

# How is COVID-19 affecting international students' plans to study in the Netherlands?

22 July 2020

# Contents

<b>How is COVID-19 affecting international students' plans to study in the Netherlands?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Main findings and considerations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A. Methodology</b>	<b>7</b>
Distribution of the survey .....	7
Differences with the first survey .....	7
Representation .....	7
<b>B. Results of the survey 'Has COVID-19 affected your study plans?'</b>	
I. Prospective students from Neso countries .....	8
II. Prospective OKP students .....	11
III. Prospective EEA students .....	12
<b>C. Update to Neso country-specific information</b>	<b>13</b>
Travel and visa challenges .....	13
Health concerns .....	14
Mode of instruction .....	14
Scholarships and exchange programmes .....	14
<b>D. Conclusions</b>	<b>15</b>

## How is COVID-19 affecting international students' plans to study in the Netherlands?

In May this year, we published our report '[How is COVID-19 affecting international students' plans to study in the Netherlands?](#)'. With this follow-up survey, we aim to gain a further insight into the situation as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to develop around the world. We conducted this survey to gauge the effect of COVID-19 on students' plans to study in the Netherlands and gain a better insight into the consequences of the pandemic for the academic year starting in September 2020. By sharing the information we have, we hope to contribute to an informed response by Dutch higher education institutions and other stakeholders in the sector. This report focuses exclusively on incoming international students in Dutch higher education.

### The respondents

In total, 1,348 prospective students participated in the survey. The vast majority of 909 respondents were from a country with a Netherlands Education Support Office (Neso – see separate box for more information on where our offices abroad are located). 270 respondents were from other countries outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and 154 respondents had their home country within the EEA (of which 49% were Erasmus+ students). Finally, 15 prospective students with the British nationality participated.

As in the first survey, the majority of prospective students who responded wished to pursue a master's degree and were planning to start their studies in the Netherlands in September 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Another 230 respondents were looking into a bachelor's degree. Another 132 respondents, of which 98 were Erasmus+ students, were looking for credit mobility. In addition, 229 Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) scholarship recipients participated in this second survey, of which 37 were from a Neso country.

	NESO countries	OKP countries	EEA countries
<b>Type of programme</b>	909	229	154
<b>Bachelor</b>	17.05%	2.62%	39.19%
<b>Master</b>	60.56%	49.78%	4.05%
<b>PhD</b>	7.08%	3.06%	
<b>Exchange</b>	4.99%		51.31%
<b>Other (short course, summer course)</b>	10.32%	44.54%	5.41%

*Illustration: Respondents broken down by country of origin and intended choice of study programme. 285 Respondents, of which 15 are from the UK, are not included in one of the above categories.*

## Main findings and considerations

1. **When asked “What will you most likely do?” and given the option to share their first and second choice, most of them planned to travel to the Netherlands to start with on-campus classes (39%) or online education (30%).** Only a small percentage of respondents wanted to start their study programme in the Netherlands in September while remaining in their home country (15% choose this as their first or second option).
2. **For many of the respondents, deferring for a year was neither their first nor second choice** (only 20% selected this option). The number of students who wanted to defer was highest among respondents from Neso countries (24%), followed by OKP (10%) and EEA (9%).
3. Zooming in on the prospective students from the 10 countries where a Neso is located, **they indicated that they had experienced uncertainties about visa procedures and travel restrictions even more frequently than 2 months ago in the first report.** Concerns about access to the Dutch healthcare system and concerns about personal health conditions remained almost equal, whereas concerns about scholarship possibilities and admission requirements had decreased.
4. **Regarding the mode of instruction (online or on-campus), the survey showed mixed results:** compared to the first survey, the percentage of students from Neso countries indicating the mode of instruction as an uncertainty increased slightly from 30 to 34%. At the same time, the most popular responses to the question “What will you most likely do?” among prospective Neso students were “start in September and travel to the Netherlands for either online education (25%) or on-campus classes” (34%) as opposed to 16% who indicated they planned to stay in their home country and pursue online education.
5. **Of the 229 OKP scholarship recipients that completed this survey,** 86% had already received a formal decision regarding their application and 59% indicated they would most likely start as planned by travelling to the Netherlands for on-campus or online classes. They mentioned travel restrictions (74%) and visa procedures (38%) as their two main uncertainties.
6. With regard to **the respondents (N=154) from the EEA,** most of the respondents indicated they would most likely start as planned by travelling to the Netherlands for either on-campus or online classes. Furthermore, health concerns were mentioned relatively less often compared to the respondents from Neso countries, with concerns about personal health at 16% and concerns about access to the healthcare system in the Netherlands at 23%. The mode of instruction, however, appeared to be a main concern for the EEA respondents. It was even the most frequently chosen uncertainty (60%).
7. When it comes to **being deterred from studying abroad as a result of COVID-19,** there was a difference between EEA students and students from Neso countries: 61% of EEA respondents indicated they were not deterred from studying abroad, whereas only 37% of respondents from Neso countries gave this same answer.

