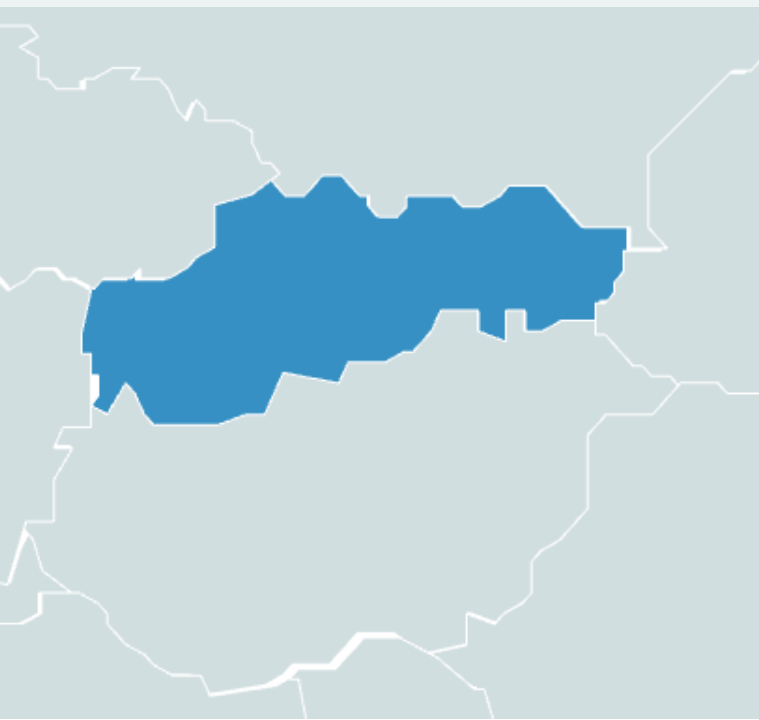


Slovak Republic



19		Upper secondary school General (33 %) Vocational (67 %)	
18			
17			
16	Compulsory schooling	Lower secondary school (Common track)	
15			
14			
13			
12			
11	Primary school (Common track)		
10			
9			
8			
7			
6			
5	Pre-school		
4			
3			

39%

Population aged 25-34 with a tertiary degree ^a

3.3%

Percentage of immigrant stock (% population) ^b

18.3%

Population below the poverty line ^c

11%

Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) ^d

Average TIMSS/PIRLS scores (4th grade) ^e
Center point: 500

535

510

521

Reading

Math

Science

Average PISA scores (10th grade) ^f
OECD average

458

486

464

487

489

489

Reading

Math

Science

4%

public spending in education as a % of GDP ^g

6.5

billions allocated in NPRR ^h

General features

Educational system

In Slovak Republic compulsory school starts at 5 and ends at 16. Compulsory education is free and available for everybody. The official language of instruction is Slovak, however, ethnic and linguistic minorities also can attend schools in other languages such as Hungarian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Ruthenian, and German. Students sit in the same school for the entire duration of compulsory schooling, following approximately the same curriculum.

Governance and funding

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport defines the core curriculum. Municipalities are in charge of self-governance for pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary school. Regions are mostly in charge of upper-secondary school. Public schools are funded by the state. Moreover, the state provides funds also to private and church-led schools.

Performance

According to the last PISA assessment (2018), students in Slovak Republic scored lower than the OECD average in reading and similarly to OECD in mathematics and science. The percentage of students who reached basic skills in reading, maths and science is slightly lower than the OECD average: (respectively 69% 75% 71% compared to OECD averages of 77% 76% and 78%).

The gender gap in reading is in favour of girls (34 points), slightly higher than the OECD average (30), while in science and maths the gap between boys and girls is not significantly different.

Socio-economically advantaged students outperformed disadvantaged one by 106 score points, a number that is larger than the OECD average of 89 points, and 9%, a number closer to the OECD average (11%) was able to score in the top quarter for reading. Among high-achieving students, a high percentage of disadvantaged ones (30%) expected not to complete tertiary education, compared to roughly 5% of the advantaged students.

Key policy challenges

Integration of marginalized groups and ethnic minorities poses a serious challenge to the equity of the overall educational system. Roma students are severely discriminated in schools: they tend to be segregated in special schools for students that display non-severe mental disabilities, after being screened by specialist during pre-primary or primary school. A report from Amnesty International¹⁴⁰ shows that many children have been misdiagnosed with disabilities, because the tools used in the screening test are biased and culture-specific. Moreover, psychologists in charge of administering the test hold strong negative prejudices against Roma people.

Recently enacted policies and investments

In 2015, the NUCEM¹⁴¹ gradually started the implementation of electronic assessment in primary and secondary school. As a consequence of the school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some primary school students did not achieve the expected knowledge and skills required for their grade, and last-year students did not possess the necessary competences to successfully transition to secondary school. In 2020, during distance learning, NUCEM made available new e-assessments to all schools in the country to assess competencies in reading, maths, science, foreign languages and financial/statistical literacy.^{142 143}

To alleviate the adverse effects of the learning loss due to distance learning, the Slovak Republic is piloting two initiatives¹⁴⁴: the Adjusted Objectives of Education and the Curriculum Framework by Cycle of Education. These provide schools with more flexibility and guidance in terms of curriculum setting, allowing schools to organize learning in multi-year cycles, so that they can adapt teaching to the level of the learning students and can more easily allocate time to adjust any arising learning gap¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴⁰Amnesty International

¹⁴¹National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements: <https://www.nucem.sk/en/nucem>

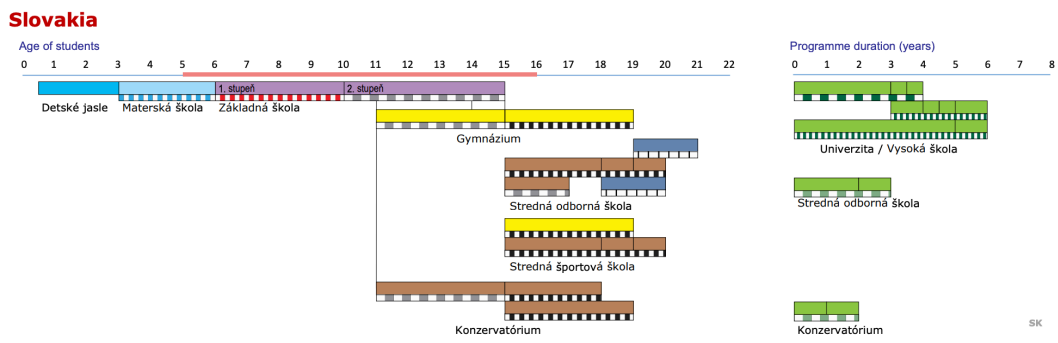
¹⁴²Počas dištančného vzdelávania bol najväčší záujem o e-testy z čitateľskej gramotnosti (During distance learning, the greatest interest was in e-test in literacy)

¹⁴³Increasing the quality of primary and secondary education with the use of electronic testing, NUCEM

¹⁴⁴Education Policy Outlook 2021: Shaping Responsive and Resilient Education in a Changing World (OECD)

¹⁴⁵National Institute for Education of the Slovak Republic. Methodological guidance - Framework curricula by cycle of education

Figure 1.11: Educational system in Slovak Republic



The Structure of the European Education Systems 2021/22, Eurydice. European Commission

Source: