

**Welcome to
The Hague
for International Students**



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Mayor's Welcome

Welcome to The Hague, international city of peace and justice. There are many reasons to be proud to be mayor of a city where tens of thousands of people are working and studying every day to build a more peaceful and just world. Walking through The Hague, you will hear languages from across the world spoken on every street.

In The Hague we believe that having a wealth of cultures expands our horizons. Our city sparkles with creativity and talent, with more than 480 international organisations and over 30,000 students, as well as numerous businesses and start-ups.

Our beautiful city has plenty to offer you and your family: an historic centre with excellent shopping, culture and varied residential areas, with plenty of green space. Not to mention the seaside; only a short distance from the city centre and bounded by protected dunes. Try to explore and see as much of The Hague region as you can.

The municipality of The Hague is very keen to help the international community in any way it can and so The Hague International Centre has been set up especially for the city's international community. The staff at the International Centre will be happy to answer any questions you may have about living and working in The Hague and the surrounding area.

I very much hope you enjoy your stay in The Hague, that you feel at home here and become part of our community.

Jan van Zanen, LL.M.
Mayor of The Hague

“Welcome to The Hague, I am delighted that you have come to live here, and I hope you will soon feel at home.”



Foto: Martijn Beekman

The Hague International Centre

Moving to another country can be complicated and, at times, feel overwhelming. At The Hague International Centre, we can help you with the best possible start as soon as you have arrived.

We are a division of the municipality of The Hague, focused on providing information and assisting international newcomers living in The Hague, Delft, Rijswijk and Leidschendam-Voorburg.

We work as a one-stop-shop for government formalities for highly skilled migrants, scientific researchers, start-ups, privileged persons, and international graduates. Our services are provided in close collaboration with both the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) and ACCESS, a non-profit organisation that aims to support internationals in the Netherlands. For students we work together with Study in The Hague, Hi The Hague and Studar.

Our Services

Information on settling in

You can always contact The Hague International Centre for questions around

- Immigration
- Municipal registration
- Obtaining a DigiD
- Exchanging your driving licence
- Converting your Digital Covid Certificate (QR code)
- Housing
- Education and childcare
- Healthcare
- Working and finding jobs

If you have a question that is not in the above list, we will try our best to help, too

Events

The Hague International Centre runs a calendar of events to help international newcomers in the region feel at home, get information, and grow their (social) network. These events include

- New in The Hague webinars
- Welcome to The Hague events for newcomers
- The Feel at Home Fair
- Various seminars and webinars around important topics such as taxes, healthcare, housing and work in collaboration with our expert partners

For information on the next event, just check out our website.



More information?

Our website is regularly updated and includes information on all sorts of topics to help internationals during their arrival and settling-in phases. It also contains a series of useful videos, important news items, and practical answers to frequently asked questions.

www.thehagueinternationalcentre.nl

Let's keep in touch

The Hague International Centre wants to continue helping people all throughout their time in the Netherlands; however short or long that is. We send out a regular newsletter (full of interesting and important information, and top tips), and you can keep up to date with us via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



Contact Information and Opening Hours

The Hague International Centre is open for appointments questions between Monday and Friday, from 09:00 to 17:00. We are also available during these hours for telephone questions on +31 (0) 70 353 50 43, e-mail questions at internationalcentre@den Haag.nl or for walk-in questions at our helpdesk.

If you'd like to visit us, our address is

The Hague International Centre,
City Hall (Atrium), Spui 70
2511BT The Hague

About ACCESS

ACCESS is a non-profit organisation established in The Hague to assist internationals but also to encourage, support, and facilitate international life in the region. ACCESS is completely managed and staffed by volunteers.

ACCESS also runs a personalised helpdesk service (available at The Hague International Centre), which you can contact for questions about arriving, settling, and living in the Netherlands.

About the IND

The IND (*Immigratie en Naturalisatie Dienst*) is part of the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security, and is responsible for residence permits for people that are coming to the Netherlands to live, work, or study. All residence permit applications are assessed by the IND, and the service also exists to help.

About Student & City

Student & Stad is a cooperation of all higher education institutes in The Hague and the municipality. As the youngest and fastest growing student city in The Netherlands, their goal is to develop and optimise the student climate in The Hague. The website Study in The Hague, the Studar app and Hi The Hague festival are products of the Student & Stad platform.

"Our goal is to make you feel at home in The Hague region."

International Offices

The international office at your university can help you with practical matters relating to your life in The Hague, such as your study permit, housing, student life or welfare.

Educational Institute	Contact	Website
The Hague University of Applied Sciences	internationaloffice@hhs.nl + 31 (0)70 445 85 85	www.thehagueuniversity.com/practical-matters/international-student-services/international-office
Leiden University	071 527 8011	www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/international-students/prepare-your-stay
International Institute of Social Studies (Erasmus University)	admission@iss.nl	www.iss.nl/en/prospective-students/studying-iss/student-information
Royal Academy of Art	international@kabk.nl exchange@kabk.nl	www.kabk.nl/en/practical-matters/what-to-arrange
Royal Conservatoire	international@koncon.nl	www.koncon.nl/en/international/regular-international-students
Inholland University of Applied Sciences	+31 (0)10 439 22 20 intoffice@inholland.nl	www.inholland.nl/inhollandcom/exchange/international-office/#The_Hague
Hotelschool The Hague	+31 (0)70 35 12 481 admissions@hotelschool.nl	www.hotelschool.nl/blog/student-life/
TU Delft	internationaloffice-tbm@tudelft.nl	www.tudelft.nl/en/education/practical-matters



Study in The Hague.

Activities during the day...

