



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

Protocol Guide for Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts

**Protocol and Host Country Affairs Department¹
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Please note: the Protocol Guide is not a statutory document and no rights can be derived from it. This document is for information purposes only.

¹ Referred to below as 'the Protocol Department'.

Protocol Guide for Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts

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Introduction

This Protocol Guide is issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of our efforts to be a transparent and accommodating host to our distinguished guests. It contains practical information based on the Dutch authorities' interpretation of the rules for privileged persons. The special rights enjoyed by privileged persons in the Netherlands derive from the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR). These conventions allow for national interpretation and evolving insights. A list of useful addresses when dealing with the Dutch authorities can be found in [Annex I](#).

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The privileges and immunities enjoyed by privileged persons are granted to the diplomatic missions and consular posts – rather than to the individuals in question – to allow diplomatic missions and consular posts and their staff to function properly. Diplomatic missions and consular posts may address their questions about the implementation of the rules to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs via the DPG@minbuza.nl mailbox. Registration Officers with questions regarding the registration process in the Probas system are requested to use the DPG-Service@minbuza.nl mailbox. The Ministry can only take matters into consideration that are submitted by a diplomatic mission. Individual cases submitted by staff members or their family cannot be processed.

Contact details:

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1 Agrément and accreditation

1.1 Accreditation of the head of mission (articles 4 to 6 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR))

The sending State must make certain that the receiving State has granted agrément for the person it proposes to accredit as head of mission to that state.

The procedure is as follows. The sending State notifies the Kingdom of the Netherlands via its diplomatic mission in the Netherlands of the person it proposes to accredit. For ambassadors residing in the Netherlands, this should be done by a verbal démarche to the Director of Protocol, a curriculum vitae being provided on a sheet of paper without a letter heading. For ambassadors residing outside the Netherlands, the embassy accredited to the Netherlands must send the Note Verbale by email or post to the Protocol and Host Country Department in The Hague.

Prospective heads of diplomatic missions must await the decision on agrément outside the Netherlands. Any form of publicity including the name of the person concerned in connection with his/her new assignment before agrément is given is considered inappropriate.

If the head of a diplomatic mission is to be accredited to more than one state and is to reside outside the Netherlands, it is customary to await the agrément of the country in which he or she is to reside. If the new head of the diplomatic mission is not to reside in the same place as his/her predecessor, the Kingdom of the Netherlands should also be notified to that effect in compliance with article 5, paragraph 1, of the VCDR. ²

1.2 Recognition and admission of career and honorary consular officers (articles 10 to 12 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR))

In accordance with Article 4 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963 (VCCR)³ a consular post may be established in the territory of the receiving State only with that State's consent, i.e. with the explicit approval of the Ministry. In accordance with Article 10 of the Convention, heads of consular posts are admitted to the exercise of their functions by the receiving State.

Before the prospective honorary consul can take up his/her duties, it is necessary to obtain the Ministry's written approval for both the establishment of a consular post headed by a honorary consul and for the sending State's nominee for this position.

The Ministry requires that requests to establish a consular post headed by a honorary consul and proposed nominations of honorary consuls be submitted to the Ministry by means of a Note Verbale. New proposals and/or questions regarding the procedure should be submitted to DPG-HonoraryConsuls@minbuza.nl.

² <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBV0004345>

³ <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBV0004334>

The Note Verbale should entail information on the size, seat, classification and consular district of the proposed consular post. Furthermore, the Ministry may require the sending State to offer justification as to why there is a need for the requested consular post. The number of honorary consuls of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the sending State will be taken into account when assessing the request o.i.d.. Furthermore, the honorary consul should have their office located in the assigned consular district. As of 7 March 2023, proposed nominees cannot be older than 70 years at the moment of nomination. Furthermore, the admission of the honorary consul will be valid for a period of no more than seven years. This seven-year term can be renewed once, for a further seven years if the honorary consul has not reached the age limit.

The requests to establish a consular post headed by a honorary consul and proposed nominations of honorary consuls transmitted to the Ministry via Note Verbale should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- a copy of the (proposed) consular commission or similar instrument, certifying the capacity of the honorary consul, and stating his/her full name, classification, consular district and seat of the consular post;
- the nominee's complete curriculum vitae;
- a copy of the nominee's passport or identity card;
- an extract from the personal records database of the municipality where the nominee resides (*uittreksel uit de Basisregistratie Personen (BRP)*);
- a certificate of conduct for the nominee (*Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag*). When applying for the certificate of conduct in the Netherlands, the Embassy should select the general screening profile (section 2.4b), and, at a minimum, the following boxes: Information (number 11, 12, 13), Money (number 21, 22) and Services (number 41 and 43). These boxes must be selected for the certificate of conduct to be taken into consideration;
- contact details of the consular post and the nominee.

Guidelines have been communicated by Note Verbale Min-BuZa.2023.14931-26

1.3 Appointment of a chargé d'affaires ad interim

If the post of head of mission is vacant, or if the head of mission is unable to perform his/her duties, a chargé d'affaires ad interim must be appointed to act as provisional head of mission. With reference to article 19 of the VCDR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be notified of the name of the chargé d'affaires ad interim by Note Verbale.

1.4 Military and Police attachés

The embassy of the sending State should request permission for the appointment of a military or police attaché by sending a Note Verbale to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, enclosing the curriculum vitae and a copy of the passport of the official concerned prior to their arrival in the Netherlands.

1.5 First arrival of heads of diplomatic mission

The Protocol Department will notify the sending State by digital Note Verbale that agrément has been granted, and this can then be made public if so desired.

The diplomatic mission should notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a digital Note Verbale of the head of mission's planned date and time of arrival and the mode of transport to be used (including the flight number in the event of arrival by plane).

The newly appointed ambassador will receive an aide-mémoire concerning the presentation of credentials from the Protocol Department prior to his/her arrival in the Netherlands. Further instructions will follow from the Grand Master of the Household of His Majesty the King when the ambassador visits him prior to the presentation of his/her letters of credence.

If heads of mission who are to reside in The Hague arrive by plane or train, they will be welcomed by an official from the Protocol Department.

It should be noted that in the Netherlands heads of mission cannot perform their public duties until they have presented their credentials to the head of state. The second possibility referred to in article 13, paragraph 1, of the VCDR, namely that the head of mission is considered as having taken up his function when he/she presents a true copy of his/her credentials to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, *does not apply in the Netherlands*. Precedence among heads of diplomatic missions therefore depends on the date on which letters of credence were presented to His Majesty the King.

1.6 Departure of heads of diplomatic mission

At the end of his/her term of office, the ambassador should inform the Director of Protocol and indicate the approximate date of his/her departure. Ambassadors who have resided in The Hague for more than two years may request a farewell audience with His Majesty the King. The ambassador should indicate whether his/her spouse will be able to accompany him/her to the audience.

At the appointed time on the day of the audience an honour guard from the Royal Military and Border Police will arrive at the address given by the embassy to the Protocol Department. The honour guard will accompany the ambassador and his/her spouse, in their own car, to the Palace and back.

1.7 Accommodation

Offices and residential accommodation may be rented or purchased through a real estate agent (*makelaar*). Diplomatic missions may choose their own office and residential accommodation,

under several conditions. Offices should in principle be situated within the municipality of The Hague. Residential accommodation must in principle be situated in the environs of The Hague (that is, within the municipalities of The Hague, Wassenaar, Leidschendam, Voorburg, Rijswijk or Zoetermeer), so that the Dutch authorities can meet their obligation to uphold the inviolability of such offices and residential accommodation and where necessary to protect them. Consular offices must be situated in the locality from which the consular post in question takes its name. There are no restrictions on residential accommodation for consuls. The sending State should inform the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the municipality in case of changes regarding the location of the offices and/or residential accommodation of the Ambassador.

For inquiries regarding housing, diplomatic missions may contact the municipality of The Hague, email: protocol@denhaag.nl.

Diplomatic missions should be aware that, if the sending State wishes to establish offices forming part of the mission in localities other than those in which the mission itself is established, the sending State must submit a substantiated and motivated request to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with article 12 of the VCDR. Such offices may be established only with prior and explicit consent.

Only trade offices facilitating economic relations between the sending State and the Kingdom of the Netherlands may in principle be considered as 'offices forming part of the mission'.

'Locality' refers to the existing premises of the mission. This means that if an office is established outside the existing premises of the mission, this qualifies as a locality 'other than those in which the mission itself is established'.

Diplomatic missions should also be aware of the risk of squatting in buildings owned by the sending State that are not in diplomatic use, as these buildings do not enjoy diplomatic immunity.

2 First entrance and visas

2.1 Visas

A visa may be required for legal entrance into the Netherlands. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs assists the following people in obtaining a visa to travel to the Netherlands: newly arriving foreign staff members of diplomatic missions and consular posts posted to the Netherlands; family members (spouse or partner and dependent children) forming part of privileged staff members' households who wish to join them; and any private servants.

2.2 When is a visa required?

Whether or not a visa is required depends on the following:

- *Nationality*

Nationals of most non-EU countries need a visa to enter the Netherlands. A list of the countries whose nationals need a visa for a stay of up to 90 days can be found on the Dutch government's website: [short-stay Schengen visa](#).

- *Type of travel document*

A person's travel document determines whether or not a visa is needed, even if that person has more than one nationality. A person travelling on a passport of a country whose nationals require a visa must have a valid visa.

- *Special travel document*

Holders of certain countries' diplomatic or service passports may be exempt from the visa requirement, even if visas are normally required for the country in question. Information about these exemptions may be obtained from the Short Stay Visa Service of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) of the Ministry of Justice and Security (email address: visa.posten@ind.nl).

Please note that other Schengen countries have their own lists and thus may sometimes require a visa even if the Netherlands does not.

- *Length of stay*

Foreign visitors planning to stay more than 90 days in the Netherlands must obtain a special visa known as 'authorisation for temporary stay' (*Machtiging tot Voorlopig Verblijf*, MVV). However, privileged foreign staff members and their immediate family forming part of their household are not required to obtain an MVV, regardless of their nationality, but should register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs upon their arrival ([see chapter 3](#)).

2.3 Visa procedure for privileged staff members and their family members

A Note Verbale from the diplomatic mission or consular post in the Netherlands stating that the staff member will be employed there should be submitted to DPG-Service@minbuza.nl. **Without this copy of the Note Verbale, the visa application cannot be considered.**

The Note Verbale should include the following details (DPG-MIN-BuZa.2021.8661-23 of 10 June 2021):

- the personal details (name, date and place of birth and nationality) of the visa applicant;
- the number, expiration date and type (ordinary, service or diplomatic) of passport;
- the position the applicant will hold at the diplomatic mission or consular post;
- the name of the predecessor or mention if it concerns a new position the applicant will hold at the diplomatic mission or consular post;
- the starting date and duration of the posting.
- a copy of the passport(s).

To avoid unnecessary delay, the diplomatic mission should send the Note Verbale to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (mail to DPG@minbuza.nl).

Privileged staff members and family members forming part of their household should all follow the same visa procedure. They are advised to submit their visa application well in advance of their departure for the Netherlands.

Privileged staff members and family members forming part of their household must apply for a visa at a Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post in their country of origin or of habitual residence before they travel to the Netherlands. A country of habitual residence is one where the person concerned resides or has a permit to reside for longer than 90 days. If there is no Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post in their country of origin or of habitual residence, they are requested to send an email to the Short Stay Visa Service of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) of the Ministry of Justice and Security (email address: visa.posten@ind.nl). The Short Stay Visa Service will provide advice about visa issues on a case-by-case basis.

Processing a visa application can take up to four weeks, as it is sometimes necessary to consult one or more of the [other Schengen countries](#).

Visas issued for the Netherlands are in general valid for 90 days in all countries that are party to the Schengen Agreement.

No documents should be sent to the Short Stay Visa Service.

2.4 Visa procedure for non-privileged staff members, relatives, friends, other guests and delegations

Visa applications for short stays (90 days or less) should be submitted well in advance to a Dutch diplomatic mission or another diplomatic mission abroad representing the Kingdom of the Netherlands (for contact details, use the search feature on [contact](#)).

Please note that, as a rule, in the case of non-privileged and short-stay visitors, **no** documents should be sent to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Visa fees must be paid by the applicant. Visas for official delegations and official guests are issued free of charge if the individuals in question are required to be present for official purposes.

3 Registration

3.1 General information

Upon arrival

Diplomatic missions should register privileged staff members and family members forming part of their household with the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs **within ten working days** of their arrival in the Netherlands so that identity cards can be issued.

Upon final departure

Within ten working days after the termination of a staff member's employment at a diplomatic mission or consular post, the staff member's and family members' identity cards must be returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the staff members and family members forming part of their household must be deregistered. On leaving the Netherlands after handing in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' identity card, privileged persons who are not EU nationals are strongly advised to carry with them a copy of their former identity card and a declaration by their diplomatic mission or consular post that their employment there was the basis of their legal residence in the Netherlands (see [Annex A](#) for an example of such a declaration). Please note that a transit visa may be required for transit through another country, even a Schengen country.

3.2 Notifying the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains a personal records database (PROBAS ePortal) of staff members of diplomatic missions and consular posts and their families. Diplomatic missions and consular posts must notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the following:

- 1) Arrival of new members of staff and family members forming part of their household, including those engaged locally (except Dutch family members). They must be registered with the Ministry within ten days of taking up employment in the Netherlands.
- 2) End of posting with the diplomatic mission or consular post.
- 3) Final departure from the Netherlands.
- 4) Change of position or rank at the diplomatic mission or consular post within 10 working days. If there is a change in position that affects the status of the staff member, the diplomatic mission must apply for a new identity card through the ePortal.
- 5) Changes in civil status.
- 6) Birth of a child.
- 7) Death of a registered member of the family.
- 8) Changes of address of staff members, those forming part of their household and of their private servant(s), .
- 9) Change of nationality (only one nationality can be registered. Dutch nationality prevails)
- 10) Change of residence status
- 11) Expiration of the identity card.

Diplomatic missions and consular posts are responsible for ensuring that the obligation to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is complied with.

Notification of births, changes in civil status and deaths

When a child is born in the Netherlands to a staff member of a diplomatic mission or consular post who is not a Dutch national or permanently resident in the Netherlands, two steps must be taken.

- a) The birth must be registered **within three working days** with the Registrar of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Registered Partnerships (*ambtenaar van de burgerlijke stand*) at the town hall (*gemeentehuis*) of the municipality in which the child was born. If the birth is not registered according to the above-mentioned procedure, this may have consequences for the child.
- b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be notified of the birth through the ePortal via the 'add a family member' option. A copy of the passport should also be uploaded upon registration.

A child is a Dutch national by birth only if either the father or the mother has Dutch nationality.

The notification procedure described above should also be followed in the event of the death, marriage, divorce or registered partnership of a staff member or a family member forming part of the household. A copy of the relevant certificate must be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the ePortal as an attachment.

Change of status

Any change in a staff member's residence status, the date of the residence status change, as well as a request for a new ID card must be submitted through the PROBAS ePortal (NV DPG-MIN-BuZa.2021.9290-12). The Ministry will then issue an ID card, as appropriate, for the newly obtained status and will deactivate the person's old ID card. The Ministry underlines that, if appropriate, the Tax and Customs Administration may send a tax assessment in order to reimburse any unrightfully enjoyed privileges, even if the old ID card is not timely returned to the Ministry.

3.3 ePortal and the Personal Records Database (BRP)

ePortal

The ePortal is an online registration system for staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts and members of their household. The ePortal is used to (de)register, to notify the Ministry of any changes and to apply for identity cards for staff members and members of their household.

The ePortal is accessible to registration officers, who are responsible for keeping all the information up to date. A registration officer should already be registered with the Protocol Department of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a staff member of the mission in question. Staff members not known to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot be registered as registration officers.

If a staff member has been granted permanent residence (DV status) in the Netherlands or has Dutch nationality, they must be registered in the ePortal. A person's residence status directly affects the privileges and immunities they are entitled to.

If a staff member's current status is not correctly recorded, they run the risk of having to pay or claim back costs.

BRP (formerly GBA)

The municipal Personal Records Database (*Basisregistratie Personen*, BRP) contains information on the number and names of residents at each address. The municipality needs this information to implement specific national and local legislation and for other administrative purposes.

Two Notes Verbales providing further information on this subject were sent to embassies, consulates and international organisations in 2013 and 2014: DKP-2013/987 and DKP-2014/324.

The Ministry would like to outline one specific national law regarding the BRP.

Wet op Orgaandonatie (Wod)

Every resident of the Netherlands aged 18 and over whose details are recorded in the municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) will receive a letter and a registration form containing a request to register their wishes in the Donor Register. As from 1 July 2020, newcomers who register in the BRP will also receive a request, after three years, to make their wishes known in the Donor Register. The general principle is that once a person has received two such letters and has not yet indicated whether or not they object to organ donation, that person will automatically be registered as having 'no objection'. Ultimately, the definitive decision regarding a deceased person's wishes with respect to donating his or her organs and tissues will always be taken in consultation with family members.

Specifically in relation to the employees of Diplomatic Missions, this means that if an individual's particulars are registered in the BRP, for instance because they have been issued with a digipass device/DigiD or a parking permit, they too will receive a letter asking them to register their wishes in the Donor Register. The application of the WOD depends on whether or not a person is registered in the BRP.

More information about this new Act of Parliament, can be found in the **Note Verbale DPG Min-BuZa.2019.4599-21** with FAQ's and online at: [donorregister](https://donorregister.nl).

More information on the donation procedure is provided in English, Deutsch, Polski, 中文, Türkçe and العربية as well as Nederlands at: [transplantatiestichting](https://transplantatiestichting.nl)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes to emphasise once again that the above arrangements apply solely to diplomats and employees of international organisations who are registered in the BRP. For diplomats who are registered only in PROBAS, nothing will change and no action needs to be taken.

