

# Destination Guide for Netherlands



## Overview

### Destination Guide Content

## Destination Risk Levels

**+** Low Medical Risk for Netherlands

**🛡️** Low Travel Risk for Netherlands

## Standing Travel Advice

- Travel to Netherlands can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take normal security precautions against petty and street crime.
- There is a credible risk of terrorist attacks by Islamist extremists in major cities in the Netherlands. Government buildings, public transport and high-profile commercial interests are likely targets. Be alert to suspicious behaviour and report any suspect packages to the authorities.
- Issues of immigration and integration as well as those related to foreign political developments have resulted in a number of high-profile incidents in recent years. Most related protests are small and relatively orderly, though the potential for escalation into unrest remains, if a new, highly sensitive issue emerges. Avoid all demonstrations, even if they appear peaceful.
- Security alerts or hoaxes can trigger the short-notice evacuation of transport hubs or public locations, causing disruption. Follow all directives issued by the authorities during any security operation and do not act on the basis of unverified information.

# Destination Guide for Netherlands



## Before You Travel

### Destination Guide Content

## Visa Requirements

### IMMIGRATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

#### British

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

#### Australian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required Yes

#### Canadian

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

#### USA

- Passport Required Yes
- Visa Required No
- Return Ticket Required No

## Visas

Passport valid for at least three months beyond length of stay is required by all nationals, except EU nationals who hold a valid national ID card.

Nationals referred to in the chart above and mentioned in the list on the Netherlands' foreign ministry [website](#) do not need visa for up to three months. All other nationals must apply for visas before travelling to the Netherlands. The visa-issuing policy is generally straightforward. However, it may take 15 days to two months to obtain a visa. Foreign nationals can apply at embassies or consulates of the Schengen country where they intend to spend the most time during their trip.

Requirement for a transit visa can be checked on the official [website](#).

For stays exceeding 90 days, an authorisation for temporary stay (MVV) is required by all nationals except citizens of the EU member states.

As per EU requirements, starting from mid-2025, nationals of [visa-exempt countries](#) will need to obtain a European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) travel authorisation to visit any of the European countries mentioned here for up to 90 days within any 180-day period.

The exact date of its implementation is yet to be announced. For updates on the ETIAS launch date and new requirements, check the [ETIAS news corner](#).

ETIAS applications can be made via official ETIAS website or the official ETIAS mobile app once it is operational. For information on travel documents required to apply for ETIAS and payment exemptions, visit [here](#).

ETIAS travel authorisation is valid for three years or until the travel document used in the application process expires, whichever comes first. It is for short-term stays and allows business travellers and foreign nationals to stay up to 90 days within any 180-day period. Most applications will be processed within minutes; however, in some cases it may take longer ranging from four to 30 days.

If your application is rejected, the email will provide the reasons for this decision. It will also include information about how to appeal, details of the competent authority, as well as the relevant time limit to appeal. Applicants of rejected ETIAS can also apply for ETIAS travel authorisation with limited validity. More information about this is available [here](#).

## Entry/Exit Requirements

### Entry/Exit requirements

All passports should contain at least two blank pages at the time of application for visa along with a proof of sufficient funds and a valid return/onward ticket.

Foreign nationals travelling to and from EU member countries do not face any restrictions on the import or export of local or foreign currencies. However, travellers to and from other countries are required to declare any amount that exceeds 10,000 euros. EU nationals are only required to produce evidence of their EU nationality and identity to be admitted to the Netherlands (an EU Member State). This evidence can take the form of a valid national passport or a national identity card. Either is accepted.

## Cultural Tips

### CULTURAL ISSUES AND ETIQUETTE

There are no legal restrictions for LGBTQ+ individuals. Societal attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community are generally tolerant.

## Getting There

### METHOD OF ARRIVAL

#### By air

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol ([AMS](#)) is the country's main international airport. Eindhoven Airport ([EIN](#)), the country's second-largest airport, is five miles (8km) north-west of Eindhoven (Noord-Brabant province), while Rotterdam-The Hague Airport ([RTM](#)) is the third-largest airport.

Security at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is good, though petty crime is a problem. Pickpockets target weary travellers who are arriving or departing late at night, particularly those overloaded with heavy luggage and laptops. People are especially vulnerable at car-rental counters, food and drink outlets and check-in desks. Foreign nationals using the Amsterdam airport should keep their travel documents safe, watch their baggage at all times and ensure that electronic goods are secure.

