

The abdication and investiture in the Netherlands on 30 April 2013

On 28 January 2013 Queen Beatrix announced her abdication. The Queen's abdication and the investiture of King Willem-Alexander, now Prince of Orange, will take place on 30 April 2013 in Amsterdam. This document provides background information on the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Royal House, the abdication, the investiture and press facilities.

This factsheet was jointly compiled by De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam, the Royal Household, the House of Representatives and the Senate of the States General, the municipality of Amsterdam, the Queen's Office and the Ministries of General Affairs, the Interior & Kingdom Relations, Foreign Affairs and Defence.

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1. The Kingdom of the Netherlands: a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy

The Kingdom of the Netherlands consists of four countries: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten. Since 10 October 2010 the Caribbean islands Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba have had the special status of public bodies within the Netherlands' constitutional structure, and are collectively called the Caribbean Netherlands. Together, the three countries and the three public bodies form the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

The Netherlands comprises an area of 41,526 km² and has around 16.7 million inhabitants. It has a North Sea coastline and shares borders with Germany and Belgium. More than 18% of the Netherlands' surface area is water and a large part of the country lies below sea level. Dikes and water defences shield the Netherlands and the Dutch people from the sea.

The Netherlands is made up of 12 provinces and 408 municipalities. Its capital city is Amsterdam. Some interesting facts about Amsterdam:

- Amsterdam has more bicycles (about 881,000) than residents (800,000). Every day, 58% of Amsterdammers use their bikes to get to work, school or other destinations.
- Amsterdam's population includes around 180 different nationalities.
- Amsterdam has around 40 parks, making it one of Europe's greenest cities. Its most famous parks are the Vondelpark, the Sarphatipark and the Westerpark.
- Amsterdam has 165 canals and 1,281 bridges. The city's waterways aren't only used for transport and travel: many people live on the water too, in one of around 2,500 houseboats.
- With 51 museums, Amsterdam is a must for lovers of art and culture. The city's best known museums include the Van Gogh Museum, the Rijksmuseum, the Anne Frank House, the Stedelijk Museum (modern and contemporary art) and the Hermitage Amsterdam.

Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands

The Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands was first adopted in 1954 and has been amended several times in the intervening years. All countries within the Kingdom now have equal status. The Charter states that the countries are autonomous in their internal affairs. It also provides that they will lend one another assistance and support, and it

regulates the constitutional relationship between the constituent countries of the Kingdom. The Charter may be amended only with the consent of all members of the Kingdom. The Dutch Constitution and the constitutions of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten are subordinate to the Charter.

Kingdom affairs

The Charter stipulates that the Kingdom as a whole is responsible for a number of areas. These 'Kingdom affairs' include the maintenance of the independence and the defence of the Kingdom, Dutch nationality and foreign relations. The Council of Ministers for the Kingdom, which deals with Kingdom affairs, consists of the Dutch Cabinet and the Ministers Plenipotentiary of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten. Laws affecting the Kingdom as a whole are called Kingdom Acts.

All other matters are national affairs and are dealt with autonomously by the individual countries of the Kingdom. The Charter provides that every country must safeguard the Kingdom's values, respecting human rights and the principles of legal certainty and good governance.

Constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy

The monarch is the head of state of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a role performed since 1980 by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix. On 30 April 2013, the Queen will be succeeded by her eldest son, the Prince of Orange, who will then become King Willem-Alexander.

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, meaning that the position of the monarch is laid down in the Constitution. The Constitution lays down that the monarch and the ministers together constitute the government.

Since 1848, the Netherlands has also been a parliamentary democracy, a system in which ministers are accountable to the elected parliament and responsible for acts of government by the monarch.

The Dutch parliament, known officially as the States General, consists of a lower house – the House of Representatives – and an upper house – the Senate. The former's 150 members of parliament are directly elected by the Dutch people at least once every four

years. The Senate's 75 members are elected by the members of the Netherlands' provincial councils, the directly elected assemblies in each of the Netherlands' 12 provinces.

The main tasks of the House of Representatives are to scrutinise the work of the government and to co-legislate. It also plays an important part in the formulation of government policy. Members of parliament are granted certain rights to enable them to perform their duties as effectively as possible. For example, MPs have the right to submit bills themselves or to propose amendments to bills. What's more, by submitting motions MPs can request action from the government in a certain area or express views concerning a given policy. The members of the government have to keep the House of Representatives fully up to date. MPs can ask them to respond to specific questions and call them to account for their actions.

Immediately after a bill is approved by the House of Representatives it is sent to the Senate. Consideration by the Senate is the final stage in an exhaustive process that includes submission of the bill by the government, consideration by the States General and the legislation's ultimate entry into force. The Senate cannot make amendments: its options are limited to approving or rejecting the bill.

Both Houses devote considerable attention to their contacts with representatives of the public, whether in the form of parliamentary hearings, round-table discussions, meetings or working visits. In addition, they also regularly conduct research in certain policy areas. In October 2009 the House of Representatives introduced its future studies and research agenda. Every year the House identifies the areas in which it wishes to conduct research, selecting up to three studies a year. To date, research topics have included labour migration, railway maintenance and innovation, house price trends, and government ICT projects. In 2012, the Senate for the first time convened an investigation committee on privatising or semi-privatising government services.

In exceptional cases the House of Representatives may exercise its right of inquiry. To this end, a special parliamentary committee is appointed to thoroughly examine aspects of government policy on a given social issue. The committee may question witnesses or other interested parties under oath. High-profile parliamentary inquiries in the Netherlands have examined the financial system, the Bijlmer air disaster and the issue of fraud in the construction industry.

The parliamentary decision-making process is highly transparent. Plenary sessions of both Houses of the States General are open to the public. Members of the public are also welcome at most parliamentary committee meetings. In addition, debates in the Senate and the House of Representatives can be followed live on their respective websites.

Membership of the States General

Under article 56 of the Constitution, to be eligible for membership of the States General, a person must be a Dutch national, must have attained the age of 18 years and must not have been disqualified from voting.

Article 57 of the Constitution states that no one may be a member of both Houses. A member of the States General may not be a member of the Council of State or the Court of Audit, the National Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman, a member of the Supreme Court or Procurator General or Advocate General at the Supreme Court. Other restrictions are laid down in the Incompatibility of Office (States General and European Parliament) Act. Ministers and state secretaries may not be members of the States General except temporarily in the period after an election when a new government is being formed.

Article 61 of the Constitution provides that the Secretaries-General and other officials of the two Houses may not be members of the States General.

The monarch and the government

Under the Constitution, the monarch and the ministers together make up the government. Since 1848, the ministers, not the monarch, have been politically responsible for what the monarch says and does. In the Netherlands the monarch plays no part in politics. While he or she signs all Acts of Parliament and Royal Decrees, these are co-signed by the minister responsible. Ministers and state secretaries are appointed by Royal Decree and sworn in by the monarch. Here, too, ministerial responsibility applies: decrees appointing or dismissing members of the government are co-signed by the prime minister, who is in turn accountable to parliament.

The monarch has several 'unwritten' rights in respect of his or her relationship to the government. In his 1867 book *The English Constitution*, British journalist and scholar

Walter Bagehot described these rights as 'the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn'.

The monarch's duties

The monarch has a number of formal duties, which include signing Acts and Decrees, ratifying (as part of the government) international treaties, presiding formally over the Council of State as its president and, on the third Tuesday in September, delivering the annual Speech from the Throne, which sets out the government's policy for the year ahead. Alongside these duties, the monarch works on behalf of the inhabitants of the Kingdom. As head of state, it is the monarch's task to unify, represent and encourage the people.

In other words, the monarch serves to unite people and groups, and supports individuals and organisations in their efforts to promote social cohesion. In this non-partisan role, the monarch helps ensure stability, continuity and progress in the Netherlands. The head of state gives expression to the prevailing national mood at times of celebration or mourning, and represents the Kingdom at home and abroad. Every year the monarch makes a number of state visits and receives heads of state and government on visits to the Netherlands. He or she frequently attends conferences, openings, celebrations, commemorations and other official events. In this way, the monarch draws attention to important social initiatives and supports other worthy activities and events.

The monarch and the Council of State

The monarch is the president of the Council of State, a historical role which is purely symbolic in nature. The Council of State provides the government and Parliament with independent advice on legislation and governance and is also the country's highest administrative court. The monarch is not involved in practice in the Council's main activities. The vice president, currently Piet Hein Donner, is in charge of the day-to-day management of the Council of State and presides over its meetings. If the monarch is unable to exercise his royal prerogative (for example because he is ill or he has not reached the age of majority) and a regent has not yet been appointed, the Council of State is granted the royal prerogative on a temporary basis.

The monarch's role in forming a new government

The Constitution contains no rules about the process of forming a government. Instead, the process is determined by procedures and customs that have developed over time.

Until recently, the head of state played a significant role as facilitator in the formation process. In the past, the monarch would initiate the formation process after an election (provided the House of Representatives had opted not to hold a debate on the formation of the new government). After consulting the presidents of both Houses of Parliament, the vice president of the Council of State and all the parliamentary party leaders, the monarch would appoint one or more *informateurs (mediators) to explore the scope for forming a new coalition government. If the informateurs concluded that forming a new government was a viable possibility, the monarch would then appoint a formateur (generally the likely prime minister) to approach prospective ministers and state secretaries in the new government.*

In 2012 the House of Representatives amended this procedure, whereby in future the House – rather than the head of state – would initiate the process of forming a new government. After the election of 2012, this new procedure was used for the first time in the formation of the current Rutte-Asscher government. The House appointed *informateurs* and the *formateur* directly and assigned each actor their given task. The Constitution requires that the monarch appoint, dismiss and swear in all government ministers and state secretaries. In view of this constitutional role, and at the request of the House, the Queen was kept apprised of all developments in the most recent formation process.

The current Dutch prime minister is Mark Rutte. Since 5 November 2012 he has headed the Rutte-Asscher government, a coalition comprising the liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the social-democratic Labour Party (PvdA).

History of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Until 1795 the Netherlands was an alliance of seven provinces which formed a state – the Republic of the United Provinces – on the basis of a treaty. Although the provinces were autonomous in respect of their internal affairs, the Republic's foreign policy and defence were the joint responsibility of them all. Stadholders from the House of Nassau were appointed over one or more provinces. As a French protectorate, the Netherlands became a unitary state, known as the Batavian Republic. In 1806 the French emperor Napoleon installed his brother Louis as king of Holland. The Kingdom of Holland lasted four years; in 1810 Napoleon deposed his brother and incorporated the Netherlands into

the French empire. Three years later, in 1813, the Netherlands regained its independence, and Prince Willem Frederik, son of the last stadholder Willem V, returned from exile and was proclaimed sovereign prince. The first constitution of the Netherlands as a monarchy dates from 1814.

In 1815 after Napoleon's final defeat at Waterloo, the Congress of Vienna decided that the northern and southern provinces should be united. After Napoleon escaped exile in Elba and returned to France, Willem Frederik proclaimed himself King Willem I of the new Kingdom of the Netherlands, which also included present-day Luxembourg. The southern provinces seceded in 1830, and with the signing of the Treaty of London in 1839 the Netherlands recognised the new, independent, Kingdom of Belgium.

The status of Luxembourg changed at the same time: in 1839, it became a Grand Duchy, with the King of the Netherlands as its Grand Duke. This personal union came to an end in 1890. When King Willem III died that year, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg passed to the head of the other branch of the House of Nassau, since his daughter Wilhelmina, as a female, had no right of succession.

Until after the Second World War, the Kingdom of the Netherlands also comprised a significant number of overseas territories: the Dutch East Indies in Asia, Suriname in South America and the Netherlands Antilles in the Caribbean. A process of decolonisation followed in the post-war period. In 1949, Queen Juliana signed the treaty transferring sovereignty over the former Dutch East Indies to the Republic of Indonesia, thus recognising Indonesia as an independent state. New Guinea remained in Dutch hands until 1962; in 1963 it was transferred to Indonesia by the United Nations.

On 15 December 1954, Queen Juliana signed the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, whereby Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles acquired the status of countries within the Kingdom, with autonomous powers over their own internal affairs. In 1975 Suriname left the Kingdom, becoming an independent republic.

