



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

# **Protocol Guide<sup>1</sup> for Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts**

**Protocol and Host Country Affairs Department<sup>2</sup>  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
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<sup>2</sup> 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.

**Please note that the Protocol Guide is not a statutory document and that no rights can be derived from it. It is an informational publication.**

The Protocol Guide may be consulted [online](#) on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is updated regularly to reflect the latest developments.

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 (not the individual staff members) may address their questions about the implementation of the rules to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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# **1 Agrément and accreditation**

## **1.1 Accreditation of the head of mission (articles 4-6 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 sending State may approach the Dutch embassy in that state or in the city where the ambassador is located.

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 custom 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.

## **1.2 Recognition and admission of career and honorary consular officers (articles 10-12 VCCR)**

The embassy of the sending State should request recognition and admission of a consular officer by means of a Note Verbale including his/her curriculum vitae prior to taking up position.

The embassy of the sending State may request permission to establish an honorary consulate, and request recognition of the honorary consul, by means of a Note Verbale specifying the provinces of the Netherlands to be included in the consular district. The Note Verbale should be accompanied by an extract from the municipal personal records database, a certificate of conduct (*Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag*, VOG), a motivation and a copy of the candidate's passport. The candidate will be invited by the Protocol Department for an interview. It is imperative that the honorary consul's district includes at least one province in the Netherlands and that the consul either resides or maintains an office in one or more provinces of the consular district. Guidelines have been communicated through Note Verbale DPG/2016-1058.

### 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, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be notified of the name of the chargé d'affaires ad interim by Note Verbale.

### 1.4 Military attachés

The embassy of the sending State should request permission for the appointment of a military attaché by sending a Note Verbale to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, enclosing the curriculum vitae of the official concerned prior to 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 (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.

For inquiries regarding housing, diplomatic missions may contact Mr. Toelen from the municipality of The Hague who may be reached by email: [Wesley.toelen@denhaag.nl](mailto:Wesley.toelen@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 needs to submit a substantiated and motivated request to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with article 12 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Only with prior and explicit consent may such offices be established.

As 'offices forming part of the mission' only trade offices, facilitating economic relations between the sending State and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, may be considered.

With 'locality' is meant the existing premises of the mission. This means that if an office is established outside of the existing premises of the mission, this qualifies as '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 Visa

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 in the Netherlands; family members (spouse or partner and dependent children) forming part of privileged staff members' households who wish to join them; and their private servants (if any).

### 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 ninety days can be found on the website of the Dutch government: <https://www.nederlandenu.nl/reizen-en-wonen/documenten/publicaties/2017/01/01/lijst-visumplichtige-en-niet-visumplichtige-nationaliteiten-kort-verblijf-nl>

#### - *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 ([visa.posten@ind.minvenj.nl](mailto:visa.posten@ind.minvenj.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 ninety 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**

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 or consular mission in their country of origin or of habitual residence before they travel to the Netherlands. A country of habitual residence is where the person concerned resides or has a permit to reside for longer than 90 days. If there is no Dutch diplomatic or consular mission 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.minvenj.nl](mailto:visa.posten@ind.minvenj.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. <https://www.nederlandenu.nl/reizen-en-wonen/documenten/publicaties/2017/01/01/lijt-visumplichtige-en-niet-visumplichtige-nationaliteiten-kort-verblijf-nl>

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

Pursuant to Regulation (EC) No. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code), biometric requirements were introduced as from 14 March 2013 in the visa procedures of all Schengen embassies.

This means that when the first application for a visa is submitted, the applicant will be required to appear in person and a photograph and fingerprints will be taken in accordance with article 13 of the Visa Code. The following persons are exempt from these requirements under article 13 (7) (a) to (d) of the Visa Code:

- a. children under the age of 12;
- b. persons for whom fingerprinting is physically impossible;
- c. heads of state or government, members of a national government with accompanying spouses, and the members of their official delegations when they are invited by EU member states' governments or by international organisations for an official purpose;
- d. sovereigns and other senior members of a royal family, when they are invited by EU member states' governments or by international organisations for an official purpose.

#### *Documents to be submitted to the Dutch Embassy*

Privileged staff members and their family members need to submit the following documents when applying for a visa:

- a duly completed visa application form;

- a **valid** passport (the passport's validity must extend at least ninety days beyond the end of the period for which the visa is being applied);
- two passport photographs: for passport photograph requirements, click on '[Photomatrix guidelines](#)';
- a copy of the Note Verbale from the diplomatic mission or consular post in the Netherlands stating that the staff member will be employed there. See [Annexe B](#) for a specimen Note Verbale. **Without this Note Verbale the visa application cannot be considered.**

The Note Verbale should include the following details:

- 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 starting date and duration of the posting.

**To avoid unnecessary delay, the diplomatic mission should send the Note Verbale to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [DPG-service@minbuza.nl](mailto:DPG-service@minbuza.nl)**

**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 (ninety 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 (contact details see via search at <https://www.netherlandsandyou.nl/contact>).

##### *Documents to be submitted by the applicant to the Dutch embassy*

Non-privileged staff members, relatives, friends, other guests and delegations need to submit the following documents when applying for a visa:

- a duly completed visa application form;
- a valid passport (the passport's validity must extend at least ninety days beyond the end of the period for which the visa is being applied);
- a copy of the staff member's Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card (in the case of a visa application for family or friends);
- two passport photographs: for passport photograph requirements click on '[Photomatrix guidelines](#)';
- supporting documents, a letter of guarantee and a letter of invitation from a privileged staff member in the Netherlands, insurance papers, and information on the referee. A specimen request for assistance for non-privileged staff members, relatives, friends and other guests invited by a privileged staff member is included in [Annexe C](#);

- for delegations only: a Note Verbale from the diplomatic mission or consular post in the Netherlands.

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

### General information

#### Upon arrival

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

#### Upon final departure

**Within eight 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 having handed 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 [Annexe 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.

### 3.1 Notifying the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains a personal records database (PROBAS) 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. They must be registered with the Ministry within eight 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. 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 E-portal.
- 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 and of their private servant(s), including those engaged locally.
- 9) 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 Eportal "add a family member".

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 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 Eportal as an attachment.

Change of address

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be notified of any change of address at the staff member's earliest convenience through ePortal.

### **3.2 ePortal and the municipal Personal Records Database (BRP)**

***ePortal***

The ePortal is an online registration system for staff of diplomatic missions and members of their household. The ePortal is used to register/deregister, 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 in turn 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 diplomatic mission in question. Staff members not known to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot be registered as registration officers.

### **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.

### **Protection of privacy**

Strict rules on privacy apply to the use and accessibility of data from ePortal and the BRP. Individuals have the right to request 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 that full confidentiality cannot be ensured.

## **3.3 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. For example for:

- 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 as well as after-school and daycare facilities are required to use BSNs in their administrative records.

By registering with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, privileged persons obtain a BSN, which is automatically issued by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

For information on registering for a BSN, please consult:

Burgerservicenummer (BSN) - Citizen Service Number on <https://www.denhaag.nl/en/moving-and-immigration/relocation-and-settling.htm>

### **DigiD**

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

Registration with the Ministry through ePortal does not lead to a DigiD. A privileged person can apply for a DigiD after registering with the BRP. Information about the DigiD and all the organisations performing public online services with DigiD can be found on these websites:

- <https://www.digid.nl/en/>
- <https://www.digid.nl/en/about-digid/participating-organisations>



### **3. Issuance of official declarations by the Protocol Department**

If, for any reason, a staff member requires an official confirmation of their registration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this can be applied for through the human resources department of the diplomatic mission or consular post. The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will declare in writing that the person concerned is registered in the privileged persons database of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## 4 Identity cards

### 4.1 General information

#### *Obligation to carry identification*

Any resident of the Netherlands 14 years of age or older is obliged by law to carry an identity card at all times and to present it upon request to police officers and other law enforcement authorities. Privileged persons who are registered through 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 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 in case of 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 <http://www.politie.nl/en/contact/file-a-complaint.html>).

