

# MillenniumDoen! and global citizenship

The effects of voluntary work or internship in a developing country on the development of Global Citizenship

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## Summary

This study will examine whether voluntary work or an internship in a developing country contributes to the development of global citizenship among young people. For the purpose of this study, global citizenship will be defined as a combination of social awareness and possessing international competencies. For a period of four years, a group of 1000 participants between 14 and 25 years old was followed using online self-administered surveys, surveys conducted within the social environment and a smaller number of in-depth interviews. Data collection took place prior to an internship or voluntary work in a developing country, following their return, and six months after their return. Almost all of the international competencies that according to prior research are required to be able to function effectively when communicating with people from a different cultural background were found to have increased during their stay abroad. Only reading and writing skills in the local language of the area were shown not to have improved. The greatest amount of improvement occurred in the area of intercultural competencies, namely attitude, knowledge, behaviour and skills. Following their stay abroad, the personal and social competencies of participants were also shown to have increased. Relatively speaking, their international professional and academic skills improved the least. Despite this, following the return from voluntary work or an internship in a developing country, a larger number of participants were shown to be exhibiting a socially responsible attitude with an understanding of interdependence, equality of all people and a shared responsibility for solving global issues, and expressed this more frequently in their behaviour. In addition, an increase in flexibility, cultural empathy, social initiative and emotional stability among participants was observed. What essentially characterises the participants according to the in-depth interviews is the ability they have developed to look through someone else's eyes at their own culture and living conditions in the Netherlands and to use their improved self-confidence to live a more socially aware life and/or engage in international activities after their return from abroad.

## 1. Introduction

Global citizenship and Internationalisation are two of the focal points at The Hague University of Applied Sciences. The university's International Cooperation Research Group carries out research into the acquisition of international competencies among students as a result of a period spent abroad (Hoven & Walenkamp, 2013; 2015; Funk, Heijer, Schuurmans-Brouwer & Walenkamp, 2014).

This chapter will examine the question whether voluntary work or an internship in a developing country contributes to the development of global citizenship among young people. For the purpose of this study, global citizenship is expressed in two elements: social awareness, a socially responsible attitude (maatschappelijke betrokkenheid), and possessing international competencies.

Social awareness focuses on being aware of the different socio-economic positions and living conditions of people in the world, recognising the influence of one's own behaviour on people elsewhere, being aware of international issues and the accompanying socially responsible behaviour such as conscious consumer behaviour, energy use, giving behaviour and searching for and sharing information.

In addition, in a globalising world it is important that young people possess international competencies that will enable them to function effectively in an international context, whenever they come into contact with people from a different cultural background. For this reason, this study will also focus on the acquisition of personal and social competencies, intercultural competencies, professional and academic competencies and foreign languages skills

In this study, a group of 1000 young people aged between 14 and 25 was followed using online surveys, 360 degrees feedback evaluations and in-depth interviews. Evaluations were made prior to their internship or voluntary work in a developing country, following their return, and six months after their return. This study generated a large and unprecedented quantity of data that was characterised by its richness. Only a portion of this data can be examined in detail in this chapter.

Firstly, the background of the study will be explained. After this, the research question will be laid out in paragraph 2 and the interpretation of the concept of global citizenship will be set out in paragraph 3. Paragraph 4 will then address the methodology used to carry out the research. In this paragraph, the general research design will firstly be discussed, followed by the quantitative and qualitative methods. For each method, information will be provided regarding the content, data collection and data analysis. The findings will then be set out in paragraph 5. After providing an overview of the response and the background characteristics of the group, the results will be displayed in the areas of social awareness and international competencies. Paragraph 6 will contain a short conclusion and in paragraph 7, the results will be put into a broader context.

### Background of the research

The group of young people who were studied all took part in the MillenniumDoen! programme conducted by the JoHo Foundation (*Stichting JoHo*). JoHo is a Dutch interest group with a worldwide network of shops and websites, by means of which people and organisations can be motivated and helped to contribute to international cooperation. The MillenniumDoen! programme received an SBOS subsidy. SBOS stands for *Subsidiefaciliteit voor Burgerschap en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (the Citizenship and Development Cooperation Grant Facility) and is a former programme operated by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focusing on increasing global citizenship within Dutch society. The SBOS subsidy was granted to the MillenniumDoen! programme in order to stimulate the development of global citizenship among those participants by encouraging them to pass this on to other people in their environment.

JoHo asked the International Cooperation Research Group at The Hague University of Applied Sciences to carry out a joint large-scale research project on the effects of the "MillenniumDoen!" programme. The MillenniumDoen! programme gave volunteers and interns who wanted to take part in a project in a developing country the opportunity to apply for a small grant. This grant allowed them to give meaning to their existence as global citizens and, particularly after their return, to carry out activities that could raise national awareness and actively promote developmental co-operation.

Alongside the small-scale financial grants provided, the participants were mostly encouraged to stay active by means of an online MillenniumDoen! platform, on which blogs, photos, events, videos and so on could be shared with one another. The programme ran from 2011 to 2015. A maximum of 1000 participants could register for the programme provided they were between 14 and 25 years old, had a Dutch nationality, and wished to go abroad for an internship or voluntary work for a period of between two weeks and eight months.

## 2. Research purpose and question

### The purpose of the research is:

To describe the effects of voluntary work and/or an internship in a developing country and complementary follow-up activities relating to the way in which young people become global citizens.

### The research question is:

How do the behaviour, knowledge, attitude and skills of young people develop with respect to global citizenship during their stay in a developing country and during the follow-up activities that take place in the subsequent six months, including in the context of the MillenniumDoen! programme?

## 3. Global citizenship

In this paragraph, the various components that make up global citizenship are set out in the way we have used them in this study: social awareness and international competencies.

### Social awareness

A global citizen is aware of global issues such as poverty, climate change, and energy, water and food scarcities. These are cross-border issues: a global citizen recognises that his or her actions at home influence the living conditions of people in other parts of the world, such as in developing countries. This **attitude** of interdependence, of equality of all people and of shared responsibility for solving global issues is expressed in **behaviour** that does this justice (Carabain et al, 2012).

Whether carrying out voluntary work or completing an internship abroad contributes to the development of a socially responsible attitude and socially responsible behaviour in young people forms a central theme in the first part of the research.

### International competencies

Global citizenship is not only expressed in social awareness, but also involves possessing international competencies.

Hoven & Walenkamp (2013; 2015) have chosen to define international competencies from a range of possibilities. These consist of:

1. Interpersonal and social competencies
2. Intercultural competencies
3. International professional and academic competencies
4. Language skills

In the Deardorff model (2006; 2009), intercultural competencies are based on the development of attitude, knowledge and skills that enable the person to exhibit appropriate behaviour and effective

communication in intercultural situations, wherein what is appropriate is related to the specific context in which interactions take place.

The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire or *Multiculturele PersoonlijkheidsVragenlijst* (MPV) is also included in the surveys. Van Oudenhoven and Van der Zee (2002) argue that by looking into somebody's personality, it can be predicted how much multicultural success this person will have. Van Oudenhoven and Van der Zee establish a link between the competencies of a person and the behaviour in situations that he/she encounters. Multicultural success is defined as achieving personal effectiveness and making adjustments within intercultural interactions. People with a relatively strong multicultural personality can adapt their behaviour more effectively to a "culturally new environment" and, in doing so, act more successfully.

The ways in which the level of social awareness and international competencies of people are measured will be explained in the following paragraph.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Research design

In this research, a mixed methods research design has been used: including both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Data was collected through a combination of three surveys conducted among participants, a survey conducted among people in their social environment (360 degrees evaluation) and in-depth interviews by telephone/Skype.

The literature and experience of the International Cooperation Research Group show that a mixed design forms the best method of mapping out individual competencies (*cf.* Hoven & Walenkamp, 2013; 2015). The advantage of the combination is that the different weaknesses of each method are compensated for by other methods, the methods together provide a more complete picture, and the results can be compared with one another (Creswell, 2013). We are also interested in the way in which participants who have been abroad see their development and the meaning they ascribe to it. Quantitative research methods, such as statistical methods to establish correlations based on a large research group, can be used to explain the results. Qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, give participants scope in which to reflect on their own development and give the researcher the opportunity to chart the meaning they derive from it. Moreover, surveys completed by people in their social environment, such as parents, friends and lecturers, demonstrate how the development is viewed from another perspective as well.

Despite the above points, finding causal relationships remains difficult in the social sciences, because there are many circumstances that can influence and explain a person's behaviour and attitude. It is therefore not possible to conclude *per se* whether any changes occurring in global citizenship can be attributed to a stay abroad or follow up activities. At the very most, we can search for an *association* between work/internship abroad and the development of global citizenship, but it is not certain that this period is *the cause* of the change and that the change is therefore *the effect* of it. Teenagers and adolescents learn new things every day. Moreover, attitudes and behaviour can also be influenced by the news, or by other people in their personal environment.

## 4.2 Quantitative methods: surveys among participants and their social environment

The quantitative methods within this study consisted of surveys conducted among participants and among people from their social environment (360 degrees evaluations). The paragraph below will explain the content of the surveys, the data collection and data analysis respectively.

### 4.2.1 Quantitative methods content

#### Surveys for participants

The online surveys for participants were put together based on the NCDO Global Citizenship Barometer, the Deardorff theoretical competency model (2009), and the multicultural personality questions by Van Oudenhoven and Van der Zee (2002).

The Global Citizenship Youth Barometer from the Dutch Knowledge and Advice Centre for Citizenship and International Cooperation (NCDO) charts the level of global citizenship of individuals. The key indicators that have been taken from this barometer are *behaviour* (such as consumer behaviour, giving an opinion, searching for/sharing information, giving behaviour (such as donating) and social participation (voluntary work)) and *attitude* (an understanding of interdependence across the world and of equality of all people and the conviction of shared responsibility in solving global issues).

International competencies consist of the following components: personal and social competencies, intercultural competencies, international, professional and academic competencies and foreign language skills. Questions with regard to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the main language of the country and the local language of the area in which the participants are carrying out their internship or doing voluntary work are included in the surveys for participants. The other international competencies were charted using the 360 degrees evaluations from the social environment and the in-depth interviews with the participants following their return.

