

# The Hague

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# Editor's Note

After the previous magazine where we delved into anything International and International Studies, we now zoom in to take a look at something much closer to us. As students of International Studies, we are always trying to take in and stay updated on what can feel like everything from everywhere at times, studying things from far and beyond our own geographical and cultural contexts. Therefore we thought it would be nice to stop and take in what we are surrounded by right here, in The Hague. This issue will cover everything Den Haag-related, from the International Court of Justice to royal fun facts and much more. If you look beyond the steering wheel of your own bike there is a lot which could be of interest to an International Studies student right here in our own city. Or at least you will become a more knowledgeable tour guide for your friends and family from home when they come and visit.

Happy reading!

Issue 37

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### **Introduction:**

Hollywood movies are often full of surprises. Especially location wise!!! It doesn't seem to bother producers, for instance, when Loki from the Marvel Cinematic Universe is supposedly in Stuttgart, Germany, but the scene is filmed in Cleveland, Ohio...

Well, let me tell you, you will be equally surprised when I tell you about the Hague, as it is shown in two more or less recent Hollywood movies!

### **Methodology:**

I chose these two movies because I've watched them, and I more or less liked them despite the amount of misrepresentations. The research is thus also based on a more or less serious analysis of these two films. To find out actors' and directors' names I used Wikipedia.

### **Relevance:**

I hope to inspire some readers to watch these movies and entertain those who have already seen them with some fun facts. First and foremost, though, I wholeheartedly hope to bring awareness to all those ambitious IS students out there, about the cultural representation of the beautiful city we live in.

## **Chapter 1: The Hitman's Bodyguard 1 (2017)**

### **Subchapter 1: Plot Summary**

In this action comedy, Michael Bryce (Ryan Reynolds), said to be the world's best bodyguard, must protect Darius Kincaid (Samuel L. Jackson), who is said to be the world's best hitman. This situation came to be, as Kincaid has to testify at the International Criminal Court against "sadistic Eastern European dictator Vladislav Dukhovich (Gary Oldman)" (Wikipedia).

### **Subchapter 2: The Hague in The Hitman's Bodyguard 1**

Aside from the fact that, according to the Movie, all Dutch people communicate exclusively in English, it should be noted here, that the International Criminal Court is apparently somewhere within the Bulgarian National Bank in Sofia. However, when two of the characters go onto the roof of this alleged Court, suddenly the skyline of the Hague can be seen in the background in its full glory (including the tits of the Hague)! Furthermore, the logo of this "International Criminal Court" (although these exact words are written underneath it), looks nothing like the actual one... (This might also be due to copyright reasons though)

Well, at least they got the skyline right!

## **Chapter 2: Ocean's 12 (2004)**

### **Subchapter 1: Plot Summary**

In the second part of the famous Ocean's trilogy (dir. Steven Soderbergh) Danny Ocean (George Clooney), and his team of now 12 bandits (starring, among others, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, and Julia Roberts) are in danger! Terry Benedict (Andy Garcia), the guy they stole money from in the first movie (Ocean's 11), is threatening them with violence if they don't repay him within two weeks! To come up with the money, the thieves decide to go to Europe, because stealing from Europeans is always a great idea if you're American.

### **Subchapter 2: The Hague in Ocean's 12**

Part of the booty is a valuable certificate they want to steal in Amsterdam... However, Amsterdam is of course not the only location in the Netherlands, where the movie is shot. In fact, there are three locations in total. Aside from Amsterdam, the other two are Haarlem Centraal, which they try to make us believe is Amsterdam Centraal, and of course The Hague! More specifically, the 1 minute and 37 seconds long scene (min 36:20-37:57 (you can find the clip on YouTube)) is shot right next to Uni, in the Stadhuis, the City Hall...

First, we see a shot of a little man (I'm sure if we were closer, he would also look bigger) running along one of those high up passages, right there in the middle of city hall. One of the ones that always seem so unreachable, because for some reason us civilians are forced to keep to the ground floor. Then, the guy, who is terribly blond btw (probably an attempt to indicate his Dutchness???) is shown, opening a door, and walking into a big room. The camera follows him and then slowly swings into the room... and there we see it!!! Badabing-badaboom! The huge EUROPOL logo, except, they didn't put the real logo, of course!

Who would have known that the City Hall is actually the Europol headquarters facility?!

### **Conclusion:**

Don't trust everything you see on TV!

