

# Working in the Netherlands



## BUILDING YOUR FUTURE IN THE NL

Even though the Dutch labour market has a fairly international orientation, as a non-Dutch speaker you could be confronted with certain challenges when entering the Dutch labour market. It's time to face these challenges! This flyer contains some practical advice and tips that might help you on your way to start your career in the Netherlands. The first part contains information for all non-Dutch speakers. The second part contains additional information with regards to legal issues that non-EU/EEA nationals will face. Do you want to know more, or discuss your personal opportunities or career path? Your faculty's Career Service is ready to help you!

### Did you know:

- 5 years after graduation, around 42% of international students are still in the Netherlands
- Around 25% of international students stay in the Netherlands for the rest of their lives
- International alumni who stay in the Netherlands for more than 5 years work just as often and earn as much as Dutch nationals
- Students from non-EU countries stay more often than EU students

## DURING YOUR STUDIES

Employers greatly value students that can show that they developed themselves not only academically, but also in other ways. So develop yourself next to your studies! Don't wait until the day of graduation, increase your employability while you are studying. What can you do? Think of these options:

- **Become an active member of your study association:** You will develop a network with people with shared or similar interests. If a study association is not your cup of tea, active participation in any kind of organisation may be useful (e.g. student associations, sports, religious institutions etc.).
- **Part-time work:** it might be tough to find a part-time job as a non-Dutch speaker as many employers will require knowledge of the Dutch language. However, many (international) stores or chains and more and more restaurants and bars do hire non-Dutch speakers. Go and find out!
- **Volunteer:** especially for those interested to work in the public sector or an NGO: both greatly appreciate people with 'social engagement'. Volunteering is a great way to prove that you are indeed engaged with society. ['Volunteer The Hague'](#) offers volunteering work for non-Dutch speakers!
- **Do an internship:** this allows you to gain study-related work experience and builds your network. If you choose to do an internship in the Netherlands, you will learn about the Dutch working culture as well and might be able to continue your career as an employee of the organisation.
- **Learn Dutch:** it helps a lot, especially if you plan to stay long term. There are different options to learn Dutch, think of courses and initiatives in the area where you live (e.g. [in The Hague](#)), practice reading the free newspaper 'Metro' during train rides, download language apps, or exchange languages with a 'taalmaatje' (language buddy).
- **Build your network:** both within university (fellow students, teachers, [mentor network](#)) & outside university (expat communities, fellow country(wo)men, the [Holland Alumni network](#), and see above).
- **Visit career events:** such as [I am not a tourist](#) or The Campus The Hague Career Event and other workshops offered by the Career Service.
- **Visit the Leiden University [CareerZone](#):** find an overview of all activities you can do during each stage of your studies.

## AFTER GRADUATION

You got your degree, congratulations! But now what? Where can you find work? Finding a job – this goes for Dutch students as well – can be quite a challenge. There is no single tip, golden key or secret website with *the* answer. However, the following steps might give you some guidance:

1. **Know yourself:** In order to know your added value to organisations, it is important to know about yourself. What are you good at? What gives you energy?
2. **Explore the labour market:** Once you are aware about your skills, knowledge and interests, it is time to connect these to concrete opportunities on the labour market. What kind of positions are available? Do I meet the requirements? If you miss some of the requirements, is it possible to gain those skills or this knowledge?
3. **Take action!** Make sure your CV and LinkedIn are up to date. Search for interesting positions. Found one? Write an enthusiastic motivation letter, specifically designed for the position you are applying for.

For each step, you can find an extensive description and advice on the [CareerZone](#). You can access this site with your LU account until one year after graduation.

## THE DUTCH WORKING CULTURE

Prepare yourself for the Dutch working culture. Some examples:

- You are expected to speak your mind, even to higher-ups. Don't be afraid to have an opinion and voice it, especially in meetings. A typical Dutch meeting can take a long time because everyone is invited to share their opinions;
- The office culture is often informal, it is common to address each other as 'je/jij' regardless of position and talk about your private life (though this does vary);
- Hierarchies are often not directly visible but don't think they are non-existent. Your boss may act informal but he/she will still evaluate your performance so act accordingly;
- Prepare yourself for the infamous Dutch directness. Not only are you expected to have an opinion, you should also be able to take direct feedback from your colleagues and superiors and it may not always come sugar-coated.

