

*support for international newcomers
and companies in the Leiden region*



Newcomer Guide: Your Start in the Leiden Region

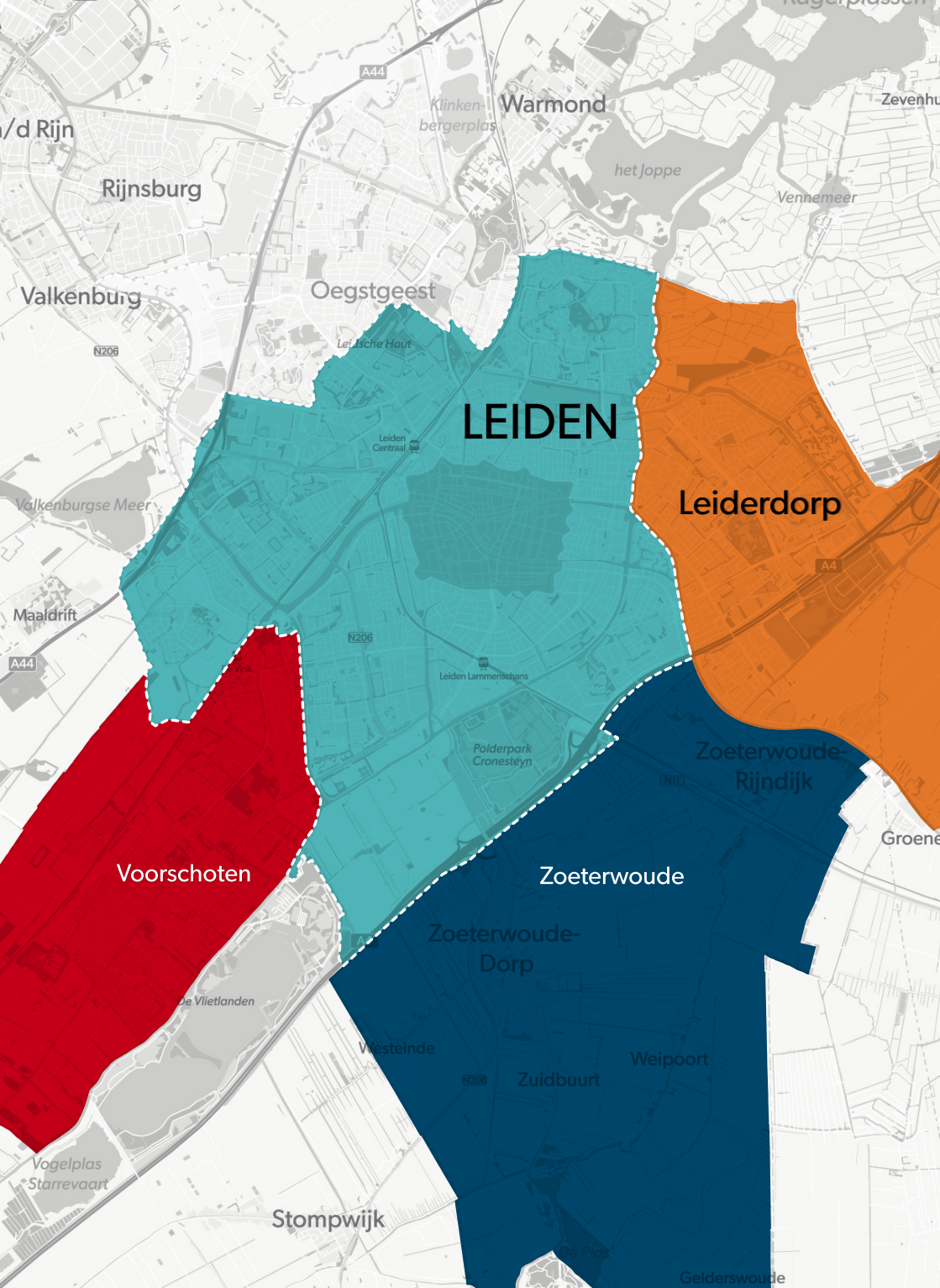
leideninternationalcentre.nl

Newcomer Guide: Your Start in the Leiden Region



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LEIDEN

Voorschoten

Leiderdorp

Zoeterwoude

Zoeterwoude-Dorp

Zoeterwoude-Rijndijk

Zuidbuurt

Weipoort

Stompwijk

Gelderswoude

Facts & Figures

Leiden has



3,000
monuments



88 bridges

35

Almshouse
courtyards



35,000 students
incl. 7,000 international students



13 museums

28 km of canals



The region is home to

20,000 internationals

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Leiden International Centre

A Brief Introduction

Who Are We?

Leiden International Centre is a non-profit organisation which offers government services and information, and provides a network for internationals living or working in the Leiden region. Internationals can make an appointment for registration and receive a Citizen Service Number (*Burgerservicenummer – BSN*), as well as detailed information about living in the Netherlands. Our helpdesk staff are happy to answer your questions, and we recommend you visit our website, which is a great source of information. Stay updated about events, subscribe for newsletters and contribute to building an active community. Leiden International Centre is the place where you connect to each other, to society and to our partners.

For Whom?

Leiden International Centre carries out registrations for internationals living or working in Leiden, Leiderdorp, Voorschoten and Zoeterwoude. Our clients are companies, highly skilled migrants, intra-corporate transferees, scientific researchers, entrepreneurs, recent graduates in their orientation year and EU citizens who fall under these categories, as well as their families.

Services in the Leiden Region

We offer services in the Leiden Region for all stages of expat life: coming to, settling in, living in and leaving. Depending on your country of origin, you may need an entry visa, a work permit, or a residence permit. You will also need to register with the Municipal Personal Records Database (*BRP*) to obtain a Citizen Service Number (*Burgerservicenummer - BSN*). It is important to know what you need to arrange during the coming to (*before arrival*), settling-in (*just arrived*), living in and leaving phases.

This booklet provides you with a good start in the Leiden region. It contains all the information you need for everyday life as an international in the Netherlands. A list of our partners can be found in the last section of this book.

Please contact us if you have any further questions or require more information. We are happy to assist you so that you will feel at home in the Leiden region as soon as possible. Stay updated via one of our social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, or sign up for our monthly e-newsletter. This way, you'll always get the latest news on activities and events.

Welcome to the Leiden Region!



Your start In the Leiden Region



First Things First

A move is always hectic, and it involves many formalities that must be taken care of. The full list of things to do depends on your nationality, place of birth, family, and sometimes on your employer's choice of work permit. Whichever route you choose, thorough preparation is essential.

Once you are here, you'll need to know how to make your settling in phase as smooth as possible. What are 'must do's' and what are the 'good to knows'?

Must Do's:

- Within five days of arrival, make an appointment via our website to register with the Municipal Personal Records Database and obtain your Citizen Service Number (*Burgerservicenummer – BSN*)
- Open a Dutch bank account
- Arrange Dutch health insurance within four months of obtaining your BSN
- Register with a local doctor and dentist
- Register with your local Embassy or consulate

Good to Know:

- Register imported vehicles with the Dutch authorities, people registered as living in the Netherlands cannot own/drive a 'foreign' vehicle
- It is compulsory for children between the age of 5 and 16 to attend full-time education
- Consider additional insurance, such as personal liability insurance and travel insurance. This is not compulsory
- Ask your HR department to apply for the 30% ruling (*if applicable*)

Registration in the Netherlands: Everything You Need to Know

Mandatory municipal registration by Dutch law

Everyone living in the Netherlands for more than 4 months is required to register in the Municipal Personal Records Database (Basisregistratie Personen - BRP). Governmental organisations need your data to provide you with the correct services. A Dutch address is required for registration in the BRP. If you don't have a permanent home address, you may be able to temporarily register at the address of someone you know or at your employer's address. Check our website for details.

Your information in the BRP

You can check your BRP record online with your Digital Identification (DigiD) at MijnOverheid or you can make an appointment with your municipality to view your data. If you find that your data in the BRP is wrong or incomplete (e.g. you haven't provided your birth certificate) you should ask your municipality for it to be changed.

Citizen service number (Burgerservicenummer - BSN)

A BSN is a unique personal number allocated to everyone registered in the Netherlands. It makes contact between different government organisations and between individuals and government easy. You need a BSN to open a Dutch bank account, apply for Dutch health insurance, register your child at a school or apply for government benefits for housing, healthcare or childcare. You will receive a BSN only once and it will always stay yours, even when you move abroad. Make sure to keep your BSN confidential, to prevent others from having access to your personal data and using it for fraud or identity theft.

Incorrect registration can have serious consequences for you:

- You may receive an administrative fine of €325,-
- You will no longer receive allowances for housing, healthcare or children
- You can no longer apply for a passport, ID card or drivers' license
- You are no longer entitled to employment benefits or other public services

Moving to another address in the Netherlands

If you move to another place of residence in the Netherlands, it is mandatory to notify the municipality of your new address. You can notify your municipality in person, in writing or online with your DigiD. You can do this four weeks before or no later than five days after the date you move. If you are moving to a different municipality, you only need to inform your new municipality. Once registered at your new address, you will be automatically deregistered from your previous address. If you have a residence permit, you do not need to notify the IND, as the municipality will do this.

Other people registered at your address

If you allow others to register at your address

The municipality must be informed if someone else will live with you for a period of 3 months or longer.

- Only allow someone to register at your address if this person is legally allowed to live in the Netherlands.
- If someone will (temporarily) stay with you, they must register themselves. You will need to provide a signed written permission form (available from the municipality), along with a copy of your passport or European ID card.

- If you rent out a room in your home, be sure to give the tenant permission to register at your address and offer a proper rental contract.

If someone else is incorrectly registered at your address

The municipality uses the data from the BRP to determine how much tax you must pay for water management and waste services. If people are incorrectly registered at your address, these costs might be higher for you. You could also be a victim of address fraud and receive bills meant for other people or lose your right to housing benefit because of ‘housemates’ who don’t live at your address. Make sure to report to your municipality if you think someone is wrongly registered at your address.

Municipality registration checks

If the municipality thinks a BRP registration is incorrect, it can launch an address investigation: the municipality will send letters to the address and ask for documents confirming the registration. Sometimes an employee may visit the house.

Moving abroad and deregistration

You need to notify the municipality that you will be relocating to another country if you are planning to stay abroad for more than 8 months out of the next 12 months. This does not have to be a continuous period. You must notify the municipality no earlier than 5 days in advance and no later than the day of your departure. On deregistration, the BRP informs other government bodies like the IND and the Tax and Customs Administration (Belastingdienst) about your new address abroad. If you do not deregister, you will still be charged for taxes and other expenses. You must return your residence permit to the IND before you leave the Netherlands at any IND desk or by post. Check the IND website for more details.

