

# The Structure of the European Education Systems

## 2019/20

Schematic Diagrams

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Eurydice – Facts and Figures

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Education and Training



## **The Structure**

## of the European

## **Education Systems**

## 2019/20

## **Schematic Diagrams**

Eurydice – Facts and Figures

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### INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the structure of education and training systems from pre-primary to tertiary level for the 2019/20 school/academic year. It covers 43 education systems, which corresponds to 38 countries participating in the EU's Erasmus+ programme (28 EU Member States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey).

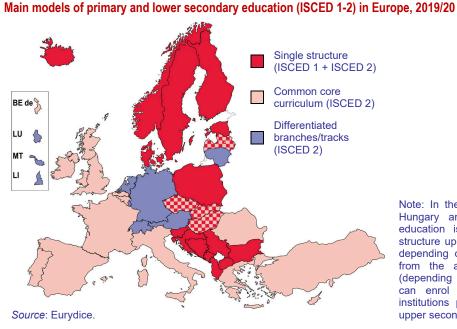
This report has three main sections:

- 1. A brief presentation of the main organisational models of primary and lower secondary education (ISCED levels 1-2);
- 2. A guide to reading the diagrams;
- 3. The schematic diagrams.

## MAIN ORGANISATIONAL MODELS OF PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

Three main organisational models of primary and lower secondary education (ISCED levels 1 and 2) can be identified. These education levels are part of compulsory education in all European education systems.

- **Single structure** education. From the beginning to the end of compulsory education, all students follow a common curriculum providing general education; in addition, there is no transition between primary and lower secondary education.
- **Common core curriculum** provision. After successfully completing primary education (ISCED level 1), all students progress to lower secondary level (ISCED level 2) where they follow the same general common core curriculum.
- **Differentiated** lower secondary education. After successfully completing primary education, students follow distinct educational pathways or specific types of education, which start either at the beginning or in the course of lower secondary education. At the end of their studies, they receive different certificates.



Note: In the Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary and Slovakia, compulsory education is organised in a single structure up to age of 14, 15, and 16 depending on the country. However, from the age of 10, 11 and 13 (depending on the country), students can enrol in separate educational institutions providing both lower and upper secondary education.

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### **GUIDE TO READING THE DIAGRAMS**

This short guide provides the necessary information to understand the diagrams. More specifically, it defines the scope; it presents the main elements of the diagrams and how they are graphically displayed; it provides the definitions as well as the key. Finally, it includes a short description of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011).

#### Scope

The diagrams show the most representative mainstream education programmes in each education system. They **encompass**:

- Early childhood education and care provided in publicly subsidised and accredited centre based settings for children from the youngest age of enrolment;
- Primary and secondary education programmes;
- Post-secondary non-tertiary programmes;
- Main tertiary level programmes.

The diagrams **do not show**:

- Education provision intended exclusively to adults with low formal educational attainment and/or a low level of basic skills. The diagrams cover only the courses allowing adult to go back to school or to gain further qualifications that are part of mainstream education programmes. Usually, these courses are integrated in the programmes providing competence-based qualifications at secondary education level or allowing access to tertiary education (i.e. post-secondary non-tertiary education level) (<sup>1</sup>).
- Separate provision outside mainstream education for children and young people with special educational needs.
- At tertiary level, doctoral studies as well as the specialised studies for regulated professions such as medicine and architecture.

#### Main elements of the diagrams (and their graphical display)

#### Age of students and programme duration: two different scales

The schematic diagrams have two distinct graphic areas:

- The left side coloured bars show the main education programmes from pre-primary to postsecondary non-tertiary levels (ISCED levels 0 to 4) in relation to the age of students when they start a particular programme. The ages are notional, i.e. they indicate the theoretical age at which students are supposed to enter an education level or begin a study programme. Early or late entry, grade retention or other interruptions to schooling are not taken into account.
- The right side coloured bars present the main education programmes at tertiary level in relation to the standard number of years necessary to complete these programmes on a full-time basis. The duration of part-time studies or individualised study patterns are not shown.

<sup>(1)</sup> For more information on main type of educational provision for adults, see European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015. Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities. [Online] Available at: <u>https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/adult-education-and-training-europe-widening-access-learning-opportunities\_en</u>

#### Education programmes

The thick coloured bars show education programmes (<sup>2</sup>); the colours refer to the levels and types of education. Within coloured bars, short vertical lines either show the division into cycles/key stages/education levels, or entry to or leaving ages for study programmes.

The thin bars with coloured stripes indicate the corresponding levels of education as defined by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) (see description below).

In few cases, the diagrams also show transition points between ISCED levels or education programmes. Long vertical lines linking coloured bars (education programmes) show these transition points.

#### **Educational institutions**

The terms under the coloured bars refer to the names of the schools or educational institutions providing the education programmes shown. In some cases, however, they might refer to education programmes or types of teaching. In that case, the terms are put in brackets. All terms are provided in the national language(s) of the country.

#### **Definitions**

**Full-time compulsory education/training** refers to a period of full-time education/training that is compulsory for all students. This period is regulated by law and often determined by students' age. Usually, full-time compulsory education/training is provided in formal institutions/schools. However, in some education systems, certain compulsory education/training programmes can combine part-time school-based and part-time workplace courses. In such cases, students are assessed for the work they do in both places (workplace and school). In some countries, under certain conditions, compulsory education/training can be provided at home.

**Part-time compulsory education/training** may take two forms: before or after full-time compulsory education.

- Before: Early childhood education and care programs of 250 or less hours per year;
- **After**: Until a certain age, students are required to participate in additional part-time school-based or workplace education/training.

**Additional year**: Part of an education programme that is not necessary to complete in order to end an education cycle or level, but may be necessary to access a higher education level or move to a different education pathway.

<sup>(&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>) ECEC services outside ISCED classification are also shown.

#### Key

Levels and typ	bes of education													
	Early childhood education and care (for which public education authorities are <b>not responsible</b> )													
	Early childhood education and care (for which public education authorities are <b>responsible</b> )													
	Primary education													
	Single structure													
	Secondary general education													
	Secondary vocational education													
	Post-secondary non-tertiary education													
	Tertiary education (full-time)													
Allocation to the	he ISCED 2011 levels (see definitions below)													
	ISCED 0 ISCED 2 ISCED 4 ISCED 6													
	ISCED 1 ISCED 3 ISCED 5 ISCED 7													
Other keys														
-	Full-time compulsory education/training													
-	Part-time compulsory education/training													
$\mathbf{\Sigma}$	Combined school based and workplace courses													
113	Possible additional year >> Study abroad													
→Iyear	Programme being phased out in (year)													
-/n/-	Compulsory work experience + its duration (in years)													

#### Compulsory work experience and its duration

Compulsory work experience is shown when it is required to move to the next education level or to begin a particular education programme; when applicable, its minimum required duration is indicated (-/n/-).

