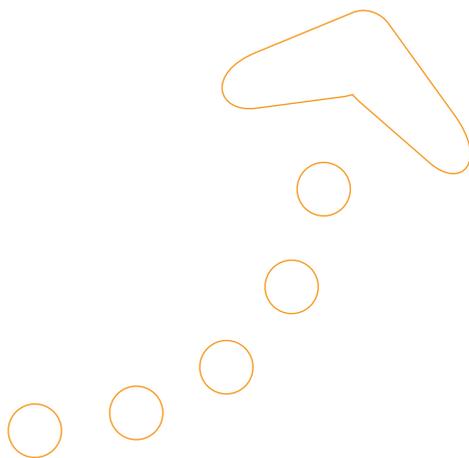


Equivalence of foreign diplomas in French-speaking Belgium



Guide of help for the preparation
of the file of equivalence

CIRÉ

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Introduction

The equivalence of a diploma is generally a starting point for every migrant arriving in Belgium and wishing to concretize his personal and professional projects.

This pocket guide about the equivalences is the fruit of the work of information and support that the CIRE, his member associations and partners are doing since several years. The numerous reports in equivalence of foreign diplomas collected by the CIRE constitute the base of this guide who tries to bring an answer to the questions of the migrants arriving in Belgium.

The present document is available in printed version and also on the web Website of the CIRE in 6 languages: French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Albanian. For more detailed information, another guide is available on the web Website of the CIRE in French version for the migrants and the professionals of the social support services.

This practical guide is a synthetic version of laws and practice regarding equivalences of foreign diplomas in French-speaking Belgium. The official informations are available for consultation in the printed guide and on the web Website of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels

<http://www.federation-wallonie-bruxelles.be>



What is equivalence?

Equivalence is a document that determines the value of studies done abroad. It is delivered on the basis of educational documents.

Why to introduce an equivalence of diploma?

- To continue or resume their studies (secondary or higher education)
- To take up employment (e.g. In public service or in a regulated profession) and get benefit from the legal salary scales determined according to level of education.
- To start a professional training.

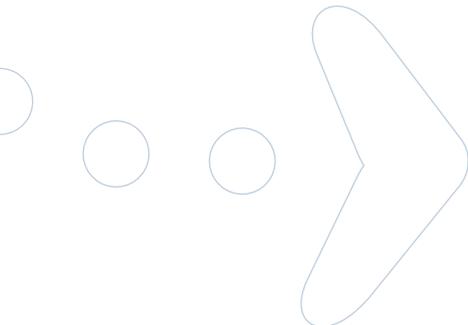




What do you need for filling your file of equivalence ?

If you wish to continue studies in secondary education

1. A motivation letter with your family name, name, complete address and desired studies (for example: I wish to continue the fourth year of general secondary education in the school Z)
 2. The last 3 school reports obtained abroad
 3. Extract of original birth certificate
 4. The proof of the 25 euro payment payable on the account:091-2110516-19 (Code IBAN: BE 39 0912 1105 1619 - Code BIC: GKCCBEBB).
- Do not forget to put in communication: Family name and names of the applicant as well as to mention "Equivalence of diploma ".



If you wish to study in the higher education

1. A motivation letter with your family name, name, full address and desired studies (for example: I wish to continue the 1st year of Bachelor in economics in the university Z)
2. An extract of original birth certificate
3. The proof of payment of 124 euro to be paid on the account : 091-2110516-19 - (Code IBAN: BE 39 0912 1105 1619 - Code BIC: GKCCBEBB). Do not forget to put in communication: names and First names of the applicant as well as the mention "equivalence of diploma "
4. A certified true copy of the completed secondary school diploma. For the graduates in course of the year: the temporary attestation of success. The definitive diploma will have to be supplied as soon as you receive it.

You absolutely have to make this payment by July 15th (last deadline). Failing this, your file will be considered as not having been introduced in due form for the prescribed deadlines and your request will not be taken into account for the next academic year.