Have you already moved abroad? You must inform the municipality as soon as possible! In that case, the day on which your notification has been received will count as your relocation date. If you have a residence permit, you will have to inform the IND yourself.

Once deregistered from the BRP as a resident, your personal data will move to the non-residents part of the BRP, the Non-residents Records Database (Registratie Niet-ingezetenen - RNI). You should keep your RNI record up to date, in order to finalize your taxes or to qualify for potential pension income in the future.

Proof of deregistration

When you move abroad, you will sometimes have to show proof of deregistration from the Netherlands. Please check with the agency that requires the proof to confirm the specific type of document it requires.

- If you come to submit your notice of emigration at the municipality office (on the day of departure or no more than 5 days in advance), you’ll receive a written confirmation of “pre-departure declaration”. This document will satisfy customs requirements.
- If you come to the municipality office on the day of your departure, you can receive an extract that includes information about your departure. This document also satisfies customs requirements.
- If you would like proof of your emigration from the Netherlands after departure, you will need to request an extract from the Non-residents Records Database. This document will be suitable for customs and foreign authorities.

As an expat or international in the Leiden region, there are several things you need to know. What makes life here different to where you come from? You will probably have loads of questions about housing, the healthcare system, your driving licence, and so on.

If you have children and a job, you will want to arrange childcare facilities. But how will you get your kids there? By bike, car or public transportation? As you will discover, the start of your stay can be a bit of a challenge...

This booklet provides you with essential information on living, working, education and social life in the Netherlands.

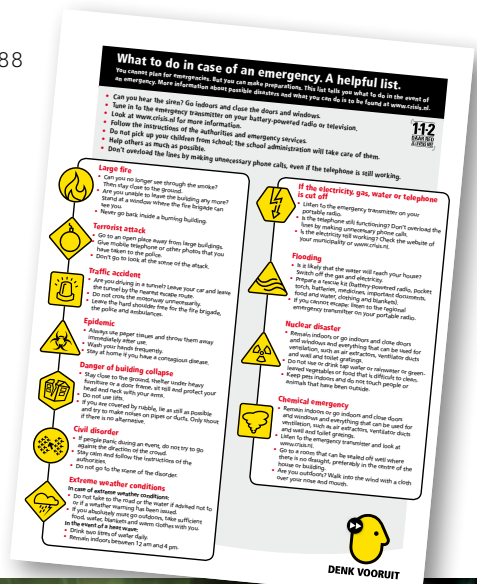
Essential Numbers

The most important number to remember in case of an emergency is 112 (It would be wise to save this in your mobile phone). This number can be called for free in any kind of serious emergency (to request the police, fire service or an ambulance) and they will be able to help you in English.

- **Police, Ambulance, Fire (Emergency) 112**
- National Police (non-emergency) 0900 8844
- Outage Gas, Electricity 0800 9009
- Sea Rescue / Coast Guard (Kustwacht) 0900 0111
- Breakdown Service (Car) (ANWB)* 088 2692 888

* This may require a subscription.

On the first Monday of every month at 12:00 noon emergency sirens are tested nationwide. Do not be alarmed. In the event of hearing the emergency siren at any other time, turn on your television or radio and tune in to a local station for further information.



Once you are in the Netherlands, you will want to arrange your banking affairs. You can open a bank account, which will allow you to use services such as iDEAL (the main online payment system in the Netherlands). The Dutch government, local municipalities and most employers prefer a Dutch bank account for financial transactions.

Opening a Bank Account

In order to open a bank account in the Netherlands, you will need to visit a bank and bring along the following documents:

- Valid ID
- Proof of address (*your rental agreement or a recent utility bill should be sufficient*).
- Some banks also require proof of regular income such as a payslip or contract.
- Your BSN
- Some banks require an extract (*uittreksel*) from the BRP as additional proof of your registration. You can request this during your BSN registration appointment or by contacting your municipality.

Bank Services

All Dutch banks provide a similar range of services to their customers and have online banking services. Unlike in some countries, cheques and cash are not commonly used in the Netherlands. Cash machines (*ATMs*) are widespread, although these days (contactless) debit card payments are the norm - even at markets! Dutch supermarkets generally do not accept credit cards. Most banks offer a variety of account types.

The most easily acquired accounts are:

- current accounts (*Betaalrekening*)
- savings accounts (*Spaarrekening*).

Current (*checking*) accounts (*Betaalrekening*) come with a debit card which enables you to withdraw money from ATMs and to pay in shops and restaurants.

ATMs

ATMs are called *geldautomaten* or *pinautomaten* in Dutch. It is possible to use any bank card in most ATMs in the Netherlands, regardless which bank issued

the card. For example, if you have a Rabobank card, you may also use it at an *ING pinautomat* at no extra charge. This is called guest use (*gastgebruik*), you can only do this once a day.

Credit Cards

In order to qualify for a credit card, you will require sufficient income. You will pay an annual fee and possibly an additional monthly fee for the card. The Dutch tend to use credit cards for purposes such as renting a car and online purchases, or when travelling abroad. Whichever bank you choose, it is recommendable to obtain a bank card which can be used abroad. Look for the Maestro and Cirrus logos on bank cards, as these networks allow you to withdraw money in most countries.

Lost or Stolen Cards

All lost or stolen bank and credit cards should be reported to the police as soon as possible. In the event of loss or theft, it is also advisable to contact your bank to have your card blocked.

If a bank card is lost or stolen:	
Rabobank	088-7226767
ABN-AMRO	0900-0024
ING	020-2288800

If a credit card is lost or stolen:	
Rabobank	088-7226767
ABN-AMRO	020-6600611
ING	020-2288800
American Express	020-5048196

Healthcare

The Dutch healthcare system is referred to as a 'gatekeeper system': the general practitioner/family doctor (*huisarts*) being the main link to any specialist or hospital. In order to see a medical specialist at a hospital, you will need to make an appointment with your GP to get a referral. Health insurance is compulsory for every person who lives or works in the Netherlands, although there are a few exceptions (e.g. Phd students). You can check if you need health insurance at [zorgverzekeringslijn.nl](https://www.zorgverzekeringslijn.nl). You can be fined if you do not get insurance when required. Insurance reimburses part of your medical expenses, depending on the level of cover you have chosen. You may also opt to take out additional insurance to cover costs not included in the basic package.

The General Practitioner (*huisarts*)

When you first arrive in the Netherlands it is important to register with a nearby GP/family doctor (*huisarts*) as soon as possible. In case of an emergency or home visit, a doctor must be able to get to your home within fifteen minutes.

Need to Knows:

- It is customary to see your new GP for an initial interview before registering with their practice.
- In the Netherlands, you require an appointment to see a doctor.
- If possible, provide your new GP with your medical records to inform him/her of your health situation.
- If you require medicine, your GP will write a prescription which you can take to the nearest pharmacy (*apotheek*) to collect your medicine.
- The general practitioner/family doctor (*huisarts*) should be the first person you call for any medical problems, with the exception of emergencies (*call 112*).
- You will always need a referral in order to see a specialist, except for appointments with a physiotherapist or midwife.
- Outside office hours, a special out-of-hours GP service (*huisartsenpost*) can be contacted.

Health Insurance

According to the Healthcare Insurance Act (*Zorgverzekeringswet*), anyone who resides or works in the Netherlands is required to take out insurance with a health insurer of their choice to cover medical expenses, within four months of arrival. Please be aware that international health insurances are generally not accepted as a substitute for Dutch health insurance.

Everyone is entitled to a basic health insurance package. The government determines the cover level of this basic package, a standard package offered by all insurers. Healthcare insurers are obliged to accept anyone who applies for the standard insurance package and must charge all policyholders the same premium, regardless of their age or state of health. You pay a fixed, nominal premium to your insurance company for the standard health insurance package.

If you have an income or receive a social security benefit, you are also due to pay an income-related premium, which will be automatically deducted from your salary. The level of this premium depends on your situation.

Additional Insurance

The standard package does not cover all medical expenses. You can opt to take out additional insurance to cover, for example, physiotherapy or dental care. Additional insurance is not obligatory, and you are not obliged to take out both the standard package and additional insurance with the same insurance company.

More Information

- Extensive independent information provided by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport about Health Care Insurance in English, German, Spanish, French, Ukrainian and Polish can be found at the *Zorgverzekeringslijn* website: zorgverzekeringslijn.nl/jouw-situatie or via 0800-6464644 from within the Netherlands or +31-88-9006960 from abroad (9am to 5pm).
- Read more on the government and health insurance: government.nl/topics/health-insurance
- ACCESS offers more information about the health care system in the Netherlands: access-nl.org/healthcare-netherlands

Non-prescription Drugs

You can usually find a pharmacy (*Apotheek*) near GP surgeries and hospitals. However, for non-prescription drugs and medical supplies (such as paracetamol, band aids, suncream) it's easier to go to supermarkets or highstreet stores such as Etos and Kruidvat.

Municipal Health Service (GGD)

Vaccinations for COVID-19 or people planning to visit the tropics can be obtained at the municipal health service (*Gemeentelijke Gezondheids Dienst - GGD*). Foreigners who come to the Netherlands generally do not have to get vaccinated at the GGD. However, people with certain nationalities are required to get tested for tuberculosis upon arrival in the Netherlands. More information about tuberculosis testing can be found here:

ind.nl/en/Pages/General_conditions.aspx

Finding a Dentist

The best way to find a dentist is by personal recommendation from friends, colleagues, neighbours or family. Simply phone and ask to register with the dentist of your choice. The municipality may also provide you with information of dentists who speak your language. Once you have registered with a dental practice they may send you reminders to attend biannual check-ups (*this may be a requirement of your insurance company*).

Coverage of Dental Care

The cost of dental care is usually not included in a basic health insurance package (*basispakket*). You may want to take out additional insurance. For information about your coverage, check your policy terms or contact your insurer. The cost of dental procedures is regulated, meaning all dentists charge the same fees.

Housing

Internationals often start their assignment in the Leiden region in a temporary accommodation such as a hotel or serviced apartment. Depending on your expected length of stay, family size, personal preferences, budget and the availability of suitable accommodation, you will choose either to rent or buy a property.

You will probably need to do some research, but with the right advice and the assistance of the partners in our partner listing, you will succeed in finding your home.

Renting a House

If you are planning to stay less than three years, renting is probably your best option. You are spared the inconvenience of arranging major repairs or maintenance, and the risk of not being able to sell the property before your departure back home. There are many options for renting a property in the private sector in the Leiden area, fully furnished and unfurnished. If you plan to rent a property, it may be useful to note the following facts:

- You will pay rent in advance on a monthly basis.
- A month's worth of rent as a deposit is common. Some landlords require two months' rent. The deposit will be refunded after the lease has been ended.
- Major maintenance is the property owner's responsibility, minor repairs are your own responsibility.