#### Education programmes being phased out

When reforms change education programmes, new and old programmes are concurrently shown. The year during which the old education programmes are being phased out is indicated ( $\rightarrow$ ) year).

#### International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)

The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is an instrument suitable for compiling statistics on education internationally. It covers two cross-classification variables: levels and fields of education with the complementary dimensions of general/vocational/pre-vocational orientation and education-labour market destination. The last version, ISCED 2011 distinguishes eight levels of education. Empirically, ISCED assumes that several criteria exist which can help allocate education programmes to levels of education. Depending on the level and type of education concerned, there is a need to establish a hierarchical ranking system between main and subsidiary criteria (typical entrance qualification, minimum entrance requirement, minimum age, staff qualification, etc.).

For the full details on each ISCED level, please consult:

UNESCO, Institute for Statistics, 2012. *International Standard Classification of Education*. *ISCED 2011*. Available at: <u>http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/isced-2011-en.pdf</u>

#### **ISCED 0: Early childhood education**

Programmes at this level are typically designed with a holistic approach to support children's early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development and introduce young children to organised instruction outside of the family context. ISCED level 0 refers to early childhood programmes that have an intentional education component.

#### **ISCED 1: Primary education**

Programmes at this level are typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics (i.e. literacy and numeracy) and establish a solid foundation for learning and understanding core areas of knowledge, personal and social development, in preparation for lower secondary education.

Age is typically the only entry requirement at this level. The customary or legal age of entry is usually not below 5 years old or above 7 years old. This level typically lasts six years, although its duration can range between four and seven years.

#### **ISCED 2: Lower secondary education**

Programmes at this level are typically designed to build on the learning outcomes from ISCED level 1. Students enter ISCED level 2 typically between ages 10 and 13 (age 12 being the most common).

#### **ISCED 3: Upper secondary education**

Programmes at this level are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education or provide skills relevant to employment, or both. Students enter this level typically between ages 14 and 16.

#### **ISCED 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education**

Post-secondary non-tertiary education provides learning experiences building on secondary education, preparing for labour market entry as well as tertiary education. Programmes at ISCED level 4, or post-secondary non-tertiary education, are typically designed to provide individuals who completed ISCED level 3 with non-tertiary qualifications required for progression to tertiary education or for employment when their ISCED level 3 qualifications do not grant such access. The completion of an ISCED level 3 programme is required to enter ISCED level 4 programmes.

#### **ISCED 5: Short-cycle tertiary education**

Programmes at this level are often designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Typically, they are practically based, occupationally-specific and prepare students to enter the labour market. However, these programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education programmes. Entry into ISCED level 5 programmes requires the successful completion of ISCED level 3 or 4 with access to tertiary education.

#### **ISCED 6: Bachelors' or equivalent level**

Programmes at this level are often designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Entry into these programmes normally requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 3 or 4 programme with access to tertiary education. Entry may depend on subject choice and/or grades achieved at ISCED levels 3 and/or 4. Additionally, it may be required to take and succeed in entry examinations. Entry or transfer into ISCED level 6 is also sometimes possible after the successful completion of ISCED level 5.

#### **ISCED 7: Master's or equivalent level**

Programmes at this level, are often designed to provide participants with advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a second degree or equivalent qualification. Typically, programmes at this level are theoretically-based but may include practical components and are informed by state of the art research and/or best professional practice. They are traditionally offered by universities and other tertiary educational institutions.

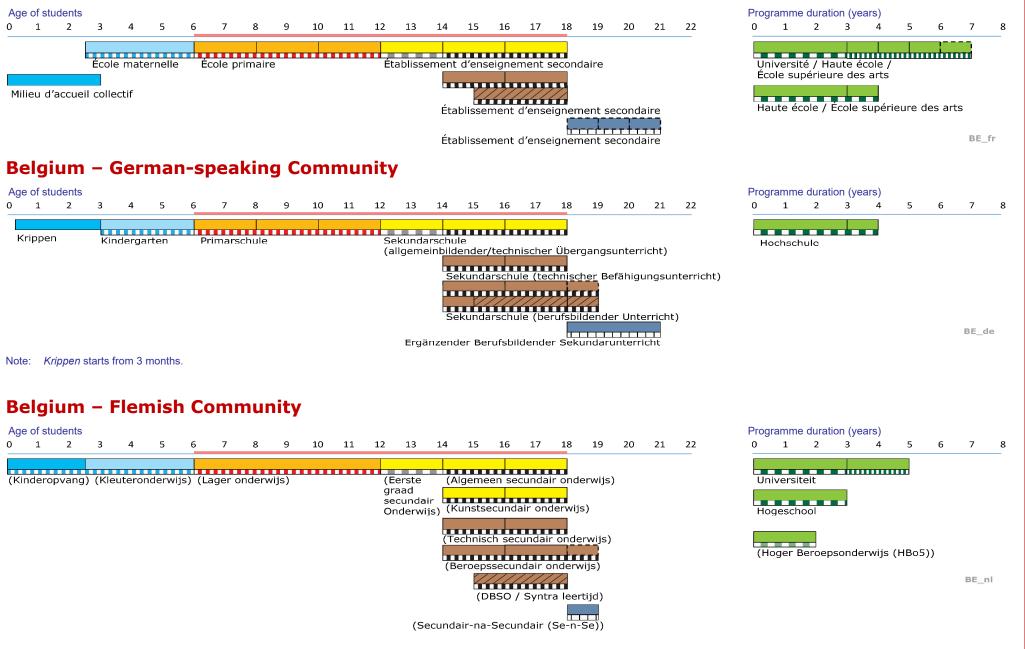
Entry into ISCED level 7 programmes preparing for a second or further degree normally requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 6 or 7 programme. In the case of long programmes that prepare for a first degree equivalent to a Master's degree, entry requires the successful completion of an ISCED level 3 or 4 programme with access to tertiary education. Entry into such programmes may depend on subject choice and/or grades achieved at ISCED levels 3 and/or 4. Additionally, it may be required to take and succeed in entry examinations.

