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Commission

# Soon in Petten

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*MODERNISING THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION*



January 2024

Human  
Resources  
and Security



## THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE PETTEN IS HAPPY TO WELCOME YOU TO ITS SITE AND TO THE NETHERLANDS

*Dear (future) colleague,*

*Would you like to work in an EU institution and share your values of freedom, democracy and equality? Is improving the day-to-day lives of EU citizens part of your dream job? Make this dream possible and join more than 20,000 colleagues working for the European Commission and its agencies!*

*The team at the Welcome Office in Petten knows how challenging it can be to start a new job in a new environment. You may have to move to a new country, decide if your family will move to The Netherlands with you, find a place to live and sort out difficult administrative tasks. However, we are here to support you throughout all these steps and give you advice whenever you need it.*

*This information booklet has been compiled by the Human Resources sector. We hope it will provide you with answers to questions that may arise during the first period of your stay and help you feel as comfortable as possible in your new surroundings. The main topics covered in this booklet are health care, housing, education, taxation, insurance and general information that can be useful in everyday life.*

*Inside, you can find the many services and activities available to you and your family to help you to integrate into your new workplace and/or city.*

*With this guide, you will have all the information to make your new start successful!*

*The Welcome Office team HR JRC Petten*

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## I. PETTEN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

The surrounding area of JRC Petten is simply wonderful, located within one kilometre of the beach and adjacent to many areas of outstanding beauty, including the highest and broadest dunes of the Netherlands, which can be found in the National Park “*De Schoorlse Duinen*”. This area contains many kilometres of hiking and cycling routes, and is even home to one of the most challenging mountain bike routes in The Netherlands. The beautiful forests and polders with the traditional windmills complete the unique picture of the North Holland’s landscape.

In addition, for those who prefer the hustle and bustle of cities, North Holland has lots to offer from traditional picturesque villages to the exciting nightlife of Amsterdam. Alkmaar, a lively city with a colourful history, is one of the closest cities to Petten and is home to many employees of JRC Petten. The city hosts many thousands of visitors every year and boasts a thriving nightlife.

To give you an impression of Petten and its location in relation to other towns, we have listed a few nearby towns for you.

### SCENERY, CITIES & VILLAGES

#### ■ Petten

Mainly by its rich history regarding their defiance against the sea, Petten remained a small and picturesque village. The constant fighting against the sea has ensured that the inhabitants of Petten are always engaged with the reinforcement of the dike. Recently, the seawall of Petten has undergone a total makeover. The former solid and stiff seawall has been reinforced with 35 million cubic meters of sand, making sure the residents of Petten can keep



Petten

their feet dry, but also making it more attractive for people to visit the area.

Petten does not lure a large flow of tourists to its village. It caters more to the needs of people that are looking for a calm and relaxing place to enjoy the beach and its surrounding nature.

#### ■ Alkmaar

If you are looking for a true and authentic experience of the Dutch culture and way of living, compared to the very culturally diverse Amsterdam, then Alkmaar is the place to visit. Alkmaar is known for its cheese but has much more to offer. It has a vast range of shops, restaurants and friendly cafés to suit all tastes and many monuments that give the city its colour. Along Alkmaar’s inner-city canals, you will find seventeenth century merchants’ houses and warehouses and we certainly recommend you joining a historic city walk to explore the most beautiful places.



Cheese carriers Alkmaar

The city also boasts a thriving nightlife with restaurants of various kinds, pavement cafés and coffee houses, as well as theatre, clubs, cinemas and museums. The dunes, beach and the North Sea are only 10 kilometres away from the city and the typical Dutch meadows, waterways and windmills of the “*Schermer Polder*”, which are protected by UNESCO, can be found east of Alkmaar. (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/899/>)

#### ■ Bergen

Some describe Bergen as “the Hamptons” of The Netherlands thanks to its popularity with wealthy Dutch and German visitors who buy up beach-front holiday homes and frequently visit the seaside restaurants and cafés. However, this almost mystic village, as it is close to the dunes and near the North Sea coast, is better known as an artists’ retreat



Bergen

because of the space and **tranquility** of its broad avenues and ample greenery. Painters, writers and architects have been leaving their mark on the village since the 1900s and it is the birthplace of the “*Bergense*” arts school. You can admire work in this particular style at Museum Kranenburgh (<https://kranenburgh.nl/>) or take a stroll among the Park Meerwijk neighbourhood to explore the distinctive thatched “*Amsterdam School*” villas. There are still many artists living in Bergen and their work is often being exhibited in galleries and art centres like the “*Kunst10daagse*” in October.

During the summer Bergen has an open-air art market every Thursday and in the winter a Christmas market. Other interesting events are: Holland Music Sessions, Lichtjesavond and **Bergen Live Music event**. The centre, situated around the “*Ruïnekerk*” (church in ruins) is also very lively with outdoor cafés, boutiques, restaurants and pubs, giving the village its informal atmosphere. Bergen has one of the loveliest art-house cinemas called the “*Zwarte Schuur*” ([www.cinebergen.nl](http://www.cinebergen.nl)). Like all Dutch cinemas the movies are shown in their original language with Dutch subtitles.

If you are more into nature, you can hop on a bike and cycle the 42 kilometres “*De Brede Duinen*” route, which passes through Bergen, Alkmaar and the spectacular sand dunes in Schoorl and Camperduin. During summer make sure to visit one of the beach clubs in Bergen aan Zee if you want to learn some surfing or if you just want to get a bit of sand between your toes while enjoying a nice dinner and possibly a great beach party afterwards.



Schoorl

## ■ Schoorl

Schoorl, Groet and Camperduin form a ribbon at the outskirts of “*de Schoorlse Duinen*” (the Schoorl dunes) National Park. These are the highest dunes of the Netherlands. In the centre of Schoorl you have the famous “*klimduin*”, a 51 meters high sand dune. It is a great place for children and nature lovers as once you have climbed the dune you directly enter the forest and dune area of Schoorl, which offers many footpaths and bicycle routes to explore the area.

## ■ Den Helder



Den Helder

With an average of 1648 hours of sun a year, this town is officially the sunniest place of the Netherlands. It has nearly sixty thousand inhabitants. The most important fact about this city is that it is the base of the Royal Dutch Marine, which has been around ever since the Napoleon times. Their base in Den Helder is the most important one in the country, and also hosts The Marine College and the Marine Museum. You can also find plenty of shops and bars in Den Helder. If you love boats, it may be interesting to go and watch the yearly-organised Tall Ships race. It’s a classic among the big sailing events in Europe and about one hundred sailboats compete in various categories. From Den Helder (and the Frisian town of Harlingen) you can also take the ferry to the unique *Wadden* islands in the North (Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, Ameland and Schiermonnikoog).

## ■ Haarlem

Haarlem is known as the flower city. Between Haarlem and Leiden you can find the “*Bollenstreek*” where in springtime countless fields of tulips, hyacinths and narcissus are flourishing, giving the landscape a wide variety of colours. The municipality has over 147.000 inhabitants and is the second largest city of the



Haarlem

province North Holland. For years Haarlem has been considered the best shopping city of the Netherlands. In the historical centre you can find exclusive stores, trendy clothing shops, charming antique stores and many restaurants. Haarlem also offers several large-scale cultural events such as “*Bevrijdingspop*”, the “*Haarlemmerhoutfestival*” en “*Haarlem Jazzstad*” but also sporting events such as Haarlem Baseball week.