Lilly



# The Haagse Bos

## **The Haagse Bos: The Hague's best park**

The Haagse Bos, located near Central Station, is more than the Hague's smaller version of New York's Central Park: it has played a major role in the history of the city – as well as being the reason behind its name.

## **Geographic Names and the Forest**

Officially, the Hague is called 's-Gravenhage, which translates to "the count's woods". The name Den Haag – The woods – is derived from this. Besides the city, the neighbourhoods Benoordenhout and Bezuidenhout also owe their name to the Haagse bos: their name describes their position north and south of the woods. Similarly, the streets Korte and Lange Voorhout are named after their position between the woods and the city centre.

The Haagse Bos, before large-scale deforestation, was part of a bigger forest, which stretched throughout a big part of the two provinces of North and South Holland. The name of this forest – Houtland, translating to 'woodlands' – eventually turned into the name Holland, which for some has become a synonym for the Netherlands.

## **History of the Haagse Bos**

The Malieveld used to be part of the Haagse Bos. Officially, the Dutch state is not allowed to cut down the Haagse Bos to sell the chopped wood, because of a treaty signed in 1576 by William of Orange. However, during the 80 year war some of the forest got cut down regardless; as the fertile soil was then washed away by heavy rain, the forest would not regrow here. As a result of that, part of the Haagse Bos ended up as an empty field, also known as Malieveld, the large grass field now known for hosting large protests, as well as several fairs and festivals.

In 1645, the Huis ten Bosch Palace, was built in the Haagse Bos. It is currently the palace where the Dutch royal family lives, with the Noordeinde Palace being their working palace.

During the second world war, the German army launched missiles from the Haagse Bos to the United Kingdom. Aiming to destroy the launch site, allied planes attempted to drop bombs over the forest. Unfortunately, the bombs missed their target, and the Bezuidenhout neighbourhood was hit instead. The resulting fires destroyed most of the neighbourhood. Walking through Bezuidenhout nowadays, it is not hard to see which streets were left untouched by the fire, and which weren't. There is a clear visual difference between the pre-war architecture style, and that of the housing blocks constructed after 1962, when the neighbourhood was rebuilt.

**Diederik**

# ICJ: Number One Career Aspiration

## Editor's note:

Lots of students who came to study global politics or law in the Hague most likely thought at one point (or even were naive enough to say it out loud to someone): I want to get a job at the ICJ. If you did not, you are lying. I am also guilty of daydreaming about it but, like many of us, I came to the conclusion that it is a daunting challenge to actually get a job there. Still, it is not a time to give up. Some people actually manage to achieve it: well, maybe not a job at first, but an internship, which is also impressive and can be a good head start in your career. I asked my good friend, Aya, who did her internship at the ICJ this year to share her inspiring story for our magazine. Aya is currently doing a Master's degree at Cambridge University. Among her talents is baking the most delicious Christmas cookies yet she is an even better lawyer.

## Could you tell us a bit about your experience at the ICJ? What are its functions and the branches? What did the people from your branch work on?

During my internship at the ICJ, I gained insight into its role as the UN's principal judicial organ. The ICJ consists mainly of two branches: the judges' wing and the registry. My focus was on the registry, which is pivotal in managing non-judicial functions like translation of judgments between English and French, liaising with diplomatic corps in The Hague, and coordinating with the UN. This division ensures smooth operation beyond the court's judicial decisions.

## What was your role as an intern? What did your average working day look like?

As a legal intern in the Office of the Deputy Registrar, my days were intense, sometimes extending to working weekends. My role involved drafting detailed internal reports, standard operating procedures, and legal briefs, which required strong research and writing skills. These documents provided crucial recommendations within the court's framework. I also collaborated across departments to align project execution with the court's international administrative legal goals.



## Did you enjoy your experience and was it good for your career growth? What were some advantages and disadvantages of the ICJ? Tell us about some of your favorite tasks.

My time at the ICJ was incredibly fulfilling. Working in a supportive and dynamic team I had the opportunity to network extensively. My favorite tasks included attending hearings, assisting with document translations, collaborating with my department, and participating in workshops on UN career opportunities. The main challenge were the limited resources due to insufficient funding from the UN, which sometimes hindered task efficiency. Despite this, the experience significantly contributed to my professional growth.

