







Here's Holland

Amsterdam

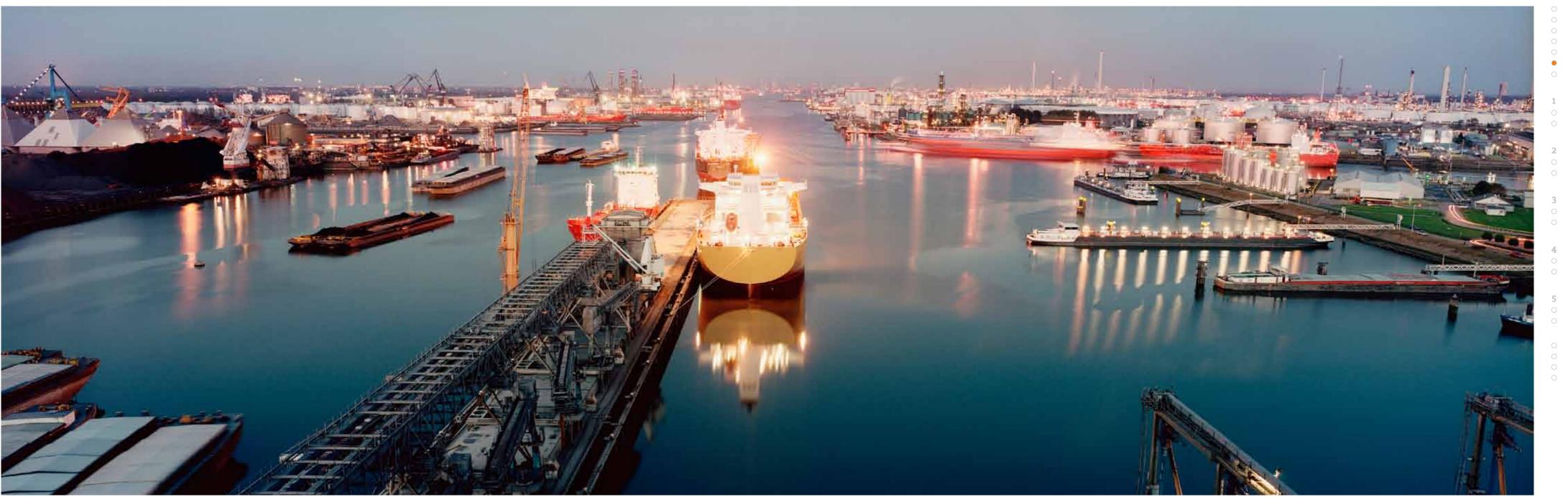






Here's Holland

Ice skating at Kinderdijk



The Port of Rotterdam

### round 2000 years ago, the Roman historian Pliny visited the water-logged Netherlands and wrote, "Twice a day, the ocean floods huge stretches of land. The people lead a hardscrabble existence and live in huts built on manmade hills."

If Pliny were alive today, he would be rubbing his Roman eyes in disbelief. This low-lying, swampy river delta has been transformed into a dynamic powerhouse, with a thriving economy. Pliny would doubtless be relieved to observe that the Dutch have meanwhile comprehensively flood-proofed their land.... In fact, the Netherlands is physically increasing in size, as a result of what are some of the world's largest land-reclamation projects. A prime example is the Maasvlakte 2 project; a huge peninsula of some 2,000 hectares, being created at the entrance to the Port of Rotterdam, itself a key driver of the Dutch economy and the logistical gateway to Europe.

Since Pliny's visit, the Netherlands has truly excelled in the global economy and is **the world's third-largest agricultural exporter, the world's second-biggest agri-food exporter, plus the world's largest flower and bulb exporter.** Clearly, the Dutch peasants of old have developed into the world's most entrepreneurial farmers and growers, working closely with leading-edge scientific institutions and multi-nationals. Dutch companies lead the global pack in key areas such as foodstuffs, chemicals, electronics, logistics and water management and engineering. No wonder some of

the world's leading multinationals are headquartered in the Netherlands, among them: Royal Dutch Shell, Unilever, Philips and Heineken.