This deadline is the one working for the request of equivalence. It is necessary that you inquire with the High School, the University or the College of the Arts about their own deadlines of admission which are generally prior to July 15th.

5. A certified true copy of the statement of notes accompanying the diploma
6. If you already had the opportunity to study in higher education in the country where you made your secondary education (example: proof of registration at the university, notation from the university, diploma awards, etc.). In that case, it is likely to obtain a more widened equivalence. It is thus important to supply a certified true copy of documents proving this admission.

If your request for equivalence of diploma is introduced with the aim of working or doing a training course, you have to join a document proving that your request aims at a job search. For example: certificate from Forem, Actiris or VDAB. The request can be introduced all year long contrarily to the request for the studies.

How to certify a foreign document?

In a Foreign Country

1. Make establish a certified true copy by a competent state employee in the country of studies
2. The signature of this state employee will be legalized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of this country.
3. The signature of the state employee of the Foreign Affairs will be then legalized by the Embassy or the Consulate of Belgium of this country.

In Belgium

In case of depositing your file on Website, a service officer of the department of equivalence can make free certified true copies from originals documents. It is also possible to go to the municipal Administration but this approach is subject to charges.



How to make translate your documents ?

No translation should be made for foreign documents if they are drafted in French, German, English, Spanish, Italian, Dutch or Portuguese. For documents drafted in another language, it is necessary:

Abroad

1. Make translate by a sworn translator. He has to put his stamp and his signature partially on the copy of the translated document and partially on his translation.
2. Legalize the signature of the translator by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country.
3. Legalize the signature of the state employee of the Foreign Affairs of the country at the Embassy or to the Consulate of Belgium of this country.

In Belgium

1. Find a sworn translator by addressing the municipality or the nearest Court of first instance
2. Make translate by the sworn translator and remind him that he has to put his stamp and his signature partially on the copy of the translated document and partially on his translation.
3. Make legalize the signature of the translator by the nearest court of first instance.

Where and how to introduce the demand ?

The demand must be introduced with the department of equivalences of the compulsory education of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, or on-the-spot or via the Post office.

On the spot

Attention: Before going there you must take an appointment by phone or it is possible to make it on-the-spot from Monday to Friday from 9 am to 12 and 1.30 pm to 4 pm

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
Direction générale de l'enseignement obligatoire
Service des équivalences - 1, rue A. Lavallée - B-1080 Bruxelles
Phone : 02 690 86 86 - Mail : equi.oblig@cfwb.be

For any information, the service of equivalences is available by phone during the following hours:

- **Monday from 9:00 to 12:00**
- **Tuesday from 9 :00 to 12:00 and from 13:30 to 16:00**
- **Wednesday from 9:00 to 12:00**
- **Thursday from 13:30 to 16:00**
- **Friday from 9:00 to 12: 00**

The on-the-spot deposit allows verifying if the file is complete. At the time of the deposit, the applicant receives a certificate of file deposit. With the reference number, it is possible to follow the progress of the file on the Website: <http://www.equivalences.cfwb.be>

Sending by post

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
Direction générale de l'enseignement obligatoire
Service des équivalences - 1, rue A. Lavallée - B-1080 Bruxelles

- The sending letter by registered post is not compulsory but strongly advised.
- Try to send all the documents in one time.
- If the file is introduced to do study, the deadline of July 15th is the deadline of introduction. It will be necessary to watch that the sending is made at the latest this day, the date taken into account by the service of the equivalences is the one of the post office.

When to introduce the request?

For the persons wishing to study

They have to introduce the file between November 15th and July 15th of the academic year which precedes the registration if the intention is to join in September the higher education.



