

# FACTSHEET MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS THE HAGUE

*Information provided by Gemeente Den Haag*

## **WHO CAN VOTE?**

- Dutch citizens of The Hague
- Nationals of EU-member states and nationals of non-EU member states who are over 18 and who've been registered in The Hague for five consecutive years

## **VOTE FOR WHAT?**

Every four years the 45 members who make up the city council are elected by the people of The Hague. The city council then appoints, based on the number of representatives elected from each party, the aldermen, or deputy mayors, who make up the municipal executive. City council meetings are public and a variety of issues are decided, including the city's budget. Municipal executive meetings are held in private and the two groups, both headed by the mayor, form a sort of "checks and balances" system. The mayor is appointed by the queen. A full explanation of the system can be found on [www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com).

When you vote in city council elections in The Hague you're asked to vote for just one candidate, though your vote will be counted on two fronts: once for the political party your candidate represents and once for the candidate him- or herself. In other words, if the political party puts five candidates forward and you vote for candidate A, but candidate B actually gets more votes in that party, your vote will count for the political party (thus allowing them more council members), but your candidate will not necessarily be appointed to the council.

## **HOW TO VOTE?**

In early February all eligible voters will receive a letter from the mayor, and a brochure (in Dutch, with English and French translations included) in the mail with their personal 'stempas', or voting pass, attached. You'll not be allowed to vote without your stempas and damaged passes will not be accepted, so keep it in a safe place, though replacement passes can be obtained on the spot from local municipal offices upon presentation of valid ID. On 3 March, 2010 voters can choose from any of the many polling stations across the city (listed in the letter and thereafter posted on [www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com)) to cast their vote between 7.30 and 21.00 hours.

## **CAMPAIGNING AND ISSUES**

Campaigning lies with the candidates and political parties. The municipality itself must remain neutral for obvious reasons, so a comprehensive translation of candidates and political issues will not be provided per se, though a list of all major political parties is to be found on [www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com). During the month of February campaigning on the streets will be in full swing, so be sure and ask your questions as opportunities arise, or contact parties directly.

Further information, including an explanation of The Hague's municipal governance and other useful information in French and English can be found on [www.denhaag.com](http://www.denhaag.com).