



Netherlands - Low



Netherlands Country Map



POLITICAL



ARMED CONFLICT



TERRORISM



CRIME



CIVIL UNREST



MARITIME AND PIRACY



HEALTH



ENVIRONMENTAL



TRANSPORTATION

Last Published: 11 December 2025

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Netherlands is considered a safe travel destination on par with most other Western European nations and visits are likely to be incident-free. The greatest

security threat to travellers is petty crime, such as pickpocketing and bag-snatching, which is most common in major cities, particularly in areas frequented by tourists.

Amsterdam's Central Station is a known hotspot for low-level criminal activity. Travellers should also be aware of opportunistic criminals riding bicycles and mopeds often target unaware pedestrians. As such, travellers should maintain sensible security precautions, such as remaining vigilant and aware of their surroundings at all times. Organised and serious crime does occur, although travellers are unlikely to be affected.

Terrorism presents a risk to the Netherlands similar to many other European countries. In December 2023, Dutch authorities raised the terror threat level from "significant" to "substantial" (the fourth highest on a five-tier scale). There remains a heightened threat of terrorist attacks globally from groups or individuals motivated by conflicts in Syria and Iraq. Attacks could be indiscriminate and could occur with little warning.

The Netherlands is a stable democracy so there is a low risk of political instability and associated security issues. Public demonstrations do occur on a fairly regular basis although they are generally well-policed and unlikely to result in violence. Protests are most likely to take place in central areas of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Hague.

CULTURAL INFORMATION

Cultural Tips

- Dutch is the official language. Most Dutch speak at least some English and most speak German; French is also a popular language.
- Smoking is banned in public places, including cafes, restaurants and bars. Smokers caught breaking the ban may be subject to fines.
- Punctuality is extremely important.
- In restaurants, a 15% service charge is included in all bills; most patrons round up to the nearest euro. For exceptional service, tip an additional 10%; otherwise, no further tipping is expected. Taxi drivers are generally tipped one euro.
- In business settings, dress is generally conservative and formal, although it

varies in formality from industry to industry.

- Homosexuality and same-sex marriage are legal in the Netherlands.

KEY FACTS	
CAPITAL	The Hague, Amsterdam
CAPITAL CITY PHONE CODE	20
COUNTRY PHONE CODE	31
CURRENCY	Euro
ELECTRICITY	230 V, 50 Hz
GMT	+1
LANGUAGES	Dutch
LEADERSHIP	Chief of State: King Willem-Alexander; Head of Government: Prime Minister Dick Schoof
OFFICE WORK WEEK	Monday-Friday
OFFICIAL COUNTRY NAME	Kingdom of the Netherlands
RELIGION	Roman Catholic 20.1%, Protestant 14.8% (includes Dutch Reformed, Protestant Church of The Netherlands, Calvinist), Muslim 5%, none 54.1%, other 5.9%

KEY FACTS	
TIME ZONE OFFSET	UTC +2 (DST Observed)
TYPE OF GOVERNMENT	Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy

RISK SUMMARY

Political - Low

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy under King Willem-Alexander and is generally regarded as politically stable. Its bicameral parliament, the States-General, comprises the Eerste Kamer (First Chamber) with 75 members, indirectly elected by regional legislatures, and the Tweede Kamer (Second Chamber) with 150 members, elected by proportional representation.

In October 2025, a snap election was held following the collapse of the Schoof cabinet, after the Party for Freedom (PVV) withdrew from the coalition. The margin of votes between the first and second place parties was the narrowest since the expansion of the Dutch parliament in 1956. The socially liberal D66 and right-wing populist PVV were the two biggest parties in the election, both winning 26 seats in the House.

At present, the most likely coalition will be run by the D66 party, led by Rob Jetten, who will likely become the Netherlands' next Prime Minister.

Armed Conflict - Low

Dutch forces have been involved in UN peacekeeping missions, however, these have had no significant impact on security in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a NATO member and is subsequently surrounded by fellow NATO members, meaning armed conflict is unlikely.

The Dutch government has committed forces to NATO/US-led security operations in Afghanistan until 2021 and has increased troop deployment to Eastern European NATO members following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The country has also supplied military equipment to the Ukrainian military.

Terrorism - Low

The domestic threat level is considered to be "substantial", or level 4 of 5, by the Dutch government, which means there is a real chance of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands, although no specific threats currently exist. This was increased from 'Significant' in December 2023, the first increase since 2019. The conflict between Hamas and Israel was cited as a reason for an increased risk of terrorist attacks in the country. There is a risk of low-capability and more sophisticated terrorist attacks launched by lone actors or small cells directly linked to non-state militant groups such as the Islamic State or inspired by their ideology. Soft targets, such as transport hubs, bars and restaurants, music and sports venues, shopping centres, or public spaces near tourist attractions, are likely to be most at risk.

The Netherlands has a proactive counter-terrorism policy in order to address the prevalent terrorism threat. It has focused on improving transportation security, uncovering the financing of extremist groups, curtailing extremism, and prosecuting individuals for terrorist-related activities.

