

Extract from the forthcoming study *'Recognition of school study periods abroad in Europe – an overview and policy recommendations'* by the European Federation for Intercultural Learning-EFIL , with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme, KA2 Strategic partnership 'Intercultural learning for pupils and teachers' funded by AEF Europe. The information is based on the information provided by 22 AFS organisations and 5 YFU organisations in January 2018.

	country	10 month secondary school study period abroad recognition system
1	<b>AUSTRIA</b>	Yes (law 1995). Every student who goes abroad from 5 months to a full school year gets full recognition of the study period abroad. The student needs to provide to the school a confirmation of attendance .No need for a transcription of grades or list of school subjects of the hosting school.
2	<b>BELGIUM FLEMISH COMMUNITY</b>	No. Students need to get the permission of their school to go abroad if they want to enroll in the same school when they return. Upon return, they can take the exam in August which allows them to enroll for the next school year.
3	<b>BELGIUM FRENCH SPEAKING COMMUNITY</b>	Yes (law issued in 2014). If the study period abroad takes place within the framework of the 'Programme Expedis'. Only during the 3rd, 4th, 5th year of secondary school, only during the Belgian academic year (not in summer), same year of studies, same type of school that the student would have attended in Belgium, 1400 minutes of school a week. Sending schools might not grant the permission to go on an exchange which foresees recognition because they believe it will be hard for students to catch up.
4	<b>BULGARIA</b>	Yes (law issued in 2016). On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad which shows that the student has passed the year in the hosting country. The documents are received by the Regional Inspectorate of Education. In general, Bulgarian students need to pass at least two exams (Bulgarian Literature and Geography).
5	<b>CROATIA</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad, translated in Croatian by an official translator + apostille of hosting country. The school evaluates the transcript and decides which additional exams the student needs to take to be admitted in the next year. If documents are correct, the period abroad is validated easily.
6	<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	No. Students go on exchange in 6th grade and when they return they can write exams to enter directly the 7th grade. This is done by approx. 50% of the exchange students. Headmasters have a huge influence and decide whether or not the students can write the exams.
7	<b>DENMARK</b>	No. Students go on exchange taking a gap year between elementary and secondary school, before entering the 10th grade. 50% of the students take a gap year.

8	<b>ESTONIA</b>	No. Students returning from the year abroad can study over the summer and take the exams organised by the school. When they pass they are entitled to enter the next year. exams taken abroad might be recognised if matching with the Estonian curriculum. Only very few students take these exams, approximately 2%.
9	<b>FINLAND</b>	No. Students repeat the year. The schools recognise some specific subjects on the basis of a transcript of records.
10	<b>FRANCE</b>	Yes (law issued in 2017). If there is a special partnership between sending and hosting school and a learning agreement. When the student returns s/he gets an international experience certificate and if s/he respected the school agreement s/he can be enrolled in the next year. If there is no special agreement between sending and hosting school, the student needs to take an exam in the sending school and the content needs to be agreed by the person in charge of the school curriculum at regional level (inspecteurs d'académie-directeurs académiques des services de l'éducation nationale - IA-Dasen). Very much depends on the willingness of the school principal to organise this exam.
11	<b>GERMANY</b>	Yes in all 16 federal states but only for the 10th grade (15-16 y). In 5 federal states you can spend a semester abroad during 11th and 12th grade. For more information: <a href="http://aja-org.de/downloadcenter/">http://aja-org.de/downloadcenter/</a>
12	<b>HUNGARY</b>	No. Students returning from the year abroad can study over the summer and take the exams organised by the school. When they pass the year they will be entitled to enter the next year. This is done by approx. 30% of the exchange students, most of the students take a gap year, especially if they go abroad in 3rd or 4th year of secondary school since the grades received at the end of the year count for the final exam.
13	<b>ICELAND</b>	No. Schools allow students to take separate exams to recognise separate subjects, mostly foreign languages. In some cases they might accept a transcript of records for some specific subject. Schools decide on a case to case basis.
14	<b>IRELAND</b>	Yes. Only if students spend abroad their 4th year, which is a transition year for 15-16 year olds.
15	<b>ITALY</b>	Yes (law issued originally in 1944, updated in 1994 ). Upon return the students need to provide to the school the documentation released by the hosting school. Before departure students discuss with the teachers what are the 2-3 subjects not present in the hosting school and that are absolutely necessary to be covered before entering the next year. Upon return, also after the academic year has started, the teachers proceed to a 'global assessment of the students' competences' on the basis of an interview. Some schools still ask to do some exams for some specific subjects. All students are admitted to the next year and catch up.
16	<b>LATVIA</b>	Yes (law issued in 2015). On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad. Students who went on exchange are automatically enrolled in the next grade and they have one year to complete all subjects that are foreseen in the Latvian curriculum and that they did not take abroad. The school principal decides what these subjects are, based on the transcript of grades received.