### 4.2 Applying for an identity card

To obtain an identity card for a privileged person, the person should be registered through 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 or does not enjoy privileges and/or immunities;
- in the case of family members, is or is not permitted to work (possibly on a restricted basis) in the Netherlands;
- can travel freely within the Schengen area if shown together with an national travel document.

The identity card permits travel to Schengen countries for a period of up to ninety 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.government.nl/topics/visa-for-the-netherlands-and-the-caribbean-parts-of-the-kingdom>.

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.identiteitsdocumenten.nl](http://www.identiteitsdocumenten.nl), [www.consilium.europa.eu/prado](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado) or [www.edisontd.net](http://www.edisontd.net).

In case of crossing the border, a valid passport is needed.

#### 4.4 Issuance and collecting the diplomatic identity card

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

Diplomatic missions can consult the E-Portal whether an identity card has been issued and is ready to be picked up.

#### 4.5 Types of status

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

For embassies:

- **AD** Head of a diplomatic mission and his/her 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** Consul-General, consul, vice-consul, consular agent 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 in 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 at the Protocol Department.

#### 4.6 Lost or stolen cards (4-7-18)

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 and should immediately be reported by the mission and should include an official declaration by the holder. A new identity card can be applied for through the e-Portal. If a card is lost or stolen a second time, the validity of the temporary replacement card will be limited to six months.

Lost or stolen cards will always be reported to the National Unit of the Dutch National Police and entered in the Visa Information System (VIS) and Schengen Information System (SIS). If a person appears at a border with a lost or stolen card, the border authorities will confiscate it.

#### 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 eight days** of 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, 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 missions and consular posts will be informed when an identity card has not been returned on time. This may lead to delays in issuing new identity cards. Cards that have not been returned on time will always be reported to the National Unit of the Dutch National Police and entered in the Visa Information System (VIS) and Schengen Information System (SIS). If a person appears at the border with such a card, the border authorities may confiscate it.

#### 4.8 Expiry date

The expiry date of the identity card is stated on it. **One month** before the identity card expires, a request for renewal should be sent through the ePortal to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to have the card replaced in time.

## 5 Partners and family and household members

### 5.1 Member of the family 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: a staff member's spouse (one only) or registered partner (one only, including a same-sex partner) who is living continuously with the staff member, a staff member's children under the age of 18, and children up to and including the age of 27 provided that they are 1) unmarried, 2) financially dependent on their parent(s) and 3) forming part of the household of the staff member.

Considered as 'financially dependent' are children that do not engage in gainful employment, or children that engage in gainful employment with an income of less than the income determined by the SVB (in case of minor children) and DUO (in case of adult children). The specific amounts can be checked via the following links:

- **SVB:**  
[https://www.svb.nl/int/nl/kinderbijslag/levensloop/hoeveel\\_bijverdiene/](https://www.svb.nl/int/nl/kinderbijslag/levensloop/hoeveel_bijverdiene/)
- **DUO:**  
<https://duo.nl/particulier/mbo-er/privesituatie/bijverdiene.jsp>

Gainful employment for children is allowed on the condition that this is explicitly formalised in an agreement, Treaty or Memorandum of Understanding between the sending State and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Children studying abroad will **not** be recognised as forming part of the household.

In very exceptional cases, **diplomatic staff** may apply for an identity card for their parents (or parents-in-law). This application must be requested by means of a Note Verbale prior to arrival in the Netherlands which includes the motivation for the application and should be accompanied by a letter of guarantee. Applications are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

### 5.2 Unmarried partners

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will issue identity cards to unmarried partners (one individual only) under the condition that proof is given of the existence of a registered partnership or cohabitation agreement made by notarial deed, and 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 and that the staff member and partner enter into a registered partnership within ninety 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 [Annexe D](#).

### 5.3 Children residing in the Netherlands

An identity card may be issued to children up to and including the age of 27, provided that they are 1) unmarried, 2) financially dependent on their parent(s) and 3) forming part of the staff member's household.

The mission must notify the Ministry promptly if circumstances change.

### 5.4 Children studying abroad

Children of staff members of embassies or consular missions 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, children from countries whose citizens do 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 27;
- the child is studying in a non-Schengen country and is a national of a non-Schengen country.

#### **Documents to be submitted to the Dutch Embassy:**

- a duly completed visa application form showing clearly that a multiple entry visa valid for several years is being requested;
- a valid passport (the passport's validity must extend at least ninety days beyond the end of the period for which the visa is being requested);
- a letter of invitation and guarantee (see [Annexe C](#) of this Protocol Guide);
- a copy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card (which must be valid for the full term of the visa) of the parent stationed in the Netherlands;
- proof of the family relationship (in case of doubt, the embassy may ask for additional documents, such as a legalised birth certificate).

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 or consular mission 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 embassies or consular missions 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.

The diplomatic mission should send these documents to the Ministry for review before approval.

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 granted to the diplomatic mission, not a right. Abuse of this privilege may lead to its revocation for the entire mission.

## **5.5 Childcare benefits**

Depending on certain terms and conditions, members of a diplomatic mission may be eligible to receive a childcare allowance. Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/belastingdienst/prive/toeslagen/kinderopvangtoeslag/kinderopvangtoeslag-2018/voorwaarden-2018/>

Questions regarding childcare benefits may be sent in through a question form to the following email address: [socialsecurity@minbuza.nl](mailto:socialsecurity@minbuza.nl). The relevant form to be used can be found in [Annexe J](#). Subsequently, the question will be directed by the Ministry to one of the relevant authorities who will provide an answer or reaction to your mission directly.

### *Childcare Act*

Staff members of international organisations with children attending childcare that is not provided by the international organisation itself may be eligible for Dutch childcare benefit. It can be applied for from the Benefits unit of the Tax and Customs Administration (*Belastingdienst Toeslagen*): Information (in Dutch) can also be found at <http://www.toeslagen.nl>

Childcare benefit can only be requested for childcare supplied by a provider or bureau that satisfies Dutch government requirements.

Questions related to childcare benefits should be addressed to the Central Bureau for Tax and Customs Administration.

## 5.6 Work permits for household members

Persons forming part of the household (see 5.1) of members 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:

- If the person concerned is a national of one of the countries of the European Union or the European Economic Area (EEA) or married to an EU national, it is possible for them to work under EU legislation. In such cases, they may retain their diplomatic status. The diplomatic mission 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 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with many countries enabling family members of staff of diplomatic missions or consular posts to engage in gainful employment (see [Annexe E](#)). These family members must obtain authorisation from the Ministry before accepting a job, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant MoU/agreement.

The following words will appear on the back of the identity card of the person in question: *Arbeid is toegestaan/Arbeid is in het kader van MoU toegestaan* (employment permitted/employment permitted under MoU).



## **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: BD/DV, AD/DV).

Persons with the Dutch nationality at the moment of being posted to a mission receive the annotation /NL on their ID-card in addition to the regular code on the card. Examples are: BD/NL, AD/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). 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 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 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.

#### *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 scheme of their home country or a third country. Their coverage must be established by means of a declaration by the authorities of the country where the private servant is insured. The social security scheme must be a legally enacted national scheme. Social security schemes with private companies are not accepted as a legitimate alternative. An employer who employs a private servant who is not covered by a social security scheme 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.