## ■ Amsterdam

The constitutional capital of the Netherlands, Amsterdam is known for its historic centre, the many canals, the relaxed atmosphere and many places of interest. With about 178 different nationalities, Amsterdam is quite the cosmopolitan city. As a result, there are lots of different types of restaurants to suit all tastes. Besides all the fancy restaurants, there are plenty of cafés and bars that remain open until deep in the night. If you're a lover of culture, Amsterdam is sensational. Ever wanted to see a real Rembrandt or Van Gogh? In that case, you are lucky. Many of their paintings are displayed in various Amsterdam museums. Or you can simply take a walk through the city centre and be amazed by the beautiful parks, canals and other characteristic buildings. The

beautiful Concertgebouw is famous around the world for its unique acoustic and is really worth a visit. In short, Amsterdam has the best of both worlds. On the one hand, it has all the advantages of unique tourist attractions and a huge variety of shops and amenities. On the other hand, many of the canals are also relatively tranquil, providing ideal locations to have a relaxing drink.

If you are not attracted by the big international shopping chains and department stores and prefer small, original and exclusive boutiques, you can visit the *9 Straatjes* (nine little streets), located in a spectacularly beautiful district in Amsterdam's city centre. For more insider tips from locals visit: <https://www.likealocalguide.com/amsterdam/things-to-do> or <https://www.spottedbylocals.com/amsterdam/>

## CLIMATE

The Netherlands has a mild maritime climate, mainly influenced by its proximity to the sea.

The closer you get to the sea, the smaller the temperature differences are between summer and winter. Wind strength increases as you get closer to the sea and generally, the wind comes from the south-west.

May through August offers the most sunshine. Without a doubt, summer is the best time of the year to sit by the canals or to take a bike trip through the country. During spring, the bulb flowers are in full bloom and the *Keukenhof* flower exhibition is a wonderful place to visit during this season.

Rain is spread pretty evenly over the year and if it gets cold enough during wintertime for the canals and waterways to freeze over, the Dutch enjoy skating on the canals and flooded plains.



Amsterdam

## II. PETTEN SITE INFORMATION

### ■ JRC Petten

The centre has a multidisciplinary team of academic, technical and support staff.

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides independent, evidence-based knowledge and science, supporting EU policies to positively impact society.

The JRC Petten carries out activities in both nuclear and non-nuclear domains, including the following scientific areas:

- Battery and hydrogen technologies
- Energy security, distribution and markets
- Energy transition insights for policy
- Nuclear safety and security

The JRC Petten site is located on the Energy and Health Campus (EHC), which is home to 3 other companies as well. They share the staff restaurant facility called the "FORUM".

### ■ The Energy and Health Campus

In September 2020 JRC Petten signed and joined the second Energy and Health Campus collaboration for the period 2020-2024. In doing so, JRC joined forces with the other signatories (namely NRG, PALLAS, Curium, TNO, Gemeente Schagen, Ontwikkelingsbedrijf NHN, Staatsbosbeheer and Provincie Noord Holland) to help build a cohesive, attractive, world-class research campus in the areas of energy and health.

Further to participating in the overall management and realisation of the EHC projects and related activities, JRC is an ambassador for the campus, helping to strengthen links with relevant European and Commission initiatives.

Projects to improve the campus infrastructure and accessibility are ongoing. These are complemented by programmes to connect the campus with knowledge and educational institutions. Furthermore, plans are progressing to establish a public Experience Centre, a multifunctional communication attraction to be located in the village of Petten (circa 3 km south of the JRC site). The Experience Centre will take visitors



Petten site overview

on an energy and health journey where they will learn about the innovative solutions and important work undertaken by the parties on the EHC. The Experience Centre will be an important feature to showcase the EHC research work, to create collaboration opportunities on site and of course to provide information to citizens and external stakeholders.

### ■ Other organisations situated on the Energy and Health Campus (EHC)

- a. The Nuclear Research & consultancy Group (NRG) is a nuclear service provider and has offices in Petten and Arnhem. It provides expertise and services in support of the safe, ecologically sound and efficient use of nuclear technologies in energy production, radiation protection and nuclear medicine. With around 500 members of staff, it manages and operates the HFR (High Flux Reactor) in Petten, the most important producer of radioactive raw materials for nuclear medicine in Europe. For more information see: [www.nrg.eu](http://www.nrg.eu)
- b. Curium is a multinational company formed in 2017 through the union of IBA Molecular and Mallinckrodt Nuclear Medicine LLC. Curium employs about 300 people on the Petten site and supplies more than 6000 public and private hospitals around the world. Curium owns two cyclotrons in Petten in which radioisotopes are produced. Thousands of shipments are dispatched from the Petten facility each year. For more information see: [www.curiumpharma.com](http://www.curiumpharma.com)
- c. The Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) is an independent research organisation. TNO was founded by law in 1932 to enable business and government to apply knowledge. In its laboratories in Petten, TNO works with partners on innovative solutions in areas, among others, such as photovoltaics. In September 2021 TNO opened its Solar Lab on the Petten site. New types of solar panels and applications are developed in the Solar Lab, together with companies, government and knowledge institutions. The province of Noord-Holland has invested €14 million in the construction and furnishing of the ultramodern laboratory. For more information: <https://www.tno.nl/>
- d. PALLAS is the new medical isotopes reactor that will replace the old High Flux Reactor (HFR) in Petten. Foundation Preparation Pallas-reactor (PALLAS) is responsible for obtaining a licensable design, obtaining private investors and constructing and operating the PALLAS-reactor. A new production facility in Petten, the Nuclear Health Centre (NHC), will process and package large amounts of irradiated raw materials (medical isotopes) into semi-finished products (radio chemicals) and medicines (radiopharmaceuticals). For more information see: [www.pallasreactor.com](http://www.pallasreactor.com)

The companies on the EHC often recruit for positions of various profiles. Open vacancies are published on the following website - <https://ehcampus.com/vacatures/>

## III. FAMILY, HOUSING AND EDUCATION



### ACCOMMODATION IN AND AROUND PETTEN

Petten is located in the province of North Holland, roughly 20 kilometres north of Alkmaar (the main town in the region) and 60 kilometres north of Amsterdam. The majority of the JRC staff members live in Alkmaar. Other, smaller towns like Schoorl and Bergen (where the European school is located - note that the European school is expected to be relocated to Alkmaar in the coming years) are also popular among the JRC staff.

#### ■ Temporary housing support for new staff

JRC Petten has access to a limited number of basic rental accommodations (13 apartments and a 3-in-1 trainee house) all of which are located in Alkmaar (on the streets Jan van Goyenstraat, Kreekwaard, Vlietwaard and Tuinderspad). These apartments are intended as temporary accommodations for newcomers while rooms in the trainee house are intended for trainees for the duration of their trainee contract. This provides time to new staff for locating and renting other more permanent accommodation, which can take some weeks/months to find depending on market availability.

The apartments and trainee house are not the property of JRC. They are furnished and intended for short-term use. There are 1, 2 and 3-bedroom apartments available. Rent prices for the apartments vary between € 950,- / € 1.350,- per month depending on the size and location of the properties. Different rental rates apply for trainees and are based on room rental in a shared house. Rent includes utilities,

taxes including waste, TV and internet costs. Pets are not allowed in any of the accommodations.

