

## The Netherlands



### AT A GLANCE:

**Population:** 16 million  
**Size:** 41 500 sq km  
**Capital:** Amsterdam  
**Language:** Dutch  
**Religion:** Christian (52%);  
Muslim (5%)  
**Government:** Constitutional  
monarchy  
**GDP:** US\$ 434 billion

As an exchange student in The Netherlands you'll most certainly hear the words: "*We're only a small nation ...*" Don't miss the pride behind these words. While Dutch people do live in a small country, it's a nation of which they are fiercely proud.

### The Dutch Culture:

Living among the Dutch, you will learn about their rich history of being one of Europe's major centres not only in the service industry, trade and transportation, but also the arts and culture. You can enjoy fabulous orchestral music or enjoy the cutting edge of Dutch pop music. The Netherlands is home to a great variety of professional theatre groups. Fine arts museums can be found in all cities and major towns. In summer, many towns organize street theatre and concerts, traditional trade markets, and multicultural events. The Netherlands has one of Europe's most multicultural societies with large numbers of immigrants having made this their home, which adds to the interesting exchange experience.

Traditionally, the Dutch live in close knit families and enjoy each other's company. Family activities such as birthdays, anniversaries and other family outings are very important and will be part of your experience. Dutch families gather over meals, especially dinner, and the table is often the family gathering place at other times as well. As a YFU exchange student, you will either attend a so-called "HAVO" (high level vocational school) or "VWO" (pre-university school) where you'll find a relaxed atmosphere, though you will be expected to study hard just as you should do here in South Africa.

While Dutch is fairly easy to learn (especially for South Africans, most of whom have some knowledge of Afrikaans), you can take advantage of tutoring in the Dutch language usually through your school. In many towns there are also possibilities to take courses in Dutch for foreigners. YFU The Netherlands expects exchange students to show a willingness to learn Dutch! A Dutch language test will be conducted about 10 weeks after arrival.

### YFU exchange to The Netherlands: Quick Facts

YFU offers the following programs to The Netherlands:

- 1-year high school exchange (departure (i) late December or (ii) August each year).
- 6-months (semester) high school exchange (departures are the same as for 1-year programs)

Application deadlines: For late December program: July of preceding year; for August departure: February of each year

Age criteria: Applicants must be between 15 and 18 years old *in their exchange year*.

Language criteria: Applicants must have a basic knowledge of English and will be expected to learn the Dutch language within a reasonable time-frame.

YFU The Netherlands offers the following services:

- Application for a temporary residence permit
- Placement with a volunteer hostfamily
- Enrollment with a Dutch public high school
- Airport assistance upon arrival and departure
- Post-arrival, mid-year and re-entry orientations
- Contact and support by YFU volunteers
- Counselling and language assistance when required
- YFU cultural activity

YFU The Netherlands Website: [www.yfu.nl](http://www.yfu.nl)

Program Fee: Please enquire from your YFU representative

**For application requirements, additional information and contact details of YFU South Africa, please refer to last page of this brochure.**