## Do you think The Hague is a good location for the ICJ? How did you enjoy the city?

The Hague proved to be an outstanding location for my internship. This city, buzzing with energy and at the heart of international law and diplomacy, offered me the chance to meet amazing people, both from within and outside the court. The vibrant atmosphere of the Hague, coupled with its frequent, high-profile events related to diplomacy and international law, deeply enriched my experience. It was an environment that perfectly aligned with my interests and passions, making every moment spent there both professionally rewarding and personally enjoyable.

## Was it hard to get an internship? Who would you recommend to do this internship and what do you think the ICJ is looking for in interns?

Securing an internship at the ICJ was challenging but rewarding. For those interested in a legal internship like mine, a solid legal background is essential. In other departments, such as information services, fluency in English and French is highly valued. The information department is often recruiting interns, and this department handles external communications, including diplomatic engagements and the court's social media presence. I would really recommend applying at the ICJ to individuals passionate about international law and multilingual communication, as these are key aspects the ICJ looks for in interns.

# The Hague's Statues

But it is not the only statue in this art-filled city. Apart from the classical effigies of great historical figures that we can see around the center and in the embassies neighborhood, modern art also has a place. The most emblematic artists represented in the city being Jan Snoeck. Everyone must have already seen his colorful ceramic emblems, located in the side of Grote Marktstraat in the center or around Zuiderpark. A part of the Dutch "Informal Group", Snoek aims to represent humans in a non-traditional way, flirting with impressionism. While it may not seem obvious at first and his statues may evoke a certain other shape, taking the time to really look at these art pieces tells us a lot about the representation of humanity this artist has.

Finally, the Buitenkunst website also offers ready-made routes to witness art in a coherent way, organized around neighborhoods (there is one for Escamp, the center, Zuiderpark...). This section provides detailed routes, as well as a bit of historical context about artworks in those specific neighborhoods.

To conclude, while the Hague is not known for its art scene, it is actually everywhere and for free. Whether you like figurative or abstract art, there is surely something for your liking around the corner.

**Alexandre**

Statues are also a part of the experience of the city. I was not aware that The Hague was known to be full of them, but it seems to be the case. The first statue I want to mention is Haagse Harry, which was inaugurated in 2016. While most must have already seen it as it close to Grote Markt and all its vices, it is perhaps less known that the ashes of Schilderwijk artist Marnix Rueb rest in it. Haagse Harry represents a typical Hagenees/Hague dweller, it is nothing but normal that the artist would want this to be his final resting place.

What I find especially great with the Hague statue's scene is that there is a real policy to develop it and render it accessible (as museums are so expensive for no reason). If you look at the map that the Buitenkunst Den Haag website provides (both in English and Dutch), you will see that there are sculptures literally everywhere in the city. I discovered writing this article that there was one thirty seconds away from my place, that I had never heard about. Doing a statue tour in the Hague can be a fun and free activity to do when the weather is better, and they can even be a source of inspiration for potential study-related projects.



Ivo Coljé, Haagsche Jantje (decorated)

# 10 Fun Facts About the Dutch Monarchy

Dedicating a whole issue to The Hague without mentioning its fanciest inhabitants would be *lèse-majesté*, an offense we at BAISmag take very seriously. So, let's do what a loyal subject would do, and gossip about the Dutch royal family. Here are ten fun facts about them:

## **They've almost continuously lived in The Hague for four hundred years**

Almost, because there were two periods when they didn't. Queen Juliana (1948-80) famously deserted The Hague for the more peaceful Soestdijk Palace in Baarn, which meant that for over three decades, The Hague became *de stad van de lege paleizen*, the city of empty palaces. In 1981, with Queen Beatrix moving the court back to the city, The Hague got its title of royal city back and kept it until 2013, when Beatrix abdicated in favor of her son Willem Alexander. The King went on to spend the first few years of his reign residing at the Wassenaar Eikenhorst estate, while the Huis ten Bosch Palace underwent a 63 million euros renovation. Since 2019, the royal family has moved back to The Hague, and currently resides at Haagse Bos's Huis ten Bosch Palace, while attending to their royal duties at Noordeinde Palace.

## **They once triggered a massive squatter riot**

Speaking of expensive renovations, the 1980 make-over of Noordeinde Palace and the Amsterdam Royal Palace did not sit very well with the Dutchies. If you've visited enough student bar toilets, you might have seen stickers saying *geen woning, geen kroning, no home, no coronation*. The slogan, still very popular at housing-crisis protests, refers to one of the biggest squatter riots in Dutch history, which happened in reaction to the decision to spend taxpayers money on renovating two out of the three royal palaces in the middle of a very acute housing shortage, instead of investing that money in new affordable housing.