In 1986 Aruba, one of the six islands of the Netherlands Antilles, acquired separate status as a country within the Kingdom. On 10 October 2010 Curaçao and St Maarten likewise became separate countries, while the remaining three islands – Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba – acquired the status of public bodies and now form part of the Dutch polity.

History of the States General

The official name of the Dutch parliament is the States General. Since a bicameral system was introduced by an amendment to the Constitution in 1815, the States General have comprised the House of Representatives or lower house and the Senate or upper house.

The term States General dates from the 15th century. Its first meeting was convened in 1464 by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, in Bruges, in what was then the county of Flanders. It drew representatives from the 17 Burgundian territories in the Low Countries, the area which now comprises the Netherlands and Belgium.

Subsequently, Brussels (in the duchy of Brabant) became the permanent seat of the meetings, which the delegates often used to claim new privileges. Accordingly, the rulers of the Low Countries were reluctant to convene the States General, preferring to deal directly with the individual provinces. During the period of Spanish rule under Philip II, the States General were forbidden to meet without permission from the sovereign.

During the same period the northern and southern Netherlands grew increasingly estranged, largely because Protestantism and the revolt against the Catholic Spanish regime took root more firmly in the north than in the south. From 1585 onwards, the States General met in The Hague, and between 1588 and 1795 the delegates were drawn from the seven provinces that made up the Republic of the United Provinces (Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Friesland, Overijssel and Groningen).

Stadholders (who also held the title of Prince of Orange) were usually appointed by the States General as Captain General and Admiral General of the Republic of the United Provinces.

When in 1795 the stadholder, William V, and his son Willem Frederik were forced to flee to England following the French invasion, the Batavian Republic was proclaimed. The States General were abolished and replaced by a National Assembly. In 1813, when French rule came to an end, Willem Frederik returned to the Netherlands and in 1814 was invested as Sovereign Prince. In 1815 he became King Willem I.

Bicameral system

From 1814 to 1815 the States General had a single chamber with 55 members, elected by the provincial councils. The amended Constitution of 1815 introduced a bicameral system, comprising a House of Representatives with 110 members elected by the provincial councils and a Senate with 40 to 60 members appointed by the King.

Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution in 1840 and 1848 increased the influence of the States General, and the two Houses acquired more powers to scrutinise the government and to amend legislation. To this day, the 1848 Constitution forms the basis of Dutch parliamentary democracy. From 1848 onwards, there was one member of the House of Representatives for every 45,000 residents, elected directly by men who paid taxes above a certain level. The Senate had 39 members, elected by the provincial councils.

Suffrage

In 1887 the number of members of the Senate and the House of Representatives was raised to 50 and 100 respectively. In 1917 universal male suffrage was introduced and women were given the right to stand for election, though not to vote. Universal suffrage (the right of both men and women to vote and to stand for election) was enshrined in the Constitution in 1922. The States General ceased to function during the German occupation of the Netherlands between 1940 and 1945. Between 1945 and 1946 a Temporary States General was succeeded by a Provisional States General. The former only had the power to vote on the bill for the Provisional States General and lacked normal parliamentary powers such as the right of interpellation (the right to submit questions to the government). The latter ceased to exist on 4 June 1946.

Since 1956 the House of Representatives has had 150 members, who are directly elected by Dutch nationals, and the Senate 75 members, who are elected by the provincial councils.

2. The Royal House

The Dutch Royal House is the House of Orange-Nassau. Since the fifteenth century the history of this House has been closely linked with that of the Netherlands. Generations of stadholders, kings and queens born into the House of Orange have made an important contribution to governing our country.

Orange is the colour of the Royal House and it is inextricably linked with the Netherlands. On Queen's Day and on birthdays of some members of the Royal House the Dutch flag is raised with an orange pennant. Many Dutch people dress in orange on Queen's Day and to mark international sporting events.

In the Netherlands a distinction is made between the Royal House and the royal family. The Membership of the Royal House Act determines who is a member of the Royal House, namely:

1. the head of state (the monarch);
2. the former head of state;
3. members of the royal family who are related to the monarch in the first or second degree of consanguinity and are eligible for succession to the throne;
4. the spouses of the above;
5. members of the royal family who are members of the Royal House on the basis of the transitional arrangement provided for by the Membership of the Royal House Act.

The Royal House currently has 17 members:

Queen Beatrix

The Prince of Orange

Princess Máxima

Princess Catharina-Amalia

Princess Alexia

Princess Ariane

Prince Constantijn

Princess Laurentien

Countess Eloise

Count Claus-Casimir

Countess Leonore

Princess Margriet

Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven

Prince Maurits

Princess Marilène

Prince Bernhard

Princess Annette

Who's who

H.M. the Queen



On 30 April 1980, Princess Beatrix succeeded her mother as Queen of the Netherlands.

The Queen was married to Prince Claus. They had three sons, Prince Willem-Alexander, Prince Friso and Prince Constantijn. Prince Claus passed away on 6 October 2002 at the age of 76.

On 28 January 2013 Her Majesty the Queen announced that she would abdicate. The abdication and the investiture of her oldest son, the Prince of Orange, will take place on 30 April 2013

The Prince of Orange



As Queen Beatrix's eldest child, the Prince of Orange is first in line of succession to the throne. The Prince is married to Princess Máxima. The royal couple have three daughters, Princess Catharina-Amalia, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane.

Princess Máxima



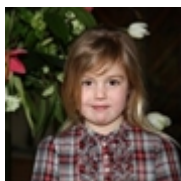
Princess Máxima is married to Prince Willem-Alexander, the heir to the throne. The royal couple have three daughters, Princess Catharina-Amalia, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane.

Princess Catharina-Amalia



Princess Catharina-Amalia of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau, the eldest child of the Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima, was born in The Hague on 7 December 2003. When her father becomes king on 30 April 2013 , she will adopt the title 'Princess of Orange' as the heir apparent.

Princess Alexia



Princess Alexia of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau, the second child of the Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima, was born in The Hague on 26 June 2005.

Princess Ariane



Princess Ariane of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau, the third child of the Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima, was born in The Hague on 10 April 2007.

Prince Constantijn and Princess Laurentien



Prince Constantijn is the third and youngest son of Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus. The Prince is married to Princess Laurentien. They have three children: Eloise, Claus-Casimir and Leonore.

Princess Margriet and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven



Princess Margriet is the third daughter of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, and Queen Beatrix's sister. Princess Margriet is married to Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven, with whom she has four sons: Prince Maurits, Prince Bernhard, Prince Pieter-Christiaan and Prince Floris.

Prince Maurits and Princess Marilène



Prince Maurits is the eldest son of Princess Margriet and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven. He is married to Princess Marilène. They have three children: Anna, Lucas and Felicia.

Prince Bernhard and Princess Annette



Prince Bernhard is the second son of Princess Margriet and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven. He is married to Princess Annette. They have three children: Isabella, Samuel and Benjamin.

More information and photographs are available at www.koninklijkhuis.nl.

Royal family

The royal family consists of the members of the Royal House, plus: Prince Friso, Princess Mabel, Prince Pieter-Christiaan, Princess Anita, Prince Floris, Princess Aimée, Princess Irene and Princess Christina, their children, daughters- and sons-in-law, and grandchildren.

Prince Friso was seriously injured in an avalanche when skiing at Lech in Austria on 17 February 2012. He spent some time in intensive care at the Landeskrankenhaus in Innsbruck, after which he was transferred for further treatment and care to the Wellington Hospital in London, where he lived before the accident. He remains in the hospital's care.

Members of the Royal House as of 30 April

Once King Willem-Alexander has succeeded to the throne, the Royal House will consist of 10 members, namely:

- the King, the Queen and their children
- Princess Beatrix
- Prince Constantijn and Princess Laurentien

- Princess Margriet and Professor Pieter van Vollenhoven

Prince Maurits and Prince Bernhard will no longer be members of the Royal House. As blood relatives of the King in the fourth degree of consanguinity they will no longer be able to succeed to the throne under article 25 of the Constitution and their respective partners will cease to be members of the Royal House. As third-degree relatives of the new King, Countess Eloise, Count Claus-Casimir and Countess Leonore (the children of Prince Constantijn and Princess Laurentien) will also lose their membership of the Royal House, but will continue to be in line of succession to the throne.

Line of succession

According to the Constitution, the line of succession to the throne is reserved for blood relatives of the King to the third degree of consanguinity. When the Prince of Orange becomes King, the line of succession will start with his children: the Princess of Orange, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane. Next in line will be Prince Constantijn, then his children and finally Princess Margriet.

If the King should die or abdicate, Queen Máxima will not become the monarch. This title will pass to the heir apparent, Princess Catharina-Amalia. If the heir apparent is still a minor, Parliament will appoint a regent in accordance with the Constitution to rule in her place until she reaches 18 years of age. Until a regent is appointed, the Council of State temporarily assumes the royal prerogative.

Previous kings and queens

The Kingdom of the Netherlands came into being in the 19th century. Its first monarch was King Willem I (1772-1843). His son, Willem II, Prince of Orange-Nassau, was King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg and Duke of Limburg from 1840 until his death in 1849. He was succeeded by his son, Willem III, Prince of Orange-Nassau, who was King of the Netherlands and Grand Duke of Luxembourg until his death and Duke of Limburg from 1849 to 1866.

When King Willem III died in 1890, his only surviving child was too young to reign, and his widow, Queen Emma, acted as regent for her daughter Wilhelmina until 1898. Having reached the age of majority, Queen Wilhelmina reigned for 50 years through two world wars and the decolonisation of Indonesia. She and her ministers spent the years

from 1940 to 1945 in exile in London. Queen Wilhelmina and her husband, Prince Hendrik, Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, had one child, Princess Juliana, who was born in 1909. Prince Hendrik died in 1934. Queen Wilhelmina abdicated in 1948.

In 1937 Princess Juliana married Prince Bernhard of Lippe-Biesterfeld. They had four daughters: Beatrix (b. 1938), Irene (b. 1939), Margriet (b. 1943, in exile in Canada) and Christina (b. 1947). Queen Juliana reigned from 1948 to 1980, a time of major changes in Dutch society, including post-war reconstruction, student unrest in the 1960s and 1970s and the oil crisis in the mid-1970s. Queen Juliana's informal manner and concern for social issues won her great popularity.

Queen Juliana abdicated on 30 April 1980. She died on 20 March 2004 and Prince Bernhard on 1 December the same year.

Investitures and abdications

Monarch	Date of investiture	Date of abdication (or death)
King Willem I	30 March 1814 21 September 1815 (Brussels)	7 October 1840
King Willem II	28 November 1840	Died 17 March 1849
King Willem III	12 May 1849	Died 23 November 1890
Queen Wilhelmina	6 September 1898	4 September 1948
Queen Juliana	6 September 1948	30 April 1980
Queen Beatrix	30 April 1980	30 April 2013
King Willem-Alexander	30 April 2013	–

3. Queen's Day and the abdication and investiture on 30 April 2013

Queen's Day – or *Koninginnedag*, as it is known in Dutch – is a national holiday that falls on 30 April. It was first celebrated on this date in 1949. Queen's Day is marked by celebrations and special events throughout the country, with the Queen and other members of the Royal House visiting one or two towns or villages. This year, 30 April will not only be *Koninginnedag* but also the day of Queen Beatrix's abdication and the Prince of Orange's swearing-in and investiture as King Willem-Alexander.

With between 700,000 and 800,000 visitors every year, Queen's Day in Amsterdam is the best-attended public event in the Netherlands. Since it coincides this year with the Abdication and Investiture, even more visitors are expected. As far as possible, street markets and other traditional Queen's Day activities will go ahead as usual in the capital and the rest of the country. For instance, there will be hundreds of children playing music and selling second-hand toys in the Vondelpark in Amsterdam. The city will also host over 200 special events, ranging from musical cabaret shows to major dance events for up to 35,000 people. Events on Queen's Night (the evening of 29 April) in Amsterdam will also go ahead as usual, although some will have to be shortened to allow the investiture preparations to get under way.

