



# The Netherlands and EMA

*On 20 November 2017, the ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU Member States decided in the margins of the General Affairs Council (RAZ) Article 50 that EMA would move to Amsterdam. The Netherlands has promised continuity of the work of EMA and that is exactly what we have been working on since then.*

It is crucial that the tasks of EMA do not suffer from Brexit. In order to ensure this continuity the Netherlands are doing their utmost to help accommodate EMA staff, the driving force behind the organization. The continuity depends largely on the willingness of the employees to move with the agency. The Netherlands are doing everything they can to help EMA retain as many staff as possible by offering a good, individual relocation program. In addition, it is also important that the temporary and permanent buildings both meet the requirements of EMA and are available on time. EMA will receive a custom-made new building. In the meantime they will be housed in a temporary building that has been approved by EMA and of which the agency itself indicated that their main activities can take place.

All of the processes above are on schedule. At some points we are even ahead!

## Seat Agreement

EMA and the Netherlands have reached an agreement on the content of the Seat Agreement. The Seat Agreement defines the status of the employees of the European agency. This is an important step in the relocation of EMA from London to Amsterdam as a result of the Brexit. The Seat Agreement will enter into force as soon as it is signed by both EMA and the Netherlands. The signing will take place when European decision-making on the relocation of EMA has been completed. The timely signing is of the utmost importance because without the treaty EMA staff cannot register in the Netherlands and any delay in that process could seriously hamper the business continuity of the agency. The Dutch government and EMA therefore hope that the treaty can be signed quickly, so that EMA staff will have more information about their future legal status. With this agreement, the Netherlands and EMA are ahead of the original planning.

## Temporary building

Business continuity is key. In order to ensure this continuity, the buildings (new headquarters and temporary premises) will be finished on time. On 29 November 2017, the temporary options from the bid book were visited and vetted together with EMA. EMA then indicated that they preferred a building where it could combine both all of its office workstations and its scientific meetings, in one location. This option was found in the 'Spark building' at Amsterdam Sloterdijk. EMA and the Dutch authorities visited the building on 6 December 2017. So within a week a new building had been found that meets the requirements of EMA for a temporary location and ensures that EMA can continue its work uninterrupted.

The Netherlands pays the costs for the temporary building, with the exception of some specific requirements from EMA. On April 12 of 2018 the Dutch government announced it had bought the Spark building. After EMA has moved to the new EMA building it will be used to house governmental organizations.

### **Furnishing of the building is on schedule**

On 29 January 2018, the contract was signed for rent of the Spark building. It is a completely renovated building that is now being furnished. EMA will gradually move in from 1 January 2019 and will be fully operational at the new location from March 2019 onwards.

Construction of ICT is on schedule.

## **Permanent premises**

The Netherlands is fully committed to the timely construction and delivery of the premises on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

The tendering procedure for the new building where the headquarters of EMA will be based went swiftly and has now been completed. The Netherlands had already started working proactive before the decision to move EMA to Amsterdam was made. The Netherlands had launched a pre-tender on 6 October 2017. As a result, six construction companies had already expressed their interest and registered before the decision on 20 November 2017. Because of this pro-active attitude, the Netherlands could start the next stage in the tendering procedure immediately afterwards. The tendering process has been conducted fully in line with the relevant EU rules on tendering procedures.

On 8 March 2018, the contract with the building company (Dura Vermeer) that was granted the project has been signed, two weeks earlier than planned. The contract is based on completion of the building on 15 November 2019. This date is very carefully planned by the Central Government Real Estate Agency (CGREA).



The construction of the new EMA building has started on 1 May 2018, earlier than was initially planned. The remaining builder Dura Vermeer is a reliable and renowned contractor and checks and balances have been built in with regard to deliver the building as planned. The CGREA and the building company have taken several measures aimed at delivering the building in time, including:

- There is a thorough planning and risk management framework in place. The deadline has been chosen very carefully, in close cooperation with and consultation of the most important partners (subcontractors and suppliers)
- The production of critical components such as the steel structure and facade elements are prefabricated by highly experienced and robust construction partners
- Dura Vermeer and the subcontractors involved have a partnership that enables them to stand in for each other as a last resort
- The construction of the new EMA building will consist of as much steel as possible and relatively little concrete
- The chosen building method is strong but can be constructed very quickly and minimizes the risk of delay due to weather conditions
- Key business installations (such as air-conditioning) will be located on the 4th floor so that they can be placed earlier and also work is being done with prefabrication
- There is good cooperation between the CGREA and the contractor, so that ambiguities can be resolved quickly

## Relocation of employees

EMA's employees are the driving force of the organization. The continuity of EMA's work largely depends on the possibility of it retaining its employees. In that respect, Amsterdam is a very good choice. In a questionnaire of October 2017 among the employees, about 80 percent of the EMA workforce indicated that they would move with the agency if that city was chosen as the new location. Amsterdam is in the top 10 of most liveable cities in Europe and it has a multicultural community. The economy is flourishing, there is a high-skilled multilingual workforce and of course, there's Schiphol airport. It has the highest number of direct flight connections with the rest of the EU.

