

Educational systems in Europe

Education helps us with many things, but most importantly, it empowers an individual to think, question, and see beyond the obvious. Human beings are born with a natural tendency to question. Education is the best way to satiate our curiosity, without extinguishing the burning desire to learn and explore more. Here are a few 'obvious' reasons for educating oneself.

- Education broadens our horizon and gives us a better understanding of the world around us and how things work.
- The world needs education, since it is the basis of a civilized, structured society.
- Education helps people to think rationally and avoid illusions in life.
- Education reduces social and economic disparity, allowing progress to be shared equally.
- It gives scope for technical advancements in fields of science and technology.

In general English, French and Spanish pupils have six units a day, each takes 55-70 minutes. Due to the fact that units in these countries take 10-25 minutes longer than in Germany, they are able to learn more.

English pupils have to wear a school uniform in order to avoid displaying the differences between rich and poor pupils. Whereas in Germany it is important to wear expensive cloths with a famous label to be integrated in a group.

From my point of view it is good that England, France and Spain have a school system where children are not selected or have to choose between three different kinds of schools too early which can influence their whole life. In Germany pupils have to decide after four school years which school-line they want to pass. This decision is very important because it can have an impact on your future. You cannot say after this short period which school is suitable for you. Because of this fact pupils often take a wrong decision. The German school system has to be changed to become modern and competitive compared with other countries.

School system in England

At an age of five, English children start to go to a play school or kindergarten. At an age of eight, they regularly go to a primary school, where they stay for four years. After primary school, the children are now about twelve years old, they go to a comprehensive school for five years. At the end of this period they pass an examination, which is called "GCSE Exam", it corresponds to our "Realschulabschlußprüfung".

If they have good marks and want to continue for another one year, they can pass the "A-Level Exam", which can be compared to the German school-leaving exam. After passing the examinations, either they can go to a university as well as to an advanced technical college or they enter a profession as an apprentice. 7 % of the English children go to a public school after primary school. Public schools are private elitist grammar schools for which you have to pay very much. These students have the chance to go to elitist universities in Oxford or Cambridge.

English pupils do not repeat the class; they are always dragged along with the class. In England the lessons begin at 9:05 o'clock and take 70 minutes in general. Between 11.30 and 11.50 o'clock there is lunchtime at school and the students have their meals. Lessons end in the afternoon at about 4 o'clock normally.

School system in Spain

Education in Spain is free. You have to go ten years to school. First children at the age of three go for two years to a nursery school. At the age of six they go for six years to a primary school. After that, at an age of twelve, children can go to schools where they obtain further education for four years. After this period students could decide between making a vocational training for two years or the "Bachillerato", which is a preparation for the university.

The university system consists of three steps: 1. The first takes three years and is called "Diplomatura". 2. The second step takes three years and is called "Licenciatura". 3. Students, who will reach a doctor's degree, have to make the third step for two years and have to write a thesis.

School system in France

At the age of three, French children start to go to a voluntary all-day school ("école maternelle"). At an age of six, they regularly go to primary school ("école primaire") where they stay five years. After primary school, the children are now about eleven years old and go to a "college" for four years. At the end of this period, they pass an examination, which is called "Brévet". After passing the "Brévet", they can go either to high school ("lycée") or to a vocational school ("lycée professionnel"). The third alternative is to enter a profession as an apprentice. The vocational school takes two years and high school takes three years. At the end of the last class of high school, they pass the examination "le bac".

French pupils normally stay twelve years in school to pass the school-leaving exam ("le bac"). Teachers make the report with a point system. Number 0 is the worst mark and number 20 the best. The lessons in France begin at 9:00 o'clock and take 55 minutes in general. Between 13:00 and 13:55 o'clock there is lunchtime at school and the pupils have their meals. Lessons end in the afternoon at about 5 o'clock normally.

School system in Czech

School attendance in the Czech Republic is compulsory from the age from six to fifteen

The school year starts on 1st September and ends on 30th June of the following year. The school year is divided into two terms (September - January, February - June). Primary schools have fewer lessons than secondary schools, which have about 35 a week. One lesson lasts 45 minutes and there are small breaks between lessons. Pupils are evaluated by marks from one to five. Each term students get their school report with marks from all subjects.

Education in the country includes these stages: pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary.

Nursery schools provide pre-school education, kindergartens for children aged three to six (creches - up to three of age). At six children start going to primary schools and they stay there until fifteen. Then pupils sit for entrance examinations to secondary schools. But at the age of eleven or thirteen can some pupils enter to a grammar school after they are passed an entrance examination.

Secondary school - several types:

- a) Grammar schools - general and rather academic education, which prepares students for university (Gymnasium).
- b) Technical (special) schools - technical colleges, specialised in building, chemistry, business academies, music and art schools.
- c) Vocational schools - prepare students for practical professions.

Secondary education usually lasts for four years and at grammar and technical schools are finished with a school-leaving examination, which is taken in four subjects. The compulsory exam from Czech is divided in oral and written part. Students can finish their studies or for these, who don't want to study on university can attend two-year courses with specialisation for managers, businessmen, language expert, etc.

School system in Ukraine

Ukraine's educational legislation places great importance on pre-school education. This early form of education is to be cared for by the family or through a pre-school institution. A variety of institutions are available for this level of education in Ukraine and include day care centers, kindergartens and special facilities for disabled children. Provision is also made for orphans.

Elementary school education in Ukraine forms the foundation of a child's schooling career. Ukraine's Law on Education states that provision of elementary schools must be made wherever there are students. Elementary or primary education acts to develop children's personalities, talents, formation of morals, working education as well as knowledge of the human body, nature, industry and society. This level of education is compulsory in Ukraine and is available at various types of

institutions. Students begin secondary comprehensive schooling at the age of 6 or 7 years.

Basic school also falls under the secondary education system in Ukraine. This is the students' last level of formal basic education. This level of education provides the link to continuous education systems. It is compulsory to attend basic school for five years. Formal basic education is completed between the ages of 14 and 16 years. On completion of basic schooling the student will receive a certificate allowing them to continue on to upper secondary school as well as certain higher education institutions.