



EMN Ad-Hoc Query on SI AHQ on verification of the reliability of potential students.

Requested by Helena KOROSEC on 25th October 2016

Students

Responses from Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom (17 in total)

Disclaimer:

The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

Background information:



In September colleagues from Dutch Immigration Service launched AHQ in which they raised concerns on increasing numbers of applications for student purposes from Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Slovenian Embassy in New Delhi has noticed an unexpected increase of admissible students from Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh in 2016 as well. Moreover, the Embassy has serious doubts about the reliability of the agents (foreign citizens) who established contacts between Slovenian private and public Educational institutions and students who are presented by the same people in visa procedures. Therefore, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs would like to know how other Member States verify the reliability of potential students


Questions


1. 1. How and by whom is the reliability of agents verified? Please, briefly describe.
2. 2. What are responsibilities of educational institutions in your Member State in this regard?
3. 3. What are conditions of admission for potential students?
4. 4. How and by whom is the reliability of visa applicants verified?
5. 5. Does your country's visa system impose a minimum language requirement for prospective international students who are not native speakers of your country's language? YES / NO
6. If YES, at what level is it set and how is it measured?
7. 6. Does your country's visa system set a minimum financial maintenance requirement for prospective international students? In other words, do students have to provide evidence of sufficient means to show that they can support themselves, without recourse to public funds or work? YES / NO
8. If YES, how is the level set? (We're less interested in the actual amount than whether there is some benchmark, such as the assumed cost of living for a student, against which it is set).
9. 7. What are consequences for educational institutions in your Member State if the visa is misused?

Responses


	Country	Wider Disseminat ion	Response
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	Austria	No	
	Croatia	Yes	<p>1. Prospective students can get all information regarding enrolment procedures and study programmes at the Central applications office (Središnji prijavni ured) at the Agency for Science and Higher Education. In case the agent is involved in the recruitment of a foreign student to a university, he / she will not be verified by the Croatian authorities.</p> <p>2. None. See answer to Q1.</p> <p>3. Foreign secondary school certificates that are issued outside of Croatia should undergo a process of recognition, which is conducted by the Education and Teacher Training Agency for general, gymnasium and art secondary school degrees and the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education for vocational secondary school degrees. Free-mover students have to pay a tuition fee to universities. Temporary residence for the purpose of studies shall be granted to a foreigner meeting the following conditions laid down by Foreigner s Act: - justifies the purpose of temporary residence, - holds a valid travel document, - has means of supporting himself, has health insurance, -his entry and residence in the Republic of Croatia is not prohibited, - does not pose a danger for public order, national security or public health, provided that he/she is studying at a higher education institution of the Republic of Croatia. A temporary residence permit for the purpose of studies shall be issued for the term of validity of up to one year, i.e. until the end of the academic year.</p> <p>4. The reliability of visa applicants is verified by the competent authorities (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). However, full-time students who need visa may apply for a temporary residence permit at the Police Administration or Police Station. An application for temporary residence is to be submitted to the competent Diplomatic Mission or Consular Office of the Republic of Croatia. Foreigner who does not require a visa for entry into the Republic of Croatia may submit application to the Police Administration or Police Station in the Republic of Croatia. An application for issuance of a temporary residence permit shall be decided upon by the Police Administration or Police Station.</p> <p>5. No.</p>

			<p>6. 6. N/a.</p> <p>7. 7. Yes.</p> <p>8. 8. A potential student foreigner who applies for issuance of a temporary residence permit for the purpose of study must submit proof of scholarship or, if it does not receive a scholarship, the proof that he /she has sufficient means of subsistence amounting to at least 1,000.00 HRK (134 EUR).</p> <p>9. 9. There are no legal consequences for the educational institutions. Generally, it is assumed that not many residence permits for study purposes are misused.</p>
	Cyprus	Yes	<p>1. There is no such verification</p> <p>2. None</p> <p>3. The students must submit an application with the following documents: (a) Duly certified copy of passport or other travel document, with a validity of: (i) at least the expected duration of studies (ii) at least two years (b) In cases of minors, duly certified parental approval of the suggested residence, with official translation in Greek or English. (c) Duly certified copy of criminal record from the official authorities of the country of residence with official translation in Greek or English. (d) Duly certified original medical examinations for Hepatitis B and C, AIDS/HIV, Syphilis and report of chest X-ray for Tuberculosis from country of origin with validity of four months. (e) Acceptance letter from an Educational Institution, in order to register to a program of studies, including a description of the specific program of studies and its duration. (f) Receipt of payment of registration fees to the Educational Institution (g) Duly certified copy of confirmation letter from a Banking Institution in his country of residence, of his financial ability to cover tuition fees, living and repatriation expenses (at least 7000 euro) or duly certified confirmation letter of scholarship, issued by the awarding institution, if this is in his country of residence.</p> <p>4. The applications are examined by the Migration Department, Ministry of Interior. For certain countries, such as Bangladesh, it was decided by the Council of Ministers, that the applicants must go</p>


			<p>through an interview procedure in order to verify their reliability by a Committee (officers from Migration Department, Embassy of Cyprus and Ministry of Education).</p> <p>5. No</p> <p>6. n/a</p> <p>7. Yes. The students must submit along with the application a bank statement with a minimum of 7000 euro in order to show that they are able to cover the tuition fees and living expenses of the first year of their studies.</p> <p>8. Minimum 7000 euro (having in mind the cost of living and the tuition first for the first year of studies)</p> <p>9. None</p>
	Czech Republic	Yes	<p>1. There is no special procedure for the verification of reliability of agents.</p> <p>2. The duties and responsibilities of educational institutions are defined by the Act No. 326/1999 Coll., on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic and its Section 107 (obligations of Other Persons or Entities). This Section states that a higher education institution or a tertiary professional school shall be obliged to forthwith inform the Police on not commencing, interruption or discontinuation of the studies of a holder of a long-term residence permit for the purposes of studies or a holder of a long-term visa for a stay of over 90 days for the purposes of studies.</p> <p>3. This area is defined by the Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education. Each educational institution sets its own criteria for admission of students.</p> <p>4. Students undergo basic security clearance while applying for visa or residence permit depending on the purpose of their application.</p>