New staff can be offered accommodation for up to 9 months however this is subject to availability. There is no guarantee that an accommodation will be available for each newcomer. Extension of rental contracts is in principle not possible beyond 9 months. Only in very exceptional and justified cases may contracts be extended by 1 month, subject to availability. Similarly, rental extension is subject to availability and is granted on a case-by-case basis – an extension cannot be guaranteed as priority is given to new staff arriving to work in Petten. For this reason, tenants are advised to start looking for alternative, more permanent accommodation in good time. Tenants may cancel the JRC rental contract with just 1-month notice when alternative accommodation is found. Newcomers and trainees with enquiries about the availability of temporary accommodation are invited to send an email to the functional mailbox [jrc-ptt-housing@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jrc-ptt-housing@ec.europa.eu)

#### ■ Renting and accommodation

On the Internet, you can find real estate agents in the Alkmaar area. The Dutch word for real estate agent is *makelaar*; some of them have English sites. Agencies can provide search services for accommodation. We also strongly advise you to let the colleagues from the social workers team ([jrc-ptt-social-assistance@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jrc-ptt-social-assistance@ec.europa.eu)) check any documents before you sign them.

You can look for a house on the “free market”. Please note that the Netherlands is an expensive country for housing. Rent prices vary from € 950 to € 2.500,- a month for a small apartment to a large house. The rent price is not only related to the size of the apartment or house, the location has also a significant influence on the price. Bergen is a popular and picturesque area and as such is a more expensive location: a house with two bedrooms can easily cost € 1.500,- a month. An apartment in Amsterdam for 70m<sup>2</sup> varies between € 1.100,- / € 2.500,- based on the location.

However, do not hesitate to contact the real estate agents by phone and/or e-mail. Usually they speak English and will be able to give you good advice. A few websites to consult are:

## REAL ESTATE AGENTS CONSULT

<https://www.funda.nl/en/huur/>

<https://www.pararius.nl/huurwoningen/nederland>

<https://www.jaap.nl/huurhuizen/noord+holland/alkmaar+en+omgeving/>

For less permanent options you can always look at hotels, small B&Bs or holidays parks "vakantie parken" in the vicinity. A few websites:

Bergen: <https://apartments.kranenbergh.nl/>

Bergen: <https://www.hotelmarijke.nl/nl/>

Alkmaar: <https://www.grandhotelalkmaar.nl/nl/>

Alkmaar: <https://www.stadenlandhotelalkmaar.nl/>

Aan Noordzee: <https://www.aannoordzee.nl/>

Bungalowpark Boerenslag [https://www.vakantiewoningenaandekust.nl/accommodaties/bungalowpark\\_boerenslag\\_sint\\_maartenszee](https://www.vakantiewoningenaandekust.nl/accommodaties/bungalowpark_boerenslag_sint_maartenszee)

Park Duinland: <https://parkduinland.nl/>

Bungalowpark Campanula: <https://www.bungalowpark-campanula.nl/>

Air bnb: <https://www.airbnb.nl/>

These links are provided for information only, the JRC does not endorse any particular agency or company.

*Please note: you need to have a permanent address and be registered on permanent address to benefit from several allowances and privileges.*

### ■ What kind of a house can you expect?

A family-house is called *eengezinswoning* in Dutch. This kind of a house has two or three floors. Many of these houses have a small garden with a shed (for bikes and storage). A garage is not always available. In general, these types of houses are let without flooring or curtains.

An apartment (flat or apartment) consists of a living room, one or more bedrooms, a bathroom, toilet, hall and a storeroom, which is usually located elsewhere in the building. Apartments start at about 50 m<sup>2</sup>.

Please note that many houses are presented bare (*kaal*), meaning that flooring is absent and sometimes there will be no kitchen furniture either.

### ■ Furnished accommodation

**IMPORTANT:** please note that fully furnished/ furnished (curtains, blinds, etc.) accommodations (*gemeubileerde/gestofeerde woonruimte*) can be difficult to find in the Netherlands. As a short-time solution, they can be acceptable. However, they are meant for the tourist industry and therefore can be very expensive.

## TRANSPORT TO THE SITE

A JRC bus shuttle service is available for transport from and to Schoorl, Bergen, Alkmaar and Amsterdam.

For all requests about the bus service please contact: [jrc-ptt-bus-service@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jrc-ptt-bus-service@ec.europa.eu)



## EDUCATION

### ■ Courses & adult education

In the Netherlands there are various organisations providing a variety of courses and adult education at several levels.

### ■ Jobs for other family members

There are various possibilities for family members to get a job. In the Netherlands, it is quite common to work full and/or part-time via interim agencies.

### ■ Childcare & Schooling

The European Commission in Petten subsidises fee-based Crèche (nursery) and Garderie (after school care) in the Netherlands.

The Crèche welcomes children from age 0 to 4 years. The Garderie organises after-school childcare (from 4 to 12 years of age).

There are many nurseries, play-schools and pre- and after-school care services. **As they might have a waiting list, book early, for instance when you are pregnant!** Partial financial contribution for the fees paid by the parents can either be arranged by the Dutch government and/or the European Commission. Only childcare facilities officially recognised by the Dutch Government can partially be reimbursed.

More information from the Social Assistants ([JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu) and reimbursement requests to file at: [jrc-ptt-creche-garderie@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jrc-ptt-creche-garderie@ec.europa.eu)

### ■ European school

JRC Staff members can enroll their children (> 4 years) at the European School in Bergen, which is located within 15 km of the JRC Petten. The school offers multi-lingual education by native speakers in a wide range of European languages. It is easy to transfer to national schools in all EU member states thanks to the highly valued European Baccalaureate, which is legally recognised in all European countries and beyond.

Pupils are entitled to free enrolment if one of the parents has a contract as official with the European Commission. Seconded national experts, temporary and contractual agents benefit from the same advantage for the duration of their contract as long as its duration is of at least one year.

#### EUROPEAN SCHOOL BERGEN

Molenweidjtje 5  
1862 BC Bergen  
Tel. 072 589 0109

[BER-info@eursc.eu](mailto:BER-info@eursc.eu)  
[www.esbergen.eu](http://www.esbergen.eu)

### ■ Local schools

In case you prefer another school for your children, you can check the website of your municipality for an overview of schools in the surrounding area. There are many in the areas around Petten, Bergen, Alkmaar and Amsterdam including bilingual education (called: *TTO /tweetalig onderwijs*) for several school levels.

More information can be found on the site of the Dutch Ministry of Education

- <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/contact/contactgids/scholen-in-nederland>
- <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/tweetalig-onderwijs/alle-tto-scholen-in-nederland>



## III. RECREATION

### ■ Dutch festivals

- Carnaval in February,
- *Koningsdag* (Kings Day) 27 April,
- Holland Festival - an arts festival held in Amsterdam and The Hague every June
- North Sea Jazz Festival, reputedly the world's biggest jazz festival, celebrated in Rotterdam in July,
- Amsterdam Dance event, which is a five-day electronic music conference and festival held annually in mid-October.
- EMBASSY FESTIVAL <https://embassyfestival.com/information/>

### ■ Tourist information

For a wide variety of information on leisure activities, please contact the local tourist information office called VVV (*Vereniging Vreemdelingen Verkeer*). Check the local authorities' guides also provide up-to-date details on all kind of sports clubs, social-cultural clubs, theatres, museums etc. Local papers usually offer summaries of exhibitions, plays, movies, music performances and so on in the region and in Amsterdam. A museum pass, which you can buy at most museums, is valid in over 400 museums all over the country. Although most entrance fees are pretty low, it could save you some money.

