and independent professional associations have all contributed to innovations in the existing curricula and the creation of new ones. Documents, most of which are prepared in institutes of educational research, are discussed in representative commissions made up of professionals from higher education institutions, research institutes, and schools. Non-formal groups of teachers, teachers' organisations and independent professional associations also contribute to the innovations and design of new curricula.

A new two-level system of curricula is gradually being introduced based on the framework educational programmes for individual courses, approved by the Ministry, and the school educational programmes. The autonomy which schools have acquired allows considerable variation in the concepts of educational approaches and permits the creation of an individual school profile, taking into consideration regional needs and the interests of the pupils. Framework educational programmes for the first group of courses were approved in 2007; the schools will start teaching according to their school educational programmes in 2009/10 at the latest.

Classes are coeducational (except for physical education lessons). Nonetheless, some courses are attended almost solely by girls (e.g. pre-primary teacher training) and others by boys (e.g. metallurgy), even though they are open to both girls and boys. Pupils are not grouped according to their educational achievements.

Pupils buy textbooks themselves. Schools operate libraries with a limited stock of textbooks that can be lent to pupils from low-income families. Schools also lend textbooks to pupils completing their compulsory education and pupils with disability.

The use of teaching documents and textbooks for subjects is under the responsibility of a teacher, with the approval of the school head.

The choice of teaching methods, materials and aids depends on the teacher; ICT and teaching software is used more and more often.

The school head decides on the use of the school building.

The prerequisites for admission to upper secondary school are the successful completion of compulsory school attendance (or possibly completion of basic education without completing compulsory school attendance) and meeting

the entrance requirements (which may include an entrance examination or an aptitude test).

For admission to the first year of secondary school, the school head announces at least one round of enrolment proceeding, the number of other rounds is not limited. In the first round, the pupils may apply to three secondary schools of their choice. Pupils and their parents may consult teachers, or educational advisors within the schools or in educational and psychological guidance centres, when making their decision. Criteria on which a pupil is accepted or rejected by a school head of secondary school may result from preceding education outcomes expressed in school reports, entrance examination or aptitude test results, if such an examination is included (e.g. in Czech and mathematics, in a foreign language or, in the case of artistic and sports schools, in a subject relevant to the alleged talent), and pupil's other abilities, knowledge and other qualities or sometimes the results of psychological tests or health prerequisites of applicant for particular field of study. If the head of a secondary school decides on performance of the entrance examination, its content and form is determined by the head on the basis of and within the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education. Two terms are announced in the first round of the enrolment proceeding. According to the Framework Educational Programme for some fields of studies aptitude test; terms for this examination are set earlier than for possible entrance examinations. Applicants who receive a decision on admission must confirm their intention to study at the particular school by a registration form at latest 5 days from receiving the decision.

The law permits a pupil to change their course or school. The decision rests with the head of the school which the pupil applies for. A special comparative examination may be required and ordered by the head of the school to which the pupil wishes to be transferred.

Among sparsely represented schools belong conservatoires, which offer art education. School leavers acquire predominantly “tertiary professional education at conservatoire” – *vyšší odborné vzdělání v konzervatoři* (ISCED 5B) but can also pass a *maturitní zkouška* examination and attain secondary education completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination (ISCED 3A). For details see 4D.



4.A

Gymnázia (general education)



The courses of *gymnázia* provide secondary education completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination (ISCED 3A). The aim of study at *gymnázium* is 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.

Gymnázia may offer 4-year courses for pupils from the age of 15 (who have completed their compulsory school attendance), 6-year courses for pupils from the age of 13 who have completed the 7th year or 8-year courses for pupils from the age of 11 who have completed the 5th year, often within one and the same school. Six-year or eight-year (multi-year) *gymnázia* have two stages – a lower stage (the first four years of an eight-year *gymnázium* or the first two years of a six-year *gymnázium*), which corresponds to the second stage of the basic school (ISCED 2), and the higher stage (ISCED 3A).

In addition to general courses, there are 12 fields of study at *gymnázia* (for example languages, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, physical education etc.) with a special focus on these subjects in the curriculum (see 4A.2). Some six-year and one eight-year *gymnázium* provide instruction in some or all subjects in a foreign language – CLIL (so-called bilingual *gymnázia*). However, the majority of *gymnázia* have a general orientation. With the transition to the two-level system of curricula these specialised courses will be replaced by one course from 2009/10 and specialisation will be up to individual schools. Only sports training *gymnázium* and *gymnázium* teaching some subjects in a foreign language will be preserved as separate courses.

In 1996 to 2007 between 19,000 and 25,000 pupils completed *gymnázia*, representing about 20% of all school leavers of full-time courses. Over two fifths of all pupils complete their education at a multi-year *gymnázium*. The majority of pupils continue their studies at higher education institutions or other institutions.

4A.1 Organisation

Pupils attend school from Monday to Friday. There are no classes at weekends. Classes are taught in both mornings and afternoons. A lesson lasts 45 minutes. In one week the pupils have a maximum of 35 lessons (in case of sports training *gymnázium* 46 lessons). The Ministry of Education stipulates a minimum of 80 pupils per school and a maximum of 30 pupils per class, with the minimum average number of pupils per class being 17. Classes are mostly organised according to the year of study. If requirements set by the regulation are fulfilled, pupils from more classes or years can be taught together in some subjects. Part or all of instruction in selected subjects may be carried out in smaller groups. This is the case primarily when the instruction is of the “learning by doing” type. Foreign languages are always taught in smaller groups with 9–23 pupils. The school year at *gymnázium* is distributed in a similar way as in basic school – see 3.1.

The education can have the day form or other forms – evening, distant, e-learning or combination of some of these.

4A.2 Curriculum

Until recently the content of education, concrete aims and timetable were set by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in curricular documents for four-year and eight-year (six-year) *gymnázia* including different types of *gymnázium* courses.

In July 2007 the Ministry of Education approved the Framework Educational Programme for the *gymnázium* and the Framework Educational Programme for sports training *gymnázium*, which determine basic requirements for education in *gymnázium* courses. Schools are obliged to prepare their own educational programmes following one of these documents. Schools will teach according to school educational programmes from the 2009/10 school year starting in the first year of the four-year *gymnázia*, the third year in six-year and the fifth year in eight-year *gymnázia*. For lower stages of multi-year *gymnázia* the Framework Educational Programmes for Basic Education is valid (see 3.3). The first years of eight-year *gymnázia* have been using this programme since 2007/08, from 2009/10 it will be binding for first years of six-year *gymnázia*. A special framework educational programme for six-year bilingual *gymnázia* is under preparation and should be in force from 2015.

Documents still in force

A basic document for education at the *gymnázium* is the Standard for Education in four-year *gymnázium*. Curricular documents stating goals, detailed timetable for four-year and eight-year *gymnázium* (six-year *gymnázium*) and syllabuses (educational content) of individual subjects are derived from it. The timetable provides schools with some freedom, the content is binding, but it is not divided into years; this is the responsibility of the school.

The number of lessons represents a minimum, to which the school head can add further lessons up to a set maximum. The letter “R” in this curriculum indicates that the inclusion of this subject in the teaching in the given year and the number of lessons is to be decided by the school head, but the total should not drop below the minimum number

Timetable of *gymnázium* (2007/08)

Number of lessons per week in years 1 to 4

	1	2	3	4	Total
Czech language and literature	3	3	3	3	12
Foreign language 1	3	3	3	3	12
Foreign language 2	3	3	3	3	12
Latin	R	R	R	R	R
Basics of social sciences	1	1	2	2	6
History	2	2	2	R	6
Geography	2	2	R	R	4
Mathematics	3	3	2	2	10
Descriptive geometry	R	R	R	R	R
Physics	2	2	2	R	6
Chemistry	2	2	2	R	6
Biology/geology	2	2	2	R	6
Information and computer technology	2	R	R	R	2
Aesthetic education	2	2	R	R	4
Physical education	2	2	2	2	8
Optional subject 1	R	R	2	2	4
Optional subject 2		R	2	2	4
Optional subject 3			R	2	2
Optional subject 4				R	R
Total of set lessons	29	27	27	21	104
Lessons added by school head (R)	4	6	6	12	28
Total	33	33	33	33	132
Non-compulsory subjects					

of lessons set for the given year, nor below the total minimum number of lessons set for a subject within the whole four-year study plan.

Foreign languages (English, German, French, Russian and Italian) are selected according to pupils' interests and the capacity of individual schools; classes can be divided into groups for all lessons. Physical education includes a week's skiing in the first year and a week's sports course usually in the third year.

Subjects included under aesthetic education are music and art. Pupils choose one of these in the first and second year.

Optional subjects 1, 2 and 3 are usually a continuation of the respective compulsory subjects at an advanced level (discussion, practicals, conversation in a foreign language, etc.). In this sense they form a unit with the compulsory subject and are therefore not independent subjects for the *maturní zkouška* examination. A maximum of 3 lessons is allocated to optional subject 4.

The school's profile is formed either through lessons – the content of which falls within the responsibility of the school head – or by a focus on some of the 12 fields of education, such as general *gymnázium*, mathematics, mathematics and physics, natural science, information and computer

technology, aesthetic subjects, living languages, classical languages, selected subjects taught in foreign language, humanities subjects, physical education and sports training. General conditions, profiling subjects (from a common timetable) and recommended content of these profiling subjects are set for each field of education. The school prepares its own curriculum based on its profile and submits it to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for approval (this arrangement remains valid until the new Framework Educational Programme is approved). The physical education and sports specialisations have special conditions and are controlled by the Ministry of Education directly.

Framework Educational Programme

The Framework Educational Programme for *Gymnázia* (FEP G) stipulates the objectives of *gymnázium* education, key competences which should be acquired by pupils, educational areas and cross-curricular topics, a framework timetable, rules to design the school educational programme (SEP), conditions of education of pupils with special educational needs (pupils with health disabilities or disadvantage and pupils from different cultural environments and socially disadvantaged background), conditions for the education of exceptionally gifted pupils, material, personnel and educational-psychological conditions, conditions of safety and mental hygiene and manual labour hygiene, psycho-social conditions and organisational and management conditions of *gymnázium* education.

