



Attracting and retaining international students in the EU

Common Template for EMN Study 2018

Final version: 5th September 2018

Subject: Common Template for the EMN Study 2018 on “*Attracting and retaining international students in the EU*”

Action: EMN NCPs are invited to submit their completed Common Templates by **4th December 2018**.

If needed, further clarifications can be provided by directly contacting the EMN Service Provider (ICF) at emn@icf.com and to Veronika Vasileva (veronika.vasileva@icf.com) and Norma Rose (norma.rose@icf.com).

1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

In view of growing labour market challenges, the EU and its Member States have increasingly looked at migration as a means to address ageing populations, sustain welfare systems and find skilled workforce. According to the OECD, the EU welcomes more migrants than any other single OECD destination, with more than two million permanent-type migration flows to EU countries in 2016.¹ Labour migrants comprise about one in three new migrants to the EU, however, at the same time, third-country migrants only comprise 4% of the total EU working-age population between the ages of 15 and 64.^{2,3}

One way to tackle this shortage in skills is through the attraction and retention of third-country nationals who choose the EU for the purpose of higher education. While the EU/EFTA as a whole is becoming an increasingly attractive destination for international students, with a 4% increase of flows in 2016, the competition with other OECD countries, such as the United States, Australia and Japan persists.⁴ The retention of international students in the EU also remains a challenge, as only a small fraction of graduates reside in an EU Member State to take up employment. In recent years, the EU and its Member States have been working on several comprehensive strategies to enhance the attractiveness of Europe's higher education system. The most prominent example at EU level is the EU's new students and researchers directive adopted in 2016 (Directive (EU) 2016/801),⁵ which notably seeks to improve and harmonise minimum legal standards for welcoming and retaining international students. At national level, some Member States have developed new national strategies for the attraction of students and many universities have increased their efforts to attract international students, for instance by organising information campaigns in third countries and increasing their social media presence. In parallel, Member States have concluded bilateral and multilateral agreements with third countries, with the aim of facilitating the admission of third-country national students to the EU.

¹ OECD, *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2018_migr_outlook-2018-en#page24

² OECD/EU (2016), *Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe 2016*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264257290-en>

³ Please note that a complete statistical overview will be presented in the Synthesis Report.

⁴ OECD, *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2018_migr_outlook-2018-en#page34

⁵ Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (recast).

A number of studies have been carried out in recent years on the topic of attracting international students (see "Relevant sources and literature" below). Most importantly, the 2012 EMN Study on "Immigration of international students to the EU" and the 2013 EMN Study on "Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals" looked into the immigration and mobility policies of (Member) States, as well as the policies and concrete practical measures in place that aim to attract (highly) qualified third-country nationals. The 2018 study aims to update this information and complement it with retention policies. This topic was also touched upon by the 2015 EMN Study on "Changes in immigration status and purpose of stay: an overview of EU Member States' approaches", by outlining the conditions that regulate the changes of status between different categories of third-country nationals.

Particularly in view of the deadline to transpose the 2016 Students and Researchers Directive by 23 May 2018, it is assumed that changes to Member States' policies with regard to attracting and retaining students have taken place recently, which this study aims to capture.

2 STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of this study is to explore what national practices are in place in Member States to attract and retain third-country national students. The Study will only focus on legal migrants issued with a residence permit or long-stay visa for the reason of studies, and will thus not include beneficiaries of international protection.

More specifically, the Study aims to:

- Provide a statistical overview of the number of third-country national students present in EU Member States and Norway from 2012-2017 and 2018 data if available, the duration of studies, the number of graduates who reside in the Member States after their studies, etc.
- Examine the incentives in place in EU Member States and Norway to attract and retain third-country national students;
- Describe the admission criteria of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), language requirements and the process for recognition of diplomas;
- Provide an overview of the bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements in place with third countries covering international students;
- Outline the challenges and good practices of EU Member States and Norway with regard to the attraction and retention of international students.

3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The overall focus of this Study are third-country nationals who are granted residence permits or long-stay visas for reasons of studies, and/or are undertaking a higher education degree (Bachelor, Masters or PhD level⁶). For the purpose of this study, higher education comprises tertiary education programmes at levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The study only focuses on full-time students. The Study covers the period from 2013-2017 for statistics and 2012-September 2018 for policy developments, to take into account changes made as a result of the transposition deadline of the Students and Researchers Directive.

For abbreviation purposes, the terms 'international students' is used in the study in the meaning of third-country national students from non-EU/EEA countries. The definitions should be read in line with Articles 3 (3) of the Students and Researchers Directive.

The following categories are excluded from the scope of this study: researchers, part-time students, third-country national family members of EU citizens, vocational post-secondary education students, trainees and apprentices, au pairs and beneficiaries of international protection.

4 EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The importance of attracting international students is well-recognised by the European Union. Promoting the mobility of third-country nationals to the EU for the purpose of study has been part of the EU's policy since 1994 with the adoption of the Council Resolution on the admission of third-country nationals to the territory of the Member States of the EU for study purposes. This is also in the context of the Bologna Process, launched with the Bologna Declaration of 1999, which is one of the main voluntary processes at European level, as it is nowadays implemented in 48 states. The Bologna Process led to the

⁶ Please note that the inclusion of PhD students in this study depends on whether they fall within the realm of students at national level.

establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The 2015 European Agenda on Migration reiterated the need for promoting the mobility of international students, calling for the EU to provide a safe haven for those fleeing persecution and at the same time also to feature as an attractive destination for the talent and entrepreneurship of students, researchers and workers.⁷ In line with this objective, the international dimension of the Erasmus + Programme encourages student mobility from third countries, providing an opportunity for students from eligible partner countries to study in an EU Member State.

In terms of the legislative framework, in October 2002, the European Commission put forward a proposal for a Directive establishing common entry and residence conditions for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service. The Directive entered into force in December 2004 with a transposition deadline for Member States of January 2007.

The Council and the European Parliament adopted in 2016 the Students and Researchers Directive, which is the result of the recast of the 2004 Directive on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service and the 2005 Directive on researchers, based on the 2011 evaluations of these Directives by the Commission.⁸

The Students and Researchers Directive clarifies the admission and residence requirements by setting out general conditions for admission, and specific conditions for researchers, students, school pupils, trainees, volunteers and au pairs. The new Directive still follows a sectoral approach. While it sets uniform and binding rules on conditions for admission for students, researchers, trainees and volunteers participating in the EU's voluntary scheme, provisions on other volunteers, school pupils and au-pairs are optional.

The Study is very topical in light of the transposition deadline of the Directive. The Directive aims to make the EU a more attractive destination for students, in particular by improving their mobility conditions, allowing them to stay at least nine months after the completion of the studies period and allowing them to work (for at least 15 h/week). Furthermore, procedural guarantees have been reinforced for all categories (decision on an application within 90 days and provision of a justification of a negative decision).

5 PRIMARY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE STUDY

The Study will aim to address the following:

- To what extent is the attraction and retention of students a policy priority for Member States?
- What is the number of students coming to the Member States for the purpose of studying? How many remain in the EU after finalising their studies to take up employment? What is the legal and policy framework in place in Member States and what recent changes have been made to policies and practices?
- In light of Article 7 and Article 11 of the recast Students and Researchers Directive, how are the admission and reception criteria for third-country national students implemented in practice by Member States (e.g. tuition fees, procedure to be granted a residence permit, recognition of diplomas, etc.)? For those Member States, which do not apply the Directive, what are the admission and reception conditions in place?
- In light of Articles 24 and 25 of the recast Students and Researchers Directive, how are the conditions⁹ for access to the national labour market or self-employment for third-country nationals while being enrolled as a student and after completion of studies implemented in practice by Member States? For those Member States, which do not apply the Directive, what are these conditions?
- Have Member States concluded bilateral or multilateral cooperation agreements with third countries covering third-country national students? If so, how do these incentivise students to take up higher education in the EU?
- What is the role of universities, companies, local governments etc. in the retention of international students (e.g. scholarships, traineeship programmes, apprenticeship contracts)?
- What challenges do Member States face with regard to attracting and retaining third-country national students?

⁷ COM(2015) 240 final

⁸ COM(2011) 587 final and COM(2011) 901 final.

⁹ Article 25 of the Students and Researchers Directive

- Which good practices are in place in Member States related to the attraction and retention of students?

6 RELEVANT SOURCES AND LITERATURE

EMN Studies

- EMN (2015): Changes in immigration status and purpose of stay: an overview of EU Member States approaches. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00.emn_study_on_the_change_of_status_final.pdf
- EMN (2013): Attracting Highly Qualified and Qualified Third-Country Nationals. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/attracting/emnsr_attractinghqworkers_finalversion_23oct2013_publication.pdf
- EMN (2012): Immigration of International Students to the EU. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/immigration-students/0_immigration_of_international_students_to_the_eu_sr_24april2013_final_en.pdf

EMN AHQs

- 2017.1234 – **Talent mobility** – requested 11 October 2017
- 2017.1233 – **Implementation of the Directive (EU) 2016/801 (research, studies, training)** – requested 26 July 2017
- 2017.1189 – **Retaining TCN Students** – requested 26 May 2017¹⁰
- 2017.1136 – **Transposition of Directive (EU) 2016/081** – requested on 27 January 2017
- 2016.1111 – **Verification of the reliability of potential students** – requested 25 October 2016

Other studies and reports

- The Conference Proceedings of the EE EMN Annual Conference on “The EU in the global race for talents: Challenges and solutions in strengthening the EU’s competitiveness”, held on 21-22 September 2017. <http://emn.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/nr9.pdf>
- OECD/EU (2016), Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe 2016, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264257290-en>. A study on the intra-EU mobility of third country nationals, by Yves Pascouau, Senior Adviser to EPC (European Policy Centre, a think-tank based in Brussels) on migration and mobility policies (2013) http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_3496_intra-eu_mobility_of_third-country_nationals.pdf
- A study by the Migration Policy Centre on “A Comprehensive Labour Market Approach to EU Labour Migration Policy” (2015) <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/824e91bc-d642-4626-9267-676945e15053/language-en>
- A report on learning mobility, by the JRC (Joint Research of the European Commission) (2015) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC99969/learning%20mobility%20technical%20report_pubsy_pdf.pdf
- A study by OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), “The Impact of the Implementation of Council Directives on Labour Migration Flows from Third Countries to EU Countries” (2016) <http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5jlwxbzkbvfl-en.pdf?expires=1519893945&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=C2DDC88488C17F6BEEC76D45022311EB>

¹⁰ Please see the 2017 EMN Inform on Retaining third-country national students in the EU: <http://emn.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Inform-student.pdf>

7 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

International level

Statistics on international mobility of students are provided by UNESCO¹¹ and OECD.¹²

EU level

Statistics are available through Eurostat on the number of residence permits issued to third-country nationals by reason, including education reasons. The Synthesis Report will also make reference to the Erasmus Plus/Erasmus Mundus Programme in the section outlining the EU policy framework and will present some general data on the number of international students who took part in these exchange programmes. This will be developed by the EMN Service Provider (ICF).

National level

Subject to availability, the following statistical data sources should be included insofar as possible:

- Statistics on the number of international students enrolled in HEIs in Member States and Norway;
- Statistics on the number of international students who have graduated in the Member State and Norway.
- Statistics on the number of international students remaining in the Member State and Norway after graduation per reason.

8 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EU 2016 Students and Researchers Directive and the EMN Glossary Version 6.0.¹³

‘Employer’ means any natural person or any legal entity, for or under the direction or supervision of whom or which the employment is undertaken;

‘Family members’ mean a third-country national, as specified in Art. 4(1) of Directive 2003/86/EC (normally members of the nuclear family – i.e. the spouse and the minor children), who has entered the territory of the European Union for the purpose of family reunification;

‘Higher education institution’ (HEI) means any type of higher education institution recognised or considered as such in accordance with national law which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers recognised higher education degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, whatever such establishments may be called, or any institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers vocational education or training at tertiary level. The term ‘higher education’ encompasses all tertiary institutions which may include, inter alia, universities, universities of applied science, institutes of technology, *grandes écoles*, business schools, engineering schools, IUTs, colleges of higher education, professional schools, polytechnics and academies.

‘International student’ means a third-country national who has been accepted by a higher education institution and is admitted to the territory of a Member State to pursue as a main activity a full-time course of study leading to a higher education qualification recognised by that Member State, including diplomas, certificates or doctoral degrees in a higher education institution, which may cover a preparatory course prior to such education, in accordance with national law, or compulsory training. Member States will be asked to state at the beginning of their national contribution and in the statistics provided whether doctoral candidates (PhD students) are included when referring to “students” or not;

‘Long-stay visa’ means an authorisation issued by a Member State as provided for in Article 18 of the Schengen Convention or issued in accordance with the national law of Member States not applying the Schengen *acquis* in full;

‘Residence permit’ is defined as “an authorisation issued using the format laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1030/2002 entitling its holder to stay legally on the territory of a Member State”;

‘Third-country national’ is defined as “any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of TFEU and who is not a person enjoying the Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Schengen Borders Code”;

¹¹ <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>

¹² <https://data.oecd.org/education.htm>

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/

9 ADVISORY GROUP

An “Advisory Group” (AG) has been established within the context of this Study for the purpose of providing support to EMN NCPs during the development of the specifications for the Study, as well as the drafting of the Synthesis Report. In addition to COM, and the EMN Service Provider (ICF and Odysseus), the members of the AG for the Study include EMN NCPs from AT, DE, EE, ES, FR, LT, LU and NL. EMN NCPs are thus invited to send any requests for clarification or further information on the Study to the following representatives of the AG:

- ★ COM: Magnus.OVILIUS@ec.europa.eu; Helene.CALERS@ec.europa.eu
- ★ EMN Service Provider: emn@icf.com; veronika.vasileva@icf.com; norma.rose@icf.com
- ★ Odysseus Expert (Philippe de Bruycker): debruyck@ulb.ac.be
- ★ AT EMN NCP: mbassermann@iom.int
- ★ DE EMN NCP: janne.grote@bamf.bund.de
- ★ EE EMN NCP: marion.pajumets@tlu.ee
- ★ ES EMN NCP: mariacristina.sierra@meyss.es
- ★ FR EMN NCP: anne-cecile.jarasse@interieur.gouv.fr, tamara.buschek-chauvel@interieur.gouv.fr; christelle.caporali-petit@interieur.gouv.fr
- ★ LU EMN NCP: adolfo.sommarribas@uni.lu; david.petry@uni.lu
- ★ LT EMN NCP: aurelija@iom.lt
- ★ NL EMN NCP: h.k.van.der.linden@ind.minvenj.nl; m.i.stegink@ind.minvenj.nl; j.j.roelofs@ind.minvenj.nl
- ★ SE EMN NCP: bernd.parusel@migrationsverket.se

10 TIMETABLE

The following tentative timetable has been proposed for the Study going forward:

Date	Action
9 th February 2018	1 st Advisory Group meeting
27 th February 2018	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Common Template</u> for the Study to COM and AG members
22 nd June 2018	2 nd Advisory Group meeting
6 th July 2018	Circulation of the revised Common Template for the Study to COM and AG members
13 th July 2018	Deadline for comments on revised template from COM and AG members
23 rd July 2018	Circulation of the <u>revised Common Template</u> for the Study to COM and EMN NCPs

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Date	Action
13 th August 2018	Deadline for comments revised template for the Study from EMN NCPs
22 nd August 2018	Circulation of the final draft Common Template to EMN NCPs and COM
5 th September 2018	Finalisation of the Common Template and official <u>launch</u> of the Study
4 th December 2018	<u>Submission of National Reports</u> to EMN Service Provider by EMN NCPs
31 st January 2019	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM and AG Members
11 th February	Circulation of the <u>revised Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM, AG members and EMN NCPs
March	<u>Finalisation</u> of the Synthesis Report for the Study and of the National Reports for publication on the EMN website

11 TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The template provided below outlines the information that should be included in the National Contributions of EMN NCPs to this Study. The indicative number of pages to be covered by each section is provided in the guidance note. For National Contributions, the total number of pages should **not exceed 35-40 pages**, including the questions and excluding the Statistical Annex. A limit of **25-30 pages** will also apply to the Synthesis Report, in order to ensure that it remains concise and accessible.

OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONS

The Education Executive Agency (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, DUO): Implementing organisation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. DUO's most important tasks are funding educational institutions, providing student financing or advances for educational expenses and collecting tuition fees and student debts.

The Migration Policy Department (Directie Migratiebeleid, DMB): This department falls under the Ministry of Justice and Security and determines the policy on regulated admission, stay and return of third-country nationals.

Erasmus Student Network (ESN): Student organisation where domestic students support international students when adapting to the Dutch culture and practical matters.

The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en naturalisatiedienst, IND): Implementing government service of the Ministry of Justice and Security responsible for the implementation of the Dutch Aliens Act (Vw) and the Netherlands Nationality Act (Rwn). To this purpose, the IND assesses all residence applications in the field of international protection, regular migration (including highly-skilled migration and study) and naturalisation. The IND also assesses visa applications.

The National Student Association (Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg, ISO): The National Student Association is the largest national student association of the Netherlands and promotes the general interests of all students at universities and universities of applied sciences. Members of ISO are the central participation councils of universities and universities of applied sciences.

The National Commission for the Code of Conduct for International Students (Landelijke Commissie Gedragscode Internationale Student, LC): A commission monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct for International Students. This commission may initiate investigations on its own initiative or at the request of students or institutions. It is competent to remove an institution from the register of recognised sponsors for a period of at least one year.

National Student Union (Landelijke Studentenvakbond, LSVb): Umbrella organisation of all local student unions, promoting the interests of all students at universities and universities of applied sciences.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Buitenlandse Zaken, BZ): This ministry is inter alia responsible for international relations, foreign policy, international development and trade, and European affairs. To this purpose, it manages a network of diplomatic missions abroad.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (Economische Zaken en Klimaat, EZK): This ministry is committed to sustainability and enterprise in the Netherlands and it focuses on climate and the economy, but also on educational institutions and students.

The Ministry of Justice and Security (Justitie en Veiligheid, JenV): This ministry is responsible for the rule of law in the Netherlands and all its related facets, including security affairs and migration policies.

The Ministry of Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap (OCW): This Ministry is primarily focused on creating a legal framework for education, implementing education laws and providing financial means for this.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, SZW): This ministry is responsible for employment and socioeconomic security. This includes the following policy components: the labour market, including migration and free movement of employees; benefits and re-integration; income policy; combining labour and care; working conditions policies; and monitoring and investigation in this field.

Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, VWS): This ministry is inter alia responsible for the policies for the health and welfare of Dutch nationals.

Dutch Council for Training and Education (Nederlandse Raad voor Training en Opleiding, NRTO): Umbrella organisation that promotes the interests of private educational institutions.

The Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie, NVAO): An organisation that safeguards the quality of higher education and is committed to enhancing the visibility of this quality in society. To this purpose, the NVAO inter alia accredits training programmes and institutions in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Nuffic: The Dutch organisation for the internationalisation of education. The objective of this organisation is to enhance the internationalisation of education in the Netherlands. It focuses inter alia on attracting international students and tries to stimulate Dutch students to study abroad.

Netherlands Enterprise Agency (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, RVO): Agency of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy that implements policy measures that relate to the Dutch business climate. This agency also carries out assignments commissioned by other ministries such as the Interior or Foreign Affairs, or the EU.

Social Insurance Bank (Sociale Verzekeringsbank, SVB): Implementing organisation of laws and regulations in relation to social security, including the implementation of social insurances.

Employee Insurance Agency (Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen, UWV): The UWV is an independent implementing organisation of the Ministry of SZW and has inter alia the task to further employment and participation in society. In this role, the UWV for example issues work permits for third-country nationals.

The Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (Vereniging van Hogescholen, VH): Organisation that promotes the interests of the 36 publicly-funded Dutch universities of applied sciences.

The Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereniging van Nederlandse Universiteiten, VSNU): Organisation that promotes the interests of the 14 publicly-funded Dutch (research) universities.

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

Attracting and retaining international students in the EU

National Contribution from *the Netherlands** ¹⁴

Disclaimer: The following information has been provided primarily for the purpose of contributing to a Synthesis Report for this EMN Study. The EMN NCP has provided information that is, to the best of its knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of the EMN NCPs' Member State.

Top-line factsheet [max. 1 page]

The top-line factsheet will serve as an overview of the **National Contribution** introducing the Study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policy-makers. Please add any innovative or visual presentations that can carry through into the synthesis report as possible infographics and visual elements.

Please provide a concise summary of the main findings of Sections 1-5:

Strategies and initiatives for attracting and retaining international students in the Netherlands

Attracting and retaining international students (from third countries as well as EU/EEA countries) is considered important in the Netherlands to contribute to the (knowledge-based) economy and to strengthen the economic competitiveness of the Netherlands. Hence, the admission systems for international students have been designed to be facilitating and service providing. In the procedure for entry and residence (Toegang En Verblijf, TEV), the application for a regular provisional residence permit (mvv) and a residence permit can be filed simultaneously. In addition, recognised sponsorship effects a fast procedure. Under the recognised sponsorship, educational institutions act as sponsors for the student enrolling and check whether the student complies with the admission requirements for stay in the Netherlands and enrolment on the institution. A prerequisite for educational institutions to become recognised sponsors is that they are a signatory of the *Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education*, containing agreements on how to recruit and work with international students. In addition to this regulation, there are various initiatives and promotion activities to disseminate information in third countries about higher education and to attract higher numbers of international students. For instance, the *Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nesos)* of Nuffic promote the Dutch higher education in the eleven countries where they have been established.¹⁵

In addition, retaining international graduates in the Netherlands is also stimulated. This is for instance done by means of facilitating regulations, such as the orientation year (enabling graduates to find work within 12 months) and a lower salary criterion for a residence permit for employment as a highly skilled migrant. In addition, there are various national, international and regional networks and programmes establishing ties between graduates and the Netherlands. These are, for example, the *Holland Alumni Network* (in which, among other things, information on jobs and career opportunities in the Netherlands is disseminated) and the project *Brabant International Students* that tries to increase the influx of international students (including EU/EEA students) in technological programmes and to promote the pathway to the Dutch labour market afterwards, supported by *Brainport Eindhoven* (cooperation between educational institutions, companies and a number of municipalities).