Far-right organisations still operate within the Netherlands. Opposition to immigration by racist or xenophobic groups has triggered small attacks, such as arson against foreign restaurants, Jewish or Muslim-linked premises and immigrant hostels.

Crime - Low

Crime rates, especially for violent crime, are generally very low in the Netherlands. Petty theft is known to occur at transport hubs such as the Central Amsterdam train station. Criminals can in some cases be seen to operate in teams, one to distract and another to steal the valuable item. There are also scams where imitation policemen in plain clothes display a false identification and

request to see the identification of the traveller. It is important to note, that plain-clothes officers rarely conduct these kinds of checks. If unsure, call the police station to verify the officer's identity.

Female travellers should be aware of drinks being spiked in bars and restaurants, particularly in the red light district.

Cybercrime is a growing threat in the Netherlands, including malware, ransomware attacks, and the targeting of networked systems.

Civil Unrest - Low

Protests occur frequently in the Netherlands and are generally targeted towards the government on foreign policy issues, domestic policies, and the economy. Prior notification is required in advance of a demonstration so appropriate security measures can be coordinated. Protests also occur at The Hague and are mostly held in Malieveld, which is adjacent to the Central Station. Violence is rarely reported at these events; however, it can occur. In February 2024, police officers in The Hague used tear gas in an attempt to quell rioting after a brawl broke out between two groups of Eritreans. The situation was scaled up to a Grip 2 regional emergency.

Immigration has become increasingly controversial in the Netherlands, which is traditionally seen as a liberal and tolerant society; notably, protests have taken place in Amsterdam to demand stronger immigration policies. An influx of immigrants from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa in 2015-16 has fuelled tensions over plans for immigrant accommodation centres in particular and triggered some protests.

Maritime and Piracy - Low

The Netherlands, with its rich maritime history, continues to play a pivotal role in global shipping, particularly through the Port of Rotterdam, one of the world's busiest ports.

The country is actively involved in international anti-piracy efforts, notably off the

coast of Somalia, with the Dutch navy participating in NATO and EU missions to protect global shipping lanes.

Domestically, maritime security is robust, with no significant piracy issues. Despite its coastal location and extensive dyke system, there are no substantial maritime security threats to the country. Additionally, despite an increase in migrant influx, few arrivals are by sea.

Health - Negligible

The Netherlands has a highly regarded healthcare system, known for its universal coverage and high-quality care, provided through a mix of private and public insurers. Residents are required to have health insurance, ensuring widespread access to services, which contributes to a high life expectancy. Additionally, marijuana is considered a soft drug and is legally sold in regulated 'coffee shops'. However, alcohol and drug use can lead to multiple drowning incidents each year, particularly in the country's many canals.

The healthcare arrangements for UK nationals in the Netherlands following Brexit are governed by the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between the EU and the UK. This agreement ensures that UK nationals residing in the Netherlands continue to have access to healthcare services, similar to provisions under the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK nationals visiting the Netherlands can use a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) for necessary medical care.

Environmental - Low

Much of the Netherlands has been reclaimed land from the sea and most of the country is located below sea level. An extensive dyke 'embankment' system has enabled the country to achieve this. Light flooding can occur from time to time and much of the Netherlands' new infrastructure sees raised ground levels to better accommodate for flooding. The Netherlands is prone to occasional minor earthquakes. The Dutch seismological monitoring network has reported an increase in the frequency of tremors induced by tectonic movements and oil and gas exploration in the north.

In July 2021, significant flooding occurred in Limburg Province and in the vicinity of Maastricht. Several areas were evacuated. The Netherlands was comparatively less acutely affected than Germany and Belgium.

Transportation - Negligible

Cycling is a popular mode of transport in the Netherlands. Cyclists are encouraged to wear helmets as accidents can be fatal. Pedestrians should also be cautious of cyclists on the roads. Caution is advised when cycling during winter months due to ice on cycle paths.

Taxis are typically expensive and are not licenced to pick up people on the street. Taxis are typically pre-booked or collected at designated taxi stands. Special taxi services that provide airport transfers are available however must be booked in advance. Shared taxis also operate however travelling with those you do not know is advised against. The bus service is extensive in Holland. Buses are affordable and run regularly. Buses can be busy at peak times. Buses vary across regions. Ferries and boats frequently serve various regions. Ferries are typically free and are often used for commuters. These are often overcrowded during commuting hours and can be cancelled in poor weather.

EMERGENCY DETAILS

SOLACE GLOBAL +44 (0)1202 795801.

GENERAL EMERGENCIES:- 112.

BRITISH EMBASSY IN THE HAGUE:- +31 (0)70 4270 427, BRITISH CONSULATE AMSTERDAM:- +31 (0)70 4270 427. U.S. EMBASSY THE HAGUE/U.S. CONSULATE AMSTERDAM:- +31 (0)70 310 2209.

