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local

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up

2018
Winter

In this issue | Sustainability | Expat mothers go back to work |
Keeping New Year's resolutions | Responsible tourism | Managing trash |
Photography to see this winter | Practising self-care |



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Dear ACCESS readers



Steve Voyce

ACCESS Editor

editor@access-nl.org

Concerns about climate change, sustainability and plastic pollution seem to be everywhere once more

Perhaps it was the long hot summer, or TV programmes and movies such as *Blue Planet* and *A Plastic Ocean*, but concerns about climate change, sustainability and plastic pollution seem to be everywhere once more. And rightly so.

The Netherlands is home to many sustainability initiatives and in our Cover Story we show some that feel archetypally Dutch. We look at innovations from an internationally successful yet ecologically-sound agricultural industry, solar roof tiles, innovative plastic removal from oceans, revolutionary feminine care products and a city at the centre of environmental awareness. We also examine how, as individuals, we can make a difference, and the other side of the subject –the Netherlands as a country where citizens took the government to court over the country’s greenhouse gas emission levels.

Elsewhere, Olivia van den Broek-Neri investigates how the food industry is dealing with the imperative matter of food waste, and Tea Gudek Šnajdar discovers how over-tourism is threatening the infrastructure of Amsterdam and causing residents daily frustrations.

The year’s end often means planning changes, and in our Education section, Katarina Gaborova gives several tips on how to do the hardest of things, keeping your New Year resolutions. In Health & Wellbeing, Carolyn van Es-Vines shows that by “minding our own business,” in other words taking care of ourselves and slowing-down, we can take time to listen to what we actually want and improve our connections.

If you’re looking for something to keep you busy during this cold time of year, Anne Pinto-Rodrigues took a tour of some dazzling photography exhibitions in the Netherlands. Or you could stay home by the fire, with the highly-recommended memoir, *The Time We Thought We Had*. Although our reviewer, Cathy Leung, warns to keep the tissues handy.

About ACCESS

For 30 years ACCESS has been an independent not-for-profit organisation serving internationals so they may settle successfully in the Netherlands. Our mission is to provide essential, comprehensive and unique services nationally, through the expertise and experience of our dedicated volunteers from the expatriate community.

Our magazine complements the services we provide through our Helpdesk, Q&As on our website, Counselling Service Network and Training Network. Our intention is to further facilitate our readers' settlement process in your new home, by providing content which helps you better understand the country; discover things about it you may not have been aware of; encourage connection with your Dutch neighbours and colleagues; and offer contributors a platform to share your skills.

Have feedback for us? Interested in contributing to the magazine? Please contact the Editor at editor@access-nl.org. We love to hear from our community!

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- welcoming
- informative
- educational
- entertaining
- original

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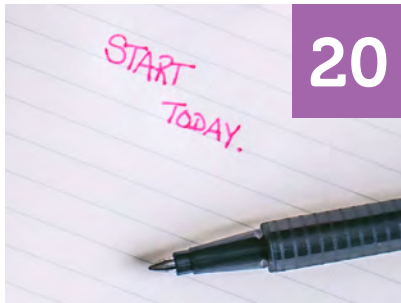
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Join ACCESS on  



30



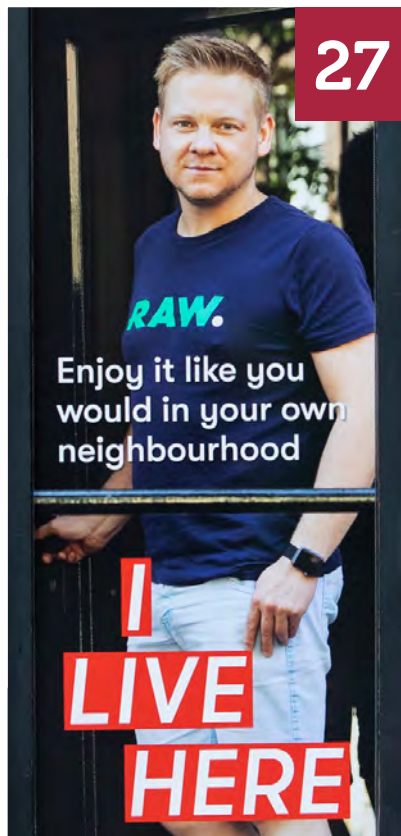
20



33



12



27

ACCESS

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Contents

- 7 **ACCESS News** Frequently-asked questions about ACCESS
- 9 **What's On** for Winter
- 12 **Cover Story** Towards a greener orange
- 20 **Education** Grow within yourself, for yourself and by yourself
- 23 **Arts & Entertainment**
An exciting winter for photo-enthusiasts
- 27 **Travel** Amsterdamed?!
- 30 **Food** Preventing food waste
- 33 **Health & Wellbeing** Self-care: minding your own business
- 36 **International Community**
Expat mums relaunching their career
- 41 **Review Book** All The Time We Thought We Had
- 42 **Dutch Lifestyle** It's not only about garbage
- 45 **Dictionary of Dutchness**

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Frequently-asked questions about ACCESS

ACCESS's website has over 300 frequently-asked questions about relocating to and settling in the Netherlands. Occasionally we get a question about ACCESS.

What is ACCESS? What are its origins?

ACCESS is a service organisation of experienced volunteers supporting internationals settling in the Netherlands. We started over 30 years ago in The Hague, when a review revealed that internationals were often lonely and when in 'trouble' did not know where to turn. The solution was a foundation with two main purposes.



PHOTO: NATALIYA VOLOSOVICH

First, a network of professional, expatriate counsellors would receive calls for help and direct people to the right support—ACCESS still has two counsellors on call every month with a free of charge call/referral service. Secondly, a volunteer network would build contacts, a community and be of service. ACCESS now operates throughout the Netherlands, with around 140 volunteers from 44 countries in The Hague, Utrecht, Amsterdam and Leiden.

How does ACCESS help?

Foremost by answering questions submitted to our helpdesk by email or phone, five days a week, for free. We provide our clients with links and information so that they can find the answers they need. We do not solve problems, rather give people the tools and direction to do so themselves.

How do you find your volunteers, and what do you ask of them?

People find us mostly through word of mouth, but occasionally we advertise within international circuits. Our monthly information mornings have on average 15 candidates, who find out about ACCESS and see if there is a 'fit'. A short interview follows where we look for a certain level of English and expat experience. Potential volunteers have already submitted a CV and motivational letter, so we know a little about each candidate in advance. Once accepted, volunteers are expected to give six hours per week to ACCESS, starting at our helpdesk, and after one month can apply for other positions within ACCESS.

ACCESS

ACCESS is an independent not-for-profit organisation helping internationals to successfully settle in the Netherlands. «

Interested in becoming a volunteer?

You are welcome to attend one of our volunteer information mornings! Check online for details, access-nl.org/volunteering-for-access/info-morning-dates/



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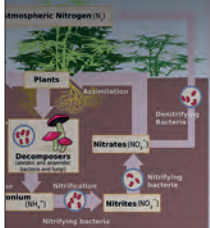
We're here to make it easier for internationals to work and register in the Amsterdam area. Qualifying companies can start the paperwork before arrival and a single visit to International Newcomers Amsterdam (IN Amsterdam, formerly called the Expatcenter Amsterdam) will complete the process. What's more, our website has loads of valuable information on a wide range of topics including education, taxes, healthcare and housing.

The cities of Amsterdam, Amstelveen, Almere, Diemen, Haarlem, Haarlemmermeer, Hilversum and Velsen are working with the Immigration and Naturalisation Services (IND) to bring you the IN Amsterdam services.

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Special events in December

Bach's Christmas Oratorio

residentieorkest.nl/en/concerts/bachs-christmas-oratorio

14 December - The Hague



PHOTO: DARNA STRAUS TSJU

Celebrate this wonderful time of year with a winter concert! The story of a new beginning and hope still inspires many each year. The Residentie Orkest will delight in the company of one of the Netherlands' best choirs, four virtuoso soloists and Bach specialist Philipp von Steinaecker.

WinterWelvaart

winterwelvaart.nl (Dutch only)

8 - 9 Zoutcamp, 9 Appingedam,
21 - 23 Groningen, December

For this event about 25 ships will be open to the public, hosting intimate concerts, exhibitions and other performances. In addition to these fabulously decorated vessels, on shore there will be a Christmas market with kids' activities, food, and music to enjoy. Celebrate this event in Groningen, or catch the ships in one of the other northern locales!

Breda Candle Factory Open Days

bredasekaarsenfabriek.nl/open-dag
(Dutch only)

15 - 16 December - Breda

Get a chance to look behind the curtain of candle making, following all the steps in the process. Kids get a chance to participate too! The factory is one of the few left that make candles the old-fashioned way, and they open their doors once a year. Be sure to check out the demos with the whole family!

Gouda by Candlelight

goudabijkaarslicht.com

14 December - Gouda

In its sixty-third year, this celebration features roughly 80 activities in about 30 locations around Gouda, in celebration of light and the holiday season. Enjoy both theatrical and musical performances throughout the city and see the lighting of the Christmas tree in front of the beautiful medieval town hall. Bars, restaurants and storefronts will all be decorated for the occasion, and the market square will sparkle with candlelight. DIY walks and guided tours are available.

Christmas Market, Bourtange Fortress

bourtange.nl/evenementen/6305

1 - 2, 8 - 9, 15 - 16 December
Bourtange

Celebrate the holidays this year up north in a beautifully illuminated fortress! Check out around 100 stalls with gifts, music and mulled wine. The fortress, access roads and bridges are covered with lights and surrounded by decorated Christmas trees. As a bonus you can also visit the perfectly restored star-shaped fortress village dating back from 1580.