Protection of privacy

Strict rules on privacy apply to the use and accessibility of data from the PROBAS and the BRP. Individuals have the right to ask their municipality to treat their personal data in the BRP as strictly confidential. However, certain national authorities (as provided by law) may use this data if needed to carry out their official tasks, so full confidentiality cannot be ensured.

3.4 Government identification codes

Citizen service numbers (BSNs)

A citizen service number (*Burger Service Nummer*, BSN) is needed to obtain access to various services in the Netherlands, including:

- 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 also 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.

Privileged persons obtain a 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.

For information on registering for a BSN, please consult:

- 1: [How to register in the BRP of The Hague](#)
- 2: [BRP registration for privileged persons](#)
- 3: [Moving to The Hague from abroad registration](#)

DigiD

The DigiD is a digital personal identity code consisting of a digital key which gives individuals secure online access to various government websites.

Unfortunately, registration through the ePortal alone does not make it possible to obtain a DigiD but a privileged person can apply for one after registering with the BRP. Information about the DigiD and all the organisations that use it can be found on the website [DigiD \(EN\)](#). To be able to apply for DigiD a privileged person must either have Dutch nationality or the nationality of another EEA country.⁴

⁴ <https://www.digid.nl/en/living-abroad/>

3.5 Issuance of official declarations by the Protocol Department

Staff members who for any reason need an official declaration regarding their registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can apply for this through the human resources department of their diplomatic mission or consular post.

4 Identity cards

4.1 General information

Obligation to carry identification

Any resident of the Netherlands 14 years of age (in public transport, an identification requirement applies from the age of 12) or older is obliged by law to carry an identity document at all times and to present it upon request to police officers and other law enforcement authorities.

Privileged persons who are registered through the ePortal can be issued an identity card by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The privileged person's identity card qualifies in the Netherlands as a valid identity document in combination with their national passport or identity card. The Ministry advises staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts to always carry their identity card and to present it upon request to the Dutch authorities. Complaints about improper treatment by the authorities when asked for identification may be lodged with the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or with the regional police force (see [police complaints](#)).

4.2 Applying for an identity card

To obtain an identity card for a privileged person, the person should be registered through the ePortal.

4.3 Purpose of the card

The identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicates that the holder:

- is residing legally in the Netherlands;
- has a specific position and nationality;
- does/does not enjoy privileges and/or immunities;
- in the case of family members (see section 5.1), is or is not permitted to work (possibly on a restricted basis) in the Netherlands;
- can travel freely within the Schengen area if shown in conjunction with a national travel document.

The identity card permits travel to Schengen countries for a period of up to 90 days. It does not permit study or residence in another Schengen country. A list of Schengen countries can be found on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

<https://www.netherlandsandyou.nl/documents/frequently-asked-questions/eu-eea-efta-and-schengen-countries>

In the case of Dutch staff members and staff members with permanent residence in the Netherlands who are entitled to an identity card under the Vienna Conventions, the card indicates (through the addition of the code NL or DV) that the person concerned has functional immunity (see chapter 10, 'Immunity').

The Ministry's identity card is an official document accepted in the Netherlands as proof of identity. All the relevant Dutch authorities (the Royal Military and Border Police (KMar), the Tax and Customs Administration (*Belastingdienst*), the municipalities and the Road Transport Agency (RDW)) are familiar with it. If uncertainty arises about the card's validity, in the Netherlands or abroad, it may be helpful for staff to refer to www.consilium.europa.eu/prado. When crossing the border, a valid travel document is needed.

4.4 Issuance and collection

When the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues an identity card for a newly appointed or already employed privileged staff member at an embassy or consulate or for a member of the staff member's household, the identity card can be collected from the Ministry. In general, the Ministry does not send identity cards through a delivery service or by registered mail to diplomatic missions and consular posts that are located within the postal code area from 2200 up to and including 2599.

Missions and posts can consult the ePortal to find out whether an identity card has been issued and is ready to be collected.

4.5 Types of status

The different types of status that may be indicated on an identity card for staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts are:

For embassies:

- **AD** Head of a diplomatic mission and their family, and highest-ranking staff and their families;
- **BD** Members of the technical and administrative staff and their families;
- **ED** Members of the service staff and their families;
- **PD** Private servants.

For consular posts:

- **AC** Consuls-general, consuls, vice-consuls, consular agents and their families;
- **BC** Members of the technical and administrative staff and their families;
- **EC** Members of the service staff and their families;
- **PC** Private servants.

The following codes may be added to the above:

- **DV** Staff members who are considered to be permanent residents of the Netherlands;
- **NL** Dutch nationals;
- **NP** No privileges.

Private servants (holders of identity cards with PD or PC status) are expected to collect their cards in person from the Protocol Department.

4.6 Lost or stolen cards

The Ministry's identity card remains at all times the property of the State of the Netherlands. Any loss or theft of an identity card is a serious matter.

The mission should therefore immediately apply (through the ePortal) for a new identity card together with either a police report or a declaration by the holder.

If a card is lost or stolen for a second time, the validity of the replacement card will be limited to six months.

4.7 Returning the card

Diplomatic missions and consular posts are responsible for returning the cards of their staff members and of staff members' family members and private servants:

- **within ten working days** of the expiry or the termination of the employment contract between the holder and the diplomatic mission or consular post;
- when a family member ceases to be part of the staff member's household (due to divorce, a child's departure to study abroad, a child's marriage, the death of the family member, etc.)
- when the card has been invalidated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for any reason and the Ministry has requested the diplomatic mission or consular post to return it;
- when a card has been reported lost or stolen but the holder or the diplomatic mission or consular post has regained possession of it, even if a new card has not yet been issued.

The diplomatic mission or consular post will be informed if an identity card has not been returned on time. This may lead to delays in issuing new identity cards.

4.8 Expiry date

The expiry date of the identity card is mentioned on the card. A request for the renewal of an identity card should be sent (through the ePortal) as early as 3 months to 1 month before the expiration date to ensure timely delivery of the new identity card.

5 Partners and family and household members

5.1 Family members forming part of the household

The following persons qualify as members of a staff member's family and as part of the staff member's household:

- the spouse (one only) or registered partner (one only) who is living continuously with the staff member of the mission; unmarried partner can be registered on the condition that proof is given of the existence of a registered partnership or of an official cohabitation agreement made by a notarial deed from the country of origin in or the Netherlands; Children of staff members of embassies, consular missions or international organizations stationed in the Netherlands and forming part of the household upon arrival can be registered and issued an identity card up to and including the age of 24, provided that they:
 1. are unmarried,
 2. are financially dependent on their parent(s),
 3. are not in the possession of a permanent Dutch residence permit,
 4. are not Dutch nationals,
 5. and live continuously in the Netherlands during the posting of their parents.

Children aged 25 up to and including 27 years can only be registered and issued an identity card (renewable yearly) if the Ministry receives proof of registration through Studielink/Mijn DUO, and provided that they full fill the above mentioned stipulations.

- Please note: children studying abroad will not be recognized as forming part of the household. (NV DPG Min-BuZa.2022.13147-85, dated 16-11-2022))

Children are considered to be 'financially dependent' if they do not engage in gainful employment, or if they do engage in gainful employment but do not earn more than the limits set by the Social Insurance Bank (SVB) (for minor children) and the Education Executive Agency (DUO) (for adult children). The specific amounts can be checked via the following links:

- **Sociale Verzekeringsbank (SVB):**
 - [Svb Homepage](#)
 - [SVB child benefit amounts](#)
- **DUO:**
 - [DUO mbo bijverdiene](#)
 - [DUO student finance additional earnings](#)

Gainful employment for children is allowed on the condition that this is explicitly formalised in an agreement, treaty or memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the sending State and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In case of gainful employment the family member should have a health insurance.

- A child that engages in full-time gainful employment, cannot be considered to be financially dependent.

5.2 Parents

In exceptional cases, privileged staff members of diplomatic missions may request the Ministry to register their parents or parents-in-law as family members forming part of their household. The Ministry will only permit the registration of parents or parents-in-law of privileged staff members of diplomatic missions who wish to live with the staff member in the Netherlands if the requirements set out below are met. The Protocol and Host Country Affairs Department of the Ministry must receive a detailed justification, in a Note Verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending State, which includes all of the following:

- a formal proof (a diplomatic registration from the previous posting abroad or an extract from the population register in the sending State) that a parent or parent-in-law was physically and principally living with the staff member as a dependent for a period of at least one year prior to arrival in the Netherlands;
- a statement of recognition as a dependent from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending State;
- a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending State that the parent or parent-in-law will not seek remunerated employment in the Netherlands during the accreditation period.

A parent or parent-in-law can only be registered if the Ministry has given explicit approval prior to arrival. Applications made after a parent or parent-in-law's arrival in the Netherlands will not be taken into consideration. The parent or parent-in-law, once registered, will not enjoy the privileges and immunities normally granted to 'members of the family forming part of the household' under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

With respect to the above, the Ministry does not consider it to be appropriate for diplomatic missions to seek accreditation for parents and parents-in-law who are simply intent on travelling to the Netherlands for the purpose of visiting the staff member. For such cases, the Ministry would refer the diplomatic missions to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) for the entry procedures that apply to regular travellers.

5.3 Unmarried partners

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will issue identity cards to unmarried partners on the condition that proof is given of the existence of a registered partnership or official cohabitation agreement made

by notarial deed, and the registered partnership is recognised by the Netherlands. The status of a recognised partner is equivalent to that of a spouse. A copy of the notarial deed or other proof of registered partnership must be submitted with the application for an identity card.

If the registered partnership is not recognised in the Netherlands, the partner may apply for a three-month visa that allows him or her to travel to the Netherlands on condition that the partner is recognised as such by the diplomatic mission or consular post and that the staff member and partner enter into a registered partnership within 90 days. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending State must submit a Note Verbale to the Dutch mission in the partner's country and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands declaring that the person in question is the staff member's current or future partner. For a specimen Note Verbale see [Annex D](#).

5.4 Children residing in the Netherlands

An identity card may be issued to children up to and including the age of 24, provided that they 1) are unmarried, 2) are financially dependent on their parent(s) and 3) form part of the staff member's household (see NV Min-BuZa.2022.13417-85, dated 16-11-2022).

5.5 Children studying abroad

Children of staff members of diplomatic missions or consular posts stationed in the Netherlands are **not** issued with an identity card from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs if they are not themselves permanently resident in the Netherlands. If these children are nationals of an EU member state or of a country whose citizens are exempt from the visa requirement, they are free to visit their parents in the Netherlands without a visa.

To facilitate visits to their parents by children from countries whose citizens require a visa to enter the Netherlands, a **multiple entry** visa with a maximum validity of **five years** will be issued **free of charge**, under the following conditions:

- the child is between the ages of 18 and 24 (validity of the visa may not exceed maximum age);
- the child is studying in a non-Schengen country and is a national of a non-Schengen country.

The visa's period of validity will depend on the child's age, the remaining validity period of the child's passport and the remaining validity period of the parent's Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card.

Students must apply for a visa at a Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post in their country of origin or of habitual residence.

Summer pass

A temporary identity card ('summer pass') may be issued to children of staff members of diplomatic missions or consular posts based in the Netherlands when the children wish to reside in the Netherlands during their summer holidays from a school or university abroad. This summer pass is valid for a maximum of four months. The Ministry will review applications for summer passes before granting them to ensure that the application meets certain conditions.

As part of the application the Ministry will require:

- proof of enrolment in a school or university abroad;
- proof of the duration of the summer holidays at the school or university abroad.

Prior on arrival and approval the diplomatic mission or consular post should send these documents to the Ministry (DPG-Service@minbuza.nl) for review.

Besides the required personal information, the pass will indicate the start and end dates of the student's stay in the Netherlands. After the end date this temporary identity card is no longer valid, and the student must therefore leave the Netherlands and return the card to the Ministry.

The possibility of obtaining this summer pass is an additional privilege, not a right. Abuse of this privilege may lead to its revocation for the entire mission or post.

5.6 Work permits for household members

Persons forming part of the household (see section 5.1) staff of diplomatic missions or consular posts may not engage in gainful employment in the Netherlands and retain their diplomatic status. There are, however, a number of exceptions to this rule:

- Under EU legislation, if the person concerned is a national of one of the countries of the European Union or the European Economic Area (EEA) or is married to an EU national, it is possible for them to work. In such cases, they may retain their diplomatic status. The diplomatic mission or consular post should inform the Ministry of the person's intention to work, following which the Ministry will issue a declaration of no objection (*verklaring van geen bezwaar*).
- Moreover, the Netherlands has concluded agreements or MoUs with many countries, enabling family members of staff of diplomatic missions or consular posts to engage in gainful employment (see [Annex E](#)).

The following may appear on the back of the identity card of the person in question: *'arbeid is toegestaan/arbeid is beperkt toegestaan/arbeid is in het kader van MoU toegestaan/arbeid is in het kader van MoU onder strikte voorwaarden toegestaan/arbeid is in het kader van een Verdrag toegestaan'* (employment permitted/employment limited permitted//employment permitted under MoU/employment permitted under MoU with strict guidelines/employment under Treaty permitted).

6 Dutch or third-state nationality and permanent residence

6.1 General information

When a diplomatic mission or consular post registers a staff member at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry assesses whether the staff member was either a Dutch national or a permanent resident at the time of posting.

Under articles 37 and 38 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, those who are permanent residents (under the Aliens Act 2000) or have Dutch nationality are not entitled to the same privileges and immunities as other diplomatic, technical or administrative staff members. Persons who were permanent residents when they were posted to a mission are given the annotation '/DV' on their identity card, in addition to the regular code on the card (for example: 'BO/DV', 'AO/DV').

Persons who hold Dutch nationality at the time of posting receive the annotation '/NL' on their ID card, in addition to the regular code on the card (for example: 'BO/NL', 'AO/NL').

6.2 Diplomatic staff who are not nationals of the sending State

Diplomatic agents must, in principle, have the nationality of the sending State (under article 8 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations). A sending State that intends to post a diplomatic agent who is a national of the Netherlands or of a third State should make a written request for the Ministry's consent. The Ministry's express and prior written consent is a precondition for any such appointment. The Ministry's consent may be withdrawn at any time.

7 Private servants

7.1 General information

This chapter outlines the Dutch policy on private servants of staff members of diplomatic missions and consular posts. Private servants are individuals in the service of persons who have been granted the privileges and immunities of diplomatic staff with AD status.

7.2 Employing private servants

Scope for employing private servants

Staff members of diplomatic missions who are not Dutch nationals or permanent residents and who have been accorded the same privileges and immunities as **heads of mission** on the basis of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations are permitted to employ a maximum of **three private servants**.

Staff members of diplomatic missions who are not Dutch nationals or permanent residents and who have been accorded the same privileges and immunities as **diplomatic agents** (AD status) on the basis of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations may employ **one private servant**. No other staff members of diplomatic missions are allowed to employ a private servant.

Staff members of consular posts who are not Dutch nationals or permanent residents and who have been accorded the same privileges and immunities as **consular agents** (AC status) on the basis of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations may employ **one private servant**. No other staff members of consular posts are allowed to employ a private servant.

No family member or relative by blood or marriage up to the fourth degree of kinship as defined in Dutch law (that is, no parent, child, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandparent, grandchild, great-grandparent, great-grandchild, great-great-grandparent, great-great-grandchild, great-aunt, great-uncle, great-niece, great-nephew or first cousin) of a staff member or of a staff member's spouse may be employed as a private servant.

A private servant is not allowed to be accompanied by family members.

Privileged persons who submit a request for a private servant must ensure that the above-mentioned conditions are satisfied for the entire duration of the private servant's stay in the Netherlands and that the private servant leaves the Schengen area once their contract has ended.

In cases where irregularities arise in this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will withhold approval of any new requests for private servants by the privileged person or the latter's successor.

Work permit for private servants

Employers of private servants are exempt from the requirement to obtain a work permit for their private servant(s).

Private servants may not be employed by a person other than the one whose name is stated in the employment contract. This restriction is indicated on the back of the servant's identity card.

Tax status of private servants

Private servants are exempt from taxes on their earnings from employment, provided that they are neither Dutch nationals nor permanent residents in the Netherlands.

Social security status of private servants

Private servants are exempt from the obligation to pay social insurance contributions, provided that they are covered by the social security regulations of their home country or of a third country.

Their coverage must be established by means of a declaration drawn up by the authorities of the country where the private servant is insured. The social security system must be a legally enacted national system. Social security systems involving private companies are not accepted as a legitimate alternative. An employer who employs a private servant who is not covered by the social security system of their home country or a third country must comply with the obligations which Dutch social security provisions impose on employers, and must register as an employer with the Tax and Customs Administration, see: [Melding Loonheffingen Werkgever van personeel aan huis](#) or [belastingdienst themaoverstijgend](#)

7.3 Admission of private servants

Before private servants from a country whose nationals require a visa for the Netherlands may enter the country, they must apply for a visa at a Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post in their country of origin or of habitual residence. If there is no Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post in their country of origin or of habitual residence, their employers are requested to send an email to the Short Stay Visa Service of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), which falls under the Ministry of Justice and Security (email address: visa.posten@ind.nl). The Short Stay Visa Service provides advice on visa issues on a case-by-case basis.

Please bear in mind that processing a visa application can take up to four weeks, as it is sometimes necessary to consult one or more of the other Schengen countries.

