

Interview with ISP (International Security Partners)

Hi, my name is Aniek and I'm studying International Business. I plan to go abroad for my studies! I prepared some questions:

What is International Security Partners?

ISP is an organization that supports schools and universities with regard to security and risks abroad. Students may have to deal with incidents or have questions about their personal security. We offer support by answering questions or offering support so that the situation can be dealt with in a good way.

Why is it so important to prepare well for a trip abroad?

Often we assume everything is the same as in our home country, we think we know it all. But when you travel abroad, you often end up in a different situation, a different environment, different facilities and also other safety risks. It is important to prepare yourself well for this so that you know what to expect and in case something happens, you know how to act and which authorities to contact in the country of destination.



What has COVID-19 changed about travelling abroad?

Before COVID-19, certain things were very self-evident. For example, it was logical that there was always a plane flying and that the embassies and insurance companies could be reached. The COVID-19 situation taught us that situations can arise in which the self-evident facilities are not always available. This is an extra reason to prepare well for your trip abroad.

When I prepare myself for my journey, what kind of information do I prepare?

It is important to prepare information in advance. Which documents do you need for that country? What are you allowed to take with you? What are the risks in that country? Do you need to take additional security measures? It may also be that there are other health risks of which we have no to little knowledge. These could be risks of certain diseases that are or more prevalent in the country of destination than in your home country, but also because it is a different area there. For example altitude sickness, or risks such as earthquakes and floods.

When I travel, what kind of information do I need to bring with me?

It is important to have information about important contact details and emergency numbers (when there is an acute emergency, you should have the emergency number of the country where you are). There are several apps for your mobile device where you get information on how to act in certain situations, as well as tips and important numbers of consulates and embassies. It is important to save your travel details, your travel insurance details plus the contact details of the people at home and the educational institution.

Can you give some examples of requests for help you receive?

These can be situations where people seek advice on how to act in a certain situation. For example the COVID-19 situation: do I have to leave the country, or can I stay? Or situations in which people want to return quickly, for example due to family circumstances, and ask for advice on how to do this in a safe way, or if they can travel safely in the country. But also be incidents such as an accident, or in when you are robbed, or when important property has been stolen. Or illness, a traveling companion that is ill, all these kinds of situations can arise in which you can ask us for advice.

Are there situations in which ISP can't immediately offer a solution?

We don't have an office in every country nor can we be immediately present. We make use of an international network that can offer help. We can also make a connection between certain agencies and students. But it is not the case that we can directly offer the solution everywhere in the form of a real physical solution. An example of this is that during COVID-19 almost no planes were flying and certain countries were in lockdown, we can't arrange that planes fly. In that case we will look for connections with embassies, with the educational institute but especially with you and your home front to find out what is the best solution under the given circumstances, so that your personal safety is guaranteed in the best way.