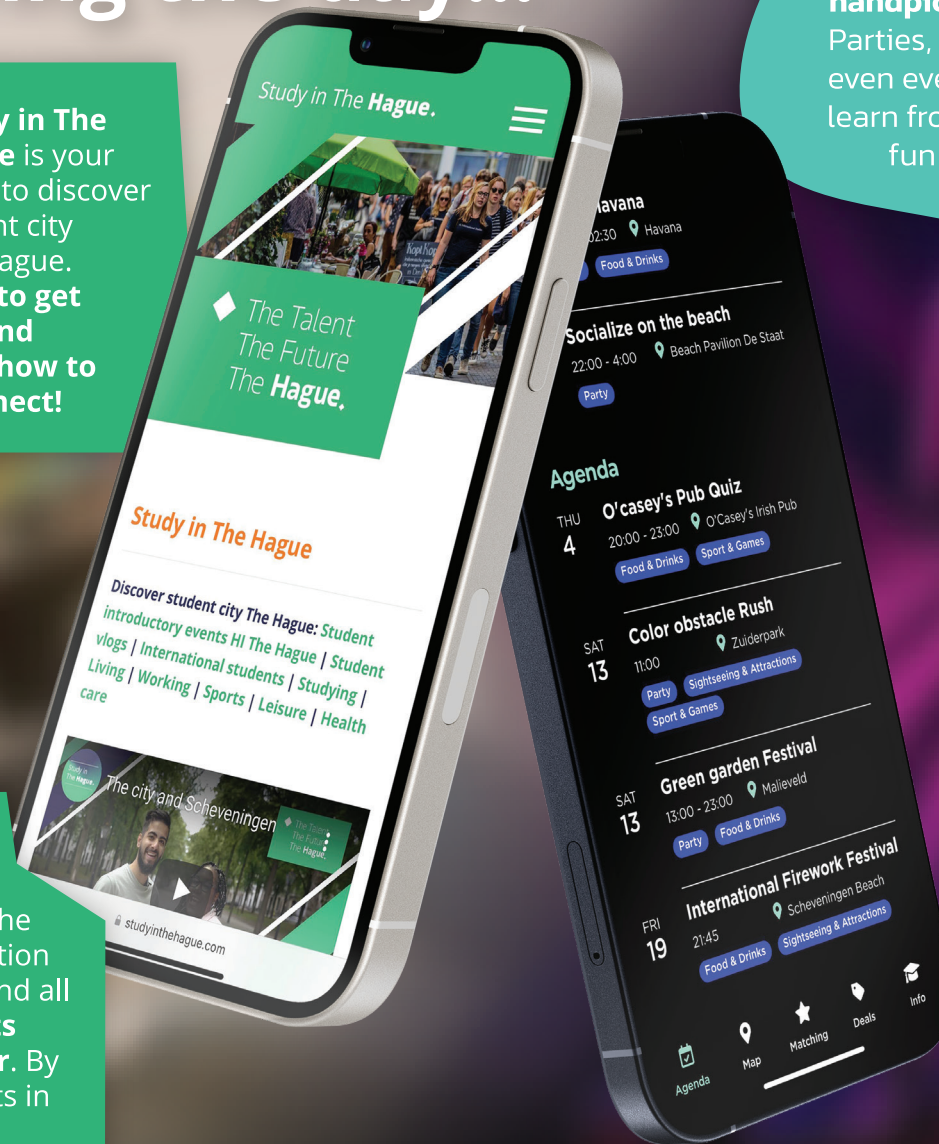


Get to know the **student associations** and **student sports clubs**, and learn where the good **public study spaces** are.

Study in The Hague is your guide to discover student city The Hague. **How to get around and how to connect!**

And join the activities of **HI The Hague**: the student introduction in the summer and all the **other events during the year**. By and for students in The Hague!

HI The Hague



Find all the best and coolest events handpicked for you! Parties, sports and even events you can learn from (only the fun ones).

What's student life without sweet deals? We search high and low to save you a precious euro or two.

Find all the hotspots and hidden gems in the Hague! Whether you are new to the city or have been living here for years, there's always a new place to find.

...and parties at night!

Relocation checklist

Before you move

- ☐ Choose your study and apply
- ☐ Check your admissions offer
- ☐ Arrange your visa
- ☐ Arrange your residence permit
- ☐ Arrange travel insurance
- ☐ Arrange short term accommodation
- ☐ Book your flights to the Netherlands

Upon arrival

- ☐ Arrange transport to The Hague region
- ☐ Check in to your accommodation
- ☐ Join the introduction week of your educational institute
- ☐ Join the Hi The Hague programme for all (new) students
- ☐ Consider joining a student organisation or sports club
- ☐ Download the Studar app to find fun things to do

- ☐ Prepare to start studying by applying for a university card, learning where your classrooms will be and what student facilities are available
- ☐ Register at your municipality to get your BSN
- ☐ Collect your residence document at the IND
- ☐ Take a TB test if you need to at the GGD
- ☐ Obtain a DigiD
- ☐ Open a bank account
- ☐ Get a Dutch phone with a plan
- ☐ Find long term accommodation
- ☐ Arrange your utilities

Settling in

- ☐ Take our Dutch health insurance
- ☐ Register with a family doctor, pharmacy and dentist for your medical needs
- ☐ Get a bike or OV card
- ☐ Learn the Dutch language
- ☐ Discover The Hague city and things to do
- ☐ Stay updated and subscribe to our newsletter

Official Matters

When you arrive in the Netherlands there are certain government formalities that you will have to take care of, primarily immigration and municipal registration.

Immigration

If you have a non-EU nationality, you will need a residence permit to come and live and study in the Netherlands. If you have an EU nationality you do not need a residence permit to study, work and live in the Netherlands. Your university should have already contacted you about your application for a study permit – as they will act as your sponsor. Part of the process may include transferring a year's worth of living costs to your university; only for it to be transferred back to you once you have opened a Dutch bank account.

You can read all about the process of obtaining a residence permit for the purpose of studying on the website of the IND: ind.nl/en/residence-permits/study/student-residence-permit-for-university-or-higher-professional-education

Submit your biometrics

You need to make an appointment for biometric data if you have a residence permit but did not need to have an entry visa (MVV) or have requested an extension or new permit. Your university will inform you about special appointment slots. Biometric data consists of your fingerprints and digital photo. The IND can only issue your residence document once it has recorded this data.

Collecting your residence document

You need to make an appointment to collect your residence document from the IND. You need the document to identify yourself and prove you are allowed to live in the Netherlands.

You either collect your document during central student collection days or at the IND desk in The Hague.