Each of the eight educational areas has its characteristics, objectives and content of education (expected outcomes and subject matter). Each area is divided into one or more courses. For cross-curricular themes the characteristics, contribution to pupil's personal development and thematic fields are set. The stress is put mainly on educational outcomes. The expected pupils' key competencies are now defined. Close attention is also paid to pupils' system of values and their personal and social development, which the cross-curricular themes should primarily contribute to.

The Framework Educational Programme for Sports Training *Gymnázia* (FEP STG) and FEP G differ only in the content and number of lessons of physical education and sports training.

The school develops the school educational programme on the basis of the FEP G (FEP STG) and legislation in force. During the preparation the pupils' needs and the conditions of the school have to be respected, the legal requirements of parents, and if necessary those of founder, and the regional conditions have to be taken into consideration. The school head is responsible for the development of the SEP and its implementation, while teachers participate in the preparation of individual parts and take part in decision-making. The School Council gives its opinion on the proposed SEP and its implementation and approves the methods of assessing pupils. In the SEP the content of education is divided into subjects and years (teaching programmes) and the timetable is worked out in detail. It is possible to integrate, divide into more subjects or otherwise link topics of each educational field and cross-curricular theme; apart from the standard approach the curriculum can be taught in the form of seminars, courses, forums or projects. The obligatory numbers of teaching hours must be respected, although the school head has a relatively high number hours at his/her disposal (20% of the total number of hours), which provide for the specialisation of school and pupil.

Cross-curricular themes: Personal and social education, Education towards thinking in the European and global context, Multicultural education, Environmental education, Media studies.

The number of hours per week in each year must be between 27 and 35. The minimum number of hours per study is 132 hours, although the school can increase it up to 140 hours. Any hours over and above the set 132 are not covered from the state budget. The timetable of FEP STG is similar to that of the FEP G, although physical education and sports training account for 64 teaching hours. The total compulsory number of hours is 184, with the number of hours per week at 46 hours.

Framework timetable

Educational area	Educational field	Total number of teaching hours during the study	Note
Language and language communication	Czech language and literature	12	obligatory in each year
	Foreign language 1 ²	12	obligatory in each year
	Foreign language 2 ²	12	obligatory in each year
Mathematics and its application		10	obligatory in years 1 to 3
People and nature	Physics	36	obligatory in years 1 and 2
	Chemistry		
	Biology		
	Geography ³		
People and society	Civic and social science essentials		
	History		
	Geography ⁵		
People and the world of work		X	during years 1 to 4 ⁴
Arts and culture ³	Music	4	obligatory in years 1 and 2
	Fine arts		
People and their health	Physical education	8	obligatory in each year
	Health education	X	during years 1 to 4 ⁴
Information and communication technology		4	during years 1 to 4
Optional educational activities ⁴		8	obligatory in years 3 and 4
Cross-curricular themes		X	during years 1 to 4 ⁴
Available hours		26	fully in responsibility of school head ⁶
Total compulsory number of hours		132	

X – the number of hours is stipulated by the SEP

¹ Content of educational area (field) has to be provided during this period, and the details are stipulated in the SEP.

² One of the foreign languages must be English.

³ The offer must be such that pupils will on the basis of their own choice have the opportunity to acquire the full range of content of at least one of the fields, including the integrated topic Art production and communication.

⁴ Hours intended for optional subjects.

⁵ Due to its nature, Geography is included in the list of fields of both educational areas – People and nature and People and society.

⁶ All hours must be used. They are intended for the implementation of cross-curricular themes, for inclusion of other subjects, for the school's specialisation, and for increasing the number of hours for individual educational areas (fields).

4A.3 Assessment/certification

Gymnázia use both continuous and final assessment of pupils in different subjects. Pupils obtain a certificate after the first semester and at the end of the school year.

Rules of assessment in individual schools are set out in the school code. Actual methods of continuous assessment are normally chosen by individual teachers.

There are no exams at the end of a year nor any standardised national testing of pupils' performance. A pupil's outcomes in individual years are assessed on the same scale as at basic school (see 3.3).

Studies in *gymnázia* end with the *maturitní zkouška* examination. The examination may be taken only if the pupil has successfully completed the final year of school. The *maturitní zkouška* examination consists of two compulsory subjects (Czech language and literature and a foreign language) and two optional subjects. The examination includes a written part (for the Czech language) and an oral part. The school determines the content of the *maturitní zkouška* examination; no specific requirements are set externally.

A *maturitní zkouška* certificate is issued by the school on a prescribed form and documents the passing of the *maturitní zkouška* exam. It is issued with a supplement confirming the level of education acquired.

The passing of the *maturitní zkouška* is a prerequisite for admission to a higher education institution or a tertiary professional school.

The new Education Act substantially changes the organisation of the *maturitní zkouška* examination. It will consist of common and profile parts. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is responsible for the centrally prepared, standardised common part for all graduates. It will consist of three exams, namely an exami-

nation in the Czech language, an examination in a foreign language, and an examination in an optional subject. The school is responsible for the profile part of the exam. The pupils will take the new form of the *maturitní zkouška* examination in 2009/10 school year for the first time; in this and the following year the common part will include examination in the Czech language and optional exam for which the pupils will choose from five foreign languages and mathematics. In 2011/12 school year the common part will include all the three exams.



4A.4 Progression/ guidance/ transition arrangements

Pupils at *gymnázium* move up to the upper grades on the basis of their school results. The school head decides if an unsuccessful pupil can repeat a year.

The lower levels of multi-year *gymnázia* provide compulsory school attendance. Pupils are not obliged to continue their studies once they have completed compulsory school attendance. In order to be admitted to the higher levels of *gymnázium* pupils do not have to pass an entrance examination, but they can apply for another secondary school.

School leavers usually continue to study, but they also have relatively good prospects on the labour market.

They can study at tertiary professional schools (*vyšší odborné školy*) – see 6A or at higher educational institutions (*vysoké školy*) – see 6B. Early educational guidance provided by the school or by a network of educational and psychological guidance services helps pupils to make their choice. Information on study opportunities is offered by schools, institutions and by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (*Centrum pro studium vysokého školství*) in Prague.

4A.5 Teachers

Initial training

Teachers of general subjects in lower and upper secondary schools must have a Master's degree. They generally obtain their qualifications through a three-year Bachelor's course followed by a two-year Master's degree course; they are specialists (usually in two subjects). The training is provided by faculties of education usually in concurrent courses in the given field of study or pedagogy. Teacher training at other faculties (of philosophy, natural sciences, mathematics/physics, information sciences, physical education and sports) can be concurrent or consecutive. Bachelor's courses are mostly specialised in the field of study, while the subsequent Master's courses are focused more on the professional (pedagogical) aspect of study.

Graduates from academic Master's degree courses can gain teaching qualifications in consecutive higher education courses lasting three years for Bachelor's courses or two years in lifelong learning courses at higher education institutions.

Teachers of theoretical technical subjects gain Master's degrees from specialised higher education institutions (technical universities, agricultural universities, faculties of medicine, universities of economics, theology and fine arts, etc.) through Bachelor's and follow-up Master's courses and usually gain their teaching qualifications consequently.

Teachers of practical training (*učitelé praktického vyučování*) and teachers of vocational training (*učitelé odborného výcviku*) can acquire the same professional qualifications as teachers of theoretical technical subjects. They may be also tertiary professional school or upper secondary school leavers holding *maturitní zkouška* certificates. They achieve their teaching qualification consequently (as a Bachelor's degree, in a life-

long learning programme at higher education institutions or by a 120-hour pedagogy course in institutions for in-service training of educational staff). Teachers of vocational training must have an apprenticeship certificate in the relevant field of study.

For recruitment see 3.5.

At upper secondary schools many external teachers are employed, and are usually contracted on a temporary basis.

In-service training

The Act on Educational Staff stipulates an obligation to in-service training of teachers in public and state schools, but does not prescribe its obligatory form. In-service training renews, supplements or enhances qualifications, extends them or may also enable staff acquire them. A school head organises in-service training in accordance with a plan which is laid down after negotiations with a relevant trade union body. It is necessary to take into account the study aspirations of the educational staff, and the school needs and budget. In-service training is organised by higher education institutions, institutions of in-service training of educational staff and at other facilities on the basis of accreditation granted by the Ministry of Education (in these cases a certificate is issued to a participant). Teachers may prefer the option of self-study. If this is the case they are entitled to 12 working days off for study in the school year (if operational factors allow this). The regulation of the Ministry of Education stipulates types of in-service training and the education staff career system.

In-service training programmes for teachers are provided mostly by the National Institute for Further Education (*Národní institut pro další vzdělávání*), a subsidised organisation of the Ministry of Education. It consists of a centre

and thirteen regional stations. The central activity of the Institute is implementation of governmental priorities for in-service training, and the development of national projects financially supported from the European Social Fund. Scientific societies, guidance facilities, professional associations and various private organisations also have a role in in-service training. Higher education institutions offer refresher training courses for teachers returning to the profession after a long interval, qualification training courses providing upgrading of educational qualifications, specialised courses, and educational studies for graduates from non-teacher training faculties.

Teachers' working hours

The total teacher's workload is 40 hours per week. The direct teaching load for teachers at the upper secondary level is 21 lessons per week for teachers of general and technical subjects (*učitel všeobecně vzdělávacích předmětů* and *učitel odborných předmětů*) 21–25 lessons for teachers of practical training (*učitel praktického vyučování*) and 25–35 lessons for teachers of vocational training (*učitel odborného výcviku*).

For working conditions see 3.5.



