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MARKET FOCUS

The Netherlands: A Strategic Base for European Expansion

By Linnie Mackenzie, Area Director, and Adeline Tan, Project Manager, NFIA

The Netherlands has, over the years, borne many international companies that sell their products and services all over the world. The reasons for its popularity are many, but none more so than the Netherlands' position as the gateway to the European, Middle East and African markets.



Dynamic Business Environment

The Economist Intelligence Unit recently ranked the Netherlands as the number nine country in the world, and number four in Europe, to do business in over the next five years (2008-2012).

The leading business hub in Europe, the Netherlands' attraction lies in its strategic location, relative ease of doing business, favourable tax incentives, excellent logistics and distribution infrastructure.

The Netherlands' well-educated and motivated workforce, has also proven itself to be innovative, flexible and responsive to ever-changing market conditions and trends, making it key resource for international businesses.

Along with the country's pro-business environment, international outlook and openness to foreign investment, the Netherlands boasts a wealth of world-class business partners who are equipped to deal with global business challenges in today's economy.

Foreign Direct Investment on the Rise

In 2007, the Netherlands was the European Union's (EU) third top exporting country after Germany and France, underpinning the central role the country plays in the distribution of goods to the neighboring European countries.

"Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the Netherlands increased by 40 percent, with Asia accounting for 60 percent of the investments – quite a feat for a small country like the Netherlands," said Linnie Mackenzie, Area Director at the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA), a division of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs based in Singapore.

Doing Business in the Netherlands

Companies planning to establish, expand or re-organise their pan-European operations can look to NFIA for expert guidance on investing or doing business in the Netherlands. More than 5,500 foreign companies have established operations in the Netherlands, and NFIA has assisted many of these companies to jump-start their businesses in Europe.

To further attract knowledge-intensive activities of foreign companies, NFIA facilitates the identification of a suitable technological partner in the Netherlands through a service called the Technology Matchmaking Service (TMS). On the basis of a TMS questionnaire, NFIA generates a selection of suitable technological partners using an extensive network of qualified parties in the field of technology, environment, energy, exports and international partnerships.

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Market: Netherlands

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