TB testing at the Municipal Health Department GGD

Some non-EU students must undergo a mandatory TB health check. The health check consists of a Tuberculosis (TB) examination, during which your lungs will be X-rayed. This health check is part of retaining your residence permit. You will receive an appointment from your university if this applies to you.

Municipal registration

If you are staying in the Netherlands for longer than 4 months, you must register with your local municipality. You will receive a citizen service number or Burgerservicenummer (BSN) as a result of registering in the Personal Records Database (BRP). You need this number to arrange a lot of formalities.

The municipality organises central registration days together with the educational institutes in The Hague. You do not need to make a separate appointment to register at the municipality. Your university will inform you about the date and time you can get registered.

You can find out the dates via: www.denhaag.nl/en/moving-and-immigration/moving-to-the-hague-from-abroad/registration-procedures-for-international-students.htm

Registration for non-residents (RNI)

At the appointment, you will need to bring:

- A fully completed municipal registration form. The school will give this form to students prior to the registration days.
- A valid form of identification: a passport or identity card.
- A copy of the passport or identity card (back and front)
- Proof of address. This can be a rental contract which clearly states the address (including house number and, if applicable, room number). Or written permission from the main occupant (including a copy of a valid form of identification for the person giving permission).
- For students who need a residence permit: a copy of the acknowledgement of receipt which the school received from the IND. The school will provide this document to students.

The students will receive a citizen service number (BSN) approximately 2 weeks after registering with the municipality. This number is required to open a bank account or take out a health insurance policy.

If you will be staying in the Netherlands for less than four months (for example if you are on exchange in the Netherlands), you can register with the municipality as a non-resident. This is for people who are not moving to the Netherlands long-term, but still need a BSN to (for example) open a bank account or work. More information about the RNI procedure is available on the website of the municipality of The Hague: www.denhaag.nl/en/moving-and-immigration/bsn-and-registration-as-a-non-resident-of-the-netherlands-rni.htm

Your citizen service number or Burgerservicenummer (BSN)

Your BSN is an ID number that confirms your personal details in the Netherlands. You will need a BSN to:

- Open a bank account
- Get a Dutch mobile phone number
- Access social security
- Work and pay income taxes
- Get DigiD

You should keep your BSN secret. Your BSN remains yours and cannot be cancelled or taken from you.

DigiD

DigiD is the Dutch government's online login system. It is only available for people with a BSN. It makes the process of doing your taxes, applying for social security, and any other government service much easier.

There is a full, English-language, guide to getting your DigiD available on www.digid.nl/en

Reporting your move

If you move house or apartment during your time living in the Netherlands, you need to report your change of address to the municipality of your new address. This can be done on the municipality's website, using your DigiD login. Other government agencies are automatically notified.

Leaving the Netherlands

When you intend to leave the Netherlands for longer than 8 months, you need to de-register from the municipality. You can report your move online (using your DigiD login) on the municipality website. You can also inform the municipality by email.

Once you have de-registered, the municipality will share this with other government agencies, such as the tax office and health insurance provider.

Using your driving licence

If you have an EU driving licence, you can continue to use it until it expires in the Netherlands. If your licence is from a non-EU country, you will need to take a Dutch driving test and obtain a Dutch licence unless you are from a few specific countries. You are only allowed to drive with a non-EU driving licence for 185 days after registration.



Housing

In The Hague, most universities do not have their own dormitories and students generally arrange their own accommodation in the city. Finding a place to live can be challenging experience as affordable rooms are in short supply all over the Netherlands. You need to start your house hunt early. You need to find an address you are allowed to register to obtain your residence permit and municipal registration.

Budget

To find housing you should take action as soon as possible by:

- Requesting housing via your university. Universities have a limited number of reserved rooms for international and exchange students. This varies per university. Often the number of applications greatly exceeds the amount of reserved rooms available. Most universities work with student housing organisations DUWO for accommodation.
- Try to find housing by yourself.
- If you need to find housing by yourself, we recommend signing up to various options before you even receive your offer.

Before you start your search, you should determine the budget you are prepared to pay. Student cities like The Hague, Leiden and Rotterdam can be quite expensive. You should also consider looking in smaller cities around the student cities. For The Hague you can consider Rijswijk, Leidschendam or Voorburg.

Rough indication of monthly rental prices in The Hague region. The prices will most likely exclude utilities and internet costs.

- Room: € 250–€ 500
- Studios: € 600–€ 800
- Apartments: € 650–€ 1000



House search

You can look at various options:

- Non-profit housing organisations and platforms such as Room.nl. Room.nl is a platform through which housing corporations like DUWO offer accommodation to students. Priority is based upon students moving to the region from far away and waiting lists on a first-come-first-serve basis. Vestia, Staedion and Haag Wonen are local housing corporations.
- Commercial platforms and housing providers.
- HousingAnywhere and RoomPlaza are booking platforms for student accommodation. Often student to student rooms rentals.
- Funda and Pararius are the main platforms for all types of housing in the Netherlands.
- The Student Hotel, Holland2Stay, Xior, Student Housing The Hague and Homey Housing offer student accommodation in The Hague.
- Short term solutions may be asking friends and family or temporarily staying in a hostel or hotel upon arrival.

Tips:

- Stay with friends and family upon arrival.
- involve your connections in the Netherlands in the house search as they may be able to help or offer advice.
- Use social media to try and find flatmates. Students often use Facebook groups to offer rooms in shared apartments.
- Check www.studyinthehague.com/ living and your university's website for more tips to find housing!

Affordable housing permit

Please note you may need an affordable housing permit in The Hague if you rent a property from a private individual and your basic rent is below € 951 a month or 185 points in a rental valuation system. You do not need the permit if you live in a shared apartment. www.denhaag.nl/en/permits-and-exemptions/residential-permits/affordable-housing-permit.htm

Rent benefit

The rent benefit (huurtoeslag) is a government contribution towards your rental costs. There are requirements for both you and your (rented) property. For example, the property, must be 'standalone': that is, with its own kitchen, bathroom, front door, and address. It must also have a rental price lower than € 442.46 if you are between 18 and 22 or € 763.47 if you are 23 or older. Your eligibility for rent benefit is calculated based on your household income. For more information, visit the Dutch Tax Authority website (Belastingdienst): I live in a rented house (belastingdienst.nl)

If you have not found a place to live before your study starts, many universities advise you not to come to the Netherlands. You may want to defer your studies to allow yourself more time to find a place to stay. Your study experience and welfare may depend on your ability to find housing.