There is also a "CJP-kaart" (Youth Passport) entitling those who are still at school or who study to reductions on all kinds of activities.

- <https://www.alkmaarpas.nl/>
- <https://dekunst10daagse.nl/>
- <https://bergenlive.nl/>
- <https://www.visitalkmaar.com/en?ArealD=18>
- <https://www.amsterdam-nu.nl/handige-informatie/2011-vvv-kantoor-amsterdahtml>

#### VVV offices in the Netherlands:

<https://www.vakantielandnederland.nl/thema-artikelen/vvv-kantoren-in-nederland/>

### ■ Public transport

The OV-chipkaart is the payment method for public transport in the Netherlands. The OV-chipkaart allows you to travel by bus, tram, metro and train by charging money on the card without having to buy a paper ticket for each different means of transportation.



There are different types of cards available, for example the Personal *OV-chipkaart* (for subscription) and the Anonymous *OV-chipkaart* (for temporary travel). To use any of these cards you need to check in as you depart and check out again after arriving at your destination (a fine is overseen if you don't own a ticket or you did not check-in). Several options come with having a Personal *OV-chipkaart*, for instance: a bicycle ticket for one day, a monthly commuting pass or a season ticket). You can also use OV-PAY method: hold your contactless debit or credit card, or mobile up to the card reader or gate to pay your travel tickets.

For more information <https://www.ovpay.nl/en>  
<https://www.ov-chipkaart.nl/en>

**Additional information on public transport within the Netherlands** <https://9292.nl/en>  
<https://www.ns.nl/en>

### ■ Driving in the Netherlands

- The minimum age for driving a moped (up to 50 cc) is 16 years (driving license.)
- The minimum age for driving a motorcycle is 18 years (driving license).
- The minimum age for driving a car is 18 years (driving license).

Check out the official website of Dutch government for more rules and regulation: <https://business.gov.nl/regulation/driving-licences/>

Speed limits - <https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/wegen/wetten-regels-en-vergunningen/verkeerswetten/>

**Please note:** *Look out for cyclists and moped riders! There are many bicycle paths and cyclists often have right of way, e.g. on a roundabout inside the city-limits.*

Do not forget to fulfil all your duties, for example: the import of your car and keeping a valid driving license. Please ask the HR sector for support ([jrc-ptt-protocol-io@ec.europa.eu](mailto:jrc-ptt-protocol-io@ec.europa.eu)).

New Petrol cars, Electric cars need to have their first periodic, technical vehicle inspection when the car is 4 years old (APK in Dutch), new diesel, gas cars need to have their first periodic, technical vehicle inspection when the car is 3 years old.

See information on website of RDW: <https://www.rdw.nl/en/>

ANWB and Routemobiel (Automobile clubs) offer their members many travel services from maps to advice and various degrees of services in case of a breakdown. For details, please check their websites. ANWB also has a store that you can visit.

## ■ Parking

In general you have to pay for parking in the centre of a town, either in public garages or at a parking meter during weekdays, late night shopping and on Saturdays. Sometimes there are special parking sites, called "blue zones" where you can park your car for free for one or two hours by putting a blue parking disk (available at your local VVV, ANWB and regular stores) behind the windscreen. There is a manual clock on the front of the blue parking disk to display your arrival time on the parking. There are several useful free apps for Android and i-Phone.



## ■ Cycling

Cycling is the nbr.1 means of transportation in The Netherlands. Some even say that the total length of the cycle paths in the Netherlands amounts up to 20.000 km. Secondary school children quite commonly cycle over 15 km in each direction to school. If you decide to buy a bike yourself, it is good to buy a heavy lock and a chain.

- <https://www.government.nl/topics/bicycles/safe-cycling>

## ■ Leisure for pleasure

Cycling can be regarded as both the national free-time and the most common form of transport in the Netherlands, and there is at least one bicycle per head of population and 35.000 km of cycle paths. The flat terrain is conducive to both cycling and walking, another popular pursuit, and this helps to reduce traffic congestion in the towns and cities.

Ice skating is also very popular when the canals and ponds freeze over in winter.

The Netherlands has beautiful long and flat beaches all along the coast of Holland. They are ideal for children of all ages.

## IV. REGISTRATION / FINANCES AND OTHER ITEMS

### ■ Registration Ministry of Foreign Affairs

#### Upon arrival

An international organisation should register the privileged staff members and family members forming part of their household with the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within ten (10) days of their arrival in the Netherlands so that privileged identity cards can be issued. You will have special residency status as a privileged person. You can also choose (after registration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to be registered in the BRP (Personal Records Database) of the municipality you are settled in.

#### Privileged ID card – ProBas registration

ProBas (Protocol Base) is the database of all privileged people living and working in the Netherlands, and is administered by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). After registration, you will receive a privileged ID card. The privileged ID card acts as both ID and a residence permit. It also serves as proof of your privileged status in the Netherlands. The privileged ID card is not a travel document.

#### Citizen service number (BSN)

Privileged persons obtain a citizen service number (*Burger Service Nummer, BSN*) by registering with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Once a privileged person has been registered, the Ministry of the Interior and

Kingdom Relations automatically issues a BSN. A BSN is a unique personal number and issued for lifetime.

The BSN is needed to obtain access to various services in the Netherlands.

**National tax authorities:** A BSN is required to obtain recognition of fiscal privileges.

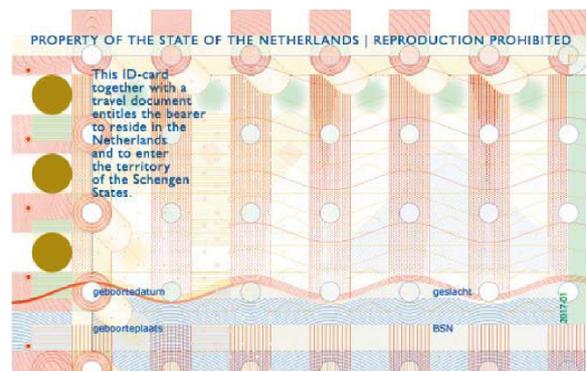
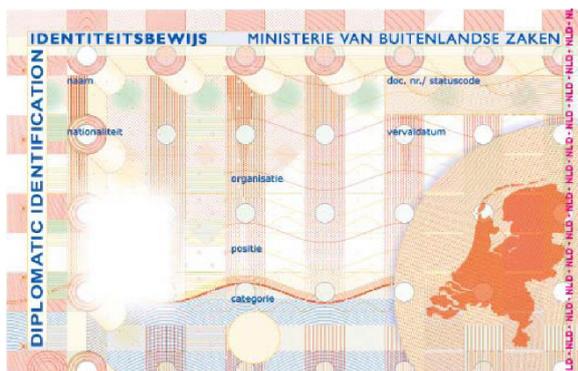
**Healthcare:** Hospitals, dentists, doctors, medical insurance companies, etc. are required to use BSNs in their administrative records. The BSN is the single identifier used in communications between healthcare organisations.

**Education:** Dutch schools and after-school and daycare facilities are required to use BSNs in their administrative records.

### ■ DigiD

DigiD (Digital Identification) is the secure online login used by residents in the Netherlands to interact with the Dutch government. Using DigiD makes organising your official matters (including taxes, healthcare, and more) much easier, and means that almost everything can be done online. The system used by both local and national government, you can use one login to access and arrange all of your contact with the Dutch authorities. In order to obtain a DigiD login, you must have a BSN.

