

Welcome  
to

The  
Hague

The Hague  
international  
centre

Welcome to  
The Hague



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## Notes

# 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 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.”**



# The Hague International Centre

Moving to another county 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 people living in The Hague, Delft, Rijswijk; and Leidschendam-Voorburg.

We work as a one-stop-shop 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.

## Our Services

### Simplified government formalities

The Hague International Centre can help you arrange the following official matters:

- Obtaining your work and residence permit through the IND
- Registration with your local municipality (BRP registration)
- Issuing a BSN (Citizen's Service Number)
- Deregistration from the municipality (The Hague only)
- Obtaining extracts from the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP)
- Purchasing a Statement of Health (CBR) for driving licence exchange

### Information on settling in

You can always contact The Hague International Centre for questions around

- Immigration issues
- Legalising documents
- Obtaining a DigiD
- Exchanging your driving licence
- Converting your Digital Covid Certificate
- 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

- Moving to The Hague Webinars
- The CONNECT Welcome Month
- The Feel at Home International Community Fair
- Various seminars and webinars around important topics such as taxes, healthcare, or housing 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](http://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](#).

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

## Contact Information and Opening Hours

The Hague International Centre is open for appointments or 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.

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

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

## When do I need to make an appointment?

In some cases, we require that you make an appointment, for example:

- Municipal registration
- Presenting certificates after registration
- Collecting residence and work permits

### 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.

# Relo cation

# Relocation checklist

## Before you move

- Find your job

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- Arrange your visa

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- Arrange your residence and work permit

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- Arrange travel insurance

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- Arrange short term accommodation

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- Find a school or childcare provider for your children

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- Arrange your removable goods move

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- Prepare the necessary documents

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- Book your flight to the Netherlands

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- Check how to import a pet

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- Check how to import your car

## Upon arrival

- Arrange transport to your new city

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- Check in to your short stay accommodation

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- Register at your municipality to get your BSN

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- Register at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get your BSN

---

- Get your privileged or MFA card

---

- Collect your residence document

---

- Take a TB test if you need to

---

- Obtain a Digid

---

- Open a bank account

---

- Get a Dutch phone with a plan

---

- Find long term accommodation

---

- Arrange your utilities

## Settling in

- Apply for the 30% ruling

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- Take out Dutch health insurance

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- Register with a family doctor, pharmacy and dentist for your medical needs

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- Exchange your driving licence

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- Apply for a parking permit

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- Sign up for the newcomers' event of your local international centre

# Official Matters

When you arrive in the Netherlands there are certain government formalities that you will have to take care of. For lots of people, this begins even before they arrive in the Netherlands, with a trip to a Dutch consulate overseas.

In general, everyone staying in the Netherlands for longer than four months must register at their local town hall in the Municipal Personal Records Database (Basisregistratie Personen). Once you have registered in the BRP, you will be issued with a BSN (Burgerservicenummer). If you will stay for less than four months you must register in the Non-Residents Database (RNI).

Anyone with a non-EU nationality who is staying for more than 3 months in the Netherlands will need a residence permit. Some may need a visa to be able to enter the Netherlands (more information available on The Netherlands and You). You can pick up your residence permit from the IND (Immigrate en Naturalisatie Dienst), at The Hague International Centre as a highly skilled migrant, ICT transferee, start-up, entrepreneur, scientific researcher, graduate or family member.

## Immigration

The IND is responsible for assessing and providing residence permits (*Verblijfsvergunningen*) for non-EU people living and working in the Netherlands. In most cases, someone's residence permit will require a 'sponsor'. Employees are sponsored by their employer, students by their educational institute.

There are residence permits available for a range of reasons: for example working, studying, researching; as a family member, as an entrepreneur, and so on. Other residence permits include the Orientation Year Permit (Zoekjaar), available for anyone that has graduated from a Dutch (or world top 200) university. Each residence permit has its own requirements regarding, for example, income or civil status.

Anyone with an EU nationality does not need to obtain a residence permit when living in the Netherlands, aside from certain specific circumstances.

If you are representing a foreign government or working at an international organisation you do not apply for a residence permit. You will be allowed to work and reside in the Netherlands based upon various treaties. Privileged people are registered by their Protocol office with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and will be issued with a diplomatic ID card. Your ID card is proof of your privileges, legal right of residence and immunities. This is also the case for family members of diplomats and representatives of international organisations.



For more information on applying, requirements, waiting times; and so on, visit the IND website: [www.ind.nl/en](http://www.ind.nl/en)

## Municipal Registration

### Short Stay

Those staying in the Netherlands for less than 4 months, but who would like to obtain a BSN, can do so via the Non-Residents Records Database, [the RNI \(Registratie Niet Ingezetenen\) process](#). A BSN is available via the RNI process through a limited number of Dutch municipalities, though this includes most of the larger cities, including The Hague, Leiden, Rotterdam and Westland. Other people that do not live in the Netherlands but need to have a relationship with the Dutch government can also apply for a BSN via the RNI process. For full information check the [Netherlands And You website](#).

### Stays longer than 4 months

Anyone intending to stay in the Netherlands for longer than 4 months must register in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP). This information is kept by the local town hall or municipality, and people that are registered in the [Municipal Personal Records Database \(BRP\)](#) obtain a BSN. In the Netherlands a BSN is required to pay taxes, open a bank account, take out a mobile phone contract, and sign up for health insurance.

BRP registration is an uncomplicated process, however an appointment must be booked at your local town hall in order to carry out the registration. Before attending the appointment make sure to bring your passport and residence permit (if applicable), proof of address (this can be a rental contract or permission form), and any legal documents required to prove, for example, your marital status. Information on the [documents required](#) for registering in the BRP can be found on The Hague International Centre website.

### Privileged people

Those arriving in the Netherlands as a representative of an overseas government or an international organisation are not required to register with the municipality, but do so with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, it is advisable to also register with the municipality after your arrival to be able to access online government services. In general, many privileged people who stay in the Netherlands for multiple years choose to register themselves.

## DigiD

In the Netherlands, lots of government services are available online. In order to make this online system as secure as possible, the Dutch government has developed DigiD: an online secure login portal for residents.

If you are only registered in the Non-Residents database or at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs you need to follow a different procedure. EU citizens need to visit the DigiD desk in The Hague to verify their identity. Non-EU citizens need to register with the municipality first. More information is available on the [Dutch government's website](#).

Anyone with a BSN number can apply for a DigiD profile, via [www.digid.nl/en](#). Once you have created your DigiD login details you can use them to access both local government and national government services: for example filing your yearly tax statement, changing the address of your BRP registration, or applying for housing or healthcare benefits.

## Leaving the Netherlands

If you are about to leave the Netherlands, it is important to remember [to return your residence permit](#) (as it remains property of the IND), and also to de-register from your municipality.

You can hand in your residence permit at The Hague International Centre or any IND desk : make sure to check their opening times beforehand! De-registering from the municipality is also generally very simple and can be done online or at a desk in your local town hall.

**Tip:** if you are leaving the Netherlands temporarily you do not need to de-register. In general, de-registering from the municipality will also inform other government authorities that you are leaving: however this is not always the case. If you are leaving the Netherlands permanently, get in touch with us for more information.

# Housing

Depending on where you have lived previously, homes in the Netherlands might be somewhat different to what you are used to. Housing in the Netherlands ranges from historic structures to the latest in housebuilding and co-living technology. You may find that your new home is a touch smaller than you expect. The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in the world (more than 400 people per square kilometre!).

Generally, there is a lot of demand for houses in the months of August/September, and January/February. Expect your house-hunting process to take a little longer in those months; as you will be searching alongside people that follow the academic calendar such as students, researchers and families.

Within The Hague region there are all sorts of housing options: from modern tower blocks and developments to classic terraced houses. Most neighbourhoods have a mixture of housing types to promote social cohesion.

## Short Stay Housing

Short stay housing is generally considered to be properties for rent at a maximum of one year. In most cases, short stay properties are rented fully furnished with an 'inclusive' rental price covering utility costs and local taxes.

Short stay apartments may also allow you to book for a specific period (can be mid-month), include a break clause, and have the option to extend a booking with little hassle. In recent years short stay complexes for students have also been developed, such as The Student Hotel.

We recommend using short stay housing or serviced apartments once you arrive in the Netherlands over hotels or Airbnb. In most cases you can register on the address of the short stay and get your BSN. Once you register you do not have to pay tourist taxes anymore.

*Please note that prices for short stay apartments are likely to be calculated nightly. For example, a studio may cost around €100 per night.*



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## Renting a Property

In the Netherlands, rental properties are commonly separated into two sectors

1. The social sector.
2. The private sector.

### Social rented housing

Properties with a monthly rent of lower than €752 (the limit determined in 2021, subject to change on a yearly basis) qualify as 'social sector' housing. They are generally owned by non-profit housing corporations or cooperatives, and tenants can only have a maximum income of around €40,000 per year to qualify for social housing. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of social housing in the Netherlands, and waiting lists can be up to 10 years in some regions.

### Private rented housing

Also known as the 'free market', private rented properties have a rent of more than 752 euros per month. The private sector covers most properties available to newcomers, and prices are not controlled by local or national government. Accordingly, this means that lots of rental housing in the Netherlands can feel somewhat expensive for the size. Tenants in the Netherlands are very well protected in legal terms, so it is very useful to know your rights.