PHOTO: REMCO-GIELEN

Special events in January

Winter Station, Railway Museum

visit-utrecht.com/event-calendar/1504220236

22 December 2018 - 6 January 2019 Utrecht

For a limited time period, this unique Railway Museum is transformed into a winter wonderland! Visitors can enjoy activities, good food and a rink where you can ice skate between the historic trains. In the outdoor area kids can roast marshmallows over a campfire. All museum attractions are fully operational with actors giving live performances.



PHOTO: MARIEKE WUJTIJES

Winter in Archeon

archeon.nl/nl/agenda/vier-de-winter.html

22 December 2018 - 6 January 2019
Alphen aan den Rijn

Experience a complete winter day back in time in Archeon! The park celebrates winter in prehistoric times, Roman times and the Middle Ages. Learn how to bake bread and see a real blacksmith in action. There's a lot to do for young and old! Winter dishes are served at the medieval monastery and Roman inn. You can also ice skate on the indoor rink!

Walking with Dinosaurs

www.ziggodome.nl/event/1368659341/walking-with-dinosaurs-1500

26 - 27 January - Amsterdam

Prehistoric dinosaurs come back to life! Enjoy this amazing 100-minute show with your family and learn about the evolution of dinosaurs, with cinematic flare and unique interaction with the animals. While the event is in Dutch, it can be enjoyed by all.



PHOTO: NBTC

National Tulip Day

amsterdam.info/events/tulip-day

19 January - Amsterdam

This date marks the beginning of Dutch tulip season! Visit Dam Square where over 200,000 tulips will create a special temporary 'picking garden.'s Everyone is invited to pick tulips for free. This event is organised by Dutch tulip growers and attracts more than 10,000 visitors each year.

Cultuurnacht Breda

www.cultuurnachtbreda.nl (Dutch only)

26 January - Breda

On this special night, dozens of museums, galleries, theatres and other institutions will be open with special activities! There will be fun for the little ones as well with a special Children's Culture Night. For participants, free buses run between the different locations.



PHOTO: CULTUURNACHT BREDA

Special events in February

Rembrandt and Saskia: Love in the Golden Age

www.friesmuseum.nl/en/

24 November 2018 - 7 March 2019
Leeuwarden



PHOTO: REMBRANT: SELF-PORTRAIT WITH SASKIA, 1639-1658. REINSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM | REQUEST OF MR AND MRS DE BRUIN VAN DER LEEUW, MUSE, SWITZERLAND

Want to know more about Friesland's most famous bridal couple? Visit this exhibit and learn about high society marriage during the Golden Age. Look at marriage portraits, intimate sketches and personal objects that show the reality of both love and suffering during those times. You'll get a peek into Rembrandt's early stages of courtship, his wedding and his tragic loss.

Innofuture

facebook.com/pg/InnofutureEmmen/events/ (Dutch only)

2 February - Emmen

Do you love new technical gadgets and cool innovations? Then come to this upcoming tech event! You can build robots, race drones, learn to program and play virtual reality games all in one place, all in one day! Visit the Fletcher Hotel-Restaurant to attend this great event, and meet like minded people.

Strao

renesse.com/en/event/62/strao.html
(Dutch only)

3 Renesse, 10 Burgh-Haamstede,
24 Noordwelle, February

Strao is an annual tradition on the Dutch island of Schouwen-Duiveland where lavishly decorated horses ride on the beach and into the sea for the first time in the year. According to ancient belief, this washes evil spirits from the horses' legs. Come watch this spectacular ride alongside thousands of spectators in different locations on the island. Remember a warm jacket for the beach!

Maastricht Underground

www.maastrichtunderground.nl/eng/locations_and_tours

ongoing - Maastricht

Are you afraid of the dark? Explore Maastricht underground! Take a tour of the Zonneberg caves, the North caves or Fort St. Pieter. In the North caves, you can see the remains of an 18th century shelter and view a WWII 'vault' used to protect Dutch art treasures. Check out Zonneberg to see an elaborate WWII shelter for up to 50,000 residents, including a bakery and small hospital.

Zwolle Ice Sculpture Festival

ijsbeelden.nl/en

15 December 2018 - 3 March 2019 Zwolle

Come to the largest ice sculpture exhibition in Europe! The theme this year is 'world famous stories'. The best global ice artists will translate their stories into ice and snow sculptures up to six metres high with spectacular special light, sound and projection effects. Check out the icy masterpieces representing the stories of Romeo and Juliet, the Three Musketeers, Robin Hood and Alice in Wonderland!



PHOTO: MARC VAN AALST

Towards a greener orange





PHOTO: VANDEBRON

While the Netherlands is home to many innovations in sustainability, which make great headlines nationally and internationally, can their incremental effect bring about a real transition?

The Netherlands has more bikes than people, and the wide flat countryside is crisscrossed by a railway network powered solely by wind turbines. Schiphol Airport, with over 68 million passengers annually, is also completely powered by wind. The country has a comparatively high number of electric cars and is relatively advanced in separating and recycling waste. The Netherlands is an affluent nation with a high educational level that drives the set-up and application of many environmental innovations. However, the key metric for measuring a country's sustainability performance is its carbon footprint, and the Netherlands' high energy needs are not met by renewable sources and its greenhouse gas emission per capita is around 50 percent above the EU average.

BY TRACEY TAYLOR
AND STEVE VOYCE

Dutch economic growth and environmental preservation

Environmental issues are often seen as the inevitable by-product of a country's economic growth, but journalist Rogier van Rooij disagrees. He feels that "long-running economic growth and environmental preservation do not clash," and that becoming more sustainable is economically valid because a deteriorating environment poses an ever-increasing burden on our material wellbeing. For Van Rooij, "environmental damage such as air pollution or deforestation takes away what we gain from economic growth." He sees the needs of short-termism competing against long-term wellbeing, with the solution that "climate action costs money now but pays off in 20 years."

Van Rooij feels an initial shift in sustainability performance will be economical, rather than political, and driven by reduced product prices. "Costs of solar »



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and wind power have been falling radically and are expected to fall further,” he says, “it’s just a matter of years before solar can compete with fossil fuels.” As coal and combustion engines disappear, electric cars, batteries, and bioplastics will follow LED lights to become dramatically cheaper. By adapting to a sustainable economy, lower prices will create higher adoption rates and incentivise the scaling-up of production, but according to Van Rooij, this will happen in the Netherlands “only when global economic and technological pressures force the private sector to bypass the Dutch government.”

Dutch innovation and progress

The Dutch government has pledged a circular economy—a system that allows for the long life, optimal reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling of products and materials—by 2050, is committed to providing 100 percent emissions-free busses by 2025 and removing all gas and diesel vehicles from the road by 2030. A new project by the Dutch power grid and utility company, TeneT, aims to build the world’s largest wind farm on an artificial island 14 miles off the coast of the Netherlands. This revolutionary wind farm will produce more than 30 gigawatts of power, twice the amount of offshore wind power installed across Europe at present. These are ambitious plans that attempt to overcome the historical geographical and social barriers of being a low-lying, small country with a high population.

Sustainable agricultural growth

Almost twenty years ago the Netherlands made a national commitment to sustainable agriculture, “Twice as much food using half as many resources.” Since 2000, Dutch farmers have reduced dependence on water for key crops by as much as 90 percent, have almost completely eliminated the use of chemical pesticides on plants in greenhouses, and since 2009 Dutch poultry and livestock producers have cut their use of antibiotics by as much as 60 percent. It’s a success story that has led to the Netherlands becoming the world’s number two exporter of food, an accomplishment driven by economic and environmental

Making the world a ‘Zepper’ place

In 2016 Elon Musk announced plans to create ‘solar roofs’ rather than solar panels, but ZEP, a Dutch company, was already there with its photovoltaic roof tiles. Builder Jan Bakker’s customers had asked him for something better than ‘hideous’ solar panels, and he recognised a need for aesthetic, durable and, almost, invisible solutions. In 2013 his company, ZEP, developed the Solar Roof Tile and within three years over a hundred roofs had already been installed around the world. ZEP’s solar tiles are particularly appropriate for historical buildings and inner-city renovation projects as the tiles retain a familiar and aesthetic street appearance. Economically, Solar Roof Tiles allow customers to move toward getting off the grid, while ZEP’s ongoing product development team plans for a future where solar energy will be further building-integrated.



PHOTO: ZEP

“Climate action costs money now but pays off in 20 years”

motives. On the frontline of ecological issues Dutch farmers realised that acting sustainably was essential for the survival and prosperity of their industry.

Think global and act local

Mondiaal Maastricht was established in 1983 as a centre for international debate, education and awareness, with a focus on globalisation and human »



PHOTO: DICK MOBY

Cleaner oceans, clearer lenses

Eyewear brand Dick Moby was established in 2014 by Tim Holland and Robbert Wefers Bettink, who share a love for aquatics and a frustration with pollution. Dick Moby makes sustainable eyewear from plastic, without creating more waste in the process. Even their glasses' cleaning cloths and cases are made from recycled material. Under the tagline 'Hang loose and recycle' their brand's mission is make high quality products for a reasonable price and, most importantly, still be sustainable.

Wefers Bettink feels while public awareness of plastic pollution has changed greatly since Dick Moby started, "today, every week, there is a new article about it," and this is positive, industries should view waste as a new resource and governments should reward companies that can prove the origin of their products. He also wants Dick Moby to inspire other brands to change, "to show there are other options of production and reusing resources."

rights. These latter issues form part of the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) conceived by the United Nations with a global priority. "Mondiaal Maastricht offers hope and action," says Nathalie Ummels, Coordinator at Mondiaal

Maastricht. "We think global and act local, and our aim is to inspire and connect people."