## Introduction

In May this year, we published our first report '[How is COVID-19 affecting international students' plans to study in the Netherlands?](#)'. At the time, many countries in Europe were in the midst of the global COVID-19 crisis, with national lockdowns the order of the day. In the report, we therefore announced a follow-up survey in a few months' time.

At the moment of writing this second report, we can cautiously conclude that fewer countries in western Europe are at the peak of the health crisis, with some countries and higher education institutions currently slowly reopening. In the Netherlands, social distancing remains one of the basic norms.<sup>1</sup> The immediate consequence of maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres is that the maximum capacity of education facilities at Dutch higher education institutions is severely reduced. However, this continues to differ strongly from country to country and re-openings can change into new lockdowns due to new COVID-19 outbreaks. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the peak of COVID-19 outbreaks globally has not yet been reached.<sup>2</sup>

With this follow-up survey, we aim to gain a further insight into the situation in the Netherlands. We conducted this survey to gauge the effect of COVID-19 on students' plans to study in the Netherlands and gain a better insight into the consequences of the pandemic for the academic year starting in September 2020. By sharing the information we have, we hope to contribute to an informed response by Dutch higher education institutions and other stakeholders in the sector. This report focuses exclusively on incoming international students in Dutch higher education.

## Relevant recent developments

There are two recent developments that are likely to influence international student mobility in the near future. Firstly, on 6 July, the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that international students were not allowed to remain in the United States if attending online-only courses.<sup>3</sup> This came as a surprise both to international students already residing in the US (who now had to leave) and to those that were planning to go. US universities took quick legal action to challenge the ban.<sup>4</sup> On 14 July, the US

### Nuffic's role

We are the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education, from primary and secondary education to vocational and higher education and research. We support educational institutions in their internationalisation activities and in teaching international students.

### NESO

We have Netherlands Education Support Offices (Neso) in 10 countries: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam.

### Orange Knowledge Programme

We also manage the Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The objective of this programme is to contribute to a society's sustainable and inclusive development by strengthening the skills and knowledge of individuals, groups of individuals and organisations. The programme involves 54 countries (among which Indonesia and South Africa, where a Neso is located).

### Erasmus+

Nuffic hosts Erasmus+, a scholarship programme funded by the European Commission. Erasmus+ gives people the opportunity to study, train, undertake work experience and volunteer abroad with the aim of boosting skills and employability.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2020/06/24/from-1-july-staying-1.5-metres-apart-remains-the-norm>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---13-july-2020>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/bcm2007-01.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200707132850257>

government decided to rescind this policy directive, which means international students will maintain their residence permit even if they attend online-only courses.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, the UK government recently announced that, following Brexit, students from the EU would lose the “home” fee status as well as access to public student loans. A recent study showed that UK universities might lose 84% of EU students if they were to charge higher fees, with 49% of the surveyed students indicating they would in that case consider studying in the Netherlands.<sup>6</sup> However, this year marks a transition period and new UK rules and regulations after 2020 are still being negotiated. It is therefore hard to predict how exactly Brexit will affect international student mobility.

This analysis is twofold and is based on results from a survey sent to prospective students in the 10 countries with a Netherlands Education Support Office (Neso), which, in this second round, was expanded to include prospective students worldwide. An update to country-specific information on each of the Neso countries is also included.

In the sections below, you will find:

- a) a description of the methodology used;
- b) the results of the survey ‘Has COVID-19 affected your study plans?’;
- c) followed by an update to Neso country-specific information;
- d) and, finally, our main conclusions.