In The Hague the municipality requires affordable rent permit for private rented properties that have a monthly rental price of between the €752 and €951 and houses with less than 185 points in a valuation system. This means people with an annual income of €60.000 as single or €70.000 as couple often have to rent bigger and more expensive housing. The permit protects rental prices for people with a lower income.

### Rent benefit (Huurtoeslag)

If you have a lower income, it is likely that you will be eligible for rent benefit. *Huurtoeslag* is a benefit that reimburses part of 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 higher than €237,62, but lower than €752,33. Your eligibility for rent benefit is calculated based on your household income.

For more information about the rental benefit, visit the Dutch tax authority website ([Belastingdienst](#)).



## Rights of Tenants

In contrast to some countries, tenants in the private rental sector in the Netherlands are well-protected by existing tenancy laws. Some housing laws in the private sector have been loosened in recent years.

The landlord is always responsible for	The tenant must, in return
Ensuring availability of the property within the agreed rental period	Pay the agreed monthly rent on time
Covering any necessary major repairs and maintenance (within a reasonable period)	Follow the agreed-upon house rules
Solving any problems affecting the tenant (plumbing, electricity, Internet etc.)	Pay for minor repairs (such as a broken faucet)
And giving valid reasons and due notice to cancel the rental contract	Allow the landlord to enter the accommodation to make repairs (within a reasonable period)
	Give valid reasons and due notice to cancel the rental contract

### Costs when moving into a rented property

In the Netherlands it is usual to pay a deposit (*borg*) of one or two months rental fee. You may also choose to pay for items that are carried over from the previous tenant. This can include the cost of, for example, laminate flooring or any items of furniture that you have agreed to take over.

*Please note that additional 'key charges' or similar are illegal. Some rental agencies may ask for an administration fee, but this should be a small amount. If you think that you are being asked for too much money (for example, an amount around one month's rent), get in contact with the Fair Rent Team at your local municipality.*

*If you are worried that your landlord may be raising your rent price unfairly, over-charging for services, or acting improperly in any way, then get in contact with the Fair Rent Team at your local municipality.*

*If you have questions about your contract, housing permits or disputes with your landlord you can contact the Rent Desk from the municipality of The Hague. They can guide you or help you get in touch with the right authorities.*

### Disputes with a landlord

If a landlord, for example, refuses to or does not complete necessary work within a reasonable time period, you can apply to the Rent Commission (huurcommissie) for a ruling to be made against the landlord. The commission can require a landlord to complete work, but also reduce your rent due to the lower living standards you face due to work not being completed.

## Tips for finding a house

The Netherlands, and especially the Randstad Metropolitan area, is facing a period of limited supply of affordable housing, especially for students, young people and middle incomes. Housing prices are increasing rapidly. You are advised to start your search early and check prices beforehand.

1. Funda and Pararius have the most listings of new houses for rent and for sale. When you see a house you like, you can contact the real estate agent to arrange a viewing of the property. Never accept a house and pay a deposit if you have not visited the house and are still abroad.
2. To smoothen the move it is recommended to find short stay housing on arrival. You can already register for the municipality, settle in and start viewing houses after your arrival. Often internationals ask a real estate agent or relocation agent to help them with finding a house. Real estate agents often charge one months rent for their help if successful.
3. It is important to consider the distance between your home, workplace, schools of your children and public transport connections before you decide where you want to live. Dutch cities are compact and the commute may be longer than expected. Dutch and international parents tend to live relatively close to the school of their children.
4. Insist on a diplomatic clause in your rental contract. This addition allows you to break the contract if you have to return to your home country or a new destination.

## Buying a Property

There are no restrictions on buying a house in the Netherlands for internationals. Likewise, internationals are usually able to obtain a mortgage if required, depending on your nationality, income, savings and family situation. There are dedicated expat mortgage advisors at banks and agencies to guide you to the Dutch housing market and mortgages.

If you are looking to buy a house, make sure to check if it is for sale with freehold (*eigen grond*), or leasehold (*erfpacht*). You also own the ground your property is on with freehold properties, while leasehold properties incur extra yearly costs because you're required to pay taxes to the municipality for owning property on state-owned ground. When people buy houses in the Netherlands, a survey is undertaken by two professional surveyors: one representing the buying party and one representing the selling party.

It is usually a good idea to speak to a professional mortgage advisor and a real estate agent once you decide to begin your house search. This means that you will have professional advice on your budget, what to look out for, help with the bidding process and property rights.

## Student Housing

Dutch Universities do not have a legal requirement to provide housing for their international students. However, there are various student housing associations that rent only to students (proof of registration at an education institution is therefore required). In The Hague region the largest student housing association is called [DUWO](#). It is highly recommended to contact the housing officer at your university or sign up with the association immediately after accepting your study offer, as rooms are often reserved incredibly quickly.

Aside from housing associations, there are several commercial options for finding student housing. These range from expensive (up to €1,000 per month), fully furnished studios with lots of in-house facilities; to more basic options, either furnished or unfurnished.

Many students also find housing through the private sector, and/or in a house share. It is important to find housing where you can register for the municipality to obtain a BSN. For more information and a list of housing providers, check out the [Study in The Hague website](#).



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## Bills: utilities and taxes

I own a property

If you own your own property, you should expect to pay for water, electricity, and gas. Newer homes will not have a gas connection. The choice for gas and electricity providers is not limited and you can use a comparison website to find out the cheapest options for you. Likewise, you can choose from a range of internet providers to get the best deal.

Water providers in the Netherlands works slightly different and are offered on a geographical basis. The Province of South Holland is covered by three separate water associations. The western section (which includes The Hague, Wassenaar, etc.) is managed by Dunea, the southern section by Evides, and the central section by Oasen (only available in Dutch).

I am renting

If you're a tenant, then the first thing to check is your rental contract – it is required to have a section breaking down what your rent includes. The monthly rental price of 'inclusive rent' properties includes all utility bills (g/w/l), and sometimes, internet coverage. If you rent an 'inclusive rent' property, make sure to ask your landlord for a year-end utilities statement as you may have under- or overpaid across the year. If you underpaid, you may be required to cover the difference. In the best case, you may be owed the difference for having overpaid.

If your rental price is 'exclusive,' then the gas, water, electricity; and internet costs are your own responsibility. This means that you are free to switch to the cheapest provider or the one with the best service on a monthly or yearly basis, depending on the contract you agree to. Your water company is set by your geographical region; see above.

## What taxes should I expect to pay?

The types of local property taxes that you pay depends on whether you rent or own your property. You should expect to receive the bills at the start of the year, in February. For more information about the various charges and payment methods, check the website of your local municipality.

### **Rubbish/waste tax** (*Afvalstoffenheffing*)

This is generally calculated depending on the number of people in your property. Eligibility for exemption is based on total household income and savings.

**paid by everyone**

### **Wastewater tax** (*Rioolheffing*)

Almost all houses and buildings are connected to the main municipal sewage system; and each household can use up to 500 cubic metres of wastewater (usage over this incurs an extra charge).

**paid by everyone**

### **Water system maintenance charge**

(*Waterschapsbelasting*)

This is a tax paid to your local water board (interestingly, Dutch water boards are some of the eldest democratically elected institutions in the world). The tax is used to service dykes, maintain sewers, and to generally keep everyone's feet dry.