Buying a House

When you intend to stay in the Netherlands for a longer period of time, it might be beneficial to buy a house. There are some things you need to know when you are considering buying a house:

- When you become a property owner in the Netherlands, you are entitled to claim certain tax benefits. If the house which you have bought is your primary residence, your mortgage (*hypothek*) interest payments will be tax-deductible, as will many other expenses incurred during the purchase (*notarial deed etc.*).
- It is advisable to consult with a mortgage advisor at your bank or an agency first, in order to calculate a realistic estimate of the price range suitable to your situation.
- You can contact an estate agent (*makelaar*) to keep you informed of suitable properties for sale, to arrange house viewings and for practical advice. An estate agent will require a commission, usually between 1 and 2 percent of the purchase price, plus VAT (*BTW*).

The best way to get a 'feel' for the market is by looking at websites like Funda (*available in English*). For professional advice and assistance with your property search and negotiation, mortgages or legal matters, please check the Our Partners page on our website or the list at the back of this booklet.

The Leiden region is ideally located within short travelling distance of various large cities, such as Amsterdam and The Hague. It is very easily accessible via public transport (*train and bus*), car, taxi, boat and by bike! Leiden to Schiphol Airport is only 20 minutes by train and Rotterdam-The Hague airport is 25 minutes away.

Public Transport

The Netherlands is a small and densely populated country with an excellent public transport system. Wherever you want to go in the Netherlands, you can get there easily and in comfort by train, bus, tram, ferry, and more.

Most people buy an OV-chipcard: a transportation card that can be used on all different forms of public transportation throughout the entire country.

You need to check in and check out with your OV-chipcard when travelling. Sometimes the card reader is in the bus or the tram and sometimes on the platform. It is important to note that travelling without paying a travel fee through using an OV-chipcard or buying a ticket is illegal, and passengers are constantly checked on this.

Sometimes, in order to get a specific location, you will need to transfer from one form of transportation to another. A practical site where you can plan your travel by public transportation is 9292.nl (*there is also an app*).

You can add credit to your OV-chipcard at the Tourist Information or any train station. Alternatively, you can buy a subscription and pay via monthly direct debits. Visit ns.nl to find out more.

Cycling

Cycling is a very common method of transport in the Netherlands. Dutch people use their bike for everything: such as a way to commute, for recreation and transportation. It is very popular because of the good infrastructure, with a well maintained network of cycle paths and clear signposts. Wearing a biking helmet is not compulsory.

This makes cycling in the Netherlands safe, convenient and pleasant. In the Leiden region the infrastructure is very good. You can easily cycle from the city to the coast. Within only 20-30 minutes of cycling you can enjoy the wide, sandy beaches.



More about cycling: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycling_in_the_Netherlands.

Discover Leiden Region: fietsnetwerk.nl/en/partners/experience-routes-leidse-ommelanden/

Driving Licence

Rules and Regulations

Whether your driving licence needs to be exchanged for a Dutch licence depends on the issuing country and the validity of your foreign licence.

For more detailed information, please visit our helpdesk or look at our website.

Driving in The Netherlands

In order to drive a car in the Netherlands, you must own a valid driving licence and you must be aged 18 or over. It is also compulsory to have third party insurance and the vehicle you are driving must be registered. If you are a resident of the Netherlands, it is prohibited for you to drive a car which is registered in another country. Holders of a foreign driving licence issued by an EU country may drive in the Netherlands for a period of 10 years or (*in the case that the licence expires at an earlier date*) until the expiry date of the licence. When the foreign driving licence expires, it can be exchanged for a Dutch licence at the town hall.

If you hold a driving licence which was issued in a country outside the EU, you are required to exchange this licence for a Dutch one within six months after registering in the Netherlands. For holders of driving licences from certain countries it is compulsory to take a driving test before they receive a Dutch driving licence.

30% Ruling

If the 30% ruling applies to you, you and your family may exchange your foreign driving licences for Dutch licences, regardless of which country you are from.

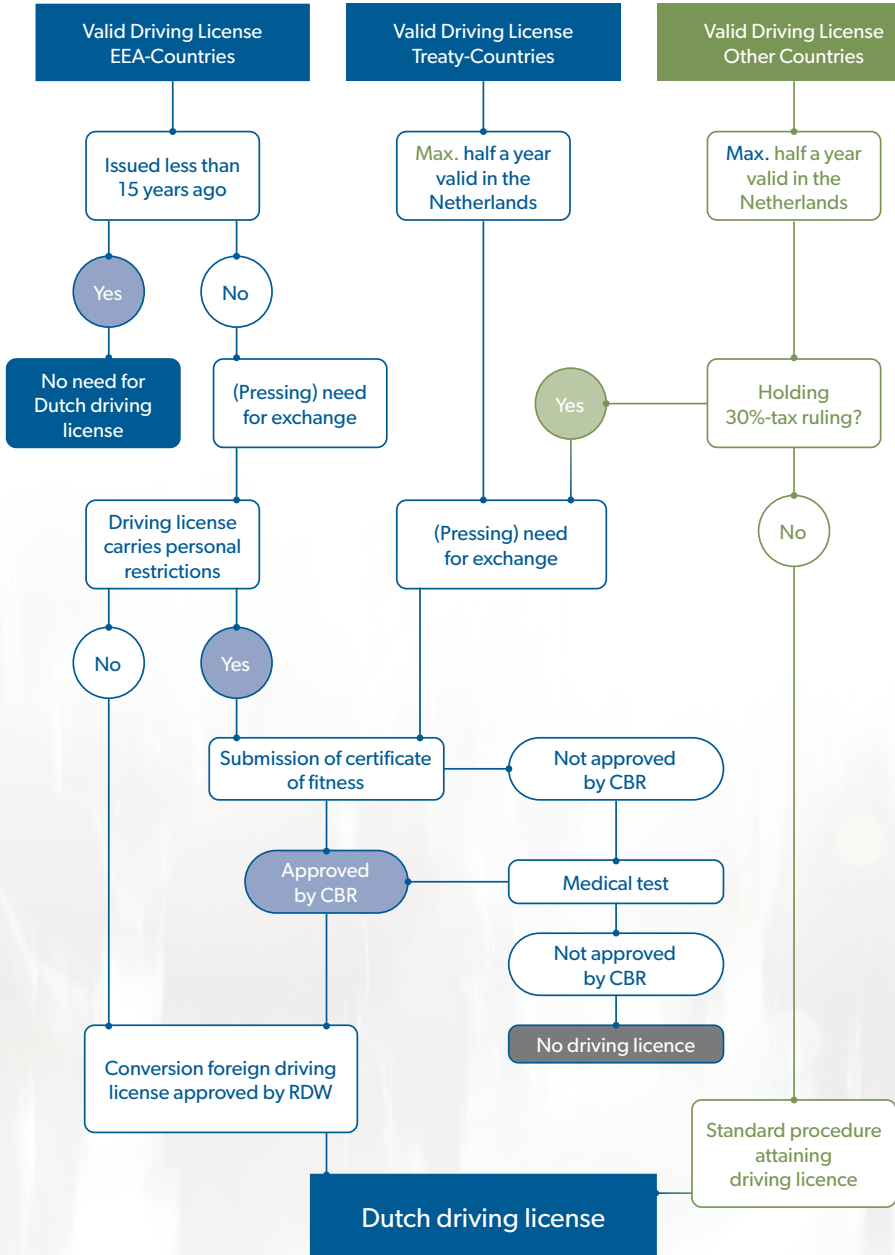
Exchanging a Driving Licence

Are you not allowed to drive a car in the Netherlands? Then you will have to exchange your driving licence. You will be able to use your foreign driving licence for 185 days after the date of your arrival, after which you are required to pass the regular Dutch CBR theory and driving tests. You may take the theory exam in Dutch, English or Turkish. More information on what you can expect: driveright.nl/theory/theory-test.

Dutch licences are generally issued for 10 years. If you have a licence which was issued in an EU country, it will also be valid for 10 years from the date of issue. However, you may wish to exchange a foreign driving licence for a Dutch one since the Dutch driving licence is accepted as valid proof of identity in many cases.

Exchanging

Attaining



Working

Working in the Leiden Region

The Netherlands offers many opportunities to start a career. Many internationals decide to stay in the country after they graduate. In the Netherlands you can expect good working conditions, a high quality of life and an attractive living and social environment.

Leiden Bio Science Park

There are plenty of job opportunities in the Leiden region. Leiden is a true knowledge city where ample scientific research takes place in areas such as Life Sciences & Health. The Leiden Bio Science Park is the leading life sciences and health cluster in the Netherlands. It is a mature science cluster with over 130 companies, home to drug development companies in all phases of the value chain, and to a number of renowned academic R&D institutes of Leiden University and Leiden University Medical Centre (LUMC).

LUMC, Centre of Medical Innovation

The LUMC is a modern university medical centre for research, education and patient care with a high quality profile and a strong scientific orientation. Its unique research practice, ranging from pure fundamental medical research to applied clinical research, places LUMC among the world's best.

The LUMC acts as a knowledge centre for topics in the field of public health with an impact on society. It has a directive function in the region and is a centre for continuing education and further training for medical professionals. The collaboration between LUMC, Leiden University and the Leiden Bio Science Park creates unique possibilities for medical innovation in Leiden and the surrounding area.

Leiden University

The university of Leiden is an important international player, as well as an employer. It was founded in 1575 and is one of Europe's leading international research universities. It has seven faculties in the arts, sciences and social sciences, spread over locations in Leiden and The Hague. The University has over 6,500 staff members and 26,900 students. The University has set up the Service Centre International Staff (SCIS). A specialized team at SCIS will serve as a guide for foreign university employees throughout the entire process of moving to and staying in the Netherlands. The team can assist in matters such as immigration, housing, formalities and all things required for an easy landing.

More information:

- leidenbiosciencepark.nl
- lumc.nl
- universiteitleiden.nl/en
- universiteitleiden.nl/scis
- scis@leidenuniv.nl

Entrepreneurs

It is also possible to set up your own business within the Leiden region. The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (*Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst - IND*) has dedicated webpages for start-up businesses and self-employed persons. You can find information about how to set up your business in the Netherlands on our website.

Entrepreneurs can make an appointment to get registered and obtain a Citizen Service Number (*Burgerservicenummer - BSN*) with Leiden International Centre after receiving their residency permit.

Important links:

ind.nl/en/work/working_in_the_Netherlands/Pages/Start-up.aspx

ind.nl/en/work/working_in_the_netherlands/pages/self-employed-person.aspx

kvk.nl/english/

Recruitment Agencies

You will find many recruitment agencies in Leiden, offering permanent and temporary positions. These recruitment agencies are frequently looking for employment specialists and native speakers. Many agencies offer access to large networks for international companies. Search the internet for 'uitzendbureau' or 'werving-en selectiebureau' meaning Recruitment Agencies.