The Dutch creative mindset is also flourishing. **Dutch design** is currently riding a wave of success, as is Dutch architecture, with iconic architect Rem Koolhaas at the helm. Dutch TV production companies develop and sell formats and programmes, such as 'Big Brother', around the world. The same strong international reputation is enjoyed by Dutch game developers. The arts, too, are well represented. When people around the world think of Dutch art, their thoughts invariably turn to past masters, such as Rembrandt, Van Gogh and Mondrian. Today's Dutch Masters, however, work in the medium of photography, and include Anton Corbijn, Erwin Olaf and Inez van Lamsweerde.

In the music world, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra has been ranked No.1 in the world by Britain's leading classical music magazine 'Gramophone'. Similarly, the Netherlands is the much-envied epicentre of contemporary dance and boasts leading dance festivals and dance companies, including the Dutch National Ballet and the Netherlands Dance Theatre. All in all, we think that we're fully entitled to blow our own trumpet a bit more loudly and tell the wider world about our impressive achievements! Hence, our motto: **"Think Holland. Think Big!"** 



# The Dutch were the first to 'go green'

Photography: Hans Oostrum Fotografie



Source: ©Koninklijke Philips Electronics N.V

#### he city of Zaandam, in the province of North Holland, was, at one time, home to some 600

windmills. However, these windmills were not the type used for draining and reclaiming the land. No, these mills were small factories using wind energy to process commodities such as timber, paper, oil, paint and foodstuffs. In 1811, Napoleon witnessed this stunning vista, exclaiming, "Sans pareil!" (beyond compare). From the 1570s onwards, Zaandam grew to become the world's first green industrial centre. The raw materials for this groundbreaking enterprise were supplied by the world's largest and most powerful merchant fleet, which was also Dutch, and also wind-powered, of course! Pragmatic as ever, the Dutch realise that, in today's world, wind energy is only part of a broader, sustainable energy mix. To achieve energy security and help mitigate climate change, the Dutch are exploring every avenue

imaginable. True to character, government, academia and the private sector have joined forces to address these challenges and, as a result, the country is making great headway towards securing sustainable, reliable and affordable energy.

#### By 2050, Dutch CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be cut by half.

Around 40% of electricity will come from sustainable sources, including offshore wind energy – an area in which the Dutch excel. The remaining 60% will be generated by hi-tech nuclear, gas, and coal power plants, often implementing CCS (Carbon Capture and Storage). An intelligent power grid is a feature of this green future too, as is a smart gas grid. Houses and buildings will be made more energy-efficient and vehicles will increasingly be powered by electricity, hydrogen and biofuels. R&D is currently focusing on many areas. Philips - the industry leader in LED lighting - is one of the companies at the forefront of energy



Source: Grontmi

innovation. Its latest wonder-product is a replacement for the ubiquitous 75-watt light bulb, that consumes 80% less energy and last 25-times longer!

Rapid global population growth, increasing per-capita water consumption, and climate change, mean that, by 2050, more than 2 billion people worldwide will lack adequate fresh water. To make matters worse, many of the world's major cities still discharge untreated effluent into rivers and other freshwater networks. In fact, around 1 billion people today have no access to clean drinking water. Thankfully, the Dutch are on hand, with a range of water treatment techniques.

One of the key areas of Dutch water expertise, is water purification. By the time river water reaches the low-lying Netherlands from the mountains of Europe, it is no longer

#### the crystal-clear spring water it once was. Consequently, over a period of 150 years, the Dutch have developed a range of solutions for transforming dirty river water into clean, potable water and,

nowadays, the quality of Dutch tap-water rivals that of bottled mineral water! Dutch companies have also developed costefficient desalination technology, which will become pivotal to the future water security of many countries. Wastewater treatment, often combined with biogas production, is another area of unrivalled Dutch expertise. Indeed, many of the treatment methods currently in use worldwide were developed in the Netherlands.



# Food for thought

Photography: Hans Oostrum Fotografie



Source: AkzoNobel

Source: Energising the Future

t's nothing short of a miracle! The Netherlands - compact in size and very densely populated - has become the world's second-biggest agrifood exporter and the world's third-largest agricultural exporter. Only the USA exports greater guantities of agri-food than the Dutch! Dutch agri-food and agricultural products enjoy a worldwide reputation for their taste, nutritional value and food safety aspects.