**paid by homeowners/landlords**

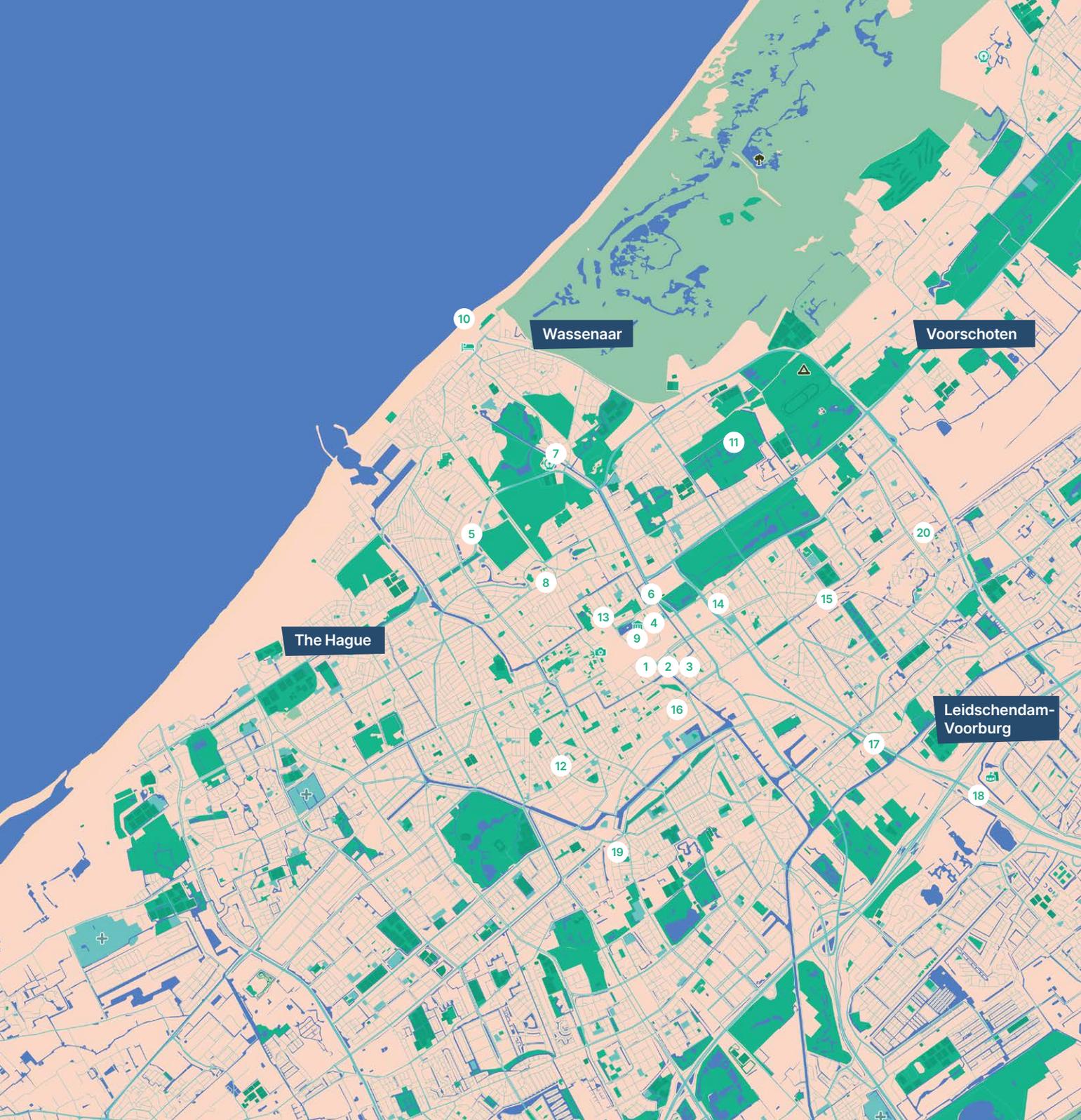
### **Property taxes** (*Onroerende zaakbelasting/ OZB*)

If you own a property, you will receive a municipal property tax bill (*woonlastennota*) each February, with the amount of property tax you must pay. This is calculated based on the value of your property (the *WOZ* value). Please note that if you live in a houseboat, you pay a slightly different tax called *roerende zaakbelasting*; and will also have to pay for the 'rent' of your mooring.

**paid by homeowners/landlords**

Privileged people may be exempt from paying certain taxes. In general, they have to pay charges for services rendered but may be exempt from paying general taxes. For example, they have to pay the waste disposal and collection, sewerage and water treatment charges, but may be exempt from property tax, dog tax and water authority taxes. You can object to invoices within 6 weeks of the date of the assessment. You can read more in the Protocol Guide of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.





**City Highlights**

- 1. The Hague International Centre
- 2. Tourist Information (The Hague Info Store)
- 3. Central Library
- 4. Mauritshuis
- 5. Kunstmuseum Den Haag
- 6. Escher in The Palace
- 7. Madurodam
- 8. The Peace Palace
- 9. Binnenhof
- 10. De Pier, Scheveningen
- 11. Japanese garden
- 12. The Hague Market
- 13. Noordeinde Palace

**Railway stations**

- 14. Den Haag Centraal
- 15. Den Haag Laan v NOI
- 16. Den Haag HS
- 17. Voorburg
- 18. Den Haag Ypenburg
- 19. Den Haag Moerwijk
- 20. Den Haag Mariahoeve

# Education and childcare

The Hague is regularly named as one of the best placed in the Netherlands to bring up children: thanks to its superb educational infrastructure, child-friendly neighbourhoods, and mixture of fine culture and easily accessible nature and open spaces.

Generally, parents and children are very well supported in the Netherlands, and the Dutch educational system is one of the highest-rated in Europe for attainment. Luckily for international parents, The Hague region has the largest selection of international schools in the country.

In the Netherlands both parents may take time off for childcare (both post-birth and as the child grows up), and there are multiple benefits paid by the Dutch government to parents that can help with, for example, childcare costs.

## Childcare: day care and pre-schools

The Hague region has a diverse array of English-speaking and bilingual day care centres for the youngest children. They often work directly together with the international schools. Most will accept children from the ages of 6 weeks through to 4 years. In order to make sure that your child won't be held in a waiting list after you arrive in The Hague region, we would recommend exploring day care options before you arrive.

In the Netherlands, pre-school is an official (but non-compulsory) first step into the Dutch school system. The programme is for children aged between 2.5 and 4 years old and is intended to provide the best possible start when they begin Primary School. There is a strong focus on making sure that children are emotionally and socially prepared for daily school life, whilst also covering the academic basics required.

## Support for parents

Parents and their children are very well supported in the Netherlands; financially and otherwise. Full information on all the support and leave schemes available for parents is available on the [Dutch government's website](#).

### Maternity and Paternity leave

All new mothers in the Netherlands have a right to 16 weeks of paid maternity leave. This can be taken in various ways (for example 6 weeks before the birth and 10 weeks after). Once someone is on maternity leave, their employer can also apply for maternity pay via the [UWV](#) (*Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen*). Paid partner or paternity leave is capped at one week at full salary: unpaid paternity leave can be up to 5 weeks taken during the first 6 months of the child's life. During unpaid paternity leave, a new parent can claim 70% of their salary through the UWV.

### Parental leave

Parents with children aged up to 8 may take (unpaid leave unless specified) up to 26 times the number of hours they work in a week in parental leave. Lots of Dutch parents will take a day or two a week as a 'Mamadag' or 'Papadag'.

### Welfare Institutions

In each region of the Netherlands, you will find a series of local institutions that aim to support parents and children's welfare. This is known as a CJG (Centrum Jeugd en Gezin). Most regions also have an office for youth and adolescent care (*Bureau Jeugdzorg*), which can also provide help and support to parents.

### Financial support for taking care of a child

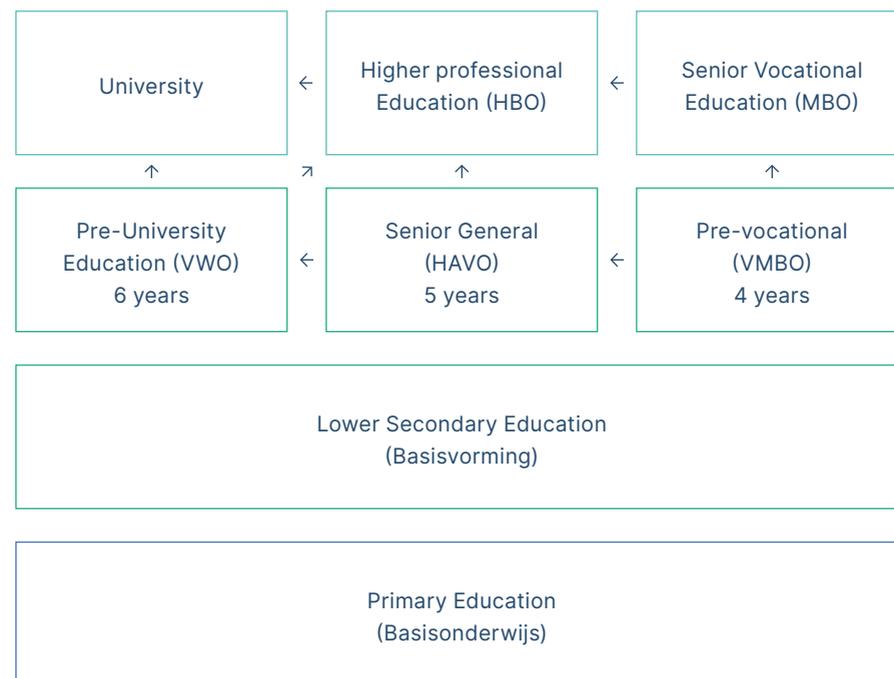
The Dutch government has two financial aid programmes for parents, to help with the costs of raising children. The first is called the Kinderbijslag, and is a general child benefit. There is also a scheme called the Kinderopvangtoeslag/childcare allowance, which is intended to help pay for childcare services and pre-school if both parents work or study. More information about both programmes is available via the SVB (Sociale Verzekeringsbank) website, in several languages.

### After school care

Whilst most senior schools will offer their own after school clubs, children at Primary School age may attend *naschoolse opvang*. This is a special programme that is provided by Primary Schools, often in collaboration with local after school centres.

## The Dutch school system

The Hague region is lucky to have multiple types and styles of school available for children, including a huge range of international schools.



- Elementary
- Highschool
- College

### The Dutch school system

A Dutch public school may be an option for your children if you intend to stay for a longer time in the Netherlands. Dutch public schools offer good quality education and the opportunity to learn Dutch, which will help them to integrate into the Dutch community.

A unique feature of the Dutch school system is the diversity in the types of schools on offer. Among the state-funded schools, there are religious schools and schools that follow a certain philosophic or pedagogic principle within the Dutch curriculum. Children attend primary school basisschool from age 4 to 12, and from age 12 onwards, secondary school middelbare school which offer different streams.