<sup>5</sup> <https://thepienews.com/news/us-government-backtracks-on-online-study-student-ban/>

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/trump-retreats-threat-deport-foreign-students>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.study.eu/press/uk-universities-might-lose-84-of-eu-students-at-higher-fees-survey>

## A. Methodology

### Distribution of the survey

The survey was distributed among prospective students by the Neso offices through a variety of channels, including social media. Furthermore, the survey was distributed via the generic Study in Holland channels, as well as being distributed via the Dutch higher education institutions to the prospective students who were awarded an OKP scholarship. Finally, we also asked the respondents of the first survey who had left their contact details to participate again.

### Differences with the first survey

Whereas the first survey merely focused on prospective degree students from the 10 countries with a Neso office, this follow-up survey was distributed among prospective students from all countries. About 84% of all international degree students in the Netherlands are not Neso country nationals, so expanding the focus of the survey was a relevant addition.

However, the expansion of the target group of this survey makes comparisons with the first survey more challenging. In this report, we have added paragraphs about OKP students and students from EEA countries, but whenever a comparison with the first survey is made, only the data from the respondents from Neso countries are used.

### Representation

One has to keep in mind that the group of students who participated in the survey does not represent the total population of international students in the Netherlands. For example, about 67% of all respondents in the survey were from a Neso country, whereas in 2019-2020 this was true for only 16% of international degree students in the Netherlands. Furthermore, with 11% of respondents, the group of EEA students was underrepresented in our survey; in 2019-2020, 72% of international degree students in the Netherlands were from an EEA country. In addition, almost half of the respondents from EEA countries came from either Germany or Spain, which is not representative either. Representation issues can also be found when looking at the type of education: a majority of survey respondents (51%) wished to pursue a master's degree, whereas in 2019-2020 the majority of international degree students in the Netherlands were enrolled in a bachelor's programme. Despite these limitations regarding representation, the information presented below can still provide relevant information and interesting insights.

## Survey results (prospective students from Neso countries, OKP, EEA)

The main purpose of this survey was to find out how COVID-19 has affected the study plans of prospective students coming to the Netherlands. We will start with the insights regarding prospective students from the 10 Neso countries, followed by those regarding prospective OKP and EEA students.

### I. Prospective students from Neso countries

#### Are they deterred from studying abroad?

When asked if they were deterred from studying abroad as a response to COVID-19, the percentage of respondents from Neso countries who had not decided yet dropped significantly from 36% two months earlier to 21% now. This is not surprising, as we are getting closer to the start of the academic year. Many students appears to have made up their minds in the meantime whether to pursue their studies abroad or not (both these percentages increased compared to the first survey).

#### Where do they want to study abroad?

As the survey was distributed via the Study in Holland channels, it is no surprise that 76% of respondents indicated they were leaning towards the Netherlands as their study destination. As we get closer to the beginning of the academic year, fewer respondents are likely to pursue their studies elsewhere. In the first survey, 26% of respondents indicated they might very well decide to pursue their studies in a country other than the Netherlands. In this second survey, this dropped to 21% of respondents from Neso countries, even 17% when taking all respondents into consideration. The countries most mentioned as a study destination other than the Netherlands continued to be Germany and the United Kingdom.

#### Will they come to the Netherlands?

For the second survey, the question whether prospective students would actually come to the Netherlands was even more urgent now than the first time we conducted this research in April/May. Dutch higher education institutions are currently planning the start of the 2020-2021 academic year.

The percentage of respondents from Neso countries who indicated admission conditions were an uncertainty<sup>7</sup> dropped significantly in comparison to the first survey (from 31% to 23%). This was likely partly influenced by the fact that all Dutch higher education institutions are now also accepting the online version of English language tests required for admission and visa purposes. [This agreement](#) between the higher education sector and the Dutch government was concluded in mid-April, with guidelines being drawn up in the [Dutch Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education](#) shortly thereafter.