The ceremonies will be broadcast throughout the day on giant screens in Amsterdam, notably at Museumplein (Museum Square), Oeverpark and Kop van Java. Screens will also be in place at various restaurants and pavement cafés around the city. Elsewhere in the Netherlands, municipal authorities will adapt their Queen's Day programmes as far as possible to enable everyone to follow the televised ceremonies.

To accommodate the large crowds expected in central Amsterdam, Museumplein will be restyled as 'Oranjeplein' (Orange Square), with giant screens for the general public (including families) to watch the ceremonies. There will be music and an ongoing programme of activities for children. In the evening, the King's Ball will also be held here, featuring a varied programme of music and culture in keeping with the ceremonial events of the day.

The Amsterdam authorities are keen to make 30 April 2013 a festive occasion that is open to all. Security measures at the Dam Square and other locations will therefore be kept to a necessary minimum. However, since many high-level dignitaries will be visiting Amsterdam for the occasion, official locations will be partially and temporarily

inaccessible on the day. At this stage it is not considered necessary to cordon off large areas for this purpose, so people will be free to move around most of the Dam Square and the adjoining area.

History of Queen's Day

The forerunner of today's public holiday was celebrated as Princess's Day for the first time on 31 August 1885, Princess Wilhelmina's fifth birthday. It was an initiative of the Liberal Party, which wanted to emphasise national unity. After the death of King Willem III on 23 November 1890, Wilhelmina became queen under the regency of her mother, Queen Emma. The first real *Koningsdag* was held on 31 August 1891. Since it was also the last day of the school summer holidays, it soon became a popular day of celebration for children. Wilhelmina was succeeded by her daughter Queen Juliana in September 1948. She too celebrated Queen's day on her own birthday – 30 April. The first time was in 1949, with the Queen and her family receiving floral tributes on the balcony at Soestdijk Palace. Crowds queued in their hundreds to present flowers and other gifts. From the mid-1950s, the event was also televised. Under Queen Juliana, it gradually became the custom for everyone to have a day off on 30 April, which ultimately became an official public holiday signifying national unity.

When Queen Beatrix came to the throne, she decided to continue to celebrate Queen's Day on 30 April in honour of her mother. However, instead of having people come to her, she preferred to go to them. Every year, accompanied by members of the Royal Family, she has visited one or two towns or villages in the Netherlands and celebrated Queen's Day there.

King's Day from 2014 onwards

From 2014, King's Day (*Koningsdag* in Dutch) will be celebrated on 27 April, the birthday of the current Prince of Orange – the future King Willem-Alexander. In 2014, by way of exception, the celebrations will be held on 26 April because in that year 27 April falls on a Sunday.

Military ceremonial on 30 April

Traditionally, the Royal House and the Dutch armed forces have always had strong links. It is therefore fitting that the abdication of Queen Beatrix and the investiture of King

Willem-Alexander should be enhanced with military ceremonial. The ceremonies symbolise the association between the Dutch armed forces and the Royal House and underline the armed forces' loyalty to the people of the Netherlands. Officers of the Royal Netherlands Navy, Army and Air Force and of the Royal Military and Border Police will fulfill this ceremonial role on 30 April, especially during the water pageant on the River IJ, at the Royal Palace, on Dam Square and in De Nieuwe Kerk. Elsewhere in the Kingdom, military officers will mount a ceremonial guard during the investiture ceremony.

With its crew assembled on deck, the Royal Netherlands Navy's air defence and command frigate HNLMS Evertsen will fire a 101-gun salute at approximately 09:00, in the presence of the Queen, as it sails up the IJ into the capital.

In addition, a ceremonial double guard of the Royal Military and Border Police will be posted outside the entrances of all buildings accommodating members of the Royal House and their guests on 30 April. These ceremonial guards symbolise the round-the-clock surveillance and security provided by the Royal Military and Border Police at the palaces and other residences of the members of the Royal House.

At the end of the day, after the water pageant on the River IJ, the Royal Netherlands Air Force will round off the day in spectacular fashion.

Besides their ceremonial tasks, the armed forces will, of course, play a major role in the security and safety of the events on 30 April. In and around Amsterdam, on and along the IJ, in the air and throughout the country, they will be supporting the national police force and other government authorities, helping to make it a safe and – above all – unforgettable day.

On or around 26 April, a brochure will be published on www.defensie.nl giving details of and background to the entire military ceremonial of 30 April. For media requests regarding the preparations, please contact persvoorlichting@mindef.nl.

National Investiture Committee

The day after Queen Beatrix announced her abdication, the Cabinet decided to appoint a National Investiture Committee. Besides its chairman, (Hans Wijers) and executive secretary (Ms José Clarisse), it consists of seven external members, three members of

staff of the Ministry of General Affairs and two members of the Royal Household. All of them were invited to join the National Investiture Committee by virtue of their expertise.

The National Investiture Committee's task is to coordinate various festivities to mark the investiture on 30 April. The Committee will also coordinate initiatives to express gratitude to Queen Beatrix and pay tribute to the new King and Queen. The organisation of the abdication and investiture ceremonies is not among its responsibilities.

In discharging its duties, the Committee will endeavour to fulfil the royal couple's express wish for the entire population to be able to take part in the celebrations. All parts of the Kingdom will be involved.

King's Games

On 26 April, more than one-and-a-half million children at 7,500 primary schools throughout the Kingdom of the Netherlands, both in Europe and the Caribbean, will take part in the King's Games – a sporting event that will replace normal lessons on that day. The National Investiture Committee is responsible for the overall organisation.

The King's Games will start with a healthy breakfast at school, followed by a national kick-off and sporting activities. Schools are free to decide on their own format for the sports and games. The future King and Queen will visit the Triangel and Palet primary schools in Enschede to officially open the Games. Pupils from the school with the most fun and original King's Games in each province will have a chance to meet the royal couple during their tour of the provinces in May and June. See www.koningsspelen.nl for more information.

Share your dream

The National Investiture Committee is asking everyone in the Netherlands, young and old, to share their dreams for the future of the Kingdom, both in Europe and the Caribbean. There is no set format. The dream may be in the form of a wish, a poem, a film, a musical composition, a performance, a drawing, a story or a painting. Entries can be uploaded to the website www.deeljouwdroom.nl. The result will be a cross section of dreams, ambitions and hopes for the Netherlands and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. The 50 most attractive, creative, humorous, moving and ambitious contributions will be brought together in a book to be presented to the new King and Queen on 5 September.

Song for the King

The National Investiture Committee will be presenting a Song for the King that can be sung by everyone across the nation. The Committee has asked public service broadcaster NPO to come up with a plan that will allow people up and down the country to join together in singing to the new King and Queen on 30 April.

The Song for the King will be written by a group of lyricists led by composer John Ewbank. The song will reflect the motto 'My dream for our country, inspiration for our King'.

The melody and chorus have already been composed by John Ewbank and his team. It is now up to the Dutch people to get creative and help write the verses. Via the website www.hetofficielekoninglied.nl, people are invited to submit their dream for the country in a single sentence. The best and most appropriate words and phrases will be used to compose the verses and will inspire the final version of the song, which will be made public on 22 April.

An event featuring a mass sing-a-long will be held at Ahoy (Rotterdam) on 30 April. The highlight will be a live performance of the Song for the King at around 19:30, with the audience at Ahoy singing to the King and Queen via a live video link on a giant screen. It will be aired live by public service radio and television broadcasters. Thanks to screens at locations throughout the Kingdom, everyone will be able to sing the Song for the King together.

Tributes of thanks to Queen Beatrix

The Queen has indicated that she prefers not to receive a gift from the nation. However, the National Investiture Committee will launch a special event later this year at which the Dutch people can express their gratitude to her for her dedication during the years of her reign.

Orange bow

The National Investiture Committee has chosen an orange bow as the official hallmark for festivities being held up and down the country and for the people and organisations

assisting the Committee in its efforts. See www.mijndroomvooronsland.nl for more information.

4. Abdication

The abdication of Queen Beatrix will take place on 30 April 2013 in the Royal Palace, Amsterdam.

Programme

10.00-10.30

Abdication of Her Majesty the Queen in the Mozeszaal of the Royal Palace. Those present will include the Presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the States General, the ministers of the Kingdom, the Vice-President of the Council of State, delegations from Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten and members of the Royal Family.

The Queen will give a short address. The Director of the Queen's Office will then read aloud the instrument of abdication, to which the Queen will give her assent by means of her signature. King Willem-Alexander and his wife will then sign too, followed by the other witnesses. These are the Presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the States General, the ministers of the Kingdom, the Vice-President of the Council of State, the members of the delegations from Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, the Queen's Commissioner for the province of North Holland, the Mayor of Amsterdam and the Director of the Queen's Office.

The full texts of the instruments of abdication of 1948 and 1980 can be found at www.koninklijkhuis.nl. The text of the present instrument of abdication will also be put on the site after it has been signed.

After she has signed the instrument of abdication, the former Queen will have the title of Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands. From that moment, the Prince of Orange will be King of the Netherlands. Princess Catherina-Amalia will become first in line to the throne and will be known as the Princess of Orange.

The instrument of abdication will be signed in the ornate Mozeszaal (or Council Chamber) of the Royal Palace. Formerly the chamber where the city council met, it is decorated to illustrate the themes of unity, peace, wisdom and *raad*, the Dutch word for both counsel and council. The instrument will be signed in front of a magnificent painting of Moses Selecting the Council of Seventy Elders, by Jacob de Wit, dating from 1737. It shows Moses carrying out God's instruction to select seventy elders who, together with

the prophet, would receive the Holy Spirit, so that they could help him govern the people of Israel.

10.30-10.50

King Willem-Alexander, Queen Máxima and Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands will appear on the balcony of the Royal Palace. Princess Beatrix and the King will each give a brief address, after which the national anthem will be played. The Princess of Orange, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane will then join their parents on the balcony.

There will be room in Dam Square for a maximum of 20,000 people to watch the balcony scene.

13.50

Princess Beatrix and the other members of the Royal Family will depart for De Nieuwe Kerk.

14.00

The King and the main procession will depart for De Nieuwe Kerk.

The Heralds of Arms lead off the royal procession, which will proceed from the Palace to De Nieuwe Kerk. Traditionally, the procession passes underneath a canopy of white fishing net.

The origins of this tradition are lost in the mists of time, but it is thought that the fishing nets allude to the landing of the then future King Willem I on the beach at Scheveningen in 1813. It is also thought that this material was chosen to give people watching from the upper stories of the Royal Palace the opportunity to see the procession on its way to De Nieuwe Kerk.

Instrument of abdication

The Constitution does not impose any conditions on the way in which the monarch abdicates. As on previous occasions, this will again be done through the instrument of abdication. After the instrument has been read aloud by the Director of the Queen's Office, the Queen signs it, at which point the abdication, within the meaning of article 27 of the Constitution, takes effect and Willem-Alexander is King. King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima then sign the instrument, followed by the witnesses present. At a

later stage, the great seal will be affixed to the instrument, after which it will be exhibited in De Nieuwe Kerk.

The great seal

The great seal is affixed to important state documents. In the Middle Ages a seal was a guarantee of authenticity, as a signature is today. Now it is merely a romantic remnant of bygone days, a symbol that has no legal significance.

The great seal is linked to the monarch currently ruling the country and is therefore changed whenever a new monarch ascends the throne. The new monarch is free to decide on the appearance of the seal. Queen Beatrix designed hers together with the artist Loeki Metz.

The back of the great seal shows the national coat of arms: two lions holding a shield against the background of a royal mantle (optional), above the motto 'Je maintiendrai' (I will maintain).

Queen's Office

After the abdication, the Queen's Office will be renamed the King's Office, in accordance with the decree of 18 December 2003 relating to the King's Office (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2004, 8). The Office's task is to support the King in the exercise of his constitutional duties and to act as a link between the King and his ministers and state secretaries. The instrument of abdication will be kept in the archives of the King's Office.

