

Conference

# ‘Globalizing Higher Education: The Hague in 2025’



Research group International Peace, Justice and Security

**DE HAAGSE**  
HOGESCHOOL



*Working conference*

# ‘Globalizing Higher Education: The Hague in 2025’

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Research group International Peace, Justice and Security

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# Foreword

Education is the key to widen people's opportunities in our globalizing world. The Hague, city of Justice and Peace, is rapidly improving its position in higher education. New universities and academies have established themselves in recent years. They broaden the offer of courses, degrees and research opportunities. The Municipal Government and The Hague University of Applied Sciences invited all interested international organizations, corporations, researchers and educational institutes to reflect on the best pattern of international higher education that should be organized in the future. Education should service the needs of both the Dutch and foreign population groups in The Hague and the region around it. With hundreds of large and small international institutions, tens of thousands of employees from abroad, as well as a growing interest of The Hague's Dutch citizens, it is important to design the best possible facilities for higher education. This report summarizes the views and proposals expressed during the working conference. The reader may find many useful ideas for further development.

Prof. Joris Voorhoeve

Lector International Peace, Justice and Security



## Introduction

*Rob Brons*

*Chairman of The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

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The Hague University of Applied Sciences has internationalised rapidly in the last few years. The university is now home to 23,500 students and 1,800 employees, many from abroad and the ex-pat community in The Hague. The city is set to develop further and should offer a complete spectrum of higher education in 2025. Important education institutions in The Hague should offer more international study programmes. To reach this goal, the Leiden University Campus The Hague, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, the Clingendael Netherlands Institute of International Relations, The Hague Academy and many other important partners need to collaborate.

In addition to more internationally focused study programmes, other practical aspects also need to be improved, such as student housing, individual courses, diploma recognition and more courses in English. Furthermore, there should be a programme for foreign interns/exchange students who can return to their home countries as informal ambassadors of The Hague. At the same time, all these developments must take account of the changing labour market.

# International Education in The Hague

*Ingrid van Engelshoven*

*Deputy Mayor of Education, City of The Hague*

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Interest in internationalisation is growing in The Hague. The need for international education is significant because of the many international organisations located here. The Hague was and is an important location for many international organisations and companies. To maintain the city's appeal for these organisations, we need to invest in its continuous improvement. We need to invest in the international character of the city and in what the city have to offer in terms of international education. Good collaboration and communication between the higher education institutions, international organisations and companies established in the city is crucial. The multicultural inhabitants of the city represent a significant advantage that we must utilise effectively.

In 2025 the city should host students who can grow into real global citizens because of the excellent level of international higher education offered. By 2025, higher education institutions and other international organisations should have developed close contacts that allow them to benefit from each other's presence in the city. Knowledge exchanges, internships, debates, conferences, guest lectures and summer courses should be the order of the day in 2025.

The Hague must become not only a student city, but an international student city. To achieve this goal, The Hague city has become an attractive and inspiring place. On completing their studies, international students should go on to become ambassadors of the city, wherever they eventually relocate to pursue their careers. We have to continue to strengthen the city's offering of international education. This will also help the city attract international organisations and companies. We must give students the attitude, knowledge and skills that can help them find their way in the world. Bring supply and demand together in The Hague.



# Studying Abroad

*Marijk van der Wende*

*Dean of Amsterdam University College*

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The internationalisation of higher education is very much influenced by the outside world. Economic crisis, EU reforms, budgetary cuts...

We need to offer students an intercultural and diverse experience and we should also stimulate them to travel and explore the world by themselves. However, we should also recognise that international student mobility is largely for the elite. Despite strong growth, international students represent a meagre 2.3% (up from 2.1% a decade ago) of the total enrolment of students worldwide (177 million in 2010). The overwhelming majority of the world's students in higher education do not leave their home countries to study. Studying abroad is increasingly a privilege open to the economic elite.

