



# UG's Branch campus in Yantai, China: a continuing process...

Janny de Jong,  
 University of Groningen

NIAD-QE University Quality Assurance Forum & Open Seminar 2018  
 'Universities Crossing Borders'

# Outline

## **1. Why did the University of Groningen decide to start a branch university in Yantai?**

- Aims and prospects

## **2. What were the challenges**

- Financial strategy and financial plan
- Staffing
- Legal issues

## **3. Why and when was the plan withdrawn, to be continued on a smaller scale?**

## **4. Conclusion**

# 1. Why did the University of Groningen decide to start a branch university in Yantai?



25 March 2015, signing of the Tripartite agreement, Shanghai

# Memorandum of agreement

Appendix 1

## **TRIPARTITE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

**BETWEEN**

**CHINA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY  
(BEIJING, CHINA)**

**UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN  
(GRONINGEN, THE NETHERLAND)**

**AND**

**YANTAI MUNICIPAL PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT  
(SHANDONG PROVINCE, CHINA)**

**MARCH 25, 2015**

# In Groningen:

## University of Groningen to start first Dutch branch campus in China

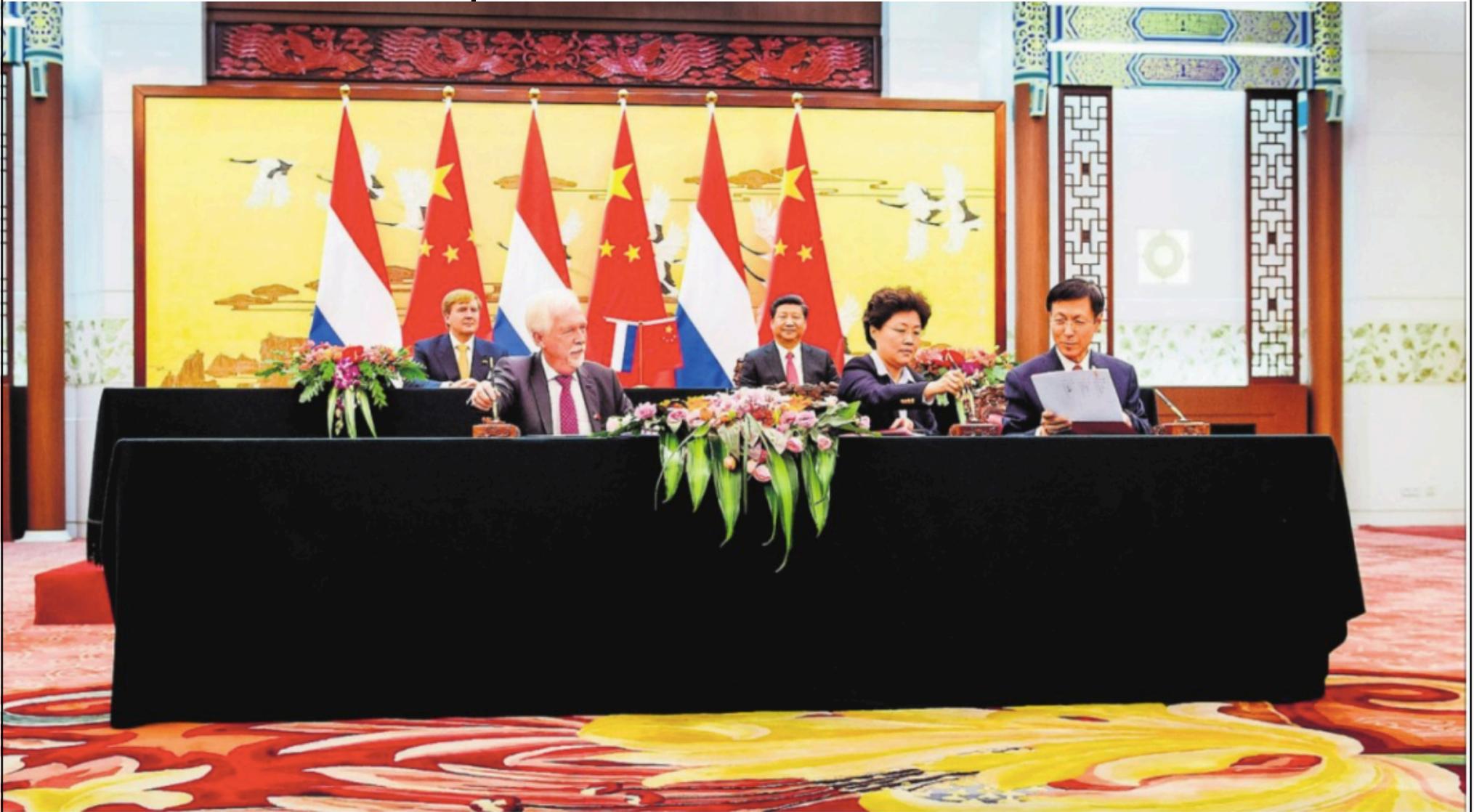
25 March 2015



Academy building Yantai

- > June 2015: UG's University Council agrees with continuation of the negotiations
- > For issuing Dutch diploma's overseas the law on Higher education needs to be changed, this takes time.

26 October 2015, signing of the financial agreement, in the presence of the Dutch King and the Chinese president



# Why?

- > Knowledge on a global level
- > Global issues demand global responses  
(climate change, conflicts, financial crises)
- > But then:
- > Why China?

# China

- › Chinese Policy to attract international universities. 10 designated cities. Ningbo-Nottingham was first branch campus in China.
- › Yantai eager to attract a top university. Highly-qualified personnel needed for factories and laboratories.
- › Finances: costs for reconstruction and equipment of the campus, ( 300 million euro) rent, housing, supporting staff, costs of gas and electricity to be paid by Chinese partners

# Promoting the project



# Promoting the project

- Take a look at our values:
- › Freedom of expression, free access to internet, 'our values'
  - › Clean air, nice climate
  - › Beautiful campus, great facilities, inclusive community
  - › Business prospects

MORE VIDEOS



2:09 / 3:40



YouTube



# "why does the UG go to China?"

Waarom gaat de RUG naar China?