## SCHEMATIC DIAGRAMS

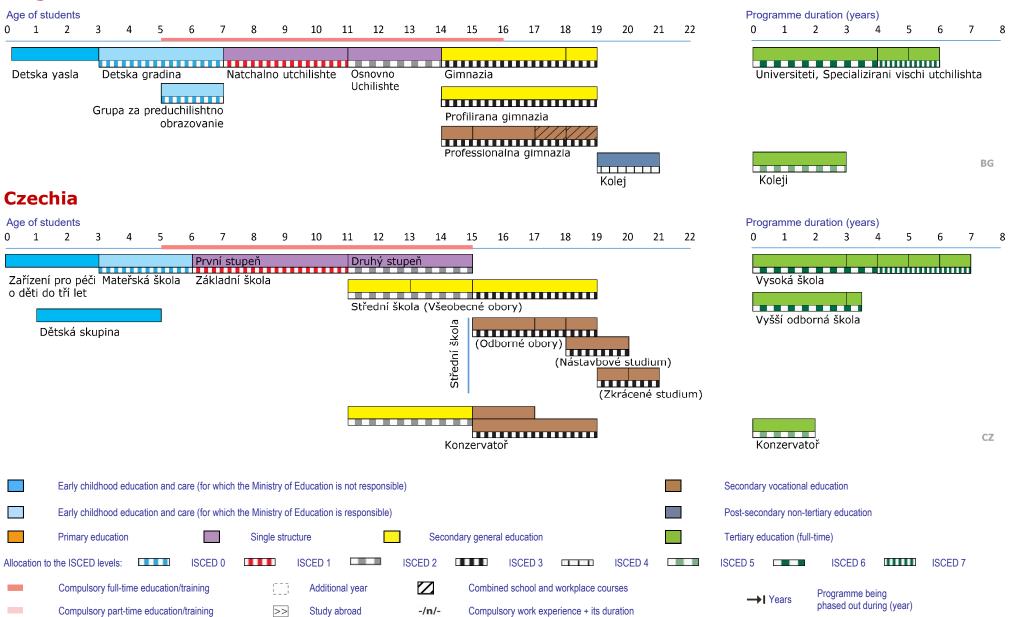
Belgium – French Community	14	Poland	24
Belgium – German-speaking Community	14	Portugal	25
Belgium – Flemish Community	14	Romania	25
Bulgaria	15	Slovenia	26
Czechia	15	Slovakia	26
Denmark	16	Finland	26
Germany	16	Sweden	27
Estonia	16	United Kingdom – England	27
Ireland	17	United Kingdom – Wales	28
Greece	17	United Kingdom – Northern Ireland	28
Spain	18	United Kingdom – Scotland	28
France	18	Albania	29
Croatia	19	Bosnia and Herzegovina	29
Italy	19	Switzerland	30
Cyprus	20	Iceland	30
Latvia	20	Liechtenstein	31
Lithuania	20	Montenegro	31
Luxembourg	21	North Macedonia	32
Hungary	22	Norway	32
Malta	22	Serbia	32
Netherlands	23	Turkey	33
Austria	24		

## **Belgium – French Community**

4



## **Bulgaria**

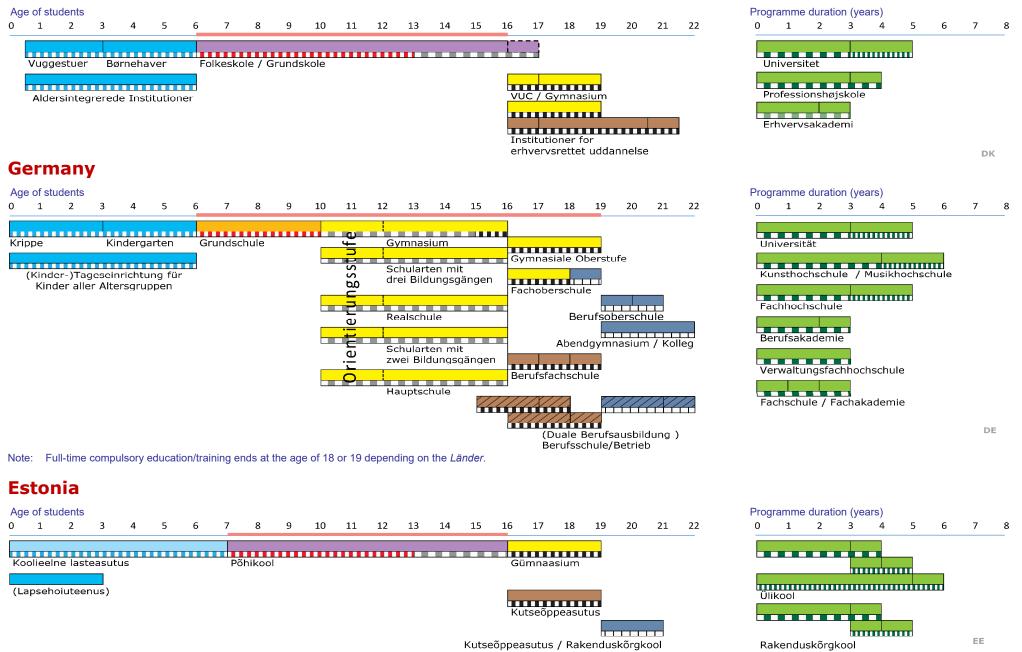


The Structure of the European Education Systems 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

