



Summary Article: **Hague, The**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Image from: [The Huis ten Bosch at The Hague in National Gallery Collection](#)

Legislative and judicial capital of the Netherlands, and capital of South Holland province, 3 km/2 mi from the North Sea; population (2003 est) 465,900. It is linked by canal to Rotterdam and Amsterdam (which is the official capital of the country). Although it has some industries (including the manufacturing of computer software, electrical equipment, petroleum products, and food products), as well as dairying, livestock-raising, and agriculture (flowers, vegetables, fruit), the city's economy revolves around government administration. Banking, insurance, and trade are also economically important.

**History** The Hague grew up around a hunting lodge after a castle was built nearby in 1248. The castle is now the centrepiece of the **Binnenhof**, a group of several buildings that came to form the principal residence for Dutch courts. The States-General (parliament) established itself here in 1586, and from the 17th century the city became one of the chief diplomatic and intellectual centres of Europe. In the early 19th century, after Amsterdam had become the constitutional Dutch capital, The Hague received its own charter. The Triple Alliance between England, Sweden, and the Netherlands was signed here in 1688; the International Peace Conference was held in The Hague in 1899; and peace conferences met here that established The Hague Convention of 1899 and The Hague Convention of 1907.

**International Court of Justice and War Crimes Tribunal** After World War I, a committee of the council of the League of Nations met at The Hague in 1920 to promote the Permanent International Court of Justice, which was established at The Hague later in the year at a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. Its successor, the International Court of Justice, also known as World Court, was created in 1945 and is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

In May 1993, an International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was established by the United Nations at The Hague. Its purpose was to bring to justice perpetrators of war crimes in the conflict in former Yugoslavia (especially Bosnia-Herzegovina) since 1991. Between 1993 and 2001 this War Crimes Tribunal publicly indicted around 100 individuals, but more than a quarter – including key figures such as the former Serbian president Slobodan Milošević and the Bosnian-Serb military and political leaders Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadžić – remained at large, having escaped arrest. By 2001 the Tribunal's annual cost approached \$100 million.

**Features** The castle was founded by William II, count of Holland, and once surrounded by a moat. Its Gothic Hall of Knights (1280) is where the annual opening of parliament takes place. Other architectural features include the town hall (1565); the Peace Palace (1913), designed by Belgian architect Louis Cordonnier and donated by US industrialist Andrew Carnegie, and which houses the International Court of Justice; and the Mauritshuis (1633–44), the royal picture gallery. Many of the city's streets are intersected by canals, and in the centre of the city is an artificial lake, known as the Hofvijver. Suburban expansion includes the seaside resort of Scheveningen to the northwest and Zoetermeer 14 km/9 mi to the east. Scheveningen is famed for its beach and its Kurhaus, a casino dating from 1887, and is the usual residence of the royal court.

The Hague was the birthplace of the astronomer Christiaan Huygens and the physician Hermann Boerhaave.

**Architecture** The principal buildings are located in the north of the city: the royal palace, purchased by the states in 1595; and the royal library, which contains over 800,000 books.

Government buildings situated in the Binnenhof include the prison, outside which the De Witt brothers, Cornelius and Jan, were killed in 1672; the law courts; and the building containing the state archives.

The city has numerous churches, including the 15th-century Gothic Grote Kerk of St James, and the Nieuwe Kerk, containing the tombs of the brothers De Witt and of the philosopher Benedict Spinoza. There is also the royal villa Huis ten Bosch (1645), where The Hague Convention of 1899 was held. The Hague Academy of International Law was opened in the Peace Palace in July 1923. The international law library was donated by Carnegie and cost over \$1.5 million.

## images

International Court of Justice

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Hague, the. (2018). In Helicon (Ed.), *The Hutchinson unabridged encyclopedia with atlas and weather guide*. Abington, UK: Helicon. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/the\\_hague](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/the_hague)

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## APA

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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