And this tendency is set to continue given the current financial crisis. Furthermore, the financial crisis has negatively impacted investments in higher education in many countries and regions, including Europe. This is having an unequal impact on different higher education systems, resulting in greater imbalances in student flows. It is also creating unsustainable patterns of degree mobility, especially between large and small countries.

From the perspective of the EU, which is a strong player in the world of higher education in terms of human capital, we are seeing a weakening of public support for mobility programmes (Erasmus grants threatened) and reduced targets for higher education participation (40%). But there are problems at the institutional level everywhere in the world. Institution budgets are under pressure.

## Workshop 1:

# Supply and demand for higher education in The Hague

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*Chairman: Jos Walenkamp, Lector International Cooperation, The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

*Speakers: Chris Goto-Jones, Dean of Leiden University College and Freddy Weima, Director General of Nuffic*

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## Introduction

A simple lack of understanding of other countries and cultures is resulting in trade missions failing and small and medium-sized businesses missing out on billions of euros annually. Politicians, scientists and other internationally working professionals need to communicate effectively across borders to tackle global problems. Graduates of education institutes need international competencies (professional/academic, intercultural, linguistic and personal), and they need them now more than ever and will need them in 2025 more than now. This is particularly the case in The Hague with its more than ninety international organisations and companies and its large multicultural population.

Need is not the same as demand, but we need to provide international higher education before masses of students start demanding it. We must provide this type of education according to what we know is needed. The subject of this workshop is the need for and supply of international higher education followed by the demand.

## **Announcements and visions of the participants**

After the introductions by Prof. Goto-Jones on the meaning and the goals of education, and Nuffic Director Weima on what the Nuffic can do to facilitate international cooperation in higher education, both the speakers and the participants agreed on a few points:

- international education should be about more than teaching in the English language alone.
- one participant even stated that we also must not forget the Dutch language and culture, because that makes it easier for international students to work and participate in Dutch society and to stay here.
- also, an important question that was raised is whether parents and youths themselves understand the necessity of international higher education.
- another point was that internationally oriented primary and secondary education is of utmost importance if international higher education is to succeed as that is where the foundation for international education is laid.
- the registration for study in the Netherlands must become easier for foreign students.

## **Advised steps and policy**

Internationalisation does not mean that English should be the only language. International education should also be provided in other languages. Moreover, by prioritising the English language, students from other cultures, such as

some Arab cultures, will be excluded from international education. Next to languages, the content of the curricula should have international features such as examples and case studies from other countries.

In order to achieve an increase in the number of international students, a better scholarship system needs to be created. There are numerous students who want to come to The Hague to study but do not have sufficient financial resources to do so.

The final recommendation is to make foreign students feel welcome, e.g. by providing more information in English both at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and at the municipality.

## **Conclusion**

Both the need for international education in The Hague and the supply are already present in The Hague. Some improvements can and should, however, be made, such as better accessibility of foreign students to study in The Hague through a simplified registration process and more scholarship programmes. Another problem is the utilisation of language. On the one hand, not enough information is provided in English either at the municipality level or at certain higher education institutes. On the other hand, in international education the focus should not be entirely on the English language, but also on other languages in order not to exclude students from other cultures in which English is less important.



## Workshop 2:

# Building Bridges between The Hague's international organisations, companies and higher educational institutes

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*Chairman: Willem Post, International Advisor City of The Hague /Senior fellow Institute Clingendael*

*Speakers: Nicole van Haelst, Director International Community Platform and Danielle Eemans, Researcher International Community Platform*

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## Introduction

Willem Post introduced Nicole van Haelst to the audience and made some remarks on the importance of the presence of excellent internationally oriented higher education for the city of The Hague. International organisations, NGOs and international companies could take advantage of this. But also students could benefit more from the fact they are studying in an international city. The question is how students, international organisations and educational institutes could profit more from each other's presence. Nicole van Haelst and Danielle Eemans did research into this topic on behalf of the Municipality of The Hague.

