



CBD



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Distr.
GENERAL
8 November 2001

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Sixth meeting
The Hague, 7-19 April 2002*

Information for Participants

Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-6)

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held from Sunday, 7 April to Friday, 19 April 2002 at the Netherlands Congress Centre in The Hague.

Venue

The Netherlands Congress Centre
10 Churchillplein
P.O. Box 82000
2508 EA, The Hague
The Netherlands
Tel. (31-70) 306-6366
Fax: (31-70) 306-6443
Internet: www.congresscentre.nl

First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (MOP-1)/third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP-3)

Should the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety enter into force before the opening of the COP-6 meeting, the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (MOP-1) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will be held from 22 to 26 April 2002 at the same venue in The Hague. For the Protocol to enter into force before the opening of the COP-6 meeting, the fiftieth instrument of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance must be deposited by 8 January 2002. In the event that the fiftieth instrument is not deposited by that date, and in accordance with recommendation 2/13 of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, as endorsed by the COP-5 Bureau at its meeting on 6 October 2001, the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP-3) will be held instead on those dates.

* On the understanding that, should the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety be held from 22 to 26 April 2002, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be suspended on 19 April and reconvened in the afternoon of 26 April.

Registration and Identification Badges

Registration will commence on Sunday, 7 April 2002 from **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** and will continue on Monday, 8 April 2002 at **8 a.m.** Based on the received and fully completed pre-registration forms, badges will be handed over at the registration desk. For security reasons, the display of name badges is necessary for admittance to the Netherlands Congress Centre as well as to the meeting premises. Participants are reminded to bring and present their own personal identification (passport or other official document with a photo) when entering the Netherlands Congress Centre and **to wear their badges at all times during the meeting.**

The official opening of the COP-6 meeting will take place at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, 7 April 2002 to be followed by a welcome reception at the Atrium in the Town Hall in The Hague. Information pertaining to room allocations for the plenary and the two working groups, as well as regional meeting rooms, will be available at the meeting upon registration.

The official opening of the MOP-1/ICCP-3 meeting will take place on Monday, 22 April 2002 at 10:00 a.m. Registration for the meeting will commence on Sunday, 21 April 2002 from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. and will continue on Monday, 22 April 2002 at 8:00 a.m.

Documents

Delegates are kindly reminded to bring their copies of the documents, as they will only be available in The Hague in limited quantities for reasons of economy.

Access to The Hague

The Netherlands' international airport is Amsterdam Schiphol airport. The Government of the Netherlands will provide a free-of-charge shuttle service to transport delegates from the airport to hotels on **Saturday and Sunday 6 and 7 April 2002.**

On Saturday and Sunday 20 and 21 April 2002, a combined shuttle service will be provided upon the departure of COP-6 delegates and the arrival of MOP-1/ICCP-3 delegates.

Furthermore, the Government will set-up a clearly marked information desk at Schiphol airport where delegates can obtain information on travel to The Hague by train. A train ticket can be purchased at the desk of the Dutch Railway Company (Nederlandse Spoorwegen – NS). Depending on the location of the hotel, delegates will be advised to exit at either The Hague Central Station or The Hague Hollands Spoor station in The Hague. Taxis are readily available at both stations to take delegates to their hotels.

Hotels will provide delegates with direction and information on which tram to use to reach the Netherlands Conference Centre. Tickets can be purchased at the tram. Upon registration, delegates will receive a pass to allow them free transportation in The Hague for the duration of the meeting.

Services to Delegates

The Netherlands Congress Centre offers a variety of services to delegates, such as a delegates' lounge, restaurant, medical facilities [first aid unit] and a business centre. The business centre will provide, on a commercial basis, photocopying, fax and card operated telephones, etc. Delegates may also access their e-mail, free-of-charge, at the cyber café situated on the first floor of the Netherlands Congress Centre.

