

Education and School system in Slovakia



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School types in Slovakia

- State schools
- Schools owned by Church
- Private schools

Slovakia school types by levels

- Kindergartens or pre-school education (3-6 years)
- Primary schools (6-15 years)
- Secondary schools (15-19 years)
- Universities (from 19)

Education in Slovakia

- Most schools in Slovakia are owned by the state but there are a few church-owned and private schools.
- Students go to school five days a week, from Monday until Friday.
- Summer holiday in primary and secondary schools in Slovakia is from the 1st of July until the 31st of August. There is a few days holiday around Christmas and Easter, and on national holidays.

- Pre-school education in Slovakia is for children from 3 to 6 years old.
- Primary education in Slovakia lasts for nine years and is compulsory. It is divided into two stages of four and five years. Children start attending primary school at the age of 6 till 15.
- A school year in Slovakia at primary and secondary schools consists of two terms. The first term starts on 2nd September and ends at the end of January, the second term starts on 1st February and lasts until 30th June.

- Primary school students in Slovakia usually have from 4 to 6 classes a day depending on year of study and school type.
- Secondary school children have usually 5 to 8 classes per day. Classes last for 45 minutes and there are 5-10 min breaks between them. There is a longer break called "big break" when students usually have a snack.
- Primary and secondary education in Slovakia is free. Most textbooks and instructional material are distributed for free, returned at the end of the school year.

- Students at primary and secondary schools in Slovakia receive marks from 1 to 5, 1 is the best, 5 is the worst. They receive school reports at the end of each school term. Primary and secondary education in Slovakia is at a quite high level compared to many countries of the world.

- Besides primary and secondary schools, there are afternoon schools for music instruments, dancing or painting. After lessons children at primary school can spend their time in youth centres where they can write their homework, draw or play games. The youth clubs in Slovakia are especially useful for children whose parents work and do not wish to leave their children at home by themselves.

Kindergarten in Slovakia

- Education in Slovakia starts in kindergartens. Pre school education starts at the age of 3, but is not compulsory. Children learn to draw, recite, sing, colours, numbers, information about nature, things that surround them. At the age of 5, the last year of kindergarten they study geometrical shapes, months of the year, days of week etc.
- Teachers of Slovakia kindergarten have to have pedagogical education either secondary pedagogical school or university.

Primary schools in Slovakia

- Primary school education starts at the age of 6 years.
- Primary school is divided into two stages. First stage lasts for four years (1st – 4th year of study). Second stage lasts for five years (5th – 9th year of study).
- After graduating from the primary school children continue their study at secondary school after passing the entrance exam.

- Education on the first stage of primary school is different from the second stage.
- On the first stage every class has its own teacher to teach all lessons.
- On the second stage, every lesson is taught by a different teacher.
- Primary school teachers are specialized for teaching all primary school lessons. Teachers of primary schools have to have a university degree in Teacher training for the first grade of basic schools.
- Teachers of the second stage of primary school have to have a degree in Teacher training study programme in a particular subject. Teachers usually have a degree in two or three subjects.

- Pupils at primary schools receive marks from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 where 1 is the best, 5 is the worst. They receive marks in oral exams or written exams or tests.
- Lessons start usually between 7 to 8 am depending on school.
- Pupils at the first stage of primary school have from four to six lessons per day and the lessons end around 12.30 pm.
- Pupils at the second stage for primary school have five or six lessons per day and lessons end around 1 or 1.30 pm.
- They receive school reports at the end of each school term.

- In the last year of study pupils decide on which secondary school they want to continue their study based on the study results and their interests. Schools accept their students based on study results. Some schools have entrance test.

Lessons on the first stage of primary school include:

- Mathematics
- Slovak language, reading and writing
- Prvouka -Introduction to Environment and Society (1st and 2nd year)
- Science (3rd and 4th year)
- Homeland Study (3rd and 4th year)
- Music
- Religion or Ethics
- Drawing
- Physical Education

Lessons on the second stage of primary school include:

- Slovak language and literature
- Mathematics
- Foreign language; usually English or German
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Science
- Geography
- Farming and Technical Education
- Drawing
- Physical Education
- History
- Religion or Ethics
- Citizenship
- Music

Secondary School

- **There are a few types of secondary schools in Slovakia.**
- **1. Grammar school:** 4-8 years; provides general secondary education and prepares for further study at universities and other higher education institutions.
- **2. Specialized Secondary School:** 4-5 years; provides specialized education and usually prepares students for further study at higher education institutions.
- **3. Conservatories:** 4-5 years; special type of professional school providing specializing in fields such as Music, Singing, Dancing and Dramatic Arts.
- **4. Vocational School:** 2-4 years; prepares students for careers that are based in manual or practical occupations.

- Learning system at secondary schools is similar to primary schools.
- Lessons last 45 minutes and there are breaks between the lessons though usually longer than at primary school.
- Students at secondary schools usually have 6 or 7 lessons per day.
- Study at secondary school finishes with school leaving examination and students obtain „maturita“ certificate. School leaving examination consists of two parts, written and oral exam. After obtaining the “maturita“ certificate, students can apply for higher education including University study.

- There are two types of secondary vocational schools: secondary vocational schools and secondary specialised schools.
- Secondary vocational schools consist of general education and vocational training and students regularly attend practical classes, training centre and real working places to learn practical skills in the given profession. Vocational education in Slovakia is offered in two, three or four years of study.
- Secondary specialized schools specialize in branches such as health, economy, sport, art, agriculture, wood industry, pharmacy, chemistry, pedagogy, industry, hotel academies etc.

- Study at the three-year vocational schools finished by final examination that qualifies graduates for performing workers' trades and vocational activities corresponding to the branch they were trained for.
- Based on study results students can continue their study at two-year vocational school to complete their secondary study with school leaving examination called maturita.
- Besides full-time two-year vocational school there are part time or evening schools providing education for people who are already employed and cannot attend education day time.
- Vocational professions include professions such as builder, mechanic, cook, waiter, hairdresser, baker, butcher, etc.
- Four-year study finishes with school leaving examination. After graduation at the four-year study students obtain maturita certificate.

Grammar Schools

- Grammar schools are considered as prestigious schools as the study is formed in order to prepare students for higher education especially universities.
- Though gymnasia provide general education, many grammar schools have specialized classes specializing e.g. in languages, programming or mathematics.

Universities in Slovakia

- After secondary school graduation students can apply for a university study. To enter a university, students have to pass an entrance exam. Students are chosen based on the secondary study results and entrance exam results.
- Full university education in Slovakia lasts five year, some faculties are organized in 6 year study, e.g. human medicine (MUDr.).

- University study in Slovakia is organized in the following stages.
- Stage one, bachelor study lasts 3-4 years and graduates obtain Bachelor title (abb. Bc.).
- Stage two usually lasts 2 years and graduates obtain the following titles:
 - Master (abb. Mgr.)
 - Engineer (abb. Ing.)
 - Doctor title is based on studied branch (MUDr., MVDr., MDDr.)

- The university title is obtained after writing a diploma work and passing state exam on a promotion ceremony.
- Most professions require second stage university degree.
- Stage three is called postgraduate study and last 3-5 years. Graduates obtain a title PhD which is placed after the name.