Airlines have variable security standards. You may wish to consult the European Commission's [website](#) for a list of airlines banned within the EU and the US Federal Aviation Administration's [website](#) for a database of aviation accidents and statistics.

#### By land

Rail and bus connections to Germany (from Amsterdam and Utrecht), France (via Brussels, Belgium) and Switzerland (via Frankfurt, Germany) are convenient. Overland border crossings from Belgium and Germany are very good and safe.

## Getting Around

### BY AIR

National carrier Royal Dutch Airlines ([KLM](#)) runs flights between Amsterdam, Eindhoven (North Brabant province) and Maastricht (Limburg province). The small size of the country and the proximity of most major cities mean that most internal travel is undertaken by road or railway, with domestic air travel being limited.

### BY ROAD

The road system is excellent and driving is a good way of travelling between cities. Traffic drives on the right and vehicles approaching from the right side are favoured. Car hire is widely available. International car-hire companies, such as [Avis](#), [Europcar](#), and [Hertz](#), are well represented in the country. Motorists need to be at least 18 years old to drive in the Netherlands. Foreign nationals from EU countries or European Economic Area countries can use their national driving licences in the Netherlands for a period of 15 years from the date of original issue in their home country, after which they will have to procure a Dutch permit. Drivers from other nations can use their national licence for 185 days after moving to the Netherlands.

Congestion is a major problem on the motorway network and parking in larger cities can be an issue. Parking fines are severe. One-way systems and cycle-lanes can also make driving in cities difficult. Drivers should be particularly aware of cyclists, even though there are special cycle lanes. The speed limits are 32 miles per hour (50kph) in built-up areas and 62-75 miles per hour (100-120kph) on highways. Motorists should carry an emergency warning triangle and a high-visibility vest for use in case of a breakdown or accident. The usage of mobile phone while driving is strictly prohibited.

### BY TAXI

Taxis are a safe and convenient way of travelling around urban areas. Many tourists have become victim of taxi drivers taking the longest route to the desired location. It is advised to only use registered taxis, which can be identified by the 'Taxi' sign on the roof. Illegal taxis also operate in the larger cities. Some taxi drivers will be unfamiliar with street names; it is advised to ask them to use the GPS navigation. Taxis can be picked up at taxi stands or booked by telephone. People should ensure that the meter is on before commencing the journey or else negotiate a fare before setting off. Mobile application ride-sharing services, such as Uber, are a reasonably safe and reliable form of transport for business travellers in major cities.

## **BY TRAIN**

A fast and efficient rail service, including double-decker commuter trains, links most major cities and towns. It is advisable to buy tickets for the faster express services, rather than the stopping services. Tickets can be purchased from the [Netherlands Railways](#) offices as well as from ticket vending machines in stations. Alternatively, people may buy an [OV-chipkaart](#) (public transport card). Travelling in first class is more comfortable during peak hours in the Randstad area (comprising the cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Rotterdam).

## **BY OTHER MEANS**

There is an extensive regional bus network. This service is convenient and cheap.

## **Business Women**

### **BUSINESSWOMEN**

There are few issues that will affect women in particular. Nevertheless, businesswomen should avoid walking alone late at night in most large cities and rural areas.

## **Working Week**

### **WORKING WEEK**

- Working week: Monday to Friday
- Office hours: 09.00-17.00
- Banking hours: 09.00-18.00; some are open on Saturdays as well.

## Language & Money

### LANGUAGE

The official language is Dutch. However, English, German and French are also widely spoken, especially in cities and main tourist areas. A few polite phrases in Dutch will be appreciated.

### MONEY

The Netherlands is a member of the European Economic and Monetary Union and the euro is the national currency. ATMs are widely available. Major credit cards, such as Visa, American Express, Diners Club and MasterCard, are accepted. Euro-denominated traveller's cheques are widely accepted in main hotels, shops and restaurants. Smaller establishments may accept cash only.

## Tipping

### TIPPING

Tipping is optional as service charges are usually included in the bill, which should also include VAT. However, waiters and taxi drivers may expect a small tip.

## Geography & Weather

### GEOGRAPHY

The Netherlands is located in western Europe and includes the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Maarten and St Eustatius. The Netherlands is bordered by Belgium to the south, Germany to the east and the North Sea to the north.