Unfortunately, registration through ProBas alone does not make it possible to obtain a DigiD, privileged persons can apply for one after registering with the BRP in the municipality. Before doing so, please contact HR. ([HR-JRC-PTT-CONTACT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-JRC-PTT-CONTACT@ec.europa.eu)).



## ■ Bank accounts

You can open a new bank account in the Netherlands at any bank.

To open a bank account or contracts with suppliers you first need to have a BSN number (Dutch citizen service number). After your registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, your privileged ID card will be issued, mentioning the BSN number.

To sign a contract with a phone company or gas, water and electricity supplier it is advisable to have a Dutch bank account for the direct debits or payments.

## INSURANCES

As in all European countries, it is wise to ensure that both your family and material goods are insured. In the Netherlands it is advised to get the following insurances:



- Liability Insurance (*aansprakelijkheidsverzekering* W.A.), which covers yourself, your family (and even your pets) for damage to third parties.
- Legal aid insurance (*rechtsbijstandsverzekering*). In case of a legal conflict, it assures you affordable expert assistance.
- Fire and theft insurance (*inboedelverzekering*) which covers your property in case of fire or theft.
- Building insurance (*opstalverzekering*) if you own a house.
- Various car insurances if you own a car.

## ■ Taxation

The amount for local taxes varies depending on the municipality. The website of the municipality can provide you more information on this topic.

### ■ Waste collection levy (*afvalstoffenheffing*)

This tax has to be paid for all the refuse that is produced and collected by the local council collectors. The amount of tax charged depends on single or multiple household at that address.

### ■ Sewage charges (*rioolrecht*)

The sewage charges concern all citizens and companies of a municipality. The sewage charges are collected by the local authorities at the beginning of each year and can be paid either all at once or in separate terms.

### ■ Property tax (*onroerendgoedbelasting*)

Owners of a house have to pay this tax. If you own a house on the 1st of January you will have to pay for the whole year and it does not matter if you leave or sell the house. The amount of money you have to pay depends on the value of your house.

### ■ Dogs tax (*hondenbelasting*)

Dogs must be registered with the municipality and a dog tax may be applicable. (*gemeentelijke belastingdienst*).

## ■ Water Authority Charges (*waterschapsbelasting*)

The land drainage rates are collected by the regional waterboard. For most cities and villages in North Holland the responsible authority is *Hoogheemraadschap Hollands Noorderkwartier* (HHNK).

For the Amsterdam region, this is *Hoogheemraadschap Amstel, Gooi en Vecht (Waternet)*. The *Hoogheemraadschap* (water authority) is responsible for the maintenance of the dikes and for ensuring good water quality. The water authority charges have to be paid at the beginning of each year and can either be paid all at once or in a maximum of ten terms.

## ■ Road tax (*wegenbelasting*)

If you own a car, you are obliged to pay road tax. The amount of road tax is based on the weight of your car, the fuel the car uses and the area where you reside. The road tax is collected by the Road Tax Department (*Belastingdienst*). All mail from the tax authority can be recognised by the blue envelope. You can choose either to pay the total amount all at once or to spread the payment in terms. Pay in time to avoid any penalties.

## HOUSEHOLD & UTILITIES



### ■ Waste collection

In many cities you can have grey, green, orange or blue containers for household waste, and they are collected according to the municipality scheme (schedule is published per year) or alternating weeks at the specially designated places. The green containers are used for organic waste, orange containers are used for plastic waste, grey containers for the remaining waste and the blue containers for paper/carton waste.

In some cities or villages you will find underground waste containers in the streets, where you can bring your waste. To be able to use them you need a special pass/card or a key to open them.

The local council (according to certain rules) can collect large pieces or large amounts of rubbish or you can bring such waste to your central garbage and recycling station. Glass bottles and plastic bottles usually are returnable.

Glass (non-returnable (*geen statiegeld*), paper and clothing/textiles can be deposited in special containers in your neighbourhood, usually located near supermarkets or next to the underground waste containers. For paint and other chemicals, see the website of your municipality for disposal rules. Please note that not all materials are accepted free of charge (furniture, building waste, etc.). The website [www.mijnafvalwijzer.nl](http://www.mijnafvalwijzer.nl) provides you with an overview of when and where your waste is going to be collected in your neighbourhood. See also overview for Alkmaar and surrounding:

<https://www.hvcgroep.nl/zelf-regelen/afvalkalender-maandoverzicht>

## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

For international telephone calls to the Netherlands the code is 0031

JRC	PHONE NUMBERS
JRC Reception	0224 56 5656
JRC Emergency	0224 56 5555
GENERAL	PHONE NUMBERS
Emergency Services Fire Brigade Ambulance Police	<b>112</b>
Police (no emergency)	0900 8844
Fire brigade	072 567 5010
In case of Gas/Electricity failure	0800 9009
IN CASE OF WATER FAILURE:	
PWN	0800 023 2355
Waternet	0900 93 94

## ■ Libraries

The Dutch public library system has a lot to offer. By paying a fix contribution each year with the library card (*bibliotheekpas*) you have access to a huge collection of reading material, music, films, games and e-books. For more information: <https://www.bibliotheekkennemerwaard.nl/welcome-kennemerwaard-public-library>.

Libraries are places for different activities, for instance, offering various courses, language learnings, advice about study books, and conversation practice (*taal in de bibliotheek*) whereas you can keep practice on the many other valuable resources available online, such as [Oefenen.nl](https://www.oefenen.nl) and <https://www.leefenleer.nl/en/in-self-study-mode>.

You will find your nearest public library website at the official websites: <https://www.bibliotheek.nl/> and <http://www.bibliotheekkennemerwaard.nl/>.

As opposed to Dutch city libraries, there are small neighbourhood initiatives for free reading (based on book donations by the local community).



## LIBRARIES CLOSEST TO ALKMAAR/BERGEN LOCATIONS

BIBLIOTHEEK ALKMAAR CENTRUM	BIBLIOTHEEK BERGEN
Gasthuisstraat 2 1811KC Alkmaar 072 515 66 44 <a href="mailto:klantenservice@bknw.nl">klantenservice@bknw.nl</a>	Dreef 1 1861TX Bergen 072 515 66 44 <a href="mailto:klantenservice@bknw.nl">klantenservice@bknw.nl</a>
BIBLIOTHEEK ALKMAAR DE MARE	BIBLIOTHEEK ALKMAAR OUDORP
Laan van Straatsburg 2 1826BZ Alkmaar 072 515 66 44 <a href="mailto:klantenservice@bknw.nl">klantenservice@bknw.nl</a>	Oudorperplein 23 1823HA Alkmaar 072 515 66 44 <a href="mailto:klantenservice@bknw.nl">klantenservice@bknw.nl</a>

## ■ Post office

You can find smaller, modern versions of post offices located in shops, such as supermarkets, bookstores and tobacco shops. These post shops are still called post offices and offer all the services of PostNL /DHL and other international mail providers.

## ■ Internet, television and telephone

Some companies offer telephone, cable TV and internet in one package. Most of the time, such packages are more profitable than ordering them separately.

There are several possibilities to receive television and radio channels (digital cable connections, satellite dish and digital antenna). TV and radio guides provide with full details of programmes etc., as well as TV programmes available via the cable network.