The five dimensions of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) were also included in the surveys. Firstly, *cultural empathy* is examined, i.e. the ability to be able to 'read' a culture or to analyse it in an understanding way. Secondly, attention is paid to *open mindedness*. This involves examining the extent to which somebody approaches people from outside their own cultural group, who has other norms and values, in an open and unprejudiced way. Thirdly, the *emotional stability* of the respondent is taken into consideration. This scale measures the extent to which people are inclined to remain calm in stressful situations, and the extent to which they are able to handle psychological or emotional discomfort. Fourthly, the person's *social initiative* is measured. Social initiative relates to the tendency of a person to actively approach social situations and to take initiatives. Finally, the *flexibility* of a person is examined. Flexibility is characterised by the ability and mentality to see new and unfamiliar situations as a challenge rather than a limitation or a threat.

The bringing together of the Youth Barometer, the Deardorff model (2006; 2009) and the MPQ led to a questionnaire consisting of 38 questions or propositions and 91 statements relating to global citizenship that examined behaviour, attitude, knowledge and skills along with the experiences and expectations of the participants. In addition, background characteristics of participants were included in the surveys, such as gender, education, parents' level of education, attitude of parents, previous experience abroad, age, expectations and length of their stay because these factors might have influence on the results.

### **Surveys for the social environment (360 degrees evaluations)**

In the surveys for the social environment of the participants (parents, friends, friends and lecturers), questions relating to international competencies were included. Hoven & Walenkamp (2013; 2015) have chosen to define international competencies from a range of possibilities. The following international competencies are included in the 360 degrees evaluations:

1. Personal and social competencies
2. Intercultural competencies
3. International professional and academic competencies
4. Language skills

#### **4.2.2 Collecting quantitative data**

Quantitative data was collected by means of a request form, a baseline measurement prior to the young person going abroad, an interim evaluation following their return and a final evaluation six months after their return, along with a 360 degrees evaluation form for the social environment following the young person's return. More information on the procedures followed can be found below.

#### **Request form**

By using a request form background information of participants of the JoHo MillenniumDoen! Programme was collected to be able to study possible associations with the development of global citizenship. The request form consisted of the following parts: first name and surname, date of birth, residence, telephone number, e-mail address, education, destination, project organisation and choice of project.

#### **Baseline measurement**

A first survey, known as the baseline measurement, was aimed at mapping out the international competencies and social awareness of the participants before their voluntary work or internship in a developing country. Shortly after receiving confirmation of their participation in the programme, the participants received a link by email to the online baseline measurement survey. The point at which these surveys were completed ranged between six months to one day before the departure abroad. The different points at which they were filled in stem from the fact that some participants submitted their applications far in advance, while others waited until the last possible moment.

#### **Interim evaluation**

After their return to the Netherlands, participants filled out a second survey, known as the interim evaluation. In terms of content, this was very similar to the baseline measurement and set out to chart to what extent the participants had changed in terms of the points previously mentioned during their voluntary work or internship in a developing country. Again, the participants received a link to the online survey by email, this time shortly after their return to the Netherlands. The vast majority of the participants filled this out within a month of their return. If they did not fill it out within a month, the participants received a reminder email, after which the interim evaluation was generally filled out within the second month of their return.

#### **Final evaluation**

A third survey was completed around six months after their return once they had received a new email link. This final evaluation is largely similar to the surveys previously filled out and shows to what extent changes have continued to develop over a longer period of time following the return and during participation in MillenniumDoen!

### 360 degrees evaluation

In order to chart the development of the participants as completely as possible, family members (2x), friends (2x) and lecturers (2x) of the participants were asked to fill in a 360 degrees evaluation while the interim evaluation was being carried out. The decision to include this evaluation in this study stems from the possibility that participants will view their skills and competencies in a more critical light following their experience abroad than they did before their departure (Van der Hoven & Walenkamp, 2013; 2015), meaning that the results from the interim and final evaluations could give a correct or slightly distorted picture of these competencies. The 360 degree evaluation is aimed at correcting or confirming this picture, thus increasing the insight into the development of the participants.

Stage	Before departure	Internship/ voluntary work in developing country	Month following return	Six months following return
<b>Evaluation</b>	Baseline measurement		Interim evaluation	Final evaluation
<b>Instruments</b>	Survey (0)		Survey (1)	Survey (2)
	Background details		In-depth interviews (1)	In-depth interviews (2)
			360 degrees evaluation	

Figure 1: Data collection

#### 4.2.3 Analysis of quantitative data

All answers given by the participants on the registration form and in the baseline measurement, interim evaluation, final evaluation and by their social environment on the 360 degree surveys were processed and analysed in the SPSS programme by the International Cooperation Research Group at The Hague University of Applied Sciences. All data files were aggregated. The data was merged by user ID, a unique identification number per participant, allowing results from different surveys to be compared with one another.

Answers on questions at the Likert scale, which have five multiple-choice answers on a scale from very weak to very strong, for example 'I totally disagree' (1) to 'I totally agree' (5) were converted into numerical form, so that the average for the entire group could be calculated and compared with the answers in the different stages of the research. Frequency tables were set up in order to give an insight into the answers to each question, the percentages, and the differences between the baseline measurement, interim evaluation and final evaluation.

Independent t-tests were carried out in order to compare the average scores of the group of participants on the baseline measurement, interim evaluation and final evaluation per question and per category. The results of these tests determined whether the differences were statistically significant at a confidence interval of 95 per cent ( $p < 0.05$ ), in order to gain an insight into whether the difference between the three evaluations was based on chance or indicated a real difference.

For each young person, a general score was calculated in the 360 degrees evaluation by making a new variable on each indicator in which the average from all answers by the people in their environment was taken. This was based on the young person's identification number.

### 4.3 Qualitative methods: in-depth interviews with the participants

Within this study, quantitative data is collected along with qualitative data, in the form of in-depth interviews. An overview of the content of the interviews, the ways in which the interviews were carried out and the manner in which the resulting qualitative data was analysed can be found below.

#### 4.3.1 Qualitative methods content

The semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out by telephone/Skype by employees of JoHo based on a survey drawn up in cooperation with The Hague University of Applied Sciences. The questions focused on the reasons the participants had for carrying out voluntary work abroad, the plans and expectations they had beforehand, the success of the voluntary work, the local conditions and personal experiences. Some questions concerned the follow-up activities in the Netherlands, along with the development of personal attitude, knowledge, skills and behaviour in terms of international competencies and social awareness. The purpose of the second round of interviews was to look back at the experiences abroad, their success, what the participants had learned and the follow-up activities they took part in while in the Netherlands. The main focus of both series of interviews was the development of knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour that reflects global citizenship, in terms of international competencies and social awareness.

#### 4.3.2 Collecting qualitative data

The selection of participants for interviews took place on two occasions within the four-year MillenniumDoen! programme. In order to gain insight into the ways in which the impact of work or internship experience abroad in the form of both activities, insight and relevant competencies developed in the period following the return to the Netherlands, it was decided to carry out an interview with the participants selected on two occasions. Participants who were interviewed in the first selection group were interviewed in the first month, and again, one year following their return to the Netherlands. Participants who were interviewed as part of the second selection round were interviewed in the first month following their return. The second in-depth interview then took place six months afterwards.

The first group of candidates were selected at random from a total list of programme participants with a return date between December 2012 and May 2013. Part of this group was already known at the start of the selection process, while another part was included during the research, so that any deficits caused by non-responders could be filled in. The registration date for participation in the MillenniumDoen! programme had no influence on the drawing up of the sample list.

A second selection round took place in March 2014, based on a return date between the start of February 2014 and the end of June 2014. In a way similar to the first selection round, the interview candidates were selected at random, meaning that the second and fifth participants on the list per five participants were selected for an interview.

#### Representativeness of the interviews

Research was carried out into whether the group of young people who participated in the in-depth interviews, both in the form of a single interview (75 respondents) and two interviews (49 respondents) is representative for the entire group of participants that were part of the MillenniumDoen! programme. The distribution in terms of education, gender and age was examined. The distribution of male and female respondents in both interview groups was in line with that of the entire group. In terms of education, both interview groups were also comparable. In relation to the entire population, people with low levels of education were represented in slightly greater numbers in the first interview group, in comparison with the participants who are either following or have recently completed a HAVO/VWO (senior general secondary education or pre-university education) degree programme. In the group of young people that also participated in a second interview, the age groups were more or less the same

as those of the entire group of participants in the programme. The age distribution between both interview groups was more or less the same, and deviates slightly from the entire group of participants. The youngest group in particular was relatively smaller, while participants aged between 22 to 25 years were actually represented in greater numbers. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that the youngest group was more difficult to reach by phone/Skype than the older groups. The discrepancies in age between the interview groups and the entire group are so small that within the research, the interviewed groups can be seen as representative of the entire research group.

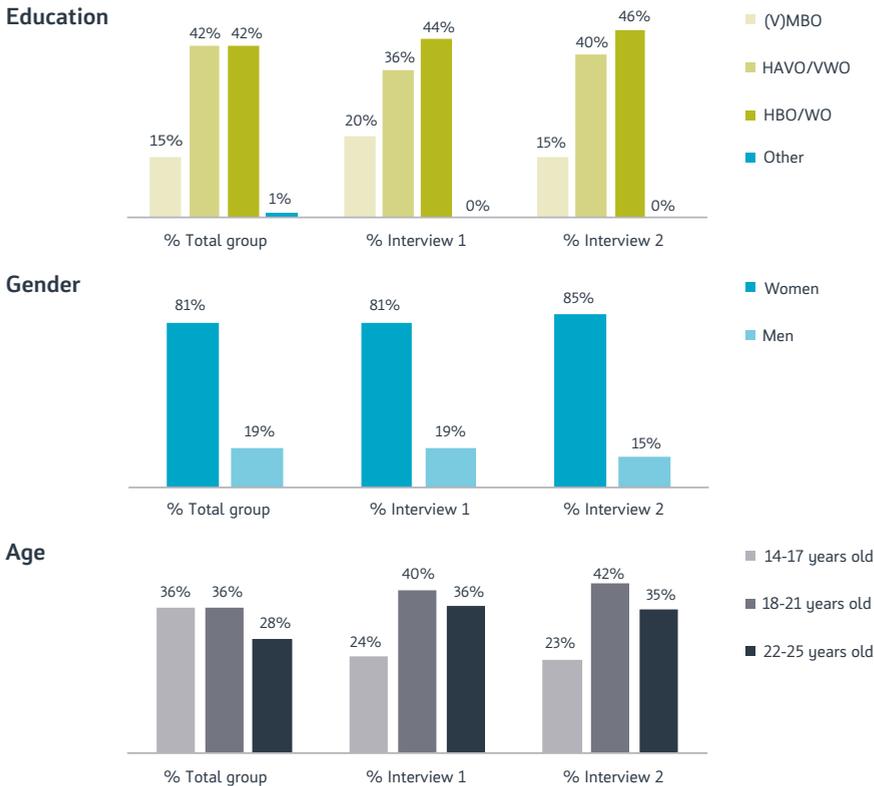


Figure 2: Representativeness of the interviewees

### 4.3.3 Analysis of qualitative data

All Skype/phone interviews were transcribed word for word by research assistants from JoHo and The Hague University of Applied Sciences. Once each transcription had been placed in a separate document, these qualitative data could be organised and coded with assistance from CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software). The ATLAS.ti programme was used for this purpose.