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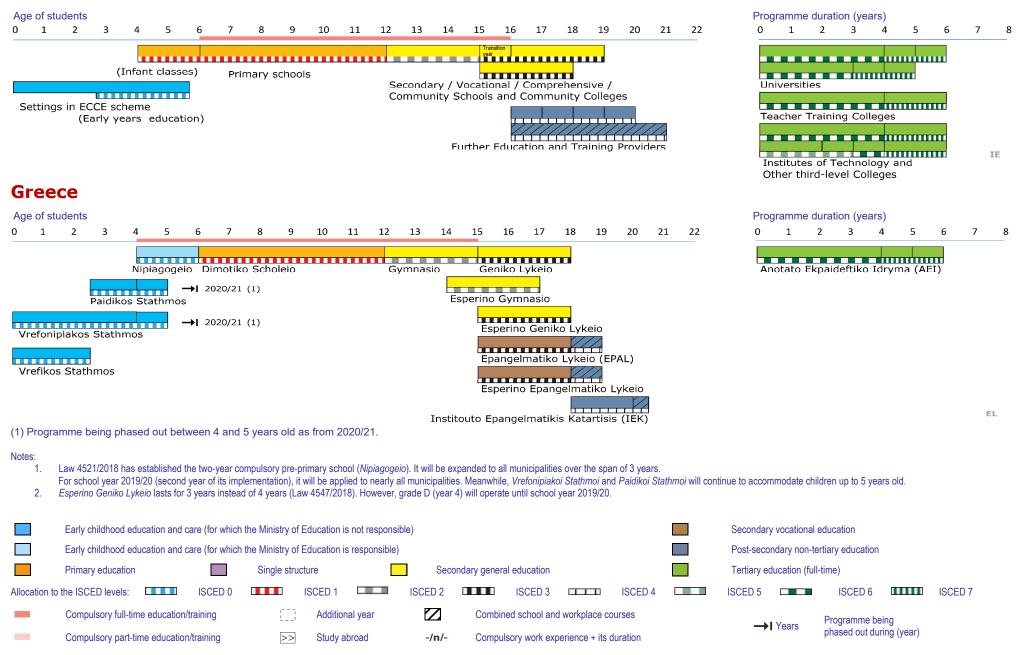
## Denmark

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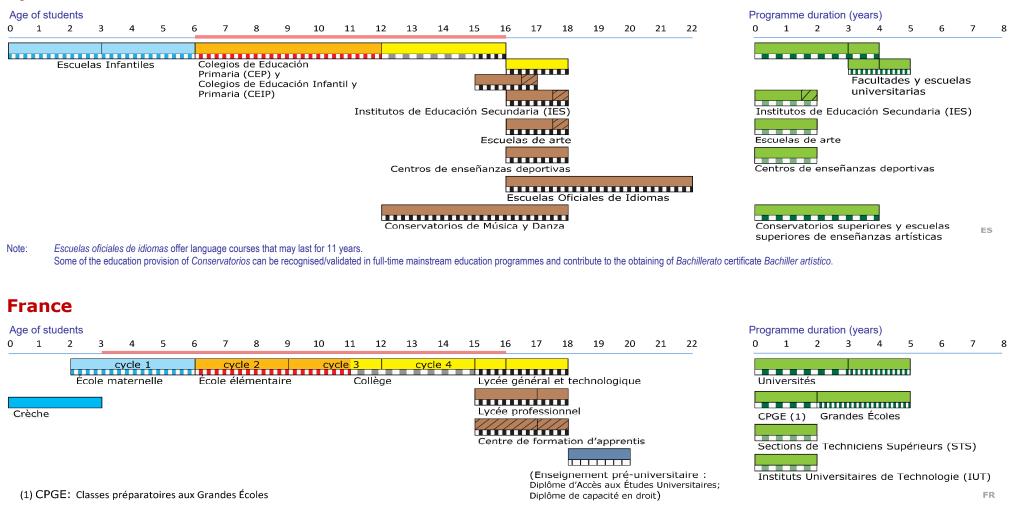
## Ireland

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## Spain

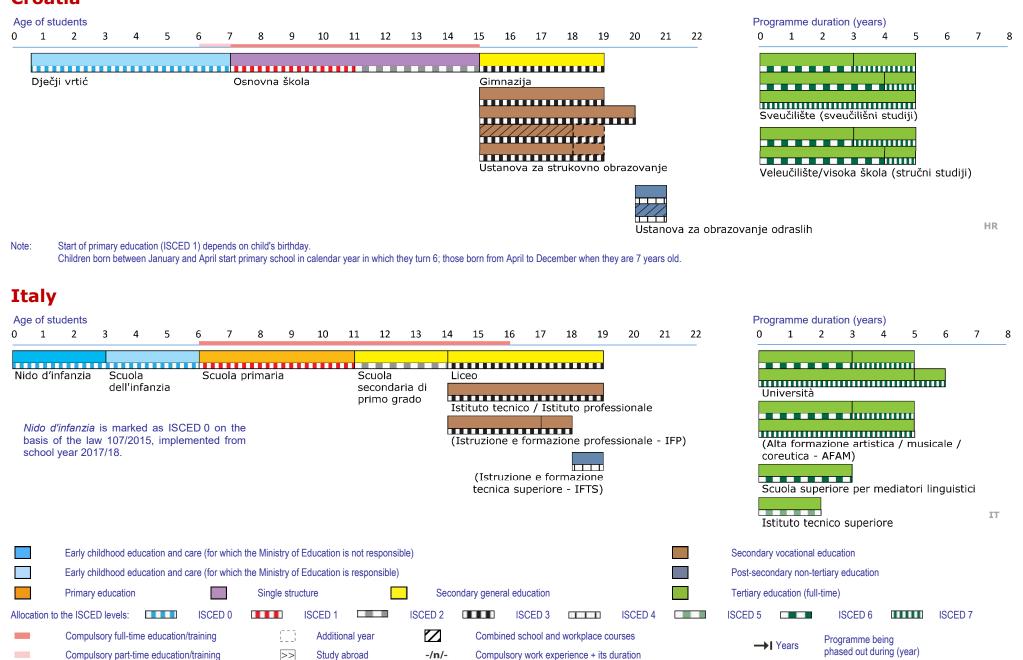
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Note: For 16-18 year olds, compulsory training will come into effect as of September 2020.