Be aware of scams

Prepare yourself so you do not fall victim to a rental scam. If the deal seems too good to be true, it probably is!

- Always check the credentials of the advertiser. Make sure the room is rented via an official website or agency. Search online for reviews or warnings. Ask for photos and personal details so you can search online. If possible, meet the landlord during a viewing before accepting the offer.
- Check the property. If possible, view the property in advance or ask a connection to view on your behalf. Search for the address online and check Google Street View.
- Check your rental contract. Be sure to understand the terms and conditions. Ask someone to translate if necessary. Make sure you can register with the municipality on the address. Ensure your contract mentions your details, the details of the landlord, rental price, rental period, payment method, deposit and a notice period. Check if it mentions what is included for utilities, internet, local taxes and service costs.
- Make sure your house meets the Dutch safety standards with smoke and CO2 detectors, fire escape routes and fire extinguishers.
- Check whether you have to pay an agency fee. A specific finder's fee, contract charge or key fee charged by rental agents is illegal. You should not have to pay anything unless you have asked them to look for housing on your behalf.
- Be wary if you have to pay rent or a deposit in advance. Do not trust pushy landlords. Especially if they seem to be based abroad or speak little Dutch

or English. Never transfer money to a landlord who is abroad, asks for cash payment, Western Union, MoneyGram or a non-Dutch bank account (you can check if the IBAN number starts with NL). Do not send copies of your passport to anyone you do not trust.

Help with housing problems

- If you have been scammed you need to contact the police to file a report. You can contact the police for emergencies via 112 and no emergencies via 0900 88 44.
- The Rental Helpdesk (Huurbalie) of the Municipality of The Hague is your first point of contact for rental issues. The helpdesk provides tenants and landlords in the private rental sector with free advice and information. www.denhaag.nl/en/moving-and-immigration/housing/rental-helpdesk-huurbalie.htm The helpdesk may involve the Fair Rent Team if you are paying too much rent or if you are having issues with your landlord concerning service charges or maintenance. You can report domestic nuisance and overdue maintenance to The Hague Housing Inspection Bureau.
- The Juridisch Loket is your first stop for (free) legal aid from the central government (Dutch website, English assistance). www.juridischloket.nl/
- International students can also ask the Housing hotline for help. This is an initiative of the Dutch Student Union (LSVb) and Erasmus Student Network (ESN), through which international students can request online advice on a range of housing issues. dutchstudentunion.nl/housinghotline/

Utilities

In some cases, the utilities (water, gas, electricity) will be included in the monthly rental price. This is called 'inclusive' (Dutch: *inclusief*) rent. If this is the case, your housing contract should break down the costs each month into 'rent', 'utilities', and 'services'.

At the end of the year, the landlord should provide proof of the actual utility costs they have paid. You will then receive a refund or have to settle the difference.

If your rental price is 'exclusive', then you have to arrange gas, water, and electricity. This means that you are free to switch to the cheapest provider or the one with the best service. Your water company is set by your geographical region. There are various online comparison websites that you can use to find out your options for energy, internet, and other providers.

What taxes should I expect to pay?

The types of local property taxes that you pay depends on whether you rent a house or share a place. You should expect to receive the bills at the start of the year, in February. Based upon your income and savings you be eligible for an exemption. You need to ask for the money back. If you have an independent rental contract and your own house address, expect to be charged for:

Waste tax (Afvalstoffenheffing)

This is generally calculated depending on the number of people in your property. For one person you would need to pay € 313.32 in 2022.

Wastewater and sewage tax (Rioolheffing)

Almost all houses and buildings are connected to the main municipal sewage system. Each household can use up to 500 cubic metres of wastewater (you pay more if you use more). For 1 person you would need to pay € 200.63 in 2022.

Waste and recycling

Depending on where you live, you will either have a large waste container(s) with underground storage on the street that are shared, or large plastic waste containers that are regularly emptied by the municipality.

There are also large shared recycling containers for paper, glass, and cartons. The municipality will also collect material for recycling on various days of the year. On the day of collection, simply leave your waste (neatly) outside of your house before 08:30. You can find the collection days on the waste calendar of the municipality (in Dutch, English, and French) at huisvuilkalendar.denhaag.nl/

Large household waste and garden waste can be brought to a municipal waste station. You can drop off waste at these stations (this can cost money), and you can also ask the municipality to come and pick up waste, free of charge.

Healthcare

The Dutch healthcare system is renowned for its quality of care. However, there may be some features that can be confusing to newcomers; for example the role of your GP/ family doctor, how insurance works, and getting in touch with the right medical experts.

How does the Dutch healthcare system work?

The Dutch medical system is very advanced and has up to date treatments. However, you must get a referral from your local GP (family doctor) in order to access specialist care. This means that signing up with a local GP is very important.

It is mandatory to have some form of health insurance in the Netherlands. For EU students, this can be proof of your insurance status at home (including if you come from a country with public health care). Non-EU students have to purchase a special type of insurance. Please note that if you have a non-EU nationality and do not purchase a health insurance package, you will receive a warning letter from the CAK (a Dutch healthcare body). After your third letter, you will receive a fine that could be higher than € 300.

EU students

EU students may utilize their home health insurance in the Netherlands to access health care. This is also the case if your home insurance is public (rather than a private policy). You will need to obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to access insurance.

Non-EU students

Non-EU students will need to purchase a special type of health insurance to access medical care in the Netherlands. These packages are available through private health insurers, and generally cost between € 300 and € 400 per year for coverage. This makes it significantly cheaper than Dutch basic health insurance.

Some insurers that offer policies of this type include AON, Allianz, and ISI. Make sure to compare policies to get the best deal. Often the university has a specific deal for students.

Dutch basic health insurance

If you decide to work or do a paid internship in the Netherlands, you will need to obtain Dutch basic health insurance. Many employers will not let you begin working until you have proof of a policy. This usually costs around € 100 per month. If you have a lower income, you can receive health insurance benefit to help with the monthly costs.

