

# Welcome to the Netherlands

Your gateway to business growth

INVEST IN  
**Holland**



“We are ready to  
guide you on your  
international journey”





**“ We are ready to help foreign businesses that look for a future in the heart of Europe.** With new jobs, research & innovation and in strengthening our international clusters that work on societal challenges you contribute to our international ecosystem. Because we value your contribution, we are ready to guide you on your international journey. At the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency, we offer you a highly knowledgeable staff, supported by an outstanding network of Invest in Holland partners, providing free, confidential assistance to streamline every step in your journey towards opening your business in the Netherlands. Because together we can achieve more.”

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Hans Kuijpers

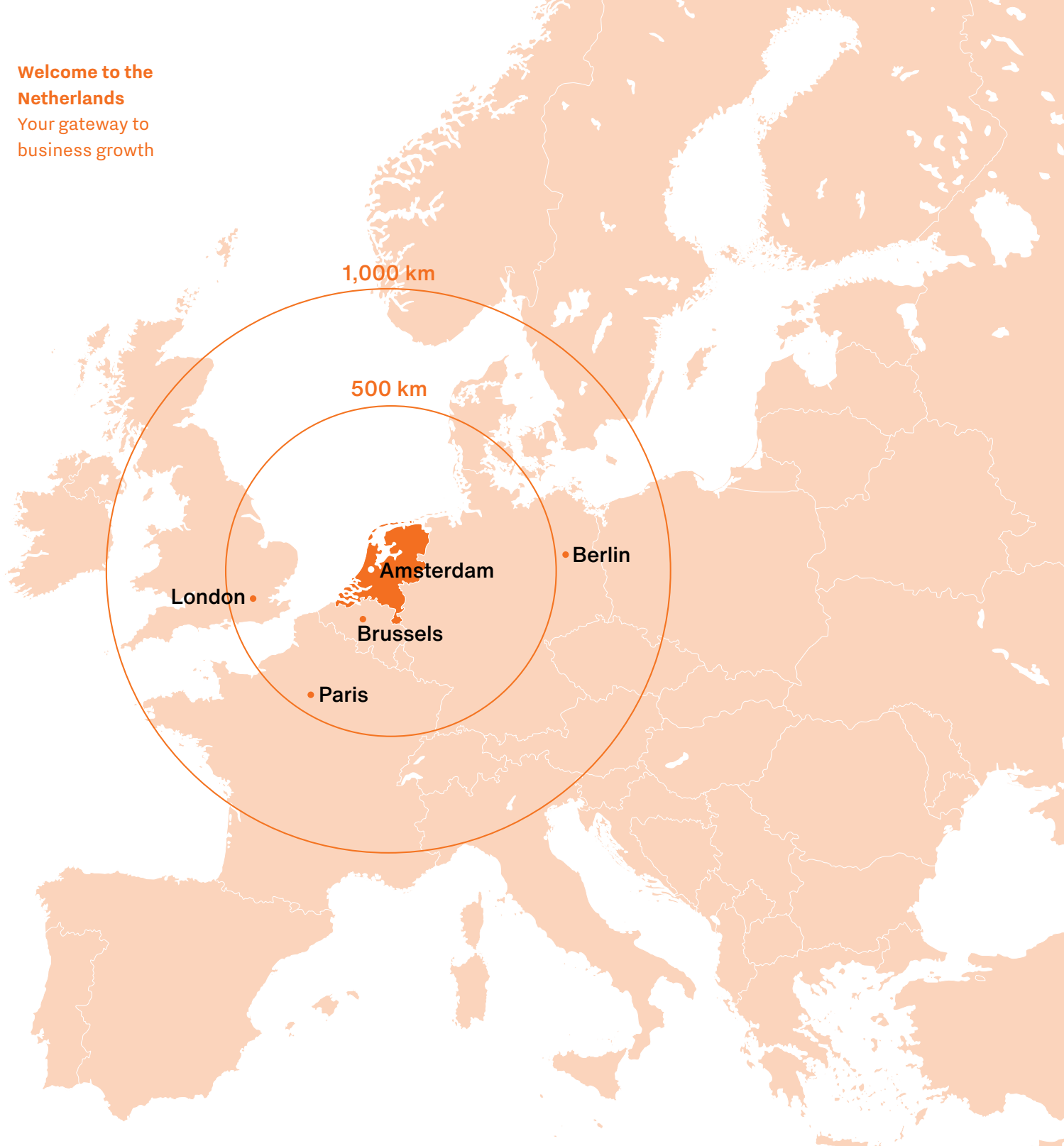
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Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency



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**95%**  
of Europe's most  
lucrative consumer  
markets are just  
around the corner



consumers  
within 500 km



consumers  
within 1,000 km

# Why invest in the Netherlands?

Do you have ambitions to expand your business in Europe? The Netherlands is your strategic business move. We are an economic powerhouse at Europe's front door, consistently ranked by Forbes as one of the top countries in the world to do business. Our strong, stable and open business environment helps international companies flourish and grow. From startups to Fortune 500 leaders, companies from around the globe choose the Netherlands as their reliable business base in Europe. What's your next move? The Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA) is ready to introduce you to the dynamic, international business ecosystem in our country.