The biggest TV, internet, and phone providers in the Netherlands include the following:

- KPN
- Ziggo
- Tele2
- T-Mobile
- Youfone

You can do this easily using online comparison sites like [internetvergelijk.nl](https://www.internetvergelijk.nl) or [Prijzvergelijken.nl](https://www.prijzvergelijken.nl), which will show you the options you have in your neighborhood.

## ■ Religion

Below you can find a list of churches, synagogues and other religious centres that hold services in foreign languages.

RELIGIONS
<b>Anglican Church of England, Amsterdam</b> <a href="http://www.christchurch.nl">www.christchurch.nl</a>
<b>Anglican Church of England, Heiloo</b> <a href="http://www.christchurch-heiloo.nl">www.christchurch-heiloo.nl</a>
<b>Eglise réformée Wallone</b> <a href="https://dewaalsekerk.nl/home/">https://dewaalsekerk.nl/home/</a>
<b>Petrus en Pauluskerk</b> <a href="http://www.rkparochiebergennh.nl">www.rkparochiebergennh.nl</a>
<b>Deutsche Evangelische Kirchengemeinde</b> <a href="http://www.deg-amsterdam.nl">www.deg-amsterdam.nl</a>
<b>Russian Orthodox Church</b> <a href="https://orthodox-amsterdam.nl/en/">https://orthodox-amsterdam.nl/en/</a>
<b>Greek Orthodox Church</b> <a href="https://www.orthodox-utrecht.nl/contact.html">https://www.orthodox-utrecht.nl/contact.html</a>
<b>Stichting Alkmaarse Synagoge</b> <a href="http://www.alkmaarsesynagoge.nl">www.alkmaarsesynagoge.nl</a>
<b>L.J.G. Synagoge</b> <a href="http://www.ljgamsterdam.nl">www.ljgamsterdam.nl</a>
<b>Islamic Foundation Bilal Moskee</b> Tel. 072 540 3315
<b>Turkse moskee St. Haci Bayram</b> Tel. 072 515 1850

Many other congregations of all religions can be found in the local area. Please see your local guide or internet for a complete overview.

## ■ Holidays

Here is a list of official public holidays in the Netherlands in 2023 and 2024.

HOLIDAYS	DATES
<b>Nieuwjaarsdag</b> (New Year's Day)	January 1st
<b>Goede vrijdag</b> (Good Friday)	varies each year
<b>Eerste paasdag</b> (Easter Day)	varies each year
<b>Tweede paasdag</b> (Easter Monday)	varies each year
<b>Hemelvaartsdag</b> (Ascension Day)	varies each year
<b>Eerste pinksterdag</b> (Whit Sunday)	varies each year
<b>Koningsdag</b> (Kings Day)	April 27 <sup>th</sup> (but if the 27 <sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday, Kings Day is celebrated on the 26 <sup>th</sup> instead)
<b>Bevrijdingsdag</b> (Liberation Day)	May 5 <sup>th</sup> (once per 5 years)
<b>Eerste kerstdag</b> (Christmas Day)	December 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Tweede kerstdag</b> (Boxing Day)	December 26 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Oudejaarsavond</b> (New Year's Eve)	December 31 <sup>st</sup>

## ■ National/local events

NATIONAL/LOCAL EVENTS	
<b>Dodenherdenking</b> (Remembrance Day)	<b>4th of May</b> The victims of World War II are commemorated with a two minute silence from 20.00 until 20.02. Please respect this silence.
<b>Alkmaar Ontzet</b> (Relief of Alkmaar)	<b>8th of October</b> Alkmaar celebrates its independence.
<b>Sint Maarten</b> (Saint Martin)	<b>11th of November</b> In this region Sint Maarten is celebrated. Children with "homemade" lanterns will go from house to house singing songs in exchange for sweets.
<b>Sinterklaas</b> (Saint Nicholas)	<b>5th of December</b> This is Saint Nicolas ( <i>Sinterklaas</i> ) birthday. For many Dutch people this is a bigger celebration than Christmas, with presents especially for children. A lot of shops close one hour earlier than usual on this day.

## V. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

### ■ Clubs

COPAS Petten coordinates the management of welfare matters at JRC Petten with the aim of improving the integration of staff members and their families. In this respect, it manages a specific budget and organises socio-cultural events, sports and leisure activities, including EU Council Presidency celebrations. COPAS also gives financial and organisational support to different COPAS clubs and activities.

*JRC Petten has its own Clubhouse with tennis and petanque courts, a pool table and table football for the use of staff and family members. Many of the social events and parties are held at the clubhouse, which is situated in Bergen, next to the European School.*

#### CLUBS

- BSC Petten (Football, Volleyball, Basketball)
- Badminton
- EU Presidency
- Fishing club
- Knitting club
- Tennis club
- Personnel library
- Party of St. Nicolas

In North Holland it is possible to do nearly any sport you can think of, including water sports like sailing and kite-surfing, even skiing and mountain biking! Bergen has its own dry ski slope and an excellent 14 km long mountain bike track through the forest. Hiking in the dunes and forests is a great way to keep fit and enjoy the beautiful local scenery. There are many trails that you can follow, ranging from very short walks to trails longer than 50 km.



## VI. HEALTH CARE IN THE NETHERLANDS

### ■ General Practitioner (GP) – huisarts

The General Practitioner (*huisarts*) fulfils a central role in the health care system of the Netherlands. The GP is the first point of contact for almost everything related to health care. The GP treats you, but also coordinates other care, normally by means of an introductory letter to specialists or paramedics, and maintains your medical file, complete with specialists' reports.

In the Netherlands, everyone has a permanent GP. You can choose a doctor within the borders of your own town (in larger cities within a radius of a few kilometres). You have to phone the GP's assistant and check if they accept new patients. You must then always visit that specific practice (except outside normal hours). After your registration has been accepted, the doctor you have chosen will be your main point of contact in case of general illnesses and other health related questions. You can also visit the doctor for an introductory talk, after which you can decide whether to register or not.

When you call your GP's office to make an appointment, the GP's assistant (*doktersassistente*), will ask you some questions in order to determine the urgency of your situation. Usually a consult with your GP is limited to 10 minutes and takes place during office hours. If you have several medical issues to discuss, you should take a longer appointment, which will be charged accordingly. Home visits by GP's are reserved for urgent cases or those who are incapable of coming to the GP's office.

### ■ In case of death (*sterfgeval*)

Should a death occur, the family doctor will come immediately and he or she will contact an undertaker. Please be sure to inform your Consulate/Embassy.

### ■ Consulting hours

Consulting hours are during daytime, usually between 8:00 and 17:00 (the same counts for consulting hours of specialists and dentists). The doctor will always ask whether you are able to come to the practice. This is not because he/she does not want to visit you, but because it is easier to examine the patient and to do tests at the practice itself.

Some family doctors have an "open" consulting hour early in the morning for short consultations consisting out of a maximum of five minutes each (also called: *inloopspreekuur*). In this case, a prior appointment is not necessary. Please ask the assistant about the common procedure at the doctor's practice.

### ■ Outside office hours

If you need a GP outside office hours (evening, night, weekend or a national holiday) due to a medical emergency, please call the telephone number of a nearby GP-practise *huisartsenpost*. Important: you will not be able to get treatment without calling first.

OPENING HOURS HUISARTSENPOST	
17.00 - 08.00	Monday-Friday
08.00 - 08.00	Saturday and Sunday
08.00 - 08.00	National holidays

Addresses and contact details for *huisartsenposten* in the area can be found below.