One SDG is that cities and human settlements should be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by 2030, and Mondiaal Maastricht is keen to build a strong,

The Urgenda Case

In October 2018 an appeal was upheld in an historic court case against the Dutch Government for the Urgenda Foundation and 886 Dutch citizens. The Hague Court of Appeal affirmed that the Government must reduce emissions by at least 25 percent by 2020 (compared to 1990 levels), and reductions of a lesser amount would be a violation of the rights of Dutch citizens as protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. In 2017 emissions were 17 percent below 1990 levels, so 25 percent could be seen as an extremely ambitious target. However, as a report by the Netherlands Environment Assessment Agency forecasted a reduction of between 19 and 27 percent by 2020, the Dutch government maintains it is already bound to meet the target without the need for major additional measures. Marjan Minnesma, director of Urgenda, feels that in the Netherlands environmental and national issues are intrinsically linked, "as a low-lying country we are on the frontline of climate change."



PHOTO: URGENDA/CHANTAL BEKKER

sustainable coalition in Maastricht following the exciting announcement in September 2018 that the city is now a Global Goals municipality. “We are committed to bringing people together and although our large network can play a vital role, we cannot do it alone,” Ummels says. “A Triple Helix Model—the interaction between academia, industry and governments to foster economic and social development—is our target and we need to engage leadership and stimulate the collaboration among civic institutions and organisations.”

Travelling with her family across the USA for six months in 2017 had a profound impact on Ummels, who found that getting back to nature made her realise how much her happiness and wellbeing is connected to the wellbeing of the earth, other creatures and other people. “I found I had time to think again,” Ummels says, “and time to ask myself if we realise how beautiful the earth is and, what we stand to lose?”

While warnings about sustainability have been with us for a long time, current reports suggest that we have 12 years to turn things around by making unprecedented efforts and with much of any success dependent on political will. Ummels firmly believes that education is the key to successfully achieving the global SDGs. “It is vital that we help people learn about what we are facing and to instill principles to live more sustainably,” she says, “We often think that scientists and entrepreneurs are the super-heroes but to me, it’s the teachers!”

Green energy

Choosing a green energy supplier is the first step everyone can take to be more sustainable. Simple and easy solutions are at our fingertips with energy-sharing platforms like Powerpeers and Eneco’s green options and sustainability entrepreneurs like Greenchoice and Vandebron. The liberalisation of the energy market in the Netherlands sixteen years ago made it possible for consumers to choose their energy supplier and led



PHOTO: YONI

Breaking the taboo

When a specialist advised Mariah Mansvelt Beck to start using organic tampons and pads, it was the first time she’d ever thought about her sanitary choices. Upon investigation she discovered that not only are many tampons and pads made from synthetic materials, and contain plastics and perfume, but that there are no legal requirements for listing ingredients on feminine care packaging.

Yoni, the company she set up with friend Wendelien Hebly, offers women the same comfort as other products but made exclusively of 100 percent certified organic cotton, processed in an eco-friendly way through a sustainable supply chain that ensures safe working conditions and fair pay. Yoni use biodegradable plastics and is working towards making all its products completely biodegradable to minimise environmental impact.

Mansvelt Beck hopes to “break the taboo, ditch the shame and start talking about periods properly,” and sees the fem care industry slowly following suit with improved labeling and products that are better for women and the environment. She also believes to make the urgent environmental changes needed globally we will need to move away from profit-driven motives and “integrate our social and spiritual lives with business.” Mansvelt Beck tries to be “the best version of me” when it comes to sustainability, in line with her company’s ethos that what is better for you is better for the planet.

to creative innovations in sustainability, offering consumers choices about where their energy came from. Greenchoice’s mission has always been ‘100 percent sustainable energy in the Netherlands’, while Vandebron felt consumers needed to know what energy they are buying and where it really comes from. »



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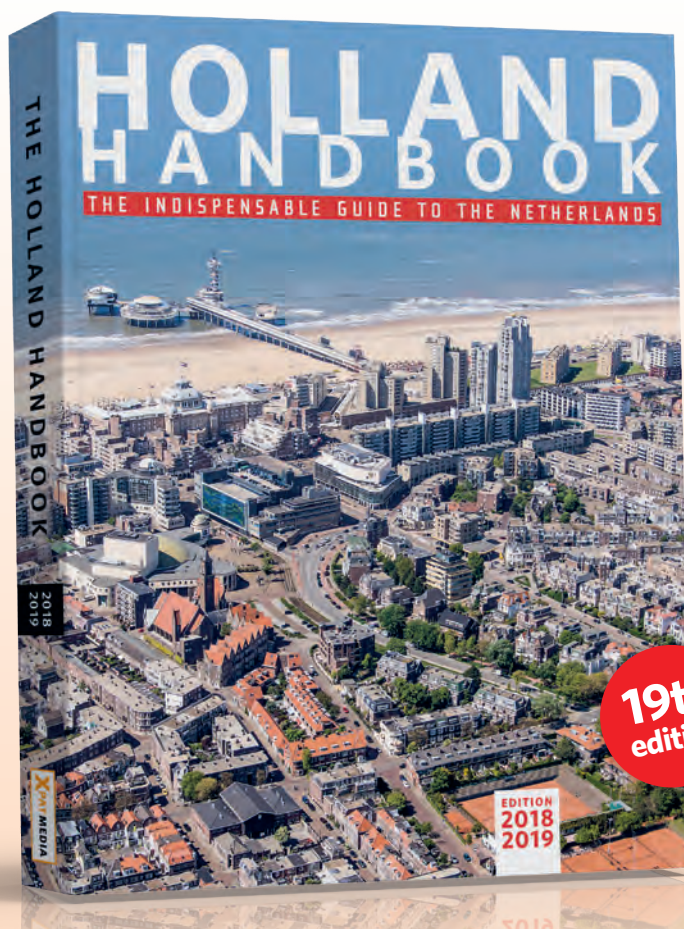
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"In the Netherlands we are on the frontline of climate change"

Vandebron is an online peer-to-peer marketplace for renewable energy that connects users with a local energy source by cutting out the need for a large energy corporate 'middleman.' Vandebron's

The Ocean Cleanup

Six years ago in Delft, aged 18, Boyan Slat founded The Ocean Cleanup, to develop a system that moves with ocean currents and catches plastic.

The system consists of a 600 metre long floater on the water surface with a tapered three metre deep skirt attached below. The floater provides buoyancy and prevents plastic from flowing over while the skirt stops debris from escaping underneath. As the system moves through the water, plastic is collected within the boundaries of its U-shape.

After advancing the design through a series of scale model tests, including prototypes implemented in the North Sea, the first system was deployed from San Francisco Bay in September 2018 and towed to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch where the cleanup has officially begun. You can see updates at theoceancleanup.com

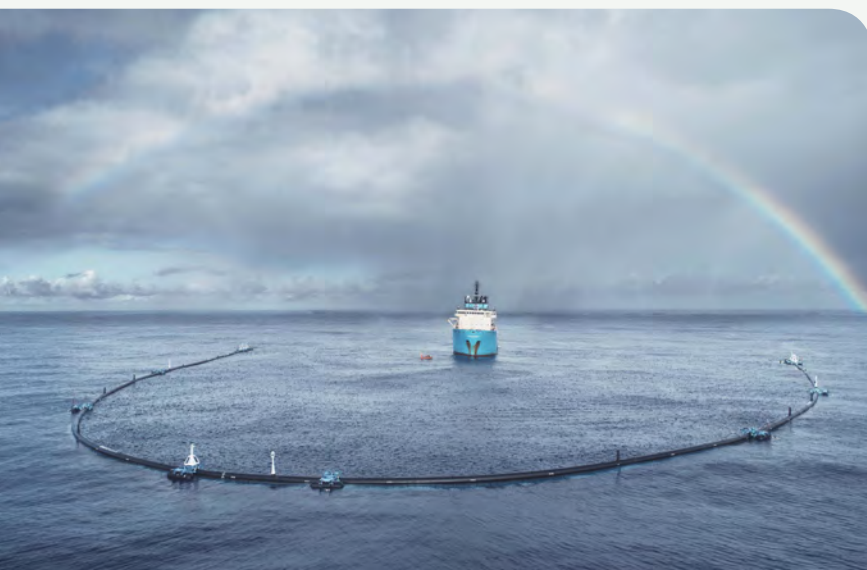


PHOTO: THE OCEAN CLEANUP

subscription-based online platform was the first to enable consumers to personally choose their own source. These sources are local independent producers, such as farmers with wind turbines, and customers are able to opt for wind, solar, water or bio-mass energy.

Greenchoice serves over 400,000 customers with green electricity and forest-compensated gas. But it also encourages consumers to generate their own sustainable electricity, with a conviction that the greenest energy is the energy that you do not use. It sells and rents solar panels and heat pumps, and customers can invest in windmills and tree plantings as well as protect forest plots to compensate for their natural gas consumption. Greenchoice partners with energy cooperatives, where neighbourhoods generate and save energy, and with not-for-profit nature and environmental organisations which work to protect forests and enrich biodiversity. Consumers are becoming increasingly interested in where products originate. As sustainable projects become more financially-viable in the energy world, consumer control follows. While change can be slow-moving at a governmental level, inventive entrepreneurial solutions mean we can implement a difference at home.

Can we make a difference?

As individuals we can make a difference by not only changing our behaviour—recycling and being aware of our energy and plastic consumption—but by applying our talents in places where they can make a larger impact. As Rogier van Rooij says, "If you are offered a job at a more environmentally friendly firm, or you are in a position to steer your company into a greener direction, do not forgo the opportunity and make a sustainable change!" «

About the authors

Tracey Taylor is Irish and lives in Maastricht with Dave and their cat, Little Tubbs. She recycles! Steve Joyce lives in Amsterdam and always separates his rubbish.

