

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Various types of visas

**What is the difference between a visa and a residence permit?**

A visa (MVV) is used to enter the Netherlands and a residence permit is a document that gives you the right to stay here legally (see section *List of frequently used terms*). Citizens of certain nationalities cannot just travel to the Netherlands; these nationalities require a visa sticker (MVV) in their passport which allows them to enter the Netherlands. A visa sticker is collected at the Dutch embassy or consulate in your home country (or a third-party country if there is no Dutch representation in your own country). Conversely, all Non-EU citizens need a residence permit. This is an ID card which you will receive in the Netherlands.

**My visa is only valid for three months, what should I do?**

There is nothing to worry about. If your nationality requires a visa (MVV) and residence permit (VVR), we will apply for both. You will collect the visa at the embassy or consulate in your home country. This is a sticker that is placed in your passport. The visa is **always valid for three months. This is due to the fact that a visa is only used to travel to the Netherlands.** From the moment you have collected the visa, you have three months to travel to the Netherlands. The **residence permit**, on the other hand, is an ID card that you will pick up in the Netherlands. This is the actual document that allows you to stay legally in the Netherlands during your studies here.

**Can I study here using a short term/tourist visa (VKV)?**

No, this is not possible. You can only stay in the Netherlands for 90 days on a short stay visa. The study programmes at VU Amsterdam are longer than 90 days\*. It is not possible either to enter the Netherlands on a short stay visa and obtain a residence permit. You can only obtain a residence permit in combination with a long stay entry visa (MVV)\*\*.

\* *The only exception to this are Summer School courses.*

\*\* *This only applies to nationals who require a visa to enter the Netherlands.*

### Required documents

**My sponsor does not have a passport, what should I do?**

In case your sponsor does not have a passport, you can provide any other form of legal identification (such as an ID card). If this type of identification is only issued in your native language, then you will need to have the document translated into Dutch or English by a sworn translator.

**Do I need to bring a birth certificate?**

No, you do not need to bring a birth certificate if you will be living in Amsterdam or Amstelveen.

### Travelling

**I wish to travel through Europe, can I do this with my Dutch entry visa and residence permit?**

Yes, you can travel to **Schengen member states only**. Before you travel, please check whether the countries of your destination are Schengen states. Your entry visa (MVV) allows you to travel through Schengen countries for **a maximum of 90 days**. Please check the [Schengen calculator](#) to check how many days you still have left. The MVV is also referred to as a type D-visa. The D-visa is valid for 90 days from the commencement date stated on the visa sticker that is placed in your passport. You can use the D-visa to enter and leave the Netherlands (and other Schengen countries).

The residence permit for study allows you to live and study in the Netherlands, and to travel to all the Schengen countries and back to the Netherlands as often as you like while the permit is valid. Please note though that the maximum amount of days you can spend uninterrupted in another Schengen country is **90 days**.

Also note that some countries require that your Dutch residence permit continues to be valid for a specific period of time (either three or six months) after your arrival in their country. This may have a significant effect on your travel plans, particularly during the summer months. Please remember this when you are planning to travel outside the Netherlands and check about any such requirements before you book any travel tickets.

### Practicalities (BSN number, municipalities)

**What is the municipality and a BSN number, and is this related to my residence permit?**

The **municipality** is the local government of a place. Depending on where you live, you fall under the municipality of Amsterdam or Amstelveen. It is necessary to register with the municipality in order to keep the right of your residence permit. When you have registered at the town hall, you will receive your BSN number within a few weeks (both Amsterdam and Amstelveen municipalities are present during the Arrival Days and you can register then as well).

A **BSN number** is a social security number needed to arrange all sorts of practical matters such as opening a Dutch bank account. Students often mistake the BSN number for their residence permit, and the municipality for the Dutch Immigration Service (IND). However, these are two separate institutions. The IND handles immigration matters and the municipality arranges the registrations in the town hall. You do not receive your BSN number when you have picked your residence permit at the Dutch Immigration Service (IND), but once you have registered with the municipality. So the IND and the municipality are not related. Please also note that it does not matter in which sequence you complete these practicalities; that is, **you do not need a BSN number to collect your residence permit nor do you need to have your residence permit already in order to register with the municipality**. Please check *List of frequently used terms* as well.

### Work and internships

**I would like to work while studying. Is that possible?**

In case you hold a non-EU nationality, you need a work permit to be able to work. Your employer needs to apply for a work permit at the UWV. Even with a work permit there are still restrictions. As a student, you are allowed to work a maximum of 10 hours a week. Please visit [this website](#) for more information about rules and regulations. Citizens of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Korea are eligible to apply for a special type of residence permit called the Working Holiday Programme/Working Holiday Scheme (WHP/WHS). WHP/WHS allows you to work and study here without needing a work permit.

**I would like to go to an internship placement in another EU country, can I do this with my Dutch residence permit?**

If you are an EU national, you are free to participate in an internship in any Schengen country. It is not so simple if you are a non-EU national. When the internship is part of your degree programme at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the internship will last no longer than 90 days, you can stay in the other Schengen country for 90 days. Please note that you do need to check with the authorities of that country whether you need a work permit to carry out your internship. When the internship is part of your degree programme at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the internship will last longer than 90 days, you will need to apply for a residence permit of the country of placement as well. Again, you also need to check whether you need a work permit. If you wish to do an internship after you finished your studies here, you will need to apply for a residence permit and a work permit.

**Can I do an internship in the Netherlands?**

This depends. If you have a residence permit for study in the Netherlands, and when the internship is relevant to your studies here or in your home country (in case you are an exchange student at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) then you can participate in an internship. You do need to complete the following [internship agreement](#) and send it to [studentimmigration@vu.nl](mailto:studentimmigration@vu.nl). In case the internship is not relevant to your studies and/or when you do not have a residence permit for study, you require a **work permit**.

### Family

**I will be a student at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and I would like to bring my partner and/or child(ren). Is this possible?**

Yes, we can apply for a visa (if applicable) and residence permit on behalf of your family members. Please visit the section **Bringing Family Members** for the required documents.