Furthermore, in this second survey we added the question "Did you pay your tuition fee?" for those respondents who indicated they had already received an admission letter. Of the 724 respondents

<sup>7</sup> For more information on the uncertainties experienced by students, see the section 'What are students' main uncertainties?'

who had already received a letter of admission from a Dutch research university or Dutch university of applied sciences, 66% indicated they had not yet paid the tuition fee (with 34% having paid the tuition fee). Tuition payment terms vary per Dutch higher education institution and there is no national deadline. In the additional questions section of the survey, several respondents asked whether financial support or scholarships were available for students need due to COVID-19.

### Is the mode of instruction a determining factor?

In addition to the admissions process having advanced, more Dutch higher education institutions have now decided on their mode of instruction for the upcoming academic year. These decisions vary per institution and per study programme. Offering on-campus classes is possible to only a limited extent, as preventive measures are still in place (a 1.5-metre social distance must be maintained). This has its effect on how education can be organised. In practice, this means that the mode of instruction can be online, offline or blended (a mixture of both).

***“How many programmes will be taught online and how many will be taught on location?”***

Nonetheless, compared to the first survey, the percentage of students from Neso countries who indicated the mode of instruction as an uncertainty increased slightly from 30 to 34%. Moreover, several respondents asked additional questions regarding whether classes would be online or on-campus.

The acceptance of online education seems to be shifting, however. When asked “What will you most likely do?” (and given the option to share their first and second choice), relatively more prospective students from Neso countries indicated they would start in September with online education while staying in their home country compared to the previous survey. This percentage increased by 6 percentage points to 16%.

In addition, 25% of respondents indicated that they would most likely “start in September with online classes and travel to the Netherlands”, a response that was not offered as an option in the first survey. We added this option in this second survey to find out whether prospective students still wanted to travel to the Netherlands even if their academic year was to begin online. This figure of 25% could be influenced by the fact that Dutch higher education institutions are encouraging their incoming degree students (especially the younger students who are going to start a bachelor’s programme) to come to the Netherlands even if classes will (mostly) be online, so that they are able to use facilities such as the library, have at least some face-to-face interaction with teaching staff and begin experiencing “Dutch student life”, to the maximum extent possible. Finally, the frequency of the response “Start, as planned, with on-campus classes at a Dutch institution” decreased slightly compared to the first survey, to 34%.

