



### AD HOC QUERY ON 2021.2 International Students - Update

Requested by COM on 13 January 2021

Compilation produced on 9 April 2021

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden (22 in Total)

#### Disclaimer:

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## 1. Background information

This Ad-Hoc Query contributes to the section of a planned EMN OECD COVID-19 Umbrella Inform that will be published in March 2021 and covers the measures adopted by Member States and Norway in relation to international students in the EU. It requests updates to some of the responses given to AHQs 2020.44 and 2020.45.

This purpose of the Umbrella Inform is to discuss the key migration issues that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, based on information already gathered and new information to be collected through further AHQs. The Inform will compare and contrast the force majeure measures taken up to June/July 2020, based on the information already collected, with measures in place at a point in time as of 31 December 2020, in order to assess whether policies have evolved or not. The purpose is not to provide a timeline of developments but to highlight changes.

The Umbrella Inform will discuss what are the challenges still faced by Member States at 31 December 2020, and whether or not any lessons have been learned. In their answers to the AHQ questions, Member States are asked to reflect on the types of challenges faced, and how any measures taken have addressed those challenges.

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For the purpose of this AHQ, international students refer to third-country nationals who are granted residence permits or long-stay visas for the purpose of studies (Bachelor, Master or PhD level). The following categories are excluded from the scope of this Inform: 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. For the purpose of this Inform, higher education comprises tertiary education programmes at levels 6 (Bachelor's or equivalent), 7 (Master's or equivalent), and 8 (Doctoral or equivalent) of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The Inform only focuses on full-time international students and will examine the situation for those who are applying to study in the EU, those already residing in the EU, and those who graduated in 2019. The questions in this AHQ will count as 2 AHQs in total.

## 2. Questions

**1. Concerning the admission of new international students, please provide the situation as of 31 December 2020 in your Member State regarding any contingency measures in place during / due to the pandemic in relation to the following:**

- a. National policies related to the admission of international students;
- b. The issuance of guidelines to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by your national authorities;
- c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line).

NB: Please in your answer address the types of challenges still faced, and how any measures taken have addressed those challenges. Please also state whether your Member State plans to implement any long-term changes to the national admission policy for international students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. Up to 31 December 2020, did your Member State or Norway observe any impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the number of new international student visas and/or residence permits issued for higher education at HEIs in the autumn semester in your country when compared with previous years (2018 and 2019)? YES/NO. If yes, please explain what that impact is (e.g. overall numbers, composition of countries of origin). Any information on indicative trends observed by your Member State up to 31 December 2020 would be useful.**

**3. As a matter of national policy, are HEIs encouraged to limit physical presence on campuses? Yes/No  
If Yes, how?**

**4. Are international students who were admitted to your MS prior to the pandemic to undertake study on the territory of your Member State permitted to continue their studies from abroad? Yes/No.**

**5. If you answer Yes to Q4, how many international students, who were already enrolled and admitted to the territory but could not return to your MS are studying online in their home countries (if known)?**

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**6. Please provide the situation as of 31 December 2020 in your Member State regarding any contingency measures in place during / due to the pandemic in relation to the following:**

- a. Availability of state-funded social security/benefits or other support mechanisms for (financially disadvantaged) international students, stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only;
- b. Availability of other support mechanisms available for international students at the local level (e.g. housing benefits, hardship allowance) stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples;
- c. Availability of other support mechanisms for international students at the HEI level (e.g. financial loans/grant or other types of exceptional financial support, reduced accommodation/tuition fees), stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples.

We would very much appreciate your responses by **10 February 2021**.

**3. Responses**

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		Wider Dissemination <sup>2</sup>	
	EMN NCP Austria	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.

<sup>1</sup> If possible at time of making the request, the Requesting EMN NCP should add their response(s) to the query. Otherwise, this should be done at the time of making the compilation.

<sup>2</sup> A default "Yes" is given for your response to be circulated further (e.g. to other EMN NCPs and their national network members). A "No" should be added here if you do not wish your response to be disseminated beyond other EMN NCPs. In case of "No" and wider dissemination beyond other EMN NCPs, then for the Compilation for Wider Dissemination the response should be removed and the following statement should be added in the relevant response box: "This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further."