### **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 to a Dutch diplomatic or consular mission in their country of origin or of habitual residence. If there is no Dutch diplomatic or consular mission 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) of the Ministry of Justice and Security (email address: [visa.io@ind.minvenj.nl](mailto:visa.io@ind.minvenj.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 at the Dutch diplomatic or consular mission, the diplomatic 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;
- the number and expiration date of his or her passport;
- the employer's name and the position he or she 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 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 his/her own country or of a third country, a statement to this effect by the authorities of his/her own country or of the third country;
- in cases where the private servant is **not** covered by the social security regulations of his/her 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.

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

The following documents must be submitted to the Dutch diplomatic or consular mission:

- a copy of the Note Verbale from the diplomatic mission or consular post in the Netherlands;
- a duly completed application form;
- a valid passport (the passport's validity must extend at least six months beyond the end of the period for which the visa is being applied);
- two passport photographs: for passport photograph requirements, click on '[Photomatrix guidelines](#)'.

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) of the Ministry of Justice and Security.

#### **7.4 Registration of private servants**

The diplomatic missions and consular posts for which the employer works must register the private servant with the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs within **eight days** of his/her 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 be issued initially 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 in person at the Ministry's Protocol Department, 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. 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 <https://www.government.nl/topics/minimum-wage/amount-of-the-minimum-wage>)

- No employment contract may be terminated during the sickness or pregnancy of the employee;
- 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 employer and 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 <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/szw/onderwerpen>. These guidelines have also been communicated through Note Verbale DPG 2018/189.

Private servants who are not insured under the social security system of the Netherlands cannot be insured under the national health insurance scheme (*zorgverzekering*) but must take out an expatriate health insurance policy.

#### **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 are not permitted. The Ministry reserves the right to request private servants to provide bank statements for verification purposes.

#### **7.8 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. It is not allowed for private servants 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;
- in case the employer is no longer a staff member of the diplomatic mission or consular post
- if the employer fails to comply with the conditions subject to which he/she may employ a private servant.

## **7.9 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 (*ziektekostenverzekering*) 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.

Private servants, who fall under the Dutch social security system, can be registered by their employer with the Dutch Tax Authority through the following link:

[https://download.belastingdienst.nl/belastingdienst/docs/melding\\_lh\\_werkg\\_personeel\\_huis\\_lh5931z8fol.pdf](https://download.belastingdienst.nl/belastingdienst/docs/melding_lh_werkg_personeel_huis_lh5931z8fol.pdf)

## **7.10 Locally recruited private servants**

Only holders of a valid residence and work permit may be employed.

## 8 Local employment contracts

### 8.1 General

The Vienna Conventions distinguish between those who are nationals or permanent residents of the receiving State and those who are not. Embassies may choose to employ Dutch nationals or permanent residents of the Netherlands, but they must observe to only recruit people who may legally work and reside in the Netherlands.

#### 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*).

#### 8.1.2 Personnel directly recruited in another EU country

Nationals of another EU member state may also be employed by an embassy or consulate, if they fall under the provisions on the free movement of labour. For Croatia, a [transitional regime](#) is in effect; for the time being, the full free movement of labour does not apply to them. Those 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 Personnel directly recruited in a third country

It is also possible to recruit people directly from a third country. Like the above-mentioned category they must be in possession of a valid residence permit with working privileges. Moreover, the embassy or consulate must obtain in advance a working permit from the UWV WERKbedrijf (UWVWb). Please note that an embassy is not allowed to employ persons who hold an authorisation for temporary stay but not a work permit.

#### 8.1.4 Questions regarding legal status

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

### 8.2 Contracts for Dutch nationals or permanent residents

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 mandatory provisions of Dutch employment legislation may never be derogated from. These mandatory provisions should always be respected by both the employer and the employee and have been communicated to all diplomatic missions through Note Verbale DPG 2018/189.

The 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 <https://www.government.nl/topics/minimum-wage/contents/amount-of-the-minimum-wage>);
- no employment contract may be terminated during the sickness or pregnancy of the employee;
- salaries must be paid 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 annually).

### **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, the Ministry advises missions 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 permanent residents. 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 possessing Dutch nationality and permanent residents are themselves responsible for paying the employee's share of income tax and social insurance contributions. The embassy or consulate is not obliged to deduct these at source or remit them to the authorities. The embassy or consulate is expected to pay the taxes and charges that are customarily paid by employers in the Netherlands.

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

**NB: These social insurance contributions are not considered to be taxes within the meaning of article 34 of the VCDR.**



The tax authorities 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 other country to avoid double taxation.

In principle, employees who are not exempt have to pay social insurance contributions in the Netherlands. However, whether an individual actually has to pay such contributions depends on any social security conventions in force. This exemption applies solely to income from employment at an embassy or consulate. It does not apply to income from employment elsewhere: income tax must be paid on income from another employer.

For more information about income tax or social insurance contributions please contact Team IFB, General IFB telephone number +31 (0)88 152 2546.

## 9 Social security

### 9.1 General information

#### *Diplomatic and consular staff*

According to 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 insured under the Dutch social security system, unless they have worked in the Netherlands for more than 10 years.

Staff members of diplomatic missions and consulates are automatically insured under the Dutch social security system if:

1. they have Dutch nationality;
2. they are permanent residents of the Netherlands at the time of recruitment;
3. they have taken up gainful employment in the Netherlands, other than for their diplomatic or consular mission or;
4. they receive any Dutch social security benefits.

Staff members who are not exempt may have to pay social insurance contributions in the Netherlands, depending on the social security conventions in force. Some of the bilateral social security conventions 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 convention. It is important for a staff member taking up a posting in the Netherlands to ascertain whether a bilateral social security convention is in force between the sending State and the Netherlands and whether that convention provides for the option of applying the sending State's social security legislation.

Private servants employed by the Ambassador or members of administrative, technical or servicestaff of the Diplomatic Mission or Consulate, can be uninsured, as laid out in Article 13, clause 4, [BUB 1999](#):

- A private servant, employed by the Ambassador or a member of staff, is not obliged to be insured under the national insurance system (volksverzekering) if they have been working in the Netherlands for under 10 years and if they are covered by the social security regulations of their own country or of a third country, unless:

- A. They have Dutch nationality;
- B. They have a residence permit at the time of recruitment;
- C. They have taken up gainful employment in the Netherlands, other than for their diplomatic or consular mission; 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 forming part of the household is linked to that of the partner 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 diplomatic/consular partner is not insured under the Dutch social security system, neither are his/her spouse, partner, children or other family members forming 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 his/her household takes up employment in the Netherlands. In such cases, it is possible for the official not to be insured under the Dutch system while his/her partner, son or daughter is: family members forming part of the household of a sending State's diplomatic/consular staff must be insured under the Dutch national insurance scheme 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, all members of the administrative, technical or service staff who worked uninterruptedly at an embassy or consulate 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. Since 1 May 2010 this possibility has no longer existed for countries whose bilateral social security conventions with the Netherlands do not provide for it. Bilateral conventions that do provide for such a choice are still in force.

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

## **9.2 Healthcare**

Under the Health Insurance Act (*Zorgverzekeringswet*), 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 also 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. People may be entitled to healthcare allowance (a contribution to the cost of their health insurance) if their individual or joint income is under a certain level. Healthcare allowance is paid by the Benefits Office of the Tax and Customs Administration.