Proportionately, the agri-food sector in the Netherlands accounts for one of the largest shares of national industrial production in the European Union. In fact, Dutch food companies include some of the world's top-players, such as Unilever, Heineken, DSM, FrieslandCampina, Numico, CSM and VION. So how did the Dutch become food producers 'par excellence'? Part of the explanation

lies in the country's good fortune in being situated on one of the most fertile river deltas on the planet. Age-old tradition plays a major role, too. As early as the 17th century, the town of Zaandam boasted the world's largest food-processing industry and was home to many hundreds of wind-powered factories; a Dutch innovation. The foundation for the Dutch dairy industry was laid some 2000 years ago, when farmers began perfecting the breeding of the Friesian Cow. The archetypal Dutch black-andwhite cow has meanwhile gone global and now accounts for a staggering one-third of all dairy cows in the world!

What also sets the Dutch agri-food sector apart is the longstanding, close cooperation amongst all players in the field: farmers and growers, food companies, equipment manufacturers, scientists and government. This has given the country a tremendous edge when it comes to competing on

the world stage. Throughout the land, innovative companies work together with academic institutions and centres of excellence. Many agri-food companies are clustered around the University of Wageningen, which carries out research into many aspects of food production. The cities of Utrecht, Maastricht and Groningen, which have strong medical research centres, also attract food production companies concerned with the nutritional and functional aspects of foodstuffs.

The Dutch realised early-on that today's global consumers increasingly demand three things from the food they eat: it must be tasty, healthy and safe. The increasing emphasis on healthy eating – as part of a health-conscious lifestyle – is now driving many of the current innovations in the sector. Add traditional Dutch salesmanship into the mix and you have the perfect recipe for success!

Source: Plantlab

There is a running joke that the Dutch are both born merchants, and moralists. Whatever the case may be, the Dutch government is very keen to help developing countries to establish a vibrant, domestic agricultural sector, with the dual aims of being able to feed their indigenous populations and earn much-needed income in the global marketplace. Dutch companies operating internationally, have developed highly advanced yet practical solutions, such as crops requiring little land, water, heating or sunlight. A perfect example of this advanced thinking is Plantlab. This Dutch company's high-tech enclosures, illuminated by LED's, can produce high quality food, rapidly, without sunlight and with minimum application of water and nutrients, thus allowing crops to be grown in locations that were previously considered unsuitable.



# **Blueprint for health and happiness**

Photography: Hans Oostrum Fotografie



Photography: De Nationale Beeldbank

Source: Marc Heeman / Rotterdam Image Bank

Source: ©Koninklijke Philips Electronics N.V.

#### n almost all comparative studies conducted amongst nations, the Netherlands regularly features in the global top-ten, or even top-five.

Few other nations perform so convincingly across the entire spectrum of human experience – from gender equality, education and technology, to healthcare, employment and per-capita GDP. However, the ranking that the Dutch value above all others, is the one concerning overall quality of life: the Netherlands proudly claims 7th place.

The Dutch success in creating a well-ordered society is interesting to the rest of the world because it shows that taking bold decisions often drives novel solutions; whether these be related to social or technological development. A prime example of this bold thinking is **a national** 

#### scheme that promotes fitness across all levels of society, for all ages, and for all levels of physical

ability. Throughout the land, almost all children already travel to school by bicycle, in a country where there are more bicycles than people, and where engaging in sport has become highly popular. At the same time, the country is firmly focussed on improving its standings, by 2028, with the hope that increased general levels of fitness and inspiring examples of top-level sporting success will eventually permeate, and benefit, all aspects of life in the Netherlands.

Should people still fall ill, despite a healthier lifestyle, then they can rest assured that the very-best doctors, drugs and equipment are available to all. Many prescription drugs are produced domestically. Dutch drug and biotechnology companies, such

Source: DSM N.V.

as life-sciences multi-national DSM, are among the most innovative around. Much medical equipment is designed and manufactured in the Netherlands. Electronics giant, Philips, is a leading force across the entire spectrum of healthcare and, as one might rightly expect, Philips has very close ties with academic medical institutions. As if to underline this, the Greater Eindhoven Area – where Philips and many other knowledge-based organisations are located – has just been named 'the world's most-intelligent region', by the Intelligent Community Forum. Dutch academic hospitals are equally renowned for their trailblazing research into major diseases, such as cancer and diabetes; a prime example being Rotterdam's Erasmus Medical Centre, ranked third worldwide for medical research.

