

RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN EDUCATION (EXCEPT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS)

The recognition of documents proving the attainment of **basic, secondary or tertiary technical education** is regulated in the Czech legal order in Section 108 of [Act No. 561/2004 Coll.](#), on pre-school, basic, secondary, tertiary technical and other education (**The Act on Education**), as amended, and in its [implementing Decree No. 12/2005 Coll.](#) by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS), on the conditions for recognizing the equivalence and validity of certificates issued by foreign schools.

In order to determine the procedure, however, it is first necessary to consider whether the document in question is covered by any equivalence agreement, which are bilateral presidential international agreements that take precedence over the law with regard to the application of the Czech legal order (point A). If the document is not covered by such an agreement (see the detailed description below), the procedure for recognizing diplomas and degrees shall be used (point B).

A. The procedure when an equivalence agreement exists

With several countries, namely with Hungary, Germany, Poland and Slovakia, international agreements on the mutual recognition of the equivalence of documents proving education, which qualify as **presidential agreements**, have been negotiated. They were authorized by the Parliament of the Czech Republic and ratified by the President of the Republic, and thus take **precedence over the application** of the Czech legal order if they provide something other than what the law demands (Article 10 of **Constitutional Act No. 1/1993 Coll.**, the **Constitution of the Czech Republic**).

In relations with Slovenia, a similar agreement negotiated by the legal predecessor of the Czech Republic remains in force. It is formally a governmental agreement, but it was implemented in the same way as the aforementioned presidential category agreements with regard to the mutual confirmation of the obligations arising from it in relations between the Czech Republic and Slovenia. This agreement was reached during negotiations on succession in bilateral agreements. At the time it was negotiated, the said issue was commonly regulated by governmental agreements.

Holders of these documents covered by the aforementioned agreements can **use them without limitation throughout the territory of the Czech Republic** without the need to submit a certificate of recognition of foreign education issued by a regional authority in the Czech Republic or by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (or the Ministry of the Interior).

However, it is recommended that the holders of the said documents submit official copies of documents proving their education together with their official translations into Czech in relevant life situations (applications for admission to further study at a higher education institution, confirmation of academic qualifications for an employer in case of non-regulated professions, etc.). The list of court interpreters is available on the website of the Ministry of Justice (www.justice.cz – experts and interpreters), the list of notaries is available on the website of the Notarial Chamber of the Czech Republic (www.nkcr.cz).

Verification of the authenticity of documents issued in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (**legalization**) **is not required** because the Czech Republic is bound by bilateral agreements on legal aid with all three countries, according to which public documents can be submitted without legalization.

However, if the **holder** of a foreign document considers it appropriate or necessary, **he/she may ask the relevant recognition authority** – a regional authority or the Ministry of the Interior – **to recognize** their foreign education. The applicant shall submit an application for the issuance of a certificate to which an original foreign document or its officially certified copy will be attached. If the application meets all requirements, the relevant recognition authority is obliged to comply with the application and to issue the certificate of recognition. The recognition authority may require evidence of the content and extent of the subjects taught if this is not clear from the submitted document, as well as other particulars. The issuance of a certificate is subject to the payment of an administrative fee.

If the aforementioned equivalence agreements do not apply to a particular document proving education (the document or qualification obtained is not mentioned in the agreement or the document was issued by an institution that is not part of the educational system of a state that is a party to the given international agreement, or which is not recognized by that state), **the procedure is the same as in cases where there is no equivalence agreement. In such cases, the general rules of recognition shall apply to the document (see part B.).**

In case of any doubt, document holders can consult the appropriate procedure with the MEYS, or with the Ministry of the Interior (MI) in cases of education in the area of fire protection and police activities.