## **They've just got themselves a royal raise...**

In 2024, the royal family's budget will increase by 11%, reaching a staggering 55 million euros. This makes the Dutch monarchy the second most expensive one in Europe, after the British one. The pay rise, which was motivated by inflation, will be the highest since King Alexander's coronation in 2013.

## **...but they might need to start paying taxes on it**

The King loves all of his subjects equally- well, except for the subject of tax. Infamously, the Dutch royals are exempted from paying taxes on their allowance, inheritance, and most of their assets. However, after decades of national debates on this, we might be nearing a turning point: in January, both chambers of the Dutch parliament passed a motion to modify the constitution to tax the royal family's income. While this move won't automatically translate into new legislation, it does bring the royals' deep pockets a lot closer to the Dutch taxpayers' reach.

## **King Willem Alexander spent some two decades being high**

...in the sky. After a turbulent youth which had earned him the nickname of *Prins Pils* (Lager Prince), the King worked as a guest pilot for KLM for around twenty years, and still does occasionally. After all, KLM stands for *Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij*, Royal Dutch Airlines, not Peasant Dutch Airlines.

## **Princess Amalia is the first to be allowed to marry someone of the same sex and serve in the army**

Not that she's expressed an interest in doing either of those things, but well, for the first time in history, she can. Her subjects, however, might be more interested in another historic first regarding Amalia: she was the first Dutch royal ever to renounce her allowance, although temporarily. In 2021, upon turning 18, she announced that she would not accept her yearly 1.6 million euros allowance until after her university graduation, when she'll start fulfilling her royal duties full-time.

## **The King recently apologized for the crown's colonial-era involvement in slavery**

Last June, speaking on the 160th anniversary of abolition of slavery in the Netherlands, King Willem Alexander apologized for his family's colonial and racist history, as well as its involvement in slavery. The apology fell short of mentioning any intention of providing reparations, but it was nonetheless a historic moment.

### **The Dutch still like their monarchy, more or less**

Apologetic or not, the monarchy is having an increasingly hard time winning over their subjects' hearts. According to a September 2023 survey by Ipsos, the percentage of Dutchies who want to keep the monarchy is slowly but surely declining, and is now down to 50%, with 26% saying they wish the Netherlands became a republic. While the approval rating is still too high to expect any major changes in the short term, a crown-less future is not a far-fetched vision anymore.

### **There is a whole organization devoted to abolishing the monarchy**

You know who didn't shed a tear looking at the King's declining approval rates? Republiek, the biggest organization working towards abolishing the monarchy in the Netherlands. Instead, they want to install a parliamentary republic. Active since 1998, in 2022 they unsuccessfully sued the Dutch government and the King himself over his role in the Dutch legal system, which they say violates Articles 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the one guaranteeing fair trial rights.

### **You can take a walking tour of Royal The Hague, for now**

It appears that the monarchy is not going anywhere for the time being, and neither are its landmarks, so while you can you should take the "royal walk": a 3.38 kilometers route across seventeen symbolic spots of royal The Hague. You can find it at [deenhaag.com](http://deenhaag.com), the website in charge of promoting tourism in The Hague.

**Bia**



Pilot King Willem-Alexander (M101Studio, Shutterstock)



Squatters riot poster ([dutchamsterdam.nl](http://dutchamsterdam.nl))





# A Little History Lesson

As a student of International Studies, the location of our university in the home of the International Court of Justice and several other international organizations is more than practical. Countless potential future employers are right at reach (well, at least physically, let's not talk about actual job chances). But not only do international giants call The Hague their home, no, also the national government is a stone's throw away from our university. And of course, the King has quite an impressive house (actually two houses, Noordeinde and Paleis Huis ten Bosch) here too. So why, despite being the legal capital of the world, the official seat of government, and De Residentie (one of The Hague's nicknames thanks to being the primary residence of the King), is The Hague not the capital of the Netherlands? Well, in order to be able to answer this I will have to give you guys a little crash course in history. Hopefully, without making you fall asleep.

Let's start in the beginning when The Hague was founded. The city's significance to royals was actually embedded in its foundation. Counts used to love the forests of the region for its rich hunting grounds, drawing them back year after year until Count Willem II eventually started building what is now known as the Binnenhof in 1248. Fun fact: this is also how The Hague received one of its other official names 's-Gravenhage, which translates to 'the count's hedge' or 'the count's private enclosure'. From this point on, the city started to grow although it actually never received official city status.