Before the visa application is submitted to the Dutch diplomatic mission or consular post, the mission must report the private servant's appointment to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by means of a Note Verbale. The Note Verbale should include the following details:

- the personal details (name, date and place of birth and nationality) of the private servant;
- their passport number and passport expiration date;
- the employer's name and the position the employer holds at the diplomatic mission or consular post;

- a copy of the servant's full-time employment contract;
- a declaration in which the employer guarantees to take full responsibility for the servant and pay all costs that may arise during the period in which the private servant resides in the Netherlands, plus any repatriation costs;
- if the private servant is covered by the social security regulations of their own country or of a third country, a statement to this effect by the authorities of their own country or of the third country;
- in cases where the private servant is **not** covered by the social security regulations of their home country or a third country: evidence that the employer is registered with the tax authorities in the Netherlands as the servant's employer;
- the starting date and duration of the servant's employment contract;
- * private servants of persons who are themselves employed by a member of a diplomatic mission do not benefit under the permit free arrangements and therefore require work permits and have to follow Dutch regulations (see section 7.6).

Without this Note Verbale, the visa application will not be considered.

The Protocol Department will determine whether the servant and the employer have complied with the conditions and notify the Short Stay Visa Service of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), which falls under the Ministry of Justice and Security.

7.4 Registration of private servants

The diplomatic mission or consular post for which the employer works must register the private servant with the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within **ten working days** of the servant's arrival in the Netherlands through the ePortal.

7.5 Identity card for private servants

The validity of a private servant's identity card is linked to the validity of the employer's identity card. The card will initially be issued twice for six months and afterwards for a maximum period of one year, unless the contract with the employer has a shorter duration. The identity card issued to private servants bears the code PD (if the employer is a diplomatic agent) or PC (if the employer is a consular agent).

Private servants are expected to collect their cards (with a valid ID) in person from the Ministry's Protocol Department, located at Rijnstraat 8, 2515 XP The Hague, after receiving notification that it is ready for collection.

7.6 Mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation

It is imperative that the terms and conditions of employment comply with the mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation. The employer and employee may opt for the applicability of a foreign legal system as the basis of an employment contract, but even then the contract should contain the mandatory provisions of Dutch legislation.

Mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation include the following:

- employees must earn at least the minimum wage and must receive 8% holiday pay, in accordance with Dutch legislation (for the latest update on the minimum wage, please consult the website of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment at [amount minimum wage](#));
- no employment contract may be terminated while the employee is sick or pregnant;
- salaries must be paid in a timely manner;
- different treatment of employees is not permitted; treatment must be on an equal basis, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, religion or political beliefs;
- employees must be given paid leave (a minimum of 20 working days' leave per year).

These mandatory provisions should always be respected by both the employer and the employee: provisions to this effect should be included in the employment contract. The website of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment provides information on employment in the Netherlands (in Dutch) at [guidelines](#). These guidelines have also been communicated through Note Verbale DPG 2018/189.

7.7 Mandatory bank account

As of 1 June 2015, employers are obliged to pay a private servant's salary into a Dutch bank account (or a bank account in another EU country) held by the private servant. Newly registered private servants must produce proof of existence of a personal bank account within 90 days of their registration with the Ministry. The agreed salary must be paid into this account by the employer on a monthly basis. Cash payment of salaries is not permitted. The Ministry reserves the right to request private servants to provide bank statements for verification purposes.

7.8 Health insurance for private servants

Private servants registered in the Dutch social insurance system must take out standard health insurance. Private servants not registered in the Dutch social insurance system cannot be insured under the national medical insurance scheme (*ziekttekostenverzekering*) but must take out an expatriate health insurance policy.

If an insurer requires proof of registration in the Netherlands before issuing the policy, the Ministry can send a copy of the identity card. If a private servant collects the identity card from the Ministry, the card will only be issued after a copy of the insurance policy has been submitted.

Employers can register private servants who fall under the Dutch social security system, with the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration through the following link: [Melding Loonheffingen](#)

The completed form should be sent to the server mailbox: Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl, instead of the address mentioned on the form.

7.9 Duration of the work contract

A private servant's right to stay in the Netherlands depends on the existence of a valid employment contract with a privileged person as employer. Private servants are not allowed to change jobs in the Netherlands. The servant must leave the Netherlands in the following circumstances:

- when the employment contract comes to an end or is terminated;
- when the employer's posting in the Netherlands ends;
- if the employer ceases to be a staff member of the diplomatic mission or consular post;
- if the employer fails to comply with the conditions subject to which they may employ a private servant.

7.10 Departure of the private servant

Privileged employers, at whose request the private servant has been granted entry to the Netherlands, are responsible for the final departure of their private servants from the Schengen area, except in those cases where the private servant is a national of an EU member state. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expects the employer to:

- ensure that the private servant returns their identity card to the Ministry's Protocol Department;
- ensure to provide the Ministry with proof of the servant's arrangements for travel to a non-Schengen country.

In cases where the employer fails to comply, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will withhold approval of any new requests for private servants.

8 Local employment contracts

8.1 General

The Vienna Conventions distinguish between individuals who are nationals or permanent residents of the receiving State and those who are not. Diplomatic missions and consular posts may choose to employ Dutch nationals or permanent residents of the Netherlands, but they must only recruit people who may legally work and reside in the Netherlands. A mission or a post is expected to inform the Ministry about any recruited of non diplomatic staff.

8.1.1 Permanent residents

Prior to entering the employment of a diplomatic mission or consular post, non-Dutch nationals must be in possession of a valid residence permit entitling them to work and, if necessary, a work permit issued under the Foreign Nationals (Employment) Act (*Wet Arbeid Vreemdelingen*), unless they are an EU citizen.

8.1.2 Staff directly recruited in another EU country

Nationals of another EU member state may also be employed by a diplomatic mission or consular post, if they fall under the provisions on the free movement of labour. For Croatian nationals, a [transitional regime](#) is in effect; for the time being, the full free movement of labour does not apply to them. Staff members may be hired directly from another member state, without a prior stay in the Netherlands. In that case, they enjoy all privileges and immunities associated with their position.

8.1.3 Staff directly recruited in a third country

It is also possible to recruit people directly from a third country. They must be in possession of a valid residence permit that entitles them to work. Moreover, the diplomatic mission or consular post must obtain a work permit from the UWV WERKbedrijf (UWVWb). Please note that persons who hold an authorisation for temporary stay but not a work permit cannot be employed.

8.1.4 Questions regarding legal status

Any questions concerning legal aspects of the residence status of a prospective member of staff should be submitted the Host Nation Division of the Protocol Department (DPG/NG) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to arrival and **before** an employment contract is drawn up.

8.2 Contracts for Dutch nationals or permanent residents

The employer and employee may opt for a foreign legal system to serve as the basis of an employment contract, but even then the mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation must be respected. These mandatory provisions should always be respected by both the employer and the employee and have been communicated to all diplomatic missions and consular posts through Note Verbale DPG 2018/189, dated 20 March 2018.

Mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation include the following:

- employees must earn at least the minimum wage and must receive 8% holiday pay, in accordance with Dutch legislation (for the latest update on the minimum wage, please consult the website of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment at [minimum wage](#));
- no employment contract may be terminated while the employee is sick or pregnant;
- salaries must be paid monthly in a timely manner into a bank account held by the employee;
- different treatment of employees is not permitted; treatment must be on an equal basis, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, religion or political beliefs;
- employees must be given paid leave (a minimum of 20 working days' leave per year).

8.3 Disputes concerning the implementation of employment contracts

If an employee brings a dispute before a Dutch court, the court will first establish whether it has jurisdiction over the dispute. As Dutch courts will not automatically assume the immunity of diplomatic missions and consular posts, the Ministry advises missions and posts to be represented by a lawyer in any court case. If the employer enjoys immunity, it should ensure its presence at any court hearing in order to claim this immunity.

8.4 Income tax and social insurance contributions

Persons employed at an embassy or consulate are exempt from income tax and social insurance contributions unless they are Dutch nationals or permanently resident in the Netherlands. Individuals who have dual citizenship of which one is Dutch will be regarded as Dutch nationals for the purposes of these exemptions.

Family members forming part of the household of persons enjoying such exemptions are not entitled to any exemptions if they are Dutch nationals or permanently resident in the Netherlands.

Employees who are Dutch nationals or permanently resident in the Netherlands are themselves responsible for paying their share of income tax and national social insurance contributions. The diplomatic mission or consular post is not obliged to deduct these at source or remit them to the Tax and Customs Administration. The mission or post is, however, expected to pay the charges

that are customarily paid by employers in the Netherlands consisting of employee social insurance premiums and healthcare contributions.

Each year, employees receive a tax and national social insurance contributions return form from the Tax and Customs Administration. A tax assessment will be issued on the basis of the information the employee provides via this form. Employees are themselves responsible for paying the amount stated in the assessment.

Please note: these employee social insurance contributions and healthcare contributions, an employer is obliged to pay, are not considered to be taxes within the meaning of article 34 of the VCDR.

The Tax and Customs Administration will grant double taxation tax relief on certain income components. This is dependent on the provisions of any conventions that the Netherlands has signed with the sending State to avoid double taxation.

In principle, employees who do not fall under an exemption must pay national social insurance contributions in the Netherlands. However, whether an individual actually has to pay such contributions depends on the social security conventions that are actually in force. Any exemption applies solely to income from employment at a diplomatic mission or consular post. It does not apply to income from employment elsewhere: income tax must be paid on income received from another employer.

For more information about income tax or social insurance contributions please contact Team IFB. by phoning +31 (0)88 152 2546.

9 Social security

9.1 General information

Diplomatic and consular staff

Under article 33 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), article 48 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR) and Dutch legislation, diplomatic agents and consular officials are exempted from the social insurance provisions of Dutch law as far as their work for the sending State is concerned. However, if they perform activities in the Netherlands other than their diplomatic or consular tasks or if they receive Dutch social security benefits, they are subject to the Dutch social security system with respect to those activities.

Administrative, technical and service staff

As a general rule, administrative, technical and service staff posted to the Netherlands are not covered by the Dutch social security system, unless they have worked in the Netherlands for more than 10 years.

Locally engaged staff members of diplomatic missions and consular posts are automatically covered by the Dutch social security system if:

- A. they have Dutch nationality;
- B. they were residents of the Netherlands at the time of recruitment;
- C. they have taken up gainful employment in the Netherlands, other than for their diplomatic mission or consular post; or
- D. they receive any Dutch social security benefits.

Some of the bilateral social security agreements concluded by the Netherlands allow diplomatic staff to opt for the application of the sending State's social security legislation. This choice must be made when the staff member is first posted to the Netherlands or within a specified period of time laid down in the bilateral agreement. It is important for a staff member prior to taking up a posting in the Netherlands to ascertain whether a bilateral social security agreement is in force between the sending State and the Netherlands and whether that agreement provides for the option of applying the sending State's social security legislation.

Staff members who are covered by Dutch social security legislation have to pay social insurance contributions in the Netherlands.

Private servants employed by the head of mission or members of administrative, technical or service staff of the diplomatic mission or consular post may be exempt from social insurance contributions, as laid down in article 13, paragraph 4, of the Access to Social Insurance (Additional Categories of Persons) Decree ([BUB 1999](#)):

- Private servants employed by the head of mission or a member of staff are exempted from national insurance contributions (*volksverzekeringen*) if they have been working in

the Netherlands for under 10 years and if they are covered by the social security legislation of their own country or of a third country, unless:

- A. they have Dutch nationality;
- B. they were residents of the Netherlands at the time of recruitment;
- C. they have taken up gainful employment in the Netherlands, other than for their diplomatic mission or consular post; or
- D. they receive any Dutch social security benefits.

Spouses, partners, children and other family members forming part of the household

The insurance position of spouses, partners, children and other family members who form part of the household is linked to that of the family member who is working in the Netherlands as a diplomatic or consular official or as a member of the administrative, technical or service staff. In other words, if the family member is not covered by the Dutch social security system, neither are their spouse, partner, children or other family members who form part of the household. This does not mean, however, that a person will not be assessed on an individual basis if, for example, a partner or a child of a consular official forming part of their household takes up employment in the Netherlands. In such cases, it is possible for the official not to be covered by the Dutch system while their partner, son or daughter is. Family members forming part of the household of a sending State's diplomatic/consular staff must be covered by the Dutch national insurance system if they engage in gainful employment in the Netherlands or if they receive Dutch social security benefits.

Staff working at the same embassy or consulate after 1 August 1987 and before 1 May 2010

Before 1 May 2010 (the date on which Regulation (EC) no. 883/2004 came into force), all members of the administrative, technical or service staff who worked without interruption at a diplomatic mission or consular post and who were nationals of an EU/EEA country which was also the sending State were entitled to opt for the application of the social security legislation of the sending State, a choice which could be renewed at the end of each calendar year. On 1 May 2010 this possibility ceased to exist. Bilateral conventions that provide for such a choice may still be in force.

For (Dutch) employees recruited locally **before** 1 August 1987, different legislation may apply.

9.2 Healthcare

Under the Health Insurance Act ([Zorgverzekeringswet](#), ZVW), everyone who is compulsorily insured under the [Long Term Care Act](#) (*Wet langdurige zorg*, Wlz) is required to take out health insurance with an insurer of their choice. This insurer will partly implement the Wlz for the person concerned. These family members are therefore required to insure themselves under the Health Insurance Act, even when the sending State's insurance system provides coverage. They may also be entitled to healthcare benefit (a contribution to the cost of their health insurance) if their individual or joint income is under a certain level. Healthcare benefit is paid by the Benefits Office of the Tax and Customs Administration.

In the Netherlands, the following internationally operating private insurance companies are known to offer insurance for diplomats:

- Allianz Care International Health Insurance
- Bupa
- Cigna
- Axa.

9.3 Remittance of contributions by the employer

Once it has been determined that an employee is liable to pay income tax and/or social security contributions in the Netherlands, the following rules apply. Diplomatic missions and consular posts (as employers) are not obliged to deduct Dutch salaries tax and social insurance contributions from their employees' wages, but they must pay the insurance contributions for their employees under the following legislation:

- Work and Income (Capacity for Work) Act (WIA)
 - Income support scheme for individuals registered as fully and permanently incapacitated (IVA)
 - Work resumption (persons partially capable of work) scheme (WGA)
- Invalidity Insurance Act (WAO)
- Unemployment Insurance Act (WW)
- Sickness Benefits Act (ZW)

The employees, in turn, do not have to pay these employee insurance contributions themselves and the employer is not allowed to deduct these amounts from their salaries.

The employees in question are responsible for submitting their own tax returns each year to the Tax and Customs Administration and for paying compulsory Dutch income tax and national insurance contributions (*volksverzekeringen*). They can pay in advance by means of a provisional assessment.

The aforementioned employee insurance contributions are paid by the employer. The contributions and corresponding percentages can differ from year to year due to a change of name or to contributions being merged or split.

Each year the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration publishes the contributions and corresponding percentages in a newsletter after they have been approved by the Dutch parliament.

For further information on the contributions and percentages, the Ministry refers readers to the Tax and Customs Administration's newsletters, since these newsletters are recognised as authoritative. The 2023 newsletter can be consulted via the following link:

https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/themaoverstijgend/brochures_en_publicaties/nieuwsbrief-loonheffingen-2023

More information on salaries tax and social insurance contributions can be found on the following website: [government topics taxation and businesses salaries tax and social insurance](#).

The Employee Insurance Agency (*Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen*, UWV) is responsible for assessing entitlements under the employee insurance schemes and paying out benefits (for more information (in Dutch), see: [UWV](#)).

The Social Insurance Bank (*Sociale Verzekeringsbank*, SVB) is responsible for implementing Dutch social security schemes for more information, see: [SVB](#).

For health insurance, a different system applies. In addition to an income-related contribution, people must register with a health insurance company and pay a basic contribution themselves. Supplementary health insurance packages are available at additional cost. Children must also be registered with a health insurance company. However, if they are younger than 18, no separate contribution has to be paid for them.

Questions regarding the obligations a diplomatic mission or consular post has as an employer towards locally recruited (Dutch) employees under employee benefit schemes or national insurance schemes may be submitted by emailing to DPG@minbuza.nl. The Ministry will forward the questions to the most appropriate authority (UWV, SVB or the Tax and Customs Administration), which will respond to your mission or post directly.

9.4 Social security during and after pregnancy as well as partner benefits

9.4.1. Pregnant employee

In case an employee is subject to the Dutch social security system and if the employee is expecting a baby, she will get pregnancy and maternity leave. Under the Work and Care Act (*Wet arbeid en zorg*; WAZO), she is entitled to pregnancy and maternity benefit during this leave. She is entitled to get pregnancy leave and pregnancy benefit before the baby is born. Maternity leave and maternity benefit will start after the birth. Pregnancy and maternity leave last for a minimum period of 16 weeks in total. In the case of twins or multiple births the total leave will last for a minimum period of 20 weeks. The diplomatic mission as an employer has to apply for both pregnancy and maternity benefits for the employee. See also:

<https://www.uwv.nl/en/employers/pregnancy-and-maternity-benefit>

9.4.2 The application for pregnancy and maternity benefit

The employer has to arrange the benefit no later than two weeks before the pregnancy leave. The diplomatic mission has to apply for the benefit (via the UWV Employers Portal ('Werkgeversportaal')). The diplomatic mission and the employee must decide to who the UWV pays the benefit. UWV usually pays it to the employer, who then pays the salary to the employee.

Source: [UWV and pregnancy](#)

Pregnancy and maternity benefit is equal to 100% of the income at the time the maternity leave started.

Source: [Pregnancy and income](#)

9.4.3 Partner benefits

If the employee is subject to the Dutch social security system and their partner gives birth, the employee has a right to one week fully paid partner leave after the birth of the child. The employer must pay the employee's salary during this leave. Furthermore, partners have the right to maximum 5 weeks unpaid leave in the first 6 months after the birth. Employees who take unpaid birth leave are able to claim benefits from UWV for up to 70% of their salary.

