

WELCOME GUIDE

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONALS MOVING TO ROTTERDAM

**WELCOME TO  
ROTTERDAM, THE  
GATEWAY TO EUROPE.**

Rotterdam: international city with a distinct character, energetic, always in motion, eyes on the future. Dynamic port city, where a vibrant mix of more than 170 nationalities and many cultures, subcultures and communities make for a diverse, inclusive and open urban culture. City for people who like to move forward, do new things, contribute and make a difference. No wonder that more and more international companies and expats come to Rotterdam to build their future.

## **ARE YOU NEWLY ARRIVING IN ROTTERDAM?**

Then you will need to take some necessary steps. **This step-by-step guide will help you along the way.** If you have any other questions, please contact Rotterdam International Center for further assistance.

Click our [headers](#) for more in depth information on specific topics.

### **1. RESIDENCE PERMIT**

Check if a Dutch residence permit is required based on your nationality and the duration of your stay in the Netherlands. If necessary, proceed by submitting an application to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND).

### **2. REGISTRATION AT MUNICIPALITY**

Within five days after your arrival in the Netherlands you have to register your presence in the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP) at the municipality where you will live. The municipality will issue you a Citizen Service Number (BSN), which is essential for all your official interactions with governmental institutions. The BSN is also needed to complete formalities such as opening a bank account and taking out a health insurance.

### 3. HOUSING

Whether you prefer the elevated view of a skyscraper or the comfort of a terrace house close to a park and whether you want to buy or rent, Rotterdam offers a wide variety of housing options. In making your decision about your next home, it's good to be aware of certain things, such as costs associated with involving an estate agent, mortgage costs, the duration of a rental contract and if a housing permit is required.

### 4. CAREER

Finding work or starting a business in Rotterdam is very feasible. The region hosts many international companies and smaller firms seeking skilled, multilingual professionals. For entrepreneurs, Rotterdam offers an excellent environment with community offices, diverse sectors, and a growing creative industry within an open, supportive culture.



### 5. DIGID: IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

DigiD is the formal digital authentication system used in the Netherlands. It allows residents to securely verify their identity when dealing with online services of Dutch government organisations, care institutions, educational institutions, pension fund websites etcetera. DigiD also enables you to log in to certain organisations in other European countries. Your DigiD is strictly personal. You cannot apply for, or use DigiD on another person's behalf.

### 6. BANK ACCOUNT

After registering and obtaining your Citizen Service Number (BSN), the next important step is to open a Dutch bank account and arrange for a debit card (Dutch: pinpas). Once you have a bank account, you can apply for health insurance and make arrangements to receive your wages and pay taxes in the Netherlands.

### 7. HEALTH INSURANCE AND GP

Health care in the Netherlands is part of the social security system, requiring all residents under Dutch law to have health insurance. To arrange this, you need a Citizen Service Number (BSN). We recommend registering promptly with a GP ('huisarts'), a pharmacy, and a dentist for basic medical needs. The GP is central in the healthcare system, coordinating referrals to specialists. Choose your GP carefully, considering their policies, English proficiency, and proximity to your home.

“ Our association with the people at Rotterdam International Center has been an absolute pleasure. From the outset, their dedication and collaboration stood out. Whether it was responding to inquiries, providing updates, or addressing unforeseen challenges, they were always flexible and quick to act, ensuring that our requirements remained on schedule. This level of efficiency reflects in their professionalism and deep understanding of effective collaboration. Their warmth and friendliness are an example of fostering an environment of approachability for new businesses like ours. ”

Daryll Dias, Gulf Turbo Solutions BV

“ Some things are just a perfect match- and our collaboration with Rotterdam International Center is proof of that. With shared passion, fresh ideas, and a big dose of enthusiasm, we're joining forces to create something special. ”

Melissa Zahaf, Mortgage Advisor  
Expat Mortgage Platform

**NEW TO  
ROTTERDAM?**

Explore and get the most out of our city with the [Rotterdam City Card!](#)

See more, spend less

**ROTTERDAM  
CITY  
CARD**

“ As a relocation consultant I always enjoy working with the Rotterdam International Center. They are happy to answer any questions, they have a lot of knowledge. And equally important; there is always a good vibe at the international center and time for a chat! They make the internationals (and me) feel at home at the center. This is the best start a newcomer can have! “

Laura de Vor, Expat Excellence

**8. TAXES, 30% RULING**  
When you start working in the Netherlands, you will start contributing to the Dutch tax system. Which taxes and which tax facilities apply to your situation? You may have to pay national and local taxes. You may be eligible for the 30% ruling, allowing employers to provide a tax-free reimbursement for extraterritorial costs or give employees up to 30% of their wages, including reimbursement, tax-free. Please make sure you have all the necessary information and are well advised.