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	<p>EMN NCP Belgium</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. a) Please note that education in Belgium is a not a national competence, but falls under the authority of the Communities.  <b>Flemish and French Community:</b> No specific regional guidelines/policies were taken concerning the admission of international students at higher education institutions following the pandemic. The admission policy of international students to higher education falls under the autonomy of the higher education institutions (HEIs).  <b>Please note:</b> Policies/measures taken by the Federal Government, specifically those related to the traveling from/to Belgium, might impact the admission of international students. However, since the first measures were taken, travelling for study purposes has always been considered as an exception, meaning therefore that international students could pursue their studies in Belgium.  b) <b>Flemish Community:</b> No. Regarding international students, the measures related to international travels apply, no additional measures have been taken on Flemish level. HEIs might have decided to suspend all visits of international scholars, researchers, partners.  Extra information: HEIs are still flexible with regards to international students and try to look for solutions where necessary, e.g. a blended start of the academic year, which is beneficial for international students who have not yet obtained a student visa.  <b>French Community:</b> No. Regarding international students, the measures related to international travels apply, no additional measures have been taken. However, some HEIs might have decided to suspend all visits of international scholars, researchers, partners. In general, a protocol (available in French on <a href="http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&amp;do_id=7985">http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&amp;do_id=7985</a>) was established at the start of the academic year 2020-2021 with different measures depending on the progression of the pandemic relating to higher education in general. Other general information concerning the coronavirus relating to higher education, issued by the French Community, is available on: <a href="http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28301&amp;navi=4684">http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28301&amp;navi=4684</a>.  c) <b>Flemish Community:</b> The application procedure as such was already completely online. Students have been actively encouraged to check if their previous educational institution provided online degree verification, thus avoiding the need to present hard copy originals in person. This policy will be continued in the future.  For the academic year 2020-2021 and depending on the programme, students had the possibility to start the programme online, thus allowing them more time to complete the visa application.  <b>French Community:</b> Due to the current crisis, an extension of the academic year 2019/2020 until 30 January 2021 had been approved in order to allow certain students to do their internships or present exams (thus</p>
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			<p>avoiding having to re-register for a new academic year) (Order of the Government of the French Community of Special Powers n° 6 relating to the organization of the end of the academic year 2019 – 2020, <a href="https://www.gallilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/48063_000.pdf">https://www.gallilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/48063_000.pdf</a>).</p> <p>Moreover, a postponement of the provisional enrolment date was agreed (end of January 2021), which may be exceeded if the delay in issuing the missing documents or certificates is not the student's responsibility (Order of the Government of the French Community of Special Powers n°41 relating to the organisation of the academic year 2020-2021, <a href="https://www.gallilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/48984_000.pdf">https://www.gallilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/48984_000.pdf</a>). The admission procedure is the direct responsibility of each higher education institution, which can decide to take additional measures to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure.</p> <p><b>2. Number of applications for D visa received by diplomatic missions and consular posts</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Jan</th> <th>Feb</th> <th>March</th> <th>April</th> <th>May</th> <th>June</th> <th>July</th> <th>Aug</th> <th>Sep</th> <th>Oct</th> <th>Nov</th> <th>Dec</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>530</td> <td>130</td> <td>152</td> <td>149</td> <td>584</td> <td>1.777</td> <td>3.564</td> <td>2.880</td> <td>1.135</td> <td>478</td> <td>433</td> <td>725</td> <td>12.537</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>592</td> <td>145</td> <td>88</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>19</td> <td>1.327</td> <td>3.110</td> <td>2.205</td> <td>887</td> <td>377</td> <td>399</td> <td>9.150</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In 2020, there is a high decrease in applications for the months March to July after which the applications picked up again with higher numbers than in 2019. For the months November and December the applications decrease once more. In 2020, there were 3387 applications less than in 2019.</p> <p><b>Most common nationalities (top 5) among the applications for visa D received by the diplomatic missions and consular posts in the context of higher education migration in 2019</b></p> <p>Most common nationalities (top 5) among the applications for visa D received by the diplomatic missions and consular posts in the context of higher education migration in 2019</p> <p>De meest voorkomende nationaliteiten (top 5) onder de visumaanvragen die de diplomatieke missies en consulaire posten hebben ontvangen in het kader van migratie in het hoger onderwijs in 2019</p> <p>Most common nationalities (top 5) below received by the diplomatic and consular visas D applications in the context of higher education migration in 2019.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Country</th> <th>2019</th> <th>Country</th> <th>2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Cameroon</td> <td>2.107</td> <td>1. Cameroon</td> <td>2.022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. China</td> <td>1.272</td> <td>2. Morocco</td> <td>912</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Morocco</td> <td>903</td> <td>3. China</td> <td>766</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	2019	530	130	152	149	584	1.777	3.564	2.880	1.135	478	433	725	12.537	2020	592	145	88	0	1	19	1.327	3.110	2.205	887	377	399	9.150	Country	2019	Country	2020	1. Cameroon	2.107	1. Cameroon	2.022	2. China	1.272	2. Morocco	912	3. Morocco	903	3. China	766
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			<p>4. India 626 4. India 469</p> <p>5. United States 594 5. Turkey 325</p> <p>Other 7.035 Other 4656</p> <p>The main nationalities remain the same in 2020, except for the United States which do not longer figure in the top five and is replaced by Turkey. Applications of Chinese nationals decreased the most with 506 applications less in 2020 compared to 2019.</p> <p><b>3. Flemish Community:</b> Yes, there are rules concerning the limitations on physical presence on campus. They can be changed according to the changing situation. All information (in Dutch) relating to the coronavirus is gathered on a website of the Flemish Ministry of Education, which is constantly updated:  <a href="https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus">https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus</a>.                  Concerning the rules on physical presence, the following site with security measures per pandemic level 2020-2021 of the Flemish Ministry of Education can be checked (for universities and university colleges):  <a href="https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/veiligheidsmaatregelen-per-pandemieniveau-2020-2021">https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/veiligheidsmaatregelen-per-pandemieniveau-2020-2021</a>.  <b>French Community:</b> A protocol (available in French on <a href="http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&amp;do_id=7985">http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&amp;do_id=7985</a>) was established at the start of the academic year 2020-2021 with different measures depending on the progression of the pandemic relating to higher education in general. Other general information concerning the coronavirus relating to higher education, issued by the French Community, is available on: <a href="http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28301&amp;navi=4684">http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28301&amp;navi=4684</a>.</p> <p>4. Yes, under the current measures, classes are still being held online mostly and international students are not obliged to be physically present. Once the pandemic evolves positively and the restrictions are loosened, students will be expected back on campus. The exams are always on campus (exceptions possible in case of force majeure).  <b>Flemish Community:</b> For degree mobility, international students should be attending (physically or virtually) classes in the hosting institution. Therefore most likely those students should be present in Belgium, although this is up to the procedures and rules of the host university. For credit mobility, this will depend on the agreement between the sending and receiving institutions. Forms of blended and virtual mobility are possible.</p>
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			<p>For example: in the university KU Leuven, under the current measures, classes are still being held online mostly and international students are not obliged to be physically present. Once the pandemic evolves positively and the restrictions are loosened, students will be expected back on campus. The exams are always on campus (exceptions possible in case of force majeure).</p> <p><b>French Community:</b> For degree mobility, international students should be attending (physically or virtually) classes in the hosting institution. Therefore most likely those students should be present in Belgium. For credit mobility, this will depend on the agreement between the sending and receiving institutions.</p> <p>5. No centrally available data on whether students are taking virtual classes from abroad or from within Belgium.</p> <p><b>6. Flemish Community:</b> The Flemish Minister for Education has <b>upped up the budget of the student facilities services</b> € 1.5 million in the beginning of the COVID-crisis. In higher education, students may have financial problems as a result of the corona crisis. In that case, students can go to the student facilities service of their institution, which however have a limited budget. The purpose of the extra budget is to provide additional financing for the student facilities services of higher education institutions, with an additional social allowance of € 684,000 for universities and € 816,000 for universities of applied sciences for the 2019-2020 academic year. This amount is distributed among the institutions according to the distribution mechanism included in the articles III.68 and III.69 of the Higher Education codex. The institutions will use the resources as a priority to absorb financial problems of students who have costs that can be traced back to the COVID-19 crisis, such as costs when switching to online education, costs that are related to (canceling) the rent of a room or loss of income as a result of the termination of a student job. The student facilities services can decide for themselves how the funds are used. It is possible other follow-up actions and/or measures will be implemented as well. <b>For international students</b>, the Corona crises increases the chance of financial support from the student facilities services for non-EEA students. Normally these students are only entitled to financial support in very exceptional cases. In many cases, Corona can now be invoked as a force majeure factor, because a significant part of the international students has a student job. If a non-EEA student can demonstrate that s/he lost his job because of the corona crisis and financed her/his studies with it, s/he can now receive a grant from his/her higher education institution, just like a Belgian student. It amounts to a maximum of € 650 and is spread over</p>
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			<p>a month. At first this was a one-off grant, but due to the crisis, a month will be added and the maximum amount will double. However, social students services emphasize that applications are rather exceptionally approved.</p> <p><b>Later the Flemish Minister of Education has added an extra 10 million Euro</b> for the further support the student facilities services in the higher education institutions.</p> <p><b>Research on the well-being of students:</b> The corona crisis has revealed dormant challenges surrounding students' mental well-being. This is why the Flemish Minister of Education has made €45.000 euros available for a research by the Flemish Association of Students (VVS) into the mental well-being of students in Flanders and Brussels.</p> <p>In December 2020 Flemish Minister for Education allocated 800.000 EUR to the Flemish Support Center for Inclusive Higher Education (SIHO) to work on the mental well-being of students. SIHO will e.g. create a digital platform to connect students to an offer of help and information in the different cities in Flanders. 7 persons will be working in this new project.</p> <p><b>Study places on campus:</b> The Flemish Minister of Education worked out a solution together with the higher education institutions to provide vulnerable students with quiet study places on campus to prepare for their exams in peace.</p> <p>It is possible other follow-up actions and/or measures will be implemented as well.</p> <p><b>VLIR-UOS:</b> VLIR-UOS as part of the Flemish Interuniversity Council is the platform in which the Flemish higher education institutions join forces within the context of university cooperation for development. In addition, using resources from the federal government, it is the most important funder of cooperative projects between academics from Flanders and from the South as well as for grants to students and professionals from Flanders and the South. VLIR-UOS awards scholarships to applicants from 31 eligible countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to attend one of the selected trainings or master programmes taught in English at a Flemish university or university college. Given the restrictions on (international) mobility and social interaction imposed by a multitude of stakeholders concerned (governmental and institutional authorities, airlines, travel agencies,...) on the basis of the Corona virus pandemic, VLIR-UOS has provided information on measures related to mobility, events and costs in the framework of ongoing and future VLIR-UOS programmes, projects and scholarships. For example, scholarship holders, promoters or project members who left Belgium who have been quarantined by the government in their home country, without that government intervening in the costs, can receive a (partial) refund of these costs upon presentation of motivation and proof of these costs (government measure, government cost reimbursement disclaimer and bills). Furthermore, proven inability to</p>
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			<p>leave Belgium due to Corona and subsequent policies (governmental and or airlines) can be qualified as force majeure; costs of forced prolonged stay will be refunded, in principle on the basis of the VLIR-UOS guidelines. More information: <a href="https://cdn.webdoos.io/vliruos/VLIR-UOS%20and%20Corona_2020-07-10.pdf">https://cdn.webdoos.io/vliruos/VLIR-UOS%20and%20Corona_2020-07-10.pdf</a>.</p> <p><b>French Community:</b> Among the various measures related to higher education and research taken by the Government of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional budget of € 2,285 Mio as social subsidies to directly support students impacted financially or psychologically by the pandemic</li> <li>• Additional budget of € 6 Mio to fund a specific work plan to support students that have started a bachelor / 1st cycle programme</li> <li>• Additional budget of € 2,124 Mio to support adult education (called “social advancement”) institutions in the acquisition of IT equipment</li> <li>• Additional budget of € 3,8 Mio to support PhD students employed by university or the research fund FNRS, so that they can benefit from an extension of their scholarship or financial support</li> </ul>
	<p>EMN NCP Bulgaria</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. In the conditions of worldwide spread of COVID-19 pandemic, with orders of the Minister of Health anti-epidemic measures have been introduced in Republic of Bulgaria, which are obligatory for implementation for all persons, located on the territory of the country. These orders also determine measures in the field of higher education, affecting the conduct of educational activities in HEIs. There are no specially developed policies in the country related to the admission of foreign students and for this reason no guidelines have been prepared for HEIs. HEIs in the Republic of Bulgaria are autonomous and they organize the admission of the foreign students on their own rules. Some of the HEIs insist the present of the candidates at place, other cope to organize submission of the documents online. At state level only, the admission of foreign students of Bulgarian nationality under the Decree of the Council of Ministers 103 of 31 May 1993 (DCM 103/1993) and citizens of the Republic of Northern Macedonia under the DCM 228 of 20 May 1997 (DCM 228/1997) is organized. Considering the pandemic situation an electronic platform is being developed for candidates under the DCM 103/1993 and the DCM 228/1997 for the candidate student campaign 2020/2021. It allowed the candidates under the two DCMs to submit electronically their documents for application to HEIs in the Republic of Bulgaria. Through the</p>


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			<p>platform were reviewed the documents of the candidates, their eligibility to apply for education in Republic of Bulgaria under DCM 103/1993 and DCM 228/1997 and their ranking in HEIs have been done. It is planned the platforms to be upgraded and to allow the whole application process to be carried out in an electronic environment for the next candidate students campaign: from submitting the application documents through holding entrance exams to the final process of enrolling in HEIs.</p> <p>2. There is no impact observed of the COVID-19 crisis on the number of new international students. During the period 01.01.2020 – 31.12.2020 a total of 1322 visas and 3105 residence permits were issued to third-country nationals whose aim was education.</p> <p>3. As it has been mentioned above in the situation of worldwide spread of the COVID-19 pandemic with orders of the Minister of Health anti-epidemic measures have been introduced in Republic of Bulgaria. According to them all HEIs are providing distance learning to their students, except for some practical activities which are not possible to be done online. Strict measures concerning the physical presence at all the HEIs buildings are implemented in line with the Ordinances issued by the Minister of Health. During all of the educational activities learners, lecturers and staff have to keep distance of minimum 1.5 m between each other in the halls, laboratories, sport facilities etc. In case this is not possible elements of distance learning must be implemented for the lectures and practical training.</p> <p>4. Yes</p> <p>5. HEIs in Republic of Bulgaria are autonomous and they do not have an obligation to provide such information to the Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p>6.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. There are no such mechanisms.</li><li>2. There are no such mechanisms.</li><li>3. There are no such mechanisms.</li></ol>
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	<p>EMN NCP Croatia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. a) National policies related to admission have not changed: a general recommendation is to provide on-line teaching and learning whenever face-to-face teaching and learning is not possible, in order to ensure the sustainability of study programmes during the pandemic. Notably it refers to study programmes in the English language which are the most common choice of students from third countries. The Ministry of Science and Education recommended higher education institutions to adjust their internal procedures taking into consideration the specific needs of various categories of students.</p> <p>b) In Croatia, decisions on academic issues fall under academic autonomy, while sanitary protection measures are applied in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the National Civil Protection Authority, which are subject to modification depending on the epidemiological situation.</p> <p>c) Due to certain delays in the visa application process reported by some HEIs (e.g. suspension of the process), consequently measures have been taken in this regard by HEIs such as prolongation of the enrolment deadline or deadline for confirmation of enrolment, as well as enabling applicants to submit all necessary documents and to apply online.</p> <p>2. All HEIs have taken the necessary measures and preparations to adjust and carry out distance learning in order to ensure the sustainability of study programmes. In the last six months there have been no collecting of data on the number of international students. Challenges remain in relation to rejecting visa applications submitted by third-country nationals from certain countries in Asia and Africa.</p> <p>3. Yes. In Croatia, decisions on academic issues fall under academic autonomy, while sanitary protection measures are applied in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of the National Civil Protection Authority, which are subject to modification depending on the epidemiological situation.</p> <p>4. Yes, all HEIs have taken the necessary measures and preparations to adjust and carry out distance learning to the extent necessary.</p> <p>5. This type of data has not been collected at the national level.</p> <p>6. a) At the state level, there are no special support mechanisms for international students. However, higher education institutions carrying out study programs in foreign languages supported by the European Social Fund are allowed to use project funds for supporting financially disadvantaged international students with excellent</p>
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			<p>academic performance. Prior to their admission, the committee appointed by the respective higher education institution carries out an online interview.</p> <p>b) There are no support mechanisms for third-country nationals available at the local level.</p> <p>c) At the HEI level, for some study programmes in foreign languages tuition fees are fully funded from projects (notably the European Social Fund) and are thus free-of-charge for international students.</p>
	EMN NCP Cyprus	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are no contingency measures in place.</li> <li>2. No.</li> <li>3. According to a decree of the Ministry of Health, as of 07.01.2021, all courses must be done online/remotely.</li> <li>4. Yes, since all lessons must be done remotely/online</li> <li>5. No data available</li> <li>6. There are no contingency measures in place.</li> </ol>
	EMN NCP Czech Republic	Yes	<p>1. a. National policies related to the admission of international students; One of the important measure, which goal was to reduce the negative effects of the current situation on all students, was introduced by the Act No. 188/2020 Coll. which was prepared by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. On 24 April 2020, the Act No. 188/2020 Coll., On Special Rules for Education and Decision-Making at Higher Education Institutions in 2020 and on the Assessment of Study Period for the Purposes of Other Acts, was published. The Act responds to the emergency situation in connection with the crisis measures which were adopted by the Government of the Czech Republic due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>