Military ceremony and national anthem

Prior to the abdication, at around 8.30, a military band and a guard of honour from one of the armed services (navy, army, air force and military constabulary) will take up their positions in front of the Dam Square entrance to the Royal Palace. A band and a guard of honour will remain there all day until the last guests have left, and will ceremonially greet the Queen and, later in the day, the King and all the guests on arrival and departure. After the abdication, a company of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps and the fife and drum band of the Royal Marines will march into the square and take position under the palace balcony. After the announcement of the abdication and the presentation of King Willem-Alexander to the public in Dam Square, they will play the

national anthem. *Wilhelmus van Nassouwe*, usually shortened to 'the Wilhelmus', has been the official Dutch national anthem since 1932. The earliest known version of its melody is thought to go back to the siege of the French city of Chartres in 1568. The words date from 1572, and are attributed to Philip van Marnix, Seigneur of Sint Aldegonde, secretary to William of Orange.

The melody as sung today comes from the collection *Nederlandtsche Gedenck-clanck* (1626) by Adriaen Valerius. The Wilhelmus has 15 verses, the first letters of which together spell the name WILLEM VAN NASSOV (William of Nassau). In the eighteenth century it became the song of the Orangists (the supporters of the House of Orange), but had yet to become the official anthem. When the Kingdom of the Netherlands came into being in 1815, Admiral J.H. van Kinsbergen launched a competition for a national anthem. The lyrics of the winning anthem, *Wiens Neerlands Bloed* (Whose Dutch blood), were written by the poet Hendrik Tollens, and the music by Johan Wilhelm Wilms. However, from the late 19th century onwards it was increasingly replaced by the Wilhelmus on official occasions, because of the latter's association with the Royal House, and in 1932 made way for it all together.

Titles

After she has signed the instrument of abdication, the former Queen will have the title of Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau. She will be addressed as Your Royal Highness.

From that moment on, the new monarch will be referred to as His Majesty the King. His official title will be His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, King of the Netherlands, Prince of Orange-Nassau, etc., etc., etc. He will be addressed as Your Majesty.

As the wife of the King, Her Royal Highness Princess Máxima of the Netherlands will be referred to as the Queen. This is a courtesy title which is both traditional and in line with international custom. Her official title will be Queen Máxima, Princess of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau. The title of Queen does not mean that she will become the head of state or have the same powers and responsibilities as the monarch. She will be addressed as Your Majesty.

The spouses of Kings Willem I, II and III were also given the title of Queen: Queen Wilhelmina, Queen Anna Paulowna, Queen Sophie and Queen Emma.

Immediately after the abdication, Princess Catharina-Amalia, the eldest daughter of the new King and Queen and heir to the throne, will become Her Royal Highness the Princess of Orange, in accordance with section 7 of the Membership of the Royal House Act.

The titles and names of the other members of the Royal House will not change although the composition of the Royal House will. See chapter 2 on the Royal House.

History of the Royal Palace



Town hall, 1648-1808

The Royal Palace was originally built to house the council, executive and judiciary of the city of Amsterdam. In the 17th century, Amsterdam was one of the main commercial centres of the world. The city was growing rapidly and the increased burden of administration meant that the old town hall soon became too small. In addition, its famous exchange bank was no longer equal to the task. It was decided to build a magnificent new town hall, one worthy of a commercial metropolis such as Amsterdam.

The burgomasters of Amsterdam commissioned the famous architect Jacob van Campen to design the building in 1648. Its vast proportions and neoclassical design, harking back to ancient Greece and Rome, were decidedly un-Dutch. It was a building that mirrored God's creation. A universe in microcosm, symmetrical and perfect.

The power and status of Amsterdam were also reflected in the building's interior, fashioned by renowned craftsmen like the Antwerp sculptor Artus Quellijn. The inlaid marble floor of the gigantic Burgers Hall depicted the eastern and western hemispheres. The main chambers were decorated with paintings that alluded to their function. Famous artists like Rembrandt van Rijn, Ferdinand Bol and Govert Flinck were commissioned to produce these works.

The first section of the town hall was opened for use in 1655, though the building had not yet been completed. The people of Amsterdam were immensely proud of their new town hall, dubbing it one of the wonders of the world.

Napoleonic Palace, 1808-1813

In 1806, Emperor Napoleon of France made his brother Louis King of Holland. In 1808 he took over the town hall and turned it into a royal palace. The city's exchange bank was the only municipal office to remain in the building. The King became the only monarch in the world to have a palace with an en suite exchange bank.

Louis furnished his new home in regal style. The prison cells were converted into wine cellars, and the cold marble floors covered with thick carpet. He had a balcony constructed at the front of the building, at first-floor level. He established a 'Royal Museum' in the War Council Chamber and adjacent rooms on the third floor: a museum whose exhibits came from the collections of the stadholders and the city of Amsterdam.

His main alteration was to have the building furnished in the very latest style. Just like the architecture of the town hall, the style of the French court (Empire Style) was modelled on the ideals of antiquity. After King Louis quitted the Palace, nearly all the costly furniture of that period was left behind, now forming one of the best preserved and most complete Empire collections in the world. In the course of 1809 tension grew between Louis and his mighty brother, leading to conflict. In 1810, Louis was forced to abdicate. On 9 October 1811, the Emperor Napoleon was given an extravagant reception at the Palace during his visit to Amsterdam.

Palace of the House of Orange, 1813 to the present

Following the downfall of Napoleon, Prince Willem Frederik of Orange Nassau, the son of the last stadholder, returned to the Netherlands. In December 1813 he went to Amsterdam and announced that the former town hall would be returned to the city. He did however reside in the Palace during his stay.

The proclamation whereby he accepted the sovereignty of the Netherlands as King Willem I was signed in the Palace. The city's administration remained at the Prinsenhof and the Palace remained a palace. Relocation and refurbishment were simply too expensive. Moreover, King Willem I saw the value of a residence in the capital. Amsterdam's city fathers once more placed the building at the disposal of the King.

Initially the King made frequent use of the Palace, receiving the Russian tsar Alexander I there in 1814. But he soon lost interest in it. His successors, Willem II and Willem III, spent only a few days a year in the building. Although it was regularly used as a prestigious backdrop for commemorations and receptions, the interim periods of vacancy began to cause annoyance among the local population. The recurring debate on the building's function rumbled on, swayed by political and economic developments. In the 1930s a group of lawyers was asked to establish exactly who the building belonged to. They found that the city was still the owner. In 1934 a plan was devised to turn it back into the town hall, but the Great Depression made this impossible. The city couldn't even afford the restoration work that was so sorely needed. In 1935 Amsterdam municipal council took a historic decision: it sold the building to the state for 10 million guilders. Central government made the Palace permanently available to the Royal House. This arrangement has now been given legal status in the Royal House Finances Act

The Royal Palace is now regularly used for reception purposes by members of the Royal House, including state visits, the Queen's New Year receptions and other official gatherings. It is also the venue for the annual award of the Erasmus Prize, the Silver Carnation Award, the Royal Award for Modern Painting and the Prince Claus Award. The building is also used for royal weddings and abdications. See www.paleisamsterdam.nl for more information and photos.

5. Swearing-in and investiture

Monarchs are not crowned in the Netherlands but sworn in and invested, as enshrined in the Constitution. A new monarch assumes the royal prerogative as soon as his or her predecessor dies or abdicates. The Constitution stipulates that the new monarch must be sworn in and invested as soon as possible.

The Constitution states that the swearing-in and investiture must take place in the capital city, Amsterdam, at a public joint session of the two Houses of the States General (Parliament) – the Senate and House of Representatives. It also states that the President of the Senate presides when the two Houses meet in joint session. This means that the current President, Fred de Graaf, will act as host at the investiture ceremony on 30 April 2013. He will prepare the ceremony in close consultation with the President of the House of Representatives, Anouchka van Miltenburg.

Since the time of Willem I the investiture has taken place in De Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam. The monarch does not usually attend meetings of the Senate or House of Representatives, but there are two exceptions. One of them is the special public joint session of the two Houses during which he is sworn in and invested. The other is the annual joint session of the States General on the third Tuesday in September, i.e. the State Opening of Parliament, when the monarch delivers the speech from the throne. The speech is written by the government and sets out its plans for the coming year. The budget presented to the House of Representatives on the same day is an integral part of these plans.

Investiture ceremony

The ceremony in De Nieuwe Kerk on 30 April 2013 will consist of two parts, both governed by statute. First the new King will be sworn in: he will swear his allegiance to the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and to the Constitution and promise to faithfully discharge his duties. The King swears this oath to the people of the Kingdom. He is then invested by the States General and the States of Aruba, the States of Curaçao and the States of St Maarten. First the President of the Joint Session of the States General will make a solemn declaration. The members of the States General and members of the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten then swear or affirm this declaration, which is a solemn manner of expressing the bond between the States General (and the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten) and the monarch and their

allegiance to the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Constitution. The oath or affirmation carries no legal consequences.

Oath or affirmation

The wording of the oath or affirmation sworn or made by the monarch to the people of the Kingdom is laid down by the Swearing-in and Investiture of the King Act. The oath (or affirmation) reads as follows:

'I solemnly swear (affirm) to the people of the Kingdom that I shall constantly preserve and uphold the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Constitution. I swear (affirm) that I shall defend and preserve the independence and the territory of the Kingdom to the best of my ability, that I shall protect the freedom and rights of all Dutch citizens and residents, and that I shall employ all means placed at my disposal by the law to preserve and promote prosperity, as is incumbent upon a good and faithful Sovereign. So help me God! (This I solemnly affirm!).'

His Majesty King Willem-Alexander will swear the oath.

The solemn declaration by the President and members of the States General and the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten reads as follows:

'In the name of the people of the Kingdom and in accordance with the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Constitution we accept and pay homage to you as Sovereign; we swear (affirm) that we shall uphold the doctrine that the ministers, and not the King, are responsible for acts of government and uphold the rights of your Crown; we swear (affirm) to do all that is incumbent upon good and faithful States General, States of Aruba, States of Curaçao and States of St Maarten. So help me God! (This I solemnly affirm!).'

Programme

13.30

Opening of the joint session of the States General, following the entry of members of the States General, the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, the Council of Ministers for the Kingdom, the Council of State of the Kingdom and the governors and prime ministers of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten.

14.00-15.30

Swearing-in and investiture of the King at the joint session of the States General in De Nieuwe Kerk. The King will deliver an address and take the oath. The President of the Joint Session, Fred de Graaf, will deliver an address and make a solemn declaration, after which the members of the States General and the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten will swear an oath or make an affirmation.

15.30

The King and his retinue proceed to the Royal Palace, Amsterdam, where a reception will be held for royal and foreign delegations, members of the States General and the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, the Council of Ministers for the Kingdom, the Council of State of the Kingdom, the governors and prime ministers of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten, the diplomatic corps and other dignitaries.

Regalia

The regalia symbolise the monarch's power and dignity. They were commissioned from goldsmiths by King Willem II in 1840.

The crown symbolises the sovereignty of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the dignity of the head of state. Since Dutch monarchs are not crowned, they never actually wear the crown. During the ceremony in De Nieuwe Kerk on 30 April 2013, the crown will be displayed on a ceremonial table (known as the credence table), together with the other regalia.

As well as the crown, the other regalia are:

- the sceptre, standing for the monarch's authority;
- the orb, standing for the monarch's territory;
- the sword of state, standing for the monarch's power;
- the national standard, bearing the Dutch coat of arms.



When taking the oath, the King will swear his allegiance to the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Constitution. Special editions of both documents will be prepared for the ceremony and displayed on the credence table, alongside the regalia. After 30 April, these special editions will be exhibited in Het Loo Palace.

Royal mantle

During the investiture on 30 April 2013, King Willem-Alexander will wear a tail coat with white tie under the royal mantle. The mantle has been in use since 1815, but its use is not laid down by law.

Only once has a different royal mantle been used – at the investiture of Willem I as Sovereign Prince. But this was replaced by the present mantle when he was invested as King in 1815.

King Willem I and Queens Wilhelmina, Juliana and Beatrix wore the mantle draped over both shoulders, whereas King Willem II and King Willem III wore the mantle suspended off the shoulders. Under the mantle the Kings wore a military uniform: Willem I wore a general officer's uniform with no designation of rank, Willem II wore the uniform of the volunteer army of the Ten Days' Campaign, while Willem III wore his admiral's uniform. All wore decorations – Willem I on the mantle, and Willem II and Willem III on their uniforms.