The country is more popularly known as Holland, though this refers to the two western coastal provinces, North and South Holland, where the three principal cities, Amsterdam, the Hague and Rotterdam, are located. The fact that the Netherlands lies on the coast and is situated on the estuaries of three major western European rivers – the Rhine, the Maas and the Scheldt – has been a major factor in the development of its economy. A quarter of the country lies below sea level.

The country is administratively divided into 12 provinces. Amsterdam is the capital, though the Hague is the seat of government and home to the Supreme Court. The other major cities are Utrecht and Rotterdam, the latter being one of the world's busiest ports.

## **CLIMATE**

### **Climate overview**

- The Netherlands has a maritime climate, meaning the summers, between June and August, are not too hot and the winters, between November to February, are not too cold.
- However, the weather can be unpredictable, and rainfall is possible year-round.
- The driest period is from February to May.
- Monitor the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute [website](#) for weather updates.

### **Flooding and strong winds**

- The country faces a recurrent threat of flooding because much of the land is below sea level.
- A network of dykes and storm surge barriers is in place to protect communities.
- Gales are common in coastal areas during autumn and winter months.
- Floods and strong winds can disrupt overland travel and damage property.

### **Earthquakes**

- The Netherlands is prone to occasional minor earthquakes.
- The frequency of tremors have increased in recent years due to tectonic movements as well as oil and gas exploration in the north of the country.
- Monitor the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute's earthquake [page](#) for related alerts.

### **Wildfires**

- Wildfires are common in the Netherlands during the spring and summer months.
- Wildfires can prompt evacuations and road closures.

### **Droughts**



- The country is vulnerable to droughts, leading to water shortages.
- In 2022, the government declared a national water shortage due to a drought and imposed water conservation measures.

## International Dialing & Power

### DIALLING CODES

Country Code 31

IDD Prefix (International Direct Dialling) 00

NDD Prefix (National Direct Dialling) 0

### COMMUNICATIONS

The telecommunications system is modern and efficient. Mobile telecommunications networks have good coverage and have roaming arrangements with many international operators. Postal services are reliable.

#### Information Security

Reported cases of cybercrime in the Netherlands have been increasing steadily since 2016. This trend has been mainly driven by a growing number of hacking attacks and internet scams. The principal risks for business in the Netherlands stem from cybercriminal campaigns focused on fraud and identity theft (bank details, company/personal logins) using spear phishing and other social engineering techniques; most attacks have so far targeted the financial and retail sectors. Governmental institutions are also at risk due to geopolitical issues and the Netherlands' involvement in the EU and NATO. Cyber-crime has been able to prosper mainly due to the lack or non-implementation of security updates, leaving software weak.

Members should take adequate precautions against disclosing personal information and avoid risky behaviours, such as connecting to public Wi-Fi, charging devices using public USB stations or leaving auto-connect features on their devices.

#### Advice

- Minimise the number of devices you bring into the country; only carry devices that are absolutely essential. Clean devices, containing only data necessary for the trip with no access to shared networks, should be used if targeted attacks are likely.

- Ensure all devices you bring are well-secured, with strong unique passwords; set up multi-factor authentication where possible.
- Ensure all storage devices have full disk encryption.
- Ensure all software, including anti-virus protection, is up-to-date prior to travel; avoid updating software while away.
- Keep devices on your person as much as possible. If unattended, ensure devices are powered down and well-secured. If using hotel safes, secure them with a secondary personally-lockable device.
- Avoid charging your phone or other electronic device at public USB points, as these can be used by criminals to install malware and steal your personal data. Bring power banks that you can use if your device runs out of power.
- Avoid connecting to insecure Wi-Fi networks where possible and disable the auto-connect feature on your devices. Public Wi-Fi connections are almost always unencrypted, allowing attackers to easily instigate man-in-the-middle attacks, where they redirect your browsing request to a malicious website and then run malware on your device.
- If necessary, only connect to public networks using a Virtual Private Network (VPN). Always familiarise yourself with the legal status of any VPN or application in your destination country prior to travel.
- Comply with local legislation. This includes any official requests to inspect devices. If this occurs, inform your IT department as soon as possible and exercise caution when using the device after. Power off devices prior to approaching customs.
- Limit location tracking or turn off your phone's location function to deter surveillance, with the exception of our Assistance App and other essential applications. Turn off Wi-Fi and Bluetooth when not in use.
- Run a thorough check of all devices upon your return and use the 'forget network' setting if you did connect to any public Wi-Fi networks.
- Obtain profile-specific advice taking into account your industry and position in the company.
- If you fall victim to cybercrime in the Netherlands, you can file a report via telephone number 0900-8844 or at a police station.