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			<p>The Act regulates some aspects of admission and enrolment in universities, regulation of study conditions and its completion by state examination, university decision-making and assessment. The Act was effective only in the Year 2020.</p> <p>b. The issuance of guidelines to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by your national authorities;</p> <p>It was introduced the new law mentioned above and protective measures – Resolutions adopted by the Ministry of Health <a href="https://koronavirus.mzcr.cz/en/extraordinary-and-protective-measures-and...">https://koronavirus.mzcr.cz/en/extraordinary-and-protective-measures-and...</a> which deals with entries of the foreigners in the Czech Republic.</p> <p>c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line).</p> <p>It is under responsibility of Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs – processes of visa.</p> <p>Support in 2020 – the frequent application of Student Mode Programme by increasing the quotas for current countries and expanding the new ones. The Student Mode (SM) is a project set up by the Government of the Czech Republic in 2017 aimed at streamlining the visa process for certain students from select third countries who have been admitted to study at a higher education institution in the Czech Republic. The function of SM is to accelerate access to the relevant embassy for an applicant seeking a long-term residence permit/visa for the purpose of studies. In May 2020 the Fast-Track Process for Granting Residence Permits for Foreign Nationals – International Students from Third Countries was introduced, which allows selected groups of applicants to negotiate granting residence permits for the Czech Republic in a shortened timeframe.</p> <p>2. We do not have data for 2020. Higher Education Institution expect some reduction of number of international students from the 3rd countries (outside the EU - due to the closed Foreign Embassies/Consulates of the Czech Republic) to study in the Czech Republic, nevertheless currently it is not possible to declare the concrete data due to the fact that some faculties of HEIs have not organized the entrance examinations yet. Some of HEIs are going to hold the on-line enrolment for foreign students to motivate the students to study in the Czech Republic in Fall semester.</p> <p>3. Yes – distance learning with respect to the requirement of the National Accreditation Bureau to report the scope of remote learning, study programme guarantors. Based on Government Directives and Protective Measures and University Measures.</p>
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			<p>4. Yes.</p> <p>5. In order to allow all students to start their studies, the majority of HEIs have facilitated remote registration through the Study Information System for applicants who have been accepted for study and cannot, for demonstrable, objective reasons, be physically present for registration. The HEIs shall issue the newly required document “Confirmation by entity from the Czech Republic receiving third-country nationals for the purpose of economic or educational activity”, which has been required of new applicants for study visas as of 13 July 2020, to successful applicants and send it together with other documents so that applicants have them prior to their interview at Czech embassies.</p> <p>6. a. Availability of state-funded social security/benefits or other support mechanisms for (financially disadvantaged) international students, stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only; N/I</p> <p>b. Availability of other support mechanisms available for international students at the local level (e.g. housing benefits, hardship allowance) stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples; N/I</p> <p>c. Availability of other support mechanisms for international students at the HEI level (e.g. financial loans/grant or other types of exceptional financial support, reduced accommodation/tuition fees), stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples. YES. The foreign students are usually accommodated at the dormitories of Higher Education Institutions. Each higher education institutions have issued its specific guidelines for students who stayed at dormitories and they received the generic support as the reduction of dormitory fees according to the students’ individual situation.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Estonia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. a. In July, the Government established conditions on accepting international students who arrive from countries where the number of new infections per 100 000 inhabitants in the last 14 days was above 16</p>


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			<p>cases. The HEI was required to organize testing upon arrival and 14 days after arrival, transport and accommodation of the international student.</p> <p>As of 31 December 2020, there were no national policies in place which would restrict the admission of international students in the Spring semester 2020/2021 or Fall semester 2021/2022.</p> <p>b. No.</p> <p>c. No developments compared to the information provided in AHQ 2020.44. The usual visa application procedure is in place and there are no changes in the application process due to COVID -19 outbreak.</p> <p>2. Yes, there was a decrease in the number of visas and residence permits issued for studying in Estonia in 2020. While there was a slight increase (4%) both in the number of residence permits and visas issued for studying in Estonia from 2018 to 2019, in 2020 the number had dropped a bit more than half (53%). There has also been a change in the composition of countries. For residence permits issued for studying in Estonia, the TOP5 countries in 2018 and 2019 were Russia, Ukraine, Nigeria, Bangladesh and India. In 2020, the TOP5 countries were Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Nigeria and Pakistan. For long-term visas issued for studying in Estonia, USA and Japan were no longer in TOP5, while Azerbaijan, Georgia and Brazil emerged in the TOP5 list. In the same period, Russia and Turkey remained among the TOP5 countries.</p> <p>3. HEIs follow the general national recommendations regarding physical presence, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating a safe work/study environment for all and carrying out teaching online;</li><li>• Obligation to self-isolate for 10 days when arriving from risk countries. The self-isolation process can be shortened by taking two COVID-19 tests (second after 7 days of arrival) which have a negative result;</li><li>• Obligation to wear a mask in public indoor spaces;</li><li>• Avoidance of all unnecessary physical contacts, or following the 2+2 rule;</li><li>• Recommendation to use the national HOIA app, which notifies about a potential close contact with a virus carrier.</li></ul>
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			<p>4. No.</p> <p>5. N/A</p> <p>6. No developments compared to the information provided in AHQ 2020.44.</p>
	EMN NCP France	Yes	<p>1. A circular from <u>the General Directorate of Higher Education and Vocational Integration (DGSIP)</u> of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation sent to the heads of higher education institutions on 17 August 2020 specifies the reception and admission procedures for international students. It points as well out that foreign students from countries classified as "red" because of an active COVID circulation, are among the public exempted from the ban on access to national territory. The circular also indicates the need to present a negative COVID test of less than 72 hours and to observe a quarantine on arrival on French territory.</p> <p>Campus France announced on its website that "consulates are authorised to issue visas to international students and researchers from 18 August 2020" and regularly updates useful information on the modalities of entry into French territory for students and international researchers in line with developments in health rules (via a flyer entitled "International students: France welcomes you!" ("Étudiants internationaux : la France vous accueille !").</p> <p>Furthermore, in November 2020, Campus France has launched a new global communication campaign, entitled "I chose France for my postgraduate studies, and you?" ("J'ai choisi la France pour mes études supérieures, et vous?"). This campaign aims to maintain the attractiveness of France despite the health context. On this occasion, the Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Frédérique Vidal, intervened on November 16 during the Campus France meetings to recall the "three pillars" of hosting international students in the health crisis context: 1) an attractive international student policy, 2) support for students, 3) innovative devices such as connected campuses.</p> <p>1. A letter sent to institutions on 17 December 2020 related to a gradual resumption of on-site classes for January 2021 created the possibility for higher education institutions to welcome "on invitation,</p>




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			<p>students who have recently entered the higher education in highly vulnerable situations, up to a limit of ten people per group. Particular attention should be paid to international students with disabilities and in a situation of digital poverty."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year, many initiatives carried out by higher education institutions and supported by the DGSIP have aimed to facilitate the reception of international students and to help them in their procedures which became difficult because of the health context. This involves, for example, the setting up of digital reception platforms for international students, facilitating personalised support for their arrival and integration in France.</li> <li>2. Yes, the total number of student visa issued for the year 2020 has declined compared to the previous year.  The 28.3% reduction in the number of long-term study visas for the year 2020 compared to 2019 is due to the health crisis. According to the annual statistics published by the French Ministry of the Interior, 73,054 long-term study visas were issued for the year 2020 (provisional) compared to 101,819 visas issued for the year 2019. According to Campus France, as the requests were late this year, these numbers clearly reflect the geographic disparities: -56.4% decrease in Asia; -52% Americas; -17% Europe; increase of 1.4% in Sub-Saharan Africa and 2.4% in MENA. Overall, the attractiveness of France holds up very well if we compare it to the drop in students actually present in the country and not only registered in a distance learning program experienced by other European and global countries (mobility almost at a standstill in Australia, Canada, USA, etc.). This decline appears to be contained (- 20.4%), in a context of rapid development of distance learning. This is probably explained by the combination between the calendar of the different lockdowns and the calendar for university registrations as well as the implementation date of a new online application tool. This enabled them to submit their application for a residence permit without delay, which could be processed quickly.</li> <li>3. Yes, in accordance with the national health policy implemented in France. The presence of students at the university is strictly limited, especially since the second lockdown in November 2020. Most of the bachelor's and master's classes are organised remotely, with flexibility for establishments to organise, if the sanitary conditions allow it, on-site examinations.</li> <li>4. No.</li> </ol>
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			<p>5. N / A as consulates are encouraged to issue visas to students and residence permits can be renewed online.</p> <p>6. Several exceptional aids, introduced since the start of the health crisis, have been maintained. These aids do not distinguish between national and international students. This is the case for the CROUS emergency assistance: for students in precarious situations, the social services of the CROUS can carry out a social survey among scholarship holders, non-scholarship holders, and international students. Exceptional aid may thus be paid following an examination of the files of the students who have requested this aid. In November 2020, following the announcement by the government of a second lockdown, exceptional aid of 150 euros for scholarship students and beneficiaries of housing assistance (APL) was announced. Furthermore, the government has asked universities to renew digital support for remote classes for the start of the academic year 2020 and to provide students with equipped rooms accessible by appointment in order to benefit from computers, 4G keys and the internet. For example, some higher education institutions have implemented digital emergency aids for both national and international students.</p>
	EMN NCP Germany	Yes	<p>1. a. National policies related to the admission of international students. Please refer to the responses given to AHQs 2020.44 and 2020.45. The only change is set out below in the response given to 1.c.</p> <p>b. The issuance of guidelines to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by your national authorities. The guidelines for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic issued or approved by the responsible Länder for university life concern university life in general, but not - as far as can be seen - specifically the admission of new international students. The higher education institutions are responsible for deciding on the admission of students.</p> <p>c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line). Due to the pandemic-related difficulties in providing proof of language proficiency, visas for entry to study can also be granted if it is proven that none of the local certified examination providers can actually offer</p>


