

A globe of the Americas is the central focus, showing North America (USA, Canada, Mexico) and South America (Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, Guayana Francesa). A hand is visible on the left, pointing towards the globe. The background is a blurred image of a person's hands.

Attracting the best and the brightest: International researchers on the Dutch university labour market

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Introduction

- Joint work with Wout Scholten and Edwin Horlings
- Rathenau Instituut stimulates policy making and (political) opinion making on science, technology and innovation
- This is research on the basis of:
 - Statistics
 - Interviews with university policy makers
 - Interviews with foreign researchers in NL (max 10 years in NL) of all levels/fields (19 persons)
 - Analysis of policy documents on internationalisation of universities, faculties, the national government and the EU

Policy context

- Fear of unattractiveness and brain drain
- Strong urge to become more international
 - For quality purposes
 - War for talent
 - Role models for students
 - Improvement of knowledge circulation
 - Supporting the national knowledge economy

Facts & figures on mobile researchers in NL: There is no problem

- The figures on incoming and outgoing researchers are roughly in balance
- Incoming researchers have somewhat higher citation scores than outgoing researchers
- Mobility with ERC-grants shows a small prevalence of incoming researchers
- New professors from abroad come from good universities
- 33% of all scientific staff of universities has a non-NL nationality
- For technical universities this is 50%

There is no uniform academic labour market

- Segmentation with respect to position/career phase
- Segmentation with respect to academic field
- Various levels of competition with other employers
- Geographic segmentation

- In some segments there is a tight labour market, in others there is a surplus in labour
- In general the labour market for PhDs en postdocs is a buyers market, the labour market for top professors is a sellers market
- Young researchers are much more likely to become mobile than older colleagues

The decision to be mobile

1. A job opportunity occurs
2. Researcher and family answer the following questions
 1. Do I want to work in this group/on this topic/with these facilities/ in these circumstances/ in this position/in this university (academic standing)
 2. Is this country/city in the (implicit) list of suitable countries in terms of culture, facilities, quality of life, opportunities for partner and kids (education), distance to parents/family
3. The researcher and his family decide to become mobile

Pull factors for foreign researchers in NL-1

Academic

- High (enough) academic reputation/high profile colleagues
- enough academic challenges/opportunities/career development
- academic culture
- Equipment up to scratch

General

- Good quality of life
- Good education and health care
- Safe
- Not so strict social hierarchy
- 30% tax reduction

Pull factors for foreign researchers in NL-2

Personal

- Culture
- Link with The Netherlands
- Choice of partner
- Distance to family

1. NL is attractive

2. Pull factors are not easy to create

Push factors for foreign researchers in NL

- Little room for negotiation
- Only external grants to form own group
- (sometimes) low salary when compared to international top institutes like MIT, ETH, Oxford or some upcoming science systems like UAE.

Policies as pull factors

- Most policies influence the stage after the decision to be mobile
- 30% tax reduction rule
- Job offer to partner

- Support for moving, housing etcetera is generally discussed too late to influence the mobility decision

Improving the Dutch attractiveness

- No direct need for more mobility (there is no problem)

There is always room for improvement:

- Offering a career perspective (requires active selection of the best by universities)
- For professors: university funded PhDs and postdocs
- More room for (salary) negotiations

Improving policy on international mobility of researchers

- Stimulation of return mobility
- Active selection of talented postdocs by universities and offering career perspective to these talents
- Stimulate short-term mobility, also without change of employer (e.g. incoming and outgoing sabbaticals)
- Stimulate foreign researchers to contribute to the Dutch (knowledge) society, help them with Dutch network formation and stimulate/require them to learn Dutch

excellence

talent development
and retention

knowledge circulation

contribution to Dutch
economy/society/
innovation

Questions/comments?

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