

Education in Slovakia

Education in Slovakia

Education is very important these days. If you want to succeed in our highly-developed society you need a good education. That's why all countries devote so much attention to their educational systems and try to improve them.

There have been several serious changes made in the educational system in Slovakia in the last few years. The National Curriculum has been changed, a new school-leaving exam is being introduced at secondary schools.

School attendance in Slovakia is compulsory from the age of six to sixteen. Besides state schools, there are also church schools and private schools. There are several stages of education: pre-school education, primary education, secondary education, post-secondary education and higher education.

Pre-school education:

Children **from one to three years of age** start their schooling in **nursery school** where they spend a few hours each day playing and doing some activities. They start socializing with other children.

Children **at the age of three** usually go to **kindergarten** where they learn social rules, ethics and the principles of the alphabet and mathematics. This attendance is not compulsory.

Elementary education:

Primary schools are attended by children **between six and fifteen** and this **nine-year school attendance** is compulsory. The school year begins in September and finishes in the late June. Children gradually learn to read, write and count.

The main subjects are: **Mother tongue** and **Maths** and **later Chemistry, History, Geography, Science, Computer Studies** and **languages** are added.

At the end of each school year pupils get **school report** (certificate). This is followed by a long awaited two months' holidays.

Children also have Christmas, Easter and spring holidays as well as a few national holidays.

Some years ago a new type of school was introduced - **the eight-year grammar school**

One positive effect is that talented children are given an opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills.

But on the other hand a new curriculum (šk. osnovy) can sometimes lead to their overloading (preťažovanie) that can result in the loss of a childhood full of fun and care freeness.

In the final year of elementary school many pupils face a problem. Everybody needs to choose his future occupation. The choice depends not only on our interests but also on our success at school.

Secondary education:

Secondary studies last for four years and secondary schools are attended by the students from **the age of 15 to 19**. In Slovakia we can choose from different kinds of secondary schools such as:

- Secondary technical schools
- Medical secondary school (ss)

- Economic ss
- Agricultural ss
- Business Academy
- **Apprentice centres** (učilištia)
- **Grammar schools** – they prepare students for university studies

Nowadays in contrast with the past more emphasis is placed on foreign languages. The high mobility of students, the possibility to seek for work or study in other countries has brought the necessity studying foreign languages.

To finish secondary education, students have to pass **the school-leaving examination** (maturity). This exam consists of * **written part** (external part) and ***oral part** (internal part).

The Slovak and foreign language exams as well as some technical subjects exams are compulsory. From each subjects a student selects one question that should be answered and discussed for 20 minutes. If students fail on their first attempt, they have got a second chance in September.

University education:

It is the highest form of education. This education usually lasts from 4 to 6 years and starts at the age of 19. If we want to study at university we must successfully pass **the entrance examination**. Many students want to continue their studies at universities where they study:

- Law (law school)
- Medicine (medical school)
- Universities with humanistic orientation and many others

Slovak universities use **two-term system: winter and summer terms** are regular periods of the academic year.

When students successfully accomplish their university studies they are given a degree in their field of study.

- **Bachelor's degree** is the lowest level of university studies and lasts for 3 years
- **Master's degree** (Mgr.) after pedagogical or philosophical studies
- **Engineer's degree** (Ing.) after economic or technical studies

Some renowned Slovak Universities:

- Comenius University in Bratislava
- The University of Constantinus Philosopher in Nitra
- The University of St.Cyril and Methodius in Trnava
- Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica
- The University of Pavol Jozef Šafárik in Košice
- The Technical University Košice

Použitá literatúra:

BÉREŠOVÁ, J. - MACKOVÁ, M. - STEYNE, L.: *Nová maturita z angličtiny- základná úroveň B1.1.* vyd. Bratislava: AKTUELL, 2005. ISBN 80-89153-14-3

BÉREŠOVÁ, J. - HOSSZÚOVÁ, M. - MACKOVÁ, M.: *Nová maturita z angličtiny.* 1. vyd. Bratislava: AKTUELL, 2004. ISBN 80-88915-92-9