Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands

Comparing Business Regulation for Domestic Firms in 24 Cities in Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands with Other European Union Member States

with funding by the European Union
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Doing Business in
THE NETHERLANDS

Groningen

The Hague

Amsterdam

Utrecht

Rotterdam

Enschede

Arnhem

Eindhoven

Maastricht

Middelburg

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Eindhoven and Middelburg place consistently in the top five across indicator areas. Maastricht leads in getting electricity, Middelburg in dealing with construction permits, and Eindhoven in enforcing contracts. Five cities rank among the top half in at least two indicators and among the bottom half in at least two others, suggesting that they have something to teach and something to learn from their neighbors.

Subnational score variations are most significant in the ease of dealing with construction permits, enforcing contracts, and getting electricity. These disparities can help policy makers identify which cities have good practices that other cities can adopt and improve without major legislative overhaul. Cities perform homogeneously in starting a business and registering property.

The regulatory framework for the five areas is set at the national level and applies across all Dutch cities. All locations score the same on quality components of the Doing Business indicators. They obtain the highest score globally for the quality of the centralized land administration framework (registering property).

Replicating local good practices can boost the Netherlands’ competitiveness, especially in dealing with construction permits and enforcing contracts. In starting a business, getting electricity, and registering property, the country can also look elsewhere in the European Union and globally to improve its business regulation.

Time is the main source of variation among the performances of the Dutch cities benchmarked. Firms in Utrecht spend more productive hours complying with regulatory requirements than elsewhere in the country—four months more than their peers in Eindhoven.
Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in the Dutch economy, representing 99.8% of the country’s enterprises and employing 63.8% of the workforce. SMEs in the Netherlands generate EUR 240 billion annually, or 62.3% of total value-added, almost 6 percentage points higher than the EU average (56.4%).

The Dutch government supports SMEs by providing an extensive network of agencies, including the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland, RVO), which aims to facilitate entrepreneurship, access to funding, networking, and compliance with laws and regulations. The Netherlands Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KVK), which informs and supports entrepreneurs (Kamer van Koophandel, KVK), which aims to facilitate entrepreneurship, access to funding, networking, and compliance with laws and regulations. The Netherlands Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KVK), which informants and supports entrepreneurs at the local level through 18 agencies located across the country, also plays a critical role. The Netherlands offers regulatory incentives to encourage local and foreign investors to establish and operate businesses. For example, the government abolished the EUR 18,000 minimum capital requirement to support small business creation. Despite these efforts, the Netherlands performs below the EU average for the ease of doing business.

Doing Business provides objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across 191 economies. It is founded on the principle that economic activity benefits from clear rules: rules that allow voluntary exchanges between economic actors, set out strong property rights, facilitate the resolution of commercial disputes, and provide contractual partners with protections against arbitrariness and abuse. Such rules are much more effective in promoting growth and development when they are efficient, transparent, and accessible to those for whom they are intended. Regulations must be implemented properly to make it easier for entrepreneurs to do business.

This report highlights divergences in regulatory performance—including in the implementation of the regulatory framework at the local level—among 10 Dutch cities: Amsterdam, Arnhem, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, The Hague, Maastricht, Middelburg, Rotterdam, and Utrecht. It analyzes the regulatory hurdles faced by entrepreneurs and suggests ways to make it easier to do business across the five areas benchmarked by providing good practice examples from the Netherlands and other EU member states.

### TABLE 1  Six benchmarked cities top the rankings in at least one area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Starting a business</th>
<th>Dealing with construction permits</th>
<th>Getting electricity</th>
<th>Registering property</th>
<th>Enforcing contracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rank (0–100)</td>
<td>Rank (0–100)</td>
<td>Rank (0–100)</td>
<td>Rank (0–100)</td>
<td>Rank (0–100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91.50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.92</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.70</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65.85</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>91.57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68.92</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.70</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.75</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66.88</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91.50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>65.11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>91.57</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>65.95</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>91.70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>69.47</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91.50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>68.32</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91.50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>65.60</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. The indicator scores show how far a location is from the best performance achieved by any economy on each Doing Business indicator set. The scores are normalized to range from 0 to 100 (the higher the score, the better). For more details, see the chapter “About Doing Business and Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands.”

### MAIN FINDINGS

**Dutch entrepreneurs operate in a homogeneous regulatory framework, but their experience dealing with business regulation varies at the local level**

The regulatory framework for the five areas is set at the national level and applies across all 10 cities. All locations score the same on quality components. Processes are homogeneous across the Netherlands for starting a business and registering property, unsurprising given the high level of centralization in these areas. More variation exists in dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, and enforcing contracts, either because local authorities and agencies can regulate further or because national rules are implemented inconsistently across cities.

Six of the benchmarked cities top the ranking in at least one measured area, with Eindhoven and Middelburg placing consistently among the top five cities across all five regulatory areas (table 1). Conversely, Utrecht ranks consistently in the bottom half. Five other cities—Amsterdam, Arnhem, Enschede, Maastricht, and Rotterdam—rank among...
the top half in at least two indicators and among the bottom half in at least two indicators, suggesting that they have something to teach and something to learn from their neighbors. Getting electricity is easiest in Maastricht, the place where contract enforcement is the most difficult. Enschede is among the top-performing cities for enforcing contracts, but the city scores poorly for dealing with construction permits and getting electricity. By contrast, Amsterdam ranks high in the latter two indicator sets, but it lags in contract enforcement.

With remarkable consistency, Eindhoven ranks at the top for contract enforcement, co-leads for property registration, and is the runner-up for dealing with construction permits and getting electricity. Similarly, Middelburg leads on construction permitting, with the second-fastest time and one of the least expensive processes. The city also shares the top position for starting a business and registering property. Rotterdam is among the most efficient locations for dealing with construction permits.

**Subnational differences highlight opportunities for cities to learn from each other**

Dutch cities show homogeneous results in two regulatory areas where they outperform the EU average: starting a business and registering property. The process of transferring property, which is fast but relatively costly, is uniform nationwide and relies heavily on notaries. All Dutch cities obtain the highest scores globally for the quality of the centralized land administration framework. It is easier and faster to start a business in the Netherlands than in the EU on average. The prevalence of centralized online systems—like the online platform hosted by the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce—ensures that the business registration process is also uniform across the 10 benchmarked cities. In both regulatory areas, marginal differences stem from variations in the fees charged by private notaries to register a company or transfer property.

In the three other areas measured, however, significant disparities in regulatory performance can help policy makers identify opportunities to improve administrative processes and building local institutional capacity. The regulatory performance gap is widest for dealing with construction permits, unsurprising considering the central role played by local authorities in this area (figure 1).

In the Netherlands, dealing with construction permits requires between 13 and 16 procedures, which can be completed in 168 to 233 days, depending on the location. Variations in the number of required procedures stem from locally determined water and sewage connection processes and the local-level application of the Bibob law to combat money laundering.7 In nine cities, water and sewage connections require separate applications; the municipality arranges sewage connections and private sector companies arrange water connections. Amsterdam is the exception. There, a private company, Waternet, performs both water and sewage connections. The cities where the municipality is responsible for sewage connections have notably

**FIGURE 1** The regulatory performance gap is wide in three areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulatory Area</th>
<th>EU Best</th>
<th>All 10 Dutch Cities</th>
<th>EU Average</th>
<th>EU Best</th>
<th>All 10 Dutch Cities</th>
<th>EU Best</th>
<th>All 10 Dutch Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting a business</td>
<td>EU best (Greece)</td>
<td>EU average</td>
<td>EU average</td>
<td>EU best (Germany)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with construction permits</td>
<td>EU best (Denmark)</td>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting electricity</td>
<td>EU best (Greece)</td>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registering property</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>All 10 Dutch Cities</td>
<td>All 10 Dutch Cities</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td>EU best (Lithuania)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam, EU averages, and EU best performances are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. The score indicates how far a location is from the best performance achieved by any economy on each Doing Business indicator. The score is normalized to range from 0 to 100 (the higher the score, the better). Averages for the Netherlands are based on data for the 10 cities benchmarked. Averages for the European Union are based on economy-level data for the 27 EU member states. Other EU member states are represented by their capital city, as measured by global Doing Business. For more details, see the chapter "About Doing Business and Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands."
different approaches and involvement levels, resulting in varying processing times. For example, in Arnhem, developers need only notify the municipality of the connection works, which are carried out by a private sector contractor. In Maastricht, the same procedure takes 1.5 months. First, the developer requests a permit to assess connection feasibility and estimate the cost; then, the municipality performs an onsite pre-connection inspection. Similarly, the process for applying anti-money laundering screening varies by location. Dutch municipalities determine which industries are most at risk and whether a project requires the basic Bibob screening or an in-depth evaluation. Five of the 10 benchmarked cities apply Bibob screening to all construction projects above a certain monetary threshold.

The regulatory gap between Dutch cities for getting electricity is also noteworthy. Cost variations stem from the different connection fees charged by the four regional distribution utilities operating in the benchmarked cities (each utility serves between one and four of the measured cities). However, several factors drive variations in the time to get electricity, including application and staff availability. Obtaining a connection takes at least a month longer in Utrecht, Groningen, and Enschede than in Maastricht and Eindhoven (where it takes 97 and 98 days, respectively). Enschede is one of the cities where the connection process is delayed by a shortage of technical staff and the utility’s transition to renewable energy sources. The time for the utility to obtain a municipal permit for works crossing a public road also varies by municipality. Getting this permit takes three days in Utrecht but eight weeks in Groningen, where the municipality requires a thorough archeological assessment to issue the permit.

Delays in securing hearing dates in the trial and judgment phase cause the main subnational variations in the area of enforcing contracts. The trial time can vary from 396 days at the district court in Eindhoven to 475 days in Maastricht. In Eindhoven, the courts’ use of an electronic calendar system (verhinderdata) reduces the waiting period for the first hearing to just 3–6 months by streamlining scheduling. In Groningen—where the trial phase lasts 442 days on average—a case registered in August 2020 would be first heard in February 2021 and, if the case is adjourned or requires a second hearing, the next available date would be in August of 2021.

The time to do business varies widely across the country, but the overall quality of regulation is uniform

Time is the dimension that varies the most across the indicators measured. Contract enforcement takes 19 months in Maastricht, three months longer than in Eindhoven. Dealing with construction

FIGURE 2 Eindhoven has the fastest turnaround time overall

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.
Note: Data for Amsterdam and EU averages, which use economy-level data for 27 member states of the European Union, are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
permits varies from 5.6 months in Groningen to almost eight months in The Hague. Getting electricity takes 97 days in Maastricht, 41 days less than in Enschede. The time for property registration and for starting a business is uniform across the country.

Overall, it takes entrepreneurs in Utrecht almost four months longer than their peers in Eindhoven to comply with the bureaucratic requirements associated with the measured Doing Business areas (figure 2). Nevertheless, even in Utrecht, the total time is two months faster than the EU average.

**Good performances exist across the country**

Most Dutch cities have lessons to offer their peers. Even cities that do not perform at the top on any indicator lead one indicator category (table 2). With four each, Eindhoven, Maastricht and Groningen are the cities with the highest number of good practices. Dealing with construction permits is fastest in Groningen, where it takes 5.5 months compared to more than 7.5 months in The Hague. However, this variation is not caused by the number of regulatory steps (Groningen requires 15 while The Hague, the city with the fewest procedures, requires 13). Instead, the main cause is the time needed for municipal consultations and the water and sewer connection. It takes 22 days to obtain the utility connection in Groningen, the fastest in the Netherlands and one-quarter of the time needed in Arnhem, Enschede, and Utrecht (85 days).

Three of the four good practices recorded for Maastricht relate to cost. Entrepreneurs in Maastricht pay the lowest costs in the Netherlands to connect a warehouse to the electricity grid, go through the construction permitting process, and transfer property. Dealing with construction permits costs just 1.5% of the warehouse value in Maastricht compared to 4.0% in Amsterdam, mainly due to lower permit fees. In Maastricht, the cost of the warehouse construction permit application (EUR 21,133) is one-quarter of that in Amsterdam (EUR 82,106).

**WHAT IS NEXT?**

Streamlining regulatory procedures can reduce the cost of doing business for local firms, enhancing their efficiency and ability to compete abroad. This report’s review of the regulatory environment in the Netherlands points to possible improvements (table 3). Some improvements could be achieved by replicating EU or global good practices, and others by looking to subnational examples.

**Replicating domestic good practices would improve the Netherlands’ scores for the ease of enforcing contracts and dealing with construction permits**

Minor administrative improvements can make a significant difference to small firms, which do not have access to the resources and tools available to larger businesses to extract better and faster service from bureaucracies. An effective way forward is to promote the exchange of information and experience among cities, enabling underperforming ones to learn from those with higher rankings. Replicating more efficient processes developed by other cities within the Netherlands could produce efficiency gains without significant legislative changes. Nevertheless, various factors such as local economic priorities or budget availability may dictate whether replicating a good practice is desirable.

The two areas where improvements would be the most impactful are dealing


with construction permits and enforcing contracts (figure 3). If Amsterdam were to reduce the cost of construction permits to levels in Maastricht (1.5% of the warehouse value) and the time to that in Groningen (168 days), the Netherlands’ score would improve from 66.92 to 71.54, just behind Switzerland but ahead of Spain. Similarly, if Amsterdam could reduce the time to enforce contracts by 43 days (to the time in Eindhoven) and the cost by 5 percentage points (to the cost in Middelburg), the Netherlands’ score would increase by 3.1 points. Making Amsterdam’s electricity connection process as efficient as Eindhoven’s would also increase the Netherlands’ score on the ease of getting electricity.

The potential for meaningful improvement extends beyond Amsterdam. Most Dutch cities could look to Amsterdam to learn how to process building permit applications more efficiently. Dutch cities could consider consolidating procedures and reducing the time developers spend on separate water and sewage applications or preliminary consultations. Unlike the other nine cities—where water and sewage connections require separate applications—water and sewage connections are requested jointly in Amsterdam to a private sector company.

The Netherlands can also look to other EU member states and beyond for good practices

Even if the Netherlands were to adopt the good practices found within its borders, the country would still lag the performance of most other EU member states, particularly in dealing with construction permits and enforcing contracts. Looking to good practices in other EU member states is another way to boost competitiveness in these indicators.
Companies complete a registration and tax registration, which entrepreneurs can establish an LLC through an online registration service (‘Empresa Online’). They can access this service through the Business Portal by using a digital mobile key, a citizen card, or a digital certificate.12

Dealing with construction permits in the Netherlands takes longer and is more expensive than the EU average. Building permit fees across Dutch cities are high, accounting for more than 80% of the total cost to complete construction permitting. In economies that have adopted good practices in this area, building permit fees are generally set to recover the cost of providing services rather than to generate tax revenue. New Zealand charges permit fees at a level that covers the costs associated with the review of plans, any inspections, and overhead costs. When setting the fees, the Auckland Council considers factors including the cost implications of infrastructure funding decisions on development and the challenges developers face in getting their products built, noting “if development costs are too high this may act as a barrier to development and slow down growth.”13

The Netherlands could streamline its company registration process. Digital tools for company registration are already available to notaries, but entrepreneurs cannot complete the process online by themselves. Incorporating technology would allow entrepreneurs to use a digital identity, eliminating the need for an in-person visit to the notary. Several EU member states employ virtual interfaces for business incorporation. These economies require no in-person interaction with the authorities, third-party participation, or hard-copy submission of documents to start a company, reducing the administrative burden. Estonia’s online company registration portal allows entrepreneurs to check the company name, submit the registration application, and pay the share capital electronically in a single interaction.10 The Danish Business Authority provides LLCs with a one-stop, centralized online platform for business and tax registration, which entrepreneurs access using their NemID digital signature. Companies complete a registration form and submit the memorandum and articles of association online.11 In Portugal, entrepreneurs can establish an LLC through an online registration service (‘Empresa Online’). They can access this service through the Business Portal by using a digital mobile key, a citizen card, or a digital certificate.12

The cost of transferring property in the Netherlands is significantly higher than the EU average (4.6% of the property value), mainly because of the 6% property transfer tax. The cost of registering property is lower than the Netherlands in 19 EU member states. Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Slovak Republic have very low property transfer taxes (less than 1%) or have abolished them altogether.

Dutch courts lag in terms of automation and case management systems. The Netherlands’ judiciary would benefit from adopting additional features such as electronic service of process or e-filing of the claim, two tools that could streamline and accelerate the process of commencing a lawsuit. Estonia and Germany have made enforcing contracts easier by introducing electronic filing of both the initial complaint and electronic service of process without the need for paper documents.
Starting a Business

The process of starting a business is uniform, but the cost varies across the 10 cities benchmarked

Across the Netherlands, starting a private limited liability company (LLC) (besloten vennootschap, bv) requires entrepreneurs to complete the same five procedures, taking the same amount of time. The Dutch Civil Code sets the requirements for operating a bv at the national level, making the process uniform nationwide. The centralized organizational structure of the startup process and the prevalence of online platforms—such as that of the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KVK)—ensure procedural uniformity. The Chamber of Commerce, an official and independent administrative body, manages the Dutch Commercial Register (Handelsregister) and the ultimate beneficial owner (UBO) register, and provides information, advice, and support to Dutch businesses. Registering a company with the Chamber of Commerce is a centralized process, with applications handled electronically in the order received.

Nearly all requirements can be completed quickly, within a day or less each (figure 4). The exception is the time to obtain the value added tax (VAT) identification number. All applications are processed centrally, and the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration (Belastingdienst or Tax Authority) conducts a risk assessment process. For a low-risk business activity—like that of the Doing Business case study company—where all information is provided upfront, the VAT number is issued in five days.

The procedures and time are uniform, but the cost to start a business ranges from 2.2% of income per capita (EUR 1,050) in Arnhem, Enschede, Groningen, and Middelburg to 3.8% (EUR 1,800) in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht (table 4). Although the Chamber
of Commerce’s business registration fee is set nationally at EUR 50. Individual notaries set their own fees, making these the main driver of cost variation for starting a business across the 10 locations.

Almost the entire cost of starting a business in the Netherlands (97%) is attributable to notary charges and fees (figure 5). Notary rates, which became negotiable in the Netherlands in 1999, can be billed at an hourly rate or as a fixed fee; notary fees can vary within the same city. Among the variables that determine the price of notarial services for starting a business are the corporate structure of the company, the number of founders, whether the articles of association require special provisions, the qualifications of those involved in the assignment’s execution, the notary office’s overhead costs, the size and status of the office, and local competition. Although it is possible that entrepreneurs in different locations would pay the same amount in fees to establish a bv, the median price is lower in Arnhem, Enschede, Groningen and Middelburg—cities where demand for incorporation services per notary is lower.

It is easier and faster to start a business in the Netherlands than the EU average

Entrepreneurs in the Netherlands must comply with five procedures to start a business, slightly fewer than the EU average (5.7 procedures) (figure 6). Only eight EU member states allow entrepreneurs to start a business in fewer procedures. The entire process takes nine days in the Netherlands—three days faster than the EU average but more than twice as long as the European Union’s best performers, France and Greece, where it takes just four days. Dutch entrepreneurs pay the equivalent of 3.1% of income per capita on average to start a business, on par with the EU average but significantly higher than the 12 top performers in the European Union for cost (where entrepreneurs pay just 0.5% of income per capita on average). Among the top performers globally, there is no cost to start an LLC in Slovenia; in Ireland, Denmark, and the United Kingdom, the cost of starting a business is less than 0.3% of income per capita. Like five other EU member states and the United Kingdom, Dutch entrepreneurs are not required to deposit cash as paid-in capital before incorporation.

Entrepreneurs complete five procedures and wait nine days to start a business

Starting a business anywhere in the Netherlands requires the same five procedures across the Netherlands. Although notaries assist with the first four procedural steps to start a business, the entrepreneur or someone on behalf of the entrepreneur must complete the fifth—registering the company as an employer with the Tax Authority (figure 7).

