

4. EDUCATION OF FOREIGNERS

Unless stipulated by the law otherwise, foreigners in the Czech Republic enjoy the same rights and duties in education as the Czech citizens do in the area of primary, secondary, higher professional, and university education. Foreigners have the right to education based on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The access to pre-school, basic art, and language education under the same conditions as citizens of the Czech Republic and nationals of Member States of the European Union belongs to persons provided that they have on the territory of the Czech Republic the right to stay for a period over 90 days or if they are persons with the right to stay on the territory of the Czech Republic for the purpose of research or if they are refugees or persons under subsidiary protection, applicants for international protection or persons under temporary protection.

The education of foreigners is governed by the following legal regulations of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports:

- Act No 561/2004 Sb, on pre-school, primary, secondary, higher professional, and other education (the Education Act), as amended, Section 20 Education of foreigners and persons staying for a long-term abroad;

- Instruction No 21 153/2000-35 of the Minister of Education, Youth, and Sports, on the Provision of Czech Language Courses for Refugees (of 4 June 2000, with effect from 1 July 2000, published in the Journal of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports No 7/2000);

- Act No 111/1998 Sb on Higher Education Institutions and on the Amendment to Some Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), as amended.

The education of foreigners is based on the following principles:

- 1) *Nationals of the European Union and their family members have access to education and education services on the same conditions as citizens of the Czech Republic.*
- 2) *Persons who are not citizens of the Czech Republic have under the same conditions as EU nationals access to:*
 - primary education, including education during their execution of institutional and protective care provided that they legally stay on the territory of the Czech Republic;*
 - school catering and leisure education provided in a school establishment for leisure education providing that they are pupils of a basic school, a corresponding year of a secondary school, or a corresponding year of a conservatoire in regular attendance;*
 - secondary education and higher professional education including education during their execution of institutional and protective care provided that they legally stay on the territory of the Czech Republic;*
 - pre-school education, basic art education, language education, and school services under the Education Act if they have the right to stay on the territory of the Czech Republic for a period longer than 90 days or if they are persons entitled to stay on the territory of the Czech Republic for the purpose of research or they are refugees, persons under subsidiary protection, applicants for international protection, or persons under temporary protection.*
- 3) *Persons who legally stay on the territory of the Czech Republic become children, pupils or students of a relevant school or a school establishment provided that they prove to the headmaster of the school or a director of the school establishment at the beginning of their education or providing of education services at the latest the legality of their stay on the territory of the Czech Republic. The legality of stay shall be proved by a document pursuant to a special legal regulation.*

- 4) *Persons, who obtained their previous education in a school outside the territory of the Czech Republic are, upon their request, exempt from the Czech language entrance exam for education in secondary schools and higher professional schools provided that such an exam is part of the entrance exam. Knowledge of the Czech language, which is necessary for studies of a given field of education, is checked by the school in an interview with those persons. Persons, who studied for at least 4 years during the previous 8 years prior to the relevant exam in a school outside the Czech Republic, have the right to have conditions and the way to make the exam adjusted as for the common part of the “Czech language and literature” subject of the A-level (“maturita”) exam so that equality of access to education is maintained. The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports determines details in the implementing legal regulation.*
- 5) *For pupils, who are children of a person with a citizenship of another Member State of the European Union, and who on the territory of the Czech Republic (where such a person is performing or performed working activity in employment or self-employment or is studying on the territory of the Czech Republic or obtained the right to stay on the territory of the Czech Republic due to another reason) are staying for a long-term and are fulfilling their compulsory school education pursuant to the Education Act, the Regional Authority competent according to the locality of residence of the pupil in cooperation with the founder of the school shall ensure:*
 - *free preparation for their inclusion in primary education, which will include teaching of Czech language adjusted to the needs of these pupils;*
 - *as circumstances allow in cooperation with the countries of origin of the pupils, support of teaching of their mother tongue and culture of the country of their origin, which will be coordinated with usual education in the basic school.*
- 6) *The Regional Authority executes a free preparation for an inclusion of other foreigners (not mentioned in the Article No 5 above) in primary education, which includes education of Czech language adjusted to the needs of these pupils.*
- 7) *The Regional Authority shall ensure preparation of teachers, who will provide that education.*
- 8) *The Ministry shall stipulate by an implementing legal regulation the form, contents, and organization of the free preparation for an inclusion of foreigners in primary education, which includes education of Czech language adjusted to the needs of these pupils.*
- 9) *The education of foreigners in public universities is governed by the Act No 111/1998 Sb on Higher Education Institutions and on the Amendment to Some Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), as amended; foreigners study under the same conditions as Czech students. If the university runs a study programme in a foreign language, it shall determine a fee for the study in a bachelor, master or a doctoral study programme.*

