



## Organisation of school time in Europe

Primary and general secondary education

School year 2003/04





# **ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL TIME IN EUROPE**

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**SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004**

**PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

- **LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**
- **STARTING DATES OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**
- **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS OVER THE SCHOOL YEAR**

**SEPTEMBER 2003**

**TABLE I – LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)**

COUNTRY	PRIMARY EDUCATION		SECONDARY EDUCATION	
	Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
<b>BELGIUM</b> FRENCH COMMUNITY <sup>1</sup> FLEMISH COMMUNITY GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	01 September 01 September 01 September	30 June 30 June 30 June	01 September 01 September 01 September	30 June 30 June 30 June
<b>DENMARK</b> <sup>2</sup>	11 August	18 June	04 or 11 August (usually in the first two weeks of August)	18 June
<b>GERMANY</b> <sup>3</sup>	01 August	31 July	01 August	31 July
<b>GREECE</b> <sup>4</sup>	11 September	15 June	11 September (Gymnasio) 11 September (Lykeio)	31 May (Gymnasio) 16 May (Lykeio)
<b>SPAIN</b> <sup>5</sup>	Between 01 and 15 September	Between 17 and 30 June	Between 01 and 18 September	Between 11 and 30 June
<b>FRANCE</b> <sup>6</sup>	02 September	29 June	02 September	29 June
<b>IRELAND</b> <sup>7</sup>	01 September	30 June approx.	01 September	*25 June
<b>ITALY</b> <sup>8</sup>	Between 10 and 26 September	Between 08 and 15 June	Between 10 and 26 September	Between 08 and 15 June
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	15 September	15 July	15 September	15 July
<b>NETHERLANDS</b> <sup>9</sup>	Between 11 August and 01 September	Between 03 July and 24 July	Between 18 August and 01 September	Between 03 July and 16 July
<b>AUSTRIA</b> <sup>10</sup>	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: 01 September other <i>Länder</i> : 08 September	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: 02 July other <i>Länder</i> : 09 July	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: 01 September other <i>Länder</i> : 08 September	Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland: 02 July other <i>Länder</i> : 09 July
<b>PORTUGAL</b> <sup>11</sup>	Between 01 and 03 September	25 June	Between 01 and 03 September	25 June 12 <sup>th</sup> year between 11 and 25 June
<b>FINLAND</b> <sup>12</sup>	Between 11 and 13 August	29 May	Between 11 and 13 August	29 May
<b>SWEDEN</b> <sup>13</sup>	Between 18 and 28 August	Between 21 May and 18 June	Between 18 and 28 August	Between 21 May and 18 June
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b> ENGLAND AND WALES <sup>14</sup> NORTHERN IRELAND <sup>15</sup> <b>SCOTLAND</b> <sup>16</sup>	First week of September First week of September Middle of August	Third or fourth week of July End of June End of June/beginning of July	First week of September First week of September Middle of August	Third or fourth week of July End of June End of June/beginning of July
<b>ICELAND</b> <sup>17</sup>	Between 21 August and 01 September (primary/lower secondary)	Between 28 May and 10 June (primary/lower secondary)	Between 22 August and 01 September (upper secondary)	Between 22 and 28 May (upper secondary)
<b>LIECHTENSTEIN</b>	18 August	02 July	18 August	02 July
<b>NORWAY</b> <sup>18</sup>	Between 14 and 20 August	Approx. 18 June	Between 14 and 20 August	Approx. 18 June
<b>BULGARIA</b>	15 September	<b>Grade 1:</b> 21 May <b>Grade 2-4:</b> 31 May	15 September	<b>Grades 5-8:</b> 15 June; <b>Grades 9-11:</b> 30 June; <b>Grade 12:</b> 07 May
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b> <sup>19</sup>	01 September	31 August	01 September	31 August
<b>ESTONIA</b> <sup>20</sup>	01 September	04 June	01 September	04 June

COUNTRY	PRIMARY EDUCATION		SECONDARY EDUCATION	
	Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
CYPRUS <sup>21</sup>	08 September (04 September)	18 June (16 June)	10 September	02 June
LATVIA <sup>22</sup>	01 September	28 May	01 September	28 May
LITHUANIA <sup>23</sup>	01 September	01 June (end of lessons)	01 September	01 June (end of lessons)
HUNGARY <sup>24</sup>	01 September	15 June	01 September	15 June
MALTA <sup>25</sup>	22 September	06 July	22 September	06 July
POLAND <sup>26</sup>	01 September	25 June	01 September	25 June
ROMANIA <sup>27</sup>	15 September	18 June	15 September	18 June
SLOVENIA <sup>28</sup>	01 September (primary and lower secondary)	24 June (primary and lower secondary)	01 September (upper secondary)	24 June (upper secondary)
SLOVAKIA <sup>29</sup>	01 September	31 August	01 September	31 August

## ENDNOTES

**TABLE I – LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)**

**1 Belgium – French Community**

The school year begins on the first working day of September and ends the last working day in June.

**2 Denmark**

The Ministry of Education issues guidelines to the distribution of holidays in the *Folkeskole*. They are not binding. Only the date of the last day of the school year must be complied with, and the school year must consist of 200 school days. As for upper secondary education, the Ministry only fixes the date of last day of the school year.

**3 Germany**

In accordance with the *Hamburg Agreement* between the *Länder* on harmonisation in the school system, the school year begins on 01 August and ends on 31 July. The actual beginning and end depend on the dates of the summer holidays which vary from one year to the other.

SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004			
Primary and secondary education			
	Beginning of school year 2003/2004	Summer holidays 2004	
		Beginning	End
BREMEN, NIEDERSACHSEN, SACHSEN-ANHALT, THÜRINGEN	21 August	08 July	18 August
SACHSEN	25 August	10 July	20 August
SAARLAND	01 September	19 July	28 August
HESSEN, RHEINLAND-PFALZ	01 September	19 July	27 August
SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN	11 August	28 June	07 August
HAMBURG	14 August	24 June	04 August
MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN	18 August	26 June	06 August
BERLIN, BRANDENBURG	18 August	24 June	07 August
NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN	15 September	22 July	04 September
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG	08 September	29 July	11 September
BAYERN	09 September	02 August	13 September

**4 Greece**

PRIMARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)		SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)	
Primary education		Secondary education (upper/lower)	
Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
01 September	21 June	01 September	30 June

Official school year: 01 September-31 August.

**5 Spain:** Dates vary according to the different Autonomous Communities. For detailed information, also on **teachers'** school year, see the following table:

	LENGTH OF STUDENTS' SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004				TEACHERS' SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004	
	Primary education		Secondary education		Primary/secondary	
	Beginning	End	Beginning	End	Beginning	End
Andalucía	15 September	Not before 22 June	15 September	Not before 22 June	01 September	30 June
Aragón	10 September	18 June	15 September	18 June	01 September	30 June
Asturias	10 September	18 June	15 September	18 June	01 September	30 June
Baleares	15 September	18 June	17 September	18 June	01 September	30 June; Official 31 August
Canarias	09/11 September	22 June	16/18 September	22 June	01 September	30 June
Cantabria	09 September	18 June	17 September	23 June	01 September	30 June
Castilla y León <sup>1)</sup>	11 September	23 June	17 September	23 June	01 September	30 June
Castilla-La Mancha	08 September	18 June	15 September	24 June	01 September	30 June.
Cataluña	15 September	18 June	15 September	18 June	01 September	30 June

LENGTH OF STUDENTS' SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004					TEACHERS' SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004	
	Primary education		Secondary education		Primary/secondary	
	Beginning	End	Beginning	End	Beginning	End
Extremadura	11 September at the latest	25 June	15 September	25 June	01 September	30 June
Galicia	10 September	24 June	18 September	25 June	01 September	31 August
Madrid	15 September	22 June	17 September	21 June	01 September	30 June
Murcia	09 September	18 June	17 September	24 June	01 September	30 June
Navarra	Not later than 09 September	Not before 18 June	Not later than 18 September	Not before 11 June	01 September	30 June
País Vasco	Not before 01 September	Not later than 30 June	Not before 01 September	Not later than 30 June	Not before 01 September	Not later than 30 June
C.Valenciana	08 September	17 June	17 September	11 June	-	-
La Rioja	08 September	23 June	15 September	23 June	01 September	30 June

<sup>1)</sup> Dates for the First Cycle of Compulsory Secondary Education when it takes place at a Primary School: 11 September

6 **France:** Teachers begin on 01 September.

7 **Ireland:** \*Last day of state exams.

In post-primary (secondary) school, the student school year, for students not sitting state examinations, will end about 4<sup>th</sup> June.

8 **Italy:** It is up to the *Direttori degli Uffici scolastici regionali* (school regional authorities) to decide the date of beginning and end of the school year. That means that the school year can begin at different dates, according to the decision taken at regional level. The *Direttore dell'Ufficio scolastico regionale* can decide for the same region different dates of beginning and end, according to the school level. Generally speaking, the school year begins between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September and finishes between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of June.

According to the implementation of school autonomy, the consultative councils of the schools can adapt the school calendar concerning the beginning and the end of the lessons. It means that the decisions of the *Direttori degli Uffici scolastici regionali* will be applied only in the case that schools have not decided their own date of beginning and end. The school adaptations of the organisation of school time must guarantee at least 200 days of lesson a school year.

LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004		
Primary and secondary education		
	Beginning	End
Veneto	10 September	08 June
Alto Adige Bolzano	10 September	12 June
Lombardia	11 September	05 June
Trentino-Trento, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Marche, Abruzzo	15 September	05 June
Piemonte, Basilicata	15 September	08 June
Sardegna	15 September	09 June
Valle d'Aosta	15 September	10 June
Liguria	16 September	11 June
Puglia	18 September	09 June
Sicilia	26 September	15 June

PRIMARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)		SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)	
Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
01 September	30 June	01 September	30 June

- <sup>9</sup> **Netherlands:** The school year officially runs from 01 August till 31 July of the following year. Start and end of the teaching year is according to region (north, central and south region).  
Teacher's school year is similar as student's school year.  
However, it is at the school's discretion to decide whether **teachers** are expected to end or start later (in order to attend meetings, for preparation of timetable, other non-teaching activities etc.)

LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR				
	Primary education		Secondary education	
	Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
North region	11 August	09 July	18 August	09 July
Central region	18 August	02 July	25 August	02 July
South region	01 September	23 July	01 September	16 July