## **ELECTRICITY**

This is the most common plug type used:

## **Calendar**

## Holidays & Security Dates

### 2024

#### **25 Dec** Christmas Day

In some countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

#### **26 Dec** Boxing Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is observed on the following Monday or Tuesday respectively.

### 2025

#### **01 Jan** New Year's Day

In many countries, if this holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a public holiday is declared for the following Monday.

#### **27 Apr** King's Day

#### **05 May** National Liberation Day

# Destination Guide for Netherlands



## Medical

### Destination Guide Content

## Medical Care

### Excellent

#### Standard of Health Care

The Netherlands is a center of medical excellence, with all medical specialties available. All residents are required to pay a nominal premium and obtain a standard package of essential healthcare insurance. Insurance companies are required to accept all residents within their area of activity. Private health care almost does not exist in the Netherlands.

Residents access all health care through the "huisarts" (general practitioners), who act as 'gatekeepers' to health care. They are assigned strictly by postal area. Individuals must initially register with one of their local GPs who will provide primary care and make specialist referrals as needed. Long term expatriates register with a huisart in their postal area on a permanent basis or as a temporary resident.

There can be long waiting times to see specialists. As in other EU countries, hospitals can specialise in different care areas. However, if needed, patients will be transferred to facilities where their condition can best be treated.

Many Dutch doctors speak fluent English.

The emergency rooms can be used for urgent specialist care. However, anyone requiring after-hours emergency care is recommended to consult their local "Huisartsenpost" for treatment and triage as necessary. A "Huisartsenpost" is a cooperative of local huisarts (GPs) who provide care out of hours. They are open 1700 - 0800 Monday to Friday and 24 hours on Saturday and Sunday.

Busy hospital emergency rooms may decline to see patients with minor complaints. Such patients will be referred back to the Huisartenpost.

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance 112

Fire service 112

Police 112

Contact International SOS for help with your medical situation. [Contact us](#)

## Hospitals & Clinics

### **Amsterdam UMC**

Category: Hospital

Address: 1119 De Boelelaan, Amsterdam, North Holland

Phone: [31 204444444](tel:31204444444)

### **Amsterdam UMC, location AMC**

Category: Hospital

Address: 9 Meibergdreef, Amsterdam, North Holland

Phone: [31 205662637](tel:31205662637)

Email: [patientenvoorlichting@amc.nl](mailto:patientenvoorlichting@amc.nl)

### **Erasmus MC**

Category: Hospital

Address: 40 Dr. Molewaterplein, Rotterdam, South Holland

Phone: [31 107040704](tel:31107040704)

Email: [klantmanager@erasmusmc.nl](mailto:klantmanager@erasmusmc.nl)

### **HMC Bronovo**

Category: Hospital

Address: Bronovolaan 5, The Hague, South Holland

Phone: [31 889797900](tel:31889797900)

Email: [informatie@haaglandenmc.nl](mailto:informatie@haaglandenmc.nl)

### **HMC Westeinde**

Category: Hospital

Address: Lijnbaan 32, The Hague, South Holland

Phone: [31 889797900](tel:31889797900)

Email: [info@haaglandenmc.nl](mailto:info@haaglandenmc.nl)

## Vaccinations

### COVID-19

Vaccination is recommended for all travellers.

### Hepatitis A

Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis A vaccination for all travellers regardless of destination, especially those who are at higher risk (see [US CDC](#)), such as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men, people who use illicit drugs or those with liver disease.

### Hepatitis B

Recommended for health care workers and anyone who may have a new sexual partner, share needles or get a tattoo or body piercing.  
Many travel health professionals recommend hepatitis B vaccination for all travellers and international assignees, regardless of destination.

### Tickborne encephalitis

Recommended for:

- people who will spend time in forested or grassy areas during tick season (particularly those who will hike, camp, perform fieldwork, etc.);
- people residing in this country for longer periods (i.e., six months or more).

## Routine Vaccinations

### Influenza

#### Influenza occurs in:

- Temperate southern hemisphere: April to September.
- Temperate northern hemisphere: November to March.
- Tropics: year-round.

**Annual vaccination is recommended. Vaccination is especially important for people at higher risk of severe disease.** People who are at higher risk for severe disease include:

- People over the age of 65.
- People with underlying health conditions.
- Pregnant women.