		<p>5. Foreign students can study at Czech higher institutions also in foreign languages, such as for example English. In such cases they are not required to speak our mother tongue. If applying for a study programme in Czech, then the knowledge of the Czech language is verified at the Czech embassies abroad. There is no special procedure for that. The Czech embassy then makes a statement for the Ministry of the Interior where it recommends granting visa or its refusal.</p> <p>6. N/A</p> <p>7. Yes. Minimum financial resources are required.</p> <p>8. Minimal required resources are defined by the Section 13 of the Act No. 326/1999 on the Residence of Foreign Nationals in the Territory of the Czech Republic where funds to cover the stay in the Czech Republic are specified. Section 13: (1) Unless provided otherwise herein, the following shall be submitted to prove the availability of funds to cover the stay in the Czech Republic a) funds amounting at least to 1. 0.5 times the subsistence minimum as the amount required under the special legal regulation) (hereinafter the ‘subsistence minimum’) per one day of the stay, if the total duration of the stay is not to exceed 30 days; 2. 15 times the subsistence minimum, if the duration of the stay in the Czech Republic is to exceed 30 days, whilst this sum shall be increased by double the subsistence minimum for each whole month of the expected stay in the Czech Republic; 3. 50 times the subsistence minimum, if a stay for the purposes of a business undertaking is concerned and the total duration of the stay is to exceed 90 days; or b) a document certifying the payment of services associated with the stay of the foreign national the Czech Republic or a document certifying that such services shall be provided free of charge. (2) Instead of the funds referred to in paragraph 1, the following may be used to prove the availability of funds for the stay in the Czech Republic a) an account statement concerning an account maintained in a bank in the name of the foreign national, demonstrating that the foreign national is authorised to use the deposited resources at the amount defined in paragraph 1 during his/her stay in the Czech Republic; or b) any other document certifying the availability of funds, such as a valid, internationally recognised, credit card. (3) A foreign national who shall study in the Czech Republic may submit, as the proof of the availability of funds for his/her stay, a document proving the commitment of a state authority or a legal entity to cover the stay of the foreign national concerned in the Czech Republic by providing funds at the amount of the subsistence minimum for one month of the expected stay, or a document confirming that all the costs associated with his/her studies and stay shall</p>
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			<p>be covered by the receiving organisation (the school). If the sum referred to in the commitment does not reach the specified amount, the foreign national shall be obliged to submit a document proving that he/she is in the possession of funds amounting to the difference between the subsistence minimum and the amount of the commitment for the period of his/her expected stay, nonetheless, not more than six times the subsistence minimum. The document on the availability of funds for the stay can be replaced by a decision or an agreement on allocation of a grant obtained under an international agreement which the Czech Republic is party. (4) A foreign national who has not yet reached the age of 18 years shall be obliged to prove the availability of funds for his/her stay pursuant to paragraph 1 to the extent of half the amount defined herein.</p> <p>9. Not specified by the law.</p>
	Estonia	Yes	<p>1. Police and Boarder Guard Board has talked with educational institutions in Estonia previously and according to our knowledge institutions usually do not use agents in foreign countries. The state financed program Study in Estonia deals with promoting Estonian education and institutions rely on their work in order to receive international students. Nevertheless we and our embassies have noticed that self-proclaimed agents operate in this field and help students with their paperwork and this is a concern.</p> <p>2. Educational institutions are responsible for checking and determining the academic abilities and qualification of the candidate – including their language skills. Once a student is enrolled, the educational institution issues an acceptance letter to the student and fills out an invitation form to the Police and Boarder Guard Board (necessary in order to issue a residence permit). The educational institution is responsible for the international student who they have accepted and invited – this means that if there are any problems with the student and we need to expel them from the country, the institution will be reliable for all the costs. The responsibilities also include an obligation to make sure that the student continues to hold a legal ground to stay in the country, to notify Police and Boarder Guard Board when the student fells behind on their studies or is expelled from the school and also pay for the students’ accommodation if necessary.</p>