Hotel Information

Delegates are kindly reminded that they are responsible for making their own hotel accommodation arrangements. It is highly recommended to arrange for the hotel reservation as soon as possible as April is a very busy month in The Hague. The company Jager Events has been designated by the Dutch Government to assist with hotel reservations. Delegates are advised that special hotel room rates may be obtained when the hotel booking is made through this company. Delegates are invited to arrange for their hotel bookings by visiting the following web site: www.jagerevents.com/cop6. Within five days, delegates who make their hotel reservation through Jager Events will receive a confirmation from the company by either facsimile or e-mail. Please indicate the title of the meeting as "CBD/COP-6" or "CBD/MOP-1" or "CBD/ICCP-3". Special requirements should be mentioned, such as placing delegations in the same hotel.

The price categories for the hotels in The Hague are as follows:

- Less than Euro (€) 145 per night corresponds to at least 2 stars
- Euro (€) 145-180 per night corresponds to at least 2-3 stars
- More than Euro (€) 180 per night corresponds to 3, 4 and 5 stars

Delegates are advised that due to the limited number of hotels in the lower price category, reservation of these rooms must be effected before 6 January 2002. Please make your reservations as soon as possible.

Special Events

- On **Saturday, 13 April 2002**, the Government of the Netherlands has graciously arranged a one-day excursion, free-of-charge, as follows:
 - One member of each delegation can visit a biodiversity-related site
 - The remaining delegates may choose between visiting **the Keukenhof in Lisse** or the **Floriade in Vijfhuizen**.

For more information, and for seat reservation, delegates are kindly requested to contact the Information Desk located at the lobby of the Netherlands Congress Centre.

- Furthermore, the Government of the Netherlands is organizing an informal conference party at **Madurodam in The Hague on Saturday, 13 April 2002 at 8:00 p.m.** Transportation shall be provided from the Netherlands Congress Centre to Madurodam.

Posters, Publications and Side Events

Limited space is available at the conference centre for the display of posters and publications during the meeting. Delegates and/or organizations wishing to avail themselves of this space, as well as those wishing to organize side events during the meeting, please direct your request(s) to the attention of Mr. Aballache Yesli, Meetings Services Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, tel.: (514) 287-7043, fax: (514) 288-6588 or e-mail: aballache.yesli@biodiv.org. Please note that given the limited space and available rooms, requests shall be processed on a **first-come first-served basis**.

Time Zone

The Hague is GMT + 1.00 hour.

Weather

During the month of April in The Hague, the average temperature is 12 °C. It is recommended to bring a raincoat and umbrella, as rain is common during this time of the year.

Electricity

220 volts, 50 Hertz.

Visas / Customs

Early contact with the consular authorities of the Government of the Netherlands is strongly advised to allow sufficient time for a visa to be issued as appropriate before departure for the Netherlands. **Delegates are advised that the Government of the Netherlands shall reimburse them the cost of the entry visa at the meeting venue.** In the event that no Dutch diplomatic representation is available in your country of residence, delegates are kindly requested to either contact a Dutch diplomatic mission in the nearest country or apply to a Dutch interest section in your country of residence, as the case may be.

The Government of the Netherlands will set-up a Help Desk at Schiphol international airport to assist delegates with visa-related problems. However, it should be stressed that it would **not** be possible to issue entry visas upon arrival and **delegates must secure their visas prior to departure from their home countries.**

To facilitate the issuance of an entry visa to the Netherlands, the Government of the Netherlands will prepare a **visa assistance letter** which it will dispatch directly to the National Focal Points to the Convention on Biological Diversity in **December 2001**. National Focal Points should ensure that their officially nominated delegates are provided with a copy of said letter which should be attached to the visa application form -- this should expedite the issuance of the entry visa. Requests for additional information and/or queries regarding the issuance of entry visas to the Netherlands should be directed to the attention of the responsible officer whose name and contact coordinates will be reflected in the above-mentioned letter. In the event that the above-mentioned visa assistance letter does not reach the National Focal Points in good time as stated above, please contact the following officers at the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries in The Hague: Mrs. Vera Minten, tel. (31-70) 378-4310, fax: (31-70) 378-6105 or Mr. Bart Vrolijk, tel.: (31-70) 378-5501, fax: (31-70) 378-6126.