International students in the (public) debate

In recent years, the number of international students (including EU/EEA students) coming to the Netherlands has increased substantially: between 2006-2007 and 2016-2017, the number of international students increased from 40,000 to over 80,000.¹⁶ While attracting international students remains a priority in policy making, the fast expansion of student entries has given rise to increasing

¹⁴ Replace highlighted text with your **Member State** name here.

¹⁵ The Neso in Thailand will close on 1 January 2019.

¹⁶ Nuffic (2018). International degree students in the Netherlands: a regional analysis.

attention from the media and politics for handling this influx more consciously and carefully. This discussion is focused primarily on the question whether the growing number of international students would be at the expense of the quality of higher education and whether the increasing number of programmes offered in English is desirable in higher education. In addition, the lack of accommodation for both Dutch and international students is a recurring theme in the public debate, as well as the inclusion of international students, which is often limited. From the recent opinion letter by the minister for Education, Culture and Science and the Internationalisation Agenda of the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) it becomes evident that these challenges are being recognised and that measures are being explored to better manage the influx of international students.¹⁷

Recent policy changes and measures

In recent years, measures have been taken on a national and regional level that have influenced the field of student migration, whether in the context of Directive (EU) 2016/801 or not. For instance, the regulations for the orientation year for persons with higher education have changed, so that now international graduates may apply for a residence permit for an orientation year within three years after graduation, instead of one year. Furthermore, it is possible for students to opt for a work placement when it is not a compulsory component of the curriculum. Moreover, students are now allowed to work 16 hours per week parallel to their studies, rather than 10 hours. In addition, Nuffic, the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education, has coordinated initiatives as part of the action plan *Make it in the Netherlands* that had the objective to establish ties with international talent in the Netherlands before, during and after their studies. Participants contributed to this on a national as well as a regional level. In addition, the *City Deal 'Warm Welkom Talent' (Warm Welcome to Talent)* helped to increase the attraction of the Netherlands to ambitious international talent. Also, the *National Action Plan for Student Housing* was launched recently to find a long-term solution for the shortage in student housing.

¹⁷ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59; VSNU and VH (2018); *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

Section 1: National legal and policy framework in the Member State

This section aims to provide an overview of the national policies in the Member States and Norway related to entry and residence of third-country nationals as students. The focus should be put on the recent changes that have been introduced in Member States and Norway since 2012.¹⁸

Please note: Statistics provided in Annex 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 will be used to contextualise the national legal and policy framework reported on by Member States in this section.

Q1a. What is the **transposition status** of Directive (EU) 2016/801 in your national law?

[Possible visual element: map indicating transposition status in each Member State]

- transposition completed.
- in process: completion of transposition expected by:
- other, please specify:

Q1b. Are **doctoral candidates** (PhD students) treated as students or researchers under national law?

Please note that if doctoral candidates fall within the category of researchers, these should not be considered in the answers to the subsequent questions.

- PhD students are treated as students
- PhD students are treated as researchers
- Other

Please elaborate:

The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) understands researchers as defined by Directive (EU) 2016/801 to include doctoral candidates.¹⁹

Q1c. What are the **main changes** to: (a) law, (b) policy and (c) practice since 2012 with regard to international students? Please specify whether these changes were made in response to Directive (EU) 2016/081 or other national policy priorities.

Please describe briefly:

Main changes to law

Study Testing Ground and Modern Migration Policy Act (MoMi)

Anticipating on the effective date of the Modern Migration Policy Act (Modern Migratiebeleid, MoMi) in June 2013, the *Study Testing Ground* was started in March 2009.²⁰ The objective of this testing ground was to gain experience with regard to study by means of the drafted policy, and to stimulate the new method among a limited group of students. For instance, experience was gained using the simplified Entry and Residence (Toegang en Verblijf, TEV) procedure and the procedure for a regular residence permit (verblijfsvergunning regulier, vvr) without regular provisional residence permit ('vvr without mvv'). The TEV procedure applies to students from countries for which a regular provisional residence permit is required (machtiging tot voorlopig verblijf, mvv: a visa for a period longer than 90 days). The admission procedure for a regular residence permit (vvr without mvv) applies to students from countries without mvv requirement. In addition, experience was gained with the system of recognised sponsors. As a result of this system, the recognised sponsor is given a considerable responsibility for admission, and focused monitoring takes place by means of an increased exchange between other government services.²¹ The testing ground showed that implementing these procedures was quite feasible. When the Modern Migration Policy Act took effect on 1 June 2013, these components also took effect officially. At

¹⁸ The last EMN studies related to this public were published in 2013 (see the study on Highly qualified migrants at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/studies_en)

¹⁹ B6/2.4 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

²⁰ Immigration and Naturalisation Service (2010). *Project Implementatie Modern Migratiebeleid [Implementation of Modern Migration Policy Project]*. Evaluation Phase.

²¹ The sponsor is a person or organisation (for instance a company or an educational institution) that has an interest in the arrival of a third-country national.

the heart of this act lies a migration policy that is selective and inviting to migrants who can make a contribution to the Dutch economy. This is achieved inter alia by simplifying and accelerating procedures compared to earlier legislation. Below a more detailed explanation of the system of recognised sponsors and the TEV procedure:

Recognised sponsor

For international students specifically, this means that educational institutions have legally become the recognised sponsors of international students as of 1 June 2013.²² These recognised sponsors file an application for the international student. An international student who wishes to apply for a residence permit for study purposes may not come to the Netherlands without being enrolled on an educational institution that is recognised by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) as sponsor. For further explanation about recognised sponsorship, see Q3c.

TEV procedure

Before 1 June 2013, the applications for a regular provisional residence permit (mvv) and for a regular residence permit were filed separately. This was simplified when the Modern Migration Policy Act took effect, by means of the Entry and Residence (TEV) procedure. This means that educational institutions no longer file applications for an mvv and a residence permit for international students on two separate occasions, but through one procedure.²³ The educational institution collects all documents required for this and assesses whether the applicant meets the requirements. Then the educational institution fills in a statement in which is laid down which requirements have been met. If all requirements have been met, an mvv and a residence permit will be granted by the IND.

Not all international students are required to have an mvv (for instance students from Canada or Japan). They qualify for entry through the procedure for a residence permit without mvv. This application is also filed by the recognised sponsor.

Orientation year for highly educated persons

Since 1 March 2016, the regulations for the orientation year for highly educated persons have been amended in the Aliens Decree (Vreemdelingenbesluit, Vb) 2000 and the Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (Besluit uitvoering Wet vreemdelingen, BuWav).²⁴ The *orientation year for graduates* (for graduates in the Netherlands) was merged with the *Highly Educated Migrants Scheme* (for graduates of the global top-200 universities) into the *orientation year for highly educated persons*. These schemes were both designed to recruit and retain graduates and holders of a doctorate. The advantage of this merge of schemes is that the most promotional elements of the schemes were merged and that the orientation year can be promoted more effectively. The new scheme applies to all persons who graduated in the Netherlands and to all graduates of top universities abroad. In addition, the scheme applies to all academic researchers and doctoral candidates. The application for an orientation year residence permit for highly educated persons can be filed up to three years after attaining the diploma or completing the academic research. Under the old orientation year scheme, this used to be one year. This amendment gives the opportunity for foreign students in the Netherlands to first return to their country of origin after obtaining their diploma, before departing for the Netherlands once again. In addition, all participants in the new scheme now have free access to the Dutch labour market during the orientation year, since the requirement of a work permit for third-country nationals (Tewerkstellingsvergunning, TWV) has lapsed. Previously, this exemption only applied to students who graduated in the Netherlands.

Options for work placements increased

For international students it has been possible to do a work placement since 1 January 2017 when it is not a compulsory component of the curriculum.²⁵ Previously it was only possible for non-EU students to do a work placement if this was required to complete the programme. They could not do a work placement parallel to the fixed curriculum on their own initiative. This decision was laid down in the Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (BuWav). It now stipulates that a work placement must be relevant to the programme.

Decision period for study amended

In October 2016 the Aliens Act (Vreemdelingenwet, Vw) 2000 was amended with regard to the decision period for applications for study and academic research.²⁶ The decision period for this purpose of stay

²² *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013, no 8389.

²³ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013, no 8389.

²⁴ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2016, no 86.

²⁵ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2016, no 347.

²⁶ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2016, no 415.

was previously up to 90 days; this has been changed into 60 days. The amendment has become effective on 1 January 2017.

Raised limit of number of hours of work parallel to studies

Currently, international students may work 16 hours per week parallel to their studies.²⁷ Previously this was 10 hours per week. The same conditions apply as before, such as the application for a work permit for third-country nationals (TWV) by the employer, because international students from third countries do not have free access to the Dutch labour market. The amendment is pursuant to EU Directive 2016/801 and became effective on 23 May 2018 (when the directive was implemented in the Netherlands). A transition scheme is in force. Work permits that were issued before the effective date of this regulation and that were still valid at the time when the amendment took effect are regarded as permits that were issued on the basis of the amended regulation. This means that students with this permit are also entitled to 16 hours of work per week.

Expansion of the target group of trainees in higher education

Previously, a work permit or combined residence and work permit (GVVA) could also be granted to international students who studied in the Netherlands if they came to the Netherlands for a work placement that was necessary for completing their programme. With the amendment of section 30 of the Aliens Employment Act Implementation Regulations (Regeling uitvoering Wet arbeid vreemdelingen) of 23 May 2018, this scheme has been expanded. The amendment also entails that international graduates who obtained a diploma at the level of *higher professional education* (HBO) or *university* (WO²⁸) can do a work placement of up to one year at a Dutch employer.²⁹ A condition is that they completed a programme at a Dutch higher education institution no more than two years before the date of the application for the permit. In addition to a copy of the diploma, a trainee agreement must be submitted with a description of the work placement programme in which the educational objectives and learning components of the placement have been laid down. It must become evident from this description that the placement does not replace a regular job. The work placement must relate to the (completed) programme. This amendment is pursuant to EU Directive 2016/801.

Main changes to policy

Entrepreneurship Scheme for International Talent has been eased

In April 2017, the Entrepreneurship Scheme for International Talent was eased.³⁰ Since April 2017, students, researchers, highly skilled migrants and holders of a European blue card have been permitted to work on a self-employed basis parallel to their studies or work. However, they must still comply with the conditions of their residence permit.

Reduced fees for study permit and orientation year

Since 3 May 2018, the fee for a study permit has been lowered from €321 to €192.³¹ In addition, the fee for the application for a residence permit for the orientation year has been reduced considerably: from €644 to €285. The principle for the calculation of fees is that they must cover the expenses where possible. The fees applicable before May 2018 had been calculated before the work process at the IND was changed radically as a result of the Modern Migration Policy Act (MoMi). A new calculation demonstrated that most fees could be adjusted downwards. This was among other reasons because of faster processing of applications as a result of digitalisation.

Main changes to practice

Action Plan 'Make it in the Netherlands'

In 2013, the three-year Action Plan '*Make it in the Netherlands*' was launched, in which Nuffic³² coordinated initiatives with the purpose of establishing ties between the Netherlands and international talent before, during and after their studies.³³ Participants contributed to this plan on a national as well as a regional level (among others universities and universities of applied sciences, associations, umbrella organisations for employers, the government, and students). This action plan was divided into five themes, which were based on advice by the Social and Economic Council (SER):

²⁷ Government Gazette, 2018, no 23392.

²⁸ The higher education system in the Netherlands is binary: a distinction is made between *higher professional education* and *university*. See Q3c for further explanation.

²⁹ Government Gazette, 2018, no 23392.

³⁰ Government Gazette, 2017, 17943.

³¹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 30 573, no 138.

³² Nuffic is the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education.

³³ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013-2014, 22452, no 35.

-It all starts with language: efforts were made to make it more attractive for international students to learn the Dutch language.

-From course to career: a study was conducted to investigate how international students could be introduced earlier to the Dutch labour market, how the connection between education and the labour market could be strengthened and how students could be recruited strategically, focusing on options on the labour market.

-Breaking the bubble: actions were taken towards social integration of international students, inter alia within the *international classroom*.

-From hassle to red carpet: efforts were made to smoothen the administrative procedures and practical matters that are currently experienced as a barrier.

-Results in the region: because approaches differ per region, support was provided for the further elaboration of regional plans.

This action plan was completed in 2016. A number of projects have been transferred to the *Holland Alumni Programme*, managed by Nuffic (also see Q16).³⁴ Moreover, a motion was submitted in July 2018 with the request to the minister for Education, Culture and Science to explore the options for a follow-up programme directed at the recruitment and retention of international talent together with her colleagues for Economic Affairs, the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Social Affairs and Employment.³⁵

Non-EU students in Aachen pilot programme

In 2015 the Netherlands decided to launch a pilot programme in which non-EU students studying in Aachen who wish to stay in the Netherlands could obtain a Dutch residence permit.³⁶ The pilot started in 2016 and will last five years. Annually, up to 75 of these students qualify for a Dutch residence permit. The programme corresponds with the policy to lift the (administrative) barriers posed by the internal borders as much as possible as part of the development of the border regions within the European Union. This concerns education and knowledge development in particular.

City Deal 'Warm Welkom Talent' (Warm Welcome to Talent)

In April 2016, a City Deal '*Warm Welkom Talent*' (*Warm Welcome to Talent*) was signed by the municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Eindhoven and Groningen, and the Ministries of Economic Affairs, Justice and Security, Social Affairs and Employment, and Education, Culture and Science.³⁷ The purpose of this deal was to enhance the attraction of the Netherlands for ambitious entrepreneurial talent from abroad and to keep it sustainably at a high level. It was focused on foreign start-ups, foreign scale-ups and foreign students who were already studying in the Netherlands and wished to start a company there. In this City Deal steps were evaluated which they needed to take along various institutions to settle in the Netherlands, start an enterprise and grow: the so-called *customer journey*. On 19 May 2017, a report with recommendations was published based on this customer journey.³⁸ From this report it becomes evident that on the one hand the Netherlands is an attractive country for starting entrepreneurs to establish an enterprise, but that on the other hand its procedures to do so are long and complicated. The recommendations therefore focus inter alia on better provision of information and guidance, and additional provisions aimed at start-ups.

Housing hotline

For the large number of international students in the Netherlands, it is often difficult to find a space to live, among other reasons because of the high rents and a structural shortage of rooms.³⁹ In addition, the landlords and fellow tenants are not always open to international students, and information on the rights and obligations of tenants is difficult to find for international students. For this reason, the National Student Union (Landelijke Studentenvakbond, LSVb) and the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) launched the *Housing Hotline* in July 2017. International students can call this hotline with questions and complaints about housing during their study period in the Netherlands. They receive assistance by telephone or e-mail from a team of employees and volunteers of the LSVb and ESN. An overview of the

³⁴ For more information, see Q16.

³⁵ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 61.

³⁶ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2015-2016, 31757, no 80.

³⁷ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2016, no 45223.

³⁸ Agendastad [Agenda City] (2017). *City Deal Warm Welkom Talent*. http://agendastad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/102724_Rapportage_Citydeal_web.pdf. Consulted on 2 October 2018.

³⁹ LSVb (2017). *LSVb en ESN lanceren Housing Hotline voor internationale studenten [LSVb and ESN launch Housing Hotline for international students]*. <https://lsvb.nl/2017/07/26/lsvb-en-esn-lanceren-housing-hotline-internationale-studenten/>. Consulted on 2 October 2018.

complaints is passed on to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kingdom Relations (BZK).

National Action Plan for Student Housing

Another change in response to the lack of housing for students (including international students) was the *National Action Plan for Student Housing*, which was published on 5 October 2018 and was sent to the House of Representatives.⁴⁰ This action plan was signed by the G4⁴¹, Netwerk Kennissteden Nederland (Netherlands Knowledge City Network)⁴², Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH), Kences⁴³, Vastgoed Belang (Real Estate Interest)⁴⁴, LSVb, Nuffic, the Ministry of OCW and the Ministry of BZK. These parties have agreed to this action plan and the agreement on student housing in 2018-2021 to find a long-term solution for the housing shortage, with special attention for international students (including EU/EEA students). This plan aims to build local cooperation within the next three years, ensuring that within ten years a local balance between supply and demand has arisen.⁴⁵ This will be done through among other things commitment to better (statistical) insight into the supply and demand for student housing, agreements between local parties and strengthening the information position of students.

Q1d. Are **any changes planned** to law/ policy/ practice regarding international students in your Member State? Such planned changes could relate both to the transposition of the Students and Researchers Directive or other changes not pertaining to the Directive.

Yes, changes planned related to the transposition of the Directive.

Yes, changes planned not pertaining to the Directive.

No changes planned

If you have answered yes, please provide details about the changes planned and the approximate timeframe, i.e. are these changes planned for the short- or long-term?:

Advisory commission for the financing of higher education

In the coalition agreement '*Vertrouwen in de toekomst*' (*Confidence in the future*) of October 2017, the government announced that the funding system for higher education would be revised in the 2017-2021 term of office, with specific attention for technical programmes. A revised system would enable better alignment of funding of higher education institutions with actual developments, such as changes in student numbers, a growing influx of technical students and the consequences of internationalisation. For this purpose, the current funding system was examined earlier by the *Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS)*. The report issued by CHEPS in August 2018 provides various alternatives for the current funding method.⁴⁶ However, it also becomes evident from the same report that the opinions about the most desirable approach vary among higher education institutions.

As a follow-up step to this study, the government wants to obtain advice on four priority themes from an independent commission. The themes that will be explored in further detail are:

- the bottlenecks in the funding of scientific and technical education and the interconnectedness of education and research;
- the accessibility and equal opportunities in higher education;
- financial incentives in research funding with regard to student numbers;
- the distribution of research funding of universities in relation to research efforts, academic quality and impact, as well as the distribution of means for practice-oriented research by universities of applied sciences.

⁴⁰ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2018-2019, 33104, no 20.

⁴¹ These are the four municipalities in the Netherlands with more than 250,000 inhabitants: Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague and Rotterdam.

⁴² The *Netwerk Kennissteden Nederland* (Netherlands Knowledge City Network) was set up in 2009 by the cities and universities of Amsterdam, Delft, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, Leiden, Maastricht, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, Tilburg, Utrecht and Wageningen, VSNU, Association of Universities of Applied Sciences and Kences.

⁴³ A branch organisation for student housing.

⁴⁴ Association of private investors in real estate.

⁴⁵ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Actieplan studentenhuisvesting 2018-2021* [Action plan for student housing 2018-2021]. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2018/10/05/actieplan-studentenhuisvesting-2018-2021>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

⁴⁶ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2018-2019, 32188, no 658.

The advisory commission will investigate these themes from November 2018 to April 2019, under the supervision of the former secretary of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, who is now Chairman of the Board of the Reinier Haga Groep.⁴⁷ In the investigation, the commission will focus on a revision of the current funding system that can still take effect in the 2017-2021 term of office. The minister for OCW will send her response to the commission's advice to the House of Representatives before the summer of 2019.

Q1e. Is attracting and retaining international students a **national policy priority, either within the national migration policies or compared to other national policies?** Please explain why.

- Yes, this is a national policy priority.
- No, this is not a major national policy priority.
- Other, please explain:

Please elaborate:

From the beginning of the 21st century, internationalisation of higher education has increasingly become a theme in Dutch policy documents.⁴⁸ The objective to be among the top-ranking international knowledge-based economies and to strengthen the quality of higher education as a basis to achieve this objective is reflected inter alia in the *Strategische Agenda Hoger Onderwijs (Strategic Agenda for Higher Education)* of 2011, which includes a description of measures and plans for the higher education system.⁴⁹ In order to position the Netherlands strategically, attracting talented students from abroad is listed as an important element. This can also be seen in the Dutch policy for attracting and retaining students, that was eased through the implementation of the Modern Migration Policy Act (MoMi) in 2013. Among other things, this law introduced an accelerated admission procedure (recognised sponsorship) and simplification of the orientation year scheme for higher educated persons.

The importance of attracting and retaining international students (including EU/EEA students) is still considered a priority in policy making. However, at the same time more attention has been raised for a more conscious strategy for dealing with the large number of international students that arrives in the Netherlands annually.

This also becomes clear from the coalition agreement '*Vertrouwen in de toekomst*' ('*Confidence in the Future*') of October 2017, in which the new government detailed its plans for the years 2017-2021.⁵⁰ In it, it is stated that an internationalisation approach will be developed in the field of higher education and research. The attraction of Dutch education for international students will be strengthened while retaining the accessibility of education to Dutch students. It should also become possible to enable a larger number of Dutch students to study abroad. At the same time, the new government has indicated that compliance with the law will be monitored more closely so that programmes are only in English when this adds value and when the quality is adequate. In addition, there must be sufficient programmes in Dutch.⁵¹

Furthermore, it emerges from both the coalition agreement as well as the '*Integrale Migratieagenda*' (*Integral Migration Agenda*) of 2018 that the Netherlands wishes to work towards strengthening legal migration that is beneficial for the Netherlands and contributes to a stronger (knowledge-based) economy, innovative clout and its competitive position.⁵² The ambition is stated to establish ties between international talent and the Netherlands, and to strengthen the business climate for companies and researchers. Connected to this is the importance of the availability of high-quality international education.

⁴⁷ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Martin van Rijn voorzitter adviescommissie financiering hoger onderwijs* [Martin van Rijn chairman of the advice commission on funding of higher education]. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2018/09/28/martin-van-rijn-voorzitter-adviescommissie-financiering-hoger-onderwijs>. Consulted on 28 November 2018.

The Reinier Haga Groep is the largest non-academic hospital group in the Netherlands.

⁴⁸ IND O&A NL EMN NCP. Policy report (2012). Migration and Asylum in the Netherlands.

³⁶ The Ministry of Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2011). *Kwaliteit in verscheidenheid. Strategische Agenda Hoger Onderwijs, Onderzoek en Wetenschap*. [Quality in diversity. Strategic Agenda for Higher Education, Research and Academia.]

⁵⁰ VVD, CDA, D66 and Christenunie (2017). *Vertrouwen in de toekomst* [Confidence in the future], Coalition Agreement 2017-2021. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/documenten/publicaties/2017/10/10/regeerakkoord-2017-vertrouwen-in-de-toekomst>. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

⁵¹ Nuffic (2017). *Internationalisering in het regeerakkoord* [Internationalisation in the coalition agreement]. <https://www.nuffic.nl/nieuws/internationalisering-het-regeerakkoord/>. Consulted on 1 October 2018.