Segments from the transcriptions were coded, based on a code book. Prior to the coding being carried out, the main and subcategories were determined by the research group and included in the code book. The code book contained the code names, definitions, and examples for each category. The codes were based on the themes from the research design and the literature, and on open coding from a limited number of interviews, by finding patterns and themes in the data without prior expectations. In order to increase the reliability of the coding as much as possible, intercoder reliability tests were carried out, in which the coders coded interviews independently of one another and then compared them with

each other. The complete interviews were discussed within the group of researchers that was involved in this project from both The Hague University of Applied Sciences and JoHo. If it proved to be the case that segments of text or codes were interpreted differently by different people, discussion took place and in these discussions consensus was almost always reached. The codebook was amended based on these discussions.

Once the definitive codebook was established and all interviews had been coded, the main themes could be mapped out based on the interviews, namely the development of behaviour, attitude, knowledge and skills in terms of global citizenship. The software allowed all segments to be immediately brought out per code. These segments added the following aspects to the research results: Firstly, an in-depth interpretation of the answers from the survey was examined: the significance of the development for the participants and the way in which they themselves formulated it. Secondly, the kind of topics the participants themselves mentioned was examined, independently of the survey, so that the results could be triangulated. Thirdly, answers on questions of the interviews that were not included in the surveys were analysed, such as the way in which the participants prepared for their stay abroad and the way in which they experienced success, both personally and for others.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Response

#### Surveys for participants

Online surveys were carried out on three occasions: before departure, after their return, and six months after their return. Of the 1000 participants of the MillenniumDoen! programme by JoHo, 773 completed the online surveys before their departure (the baseline measurement).

The participants in the programme received a small subsidy to facilitate extension activities upon their return. In order to qualify for that subsidy the young volunteers had to participate in the surveys. That explains the high response rate of 77 per cent. Following their return from the internship or voluntary work abroad, 628 participants completed the online survey (interim evaluation). In relation to the group of 1000, this is a response of 63 per cent, and in relation to the group that filled in the baseline measurement, this is 81 per cent. Six months after their return, 332 participants filled in the survey once again (final evaluation), which is a response of 33 per cent of the entire group, 43 per cent of the group that completed the baseline measurement, and 53 per cent of the group that filled in the interim evaluation.

#### 360 degrees evaluations

Once the participants returned from their internship or voluntary work abroad, they were asked to collect six completed 360 degrees feedback evaluation forms. These digital forms could be filled out by people from their social environment, such as parents, friends and lecturers. This resulted in 3261 completed 360 degrees evaluation forms, of which 430 were complete data sets (more than 6 completed forms per participant) and 144 were incomplete data sets (fewer than 6 forms per participant). In relation to the number of participants who filled out a survey personally immediately after their return, this was 91 per cent.

#### Interviews

After their return from the internship or voluntary work abroad, a selection of the young people were asked to participate in in-depth interviews by telephone or Skype.

In December 2012 to May 2013 and from February to June 2014, a total of 114 participants were approached for in-depth interviews, resulting in 75 interim interviews (response: 66 per cent of the participants approached, 7.5 per cent of the total group of 1000 participants). The group of people interviewed was approached once again six months or one year following their return, which resulted in 49 second interviews (response of 65 per cent of the participants approached, 5 per cent of the total group of 1000 participants). Approximately 1 in 3 people could not be contacted. The analysis of the background characteristics, however, shows that the groups of the participants interviewed have the same education, age and gender as the entire group of participants of MillenniumDoen! (see paragraph 4.3.2).

## 5.2 Background characteristics of the participants

This chapter will focus on the background characteristics of the participants who went to a developing country for voluntary work or an internship and took part in the MillenniumDoen! programme by JoHo and also took part in the research. The characteristics described below, such as age and education, are measures before the departure, and might have changed during the programme.

### Gender

81 per cent of participants were female. 19 per cent of participants were male. Women were therefore strongly over-represented in the group in comparison to the general population of The Netherlands.

### Age on departure

The group consisted of young people aged between 14 to 26 years. The average age upon departure abroad was 19.7 years. 72 per cent of the group were 21 years or younger on departure. 36 per cent of the participants were aged between 18 and 21. 36 per cent were aged between 14 and 17 years old. 28 per cent of the participants were aged between 22 and 26.

### Education

The group that went abroad was more highly educated than the rest of the population of The Netherlands. 42 per cent of the participants were either following a HAVO/VWO degree programme, or had already completed one. In addition, 42 per cent were either following a HBO/WO (higher professional education or academic) degree programme, or had already completed one. A total of 84 per cent of the participants were therefore highly educated. 16 per cent of the participants were either following a (V)MBO (preparatory or middle vocational education) degree programme, or had already completed one.

### Education of parents/guardians

Although the above figures shows that 84 per cent of the participants are highly educated, a different result is shown if we examine the education enjoyed by the parents of the participants. Details of both fathers and mothers were collected. Half of the parents had received a higher professional or university education (50-55 per cent). 13-16 per cent of the parents had a HAVO or VWO education. 32-33 per cent of the parents had a (V)MBO education. Fathers were, on average, slightly more highly educated than the mothers, but the differences were not great. In general, the parents of the participants who went abroad were more highly educated than the general population.

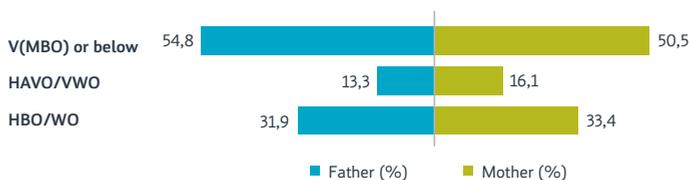


Figure 3. Education of parents

## Experience abroad

The majority of the participants had never gained any experience in a developing country before.

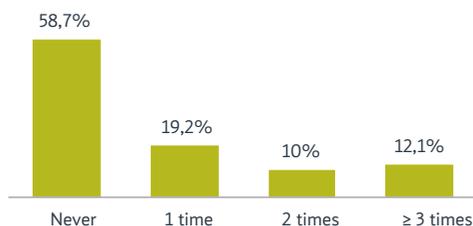


Figure 4: Prior visits to a developing country before?

Almost 60 per cent of the participants had never been to a developing country before this trip. Almost 20 per cent had been once, while the remaining proportion of the participants had been twice or more.

## Destination of internship or voluntary work

The largest proportion of the participants, 66 per cent, went to Africa for their internship or voluntary work. 22 per cent went to Asia, and 12 per cent went to Latin America.

## Motivation for going abroad

The participants were asked in advance to indicate the three main reasons they had for going abroad. A great majority of the participants (82 per cent) stated expecting to develop personally as one of the main motives for going abroad. Coming into contact with other cultures (80 per cent), altruistic motives (70 per cent) and wanting to travel and experience new things (49 per cent) followed closely after. Professional motives, or improving skills, was cited by relatively few participants. It is striking that only four young people (0.5 per cent) cited advice of family or friends as one of the main reasons.

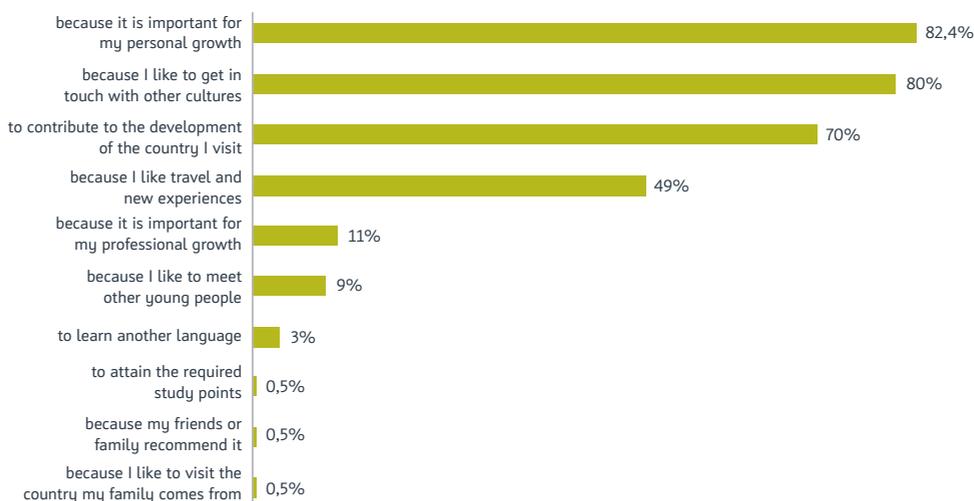
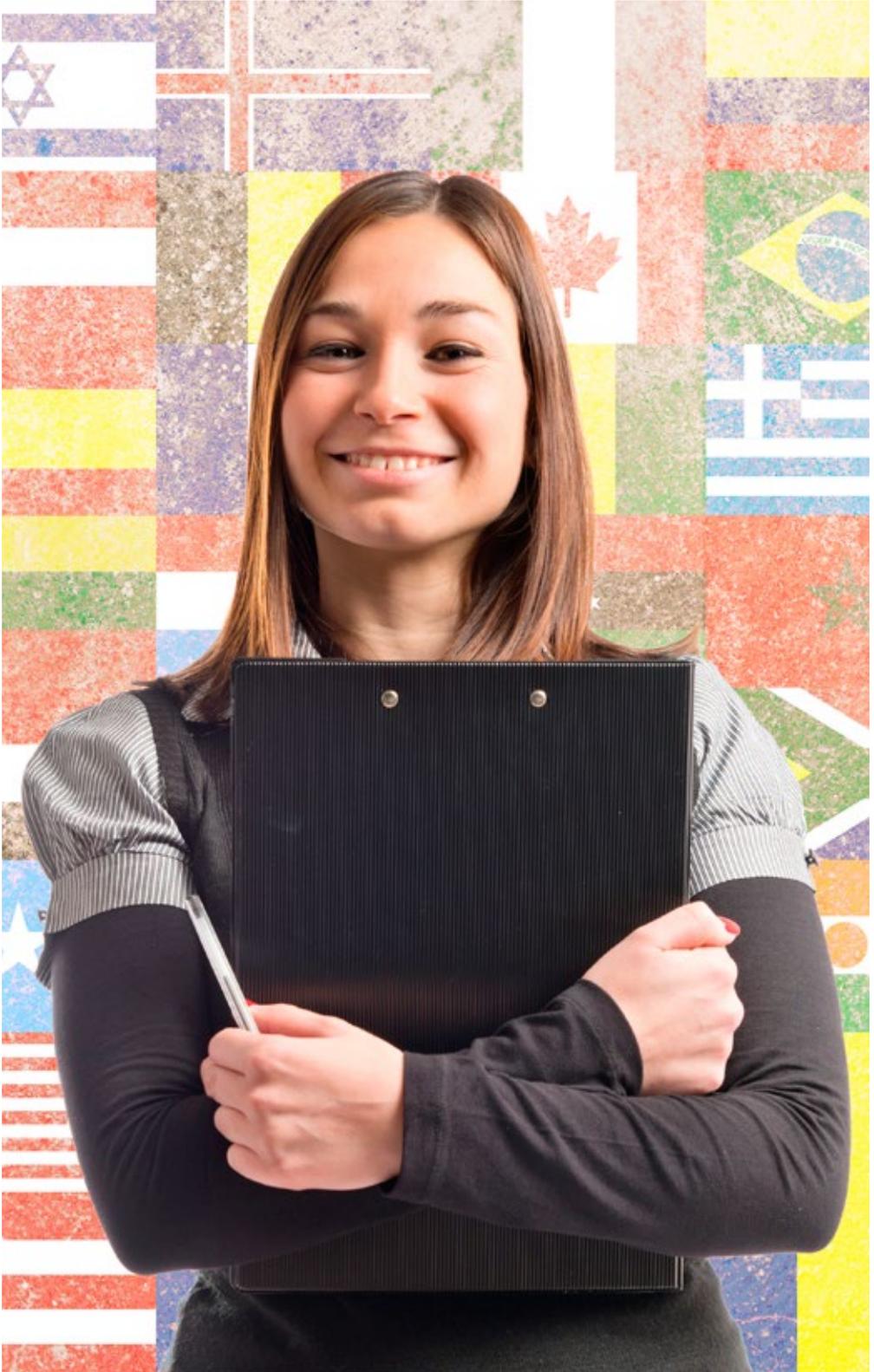