In the Netherlands, the following international operating private insurance companies are known for offering insurances for diplomats:

- Allianz Care International health insurance
- Bupa
- Cigna
- Axa

### **9.3 Remittance of contributions by the employer**

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

- Work and Income according to Labour Capacity Act (WIA)
- Invalidity Insurance for Employees Act (WAO)
- Unemployment Insurance Act (WW)
- Sickness Benefits Act (ZW)
- Insurance wholly and permanently incapacitated employees (IVA)
- Insurance for partially incapacitated employees (WGA)

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

The employees in question are responsible for submitting their own tax returns each year to the tax authorities and for paying compulsory Dutch income tax and national insurance contributions (volksverzekeringen).

The aforementioned employee insurances are paid by the employer by means of premiums. The premiums and corresponding percentages can differ per year due to the changing of the name of a premium, or the (de)merging of different premiums.

Each year the Dutch Tax Authority publishes the premiums and corresponding percentages a newsletter after they have been approved in the Dutch parliament.

For further information on the premiums and percentages, the Ministry refers to the Tax Authority newsletters since the newsletters are recognized as authoritative in communicating the relevant percentages. The 2019 newsletter is to be consulted via the following link:

[https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/themaoverstijgend/brochures\\_en\\_publicaties/nieuwsbrief-loonheffingen-2019](https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldcontentnl/themaoverstijgend/brochures_en_publicaties/nieuwsbrief-loonheffingen-2019)

More information on salaries tax and social insurance contributions can be found on the following website: <https://www.government.nl/topics/taxation-and-businesses/contents/salaries-tax-and-social-insurance-contributions>.

The Employee Insurance Agency (Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen, UWV) is responsible for assessing entitlements under the employee insurance scheme and paying out benefits (for more information (in Dutch) see [www.uwv.nl](http://www.uwv.nl)).

The Social Insurance Bank (Sociale Verzekeringsbank, SVB) is responsible for implementing Dutch social security schemes (for more information see <http://svb.nl/int/en/index.jsp>).

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. If they are younger than 18, no separate contribution has to be paid for them.

Questions regarding the obligations a diplomatic missions has as an employer towards locally recruited (Dutch) employees under the Employee benefit schemes or the National Insurance schemes may be send in through a question form to the following email address: [socialsecurity@minbuza.nl](mailto:socialsecurity@minbuza.nl). The relevant form to be used can be found in [Annexe J](#). Subsequently, the question will be directed to one of the relevant authorities (UWV, SVB or Tax Authority) by the Ministry and the authority most suitable to address the issue will provide an answer or reaction to your mission directly.

## 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 (articles 29 and 37 VCDR);
- members of the administrative and technical staff and members of their families forming part of their households (article 37 VCDR);
- members of the service staff in respect of acts performed in the course of their duties (article 37 VCDR).

A general exception to this are 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 VCDR);
- its archives and documents (article 24 VCDR);
- its official correspondence (article 27 VCDR);
- the diplomatic courier (article 27 VCDR);
- the diplomatic bag (article 27 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 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 VCDR);
- a diplomatic agent and members of his or her family passing through the Netherlands provided he or she is proceeding to take up a post or returning from a post (article 40 VCDR).

#### 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. VCCR).

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

- the consular premises (article 31 VCCR);
- the consular archives (article 33 VCCR);
- the official correspondence of the post (article 35 VCCR);

- the consular courier (article 35 VCCR);
- consular officers, to a limited extent (article 41 in conjunction with article 43 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 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 VCDR, 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**

A diplomatic agent enjoys 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 in a civil case. Under article 29 of the VCCR, 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 to engage an attorney. Upon request the Ministry can provide informal advice to diplomatic missions on how to deal with these matters.

*Bailiffs*

A bailiff (*gerechtsdeurwaarder*) is not entitled to serve a summons on a person who enjoys inviolability. In case a bailiff arrives at a diplomatic mission or consular post or the house of a diplomatic agent, he 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 embassies and consular posts should only accept summonses directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

*Witnesses*

A diplomatic agent is under no obligation to act as a witness (article 31 VCDR).

If a consular officer or member of the administrative or technical staff is summoned to attend judicial or administrative proceedings as a witness, he or she may not refuse (article 44 VCCR).

#### **10.4 Immunity from criminal jurisdiction**

Members of diplomatic missions and members of their families who form part of their households enjoy immunity from criminal jurisdiction (article 31 VCDR). If there are suspicions that an offence has been committed by a privileged person, the Public Prosecution Service may pursue the case, unless immunity is invoked. 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 Customs or the Royal Military and Border Police (*Koninklijke Marechaussee*)) 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 by use of their identity card issued 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) on request by the police.

### **10.6 Traffic violations**

Persons with diplomatic immunity must respect the rules and laws of the Netherlands (article 41 VCDR). Dutch motor traffic is among the safest in the world, and compliance with the law contributes to everyone's safety.

#### *Unawareness 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, CDJ, GN or BN registration plate. The offender's address may not always indicate that he/she enjoys 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 control – 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 checked the 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 him- or herself or others. In such cases, in line 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 Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which may subsequently inform the head of the diplomatic mission of the incident.

## 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 its staff. For an overview of all tax exemptions please refer to [Annexe 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*) of the Netherlands has a special desk for international organisations and embassies: Team IFB (*Team Internationale Fiscale Behandeling*), Prinses Beatrixlaan 512, The Hague. Team IFB can be contacted by phone at +31 (0)88 152 2546, by post at Postbus 30509, 2500 GM The Hague, or by email at [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl).

Or:

Ms E.D. Drinhuyzen

Team Internationale Fiscale Behandeling (IFB)

T +31 (0)88 152 3633

M +31 (0)6 1860 6040

[ed.drinhuyzen@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:ed.drinhuyzen@belastingdienst.nl)

General IFB telephone number +31 (0)88 152 2546

Email [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl)

The Ministry of Finance (*Ministerie van Financiën*) may be contacted at:

Postbus 20201, 2500 EE Den Haag

Tel. +31 (0)70 342 8000

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

Address for visitors:

Korte Voorhout 7, 2511 CW Den Haag

Tel. +31 (0)70 342 8646

Email: [secretariaat.izv@minfin.nl](mailto:secretariaat.izv@minfin.nl)

### 11.2 Income tax

Staff of diplomatic missions and consular officers are exempt from Dutch income tax in relation to earnings from their diplomatic or consular duties (article 34 VCDR and article 49 VCCR). This means that they will only be taxed on income not related to their official activities in the

Netherlands, on immovable property located in the Netherlands (such as second homes) and on other income described in chapter 7 of the Income Tax Act.

### 11.3 Conditions for exemption

There are two packages of fiscal privileges (A and B) which the Netherlands accords to diplomatic missions. The difference between these packages concern 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. 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 [Annexe F](#) for further details. In addition, there are quotas for alcoholic beverages, cigarettes (or equivalent in other tobacco products) and fuel for tax-exempted motor vehicles as indicated in [Annexe G](#). These are annual quotas, unless otherwise stipulated. An overview of other tax exemptions accompanying packages A and B can be found in [Annexe H](#).

### 11.4 Value added tax

#### 11.4.1 Conditions and exemption by way of refund

##### **Diplomatic missions and consular posts on the A list:**

Diplomatic missions and consular posts on the A list 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 refund of VAT. 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 on the B list 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 an embassy or 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 an embassy or 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 mission of immovable property intended for official use.

*Staff of diplomatic missions and consular posts on the A list*

Movable property intended for personal use (other than motor vehicles, food, (alcoholic) beverages and tobacco) 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 refund of VAT. 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 the exemption from VAT on the purchase of goods and services to diplomatic missions and consular posts intended for official use and the purchase of goods (except foodstuffs, beverages or tobacco products) for personal use by staff members of the diplomatic missions and consular posts.