### **Measles-Mumps-Rubella**

Vaccinations against measles, mumps and rubella are routine in childhood, and are usually available as a combined vaccine "MMR". See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)  
All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need to be vaccinated.

### **Polio**

Vaccination against polio is routine in childhood in many countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)  
All adults should ensure they are immune to the disease before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or a *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

### **Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis**

Vaccinations against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are routine in childhood.

See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to these diseases before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional. You may need a *primary vaccination* or *booster*. Booster recommendations vary by country.

### **Varicella**

Varicella (chickenpox) vaccinations are included in the routine childhood immunization schedule of some countries. See routine childhood vaccination schedules: [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [USA](#), [UK](#)

All adults should ensure they are immune to varicella before they travel abroad. If unsure of your immunity, consult your health professional.

## **Malaria**

**None**

## **Yellow Fever**

**Routine only**

## **Health Threats**

### **Lyme disease**

Lyme disease occurs in North America, Europe and Asia. It is transmitted to humans by the bite of a particular species of tick. Lyme disease can cause an expanding rash at the site of the bite, fever, arthritis and nerve problems such as facial palsy.

To prevent tick bites:

- Avoid tick habitats
- Use insect repellents
- Check daily for ticks

Lyme disease vaccination is no longer available.

If you develop a rash at the site of a tick bite or other symptoms of Lyme disease, seek medical attention. A course of antibiotics can cure Lyme disease.

Risk is present throughout the entire country. The most frequently affected areas are the northeast, south and western coasts.

### **Tickborne encephalitis**



Tickborne encephalitis (TBE) is a viral infection which is mostly transmitted to people through tick bites. Ticks live in or near forests and are usually active during warmer months. TBE infection can also be acquired by consuming unpasteurized dairy products from infected cows, goats or sheep.

Most people will not have any symptoms. For those who do, initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, nausea, and fatigue. These may resolve in a week or so, but if the infection spreads to the brain, the symptoms may become more severe (decreased mental state, severe headaches, convulsions, weakness and/or coma). TBE can be fatal. Prevention is through avoiding tick bites and vaccination.

There is a risk in forested and grassy areas of the country. Provinces that previously reported cases include Flevopolder, Gelderland, Noord-Brabant, Overijssel and Utrecht. Transmission occurs when ticks are active, from early spring to late autumn.

## **COVID-19**

COVID-19 is predominantly a respiratory illness, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Transmission is from person to person via contaminated respiratory droplets. People are infected when these droplets are inhaled or land directly on the mouth/nose/eyes, or indirectly when transferred by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the mouth/nose/eyes.

Most people will develop a mild to moderate illness only which lasts up to two weeks, or have no symptoms. Symptoms vary greatly. Common symptoms include fever, cough and sore throat. Sometimes there is a loss of or change in the sense of smell or taste. The illness can progress to being severe and can be fatal. Older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk of severe disease and death. Antiviral treatment is available and is particularly important for people at higher risk of severe illness.

Some people may continue to have symptoms that last for weeks or months after the initial infection has gone.

Prevention is through vaccination, hand hygiene, and physical distancing. Wearing a mask, and ensuring adequate ventilation in enclosed spaces can reduce the risk of infection.

The first imported COVID-19 cases were reported on 27 February 2020 and locally acquired cases were detected at the start of March.

Vaccination began on 6 January 2021. See the national vaccination strategy [here](#) (in *Dutch*).

See the National Institute of Public Health [COVID-19 information](#) page. There is a hotline for information: 088-1351.

## **HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and STIs**

HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C are spread by contact with bodily fluids (especially blood and semen).

- unprotected sex,
- needle sharing during IV drug use, or
- unsafe blood or medical/dental instruments.

Genital herpes (HSV), genital warts (HPV), gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis and most other sexually transmitted diseases are spread by genital contact.

Prevention:

- In many countries, hepatitis B is now a routine childhood immunisation and need not be repeated. All non-immune travellers should consider vaccination.
- Always use new condoms (preferably brought from your home country).
- IV drug users should not share needles.
- Avoid having tattoos or piercings done.
- In healthcare settings, make sure that needles and syringes are sterile and not shared between patients.
- Call International SOS or your corporate medical department if you are hospitalised.
- Be aware of your risk when assisting anyone with an injury. Protect yourself from contact with bodily fluids.
- Seek medical attention within 24 hours if you accidentally come into contact with someone else's bodily fluids.