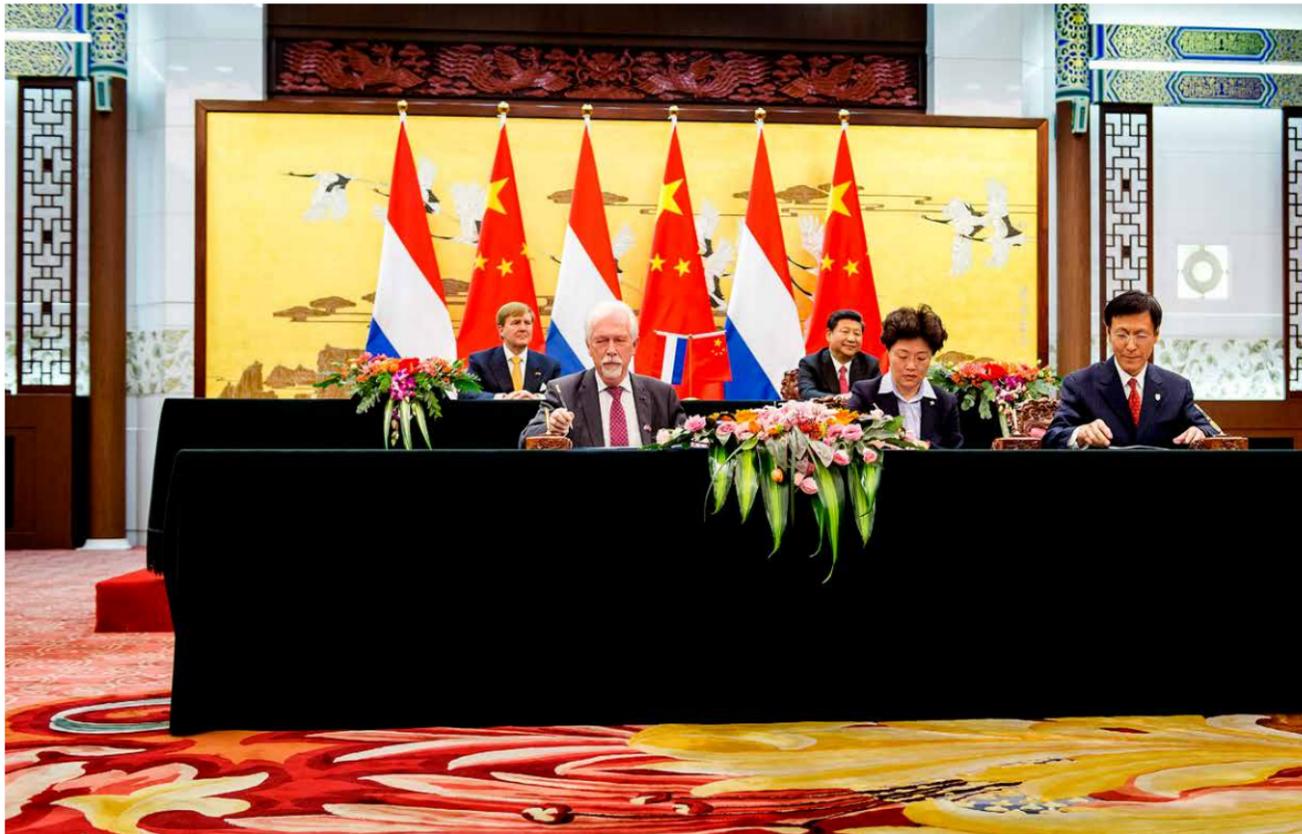
[https://youtu.be/7XOJEESP\\_B](https://youtu.be/7XOJEESP_B)

MORE VIDEOS ..om de internationale reputatie verder uit te bouwen.

0:51 / 2:01

YouTube

# Brochure on collaboration University of Groningen with Chinese partners



On 26 October 2015 Sibrand Poppema and Ke Bingsheng, the Presidents of the University of Groningen and China Agricultural University respectively, and Mayor Zhang Yongxia of Yantai signed the financial agreement to establish the University of Groningen Yantai (UGY). King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands and President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China attended the ceremony. The University of Groningen wants to be the first Dutch university to open a branch campus in China.

[https://www.rug.nl/about-us/internationalization/brochure-eng\\_def.pdf](https://www.rug.nl/about-us/internationalization/brochure-eng_def.pdf)

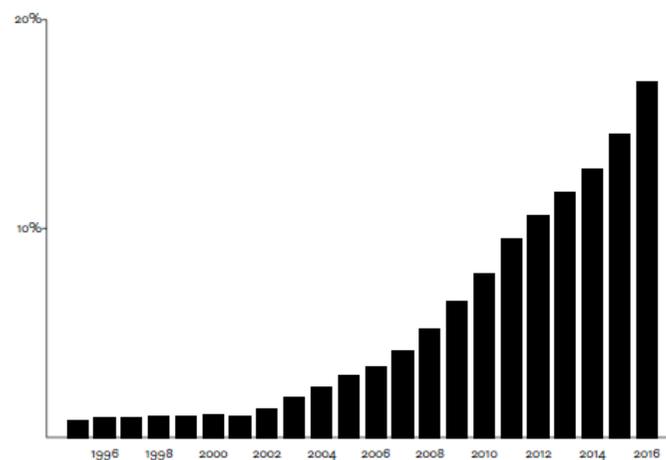
# Groningen: “Internationalization is essential”

History of an international university



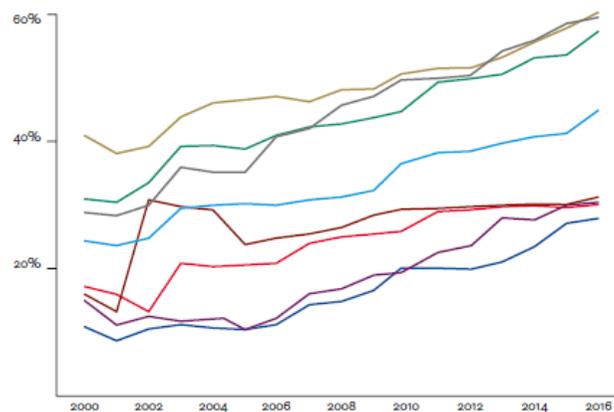
In August 2014 the University of Groningen celebrated its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The entire month was filled with festivities. Attention was also drawn to the fact that the UG has had an international orientation right from the start. Many of the first students and professors came from outside the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the speed at which internationalization is currently taking place at this university is staggering. And essential.

### Foreign Bachelor's and Master's Degree Students at the UG



### International Collaboration is a Global Trend

Percentage of own research carried out in collaboration with international partners.



- Fudan University
- Harvard University
- National University of Singapore
- Peking University
- Shanghai Jiaotong University
- Tsinghua University
- University of Groningen
- University of Oxford

## Programme preferences

This reports looks specifically at the top fifteen countries of origin of international degree students enrolled in Dutch higher education, in 2016–17. Together these nationalities represent 64% of all 80,000+ international degree students in the Netherlands. Neighbouring countries (Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom), southern and eastern European countries, and Asian countries constitute the most important regions of origin, which is as such reflected in the top fifteen.

