



National Office for Identity Data  
Ministry of the Interior and  
Kingdom Relations

# The Personal Records Database (BRP): for the government and for you

In the Netherlands, everyone is required to report things like the birth of a child or a change of address to the municipality where they live. But what does the government actually do with all this information?

This brochure explains the various kinds of personal data recorded in the Personal Records Database (BRP) and what it's used for. It also sets out your rights and obligations. This brochure is not just for people currently living in the Netherlands; if you're coming from abroad and will be staying in the Netherlands for an extended period, you should read this brochure to find out what information you need to provide and how to report it.

## Why is the Personal Records Database important?

The Dutch government needs to have up-to-date information about the people living in the Netherlands. It needs this information to issue passports, identity cards and driving licences, but also to know who can vote in elections, who is eligible for benefits and who needs to pay municipal taxes. Organisations like the Tax and Customs Administration, benefit agencies and pension funds also use this information to make sure their decisions are the right ones for the people they serve. The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has tasked all municipalities in the Netherlands with keeping the Personal Records Database up to date and correct. This is a legal requirement set out in the Personal Records Database Act.

## What personal data?

If you live in or have lived in the Netherlands, your personal data is recorded in the Personal Records Database, or BRP. This includes information like:

- your name
- your date, place and country of birth
- your address
- your citizen service number (BSN)
- your parents' names
- your nationality (and residence status if applicable)
- your marital status
- your children's names
- your passport and identity card
- your right to vote.

## How does the government get all this personal data?

There is data that you must provide yourself: for example, if you change your address, have a baby, get married abroad, or if a family member dies. Some data is automatically collected or updated. For example, if you get married in the Netherlands, the registrar of births, deaths and

marriages reports the change in your marital status to the municipality you live in.

## If you want to live in the Netherlands

If you come to the Netherlands from another country and you intend to stay longer than four months, you need to register with the municipality where you will be living. You must do this within five days after arriving in the Netherlands. You must have a legal right to live in the Netherlands. This means you must be a Dutch national or a national of a member state of the European Union, the European Economic Area or Switzerland, or you must have a valid residence permit.

## A unique citizen service number for everyone

Your citizen service number (BSN) is your own personal ID code for your contacts with government services. This number helps you identify yourself and protect your identity. Everyone is assigned a BSN when their details are first registered in the BRP. This includes newborn babies – when the parent registers the birth, the child gets a BSN right away. Your BSN is on your Dutch passport, driving license and identity card. Having a BSN offers you and the government a number of benefits. It simplifies your contacts with the municipality and other government organisations, for example. When you start a job and you give your BSN to your employer, they will use it to arrange things for you with the Tax and Customs Administration, the employee pension fund, and certain other organisations. The healthcare system also uses your BSN. You may be asked for it when you visit your doctor, go to hospital, collect a prescription from the pharmacy or apply for home care. For more information, visit [www.government.nl](http://www.government.nl).

## Your privacy is well protected

The BRP contains personal data that is not in the public domain. The government takes great pains to protect everyone's privacy and only uses your data to carry out its tasks properly.

## What are your rights?

When you register in the BRP for the first time, you will be given a copy of the information that is registered. This copy is free of charge. If you move abroad for a time and then return to the Netherlands, you will also receive a free copy of the data held on you in the BRP.

You can review the data held on you in the BRP at the offices of your municipality, free of charge. If you require a paper copy of the data held on you, the municipality will normally charge a fee for this service. You can also review your data on [mijn.overheid.nl](http://mijn.overheid.nl).

If any of your data is incorrect or incomplete, you can ask the municipality to correct or update it. When you do this, the municipality will ask you for supporting documentation. Aside from a few specific exceptions set out in the Personal Records Database Act, you cannot have any information deleted from the BRP.

You may ask the municipality not to provide your data to specific institutions. If you wish to make such a request, contact your municipality.

You can request a list of the institutions to which your data has been provided in recent years from the municipality where you are registered. This list is free of charge. For a general list of the type of institutions to which your data may be provided in certain situations, go to [www.wiekrijgtmijngegevens.nl](http://www.wiekrijgtmijngegevens.nl).

#### **What if you want to exercise your data protection rights?**

Any request to exercise any of your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) should be sent to the municipality where you are registered. You will receive a decision on your request within one month.

#### **What if you have questions or complaints?**

Every municipality in the Netherlands has a data protection officer who makes sure that privacy laws are followed. You can get in touch with the data protection officer by contacting your municipality. If you have a complaint about how your municipality is handling your personal data, you can file a complaint with the Data Protection Authority, the external body that monitors compliance with privacy legislation. You can do this either online or by phoning +31 (0)88 180 5250.

#### **What are your obligations?**

Whenever you have any contact with government services, you must be able to identify yourself with a valid form of identification.

If the municipality where you live asks you to, you must provide further information about your data in the BRP.

If you move to a different address in the Netherlands, you must inform the municipality from four weeks before you move to no later than five days after you move.

If you are going abroad for an extended period (more than eight months), you must notify your municipality within five days before your departure. When you return, if your personal data has changed while you were away from the Netherlands (for example, if you got married or had a baby abroad), you need to make sure that you will be able to present all original documents relating to this change when you return to the Netherlands.

If you are moving to the Netherlands from abroad (or returning after an extended stay abroad), you must register with the municipality where you will be living within five days of arriving in the Netherlands. If you also need to register your partner and/or children, all of you must appear in person at the offices of the municipality. Bring originals of all the documents you need to confirm your identity, marital status and address in the Netherlands. At a minimum, you will need to bring your passport and, if applicable, documentation proving that you are living in the Netherlands legally. Documents that may be required include: birth certificates (for yourself and your children), marriage certificates (including from previous marriages), and a rental contract or a contract of sale for your home in the Netherlands or proof that you are entitled to lodge with the primary resident of a property.

In the following situations, you will not be able to register with the municipality directly:

- If you are not a Dutch national and do not have a valid residence permit. In this case, you must first apply for a residence permit at an office of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND). For more information, see [ind.nl/en](http://ind.nl/en).
- If you have requested asylum and are staying in an asylum seekers' centre operated under the authority of the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA), the COA will register you for your first six months in the Netherlands. After this period, or if you leave the centre earlier, you must register with the municipality where you will be living.
- If you have lived in one of the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, you must provide proof that you have deregistered from that location. This is to prevent people being registered in two places within the Kingdom of the Netherlands at the same time.

#### **Registering as a non-resident**

If you come from another country and will be staying in the Netherlands for less than four months, please read the brochure on registering for a short-term stay in the Netherlands, which can be found on [www.government.nl](http://www.government.nl).

#### **Questions**

If you still have any questions after reading this brochure, contact your municipality.

#### **Publication information**

*BRP Brochure AVG 20201207 Engels*

This brochure is a publication of the National Office for Identity Data (RvIG), part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Kingdom Relations. No rights may be derived from the information presented in this brochure.

*December 2020*