POLICE NUMBER

112

EMERGENCY DETAILS	
AMBULANCE NUMBER	112
FIRE NUMBER	112
EMERGENCY DETAILS	

TRAVEL

TRAVEL ADVICE

Travellers should exercise caution when driving or cycling throughout the Netherlands as roads are often shared with bicycles, cars and pedestrians. Self-driving travellers should ensure they comply with all local laws and safety regulations. Taxis are expensive and not licenced to pick up people on the street. Taxis are typically pre-booked or collected at designated taxi stands. Special taxi services that provide airport transfers are available however must be booked in advance. Shared taxis also operate however travelling with those you do not know is advised against.

Ferries and boats frequently serve various regions. Ferries are typically free and are often used for commuters. These are often overcrowded during commuting hours and can be cancelled in poor weather. Anyone over the age of 14 is required by law to carry ID at all times.

SIGNIFICANT DATES
DECEMBER 21, 2025

SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **December Solstice:** Netherlands - Seasonal

DECEMBER 24, 2025

- **Christmas Eve:** Netherlands - Observance

DECEMBER 25, 2025

- **Christmas Day:** Netherlands - National

DECEMBER 26, 2025

- **Second Day of Christmas:** Netherlands - National

DECEMBER 31, 2025

- **New Year's Eve:** Netherlands - Observance

JANUARY 01, 2026

- **New Year's Day:** Netherlands - National

FEBRUARY 14, 2026

- **Valentine's Day:** Netherlands - Observance

MARCH 20, 2026

SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **March Equinox:** Netherlands - Seasonal

APRIL 03, 2026

- **Good Friday:** Netherlands - National

APRIL 05, 2026

- **Easter Sunday:** Netherlands - National

APRIL 06, 2026

- **Easter Monday:** Netherlands - National

APRIL 27, 2026

- **King's Birthday:** Netherlands - National

MAY 04, 2026

- **Remembrance Day:** Netherlands - Observance

MAY 05, 2026

- **Liberation Day:** Netherlands - National

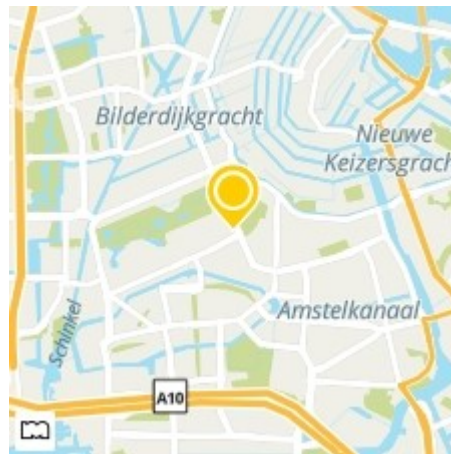
MAY 14, 2026

SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **Ascension Day:** Netherlands - National

RECENT ALERTS

ARRESTS MADE FOLLOWING CLASHES AT PRO-PALESTIANIAN PROTEST OUTSIDE CONCERTGEBOUW



Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Moderate



14-Dec-2025 20:37

Local media reports that riot police have arrested several pro-Palestinian protesters outside Amsterdam's Concertgebouw following minor clashes. Protestors gathered to protest the Israeli singer Abramson's show at the concert venue. The protestors threw smoke bombs, fences and fireworks prompting Dutch riot police to step in. The situation appears to be relatively under control; however, a significant police presence remains. We will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as necessary.

RECENT ALERTS

THE HAGUE CITY CENTRE DESIGNATED A HIGH-RISK SECURITY ZONE AHEAD OF PROTEST



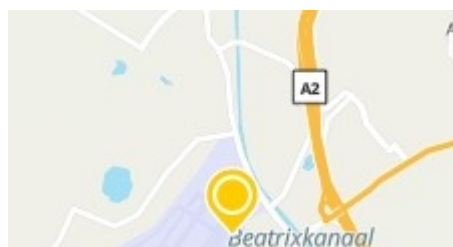
Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Moderate

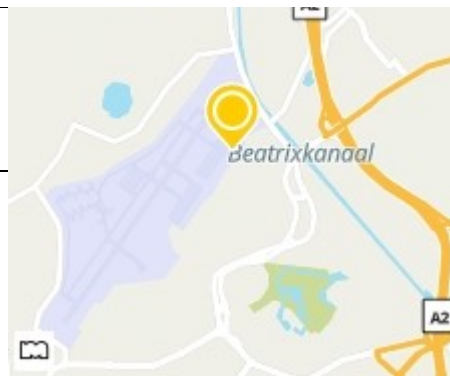


29-Nov-2025 11:38

Local media reports that the Mayor of the Hague has designated the city centre a high-risk security zone ahead of the "March for a Safe Netherlands" demonstration. The demonstration begins at 14:00 local time on Laan van Reagan en Gorbachev. Police have been granted stop and search powers, and face coverings have been prohibited. We will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates if necessary.

DRONE SIGHTINGS NEAR EINDHOVEN AIRPORT (EIN)





Category: Caution - **Risk:** Moderate



22-Nov-2025 20:57

The Minister of Defence of the Netherlands, Ruben Brekelmans, has reported drone sightings near Eindhoven Airport. Ground sources report that civilian and military air traffic has been suspended. Further reports that counter-drone assets from the Ministry of Defence are on standby to intervene. Emergency services are on site, and further investigation is ongoing. Further information remains limited.