⁵² *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 19637, no 2375. In the integral migration agenda, intended policies from the coalition agreement have been linked and thus a broad and integral approach to the migration policy has been established.

The attraction and retention of international talent and strengthening the international position of the Netherlands as a knowledge-based society also recur as key points in the *'Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs'* (*Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education*), compiled by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) as published in May 2018.⁵³ However, according to the agenda, this also poses challenges, because an unchecked increase of international students could exceed the present capacity of higher education institutions. Moreover, there is a considerable shortage of housing for international students. To compensate for this, better management and guidance of the international influx would be needed with the aid of additional instruments supplied by the government. It is also important to safeguard the quality of education as well as a balanced language policy with enough programmes available in Dutch. In addition, attention must be paid to accessibility for Dutch students and inclusiveness within educational communities. Solutions proposed in the internationalisation agenda by VH and VSNU for a better management of the influx of international students are listed under Q2. In her recent opinion letter of June 2018, *'Internationalisering in Evenwicht'* (*Balanced Internationalisation*), the minister for OCW promised to explore these options for better management of the student influx.⁵⁴

In short, the coalition agreement, the Integral Migration Agenda and the Internationalisation Agenda all underline the importance of attracting and retaining students. However, it is also a priority to take the challenges this poses seriously and to solve them. The common objective in these plans is to make sure that the attraction and retention of international students is in balance with the social and economic abilities to deal with the influx more consciously and carefully.

Q1f. Does your Member State have a **national strategy**, or a **lower level (e.g. ministerial, regional) strategy**, for attracting and/or retaining international students?

Yes, national strategy in place.

Yes, lower level strategy in place.

No, a national strategy is not in place.

If you have answered yes, please indicate whether the strategy focuses on attraction, retention or both, and provide details about the main elements of the strategy (e.g. name, policy goals, year of adoption):

The Netherlands has both national and regional strategies for attracting and retaining international students (including EU/EEA students). Earlier, in the 2012 EMN study *'Immigration of International Students'* it was stated that the Netherlands wishes to be a feeding ground for economics, science and culture.⁵⁵ The government considers the admission of talented highly skilled and student migrants an important means to achieve this. For instance, international talent improves the quality of the workforce and the attraction of the Netherlands as a place of business for foreign investors. If international students stay in the Netherlands after their graduation, they contribute to the Dutch knowledge-based economy. When they leave, they can promote Dutch education upon return. The principles of the national strategy are established by the Ministry of OCW, but on a regional level, higher education institutions have the freedom to determine their own objectives.

The *Strategische Agenda Hoger Onderwijs 2015-2025* (*Strategic Agenda for Higher Education 2015-2025*)⁵⁶, compiled by the former ministers of OCW and Economic Affairs, outlines a general internationalisation strategy for the period of 2015-2025. Internationalisation has become an indispensable aspect in the education of students: education increasingly takes place in international networks. Foreign students, moreover, enrich education, research and society. A strategic approach to an attractive climate for international students in the Netherlands is essential to profit from this. This is reflected in the opinion letter by the present minister for OCW, published in June 2018.⁵⁷ She states in this letter, among others, that the internationalisation process must be balanced, revolving around

⁵³ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

⁵⁴ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

⁵⁵ IND O&A – NL EMN NCP (2012). *Immigratie van internationale studenten naar Nederland [Immigration of international students to the Netherlands]*.

⁵⁶ Government of the Netherlands (2015). *De waarde(n) van weten, Strategische Agenda Hoger Onderwijs en Onderzoek 2015-2025 [The value of knowledge, Strategic Agenda for Higher Education and Research]*. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/beleidsnota-s/2015/07/07/de-waarde-n-van-weten-strategische-agenda-hoger-onderwijs-en-onderzoek-2015-2025>. Consulted on 8 October 2018.

⁵⁷ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

quality, accessibility, efficiency and contact with the environment. Just like the Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education, the opinion letter refers among other things to keeping up a high standard of education and accessibility for Dutch students. Moreover, the minister states that the programmes available must be practical: they must be linked to the labour market. Here, focussed promotion is essential when recruiting international students for sectors in which there is a demand in the Dutch labour market.

Action Plan 'Make it in the Netherlands'

In addition to these strategic plans and visions for the future, the three-year Action Plan '*Make it in the Netherlands*' was launched in 2013, coordinated by Nuffic, in which among others higher education institutions, associations, umbrella organisations for employers, the government and students cooperated to strengthen ties of students to the Netherlands before, during and after their studies (see Q1c). This action plan primarily aimed to offer an attractive climate for international students and to recruit more strategically to ensure that inter alia more students would stay to work in the Netherlands after their graduation. In addition, there was an ambition to establish strong ties between international students and the Netherlands, even if they left the country.⁵⁸

The former minister for OCW indicated in a letter to parliament in 2016 that the programme had succeeded to establish ties between international students and the Netherlands through 25 different projects and activities, and that this would be listed as a new theme on the Dutch agenda.⁵⁹ A number of projects have been transferred to the *Holland Alumni Programme*, coordinated by Nuffic. The recruitment and retention of international students are also important in the internationalisation policy, as well as the detection of obstacles to mobility (*mobstacles*, see Q3b for more information). If the programme is continued, it will follow the principles of the old programme and will in addition focus on the key points of social integration, establishing ties with the labour market and housing.⁶⁰ From research by Nuffic it has become evident that the stay rate after five years of all international graduates in the Netherlands (including EU/EEA students) was 24.7% between 2006 and 2013.⁶¹ 72% of them is employed.

Q1g. Does your Member State target **specific fields of studies/subject areas** (outside bilateral/multilateral cooperation) as regards the attraction and/or retention of international students? If so, please briefly elaborate on the reasons why these fields of studies/subject areas are targeted. *Please select all boxes that apply.*

- Yes, specific fields of studies are targeted for the attraction of international students.
- Yes, specific fields of studies are targeted for the retention of international students.
- No specific fields of studies are targeted.

If you have answered yes, please provide a list of the study fields targeted and the reasons. Please differentiate clearly between attraction and retention:

Q2. Is there a current or recent **public debate** (i.e. within the past year) with regard to international students in your Member State (e.g. in Parliament, media, etc.)?

- Yes, there is a public debate at national level.
- No, there is no significant public debate at national level.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the main issues of the debate:

In the past years the theme of internationalisation has become very important and Dutch higher education institutions (universities in particular) have achieved a lot in this field. For instance, a strong rise can be observed in the number of international students in the Netherlands (including EU/EEA students), particularly in the past three years. Projections show that this number will also keep growing

⁵⁸ EP-Nuffic (2016). Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 25 September 2018.

⁵⁹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2015-2016, 22452, no 48.

⁶⁰ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

⁶¹ Nuffic (2018). Stay rates of international graduates in the Netherlands. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/stayrates-of-international-graduates/>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

in the coming years.⁶² This increase entails a number of issues that are visible in politics as well as in the media. These are explained below.

Housing of international students

As a result of the increasing number of international students coming to the Netherlands, problems related to the housing of international students have become an increasingly important theme. This discussion has often been rekindled in the media as well as in the House of Representatives around the start of the new academic year in September, when many new international students move to the Netherlands. This was also the case in 2017 and 2018, when attention was drawn to the housing shortage for students at several occasions, regionally and nationally. For instance, news broadcaster NOS produced items about the housing shortage in Groningen and the emergency measures taken against it: the establishment of a tent camp for international students and the call on university employees to accommodate students.⁶³ In addition, a national survey among 311 international students in 2018 showed that almost half of the respondents considered housing to be the largest area of concern of their stay in the Netherlands.⁶⁴ Housing also recurs in the Internationalisation Agenda of VSNU and VH. In it, it is indicated that these housing problems are part of a larger social problem.⁶⁵ In cities such as Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam, Leiden and Groningen, the demand for rental and owner-occupied dwellings is much larger than the supply. This housing problem is not only the result of internationalisation. It does, however, affect international students. Because the distribution of students is not even among student cities and because the housing problem does not exist everywhere, it is important according to the Internationalisation Agenda to guide the influx of students and to achieve a more even distribution among cities in this way. The following five points have been listed in the Internationalisation Agenda to combat the housing problems:

1. Better provision of information on housing: this will be done nationally as well as locally, via inter alia campaigns.
2. Strengthening regional housing consultations: institutions in municipalities with highly saturated housing markets will organise structural meetings with municipalities and housing suppliers to explore the options for expanding the supply of student accommodations.
3. Partnerships with the Netwerk Kennissteden (Knowledge City Network): this network plays an important role in housing and facilitating international students in cities. Further efforts will be made to engage in active partnerships with cities that are members of the Knowledge City Network.
4. A better reference estimate by the Ministry of OCW: with the aid of the reference estimate by OCW, the number of expected (international students) is estimated. This is important for suppliers of housing, municipalities and educational institutions. The influx estimate was too low in the past years and the reference estimate must therefore be improved.
5. Rent legislation that makes it possible to reserve rooms for international students: the legislation for rent to international students must have a facilitating function. Current legislation and agreements insufficiently guarantee housing for international students.

Moreover, a National Action Plan for Student Housing was published on 5 October 2018 and sent to the House of Representatives (see Q1c). This plan aims to build a local cooperation within the next three years that ensures that within ten years a local balance between supply and demand has arisen.⁶⁶ This will be done through among other things commitment to better (statistical) insight into the supply and demand for student housing, agreements between local parties and strengthening the information position of students.

⁶² ABF Research (2018). *Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting [National Student Housing Monitor]*, p.89. https://www.kences.nl/assets/files/2018/def-r2018-0001rh_20181001.pdf. Consulted on 23 November 2018.

⁶³ NOS (2018). *Universiteit Groningen roept personeel op studenten in huis te nemen [Groningen University calls on staff to accommodate students]*. <https://nos.nl/artikel/2247435-universiteit-groningen-roept-personeel-op-studenten-in-huis-te-nemen.html> en NOS (2018). *Studenten hoeven tent-overnachting in Groningen niet meer te betalen [Students no longer have to pay for their stay in tents in Groningen]*. <https://nos.nl/artikel/2248167-studenten-hoeven-tent-overnachting-in-groningen-niet-meer-te-betalen.html>. Consulted on 10 October 2018.

⁶⁴ National Student Union (LSVb), National Students Association (ISO) and Erasmus Student Network (ESN), 2018. *Annual International Student Survey*.

⁶⁵ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnunl.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

⁶⁶ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Actieplan studentenhuisvesting 2018-2021 [Action plan for student housing 2018-2021]*. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2018/10/05/actieplan-studentenhuisvesting-2018-2021>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

Anglicisation of higher education

In the past years a debate has arisen among lecturers, students and managers about the extent of anglicisation in higher education. This issue has emerged from various news items and the political debate. The increasing number of programmes offered in English would, according to critics, be detrimental to the Dutch language.⁶⁷ It has also been mentioned that universities would not carefully consider whether an English language programme would benefit the quality of education. For instance, Twente University and Maastricht University were held accountable in 2018 for their English-language lectures in preliminary relief proceedings initiated by the Association for Better Education in the Netherlands (BON).⁶⁸ According to BON, the universities did not comply with the Higher Education Act (Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW), which prescribes that in principle programmes must be in Dutch, unless a different language is required. Maastricht University reasoned *inter alia* that English-language programmes were of added value to the quality of education and research, and would increase the significance of the Dutch knowledge-based economy internationally. The court was of the opinion that the educational institutions were allowed to hold the lectures concerned in English, as becomes evident from the ruling in the preliminary relief proceedings.⁶⁹

The minister for OCW gave her opinion on the internationalisation of education in a letter to parliament in June 2018. In this letter she indicates that the section in the Higher Education Act pertaining to language policies for programmes will be modernised (see Q1d for more information).⁷⁰ Institutions must then consider more carefully whether a programme is best taught in English and whether this is really to the benefit of the quality of education.

Increasing number of international students at higher education institutions

The rising number of international students at universities and to a lesser extent at universities of applied sciences is increasingly under debate. Research by Nuffic has shown that the total number of international students in the Netherlands (including EU/EEA students) had doubled in the 2016-2017 academic year, compared to 2006-2007, from 40,000 to 80,000.⁷¹ In the academic year of 2017-2018, the largest number of international students (including EU/EEA students) ever received higher education in the Netherlands, namely around 89.900. This number excludes students coming to the Netherlands for a shorter period, such as exchange students.⁷²

On the one hand, attracting international students is important, thusly strengthening the Dutch knowledge-based economy and increasing its significance internationally. On the other hand, a number of universities has indicated in the past year that this growth is taking place too fast and should be slowed down.⁷³ This, among other reasons because there is a deterioration in quality of higher education and there may be a risk of displacement of Dutch students. The Internationalisation Agenda by VH and VSNU indicates that educational institutions are not prepared for a further increase in international students.⁷⁴ This makes it a challenge to achieve a balance in a diverse *international classroom* (a mixture of nationalities).

VSNU and VH have indicated that a solution can be found in including the contribution to diversity as a selection criterion in the admission requirements for more bachelor programmes. Another option could be that it will be possible to introduce a limit to the capacity for the English-language track of programmes. To date, this capacity limitation has always applied to the full programme, even if it consists of a Dutch and an English language track. Furthermore, it should become possible for specific programmes and under certain circumstances to impose a maximum number of international students (specifically non-

⁶⁷ NOS (2018). *Universiteiten voor de rechter want 'oprukkend Engels moet stoppen'* [Universities brought before court because 'the rise of English has to stop']. <https://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/artikel/2232341-universiteiten-voor-de-rechter-want-oprukkend-engels-moet-stoppen.html>. Consulted on 9 October 2018.

⁶⁸ Volkskrant (2018). *Mogen universiteiten in het Engels lesgeven? De rechter vraagt extra bedenktijd.* [Are universities allowed to lecture in English? The Court needs more time to consider.] <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/mogen-universiteiten-in-het-engels-lesgeven-de-rechter-vraagt-extra-bedenktijd~bd6543f0/>. Consulted on 9 October 2018.

⁶⁹ RBMNE 6 June 2018, ECLI:NL:RBMNE:2018:3117.

⁷⁰ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

⁷¹ Nuffic (2018). International degree students in the Netherlands: a regional analysis.

⁷² Nuffic (2018). Incoming student mobility in Dutch higher education 2017-2018.

⁷³ NRC (2018). *Universiteit wil minder internationale studenten* [University wants fewer international students]. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/05/10/student-uit-buitenland-afremmen-a1602588>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

⁷⁴ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs* [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]. http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

EU/EEA students) that can start a programme. The fourth instrument to manage the high influx of students that is mentioned by VSNU and VH is to charge a higher tuition fee. In addition to limiting the influx, this can also help to cover the expenses. Moreover, introducing a registration fee for international students should be explored. This is because they currently register for a number of programmes, and several educational institutions incur costs to assess these applications, while students often take up studies at a different institution.

In her opinion letter of June 2018, the minister for OCW stated that the picture is incorrect that on a large scale, Dutch students are unable to study at the institutions or attend the programmes of their choice because of an enormous influx of international students.⁷⁵ However, the minister for OCW will explore the above-mentioned options suggested by VH and VSNU in order to better manage the student flows and safeguard a balanced *international classroom*.

Inclusiveness

Although internationalisation and anglicisation of higher education have been under debate for a longer period, a national survey was conducted for the first time in 2018 by the Landelijke Studentenvakbond (LSVb), National Students Association (ISO) and Erasmus Student Network (ESN) to investigate the experiences of foreign students in the Netherlands.⁷⁶ From this survey it became evident that foreign students often find it difficult come into contact with Dutch students. Moreover, international students often do not know where they can affordably learn the Dutch language. Among other things, language can form a barrier when socialising with Dutch students. International students, for example, indicate that it can be difficult to become a member of a student society or study society when they do not speak Dutch.⁷⁷ Notwithstanding, integration has improved considerably in certain fields, for example in art education, technical education and University Colleges. International students also appear to blend in well at sports societies.⁷⁸ In the Internationalisation Agenda the theme of inclusiveness recurs and it states that efforts will be made for academic and social integration and an inclusive student life.⁷⁹

Q3. What is the structure and governance of the national higher education system in your Member State? Please answer by elaborating on the following aspects:

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) is politically responsible for the education system. The Ministry of OCW is largely responsible for the funding of education, determines the general educational policy and globally determines the admission requirements, structure and objectives of education. However, institutions themselves are responsible for the implementation of government policies.⁸⁰ In addition, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (EZK) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) are involved in the content of higher education. Educational institutions themselves are responsible for the implementation of government policies.

The higher education system in the Netherlands is binary: a distinction is made between *university* and *higher professional education*.⁸¹ The admission requirements and duration of the programme vary between both forms of higher education.

The purpose of higher professional education (hbo) is to prepare for the professional practice and it is provided at universities of applied sciences. In principle, the duration of an hbo programme is four years.

Education at university (wo) is aimed at the independent practice of academia and/or professionally applying academic knowledge. Such academic education is provided at universities, but in some cases

⁷⁵ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

⁷⁶ Trouw (2018). *De buitenlandse student in Nederland voelt zich buitengesloten [Foreign students in the Netherlands feel excluded]*. <https://www.trouw.nl/samenleving/de-buitenlandse-student-in-nederland-voelt-zich-buitengesloten~aaba7fd7/>. Consulted on 10 October 2018. It must be noted that this survey was filled in by 311 foreign students and can therefore not be considered representative.

⁷⁷ NOS (2017). *Mengen die 112.000 buitenlandse studenten eigenlijk een beetje? [Are those 112,000 foreign students blending in at all?]* <https://nos.nl/op3/artikel/2165782-mengen-die-112-000-buitenlandse-studenten-eigenlijk-een-beetje.html>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

⁷⁸ Interview with board member of the National Students Association, The Hague, 02 October 2018.

⁷⁹ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

⁸⁰ Nuffic (2018). *Onderwijssysteem Nederland [Education system of the Netherlands]*. <https://www.nuffic.nl/publicaties/onderwijssysteem-nederland/>. Consulted on 8 October 2018.

⁸¹ Nuffic (2018). *Onderwijssysteem Nederland [Education system of the Netherlands]*. <https://www.nuffic.nl/publicaties/onderwijssysteem-nederland/>. Consulted on 8 October 2018.

also at universities of applied sciences. The curriculum is divided into a bachelor's programme of three years and a master's programme of one to three years.

There are three types of universities of applied sciences and universities in the Netherlands:

1. Funded institutions. These are funded by the Ministry of OCW or the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, and are entitled to confer legally recognised degrees for programmes accredited by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). The programmes at these institutions are taught at the legally established tuition fee. These are 13 universities, 36 universities of applied sciences and the Open University.

2. Private institutions that are legal entities for higher education⁸² These institutions do not receive funding from the government, but are recognised as 'legal entities for higher education', entitling them to also confer legally recognised degrees for programmes accredited by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie, NVAO). The institutions determine the tuition fee themselves. The diplomas issued by these programmes are equal to diplomas from funded institutions. One of these institutions is the Nyenrode Business University.

3. Foreign institutions. These institutions can also become a legal entity for higher education. In that case, accreditation can also be obtained from the NVAO and Dutch degrees can also be conferred. If this is not the case, recognised foreign degrees or diplomas can be conferred in certain cases.

Several institutions safeguard the quality of higher education. For example, the NVAO is responsible for assessing the quality of existing programmes and institutions and assessing the quality of new programmes. Moreover, since 2016 the *Code of Conduct for International Students*, as agreed by the joint institutions for higher education, safeguards the quality of Dutch higher education provided to international students. If an institution signs this code of conduct, it commits itself to the rules prescribed for foreign students. See Q3b for further explanation of the code of conduct.

Q3a. Is there a specific **public entity(ies)** at national level which is responsible for international students in regards to their studies and what are they competent for? What is its role in the application process/supervision of these students?

Please explain:

No, there is no specific public entity at national level which is responsible for international students. As detailed in Q3, the Ministry of OCW is politically responsible for international students. However, the educational institutions themselves are directly responsible when the international students' studies are concerned. To develop a relationship with international students, the educational institutions have drawn up a *Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education*. In addition, educational institutions are responsible for international students under the recognised sponsorship, in which educational institutions apply for international students' residence permits. For a further explanation of the code of conduct and recognised sponsorship, see Q3b and Q3c.

Q3b. Do migration authorities cooperate with HEIs? If yes, in what ways do they cooperate? Is there an institutionalised cooperation mechanism?

Yes, migration authorities cooperate with HEIs.

No, migration authorities do not cooperate with HEIs.

If you have answered yes, please explain the ways in which they cooperate:

Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education

In the *Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education*, a product of self-regulation, agreements have been laid down between educational institutions on how to work with international students; this is a joint initiative of the higher education institutions in cooperation with the Dutch government.⁸³ For example, the educational institutions have committed themselves in the code of conduct to providing international students with reliable and accessible information about the programmes, admission requirements, rules and procedures. These rules pertain inter alia to recruitment

⁸² In the rest of this template we will refer to 'private institutions'.

⁸³ Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017).
[http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf).
 Consulted on 3 October 2018.

and selection, accreditation of education and control of the English language by international students, supplementary to the quality standards that have been laid down or can be derived from educational and aliens legislation. A complaints procedure for international students and other interested parties has also been provided for. Only those institutions that have signed the code of conduct are allowed to recruit and select international students. One of the conditions imposed on recognised sponsorship by the IND is that the higher education institution is a signatory of the code of conduct. Moreover, via *Study in Holland*⁸⁴ channels, Nuffic only refers to programmes offered by higher education institutions that have signed the Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is monitored by the *National Commission for the Code of Conduct for International Students*. The Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH), Dutch Council for Training and Education (Nederlandse Raad voor Training en Opleiding, NRTO) and VNSU nominate members for the Commission.