			<p>3. The academic criteria's for enrolling a student are stipulated by law. ENIC/NARIC center in Estonia evaluates education obtained abroad and educational institutions use its services or their guidelines when accepting international students.</p> <p>4. International students who wish to study in Estonia apply for a residence permit. In order to enter Estonia, they usually also apply for a visa beforehand. In order to receive the visa, educational institution needs to provide information to the embassy. In order to apply for the residence permit, the educational institution needs to fill out an invitation form and the student hands in the application. Police and Boarder Guard Board checks the background of the student and the institution, collects relevant information and makes a decision. If during the visa or residence permit application process there is any doubt about the qualifications or language skills of the applicant then we contact the institution and investigate how the qualification was assessed. In some cases the institution takes back its invitation and in this case the process of the application is discontinued.</p> <p>5. NO. However, according to the Aliens Act a temporary residence permit for study may be issued if the purpose of the stay of the student in the state is study according to the curriculum of a higher education and his or her proficiency in the language of instruction is sufficient. The proficiency in the language of instruction of TCN is considered to be sufficient if it corresponds to the minimum requirements set by the educational institution for language of instruction or if a TCN commences in-depth studies in the national language. A regulation of the minister of Education and Research stipulates that educational institutions need to establish a language level requirement for international students.</p> <p>6. Please see question 5.</p> <p>7. YES (for residence permit).</p> <p>8. It depends on the states subsistence level stipulated by the annual state budget (for residence permit).</p> <p>9. Firstly, institution as the inviter is responsible for any costs that the state has to make to expel the person. Secondly, this might influence the institutions ability to invite new students.</p>
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+	Finland	Yes	<p>1. A number of Finnish higher education institutions were contacted to respond to this question. None of the institutions said they use agents. It was also noted by many institutions that they prefer that agents are not used by applicants either. Some institutions noted that they advise applicants not to use agents but to make the applications personally. Despite this, applicants from Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh often use agents and it is difficult to prevent this as there is a long-standing belief in these countries that agents should be used when applying for higher education institutions. The institutions that responded to the query noted that it is not always evident from the application whether it was made by a private person or an agent. However, some institutions noted that they are aware that some applicants use agents: this becomes evident from the similarity of the e-mail addresses and postal addresses provided, and by the fact that attachments are sent collectively from the same address. Reliability of agents is not verified by anyone, because using agents is a partly hidden phenomenon, which is difficult to verify and it is not a standard practice that would be recommended. If the application is correctly filled in and contains all necessary elements, it is taken into account regardless of whether it was made by an agent or the applicant personally.</p> <p>2. Educational institutions do not have particular responsibilities in this regard.</p> <p>3. Conditions of admission are generally the same for everyone regardless of the country of origin. All applications that include the necessary elements are taken into consideration in student admissions. However, some Finnish institutions noted that there are country-specific requirements for documentation of previous degrees: E.g. for degrees awarded in certain countries, an official transcript of the degree must be sent to the Finnish university in a sealed envelope by the awarding institution directly, and not by the applicant.</p> <p>4. The Finnish Immigration Service makes the decision on the application for residence permit. Conditions for granting a residence permit are investigated through written documentation: application and the attachments required. Applicants may also be interviewed. Applications may become under more scrutiny if they are from countries, where there is a greater prevalence of forged documents or if there are uncertainties in how the existence of sufficient means is verified.</p> <p>5. Finnish legislation does not impose a minimum language requirement as a prerequisite for obtaining a residence permit. However, in applications for residence permit the Finnish Immigration Service may</p>
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			<p>pay attention to the applicant's language skills even though verifying necessary language skills is primarily the responsibility of the educational institution. Before arriving in Finland, the prospective student should have at least basic skills in the language in which studies will be conducted. In order to prove this, the student may be interviewed in the teaching language. Weak skills in the teaching language can provide for reasonable grounds to suspect that the applicant intends to evade the provisions on residence in the country, and therefore a residence permit may be refused.</p> <p>6. Please see answer to question 5.</p> <p>7. Yes.</p> <p>8. The basis for setting the level of EUR amount required of international students for subsistence is based on the amount of the student financial aid, which is paid to Finnish students by the Finnish national social security institution, Kela. The Finnish student financial aid is provided for full-time studies after comprehensive school, and it is available in the form of study grant, housing supplement and government guarantee for student loans. International students are not eligible for the Finnish student financial aid by Kela, and therefore they are required to have similar means of sub-sistence before commencing their studies in Finland.</p> <p>9. No consequences.</p>
	France	Yes	<p>1. International students holding a certificate of secondary education issued in another country and seeking admission to the first or second year of university studies in France must submit an application for pre-enrolment (DAP) to the Cooperation and Cultural Action Service at the French Embassy of their country of residence. The same procedure must be followed with cultural services offices of the French embassy in case there is no specific Campus France office. In that case these services then forwards the application to the universities chosen by the candidates. Once their application has been accepted by a higher education institution in France, they should then contact the French Consulate in their country of residence, which is responsible for issuing visas. Consequently in both steps, agents are either French citizens or agents agreed by the French Embassy.</p>

2. There is no direct relationship between educational institutions and consulates since as indicated in Q1, students submit an application with a list of selected universities / high schools. Entrance to the university system is non-selective. Access to the first year of university is open to all students holding the French baccalauréat or a certificate of secondary education from abroad. The grandes écoles, on the other hand, operate a selective system with a limited number of places. These schools generally apply a specific admission process for international students, who are selected via competitive examination, on academic record or at interview. Students wishing to register for a masters or doctoral degree course submit their application directly to the establishment of their choice, which operate after that their own selection based on students' profiles. Assessment of applicants' academic level is based solely on the application sent to the institution. Some selective establishments, such as the specialized schools and the grandes écoles, do nonetheless still require that candidates go through entrance tests or interviews.

3. There are five conditions of admission to pursue studies in France: - Students have to hold a certificate of secondary education issued in another country - Their application for a pre-enrolment has to be accepted by a higher education institution in France - The consular authorities have to accept their visa application They have to provide an official certificate of their level of proficiency in French - They have to provide proof of adequate financial resources

4. Two aspects are taken into consideration when processing visa applications for studies in France: - academic: verification of qualifications, study plan and the student's ability to carry out the proposed course of study. Educational institutions are in charge of this verification; -consular: All international students wishing to pursue their studies in a French higher education institute have to apply for a long term visa (for stays over 3 months). Verification of the applicant's situation in terms of resources, accommodation, and public order and/or public security as well as the coherence and the seriousness of the study plan are assessed by the French consular authorities with regard to four specific criteria: - The level attained by the applicants in their university studies; - The quality of any previous courses of study; - The institutional framework in which the applicants are planning their study abroad; - Consideration of language skills.