A common interest shared by international employers and higher education institutes is access to talented interns, trainees and staff. Efficient and effective recruitment in a global competitive environment is becoming more and more important for international organisations. They are slowly starting to become more curious about the local education and labour markets. There is also a big interest for the local municipality. Retention of more highly educated people for the city is of socio-economic importance. The International Community Platform performed research into the recruitment process of international organisations, NGOs and companies, knowledge institutes (32) during autumn and winter 2012. They used qualitative research methods and did a feasibility check with higher educational institutions and intermediate recruitment parties.

## Main Challenges

Nicole van Haelst focused on the most important outcomes of the inventory in the five main steps of the recruitment procedures:

**Strategic staff planning:** interaction between international employers and local education limited and ineffective. There is a lack of contact.

**Definition of profiles:** focused on academic level only, focus on (academic) study but (HBO) skills required! MBO and HBO fairly unknown.

**Search:** customised recruitment processes (business, IOs, NGOs), interns mostly via university, no recruitment via local programmes; corporate focus amongst students, negative image of NGOs and some IOs.

**Selection:** 'procedural' rejections because of complicated digital forms; timing issue internships is often a problem; 'international profile' is important: international network is decisive.

**Retention:** continuity of programs challenged by (mutual) priority shifts in organisations; quality of life aspects need attention!

## Proposed solutions

Proposed actions for improving stakeholder management between international organisations and educational institutes:

- Provide contact lists
- Seminar talent recruitment according to employers
- Set up an alignment for structural cooperation (like The Hague Security Delta or International Community Platform)

Proposed actions for selling skills of HBO and MBO students:

- Increase marketing efforts of MBO and HBO
- Define clear profiles
- Cooperate with the innovative Peace and Justice lab (Campus The Hague)

Proposed actions on talent scouting and selection:

- Organise a *Justice and Peace In Business* career event for (preselected) students and trainees

Proposed actions for effective search for talent:

- A professional connector/a small matchmaker agency between international organisations and educational institutes: The Hague Intern Ship Recruitment Agency

Proposed actions in mainstreaming the contacts between international organisations, NGOs and educational institutes:

- Transfer of knowledge and experience (for instance by guest lectures);
- Organise alumni programs and exchange good practices amongst educational institutions and employers at working conferences;
- Optimise Quality of Life aspects, because retention of staff is the next step.



## Remarks and Visions by the public

Some remarks by the public on the proposals of ICP:

- ‘Officials from NGOs, international companies, etc. could participate in our programmes, e.g. by giving lectures or by participating in so called “professional field committees”’;
- ‘Consider them (employers) as those who can show their world to the educational population; Start informal networks with the purpose of creating a new way of thinking (connection not as occasional, but the way to evolve).’
- ‘Alumni as mentors for graduating students. Know both worlds and still speak the language of students.’
- ‘Better communication about what has already been achieved. The law programme (HBO) has interns at the EU, NGOs, ICC etc.’
- ‘More marketing via “professional field committees” and specific attention for internationalisation.’
- ‘When recruiting, be less strict in educational requirements.’
- ‘Organise a challenge between HBO and WO students’ - assignment from organisation/company students need to solve - added value of HBO (skills) will become apparent and employers have an idea of what HBO students and graduates can do.
- ‘Build programmes for different levels: graduates, junior, middle management, leadership, board.’
- ‘Enhance education and prepare for the future with an internship organisation (example: <http://wiidc.org/>).’
- ‘Tap into, or create, student networks for volunteering at International Events (both business and governmental) to help out with a wide variety of tasks. It is great exposure for how to behave in such settings and helps develop skills. This would also serve to strengthen the bonds between employers and students.’
- ‘Create and implement online sources for students, institutions, recruiters, see Euraxess at academic level.’

- “Enhance education and prepare for the future with an internship organization (example: <http://wiidc.org/>)”
- ‘Good initiative, but funding? International organisations will not be willing to pay’.
- ‘Establish talent coordinators at institutional level who manage contributions to a digital “talent bank” between academies where top talent programs exist and real life project provided by industry. Thus can employers test the talent and match talent and task before entering contractual commitments.’
- ‘It would be fantastic to organise an event in the city hall, sort of career day, where universities, educational institutes and employees could stand and network.’
- ‘Create (fund) extra-curricular activities at schools that are relevant to the employer.’