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			<p>examinations at the end of an already completed language course and the required language proficiency has been credibly demonstrated in the visa procedure. This is to apply as long as the availability of examinations cannot be guaranteed in the country of origin due to the pandemic.</p> <p>NB: Please in your answer address the types of challenges still faced, and how any measures taken have addressed those challenges. Please also state whether your Member State plans to implement any long-term changes to the national admission policy for international students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenges remain in aligning regular teaching with the necessary safeguards. The emergence of corona mutations in other countries could also further complicate the admission of international students</p> <p>2. The situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic had existed for less than a year on 31 December 2020 and was also very volatile, with a temporary but significant easing of the situation in the summer, shortly before the start of the winter semester, meaning that no data is available yet from which indicative trends can be derived</p> <p>3. Yes. The guidelines issued or approved by the competent Länder for university operations on how to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic that apply to general university operations also advocate the restriction of attendance-based teaching, replacing it with the increased use of online formats.</p> <p>4. Yes. However, it is the higher education institution that decides on this matter and examines the extent to which courses can be sensibly delivered from abroad using online formats.</p> <p>5. No information about figures.</p> <p>6. a. Yes. Please refer to the responses given to Questions 7 and 9 in AHQ 2020.44.          b. Please refer to the response given to Question 8 in AHQ 2020.44.          c. Please refer to the response given to Question 6.a.</p>
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	<p>EMN NCP Hungary</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. Given the continued increase in Covid-19 cases across the world, as well as the uncertainty about the course of the pandemic, the Hungarian government introduced new incoming travel restrictions /Government Decree 408/2020. (VIII. 30.)/ as of 1 September 2020.</p> <p>Due to the worsening statistics, the Hungarian Government has decided to reintroduce border control regulations. As a main rule, non-Hungarian citizens may not enter the country unless they fall into one of the categories of persons that are treated equally to Hungarian citizens or are granted an entry permit. For prospective students entry may be allowed with a permit issued by the Hungarian Police.</p> <p>Entrance to Hungary for non-Hungarian students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- permit from the Hungarian Police (online form)</li> <li>- certificate issued by the educational institution attesting full-time student's status</li> <li>- mandatory medical examination at the border</li> </ul> <p>a) infection suspected: entry to Hungary will be refused.  b) no infection is suspected: 10-days* of self-isolation is mandatory.</p> <p>*Time to be spent in quarantine was reduced from 14 to 10 days starting from 21 September.</p> <p>Prior to the entry students are asked to apply for a prior entry permit („On lodging an Equity Request to cross the state border”, in Hungarian: „Államhatáron történő beutazáshoz méltányossági kérelem”) before their planned departure. Granting such a permit is at the sole discretion of the Hungarian Police and it usually takes 2 working days to get it. The request must be submitted electronically in English or Hungarian.</p> <p>Once the police permission is granted to the student, it will be mailed to her/him (only in Hungarian).</p> <p>At the border the student has to present police entry permission together with all other documents at the border of Hungary. After crossing the border and after a brief medical examination, the police will issue a decree of quarantine order, and the student is obligated to travel to the address indicated in the decree. Incoming students might be asked by the Police to install a quarantine tracking app that will automatize checking up on them.</p> <p>In order to support a smooth entry procedure, passengers arriving at Budapest Airport are asked to fill in the quarantine form that can be downloaded in advance, and to hand it over to authority personnel when checked at the border.</p>
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			<p>There are also quarantine obligations. Incoming students are asked to arrange their arrival to happen at least 10 days before the start of the semester, since they may only visit the educational institution after completing the 10-day self-isolation, unless the quarantine is waived by the pandemic authority.</p> <p>Calculating quarantine: with regards to the mandatory 10-days isolation period, kindly note that the date of travel (entry to Hungary) is considered day 0, the 10 days start on the day after.</p> <p>Requirements for exemption of the above quarantine obligations:          The quarantine may be shortened by the competent epidemic authority in case of 2 negative COVID tests (taken within 5 days with a 48-hour difference between them). It is also acceptable if the first of the two tests is performed in one of the Schengen countries, the United States of America or Canada.          The current restrictions do not apply to individuals who can prove at the border that they have recovered from COVID-19 over the last 6 months before entering Hungary.</p> <p>2. At this time we do not have the exact numbers, but there is definitely a decrease in the usual large number of international students in Hungary.</p> <p>3. Yes.          Depending on the insitutions regulations some courses are held with personal attendance and some courses require synchronous or asynchronous online communication (or both). In general, only courses requiring the use of certain equipments (laboratories, mechanical devices) are held in person. The primary deciding factor when selecting the format is to avoid the presence of large numbers of people in enclosed spaces. The protection of vulnerable teachers is also a priority. Education that involves personal attendance may only be held in accordance with the applicable epidemiological rules, with the use of the required protective measures.</p> <p>4. Yes. However, as the implementation of (online/distance) study programmes is the responsibility of the higher education institutions, further conditions are determined by them.</p> <p>5. No information.</p> <p>6. In proceedings for the issue of a student mobility residence permit and related to student mobility notification the applicant shall provide proof of having access to comprehensive health insurance services (in particular on the basis of specific other legislation on the social security system, international agreement, or</p>
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			<p>under specific agreement), or that he/she has the necessary financial resources to cover the costs of such services.</p> <p>To protect against the coronavirus, there are some institutions that opened a health room at the beginning of the new semester, where Medical-trained assistance is available. They are responsible for providing professional assistance in the event of a suspicion of coronavirus infection and for taking the necessary epidemiological measures.</p> <p>Scholarship holders receive the benefits provided by the program if they stay in Hungary: the monthly amount of scholarship, contribution to housing expenses, health insurance, and the additional health services. If the scholarship holders leave the territory of Hungary, they can do so only with the permission of the host institution, and if they are absent for more than 30 days, they will lose their right to their living and housing allowance until their return, as these allowances are intended to contribute to their costs of living in Hungary. However, they do not lose their scholarship status.</p> <p>Based on the information received from the universities, Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship holders are provided with the opportunities and measures of distance/e-learning with the same conditions as Hungarian students, thus the continuity of the studies of scholarship holders are guaranteed during the spring semester of the 2019/2020 academic year, regardless of their current place of stay.</p> <p>All international students are entitled to remain on the premises of their student residence (dormitory, student hotel). Based on our current information from the universities, in case the Operational Group of Hungary requires the host institution to do so, students might be asked to re-locate their residence within the premises of their student accommodation (e.g., moving to another room, floor or building). This, however does not affect the students' rights, the host institution still provides them with accommodation. As the details of such re-location requests might vary by institutions, further details can be provided by them.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Ireland</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. <u>a. National policies related to the admission of international students</u></p> <p>Immigration policies regarding the admission of international students have not changed as a result of the Covid-19 crisis - there have been no changes to the existing immigration pathway or conditions regarding third country national students.</p> <p>However there have been some procedural changes introduced:</p>