Firstly, it is important to note that the Dutch education system is based on several stages and streams. Education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 16, and is split between pre-school (ages 2.5 to 4), elementary school (ages 4 to 12), and then a streamed high-school system (ages 12 to 16,17 or 18).

The Compulsory Education Act *Leerplicht* requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 residing in the Netherlands to attend school. Home schooling is only allowed in very special cases in the Netherlands.

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Email: [leerlingzaken@denhaag.nl](mailto:leerlingzaken@denhaag.nl)

The streamed high-school system is separated into VMBO (technical, up to age 16), HAVO (advanced technical, up to age 17), and VWO (academic, up to age 18) classifications. At the end of VMBO education, most teenagers attend a vocational college (MBO). At the end of HAVO education, most teenagers attend a Hogeschool. At the end of VWO education, most teenagers go on to a University. It is important to note that a high-achiever in the VMBO stream may move into the HAVO stream, then the VWO stream and then onto a University. Lots of schools also offer a bridging year (ISK), or bilingual education (TTO) for non-native Dutch speakers that wish to attend schools in the Dutch school system.

Children of international parents which do not speak Dutch can opt for various types of support.



### Children of international parents which do not speak Dutch can opt for various types of support.

- Children from 4 to 7 years will receive extra support in school, especially around the age of 6 when they learn to write in Dutch.
- Between the ages of 7 and 12, children can attend special language classes, called schakelklas or nieuwkomersklas. International children attend these classes which last about a year. A list of schakelklas can be found on [The Hague municipality website](#).
- When your child is 12 years or older, they can go to a school which offers a language class, called Eerste Opgang Anderstaligen. Depending on age, educational background and abilities, children stay in this class for a year or longer before they switch over to the regular system. In The Hague, there are [four schools that offer this](#).
- At both primary and secondary level there are bilingual schools offering classes in Dutch and English. The final exams will still be in Dutch.

## Types of international schools

### Government-funded Dutch international schools

These schools are funded by the Dutch government and offer both Primary and Secondary education. All offer education that is accredited by the Dutch government, but do not follow the Dutch schooling system: most offer either the European Baccalaureate or International Baccalaureate (IB) qualification. Both of these are accepted by most universities across the world. School fees at these schools are generally affordable: as to a partial extent, education is subsidised by the Dutch government (between €4.000 for primary and €10.000 for secondary).

#### *Government-funded Dutch international schools in The Hague region*

- [The European School of The Hague](#)
- [The International School of The Hague](#)
- [The 'Haagsche Schoolvereniging' / HSV](#)
- [International Waldorf School The Hague](#)
- [International School Delft](#)
- [International School Leiden](#) (Opening September 2022)
- [Het Rijnlands Lyceum Oestgeest International School](#)
- [Het Rijnlands Lyceum Wassenaar International School](#)
- [Elckerlyc International School](#)

### Independent International Schools

Independent International Schools generally follow the curriculum and award the qualifications of their 'home' education system; however, some also offer the opportunity to complete an International Baccalaureate (IB). You should be aware that fees for these schools are also often much higher than government-funded international schools (between €17.000 and €25.000).

#### *Independent international schools in The Hague region*

- [The British School in the Netherlands](#) (multiple locations; junior and senior schools)
- [The American School of The Hague, Wassenaar](#)

### Foreign National Schools

These schools can be thought of as a school from another country that has been founded in The Hague. They generally teach the curriculum of their 'home' country, and award qualifications consistent with that country, too. Fees range from €6.000 to €10.000).

#### *Foreign national schools in The Hague region*

- [Deutsche Internationale Schule](#)
- [Le Lycée Français Vincent van Gogh](#)
- [Sekolah Indonesia](#)

### Special needs education

[Lighthouse Special Education](#) offers specific education programmes to help children with special needs get the most from their schooling experience. The organisation specialises in complex behavioural and/or developmental problems, and offers classes for children aged 3-13. It is linked to the HSV International School, and it is hoped that after the age of 13, children will be able to join their peers in the mainstream schools, supported by ongoing special needs teachers.

Many of the foreign national and independent international schools will also have special needs departments.

## Tips for finding a school

If you are confused about which school to send your children to, there is plenty of help available, from municipal support to education consultants and comparison websites. We would always recommend attending an open day: Dutch and international schools in The Hague region will be glad to explain their teaching to interested parents.

## Some points to consider when selecting a school

**Waiting lists** Some schools may have a waiting list for admission. Some international schools and newcomer classes for Dutch schools often have waiting lists. Do consider alternative options before you move. Your children need to go to school within 5 days of arrival.

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**Length of stay** If you intend to stay only a few years before you move to a new country you may consider international schools as they teach in English and their curriculum is recognized worldwide. For some government-funded schools you may need to prove you are only here temporarily. If you consider staying in the Netherlands for a longer period you may want to consider Dutch schools as it helps with your integration and saves a lot of money.

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**Finances** Dutch schools only ask for parental contributions to cover events and activities. International school fees range between 4.000 and €25.000 a year. Your salary and the contribution of your employer may determine what type of school to chose.

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**Integration** Opting for a Dutch school enables your children to learn Dutch and befriend local children, which helps integrate into the local community. Choosing an international school means the children may learn only a little bit of Dutch and befriend other international children.

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**Location** Most of the schools have excellent public transport connections, though you may prefer your children to go to one within walking or biking distance. Most Dutch and international parents live relatively close by the school of their children. Apply to the school first before determining the area you want to live.

**Qualification(s)** The International Baccalaureate or European Baccalaureate are widely accepted in universities worldwide. National qualification systems (such as that from the Netherlands or the US) may require a bridging programme to be completed before university admission in other countries. Transition to another school abroad may be difficult depending on the school system and language taught.

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**Curriculum** The Dutch school system offers a wide variety of religious and philosophical teaching foundations. Even international schools can be based upon a different curriculum.

The Municipality of The Hague has a 'school finder' (*scholenwijzer*) website available here. It is presently available in Dutch, but will also be available in English in the future.



### Primary schools

1. American School of The Hague
2. British School in the Netherlands Junior School Diamanthorst
3. British School in the Netherlands Junior School Vlaskamp
4. British School in the Netherlands Junior School Leidschenveen
5. Deutsche Internationale Schule
6. Elckerlyc International School
7. European School The Hague
8. NSL location Haagsche Schoolvereniging
9. KSS location Haagsche Schoolvereniging
10. VNS location Haagsche Schoolvereniging
11. VHS location Haagsche Schoolvereniging
12. International School Delft
13. International School of the Hague
14. International Waldorf School the Hague
15. Lighthouse Special Education
16. Le Lycée Francais Vincent van Gogh
17. Sekolah Indonesia

### Secondary Schools

18. American School of The Hague
19. British School in the Netherlands
20. Deutsche Internationale Schule
21. European School The Hague
22. International School The Hague
23. Het Rijnlands Lyceum Wassenaar International School
24. International School Delft
25. Le Lycée Francais Vincent van Gogh
26. Het Rijnlands Lyceum Oegstgeest International School
27. Sekolah Indonesia School

### Higher Education

28. Tu Delft
29. University of Leiden (Campus The Hague, Leiden)
30. The Hague University of Applied Sciences
31. Hogeschool Inholland
32. Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten (KABK)
33. International Institute of Social Studies.
34. The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS)
35. Hotelschool The Hague

# Healthcare and Insurance

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.

## The Dutch Healthcare system

In the Netherlands the healthcare system is a blend of socialised healthcare (for example in Sweden, Singapore, or the UK), and a private insurance system (like the US). Everyone working and living in the Netherlands will need some form of health insurance, and for most people this will entail taking out a policy with one of the 40 or so insurance companies available.

This must be done within 3 months of registering in the BRP (obtaining a BSN). It should be noted that Dutch law prevents any insurance company from withholding coverage based on any personal feature or pre-existing health condition.

Naturally, emergency care is available at speed (by dialling 112). However, for most other medical issues your GP/ family doctor is the first place to go. Almost all specialists will require a referral from your GP.

Mental health care, dental care, and most other complementary therapies (for example physiotherapy) are freely accessible: however, they are often not covered by basic insurance packages.

### Registering with a GP

Within the Dutch medical system, the GP (or family doctor) is considered the first place to go when you have a medical issue. It is very important, then, to sign up with a local GP surgery promptly after obtaining insurance.

You have a limited choice of GP surgeries: whilst you may approach any to sign up as a patient, most surgeries will require that you live within a few kilometres. Some GP surgeries specialise in international patients and so will have a bigger catchment area. You can sign up with a GP surgery by calling, emailing, or (in many cases) filling in a web form.

In The Hague, lots of new internationals sign up for [the International Health Centre The Hague](#). The Centre has lots of services (GP, dental, physio, etc) all under one roof.

Please note that the Dutch GP may have a slightly less warm manner than you are used to. It is quite normal for a GP to recommend taking a low strength painkiller, and reporting back if symptoms persist. GP's are also generally unlikely to prescribe antibiotics, to help prevent resistant bacterial strains.

### Dental care, physiotherapy, complementary therapy

Most basic Dutch health insurance policies do not cover dental care, physiotherapy, or complementary therapies. This means that you have a free choice of dentist, physiotherapist, and so on. All dentists and physiotherapists in the Netherlands have strict training and qualification requirements, so care quality is likely to be high.