## **Food & Water**

### **Generally safe**

Food Risk

Food is considered safe.

Water and Beverages

Tap water is safe.

# Destination Guide for Netherlands



## Security

### Destination Guide Content

## Personal Security

### STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Travel to Netherlands can continue with standard security precautions.
- Take normal security precautions against petty and street crime.
- There is a credible risk of terrorist attacks by Islamist extremists in major cities in the Netherlands. Government buildings, public transport and high-profile commercial interests are likely targets. Be alert to suspicious behaviour and report any suspect packages to the authorities.
- Issues of immigration and integration as well as those related to foreign political developments have resulted in a number of high-profile incidents in recent years. Most related protests are small and relatively orderly, though the potential for escalation into unrest remains, if a new, highly sensitive issue emerges. Avoid all demonstrations, even if they appear peaceful.
- Security alerts or hoaxes can trigger the short-notice evacuation of transport hubs or public locations, causing disruption. Follow all directives issued by the authorities during any security operation and do not act on the basis of unverified information.

## Crime

### Limited to hot spots

### CRIME

Petty crime, mostly in the form of pickpocketing, poses the main risk. Levels of such crime are highest in tourist areas of the capital Amsterdam and other busy locations. Such locations include Amsterdam's Centraal rail station, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS) and main transport stations in or around major cities like Rotterdam and The Hague. Some thieves use bicycles and mopeds to escape after bag-snatching, while

others operate in gangs with one thief attempting to distract a potential victim while another commits the theft. Caution should be exercised in larger cities after dark and standard precautions should be taken against petty crime. Drink spiking is also a concern, especially for women or those alone in large urban centres.

Criminals posing as police officers sometimes target tourists and ask to see passports and credit cards before stealing them. Always ask to see valid identification before surrendering personal documents. ATM and credit card skimming, and email fraud have increased substantially. Precautionary measures should be taken while making transactions or replying to any unknown email correspondence.

Violent crime is generally limited to gang-related feuds. Instances are sometimes reported, mainly in Amsterdam or Rotterdam. Police statistics indicate that reports of discrimination – including verbal and physical assaults – against members of the LGBTQ+ community have increased in recent years. Organised crime rarely impacts legitimate workforce, though assignees have experienced some extortion demands. Criminal gangs are especially active in drug trafficking, money laundering, prostitution and car theft.

## **Terrorism**

### **Minimal risk to foreigners**

#### **TERRORISM**

The country's participation in the fight against Islamist militant groups in Iraq and Syria has made the Netherlands a credible target for terrorist attacks. Dutch populist politicians, such as far-right Party for Freedom leader Geert Wilders, some artists and other figures, have expressed hostile views towards Islam, drawing additional attention to the country.

In December 2023, the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) increased the nationwide terrorism threat level to 'substantial' (second highest on a five-tier scale). According to the NCTV, the increased level means there is a realistic possibility of an attack taking place. The terrorist threat level can be monitored via the [NCTV website](#).

Attacks have taken place using unsophisticated and readily available means; such incidents are difficult to detect and prevent. Four people were shot and killed in March 2019 on a tram in Utrecht and two people were injured in August 2018 in a stabbing attack at Amsterdam Centraal rail station. The security services have previously foiled plots and arrested terrorist suspects. On 14 December 2023, one person was detained in Rotterdam (South Holland province) for allegedly plotting attacks on Jewish institutions in Europe.

## **Kidnapping**

#### **KIDNAPPING**

Business travellers face a low risk of kidnapping, though Dutch business people and their

families are targeted occasionally.

## Social Unrest

### **SOCIAL UNREST**

Public protests occur periodically and are generally localised and directed at the local government. Most protests are held in central areas of Amsterdam (particularly at Museumplein), Rotterdam and The Hague (at the Binnenhof parliamentary precinct or the Malieveld, adjacent to the city's Centraal train station). While gatherings are rarely violent, they often result in localised transport disruption. Disturbances can also break out near stadiums following football matches.

Immigration is a divisive topic in the Netherlands and protests have taken place in Amsterdam to demand tighter immigration policies. Rallies in support of asylum seekers also occur.

Protests by farmers have also been a recurring movement since 2022, following the decision by the authorities to reduce nitrogen emissions. Tractors have been used to block key highways around major cities in response.