5. YES

			<p>6. With the exception of courses taught in English, proficiency in French is a key criterion for admission. Any student applying for admission to a French higher education institution will be required to provide an official certificate of their level of proficiency in French. In France, the International Centre for Education Studies (known by its French initials, CIEP) is responsible for the pedagogical and administrative management of national certification, tests and diplomas of French as a foreign language. Various certifications of French as a foreign language, such as the TCF test or the DELF and DALF diplomas, have been developed to determine levels of proficiency in French, corresponding to the six-level scale of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) drawn up by the Council of Europe. As part of the DAP process described above, students must take a specific language proficiency test, called the Test de Connaissance du Français (TCF–DAP). There is a fee for the test (59 euros), which can be taken in a number of approved testing centers around the world. Students seeking admission to the second or third cycle of higher education are generally required to provide proof of proficiency at level B2 (for undergraduate level) or C1 (for a master). The DELF (basic diploma of French as a foreign language) and the DALF (advanced diploma of French as a foreign language) are awarded by the Ministry of Education. They constitute official certification of proficiency in French, with six distinct diplomas (DELF A1 to B2 and DALF C1 to C2). International students are exempted from these language proficiency tests if they are nationals of a State using French as an official language or if they have attended bilingual French sections in schools featuring on a list drawn up jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p> <p>7. YES</p> <p>8. International students are required to provide proof of adequate financial resources, determined by the decree of 6 September 2011 standing at 615 euros per month (can be taken into account: own resources, housing allowance, family allowance, ...). This amount corresponds to the monthly base allocation for French Government scholarship holders.</p> <p>9. As far as we know, there are no consequences for educational institutions if the visa is misused.</p>
	Germany	Yes	<p>1. The application for a place to study at university as well as the procedure to obtain a visa must always be handled personally by the applicant. It is therefore not possible for a foreign agency to take any relevant procedural steps on behalf of the applicant. If it transpires during the procedure to obtain a</p>

falsified visa or forged documents have been presented or that incorrect indications have been made, the data of persons who have confirmed to take on the responsibility for the living costs of the applicant and the termination of the applicant's stay or who, as reference persons, have confirmed the purpose for the stay of the applicant is recorded in a Visa Warning File. This allows us to detect if such a person has already made an appearance in several visa procedures and to uncover cases of abuse.


2. Colleges and universities determine under their own direct authority and responsibility if the legal framework for the admission requirements of the applicant for a place to study has been fulfilled and if the admission to study can be awarded.


3. The applicant for a place to study must provide proof that he/she fulfils the relevant conditions of admittance on the basis of his/her prior education and have the necessary knowledge of the language.

4. During the procedure to obtain a visa, the competent German representation abroad verifies that the general conditions (e.g. passport obligation, identity, secured living expenses, absence of risk to public safety and order) for admittance prevail and that the special conditions for admittance (confirmation of a place of study by a college or university), are fulfilled. Within the scope of a general assessment the representation abroad also verifies if the indications made regarding the purpose for his/her stay is plausible and correct. The foreigner's authority for the future place of study must endorse the issuance of the visa with the representation abroad.


5. Yes, although this assessment no longer prevails during the procedure to obtain a visa as the college/university ascertains the required knowledge of the German language or, where applicable, that of another teaching language within the framework of the admission for the studies.


6. Two entrance examinations are in place for colleges and universities: the „Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang ausländischer Studienbewerber“, DSH, (German language examination for university admission of foreign applicants) and the „Test Deutsch als Fremdsprache“, TestDaF, (test of German as a foreign language). Furthermore language certificates of some language institutes (e.g. the Goethe-Institut) are also recognized. Those who can prove that he/she has a sufficient command of the German language due to his/her previous education (e.g. German A-levels/high school graduation) are exempt from such examinations. The colleges/universities determine the required level of the

			<p>knowledge of language required for the relevant study course. Generally speaking, however, the grade C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is the minimum requirement. A language course to prepare for a study course may represent a specific purpose for the stay when applying for a visa and may also directly precede the period of studies.</p> <p>7. Yes. Proof must be made available for the payment for sustenance as required for a whole semester into an account that is blocked for the benefit of the foreigner’s authority and from which a partial sum is paid out to the student on a monthly basis.</p> <p>8. The living costs are regarded as being secured if the foreign student has monthly funds available that correspond to the amount prescribed by the “Bundesgesetz über individuelle Förderung der Ausbildung”(German Federal Law on the individual Promotion of Education and Training) including the additional charge required to pay for the health and care insurance (§§ 13 and 13a “BAFöG” (German Federal Training Assistance Act).</p> <p>9. In the case of repeated abuse, the local foreigner’s authority and the colleges/universities that are required to agree to the visa for the purpose of studies will try to determine and eliminate weak points in their admission procedure. After all, it is in the interest of the colleges and universities to only admit honest and genuine students.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p>1. The Office of Immigration and Nationality doesn’t keep a record on the agents representing potential students, and they don’t examine the reliability of these agents during the application procedure for the residence permit for the purpose of studies.</p> <p>2. According to the alien policing laws of Hungary the educational institutions are not liable for the responsibility of the agents.</p> <p>3. Educational institutions have different selection criteria for potential students. According to Act II of 2007 on the Entry and Stay of Third-Country Nationals, Section 21 (1), long-term visa or residence permit may be issued on grounds of pursuit of studies to third-country nationals accepted by an establishment of secondary or higher education accredited in Hungary, and admitted to the territory of Hungary to pursue as his/her main activity a full-time course of study, or to attend a course in an</p>