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			<p>- On 22 December 2020, it was announced that current valid immigration permissions, including those held by students, that are due to expire from 21 January 2021 to 20 April 2021 are automatically renewed to 20 April 2021. This is the sixth in the series of renewals of permissions. The renewal of permission is on the same basis as the existing permission and the same conditions attach. While permissions are automatically extended, it is possible for persons residing in the Dublin area to apply for renewal of immigration permission via the online system which was implemented from 20 July 2020.</p> <p><u>b. The issuance of guidance to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by our national authorities</u></p> <p>Detailed guidance is available on the website of the immigration service - <a href="http://www.inis.gov.ie">www.inis.gov.ie</a>. No change to answer to AHQ 2020.44</p> <p><u>c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line).</u></p> <p>On 22 June 2020, the Department of Justice Immigration Service Delivery launched an online registration system for residence permits for all third-country national students renewing permission for the coming academic year, who reside in Dublin. This online system was extended to all third country nationals renewing residence permissions from 20 July 2020, including third-country national students. Students who reside outside Dublin must continue to renew their registration at local registration offices.</p> <p>From 22 June 2020, the Department of Justice recommenced limited processing of long stay visas, including for students. From 25 September 2020, decisions on certain long-stay visas, including study, were being issued. It should be noted that this does not necessarily mean that the person could travel - other local factors could impact.</p> <p>2. Information not available.</p> <p>3. General public health guidance and restrictions in accordance with the Government's Living with Covid-19 Plan apply.</p> <p>4. No.</p> <p>5. N/A</p>
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			<p><u>6. Availability of state-funded social security/benefits or other support mechanisms for (financially disadvantaged) international students, stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only</u></p> <p>All migrants (including students) with valid residence permission continue to be entitled to apply for/avail of the mainstream Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) in accordance with the conditions applicable to the scheme.</p> <p>The standard criteria for the student work concession in Ireland are normally 20 hours per week in term and 40 hours per week out of term (June, July, August, September and 15 December to 15 January inclusive). As a temporary measure up to 25 September 2020, students were permitted to work up to 40 hours per week, if classes were not running. This was conditional on the student completing the course online, if the service was provided by the school/college. UPDATE: From 25 September 2020, the standard criteria for the student work concession were re-introduced.</p> <p><u>b. Availability of other support mechanisms available for international students at the local level (e.g. housing benefits, hardship allowance) stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples:</u></p> <p>It is a general immigration condition that third country national students do not have recourse to public funds. The Pandemic Unemployment Payment is an exception to this.</p> <p>Students might also benefit from mainstream protections in relation to tenancies. These provisions update the protections reported in AHQ 2020.44.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Residential Tenancies Act 2020, of 24 October 2020, provides for a moratorium on evictions during the periods of Level 5 restrictions under the Living with Covid-19 plan.</li> <li>- Protection for certain tenants regarding prohibitions on rent increases for tenancies facing rent arrears due to Covid-19 were extended to 12 April 2021.</li> </ul> <p>Sources and further information: <a href="https://www.rtb.ie/news">https://www.rtb.ie/news</a></p> <p><u>c. Availability of other support mechanisms for international students at the HEI level (e.g. financial loans/grant or other types of exceptional financial support, reduced accommodation/tuition fees), stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples.</u></p> <p>Information not available.</p>
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	EMN NCP Italy	Yes	<p>1. Procedures for entry, residency and enrolment at higher education institutions for international students are not changed due to the Covid-19.</p> <p>However, this procedure must adapt to guidelines issued by the Government to contain the spread of the virus. The General Directorate for Higher Education Inclusion and Right to Study has updated the document which regulates procedures for entry, residency and enrolment at higher education institutions for students requiring visas for higher education courses in Italy for the academic year 2020-2021 ( This document is available on the website of the Ministry for University and Research and is updated on 16 June 2020: <a href="https://www.studiare-in-italia.it/studentistranieri/moduli/2020/Circolare_2020_2021_EN.pdf">https://www.studiare-in-italia.it/studentistranieri/moduli/2020/Circolare_2020_2021_EN.pdf</a>).</p> <p>In particular, due to the Covid emergency, the Ministry has specified that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- these procedures are subject to the current and future emergency provisions of the Italian Government and of the European Union regarding the prevention and containment of the COVID-19 virus epidemic;</li> <li>- In consideration of the provisions sent to higher education institutions by the Minister for Universities and Research and relating to the start of the academic year 2020/21, it is noted that in the face of the persistence of the COVID-19 emergency situation, <u>the physical mobility of international students in Italy can be replaced if necessary, at least until the end of 2020, with distance learning activities;</u></li> <li>- This does not mean that these international students, if they require an entry visa for Italy, should not in any case promptly arrange for a visa application for study purposes at the diplomatic-consular missions of reference for their respective places of residence, in order to use this visa as soon as conditions permit. The procedures for issuing these visas must be concluded, unless otherwise indicated in the future, by 30 November 2020, in order to allow the effective enrolment of international students and the subsequent payment of university fees. However, for international students already present in Italy, the Decree "Cura Italia" n. 27/2020 provided the extension of the validity of residence permits expiring from 31 January 2020 until 31 August 2020: among them, also residence permits for study are included in the regulation.</li> </ul> <p>Then, due to the persistence of the Covid emergency, the law n. 159/2020 (in force since 4 December 2020), provided that the validity of residence permits (issued for study reasons, subordinate work, self-employment, seasonal work, job-searching or entrepreneurship for researchers and students and family grounds) - expiring between 31 August and 31 December 2020 - have been extended until 31 January 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to start the procedure to obtain the visa, candidates of study courses at Italian universities need to submit their <u>pre-enrolment applications using the UNIVERSITALY portal</u>, according to the indications already communicated to all Italian universities; so, all higher education institutions are therefore invited not to interrupt</li> </ul>
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			<p>their international student recruitment procedures and the related evaluation of the suitability of the foreign qualifications they possess.</p> <p>For completeness, it may be interesting to highlight that the law n. 130/2020 introduced a new provision which allows students of Italian subsidiaries of foreign universities – entered in Italy with a visa for study – to reside in the Italian territory for the entire duration of the course.</p> <p>Moreover, the student has to submit to the Questor a declaration of presence accompanied with a statement of assurance issued by the legal representative of the subsidiary who is committed to inform the Questor about any chances regarding the presence of the student during his/her residence for study purpose.</p> <p>2. No.</p> <p>According to data available on the website of the Minister of Education, in the academic year 2019/2020 the number of international students enrolled in Italian universities was higher than 2018/2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 15.575 in the 2018/2019;</li><li>- 16.514 in the 2019/2020.</li></ul> <p>Until now, in the academic year 2020/2021, 16.307 international students were enrolled. (Source: <a href="http://dati.ustat.miur.it/dataset/immatricolati">http://dati.ustat.miur.it/dataset/immatricolati</a>).</p> <p>3. Yes.</p> <p>As said in Q. 1 the general guidelines issued by the Ministry for University and Research recommended distance learning activities.</p> <p>4. Yes.</p> <p>To this regard, the National Agency Erasmus+ - in order to implement dispositions issued by the European Commission about management of ongoing projects and other ones approved in 2020 – has approved mobility activities in virtual mode as long as they are compatible with the scope of the mobility (such as distance learning, virtual training).</p> <p>As soon as possible, these activities should be combined with a physical mobility abroad.</p> <p>Anyway, in order to ensure the development of linguistic skills, beneficiaries may grant the Online Linguistic Support (OLS).</p>
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			<p>5. No data available.</p> <p>6. Due to the pandemic, no state-funded social security/benefits have been adopted at national level. However, in general, it is important to point out that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) offers grants in favor of foreign citizens not residing in Italy and Italian citizens living abroad for the academic year 2020-2021, in order to foster international cooperation in cultural, scientific and technological fields, to promote Italian language and culture and to support Italy's economic system in the world (According to Law 288/55 and its subsequent changes and additions). However, this year, scholarships are exclusively for renewals to complete study courses and research/training programs which have been already started in the academic year 2019-2020 and are attended in public or legally recognized Italian educational institutions. Moreover, scholarships are available to attend academic courses in Italy only.</p> <p>At local level, measures varied based on universities, which adopted supportive measures it considers necessary for the management of students, in accordance with regional legislation.</p> <p>For example - as said in the ahq 2020.44 - the 3 public universities of Milan (Bicocca, Politecnico and University of studies of Milan) adopted some measures in order to support students during the lockdown, such as free meals in the university housing, authorization to offsite graduates, unable to return home, to remain in the university housing without any costs.</p> <p>To regard with hardships, the time limits to apply for have been suspended or postponed.</p> <p>Anyway, the abovementioned measures were provided for all students, not specifically for international students. For the academic year 2020/2021, the Universities of studies of Milan offers its best new students "Excellence Scholarships": 54 scholarships worth € 6,000 each, with the right to exemption from the all-inclusive tuition fee and 100 total exemptions from the all-inclusive tuition fee.</p>
	EMN NCP Latvia	Yes	<p>1. According to the Order of Cabinet of Ministers "Regarding Declaration of the Emergency Situation" since November 9 the learning process on site shall be discontinued in all educational institutions, including HEIs, and the learning shall be ensured remotely.</p> <p>Except - completion of the practical part of the second level vocational education study programme Veterinary Medicine at the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, the sixth year of the second level higher vocational education study programme Medicine and Treatment of the health care study direction, fifth year of</p>


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			<p>the study programme Dentistry, fourth year of the study programmes Physiotherapy, Ergotherapy, Nursing and Midwife, third year of the first level higher vocational education programme Nursing with the qualification nurse and study programme Nursing.</p> <p>The HEI must inform international students about the conditions of arrival in Latvia and taking the test, and after fulfilling these conditions, foreign students can come to Latvia. Upon arrival proof of a negative Covid-19 test must be presented, which must be performed not earlier than 72 hours before boarding or before crossing border. There is a condition of 10 days of self-isolation, if the student enters from abroad with a high risk of infection.</p> <p>2. Yes.                  In 2020 from September till December 31 only 350 were issued first-time residence permits for international students. In 2019 - 1302 and in 2018 - 1248. (around 70% decrease)                  In 2020 from September till December 31 there were 77 visas issued for higher education, in 2019 - 219 and in 2018 - 190. (around 65% decrease).                  At the same time in Riga Stradins University there are 16% increase of international students (but this increase could be linked to EU students. There is no information on origin countries)</p> <p>3. Yes.                  Since November 9 the learning process on site shall be discontinued in all educational institutions, including HEIs, and the learning shall be ensured remotely.                  Exception are only practical part of Medicine studies.</p> <p>4. Yes.</p> <p>5. HEIs at the moment could not provide data on how many students were enrolled and studying remotely.</p> <p>6. b. Local municipalities may grant a crisis benefit grant also to foreign students, who remained in Latvia in conditions of Covid-19, study remotely and have no means of subsistence to provide for their basic needs                  c. In several HE's there is available psychological support for local and international students.</p>
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			<p>International students were offered the option to divide the tuition fee into 2 payments without paying at once for the whole semester.</p> <p>Measures have been introduced to help students with accommodation during the pandemic.</p>
	EMN NCP Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. a. State of emergency on the territory of the Republic of Lithuania was declared on 16 March 2020, until 31 December 2020 (currently still in force) and it restricted the entry of third-country nationals into Lithuania. The second quarantine has been declared as of 7 November 2020 by the Government of Lithuania (currently set until 28 February 2021) but this has not led to the closure of cross-border movements, as well as the complete interruption of air, sea and land connections. Taking this into account no exceptional additional measures have been taken. Nonetheless, during the state of quarantine it is strongly recommended against all unnecessary travel to Lithuania and abroad. All persons, arriving to Lithuania by all means of transport, are obligated to register with the National Public Health Center. Persons arriving to Lithuania from affected countries, have to self-isolate for 14 days and follow mandatory isolation regulations.</p> <p>b. In August 2020, the Government approved the proposal of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport to allow foreign nationals admitted to higher education in Lithuania to enter Lithuania. In this way, foreign students must be guaranteed access to their host higher education institutions and to travel to other countries for research, study and training purposes.</p> <p>The higher education institutions are responsible for deciding on the admission of students and must follow the decisions of the Heads of State Emergency State Operations on ensuring health safety and other conditions for disease management. The guidelines for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic are also issued by different responsible institutions depending on the issue (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration Department, National Public Health Center).</p> <p>c. In the HEI survey carried out on November and December 2020 by EMN Lithuania on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international students in Lithuania, HEI noted that most documents from international students were accepted online. Higher education institutions were aware that due to the pandemic the national examinations in countries of origin were delayed, therefore HEI had to adapt to this. Some HEI noted, that the time limits for admission have been extended in order to adapt to students, e.g. due to delayed completion of Bachelor's studies in country of origin.</p>