Full texts of valid equivalence agreements

[The agreement](#) between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the **Republic of Hungary** on the mutual recognition of equivalence of documents proving education attained and documents on scientific degrees and titles issued in the Czech Republic and in the Republic of Hungary (Budapest, 6 May 2004, published under No. 92/2005 Coll. of International Treaties);

[The Agreement](#) between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the **Federal Republic of Germany** on the mutual recognition of equivalence of documents proving education attained in the area of higher education (Prague, 23 March 2007) – No. 60/2008 Coll. of International Treaties;

[The Agreement](#) between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the **Republic of Poland** on the mutual recognition of parts of study, equivalence of documents proving education attained and documents on scientific degrees and titles issued in the Czech Republic and in the Republic of Poland (Prague, 16 January 2006, published under No. 104/2006 Coll. of International Treaties);

[The Agreement between the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic on the mutual recognition of equivalence of documents proving education attained issued in the Czech Republic and in the Slovak Republic](#) (Prague, 28 November 2013, published under No. 23/2015 Coll. of International Treaties, in force from 28 March 2015).

[The Agreement](#) between the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Federal Assembly (Skupština) of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the mutual recognition of equivalence of documents proving education attained and documents on scientific degrees and titles issued in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Belgrade, 12 September 1989, published under No. 89/1991 Coll. of International Treaties) – **valid only for Slovenia**.

B. Recognition of a document proving foreign education

A school graduate who completed their education at a foreign school and obtained a document proving the attainment of **basic, secondary or tertiary technical education** may ask **the competent regional authority (department of education) at the applicant's place of residence** (see below*) to recognize the document proving foreign education.

- If the Czech Republic is not bound by an international agreement to recognize a given foreign certificate as equivalent to a document proving education issued in the Czech Republic, **regional authorities** competent [at the applicant's place of residence in the Czech Republic shall decide](#), based on the submitted application, **on the recognition of the validity of the foreign certificate in the Czech Republic**.

Application procedure:

1. We recommend submitting the application using a form available at the regional authorities.

2. Attach the following documents to the application:

- the original of the foreign document or its officially certified copy;
- a document proving the content and extent of education completed in the foreign school;
- a document proving that the school is recognized by the state according to whose legal order the foreign certificate was issued as part of its educational system, unless this fact results from the foreign certificate (in case of recognition of the certificate);
- an officially certified translation of the said documents into Czech, made by an interpreter registered in the Czech Republic in the [List of Experts and Interpreters](#); for a document made in Slovak, the translation into Czech is not required;
- the authenticity of the signatures and stamps on the originals of foreign certificates and the fact that the school is recognized by the state according to whose legal order the foreign certificate was issued must be verified by the relevant representative office of the Czech Republic and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the state according to whose legal order the foreign certificate was issued, or by a notary acting within the territory of such state unless an international agreement provides otherwise (see below**);
- a written power of attorney if the applicant is represented by a proxy;
- a document proving the place of residence of the applicant within the territory of the Czech Republic (see below*);
- proof of payment of the administrative fee in the amount of 1,000 CZK for receipt of the application (information will be provided by the relevant regional authority).

3. Submit the application to the relevant regional authority (see: [Regional authority contacts](#))

4. The regional authority shall assess the content and extent of education completed in the foreign school compared to education under a similar framework educational programme in the Czech Republic.

- If the **content and extent of education in the foreign school is similar**, the regional authority shall decide on the **recognition of the validity of the foreign certificate in the Czech Republic** and shall issue a recognition clause.
- If the **content and extent of education in the foreign school differs in part** (or if the applicant cannot provide a document proving the content and extent of education completed in the foreign school or the evidence of the required verifications of foreign documents), **the regional authority shall order the applicant to sit a recognition examination**. After the applicant successfully passes the recognition examination, the regional authority shall decide on the **recognition of the validity of the foreign certificate in the Czech Republic** and shall issue a recognition clause.
- If the **content and extent of education in the foreign school differs substantially**, or if the **applicant does not pass the recognition examination**, the regional authority shall **reject the application for recognition of the validity of foreign education**.

Differences in the content and extent of education are not taken into account if a foreign certificate was issued under the legal order of a Member State of the European Union and if the outputs of completed education are comparable to the educational outputs according to the Education Act based on the standards used in the European Union. In such cases, the application for recognition shall be satisfied. The application shall also be satisfied if a foreign certificate issued under the legal order of a Member State of the European Union is considered in the relevant Member State as a document entitling the applicant to access to higher education.