As a rule, exemption from VAT takes the form of a refund of tax paid following the submission of an application for a refund. This should be applied for quarterly, within three months of the end of the calendar quarter in which the goods or services were supplied. Applications must be submitted within ninety days after a transaction giving rise to entitlement to a refund. Applicants must use form OB 100, which can be obtained from Team IFB. The application must also include proof of payment of the invoices 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;

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 members of the diplomatic staff and consular officers must be signed by the applicant.

Questions about customs rules and VAT refunds, about refunds of excise duties and related taxes on mineral oils can be addressed to Team IFB, either by phoning +31 (0)88 152 2546 or by sending an email to [IFB.Diplomatieke.Privileges@belastingdienst.nl](mailto: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 special certificate, known as a 15/10 Certificate.

##### *15/10 certificate*

The special certificate is the '*Certificaat voor vrijstelling van BTW en accijnzen*' (Directive 77/388/EEC, article 15, paragraph 10 and Directive 92/12/EEC, article 23, paragraph 1) in either Dutch or English. A separate certificate is needed for each purchase. These certificates 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.

If the application is found to be correct, the certificate will be stamped by Team IFB. The completed and stamped 15/10 certificate must be submitted to the supplier, who should keep it in its records as proof that no VAT has been charged. The supplier may then provide the goods or services free of VAT. The certificate can also facilitate exemption from VAT on purchases in other EU states.

If you have any questions or wish to request any of the relevant forms (e.g. D39) please contact Team IFB, either by phoning +31 (0)88 152 2546 or by sending an email to [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl).

#### **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 of 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 beforehand by Team IFB through the D39 form. In order to be eligible for the tax exemptions on importing personal goods, **all** of the following conditions must be met:

- You are moving from a country outside of the European Union to the Netherlands and will be living in the Netherlands or another country of the European Union;
- You are thus transferring from your original place of residence to the European Union;
- You have lived outside of the European Union for at least twelve consecutive months;
- 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 twelve months** of taking up employment in the Netherlands or another country of the European Union;
- Loaning, pledging, selling, leasing out or transferring the goods within twelve months of the date on which they were imported is not permitted.

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 vehicle;
- Non-portable materials for professional use.

In order to be exempted from paying import duties on household effects, all conditions, set by the Tax and Customs Administration, must be fulfilled.

The website of the Tax Authority 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 either by phoning +31(0)881522546 or emailing [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl).

#### **11.5.2 Taxes and duties on imported goods originating outside of the EU**

*The procedure and the libre permis.*

Subject to certain conditions (official use or personal use by eligible personnel) and restrictions (quota) those eligible for this tax exemption may import goods (including tobacco and alcohol) originating from outside the EU duty-free by using the form Douane 39 (D39). For alcohol and tobacco, the applicable conditions will apply to both the tax-exempt imports and purchases at an



excise good location (*accijnsgoederenplaats*, AGP). To calculate the quota, both import 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 his/her authorised representative. His or her name and signature must be recorded at the Protocol Department in advance. He or she 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(n) certified/approved D39 form is **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.

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

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

For transactions in other EU member states, a special certificate for each transaction in the other EU member state is needed in order to prove to the supplier and to the tax authorities of the state in question that the person is entitled to tax exemption. The tax authorities of the EU member state in which the supplier is located decide whether there is eligibility for a tax exemption or a tax refund in that member state. Special certificates for VAT exemption can be obtained from Team IFB.

For questions concerning D39 and tax-free importation of goods, please contact Team IFB by phoning +31 (0)88 152 2811 (Ms S. Greeve-van Heel), +31 (0)88 152 2655 (Ms M.T. van Bergen) or +31 (0)88 152 2546 or email [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@belastingdienst.nl).

#### **11.6 Transfer tax on immovable property**

Exemption from transfer tax (*overdrachtsbelasting*) can be granted in respect of the acquisition by 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 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.

The Ministry of Finance examines each case on an individual basis to see whether the requirement of reciprocity has been met. Exemptions can only be obtained through the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by sending a Note Verbale and submitting the draft deed of conveyance. Embassies and consular posts that approach Team IFB directly to request exemption from transfer tax are redirected to the Protocol Department at the Ministry.

If the application for exemption is received at least six weeks before the date of transfer of the property, 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.

## **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 motor vehicle tax (*motorrijtuigenbelasting MRB*).

Staff of a diplomatic mission or consular post may be exempt 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, see chapter 12 'Cars' (CD, BN/GN). Administrative, technical and service staff are no longer exempt from motor vehicle tax after having lived in the Netherlands for over 10 years.

### **11.7.2 Car and motorcycle tax (BPM)**

Exemption from BPM 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 embassy. Exemption from BPM is granted subject to the condition that the vehicle has CD/CDJ/BN/GN registration plates on the basis of reciprocity.

Members of a diplomatic mission or consular post may be exempt from BPM on the vehicles intended for personal use on the basis of reciprocity. Administrative, technical and service staff who have lived in the Netherlands for over 10 years are no longer exempt from BPM.

For both official and personal use, the exemption from BPM ends when the car is sold, leased, hired out, pledged or transferred free of charge or in return for payment. Using the car 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.

### 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 who have lived in the Netherlands for over 10 years are no longer exempt from excise duties on motor vehicle fuel.

## 11.8 Energy tax

If exemption from VAT is granted for the supply of natural gas or electricity intended for the official use by a diplomatic or consular mission, exemption from energy tax is also granted. The exemption is granted through a refund on the basis of the energy company's final invoice. These invoices 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 refunded on the basis of the application mentioned above.

## 11.9 Municipal taxes

Diplomatic missions or consular posts and their staff members are entitled to exemption from certain municipal taxes (but not charges for services rendered), depending on their status. Exemption is granted only where the taxes concerned relate to the official activities of the mission or post and the personal use by their members including their dependants. The term 'official activities' includes providing accommodation for staff. Of course, only those members of staff who are neither nationals nor considered to be permanent residents of the Netherlands are eligible for exemption. In granting exemptions under this regulation, 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 and head of mission (*onroerende zaakbelasting, OZB*);
- municipal tax on second homes (*forensenbelasting*);
- dog licences (*hondenbelasting*);
- public announcements tax (*reclamebelasting*);
- tax for installations on public land or water (*precariobelasting*).

Please note that these assessments may sometimes be sent by the municipal tax authorities even though you are exempted from municipal taxes. In such cases, you can lodge an objection with the municipality within six weeks of the date of the assessment.

### 11.9.1 Charges for services rendered

It should be noted that no exemptions are granted in respect of charges levied for specific services rendered. No exemption is therefore granted in respect of administrative charges (*leges*), betterment levy (*baatbelasting*), sewerage charges (*rioolrechten*), waste disposal charges (*afvalstoffenheffing*), waste collection charges (*reinigingsrechten*) and toll charges. 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.

### **11.9.2 Water authority charges**

These charges consist of:

1. the Waterboard charges paid by the owner of the premises (*watersysteemheffing gebouw*) of the premises;
2. the Waterboard charges paid by occupier (*watersysteemheffing ingezetenen*)
3. the water treatment charges (*zuiveringsheffing*).

Exemption from the waterboard charges for owners is only granted to diplomatic missions and consular posts and the head of mission, unless it is a second home.

Exemption from the waterboard charges for residents is granted to diplomatic missions and consular posts as well as to the diplomatic agents, consular officers, and administrative and technical staff of diplomatic missions, unless they are permanently resident in the Netherlands or have Dutch nationality.

Please note that the water treatment charge has to be paid by everyone residing in a particular district. There are no exemptions, as this is a charge for a specific service rendered.