Figure 5: Motivations for going abroad for work or internship



### 5.3 Findings: social awareness

Social awareness focuses on being aware of the different socio-economic positions and living conditions of people in the world, recognising the influence of one's own behaviour on people elsewhere, being aware of international issues and the accompanying socially responsible behaviour such as conscious consumer behaviour, energy use, giving behaviour and searching for and sharing information.

JoHo promoted socially responsible behaviour through the Millenniumdoen! programme in the period following their return. Following their return from voluntary work or an internship abroad, an increase in a socially responsible attitude and behaviour among the participants can be seen.

This is shown by the surveys that the participants completed before their departure, following their return and six months after their return, the in-depth interviews held with the participants following their return and the feedback provided by parents and by other people from their immediate environment.

#### ***Attitude***

Changes in the *attitude* of participants towards people from other cultures and developing countries were demonstrated in an online survey held before and after their stay abroad: an increased awareness and recognition of shared responsibility, equality of all people and interdependence. The changes were also reflected in the in-depth interviews.

#### ***Shared responsibility***

The surveys showed that following their return, considerably more participants considered it important that politics as well as businesses and individuals contribute to development cooperation. Over 80 per cent of the participants had a positive view on development cooperation before their departure, but this percentage increased following their return. Following their return, fewer participants were of the opinion that while people in the Netherlands are living in poverty, no money should be sent to developing countries. Before their departure, over 90 per cent of the participants were of the opinion that we should do something about the problems in developing countries, and kept that opinion following their return.

In terms of shared responsibility, it can be concluded that the changes in attitude between departure and return are significant and that no differences can be perceived between the time immediately after their return and in the following six months. The change, therefore, is lasting.

#### ***Equality of all people***

Before departure, 24 per cent of the participants thought that some beliefs had better values than others. Following return, this was 22 per cent and six months after return, this was 16 per cent. The proportion of people who disagreed with this statement was 43 per cent before departure, 51 per cent following return, and 58 per cent six months after return. All the differences were significant.

Following their return, fewer participants saw the norms and values of their own culture as being superior to those of other cultures. The proportion of participants that did not agree with this before their departure was: 65 per cent, 76 per cent following their return, and after six months, this remained unchanged at 76 per cent .

#### ***Interdependence***

The idea of interdependence between people in the Netherlands and people elsewhere in the world was already recognised by the majority of participants before they started their internship or voluntary work abroad. For almost all assertions on this matter (see below), the number of people with this view following their return had grown.

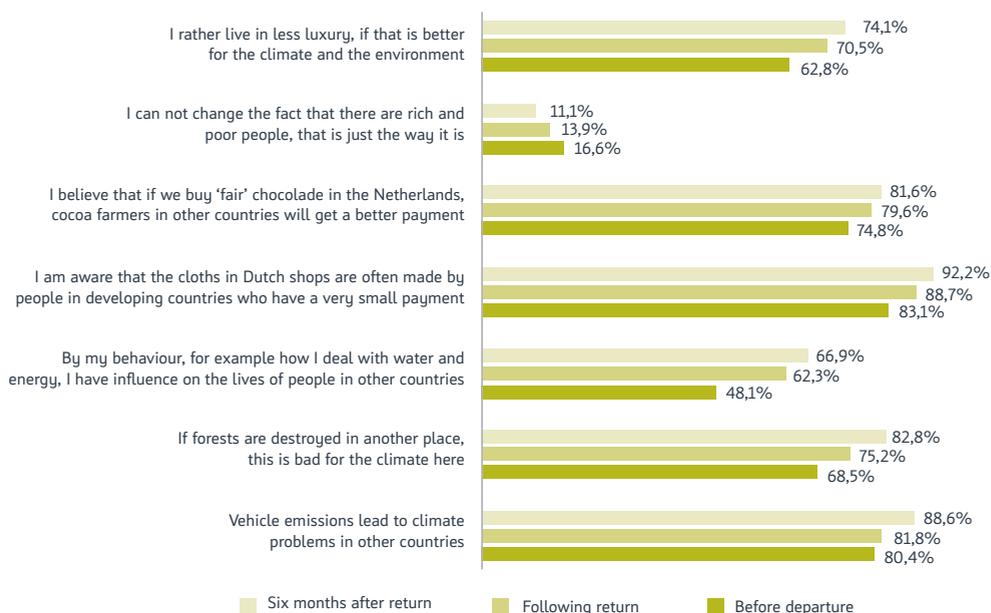


Figure 6: Percentage of participants that agrees or strongly agrees to statements regarding interdependence

This was also reflected in the in-depth interviews. Participants emphasised their attitude towards people in developing countries in a number of ways: firstly, they saw many socio-economic differences between the developing country and the Netherlands. The living conditions were very different, for example if there was no water, little food and little medical care. In general, the interviews showed that when the participants returned to the Netherlands, they had adopted a different attitude towards their own living conditions. They were acutely aware of the value of the things that they have in the Netherlands, both materially and immaterially. They had become increasingly aware of this, and valued what they have more. Because they had become more aware of the fact that not everyone in the world has as much as they do, they no longer took things for granted. A new vision was formed, in which they attached less importance to material things and luxury. Health and relationships with other people had become far more important in life. Based on the awareness that the living conditions people have in other countries are worse, they learned that as participants themselves and individuals from the Western world, they can make a contribution to the situation elsewhere, although they are also aware that this contribution may be very small.

In the 360 degrees evaluation following their return, around six people from the immediate surroundings of the participants (parents, friends and lecturers) indicated to what extent they believed that the social awareness of participants had increased following their stay abroad on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 = strong increase, 4 = slight increase, 3 = no difference, 2 = slight decrease, 1 = strong decrease). The average was calculated for each young person. For the whole group of participants, it was shown that according to the people from their close environment, their *social awareness* had increased since their internship or voluntary work in a developing country. The people from their social environment gave them an average score of 4.21. In addition, the people from their social environment also found that a *broadening of the participants' view of the world* had taken place (average score of 4.46). This means that a slight to strong increase of a socially aware attitude among the participants was observed in the 360 degree evaluations. This corresponds with the results from the surveys that the participants filled in and with the in-depth interviews.

## Behaviour

With regard to of social awareness, the online survey showed that before and after a stay abroad, behaviour changed in terms of energy use, consumer behaviour, giving their opinions, searching for and sharing information, giving behaviour (donating) and the level of social participation.

The online surveys (see above) showed that a sense of *interdependence* was acknowledged by a larger number of participants following their return from their stay abroad. This was also demonstrated in their behaviour.

### Energy use

During the in-depth interviews, participants returning from abroad were asked if anything had changed in their behaviour in terms of social awareness. The vast majority of the participants stated that they had changed the way in which they use energy. Almost all participants started using less water, or using it differently: they take shorter showers, shower less often, or shower at a lower temperature. Immediately after their return, one of the participants even stated that they started showering with cold water, while another started showering at a temperature that was 10 degrees colder. Some of the participants do the dishes less often than before. The reason they gave for this, was that the water usage in the Netherlands is far too great, which influences global issues, and that they want to play a personal role in reducing the usage. In the developing countries in which they had lived, generally much less water was available.

### Consumer behaviour

The surveys conducted among the participants showed that 28 per cent did not buy products or brands that they knew were harmful for people or the environment in their production. After their return, this was 37 per cent and six months later, this was 41 per cent. Over one third of the participants had a neutral answer to this. This could indicate that the participants found it difficult to answer the question, perhaps because the production methods of the products are not always known.

Following their return, the participants bought more Fairtrade products, such as chocolate, clothes, fruit, coffee/tea or presents (see table below). Approximately six months after their return, around 90 per cent of the participants stated that they sometimes bought Fairtrade products, which is an increase of 20 per cent compared to before their departure.