The 30% -ruling allows employers to grant certain employees with special skills or expertise which is scarce or absent on the Dutch labour market a maximum tax-free allowance of (*approximately*) 30% of their salary. To qualify, the employee must be hired from abroad and meet the salary criterion. The minimum gross salary required is adjusted on January 1st every year. Check our website for the requirements in 2023.

- For employees older than 30, the required taxable salary for 2022 must be more than € 39,467.
- For employees younger than 30 and holding a qualifying master title, the required taxable salary for 2022 must be more than € 30,001.
- For certain scientific researchers/teachers, no salary criterion applies.

This tax-free allowance is meant to compensate for additional expenses incurred during a temporary stay outside the country of origin (*extra-territorial costs*). These expenses cannot be reimbursed separately tax free on top of the 30% tax free reimbursement except for moving expenses and international school fees.

As of 1st January 2021, the ruling is only applicable for a maximum period of 5 years.

The 30%-ruling has certain consequences in terms of social security. Social security rights and premiums may also be affected as these will be based on salary only, thus excluding the 30% allowance. Please contact our partners in Taxes for most updated details.

Another important feature of the 30%-ruling is that investment income will -in general- not be subject to Dutch taxation (“box 3”).

Important

The 30% ruling is only applicable if approved by the Tax Administration Authority (*Belastingdienst*) or a certified tax advisory firm. The employer and employee need to file a joint request to apply for the ruling. The request for the 30% ruling must be filed within 4 months after the start of employment. Requests that have not been filed within 4 months, will not have a retroactive effect from the start date of the employment. In that case, the 30%-ruling will only be applicable as of the month following the date of the request.

More information

- leideninternationalcentre.nl or via 071 516 6005
- belastingdienst.nl or via 088-154 2955 or 088-154 2862
- hbk.nl or via 071 542 27 20

Childcare & Educational

Daycare

The Netherlands has no formal educational provision for children under the age of four: the age at which they can start primary school.

However, outside the formal education system, there are childcare facilities for young children, such as baby-sitters, nurseries and childminders. Childcare facilities, in the shape of out-of-school care, are also available for children of school age.

Childcare policy was transferred from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (*het Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid*) to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*het Ministerie van Onderwijs Cultuur en Wetenschap - OCW*).

For more information on childcare and childcare allowance, visit: belastingdienst.nl/english/benefits/moving_to_the_netherlands/my_child_goes_to_a_childcare_centre

In the ACCESS guide 'Your Child' you will find more information about regulations and the different types of childcare: access-nl.org/living-netherlands/childcare





Education

The philosophy behind the Dutch education system reflects the mentality of Dutch society as a whole and aims to encourage students to live and learn in an open-minded and creative manner. Generally, schools in the Netherlands offer high-quality education. Compulsory education (*leerplicht*) in the Netherlands applies to all children aged 5 to 16, or until they have a diploma. Due to this obligation, schools will not give permission to parents to take children out of school outside of official school holidays.

The Education System

Education in the Netherlands consists of the following levels:

- Nursery school (*not compulsory*)
- Primary education/Elementary education (*basisschool*)
- Secondary education/(*VMBO, HAVO, VWO*)
- Tertiary education
 - Senior Secondary Vocational Education (*MBO*)
 - Higher Vocational Education (*HBO*)
 - University (*WO*)

How to Choose a Dutch School?

In order to find a Dutch primary or secondary school, your municipality's website is probably the good place to start. Unfortunately, these websites are likely to be in Dutch only.

On the following websites you can find more information about regular schools in the Netherlands: scholenopdekaart.nl and 10000scholen.nl. On our website you will find a guide on how to choose a school. It gives you a lot of detailed information about the options for primary education in Leiden.

Visit several schools so that you can get a feel for each school – it is a very personal decision.

Primary Education

Although by law children are not required to start school until the age of 5, most start on the day after their fourth birthday. This means that everyone starts school on a different day throughout the year. At age 4, a child starts in group 1. Group 8 (*age 11 or 12*) is the last grade of primary school, after which pupils proceed to secondary school.

Most schools combine groups 1 & 2. The children in this group are called 'kleuters', and the group is known as 'kleuterklas.' In the 'kleuterklas' the focus is on learning through play, social skills, fine and gross motor skills, structure, and gradual preparation for reading and writing. Formal reading and writing starts in group 3 (*age 6*).

Good to know:

- All schools are funded by the government.
- In the Netherlands you have regular (*openbare*) and special schools. Regular schools are both funded and run by the Dutch government. Special schools have their own board, which usually consists of parents or the foundation that set up the school. Special schools receive equal state funding to regular schools.
- On almost all schools parents pay a 'voluntary parental contribution' with which schools pay for extras. The amount varies from 50 – 800 euro.

Secondary Education

Once children leave primary school (*basisschool*) at age 12, they enter secondary education which generally continues until the age of 16 - 18, depending on the type of education chosen. All secondary schools start with a basic curriculum. Every student takes a wide variety of classes that are more or less the same, regardless of which school is attended. In the Netherlands, there are different levels of secondary education:

1. **Lower secondary professional education (VMBO):** children are prepared for a practical internship followed by employment or vocational education. It generally takes 4 years.
2. **General senior secondary education (HAVO):** This course takes 5 years and prepares children for Higher Vocational Education/College/University of Applied Sciences (*HBO*)
3. **Pre-University education (VWO):** This course takes 6 years and is the admission level for universities.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has a dedicated list of all primary and secondary schools. Leiden International Centre and the Municipality of Leiden organize seminars about Dutch education in general, covering which schools offer English language from group 1, international schools and how to find a school in Leiden, Leiderdorp, Oegstgeest, Voorschoten and Zoeterwoude.

International Education

In the Netherlands, there are four types of international schools:

- government-funded Dutch schools with an international education department;
- private international schools;
- foreign national schools;
- schools associated with embassies.

An international school follows either an international curriculum, or a curriculum that is in line with the educational system and legislation of a specific country other than the Netherlands. These schools are mainly attended by foreign children. Visit leideninternationalcentre.nl for the checklist of International Schools and an overview of international schools in the region.

Social

Social Behaviour

Like any culture, the Dutch have their own form of social behaviour. What is the best way to behave in and out of work?

Working Life

The Dutch business world is not a high power distance culture. Relations are often based on trust, and during a decision-making process everyone's views are heard. Often a compromise is reached that is agreeable to all parties. In the Netherlands, many meetings take place during office hours. It is a much-used method for exchanging views in the run-up to a decision. This process can take a great deal of time before a decision is made. By contrast, in the Netherlands people like to come straight to the point during an appointment or meeting. In other cultures, it is often customary to get well-acquainted with new business partners, or to spend more time on 'small talk' before discussing business.

Practical Tips

- The Dutch do not use titles when they talk to people. In writing, you can state a title, but this is only done in official letters.
- In Dutch business it is important to know how to handle a phone call. The Dutch always state their name (*and if necessary the company name*) first.
- Typical working hours in the Netherlands are between 9 AM and 5 PM (*office jobs*). Most organizations cannot be contacted outside these working hours. Other working hours apply to industries such as hospitality and construction.
- There are major differences in how people dress in various business settings. The nature of an organization is a determining factor when it comes to a dress code. Banks are known for a 'suit culture' whereas casual clothing is usually the standard for organizations in the cultural sector.
- The Dutch speak directly and use ample eye contact.
- When the Dutch introduce you to someone it is common to shake hands and state your name. Upon leaving you shake hands again and thank the person for the visit/meeting.
- If it is your birthday your colleagues/class mates expect you to bring your own cake or other treats to share.

Going Dutch

The Dutch are modest, tolerant and independent people. They like to be self-sustaining and enterprising. In the Netherlands, education, ambition and competence are regarded as important, valuable traits. 'Doe normaal' (*just act normally*) is a frequently used phrase.

The Dutch are very open-minded people and they are not easily offended if you do not behave according to the typically Dutch conventions. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, Dutch people will understand that you are a foreigner. To help you understand the Dutch a little better, we will give you some examples of typically Dutch (*cultural*) behaviour:

- The Dutch generally avoid superlatives. Compliments are offered sparingly, and to say that something is 'not bad' is to praise it.
- The Dutch generally call in advance to make appointments with friends. It is not very common to just drop by.



Language

The majority of Dutch people do speak English quite well and often are also fluent in one or two other languages on top of that, such as German and/or French. However, it might be very practical to know at least some phrases that are often used in daily life. The Dutch appreciate it when foreigners take the effort to speak their language and are more than willing to help you with your pronunciation.

Useful Words and Sentences:

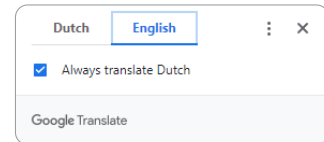
Good morning	<i>Goedemorgen</i>
Good afternoon	<i>Goedemiddag</i>
Good evening	<i>Goedenavond</i>
May I ask you something?	<i>Mag ik u iets vragen?</i>
Can you help me?	<i>Kunt u mij helpen?</i>
Nice to meet you!	<i>Leuk kennis te maken</i>
Tasty	<i>Lekker</i>
Cosy	<i>Gezellig</i>
Thank you very much	<i>Dank u wel</i>
Please	<i>Alstublieft</i>
Excuse me	<i>Pardon</i>
Yes	<i>Ja</i>
No	<i>Nee</i>
Closed	<i>Dicht</i>
Open	<i>Open</i>

Google Chrome

One of the first things that will be useful now that you've moved to the Netherlands is (if you're not a native Dutch speaker) to install **Google Chrome** to your laptop, tablet and/or phone. Once downloaded, enable the **Google Translate** extension.

Using Google Chrome, you can translate many web pages automatically into English, or your chosen language. This also works for a variety of attachments, although for text within photos or images, the text will not translate on a web page.

When you open a webpage written in another language, you should see a pop-up asking to translate the page. You can customise Google Chrome to always translate the language without asking. The Chrome mobile app displays a language bar at the bottom of the screen, within settings, to let you quickly switch between English and the original language. You can turn this feature on or off – it is on by default.



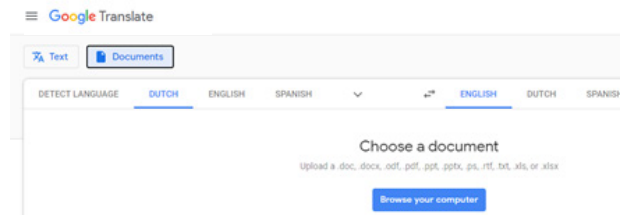
Some Government sites and forms may not allow the text to be translated. You can use Google Translate directly to type in the text to help understand it.

Google Translate

Google Translate can be downloaded on its own to use on your phone and tablet, or accessed via the Google Translate webpage. Simply type in the text and select your language or allow it to detect the language for you. You can also import documents into Google Translate – a very handy function.