#### *Tap water*

Diplomatic missions and consular posts eligible for exemption from VAT on the delivery of water for official purposes are also exempt from VAT on tap water. A request 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 the tax authorities (Team IFB) within 13 weeks of the dispatch of the final invoice by the water company.

## 12 Cars

### 12.1 Tax exemption and special registration certificate

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises privileged persons to consult Team IFB (see Chapter 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;
- VAT on the purchase of a new car in the EU;
- car and motorcycle tax (*belasting op personenauto's en motorrijwielen* BPM) when registering a car or motorcycle in the Netherlands;
- motor vehicle tax (*motorrijtuigenbelasting*, MRB).

Staff members of diplomatic missions or consular posts based in the Netherlands may purchase a motor vehicle tax free for personal use, to perform their work in the Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> Exemption from BPM is granted on the condition that the vehicle has CD/CDJ/BN/GN registration. 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.<sup>4</sup> The exemption is granted in advance and is subject to conditions.<sup>5</sup> Exemption from tax is always granted subject to the condition that the exemption ends when the car is disposed of. This includes selling, leasing, hiring out and pledging the car, and transferring 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.<sup>6</sup>

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:

Belastingdienst kantoor Den Haag  
 Team IFB  
 Afdeling Motorrijtuigen  
 Postbus 30509

<sup>3</sup> IFZ02/1208M, 5.2.1.

<sup>4</sup> Article 39, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Vienna, 18 April 1961.

<sup>5</sup> IFZ02/1208M, 5.3.1 and 7.1.

<sup>6</sup> Article 32, paragraph 3, State Taxes Act Implementation Order 1994.

2500 GM The Hague

Tel: +31 (0)88 152 2546

The application should include the following information:

- name and full address of the person concerned;
- BSN (citizen service number);
- 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* form;
- a copy of the sales contract;
- the RDW 137 special registration certificate application form;
- a copy of the certificate of conformity (*certificaat van overeenstemming*, CVO);
- a document demonstrating that the car is or will be insured;
- foreign MoT report
- a registration certificate for the car, if one has already been issued;

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 number – should be addressed to Mr R.W.J. Strang at +31 (0)88 152 2443, [rwj.strang@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:rwj.strang@belastingdienst.nl), Ms S. Greeve-van Heel at +31 (0)881522811 or Mr J.P. Tuijt at +31 (0)881522587 or by email to [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto:Haaglanden.CB_IFB@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 embassy or consulate.

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 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 for the purchase of used cars in the Netherlands.

### **12.1.3 Purchasing and 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. Blank forms are available at the Road Transport Agency (Rijksdienst voor het Wegverkeer) in Veendam, tel. +31 (0)598 699242.

### **12.1.4 Purchasing a used car outside the Netherlands**

When 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. Any 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 embassy or consulate staff member**

When a privileged person buys an already tax exempted used car, the *Douane 39* form, a RDW 137 special registration certificate application form, the original special registration certificate, the APK report (proof of annual vehicle inspection as required by law) and an insurance certificate must be submitted. The granted exemption will be taken over on new special registration certificate to 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/CDJ/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 costs of 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 (CD/CDJ/BN/GN) into a regular Dutch registration to the Team IFB, it is therefore advisable to contact the RDW (Road Transport Agency) in Veendam at +31 (0)598 699 242.

## **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, rented 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 new owner will in principle be responsible for paying the costs of the inspection.

If you wish to sell a tax-free car to a non-privileged person, you should submit a written request to Team IFB to waive the exemption. Team IFB will calculate the tax and send the owner concerned a request to pay stating the amount of tax due. Once the tax has been paid, Team IFB will agree to the issuance of an ordinary Dutch registration plate for the car. In case the tax has not been (fully) paid, Team IFB cannot approve the exempted purchase of a new motor vehicle with a special licence plate either.

To apply for a Dutch registration certificate, the following documents should be submitted to Team IFB in The Hague:

- an RDW 134 registration certificate application form;
- the original special registration certificate;
- the APK report;
- a copy of the passport of the person who sells the car;
- the request to waive exemption.

Only if the above mentioned taxes have been paid, Team IFB can approve the exempt purchase of a new motor vehicle with a special registration plate.

After you submit the above-mentioned documents, the RDW will send you a letter dependent on the specific situation to arrange an appointment at one of the RDW offices so that you can identify yourself, as required by Dutch law. Your identification at an RDW office completes the application process for a Dutch registration certificate.

### **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.

### **12.4 Exporting a tax-free car**

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

#### *Person with exemption leaves embassy or consulate and takes car to country of destination*

In this case, a verbal note, a copy of the registration certificate and a form "Request to waive the tax exemption for a vehicle" should be sent to Team IFB. Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam with the request to terminate the registration after ninety days. The RDW will send a letter to the person concerned with the confirmation and date when the special registration will terminate. If you do cancel the registration certificate, the CBM (*Centraal Bureau Motorrijtuigenbelasting*) will continue to send motor vehicle tax bills to the owner.



*Person with exemption continues working at embassy or consulate and car is exported*

If the car is exported **outside of 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 the owner motor vehicle tax bills (if applicable). If the car is exported **outside the Netherlands but remains within the EU**, VAT and possible customs duties are due since the car is no longer being used for the purposes 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 a EU member state. A request should be submitted to waive the tax exemption. The registration certificate should be enclosed with the request. Team IFB calculates the VAT and possibly the customs duties. They will send the owner the calculation of the taxes due and a request for payment. After the registration certificate, Team IFB will inform the RDW in Veendam and 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).

## 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) for the registration and issuing of a special registration number. For proper registration of your vehicle, it is important to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as soon as possible of any changes in 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. When your address is correct in PROBAS, it will be changed in the vehicle registration database.

## 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 Ministry ID 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 (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 either one of the following procedures:

- a. submit the application to the RDW directly (Non-EU/EEA licenses or no BRP (municipal personal records database) registration).
- 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 driving licence **AND** is also registered in the BRP.

When submitting an application directly to the RDW the application form 'Aanvraag rijbewijs (niet woonachtig in Nederland)' (driving licence application (not) resident in the Netherlands) can be requested from the RDW by sending the privileged person's personal details (as specified below) to [rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl](mailto:rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl):

*Personal details*

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

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 mailed 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, accompanied by the required documents, can be addressed to:

RDW  
Unit Rijbewijzen  
Postbus 9000  
9640 HA Veendam

**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 provided in the application.

For more information on exchanging a foreign driving license please consult the [user guide](#) "driving licence application (non) resident in the Netherlands (3 E 0395)" by the RDW. For any questions regarding licences please contact the RDW at [rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl](mailto:rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl) or Christien Jonker at [cjonker@rdw.nl](mailto:cjonker@rdw.nl).

## 12.7 Practical information

### *Competency 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 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 number 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 only do so if they are registered with the BRP of the municipality where they reside.

For any questions regarding driving licenses in the Netherlands please contact the RDW either by phone or email:

Unit Rijbewijzen

Email: [rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl](mailto:rijbewijsmailing@rdw.nl)

Tel.: 0900 235 9739

Fax: +31 (0)598 69 9192

## 12.8 Annual Vehicle Inspection (APK) and Law Liability Insurance Motor Vehicles (WAM)

By law all vehicles manufactured after 1 January 2005, have to undergo a technical inspection in the interests of road safety once a year.

Adequate information, especially on the inspection periods according to the age of the vehicles, can be found online under

<https://www.rdw.nl/particulier/voertuigen/auto/apk/wanneer-en-hoe-vaak-apk-keuren/apk-keuringsschema>. Vehicles are to be inspected timely through a wide network of car dealers and garages who will at the same time forward the respective 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 Law Liability Insurance Motor Vehicles (Wet Aansprakelijkheidsverzekeringen motorrijtuigen, **WAM**) is a compulsory basic insurance for registered motor vehicles. The use of any motor vehicle without valid insurance coverage is an offence and punished by law.