If you would like your health insurance to cover other forms of care, make sure to specify this when comparing policies.

## Mental healthcare

The Dutch healthcare system is moving towards considering mental healthcare as essential. However, most insurance policies do not cover the costs of mental health practitioners. It is important to note that clinical psychiatric care is high quality and accessible via your GP. However, non-clinical care is voluntary.

There are several mental healthcare companies and practices in The Hague region that specifically provide services for people that do not speak Dutch as their first language. Check The Hague International Centre website for more information, under 'partners'.

You can also find out more information on the website of Healthcare 4 internationals (H4i), an organisation dedicated to making sure that international people have the same standard of healthcare as Dutch people.

making sure everyone is insured. The CAK will send one warning letter after 3 months, then another a month later, and will finally issue you with a fine and sign you up for insurance on your behalf if you do not get a policy yourself.

As mentioned, Dutch basic health insurance tends not to cover dental, mental, and complementary healthcare. However, most insurance companies will offer a 'bolt on' for a small extra monthly fee that will cover these types of care.

Not all health insurers have agreements with all hospitals or care groups: it is best to check with the insurer before you sign up. In general, healthcare costs are reimbursed (sometimes via a custom online portal).

You can change health insurance provider once per year, and the change must be made before the end of December.

## Health Insurance

Once you have registered in the BRP (and have a BSN), it is time to register with a health insurance company. There are around 40 of these in the Netherlands, and a variety of comparison sites to help you find the best and most comprehensive cover. Children up to the age of 18 are covered by their parents' policy. Many employers have special deals with insurance companies so that employees can access preferential rates, too.

You must register for health insurance within 3 months of arriving in the Netherlands, otherwise you will receive a letter from the CAK (website available in Dutch), the public body in charge of



## Eigen risico (Personal excess)

With most insurance policies, the first €385 (2022) of medical expenses are your responsibility. This is called the 'personal excess', or *eigen risico* in Dutch. There are some insurance companies that offer a 'zero' excess with a higher monthly fee, and equally some companies allow you to specify a higher personal voluntary excess for lower monthly costs.

## Zorgtoeslag (Health insurance benefit)

People with a low income can apply for *zorgtoeslag*, a government benefit that reimburses some or all of your monthly health insurance costs. For more information (in English) about the health insurance benefit, and information about income levels and so on, visit the website of the Dutch tax authority ([Belastingdienst](#)).

In some cases, people can either utilise their home or international health insurance, whether public or private. This is generally the case if you do not have your 'main residence' in the Netherlands.

In general, refer to Zorgwijzer and H4 Internationals for more information on healthcare system.

For more information about using your home insurance in the Netherlands, visit the [Healthcare 4 internationals \(H4i\) website](#).

## Exceptions and privileged people

If you are not socially secured in the Netherlands you do not have the right to take out a Dutch health insurance. This may apply to privileged people, people earning income from another country and non-residents. Internationals students are exempt from the Dutch health insurance if they are less than 3 years in the Netherlands and if they are not working. If you are not allowed to take out Dutch health insurance you will need to take out an international health policy or make sure you are insured by their own national health insurance, whether public or private. EU/EEA/Swiss nationals can prove they are covered with an European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

# Taxes and finance

The Dutch tax system is generally digitised and easy to use, but can seem daunting for newcomers. If you are employed by a company, your monthly taxes will be deducted from your salary. If you are a freelancer, or entrepreneur then you will have to arrange this yourself. There are both national and local taxes (included in the Housing section of this book), and there are lots of tax credits and benefits available in the Netherlands. It is advisable to read up on the tax system before completing your yearly tax return, and many people utilise the services of a reliable tax consultant for their first (or indeed yearly) tax returns.

## Banking

In order to open a personal bank account in the Netherlands, you must first be registered in the BRP or RNI and so have a BSN.

### What you need to open a bank account

- Citizen Service Number (BSN)**

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- Valid form of identification (passport or EU national identity card are preferable)**

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- Residency documents: a provisional residence permit (MVV) or residence permit**

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- An appointment with your chosen bank**

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- Some form of deposit for your new bank account**

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- An employment contract (if applicable)**

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- An extract with your address (applicable for some banks)**

You then have a free choice of banks; with a range available. Some, such as ING, Rabobank, and ABN AMRO are multinational financial giants with recognisable brands and plenty of information in English and cross border banking experience. Many people begin their time in the Netherlands with an account at one of the largest banks mentioned. Nowadays, there are even a few fully digital banks such as Bunq, which offer all of the services you would expect of a bank, but with no physical branches to visit.

During your appointment, the bank staff will confirm your details, check your ID and make copies for security purposes. If you are living in short-term accommodation to start out and are planning on moving to a different apartment, don't forget to change your address with the bank afterwards! This is easily done online in most cases.

### How long does the process take?

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.

However, once you have opened your account, you may switch to any bank you choose (some banks only allow switches, rather than letting you open an account). There are several banks that specialise in certain types of investments, for example green investment, some that are online-only, and some that have special offers to tempt you to switch.

It is important to note that there is a switching service in the Netherlands, if you choose to move to another bank, all of your automatic payments and deposits that go into your old account will be forwarded to your new account for the first 12 months.



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## Annual Tax Returns

Employers will (on your behalf) complete your monthly tax payments out of your salary; you can see the amounts paid for various taxes in your payslip. At the end of each year, you should also be able to access a year-end statement (*jaaropgaaf*), with further information on the taxes you have paid.

However, everyone in the Netherlands also needs to fill in and submit a yearly tax return to the Belastingdienst (tax office). The tax return is split into three major income streams: from employment, from assets, and from shareholdings. If you only have one stream of income (for example from a salaried job), the tax return form is a relatively quick and easy process. However, if you have multiple streams of income, or overseas income, it is a good idea to consult a tax advisor.

Aside from your first tax return, which required the use of the 'M form', you can do all your tax returns online. 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.



### The M Form

Your first tax return in the Netherlands will require the use of the 'M form'. This form can look a little daunting, but depending on the number of income streams you have, it is likely that you will only have to fill in a section of it.

There are plenty of instructional webinars available online about the 'M form', and various tax advisors offer special 'M form' packages. It is best to at least consult some online information about your first year's tax return, as if you have worked only part of the year, you will likely receive a rebate!



## Insurance

Everyone in the Netherlands needs some form of basic health insurance: for more information on this please check the healthcare section of this book.

The only other mandatory insurance in the Netherlands is car insurance, if you own a car. Many people in the Netherlands take out some form of personal liability insurance, usually available for a very small monthly charge. You can also take out legal fees insurance in the Netherlands, whilst many people have a yearly travel insurance package.

It is possible that your landlord will require you to take out either personal liability insurance (*aansprakelijkheidsverzekering*), or contents insurance (*inboedelverzekering*) for your rented property. It is often cheapest to ask your bank for their insurance rates, as they may have preferential treatment for existing customers.

## Benefits (Toeslagen)

The Dutch government offers a range of benefits and social insurance programmes for people in the Netherlands. This ranges from child benefit payments (more information available in the childcare section of this book), to job-seeking benefits, and rebates on the cost of your health insurance (see the healthcare section of this book for more information). Please see below for a short explanation of the most often used benefits.

<b>Zorgtoeslag</b>	A rebate on the costs of your health insurance (please see the healthcare section for more details)
<b>Huurtoeslag</b>	A rebate on the costs of your housing (please see the housing section for more details)
<b>Kinderbijslag</b>	A quarterly payment to help with the costs of raising children (please see the childcare section for more details)
<b>Kinderopvangtoeslag</b>	A payment to help with childcare costs (please see the childcare section for more details)
<b>UWV toeslag</b>	A payment provided by the employment insurance agency (UWV) to boost incomes up to the legal minimum (1232 euros per month for single people, 1684 euros per month for couples)
<b>Werkloos uitkering</b>	Paid to unemployed people to provide income whilst searching for a job

In most cases, 'toeslagen' are controlled by the *Belastingdienst* (tax office), and more information about applying is available on their website. Information can also be found on the website of the Social Insurance Bank (SVB), and unemployment benefit information can be found on the [website of the UWV](#).

## The 30% ruling

In order to try and attract more international talent to the Netherlands, the Dutch government introduced a tax incentive called the '30% ruling'. This is usually available for people that are in possession of a 'Highly-Skilled Migrant' residence permit, and who had to move to the Netherlands for their new job, however not for every case. In order to qualify for the 30% ruling, you must

- Have been recruited from abroad, 150 km from the Dutch border
- Have a minimum salary or master's degree from a recognized university if below 30 years old

The tax break is intended to help with the costs of relocating to a new country, such as travel expenses, costs of international education or furnished housing. You also benefit from the provision to exchange a non-EU driving license for a Dutch one (for both the person with the benefit and their partner). With the 30% ruling you may opt to be considered a non-resident tax payer for your worldwide assets. Your employer should apply for the 30% ruling on your behalf, so it is best to talk to your HR department if you think that you are eligible for the ruling.

