



European  
Commission

# The organisation of school time in Europe

Primary and general  
secondary education  
2023/2024

Eurydice – *Facts and Figures*



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# **The organisation of school time in Europe**

**Primary and general  
secondary education**

**2023/2024**

**Eurydice – Facts and Figures**

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## INTRODUCTION

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This report gives an overview on the start of the school year and its length as well as the timing and length of school holidays. It covers both primary and general secondary education. The information is available for the 37 countries participating in the EU's Erasmus+ programme (27 EU Member States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Türkiye). The reference year is 2023/2024.

## KEY POINTS

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### **The school year generally starts at the beginning of September**

In most of the European education systems, the school year starts in September. It starts on 1 September in 11 education systems <sup>(1)</sup>. Students in Malta are the last to return to school at the end of September. In eight education systems, school starts in August <sup>(2)</sup>. It may start as early as 9 August in Finland.

### **The length of the summer holidays varies a lot across Europe**

In Europe, the summer holidays generally start between the end of May and the second half of July. In the majority of the education systems, students have between 8 and 12 weeks.

However, the length of the summer holidays varies significantly between countries (see Figure 1). They last no more than 8 weeks in the French Community of Belgium, Denmark, some German *Länder*, France, the Netherlands, some Swiss cantons, Liechtenstein and Norway. At the opposite end, students are on holidays for more than 12 weeks in Ireland (ISCED 2 and 3), Greece, Latvia, Malta, Portugal (ISCED 2), Albania, Iceland (ISCED 2-3), and in most regions in Italy.

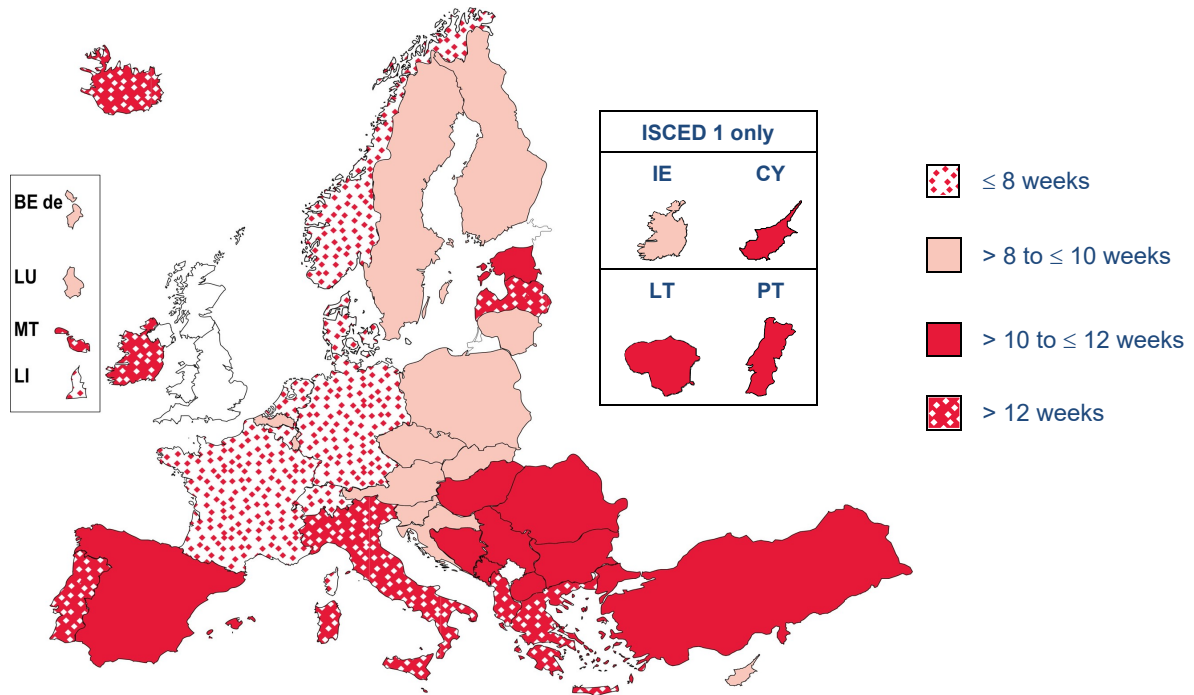
In some countries, the length of the summer holidays varies depending on the level of education. In Lithuania, students in primary education have two more weeks than those in general secondary education. In three countries, students in primary education have more holidays than those in general secondary education. They may have one month more in Portugal (depending on grade), two more weeks in Lithuania, and one and a half week more in Cyprus; Conversely, students in general secondary education have longer summer holidays. In Iceland they have two weeks less and in Ireland about four weeks less.

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(1) Belgium (German-speaking and Flemish Communities), Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, North Macedonia and Serbia

(2) In the French Community of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. It may also be the case in Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands depending on the region or the school.

**Figure 1: Length of summer holidays (in weeks) in primary and general secondary education (ISCED 1-3), 2023/2024**



Source: Eurydice.

**Explanatory note**

See Figure 2.

Data are available as open data at <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/organisation-school-time-europe-primary-and-general-secondary-education-20232024>.