Somewhat ironically, all the effort put into keeping people healthy and happy has a 'side-effect': Dutch citizens reach a ripe old age. Fortunately, the Dutch were amongst the first to recognize that much needs to be done to build a secure future for an ageing society. To help keep senior citizens as self-reliant and independent for as long as possible – for social and financial reasons – care for the elderly takes the form of independent living, assisted living, and nursing homes. Dutch hi-tech solutions are increasingly coming to the aid of the elderly and infirm. Nowadays, even robotics are playing a role. One of the newest advances is LOPES (Lowerextremity Powered ExoSkeleton) – a robot that teaches stroke victims how to walk again. Step-by-step, technology is playing an increasing role in the care of an ageing society.



### **Dutch Water Masters: securing the future**



Source: Rijkswaterstaat

Source: Royal Boskalis Westminster nv

Source: Witteveen+Bos Raadgevende ingenieurs B.V.

#### f necessity is the mother of invention, then the prime physical manifestation of this proverb is surely embodied in the Dutch landscape. The Dutch

are widely regarded as the Masters of Water.

Why are the Dutch accorded the title Masters of Water? Quite simply, without their unsurpassed ability to 'manage' the seawater, river water and groundwater, much of the low-lying Netherlands would, literally, resemble a swamp. Instead, it is home to a powerful economy and an advanced, dynamic agricultural community. Centuries of experience gained in managing water means that nowadays, the Dutch are actively exporting their hard-earned expertise and impressive capabilities to every corner of the world, accounting for a staggering 40% of the global open-to-tender water sector.

There is no shortage of work in a warming planet increasingly threatened, somewhat ironically, not only by flooding, but also by scarcity of water.

More than half of the world's population lives in deltas or coastal areas, which are facing increased risk of flooding and extreme weather as a direct result of global warming. Well-ahead of the curve, the Dutch moved from 'flood protection' to 'integrated flood management', which seeks to 'work with nature' and covers anything from economic/urban development and the environment, to freshwater supply security and land reclamation. When people around the world are at risk from flooding they call in the Dutch water experts, such as engineering consultancies Arcadis, Royal Haskoning, Grontmij, DHV and Fugro. These companies not only conceive and develop mitigation plans, but also often put them into practice. Van Oord

Dutch companies have developed flood-protection systems for major population centres such as London, Venice, St. Petersburg, Jakarta and Ho Chi Minh City. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Dutch engineers were also consulted in the rebuilding of the coastal defences around New Orleans. Likewise, the recent devastation wrought by unruly rivers, such as the mighty Mississippi, has prompted a move to learn from Dutch river management techniques, which involve giving rivers 'room to breathe'.

#### The Netherlands is also becoming increasingly involved in all aspects of water security, which covers clean drinking-water and freshwater for use in consumer

Here's Holland

Source: Deltares

Photography: Peter Hilz, Hollandse Hoogte

Source: Architect Koen Olthuis - Waterstudio.NL in co-operation with ONW BV/BNG

and Royal Boskalis, between them, for example, account for around half of the global dredging market.

and industrial applications. Among the Dutch solutions on offer

to conserve increasingly scare freshwater, are water-efficient greenhouses employing a closed-circuit system. The Dutch are also engaged in the development of reduced-water crops, drawing from their world-class agricultural know-how. Other solutions involve water collection, recycling, treatment and desalination.

#### In every sphere, the Netherlands is at the forefront of the global effort to mitigate climate

**change.** A shining example is City of the Sun – the world's largest climate-neutral community. This ambitious sustainable housing project is attracting considerable interest from urban planners around the world. Another much-talked-about project is the Rotterdam Climate Initiative, which aims to halve CO emissions from the Greater Rotterdam Area (Europe's largest port and a mega-industrial complex) by 2025.



### Location, location, location

Photography: Hans Oostrum Fotografie



Photography: Peter Hilz, Hollandse Hoogte

Source: Europe Container Terminals BV, Rotterdam

Source: Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

#### f a potential foreign investor asked a Dutch national to explain the benefits of setting up a business, or otherwise investing in the Netherlands, the answer might well be, "How much time have you got?" There are reasons aplenty!

The simple, yet crucial, fact that you can ask this question in English, in the knowledge that virtually all of the locals will be both keen and able to answer you in that language, already sets the Netherlands firmly apart from most of the rest of continental Europe....An added bonus, is the openness and inclusiveness of the Dutch and their willingness to associate with people regardless of culture or background. No less important; the workforce is amongst the best educated and most productive in the world.