4.B

Technical secondary education completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination



Schools providing courses of this type were founded on Czech territory as early as the 19th century in the same way as in Austria and Hungary. Many of them have a long tradition and due to historical developments their programmes are sometimes rather narrowly specialised. Some of the schools retain this tradition and serve large geographical regions or they may take pupils from all over the country. Most of them, however, offer a wider range of courses, in terms of both subjects as well as educational levels.

These schools were intended to provide an education with an intermediate level of qualifications on the assumption that these students would move directly into the labour market. The education was geared towards developing the ability to apply acquired technical knowledge and skills in practice.

At present leavers of secondary education completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination (ISCED 3A) are qualified to perform their profession, but they can also enter tertiary educational level (higher education institutions or tertiary professional schools). In addition to the professional part of the education general education is also included, making up about one half of the curriculum. The education is provided mostly in four-year courses. Moreover some schools organise two year follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*), leading to the *maturitní zkouška* examination, for pupils who have an apprenticeship certificate. Many pupils choose de facto five-year professional education composed of three-year training, through which they gain an apprenticeship certificate, and a further two years completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination. The Education Act introduced shortened studies (*zkrácené studium*) to acquire secondary education completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination. They are intended for those who have already acquired secondary education with a *maturitní zkouška* examination in other fields of study. Such courses may last 1 to 2 years of full-time study.

Entry requirements – see introduction to Chapter 4, information on fees – see the section 4A.

4B.1 Organisation

In one week the pupils have a maximum of 35 lessons (in some arts fields 40). The average number of lessons is 33, each lesson being 45 minutes. A practical training lesson lasts 60 minutes. The structure of the school year is the same as for other levels of education (see 3.1). In addition to the day form education can be provided in other forms – see 4A.1.

4B.2 Curriculum

According to the 2005 study, the general component of education (including ICT and economic subjects for non-economic courses) forms an average of 50% of the curriculum. For arts fields it is just 34–35%, although the total number of hours for these fields is higher. As an alternative to professional courses and wholly general (*gymnázium*) courses there are *lyceum* courses (Technical lyceum, Economics lyceum, etc.), where the general component forms 71% of curriculum. These courses, which currently have only a small number of pupils, prepare their pupils mainly for higher education with relevant specialisation.

The basic curricular document for secondary technical/vocational education is the Standard of Secondary Vocational Education, in force since 1st January 1998, which sets the basic requirements for all fields. According to the Standard the curricular documents for individual courses are centrally prepared or approved, including the school leaver's profile, characteristics of an educational programme, timetable and teaching programmes of individual subjects. Schools are allowed to adapt approved curricula for up to 10% of the whole weekly number of teaching hours in the year, and the educational content in teaching programmes (modules) by up to 30% of total number of hours.

The reform of curricular documents brings a new, two-level concept of the curriculum. New framework educational programmes (FEPs) are gradually being approved on the basis of which the schools will develop their own school educational programmes. In June 2007 the Ministry of Education approved FEPs for first 29 courses leading to apprenticeship certificate and 32 courses completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination. Schools providing these courses must prepare their school educational programmes by September 2009, when they start to teach according to them.

FEPs set objectives of secondary vocational education, key competencies, vocational competencies and job opportunities for leavers, curricular frameworks for individual educational areas, framework timetable of the content of education, cross-curricular themes, rules for development of school educational programme (SEP), basic conditions to provide the educational programme (material, personal and organisational conditions and conditions of safety work and health protection during the educational activities), conditions of education of pupils with special educational needs and exceptionally gifted pupils, application of the FEPs on the education of adults.

For every educational area, which can include several educational fields, the obligatory content of education and required outcomes of education are set.

The list of educational areas follows:

- language education and communication (in Czech language and foreign language);
- humanity and social education;
- science education (physics, chemistry, biology and ecology);
- mathematical education;
- aesthetic education;
- education for health (including physical education);
- education in information and communication technologies;
- economics education;
- specific vocational education (depending on a field of study).

The framework timetable of the content of education sets the total number of hours of individual educational areas per study. A number of hours are at the discretion of the school. The time for job practice (or apprenticeship practice or practical training) is also set.

The way the cross-curricular themes are included into instruction is set by the SEP. All the following themes must be included: Citizen in

democratic society, People and the environment, People and the world of work, Information and communication technologies.

The SEP must be prepared on the basis of the FEP and relevant legislation. The responsibility for its creation and implementation lies with the school head. The SEP must be available to the public. The school can prepare separate a SEP for each form of education (day study and other forms) or individual programmes can be included in one document. The SEPs for follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*) and shortened courses are separate documents. On the basis of one FEP the school may prepare several SEPs for different specialisations.

In addition to the identification data the SEP includes school leaver's profile, characteristics of the SEP (the overall conception, the organisation of instruction, implementation of practical training, key competencies and cross-curricular themes, other and out-of-school activities, conditions of enrolment proceedings, the form of *závěrečné zkouška* exam and/or the profile part of *maturitní zkouška* exam, approaches to the education of pupils with special educational needs and exceptionally gifted pupils), the timetable and an overview of distribution of the content of education, the teaching programmes or educational modules.

4B.3 Assessment/certification

Secondary schools use both continuous assessment and final examinations of pupils. See section 4A.3.

The *maturitní zkouška* examination consists of examinations in the Czech language and literature, in one optional subject and in various vocational subjects. The Czech language examination has a written and an oral part, the optional examination is oral and the vocational part includes a theoretical and a practical examination. Having passed this examination the pupils receive a *maturitní zkouška* certificate. The *maturitní zkouška* examination is taken in face of a board. For information on the *maturitní zkouška* examination according to the new Education Act see 4A.3.

Employers recognise the certificates as evidence of the relevant professional qualifications.

4B.4 Progression/ guidance/ transition arrangements

School leavers can continue their education at higher education institutions or tertiary professional schools (*vyšší odborná škola*).

For conditions of transition to upper years, for education at upper level and guidance see 4A.4.

4B.5 Teachers

See 4A.5

4.C

Vocational secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate and other secondary education



The education by which the pupils acquire an apprenticeship certificate is historically associated with different forms of practice-oriented apprentice training which was accompanied, to a limited extent, by general education. This training was later replaced by so-called apprentice schools, whose status was not however equivalent to that of the selective schools (*gymnázia*, secondary technical schools). After World War Two, the status of such schools rose to rank equally alongside other upper secondary schools as secondary vocational schools. They were run by companies and after 1990 they came under the control of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, and from 2001 regions.

Education in courses where pupils attain an apprenticeship certificate lasts three or two years and is professionally and practically oriented, but also includes a general educational component. The qualification does not entitle pupils to enter tertiary education. Pupils are admitted to the first year of study once they have finished compulsory school attendance (at age 15). Secondary vocational schools now also organise shortened study programmes for those having completed secondary education with a *maturitní zkouška* examination and these can last 1 to 1.5 year of full-time study.

The participation of companies in vocational training, particularly at the school level, is developing. To improve their educational programmes, the schools are collaborating with Labour Offices, local enterprises, trade unions, professional associations and the Chambers of Commerce. Business interest in vocational training is also manifesting itself in the fact that some enterprises are once again establishing their own (private) secondary vocational schools or organising vocational training on their premises. The participation of businesses in the financing of vocational training is, however, very limited. It is characteristic of vocational education that pupils are not trained to work for a specific company. Generally, interest in these types of study has decreased in favour of fields of study completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination.

4C.1 Organisation

In addition to traditional courses completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination or the apprenticeship certificate since 1990 some secondary schools have also provided less demanding secondary education (without a *maturitní zkouška* examination or an apprenticeship certificate) – ISCED 3C. Also pupils of practical schools (for pupils with more serious mental disability) acquire secondary education, which corresponds to ISCED 2C.

In one week the pupils have at a maximum of 35 lessons (in some arts fields 40). The average number of lessons is 33. For theoretical subjects one lesson is 45 minutes long; for practical training it is 60 minutes long. For information about school year see 3.1.

During the school year, a week of theoretical education (including vocational as well as general education) and a week of practical training normally alternate. Practical training takes place in a laboratory, in a school facility or at a workplace of private individuals or companies. In addition to the day form the education can take other forms – see 4A.1.



4C.2 Curriculum

The formulation of the education curriculum and its present changes were explained in 4B.2.

Compared to courses completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination, education in courses leading to apprenticeship certificate is more practically oriented and includes a smaller general component. According to a 2005 study, the general component of education (including ICT and economic subjects for non-economic courses) forms an average of 32% in three-year courses, 30% in two-year courses and only 19% in two-year courses for pupils who did not complete basic education or who completed a practical basic school (*základní škola praktická*). Practical training is an important part of education.

Courses of secondary education (without a *maturitní zkouška* examination or an apprenticeship certificate) prepare their pupils for simple occupations and in addition to the vocational (professional) training, the education includes a general component which takes up 30–40% of the curriculum. The training of pupils with serious mental disability in Practical one-year and two-year schools has a specific character as it aims to supplement and broaden the general education which they acquired during their compulsory school attendance and to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to perform simple tasks in different occupations as well as in everyday life.

Traditional teaching methods still prevail in secondary vocational schools, but new methodology is seeking to adapt the instruction better to the varying abilities of the pupils. Theoretical education takes place in classrooms. When a foreign language is taught, pupils of one class are divided into groups. For practical training pupils are divided into groups. For each specialisation the size of groups is determined by a government decree, taking into account the nature of the activity and occupational safety requirements. Practical training takes place mostly in training workshops or in company workshops and offices. Depending on the nature of the course, it may also take place in laboratories or other specially equipped classrooms.

4C.3 Assessment/certification

Secondary schools use both continuous assessment and final examinations of pupils. See section 4A.3.

For courses of secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate as well as courses of secondary education pupils must pass a final examination (*závěrečná zkouška*).