**Country-specific notes**

**Belgium (Flemish Community):** the data has not been validated by the Eurydice National Unit.

**Spain, Croatia, Italy, Malta and Portugal:** the exact dates for the start of the school year in 2024/2025 are not yet available. The summer period is calculated with the assumption that students will come back to school at the same period as in 2023/2024.

**Portugal:** In the last two grades of ISCED 3, the duration can be 8 weeks or less.

**Iceland:** the map shows the category for ISCED 3. For ISCED 1 and 2, the duration is between 10 and 12 weeks.

Figure 2: Length of the school year and distribution of holidays in primary and general education (ISCED 1-3), 2023/2024

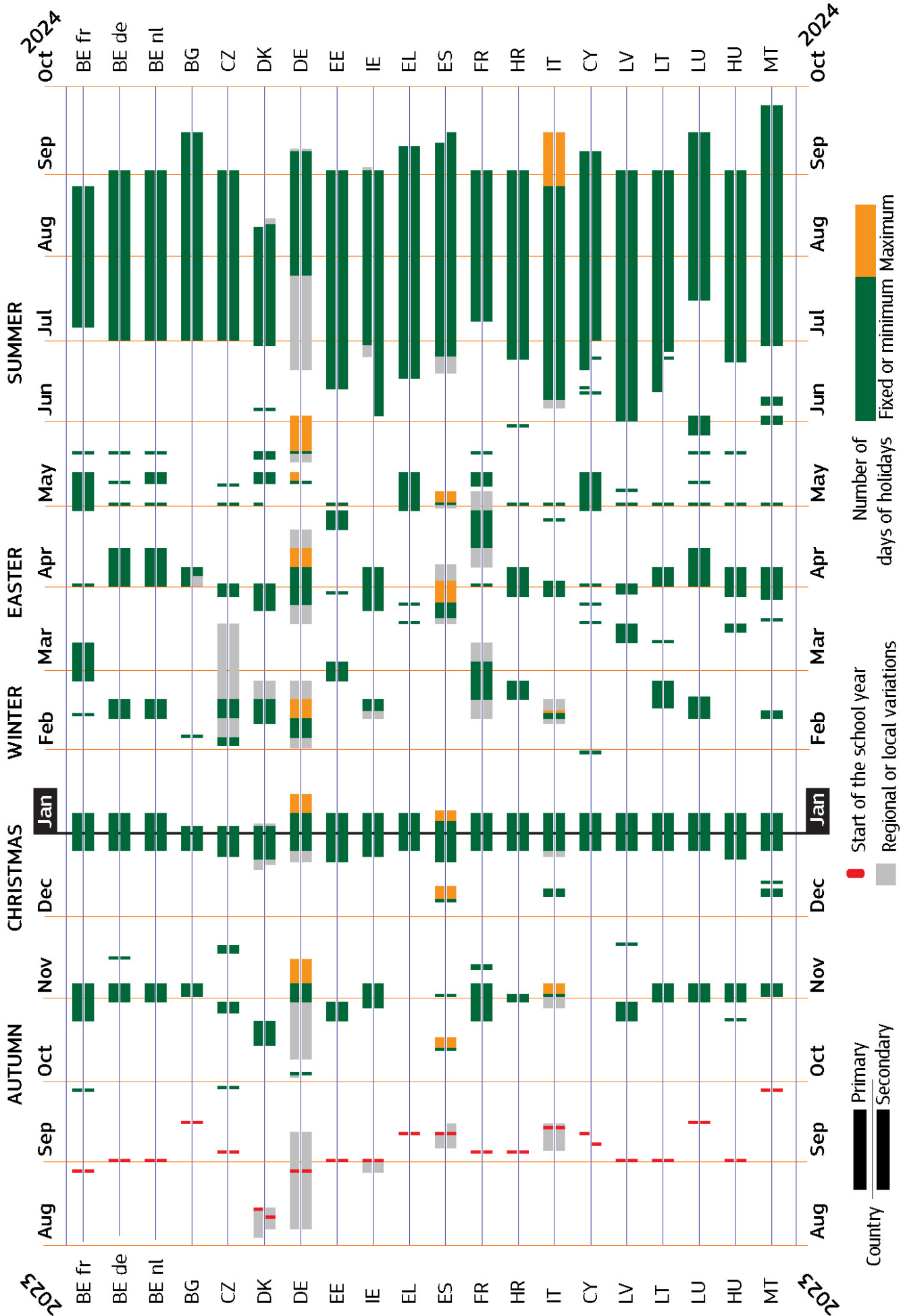
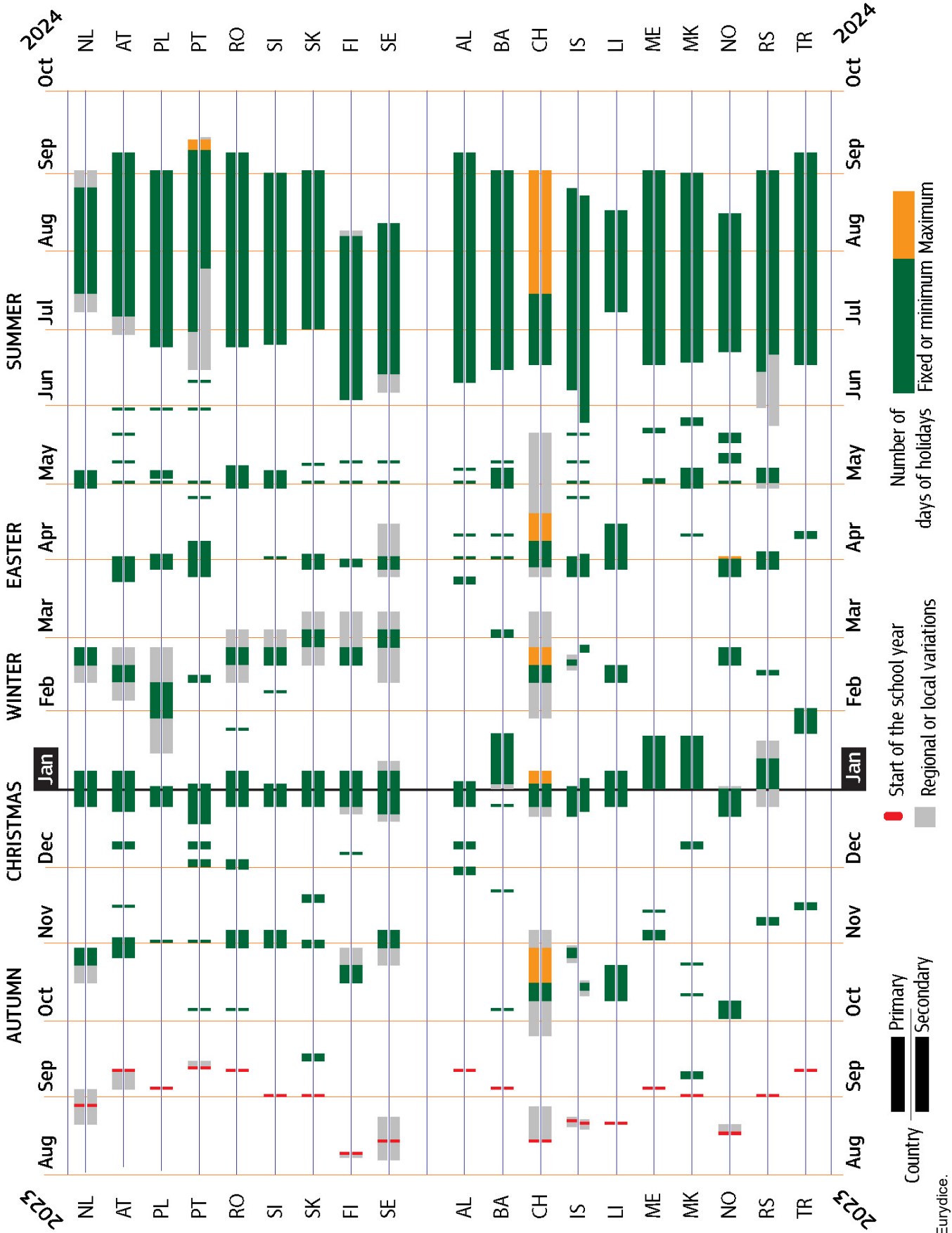