## **We help businesses hit the ground running**

There is no better place than the Netherlands to do business. The Dutch government is business-friendly and committed to stimulating innovation, sustainability and digitalization. Regulators and authorities aim to provide the information and tools your company needs to succeed. Ranked as the world's No. 1 most connected economy by DHL, we are also known for our creative, collaborative and open environment that fuels business growth. We bring the best mix of what is important to international companies: a competitive business climate; a skilled and educated workforce; accessible programs to enhance and boost innovation; state-of-the-art infrastructure, and a stable political and economic landscape. Entrepreneurs can hit the ground running in the Netherlands.

## **Great access to your customers, suppliers and partners**

Finding the right geographical location is a top priority for any business looking to expand or relocate. And it doesn't get any better than the Netherlands, where 95% of Europe's most lucrative markets are just around the corner. We're ideally situated on the mainland to provide fast access to your partners, suppliers and customers throughout Europe. Whether you need to travel or transport your goods by road, rail, water or air, the Netherlands has the logistics infrastructure to get you there. Need to access trade by sea? We're home to the Port of Rotterdam, Europe's largest port, along with the Port of Amsterdam and North Sea Ports. Looking for air transport that can take your business to new heights? Centrally located in Europe, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol can connect you with a vast global network for cargo and international travel. From entry to delivery, you can do it all in the Netherlands – and in record time.

## Solving global challenges by innovating together

In the Netherlands, we know that global challenges require innovative solutions, which is why we're building an ecosystem where foreign and domestic players can shape the future together. It's no coincidence that the EU Innovation Scoreboard and the Global Innovation Index both rank our country as an innovation leader in Europe. Whether you're in the business of agrifood, tech, life sciences & health, clean energy or quantum technology, our world-leading industry clusters offer fertile ground for R&D-driven innovation. Through incentive programs and public-private partnerships, our government fosters a forward-thinking environment for groundbreaking research and cutting-edge projects. It's no wonder global innovators bring their projects to the Netherlands – there's no limit to what you can achieve here.

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## A smart workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Renowned for our deeply skilled workforce and our commitment to nurturing new talent, the Netherlands is the natural choice for companies looking to stay competitive in today's global market. We have the rankings to prove it: In 2020, the Netherlands moved up to No. 6 in the INSEAD Global Talent Competitiveness Index. In addition, the IMD Competitiveness ranking scored the Netherlands among the world's top countries for our labor market, educational attainment and skilled workforce – all critical factors for a business to consider when expanding internationally.

The Dutch are not only expert workers – we're lifelong learners who eagerly adopt new technologies and seek out vocational training to gain new skills. Leading the world in internet and computer proficiency, we're tech-savvy and plugged into the digital economy. Our English as a second-language skills are second to none. These are all reasons why international talent is attracted to working here. And with a robust university system that produces some of the smartest students in Europe, it's no surprise that talent is a huge draw for foreign companies to land in the Netherlands.

Last but not least? Our government takes a pragmatic approach to labor relations that encourages efficient growth for business in the Netherlands. Competitive labor costs mean high returns, thanks to the hard-working ethos that permeates the Netherlands.

## The Netherlands

Population (millions)

17.47

GDP per capita (Euros)

47,049

GDP (Euros billions):

812

17<sup>th</sup> Largest economy  
in the world

Source: Statistics Netherlands 2019-2020



With highly-trained experts and next-generation breakthroughs, the Netherlands is pioneering the future of health and food.



# Where industry and innovation converge

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From Coca-Cola and Netflix to Janssen and Philips, the Netherlands has attracted and fueled some of the world's largest enterprises and most cutting-edge innovations. How? The answer lies in our diverse industry clusters, which cultivate collaboration, fuel R&D and inspire bold entrepreneurship. These clusters run the gamut of agrifood, life sciences & health, high-tech systems, chemicals, clean energy, IT and creative industries. Within every industry, there are numerous sub-sectors ranging from cybersecurity and fintech to e-health and protein-based foods. Needless to say, your business will find itself in good company in the Netherlands.