- <sup>10</sup> **Austria:** There are 9 Austrian Bundesländer - B ► Burgenland, K ► Kärnten, NÖ ► Niederösterreich, OÖ ► Oberösterreich, S ► Salzburg, Stmk ► Steiermark, T ► Tirol, V ► Vorarlberg, W ► Wien.
- <sup>11</sup> **Portugal:** The official school year is from 01 September to 31 August. Beginning and end of the study period and school holidays are determined by a regulation of the Minister of Education for every school year. The academic year starts in 2003 between 01 and 03 September and includes not less than 180 school days and finishes for basic and secondary education on 25 June and on 11 June for the 12<sup>th</sup> year. After the end of the academic year and during the holidays, schools have to offer activities to pupils.  
**Teachers** have the summer holidays from 15 July until 01 September, according to school needs.
- <sup>12</sup> **Finland:** The providers of education (municipalities, school boards of private schools) can decide when to start, but the date of the last school day, as well as the length of the school year, are fixed. In the school year 2003/2004, there are 189 schooldays.
- <sup>13</sup> **Sweden:** Municipalities decide themselves when to start and finish in accordance to regulations set out in the Education Act.  
**Teachers:** Teachers' working time at school is 1360 hours. The regulated working hours are divided into 194 days during or in connection with the pupils' school year. Some days of competence development are often held when pupils' school year starts or ends. The holiday period for **teachers**, mid-June – mid August, includes the agreed holiday.
- <sup>14</sup> In **England and Wales**, school schools must be open for at least 380 half day sessions each school year. The dates of school terms are not fixed nationally; they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by local education authorities (LEAs) or school governing bodies. Although school holidays generally cover the same core periods, exact dates may vary between schools and authorities. In most cases, the school year runs from the first week of September to the third or fourth week of July. There is currently some movement towards the adoption of a standardised six-term school year which would be consistent year on year from 2003/2004. However, the decision to adopt this new model remains at the level of the LEA or school governing body.  
**Length of the teachers' school year:** Teachers are required to be available for 5 additional days. Schools normally schedule these within the school opening dates given in the table.
- <sup>15</sup> In **Northern Ireland**, school must be open for 190 days a year. The dates of school terms are not fixed nationally, they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by Education and Library Boards or school governing bodies. Therefore school holidays may differ between boards and schools. The five Education and Library Boards, encouraged by the Department of Education, have set up a harmonisation scheme, which sets the core holiday dates on which no services (school transport and school meals) are provided. Schools do not have to set holidays within these dates, but they are strongly advised to do so.  
**Length of teachers' school year:** Teachers are required to be available for 5 additional days. These are scheduled by schools to take place outside but near to the dates given in the table.
- <sup>16</sup> **Scotland:** There are no differences between primary and secondary schools, however, there are variances across the 32 local education authorities.  
The earliest **start** date for the school year 2003/04 is 14 August 2003 and the latest is 21 August 2003.  
The earliest **end** date for the school year 2003/04 is 24 June 2004 and the latest is 02 July 2004.

- 17 **Iceland:** There are still a few small rural schools on compulsory level which operate for 8 ½ months. The **teachers** work for 9 months.

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)		UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)	
Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
Between 17 and 26 August	Between 04 and 14 June	Between 20 and 29 August	Between 25 May and 02 June

- 18 **Norway:** The dates may vary between municipalities (primary and lower secondary education) and between counties (upper secondary education). The students' school year lasts totally 38 weeks. Minimum 7 weeks summer holidays. **The teachers' school year** lasts totally 39 weeks; one more than the students. The local administrations are free to organise the teachers extra working time during the year.

- 19 **Czech Republic:** Official end of the school year is 31 August 2004 but the school teaching ends 30 June 2004 and 9 weeks of summer holidays follow.

**Teacher:** According to the Labour Code, the holidays for teachers at primary and secondary level are 8 weeks per calendar year.

- 20 **Estonia:** The Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act stipulates that an academic year shall start on 01 September and a study period shall include not less than 175 days of study (35 weeks). School holidays (and accordingly the end of the school year) are determined by a regulation of the Minister of Education for every school year.

**Teacher:** The beginning and the end of a teacher's school year depend on the individual school and teacher. According to the legislation, teachers have 56 days (8 weeks) of vacation. Generally, they go on vacation in the middle of June and are back in the middle of August.

- 21 **Cyprus:** The dates for the beginning and the end of the school year 2003/2004 in **primary** education are still under discussion. They could be changed into the dates in brackets. **Secondary** education: The approximate exam period is from 03 to 20 June. The exact dates have not been set yet.

The school year is longer for **teachers** in both primary and secondary education:

PRIMARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)		SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)	
Beginning 2003	End 2004	Beginning 2003	End 2004
01 September	18 June	01 September	30 June

- 22 **Latvia:** Because the exam period is included in the school year, Year 9 (end of basic education) finishes on 11 June 2004 and Year 12 (end of upper secondary education) on 18 June 2004. Years 1-8, 10 and 11 finish studies on 28 May 2004. The start and end of the school year, as well as the dates of school holidays are annually set by a decree of the Ministry of Education and Science.

- 23 **Lithuania:** It is within each school's discretion to decide what kind of activity pupils will be offered after 01 June: either disciplinary subject-based projects, subject/art weeks, work at the school library, visits to higher education schools, installing exhibition, visits to historic places, sports events, remedial courses for pupils not showing notable progress, etc.

Pupils in the years 1 to 5 can finish only after at least 170 school days, while those in the years 6 to 9 and 11, after at least 195 days. These days include the national holidays.

Pupils in the last year of lower secondary education finish their lessons on 25 May, those in upper secondary education on 17 May.

**Teachers:** Teachers begin on 25 August. In Lithuania, the annual amount of leave for teachers by law is 56 calendar days. Normally, it is recommended that teachers take their annual leave during school summer holidays (i.e. teachers' leave is normally determined by the school calendar).

**It has to be noted that the given dates are only indicative.**

- 24 **Hungary:** The number of school days is 182, compulsory, for all institutions. However, there are some exceptional cases concerning the ending of the school year (degree 12/2003.(V.23.) Decree of the Ministry of Education on the Academic Year of 2003/2004):

The last school days for pupils who finish school (pupils in the finishing year) are as follows:

a) In secondary institutions – except for the case mentioned in point b) – it is the 07 May 2004. In the institutions maintained by the Ministry of Interior it is the 21 May 2004;

b) the 06 May 2004 in the secondary institutions which provide tuition in minority languages and in secondary institutions of two languages of instruction (kétannyelvű gimnázium).