			<p>establishment of higher education, which may cover a preparatory course prior to such education. They also need to prove that they have the necessary language skills to pursue their studies.</p> <p>4. The examination of potential third-country students are done by the consular officers in the beginning of the application procedure.</p> <p>5. Yes, according to Act II of 2007 on the Entry and Stay of Third-Country Nationals, Section 21 (1) potential students have to prove that they have the necessary language skills to pursue their specific studies.</p> <p>6. The Government Decree 114/on the Implementation of Act II of 2007 on the Entry and Stay of Third-Country Nationals, Section 60 (3) the required language skills in Act II of 2007, Section 21 (1) can be proven by the following: language certificate, official certificate about studies pursued in the required language, or in any other credible way.</p> <p>7. Yes, potential students have to prove that they have the necessary funds to cover their expenses in Hungary. According to the Government Decree, Section 29 (5) third-country nationals have their expenses covered for a longer than 90 days stay when they or their relatives can finance their costs of living, accommodation, travel and medical expenses from their legally acquired income or wealth.</p> <p>8. The laws do not set an exact benchmark. The immigration authorities examine all the available documents provided by third-country nationals to assess whether they can cover their expenses or not, and they make their decision at their discretion.</p> <p>9. The alien policing laws do not have provisions on the consequences for educational institutions if the visa is misused.</p>
	Italy	Yes	<p>1. In Italy, ‘agents’ cannot apply for a visa for the purpose of studies or for the related residence permit. Both applications should be submitted directly by the persons concerned. Please note that foreign nationals, just like Italian nationals, are required to take a selection test at the selected university (and, in this case, the residence permit has a limited duration).</p>

			<p>2. See below.</p> <p>3. A. Financial means of subsistence for the expected stay. These means have been quantified as EUR 5,824.91/year (for 2016). The availability of such means should be proved by financial guarantee provided by the applicants or their parents, or by Italian bodies and Institutions of proved creditworthiness, including Universities and local governments, or by foreign bodies or institutions considered to be reliable by the Italian diplomatic mission. Availability of financial means of subsistence cannot be proved by a bank guaranty, or cash money, or guarantees provided by third parties. B. The availability of the money needed for return, which may be proved by a return ticket. C. Suitable accommodation in Italy; D. Suitable insurance coverage for medical care and hospitalisations (Article 39(3) of the Consolidated Text No 286/1998 and Directive 1 March 2000 of the Ministry of the Interior) that the applicant should prove to have when applying for a residence permit. Before pre-enrolment, students may contact the University they have selected and indicate which degree programme they would like to take, allowing for a preliminary assessment of their applications. The University may inform the applicants whether they have been admitted, and if they have to take additional tests, or it may recommend a more suitable degree programme.</p> <p>4. On entry into Italy for the purposes of studies, foreign nationals may apply for a residence permit at the police authority, enclosing a copy of the following: passport; certification showing the study programme they intend to take, endorsed by the Italian embassy; accident and sickness insurance policy; and enrolment certificate. The applicants will then be called by the Immigration Office of the police authority to have their fingerprints and photographs taken and then to be granted the residence permit.</p> <p>5. To enrol in a university programme, third-country nationals have to submit the documentation concerning the educational qualifications they obtained in their country of origin and an Italian language proficiency certificate. Students who have obtained an Italian language proficiency certificate corresponding to levels C1 and C2 of the Council of Europe are exempted.</p> <p>6. See Answer 5</p>
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	Latvia	Yes	<p>1. Latvian immigration authorities do not carry out any checks or controls of agents. The responsible bodies are the educational establishments.</p> <p>2. Educational institutions have to make sure that the previous education of the student corresponds to the required level and they have to carry out careful selection of students. Educational institutions shall report about any substantial changes in the study agreements and they have to report in the case if the student is excluded from the respective institution.</p> <p>3. Conditions of admission are: - sufficient financial means; - student shall not pose any threat to public policy, national security or public health; - adequate previous education that is required for enrolment in the educational establishment of Latvia; - valid travel document; - health insurance policy.</p> <p>4. Reliability of applicants is verified, first, by the educational establishments who evaluate previous education of students. Sometimes there is an additional examination carried out. Then student is interviewed in the diplomatic or consular representation abroad and his/her documents are evaluated by the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs who is the responsible institution for granting a residence permit.</p> <p>5. No</p> <p>6. n/a</p> <p>7. Yes</p> <p>8. Level corresponds to the minimum monthly salary in the country (370 EUR per month).</p>

			<p>9. If the residence permit is misused and the educational institution has not reported within 3 working days about exclusion of the student from the educational institution, it can be fined administratively. If student has to be expelled, the educational institution might be held responsible for covering expulsion costs.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. In general, third country national students are screened by two institutions: primary screening procedures are carried out by universities (in they have the authorisation, otherwise it can be done the Centre of Quality assessment in higher education) and secondary ones - by visa service officers in the country of origin.</p> <p>2. Responsibilities of educational institutions: - assessment of qualification acquired abroad (three biggest Universities have the authorisation to do it themselves, others need to forward the diplomas to the Centre of Quality assessment in higher education); - verification of language of instruction. Universities ask for documents or conduct interviews designed to assess candidate's knowledge of language of instruction; - implementation of specialized tests. When applying for specialized studies (architecture, medicine), universities conduct specialized tests in the country of origin. As a rule, tests are administered by agents; - collection of tuition fees. Universities demand that tuition fees would be paid before requesting arrival documents to be processed and forwarded to the Lithuanian embassy or consulate. Universities remark that this serves as an indication of the fact that student is determined to pursue his/her studies; - assessment of other documents (CV, motivational letter, recommendations).</p> <p>3. Third country national students can arrive to Lithuania with the national (D) multi-entry visa or a residence permit. Admission requirements for students from third countries who come with the national visa: Requested documents for a national visa: - Application for visa - Valid travel document - Photo - A mediation document of the higher education institution - Document confirming availability of subsistence funds. Means of subsistence (0.5 of minimum monthly salary - currently the amount requested is 180 EUR for every month of planned stay) in the Republic of Lithuania (minimum last 3 months original bank account statements/ pay slips etc.; in case of sponsorship - Affidavit of Sponsorship from parents/relatives and their bank account statements for minimum 3 months). - A document confirming health insurance that is valid during the stay in Lithuania (the insurance amount comprises EUR 5792.4). - A confirmed air ticket reservation. It should be noted that national visa is</p>