TRAIN DELAYS EXPECTED TO, FROM AND VIA AMSTERDAM SCHIPOL AIRPORT (AMS) FROM 15 NOVEMBER TO 07 DECEMBER



Category: Travel Information - **Risk:** Low



RECENT ALERTS



01-Nov-2025 11:41

ProRail has reported that train delays are expected going to, from and via Amsterdam Schipol Airport (AMS) from 15 November to 7 December. The railway network is undergoing improvements, which may result in crowded trains due to fewer trains operating. The railway improvements are expected to peak on the weekend of 29 and 30 November, with additional work being carried out.

ROTTERDAM BLAAK STATION EVACUATED FOLLOWING FIRE ON EUROSTAR TRAIN

RECENT ALERTS



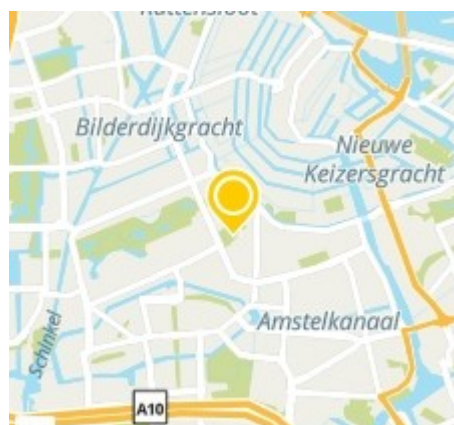
Category: Travel Information - **Risk:** Moderate



26-Oct-2025 18:47

Local media have reported that the Rotterdam Blaak station has been evacuated following a fire on a Eurostar train. A large fire and emergency contingency is on site, and the fire has been escalated to a very large fire; however, it has been reported to have subsided. Rail traffic has completely halted between Rotterdam Centraal, Lombardijen and Rotterdam Stadion, affecting a football match.

ANTI-IMMIGRATION PROTESTS UNDERWAY NEAR MUSEUMPLEIN, AMSTERDAM





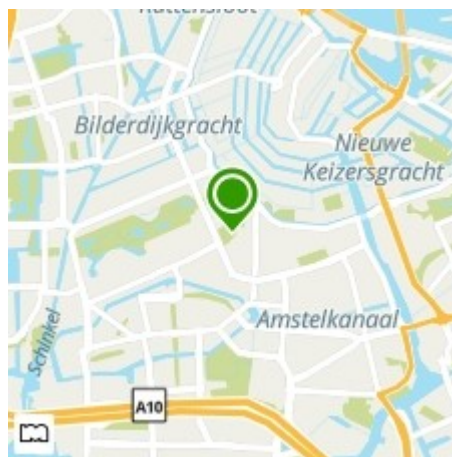
Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Moderate



12-Oct-2025 14:18

According to local sources, a few hundred people are marching in the Museumplein area, Amsterdam in an anti-immigration demonstration organised by the Netherlands in Revolt. Police are present in large numbers, and several arrests were made near Central Station before the protest. A counter-demonstration is taking place at Jonas Daniel Meijerplein. Further information is limited.

DEMONSTRATION EXPECTED IN AMSTERDAM ON 12 OCTOBER



Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Low



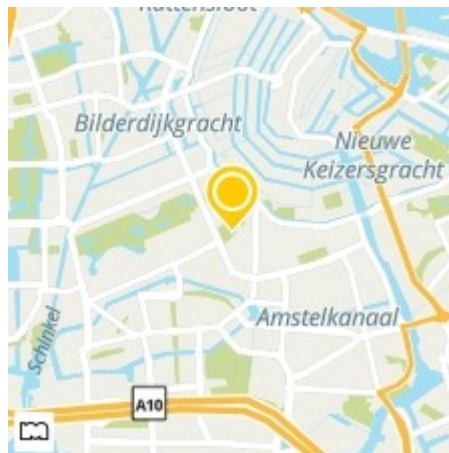
10-Oct-2025 16:29

The United States' Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) has reported

RECENT ALERTS

that a demonstration is expected on 12 October in Amsterdam. The protest is expected to be an anti-immigration protest march. The march is expected to begin at 13:00, local time, beginning at the Museumplein. The protesters are expected to march north of Vondelpark, through Oud-Zuid neighbourhood, and then return to Museumplein at around 17:00, local time. It is unclear how many participants there will be.

PRO-PALESTINIAN PROTEST ONGOING AT MUSEUMPLEIN, AMSTERDAM



Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Moderate

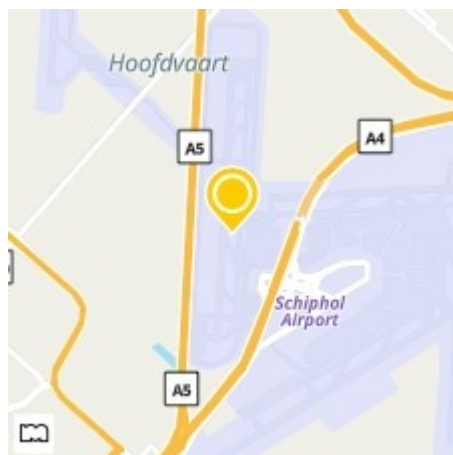


05-Oct-2025 13:28

According to local media, large crowds of pro-Palestinian protesters have gathered at Museumplein in Amsterdam's Zuid borough. Videos circulating on social media show large groups of demonstrators wearing red at Museumplein and nearby streets. There are currently no reports of clashes with police or casualties. Further information remains limited.