- <sup>25</sup> **Malta:** These dates include also examination days. Annual exams will be held between the 14 June and 28 June; half-year exams will be held between the 11 and 19 February.  
**Teachers** begin on 18 September 2003 and end on 06 July 2004. INSET days are scheduled on the 15, 16 and 17 September and 7, 8 and 9 July. Teachers have to attend either the September session or July session.
- <sup>26</sup> **Poland:** End of the school year in both primary and secondary schools is always the last Friday of June. In the last grades of upper secondary schools ending with the Matura examination, however, the school year ends on 30 April 2004. In general, **teachers'** school year covers the same period of time as pupils' school year. Teachers' holidays, however, may be shortened by max. 7 days, if there is a need to perform organisational tasks in a given school.
- <sup>27</sup> **Romania:** In exceptional cases, the structure of the school year can be modified at the request of the local educational authorities (County School Inspectorate). The approval will be awarded if the number of 36 weeks and 179 school days is assured.
- <sup>28</sup> **Slovenia:** The official length of the school year is from 01 September to 31 August, but lessons are completed in June.  
 End of the **elementary school lessons** (single structure of primary and lower secondary education):  
 15 June for the final grade pupils,  
 24 June for pupils who are not in the final grade.  
 End of the **upper secondary school lessons:**  
 26 May is the last day of lessons in final grade in upper secondary schools, but there are final examinations in June for students of general and technical schools and in June/July for students of vocational schools;  
 24 June is the last day of lessons for upper secondary students who are not in the final grade.

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)		UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (TEACHERS)	
<b>Beginning 2003</b>	<b>End 2004</b>	<b>Beginning 2003</b>	<b>End 2004</b>
About 20 August	mid-July	About 20 August	mid-July

**Teachers'** school year begins about 10 days before the pupils' school year and ends some 14-21 days after the end of pupils' lessons. The precise length depends on the individually determined leave of a teacher (from 22 to 35 days) and his/her tasks and obligations allocated by the head teacher.

- <sup>29</sup> **Slovakia:** Official length of the school year is from 01 September to 31 August. The holidays for **teachers** at primary and secondary levels are 8 weeks per year.

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**TABLE II – STARTING DATES OF THE SCHOOL YEAR IN 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)**

COUNTRY	DATES
<b>BELGIUM</b>	
FRENCH COMMUNITY	01 September
FLEMISH COMMUNITY	01 September
GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY	01 September
<b>DENMARK<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Primary</b> : 11 August <b>Secondary</b> : 04 or 11 August
<b>GERMANY</b>	
BREMEN, NIEDERSACHSEN, SACHSEN-ANHALT, THÜRINGEN	21 August
SACHSEN	25 August
SAARLAND	01 September
HESSEN	01 September
SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN	11 August
HAMBURG	14 August
MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN	18 August
BERLIN, BRANDENBURG	18 August
RHEINLAND-PFALZ	01 September
NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN	15 September
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG	08 September
BAYERN	09 September
<b>GREECE<sup>2</sup></b>	11 September
<b>SPAIN<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Primary</b> : Between 01 and 15 September <b>Secondary</b> : Between 01 and 18 September
<b>FRANCE<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Primary</b> : 02 September <b>Secondary</b> : 02 September
<b>IRELAND</b>	01 September
<b>ITALY<sup>5</sup></b>	Between the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> week of September (10-26 Sept.)
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	15 September
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	<b>Primary</b> : 11 August <b>Secondary</b> : 18 August
NORTH REGION	18 August
CENTRAL REGION	25 August
SOUTH REGION	01 September
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	
BURGENLAND, NIEDERÖSTERREICH, WIEN	01 September
OTHER LÄNDER	08 September
<b>PORTUGAL<sup>6</sup></b>	Between 01 and 03 September
<b>FINLAND</b>	Between 11 and 13 August
<b>SWEDEN</b>	Between 18 and 28 August
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	
ENGLAND AND WALES	First week of September
NORTHERN IRELAND	First week of September
SCOTLAND	Middle of August
<b>ICELAND<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Primary/lower secondary</b> : Between 21 August and 01 September <b>Upper secondary</b> : Between 22 August and 01 September
<b>LIECHTENSTEIN</b>	18 August
<b>NORWAY<sup>8</sup></b>	Between 14 and 20 August
<b>BULGARIA</b>	15 September
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	01 September
<b>ESTONIA</b>	01 September
<b>CYPRUS</b>	04 or 08 September
<b>LATVIA</b>	01 September
<b>LITHUANIA<sup>9</sup></b>	01 September
<b>HUNGARY</b>	01 September
<b>MALTA<sup>10</sup></b>	22 September
<b>POLAND</b>	01 September
<b>ROMANIA</b>	15 September
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	01 September
<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	01 September

## ENDNOTES

TABLE II – STARTING DATES OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)

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- <sup>1</sup> **Denmark:** Not all schools start at the same date, they may start a week earlier so as to save up a week so that they can have a week's Winter holidays in February.
- <sup>2</sup> **Greece:** Official school year: 01 September – 31 August.
- <sup>3</sup> **Spain:** Each Autonomous Community officially starts and ends the school year on a fixed date within this period. **Teachers** begin on 01 September.
- <sup>4</sup> **France:** **Teachers** begin on 01 September.
- <sup>5</sup> **Italy:** **Teachers** begin on 01 September.
- <sup>6</sup> **Portugal:** **Teachers** have the summer holidays from 15 July until 1<sup>st</sup> September, according to school needs.
- <sup>7</sup> **Iceland:** **Teachers:** primary and lower secondary education - beginning between 17 and 26 August; upper secondary education – beginning between 20 and 29 August.
- <sup>8</sup> **Norway:** The dates may vary between municipalities (primary and lower secondary education) and between counties (upper/secondary education).
- <sup>9</sup> **Lithuania:** **Teachers** begin on August 25.
- <sup>10</sup> **Malta:** **Teachers** begin on 18 September.