9.4.4 Paid parental leave

Employees with children aged up to 8 are already entitled to 26 weeks of unpaid parental leave. Since 2 August 2022, UWV pays 70% of the salary for a period of maximum nine weeks, if that leave is taken within the first year after the child is born, adopted or taken in as a foster child.

Source: [Nieuwe regeling betaald ouderschapsverlof | UWV | Particulieren](#)

10 Immunity

10.1 Who enjoys diplomatic immunity?

Diplomatic missions

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), the following persons enjoy at least some degree of immunity:

- diplomatic agents and members of their families forming part of their households if they are not nationals of the receiving State, (articles 29 and 37 of the VCDR);
- members of the administrative and technical staff and members of their families forming part of their households if they are not nationals of the receiving State, (article 37 of the VCDR);
- members of the service staff in respect of acts performed in the course of their duties if they are not nationals of the receiving State,(article 37 of the VCDR).

As mentioned, a general exception to this is formed by persons having Dutch nationality or permanent residence status.

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the following are inviolable:

- the mission's premises (article 22 of the VCDR);
- its archives and documents (article 24 of the VCDR);
- its official correspondence (article 27 of the VCDR);
- the diplomatic courier (article 27 of the VCDR);
- the diplomatic bag (article 27 of the VCDR);
- the persons of diplomatic agents, members of the administrative and technical staff of missions, and members of their families forming part of their households (articles 29 and 37 of the VCDR);
- the private residences of diplomatic agents and of members of the administrative and technical staff of missions, their papers, correspondence and property (article 30 of the VCDR);
- diplomatic agents and members of their family passing through the Netherlands provided the agents are travelling to take up a posting or returning from a posting (article 40 of the VCDR).

The diplomatic bag

In accordance with article 27 of the VCDR and article 35 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR), the diplomatic bag is inviolable. It may not be opened or detained. Should there be serious grounds for suspecting that a diplomatic bag contains prohibited items, it may be detained, but will only be opened with the consent of the sending State.

A diplomatic bag may be exempted from X-ray screening when it is:

- 1) identifiable as a diplomatic bag; and

- 2) accompanied at all times, including in the cabin of the aircraft during the flight, by a diplomatic courier, or a diplomatic agent in the possession of an identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Unaccompanied diplomatic bags may be picked up in person by accredited staff members of the diplomatic mission in the Netherlands to which they belong, in which case they will not be scanned. In all other cases, diplomatic bags are subjected to X-ray screening. There is no breach of the inviolability of the diplomatic bag if airlines require scanning as a condition of carriage. The diplomatic bag must be registered in advance by emailing the Schiphol authorities directly via DM_SCC@schiphol.nl.

Consular posts

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR), consular officers and consular employees (both career and honorary officers) enjoy immunity from jurisdiction in respect of acts performed in the exercise of their consular duties. Career officers also enjoy immunity from arrest or pre-trial detention, except in the case of a grave crime and pursuant to a decision given by the competent judicial authority.

However, consular officers may also be arrested or subjected to restrictions on their personal freedom in execution of a final and irrevocable court judgment (article 41 et seq. of the VCCR).

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, the following are inviolable:

- the consular premises (article 31 of the VCCR);
- the consular archives (article 33 of the VCCR);
- the official correspondence of the post (article 35 of the VCCR);
- the consular courier (article 35 of the VCCR);
- consular officers, to a limited extent (article 41 in conjunction with article 43 of the VCCR);
- consular officers who are nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving State only enjoy immunity from jurisdiction and personal inviolability in respect of official acts performed in the exercise of their duties (article 71 of the VCCR).

10.2 State immunity

In the Netherlands, diplomatic missions and consular posts are the representatives of the sending State. They are not legal persons in their own right. It is therefore against the sending State that legal proceedings must be instituted if a dispute arises concerning the actions of a diplomatic mission or consular post. However, not only diplomatic agents and consular officers but also sending States may enjoy immunity.

When does immunity apply?

Under article 22 of the VCCR, a mission's premises are inviolable. This means that the receiving State has a duty to abstain from exercising any sovereign rights, including in respect of any official mission building and the accompanying terrain.

Even if a mission believes it is entitled to immunity, however, it should not assume that the courts will of their own accord examine the question of immunity. The mission concerned must appoint an attorney (*advocaat*) and make clear at the beginning of the proceedings that it is claiming immunity on behalf of its sending State. If the case comes to trial, the question is then whether the Dutch courts are competent to hear the dispute. State immunity is accepted only when the actions concerned arise directly from sovereign acts by the state. If the actions constituted private-law acts, state immunity does not apply.

No measures of constraint, such as attachment, arrest and execution, against property of the state may be taken in connection with a proceeding before a court of another state unless the state has expressly consented to the taking of such measures or has allocated the property for the satisfaction of the claim. This also applies to a mission's bank accounts. A bank account is immune from seizure if it is used or intended for use for the purposes of the diplomatic mission of the state or its consular posts, special missions, missions to the diplomatic missions, or delegations to organs of international organisations or to international conferences.

10.3 Diplomatic agents: immunity from civil jurisdiction

Diplomatic agents enjoy immunity from civil jurisdiction. An exhaustive list of exemptions to this rule can be found in article 31 (1) of the VCDR. Members of a diplomatic agent's household enjoy the same immunity. Administrative, technical and service staff only enjoy immunity for acts carried out in the exercise of their duties. Private servants only have immunities in so far as they are granted by the receiving State. Consular agents have only functional immunities with regard to the exemptions listed in article 45 of the VCCR.

What to do in case of a summons?

A diplomatic mission, consular post, diplomatic agent, consular officer or member of the administrative or technical staff may receive a summons (*dagvaarding*) in a civil case. Under article 29 of the VCDR, the person of a diplomatic agent is inviolable. Process may therefore not be served on diplomats of a sending State by authorities of the receiving State (including judges). Although the provisions of the VCCR are slightly less strict than those of the VCDR, state practice and doctrine support the view that the same conclusion must be drawn for consular officers.

However, the Ministry has no power to prevent such a lawsuit because the Dutch judiciary is independent.

If summoned to appear in a Dutch court of law, the Ministry advises the party in question to engage an attorney. Upon request, the Ministry can provide informal advice on how to deal with these matters.

Bailiffs

A bailiff (*gerechtsdeurwaarder*) is not entitled to serve a summons on a person who enjoys inviolability. If a bailiff arrives at a diplomatic mission or consular post or the house of a diplomatic or consular agent, they should be told to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, summonses may arrive by registered mail and refusal may therefore be difficult.

The Ministry would like to stress that diplomatic mission and consular posts should only accept summonses directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Witnesses

Under article 31.2 of the VCDR, a diplomatic agent is under no obligation to act as a witness.

If a consular officer or member of the administrative or technical staff is summoned to attend judicial or administrative proceedings as a witness, under article 44.1 of the VCCR they may not refuse.

10.4 Immunity from criminal jurisdiction

Under article 31 of the VCDR, members of diplomatic missions and members of their families who form part of their households enjoy immunity from criminal jurisdiction. If there are suspicions that an offence has been committed by a privileged person, the Public Prosecution Service may pursue the case. If immunity is applicable, the Prosecutor's Office could request the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ask for a waiver. It will then ask the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish whether the suspect enjoys such immunity. In the case of serious criminal offences, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or another authority such as the Tax and Customs Administration or the Royal Military and Border Police (KMar) can request that immunity be lifted. The Ministry may also issue a caution, via the head of the mission or directly to the person concerned. In more serious cases, the individual concerned may be asked to leave the country. Ultimately, the person involved may be declared *persona non grata*.

10.5 Privileged persons who come into contact with the police

Staff members who are stopped by or otherwise come into contact with the police in connection with a suspected offence should immediately identify themselves with a valid identity card issued to them by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Showing this card does not relieve the holder of the obligation to show other documents (e.g. driving licence, vehicle registration documents) if requested by the police. The Ministry takes offences seriously and is in close contact with both police and the public prosecutor's services. In case any follow up is requested, the Ministry will contact the embassy.

10.6 Traffic violations

In accordance with Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, it is, without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, the duty of all persons enjoying diplomatic privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving state. The Ministry therefore strongly suggests all staff members of diplomatic missions and International Organisations to respect the traffic laws and regulations of the Netherlands. Compliance with the traffic laws and regulations contributes to everyone's safety. In cases of serious offences, the Public Prosecutor's Office could request the Ministry for further assistance with regard to possible prosecution. In these cases the Ministry will be contacting the diplomatic mission in order to discuss possible steps forward. Additional action might also be the result of a large number of offenses.

Notification letters following traffic violations

Since 1 May 2019 (Note Verbale DPG-2019/185, dated 11 March 2019), privileged persons who possess a vehicle with a special registration plate receive a notification letter when a traffic offence is registered for their vehicle. This notification letter provides information about the offence and informs them about the fine that would have been payable if the offence had been committed in a vehicle without a special registration plate. Subsequently, the person to whom the vehicle is registered is invited to voluntarily pay the amount specified in the letter.

Reminder letters

As of January 2021, persons who have received a notification letter of which the due date has passed will receive up to a maximum of two reminder letters in which they are invited to voluntarily pay the indicated sum. Neither the reminder letters, nor the traffic notification letter, constitute a court order, fine or a demand for payment.⁵

Monitoring

By means of the notification system, all traffic offences are brought to the Ministry's attention. The Ministry closely monitors the number and severity of recorded traffic offences, as well as the amount of outstanding traffic notification letters. If necessary, the Ministry brings the matter to the attention of the diplomatic mission or International Organisation in question. Further diplomatic measures may be taken in the absence of an improvement of driving behavior. These measures could be taken after receiving such a request from the Public Prosecutor's Office.

Registration number liability

The Netherlands applies the principle of 'registration number liability'. This means that the owner of a vehicle is responsible – and therefore liable – for every unlawful act committed with the vehicle. This applies to vehicles registered to an individual and vehicles registered to an organisation. It is therefore not relevant who was driving the vehicle at the time of the recorded incident, unless the vehicle and the individual are stopped by the police at the scene.

⁵ The statutory rules were published in the Government Gazette no. 51 on 15 February 2019 and are available at <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stb-2019-51.pdf>.

Important traffic regulations

The Ministry would like to draw the attention to the fact that the daytime speed limit on motorways has been cut to 100 km/h between 6 am and 7 pm. The speed limit does not apply between 7 pm and 6 am. During these hours, the speed limit remains 100 km/h, 120 km/h or 130 km/h, as indicated on the traffic signs.

The Ministry wishes to remind all Diplomatic Missions that, in line with Article 61a of the traffic rules and traffic signs regulations, the use of a mobile device while driving is illegal. This includes any mobile electronic device that can be used for communication or information processing, such as a mobile phone, a tablet or a computer. The enforcement of this traffic rule by the competent Dutch authorities has been expanded by using special cameras with which it is automatically recorded if the driver is using a mobile device.

For the benefit of traffic safety the Ministry has enclosed a factsheet with a list of FAQs (see [Annex K](#)) about some of the most important traffic regulations. This list is not complete; it contains only a number of the most important rules and regulations. Additional information and a summary of the Dutch traffic rules can be found at: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0004825>

If the authorities are unaware that a person with immunity is involved

Sometimes the police and the Public Prosecution Service are not aware that the offender is a person who enjoys immunity. This is particularly likely to be the case with traffic offences, especially if the offence was committed with a vehicle without a CD, GN or BN registration plate. The offender's address may not always indicate that they enjoy immunity either. In such cases, a summons (*dagvaarding*) may be issued in the routine manner and sent by post.

If the person concerned takes no action

If the person to whom a summons is addressed takes no action and fails to appear in court, either in person or represented by a lawyer, they are liable to be convicted and sentenced in absentia, in which case the judgment will be sent to the privileged person by post. If an offender convicted in this manner still fails to respond, their personal particulars will be entered on the list of wanted persons, which is widely distributed to police forces, including border control personnel. This may lead to the offender being detained by the police, and, unless the offender can produce satisfactory evidence of identity and immunity, may lead to the risk of arrest.

The Ministry urges diplomatic missions and consular posts to instruct their staff members to take the necessary action if they receive a summons, especially if they receive a notice of conviction. The diplomatic missions and consular posts concerned should forward the documents received to the Ministry without delay, accompanied by a Note Verbale, so that the Ministry can inform the Public Prosecution Service.

10.7 Consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines

Under international law, privileged persons have a duty to respect Dutch traffic laws, despite their privileges and immunities. Although the vast majority of them do so, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wishes – given the potentially serious consequences – to clarify the relationship between driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medications and the immunities that apply.

Police traffic checks – Flagging down vehicles and the breathalyser test

The police have the right to flag down a person with diplomatic immunity and ask for identification. Persons with immunity must show the police the identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, if asked to do so, hand it over for verification. The card must be returned to the privileged person once the police have verified their identity.

The police may decide, based on their observations, whether there are reasonable grounds for assuming that a privileged person is driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medicines. They may request the privileged person to submit voluntarily to a breathalyser test. (The breathalyser test shows whether a motorist has exceeded the statutory limit – currently a blood alcohol level of 0.05% or 220 micrograms per litre of exhaled air.)

Arrest, breath tests, blood tests and urine tests

A privileged person who enjoys immunity from criminal jurisdiction may not be arrested or compelled by the police to take a breath, blood or urine test. However, the Ministry would request privileged persons to respect Dutch law and to cooperate with the competent national authorities in the interest of road safety.

Driving under influence, causing damage or injury

If a privileged person has caused serious injury to a third party while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medicines, the Dutch authorities may, if necessary, request the sending State to waive the immunity of a privileged person so that criminal proceedings can be instituted and any sentence passed can be enforced. Failing such cooperation, the sending State may be requested to recall the person concerned.

Driving bans and the confiscation of car keys

If the police have reasonable grounds to assume that a person with diplomatic immunity is unfit to drive due to the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medicines, they may take steps to ensure that the driver does not endanger themselves or others. In such cases, in accordance with international practice, the police may temporarily confiscate a driver's car keys and will help the driver to organise alternative transport. In addition, the police may decide to have the car taken to a safe location in the interests of public safety and to protect the car. The police may not confiscate the Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card, passport or driving licence of a privileged person who has immunity.

The police will draw up an official report if they discover that a person with immunity has been driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines. They will also notify the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after which appropriate measures could be taken. This could include a request to waive immunity in order to allow the Prosecutor's Office to proceed. In case such a waiver is being denied, the Ministry could take appropriate measures; this could entail a first warning or, in case of a second or serious offence, the request to leave the country.

11 Fiscal privileges

11.1 General information

Members of diplomatic missions and consular posts may enjoy certain fiscal privileges. These privileges are granted in the interests of the diplomatic missions or consular posts, so that they can function efficiently, and not for the personal benefit of their staff. For an overview of all tax exemptions please refer to [Annex H](#).

Staff members with Dutch nationality or permanent residents do not enjoy the tax exemptions mentioned in the other sections of this chapter.

The Tax and Customs Administration (*Belastingdienst*) has a special desk for international organisations, diplomatic missions and consular posts: Team IFB (*Team Internationale Fiscale Behandeling*).

Team IFB can be contacted by post (Postbus 30509, 2500 GM The Hague) or by email. For questions about income tax, email Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl. For questions about VAT and excise duties, email IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl. The address for visitors is: Prinses Beatrixlaan 512, 2595 BL The Hague.

The Ministry of Finance (Ministerie van Financiën) can be contacted as follows:

Postbus 20201, 2500 EE The Hague

Tel. +31 (0)70 342 8000

Website: <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-finance>

11.2 Income tax

Under article 34 of the VCDR⁶ and article 39 of the VCCR⁷, staff of diplomatic missions and consular officers are exempt from Dutch income tax in relation to earnings from their diplomatic or consular duties. This means that they will be treated as non-resident taxpayers. They will only be taxed on income not related to their official activities in the Netherlands.

11.3 Conditions for exemption

There are two packages of fiscal privileges (A and B) which the Netherlands accords to diplomatic missions and consular posts. The difference between these packages concerns the exemption from import duties, VAT, and the quota with regard to tax-free items.

Package B covers exemptions under the Vienna Conventions and provides only for limited exemptions on goods for the personal use of members of diplomatic missions and consular posts.

⁶ Artikel 34 Uitvoeringsregeling Algemene wet inzake rijksbelastingen 1964

⁷ Article 39 State Taxes Act Implementation Order 1994

Package A, which is granted on the basis of reciprocity only, has the same exemptions as package B, as well as additional privileges, such as exemption from VAT and increased quotas for personal use (see [Annex F](#) for further details). In addition, there are quotas for alcoholic beverages and fuel for tax-exempted motor vehicles, as indicated in [Annex G](#). These are annual quotas, unless otherwise stipulated. An overview of other tax exemptions accompanying packages A and B can be found in [Annex H](#).

11.4 Value added tax

11.4.1 Conditions and exemption by way of refund

Diplomatic missions and consular posts that fall under package A

Diplomatic missions and consular posts that fall under package A will be exempt from VAT paid on the supply of goods (except tobacco) and services intended for their official use. The exemption from VAT only applies to invoices higher than €225 excluding VAT. If separate goods or services amount to more than €225 (excl. VAT) on the same invoice, this invoice may be approved for a VAT refund. When buying on account, the invoice may cover purchases from the same supplier within one calendar quarter. No exemption will be granted if purchases made by different persons, diplomatic missions or consular posts have been added together on the same invoice.