During its nearly 200-year history, the mantle has been restored and repaired several times, due to its age and the need to adapt it to the build and stylistic wishes of different monarchs. Significant alterations were made by the Swiss couturier Edwin Dolder in 1948 and by Theresia Couture of Amsterdam in 1980.

Royal coat of arms and standard

From his investiture onwards, King Willem-Alexander will fly the royal standard. His coat of arms will be identical to that used by Queen Beatrix. The royal standard will be altered slightly: the rosette in the ribbon of the Military Order of William will be replaced by a bow, and the tassels on either side of the horns will hang down in exactly the same way.

The royal standard will be flown above Noordeinde Palace in The Hague and at Eikenhorst in Wassenaar when the King is in the country. Queen Wilhelmina adopted this standard in 1908, and it was also flown, unchanged, by Queen Juliana and Queen Beatrix.

The royal coat of arms, which is the same as the coat of arms of the Netherlands, has only been altered once since the foundation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In 1907, at the instigation of Queen Wilhelmina, the number of crowns was reduced to one, surmounting the shield. At the same time, it became possible to add the royal mantle, also surmounted by a crown. The addition of other decorative elements to the coat of arms is optional.

After her abdication the Queen will adopt the coat of arms created for her (and for her sisters) in 1938 as Princess of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau and Princess of Lippe-Biesterfeld.

For pictures of the royal standard and coat of arms, go to www.koninklijkhuis.nl (Monarchy / Royal standard and royal coat of arms).

Heralds

Several heralds and kings of arms took part in the investiture of Willem I as King in 1815. Since then, heralds have played an important ceremonial role in investitures.

Heralds and kings of arms are officials who in the Middle Ages acted partly as messengers. In those days, they wore a robe or tabard decorated with the royal arms. A king of arms is of a higher rank than the heralds; the word 'king' does not have any constitutional significance in this context.

The costume worn by the heralds of arms was considerably simplified in the 20th century. They are still equipped with a staff, but since 1980 they have no longer worn the traditional tabard bearing the royal arms. The role of herald was formerly assigned preferably to young noblemen with a military background; the first female herald was seen at the investiture of Queen Beatrix in 1980. The senior king of arms in 1980 was Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema, a well-known Dutch Resistance fighter in the Second World War (known as 'the soldier of Orange'). After Queen Beatrix had taken the oath, he

proclaimed to those present in De Nieuwe Kerk that the Queen had been invested. Other heralds proclaimed the same message in Dam Square.

On 30 April 2013 the heralds will lead the royal procession, which will proceed from the Royal Palace in Dam Square to De Nieuwe Kerk. The Government Information Service (RVD) will announce the names of the heralds in mid-April. See the news items at www.koninklijkhuis.nl.

Music

Four groups of musicians will provide the musical element in the investiture. The Amsterdam Sinfonietta, the Netherlands Wind Ensemble and the Dutch Chamber Choir will represent the rich ensemble culture in the Netherlands. The New Amsterdam Children's Choir will also perform during the ceremony. The organ will be played by De Nieuwe Kerk's resident organist, Bernard Winsemius.

Music will be played during the joint session of the States General and the investiture ceremony in De Nieuwe Kerk, and also while the many guests are arriving. The programme will be announced later.

Military ceremonial

Beginning with the balcony appearance after the abdication, a military band and a military guard of honour will be stationed in Dam Square throughout the day. They will ceremonially greet all guests walking to and from De Nieuwe Kerk. Guests will also pass between two lines of cadets from the Royal Netherlands Naval College and the Royal Military Academy, the two training institutes for officers in the armed forces.

Around 14.00 a guard of honour from the King's Company of Grenadier Guards and Chasseurs of the Royal Netherlands Army and the Royal Military Band will arrive in Dam Square. They will pay homage to King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima when they proceed from the Royal Palace to De Nieuwe Kerk. While the King and Queen and the rest of the procession are making their way between the two lines of cadets, a salute battery of the Royal Horse Artillery of the Royal Netherlands Army at the Ministry of Defence site on the IJ will fire a round every five seconds.

The royal procession will include several other military officers as well as the military aides-de-camp to the Royal House. The Chief of Defence, General Tom Middendorp, will be in the vanguard of the procession bearing the sword of state. The Inspector-General of the Armed Forces, Lieutenant-General Ton van Ede RNLMC, will bear the national standard. These two regalia are traditionally borne by members of the armed forces in the procession.

The two generals will be accompanied by four aides-de-camp with the rank of lieutenant or captain. These young officers, all recipients of a royal decoration or other medal for bravery, loyalty or devotion to duty, symbolise the norms and values of the armed forces.

The procession will include the National Police Force with its colours. The Commanders-in-Chief of the Royal Netherlands Navy, the Royal Netherlands Army and the Royal Netherlands Air Force, and the Commander of the Royal Military and Border Police will each be accompanied by the colours or standard of their own armed service. They represent the security guaranteed by the four services. The other 28 royal colours or standards of the armed services will already be in De Nieuwe Kerk. These flags were presented to units and regiments by past heads of state. On joining the forces, all current military personnel swore or affirmed their allegiance to the Queen and the laws of the Kingdom with one hand placed on one of these flags. The presence of the flags in the church is therefore an expression of the armed forces' ties with the Royal House and Dutch society at large. The armed forces stand ready every day not only to fulfil their ceremonial duties but also to defend our Kingdom's interests and security in action.

The Prince of Orange currently holds the rank of commodore (*commandeur*) in the Royal Netherlands Navy and corresponding general officer ranks in the other armed services. However, as head of state and a member of the government, the King can no longer hold an active military position in the armed forces. In view of his forthcoming assumption of the position of head of state, the Prince of Orange will relinquish his active military status. Before his investiture as King, he will at his request be granted an honourable discharge. He will, however, retain the right to wear a uniform on suitable ceremonial occasions. The uniform will be based on that of the flag and general officers of the armed services but without insignia of rank. The braid or epaulette will be replaced by a new royal insignia, a heraldic figure composed of the orb, the sword of state and the sceptre – three of the regalia, or symbols of royal power. The fourth royal symbol, the crown, is not included in the design because it is already widely used in military badges and insignia.

Guests in De Nieuwe Kerk

The joint session of the States General to mark the swearing-in and investiture of the new King is a significant constitutional event. A large number of people will therefore be invited to attend, either because of their position or because they are representative of society at large.

- First and foremost, those present will include the King, members of the States General (the Senate and House of Representatives) and members of the States of Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten. The swearing-in and investiture will, after all, take place at a parliamentary session. All parliamentarians are permitted to bring one guest. The Royal Family and guests of the King will of course also be present, along with representatives of other royal houses.
- The members of the government (all the ministers and state secretaries) and the ministers plenipotentiary for Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten have also been invited.
- Representatives of important institutions such as the Council of State (the highest advisory body on legislation), the Netherlands Court of Audit, the National Ombudsman, the High Councils of State, the president of the Supreme Court and several vice-presidents have been invited, together with numerous office holders, such as King's Commissioners and mayors of major cities.
- The ambassadors of all friendly states accredited in the Netherlands will be invited (the diplomatic corps). In addition, several countries will be represented by other senior officials from their country in special delegations.
- Finally, the guests will include at least 500 people nominated by the provincial authorities at the States General's request because they are representative of society as a whole. Some of them will be given a prominent place in De Nieuwe Kerk. Thirty pupils from three primary schools and veterans of Dutch military missions abroad will receive separate invitations.

There will be seats for just over 2,000 people during the investiture in De Nieuwe Kerk.

History of De Nieuwe Kerk

The history of De Nieuwe Kerk goes back over 600 years. In 1410, long before Amsterdam town hall was built, the foundations were laid of what would develop into the largest Late Gothic cruciform basilica in Amsterdam. The church suffered three major

fires (in 1421, 1452 and 1645) and the 16th-century iconoclasts did not leave it unscathed either. The church's special ties with the city and the country, however, also date from that time. The church gradually became much more than a place of worship, providing resting places for Amsterdam's patricians and burghers.

National naval heroes, writers and poets were interred there. The naval commanders Michiel Adriaenszoon de Ruyter, Jan van Galen, Jan Hendrik van Kinsbergen and Jan van Speijk – Dutch hero of the campaign against the Belgian Revolution – were laid to rest in the church, with great pomp and ceremony. They were honoured with grand monuments, made by the finest sculptors of the day: Rombout Verhulst, Willem de Keyser, Artus Quellinus, Paulus Joseph Gabriël and Jean François Sigault. The Republic and the city of Amsterdam treated their writers and poets with less pomp and a more literary restraint: Joost van den Vondel, P.C. Hooft, Caspar van Baerle and Isaäk da Costa were given solemn burials but not such grand monuments. After the foundation of the Sovereign Principality of the Netherlands in 1813, the church acquired another unique function: it became the church where monarchs of the House of Orange-Nassau were invested, from 1815 onwards as Kings of the Netherlands. It was in this church, in the presence of the two houses of parliament, that the descendants of the Republic's illustrious stadholders – Willem I, Willem II, Willem III, Wilhelmina, Juliana and Beatrix – swore to uphold the Constitution and defend the Kingdom's independence. The parliamentarians swore or affirmed that they would uphold the rights of the monarch. The church also hosted the marriage of Prince Willem-Alexander and Princess Máxima in 2002.

The church's ties with the Royal House are vividly expressed in several stained glass windows by artists such as Otto Mengelberg, Willem van Konijnenburg and Marc Mulders. The oldest window depicts a scene predating the Kings and even stadholders. In the 17th century, above the doors on the north side, Jan Gerritszoon van Bronckhorst depicted how Willem IV, Count of Holland, granted Amsterdam its coat of arms in the Middle Ages. The 17th century also brought the church three world-class showpieces: the organ by Hans Schonat, Jacobus Galtuszoon van Hagerbeer and Roelof Barentszoon Duyschot (organ), Jacob van Campen (organ case), Artus Quellinus (sculptures) and Gerrit Janszoon van Bronckorst (paintings); the pulpit by Albert Janszoon Vinckenbrink; and the brass choir screen by Johannes Lutma.

Shortly after the Second World War, the World Council of Churches was founded in De Nieuwe Kerk. However, this international organisation of over 300 churches, with over 400 million members, was unable to stem the tide of secularisation. De Nieuwe Kerk

ceased to be a place of worship. In the 1980s, after a major restoration, the National Foundation De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam took over its management as a cultural entrepreneur. Since then, with the support of many, the Foundation has organised a wide range of exhibitions, concerts, lectures, inaugurations, debates and countless other activities in this national centre for commemorations and celebrations in order to fulfil its mission: initiating cultural encounters aimed at improving our understanding of one another and of other cultures and countries.

From Saturday 11 May to 18 August 2013 De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam will open its doors for a one-off exhibition on royal investitures. For exactly 100 days the spotlight will be on the festive and ceremonial investitures of seven generations of the House of Orange –

Willem I, Willem II, Willem III, Wilhelmina, Juliana, Beatrix and Willem-Alexander. For more information, go to www.nieuwekerk.nl.

6. Evening programme on 30 April 2013

19.30 The Song for the King and water pageant

The Song for the King will be performed in the presence of the King and the Queen, prior to the water pageant. The performance will take place at the EYE Film Institute via a video link with the Ahoy Arena in Rotterdam.

In collaboration with the organisation Stichting Sail, the municipality of Amsterdam will then stage a water pageant on the IJ to mark the investiture of the new King. The King and Queen, accompanied by their three daughters, will embark at the EYE Film Institute and sail past the Oeverpark along the northern bank of the IJ to the Kop van Java and the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ. During the water pageant, spectators lining the banks of the IJ will be able to wave to King Willem-Alexander, Queen Máxima and their daughters. At several locations along the route there will be a high-quality programme of art, culture and sport catering for all ages. The programme, entitled 'This is your country', will feature the globally acclaimed DJ Armin van Buuren performing with the world famous Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Other well-known musicians, leading Dutch sportsmen and women, actors and other artists will be taking part.