## Conclusions

There was a vivid exchange of ideas during the workshops. It is clear that direct contact with employers is appreciated by education institutes and employers. Most of the participants agreed to the idea that this is clearly not business as usual. New initiatives should be implemental within one year because of the period of time in which people come and go. There should be a strong focus on short term pragmatic solutions. Stay away from system changes because they will not be very helpful on short notice. One of the challenges in making stronger connections is ownership. Who will get in touch with whom? H&R staff of international organisations or educational institutes? And who should be contacted? Employers would appreciate a single point of contact. Education institutes do not like the idea of more bureaucracy and starting a brand new organisation. An external connector who is related to available organisations (for instance *Regioregisseur*) might be helpful.

## Workshop 3:

# The Hague in comparison with other centres of higher education

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*Chairman: Willem Looije, Director Academy of Management and Human Resources*

*Speakers: Henno Theisens, Lector Public Management Effective Complex Government System and Rosa Groen, Lecturer The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

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## Introduction:

In this workshop, the challenge was to find solutions for The Hague as an international 'student' city. Why would we need a long-term strategy for The Hague? What does (Dutch) higher education have to offer as part of a long-term strategy for The Hague?

## **What is the main challenge that such a strategy must address?**

His answers to these questions were that Dutch higher education is in a good position to attract international talent, but is not doing that now in large numbers and will be facing stiffer competition. Besides, he remarked that higher education, especially world-class higher education, is important because it changes the socio-economic and cultural climate in a city. However, for expats the availability of local higher education is probably a lot less important than primary and secondary education.

The introduction by Rosa Groen was about the available international primary and secondary education in The Hague. There are around 20 international schools in The Hague and many more schools that have international programmes. The internationally valid baccalaureate is especially important for the expats who might want their kids being moved again after secondary school. Over 6,300 children of more than 40 nationalities attend these international schools. Most international schools are both primary and secondary schools.

The situation of higher education in The Hague is more complex. The Hague is proud of The Hague Academic Coalition (HAC), which is a cluster of research centres and educational institutes, such as the Clingendael Institute, the Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law (HiIL), The Hague University of Applied Sciences, the Asser Institute and Leiden University Campus The Hague. A new part of the Leiden University Campus The Hague is The Hague International University College. Other new developments are The Hague Institute for Global Justice (2011) and the University of Peace (UPeace) in the Peace Palace (2012). There are 5,000 international students in The Hague, one sixth of the total 30,000 students. However, as there is no university in The Hague, a traditional research atmosphere or community is lacking.

Compared with other global cities, The Hague is not an example. In the category 'educational development' The Hague comes 144th out of 150 in the ranking of The Global Urban Competitiveness Report 2010 (Pengfei Ni and Peter Karl Kresl, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China, and Bucknell University, USA). Paris tops this ranking, with London in fourth place and Geneva in the 61st spot. This is not surprising, as this number is derived from two factors: number of Colleges and Universities and Famous University Distribution.

However, in another category of the same ranking, 'Status of Talent', The Hague tops the list whereas Paris comes in 3rd, London 10th and Geneva 103rd. This number is derived from the number of managers and employment in high-tech services (both per 1000 inhabitants).

Rosa Groen finished off by asking the public a question: What are the strengths and weaknesses of The Hague when focusing on higher education?

## **Remarks and visions by the public:**

- Two main weaknesses according to the public were the level of bureaucracy (i.e. Dutch higher education policy) for students and expats in The Hague, and the lack of attractiveness for international (or even Dutch) students. There are not many student clubs, sport facilities and bars, and there is no real student atmosphere in The Hague. As students mostly come from Leiden, Delft or villages and cities nearby, the student overview is rather fragmented.
- Another weakness of The Hague is the local character and focus of the city. As Theisens already pointed out, it is impossible for The Hague to be a global centre on its own strength. It needs Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Brussels and Antwerp to be a crucial player in the education economy. The public at the workshop agreed that there should be more links to other centres of knowledge, such as Rotterdam, Leiden and Delft. Without joining Leiden and other centres, it will be impossible to 'matter' in the world of scientific knowledge.

