

IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DOING A TRAINEESHIP

If you are an international student who would like to do a traineeship in the Netherlands, then it is quite likely that you will have to deal with certain immigration procedures. This factsheet explains more about these procedures.

Can I work as a trainee in the Netherlands?

If you are enrolled as a student in the Netherlands or in another country, you may work as a trainee. A traineeship is any work placement or practical training arrangement that aims to give you experience of the world of work while you are studying. If you have already graduated, you will not be able to work as a trainee in the Netherlands. However, there is a similar arrangement for students that have graduated abroad that allows you to gain practical work experience in the Netherlands for up to six months. This is called residency with the purpose of work experience. To stay in the Netherlands with the purpose of work experience, you must already be in employment in your home country or in your country of residence. If you have graduated in the Netherlands with a diploma of a Dutch higher education institution you can apply for a change in the purpose of your stay from 'study' to 'seeking work as a highly skilled migrant'. During this year you are free to take up any job, traineeship or placement to gain work experience you like, but after this year you must have found a job as a highly skilled migrant. More information on this topic can be found in a separate factsheet (see: www.nuffic.nl/international-students/preparation-stay/staying-in-holland/working-after-your-study)

Do I need a work permit if I work as a trainee?

The traineeship provider might need a work permit for you. Whether a work permit is needed, depends mostly on your nationality and the country in which you study. In some cases a work permit is not needed; in those cases it might be that the Dutch Labour Inspectorate (Arbeidsinspectie) requires your traineeship provider (the company at which you do your traineeship) to have a so called traineeship agreement¹.

What is needed in which situations, can be seen down here.

Category trainee	Work permit required?	Traineeship agreement required?
Category A You are a national of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland or the United Kingdom.	No	No

¹ The agreement is a formal traineeship agreement between the trainee, the traineeship provider and the Dutch higher education institution. A standardized agreement form can be downloaded from Nuffic's website www.nuffic.nl/nederlandse-organisaties/docs/cospa/cospa-stageovereenkomst2.doc

Category trainee	Work permit required?	Traineeship agreement required?
Category B You're a student doing a traineeship under an action programme of the European Union which is published in the Official Journal of the EU (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci or Socrates).	No	No
Category C You're a national of Bulgaria or Romania and you are in the possession of a Dutch residence document or a sticker in your passport to prove that you have lawful residence.	No	Yes
Category D You do not fall under category A, B or C and you're studying in the Netherlands and you're in the possession of a Dutch residence permit with the aim to study.	No	Yes
Category E You do not fall under category A, B, C or D.	Yes (apart from exceptions)	No

Where can I find the traineeship agreement?

There is a special standardized agreement that replaces the work permit in the situations mentioned above. The agreement can be found on the Nuffic website: www.nuffic.nl/nederlandse-organisaties/docs/cospa/cospa-stageovereenkomst2.doc It is important that the three parties mentioned in the agreement, the student, the institution where the student studies and the traineeship provider, sign the agreement. The traineeship provider must be able to present this agreement to the Labour Inspectorate if asked to do so. Use of this traineeship agreement is therefore NOT optional: it is compulsory.

Where and how do I need to apply for a work permit?

Although a work permit in this situation is only a formality (i.e. it is not necessary to demonstrate that there are no other people already in the labour market who could do the same work and the vacancy does not need to be published with the Central Organization for Work and Income (CWI) in Zoetermeer), it is still required. If the traineeship provider doesn't get one, he faces a penalty of up to €8,000.

Applications for work permits must be done by the traineeship provider. Applications should be sent to the CWI in Zoetermeer. The application form for a work permit can be downloaded from CWI's internet site: www.werk.nl/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/189248.PDF

You can read on the application form which documents have to be included. With regard to trainees some extra supporting documents have to be included such as a declaration from your education institution stating that the traineeship is a necessary part of your education. Detailed information about what work will be done by you during the traineeship must also be included. The CWI is able to provide you with information about the documents which have to be included.

Applications are normally processed in about five weeks. Therefore it is important to start the application procedure in time.

Do I need to arrange a visa?

If you fall under category A, B, C or D, you do most probably not need a visa or you are already in the possession of a visa or a residence permit. If you fall under category E and you're not in the Netherlands yet, it might be that you need a visa to enter the Netherlands.

Whether you need a visa to enter the Netherlands depends on your nationality and the length of your stay in the Netherlands. There are two types of visa for the Netherlands: the 'short stay visa' (VKV) and 'the provisional residence permit' (MVV). If your stay will be for up to three months, it is likely that you will need a short stay visa (VKV). If your stay will be for longer than three months, you will probably need a 'provisional residence permit' (MVV). Once you arrive in the Netherlands you will need to apply for a residence permit, as the MVV is only a visa to enter Holland and not to stay here for a longer period of time.

Take a look at our guide on www.nuffic.nl/international-students/preparation-stay/preparing-your-stay/visa-and-permits/student-visa-wizard to see what rules apply to your situation.

If you need a short stay visa, you need to arrange it yourself. If you need a provisional residence permit, it is possible for your traineeship provider to apply for it. The application form can be found at the website of the IND: www.ind.nl/EN/algemeen/brochures/Formulieren/index.asp?subhome=&title=&origin= (the title of the form is Request for recommendation to obtain a Provisional Residence Permit (MVV) stay working as an employee).

Where can I get more information?

If you have questions about work permits, you can contact the CWI. Their telephone number is: +31- (0) 79 7502903.

For questions about applying for a visa or a residence permit, you can contact the Immigration and Naturalization Department on the following number: + 31- (0) 20 8893045.

If you are already in the Netherlands you can dial the following number: 0900-1234561.

If you have questions, you can also contact the mobstacles team at Nuffic: www.nuffic.nl/contact or +31- (0) 70 4260340 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09.30 until 12.30). You can also ask this team questions about the traineeship agreement.

This factsheet is produced by the mobstacles team at Nuffic, last updated July 2008.

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• **Capacity Building & Scholarships**

Administering international mobility programmes (scholarships) and institutional cooperation programmes.

• **Communication**

Providing information about higher education systems in the Netherlands and in other countries; providing credential evaluation services; providing information in the Netherlands about studying abroad, and in other countries about studying in Holland; promoting Dutch higher education in other countries; encouraging international mobility.

• **Knowledge & Innovation**

Conducting studies into international cooperation in higher education; providing information to expert groups and consultation forums; transferring our knowledge of international cooperation in higher education through courses and seminars.

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