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Indonesian teens highly motivated to study abroad, according to AFS research; concerns about security, affordability remain

NEW YORK, NY, USA (1 December 2017) - School students in Indonesia are motivated to go abroad mainly to further their academic careers, according to the latest research report, "Mapping Generation Z in Indonesia" published by AFS Intercultural Programs. AFS is the leading intercultural education organization focused on developing active global citizens to take action in the communities and around the world.

This study focuses on Indonesia, an emerging market for international education. Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world with more than 260 million people, nearly half of them under the age of 30. The middle-class is expected to double in size (from 74 million to 141 million) by 2020. The report aims to uncover the attitudes and perceptions of Indonesian teens on studying abroad, including what drives their decision-making process, which destinations they prefer and what concerns they have when thinking about a student exchange opportunity.

The AFS study includes more than 5,500 respondents from Indonesia between the ages of 13 and 18, and found that regardless of the primary motivating factor, a vast majority of the students surveyed (81%) have considered studying abroad. 56% of Indonesian students' motivations to study abroad revolve around academic advancement, while cultural exploration is the primary focus for 44% of Indonesian teens.

"It is great to see the strong interest in study abroad from a country like Indonesia, home to the largest Muslim population in the world, where nearly half of the citizens are under the age of 30," says Daniel Obst, President & CEO, AFS Intercultural Programs. "At the same time, it's important that the study abroad programs and experiences they participate in include intentional global competence training."

Affordability remains a significant obstacle on the path to study abroad for Indonesian teens. 45% of all respondents indicate that they would not be able to afford an exchange abroad without receiving a full scholarship. Another noteworthy barrier is security, which features prominently on the list of personal concerns (47%). This signals an increased awareness of the global security situation due to the frequent threats to security worldwide.

“The data sheds light on the acute awareness that Generation Z exhibits around the events affecting global security,” said Hristo Banov, the primary architect of the study. “As it is, the youth and student travel industry bolsters a variety of best practices to keep participants safe. It is of utmost importance that we continue to demonstrate strong understanding of risk management and safety along with an unwavering commitment to empowering global citizens ready to embrace the ideas of intercultural understanding and acceptance.”

Finally, the report found that English-speaking countries such as the U.S., U.K. and Australia maintain their status as the most sought-after destinations (88% of respondents see them as very favorable or favorable) for study abroad. Additionally, program aspects such as the reputation of the host country (84%) and the host school (71%), as well as English as the language of instruction (78%) are highly impactful for a student’s decision to go abroad.

The research was conducted by AFS Intercultural Programs via an anonymous online survey in Indonesia. Data was collected between March and April 2017. The 5,502 respondents ranged in age from 13-18 years. The research is available at <http://afs.org/research/#afs-nav-indonesia-country-report>.

This Indonesia country report builds on a first-of-its-kind global research study, Mapping Generation Z, which polled more than 5,000 teenagers (aged 13-18) in nearly 30 countries. That report is available at afs.org/research.

About AFS Intercultural Programs:

The AFS mission is to provide intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world. Each year around 12,000 young people take part in the AFS Programs that are supported by over 42,000 volunteers and staff in 60 countries worldwide. AFS Indonesia was launched in 1956 and has exchanged over 3,000 students to date.