## **Remarks and recommendations from the public:**

- A solution for the first problem would be an online portal for international and Dutch students containing an overview of the international education available in The Hague. Or, even better, more marketing for the yearly 'Education in The Hague' booklet published by the City Hall. Besides, more marketing could be made for The Hague Student Platform, which tries to bring together the higher education institutions on a more regular basis.
- A solution for the second problem is, on the one hand, creating more links to other urban centres. English-language education could be much higher on the priority list, maybe by using talent already present in internationally oriented The Hague. The Randstad should develop into one educational centre. However, as long as money is divided per city, this may prove a difficult task. On the other hand, as somebody suggested, The Hague could invest in an online university. A challenge for The Hague could be to create the first Global Online University. A local context could be provided for this global university through the creation of workspaces for students. For this initiative the diverse international talent available in The Hague can also be used.

## **Recommended steps in governance:**

There were several ideas from the public on 'how to make The Hague a more successful global education centre'. The main point was that the Dutch educational system should be less harsh on students: an additional Master's costs lots of money in The Netherlands, whereas in Sweden studying is free. The public concluded that students should be subjected to less stringent regulations. Another important recommendation was that The Hague should be more linked to other cities such as Rotterdam, Leiden, Amsterdam and Utrecht. According to Theisens, Antwerp and Brussels could be added.

## **Summary of relevant information:**

Higher education, especially world-class higher education, is important because it changes the socio-economic and cultural climate in a city. However, for expats the availability of local higher education is probably a lot less important than primary and secondary education. Growing as an international centre of higher education is only possible if there is a tie-up with other (nearby) centres of research and education. The surrounding cities could be more efficiently linked and effectively used. The Hague should invest more in attracting students from abroad and local students. Creating more facilities would make The Hague a more attractive city for students.

## **Conclusions:**

Theisens concluded with two statements that might be a bit controversial: the lessons learned from Richard Florida are 1) without a strategy The Hague will be a pleasant provincial town in 2025 (this may not be a bad outcome); and 2) The Hague by itself is too small to be a global city; links and complementarity with Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Brussels are vital.

Last, but not least, attracting international institutions, expats and international talent is important, but the real challenge may be to harness the existing cultural diversity and use the talent that is living here already.

## Workshop 4:

# Setting the agenda for the city as a centre of higher education.

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*Chairman: Joris Voorhoeve, Lector International Peace, Justice and Security, The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

*Speaker: Louis Genet, Director of Investments International City The Hague*

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## Introduction

In his presentation, Louis Genet gave an overview of The Hague's current education and internationalisation projects and developments. According to Mr Genet, The Hague as a city does not directly coordinate/finance higher education; that is done by the central government. The city's role is more like a facilitator. However, The Hague achieved many goals between 2007-2012 in the field of education and has ambitious to achieve further goals between 2013-2016.



## **Main challenges**

According to Mr Genet, the city of The Hague's strengths lies in its international and education profile. However, there are also weaknesses, including the increasing demand for skilled labour for different specific areas and the need to improve cooperation between the different international organisations. For the agenda through to 2025, Mr Genet mentioned the goals of achieving excellent communication and collaboration between the LDE institutions (University of Leiden, University of Delft and Erasmus University) and expanding the two main education institutions in The Hague: The Hague University of Applied Sciences and the Leiden University Campus The Hague. The city is also planning to set up different research programmes in corporation with local schools to improve innovation and research in the city.