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			<p>2. In the HEI survey carried out by EMN Lithuania on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international students in Lithuania, the HEI identified a decrease in the number of international students and noted the main challenges faced: reduced number of student exchanges; reluctance to travel and the fact that the beginning of the pandemic has caused problems with obtaining visas, especially if students were not able to obtain visas in their home country; epidemiological situation and restrictions in student countries of origin, travel bans; studying remotely; unspecified or worsened financial situation of students and their families.</p> <p>3. Yes. As Lithuania saw the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases in November, December of 2020 and beginning of 2021, in order to limit the spread of COVID-19 infection, and according to the declared quarantine, the study process and work organisation at the HEI is organized remotely (online) with some exceptions.</p> <p>4. This should be addressed with the higher education institution.</p> <p>5. N/i</p> <p>6. Please refer to the responses given to Questions 7, 8 and 9 in AHQ 2020.44. Examples of available support to all students, including international students, includes: some HEI introduced counselling / psychological support services to students; several institutions allocated funds for support university students and their families who experience financial difficulties because of the pandemic; some higher education institutions in cooperation with municipalities provided housing arrangements for newly arriving students to undergo 14 day quarantine period.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Luxembourg</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. a. National policies related to the admission of international students;</p> <p>With the end of the state of crisis, the law of 24 June 2020 introducing certain temporary measures relating to the application of the Immigration law extended the prohibitions on entry to the territory over time: a) the Grand-ducal regulation of 1st July 2020 extended this temporary restriction on entry to the territory until the 15 September 2020 inclusive</p>

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			<p>b) the Grand-ducal regulation of 11 September 2020 extended this restriction until 31 December 2020 inclusive</p> <p>c) the Grand-ducal regulation of 19 December 2020 extended the temporary restriction until 31 March 2021.</p> <p>However, the third-country nationals travelling for the purpose of study were expressly excluded from this temporary restriction since 1 July 2020.</p> <p>In addition, since 1 July 2020, third-country nationals who are resident in one of the countries which figure on a list fixed by grand-ducal regulation were also authorised to enter the territory of Luxembourg. This list has been adapted over time. On 31 December 2020, this list includes the following countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Australia;</li><li>China (subject to confirmation of reciprocity at EU level);</li><li>South Korea;</li><li>Japan;</li><li>New Zealand;</li><li>Rwanda;</li><li>Singapore;</li><li>Thailand;</li><li>Uruguay.</li></ul> <p>Furthermore, from 29 January 2021, any person, regardless of nationality, aged 6 years or over, wishing to travel by air transport to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, must present a negative result at boarding. This applies to all departures to Luxembourg, including those from European Union Member States or the Schengen area.</p> <p>In addition, any person travelling by air from a third country, i.e. a country that is not a member of the European Union or the Schengen area, will have to undergo an additional test for viral antigen (rapid test) on arrival at Luxembourg airport. This also applies to air transport of persons bound for the Grand Duchy from a third country who are in transit through an airport of a Member State of the European Union or of the Schengen area. This does not apply to members of the flight crew and to passengers on a stopover waiting for a connecting flight and who are not leaving the transit area. At the moment this test must have been carried</p>
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			<p>out less than 72 hours before the flight.</p> <p>b. The issuance of guidelines to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by your national authorities;</p> <p>No.</p> <p>c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line).</p> <p>No.</p> <p>2. Yes.</p> <p>If yes, please explain what that impact is (e.g. overall numbers, composition of countries of origin). Any information on indicative trends observed by your Member State up to 31 December 2020 would be useful.</p> <p>No information available.</p> <p>3. Yes.</p> <p>If Yes, how?</p> <p>At the University of Luxembourg, until the end of December 2020, teaching continues to be conducted in remote format, except for lab work in small groups, practical work and mid-term exams that cannot be held remotely.</p> <p>For those allowed activities, the maximum room capacities must be respected. The default setting for end of</p>
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			<p>semester exams is the remote format. A very limited number of in-person assessments will be accepted for those study programmes and courses whose exams require an explicit physical presence and interaction. All exceptions to remote examination require the consent from the Vice-rector for academic affairs. The end of semester exam period is extended to include the week of study days/revisions; it starts on 4 January and ends on 6 February 2021.</p> <p>Online resources for teachers and students are made available on the web platform remote.uni.lu. Provisions must be made to enable students isolating or in quarantine to follow courses and sit exams in a remote mode.</p> <p>Exemption from in-person classes</p> <p>Vulnerable persons, or students living in a household with a vulnerable person, and students whose arrival in Luxembourg is delayed for reasons related to COVID-19 are exempt from attending in-person activities.</p> <p>Pregnant students who inform the Student service (SEVE) of their pregnancy status must be given special attention during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only remote studying is allowed for pregnant women.</p> <p>4. In principle, the answer is NO. As it is mentioned in the answer to Q.1.a), international students could enter into the country without any problem if they fulfil the conditions. However, the University of Luxembourg can allow students who could not enter the territory because of the lack of air transportation to follow their courses online.</p> <p>5. N/A.</p> <p>6. a. Availability of state-funded social security/benefits or other support mechanisms for (financially disadvantaged) international students, stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only;</p> <p>No.</p>
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			<p>b. Availability of other support mechanisms available for international students at the local level (e.g. housing benefits, hardship allowance) stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples;</p> <p>No.</p> <p>c. Availability of other support mechanisms for international students at the HEI level (e.g. financial loans/grant or other types of exceptional financial support, reduced accommodation/tuition fees), stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples.</p> <p>No.</p>
	EMN NCP Netherlands	Yes	<p>1. a. National policies related to the admission of international students;</p> <p>International students are welcome in the Netherlands. As PhD students in the Netherlands receive a different residence permit than international students the measures below do not apply to PhD students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher education has not yet returned to physical education. At least for the rest of this academic year, it is expected that most HEIs offer blended education, which consists of a combination of some physical and mostly online educational activities. So most international students can follow the first semester or the first academic year online. International students that are not able to travel to the Netherlands may therefore make use of online education, if provided by the HEI. A resident permit for the purpose of study is granted if the student meets the criteria.</li> <li>• When a student follows the education program online from their home country for the first few months, it is advised that the HEI, which serves as a recognised sponsor for the students, requests the permit when it becomes clear that this student can/will travel to The Netherlands.</li> <li>• As part of the guidelines of the National Commission on the Code of Conduct (in Dutch only), all Dutch HEIs are temporarily accepting the TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test, which can be taken online, for</li> </ul>

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			<p>admission to the HEI. This agreement was made on 15 April and renewed on 16 June and 14 December.<a href="#">[1]</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International students' income requirement was temporarily relaxed (July 20, 2020). The coronavirus crisis makes it more difficult for international students to meet the income requirement for their residence permits. The Minister for Migration has therefore decided that students cannot lose their residence permit for this reason alone. The temporary relaxation of the income requirement applies only to current students of the academic year 2020-2021, who already had a legal residence permit to study in the Netherlands in the academic year 2019-2020. This does not apply to new students. The educational institution must inform the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie en Naturalisatie Dienst; IND) that the student does not meet the income requirement due to the coronavirus crisis. In that case the student's residence permit will not be revoked during the academic year 2020-2021. If a student ends up claiming social assistance, the IND can still decide to revoke the residence permit.<a href="#">[2]</a></li> <li>• Moreover, the deadline for enrolling in higher education was postponed from 1 May to 1 June 2020. This change applied to Dutch students and international students alike.<a href="#">[3]</a></li> <li>• Furthermore, with the Second Collective Emergency Act COVID-19, it became possible for international students as well as Dutch students who do not fully meet the admission requirements for a Master's programme to enrol on a provisional basis. Students who were admitted on a provisional basis, before the first of September, were given one year to meet the admission requirements.<a href="#">[4]</a></li> <li>• Normally, insufficient study progress could have consequences for the residence permit if there is no valid excusable reason. The coronavirus has been accepted as a an excusable reason for insufficient study progress. The educational institution must, however, include the reason in its administration.<a href="#">[5]</a></li> </ul> <p>b. The issuance of guidelines to HEIs regarding the changes referred to in Question 1a above by your national authorities; The National government published continuously updated service documents with all the guidelines and advice regarding the COVID-19 measures for HEIs. With the practical guidelines, institutions could implement the measures for higher education. The basic principle was to limit the adverse effects for students as much as possible. When new information was available, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science issued a new document.<a href="#">[6]</a></p>
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			<p>c. Measures specifically aimed at international students to mitigate the negative impacts of any delays in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students (for example, the possibility to submit all documents on line). There was no delay in the application procedure and/or processing for visas and/or residence permits for international students due to the Covid-19 outbreak</p> <p>[1] <a href="https://www.internationalstudy.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Guidelines-16062020-Code-of-Conduct-with-regard-to-Corona-ENG.pdf">https://www.internationalstudy.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Guidelines-16062020-Code-of-Conduct-with-regard-to-Corona-ENG.pdf</a> <a href="#">Tijdelijke-verruiming-14-december-2020-artikel-4.2-Gedragcode.pdf (internationalstudy.nl)</a> and <a href="#">Update richtlijnen Gedragcode inzake Covid-19 – internationalstudy</a></p> <p>[2] Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) (2020), 'International students' income requirement temporarily relaxed', <a href="https://ind.nl/en/news/pages/international-students-income-requirement-temporarily-relaxed.aspx">https://ind.nl/en/news/pages/international-students-income-requirement-temporarily-relaxed.aspx</a>, last accessed on 18 December 2020</p> <p>[3] Government (2020), 'Veelgestelde vragen over het coronavirus en het hoger onderwijs,' (Frequently asked questions about coronavirus and higher education), <a href="https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/onderwijs-en-kinderopvang/hogescholen-en-universiteiten-hoger-onderwijs">https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/onderwijs-en-kinderopvang/hogescholen-en-universiteiten-hoger-onderwijs</a>, last accessed on 18 January 2021.</p> <p>[4] Government (2020), 'Veelgestelde vragen over het coronavirus en het hoger onderwijs,' (Frequently asked questions about coronavirus and higher education), <a href="https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/onderwijs-en-kinderopvang/hogescholen-en-universiteiten-hoger-onderwijs">https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19/onderwijs-en-kinderopvang/hogescholen-en-universiteiten-hoger-onderwijs</a>, last accessed on 18 January 2021.</p> <p>[5] <a href="#">Coronavirus: effects on application or stay (ind.nl)</a></p> <p>[6] <a href="#">Servicedocumenten hoger onderwijs (HO): aanpak coronavirus COVID-19   Publicatie   Rijksoverheid.nl</a></p> <p>2. Yes. Figures from Dutch Executive Agency for Education (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs; DUO) show that the number of international registrations in higher education (slightly) decreased in 2020 compared to 2019 (see table). Some of the non-EEA students are already registered at a Dutch higher education institution, but follow the online education in the first period from their home country. <i>Table Number of HEI applications 2019 and 2020, divided under country of origin (EEA or Non-EEA) and type of education (University of Applied Sciences (hoger beroepsonderwijs; HBO) and Scientific Education (Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs; WO)).</i></p>
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Type Origin	Applications in 2019	Applications in 2020	Difference 2020-2019
hbo EER	7.816	7.690	-126 (-1,6%)
hbo non-EEA	2.814	2.653	-161 (-5,7%)
hbo NL	102.723	114.340	11.617 (11,3%)
wo EER	20.266	23.593	3.327 (16,4%)
wo non-EEA	8.694	8.652	-42 (-0,5%)
wo NL	80.868	92.881	12.013 (14,9%)

Source: DUO

3.  
Yes, HEIs are encouraged to adhere to social distancing measures and to have no more than 30 people per facility. Physical presence is limited to (practice) exams.