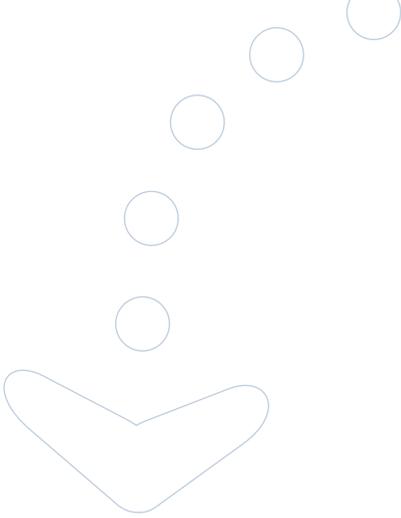
The deadline from November 15th till July 15th is the one of the request of equivalence. It is necessary to inquire with the High School, the University or of the College of the Arts over their own deadline of admission which is generally prior to July 15th..

The late submission of the dossier (file) is allowed only in the following cases:

- **If the proclamation of the results of your high school diploma took place after July 10th** (July 10th being not included), the deadline of deposit is prolonged until September 14th. In that case, it is compulsory to join at the dispensation request, an official proof of this late proclamation (delivered by the Ministry of Education, the Academy, the Service of High school diploma, etc.).
- **If the success of an examination of admission is required.** The persons wishing to follow higher education in the Federation Wallonia Brussels involving the success of an examination of admission have a deadline of 5 working days, after the date of notification of the success, to introduce the request for equivalence. This one must be accompanied with the proof of success of the above mentioned examination of admission. In that case, it is compulsory that the file contains the following elements: demand of dispensation, school documents, birth certificate, proof of payment and certificate of success of the examination of admission
- **In exceptional circumstances.** It is possible to indicate that exceptional circumstances have prevented the deposit of the file within the time limits. Exceptional circumstances must be understood as objective facts leading to the introduction of the request beyond the prescribed deadlines and exceptional enough to justify that the request is treated within faster deadline than requests introduced in due time.

For persons wishing to work or to do a training course

It is possible to introduce the request of equivalence at any time of the year.



What to do if the decision of equivalence is unsatisfactory?

In the case of an unsatisfactory decision of equivalence, it is possible to address to Wallonia-Brussels Federation ombudsman:

Service du Médiateur de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

11-13, boîte 7, rue de Poissonnier - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 548 00 70

Web Website : <http://www.mediateurcf.be> - Mail: courrier@mediateurcf.be

This department can restore the communication between the candidate and the administration and make recommendations (not binding) with the administration.

It is also possible to make an appeal against the decision of the administration before the State Council via a lawyer. The State Council does not examine the bottom of the file but checks the respect of the procedure's formalities by the administration and can render a judgment which will break the administration's decision

You obtained a diploma of the higher or university education abroad and you want to make an equivalence?



An Equivalence is a procedure of recognition of a diploma obtained abroad, which is not automatic and bases itself on various criteria, among which in particular:

- **The recognised character of the diploma by the competent authorities of the country delivering the diploma;**
- **The duration of the studies and their hourly volume and**
- **The formation contents , (training, internships, theses).**

Documents to be attached

- A letter in support of application specifying the object and motive of the request
- The inventory of the supplied documents
- A copy of document of identity (orange card, passport, etc.)
- A copy of the diploma of the secondary education:
 - › Or a certified true copy ,by a Belgian competent authority, of the decision of equivalence for the foreign secondary education diploma.
 - › Or a certified true copy by a Belgian competent authority of the foreign diploma of secondary education and its translation established by a Belgian official translator if the diploma is written in another language than French.
 - › Or a certified true copy by a Belgian competent authority of the approved certificate for upper secondary education (for students having made their secondary education in Belgium). If one of these documents is missing, an official document from the institution of higher education describing the conditions of access to the formation. If this document is written in foreign language, an official French translation by a sworn translator must be joined.

