

Collaborating parties in The Hague facilitate all conferences

# Secure feeling of welcome

**The mission is ambitious: The Hague aims to achieve the status of second conference city in the Netherlands, after already having climbed in the rankings from fourth to third place. By working closely together, the city council, The Hague Convention Bureau, World Forum and other parties create an atmosphere where hospitality, security and content go hand in hand.** TEXT AART VAN DER HAAGEN

**D**uring the past years, The Hague (Den Haag in Dutch) has worked hard to offer a complete platform for (inter)national conferences, more so since research showed that in many ways, these events make a significant contribution to a further development of the 'Hofstad' (court city, epithet of the city because the royal court used to reside here, ed.). Its location is certainly an advantage, right next to the North Sea and situated between Schiphol Amsterdam Airport and Rotterdam The Hague Airport. A bonus is the fact that not so long ago, the city centre was pronounced Best Inner City 2013-2015. Kirsten Vosmer, commercial manager at World Forum – with a total floor surface of 40,000 square meters (of which 15,000 rentable) the city's largest conference location – mentions an other unique element of The Hague: "The International Zone, known by, for instance, the Yugoslavia Tribunal, OPCW and Europol. This is the beating heart of the International City of Peace and Justice, as well as leader in the field of security. 400 companies specialised in this area work closely together in The Hague Security Delta. The products they deliver and service they render, such as organizing workshops, can be found throughout the city." The profiling of the council in the field of security yields rewards: in 2014, for example, it hosted the Nuclear Security Summit and in 2015 the Cyber Security Conference was held here.

## OPTIMAL ACCESSIBILITY

The above is proof of the effectiveness of many different organizations in The Hague to work together to create an

optimal hostmanship for (inter)national conferences and events. In this joint venture, a key role is played by The Hague Convention Bureau which, supported by the council and linked to Den Haag Marketing (more tourism oriented) makes all kinds of efforts in this field. Manager Nienke van der Malen: "Usually in close, very inspiring collaboration with World Forum, we achieve an optimal accessibility to the city's facilities; in these efforts we can make use of a huge network. Heeding the wishes of the client, we supply the possibilities that meet the requirements the most in the areas of, for example, leisure, security, education and sponsoring, but we also supply active content to events. An example: for the One Young World conference in 2018, we formed, together with the council, a project group with the tasks of increasing the number of participants, achieving a maximum publicity value and the creating of content. This last-mentioned was already realized when, during the last edition of this event in Ottawa, a speaker session was held in anticipation of 2018. As part of the food conference Espen in 2018, we organize, as a sort of 'warm-up', the one-day Healthy Food Conference, supported by local parties and aimed at sustainability."

## KEY FEATURE

Where The Hague Convention Bureau, World Forum, the council and the numerous parties are concerned, the facilitary possibilities are almost unlimited. Nienke van der Malen gives a few examples: "Transport of guests from and to the airport, creating a visual link between

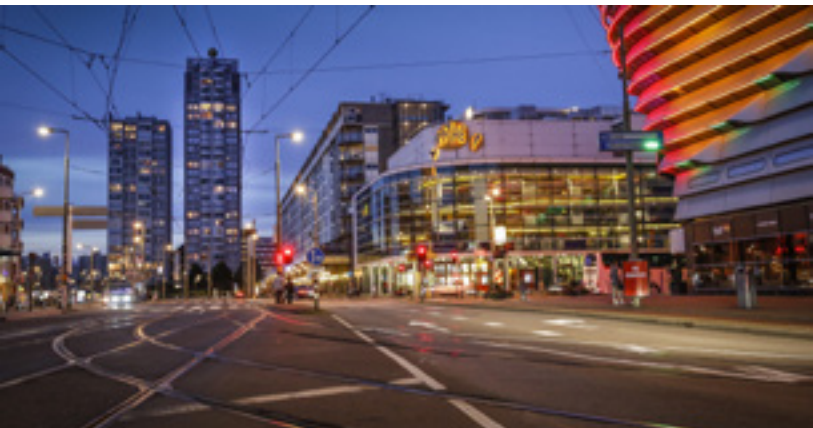
the city and the theme by putting up flags at 55 key locations throughout the city, organizing an exclusive mega-reception on the beach with an opening speech by the mayor, organizing a guided tour of the Mauritshuis museum with a dinner for a group of board members, creating a link to, for instance, the Mondrian to Dutch Design Year 2017. We also give touristic tips and these are certainly not the customary crowd pullers, but specifically the less-known attractions, good restaurants et cetera." A key feature in this story is World Forum, which, thanks to a council investment of 28 million euros, was completely modernized during the past three years, including the addition of an exhibition room of 3,500 square meters. Kirsten Vosmer: "Here, visitors experience a warm, intimate atmosphere and a personal service, for example in the form of a VVV-stand (tourist bureau, ed.). From evaluations we learn that organizers appreciate our flexible disposition. This is proved, for instance, by our capacity to make adjustments at the very last moment. The entire staff has this mentality. Apart from that, we play a leading role in the field of security, which partially has led to our winning two large tenders for 2017: Future Force Conference and the UN Public Service Day."

It seems that the efforts of The Hague Convention Bureau, World Forum, the council plus many enthusiastic entrepreneurs and institutions provide The Hague with a good perspective to break through to the position of the Netherlands' second conference city, heralded by a well-filled calendar.

## More information:

[www.theconventionbureau.com](http://www.theconventionbureau.com)  
[www.worldforum.nl](http://www.worldforum.nl)





Interior World Forum

World Forum

Photographer: Arjan Veldt

World Forum

Kirsten Vosmer and Nienke van der Malen  
Photo: Aart van der Haagen