

# Czech Republic



**33%**

Population aged 25-34 with a tertiary degree <sup>a</sup>

**3.8%**

Percentage of immigrant stock (% population) <sup>b</sup>

**12.3%**

Population below the poverty line <sup>c</sup>

**6.5%**

Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) <sup>d</sup>

Average TIMSS/PIRLS scores (4th grade) <sup>e</sup>  
Center point: 500

**543**

**533**

**534**

**Reading**

**Math**

**Science**

Average PISA scores (10th grade) <sup>f</sup>  
OECD average

**490**

**499**

**497**

487

489

489

**Reading**

**Math**

**Science**

**4.3%**

public spending in education as a % of GDP <sup>g</sup>

**7.1**

billions allocated in NPRR <sup>h</sup>

19		Upper secondary school General (30 %) Vocational (70 %)
18		
17		
16		
15	Compulsory schooling	Lower secondary school (Common track)
14		
13		
12		Primary school (Common track)
11		
10		
9		Pre-school
8		
7		
6		
5		
4		
3		

## General features

### *Educational system*

Compulsory education starts at 5, with the last year of the pre-primary education and continues until pupils are 15 years old. Students can decide to stay in the same school for the entire duration of compulsory schooling or decide to early enroll for lower secondary school in a multi-year general school (that will also offer upper secondary general education) or enroll in the eight-year conservatory. At 15 years old, students decide whether they would like to continue with (i) general education (ii) vocational education and training. At the end of the 4 years of upper secondary school, students both in general and vocational school can pass a final examination that grants access to higher education. The school system is predominantly public, but the number of children who go to primary school in private institutions is increasing: private schools represented 3.5% of the total in 2015, while today they almost doubled to 6.6% and the percentage of pupils enrolled now is 2.2% compared to 1.1% in 2015.<sup>64</sup> Immigrant students represent 3.8% of the population, and migrants' main countries of birth are Slovak Republic (36%), Ukraine (17%) and Viet Nam (7%). The top three nationalities of newcomers in 2018 were Ukraine, Russia and Slovak Republic.<sup>65</sup> The rate of early school leavers is low compared to the EU average (7.5% versus 9.9% in 2020), while the percentage of people with tertiary educational attainment is lower than the EU average (33% compared to 40.5%). The percentage of youth not in employment nor in education and training is low compared to the EU average (6.5% versus roughly 13%).

### *Governance and funding*

The Czech education system is highly decentralised; in 2017, schools had the second-largest share of responsibility for educational decisions at lower secondary level among OECD countries. Central government steers the system through key documents, such as the Framework Educational Programme and the Strategy for Education Policy of the Czech Republic until 2020. Both local and regional governance layers are also active in the education system. This adds complexity to funding streams and allocations<sup>66</sup>. Public schools are financed both from the State and from local authorities. The state finances the so-called direct costs (i.e. teachers' salaries and professional develop-

ment and other teaching aids) and local authorities take care of operational costs such as maintenance costs<sup>67</sup>. Usually municipalities are responsible for investments in primary schools and regions for investment costs in secondary schools.

## Performance

According to the last PISA assessment (2018), students in Czech Republic scored similar to the OECD average in maths and reading and higher than the average in science. Moreover, the percentage of students who reached basic skills in reading, maths and science is higher than the OECD average: (respectively 79% 80% 81% compared to OECD averages of 77% 76% and 78%).

The gender gap in reading is in favour of girls (33 percentage point), but this is not significantly different than the OECD average (30). Both in mathematics and science, the gap between boys and girls is not statistically different.

Performance in reading has been stable and close to OECD average throughout different PISA editions, while performance in mathematics has increased since the last edition (2015). Performance in science is decreasing, although not significantly, from previous editions.

Socio-economically advantaged students outperformed disadvantaged ones by 105 score points, a number larger than the OECD average of 89 points. 9% of students, a number closer to the OECD average (11%), were able to score in the top quarter for reading. Socio-economic status explained a higher portion of the variation in performance when compared to the OECD average: respectively 18% of the variation in maths and 17% of the variation in science compared to the OECD average of 13% and 14%.

Immigrant students scored 34 points less in reading than natives, a number that is higher than the OECD average (24 points).

On average, self-reported absenteeism is lower than the OECD average (10% versus 21% of students reported to have missed a class in the preceding two weeks of the PISA test) and the percentage of late entries to school is similar to the OECD average (54% versus 48%).

Moreover, low- and high-performing students tend to be grouped in the same schools more often than the OECD average.