Sounding Board

Recognised sponsorship has established a formal relationship between the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) and higher education institutions. The importance of close cooperation between these parties was a reason to found the *Mobstacles* network, managed by Nuffic. This network consists of two components: '*Mobstacles employment*' and '*Mobstacles studies*'.⁸⁵ *Mobstacles studies* focuses on people who support international students and trainees. This network meets every other year to exchange knowledge about the recent developments in the field of mobility and formal procedures. Present are, among others, the IND, the Social Insurance Bank (SVB) and the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV). These meetings are prepared by a special sounding board that meets biannually, consisting of staff of the IND and higher education institutions (staff that is responsible for the counselling of international students and researchers).⁸⁶ During these sounding board meetings, the two-yearly network meeting is prepared. The sounding board was established at the request of the IND and the field of higher education to facilitate close cooperation between the IND and higher education institutions. Reasons for this were that procedural affairs could be aligned, and to establish bottlenecks in the implementation and discuss solutions.

Q3c. Is there an approval procedure⁸⁷ in place in your Member State for public/private HEIs for the purpose of hosting international students? If so, are international students only allowed to study in those HEIs?

Yes.

No.

Please explain. If you have answered yes, please indicate whether international students are only allowed to those in those HEIs:

Since 1 June 2013, the recognised sponsorship has been applicable as a result of the introduction of the Modern Migration Policy Act (MoMi).⁸⁸ A recognised sponsor is a person or organisation that is interested in the entry of a third-country national, in this case the educational institution. The sponsor procedure entails that when the student files a request for admission and enrolment on the educational institution of their choice, the educational institution acting as recognised sponsor checks whether the student meets the requirements. If educational institutions wish to admit international students, it is compulsory for the educational institution to be recognised by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). The educational institution will then be listed in the public register of recognised sponsors and can subsequently apply for residence permits for international students. This means that the IND trusts the institutions to act carefully and in compliance with the rules when recruiting and selecting international students (in conformity with the *duty of care*⁸⁹ that recognised sponsors have). Institutions that are not recognised sponsors are not allowed to apply to the IND for residence permits for international students.

⁸⁴ The 'Study in Holland' campaign disseminates information about Dutch society, the system of higher education, the different programmes available, scholarships, practical tips and the labour market. For more information, see Q5a.

⁸⁵ Nuffic (2018). *Internationale onderzoekers en studenten helpen [Helping international researchers and students]*. <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/internationale-onderzoekers-en-studenten-helpen/>. Consulted on 15 October 2018.

⁸⁶ Interview with Nuffic policy staff member, The Hague, 28 September 2018.

⁸⁷ Article 15 of the Students and Researchers Directive

⁸⁸ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013, no 165.

⁸⁹ Educational institutions that are recognised sponsors also have a duty of care. This means that institutions are only allowed to recruit students who are admissible to the programme and must inform the student about any relevant regulations (such as the rules for work).

To be recognised as sponsor, the educational institution must meet a number of criteria. In addition to the requirements for all recognised sponsors (such as the assurance of continuity and solvability of the organisation) the following requirements apply to higher education institutions:

-the institution must provide accredited education as prescribed in Section 6.13 of the Higher Education and Research Act;

-the institution is a signatory of the *Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education*, or provides education within the context of development cooperation policies by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Cultural Policy Special-Purpose Funding Act. See Q3b for a further explanation of the code of conduct.

Certain obligations also apply to the institution if the IND grants recognition. There is, for instance, an obligation to inform: the obligation to notify the IND of all relevant data, facts and circumstances that influence the admission and stay of the student in the Netherlands. This applies for instance when the student does not progress sufficiently, no longer studies full-time at the educational institution, does not or no longer attends the institution, or has terminated their studies. Furthermore, there is an obligation to record: the educational institution must retain all documents relating to the student and their admission. Finally, there is the duty of care, as explained above.

If the institution does not comply with the obligations, the IND may suspend it in case of serious suspicions that there are grounds to revoke recognition.⁹⁰ This can also be done when it turns out that recognition was granted on the basis of incorrect or incomplete data, or when the recognised sponsor no longer meets the requirements for recognition. The IND can also impose a fine (usually a warning is issued first).

Q3d. Is higher education for third-country nationals funded by the state (i.e. state-sponsored) in your Member State?

- Yes, higher education is state-sponsored for third-country nationals.
- No, higher education is not state-sponsored for third-country nationals.
- Other (e.g. state support depends on the student's country of origin):

Please elaborate:

Universities (including universities of applied sciences) do not receive state funding for international students from outside the European Union.⁹¹ However, higher education institutions receive state funding for EU students. This state funding is the same as the funding higher education institutions receive for Dutch students.

⁹⁰ Section 2, sub 2, under f and g, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

⁹¹ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018.

Section 2: Measures and incentives to **attract** international students

This section examines the measures and incentives to attract international students in place in the Member States in terms of admission conditions; hosting and welcoming international students; special incentives and measures; external factors; challenges and good practices in attracting international students.

2.1 Admission conditions for international students

Q4a. Which are the common immigration **admission conditions** applicable for all international students determined by the immigration authorities for the purpose of residence in the territory of your Member State?

Please elaborate:

A number of general conditions apply to each third-country national who applies for a residence permit⁹²:

- The third-country national possesses a valid regular provisional residence permit (mvv) to enter the Netherlands. This permit is valid for 90 days. Upon entry of the Netherlands, the third-country national can collect their residence permit within two weeks. Students from countries within the EEA or Switzerland do not need these permits. In addition, nationals from a number of countries have been exempted from the mvv requirement. These are: Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Vatican City, The United States and South Korea.
- A valid passport or other travel document.
- An antecedents certificate that has been filled in, so that it is clear that the third-country national does not pose a threat to public order.
- After arrival in the Netherlands, the third-country national must undergo a medical examination for tuberculosis. In some cases, third-country nationals are exempted from this examination.
- The third-country national must have insurance coverage for healthcare expenses in the Netherlands.
- The third-country national must possess sufficient financial means. What this entails for international students is explained in Q4h.

In addition, specific conditions apply to international students⁹³:

- The third-country national must have a (provisional) proof of enrolment on the university or university of applied sciences for taking an accredited full-time day programme. This university or university of applied sciences has been recognised as a sponsor by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND).⁹⁴ The educational institutions that have been recognised as such have been recorded in the public register of recognised sponsors.

Are the following **admission conditions** listed under Q4b-Q4i required in your Member State? *Please answer with Yes/No and shortly describe the admission condition.*

IMPORTANT: *Please explain also under each question Q4b-4i how each of the below listed admission conditions are considered to attract international students / are used to attract them / are used flexibly in order to attract international students, or are there some that are considered disincentives.*

[Possible visual element: for the Synthesis Report, the applicable admission conditions (including fees) could be visualised in one infographic page]

Q4b. Is a proof of **acceptance** by HEI required in your Member State in order to obtain the visa/residence permit?⁹⁵

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

A proof of acceptance is required for an application for a residence permit with the purpose of 'study'.⁹⁶ From it, it must become evident that a third-country national has been enrolled on an educational

⁹² Section 16, sub 1, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

⁹³ B3/5 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

⁹⁴ Section 3.41, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

⁹⁵ Article 11 (1) of the Students and Researchers Directive

⁹⁶ B3/5 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

institution. The Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vreemdelingencirculaire, Vc) 2000 prescribe that this can also be a provisional proof of enrolment.

Q4c. How is the **academic recognition** of foreign academic degrees regulated in your Member State? Is this done in a centralised manner (e.g. by a specific organisation) or by each HEI?

- Recognition of degrees carried out centrally.
- Recognition of degrees carried out by each HEI.
- Other.

Please explain:

As ENIC-NARIC centre for the Netherlands, Nuffic is responsible for the improvement of recognition of foreign credentials (diplomas).⁹⁷ After the request for enrolment by an international student, the higher education institution may have Nuffic evaluate the diploma. Nuffic issues an advice on the diploma to the educational institution. The educational institution itself subsequently decides whether it will follow this advice and admit the student. However, the higher education institution can also decide not to ask Nuffic for advice.

Q4d. What are the **level of tuition fees for third-country nationals** in your Member State?⁹⁸ If applicable, please distinguish between the different qualifications levels (ISCED levels 5-8).

- If possible, please provide here a range of the level of tuition fees per academic year in euro/national currency:

Funded educational institutions

In the Netherlands two types of tuition fee apply: the statutory tuition fee and the institutional tuition fee.⁹⁹ International students pay the institutional tuition fee and in principle do not qualify for the statutory tuition fee (EU/EEA students do qualify). The government annually decides the level of the statutory tuition fee, which is the same for all funded institutions. Funded educational institutions can individually decide the level of the institutional tuition fee. The condition applies that the institutional tuition fee can never be lower than the statutory tuition fee. In practice, institutional tuition fees are often considerably higher than statutory tuition fees. The level of the institutional tuition fee may vary per educational institution, programme and group of students.¹⁰⁰ The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) does not provide guidelines for this. The institutional tuition fee should, in principle, cover the expenses of funded educational institutions. The institutional tuition fee is often higher than the statutory tuition fee, among other reasons because educational institutions do not receive funding from the government for international students. For both ISCED level 6 (bachelor's degree) and 7 (master's degree), the level of tuition fee varies between € 2,060 per year (statutory tuition fee of the 2018-2019 academic year) to € 32,000 per year (for example for the programme of medicine).¹⁰¹

Private educational institutions

Private educational institutions are not funded by the government. At these educational institutions, only the institutional tuition fee applies and not the statutory tuition fee. The institutional tuition fee does not have to cover the expenses of these institutions, in contrast to funded institutions. This amount is usually established by the individual educational institution and is often higher than the statutory tuition fee. The rate of this fee can vary between private institutions.

⁹⁷ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Hoe laat ik mijn buitenlandse diploma in Nederland erkennen [How do I obtain recognition of my foreign diploma in the Netherlands]?* <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/onderwijs-en-internationalisering/vraag-en-antwoord/hoe-laat-ik-mijn-buitenlandse-diploma-in-nederland-waarderen-of-erkennen>. Consulted on 12 October 2018.

⁹⁸ See Article 11(1)(b) of the Students and Researchers Directive

⁹⁹ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Wanneer moet ik collegegeld betalen [When do I have to pay tuition fee]?* <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/hoger-onderwijs/vraag-en-antwoord/wanneer-moet-ik-collegegeld-betalen>. Consulted on 2 October 2018.

¹⁰⁰ Section 7.11 of the Higher education and research act (WHW)

¹⁰¹ Government of the Netherlands (2018). *Wat is de wettelijke hoogte van het collegegeld op de hogeschool of universiteit [What are the tuition fees at universities and universities of applied sciences]?* <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/hoger-onderwijs/vraag-en-antwoord/hoogte-van-het-collegegeld-hogeschool-universiteit>. Consulted on 3 October 2018; And see university websites for tuition fees, for example: <https://www.rug.nl/education/tuition/fees/bachelor-degrees>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.

Exemptions

Exempted from the institutional tuition fee are EU/EEA students, students from Suriname and Switzerland and under certain conditions persons with the Turkish nationality on the basis of Association Decision 1/80 (this concerns children of Turkish employees or former Turkish employees who work or worked in an EU member state).¹⁰² They are exempted from the higher institutional tuition fee and pay the statutory tuition fee. Third-country nationals also qualify for the statutory tuition fee if they stay regularly in the Netherlands on the basis of a permanent regular residence permit or in certain cases a temporary regular residence permit.¹⁰³

- Is the level of fees for third-country nationals determined centrally (e.g. by the state) or by each HEI?

The tuition fee payable by the international student, the so-called institutional tuition fee, is determined individually by every educational institution. The exempted international students, as listed in the previous question, pay the statutory tuition fee. This is a fixed fee that is determined by the government.¹⁰⁴

Please explain:

- Is evidence of payment an admission condition?

Yes.

No.

Evidence of payment is no condition for admission in the Netherlands. However, educational institutions may determine that international students must have paid the tuition fee before the start date of the programme.¹⁰⁵ This is mostly the case when the international student does not hold a SEPA country bank account.¹⁰⁶ In this sense, it is an indirect condition for admission, since the student must comply with it in order to be admitted to the programme and will only then qualify for a residence permit.

- Are the fees capped in your Member State (i.e. is there a higher/lower threshold limit imposed)?

Yes.

No.

International students must pay at least the statutory tuition fee. There is no higher threshold limit to institutional tuition fees.

- Are the fees for international students the same as those for domestic students? If no, what is the difference (i.e. are they higher or lower)?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered no, please elaborate:

The level of tuition fees is the same for international students that are listed under the exemptions in the first question of Q4D as for Dutch students. They qualify for the statutory tuition fee. All other international students do not meet the conditions for the statutory tuition fee and therefore pay the higher institutional tuition fee. In some cases, Dutch students must also pay the institutional tuition fee, for example when they wish to follow a second programme after attaining a bachelor's or master's degree.¹⁰⁷ This is not the case when the first and second programme overlap and when the second programme is in the field of education or healthcare and the student has not yet attained a degree in these fields.

¹⁰² Section 7.45a, Higher Education and Research Act (WHW).

¹⁰³ Temporary/permanent third-country national beneficiaries of international protection also qualify for the statutory tuition fee. This group is beyond the scope of this study and will therefore not be discussed further in this template.

¹⁰⁴ Section 7.45, Higher education and research act (WHW).

¹⁰⁵ See for example: RuG (n.d.). <https://www.rug.nl/education/tuition/payment/>

¹⁰⁶ SEPA stands for Single Euro Payments Area. This is an initiative by the EU and the collective European banks to achieve harmonisation of Euro payments within Europe.

¹⁰⁷ Section 7.11 of the Higher education and research act (WHW)

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– Are specific groups of international students exempt from fees? Which ones and why?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on which groups are exempted and why:

No specific groups of international students are exempt from tuition fees.

Q4e. What is the level of **administrative fees** for third-country nationals in your Member State? Please elaborate also on other types of fees (e.g. administrative fees at universities)

Please elaborate:

Administrative fees for a first application for a residence permit for the purpose of study are €192.¹⁰⁸ The renewal costs of this residence permit are €161.

In addition, higher education institutions may charge additional fees to students (including international students) for standardised tests, such as a GMAT (management skills test) or an IELTS/TOEFL/TOEIC (language test). However, the current academic year (2018-2019) is the last year in which this is possible, because it will be abolished as of the 2019-2020 academic year.¹⁰⁹ The Ministry of OCW is investigating whether these costs can still be charged to international students in the future.¹¹⁰

Moreover, an educational institution may charge an administration fee for processing the application, for instance for diploma evaluation.¹¹¹ If students (including international students) wish to pay the tuition fee in instalments, an administration fee may also be charged.

Q4f. Are international students required to provide a proof of sufficient **knowledge of the language** of the course?¹¹² If so, what is the required level? Does the student have to provide an attestation (e.g. TOEFL test)?

Yes, proof of sufficient knowledge of the language of the course is required in general.

A proof is required for specific courses.

No, proof of sufficient knowledge of the language of the course is not required.

If proof is required (either in general or for specific courses), please elaborate and specify the required level, using the levels defined by the CEFR:¹¹³

Please elaborate:

Adequate language skills are one of the conditions for international students to qualify for enrolment on a higher education institution.¹¹⁴ Where English-language education is concerned, at least an 'academic' IELTS test with a 6.0 (six) overall band score is required for a bachelor's or master's level. The language skills must be established through one of the accepted language tests, namely: IELTS, TOEFL (on paper or via the Internet) and TOEIC (listening/reading and speaking/writing).¹¹⁵

A language requirement also applies to a preparatory year¹¹⁶ and a premaster's programme of at least six months, namely a minimum score of 5.0 for the IELTS test. To a preparatory period or a premaster's programme of less than six months, a minimum requirement of 5.5 for the IELTS test applies.

¹⁰⁸ Section 3.34, Aliens Regulations 2000.

¹⁰⁹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 31288, no 650.

¹¹⁰ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 31288, no 650.

¹¹¹ Section 7.47, Higher education and research act (WHW).

¹¹² See Article 11(1)(c) of the Students and Researchers Directive

¹¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

¹¹⁴ Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017). [http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf). Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹¹⁵ IELTS (n.d.). <https://www.ielts.org/ielts-for-organisations/common-european-framework> For more information, reference is made to: <https://www.ielts.org/ielts-for-organisations/common-european-framework>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹¹⁶ See Q7c for more information about the preparatory year.

Because the CEFR levels are more general than the scores in the IELTS, TOEFL and TOEIC tests, they are difficult to compare. A 5.5 IELTS score and a 6.0 IELTS score are both equal to the CEFR B2 level, but only a 6.0 IELTS score is sufficient to be admitted to a bachelor's programme. In principle, a 5.0 IELTS score falls under a B1 CEFR level, but here the CEFR also comprises several IELTS scores.

A number of exceptions apply to the language requirements.¹¹⁷ If the international student received their prior education in English, the educational institution may exempt them from the requirement to take a language test. This is also the case when the student has obtained an International Baccalaureate certificate for *English A: Language and Literature*. Furthermore, an educational institution may exempt a student from taking a language test if the student has obtained a diploma in secondary education in a country that is included on the diploma list drawn up by Nuffic at the request of the umbrella organisations for higher education.¹¹⁸ Finally, programmes in the field of art taught at universities of applied sciences may impose customised requirements for English language skills.

To Dutch-language education at all higher education institutions, a minimum language requirement of NT2 for the State Examination in Dutch applies. The programme for higher education that must be followed by students is equal to the CEFR B2 level.¹¹⁹

To the English as well as the Dutch language requirement applies that this is a minimum requirement. The educational institution is allowed to decide individually whether it will use this level or set a higher level.

- The student has to provide an attestation.
- Yes, an attestation is required for all courses.
- An attestation is required for specific courses.
- No.

Q4g. Are international students automatically qualified for **health insurance**?¹²⁰

- Yes, students automatically qualify for health insurance.
- No, students need to submit proof of health insurance.

Please elaborate:

International students who only stay in the Netherlands for study reasons are not allowed to take out a Dutch basic health insurance.¹²¹ The student may remain insured in the country of origin or take out a private Dutch health insurance. This health insurance must give coverage in the Netherlands, including costs related to hospitalisation and nursing in a sanatorium or psychiatric hospital.¹²²

However, if the international student is also working or doing a paid work placement parallel to their studies, the student is required to take out a Dutch basic health insurance. Healthcare benefit can then also be applied for. Healthcare benefit is a financial compensation by the government for the payment of health insurance.

Q4h. Is there a pre-determined level of **sufficient resources** for international students at national level?¹²³ If so, what is the level of sufficient resources and what type of resources are accepted?

- Yes.
- No.

¹¹⁷ Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017). [http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf). Consulted on 31 October 2018.

¹¹⁸ These are the Dutch Council for Training and Education (NRTO), the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU).

¹¹⁹ Tests and Examinations Board (CvTE) (n.d.). <https://www.staatsexamensnt2.nl/item/wat-zijn-de-staatsexamens-nt2>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹²⁰ See Articles 7(1)(c) and 11(2) of the Students and Researchers Directive

¹²¹ Study in Holland (n.d.). <https://www.studyinholland.nl/practical-matters/insurance/studying-and-health-insurance-in-holland>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹²² IND O&A – NL EMN NCP (2012). Immigration of international students to the Netherlands.

¹²³ See Articles 7(1)(e), 7(3) and 11(1)(d) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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- What is the level of sufficient resources and what documents are accepted as proof?

Please explain:

The international student must have a demonstrable minimum income of € 870.46 per month (the required amount for higher education).¹²⁴ This is equal to the amount that students living independently receive pursuant to the Student Finance Act (Wet Studiefinanciering, Wsf); this amount is adjusted biannually.¹²⁵ This amount is exclusive of fees and tuition fee and is only meant for subsistence and student material. The income of international students must be sustainable and independent. This must be demonstrated in one of the following ways:¹²⁶

-An amount on a bank account in the name of the international student. This must be at least the total required amount for one academic year, so twelve times the above-mentioned required amount per month. The third-country national can provide one of the following documents as proof, if they are no older than three months: an original bank declaration, a copy of a bank statement, or a printout from an internet banking overview of the account. When a foreign bank account is concerned, an original bank declaration is also required.

-An income from a scholarship. The document to prove this is a scholarship declaration.

-An income from periodical payments of sponsorship money. This can be from a third-party sponsor abroad or in the Netherlands, such as a family member or a company. Valid documents to demonstrate this are a 'person's' declaration of financial support combined with a bank declaration about the account of the sponsor, or a 'company's' declaration of financial support combined with a bank declaration about the account of the sponsor.

-By depositing the total required amount for one academic year (twelve times the above-mentioned required amount) on the bank account of the educational institution. The document to demonstrate this is a copy of a bank statement of the educational institution. After the international student's arrival in the Netherlands, this amount will be transferred back to the student's Dutch bank account either in instalments or at once. This way, the educational institution can establish with certainty that the international student actually has the required amount. For this reason, many educational institutions choose this option.

- *What type of resource(s) are accepted by your Member State? Please check all applicable boxes.*

Bank statement.

Guarantee by a third person.

Other, please specify:

It is not only possible to submit a bank declaration as proof, as explained in the previous question, but also to enclose a copy of the bank account via online banking.

Q4i. Other admission conditions

If applicable, please describe any other admission conditions for the purpose of residence on the territory of your Member State:

Please elaborate:

In addition to the criteria listed above, substantial conditions may also apply to programmes, which students must meet to enrol. These may vary among programmes. Students may only be admitted to some bachelor's programmes if they took certain subjects in their prior education (secondary school).¹²⁷ For master's programmes, the substantial conditions for the admission of students are generally more selective. For example, students (including international students) may have to write a letter of motivation or participate in a selection interview. It varies whether these substantial conditions only apply to international students or to Dutch students as well.

2.2 Special incentives for attracting international students

¹²⁴ Section 3.74, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

¹²⁵ Section 7, Student Finance Act (Wsf) 2000.

¹²⁶ B3/2.4 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

¹²⁷ Section 2, Higher Education Application and Admission Regulations.

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Q5. Please indicate which of the incentives listed below (Q5a-Q5i) are in place in your Member State *and please provide a brief description*. What are the incentives/measures carried out 'centrally' or by individual HEIs. *If measures are carried out by the state/regional authorities, individual HEIs and/or private entities (e.g. companies, research organisations, etc.), please provide examples.*

NB: Please also state whether measures to attract are targeted to a specific qualification level (ISCED levels 5-8) or sciences/fields of education (e.g. STEM¹²⁸).