Information on visa procedure including a list of relevant Dutch missions are available on the website of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs www.buza.nl. Information may also be obtained at www.immigratiedienst.nl.

Please find attached information on the requirements for the issuance of an entry visa to the Netherlands as well as a list of countries whose citizens require an entry visa for the Netherlands.

Official Language

The official language in the Netherlands is Dutch. However, English is widely spoken in hotels and restaurants.

Currency

On 1 January 2002, Euro (€) bank notes and coins will come into circulation. Effective 28 January 2002, only the Euro will be accepted in the Netherlands. The current official exchange rate vis-à-vis the US dollar is 0.90 USD for one Euro (€). Traveller's checks can be exchanged for Euro (€) throughout the country.

Bank / Credit Cards

A bank shall be available at the meeting venue.

Cash dispenser machines can be used around the clock, and accepts the following cards: EC Card, Eurocard/MasterCard and Visa. The participants will also find a large number of banks throughout the city that accept all the usual credit cards.

General Information

The Netherlands is best known for its tulips, windmills and clogs. Kinderdijk's 19 windmills are on the World Heritage List. The Dutch flowers are a top attraction – with Floriade 2002 – the world's biggest flower show coming soon. The scenery ranges from flat polder land in the West and North to forest and heath land in the South and East.

Over the centuries, the Dutch had to protect themselves against water by building dikes and reclaiming land from the sea, thus creating famous lowland polders and impressive water defences. For those who are sea lovers, the Netherlands offers splendid wide beaches.

The Hague is home to the Dutch Royal family and for historical reasons it is also the seat of the Government. Amsterdam, however, is the capital city. It is a very lively city renowned for its canals, museums and animated nightlife.

Attached are the following:

1. Registration forms for COP-6, MOP-1/ICCP-3
2. Hotel reservation form
3. List of countries whose nationals require an entry visa to the Netherlands
4. List of countries whose nationals do NOT require an entry visa to the Netherlands
5. Information on the requirements for the issuance of an entry visa to the Netherlands

**SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
THE HAGUE, 7-19 APRIL 2002**

Pre-Registration Form (Please print)

☐ Mr. / ☐ Mrs. / ☐ Ms. / ☐ Amb. / ☐ Dr. / ☐ Prof. ☐ Female ☐ Male

FAMILY NAME: _____

First name: _____

Have you attended CBD meeting(s) before?: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Representing:

☐ GOVERNMENT : _____

Ministry/department/agency : _____

OR

☐ ORGANIZATION : _____

(SHORT NAME / ACRONYM): _____

(Check one) ☐ UN/ Specialized Agency ☐ Inter-governmental organization

☐ Non-governmental organization ☐ Indigenous community organization

☐ Media ☐ Industry ☐ Other

Official Address : _____

Telephone : + (____) _____

Fax : + (____) _____

Telex : + (____) _____

E-MAIL : _____

URL: _____

Signature : _____ Date: _____

Please return duly filled by 31 January 2002 to :

Secretariat of the
Convention on Biological Diversity
World Trade Center
393 Saint-Jacques St., Suite 300
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
H2Y 1N9
Fax : + 1 (514) 288-6588
E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org

Preferred language:

- ☐ English
- ☐ French
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Russian
- ☐ Arabic
- ☐ Chinese

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE
MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (MOP-1)

OR

THE THIRD MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF THE
CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY (ICCP-3)

THE HAGUE, 22-26 APRIL 2002

Pre-Registration Form (Please print)

☐ Mr. / ☐ Mrs. / ☐ Ms. / ☐ Amb. / ☐ Dr. / ☐ Prof. ☐ Female ☐ Male

FAMILY NAME: _____

First name: _____

Have you attended CBD meeting(s) before?: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Representing:

☐ GOVERNMENT : _____

Ministry/department/agency : _____

OR

☐ ORGANIZATION : _____

(SHORT NAME / ACRONYM): _____

(Check one) ☐ UN/ Specialized Agency ☐ Inter-governmental organization

☐ Non-governmental organization ☐ Indigenous community organization

☐ Media ☐ Industry ☐ Other

Official Address : _____

Telephone : + (____) _____

Fax : + (____) _____

Telex : + (____) _____

E-MAIL : _____

URL: _____

Signature : _____ Date: _____

Please return duly filled by 31 January 2002 to :

Secretariat of the
Convention on Biological Diversity
World Trade Center
393 Saint-Jacques St., Suite 300
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
H2Y 1N9

Fax : + 1 (514) 288-6588

E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org

Preferred language:

- ☐ English
- ☐ French
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Russian
- ☐ Arabic
- ☐ Chinese

HOTELRESERVATION

JAGER EVENTS BV

Burg. Marijnenlaan 123
 2585 DV The Hague
 The Netherlands
 Tel. 0031 (0) 70 364 92 93
 Fax. 0031 (0) 70 362 14 54
 E-mail: info@jagerevents.com
www.jagerevents.com/COP6

Please send or fax to:

JAGER EVENTS
 0031 (0) 70 362 14 54

COP6/MOP 1 Meeting
 8 - 19 April 2002
 22 - 26 April 2002
 The Hague

Name of person requesting hotel reservation

Street and number

Residence

Telephone

Telefax

e-mail

I order definitely

- ☐ Single room (number of rooms)
☐ Double room (number of rooms)

Please reserve a room in the following price categorie (Incl. breakfast, per room and night)

>145 euro
 145 - 180 euro
 < 180 euro

☐
☐
☐

If the desired price category is not available, please reserve a hotel room in a

- ☐ Higher
☐ Lower

date of arrival
 date of departure
 number of nights

arrival by car
 arrival by train
 arrival by plane

time of arrival at hotel

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Countries whose subjects require a visa to enter the Netherlands	
Afghanistan	Egypt
Albania	Equatorial Guyana
Algeria	Eritrea
Angola	Ethiopia
Antigua and Barbuda	
Armenia	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
Azerbaijan	Fiji
	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Bahamas	
Bahrain	Gabon
Bangladesh	Gambia
Barbados	Georgia
Belarus	Ghana
Belize	Grenada
Benin	Guinea
Bhutan	Guinea Bissau
	Guyana
Bosnia Herzegovina	
Botswana	Haiti
Burkina Faso	
Burundi	India
	Indonesia
Cambodia	Iraq
Cameroon	Iran
Cape Verde	Ivory Coast **
Central African Republic	
Chad *	Jamaica **
China	Jordan
Columbia	
Comoros	Kazakhstan
Congo Brazzaville	Kenya
Congo (Democratic Republic)	Kiribati
Cuba	Korea (North)
	Kuwait
Djibouti	Kyrgyzstan
Dominica	
Dominican Republic	

** Countries whose subjects DO NOT require a visa to enter the Netherlands provided they hold a diplomatic, official or service passport

* Countries whose subjects DO NOT require a visa to enter the Netherlands provided they hold a diplomatic passport

(cont'd)