## **Remarks and ideas by the public**

- The focus of the city should be not only on local level but more on the international level. Entrepreneurs/experts are not only local players, but also global. Develop a good global communication programme to explain what opportunities are available in The Hague with a focus on international law, peace and justice.
- Recently, there has been an increasing focus on security in The Hague. It is important that the other aspects (law, peace and justice) get equal attention. A balance should be created between these aspects and they should support each other.
- Good communication between the different international organisations with the same goal or conducting similar activities in the city and internationally is extremely important. There are many organisations in The Hague focusing on conflict areas in many different parts of the world. Better communication between these organisations would improve their work efficiency. Furthermore, there should be a warning system to help

prevent violent conflicts in the world. Such a warning system combined with good communication can facilitate the effective monitoring and even prevention of these conflicts. Violent conflicts are easier to prevent than to cure.

- The Hague should use its international law profile to become a conflict mediator and peace negotiator in the world (example Oslo). Although there is strong competition, The Hague has excellent qualities to become an important player in this field.
- The Hague's education institutions currently offer more studies that fit the city's profile. The next step should be to discover the needs of the NGOs, companies and another international organisations.
- The focus on international law, peace and justice is clear but not specific enough. Add more specific fields.
- There is an increasing need for summer schools and more exchange students in The Hague. This will attract students who may continue with their Master's programme in The Hague. The schools in the city should set up a programme for summer schools and student exchange (example of Utrecht). There should be an exchange portal or international exchange office in The Hague to attract more of these students. International students can later become ambassadors of The Hague and would create an excellent network of experts.
- The infrastructure needs to be improved. Better connections and less travel time to The Hague.
- The Hague is already the centre of international law, peace and justice. The goal should now be to excel in these areas and rise above the average.
- The Hague should better promote itself as a city that is home to one of the UN's institutions. This would help put the city in international spotlight. When mentioned in the international media (BBC/CNN), The Hague is mostly referred to as the city of its UN institution: The International Court of Justice.
- There should be one website for all the innovation/research/internationalisation programmes that are located in The Hague. It is

currently very difficult to get a clear overview what opportunities are available in The Hague.

- The Hague should also become a centre of research like Rotterdam, Leiden or Delft.
- The Hague should work more on its qualities to attract the best expats. It is important not to remain merely an average player in the field of international law, peace and justice. The city should be able to meet the needs of the high-level expats.

## **Summary of relevant information and conclusion**

The workshops saw active discussion on the main topic – setting the agenda for the city as a centre of higher education. All the participants agreed about the importance of a few main themes, one of which was the importance of better communication between the different international organisations in The Hague. The exchange of their knowledge, achievements and networks will improve their efficiency and help their work in their respective fields.

Furthermore, the participants agreed that there should be more exchange programmes to attract international students to The Hague. In combination with those exchange programmes, the city should offer summer school programmes which currently do not exist here. These two types of programmes would largely improve the international profile of The Hague and the city would be promoted in the world by the students themselves.

Another main topic handled during the workshop is that the city should try to become a conflict mediator and a place for peace negotiations in the world. This would fit the profile of the city as a centre of international law, peace and justice and would put The Hague in the spotlight internationally.

To achieve all those goals, a good infrastructure is needed with better connections and less travel time to The Hague.

## **Advised steps in governance**

- Improve communication between international/national organisations in The Hague. (exchange network, achievements and knowledge);
- Support a summer school programme and exchange programmes in corporation with the schools in The Hague. Setup an exchange office/ website for better information and coordination;
- Find a solution to increase the number of housing options for the new students;
- Set up a programme to become a conflict mediator and a city for peace negotiations in the world. (Make sure the facilities are ready, i.e. conference centres, hotels);
- Improve the infrastructure of The Hague. Better connections and reduced travel to important cities such as Brussels.



## Workshop 5:

# The Hague as Pluriform Urban Community

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*Chairman: Dr Baukje Prins, Lector of Citizenship & Diversity, The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

*Speakers: Bart Dalmaijer, Mi-Jung van der Velde LLM, Lecturers at The Hague University of Applied Sciences and Iwette de Koster, IDHEM, Integration in The Hague of European Migrants*

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## Introduction

*Dr Baukje Prins*

*Lector of Citizenship & Diversity, The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

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Only 2.3 per cent of all students in higher education in the world are international. The focus is mainly on the world's elites that have the opportunity to travel and who can profit from the knowledge and economic benefits gained from an international education. Most students stay in their own countries.