**9. DRIVING LICENSE**  
Are you planning on driving a motor vehicle when in the Netherlands? Check carefully whether or not your driving license is valid in the Netherlands (depending on the country where it was issued). Under certain conditions, it is possible to exchange your driving license for a Dutch one without taking a driving test in the Netherlands. This is arranged via your municipality.

**10. DUTCH LANGUAGE**  
In Rotterdam practically everybody speaks English and Rotterdammers are very understanding toward non-Dutch speakers, often switching to English to help you out. However, learning Dutch can be beneficial to improve your understanding of Dutch culture and society. There are several options available to start learning Dutch, including several schools as well as online courses.

## SO MUCH TO EXPERIENCE AND DISCOVER

There's so much to experience in Rotterdam. Whether you live here alone or with a family, Rotterdam offers an abundance of attractions and other leisure options, and there's always something new to discover in the city.



### **FENIX, ROTTERDAM'S NEW ART MUSEUM ABOUT MIGRATION**

Fenix tells the story of migration from every corner of the world. It is an art museum that takes you through the lived experiences of migrants. The stories speak of love and separation, coming home and feeling at home, of navigating identity, and of searching for happiness, all at the place of departure and arrival. Interesting and educational for the entire family.



### **ROTTERDAM ZOO (DIERGAARDE BLIJDORP)**

Enjoy a world trip in one day at Rotterdam Zoo (Diergaarde Blijdorp)! Come face to face with all the beauty that nature has to offer worldwide. Meet the red pandas in the Himalayas and the giraffes and zebras on the savannah in Africa. This zoo is actively committed to the survival of wild animals, to preserving biodiversity, restoring ecosystems and promoting sustainability.



### **SPIDO HARBOUR TOUR**

Looking for a unique perspective of the city? With a Spido harbor cruise you explore one of the largest ports in the world, the Port of Rotterdam. You'll pass impressive container ships, historical shipyards and modern architecture along the banks of the Maas. You'll receive live commentary on port life and the history of this dynamic region, making the cruise both informative and relaxing.



**WE WELCOME YOU  
TO ROTTERDAM,  
ENJOY YOUR STAY!**

We hope and trust that this step-by-step guide helps you settle and start your life in Rotterdam. Via our website you can also book an appointment to visit us for registration (BSN), residence permit and biomedical information (IND procedure) and opening your personal bank account. Alternatively, contact us via the options below. We'll be happy to assist you!

[SIGN UP](#) for our events!

**ROTTERDAM  
INTERNATIONAL  
CENTER**

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**W:** [www.rotterdaminternationalcenter.nl](http://www.rotterdaminternationalcenter.nl)

**Opening hours:** Monday – Thursday, 09.00 – 17.00 hrs.

On Fridays we are only available via phone and e-mail.

[Plan Appointment](#) ➔



**ROTTERDAM. MAKE IT HAPPEN.**

## MEETING OTHER INTERNATIONALS

### WALK AND TALK WITH A LOCAL

Want to improve your Dutch language skills while and meet new people? With Walking & Talking, you explore Rotterdam while also practicing the language. You will meet new people who all want to speak better Dutch. At least one Dutch volunteer walks along and helps participants to use the correct words and sentences. This way, you practice Dutch efficiently and in a fun way!

### SPORTS: A GREAT WAY TO MEET LOCALS AND OTHER INTERNATIONALS

A great way of meeting locals and other internationals, is through sports. Rotterdam is truly a city of sports and Rotterdammers love to be active. There are plenty of clubs to choose from if you want to play sports and connect to other sports enthusiasts. Get off the blocks via this handy introduction page. On your marks, get set, GO!

### FINDING FELLOW INTERNATIONALS IN SPECIFIC COMMUNITIES

Rotterdam has a range of expat communities, which are a great way for you to make new connections on both a personal and a professional level. Some are based on religion, some country/region or origin. Others focus on cultural aspects, like cinema, choir singing or language. There's loads of ways to find a good match.

# MEET OUR PARTNERS



AKD  
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ABN AMRO  
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Charles Clinic  
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Corporate Housing  
Factory  
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Counselr  
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De Dependance  
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De Gruijter & Co  
✉



DWM Makelaardij  
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De Taalvraag  
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Eastwing  
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Easy Nuts  
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Expat Excellence  
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European Insurance  
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Expatri Mortgage Platform  
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Irene Anggreeni  
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Jans Huisartsen  
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Mondzorg Erasmus  
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Pryme Mobility  
✉



Reaching Expatations  
✉



Rentfocus  
✉



Rotterdam Rental Service  
✉



RSH  
✉



Soraya Educaion Advisor  
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TaxSavers  
✉



Twinkeltje  
✉



Undutchables  
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✉



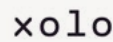
Verra Makelaars  
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Xolo  
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