Grow within yourself, for yourself and **by yourself**

Have you been to a gym at the beginning of January? It's busy and crowded with people talking about their new training programme as a part of their New Year's resolutions. Go back to that same gym towards the end of December and you'll discover that it's somewhat empty.



PHOTO BY GEERT PIETERS

BY KATARINA
GABOROVA

What happens in between?

And how is it that, according to Richard Wiseman, professor of Public Understanding of Psychology at Hertfordshire University, only twelve percent of us are able to stick to goals? In Wiseman's research, the remaining eighty-eight percent of a sample of 3000 people did not achieve what they planned, despite over half being very confident of succeeding.

Starting anything new and keeping it up requires two crucial skills; a precise strategy—what, how, and a specific timeline—to execute the intended plan, and willpower.

We've all started a new year with the intention of a healthier lifestyle, to smoke less, or to finally unpack that last moving box. But something happens and we fall back onto the old familiar paths.

Can we increase the success rate of our personal goals?

Human beings are creatures of habit. Forty percent of our everyday lives are run by habits and automatic brain processes. Starting anything 'out of the ordinary' requires interrupting these old patterns and exchanging them for new. We are great at coming up with ideas, but keeping and accomplishing them is a challenge. Physiologically it literally costs us more energy.

Rather than wait until the new year to create a better self, we can use science to improve at any time.

Today is the best day to start

- Divide a sheet of paper into three columns. The first one is your 'actual self' (how you see yourself currently). The second is your 'ought self' (a representation of how others or how you judge how you ought to be), the third is your 'ideal self' (how you wish ideally to be).
- This 'Self-discrepancy theory,' that people are motivated to reduce the gap between these different internalized parts of self, motivates our 'ideal self' towards the desired change.
- Focus on one goal at a time. Physiologically, the pre-frontal cortex of our brain, situated behind the forehead, has been linked to willpower. Focusing on too many changes at once constrains this area, affecting decision making, regulation of emotions, and creative thinking, all important for motivation.

If we are overwhelmed, change is less likely as willpower gets blocked, which is the foremost reason for not maintaining goals, according to a survey by the American Psychological Association.

- Utilise a specific, achievable strategy within a designated timetable. For example, schedule an exercise plan for 45-60 minutes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Detailed dates, time, duration and intensity, mean we are more likely to stick to plans.

- Practise goals regularly, to turn the new activity into a habit. Practice improves whatever we are doing. Any routine behaviour, like driving a car, gets embedded in the unconscious area of our brain, the basal ganglia, responsible for habits, routines, and automatic responses. For change, we need our conscious thinking area, the pre-frontal cortex, to override unconscious activity. By focusing on the new tasks and practising them they'll become automatised.



- Visualise achieving the goal and apply visual, auditory, or tactile details. If your goal is to improve your public speaking, see yourself giving a speech in front of a large audience and delivering the speech competently, hear the audience clapping and feel the pride on finishing.

We get stuck in the old ways, and our brain views change as a 'threat,' causing a rise in a stress hormone, cortisol. Blood gets drawn away from the prefrontal cortex, further affecting our willpower. Visualisation serves as practice and the more we practice the more comfortable we feel.

- Get support from family and friends. By telling others what we want to change, we are more likely to stand behind our word and their support motivates during tough times.

So, cheers to the New Year, but remember the time for resolutions is now and every day. «

About the Author

Katarina Gaborova is a founder of K.G. Psychological Services psychologistinthehague.com in The Hague, where she works as a psychologist and coach and a member of the ACCESS Counselling Service Network (CSN). She is a TED speaker and a published author of VIVA Tools for Well-being, which was reviewed on the ACCESS website access-nl.org/features/viva-tools-for-well-being.

8 Ways to lose your job in Holland



BY GODELIJN
BOONMAN

As an expat, the most common reason to move to a new land is work – but which country will protect your rights in the workplace when you are there? Expat employment specialist Godelijn Boonman explains what makes the Netherlands a great choice for international workers.

For anyone who has moved country to follow their career, the thought of losing that job due to dismissal is a nightmare. What you may not realise when choosing your new homeland is that the laws of the country you move to will determine your rights in the workplace.



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How safe is my job in the Netherlands?

Employees enjoy very strong legal protection under Dutch law. In fact, an employee in the Netherlands with a permanent contract can only be dismissed with permission from either a judge or the UWV (Employees Insurance Agency), and for an employer to get that permission is not easy.

An employer needs to have reasonable grounds to dismiss someone. They also need to prove that they have tried to move the employee into another role in the company.

There are only 8 ways to lose your job in Holland

In the Netherlands, there are only 8 reasonable grounds that an employer can use to justify dismissing an employee on a permanent contract. These are:

1. Headcount reduction for business reasons (redundancy)
2. Long-term disability (more than two years)
3. Frequent and disruptive absence relating to sickness
4. Incapacity to perform contracted work other than for a medical reason
5. Serious misbehaviour
6. Refusal to perform contractual duties for moral reasons (conscientious objections)
7. A working relationship that has broken down so badly that the employer cannot reasonably be required to continue the relationship
8. Other reasons such that it cannot reasonably be expected that the employer should continue the employment relationship.

“Employees enjoy very strong legal protection under Dutch law”

Facing dismissal?

If you are employed in the Netherlands, and you are facing dismissal, then you would be wise to consult [GMW lawyers](#) for further advice from our experts in employment law, or visit www.legalexpatdesk.nl for more information. «

An exciting winter for photo-enthusiasts

As temperatures plummet and the thought of spending time outdoors gets increasingly daunting, I explore the world from the comfort of photographic institutions in the Netherlands. This winter, several thought-provoking photo exhibitions showcase Dutch and international image-makers and promise to fascinate and enlighten.

BY ANNE
PINTO-RODRIGUES

IMAGE 1



Controversial American photographer Robert Mapplethorpe (1946–1989) once quipped about his profession of choice, “I went into photography because it seemed like the perfect vehicle for commenting on the madness of today’s existence.” A sentiment echoed today by thousands of photographers and photojournalists around the world. Photography has emerged as one of the most powerful tools for storytelling, for creating awareness, and for initiating change. Here in the Netherlands, several compelling photo exhibitions during the winter give us an opportunity to make sense of the world around us, through the eyes, and lenses, of several master photographers. »



IMAGE 2



IMAGE 3

Readers of ACCESS Magazine will receive free entry for two people to the “Face to Face” exhibition on presenting a copy of the magazine

IMAGE 1 - ACT OF RECOVERY (PART 1), 2016 © DAWIT L. PETROS, COLLECTION HUIS MARSEILLE
 IMAGE 2 - THE ‘FACE TO FACE’ EXHIBITION AT THE NATIONAAL ARCHIEF, DEN HAAG
 IMAGE 3 - PELUQUERIA, LIMONES, 1979 © OUKA LEELE FEAST FOR THE EYES, FOAM AMSTERDAM

Common threads

I start my photo exhibition tour at the National Archives in The Hague. Home to the largest photo collection in the Netherlands—15 million images from the past 175 years—the National Archives launched “Face to Face” in September 2018. In this extraordinary showcase, ninety portraits of famous as well as ordinary people, selected from the in-house collection, are displayed in a novel fashion.

Other Photo Exhibitions

This is Cas

Works of renowned 20th century Dutch photographer Cas Oorthuys
 Until 31 December 2018
 Nederlands Fotomuseum, Wilhelminakade 332
 3072 AR Rotterdam

Daniel Shea

2018 Winner of the Foam Paul Huf Award
 Until 20 January 2019
 Foam, Keizersgracht 609, 1017 DS Amsterdam

Erwin Olaf

One of the Netherlands’ most famous photographers
 16 February to 12 May 2019
 Fotomuseum Den Haag, Stadhouderslaan 43
 2517 HV Den Haag

World Press Photo 2018 exhibitions

- Den Bosch - Until 9 December 2018
 Willem Twee, muziek en beeldende kunst,
 Boschdijkstraat 100
- Hulst - Until 20 December 2018
 St. Willibrordusbasiliek, Steenstraat 2
- Hilversum - 4 to 27 January 2019
 Museum Hilversum, Kerkbrink 6

Original vintage prints of seemingly unconnected individuals are paired to tell stories of their surprising commonalities—for example, the portrait-pair of Dutch dancer Mata Hari and White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Though born nearly 100 years apart and in different parts of the world, the lives of both women were fraught with infamy and notoriety – one executed by the state, the other condemned by the media and public. Forty-four other such image pairs tell intriguing stories of shared history. These stories are further enriched by letters, documents, books, and magazine articles from the National Archives.

This exhibition runs until 6 January 2019. Find more information at nationaalarchief.nl/beleven/tentoonstelling/face-to-face

When too much really is too much

My next stop is The Hague Museum of Photography, to view the work of American photographer and film-maker Lauren Greenfield, who has been documenting the concept of 'wealth' for over 25 years. Titled "Generation Wealth", this exhibition with shocking images of people's excesses, is an interesting contrast to the sombre experience at the National Archives. Interested in the science behind people's desires to acquire more and more, Greenfield shares over 200 photographs and several short films which tell stories of the ultra-wealthy 1% and the 'wannabes' who go to great lengths to portray a certain image. The show also documents the aspirations of the poor in societies who idolise financial success, and those ageing in a culture that fetishises youth. 'Riches to rags' accounts also serve as cautionary tales. This hard-hitting exhibition, running until 3 February 2019, pushes us to examine our own attitudes towards wealth and consumption. Greenfield's work is particularly relevant in our times, as humanity's insatiable desire for material goods decimates the world's natural resources.

