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Ministry of Education and Culture
Hungary



Introduction into Hungarian Education

In Hungary Education is one of the strategic topics among main political issues.

The Ministry oversees the pedagogical, professional and educational efforts in public education. It is responsible for drawing up the necessary development plans, creating the legislation required for such operations and ensuring that the institutions work at the required standard of quality. To this end, it organises pedagogical, professional assessments, examinations and surveys in the field of public education. It ensures that children are supplied with high-quality textbooks by elaborating the order and conditions of schoolbook registration.



The Ministry is responsible for the public administration tasks relating to the valuable assets safeguarded in public collections (museums, libraries and archives). It also operates the relevant services, professional committees and councils. An important duty of the Ministry is to organise the State's public education activities and to support public education.

It furthers and coordinates the efforts of the professional contributors to cultural and tourist attraction projects.



The Ministry lays great emphasis on assisting and subsidising the cultural and educational work of Hungarians across the border and minorities in Hungary, as well as the provision of equal opportunities for children and young people with disadvantages. The Minister attaches special significance to his tasks related to ecclesiastic matters and church relations.

The Ministry also monitors and modifies existing and introduces new medals, awards and scholarships in education and culture.



In his international role, the Minister is often engaged in cooperation with other ministers. Such work includes preparations for, and the conclusion of, educational and research agreements with other countries, the adoption of workplans, facilitating the overseas studies of scholarship holders, and carrying out the state tasks related to the education of Hungarians beyond the borders of the Republic of Hungary. The MEC also partakes in the overseeing of Hungarian cultural institutes.

It is independently responsible for the central steering of education for national and ethnic minorities in their mother tongues and the conclusion of international agreements concerning the acknowledgement of certificates, diplomas and scientific degrees.



Important roles at the Ministry

Minister:

Dr. PhD István Hiller

Senior State Secretary (Education):

Gergely Arató

State Secretaries:

Ferenc Csák - in charge of international relations

Dr. Károly Manherz - in charge of higher education and science

Dr. Márta Schneider - in charge of culture

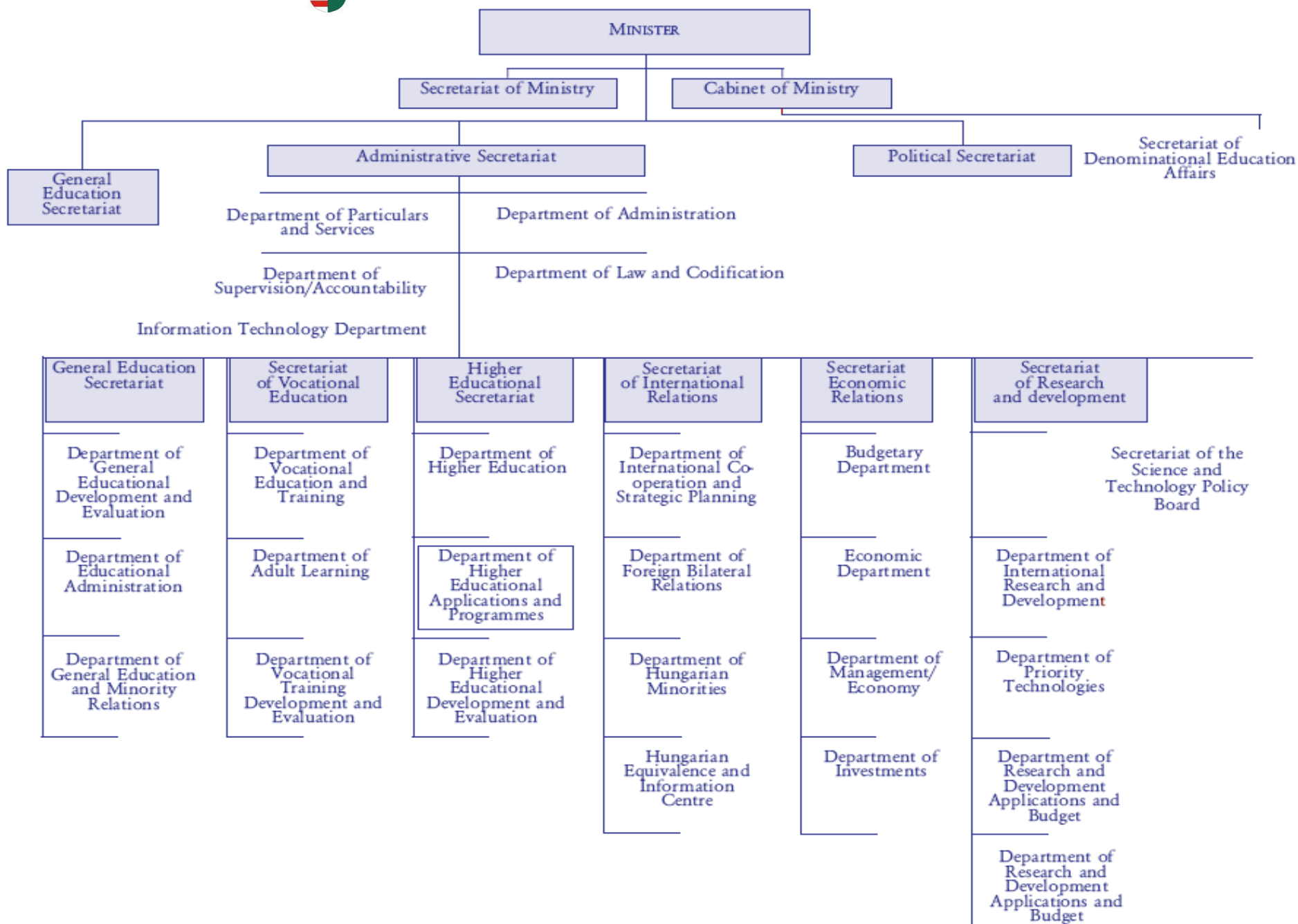
Dr. János Szüdi - in charge of public education