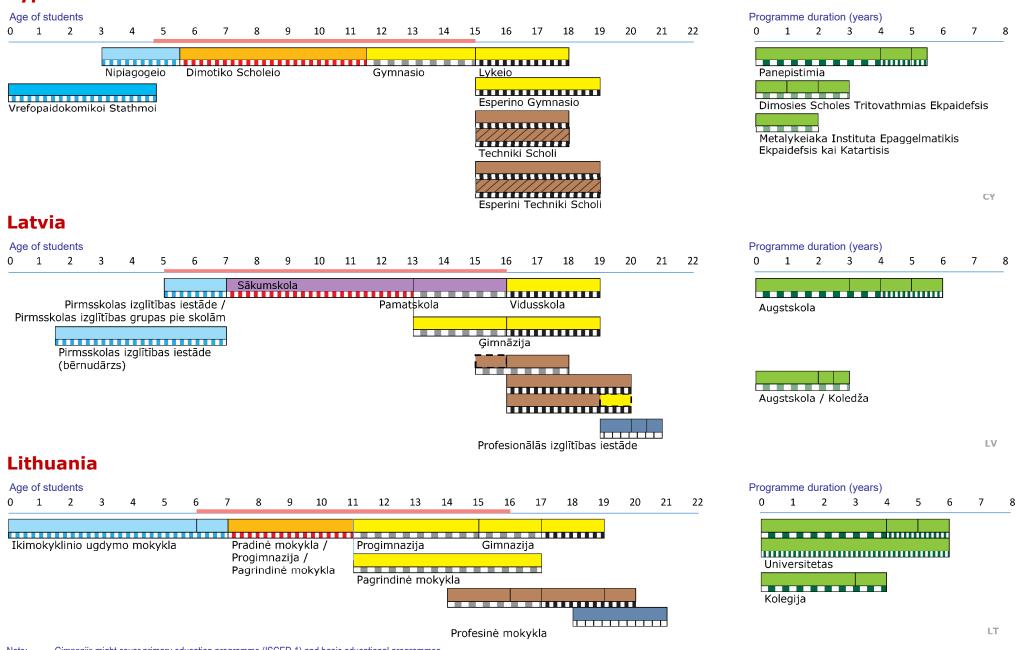
### Croatia

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## Cyprus

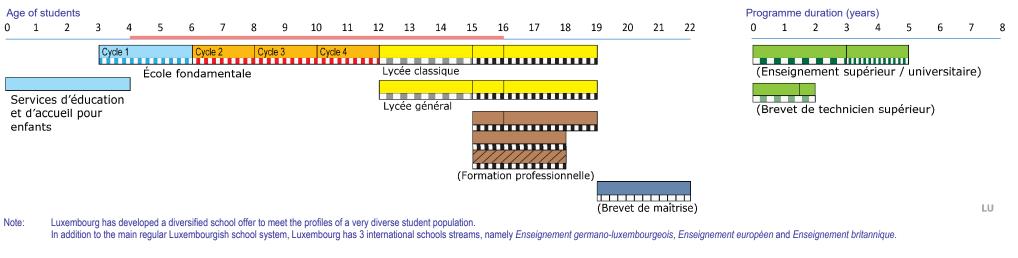
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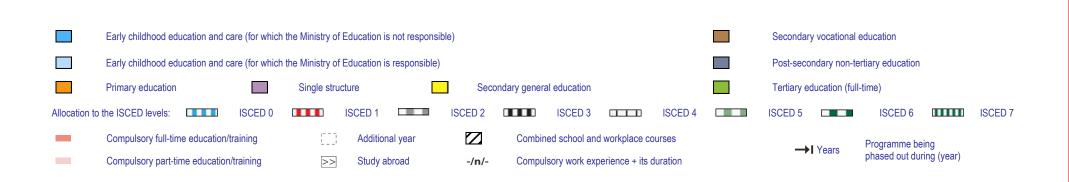
Note: Gimnazija might cover primary education programme (ISCED 1) and basic educational programmes.

The Structure of the European Education Systems 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

## Luxembourg

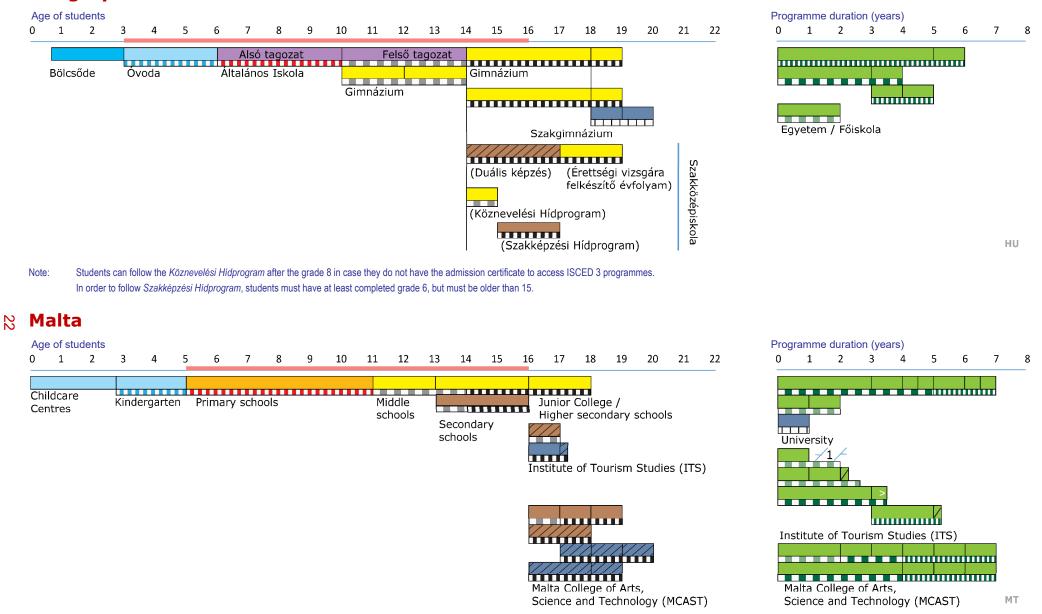


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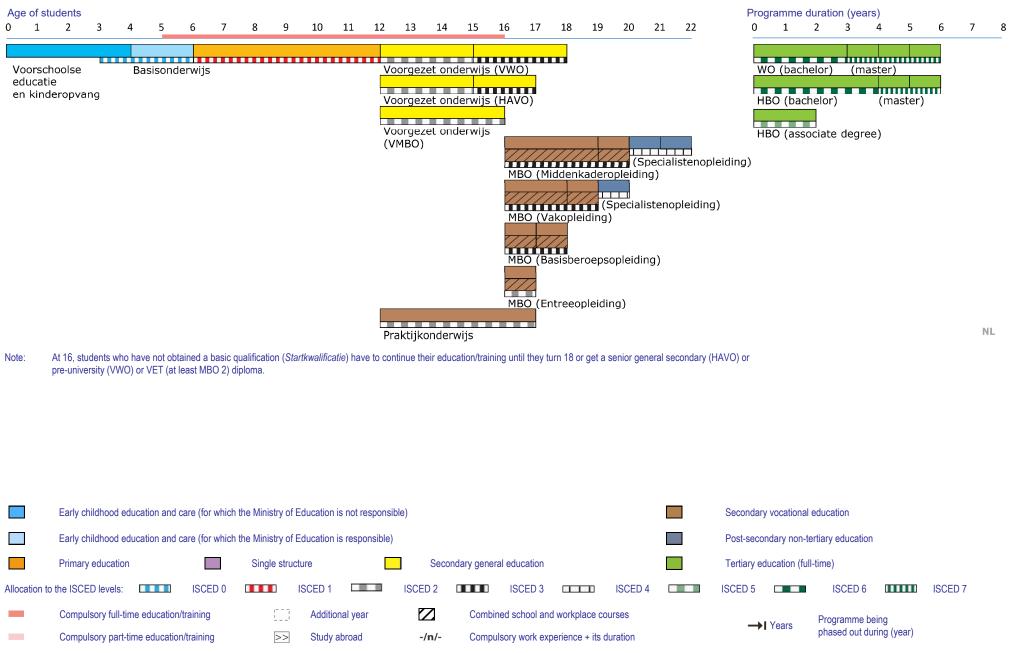
## Hungary