Need even more reasons for choosing the Dutch route? As a pre-requisite for a knowledge-based economy, the Netherlands has made heavy investment in ICT infrastructure, as part of much wider, world-class infrastructure. The innovative business climate – underpinned by some of the world's most innovative multinationals and astute SMEs – makes the country a perfect location for companies seeking business acceleration. Strong links between industry and academia, a favourable fiscal climate are very much the icing on the cake. The Dutch government has established a very favourable tax regime. Its general rate of corporate income tax of 25% is lower than in surrounding countries. Additionally, the participation exemption permits the receipt of dividends and capital gains from subsidiaries exempt from tax. Equally appealing; the cost of living in the Netherlands is lower than in many Western European countries.

And, if you are looking for the ideal operational base for logistically serving the whole of the European market, there can be no better choice....Located in the heart of Europe, on the North Sea coast and with an extensive major river network reaching out into the continent, the Netherlands has an A1 location; one of the key reasons why it is home to 57% of all US and Asian EDC's (European **Distribution Centres**). The Dutch logistics sector handles over 22% of all international goods transports across Europe. Most of the cargo moves through Rotterdam – Europe's biggest and most dynamic port – with direct links to the hinterland, via rivers, railways, roads, pipelines, shortsea shipping, and air transport (Schiphol ranks as Europe's best airport). However, the appeal of the Netherlands as a European base is not solely limited to logistics. Other pan-continental operations located here, specifically because of the location, include European

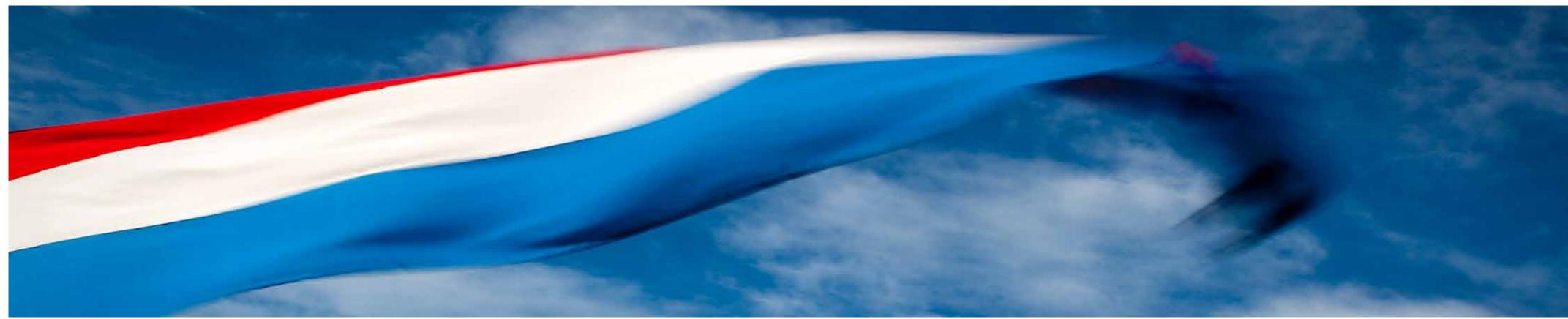
Source: Hannah Anthonysz / Rotterdam Image Bank

Source: DHV

Photography: De Nationale Beeldbank

headquarters, shared-services centres, customer-care centres and R&D facilities.

In terms of culture, one would be hard-pushed to find anything better than a country boasting a large number of museums packed with works by Hieronymus Bosch, Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Gogh, and other icons of painting; the world's best symphony orchestra; leading dance companies and festivals; plus the vibrant entertainment on-tap in magnificent historic cities like Amsterdam. Should this fail to inspire you, the rest of cultural Europe is but a short trip away - thanks to high-speed trains and other excellent transport connections.