As a first step to register a bv, the entrepreneur or notary verifies the availability of the proposed company name using the Chamber of Commerce’s online tool. Although the entrepreneur can complete this step independently, most seek advice from notaries on the company name to ensure that it complies with the Trade Name Act. In the Netherlands, a bv must be incorporated by a notarial deed executed in the physical presence of a notary either by the entrepreneur or the person granted power of attorney to act on their behalf. Entrepreneurs send the required information and documentation to the notary by post, in person, or electronically (by email or through online software systems such as ‘Online Dossier’) for the notary to draw up the deed of incorporation. Most entrepreneurs submit the documentation by email. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, all shareholders of the bv were required to appear in person with a valid identification document for the notary to execute the deed or legalize a power of attorney. However, the Royal Dutch Association of Civil-law Notaries (Koninklijke Notariële Beroepsorganisatie, KNB) enacted temporary policy rules during the pandemic allowing notaries to verify the identities of entrepreneurs remotely (using audiovisual communications technology) and suspending the need for the in-person verification.

### FIGURE 5 Notary services account for 97% of startup costs in the Netherlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Cost (EUR)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands average (EUR 1,448)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
signing of powers of attorney with the notary (box 1).

Once the deed is signed, the notary submits the required information electronically\(^\text{24}\) to the Chamber of Commerce to register the bv online through an online platform (Online Registreren Notarissen, ORN) and its UBOs through the NAU platform (Notaris Applicatie UBO).\(^\text{25}\)

Only a notary can complete this process electronically. Entrepreneurs wishing to register the company and UBOs themselves can visit a Chamber of Commerce office in person. Most entrepreneurs opt for a notary to complete the process electronically, citing time efficiency.\(^\text{26}\)

Upon approval of UBO registration, the Chamber of Commerce sends a confirmation letter by post to the company and its UBOs. The NAU platform automatically notifies the notary whether UBO registration was approved or not.

Once registrations are complete—for the company, directors, and UBOs—the Chamber of Commerce assigns two numbers to the company: the Chamber of Commerce registration number (KVK-nummer) and the legal identities and associations identification number (Rechtspersonen en Samenwerkingsverbanden Informatienummer, RSIN-nummer) used for data exchange with government entities. Entrepreneurs receive a letter from the Chamber of Commerce informing them of the success of the company’s registration in the Commercial Register. While awaiting this letter, the notary can check the company’s registration status online using the ORN application. Alternatively, entrepreneurs can search online for the company’s information using the Commercial Register’s database\(^\text{27}\) or the extract from the Chamber of Commerce.

VAT registration is initiated with company registration at the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber automatically forwards the company’s registration information to the Tax Authority, which in turn assigns the company’s VAT identification number and delivers it by post to the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs can access company tax information, including the VAT identification number, online.

**FIGURE 6** Dutch cities outperform the EU average for number of procedures and time and are on par for cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures (number)</th>
<th>Time (days)</th>
<th>Cost (% of income per capita)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU average</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Slovenia (EU best) — 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark, France</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria, Czech</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 10 Dutch cities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 member states* (EU best)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France, Greece (EU best)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 10 Dutch cities</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam, comparator economies, and EU averages are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. EU average uses economy-level data for the 27 member states of the European Union. Data for individual economies are for their capital city as measured by Doing Business.

* Estonia, Finland, Greece, Slovenia.

**FIGURE 7** How does the business registration process work in the Netherlands?

1. Verify company name
2. Draft and sign notarial deed
3. Register Ultimate Beneficial Owners
4. Register company
5. Register as employer

4. Obtain VAT-id (requested automatically)

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.
and file various tax returns electronically (payroll, corporate, VAT) using the Tax Authority’s portal for entrepreneurs.28

Private limited companies located in the Netherlands with a turnover not exceeding EUR 20,000 per calendar year can receive a VAT exemption by opting for the small business scheme (Kleineondernemersregeling, KOR).29

Finally, a company hiring employees for the first time must register as an employer with the Tax Authority. Firms register as an employer by completing and signing a PDF form (available online from the Tax Authority’s website30); they mail the form by post to the Tax Authority office in Heerlen.31 Within six weeks of completing registration, the company receives a payroll tax number, a payroll tax return letter—listing the tax return filing periods for the current year—and information on the contributions due to the employee social security scheme.

WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED?

Introduce an automated name verification system

The entrepreneur has the legal responsibility to check the availability of the company name in the Netherlands. The name must meet certain requirements, such as not using another company’s brand name and avoiding confusion with existing company names. The Chamber of Commerce’s website offers instructions on how to check the company name before registration and provides an online tool for entrepreneurs to verify whether their proposed company name is already listed in the Commercial Register. This tool cannot check for phonetics, special punctuation marks, or other distinguishing factors between names that could confuse the public or be disallowed under the Trade Name Act. Therefore, the Chamber of Commerce recommends that entrepreneurs seek the assistance of a notary to evaluate the company name.33 Most entrepreneurs seek the assistance of a notary to ensure that the proposed company name complies with the Trade Name Act. Entrepreneurs and their notaries can also check the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property34 for brand names and the Internet Domain Name Registration Foundation (SIDN)35 for domain names.

By simplifying the rules and offering an automated name verification system at the time of company registration, the authorities would allow entrepreneurs to verify for themselves that the proposed company name complies with the legal requirements for company registration.

Various economies have redesigned the registration process to allow entrepreneurs to automatically verify the proposed company name at the time of application for business registration. Australia, Canada, and the United States introduced clear rules in the early 2000s to determine whether proposed
company names were identical or similar to existing companies or required specific consent. This approach allows for automatic name rejection or acceptance at the time of registration, increasing both the transparency and efficiency of the name clearance process and company registration overall. Other economies allow entrepreneurs to choose from a list of preapproved company names. In Portugal, entrepreneurs can choose from a list on the business registry’s website and register the company through a single contact point, Empresa na Hora. In Estonia, entrepreneurs can check the proposed company name online using the e-Business Register, which accesses county court registry databases and displays real-time data on all legal persons registered in Estonia. In the United Kingdom, the online registration website alerts entrepreneurs if the desired company name cannot be used and provides guidance for choosing another company name.

**Make third-party involvement optional, standardize incorporation forms, and provide public access to the business registration system**

Starting a bv in the Netherlands costs on average 3.1% of income per capita. The cost to start a business is higher in only 10 other EU member states. Notary fees comprise the bulk of this cost (97%) in the Netherlands. Although notaries play a similarly central role in the business startup process in other EU member states, notary fees elsewhere are a fraction of those in the Netherlands. In the Czech Republic, entrepreneurs starting a simple LLC pay a flat fee of CZK 2,000 (approximately EUR 77) for the notary to draft and notarize the company articles of association. There are no formal standardized articles of association in the Netherlands; in practice, many notaries use a standardized framework for the notarial deed. Still, notary rates vary significantly, even for the same type of company incorporation within the same city. Notarial costs should be more accessible and transparent, and prices should reflect variations only for the services provided.

Various digital platforms—for example, Firm24—allow entrepreneurs to establish a bv in the Netherlands and offer standardized articles of association for company incorporation. However, these still require the involvement of a notary. Most entrepreneurs prefer to use customized incorporation documents and, therefore, do not take advantage of these platforms. The Dutch authorities could reduce the cost of starting a business by formalizing the use of standardized articles of association and making them flexible enough to accommodate most small businesses. Standardization could make it possible for registry officials to verify their accuracy, signatures, and legal compliance. For a standard company, a single verification should suffice; larger companies with more complex structures and special requirements could continue to solicit the services of third-party professionals and use customized incorporation documents. Allowing entrepreneurs to file the incorporation documents electronically with the Chamber of Commerce would also facilitate company formation by reducing the need for legal intermediaries and reducing costs.

Fewer than half of the 191 economies measured by Doing Business require entrepreneurs to hire a third-party agent when starting a business. Increasingly, economies are making the use of intermediaries optional when incorporating a new LLC. Third-party agents are not required in the 10 EU member states with the lowest cost to start a business (figure 8). Across regions, the overall cost to start a business is lower in economies where there is no third-party involvement. Entrepreneurs pay no fees when using SPOT, Slovenia’s electronic one-stop shop, to start a simple LLC. This procedure makes use of standardized electronic articles of association and can be used by both single-member LLCs (one founder) and multi-member LLCs (several founders). Portugal successfully made third-party involvement optional for companies using registry-provided standard incorporation documents.

Entrepreneurs can establish a “one-person” company, a private limited company, or a public LLC instantly at just one desk. In the United Kingdom, entrepreneurs can register an LLC using the Companies House’s online tool at a cost of GBP 12 (approximately EUR 14). The registration website automatically generates model articles of incorporation and company memoranda.

**Make starting a business a fully electronic process**

The coronavirus pandemic has driven technological advances at a staggering pace worldwide. In the European Union, the move toward online business registration was already well underway. The coronavirus pandemic has driven technological advances at a staggering pace worldwide. In the European Union, the move toward online business registration was already well underway. EU Directive 1151/2019 requires that all EU member states introduce an online procedure for company formation, branch registration, and document submission. However, the availability of online tools for company registration varies across the European Union. In several EU member states, entrepreneurs can register their company electronically; in others, the law requires the involvement of a third party (a notary, accountant, or lawyer) in the incorporation process.

In the Netherlands, digital tools for company registration are available only to notaries, who must verify the identity of all shareholders. But the process for starting a business is not fully online—the notarial deed is still executed in the physical presence of a notary. Moreover, company founders hiring employees for the first time must send a PDF form by post to the Tax Authority’s Heerlen office. Allowing entrepreneurs to use a digital identity would eliminate the need for an in-person visit to the notary. Furthermore, adding employee registration to the electronic incorporation process would eliminate the need for the submission of paper documents. By adopting these measures—and making the temporary digitalization measures adopted during
COVID-19 permanent—the authorities could fully digitalize the company incorporation process in the Netherlands.

Several EU member states have virtual interfaces for business incorporation. These economies require no in-person interaction with the authorities, third-party participation, or hard-copy submission of documents to start a company, reducing the administrative burden. Estonia’s online company registration portal allows entrepreneurs to check the company name, submit the registration application, and pay the share capital electronically in a single interaction.48 The Danish Business Authority provides LLCs with a one-stop, centralized online platform for business and tax registration, which entrepreneurs access using their NemID digital signature. Companies complete a registration form and submit the memorandum and articles of association online.49 In Portugal, entrepreneurs can establish an LLC through an online registration service (‘Empresa Online’). They can access this service through the Business Portal by using a digital mobile key, a citizen card, or a digital certificate.50

Economies worldwide offer an electronic end-to-end company registration process. Canada’s registration process has been entirely paperless since 2006. An integrated IT system links the databases of relevant agencies (registry, tax, social security, and statistics institute). Entrepreneurs can submit a single electronic form and pay electronically through the website.51 Once all the requirements are met, and payment is received, the system automatically processes the information and instantly issues the registration certificate. In the United Kingdom, company founders have the option of registering their company online with the Companies House52 in a process that takes only several hours.

Accelerate and streamline the VAT registration process

Each of the individual requirements to start a business in the Netherlands can be completed in one day or less—except for VAT registration. The due diligence process to issue the VAT number for a low-risk activity, takes roughly five days. This lengthy wait is due to staff workload and the thorough evaluation of the application undertaken by revenue officers to reduce the risk of noncompliance and the incidence of fraudulent reimbursement claims.

The authorities could consider streamlining risk screening at the point of registration, thereby freeing resources for reallocation to other compliance actions. In Croatia, which takes this approach, obtaining a decision on VAT registration takes one to two days. Checks are performed to assess the accuracy of the information submitted after registration.
Some EU member states issue VAT and other tax numbers on the spot. In Italy, just two days after submitting a single electronic notice (Comunicazione Unica, or ComUnica) to the business register, the company receives the fiscal code, VAT number, and registry application reference number. In France, entrepreneurs can file a joint application for company incorporation, allowing them to meet the requirements of various agencies—including the tax authorities—in just two days. Similarly, in Greece and Hungary, completing the company registration and obtaining the taxpayer/VAT number takes two days.
The Dutch construction permitting system is regulated at the national level by the Environmental Licensing (General Provisions) Act (referred to hereafter by its Dutch acronym, Wabo).\(^5^3\) The Wabo legislation allows a developer to submit all permits and notifications required for a project in a single application to the Omgevingsloket online platform (also referred to as OLO).\(^5^4\) Although legislation is set at the national level, the law leaves room for implementation variations at the local level.

Dealing with construction permits is easiest in Middelburg and hardest in Enschede

The 10 Dutch cities benchmarked show notable differences in the efficiency of the construction permitting process (table 5). Amsterdam, Arnhem, Eindhoven, The Hague, and Utrecht require the fewest procedures (13), while Maastricht requires the most (16). Construction permitting is fastest in Groningen (168 days) even though the city requires two more procedures than The Hague, where the process takes two months longer (233 days). The cost—which averages 2.7% of the warehouse value in the Netherlands—ranges from 1.5% in Maastricht to 4.0% in Amsterdam.

On average, Dutch cities lag their EU peers on measures of efficiency and quality in construction permitting

Dealing with construction permits across the Dutch cities measured requires, on average, 14 procedures in 202.8 days at a cost of 2.7% of the warehouse value (figure 9).\(^5^5\) The number of procedures is roughly on par with the EU average (13.8), but the process takes nearly a month longer than the EU average (181.1 days). It is also roughly one-third more expensive to get a construction permit in the Netherlands than the EU average (1.9% of the warehouse value). Construction permitting in the Netherlands is among the most expensive in the European Union, with Amsterdam and Groningen among the top five most expensive European cities. Dutch cities are on average over three times slower than Denmark (64 days) and nearly three months slower than Germany (126 days), but slightly faster than Belgium (211 days) and France (213 days). On the building quality control index, the Dutch cities score higher than the UK and on par with Germany, but below France, Belgium, and Denmark, and the EU average (11.6).

Dealing with construction permits in the Netherlands involves 11 common steps

In most cities in the Netherlands, the construction permitting process follows a general scheme of 11 steps (figure 10). Some cities require additional procedures. Before construction, the first step is to obtain a report of the soil conditions from a soil research company. The soil report, required for the permit application, ensures that soil quality is sufficient and that soil pollution is minimal. Simultaneously, the developer consults with the municipality to discuss the feasibility of the project. Developers typically conduct this consultation—which is optional but strongly advised by the municipality—to prevent delays due to project complications.

As a next step, the developer applies online for the construction permit (Omgevingsvergunning). The municipal departments reviewing the application (for example, the environment department) access it through the OLO online platform.

After the construction permit is granted, the developer notifies the building inspector two days before starting construction. The building inspector is

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**TABLE 5** Dealing with construction permits in the Netherlands—where is it easier?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Score (0–100)</th>
<th>Procedures (number)</th>
<th>Time (days)</th>
<th>Cost (percentage of warehouse value)</th>
<th>Building quality control index (0–15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>69.47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68.89</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>68.32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66.92</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66.88</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>65.95</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65.85</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>65.60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>65.11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62.75</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. Rankings are based on the average score for the procedures, time, and cost, as well as the building quality control index. The score is normalized to range from 0 to 100 (the higher the score, the better). For more details, see the chapter “About Doing Business and Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands.”
present during the building’s foundation, which entails pile driving, concrete pouring, and concrete reinforcement. The building inspector may also conduct a random inspection to ensure the safety of the construction and the construction site. In parallel, the developer applies for the water and sewage connections. The procedure to request the connection is the same in all cities. Through the national Mijnaansluiting platform, the developer can request the connection process is coordinated directly between the developer and the utility company. The remainder of the connection process is coordinated directly between the developer and the utility company.

Once construction and the utility connections are completed, the developer notifies the building inspector that the project is complete. The building inspector conducts a final inspection. If the building passes the inspection, the fire-safe occupancy permit is granted.

**Despite national legislation, the number of procedures ranges from 13 to 16**

Dealing with construction permits requires between 13 and 16 procedures in the Netherlands, depending upon the municipality. The various water and sewage connection processes and the local-level application of the Bibob Act—part of the legal framework addressing money laundering activities—are the main drivers of variation.

Dutch municipalities determine which industries are most at risk to money laundering and apply the Bibob screening; they choose either a basic screening or in-depth evaluation depending upon the individual case. Five of the 10 benchmarked cities apply Bibob screening to all construction projects above a certain monetary threshold. The Bibob procedure consists of the developer filling out a form, which is then forwarded to the municipal Bibob office. The form is confidential, and the information in the form is not shared with the permitting office; only the outcome of the Bibob screening is shared with the permitting office. If the project passes the screening, the developer receives no further communication; if the project fails, the municipality may deny the construction permit.

In nine cities, water and sewage connections require separate applications because sewage connections are arranged through the municipality and private sector companies are responsible for water connections. Amsterdam is the exception. Since 2005, when the water and sewage companies merged, a private

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**FIGURE 9** Dealing with construction permits in the Netherlands requires more time and is more expensive than in most other EU member states

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures (number)</th>
<th>Time (days)</th>
<th>Cost (% of warehouse value)</th>
<th>Building Quality Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark (EU best)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU average</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch average</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>520</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: EU average uses economy-level data for the 27 member states of the European Union. Data for individual economies are for their capital or largest business city as measured by Doing Business. Data for Amsterdam, comparator economies and EU averages are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

* Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland and Slovak Republic.
The nine cities where the municipality is responsible for the sewage connection have notably different approaches and involvement levels. In Arnhem, the first step to obtain a sewage connection is to notify the municipality. In Enschede, Eindhoven, Groningen, The Hague, and Utrecht, the builder makes a formal request to the municipality, which either completes the sewage works or provides a list of contractors. The sewage notification procedure (as in Arnhem) is relatively simple. The developer submits a form containing basic information on the developer, the connection site, and the type of connection and a simple blueprint of the connection site. The notification requires minimal interaction between the developer and the municipality. After submitting the information form, the developer receives confirmation of receipt from the municipality within two weeks. Upon confirmation of receipt, the developer can make the connection. The notification is not open to objections or appeals. The sewage connection request process is similar, with the primary difference that the municipality acts as a coordinator between the contractor and the developer. The size of the municipality’s role differs by municipality. In Enschede, the municipality arranges the connection. In Utrecht, the municipality obtains quotations from three contractors, which it shares with the developer. The developer then contacts the contractor of its choice from the three options. In Maastricht, Middelburg, and Rotterdam, the developer requests a permit to assess whether a connection is possible and estimate the cost. In Maastricht and Rotterdam, the municipality carries out an onsite inspection before making the connection.

### FIGURE 10 The main stages of construction permitting show slight variations in implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before construction</th>
<th>During construction</th>
<th>Utility connections (b)</th>
<th>After construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities*</td>
<td>- Request and receive inspection at foundation stage*</td>
<td>- Request water and sewage connection*</td>
<td>- Notify building inspector upon completion of work*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Submit a request for a building permit to the municipal executive*</td>
<td>- Receive a random inspection*</td>
<td>- Obtain water and sewage connection*</td>
<td>- Receive final inspection*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Apply for Bibob clearance (a)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Notify building inspector two days before construction begins*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Procedure applies to all cities.

(a) This procedure only applies in: Amsterdam, Enschede, Groningen, Maastricht, and Rotterdam.
(b) The number of procedures to connect to water and sewage services varies depending on the city. In Amsterdam, these services are merged, while all other cities require separate applications.

### Construction permitting is fastest in Groningen, Middelburg, and Rotterdam, and slowest in Enschede and The Hague

The time to deal with construction permits ranges from 5.6 months in Groningen to more than 7.5 months in The Hague. This difference is not necessarily caused by the number of procedures (Groningen requires 15 while The Hague requires 13), but rather by differences in the time needed for municipal consultations and utility connection procedures (figure 11).