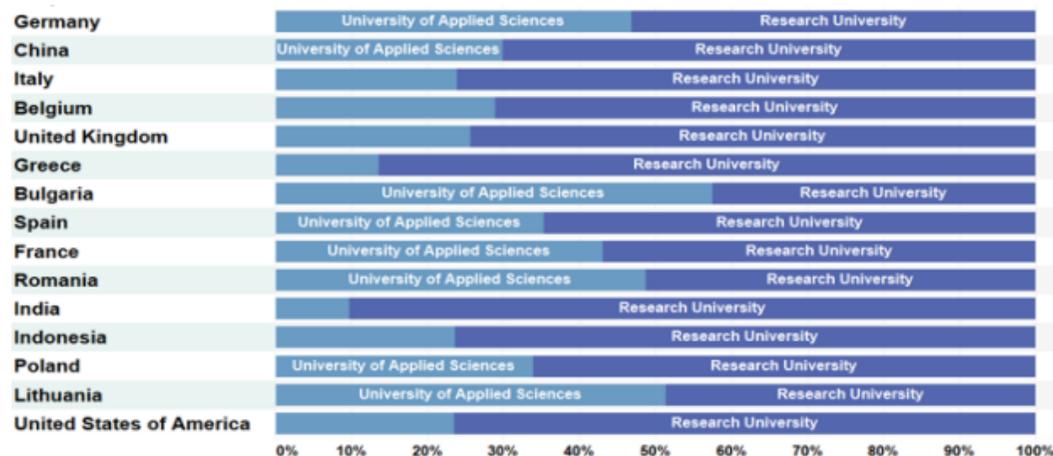


Figure 2: Percentage share of international degree students enrolled in universities of applied sciences and research universities, for the top 15 nationalities enrolled in the Netherlands 2016–17.

<https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/international-degree-students-in-the-netherlands-a-regional-analysis.pdf>

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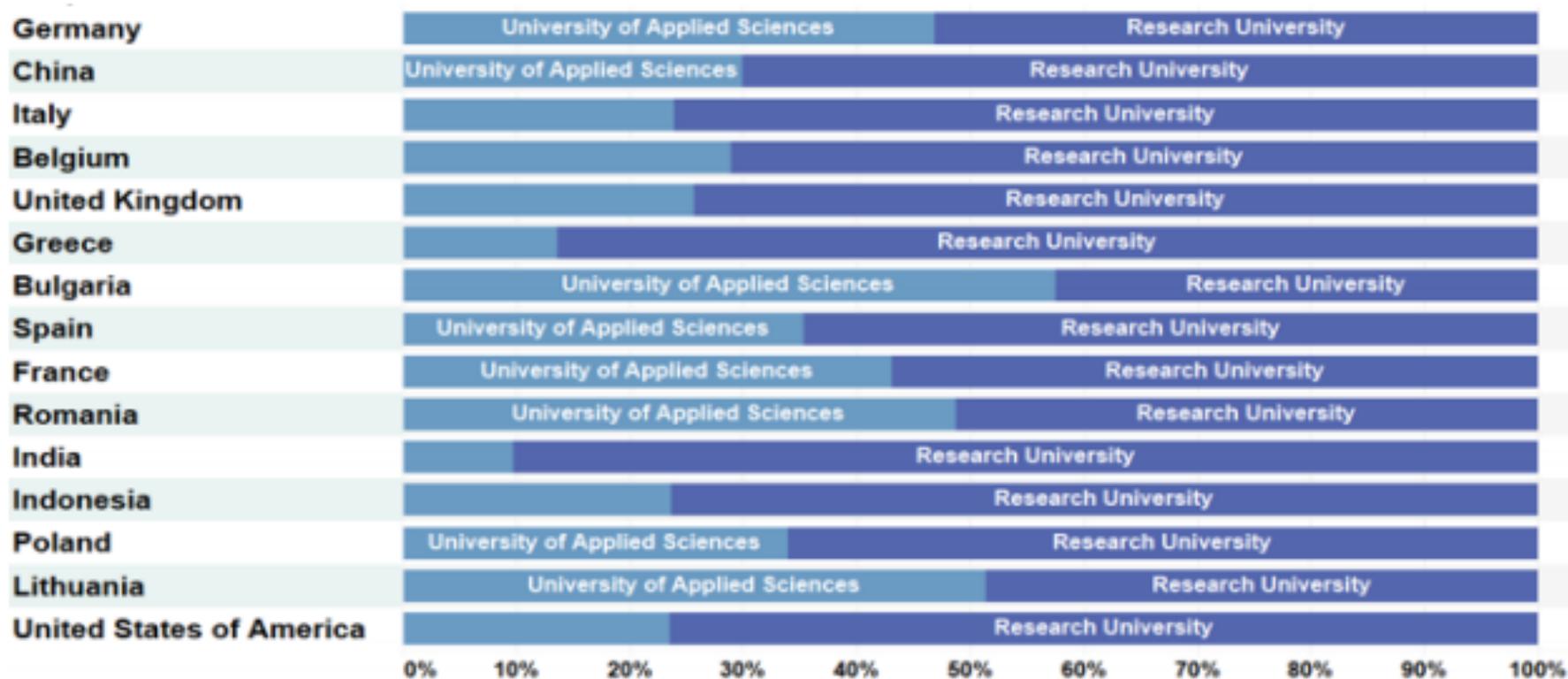


Figure 2: Percentage share of international degree students enrolled in universities of applied sciences and research universities, for the top 15 nationalities enrolled in the Netherlands 2016–17.