The insurance industry is highly regulated, and monthly premiums and the cost of treatments are set by the Dutch government. Most insurance packages require you to pay for the first € 385 (2022) of medical costs. After that, your insurance will cover the rest.

Most health insurance packages cover medical care, but not dental care, eye care, or physiotherapy. Additionally, most health insurance plans do not cover comprehensive medical health care or treatment.

You can switch your health insurer once per year, and you must make sure to do this before December.

There are various online comparison websites for you to compare prices, coverage, etc.

Health Insurance Benefit (Zorgtoeslag)

Health Insurance Benefit, or 'Zorgtoeslag' in Dutch, is intended to help you cover the costs of basic health insurance. You can apply for it through the Dutch Tax Aervice (*Belastingdienst*) with DigiD and the amount of money you receive depends on your income.

You cannot apply for *Zorgtoeslag* if you are using a non-EU student's insurance policy. If you have a non-EU nationality and work on top of your study (and so take out Dutch basic health insurance) you can then apply for *Zorgtoeslag*.

Family Doctors (GP's or Huisartsen)

Your local GP is the point of access to the Dutch healthcare system. In most cases you will have to consult your local doctor before accessing any specialist care. The Dutch healthcare system tries to avoid prescribing too many antibiotics, and so you may be asked to come back to a second appointment before having any given to you.

You can sign up with the GP closest to you, or another in your local area. Many allow you to sign up online, or by email. You can find the closest GP surgery to you by checking an online listings website, for example independer.nl

The Hague has two special student general practitioners: StudentDoc and Biking Doctors The Hague. They offer specialised services for students around the city centre.

- www.dedoc.nl/en/studentendoc/
- www.bikingdoctors.nl/?lang=en

Out of hours GP care

If you need to speak to or visit a GP out of hours, you can contact the Hadoks service. They have two help points in the city ('huisartsenpost'):

Hadoks Hagaziekenhuis
Charlotte Jacobslaan 10
2545 AB, The Hague
+31(0)70 210 20 60

Hadoks HMC Westeinde
Westeinde 150
2512 HH, The Hague
+31(0)70 346 69 69

Emergency care

In the event of a medical emergency, call **112**.

For suicidal thoughts, call **113**.

Most larger hospitals have Accident and Emergency services. Look for signs for '*Spoedeisende hulp*', or '*SEH*'.

SEH Hagaziekenhuis
Charlotte Jacobslaan 10
2545 AB, The Hague
+31(0)70 210 20 60

SEH HMC Westeinde
Lijnbaan 32
2512VA, The Hague
+31(0)70 346 69 69

Other types of healthcare: dentist, optician, mental health

Other types of healthcare are generally not covered by your health insurance, though policies do differ. Make sure to check what is covered before selecting a provider. There is a free choice of dentists ('*tandarts*'), opticians ('*opticien*'), or mental health providers. You may be asked to pay for your treatment after your appointment.

All educational institutes offer some sort of health care support. For example, if you feel stressed, depressed, lonely, unsafe or suffer from other anxieties, please contact your international office, welfare officer or student counsellor. Welfare officers may also be able to guide you through the Dutch medical system to the best possible help.

COVID Certificates

Though not required for entry to leisure locations (for example bars, restaurants, etc), the Netherlands does use the European Digital Covid Certificate system. This means that if you received an EU-standard Coronavirus vaccine and/or booster in another EU country, you can use your Digital Covid Certificate (DCC) in the Netherlands.

The Dutch equivalent of the DCC is displayed through the 'CoronaCheck' app. A paper certificate can be downloaded via coronacheck.nl



Banking and Finance

Opening a bank account

A Dutch bank account is recommended as many organisations require a Dutch bank account if you want to use their service. Especially if you are not from an EU/EEA country. Credit cards are not accepted widely in the Netherlands.

In order to open a personal bank account in the Netherlands, you must register with the municipality to get a BSN. Some online banks also allow you to already open an account before you receive your BSN. You may use a student-friendly bank with a physical office (ABN Amro, Rabobank or ING) or an online bank (Bunq and Bitsafe).

What you need to open a bank account

- ☐ Admission letter or student registration statement
- ☐ Proof of your municipal registration, address and citizen service number or BSN
- ☐ Valid form of identification (passport or EU national identity card)
- ☐ If Non-EU: a residence document or IND residence approval letter
- ☐ Some form of deposit for your new bank account

During your appointment, the bank staff will confirm your details, check your ID and make copies for security purposes. Remember to update your address with your bank when you move house.

The process of setting up an account can be completed relatively quickly. You will receive your debit card in the post a few days afterwards. You will also receive your authorisation code (PIN) for your debit card by post: usually in separate deliveries.

National Taxes

Wage taxes and social security contributions are usually deducted and paid by an employer. Your payslip should clearly show how much money has been paid in tax in a month.

Everyone in the Netherlands must also complete a yearly tax return. For your first year in the Netherlands, you will have to use a paper ‘M form’. This form is quite long, but if you only have one stream of income, you will not need to fill in every page. There are lots of tax consultants that can help, and also various webinars available online about the ‘M form’. The form will be sent to you in the mail.

After your first year in the Netherlands you can complete an online tax return. You do this by logging into the Tax Authority (‘belastingdienst’) website or app with your DigiD.

The tax office will then confirm your tax return and inform you if you need to pay more tax, or will receive a rebate. It is important to note that the Dutch tax office does not require you to settle (or pay out itself) for amounts under € 50.

Returns can be sent in from 1 January, and you have until 1 May to complete your yearly return. For your first year’s tax return, you have an extended deadline until 1 July, and you can always ask the Belastingdienst for an extension.

Insurance

The only mandatory insurances in the Netherlands are health insurance (see healthcare section), and car insurance if you own a car.

However, many Dutch people choose to take out personal liability insurance

in case they accidentally damage someone’s property (for example). Personal liability insurance is often very cheap, and available through your bank or a general insurance company.

Other types of insurance available in the Netherlands include home and contents insurance. Your landlord may require you to take out contents insurance in your rented property. Both types of insurance are readily available through both banks and insurance agencies.

