

- 4 Establish contacts with your fellow workers from day one at a new job. Exchange phone numbers. Try to inform each other about issues at work. Build a feeling of solidarity. In case of conflict you'll be stronger together than on your own.
- 5 After your contract has finished, make sure you get all your back payment, including your holiday pay (around 8% of your gross monthly wage) and unused vacation days.
- 6 Your work might be regulated by means of a collective bargaining agreement (CAO, Collectieve ArbeidsOvereenkomst). If you are working through a temporary work agency, the Dutch temp agency CAO applies to you. Recent versions in English, Polish and Dutch you can find here:
<http://www.abu.nl/publicaties/cao>
- 7 Most workers are entitled to zorgtoeslag from the government. This monthly allowance could save you up to half of your health insurance fee. You can apply for this through:
<http://www.toeslagen.nl>
- 8 Make sure you get the jaaropgaaf from your boss, so you can fill in your tax return. Tax forms can be found on:
<http://www.belastingdienst.nl/english/>
<http://www.belastingdienst.nl/deutsch/>

This leaflet was published in September 2014. By the time you read it some information might be outdated. So always double check with more up-to-date information sources. More information can also be found on the following website:

<http://labourrights.vrijebond.org/>

In case you are looking for mutual support from fellow workers, you can also contact us:

Anarchistische Groep Amsterdam - Vrije Bond
aga@agamsterdam.org
<http://agamsterdam.org>
postbus 16521
1001 RA Amsterdam



Or pass by our library on Saturdays from 2 to 6 pm:
Eerste Schinkelstraat 14-16, Amsterdam

There are many groups and people involved in the Vrije Bond in the Netherlands and in large parts of Belgium. Check the website for contact details:
<http://www.vrijebond.org/groepen/>
Or write to the secretariat to get in contact with members in your vicinity:
secretariaat@vrijebond.nl



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As workers, we are vulnerable when we are unfamiliar with our rights. Especially foreign workers in the Netherlands all too often get taken advantage of. This may be due to a lack of available information on basic workers' rights in the Netherlands in languages other than Dutch. With this pamphlet we hope to change that and to encourage solidarity between workers, so we can defend ourselves against employers looking to exploit us. Please share it's content with your fellow workers. Of course the rights listed below are only our basic rights. We'll have to fight for it if we want more!

On our site you can find this pamphlet in many translations, if you have a translation to add, please send it to us.



www.labourrights.vrijebond.org

Working times & breaks

- 1 A shift may not exceed 12 hours. A working week may last no more than 60 hours. When you make a week of 60 hours it should be compensated because you are not allowed to work more than 55 hours a week on average over in 4 weeks. After 16 weeks this number becomes an average of 48 hours.
- 2 You are entitled to a mandatory 30 minute break for every 5 and a half hours you work. (You have to take this break!) If you work for more than 10 hours this becomes 45 minutes. This can be made up of three breaks of 15 minutes spread throughout the 10 hours. This break is not paid.

Health & safety

- 3 A boss is responsible for the health and safety of his/her workers. This means providing a safe working environment, safe tools and vehicles, proper instructions regarding safe operation of those tools and vehicles, and proper precautions for working with (potentially) hazardous substances.
- 4 When you are physically unable to do your work, you are, in most cases, entitled to sick pay. Depending on the type of contract you have the amount of sick pay can differ. Take into account that many contracts say you won't get paid the first two days, these days are called wachtdagen.
- 5 Regarding sick leave: When you fall ill the boss is not allowed to ask the worker what is the cause of the illness. You are free to tell them if you wish, but they cannot make you tell them.



Payment

- 6 For workers between 23 and 67 years of age the legal minimum wage is €8,63 gross an hour based on a 40 hour work week. This is €69,01 for an 8 hour day, €345,05 per week and €1.495,20 gross per month. If you are not paid an hourly wage but instead receive 'piece wage', you should be able to earn at least this minimum wage while doing your work at a 'normal' pace.

Contracts

- 7 In principle a verbal labour agreement has the same validity as a written contract. However it is hard to prove the details of the agreement when there is no physical evidence. Always get a copy of the agreement on paper, by e-mail or text message!
- 8 When a boss wants to fire you he/she has to state the reason in writing. When not in writing, the contract continues and the boss is still obliged to pay you your wages. Immediate dismissal is only allowed during a probation time.
- 9 People without residence permit (verblijfsvergunning) are lawfully entitled to their wages after having worked and to regular health and safety protection while at work. (A boss however, is not allowed to hire people without a residence permit).



The infamous 'zero-hour' contract

- 10 In the Netherlands contracts can be made for zero hours. Unfortunately with most zero-hour contracts you are obliged to come to work when the boss calls you to do so. When you want to quit you have to give a month's notice. This doesn't mean you can not try to leave immediately. Just check whether or not you are doing this legally, so you know what risk you are taking.
- 11 There is also another, very important regulation: When an employee works more than his/her contracted hours for three consecutive months, the contract changes to that new average of hours!

Some suggestions for (migrant)workers in the Netherlands

- 1 Keep your own administration! Save pay slips, keep a roster of your working hours and save all information you get from your boss on paper or email. Also write down addresses and names of companies you are working for.
- 2 Never hand over any documentation, especially passport and work permit, to anyone. These are important personal possessions and in the hands of others they can be used to pressure you into doing things you don't want to do.
- 3 Never sign any documents without fully understanding their meaning. Ask a copy in a language you understand and decide whether you want (legal) advice on it.

