

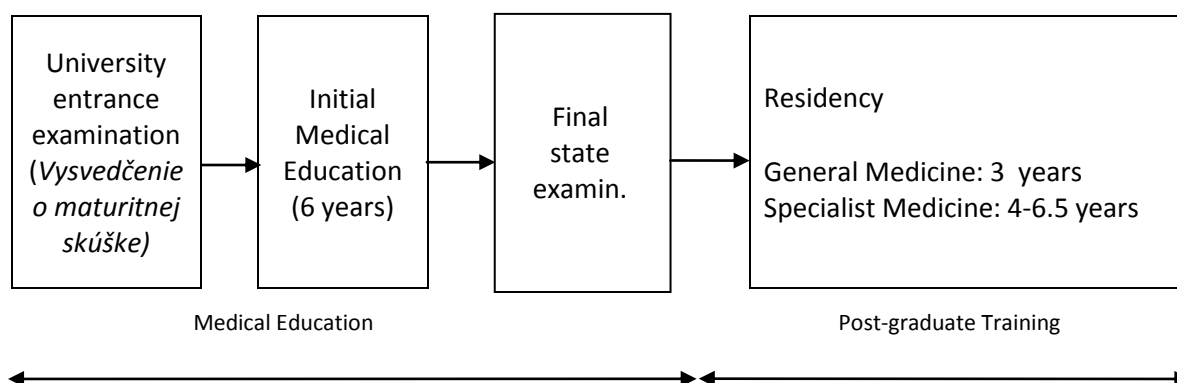


Trends in Medical Education and Training in Slovak Republic

1. Brief Overview of Medical Education and Training Pathways

- In the Slovak Republic, students can access medical education after having completed high school and having passed a university entrance examination. Since 2003, Slovakian medical schools are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport, which also determines the financial resources available to them. There is no explicit *numerus clausus* policy (i.e., annual quota), but the capacity of medical schools to accept students is limited by budget constraints. Four medical faculties in three different universities are currently accredited by the government to provide medical studies and to award the title of medical doctor (two in Comenius University, one in Slovak Health University and one in Pavol Jozef Šafárik University) (Szalay et al., 2011).
- Following reforms of the Higher Education Act which were part of the Bologna Process, initial medical education became a six year programme (twelve semesters). The first six semesters are largely theoretical and nonclinical, whereas the last six semesters include mostly clinical and hospital-based training. Following the completion of this six year programme and the final state examination, graduates are awarded the title Doctor of General Medicine.
- Following the completion of this initial medical degree, graduates are eligible to apply for a post-graduate training programme. In 2011, 96 specialised post-graduate training programmes were available (Szalay et al., 2011). These programmes can last from three up to six and a half years, depending on the area of specialisation.
- Following the completion of this specialty training programme, the graduate is eligible to apply to the Slovak Chamber of Medicine for a license to practice as a specialist physician.
- On average, to become a doctor in the Slovak Republic, it therefore takes between 9 to 12 years of university education and post-graduate training, depending on the area of specialisation.

