Rotterdam is the second-largest city in the Netherlands and one of the largest ports in the world. Its strategic location at the Rhine-Meuse-Scheldt delta on the North Sea and at the heart of a massive rail, road, air and inland waterway distribution system extending throughout Europe is the reason that Rotterdam is often called the “Gateway to Europe.”

One of Europe’s most vibrant, multicultural cities, Rotterdam is known for its university (Erasmus), cutting-edge architecture, lively cultural life, striking riverside setting and maritime heritage. Rotterdam has always been one of the main centers of the shipping industry in the Netherlands. From the Rotterdam Chamber of the VOC, the world’s first multinational, established in 1602, to the merchant shipping leader Royal Nedlloyd established in 1970. The port’s main activities are petrochemical industries and general cargo handling and trans-shipment. The harbor functions as an important transit point for bulk materials and between the European continent and global markets.

The Erasmus University has a strong focus on research and education in management and economics. Rotterdam is the home of three professional football clubs; one first tier club, Feyenoord, and two second tier clubs, Sparta and Excelsior. The main shopping venue in the south of Rotterdam is Zuidplein, which lies close to Ahoy Rotterdam, an accommodation center for shows, exhibitions, sporting events, concerts and congresses. Rotterdam is well connected by international, national, regional and local public transport systems, as well as by the Dutch motorway network.