Figure 2 (continued): Length of the school year and distribution of holidays in primary and general education (ISCED 1-3), 2023/2024





### **Explanatory note**

See in Annex the figures including, when applicable, school calendars depending on the region or the zone. All dates are also available as open data at: <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/publications/organisation-school-time-europe-primary-and-general-secondary-education-20232024>

**Beginning of the school year:** the first day when students are meant to resume school activities, usually after the longest holiday period. It is the day that is indicated in official documents even if it is not an instruction day.

**Holiday period:** days when students are not required to be present at school (compared to usual school week). This includes public holidays. Examination periods (even if taken outside the schools), school trips when some or all students are not present at school are not considered, even if only some students are required to attend.

When there is a holiday period immediately before a weekend, the days of the weekend that follows are included as part of the holiday period.

When a holiday period lasts for a week or more, the weekends during the holiday period and at the end of the holiday period are included. However, the weekend before is not included even if the holiday period is starting on a Monday.

The figure does not take into account specific minimum number of days for students in the final grade of an education cycle.

Longer holiday periods for specific regions or tracks, indicated as 'maximum duration' in Figure 3, are not considered.

The figure does not take into account specific minimum number of days for students in the final grade of an education cycle.

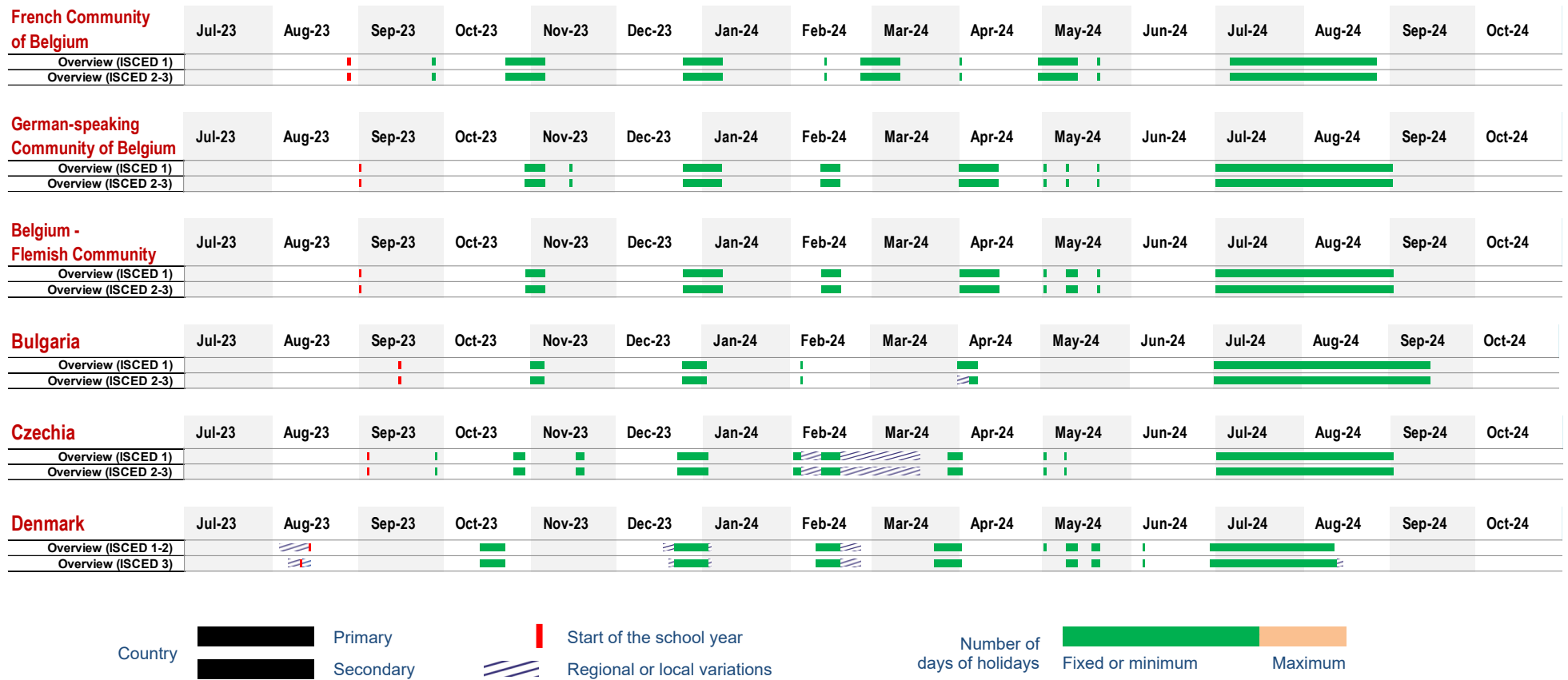
### **Country-specific notes**

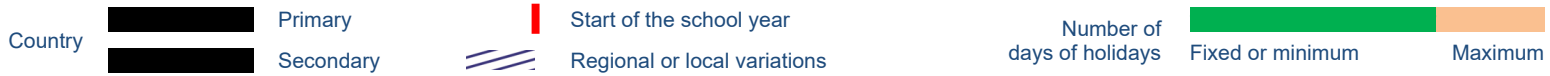
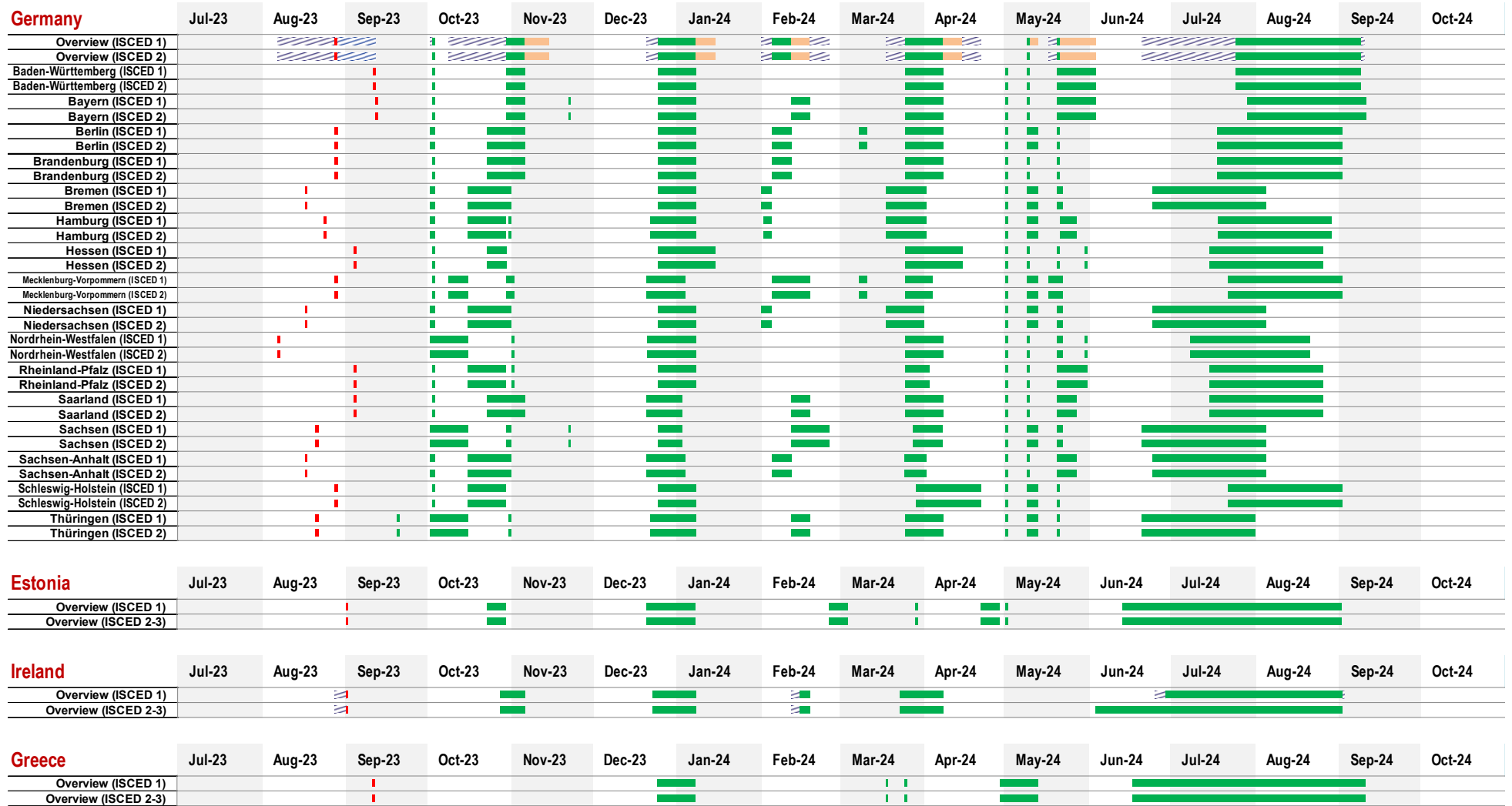
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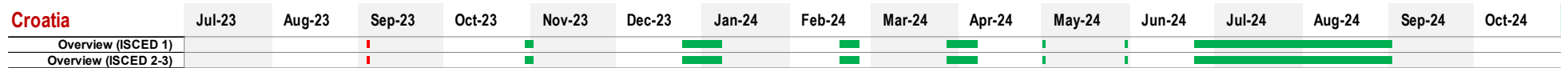
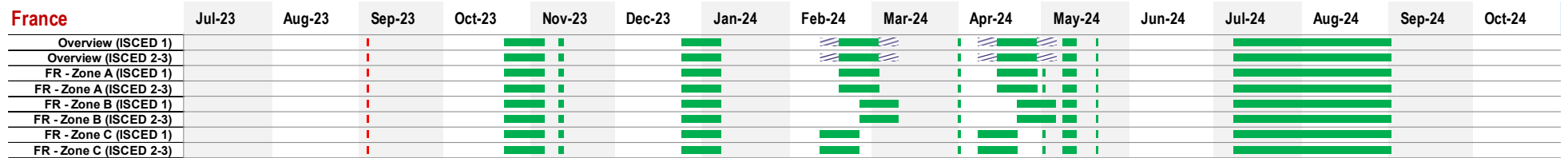
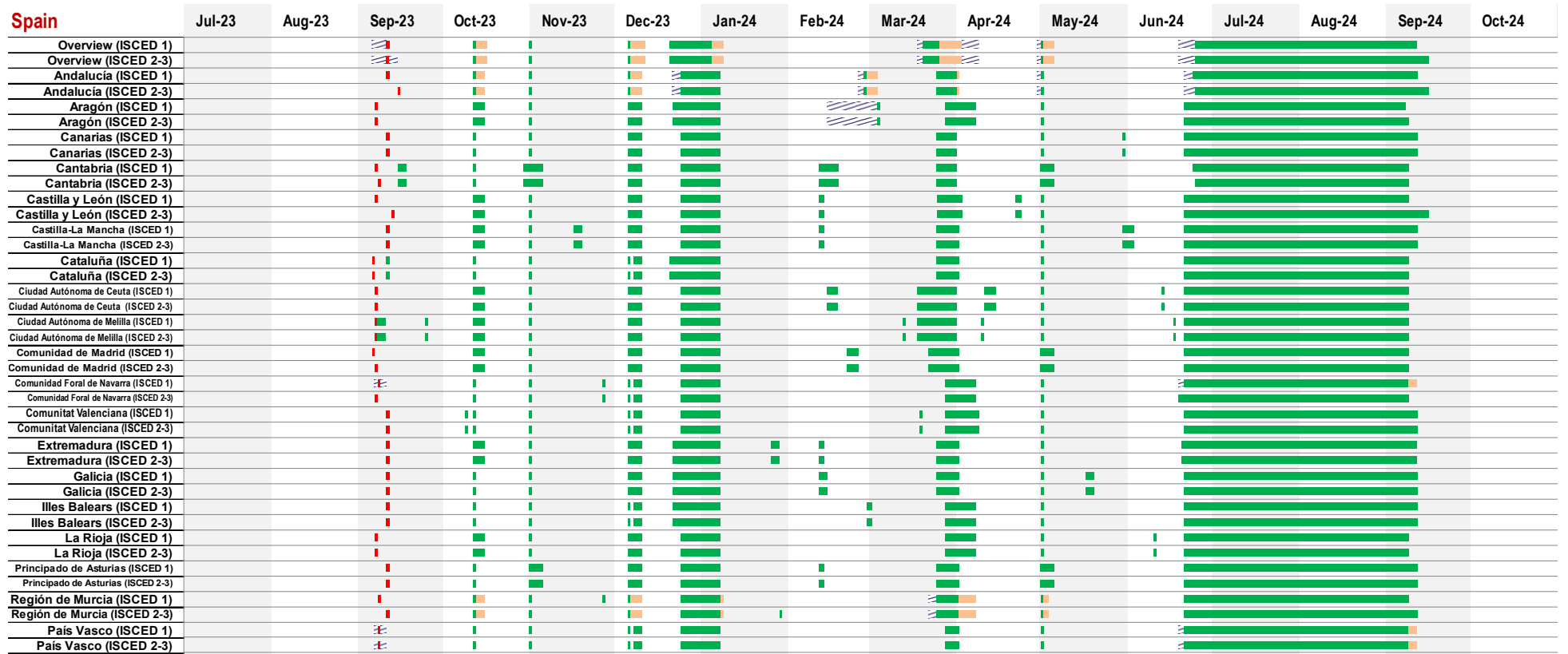
**Denmark, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Norway and Serbia:** the distinction is made between primary and lower secondary education (single structure) on one hand and upper secondary on the other hand.