Details of the exhibition are at fotomuseumdenhaag.nl/en/exhibitions/lauren-greenfield

For the love of food

One topic that always pops up while discussing excesses is food. From time immemorial, food has been a popular subject in traditional visual arts—painting and sculpture—and more recently, in photojournalism and commercial photography. With the advent of the camera phone, photographing your meal has become an integral part of the dining experience, making food the most-photographed subject of our times. From 21 December 2018, the Foam Museum in Amsterdam will host a riveting exhibition "Feast for the Eyes—The Story of Food in Photography", centred on our long history of documenting food. Three specific themes—Still Life, Around the Table and Playing with your Food—will be used to explore the many layers surrounding the representation of food. Delightful cookbooks from

the sixties will be displayed, providing additional context to the photographs. This exhibition, running until 3 March 2019, includes works by many well-known photographers, such as Nobuyoshi Araki, Guy Bourdin, Imogen Cunningham, Roe Ethridge, Rotimi Fani Kayode, Martin Parr, and Andy Warhol.

Discover more at foam.org/museum/programme/feast-for-the-eyes

Redefining the African narrative

Another exhibition to watch out for is "Recent Histories/Contemporary African Photography and Video Art" at the Huis Marseille Museum of Photography in Amsterdam. This show, which runs from 8 December 2018 until 3 March 2019, shares the perspectives of 15 contemporary photographers and film-makers of African descent as they question traditional narratives about Africa. Through their work these lens-based artists explore issues of identity, origins, belonging, migration, and the legacy of colonialism. The work of these artists—David Goldblatt, Mimi Cherono Ng'ok, Em'kal Eyongakpa, Pieter Hugo, Délio Jasse, Lebohang Kganye, Sabelo Mlangeni, Santu Mofokeng, Zanele Muholi, Mame-Diarra Niang, Dawit L. Petros, Thabiso Sekgala, Mikhael Subotzky, Guy Tillim and Michael Tsegaye—is a powerful investigation of African identity, and is taken from the Walther Collection and the Huis Marseille collection.

With so many gripping photo exhibitions this winter, photography enthusiasts in the Netherlands are in for a treat. This Dutch winter may turn out to be quite exciting after all! «

About the author

Anne Pinto-Rodrigues is an Amsterdam-based writer and photographer. She moved to the Netherlands two years ago and documents several subjects of interest to her. More about Anne on her website annepintorodrigues.com

Bringing Communities Together

The Feel at Home Fair is the biggest gathering of the international community in the Netherlands. Over 4000 people, representing more than 100 nationalities, come together to share their experience of life in Holland and make connections locally.

The Fair is unique in its variety of exhibitors, presenters, performers and players representing our diverse community and the interests that bring us together. It recognises that international people don't just come to the Netherlands to work, you also come here to rest and play. And you don't come here alone, you bring your family, visitors and friends, who also need to *Feel at Home*.



fair@thehagueonline.com
www.feelathomeinthehague.com

All interests and pastimes

The 2019 Feel at Home Fair aims to bring together as many different communities as possible so that everyone can find a connection locally, be it with an international or a local group. Those connections can be made through business, culture, sport, nationality or religion. Any shared interest,

concern or desire to learn which brings like-minded people together—to work, socialise, exercise, learn a new skill... or simply to relax.

Around half of the 150 stands at the Feel at Home Fair are Sport, Social and Community groups representing all manner of hobbies and pastimes for every age. Whether you wish to play football or play the saxophone, play Mah-jong or play the villain in the Christmas panto... you'll find others who share your interest at the Fair.

Uniting and sharing

The Feel at Home Fair team invites these culturally diverse groups to identify the activity or interest which unites their work, school, sport or social community, and share it with the international community at the Fair. To bring the dance or the game, the food or the mood, the art or the craft, the passion or the cause, that animates their group and motivates them to get together. And to give visitors the opportunity to understand and participate in the activity that their community enjoys.

Interacting with visitors creates the special warmth and atmosphere for which the Feel at Home Fair is known and appreciated. It is a celebration of a united international community in which everyone can *Feel at Home*. «

Join your Community at the Fair

11am - 5pm • Sunday 3 February 2019 • The Hague City Hall



Amsterdamed?



BY TEA GUDEK
ŠNAJDAR

The global economic crisis of 2008 led Amsterdam to look for new income streams. To attract more visitors, Amsterdam has been promoted as a city of fun and entertainment where anything is possible. Ten years later, 20 million people visit the city annually, and while it has recouped millions in tax revenues, a consequence is that daily, on average, there are ten tourists for each Amsterdam resident.

Rising Tourism

Today, worldwide, one in ten people have a job related to tourism, and it is the leading industry or an important part of many countries' economic development. But only recently have we started to consider the negative impacts of tourism on local communities.

Over the last four decades rising prosperity led to an increase in tourism, and in the last twenty years low cost flights and cheap accommodation drove an escalation in short-stay travel, so-called city breaks, with Barcelona, Venice, Dubrovnik, Amsterdam and similar cities experiencing huge influxes of tourists. »

In 2002 the Cape Town Declaration defined responsible tourism as that which “minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts” and “provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people.”

Why is responsible tourism so important?

Air travel is a pollutant, short-term rentals are a factor in increasing the rental prices for citydwellers, and large numbers of visitors strain cities’ infrastructures and locals. As one Amsterdam resident remarked, “I’ve been woken up by people going down my street in tour groups with the guide shouting the history of my building, and had people watching my neighbours as if they were in a zoo.”

In an interview with *The Guardian*, Sebastiaan Meijer, Amsterdam’s municipality’s spokesperson for economic affairs, said, “For a long time our marketing policy was simply aimed at making people come to Amsterdam. Now we want to spread a new message, ‘come to Amsterdam, but please behave’.”

Now we want to spread a new message, ‘come to Amsterdam, but please behave’

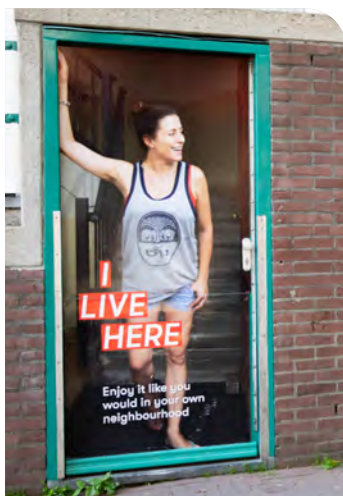


PHOTO: I LIVE HERE

Responsible tourism is vital in balancing wanderlust with maintaining a respected and respectable environment for locals.

Challenges of over-tourism in Amsterdam

“Getting stuck behind a group of 30 tourists, taking selfies, isn’t fun when I’m heading to the office or picking up my kids from school,” said another Amsterdam local. Residents also complain that their local shops have been replaced by those catering solely to tourists, and that they often feel like visitors in their own neighbourhoods. Edwin Schölvinck, a volunteer with ‘I Live Here’, an initiative by residents of Amsterdam’s de Wallen neighbourhood—the Red Light District—believes the beauty of city life is vitality and bustle, but things can get out of hand. “While we are not against tourism,” he says, “we do have our lives.” ‘I Live Here’ was formed by locals in de Wallen, Amsterdam’s oldest neighbourhood, to help visitors appreciate that it isn’t a Disneyland for grown-ups, rather where 3,750 people live, bring up children and go to work. “I’m always asked, ‘People actually live here?’” says Schölvinck. “I love cities and I love the people in Amsterdam,” he adds. “But some Saturday nights can feel like King’s Day. It’s just too busy. Sometimes I leave town.” By Sunday evening he is back in his Wallen apartment watching the crowds on the narrow street outside. “I always miss the place, I always come back,” he smiles.

Schölvinck agrees that things need to change, but Amsterdam’s message of openness shouldn’t be lost. How this is balanced with the commercial needs of the city is difficult. The future of this neighbourhood is one priority of Amsterdam’s new mayor Femke Halsema, but Schölvinck worries that the sheer number of people crammed into the tiny streets is untenable, and could lead to unfortunate consequences. However, he’s an optimist and a lover of the city he has called home for over 26 years. “We await policy change from the city and government,” he says. “But never forget the changes we can make as individuals. Together small changes make a difference.”

Unique tourism initiatives

Amsterdam is also taking a novel approach with a recent project that encourages visitors to explore places beyond Amsterdam. Adjacent areas have been rebranded, coastal Zandvoort has become 'Amsterdam Beach', Keukenhof is advertised as 'Flowers of Amsterdam' and Muiderslot as 'Amsterdam Castle'. Perhaps changing the identities of these places is simply a clever trick, but the intention is to lighten the burden on the city centre. Within Amsterdam new policies mean regulations on city centre guided tours of more than six people, *bierfietsen* (beer bicycles) banned, short-term property rentals limited to fewer than 30 days per year, and the city tourist tax increased. "You have to start somewhere," says former mayor, Jozias van Aartsen.

Did you know...
Amsterdam has more museums per square metre than any other city in the world.



PHOTO: HOLLAND.COM

Tourism in the rest of the Netherlands

Increasingly tour providers are taking visitors beyond the beaten path into the Dutch countryside and lesser-known cities. 'Dutch Experience' organises 'experiences' provided by locals, where visitors can learn about music in The Hague or take a walk in Abcoude with Piet Mondrian. Rather than taking a selfie on the Museumplein, spending time with enthusiastic locals gives a more authentic image of the Netherlands. Bicycle tours take small groups of visitors to the countryside and local markets and windmills. Many visitors want to try cycling while in the Netherlands, and it's better experienced on a peaceful country bicycle path than in the centre of Amsterdam.

What we can do as individuals

Although governments can take bigger steps to focus on responsible tourism, individually we can also make a difference. We can encourage our visitors from abroad to come during the low season, between November and March, and avoid overcrowded areas such as Museumplein, the Red Light District or Dam Square during the peak season. We can look at alternatives to Amsterdam, take our visitors to learn

about Dutch art at the Mauritshuis in The Hague, home to Vermeer's 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' and many of Rembrandt's paintings, or to see unique Dutch architecture in Rotterdam, Gouda or Utrecht.