The time to schedule a consultation to discuss project feasibility with the municipality ranges from eight days in Maastricht to 60 days in The Hague. Several factors account for this difference. One is the difference between the types of consultations and the different arrangements the municipalities offer. The developer can submit a draft application through the national online platform OLO or arrange a consultation directly with the municipality. For both options, it is at the municipality’s discretion to set the cost, and consultations are not bound to any maximum time. Permitting officer availability can also drive variations in time. Cities such as Utrecht (25 days), Enschede (30 days), and The Hague (60 days) have a shortage of permitting officers, resulting in delays and longer response times.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, procedures took longer in Arnhem, Amsterdam, Eindhoven, and The Hague, and contact with municipalities was more challenging due to remote working arrangements. In Enschede, Groningen, and Rotterdam, developers indicated that municipalities adjusted well (though not immediately), and contact with the municipalities went smoothly via virtual meetings. For all cities, developers noted that when an interaction needed to occur between different departments within the municipality (whether it be for a meeting or to answer a question), it took longer than normal due to home-based work.
The process of getting water and sewage connections also drives significant subnational time variations. One company is responsible for both water and sewage connections in Amsterdam—saving developers time—while in all other cities, developers must make separate applications for these services. As different entities provide these services in the Dutch cities benchmarked, there is significant time variation, ranging from 22 days in Groningen to 85 in Arnhem, Enschede, and Utrecht. Additionally, municipalities have different processes in place to obtain the sewage connection, leading to further variation: in Rotterdam the developer applies for a permit for the sewage connection, in Utrecht the developer submits a sewage connection request, and in Arnhem the developer presents a notification of plans to connect to the sewage system.

The time to request the building permit is uniform across the 10 cities. The official time limit is respected in practice, with 56 days to assess the permit application and another 42 days for the permit to become irrevocable—a total of 98 days from application submission to the start of construction. Municipalities can prioritize projects that are particularly beneficial to the community, such as those creating jobs or exceptional economic value; these projects often have a faster processing time.

**Building permit fees represent the largest source of variation in cost across cities**

The average cost of dealing with construction permits in the Netherlands is 2.7% of the warehouse value, ranging from 1.5% in Maastricht to 4.0% in Amsterdam. The difference in cost primarily stems from permitting fees: in Amsterdam a permit application for the Doing Business case study warehouse costs EUR 82,106; the same permit in Maastricht costs just EUR 21,133. On average, municipal fees comprise 82% of the cost of dealing with construction permits across the 10 cities benchmarked (figure 12). In the Netherlands, permit fees cover the entire construction process, including inspection fees and the fire-safe occupancy permit.

Although the permit application is a national procedure, municipalities set permit fees. In all cities, the permit fee is based on construction costs, and some distinction is made depending on the building’s intended use. The permit fee is a fixed percentage of the construction costs in Arnhem (2.0% of warehouse costs), Rotterdam (2.1%), Utrecht (2.1%), and The Hague (2.6%). In Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, and Middelburg, the municipality uses a cost-based tiered system to determine the permit fee. Maastricht uses a slightly different approach whereby the municipality estimates the construction costs based on the building area, purpose, and market prices. The municipality’s construction costs are then applied to the cost schedule to determine the permit fee.
In addition to the above cost schedules, municipalities have varying permit discount schemes to encourage sustainable construction. For example, in Amsterdam, the permit fee is discounted by up to EUR 25,000 for energy-efficient technology like solar panels or green roofs. The Hague discounts the permit fee by up to EUR 200,000 for energy-efficient installations, sustainable materials, and repurposable building design.

The consultation fees charged by municipalities also differ by city. These fees are set by the municipality in the overall permit fee schedules. For example, The Hague charges a set fee of EUR 100, regardless of the size of the construction project. In Utrecht, the consultation fee for projects with construction costs below EUR 1 million is EUR 345, while the fee for projects above this threshold is EUR 3,000. In some cities, such as Groningen, there is no consultation fee. Fees can also differ depending on the type of consultation. For example, in Maastricht a conversation with the municipality is free of charge, but submitting a preliminary application costs 30% of the total permitting fee. Some cities deduct the consultation fee from the permitting fee when the builder submits the permit application. In Middelburg, the consultation costs 25% of the permitting fee, but this is deducted from the permitting fee upon application submission.

In most Dutch cities, water and sewage connection costs comprise between 1 and 5% of the total cost. Maastricht is the exception at 14% (lower construction costs mean that utility fees comprise a larger share of the total cost). Utility connection costs vary from city to city due to differing systems (for example, municipal involvement in sewage connection) and fee schedules (flat fees versus per meter fees).

On the building quality control index, all benchmarked Dutch cities score 10 out of 15 points (table 6), which is below the EU average (11.6 points). Despite its strength in most quality control aspects, the Netherlands does not get full marks in liability and insurance regimes (1 out of 2 points) and professional certification requirements (0 out of 4 points).

When structural defects are discovered during construction, it is important that the responsible party be held liable and that the parties involved in the building design, supervision, and construction have insurance to cover the costs of any structural defects. In the Netherlands, even though the law specifies who is liable for structural defects (namely the construction company, professional in charge of the supervision, and the architect or engineer that designed the building plans), there is no legal requirement to obtain a latent defect liability insurance policy to cover structural flaws in the building once it is in use.

Having the appropriate technical qualifications is also essential in the construction sector. The Netherlands scores no points on the professional certifications index, as the national law does not meet all requirements as measured by Doing Business, such as the minimum requirement of a university degree.

### WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED?

**Increase efficiency by improving coordination and consolidating procedures**

Streamlining construction permitting clearances and utility connections is key to making the construction process more efficient. Getting a construction permit in the Netherlands takes, on average, nearly a month longer than the EU average, three times longer than in Denmark, and twice as long as in the United Kingdom.

In nine of the 10 cities benchmarked, water and sewage connections are handled separately, lengthening the process. Additionally, there is no standard sewage connection procedure across cities. Combining the water and sewage applications could reduce utility connection procedures significantly and ease the developer’s burden of interacting with multiple companies.
Most Dutch cities could follow Amsterdam’s example. There, the developer submits one request via mijnaansluiting.nl and coordinates the new connection with one entity. The other cities could consider moving the sewage request procedure—currently done via municipal websites—onto the mijnaansluiting.nl platform. Improved coordination between municipal sewage connection services and the public water connection companies would benefit the developer. Additionally, as the sewage request procedure varies significantly by location in the Netherlands, municipalities could consider standardizing this procedure nationally.

Dutch cities could also achieve substantial improvements by reducing the developer’s need to consult with municipal authorities before applying for the building permit. Although the procedure is optional, developers prefer to go through the additional process to reduce complications, delays, and errors when the permit is requested. For some cities, this procedure adds a significant amount of time to the permitting process. In The Hague, for example, it takes 60 days on average to have a consultation. Furthermore, there is more than one type of consultation available in each city, but no centralized explanation of the various options. Depending on the type of consultation, the time, cost, and level of advice can vary significantly. For example, in Arnhem one consultation option costs EUR 561 while another costs 40% of the construction cost. Costs also vary between cities, from no cost in Enschede to EUR 3,000 in Utrecht. Making the relevant information clearer and more accessible could reduce the need for developers to seek municipal consultations for simpler projects, which could, in turn, reduce the burden on permitting officials. Additionally, the authorities should better explain the types of consultations available to make it easier for developers to choose the best option for their needs.

In Denmark and New Zealand, clear, consolidated, and readily available information on building regulation make consultations before submitting the permit request unnecessary. The Netherlands plans to consolidate and clarify Dutch building regulations and make them more easily accessible on the new Digital System Environmental Code (DSO) platform (box 2). Such reforms should help reduce the need for developers in the Netherlands to hold consultations with the municipality before requesting the permit.

**Continue expanding the digital platform to consolidate the construction permitting process further**

Currently, developers in the Netherlands use the OLO platform to submit the building permit application and track its progress. They submit their utility connection requests through the mijnaansluiting.nl portal. Communication with building inspectors is also digital but occurs via email. Integrating these digital activities into a single window platform could improve user-friendliness and

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**TABLE 6** There is room for improvement on the building quality control index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUILDING QUALITY CONTROL INDEX (0–15)</th>
<th>All 10 Dutch cities (score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of building regulations</strong> (0–2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are building regulations easily accessible?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the requirements for obtaining a building permit clearly specified?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control before construction</strong> (0–1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which entity(ies) is/are required by law to verify the compliance of the building plans with existing building regulations?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control during construction</strong> (0–3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are inspections mandated by law during the construction process?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are inspections during construction implemented in practice?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control after construction</strong> (0–3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a final inspection mandated by law?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a final inspection implemented in practice?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liability and insurance regimes</strong> (0–2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is any party involved in the construction process held legally liable for latent defects once the building is in use?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is any party involved in the construction process legally required to obtain a latent defect liability—or decennial (10-year) liability—insurance policy to cover possible structural flaws or problems in the building once it is in use?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional certifications</strong> (0–4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there qualification requirements for the professional responsible for verifying that the architectural plans or drawings are in compliance with the building regulations?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there qualification requirements for the professional who conducts the technical inspections during construction?</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum points obtained

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. For details on the scoring of each question, see the data notes.
allow developers to track their projects in one place.

Shifting from the OLO platform to the DSO platform will integrate three online spatial planning tools (combining the OLO, AIM, and ruimtelijkeplannen.nl). The Dutch might consider also integrating the utilities portal to further streamline the permitting process, creating one single platform for developers to make all necessary requests. Expanding the scope further to include communication with building inspectors would create a comprehensive picture of developer and municipality activities. In the United Arab Emirates, the use of cameras and drones to inspect construction sites reduces the need for onsite inspections, freeing up inspectors’ time.

In the long run, Dutch cities should look into the advantages offered by Building Information Modelling (BIM) systems, which incorporate building regulation parameters into project design.67 The software helps professionals plan projects that comply with national and local regulations, and it makes conducting post-design checks easier and faster for public authorities. Australia developed the DesignCheck program, which provides an automated code-checking tool for designers to check code requirements at varying stages of project design: basic building-code compliance tests can be done rapidly and automatically.68 Introducing BIM technology requires a financial investment and training for both private professionals and public sector officials. A strong collaboration between professional associations and municipalities would be essential in the preparation and implementation phases.

**Introduce mandatory liability insurance requirements to cover developers and architects in the event of structural defects**

Although developers and architects in the Netherlands are liable by law for structural flaws or building problems, the law does not require them to obtain insurance to cover costs arising from structural defects once the building is in use. Such insurance benefits clients and contractors, and it encourages construction companies—particularly small and medium-sized construction companies—to pursue more projects.69

With the Omgevingswet reform (see box 2), the Netherlands will take the first step in this direction by making it mandatory for contractors to inform their clients whether they have insurance for bankruptcy, defects, and damages and, if so, what type of insurance. The Netherlands has also implemented a new system for quality assurance companies, which will increase the reliability of construction projects. Under the new system, the Dutch might consider also integrating the OLO platform with the DSO platform to further streamline the permitting process.
could emulate the examples of France and Denmark. France, an early adopter of mandatory decennial (10-year) insurance policies, applies the same insurance requirement to all new buildings, regardless of their purpose. Two coverage levels are required for structural defects: insurance taken out by the owners of the building (dommage ouvrage) and decennial insurance taken out by the builders. In Denmark, regulations require decennial insurance for the construction of new permanent dwellings. When issuing the occupancy permit, the municipality checks the validity of the insurance before issuing the building permit and completing construction.

**Review the building permit cost structure**

Building permit fees across all Dutch cities are high, accounting for more than 80% of the total cost of construction permitting. Based on the construction value, a Dutch entrepreneur pays EUR 51,096 on average for the building permit—almost four times the EU average (EUR 13,989). Building permit fees allow local authorities to provide public infrastructure and facilities that benefit local development. However, high building permit fees tend to reduce commercial property investment, adversely affecting job growth.

In economies that have adopted good practices in this area, building permit fees are generally set to recover the cost of providing the services rather than to fulfill a tax purpose. New Zealand charges permit fees at a level that covers the costs associated with the review of plans, inspections, and overhead costs. When setting the fees, the Auckland Council considers factors including the cost implications of infrastructure funding decisions on development and the challenges developers face in getting their products built, noting "If development costs are too high this may act as a barrier to development and slow down growth."

**Improve regulatory expertise together with the private sector**

Construction permitting is a complex process involving multiple stakeholders. Managing this process requires permit-issuing agencies that are adequately staffed and technically competent, with professional case management know-how and technology. Developers in the Netherlands cite inadequately trained or understaffed permit-issuing offices as causes of construction permitting delays.

More robust qualification requirements for professionals involved in construction permitting and control could be beneficial. In the Netherlands, the professionals who approve standard case building plans and supervising construction must have a senior secondary vocational education (MBO), one year of work experience, and some additional specialized certifications. In contrast, in Croatia and Portugal, these professionals must have a university degree in architecture or engineering. Introducing a requirement for higher education would automatically increase the technical competency of the Dutch permitting agencies. Globally, more than 80% of economies measured by Doing Business require a university degree in architecture or engineering for professionals reviewing building plans.

In the medium term, understaffing could be addressed by giving certified private sector professionals a more significant role in the permitting process. Although this might require legislative action, the benefits of a highly specialized workforce flexible to changes in demand could be substantial. Most EU member economies have made a complete shift from public to private governance mechanisms in building regulation, reflecting a desire to improve the quality of regulation, reduce the administrative burden for applicants, and support a greater focus on risk mitigation. Australia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom are among the countries that have adopted a system of third-party contractors to expand regulatory coverage and expertise. Doing Business data suggest that construction permitting is more efficient in economies that rely on some form of private sector participation in construction permitting or control processes. But such a system needs to be accompanied by adequate safeguards, such as more robust qualification requirements for professionals who approve building plans. The upcoming reforms in the Netherlands will take a significant step in this direction by privatizing inspections and updating inspectors’ minimum qualifications.
Electricity-related laws and regulations are defined at the national level and monitored by an independent administrative body, the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM). Distribution system operators (DSOs)—also referred to as “electricity distributors” and “distribution utilities” in this chapter—are key players in the connection process. The low and medium voltage grids in the 10 benchmarked cities are operated by four utilities: Enduris, Enexis, Liander, and Stedin (map 1). Each utility serves a specific geographic area and is responsible for expanding and maintaining its own grid. The national high voltage grid is managed by a transmission system operator, TenneT, which transports electricity and balances supply with demand.

Among the 10 cities benchmarked, getting electricity is easiest in Maastricht and Eindhoven, and most difficult in Enschede and Groningen (table 7). The procedural steps to obtain a new connection are identical across locations, but the time and cost to complete them vary substantially.

### Obtaining an electricity connection in the Netherlands takes longer but costs significantly less than the EU average

Across the Dutch cities benchmarked, a new electricity connection costs 21.9% of income per capita on average, one-sixth of the average cost in the European Union. This low cost places Dutch cities among the EU member states with the lowest grid connection costs. The process requires the same four procedures in all 10 cities, in line with the EU average of 4.5 procedures. However, completing these steps takes on average almost four months across the Dutch cities, nearly one month longer than the EU average. Obtaining a
new connection takes longer than the Dutch average (116.6 days) in only five EU member states. In Germany, obtaining an electricity connection takes less than one month, making it the European Union’s fastest economy as measured by Doing Business (figure 13).

The Netherlands performs well on the Doing Business reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index, with all 10 cities scoring the maximum 8 points on the index (figure 14). The Dutch cities offer a reliable grid and the regulatory framework is robust and follows good practices.

Doing Business studies the hypothetical case of a local firm that needs a 140-kilovolt-ampere (kVA) electricity connection for a newly built warehouse located in a commercial area outside a city’s historical center. In all 10 cities measured in the Netherlands, a new warehouse would be connected to the low voltage underground network. To obtain a new electricity connection, customers initiate the application process by submitting a form online, together with details on the requested capacity and the building’s exact location (figure 15).

Upon receiving the request, the utility assesses the feasibility of the connection and, if positive, provides the client with a quote for connection fees. The utility (on the client’s behalf) then obtains the necessary excavation permits from the local municipality and performs the connection works using an external contractor. Before the external connection works can start, as an internal step the utility’s contractor submits a request (KLIC request) through the Netherlands’ Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency’s online platform to obtain a map showing the existing underground cables and pipes. This map, which takes a maximum of two days to receive, is required to prevent damage during the excavation works (figure 16). Utilities with underground networks—for water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, or electricity—are legally required to register their pipes and cables with the cadaster and regularly update their maps. The customer can sign a supply contract with any available energy supplier as well as hire a specialized company to install the meter at any point during the connection works. Using an electronic platform, the supplier and the meter company notify the distribution utility of the supply contract signing and meter installation. Finally, the utility electifies the connection without any further action by the customer.

**Entrepreneurs benefit from a standardized process, but variations exist in the time and cost to get an electricity connection**

In all benchmarked cities, entrepreneurs can request connections from different distribution utilities while benefitting from the same predictable process. This predictability stems from the strict legal

![FIGURE 13 Getting electricity in the Netherlands takes almost a month longer than the EU average](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures (number)</th>
<th>EU average</th>
<th>Cost (% of income per capita)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania (EU best)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>France (EU best)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, Sweden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Belguim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>All 10 Dutch cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, Maastricht, Middelburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (EU best)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Eindhoven, Middelburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Amsterdam, Arnhem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>Romania</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: EU average uses economy-level data for the 27 member states of the European Union. Data for individual economies are for their capital city as measured by the global Doing Business. Data for Amsterdam, comparator economies and EU averages are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
Obtaining a connection requires slightly over three months in Maastricht and Eindhoven (97 and 98 days, respectively), while entrepreneurs can wait for over four months in Arnhem, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Groningen, and Enschede. Longer wait times are typically the result of DSOs receiving a high number of applications and lacking the technical staff to deal with the connection process.86 Liander and Enexis are experiencing a heavier workload related to their ongoing transition to renewable energy (box 3).87 Furthermore, the time to obtain a municipal permit to cross a public road, which the utility obtains on behalf of the client, can also vary across locations. In all cities benchmarked except Enschede, an excavation permit is required. The legal time limit to issue a permit is set nationally at eight weeks, but municipalities can set shorter limits.88 In practice, obtaining the permit takes from three days in Utrecht to 14 days in Maastricht and Arnhem and one month on average in the rest of the benchmarked cities. In Groningen, the time for the municipality to issue a permit is closer to the maximum term of eight weeks due to the presence of ancient burial grounds in the area, which require thorough archaeological assessments. In Enschede, a permit is only required when public domain excavation works exceed 25 meters.89

New connection application processing times also cause subnational variations in the time to get electricity. Enexis, which operates in Maastricht and Eindhoven, processes requests within eight days, five days faster than utilities in the majority of the other cities (figure 17). Enexis is the only utility that allows the submission of connection requests through its website, resulting in faster processing. Applications for all other utilities are submitted through the national platform, Mijnaansluiting.90

FIGURE 14 Dutch cities perform in the top tier on the reliability of electricity supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELIABILITY OF SUPPLY AND TRANSPARENCY OF TARIFFS INDEX (0–8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 other EU economies (EU best) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: EU average uses economy-level data for the 27 member states of the European Union. Data for individual economies are for their capital city as measured by Doing Business. Data for Amsterdam, EU averages, and EU comparators countries are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

* Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

FIGURE 15 Getting electricity takes four steps across the Netherlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit application to utility and receive quote</td>
<td>Distribution utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain external works from utility’s contractor</td>
<td>Distribution utility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign contract with electricity supplier*</td>
<td>Supplier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain meter installation by meter company*</td>
<td>Meter company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

* Procedure occurs simultaneously with previous one

time limits imposed by national regulation for the various steps required to get an electricity connection.85 Furthermore, the entire process is digitalized. However, there are local variations in the duration and cost to obtain a new electricity connection.
For connections exceeding 3x80 ampere, as in the Doing Business case study, applications received through Mijnaansluiting are forwarded manually to the relevant utility, causing delays in the review process.\(^9\) The national regulator, ACM, sets the maximum electricity connection fee. Utilities can propose tariffs to the regulator that fall below this maximum amount. All four utilities charge a connection fee comprising two components: (i) the requested capacity and (ii) a fee based on how far the connection point is from the existing grid.\(^9\) At EUR 8,591, getting electricity is least expensive in Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, and Maastricht—from EUR 2,500 to EUR 3,000 lower than the average cost in the other Dutch cities benchmarked (figure 18).