			<p>issued for the first year of studies and is valid up to 1 year. Later a student must apply for the residence permit. It should be noted that students applying for visa for the first time must be present at visa service personally for an interview. Visa is issued within 14 days. Requested documents for a temporary residence permit: - Application - Valid travel document - Photo - A mediation document of the higher education institution - Document confirming availability of subsistence funds - Document confirming that student has living premises in Lithuania (this can be submitted at the time of issuance of the residence permit) - A document confirming health insurance that is valid during the stay in Lithuania (the insurance amount comprises EUR 5792.4) - A certificate regarding (the absence of) a criminal record for the state of origin; - A fee (68 EUR for consideration of the application +28 EUR for processing of the permit).</p> <p>4. Lithuanian visa service officers perform the reliability check. Students applying for national visa for the first time must be present at visa service personally for an interview. At the time of interview applicants should be able to motivate their intentions to study in Lithuania as well as acquaintance with the study program. Non ability of an applicant to communicate in English may lead to visa denial.</p> <p>5. No. There is no minimum language requirements for prospective international students who are not native speakers of Lithuanian. However, ability to communicate in English is checked.</p> <p>6. N/A</p> <p>7. Yes.</p> <p>8. The amount of subsistence funds comprises 0.5 of the minimum monthly salary per month (currently minimum monthly salary is 380 EUR per month and this amount might be changing). In order to prove sufficient means international students must submit minimum last 3 months original bank account statements/ pay slips etc.; in case of sponsorship - Affidavit of Sponsorship from parents/relatives and their bank account statements for minimum 3 months.</p>
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	Luxembourg	Yes	<p>1. In Luxembourg there are no agents who establish contacts between the potential students and the University of Luxembourg. The University of Luxembourg is a public institution created by the amended Law of 12 August 2003. All application requests have to be done online. The student needs to choose his/her program, to be well informed about the study planning and prerequisites. Then s/he can file the application on line. Once the online application is filled out, the applicant needs to print it, add the requested documents and send to the University the complete application file before the deadline. The Student Service of the University of Luxembourg will check the application and send an answer by post mail indicating the decision if the student is admitted or not.</p> <p>2. In Luxembourg there are no responsibilities of educational institutions in this regard as the application to enter the University must be done directly by the student and no intervention of an agent is required.</p> <p>3. The student must fulfil the eligibility criteria for entering the different types of program: bachelor, masters or PhD. In order to enter a bachelor program: The student must proof to have a: A. Secondary school-leaving certificate recognised by the Luxembourgish Ministry of Education; or B. In case of Secondary school-leaving certificates which are not recognised by the Luxembourgish Ministry of Education: 1. Candidates with a non-recognised secondary school-leaving certificate, who have not completed any university studies must apply for the 1st semester of the bachelor programme and must take an entrance exam; 2. Candidates with a non-recognised secondary school-leaving certificate, who have completed at least one year of university studies: a) in a university situated in the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process). In this case the application has to be approved by an evaluation committee; or b) in a university situated outside the European Higher Education Area: in this case the application has to be approved by an evaluation committee and the candidate must take an entrance exam. In order to apply to any type of program (bachelor or master) the applicant must provide the copy of his/her diploma (s) and transcripts with the original official apostille (no photocopies of the apostille), or they must be issued with a double legalisation. For applicants legally resident in the entire</p>

American continent (North and South), these formalities are not requested, however the institution of origin (High School/University) must send a copy of the diploma and transcripts in a sealed envelope. In the case of candidates residing in CAMEROON, GHANA, NIGERIA, IVORY COAST and SENEGAL, the University of Luxembourg imposes stricter conditions. In addition to the double legalisation or apostille, the institution (High School/University) where the applicant has obtained the diploma must send to the University of Luxembourg a copy of the diploma and transcripts in a stamped and sealed envelope.

4. Once the potential student receives the decision from the University of Luxembourg that s/he has been admitted, s/he would have to apply for an authorisation of stay as a student at the Directorate of Immigration in Luxembourg (the applicant must apply from its country of origin or a country where s/he is allowed to stay). The applicant must attach to his/her application the following documents: • A certified true copy of all the pages of his/her passport; • A birth certificate; • An extract from the police records or an affidavit; • The letter of admission to the University of Luxembourg; • Proof of parental authorisation if the candidate is under 18; • Proof of health insurance covering all risks in Luxembourg; • Proof of sufficient resources, during the course of the studies, to cover the living and return expenses (monthly resources corresponding to at least 80% of the minimum guaranteed income in Luxembourg, i.e. €1078,54). Such proof may consist of: o A certificate of a grant or student loan, indicating the amount granted and term o A certificate from the bank o A certificate of financial support for the student All documents either have to have an apostil by the competent local authority of the country of origin, or to be legalised by the competent local authority of the country of origin and authenticated by the diplomatic representation of Luxembourg or of any EU country which represents Luxembourg's interests. If such documents are not in English, French or German, they must be accompanied by a certified and sworn translation. As soon as the application for a temporary authorisation to stay has been received by the applicant, and if the applicant is a national of a third-country which requires a visa for entering the European Union the applicant must apply for a visa within 90 days after obtaining the authorisation to stay, at the diplomatic representation of Luxembourg (or of the EU country who represents Luxembourg interests) in his/her country of residence.