Benefits (Toeslagen)

As a taxpayer in the Netherlands, you may be entitled to various benefits to help with the cost of health insurance, housing, childcare; and more. The names of these are outlined below. You can find out more information on the websites of the UWV (worker’s agency), SVB (social insurance agency), and Belastingdienst (tax authority)



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Zorgtoeslag	a rebate on the costs of your health insurance (please see the healthcare section for more details)
Huurtoeslag	a rebate on the costs of your housing (please see the housing section for more details)
Werkloosheidsuitkering	paid to unemployed people to provide income whilst searching for a job

Other benefits include payments for people with long-term medical conditions, for people with disabilities, and for people that have survived the death of their spouse.

Work and career

Working as a student

Many students take up part time jobs to cover their daily expenses. Popular jobs are in bars, restaurants, hotels, delivery, administration jobs in their field of study and at the university itself. It is common to work for an employment agency in the Netherlands. Please note students will have to take out Dutch basic health insurance, pay taxes, and make sure to comply with working regulations. In general, though, it is not recommended to work more than 8–16 hours per week so that you can continue to get the most out of your study programme.

I have an EU nationality

Students with an EU nationality can work in the Netherlands without restrictions during and after their studies

I have a non-EU nationality

Non-EU students in the Netherlands must have a student residence permit. On the back of the residence document, you will find information about working in the Netherlands. In general, though, non-EU students may work:

- Up to a maximum of 16 hours per week
- Or:
- Full time during the months June, July and August.

Non-EU students also require a work permit to work in the Netherlands. This is a fairly uncomplicated process, and the application is submitted by your employer at the UWV (Dutch Employment Agency).

EU and Non-EU students are also allowed to work as self-employed person during their studies. There are no restrictions on the hours. You must register your company at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce or KVK.

Doing an internship as part of your study programme

All students may take part in an internship if it is part of their study programme. No work permit is required, however you must make sure to have a signed internship agreement (signed by you, your internship employer, and your university).

Lots of study programmes in the Netherlands have an internship element (this can be worth up to 20 credits). Whilst all universities have their different processes, many place their internship period in the first six months of the year. This means that competition for internships is very strong in this time.

There are large numbers of English-language internships available on websites including jobs. workinrotterdamthehague.org, or on the websites of the various sector hubs in The Hague region. Think here of organisations like The Hague Humanity Hub, The Hague Tech, Apollo 14 or The Hague Security Delta.

Finding a job after you graduate

It is easier to find a job as an international in the Netherlands compared to many other countries. As international city of Peace and Justice and seat of the government The Hague is home to many international organisations, multinational companies, innovative start-ups and NGOs. For many knowledge-based jobs Dutch is not required.

Of course, finding a job is still a process to go through, and searching and applying is something that takes time and can be confidence-sapping. Luckily there are plenty of places in The Hague region to find help, get advice, and obtain skills to boost your CV.

With The Hague forming part of the 'Randstad' conurbation of over 8.5 million people, if you are happy to commute to another city the chances of finding a job increase exponentially.

Orientation Year permit for (non-EU) graduates

At the end of your study programme in the Netherlands, all students with a non-EU nationality may apply for an Orientation Year permit (Zoekjaar). This permit allows you to live and/or work with no work restrictions in the Netherlands for one year. You can apply for the Orientation Year permit up to three years after you graduate – even if you move back to your country of origin or elsewhere.

One of the advantages of the Orientation Year permit is that it allows you to access the Highly Skilled Migrant permit with a lower salary level (2022: € 2,540). This therefore means that you are as competitive on the labour market as a graduate with Dutch/EU citizenship.

For more information on the Orientation Year Permit, head to the IND website: ind.nl/en/residence-permits/work/residence-permit-for-orientation-year

You must make sure to apply for the permit before your student permit expires.

Read more on The Hague's economic sectors on our website: www.thehagueinternationalcentre.nl/working-in-the-hague-region

For economic sectors in other Dutch cities you can visit the national Welcome to NL website: www.welcome-to-nl.nl/

If you want to stay updated on local career events for internationals, follow The Hague International Centre on LinkedIn or sign up for our newsletter.

Top Sectors in The Hague Region

New Energy	The Hague region is a hub for innovative, low and zero-carbon ways of producing energy. For decades The Hague city has been the home town of large numbers of multinational energy companies, along with their support businesses and engineering companies. This means that it's a stimulating place to work on the energy sources of the (near) future
IT & Technology	Due to its mixture of excellent universities (including nearby Delft), start-up campuses, and established global tech companies The Hague has established itself as a centre of IT & Tech innovation. In The Hague region companies, research institutes, and the government all work together to come up with new solutions; an example of this is the new Strategic Plan for Artificial Intelligence
Legal & Policy	The Hague city has been associated with the international human rights-based system for decades. Accordingly, it has a very high concentrations of legal scholars, practices, innovation centres; agencies, and more. Being home to the Dutch parliament, international organisations like the International Court of Justice, Europol; and more means that people and companies in The Hague are extremely close to likeminded policymakers and legalists
Finance	Ongoing investments and funding are vital for innovation and business growth. In The Hague there is an established financial industry with major multinationals headquartered in the city: Nationale-Nederlanden, Aegon, MN Services, NIBC and FMO. They work together with key financial institutions based in the region make up a solid foundation for a healthy business climate critical for the start-ups and business success
Cybersecurity	Cybersecurity presents an interesting crossover of several areas that The Hague is already an important part, and rapidly evolving technology. The region has an unparalleled ecosystem of cyber-based companies, and is also a leading region for creating the initiatives and policies that govern global cybersecurity concerns
NGO's and Impact	The Hague is the European home of the non-governmental sector, and there are hundreds of NGO's located in the city. A city, where entrepreneurs, governmental institutions, academic and business communities together are working towards a better, safer and more just world. The city is so well regarded in this area that it is called an 'Impact City'

Job portals and recruiters

There are large numbers of job portals and multilingual recruiters that can help you with your job search after you graduate. For more information, and direct links to the various portals, check out the website of The Hague International Centre: www.thehagueinternationalcentre.nl/looking-for-a-job-in-the-netherlands?parent=123

Top Tips when applying

Open applications

In the Netherlands it is quite normal to send a speculative application to a company or organisation that you would like to work for. Lots of companies even have a specific 'open application' tab on their recruitment page. It is thought that if someone has useful skills, then a position will be found for them (rather than the other way around), so if a company finds your CV interesting you might be invited to an interview!