4. In general yes, but this depends on the study programme and whether the HEI supports online education.

5. Unknown.

6.  
1. There are two new financial compensation schemes due to COVID-19:

- Compensation for the loss of the grant
- Compensation for extra costs due to study delay.

Students do not have to repay the compensation. The compensation is a one-off gift.

[Compensation for the loss of your grant](#)


Your grant	Your compensation
HBO or university additional grant	€ 1,500

[Compensation for extra costs due to study delay](#)

Your completed programme	Your compensation
HBO Associate, Bachelor's or Master's Degree	€ 535
University Master's Degree	€ 535

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			<p>b. Availability of other support mechanisms available for international students at the local level (e.g. housing benefits, hardship allowance) stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples; No.</p> <p>c. Availability of other support mechanisms for international students at the HEI level (e.g. financial loans/grant or other types of exceptional financial support, reduced accommodation/tuition fees), stating whether this is generic support available to all students or specific to third-country nationals only, giving examples. A number of students rely on their part time jobs to make ends meet. For international students who receive student finance, the maximum amount for additional earnings does not apply in 2020. Some students in vital professions are working extra hours because of the Covid-19 outbreak. The corona crisis is an exceptional situation. That is why international students may be entitled to an extension of their graduation term. A <a href="#">request for an extension of the graduation term</a> always proceeds through the student counsellor.</p>
	EMN NCP Poland	Yes	<p>1. Due to epidemiological situation in Poland, amendments to the Polish law came into force providing special solutions for foreigners. The regulations allow people who want to pursue their current purpose of stay or cannot leave Poland due to the spread of SARS-CoV-2 virus to stay legally in the country. Extension of legal stay of a third-country national staying in Poland on the basis of: temporary residence permit or national visa or short-term residence titles (including Schengen visas and visa-free travel) applies to situations in which the last day of legal stay will fall within the period of state of epidemic emergency or state of epidemic. Extending the legality of stay does not involve placing a new visa sticker on the foreigner's travel document, issuing a new residence card or other documents. It is also not required to submit any applications.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 restrictions, in order to help foreigners stay in touch with some Provincial Offices, i.e. Małopolska Provincial Office, in matters regarding f.e. legalisation of stay, Department of Foreigners in this unit has added a new infoline phone number which is dedicated especially to third country nationals. Additionally, in order to make it possible for foreigners to arrange their legal stay in Poland Małopolska Provincial Office, Department for Foreigners between July and December organized a few so called Information Saturdays –</p>

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			<p>events during which it was possible for a foreigner to for example submit an application regarding legalisation of stay or an application for residence card issue/replacement or submit documents to pending cases (it was necessary to schedule an appointment before the event by sending an e-mail). Foreigners could receive free help with application completion and receive information regarding legalization of stay and work. These services were subject to a ticket-based system, in order to maintain safety regime.</p> <p>However, there was a problem with overloaded Embassies which complained about lack of staff and, on the other hand – students who complained about difficulties on contacting embassies/consulates.</p> <p>The measure implemented by the Polish government is giving a 14-days quarantine waiver for students when crossing the border. Such solution grants them a possibility to join practical classes, which still were conducted on-site, as well as to Poland after summer period, if necessary. Additionally, full-time students were obliged to visit the University to submit all required documents, sign the agreement as well as get student ID ect.</p> <p>The challenges are: limited number of open Embassies, as well as still reduced number of visa slots. Students wishing to come back to Poland (continuing studies) or applying first time for studies faced with not really coherent situation when HEIs are open for international students (in terms of studying partially on-site, but as well in terms of short-time mobility and admission of newcomers), but on national level visa, border and safety policy they are blocked to enter Poland even after positive answer from the university.</p> <p>Due to the epidemic situation, the National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) introduced the following changes in the student scholarship programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changed the rules for assessing applications</li> <li>• extended the period of application</li> <li>• made the scholarship payment more flexible for scholarship holders staying outside the Republic of Poland, granting them the full scholarship rate during their on-line education.</li> </ul> <p>The modified rules were effective until the 30th of September, 2020.</p> <p>From October 2020, the Agency extended the range of scholarship rates in the students programmes, also awarding a scholarship to those who were not able to come to Poland due to the closure of the borders (as of 30/09/2020).</p>
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			<p>2. According to the information from the universities it seems that in the summer admission process 2020/2021 for regular studies, there were more than usually resignations from taking up the studies, after the positive result of qualification. Unfortunately we do not have any data on number of visas or residence permits issued altogether in Poland. However students are complaining that it is difficult to get an appointment in the Embassy or local Migration office. The National Agency for Academic Exchange is monitoring the visas problems or any other barriers which unable the scholarship holders to come to Poland. In the second half of 2020, some difficulties were noted in the field of Belarusian citizens (closing the border with Poland) and scholarship holders from Nigeria (lack of the required financial security in visa procedure). Thus, it seems that these reasons were independent of the epidemic situation. On the other hand, scholarship holders from Germany informed the Agency about the information available on some educational or travel portals in Germany which discourage them from coming to Poland due to the COVID-19 threat.</p> <p>3. HEIs are granted autonomous decision on students presence. Still practical classes are held on-site. Government recommended to have all possible classes online. The international students are not really much interested in studying only online. The physical presence of scholarship holders in Poland remains The National Agency's for Academic Exchange unchanged priority. Nevertheless, due to the epidemic situation, the Agency respects all forms and modes of education established by universities for their students. Taking both into account, from the beginning of academic year of 2020/2021, NAWA introduced a new scholarship rate for scholarship holders studying abroad due to the closed borders (as of 30/09/2020).</p> <p>4. yes</p> <p>5. The Ministry of Education and Science has prepared recommendations for conducting classes that may be conducted with the use of distance learning methods and techniques, at all fields of study and education levels. Currently, classes at universities are held remotely. The exceptions are: activities the nature of which does not allow for remote implementation, classes planned for the last year of studies.</p>
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			<p>By the decision of the rector or the head of the entity providing doctoral student education, these classes may be held stationary. If it is necessary to conduct the classes in a direct form, it is necessary to take care of such organizational solutions that will minimize the risk of infection by their participants. Group sizes should be reduced and classroom capacities should be adjusted, and changes to the schedule should be made to prevent the accumulation of activities requiring direct attendance.</p> <p>Regarding the organization of the education process and didactic classes in the new academic year 2020/2021, classes in the new academic year can be held remotely, in a stationary form or mixed manner. The detailed organization of classes within the fields of study was left to the decision of the dean's authorities and subject coordinators (persons responsible for individual subjects), and in the case of foreign language courses and physical education classes - according to the decision of the Director of the Foreign Language Center and the Director of the Physical Education Center and Sports, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty.</p> <p>6. Ad. a</p> <p>The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange offered financial aid to the holders of the Agency's scholarships who have found themselves in a difficult financial situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Until the end of September 2020, the Agency continued to pay scholarships on unchanged financial conditions, regardless of the place of stay of the scholarship holders and the form of education (stationary and not). To make it possible, the Agency temporarily suspended one of the programme rule, i.e. the scholarship payment only if the scholarship holder stays in Poland (or a short stay abroad).</p> <p>In connection with the epidemic threat in the territory of the Republic of Poland, the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange enables the scholarship holders of student programmes applying for a one-off financial aid. The aid was dedicated to the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) participants of preparatory courses,</li> <li>2) students,</li> <li>3) doctoral students who took up education before the 2019/2020 academic year,</li> </ol> <p>who were staying in the Republic of Poland at the time of submitting the application for the aid.</p> <p>Ad. b</p> <p>Not available or no knowledge about that.</p> <p>Ad. c</p>
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			<p>According to the information from the universities, thanks for private donates from partner companies a special fund was established for international students at Polish universities. The fund is very limited, but allowed students who lost their incomes to apply for support from the HEI.</p>
	<p>EMN NCP Portugal</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. No new developments concerning a) and b) c)Students can renew their residence permit online since 25 November, in compliance with Order No. 10944/2020, of 8 November. After paying the fees, the student will receive a Residence Permit at his/her address.</p> <p>2. Information not available yet</p> <p>3. Yes. Students have both presence classes and online classes. classes may be divided but the managment of classes is up to the HEI. Since mid January classes take place only only due to emergency state.</p> <p>4. No. They may have classes online but they will have to come back to Portugal for classroom classes, as they are available.</p> <p>5. NA. Statistics available only on the 2nd semester.</p> <p>6. 6a)The Portuguese State does not have support for international students. Some HEIs have support and scholarships designed to help international students, but the rules are defined by the social services of each of the institutions, i.e., they are not uniform 6b)They can apply for accommodation like all students. Nothing specific for foreigners. 6c)Not available</p>