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
1 never	3.1 %	1.6 %	0.9 %
2 seldom	27.6 %	15.4 %	8.7 %
3 sometimes	50.3 %	60.5 %	57.2 %
4 often	19.1 %	22.5 %	33.1 %

Figure 7: Buying Fairtrade products such as chocolate, clothing, fruit, coffee/tea or presents

The in-depth interviews confirmed that the sustainable consumer behaviour of the participants increased following their return. Most participants stated that they bought fewer items and/or that they bought Fairtrade products more often. Following the experience the participants gained abroad, material items were viewed as less important. A different attitude towards products therefore has an influence on consumer behaviour. At the same time, it is also due to a wider perspective: in other countries, people have fewer possessions, while in Dutch supermarkets, there is far more choice, which

is no longer viewed as necessary. A minority of participants already regularly bought Fairtrade products before they left and did not mention any change in their behaviour. Global awareness also does not necessarily mean that participants generally spend less money. People sometimes prefer buying high-quality products.

### ***Giving an opinion***

According to the online surveys the participants, around half of seldom or never gave their opinion on global issues on the internet before their trip abroad. Shortly after their return, this percentage decreased sharply to 28.5 per cent, while the percentage of participants who give their opinions regularly or often doubled from 22.5 per cent to 44.7 per cent. In the months after their return, this significant shift remained unchanged. Six months after their return to the Netherlands, over half (56.3 per cent) of the participants gave their opinion on global issues online.

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
strongly (disagree)	47.3 %	28.5 %	17.5 %
neutral	30.2 %	26.8 %	26.8 %
strongly (agree)	22.5 %	44.7 %	56.3 %

**Figure 8: “I give my opinion on global issues online, e.g. on Facebook, Twitter, a blog or internet fora”**

The percentage of participants supporting charities by ‘liking’ them on Facebook before their departure was 46 per cent. Approximately one in every four participants (26.5 per cent) indicated that they did not do that. Shortly after their internship in a developing country, more participants stated that they supported charities through Facebook (63.2 per cent). The percentage not supporting them had almost halved (15.6 per cent). In the months that followed, too, a significant shift could be seen. Six months after their return, the percentage ‘liking’ charities on Facebook increased to 72.9 per cent while the percentage not doing so decreased to 12.3 per cent.

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
(strongly) disagree	26.5 %	15.6 %	12.3 %
neutral	27.9 %	21.2 %	14.8 %
(strongly) agree	45.7 %	63.2 %	72.9 %

**Figure 9: ‘I support charities on Facebook by ‘liking’ them’**

However, internet behaviour was mentioned less frequently in the interviews than it was in the surveys. In the interviews, there was a bigger focus on engaging in discussions with other people.

### ***Searching for and sharing information on global issues***

The in-depth interviews and surveys both showed that more participants talk with others about problems in the world or international news. More and more participants are going to debates or lectures about problems in the world. The surveys showed that participants follow the media more often (TV, internet, journals, newsletters, books) regarding developments in the world, international cooperation or developmental cooperation. Significant differences can be seen between both before departure and immediately after return, and between immediately after return and six months later. Participants

increasingly search for and share information in the period following return. The tables below show this increase. The JoHo MillenniumDoen! programme has continued to encourage the participants to share their experiences after their return and to remain globally involved, and may have therefore contributed to this increase.

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
(strongly) disagree	6.8 %	2.5 %	1.5 %
neutral	15.0 %	7.6 %	5.1 %
(strongly) agree	78.3 %	89.8 %	93.4 %

Figure 10: 'I speak with other people about global issues or international news'

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
(strongly) disagree	74.9 %	65.3 %	53.9 %
neutral	13.4 %	20.7 %	22.6 %
(strongly) agree	11.6 %	14.0 %	23.5 %

Figure 11: 'I go to debates or lectures about problems in the world'

	Before departure	Following return	Six months after return
Daily	8.1	12.4	18.7
Weekly	37.3	39	46.7
Monthly	19.1	21.8	18.7
Sometimes	25.4	20.1	14.5
Seldom	9.8	6.2	1.5
Never	0.3	0.5	0

Figure 12: 'How often do you read/watch TV, internet, journals (digital or in print), newsletters or books regarding developments in the world, international cooperation or development cooperation?'

The in-depth interviews showed the reason for the increase in following international developments and speaking to other people about them: following their return from their stay in a developing country, participants themselves indicated that they wanted to motivate the social awareness of other people in the Netherlands. They gave presentations, wrote articles and discussed the matters with acquaintances. It is clear from the interviews that a period in a developing country encourages many participants to engage in discussions with other people about differences and interdependence, and that they themselves are taking various initiatives to remain involved.

### *Giving behaviour*

Many participants (80 per cent) indicated in the surveys before their stay abroad that they already supported one or more charities, and six months after their return, that figure increased to 91.5 per cent. The number of charities supported also increased. In the months following their return, the participants also gave more money to charities than they did before their departure, and during their stay in a

developing country, that amount was at its highest. The in-depth interviews also show that participants started donating more money to projects relating to international cooperation. Some participants made new plans to ensure that they actively contribute to projects relating to international cooperation, or to set up new projects. The proportion of participants who only wish to contribute by donating, however, is significantly larger. Instead of remaining active as a volunteer, the focus in the period following return was relatively far more often on the other aspects of socially responsible behaviour: a change in consumer behaviour, energy use and the awareness and contact with other people.

### ***Social behaviour***

Another finding from the interviews was that there is a link between the stay abroad and the development of social and personal competencies: some participants found that they were behaving more sociably towards other people. Once back home, they would ask other people how they were more frequently than before, and they were more aware that they could mean something to people by behaving in a more sociable, friendly way. When carrying out projects abroad, some participants learned that development cooperation is something you do together, meaning they asked the local population lots of questions, paid attention to them and had a friendly attitude. These personal and social competencies then, according to existing research, made up an important part of the international competencies required to communicate with other cultures and under international circumstances well and effectively. These competencies will be discussed further in the chapter on international competencies and the chapter in which the results of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire are discussed.

## **5.4 Findings: International competencies**

Global Citizenship exists in the perception of this study in the form of social awareness and international competencies. This chapter will show the results concerning international competencies.

Within the International Cooperation Research Group, we see the following as part of international competencies:

1. Interpersonal and social competencies
2. Intercultural competencies
3. International professional and academic competencies
4. Language skills

This chapter shows how international competencies have developed in the group of participants studied, who have done an internship or voluntary work in a developing country as part of the MillenniumDoen! programme. All of the various international competencies were assessed via the 360 degrees evaluation. The in-depth interviews focused particularly on the awareness of and attitude towards other cultures and their own culture, knowledge of their own and other cultures, the internal development of skills (desired internal outcome, skills) and the behaviour and actions that ensue from this (desired external outcome). Changes in foreign language skills were also reported by the participants themselves via online surveys.

After the participants returned from abroad, the 360 degrees evaluation was used to ask an average of six people from the immediate social environment of participants how much they feel the young person's international competencies have improved after their return in comparison with the situation before departure. The surveys were completed by parents, friends, friends and lecturers. This involved a total of 3,261 people. They were asked specifically about the changes observed. Respondents were able to choose between the following answers:

5 = Strong increase, 4 = Slight increase, 3 = No difference, 2 = Slight decrease, 1 = Strong decrease

The average per young person was calculated for all of the answers provided by the social environment and, on the basis of this, the average for the entire group of participants was calculated. The 360 degrees evaluation shows that all of the participants achieved a slight increase in their international competencies.

## Results

The most important findings to emerge in relation to international competencies are explained below.

### 5.4.1. Personal and social competencies

Personal and social competencies were evaluated on the basis of the following indicators: broadening of the world view, social awareness, independence/self-reliance, open mindedness, showing initiative, self-confidence/a positive self-image, flexibility/adaptation skills and insight into one's own skills and limitations.

The 360 degree evaluation shows that all of the personal and social competencies measured have improved slightly for the participants. The table below shows the difference between the situation following their return and before the internship or voluntary work abroad. The competencies have been ordered on the basis of the extent of change:

Broadening of the world view	4.46	
Social awareness	4.21	
Independence/self-reliance	4.16	5 = strong increase
Open mindedness	4.08	4 = slight increase
Showing initiative	4.00	3 = no difference
Self-confidence, positive self-image	4.06	2 = slight decrease
Flexibility, ability to adapt	4.03	1 = decrease
Insight into one's own possibilities and limitations	3.98	
Average increase	4.12	

**Figure 13: Changes in personal and social competencies in comparison with the situation before going abroad**

The 360 degrees evaluation shows a slight increase of all measured personal and social competencies. This is even a slight to strong increase for *broadening of the world view* (4.46). The second strongest change took place in relation to *social awareness* (4.21). The average growth as a whole for all of the personal and social competencies evaluated is 4.12. This is statistically significant if the average is compared to a zero-value of 3 (situation before departure).

In the online surveys, the participants themselves also answered a number of questions (before leaving, the month after their return and six months after their return) on the subjects of open-mindedness, flexibility and social initiative. The small increase of these competencies that emerged from the 360 degrees evaluation is confirmed by the participants themselves in the surveys. The participants achieve a statistically significant increase of open-mindedness and social initiative immediately after their return in comparison with the situation before they went abroad, and between the situation before they left and the situation six months after their return. The flexibility of participants also increased significantly during their stay abroad. However, this returned to the original level within six months of their return. This means that, according to the surveys, the changes relating to flexibility and the ability to adapt that the social environment and the participants themselves see immediately after their return are not permanent. What is interesting is that the broadening of the world view and increased social awareness are

the personal and social competencies that changed most, in contrast to the more generic competencies, such as flexibility and insight into one's own possibilities and limitations.

The in-depth interviews show a change in personal and social competencies: improved self-confidence results in independence and taking initiative. As a result, participants show assertiveness and self-reliance in intercultural situations. See subsection 2.5

### 5.4.2. Intercultural competencies

Intercultural competencies consist of four elements: attitude, knowledge, skills and a 'desired' internal outcome (critical cultural awareness, for example). If a person has developed these elements, the result is a 'desired' external outcome: appropriate behaviour and effective communication in intercultural situations.

#### 5.4.2.1 Intercultural attitude

An intercultural attitude consists of respect for and an appreciation of cultural differences and diversity, coping with uncertainty, with unknown and unclear situations, openness, impartiality and the willingness to suspend one's own opinion and raise it for discussion.

