

Doing business in the Netherlands

Business Culture in the Netherlands



The Netherlands is an excellent place to start your business. It has an international focus, a great physical and digital infrastructure, and the majority of the people speak English. The country has an attractive business climate for you to start and expand your business to the rest of Europe. If you want to come to the Netherlands and start a business here, make sure you are well prepared.

The Dutch culture

The Netherlands is a densely populated country with a diversity of nationalities. The quality of living is high and most inhabitants are well-educated. Tolerance is very important in the Netherlands, especially when it comes to freedom of speech. The Dutch can be quite opinionated and direct. This could come across as rude to some foreigners. However, it is best to not take it personally. Overall, the Dutch are considered to be open-minded, flexible and inclusive.

The Dutch business climate

The Dutch business climate is progressive. Reliability and honesty are both highly valued in the workplace. For example, being late at an appointment is considered unacceptable. The Dutch like to get things done, thus structure and planning is often an important element within the business strategy. The hierarchy in Dutch business culture is generally not very rigorous but instead relatively flexible. Dutch employees are often expected to work independently.

Source: www.business.gov.nl

Facts

Business language

Dutch is the official language, but English, German and French are also widely spoken and understood.

Business hours

Business hours are usually 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Business dress

Business attire is usually smart casual. Suits are often worn but ties aren't always expected.

Greeting

A firm handshake with direct eye contact is the usual form of greeting with everybody present.

Gifts

Gift giving is not a common aspect of business relationships in the Netherlands.

Gender equality

Dutch society is very liberal, men and women have equal rights.

Do's and don'ts

- > Do be punctual for meetings. Dutch people tend to keep appointments and are usually on time.
- > Don't expect much small talk at the beginning of a meeting as the Dutch prefer to get straight to business.
- > Do prepare. Ask questions during a meeting. The Dutch appreciate this.
- > Do maintain direct eye contact when speaking to associates.
- > Do expect decision making to be a drawn-out process. However, once decisions are final, implementation is fast and efficient.

Source: www.expatarrivals.com/europe/netherlands/doing-business-netherlands

East Netherlands - Innovative international business environment in Food, Health, Tech and Energy

East Netherlands has developed strong business clusters in four sectors: Food, Health, Tech and Energy. We host top-quality companies and research institutes in these sectors. The region is driving innovation in interfaces emerging between the four areas. The region has leading universities that are used to do joint R&D with the business: Wageningen University & Research (Food), Radboud University Nijmegen (Health) and University of Twente (Tech).

Oost NL

Oost NL is the economic development agency for the two provinces (Gelderland and Overijssel) that comprise East Netherlands. Together with a network of business & innovation campuses, existing businesses, innovation centers, non-profits, local, provincial and national officials and agencies, Oost NL stimulates economic development and innovation in our region.

Oost NL is a publicly-owned entity. Our shareholders are the Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, and the provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel.

Invest in Holland

Oost NL is member of the 'Invest in Holland' network and partner of the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA).



What Oost NL can do for you

We have access to information, resources, funding, network of business and research partners, etc. to help you succeed in establishing and growing your European business.

Our services, for foreign companies considering future investments in the Netherlands, are confidential and free-of-charge. We can:

- > introduce you to the relevant networks and business partners in our ecosystems,
- > share our knowledge and expertise with regard to all matters related to establishing your business in the Netherlands (this includes issues related to customs, taxes, legal, etc.),
- > introduce you to reliable service providers that can assist you in establishing a legal entity,
- > find the perfect premises: laboratory, office space, factory, warehouse or shared facilities,
- > organise matchmaking to find business partners,
- > provide tailor-made bidbooks,
- > organize a custom-made fact-finding trip when you visit East Netherlands,
- > provide assistance and support in every stage of your business expansion.

Oost NL

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