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	<p>EMN NCP Slovakia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. In 2020, there were no changes in the Act on Higher Educational Institutions related to international students. From the 5 October, the form of study changed to distance learning and in this regard the embassies of the Slovak Republic stopped granting visa to international students, more specifically students of the 1. and 2. university degree. In case of researchers, PhD students, university teachers etc., the visa is considered individually while it is necessary that the hosting institution provides foreigners with a confirmation that their physical presence at the university will be required during their stay. Without this permission, embassy does not have to issue the visa.</p> <p>Students applying for a national visa for the purpose of distance education were not granted visa. Students already in the territory of the Slovak Republic who did not manage to apply for a residence permit for the purpose of study at the Foreign Police departments due to the COVID-19 pandemic were referred to the Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic to be granted permission for the national visa (marked as a category 'in the interest for the Slovak Republic') and subsequently these students could apply for the residence permit for the purpose of study.</p> <p>As regards students applying for Slovak government scholarship for the study at Slovak universities during 2020/2021, selection of candidates was carried out electronically in June 2020 and the accepted candidates enrolled on 2 September 2020. Those students who could not travel outside their country due to the epidemiological situation could apply for a postponement of their study for the next academic year. After the change to the distance learning in October 2020, students granted Slovak government scholarship could stay at the dormitories (other students had to move out).</p> <p>a) In September 2020, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic issued recommendations related to international students' enrollment (beginning of the academic year) which regulated conditions for the possible start of study for all students including international students as well as their stay at dormitories. The information is available only in Slovak: <a href="https://www.minedu.sk/vysoke-skoly-a-skolske-domovy-aktualizovane-11102020/">https://www.minedu.sk/vysoke-skoly-a-skolske-domovy-aktualizovane-11102020/</a> (the document was updated in October 2020).</p> <p>b) See a).</p> <p>2. In 2020, there were 2107 first residence permits issued for the purpose of study (university students and language courses organized by universities) which represents approximately 20 % decrease compared to 2019 when 2621 permits were issued for this purpose. In 2018, there were 2005 first residence permits for the purpose of study issued.</p>
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			<p>However, some third-country nationals could have been granted different purpose of residence permit and still study at the university. There is also a specific type of residence permit called “the status of a Slovak living abroad” which is almost exclusively used by Serbian and Ukrainian nationals. However, they do not represent a significant number taken into consideration the fact that they mostly come to the Slovak Republic to work. In general, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the first residence permit for the purpose of study can be considered as mild (a 20 % decrease compared to 2019).</p> <p>3. Yes. As mentioned above, universities changed the form of study to distance learning with few exceptions and after 19 December 2020, even these exceptions were cancelled.</p> <p>4. Yes. Moreover, If international students had been issued a temporary residence permit, they were also allowed to re-enter the territory of the Slovak Republic.</p> <p>5. This data is not available.</p> <p>According to the data from 31 December 2020 provided by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, there were 219 students studying online from their country of origin.t However, this is just a number of students granted Slovak government scholarships and studying through bilateral agreements.</p> <p>6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No</li> <li>b) No</li> <li>c) No</li> </ul>
	<p>EMN NCP Slovenia</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. No measures specifically aimed at international students were adopted. Enrollment process is established through eVŠ online portal.</p>


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			<p>On 10 December 2020, the Government issued a Decree on temporary measures to reduce the risk of infection and prevent the spread of the infectious disease Covid-19 in all administrative matters (including residence permit matters). The Decree entered into force on 11th of December 2020.</p> <p>On the basis of the authorization from the General Administrative Procedure Act, the Decree determines temporary measures to reduce the risk of infection and prevent the spread of the infectious disease COVID-19 in the management of administrative procedures and decision-making in administrative matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is possible to submit applications electronically without a qualified electronic signature, which is otherwise mandatory for electronic business of clients with authorities. Customers are able to identify themselves with an officially assigned identification number (for example EMŠO, tax number) or another unique identifier determined by the authority for the purposes of electronic commerce;</li> <li>2. The possibility of submitting (written and oral) applications directly to the competent authority for the acceptance of the application is limited, except for applications, which, by law, may only be submitted directly to this authority. In these cases, applicants have to agree with the authority on the timing of the application. The ordering process by telephone or electronically is published by the authorities in a publicly accessible place and on a website;</li> <li>3. The Decree establishes the authority of the body to exclude the interested public from oral hearings or other procedural acts, if this is necessary for the protection of health;</li> <li>4. The Decree restricts the right to inspect the documents of the administrative case on the premises of the body, if the entitled person can be guaranteed the exercise of this right by sending him (physical or electronic) a copy of the documents of the case;</li> <li>5. The Decree enables the service of decisions, resolutions and other documents to be performed by filing in an electronic mailbox that does not meet the security and technical conditions for a secure electronic mailbox under the General Administrative Procedure Act and the Decree on Administrative Operations. Such service takes place provided that the addressees agree and provide an e-mail address for this purpose.</li> </ol> <p>The Decree is valid until the epidemic is canceled or for a maximum of three months.</p> <p>2. In 2020 there was approximate 15 percent decrease in issuance of first temporary residence permits for the purpose of study in comparison to 2019 (see table 1). We believe that 15 percent decrease, mentioned above, is linked with travel restrictions that were put in place due to Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
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			<p>Year Number of first temporary residence permits issued for the purpose of study (6., 7., 8. Level ISCED)</p> <p>2018 1358</p> <p>2019 1759</p> <p>2020 1525</p> <p>3. According to the current overall epidemic status in Slovenia, all studies are provided on-line.</p> <p>4. Yes.</p> <p>5. No data available.</p> <p>6. No contingency measures concerning foreign students were adopted.</p>
	EMN NCP Spain	Yes	<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The activity of visa sections of Spanish Embassies and Consulates has not been suspended during / due to the pandemic. Holders of national visas (including student visas) have been included among exceptional cases exempted from the entry ban, in accordance with Orders passed by the Ministry of Interior. Therefore, D visas have been issued normally, without prejudice to the restrictions established by foreign countries and Governments with regard to the opening of Embassies and Consulates on their territory.</li> <li>• During periods in which air and sea connections were suspended, visa applications were processed but visa stickers were not printed until travel connections were re-established. Due to travel restrictions, the issuance of visas in 2020 has fallen sharply.</li> <li>• In addition, the measures implemented in order to process visas in a secure environment reduced the capacity to process visas; nonetheless, instructions were issued in June 2020 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation to expedite and facilitate the issuance and processing of visa applications by our Embassies and Consulates, giving priority to students starting the academic course in September / October 2020, in order to ensure that all students were able to get their visas on time.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student visa applications could be submitted through representatives. Additional documents were accepted by post or courier and personal interviews could take place by videoconference.</li> <li>• Visas that could not be used due to national travel restrictions were reissued (free of charge) by our Embassies and Consulates, including student visas.</li> </ul> <p>Challenges: Present and future challenges are related to the pandemic and, in particular, to restrictions adopted by local authorities to internal mobility and opening of embassies and consulates, as well as new travel restrictions.</p> <p>2. Due to the COVID-19 crisis visa applications have fallen sharply in 2020: from 89.204 in 2019 (and 86.115 in 2018) to 36.432 in 2020. Most of the applications were received in July and August, coinciding with the ease of travel restrictions and the beginning of the new academic year. As for residence permits, there was also a drop in their issuance, compared to 2019: 1.582 permits for tertiary education in 2020, whereas in 2019 the number of those permits was 9.472 (- 83 %).</p> <p>3. The Spanish Ministry of Universities adopted at the beginning of the school year 2020-21 a document called "Recommendations for the university community for an adapted physical presence at the classroom, and for a COVID-19 protocol". This document is available here, in Spanish: <a href="https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Universidades/Ficheros/Recomendaciones_del_Ministerio_de_Universidades_para_adaptar_curso.pdf">https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Universidades/Ficheros/Recomendaciones_del_Ministerio_de_Universidades_para_adaptar_curso.pdf</a> Universities were to adopt contingency plans, along with their respective regional education authorities, in order to swiftly switch to online education, if necessary. In fact, all Universities developed a contingency plan right after the lockdown that took place in Spring 2020, that included measures such as teleworking, flexible timetables, work turns, compulsory use of mask and social distance (as suggested by the WHO and by Spanish authorities). During this school year (2020-21) Universities are implementing a hybrid system that combines physical presence (when possible) and online education, and at the same time guaranties that every student have all the means they need. It is highly unlikely that this school year any University can offer fully in-person classes. Ultimately, the Recommendation also states measures to better organize and control the accesses to the Campus, and the movement of persons within them, especially in libraries, labs, canteens, etc.</p> <p>4. Yes.</p>
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			<p>5. Currently there are no data. The Universities Integrated Information System (SIIU) will have this information ready once the second term is over.</p> <p>6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The income threshold to get a scholarship was amended, so that a larger number of students could benefit from these subsidies. However, this only applied to EU students residing permanently in Spain, or working in Spain.</li><li>• Psychosocial care was provided to those students in need, the number of whom increased during the pandemic.</li><li>• The Ministry of Universities funded a research conducted by the Basque Country University on the Psychological consequences of COVID-19 and lockdown. Apart of the participants interviewed in the research were students. <a href="https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Universidades/Ficheros/Consecuencias_psicologicasCOVID19.pdf">https://www.ciencia.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Universidades/Ficheros/Consecuencias_psicologicasCOVID19.pdf</a></li><li>• An online and telephone psychological care service was provided to the university community and also to the general public, available on the “Conectados@la universidad en casa” (Connected to University from home) platform. This service was offered by the Applied Psychology Department of the National Distance University (UNED).</li><li>• Students’ dormitories weren’t closed during the pandemic. Most of them, at least, were reported to be open all year round.</li><li>• The Ministry of Universities, along with the governing body of Universities (CRUE) launched the “Conectados @ la universidad en casa” (Connected to University from home) platform to offer support to professors, students and to the general public during the closure of classes during the pandemic, and to accompany the transition from in-person education to online education at the beginning of the crisis. This platform was designed both by the National Distance University (UNED) and the Catalan Open University (UAC).</li><li>• In general, all the measures that were put in place led to a reinforcement of the digitalization of the Universities that was funded by the Spanish government through the regional education authorities, worth 400 million euros.</li></ul>
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	<p>EMN NCP Sweden</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>1. No changes due to the pandemic. An electronic application system was in place and used already before the pandemic and has not changed.</p> <p>2. Yes. Overall, Sweden issued 5,722 first-time residence permit for studies at higher education institutions in Sweden in 2020, i.e. 42 percent fewer than in 2019. In 2019, a total of 9,833 such permits were granted. The number of permits issued for studies at doctoral level decreased as well. The reduction in the number of permits granted for studies was particularly visible during the summer months, i.e. June to August 2020, which is when permits for admission to studies during the autumn term are normally issued.</p> <p>3. Yes, as much as possible using digital solutions for learning activities.</p> <p>4. Yes</p> <p>5. No information available</p> <p>6. To the best of our knowledge there are no support available. There were some local, private initiatives earlier in 2020 but this is no longer the case.</p>
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