The 360 degrees evaluation shows that, according to the social environment of the participants, their intercultural attitude has developed slightly. This manifests itself particularly in respect for and appreciation of cultural differences and diversity (4.21). Participants also find it easier to cope with uncertain, unknown situations (3.99) and enter into them with an open mind (3.93). This attitude has improved slightly according to people close to them. The willingness to suspend one's own opinion and raise it in a discussion has increased too (3.69). However, according to the social environment, this has improved less strongly than the other aspects of an intercultural attitude. The table below shows the average increase of the various aspects of an intercultural attitude in participants, in which the situation following their return is compared with the situation before they left for abroad by the people from the social environment of the participants.

Respect for and appreciation of cultural differences and diversity	4.21	5 = strong increase 4 = slight increase 3 = no difference 2 = slight decrease 1 = decrease
Coping with uncertainty and with unknown and unclear situations	3.99	
Openness, impartiality	3.93	
Willingness to suspend one's own opinion and raise it for discussion	3.69	
Average increase	3.96	

**Figure 14: Changes in the intercultural attitude in comparison with the situation before the participants left for abroad**

#### 5.4.2.2 Intercultural knowledge

Intercultural knowledge involves having a knowledge of other cultures. A knowledge of one's own culture and other cultures is understood to mean an actual knowledge of the differences, similarities, limitations and possibilities offered by one's own culture and the culture of others. Intercultural knowledge also involves knowing how cultural factors influence the behaviour of people and the forms of communication they use.

The in-depth interviews held with the participants following their return showed that their knowledge of their own culture and of other cultures has improved strongly after the internship or voluntary work abroad. They learned a great deal about the actions and habits of people in developing countries and about local customs. They also indicate that they know more about the views of other people and their

outlooks on life. In the interviews, the participants very often compare the culture of the other country with the culture in the Netherlands. Because of this, they look at their own culture from a new perspective and are able to indicate the differences better than they could do previously.

This result, which emerges from the interviews held with the participants, is confirmed by people who are close to them. In comparison with the other international competencies, intercultural knowledge is the outlier in the 360 degrees evaluation. Scored as 4.34 on a scale of 1 to 5, this is characterised as a very high score. According to the social environment of the participants, this is particularly due to their improved knowledge of other cultures (4.47 on average) and also to their improved knowledge of the influence of cultural factors on the behaviour of people (4.21 on average). These averages are shown in the table below.

Knowledge of other cultures	4.47	5 = strong increase 4 = slight increase 3 = no difference 2 = slight decrease 1 = decrease
Knowledge of the influence of cultural factors on the behaviour of and forms of communication used by people	4.20	
Average increase	4.34	

Figure 14: Changes in intercultural knowledge in comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad

#### 5.4.2.3 Intercultural skills

Intercultural skills include having a feel for the situation or context, social and communication skills, self-reflection and an awareness of and coping with one's own feelings. These are the skills that are necessary to be able to communicate effectively and behave properly with other people in an intercultural situation.

The 360 degrees evaluation shows that these intercultural skills have improved, but to a slightly lesser extent than the other competencies evaluated. However, the improvement is still statistically significant. Of the various intercultural skills, the feel for the situation or context, social and communication skills and self-reflection have improved more (3.87) than the awareness of and coping with one's own feelings (3.82), according to the social environment. The table below shows the average change of intercultural skills in the 360 degrees evaluation:

Feel for the situation/context	3.87	5 = strong increase 4 = slight increase 3 = no difference 2 = slight decrease 1 = decrease
Social and communication skills	3.87	
Self-reflection	3.87	
Awareness of and coping with one's own feelings	3.82	
Average increase	3.86	

Figure 15: Changes in intercultural skills in comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad

The in-depth interviews reveal a far stronger picture than that indicated by the people close to the participants. The in-depth interviews show that intercultural skills developed strongly during the stay abroad. If things went wrong abroad, the development project did not progress as expected, the participants became ill, communication was difficult and the participants were confronted with cultural and socio-economic differences, the participants reflected on this afterwards in the interviews. Some participants experienced a crisis during their time abroad and were aware of this. Many participants displayed assertiveness in their behaviour abroad in order to resolve problems, whether their own or others, and adapted to the local context in line with their feel for the situation. Having the ability

to be aware of the above was very much evident in the answers given in the interviews. However, it must be observed here that in the interviews the participants referred mostly to intercultural situations abroad. The interviews yielded little information about how they deal with intercultural situations in the Netherlands. However, they were able to properly self-reflect, and reflect on situations that arose during their time abroad.

#### 5.4.2.4 Desired internal outcome: critical cultural awareness

Having a critical cultural awareness means that a person has the ability to reflect on cultural matters, change perspectives and to put into perspective and broaden the frame of reference on which one's thinking and actions are based. The results show that the critical cultural awareness that participants have improves slightly after an internship or voluntary work abroad.

In the 360 degrees evaluation, the people close to the participants were asked whether they observe that the critical cultural awareness of participants had improved following their return. In comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad, the 360 degrees evaluation shows that participants are generally better capable of putting their own culture into perspective (4.06) and changing perspective, and the ability to put themselves in someone else's position and consider their views (3.97) also improved. This slight increase of critical cultural awareness after a stay abroad is evident in the table below.

The ability to put one's own culture into perspective	4.06	5 = strong increase
The ability to change perspective and put themselves in someone else's position and consider their views	3.97	4 = slight increase
		3 = no difference
		2 = slight decrease
Average increase	4.01	1 = decrease

**Figure 16: Changes in critical cultural awareness in comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad (360-degrees evaluation)**

The online surveys that the participants completed before leaving, following their return and six months after their return reveal that the level of cultural empathy has generally increased. Statistically significant differences were observed between the level of cultural empathy before leaving for abroad and immediately after their return, and also between before leaving for abroad and six months after their return. This means that the increase of cultural empathy is evident in the longer term too.

After their stay abroad, participants find it easier to empathise with the thoughts, feelings and/or actions of individuals with a different cultural background than they would have before leaving for abroad.

#### 5.4.2.5 Desired external outcome: effective behaviour and communication in intercultural situations

Participants are confronted with many new situations during their stay abroad. They respond to this in a certain manner. Based on the in-depth interviews three types of behaviour often emerge: standing up for oneself and for others, adjusting social behaviour in line with local customs and adjusting professional behaviour in the projects in which the participants are involved.

##### 1. Standing up for oneself and for others

Many participants say that they stood up for themselves and for others when they were confronted with something they experienced as unpleasant. This manifests itself in three different ways: Firstly, the participants take action, they do not allow themselves to become bogged down by problems in the

new cultural context, but stand up for themselves via effective behaviour. This overlaps with the second aspect, the ability to independently resolve problems, whether one's own problems or the problems of others. Besides taking action and adopting a problem-solving approach, participants also learn to say no and to adopt a more cautious approach. This was especially true for girls.

## **2. Adjusting social behaviour in line with local customs**

The majority of participants adjust their behaviour in line with local customs in the developing country. For example, they adjust their eating habits, display religious behaviour or wear different clothes.

## **3. Adjusting professional behaviour in line with local circumstances**

During the internship or volunteer projects, many participants chose to adjust their professional behaviour in line with local circumstances. This often had a direct connection with the effectiveness of their own contribution to a project. Other behaviour led to better results than would have been the case if they had continued to behave as they were accustomed to doing back in the Netherlands. For example, if participants were expected to lead a project for one day, communication was adjusted to reflect the various cultures of the other nationalities involved. Adopting the local pace, for example, the pace of construction work, is also mentioned regularly. Learning local games can be crucial too.

Virtually all of the participants are able to speak languages other than Dutch (English, for example).

## **4. No adjustment to the situation**

Despite the above, several participants indicated in the in-depth interviews that they had neglected to do something that they felt would have been effective. One girl, for example, did not dare to ask a question that she had wanted to ask, and, on one occasion, a young vegetarian had intended to eat meat, but ultimately did not. In addition, someone who accepts in advance that it will be necessary to adapt may also notice his/her adjustment to a lesser extent.

### **5.4.3. International professional and academic competencies**

If someone has international professional skills, he/she will be able to pursue his occupation or profession well in an international context. The participants who took part in this research worked in a globalising world during the research or will enter the labour market, in which they will practise a profession that will involve contact and collaboration with people from other cultures, a world in which people from different cultures will have a different vision on how the profession is practised and in which the labour market itself will be becoming more international in nature.

International academic competencies involve a knowledge of the discipline, as taught, learned and studied in other countries, an understanding of the norms and values that are important for certain studies and also a knowledge of international literature. Next to these, the competencies that are needed to be able to act and communicate effectively in an international context, a critical, inquiring attitude, specific professional knowledge and the ability to think conceptually or analytically are also taken into account.

In the 360 degrees evaluation, people close to the participants were asked, after the return of the participants in question, whether they felt that the international professional and academic skills of the participants had improved. The 360 degrees evaluation shows that these skills have improved in comparison with the situation before the participants left for abroad. However, when we compare this with the other international competencies, the professional skills (average: 3.82) and the academic skills (average: 3.64) have improved less than the other competencies, such as the social and personal competencies, intercultural attitude and knowledge. This corresponds with the findings of Hoven & Walenkamp (2015).

According to the social environment, the academic skills improved least (3.64). The influence of the stay abroad on the specific professional knowledge (3.55) and a critical research attitude (3.63) is less visible than the development of all of the other international competencies. Where professional skills are concerned, shows a lower score too: the improvement of career prospects (3.62). Within the professional skills, other people close to the participants identified that the views on the profession (3.97), the problem-solving innovative ability (3.95) and the ability to think outside of the box (3.90) in particular had improved most in this category of international competencies. The average improvement in the international professional and academic competencies, as shown in the table below, is statistically significant.

Professional skills		
Motivation for the study / practising profession	3.81	
Problem-solving, innovative ability	3.95	
Thinking outside of the box	3.90	
Applying knowledge and skills in non-routine situations	3.70	
Interest in an international career	3.77	
Own career prospects	3.62	5 = strong increase
Views on the profession	3.97	4 = slight increase
Opportunities in the labour market	3.83	3 = no difference
Average increase	3.82	2 = slight decrease
Academic skills		1 = decrease
Critical, research attitude	3.63	
Specific knowledge of the contents	3.55	
Conceptual, analytical thinking	3.74	
Average increase	3.64	

**Figure 17: Changes in international professional and academic competencies in comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad (360 degrees evaluation)**

#### 5.4.4. Language skills

We understand language skills to mean reading, speaking, listening and writing proficiently in a foreign language. In the online surveys, a distinction was made between the main language of the country and the local language used in the country or area. The main language is usually the official national language (for example, English in Ghana). The local language in Ghana is the local language that students encounter during their work/internship (Swahili, for example).