# Where do students from Asia study in the Netherlands?

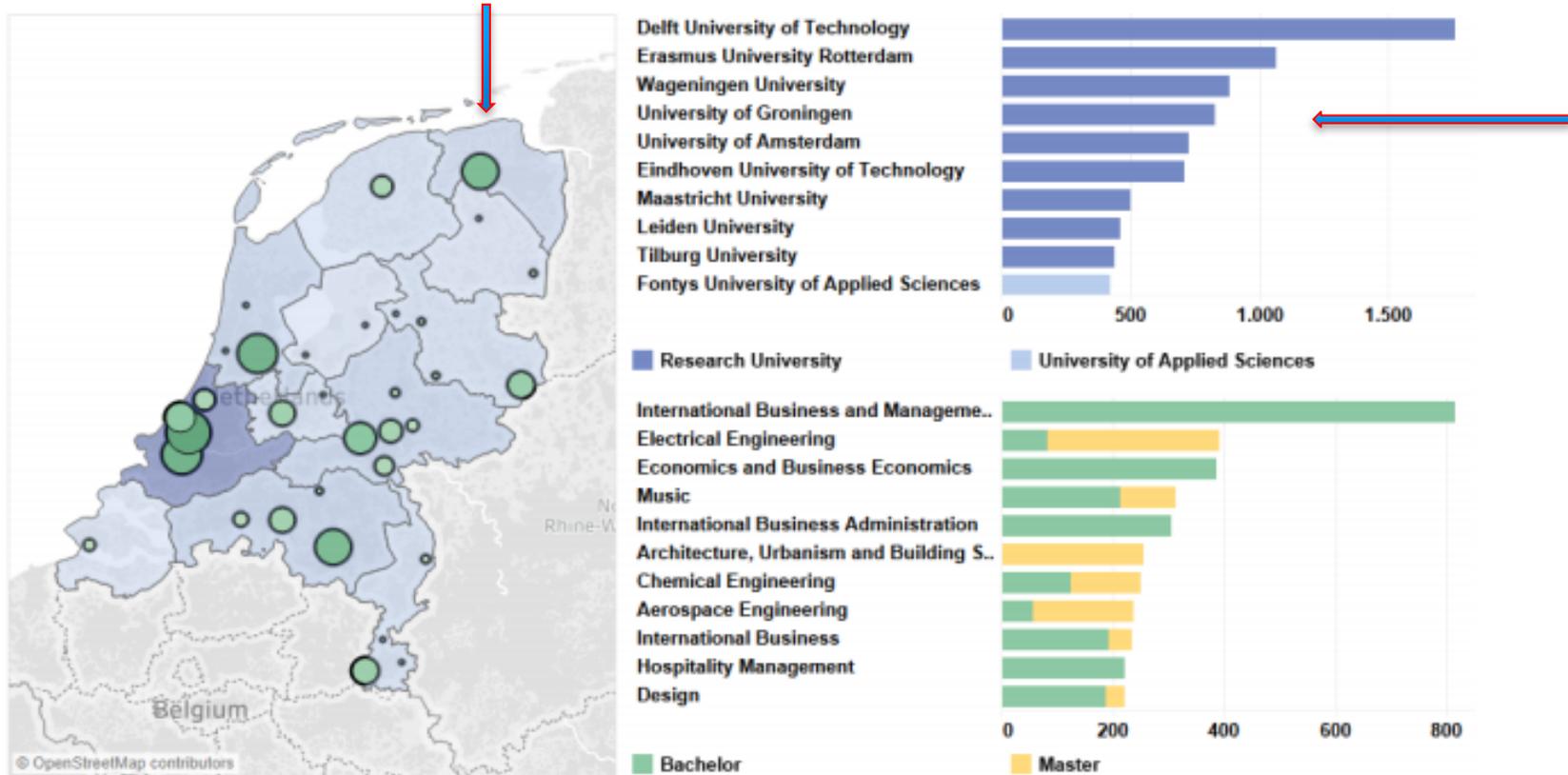
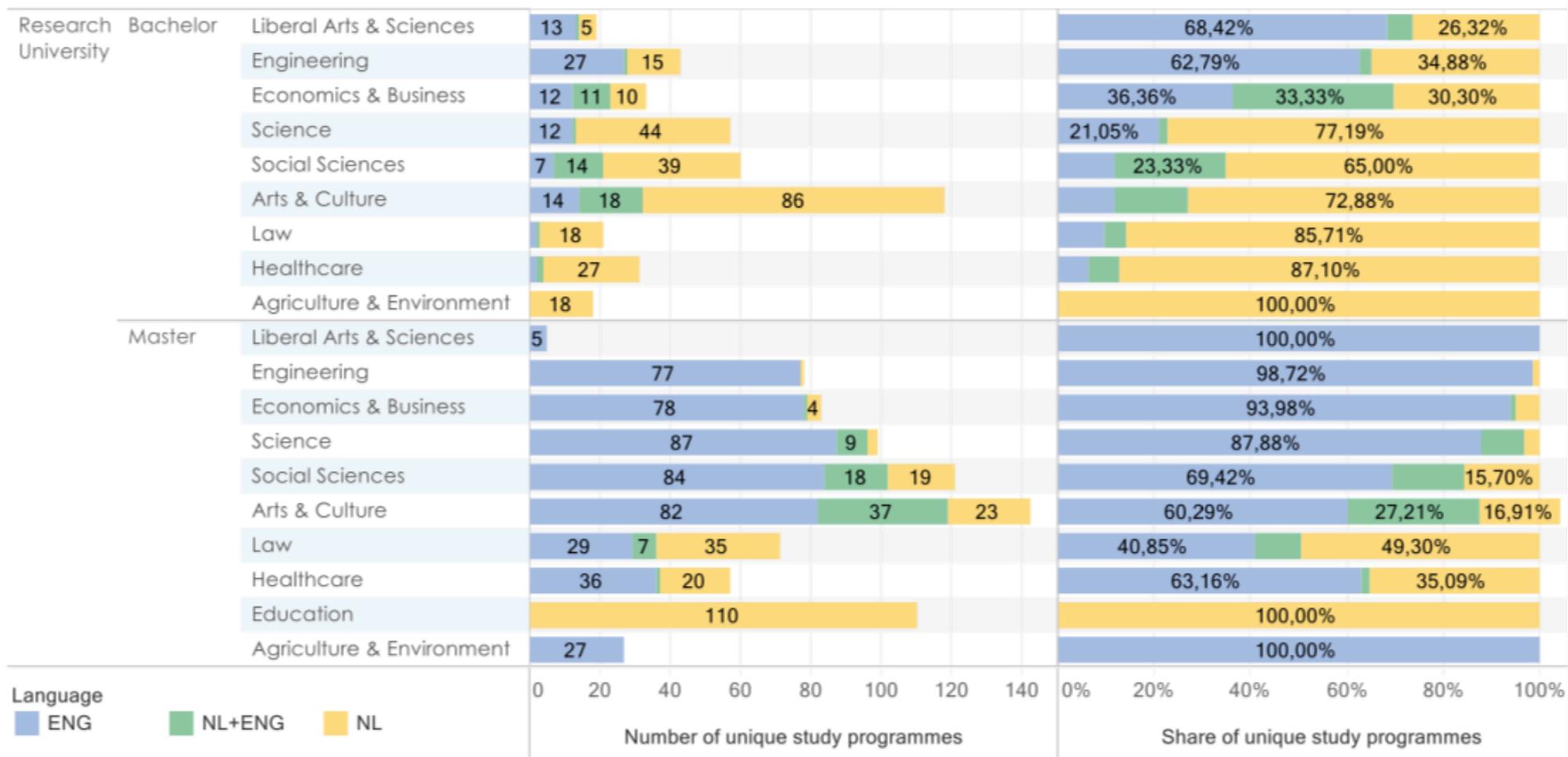


Figure 9: Degree students from Asia in the Netherlands higher education, 2016–17.