The final examination is of a vocational nature and pupils must demonstrate how well prepared they are to perform the relevant skills and occupations. In the case of secondary education courses completed with an apprenticeship certificate the exam consists of a written, an oral and an examination in practical training. Upon passing the final examination the pupils receive a final examination certificate (*vysvědčení o závěrečné zkoušce*) and an apprenticeship certificate (*výuční list*). In the case of secondary education courses not completed by an apprenticeship certificate the final examination consists of a practical exam in vocational subjects and a theoretical exam in vocational subjects. Pupils obtain a certificate *vysvědčení o závěrečné zkoušce*.

The organisation and assessment of the final examination is the responsibility of a school. For courses leading to an apprenticeship certificate, standardised examination assignments are being developed for individual courses within the Quality I project. In the 2007/08 school year about half schools used and tested these. The uniform assignments are in relation to framework educational programmes and the qualification and assessment standards of the National Qualification Framework (see 7).

4C.4

Progression/ guidance/ transition arrangements

School leavers generally enter the labour market. Secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate or the secondary education does not enable pupils to enter tertiary education but school leavers from three-year programmes with an apprenticeship certificate can continue their education in follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*) and thus acquire secondary education completed by the *maturitní zkouška* examination. For conditions of transition to upper years and guidance see 4A.4.

4C.5 Teachers

See 4A.5



4.D

Conservatoires



The conservatoire (*konzervatoř*) is a special type of school, which provides general education and prepares pupils for the performance of demanding artistic or combined artistic and pedagogical activities in such fields of study as music, dance, singing, and drama. Courses last either 6 years (admitting pupils who have completed their compulsory school education) or, in the case of dance, 8 years (pupils who have successfully completed 5 years of basic school). In lower grades the conservatoires must ensure compulsory school attendance. The conservatoires are minority schools, in 2007/08 there were 19 conservatoires with 3606 pupils. Admission proceedings require candidates to demonstrate talent in form of an aptitude test.

Pupils at conservatoires are taught individually or in groups.

Schools still provide education according to the curricular documents approved by the Ministry of Education, but new framework educational programmes for individual courses, on the basis of which the schools will prepare their own school educational programmes, are being prepared and tested.

Education is generally completed by passing an absolutorium examination, which gives leavers "tertiary professional education in conservatoire" (ISCED 5B). Leavers are awarded a degree "qualified specialist" (*diplomovaný specialista*), DiS. This enables pupils to apply for art higher education courses. To study in other higher education courses or at tertiary professional school they must pass a *maturitní zkouška* examination. Pupils may pass this exam (and thus acquire secondary education

completed with the *maturitní zkouška* examination – ISCED 3A) not earlier than after the fourth year, and in dance after the eighth year.

The *absolutorium* is a comprehensive professional examination consisting of a theoretical examination in vocational subjects specified by a curricular document, an examination in a foreign language, a thesis and its defence, and a performance in one or two principal artistic branches, or an examination in artistic and pedagogical training. If a pupil completes the conservatoire without passing a *maturitní zkouška* examination, he/she must sit for a final examination in front of an Examination Board (*komisionální zkouška*) prior to the *absolutorium* exam. The final examination is composed of an exam in the Czech language and literature, for a six-year course also in the history of the field studied. Having passed the *absolutorium* examination, the pupil is awarded a certificate on *absolutorium*.

Teachers of general subjects have the same qualification as teachers of these subjects at secondary schools (see 4A.5). Teachers of art subjects achieve their art qualification at different levels of education and their teaching qualification through consecutive education (in-service training). Graduates of conservatoires and some higher education courses can gain their teaching qualifications by concurrent study.



4.6 Statistics for 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D

Upper secondary schools, classes, pupils, teachers

(day form of education)

	2007/2008
Schools	1 439
Classes	21 726
Teachers (FTE)*	47 124.3
women (in %)	58.4%
Number of pupils per school	371.0
Number of pupils per class	24.6
Number of pupils per teacher (FTE)**	11.3

* All forms of education.

** Number of pupils in the day form of education recounted to full-time equivalent of teachers in all forms of education.

Source: Institute for Information on Education

Distribution of pupils of secondary school and conservatoires by level of education

(day form of education)

	2001/02	2007/08
Proportion of pupils of upper secondary schools (without lower secondary level) to the population cohort 15–18	91.4%	96.5%
pupils in the fields of:		
- general secondary education completed by the <i>maturitní zkouška</i> examination (<i>gymnázia</i>)*	17.7%	20.2%
- technical secondary education completed by the <i>maturitní zkouška</i> examination**	4.0%	48.0%
- vocational secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate***	28.9%	24.0%
- secondary education***	0.6%	0.3%
Proportion of pupils of conservatoires to the population cohort 15–18	0.6%	0.7%

* Under the previous regulations *úplné střední vzdělání* (full secondary education).

** Under previous regulations *úplné střední odborné vzdělání* (full secondary vocational education).

*** Under previous regulations *střední odborné vzdělání* (secondary vocational education).

Note: Data on number of pupils relate to the population of 15–18, to the age which is typical for upper secondary education as a whole: almost 70% of population complete four-year education. The study in the fields of "secondary education" and "secondary education leading to an apprenticeship certificate" is shorter (1–3 years, the 3 year education prevails). On the contrary follow-up course (*nástavbové studium*) and shortened study are attended solely by 18 year olds and older pupils and study at conservatoire partially involve population older than 18.



Initial Vocational Training



5



Initial vocational training is an integral part of upper secondary education.
All relevant information is to be found in section 4C.



Tertiary Education



6



6A | Tertiary professional education . . . 80

6B | Higher education . . . 90

Traditionally, higher education institutions (*vysoké školy*) provide tertiary education of ISCED 5A and 6 levels; they can be of university and non-university types. For a detailed description see section 6B.

Tertiary professional schools (*vyšší odborné školy*) have been included into tertiary education relatively recently; they are more focused on providing students with practically oriented qualifications of ISCED 5B level. For a further description see section 6A.

In 2007/08 the ratio of the enrolled population of 19 years-olds in tertiary education was 77.9% of which 69.8% were in higher education institutions and 6.5% in tertiary professional schools. Applicants completing their studies with a *maturitní zkouška* examination in 2007 make up 42.8% of all registered, 49.9% of all those admitted and 50.6% of all those enrolled.



6.A

Tertiary professional education



Tertiary professional schools were introduced in the 1992/93 school year on an experimental basis and since 1995 they have been part of the educational system. Their aim was to fill the gap in qualification needs between secondary and tertiary education. These schools have mostly been attached to secondary technical schools and they still form a single legal entity with them. Only one fifth of them are independent entities. Tertiary professional education has been regulated by the same Education Act (No. 561/2004) as basic and secondary education, the Decree on Tertiary Professional Education (No. 10/2005) dealing with further particulars.

Educational programmes at these schools last 3 years of full-time study, medical courses 3.5 years including practical training.

The average number of students per school is 126.

6A.1 Admission requirements

Only applicants who have completed their secondary education with the *maturitní zkouška* examination (former full-secondary or full-secondary technical education) are admitted. They are usually 19 years old. The school head decides on whether there will be an entrance examination and on its content.

An applicant can skip a year or more provided his/her previous education has been acknowledged.

6A.2 Fees/Financial support for students

Tertiary professional schools can charge fees. The maximum level of fees in public schools is set by the Decree on Tertiary Professional Education and depends on how financially demanding each particular field of study is. For most fields of study the charge is CZK 3000, for the least demanding ones CZK 2500, but for certain other fields it ranges from CZK 4000 to 5000. The fees are payable in two instalments.

The school head may reduce an individual student's fee by up to 50% of the set amount.



6A.3 Organisation

The school year is divided into a winter and a summer term. School instruction within a school year lasts 40 weeks, out of which lessons last for 32 weeks, 6 weeks are dedicated to self-study and obtaining assessment by the due date, and 2 weeks serve as a time reserve. A lesson lasts 45 minutes and a practical training session lasts 60 minutes, a consultation lesson lasts 45 minutes in all forms of education. It is possible to organise courses, practical training and examinations during the school holidays, but school holidays must not be shorter than four weeks.

Students are placed into groups independently of their level, sex or age. For theoretical education students are organised in study groups formed according to study fields (the lowest number of students in a group is 10, in artistic fields 6, the highest number is 40); as far as the size of groups for practical training is concerned workplace conditions have to be taken into account.

6A.4 Curriculum

Each school prepares its own educational programme. It contains the goals, form, length and content of education, its conditions, organisation, course of education, its completion, profile of a graduate and employment possibilities. A school must produce evidence that it will be able to implement the educational programme, including providing evidence of co-operation with experts and an estimate of the number of admitted applicants. As of 1 January 2005 (i.e. since the new Education Act came into force) programmes must be accredited. Accreditation is granted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on the basis of a judgement of the Accreditation Commission for tertiary professional education. Programme accreditation enables schools to enrol and educate students based on the educational programme. The educational programme has to be taken into account when assessing the students as well as when evaluating the school and when allocating financial resources from the state budget.

The content of education is organised in areas corresponding to various subjects or other comprehensive units of the syllabus, e.g. modules. These units are divided into compulsory, compulsory optional and optional subjects. The number of lessons is defined by the curriculum.

The theoretical part of the study programme takes the form of lectures, seminars, consultations, practicals and excursions.

Practical training in the relevant field is a substantial part of this type of study. It can be organised on the premises of the school or, based on a contract, in work places owned by corporations or individuals.

Current development shows a convergence of both types of tertiary education. The organisation of study is similar to university study with an emphasis on individual work. Tertiary professional schools also provide Bachelor's degree programmes in cooperation with higher education institutions.

6A.5 Assessment/certification

Forms of assessment are set by the Decree on Tertiary Professional Education. They include continuous assessment, systems of credits, graded credits and examinations. Each school chooses the form to be applied to particular subjects and in individual school terms. This information is included in the educational programme. Standards students have to meet during the study and standards of examinations have to be made available before the course begins. A credit is granted if the student meets all the requirements. The credit granted is recorded together with the date and the examiners signature in the student's book. In addition to the fulfilment of standards, graded credits and examinations assess the level of performance. A four-level assessment scale is used. In the case of a second re-sit, if there are doubts concerning the appropriateness of assessment or in the case of transfer of students the examination is always taken in front of an examination board. Educational results of students are recorded in their student books.

