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New care and nursing study opportunities in Czechia

A pilot programme of tiered educational pathways within the care and nursing sector has just been launched in Czechia, the EU Presidency holder in the second semester of 2022.

The programme, from the Ministry of Education, started on 1 September with the aim that students, upon completing the relevant part of the educational pathway, achieve not only a qualification but also the corresponding education level.

This objective meets both the current needs in the healthcare sector and the provision of individual learning opportunities. In practice, candidates who enter the first of a four-year study programme in Practical nursing (EQF 4), concluded with the *maturita* exam will, at the end of the third year, have the opportunity to take the final examination and obtain the Carer vocational education and training certificate (EQF 3).

In the fourth year, they will take the *maturita* exam and obtain the Maturita certificate in practical nursing. Subsequently they can continue to a diploma programme in General nursing (EQF 6) at a tertiary professional school. There will be no need for an entrance examination: they will commence their studies in the second year of this three-year programme, concluding with the *absolutorium* exam, which will give them a tertiary level diploma.

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

Obtaining the Carer vocational education and training certificate allows students to perform qualified work in healthcare institutions during their studies, with a higher salary. Shorter studies to obtain a tertiary level of education and the possibility to enter a tertiary professional school after completing the fourth year of upper secondary school, even if they fail the state part of the *maturita* exam, also offer motivation. However, students need to complete the state part of the *maturita* exam by the end of the second year at the tertiary professional school.

The full cycle of pilot testing, which involves 30 upper secondary and tertiary professional medical schools, will be finalised by 31 August 2031. Schools may still join the pilot in the next 4 years.



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