- A certified true copy by a competent Belgian authority (for example: the municipal administration) of the original, final and definitive diploma of higher education for which the equivalence is asked (or completion certificates). If this document is written in foreign language, its French translation by a sworn translator must be joined.
- A certified true copy by a competent Belgian authority of notes (or mentions) obtained in the various examinations for every year of higher education. If this document is written in foreign language, its French translation by a sworn translator must be joined.
- A certified of official program by a competent Belgian authority and detailed year by year higher education accomplished and resuming at least a titled and brief description of every followed course, the hourly volume (credits and translation of these in total number of hours) of every followed course. The applicant himself can make the translation.
- A copy of the report, the project or the thesis of the end of studies accompanied, if the report is not written in French, by a summary of some pages in French language, excepted for the diplomas of philosophy, history and letters for which the complete translation is requested. The applicant himself can do the translation.
- The official document duly completed must be downloaded from the Website: <http://www.equivalences.cfwb.be> or requested by mail.
- A detailed record of training courses attended by a certified Belgian competent authority. The applicant can make the translation himself.
- A bio data.

If the objective is to take back studies in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

It is necessary to contact directly the High School, the University or the School Superior of the Arts of your choice so that this institution of higher education decides, upon file, in which year of studies you are eligible. The institution of higher education will examine the comparability of the accomplished higher education abroad with the one wished in Belgium. If, after examination of the request, the decision of the High School, University or College of the Arts allows the registration in a 1st year of studies, the equivalence of your superior secondary education diploma will also be required. It is thus also necessary to address to the equivalence department of the secondary education of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels.

We invite you to consult several schools to verify the various possibilities offered for the continuation of your studies.

Website : <http://www.enseignement.be>

If the objective is to work with a university degree in Belgium and that an equivalence is necessary

It is necessary to contact by fax, mail, telephone or to make on-the-spot at the department of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels:

Service de reconnaissance académique et professionnelle des diplômes étrangers de l'enseignement supérieur

1, rue Adolphe Lavallée (5ème étage) - B-1080 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 690 89 00 - Fax : 02 690 88 90

Website: www.equivalences.cfwb.be - Mail : equi.sup@cfwb.be

You can contact this department by phone on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. The department receives without appointment on Monday and Thursday from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. These visits will aim to help people to introduce their request in adequate way.



Refusal of equivalence or restrictive equivalence

In case of equivalence refusal, there are alternatives to realize higher education:

- To appear examinations of the Central Jury to obtain the CESS (Certificate of the Upper Secondary education). For more information, consult the Website <http://www.jurys.cfwb.be/accueil.asp> or
- To appear entrance examination organized by Universities and High Schools or
- To appear entrance examination organized by schools for social promotion.
- Directory of the schools of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, to be consulted on the Website: <http://www.enseignement.be>

In case of restrictive equivalence limiting the access to certain higher education, the alternatives are:

- To appear the examination of maturity to obtain the DAES (Diploma of Capacity towards Higher education) <http://www.jurys.cfwb.be/accueil.asp> or
- To appear entrance examination organized by Universities and the High Schools or
- To appear entrance examination organized by the schools for social promotion (education with reduced schedule)

For some people have learned a trade "with the job", by working with a parent, via a hobby, a voluntary activity, etc. the persons holding skills but no school title, no diploma and who are slowed down in a job search, on the way of training or in one's career development.

Device for validation of skills has been created for all these persons.

In fact, this device allows every person of more than 18 years to make recognize his skills in an official way. No matter how the skills were learnt, the validation of the skills gives a recognized value on the employment market to professional capacities thanks to competence titles.

To obtain a competence title, it is sufficient to show your mastery of skills by passing a practical test, in real situation, in one of the approved centers. It is simple, free and gratifying!

Consult the web Website: <http://www.cvdc.be>

You wish to resume university studies and at the same time assert your work experience. You can make it via the valuation of acquired experience (VAE). For more information, contact :

Centre Inter-Universitaire Francophone (CIUF)

5, rue d'Egmont - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 504 92 91 - Fax : 02 502 27 68

Website: <http://www.ciuf.be/cms/la-plateforme-interuniversitaire-pour-la-vae.html>

It is possible to become contractor or self-employed, with or without diploma. Regarding this matter, it is interesting to consult the ministry of middle classes (small and medium-sized enterprises) web Website to verify which diplomas allow to prove contractual capacities, meaning the knowledge of basic management and professional skill.