# Language and Culture

## A short history of the Netherlands

### Around 37,000 years ago

First known human settlement in the Netherlands

### Around the year 100BCE

Germanic tribes settle north of the Rhine, with Celtic peoples settle south of the river

### 57BCE – 54BCE

The land that is now the Netherlands is conquered by the Romans, led by Julius Caesar

### 1083

First use of the term 'Holland'

### Around 1500

The Netherlands comes into the possession of the Hapsburgs under Emperor Charles V

### Around 1540 – 1550

Calvinist Reformed Protestantism becomes the dominant religion in the Netherlands, and is repressed by the Spanish Authorities

### 1566-1648

The Dutch revolt against the Hapsburgian King of Spain, Philip II

### 1602

Founding of the Dutch East India company, beginning of Dutch colonial expansion

### 1648

Peace of Westphalia declares the independence of the United Dutch Provinces

### Around 1600 – 1800

Dutch 'Golden Age', as Amsterdam becomes a trading, intellectual, and artistic hub

### 1815

Independence of the Netherlands from Napoleonic France under William I

### 1850 – 1900

'Pillarisation' of Dutch culture into Catholic, Protestant and Secular. Each 'pillar' develops its own civil society organisations

### 1914 – 1918

World War I, Dutch remain neutral

### 1910 to 1920

Dutch colonial takeover of all of Batavia (now modern-day Indonesia)

### 1917-1919

Expansion of voting rights to include all men and women

### 1940

Netherlands invaded by Nazi Germany; puppet government installed

### 1947 – 1949

National struggle for liberation in Indonesia, with independence finally achieved in 1949

### 1951

The Netherlands becomes a founding member of the European Coal and Steel Community: the forerunner to the EU

### 1953

North Sea flood (*Watersnoodramp*); work begins on the 'Delta Works'

### 1960's – 1970's

Famous 'liberalisation' of Dutch society

### 1975

Independence of Suriname

### 1980's to 2000's

Increasing economic liberalisation leads to the Netherlands becoming a European financial and technical hub, as well as a base for large numbers of multinational corporations

### May 2011

OECD names the Netherlands the 'happiest country in Europe'

### April 2013

Abdication of Queen Beatrix and coronation of King Willem-Alexander II

## Food and cuisine

The Dutch kitchen may have somewhat different traditions and tastes to other cuisines. There are several 'classic' Dutch dishes, including (but not limited to) pancakes and poffertjes, stamppot, herring; *frites*. Other popular dishes reflect the Netherlands' relationship with Indonesia- for example *gado-gado*, *loempia*, and *rijsttafel*. Also make sure to try Surinamese food when you are in the Netherlands, including flavourful curries and interpretations of Dutch and Chinese cuisine.

With the Netherlands' long history of trade and empire, it is unsurprising that there is a wide diversity of restaurants, supermarkets, and vendors of food from across the world. The port of Rotterdam is Europe's largest food importing port, and as such you can find ingredients from all over the world across the country.

### Typical meals in the Netherlands

Eating habits in the Netherlands are naturally as diverse as the people that live here, however traditionally Dutch meals are taken as followed.



### Breakfast

Usually eaten before 09:00 and consisting of bread or *beschuit* with various toppings; for example, cheese, cold cuts, *hagelslag* (chocolate sprinkles), peanut butter, or jam.

### Lunch

Usually eaten at around 12:00 and consisting of similar food to breakfast, although soup is a popular warm choice.

### Tea-time

It is common for Dutch people to invite friends over for tea and sweet treats at around 10-11:00, and/or 16:00, and/or 19:00-20:00.

### Borrel

A social event involving a (usually alcoholic) drink and some form of snack food, for example *bitterballen* (deep-fried delicacies). Commonly served just after work at the end of the work week, on Friday's, called *VRIJMIBO* (vrijdag middag borrels).

### Dinner

The largest meal of the day, often warm and eaten earlier than in many cultures - around 18:00.

## Births, deaths and marriages

### Births

In the Netherlands, many people choose to give birth at home. The birth is then announced either with a card inviting people to come and meet the new baby (*kraambezoek*), whilst sometimes people choose to put an announcement in the newspaper or put a wooden stork on the front of their house. Naturally, it is polite to phone ahead, but often people will visit unannounced to see the baby. Visitors will be served *muisjes* (aniseeds covered in a sugar shell; blue coloured for boys and pink coloured for girls) served on *beschuit* (hard biscuits) to celebrate the birth.

### Deaths

When someone passes away it is common practice for their family to put an announcement in the local newspaper, including funeral plans. It is also common for someone's (ex-) employer to announce the passing to their former colleagues. Traditionally, someone may lie in state in their house for people to pay their last respects. After the funeral, cake and coffee is usually served and people may come to pay their respects. Naturally, religious traditions are also followed depending on the cultural background of the person that has passed away.

### Marriages

In the Netherlands, marriage is regarded as a secular legal procedure. Indeed, many couples choose not to get married and instead sign a *samenlevingscontract* (cohabitation contract), or *geregistreerd partnerschap* (civil partnership), the latter having many of the same rights as a marriage. If people do choose to marry, it may happen above the age of 30, and though many people choose to undertake a religious ceremony the marriage is officially completed at the registry.

Many Dutch people choose to have a slightly less formal marriage celebration than in other cultures. Wedding parties are often an extension of the couple's personality, and so may be a little more exuberant than in other cultures.

## 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.



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

## Language and multilingualism

The official language of the Netherlands is Dutch, with (West) Frisian recognised as an official minority language. Several other regional dialects and related languages are also protected under law. Whilst the vast majority (over 90 percent of people under the age of 50) will speak English, some older people may not- or may choose not to. It is common for Dutch people to be somewhat bashful about their level of English- to only then demonstrate perfect English themselves.

You may hear people speaking in languages used in Dutch overseas territories and former colonies, such as Papiamentu: a creole language that mixes Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch; and English, along with its own words. Papiamentu is widely spoken in the Dutch-influenced Caribbean.

Some of the most popular second or third languages for Dutch people are French (particularly in the south), German (particularly in the north and east), and Spanish. The Dutch are generally known worldwide for their language skills, including the uncanny ability to pick up accents.

It is generally advisable to learn at least basic Dutch: not only because it makes you more employable, but Dutch people tend to enjoy hearing others trying out their language. This is because the number of Dutch speakers is very small in global terms.

## Learning Dutch in The Hague region

Luckily for those wishing to learn Dutch in The Hague region, there are plenty of options. Whether you'd like to undertake an intensive course, follow a weekly group course to learn and meet people at the same time, or join a free course, there's plenty of options.

It is always a good idea to learn the language of the country you live in, and learning Dutch will help you with integration into your new home. If you'd like to obtain Dutch nationality, or a permanent residence permit in the future, you will have to pass various Dutch examinations.

For some people, it is mandatory to complete an *inburgering* as part of their immigration process.

The libraries in the city of The Hague offer a programme called 'Taal in de Bibliotheek,' which offers free weekly Dutch practice sessions with others learning the language in the central library (located next to City Hall), and all of the local neighbourhood libraries. If you live in Delft, there is the language centre at TU Delft, which offers courses both to students/employees and the general public.

For a full list of Dutch language schools, language courses, conversation groups and more, check out our website, or that of the *Taalhuis Den Haag*.

# Finding a Job

Luckily for newcomers, it is easier to find a job as an international in the Netherlands compared to many other countries. This is due to the high value that the Netherlands places on the 'knowledge and services' part of its economy, the high number of jobs that require other languages, and the variety of economic sectors and companies active here.

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. For more information, check out the Welcome to NL website.

## 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, 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 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'.

## 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

The Hague region is in the excellent position of having lots of volunteering positions for multi-lingual people, across a range of sectors. Whether you'd like to help transform local people's life chances, or work on some of the most important global problems, there will be a position available somewhere. Additionally, volunteering is a great way to get experience of Dutch working life, expand your network, and spend time doing something that makes you feel good.



Volunteer The Hague is a publicly-run organisation that aims to get internationals in The Hague in touch with volunteering opportunities, and is a great place to start your search. Alternatively, check out our website for more information and opportunities, as well as the website of The Hague Humanity Hub.

## Being self-employed and freelancing

More and more people across the Netherlands are choosing to be a self-employed professional (ZZP'er). It is quite usual for Dutch companies to use freelancers and for them to be integrated into the team; meaning more flexibility for employer and freelancer.

If you'd like to work as a freelancer in the Netherlands, you should first consult the website of the Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel), as they are responsible for registering you as a business, and have a range of informative videos on how to get started and run your own business. Information is also available on the Dutch government's website.

Another useful resource is the website of ZZP-Nederland (available in Dutch), which also has a large amount of information and sources for finding projects to work on. Remember that freelancers must adhere to different tax regulations than employees.

### Freelancer Residence Permits

The Dutch IND also has a special residence permit available for people that work as freelancers. In order to qualify you must present a business plan, evidence of funds, and evidence that you have work projects available to you. For more information, check out the IND website.

## 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. [Startup The Hague](#) should be the first place you visit for more information, but you can also reach out the [The Hague Business Agency](#), or one of the hubs themselves.

### 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 organisation for entrepreneurship, 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.