### Proficiency of the main language of the country

If we consider the language skills of the entire group on average, the results of the online surveys show that according to the participants themselves, every aspect of their command of the main language of the country improved significantly during the stay abroad. Half a year later, it was found that no statistically significant difference had been achieved for writing skills and reading skills in comparison with the situation before the participants left for abroad. Thus, a permanent change was only achieved for listening skills and speaking skills in the main language of the country.

	Before leaving for abroad	Following return	Six months later	
Listening	3.36	3.67	3.57	1 = very poor
Speaking	3.16	3.60	3.48	2 = poor,
Writing	3.03	3.31	3.19	3 = moderate
Reading	3.29	3.51	3.41	4 = good
				5 = very good

Figure 18: Average language skills of the main language of the country (surveys)

The table below shows how many participants assess their own language skills in the main language of the country as good or very good. Approximately 47-63 percent of participants assess their writing, reading, listening and speaking skills in the main language of the country as good to very good. By the end of their stay abroad, participants believed that this had improved to 58-72 per cent. Six months after their return, the percentage of participants that assess themselves as good to very good in the main language had fallen to 53-66 per cent

	Before leaving for abroad	Following return	Six months later	
Listening	63.2	71.3	66.0	1 = very poor
Speaking	54.5	66.7	61.7	2 = poor,
Writing	47.3	58.3	52.7	3 = moderate
Reading	59.0	67.2	61.1	4 = good
				5 = very good

Figure 19: Percentage of people that considers their language skills of the main language of the country as good or very good

### Proficiency of the local language of the country/area

The table below shows changes of the average language skills of the local language of the country/area based on self-reported answers in the surveys. The majority of the participants indicated before and after their stay abroad that they had a poor to very poor command of the local language. However, slight improvements of some aspects are reported. The increase of listening and speaking skills in the local language are statistically significant. After six months, the participants are still significantly better at listening and speaking in the local language than they were before they left for abroad, but the averages of 1.93 and 1.94 on a scale of 1 to 5 indicate a poor command of the language nonetheless. By contrast, barely any differences at all are evident in the averages for writing and reading skills. No statistically significant differences apply between before leaving, following return or six months after return.

	Before leaving for abroad	Following return	Six months later	
Listening	1.66	1.90	1.93	1 = very poor
Speaking	1.61	1.99	1.94	2 = poor,
Writing	1.53	1.49	1.55	3 = moderate
Reading	1.64	1.57	1.65	4 = good
				5 = very good

Figure 20: Average language skills of the local language of the country/area (surveys)

Therefore, the general conclusion that emerges from the online surveys is that speaking and listening skills in foreign languages have improved. After the participants had returned from abroad, the 360 degrees evaluation was also used to ask the Dutch social environment (parents, friends, friends and lecturers) for their opinions on the language skills of the participants. The social environment also sees a particular change where speaking and listening skills are concerned. According to the social environment, these skills have improved slightly since the participants returned from abroad. Reading and writing skills in a foreign language have improved less in comparison with listening and speaking skills. However, they see an improvement here too.

Speaking skills in a foreign language	3.98	
Listening skills in a foreign language	3.96	5 = strong increase
Reading skills in a foreign language	3.55	4 = slight increase
Writing skills in a foreign language	3.65	3 = no difference
		2 = slight decrease
		1 = strong decrease
Average increase	3.79	

Figure 21: Change in language skills in comparison with the situation before leaving for abroad (360 degree evaluation)

In conclusion, both the participants themselves and the people around them indicate an improvement in speaking and listening skills in foreign languages. According to the social environment, reading and writing skills have improved too. However, the survey completed by the participants show that foreign reading and writing skills after 6 months are not significantly different to the situation before they left for abroad.

### Conclusion on international competencies

International competencies consist of personal and social competencies, intercultural competencies, international professional and academic competencies and language knowledge. The results of the 360 degrees evaluations, online surveys and in-depth interviews show that almost all of the international competencies possessed by participants have improved after an internship or voluntary work in a developing country. The most significant growth was in the area of intercultural competencies: intercultural attitude, knowledge, behaviour and skills. Following their stay abroad, the personal and social competencies of participants were shown to have grown too. Relatively speaking, professional and academic skills grew the least. Foreign language listening and speaking skills improved. However, the same did not apply for reading skills and writing skills.

## 5.5 Results of the multicultural personality questionnaire

The multicultural personality questionnaire was included in the online surveys that participants completed themselves. They were able to indicate whether they felt that each of the statements applied to them on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not applicable at all, 5 = completely applicable).

Five categories of qualities that improve multicultural effectiveness can be distinguished: flexibility, cultural empathy open-mindedness, social initiative and emotional stability (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002)

	Before leaving	Following return	Six months after return
	N= 777	N= 628	N= 332
Flexibility	3.49	3.57	3.53
Cultural empathy	4.12	4.17	4.18
Open-mindedness	3.83	3.93	3.96
Social initiative	3.68	3.74	3.74
Emotional stability	3.48	3.59	3.52
Total multicultural effectiveness	3.72	3.80	3.79

Figure 22: Results of the multicultural personality questionnaire (MPV)

If we consider the score for **multicultural effectiveness** as a whole, we see that participants achieve quite high scores before they leave for abroad: 3.72 on a scale of 1 to 5. After completing the internship or voluntary work abroad, this score has increased to 3.80. Six months later, this score is still similar: 3.79. In general, the data enable us to conclude that multicultural effectiveness has improved significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) during the stay abroad and this remained stable in the period following their return. How the participants developed per category will be discussed in the rest of this subsection. The results were analysed in two different ways. Firstly, by looking at the high scores: on which indicators of flexibility do the participants score very well? Secondly, by having a closer look at the areas in which the greatest growth is achieved: on which aspects of each category do the participants score better following their return?

### Flexibility

Before the participants left to do an internship or voluntary work in the developing country, flexibility had an average score of 3.49 on a scale of 1 to 5. Following their return, the average had increased to 3.57. This is a statistically significant difference. In other words, participants who have returned from voluntary work/an internship in a developing country are significantly more flexible immediately following their return than they are before they leave for abroad.

The participants already achieve very high scores on average for three indicators before they leave for abroad. They feel that they are able to switch easily from one activity to another, indicate that they seek out challenges and enjoy unusual experiences. Surveys carried out following their return from abroad show that they enjoy these challenges and experiences even more. The participants achieved very low scores on the statements formulated negatively before leaving for abroad: the participants do not recognise themselves in a dislike of travel or the avoidance of adventure either.

The following aspects have increased most on average among the participants: they feel less uneasy in a different culture, enjoy primitive holidays more, enjoy working alone less and have fewer fixed habits. In addition, more participants have a need for change and avoid adventure less.

This improvement in flexibility, which the participants indicated themselves in the surveys, is reflected in the results of the 360 degrees evaluation too. After the participants returned from their internships or voluntary work in a developing country, the people from their social environment also observed a slight increase of flexibility, including a slight increase of the number of participants with the ability to cope with uncertain situations, thinking outside of the box, the ability to solve problems innovatively and apply knowledge in non-routine situations.

The second category in the multicultural personality questionnaire is **Cultural Empathy**. Results show that participants score significantly higher on cultural empathy in comparison with the situation before they left for abroad (4.12), both soon after their return (4.17) and six months after their return (4.18) from voluntary work or an internship abroad.

The participants score highest on cultural empathy at all evaluation moments in comparison with the other four categories from the multicultural personality questionnaire.

Even before leaving for abroad, the participants indicate that they are good at understanding the feelings of other people, that they try to understand the behaviour of others, that they empathise with others and that they enjoy the stories of other people. These aspects increased just very slightly after returning from their stay abroad. This can easily be explained by their favourable starting position.

The biggest improvements were achieved by participants regarding their insight into human nature, observing facial expressions, asking personal questions, remembering what others say, and recognizing when someone is experiencing difficulties and enjoy immersing themselves in other people. As such, this confirms the results of the 360 degrees evaluation, in which individuals from the social environment of the participants indicate that these participants are better after their return to put themselves in the position of others and understand their views.

The third category of the multicultural personality questionnaire is **Open-mindedness**.

Before leaving for an internship or voluntary work in a developing country, open-mindedness achieved an average of 3.83 on a scale of 1 to 5 in the group studied. After cultural empathy, open-mindedness is the category in which the participants achieved the highest scores in the multicultural personality questionnaire. After their return, the average increased significantly to 3.93 and the score was 3.96 after half a year. The differences are statistically significant between before leaving for abroad and following the return from abroad on the one hand and before leaving for abroad and six months after the return on the other hand. The average degree of open-mindedness was found to be the same for this group of participants immediately after their return and half a year later.

The participants scored high on open-mindedness even before their stay abroad. They have a strong interest in other cultures, are curious, have a broad interest and are open to new ideas. Following their return, this has grown and even more six months after their return.

The greatest growth in open-mindedness is evident in relation to the ability of participants to put their own culture into perspective, lead the way in social change, come up with solutions to problems, have a feel of what is appropriate in another culture and find it easy to start a new life. The participants have grown in all of these aspects after their return from abroad and in the months following their return. The strongest improvements were evident in the participants who achieved relatively low scores before leaving for abroad. This confirms the findings of other methods that have been used. According to the 360 degrees evaluation, open-mindedness increased slightly, including broadening of the world view,

being less biased, increased knowledge of and appreciation for other and having the ability to put one's own culture into perspective. The ability to put one's own culture into perspective was noticed in the in-depth interviews too.

**Social initiative.** The participants are significantly more inclined to actively take part in social situations and to show initiative after spending a period of time abroad. Prior to their stay abroad, the average score was 3.68. This was 3.74 after their return and 3.74 six months after their return. Therefore, the improvement achieved is stable.

The qualities that were already often evident prior to the internship/work abroad were showing initiative, finding it easy to establish contacts, the ability to manage in social situations and enjoying action. These aspects of social initiative had increased slightly after the participants returned from abroad.

What is striking is that more participants are inclined to speak out following their return and they are usually the driving force behind developments. It also appears that more participants take the lead.

Considering all of the categories in the multicultural personality questionnaire, the participants achieved the lowest relative score for **Emotional Stability**. Before leaving to do the internship/voluntary work abroad, the average is 3.48. After their return, this average increases to 3.59 and six months after return it is 3.52. Statistical significance is limited to the difference between before leaving for abroad and following return. Half a year after their return, emotional stability is back at the same level as before leaving for abroad on average. As such, no sustainable growth is evident in this field. It is important to stress that the above applies to the average for every aspect of emotional stability. In practice, some aspects have improved and some have worsened.

