

# WHY LIVING IN THE NETHERLANDS MAKES YOU HAPPY



BY



INBOUND RECRUITMENT

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**Happy:** [the Dutch are the sixth-happiest-nation in the world](#) and [according to the latest report of Unicef Dutch children are the happiest!](#)

### **SOCIAL HAPPY**

**Freedom:** In the Netherlands you are free regarding religion, speech, sexuality etc. Did you know The Netherlands was the first country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage (in 2001). [And The Netherlands ranks 3 in world press freedom index \(2018\).](#)

**Easy to communicate in English:** If you order a meal or ask for a direction or go shopping and would like some advice, every Dutchman will immediately answer your question in English. It is even hard to practice your Dutch, because once noticed that you are a foreigner, the Dutch answer in English.

**Innovative country:** the Dutch are an inventive nation, did you know wifi was invented in The Netherlands? But it is also true that the Dutch philosophy of encouraging homegrown startups to flee may be one of necessity. Though strong in education and tech infrastructure, the Netherlands has fewer than 17 million residents and a language that nobody else speaks. Since it's tough for entrepreneurs to dream big in such an isolated market, they naturally look beyond their borders.

**The Netherlands are prosperous and have a high standard of public facilities:** Free, healthy, educated, and well governed, the Dutch live in one of the world's most prosperous countries. Indeed, the Netherlands has consistently ranked in the global top ten for overall prosperity in the past decade, [at present at 6<sup>th</sup> place \(2017\)](#). Despite being one of the hardest hit European countries by the 2008 crisis, Economic Quality and Governance did not falter, remaining in the global top six. This could help to explain the Netherlands' recovery from the crisis, as well as its strong health and education systems, which are amongst the best in the world.

The healthcare is well organised, the roads are well maintained and the other public facilities are well organised.

**Good work/life balance:** The Dutch generally work to rule, that is to say that they have clearly defined working hours and they respect them. The Netherlands was named the third best country for work-life balance [in the latest of OECD](#). The Netherlands already has the highest percentage of part-time employees.

## **FINANCIAL HAPPY**

**General tax credit:** All employees are entitled to the algemene heffingskorting (general tax credit). This is a credit on your taxation through your employer. For non-working partners it is also possible to receive this tax credit, which can amount to € 2.007 a year. The main condition is that you are living with a partner for a minimum of six months, who is subject to Dutch taxes, and has paid taxes on at least €15.000. The general tax credit is applied through the provisional tax return form, which is available on the Tax Administration website.

**30% facility for incoming employees:** If you come to work in the Netherlands, you are possibly confronted with extra costs, so-called extraterritorial costs. Your employer may grant you a free (untaxed) reimbursement for the extraterritorial costs that you incur. Your employer may also provide you with 30% of your wage, including reimbursement, tax-free. This facility is known as the 30%-facility. For this, it is not necessary to prove that expenses have been incurred.

([http://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontenten/belastingdienst/individuals/iving\\_and\\_working/working\\_in\\_another\\_country\\_temporarily/you\\_are\\_coming\\_to\\_work\\_in\\_the\\_netherlands/30\\_facility\\_for\\_incoming\\_employees/](http://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontenten/belastingdienst/individuals/iving_and_working/working_in_another_country_temporarily/you_are_coming_to_work_in_the_netherlands/30_facility_for_incoming_employees/) )

**Child benefit:** Child benefit is money from the government towards the expenses of raising a child. If you live or work in the Netherlands and you have a child or children under 18, you will get Dutch child benefit. Dutch child benefit is paid by the SVB.

(<http://www.svb.nl/int/en/kinderbijslag/> )

**Childcare Benefit:** Will your children be going to day care after you move to the Netherlands? Then you are most likely eligible for a childcare benefit. This is a subsidy to help cover the costs of childcare. In order to receive a childcare benefit, both you and your benefit partner must be employed or studying.

**National Health insurance:** Health insurance provides insurance cover for the cost of medical care. If you work and pay income tax in The Netherlands, you are subject to Dutch social security legislation. This means that you are obliged by law to take out health insurance. A health insurance policy is a Dutch insurance policy that provides coverage for healthcare costs and meets the requirements of the Zorgverzekeringswet (Dutch Health Insurance Act) with a free choice of insurer.

**Buying a house in The Netherlands:** Being an expat doesn't mean you can't buy a property in the Netherlands. Depending on your personal situation you could be able to arrange a Dutch mortgage. At the moment the average interest rate is low. Besides that the interest is still deductible if the property is used as your main residence.

(<http://www.expatax.nl/mortgage.php> )

**Tax refund on mortgages:** The Dutch tax authority is providing an annual tax benefit for house owners. Owners of a (residential) property will receive a tax refund on the interest paid for the mortgage used for the purchase of this particular house up to a maximum level

of 52% (i.e. highest tax bracket).

(<http://www.hollandexpatcenter.com/themes/housing/buying-a-house/> )

**Vakantiegeld (vacation money):** In May or June your employer will pay you an amount totally of 8% of your annual salary: vakantiegeld. Vacation money, which is meant to cover plane tickets, surfing lessons, tapas: vacations.

## **GENERAL TOURIST INFORMATION ON THE NETHERLANDS**

If you associate canals, tulips and cheese with the Netherlands, you're not alone. So beneath you will find just a small summary of typical Dutch things.

**Canals** are without doubt one of the most typically Dutch sights, but what you may not know is that they are found in many more places than just Amsterdam. Beautiful cities like Utrecht, Leiden and Delft were also built-up around canals too.

**Bicycles:** Blessed with almost entirely flat terrain, bicycles took off in a big way here, and to many people, they are the first things they notice as being very different from home when visiting Holland. Hundreds upon hundreds of old-school bicycles can be found at any given time outside the train station, shopping centre, or whizzing past you on the street.

**Tolerance:** The Netherlands are known for their attitude of tolerance to alternative lifestyles and those who choose to go their own way in life. All the major religions are represented. Every individual has the right to change his or her religion and is free to practice his religion or conviction.

**Tulips** may not be native to Holland, but once Dutch explorers brought them here after journeys to the East, they flourished and became known as one of the most typically Dutch things.

**Windmills** are more than just a photo opportunity; for centuries they were an essential part of life in this altitude-challenged country. Windmills helped drain the land of water and also helped in grain production.

**The Delta Works** is a collection of construction projects in the southwest of the Netherlands to protect a large area of land around the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta from the sea. The American Society of Civil Engineers has declared Delta Works one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World.

**Eleven Cities Tour:** the world's largest and longest (almost 200 km.) speed skating competition conducted on frozen canals, rivers and lakes between the eleven historic Frisian cities.

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