# 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.**



[volunteertehague.nl](http://volunteertehague.nl)



## About InnovationQuarter

InnovationQuarter is the regional economic development agency for West Holland. Our mission is to strengthen the regional economy in West Holland by stimulating the innovation potential of this unique delta region. We finance innovative and fast-growing companies, assist foreign companies in establishing their businesses in West Holland, and organize collaboration between innovative companies, knowledge institutes and government.

## West Holland, an innovative delta region

We proactively work in our region's most innovative sectors like Cybersecurity, Cleantech, Life Sciences & Health, Medical Technology, Horticulture, Maritime Industry, High Tech Systems & Materials, ICT, Robotics and Aero-Space. If you are active in one of these sectors and are interested in our activities, please visit our website or sign up to our monthly insightful newsletter!



**€137 million  
investment funds**



**2.700 foreign  
companies**



**15 fieldlabs &  
innovation hubs**



[www.innovationquarter.eu](http://www.innovationquarter.eu)

# Daily Life

# Important information

## Emergency Numbers

For fire, police, and ambulance services	<b>112</b>
Non-emergency police contact number	<b>+31 (0) 900 88 44</b>

## 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, Leidschendam-Voorburg, and Rijswijk you can ring 'Hadoks' on **+31 (0) 70 346 96 69**. If you live in Delft, you can contact the 'Huisartsenpost Delft' on **+31 (0) 15 251 19 30**.

## Emergency Sirens

There are around 4,200 emergency sirens located around the Netherlands, which are intended to warn the populace of an impending threat (upon hearing the sirens, people are requested to 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 may be a disconcerting experience to begin with!

# Basic information

## Country and Area Codes

Country Code for the Netherlands	<b>+31</b>
Dutch mobile phone numbers begin with	<b>06</b>
Area code for The Hague, Rijswijk, and Leidschendam-Voorburg	<b>070</b>
Area code for Delft	<b>015</b>
Area code for Voorschoten	<b>071</b>

## Currency and daily payments

The currency in use in the Netherlands is the Euro, and most places take both cash and card payments (indeed 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.

### Online payments

Many multinational online retailers have Dutch websites, and you will be able to use your (non-Dutch) Visa, Mastercard, or American Express card to pay. However, lots of online shops that only serve the Netherlands will accept payment via iDeal. This is a Dutch secure money transfer system, and all Dutch banks are compatible with it. More and more online stores are now accepting Paypal, too.

### 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, and whilst there is often a little snowfall in January and February, the Netherlands is affected by North Sea storms in the autumn and spring.

# Getting around and public transport



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## Biking

The Netherlands is internationally known for its bicycling infrastructure, and it may be slightly odd for a newcomer to see Dutch residents of all ages cycling without a helmet. For short distances, and trips within the area you live it is very common for people to use a bike. Dutch cycling lanes are often completely separate from road traffic, and there are often 'cycle highways' that run through the countryside between towns and cities.

## Public transport

The Dutch public transport system is very widespread, and the Dutch train service (NS, or [Nederlandse Spoorwegen](#)) is one of the most punctual in Europe. Whilst you can pay with cash or contactless card on many services, it is best to obtain a public transport card ([OV Chipkaart](#)). These can be obtained via [ovchipkaart.nl](#) or at ticket offices in major stations. They come in two forms; blue (non-personalised), and yellow. The yellow cards are only available online and have your picture on them; as well as your own personal online account. This means that you can load up the cards with credit online, or purchase travel discounts that apply only to your card.

If you regularly travel on the same route (to work, for example), it may be a good idea to get a season ticket (*abonnement*). Each of the different transport companies offers different season tickets, whilst the train operator NS also offers products such as 'free travel on the weekend' for a set price each month. Remember that your season ticket or travel product will usually only work on with the transport company it has been bought from. For example, an NS season ticket will not work on The Hague tram system, which is run by the HTM transport company.

For all the latest bus, tram, train; and metro times in the Netherlands you can use [9292.nl](#)

## Driving

Whilst the road system in the Netherlands is very well maintained, some people that live in cities or towns choose either not to own a car, or to have one per household. Petrol prices are high in the Netherlands, however there is significant support for buying an electric car instead. There are a number of car sharing schemes, too, which means that you only pay for the kilometres you drive.

In built-up areas the speed limit is usually 50 kilometres per hour (31 mph), and 80 kilometres per hour (50 mph) outside of urban areas. Expressways (*snellwegen*) have a higher speed limit of 100 kilometres per hour (62 mph)- and this rises to 130 kilometres per hour (81 mph) between 19:00 and 06:00.

People with an EU driving license may drive in the Netherlands as long as their license is valid. Those with a non-EU license may use it for the first six months after they arrive. Thereafter, anyone wanting to continue driving must sit a Dutch driving test.

If you receive the 30% tax ruling then you and your family members may exchange their non-EU license for a Dutch one. You may need to fill in a medical statement before. For more information about exchanging your license check out our website.

Privileged people can use their driving licence as long as it is valid.



Tramstation at The Hague Central

# School Holidays and important dates

School holidays in the Netherlands are split according to region, to reduce pressure on employers and stop crowds forming at attractions. Schools are not held to these dates, however, so it is best to always check with your children's school for its specific holiday dates. International schools often also follow a different calendar, and have their own holiday dates.

The Province of South-Holland is part of the Regio Midden. See below for an approximate holiday schedule

<b>Beginning of school year</b>	First half of September
<b>Herfstvakantie</b> ( <i>Autumn Holiday</i> )	Third or fourth week of October
<b>Kerstvakantie</b> ( <i>Christmas Holiday</i> )	From the last weekday closest to Christmas Day, through to the end of week one of January
<b>Voorjaarsvakantie</b> ( <i>Spring Holiday</i> )	Third or fourth week of February
<b>Meivakantie</b> ( <i>May Holiday</i> )	First week of May
<b>Zomervakantie</b> ( <i>Summer Holidays</i> )	Beginning/middle of July to end August/ beginning September

## Public holidays

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



**Hospitals**

- 1. HagaZiekenhuis location Leyweg
- 2. Juliana Children's Hospital
- 3. HagaZiekenhuis location Sportlaan
- 4. HMC Antoniushove
- 5. HMC Westeinde

**Railway stations**

- 6. Den Haag Centraal
- 7. Den Haag Laan v NOI
- 8. Station HS
- 9. Den Haag Ypenburg
- 10. Den Haag Moerwijk
- 11. Den Haag Mariahoeve
- 12. Voorburg
- 13. Delft
- 14. Delft Zuid

# Discover The Hague Region

# City of The Hague



**City Hall address**  
Spui 70, 2511BT The Hague

**City Hall telephone**  
+31 (0) 70 353 30 00

**Tourism website**  
[www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com)

## Quick facts

- The Hague is known as ‘the City by the sea’: it is the only major Dutch city located on the coast. Within 15 minutes of the city centre you can find more than 11 kilometres of beaches, dunes, and fresh sea air!
- The Hague is also known as the ‘City of Peace and Justice’: with over 200 international organisations, Dutch national bodies, and NGO’s based in the city, where thousands of people work for a better, safer and more just world
- The Hague is also the seat of government in the Netherlands, and the residence of the Dutch royal family

## Description

The Hague is truly a city of many facets, with opportunities for superb shopping in the city centre, long walks along the dunes, and plenty of fresh sea air. A compact city, you’ll be able to find your way around in no time. It’s family-friendly environment and great (international) schools, make the city an excellent place to start your future.

## Popular places to live

The Hague is made up of a large number of neighbourhoods, each with their own charm. Large numbers of international families live in the Geuzenkwartier, the Statenkwartier, Benoordenhout; and the Archipelbuurt/Willemspark. Meanwhile, the up and coming areas of the

Zeeheldenkwartier, Regentessekwartier, and Vroondaal are becoming very popular with young professionals and couples.

## Education

The Hague has the widest range of international education options in the Netherlands. The city is home to publicly-funded international schools, private international schools, and schools run by other countries’ education systems. There are also bilingual schools and classes to help children join mainstream Dutch schooling.

## Working in The Hague

The Hague is the place to be when it comes to the next step in your professional career. Many international organisations call the city home, with people from all over the world working in The Hague towards creating a better, more secure and just world. Think of potential employers, such as the International Court of Justice, Europol, NATO or the International Criminal Court. Next to the Dutch government, one of the largest employers in the city with a total of over 35,000 employees, many multinational head offices such as Shell, Total, Siemens, Huawei, Aegon and the NN Group can be found in The Hague. Also, the number of entrepreneurs in the city is growing, creating startups that offer innovative services and products, often operating out of hubs like The Hague Tech, The Hague Security Delta, Apollo14 or The Hague Humanity Hub. These startups are not only focusing on commercial success but also on social responsibility. That’s what we call ‘doing good & doing business’.

# Delft



## City Hall address

Stationsplein 1, 2611 BV Delft

## City Hall telephone

+31 (0) 15 260 22 22

## Tourism website

[www.delft.com](http://www.delft.com)

## Quick facts

- Delft is known worldwide for its history of ceramics (the iconic 'Delft Blue'), its Royal connections, and for having one of the top science and engineering universities in the world: the Delft Institute of Technology (TU Delft)
- The city has around 100,000 inhabitants, of which about 25,000 are students, and more than one million tourists visit each year!
- TU Delft has had three Nobel prize laureates conduct research in its labs

## Description

Delft is an historic city, filled with monumental architecture from across the centuries, canals, and lovely hidden courtyards. Tourists flock to the winding streets to see the birthplace of the painter Johannes Vermeer, and to discover the story of William of Orange: the first king of the Netherlands. Naturally, the name Delft is also bonded to the famous blue and white tin-glazed pottery that is still produced in the city.

