

Your stay in Groningen

Police information for International Students



«waakzaam en dienstbaar»

**POLITIE**

Introduction

Welcome to the city of Groningen. Both visitors and inhabitants experience this city as very friendly, hospitable and safe. This is emphasized by the fact that Groningen has recently been awarded as the 'Best inner city of The Netherlands'. However, there are some things you should keep in mind to make your stay even more pleasant.

This brochure gives you practical advice about living and studying in Groningen. It tells you more about the Groningen Police Force and the do's and don'ts in the city. Other subjects included are: traffic regulations, drug policy, noise pollution, security issues and the role of the student police officers. You can find the police contact information on the back of this brochure.

About the Police

The police play an important role in Dutch society. Your safety in traffic, in your neighbourhood, in shopping areas and at home is a responsibility of us all. The police contribute to this in different ways: by tracking down criminals, by detecting offenders and by reducing and preventing crime and nuisance.

In order to create close contacts between the police and the public, the Groningen Regional Police Force has been divided in three districts. These districts include thirteen police stations. This means that the individual police officers work in small and familiar areas. So it does not take them a long time to arrive at the place where they are needed. And there is always a police station nearby.

The Groningen Police Force is responsible for ensuring security in the province of Groningen. The four main tasks of the police are:

- To be easily recognized and always be present
- To give attention to the victim
- To ensure road safety
- To work together to create a safer and cleaner environment.



The police in Groningen have a duty to protect everyone and can always be easily approached. Circumstances in which you need to contact the police include:

- In case of an emergency: If you are in trouble or if you have witnessed a crime, call 1-1-2 from any telephone. This call is free of charge but should be used only in case of an emergency.
- To report a crime: To report a non-emergency minor crime, call the local police station at 0900-8844.

Do's and don'ts in Groningen

The Groningen Regional Police Force aims to guarantee security for its citizens. The police also want to increase the student's awareness of the do's and don'ts in Groningen, so that the students can have a safe and enjoyable stay.

Like in all other countries, you have to stick to the law. If you don't, you risk getting a fine, or worse, getting arrested.

Below are some violations of the Dutch law and the fines you will have to pay if you commit them:



- Littering: throwing waste on the street (like cans, cigarettes, papers, etc) € 140
- Dropping your domestic waste in the non-prescribed places, or at the non-prescribed days or times € 90
- Urinating in public places € 140
- Making too much noise (like loud music, shouting, etc) € 140
- Insulting a police officer € 500
- Not having an ID on you € 90
- Treating a person or a property in a destructive manner in a public place ... € 230
- Drinking in public € 90
- Being drunk in the street € 90
- Giving a false identity to a police officer € 370

Drug Policy

The Netherlands are known for maintaining a policy of tolerance towards the use of soft drugs. However, the distribution of hashish and marihuana to the public is strictly regulated. Soft drugs include cannabis products like hashish and marihuana, as well as 'magic mushrooms'.

The drug policy in The Netherlands on soft drugs:

- If you are 18 years or older, you are allowed to possess a maximum amount of 5 grams of soft drugs if it's for your own use. If you are younger than 18 years you are not allowed to possess soft drugs at all, not even a joint.
- If you are in the possession of 5 tot 30 grams of soft drugs you are violating the drug policy and you will get a fine. If you possess more than 30 grams of soft drugs you are committing a crime. You will be arrested and you will get a criminal record.
- You can only buy soft drugs in an official coffee shop.
- You can only buy soft drugs if you are 18 years or older.
- In some cases you have to show your ID in the coffee shop to prove that you are 18 years or older.
- You can only use soft drugs at your own home, in an official coffee shop or in an other public facility where using drugs is officially allowed.
- It's not allowed to use soft drugs when you are on the public road and taking part in traffic.
- If you are violating the soft drugs policy you can get arrested and criminally prosecuted.



The drug policy in The Netherlands on hard drugs:

- Hard drugs, like cocaine, heroin and GHB, are not tolerated anywhere.
- If the police find hard drugs on you the drugs will be confiscated. You might get arrested and the police will make a public report.