Travelling abroad, we can be more accountable by taking individual trips, avoiding large groups, staying in a locally-owned hotel, eating regional food and buying local products. We can avoid going to places known for over-tourism or decide to visit them during the low season.

Edwin Schölvink echoes many locals, "All we ask is that visitors act the same way as they would in their own neighbourhoods." He wants people to appreciate Amsterdam as he does, but worries that before long overcrowding will mean that all visitors will see is the back of someone's head, or a phone screen. "Everything they come to see is hidden behind the crowds." «

About the author

Tea Gudek Šnajdar is a museum docent and a travel blogger living in Haarlem. On her blog culturetourist.com she writes about the art, history and culture of European destinations.

Preventing food waste

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year gets lost or wasted, but there are ways you can help. This article shares tips from three different people who are working to prevent food waste in the Netherlands.

BY OLIVIA
VAN DEN BROEK-NERI



August de Vocht

Founder, NoFoodWasted App nofoodwasted.com

“Awareness is the first thing in preventing food waste,” said August de Vocht. In the past, August used to purchase items at the grocery store that were discounted due to an upcoming expiration date and thought that others would too. However, he said “they were just there with a sticker and no one else knew.” This inspired the NoFoodWasted App which allows people to see which products are discounted due to their upcoming expiration date.

The app has since expanded to include restaurants that prepare meals using ingredients that will go bad soon. The consumer can view and purchase these featured meals on the app and then pick them up at the restaurant. Everyone wins: the consumer gets to enjoy a meal at a lower price, and the restaurants and grocery stores have less waste and a higher margin. “Together we are fighting food waste,” de Vocht said.

The app is now live in 's-Hertogenbosch and Tilburg, and will soon be live in Hilversum and Eindhoven.

Ralph Blaakenburg

Head Cook, La Nouvelle Auberge, Tilburg

bonheurrecagroep.nl/en/auberge-du-bonheur/dining

At La Nouvelle Auberge, head cook Ralph Blaakenburg uses the NoFoodWasted App in his restaurant and throws away as little as possible. “We try to use everything,” he explains. “For example, when you have a leek, most people only use the white part, but we are thinking about what we can make with the green part!”

Blaakenburg points out that there are many things you can make with leftovers, including croutons and soup. “When you have old bread, you can make croutons from them,” he says. “When you have some vegetables left over, slice them and make a soup!” Most importantly, before you throw food away, look at it and smell it.

The need to prevent food waste was instilled in Blaakenburg from an early age. This practice also helps him save the restaurant money. He claims that almost eight percent of costs have been reduced since he first started working at the restaurant 10 years ago.

Blaakenburg’s sustainable mindset results in two menus: a set menu and a surprise menu that varies from day to day. On Friday and Saturday, almost 70% of the customers at La Nouvelle Auberge choose the surprise menu, and thus help contribute to preventing food waste through a delicious meal.

Anubhav Kandpal

Co-Founder, Conscious Kitchen, The Hague and Leiden consciouskitchen.nl

Anubhav Kandpal takes a similar approach to Ralph Blaakenburg’s surprise menu through a different initiative. After moving from India to The Hague, he got involved with Conscious Kitchen, a small group of volunteers who create delicious weekly dinners to share by using food from local markets that would



PHOTO: NOFOODWASTED



PHOTO: CONSCIOUS KITCHEN

"When you have some vegetables left over, slice them and make a soup!"

otherwise be thrown it away, or sourcing it locally and organically. Their meals are vegan and affordable, with the hope of bringing people together to promote community and sustainability.

Kandpal points out that sustainability on its own doesn't work. "You need a community of people to build it and move it further," he says. "We want to raise awareness, and how we raise awareness is through people."

A group of 20 volunteers assist at each dinner, which includes a soup, a main course and a dessert, with the option to take food items home as well. The dinner costs a minimum of 5 euros, but guests are welcome to contribute as much as they want.

A lot of the dinner ingredients are given to them for free from the Haagse Markt and the Leiden weekly market food vendors. Over the years,

the organisation has built relationships with the vendors. "In the beginning they would only give us a few things," says Kandpal. Once the vendors saw what they were doing, some started to give them more.

Volunteers pick up the food from the vendors on Wednesdays, and the dinners take place on Thursdays.

The dinner guests are mostly international. "We discovered that a lot of people come to the dinner because they are lonely," he says. "At the Conscious Kitchen, they find a new community." «

About the author

Olivia van den Broek-Neri is originally from California and has lived in the Netherlands for 12 years.

Plastic pollution and the use of plastic in today's society

One goal of a recent student exchange between eighth-graders from the German International School The Hague and St Kilian's German School in Dublin was to discover more about the use of plastic and to cultivate awareness in dealing with plastic in their everyday lives.

The questions

Students from both schools worked together on a questionnaire inspired by the exchange's motto, 'Plastic pollution and the use of plastic in today's society.' During the students from Ireland visit to The Hague the questionnaire was prepared and on the reverse trip its results were evaluated. Students revealed thought-provoking questions and answers and found the project also made them think about their own relationship with sustainability and plastic. As one student commented, "I noticed through this project that I never really paid attention to how much plastic I used every week. I was not aware of the environmental consequences especially for the sea and animals."



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During the exchange programme, pupils analysed the desirability of plastic and found most retailers used unsustainable, single-use plastic packaging for their products, which are often disposed of after a very short time. Sixty percent of the students questioned admitted that they didn't know what happened to the plastic they threw away, while forty percent felt that they used too much plastic. Almost all the students, ninety-five percent, felt that plastic consumption should be regulated by law.

How can we change?

Motivated by the movie *A Plastic Ocean*, the students posed their most important question, "How can we protect the oceans from getting polluted with plastics?" The consensus was that we must avoid buying unnecessarily-packaged products, to use cloth, reusable shopping bags, and to purchase recycled and upgraded products where possible. The students also concluded that the schools could do more, starting with cutting their use of cling-film, plastic bags and aluminum foil. Onno Schroeder, a German International School teacher who accompanied the project, concluded that, "Plastic pollution is and will be one of the negative effects of globalisation and the Western way of living. Raising awareness for this problem and confronting students with other current global issues is more important than ever."

A great success

The student exchange programme, and the plastic pollution project, was a huge success in raising the awareness of environmental issues in students from both schools, and demonstrating how collaboration inspires and motivates pupils. «



Self-care:

The art of minding your own business



PHOTO: TAYLOR SMITH

As expats, we're reminded more than most people of what self-care is every time we fly to our next assignment or home to visit loved ones. We're urged, in case of an emergency landing, to put on our oxygen masks before assisting others... even our children. If we're struggling for breath, how can we help someone else breathe?

BY CAROLYN VAN ES-VINES

Yet this is precisely what appens in our daily lives. We, particularly women, are so busy caring for others that we rarely ever put ourselves on the ever-growing to-do list until we're on the verge of suffocation.

Self-care is about putting our energy and attention back where it belongs: on what we really want, not what our parents wanted for us, not what our spouses expect from us, not even what we think is right to want for our children. Like any new habit, it's tough to put ourselves at the top of the list because we believe it's too selfish.

Yet, in her phenomenal international best seller *Loving What Is*, Byron Katie maintains that there is no greater expression of self-care than minding our own business. For Katie, there are only three types of business in the universe, namely yours, mine and God's. Furthermore, she argues, "Much of our stress comes from mentally living out of our own business. When I think, 'I want you to be happy, or you should be on time,' I am in your business. When I'm worried about earthquakes, floods, war or when I will die, I am in God's business... If you are living your life and I am mentally living your life, who is here living mine?" »

So, how do we begin to mind our own business?

Show yourself kindness

Most of us limit self-care to booking a massage, signing up for a yoga class or organising a girls' night out. While fun, these things focus exclusively on the temporary attempt to soothe our bodies. Showing ourselves kindness actually starts cognitively and emotionally.

"Self-care is about putting our energy and attention back where it belongs: on what we really want"

We think thousands of thoughts a day, surprisingly with little variation. The majority of our thoughts are negative and focused on one subject: our inadequacy. A familiar voice constantly tells us we don't have the will power to lose weight, reminds us that we're bad parents, scolds us yet again for making the "wrong" decision. It's no wonder we engage in self-sabotaging behaviours and habits.

The moment we become conscious of that little voice and the many forms its criticism takes, we will have taken the first step toward self-care. Furthermore,

it's only in recognising the self-sabotaging thoughts that we can talk back to them by asking ourselves "How true is it that we have no will power?" Certainly there have been times when we've achieved difficult goals. Call those successes to mind when the critic starts yapping!

Be aware of how you feel

After we've started paying attention to the quality of our thoughts, we can take the next step towards self-care, which is becoming aware of how those thoughts make us feel. This is what is meant by practising mindfulness. We don't have to bend ourselves up like a pretzel and sit still for an hour willing the cramps out of our legs. Mindfulness can be as simple as asking ourselves throughout the day, "How do I feel right now?" or "Do I feel good right now?" or "Am I doing what I want to be doing right now?"

Understandably, most of us don't ask those



PHOTO: LEIGHANN RENEE

questions because we're afraid of the answers. We believe that if we don't feel good, we're doing something wrong. We believe we don't have the resources to create a feeling of well-being. Or we simply have become so disconnected from how we feel that we always feel "fine".

The good news is that we don't need to fix ourselves because there's nothing wrong with us. It's simply that we haven't practised using the tools we already have: our emotions. Quite frankly, we're taught to ignore how we feel physically and emotionally. If we're tired, we should go to the gym. If we're feeling down, we should think positive thoughts. If we women are mad, we shouldn't express it. And for goodness sakes, if we're men, we shouldn't ever cry.