[Possible visual element to be included in the Synthesis report: the incentives used in Member States could be visualised in a one infographics page]

Q5a. Does your Member State carry out **promotional activities and dissemination of information in the countries of origin?** Please select all boxes that apply and elaborate.

- Yes, carried out centrally.
- Yes, carried out by HEIs.
- Yes, carried out by other (educational) organisations.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please explain/elaborate by giving 1-2 examples.

From the Netherlands, information is disseminated in various ways in international students' countries of origin. A number of examples are explained below:

1. Nuffic organises several promotional activities and disseminates information in countries outside the EU. One of Nuffic's core tasks is to improve the (diversity of) incoming mobility and outgoing mobility, focusing on the *international classroom*, and to establish ties with talent. To this purpose, Nuffic manages the '*Study in Holland*' campaign, through which information is disseminated about Dutch society, the higher education system, the variety of English-language programmes, scholarships and practical matters.¹²⁹ The generic information on 'Studying in Holland' is provided via online channels (such as the 'Study in Holland' website) as well as offline channels (such as study grants). This campaign is directed exclusively at future students, inter alia in countries where Neso offices have been established. Neso stands for *Netherlands Education Support Office*, of which Nuffic manages eleven. The Nesos are financed by the Ministry of OCW and have been established in eleven countries that are of strategic importance for Dutch higher education, namely: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Korea, Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam. The office in Thailand has closed at the end of 2018.¹³⁰ The local expertise and the Neso network contribute to the further promotion of Dutch higher education, the Dutch higher education institutions, their study programmes and the scholarships available.¹³¹

The '*Study in Holland*' branding ensures a consistent, recognisable positioning of Dutch higher education abroad. The number of international students arriving from countries with a Neso has increased since the offices were established and contributes to the diversity of the *international classrooms*.¹³² As a result, the student numbers from these countries doubled between the academic year of 2006-2007 and 2017-2018.¹³³ The number of students from India has increased the most in this period, from 913 in the academic year of 2006-2007 to 1,482 in 2017-2018. The country with a Neso from which the most students originate in this period is China. In the academic year of 2017-2018, 4,475 students came from China to the Netherlands. The Nesos also support local Holland Alumni Networks (these are part of the global *Holland Alumni Network*) and strengthen the generic education market information. See Q16 for more information on the *Holland Alumni Network*.

2. In addition, higher education institutions individually undertake various activities in the field of information dissemination or promotion of programmes in target countries. To this purpose, educational institutions manage networks and contacts with educational institutions and governments abroad.¹³⁴ Institutions also use English-language websites and social media. This applies to both funded and private institutions.

¹²⁸ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

¹²⁹ Study in Holland (n.d.). <https://www.studyinholland.nl/>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

¹³⁰ Nuffic (2018). <https://www.nuffic.nl/nieuws/sluiting-neso-thailand/>. Consulted on 23 November 2018.

¹³¹ Nuffic (2018). <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/international-offices/>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹³² *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2015-2016, 22452, no 48.

¹³³ Nuffic (2018). Incoming student mobility in Dutch higher education 2017-2018. Consulted on 7 November 2018.

¹³⁴ See for example: UvA (n.d.). <http://buitenland.uva.nl/contact/netwerken-van-de-uva/netwerken-van-de-uva.html>. Consulted on 18 November 2018.

Q5b. Are scholarships and bursaries available? Please select all boxes that apply and elaborate by giving 1-2 examples (incl. the amount, type and length of the scholarship/bursary).

Yes, provided by the state/regional authorities. Please elaborate by providing 1-2 examples:

Yes, provided by HEIs. Please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:

Yes, provided by private entities. Please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:

No.

In the Netherlands many scholarships are available to international students. The 'Study in Holland' website mentions around 90 scholarships that relate to a bachelor's and/or master's level. A number of these scholarships will be explained below.

Government scholarships:

-*StuNed*: The StuNed scholarship (Studying in the Netherlands) is a scholarship programme that is part of the bilateral cooperation between the Dutch and Indonesian government.¹³⁵ StuNed has been existing since 2000. The purpose of this programme is to provide quality education to Indonesian students. In addition, StuNed contributes to strengthening the relation between the Netherlands and Indonesia. Annually, over 200 Indonesian students receive this scholarship for a master's programme (less than two years) or *short course* (two to twelve weeks). The focus of this programme is on the following fields that are considered important by Indonesia and the Netherlands: International Trade; Finance and Economics; Transport, (Agro) logistics and Infrastructure; Security and the Rule of Law; and Agro-Food and Horticulture. The maximum tuition fee granted is € 15,000 per person per year. The amount that is remunerated for administrative costs of the receiving higher education institution is up to € 455 per person. This scholarship is managed by Nuffic Neso Indonesia on behalf of the Dutch embassy in Indonesia.

-*Orange Knowledge Program (OKP)*: This scholarship programme will be explained further under Q19.

Government scholarships in collaboration with higher education institutions:

-*Holland Scholarship*: the national scholarship programme for Dutch and international students that is implemented by universities and universities of applied sciences. The objective of this scholarship is to stimulate students from outside the EU/EEA to study in the Netherlands.¹³⁶ Furthermore, Dutch students at universities and universities of applied sciences are stimulated to attend part of their programme abroad. The Holland Scholarship is funded and made available by the Ministry of OCW and 48 Dutch higher education institutions. The Holland Scholarship was introduced in response to the '*International Vision*' of the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH) and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and an opinion letter on internationalisation by the former minister for OCW in 2014.¹³⁷ Nuffic plays a supportive part in this programme through providing management, information provision and promotion, organising events and coordinating the alumni network. Per academic year, a number of scholarships is awarded to incoming students (€ 1,250) and a number of scholarships to outgoing (Dutch) students (€ 5,000). Hence, this does not cover the tuition fees of most programmes. This scholarship is only available for one year and can be received only once.

Scholarships from higher education institutions:

-*Delta programme*: The 'Dutch Education: Learning at Top level Abroad' (Delta) programme enables educational institutions to award scholarships to students from China, Indonesia, Taiwan and South Africa to study in the Netherlands.¹³⁸ These scholarships have been organised via the Nuffic Nesos in the countries of origin concerned, but do not fully cover the expenses.

In addition, some higher education institutions themselves also provide various scholarships to international students to study at their institution. For example, the Mandela Scholarship Fund of the *Leiden University Scholarship*.¹³⁹ This scholarship enables students from South Africa to study at Leiden

¹³⁵ Nuffic Neso Indonesia (n.d.). <http://www.nesoindonesia.or.id/beasiswa/stuned/stuned-english-version>. Consulted on 2 October 2018.

¹³⁶ Nuffic (n.d.). <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/holland-scholarship/>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹³⁷ VH and VSNU (2014). *Gezamenlijke visie internationaal [Joint international vision]*. <https://vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Notitie%20Visie%20Internationaal%20definitief.pdf>. Consulted on 19 October 2018; *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013-2014, 22452, no 41.

¹³⁸ Loshbo (n.d.). <https://www.loshbo.nl/digitaal-decanen-handboek/financien/financiele-ondersteuning-voor-bijzondere-gevallen-en-speciale-doeleinden/buitenlandse-studenten-in-nederland-en-financien/buitenlandse-studenten-in-nederland-beurzen>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹³⁹ Leiden University (n.d.). <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/scholarships/sea/mandela-scholarship-fund>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.

University one semester, exempt from tuition fees. It is available for the bachelor's as well as the master's level.

Scholarships from the government, higher education institutions and private institutions:

-Orange Tulip Scholarship: This scholarship is available in all countries where Nuffic has Nesos. The scholarships are made available by the government, funded and private higher education institutions, and companies.¹⁴⁰ These institutions can indicate themselves how many and which type of students they wish to make the scholarship available to, the level of the scholarship and its length. Scholarships as part of the Orange Tulip Scholarship are awarded in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Thailand and Vietnam.

Scholarships from private educational institutions

-Women in Business Scholarship: This scholarship is awarded by the private higher education institution Nyenrode Business University and it only applies to its Fulltime MBA programme. The scholarship is only available to female talent and can amount to a maximum of €19,750 of the tuition fee. In addition to this scholarship, Nyenrode has four other types of scholarship for the MBA programme, which vary in amount.¹⁴¹

-Tio Super Talent Scholarship: This is a scholarship of the private university of applied sciences Tio for one of its bachelor's programmes.¹⁴² This scholarship is made available to international students (including EU/EEA students) and is intended for students with outstanding study results. The scholarship is provided for one academic year and amounts € 8,950.

Q5c. Are there any other financial incentives or financial support (e.g. loans, tax benefits, etc.) in place?

- Yes, provided by the state.
- Yes, provided by HEIs.
- Yes, provided by private entities.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:

International students (including EU/EEA students) may qualify for various tax benefits. For instance, these students can apply for *healthcare benefits* (a contribution from the government to the costs of a Dutch health insurance).¹⁴³ However, this can only be done if certain conditions are met. For example, healthcare benefits can only be received if the student has a Dutch basic healthcare insurance and is working parallel to their studies. In addition, the student must be 18 years or older, have a valid residence permit and their income must not exceed a certain limit.

International students (including EU/EEA students) may also qualify for *housing benefits* (a contribution from the government to the rental costs of housing).¹⁴⁴ In this case also, the student must be 18 years or older, have an income that does not exceed a certain limit and hold a valid residence permit. Moreover, the student must rent an independent living space (a dwelling accessed through an own entrance door).

In some cases, international students may qualify for *student finance* (a contribution from the government to the costs of education). If they are only holders of a residence permit for the purpose of 'study', they do not qualify for student finance in principle. If international students hold a temporary regular residence permit, they may qualify for student finance under certain conditions.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Study in Holland (n.d.). <https://www.studyinholland.nl/scholarships/highlighted-scholarships/orange-tulip-scholarship-programme>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹⁴¹ Nyenrode (n.d.). <https://www.nyenrode.nl/opleidingen/p/fulltime-mba#kosten>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

¹⁴² Tio (n.d.). <https://www.tio.nl/en/scholarships/>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

¹⁴³ Tax and Customs Administration (2018). *Ik studeer in Nederland [I am studying in the Netherlands]*. <https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/belastingdienst/privetoelagen/zorgtoeslag/voorwaarden/ik-studeer-in-nederland.Geraadpleegd> op 12 oktober 2018.

¹⁴⁴ Tax and Customs Administration (2018). *Huurtoeslag [Housing benefit]*. <https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/belastingdienst/privetoelagen/huurtoeslag/>. Consulted on 12 October 2018.

¹⁴⁵ DUO (2018). *Student finance*. <https://www.duo.nl/particulier/student-finance/eligibility.jsp>. Consulted on 12 October 2018.

Q5d. Are any incentives with regard to family reunification in place?

- Do family members of international students have access to family reunification in your Member State?

Yes.

No.

Pursuant to the Aliens Act (Vreemdelingenwet, Vw) 2000, an international student may act as a sponsor for family reunification under certain conditions.¹⁴⁶ For example, the sponsor must be 21 years or older and stay regularly in the Netherlands. If family reunification in the context of an existing marriage or registered partnership is concerned, the minimum age of 18 years applies.¹⁴⁷ Family reunification is possible for the core family: the (wedded) partner of the sponsor, his/her minor children and the partner's minor children.

- If yes, do family members have the right to work in your Member State?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please explain:

The Labour Act for Aliens (Wav) does not permit family members of students to work in the Netherlands.¹⁴⁸ This also applies when the student has access to the labour market (on conditions).

Q5e. Is any support targeted at spouses and other family members of international students offered in your Member State (e.g. counselling spouses to find employment, continue their education or engage in voluntary work, social and networking activities for spouses, help with enrolling children in kindergartens/schools)? Please select all boxes that apply.

Yes, support for spouses available.

Yes, support for children available.

Yes, support for other family members available (please specify which family members this includes when elaborating below).

No.

No support targeted at spouses and other family members of international students is offered by the government.

Q5f. Are courses offered in English/other languages than the national language(s)?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

Many courses are offered in English at Dutch higher education institutions. Around 23% of all bachelor's programmes (ISCED level 6) is taught fully in English.¹⁴⁹ The remaining 77% of bachelor's programmes is taught in Dutch; this includes 12% of the programmes where students may choose between a Dutch and an English version. Of the master's programmes, 74% is in English (ISCED level 7). The remaining master's programmes are in Dutch. At universities of applied sciences, 5% of the bachelor's programmes (ISCED level 6) is taught fully in English and 13% has a Dutch and an English-language track. Of all

¹⁴⁶ Section 3.15(1)b and Section 3.4, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000; B7/2.2, Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

¹⁴⁷ B7/3.1.2., Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

¹⁴⁸ B7/4 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines 2000.

¹⁴⁹ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*.

http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. Consulted on 21 September 2018. These numbers apply to the 2017-2018 academic year.

master's programmes at universities of applied sciences (ISCED level 7), 23% is taught in English and 9% has a Dutch and an English-language track.

Some specific subjects are also taught in a different language. For example, some subjects in the 'French language and culture' programme are taught in French.¹⁵⁰ This also applies to other culture-related programmes that focus on, for example, Germany, Italy or Spain. In addition, some programmes at the various educational institutions in the border region with Germany are partially taught in German.¹⁵¹

Q5g. Are there any incentives from the state for HEIs providing **courses in other languages**?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

There are no incentives from the government for higher education institutions to provide courses in other languages.

Q5h. Is there a possibility for a fast-track application for visa/residence permits?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

On the basis of recognised sponsorship, a residence permit for the purpose of 'study' can be issued within a short period of time, allowing an educational institution to apply for a combined provisional residence permit and residence permit through the Entry and Residence (Toegang en Verblijf, TEV) procedure, or a residence permit without provisional residence permit (for international students to whom the requirement of a provisional permit does not apply). The target term for the IND to process applications for the purpose of 'study' is two weeks (ten working days) if all documents are valid. The statutory decision term is 60 days. Hence, this fast track can be used if the application is filed by the recognised sponsor.

Q5i. Are any other incentives not listed above in place?

If applicable, please describe any other incentives in place not mentioned above.

Answer:

In addition to the above-mentioned measures, no other measures or incentives are used to attract international students.

2.3 Hosting international students: preparation, arrival and housing

Q6a. What is the nature of the document issued (long-stay visa or residence permit)? *Please indicate the type and length of the residence permit. Please select all relevant boxes.*

Long-stay visa issued in the third country:

Residence permit issued (please specify the type and length of the permit):

It is a temporary regular residence permit for the purpose of 'study'. It is valid for the length of the programme plus three months, with a maximum of five years.¹⁵² A preparatory year is included in the length of the programme. If the programme is longer than five years, the higher education institution may apply for renewal of the residence permit.

¹⁵⁰ Leiden University (n.d.) <https://studiegids.leidenuniv.nl/studies/show/6359/franse-taal-en-cultuur>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.

¹⁵¹ See for example: Fontys (2018). <https://fontys.nl/Studeren/Opleidingen/Mechatronica-voltijd/Venlo-1.htm>. Consulted on 18 November 2018.

¹⁵² Section 3.58, sub 1, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

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Other (please specify):

- If your Member State issues a residence permit, is this issued in the territory of your Member State or in the third country?

Residence permit issued in the third country:

Residence permit issued in the territory of the Member State. *If so, do you issue a long-stay visa in the third country first (yes/no)?:*

Before entry into the Netherlands, the international student first needs a special visa for 90 days, namely the 'regular provisional residence permit' (machtiging tot voorlopig verblijf, mvv).¹⁵³ EU/EEA citizens and nationals of Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Vatican City, the United States, South Korea and Switzerland are exempted from this mvv requirement. The higher education institution applies to the IND on behalf of the student through the Entry and Residence (TEV) procedure or the 'temporary residence permit without mvv' ('vvr without mvv') procedure. The mvv must be collected at the Dutch embassy or consulate in the country of origin within three months. The applicant has 90 days thereafter to travel to the Netherlands. Upon entry of the Netherlands, the international student can collect their residence permit within two weeks.¹⁵⁴

Q6b. What are **processing times for visa/residence permit applications** for third-country nationals in your Member State (minimum, maximum and average)?

Please elaborate:

The target time (the **minimum**) for processing an application for the purpose of 'study' is two weeks (10 working days). The average processing time is calculated using data from the IND information system. For the calculation of the processing time, the legal starting date (the date on which the application was filed) is used as the starting date and the decision by the IND as completion date. From this, it becomes evident that the **average processing time** of granted applications was seven working days in the period of June 2013 - 31 December 2017. The starting date for calculating the processing time is 1 June 2013, because on this date the Modern Migration Policy Act took effect. The **average processing time** of rejected applications is 49 working days. The processing time of rejections is longer because in these cases supplementary documents must be requested from the educational institution and sometimes investigations must be conducted (for example in cases of document fraud). The **maximum** decision time for processing an application is 60 days.¹⁵⁵

Q6c. What are the main requirements for the **renewal of a residence permit** for international students (e.g. does the student need to prove his/her attendance in HEI courses or is the study progress measured)?

Please explain:

The residence permit for the purpose of study applies for the length of the programme, with a maximum of five years, as explained in Q6a. However, some programmes are longer than five years. In that case, the higher education institution may apply for renewal of the residence permit.

In addition, the international student must demonstrate sufficient progress in their studies (this means that at least 50% of ECTS credits must have been obtained in the academic year in question).¹⁵⁶ If the student does not meet this requirement, they lose their right to a residence permit in principle. However, this does not happen automatically. If the international student enrolls on a different programme at a different institution, they retain their residence permit. The student may also retain their residence permit if a right of residence has been obtained for a different purpose of residence. For more information on the study progress requirement, please refer to Q10b.

¹⁵³ B3/3.3. Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000. Section 14, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

¹⁵⁵ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2016, no 415.

¹⁵⁶ Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017).

[http://www.vsnv.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnv.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf) Consulted on 5 October 2015

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Q7. Please indicate if the **hosting initiatives and measures** listed below (Q7a-Q7e) are in place in your Member State. Please state which institution is responsible for these measures.

Q7a. Is induction and orientation support provided in your Member State (incl. opening a bank account, registering in the healthcare system, etc.)? *Please select all relevant boxes.*

- Yes, state-organised measures for support in place.
- Yes, support provided by HEIs.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the support measures provided:

Support relating to introduction and orientation is generally provided by the educational institution itself. However, the number of measures differs per educational institution. Some higher education institutions have *support offices* for international students (including EU/EEA students).¹⁵⁷ There are also other examples of measures:¹⁵⁸

- introduction days or an introduction week;
- student support teams. These are teams of students who are already studying at the education institution and support international students when making all sorts of practical arrangements;
- assistance when taking out an insurance;
- assistance with buying a bicycle;
- assistance when registering at a municipality.

In addition to these information schemes by educational institutions, there is also the so-called Red-Carpet Consultation (Rode Loper overleg).¹⁵⁹ This is a consultation in which Nuffic, the Ministry of Justice and Security, the Ministry of OCW, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, VH, VSNU, Kences (knowledge centre for student housing), Education Executive Agency (DUO), Studielink, Studiekeuze123 and VNO/NCWO-MKB participate. The purpose is to remove administrative obstacles (*mobility obstacles: mobstacles*) from legislation, regulations and other procedures for international students. One of the means to achieve this is the dissemination of clear information on student finance, residence permits and other administrative procedures. To this purpose, Nuffic manages the tool 'Pathfinder', implemented on the own websites of 42 higher education institutions.¹⁶⁰

Q7b. Is support with finding housing and accommodation provided in your Member State? Please select all boxes that apply.

- Yes, state-organised measures for support in place.
- Yes, support provided by HEIs.
- Yes, support provided by other organisations.
- No, support not available.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the type of support provided:

In the Netherlands, the responsibility for finding suitable housing does not lie with the educational institutions, but with the international students themselves. This also applies to Dutch and EU/EEA students. Some support is offered by the higher education institutions in finding a room in the Netherlands. This is mostly in the form of information. In addition, there are campuses of higher education institutions in the Netherlands where international students can be assigned a room. However,

¹⁵⁷ University of Amsterdam (n.d.). <https://student.uva.nl/en/content/az/international-offices/office-international-student-affairs/office-international-student-affairs.html>. Consulted on 18 October 2018.

¹⁵⁸ See the websites of educational institutions for the various measures, such as: Maastricht University (n.d.). <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/nl/support/voordat-je-studie-begint/vanuit-het-buitenland-naar-de-um/welkomstpakket-voor-internationa-0>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.

¹⁵⁹ EP-Nuffic (2016). Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report, p. 2. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 25 September 2018.

¹⁶⁰ Nuffic (2018). <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/wet-en-regelgeving-voor-internationale-studenten/#pathfinder>. Consulted on 7 November 2018.

the space available is often limited.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, Nuffic provides information on housing on the 'Study in Holland' website.

Because there is a housing shortage for international students in the Netherlands, the National Student Union (LSVb) and the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) have set up a *housing hotline*.¹⁶² International students can call this hotline with questions and complaints about housing. However, the housing shortage also applies to Dutch and EU/EEA students; see Q13a for more information.

Q7c. Are preparatory courses (incl. language courses, orientation courses, multicultural sessions, intercultural awareness/diversity courses) offered in your Member State?

Yes, state-organised measures for courses in place.

Yes, courses provided by HEIs.

Yes, support provided by other organisations.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the courses provided:

Preparatory courses are offered by both higher education institutions themselves and other organisations.

Dutch language classes

The available Dutch language classes are organised by various funded and private (educational) institutions. For example, Utrecht University and the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences offer Dutch language courses.¹⁶³ According to the National Student Association (Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg, ISO), the availability of Dutch language courses is limited and the courses are often offered at high prices. The courses that are on offer are often beginner's courses, after which there is usually no (affordable) follow-up course. For more information on this, please refer to Q17.

Because the availability of Dutch language classes differs per (educational) institution, an overview of Dutch language classes has been drawn up on the 'Study in Holland' website on the initiative of the action plan *Make it in the Netherlands*.¹⁶⁴ In this overview, reference is made to:

- Dutch language classes abroad, which can be found through the local Nuffic Nesos in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Korea, Russia, Vietnam;
- Dutch language classes in the Netherlands per city at a beginner's, intermediate and advanced level;
- summer courses through the Dutch Language Union (Taalunie)¹⁶⁵;
- various other convenient links and applications (such as the *Hoi Holland!* application, a *serious game* introducing non-Dutch students to the Dutch language and culture in an accessible way).