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**TABLE III – SCHOOL HOLIDAYS OVER THE SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>AUTUMN 2003</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR 2003/2004</b>	<b>WINTER / CARNIVAL 2004</b>	<b>SPRING / EASTER 2004</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> TERM 2004</b>	<b>SUMMER 2004</b>	<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / OCCASIONAL/RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS 2003/2004</b>
<b>BELGIUM FRENCH COMMUNITY</b>	1 week (27-31 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 02 January)	1 week (23-27 February)	2 weeks (05-16 April)	-	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	6 public holidays (27/09; 11/11; 01/05; 20/05; 21/05; 31/05)
<b>FLEMISH COMMUNITY</b>	1 week (27 October- 02 November)	2 weeks (22 December- 04 January)	1 week (23-29 February)	2 weeks (05-18 April)	-	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	5 public holidays (11/11; 01/05; 20/05; 21/05; 31/05 + 2 extra days)
<b>GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY</b>	1 week (27-31 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 02 January)	1 week (23-27 February)	2 weeks (05-16 April)	-	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	6 public holidays (11/11; 15/11; 01/05; 20/05; 21/05; 31/05 + 2 extra days)
<b>DENMARK<sup>1</sup></b>	1 week (13-18 October)	2 weeks (20 December- 04 January)	-	1 week (03-12 April)	-	7 weeks (19 June-08 August)	4 public/religious holidays (16/04; 07/05; 20/05; 31/05;)
<b>GERMANY<sup>2</sup></b>	4 to 12 days (staggered between 04 October and 08 November)	8 to 15 days (staggered between 22 December and 10 January)	0 to 12 days (staggered between 02 and 27 February)	4 to 12 days (staggered between 08 March and 20 April)	0 to 11 days (staggered between 17 May and 12 June)	6 weeks (staggered between 24 June and 13 September)	Up to 10 days, depending on the <i>Land</i>
<b>GREECE<sup>3</sup></b>	2 days (28 October and 17 November)	2 weeks (24 December- 07 January)	2 days (30 January and 23 February)	2 weeks (05-16 April)	-	10 weeks (22 June-31 August)	2 national holidays (28/10; 25/03) 2 religious holidays (23/02; 13/05) 1 public holiday (01/05)
<b>SPAIN</b>	-	2 weeks (between 22 December and 06/07 January)	Usually 2 or 3 days (a maximum of 4 days) between 20 and 25 February depending on the Autonomous Community	About 1 week (staggered between 02 and 19 April depending on the Autonomous Community)	-	<b>Prim.:</b> 11 weeks (staggered between 21 June and mid- September) <b>Sec.:</b> 12 weeks (staggered between 14 June and end September)	Around 7 public holidays, depending on the Autonomous Community
<b>FRANCE</b>	1½ week (22 October- 03 November)	2 weeks (20 December- 05 January)	2 weeks: 07/2-23/02 (zone A) 21/2-08/3 (zone B) 14/2-01/03 (zone C)	2 weeks: 03/04-19/04 (zone A) 17/04-03/05 (zone B) 10/04-26/04 (zone C)	-	9 weeks (30 June- 01/02 September)	A few days between Easter and summer holidays
<b>IRELAND<sup>4</sup></b>	1 week (27-31 October)	2 weeks (24 December- 06 January)	A few days ( <b>Prim.:</b> 19-20 February; <b>Sec.:</b> 16-20 February)	2 weeks (05-16 April)	-	<b>Prim.:</b> about 9 weeks (30 June-01 September) <b>Sec.:</b> about 10 weeks (28 June-01 September)	4 public holidays (03/11; 17/03; 03/05; 07/06)
<b>ITALY<sup>5</sup></b>	-	2 weeks (22/23/24 December- 05/06 January)	1 to 3 days depending on the regions (23-26 February)	2 to 7 days depending on the regions (7/8 April-10/14 April)	-	13-14 weeks (between June and September)	5 national holidays (01/11; 08/12; 25/04; 01/05; 02/06) and religious holidays depending on the region