**Portugal:** the variation occurs between grades.

**Spain, Croatia, Italy, Malta and Portugal:** the exact dates for the start of the school year in 2024/2025 are not yet available. The summer period is calculated with the assumption that students will come back to school at the same period as in 2023/2024.







Country Primary Secondary Start of the school year Regional or local variations Number of days of holidays Fixed or minimum Maximum

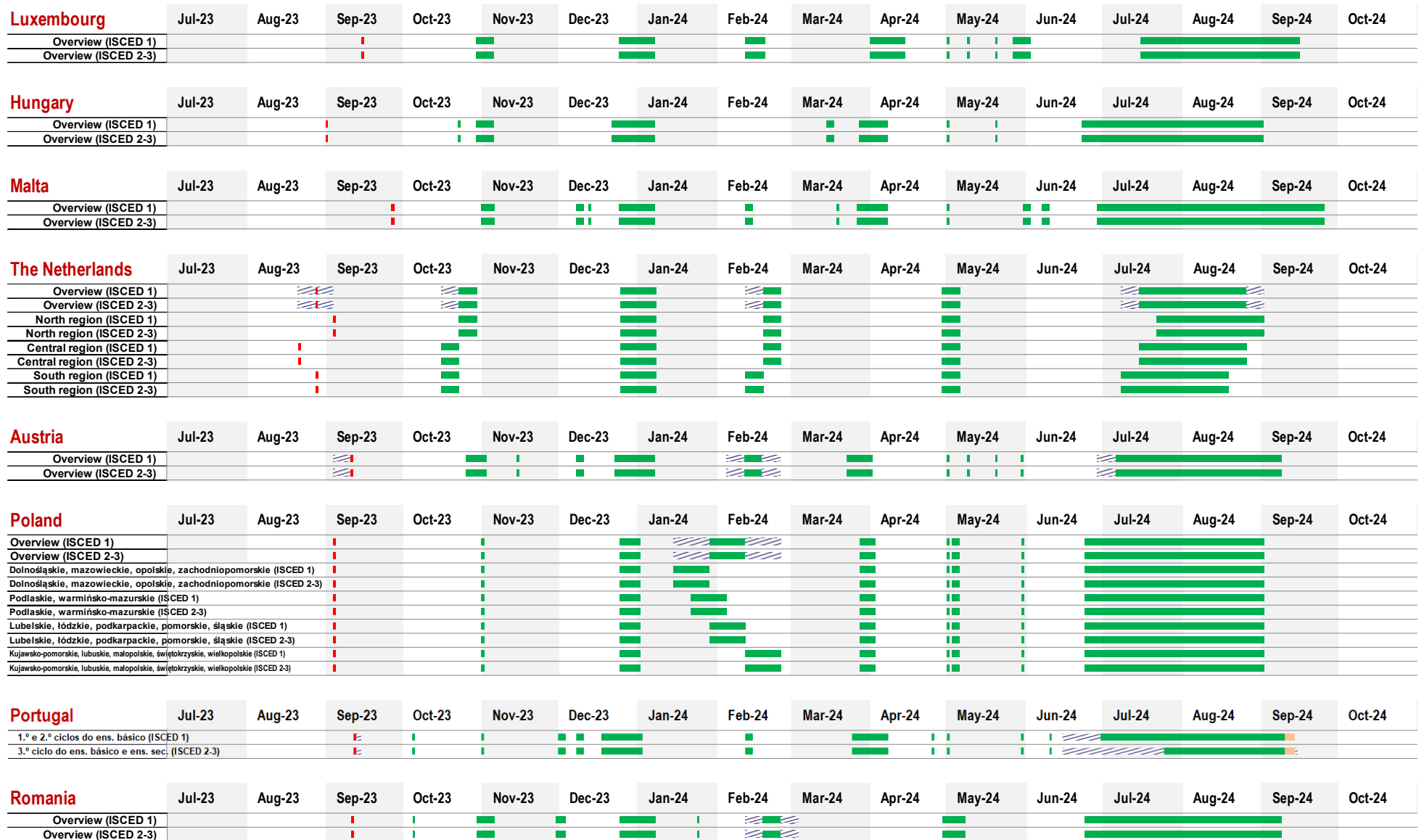
Italy	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24
National overview (ISCED 1)																
National overview (ISCED 2-3)																
Abruzzo (ISCED 1)																
Abruzzo (ISCED 2-3)																
Basilicata (ISCED 1)																
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Bolzano - Trentino Alto Adige (ISCED 1)																
Bolzano - Trentino Alto Adige (ISCED 2-3)																
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Trento - Trentino Alto Adige (ISCED 1)																
Trento - Trentino Alto Adige (ISCED 2-3)																
Umbria (ISCED 1)																
Umbria (ISCED 2-3)																
Valle D'Aosta (ISCED 1)																
Valle D'Aosta (ISCED 2-3)																
Veneto (ISCED 1)																
Veneto (ISCED 2-3)																