The end of the water pageant at the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ will be marked by a salute from the vessels present. A formation of Royal Netherlands Air Force F-16s will fly past to greet the King and the Dutch people.

King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima will then attend a party with their guests at Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ hosted by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Council of Ministers for the Kingdom.

21.15 – 24.00 Royal Ball and evening celebrations

Because of the expected crowds in the city centre, Museumplein – which will be renamed 'Oranjeplein' for the day – will host a variety of events. People can come here and follow the abdication and investiture on big screens, and entertainment will be provided for children. In the evening, after the water pageant, a Royal Ball will be held on Oranjeplein for some 50,000 to 70,000 people with a varied programme of arts and culture in keeping with the occasion.

Celebrations in Amsterdam will continue into the night at a number of locations. This will enable the departure of visitors to be spread over the evening. A programme will be organised at the Oeverpark near the EYE Film Institute and at the Kop van Java which will tie in with the themes of sport, music, art and youth developed by the National Investiture Committee.

7. Curriculum Vitae

This chapter consists of the current CVs of Queen Beatrix, the Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima. Following the abdication of the Queen and the swearing in and investiture of King Willem-Alexander on 30 April 2013 updated CVs will be available at www.koninklijkhuis.nl.

In preparation for his accession to the throne, the Prince of Orange is resigning from his official positions, with due regard for the terms of office and procedures of the organisations concerned.

In the year ahead the Queen and the Prince of Orange will decide as to the continuation of their honorary posts and their patronage of organisations. Further announcements will be made on this subject in due course. In principle Princess Máxima will continue as Queen to hold her current honorary and other posts.

Her Majesty the Queen



On 30 April 1980, Princess Beatrix succeeded her mother as Queen of the Netherlands. The Queen was married to His Royal Highness Prince Claus of the Netherlands. They had three sons, Prince Willem-Alexander in 1967, Prince Friso in 1968 and Prince Constantijn in 1969. On 28 January 2013, the Queen announced her abdication. Her eldest son, His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange, will succeed her.

Together the Queen and the ministers make up the government. The Queen is the head of state and, as such, fulfils a number of formal tasks. She represents the Netherlands at home and abroad. As head of state, the Queen co-signs new Acts of Parliament. She is president of the Council of State, and every year delivers the Speech from the Throne.

Besides performing her formal tasks as head of state, the Queen also plays a unifying, representative and encouraging role with regard to the people of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Youth

Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard was born at Soestdijk Palace in Baarn on 31 January 1938. She was the first child of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard. At her birth, she held the titles of Princess of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange-Nassau and Princess of Lippe-Biesterfeld. Her sister, Princess Irene, was born in 1939.

When war broke out in May 1940, the family fled to the United Kingdom. Throughout the war, Prince Bernhard stayed in London with Queen Wilhelmina. In June 1940, Princess Juliana and her two daughters went to Ottawa in Canada, where they would be safer. Princess Margriet was born in Canada on 19 January 1943. On 2 August 1945, the whole family returned to the Netherlands. Princess Christina was born at Soestdijk Palace on 18 February 1947. Princess Beatrix spent the rest of her childhood at Soestdijk Palace.

Education

In Canada, Princess Beatrix attended nursery and primary school. On her return to the Netherlands, she continued her primary education at *De Werkplaats*, Kees Boeke's progressive school in Bilthoven.

In April 1950, Princess Beatrix entered the Incrementum, part of the Baarns Lyceum, where she passed her school-leaving examinations in arts subjects and classics in 1956. In the same year, the Princess enrolled as a student at Leiden University. She was a member of the Leiden Women Students' Association. In her first years at university, she attended lectures in sociology, jurisprudence, economics, parliamentary history and constitutional law.

Later she also attended lectures on the cultures of Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles, the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, international affairs, international law, history and European law.

In the summer of 1959, she passed her preliminary examination in law. While at university, the Princess visited various European and international organisations in

Geneva, Strasbourg, Paris and Brussels. In 1961 she obtained a combined degree in law and other subjects, including sociology and economics.

In 2005, the Queen received an honorary doctorate from Leiden University in recognition of the way in which she raises the issue of the importance of individual freedom and the responsibilities that go with it.

Marriage and family

On 28 June 1965, Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard announced the engagement of Princess Beatrix and the German diplomat Claus von Amsberg in radio and television broadcasts.

Before the wedding could take place parliament had to be asked for permission. In autumn 1965, the two houses of parliament passed a bill consenting to the marriage. Claus von Amsberg immediately became a Dutch citizen.

Princess Beatrix married Claus von Amsberg on 10 March 1966. The ceremony was conducted by the Mayor of Amsterdam, Gijsbert van Hall.

After the civil ceremony in Amsterdam City Hall, the marriage was blessed in the Westerkerk by Rev. Hendrik Jan Kater, with a sermon by Rev. Johannes Hendrik Sillevius Smitt.

On the same day, Claus von Amsberg received the title of Prince of the Netherlands and the designation Jonkheer van Amsberg.

The royal couple took up residence in Drakensteyn Castle in Lage Vuursche, where the Princess had lived since 1963. They lived at Drakensteyn Castle until 1981, when they moved into Huis ten Bosch Palace in The Hague.

Prince Claus passed away on 6 October 2002.

Queen Beatrix has eight grandchildren.

Position and role as head of state

Under the Constitution, the Queen, together with the ministers, makes up the government. The ministers, and not the monarch, are responsible for the acts of the government, and the ministers are accountable to Parliament for what she says and does. The ministers, who together make up the cabinet, are responsible for decision-making.

The Queen has weekly meetings with the prime minister, speaks regularly with ministers and state secretaries, and signs all new Acts of Parliament and royal decrees. At the state opening of parliament on the third Tuesday in September, she delivers the Speech from the Throne, in which the government announces its plans for the coming parliamentary year.

The Queen is president of the Council of State. This is a ceremonial, largely symbolic position. The Queen represents the Kingdom of the Netherlands at home and abroad, and keeps in touch with society. She plays a unifying, representative and encouraging role.

The Queen binds people together and supports the activities of persons and organisations who play a unifying role in society. She is impartial and contributes to social stability, continuity and progress in the country. She expresses the people's feelings at times of joy and sadness.

The Queen represents the Kingdom of the Netherlands at home and abroad. Every year, she undertakes state visits abroad and receives foreign heads of state and government visiting the Netherlands.

The Queen regularly attends conferences, meetings, celebrations, remembrance ceremonies and other official events. She devotes attention to positive initiatives in society and supports valuable trends and activities.

Contact with the public

The Queen devotes much attention to important events in the Netherlands. When a disaster occurs she expresses her sympathy with those affected and talks to the bereaved.

The Queen keeps herself informed of what is going on in society. She regularly attends openings, celebrations, remembrance ceremonies, and other official events.

She also regularly visits the provinces to learn of the issues that affect people at local level. During specially organised working visits, she examines issues relating to such subjects as justice, agriculture, minorities and the environment.

On 16 May 1996, the Queen was awarded the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen for her contribution to European unification. The prize was established in 1949 for distinguished service on behalf of European unification. The Queen was the third Dutch person to receive the prize. Hendrik Brugmans, who received the prize in 1951, and Joseph Luns, the 1961 prizewinner, preceded her.

The Queen is patron of many organisations and holds various honorary posts.

Posts held

Posts

- President of the Council of State
- Chair of the Board of the House of Orange-Nassau Archives Trust

Honorary posts

- Patron of the Dutch Disability Organisation
- Patron of the Batavian Society for Experimental Sciences
- Patron of the Society for the Protection of Trees
- Patron of the *Heemschut* Association for the Protection of Historic Buildings
- Patron of the Federation of Victims of War and Military Service
- Patron of the Royal Institute of Dutch Architects/Royal Society for the Advancement of Architecture
- Patron of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
- Patron of Floriade 2012
- Patron of HVO-Querido
- Patron of *Die Haghe* Historical Association
- Patron of the Orange-Nassau Historical Association
- Patron of the Johanna Children's Fund
- Patron of the Karel Doorman Fund
- Patron of the Koning Willem Fonds/Netherlands Benevolent Society, London
- Patron of the Royal Frisian Society for History and Culture
- Patron of the Royal Institute of Engineers (KIVI)
- Patron of *Die Haghe Sanghers* Royal Male Choir

- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Choral Union
- Patron of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, Amsterdam
- Patron of Bronbeek Royal Veterans' Home
- Patron of the Royal Zeeland Scientific Society
- Patron of the Royal Academy of the Visual Arts
- Patron of *De Hoop* Royal Yacht Club, Amsterdam
- Patron of the Royal Federation of Choral and Oratorio Societies
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Beef Cattle Syndicate
- Patron of the Royal Botanical and Horticultural Society
- Patron of *Diligentia* Royal Physics Society
- Patron of the Royal Military and Border Police
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)
- Patron of the Royal Dutch Retired Warrant Officers' Association
- Patron of the Royal Dutch Aviculture Association
- Patron of the Royal Dutch Aviation Association
- Patron of the Royal Dutch Yachting and Rowing Association, Muiden
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Institution
- Patron of *De Maas* Royal Yacht Club
- Patron of *de Schuttevaer* Royal Inland Waterways Shipping Association
- Patron of the Royal Frisian Studbook Association
- Patron of the Royal Association of Knights of the Military Order of William
- Patron of the Royal Association of Honourably Discharged Officers of the Netherlands Armed Forces
- Patron of *Maastrichter Staar* Royal Choral Society
- Patron of the Netherlands Association for the Prevention of Cancer (KWF)
- Patron of the Zuid-Midden-Oost Agricultural Union
- Patron of the University of Leiden Fund
- Patron of the Historical and Archaeological Society of Limburg
- Patron of the Northern Netherlands Agricultural and Horticultural Organisation
- Patron of the Society of Dutch Literature
- Patron of Madurodam Miniature City
- Patron of the *Jantje Beton* National Youth Fund
- Patron of the Dutch Council on Social Welfare
- Patron of the Netherlands Bible Society
- Patron of *Vrouwen van Nu*, the Dutch Women's Institute
- Patron of the Netherlands UNICEF Committee
- Patron of the Netherlands Society for Trade and Industry
- Patron of the Association of Netherlands Nobility

- Patron of the Netherlands Confectioners' Association
- Patron of the *Arti et Industriae* Association
- Patron of the Fund for the Visually Impaired
- Patron of the War Graves Foundation
- Patron of the Limburg Historic Archery Association
- Patron of the Princess Beatrix Fund
- Patron of the Rheumatism Fund
- Patron of the *Pulchri Studio* Art Society
- Patron of the Queen Wilhelmina Dutch National Costume Collection
- Patron of Simavi
- Patron of the Register of Round-bottomed and Flat-bottomed Yachts
- Patron of the Refugee Foundation
- Patron of the Foundation for Refugee Students UAF
- Patron of the Care and Assistance Society
- Patron of the Netherlands Maritime Museum Association
- Patron of the Association for the Law and History of Overijssel
- Patron of the *Gelre* Association
- Patron of the Netherlands Cancer Institute
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Heathlands Society
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Trade Fairs Association
- Patron of the Rembrandt Association
- Patron of the Association for History of Dutch Music
- Patron of the Young Women's Christian Association
- Patron of the Southern Netherlands Agricultural and Horticultural Organisation

Prince of Orange



As Queen Beatrix's eldest child, His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange is first in line of succession to the throne. The Prince is married to Princess Máxima. They have three daughters, Princess Catharina-Amalia, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane.

Since the Queen's investiture on 30 April 1980, Prince Willem-Alexander has borne the title of Prince of Orange, which is held by the heir to the throne.

The Prince represents the Royal House on official occasions in all sectors of society. He often represents the Queen at international events or accompanies her on state visits. With Princess Máxima and the ministers responsible, he regularly accompanies Dutch trade missions to countries of interest to Dutch business.