## REGULATIONS FOR NON-EU/EEA STUDENTS

Students from EU/EEA countries do not encounter legal boundaries when entering the Dutch labour market. If you do not have a passport from an EU/EEA country, there are possibilities to work in the Netherlands, but according to strict rules and regulations (these rules are subject to regular changes, Leiden University cannot be held accountable for any outdated or incorrect information).

## WORKING DURING YOUR STUDIES

**During your studies you can work:**

- Part-time (max 16h a week) throughout the year OR full-time (40h a week) during June, July and August. You cannot do both.
- You need a work permit for students, the employer needs to apply for this (can take up to 5 weeks). Some employers are not informed about the rules and regulations, you can refer them to [www.werk.nl](http://www.werk.nl) > wervingsadvies > werkvergunning > speciale voorwaarden per groep > werkstudent or click [this link](#).
- On [www.studyinholland.nl](http://www.studyinholland.nl) > life in Holland > working while studying (or [this link](#)) you can find more information and necessary documents.

**During your studies you can do an internship in The Netherlands:**

You are allowed to do an internship as long as it is approved by the university. The rules and regulations may vary depending on your faculty. As university approval is required, please check the specifics with your faculty's Career Service.

## WORKING AFTER YOUR STUDIES

After graduation, you have a year to find a job or self-employment opportunity if you apply for the so-called 'Zoekjaar'. This orientation year grants you access to the Dutch labour market: there are no requirements for work permit, salary or proof of sufficient funds.

- Application deadline: up to 3 years after graduation;
- It is possible to apply for an orientation year from abroad;
- You can enjoy the benefits of the orientation year for a maximum of 1 year;
- You can apply for the orientation year each time you have completed a study program, doctoral program or scientific research as long as the new degree is obtained after the previous orientation year ended;
- In 2019, the costs for application were €171.

## WHERE TO START LOOKING FOR JOBS

- The Facebook pages of the Career Services
- The CareerZone has a job portal
- Contact your faculty's Career Service for contacts with alumni
- [www.iamexpat.nl](http://www.iamexpat.nl)
- Check vacancies on LinkedIn
- Post a message on your own LinkedIn profile stating you are available
- Approach people with interesting careers, ask to meet for coffee & advice



**Career SERVICE**  
Humanities

careerservice@hum.leidenuniv.nl

071 527 22 35

**Career SERVICE**  
Social and Behavioural Sciences

slsfsw@fsw.leidenuniv.nl

071 527 80 25

**Career SERVICE**  
Governance and Global Affairs

careerservice@fgga.leidenuniv.nl

070 800 95 61

**Kickstart your career with the Career Services!**

- Individual coaching
- CV, application letter & LinkedIn check
- Workshops
- Visit potential employers
- Contacts with alumni
- Find a job or an internship
- Career Event & Internship Fair

**JOB INSPIRATION**

**Where international graduates work in the Netherlands (a.o.):**

Deloitte  
PSPS Consultants  
Cyberlight Security  
Rabobank  
Microsoft

Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences  
Montesquieu Institute  
Embassies  
International Criminal Court  
Shell  
Eurojust  
Europol

Special Tribunal for Lebanon  
Permanent Court of Arbitration  
CGI Netherlands  
Atos Consulting  
Dutch Red Cross  
Sen Foundation  
German-Dutch Commerce Chamber

**What they do:**

Accounts Officer  
Assistant Consultant  
Associate Data Analyst  
Associate Lawyer  
Asylum Aid coordinator  
Blue Book Trainee  
Business Development Analyst  
Climate Policy Analyst  
Communications Officer  
Concept Development  
Consultant  
Customer Service Associate  
English language teacher  
Environment Planning Officer  
Event Coordinator  
Governance and Performance  
Manager  
Human Resources Assistant

Innovation Officer  
International Relations Analyst  
International Support Officer  
Junior Project Manager  
Junior Research Fellow  
Junior Strategic Media and  
Communications Consultant  
Junior Talent Scout  
Lecturer  
Legal Researcher and analyst  
Marketing & Investment Manager  
Marketing coordinator  
Foreign Policy Team Member  
Paralegal  
Parliamentary Assistant  
PhD candidate  
Policy Researcher  
Project Officer

Research Associate  
Researcher Renewable Energy  
Risk and Compliance Analyst  
Risk consulting associate  
Schuman Trainee  
Senior Desk Officer, International  
Law Division  
Senior Executive, Corporate  
Communications  
Social Entrepreneur Consultant  
Sustainability Analyst