This insurance, offered by insurance companies in the Netherlands, exclusively provides limited coverage for legal liability to a third party – 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 Road Traffic Authority (RDW) in Veendam. Dutch insurance agencies make certain that the necessary insurance details, including the coverage of WAM, are registered accordingly.

## **12.9 Parking**

### *Parking near diplomatic missions and consular posts or official residences*

The municipal authorities are fully autonomous in setting policy on reserved parking bays. The municipality of The Hague is willing, where necessary and possible, to mark as reserved two parking bays on the public road outside the main offices of a diplomatic mission and one outside the official residence of the organisation's head. Whether or not these parking bays are granted depends on the parking situation at the diplomatic mission or residence and the possibilities for public parking nearby. These parking bays may be used only by cars belonging to the mission, not by visitors. Even though the parking bays are reserved, the Embassy needs to apply for a parking permit. Embassies could apply for a 'functional permit' with which they are able to park throughout the city.

A mission can apply for a reserved parking bay directly to:

Municipality of The Hague

Department of City Management (Stadsbeheer / Sector Wegen en Water)

Permits Division (Afdeling Vergunningen)

P.O. Box 12651

2500 DP The Hague

or by email to [gereserveerdeplaatsen.parkeren@denhaag.nl](mailto: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*) at +31 (0)70 353 3000.

### *Parking during receptions or other events*

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

The following information must be provided:

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

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

#### *Municipality of Wassenaar*

The rules for the municipality of Wassenaar are different. The police force here is willing to consider all requests from diplomatic missions for assistance with parking near the official residences of heads of mission in Wassenaar. Whether the request is granted depends on the number of guests, and the time and place of the reception. Diplomatic missions 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 the 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 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 (a tenancy agreement, for instance) and their Ministry of Foreign Affairs identity card. The cost for this permit varies according to 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, at +31 (0)70 353 3000 or by e-mail: [parkeervergunningen@denhaag.nl](mailto:parkeervergunningen@denhaag.nl). This information is also available at the Expat Service of The Hague International Centre located on the ground floor of the City Hall (Atrium), Spui 70, The Hague, tel. +31 (0)70 353 5043.

### **12.9.1 Parking near the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

#### *General*

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

#### *Using a chauffeur-driven car*

Members of the Diplomatic Corps using a chauffeur-driven car to visit the Ministry (*see map below, text box No. 1*) may use the VIP entrance at "Schedeldoekshaven (*see map below, text box No. 2*)" 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 at the "Oranjebuitensingel" (via the transport official), while those with chauffeur-driven cars wishing to deliver other documents should report to the Central Mail Room counter at "Oranjebuitensingel 8" (*see map below, text box No. 3*).

## Map



Source: Google Maps

## **13 Visits**

### **13.1 General information**

The Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its capacity as Protocol Department for the Ministry of General Affairs, is responsible for the overall organisation and logistics of incoming visits by heads of state and government, foreign ministers 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 foreign ministers, 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 is at all times politically responsible.

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 and a protocol official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During their state, official and or working visit to the Netherlands, heads of state will be accompanied by an Aide-de-Camp to H.M. the King and a protocol official. 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.

### **13.3 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.

### **13.4 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 from the Central Security and Protection



Division. Heads of government will be accompanied by a protocol official during their stay 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**

Foreign ministers on a working visit will in principle be met on arrival by a protocol official, officials from their embassy and a security officer from the Central Security and Protection Division. 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.

### **13.6 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 from the Central Security and Protection Division. 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 foreign ministers 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 foreign ministers is in principle the sole responsibility of the Dutch authorities.

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

- name, place, date of birth and passport number of the security officer(s);
- name, type and registration number of the firearm and rounds of ammunition;
- 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 Schiphol Airport

### 14.1 Entry passes to Schiphol Airport

Eligible persons from diplomatic missions and consular posts may 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 embassy is eligible for a limited number of personal Schiphol passes related to the number of diplomatic staff:

- embassies with a staff of no more than seven diplomats qualify for a maximum of three passes;
- embassies 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 and without the Ministry's intervention.

The address of the office concerned is:

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: <https://www.schiphol.nl/en/work-at-schiphol/>

Ambassadors will be guided personally through the application and issuing process by an officer from the Access Centre.

Due to Schiphol security regulations it is not possible to exempt ambassadors or heads of mission from the short test that must be passed in order to obtain a Schiphol Pass. Ambassadors do have priority to take the test. They may make an appointment through the Schiphol Badge Center, Evert van der Beekstraat 202, Schiphol (tel.: +31 (0)20 601 2626; email: [toegangszaken@schiphol.nl](mailto: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:

<https://www.schiphol.nl/en/work-at-schiphol/page/which-tests-must-you-take/>

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 foreign ministers, 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.

In all other cases, diplomatic missions and consular posts must make reservations through the VIP Lounge directly by email to [VIP\\_centrum@schiphol.nl](mailto:VIP_centrum@schiphol.nl) and bear the costs themselves.

Please note that the use of the VIP Lounge does not exempt the security check 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, 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 the reasonable ground 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 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

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 to avoid a security check. The identity card is valid for exemption of the security check; a valid passport can be asked for when

crossing the border. These are two separate procedures in which the different documents have to be presented.

As of 25 May 2011, privileged persons and members of their families who are nationals of countries outside the EEA or Switzerland and who have a privileged person's identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bearing the code AD, AO or AC will have the option of joining Schiphol Airport's Privium programme (for a fee). Following a biometric scan, travellers registered with Privium are given fast-track entry to or exit from the Netherlands via a separate channel. This is possible because the thorough inspection required by the Schengen Agreement will already have been performed as part of the Privium application process, at which point the traveller's personal details are registered (see: <https://www.schiphol.nl/en/privium/>)

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 at 0800 1814.

#### **14.5 Incoming flights**

The latest flight information is available at the yellow Schiphol information desks at the airport or through the special Schiphol Amsterdam Airport app:

<http://www.schiphol.nl/Travellers/FlightInformation/SchipholAppAndMobileWebsite.htm#>.

Information on arrival gates, when known, may be obtained by telephone (for a charge): on 0900 0141 (press 2 for English and an operator will inform you of the arrival gate) or from abroad on +31 20 794 0800. 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](mailto:sao@mindef.nl); tel.: +31 (0)20 603 9472; fax: +31 (0)20 603 9473). Please be aware of the fact that the authorities may ask for a valid passport when crossing the border.

#### **14.7 Parking**

If CD parking is unavailable due to illegal parking by non-diplomats, please contact the Royal Military and Border Police at 0800 1814 and request to be connected to Schiphol landside operations. Schiphol Airport Operations has promised to be more vigilant to ensure that CD parking spots are available only to diplomats.

Public parking is also available next to Departure Hall 3 (see <https://www.schiphol.nl/en/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 mission 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 6490 during office hours (09.00 – 17.00), or through the Ministry's Front Office (*centrale meldkamer*) outside office hours at +31 (0)70 348 4278.

In case 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 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 at +31 (0)88 964 9649.

#### **15.4 Measures against burglary, vandalism and fire**

All diplomatic missions and consular posts should, as a standard, 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 missions and consular posts 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. The municipal authorities must be notified in writing, in advance, of plans to hold demonstrations.