ALKMAAR, HEILOO, BERGEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS	SCHAGEN, CALLANTSOOG, PETTEN AND SURROUNDING AREAS
<b>HUISARTSENPOST ALKMAAR E.O.</b>	<b>HUISARTSENPOST SCHAGEN E.O.</b>
Hertog Aalbrechtweg 5a 1823 DL Alkmaar Tel. 072 518 0618 Fax. 072 518 0654 <a href="http://www.hapa-alkmaar.nl">www.hapa-alkmaar.nl</a>	Grotewallerweg 3-04 1742 NM Schagen Tel. 0224 22 4040 Fax. 0224 27 4048 <a href="http://www.hknhuisartsen.nl">www.hknhuisartsen.nl</a>

If you call your GP, outside working hours the voice-mail will indicate the telephone number of the GP-practice in service.

### ■ Emergency first aid service in hospitals (EHBO/ ER)

Emergency First Aid is given in each situation where there are **life-threatening** injuries or other health troubles (like breathing difficulty, shock or loss of consciousness).

However, please note that, unlike in many other countries, the emergency service is meant only for life-threatening medical situations. For all other medical needs (for example local injuries (wounds), hyperthermia and hypothermia, electrical injuries and first aid in case of food poisoning or allergic reactions, please consult your GP or *Huisartsenpost* first, who will then send you to ER if necessary.

**Emergency calls** are made via calling 112. Please note that you have to mention whether you are calling for police, fire brigade or an ambulance.

### ■ Mental Health Care

Moving to a foreign country can be quite demanding for all members of your family. The stress of moving and adjusting to life in a country with unfamiliar customs can lead to mental health issues.

If you have any questions, please check with your GP first. Your GP can help you assess the type and urgency of your need. Some of the mental healthcare providers in the Netherlands have a dedicated expat clinic, so that they can provide specialised care for expat adults and children with mental health issues. For staff members you can contact the psychologist or social assistants for help and appointments. ([JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu) or [JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu))

## HOSPITALS



### ■ Medical specialists

If your GP is unable to diagnose or treat you, you will be referred to a medical specialist. Unless the matter is urgent, you may have to wait for an appointment. Nearly all medical specialists in the Netherlands work via the outpatient departments (*polikliniek*) of hospitals. Your GP can make some recommendations and will send you to the correct specialist. If urgent,

### AMBULANCE (IN CASE OF EMERGENCY): TEL. 112

#### HOSPITAL CONTACT INFORMATION

##### NOORDWEST ZIEKENHUISGROEP

Location: Alkmaar

[www.nwz.nl](http://www.nwz.nl)

Patients information desk: Tel. 072 548 3500

##### NOORDWEST ZIEKENHUISGROEP

Location: Den Helder

[www.nwz.nl](http://www.nwz.nl)

Patients information desk: Tel. 0223 69 6346

##### ACADEMISCH MEDISCH CENTRUM

[www.amc.nl](http://www.amc.nl)

Patients information desk: Tel. 020 566 3355

##### EMMA KINDERZIEKENHUIS (AMC)

Tel. 020 566 8000

[emma@amc.nl](mailto:emma@amc.nl)

##### ONZE LIEVE VROUWE GASTHUIS

Location: Oosterpark

Tel. 020 599 9111

[www.olvg.nl](http://www.olvg.nl)

[informatie@olvg.nl](mailto:informatie@olvg.nl)

##### ANTONI VAN LEEUWENHOEK

(specialised in cancer treatment)

Tel. 020 512 9111

[www.avl.nl](http://www.avl.nl)

##### V.U. ZIEKENHUIS

[www.vumc.nl](http://www.vumc.nl)

Patients information desk: Tel. 020 444 0700

an appointment will be arranged quickly. The general policy is to first visit your GP, who will send you to the specialist. The specialist will always report back to the GP.

### ■ Hospital contact information

Two hospitals are situated near Petten, namely: Noordwest Ziekenhuisgroep Locatie Alkmaar (a large hospital in Alkmaar) and Noordwest Ziekenhuisgroep locatie Den Helder (a smaller hospital, but all the usual specialisations are represented here as well.) On website: [zorgkaartnederland.nl](http://zorgkaartnederland.nl) you find information of all hospitals in the Netherlands.

## OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES

### ■ Municipal health organisation *Gemeentelijke Gezondheidsdienst* (GGD)

Among other services, the GGD can be consulted in case you need traveler's vaccinations.

GGD
GGD HOLLANDS NOORDEN, LOCATION ALKMAAR
Hertog Aalbrechtweg 5 1823 DL Alkmaar Tel. 088 010 0500 <a href="mailto:info@ggdhollandsnoorden.nl">info@ggdhollandsnoorden.nl</a> <a href="http://www.ggdhollandsnoorden.nl">www.ggdhollandsnoorden.nl</a>

### ■ Dentist

You are free to choose any dentist (*tandarts*) within 50 km of your home. However, in case of emergency it would be best to have a dentist close to your home.

### ■ Pharmacy

Pharmacies (*apotheek*) are open from Monday to Friday, during office hours. Nowadays some pharmacies are also open on Saturday. Outside office hours, there is a pharmacy on duty to supply urgent prescriptions. For common medications like

aspirins or vitamins, you can also turn to a drug store (*drogist*) or supermarket (*supermarkt*). These stores are usually open on Saturdays and during late night shopping evenings.

### ■ Homecare (*thuiszorg*)

In every town or area, a homecare organisation is present. Their care concerns everybody: babies, children, adults, the elderly, handicapped, etc. Homecare organisations offer a great variety of services, offered by registered nurses, nursing aids and Health visitors, who work in close cooperation with the local doctors.

Please contact the nurse ([JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu)) in case you need to know the service of homecare in your area.

HOMECARE SERVICES	
EVEAN - REGIO NOORD-HOLLAND	ACTIEZORG
Noord Postbus 67 1800 AB Alkmaar Tel: 0900 98 97 <a href="http://www.evean.nl">www.evean.nl</a>	James Wattstraat 7 1817 DC Alkmaar Tel: 072 575 31 30 <a href="mailto:servicecentrum@magenta-zorg.nl">servicecentrum@magenta-zorg.nl</a>

## FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH CARE

### ■ Health insurance

The insurance for JRC statutory staff is organised and executed by the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme (JSIS) of the institutions of the European Union. Detailed information is available on Intranet (My IntraComm). Please make sure to follow the correct procedures.

A person residing or working in the Netherlands for more than 3 months needs to apply for a Dutch health insurance unless excluded by law. Statutory staff members of the European Commission are excluded by law because it is mandatory for them to be insured under JSIS.

Partners and/or children of JRC Petten staff members who have income from a Dutch source, mainly from work, are obliged to be insured under the Dutch health insurance (*zorgverzekeringswet*). Family members, who are under the Dutch health insurance

(*zorgverzekeringswet*) have to follow the procedure of their health insurance company.

Partners and/or children of JRC Petten staff members without any income may be insured with JSIS, in which case they may choose to opt-out from the Dutch social security scheme. For more information and the procedures applicable, please contact the social assistants. Functional mailbox: [JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-SOCIAL-ASSISTANCE@ec.europa.eu)

## PREGNANCY



After your GP has confirmed your pregnancy, he or she will refer you to a midwife and/or to the centre for Maternity Homecare. You will be advised to see a gynaecologist in case of possible complications or difficulties with a previous pregnancy.

