

Childcare

Knowledge Centre for International Staff

This information page provides more information on childcare in the Netherlands. The Netherlands has no formal educational provision for children under the age of 4. Outside the formal education system there are, however, childcare facilities for younger children. There are several options which vary greatly in possibilities and costs and will be briefly explained in this information sheet.

Day care centre (*kinderdagverblijf*)

Day care centres are available for children aged 0–4 years for five days a week. Most day care centres have divided the group into age categories, allowing the children to integrate with kids of their own age. Others place the children in vertical groups with different ages to stimulate them to interact with children in different age groups. This depends on the day care centre you choose. The children are taken care of by certified group leaders.

Day care centres are open from 7.30 to 18.30. Some day care centres also cater for after-school care ('BSO'). They take care of your children outside of regular school hours or during holidays. This type of care is often arranged by primary schools in conjunction with day care centres, and is therefore intended for all children attending primary school. For specific information, contact the day care centre you have in mind.

Host parent (*gastouder*)

Host parents usually have children of their own and care for a group of children in their house. There is an official maximum of six children per host family (including the host parents' own children up to the age of 10). If you work irregular hours or need flexible childcare in a domestic setting, this might be an option for you. Host parents can be found through host parent agencies or you can contact them yourself. You can look up contact details in the [national childcare register](#).

Playgroups (*peuterspeelzaal*)

A playgroup is a pre-school educational facility where toddlers are prepared for primary school. These facilities are open for children between the ages of 2 and 4. In most cases, playgroups are open half days and are attended by two or three mornings a week.

Registration of facilities

To see whether the facility you have in mind is registered with the government and you are therefore eligible for possible benefits, visit the [national childcare register](#).

Maastricht region

There are plenty of [facilities in all categories in the Maastricht region](#). For host parents, visit the [national childcare register](#) (search for: 'gastouderopvang' or 'gastouderbureau').

Costs

The costs of day care centres average around €6 an hour. If you decide to have your child/children taken care of by a registered day care centre or host parent organisation, you may be eligible for benefits from the government. Just like most other governmental benefits, the amount of subsidy you receive depends on your income and family composition. For more information, check the benefits page or www.toeslagen.nl. Host parent care is said to be slightly less expensive, and may also be eligible for benefits.

Unlike day care centres, playgroups are not subsidised, but their costs are just a fraction of those of day care centres. In addition, most playgroups receive a municipal grant to keep their costs low. You pay an income-dependent monthly fee to the playgroups.

Babysitters

In the Netherlands it is common practice to ask a (high school or other) student in your neighbourhood to babysit your kids when you're away outside of school hours or during weekends. The compensation for such student jobs is usually between €4–7 per hour (depending on the student's age, number of children, duration and frequency).

Maastricht International Playgroup

In the Netherlands, international or expatriate parents form local small groups to provide a play space for babies and toddlers up to the ages of 4–5, as well as offer a support network for the parents. Meetings are usually held weekly in a hall or other public venue, and the groups organise other social activities such as Ladies Nights Out, visits to local parks and zoos, summer barbecues, etc. The [Maastricht International Playgroup](#) was established more than eight years ago to cater to the needs of expatriate families living in and around the area.

[More information about International School programmes](#) (for children older than 2 years) offered by United World College in Maastricht.

Maastricht University is not responsible for any support or advice given by third parties.