Networking

Whilst almost every company and institution will post their vacancies on their own job pages, on local job portals, with multi-lingual recruiters; and on LinkedIn, they will also recruit 'from their own network'. This, combined with Dutch fondness for 'directness' means that if you are speaking to someone that works somewhere interesting do not be afraid to mention that you are job seeking and would like to learn more about their company or organisation in the future.

Focus on what you can offer

Lots of Dutch employers place a strong emphasis on individual and/or unique

skills. For example, if you speak a non-European language then emphasize that you can work on opening new markets or providing information for a diverse group of people. If you are an account manager, but you also have experience with business development, mention it! Many Dutch employers love crossover skills.

Make it memorable

When applying for jobs take some time to make sure that your CV is easy to read and has something to make it memorable. Whether that's a colour scheme, innovative way of presenting your skills, or just something that demonstrates your personality.

Volunteering, traineeships, etc.

If you are just out of university, check to see if a company or organisation has a series of traineeships, or offers volunteer positions to start with. A traineeship is a fixed-term learn/work trajectory, whilst lots of organisations have a team of paid staff supported by volunteers.

Make use of your internships

If you're currently studying and your course has an internship element, take it! Lots of people in the Netherlands use their in-study internship as a stepping stone into employment when they graduate. Your university is also likely to have a very good network of connections via its careers centre, too.

Volunteering

It is important to note that volunteering has a different status in the Netherlands to many countries. Not only are

No Dutch? No problem. Volunteer!

Over 300 volunteer jobs suitable for non-Dutch speakers.



**VOLUNTEER THE HAGUE PROJECT
HELPS ENGLISH SPEAKING
RESIDENTS CONNECT WITH LOCAL
NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS.**



volunteerthehague.nl



volunteers often offered a small financial contribution for their time, employers consider volunteer work to be on a similar level to paid work: especially if it is relevant to the job function. Lots of Dutch people take time to volunteer in their careers, and it can be a very rewarding experience.

You do not need a work permit to volunteer, either. English-language volunteering vacancies in The Hague can be found at volunteerthehague.nl

Learning Dutch

Whilst there are plenty of people working in the Netherlands that do not speak Dutch, it will be very beneficial for any job search after you graduate. There are plenty of opportunities to learn Dutch in The Hague region; and your university may offer a free or discounted course to help get you started.

You can also check out the Taalhuis Den Haag for more opportunities to learn and practice Dutch: taalhuisdenhaag.nl

Entrepreneurship

The Netherlands is very highly rated as a place for entrepreneurs. The process of starting-up a business has been made as simple as possible, and there are large numbers of start-up hubs that offer discounted office space, access to experts, and support with finding financing. The Hague Business Agency or one of the hubs may be able to guide you in the process.

In The Hague region the start-up hubs available are:

Apollo 14

a hub dedicated to social enterprise and 'impact' businesses.

The Hague Humanity Hub

a hub dedicated to NGO's and the next generation of globally-relevant organisations.

The Hague Tech

a hub dedicated to IT, technology, and all things digital.

Technology Park Ypenburg

a hub located at the home of Dutch flight, the former Fokker campus, and dedicated to aerospace innovation and high-tech business.

YES!Delft

a hub dedicated to AI and Blockchain, with two campuses in Delft and The Hague.

Start-Up in Residence and Essential Start-Up Personnel Permit

The Dutch IND also has schemes (run in collaboration with the Dutch Enterprise Agency, the RVO) that allow entrepreneurs to come to the Netherlands and begin their start-up; combined with a residence permit. There is also a permit available for essential workers from outside the EU that bring special skills to start-ups. Both permits have their own requirements, listed on the IND website.

Welcome to The Hague.

Royal city by the sea



◆ The City
The Beach
The **Hague.**

denhaag.com

Important information

Emergency Numbers

Fire, police, and ambulance services:
112

Suicidal thoughts:
113

Non-emergency police contact number:
+31 (0) 900 88 44

Non-emergency medical care

In the case of a medical emergency, always call **112**. However, if the issue is non-urgent but you would like to speak to a doctor you can ring your GP's surgery during office hours. Outside of office hours you can reach an 'out of hours GP line', which is staffed by doctors. In The Hague you can ring 'Hadoks' on **+31(0)70 346 96 69**.

Emergency Sirens

There are around 4,200 emergency sirens located around the Netherlands. If you hear the sirens, go home, and turn on their television or radio for updates).

However, the first Monday of each month, at 12:00, the sirens are tested. This so if you hear the sirens on the first Monday of the month, do not be worried!

Country and Area Codes

Country Code for the Netherlands::
+31

Dutch mobile phone number code:
113

Area code for The Hague:
070

Currency & daily payments

The currency in use in the Netherlands is the **Euro**, and most places take both cash and card payments (some places are cash-free). Contactless or mobile phone-based payment is also accepted in many places.

Please note that many places do not accept Visa, American Express, or Mastercard. Dutch bank cards will most often be Maestro branded.

Time zones

The Netherlands is located in the Central European time zone (CET). This is one hour after Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +1).

At the moment, the Netherlands observes a Summer Time shift, with the clocks being put forwards by one hour in spring, and back again an hour in autumn.

Seasons and weather

Generally the Netherlands has a 'temperate maritime climate', which means that winters are usually mild and summers cool. Rainfall is distributed throughout the year, with winter temperatures generally between around 2 and 6 degrees centigrade and summer temperatures between 17 and 20 degrees centigrade.

In recent years there have been longer periods of dry, warm weather. There is often a little snowfall in January and February, and the Netherlands is affected by North Sea storms in the autumn and spring.

Important dates and festivals

On national holidays people in the Netherlands have the day off work and though only (some) Christian holidays are recognised as national holidays, the right to take time off for a religious holiday is protected by law.