The technical universities of Delft, Wageningen and Eindhoven feature prominently among the most popular institutions, as do the universities of Rotterdam, Groningen and Amsterdam – mainly for Business. Due to their preference for technically oriented programmes, international students from Asia contribute significantly to achieving the goals of the *Techniekpact*.<sup>9</sup>

## New enrolments International degree students/type of institution/type of education



**Visual 3:** Number and share of new enrolments from international degree students, per type of institution, and type of education in 2017-2018.

<https://www.nuffic.nl>

# Sibrand Poppema, president UG:

- › “It will be a **broadly-based university** with **research-intensive teaching** at the same high level as at the UG.
- › **Top quality research facilities** will generate opportunities for fundamental research and for collaboration with the business world.
- › It will be an **international campus**, with researchers and students from **China**, the **Netherlands** and **the rest of the world**”

introduction brochure

# Planning of a broad research university

- › Start: 4 Bachelor's programmes and 2 Master's programmes ( FSE, Spatial Sciences).
  - Bachelor's degree programmes in Chemistry, Industrial Engineering & Management, Life Sciences & Technology and Mathematics.  
Aim: attract 100 students to each Bachelor's programme
  - Master's programmes in Chemical Engineering and Environmental and Infrastructure Planning.  
Aim: attract 50 to each Master's programme

Ultimately: additional degree programmes from different faculties, in total : 20 Bachelor's programmes and 10 Master's programmes.

## 2. What were the challenges

- › Adjustment Law on Higher Education necessary for issuing diploma's abroad
  - 23 February 2<sup>nd</sup> Chamber votes in favour of this change
- › Criticism and doubts in Groningen: is the project financially sound? Staffing?
- › Quality assurance of teaching and research in China
  - How independent is teaching/ research? Why will a secretary of the Party have a seat in the Board of UGY?

# Staff?

## Higher Education Network



**Frederika Whitehead**

🐦 @frederikaw ✉ Email

Tue 22 Jul 2014 09:55 BST



305  10 

<https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2014/jul/22/uk-academics-would-you-teach-in-china>

## Academics: would you teach in China?

Opportunities to work in China are growing, but expect to adapt your approach to teaching and research

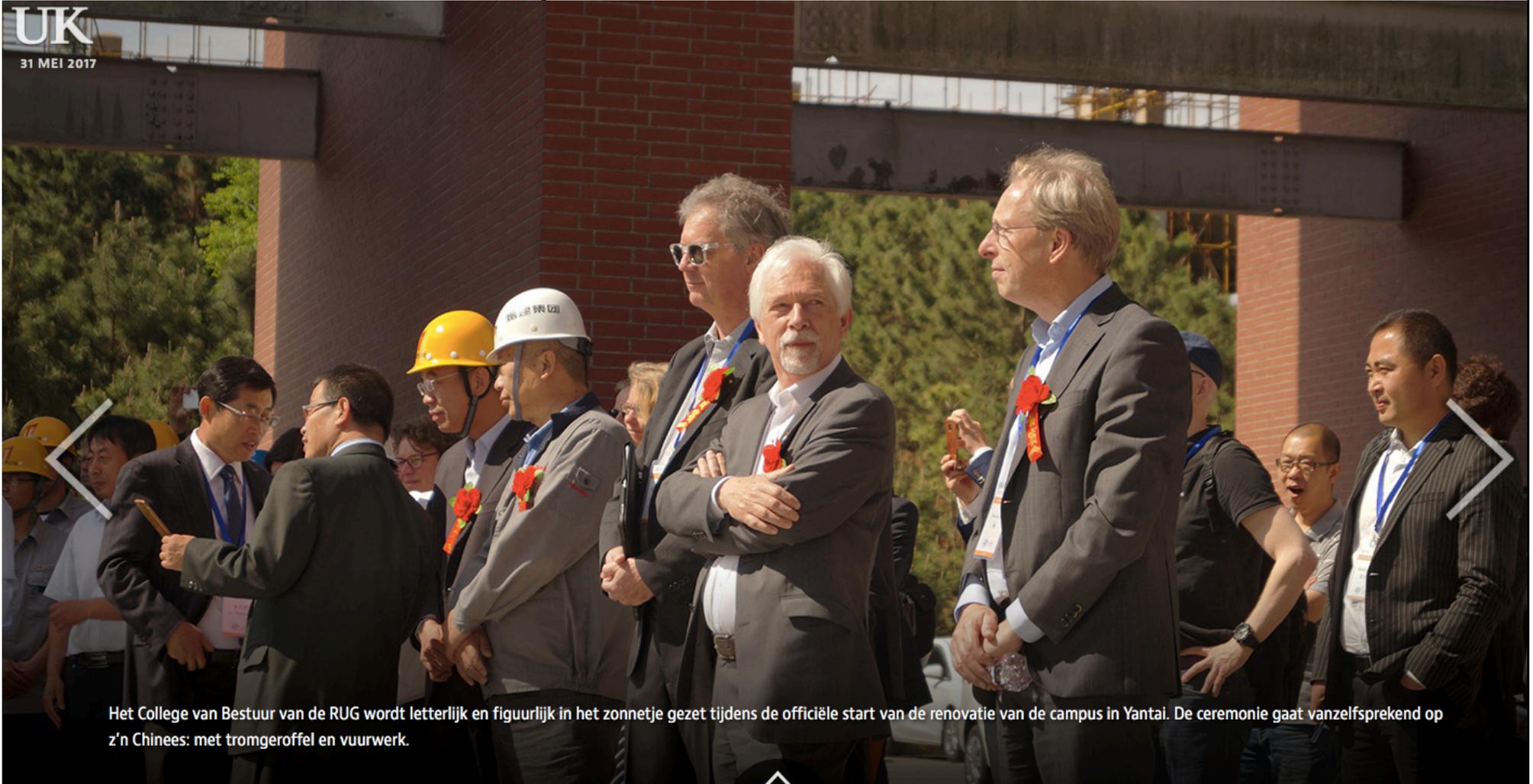


▲ The University of Nottingham's Ningbo branch was the first to be opened by a UK institution. Photograph: Qilai Shen/EPA

**C**hina's young people are hungry for degrees. The number moving to the UK to study has grown year-on-year since 2008, with the country counting as the **biggest source of international students**. Meanwhile UK institutions are opening branch campuses across China, **driving a quarter of such international provision**. Many home

# May 2017

> 48 UG Board, staff and students visit Yantai



Het College van Bestuur van de RUG wordt letterlijk en figuurlijk in het zonnetje gezet tijdens de officiële start van de renovatie van de campus in Yantai. De ceremonie gaat vanzelfsprekend op z'n Chinees: met tromgeroffel en vuurwerk.