Laos	Saint Christopher (Saint Kitts) and Nevis
Lesotho	Saint Lucia
Lebanon	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Liberia	Solomon Islands
Libya	South Africa
	Samoa (west)
	Sao Tomé and Príncipe
Madagascar	Saudi Arabia
Malawi **	Senegal *
Maldives	Seychelles
Mali	Sierra Leone
Marian Islands (Northern)	Somalia
Marshall Islands	Sri Lanka
Mauritania	Sudan
Mauritius	Surinam
Micronesia	Swaziland
Moldavia	Syria
Mongolia	
Morocco **	Tadzhikistan
Mozambique	
Myanmar	Tanzania
	Thailand **
Namibia	Togo
Nauru	Tonga
Nepal	Trinidad and Tobago
Niger	Tunisia **
Nigeria	Turkey **
	Turkmenistan
Oman	Tuvalu
Pakistan **	Vanuatu
Palau	Vietnam
Papua New Guinea	
Peru	Uganda
Philippines	Ukraine
	Uzbekistan
Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Rumania *	Yemen
Russia	
Rwanda	Zambia
	Zimbabwe

** Countries whose subjects DO NOT require a visa to enter the Netherlands provided they hold a diplomatic, official or service passport

* Countries whose subjects DO NOT require a visa to enter the Netherlands provided they hold a diplomatic passport

May 2001

Annex 2 Countries whose subjects DO NOT require a visa to enter the Netherlands (maximum stay: 90 days)

Andorra	
Argentina	Korea (South)
Australia	
	Latvia
Bolivia	Liechtenstein
Brazil	Lithuania
Brunei	
Bulgaria	Malay
	Malta
Canada	Mexico
Chile	Monaco
Costa Rica	
Croatia	New Zealand
Cyprus	Nicaragua
Czech Republic	
	Panama
Ecuador	Paraguay
El Salvador	Poland
Estonia	
	San Marino
Guatemala	Singapore
	Slovenia
Honduras	Slovakia
Hungary	Switzerland
	United Kingdom
	United States of America
Ireland	Uruguay
Israel	
	Vatican City
Japan	Venezuela

May 2001

Visa for short stay in the Netherlands

Mission IND

Migration poses ever-changing and complex problems for our society. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) is responsible within this dynamic situation for carrying out tasks concerning the admission of aliens, naturalization, regulation, repatriation, and border security. The IND is an open, professional, and reliable organization, and makes its decisions carefully and timely. To this end, the IND invests in expert, motivated, and committed staff who are essential for the quality of the work.

1 What is the purpose of this brochure?

The Dutch government maintains an admissions policy for aliens who want to come to the Netherlands. This admissions policy is regulated by the Dutch Aliens Act. Depending on your nationality, the purpose of your visit, and how long you want to stay in the Netherlands, you will have to apply for a visa in your country in order to be able to travel to the Netherlands. The Dutch government will check to see if you satisfy the rules in order to be eligible for this. The decision about your visa application is taken by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, an executive body of the Ministry of Justice. Please remember that this procedure does take a certain amount of time. This brochure explains what you must do in order for your application to pass off well.

Please note! no rights can be derived from the contents of this brochure.

2 Who should read this brochure?

This brochure is intended for aliens who want to come to the Netherlands for a period of less than three months, and come from a country where you need to have a visa. The brochure tells you about the rules that apply for your stay in the Netherlands and about the procedure that has to be followed. It also tells you what documents you will need. Read this brochure through carefully, so that you know which steps to take and whether or not you have the right documents. The documents you need depends on the purpose of your visit. If you do not have the right documents, then this usually delays the processing of your application.

What is a visa for short stay?

A visa for short stay is a Schengen visa that entitles the holder to a stay of a maximum of three months in the Schengen countries. These are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. The purpose for coming to the Netherlands might be a holiday, a business trip, visiting friends or family, or participation in a convention or sporting event. With a visa, you can in principle travel freely through the Schengen countries for as long as your visa is valid. The conditions for issuing visas are set out in relation to the Schengen area. The -Schengen Implementation Agreement has been in force since 26 March 1995.

There is a list in the appendix which shows whether or not a citizen of a particular country needs a visa for any of the Schengen countries. If you come from one of the countries where you need a visa, then you will need a valid travel visa in order to be admitted to any of the countries marked with a cross. If you are a citizen of a country where you do not need to have a visa for the relevant member states, then you are free to stay in this country for a maximum period of three months. You can read more about what you have to do when you arrive in the Netherlands in chapter 6.