## **Facts and Figures**

#### Form of government

Parliamentary democracy, constitutional monarchy Government Head of State HM Queen Beatrix Prime Minister Mark Rutte

### Capital city

Amsterdam

Seat of the government

The Hague

Composition of the country

12 provinces, overseas territories of Aruba,

Curaçao and St. Martin

Language Dutch

English spoken by 85% of the population

#### Monetary unit

Euro Population

16,664,011 (January 2011)

#### Population density

493/km2 (March 2011) Labor force 8,761,000 (2010) Geography and demography Surface area 33,800 km<sup>2</sup> | 13,050 mi<sup>2</sup>

GDP

Here's Holland

Photography: Vincent Mentzel, Hollandse Hoogte

#### Location

- Western Europe, by the North Sea, bordering Belgium and Germany Climate Temperate maritime
- Average temperatures 16°C / 61°F (Summer) | 3°C / 37°F (Winter)
- 794 billion \$ (2009)

#### Per capita income

40,852 \$ per capita (2009)

Export partners

Germany 25%; Belgium 12.6%; UK 9.2%; France 8.1%; Italy 4.7%; US 4.5% (2009) Import partners

#### Germany 19.6%; Belgium 10.0%; US 8.4%; China 7.9%; UK 6.1%; France 4.9% (2009)

Dutch investments abroad 851 billion \$ (2009) Foreign direct investment in the Netherlands 597 billion \$ (2009) Command of foreign languages English (85%), German (66%) and French (25%)

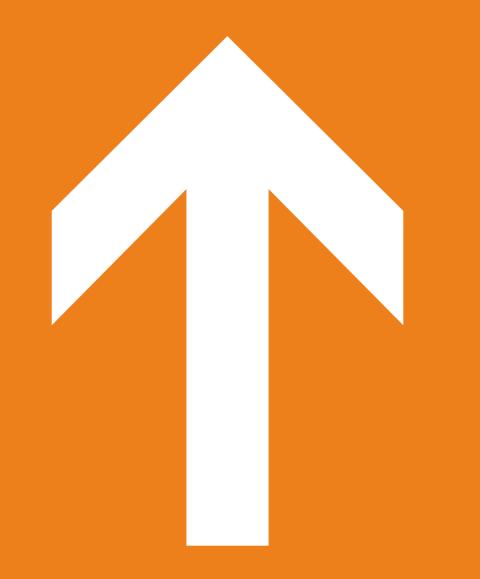
### **opefully, you've been able to form a clear picture of the creative capacity of the Netherlands.** What we haven't fully explained, is what the Netherlands looks like or what the Dutch are like. The description contained in the travel guide - *Loney Planet: The Netherlands* - sums it up pretty well...

".....There aren't many countries with so much land below sea level. There aren't many - if any - countries this flat. There aren't many countries with so much reclaimed land. There aren't many countries this densely populated, and yet so liberal. There aren't many countries with so much water and wind, or so many boats, sails, bikes, birds, dykes, polders, windmills, flowers, fish, bridges, cafés, cheese - and tall people. And there certainly aren't many countries who can claim such a vibrant colour (vivid orange in this case) as their own. Simply put, there is no place like the Netherlands."

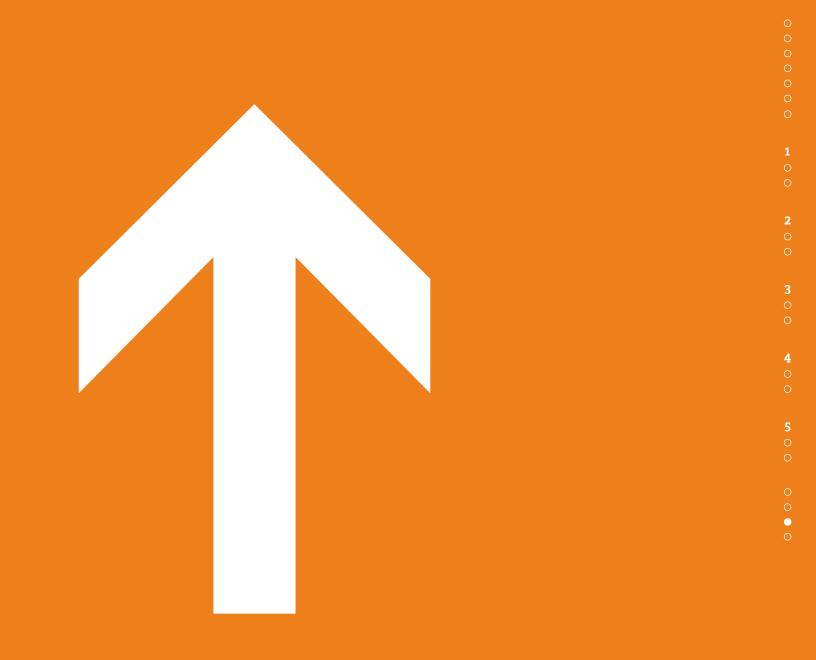
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That short-and-sweet description should leave you in no doubt about the country! However, it still doesn't give away much about the Dutch. Perhaps that's not necessary, because maybe you've already visited the Netherlands, or maybe you know some Dutch people in your own area, and, who knows, maybe you've already struck up a friendship with them! If this isn't the case, and you're still secretly a bit curious about the Dutch character, then we can reveal a few insights into what makes us tick... If you turn to the following page and fold it out, you'll start to get an idea. And if some of the examples aren't instantly apparent, we've tucked a little explanation in there to help you. **Have fun discovering the Dutch**!