New Year's Day (<i>Nieuwjaarsdag</i>)	1 January
Good Friday (<i>Goede Vrijdag</i>)	15 April 2022 / 7 April 2023 / 29 March 2024 (not every employer gives the day off work)
Easter Sunday (<i>Eerste Paasdag</i>)	17 April 2022 / 9 April 2023 / 31 March 2024
Easter Monday (<i>Tweede Paasdag</i>)	18 April 2022 / 10 April 2023 / 1 April 2024
King's Day (<i>Koningsdag</i>)	27 April
Liberation Day (<i>Bevrijdingsdag</i>)	5 May (only a day off work once every five years)
Ascension Day (<i>Hemelvaartsdag</i>)	26 May 2022 / 18 May 2023 / 9 May 2024
Pentecost (<i>Pinksteren</i>)	5 June 2022 / 28 May 2023 / 19 May 2024
Christmas Day and Boxing Day (<i>Eerste en Tweede Kerstdag</i>)	25 December and 26 December

Cultural do's and don'ts

Punctuality

Many Dutch people schedule their social events into their 'agenda' weeks in advance and to non-Dutch eyes may attribute small amounts of time to various social events. Accordingly, lots of Dutch people place a high value on punctuality.

Smoking

Almost all places in the Netherlands are designated non-smoking (*rookvrij*) areas and it is courtesy to ask your companion before lighting your cigarette.

Meeting people

It is common for people to take the initiative and introduce themselves when meeting new people. Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, lots of Dutch people placed importance on the initial greeting handshake. When meeting with someone regarded as more than an acquaintance, it is also common to greet with two kisses on the cheeks.

Distance

Dutch people may be used to a bit more personal, social, and emotional distance than people from non-Dutch cultures.

Directness

Many Dutch people pride themselves on their (sometimes brutal) honesty. The Dutch dub this '*hollandse nuchterheid*', which roughly translated means 'Dutch soberness in thinking.' For example, if someone dislikes an idea you should expect them to say so, with their reasoning.

Consensus

Consensus is a valued commodity in Dutch social and public life because the political system in the Netherlands is what is called a 'consensus democracy.' It is therefore common to make sure that everyone involved has been able to give their view before a decision is made.

Birthdays

It is custom to not only wish the person having their birthday congratulations (*gefeliciteerd*) but to also congratulate everyone in the room! Many Dutch people keep track of birthdays in their friendship group and family using a calendar kept on the back of the toilet door.

Dinners

If you invite your new Dutch friends or colleagues for dinner, expect them to be (very) punctual. It is generally custom to bring a small, edible or floral, present with you. If you bring wine, don't expect it to be opened that evening, though!

It is customary to wait until the host has raised their glass to begin drinking and usually the host is expected to refill glasses. Second helpings are likely to be offered, but only once everyone has finished their first plate.

Bills and tipping

If your meal and the service provided was good, it is usual to leave a 5-10 percent tip. Famously, Dutch people tend to split the bill (using the *Tikkie* app), though if someone else is paying expect them to mention it before sitting down in the restaurant.

Getting around and public transport

Public transport

The Netherlands has an excellent public transport system, with trains, trams, buses; and water taxis available. The national rail company is called Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) and is responsible for train services across the country. Their blue and yellow trains are easily recognisable. Various other companies handle local routes, including HTM for trams in The Hague and RET for metros.

You can check your fastest commute from A to B via the 9292 (9292.nl/en) and NS app or Google Maps.

Buses are operated by a range of companies, and some cities (such as Rotterdam) also have water taxis and water buses.

OV-Chipkaart

You can purchase tickets from machines in stations, or online, but if you are staying in the Netherlands for more than a very short time it is a good idea to get a personal public transport card (OV-Chipkaart). These can be used on all forms of public transport, by 'tapping in' at the station or on the bus.

There are two types of OV-Chipkaart: blue, and yellow. The blue card can be obtained at a ticket office, and can then be loaded up with credit at a ticket machine. Blue cards are 'anonymous', whilst you can also buy a yellow, 'personalised' card online. Yellow cards are linked to an online account, and you can purchase various packages for them.

For more information, head to www.ovchipkaart.nl/en

Bicycles

The Netherlands is known as a biking country, and there are more bicycles than people! Bike infrastructure is very advanced in the Netherlands, with many streets having separate bike lanes. You can tell a bike lane because it is often made from red bricks or red tarmac (and usually has the outline of a bike painted on it).

You can buy a bike in hundreds of shops across the Netherlands, and you do not need to wear a helmet when riding it. Make sure to purchase a strong lock with your bike. When you do lock the bike, remember to lock it to something (for example a bike rack).

Many students use Swapfiets (look out for the bikes with the blue front wheel!) which offers a bike as a service monthly contract to use their bikes. Free repairs are included.

Dutch train stations often have multi-level bike parking with plenty of racks available.

Driving

You may use a driving license from another EU member state in the Netherlands until it expires. If you have a non-EU driving license, you can use it for 185 days after you register in the Netherlands. After that you will have to take a Dutch driving test and obtain a Dutch license.

How can The Hague International Centre help you settle in?

The Hague International Centre is your point of contact as international in The Hague region. Reach out to the centre for any question you may have during your time in The Hague as a student or when you are looking for a job once you graduate. Check our website for updates on how things work in the Netherlands or where you can go for help in our service provider section. Sign up for our newsletter or follow on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram channels. Visit our daily helpdesk in City Hall to ask your question directly to our information officers. We also organise regular events to help international newcomers settle in The Hague region.



Our events include:

Moving to The Hague webinars about all the essential steps you need to take to settle in and feel at home in The Hague. Welcome to The Hague events for newcomers with an introduction to Dutch culture, things to do, city tour and borrel with other newcomers.

Various seminars and webinars around important topics such as taxes, healthcare, housing and work in collaboration with our expert partners. Feel at Home Fair to connect newcomers to sport, social and community clubs and networks in the region.

All of our upcoming events are available at www.thehagueinternationalcentre.nl/events



City Events

For everything that is going on in the city of The Hague, make sure to check out denhaag.com, which showcases the best in culture, lifestyle, and more.



Text

The Hague International Centre/Gemeente Den Haag

Date of publication

August 2022

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