COUNTRY	AUTUMN 2003	CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR 2003/2004	WINTER / CARNIVAL 2004	SPRING / EASTER 2004	3 <sup>rd</sup> TERM 2004	SUMMER 2004	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / OCCASIONAL/RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS 2003/2004
LUXEMBOURG	1 week (25 October- 02 November)	2 weeks (20 December- 04 January)	1 week (21-29 February)	2 weeks (03-18 April)	1 week (29 May-06 June)	9 weeks (16 July- 14 September)	3 public holidays (01/05; 20/05; 23/06)
NETHERLANDS <sup>6</sup>	1 week (staggered over 2 regions: <b>North/Central:</b> 11-19 October; <b>South:</b> 18-26 October)	2 weeks (20 December- 04 January)	1 week (staggered over 2 regions: <b>Central/South:</b> 21-29 February; <b>North:</b> 28 February- 07 March)	1 ½ week (30 April-12 May)	-	<b>Prim:</b> 6 weeks (staggered over 3 regions between 03 July and 05 September) <b>Sec.:</b> 7 weeks (staggered over 3 regions between 03 July and 05 September)	3 public holidays (12/04; 20/05; 31/05) + 2 national holidays (30/04 and 05/05)
AUSTRIA <sup>7</sup>	-	2 weeks (24 December- 06 January)	1 week (02-07 February: NÖ/W; 09-14 February: B/K/S/V; 16-21 February: OÖ/ Stmk)	1 week (03-13 April)	4 days (Whitsun) (29 May-01 June)	About 9 weeks (03 July-04 Septem- ber: B, NÖ/W; 10 July-11 September: other Länder)	5 days throughout the school year (01/11; 08/12; 01/05; 20/05; 10/06)
PORTUGAL <sup>8</sup>	-	2 weeks (18 December- 02 January)	3 days (23-25 February)	11 days (05-16 April)	-	About 12/14 weeks (12 <sup>th</sup> year from 11 June, others from 25 June to September)	Around 10 days throughout the school year
FINLAND <sup>9</sup>	1 to 6 days (between 13 and 31 October)	About 2 weeks (between 19 Decem- ber and 06 January)	1 week (between 16 Feb- ruary and 12 March)	4 days (09-12 April)	-	10-11 weeks (30 May-mid-August)	2 public/religious holidays (06/01; 20/05)
SWEDEN <sup>10</sup>	1 week (13 -18 October or 27 October- 01 November or none)	About 3 weeks (between 17 Decem- ber and 12 January)	1 week (between 09 February and 06 March)	1 week (between 05 and 24 April)	-	About 10 weeks (between end of May/beginning of June-end of August)	4 days (09/04; 12/04; 20/05; 31/05 + 1 extra day to be distributed)
UNITED KINGDOM ENGLAND AND WALES <sup>11</sup>	1 week (either 20-24 Octo- ber or 27-31 October)	2 weeks (19 December-05 January)	1 week (16-20 February)	2 weeks (02-19 April)	1 week (31 May-04 June)	6 weeks (between 16 or 23 July to the first week of September)	1 public holiday (03/05) *
NORTHERN IRELAND <sup>12</sup>	2 days (30 -31 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 02 January)	1 day (20 February)	1 week and 1 day (09-16 April)	1 day (03 May)	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	up to 7 optional closure days
SCOTLAND <sup>13</sup>	From 1 to 2 weeks (between 08 September and 01 December)	2 weeks (19 December- 08 January)	1 to 7 days (between 05 and 24 February)	2 weeks (between 26 March and 28 April)	1 to 5 days (between 30 April and 07 June)	7 weeks (between 24 June and 17 August)	-

COUNTRY	AUTUMN 2003	CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR 2003/2004	WINTER / CARNIVAL 2004	SPRING / EASTER 2004	3 <sup>rd</sup> TERM 2004	SUMMER 2004	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / OCCASIONAL/RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS 2003/2004
ICELAND <sup>14</sup>	0-2 days in October	2 weeks (December/ January)	0-5 days (primary/lower secondary) 0-2 days (upper secondary) in February or March	7-11 days in April (primary/lower secondary) 11 days in April (upper secondary)	-	11 weeks (primary/lower secondary) 13 weeks (upper secondary) in June/July	3-4 public holidays
LIECHTENSTEIN	2 weeks (04-19 October)	2 weeks (24 December- 06 January)	1 week (21-29 February)	About 2 weeks (08-25 April)	-	6 weeks (03 July-16 August)	9 public holidays (08/09; 01/11; 08/12; 02/02; 19/03; 01/05; 20/05; 31/05; 10/06)
NORWAY <sup>15</sup>	1 week (between 29 Sep- tember and 18 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 03 January)	1 week (between 23 Feb- ruary and 13 March)	1 ½ weeks (05-12 April)	-	min. 7 weeks (between 21 June and 14 August)	5 public holidays (01/05; 17/05; 20/05; 21/05; 31/05)
BULGARIA	<b>Grade 1:</b> 4 days (08-11 November)	2 weeks (24 December- 04 January)	-	1 ½ weeks (01-12 April)	-	<b>Grade 1:</b> 16 weeks (21 May-15 Sept.) <b>Prim.:</b> 15 weeks (01 June-15 Sept.) <b>Sec.:</b> 13 weeks (16 June-15 Sept.) <b>Grades 9, 10, 11:</b> 11 weeks (01 July-15 Sept.)	About 7 bank holidays (22/09; 01/11; 03/03; 01/05; 06/05; 24/05; 25/05)
CZECH REPUBLIC <sup>16</sup>	2 days (27 and 29 October)	10 days (22 December- 02 January)	1 day (30 January) + 1 week (between 02 February and 14 March depending on the region)	2 days (08-09 April)	-	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	6 days (28/09; 28/10; 17/11; 12/04; 01/05; 08/05)
ESTONIA	1 week (25 October- 02 November)	2 ½ weeks (24 December- 11 January)	-	1 week (20-28 March)	-	12 weeks (05 June- 31 August)	2 days (24/02; 09/04/)
CYPRUS <sup>17</sup>	-	2 weeks ( <b>Prim.:</b> 23 Decem- ber/ <b>Sec.</b> 24 Decem- ber-06 January)	-	2 weeks (06-17 April)	-	<b>Prim.</b> 15 weeks (19/06-30/09) <b>Sec.</b> 14 weeks (01 July-30 September)	10 days (01/10; 28/10; 13/11; 30/01; 23/02; 25/03; 01/04; 01/05; 11/06 + 20/05 primary).
LATVIA	1 week (20-24 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 02 January)	-	5 days (15-19 March)	-	13 weeks (31 May -31 August)	1 day (18/11)

