



The Dutch BRP register: registration of personal details for the government and for you

Anyone who becomes a parent or moves house is required to inform their municipality. But what does the Dutch government do with the details of all of the Netherlands' citizens? This brochure explains which personal details the Dutch population register (*Basisregistratie Personen*, or 'BRP') contains, and what they are used for. We also outline your rights and obligations and explain the procedure for people living abroad who want to stay in the Netherlands for an extended period.

Why is the BRP register important?

The government needs to have accurate details on file for the country's citizens so it can issue passports, ID cards and driving licences, so it knows who has the right to vote in elections, so it can award benefits, and so it can levy council tax. Organisations like the Dutch Tax Administration (*Belastingdienst*), benefit agencies and pension funds use your personal details to tailor their decisions to your situation.

Which personal details?

In the Netherlands, your personal details are listed in the BRP register, along with the personal details of everyone else who lives or has lived in the Netherlands. The BRP register contains the following and other details for every citizen:

- Client
- Date, place and country of birth
- Address
- Burgerservicenummer (BSN)
- Parents
- Nationality (and right of residence, if applicable)
- Marriage and registered partnership
- Children
- Travel document and ID card
- Right to vote

How does the government obtain all of these personal details?

There are details you need to provide yourself, for instance if you move house, have a child, marry abroad, or if a member of your family passes away. However, some details are registered or adjusted automatically. If, for instance, you marry in the Netherlands, the registrar informs the municipality where you live.

If you live abroad and want to stay in the Netherlands

If you live abroad and want to stay in the Netherlands for longer than four months, within five days of entering the country you must register as living in the municipality where you are staying and provide the municipality with your residential address. However, you must be staying in the Netherlands legally. In other words, you must have Dutch nationality, the nationality of a Member State of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA), Swiss nationality, or a valid residence permit.

A unique Burgerservicenummer for every citizen

Your Burgerservicenummer (BSN) is your own personal number for your contacts with the government. One of the purposes of this unique number is to prevent cases of mistaken identity. Everyone who registers in the BRP register for the first time is issued a BSN. The same applies to newborn children, for whom a BSN is issued as soon as they are registered by their parents. Your BSN is stated on your passport, driving licence and ID card. The BSN has a number of advantages both for you and the government. It facilitates your contacts with the municipality and other government agencies and organisations. When you start working, you will need to give your employer your BSN so that they can take care of a number of formalities with institutions like the Tax Administration and your pension fund. The Dutch healthcare system also uses the BSN, and you may be asked for it at your doctor's surgery, at a hospital, at your pharmacy, or when applying for home care. For more information, go to www.rijksverheid.nl.

Your privacy will be protected at all times

The BRP register contains personal details that are not accessible to the public. The government will protect your privacy carefully, and will use your details solely to aid it in performing its duties.

Your rights

Your rights are as follows:

- Everyone who registers in the BRP register for the first time is issued a copy of their registered details. This copy is free of charge. If you register in the Netherlands again at a later date, the same will apply.
- You may view your details in the BRP register at any time at your municipality free of charge. If you require a hard copy of your registered details, the municipality will usually charge a fee. You can also view your details at mijn.overheid.nl.
- As a resident of the Netherlands, you are entitled to use the surname of your current or former spouse or registered partner. This is called 'use of partner's surname'. The name you choose to use is communicated to government agencies such as the Tax Administration, pension funds, the water management authorities, and the Dutch National Vehicle and Driving Licence Registration Authority (RDW). Your passport, ID card or driving licence will still bear your own surname.
- You can have your details corrected or supplemented if they are incorrect or incomplete. If you do this, your municipality will ask you to provide documentary evidence for verification purposes.
- You can also ask the municipality not to pass on your details to certain institutions. Your municipality will be able to advise you about this.
- The municipality where you are registered as living can also provide you with a list of the institutions to which it has provided your details over the past several years. This list will be provided free of charge.

Your obligations

Your obligations as a citizen are as follows:

- In your contacts with the government, you must be able to identify yourself at all times with a valid identity document.
- If you live abroad and want to stay in the Netherlands, within five days of your arrival here you must register with your local municipality and provide them with your residential address.
- If you move house in the Netherlands, you must register your new address with your new municipality within five days of the move. You may also do this up to four weeks in advance.
- If you will be staying abroad for a period longer than eight months, you must inform your municipality no later than five days before your departure.
- If requested by the municipality where you live, you must provide additional information on your details as registered in the BRP register.
- If your personal details change during your stay abroad (for instance, you get married or have children), you must be able to show the municipality the original copies of the documents showing this change.

Immediate registration with the municipality is not possible in the situations listed below:

- If you do not have a valid residence permit, you must first apply to the Dutch Migration and Naturalisation Service (IND) to obtain one. For more information, go to www.ind.nl.
- If you have applied for asylum and are staying in a reception centre or asylum seekers' centre, the centre will take care of your registration for your first six months in the country. When this period has ended, or if you leave the centre to live elsewhere in the Netherlands during this period, you must register in the municipality where you are living.
- If you have lived on one of the islands in the Dutch Caribbean, you must provide documentary evidence of your deregistration from there, so as to prevent you from having duplicate registrations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Should you also want to register your partner and/or your children, they must accompany you to the town or city hall. You will also need to take original copies of the documents showing your identity, marital status with you, and your place of residence in the Netherlands. Naturally, you will also need to have your passport with you and, if necessary, proof that you are staying in the Netherlands legally. You will also need to take the following documents: birth certificates (of you and your children), marriage certificates (also for previous marriages) and leases or purchase agreements for your home in the Netherlands, or proof that you are permitted to share a house with a principal occupant.

Registering as a non-resident

If you live abroad and want to stay in the Netherlands for less than four months, please read the brochure on how to register for a short stay in the Netherlands (*Inschrijven bij kortdurend verblijf in Nederland*).

You can find this brochure at www.rijksverheid.nl.

If you have any questions

If you have any questions after reading this information, please contact your municipality.

Colophon

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