## What are students' main uncertainties?

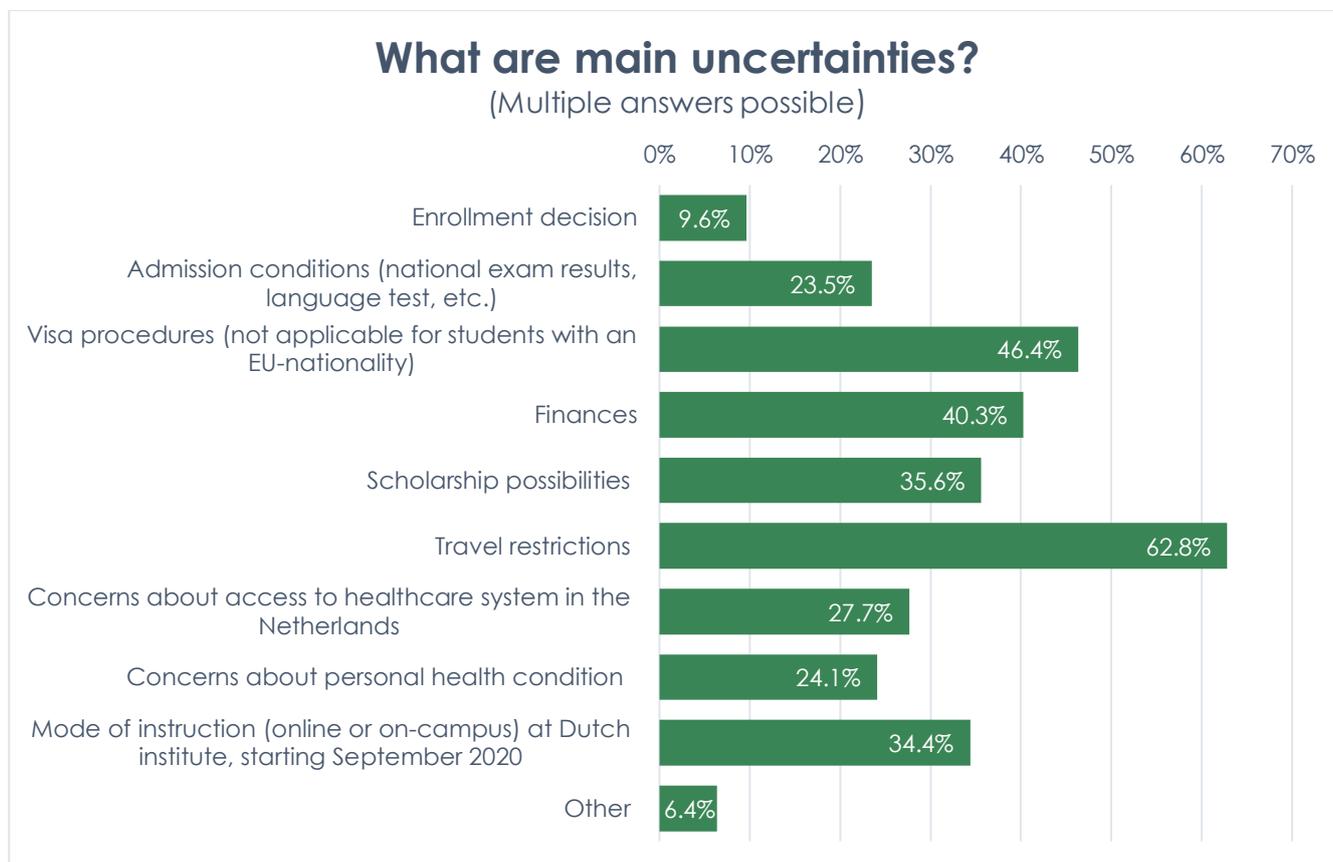


Illustration Q13: What are the main uncertainties? Respondents' main uncertainties shown in percentage per uncertainty. The visual gives an insight into the response of students from Neso countries only.

As in the first survey, we asked prospective students what they currently considered to be the main uncertainties with regard to pursuing their plans of studying in the Netherlands. Prospective students are exempted from the current travel ban and are thus in principle allowed to travel to the Netherlands. Their visa application also has priority. Despite this, uncertainties about visa procedures were being felt relatively more often (up from 40% to 46% among students from Neso countries) and the frequency of uncertainties about travel restrictions had even increased from 51% to 63% among these respondents. This could be explained by the fact that, even though students are exempted from the travel ban, flights are not always immediately available (as can be seen in the specific Neso country information update below) and while the visa application has been prioritised by the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the re-opening of embassies (and upscaling of consular services) is highly dependent on

***“If flights do not resume and embassies do not open on time before the course starts, will I still be able to join the course later?”***

local situations. Furthermore, several respondents asked additional questions, such as: Will embassies reopen in order to collect the entry visa (*in Dutch: mvv*) on time? Are students exempted from the travel ban? Can study programmes be delayed when there are no commercial flights available?

The level of concern about access to the Dutch healthcare system and about personal health conditions remained almost equal among students from Neso countries in the two surveys (up from 23% to 24% and from

27% to 28%, respectively). However, there were marked differences between countries. For instance, these two health concerns were much more prevalent among students from both China and South Korea than the average for all Neso countries combined (as was the case in the first survey). Also, respondents from all Neso countries had questions about their health, such as: Is it necessary to wear a mask? Will I be refused entry when coming from a country with high rates of COVID-19? Do I need to self-quarantine after arrival?

Finally, some uncertainties were being felt less often than two months ago, such as those regarding scholarship possibilities (down from 50% to 36%) and admission conditions (down by 8% to 23%). This might be explained by the clarification provided by scholarship programmes in the meantime about scholarship possibilities for the upcoming academic year.

## **II. Prospective OKP students**

Even though a comparison between this survey and the first one is not possible for OKP students and for students from the EEA, obtaining some insight into their answers to this survey is still relevant. Of the 229 OKP scholarship recipients that completed this survey, 86% had already received a formal decision regarding their application (which is a substantially higher percentage than the 58% of respondents from Neso countries).

Furthermore, when asked what they would most likely do, more OKP students indicated that they would start as planned and travel to the Netherlands for on-campus classes compared to respondents from Neso countries (59% chose this option as either their first or second choice). Moreover, 39% chose the option “start in September with online education at a Dutch institution and travel to the Netherlands” as their first or second choice. This can likely be attributed to the fact that deferral is not an option for OKP scholarship recipients, in addition to the fact that they must start their master’s degree programme or short course between 28 July and 23 November 2020.