Diplomatic missions and consular posts that fall under package B and consular posts headed by an honorary consular officer

Exemption from VAT may be obtained for:

- the supply of movable property and provision of services for the purpose of renovating, restoring and maintaining (excluding cleaning) official buildings, except for the residence of the honorary consul;
- the renting of immovable property intended for official use;
- the supply to a diplomatic mission or a consular post headed by a career consular officer of gas, water, electricity and domestic fuel intended for official use, including use by the head of the mission;
- the provision of security, cleaning and telecommunication services for the benefit of the official functions of a diplomatic mission or a consular post headed by a career consular officer, including the protection of members of the mission or post.

The exemption from VAT (*omzetbelasting*/BTW) enjoyed by honorary consular posts is limited to the following transactions:

- the purchase of immovable property, and associated rights *in rem*, intended for the post's official use, including immovable property and associated rights *in rem* intended for accommodating the post's staff, with the exception of honorary consuls;
- the purchase of goods and services intended for the construction, renovation, repair and maintenance, not including cleaning, of the post's official buildings, with the exception of the honorary consul's home;
- the letting to the post of immovable property intended for official use.

Staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts that fall under package A

Movable property intended for personal use (other than motor vehicles, food and (alcoholic) beverages) may be exempted from VAT. The exemption from VAT only applies to invoices higher than € 225 excluding VAT. If separate goods or services amount to more than € 225 (excl. VAT) on the same invoice, this invoice may be approved for a VAT refund. When buying on account, the invoice may cover purchases from the same supplier within one calendar quarter. No exemption will be granted if purchases made by different persons, diplomatic missions or consular posts have been added together on the same invoice.

The exemption does not apply to goods supplied by hotels, restaurants, cafés, catering organisations and related bodies. Furthermore, immovable property and services (*BTW voor diensten*) are excluded from the exemption. Exemption from VAT is not granted in respect of goods which are used for business purposes, or which are sold, given away, hired out or in any other way put at the disposal of third parties by the person concerned.

Procedure

The following procedure applies to diplomatic missions and consular posts eligible for exemptions from VAT on the purchase of goods and services intended for official use and the purchase of goods (except foodstuffs or beverages) intended for personal use by their staff members.

As a rule, exemption from VAT takes the form of a refund of tax paid following the submission of an application for a refund.

One application should be submitted each quarter. The refund will only be granted if the goods or services in question are recorded using form OB 100, and if the application also **includes proof of payment and dated invoices** which clearly state:

- the date on which the transaction subject to VAT took place;
- the name and address of the business that supplied the goods or service;
- the name and address of the person to whom the goods or service were supplied;
- a clear description of the goods or service;
- the quantity of the goods supplied;
- the amount paid;
- the amount of tax due on the supply of goods or services.

Proof of payment is a copy of a bank statement showing the bank account number, the name of the account holder and the payment. Transaction overviews will not be accepted as a proof of payment because they do not meet the necessary requirements.

Receipts are not generally considered invoices because they do not meet the requirements set out above. A receipt may be accepted instead of an invoice, however, if the goods are clearly described and a copy of a bank statement is attached showing the bank account number, the name of the account holder and the payment.

The invoice amount must be at least €225 excluding VAT in order to qualify for a refund. Applications for refunds by diplomatic missions and consular posts must be signed by or on behalf of the head of mission. Applications for refunds by administrative, technical or service staff members must be signed both by the applicant and by or on behalf of the head of mission. Applications for refunds by diplomatic staff and consular officers must be signed by the applicant.

Questions about customs rules and VAT refunds, refunds of excise duties and related taxes on engine fuel can be addressed to Team IFB by sending an email to IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl.

11.4.2 Advance exemption

Subject to certain conditions, exemption from VAT on goods and services may also be granted in advance to diplomatic missions and consular posts for large purchases. The amount invoiced must be at least €35,000. Advance exemption from VAT can be requested by submitting a certificate.

Certificate

The certificate is the 'VAT and/or Excise Duty Exemption Certificate' (article 151 of Directive 2006/112/EC and article 13 of Directive 2008/118/EC). The certificate may be in either Dutch or English. A separate certificate is needed for each purchase. The certificate can be obtained from Team IFB. The diplomatic mission or consular post must submit a written request to Team IFB in advance, together with the following:

- a) the completed certificate; and
- b) the order form, invoice and draft contract, together with information proving that the total amount of the taxable supply of goods or services is at least € 35,000 (excluding VAT).

If the application is approved, the certificate will be stamped by Team IFB. The completed and stamped certificate must be submitted to the supplier (before the transaction takes place), who should keep it in its records as proof that no VAT needs to be charged. The supplier may then provide the goods or services free of VAT, applying a 0% VAT rate on the invoice. The certificate can also facilitate exemption from VAT on purchases in other EU member states.

If you have any questions or wish to request any of the relevant forms please contact Team IFB by sending an email to IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl.

11.4.3 Purchasing outside the Netherlands but within the EU

For transactions in other EU member states, a certificate is needed for each transaction in the other EU member state in order to prove to the supplier and to the tax authorities of the state in

question that entitlement to exemption from VAT exists. The tax authorities of the EU member state in which the supplier is located decide whether a diplomatic mission or consular post is eligible for a tax exemption or a tax refund in that member state. Certificates for VAT exemption can be obtained from Team IFB.

11.5 Importing goods into the Netherlands

Subject to certain conditions, those eligible for this tax exemption may import goods originating from outside the EU duty-free.

Procedures for the import of goods vary according to whether the goods are to be imported for personal or official use and whether the goods originate from within or outside the EU.

11.5.1 Import of household effects (for personal use)

When moving to the Netherlands from a non-EU country, personal household goods are eligible for import without paying import duties. Exemption is granted in advance by Team IFB through the D39 form. In order to be eligible for the tax exemptions on importing personal goods, **all** the following conditions must be met:

- you are moving from a country outside the European Union to the Netherlands and will be living in the Netherlands or another EU country;
- you are thus moving from your original place of residence to the European Union;
- you have lived outside the European Union for at least 12 consecutive months immediately preceding your relocation;
- you have owned and used the goods for at least six months prior to moving to the Netherlands;
- you have used the goods and will be using them again;
- you are importing the goods **within 12 months** of taking up employment in the Netherlands or another EU country;
- you will not loan, pledge, sell, lease out or transfer the goods within 12 months of the date on which they were imported.

Please note that the following goods are **not** considered part of household effects and are therefore not eligible for exemption:

- alcoholic beverages or any other item that contains alcohol;
- tobacco and any other item that contains tobacco;
- company vehicles;
- non-portable materials for professional use.

In order to be exempted from paying import duties on household effects, all conditions set by the tax authorities must be met.

The website of the Tax and Customs Administration may be consulted in order to obtain further information on this matter (please refer to the general information on [Moving to the Netherlands](#)). For more specific information, you may also contact Team IFB by emailing IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl.

11.5.2 Taxes and duties on imported goods originating outside the EU

The procedure

Subject to certain conditions (i.e. official use or personal use by eligible personnel) and restrictions (i.e. quotas), those eligible for this tax exemption may import goods (including alcohol) originating from outside the EU duty-free by using the Douane 39 (D39) form.

The relevant conditions will apply to both tax-exempt imports and tax-exempt purchases at a tax warehouse (*accijnsgoederenplaats*, AGP). To calculate the quotas, both imports and AGP purchases will be totalled. Please contact Team IFB for the relevant form.

The **application must be made by the head of the diplomatic mission** or consular post or their authorised representative. Their name and signature must be recorded at the Protocol Department in advance. They must complete and sign the forms and forward them to Team IFB. Team IFB will retain the office copy and, after endorsement, return the other copies to the applicant.

As a certified/approved D39 form is **only valid for 14 days**, the goods must reach their destination within this period. Upon arrival of the goods, the recipient must acknowledge receipt using the back of the customs copy of the D39 form. The form must then be signed as approved by or on behalf of the head of the diplomatic mission or consular post.

NB: Team IFB will only process a new application if the applicant has returned the previous copy. Exempt goods may not be loaned, pledged, hired out, transferred or used in a manner or for purposes not covered by the exemption.

Any application submitted by a diplomatic mission or consular post which does not meet the stipulated conditions and requirements cannot be processed by Team IFB. Please contact Team IFB to request the relevant forms.

For questions concerning form D39 and tax-free importation of goods, please contact Team IFB by emailing IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl.

11.6 Transfer tax on immovable property

Exemption from transfer tax (*overdrachtsbelasting*) can be granted in respect of the acquisition of immovable property situated in the Netherlands by a foreign state.

If the immovable property is intended to accommodate the diplomatic mission or consular post of that foreign state or its staff members (with the exception of honorary consular officers), the exemption is granted in respect of rights *in rem* to such property. These include apartment rights and leasehold rights.

Exemptions can only be obtained through the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by sending a Note Verbale and submitting a deed of conveyance. Diplomatic missions and consular posts that approach Team IFB directly to request exemption from transfer tax are redirected to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

If the application for exemption is received at least six weeks before the date of the property's transfer, the Ministry of Finance can give the notary concerned permission to apply the zero rate. Otherwise, the exemption will be granted in the form of a refund.

In some cases, VAT, rather than transfer tax, is payable on the purchase of official immovable property. Here too, advance exemption may be obtained if a request is submitted to the Protocol Department at least six weeks in advance. Otherwise, the exemption will be granted in the form of a refund.

11.7 Motor vehicles

11.7.1 Motor vehicle tax (MRB)

Motor vehicles intended for official use by the diplomatic mission or consular post (i.e. official cars) are exempt from MRB (*motorrijtuigenbelasting*).

Staff of a diplomatic mission or consular post may be exempted from motor vehicle tax on vehicles intended for personal use (including use by their dependants). Exemption from motor vehicle tax is granted on the condition that the vehicles concerned have been issued with special registration plates (bearing the codes CD, BN or GN); see chapter 12 ('Cars'). Administrative, technical and service staff are exempt from motor vehicle tax for 10 years, starting from when they first began working for the organisation in the Netherlands. This 10-year limit does not apply to higher ranking staff with AD status.

11.7.2 Car and motorcycle tax (BPM)

Exemption from BPM (*belasting op personenauto's en motorrijwielen*) is granted in respect of motor vehicles intended for official use by the diplomatic mission or consular post (i.e. official cars). These vehicles need to be bought, paid for and thus owned by the mission or post. Exemption from BPM, VAT and, if applicable, customs duties, is granted on the condition that the vehicle has CD/BN/GN registration plates and on the basis of reciprocity.

Members of a diplomatic mission or consular post may be exempted from BPM, VAT and, if applicable, customs duties on one or two vehicles intended for personal use. Administrative, technical and service staff are exempt from BPM, VAT and, if applicable, customs duties, for 10 years, starting from when they first began working for the organisation in the Netherlands. This 10-year limit does not apply to higher ranking staff with AD status.

For both official and personal use, the exemption from BPM, VAT and, if applicable, customs duties, ends when the vehicle is sold, leased, hired out, pledged or transferred free of charge or in return for payment. Using the vehicle or causing it to be used in a manner or for purposes not covered by the exemption is prohibited.

Please note that taxes already paid in connection with ordinary Dutch registration plates will not be refunded. The exemption from taxes on the purchase of motor vehicles is always granted in advance with a D39 form. No refund of paid taxes is granted after the purchase has taken place. Taxes paid on the purchase of second-hand motor vehicles are also not eligible for refund.

11.7.3 Excise duties on motor vehicle fuel

Exemption from excise duties on motor vehicle fuel is granted in respect of motor vehicles intended for official use by the diplomatic mission or consular post (i.e. official cars), and for personal use by eligible staff. This exemption is granted only for motor vehicles with special registration plates on the basis of reciprocity. Administrative, technical and service staff are exempt from excise duties for 10 years, starting from when they first began working for the organisation in the Netherlands. This 10-year limit does not apply to higher ranking staff with AD status.

11.8 Energy tax

If exemption from VAT is granted for the supply of natural gas or electricity intended for official use by a diplomatic mission or consular post, exemption from energy tax is also granted. If the mission or post is responsible for staff accommodation and the associated costs, these costs will also be considered to be costs relating to official use. The exemption can be granted directly through the VAT and/or Excise Duty Exemption Certificate Directive 2006/112/EC. A filled in certificate must be sent to Team IFB. Team IFB will certify the certificate and return it to the diplomatic mission. In order to receive the direct exemption, diplomatic missions must provide its supplier with the

certified certificate. Instead of being directly exempted beforehand, diplomatic missions also have the option to request a refund of tax already paid. A request thereto can be submitted together with the request for the VAT refund using the OB 100 form.

This request must be submitted to Team IFB within 13 weeks of dispatch of the final invoice by the energy company. The refund application should be combined with the application for a VAT refund in respect of the energy company's final invoice.

Diplomatic missions and consular posts are also exempt from the renewable energy surcharge (a supplementary levy on the energy tax, ODE) which is included in the energy company's invoice. It will be exempted on the basis of the application mentioned above.

11.9 Municipal taxes⁸

In the Netherlands, there are two types of 'municipal taxes': taxes on the one hand and charges for services rendered on the other. Diplomatic missions and consular posts and their staff members are entitled to exemption from certain municipal taxes, depending on their status. This does not include exemption from charges for services rendered (see next paragraphs).

11.9.1 Taxes

Exemption is granted only from municipal taxes relating to the official activities of the mission or post and personal use by staff members including their dependants. The term 'official activities' includes providing accommodation for staff. Only staff who are neither nationals nor considered to be permanent residents of the Netherlands are eligible for exemption. In granting exemptions, account may be taken of reciprocity.

Exemptions can be granted from payment of the following municipal taxes:

- property tax on property owned by the mission or post and the head of mission or head of post (*onroerende-zaakbelasting, OZB*);
- municipal tax on second homes (*forensenbelasting*);
- dog licences (*hondenbelasting*);
- tax for installations on public land or water (*precariobelasting*).

If faced with an invoice for municipal taxes despite an exemption, an objection can be lodged at the municipality within six weeks of the date of the assessment. **The Municipality can also be contacted for any other questions about these taxes. Municipal taxes do not fall under Team IFB's remit.**

⁸ See [Annex H](#)

11.9.2 Charges for services rendered

It should be noted that no exemptions are granted on charges levied for specific services rendered. No exemption is therefore granted in respect of: administrative charges (*leges*), water treatment charges (*zuiveringsheffing*, see paragraph below), betterment levy (*baatbelasting*), sewerage charges (*rioolheffing*), waste disposal charges (*afvalstoffenheffing*) and waste collection charges (*reinigingsrechten*). An example of a betterment levy is a charge for the construction of a new sewerage system to which the property in question is connected. This is a municipal charge for a specific service rendered.

Water authority charges

These charges consist of:

- Water authority charges paid by the owner of the premises (*watersysteemheffing eigenaar*): exemption is only granted to diplomatic missions and consular posts and the head of mission or head of post, unless the property is a second home.
- Water authority charges paid by the occupier (resident) (*watersysteemheffing ingezetenen*): exemption is granted to diplomatic missions and consular posts as well as to the head of mission or head of post, the diplomatic agents, consular officers, and administrative and technical staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts, unless they are permanently resident in the Netherlands or have Dutch nationality.
- Water treatment charges, wastewater (*zuiveringsheffing*): the water authority tax for the treatment of wastewater (*zuiveringsheffing*) has to be paid by everyone residing in a particular district. Despite the wording, this levy concerns a charge – not a tax – for a specific service rendered. Hence there are no exemptions.

11.9.3 Delivery of tap water

Diplomatic missions and consular posts eligible for exemption from VAT are also exempted from tax on the delivery of tap water for official purposes. This exemption can be granted directly through the VAT and/or Excise Duty Exemption Certificate Directive 2006/112/EC. A filled in certificate must be sent to Team IFB of the Tax and Customs Administration. Team IFB will certify the certificate and return it to the diplomatic mission. In order to receive the direct exemption, diplomatic missions must provide their supplier with the certified certificate.

Instead of being directly exempted beforehand, diplomatic missions also have the option to request a refund of tax already paid. A request thereto can be submitted together with the request for the VAT refund using the OB 100 form. An application for a refund of tax paid on tap water must be submitted to Team IFB within 13 weeks of the dispatch of the final invoice of the water company.

12 Cars

12.1 Tax exemption and special registration certificate

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs would advise privileged persons to consult Team IFB (see section 11.1 for contact details) about exemptions before purchasing a car in the Netherlands. Exemption from tax may be granted when purchasing or importing a car, depending on the diplomatic mission, consular post and the status of the person concerned. Exemption may be granted from the following taxes:

- customs duties and VAT when importing a car into the European Union and registering that car in the Netherlands with special registration plates;
- VAT on the purchase of a new car in the EU if the car will be registered in the Netherlands with special registration plates;
- car and motorcycle tax (*belasting op personenauto's en motorrijwielen*, BPM) when registering a car or motorcycle in the Netherlands with special registration plates;
- motor vehicle tax (*motorrijtuigenbelasting*, MRB) for cars registered in the Netherlands with special registration plates.

Staff members of diplomatic missions or consular posts based in the Netherlands may purchase a motor vehicle tax free for personal use. Exemption from BPM may be granted on condition that the vehicle has CD/BN/GN registration plates. This privilege applies from the moment they take up their position in the Netherlands, i.e. from the date on which diplomats posted to the Netherlands enter Dutch territory in order to perform their duties here, until the date on which their position comes to an end.⁹ The exemption is granted in advance and is subject to conditions.¹⁰ Exemption from tax is always granted subject to the condition that the exemption ends when the car is no longer owned by or in the possession of the mission or post, for example because the mission or post sells, leases, hires out or pledges the car, or transfers it free of charge or in return for payment. It is also prohibited to use the car, or cause it to be used, in a manner or for purposes not covered by the exemption. If a motor vehicle purchased subject to the diplomatic exemption is exported without the diplomat leaving the Netherlands to perform their duties elsewhere, this means that the vehicle is being used for purposes other than those for which the exemption was granted.