The fuel for this rapid, far-reaching growth comes from robust public-private partnerships

## **An agrifood powerhouse that sustainably feeds the world**

Although relatively small in size, the Netherlands is an undeniable powerhouse for agriculture and food innovation. The Dutch hold the distinction of being the world's second largest exporters of agricultural products, second only to the United States. Agrifood innovation grows strong in the Netherlands, thanks to knowledge institutions like Wageningen University & Research, the world's No. 1 ranked agrifood university. Dutch agrifood ingenuity has attracted 15 of the world's top 20 agrifood companies, including Nestlé, AB Inbev, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Heineken, Cargill and Kraft Heinz, to establish major production or R&D operations here. In addition to these agrifood giants, the Netherlands is home to fast-growing innovators like Beyond Meat, Innocent Drinks and Lamb Weston / Meijer that are pioneering the future of our global food system.

## **The new frontier of life sciences & health innovation**

Highly trained expertise and next-generation breakthroughs in biopharma, medtech and biotech – it's all happening in the Dutch life sciences & health sector. Life sciences companies from around the world come here to be part of a high-connected Dutch ecosystem buttressed by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA), as well as the local Dutch regulator Medicines Evaluation Board (MEB). Well-established as a leading hub in Europe, the Netherlands produces some of the top minds and innovations in global health. We rank in the top 10 worldwide for patents in medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, and we're the No. 1 world market leader in medical isotopes. Across the Netherlands, companies like Janssen and BBio are



joining forces with hospitals and knowledge institutions to develop vaccines and other pioneering research for a better world.

### **Europe's Silicon Valley of high-tech systems**

Often dubbed the “Silicon Valley” of embedded systems and nanotechnology, the Netherlands has one of the hottest high-tech industries in Europe. The city of Eindhoven is called “Brainport” for a reason – the Dutch tech hub is home to Europe’s smartest square kilometer, making it easy to see how top firms like Philips and ASML got their start and continue to thrive in the region. We excel in technologies that are shaping the future of industry, such as robotics, quantum technology, 3D printing, automotive tech, high-tech manufacturing, aerospace technology, semiconductor technology, photonics and nanotechnology. The fuel for this rapid, far-reaching growth comes from robust public-private partnerships and cutting-edge R&D, which propel Dutch high-tech innovation forward.

### **Pioneering the chemicals of tomorrow**

Driven by a commitment to sustainability, the Dutch chemicals sector is engineering the materials of tomorrow. We’re at the heart of one of the top chemical clusters in the world: the interconnected Antwerp-Rotterdam-Rhine-Ruhr Area, which accounts for 40 percent of the EU’s total chemical production. Domestically, our chemicals industry is home to 19 of the world’s top 25 chemicals companies. All told, 2,000 leading companies in the Netherlands contribute to the vitality of this sector across the entire supply chain.







We're the smart choice for companies invested in chemical innovation, supporting a diverse array of public-private consortia and hosting key R&D facilities for major firms like DSM, SABIC, Shell and Avantium.

### **Catalyst for the energy transition**

The transition to renewable and smart energy is coming to life in the Netherlands. With our progressive policies and affinity for innovation, the Netherlands is a magnet for some of the world's leading specialists in the energy industry. We've built world-class R&D facilities and created incentive programs to stimulate innovation and find new ways to produce, use and save energy. Energy companies – homegrown and international – knowledge institutions, networking organizations and government all work together to form the energy ecosystem in the Netherlands. In the evolving global energy landscape, this ecosystem is powering new solutions – from offshore windfarms and hydrogen hubs to floating solar panels and smart grid communities.

### **Connecting the world through information technology**

Poor internet connection? Not in the Netherlands. Some 98 percent of Dutch households have Internet access, which is higher than all other European nations. The Netherlands' diverse information technology sector is

bolstered by the Amsterdam Internet Exchange (AMS-IX), one of the world's leading digital data distributors. We're putting our brains together to accelerate the development of artificial intelligence, driven by our government's Strategic Action Plan for AI. We've also become a leading cybersecurity hub in Europe as the home base of The Hague Security Delta, Europe's largest security cluster. Last but not least, the Netherlands is making headlines in the financial world as Europe's fastest-growing hub for fintech innovators.