In the 16th century, The Hague finally gained political importance. First, it was the epicenter of the Dutch resistance against the Habsburg rule before William I made The Hague his capital in 1559. This kicked off the development of The Hague, which birthed many institutions that we still know today. The central government of the Dutch Republic moved to the city, canals were dug all around the city and the neighborhoods around the Spui and Prinsegracht were built along with other impressive mansions for aristocrats who were now drawn to the city. With the rise of the Dutch Republic, first in Europe and then later also as a colonial power, The Hague steadily gained diplomatic relevance. Important figures like Hugo Grotius, whose writings now count as the basis for modern international law, Baruch Spinoza, who greatly influenced our understanding of peace and freedom, and finally, Tobias Asser, the founder of the Hague Conference on Private International Law, all called The Hague their home at least once in their lifetimes. All this eventually accumulated to the selection of the city as the site of two international peace conferences in 1899 and 1907, giving The Hague its final title: the legal capital of the world.

Well, now that I have ranted on and on about the history of The Hague, you might notice that I have actually only made a pretty good point about why The Hague should be the capital of the Netherlands without answering why it is not (which is the actual point of this article). The short, albeit slightly disappointing answer is: there is no clear answer. Some historians argue that while The Hague was chosen as the political center due to its inherently neutral character as it never gained city status, Amsterdam simply remained the cultural and economic center of the country, making it more suitable as the capital. Others argue that Amsterdam probably would have become the capital in the first place if it had not stayed loyal to Spain at the beginning of the Eighty Years' War, which forced the decision-makers of the time to settle for The Hague. Either way, I think it becomes clear that we live in a city with a very rich, and at times very controversial history, whose traces can still be seen all around us today. With this, I conclude my little history crash course and hope that one or the other may now have gained a new-found appreciation for The Hague and might view the Binnenhof or the historical buildings all around the city a little differently next time when you walk around.

**Vanessa**

# HAAGSE WHO?

You have probably seen him many times already. Biking past, or when grabbing a drink at Grote Markt. It is of course Haagse Harry. Roughly two meters tall and three tons heavy, he stands proud in the city center of The Hague. But who is he? A comic-book figure symbolic of The Hague. That is the short answer. Here is the slightly longer one.

The idea for Haagse Harry came from a time when his founder and sketcher Marnix Rueb lived in Schilderswijk and got to know the Hageneezen.\* They became Marnix's inspiration for the character of Harry. Haagse Harry is an unemployed, slightly overweight man native to The Hague who always wears his characteristic tracksuit and big sneakers. In the comics, the reader follows Harry around as he takes on the streets of The Hague and deals with everything and everyone he encounters in his own comedic way.

Originally, Haagse Harry did not have a publication of his own but appeared as a comic strip in another magazine. In the early 1990s however, he gained such a fanbase that he got his own magazine. The familiarity of the situations from Harry's life appealed to the citizens of The Hague, who became very fond of him. Haagse Harry is also written phonetically, reflecting the spoken local accent of the city. According to Marnix Rueb, that was a conscious choice because he found it to be a beautiful accent, and writing it down was a way to conserve it. It was also a way to capture the way he imagined Harry actually speaking, but in written form.

Marnix Rueb passed away from lung cancer in 2014. In 2015 he posthumously received the culture prize by the municipality of The Hague. The statue of Haagse Harry was created shortly after and has been in its current location at Grote Markt since 2016. Placed inside the statue is also the ashes of his creator, Marnix Rueb, forever connecting him to Harry and to the city which he loved and lived in.

\*Haagseneezen refers to a part of the locals of The Hague. Typically the word is associated with people from lower socio-economic class, and often in comparison to the Haagsenaren which is used for people of posher areas of the town. The difference between Haagseneezen and Haagsenaren stems from the difference between the neighbourhoods that were built on sand versus on turf ground. Haagseneezen coming from the areas built on sand such as Scheveningen, and Haagsenaren from the areas built on turf grounds like Statenkwartier. In the 90s these neighborhoods still attracted very different demographics, and the names have stuck around till today.

**Martina**

**(With thanks to Pia Hoogers for the history contribution)**



MARNIX RUEB CREATED THE COMIC CHARACTER HAAGSE HARRY. THE STATUE WAS CREATED BY BOUKE SCHUEMIE AND WAS REVEALED IN FEBRUARY 2016, PRIVATE PICTURE