## Education

TU Delft is a globally-renowned university, and attracts researchers and students from across the world. There is also the International School Delft, which is situated on-campus and offers primary and secondary education.

## Working in Delft

Clustered around the university TU Delft are over 70 high-tech institutes and companies with plenty of working opportunities available. The city's is a key part of the 'South Holland Medical and Life Sciences cluster', and the TU Delft Science Park is home to tens of innovative start-ups. There are several large organisations and companies that call Delft home, including the UNESCO-IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, IKEA, DSM; Samsung, and Birthsight.

# Rijswijk



## City Hall address

Bogaardplein 15, 2284DP Rijswijk

## City Hall telephone

+31 (0) 70 326 10 00

## Tourism website

[www.denhaag.com/nl/rijswijk](http://www.denhaag.com/nl/rijswijk)

## Quick facts

- Rijswijk is an incredibly green town, with a pedestrianised high street
- The town is now home to the European Patent Office
- The Bogaard shopping centre is one of the most popular in the region

## Description

Rijswijk is a quiet district located just a short distance from The Hague itself, but with all of its own amenities. The Herenstraat forms the centre of an historic central district, filled with small shops and charming cafés and restaurants- though the town is also home to the Bogaard shopping centre. Around 50,000 people call Rijswijk home, and the pretty town has its own museum, theatre, and the family amusement park 'Drievliet'.

## Working in Rijswijk

Rijswijk is home to the second-largest EU institution by number of employees; the European Patent Office. The EPO's new building houses over 2,500 employees, whilst the energy companies Wintershall and Petrogas are also based in the town. Recently, tech companies like Huawei, Worth Internet Systems and others have moved to Rijswijk's Hoornwijck business park.

## Education

The International Schools in both Delft and The Hague are all easily reachable by public transport or bike from Rijswijk.

# Wassenaar



## City Hall address

Johan de Wittstraat 45, 2242 LV,  
Wassenaar

## City Hall telephone

+31 (0) 88 65 49 222

## Tourism website

[www.wassenaar-voorschoten.info](http://www.wassenaar-voorschoten.info)

## Quick facts

- Wassenaar has always been a destination for wealthy people from The Hague region: it is a residence of the Dutch Royal Family, and various country estates are to be found around the town
- The town is known for its large diplomatic community, with the US Embassy and several ambassadorial residences located there
- Wassenaar is also one of the greener areas in the region, with 7km of beaches, protected dunes, and several historic parks (such as the Clingendael)

## Description

Wassenaar is an upscale town with around 26,000 residents, including a large American community. On one side of the town lies the Meijendel nature reserve, whilst there are plenty of outdoor activities including several golf clubs located throughout the municipality. The city offers a very high quality of life, with a large number of boutiques and restaurants in the town centre. Several historic churches dot the municipality, too, and the Museum Voorlinden and Museum Louwman are must-sees!

Outside of the town itself, you'll find both the Duinrell amusement park and the Tiki Pool water park- as well as over 7km of beautiful beaches and plenty of protected nature reserves in the dunes.

## Working in Wassenaar

Whilst lots of people that live in Wassenaar commute to The Hague for work, the town is home to the US Embassy in the Netherlands, as well as several International Relations-focussed organisations such as the Clingendael Institute.

## Education

Wassenaar is home to high-quality Dutch and International school options; including the highly-rated Rijnlands Lyceum, and The American School in The Hague.

# Voorschoten



## City Hall address

Liedseweg 25, 2252LA Voorschoten

## City Hall telephone

+31 (0) 88 654 96 00

## Tourism website

[www.wassenaar-voorschoten.info](http://www.wassenaar-voorschoten.info)

## Quick facts

- Despite being surrounded by the cities of The Hague, Leiden, and Wassenaar; Voorschoten has kept its charming 'village' feel
- The Duivenvoorde Castle, located in the municipality, is one of the oldest in the Netherlands, having been built in 1226
- Voorschoten is also home to the modern campus hosting the British School in the Netherlands (Senior School)

## Description

Voorschoten is an historic town located in between The Hague and Leiden with around 25,000 residents. With superb transport connections and plenty of greenspace, the municipality is a peaceful place to come home to. The old town has plenty of charm, with several centuries-old buildings lining the streets; whilst the famous Duivenvoorde Castle dating to 1226 is also within the municipality. The castle is now open partially as a museum, and interestingly has remained in the hands of just one family since being built. The municipality also enjoys a strong British community, with the British School in the Netherlands a focal point.

## Education

Located within the town itself is the modern campus of the British School in the Netherlands: the Senior School Voorschoten. It is known for providing education to students of more than 80 nationalities, and is generally very highly regarded.

## Working in Leidschendam-Voorburg

With its position on the Rotterdam-Amsterdam railway, Voorschoten is well placed for people working in The Hague, Leiden, and Delft. The town itself has a successful local economy, too, generally situated around tourism and retail.

# Leidschendam- Voorburg



## City Hall address

Koniging Wilhelminalaan 2, 2264 BM  
Leidschendam

## City Hall telephone

+31 (0) 70 300 90 00

## Tourism website

[www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com)

## Quick facts

- The City of Voorburg is thought to be the oldest city in the Netherlands, and celebrated its 2000th birthday in 1988.
- The UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon is located in Leidschendam, in a building formerly used by the Dutch secret services!
- In 2021 the Westfield Mall of the Netherlands opened in the municipality: the largest and most diverse shopping centre in the country.

## Description

Leidschendam-Voorburg is a municipality of about 75,000 residents that border the City of The Hague, and is known for its greenspaces and outdoor experiences. The municipality is also home to the largest shopping centre in the Netherlands, as well as a number of international companies and institutions.

## Working in Leidschendam-Voorburg

Leidschendam-Voorburg borders one of the most economically active parts of The Hague, and so is situated very close by to the World Trade Centre, as well as the headquarters of KPN and the regional headquarters of Siemens and Worley; and the materials experts Fugro. Accordingly, The Hague Tech and The Hague Security Delta start-up campuses are also in and around the area.

## Education

There are two International primary schools (run by the HSV) in nearby Bezuidenhout, whilst the British primary school in Mariahoeve is also within easy reach of Leidschendam-Voorburg. The village of Leidschenveen, also just a short journey by bike or public transport, is home to both a primary and secondary British school, too.



◆ The Impact  
The Business  
The **Hague.**

'One stop shop' for foreign companies,  
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The Hague.

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The **Hague.**

Business Agency

Welcome to **The Hague.**

Royal city by the sea



◆ The City  
The Beach  
The **Hague.**

[denhaag.com](http://denhaag.com)

# Events

# How can The Hague International Centre help you settle in?



The Hague International Centre wants to help you settle in to living in our region in the mid-term, and so we arrange a series of events each year that are intended to help new and not-so-new Internationals feel at home in The Hague region. We aim to help people build their own community and network during our events, and throughout the year we try to provide plenty of opportunities for networking and socialising.

We also provide a monthly **Moving to The Hague Webinar**, which details all of the important steps you need to take to settle in and feel at home in The Hague. The webinar takes place twice each month, in different time slots (lunch time and evening). Check our events page for the next webinar and get a head start on settling in.

All of our events are free to attend!

# Connect Welcome Month

Our Connect Welcome Month is a month-long programme of informative presentations, meetups, events to help you get to know The Hague; and much more besides. The programme is repeated multiple times per year so that everyone can benefit from it, meet new internationals, and share your experiences.

During this month-long programme (you may join all of the sessions, or just one or two!) you can connect to the region, connect with the community, and connect with us.

## Informational evenings

Interested in the first steps to settling in? Want to dig deeper into a topic like housing, healthcare, finding and international school; or taxes and finance? Just want to check out some of the cultural offerings in The Hague? Then join in with one (or several!) of our online informational evenings. Check out the full programme on our website.

### *Physical meetups*

Whether you just want to get to know fellow newcomers, or you'd like to get a look behind the scenes of one of The Hague's hidden gems, our meetups are an accessible way to get involved in the international community.



### **Welcome to The Hague**

Our Welcome To The Hague event is all of our expertise and ideas compressed into one fun-filled day, whilst with the Feel At Home in The Hague fair we want to help people make friends, expand their social network, and get to know all of the wonderful happenings in our region.

Our Welcome to The Hague event has become well-known over the past decade and has been lots of internationals first experience of the region. The event consists of a city tour, informative presentations, and a first *borrel* in The Hague. Now part of our Connect Welcome Month, check out our website for the date of the next exciting edition.

### **Feel at Home in The Hague Fair**

The Feel at Home in The Hague Fair is also a city institution, and has been introducing (new) international in The Hague to voluntary, sports, and social clubs for over a decade. Now part of our Connect Welcome Month, the fair is held at a series of different locations each year that are important to the international community. It's a great way to meet people, build a network, and get involved with all of the fun clubs and societies in The Hague region. Check out our website for more information about the next edition.

# City Events



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









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you  
soon!