On the **Google Translate App** you can also instantly translate using the camera function, as well as importing images with text into the App. Try the different functions for a variety of options to convert to your chosen language.

Other social media sites also provide translation options – look for 'translate' at the bottom of messages to click and convert the text to your preferred language.



International Groups and Social Clubs

Below you will find an overview of internationally-oriented social and professional groups and networks in the Leiden region. You might find more specific groups and clubs on our website.

Local based International groups

We are Leiden organises various projects and events in Leiden, connecting all the city residents – internationals and locals: weareleiden.com

MeetupLeiden offers a large number of social and sport groups in the Leiden region:
meetup.com/nl-NL/cities/nl/leiden

Leiden Toastmasters Club is an international organisation dedicated to improving the public speaking and leadership skills of its members: toastmasters.nl/en/tm-clubs/leiden-toastmasters

Social media sites Leiden

International

Leiden Expats: [f.com/groups/leidenexpats](https://www.facebook.com/groups/leidenexpats)
Leiden Friends: [f.com/groups/1200657540009133](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1200657540009133)
Leiden MIX (Meetup International Xperience):
[f.com/groups/leidenmix](https://www.facebook.com/groups/leidenmix)
Leiden mamas: [f.com/groups/LeidenMamas](https://www.facebook.com/groups/LeidenMamas)
Leiden Language Exchange:
[f.com/groups/49893697570](https://www.facebook.com/groups/49893697570)
Leiden International Community:
[f.com/groups/219095914886234](https://www.facebook.com/groups/219095914886234)
Little Friends Leiden:
[f.com/groups/2518112848479786](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2518112848479786)
Oegstgeest Expats and locals:
[f.com/groups/1381439702119065](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1381439702119065)
Voorschoten families:
[f.com/groups/115460755770282](https://www.facebook.com/groups/115460755770282)

For international students:

<https://theleidener.com>

For entrepreneurs & networking

Leiden entrepreneurs network:
[f.com/groups/294257924322441](https://www.facebook.com/groups/294257924322441)
Small Business Connections Leiden:
[f.com/groups/SBCLeiden](https://www.facebook.com/groups/SBCLeiden)

By Language

Deutsch sprechende Mamas und Papas in Leiden:
[f.com/groups/542480646165502](https://www.facebook.com/groups/542480646165502)
Españoles en Leiden:
[f.com/groups/119552408120674](https://www.facebook.com/groups/119552408120674)
Españoles y Latinos en Leiden:
[f.com/groups/311840622216607](https://www.facebook.com/groups/311840622216607)
Filipinos in Leiden Netherlands:
[f.com/groups/578768819265140](https://www.facebook.com/groups/578768819265140)
Les Francophones à Leiden:
[f.com/groups/1155091627841266](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1155091627841266)
Indians in Leiden:
[f.com/groups/689407177746874](https://www.facebook.com/groups/689407177746874)
Italiani in Leiden: [f.com/groups/italianialeiden](https://www.facebook.com/groups/italianialeiden)
Leiden Portugal: [f.com/groups/146895075720462](https://www.facebook.com/groups/146895075720462)
Leideni szülők: [f.com/groups/239917140215401](https://www.facebook.com/groups/239917140215401)

Social media sites - in the Netherlands

Americans in the Netherlands:
[f.com/groups/americansnl](https://www.facebook.com/groups/americansnl)
British in the Netherlands:
[f.com/groups/BritishinTheNetherlands](https://www.facebook.com/groups/BritishinTheNetherlands)
Canadians in the Netherlands:
[f.com/groups/42020531482](https://www.facebook.com/groups/42020531482)
荷兰华人群/Chinese in the Netherlands :
[f.com/groups/636840863061715](https://www.facebook.com/groups/636840863061715)
Japan Dutch オランダ語 Club JPNLBE:
[f.com/groups/837238466334271](https://www.facebook.com/groups/837238466334271)

Approximately 4.5 million out of a total of almost 17 million people (*more than a quarter of the population*) in the Netherlands are registered with one of the 24,669 (2015) sports clubs in the country.

More information on sports can be found via: nocnsf.nl.

Whenever the national team takes part in international competitions, orange mania reigns. People dress in orange (*in reference to the name of the royal family*), raise the national flag, and decorate the houses and streets as a patriotic feeling of athletic superiority floods the nation.

Popular Sports

The following sports are very popular in the Netherlands:

- Football (Soccer): has the largest following in the Netherlands
- Field hockey: second most popular sport
- Volleyball: third most popular sport.

Tennis, gymnastics and golf are the three most widely played individual sports. Cricket is considered a growing sport in the Netherlands.

Another Dutch favourite is ice skating. Whenever the temperature drops below zero for several days in a row and the lakes start to freeze over, the Dutch become excited as it means there's a possibility of an 'Elfstedentocht', a traditional ice skating tour which passes by eleven cities in the North of the Netherlands. The tour, almost 200 km in length, stretches over frozen canals, rivers and lakes between eleven historic Frisian cities, amongst which is Leeuwarden. Any time the weather allows it, this tour is held. The last editions of the Elfstedentocht were held in 1985, 1986 and 1997. The tour would typically feature about 15,000 amateur skaters taking part, and it requires high quality ice. The regulations state that the ice must be (*and remain at*) a minimum thickness of 15 centimetres during the entire tour, in order for the race to take place.

The Dutch also love to watch ice skating on television.

Children and Sports

In primary and secondary schools, physical education lessons (*gymles*) are provided to promote physical exercise. Children participate in different kinds of sports such as basketball, football, gymnastics or swimming at least once a week. They are expected to bring their own sportswear.

Extracurricular sports are not automatically part of the school system. The greater part of organised sports in the Netherlands takes place at the sport clubs at the local level. Most Dutch sport clubs are run by volunteers. Equally important, a sports club is a democratic organisation run by the members themselves. Most sports clubs are members of national sports federations.

Sports for Internationals

There are numerous expat-oriented and international-friendly sport associations in the Leiden region. You can find a list of these on the Living Here section of our website.

Events Calendar

The Leiden region has a lot to offer. In your spare time, there's always something to do! Make sure to make the best out of your stay and discover the different activities on offer in your area.

On our website you will find an event calendar (*in English*) with various events, either specifically for expats, or expat-friendly. Leiden International Centre also organises a Meet and Mingle every month. This is a social event open to all internationals who want to meet and connect with other expats. See the event calendar on our website or our social media channels for details.



National Holidays 2023

- New Year's Day (*Nieuwsjaarsdag*):
January 1st
- Good Friday (*Goede Vrijdag*):
April 7th
- Easter Sunday (*Eerste Paasdag*):
April 9th
- Easter Monday (*Tweede Paasdag*):
April 10th
- King's Day (*Koningsdag*):
April 27th
- National Remembrance Day
(*Dodenherdenking*):
May 4th
- Liberation Day (*Bevrijdingsdag*):
May 5th
- Ascension Day (*Hemelvaartsdag*):
May 18th
- Whitsun (*Eerste Pinksterdag*):
May 28th
- Whit Monday (*Tweede Pinksterdag*):
May 29th
- Christmas Day (*Eerste Kerstdag*):
December 25th
- Boxing Day (*Tweede Kerstdag*):
December 26th
- New Year's Eve (*Oudejaarsavond*):
December 31st

Other special days in 2023

- Carnival (*Carnaval*):
February 19th, 20th, 21st
- Labour Day (*Dag van de Arbeid*):
May 1st
- Mother's Day (*Moederdag*):
May 14th
- Father's Day (*Vaderdag*):
June 18th
- Budget Day (*Prinsjesdag*):
Opening day of the Dutch Parliament
September 19th
- Liberation of Leiden (*Leidens Ontzet*):
October 3rd
- World Animal Day (*Werelddierendag*):
October 4th
- St Martin's Day (*Sint Maarten*):
November 11th
- Saint Nicholas (*Sinterklaas*):
December 5th

Public school holidays 2023 (Leiden Area)

Vacation	Primary Education
Spring break (<i>Voorjaarsvakantie</i>)	February 25th - March 5th
May vacation (<i>Meivakantie</i>)	April 29th - May 7th
Summer holiday (<i>Zomervakantie</i>)	July 8th - August 20th
Autumn break (<i>Herfstvakantie</i>)	October 14th - 22nd
Winter break (<i>Kerstvakantie</i>)	December 23rd 2023 - January 7th, 2024

Please verify this information with the school. Schools are free to deviate from national guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the 10 most frequently asked questions by internationals?
And even more important, what are the answers?

Q. What should you do first when you arrive?

A. Make an appointment with Leiden International Centre to receive a Burgerservicenummer (BSN), Citizen Service Number.

Q. I need to find housing, can you help?

A. We recommend getting in touch with one of our trusted housing partners (see p.46-47).

Q. Should I opt for an International or Dutch school?

A. In a Dutch school, your child will experience the language and culture of your new home. Are you only locating to the Netherlands for a short period of time? Then an international school might be better.

Q. Where should I go on a regular Saturday in the Leiden region?

A. To the Leiden market! Eat some fish or a syrup waffle and stroll around. In fine weather, explore the coastal area with the wide sandy beaches or discover Leiden and the region by bike.

Q. How many internationals are located in the Leiden region?

A. There are 20,000 internationals living in the region.

Q. Where do I learn to speak Dutch?

A. Follow a language course with one of our language school partners, or start with Dutch Studies at the University of Leiden.

Q. How do I get around like a local?

A. Use a bike! A racing bike, or a cargo bike with kids: as long as it is a two-wheeler you are fine!

Q. It is your birthday! How to act?

A. Make sure you bring a treat to the school or to work. Going the 'Dutch way'? Invite your friends for coffee & cake.

Q. The best spot for a picnic?

A. Settle down in the Singelpark, a 7 kilometres-long ring of canals around the inner city of Leiden, or just go to the beach!