RECENT ALERTS

DOZENS OF FLIGHTS CANCELLED AT SCHIPHOL AIRPORT IN AMSTERDAM DUE TO STORM AMY



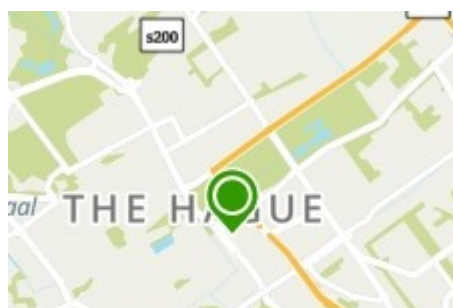
Category: Travel Information - **Risk:** Moderate



04-Oct-2025 07:33

According to local media sources, Amsterdam Schiphol Airport (AMS) has cancelled up to 150 flights on 04 October due to heavy rainfall and strong winds caused by Storm Amy. Of the cancelled flights, 80 were arrival flights and 70 were outgoing. The cancelled flights are mainly ones arriving from or travelling to western destinations. A code yellow is in effect nationwide due to Amy.

ONGOING PROTEST IN THE HAGUE BLOCKING TRAIN TRACKS





Category: Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Low



02-Oct-2025 17:39

Local media reports an ongoing protest in the Hague blocking train tracks at Den Haag Centraal railway station. Law enforcement are in attendance. Videos circulating on social media show a small crowd of students with Palestine flags sitting on the railway line. Currently, there are no reports of any clashes or arrests. We will monitor the situation and provide updates as necessary.

FCDO SUMMARY

Last updated: 12/10/2025 13:19:10

Warnings and insurance

Check [separate travel advice pages](#) for advice on travel to the constituent countries and special municipalities in the Dutch Caribbean.

Before you travel

No travel can be guaranteed safe. Read all the advice in this guide. You may also find it helpful to:

- see [general advice for women travellers](#)
- read our [guide on disability and travel abroad](#)
- see [general advice for LGBT+ travellers](#)
- read about [safety for solo and independent travel](#)
- see [advice on volunteering and adventure travel abroad](#)

Travel insurance

If you choose to travel, research your destinations and [get appropriate travel insurance](#). Insurance should cover your itinerary, planned activities and expenses in an emergency.

About FCDO travel advice

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) provides advice about risks of travel to help you make informed decisions. Find out [more about FCDO travel advice](#).

Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow FCDO:

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)

- [Travel Aware on Instagram](#)

Entry requirements

This information is for people travelling on a full [‘British citizen’ passport](#) from the UK. It is based on the UK government’s understanding of the Netherlands’ current rules for the most common types of travel.

The authorities in the Netherlands set and enforce entry rules. If you’re not sure how these requirements apply to you, contact the [Netherlands Embassy in the UK](#).

Passport validity requirements

The Netherlands follows [Schengen area rules](#). Your passport must:

- have a ‘date of issue’ less than 10 years before the date you arrive – if you renewed your passport before 1 October 2018, it may have a date of issue that is more than 10 years ago
- have an ‘expiry date’ at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave the Schengen area (the expiry date does not need to be within 10 years of the date of issue)

Check with your travel provider that your passport and other travel documents meet requirements. [Renew your passport](#) if you need to.

You will be denied entry if you do not have a valid travel document or try to use a passport that has been reported lost or stolen.

Dual nationals

When returning to the UK, British citizens must carry a valid [British passport](#) or [certificate of entitlement](#). See [Dual citizenship](#).

Visa requirements

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area, which includes the Netherlands, for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. This applies if you travel:

- as a tourist
- to visit family or friends
- to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events
- or for short-term studies or training

The [requirements for working in the Netherlands](#) are different.

If you are travelling to other Schengen countries as well, make sure your whole visit is within the 90-day limit. Visits to Schengen countries within the previous 180 days before you travel count towards your 90 days. If you overstay the 90-day visa-free limit, you may be banned from entering Schengen countries for up to 3 years.

Until the Entry-Exit System (EES) is fully rolled out, make sure you get your passport stamped on entry and exit (read 'New Schengen entry requirements').

If you're a visitor, border guards will look at your entry and exit stamps to check you have not overstayed the 90-day visa-free limit for the Schengen area.

If your passport is missing a stamp, show evidence of when and where you entered or left the Schengen area (for example, boarding passes or tickets) and ask the border guards to add the date and location in your passport.

Read about [entry processes if you live in the Netherlands](#).

Staying longer than 90 days in a 180-day period

To stay longer, you must meet the Dutch government's entry requirements. Check which type of visa or work permit you need on the [Dutch government website](#).