Longer than three months in the Netherlands

If you want to stay in the Netherlands for longer than three months, then you must have a valid Authorization for temporary stay (Machtiging tot

Voorlopig Verblijf, MVV) when you arrive. This is a special visa that will allow you to apply for a residence permit. You will have to apply for this MVV in your own country. There are different procedures all according to the purpose of your stay in the Netherlands. You can find information about the MVV application in the brochure that deals with the specific purpose for your stay, such as 'Work Placements and Practical Training in the Netherlands', 'Study in the Netherlands', 'Au pair in the Netherlands', etc. chapter 12 (Do you still have any questions?), you can find out where to obtain these brochures.

If you are a citizen of one of the member states of the European Union or the European Economic Area, then different admission rules apply. You do not need to read this brochure if you have the nationality of one of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden or United Kingdom (Great Britain and Northern Ireland). There is a special brochure for you that can be obtained from the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

3 Under which conditions can you stay in the Netherlands?

If you want to stay in the Netherlands for less than three months, then you have to satisfy certain conditions. Below is a list of all the conditions which in any event apply to you. You can check to see if you satisfy them.

General conditions

You must in any event:

- have a valid passport/travel document.
- not be considered a danger to public order, to national security, or to the international relations of one of the parties to the Agreement.
- have sufficient means of support. If this is not the case, you will need a guarantee declaration from a third person who has sufficient continuous income.

4 Which documents do you need?

For admission to the Netherlands you need various documents. You will need most documents straight-away for your application for admission.

- valid passport/travel document
- evidence to support the purpose of your visit (for example, a letter of invitation from friends or family)
- documents that show you have sufficient means of support for your stay, your onward journey, and/or your journey home
- guarantee declaration
- proof of employment (letter from employer)
- one or more payslips
- one or more bank statements
- Proof that the journey has been booked
- Documents that prove you are going back (for example, showing the enrollment of children at school)
- passport photographs

5 When do you need a visa?

In order to be able to enter the Netherlands, you will need a visa in most cases. This does not apply to everyone. It depends on your nationality. The Dutch embassy or consulate can tell you more about this. There is a list of countries where a visa is required in the appendix. If you are a citizen of one of these countries, then you will need a valid travel visa if you want to come to the Netherlands. If you are a citizen of another country, and you therefore do not need to have a visa, you are free to stay in the Netherlands for a maximum period of three months. You can also find out in the appendix whether or not your Schengen visa allows you to travel through all Schengen countries.

Please note! If you have entered the Netherlands with a short stay visa, you will not be able to obtain a residence permit here. In that case you will first of all have to return to your country of origin, or the country where you have established residence, in order to apply for a so-called Authorization for temporary stay (MVV) at the Dutch embassy or consulate in that country.

How do you apply for a visa?

You will have to make a personal application for a visa at the Dutch diplomatic representation (embassy or consulate) in the country where you come from or have your main place of residence. This is done using a standard Schengen visa application form.

You might also need authorization from the Visa Service in the Netherlands in order to obtain a visa. The service can then decide about the application immediately, in a number of cases the application is sent on to the chief of police (in the Netherlands) for information and advice. In that case, the referee (the acquaintance who will support you) might be called upon to provide more detailed information and to sign a guarantee declaration. It is also possible that the referee might be approached directly by the Visa Service to provide written information. He will then be sent a number of forms that he has to send back as quickly as possible. That is why it can take up to three months for your application to be dealt with. It is therefore important that you apply for a visa well in advance. The short stay visa is a sticker that is fixed in your passport. The visa is valid for a limited period only². The start and end date of the valid period are stated on the sticker. You will have to pay a fee for the visa. Once you have your visa in your passport, you can travel to the Netherlands. You can read more about what you will have to do when you arrive in the Netherlands in chapter 6.

How can the referee in the Netherlands support your visa application?