In general, the participants generally achieve a reasonably neutral score for the statements that relate to emotional stability. Positive outliers, which were already present prior to the internship/voluntary work and that had also improved a little following their return are resilience and finding solutions to every problem, having more self-confidence and suffering less due to conflicts with others.

### 5.6 Social awareness and international competencies in the longer term from the point of view of the participant

Where social awareness and international competencies are concerned, the second series of interviews - which involved a selection of participants and took place approximately six months to a year after the return of the participants in question - show that the participants are generally more aware of the socio-economic differences that exist in the world and in terms of cultural diversity (different customs and behaviour). Knowledge and awareness of these issues have improved.

As a result, many participants developed more skills in relation to international competencies (internal change). For example, seeing one's own culture through the eyes of someone from a different culture or being able to put one's own living conditions and wealth into perspective. At the same time, the international experience gained has often resulted in an improvement in self-confidence, assertiveness and self-reliance. As a result of that participants are more inclined to show initiative (external change). This is in line with the results achieved for the multicultural personality questionnaire. This relates to social initiative in areas such as travel, study choice and standing up for one's own opinions.

While in the weeks directly after their return from abroad the participants were particularly intending to display socially responsible behaviour by using less water, sharing more information with other people, using less energy and displaying different consumption behaviour, this was less evident in the

interviews (half) a year later. Participants said, for example, that they were intending to deliver more presentations or to continue their involvement in other activities organised by the World Supporter Platform of JoHo. However, as their normal lives resumed, participants often found that they had less time for these activities than expected and also thought about them less often than expected. Many participants wanted to do (even) more than they actually did in practice. So, while the online questionnaires that the participants themselves completed before leaving for abroad, following their return and six months after their return show that socially aware behaviour was greater six months after their return than immediately after their return, this extra improvement is not evident from the interviews held with the participants approximately six months after their return. However, it can be concluded from the interviews that the level of socially responsible behaviour did strongly improve on average following their return in comparison with the situation before they left for abroad. This behaviour was still observed a (half) year later and is a stable result of the stay abroad and the follow up activities that were stimulated by JoHo. This result corresponds with the results that emerge from the surveys.

Based on the final evaluations, a distinction can be made between participants who primarily see the programme as a life experience that made them stronger and more internationally competent, and want to continue to travel and communicate in different cultures on the one hand and, on the other hand, participants who primarily became more aware of socio-economic differences and global issues in the world after their return from abroad and who will continue to raise awareness of these issues, and will keep taking actions themselves to improve the situation elsewhere. A few young participants who found (their contribution to) the particular projects in developing countries they had visited ineffective or difficult have turned their backs on international collaboration and have chosen to focus on their own personal growth instead. What essentially characterises both groups of participants is the ability they have developed to look through someone else's eyes at their own culture and living conditions in the Netherlands and to use their improved self-confidence to live a more socially aware life and/or engage in international activities after their return from abroad.



## 6. Conclusion

Based on this research, it can be concluded that voluntary work or an internship in a developing country is linked to the development of global citizenship among young people. This is evident from surveys that participants completed before leaving for abroad, following their return and six months after their return, the in-depth interviews held with the participants following their return and the feedback that parents and other people from the close environment have given. This study suggest that almost all international competencies of participants have improved after an internship or voluntary work in a developing country. Reading and writing skills in the local language of the area in question were the only competencies not to have improved. The most significant growth was shown to have taken place in the area of intercultural competencies: attitude, knowledge, skills and behaviour. Following their stay abroad, it was also found that participants's personal and social competencies had improved. Professional and academic skills grew the least. An improvement is also evident in multicultural effectiveness. Following their return from voluntary work or an internship in a developing country, an increase in a socially aware attitude and behaviour among the participants could also be observed. The results also suggest that most changes still apply six months after return. What essentially characterises the participants according to the in-depth interviews is the ability they have developed to look through someone else's eyes at their own culture and living conditions in the Netherlands and to use their improved self-confidence to live a more socially aware life and/or engage in international activities after their return from abroad.

The extent to which the improvement in international competencies and socially involved attitude and behaviour are a direct effect of the stay abroad cannot be established because many other factors could play a role too. However, it can be observed that significant differences have been demonstrated between the time before participants leave for abroad and the time following their return.

## 7. Discussion

This research on the development of global citizenship has a stronger methodological basis than previous research on international competencies and social awareness, due to two aspects: the number of participants was higher and a combination of research methods was used.

The size of the group is the first important aspect. Earlier research focused on small groups, such as school classes, while this study involved hundreds of young people. This meant that more statistical test were possible and that random results could be ruled out. Analysing responses of a larger group of people improves the reliability of research. In this research domain, following a group of this size for four years is rare and has yielded data that are very valuable.

In addition, a number of research methods were used: surveys that the participants completed themselves, surveys completed by people in the immediate social environment of the participants and in-depth interviews with participants. As a result, the validity of the research increased: the same topics have been researched in a number of different ways and the results have been compared with each other. Because of this, a better insight is attained into what global citizenship is, what it means and what influence a stay abroad has on this process.

Despite the above points, it continues to be difficult to draw cause-effect conclusions. There are, after all, many circumstances that define and explain a person's behaviour and attitude. Therefore it is not possible to attribute the changes occurring in global citizenship to a stay abroad by definition. At the

very most, we can say that a *association* has been demonstrated between work and internship abroad and the development of global citizenship, but not that this period is *the cause* of the change and that the change is *the effect* of it. Although differences can be observed between before and after this period, a *causal* relationship is not necessarily the case here.

This research did not involve a control group. It can be assumed that people between the ages of 14 and 26 always develop in many ways because they grow older. Because there was no control group, we do not know whether young people who did not go abroad developed global citizenship too.

It is also important to observe that behavioural change is inherent to the programme, which is aimed at precisely that change. The positive results, as measured in this study, may, however, be somewhat biased in the sense that the participants might at times be inclined to give desirable answers.

Some participants completed the surveys on the same day they returned from abroad, while other participants only completed it a number of weeks or months later. The picture may be a little distorted as a result. It is difficult for someone who has just returned from abroad to indicate how often he/she attends lectures and buys Fairtrade products if he/she has had little opportunity to do either yet. With this in mind, the second evaluation, which took place a number of months after the participants had returned, is a good tool for the more precise identification of the above. However, the group of respondents that completed the final evaluation is smaller.

There is another chance that participants gave socially desirable answers. After participants had completed the baseline measurement, they were presented with the same questions in the interim evaluation and the final evaluation. Memory effects could start to play a role, for example: respondents still remember which answers they gave before, which has an unpredictable influence on the new questions. In addition, the direct prior evaluation and follow-up evaluation carried out on the same person will result in response bias. In other words, respondents will form an impression of the objective for the research and base their answers on this impression. The same applied for the second series of interviews. This problem has been recognised by also addressing questions to people close to the participants via the 360 degrees evaluation. In this way, it became possible to assess whether or not, and how, participants had developed from the perspective of the participants themselves and of others.

The programme was subject to a certain level of respondent drop-out. Significantly fewer final evaluations were completed than interim evaluations. The entire group of 1000 participants did not complete all of the surveys. It cannot be ruled out that enthusiastic participants continued to form part of the research. The same applies for the interviews. Although efforts were made to safeguard representativeness for the group, it is possible that the participants who continued to be committed to global citizenship took part in the second series of interviews, resulting in a positive bias.

It cannot be ruled out that background characteristics of participants influenced the presence and development of global citizenship. In a follow-up publication, correlations with the gender, education, age and education of the parents of the participants, amongst other things, will feature too.

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## WORD OF GRATITUDE

The JoHo Foundation was extremely serious about achieving the success it had envisaged for the programme. It asked the International Cooperation Research Group of The Hague University of Applied Sciences to help design and implement research on the effectiveness of the MillenniumDoen! programme. This was a great opportunity for the Research Group, because many of the thousand young people took part in the research as a compulsory component of the programme. Thanks to major efforts on the part of JoHo, a huge amount of data were collected. The analysis of the data yielded very important knowledge for the various parties. For JoHo and the Directorate-General for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Development Cooperation, this knowledge pertained to the success of the programme and the lessons that can be learned from it. These lessons were added to the knowledge that the International Cooperation Research Group is developing. In addition to the formal, very detailed, final outcome report that JoHo produced about the programme for the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and this chapter about the research, JoHo and the Research Group will join forces to publish a book about the research, which will enable others to share in the overwhelming wealth of data and findings obtained. Our huge appreciation and thanks go out to JoHo staff, volunteers and interns for the commitment, involvement and professionalism they showed when taking part in the research. Furthermore, we would like to thank Ingrid Arts, student Nutrition and Dietetics at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, for her contribution.

Jos Walenkamp

## REFLECTION

For over 20 years, JoHo is a development agency with worldwide stores and websites, where people and organisations are encouraged and assisted in talent development and international cooperation.

Between 2011 and 2015, an incentive program ("MillenniumDoen!") was run in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as one of the many JoHo activities. In this program youth and students participated in a preparatory course, an internship or volunteering period abroad and a trajectory of sustained commitment after their return.

For an accurate and objective measurement of program effects on global citizen behaviour and international skills of young participants, JoHo cooperated with the Research Group International Cooperation of The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

JoHo experienced this cooperation as instructive and very pleasant. JoHo endorses the fact that the conducted research has been remarkable compared with previous studies, particularly in the size of the studied group of young people, the volume of data obtained, the period of research and the application of mixed method research instruments. Mid-2015, the MillenniumDoen! program was completed and a comprehensive final outcome report was provided to the ministry to give insight in actual program effects.

Of course, the growth of international mobility continues. Obtaining international experience by young people and students is becoming a central part of internationalisation policies of various ministries and education institutes. Nowadays, life long learning, and working on international competencies and skills, becomes part of everyone's career.

JoHo therefore looks forward to continuing the productive cooperation with The Hague University and the Research Group. JoHo also hopes to involve other stakeholders, such as government departments, international offices and internship agencies, in the application of newly acquired international competencies and skills in educational and career opportunities...changing all of us into global citizens.

Many thanks to the dedicated professionals of the Research Group!

Koert Hommel

2011-2015 Program Manager MillenniumDoen! and JoHo World Supporter