



Regionale Sociale Dienst

Hoeksche Waard



Civic integration

In the Hoeksche Waard



**Samen
dát werkt**





CIVIC INTERGRATION IN THE HOEKSCHE WAARD

Purpose of this brochure

On January 1, 2007, the Wet Inburgering (Dutch Integration Act) came into effect. This brochure explains what civic integration means for you as a resident of Hoeksche Waard and where you can go if you have any questions. Hoeksche Waard includes the municipalities of Binnenmaas, Cromstrijen, Korendijk, Oud-Beijerland and Strijen.

Who enforces the Wet Inburgering?

Regional Social Service Hoeksche Waard is the organization that enforces the Wet Inburgering in the region of Hoeksche Waard. This means that if you have any questions about civic integration, we can answer them for you. You can find our contact information at the last page of this brochure.

What is civic integration?

Civic integration means learning how to speak and understand the Dutch language and getting to know the ins and outs of Dutch society. This makes it easier for you to carry out everyday activities such as running errands, going to a physician and looking for a job.

What do I have to do to become civically integrated?

In order to become civically integrated you will have to do an exam. This is the civic integration exam. If you pass this exam you will receive a diploma and you will be civically integrated.

Am I eligible for civic integration?

You are eligible for civic integration if you wish to live and work in the Netherlands for a long period of time but you do not have a Dutch passport.

Am I not eligible for civic integration?

There may be various reasons for you not to be eligible for civic integration. The most common reasons are:

- You are under the age of 18.
- You are over the age of 65.
- You have an EU passport.
- You have Swiss nationality.
- You are of school age (compulsory education). Everyone between the age of 5 and 18 is obliged to follow an education.
- You already have the Dutch nationality through naturalization.
- You have lived in the Netherlands for eight years when you were between the age of 5 and 18.
- You have sufficient diplomas and/or certificates.
- You are not physically or mentally able to pass the civic integration exam (this can only be assessed by a physician who is authorized to carry out the integration examination).

For a complete survey of all diplomas and certificates that will grant you exemption for the civic integration obligation, please visit the website www.hoemoetikinburgeren.nl.





Man or woman of the clergy

If you have a religious occupation you are considered a 'man or woman of the clergy'. Examples of such professions are: minister, imam, rabbi, minister of religion or missionary. If you have one of these professions, different rules may apply to your civic integration. In this case we recommend that you contact us. We will provide you with further, more detailed information.

What do I do when I am eligible for civic integration?

In order to become civically integrated, you have to pass the civic integration exam within a set period of time. We will send you a letter stating the date before which you must have passed the civic integration exam:

- If you have received a residence permit before January 1, 2007, you must pass the exam within five years counting from the day you received a letter on your civic integration from us.
- If you received a residence permit after January 1, 2007, you must pass the exam within five years counting from the day you received a letter from the IND in which it is stated that a residence permit was issued to you.

Only if you have passed the basic civic integration exam you must pass the civic integration exam within three years and six months.



Civic integration exam

You can apply for this exam at the Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, DUO (Service Achievement Education). With this exam you are tested on your Dutch language skills, your reading and writing skills and your knowledge of Dutch society. If you want to know more about the exam or if you want to know how to apply for the exam, we recommend that you visit the (Dutch) website www.inburgeren.nl.

How do I prepare for the civic integration exam?

There are special courses available that enable you to prepare for the civic integration exam. If you are looking for a school that offers a course in civic integration, we recommend that you go to a school with the 'civic integration hallmark'.

We cooperate with the Da Vinci College, a school with the civic integration hallmark. We can refer you to this school.

If you want to choose a suitable school with the civic integration hallmark yourself, the (Dutch) website www.blikopwerk.nl may be of help to you.

Remember that you are not obliged to attend a civic integration course. These courses are not compulsory. You may also prepare for the civic integration exam on your own.



Are there any costs involved?

The costs for civic integration depend on your personal situation. The contribution for our civic integration courses at the Da Vinci College generally amounts to € 270.00. Please take into account that you will also have to purchase various textbooks and that travelling expenses will not be reimbursed.

If you do not have the financial means to pay the contribution of € 270.00 at once, you may choose to pay this amount in instalments, with a maximum of 12 instalments.

If you are on social security, any costs for books and any travelling expenses can be reimbursed. Please contact us for details.

If you decide to choose a school for your civic integration exam yourself, you have two options as regards the financial aspect:

- You can pay the course contribution yourself.
- You can request for a loan for the civic integration course contribution at the DUO.

In both situations part of the costs of the civic integration exam may be reimbursed via the DUO, once you have passed the civic integration exam. However, there are certain conditions involved. For instance, you will have to pass the civic integration exam within three years, and if you attended a civic integration course at a school with the civic integration hallmark. 70 percent of the costs of your civic integration course via the DUO can be reimbursed with a maximum of € 3,000.00.

More information?

For more information on loans or on how to request reimbursement of the costs after completing the civic integration course, please visit the (Dutch) website of the DUO: www.inburgeren.nl.





Obligations

Civic integration is not only a right, it is also an obligation. This means that you may be fined if you do not respond to our invitation or if you do not pass your civic integration exam in time. These obligations also apply when you are attending a civic integration course that you have chosen yourself.

Who can answer my questions about civic integration?

If you have any questions about civic integration, you can consult the website www.hoemoetikinburgeren.nl. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you do not have access to the Internet or if you have any questions that are not answered on the website.

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*The legal procedure is included in chapter 9
of the Dutch 'Algemene wet bestuursrecht'.*



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