Tertiary professional education ends with an *absolutorium*, an examination consisting of a theoretical exam in vocational subjects (at most three subjects), an exam in a foreign language and defence of a thesis. A thesis may be written and defended by several students; however each student is evaluated individually. A thesis and its defence may also contain a part examining practical skills.

The school head announces the date for the *absolutorium* within the time range set by the Decree. The school head also appoints examination board members. The chair of the examination board is appointed by a regional authority.

A four-point assessment scale is used in the *absolutorium* exams: excellent, very good, good and fail. Individual examiners suggest the marks.

The mark of the thesis is suggested by the thesis supervisor. Based on the results achieved in the *absolutorium*, the final overall assessment is carried out using a three-point scale (pass with distinction, pass and fail).

Having passed the *absolutorium* examination the graduate has completed tertiary professional education, which is certified by the *Absolutorium* certificate and the diploma of a graduate of a tertiary professional school. The graduates are awarded a degree "qualified specialist" (*diplomovaný specialista*) abbreviated as "DiS" and written after the name.

6A.6 Progression/ guidance/ transfer arrangements

A student who has successfully met the requirements specified by the accredited educational programme for a relevant year proceeds to a higher year. Having considered the student's study results a school head may permit a student, who has not met the requirements, to repeat the year.

During his/her studies at tertiary professional school a student can request a transfer to another tertiary professional school, to change their educational field of study or to suspend their studies for a period of no longer than 2 years. It is up to the head of the school to which the student applies to decide on a transfer.

A school head may recognise the comprehensive background education achieved by a student provided that it is documented with a relevant certificate. The school head may recognise partial education of a student provided he/she can prove that no more than 10 years have elapsed since its completion, or that it is evidenced by examination.

School leavers find employment in various labour market fields. They can upgrade their qualifications at higher education institutions under the same conditions as those leaving upper secondary schools completed with a *maturitní zkouška* examination. The Amendment to the Higher Education Act (of 2004) has facilitated the transition from tertiary professional schools to higher educational institutions; differential entrance requirements can be set by higher education institutions for applicants who have completed all or part of an accredited educational programme at a tertiary professional school.

6A.7 Teachers

The Act on Educational Staff introduced a new category of teachers the *učitel vyšší odborné školy* (tertiary professional school teachers). These can be teachers of general subjects and technical subjects or of practical training (*praktického vyučování*) and vocational practice (*odborné praxe*). Although a teaching qualification is not required for these teachers, the other prerequisites for performing their educational activities are similar to those of secondary school teachers – see 4A.5.

6A.8 Statistics 2007/08

Tertiary professional schools: number of schools, students, teachers and relative data

Students (all forms of study)	28 774
Students in day form of education	22 295
Schools in total	177
Teachers (FTE)*	1 799.0
Students in day form of education per teacher (FTE)*	12.4

* Number of teachers includes also those teaching in other forms of study.

Source: Institute for Information on Education



6.B

Higher education



Higher education institutions come under the Higher Education Act (No. 111/1998) and its amendments. Their activities are also subject to internal regulations related to the Act. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports maintains a register of internal regulations of higher education institutions. Whereas eight of the regulations defined by the Higher Education Act are compulsory for every public higher education institution, others may be defined by individual school statutes. For more details on higher education administration see section 1.3, School Autonomy.

By law higher education institutions are of two types – university, providing all levels of study programmes, and non-university usually offering only Bachelor's degree programmes. Due to historical developments all existing higher education institutions established before the Higher Education Act came into force are university type institutions. Recently established higher education institutions have been accredited as non-university institutions. This refers to almost all private institutions as well as to two newly established public institutions: the College of Polytechnics in Jihlava (*Vysoká škola polytechnická Jihlava*) and the Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice (*Vysoká škola technická a ekonomická v Českých Budějovicích*).

All accredited Bachelor's degree study programmes provide education of ISCED level 5A, i.e. education which enables students to continue to study for a Master's degree.

The institutional structure of higher education institutions has changed as a result of the Act No.111/1998. Most state institutions of higher education gained the status of public institutions. There are 25 of these, two of which are of non-university type. They can be established or closed down only by law.

The University of Defence (*Univerzita obrany*), which came into existence on 1 January 2004 through the merging of three military schools, and the Police

Academy are still state institutions. They are controlled by the relevant Ministries (Defence and the Interior).

Private higher education institutions began to emerge shortly after the law came into force. They have often developed from private tertiary professional schools. Private schools can only function as legal entities after obtaining the approval of the Ministry of Education which is based on the recommendation of the Accreditation Commission. Forty-three private institutions of higher education had been registered by to date 31 December 2007. Sixteen of these institutions have the status of a public benefit corporation. Two private higher education institutions are of university type.

Higher education institutions organise accredited study programmes and programmes of lifelong education.

Bachelor's study programmes are focused on professional training and provide a basis for studies in Master's study programmes. The programmes last 3–4 years and graduates acquire qualification of ISCED level 5A. Bachelor's degree programmes prevail at private institutions.

Master's study programmes aim to provide theoretical knowledge based on latest scientific findings, research and development, at mastering their applications and to develop creative skills. These study programmes follow on from Bachelor's degrees. Their standard length is 1–3 years. If the character of the study programme so requires, accreditation can be granted to a Master's degree programme (4–6 years long), which does not follow on from a Bachelor's one. The standard study programme is between three and seven years. Graduates of all types of Master's degree programmes acquire qualification of ISCED level 5A.

A Doctoral study programme can follow the completion of a Master's programme. It is aimed at scientific work, independent creative activity in the area of research and development or at independent theoretical and creative skills in art. It is offered solely in universities and lasts 3–4 years and graduates acquire qualification of ISCED level 6.

The law does not lay down the length of study for any particular study field.

In compliance with the implementation of the Bologna process principles the expansion of Bachelor's degree programmes is encouraged as well as the highest possible transferability of study. The three-cycle structure of study has been fully introduced at all university type higher education institutions.

In addition to their study programmes, all higher education institutions carry out other activities such as research, development, artistic work, possibly other creative activities, and also organise lifelong learning.

For more details on the structure of higher education according to study fields see 6B.7.

6B.1 Admission requirements

The minimum requirement for admission to higher education institution is secondary education completed with a *maturitní zkouška* examination. The requirement for admission to a Master's programme following on from a Bachelor's programme is successful completion of the Bachelor's programme. The requirement for admission to a Doctoral programme is successful completion of a Master's programme.

Students may apply for admission to several fields of study. Each higher education institution decides on the number of enrolled students and on specific admission proceedings (upper secondary school results, approval of credits from previous studies of other fields of study or of tertiary professional school, etc.). The admission proceedings usually include an entrance examination, in particular a written test, oral examination or both. If the number of applicants who meet the conditions is higher than the maximum number which can be enrolled, applicants are ranked based on the examination results.

In the admission proceedings foreigners must meet the same requirements as Czech students.

According to the 2001 Amendment to the Higher Education Act a higher education institution can accept up to 60% of the credits earned in accredited lifelong learning programmes provided the applicant becomes a student as defined by the Higher Education Act.

6B.2 Fees/Financial support for students

By law, higher education for Czech citizens is free of charge, with the following exceptions:

- fees for administration of admission proceedings;
- fees for prolonging the duration of study beyond a set limit;
- fees for the study of an additional programme.

The base for fees is 5% of the average running cost per student paid to the institutions by the Ministry of Education from the state budget in a calendar year.

- Public institutions can set a registration fee, which can be up to 20% of the base figure.
- If the actual period of study exceeds the standard duration for Bachelor's or Master's studies by one year, then the student is charged at least 1.5 times the base for every further six months of study in which a student attends the institution.
- If a holder of a Bachelor's or Master's degree wishes to take another Bachelor's or Master's study programme, the student can be charged the full base for each year (this is not the case for concurrent study programmes).

Foreign students study at higher education institutions under the same conditions as Czech students. If foreign students are taught in languages other than Czech they can be charged special fees set by the relevant institution.

Private institutions of higher education can fix their own fees. The law does not set any limit on fees.

The head of the institution (*rektor*) may reduce the fees, exempt a student from paying them or defer payment with regard to a student's achievements or social situation.

The family of a child in education and training receives allowances until that child reaches the age of 26. Allowances for children are not provided universally, but on the basis of family income. Since January 2008, a family

6B.3 Academic Year

receives an allowance if their income is less than 2.4-times the set minimum subsistence, and a social allowance if their income is twice the subsistence minimum. At the same time one of the parents might be able to claim tax relief. Students are subsidised for transport costs. Until recently, meals in students' cafeterias and accommodation in halls of residence or other facilities were provided at subsidised prices. Since 2005/06 the subsidy is not allocated to hostels, but the higher education institution allocates amounts calculated according to the ministerial rules and specified by its internal regulations to students in the form of contributions for accommodation.

Students can be given a grant based on merit or social and other grounds according to the grant regulations of the relevant institution. In Doctoral study programmes students receive a monthly grant ranging from CZK 5000 to 10000.

The academic year lasts 12 months; the start is fixed by the head of the higher education institution (*rektor*). Courses are divided into semesters, years or blocks, which are composed of a period of teaching, an examination period and a vacation.

The structure of the academic year is decided by each institution. It usually begins in September and is divided into two semesters: winter and summer, with a five-week examination period after each semester. The summer vacation is in July and August.



6B.4 Courses

Study programmes are developed and submitted for accreditation by an institution of higher education or other institution which wants to carry out the programme in collaboration with the higher education institution. Programmes may be for Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral studies and may be full-time, distance or a combination of both. Each study programme is further divided into specialisations, including the graduates profile for each specialisation, the subjects studied, rules for the creation of the curriculum, the standard length of study, conditions for the fulfilment and completion of study, and its relation to other types of programmes.