The point is that our emotions let us know our response to the world around us. When our toddlers fall down, we acknowledge the hurt by picking them up and soothing them. Now is the time to start doing that for ourselves, practising what Dr. Gabor Maté, author of the best seller *When the Body Says No*, calls the reverse 'Golden Rule,' "Do unto yourself as you would like to do unto others."

Strive for authenticity

Maté argues that authenticity is one of the two basic human needs, the other being attachment. He defines being authentic as knowing who we are, knowing and expressing how we feel and honoring that in our behavior.

While the essence of self-care is authentic living, we tend to focus more on setting and achieving external goals. Instead of attuning to how we feel, we're trying to control the outcome.

We're all pumped up when we're 'successful' and disappointed or mad at ourselves when we 'fail.' Wouldn't it be nice to focus on the ride instead of the high?

Self-care is about finding ways to be our authentic selves, which can't be limited to a few hours here and there when we pay someone to pamper our outer selves. Self-care is, in fact, a daily practice much like eating and drinking regularly.

Keep calm and be quiet

Now more than ever we have so many options and choices, so many ways to spend our time. Our minds are also more easily distracted and for longer periods of time by smart phones and social media. Jennifer Glaese, member of the ACCESS Counselling Network, reminds us that the natural state of humans is just slowing down and just hanging out, which is easier said than done.

According to Glaese, "Our human mind loves to stay busy. It loves to learn, solve problems, engage in and watch drama (our own or someone else's), etc. Yet we also have a heart which I use to define our emotional self. We also have a body. And perhaps we also have a sense that there may be something else to life as well."

Doing less is a gift we can choose to give ourselves at any moment. How we treat ourselves in that down time will determine the quality of life we lead.

Be willing to ask for help

Many of us, especially in the expat world, will encounter a situation that we simply cannot resolve ourselves. Unfortunately, we tend to wear our DIY mentality as a badge of honour, refusing to ask for help until we're on the brink of burning out. Taking care of ourselves means sometimes reaching out to someone for help. Glaese and the rest of ACCESS's team of international psychologists, counsellors and therapists are on call to give more information related to self-care and mental health. «

About the author

Carolyn van Es-Vines is a life coach and trainer as well an author of *black and (A)broad: traveling beyond the limitations of identity*.





PHOTOS: GENEVIE CHASSE



BY ANGELA FUSARO

Expat mums relaunching their career

Raising a family and pursuing a career can be a real challenge for expat mums. Relocation with children to a new country needs time and energy, while often your career aspirations pause during the transition. Yet once everyone in the family is happy and settled you may feel like returning to work and investing in your professional life.

Then, plenty of questions start popping up in your head, What opportunities are there in the local market? How does my profile fit with the job vacancies? How do I motivate the gaps in my CV, explaining the relocation and maternity breaks? How will I maintain a work/life balance as an expat mum?

Finding a job after a career break in a country where you don't have a strong professional network can be daunting. Along with this you need to sort out childcare and find a completely new balance as a whole family.

Here are some steps to get started.

Align your vision

Why do you want to restart your career?

Motherhood and relocation are life-changing, but they provide an opportunity to determine what is really important for you.

What are your career goals and priorities?

Maybe you want to be financially independent and contribute to the household?

Remember a small, yet important note; stay-at-home mums do contribute to the household—more than people think.

Maybe you miss the intellectual challenge of a professional environment and the chance to learn and develop yourself outside the home. Or you want to be a role model for your children.

Or perhaps you have an idea for an innovative service or product, that keeps you awake at night because want you to take action.

Focus on your vision. This will help you on the journey you're about to start.

Find your strengths

Psychologists say that relocation, motherhood and a career break can have a negative impact on our confidence. Women begin to doubt their skills and abilities, and sometimes forget or underestimate their past accomplishments. Many mums struggle to recall their career highlights before the break, and the key achievements and projects they enjoyed working on. If this sounds familiar, retrace your career journey, and for each year or relevant period, write down the things you accomplished and the skills you developed. Are those skills and achievements something you can use when relaunching your career in the new country?

Furthermore, what are the new skills and competencies you developed during motherhood and your expat life? Most of these are transferable to other areas, and are handy when preparing for a career move.

Working with a career coach can help map your skills and connect them to your target jobs.

A little laughter

Interviewer: Tell me about a time you exercised leadership in completing a difficult task.

Me: One time I convinced my kid to clean up the playroom and none of us cried.

Interviewer: You're hired.

Source: Explorations of Ambiguity by Andrew Knott

Remember - motherhood and an international relocation make us stronger than before, teach us great lessons and endow us with skills that we'll likely re-use.

Your Strengths

Prioritise

In today's world, work is often incredibly busy, but that is nothing new for mothers. They know how to function effectively at a rapid pace. As a mother, you have the ability to prioritise on the fly and accomplish tasks that deliver the greatest impact, every day.

Negotiation

Motherhood teaches you that, when you want something done, control simply doesn't work. As a mum, you get what you want in subtler ways, by weaving a solution out of everyone's different needs. Control never works in business, and it is mothers who best »





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know how to manipulate and negotiate in a multi-faceted, multi-directional environment. In the world of work, mothers know how to invite others to their point of view—patients, clients, investors or staff—without stirring up resistance or resentment.

Leadership

Motherhood teaches you how to play with power. You learn how to assert your needs, desires and the edges of your personal domain. It goes without saying that these qualities are imperative at work. Mothers are well equipped to manage staff, customers, clients and conflicts, because they have learned that you can't make everyone happy. There are times when you have to say "no".

Collaboration

Whether it's our relationship with our kid's teachers, helping your child with a school project or teaching how to bake, mums are good collaborators, almost without realising it. Our ability to work with others is key. The workplace requires this close cooperation, without ego.

Prepare

If, after reading this, you still do not feel ready, don't worry, there's more you can do to become the change you want. Get your LinkedIn profile in order and tailor your CV. Explain the gaps in your career history with your own journey, mention the things you've done, the countries you've visited, including your experiences as a volunteer, the courses you've followed and other contributions you've made while away from the workplace.

Make contact with recruiters, attend career fairs, seminars, and other events that will expand your network and knowledge. Start following the leading companies in your industry. Join communities for job seekers and professionals, both online and offline, or take a course if you want to brush up on some skills. Discuss childcare arrangements with your partner and plan how you both will manage the household when you start working again.



PHOTO: LIV STEPHEN

Motherhood and relocation are life-changing. But they provide an opportunity to determine what is really important for you.

Final thoughts

In the last decade, we have shifted from the concept of linear and defined careers. The world, the new economy, and new technology invite change and encourage us to embrace it. More and more companies hire employees, not for their skills but, because they are a good fit. As an expat mum, transformation and change have been central in your journey.

The way you dealt with it shows the value you can bring to work. Blend those life experiences together with your skills and expertise, and craft a message that shows the world who you are and the value you have to offer. This will help you land your next role with confidence and ease. «

About the Author

Angela Fusaro is the mother of two boys and the founder of Every Mother Knows, a career coaching initiative that supports mums returning to work and/or making their next career move. Learn more at everymotherknows.org or facebook.com/everymotherknowsorg



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All the Time We Thought We Had

By Gordon Darroch

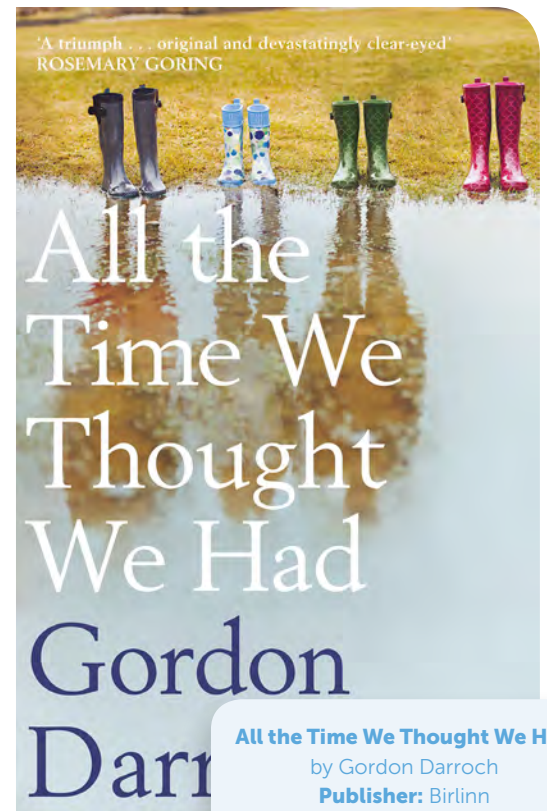
It's possible that author Gordon Darroch's memoir has already been recommended to you. In my case each recommendation came with hushed tones, knowing sighs, and a warning not to read it on public transport—unless you're cool with blubbing your eyes out in front of complete strangers.

BY CATHY LEUNG

I was prepared for a sad story though, as several years ago I came across a moving and well-articulated blog post by Darroch about his loneliness, and the back-story of losing his wife and caring for his two autistic sons whilst settling in the Netherlands. *All the Time We Thought We Had* is a blow-by-blow account of his wife Magteld's illness and the excruciating cruelty their family endured. In rich detail we get to know the spirited 20-year old woman who left Holland for love and who died of cancer way too soon, resulting in a full-on emotional assault that I was not prepared for.

But this is no one-note 'misery memoir', as Darroch is too good a writer for that, and remains unfailingly honest, including when he thinks about escaping the dredge of daily caring. It's also a study in empathy, giving thoughtful insights on how to be of actual use and comfort to sick friends or family, and the stumbling blocks people with disabilities face.