5. No. The language requirement depends on the program (bachelor or master) that the student has chosen and is a criteria of admissibility in the University. As the University of Luxembourg is a multilingual university, most of the programs are in one, two or three of the official languages of the

			<p>University (English, German or French) so the student has to prove that s/he has the level (normally a B2 or C1 in all of the languages).</p> <p>6. N/A. See answer to question 5.</p> <p>7. YES.</p> <p>8. The applicant must proof monthly resources corresponding to at least 80% of the minimum guaranteed income in Luxembourg, i.e. €1078,40 per month in 2016.</p> <p>9. There are no consequences for the educational institutions if the visa is misused because that is the responsibility of the applicant.</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p>1. It is up to the educational facility to decide whether or not it will work with agents. Facilities do have this freedom based upon the system of co-operation and mutual trust with governmental entities, such as the Dutch Immigration Services. Therefore, it is also the task of educational facilities to verify the reliability of agents as well as binding these agents contractually. However, this does not exclude other individuals (unofficial “agents”, without any ties to educational facilities) to bring forward admissible students from Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh to the educational institutes.</p> <p>2. Educational institutes are the ones who should act as a ‘sponsor’ for the international students. Students can only apply for a residence permit, in case the educational facility is recognized as a sponsor by the Dutch government and this facility explicitly states its willingness to act as a sponsor for the specific student. In principle, the educational institution is responsible for the legal stay of the student. Therefore, the educational facility has at least four responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the IND with information on study progress, availability of enough income and changes regarding the accreditation of the educational facility. Information regarding rehousing or a change in marital status does not need to be provided to the IND. • The educational institution should keep records regarding study progress, identification, proof of registration at the educational facility, the address details and proof of income. • The educational institution should take care of the acquisition of new students and provide the correct information regarding studying in the Netherlands and gaining a residence permit. • The educational

institution is responsible for the return of the student and guarantees the costs that can be made with a return up to one year after withdrawal of the permit.

3. There are a couple of conditions that potential students need to fulfil: • The potential student possesses a valid passport or ID; • The potential student does not pose a threat to national security or public order; • The potential student did not bring forward false information at earlier applications; • The potential student has not been living and working illegally in the Netherlands before the application; • The potential student, if originating from certain countries, is willing to comply with a research on tuberculosis; • The potential student will be registered to a certified educational institution, which is recognized as a sponsor for students; • The potential student follows a Higher Education of University level programme; • The potential student follows a full-time programme; • The potential student has enough financial means (see question 7)


4. The Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND).


5. The requirement concerning the level of English language can be found within the framework for international students within higher education in the Netherlands. This rule is laid down in (article 4.2 of) the so-called 'Code of conduct' (<http://internationalstudy.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Gedragcode-2014-Engels.pdf>). The level of English is primarily measured by the use of IELTS. As the educational institution is obliged to sign the 'Code of conduct' in fact there exist an minimum English language requirement for international students

6. For study programmes in English, a minimum of an academic IELTS test with an overall band score of at least 6.0 (six) for the B and M level is required. For preparatory education with a length of 6 up to 12 months, a minimum requirement of 5.0 IELTS applies; for preparatory education of 6 months or shorter, a minimum requirement of 5.5 IELTS is required. For the scores of other accepted language tests than IELTS, the table in the appendix (see attached document) applies. Contrary to the provisions of Article 4.2, a higher education institution may exempt international students who have had their preparatory education in English, from having to take a mandatory language test. The National Commission may request that the higher education institution provides a statement from the NUFFIC, confirming that the preparatory education has been followed in the English language.