Other subjects and courses

Other subjects and courses are also on offer regionally by various educational institutions and other organisations. For example, some higher education institutions provide introductory courses on Dutch culture.¹⁶⁶

Preparatory year

¹⁶¹ See for example: Leiden University (n.d.). <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/international-students/prepare-your-stay/housing/via-leiden-university-housing-office>. Consulted on 17 October 2018.

¹⁶² Hulle, R. van (2018). Landelijke Monitor Studentenhuisvesting [National Student Housing Monitor]. *ABF Research (2018)*. For more information, please refer to: https://www.kences.nl/assets/files/2018/def-r2018-0001rh_20181001.pdf. Consulted on 17 October 2018.; LSVb (n.d.). <https://dutchstudentunion.nl/housinghotline/>. Consulted on 17 October 2018.

¹⁶³ See for example: Utrecht University (n.d.) <https://www.uu.nl/en/education/welcome-to-utrecht/student-life/learning-dutch>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (n.d.). <http://www.amsterdamuas.com/practical-matters/prospective-students/auas/student-affairs/language-and-preparatory-course/language-and-preparatory-course.html>. Consulted on 17 October 2018.

¹⁶⁴ EP-Nuffic (2016). *Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report*, p. 14. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 8 October 2018.

¹⁶⁵ The Dutch Language Union develops and stimulates policies for the Dutch language in the Netherlands, Flanders and Surinam and supports the Dutch language in the world.

¹⁶⁶ See for example: Maastricht University (n.d.). <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/education/contract/dutch-culture-and-language>. Consulted on 17 October 2018.

In addition to the standalone subjects/courses described above, some educational institutions also offer a preparatory year to international students, preparing them for the programme they will take. The international student may take such a preparatory year if it is offered under the responsibility of the educational institution where the student can subsequently be admitted to the regular programme.¹⁶⁷ During this preparatory year, English language and study skills can for example be acquired and improved, but supplementary subjects can also be taken that are required for admission to the desired programme.¹⁶⁸

In addition, pre-master's programmes are also on offer for some master's programmes. These are bridging programmes where Dutch and EU/EEA students as well as non-EU/EEA students can catch up on missing subjects from their prior education to comply with the requirements of a master's programme. International students are allowed to attend such a premaster's programme.¹⁶⁹

Q7d. If applicable, please describe **any other hosting initiatives and measures not mentioned above**.

Please elaborate:

There are no other hosting initiatives/measures for international students.

2.4 Rights of international students

Q8. Right to work

Q8a. How many hours are international students allowed to work per week or months per year?¹⁷⁰

[Possible visual element to be included in Synthesis report: map indicating the number of hours in each Member State.]

Please elaborate:

Since 23 May 2018, international students have been allowed to work up to 16 hours per week parallel to their studies, or fulltime in the summer months June, July and August.¹⁷¹ There is no restriction to work for self-employed individuals (but they must progress sufficiently in their studies).

Q8b. Are any restrictions in place in your Member State in terms of the **type/field of work international students** are allowed to work in?

Yes, restrictions in place.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the type of restrictions in place:

No restrictions are in place in the Netherlands in terms of the type or field of work international students are allowed to work in.

Q8c. Do students need to obtain **prior authorisation** for the right to work in accordance with national law?

Yes, prior authorisation required.

¹⁶⁷ Article 1, Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017).

[http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf).

¹⁶⁸ See for example: Saxion (n.d.). <https://www.saxion.edu/site/programmes/degree/details/preparatory-year/preparatory-year/>; Maastricht University (n.d.).

<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/education/contract/foundation-programme>

¹⁶⁹ Article 5.2, Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017).

[http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf).

¹⁷⁰ See Article 24 of the Students and Researchers Directive.

¹⁷¹ B1/33, Aliens Employment Act Implementation Regulations 2014.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the purpose of this prior authorisation and the entity responsible for granting it:

Students who wish to work need a work permit for third-country nationals (Tewerkstellingsvergunning, TWV), and these students must take out a Dutch health insurance.¹⁷² The employer employing the international student must apply for this TWV. In the application, the international student's residence permit must be included as proof, together with a concept employment agreement.¹⁷³ The employer must pay a remuneration in conformity with the market, meaning that the student must earn the usual salary for the type of work (usually the collective labour agreement salary, but at least the statutory minimum wage for the number of hours worked). The TWV is issued leniently. For example, there is no need to check whether there is a prioritised supply on the labour market for the open vacancy. The main purpose of stay is 'study' and as a result it is only allowed to conduct work of an additional nature, meaning up to 16 hours per week or fulltime in the months June July and August. The TWV is valid for a maximum of one year. An application for the TWV can be filed by the employer at the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV).¹⁷⁴ This is the government institution responsible for services concerning employee insurance schemes and TWVs in the Netherlands, commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. For a work placement in the context of the study programme, no TWV is required, but a trainee agreement must be entered into.¹⁷⁵

Q8d. Are international students entitled to exercise **self-employed economic activity**?

Yes, self-employment possible.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

International students are entitled to exercise self-employed activities parallel to their studies.¹⁷⁶ This way they can develop their entrepreneurial skills while still at university. This serves as an incentive for international students to participate in innovative start-ups and after completion of their programme to apply for a residence permit for start-ups.¹⁷⁷ Study, however, remains the primary activity and the study progress must be safeguarded.

Q9. Do students have the right to **carry out in parallel to their studies or defer their studies for a training or a job** in the Member State?

Yes, deferral of studies possible.

Yes, carrying out a training/job in parallel to studies possible.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

Please refer to Q8a.

Q10a. Do students have to **complete their studies within a maximum period of time**?

Yes.

No.

¹⁷² B3/3, Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

¹⁷³ Annex 1, section 33, Aliens Employment Act Implementation Regulations.

¹⁷⁴ For more information, please refer to: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/nieuw-in-nederland/vergunningen-buitenlandse-werknemers>. Consulted on 19 October 2018. In addition, Nuffic mapped out which steps employers must take to employ international students, to facilitate the application procedure. For more information, see: <https://www.hollandalumni.nl/medias/editor/oneshot-images/7461753705b1540c21a3e1.pdf>. Consulted on 8 October 2018.

¹⁷⁵ Section 1f, sub 1 under b, Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (BuWav) 2014.

¹⁷⁶ Section 1f, Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (BuWav) 2014; B3/3 Vreemdelingen circulaire (Vc) 2000.

¹⁷⁷ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2017, no 134.

If you have answered yes, please indicate the period:

In the Dutch educational legislation there is no maximum term in which students must attain their degree. In principle, this also applies to international students. However, international students must make a minimum study progress not to lose their residence permit (as explained in Q10b). This progress amounts to a minimum of 50% of the study credits for one academic year. Considering this requirement, the maximum period in which international students must graduate is the double number of years prescribed for their programme. This means that when an international student is taking a three-year bachelor's programme at a university and subsequently a one-year university-level master's programme, they should obtain their diploma within eight years according to the study progress requirement.

The residence permit for the purpose of 'study' is valid for the length of the programme and three additional months for its administrative completion, with a maximum of five years.¹⁷⁸ If the programme is longer than five years, the educational institution may renew the residence permit for the remaining time of the programme. Renewal is always possible for up to five years.

Q10b. In accordance with Directive 2016/801 Article 21(3),¹⁷⁹ Member states may withdraw a visa/residence permit in case of a lack of progress in the relevant studies. Has your Member State transposed this provision?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on how the lack of progress is assessed by your Member State:

International students must attain at least 50% of the available credits for every academic year.¹⁸⁰ This is registered in a study progress monitor by the higher education institution where the international student studies. The educational institution must report this annually to the IND. If the international student does not reach this percentage or no longer studies at the institution, the reason for this is established by the higher education institution, for example in a study progress interview. If it is established that the international student does not or not sufficiently study, or that the level is too high, the educational institution must notify the IND.¹⁸¹ In this case, the international student's residence permit is revoked in principle, after which the student is entitled to up to three months of stay. However, the permit is not revoked automatically, because the international student has the option to enrol on a different programme at a different institution. In that case they retain their residence permit. The student may also retain their residence permit if it has been obtained for a different purpose of residence.

There are exceptions to the study progress requirement, for example for excusable reasons or relevant board memberships.¹⁸²

To preparatory years applies that the international student must attain all available credits within one year. If after the preparatory year there is no subsequent enrolment on the programme, the residence permit will also be revoked.¹⁸³

If the educational institution has unenrolled the international student, it is possible for the international student to obtain a new residence permit if the student enrolls on a different programme within two years.¹⁸⁴

Q11. Do the **number of years** an international student possesses a residence permit for the purpose of studying count towards being granted access to long-term residence or citizenship?

Yes.

¹⁷⁸ Section 3.58, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

¹⁷⁹ See Article 21(2)(f) of the Students and Researchers Directive

¹⁸⁰ Gedragscode internationale student hoger onderwijs [Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education] (2017).

[http://www.vsnv.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs\(1\).pdf](http://www.vsnv.nl/files/documenten/Gedragscode%20internationale%20student%20hoger%20onderwijs(1).pdf).
Consulted on 19 October 2018.

¹⁸¹ Section 3.91b, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

¹⁸² Section 7.51, Higher Education and Research Act (WHW).

¹⁸³ B3/4 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

¹⁸⁴ Section 3.82, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

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No

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

In some situations, the number of years an international student studied in the Netherlands may count towards being granted a permanent residence permit or Dutch citizenship. The study period counts for 50% towards the application for a permit for EU long-term residents.¹⁸⁵ The study period counts in full for applications for a permanent residence permit, which also applies to an application for Dutch citizenship.¹⁸⁶

External factors affecting attracting international students

Q12. Based on existing national sources (evaluation reports, media reports, etc.), what are the **external factors** affecting the attraction of international students in your Member State? Please select all relevant boxes.

- HEI rankings
- Member State is a hub for specific fields
- Language in which courses are taught
- Culture
- Socio-economic factors (e.g. living costs)
- Other (please specify):
- No information available.

Please elaborate:

From research by *The Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration* it becomes evident that the Netherlands ranked 15th in the ranking of top destinations for study in 2015. Among other reasons, the Netherlands is an attractive destination for international students because of the wide variety of programmes and subjects taught in English.¹⁸⁷

In June 2014, I-graduate conducted a study for Nuffic in which 2,000 students from eight countries (Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa and Turkey) filled in a survey.¹⁸⁸ From it, it became evident that international students from the aforementioned countries wished to study in the Netherlands for the following reasons:

- high standard of living;
- free, open, tolerant and safe society;
- internationally oriented society;
- high quality of education and research (90% of the respondents indicated that they considered the standard Dutch education 'good' or 'outstanding');
- many subjects in English, so that learning the Dutch language is not necessary (63% of the respondents indicated that this was the case);
- strong economy;
- in addition, students indicate that the city of Amsterdam in particular attracts them to studying in the Netherlands.

Moreover, 81% of the respondents indicate that they estimated the chance of finding work in the Netherlands to be 'good' or 'outstanding'. From the survey it emerged that the options on the labour market were considered very important for the choice of a certain country of study (86% of the respondents indicated this).

Geopolitical developments can also make the Netherlands attractive for international students. For example, the VSNU and the Ministry of OCW have indicated that it is expected that Brexit will have

¹⁸⁵ Section 45b, sub 3, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

¹⁸⁶ Section 21, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000; Section 8, Netherlands Nationality Act.

¹⁸⁷ SVR Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (2015). *Train and Retain, Career Support for International Students in Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden Study*. <https://www.svr-migration.de/en/publications/train-and-retain/>. Consulted on 17 October 2018.

¹⁸⁸ Ripmeester, N. (2014). Measuring the brand awareness of Dutch Higher Education abroad. Report prepared for Nuffic. *I-graduate International Insight*.

consequences for the number of international students (including EU/EEA students) coming to the Netherlands. For example, international students who will not go to Great Britain after Brexit may opt for the Netherlands as their destined country of study.¹⁸⁹

Lastly, the Netherlands is considered a hub for certain fields of study. This concerns programmes of internationally high repute, for which students specifically come to the Netherlands. For example, Wageningen University & Research ranks top of the QS World Universities Ranking in the field of agriculture and forestry and the University of Amsterdam ranks top for communications and media studies.¹⁹⁰ Another example is the aerospace engineering programme at Delft University of Technology. This programme is listed in the top 15 of the QS World Universities Ranking of the subject.¹⁹¹

2.5 Challenges and good practices in attracting international students

Q13. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State on attracting international students and for whom is it considered a challenge/good practice (HEI, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice: why is this considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/surveys/evaluation reports/interviews/other?

a) Challenges:

Please elaborate:

Making sufficient (staffing) capacity available at universities and universities of applied sciences.

As specified earlier in Q2, the strong increase in the number of international students at universities is a theme that has raised a debate in the media and politics. This increase can mostly be noticed at universities and to a lesser extent at universities of applied sciences. According to VSNU, the substantial increase of international students has burdened universities and the most important challenge is for universities to manage the influx.¹⁹² Not only the high numbers contribute to this, but also the unpredictability of the student influx and the unequal distribution of international students among cities, institutions and programmes. VSNU, VH and ISO state that the large number of international students is mostly a challenge to (staffing) capacity of universities (to a lesser extent to universities of applied sciences), safeguarding the quality of education, and making sufficient housing available.¹⁹³ The challenges ensuing from the increase of international students and recommendations to solve them are listed in the Internationalisation Agenda by VSNU and VH.¹⁹⁴ For more information, see Q2.

Housing shortage

A challenge that is part of a broader social problem is the housing shortage. It poses a challenge to students (including international students) as well as higher education institutions, and universities in particular.¹⁹⁵ The Ministry of OCW and Nuffic have indicated that it seems as if students have found housing at the beginning of the academic year (around October). According to Nuffic this does, however, not provide an insight into whether this is really the case and where students are housed. When demand outstrips supply, the risk is increased on more expensive alternatives or options without a decent rental contract. Furthermore, the question arises who in principle is responsible for this problem (are these, for

¹⁸⁹ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague; Interview with OCW policy staff member, 1 October 2018 in The Hague.

¹⁹⁰ QS TopUniversities (2018). <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2018/agriculture-forestry>. Consulted on 14 November 2018; QS TopUniversities (2018). <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2018/communication-media-studies>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

¹⁹¹ QS TopUniversities (2018). <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/university-subject-rankings/2018/engineering-mechanical>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

¹⁹² Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

¹⁹³ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague and interview with VSNU international domain leader. 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

¹⁹⁴ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf and *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2018-2019, 33104, no 20.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague. Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague. Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

example, the educational institutions, municipalities, or a different party). For example, from their role as recognised sponsor, educational institutions have a so-called 'duty of care', meaning that students may only be recruited when admissible to the programme and that they must be given adequate information on the applicable regulations. It is, however, not clear to which extent housing students falls under the duty of care. There are various initiatives to combat the housing problem. For example, in the Internationalisation Agenda by VH and VSNU, a number of recommendations is made to reduce the problems and in October 2018 a *National Action Plan for Student Housing 2018-2021* was launched.¹⁹⁶ In addition, Nuffic and higher education institutions make efforts to inform international students in good time about the importance of starting to make housing arrangements at an early stage. For more information, see Q2.

Estimating the effect of the level of tuition fees

International students must pay the institutional tuition fee, which is often many times higher than the statutory tuition fee paid by Dutch students (see Q4d). According to VH, VSNU, ISO, OCW and the IND, the level of tuition fees is a tool which can be used to influence the size of the student influx. It is, however, difficult to estimate the precise effect the level of the institutional tuition fee has on the number of enrolments of non-EU/EEA students. For example, according to VH the level of the institutional fee can be a considerable obstacle for international students from countries such as India. This is partially compensated by scholarships for talented students, but not fully.¹⁹⁷ According to ISO and VH, it could be possible that on the other hand international students are inclined to enrol on programmes with a high institutional tuition fee, because they would expect this programme to be of a better quality than a less expensive programme. Therefore, it is mostly a challenge to estimate the effect of the level of institutional tuition fees on the number of non-EU/EEA student enrolments. The opinion letter by the minister for OCW of June 2018 and the Internationalisation Agenda by VH and VSNU inter alia list the exploration of any adjustments to institutional tuition fees as an instrument to better manage the number of international students flowing in.¹⁹⁸

Admission policy in relation to legislation and regulations

Related to the high influx of international students are the bottlenecks that educational institutions and the IND experience in relation to legislation and regulations in the field of education law and aliens law.¹⁹⁹ These different laws and regulations are not always sufficiently aligned according to VSNU, VH, IND, Nuffic and Migration Policy Department (DMB), and as a result, educational institution have limited options to reject applications or re-applications by non-EU/EEA students.²⁰⁰

Educational institutions decide on the basis of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) whether a student can be admitted to the institution. However, pursuant to the WHW, educational institutions are not allowed to reject students, for example in case of doubts about their motivation to complete the programme. This can not only pose a problem to first registrations, but also to so-called '*study hoppers*': international students who switch to a different educational institution or programme, for example because they foresee that their residence permit will be revoked as a result of their lacking study progress. If a student leaves the programme before the educational institution deregisters them at the IND and they still have a valid residence permit, another educational institution must admit this student. The educational institution can also not reject the student when there is a suspicion that their study progress at the prior programme was not made because of a lack of motivation. In addition, the IND has limited grounds to reject the issuance of a residence permit to students (for example because of public order aspects or insufficient financial means). In practice this means that the educational institution is unable or not allowed to reject the student and the IND will then grant the residence permit because of a lack of grounds for rejection.

The above it difficult to manage and/or limit the influx of international students and to safeguard a balanced *international classroom*. In practice the number of applications for certain programmes can be too high and the balance between international (and EU/EEA) students and Dutch students can be unequal. Educational institutions have therefore asked to provide more tools to facilitate management of

¹⁹⁶ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*.
http://www.vsnunl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf and *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2018-2019, 33104, no 20.

¹⁹⁷ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

¹⁹⁸ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

¹⁹⁹ These are the Aliens Act (Vw) 2000, Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) and the Code of Conduct for Higher Education.

²⁰⁰ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague; interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague; interview with IND and DMB policy staff, 8 October in The Hague.

the influx of international students. One solution suggested in the Internationalisation Agenda by VH and VSNU is that a *numerus fixus* (capacity limitation) is imposed for specific English-language tracts of programmes and under specific circumstances for international students. At the moment, this still requires explicit approval from the Ministry of OCW. The opinion letter by the minister for OCW of June 2018 states that the alignment of the Aliens Act (Vw) and the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) will be examined more closely and that it will be investigated whether (legal) solutions are options in this field.²⁰¹ This way, more balance would be achieved between welcoming international students on the one hand, since this is a desired form of migration, and options for selection and management on the other.

Information on administrative procedures

According to VH and ISO, an obstacle may be posed to international students by the fact that much information important for them is in Dutch. This emerges *inter alia* from a survey among international students.²⁰² This is, for example, information by municipalities, the Tax and Customs Administration and the UWV. VH moreover mentions that it can be difficult for international students to settle certain administrative affairs that are necessary to function in the Netherlands, such as applying for a Citizen Service Number (BSN)²⁰³, registering at a municipality, opening a bank account and taking out a health insurance.²⁰⁴ According to Nuffic, the existing regulations for health insurances are moreover complex and it is unclear whether the information about health insurances always reaches students. This can result in international students taking out a Dutch basic health insurance without being entitled to do so. The Dutch insurance agency is also responsible when wrongly insuring the student. Other risks are that international students eventually must pay higher healthcare costs or are granted healthcare benefits without entitlement.²⁰⁵ Better information is, however, being developed on administrative procedures, through for example the Red-Carpet consultation (part of *Make it in the Netherlands*).²⁰⁶

Information on educational institutions

As specified in Q3, the system for higher education in the Netherlands is binary: a distinction is made between *university* and *higher professional education*. The admission requirements and duration of the programme vary between both forms of higher education. According to ISO and VH, this distinction can be difficult for international students. The IND also indicates that it can be a challenge, in particular for international students who take a university of applied sciences to be a university.

b) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

The positioning of Dutch education

-Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nesos)

By order of the Dutch government, the Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nesos) have been established in various countries and they position Dutch higher education in these countries (see Q5a). This has led to among other things a considerable increase of international students from those countries, stronger institutional collaborations and more ties with Holland Alumni.²⁰⁷ Because the Dutch higher education institutions closely cooperate with the Nesos, this benefits joint positioning. Nesos have also positively affected the attraction of foreign students, according to the Ministry of OCW, Nuffic, VSNU, VH and ISO.²⁰⁸

-Active recruitment policy

According to VH and ISO higher education institutions have an active recruitment policy. An increasing number of institutions establish own departments that focus on international students and international

²⁰¹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 22452, no 59.

²⁰² ISO, LSVb, ESN (2017). Annual International Student Survey. <http://www.iso.nl/persbericht/iso-lsvb-en-esn-minister-vergeet-de-positie-van-de-internationale-studenten/>. Consulted on 17 October 2018. 311 students participated in this survey.

²⁰³ The Citizen Service Number is a unique personal number for all persons registered in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP). It is necessary for contact with the government about, for example, tax or healthcare.

²⁰⁴ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁰⁵ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁰⁶ EP-Nuffic (2016). *Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report*. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 25 September 2018.

²⁰⁷ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2015-2016, 22452, no 48.

²⁰⁸ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague; interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague; interview with Nuffic policy staff members, 3 October 2018 in The Hague; interview with OCW policy staff member, 8 October 2018 in The Hague.

cooperation. Moreover, institutions increasingly *brand themselves internationally*, for example making the choice to translate the name of the institution into English. A joint approach by VSNU and VH was described in their *international vision* from 2014.²⁰⁹ This is inter alia to ensure that the cooperation between institutions does not turn into competition abroad.

English language programmes

In the Netherlands, programmes are widely available in English: 23% of all bachelor's programmes (ISCED 6) and 74% of all master's programmes are in English.²¹⁰ According to VSNU, this availability of English language programmes is important for attracting international students, especially when certain sectors of the labour market are concerned which can profit from the arrival of these students.²¹¹ At the same time, the increasing number of programmes in English has sparked off a debate because it would be at the expense of among other things the quality of education at institutions and programmes (see Q2 for more information). Moreover, while the wide availability of English language programmes has proven a *good practice* for attracting international students, it can also pose a challenge to the retention of international students. After all, not speaking the Dutch language may pose an obstacle for social integration during their studies and finding a job after graduation. For more information, see Q17.