The Netherlands has a reliable grid, and its robust regulatory framework reflects good practices. In addition to efficiency, Doing Business also measures the reliability of supply and the transparency of tariffs using an index that scores cities on a scale of 0 to 8. All Dutch utilities score the maximum
of 8 points. DSOs report their annual performance on grid quality, capacity, and safety to ACM. In addition, tariffs and tariff changes are efficiently communicated to customers, and these are available online. All 10 benchmarked cities have automated systems to monitor power outages and restore services and utilities. DSOs compensate customers in the event of outages that exceed four hours, and this must be paid out within six months.\textsuperscript{93} Enexis—operating in Eindhoven, Enschede, Groningen, and Maastricht—recorded the fewest outages in 2019, when each customer experienced 0.15 service interruptions lasting a total of 12 minutes on average. In contrast, Liander’s customers in Amsterdam and Arnhem experienced 0.32 service interruptions, lasting three times longer (nearly 35 minutes) on average (figure 19).

### WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED?

**Streamline the process for obtaining external connection works and excavation permits**

The Netherlands’ distribution utilities are facing a series of new challenges simultaneously: accommodating an increasing volume of connection requests, dealing with a shortage of technical staff, and meeting new demands for renewable energy sources. With an increased demand of new connection requests, Dutch municipalities are also affected. Consequently, businesses must wait longer to obtain electricity connections.

Dutch authorities and utilities could take inspiration from the United Kingdom to reduce new connection wait times. In 2017, the UK regulator, Ofgem, approved the ICE initiative to encourage distribution network operators to complete the external connection works faster. According to the ICE guidance, the utilities must provide data demonstrating that they have responded to their customers on time and according to their customer service engagement. DSOs can be penalized if they fail to meet these requirements. Moreover, one DSO, UK Power Networks, implemented a new software system, the ICP Design Fast Track and Approved Designer Scheme, that allows for direct contact with subcontractors and tracks their progress. The utility also introduced common requirements for the design and planning of the works and material specifications for subcontractors to carry out external works. As a result of these initiatives, UK Power Networks reduced the time to provide a new electricity connection by one month. According to Doing Business data, it takes 46 days to complete the connection works in the United Kingdom, nearly 2.5 months faster than the Dutch average.

Regarding reducing excavation permit wait times, Dutch cities could learn from one another and elevate the local good practices identified in this study to the

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**FIGURE 18** Capacity and connection charges drive cost variations

![Cost variations graph](image)

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

**FIGURE 19** Amsterdam and Arnhem experienced the most frequent and longest outages in 2019

![Outage frequency graph](image)

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
national level. Local laws on underground infrastructure in Amsterdam, Enschede, and Utrecht establish good practices by setting different time limits for crossing a public domain, depending on whether the excavation works are under or over 25 meters in length. If the total length is less than 25 meters in length, the works are considered noninvasive, and the project is deemed eligible for a “small works permit”. Issuance of this type of permit is faster than for a project with a length over 25 meters. In Utrecht, the municipality must issue a permit decision within three business days of receiving a permit request for noninvasive works. The municipality in Enschede went a step further, eliminating the need for an excavation permit for public road crossings under 25 meters in length altogether. Although in Arnhem the municipality does not make a distinction based on the length of the crossing, it does provide a local good practice in terms of lowering the legal time limit.

Increase transparency by making data on legal time compliance publicly available

Beyond monitoring legal compliance, it is also critical that municipalities, distribution utilities, and electricity suppliers make data on proceeding times publicly available. Doing so would help entrepreneurs to accurately estimate waiting times. In Austria, the regulator publishes a standardized electricity quality report, the Kommerzielle Qualität Storm, which includes cross-cutting data on the various steps of the electricity connection process. The report includes data on application processing times and the time to complete a connection at different voltage levels, making the data easily comparable across cities and utilities. Data are collected annually from utilities through a questionnaire. A similar data-driven report could help streamline the electricity sector—and help Dutch entrepreneurs and utilities set clear and realistic expectations. Such data reporting could also serve as an indirect accountability measure to incentivize utilities and boost their performance.

Allow entrepreneurs to request a new connection, supply contract, and meter installation via a single window

Economies can reduce the number of procedures required to obtain an electricity connection by allowing customers to apply for the electricity connection, supply contract, and meter installation through the same electronic platform (instead of through three separate applications). The Dutch utilities have already come together to cooperatively introduce a national platform under the Mijn Aansluiting, or “my connection”, initiative, which allows customers to apply for all utility-related connections in one place. The single electronic interface is designed to optimize the application process for anything related to electricity, gas, water, sewer, media, and communications (television, internet, and telephone). The platform could integrate additional utilities, suppliers, and meter companies. In Italy, customers have the option to apply for a new electricity connection in a single application through a chosen supplier. Thanks to economies of scale, it is easier and faster for a supplier to go through the process of obtaining a connection in a single application than it is for a first-time applicant.

Allow the option to pay connection fees in installments and assess the possibility of lowering the cost of getting an electricity connection

In the Dutch cities where Stedin operates, the connection works do not commence until the client has paid the connection fees in full. Electrical connections could be expedited by allowing customers to pay the connection fees after the connection is completed or in installments instead of requiring the full payment upfront. Liander, Enduris, and Enexis already use such a system, providing a good example for the Dutch cities. Enexis allows entrepreneurs to pay the total connection fee after the external connection works are completed. Liander requires entrepreneurs to pay 20% of the total connection fee upon quote acceptance, 70% before the external connection works commence, and the remaining 10% upon completion. Enduris requires 60% of the total fee to be paid upfront and the remaining 40% once the external connection works are completed. A payment arrangement whereby the customer pays after the connection is completed or a share of the bill upfront and the balance at a later stage is considered a good practice.

Getting an electricity connection in the Netherlands is inexpensive compared to other EU member states. Still, the Netherlands could reduce the cost further. In France, the connection to electricity costs 5.8% of income per capita, one-third as much as in the Netherlands. The cost is significantly lower because the federal government subsidizes the cost by requiring that municipalities finance a portion of the connection costs.
Registering Property

The Netherlands’ Cadastre, Land Registry, and Mapping Agency—known locally as Kadaster—maintains the public registers of land rights and mapping nationwide. Kadaster is an independent public body that operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations. Established in the early nineteenth century by Napoleon, the institution’s structure, functioning, and funding were transformed by the 1994 Cadastre Organization Act. Kadaster registers rights and interests affecting any real estate, keeps the registers updated with information on rights and rightsholders, and maintains administrative and geographical records and geospatial data.100

The Dutch land registry is a centralized, deed-based system in which notaries and registrars play a key role

The process to register a property is uniform throughout the Netherlands, with the same five procedures taking three days in all benchmarked cities (table 8). The cost to register property varies slightly, even though public fees and taxes are fixed nationwide at EUR 114,147. This amount comprises transfer taxes of 6%101 of the property value (EUR 141,031) and other fees for cadastral and map searches, and fees for digital registration with Kadaster102 (totaling EUR 116).

Variations in cost stem primarily from differences in notary fees. Notary rates, which were deregulated in 1999, can be billed at an hourly rate or fixed fee. As such, notary fees can vary within the same city. Among the variables that determine the price of notarial services are the size of the notary office, the seniority of the notary, and their client composition (large companies, small businesses, or private individuals). Although the city of operation does not appear to be a primary driver of cost variation, entrepreneurs in the Randstad cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht are likely to pay higher fees (EUR 2,250) than elsewhere in the Netherlands. In Arnhem and Enschede, notary fees tend to be lower (EUR 1,500) than in the Randstad cities but higher than in Eindhoven, Groningen, Maastricht, and Middelburg (EUR 1,000). Notaries charging at the lower end of the range can be found in all Dutch cities, but larger notary offices working with multinational enterprises are more present in the cities of the Randstad.

The Netherlands’ land management system is uniform nationwide, with a public, central-level database storing geospatial and land rights data. Property rights transfers are completed through the authentication of a deed of sale by a notary. The notary also verifies the parties’ identities and rights, intermediates the payments, and submits the deed together with a request for registration to the Kadaster. The Registrar receives the application form, checks the documentation, and updates the database to reflect the transfer. The new rights are constituted retroactively to the day of deed authentication.

Registering property in the Netherlands is fast but relatively expensive

Property registration in the Netherlands is efficient. A property transfer between domestic private companies requires five procedures, on par with the EU average (figure 20). At just three days, it takes significantly less time for an entrepreneur in the Netherlands to complete these procedures than the EU average of 28 days. However, the cost to register a property is the equivalent of 6.1% of the property value, higher than the EU average of 4.8%. The Netherlands scores among the top five economies globally on the quality of land administration index (28.5 out of 30 points)—one of only two EU member states.103

Four of the five steps to transfer property are conducted online

Notaries perform the procedures required to transfer property in the...
Netherlands. First, they verify the parties’ identities and their rights to the property by consulting Kadaster and Trade Register databases (figure 21). Unlike in other deed systems, the notary only needs to check the previous deed of sale. Notaries can sign up to get free access to Kadaster’s systems. However, most notaries conduct these searches using licensed software provided by private companies that develop integrated products using the open-source codes made available by Kadaster and other public institutions. These applications pull data from public databases, including those at Kadaster and the Trade Register. The notary obtains the registered title, cadastral map, and one cadastral extract regarding the ownership and another cadastral extract regarding mortgages and encumbrances. The notary obtains basic information from the Trade Register search, including the two parties’ names, addresses, and legal representatives. Next, the notary drafts the deed for the parties to sign in person. Once signed, the notary authenticates the deed and signs a true copy, which is submitted online to Kadaster. Upon submission, the notary receives a receipt, checks the Kadaster online to ensure no change in rights has occurred in the meanwhile and pays the purchase price to the seller and the due taxes to the Tax Authority.

Notaries have a maximum of 10 calendar days after the day on which the deed is drawn up and signed to present the deed to the tax authority. The transfer tax must be paid within one month from the registration, but in practice, notaries pay the transfer tax immediately. Kadaster then reviews the documentation received, a mostly automated process, and the Registrar updates Kadaster’s databases to reflect the transfer. The rights of the buyer are constituted retroactively from the date of the deed’s execution.

The Netherlands’ streamlined and fast process to register property is the result of a series of reforms

Various factors explain why the Dutch land administration system is so efficient and uniform. These include the early
development of a single database for the land registry and cadaster, the country’s constant orientation toward simplifying processes by using the latest technology, and a whole-of-government approach to developing an integrated IT architecture for delivering public services built around key public registries. The authorities have also followed a reform approach integrating continuous consultation with key stakeholders such as the Civil-Law Notaries Association to define the most efficient and effective procedures and technologies.

As a result of reform efforts dating to the 1980s, today, the notary’s interaction with Kadaster is entirely electronic, and the processing of most requests is fully automated (figure 22). In 1990, Kadaster introduced an interface, Automatische Kadastrale Registratie, that allowed notaries to submit registration forms electronically for the first time. However, paper-based signed deeds were still required to accompany the application. In 1999, the authorities completed scanning historical deeds and began scanning new deeds upon their receipt, enabling faster document processing by registrars. In 2005, the Netherlands began using electronically signed deeds exclusively, abolishing paper documents. Kadaster unveiled the WebELAN application for notaries, enabling them to submit electronically signed documents. The notaries could opt to use either Kadaster’s free electronic signature application or another provider’s application (to accommodate those notaries that had purchased electronic signature applications). To this end, compatibility protocols between Kadaster’s application and other electronic signature providers were developed.

In 2008, Kadaster introduced the KIK system (Ketenintegratie Inschrijving Kadaster, the chain integration inscription cadaster), which enabled the partial digital processing of deeds submitted by notaries. The KIK system splits deeds into two sections: a standard section (a “stylesheet”, already reviewed by the Registrar) containing key information to register any transfer or mortgage and a section where notaries and other parties can customize terms specific to the transaction. To accelerate the process, data related to the standard section of the deed are extracted automatically from the Basic Land Register (BRK, Basisregistratie Kadaster). When submitting the deed, the notary also sends a duplicate XML version of the deed’s standard section. If the deed is presented electronically for registration by the notary in accordance with the model, the cadastral registration is adjusted without further human intervention. Kadaster reviews the stylesheet automatically.

The latest major technical advance was the 2018 migration to KOERS (Kadastrale Objecten Rechtenregistratie Systeem, the cadastral objects and rights system). KOERS introduced the full automation of standard deed processing and software checks of more information included in the deed, such as size and boundaries, rights and rightsholders against the database. Only notaries can use the KOERS automatic system, but its use is not mandatory. Notaries can opt for the previous semi-automatic registration or even submit the paper deed by postal mail. To encourage the adoption of the new technology, however, Kadaster charges more for paper registration (EUR 172) than for semi-automatic registration (EUR 144.5) or fully digital registration (EUR 82.5). The vast majority of notaries now use the automatic or semi-automatic options.

Consistent, nationwide efficiency standards are the result of a country-wide team of registrars and a unified cadastral system. Following a 2006 reform, all regional property-related databases and registrar teams were merged into one, and the practice of assigning each region to one team of registrars was discontinued. Currently, the Netherlands has a national team of registrars that update the registry with transfers anywhere in the country.

**Investments in digital infrastructure has paid off, especially in times of crisis**

The Dutch property registration system’s reliance on digital infrastructure made it resilient to the unprecedented challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Kadaster recorded no serious disruptions to service delivery in 2020. In addition, Kadaster staff were able to complete their tasks remotely. Four out of the five procedures to transfer property are conducted entirely online in the Netherlands. The execution of the deed by the notary is the only procedure requiring physical interaction. Additional remote services were enabled during the pandemic, but...

**FIGURE 22** The Dutch Kadaster’s Key Steps in Going Digital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Key Step</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>First electronic registration forms enabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Scanning of historical deeds completed and new ones were scanned upon receipt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The requirement of submitting paper deeds was abolished (WebELAN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>KIK system enabling partial digital processing of deeds was introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>KOERS System further digitalized and enabled future upgradings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.
the temporary provisions do not apply to the execution of transfer deeds.\textsuperscript{114}

All cities in the Netherlands rank at the top of the quality of land administration index, a measure of the quality of land administration institutions across five areas: reliability of infrastructure, transparency of information, geographic coverage, and land dispute resolution.\textsuperscript{115} The reliability of infrastructure component measures whether the land registry and mapping system (cadaster) have adequate infrastructure to guarantee high standards and reduce errors. All cities in the Netherlands score 7 out of 8 points for the reliability of infrastructure on account of the country’s advanced electronic infrastructure. Kadaster maintains a single electronic database for encumbrances and maps and has fully digitized its maps and scanned the majority of deeds. Keeping the majority of deeds in a fully digital format would raise the score to the maximum.

The geographic coverage component measures the extent to which the land registry and mapping system provide complete geographic coverage of privately held land parcels. Because all properties in the Netherlands are mapped and registered, all cities score 8 out of 8 points for geographical coverage.

The land dispute resolution index measures the accessibility of conflict resolution mechanisms and the extent of liability for entities or agents recording land transactions. The index also looks at how efficiently the courts, as a last resort, handle disputes. All Dutch cities score 7.5 out of 8 points on this index. The Netherlands is one of only five EU countries\textsuperscript{116} where a first instance court decision in a standard property dispute can be obtained in less than a year. If the Dutch courts were to publish statistics on the number of property-related legal disputes, the benchmarked cities would obtain the maximum score on the land dispute resolution index.

**WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED?**

**Assess the possibility of reducing the cost of transferring property in the Netherlands**

At 6.1% of the property value, the cost to transfer property is higher in the Netherlands than the EU average (4.8%) and the OECD high-income economy average (4.2%). As noted above, the main component of the cost is the 6% transfer tax. Because an expensive property registration process can represent a burden for the private sector, the authorities could consider reducing the transfer tax. Several EU member states, including Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Slovak Republic, have either very low property transfer taxes (less than 1%) or have abolished them altogether. Of the European Union’s 27 member states, 19 have a lower cost to register property than the Netherlands. Globally, registering a property transfer is less costly than the Netherlands in 125 of the 190 economies measured by Doing Business.

**Increase the transparency of the land administration system by collecting and compiling statistics on land disputes**

When land disputes occur, ensuring that they clear the courts quickly is important—citizens’ resources should not be unnecessarily tied up in the legal system. However, the Netherlands does not make information on land disputes in the courts at the national level publicly available. Such statistics inform citizens about the court’s true performance. They also provide the court with information on current bottlenecks and challenges that can inform future reform initiatives.

Court statistics should be published continuously and updated regularly. Six
EU countries publish land dispute statistics: Croatia, Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Sweden (map 2). Dutch authorities should consider making such data publicly available in a user-friendly format, updated regularly or in real-time.

MAP 2  Six EU member states make statistics on land disputes publicly available

Source: Doing Business database.
Note: The data for EU member states are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
Enforcing Contracts

The Dutch judiciary is one of the most reliable and transparent in the world. However, many court processes in the Netherlands lack the automation and digitalization found in other advanced jurisdictions. Investment in the court system has focused on making litigation easier, faster, and more automated to improve work quality and case flow. In 2019, the Netherlands adopted a technology-focused plan targeting “timely justice” (Tijdige Rechtspraak)—to cut disposition times, in particular—by 2023.

Temporary changes to court rules adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the Netherlands’ move toward court modernization. For the first time, judges held virtual hearings and accepted judicial files electronically, improving court automation and efficiency. Even if temporary, these changes could reshape the way courts across the Netherlands deal with litigation.

**Court efficiency varies across the country, but all courts lag on the quality of judicial processes**

Resolving the Doing Business case study’s standardized commercial dispute is fastest in Eindhoven (471 days), 42 days faster than the average across the 10 Dutch cities benchmarked (513 days) (figure 23). The Dutch courts resolve commercial disputes more than four months faster than the EU average (653 days). The fastest Dutch courts, Eindhoven and Rotterdam (471 days and 485 days, respectively), are slightly slower than France (447 days) but faster than Germany (499 days).

Despite its relatively fast process for contract enforcement, the Netherlands lags the EU average for cost efficiency. At 21.6% of the claim value, enforcing contracts is more expensive in the benchmarked cities than in 16 other EU member states, most notably France (17.4%), Belgium (16.4%), and Germany (14.4%). However, the process is less costly than in Denmark (23.3%) and significantly cheaper than in selected common law countries such as the United Kingdom (45.7%).

On the Doing Business quality of judicial processes index, all Dutch cities benchmarked score 7 of 18 possible points—the lowest in the European Union and below the global average of 8.8 points. The Dutch courts’ performance for case management and court automation systems (2.5 out of 10 points on both components) is lower than Germany (5 points) and Denmark (8 points).

**Commercial disputes follow a straightforward and consistent process across the country**

The Dutch Code of Civil Procedure (Wetboek van Burgerlijke Rechtsvordering, or Rv) governs litigation nationwide. District courts (rechtbank) have jurisdiction over the Doing Business case—a breach of contract dispute between two companies valued at 200% of income per capita (EUR 94,021). The courts in the cities of Eindhoven and Enschede are branches of the district courts of Oost-Brabant and Overijssel, respectively. In principle, these branches hear cantonal cases (kantonzaken) with a claim value of up to EUR 25,000. However, an exception in the 2013 reorganization of legal districts (arrondissenmenten) allowed Eindhoven’s district court branch to hear commercial cases over EUR 25,000.

The plaintiff initiates the litigation process by serving the defendant with the lawsuit, usually in person via a bailiff. During the pandemic, temporary legislation allowed bailiffs to serve documents by postal mail. The parties must respect a one-week summons term (dagvaardingstermijn) between the service of the summons and the beginning of the process; the summons is registered with the court during this period.