**However, the internationalisation of higher education can start at home.**

Two topics should be on the agenda of global higher education in 2020:

- The huge number of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation immigrant students in The Hague who bring knowledge, skills and their own background.
- The large number of immigrants at The Hague: in particular east European children & their parents who need higher education.

## **Speakers:**

*Bart Dalmaijer*

*Lecturer in the Primary School Teacher Training programme (PABO),*

*The Hague University of Applied Sciences*

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30% of all students in PABO have non-Western origins, in particular Turkish and Moroccan. They will become teachers at Dutch primary schools. 60% of all students in primary schools in The Hague have non-Western origins. These teachers will be role models with the same background. They will teach children how to become valuable members of society. At home, however, these children will face a different situation: parents with low levels of education.

2<sup>nd</sup> generation immigrant students in the PABO programme tend to have hold more senior secondary vocational education (MBO) diplomas than Dutch students. Since compared with higher general secondary education (HAVO) and pre-university education (VWO), the MBO programme is less focused on mathematics, history and geography, which are important components of the teachers training programme, the drop-out rate of MBO-trained students is higher as they not as well prepared.

Non-Western immigrants are regarded as assets in the teacher training programme as they are often trilingual, for example. Problems with the Dutch

language have diminished. Cultural problems continue to exist, however. A variety of policies have helped (first-generation) students to study effectively, deal with diversity in the classroom and prepare them for diversity at the primary schools. Among these are a) support groups that bridge diversity; b) all-round tutoring to help with study or non-study-related problems; c) extra lessons for both teachers and students in, for example, language and mathematics; d) a diversity programme in the first year, discussion lessons; and e) at Mondriaan (MBO), extra mathematics and history lessons are provided to potential students that are very successful in preparing students for and attracting them to the PABO programme.

*Iwette de Koster*

*Coordinator of IDHEM (Integratie in Den Haag van Europese Migranten)*

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IDHEM provides three types of east-European immigrants with education support and information:

- International students whose goal in the Netherlands is study, after which they tend to return to their own country or leave for another country. 15% stays on in the Netherlands permanently with a job.
- Migrants with a degree. East European citizens have had the opportunity to work in the Netherlands since 2006. They move to the Netherlands for economic reasons. However, most jobs they have do not call for their degrees as these degrees are not valid in the Netherlands.
- Children of migrants (0-18 years). They have opportunities for education.

The focus today is on the migrants with a degree. 40% of east European workers have lived in the Netherlands for at least ten years. Of all central/ east European immigrants in The Hague, 30,000 completed higher education in their home countries. Of this figure, 45% are women. These women want to do more for society than just be wives or mothers. They want education. They mostly tend to take a Dutch language course independently, but they do not study at a higher education level. There is underemployment among



these women because their foreign degrees are considered invalid in the Netherlands. Many of their husbands are low-paid workers in the horticulture/ greenhouse sector. Furthermore, they do not have time for four years of education. They need to work fulltime to earn the money to survive.

Why do Eastern European immigrant woman want higher education? There are three reasons:

- 1) they want to feel useful;
- 2) they want better work; and
- 3) they want a better future for their children, which is the ultimate goal.

**The main problems are a lack of time and funds.**

The combination of education, work and family is impossible. Child care is expensive. They cannot leave their jobs for a couple of hours every time they have to attend classes. For part-time education they need work experience, which they do not have. They do not have the financial means. Even though they come to the Netherlands for money, they just do not earn enough.

Opportunities of immigrants can be increased by making it easier to validate their degrees earned in their countries of origin, so they do not have to start all over again. The diploma might become valid, for example, if it is complemented by self-education for a number of months. Secondly, their acquisition of the Dutch language and culture could be boosted by voluntary work, traineeships or special working programmes for skilled people in companies with a labour shortages.