If the applicable conditions are no longer met, the exemption immediately ceases to apply and the relevant taxes must be paid.¹¹

This tax exemption is always granted in advance and never in the form of a tax refund. Applications for tax exemption and the issue of a special registration certificate should be supported by the employer and addressed to:

⁹ Article 39, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Vienna, 18 April 1961.

¹⁰ IFZ2002/1208M, 5.3.1 and 7.1.

¹¹ Article 32, paragraph 3, State Taxes Act Implementation Order 1994.

Belastingdienst kantoor Den Haag
Team IFB
Afdeling Motorrijtuigen
Postbus 30509
2500 GM The Hague

The application should include the following information:

- name and full address of the privileged person concerned;
- citizen service number (BSN);
- nationality;
- place of residence at the time of recruitment;
- date on which employment with the diplomatic mission or consular post commenced.

The following documents should be enclosed with the application:

- a completed *Douane 39* (D39) form;
- a copy of the sales contract;
- the RDW 137 special registration certificate application form. Blank forms can be obtained from the Road Transport Agency (*Dienst Wegverkeer*, RDW) in Veendam by telephoning + 31 (0)598 699 242 or emailing bk@rdw.nl;
- a copy of the certificate of conformity (*certificaat van overeenstemming*, CVO);
- a document demonstrating that the car has been or will be insured;
- a registration certificate for the car, if one has already been issued;
- a valid foreign vehicle inspection test report (if available), so that the annual vehicle inspection (APK) expiration date can be registered.

Questions concerning customs regulations on cars – non-recurring issues such as tax exemptions or waiving exemptions and the consequent additional tax assessments and applications for a special registration plate – should be addressed to Team IFB by emailing IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl.

12.1.1 Importing or purchasing a car

When importing or purchasing a car, the following situations may occur:

- a new car is purchased in the Netherlands;
- a new car is imported from abroad;
- a used car is imported into the Netherlands;
- a car is purchased within the diplomatic mission or consular post.

These situations will be explained in turn. Please note that the above-mentioned documents must always be enclosed with the application.

Please note that third-party liability motor vehicle insurance is compulsory.

12.1.2 Purchasing a new car in the Netherlands

When a new and unused car is purchased in the Netherlands, the organisation applies to Team IFB for exemption from tax and the issue of a special registration certificate. Exemption is granted from customs duties (if the car originates outside the EU), VAT and BPM.

NB: These exemptions are not applicable to the purchase of used cars in the Netherlands.

12.1.3 Purchasing a new car outside or importing a new car from outside the Netherlands

When a new and unused car is purchased outside the Netherlands, the procedure for obtaining exemption from tax and applying for a special registration certificate is the same as described in section 12.1.2. Please note that the car must be physically present in the Netherlands.

Applicants should complete the RDW 137 special registration certificate themselves.

12.1.4 Purchasing a used car outside the Netherlands

If a used car is purchased outside the Netherlands but within the EU, BPM must be paid when registering it in the Netherlands. VAT has been paid in the country where the vehicle was purchased. A used car means a car older than six months and/or with more than 6,000 km on the odometer. Exemption from BPM is granted on the basis of a *Douane 39* form. An exemption is only granted if the car will be issued with special registration plates in the Netherlands. The exemption ends when the car is sold or otherwise disposed of. A copy of the foreign registration certificate should be enclosed with the above-mentioned documents.

12.1.5 Purchasing a car from another staff member

If a car already covered by a tax exemption is bought by a privileged person, it is only necessary to submit a Note Verbale, the completed *Douane 39* form, an RDW 137 special registration certificate application form, the original special registration certificate, the APK report (proof of annual vehicle inspection as required by law), an insurance certificate and a copy of the sales agreement drawn up between the people concerned. The granted exemption will be included on the new special registration certificate that will be issued. The same conditions will apply to this new certificate.

12.1.6 Motor vehicles without European-type approval

These motor vehicles will be temporarily approved for use on public roads if they have a special registration plate (CD/BN/GN).

When converting a special registration into a regular Dutch registration, please note that an individual assessment is needed to obtain a regular registration. The vehicle may also be required to be modified. The costs of European-type approval and modifications to the vehicle (if necessary) may be significant. Before submitting a request to waive temporary exemption and an application to convert a special registration plate (CD/BN/GN) into a regular Dutch registration plate to Team IFB, it is advisable to contact the RDW in Veendam. Information you can find at: [rdw information](#).

12.2 Selling a tax-free car and waiving exemption

If a car is no longer used for the purpose for which the exemption was granted, the relevant taxes are due.

The car should not be given away, hired out or in any other way put at the disposal of third parties.

When new or second-hand motor vehicles imported from abroad (which fall into categories B and D) are sold in the Netherlands to a person who does not possess a privileged status, the vehicle will first have to be technically inspected in order to obtain ordinary Dutch registration documents. The parties concerned are responsible for paying the costs of the inspection.

If a privileged person wishes to sell a tax-free car to a non-privileged person, a written request should be submitted to Team IFB to waive the exemption on the requirement to pay tax. Team IFB will calculate the tax and send the owner concerned a request for payment stating the amount of tax due. Once the tax has been paid, Team IFB will agree to issue an ordinary Dutch registration plate for the car. If the tax has not been (fully) paid, Team IFB cannot approve the exempted purchase of a new motor vehicle with a special registration plate.

To apply for a Dutch registration certificate, the following documents should be submitted to Team IFB in The Hague (Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl):

- A Note Verbale or official letter with the request to waive the exemption;
- An RDW 134 registration certificate application form (upon request available at Team IFB);
- The original special registration certificate;
- The APK (Annual Vehicle Inspection) report;
- A copy of the passport of the person selling the car;

After the above-mentioned documents are submitted to Team IFB, the RDW (Road Transport Agency) will, depending on the specific situation, send a letter to the person involved in order to arrange an appointment at one of the RDW offices to identify themselves and/or to have their vehicle approved, as required by Dutch law.

12.3 Scrapping cars

If you want your car to be scrapped, it is first necessary to obtain written permission from Team IFB by submitting a request to that effect. Team IFB will then send a notice stating whether it will grant permission and under what conditions. Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam that the car has been scrapped. The RDW will send a letter to confirm the registration has been ended.

12.4 Exporting a tax-free car

If a tax-free car is exported, the following situations may occur:

Person with exemption leaves diplomatic mission or consular post and takes car to country of destination

In this case, a Note Verbale, a copy of the registration certificate and a 'Request to waive the tax exemption for a vehicle' form should be sent to Team IFB. Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam that the car has been exported and request that the car's special registration be terminated after three months. This allows enough time for transportation and de-registration. The RDW will inform the person concerned in writing and the special registration will be cancelled as of the date mentioned in the letter. If you do not return the registration certificate, the CBM (*Centraal Bureau Motorrijtuigenbelasting*) in Apeldoorn will continue to send the owner motor vehicle tax bills (if applicable). The RDW will inform the person concerned in writing and the special registration will be cancelled as of the date mentioned in the letter.

Person with exemption continues working at diplomatic mission or consular post and car is exported

If the car is exported **outside the EU**, a copy of the registration certificate should be sent to Team IFB. Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam and the CBM in Apeldoorn that the car has been exported. If you do not return the registration certificate, the CBM will continue to send motor vehicle tax bills to the owner (if applicable). The RDW will inform the person concerned in writing and the special registration will be cancelled as of the date mentioned in the letter.

If a vehicle is exported **outside the Netherlands but remains within the EU**, VAT and possibly customs duties are due since the car is no longer being used for the purpose for which the exemption was granted. In this case, Team IFB should be informed (in writing) that the car is going to be exported to an EU member state. A request to waive the tax exemption should be submitted. A copy of the registration certificate should be enclosed with this request. Team IFB will calculate the VAT and, if applicable, the customs duties. Team IFB will send the owner the calculation of the taxes due and a request for payment. After the registration certificate has been returned, Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam and CBM in Apeldoorn that the car has been

exported. If you do not cancel the special registration and do not return the registration certificate, the CBM will continue to send the owner motor vehicle tax bills (if applicable).

The RDW will inform the person concerned in writing and the special registration will be cancelled as of the date mentioned in the letter.

12.5 Change of address

The RDW in Veendam uses the data registered in the personal records database of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PROBAS) to register and issue special registration plates. For proper registration of your vehicle, it is important to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as soon as possible of any changes to your home address. If the address on your registration certificate is no longer correct, it is not necessary to apply for a new registration certificate. It will be changed in the vehicle registration database when your address is updated in PROBAS.

12.6 Driving licences

Driving in the Netherlands is only permitted with a valid driving licence. Driving without a driving licence is a criminal offence. Privileged persons with a valid driving licence are allowed to drive with their foreign driving licence in the Netherlands in combination with a valid privileged person's identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is not necessary to show your privileged person's identity card, though you are strongly advised to keep it on hand at all times. Privileged persons may exchange their foreign driving licence for a Dutch driving licence by following procedure a or b in section 12.6.1 below.

12.6.1 Exchanging a foreign driving licence

In order to exchange a foreign driving licence for a Dutch driving licence, the applicant can follow one of the following two procedures:

- a. submit the application to the RDW directly (EU/EEA, non-EU/EEA licences or no registration in the municipal Personal Records Database (BRP));
- b. submit the application to the municipality, which will then forward it to the RDW. This procedure is only applicable when the applicant is the holder of an EU/EEA, non EU/EEA driving licence **and** is also registered in the BRP. (Send in a copy of your identity card privileged person's.)

When submitting an application directly to the RDW, the 'Aanvraag rijbewijs (niet) woonachtig in Nederland' (driving licence application (non-) resident in the Netherlands) application form can be requested from the RDW by sending the privileged person's personal details (specified below) to rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl:

Personal details

- Citizen service number (BSN)
- Name (i.e. first name, up to five initials, surname) Dutch postal address (including postal code)
- Dutch postal address (including postcode)
- Foreign address (including postal code and country)
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Telephone number

As soon as the above information has been received, the form 'Aanvraag rijbewijs (niet) woonachtig in Nederland', along with instructions for filling it out, will be sent by post to the person in question at the Dutch postal address provided. The RDW cannot send the application form by email.

Required documents

The instructions accompanying the application form will explain what documents must be submitted with the completed and signed form, in order to exchange the foreign driving licence for a Dutch driving licence.

Submitting the application

The completed application form, along with the required documents, can be sent to:

RDW

Unit Rijbewijzen

Postbus 9000

9640 HA Veendam

[Rdw.nl](http://rdw.nl)

[Rdw.nl manual and documents](#)

Processing applications

Applications are generally processed in about 10 working days. If everything is in order, the privileged person will receive a new Dutch driving licence at the Dutch postal address of the mission or post as stated on your diplomatic identification card.

For more information on exchanging a foreign driving licence, please consult the [RDW instructions](#) for the 'driving licence application (non-) resident in the Netherlands (3 E 0395)' form. For any questions regarding licences, please contact the RDW at rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl

12.7 Practical information

Competency Health certificate

Sometimes in order to renew a Dutch driving licence, it is necessary to submit a certificate declaring you competent to drive (*Verklaring van Geschiktheid*). This can be requested from the Central Office for Motor Vehicle Driver Testing (*Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheid, CBR*). The instructions explain who needs to submit such a Health Certificate.

When your driving licence expires

If your Dutch driving licence expires, you are entitled to renew it. You are not permitted to drive with an expired licence.

Changes of address

Privileged persons (with or without special registration plates) should notify the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of their new address.

Application for a Dutch driving licence

Privileged persons wishing to apply for a Dutch driving licence, after passing a driving test in the Netherlands, can do so if they are registered in the BRP of the municipality where they reside. It is also possible to apply with the RDW.

General information about this subject you can find at: <https://www.rdw.nl/en/driving-licence>

Regarding driving licences in the Netherlands, please contact the RDW by phone or email using the details below:

Unit Rijbewijzen

Email: rijbewijzmailing@rdw.nl

Tel.: +31 (0)88 008 7407

Fax: +31 (0)598 69 9192

12.8 Annual Vehicle Inspection (APK) and Civil Liability Insurance (Motor Vehicles) Act (WAM)

In Europe, all vehicles have to undergo a periodic technical inspection (known as APK in the Netherlands) in the interests of improving road safety and protecting the environment. Adequate information, especially on the inspection periods (which vary, depending on the age of the vehicle and the fuel type used), can be found online at [Rdw information technical inspection apk](#). Vehicles must be inspected in good time through a wide network of car dealers and garages, which will simultaneously forward the data to the competent authorities.

Information on which garages can perform this inspection and enter the inspection data into the official registry can be obtained from garages, car dealers and the RDW.

The Civil Liability Insurance (Motor Vehicles) Act (*Wet Aansprakelijkheidsverzekeringen motorrijtuigen*, WAM) makes basic insurance for registered motor vehicles compulsory. It is an offence to use any motor vehicle without valid insurance.

This insurance, offered by insurance companies in the Netherlands, exclusively provides parties with limited coverage for legal liability – for bodily injury, death and damage to property – while using a registered vehicle.

Each motor vehicle registered in the Netherlands must be registered in the official insurance register of the RDW in Veendam. This has to be done by an insurance company that can make registrations in the RDW insurance register. Usually, this means it involves a Dutch insurance company. Dutch insurance companies ensure that the necessary insurance details, including WAM coverage, are registered accordingly. International insurance companies that want to make registrations in the insurance register must be registered with De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB) (under “Motor Vehicle Liability (S10A)” under the Dutch Financial Supervision Act (Wft)) and have a CRWAM-code of the RDW. Please make sure that your international insurance company fulfills the requirements to ensure a car in the Netherlands.

12.9 Parking

Parking near diplomatic missions and consular posts or official residences

The municipal authorities have full autonomy when it comes to setting policy on reserved parking bays. The municipality of The Hague is in principle willing, where necessary and possible, to mark two parking bays as reserved bays on public highways outside the main offices of a diplomatic mission or consular post and one outside the official residence of the head of mission or head of post. Whether or not these reserved parking bays are granted depends on the parking situation and the possibilities for public parking nearby. These parking bays may be used only by cars belonging to the mission or post, not by visitors. Even though the parking bays are reserved, it is still necessary to apply for a parking permit. It is advisable to apply for a ‘functional permit’, which allows parking throughout the city.

To apply for reserved parking, write directly to:

Municipality of The Hague

City Management Office (*Stadsbeheer*)

Highways and Waterways Sector (*Sector Wegen en Water*)

Permits Division (*Afdeling Vergunningen*)

P.O. Box 12651

2500 DP The Hague

or email: gereserveerdeplaatsen.parkeren@denhaag.nl

Visitors' cars

Visitors will have to use the normal parking spaces and pay any applicable parking fees. Visitors' cars that are parked illegally will be treated by the traffic police like any other illegally parked cars. The mission can apply for a special visitor's permit from the municipality of The Hague. For more information, contact the City Management Office (*Stadsbeheer*) on +31 (0)70 353 3000.

Parking during receptions or other events

If a diplomatic mission or consular post holds a reception or another event, The Hague municipal police are prepared to provide assistance wherever possible to ensure that guests are able to park satisfactorily. The mission or post should inform the Protocol Department by way of a Note Verbale as far in advance as possible, and in any event at least four weeks in advance.

The following information must be provided in the Note Verbale:

- the date and time of the event;
- the address of the venue;
- the number of expected guests;
- the contact person's details;
- requested measures (parking measures, blocking streets, traffic control, etc.).

The Protocol Department will forward the Note Verbale containing the details mentioned above to the competent authorities, who will decide on the traffic measures to be taken. For more details, please contact the Diplomatic Front Office in The Hague on +31 (0)88 964 9649.

Municipality of Wassenaar

The rules for the municipality of Wassenaar are different. The police force there is willing to consider all requests from diplomatic missions or consular posts for assistance with parking near the official residences of heads of mission or heads of post in Wassenaar. Whether the request is granted depends on the number of guests, and the time and place of the event in question. Diplomatic missions and consular posts should approach the Chief Commissioner of Police responsible for the diplomatic corps in Wassenaar.

Parking meters and car park charges

The Ministry is frequently asked about parking meters and car park charges. No exemptions are possible from these charges, because they are levied by the municipality for specific services rendered. Like anyone else, the staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts must therefore pay parking fees.

How to obtain a parking permit

The following applies to residents of The Hague: in many parts of The Hague, residents need a parking permit to park their car in the street where they live. Staff members of diplomatic missions and consular posts driving vehicles with CD, GN or BN registration plates can obtain a parking permit for the area of The Hague in which they live by providing evidence of their address (such as a tenancy agreement) and their Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card. The cost of this permit varies, depending on the area.

Staff members with a reserved parking space in an area of The Hague where parking permits are required must hold such a permit. They must pay for the permit themselves.

For more information, staff members can contact the City Management Office on +31 (0)70 353 3000 or email to parkeervergunningen@denhaag.nl. Information is also available through The Hague International Centre, located in the atrium of City Hall, Spui 70, The Hague (+31 (0)70 353 5043).

12.9.1 Parking violations

Under article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, it is the duty of all persons enjoying privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State. This also applies to municipal parking regulations. Any violation may lead to the issuing of a parking ticket. A parking ticket is not a traffic fine, but rather a levy by the respective municipality for the improper use of a parking space, or unauthorised parking in non-designated area.

The Ministry expects any matters relating to parking violations to be dealt with accordingly by diplomatic missions and their staff members.

12.10 Parking near the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

General

The nearest parking facility to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the [Q-Park Rijnstraat](#).