17	<b>LITHUANIA</b>	No. There is no law but schools can decide if they admit a student in the next class, on the basis of a transcript of grades from the hosting school. Each school decides on its own, and case by case. The chances to get the year abroad validated are very low.
18	<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	No. Students repeat the year.
19	<b>NORWAY</b>	Yes (law issued in 1999). The school decides whether or not to validate the year abroad, the conditions for all are: 1) completing the school year and pass the exams and/or qualify to be moved up to the next level in the education system in the host country; 2) the school year abroad is considered equivalent to or more extensive than year 12 in Norway; 3) the education year abroad must have the "main emphasis" on the same range of subjects as the education programme that the student would have followed in Norway. Local schools can have additional criteria. Moreover, all students who go on exchange with an accredited organisation and get their year abroad validated as year 12 (of a total of 13) get a scholarship of about NOK 50.000 (approx. 5300 euros).
20	<b>POLAND</b>	Yes. The law foresees that if a student going a year abroad has the permission from the school principal, the school needs to enroll the student again in the next year. However, the experience of pupil exchange organisations shows that it is better for the students to take a gap year. In fact students go on exchange during the 2nd year of secondary school and it is hard for them to catch up and pass the final exams foreseen in the last and 3rd year. Now the school reform foresees 4 years of secondary school and it might be easier for students to catch up before the final exam.
21	<b>PORTUGAL</b>	Yes (law issued in 2005). Students need to be enrolled in the equivalent year and submit to the Ministry of Education an official certificate issued by the host school with reference to the year, with a list of subjects and transcript of grades translated, and with apostille. However, students tend to go on exchange in the last year of high school and prefer to take a gap year after in order to study for the exams to enter university.
22	<b>ROMANIA</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad which shows that the student has passed the year in the hosting country. An important condition for recognition of the study period abroad is that the student has attended the same (or higher) school grade s/he would have attended in Romania. In general, no additional exams/tests are requested. The documents are received by the decentralised Unit of the Ministry of Education.
23	<b>SERBIA</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad, translated in Serbian by an official translator + apostille of hosting country. If the documents are complete, the period abroad is validated easily. The documents are received and examined by the Ministry of Education.
24	<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad which is provided to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education then proceeds to the conversion of the grades. If the documents are complete, the period abroad is validated easily. The headmaster then decides which extra exams the student needs to take (e.g. Slovak language).

25	<b>SLOVENIA</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad, accompanied by the curriculum of the subjects (either in German, French, Italian, or English). The school evaluates the host school curriculum and the transcript and decides which additional exams the student needs to take to be admitted in the next year (mostly the subjects that are part of the final exams to get a secondary school diploma). Half of the exchange students decide to take a gap year.
26	<b>SPAIN</b>	Yes. On the basis of a transcript of grades from the school abroad, translated in Spanish by an official translator + apostille of the hosting country. Very few students are granted the validation of the year and this depends mostly on which the hosting country is: 100% students who go on exchange in the USA get the period abroad recognised. For other hosting countries the percentages are very low (2-3%). There is no partial recognition. The transcript of records has to provide all the elements to validate the year, if not the student needs to repeat the year. They can also take the exams for all subjects in September to enter the next class but exchange students only rarely choose this option
27	<b>SWEDEN</b>	No. Only the language of the hosting country can be recognised as a subject.
28	<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	No. There is no law but schools are highly autonomous and can decide whether or not to admit a student in the next class, on the basis of a transcript of grades from the hosting school. Most schools insist on a minimum grade point average in order to have the exchange period being recognised. Some schools make students take an evaluation test, some put the students on an assessment level for a semester (they drop out if they fail to have average marks).