Prince Willem-Alexander often undertakes working visits in the Netherlands and abroad, to familiarise himself with social issues. He also pays frequent visits to the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

Youth

Willem-Alexander Claus George Ferdinand was born in the University Hospital, Utrecht, on 27 April 1967, the first child of Princess Beatrix and Prince Claus. On his birth, he received the titles of Prince of the Netherlands and Prince of Orange-Nassau, Jonkheer van Amsberg. He was baptised in The Hague on 2 September 1967. His godparents were Prince Bernhard, Queen Margrethe of Denmark, Ferdinand von Bismarck, former Prime Minister Jelle Zijlstra and Ms Renée Smith-Roëll.

Prince Willem-Alexander spent his early childhood at Drakensteyn Castle in Lage Vuursche. He has two brothers, Prince Friso, born in 1968, and Prince Constantijn, born in 1969. In 1981, the family moved from Drakensteyn Castle to Huis ten Bosch Palace in The Hague.

Education

Prince Willem-Alexander received his primary education at the Nieuwe Baarnse School in Baarn. He started his secondary education at the Baarns Lyceum and after moving to Huis Ten Bosch Palace in 1981 attended the Eerste Vrijzinnig Christelijk Lyceum in The Hague. He completed his secondary education at Atlantic College in Llantwit Major in Wales, where he gained an International Baccalaureate in 1985.

The Prince performed his military service in the Royal Netherlands Navy from August 1985 to January 1987. He received training at the Royal Netherlands Naval College in Den Helder, after which he served on board the frigates *HNLMS Tromp* and *HNLMS Abraham Crijnssen*. In 1988, he received refresher training, serving as a duty officer on board the frigate *HNLMS Van Kinsbergen*.

After completing his military service in 1987, the Prince enrolled as a history student in the Arts Faculty of Leiden University. His studies gave him a wide-ranging knowledge of a broad spectrum of subjects, including general and Dutch history, economic history, political science and constitutional law, EC law, international law, human rights and economics. He was awarded a degree in history in 1993. The Prince concluded his studies with a dissertation on the Dutch response to France's decision under President de Gaulle to leave NATO's integrated command structure. While he was at university, he was a member of the Minerva students' society.

After graduating in 1993, the Prince gained his Military Pilot's Licence with 334 Transport Squadron of the Royal Netherlands Air Force. In 1994, the Prince spent several months at the Netherlands Defence College, studying aspects of the work of the Royal Netherlands Army and Air Force.

After his studies and his military career, the Prince completed an intensive programme in which he became familiar with every facet of Dutch society. He studied the constitutional and legal systems and learned how central government and other authorities function. He visited European institutions, Dutch ministries and the High Councils of State. He then went on to complete an extensive introductory programme with the Dutch business

community and an Advanced Development Programme at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, USA.

Marriage and family

On 30 March 2001 Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus announced the engagement of the Prince of Orange and Máxima Zorreguieta. On 3 July 2001, the two houses of parliament passed a bill submitted by the government consenting to the marriage. The Mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen, conducted the civil marriage ceremony in the Beurs van Berlage on 2 February 2002. The church ceremony took place immediately afterwards at De Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam. The Reverend Carel ter Linden and Father Rafael Braun officiated. The royal couple initially lived in the Prince's home at Noordeinde 66, The Hague. In spring 2003, they moved to Eikenhorst on the De Horsten estate in Wassenaar.

Their first child, Princess Catharina-Amalia, was born on 7 December 2003. Their second child, Princess Alexia, was born on 26 June 2005, and their third child, Princess Ariane, on 10 April 2007. All three were born at Bronovo Hospital in The Hague.

Work

Prince Willem-Alexander occupies a number of specific posts and has some specific duties. He is involved in Dutch society in various capacities, for example through the Orange Fund. There are some areas in which he is especially interested. They include water management, infrastructure and ICT, sport and defence.

He has been a member of the Council of State since his 18th birthday. The Prince normally attends the weekly meetings of the Advisory Division of the Council of State and the Council's plenary meetings, which are held every six weeks.

He is also a member of various boards. He was a member of the supervisory boards of *De Nederlandsche Bank* (the Dutch central bank) from 1998 to 2010 and of the Kröller-Müller Museum from 1999 to 2010. Since 2002, he has chaired the House of Orange-Nassau Historic Collections Trust and has represented the Royal Family on the management board of the Royal Domains.

The Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima are patrons of the Orange Fund, which works for social welfare and cohesion in the Netherlands. By undertaking numerous working

visits, and taking part in activities such as the volunteer initiative NL DOET, the couple are able to broaden and deepen their commitment to society through the Orange Fund.

At the informal dinners they hold regularly at Eikenhorst, the Prince and Princess discuss significant subjects with guests from various sectors of society. They also host lunches for 'highflyers' at Noordeinde Palace at which they entertain Dutch people who have distinguished themselves, and have received an award for their achievement.

Water management, infrastructure and ICT

Prince Willem-Alexander has been active in the field of water management, both at home and abroad, since 1997.

In 2000, he was appointed chair of the Dutch Integrated Water Management Commission, which became the Water Advisory Committee in 2004, with the Prince as its chairperson. This independent committee of experts gives advice on water management to the minister concerned, acting either in response to a request or on its own initiative. Its recommendations are usually on the feasibility of water policy and its financial and social impact. Of particular importance in this respect is the Delta Programme, which was launched to keep the Netherlands safe from the consequences of climate change. The Programme addresses issues such as flood protection, efficient water management, flood insurance and standard-setting in relation to flood defences.

Apart from issuing recommendations, the Prince, in his capacity as chair of the Committee, pays regular working visits to projects all over the country, and takes part in workshops and symposiums.

The Prince is also active in the field of water management at international level. In 1998, he became the patron of the Global Water Partnership. In 2000, he was Chair of the Second World Water Forum in The Hague. In 2006, the Prince was asked by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to succeed the former Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto as chair of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB).

UNSGAB provides the Secretary-General with independent advice, and lobbies worldwide for practical measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goal on water and sanitation. The UN has set itself the aim of halving the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation by 2015. In this context,

UNSGAB focuses in particular on practical measures in the field of integrated water management, funding and monitoring. It also devotes special attention to the problem of sanitation, and water-related disasters. As chair of UNSGAB, the Prince has visited numerous countries, organisations and international meetings to turn the spotlight on these problems and UNSGAB's views.

Both nationally and internationally, water management is closely connected with other sectors, in particular spatial planning and infrastructure, agriculture and sustainable energy. The Prince is extremely interested in these subjects too, and in the relationships between them.

He is also interested in innovation and ICT, particularly in his own special areas of interest. As a member of the Advisory Council of ECP, the information society forum for government, business and civil society, the Prince undertakes regular working visits to keep abreast of new digital applications in various social and economic sectors.

Sport

The Prince has a passion for sport. He is not only a sportsman himself, but is involved professionally with sport, both in the Netherlands and abroad.

From 1995 to 1998, Prince Willem-Alexander was patron of the Netherlands Olympic Committee* Dutch Sports Federation. In 1998, he became a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). As a member of the IOC, Prince Willem-Alexander attends the annual meetings and all Olympic Games. He acts as an observer at some matches. Within the IOC, the Prince sat on various commissions, including the Olympic Solidarity Commission from 1999 to 2003, the Nominations Commission in 2000 and the 2000 Reform Follow-up Commission in 2002.

He was closely involved in the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver in 2010. In 2003, he was a member of the Evaluation Commission, and visited and evaluated all the candidates for the XXIst Winter Olympic Games. After Vancouver was selected, the Prince was a member of the Vancouver 2010 Coordination Commission, chairing the marketing and communications working group from 2003 to 2010. The Coordination Commission advised and supervised preparations for the Games. Given his experience in Vancouver, the Prince was asked to join the IOC's Marketing Commission in 2010.

Defence

The Prince has a special relationship with the Dutch armed forces. He holds the rank of Commodore in the Royal Netherlands Navy Reserve, Brigadier General in the Royal Netherlands Army Reserve and Air Commodore in the Royal Netherlands Air Force Reserve. He has been Aide-de-Camp Extraordinary to Her Majesty the Queen since 1990.

Every year, the Prince visits units and staffs of all three armed forces. He also pays regular visits to troops on manoeuvres or missions abroad. He visited the Dutch units in Afghanistan on four occasions, and he was recently on board the *HNLMS Evertsen* as it patrolled the waters off the coast of Somalia as part of the EU's anti-piracy mission.

The Prince of Orange is patron of Veterans' Day, and takes the salute at the annual Veterans' Day parade in The Hague.

Flying

The Prince is extremely interested in flying. In 1985, he obtained his Private Pilot's Licence (Second Class), followed by his Commercial Pilot's Licence (with an Instrument Rating) in 1987. This enabled him to fly as a volunteer in Kenya, first for the medical aid organisation African Medical Research & Education Foundation (AMREF) and then for the Kenya Wildlife Service. In 1989, the Prince obtained a supplementary licence to fly multi-engine jet aircraft. He also has his Military Pilot's Licence, which was presented to him by his grandfather Prince Bernhard in 1994. The Prince earned his Airline Transport Pilot Licence in 2001, which enables him to fly large commercial aircraft. In order to keep in practice, the Prince occasionally flies KLM City Hopper's Fokker 70s (either the government aeroplane – registration PH-KBX – or a Fokker 70 from the regular fleet).

Posts held

- Member of the Council of State
- Chair of the Water Advisory Committee
- Chair of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation
- Member of the International Olympic Committee
- Member of the Advisory Council of ECP (information society forum for the Netherlands)
- Chair of the board of the House of Orange-Nassau Historic Collections Trust
- Representative of Her Majesty the Queen and members of the royal family, Royal Domains management board

Military ranks

- Commodore in the Royal Netherlands Navy Reserve
- Brigadier General in the Royal Netherlands Army Reserve
- Air Commodore in the Royal Netherlands Air Force Reserve
- Aide-de-Camp Extraordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

Honorary posts

- Patron of the Orange Fund
- Patron of the Global Water Partnership
- Patron of the Netherlands Heart Foundation
- Patron of AMREF Nederland
- Patron of UWC the Netherlands
- Patron of *Sail Amsterdam*
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Watersports Association
- Patron of Hermitage Amsterdam
- Patron of the Royal Dutch Arts and Science Society of Sciences and Humanities
- Patron of the National Veterans Day Committee
- Honorary Chair of the Koning Willem I Foundation
- Patron of the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation

Princess Máxima

Princess Máxima of the Netherlands is married to Prince Willem-Alexander, the heir to the throne. The royal couple have three daughters, Princess Catharina-Amalia, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane.

Since her marriage, Princess Máxima has held various public posts. She also devotes a great deal of time to her representative duties. Princess Máxima represents the Royal House at official occasions of all kinds. The Prince of Orange and Princess Máxima also accompany the Queen on state visits.

Since 20 October 2004, Princess Máxima has been a member of the Council of State, the most important government advisory body.



Princess Máxima was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 17 May 1971 as Máxima Zorreguieta. She is the daughter of Jorge Horacio Zorreguieta and Maria del Carmen Cerruti de Zorreguieta.

She has two brothers, one sister and three half-sisters. Princess Máxima grew up in Buenos Aires.

Education

Princess Máxima passed her baccalaureate examinations at Northlands School in 1988.

She graduated in economics from the Universidad Católica Argentina in 1995.

From 1989 to 1990, while still at university, she worked for Mercado Abierto SA, where she did research into software for financial markets.

From 1992 to 1995, she worked in the Sales Department of Boston Securities SA in Buenos Aires. She also taught English to children and adults, and mathematics to secondary school pupils and first-year students.

From July 1996 to February 1998, Princess Máxima worked for HSBC James Capel Inc. in New York, where she was Vice-President of Latin American Institutional Sales. She then worked for Dresdner Kleinwort Benson until July 1999. She was Vice-President of the emerging markets division, specialising in equities.

She then moved to Deutsche Bank in New York, where she was Vice-President of Institutional Sales. From May 2000 to March 2001, she worked at the EU Representative Office of Deutsche Bank in Brussels.

Marriage and family

On 30 March 2001, Máxima Zorreguieta became engaged to the Prince of Orange.

On 17 May 2001 she became a Dutch citizen. On 3 July 2001, the two houses of parliament passed a bill submitted by the government consenting to the marriage.