If you're in the Netherlands with a residence permit or long-stay visa, this does not count towards your 90-day visa-free limit.

New Schengen entry requirements

From 12 October 2025, the European Union's (EU) new Entry/Exit System (EES) will begin roll out.

This means that when you travel into the Schengen area for short stays, you may need to register your biometric details, such as fingerprints and a photo. You do

not need to take any action before you arrive at the border, and there is no cost for EES registration.

On your first visit into a Schengen country from 12 October onwards, you may be asked to register your details at a special booth before proceeding to the immigration desk. Follow directions from your travel operator or the staff at your port of entry. You may also need to provide either your fingerprint or photo when you leave the Schengen area. Children aged 11 or younger will not have their fingerprints scanned but can be required to have their photo taken.

EES may take each passenger a few extra minutes to complete so be prepared to wait longer than usual at the border.

EES will not be rolled out to all ports of entry at once, the numbers of passengers being registered at each port of entry will vary, and some destinations may take up to 6 months to fully roll out the new process.

Until EES is fully rolled out your passport will continue to be stamped, even if you've already been registered for EES. Once EES is fully rolled out, it will replace the current system of manually stamping passports when visitors arrive in the Schengen area for short stays and you will input biometric details every time you enter or exit.

If you enter the Schengen area through the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel at Folkestone or Eurostar at St Pancras International and you are asked to register for EES, the information will be taken at the border before you leave the UK.

Read more [information on the EU Entry/Exit System and to understand which countries are in the Schengen area](#).

Temporary border controls

Netherlands has introduced additional entry checks until December 2025. Checks may be carried out on major roads leading into Netherlands, international trains and on intra-Schengen flights. See information from [Royal Netherlands Marechaussee](#).

Border controls at Germany's borders

A temporary reintroduction of border controls are currently in place at Germany's

borders. If you are planning to enter Germany from Netherlands, see information from [The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community](#).

Border controls at Belgium's borders

Belgium has introduced additional entry checks until December 2025. Checks may be carried out on major roads leading into Belgium, motorway car parks, international bus services, international trains and on intra-Schengen flights. Checks may involve verifying travel documents and identification, as well as screening for illegal substances. In Belgium you must carry your passport with you at all times.

Vaccine requirements

For details about medical entry requirements and recommended vaccinations, see [TravelHealthPro's Netherlands guide](#).

Customs rules

There are strict rules about [goods you can take into or out of the Netherlands](#). You must declare anything that may be prohibited or subject to tax or duty.

Taking food and drink into the Netherlands

You cannot take [meat, milk or products containing them into EU countries](#). There are some exceptions such as powdered baby milk, baby food and special foods or pet feed required for medical reasons.

Taking money into the Netherlands

Declare cash or travellers cheques if the value is [10,000 euros or more](#). You will get a certified declaration to show you brought it in with you. If you do not, your money could be seized when you leave.

Safety and security

Terrorism

There is a high threat of terrorist attack globally affecting UK interests and British nationals, including from groups and individuals who view the UK and British nationals as targets. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times.

UK Counter Terrorism Policing has information and advice on [staying safe abroad](#) and what to do in the event of a terrorist attack. Find out [how to reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad](#).

Terrorism in the Netherlands

Terrorists are likely to try to carry out attacks in the Netherlands.

Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places visited by foreign nationals. You should remain aware of your surroundings, keep up to date with local media reports and follow the advice of local authorities.

On 12 December 2023 the Netherlands raised its National Terrorist Threat Level. This means that they assess there is a heightened risk of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands.

Crime

Protecting your belongings

Pickpocketing and bag-snatching are common, particularly in central Amsterdam and around Amsterdam Central Station. Thieves often operate in gangs on the trains and trams to and from Schiphol airport and Central Station. One thief distracts you while another steals your bag. Sleeping on trains can make you an easy target.

Thieves enter restaurants on the pretext of selling something or looking for someone. They steal bags while people are distracted.

You should:

- keep sight of your luggage and belongings – especially when checking into hotels
- keep valuables securely on your person
- avoid hanging bags or jackets on the back of a chair in restaurants
- avoid falling asleep in public or on public transport

Fake police scams

Amsterdam police have warned of criminals using false police identities to trick tourists into handing over cash and credit cards. They will usually say that it is part of an investigation into counterfeit money or false credit cards. Be very cautious about any approaches.

Genuine plain-clothes police will rarely carry out this type of inspection. Dutch police do not have shiny badges, which the fake police sometimes present as ID.

Call 0900 8844 to contact the nearest police station if you are unsure whether a police person is genuine.

Drug sellers

Avoid confrontation with anyone offering you drugs. Stay away from quiet or dark alleys, particularly late at night.

Drink spiking

There is a risk of drink spiking, particularly for young women and solo travellers. Do not leave your drink unattended. If you are in a group, make sure you stay together.

If you think your drink has been spiked, seek immediate medical help and contact the police.

Organised crime

There are regular incidents of violent crime among organised crime gangs involved in drug trafficking, particularly in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and other large cities. Confrontations between rival gangs have led to violent incidents including shootings, stabbings, and use of homemade explosives.

