

International students and part-time jobs

Working part-time during your studies

As an international student in Holland, you might want to take a part-time job, just as Dutch students do. Besides helping to cover your costs, a job can also give you useful work experience, allow you to participate in Dutch society and make it easier for you to learn the language. Your position as a job applicant is somewhat different from that of Dutch students, however. That is what this factsheet is about.

How do I find a part-time job?

The easiest way to find a job is through an employment agency, or *uitzendbureau*. Some agencies specialize in jobs for students. The student affairs office at the Dutch institution where you are enrolled can provide addresses or may even have their own job agency. Of course you can also respond to advertisements or search for a job on the Internet. The following websites may be helpful:

- www.undutchables.nl
- international.monsterboard.nl
- www.dutchisnotrequired.nl/
- www.studentenbaan.nl (in Dutch)

Formalities and rules

Your position is different from that of Dutch students and you will have to take several practical restrictions into account, such as your probable lack of fluency in the Dutch language. It goes without saying that if you are enrolled in an English-taught programme and have not had to learn any Dutch, certain jobs will be out of your reach. But even if you do speak Dutch, some jobs simply require the fluency of a native speaker. Always make sure you know about the relevant formalities and rules before you begin to look for a job.

Work permit

Many foreign students need a work permit in order to hold a part-time job in the Netherlands. Whether you will need a permit depends on your nationality.

- If you are a citizen of the EU/EEA (except for Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania) and Switzerland you do not need a work permit. There is no restriction on the number of hours you are allowed to work. While you are not obliged to register with the Dutch Immigration Service (IND) as an EU student, it is highly advisable to do so as it will make a number of things easier, such as applying for a telephone subscription and finding a job. Registration is free.
- If you are a citizen of Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania, transitional rules apply with respect to the labour market. You will still need a work permit. It is up to your employer or the employment agency to apply for your work permit from UWV WERKbedrijf. You cannot do this yourself. There is no restriction on the number of hours you are allowed to work, but it is easier if you limit the hours to ten a week or full-time during the summer months June, July and August only. In that case the application process for a work permit is much easier as the UWV WERKbedrijf applies simplified rules (see also: citizens of all other countries).
While you are not obliged to apply for verification against EU Community Law (proof of lawful residence) from the IND, it is highly advisable to do so as it will make a number of things easier, such as applying for a telephone subscription and finding a job.
- Citizens of all other countries will need a work permit. Dutch immigration law restricts the number of hours you may work. You may either do seasonal work full-time (but only in June, July and August), or you may work part-time throughout the rest of the year (but no more than ten hours a week); you may not do both. It is up to your employer or the employment agency to apply for your work permit from UWV WERKbedrijf. You cannot do this yourself.

The application must be accompanied by a copy of your residence permit for study purposes and by a statement from your institution confirming that you are enrolled as a student. It will take about five weeks to process the application. Simplified rules are now in place for the work permit application procedure, which means that UWV WERKbedrijf no longer performs all the checks stipulated in the Foreign Nationals Employment Act (*Wet arbeid vreemdelingen*, Wav). Employers may not always be aware of the simplified rules, and may be wary about applying for a work permit. There is no need for this, though.

Healthcare insurance

Dutch public healthcare insurance is called *basiszorgverzekering*, or 'basic care insurance'. Dutch law requires everyone in Holland with resident or employee status to take out public healthcare insurance. Students who are in Holland solely for study purposes are exempt from this general requirement and are allowed to have other insurance, such as private healthcare insurance. If you start a part-time job, however, you will immediately have to take out Dutch public healthcare insurance, since now you are no longer just a student, but also an employee. This applies no matter how many hours you work per week. You are advised to take this into consideration before starting a job, because Dutch public healthcare insurance may be more expensive than the insurance you otherwise use. This rule also applies to EU citizens who are covered by an EU Health Insurance Card. From the moment you start working, you need to take out Dutch public healthcare insurance. If you intend to work part-time on and off, make sure you choose an insurance company that allows you to switch between private and public healthcare insurance. For more detailed information, please check the 'Healthcare insurance for international students in Holland' factsheet on www.studyinholland.nl.

Healthcare allowance

As the costs of Dutch public healthcare insurance can weigh heavily on a small budget, the Dutch government provides a healthcare allowance to people with low incomes. If you are insured through a Dutch public healthcare insurance you are eligible to apply for this healthcare allowance. Since the online application tool requires an electronic signature it is generally easiest to order an application form through your local tax office. The healthcare allowance application form is only available in Dutch. To help students complete this Dutch form Nuffic has created a translated version, which can be downloaded from www.studyinholland.nl. Please note that you are not to submit this English application form; it is only a tool to help you fill out the Dutch form.

Social security

Social security contributions will be deducted from your gross pay. These deductions support the systems that provide disability pay and unemployment benefits – meaning that, as an employee, you will be insured against the consequences of any work-related accident. Your employer is obliged to deduct these social security contributions from your pay before you get it. These deductions can easily take up a third of your gross pay. Your employer's human resources department can provide a detailed explanation of this and other elements of your payslip.

Income tax

You are required to pay tax over your total Dutch income for the year. Scholarships may also be counted as income and added to the total. If you have both a scholarship that is taxed and a part-time job, you might receive less money than with only a scholarship. If you have a foreign scholarship and your country has signed a tax treaty with the Netherlands, it is possible that your scholarship will not be taxed in Holland (since according to Dutch law a person is only obliged to pay income tax in one country). Holland has tax treaties with many countries, including all EU member states. For more information about this complicated issue, contact your employer's human resources department or the Tax & Customs Administration's inquiry desk for private individuals (*Belastingdienst particulieren*, phone 0800 0543 or www.belastingdienst.nl).

Agreements with your employer

Before you start a job, it is wise to settle all the formalities with your employer, such as the number of holiday days you are entitled to, your insurance coverage and your tax situation. Also make sure you know the organization's own rules and regulations regarding the terms of employment.

Stick to the rules...

Some students take jobs in, for example, cafes and restaurants through unofficial channels, where the employer does not pay any social security contributions for them. The pay for such jobs is usually higher than for regular jobs, but it is important to realize that this practice (called *zwartwerken*, or 'working in the black') is illegal, and means that you cannot claim any rights as an employee. Moreover, you will not be insured in the event of a work-related accident. You should also be aware that if you need a work permit and your employer lets you work without one, he or she risks a high fine in the event of discovery. In the worst case you might even lose your residence permit.

More information

For more information about employment formalities, please contact your institution and/or employment agency.

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