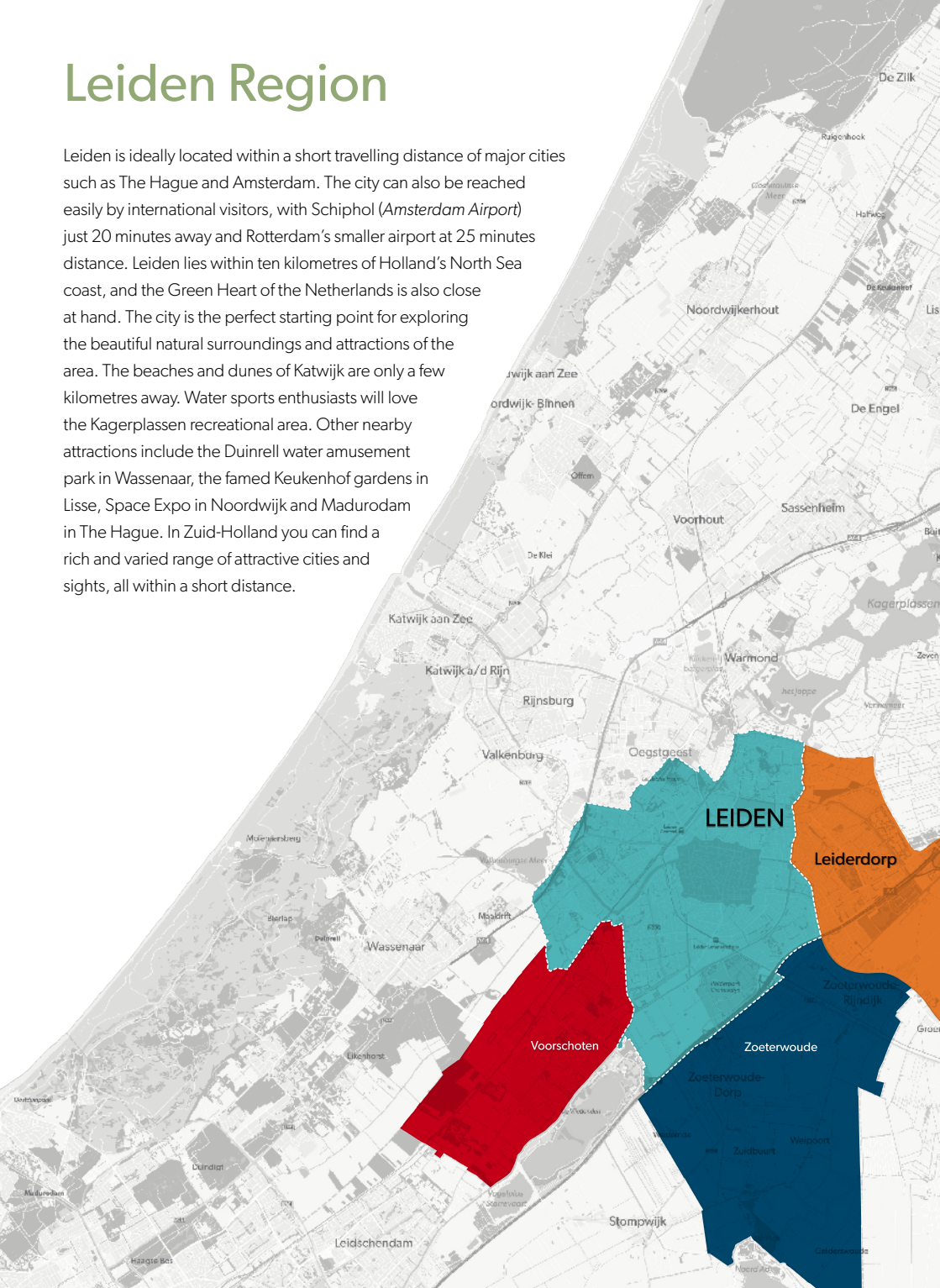
Q. What Leiden festivals cannot be missed?

A. Leidens ontzet (*Liberation of Leiden Festival*) on October 3rd!

Have more questions? Check our website or contact our helpdesk at info@leideninternationalcentre.nl

Leiden Region

Leiden is ideally located within a short travelling distance of major cities such as The Hague and Amsterdam. The city can also be reached easily by international visitors, with Schiphol (Amsterdam Airport) just 20 minutes away and Rotterdam's smaller airport at 25 minutes distance. Leiden lies within ten kilometres of Holland's North Sea coast, and the Green Heart of the Netherlands is also close at hand. The city is the perfect starting point for exploring the beautiful natural surroundings and attractions of the area. The beaches and dunes of Katwijk are only a few kilometres away. Water sports enthusiasts will love the Kagerplassen recreational area. Other nearby attractions include the Duinrell water amusement park in Wassenaar, the famed Keukenhof gardens in Lisse, Space Expo in Noordwijk and Madurodam in The Hague. In Zuid-Holland you can find a rich and varied range of attractive cities and sights, all within a short distance.



Town Halls

Below you will find a listing of all town halls offering municipal services. If you live in Leiden, Leiderdorp, Oegstgeest, Voorschoten or Zoeterwoude you will have to visit your local City Hall for specific services such as:

- Change of address (can also be done online)
- Present birth certificate and/or marriage certificate (*if applicable*)
- Exchange of driving licence
- Obtain an extract (*uittreksel*) from the Municipal Personal Records Database (*BRP*)
- Obtain a letter of invitation (*guarantor's declaration, garantverklaring*) for tourist visas
- Register a birth, marriage or death
- De-register

Leiden

Bargelaan 190, Level building

📞 +31 71 516 516 5

leiden.nl

Leiderdorp

Willem-Alexanderlaan 1

📞 +31 71 54 58 500

leiderdorp.nl

Voorschoten

Leidseweg 25

📞 +31 88 654 9600

voorschoten.nl

Zoeterwoude

Noordbuurtseweg 27

📞 +31 71 58 06 300

zoeterwoude.nl

Leiden



Leiden is a cosy, vibrant city which will quickly feel like home. There is plenty to explore, from hidden courtyards to independent boutiques and award-winning national museums. Then there's the 28km of canals that can be enjoyed by boat, or from one of the many water-side restaurants. With Leiden University, the Leiden University Medical Center, Leiden Bio Science Park (Life Sciences and Health) and many international businesses based here, it's no surprise that the Leiden region is popular with internationals, who make up 12% of the city's population!

European City of Science

Since the first university in the Netherlands was founded here in 1575, Leiden has been a city where innovation and scientific exploration have flourished. Over the centuries it has attracted the world's greatest thinkers, including René Descartes, Herman Boerhaave, Hendrik Lorentz and Albert Einstein. In recognition of the city's contribution to science, Leiden was awarded the title of European City of Science in 2022.

Visit the [Tourist Information](#) to discover more things to see and do in the city.

More information: leiden.nl

Leiderdorp



Leiderdorp is located ‘between city and countryside’, in the middle of the Randstad (*the metropolitan area of the western part of the Netherlands*). Leiden lies to the west, while Leiderdorp itself borders the Green Heart of the Netherlands.

The town provides a pleasant living environment for its 27,000 inhabitants. Leiderdorp offers plenty of opportunities for recreation and relaxation. A flourishing social climate and thriving business sector make Leiderdorp a great place to visit.

Leiderdorp is as easily accessible by road as it is by water. City life and countryside, and everything they have to offer, are only a short bike ride away. Those wishing to visit museums are moments away from the historic centre of Leiden, and those seeking tranquil natural surroundings can find an abundance of nature in the Green Heart of Holland.

In short, Leiderdorp offers both dynamic and relaxed surroundings at the same time. Come and experience it yourself!

More information: leiderdorp.nl

Voorschoten is an authentic and centuries old Dutch municipality that has a lot to offer as your place of residence or education. It is a typical family-friendly place which has many recreational facilities, sports associations and a wide variety of quality restaurants and bars. Voorschoten is also home to the British School in the Netherlands, with a British and international curriculum. Furthermore, Voorschoten offers widespread opportunities to explore arts and culture, and to enjoy the lively shopping centre.

More information: voorschoten.nl

Voorschoten has a rich history, which becomes evident when you are in the town. Both in the centre of Voorschoten and in the surrounding area you will find many historic buildings and places that tell the story of Voorschoten. Recently, a number of information panels describing the history of Voorschoten have been installed in the town centre.

Some must-sees in Voorschoten are:

- Duivenvoorde Castle:
Visit the castle museum, stroll through the park and allow yourself to be amazed by the rich history of the castle and the estate.
- Museum Voorschoten: Situated in the Voorstraat, in the heart of the historic old town. The museum exhibits everything to do with Voorschoten, with a focus on the history of the town.
- Landgoed de Horsten (*De Horsten Estate*): a large contiguous green area of approximately 450 hectares, situated on the outskirts of Voorschoten. Prince Frederik of the Netherlands (1797-1881) founded De Horsten Estate. King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima live at the Eikenhorst, which is closed to the public. The other parts of the estate are accessible to pedestrians.

For more information about museums, restaurants and events in Voorschoten, please visit: vorstelijkvrij.nl/en



Zoeterwoude

Zoeterwoude, a municipality which offers a unique view of the typical Dutch 'polder', the flat and lush pastures with their extensive waterworks. Scout around the area by bike, on foot or in a canoe. Visit a farm where the age-old craft of cheesemaking is still carried out. Go birdwatching while enjoying the rural landscape with its monumental farms, its mills and the characteristic silhouette of distant church steeples.

More information: zoeterwoude.nl



Our Partners



Leiden International Centre is partners with local organisations who provide services relevant to the international community.

All of our trusted partners provide services in English and have plenty of experience working with expats.

Many of our partners also organise free events in collaboration with Leiden International Centre. These include career workshops, mortgage consultations, and webinars on how to choose a school or file your taxes. Check the events page of our website for upcoming partner events.



Partner Categories

- Business Support
- Career
- Education and Personal Development
- Expat Services
- Finance
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Immigration Services
- Legal Services
- Leisure
- Media
- Policy Advising
- Relocation Services
- Taxes
- Telecommunications
- Transportation
- Volunteering

Business Support

Blue Ninja Business Support

We offer a full business support experience. Improving efficiency, systems analysis, and simplifying your back office are just a few of the ways we can help. Our bespoke packages are designed to fit businesses at all stages of growth, leaving you with the time, clarity, and peace of mind you need to work with your clients.



blueninja.eu

Hello Expat!

Hello Expat! is an online stage for (*entrepreneurial*) expats and (*international*) startups, institutions and companies whose main target audience consists of Expats.

Hello Expat!

HelloExpat.nl

Buzz Business Networking

Join this supportive English-speaking B2B networking community with in-person and online events where we can help and support each other and share knowledge. This networking group will connect you with other business owners locally, nationally, and internationally, who knows where the conversation will take you. Interested in joining the hive?

www.buzzbusinessnetworking.eu/events



Career

Abroad at Your Best

Abroad at Your Best is founded and run by expats to support other expats in the Leiden area in building and enjoying their wished life and career here. Through workshops, support groups, job-seeking advice, job applications review services and/or coaching sessions it supports expats to:

- Enhance job/career opportunities and life-skills
- Achieve more balance, fulfilment and integration
- Get their wished job or career advancement/change
- Start or improve their freelancing or business activities

coachforinternationals.com



COACHING - THERAPY - WORKSHOPS
FOR INTERNATIONALS

Atentamente HR Consulting & Career Coaching

When you move abroad, you want to use your skills and potential to the fullest. Atentamente was founded by an HR professional who knows all about expatriation and understands the Dutch employment market. Expect a client-centred approach, good exploration of your talent and career options, as well as expert interview practice and CV advice.



atentamente.nl

Education and Personal Development

New2NL

The Dutch education system is very different to that of many other countries, and international families often struggle to find the right school. This can result in a distressing mismatch, leading some families to give up and head home. New2nl will make sure this doesn't happen to you. Schooling and the Dutch education system are our specialty.