Cooperation between government and educational institutions

The cooperation between educational institution and government institutions has improved substantially in the past years. Formally this has been arranged via the recognised sponsorship. Further agreements between educational institutions about how to work with international students have been recorded in the *Code of Conduct for International Students*. In addition, the *Mobstacles* (mobility obstacles) network and a closely related IND sounding board have, according to Nuffic, facilitated close cooperation between ministries and implementation institutions on the one hand and higher education institutions on the other.²¹² Signs for policy implementation and possible bottlenecks are discussed here, among other things, and various implementation practices can be aligned more closely. As a result, the reception and counselling of international students is being improved. In addition, the final report of the *Make it in the Netherlands* action plan shows that the many (regional) partnerships between among others higher education institutions, students and the government that were founded and/or strengthened in the period of 2013-2016 have helped to establish ties between international students and the Netherlands.²¹³

Recognised sponsorship and Code of Conduct for International Students in Higher Education

Since the introduction of the recognised sponsor system, the application procedure has become easier and faster for international students. This is in line with the objectives as specified in Q1f to keep the Netherlands attractive for international students as an international knowledge-based economy. The IND has indicated that in addition to the guidelines of the Code of Conduct for Higher Education, the cooperation with higher education institutions as recognised sponsors relies on mutual trust and a great extent of self-regulation by and within the field of education. According to the IND, almost all educational institutions take their role as recognised sponsors and the ensuing responsibilities very seriously.²¹⁴ As a result of the recognised sponsorship, more responsibility has been placed on educational institutions for the admission process of international students. An important instrument to streamline these responsibilities is the *Code of Conduct for International Students*. It contains agreements made between educational institutions, such as agreements on informing students or language requirements. It has become evident from an evaluation of the code of conduct that educational institutions have evaluated the code positively and found that it helps them to implement policies.²¹⁵ According to the IND, the mutual trust and cooperation between the parties involved in the field of education have improved inter alia as a result of the code of conduct. An important point of attention is, however, that some staff at educational institutions are not familiar with the code of conduct, but do have to work with international students. For this reason, a summary of the code of conduct has been drawn up and two short videos have been made that provide the information required.

²⁰⁹ VH and VSNU (2014). *Gezamenlijke visie internationaal [Joint international vision]*.

<https://vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Notitie%20Visie%20Internationaal%20definitief.pdf>. Consulted on 19 October 2018.

²¹⁰ VSNU and VH (2018). *Internationaliseringsagenda Hoger Onderwijs [Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education]*. Consulted on 21 September 2018:

http://www.vsnunl.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Internationaal/Internationaliseringsagenda%20Hoger%20Onderwijs_2018.pdf. These numbers apply to the 2017-2018 academic year.

²¹¹ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

²¹² Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²¹³ EP-Nuffic (2016). *Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report*.

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 25 September 2018.

²¹⁴ Interview with two IND policy staff members, 8 October 2018 in The Hague.

²¹⁵ National Commission for Higher Education (2017). *Evaluation of Code of Conduct for Higher Education, final report*.

Section 3. Measures and incentives to **retain** international graduates

3.1. Measures and incentives for the retention of international graduates.

This section examines the measures and incentives to retain international graduates after their studies in place in the Member States. Statistics provided in Annex 1.4 and Annex 1.5 will be used to contextualise the measures and incentives reported on by Member States.

NB: *in your answers to Q14-16, if applicable, please indicate whether the policy/offer/strategy differs between qualification levels (ISCED levels 5-8).*

Q14. Measures and incentives to **retain** international graduates in Member States.

Q14a. What are the conditions for **access after study** to national labour market/ self-employment/ start up or spin-off activities/ research project?

Please briefly outline the conditions:

A residence permit obtained by an international student for the purpose of 'study' is granted for the length of the programme and three supplementary months for administrative completion of the programme.²¹⁶ After this period, the right of residence expires, unless an application is filed to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, IND) for a permit with a different purpose of residence. In order to enter the Dutch labour market immediately after completion of the study programme, an application for a temporary regular residence permit must be filed. This residence permit may, for example, be issued for the residence purpose of self-employment or to work as a highly skilled migrant. Depending on the envisaged category of labour, different conditions may apply. Furthermore, international graduates may apply for a residence permit for an orientation year for higher educated persons, which poses no restrictions on the labour market (see Q16).

General conditions

The general conditions applicable to all residence permits are²¹⁷:

- The third-country national must possess a valid passport.
- The third-country national does not pose a threat to public order or national security, has not been convicted for a crime and has not committed war crimes, terrorist acts or crimes against humanity.
- The third-country national must take out a health insurance with sufficient coverage.
- The third-country national must be examined for tuberculosis in the Netherlands (exempting those third-country nationals who already have a valid residence permit in the Netherlands).
- The third-country national must possess sufficient means of existence.

If the international graduate continues his stay immediately after completion of his studies (and there is thus a continuation of stay in the Netherlands), there is no need to meet the Regular Provisional Residence Permit (machtiging tot voorlopig verblijf, mvv) requirement again. The period in which the decision of the application for a residence permit should be awaited, can then be spent in the Netherlands, provided that the application was filed on time.²¹⁸

In addition to these general conditions, specific conditions apply to the different purposes of stay. Below, requirements are briefly outlined which must be met in order to obtain a residence permit for work as a highly skilled migrant, academic researcher, paid employment, work on a self-employed basis, or work within the framework of start-ups. In addition, graduates may in some cases qualify for a residence permit on the basis of family reunification. This option will not be discussed further here.

Highly skilled migrants

If an international graduate wishes to apply for a residence permit for work as a highly skilled migrant, they must have concluded an employment agreement with an employer in the Netherlands. This employer must be registered as a recognised sponsor with the IND.²¹⁹ In addition, the salary criterion must be met.²²⁰ A lower salary criterion applies to international graduates complying with the requirements for the 'orientation year for higher educated persons' scheme than to other highly skilled migrants (see Q14a and Q14b). Moreover, a work permit for third-country nationals (Tewerkstellingsvergunning, TWV) is not required.

Academic researchers

In addition to a residence permit for highly skilled migrants, it is possible to apply for a residence permit as an academic researcher.²²¹ To obtain this permit, the following requirements must be met:

- The third-country national must conduct research at a Dutch educational institution registered with the IND as recognised sponsor.
- The third-country national must have an appropriate diploma of higher education that admits them to the doctorate programme.
- The research project has been approved by the educational institution.
- The third-country national must have an employment agreement or hospitality agreement with the educational institution.

Paid employment

²¹⁶ Section 3.58, sub 1, under m, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000. B3/3 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

²¹⁷ B4 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines 2000.

²¹⁸ Section 17, sub 1, under f, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000.

²¹⁹ Section 3.30a, sub 1, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000 and Section 2c, sub 2, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²²⁰ Section 1d, sub 1 under a, Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (BuWav)

²²¹ Section 3.33, sub 1 and sub 2, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

International graduates may apply for a residence permit for work in paid employment. To work in the Netherlands, a Single Work and Residence Permit (Gecombineerde Vergunning voor Verblijf en Arbeid, GVVA) is required, combining the residence permit and the work permit for third-country nationals (TWV). An application for a GVVA can be filed at the IND, after which the IND requests an advice from the Employee Insurance Agency (Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen, UWV) on admission to the labour market. The UWV assesses it against the conditions of the Labour Act for Aliens (Wet arbeid vreemdelingen, Wav). A residence permit will (among others) not be granted if there are sufficient candidates for the vacancy in the Netherlands or the EU or if the remuneration is not in conformity with the market.

Self-employment

In addition, it is also possible to apply for a residence permit to work on a self-employed basis. To qualify for this, it is assessed by means of the advice by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, RVO) whether the activities are of an innovative nature and accordingly are of substantial interest for the Dutch economy.²²² This is done by means of a scoring system.²²³ In addition, the following requirements must be met²²⁴:

- The third-country national sustainably and independently acquires sufficient means of existence from the activities concerned.
- The third-country national possesses the necessary permits/competency requirements to exercise his profession and is registered in the Trade Register of the Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KvK).

Start-up

It is also possible to qualify for a regular residence permit as a start-up. This category of third-country nationals often does not yet meet the requirements for a residence permit for employed or self-employed work.²²⁵ In many cases, it will not be possible to meet the conditions of possessing sufficient start-up capital or having developed a complete business plan. The residence permit for start-ups provides third-country nationals the opportunity to start up an innovative enterprise in the Netherlands within one year. The conditions for this residence permit are in some ways more lenient than those for a residence permit for self-employed work. To qualify for the residence permit, the applicant must possess sustainable and sufficient sources of livelihood.²²⁶ Furthermore, required is that the product or service is innovative, there must be a plan and a cooperation with a so-called 'facilitator'.²²⁷ Registration of the third-country national and the facilitator in the Trade Register of the Chamber of Commerce (KvK) is also required. With this admission policy, the Netherlands tries to improve its knowledge-based economy by also attracting ambitious and innovative entrepreneurs.²²⁸ This group of third-country nationals is seen as a source of innovation, new employment, internationalisation and productivity.²²⁹ International students are permitted to explore entrepreneurial activities even during their studies, which serves as an incentive to consider a start-up after completion of their studies. The residence permit for start-ups is granted for up to one year, after which an application can be filed for a residence permit for work on a self-employed basis.²³⁰ At that time, the requirements applicable to the residence permit for work on a self-employed basis must be met.

- For what period of time does your Member State allow students to stay after studies in order to seek employment or set up a business?²³¹ What happens after this period?

Please elaborate:

It is possible for international students to seek a job in the so-called 'orientation year' after having attained a bachelor's or master's degree at a Dutch higher education institution (also see Q1c). To do so, the student migrant must apply for a temporary residence permit (temporary regular residence permit),

²²² Section 3.30, sub 1, under a, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²²³ Section 3.30, sub 2, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000. For more information, please refer to <https://ind.nl/werk/Paginas/Zelfstandig-ondernemer.aspx>, consulted on 8 October 2018.

²²⁴ Section 3.30, sub 1, under b and c, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²²⁵ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2014, no 450.

²²⁶ Section 3.30, sub 6, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²²⁷ For more information, please refer to <https://ind.nl/werk/Paginas/Start-up.aspx>, consulted on 7 January 2019.

²²⁸ Bulletin of Acts and Decrees, 2014, no 450.

²²⁹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2013-2014, 31 311, no 401.

²³⁰ Section 3.58 sub 1, under c, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²³¹ See Article 25(1) of the Students and Researchers Directive

with the limitation of 'seeking and conducting work, whether or not in paid employment.'²³² An application for this residence permit can be filed up to three years after attaining the diploma.²³³ The scheme allows international graduates to choose whether they want to start their orientation year immediately after graduation or later. The international graduate can, for example, first return to his country of origin for a certain period and return to the Netherlands within three years to seek a job. It is not possible to renew this temporary residence permit. The scheme does, however, make it possible for the international graduate to apply for a new orientation year if after the first orientation year a new study programme or research has been completed.²³⁴ It is important that the second programme was completed after the first orientation year. This means the international student is not allowed to first attain a bachelor's and master's programme to subsequently obtain an orientation residence permit for two consecutive years on the basis of the bachelor's and master's degree.²³⁵

During the orientation year, no restrictions on access to the labour market are in place. This exempts the international graduate's employer from the condition of having a work permit for third-country nationals during this year. This way, international graduates can sustain their own livelihood. If the international graduate finds a job within the orientation year, it is possible to change their residence permit to, for example, a residence permit for work on a self-employed basis or as a highly skilled migrant.²³⁶

- Does your Member State have any restrictions in place regarding the job field in which the international student can seek employment or set up a business?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the restrictions in place:

No restrictions are in place regarding the job field in which the international student wishes to work or where they want to set up a business.

- Does the international student require a minimum level of degree in order to be allowed to stay after studies in order to seek employment or set up a business?²³⁷

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please indicate the minimum level required:

An application for a residence permit for the orientation year for highly educated persons can be filed by international students who have completed a bachelor's, master's or post-doctoral programme of at least twelve months at a Dutch higher education institution.²³⁸ International students can also apply for an orientation year in the Netherlands if they completed their master's or post-doctoral education (of at least twelve months) at a top university abroad (if a language requirement is met). Which specific educational institutions fall under the category of 'top university' is decided on the directions of a ministerial decree. Furthermore, students may qualify for this residence permit upon completion of three specific programmes²³⁹ or a higher education programme designated in a ministerial decree.

Q14b. Are there any other particular **policy measures** or incentives to retain international students in place? *Please select all relevant boxes:*

²³² Section 14, sub 3, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000. Section 3.4, sub 1, under n, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000. Section 3.58, sub 1, under n, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²³³ Section 3.42, sub 1, under a, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000. As starting date of these three years, the date of the examination applies, see B6/2.2 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

²³⁴ Section 3.43, sub 2, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000. B6/2.2 Aliens Act Implementation Guidelines (Vc) 2000.

²³⁵ Government Gazette, 2017, 17934.

²³⁶ Section 14, sub 3, Aliens Act (Vw) 2000. Section 3.4, under d and c, Aliens Decree (Vb) 2000.

²³⁷ See Article 25(2) of the Students and Researchers Directive

²³⁸ Section 3.42, Aliens Decree (vb) 2000.

²³⁹ This concerns programmes within the framework of the Cultural Policy Special-Purpose Funding Act, programmes that are provided in the context of development assistance policies by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or Erasmus Mundus Master's Course.

Attracting and retaining international students in the EU

- Lowered salary requirement for a work/residence permit.
- Unrestricted access to the labour market.
- Other incentive(s).
- No.

If you have answered yes, please briefly elaborate on the measures or incentives in place.

A lower salary criterion applies to international graduates to qualify for a regular residence permit for highly skilled migrants than to other third-country nationals. If international students find a job with a gross annual salary of at least € 2,314 per month immediately after their studies or during/immediately following their orientation year, a residence permit can be granted under the restriction of work as a highly skilled migrant.²⁴⁰ Highly skilled migrants younger than 30 years old who do not fall under this scheme may qualify for this residence permit at a gross monthly salary of € 3,229. If the highly skilled migrant is aged 30 years or older, a gross salary criterion of € 4,404 per month applies. The lowered salary criterion makes it easier for international students to obtain a residence permit for labour as a highly skilled migrant, which may make it more attractive to find work in the Netherlands.

Q15. Are there **initiatives of HEIs or the private sector** whereby support is provided to students following the completion of their studies? (e.g. in specialised or niche areas, in the form of counselling, contract with students to commence work with a company after the completion of their studies). Please also consider initiatives at a regional level. *Please select all relevant boxes and if applicable, please provide best practice examples of the initiatives of universities/HEIs, private sector, local governments, etc. in the retention of international graduates (e.g. in specialised and niche areas, in the form of scholarships, apprenticeship contracts, counselling, etc.).*

- Yes, initiatives implemented by HEIs.
- Yes, initiatives implemented by the private sector.
- Other initiatives.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate and provide 1-2 examples of best practices:

At various levels there are initiatives providing support to international talent on the Dutch labour market in finding a job. This is done by higher education institutions, private parties and through partnerships at a regional government level. Some programmes are not exclusively aimed at international students, but at international employees in general.

Career services of higher education institutions

Higher education institutions in the Netherlands often have a department responsible for advising students on their career options in the Netherlands and/or abroad. From a study by the SVR Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration, it emerges that around 80% of higher education institutions provide career support to students, which can also be used by international students.²⁴¹ This for example concerns counselling, network events and job application trainings during the full study period at the educational institution. The extent may vary per university to which career services departments organise focused activities for international students. For example, Career Services at the University of Amsterdam (Universiteit van Amsterdam, UvA) organises workshops and events specifically targeting international students entering the labour market.²⁴² This includes sessions that are organised eight times per year with the title *'Understanding the Dutch graduate labour market'*. In these sessions, entering the Dutch labour market as an international graduate is discussed. In addition the question is addressed whether learning the Dutch language is necessary, and strategies in order to find a

²⁴⁰ The required amount is adjusted annually as of 1 January and published in the Government Gazette by the minister. The sums stated apply to the year 2018. Also see Section 1d, sub 1 under a, Aliens Employment Implementation Decree (BuWav). The holiday allowance does not count towards the calculation of the required amount.

²⁴¹ SVR Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (2015). Train and Retain, Career Support for International Students in Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden Study. <https://www.svr-migration.de/en/publications/train-and-retain/>. Consulted on 27 September 2018.

²⁴² For more information, please refer to: <http://career.uva.nl/> consulted on 20 September 2018.

job are highlighted. Also the Career Services at the University of Groningen (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, RuG) creates awareness among international students of the importance of being able to speak Dutch on the labour market. The language centre of the RuG therefore has designed a *Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)* for this target group to learn the Dutch language. This course has turned out to be popular and has won an award from the European Language Label. In addition, Career Services at the RuG organises events, such as the workshop 'job hunting skills'. The services offered at Career Services at the University of Groningen (RuG) are available in Dutch as well as in English, making them accessible to international students. Furthermore, 80% of the career service departments of higher education institutions in the Netherlands deploy their international graduates, for instance to give guest lectures.²⁴³ It can be of added value for international students to hear about the experiences of other international students who graduated in the Netherlands. Whether support is provided at private higher education institutions differs per institution. One institution may facilitate contact with potential employers, while another institution does not provide such services or only when asked by the student.

Private parties

There are also private parties that support expats in the Netherlands in a general sense. *IamExpat* is an example of a party that provides international graduates with information relevant to them digitally. This can be information on the Dutch migration policy, formalities (such as DigiD, registration, pension schemes and the Dutch healthcare system), finding housing, language courses, and also open vacancies published on a search portal on the website.

Cooperation between various parties

In addition, several programmes can be mentioned in which various parties cooperate. For example, Brainport Eindhoven provides a platform merging cooperation between companies, educational and knowledge institutions and 21 municipalities at a regional level. Brainport Eindhoven and the province of Noord-Brabant published the national action agenda in July 2018. With this programme the region and the state jointly make an effort to strengthen the knowledge-intensive industry and engage in a long-term partnership.²⁴⁴ The first point on the list of priorities is the attraction and retention of national as well as international *talent* (meaning expats in general) in the technological sector. Concretely, this among others means supporting the project *Brabant International Students* to working towards an increased influx of international students (including EU/EEA students) at technical programmes and promoting the subsequent pathway to the Dutch labour market. The latter is also addressed by the *Brainport Talent Attraction Programme*, which is focused on recruitment by employers of both national as well as international *talent*.²⁴⁵ In addition, there is the *NL Talent Coalition*, in which thirteen organisations from various regions cooperate with the aim of improving the international status of the Netherlands where attraction of talent is concerned.²⁴⁶ An example of the activities is the construction of the national *job portal*, which contains all information needed by international talent to find a job on the Dutch labour market (also see Q17). This makes Brainport an example of an initiative that (among others) is active in various programmes in the field of attraction and retention of international *talent* in general in the Netherlands.

Another example of cooperation is the *International Welcome Centre North (IWCN)*.²⁴⁷ In the IWCN, the municipality of Groningen, the RuG, the IND and the Stichting (foundation) Connect International cooperate to smoothen the pathway to Groningen, Friesland or Drenthe for international students. Support is provided in three fields, namely: government formalities (such as applying for a residence permit), obtaining information (through information sessions on, for example, housing or the Dutch social context) and building a (business) network (through organised events).

Other initiatives

Finally, *Career in Holland* and the *Holland Alumni Network* (also see Q16) can be listed in the context of support for students to find a job. For example, the organisation trained 27 '*Holland Career*

²⁴³ SVR Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (2015). Train and Retain, Career Support for International Students in Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden Study. <https://www.svr-migration.de/en/publications/train-and-retain/>. Consulted on 27 September 2018.

²⁴⁴ Brainport Eindhoven, Central government and Province of Noord-Brabant (2018). *Brainport Nationale Actieagenda [Brainport National Action Agenda]*. <https://www.brainport.nl/over-brainport/actieagenda>. Consulted on 27 September 2018.

²⁴⁵ Brainport Eindhoven, Central government and Province of Noord-Brabant (2018). *Brainport Nationale Actieagenda [Brainport National Action Agenda]*. <https://www.brainport.nl/over-brainport/actieagenda>. Consulted on 27 September 2018.

²⁴⁶ Talent Coalition Netherlands, Manifest. *Internationaal talent versterkt Nederlands kapitaal [International talent strengthens Dutch capital]*. <https://www.brainport.nl/uploads/documents/Talent-Coalition-Netherlands-Internationaal-talent-versterkt-Nederlands-kapitaal.pdf>. Consulted on 27 September 2018.

²⁴⁷ For more information, please refer to: <https://iwcen.nl/>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

Ambassadors, who can make an important contribution to supporting international students and graduates with finding a job on the Dutch labour market. These ambassadors are, for example, invited to meetings to tell international students about their experiences with (starting) their career in the Netherlands. On the *Career in Holland* website, international students can find information pertaining to regulations, the Dutch labour culture and finding a job in the Netherlands via a *jobfeed*.²⁴⁸

Q16. Does your government and/or HEIs implement any strategies in your Member State to **encourage former international graduates** (i.e. international alumni who have already left the Member State) to establish and/or maintain a connection to the national labour market)? *Please select all relevant boxes.*

- Yes, strategy implemented by HEIs.
- Yes, strategy implemented by the government.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the main elements of the strategy:

Even though the Netherlands tries to encourage international graduates to enter the Dutch labour market, some of them will return to their country of origin or explore the international labour market. A strategy applied by the government to also establish a connection between these graduates and the Dutch labour market is the orientation year (also see Q1c). This is because the orientation year offers international graduates the opportunity to return to the Netherlands to find a job within the three years following their graduation. This way, international graduates who initially return to their country of origin can also be encouraged to find work in the Netherlands.