COUNTRY	AUTUMN 2003	CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR 2003/2004	WINTER / CARNIVAL 2004	SPRING / EASTER 2004	3 <sup>rd</sup> TERM 2004	SUMMER 2004	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS / OCCASIONAL/RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS 2003/2004
LITHUANIA <sup>18</sup>	1 week (end of October/ beginning November)	2 weeks (about 23 December- 03 January)	-	1 week (mid-April)	-	<b>Prim.:</b> 13 weeks (01 June-31 August) <b>Sec.:</b> approx. 12-13 weeks (01 June- 31 August or approx. 15/17 June-31 August)	5 days (01/11; 16/02; 11/03; 12/04; 01/05)
HUNGARY <sup>19</sup>	1 week (20-26 October)	2 weeks (22 December- 02 January)	-	1 week (08-13 April)	-	About 11 weeks (as of 16 June)	5 days (23/10; 15/03; 12/04 , 01/05; 30/05)
MALTA <sup>20</sup>	1 day (03 November)	2 weeks + 2 days (22 December- 06 January)	2 days (23 and 24 February)	1 ½ week (05-14 April)	1 day (03 May)	About 11 weeks (07 July-22 September)	About 13 days <sup>1</sup> National holidays: (21/09; 02/11; 13/12; 31/03; 07/6) Public holidays: (08/12; 25/12; 10/02; 19/03; 09/04; 11/04; 01/05; 29/06)
POLAND <sup>21</sup>	-	1 week (22-31 December)	2 weeks (19-31 January in 5 regions, 26 January-07 February in 1 region; 02-14 February in 5 regions; 09-21 February in 5 regions)	6 days (08-13 April)	-	9 weeks (26 June-31 August)	4 days (11/11; 01/01; 03/05; 10/06)
ROMANIA	1 week (03-09 November) only primary education	2 weeks (20 December- 04 January)	-	2 weeks (03-18 April)	-	12 weeks (19 June-12 September)	1 National holiday (01 December)
SLOVENIA <sup>22</sup>	1 week (27 October- 02 November)	1 week (25 December- 04 January)	1 week (between 16 and 29 February, depending on the regions)	1 week (27 April-02 May)	-	9 weeks (25 June-31 August)	1 day (12 April - other public holidays fall into school holidays)
SLOVAKIA <sup>23</sup>	2 days (30 and 31 October)	10 days (22 December- 05 January)	1 day (02 February)	1 week (between 23 February and 12 March, depending on the regions); Easter: 4 days (08-13 April)	-	9 weeks (01 July-31 August)	4 days (01/09; 15/09; 07/11; 06/01)

<sup>1</sup> See endnotes.

## ENDNOTES

**TABLE III –SCHOOL HOLIDAYS OVER THE SCHOOL YEAR 2003/2004  
(PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION)**

- <sup>1</sup> **Denmark:** The holiday dates are not compulsory, they merely function as guidelines. The Ministry of Education issues guidelines to the distribution of holidays in the *Folkeskole*. They are not binding. Only the date of the last day of the school year must be complied with, and the school year must consist of 200 school days. As for upper secondary education, the Ministry only fixes the date of last day of the school year.
- <sup>2</sup> **Germany:** The length of the shorter holiday periods in each year is fixed by the individual *Länder* within the total number of 75 days of the holidays in the school year.
- <sup>3</sup> **Greece:** On the 17 November a celebration is organised at schools. On the 30 January, a religious holiday, students attend the mass, at the church.
- <sup>4</sup> **Ireland: Spring/Easter:** all schools will reopen on 19 April 2004. **Summer:** Post primary (secondary) school holidays start earlier (approx. 1 week earlier) for those students not sitting state examinations.
- <sup>5</sup> In **Italy**, public holidays that fall on Sunday are **not** taken on another day of the week as compensation.

- <sup>6</sup> **Netherlands:** Dates for the summer holidays are decided by the Ministry; the holiday period is staggered over 3 regions (compulsory dates for all schools); all other holidays are recommended by the Ministry.

**School year 2003/2004 (summer holidays 2004)**

	<b>Primary education</b>	<b>Secondary education</b>
North region	10 July-22 August	10 July-29 August
Central region	03 July-15 August	03 July-22 August
South region	24 July-05 September	17 July-05 September

The administrative school year runs from 01 August 2003 to 31 July 2004, the summer holidays 2004 being considered as the summer holidays for the school year 2003/2004.

- <sup>7</sup> **Austria:** 9 Austrian Bundesländer: B=Burgenland; K=Kärnten; NÖ=Niederösterreich; OÖ=Oberösterreich; S=Salzburg; Stmk=Steiermark; T=Tirol; V=Vorarlberg; W=Wien.  
**Summer holidays:** Burgenland, Niederösterreich, Wien ⇒ 03 July-04 September; other 6 *Länder* ⇒ 10 July-11 September.
- <sup>8</sup> **Portugal:** School holidays are stipulated in new regulations (national level): *Despacho n° 12453/2003 (DR n° 148-30 of June 2003)*. With the new government, the public holidays/occasional/religious holidays are under revision.
- <sup>9</sup> In **Finland**, the provider of education (usually a municipality) decides on the precise starting date of the school year and other possible short holiday periods. School holidays differ so that even within the same municipality pupils in different schools may have their school holidays at different times.
- <sup>10</sup> **Sweden:** The exact dates vary between municipalities. There is a total of 178 school days and at least 5 holidays to be distributed, as each municipality wishes.
- <sup>11</sup> In **England and Wales**, schools must be open for at least 380 half day sessions each school year. The dates of school holidays are not fixed nationally; they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by local education authorities (LEAs) or schools' governing bodies. Although school holidays generally take place over a core period, their exact dates may vary between schools and authorities. There is currently some movement towards the adoption of a standardised six-term school year which would be consistent year on year from 2003/2004. However the decision to adopt this new model remains at the level of the LEA or school governing body. The pattern of terms and holidays proposed would be two approximately seven-week terms with a two-week break between them, followed by four approximately six-week terms with breaks of either one or two weeks at Easter between them.  
\*School holidays in England and Wales are planned to take into account and cover other national public holidays.