The writing itself is atmospheric, with a great sense of place, setting the scenes with skills you'd expect of a professional journalist. Landscapes, local colour and cultural observations paint a vivid backdrop that



make this a specific story set in a specific location, despite the universal issues. Darroch matches this with a clear-headed command of his timeline, guiding the reader along a non-linear path and unravelling the story in the order he feels it should be told. It's a book of pairs—the undulating intimacy of two lovers over time, two brothers coping with life in their own way, a tale of two cities, Glasgow and The Hague, the double-whammy their family is dealt—cancer and autism—and the story's medical history and metaphysical journey.

Darroch has experienced huge loss and personal pain, and he may feel all he has to show for it is a kind of frazzled wisdom. But those who have a little, often give a lot, and he generously shares the little he has gained. How can we show solidarity with him? Nurture empathy. «

About the author

Cathy Leung heads up the non-profit Broadcast Amsterdam, sharing local stories for Amsterdam on TV, online, and 24/7 radio. Cathy tweets for fun [@cathycentral](#).

It's not only about garbage

There are many trials and tribulations when moving to a new country. While the monumental—housing, work, schooling—may seem overwhelming, it is often the little things that confound. Like how to dispose of your rubbish.

BY DEBORAH
VALENTINE



Who knew?

From country to country, there are many ways of getting rid of one's rubbish. But you don't know, until you know. Rubbish disposal is more than a practical matter, it's a conscious act of recycling. From one experienced international, here are a few tips to help you manage this part of your new lives in the Netherlands.

It's simple, really

In the Netherlands people take a pro-active responsibility in rubbish disposal. It is not 'left' to municipal authorities to pick up, sort and dispose, rather you will be expected to play a role, from sorting your

refuse to, increasingly, taking your garbage bag to a nearby underground disposal container. Seems clear-cut, get the rules, follow them, right? But, things differ from municipality to municipality. So, once you know where you will live, some research is in order.

The process of separation

Garbage sorting generally starts in the home, where, at least, glass, paper and household waste are separated. Collection points for plastics are increasing, which means separating plastics first at home. Some municipalities will provide, upon request, bins for holding items like paper, organic and household waste, ensuring tidy streets and preventing animals from rummaging through your refuse.

Don't simply leave larger items, such as old beds, larger toys, or mattresses, outside your home in the hope they will magically disappear. Municipalities provide drop-off points or a phone number to organise a pick-up of these items.

To be pro-active in your waste-disposal in the Netherlands, and find your way through the rules and regulations, here are some key words for your municipality's website search bar.

People take a pro-active responsibility to rubbish disposal

Afval (waste)

Grofvuil (oversized waste) is household waste which doesn't fit in a garbage bag, mini-container or underground rubbish container, or is too heavy—such as sofas, cupboards, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and large garden waste.

Grofvuil requires pre-arranged collection via your municipality, or self-disposal at a **afvalbrengstation** or

Words to remember when separating and disposing

Papier – paper, carton, goes in the *papierbak*

Glas – glass, goes in the *glasbak*. *Wit* (white or clear) *bont* (coloured), *groen* (green), and *bruin* (brown)

Statiegeld (deposit) – for some glass and plastic bottles returned to many grocery stores

Afvalkalender – dates when certain garbage is collected (check online by postal code).

afvalscheidingsstation (waste separation and recycling stations). Certain cities may require an *afvalpas* (garbage pass), available through municipal websites. Some *grofvuil* items can be brought to or arranged to be picked up by a local *kringloopwinkel* (charity shop).

Groente- fruit- en tuinafval (GFT) – vegetable, fruit and garden biodegradable waste is often collected separately in designated bins available from your municipality. Find information in your local *afvalcalendar* (garbage collection schedule). GFT might also be called *groenbak* (green bin).

Ondergrondse afvalcontainers (ORAC) – are underground rubbish containers and usually separate for household waste, paper and glass. If the ORAC is full, do not leave your waste next to it, which can incur a fine. Report a full ORAC to your municipality.

Elektrobakken – collection points for small electrical appliances, with separate boxes for *batterijen* (batteries) and *gloeilampen* (light bulbs). Energy-saving light bulbs and LED lamps don't go in the *elektrobak*, but can be returned to many shops selling them or disposed of at recycling stations.

Klein chemisch afval (KCA) – small household products, hazardous to the environment, which are dangerous to throw away with the regular household waste or to pour down the drain, sink or toilet. Should be separated from your household waste and taken to an *afvalbrengstation*.

Textielafval – textiles are disposed for recycling in containers on the street, or given to local charity shops and organisations' collections. Carpets and rugs, mattresses, duvets and pillows, and badly-stained baby clothes, usually can't be disposed here.

Plastic/kunststof – items to be disposed of in plastic recycling bins tend to differ by municipality, but might include *drankpakken* (carton milk and drink packs) and *drank en conservenblikjes* (metal cans and aluminium tins). Check with your local municipality

for guidance as what goes into plastic recycling bins. Some municipalities prefer plastic loose, while others only accept items in transparent bags.


It's simple really

Disposal of rubbish in the Netherlands often sounds complicated, but it's a combination of personal responsibility and local municipality rules and regulations that when done properly should work seamlessly. You just need to make sure you do it right, which often requires some research with your neighbours and local authorities. Then it's one less thing to be overwhelmed by as you get settled. «



About the author

Deborah Valentine is a seasoned expat—having lived in more than 10 countries, and is often overwhelmed by the simple task of taking out the trash.






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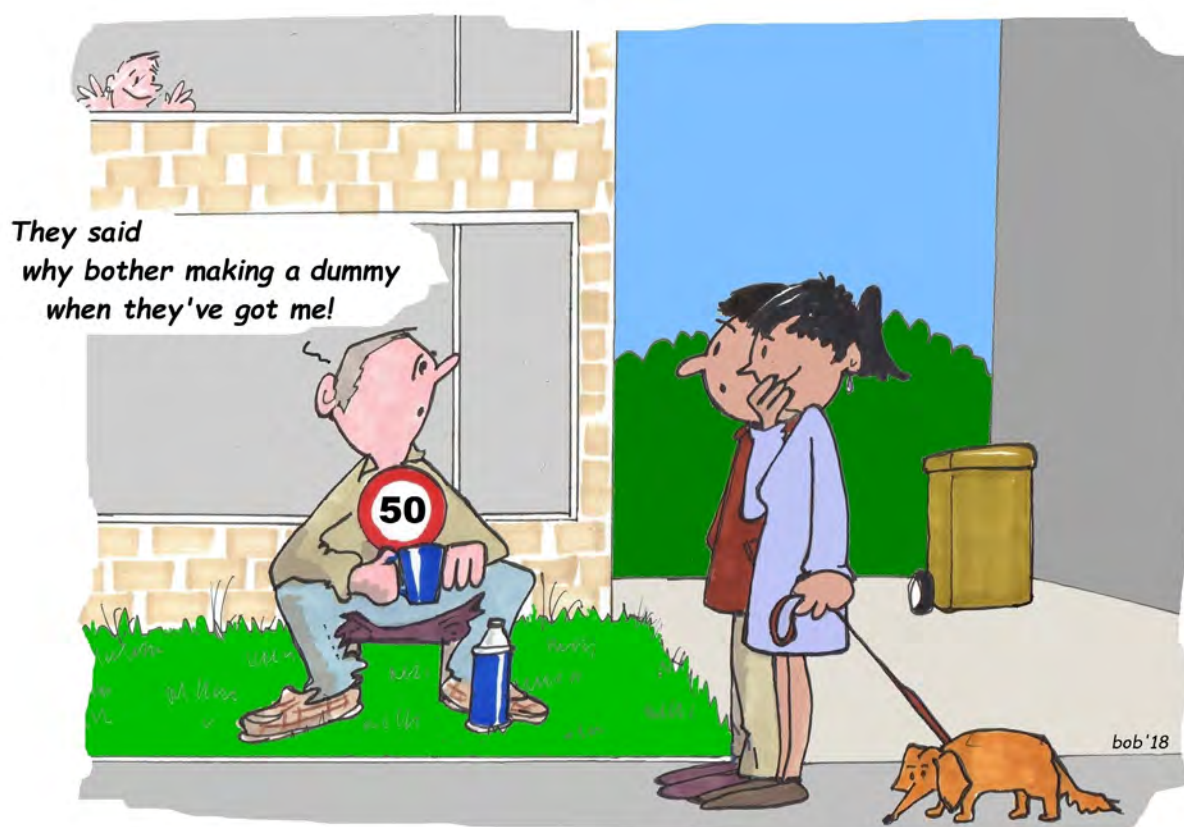



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Dictionary of Dutchness

Courtesy of **DutchNews.nl**

For fun, and to help internationals relieve their frustrations over
Dutch acronyms and puzzling terms...



Abraham and Sarah

The name of the Biblical patriarch Abraham, who reached the ripe old age of 175, is applied to men in the Netherlands when they reach the age of 50. Women are known as Sarah, who, according to the Bible, lived until she was 127. Fiftieth birthday celebrations in the Netherlands often include songs pointing out the birthday boy is old, grey and past it.

KNMI

The Koninklijk Nederlands Meteorologisch Instituut (royal Dutch meteorological institute) was set up in 1854, provides weather forecasts and warnings, and researches weather, climate and seismology. Based in De Bilt, the KNMI has come under fire in recent years for too many weather warnings and disappointing people when the predicted snow storm does not appear.

Horeca

Horeca is an extremely handy Dutch word for describing the hotel, restaurant and café trade (ho-re-ca)—broader in context than ‘catering industry’. The horeca sector has its own massive trade fair, Horecava, in which the ‘va’ stands for vak (profession). The word horeca is already used in Portugal and Lebanon and is gaining acceptance elsewhere.

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