



Important message regarding staying in the Netherlands after graduation

17 July 2020

Congratulations! You are about to finish your studies at a Dutch research university or university of applied sciences. We hope you have experienced an unforgettable and valuable study period in the Netherlands.

And while you have reached important personal milestones, and have to make important decisions for your future, the world has been stunned by the Corona pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 is felt throughout the globe and has also had an effect on the Dutch labour market and economy. At the moment there are less vacancies than what we have experienced in the last years. In this mailing you will find information about the options available to you and the special considerations regarding those options related to the Corona crisis. Whatever your choice may be, as a Holland Alumnus we would like to keep in touch with you.



In cooperation with:



Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend
Nederland



Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst
Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid



Search Year permit

The Search year is also known as Zoekjaar (in Dutch) or Orientation year for highly educated persons. As an international graduate with a Bachelors-, Masters- or PhD-degree you are eligible to apply for this 1-year permit. During this year, you don't need a work permit and are allowed to take out any job. This might be your stepping stone towards a job that qualifies you for a highly skilled migrant permit. This residence permit allows you to work without a work permit and has favourable conditions.

In the past few months there have been several requests to extend the search year because of the downturn in vacancies caused by the Corona crisis. Unfortunately, this is not possible because the conditions for the Search year are entrenched in law, a change in which is a lengthy and uncertain process. However, the government values the contribution of international students and highly skilled migrants to the Netherlands greatly. Therefore, the lower salary criteria to find a job as a highly skilled migrant is extended for all recent graduates up until 3 years after graduation in the Netherlands. In practice this means that if you don't find a job within the Search year, you can continue looking for a job with the lower salary criteria from abroad up until 3 years after graduation. This will facilitate your search for a job as a highly skilled migrant in the Netherlands, even if you are not in the Netherlands when you are job hunting.

In addition there are several options regarding the Search year permit:

- You can apply for the Search year up to 3 years after graduation.
- If you get a job without having had the Search year visa, you still qualify for the lower salary criterium, on the basis that you were eligible for this permit up to 3 years after graduation.
- You can register at the UWV (Employee Insurance Agency) as a job seeker and receive job placement assistance from the UWV.

Together with the Dutch Immigration Service (IND), we have developed information tools such as a FAQ and a webinar, which you can find on our website. If you want to find out more ins and outs about this permit and about how to apply - please visit the website of the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation service.



Start-up & Self-employment permit

The Netherlands welcomes people with the ambition to grow their innovative idea into a viable business. If you have the creativity and the energy, the Netherlands offers the Self-employment permit & start-up visum, a residence permit that allows you to work on your idea without a work permit. For the start-up visum you will need to find a facilitator. Applying for a Self-employment permit or Start-up permit might be a good alternative to the search year, you can also try both. For more information visit the website of the IND or the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO). Both of them are responsible for deciding upon the application for this Start-up permit.



Holland Alumni network

The Holland Alumni network offers students and alumni a platform to connect and reconnect with fellow Holland Alumni and keep in touch with the Dutch. Stay informed and involved through online communities, and events calendar and news updates. You can find information about career opportunities in the Netherlands and network through Alumni associations. Dutch embassies worldwide use the Holland Alumni network to distribute invitations and opportunities. Register now to start enjoying the benefits.



Where to from here

The Netherlands is a dynamic, innovative and vibrant country that needs international talent like you. We trust that you will make an informed decision and that wherever your road will take you, strong connections to the Netherlands and its people will be part of it.