<sup>12</sup> In **Northern Ireland**, schools must be open for 190 days a year. The dates of school holidays are not fixed nationally; they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by Education and Library Boards or by school governing bodies. Holidays therefore vary between boards and schools. The dates provided in the table are the harmonised holidays as set by all the Education and Library Boards. These are the core dates on which the Boards have agreed not to provide services (school transport and school meals). Schools do not have to set holidays within these dates, however they are strongly advised to do so. In addition to these dates, schools have between four and seven optional closure days annually, which may be scheduled at their discretion.

<sup>13</sup> In **Scotland** the school holidays are not fixed nationally, but by local education authorities, and may vary from one local authority to another.

<sup>14</sup> **Iceland**: Autumn, Christmas, winter and spring holidays can vary on compulsory level according to a change in the compulsory school act from 2001. Pupils' holidays over the school year are never shorter than 15 weeks.

<sup>15</sup> **Norway**: Autumn holiday last 1 week, but vary between week 40 and week 42 in different municipalities and counties. Winter holiday last 1 week, but vary between week 9 and week 11 in different municipalities and counties.

<sup>16</sup> **Czech Republic:**

SPECIFICATION OF TERMS FOR WINTER/CARNIVAL HOLIDAYS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Term	Regions
2 - 8 February 2004	Kroměříž, Uherské Hradiště, Vsetín a Zlín, Praha-východ, Praha-západ, Mělník, Rakovník, Plzeň-město, Plzeň-sever, Plzeň-jih, Hradec Králové, Teplice, Nový Jičín
9 - 15 February 2004	Česká Lípa, Jablonec nad Nisou, Liberec a Semily, Havlíčkův Brod, Jihlava, Pelhřimov, Třebíč a Žďár nad Sázavou, Kladno, Kolín, Kutná Hora, Písek, Náchod, Bruntál
16 - 22 February 2004	Mladá Boleslav, Příbram, Tábor, Prachatice, Strakonice, Ústí nad Labem, Chomutov, Most, Jičín, Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Olomouc, Šumperk, Opava, Jeseník
23 - 29 February 2004	Benešov, Beroun, Rokycany, České Budějovice, Klatovy, Český Krumlov, Trutnov, Pardubice, Chrudim, Svitavy a Ústí nad Orlicí, Ostrava-město
1 - 7 Mars 2004	Praha 1 až 5, Blansko, Brno-město, Brno-venkov, Břeclav, Hodonín, Vyškov a Znojmo, Domažlice, Tachov, Louny, Prostějov, Karviná
8 - 14 Mars 2004	Praha 6 až 10, Cheb, Karlovy Vary a Sokolov, Nymburk, Jindřichův Hradec, Litoměřice, Děčín, Přerov, Frýdek-Místek

<sup>17</sup> **Cyprus**: The first and last days for Christmas and Easter are included. Some primary schools named after a Saint are closed on the corresponding name day.

<sup>18</sup> **Lithuania**: Exact dates of school holidays are within each school's disposition. Upon approval of the school council, schools may stagger days of holidays or, if need be, change dates of holidays recommended by the Ministry provided the following requirements are met: years 1 to 5 can finish only after at least 170 school days, while years 6 to 9 and 11, after at least 195 days (see table I endnotes).

<sup>19</sup> **Hungary**: 5 days may be allocated as a holiday each academic year; it depends on the school which dates to choose. Schools are also allowed to allocate additional holidays if they reschedule the lessons onto a weekend or another holiday as a replacement.

<sup>20</sup> **Malta**: Christmas holidays are between the 23 December and 06 January. However, during school year 2003/2004, the holidays will start on 22 December, this day being given in lieu of 21 September 2003. Easter holidays are usually between Wednesday before Easter till Wednesday after Easter. This time, Easter holidays will start on Monday 05 April 2004, this date being given in lieu of 02 November and 06 April being given in lieu of 13 December 2003. Easter holidays will be between 05 April and 14 April, both days included. Summer 03 May will be a holiday in lieu of 01 May which falls on a Saturday. Summer holidays will start on 07 July and end on 22 September 2004 both days inclusive. However, teachers would have to attend in-service courses either from 07 to 09 July or from 15 to 17 September. Teachers start attending school on 18 September 2003 while teaching starts on the 23 September.

<sup>21</sup> **Poland**

<b>Winter Holidays</b>	<b>Regions (Voivodship)</b>
19 January 2004 – 31 January 2004	Kujawsko-Pomorskie Lubuskie Małopolskie Świętokrzyskie Wielkopolskie
26 January 2004 – 07 February 2004	Podlaskie
02 February 2004 – 14 February 2004	Dolnośląskie Łódzkie Mazowieckie Opolskie Zachodniopomorskie
09 February 2004 – 21 February 2004	Lubelskie Podkarpackie Pomorskie Śląskie Warmińsko-Mazurskie

<sup>22</sup> **Slovenia:** Winter/carnival holidays - Ljubljana and Maribor regions: 16-22 February; other regions: 23-29 February.

<sup>23</sup> **Slovakia:**

<b>Spring/Easter Holidays</b>	23-27 February in 2 regions
	01-05 March in 3 regions
	08-12 March in 3 regions

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