# Public debate, questions in parliament

## Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal

# 2

Vergaderjaar 2015–2016

### Aanhangsel van de Handelingen

Vragen gesteld door de leden der Kamer, met de daarop door de regering gegeven antwoorden

**844**

Vragen van het lid **Jasper van Dijk** (SP) aan de Minister van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap over *de opening van een nevenvestiging van de RUG in China* (ingezonden 5 november 2015).

Antwoord van Minister **Bussemaker** (Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap) (ontvangen 10 december 2015)

Vraag 1  
Hoe oordeelt u over het artikel «Chinese uitbreiding Groningse universiteit is in landsbelang»?<sup>1</sup>



## Aanhangsel van de Handelingen

Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal

Vragen van het lid **Van Meenen (D66)** aan de Minister van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap over enkele berichten over de plannen van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) voor een campus in Yantai, China (ingezonden 30 mei 2017).

Antwoord van Minister **Bussemaker** (Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap) (ontvangen 21 juni 2017)

### Vraag 1

Bent u bekend met de berichten: «Voorbereidingen Yantai kosten flink meer» <sup>1</sup> en «Student blogt voor dvhn.nl vanuit China over campus RUG»? <sup>2</sup>

### Antwoord 1

Ja.

### Vraag 2

Dossier

# University of Groningen Yantai

Opinie: Eerst een compleet dossier  
over Yantai



RUG gaat China-plan herzien



Meerderheid Universiteitsraad  
stemt tegen campus Yantai



# Commotion about the Party secretary

**Fu Zetian, leader  
Yantai project, China**



## **De Volkskrant, 14-1-2018**

- > I do not understand the commotion about the secretary of the Party. According to your own democratic principles we certainly have the right to propagate our own political views at our own school.

# Academic freedom branch campuses?

## China tightens party control of foreign university ventures

British academic ejected from board after writing essay critical of Communist party



Chinese universities have tightened controls over foreign textbooks and introduced a greater number of Communist party-backed courses and research institutes © Reuters

Emily Feng in Beijing JULY 2, 2018



The University of Nottingham Ningbo China, the first joint venture university in China, has removed a foreign academic from its management board for being critical of Communist party-backed initiatives.

### CHINA

## Al te grote academische vrijheid wordt niet gewaardeerd in China

Westerse universiteiten willen graag vestigingen in China oprichten. Maar een Britse hoogleraar bij zo'n dependance moest weg na een kritisch stuk.

venture tussen een Chinese en een buitenlandse universiteit. De Rijksuniversiteit Groningen noemde het model dat zij daarbij hanteerden als voorbeeld van hoe Groningen zelf zijn campus in de Oost-Chinese plaats Yantai wilde opzetten.

### Herbenoeming

Door onze correspondent  
Garrie van Pinxteren

**BEIJING.** Dat er op Chinese universiteiten steeds minder sprake is van academische vrijheid was al langer bekend. Nu blijkt dat die ook op de campus van buitenlandse universiteiten in China niet langer is gegarandeerd. Een Britse academicus is uit het bestuur van de Chinese campus van zijn Britse universiteit gezet omdat hij een kritisch stuk schreef over de Communistische Partij van China (CPC).

Dat is ook voor Nederlandse universiteiten relevant. Zo had de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) tot voor kort vergevorderde plannen om in China een eigen campus te beginnen. Volgens het college van bestuur zou er op die dependance geen sprake zijn van inperking van de academische vrijheid. De Universiteitsraad geloofde dat echter niet. Het plan van de RUG werd uiteindelijk eerder dit jaar afgeblazen.

Het wantrouwen blijkt nu terecht. De Britse academicus Stephen Morgan mag niet langer deel uitmaken van het bestuur van de University of Nottingham Ningbo. Zakenkrant *Financial Times* meldt op basis van anonieme bronnen dat dit komt doordat Morgan zich te kritisch heeft uitgelaten over het 19de partijcongres van de Communistische Partij van China (CPC). Tijdens het meest recente congres werd de Chinese president Xi Jinping in principe voor het leven benoemd. Morgan schreef het stuk niet voor een publicatie van de universiteit in Ningbo, maar voor een internetpublicatie van de moederuniversiteit in Nottingham.

De University of Nottingham Ningbo werd in 2004 geopend als de eerste joint

Morgan werd niet meteen na verschijnen van zijn stuk ontslagen als bestuurslid. Pas toen het tijd werd om zijn contract te verlengen, maakten vertegenwoordigers van de CPC aan het bestuur duidelijk dat een herbenoeming er voor Morgan niet in zat. Het stuk van Morgan had in hun ogen de universiteit in verlegenheid gebracht. Morgan blijft wel aan als docent. Morgan en het universiteitsbestuur zeggen overigens dat het gaat om een reguliere en gebruikelijke vernieuwing van het bestuur.

De zaak is niet alleen relevant in het licht van berichten dat de CPC onder Xi de teugels op Chinese universiteiten steeds strakker aanhaalt. Zo is het moeilijker geworden om buitenlands materiaal bij colleges te gebruiken en is er steeds vaker cameratoezicht in de collegezalen. Het ontslag werpt ook een nieuw licht op de jarenlange discussie die er op de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RUG) werd gevoerd over het wel of niet openen van een campus in de Oost-Chinese stad Yantai.

Bij die discussie draaide het vooral om de vraag of de academische vrijheid in China te garanderen zou zijn. Het college van bestuur onder leiding van Sibrand Poppema meende van wel, maar de Universiteitsraad bleef twijfels houden. Toen de Universiteitsraad begin dit jaar in meerderheid van plan bleek tegen de plannen voor Yantai te stemmen, trok het bestuur de plannen voor de campus in.