Here's Holland



national character

N o Dutch city has yet reached a million inhabitants and many retain their traditional character and architectural style. In 2010, Unesco added Amsterdam's inner canals to its list of World Heritage Sites.





he Dutch are best characterized by their international outlook, tolerance of others' beliefs, love of personal freedom and commitment to a society endeavouring to provide a reasonable standard of living for everyone. (source: www.afsuk.org)

D utch children are the happiest children

(source: UNICEF)

in the developed world.

🖽 🔒 +++

18 M

he Dutch are punctual people. As a result, things tend to be done at fixed times: there is a time to work, a time to clean the house, a time to drink coffee, and a time to visit friends.



Brother.

he Netherlands has the highest museum density per head of population in the world. In the realm of high culture, magnificent art can be appreciated at more than 1,100 museums, such as the Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum.



icrochips are used widely in the manufacture of smart-phones and tablet computers. ASML manufactures complex machines that are critical to the production of integrated circuits or microchips.



raditional Dutch houses tend to have large windows without curtains. This 'transparency' underlines a general openness.



he Eleven-City Tour is the world biggest speed-skating marathon and attracts

not only the world's elite long-distance skaters, but also an army of 16,000 amateur skaters. The Netherlands has built a solid reputation in the organisation and staging of large-scale sporting events.

Additionally, in 2012, the Netherlands will hold its 'once-in-a-decade' horticultural extravaganza: the 'Floriade'. The Netherlands is the largest producer and auctioneer of cut flowers and flower bulbs.

100

S pringtime in Holland brings flowers in

abundance. During April

and May, a visit to the

floral display, is a must

Keukenhof gardens,

the world's largest

D utch TV production companies have conquered the world's channels by creating

and marketing original programme formats, including The Voice of Holland, Deal or No Deal, So You Wannabe a Popstar and Big

n Koninginnedag (Queen's Day), the Dutch celebrate the birthday of Queen Beatrix. Everyone dresses up in orange shirts, hats, and wigs while celebrating their innate passion for trading: it's the one time each year when people can set up a trading stall on the sidewalk, without requiring a licence.

or centuries, Dutch creativity has inspired and instructed others. Great masters such as Rembrandt, Van Gogh and Escher transformed the world around them. Today's creative masters include fashion designers Viktor & Rolf, architect Rem Koolhaas, 'Miffy' illustrator Dick Bruna and DJs Armin van Buuren and Tiësto. N o winter is complete without 'stamppot'. This is one of the staple foods of the Dutch, (the other being thick, pea soup) during the cold winter months. Stamppot is potatoes and vegetables mashed together. The Netherlands is the world's largest exporter of potatoes, so it's no wonder that you find many potato dishes in traditional Dutch cuisine.



his cabinet, from designer Piet Hein Eek, is a prime example of Dutch Design. Made from recycled construction material, it is a shining example of how design and recycling can be happily married. Other contemporary Dutch designers include Marcel Wanders, Hella Jongerius and Tejo Remy. So what are the trademarks of typically Dutch Design? Out-of-the-box thinking and tongue-in-cheek humour coupled with practicality. he Netherlands has more bicycles than it has citizens. Many major cities around the world are implementing Dutch design guidelines for the implementation of cycle-paths so as to reduce traffic in busy urban environments.

n 1999, Time magazine named Anne Frank among the heroes and icons of the 20th century, stating: "With a diary kept in a secret attic, she braved the Nazis and lent a searing voice to the fight for human dignity". Today, the Netherlands is renowned for its tolerance and its open, multicultural society. The Hague is the home of the International Court of Justice.

### About this publication

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