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**TABLE 9 Enforcing contracts in the Netherlands: where is it easiest?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Score (0–100)</th>
<th>Time (day)</th>
<th>Cost (% of claim)</th>
<th>Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62.24</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61.87</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61.62</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>61.61</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>61.49</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60.46</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59.99</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59.94</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>59.89</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>59.09</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report. Rankings are based on the average score for the time and cost associated with enforcing a contract, as well as for the quality of judicial processes index. The score is normalized to range from 0 to 100 (the higher the score, the better). For more details, see the chapter “About Doing Business and Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands.”

**Source:** Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.
The defendant has six weeks to respond to the claim. To simplify the court hearing, the judge can order the parties to provide preparatory briefs clarifying factual or disputed points. Briefs should reach the court a minimum of 10 days before the hearing. Complementary evidence is gathered at this stage, and, when appropriate, the parties submit additional written arguments.

The main purpose of the first hearing is to gather information on the case and organize the litigation process. The parties, who appear with their attorney in court, play an important role in the procedure. In many cases, the first hearing is an opportunity to clarify the parties’ respective positions, eliminating the need for additional replies or rejoinders.

The parties enjoy substantial autonomy in trial management; they decide on the type of evidence to present and its order. However, if the judge deems the evidence insufficient, a technical expert is appointed (the judge selects the expert only if the parties cannot agree on one). A case like the Doing Business standardized commercial dispute is typically decided in one or two hearings. One adjournment is easily granted; subsequent adjournments are much less common as they require the agreement of both parties. The judge only accepts unilateral adjournment requests for compelling reasons or force majeure (klemmende redenen of overmacht).

Dutch courts hear a relatively low volume of commercial cases compared to courts in other countries. In The Hague, court officials credit out-of-court settlements for their modest caseload. In Middelburg, lawyers explain that the parties and the judge often use the time between the service of the summons and the first hearing to discuss an extrajudicial resolution. Even when the parties cannot reach a settlement, this discussion reduces the number of contentious issues, allowing a decision on most disputes after the first hearing.

Judges do not limit themselves to the documentary evidence provided by the parties and experts. Hearings can be held onsite, allowing the judge to observe the core of the conflict first-hand to inform his or her judgment. In Utrecht, lawyers report that such a practical approach has a positive impact on the trial and judgment phase, particularly in construction cases.

When a second hearing is needed, which can take up to six months to schedule in many Dutch courts, it is typically the last. The parties discuss the evidence, including the expert’s report, and make their concluding arguments. After the final trial hearing, it can take a few months for the judge to issue a ruling.

Enforcement is a separate judicial process. A copy of the judgment is sent to the attorneys of both parties the day after the ruling. The plaintiff can contact the court bailiff (gerechtsdeurwaarder) on the same day. The bailiff subsequently
serves the defendant with the judgment (vonnis betekenen). If the defendant does not comply with the enforcement order, the bailiff can seize the defendant’s moveable property and organize the sale.136 Seized items are auctioned publicly under the supervision of the bailiff, either in person or online.

**Enforcing contracts is fastest in Eindhoven but cheapest in Middelburg**

Litigating a commercial contract dispute is fastest in Eindhoven, where contract enforcement is almost three months shorter than in Maastricht, the city where it takes the longest.

Court performance is remarkably uniform across the Netherlands. However, this is unsurprising, given the level of communication and organization within the various branches of the Dutch judiciary. The Council for the Judiciary holds monthly meetings with the presidents of the country’s 11 district courts, four appellate courts, and the Supreme Court with the aim of improving efficiency throughout the country and, as a consequence, minimize subnational variations.

In the five districts with the shortest contract enforcement times, the one-year commercial case clearance rate in 2019 was higher than average across the Netherlands. Although it is not required by law, the plaintiff can send a letter to the defendant before action in an attempt to settle the dispute. In Enschede and Middelburg, lawyers tend to allow more time to complete pretrial steps, increasing the duration of the dispute’s filing and service phase to 30 days (still shorter than the EU average of 41 days).

The main variation in time and overall performance across Dutch courts stems from the trial and judgment phase (figure 24), specifically the time between claim registration and the first hearing. The duration of the trial and judgment phase ranges from 390 days in Enschede to 475 days in Maastricht. Across the Netherlands, the trial and judgment phase lasts 430 days on average, a month faster than the EU average (469 days). The trial and judgment phase takes less than 390 days in 15 EU member states; in eight, it takes more than 475 days.138

Dutch courts face diverse challenges that influence trial time, including staffing gaps and the low level of court automation. Because both parties and their attorneys must attend the first hearing, scheduling can be complex and time-consuming. Litigants routinely wait for six months—sometimes longer—for their first hearing. In Groningen, a case first registered in August 2020 would be heard in February 2021 and, if the case is adjourned or requires a second hearing, the next available date would be in August 2021. During the pandemic, the backlog of cases increased. To avoid the creation of additional delays in Dutch courts, the authorities passed a temporary act (Tweede Verzamelspoedwet COVID-19) to increase the number of available judges by allowing retired judges to rejoin the judiciary. In Utrecht, the second slowest city for enforcing contracts, two retired judges were called back to help with the caseload.

In Eindhoven, Middelburg, and Rotterdam, scheduling the first hearing takes less time. In Middelburg, a court officer (instead of a judge) assigns cases based on judges’ legal experience and availability. This approach streamlines the scheduling process. Lawyers in Eindhoven note that the court’s efficient use of the scheduling system has helped to reduce the waiting period from filing the summons to the first hearing to three to six months. This system, which consolidates the schedules of the parties

![FIGURE 24 Differences in the trial and judgment phase drive variations in the time to resolve a commercial dispute](Image)

**Source:** Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

**Note:** The average for the European Union is based on economy-level data for 27 EU member states. Data for Amsterdam and EU average are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
and their lawyers, allows administrative personnel to optimize judges’ schedules, maximizing efficiency in scheduling the first hearing. Scheduling the hearing date in Rotterdam is also easier following a recent increase in judges, a new computerized case assignment system, and the expanded use of virtual hearings. These measures help judges to manage their schedules and administrative staff to ensure courtroom availability. Judges also receive valuable daily support from staff, many of them local university students.

Trial hearings are used to discuss evidence, including from expert witnesses. If the legal and factual aspects of the dispute are clear, no adjournment or additional hearing is needed. Delivery of an expert opinion rarely takes more than three months.

After evidence is collected and arguments are debated, the judge issues a decision. Judges usually aim to draft their judgment in six weeks, but it can take significantly longer in practice. In most cities a decision can take three to six months, depending on the workload of the judge and the complexity of the case. As part of the judiciary’s ‘Tijdige Rechtspraak’ (timely justice) program, the courts jointly set up an inloopkamer (literally, a “catch-up chamber”), which became operational in March 2021, to address these delays, reduce existing backlogs, and assist judges in finalizing their judgments. This chamber provides extra capacity where the need is greatest across the entire judiciary. Judges and lawyers from the inloopteams focus on specific case flows to address the backlog efficiently. Most of the courts covered in the study (Gelderland, Limburg, Central Netherlands, East Brabant, Rotterdam, and The Hague) have already requested that the National Council of the Judiciary include them in the project.

Enforcement procedures are uniform across the Netherlands. Enforcement takes 65 days on average across the courts and cities report a variation of no more than 10 days (except for Enschede, where the plaintiff typically gives the defendant more time to comply). Among EU member states, only Luxembourg (60 days) enforces the judgment faster than the Netherlands. At 90 days, Enschede lags the other Dutch cities; even so, in the European Union only Luxembourg and Estonia (75 days) have faster enforcement times than Enschede. The sale of the debtor’s seized assets is not allowed until four weeks after the judgment; bailiffs use this waiting period to prepare the auction (which can take place soon after the four-week period). Occasionally the process can take several days longer—for example, the attachment of movable assets might take place with a police officer, which requires coordination of the officer’s and the bailiff’s schedules.

The cost of litigation varies from 18.9% of the claim value in Middelburg to 23.9% in Amsterdam. Attorney fees, which make up the bulk of the cost, are typically charged at an hourly rate (figure 25). Because the attorney fee structure is not standardized in the Netherlands, critics argue that legal fees lack transparency. Attorneys explain that rates vary depending on the demand for judicial services and time to resolve the case. In their assessment, the hourly rate is generally higher in Amsterdam and The Hague, given higher demand for judicial services. Costs are also relatively high in Maastricht and Utrecht, where judicial procedures are on the longer end. Fees are slightly lower in Enschede, Groningen, and Middelburg, where the demand for legal services on commercial matters is lower.

The Court Fees Law (Wet griffierechten burgerlijke zaken) sets court fees nationwide, including the fees to register the claim and for the issuance of the judgment (EUR 2,042). However, the fees of expert witnesses are unregulated, resulting in variations across the benchmarked cities in court fees. Expert witness fees are highest in Enschede, Maastricht, and Middelburg—among the smaller cities benchmarked—and Rotterdam. Practitioners report that there are fewer local experts in smaller cities, reducing competition and raising prices. In addition, experts who charge the same rate for services nationwide tend to be based in larger cities; they charge transportation expenses when they travel to locations outside of their hub.

The Bailiffs’ Fee Decree (Besluit tarieven ambtshandelingen gerechtsdeurwaarders) regulates enforcement costs in the Netherlands. The cost to store the seized goods and organize the public sale varies across the benchmarked cities. Auctions occur either onsite (if the attached goods are on the defendant’s premises), in a rented hotel conference room, or at an auction house. There is no cost for an onsite auction. For auctions

![FIGURE 25](https://example.com/figure25.png)  
**FIGURE 25** Court costs in the Netherlands are higher than the EU average
held at a hotel conference room, the cost is lowest in Enschede, Groningen, and Middelburg. Costs associated with an auction held at an auction house are included in the auction price and charged directly to the purchaser of the goods.

The Dutch judicial system ranks among the top civil justice systems globally, and international parties are increasingly choosing the Dutch courts—specifically the Netherlands Commercial Court—to resolve their cross-border disputes (box 4). However, the Netherlands scores only 7 of 18 possible points on the Doing Business quality of judicial processes index. This index measures whether an economy has adopted a series of good practices in its court system in four areas (court structure and proceedings, case management, court automation, and alternative dispute resolution). The lack of automatic case assignment tools and the absence of innovative platforms to manage case documents are two of the Dutch judicial system’s most urgent weaknesses.

With the legal framework applied consistently nationwide, all Dutch courts follow the same judicial processes as measured by Doing Business (figure 26). However, the failure of recent digitalization projects (see box 5) has prevented the Dutch courts from reaching a level of court automation and case management system comparable to that of their peers.

The Dutch courts are only partially automated. As in Belgium, the availability of electronic means to manage a case is among the lowest in the European Union. Some automated features are available to litigants (for example, they can pay court fees electronically), and the court publishes commercial judgments at all levels, allowing litigants to assess their rights and lawyers to apply the law consistently. However, some widely available features in other advanced economies are not available in the Netherlands. For example, unlike in 42 other economies measured by Doing Business, the initial complaint cannot be filed electronically in the Netherlands. Also, a bailiff must carry out the service of process in person (the Supreme Court temporarily allowed bailiffs to serve documents by postal mail during the pandemic).

The Dutch courts also have a mixed performance on the court structure and proceedings component. Small claims courts (kantonrechter) are available, and self-representation is permitted, preventing small-figure disputes from burdening the district courts. The law also provides for pretrial attachment of the defendant’s movable property to prevent the debtor from disposing of assets before trial. Like in 163 other economies worldwide, the same judicial processes as measured by Doing Business (figure 26) are applied consistently nationwide, but the availability of electronic means to manage a case is among the lowest in the European Union.

BOX 4 The Netherlands Commercial Court: a European judicial destination for international commercial disputes

The Netherlands Commercial Court (NCC) was established on January 1, 2019, as a specialized division within the Amsterdam District Court and the Amsterdam Court of Appeal that offers high-level international dispute settlement by hearing complex cross-border commercial cases. NCC proceedings are conducted in English, and all cases are heard and disposed of by a three-judge panel with specific knowledge in the field of international commercial litigation. The NCC is one of the world’s first civil law-based international commercial courts.

The NCC’s jurisdiction is based on consent. If the dispute does not fall under the Amsterdam District Court’s jurisdiction, the parties must designate the NCC as the competent court (typically in the forum selection clause of their agreement). There must be an international aspect to the dispute, and the parties must have expressly agreed that the proceedings will be held in English.

The idea to create the NCC came from the national Council for the Judiciary, which, in 2015, noted that a considerable number of complex cross-border disputes were settled outside of the Netherlands by foreign courts or through (international) arbitration. The Council expressed concern that the Netherlands could forego knowledge on the settlement of international commercial disputes within the existing Dutch legal framework. The NCC was subsequently created as a landmark forum for EU companies, with the ambition to offer first-class international legal services and establish a knowledge hub in the Netherlands.

The NCC can hear contractual disputes, precontractual issues, tort claims, personal property disputes, and corporate law matters. Unlike other Dutch courts, the NCC establishes an informal, pretrial case management conference which gives parties a say on how proceedings will be conducted. A web portal, eNCC, facilitates communication and document exchange.

The NCC rendered its first final judgment on the merits in March 2020. With state-of-the-art facilities, highly qualified judges, and proceedings conducted in English, the NCC is expected to become a benchmark venue for EU companies.

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a. As such, the NCC would not be competent to hear the Doing Business case study which focuses on domestic litigation.
c. See the NCC rules, available at https://www.rechtspraak.nl/English/NCC/Pages/rules.aspx.
the Dutch courts randomly assign cases to judges. However, this process is not fully automated. Also, except for the NCC—which focuses on international cases—the Netherlands has no dedicated specialized commercial court or division within the district courts.

With just 0.5 out of 6 possible points, the Netherlands also lags in case management techniques for judges, lawyers, and parties to a dispute. The pretrial conference is not an established good practice in Dutch courts, although some judges make use of the first hearing of a trial to streamline the dispute. Paper files are still widely used in the Dutch courts, and the introduction of an integrated electronic case management system has generally failed. The lack of digitalization has reduced the availability of court reports and statistics. Procedural law sets time standards for some court events, but these are not binding in most cases. Lastly, the Dutch Code on Civil Procedure does not strictly regulate adjournments (merely referring to generic compelling reasons or force majeure clauses), which can be a source of delay.

Although the Netherlands provides a framework for voluntary mediation, regulates commercial arbitration, and ensures that valid arbitration clauses are enforced in practice, no financial incentives exist to encourage mediation or conciliation.

**WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED?**

*Consider making measures allowing virtual hearings permanent*  
  
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dutch judiciary temporarily allowed the use of digital features as a means of continuing court operations. Between March 17 and April 6, 2020, only very urgent cases (so-called “List 1” cases) were conducted online (via Skype) or by telephone in court. From April 7 to May 10, urgent cases (“List 2”) were treated in the same way. In parallel, the courts encouraged written proceedings...
for these cases. Experts participating in this study provided contrasting feedback on the shift to remote litigation. Many users were generally satisfied, but others—often judges—highlighted the importance of nonverbal communication and in-person, informal contacts, which were absent in the virtual hearings.

Making virtual hearings an option permanently would provide more flexibility in the organization of the litigation. It would facilitate the scheduling of trial hearings and time savings for judges, attorneys, and litigants. Furthermore, virtual hearings could reduce the impact of common circumstances that currently warrant a hearing adjournment (such as the unavailability of a hearing room or minor health condition of one of the parties). The Netherlands could follow the example of other economies with a legal framework allowing litigation to occur remotely. In Estonia, all steps in a legal dispute can be completed remotely, from initiating the case until the publication of the decision. During the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown period, around 61% of hearings were held online in Estonia, keeping the number of decided cases steady with the previous quarter (when there was no lockdown).148 In Singapore, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court cited time and cost efficiencies to justify that most cases would resume but will continue to be held virtually on a permanent basis.149

Consider expanding e-features in courts for commercial litigation and small claims

COVID-19 has highlighted the suboptimal nature of courts around the world. In many jurisdictions, the shift toward virtual justice is gaining momentum and improving court efficiency. However, with a low level of court automation, the Netherlands lags in this regard. There have been attempts to modernize the Dutch courts, but with some courts still adopting older data management systems (such as MS-DOS), there is room for improvement.150

Features such as electronic filing of cases and electronic service of process—that is, the initial summons can be served by email, fax, or text message—can streamline and accelerate the process of commencing a lawsuit. But court automation has broader benefits. Electronic records tend to be more convenient and reliable. Reducing in-person interactions with court officials results in better access to courts. These features also reduce the cost to enforce a contract—parties save on courthouse visits, while courts save on storage costs, archiving costs, and court officers’ costs. The implementation of Korea’s e-court system resulted in a savings of $221 per e-filing from a reduction in paper use, the time spent in court, cheaper service of process, lower transportation costs, easierarchiving of documents, and easier payment of fees.151 Furthermore, e-filing facilitates access to and the delivery of justice. The best-performing economies have several features of court automation. Estonia, Lithuania, and the Slovak Republic are the EU member states that obtain the highest possible score on the Doing Business court automation index.

Doing Business records 24 reforms introducing an e-filing system for commercial court cases and allowing attorneys to submit the initial complaint online. Today, 42 economies worldwide allow the electronic filing of the initial complaint. Similarly, 37 economies permit e-service of process. Germany made enforcing contracts easier by introducing e-filing of the initial complaint and e-service of process without the need for paper documents.

Consider creating specialized commercial courts or divisions

Having courts or divisions with general commercial jurisdiction—hearing only commercial cases—is an internationally recognized good practice. When properly established, such courts can improve efficiency because they tend to have streamlined procedures and because they offer an alternative forum for litigants that may compete with regular courts.152 Doing Business data show that the 101 economies with dedicated commercial courts resolve cases 92 days sooner on average than those without such courts.

Given the level of business activity in the Netherlands, a dedicated commercial court would have no shortage of cases. The establishment of the NCC in Amsterdam is already creating a hub of commercial litigation knowledge. However, the NCC’s focus is primarily on international cases.

A gradual approach toward specialized commercial jurisdictions could be an option. In 1995, North Carolina, a U.S. state with a population of more than 10 million, created a business court with a statewide jurisdictional reach. Initially staffed by one judge, the court’s expansion was recommended in 2004. As of mid-2019, there were five active business court judges sitting in four cities across the state who hear cases originating in North Carolina.153

Decision was recommended in 2004. As of mid-2019, there were five active business court judges sitting in four cities across the state who hear cases originating in North Carolina.153
NOTES


3. Data used in this report for Amsterdam and comparator economies are not considered official until published by the Doing Business 2021 report.

4. The cities were selected based on demographic and geographical criteria. Each city belongs to a different NUTS2 region (the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics, or NUTS), is a geo-code standard for referencing the subdivisions of countries for statistical purposes developed by the European Union). Furthermore, the selection of cities was agreed between the World Bank project team, the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, the Invest in Holland Network and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The data presented for Amsterdam are those published by the global Doing Business report, which uses Amsterdam as a proxy for the Netherlands.

5. The indicator quality components are the building quality control index for dealing with construction permits, the reliability of supply and transparency of tariff index for getting electricity, the quality of the land administration index for registering property, and the quality of judicial processes for enforcing contracts.

6. Data used to calculate the quality of the land administration index for registering property are not considered official until the Doing Business 2021 report is published.

7. Although the Bibob law is a national-level regulation, municipalities apply it locally at their discretion. The law, which is partially integrated into the Wabo permitting legislation, serves as an additional layer of protection against money laundering and criminal activity. The basic screening comprises a form that the developer fills out that includes company accounting information. Should the municipality choose to carry out an in-depth evaluation—for example, if they have doubts about the legitimacy of the business—the authorities contact the developer for further information.

8. The basic screening comprises a form that the developer fills out that includes company accounting information. Should the municipality choose to carry out an in-depth evaluation—for example, if they have doubts about the legitimacy of the business—the authorities contact the developer for further information.