The acquaintance who will meet you in the Netherlands is called the referee. To support your visa application, the referee can obtain a standard letter of invitation from his local council. After the referee has filled this in, and when he has shown a valid passport, the letter of invitation is legalized by a council official. However, you cannot derive any rights from the fact that the council has legalized the letter of invitation. This is because the council only certifies the signature of the referee.

The referee can send you this letter of invitation, along with a copy of his passport, copies of his last three payslips (or other proof of his income or assets), and a guarantee declaration.

6 What do you have to do when you arrive in the Netherlands?

Once you have arrived in the Netherlands, you must then report to the Aliens Police within three working days in the region where you are temporarily going to live. You have to report to the Aliens Police regardless of whether or not you come from a country for which a visa is required. If you are going to stay in the Netherlands for less than three days, then this obligation does not apply.

7 The costs *

An application fee has to be paid to the Dutch government. You must pay a fee for a:

-Short stay visa (The fee depends on the exchange rate and how long the visa is valid for):

-for 1 month NLG 55.09 € 25,-

-for 2 or 3 months NLG 66.11 € 30,-

*Amounts are given with a reservation

Euro Information

The Dutch government, and therefore also the Ministry of Justice, will be using the Dutch guilder until 31 December 2001. From 1 January 2002 onwards, the national currency of the Netherlands will be the euro (€).

Handling-fee

As of 1 January 2001, the Dutch government will be charging a so-called 'handling fee' for each new visa application. This means that prior to any decision about the visa application, a charge will be made for handling the application. This fee will be the same as the fee that has to be paid for the visa being applied for. If the application is approved, this means the applicant has already paid all the costs. If the visa application is refused, however, the handling fee will not be refunded.

8 Additional information

Renewal for a maximum stay of three months

Circumstances might arise where you have to extend your stay in the Netherlands (for example, with your family). For example, in the event of force majeure or for personal or humanitarian reasons. An application for renewal of the visa can only be made at the nearest office of the Aliens Police. Renewal is only possible for a maximum stay of three months. Renewal for more than three months is only granted under exceptional circumstances. In that case the visa is limited to the Benelux countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. However, the duration of your stay must not exceed six months. You will have to pay a fee to extend the validity period of your visa.

9 What if you don't agree with a decision?

If your application is refused by the Dutch government, then you can submit a letter of objection about this. The Aliens Act provides for a number of legal procedures which you can use if you do not agree with a certain decision.

Your legal representative, your special authorized representative, or any lawyer called in by you can take these steps on your behalf. If a referee submits a letter of objection on your behalf, he must also submit a written authorization from you allowing him to do so. The decision notification will include details about how you can object/appeal against the decision. You should therefore read the decision through carefully, in particular paying attention to the date before which you must make your objection or appeal. In general, a letter of objection or appeal must be made in writing within four weeks of the date on which notification was given of the decision. It is advisable to enclose a copy of the decision. Moreover, it is important that the Aliens Police is also notified about the submission of a letter of objection or appeal.

For more detailed information, you should see a lawyer or go to a legal aid centre.

10 Which official bodies will you have to deal with?

The Dutch embassy or consulate

The diplomatic representation of the Dutch government in your country.

Aliens Police

The Aliens Police is a section of the Dutch police. The Aliens Police is responsible for dealing with the applications for residence permits from aliens and the supervision of aliens who are living in the Netherlands. The Aliens Police has an office in nearly every local council district in the Netherlands.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND)

This organization is a department of the Ministry of Justice. The IND decides on behalf of the state secretary who is admitted to the Netherlands. Furthermore, the IND deals with applications from aliens who want to become Dutch citizens. Together with the police and the Royal Military Police, the IND is responsible for border security, for monitoring the legal residence of aliens, and for returning aliens who are no longer allowed to remain in the Netherlands.

11 Glossary

Alien

A person who does not have Dutch nationality.