*Only a person (school graduate) with their place of residence in the Czech Republic can apply for the issuance of a certificate of recognition of the equivalence of a foreign certificate in the Czech Republic or for a decision on the recognition of the validity of a foreign certificate in the Czech Republic, namely with the regional authority in whose administrative district this is located. A place of residence within the territory of the Czech Republic is a prerequisite for the material competence of the regional authority to deal with the matter. If the person does not have a place of residence within the territory of the Czech Republic, no regional authority (or any other administrative authority) is materially competent to carry out the application procedure and, at the same time, it is not possible to determine which of the regional authorities has territorial competence. Section 108 of the Education Act does not specifically stipulate what is meant by the place of residence within the territory of the Czech Republic and, therefore, the place of residence must be understood as a place of residence in the territory within the meaning of Section 97 of Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the residence of foreign nationals within the territory of the Czech Republic and on the amendment to some acts, as amended ("The Act on Residence of Foreign Nationals"). In this respect, it is essential that a person who is a foreign national has the obligation, pursuant to Section 93 in conjunction with Section 97 of the Act on Residence of Foreign Nationals, to report their place of residence to the police and/or to the accommodation provider. Therefore, a school graduate who is a foreign national can prove his/her place of residence within the territory of the Czech Republic, for example, by submitting a copy of the report of their place of residence within the territory within the meaning of Section 97 of the Act on Residence of Foreign Nationals. Based on this document, it is possible to determine the regional authority that is territorially competent to deal with the matter. It is, therefore, not necessary that a school graduate who is a foreign national have permanent or temporary residence within the territory of the Czech Republic within the meaning of the Act on Residence of Foreign Nationals, the authorization of which he/she would have to prove. In any case, however, it is necessary that the place of residence within the territory be proved in some way, since without a place of residence by the applicant within the territory of the Czech Republic, the application procedure cannot be carried out.

** see information from the Ministry of the Interior <http://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/obcane-tretich-zemi-nektere-nalezitosti-zadosti-overeni-cizich-verejnych-listin.aspx>.

5. Appeal

An appeal can be lodged against a decision taken by a regional authority with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports within 15 days from the day on which the decision was delivered.

The deadline for dealing with the application is 30 days from the delivery of the application with complete required documents, or after taking a recognition examination; the deadline can be extended by up to 30 days, especially in complex cases.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

- ***issues certificates of recognition of the equivalence of foreign education to school graduates who have completed a European school pursuant to the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools (application form)***
- ***is the appellate administrative authority in cases of the rejection of an application for the recognition of a foreign education by a regional authority***
- ***decides on the recognition of the validity of a foreign certificate issued by the Lycée in Dijon or Nîmes, the Gymnasium “Friedrich Schiller” in Pirna (application form)***

Contact: tel.: 234 811 703, email: nostrifikace20@msmt.cz

Office hours for telephone consultation:

Monday -----

Tuesday **9 a.m. – 11 a.m.**

Wednesday -----

Thursday **9 a.m. – 11 a.m. 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.**

Friday -----

Personal consultation is only possible after prior arrangement by telephone.

The Ministry of Defence issues certificates of the recognition of equivalence and decides on the recognition of foreign certificates issues concerning the military.

Contact: tel.: 973 201 111, <http://www.army.cz/>

The Ministry of the Interior issues certificates of the recognition of equivalence and decides on the recognition of foreign certificates in areas concerning police activities and fire protection.

Contact: tel.: 974 111 111, <http://www.mvcr.cz/>

Legal regulations:

- Act No. 561/2004 Coll., on pre-school, basic, secondary, tertiary technical and other education (Education Act), as amended
- Decree No. 12/2005 Coll., on the conditions for recognizing equivalence and the validity of certificates issued by foreign schools
- Act No. 500/2004 Coll., the Administrative Procedure Code, as amended
- [Act No. 634/2004 Coll., on administrative fees, as amended](#)
- Act No. 21/2006 Coll., on the verification of conformity of a duplicate or a copy with a document and on the verification of authenticity of a signature and on the amendment to some acts (the Verification Act), as amended
- Act No. 36/1967 Coll., on experts and interpreters, as amended
- Decree No. 37/1967 Coll., to implement the Act on Experts and Interpreters, as amended
- [international agreements](#) on the recognition of the equivalence of documents proving education attained and on legal aid, to which the Czech Republic is bound