### ■ Personal wishes concerning delivery

The expectant mother (and father) discusses their personal wishes concerning the delivery with the midwife, gynaecologist and/or others who will support the mother during delivery. Please note that there can be differences between hospitals. Find out about the rules in the different hospitals, so that you can choose the one that appeal to you most.

### ■ How to make a choice

Ask friends about their experiences with different hospitals, midwives or gynaecologists. In principle, you always decide yourself where your baby should be delivered. Of course, this will not be at home if difficulties are expected.

## GIVING BIRTH TO A BABY: AT HOME OR IN HOSPITAL?

### ■ At home

The baby is born at home and the delivery is assisted by the midwife or your GP. Giving birth to the baby at home is possible if the pregnancy evolved without problems and when there is a good chance that the delivery will happen normally.

#### Delivery in hospital will be advised if:

- There is a chance of difficulties.
- The mother is over 35 years old or very young
- Sometimes for non-medical reasons, e.g. if the house is not suitable

### ■ In hospital

In this case there are two possibilities:

- **Outpatient departments** (polikliniek): this means that the mother and the baby leave the hospital 2 hours after the delivery (only if everything is all right, of course). The delivery will be assisted by the person who has also been monitoring the pregnancy.
- **Hospitalisation**: this means a stay in the hospital for the mother and the baby if there is a medical reason requiring it. The gynaecologist gives guidance during the delivery.

### ■ Midwife (*verloskundige*)

The midwife is qualified in the support and monitoring of a healthy pregnancy, the delivery and the six-week-period after giving birth. If necessary, the midwife will consult a gynaecologist or refer you to a gynaecologist. During the pregnancy, the midwife will provide you with all information and answer all your questions in order to improve your health. The midwife usually has consulting hours at the *thuiszorg* or health centres.

## ■ Safety

Safety depends a lot on personal feelings; one person will feel safe to have their baby in the familiar atmosphere of their home, surrounded by their family, while another will feel safer with the assurance that in a hospital all equipment is present, if needed. Compared to other countries, the number of babies born at home is much higher in the Netherlands.

## ■ Maternity home care - *kraamzorg*

After giving birth to your baby, the midwife or GP will visit you daily in the first 3 or 4 days and after that period at longer intervals. In the first few days a nurse will take a very small blood sample from the heel of the baby (*hielprik = Guthrie test*). The blood is checked for abnormalities in the metabolism and in the thyroid functions.

Tasks of the maternity assistance depend on the arrangements made. There are several possibilities, for example: the maternity nurse assists the midwife or doctor with the delivery, takes care of technical tasks or carries out the daily housekeeping tasks. Please check JSIS, how long the maternity home care can be booked.

Registration must take place as early as possible (about 3 months into pregnancy) during the consulting hours. The nurse will ask for the necessary information, tell you about the procedures and will give you a list of things you have to buy or borrow.

The nurse visits at home around the 8th month of the pregnancy and will discuss all the aspects of the maternity home care with you.

On the last day of the home care, the nurse makes a file about mother and baby and delivers this file to the district nurse of the *consultatiebureau*, who will pay a visit to the mother in the 2nd week. The district nurse will also make an appointment for the first visit to the *consultatiebureau*.

## ■ Registration for maternity home care

There are several organisations offering the maternity home care service.

One of the main points of contact for the whole region of North Holland: [www.dekraamvogel.nl](http://www.dekraamvogel.nl) or search on internet: kraamzorg Noord-Holland.

The *thuiszorg* also has several booklets (in different languages) available with descriptions of the services they offer; they will give you a copy at your request.

## ■ Child health centre/clinic (*consultatiebureau*)

In the Netherlands, clinics (*consultatiebureaus*) monitor the progress of babies and toddlers. When a child is born, its birth has to be registered within three days at the town hall. In larger hospitals, it is sometimes possible to register the birth. A week after birth a health visitor (*wijkverpleegkundige*) pays a home visit to take blood from the baby's heel for the PKU/CHT test. She also will get acquainted with the parents and explain the role of the clinic and how she can be contacted if questions arise.

She also provides the parents with a growth book with lots of information on child care. If necessary, nutrition and baby care will be discussed during the visit. Another home visit will be scheduled for about one week later. During this visit, a first appointment for the clinic will be made. Regular check-ups take place at the clinic: frequently in the beginning and at longer intervals as the child grows older. The child's development is monitored to ensure that physical or mental problems are detected at an early stage.

The doctor at the clinic will physically examine the child (height, weight, head-circumference, hips, eyes, ears, etc.) while the health visitor discusses the care and feeding of the child. Either the doctor or the health visitor will ask questions to determine the development stage of the child and the parents will be able to discuss concerns they might have. During some office visits, the parents will meet both the doctor and the health visitor, during other visits they will only meet the health visitor.

If your child is younger than 4 years and not born in the Netherlands, you have to contact the child health centre to register your child for the first visit. Please contact the nurse ([JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JRC-PTT-MEDICAL-SERVICE@ec.europa.eu))

In special circumstances, the health visitor will pay home visits. If necessary, the clinic refers you to the family doctor or specialist. At the age of 4, the municipal health care (GGD) will take over the monitoring through the schools until the child is 18 years old.

### ■ Dutch vaccination schedule for babies and children

In the Netherlands, vaccinations are provided through the Government Vaccination Programme (*Rijks Vaccinatie Programma*). After registration of a child's birth at the town hall, parents receive a package with information about the Dutch vaccination schedule together with a vaccination card (*vaccinatiekaart*) for administration of the dates, types of vaccination and lot numbers.

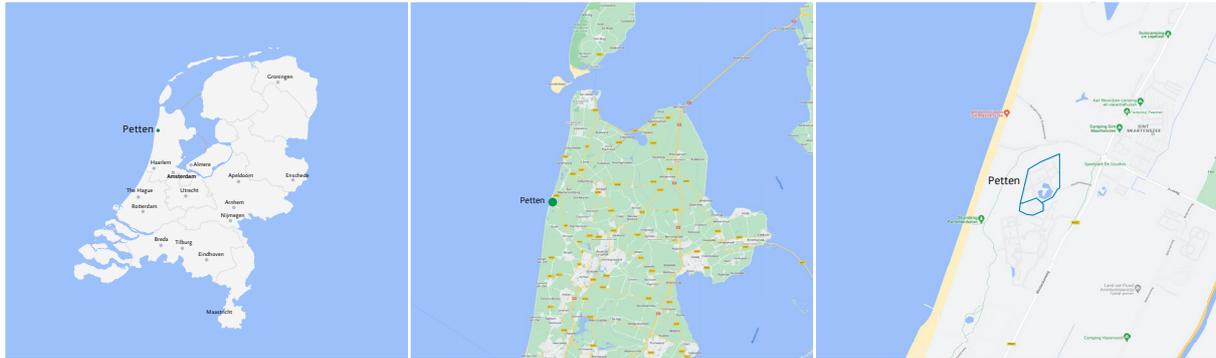
If a child was already vaccinated in another country, the Dutch schedule will be followed after residency in the Netherlands. Any "missing" vaccination will be added. Vaccinations are not mandatory. Health care and vaccinations are provided to members of the home care organisation (*regionale thuiszorg*) without extra costs.

It is possible for both check-ups and vaccinations to be done by the GP for the cost of a consultation each time.

For information, check the website:

<https://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/english>

*On behalf of the JRC Petten, we are looking forward to welcome you soon!*



**DG HR. E.4 Petten**

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