Cyprus	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24
Overview (ISCED 1)																
Overview (ISCED 2-3)																

Latvia	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24
Overview (ISCED 1)																
Overview (ISCED 2-3)																

Lithuania	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24
Overview (ISCED 1)																
Overview (ISCED 2-3)																

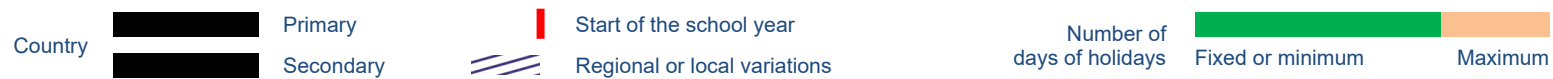
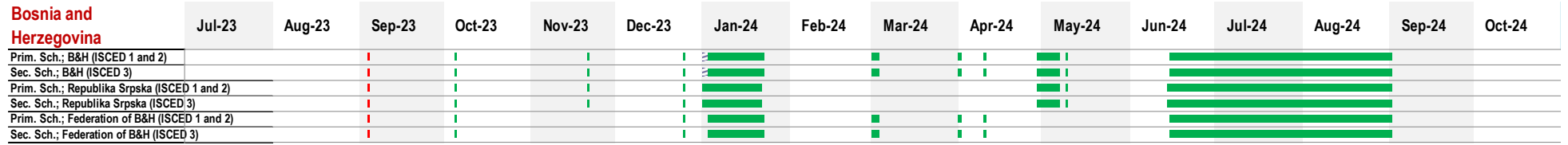
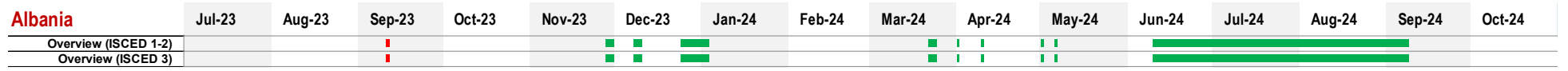
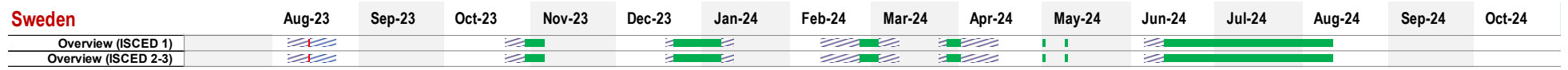
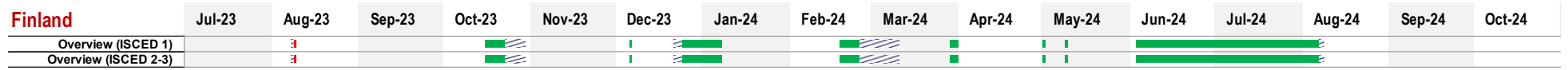
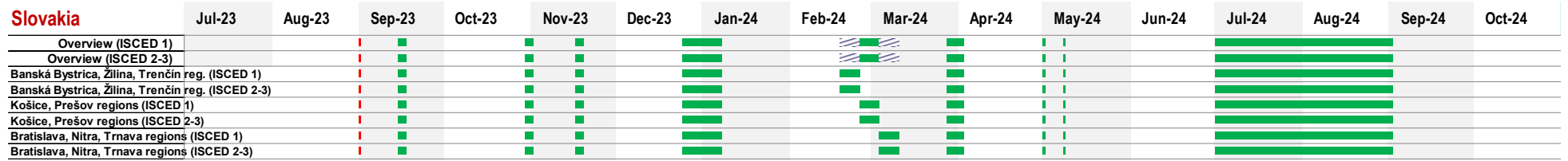
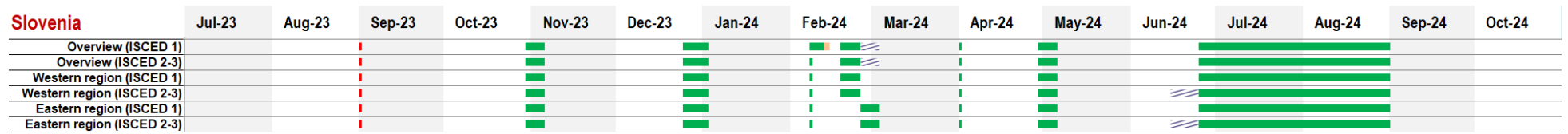
Country Primary Secondary Regional or local variations Start of the school year Number of days of holidays Fixed or minimum Maximum