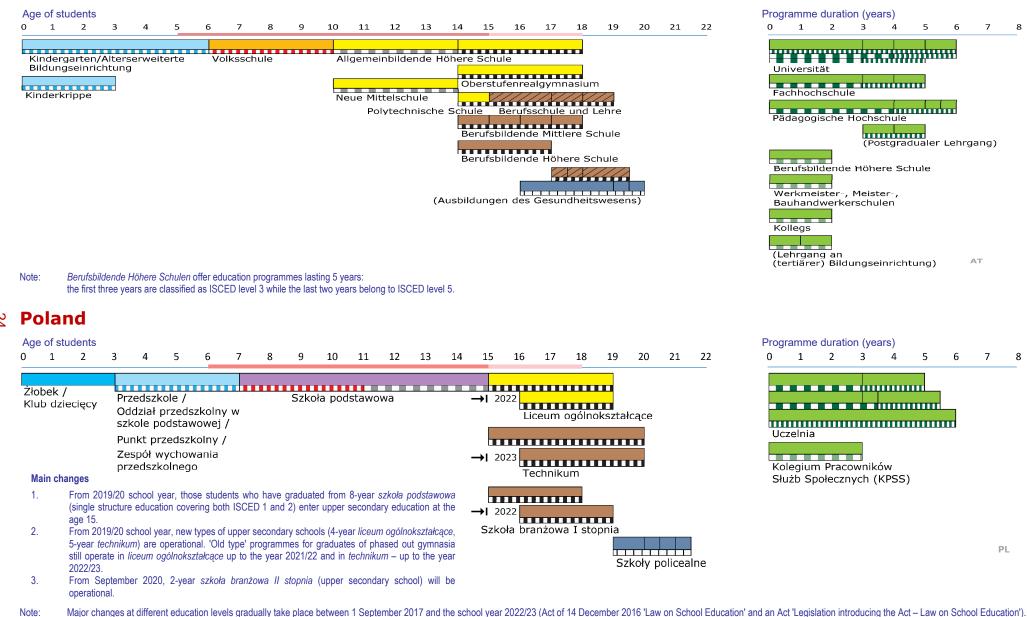
Note: To emphasise the possibility of one continuous pathway between different levels, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) has introduced three colleges during 2016: the Foundation College, the Technical College and the University College.

## Netherlands

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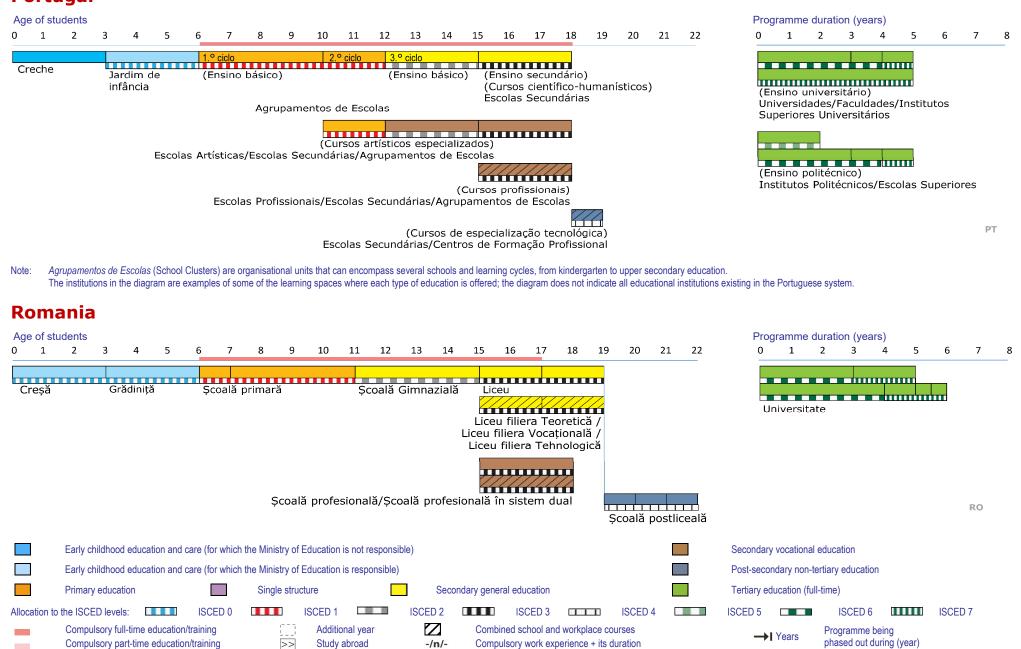