9. These cities are Amsterdam, Enschede, Groningen, Maastricht, and Rotterdam. Amsterdam, which has the lowest threshold, applies a basic Bibob screening to all construction projects over EUR 250,000, suggesting that the Amsterdam municipality views construction projects as vulnerable to a relatively high risk of criminal activity.

10. For more information on Estonia’s online company registration portal, see the website at https://www.rki.ee/en/company-registration-portal/e-residency.

11. For more information on the Danish system, see the website at https://indberet.virk.dk/.


15. The Netherlands’ UBO register was launched on September 27, 2020. For EU member states, the UBO register is mandatory under EU Directive 2015/849, the fourth anti-money laundering directive. In the Netherlands, the UBO register is legally regulated by the Wwft Implementation Decree 2018, the Commercial Register Act 2007, and the Commercial Register Decree 2008.

16. The Chamber of Commerce’s business registration fee was EUR 50 for the period January to December 2020. The annual compulsory contribution was abolished in 2013. Companies, associations, and foundations do not pay any other costs for registration in the commercial register after initial registration.

17. Entrepreneurs setting up a bv must use the services of a notary, located anywhere in the Netherlands, independent of where the company will be established, to draft and execute the notarial deed.

18. Starting a business in Estonia, Finland, Greece, and Slovenia requires three procedures; in Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden it requires four.

19. Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, and Portugal do not require any paid-in minimum capital at the time of business startup.

20. The Act for Simplification and Flexibilization of Private Company Law (Wet vereenvoudiging en flexibilisering bv-recht) took effect on October 1, 2012, abolishing the minimum capital requirement for these companies (previously set at EUR 18,000).


22. For more information on registering a company with Companies House, see the website at www.gov.uk/limited-company-formation/register-your-company.

23. To draw up a deed of incorporation, the civil-law notary requires information including the company name, location, and purpose as described in Article 2:177, paragraph 1 of the Dutch Civil Code. Notaries also require a copy of the founders’ identification documents.

24. The various forms completed by the civil-law notary to register a company are available at https://www.kvk.nl/inschrijven-en-wijzigen/inschrijven-onderneemers/bv-oprichten-registratie/.

25. The national electronic registration platform, ORN, was introduced in 2013; the NAU in 2020. Based on interviews with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and private professionals in the Netherlands, April to December 2020.

26. See the Commercial Register’s database at https://www.kvk.nl/zoeken/handelsregister/.

27. Entrepreneurs can access the Tax Authority portal at https://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/nl/ondernemers/content/inloggen-voor-onderneemers.


29. The PDF form is available at https://Download.belastingdienst.nl/belastingdienst/docs/melding_loonheffingen_aanmelding_werkgever_ihs9019z901l.pdf.

30. Any company that becomes an employer must send the form to the following address: Dutch Tax and Customs Administration, Postbox 2892, 6401 DJ, Heerlen.

31. According to interviews with the Chamber of Commerce by the Subnational Doing Business team in June 2020, as of July 2011, the Chamber of Commerce no longer carries out trade name assessments and cannot refuse the registration of a company based on the name chosen, except for those that are not allowed by law.

32. For more information, see https://www.kvk.nl/advies-en-informatie/bedrijf-starten/een-bedrijfsnaam-kiezen/.

33. See the website of the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP) at https://www.bop.int/nl/merkenregister/.

34. See the website of the Internet Domain Name Registration Foundation at https://www.sidni/.

35. For more information, see the business registry’s website at http://polisamenodenominacojes.pjusica.justitiagov.nl/index.php.


37. For more information on Estonia’s e-Business Register, see the website at www.rki.ee.

38. For more information on registering a company with Companies House, see the website at www.gov.uk/limited-company-formation/register-your-company.

39. These 10 EU member states are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, and Spain.


41. Coste, Cyriane, Marie Delion, Adrián González, Frédéric Meunier, Nathalie...

43. For more information on SPOT, see the website at https://spot.gov.s/.


45. For more information, see the website at https://www.gov.uk/limited-company-formation.

46. Examples are available at www.gov.uk/register-a-company-online.


48. For more information on Estonia’s online company registration portal, see the website at https://www.rik.ee/en/company-registration-portal/e-residency.

49. For more information on the Danish system, see the website at https://indberet.virk.dk/.


51. For more information on the Canadian system, see https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/edc06642.nsf/eng/s06642.html.

52. Additional information on the system in the United Kingdom is available at https://www.gov.uk/limited-company-formation/register-your-company.

53. The Wabo (Wet algemene bepalingen omgevingsrecht) legislation was enacted in 2010 and has been amended several times since. Its main purpose is to consolidate and simplify regulations and permitting pertaining to construction, nature, and environment.

54. For more information on the online platform, see http://omgevingsloket.nl and http://olo.nl.

55. The dealing with construction permits indicators record all procedures required for a business in the construction industry to build a warehouse, along with the time and cost to complete each procedure. In addition, the indicator measures the building quality control index, which evaluates the quality of building regulations, the strength of quality control and safety mechanisms, liability and insurance regimes, and professional certification requirements. For more information, see the data notes.

56. A vertical structural element that is driven to reach load-bearing level in the ground, is a necessary foundational element in construction due to soft soil in the Netherlands.

57. The platform is a result of cooperation between the various utility companies with the aim of simplifying the application process for developers. The Mijnansluiting platform sorts applications before forwarding them to the appropriate utility. The utility then processes the application. For more information on the platform, see the website at www.mijnansluiting.nl.

58. The Bibb law is a national-level regulation applied at the discretion of the municipality. The law, which is partially integrated into the Wabo legislation, serves as an additional layer of protection against money laundering and criminal activities.

59. The basic screening is comprised of a form that the developer fills out that includes company financial information. Should the municipality choose to carry out an in-depth evaluation—if they have doubts about the legitimacy of the business—the developer is contacted for further information.

60. These cities are Amsterdam, Enschede, Groningen, Maastricht, and Rotterdam. Amsterdam, which has the lowest threshold, applies a basic Bibb screening to all construction projects over EUR 250,000, suggesting that the Amsterdam municipality views construction projects as vulnerable to a relatively high risk of criminal activity. Maastricht has the second lowest threshold at EUR 500,000. Enschede, Groningen, and Rotterdam all apply a threshold of EUR 1,000,000. Although Arnhem did not apply the basic Bibb screening to construction projects at the time of this study, it has implemented one in 2021.

61. In Amsterdam as in all the other cities, private sector companies are owned by public shareholders (combination of municipalities and provinces). For more information on Watermer, see https://publicaties.rekenkamer.amsterdam.nl/gemeentelijke +rrooiawateraten/.

62. For further details on permit discounts in Amsterdam: https://www.amsterdam.nl/veelgevaagd/?casedef=%7B354E893B-EE2E-4DBD-AC8B-89A0928C1208%7D.


65. The relevant laws can be found in the Burgerlijk Wetboek book 6 title 1 article 74 and book 6 title 12 section 4.


70. Except those listed in articles L243-1-1 of the Insurance Code.


73. For nonstandard or more complex cases, different requirements apply. For more details on requirements, see https://wng.nl/sites /default/files/vth_wabo_kwaliteitscriteria _versie2.2.2019_dec.


76. As the regulator, ACM is charged with sector-specific market supervision of telecommunications, the gas and electricity market, fair competition, and consumer protection law. For more information, see ACM’s website at https://www.acm.nl/.


78. The EU member states with the lowest grid connection costs are the Czech Republic, France, and Poland.

79. These countries are Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Hungary, and Romania.

80. To measure the reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs, Doing Business presents an index scored from 0 to 8 points. The index measures the role of the energy regulator, the systems used to monitor power outages and restore supply, whether financial deterrents exist to limit outages, and whether effective tariffs are available online and customers are notified of a change in tariffs a full billing cycle in advance. For more details, see the data notes.

81. Electricity Code, Article 219 in conjunction with Article 2.25 paragraph 2 sub c states that a connection with a capacity of between 60 kVA and 0.3 MVA will be made at the low-voltage level (https://wetten.overheid.nl /BWBR00007940/2020-12-05).

82. KLIC is the Kabels en Leidingen Informatie Centrum (Cables and Pipes Information Center). The KLIC request must be submitted 20 business days at the earliest and three business days at the latest from the start of the excavation works. The Information
Exchange Above-and Underground Networks Act 2018 (WIBON) states in Article 10 that the cadastre is required to send a notice of receipt immediately after the KLIC request is submitted. Article 13 paragraph 1 stipulates that within two business days the cadastre sends all requested information. In case the subcontractor finds a grid that was not included in the map while digging, Article 20 requires that the cadastre be notified immediately. The cadaster then notifies all potential owners of the cables, and those parties are required to respond within 10 business days.

83. The meter market for connections exceeding 3x80 ampere was liberalized in 2011. Since then, distribution utilities cannot install meters, and the customer is responsible for hiring a meter company. See the regulator’s website at [https://www.acm.nl/nl/_onderwerpen/energie/afnemers-van-energie/-energetarianve/meetandel; Electricity Law, art. 90c et seq.](https://www.wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0009755/2021-01-01) stipulates that a utility may not install a meter if the authority authorizes a connection request, and so on).

84. The electronic platform is Energy Data Services Netherlands (EDSN). All Dutch distribution utilities, suppliers, meter companies, and parties that purchase electricity on the wholesale market and sell it to suppliers are connected to this platform. The parties use this platform and an internal message system for digital data exchange. Each connection is identified by a unique European Article Number (EAN) code that is used for internal communication.

85. The Electricity Code, Article 8.4 sub d (available at [https://www.wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037940/2020-12-05](https://www.wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037940/2020-12-05)) stipulates that a utility has 10 working days to send a quote after receiving an application for a connection with a maximum capacity of 10 MVA. The Electricity Act, Article 23 par. 4 (available at [https://www.wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0009755/2021-01-01](https://www.wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0009755/2021-01-01)) sets a limit of 18 weeks to obtain a new connection from the utility. Note that a connection request is reviewed after an inspection, if applicable; whether the application is fast-tracked (utility preparing the quote; the application is fast-tracked (utility preparing the quote; the application is fast-tracked; the utility accepts the quote as offered by the utility. Note that a connection request is reviewed after an inspection, if applicable; whether the application is fast-tracked (utility preparing the quote; the application is fast-tracked; the utility accepts the quote as offered by the utility.

86. Consultative meetings with Dutch distribution utility and other practitioners for this study. Distribution utilities acknowledge issues with current staffing on their websites. See for example [https://www.enexisgroep.nl/actuele-themas/schaarste-personeel/; and https://www.lander.nl/nieuwe-aansluiting.](https://www.lander.nl/nieuwe-aansluiting)

87. Consultative meetings with Dutch distribution utility and other practitioners for this study.

88. As regulated by the General Administrative Law Act, available from [https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR00005537/2021-03-01](https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR00005537/2021-03-01), Local municipalities have their own regime that can deviate from the national law as long as they do not exceed the limits as set by the national law.

89. The Dong Business case study assumes that the electricity cable crosses a 10-meter-wide public road. In Enschede, permits for excavations under 25 meters are not required according to the General Regulation Underground Infrastructure Enschede 2018 ([https://doket.enschede.nl/loket/sites/default/files/IMG/AO/01%20Enschede%202018.pdf](https://doket.enschede.nl/loket/sites/default/files/IMG/AO/01%20Enschede%202018.pdf), Article 2.8)

90. For more information, see the website at [https://www.mijnnaansluiting.nl](https://www.mijnnaansluiting.nl).

91. The Mijnnaansluiting platform sorts applications before forwarding them to the appropriate utility. The utility then processes the application. Using the Enexis website is faster because it eliminates the need for the forwarding step—it is submitted directly to the utility. Enexis also allows customers to submit applications through the national platform.

92. The first 25 meters of cable are free of charge.

93. Electricity Code, Article 8.8 ([https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037940/2019-02-01#Hoofdstuk8%20-%20Article%208.8](https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037940/2019-02-01#Hoofdstuk8%20-%20Article%208.8)). Compensation for outages exceeding four hours is paid out automatically.

94. The Cables and Pipelines Regulation establishes that the municipality must issue a permit decision within two business days of receiving a permit request for noninvasive works.

95. In Amsterdam, it takes six weeks to issue a permit instead of up to 12 weeks at the national level, however the length of legal time frame is still considered long compared to other economies.


97. Dutch utilities also publish statistics on the number of applications, length in kilometers of the electricity grid, incidents, transported electricity on the grid, and average outage duration and frequency in an annual report. The Dutch regulator also publishes factsheets that contain similar information. The most recent factsheet dates from 2017 (the regulator is modernizing the visuals). For more, see the ACM’s website at [https://www.acm.nl/nl/publicaties/factsheets-kwaliteit-2017-van-alle-regionale-netbeheerders](https://www.acm.nl/nl/publicaties/factsheets-kwaliteit-2017-van-alle-regionale-netbeheerders).

98. Customers can track the status of their application (utility preparing the quote; scheduling an inspection, if applicable; whether the application file is sent to a subcontractor for completing excavation works, so the utility can also start simultaneous works in case of a small capacity connection request, and so on).

99. This requirement is in accordance with the Energy Code (Article L342-11), which specifies that urban planning commissions are to bear the cost of extension works for the electricity grid, provided that the network extension can benefit future residents and firms.

100. Article 3 of the Cadaster Act of 1989, Kadaster’s mandate includes statutory and advisory tasks in relation to rural areas, the registration and provision of topographical information, registration of ships and aircraft, maintenance of the national triangular network, the management of public law restrictions, the Key Registers of Addresses and Buildings (BAG), the spatial planning portal (RO-online), the combined underground utility information exchange (KLIC), and the national immovable property valuation system (WOZ).

101. The value of the property transferred in the Doing Business case study is EUR 2,350,524. As of December 31, 2020 (this report’s cut-off date), the property transfer tax was 6% of the property value for commercial properties and 2% for residential properties. Starting January 1, 2021, the property transfer tax for commercial property increased to 8% of the property value. See Article 14 of the Act on taxation of legal transactions.

102. For a semi-automatic registration, the fee is EUR 144.50; for paper registration, the fee is EUR 172. See Article 2 of the Fee Schedule of the Kadaster.

103. The top global performers on the quality of land administration index are Lithuania, the Netherlands, Rwanda, and Taiwan, China.

104. In case of transfers between natural persons, the notary checks the municipality’s online identification database.

105. The mortgages and encumbrance extract must be obtained for all transfers, including properties without encumbrance.

106. The Netherlands has 10 basic registers: Central Register of Persons (BRP, Basisregistratie Personen); Trade Register (HR, Handselregistr); Addresses and Buildings Registry (BAG, Basisregistratie Adressen en Gebouwen); Topographical Registry (BRT, Basisregistratie Topografie); Land Registry (BRK, Basisregistratie Kadaster); Vehicles Key Register for vehicle registration (BRV, Basisregistratie Voertuigen, voor kentekenregistratie); Basic Income Register (BRI, Basisregistratie Inkomen); Real Estate Valuation Register (WOZ, Basisregistratie Waardering Onroerende Zaken); Large-Scale Topography Key Register (BGT, Basisregistratie Grootschalige Topografie); Subsurface Key Register (BRO, Basisregistratie Ondergrond). For additional information, see [https://data.overheid.nl/community/group/basisregistraties_10](https://data.overheid.nl/community/group/basisregistraties_10).


111. Article 2 of the Kadaster’s Fee Schedule.
114. The Dutch authorities adopted the Temporary Law COVID-19 Justice and Security (Tijdelijke Wet COVID-19 Justitie en Veiligheid) allowing the signing of documents for which a private power of attorney does not suffice (such as mortgage deeds) via audiovisual communication tools. See Article 26 of the Temporary Law COVID-19 Justice and Security. This legislation is not applicable to the execution of a transfer deed, for which the party can issue a private power of attorney.
115. According to the Doing Business methodology, the quality of land administration includes a fifth component which measures legal provisions on equality of access to property rights for women and men. This subindicator is not discussed in Doing Business in the European Union as women and men enjoy the same ownership rights in all EU member states.
116. These economies are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, and the Netherlands.
120. For more information, see “Tijdige en voorspelbare rechtspraak” at https://www .rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact /Organisatie/Raad-voor-de-rechtspraak /Kwaliteit-van-de-rechtspraak/Paginas /Tijdige-rechtspraak.aspx.
122. Since April 9, 2020, users can use a digital platform, ZIVVER, to send procedural documents and messages (typically sent by post or fax) to the judiciary.
124. For an overview of the enforcing contracts indicators and the assumptions underlying the Doing Business case scenario, see the data notes.
125. Averages for the EU or other groups of economies are calculated using data from the Doing Business database, which uses the main business city as a proxy for each country or economy covered by the global Doing Business. Averages for the Netherlands are calculated using Subnational Doing Business data for all cities in the study except Amsterdam. For Amsterdam, data are sourced from the Doing Business database.
126. Doing Business considers the applicable court to be the local court with jurisdiction over commercial contract cases worth 200% income per capita or $5,000, whichever is greater. In the Netherlands the small claims courts (Kantongerecht) are the lowest courts of first instance. They have a monetary threshold of EUR 25,000. Claims above this amount must be filed in the district courts.
129. Dutch Code of Civil Procedure (Rv), Article 133.1.
130. Dutch Code of Civil Procedure (Rv), Article 87.6.
133. Subnational Doing Business research, interviews with court officials and litigation attorneys, January 2021.
134. Subnational Doing Business research, interviews with court officials and litigation attorneys, February 2021.
137. Statistics provided by the Council for the Judiciary. The clearance rate is a ratio of the number of cases adjudicated to the number of cases added to the docket.
138. These economies are Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia.
142. See the Court Fees Law at https://wetten .overheid.nl/BWBR0028899/2021-01-01.
143. For more information on the Bailiff’s Fee Decree, see https://www.kbvg.nl/cms/public -files/Btag-tarieven/Btag-1-januari-2020 -pdf?ac76a46f40.
144. According to the World Justice Project, which provides a quantitative tool for measuring the rule of law in practice. For more information on the Rule of Law Index, see the website of the World Justice Project at https:// worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files /documents/WIP-ROLI-2020-Online_O.pdf.
145. For an overview of the enforcing contracts indicators and quality of judicial processes index, see the data notes.