Using a chauffeur-driven car

Members of the diplomatic corps using a chauffeur-driven car to visit the Ministry (marked '1' on the map below) may use the VIP entrance at Schedeldoekshaven (marked '2' on the map below) after making an appointment with the Ministry. You are advised to make arrangements well in advance with the secretariat of the Protocol Department, tel. +31 (0)70 348 4905. After passing through the vehicle gate the chauffeur should leave the passenger at the entrance to the building, where the latter should identify him/herself to the security officer on duty and state the reason for the visit. The security officer will then contact the Ministry official with whom the visitor has the appointment. In the meantime the chauffeur can park the car in the VIP garage and await the passenger's return.

Delivery of documents

Visitors coming by car (chauffeur-driven or otherwise) wishing to deliver large documents for specific departments or officials should report to Oranjevuitensingel 8 (via the transport official), while those with chauffeur-driven cars wishing to deliver other documents should report to the Central Mail Room counter at Oranjevuitensingel 8 (marked '3' on the map below).

12.10.1 Map



Source: Google Maps

13 Visits

13.1 General information

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall organisation and logistics of incoming visits by heads of state and government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and heads of international organisations. It also assists embassies with the logistics of inward state, official and working visits by heads of state and government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and, in some cases, with private visits and transits.

The Protocol Department should be informed of a visit at least two weeks before the VIP's arrival so that it can make the necessary arrangements.

The Royal Household is responsible for the logistics of all incoming and outgoing visits by Their Majesties the King and Queen and members of the Royal House. The Ministry of General Affairs takes political responsibility for these visits.

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of General Affairs is responsible for outgoing official and working visits of the Prime Minister, while the same departments in other ministries are responsible for incoming and outgoing visits of their own ministers.

13.2 Heads of state

Heads of state will be met on arrival by an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King, a protocol official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, officials from their embassy and a security officer. During their state, official and or working visit to the Netherlands, heads of state will be accompanied by a protocol official and a security officer. For the entire duration of the state visit the head of state will also be accompanied by an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance of the head of state's time, date and place of arrival and departure and provided with a detailed programme of the visit.

13.2.1 Heads of state transiting in the Netherlands

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance by Note Verbale of a transiting head of state's time, date and place of arrival and departure.

The embassy is responsible for making reservations for the VIP Lounge and must bear the associated costs. At the embassy's request an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King and a protocol official will welcome the head of state on arrival and take leave of them on departure.

If the head of state is accompanied by armed security officers, the relevant details should be given in the Note Verbale. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will inform the national security coordinator (NCTV) about the arms they are carrying.

13.3 Members of foreign royal families

Crown Princes and Princesses will, in principle, be met on arrival by an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance of their time, date and place of arrival and departure and provided with a detailed programme of the visit.

13.3.1 Members of foreign royal families transiting in the Netherlands

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance by Note Verbale of a transiting foreign royal's time, date and place of arrival and departure.

The embassy is responsible for making reservations for the VIP Lounge and must bear the associated costs. At the embassy's request an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King and a protocol official, will welcome a member of a foreign royal family on arrival and take leave of them on departure.

If a member of a foreign royal family is accompanied by armed security officers, the relevant details should be given in the Note Verbale. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will inform the national security coordinator (NCTV) about the arms they are carrying.

13.4 Heads of government

Heads of government on an official or working visit will, in principle, be met on arrival by a protocol official, officials from their embassy and a security officer. Heads of government will be accompanied by a protocol official during their official programme in the Netherlands. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance of their time, date and place of arrival and departure and provided with a detailed programme of the visit.

13.5 Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Ministers of Foreign Affairs on a working visit will, in principle, be met on arrival by a protocol official, officials from their embassy and a security officer. They will be accompanied by a protocol official and a security officer during their official programme in the Netherlands. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed by Note Verbale, well in advance, of their time, date and place of arrival and departure and provided with a detailed programme of the visit.

13.6 Heads of international organisations

Heads of international organisations on a working visit will, in principle, be met on arrival by a protocol official, officials from their organisation and a security officer. They will be accompanied by a protocol official and a security officer during their official programme in the Netherlands. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be informed in advance of their time, date and place of arrival and departure and provided with a detailed programme of the visit.

13.7 Security officers accompanying official visitors

On state, official and working visits only, heads of state and government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs may be allowed to bring in armed security officers, after consulting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **The protection of heads of state and government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs is, in principle, the sole responsibility of the Dutch authorities.**

Diplomatic missions have to provide the following information by Note Verbale, well in advance, if they request to bring in armed security officers, so that the necessary arrangements can be made:

- the name, place, date of birth and passport number of the security officer(s);
- the name, type and registration number of the firearm and rounds of ammunition; the mode of transport and place, date and time of arrival and departure (if commercial airlines are to be used, the flight number should be stated).

Armed security officers who are not allowed to carry their arms during their stay in the Netherlands have to deposit them at Schiphol Airport or at another location designated by the Dutch authorities. The name, type and registration number of the firearm will be recorded. The firearms and ammunition will be returned when the security officer leaves the Netherlands.

14 Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

14.1 Entry passes to Schiphol Airport

Eligible persons from diplomatic missions and consular posts can obtain access to protected areas by means of an airport pass carrying electronic information.

At present two types of entry passes are available for persons who have to be present in the protected area by reason of their position:

- the Schiphol pass, for persons who have to be present several times a week;
- the Schiphol day pass, for persons who do not have to be present on a regular basis.

Every mission is eligible for a **limited** number of personal Schiphol passes related to the number of diplomatic staff:

- missions with a staff of no more than seven diplomats qualify for a maximum of three passes;
- missions with more than seven diplomats may apply for a maximum of five passes.

The entry passes are for specific individuals and should be applied for and collected from Schiphol Airport directly, without the Ministry's intervention. In accordance with Schiphol policy, and due to safety regulations, only a limited number of passes can be obtained.

Applications should be made using the contact details below:

SCHIPHOL GROUP

Access & Identification Centre

Section Regulations

Triport 2, Room 2314, Locatiecode 03-20

Schiphol Centrum

Postbus 7501

1118 ZG SCHIPHOL CENTRUM

Tel.: +31 (0)20 601 2626

Website: [Schiphol applications](#)

Heads of mission will be guided personally through the application and issuing process by an officer from the Access & Identification Centre. Please note, that the short security test needed to obtain a Schiphol pass is mandatory at all times.

Due to Schiphol's security regulations:

- it is **not** possible to exempt heads of mission from the short test which must be passed in order to obtain a Schiphol pass. Heads of mission do have priority to take the test, however. They may make an appointment through the Schiphol Badge Centre, Evert van

der Beekstraat 202, Schiphol (tel.: +31 (0)20 601 2626; email: toegangszaken@schiphol.nl;

- due to a Schiphol security measure aimed at limiting the number of versions of Schiphol passes, it is not possible to create a distinctively coloured Schiphol pass for diplomats.

Study materials (in nine languages) for the Schiphol pass test can be found at: [Study materials](#)

Persons entering or exiting the restricted section of the arrivals hall have to pass through a special staff entrance and not through any passengers' entrance or exit.

14.2 VIP Lounge

The following persons may use the VIP Lounge at the Ministry's expense if they are coming to this country on a state, official or working visit:

- heads of state and vice-presidents (only when replacing the head of state while paying a visit to the Dutch head of state);
- prime ministers, deputy prime ministers (only when replacing the prime minister while paying a visit to the Dutch prime minister) and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, if they are meeting their Dutch counterparts;
- the President and judges of the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court, on their first arrival and final departure;
- ambassadors accredited to the Netherlands on their first arrival and final departure;
- heads of international organisations based in the Netherlands and persons with head of mission status on their first arrival and final departure;
- (in random order) the Secretary-General of the United Nations, UN Representatives at USG level, the Secretary-General of NATO, the Secretary-General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the President of the European Council, the President and Commissioners of the European Commission, the High Representative of the EU, the President of the European Parliament, the President of the World Bank, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Secretary-General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the President of the African Union, the President of the European Central Bank, and the highest spiritual authority of a religion.

NB: These rules do not apply if the persons mentioned above are on a private visit or in transit.

Diplomatic missions and consular posts receiving any of the persons listed above and wishing to use the VIP Lounge at Schiphol are advised to make arrangements well in advance. They should address their requests to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the form of a Note Verbale. The Protocol Department will then make the reservation and the costs will be borne by the Ministry. If, for some reason, the reservation is not necessary anymore, diplomatic missions and consular posts are expected to cancel the reservation in time by informing the Protocol

Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If the cancellation is reported to the Protocol Department less than 36 hours in advance, the invoice will be forwarded to the Diplomatic Mission or Consular Posts for payment.

In all other cases, diplomatic missions and consular posts must make reservations directly with the VIP Lounge directly by emailing [VIP Schiphol](#) and bear the costs themselves.

Please note that the use of the VIP Lounge does not exempt passengers from security checks at Schiphol Airport.

14.3 Security procedures at Schiphol Airport

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol uses both walk-through metal detectors and security scanners at their security checkpoints.

If anything suspicious is observed when a person is scanned, a partial pat-down body search is normally done. The Netherlands considers that such body searches are contrary to the inviolability of the person of a diplomatic agent as guaranteed by article 29 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, and that a privileged person may therefore refuse to undergo them. This may however cause the airline to refuse to transport the person concerned if reasonable grounds for suspicion cannot be removed.

At the VIP Lounge, a security scanner has replaced the walk-through metal detector.

The following persons are exempt from security checks at Dutch airports:

- a. heads of state, prime ministers and Ministers of Foreign Affairs;
- b. the Secretary-General of NATO;
- c. the Secretary-General of the United Nations;
- d. the President of the World Bank;
- e. diplomatic officials posted to the Netherlands who have a diplomatic passport and a Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card with the code AD or AC;
- f. family members who form part of the household of the diplomatic officials referred to under e, provided that they are not Dutch nationals and that they have a diplomatic passport and a Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card with the code AD or AC;
- g. officials employed by international organisations who have a diplomatic passport and a Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card with the code AO;
- h. family members who form part of the household of the officials referred to under g, provided that they are not Dutch nationals and that they have a diplomatic passport and a Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card with the code AO;
- i. armed bodyguards of persons in any of these categories.

Persons in any of these categories will be requested to pass through a security scanner or a walk-through metal detector (depending on the location), but should not be subjected to a body search. Their baggage may be scanned but may not be searched without serious grounds, such as a suspicion that it contains a prohibited article. Their baggage may only be searched with the consent and in the presence of the owner.

14.4 Passage through security checkpoints at Schiphol Airport and other security concerns

In order to avoid having to undergo security checks, privileged persons who are exempt from a security check must show their identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before entering the checkpoint. The identity card only exempts the persons in question from security checks; officials can ask to see a valid travel document in the event of cross-border travel. The different documents are presented as part of two separate procedures.

Although extra security measures are taken (including camera and live surveillance) to detect pickpockets, passengers should be careful with their luggage and personal belongings.

For other security concerns at Schiphol, please contact the Royal Military and Border Police (KMar) on +31 (0)800 1814.

14.5 Incoming flights

The latest flight information is available at the yellow information desks at the airport or through the special Schiphol Amsterdam Airport app: [Schiphol app](#) or on the website: [Schiphol web](#).

Information on arrival gates, when known, may be obtained by telephone (for a charge) by calling + 31 (0) 900 0141 from the Netherlands (press 2 for English and an operator will inform you of the arrival gate) or general enquiries +31 (0) 20 794 0800 from abroad. Arrival gates may be subject to last-minute changes.

14.6 Incoming and departing delegations

The standard procedure for holders of a Schiphol pass is for them to enter and depart through the special lanes for Schiphol staff. However, if the holder of the pass needs to remain with a delegation at all times, please inform the coordinator of the Special Security Operations Brigade of the Royal Military and Border Police beforehand (email: sao@mindef.nl; tel.: +31 (0)20 603 9472. Please be aware of the fact that the authorities may ask for a valid travel document when crossing the border.

14.7 Parking

Schiphol Airport offers Embassies the possibility to park in front of the Terminal for the maximum duration of two (2) hours. Please register your car in accordance with below procedure. We expect you to respect and act according to the Schiphol Airport Parking rules and limitations. In case of violation Schiphol will inform the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Consequently, specific sanctions could be taken.

Public parking is also available next to Departure Hall 3 (see [schiphol parking](#)).

14.7.1 Additional security measures for parking in front of the Terminal

As of 1 April 2023 there are additional security measures in place at the entrance of the Dienstenbaan. This to continue the guarantee of the security at Schiphol Airport.

In order to qualify for CD parking on the Dienstenbaan you have to comply to all of the following requirements.

- The Embassy or Consular Post is registered at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (see section 14.1 above);
- The driver of the CD vehicle must have a personal Schiphol pass with Known Transporter authorisation for access to the Dienstenbaan. These passes are additional to the limited number of passes for the diplomatic staff. The required authorisation for Known Transporter ('Chauffeur BT'/ Driver BT) for the pass must be requested in the eVesta account of the Embassy or Consular Post;
- The driver of the CD vehicle must complete the 'Known Transporter' e-learning module. The e-learning module must be renewed every 2.5 years. One will be informed with instructions by the Badge Center of Schiphol 10 weeks prior to the expiry of the e-learning module.
- The CD vehicle(s) must have a Schiphol vehicle pass. This pass can be requested in the eVesta account of the Embassy or Consular Post;
- A Visual inspection of the CD vehicle must be executed every time before heading to Schiphol Airport (inside and outside, on prohibited articles, e.g. knives, guns and explosives).
- The authorities at Schiphol are allowed to visually inspect cars and refuse entry at all times.

Only if all of the above conditions are met, access will (continue to) be granted to the Dienstenbaan. For questions regarding the additional security measures for parking in front of the Terminal, please contact Schiphol Security via bekendtransporteur@schiphol.nl

Public parking is also available next to Departure Hall 3 (see [schiphol parking](#)).

15 Security and protection

15.1 General information

The Netherlands is aware of its special duty towards diplomatic missions and consular posts and has customised its security policy to take that responsibility into account. The Protocol Department is the front office for requests and questions concerning security issues.

The office of the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV), through its Surveillance and Protection Department, is responsible for security policy and security matters concerning diplomatic missions and consular posts and maintains direct contact with some of these organisations.

15.2 Protection of persons

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to implement specific protection measures for specific persons. The initiative for such protection will normally come from the Dutch authorities. Diplomatic missions and consular posts should provide the host country authorities with up-to-date information on potential threats or other relevant developments. However, final responsibility for protection measures always rests with the Dutch authorities. Cooperation of protected persons with the security agencies is of the utmost importance.

15.3 Protection of buildings

If a diplomatic missions or consular post has information that its peace is likely to be disturbed, it should inform the Ministry's Protocol Department at +31 (0)70 348 4905 during office hours (09.00 – 17.00) or outside office hours at +31 6 5114 3634.

If police assistance is required, the following procedures are suggested:

- in the event of an **emergency (including accidents)**, diplomatic missions and consular posts can always dial the national emergency number **112**; (ask for police, medical assistance or fire brigade, as required);
- for **less urgent matters** requiring police assistance, please call **0900 8844**.

The Haaglanden regional police have a special surveillance unit for diplomatic and consular premises, the Mobile Diplomatic Protection Squad (*Dynamische Diplomatieke Surveillance*, DDS). It can be reached via the national police telephone number 0900 8844 or via the Diplomatic Front Office of the Haaglanden police force at +31 (0)88 964 9649.

15.4 Measures to prevent burglary, vandalism and fire

All diplomatic missions and consular posts should make it standard practice to take necessary measures for the protection of their premises and for the basic protection of the homes of their staff members against burglary, vandalism and fire. It is recommended that staff members ensure

adequate insurance coverage against fire and burglary. The regional police force is prepared to provide advice on protective measures in response to a request from a diplomatic mission or consular post received through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Damage to the premises or vehicles of the diplomatic mission and consular post or its staff members, as a result of a burglary or vandalism, should immediately be reported to the Ministry. If the damage caused was demonstrably politically motivated or occurred in the course of a demonstration, the diplomatic mission or consular post can apply to the Ministry for compensation. Damage to flags and coats of arms will always be compensated.

15.5 Demonstrations

The freedom to hold demonstrations is a long-standing tradition and a constitutional right in the Netherlands. The Netherlands has clearly defined limits within which these rights may be exercised and within which the competent authorities may impose restrictions on demonstrations. It is advised to announce the demonstrations in writing to the municipal authorities in advance, but this is not obligatory.

Once a demonstration has been announced, the police are responsible for ensuring that it proceeds in an orderly manner. Impeding the normal course of business of diplomatic missions and consular posts is prohibited. The mayor is therefore empowered to issue instructions, which demonstrators must obey, and may if necessary give orders to terminate a demonstration if these instructions are not complied with. The police will contact the diplomatic mission or consular post to make adequate security arrangements and ensure that it can continue to operate.

Police contact numbers: +31 (0)88 964 9649 (Diplomatic Front Office) // +31 (0)900 8844 (general) // 112 (emergency)

15.6 Firearms

Permission

The possession of firearms without a permit is forbidden in the Netherlands. The Dutch authorities are responsible for protecting the staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts. Applications for licences to carry firearms must be made to the local police.

Foreign security personnel

Separate regulations apply to foreign visitors wishing to be accompanied during their stay in the Netherlands by their own armed security personnel. These regulations state the categories of persons (or posts) eligible for a firearm permit and the maximum number of firearms that may be carried.

Separate permission for each armed security officer and weapon must be obtained from the NCTV. Each request for permission must be made in writing via the Protocol Department at least two weeks before the arrival of the visitor(s). In principle, only heads of state and government,

Ministers of Foreign Affairs and military officers whose visit is covered by the NATO Status of Forces Agreement can obtain permission. Other dignitaries may be eligible in the event of a threat substantiated by an NCTV threat assessment.