One OKP respondent explained his/her choice as follows: “The training is the most important for me. The place for the training is secondary. The essential thing is to acquire the knowledge.”

In terms of uncertainties concerning health, there was quite a difference between OKP students and students

***“The training is the most important for me. The place for the training is secondary. The essential thing is to acquire the knowledge.”***

from Neso countries. Concerns about access to the Dutch healthcare system were far less common among OKP students (19% indicated this as an uncertainty, compared to 24% of respondents from Neso countries) and only 7% were concerned about their personal health, compared to 28% of respondents from Neso countries. Notwithstanding these differences, the two main uncertainties for both students from Neso countries and OKP students were travel restrictions (74%) and visa procedures (38%).

### III. Prospective EEA students

Of the 154 respondents from the EEA who completed the survey, 75% had already received a formal decision regarding their application, but only a minority had already paid their tuition fee: 23% of the non-Erasmus+ students (students participating in the Erasmus+ programme do not have to pay additional tuition fees). Similar to respondents from Neso countries, when asked that they would most likely do, the two most popular responses were to start in September and travel to the Netherlands for either on-campus classes (43%) or online education (39%). Only 9% of respondents from countries in the EEA chose deferring for a year as either their first or second choice.

Health concerns were relatively less common among respondents from the EEA compared to those from Neso countries, with concerns about personal health at 16% and concerns about access to the healthcare system in the Netherlands at 23%. The mode of instruction, however, appeared to be a main concern for EEA respondents. It was even the most frequently chosen uncertainty, even surpassing concerns relating to travel restrictions (at 60% and 56%, respectively).

Finally, the Dutch National Agency Erasmus+ distributed [a short survey among Dutch higher education institutions that are participating in Erasmus+ mobility projects](#). The survey was conducted between 18 April and 8 May. The aim of this survey was to gauge the impact of COVID-19 on project activities funded by Erasmus+, including student mobility.

## C. Update to Neso country-specific information



*Illustration: Overview of the location of the Netherlands Education Support Offices in 10 countries: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam.*

### Travel and visa challenges

Neso offices are often the first to respond to students in Neso countries who have come close to the moment to decide whether to go to the Netherlands or not. All Neso offices report an increase in questions from students about the technicalities of travelling and moving to the Netherlands. For many students, the process of visa application started later than normal. Although obtaining the entry visa (*in Dutch: mvv*) is a stress factor, it is one that seems to be working out in time in most countries.

In most countries, international travel to the Netherlands and Europe is opening up enough to make student mobility possible. Students can travel to the Netherlands under specific regulations. In some cases, though, problems remain. Vietnam, for example, is not yet open for international flights. In South Africa, the number of people wishing to travel exceeds the number of available seats on flights, making it difficult for students to find a flight to Europe. On the other hand, Brazil has flights available but consular services cannot be upscaled yet, so students are worried about receiving their visa on time. Neso offices also receive questions on whether health insurance will cover possible coronavirus infection and on the housing situation for international students.

Overall, the information from the Neso offices confirms the results of the survey that the practical difficulties of coming to the Netherlands are generally of greater concern to prospective students than the COVID-19 situation in the Netherlands itself. As a matter of fact, several Neso countries face a rate of COVID-19 infections that is cause for greater concern compared to two months ago. With each passing month, it is becoming more and more apparent that COVID-19 is here to stay for

some time and situations in several countries will remain critical. India, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa and Indonesia all report rising numbers of infections. The governments of these countries are struggling to striking a balance between measures to contain the virus and pressure to open up the economy, although this may create a risk of even more infections. In China, South Korea and Vietnam, life is mostly back to normal, with governments on constant alert to control outbreaks locally.

## Health concerns

Most international students expected the public healthcare system in the Netherlands to be better than the one at home. Moreover, students know that in the Netherlands the curve has been successfully flattened. The COVID-19 situation at home also influences how the situation in the Netherlands is perceived. Students from countries where COVID-19 has been successfully contained appear to be more careful in moving overseas this year. This is especially the case for South Korea, where the Neso office expects a 50% decrease in outbound international student, and to a lesser extent for China and Vietnam. A student's decision not to study abroad this academic year does not necessarily imply a loss of interest in international mobility. Among those who will stay home, many suggest they want to postpone their departure to the Netherlands until next year.