### The Netherlands Helpdesk in the EMA building opened on 4 December 2017

#### What has been done so far?

- 7 presentations with general information about life in the Netherlands
- 4 information sessions about education in the Netherlands
- 2 information sessions about European schools
- 2 information sessions about childcare in the Netherlands
- 2 information sessions about the Dutch system including Newcomers' education
- 2 information sessions about universities and higher education
- 6 visits from EMA staff to Dutch schools
- 2 school information markets in the EMA premises in London, where Dutch schools presented themselves to EMA staff
- The Netherlands Helpdesk processed over 500 information requests.

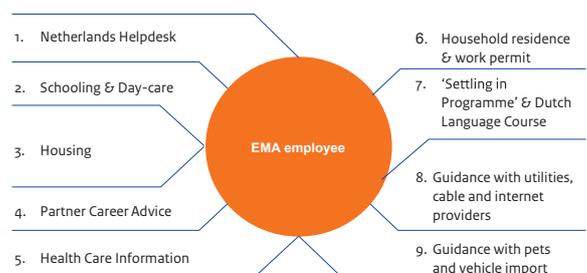


### On 19 February 2018 the individual guidance started

Between 19 February and 25 April, 724 employees completed their initial relocation consultation. Following the consultations, all staff members will be assigned a personal relocation consultant based on their relocation date. Employees relocating in 2018 have already been assigned a personal consultant

#### Every EMA employee and his / her family receives one on one guidance on

- the search for housing
- selecting and registering at schools and daycare
- help with registering with the health care system of the Netherlands
- employment for partners
- help with administrative procedures
- learning the Dutch language and getting to know Dutch culture
- assistance with arranging services
- necessary additional guidance (for example bringing pets)



## Education

Relocating EMA requires more than just ensuring its business continuity and taking care of its employees. It is also about ensuring a smooth transition for the EMA families. Children of EMA employees therefore have our particular attention. Aside from the information sessions about education and schooling markets held at the EMA office in London, several schools in the Netherlands were visited. In December 2017 and January 2018, multi-day visits took place to the European schools in Bergen and The Hague and international schools in The Hague, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Laren and Almere. Initially these visits included staff from the EMA Human Resources department, later visits took place with members of the Works Council representing EMA staff. These delegations visited different types of schools in the region. There has been mostly positive feedback on the information gathered during these visits, and wherever concerns might arise, we have addressed or will address those.

Until 7 March a survey was conducted among the employees. This allowed them to indicate their preferences for schools, so that they could be better supported in their choice of a school, and the information supply and support from the Netherlands Helpdesk could be adjusted accordingly. The survey is a co-production of EMA and the Netherlands Helpdesk.

## Timeline

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 20 November 2017 | Decision to move EMA to Amsterdam   |
| 24 November 2017 | First visit of Dutch delegation from Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and City of Amsterdam to EMA; Q&A session with EMA staff               |
| 29 November 2017 | EMA visits temporary building options from bid book and requests a different building combining conference facilities and workplaces              |
| 4 December 2017  | The Netherlands Helpdesk opened in EMA building in London. The helpdesk deals with various questions from employees about life in the Netherlands |
| 6 December 2017  | EMA visits Spark building and tentatively agrees with this option as a temporary location   |
| 29 January 2018  | Lease agreement Spark building signed   |
| 19 February 2018 | Individual guidance EMA employees started   |
| 22 February 2018 | Fact finding mission of a delegation of the ENVI committee of the European Parliament to the temporary and permanent housing facilities of EMA    |
| 28 February 2018 | Management Board EMA approves the Netherlands proposal for relocation of EMA to its new future headquarters at Amsterdam Zuidas                   |
| 1 March 2018     | Start refurbishment Spark building  |
| 8 March 2018     | Signing of the contract with builder for the new headquarters   |
| 12 March 2018    | ENVI committee of the European Parliament votes for relocation of EMA to Amsterdam  |
| 13 March 2018    | Budget Committee of European Council agrees with the Dutch proposal for the future headquarters of EMA  |
| 21 March 2018    | Budget Committee of the European Parliament approves building plan  |
| 27 March 2018    | EMA and the Netherlands reach agreement on Seat Agreement   |
| 12 April 2018    | Dutch government buys Spark building  |
| 13 April 2018    | Dutch Council of Ministers agrees upon Seat Agreement   |
| 25 April 2018    | Environmental permit granted for EMA building   |
| 1 May 2018       | Start of construction of EMA building on the Zuidas   |
| 28 May 2018      | Foundation laying ceremony EMA building   |
| 1 January 2019   | Spark building ready for EMA  |
| 15 November 2019 | Permanent building ready for EMA  |