In addition, the connection with international graduates is partially maintained digitally. The *Holland Alumni Network* is an example of a broad platform focused on international graduates and the maintenance of a connection to the Netherlands. Initiated by Nuffic, the network was founded in 2009, and one of its objectives is to facilitate an international network.²⁴⁹ This international network is intended for graduates, international students, Dutch higher education institutions, Dutch embassies and companies and has over 60.000 members.²⁵⁰ Membership of the Holland Alumni Network *inter alia* offers the opportunity to stay in touch with other graduates, share experiences, and provides a platform where interested parties can join various 'communities' related to countries, themes and scholarships. Moreover, the network gives information about jobs and career opportunities in the Netherlands and vacancies are published on the website. In doing so, Nuffic aims to help companies to find international talent, even though its services concern exploration rather than making a concrete match.²⁵¹ Through this initiative, Nuffic calls for building an 'international graduates strategy', focusing on sharing knowledge and innovation, promoting education, diplomacy and acquisition of local knowledge, and finally promoting trade and economic opportunities.²⁵² These are the four pillars on which the national strategy is based and it is accordingly directed at the interests of both graduates and the Netherlands. In addition to maintaining contact with international graduates via digital channels, Nuffic also maintains on-site contact in some countries. This is done through Nesos (also see Q5b). Sometimes, career events are organised in these various countries, where international graduates and Dutch companies can meet each other.²⁵³

Many universities have established a separate department or organisation aimed at keeping contact with graduates abroad. Examples are the *International Alumni Network Netherlands* (University of Amsterdam), *the Alumni Office* (Utrecht University) and *International Alumni* (Radboud University Nijmegen). These graduate departments organize for example events abroad, offer Dutch job portals and maintain contact with international graduates. This assists in maintaining a connection with the university, other alumni and the Netherlands. At some of the by HEIs organized alumni events abroad, there are possibilities for representatives of Dutch companies to speak in order to establish a connection with the labour market.

²⁴⁸ For more information, please refer to: <https://www.hollandalumni.nl/careerinholland>. Consulted on 13 November 2018.

²⁴⁹ For more information, please refer to: <https://www.hollandalumni.nl/>. Consulted on 13 September 2018.

²⁵⁰ Nuffic (2018). *A national alumni strategy*. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/holland-alumni-network/>. Consulted on 13 September 2018.

²⁵¹ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁵² Nuffic (2018). *A national alumni strategy*. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/holland-alumni-network/>. Consulted on 13 September 2018.

²⁵³ EP-Nuffic (2016). *Make it in the Netherlands! 2014 and 2015 report*. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2016/09/19/make-it-in-the-netherlands>. Consulted on 25 September 2018.

3.2 Challenges and good practices in retaining international students

Q17. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State on retaining international students and for whom is it considered a challenge/good practice (HEIs, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice: why is this considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/studies/evaluation reports/surveys/interviews/other? Please briefly summarise the input and findings of these experts/studies/evaluation reports/interviews/other.

A) Challenges:

Please elaborate:

Language and cultural differences

VSNU has indicated that in the Netherlands the culture at the workplace is rather Dutch, also at reasonably internationally oriented companies.²⁵⁴ As a result, companies are not always receptive to international students, while they are urgently needed on the labour market. The Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (Vereniging van Hogescholen, VH) and the National Student Association (Interstedelijk Studentenoverleg, ISO) also point out the fact that cultural differences play a role in whether or not international students can be retained on the Dutch labour market.²⁵⁵

One aspect of the cultural difference is the language. According to Nuffic, VH and ISO, the language barrier plays a role for international students to decide whether or not to stay and make the transition to the labour market in the Netherlands.²⁵⁶ Practice has shown that to enter the Dutch labour market, speaking the Dutch language is usually required or desirable. Nuffic often hears from students that they only realise that they want to learn the language once they have completed their studies, because it turns out to be an important aspect of the Dutch labour market after all. In addition, VH and ISO point out that not mastering the Dutch language also leads to less social integration during the programme, because of which international students are more often in a *social bubble*. They are accepted in the classroom, but outside of it, it is difficult for international students to blend in socially. While a transition is taking place, Nuffic has indicated that not all higher education institutions offer a language course and that it is often not free of charge.²⁵⁷ In addition, such language courses are only available to students, not to graduates. Nuffic indicates that more investments could be directed towards this cause, for instance also by companies.

Large companies for example already have a small stake in founding programmes where international graduates can work for a company, while time is reserved for language classes. However, founding such a programme is often not feasible for smaller companies because it requires a high investment according to Nuffic.

In the field of information by institutions, some improvements should also be implemented, considering that information is sometimes only available in Dutch. The application form for a work permit (to be filed by the employer) is, for example, in Dutch only, as well as most letters from the Tax and Customs Administration. The IND has made large steps in recent years to also provide information in English, although there is still room for improvement in this field (for example the letter in which the Regular Residence Permit (vvr) for study is granted).

The high threshold for small and medium-sized companies to employ international talent

In addition, there may be a challenge for small and medium-sized companies (MKB) to employ international talent in terms of capacity. For example, fees must be paid that are around €4,000 (or €1,930 if a start-up or small company is concerned with a maximum of 50 employees) if companies wish to act as recognised sponsors.²⁵⁸ This can be a threshold for smaller companies since investments must first be made, before international students can be employed. While there is a demand for talent in small and medium-sized companies, the step may be too great in practice. Moreover, Nuffic indicates that the language barrier can also be a bottleneck for smaller companies because at such companies often only Dutch is spoken, making the step to invest in international talent very large. To large companies this problem plays a lesser role: often, they already have made a transition towards internationalisation.

²⁵⁴ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁵⁵ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁵⁶ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018. Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁵⁷ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁵⁸ For more information, please refer to: https://ind.nl/werk/werkgever/Paginas/Erkenning_als_referent.aspx.

Regulations for work placements

Nuffic indicates that while the opportunity for a work placement during a study programme plays an important role with regard to retaining international students in the Netherlands, it can be of less importance to higher education institutions.²⁵⁹ After all, if the work placement is no compulsory component of the study programme but international students still choose to do a work placement, it can delay the study process. For the international student's right of residence, a study progress requirement must be met, which higher education institutions want to safeguard. This causes a conflict of interest, which has been recognised by a number of institutions according to Nuffic. Higher education institutions may, if necessary, renew the residence permit to offer more time to students. The trainee agreement is drawn up jointly by the employer, student and higher education institution. All parties must sign the agreement. There is no overview on whether this goes smoothly, but Nuffic has received signals from higher education institutions that in practice it may be difficult as a result of inter alia the available capacity to supervise the student

Eligibility for participation councils

A challenge that reached Nuffic via signals from higher education institutions through inter alia the *Mobstacles* network, can be noticed in the eligibility of international non-EU students for participation councils. The question is whether participation in a council constitutes labour in the framework of the Labour Act for Aliens (Wet arbeid vreemdelingen, Wav). This would entail that a work permit for third-country nationals (TWV) must be obtained, which can form a threshold for international students to participate. According to the field of higher education it is important that in that case an exemption from the TWV applies to this group, to assure the accessibility to participation in decision-making. Running for election as a representative in a participation council is a democratic right which students are entitled to exercise. It is important that both national and international students engage in a conversation about policies within the institution (for example in the field of internationalisation). In addition, this can be a way to introduce international students to Dutch students and embed them socially in the direct living environment.

SZW and the UWV are considering the above-mentioned question. In the meanwhile, it is possible for international students to join participation councils if the educational institution applies for a volunteer's certificate from the UWV. This certificate can be issued to non-profit organisations that work on a non-profit basis and serve a social purpose. The certificate is issued for the activities carried out - so not in the name of a certain student - and is valid for three years.

B) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

(Easing of) regulations for work placements

The regulations for work placements have been eased, making it possible for international students to do a work placement when this is no compulsory component of the programme. Nuffic states that the fact that international students can do a work placement is an important factor in retaining international students in the Netherlands.²⁶⁰ It offers opportunities in finding a job and is the first introduction to the Dutch labour market. The Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereniging van Nederlandse Universiteiten, VSNU) also stresses the importance of the option to do a work placement and in addition points to the fact that this is also an opportunity to introduce companies to these international students.²⁶¹

Time to seek a job during the orientation year

The orientation year (see Q14a for more information) is seen by the IND as a positive means to enable students who studied in the Netherlands to find a job, considering that it is a relatively long period (one

²⁵⁹ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁶⁰ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁶¹ Interview with international domain leader of VSNU, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

year, which can be applied for within three years after graduation).²⁶² There are signals according to the IND that it will also be introduced by other member states.

Easing the administrative steps for employers

Dutch employers may consider employing international students/graduates an extra administrative burden. The procedure to employ an EU student is, after all, much easier. To make sure that the step for employers to employ international graduates becomes more accessible, Nuffic has compiled an *Employer Toolkit*. It explains the procedure, which applications the employer must file exactly, and which documents must be submitted. Nuffic indicates that the Employer Toolkit is an instrument meant to assist employers and to ease their administrative steps.²⁶³

Facilitating programmes

From interviews with experts, various programmes emerged which are listed as instruments for retaining international students on the Dutch labour market. In addition to the programmes listed below, there are also local programmes which work towards this end.

Holland Alumni Network and ambassadors

Nuffic indicates that the *Holland Alumni Network* is a good practice with regard to the retention of international students in the Netherlands (see Q16 for more information). Facilitating a network, as done through this programme, is quite important for international students in many respects. In addition, there are currently 27 ambassadors trained to support international students, to give workshops and to speak on career events (see Q16 for more information). According to Nuffic, the demand from various regions, higher education institutions and students themselves is high for a conversation with such persons.

Make it in the Netherlands

VSNU, VH and ISO indicate that the programme *'Make it in the Netherlands'* can be considered a good practice (also see Q1C).²⁶⁴ The umbrella programme provided a place in which initiatives could be taken for projects pertaining to this theme, according to VH and ISO.

Talent Coalition

Furthermore, Nuffic points to the *Talent Coalition*, a collaboration between various parties, including economic councils in the region, expat centres and Nuffic.²⁶⁵ The coalition advocates that more needs to be done to retain international students in the Netherlands. In addition, more attention must be raised for attracting international talent (not necessarily graduates from Dutch universities) to the Netherlands. A project plan has been designed to this purpose and efforts are being made in international branding and recruitment programmes to promote the Netherlands internationally. Moreover, a national job portal will be constructed for the publication of international vacancies.

Connect Programme

The Connect Programme was founded by the University of Twente and the Saxion university of applied sciences and is supported by companies, branch organisations and network organisations. The programme focuses on the retention of highly educated international graduates on the Dutch labour market. A number of courses are offered as part of the programme that support the students in learning the Dutch language and understanding the Dutch labour culture (such as the application process), improving their chances of finding a job in their orientation year. Learning the Dutch language is important for small and middle-sized companies. In addition, the programme establishes a connection with around 1500 employers and there are options for traineeships. The programme also helps foreign students to expand their network here in the Netherlands. The programme arose from two needs. According to a Connect staff member, research has shown that foreign students felt the need for more tools to find work on the Dutch labour market,²⁶⁶ while companies in the region turned out to have a need for finding and establishing ties with highly educated and highly skilled employees. Here, motivating and retaining international, talented graduates is a great opportunity. It is important to note that Connect started as a regional initiative that focused inter alia on companies from the region, but currently also operates beyond it.

²⁶² Interview with IND policy staff member, 8 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁶³ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁶⁴ Interview with VH policy advisor and ISO board member, 2 October 2018 in The Hague. Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁶⁵ Interview with two Nuffic policy staff members, The Hague, 3 October 2018.

²⁶⁶ Interview with Career Services Students coordinator at the University of Twente, 12 November 2018 in The Hague.

Science field of the University of Groningen (RuG)

VSNU has indicated that there is an increasing cooperation between higher education institutions and the job field.²⁶⁷ One example that is given is the Science field of the University of Groningen (RuG). Since it is often difficult for international students to find a work placement, an organisation was founded to facilitate this.

Section 4: Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with third countries

Q18. Has your Member State concluded and/or intends to conclude any **bilateral and/or multilateral agreements** with countries of origin concerning international students? Please distinguish between agreements in place with countries with developed economies and those with developing economies²⁶⁸ as classified by the United Nations²⁶⁹ and summarise and provide an overview of the type of agreements – without listing all the agreements and detailed provisions.

[Possible visual element to be included in the Synthesis report: map indicating the regions/countries of origin with which agreements are in place.]

Yes, bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned with industrialised countries. *Please elaborate on the aspects listed below):*

- The most common provisions of the agreements;
- Most common world regions/countries of origin with which agreements have been concluded;
- Are specific fields of studies or qualification levels covered in the agreements?

²⁶⁷ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁶⁸ This distinction is relevant as the objectives and purpose of such agreements could differ significantly between these two categories.

²⁶⁹ http://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/Classifications/DimCountries_DevelopmentStatus_Hierarchy.pdf

Attracting and retaining international students in the EU

- Are specific categories of persons covered under the agreements? (e.g. specific age groups; gender; other socio-demographic characteristics).

Yes, bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned with developing countries. *Please elaborate on the aspects listed below):*

- The most common provisions of the agreements;
- Most common world regions/countries of origin with which agreements have been concluded;
- Are specific fields of studies or qualification levels covered in the agreements?
- Are specific categories of persons covered under the agreements? (e.g. specific age groups; gender; other socio-demographic characteristics).

No bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned.

On a government level, the amount of cooperation based on agreements between the Netherlands and third countries is limited. Many of the Cultural Conventions were adopted shortly after the Second World War and inter alia had the purpose of contributing to good international relations. For example, the Netherlands entered into Cultural Conventions with the United States, Canada, Mexico and later also with Russia, South Africa and Indonesia. With respect to exchange, many student exchange programmes are however not organised under these conventions. Within this framework, agreements about exchange often have the nature of pupil exchanges or summer courses. They do not provide support for the current system of study credits or degree mobility of students. An exception is the relation with the United States. Under this convention (of 1948), student exchanges still take place in the form of FulBright scholarships.

Today, the effectiveness of Cultural Conventions is up for discussion as a result of increasing internationalisation. Compared to the number of scholarships available elsewhere (publicly and privately) ²⁷⁰ Cultural Conventions play a marginal role. Many scholarships are available through other channels, including national funds (see Q5b). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs exploits various scholarship programmes, including the Orange Tulip Scholarship in particular, which is focused on incoming mobility of students from Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam and South Africa (see Q5b). Moreover, Dutch educational institutions already offer a multitude of exchange programmes on a local level, or have certain agreements with universities abroad.

Otherwise, the Netherlands has bilateral cooperation agreements with other countries in the form of *Memoranda of Understanding* (MoUs). In these memoranda, intentions are laid down that do not have a binding nature. These agreements may be directed at specific fields of study. However, study exchange is also limited in this case: many students come to the Netherlands under student exchange programmes by individual educational institutions. For example, the Netherlands has a MoU with China in the field of science.²⁷¹ This includes the '*Sino-Dutch Bilateral Exchange Scholarship*' programme. Annually, around 50 scholarship are made available to Dutch and Chinese students to improve the exchange of knowledge.²⁷² These scholarships are jointly funded by the Dutch and Chinese government.

Q19. Are there any measures or incentives in place to avoid **brain drain** in the country of origin when attracting and retaining international students?

- Yes, measures related to brain drain in place.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the measures in place:

In general, brain drain is not an aspect addressed in bilateral agreements, in which the main objective is attracting and retaining international talent. Most international students return to their country of origin after their studies. From research by Nuffic it has emerged that the stay rate of all international

²⁷⁰ For more information, please refer to: <https://www.studyinholland.nl/study/scholarships/find-a-scholarship>. Consulted on 16 November 2018.

²⁷¹ MoUs have been signed between the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

²⁷² Nuffic (n.d.). <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/sino-dutch-scholarship/>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

graduates (including EU/EEA students) who remained in the Netherlands after five years was 24.7% between 2006 and 2013.²⁷³

However, the Netherlands has programmes that focus specifically on assisting the development of knowledge in third countries. Doing so also serves a Dutch interest, according to the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (Vereniging van Nederlandse Universiteiten, VSNU).²⁷⁴ If many students from third countries are educated in the Netherlands, this best guarantees access to trade and business in the country of origin. These students are, after all, ambassadors of the Netherlands and this builds a connection with the Netherlands. The scholarship programme StuNed (Studying in the Netherlands) (also see Q5b) is, for example, aimed at strengthening and further developing knowledge in Indonesia through allowing students to follow a programme in the Netherlands. Thus, the purpose of this programme is not to retain these students in the Netherlands, but for them to return to Indonesia after graduation, so that the acquired knowledge can be spread.

Another example of a programme that invests in knowledge in the country of origin is the 'Orange Knowledge Programme' (OKP). This five-year programme was started in 2017 and is being implemented by Nuffic and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme provides various options for the development of knowledge and capacity of persons and institutions in 52 countries.²⁷⁵ To this purpose, the Netherlands has designated four themes on which OKP will focus. These are food and nutrition; water, energy and climate; sexual and reproductive health and rights; and security and the rule of law. A number of focus points have been determined per country, for which OKP facilities can be used. The prioritised sectors have been compiled by the embassies in the relevant countries. In addition, the partners or organisations that wish to support the embassy have also been identified. One component of the programme consists of scholarships for professionals in order to take courses and master programmes. Around 7,770 scholarships are available for short courses and around 1,500 scholarships for master's programmes. OKP is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a budget of € 192.2 million. In particular, countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and some countries in Central and South America participate in the programme.

Q20. Do HEIs in your Member States have **initiatives and cooperation agreements with HEIs** in third countries in place? If so, what types of agreements and for which purpose (e.g. student exchange programmes)? *If there are many different agreements in place, please only provide 1-2 examples of agreements in place.*

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the initiatives/cooperation agreements in place and provide 1-2 examples:

Higher education institutions in the Netherlands themselves have entered into various MoUs with other higher education institutions in third countries. Such cooperation often has the purpose to establish a deeper connection between different universities in the areas of research and exchange of students and staff. MoUs are of a general nature. Concrete agreements on exchange programmes can be defined further in specific exchange agreements and partnerships between universities.

There are also Dutch higher education institutions that make use of joint and double degree programmes. In these programmes, two (or more) institutes jointly offer a programme (e.g. a bachelor's or master's degree, ISCED 6 and 7).²⁷⁶ During a certain period, the international student can take subjects at both universities within the context of the programme. Depending on the programme, a diploma is jointly issued by both institutions upon completion or a double degree can be obtained. By attending joint and double degree programmes, international students are introduced to different cultures. Furthermore, they simplify effecting a foreign stay in the Netherlands and do not necessarily delay the international student's progress in completing their education.

²⁷³ Nuffic (2018). Stay rates of international graduates in the Netherlands. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/stayrates-of-international-graduates/>. Consulted on 14 November 2018.

²⁷⁴ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁷⁵ Nuffic (n.d.). <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/orange-knowledge-programme-overview/>. Consulted on 24 September 2018.

²⁷⁶ See for example the Joint Programmes offered by the University of Groningen at <https://www.rug.nl/education/other-study-opportunities/double-degree-programmes/double-and-joint-degree-programmes>. Consulted on 5 October 2018.

The University of Groningen (RuG) can serve as an example in this respect, having more than 600 international agreements. Most bilateral agreements come in the form of MoUs and exchange programmes. In particular, these are exchange programmes with partner organisations in East Asia (around 55), North America (around 34) and Latin America (around 27). The university offers a large number of courses in English, making it relatively easy to enter into partnerships with other higher education institutions. In addition, the university has established some relations with national funding agencies (inter alia in Indonesia, China, Brazil and Mexico), making it possible for the RuG to receive *top scholarship* students. A good example of cooperation is the partnership with the Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia. Various links relating to research were followed up on through exchange programmes and double degree programmes.

Q21. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State with regard to bilateral and multilateral agreements and for whom is this considered a challenge/good practice (HEIs, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice, why is it considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/studies/evaluation reports/surveys/interviews/other? Please briefly summarise the input and findings of these experts/studies/evaluation reports/interviews/other

A) Challenges:

Please elaborate:

International diploma recognition

According to the Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (Vereniging Hogescholen, VH), recognition of Dutch diplomas by government institutions and semi government institutions abroad is a challenge.²⁷⁷ This is because it is difficult to make international agreements on this. This problem can mostly be observed in so-called *joint programmes*, where institutions do not always correctly value diplomas from other countries, and do not admit students as a result. However, in this respect, the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (De Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie, NVAO) considers it a good practice that within the European Higher Education Area agreements have been made on the evaluation of international *joint programmes* via the European Approach.

Moreover, VH has indicated that diploma recognition is specifically a challenge when recognition of diplomas by China is concerned. If a diploma has not been accredited in the country in which it was issued, the Chinese government does not recognise it. This is for instance the case when Dutch educational institutions make use of a British accreditation. Cultural barriers and incompatibility of programmes also play a role in this respect. This poses a challenge to students themselves, but also to educational institutions.

B) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

Bilateral agreements between educational institutions

According to VH there are many agreements between educational institutions and other countries.²⁷⁸ Institutions themselves often manage large networks of other countries and institutions. These can be very specific partnerships initiated by instructors or programme administrations or wider umbrella collaborations on an institutional level. An institution can make strategic choices in this respect, for example about joint programmes, joint research or student exchange. According to VH it is a good practice that institutions, programme administrations and instructors are working on this. For example, VH, VSNU, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, OCW), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Buitenlandse Zaken, BZ) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (Economische Zaken en Klimaat, EZK) are jointly building a network with China, Indonesia, Canada and Germany.²⁷⁹ It must, however, be noted that educational institutions often lack an overview of all

²⁷⁷ Interview with ISO and VH policy advisor, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁷⁸ Interview with ISO and VH policy advisor, 2 October 2018 in The Hague.

²⁷⁹ *Parliamentary Papers II*, 2017-2018, 33009, no 69.

international agreements concluded by researchers and programmes.²⁸⁰ In addition, most agreements are with institutions in countries within the EU and to a lesser extent with non-EU countries.

Moreover, according to VSNU there are almost no bilateral/multilateral agreements between the government and third countries.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ This becomes evident from a meeting organised by EMN NL in the context of the study '*Attracting and Retaining international students in the EU*' between among others the IND, VSNU, VH, ISO, Nuffic and the Ministry of OCW on 29 October in The Hague.

²⁸¹ Interview with VSNU international domain leader, 3 October 2018 in The Hague.

