

Guidelines for study related trips to risk areas for TU/e students

Introduction: what is the purpose of these guidelines?

In countries or regions where students of TU/e conduct education-related activities as part of an International Experience program / study trip, it is possible that safety risks or calamities may occur. In such instances, the country or region in question may be designated as a risk area. TU/e has a responsibility of care towards its students and is obligated to safeguard their safety, health, and well-being. In the case of study trips to risk areas, however, TU/e is unable (at times) to guarantee the safety of its students.

TU/e is also obligated to support students who travel to risk areas for their studies by providing them with necessary guidelines and recommendations. TU/e will also advise the students in question regarding any additional or alternate travel insurance that may be necessary. This memorandum provides guidelines for study trips to risk areas that students are taking or intend to take in future.

What is a risk area?

In identifying risk areas and determining the accompanying recommendations pertaining to travel, TU/e strives to be consistent with the travel advisories issued by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BuZa). BuZa uses color codes to differentiate its travel advisory categories. The color code indicates how safe a particular country or region is, and for each color, BuZa issues different recommendations. These travel advisories are not binding. The color codes are:

- Green: Safe to travel. No unusual safety risks. The risks to safety in this country or region are comparable to the safety risks in the Netherlands.
- Yellow: Safety risks are present. The risks to safety in this country or region differ from those in the Netherlands.
- Orange: Essential travel only. Travelers may be exposed to dangerous situations resulting from grave risks to personal safety in this country or region. BuZa therefore recommends travelling to this area only if absolutely necessary. ‘
- Red: Avoid travel. Extremely grave risks to safety are present, which may result in life-threatening situations for travelers, such as in the event of war. BuZa therefore recommends avoiding all travel to this area.

Color code related to Covid-19

- Yellow: beware, security risks. Security risks differ from what you are used to in the Netherlands. There are infections with the coronavirus. Government can impose measures.
- Orange: only necessary trips Only travel to this area if absolutely necessary. Holiday trips are not necessary. If you do travel, prepare yourself very well. There are many infections.

When planning a study-related trip to a risk area, students need to consult the International Officer of their department timely to establish matters such as the destination and duration of the trip and to provide/update contact information. Students always need to register themselves in Mobility Online. Instructions about this obligated registration can be given by the responsible International Officer of the department.

Permitted study-related travel to code green or yellow destinations.

Study-related travel to a country or region with the code green or yellow, students are not required to request specific written permission of TU/e. Students will, however, be expected to observe the general procedure for study-related travel, and to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the safety risks and developments in the country or region to which they are travelling. To do so, they can refer to the relevant pages of the website of BuZa, or the BuZa Reisapp. During the study-related trip, students will avoid taking careless decisions or risks about their own safety and health or that of others. Students must coordinate the travel in advance with their International Officer (or internships supervisor) by reporting the duration and destination of the study-related trip, along with their contact details and register themselves into Mobility Online. Prior to their study-related trip abroad, students must also sign a document (of TU/e) by which they declare that they are familiar with the guidelines for study-related trips to risk areas, as well taken care to be properly insure against certain risks.

Study-related travel not permitted (code orange or red)

In principle, when a country or region has a travel advisory with the color code orange or red, an approval of TU/e will not be issued to students to travel to that destination. The study-related travel is then not permitted. This applies to risk areas where grave risks to (personal) safety are present. Moreover, such trips are not covered under TU/e's travel insurance. In certain situations, a student can file a request for an exception to travel to countries with travel advisory code orange.

Travel insurance and other obligatory insurances

TU/e has purchased a legal liability policy for students that will provide coverage if students cause damage to third parties during their internship or educational activities. Students are in all cases responsible to be insured for certain risks, including obtaining a healthcare insurance (healthcare policy with worldwide coverage), liability insurance for private persons, travel insurance (baggage, repatriation and assistance, supplementary healthcare policy with worldwide coverage, travel documents), personal accident and professional liability in the event this is not covered by the internship host. Also students need to check that in times of the Corona pandemic, Corona-related situations are sufficiently covered by the insurance.

Instructions from TU/e

When students travel to a foreign country and take up temporary residence there in connection with study-related travel abroad, they are obligated to follow all directives and/or instructions from TU/e. If students neglect to comply with this obligation, there may be consequences regarding awarding credits for the study component that they have attended while abroad.

Changes to color code

If, during study-related travel, students find themselves in a country or region for which the color code of the travel advisory has been changed from green or yellow to code orange, they need to contact the International Officer of their department and follow the instructions they are given.

If students find themselves in a country or region for which the color code of the travel advisory has been changed to red, they must immediately contact the International Officer of their department and, if possible and advised, evacuate the country or region without further delay.

Travel at own risk

If, during a study-related trip, a student elects to leave the country or region (destination of the mobility) with code green or yellow (or orange with explicit permission of TU/e) and travel to a risk area with color code orange or red, this travel will be considered a personal trip taken by the student.

Registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

For study-related trips, it is important and advised that students register themselves with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This will allow the Dutch embassy or consulate to reach the students in case of an emergency in the foreign country and to offer them assistance. Should the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issue any instructions relating to the country or region in which the students are travelling, the students are required to follow these instructions. Students with a nationality other than Dutch should report to the applicable authority of their home countries and follow any instructions issued by this authority. These students may register with their country's embassy in the Netherlands.

Updates and actualities travel advisories

You can receive updates via the Dutch BuZa 'Reisapp' to keep you informed of any changes to the travel advisories issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These changes will also be reflected on the BuZa's website; you can also register there to receive e-mail updates.

Via the 24/7 BZ Information service you can also register to receive e-mail updates regarding changes in colour code. Registration is possible at following website:

<https://informatieservice.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/>

A few additional issues that are important to prepare for

You are advised to also ask yourself some other important and relevant questions and take the answers into account when preparing for your study abroad period or when you are actually at your destination abroad, like:

- ❖ What are the changes in national measures to prevent further spread of the virus?
- ❖ Are other non-COVID risks mentioned in the travel advisory of the Dutch government causing the travel advice to change?
- ❖ Are you dependent on public transportation and if so, what effect have new measures on public transportation between your accommodation and host institution?
- ❖ What effect have new measures on your social activities?
- ❖ What does your safety network look like? Do you have family or friends close by?
- ❖ In case of shared accommodation, can you comply with quarantine measures if necessary?
- ❖ Are there any COVID-19 specific measures/instructions that might prevent in-person completion of your study-abroad program?
- ❖ Is there specific guidance and support from the host to prevent social isolation?
- ❖ Is extra support given to international (exchange) students in the event of emergencies/requests for help?