Contact us for:

- Professional education services for international families
- Special offers with trusted partners
- Bespoke business packages
- Articles on life and education in the Netherlands



new2nl.com

The Square Mile

Develop your language skills with a business language training programme from The Square Mile. We offer all languages including Dutch and deliver private courses, in-company group courses and open enrolment Dutch courses at the Leiden Bio Science Park.



thesquaremile.nl/en/

Education and Personal Development

LeidenGlobal

LeidenGlobal is a joint effort of Leiden University and seven Leiden-based museums and academic institutes all dedicated to collections and research on specific themes and cultures of the world. LeidenGlobal aims to demonstrate and present the knowledge that is available in Leiden to a broad public, such as the expats in Leiden and surrounding areas.



LeidenGlobal

Rooted in Calm

Rooted in Calm's Founder Allyson Kukel is a Transformational Coach specializing in motivation, confidence, and resilience. If you are looking to build confidence and resilience, transition smoothly into Leiden, or support carving out time for yourself she can help. Especially, if you are an expat or have repatriated during the pandemic.



Webster Leiden Campus

Expats study at Webster for its unique American Liberal Arts education that promotes global citizenship. The small class sizes, personal attention, and flexibility sets us apart from Dutch higher education. Flexibility is key for expats who are on the move with classes online and campuses in the US, Europe, Asia, and Africa.



BplusC

BplusC is a dynamic organization that offers a great, versatile and complete range of courses for everyone in Leiden, Leiderdorp, Oegstgeest, Voorschoten and Wassenaar. Under the motto of 'Lifelong learning', they offer a programme brimming with knowledge, contact, development, society, art and culture.



bplusc.nl

Taalhuis

Learning Dutch at Taalhuis is educational and fun! The lesson location of Taalhuis is located next to the train station at Schipholweg 66, we are located in the building of Lyceo. You will learn Dutch in small groups with a lot of personal attention. You can also contact us for incompany courses!



taalhuis.nl

Expat Services

ACCESS

ACCESS is a not-for-profit organization supporting the international community in the Netherlands. The professional volunteer staff at ACCESS can answer questions and provide information on important expatriation issues. In addition, its on-call Counselling Services Network consisting of experienced and qualified professionals who are aware of the challenges facing expatriates in need of support as well as a group of Trainers offering support in a variety of fields.

access-nl.org



Finance

Rabobank Leiden - Katwijk

Expats are welcome to open an account at Rabobank. You can also opt for a package deal for any insurance you may need in the Netherlands.

rabo.nl



Rabobank

Your Financials

Your Financials' consultants bring the best personalized plan for your financial future, fully licenced, experienced and connected to deliver smooth execution as well. Income and estate planning across generations. Solutions for employees and entrepreneurs. Managing and establishing your future pension and responsible investment income, including home finance and investment finance.

yourfinancials.nl



Healthcare: Mental Health

BrightMind Practice

BrightMind Practice, led by registered psychologist Drs. Roy Kamienchik, provides therapy and coaching for international and Dutch clients. The service is warm, personal and follows an effective evidence-based integrative approach. Both individual and group therapy are offered based on the client's need and the professional advice. Options for insurance reimbursement are available.

brightmindpractice.nl



Housing: Mortgages

Expat Mortgages

Expat Mortgages is a team of independent mortgage brokers helping expats who want to buy a house in the Netherlands and need a mortgage for that. The company has existed for more than 10 years and provided mortgage advice to thousands of people. The exclusive work with expats only turned the company into a preferred choice by many internationals.

expatmortgages.nl



Hypotheek Visie

Hypotheek Visie Leiden is a local independent mortgage agency that compares around 40 different mortgage providers. Maarten van Tongeren is an experienced mortgage advisor who can guide you through the process of getting a mortgage and can also help you with finding a local notary and real estate agency. Get in touch by phone or email to book your first meeting free of charge.

hypotheekvisie.nl/leiden



Housing: Real Estate Agents

De Raad Makelaars

De Raad Makelaars offers rental houses in and around Leiden. Whether you are looking for a place to live at short notice or within a longer period of time, we have what you need! Our portfolio includes fully furnished short stay rentals to shell new-built rentals. We have residences you can move into straight away and residences that are yet to be built.

deraadmakelaars.nl



Tweelwonen

Tweelwonen has been renting, letting and managing rental properties since 2003. With offices in Leiden, Noordwijk, The Hague, Utrecht and Rotterdam they are the largest non-franchise real estate broker in homes rentals in this area.

tweelwonen.nl/en-gb



Eigen Haard Real Estate Agency

Eigen Haard Makelaars is an agency with over 75 years of experience in the local housing market. If you are looking for accommodation to rent or a house to buy, the Eigen Haard team will be standing by to assist you with their experience and expertise.



eigen-haard.nl

Mevrouw de Aankoopmakelaar

Looking for your dream house? Xandra Walburg is a specialised buying agent in Leiden and the surrounding area, with years of experience helping expats. As a purchase agent, Xandra works exclusively in the interest of the buyer. She knows the market and has the necessary legal and technical knowledge to advise the buyer every step of the way. "My goal is to realise the best purchase for you without any risks. You don't have to worry about anything". She has an extensive professional network from financial advisers to technical surveyors and, together with her colleague Sandra, she helps the buyer throughout the process with personal and professional support.



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

mevrouwdeaankoopmakelaar.nl/Leiden

Kammeraad Housing Agency

Good to see you here! Are you still searching for a new house? You're more than welcome to simply drop by our office for an exploratory chat. We've been here since 1985 and considered as one of the best renting and letting specialists for a diversity of residential premises in the Leiden area.



kammeraad.nl/en-gb

Legal Services

Van den Heuvel Lawfirm

Our office specializes in Dutch immigration law and employment law. Van den Heuvel has years of experience working for the Dutch Immigration Service (*IND*) before starting immigration services independently.

We further offer legal services to employers and employees in employment matters.

Please visit our website for more information.

vandenheuveljuristen.nl



De Clercq Advocaten

Established in 1850. De Clercq advises (inter)national companies and expats on various areas of Dutch law such as employment law, immigration law, corporate law, intellectual property, privacy, real estate and notarial services.

They regularly publish blogs with useful information. De Clercq is well known for investing in the relation with its clients, being pragmatically, innovative as well as socially committed by supporting various institutions, associations and initiatives.



Everaert Advocaten

Located in Amsterdam, Everaert Advocaten's lawyers provide immigration services to companies and individuals since 1982. With specialists in global mobility, Dutch citizenship, permanent residence, family reunification and international adoption, we will guide you step-by-step through the bureaucratic maze and make sure your/your family's stay in the Netherlands is compliant with Dutch law.

everaert.nl



Leisure



Leiden Cinemas

All local cinematic offerings can be found at Bioscopen Leiden, or Leiden Cinemas. Whether it be Hollywood blockbusters, all-time classics or indie gems: you'll find what you're looking for at one of these three theatres, all located in the heart of the city.

Want to enjoy foreign films with English subtitles? Visit the weekly edition of Expat Cinema! Keep an eye out for these events on the Bioscopen Leiden Facebook page.

bioscopenleiden.nl

Hilton Garden Inn Leiden

Located on Leiden's Bio Science Park, Hilton Garden Inn Leiden offers complimentary WiFi, flexible meeting and event space with natural light, a private dining suite and 6 meeting rooms for up to 112 people. The hotel offers free parking and A/V equipment. The adjacent CORPUS Congress Centre and Bio Science Park add unique components for a successful large meeting, product presentation or multi-day congress.



hiltonhotels.com/nL_NL/nederland/hilton-garden-inn-leiden

Media



DutchNews

Want to keep up with what's going on in the Netherlands? DutchNews.nl is the leading provider of quality Dutch news and current affairs in English for an international audience. You can follow the news online, on your mobile phone, via the newsletter and social media – and it's absolutely free.

dutchnews.nl

Dutch Review

DutchReview's unique mix of high-energy content gives expats and internationals in the Netherlands news, culture, politics, history, opinion, and lifestyle. Want to know why the Dutch are so direct? Best destinations for a day trip? How to navigate the Dutch healthcare system?

DutchReview has the blow-by-blow on anything Dutch.

dutchreview.com



Media

Expat Republic

Expat Republic is a leading media company aimed at improving and enriching the lives of expatriates living in The Netherlands. They frequently organise events and seminars as well as provide a myriad of useful and engaging information. Find out how they can help tell your story to a huge international, diverse and dynamic community.

[Expatriatepublic.com](https://www.expatriatepublic.com)



IamExpat

Founded and run by expats, IamExpat Media is the leading English-language media platform for internationals in the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland, providing up-to-date information, news, job listings, housing services, events and lifestyle tips. IamExpat also organises the annual IamExpat Fair in Amsterdam and The Hague; a truly international one - day event designed to connect and support the expat community in the Netherlands.



Policy Advising

Blaauwberg

Blaauwberg is a regional advisory firm settled in the inner city of Leiden. We host on demand masterclasses and courses with a regional touch. Blaauwberg is known for its courses 'Leidenkunde'. A four day knowledge program about Leiden, seen from a global perspective.

[blaauwberg.nl](https://www.blaauwberg.nl)

BLAAUWBERG
strategieontwikkeling & kennistransfer

Relocation Services

Atlas International Movers

Moving your household goods to the Netherlands from abroad is a major event. Atlas International Movers provides high quality moving services to and from the Netherlands from all around the globe. Atlas International Movers is an experienced and trusted partner who will perfectly organise your relocation for you.



atlas-movers.com

PAS BMS Immigration & Relocation Services

For many years PAS BMS Immigration & Relocation Services provides high quality, professional services with a personal touch. We offer full immigration services and can assist with all aspects of your move to the Netherlands such as housing, schooling, taxes, registration and full settling in service. We are dedicated to make your relocation a seamless process and to make you feel at home in our country.



pasbms.com

Taxes

HBK Expat Consultants

The specialists at HBK expat consultants provide expert advice on tax and social security matters relating to cross-border employment. Our consultants are highly experienced and know all the ins and outs of international mobility. Drawing on our international network and with our flexible approach we can provide support in any situation and with any problem, small or large, complex or straightforward. Our customer portfolio is varied and includes multinationals, SMEs, employees, independent professionals and private individuals all of whom are in some way affected by international tax and social security matters.

hbk.nl

tax advisors
accountants
expat consultants



Taxes

LIMES International

When it comes to international activities, everyone comes across fiscal issues, as well as related questions. An integrated approach is essential in coping with these issues. LIMES international advises companies and private individuals with their cross-border activities.