The classification of fields of study corresponds essentially with the traditional classification of academic fields, e.g. humanities, social sciences, science, medicine, education and teacher training, mathematics, computer science, engineering, economics, agriculture, military and police sciences, arts and architecture, physical education and sport.

Fields of study are divided according to an approved list of the Classification of Core Fields that applies nation-wide. There are more than 150 core fields of study at higher education institutions.

Study programmes have to be accredited. The accreditation is granted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports based on an opinion of the Accreditation Commission. The Commission was established by the government and its members are prominent professors and scientists. Within the accreditation process decisions are also taken on authorisation to award academic titles. The Accreditation Commission also carries out evaluation of faculties in the individual specialisations.

Teaching on Bachelor's and Master's programmes rests on two main methods – lectures and seminars. Doctoral studies run according to an individual study scheme under a tutor's guidance.

Attendance at lectures is not compulsory whereas attendance at seminars usually is. The forms of the students' work reflect the subject and the orientation of study. These may include seminars, laboratory work, field observation, work in clinics for students of medicine, observations in schools for future teachers, videoconferences, instruction using information networks, etc. Individual work with students in tutorials or group consultations or in the form of written seminar and annual assignments, project work is becoming increasingly important.

Students have to pay for their books.

In addition to the accredited study programmes, higher education institutions also offer lifelong education programmes which may be free of charge or on a fee paying basis. These programmes are aimed at individual professions or interests. See also 7.5.3.

6B.5 Assessment/qualifications

The frequency and methods of assessing students' achievements differ according to the field of study. In some cases a system of partial examinations taken after each semester has been introduced, in other cases one comprehensive examination after each completed part of studies is prescribed, mostly at the end of a certain module. Performance in examinations and in the defence of the thesis is graded (normally on a three-point scale), with a fourth level representing failure. In some institutions students are assessed by means of credits. The credit system has been encouraged since it allows completed parts of studies to be recognised, thus contributing to transferability within the system.

Bachelor's degree studies end with a final state examination and the defence of a thesis. The academic title obtained is *bakalář* (Bc.) or *bakalář umění* (BcA.).

Master's degree studies end with a state examination and the defence of a thesis. The academic title awarded is *magistr* (Mgr.), *magistr umění* (MgA.), *inženýr* (Ing.), *inženýr architekt* (Ing. arch.) Students of medicine, veterinary medicine and hygiene are the exception. They finish their studies with a state examination – *rigorózní zkouška* – and they are awarded the title doctor of medicine (MUDr.), dentist (MDDr.), or doctor of veterinary medicine (MVDr.). All titles are used in front of the name.

Having been awarded the academic title *magistr* students can sit a state examination *rigorózní zkouška* which includes the defence of a thesis – *rigorózní práce*. Those who have passed the exam and successfully defended their thesis are awarded the title of *doktor*; the abbreviation differing according to the field of study (JUDr., PhDr., RNDr., PharmDr., ThDr., for catholic theology the title – licentiate – ThLic.). This is put in front of the person's name.

Doctoral studies finish with a state doctoral examination and defence of a thesis. The title for all fields of study is *doktor* (Ph.D.) with the exception of theology, where the title *doktor teologie* (Th.D.) is awarded. Both titles are used after the name.

Successful graduates of all programmes can either enter the labour market or, in the case Bachelor's and Master's programmes, can continue their studies.

Upon completion of lifelong learning courses students obtain a certificate from the institution of higher education. For more information see 7.5.

Unemployment among higher education graduates is notably lower than among graduates of other education levels. Most graduates find employment in the field they have studied. Doctors show the highest percentage working in their field, while civil engineers and, in particular teachers the lowest. This can be explained primarily by the unsatisfactory pay conditions in education sector. Due to rising skill requirements the labour market is starting to recruit higher education institution graduates where until recently only secondary education was required.

In the near future unemployment among higher education graduates is expected. This is leading to increased interest among higher education management in direct cooperation with the business sector.

Continuing education is a common part of the working life of higher education graduates.

6B.6 Teachers

Academics are those employees of institutions of higher education who carry out both educational and scientific work, as well as research, development, artistic or other creative activity, e.g. professor (*profesor*), associate professor (*docent*), specialised assistant (*odborný asistent*), assistant (*asistent*), lecturer (*lektor*) and academics involved in science, research and development. Other specialists who are not members of the higher education institution's staff can also teach in these institutions. An institution's internal regulations define the position of visiting professor.

The law does not prescribe any special pedagogical training for academics. Career development is specified by internal institutional regulations. The title of *docent* (associate professor) is awarded by the *rektor* following a *habilitation* procedure in which the scientific or artistic qualifications of the applicant are examined, partly on the basis of their *habilitation* dissertation. Professors are appointed in a specific field by the President of the Republic on the recommendation of the higher education institution's council, submitted through the Minister of Education. Higher education institutions must be authorised to carry out *habilitation* procedures or appointment procedures (in the case of a professorship). This authorisation is subject to accreditation by the Ministry of Education.

Professors make up around 11% of faculty staff and associate professors approximately 20% (2007). The structure of qualifications is rising slowly and the average age is also decreasing slowly.

There is no set teaching load for various categories of teachers within higher education. It is determined by their direct superiors in accordance with internal institutional regulations.

The working conditions of (all) teachers are governed by the Labour Code. Teachers are employed and appointed on the basis of a competitive procedure. Details of vacant posts are set by the internal regulations of the relevant higher institution. Types of employment contracts are the same as for other employees. Very often professors and associate professors have permanent contracts, while other academic staff usually have temporary contracts.

The obligation of academic staff to further educate themselves is not defined explicitly in the Higher Education Act. But the Higher Education Act states that in addition to teaching the academic staff must fulfil also the scientific, research, development, artistic and other creative activities. According to the Model Ethics Code for Academic Staff of Higher Education Institutions, which is not binding document but many *vysoké školy* prepared their own ethics code on its basis, the academic staff permanently develop their own abilities, extent and deepen knowledge and skills in the area of their professional focus as well as general educational work.

6B.7 Statistics 2007/08

Number of higher education institutions

Public	25
State	2
Private	43

Number of students (2007/08)

	Total Czech citizens and foreigners	Students Czech citizens	Students foreigners
Total	344 180	316 619	77 580
Full-time (daily) form	250 269	91.74	8.27
- Bc.	148 622	92.76	7.24
- Mgr. – long study programmes (4 to 6 years)	59 675	89.06	10.94
- Mgr. – short study programmes (1 to 2 years)	34 676	93.59	6.42
- Ph.D.	10 030	86.38	13.62
Distant and combined study	97 283	92.77	7.23
- Bc.	60 723	92.73	7.27
- Mgr. – long study programmes (4 to 6 years)	5 870	97.19	2.81
- Mgr. – short study programmes (1 to 2 years)	16 912	33.73	0.98
- Ph.D.	14 164	92.58	7.42

Note: Overall number of students need not necessarily be equal to the sum of these in individual forms and types of study programmes, groups of study programmes or national citizenship. Student is included only once in the sum irrespective of the number of his/her studies in various forms and types of study programmes.

Number of graduates (2006/07)

	Total	Full-time (daily) form of study
Higher education institutions in total*	63 473	47 760
Public higher education institutions	56 629	45 184
Private higher education institutions	6 849	2 577

* Bachelor, Master's and doctoral programmes. Without state higher education institutions.

Higher education students according to fields of study, all forms of study (2006/07)

Study programmes groups	Number of graduates	Proportion of total number
All fields total*	63 473	100.00%
Natural sciences	4 885	7.70%
Technical sciences	15 608	24.59%
Agriculture and forestry, veterinary	2 650	4.17%
Health care, medicine and pharmacy	3 826	6.03%
Humanities and social sciences	8 916	14.04%
Economics and administration	15 169	23.90%
Justice, legal and public administration	2 210	3.48%
Pedagogy, teaching and social care	8 933	14.07%
Arts and culture	1 481	2.33%