Ferenc Závecz - financial affairs and administrative activities





STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



Professional organizations taking part in the preparation of new laws:

- National Public Education Council
- Public Education Policy Council
- Educational Authority
- National Council of Ethnic Minorities
- Over 100 Civil Educational Organizations are involved in preparation of legal documents



Education population and language of instruction

In 2006 the number of people aged between 0 and 29 was **3 673 592**, which is the 36.63 % of the total population.

2 150 602 young people aged 5-18 were involved in compulsory education. The 87 % of the population aged 3-22 was enrolled in pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions.

The official language of instruction is Hungarian. Officially recognized ethnic and national minorities (e.g. German, Romanian, Slovenian, Serb, Croatian and Greek) have public minority educational institutions where their own language as first or second language of instruction is used.



Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

The predominant majority of children attend public-sector schools (kindergartens or schools), which are administered by public authorities, primarily the local governments. State and private institutions receive funding according to the same criteria.

The ratio of children at kindergartens and primary schools managed by non state maintainers is 5 %; in the case of secondary schools it is 28 %. The central budget provides normative financial support to all maintainers (state and non state).



Administrative control /1

Additional financial support (*kiegészítő támogatás*) is given for specific tasks and purposes that are stipulated by law. Basic education is free according to the core principle of the Hungarian education system.

Horizontally, the administrative responsibilities are shared between the Ministry of Education and Culture and other ministries: primarily the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Local Governments and Regional Development.



Administrative control /2

National summary sheets on education systems in Europe and ongoing reforms. Since 2006 responsibility for defining the content of school based vocational education has been transferred to the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, while the Ministry of Education and Culture continues to be responsible for the overall management of public and higher education.

Vertically, the tasks related to administrative control and management responsibilities are decentralized and are shared among the central (national) government, the local (county and/or community level) authorities and the respective educational institutions.



Administrative control /3

The overall control is the responsibility of the Minister of Education and Culture, whose authority covers all the issues and activities falling under the Act on Public Education irrespectively of where the activity takes place, in what kind of institution or who the maintainer of the institution is.

National Public Education Council (*Országos Köznevelési Tanács*) is the minister's professional advisory body – established by the Act on Public Education – which contributes to the preparations of decision-making, forms opinion and makes proposals.

Public Education Policy Council (*Közoktatás-politika Tanács*) takes a stand on issues regarding the public education and policy at national level.

The Educational Authority (*Oktatási Hivatal*) was set up in 2006. The Authority operates as a central office, under the control of the Minister of Education and Culture. It performs organisation and coordination of surveying, measuring, evaluation and quality assurance tasks regarding all levels of education.



Administrative control /4

Municipalities undertake tasks related to kindergarten and primary public education, and also secondary education. In case the secondary education presents difficulties, the tasks can be delivered to or shared with county/ capital (in Budapest) local governments.

Municipalities control the legacy of operation and management; make decisions about the establishment; specify the budget; supervise the economy and legal operation and the efficiency of professional work.

In the case of state-funded education, municipalities act as maintainer of the educational institutions. The maintainer appoints the head of the institution and practices the employer's rights. Within the local and county governments notaries exercise the rights of authority.



Curriculum control and content

The education in pre-primary school (*óvoda*) is performed on the basis of its local programme developed according to the provisions of the National *Óvoda* Core Programme, which is issued by the Government.

A three level structure – comprising the National Core Curriculum, the Frame Curricula and local curricula – constitutes the overall framework for curricular matters. The National Core Curriculum is issued by the government every three years. It focuses on the acquisition of lifelong learning key competences.

Curriculum to serve as a basis for developing Local Curricula. At institutional level local curricula are developed by schools in accordance with the stipulations of the National Core Curriculum and are approved by the teaching staff and the maintainer.



Local curricula stipulate the pool of compulsory and optional study units (subjects, projects, etc.) with respect to the stipulations of the National Core Curriculum.

Teachers have the autonomy to choose the method, accessories and tools of teaching, to write the syllabus on the basis of the teaching program. Responsibility of the choice of textbooks falls on the teaching staff although the Ministry of Education and Culture approves the list of the eligible textbooks. Law (Act XXXVII of 2001) stipulates the guidelines regarding the textbook market. The accreditation and subsidy of textbooks is regulated by a decree.