# City Snapshots and Indicator Details

## THE NETHERLANDS

### Amsterdam

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting a business (rank)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedures (number)</td>
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<td>Time (days)</td>
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<td>Cost (% of income per capita)</td>
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<td>Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with construction permits (rank)</td>
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<td>Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100) 66.92</td>
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<td>Procedures (number)</td>
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<td>Time (days)</td>
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<td>Cost (% of warehouse value)</td>
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<td>Building quality control index (0–15)</td>
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<td>Score for getting electricity (0–100) 86.63</td>
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<td>Enforcing contracts (rank)</td>
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<td>Score for enforcing contracts (0–100) 59.94</td>
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<td>Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)</td>
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### Arnhem

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<tr>
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Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Starting a business (rank)</th>
<th>Dealing with construction permits (rank)</th>
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<td>Quality of land administration index (0–30)</td>
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</table>
### Maastricht

**Starting a business (rank)**  
5  
- Score for starting a business (0–100) 91.57  
- Procedures (number) 5  
- Time (days) 9  
- Cost (% of income per capita) 3.3  
- Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita) 0.0

**Dealing with construction permits (rank)**  
6  
- Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100) 65.95  
- Procedures (number) 16  
- Time (days) 204  
- Cost (% of warehouse value) 1.5  
- Building quality control index (0–15) 10

**Getting electricity (rank)**  
1  
- Score for getting electricity (0–100) 87.19  
- Procedures (number) 4  
- Time (days) 97  
- Cost (% of income per capita) 18.3  
- Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8) 8

**Registering property (rank)**  
1  
- Score for registering property (0–100) 80.10  
- Procedures (number) 5  
- Time (days) 3  
- Cost (% of property value) 6.0  
- Quality of land administration index (0–30) 28.5

**Enforcing contracts (rank)**  
10  
- Score for enforcing contracts (0–100) 59.09  
- Time (days) 561  
- Cost (% of claim value) 22.8  
- Quality of judicial processes index (0–18) 7.0

### Middelburg

**Starting a business (rank)**  
1  
- Score for starting a business (0–100) 91.70  
- Procedures (number) 5  
- Time (days) 9  
- Cost (% of income per capita) 2.2  
- Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita) 0.0

**Dealing with construction permits (rank)**  
1  
- Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100) 69.47  
- Procedures (number) 14  
- Time (days) 169  
- Cost (% of warehouse value) 2.3  
- Building quality control index (0–15) 10

**Getting electricity (rank)**  
3  
- Score for getting electricity (0–100) 86.63  
- Procedures (number) 4  
- Time (days) 102  
- Cost (% of income per capita) 23.7  
- Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8) 8

**Registering property (rank)**  
1  
- Score for registering property (0–100) 80.10  
- Procedures (number) 5  
- Time (days) 3  
- Cost (% of property value) 6.0  
- Quality of land administration index (0–30) 28.5

**Enforcing contracts (rank)**  
2  
- Score for enforcing contracts (0–100) 61.87  
- Time (days) 512  
- Cost (% of claim value) 18.9  
- Quality of judicial processes index (0–18) 7.0
## Rotterdam

<table>
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<td>Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita)</td>
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</table>

### Dealing with construction permits (rank) | 3

| Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100) | 68.32 |
| Procedures (number) | 15 |
| Time (days) | 169 |
| Cost (% of warehouse value) | 2.4 |
| Building quality control index (0–15) | 10 |

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<td>Procedures (number)</td>
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<td>Cost (% of income per capita)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

### Enforcing contracts (rank) | 4

| Score for enforcing contracts (0–100) | 61.61 |
| Time (days) | 485 |
| Cost (% of claim value) | 21.6 |
| Quality of judicial processes index (0–18) | 7.0 |

## Utrecht

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score for starting a business (0–100)</td>
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<td>Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita)</td>
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### Dealing with construction permits (rank) | 7

| Score for dealing with construction permits (0–100) | 65.60 |
| Procedures (number) | 13 |
| Time (days) | 231 |
| Cost (% of warehouse value) | 2.6 |
| Building quality control index (0–15) | 10 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting electricity (rank)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

### Enforcing contracts (rank) | 9

| Score for enforcing contracts (0–100) | 59.89 |
| Time (days) | 526 |
| Cost (% of claim value) | 23.2 |
| Quality of judicial processes index (0–18) | 7.0 |
### Starting a Business in the Netherlands – Procedures Required to Start a Business, by City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard company legal form: besloten vennootschap (bv)</th>
<th>Paid-in minimum capital requirement: none</th>
<th>Data as of: December 31, 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>1. Check the company name for appropriateness and validity</td>
<td>Time (days) Less than one day (online procedure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aachen</td>
<td>Cost (EUR) No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>Entrepreneur must check the company name before registering it with the Chamber of Commerce. The company name must meet a number of rules such as not using another company's brand name or avoiding confusion with existing company names. The entrepreneur or the notary are the ones who verify the appropriateness and validity of the company name on the Chamber of Commerce website before notarizing the company's deed of incorporation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>Cost (EUR) 1,750 1,000 1,492 1,000 1,750 1,492 1,000 1,750 1,750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>2. A civil law notary drafts and signs the company's deed of incorporation</td>
<td>Time (days) 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>Entrepreneurs can send all the necessary documentation for the notary to draft the deed of incorporation by email, through online software systems such as 'Online Dossier', in-person or via post. The deed can be executed in the physical presence of a notary either by the entrepreneur or the person granted power of attorney to act on the entrepreneur's behalf. Notary rates are negotiable and can be billed at an hourly rate or as a fixed fee. This varies among notaries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>Cost (EUR) 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>3. Register ultimate beneficial owners in the UBO register</td>
<td>Time (days) Less than one day (online procedure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>As of September 27, 2020, companies and other legal entities incorporated in the Netherlands are obliged to register their ultimate beneficial owners (UBOs) in the UBO register. Registration can be done online by a civil law notary. The notary submits the UBO registration application to the Chamber of Commerce through an electronic application — the NAU (Notaris Applicatie UBO). The Chamber of Commerce approves the registration of the UBO and sends a confirmation letter to the respective entity as well as the UBO. UBO registration is a prerequisite for registering the company at the Chamber of Commerce.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost (EUR) No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>4. Register the company at the Chamber of Commerce and obtain the VAT identification number</td>
<td>Time (days) 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost (EUR) 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>The registration at the Chamber of Commerce is done by the civil law notary, usually through an online platform called 'Online Registreren Notaris' (ORN). After the required information is submitted, the Chamber of Commerce verifies it, together with the UBO registration information and registers the company in the Commercial Register. The company’s founders are jointly and severally liable for each legal act that takes place between the execution of the deed of incorporation and the company's registration at the Chamber of Commerce.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>The VAT registration is done along with company registration at the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce automatically forwards the registered company information to the Tax Authority, which in turn will create and deliver the VAT identification number to the entrepreneur.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>Cost (EUR) No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>5. Register as employer with the Tax Authority and the Social Security Authority</td>
<td>Time (days) 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>The company has to be registered with the Tax Authority in order to hire employees. There is a PDF-form available online that must be filled out and sent via post to the Tax Authority. Within six weeks of completing registration, the company receives a payroll tax number, a payroll tax return letter, and information on the contributions to be paid for the employed person's social security insurance scheme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost (EUR) No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost No cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

*Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.*
**Amsterdam**

Warehouse value: EUR 2,350,524 (USD 2,660,000)
Data as of: December 31, 2020

---

**Procedure 1. Obtain report on the soil conditions**
 Agency: Soil Researching Company
 Time: 30 days
 Cost: EUR 9,650

**Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 15 days
 Cost: EUR 217

**Procedure 3. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 98 days
 Cost: EUR 82,106

**Procedure 4*. Apply for Bibob clearance**
 Agency: The Public Administration Probity Screening (Bureau Bibob)
 Time: 7 days
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 5. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: Less than one day (online procedure)
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 6. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 7. Receive a random inspection**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 8. Obtain water connection**
 Agency: Waternet
 Time: 21 days
 Cost: EUR 2,167

**Procedure 9. Receive inspection for water and sewage connection**
 Agency: Waternet
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 10. Obtain water and sewage connection**
 Agency: Waternet
 Time: 21 days
 Cost: EUR 2,167

**Procedure 11. Notify building inspector upon completion of work**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: Less than one day (online procedure)
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 12. Receive final inspection**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 13. Obtain occupancy permit**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 14 days
 Cost: No cost

---

**Arnhem**

Warehouse value: EUR 2,350,524 (USD 2,660,000)
Data as of: December 31, 2020

---

**Procedure 1. Obtain report on the soil conditions**
 Agency: Soil Researching Company
 Time: 30 days
 Cost: EUR 9,650

**Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 21 days
 Cost: EUR 561

**Procedure 3. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 98 days
 Cost: EUR 46,273 (2.04% of warehouse value)

**Procedure 4*. Notify municipality of sewage connection at least 3 weeks in advance**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 14 days
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 5*. Request water connection**
 Agency: Vitens
 Time: 6 days
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 6. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 5 days
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 7. Receive inspection for water connection**
 Agency: Vitens
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 8. Obtain water connection**
 Agency: Vitens
 Time: 84 days
 Cost: EUR 762

**Procedure 9. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 10. Receive a random inspection**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 11. Notify building inspector upon completion of work**
 Agency: Construction permits division region Arnhem
 Time: 5 days
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 12. Receive final inspection**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 1 day
 Cost: No cost

**Procedure 13. Notification occupancy**
 Agency: Municipality
 Time: 14 days
 Cost: No cost

---

*Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.*
Procedure 1. Obtain report on the soil conditions
Agency: Soil Researching Company
Time: 30 days
Cost: EUR 9,650

Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities
Agency: Municipality
Time: 17 days
Cost: EUR 325

Procedure 3. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)
Agency: Municipality
Time: 98 days
Cost: EUR 63,512

Procedure 4*. Apply for Bibob clearance
Agency: The Public Administration Probity Screening (Bureau Bibob)
Time: 7 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 5*. Request water connection
Agency: Brabant Water
Time: 6 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 6. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 7. Obtain water connection
Agency: Brabant Water
Time: 56 days
Cost: EUR 1,067

Procedure 8*. Obtain sewage connection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 21 days
Cost: EUR 917

Procedure 9. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 10. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 11. Notify building inspector upon completion of work
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 12. Receive final inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 13. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality
Time: 14 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 14. Receive final inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 15. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality
Time: 14 days
Cost: No cost

* Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.
Procedure 1. Obtain report on the soil conditions
Agency: Soil Researching Company
Time: 30 days
Cost: EUR 9,650

Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities
Agency: Municipality
Time: 28 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 3. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)
Agency: Municipality
Time: 98 days
Cost: EUR 75,157 (EUR 17,585.75 for the first 455,000 of warehouse value + EUR 31.75 for every additional 1,000 euro in warehouse value)

Procedure 4*. Request water connection
Agency: Waterbedrijf Groningen
Time: 21 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 5*. Request sewage connection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 7 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 10*. Obtain sewage connection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 7 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 11. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 12. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 13. Notify building inspector upon completion of work
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 14. Receive final inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 15. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality
Time: 14 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 4*. Request sewage connection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 42 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 5*. Request water connection
Agency: Dunea
Time: 42 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 6. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 7. Receive inspection for water connection
Agency: Dunea
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 8. Obtain water connection
Agency: Dunea
Time: 56 days
Cost: EUR 862

Procedure 9. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 10. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 11. Notify building inspector upon completion of work
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 12. Receive final inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 13. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality
Time: 14 days
Cost: No cost

* Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.
### Maastricht

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Obtain report on the soil conditions</td>
<td>Soil Researching Company</td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td>EUR 9,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2*</td>
<td>Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>98 days</td>
<td>EUR 21,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4*</td>
<td>Request sewage connection permit</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5*</td>
<td>Request water connection</td>
<td>Evides</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Notify building inspector two days before construction begins</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>0.5 days</td>
<td>No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Receive inspection for water connection</td>
<td>Evides</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Obtain sewage connection</td>
<td>Municipality</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>EUR 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Obtain water connection</td>
<td>Evides</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>EUR 978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 8 days  
Cost: No cost  
*No cost for the first 15,000 in warehouse value + EUR 18.65 for every additional 1,000 euro in warehouse value.*

### Procedure 3*. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 98 days  
Cost: EUR 21,133  
*The municipality estimates the construction costs for a project based on unit prices. For a warehouse of 1300.6 meters squared, the construction fees are estimated to be 563,160 euro. When applying this to the municipal cost table, the fees for the permit would be 21,133.1 euro.*

### Procedure 4*. Request water connection
Agency: WML  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 5*. Apply for Bibob clearance
Agency: The Public Administration Probity Screening (Bureau Bibob)  
Time: 7 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 6*. Request sewage connection permit
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 6 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 7*. Request sewage connection permit
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 1,186  
*25% of the cost of the construction permit.*

### Procedure 8*. Obtain sewage connection
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 3,660

### Procedure 9*. Obtain water connection
Agency: WML  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 1,168

### Procedure 10*. Request sewage connection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 11*. Obtain water connection
Agency: Evides  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 978

### Procedure 12*. Request sewage connection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 13*. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 14*. Notify building inspector upon completion of work
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 5 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 15*. Receive final inspection
Agency: Evides  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 16*. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 14 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 1,186  
(25% of the cost of the construction permit)

### Procedure 3*. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 98 days  
Cost: EUR 42,358  
(EUR 334.85 for the first 15,000 in warehouse value + EUR 18.65 for every additional 1,000 euro in warehouse value)

### Procedure 4*. Request sewage connection permit
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 5*. Request water connection
Agency: Evides  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 6. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 5 days  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 7. Receive inspection for water connection
Agency: Evides  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 8. Obtain sewage connection
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 14 days  
Cost: EUR 177

### Procedure 9*. Obtain water connection
Agency: Evides  
Time: 21 days  
Cost: EUR 978

### Procedure 10. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

### Procedure 11. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality  
Time: 1 day  
Cost: No cost

*Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.*
Procedure 1. Obtain report on the soil conditions
Agency: Soil Researching Company
Time: 30 days
Cost: EUR 9,650

Procedure 2*. Hold a consultation with the municipal authorities
Agency: Municipality
Time: 25 days
Cost: EUR 3,000

Procedure 3. Submit a request for a building permit to the Municipal Executive (Mayor and Aldermen)
Agency: Municipality
Time: 98 days
Cost: EUR 48,541 (2.14% of warehouse value)

Procedure 4*. Request sewage connection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 21 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 5*. Request water connection
Agency: Vites
Time: 6 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 6*. Notify building inspector two days before construction begins
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 7. Receive inspection for water connection
Agency: Vites
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 8. Obtain water connection
Agency: Vites
Time: 84 days
Cost: EUR 762

Procedure 9. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 10. Obtain water connection
Agency: Evides
Time: 21 days
Cost: EUR 978

Procedure 11. Request and receive inspection at foundation stage
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 12. Receive a random inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 13. Notify building inspector upon completion of work
Agency: Municipality
Time: 5 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 14. Receive final inspection
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 15. Obtain occupancy permit
Agency: Municipality
Time: 14 days
Cost: No cost

Procedure 16. Travel distance
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost

Procedure 17. Travel time
Agency: Municipality
Time: 1 day
Cost: No cost
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure 10. Receive a random inspection</th>
<th>Agency: Municipality</th>
<th>Time: 1 day</th>
<th>Cost: No cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procedure 11. Notify building inspector upon completion of work</td>
<td>Agency: Municipality</td>
<td>Time: .5 days</td>
<td>Cost: No cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure 12. Receive final inspection</td>
<td>Agency: Municipality</td>
<td>Time: 1 day</td>
<td>Cost: No cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS IN THE NETHERLANDS – BUILDING QUALITY CONTROL INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>All cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building quality control index (0–15)</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of building regulations index (0–2)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How accessible are building laws and regulations in your economy? (0–1)</td>
<td>Available online; Free of charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which requirements for obtaining a building permit are clearly specified in the building regulations or on any accessible website, brochure or pamphlet? (0–1)</td>
<td>List of required documents; Fees to be paid; Required preapprovals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control before construction index (0–1)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which third-party entities are required by law to verify that the building plans are in compliance with existing building regulations? (0–1)</td>
<td>Licensed architect; Licensed engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control during construction index (0–3)</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of inspections (if any) are required by law to be carried out during construction? (0–2)</td>
<td>Inspections at various phases; Risk-based inspections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do legally mandated inspections occur in practice during construction? (0–1)</td>
<td>Mandatory inspections are always done in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality control after construction index (0–3)</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a final inspection required by law to verify that the building was built in accordance with the approved plans and regulations? (0–2)</td>
<td>Yes, final inspection is done by government agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do legally mandated final inspections occur in practice? (0–1)</td>
<td>Final inspection always occurs in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liability and insurance regimes index (0–2)</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which parties (if any) are held liable by law for structural flaws or problems in the building once it is in use (Latent Defect Liability or Decennial Liability)? (0–1)</td>
<td>Architect or engineer; Professional in charge of the supervision; Construction company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which parties (if any) are required by law to obtain an insurance policy to cover possible structural flaws or problems in the building once it is in use? (0–1)</td>
<td>No party is required by law to obtain insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional certifications index (0–4)</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the qualification requirements for the professional responsible for verifying that the architectural plans or drawings are in compliance with existing building regulations? (0–2)</td>
<td>Minimum number of years of experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the qualification requirements for the professional who supervises the construction on the ground? (0–2)</td>
<td>Minimum number of years of experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
### Getting Electricity in the Netherlands – Procedures Required to Obtain a New Electricity Connection, by City

**Data as of: December 31, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of utility:</th>
<th>Enduris</th>
<th>Enexis</th>
<th>Liander</th>
<th>Stedin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amhem</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1. Submit application to utility and receive quote

**Time (days):**

- Middelburg: 12
- Eindhoven: 8
- Enschede: 12
- Groningen: 10
- Maastricht: 7
- Amsterdam: 12
- Amhem: 12
- The Hague: 12
- Rotterdam: 12
- Utrecht: 12

**Comments:**

The customer applies for an electricity connection with the utility. Once the utility has received a complete application it will assess if the grid in its current capacity is able to handle the requested connection capacity. The utility then prepares and calculates the connection fees, no site inspection is required to issue a quote.

#### 2. Obtain external works from utility’s contractor

**Time (days):**

- Middelburg: 90
- Eindhoven: 90
- Enschede: 126
- Groningen: 126
- Maastricht: 90
- Amsterdam: 90
- Amhem: 112
- The Hague: 101
- Rotterdam: 112
- Utrecht: 120

**Cost (EUR):**

- Middelburg: 11,150 ([EUR 4,437 for capacity between 50 kVA and 200 kVA for the first 25 meters] + [EUR 3,428 for capacity between 3x160A and 3x250A for the first 25 meters] + [EUR 6,712.50 for EUR 53.70 per each additional meter])
- Eindhoven: 8,591 ([EUR 3,428 for capacity between 3x160A and 3x250A for the first 25 meters] + [EUR 6,652 for EUR 52.40 per each additional meter])
- Enschede: 11,352 ([EUR 4,802 for capacity between 100 kVA and 160 kVA for the first 25 meters] + [EUR 6,550 for EUR 52.40 per each additional meter])
- Groningen: 11,580 ([EUR 5,330 for capacity between 3x125A and 175kVA and for the first 25 meters] + [EUR 6,250 for EUR 50 per each additional meter])

The utility will sub-contract the works to a private firm. In this case, the works consist of laying out a cable from the warehouse to the closest supply source. According to Article 23 of the Electricity Law, utilities in the Netherlands have 18 weeks (126 days) to complete the external works. Maximum connection fees are fixed and set by the ACM (Autoriteit Consument & Markt) and include the physical works for a connection up to 25 meters. Before the electricity can be turned on, the client will need to show the relevant agency (the utility) a copy of the supply contract. Nowadays this is carried out by internal electronic communication between the supplier and the utility. This is done during the execution of the works and therefore gives no additional delay to the process.

#### 3. Sign contract with electricity supplier*

**Time (days):**

- Middelburg: 7
- Eindhoven: 7
- Enschede: 7
- Groningen: 7
- Maastricht: 7
- Amsterdam: 7
- Amhem: 7
- The Hague: 7
- Rotterdam: 7
- Utrecht: 7

**Cost (EUR):**

- Middelburg: No cost
- Eindhoven: No cost
- Enschede: No cost
- Groningen: No cost
- Maastricht: No cost
- Amsterdam: No cost
- Amhem: No cost
- The Hague: No cost
- Rotterdam: No cost
- Utrecht: No cost

In the Netherlands, the electricity market is free. The utility is a distributor of electricity, but not a provider. Therefore, in order to obtain electricity, once the client has received an EAN code from the utility, the client will need to choose and sign a contract with one of many suppliers.

#### 4. Obtain meter installation by meter company*

**Time (days):**

- Middelburg: 7
- Eindhoven: 7
- Enschede: 7
- Groningen: 7
- Maastricht: 7
- Amsterdam: 7
- Amhem: 7
- The Hague: 7
- Rotterdam: 7
- Utrecht: 7

**Cost (EUR):**

- Middelburg: No cost
- Eindhoven: No cost
- Enschede: No cost
- Groningen: No cost
- Maastricht: No cost
- Amsterdam: No cost
- Amhem: No cost
- The Hague: No cost
- Rotterdam: No cost
- Utrecht: No cost

The client must choose a meter company to install the meter for them. Utilities cannot install meters for clients with connections with a capacity larger than 3 x 80 Ampere. Before the electricity can be turned on, the client will need to show the relevant agency (the utility) a copy of the supply contract, via electronic communication.

*Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

* Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.
### Getting Electricity in Austria – Reliability of Supply and Transparency of Tariffs Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (0–8)</th>
<th>8 (all cities)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total duration and frequency of outages per customer a year (0–3)</td>
<td>3 (all cities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### System average interruption duration index (SAIDI)
- 0.20 (Eindhoven, Enchede, Groningen, Maastricht)
- 0.25 (Middelburg)
- 0.34 (The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht)
- 0.58 (Amsterdam, Arnhem)

#### System average interruption frequency index (SAIFI)
- 0.15 (Eindhoven, Enchede, Groningen, Maastricht)
- 0.23 (The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht)
- 0.24 (Middelburg)
- 0.32 (Amsterdam, Arnhem)

#### Mechanisms for monitoring outages (0–1)
- Does the distribution utility use automated tools to monitor outages? Yes (all cities)

#### Mechanisms for restoring service (0–1)
- Does the distribution utility use automated tools to restore service? Yes (all cities)

#### Regulatory monitoring (0–1)
- Does a regulator—that is, an entity separate from the utility—monitor the utility’s performance on reliability of supply? Yes (all cities)

#### Financial deterrents aimed at limiting outages (0–1)
- Does the utility either pay compensation to customers or face fines by the regulator (or both) if outages exceed a certain cap? Yes (all cities)

#### Communication of tariffs and tariff changes (0–1)
- Are effective tariffs available online? Yes (all cities)
- Are customers notified of a change in tariff ahead of the billing cycle? Yes (all cities)

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
### Registering Property in the Netherlands – Procedures Required to Register a Property, by City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property value: EUR 2,350,524</th>
<th>Amsterdam</th>
<th>Arnhem</th>
<th>Eindhoven</th>
<th>Enschede</th>
<th>Groningen</th>
<th>The Hague</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data as of: December 31, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notary conducts a title</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Amsterdam</strong></td>
<td><strong>Arnhem</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eindhoven</strong></td>
<td><strong>Enschede</strong></td>
<td><strong>Groningen</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>search at the Land</strong></td>
<td><strong>days</strong></td>
<td>EUR 2,258.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registry**</td>
<td></td>
<td>A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) a cadastral map (EUR 1.80) and a cadastral extract (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR 2,250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost (EUR)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) a cadastral map (EUR 1.80) and a cadastral extract (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR 1,500.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) a cadastral map (EUR 1.80) and a cadastral extract (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR 1,000.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) a cadastral map (EUR 1.80) and a cadastral extract (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR 1,000.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notary conducts a search</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>EUR 22.8.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 1,508.</td>
<td>EUR 1,008.</td>
<td>EUR 2,258.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>on the representation of the</strong></td>
<td><strong>days</strong></td>
<td>This fee is charged by the Chamber of Commerce to research the legal capacity of the seller and purchaser to represent the companies.</td>
<td>A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) a cadastral map (EUR 1.80) and a cadastral extract (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR 1,000.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>parties</strong>**</td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 3.05 is charged to access the annual accounts (of each company); EUR 2.65 for the articles of association (of each company); and EUR 3.05 for an authenticated commercial extract (of each company).</td>
<td>EUR 1,500.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost (EUR)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 141,031</td>
<td>EUR 1,500.</td>
<td>EUR 1,000</td>
<td>EUR 2,250.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Transfer Tax: 6% of property value for non-residential; 2% for residential use)</td>
<td>EUR 2,250.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Execution of the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>transfer deed</strong></td>
<td><strong>days</strong></td>
<td>EUR 141,031</td>
<td>EUR 1,500.</td>
<td>EUR 1,000</td>
<td>EUR 2,250.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registration of deed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Less than one day (online procedure)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>days</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>EUR 82.5 (for fully automatic registration)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registration with Tax</strong></td>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>Less than one day (online procedure)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>authority, Department</strong></td>
<td><strong>days</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registration and Succession</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cost (EUR)</strong></td>
<td>Included in Procedure 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.

*Simultaneous with a previous procedure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maastricht</th>
<th>Middelburg</th>
<th>Rotterdam</th>
<th>Utrecht</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less than one day (online procedure)</strong></td>
<td>EUR 1,008. A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) and cadastral map (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR1,000</td>
<td>EUR 1,008. A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) and cadastral map (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR1,000</td>
<td>EUR 2,258. A fraction of the cost is charged by the Land Registry to issue a registered title (EUR 2.95) and cadastral map (EUR 1.80). Most of the cost relates to the notarial fees (for the work performed under procedures 1, 2 and 3): EUR2,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the Dutch Civil Code it is mandatory to hire a civil law notary to perform the property registration process. The notary will conduct a title search at the Land Registry to check for ownership and encumbrances before executing the deed. A notarial deed is mandatory ("authentic deed"); and the notary verifies that the seller is indeed the owner. Notaries can consult the land register remotely via the Automatic Cadastral Registration (AKR).

All deeds are available online, as well as extracts from the cadastral map showing the relevant properties. The civil law notary then drafts the transfer deed.

| **Less than one day (online procedure)** | EUR 22.8. This fee is charged by the Chamber of Commerce to research the legal capacity of the seller and purchaser to represent the companies, EUR 3.05 is charged to access the annual accounts (of each company); EUR 2.65 for the names of legal representatives (of each company); EUR 2.65 for the articles of association (of each company); and EUR 3.05 for an authenticated commercial extract (of each company). |

When the parties to the transactions are companies (not individuals), the notary must verify with the Commercial Register from the Chamber of Commerce specific information regarding the parties (such as address, managing directors). The articles of association cannot be checked on-line. The civil law notary can have these sent to him by mail or fax. The notary will also check the Insolvency Registry, to verify whether either the buyer and or the seller have been declared bankrupted at the time of signing the deed and the registration with the Land Registry. This is important to verify that both the seller and the buyer have the right to enter into the transaction on behalf of the company.

| **1 day** | EUR 141,031 (Transfer Tax: 6% of property value for non-residential; 2% for residential use) |

The notary obtains an excerpt from the Office of Legal Security to verify whether certain third-party rights were granted over the property, e.g. through mortgages, rights to construct. A 30-year title search is included in the documents. The notary might request a full transcription, an inscription extract or a notification extract of transfer acts over 30 years affecting the property object to the transaction. The Office of Legal Security provides (i) "full transcription" of the title or of the judgment attributing the title: the date of acquisition of the full ownership or other right over the property, the terms and conditions of the acquisition including the purchase price, the existence of lease contracts exceeding nine years and information on the rights of third parties such as judgments, servitudes/easements and seizures affecting the property in question for the past 30 years and (ii) by “inscription” whether the right over the property is encumbered by a mortgage or a legal lien (beneficiary, amount, costs, term).

| **Less than one day (online procedure)** | EUR 82.5 (for fully automatic registration) |

Every notary deed must be registered with the Land Registry ("ingeschreven"). This can be done online. The registration fee of the Land Registry depends on the way the deed is submitted to the Land Registry: EUR 82.50 for full automatic registration (submitted essentially via KIK system and/or as XML file), EUR 144.50 for semi digital deed delivery for automatic registration (digitally submitted) and EUR 172.00 (144.50 + 27.50 as extra charge) for deed paper delivery for regular registration.

| **Less than one day (online procedure)** | Included in Procedure 3 |

After the execution of the notarial deed, a scan of the original deed is submitted by the civil-law notary into a secured online/digital registration system managed by the notarial professional organization (the "KNB": https://notarisnet.notaris.nl/cdr-centraal-digitaal-repertorium). The civil-law notary also enters into the registration system whether the deed contains transfer taxable aspects. The KNB then submits the registered notarial deeds with the additional information provided by the civil-law notary to the tax authorities digitally.

Registration with the Ministry of Finance, Tax Authority, Department Registration and Succession is done online: www.belastingdienst.nl. This is the official register of the Department Registration. Each notarial deed must be registered within 10 days with the Tax Authority who checks the deed for taxable aspects. The transfer tax is paid to the civil law notary, who will pay this tax to the Tax Authorities after registration. The transfer tax is 6% or 2% of the total purchase price or the market value, whichever is higher. Depending on the VAT-status of the entrepreneur, VAT (21%) may be applicable in lieu of the transfer tax. The deed itself is then returned with that statement to the civil law notary.
## Registering Property in the Netherlands – Quality of Land Administration Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Quality of the Land Administration Index (0–30)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Score (all cities)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability of Infrastructure Index (0–8)</strong></td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what format land title certificates are kept at the immovable property registry—in a paper format or in a computerized format (scanned or fully digital)? (0–2)</td>
<td>Computer/Scanned 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a comprehensive and functional electronic database for checking for encumbrances (liens, mortgages, restrictions and the like)? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what format cadastral plans are kept at the mapping agency—in a paper format or in a computerized format (scanned or fully digital)? (0–2)</td>
<td>Computer/Fully digital 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there an electronic database for recording boundaries, checking plans and providing cadastral information (geographic information system)? (0–1)</td>
<td>Single database 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a comprehensive and functional electronic database for checking for encumbrances (liens, mortgages, restrictions and the like)? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability of Infrastructure Index (0–8)</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency of Information Index (0–6)</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether information on land ownership is made publicly available without providing the title certificate number at the agency in charge of immovable property registration? (0–1)</td>
<td>Anyone who pays the official fee 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the list of documents that are required to complete all types of property transactions made publicly available—and if so, how? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes, online 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the applicable fee schedule for all types of property transactions at the agency in charge of immovable property registration made publicly available—and if so, how? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes, online 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the agency in charge of immovable property registration formally commit to deliver a legally binding document proving ownership within a specific timeframe—and if so, how does it communicate the service standard? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes, online 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a specific and independent mechanism for filing complaints about a problem that occurred at the agency in charge of immovable property registration? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there publicly available official statistics tracking the number of transactions at the immovable property registration agency? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are cadastral plans made publicly available? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Anyone who pays the official fee 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the applicable fee schedule for accessing maps of land plots made easily publicly available—and if so, how? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes, online 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the cadastral/mapping agency formally specifies the timeframe to deliver an updated cadastral plan—and if so, how does it communicate the service standard? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes, online 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a specific and independent mechanism for filing complaints about a problem that occurred at the cadastral or mapping agency? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Coverage Index (0–8)</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all privately held land plots in the economy formally registered at the immovable property registry? (0–2)</td>
<td>Yes 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all privately held land plots formally registered at the immovable property registry in the measured city? (0–2)</td>
<td>Yes 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all privately held land plots in the economy mapped? (0–2)</td>
<td>Yes 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all privately held land plots mapped in the measured city? (0–2)</td>
<td>Yes 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Dispute Resolution Index (0–8)</strong></td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the law require that all property sale transactions be registered at the immovable property registry to make them opposable to third parties? (0–1.5)</td>
<td>Yes 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the system of immovable property registration subject to a state or private guarantee? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a specific out-of-court compensation mechanism to cover for losses incurred by parties who engaged in good faith in a property transaction based on erroneous information certified by the immovable property registry? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the legal system require a control of legality of the documents necessary for a property transaction (e.g., checking the compliance of contracts with requirements of the law)? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the legal system require verification of the identity of the parties to a property transaction? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a national database to verify the accuracy of government issued identity documents? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long does it take on average to obtain a decision from the first-instance court for such a case (without appeal)? (0–3)</td>
<td>Less than a year 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there publicly available statistics on the number of land disputes in the first-instance court? (0–0.5)</td>
<td>No 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## REGISTERING PROPERTY IN THE NETHERLANDS – QUALITY OF LAND ADMINISTRATION INDEX (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equal access to property rights index (-2–0)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do unmarried men and unmarried women have equal ownership rights to property?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do married men and married women have equal ownership rights to property?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.*

*Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.*
## ENFORCING CONTRACTS IN THE NETHERLANDS – TIME AND COST TO RESOLVE A COMMERCIAL DISPUTE, BY CITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Filing and service</th>
<th>Trial and judgment</th>
<th>Enforcement of judgment</th>
<th>Total time</th>
<th>Attorney fees</th>
<th>Court costs</th>
<th>Enforcement costs</th>
<th>Total cost</th>
<th>Court structure and proceedings (-1–5)</th>
<th>Case management (0–6)</th>
<th>Court automation (0–5)</th>
<th>Alternative dispute resolution (0–3)</th>
<th>Total score (0–18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnhem</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eindhoven</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enschede</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maastricht</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: The cost values, expressed as % of claim, are rounded to the first decimal place. Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
### Quality of judicial processes index (0–18)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court structure and proceedings (1–5)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is there a court or division of a court dedicated solely to hearing commercial cases? (0–1.5)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Small claims court (0–1.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.a. Is there a small claims court or a fast-track procedure for small claims?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b. If yes, is self-representation allowed?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is pretrial attachment available? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Are new cases assigned randomly to judges? (0–1)</td>
<td>Yes, but manual</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does a woman’s testimony carry the same evidentiary weight in court as a man’s? (-1–0)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Case management (0–6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Time standards (0–1)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.a. Are there laws setting overall time standards for key court events in a civil case?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b. If yes, are the time standards set for at least three court events?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.c. Are these time standards respected in more than 50% of cases?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Adjournments (0–1)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.a. Does the law regulate the maximum number of adjournments that can be granted?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b. Are adjournments limited to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c. If rules on adjournments exist, are they respected in more than 50% of cases?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 3. Can two of the following four reports be generated about the competent court: (i) time to disposition report; (ii) clearance rate report; (iii) age of pending cases report; and (iv) single case progress report? (0–1) | No | 0.0 |

| 4. Is a pretrial conference among the case management techniques used before the competent court? (0–1) | No | 0.0 |
| 5. Are there any electronic case management tools in place within the competent court for use by judges? (0–1) | No | 0.0 |
| 6. Are there any electronic case management tools in place within the competent court for use by lawyers? (0–1) | No | 0.0 |

### Court automation (0–4)

| 1. Can the initial complaint be filed electronically through a dedicated platform within the competent court? (0–1) | No | 2.0 |
| 2. Is it possible to carry out service of process electronically for claims filed before the competent court? (0–1) | No | |
| 3. Can court fees be paid electronically within the competent court? (0–1) | Yes | 1.0 |
| 4. Publication of judgments (0–1) | Answer | |
| 4.a. Are judgments rendered in commercial cases at all levels made available to the general public through publication in official gazettes, in newspapers or on the internet or court website? | Yes | 1.0 |
| 4.b. Are judgments rendered in commercial cases at the appellate and supreme court level made available to the general public through publication in official gazettes, in newspapers or on the internet or court website? | Yes | |

### Alternative dispute resolution (0–3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Arbitration (0–1.5)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.a. Is domestic commercial arbitration governed by a consolidated law or consolidated chapter or section of the applicable code of civil procedure encompassing substantially all its aspects?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b. Are there any commercial disputes—aside from those that deal with public order or public policy—that cannot be submitted to arbitration?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.c. Are valid arbitration clauses or agreements usually enforced by the courts?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Mediation/Conciliation (0–1.5)</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.a. Is voluntary mediation or conciliation available?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b. Are mediation, conciliation or both governed by a consolidated law or consolidated chapter or section of the applicable code of civil procedure encompassing substantially all their aspects?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c. Are there financial incentives for parties to attempt mediation or conciliation (i.e., if mediation or conciliation is successful, a refund of court filing fees, income tax credits or the like)?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Subnational Doing Business and Doing Business databases.

Note: Data for Amsterdam are not considered official until published in the Doing Business 2021 report.
Acknowledgments

Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands was produced by a team led by Carlos I. Mejía, Tommaso Rooms and Julien Vilquin. The team comprised Razvan Gabriel Antonescu, Leo Henricus Bouma, Julia Constanze Braunmiller, Federico Cardenas Chacon, Lila Marta Fordos, Philipp Hlatky, Valerie Erica Marechal, Maximilian Martin Meduna, Hannelore Maria L. Niesten, Enrique Orellana Tamez, Madalina Papahagi, Alberto Pellicanò, Kimberley Maria Margarethta Roeten, Ana Santillana, Veerle Margo Verhey, Marilina Vieira and Lisa Weekers. The report was prepared under the direction of Pilar Salgado Otóñel.

The team is grateful for valuable peer review comments provided by colleagues from across the World Bank Group. Mohammad Amin, Isfandyar Zaman Khan, Austin Kiroy reviewed the full text. Experts in each of the five areas measured were consulted when drafting the individual chapters: Youmna Al Hourani, Jean Nicolas Arlet, Karim O. Belayachi, Erica Bosio, Camille Bourguignon, Klaus Decker, Marie Lily Delion, Viktoria Ereshchenko, Maria Antonia Quesada Gamez, Marton Kerkapoly, Raman Maroz, Federic Meunier, Nadia Novik, Oleksandra Popova, Jayashree Srinivasan, and Alessio Zanelli.

Julie Biau, Catherine Doody, Veronique Jacobs, Norman Loayza, Massimiliano Paolucci, Ralf Retter, Linda Van Gelder and Gallina Vincelette provided guidance and leadership. Antonio Borges, Daria Goldstein, Anastasia Iarovenko, Joyce A. Ibrahim, Anna Karpet, Trinor Mici, Monique Pellox, Patrizia Poggi, Serge Randriamiharisoa, Lada Strelkova, Goran Tinjic, Erick Tjong and Nina Vucenik provided valuable assistance at various stages of the project. The website (http://www.doingbusiness.org/EU4) was developed by Manasi Amalraj, Varun V. Doiphode, Anna Maria Kojzar, Akash Pradhan and Shrikant Bhaskar Shinde. The report was edited by Bronwen Brown, and the layout produced by Luis Liceaga.

The study was funded by the European Commission, Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy. It was undertaken under the auspices of the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Ministry of Finance of Austria; the Federal Public Service Finance and Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in Belgium; and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy of the Netherlands.

The project team extends special thanks for information and assistance provided throughout the project to (i) the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, the Business Service Portal, the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Justice, the Office of Metrology and Surveying, the regulator for electricity and natural gas markets E-Control, as well as district courts, federal states, local tax offices, municipalities, and regional courts across Austria; (ii) the Wallonia Export-Investment Agency (AWEX), the Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT), the Brussels Agency for Business Support (hub.brussels), the Federal Public Service (FPS) Economy, SMEs, Self-employed and Energy, FPS Finance, FPS Justice, FPS Social Security, the Commission for Electricity and Gas Regulation (CREG), the Brussels Regulatory Commission for the Gas and Electricity Markets (BRUGEL), the Flemish Regulator of the Electricity and Gas Market (VREG), the Walloon Energy Commission (CWAPE), as well as local commercial courts, local tax offices and municipalities across Belgium; (iii) the Invest in Holland Network, the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce (KVK), the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects (BNA), the Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency (Kadaster), the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets, the Council for the Judiciary as well as local courts and municipalities in the Netherlands.

Data collection was carried out in collaboration with (i) the Austrian Chamber of Civil Law Notaries (team led by Stephan Verweijen and Stephan Matyk-d’Anjony), the Austrian Chamber of Tax Advisors and Public Accountants (team led by Anna Weber), Brauneis Klauser Pröndl Rechtsanwälte GmbH (team led by Alexander Klauser), the Federal Chamber of Architects and Chartered Engineering Consultants, Heinisch Weber Rechtsanwälte OG (team led by Lukas Weber), the Austrian Bar Österreichischer Rechtsanwaltskammertag (ÖRAK); (ii) Monard Law (team led by Xiufang (Ava) Tu and Karen Braeckmans), the Royal Federation of Belgian Notaries and the International Council of the Belgian notariat, the Order of Architects (team led by Koen Vidts, Deborah Ashimwe and Hans Vanden Driessche), the Walloon Union of Architects (team led by Gaëtan Doquire); (iii) ParentzKrons (team led by Joost Fanoy and Michiel Martin, including Karlijn de Groes) and the BNA (team led by Alexander Pastoors) in the Netherlands.

More than 550 lawyers, notaries, engineers, electricians, architects, construction experts, utility providers, public officials, judges and enforcement agents contributed to Doing Business in the European Union 2021: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. The team would like to express its special gratitude to the national and local public officials and members of the judiciary who participated in the project and who made valuable comments during the consultation and data review period. The names of those wishing to be acknowledged are listed on the following pages.
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