The risk mostly affects those involved in drug crime, but there is always the risk of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Remain vigilant if you suspect illegal activity. Follow the advice of local authorities.

Laws and cultural differences

Personal ID

Anyone aged 14 or over must always be able to show identification. British nationals should use their passport as ID. Dual nationals can show a Dutch driving licence, Dutch passport or identity card.

For people aged 16 or over who fail to comply with the requirement to identify themselves, the fine is 100 euros. For persons aged 14 and 15, the fine is 50 euros.

Illegal drugs

The Netherlands has a reputation for being tolerant on the use of 'soft drugs', such as cannabis. However, drug use is only tolerated in designated premises in the major cities. Buying or possessing prohibited drugs and substances outside of designated areas, including when transiting through airports, is illegal and can result in a prison sentence.

Airports in Netherlands have excellent technology and security for detecting illegal items. This is also used to scan the baggage of transiting passengers.

Smoking soft drugs in public places is illegal. There are specific cafés where it is legal to purchase and use cannabis in limited quantities and under strict conditions.

The sale of dry and fresh psychoactive mushrooms is illegal. However, the truffle (sclerotium) form of psychoactive (psilocybin) mushrooms is not covered under Dutch law (Opium Act) and is still sold in regulated 'smart shops'.

Be extremely careful as mixing alcohol, cannabis and wild mushrooms can be fatal.

Canal laws and dangers

Every year people drown in the canals of Amsterdam and in canals elsewhere in the Netherlands. The majority of drownings happen after heavy drinking or smoking cannabis. Take care when walking beside canals.

If police catch you swimming in the Amsterdam canals, they will fine you 160 euros. They will also fine you for urinating in the canals.

Transport risks

Road travel

If you are planning to drive in the Netherlands, see [information on driving abroad](#) and check the [rules of the road in the RAC's Netherlands guide](#). The guide lists driving regulations and other legal requirements you need to be aware of.

You can drive in the Netherlands on a UK driving licence. Always carry your:

- driving licence
- insurance documents
- vehicle documents
- photo ID such as a passport or residence permit

If you are driving a vehicle that does not belong to you, you may need written permission from the registered owner. You are not allowed to drive on a provisional licence.

Check if you need a [UK sticker to drive your car outside the UK](#).

If you're living in the Netherlands, check the [driving requirements for residents](#).

Driving regulations

Traffic offences can carry heavy, on-the-spot fines. If you pay a fine, always ask for a receipt.

Watch out for trams. They have priority over other traffic. You must stop if a tram or a bus stops in the middle of the road to let passengers on and off.

Speed cameras, speed traps and unmarked vehicles are widely used. Motorway speed limits can vary. You must follow overhead illuminated lane indicators when in use.

Look out for cyclists and mopeds, who have right of way over motor vehicles and often ignore road traffic rules and red lights.

Pedestrian safety

Be on the look-out for cyclists, mopeds and trams when crossing roads, especially on zebra crossings. If you do not use marked crossings on roads, you could be fined for jaywalking.

Cycle paths are busy and cyclists ride at speed.

Health

Before you travel check that:

- your destination can provide the healthcare you may need
- you have [appropriate travel insurance](#) for local treatment or unexpected medical evacuation

This is particularly important if you have a health condition or are pregnant.

Emergency medical number

Dial 112 and ask for an ambulance.

Contact your insurance or medical assistance company quickly if you're referred to a medical facility for treatment.

Vaccine recommendations and health risks

At least 8 weeks before your trip:

- check the latest [vaccine recommendations for the Netherlands](#)
- see where to get vaccines and whether you have to pay on the [NHS travel vaccinations page](#)

See [what health risks you'll face in the Netherlands](#), including biting insects and ticks.

Medication

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or bought in the UK can be different in other countries.

TravelHealthPro explains [best practice when travelling with medicines](#).

Healthcare in the Netherlands

[FCDO](#) has a list of [medical providers in the Netherlands](#) where some staff will speak English.

Health insurance cards

To get medically necessary state healthcare in the Netherlands, you need a Global Health Insurance Card ([GHIC](#)) or a European Health Insurance Card ([EHIC](#)).

The NHS's [getting healthcare abroad webpage](#) has details about:

- how to apply for a [GHIC](#)
- how to get temporary cover if you lose your card or it does not arrive in time
- who qualifies for a new [EHIC](#) instead of a [GHIC](#)
- what treatment counts as medically necessary

A [GHIC](#) or [EHIC](#) is not an alternative to travel insurance. You may have costs your [GHIC](#) or [EHIC](#) does not cover, including:

- changes to travel and accommodation bookings
- additional standard costs for treatment
- medical repatriation to the UK
- treatment that is ruled non-urgent
- private healthcare
- private clinics
- prescription charges

There is also [guidance on healthcare if you're living in the Netherlands](#).

Travel and mental health

Read [FCDO guidance on travel and mental health](#). There is also [guidance on TravelHealthPro](#).

Getting help

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) cannot provide tailored advice for individual trips. Read this travel advice and carry out your own research before deciding whether to travel.

