University of Amsterdam

Start Newsletter
for international students

See you soon in Amsterdam
We wish you a safe and enjoyable journey to Amsterdam! We're glad to meet
In preparation for your arrival in Amsterdam, you can now book an appointment to open a Dutch bank account in the Netherlands, either with the ING bank or bunq, bank of the free.

Tips for your personal safety
Amsterdam is a small city with a pleasant atmosphere where you will soon feel at home. Recently, it was ranked as one of the safest cities worldwide and the second safest city in Europe. However, incidents do occur, so it is recommended to take normal safety precautions.

- Make sure you always watch your belongings, especially in crowded places, when waiting at a bus stop, travelling by public transport, shopping and so on, because pickpocketing occurs.
- It is recommended to avoid walking or cycling alone in poorly lit and unpopulated areas after dark.
- Do not use ATMs at night in quiet areas.
- Bike theft is common in Amsterdam. If you have a bicycle, make sure to always lock both wheel and frame properly, preferably by locking it to a bicycle rack.

The emergency number for the Netherlands is 112. Non-emergency is 0900-8844, or if you’re outside the Netherlands +31 (0)34 357-8844.

Police stations in Amsterdam

Dutch bank account
In preparation for your arrival in Amsterdam, you can now book an appointment to open a Dutch bank account in the Netherlands, either with the ING bank or bunq, bank of the free.

Opening a Dutch bank account
Public transport card with discount for international students

In the Netherlands, you need an OV-chipcard to travel on train, bus, metro and tram. Choosing a suitable subscription is a complicated process, especially for international students. That is why ISIC created the ISIC Mobility card, a custom-made OV-chipcard for international students with discount on trains. Order the ISIC Mobility card prior to your arrival in Amsterdam and pick it up at your arrival day on 16 or 19 August. If you cannot be there ISIC will send the card to your Dutch address. Do not wait too long as stock is limited!

On 16 and 19 August, it will only be possible to pick up pre-registered ISIC cards. Unfortunately, it’s not possible to register on the spot for an ISIC card. ISIC is an independent organisation and not related to the UvA. For questions, please visit the ISIC website.

Regular card
In case you would like to buy a regular OV-chipkaart, go to the NS website or to the Helpdesk at Amsterdam Central Station. Go to online journey planner 9292 for real time journey advice.
Student associations

Student associations promote and protect student interests and organise activities ranging from excursions to book discounts. Each faculty or department has its own association that plays an important role.

In addition, there are student unions like ASVA that represent the interests of all students. Student associations such as ISN look after the interests of international students.

Find your student association →

CREA cultural student centre

CREA, the UvA’s own cultural centre, is the place to meet creative minds. There’s a theatre, a music hall, rehearsal studios and a café. CREA organises a wide range of courses, in music, fine arts, dance, writing, media and more. In the evenings: movies, stand-up comedy or debate. The CREA café is the perfect place to grab a coffee (or beer) and meet (new) friends. Right in the middle at the Roeterseiland Campus!

Go to CREA →
UvA wireless service

UvA wireless offers students secure wireless access to the UvA network from various locations. To make sure you can use the network once you are in Amsterdam, configure your device for the UvA network beforehand. You will need your UvA-net ID to do so.

[Read more →](#)

Software discount

As a UvA student, you can purchase software - and sometimes hardware as well - from Surfspot at substantial discount prices using your UvA-net ID to login. The website is available in English. If you need help, visit the [Surfspot Customer Service page](#).

[Surfspot →](#)

Study centres

You can use the UvA study centres with a fast internet connection for any work requiring a computer, either for a short time or longer.

[Study centres and opening hours →](#)

Previous Start Newsletters

The Start Newsletter is sent from June to the beginning of September. Previous editions are available online.

[Previous editions Start Newsletter →](#)