16 Polling stations

A diplomatic mission or consular post may open a polling station on its premises without requesting permission. However, please notify the Ministry accordingly – well in advance - so that the police can prepare for potentially large crowds.

The mission or post can also arrange for a polling station to be set up at a location other than on its premises. As soon as a suitable location has been found, the Ministry would appreciate receiving a Note Verbale specifying the location, date and the number of expected voters, so that it can inform the competent security authorities. The Ministry always advises missions and posts to contact the relevant municipality/municipalities in order to discuss any further logistical measures or local requirements.

17 Events

If a diplomatic mission or consular post would like to organise a major social or other event, it is kindly requested to notify the Ministry well in advance, preferably at least four weeks, via a Note Verbale specifying the location, date and number of expected guests. The Ministry will inform the relevant security authorities. With regard to further logistical issues or information on meeting local requirements, the mission or post is kindly requested to contact the competent municipality/municipalities.

Annex A - Specimen declaration for purposes travel on termination of employment

(see section [3.1](#))

This letter, together with a certified copy of the privileged person's identity card mentioned below, serves as proof of the bearer's legal stay in the Netherlands.

Mr/Mrs/Ms

national of

was employed in the Netherlands by the diplomatic mission / consular post of

.....

from until the day of his/her departure from the Netherlands.

During this period he/she was officially registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the holder of privileged person's identity card no.

Upon completion of his/her duties with the aforementioned diplomatic mission or consular post, the original identity card was returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

In case of questions, information or assistance may be sought from the Host Nation Division (DPG/NG) of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tel.: +31 (0)70 348 4905 (outside office hours +31 6 51 14 36 34), email: DPG@minbuza.nl.

The Hague,

[Date and stamp of the diplomatic mission or consular post]

Annex B - Specimen Note Verbale for privileged persons and members of their family forming part of the household applying for a visa
(see section [2.3](#))

The form is no longer applicable en has been removed.

Annex C - Specimen request for assistance with a visa for a private visit to privileged staff member

(see section [2.4](#) and section [5.4](#))

The undersigned, [name], [position at the diplomatic mission or consular post] at the [diplomatic mission or consular post], holder of identity card [number] issued by the Protocol Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague and valid until [date], intends to invite the following family member: [name], born on [date] in [place], a national of [country], with passport [number], [relation] of the undersigned, to the Kingdom of the Netherlands for a period of [...] as from [date of entry].

I assume full responsibility for all expenses associated with [name]'s stay in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, including medical expenses. I also guarantee that [name] will leave the Netherlands before [his/her] visa expires.

I request the assistance of the [Embassy/Consulate] of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the issuance of an entry visa for [name of guest].

[signature]

The Hague, [date]

To the [Embassy/Consulate] of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

[place and country]

Cc: [visa applicant]

Annex D - Specimen Note Verbale for partners of privileged persons applying for a visa (without marriage certificate or registered partnership recognised by the Netherlands)
(see section [5.3](#))

The [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in [country] and has the honour to inform the Embassy that the partner of [name of staff member], who is working for the [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] in the Netherlands as [position], will apply for a visa for the Netherlands for the purpose of joining [name of staff member].

Name of partner:

Address:

Date and place of birth:

Passport number:

Date and place of issue:

Expiry date:

The [name of the diplomatic mission or consular post] and [name of staff member] hereby declare that [name of partner]:

- will form part of the household of [name of staff member] in the Netherlands;
- has an exclusive relationship with [name of staff member];
- is of age (older than 18);
- is not under any legal constraint;
- is not a relative of [name of staff member].

In addition, the [name of the diplomatic mission or consular post] and [name of staff member] declare that [name of staff member] and [name of partner] will conclude a cohabitation agreement (*samenlevingsovereenkomst*) or enter into a registered partnership (*geregistreerd partnerschap*) in the Netherlands within the period of the validity of the visa (90 days). [Name of staff member] and [name of partner] are aware that registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DPG) and issuance of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card for the partner must also take place within the period of validity of the visa; that registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and issuance of an identity card cannot take place without a cohabitation agreement or registered partnership; and that failure to comply within 90 days will result in illegal stay through expiration of the visa and possible expulsion.

Signed:

Name of staff member:

Place:

Date:

Countersigned by a representative of the diplomatic mission or consular post and marked with the official stamp of the organisation:

Name of representative:

Place:

Date:

The [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands the assurances of its highest consideration.

The Hague, [date]

Embassy of the Kingdom
of the Netherlands in [place]

[official stamp of the diplomatic mission or
consular post]

Cc: DPG

Annex E - Countries with which the Netherlands has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding or other international instrument on the employment of family members
(see section [5.6](#))

Albania	Kenya	Uruguay
Argentina	Kosovo	Venezuela
Armenië	Latvia	Verenigd Koninkrijk
Australia	Lebanon	Vietnam
Bangladesh	Liechtenstein (EEA)	Zambia
Bolivia	Lebanon	Zimbabwe
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Macedonia	
Brazil	Mali	
Canada	Mexico	
Chile	New Zealand	
Colombia	Nicaragua	
Costa Rica	Norway (EEA)	
Croatia	Panama	
Czech Republic	Peru	
Ecuador	Philippines	
El Salvador	Romania	
Estonia	Senegal	
Georgia	Serbia	
Ghana	Slovakia	
Hungary	South Africa	
Iceland (EEA)	Sri Lanka	
India	Suriname	
Israel	Switzerland	
Japan	Turkey	
Kenya	United States	

Annex F - Tax packages A and B

(see section [11.3](#))

Package A (Vienna plus)

Exempted taxes	Embassy and consulate	Head of mission	Diplomatic agent and consular officer	Administrative, technical and service staff
VAT on goods (in free circulation in the Netherlands)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
VAT on services	Yes	No	No	No
Taxes on imported goods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duty-free alcohol (imported)	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota*
Duty-free tobacco (imported)	No	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota*
Tax-free car(s)	A reasonable number of cars	Two cars	Two cars	Two cars
Tax on motor vehicle fuel	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and in accordance with applicable quota

* For up to 10 years after taking up employment in the Netherlands.

Package B (Vienna)

Exempted taxes	Embassy and consulate	Head of mission	Diplomatic agent or consular officer	Administrative, technical or service staff
VAT on goods	Limited*	No	No	No
VAT on services	Limited*	No	No	No
Taxes on imported goods (no alcohol or tobacco)	Yes	Yes	Yes, only during the first year after arrival	Yes, only during the first year after arrival
Duty-free alcohol (imported)	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	No	No
Duty-free tobacco (imported)	No	Yes, in accordance with applicable quota	No	No
Tax-free car(s)	A reasonable number of cars	Two cars	Two cars	One car**
Tax on motor vehicle fuel	Excise duty only and in accordance with applicable quota	Excise duty only and in accordance with applicable quota	Excise duty only and in accordance with applicable quota	Excise duty only and in accordance with applicable quota

* Only for official purposes in the mission's buildings (e.g. data communication services, security services, gas, water and electricity).

** Package B does not include a tax-free car for administrative, technical or service staff, but the Netherlands grants this privilege nonetheless.

Annex G - Quota for alcoholic beverages and fuel

(see section [11.3](#))

Category	Alcoholic beverages (22% and over)	Cigarettes (or equivalent in other tobacco products)
Diplomatic mission, consular post and international organisation	300 litres	none
Head of mission	90 litres	12,000 cigarettes
Diplomatic agent or consular officer	60 litres	12,000 cigarettes
Administrative, technical and service staff	30 litres	12,000 cigarettes

Category	Official cars	1st exempted car	2nd exempted car*
Diplomatic mission, consular post and international organisation	For a maximum of five cars: 500 litres per month Additional cars: 300 litres per month		
Head of mission		300 litres per month	200 litres per month
Diplomatic agents or consular officers		300 litres per month	200 litres per month
Administrative, technical and service staff (10 years maximum)		200 litres per month	100 litres per month

* Only if the privilege of a second tax-exempted car with a special registration plate has been granted/is applicable.

* Quotas are applied on a yearly basis.

Annex H - Other fiscal privileges

(see section [11.1](#) and section [11.3](#))

Exempted taxes	Embassy or consulate	Head of mission	Diplomatic agent or consular officer	Administrative, technical or service staff
Tax on games of chance (<i>kansspelbelasting</i>)*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes**
Transfer tax	Yes	No	No	No
Energy tax and Tax on storage of sustainable energy and climate transition (<i>ODE - Opslag Duurzame Energie- en Klimaattransitie</i>)	Yes	No	No	No
Tax on tap water	Yes	No	No	No
Municipal taxes¹²				
Property tax (owner-related part of OZB)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Municipal tax on second homes (<i>forensenbelasting</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dog licences (<i>hondenbelasting</i>)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tax for installations on public land or water (<i>precariobelasting</i>) (only for purposes relating to official activities)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Administrative charges (<i>leges</i>)	No	No	No	No
Betterment levy (<i>baatbelasting</i>)	No	No	No	No
Sewerage charges (<i>rioolheffing</i>)	No	No	No	No

¹² See section [11.9](#)

Waste disposal charges (afvalstoffenheffing)	No	No	No	No
Waste collection charges (reinigingsrechten)	No	No	No	No
Tourist tax (toeristenbelasting)	No	No	No	No
Water board charges¹³				
Water system tax paid by the owner of the premises (watersysteemheffing eigenaar)	Yes	Yes (unless private property)	No	No
Water system tax paid by the occupier (resident) (watersysteemheffing ingezetenen)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Water treatment charges wastewater (zuiveringsheffing)	No	No	No	No

* The exemption from tax on games of chance is not applicable to prizes won in national games of chance in the Netherlands.

** During the first 10 years after taking up employment in the Netherlands.

¹³ See section [11.9](#)

Annex I - Addresses

(see [Introduction](#))

Diplomatic missions and consular posts

[Missions and Consular posts](#)

International organisations

[International Organisations](#)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

Postbus 20061

2500 EB Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 348 6486 (including outside office hours) [MFA](#)

see also [map](#)

Address for visitors : Rijnstraat 8, 2515 XP The Hague
VIP entrance : Schedeldoekshaven, The Hague. Tel.: + 31 (0)70 311 8627
Front Office : Rijnstraat 8, The Hague
Central Mail Room Counter : Oranjevuitensingel 8, 2511 VE The Hague

Protocol and Host Country Affairs Department

Directie Protocol en Gastlandzaken (DPG)

Postbus 20061

2500 EB Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 348 4905 (during office hours)

Tel.: +31 6 51 14 36 34 (outside office hours)

Email: DPG@minbuza.nl

Host Nation Division

Tel.: +31 (0)70 348 4905

Ministry of Justice and Security

Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid

Postbus 20301

2500 EH Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 370 7911

[MJ & S](#)

Justis (Central Organisation for Certificates of Good Conduct (COVOG))

Postbus 16115

2500 BC Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 370 7234

[COVOG](#)

Immigration and Naturalisation Service

Contact : [contact](#)

Website: [ind](#)

Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment

Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid

Postbus 90801

2509 LV Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 333 4444
[ministry-of-social-affairs-and-employment](#)
Visitors: Parnassusplein 5, 2511 VX The Hague

UWV WERKbedrijf
Tel.: +31 (0)800 8001
[werkzoekenden](#)

Social Insurance Bank
Sociale Verzekeringsbank
Postbus 9104
2300 PC Leiden
Tel.: +31 (0)71 512 9610
[SIB](#)
Address for visitors: Stationsplein 1, Leiden

Ministry of Finance
Ministerie van Financiën
Postbus 20201
2500 EE Den Haag
Tel.: +31 (0)70 342 8000
[ministry of finance](#)

Directie Verbruiksbelastingen, Douane en Internationale Aangelegenheden (VDI)
Afdeling Internationale Aangelegenheden
Korte Voorhout 7
2511 CW Den Haag
Tel.: +31 (0)70 342 8366
Email: secretariat.vdi@minfin.nl

Tax and Customs Administration
Belastingdienst kantoor Den Haag
Team Internationale Fiscale Behandeling (Team IFB)
Postbus 30509
2500 GM Den Haag
Email: Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl
Address for visitors: Prinses Beatrixlaan 512, The Hague

Tax authorities in Heerlen
Postbus 2865
6401 DJ Heerlen
Tel.: 0800 0543
Tel. (from outside the Netherlands): +31 (0)55 538 5385

Address for visitors: Schakelweg 5, Heerlen

Benefits (*toeslagen*)
Tel.: +31 (0)88 152 3306/2474

Road Transport Agency

RDW Centrum voor Voertuigtechniek en Informatie
Customer Service
Postbus 30 000
9640 RA Veendam
Tel.: +31 (0)88 008 740739
Tel.: +31 (0)598 393 330
website: [rdw_dutch](#) or [rdw_english](#)

Central Office for Motor Vehicle Driving Testing

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)
Postbus 5301
2280 HH Rijswijk
Tel.: +31 (0)88 227 77 00
[cbr](#)

Haaglanden police force

Politie Haaglanden (call centre)
Postbus 264
2501 CG Den Haag
Tel.: 0900 8844

Emergencies: 112

Diplomatic Front Office
+31 (0)88 964 9649

City of The Hague

Municipal Contact Centre
Tel.: +31 (0)70 353 3000
[city_The_Hague](#)

The Hague International Centre
Tel.: +31 (0)70 353 5043
[The_Hague_International](#)

Postbus 12 600
2500 DJ Den Haag
Address for visitors: City Hall (Atrium), Spui 70, The Hague

Annex J - Question form: social security

The form has been removed, for information see section [5.5](#) and section [9.3](#)

Annex K - FAQs on Traffic Rules

(see section [10.6](#))

No rights can be derived from this document. This list is by no means complete; it contains only a few of the most important rules and regulations.

General rules

It is an offence for any road user to act in such manner as to cause a hazard (or a potential hazard) on the public highway or to obstruct other road users in any way. (section 5, Road Traffic Act)

Anyone who is involved in a traffic accident is prohibited from leaving the scene of the accident before their identity and that of their vehicle have been ascertained. It is also an offence to leave a person behind in a helpless state following an accident. (Adapted from section 7, Road Traffic Act)

What rules apply to the consumption of drugs or alcohol while driving?

It is against the law to operate a vehicle (including a moped or bicycle) under the influence of certain substances. Specifically:

- a substance, such as medication, which you can be expected to know could have a negative effect on your ability to drive;
- over 220 micrograms of alcohol per litre of exhaled air (220µg/l); or
- over 0.5% of alcohol per millilitre of blood (0.5‰).

(Adapted from section 8, Road Traffic Act)

Two alcoholic drinks is often enough to reach this limit. Obviously, it is best to avoid alcohol entirely if you plan on getting behind the wheel. For drivers who have had their licence for less than five years, lower limits apply: 88µg/l or 0.2‰, respectively. It is an offence to drive under the influence of narcotics, if the legal limit of the substance in the blood is exceeded.

The government publishes a list that shows the maximum allowable values for a variety of narcotic substances.

How do you know who has right-of-way?

Generally speaking, at an intersection, all road users (including cyclists) coming from the right have right-of-way. There are a number of exceptions to this rule, however. The most important of these are as follows:

- when road signs indicate otherwise;
- when pulling out of a driveway, you must give way to all other traffic (including pedestrians);
- drivers on unpaved roads must give way to drivers on paved roads;
- all drivers must give way to trams.

What is the speed limit in built-up areas?

The speed limit never exceeds what is indicated on conventional road signs or matrix signs (electronic signs that hang over the road). The main rules governing speed limits are as follows:

Vehicle	Motorway (<i>autosnelweg</i>)	Dual carriageway (<i>autoweg</i>)	Outside built-up areas	Within a built-up area**
Passenger car or motorcycle	100*	100	80	50
Passenger car + trailer	90	90	80	50
Moped (yellow number plate)	N/A	N/A	(40#) 45	(30#) 45
Motorassisted bicycle (blue number plate)	N/A	N/A	25	25

* from 06.00 – 19.00 Hr: 100km/h (or 80 km/h in environmental zones, as indicated by signs)
from 19.00 – 06.00 Hr: 100, 120 or 130 km/h, as indicated by signs (or 80 km/h in environmental zones)

** There are also 30 km/h zones in built-up area. These are clearly indicated by road signs. In certain low- traffic roads in residential areas, the speed limit is 15 km/h.

When on a cycle path.

Which rules apply to a vehicle's place on the road / overtaking / roundabouts?

Generally speaking, you should keep right as much as possible. You overtake on the left, except when the vehicle in front of you is turning left, has its indicator on and is on the left side of the road; in that case you are permitted to overtake on the right.

When approaching or driving on a roundabout, you may also drive on the left and overtake on the right. For almost every roundabout, right-of-way will be indicated by traffic lights or signs. In those rare instances where there are no lights or signs present, the following rules apply:

- vehicles entering the roundabout from the right have right-of-way;
- when exiting a roundabout, you must give way to traffic staying on the roundabout (motor vehicles, bicycles *and* pedestrians).

You must use your indicator when exiting a roundabout. When entering a roundabout, you are not required to use your indicator, but it is advisable as a courtesy to other drivers.

Are there special rules for buses and trams?

Bus and tram stops may be located in the middle of the road. When passing a stopped bus or tram, you must allow passengers to board or exit. Within built-up areas, a bus with its indicator on, pulling away from a stop, has right-of-way.

Can I use my mobile phone while driving?

It is prohibited to hold a mobile electronic device for communication or data processing while driving, e.g. a mobile telephone, tablet or media player. This rule applies to all vehicles (including mopeds and bicycles), but only when moving. It does not apply when you are stationary, for instance at a red light.

For more information, please go to:

The complete 1990 Traffic Rules and Signs Regulations (RVV 1990) in the Dutch language can be viewed at: <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0004825/>