Consult the web Website:

http://economie.fgov.be/fr/entreprises/vie_entreprise/Creer/Conditions/

For more informations :

SPF Économie, P.M.E., Classes moyennes et Énergie
Direction générale de la Politique des P.M.E.
Service des Guichets d'Entreprises
WTC III, 18e étage
30, Boulevard Simon Bolivar - B-1000 Bruxelles
Phone : 02 277 74 86 - Fax : 02 277 98 78
Mail : gea@economie.fgov.be

... And in Flemish Community of Belgium?



If your wish is to study in Flemish Community, you have to introduce your demand necessarily with Flemish Community.

The persons who live in Brussels and who wish to work with their equivalence of diploma can choose the Federation Wallonia-Brussels or the Flemish Community

Any information can be obtained with:

Vlaams Ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming
Agentschap voor Kwaliteitszorg in Onderwijs en Vorming
Afdeling Dienstverlening EVC
Hendrik Consciencegebouw - Toren C - 2de verdieping
15, Avenue Koning Albert II-laan - B-1210 Bruxelles
Phone : 02 553 89 58

WebWeb Website : <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/naric/> -Mail : naric@vlaanderen.be



Assistance and support Services helping to obtain an equivalence of diploma

In Brussels

CIRÉ (Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Étrangers)

80-82, rue du Vivier - B-1050 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 629 77 10

Web Website : <http://www.cire.be>

Convivial

Service de Guidance Socioprofessionnelle

33-35, rue du Charroi - B-1190 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 503 43 46 - GSM : 0488 28 31 64

Website : <http://www.convivial.be/> - Mail : guidance@convivial.be

Infor-Jeunes Bruxelles (Centre Ville)

155, rue van Artevelde - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 514 41 11 - Fax : 02 502 68 19

Mail : bruxelles@inforjeunes-bxl.be

Infor jeunes Bruxelles Nord-Ouest (Laeken)

360d, Boulevard Emile Bockstael - B-1020 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 421 71 31 - Fax : 02 421 71 36

Mail : laeken@inforjeunes-bxl.be

Service social de Solidarité Socialiste (SESO)

26, rue de Parme - B-1060 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 533 39 84 - Fax : 02 534 62 26

Mail : info@seso.be - Website : <http://www.seso.be>

Centre Social Protestant

12, rue Cans - B-1050 Bruxelles

tél. : +32 2 512 80 80 - fax : +32 2 512 70 30

Mail : csp.psc@skynet.be - Website : <http://www.csp-psc.be>

Cap Migrant

98, rue de Fétines - B-4020 Liège

Phone : 04 222 36 16 - Fax : 04 342 47 77

Mail : sse@swing.be

CIMB - Centre Interculturel de Mons et du Borinage

Operational headquarters

56, Rue Grande - B-7330 Saint-Ghislain

Phone : 065 61 18 50 - Fax : 065 43 00 48

Mail : cimb@skynet.be - Website : <http://www.cimb.be>

Headquarters

4, Grand-Place - B-7012 Jemappes

Ce.R.A.I.C. - Centre Régional d'Action Interculturelle du Centre

43, Rue Dieudonné François - B-7100 Trivières

Phone : 064 23 86 56 - Fax : 064 26 52 53

Mail : ceraic@swing.be - Website : <http://www.ceraic.be>

Centre d'action interculturelle de la province de Namur

2, Rue Docteur Haibe - B-5002 Saint-Servais (Namur)

Phone : 081 73 71 76 - Fax 081 73 04 41 - Website : <http://www.cainamur.be>

Centre Régional de Verviers pour l'Intégration

17, Rue de Rome - B-4800 Verviers

Phone : 087 35 35 20 - Fax : 087 35 55 20 - Website : <http://www.crvl.be>

CRIBW - Centre Régional d'Intégration du Brabant wallon

17/1, Rue de Mons - B-1480 Tubize

Phone : 02 366 05 51 - Fax : 02 390 99 93

Mail : info@cribw.be - <http://www.cribw.be>

CRIPEL

Centre Régional pour l'Intégration des Personnes Etrangères ou d'Origine étrangère de Liège