Figure 1. Medical education and training paths, Slovak Republic

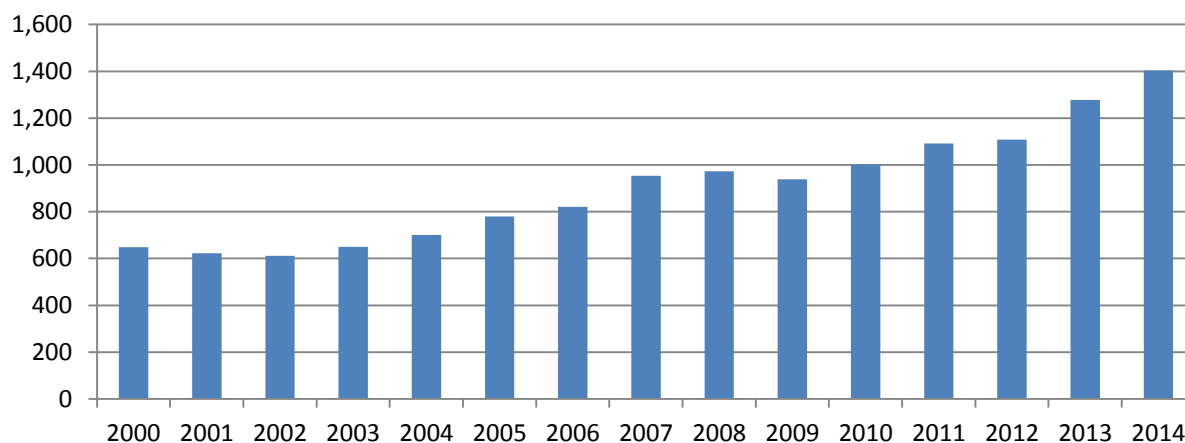


Source: Szalay et al., 2011.

2. Trends in Admissions to Medical Schools

- Figure 2 shows trends in first-year students' admission to medical schools in Slovakia from 2000 to 2014. The number of admissions to undergraduate medical education has increased throughout this period, with the exception of 2009 when there was a small decrease. From 2004 to 2014, intake to undergraduate medical education doubled from 700 to 1,404 students.

Figure 2. Admissions to medical education in the Slovak Republic, 2000-2014



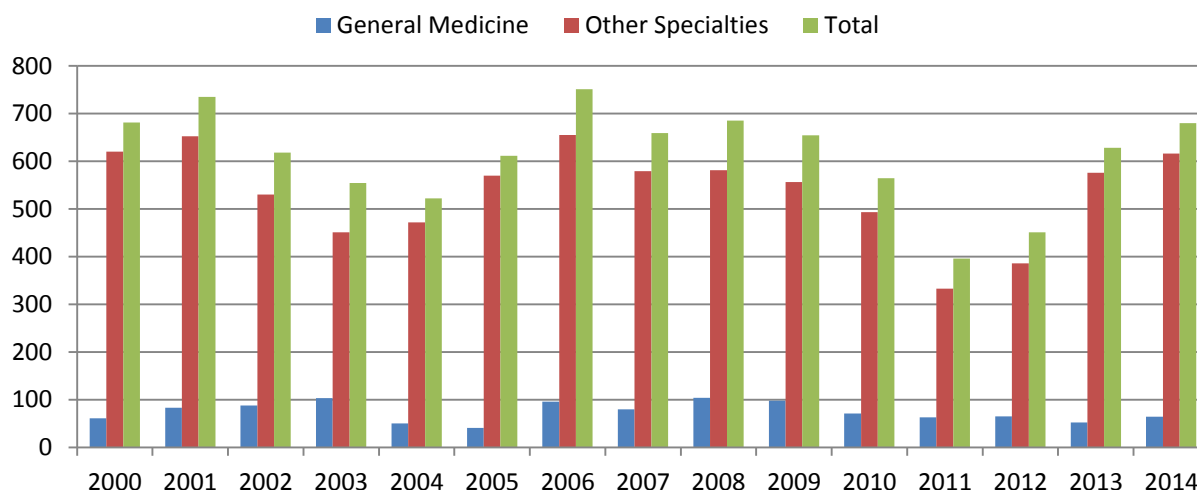
Source: Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic.

- Under the influence of the reforms linked to the Bologna Process, the Slovak Republic is increasingly offering undergraduate medical education in English, in an attempt to attract foreign medical students. However, no data is readily available to assess the growth in the number of foreign students pursuing their studies in Slovakian medical schools.

3. Trends in Admissions to Post-graduate Training

- Figure 3 depicts trends in admissions to post-graduate training programmes overall in the Slovak Republic from 2000 and 2014, as well as a breakdown between places in general medicine *versus* other specialties.
- The number of admissions to post-graduate medical training was the same in 2014 as it was in 2000 (680 in both years), but there were some fluctuations up and down during that period. The number of admissions reached a peak of over 700 new posts in 2001 and 2006, while the lowest levels were recorded in 2011 and 2012 with less than 500, but the numbers have gone back up since then.
- The percentage of admissions to general medicine training has remained fairly constant throughout this period, with only about 9% of total admissions in post-graduate medical training being in general medicine in 2000 and 2014.

Figure 3. Admissions to General Practitioner and Specialisation post-graduate training in the Slovak Republic , 2000-2014



Source: Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic.

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