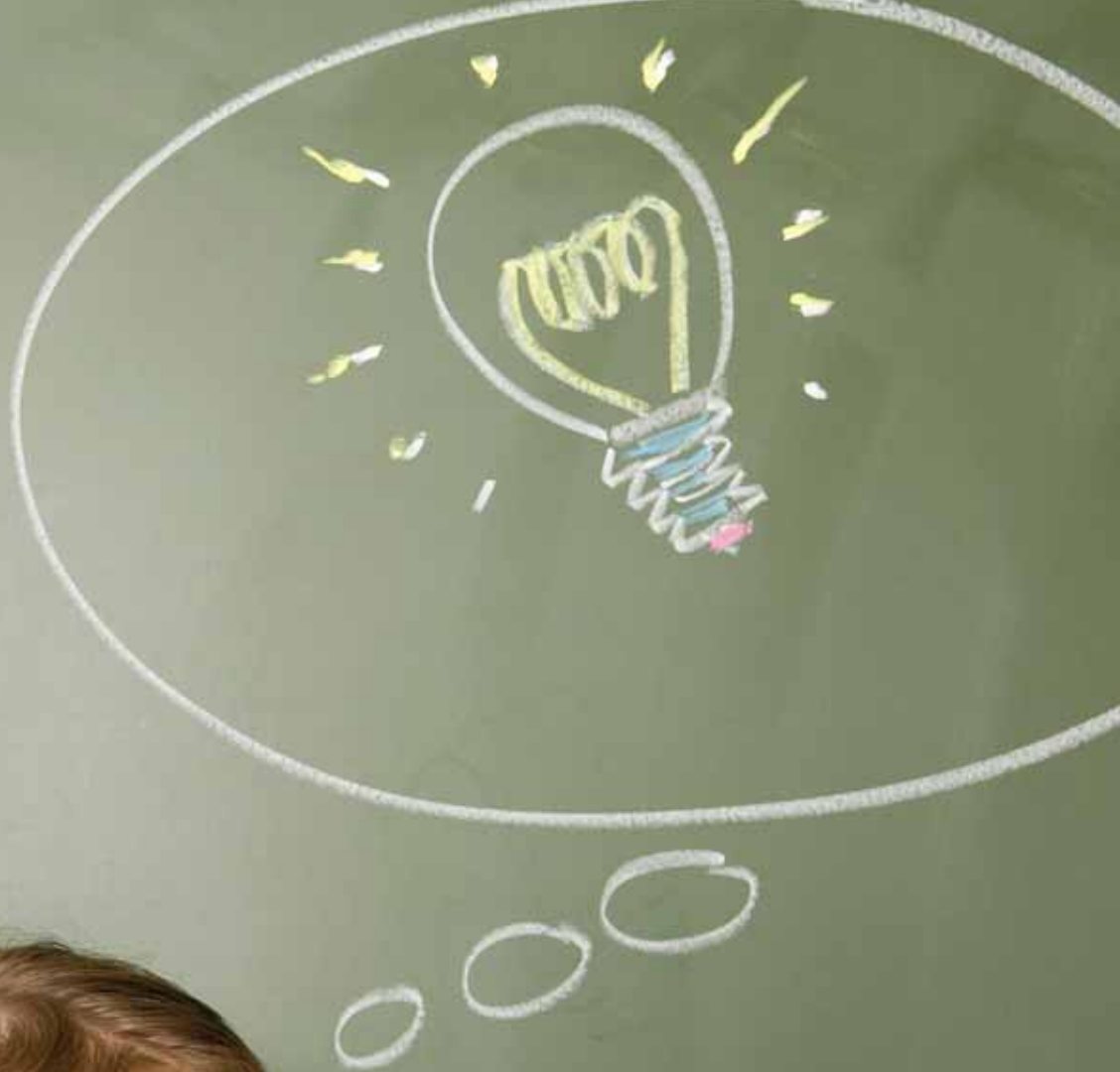
* Estimates of graduates (physical persons) of the public and private higher education institutions without state institutions.

Academic staff of higher education institutions

(average registered number of employees
– full-time equivalent)

	2007
Educational (academic) staff	16 526
in it:	
Professors (<i>profesor</i>) and associate professors (<i>docent</i>) in total	5 188
Professors (<i>profesor</i>) and associate professors (<i>docent</i>) in total (in %)	31.39%

Source: Institute for Information on Education



Continuing Education
and Training for Adults



7



7.1 Policy and legislative framework

Vocational and special interest education of adults has a long tradition, and in some professions the system is very well developed.

The current legislation consists of the following acts.

1. The Education Act and the Higher Education Act, which specify the forms which adult education (or lifelong learning) may take at various educational levels;
2. The 2006 Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes, implemented progressively since 2007;
3. Regulations related to work performance: the Labour Code, the Employment Law and related regulations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports on accreditation of training facilities providing retraining for job seekers;
4. Regulations specifying qualification requirements for non-manual professions: e.g. acts on the administration of territorial units, on courts and judges, on tax advisers, etc. These regulations often define institutions, which organise training or examinations. One of these regulations is the 2004 Act on Educational Staff which, among other things, specifies terms of in-service training and its accreditation;
5. On the basis of the Act on Technical Standards and the Act on State Supervision, regulations concerning professional skills and qualification requirements, regular in-service training and re-examination of employees have been developed. These regulations also anticipate the establishment of special institutions for education and certification;
6. The Trade Licensing Act, which regulates provision of education on a commercial basis does not stipulate any special requirements, although, retraining programmes have to be accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, or, in the case of education covered in points 3 and 4, by the relevant ministries: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, etc. or other responsible authorities.

According to the Labour Code, employees are obliged to maintain and improve their qualifications. An employer is entitled to require an employee to participate in courses. If employees are unqualified or they are transferred to different types of jobs, the employer is obliged to train them.

The Employment Act, which takes into account and reflects EU legislation, defines state employment policy, its subjects and tools. The framework of pro-active employment policy includes measures for the development of human resources, e.g. training courses, retraining, information and guidance.

The Education Act (valid from 1 January 2005) was drawn up taking life-long learning into account and it:

- newly defined other forms of education than full-time;
- strengthened the role of follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*);
- introduced shortened forms of study to attain apprenticeship certificated or to attain secondary education completed by a *maturitní zkouška* examination (both forms provide a second chance for applicants who have difficulties in finding work);
- introduced the possibility to recognise previously completed education (including informal education) which is in compliance with EU recommendations;
- made it possible to acquire a level of education without having studied at a secondary or tertiary professional school;
- enabled continuing education in courses which do not provide a recognised level of education.

The Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes makes provision for

- the National Qualifications Framework as a publicly accessible register of entire and partial qualifications and their standards for qualification and evaluation;
- rules for awarding and withdrawing authorisation for verification of further education outcomes (partial or entire qualifications);
- rights and obligations of further education learners and
- responsibilities of state administration bodies in the verification and recognition of further education.

7.2 Management/organisations involved

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has overall responsibility for education, including adult education. Other than full-time forms of study, which lead towards a specific level of education, fall completely within the responsibility of this Ministry. Adult education at higher education institutions, i.e. distance studies or a combination of distance and full-time studies and also lifelong learning programmes including the University of the Third Age, falls within the responsibility of higher education institutions. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports outlines the general framework of continuing education and supports its development mainly through an effort to restructure educational programmes and through financing development programmes. Its specific sphere of responsibility includes retraining where the Ministry is an accreditation body for retraining programmes. In 2006 the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education were extended: it continues to coordinate the activities of other ministries and other bodies in the system of recognition of qualifications. It approves, amends and deletes entries on the list of entire and partial qualifications in the National Qualification Framework (NQF) which is managed and published by the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education. It approves, changes and cancels qualification and assessment standards. The Ministry of Education established an advisory body for this area: the National Council for Qualifications.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs guarantees state employment policy. It is responsible for designing the National Qualifications System (NQS) – a database which will offer information on labour market demands for qualifications. The Ministry is the organising body of Labour Offices which provide information and guidance services related to vocational training and continuing education, organise retraining of job seekers, co-finance retraining (including subsistence during

retraining), and encourage development of job opportunities through which school leavers can gain professional experience and young job seekers can gain qualifications.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade strives to increase the competitiveness of industry. This involves support for the introduction of new technologies, including retraining of employees.

The Ministry for Regional Development promotes the implementation of all educational initiatives at regional or local levels.

The Ministry of Culture is one of the central state authorities for media, libraries and cultural education, which are an important part of non-vocational (interest) education.

All ministries are responsible for vocational training in regulated professions within their respective sectors. They are authorising bodies according to the Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes: they grant authorisation to verify and recognise further education outcomes and participate in preparation of qualification and assessment standards in their sectors.

The provision of educational services on a commercial basis is not controlled by any regulatory body. The only exceptions are institutions wishing to provide recognised continuing vocational training (which have to apply for accreditation to an authorised body, e.g. the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) and institutions providing approved language courses (which apply for accreditation to the Ministry of Education).

Social partners have been active in education approximately since 1996. The three most important organisations are: the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (*Svaz dopravy*

a průmyslu České republiky), the Chamber of Commerce of the Czech Republic (*Hospodářská komora České republiky*) and the Bohemian and Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (*Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů*). Their main sphere is vocational training, both initial and, even more importantly, continuing training. These organisations aim to change the economic environment in order to encourage companies to take an interest in education and training.

Regions establish councils for education, training and employment. One of their objectives is to build links between the world of education and the world of work. Regions also establish regional centres for lifelong learning that are sometimes composed of a network of upper secondary and tertiary professional schools providing adult education services. Chambers of Commerce and Human Resources Development Councils also operate at a regional level.

7.3 Funding

Adult education through which a relevant education level is attained may be organised at upper secondary and tertiary professional schools in other than the full-time (daily) study. It is financed by the Ministry of Education through regional authorities. Funds are allocated to regional authorities on the basis of the number of pupils in age cohorts relevant to educational levels and national per capita amounts – see section 1.5. According to set rules regions establish their own regional per capita amounts for every type and form of education in agreement with their long-term policy objectives, taking into account registered activities of individual schools. The only exceptions are courses in which adults can complete basic education when, as a rule, the costs of the study are covered from the central budget.

Retraining is financed from various sources. Unemployed people registered as job seekers are entitled to attend such courses fully funded by Labour Offices (from the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, namely from contributions of companies, employees and self-employed people earmarked for the state employment policy). Other participants have to bear the cost themselves. Labour Offices share the costs of retraining courses organised by institutions for their employees.

Financing of company level educational activities is the responsibility of the employer. Employers usually offer fully funded training and provide employees with paid leaves if the increase in their qualification meets the employers' needs. Employers and employees can also agree on terms of sharing costs.

Special interest education activities are fully funded by the participants. Prices are based on free market principles.

Employers can include expenses of continuing education and retraining of employees provided by institutions other than the employer, as well as expenses for the operation of their educational facilities, in their costs, provided it is not up to the state administration to cover them. However, the current financial incentives are considered to be insufficient both for providers and participants in education.

7.4 Human resources

Teacher qualifications (including those of teachers of language schools authorised to organise state language examinations and of basic art schools) are stipulated in the Act of Educational Staff.

Teachers participating in education of adults in schools do not need any special training for teaching adults. Topics related to adult education are usually included in in-service training of teachers. Specialists in adult education are trained at three departments of Czech universities; they have been mostly employed in personnel management.

Qualifications of trainers and instructors working for commercial institutions as well as the quality of teaching in these institutions are rarely monitored.