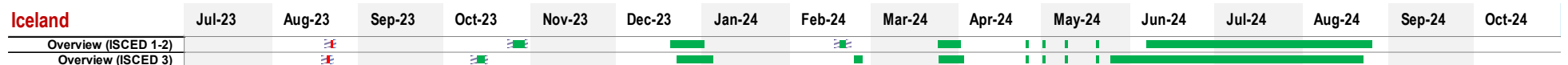


Country  Primary  Secondary

Start of the school year  Regional or local variations

Number of days of holidays  Fixed or minimum  Maximum

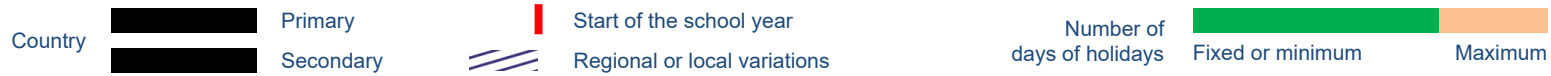
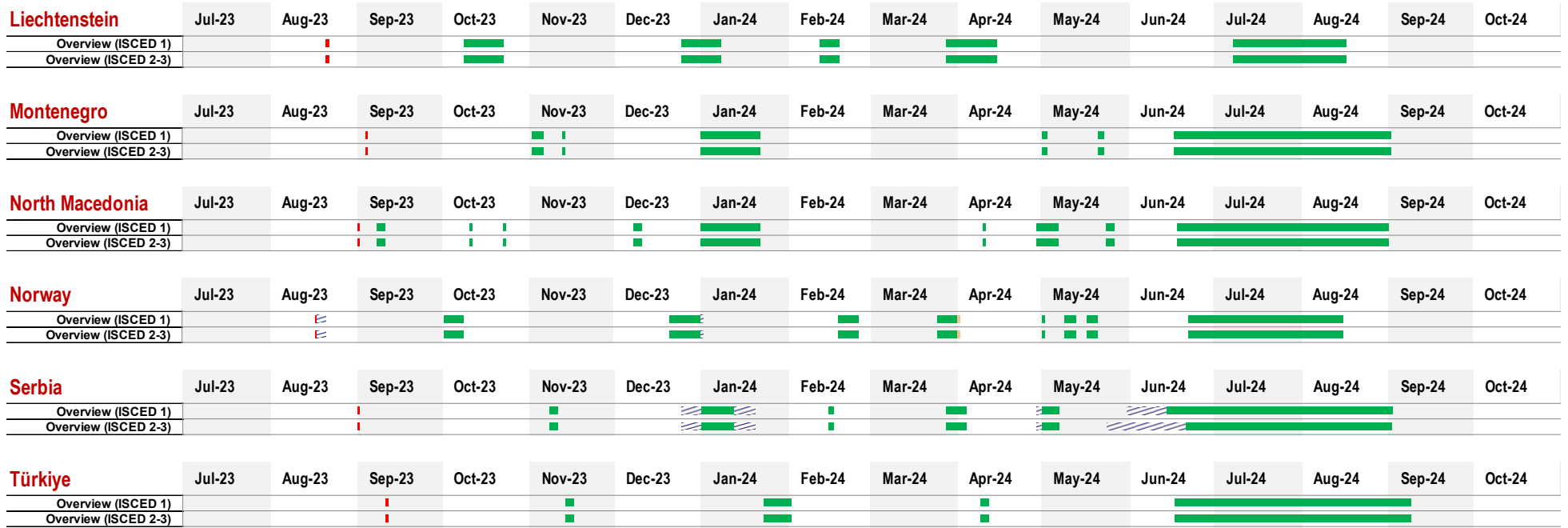




Country

- Primary
- Secondary
- Start of the school year
- Regional or local variations
- Number of days of holidays
- Fixed or minimum
- Maximum







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## **The organisation of school time in Europe. Primary and general secondary education – 2023/2024**

This report provides an overview of the school calendars for primary and general secondary education in 37 European countries. It presents information on the start of the school year and its length as well as the timing and length of school holidays.

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