As a lecturer, Jumi helps her students to reflect on diversity. She holds regular discussions with students to see where they stand. Some immigrant students can behave in a certain way that she regards as 'inappropriate'. When she talked to these students, she found they considered their behaviour to be 'normal', and that it was not intended to be deliberately inappropriate'. They were unaware of their own body language. Discussing it provided an opportunity to learn and reflect.

Based on her own experience, students' perception about diversity is about ethnicity/nationality, language and religion. Dutch students tend to see the Dutch culture as something normal and neutral. However, it is just a culture. Dutch students tend to see all students with a double identity as foreigners.

During discussions, students learned that they were not aware of their own framework. These discussions really helped to deal with diversity in the classroom and in the student-teacher relationship.

The discussion that followed showed that agreements between teachers and students about appropriate behaviour can sometimes be hard to achieve, but that they are necessary. Moreover, a certain difference can be observed between immigrant and international students.

Awareness and conversation are key elements in creating successful diversity policies at higher education institutions.



## Panel Discussions

*Dr Abiodun Williams*

*President The Hague Institute for Global Justice*

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Mr Williams hopes that his institution will become one of the world's leading think-thanks. This is how The Hague Institute for Global Justice wishes to contribute to the international character of The Hague. Policy-relevant research, workshops and partnership creation were the main activities Mr Williams mentioned.

*Nicole van Haelst*

*Director International Community Platform*

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The quality of the Dutch labour market is good, but we have to attract international talent to this country. Salary is no longer the single most important aspect as considerations such as career and education opportunities rise in importance. There is also a gap between the business and education sectors. We need practical solutions to bridge this gap and bring these sectors closer together so that each can learn from the other and understand the other's needs.

*Freddy Weima*

*Director General of Nuffic*

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The Hague has a good knowledge infrastructure, but we have a lot of work ahead of us to be ready for 2025. Improvement of higher education and its infrastructure are essential. More also has to be done at the level of primary and secondary education and in the teaching of languages. Higher education

organisations should work on a common strategy and communicate their needs to lower-level educational institutions. Nuffic encourages schools in The Hague to communicate and work on their strategies.

*Prof. Joris Voorhoeve*

*Chairman of Oxfam Novib*

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Prof. Voorhoeve highlighted many of the city's needs in terms of higher education. These included the need for accommodation to be arranged for international students. He also mentioned the need for summer schools, training for legal professions, improved legal systems, police, human rights and teaching. The theme of improving education systems would make excellent subjects for summer school programmes. Furthermore, there should be a programme for international interns so that they The Hague as ambassadors of the city.

# The Future Labour Market

*Prof. Alexander Rinnooy Kan*

*Professor at the University of Amsterdam*

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The labour market is extremely important. The labour market determinates the competitiveness of an economy, a country or even a continent. We should take care and look after the labour market, which is highly complex since the labour market is a part of a greater whole. The movement of labour within Europe should also be encouraged. Only 3 - 4 per cent of Europeans relocate outside their own countries for jobs and that is not compatible with another continents. There are still huge opportunities there.

On the face of it the Dutch labour market seems rather standard but it is actually one of extremes. First, at 80% female participation is very high, almost the highest in Europe. But much of this (60%) is part-time work, a proportion that is much higher than in other OECD countries. Second, although productivity is very high, its annual growth rate (1%) is lower than it used to be. The highest productivity growth rate can be found in Finland at 2.5%. Third, the number of hours worked annually per worker is very low in the Netherlands, which has the lowest rate in the OECD. The highest rate can be found in Greece, which exceeds the Netherlands by 50%. The Netherlands also suffers from a poor labour-market flexibility rating owing to its employment protection legislation.

International education contributes to the business climate. Ex-pats need more than a good salary. They also want good education for their children, among other things. Dutch talent also needs to be prepared to operate in an international environment. The development of education in The Hague seems to be on the right track. Many new higher education institutions have established themselves in the city in the past few years. This development will need to continue to encompass the needs of globalization and interconnectedness of the Netherlands.



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