19B, Place Xavier Neujean - B-4000 Liège

Phone : 04 220 01 20 - Fax : 04 220 01 19

Mail : secretariat@cripel.be - <http://www.cripel.be>

CRIC - Centre Régional d'Intégration de Charleroi

23, Rue Hanoteau - B-6060 Gilly

Phone : 071 20 98 60 - Fax : 071 20 98 61

Mail : info@criccharleroi.be - <http://www.criccharleroi.be>

APD - Aide aux personnes déplacés - Assistants to the displaced persons

Liège

93, rue Jean d'Outremeuse - B-4020 Liège

Phone : 04 342 14 44 - Fax 04 340 00 90

Mail : contact@aideauxpersonnesdeplacees.be

Mons

98, rue d'Havré, 98 - B-7000 Mons

Phone : 0478 021 990

Mail : apd.anneroulet@gmail.com

Braine-le-Comte

Le Sylvius

11, rue Adolphe Gillis - B-7090 Braine-le-Comte

Phone : 0478 021 990

Mail : apd.anneroulet@gmail.com

Huy

33, rue du Marché - B-4500 Huy

Phone : 085 21 34 81 - Fax 085 23 01 47

Mail : aidepersdepl.huy@skynet.be

Flemish Community

Vluchtelingenwerk Vlanderen

164, rue Gaucheret, B-1030 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 274 00 20

Mail : info@vluchtelingenwerk.be - Web Website : <http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.be>

Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie vzw

323/1, Vooruitgangstraat – B-1030 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 205 00 50 - Fax : 02 205 00 60

Website : <http://www.kruispuntmi.be/>

Regionaal Integratiecentrum Foyer

25, Werkhuizenstraat B-1080 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 411 74 95 - Fax : 02 411 04 39

Mail : foyer@foyer.be - Web Website : www.foyer.be

Brussels Onthaalbureau (bon)

23, rue Philippe de Champagne - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 501 66 80 Fax : 02 289 00 91

Mail : info@bonvzw.be - Web Website : www.bonvzw.be

Public departments in connection with the equivalence of diploma

Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

1, rue Adolphe Lavallé- B-1080 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 690 86 86

Website : <http://www.equivalences.cfwb.be>

Médiateur de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

11-13, boîte 17, rue des poissonniers - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 548 00 70

Website : <http://www.mediateurcfwb.be>

Regional public employment and training Services

Walloon Region : <http://www.leforem.be>

Brussels-Capital Region : <http://www.actiris.be>

Flanders : <http://vdab.be>

Assistant in search of studies and courses

Everything about the education in French-speaking Belgium : www.enseignement.be

All trainings for adults in Brussels : www.dorifor.be

Service of Information on the studies and the professions : www.siep.be

Actions of elimination of illiteracy in French-speaking Belgium : www.lire-et-ecrire.be

Tribunal de première instance de Bruxelles

1, Place Poelart - B-1000 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 508 65 92

Web Website : www.juridat.be (For all the courts of 1st authority of Belgium)

Conseil d'État

94-102, rue d'Arlon - B-1040 Bruxelles

Phone : 02 234 96 11

Website : <http://www.raadvst-consetat.be/?lang=fr>



coordination et initiatives
pour réfugiés et étrangers

Créé en 1954, le CIRÉ est une structure de coordination pluraliste réunissant 23 associations aussi diversifiées que des services sociaux d'aide aux demandeurs d'asile, des organisations syndicales, des services d'éducation permanente et des organisations internationales. L'objectif poursuivi est de réfléchir et d'agir de façon concertée sur des questions liées à la problématique des demandeurs d'asile, des réfugiés et des étrangers.

www.cire.be - cire@cire.be



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