„Samen met de faculteiten en opleidingen onderzoeken we de komende tijd welke andere vormen van samenwerking in Yantai mogelijk zijn”, zei Poppema toen. Poppema wordt per 1 oktober opgevolgd door Jouke de Vries. Of, en zo ja in welke vorm, de RUG onder zijn leiding doorgaat met de samenwerking met Yantai is nog onbekend.

# University Council in majority does not support UGY

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Menu nrc.nl abonneer

## RUG wijst Groningse campus in China af

De universiteitsraad steunt geen campus van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen in het Chinese Yantai. 'Het college van bestuur benadrukte altijd eenzijdig de positieve kanten.'

Maarten Huygen 29 januari 2018



De Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.  
Foto Remko de Waal

> “the University Board always pointed solely to the positive elements”

# 3. Why and when was the plan withdrawn, to be continued on a smaller scale

## Jammer dat Yantai niet doorgaat

31 januari 2018

NRC-Hbld, 31-1-2018



De mist trekt over Yantai. AP Chu Yang

De drie jaar durende discussie over de branch campus in Yantai is de laatste dagen in een stroomversnelling gekomen. Toen binnenskamers duidelijk werd dat er bij een eventuele stemming geen meerderheid gehaald kon worden, hebben wij en enkele andere aangedrongen om toch in overleg te blijven. Helaas bleek de moeite tevergeefs. Als enige studentenpartij die zich achter het plan heeft geschaard heerst bij ons dan ook teleurstelling.

De universiteit heeft de kans om een stap vooruit te zetten niet gekregen, en is in plaats daarvan gedwongen om twee stappen terug te doen. Gedurende de afgelopen drie jaar hebben wij als partij altijd geprobeerd om de plannen over een eventuele branch campus kritisch maar positief te benaderen. Ook realiseren wij ons dat iedereen aan de RUG uiteindelijk

DvhN, 14-4-18

## Blijdschap en scepsis over vernieuwd China-plan van de RUG

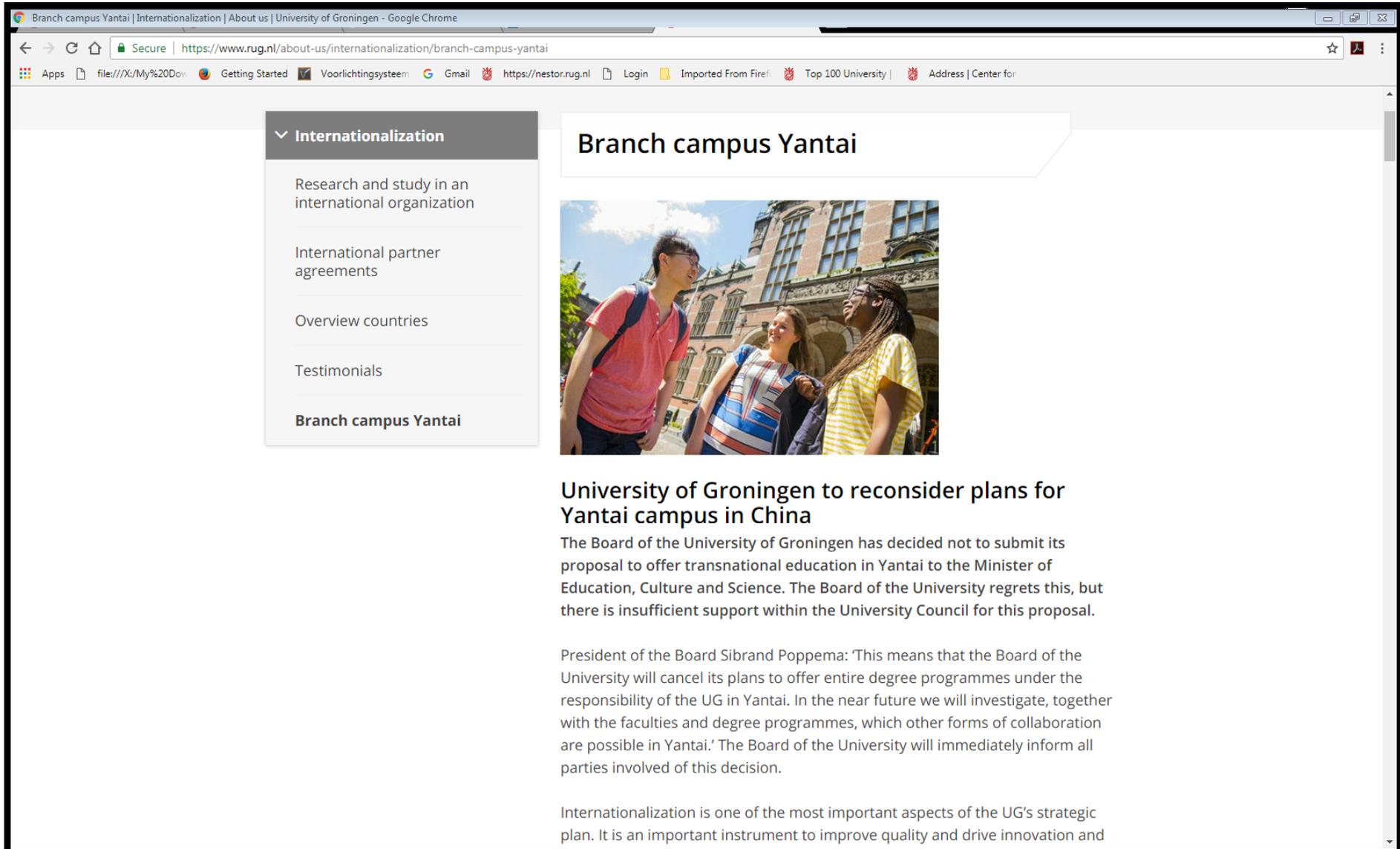
Maaïke Wind • 14 april



De Chinese stad Yantai. (FOTO DVHN)

**Met een dubbel gevoel kijkt de universiteitsraad naar de aangepaste Chinese strategie van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Is dit een mooie oplossing of een poging om het afgekeurde plan alsnog door te drukken?**

# Reconsidering the plans...



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the University of Groningen's page for the Yantai branch campus. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://www.rug.nl/about-us/internationalization/branch-campus-yantai>. A navigation menu on the left lists several options under the 'Internationalization' heading, with 'Branch campus Yantai' selected. The main content area features a large heading 'Branch campus Yantai' above a photograph of three students (two men and one woman) standing outdoors in front of a building. Below the photo is a sub-heading: 'University of Groningen to reconsider plans for Yantai campus in China'. The text below this heading states that the Board of the University of Groningen has decided not to submit its proposal to offer transnational education in Yantai to the Chinese Minister of Education, Culture and Science. It also includes a quote from President Sibrand Poppema explaining the decision and the university's future plans for collaboration in Yantai. The page concludes by stating that internationalization remains a key part of the university's strategic plan.