			<p>7. Yes, we do set a minimum financial maintenance requirement.</p> <p>8. The international students need to have enough means to provide for study- and living costs in the Netherlands. The benchmark of this amount is a standard amount of money per month which Dutch students need to have to provide for rent and other living expenses, when they do not live with their parents anymore, excluding study fees. For 2016, this amount is specified at €862,50 for students at Higher Education of University. For students in secondary school/Lower Education, this amount is set at €709,29. The student has three different options to prove that they can make this amount: • The student has a bank account in their own name, with money equivalent to 12 times the standard amount for students (12 times €862,50 or €709,29) on it. A bank statement is enough proof. The bank account must be owned by the student only, or with a certificate of proof in which it is stated that the students has free access to the bank account. • In case someone else abroad pays for residence and study fees, the student needs to hand over an original statement from the bank, in which it is noted that the person/organization will transfer the requested standard amount for students every month. The bank account must be owned by the student only, or with a certificate of proof in which it is stated that the students has free access to the bank account. • In case someone else in the Netherlands pays for residence and study fees, the income of the person who pays needs to be equivalent or higher than the standard amount of money for ‘Study’ and the standard amount for ‘Residence as a family member’, fitting to the right situation of the family. The income should be available for at least one year.</p> <p>9. The first time that an educational institution is found to be disobeying the rules, it can be issued with a warning. In the event of a subsequent breach, the IND can impose a fine. The level of the fine depends on issues such as the severity of the breach and the number of breaches that have taken place. In the event of serious breaches, the IND can also impose an immediate fine, without issuing a prior warning. If an institution of higher education can be held accountable for the misuse of student visas based on admissible evidence (such as signals from students and/or other educational facilities) the Dutch Immigration Services may in the end also revoke the granted recognition for this facility. In that case the institution will no longer be able to act as a ‘sponsor’ for foreign students, nor will it have the right to submit any applications.</p>
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	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p>1. Third-country nationals who want to study in Slovakia have to apply for a residence permit for the purpose of study at the Bureau of Border and Alien Police of the Police Forces of the Slovak Republic or at the Slovak diplomatic mission abroad. The Bureau of Border and Alien Police does not verify whether student agencies/agents are involved or what contacts were used. It only checks whether the conditions for granting the temporary residence for the purpose of study are met, in line with respective legislation.</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. In order to be granted a residence permit for the purpose of study in Slovakia, the applicant must submit an application and include: two current photographs (3 x 3,5 cm), valid passport, provide the proof of the purpose of residence (letter of acceptance to a Slovak university, college or other accredited educational institution), clean criminal record, demonstrate sufficient financial resources, provided accommodation.</p> <p>4. In the Slovak Republic there is no specific visa granted for the purpose of study. Please, see the answer in Q1. In order to obtain a residence permit for the purpose of study, students have to provide a proof of their purpose of residence (in this case the letter of acceptance from the university, college or other accredited educational institution) when applying for the residence.</p> <p>5. As regards the residence permit for the purpose of study, no such criteria are set.</p> <p>6. N/A</p> <p>7. There is a condition of the minimum financial resources for their stay which has to be proved when submitting application.</p> <p>8. According to the Act on the Residence of Aliens, the financial resources shall be demonstrated by a third country national in the amount of subsistence minimum for each month of residence; if the residence period exceeds one year, financial resources must be demonstrated in the amount of twelvefold subsistence minimum. A minor third country national shall demonstrate a half of the financial resources for residence.</p>
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	Sweden	Yes	<p>1. Third-country nationals who want to come to Sweden for study purposes normally apply for a residence permit by themselves, either electronically or in person at a Swedish mission abroad. Whether or not an agent is involved in the recruitment of a foreign student to a university or university college in Sweden is not a concern for the Swedish authorities that process the residence permit application.</p> <p>2. Whether universities or university colleges use agents to recruit foreign students is not a concern for the migration authorities. (The only requirement for universities and university colleges regarding the Residence permit process is to report to the Migration Agency any cases in which an international student has not registered for studies after his or her arrival in Sweden, or when an international student has interrupted his or her studies.)</p> <p>3. In order to obtain a residence permit for studies in Sweden, a third-country national must have a valid passport, have been admitted to full-time studies, be able to support himself/herself during the foreseen period of studies in Sweden, and – if the person intends to study for less than one year - have comprehensive health insurance. Free-mover students have to pay a tuition fee to universities, and a residence permit can only be granted when this fee has been paid.</p> <p>4. Third-country nationals who want to study in Sweden for more than three months normally need a residence permit, not a visa. The application for such a permit is examined by the Swedish Migration Agency on the basis of documents and evidence provided by the applicant, as described under question 3. Among other things, the Migration Agency examines whether the applicant really intends to study in Sweden that is if studies are the main reason for applying for this type of residence permit.</p>

			<p>5. No, but in practice, a foreign student will not be admitted to studies at a Swedish university if he or she does not speak Swedish or English. Admission to full-time studies is a requirement for the residence permit to be granted. When an applicant obviously does not speak Swedish or English, a residence permit application can be rejected by the Migration Agency due to doubts as to whether the person really wants to study in Sweden.</p> <p>6. To examine whether a person applying for studies in Sweden has sufficient knowledge of Swedish or English is a responsibility of the universities / university colleges. Different methods may be used by these institutions.</p> <p>7. Yes.</p> <p>8. The level is set at 18 percent of the current price basic amount, which is calculated each year based on changes in the general price level, in accordance with the Swedish National Insurance Act. The price basic amount for 2016 is 44,300.00 SEK. Under certain circumstances, e.g. when a student has free accommodation or free food in Sweden, or when he or she only intends to study in Sweden for a short time, the percentage can be lower.</p> <p>9. There are no legal consequences for the educational institutions. Generally, it is assumed that not many residence permits for study purposes are misused. The tuition fee that prospective free-mover students have to pay is rather high.</p>
	United Kingdom	Yes	<p>1. The UK does not currently operate an accreditation system for any agents involved in applications for any type of UK Visas.</p> <p>2. Sponsorship is a privilege and not a right. Sponsors benefit directly from migration and are expected to play a part in ensuring that the system is not abused. Sponsors must therefore fulfil certain duties, in order to ensure that immigration control is maintained. Providers must be able to show that they can fulfil, and are fulfilling, these sponsor duties in order to gain and retain a Tier 4 licence. The duties are set out in Part 2 of the Tier 4 sponsorship guidance, available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/538372/Tier_4_Sponsor_Guidance-Sponsorship_Duties_July_2016.pdf Students within Tier 4 must obtain a Confirmation of</p>

			<p>Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from their sponsor before progressing with their visa application. When considering a sponsor's request to renew their annual CAS allocation, the Home Office will take a number of factors into account, including but not limited to, any agents that the sponsor use to recruit international students, where they have been linked to immigration abuse in the past.</p> <p>3. The applicant must have an unconditional offer of a place on a course with a licensed Tier 4 sponsor, who will issue them with a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS). They must apply for their visa no more than six months after they have been assigned a CAS for the course and enough money to support themselves and pay for their course – the amount will vary depending on the circumstances.</p> <p>4. All UK Visa applications for Tier 4 made by Nepali, Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants require an assessment by a trained Entry Clearance Officer who is subject to passing stringent security and capability assessments. All students from these countries are also required to take a mandatory interview at the time of application. The Entry Clearance Officer makes a Points Based assessment of the students funding and English Language capabilities and also ensures they have met the UK's requirement on being free from tuberculosis. The Entry Clearance Officer also has the powers to conduct a genuine student assessment where there are concerns about the student's credibility and carries this out by conducting a secondary in depth interview. If the student does not satisfy the Entry Clearance Officer of their credibility then they can be refused entry to the UK.</p> <p>5. Yes</p> <p>6. CEFR level B2 if they are studying at degree level or higher. CEFR level B1 if they are not studying at degree level. Exceptions apply for nationals of certain English speaking countries, those who have recently completed a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in certain English speaking countries, and for students moving from Tier 4 (Child) into Tier 4 (General).</p> <p>7. Yes</p>
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