Career aspirations somewhat reflect gender stereotypes: among high-achieving students in mathematics and science, 10% of girls expected to

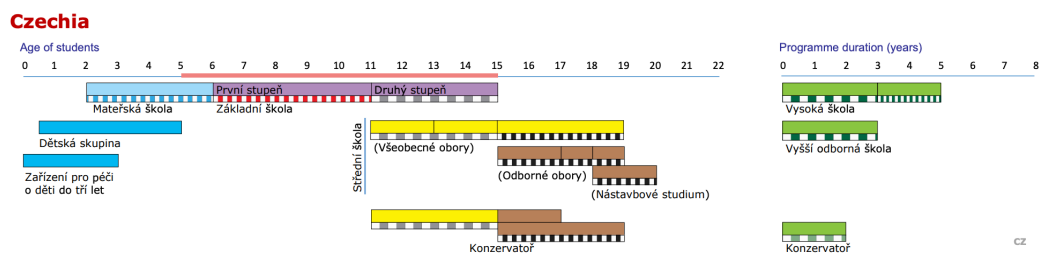
<sup>64</sup> Czech Republic Education Ministry Data

<sup>65</sup> International Migration Outlook 2020

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/education/policy-outlook/country-profile-Czech-Republic-2020.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> OECD Reviews of School Resources: Czech Republic 2016

Figure 1.5: Educational system in Czech Republic



work in an engineering or science job, compared to 14% of their male counterparts. 30% of girls wanted to work in the health-related sector (compared to only 11% of boys) and only 1% of girls expected to work in an ICT related job (compared to 9% of boys).

Willingness to go to university significantly differs among high-achieving students according to their socioeconomic background: a high percentage of disadvantaged students (30%) expected not to complete tertiary education, compared to roughly 5% of the advantaged students.

## Key policy challenges

**Regional heterogeneities and performance gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged students are a key challenge for the educational system**, with further inequalities concerning the Roma students. At system level, some features associated with greater inequity are present, such as (i) early tracking into different educational pathways and (ii) the provision of reduced curricula in some types of schools<sup>68</sup>.

Despite the popularity of vocational education and training, considerable skill mismatches between education and the labour market significantly decreases graduates from VET's employability.

**More effort is needed in order to support teacher' training and professional development.** To ensure a high-quality of teaching, Czech Republic should invest more in teachers' training, especially in the light of recent digital developments in education. Moreover, it should increase efforts in rendering the teacher profession attractive in the labour market, for instance, by introducing a link between teachers' performance and salary.

**Governance in education is highly frag-**

**mented, with some municipalities in severe capacity constraints.** A more equal distribution of funding and finances across local authorities might increase educational equity and efficiencies<sup>69</sup>.

**During the next academic year, Czech Republic will face increasing challenges in order to offer quality of education to refugee children in their schools.** According to the United Nations, Romania, together with Poland, Germany, Czech Republic, Italy, Moldavia and Slovakia, is hosting the highest number of Ukrainian refugees since Russia's invasion of Ukraine<sup>70</sup>.

## Recently enacted policies and investments

**To tackle emerging and long-standing problems in education the Government adopted the Strategy for Education 2030+.** The main objectives of the strategy are (i) to address skill mismatch between education and the job market and (ii) to reduce emerging inequalities in education and (iii) to support teacher training, professional development and increase attractiveness of the profession<sup>71</sup>.

**In order to promote equity in the overall educational system**, in the framework of the Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme (2007-13) **Czech Republic provided school counselling centres**, in order to strengthen support during compulsory schooling and help students in their school choice<sup>72</sup>.

**To strengthen the evaluation of the educational system, the Czech School Inspectorate launched the Complex system of Evaluation**, co-financed by the European Union through Operational Programme Research, Development and Education (OP RDE) in 2017. The aim is to integrate internal and external evaluation of schools and produce new data, methods and tools to eval-

<sup>68</sup>Co-ordinating educational levels and sectors to improve student trajectories, OECD 2018

<sup>69</sup>Education Policy Outlook: Czech Republic, OECD 2020

<sup>70</sup><https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

<sup>71</sup>Czechia New Education Strategy, 2020

<sup>72</sup>Education Policy Outlook, Country profile: Czech Republic

uate key competencies<sup>73</sup>.

**In the context of the Recovery and Resilience Plan, Czech Republic will invest to strengthen digitalization and ensure more equal access to education:** an investment of 585

million euros will be deployed for purchase of digital equipment for schools and training for teachers, and part of 393 million euros will be allocated to disadvantaged schools and to provide additional tutoring for children at risk of failure<sup>74</sup>.

---

<sup>73</sup><https://www.csicr.cz/en/ESF-projekty/Komplexni-system-hodnoceni>

<sup>74</sup>Czech Republic Recovery and Resilience Plan