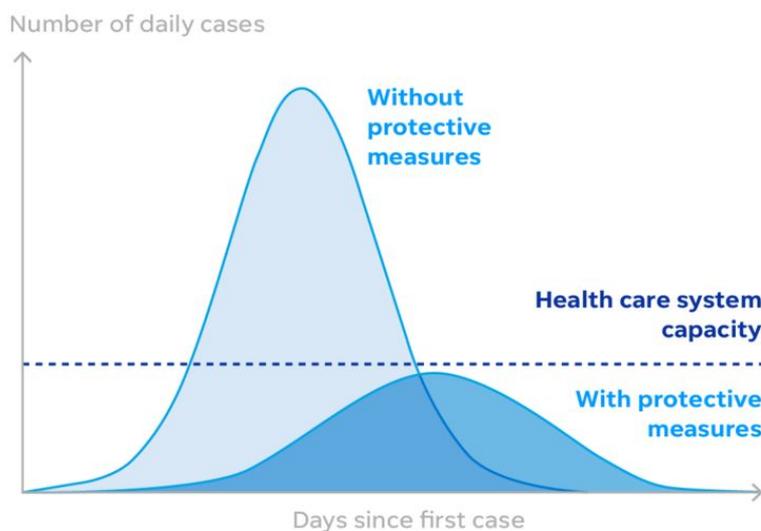


Dear students,

We would like to take this opportunity to explain the measures that the Dutch government has taken in response to the Coronavirus, considering that Leiden University acts in accordance with these measures.

The Dutch government has relied on the advice of its experts in determining the appropriate measures whilst the world waits for a vaccine. The experts at the National Institute for Public Health and Environment say that we can stall and simultaneously control the spread of the virus by building herd immunity.

Those who have had the virus typically become immune – similarly to the measles. If more and more people become immune then they will not spread the virus further, and it will become less likely that elderly people and people with poor health get infected. The ‘herd’ protects the people who are not immune. The Dutch government has therefore opted for the following strategy: control the pace at which the virus spreads, so that vulnerable groups are protected, hospitals do not become overloaded, and strong groups (like young people) build immunity. This strategy is commonly referred to as *flattening the curve*.



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Experts warn that a complete lockdown will lead to positive short-term results like easing the pressure on hospitals. However, they also warn that a complete lockdown can be disastrous in the long-term, as it can result in a sudden overflow of corona patients that society cannot handle when the lockdown is lifted. Therefore, the only groups of people that are advised not to leave their houses or come in contact with other people are the elderly and the people with poor health. Also, people who experience any health issues like a cold, sore throat, coughing and/or fever, should stay at home and avoid contact with others. All others are advised to work or study from home, limit their social contacts and when outside, keep at least 1.5m distance.

Please visit the website of the [National Institute for Public Health and Environment](#) for more information on the Dutch strategy.

We understand that these are difficult times but we want you to know that Leiden University is here for you. We also understand that it may be confusing that the Netherlands is dealing with this crisis in a different manner than other countries.

If you have any questions please check [our FAQs page](#) or contact our corona-helpdesk: corona@leidenuniv.nl or 071 - 527 1132 (Mon-Fri). You can also contact your [exchange coordinator at the university](#).

Visit our website for the latest updates: universiteitleiden.nl/en/coronavirus