Methodological notes on the Tables

Unless stated otherwise, the data refer to schools established by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, by municipalities, regions, the private sector or church founders, and in the case of secondary and higher professional schools also by other ministries (the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Justice). Individual types of schools comprise data on schools for children/pupils/students with special education needs. Since 2009/2010, in the case of nursery schools, basic schools, secondary schools, conservatoires, and higher professional schools the data on the number of children/pupils/students with temporary residence have not been reported.

Tables on universities comprise data on public and private universities (excluding data on state universities, i.e. universities established by the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior). Data on university students are headcount as at 31 December, data on the first enrolled and on graduates are headcount for a calendar year. Background data are taken over from the SIMS database (i.e. Union Information from Students’ Registers) and as universities deliver corrections to

the system also retrospectively, it is not possible to add to the time series continuously; it is necessary to recalculate the data every year also for the previous years. The data therefore may not be the same as those published in the previous years. Due to the calculation methodology, the sum of data on individual categories in the tables (e.g. types of education, study programmes, faculties, etc.) may be higher than the "Total". It is because it is the headcount and a student (the first enrolled, a graduate) may study (be enrolled, graduate) concurrently in more universities, faculties or in more study programmes or groups of fields of education. However, each student (the enrolled, a graduate) is counted only once in the total sum.

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Nursery schools

The share of foreigners in nursery schools is 3.4% of all children attending nursery schools. Most of the children - foreigners in nursery schools come from Ukraine (25.2%), Viet Nam (22.7%), Slovakia (18.2%), and the Russian Federation (6.4%). In 2020/2021, 12 103 foreigners attended nursery schools, which is an increase by 2.0% (i.e. by 239 children) compared to the previous year.

Basic schools

Foreigners account for 3.2% of pupils in basic schools in the Czech Republic; they are mostly citizens of Ukraine (31.6%), Slovakia (19.1%), Viet Nam (19.5%), and the Russian Federation (5.8%). In 2020/2021, 30 543 foreigners were studying in basic schools, which is by 7.6% (i.e. by 2 163 pupils) more than in the previous year.

Secondary schools

In the area of secondary education, the share of foreign students is 2.3%. They are, as in the case of nursery schools and basic schools, especially citizens of Ukraine (31.0%), Slovakia (19.9%), Viet Nam (18.3%), and the Russian Federation (9.6%). In 2020/2021, 10 053 foreign students were studying in secondary schools, which is by 3.1% more as compared to the previous year (i.e. by 302 pupils more).

Conservatoires

A total of 210 foreigners were studying in conservatoires in 2020/2021; their share in the total number of pupils studying in conservatoires was 5.5%. Most often they are citizens of Slovakia (34.8%), Ukraine (20.0%) and the Russian Federation (17.1%).

Higher professional schools

In total, 721 students with foreign citizenship were studying in higher professional schools in 2020/2021. Foreigners make up 3.7% of all students of higher professional schools; they are mostly citizens of Slovakia (39.8%), Ukraine (23.0%), the Russian Federation (18.9%) and Kazakhstan (5.5%). Compared to 2019/2020, the number of foreign students studying in higher professional schools decreased by 2.2% (i.e. by 16 foreigners).

Universities

Higher education (universities) is an area of education, in which most of the foreigners are studying. Foreigners now account for 17.1% of all public and private university students (i.e. 52 109 foreign students, which is an increase by 2 189 students, year-on-year, i.e. by more than 4%).

The number of students naturally depends on the number of the enrolled for the first time in individual years. Foreign students make up 21.9% of all students enrolled for the first time to universities (i.e. 14 382 students enrolled for the first time).

Of the total number of public and private university graduates, 14.7% (i.e. 8 917 graduates) are foreigners.

They are mostly students from Slovakia (40.1%) and the Russian Federation (15.6%) followed by students from Ukraine (8.5%) and Kazakhstan (4.9%).