Authorization for temporary stay (Machtiging tot Voorlopig Verblijf, MVV)

Visa with which an alien can travel to the Netherlands in order to apply for a residence permit here at the Aliens Police. Before MVV is issued, a check is made to see if the alien satisfies all the conditions for residence in the Netherlands. The MVV is applied for and issued at a Dutch embassy or consulate.

Guarantee declaration

This declaration can be obtained from the Aliens Police in your area. If a alien wants to come to the Netherlands, it might be the case that another person (for example, a family member or acquaintance) might have to stand as a guarantor. This person then signs a guarantee declaration by which he or she is responsible for any costs the government makes in connection with the stay (or departure) of the alien. A guarantee declaration does not need to be signed if it is clear that the alien has sufficient financial means of his own in order to provide for his living expenses during his stay in the Netherlands.

Letter of invitation

Standard form, which can be obtained from any local council, that is filled in by the referee in the Netherlands, and on the basis of which the alien in the foreign country can apply for a visa.

Order

This is a (written) government decision. An alien who has made an application for a residence permit is notified about the decision by way of an order. This is issued by the Aliens Police.

Referee

The acquaintance who receives the alien in the Netherlands.

Schengen

In 1985 and 1990, several member states of what was then the European Community signed the Treaty of Schengen and the Schengen Implementation Agreement in the town of Schengen. These treaties introduced the free movement of people in the so-called Schengen area, which is formed by Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. Due to the scrapping of internal borders in this area, the control of the movement of people has also been discontinued.

Schengen visa

With the introduction of the Treaty of Schengen, a Schengen visa has also been introduced. With this visa, it is possible to travel freely within the territory of all the Schengen countries. Nonetheless, each country still has the right to refuse an alien. A Schengen visa is in principle valid for a maximum of three months.

Short stay visa

Aliens from certain countries need to have a visa before they are allowed to come to the Netherlands. This visa must be applied for at the Dutch embassy or consulate in their own country. With a visa, an alien can stay a maximum period of three months.

Important: Throughout this text, 'he' can also be read as 'she'.

12 Do you still have any questions?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs deals with visa applications for such reasons as business trips, conventions, and participation in sporting events. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can be contacted by telephone on weekdays between 9.00-12.30 on the following number: +31 (0)70 348 64 86.

The Visa Service of the Immigration and Naturalization Service assesses the visa applications for family visits and tourism/holidays. The Visa Service information line is open on weekdays between 9.00-12.30 and between 13.30-16.00.

Telephone: +31 (0)70 370 35 55

Fax: +31 (0)70 370 36 55

Postal address:

Immigratie-en Naturalisatiedienst

Afdeling Visadienst

Postbus 30124

2500 GC 's-Gravenhage

13 More information

This brochure is intended for people who want to apply for a visa for short stay in the Netherlands. The stay in this case does not last longer than three months. Perhaps you still have some questions, or the information in this brochure is not clear enough. If you have any questions, you can get in touch with the staff at the IND Communication department on weekdays from 9.00-12.30 and from 13.30-16.30, on +31 (0)70 370 31 24. You can also put your questions in a letter, fax, or e-mail. You cannot, however, derive any legal rights from any information given to you by this department. If you have a complaint about the way you have been treated by the IND, you should put this in writing.

Ministerie van Justitie

Immigratie-en Naturalisatiedienst

Afdeling Communicatie

Postbus 30125

2500 GC 's-Gravenhage

Telephone: +31 (0)70 370 31 24

Fax: +31 (0)70 370 31 34

E-mail: voorlichting@ind.minjus.nl

Internet: www.immigratiedienst.nl

14 Publication

This brochure is a brief summary of a subject covered by the laws and regulations concerning aliens in the Netherlands. The brochure has been published by the Communication department of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, an executive body of the Ministry of Justice. No rights can be derived from the contents of this publication. The text of this publication can be used as long as the source and date of publication are also mentioned.

Publication date: April 2001