Branch campus Yantai | Internationalization | About us | University of Groningen - Google Chrome

Secure | <https://www.rug.nl/about-us/internationalization/branch-campus-yantai>

Apps | file:///X:/My%20Dow | Getting Started | Voorlichtingsysteem | Gmail | <https://nestor.rug.nl> | Login | Imported From Firefox | Top 100 University | Address | Center for

▼ Internationalization

- Research and study in an international organization
- International partner agreements
- Overview countries
- Testimonials
- Branch campus Yantai**

## Branch campus Yantai



### University of Groningen to reconsider plans for Yantai campus in China

The Board of the University of Groningen has decided not to submit its proposal to offer transnational education in Yantai to the Minister of Education, Culture and Science. The Board of the University regrets this, but there is insufficient support within the University Council for this proposal.

President of the Board Sibrand Poppema: 'This means that the Board of the University will cancel its plans to offer entire degree programmes under the responsibility of the UG in Yantai. In the near future we will investigate, together with the faculties and degree programmes, which other forms of collaboration are possible in Yantai.' The Board of the University will immediately inform all parties involved of this decision.

Internationalization is one of the most important aspects of the UG's strategic plan. It is an important instrument to improve quality and drive innovation and

# To be continued, but slower pace

- > application for Transnational Education (TNE) can be drawn up for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and put before the University Council for approval.
- > Ongoing agreements will continue, on the understanding that approval for TNE from the University Council and the Minister are a legal requirement.

<https://www.rug.nl/news/2018/04/vervolg-samenwerking-in-yantai>

# Solution:

- > Not a university wide branch but gradual partnership with specific faculties
- > Faculty of Faculty of Science and Engineering interested; other faculties may follow

# Bottom up approach FSE

About us › Faculty of Science and Engineering › The Faculty › FSE Programme Team Yantai

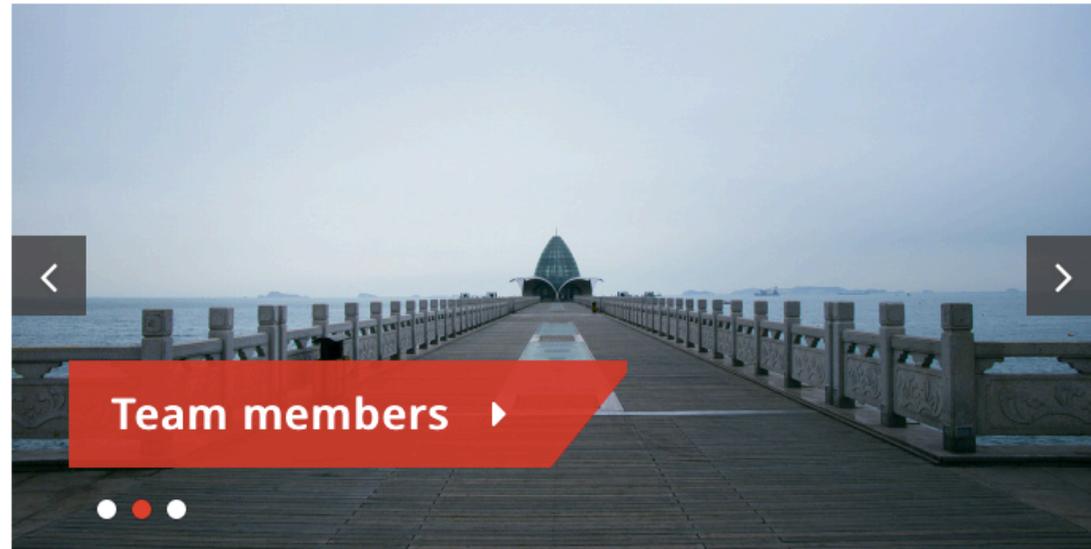
▼ FSE Programme Team Yantai

FSE Programme Team Yantai

A programme in collaboration

Team members

## FSE Programme Team Yantai



The [Faculty of Science and Engineering](#) initiated the FSE programme team Yantai China in 2017 to explore and build collaborations in research and education.

The team works bottom-up to engage interested and motivated parties in constructive collaborations, believing it will lead to the best possible outcome for all related parties.

BUSINESS TOP STORIES

# NETHERLANDS ATTRACTS MORE FOREIGN STUDENTS; WORRYING TREND, STUDENT UNION SAYS

By Janene Pieters on March 8, 2018 - 09:02



. Source: Wikipedia/Xbxg32000

A total of 122 thousand international students from 162 different countries are currently studying at a Dutch university or university of applied science, 10 thousand **more than last year**, according to an **analysis by Nuffic**. Dutch universities' continuing focus on attracting as many international students as possible is a worrying trend, according to student union LSVb.

According to Nuffic, the Dutch organization for internationalization in education, nearly 90 thousand of the international students are working on a complete degree in the Netherlands. The rest are here for a short time, for example on an

SEARCH



TOP STORIES

RECENT STORIES



DUTCH ECONOMY DOING WELL, BUT WORKERS DON'T NOTICE IT: OECD



ALARMING INCREASE IN NUMBER OF DUTCH TEENS COMMITTING SUICIDE



PM RUTTE INTERRUPTS TRUMP ON EU TRADE DEAL



CHINOOK HELICOPTERS POUR THOUSANDS OF LITERS OF WATER ON HENGLO DUMP FIRE



DUTCH MAN KILLED IN JET-SKI ACCIDENT IN BELGIUM



PUBLIC TRANSIT STRIKE OVER; AGREEMENT REACHED ON WAGE INCREASE, WORKLOAD



## Oxford Summer School 2018



# 2017-2018

- › During academic year 2017-2018 at least 122,000 international students study in Dutch higher education. This is the **highest number** ever recorded.
- › In addition, there are almost 5,000 foreign PhD students in the Netherlands.
- › In 2017-2018, students with a total of **162 different nationalities** were enrolled in the Netherlands in higher education.
- › Around 80,000 Dutch students and 40,000 international students are currently enrolled in a study programme which is exclusively taught in English. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/publications/find-a-publication/incoming-student-mobility-in-dutch-higher-education-2017-2018.pdf>

## 4. Conclusion: Why did the branch campus not materialise?

1. Doubts about the business plan
2. Doubts about assurance of the same research/education quality in China
3. Decision making process: the consent of the University Council was crucial; its members were not in agreement