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: 088 964 9649 (Diplomatic Front Office) // 0900 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 licenses 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, foreign ministers 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**

An embassy may open a polling station on its premises without requesting permission. However, it is kindly requested to notify the Ministry of this fact so that the police can prepare for possible large crowds. Polling stations outside embassy premises are also to be arranged by the embassy. As soon as the embassy has found a suitable location for these polling stations, the Ministry would appreciate receiving a Note Verbale specifying the locations so that it can inform the competent authorities.

**Annexe A - Specimen declaration for travel purposes 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

.....

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 6138 (outside office hours +31 (0)70 348 4278), fax: +31 (0)70 348 5268, email: [DPG@minbuza.nl](mailto:DPG@minbuza.nl).

The Hague,

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

**Annexe 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 [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and has the honour to inform the Ministry that [name of visa applicant], a national of [country of origin], will be working for the [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] as [position] in the [name of department/office/division] as from [date] for a period of [duration of the employment contract].

*In cases of family reunification:*

... has the honour to inform the Ministry that the spouse/child of [name of employee], who is working for the [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] as [position], will apply for a visa for the Netherlands for the purpose of joining [his/her husband/wife/father/mother]. The [name of diplomatic mission or consular post] requests the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assist in the issuance of a visa for [name(s) of visa applicant(s)]. The visa application(s) will be submitted to the [Embassy/Consulate] of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in [place and country]:

Name of staff member/spouse/child:

Address:

Date and place of birth:

Passport number:

Date and place of issue:

Expiry date:

*[include this information for each person applying for a visa]*

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]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

[official stamp of the diplomatic mission or consular post]

Attn. DPG/NG

Cc: [visa applicant(s)]

**Annexe C - Specimen request for assistance with a visa for a private visit to privileged staff member (see section [2.4](#) and [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]

**Annexe 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 5.2](#))**

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 (ninety 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 ninety 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

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



**Annexe 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, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to applicable quota*
Duty-free tobacco (imported)	No	Yes, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to 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 according to applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and according to applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and according to applicable quota	Yes, both excise duty and VAT and according to applicable quota

\* Max. the first 10 years after taking up employment/posting in the Netherlands.

## Package B (Vienna)

Exempted taxes	Embassy or 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, according to applicable quota	Yes, according to applicable quota	No	No
Duty-free tobacco (imported)	No	Yes, according to 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 according to applicable quota	Excise duty only and according to applicable quota	Excise duty only and according to applicable quota	Excise duty only and according to 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.

**Annexe G - Quota for alcoholic beverages, cigarettes 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.

\* Quota are applied on a yearly basis.

Annexe H - Other fiscal privileges (see section [11.1](#) and [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	Yes	No	No	No
Tax on tap water	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Water authority charges</b>				
Water system tax paid by the owner and user ( <i>watersysteemheffing gebouwd/eigenaren</i> )	Yes	Yes (unless private property)	No	No
Water system tax paid by the occupier ( <i>watersysteemheffing ingezetenen</i> )	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Municipal taxes</b>				
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
Advertising tax ( <i>reclamebelasting</i> ) (only for purposes relating to their official activities)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tax for installations on public land or water ( <i>precariobelasting</i> ) (only for purposes relating to their 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>rioolrechten</i> )	No	No	No	No

Waste disposal charges ( <i>afvalstoffenheffing</i> )	No	No	No	No
Waste collection charges ( <i>reinigingsrechten</i> )	No	No	No	No
Toll charges ( <i>tolheffing</i> )	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.

**Annexe I - List of addresses (see [Introduction](#), page 5)**

**Diplomatic missions and consular posts**

<http://www.government.nl/issues/embassies-consulates-and-other-representations>

**International organisations**

<https://www.government.nl/topics/staff-of-foreign-missions-and-international-organisations>

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

Postbus 20061

2500 EB Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 348 6486 (inside and outside office hours)

Fax: +31 (0)70 348 4848

<http://www.minbuza.nl/en>

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

Fax: +31 (0)70 348 5268

Email: [DPG@minbuza.nl](mailto:DPG@minbuza.nl)

Host Nation Division

Tel.: +31 (0)70 348 4905

**Ministry of Justice and Security**

Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie

Postbus 20301

2500 EH Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 370 7911

<https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-justice-and-security>

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

Postbus 16115

2500 BC Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 370 7234

Fax: +31 (0)70 370 4631

<https://www.government.nl/topics/identification-documents/question-and-answer/how-do-i-apply-for-a-certificate-of-conduct-vog>

**Immigration and Naturalisation Service**

[Contact](#)

<https://ind.nl/en>

**Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment**

Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid

Postbus 90801

2509 LV Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 333 4444

<https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-social-affairs-and-employment>

Address for visitors: Anna van Hannoverstraat 4, The Hague

**UWV WERKbedrijf**

Tel.: 0800 8001

[https://www.werk.nl/werk\\_nl/werknemer/eu/working-netherlands](https://www.werk.nl/werk_nl/werknemer/eu/working-netherlands)

**Social Insurance Bank**

Sociale Verzekeringsbank

Postbus 9104

2300 PC Leiden

Tel.: +31 (0)71 512 9610

<http://svb.nl/int/en/index.jsp>

Address for visitors: Stationsplein 1, Leiden

**Ministry of Finance**

Ministerie van Financiën

Postbus 20201

2500 EE Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 342 8000

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

Directie Internationale Fiscale Zaken (IFZ)

Korte Voorhout 7

2511 CW Den Haag

Tel.: +31 (0)70 342 8366

Email: [secretariat.ifz@minfin.nl](mailto:secretariat.ifz@minfin.nl)

**Tax and Customs Administration**

Belastingdienst/Team IFB

Postbus 30509

2500 GM Den Haag

Tel.: + 31 (0)88 152 3294

Fax: + 31 (0)88 152 3360

Email: [Haaglanden.CB\\_IFB@belastingdienst.nl](mailto: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.: 0900 0739  
Tel.: +31 (0)598 393 330  
<https://www.rdw.nl/information-in-english>

**Central Office for Motor Vehicle Driving Testing**

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)  
Postbus 5301  
2280 HH Rijswijk  
Tel.: 0900 0210  
<https://www.cbr.nl/nl.htm>

**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  
<http://www.denhaag.nl/en.htm>

The Hague international centre  
Tel.: +31 (0)70 353 5043  
<https://www.thehagueinternationalcentre.nl/>

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



**Annexe J - Question form – social security (see [section 9.3](#))**

**Question form – Good employment: rights and duties**

Please provide for a clear description of your concern and make sure all fields are filled in properly.  
The completed form may be send to [socialsecurity@minbuza.nl](mailto:socialsecurity@minbuza.nl).

Should the Ministry, Tax Authority (Belastingdienst), Institute for Employee Benefit Schemes (UWV) or Social Insurance Bank (SVB) have any further questions about your concern, the relevant authority would like to be able to contact the author of the request directly.

**Please provide your contact details hereunder.**

Name of the contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the diplomatic mission or international organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select one of the following options. The question concerns:**

- [Employee benefit schemes](#)
- [National Insurance schemes](#)
- Other, namely \_\_\_\_\_

*Description of the question:*

*Before filling in this form I tried to find an answer to my question by:*

**Information box**

<p>The Employee benefit schemes includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sickness Benefits Act</li><li>• Disability Benefits Act</li><li>• Unemployment Benefits Act</li><li>• Disablement Assistance Act for handicapped young persons</li><li>• Act on Income According to labour capacity</li><li>• Improved Gate Keepers Act</li></ul>	<p>The National Insurance schemes includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General Old Age Pension Act</li><li>• General Surviving Relatives Act</li><li>• General Child Benefit Act</li><li>• Long-term care Act</li></ul>
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