## Austria



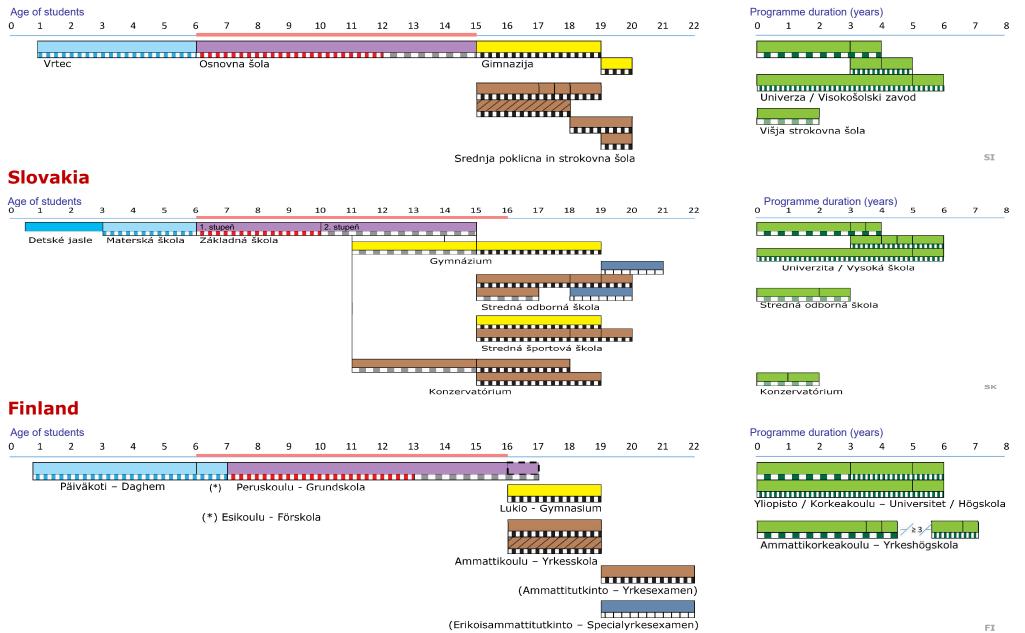
## Portugal

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## **Slovenia**

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The

Structure

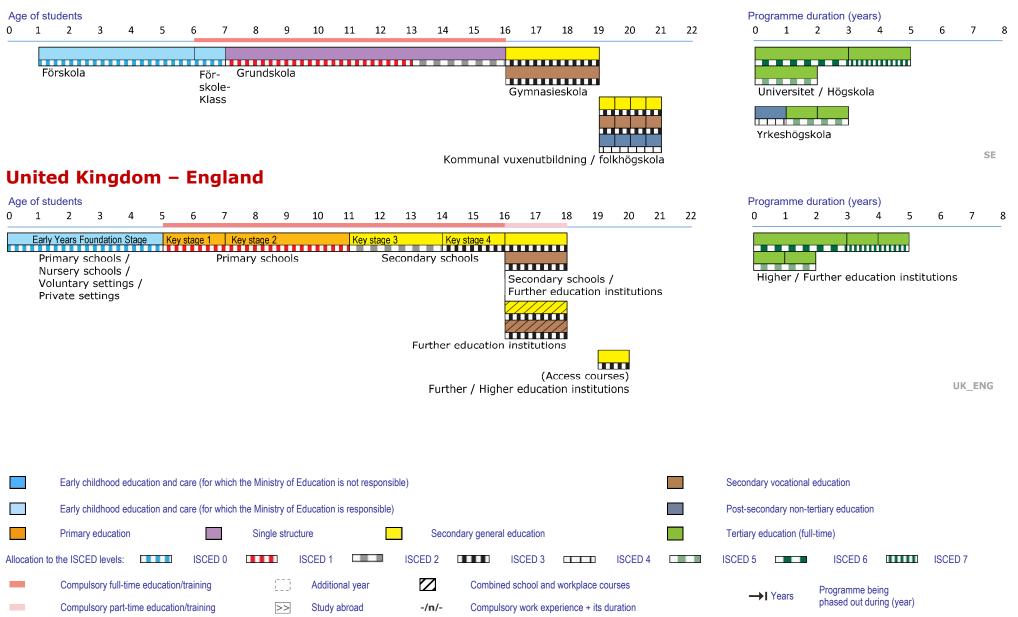
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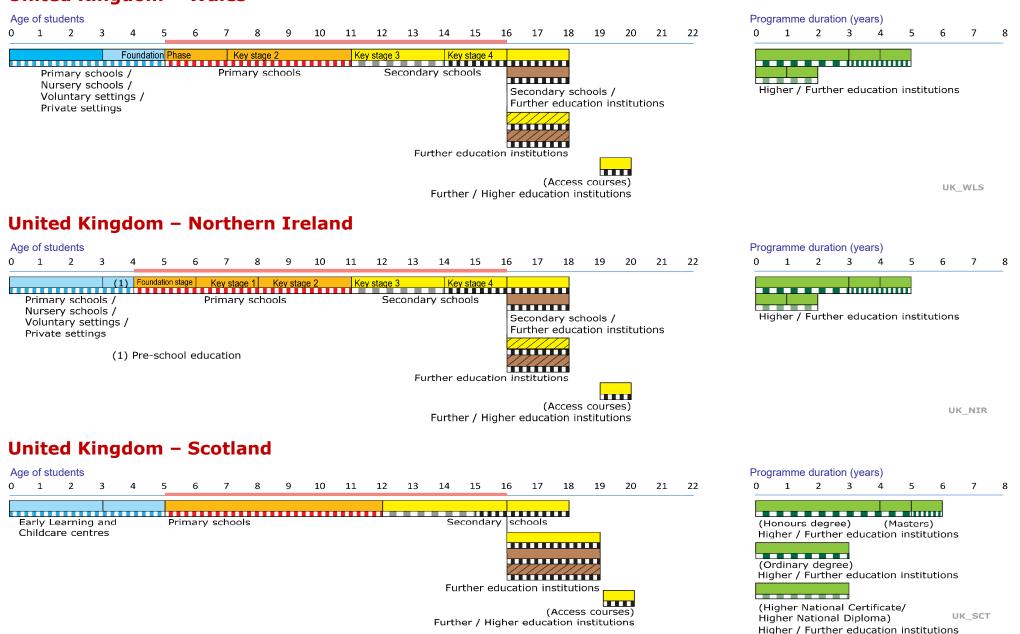
Systems 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

### Sweden



## **United Kingdom – Wales**

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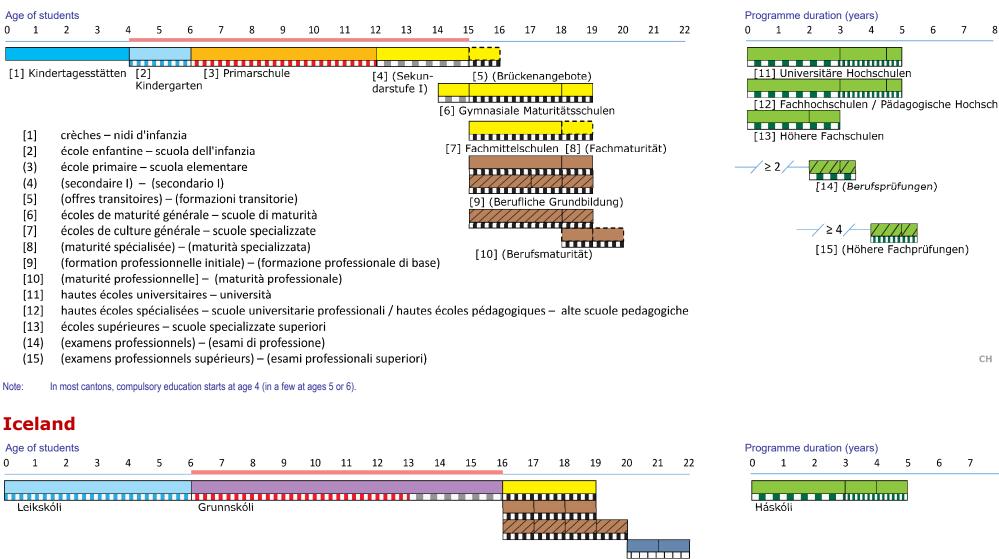
## Albania