## Mode of instruction

Another factor impacting on the decision of students whether to travel abroad or not is the quality of study programmes offered. In this regard, Dutch higher education institutions have caught up with deciding whether they will offer online, offline or blended education in the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year and with communicating about it. In most cases, Neso offices can effectively guide students to the websites of Dutch higher education institutions or international offices for the answer to any remaining questions. Some scepticism regarding the quality of online education remains, and students lament the inherently missing elements in online classes, such as face-to-face interaction with Dutch professors and fellow students and opportunities to create a useful network for further study and job opportunities. Then again, students in Neso countries face increased levels of online education at home as well.

## Scholarships and exchange programmes

Finally, two important factors that restrict mobility from Neso countries are a more limited availability of scholarships and a cancellation of international exchange programmes. In the May 2019 report, we already provided information on the situation in several countries. Countries for which the situation has not changed include Brazil, Mexico and Indonesia. The Indonesian LPDP scholarships, for example, are still suspended. Several Mexican higher education institutions have decided to postpone international exchange programmes for the autumn of 2020. That means that fewer students will move to Europe this autumn than usual. There is a consensus that Latin American institutions may miss out on internationalisation opportunities due to the fact that the pandemic hit 'last' on this continent. Whereas Asian and European institutions may already be working towards a new beginning, many Latin American institutions are still closed.

COVID-19 will impact international student mobility globally, also where the Netherlands is concerned. However, interest in studying in the Netherlands in the longer term has not significantly changed. Several Neso offices report an increase in requests for information and student

counselling, after a drop immediately following the outbreak of COVID-19. Other Neso offices never experienced such a drop. Applications for Dutch scholarships, such as Orange Tulip Scholarship, OKP and StuNed, have increased in number in most countries, and scholarship recipients are preparing to arrive in the Netherlands in August and September. Despite various hurdles and challenges, many students are ready to make their way to the Netherlands.

## D. Conclusions

As in the first survey, prospective international students indicated they still want to come to the Netherlands in September. Deferring for a year was the preference of only a minority of the respondents across the different respondent groups. However, prospective students are facing increased uncertainties and practical difficulties regarding travel (i.e. will they be able to book a flight) and – directly related to this – the issue of visas: will they be able to obtain their student visa on time? Furthermore, we observe both a certain degree of acceptance of online education as well as persisting scepticism about this mode of instruction (i.e. will online classes provide the quality of education for which the Dutch higher education system is so well known?). In short, students are worried about missing out on the physical classroom experience, as well as on taking part in “ordinary” student life outside the classroom.

We do not know yet what the medium- and longer-term implications of the COVID-19 crisis will be. This is, of course, directly tied to the extent to which COVID-19 is able to keep the world in its grip, including an ensuing potential economic crisis in many countries. Furthermore, we assume that recent developments in the United Kingdom and the United States such as mentioned in the introduction will likely affect the landscape of student mobility in the coming years. It is not inconceivable that prospective students will reconsider their future plans and will choose the Netherlands (or another European country) as their study destination.

That said, if global international degree and exchange student mobility is negatively affected for years to come, as current predictions indicate<sup>8</sup>, an increased competition for international students is expected and national policies for attracting and retaining international talent will be crucial. As always, we will continue to report on the actual [international student mobility numbers](#) as soon as they become available. Lastly, given the current uncertain prospects, we will continue to provide further insights into prospective students' plans with regard to the 2021-2022 academic year and beyond and how COVID-19 has affected these plans.

*If you have any questions after reading this analysis, please do not hesitate to contact us at [studyinholland@nuffic.nl](mailto:studyinholland@nuffic.nl).*

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=2020032618010440Z>



Visit [www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/copyright/](http://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/copyright/) for more information on how to re-use the information provided in this publication.



**Nuffic** Kortenaerkade 11 2518 AX Den Haag  
Postbus 29777 2502 LT Den Haag  
T 070 4260 260 [www.nuffic.nl](http://www.nuffic.nl)