Please note that:

- Mixing soft drugs and alcohol can be very dangerous.
- Always watch your drink when you are in a bar or at a party. There is a risk that someone puts the drug GHB (the so called 'love drug') in your drink. Worst case scenario: as a result of GHB you might lose conscience, get vulnerable and end up as a victim of (sexual) assault.
- The import and export of hard- en soft drugs in The Netherlands is illegal.

Cycling

In Groningen cycling is a part of people's life. That's why it is crucial for international students to know more about cycling and traffic regulations in the city.

Cycling and traffic regulations

Traffic regulations for cycling are basically the same as for driving a car. Make sure that you are aware of the rules before jumping on your bike. Always watch the signs and traffic signals.

If you don't obey the rules, you risk getting a fine. Some of the cycling-related violations are:

- If you cycle through a red light€ 90
- If you cycle in a pedestrian area€ 50
- If you don't have light on your bike at night€ 55
- If you buy a stolen cycle€ 340 + criminal record





Stolen bikes

Stolen bikes are often sold in the street. When your bike has been stolen, a 10 euro bike seems like an interesting bargain. But when you get caught while buying a stolen bike, you are guilty of receiving stolen goods. You will not only pay a fine of 340 euro, but you will get a criminal record as well. In addition, your statement of good behaviour is down the drain. Such a statement is often required when you apply for a job.

If your bike gets stolen, you can buy a cheap bike at the Environmental Health Service (Milieudienst in Dutch). You can buy a replacement (used) bike on the first Friday of the month between 7.30 am and 3.30 pm at the following address:

Milieudienst gemeente Groningen
Oude Boteringestraat 18 Groningen
Telephone: (050) 367 1000

Remember to note down the framenummer of your bike. That will make it easier for the police to return your stolen bike to you in case it turns up again.



Noise Pollution

Noise pollution: also nice for your neighbours?

The police will strictly monitor noise pollution. Besides giving a fine, the police can also confiscate the stereo equipment. So please be considerate of your neighbours! The way to deal with noise pollution has been thought up by the student contact officers. Noise pollution is one of the major irritations of citizens.

Security Issues

Compared to other cities, both inside and outside the Netherlands, Groningen is a safe city. However crime does occur in Groningen. These are mainly directed against properties.

- Unfortunately bicycle theft is common in Groningen; it is advisable to use two locks for your bike.
- To be on the safe side, you should keep all valuable things like wallets, passports and credit cards in zipped pockets or fastened bags while you are walking in the street. Never leave your bags and backpacks unattended in public places.
- Burglary is increasing in the student residences. Doors should always be kept double-locked, even in daytime. Remember to keep valuable items in locked drawers or closets.
- Among all those happy, friendly people in pubs, there may be some who are not just there to have a good time. They might steal your mobile phone or your wallet from your pocket. So don't forget to keep an eye on your personal belongings while having fun.



Student Contact Officers

Students form a considerable part of the population in the city of Groningen. That is why the Groningen Police Force has appointed two police officers to act as student contact officers.

The student contact officers keep close contacts with the universities and a variety of student organisations in order to gain an insight into student-related problems. This way, the police force will be able to solve these problems effectively and create better conditions for the students and their surroundings. They are also tasked with informing student groups on specific subjects, including burglary prevention, drug abuse and buying or receiving stolen bikes.

The student contact officers work at the police station in the city centre. Their contact information:

- Email: Studentagent@ groningen .politie .nl
- Twitter: @studentagent
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/studentagent



- Do you have internet on your mobile phone? Scan the QR-code to get more information about the student contact officers!



Please note that you should only contact them about student-related issues, since they are student contact officers. For general issues, like reporting a stolen bike, contact the nearest police station. You can find the contact information below.

Contacting the Police

In case of emergency, call: 1-1-2

If there is no emergency, call 0900-8844

For more information visit: www.politie.nl

You can report crimes at the local police station.

Addresses of Police Stations in Groningen

- **Police Station Groningen Centre**
Rademarkt 12
9711 CV Groningen
0900-8844
- **Police Station Groningen West**
Diamantlaan 168
9743 BK Groningen
0900-8844
- **Police Station Groningen North**
Korreweg 3
9714 AA Groningen
0900-8844
- **Police Station Groningen East**
Parkallee 20
9735 AB Groningen
0900-8844
- **Police Station Groningen South**
Vondellaan 8
9752 EC Haren
0900-8844

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