Emergency services in the Netherlands

Telephone: 112 (ambulance, fire, police)

Contact your travel provider and insurer

Contact your travel provider and your insurer if you are involved in a serious incident or emergency abroad. They will tell you if they can help and what you need to do.

Refunds and changes to travel

For refunds or changes to travel, contact your travel provider. You may also be able to make a claim through insurance. However, insurers usually require you to talk to your travel provider first.

Find out more about [changing or cancelling travel plans](#), including:

- where to get advice if you are in a dispute with a provider
- how to access previous versions of travel advice to support a claim

Support from FCDO

FCDO has guidance on staying safe and what to do if you need help or support abroad, including:

- finding English-speaking [lawyers](#), [funeral directors](#) and [translators and interpreters](#) in the Netherlands
- dealing with a [death in the Netherlands](#)
- being [arrested in the Netherlands](#)
- getting help if you're a [victim of crime](#)
- what to do if you're [in hospital](#)
- if you are [affected by a crisis](#), such as a terrorist attack

Contacting FCDO

Help abroad

See [how to get help from the UK government abroad](#) including in an emergency.

Help in the UK

You can call [FCDO](#) in London if you need urgent help because something has happened to a friend or relative abroad.

Telephone: 020 7008 5000 (24 hours)

[Find out about call charges](#)

Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow [FCDO](#):

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)

Risk information for British companies

The Overseas Business Risk service offers [information and advice for British companies operating in the Netherlands](#) on how to manage political, economic, and business security-related risks.

PACK SMART

Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Carry a duplicate wallet with small denomination notes and old cards that you could relinquish if threatened by robbers. Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Always check the destination restrictions regarding medications when planning your trip.

STAY SAFE: Hotels



Request a hotel room between the third & seventh floor. Ground floor rooms should always be avoided as they are easily accessible from the outside. Higher levels mean in the event of a fire there are many stairs to navigate and in some countries firefighters may not have ladders capable of reaching higher than the seventh floor.



Check your room phone works in case you need to call reception for help.



Know where your fire exits are. Count the number of doors to the fire exit from your room so you can feel your way in the event of a fire and a smoke-filled corridor.



To prevent unauthorised entry into your hotel room, make sure the windows and doors lock. Bolt the deadbolt and use the door wedges

you've brought with you from home to wedge the main door closed.

TRAVEL SAFE: Out & About



When you are out and about, be aware of your surroundings - don't display obvious wealth, such as expensive jewellery, watches and mobile phones.



Use ATMs inside banks and shopping centres, where there is greater security and CCTV. Safety in numbers. If you are travelling with colleagues, stay together for meals and trips out. If you are alone, avoid quiet areas and trust your instincts.

Road traffic accidents are still the greatest threat to travel safety.



- Use licensed taxis.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Keep doors locked & windows up.
- Avoid night-time driving.
- If the driver is using a phone or driving dangerously, insist they slow down/stop using their phone.

Check in regularly. Use the 'Check In' button on the Solace Secure app so your location can be monitored and you can view all intelligence alerts within your vicinity.

SAFE TRAVEL: Health Tips

See a medical travel specialist at least 4 weeks before travel.

Ask about recommended vaccines for specific destinations.

First aid kit with regular & special medication for trip - carry in hand luggage.

Evacuation & travel insurance to cover health emergencies while abroad.



Take an extra month of prescribed medication for pre-existing conditions.

Risk of malaria - take precautions to prevent mosquito bites and take malaria pills as advised.



Avoid drinking alcohol and becoming dehydrated.

Verify & consume safe water and food. Have a supply of medicine for self-treatment of diarrhoea.



Excessive sun exposure should be minimised by the use of sunscreen - sun can be more intense over water, snow and at altitude.

Leave animals alone. Animal bites or scratches can transmit rabies.

THINK SAFE: Know Your Destination

Understand the culture of your destination. Dress and behave so as not to cause offence or draw attention.



Know if the tap water is suitable to drink if not; only accept water from a sealed bottle.

Avoid ice in your drinks & salad washed in tap water.

Research where you are travelling to. Make a note of the local emergency services number. Know the current security and medical threats and advice.

See the FCO website for general information ([gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)).

DOCUMENT SAFE: Know Your Destination

Take photos/scans of your essential documents and email them to yourself.
You can then access them remotely if your belongings are stolen:

- Passport
- Driver's Licence
- Travel Insurance Document
- Visa
- Medical Certificates

For 24/7 travel risk advice and emergency assistance contact Solace Global Risk operations: + 44 (0)1202 795 801

The Solace Secure desktop and app provide up-to-the-minute alerts, providing latest information on your travel location even when you are there.

CONTACT SOLACE GLOBAL RESPONSE TEAM

This report has been prepared for you by Solace Global Risk Ltd.

If you need urgent help, advice or assistance at any time please contact the 24/7 Response and Assistance Team.

If you have a question about this travel advice or any other location please email SGR@solaceglobal.com for further safety and security information.

For support using your Solace Secure platform or app please contact support@solaceglobal.com.

Solace Global Risk, Twin Sails House, West Quay Road, Poole, BH15 1JF, UK