TaxSavers

TaxSavers is an all-round tax firm that assists you with all questions about Dutch taxes. We help with the M-form, income tax return, 30% ruling, VAT return, and more.



taxsavers.nl

Telecommunications

Lebara

Lebara is a telecommunication company, providing prepaid and postpaid services by using KPN's reliable 4G network.



lebara.com/nl/en/expats

Volunteering

BuZz

Volunteering with BuZz can help you build a network in your new home and is a great way to practice Dutch. BuZz believes that everyone has talents and can participate in their community.



buzzleiden.nl

Transportation

Bynco

Buying a car made easy for expats. Bynco.com is the Dutch number 1 car-webshop for expats. No language barrier, 14-day trial period, foreign driving licence possible, home delivery, official RDW-registration, personal assistance. We have already welcomed many expats with their new occasion and we receive excellent reviews.



Taxi Centrale ELTAX

ELTAX was the first taxi service in Leiden, founded in 1933. Since then the company has not stood still, and even has a street named after it, the Eltaxhof. With four Tesla's in the fleet, ELTAX also has sustainable travel options. 100% electric is 0% emission. We will be happy to offer you our highly personalized service. Do what the Leiden dweller does.

Taxi? Eltax. Visit our website for more information.



SCL Rotterdam

Moving to The Netherlands? Bring your car with you and benefit from enormous tax advantages! In many cases it is cheaper to bring your car with you when you move to the Netherlands instead of buying a new car in The Netherlands. Expats can benefit from various tax exemptions by using a special permit for removal goods which makes it attractive to bring a car. SCL Rotterdam can take care of the shipment your car from Door-To-Door, we move your car safely and take care of all the paperwork including the Dutch license plate registration so you can hit the Dutch roads in your own car within no time..



sclrotterdam.com



Webster Leiden Campus

Earn an American degree in The Netherlands! Flexibility is key for expats and internationals who are on the move. Webster Leiden Campus offers evening classes and online classes with global campuses in the US, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Our undergraduate and graduate programs provide internationals with an opportunity to enhance their career and become part of our global alumni network with over 200,000 members.

Enhance your career with an American graduate degree

- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Arts in International Relations
- Master of Arts in Psychology with an Emphasis in Mental Health



We accept students who are

- Foreign from over 50+ nationalities or locally from the Netherlands
- A full-time or part-time employee based in the Netherlands (Graduate-specific)
- Enrolled in International Baccalaureate (Undergraduate-specific)
- Enrolled in American Advanced Placement programs (Undergraduate-specific)
- Enrolled in Dutch VWO program (Undergraduate-specific)
- Enrolled in United Kingdom A-level (Undergraduate-specific)
- Enrolled in a Dutch HBO program
- Looking to transfer from a bachelor program

Email: Admissions@webster.nl. Telephone: 071 516 8000. Apply Now: <https://applywu.webster.edu/apply/>

Get in touch!

webster.nl



Taalthuis

At Taalthuis you can follow Dutch courses at different levels both online and face-to-face in a classroom. We aim to make learning a fun experience! Founded in 2006 Taalthuis now is a well-known language institute in the Netherlands for higher educated students. With lesson locations in seven different cities in the Netherlands, Taalthuis makes it possible for expats, au pairs, and international students to learn Dutch all over the Netherlands.

In-company

Taalthuis also offers Dutch courses for businesses on location. Our teachers are happy to travel to your company and deliver a course which allows you and your colleagues to learn Dutch in a way that suits your needs. We also offer the possibility for online Dutch courses. These courses can be organised at any time, even during lunch break!

Learn Dutch in Leiden

Next to the train station you will find the lesson location of Taalthuis in the building of Lyceo at Schipholweg 66. Overlooking the beautiful city Leiden you will learn Dutch in a fun way!

Contact details

T: 023-3050305

T: 023-3040023 (level check consultation)

E: info@taalthuis.nl.

taalthuis.nl



TAALtHUIS©
Learning Dutch in small groups



The Square Mile

The Square Mile is one of the market leaders for business language training in The Netherlands. Based in Leiden, we train around 1700 people a year in the Aerospace, Pharmaceuticals, ICT, Manufacturing, Finance and Accounting sectors.

We offer:

- Individual, tailored language courses, either intensive (*1-2 weeks, 30 hours a week*), semi-intensive (*3-6 weeks, 10 hours a week*) or extensive (*30-40 hours spread over 3 months*).
- In-company group programmes for teams or departments.
- Open Enrolment Dutch courses at the Leiden Bio Science Park, bringing international arrivals together in a friendly, convenient location to learn Dutch and build social and professional networks.

We provide a personal, friendly service and many of our clients have been with us for over 15 years. If you would like more information, please give us a call. You can call us on 071 532 3356 or mail info@thesquaremile.nl.

thesquaremile.nl/en/

De Raad Makelaars

De Raad Makelaars, a renowned real estate agency located in Katwijk, offers rental houses in and around Leiden. Whether you are looking for a place to live at short notice or a longer period of time, we have what you need! Our portfolio includes fully furnished short stay rentals and new-build rentals. We have residences you can move into straight away and residences that are yet to be built.

Apart from new-build projects, our portfolio also includes existing homes and commercial real estate such as Crown Business Center. Our office specializes in assisting our clients during the entire rental process.

Would you like to know more about De Raad Makelaars or about the properties we offer? Then please contact us and find out what we can do for you.

Contact details

T: 071 - 405 15 00

E: welkom@deraadmakelaars.nl

deraadmakelaars.nl





Tweelwonen

Tweelwonen is the most reputable brokerage office in Leiden and surroundings and has over 15 years of experience in all areas of leasing of living accommodations.

For years, Tweelwonen is the leading brokerage office of the Leiden region. Last year we won the National Rental Broker of the Year Award.

With our solid and trusted team of 20 employees, we are daily at your service! We have offices in Leiden, The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Noordwijk.

Also, in the field of real estate (*RE*) management / property management you've come to the right place. Our Expat Package is unique in the housing market and we can assist you or your company with finding and managing your new home.

tweelwonen.nl/en-gb



Watch out, because HBK expat consultants is sharp and delivers what gets you ahead!

HBK expat consultants is part of HBK tax advisors, accountants & expat consultants. With over 20 years of experience and expertise in the field of global mobility, immigration and international social security, HBK advises and facilitates organizations and individuals that operate across national borders. Our services range from advising on complex international tax and social security issues to expatriate payroll services, the preparation of Dutch income tax returns, applications for a 30% ruling, applications for residence permits and other related services.

Saskia Hemmes is one of the partners at HBK who advises on cross-border employment. "My career started as an advisor at one of the Big-Four offices. I have been using my knowledge and experience for more than 10 years at HBK where we serve a wide range of clients, from multinationals to private individuals. With the size of this office and the freedom and flexibility that we have here, we can really free up time for our customers, large or small, whether they are experienced players or starters on the international playing field." Within HBK there are of course more professionals with knowledge and experience in global mobility. One of the advisers is Daniel van den Helder. Daniel has been working at HBK since 2019 and is also specialized in expat advice. "During my Master's degree in Tax Law, I also started my working life at a Big-Four office where I worked for 12.5 years. In 2019 I switched to HBK in the position of Global Mobility specialist. I'm glad I took this step. As a small player within this niche, we can make a substantial difference. High in knowledge and yet the time for our customers. Our international network does help with that, of course."

If you would like to discuss your cross border issues with us, or if you would just like to take a peek inside our beautiful building, don't hesitate to contact us!

Stay sharp!

hbk.nl



fiscalisten
accountants
expat consultants | **hbk**

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Go for freedom with Lebara

To feel free, that's the idea. We are here for anyone who finds happiness in real experiences. For enterprising spirits who do their own thing and go their own way. Just like us. Let us make your life a little bit easier. With flexible Sim Only, Prepaid and affordable extra bundles and add-ons. All on a superfast network with maximum coverage. Because if you got something to say, you should be able to share it. Always, everywhere and with everyone.

What's keeping you?
Lebara. Unstoppable.

Lebara.com/nl/en/expats

Bynco (Buy Your Next Car Online)

The first webshop where it is possible to buy a second-hand car 100% online, in the comfort of your own home. Our website does not refer you to other dealers. We are acknowledged by the RDW and use an independent third-party bank account with GoCredible to make sure your money is safely transferred when you accept the car. Buying a car online is as easy and safe as making a purchase with any other webshop. We have already welcomed many expats and we receive excellent reviews.

- 14 day trial period
- No haggling
- 180 day warranty
- Pay on delivery
- Free delivery within The Netherlands
- No questions asked money back guarantee
- Personal assistance 24/7
- Safe payment

Buying a car made easy for expats

Bynco is the Dutch number 1 car website for anyone that is new in the Netherlands. All cars that are being offered by Bynco are from selected partners. The collection of cars we offer therefore do not consist of randomly used cars, but of cars specially selected by our experts.

Do you live in the Netherlands and do you have a foreign driving licence? No problem, you can just buy a car from our webshop and we will guide you through every step. When placing an order you can indicate that you have a foreign driving licence. The only difference is that the registration of the car must take place at an official RDW location. These locations are located throughout the Netherlands and we'll be there to assist. You also need an original certificate of registration in the Netherlands (BRP-extract, including BSN, not older than 3 months) and a valid driving licence.

Contact details

T: 030 - 207 42 20

Whatsapp: +31 30 808 0186

E: info@bynco.com

bynco.com/nl-en/

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bynco
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NO. 1 CAR-WEBSITE FOR EXPATS

Stay Tuned!

Stay updated about events, subscribe for newsletters and contribute to building an active community. Leiden International Centre is the place where you connect to each other, to society and to our partners. There are many ways to stay updated on our activities!

Social Media

 @LeidenInternationalCentre

 @LeidenIntCentre

 Leiden International Centre

E-newsletters

At leideninternationalcentre.nl you can subscribe for newsletters to stay updated on activities, events and relevant information in the Leiden region.

Website

At leideninternationalcentre.nl you will find more information but also interesting, personal stories and blogs of other internationals.

Contact Details

The Leiden International Centre is located on the ground floor at Stadskantoor Leiden in the LEVEL building

Email: info@leideninternationalcentre.nl For questions, please contact us by email or book a videocall via our website.

Phone: +31 (0) 71 516 6005

For registrations an appointment is required.

Visiting address

Bargelaan 190
2333 CW Leiden

Our current openinghours can be found on our website.

How to Reach Leiden International Centre?

Leiden International Centre is located in Stadskantoor Leiden - LEVEL building, on the LUMC side of Leiden Central Station and is easy accessible with public transport. If you are coming by car, you can park in the parking garage LEVEL, just outside the building. Please note this is paid parking.

Appointments

Appointments can be made via our website.