### **Europe's fastest growing hub for fintech innovation**

The Netherlands is a leading edge center for finance and fintech, from investment, payments, trading and insurance to green and inclusive finance. With our open financial regulatory system, superb digital infrastructure, and high adoption rate for tech innovation, the Netherlands is a magnet for fintech entrepreneurs. We rank 3<sup>rd</sup> in Europe for VC funding and are one of the biggest markets for payments and P2P lending. Our outstanding tech ecosystem ranks 3rd in Europe for innovative startups. With companies like Booking.com, Adyen, Takeaway, TomTom and WeTransfer breaking the mold, using artificial intelligence and big data, we are revolutionizing fintech. Dutch payment services like Buckaroo have moved the



The Netherlands offers a strong, stable and open business environment with superb talent and infrastructure so international entrepreneurs can hit the ground running.

needle on traditional banking. Adyen provides payment tools for Airbnb and Uber, Mollie has become the latest fintech unicorn and payment app Tikkie is making headlines. Foreign fintech companies like Lemonade and Plaid have already chosen the Netherlands, and Inshur – the insurance offer adopted by Uber – demonstrates how the fintech sector is expanding further, all the way to the insurance industry.

### **A strong creative streak that fuels global brands**

The birthplace of Vincent Van Gogh and Rembrandt has retained its creative streak, generating more creative output today than almost any country in the world. Ranked in the top 10 worldwide for trade, jobs and brands, the Dutch creative industry fuels advertising for global brands like Nike, McDonalds and Heineken. Creativity and sustainability are interwoven in the Dutch fashion and apparel industry, with companies like Renewal Workshop leading the way toward zero-waste circular solutions for apparel brands. The Netherlands is also a lightning rod for some of the biggest players in media, entertainment and broadcasting – Netflix, Discovery and ViacomCBS, to name a few – thanks to major media hotspots like Amsterdam and Hilversum.

### **Digital gateway to Europe**

#1 internet exchange in Europe - AMS-IX



#1 most connected economy (DHL)



Europe's leading cyber security hub



AI innovation driver



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# The Netherlands: a great place to live

No matter where you're from, the Netherlands welcomes people from all walks of life. We take pride in our vibrant, open and multicultural society, which cultivates close-knit international communities for expats. And our dedicated network of Expat Centers across the country help ensure a soft landing in our country.

Dutch cities make the top 10 global ranking of most livable cities. They are ideal for natives and newcomers alike with a wealth of culture and a safe, beautiful environment that is never too far from the countryside or seaside. Getting around is a breeze too, thanks to our outstanding mobility and public transportation infrastructure which accommodates road, rail and of course, our world-famous cycling culture.

With numerous international schools across the country, the Dutch education system fosters global connections and nurtures bright minds. Our healthcare system, ranked No. 1 in the EU, guarantees equitable access to high quality services for everyone who lives here.

## Find your spark in the Dutch way of life

For residents in the Netherlands, an exceptional quality of living and a healthy work-life balance simply describe the Dutch way of life. Don't just take it from us: the OECD ranks the Netherlands No. 1 in the world for work-life balance, in addition to high scores for health, housing, employment and well-being. With all of these factors combined, it's no surprise that the Netherlands is the world's sixth happiest nation according to the UN Happiness Report. The Dutch know it too, with more than 87 percent of our population reporting a positive satisfaction with their lives – the highest proportion in Europe.

From great healthcare to overall happiness, the Netherlands furnishes the spark that can inspire your work and life.

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## Quality of life in the Netherlands

#1

Work-life balance  
(OECD 2019)

#2

Healthcare system  
(EHCI 2018)

#2

Happiest country  
(Eurostat 2018)

Top 10

Education system  
(USNews 2019)


# Ready. Set. Go Dutch for your next business expansion

The Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA), an operational unit of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, is your one-stop-shop for establishing or expanding your business in the Netherlands. Together with our regional partners in the Invest in Holland network, NFIA assists you in your site selection, establishment and expansion processes. We provide free, confidential services that give you all the information needed to make a business case for the Netherlands, including:

- **Providing up-to-date, customized information** on the Netherlands in general, relevant business locations, Dutch legislation and tax regulations, labor issues, permit procedures, governmental incentives and many other subjects during preliminary in-person meetings.
- **Organizing tailor-made fact-finding trips** (in person or online) in close cooperation with our partners in the Invest in Holland network, including introductions to relevant business partners, government authorities, a variety of Dutch networks and service suppliers, and other relevant contacts in the investment process.
- **Presenting practical solutions** that simplify and optimize establishment in the Netherlands.
- **Offering tailor-made support** by NFIA's sector specialists in agrifood, life sciences & health, high tech systems, chemical, IT, fintech and more.
- **Providing special services for international employees** at our nation-wide network of Expat Centers which help internationals navigate the formalities so they can get settled quickly and smoothly in the Netherlands.







To start the conversation  
about locating your business in the  
Netherlands, contact us at:

[www.investinholland.com](http://www.investinholland.com)

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