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## Switzerland

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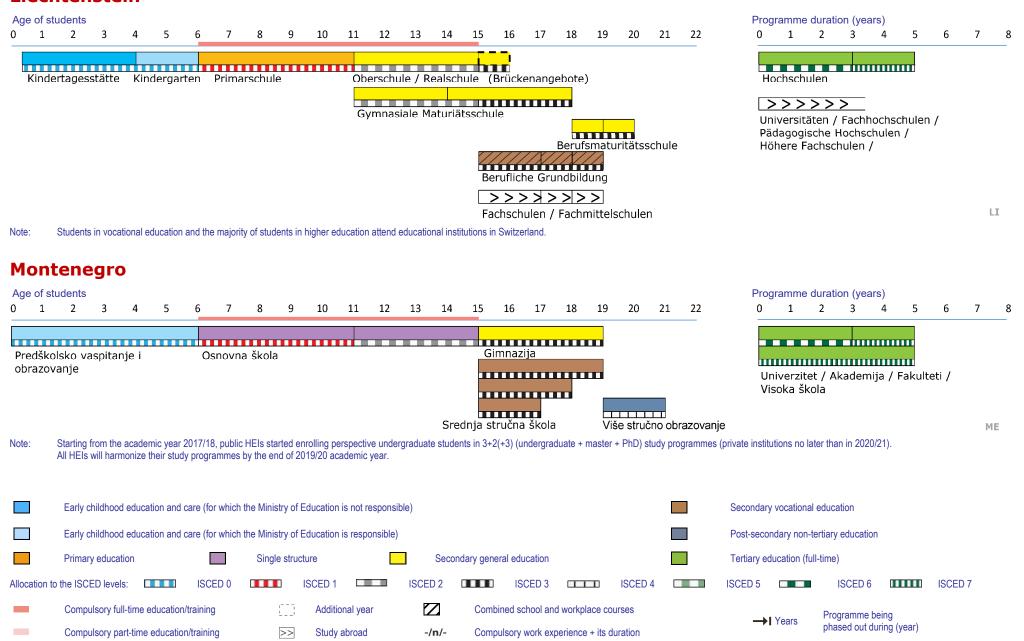
Structure

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European Education Systems 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

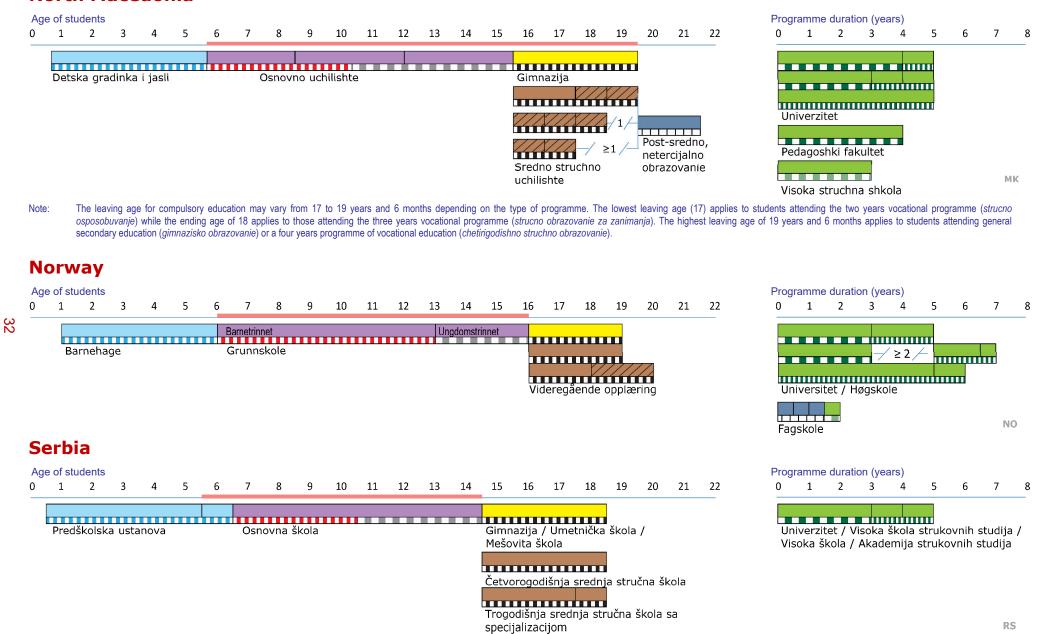
## Liechtenstein

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The Structure of the **European Education Systems** 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

## **North Macedonia**



## Turkey

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	Age of s																					Pro	gramme		ation (ye	ears)				
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## EDUCATION, AUDIOVISUAL AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY

## **Education and Youth Policy Analysis**

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## The Structure of the European Education Systems 2019/20: Schematic Diagrams

This report provides information on the structure of mainstream European education systems, from pre-primary to tertiary level for the 2019/20 school and academic year. It includes national schematic diagrams and a guide to reading the diagrams. It also contains a map visually showing the main organisational models of primary and lower secondary education in Europe,: 'single structured education', 'common core curriculum provision' and 'differentiated lower secondary education'. The information is available for 43 European education systems covering 38 countries participating in the EU's Erasmus+ programme.

The report's content is in line with the Eurydice Network's task: understand and explain how Europe's different education systems are organised and how they work.

The Eurydice network's task is to understand and explain how Europe's different education systems are organised and how they work. The network provides descriptions of national education systems, comparative studies devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics. All Eurydice publications are available free of charge on the Eurydice website or in print upon request. Through its work, Eurydice aims to promote understanding, cooperation, trust and mobility at European and international levels. The network consists of national units located in European countries and is coordinated by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. For more information about Eurydice, see <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/eurydice">http://ec.europa.eu/eurydice</a>.



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