The civil marriage ceremony was conducted by Job Cohen, the Mayor of Amsterdam, in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam on 2 February 2002. The Reverend Carel ter Linden officiated at the church ceremony, which took place in De Nieuwe Kerk.

In spring 2003, the couple moved from Noordeinde 66 in The Hague to Villa Eikenhorst on the De Horsten estate in Wassenaar.

Their first child, Princess Catharina-Amalia, was born on 7 December 2003. A second daughter, Princess Alexia, was born on 26 June 2005, and a third, Princess Ariane, on 10 April 2007. All three were born at Bronovo Hospital in The Hague.

Work

Since 20 October 2004, Princess Máxima has been a member of the Council of State, the most important government advisory body.

Orange Fund

Princess Máxima and the Prince of Orange are patrons of the Orange Fund, which was set up to promote social welfare and cohesion in the Netherlands. Each May, the Princess presents *Appeltjes van Oranje* awards to institutions that set an example in the field of welfare and cohesion.

Prince Claus Chair

The Princess chairs the Board of Trustees of the Prince Claus Chair, which is occupied in turn at Utrecht University and the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. The Chair was endowed to promote training and research in the field of development cooperation.

Money wiser

Princess Máxima has been honorary chair of the Money Wiser Platform since 1 September 2010. In this capacity, the Princess focuses attention on the importance of financial education for young people and managing money sensibly. The Princess acts as special adviser to the Platform and consults with interested parties on ways of increasing people's financial resilience.

Committee for Enterprise and Finance

Princess Máxima is a member of the Committee for Enterprise and Finance, which succeeded the Microfinance Council in August 2011. In this capacity, she promotes enterprise by advising on coaching and the issue of small loans to starting and established entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. The Princess was a member of the Microfinance Council from 2007 to 2011.

United Nations

In 2009, Princess Máxima was appointed the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development. In this capacity, the Princess advises the Secretary-General, and works worldwide to make financial services accessible to all. In

doing so, she contributes to the development of low-income groups and the SME sector in particular.

G20

Princess Máxima has been honorary chair of the G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion since June 2011. In this capacity, she works to strengthen the synergy between the UN and the G20 in the field of universal access to financial services, calling on her many years of experience to put inclusive finance firmly on the world map.

Diversity and integration

The Princess is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Chair in Management of Diversity and Integration at the Free University of Amsterdam.

From July 2003 to the summer of 2005, she was a member of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Women's Participation. This Committee supported the thirty largest municipalities in promoting the participation in society of women from ethnic minority groups. It was chaired by former Member of Parliament Paul Rosenmöller.

Civic integration

Princess Máxima completed her civic integration programme in early 2005. Since becoming engaged, she had been familiarising herself with Dutch society and the society of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. She also learned the Dutch language, and studied Dutch history and constitutional law.

Inclusive finance

For several years now, Princess Máxima has been committed to increasing access to financial services and to improving consumer protection and people's financial skills.

In 2009, Princess Máxima was appointed the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development. In this capacity, the Princess advises the Secretary-General, and works worldwide to make financial services accessible to all. In doing so, she contributes to the development of low-income groups and the SME sector in particular. At present, people and small businesses in many countries cannot open a bank or savings account or take out insurance or loans.

Princess Máxima has been honorary chair of the G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion since June 2011. In this capacity, she works to strengthen the synergy between the UN and the G20 in the field of universal access to financial services, calling on her many years of experience to put inclusive finance firmly on the world map.

Princess Máxima has been honorary chair of the Dutch Money Wiser Platform since 1 September 2010. In this capacity, the Princess focuses attention on the importance of financial education for young people and managing money sensibly. The Princess acts as special adviser to the Platform and consults with interested parties on ways of increasing people's financial resilience.

Princess Máxima is also a member of the Committee for Enterprise and Finance, which succeeded the Microfinance Council in August 2011. In this capacity, the Princess promotes entrepreneurship by advising on coaching and the issue of small loans to starting and established entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. The Princess was a member of the Microfinance Council from 2007 to 2011.

Prior to her UN appointment, the Princess had joined the Advisors Group for the International Year of Microcredit at the invitation of the United Nations. In 2005, the advisors met regularly to discuss progress in the field of universal access to financial services. The Princess paid working visits to Uganda, Kenya, Brazil and Argentina to see how microcredit works. During these visits, she also had talks with representatives of government, the business sector and NGOs.

In June 2006, Princess Máxima became a member of the UN Advisors Group on Inclusive Financial Sectors. This Group built on the achievements of the International Year of Microcredit 2005. Apart from microcredit – small loans to economically active poor people – the Advisors Group also promoted wider access to financial services for small businesses. The Princess contributed by entering into dialogue with the business sector, donors, legislators, oversight agencies, microfinance institutions and international organisations on the role they can play in giving more small businesses access to the financial sector.

Posts held

- Member of the Council of State
- Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Prince Claus Chair

- Member of the Board of Trustees of the Chair in Management of Diversity and Integration at the Free University of Amsterdam
- Member of the Supervisory Board of the Het Loo Palace National Museum
- Honorary chair of the Money Wiser Platform
- Member of the Dutch Committee for Enterprise and Finance
- UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development
- Honorary Chair of the G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion

Honorary posts

- Patron of the Orange Fund (with the Prince of Orange)
- Patron of Scouting Nederland
- Patron of the Royal Tropical Institute
- Patron of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
- Patron of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies

8. Press programme and facilities

Many hundreds of journalists and media organisations from home and abroad will cover the abdication and investiture in Amsterdam. Various facilities are being provided to ensure you can create a memorable record of this special day. Press enclosures will be set up at the principal locations around the town and there will be a press centre at the Beurs van Berlage with a range of facilities.

Press enclosures

Press enclosures are available for a maximum of 300 selected media representatives at the following locations in the secure area (only accessible to holders of a police accreditation pass):

- at the Rijksmuseum (29 April)
- in the immediate vicinity of the Royal Palace and De Nieuwe Kerk (30 April)
- at various locations and on the press boat for the water pageant on the IJ (30 April in the evening).

Registration for these locations has closed. An effort has been made to include the widest possible range of media outlets.

Various press facilities are being provided outside the secure area. Upon presenting your press card and identity document you can obtain a general press pass from the press centre at the Beurs van Berlage on 28, 29 and 30 April which gives you access to press enclosures outside the secure area:

- on the northern bank of the IJ to cover the water pageant
- Sumatrakade (around 50 places)
- Oeverpark (around 50 places)
- Stork site (around 50 places)
- press enclosures at public events on Museumplein/Oranjeplein, including the Royal Ball, and the Kop van Java, which lies on the route of the water pageant (limited places).

Photographers and reporters can also mingle with the public to report on the water pageant. The best spots for this are Noordwal (northern bank) and De Ruijterkade (southern bank).

Capacity is limited at all press enclosures. The organisers therefore reserve the right to stop admitting journalists once capacity has been reached.

Side programme

Media tours and side programmes on a number of themes will be available for foreign journalists. You can sign up for these at the press centre at the Beurs van Berlage. Email any questions to pressoffice@amsterdam.nl.

Press centre at the Beurs van Berlage

A press centre for all media will be set up by the municipality of Amsterdam, the States General and the Government Information Service (RVD) in the Beurs van Berlage (entrance at Damrak 243). The press centre will be outside the secure area.

Upon presenting an identity document and press card, or a pass issued by the police to accredited journalists, representatives of all media organisations that have registered can obtain a badge that will give them access to the press centre in the Effectenbeurszaal. The press centre will be open at the following times (subject to alteration):

- Sunday 28 April, 13.00 - 22.00
- Monday 29 April, 13.00 - 22.00
- Tuesday 30 April, 8.00 - 00.00

The press centre will be equipped with standard facilities for journalists. It will also serve as a central information point for questions about the abdication and investiture ceremonies, the Royal House, Queen's Day and the activities in Amsterdam on and around 30 April. A big screen in the press centre will display a livestream of all available images of the abdication, investiture and public events.

The press centre will also provide opportunities to the media to visit other locations in Amsterdam. See www.iamsterdam.com/press for more information.

Press facilities

At present, the following facilities are planned:

- The NOS, which will act as host broadcaster, will provide live coverage of events throughout the day (including the abdication at the Royal Palace, Amsterdam and

the investiture ceremony at De Nieuwe Kerk). For programme information: Anja van Ginhoven, +31 (0)6 51815183.

- For visual material: Hadewijch van den Berg, +31 (0)6 53230561 or Matthijs Linnenman, +31 (0)6 53645556.
- The ANP will act as pool coordinator for photographic material of the abdication at the Royal Palace, Amsterdam and the investiture ceremony at De Nieuwe Kerk. Further information: ANP Photo news manager: +31 (0)70 4141350 or hotseat@anp.nl.
- A number of standup positions for television will be provided on the Dam outside the secure area. There will be limited space on Rokin for SNG/ENG vans. For more information and bookings:
Eurovisie: Eurovisie@nos.nl, +31 (0)35 6773604 (Janet Verheijen, Eva Spoor).
Enex members: enex130430@rtl.nl, +31 (0)35 6718844 (Manon Huijsmans).

More information

- About the joint session of the two Houses of the States General and the investiture at De Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam:
Joint session of the two Houses of the States General:
Senate of the States General, Gert Riphagen: +31 (0)6 20544625, gert.riphagen@eerstekamer.nl and
Tonnie van der Harst: +31 (0)6 21166912, tonnie.vanderharst@eerstekamer.nl
House of Representatives of the States General, Jos Jochemsen: +31 (0)6 18305710, j.jochemsen@tweedekamer.nl
See also: www.staten-generaal.nl and www.nieuwekerk.nl
- About the Royal House and the abdication at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam:
Government Information Service, rvd.pers.kh@minaz.nl
See also: www.koninklijkhuis.nl and www.paleisamsterdam.nl
- About accreditation and the press enclosures in the secure area:
Government Information Service, +31 (0)70 3564142, rvd.pers.kh@minaz.nl
- About the celebrations, security measures, logistics and other press enclosures in Amsterdam: Municipality of Amsterdam, Bartho Boer or Iris Reshef: +31 (0)20 5522117, b.boer@amsterdam.nl and i.reshef@amsterdam.nl
See also: www.amsterdam.nl/troonswisseling

- About the deployment of Ministry of Defence personnel and military ceremonial:
Ministry of Defence, Detlev Simons: +31 (0)6 20542887, dwm.simons@mindef.nl
See also www.defensie.nl
- About the National Investiture Committee:
+31 (0)70 3564110.
See also: www.mijndroomvooronsland.nl

9. After 30 April 2013

After the abdication and investiture on 30 April 2013 King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima will tour all the provinces of the Netherlands in May and June, visiting two provinces a day. The Queen's Commissioners have been asked to submit suggestions for the programme. The royal couple will visit not just the provincial capitals, but a number of other locations as well. The dates for the planned visits to the provinces are as follows:

- 28 May Groningen and Drenthe
- 30 May Gelderland and Utrecht
- 12 June Limburg and North Brabant
- 14 June Friesland and North Holland
- 19 June Flevoland and Overijssel
- 21 June Zeeland and South Holland

The King and Queen will visit the Caribbean part of the Kingdom from 12-24 November.

Bicentenary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Almost immediately after the King and Queen return from the Caribbean, celebrations marking the bicentenary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands will begin. The years 1813-1815 witnessed the laying of the foundations of the country which was built up over the next 200 years: a kingdom with a constitution, a parliament and its own place on the international stage. The entire Kingdom will remember the events of those years and celebrate the achievements of 200 years of independence and democracy.

The bicentenary programme will start in The Hague on 30 November 2013, and will feature a commemoration of the landing by the subsequent King Willem I at Scheveningen on the same day in 1813. Four other national events will be organised. In the spring of 2014 the Kingdom's youth parliament will convene in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. Fifty young people from the Netherlands, Curaçao, Aruba, St Maarten, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba will debate the Kingdom's achievements over 200 years. The bicentenary programme will be rounded off on 26 September 2015 in Amsterdam with a celebration based on the theme of 'unity in diversity'.

More information: www.200jaarkoninkrijk.nl