7.5 Organisation

7.5.1 Types of training institutions

Adult education takes place in:

- schools (basic, upper secondary, tertiary professional and higher education institutions) and other educational institutions;
- organisations (enterprises, institutions, state administration bodies) providing education primarily for their own employees by means of their own education institutions or trainers, or by hiring services of other institutions;
- non-profit organisations: organisations from the education sector, professional organisations, foundations, churches, trade unions, political parties, cultural institutions (museums, galleries, libraries, houses of culture);
- commercial educational institutions. Schools can also organise educational courses on a commercial basis.

A special group of institutions are retraining establishments, i.e. those of institutions named above which were granted accreditation from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to provide retraining.

Since mid-2007 a new type of institutions has been established that will participate in further education. These are the so-called authorised bodies (individuals or organisations) that were authorised to carry out examinations according to the Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes. Up to now these are mainly schools.



7.5.2 Access requirements

Admission requirements to other forms of studies providing courses for adults leading to a defined level of education are usually identical to those for full-time study. This is also the case for applicants who have completed their previous education abroad. Admission requirements for other types of education depend on the kind and level of the course in question. Information on retraining courses usually states if they are targeted at unemployed people or if they do not relate to the learner's status on the labour market.

7.5.3 Objectives of the programmes

Courses organised by schools and other educational institutions are primarily aimed at providing students with qualifications.

Retraining courses organised within active employment policy and accredited by the Ministry of Education aim to increase the employability of job seekers and groups threatened with unemployment.

Schools

Schools primarily organise coherent adult education programmes, providing a certain level of education through other than full-time forms of studies. These programmes at upper secondary and tertiary professional levels are mostly provided in fields for which full-time programmes also exist. Follow-up courses (*nástavbové studium*) are organised in other than full-time study forms. So is the newly established shortened form of study for acquiring secondary education completed either by attaining an apprenticeship certificate or by a *maturitní zkouška* examination (see chapter 4).

For those who have completed compulsory school attendance requirements but have not completed basic education, both basic schools and secondary schools can organise courses aimed at completing basic education.

The educational objectives in all forms of education are identical.

All schools can also organise various continuing education courses, including retraining, but they have to gain a special accreditation.

Adult education is also organised by basic art schools – *základní umělecké školy* (however, special interest education activities are mostly

intended for basic and upper secondary school pupils) and language schools authorised to organise state language examinations – *jazykové školy s právem jazykové zkoušky* (both special interest education activities and qualification courses).

Higher educational institutions

Higher educational institutions provide adults with the opportunity to study in all types of study programmes, either in the form of distance learning or combined distance and full-time study.

Higher education institutions can provide lifelong learning courses in addition to their regular study programmes. Courses can be offered free or for fees, and can be career-related or for personal development (e.g. the University of the Third Age). The specific conditions for lifelong learning are set by the internal regulations of each institution. In keeping with the Higher Education Act, participants in lifelong education are not considered to be university students. Since 2001 it has been possible for higher educational institutions to acknowledge credits gained in lifelong education programmes. If successful graduates of these programmes become students of accredited study programmes, higher education institution may acknowledge credits up to the amount of 60% of the credits necessary to obtain the higher education diploma.

The National Network of Distance Education has been formed under the support of the PHARE programme. It consists of National Centre for Distance Education at the Centre for Higher Education Studies in Prague and many centres at 24 higher education institutions.

Profit and non-profit non-school institutions

Education provided by enterprises and, non-profit or commercial organisations includes courses of various types, subjects, levels and duration. Courses are offered depending on current supply and demand. Therefore, it is impossible to give a general description of admission requirements, educational objectives, the content and methods of education, assessment or certification.

In general, the most frequently offered courses are those in foreign languages, ICT, management and accounting.



7.5.4 Main principles of the organisation of time and venue

Adult education at secondary or tertiary professional levels is usually organised in part-time forms of education, namely in:

- evening courses (*večerní*) – ranging from 10 to 18 lessons a week in the afternoon or evening;
- distance study (*dálkové*) – self-learning supported by consultation in the range of 200–220 consultation hours in a school year;
- e-learning courses (*distanční*) – self-learning mainly via information technologies, which could be supported by individual consultation (e-learning);
- combination of study forms (*kombinované*) – education using full-time and one of the forms of education mentioned above.

The study can take one year longer than in a full-time form.

Higher education institutions organise distant forms and a combination of forms of studies for adults.

Organisation, duration and venue of qualification, retraining and special interest courses are determined by the institution, which provides them. To a certain extent, institutions can take into account the needs of participants.

7.5.5 Curriculum

Curriculum documents for other than full-time study programmes are a modification of the full-time curriculum documents. They are developed by the respective institutions.

A school head can partially recognise education achieved by a learner prior to his/her present study if it is documented or if the learner demonstrates his/her knowledge in an examination.

Teaching methods are not markedly different from those used in full-time courses with similar content; although self-study forms a substantial part of the educational process.

The content of continuing informal adult education is prepared by the programme organisers: a company prepares a programme for its employees according to their or its needs; a commercial or other institution prepares it in compliance with the demand of individuals or enterprises, which order courses for their employees.

There has been a significant innovation of content and methods especially in language courses, which to a certain extent follow methods and techniques common abroad (a move away from a linguistic approach and an emphasis on communicative competency).

Information and communication technologies are gaining ground both in formal and non-formal adult education.

7.5.6 Quality assurance

Schools of all levels except for higher education institutions are evaluated through the Czech School Inspectorate. The other institutions are neither evaluated nor sufficiently monitored.

There are two approaches which have recently prevailed in the promotion of quality assurance, particularly in the area of managerial education:

- a) an increasing number of institutions apply ISO 9000 international standards. They aim to acquire the ISO 9001 certificate – evidence of standard quality of their services;
- b) associations of educational and consulting firms stipulate their own set of requirements, usually inspired by the Total Quality Management approach.

7.6 Guidance / counselling services

There are no special legislative measures for guidance services for adults in education system. However the Government authorised the Ministry of Education to participate in the development of an information system of educational opportunities not only for children and youth, but also for adults. The National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education is engaged in vocational guidance in the education sectors. One unit of the Institute is the Career Guidance Centre.

Labour Offices, which fall within the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, provide guidance services in the area of continuing education, especially retraining. This Ministry is provider of the Integrated System of Typal Positions (ISTP) portal where it is possible to find a programme to draw up one's own work profile, on the basis of which an individual can look for work or for information on different professions including pay levels. It includes the Internet Database of Continuing Education – DAT. Providers of educational services put data concerning their activities in the database. Users can search for courses according to chosen criteria. The database also includes retraining courses arranged by Labour Offices.

Guidance services are provided also by private employment agencies (*agentura práce*) which must be accredited by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

7.7 Assessment, accreditation and recognition

Having passed prescribed examinations, graduates of other than full-time study at upper secondary or tertiary professional schools, or higher educational institutions receive a certificate or a degree of the same validity as those in full-time study.

Attainment on adult education courses within lifelong learning at higher educational institutions is recognised by certificates.

Every qualification provided by secondary or tertiary professional education can be acquired without prior education at the relevant school after an examination in subjects or other elements of the educational programme.

A system of state recognised qualifications in the area of continuing vocational education and training for the present up to ISCED level 3C was launched in mid-2007. Successful passing of an examination taken under the new Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes is documented by a certificate which lists professional skills.

The authorised bodies (individuals or organisations) who were entrusted with the organisation of examinations verifying the mastery of professional skills according to the National Qualification Framework in the sense of the Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes are authorised by relevant ministries or other charged bodies.

Some professions (medicine and a number of technical professions) have their own examination system as do some professional organizations, e.g. the Auditors' Chamber or the Chamber of Tax Advisers.

There are two independent systems of certification in language education: the traditional Czech

system of state language examinations used by language schools authorised to organise these examinations, and adopted systems of international certification of individual languages, which are carried out by accredited (often foreign) institutions.

No general system of accreditation of institutions has yet been developed. Nevertheless, some continuing education courses have to be accredited by:

- the Ministry of Education: in-service training courses for teachers and other educational staff, courses (mainly in languages) for which families of pupils are eligible for allowances, and retraining courses;
- another departmental body if departmental (certificated) education or training (doctors, medical staff, technicians) is involved.

7.8 Statistics

Students/participant in other than full-time (day form) in different levels of education Numbers and relative distribution, 2007/08

	Students/ participant	% of students total
Upper secondary schools in total	35 327	6.2
in it secondary education (upper and lower)	11 771	2.2
in it postsecondary education*	23 556	53.6
Tertiary professional schools (ISCED 5B)	6 479	22.5
Higher education institutions	97 283	28.3
Life-long learning courses at higher education institutions	43 659	x
Courses for acquiring "basic education" (<i>základní vzdělání</i>) – ISCED 2A**	344	x
Courses for acquiring "basics of education" (<i>základy vzdělání</i>) – ISCED 2C***	307	x

* In it 99% are follow-up courses, half of them in other than day form. The rest is shortened study, mostly in other than day form.

Source: Institute for Information on Education

Participation in further education at upper secondary schools, conservatoires and tertiary professional schools (2006/07)

Type of course	Number of courses	Number of participants
Retraining courses at upper secondary schools in branches of KKOv* (2007/08)	-	494
Retraining courses outside branches of KKOv*	410	3 950
Vocational courses	4 651	32 158
Courses of individual subjects	2 587	8 006
Courses of comprehensive parts of the syllabus	502	2 123
Specialised (post-secondary) courses following the <i>maturitní zkouška</i> examination	85	769

* CBBE = Classification of Basic Branches of Education

Source: Institute for Information on Education

Further vocational education (FVE) of employed

	1999	2005*
Ratio of companies offering FVE	67%	70%
Ratio of participants in FVE courses to total number of employed of all companies		
- total	40.8%	60%
- men	44.9%	64.4%
- women	34.2%	53.2%
Ratio of cost of courses to overall cost of work	1.1%	0.9%

* The data modified to comparable basis of both surveys.

Source: Results of the Eurostat Survey 2000 CVTS 2 and 2006 CVTS 3 published by the Czech Statistical Office in March 2008





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