

Princess Máxima

Princess Máxima of the Netherlands is married to Prince Willem-Alexander, the heir to the throne. They have three daughters, Princess Catharina-Amalia, Princess Alexia and Princess Ariane.

Youth

Princess Máxima was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 17 May 1971 as Máxima Zorreguieta. She is the daughter of Jorge Horacio Zorreguieta and María del Carmen Cerruti de Zorreguieta. She has two brothers, one sister and three half-sisters. Princess Máxima grew up in Buenos Aires.

Education and work before 2002

Princess Máxima passed her baccalaureate examinations at Northlands School in 1988. She graduated in economics from the Universidad Católica Argentina in 1995.

From 1989 to 1990, while still at university, she worked for Mercado Abierto SA, where she did research into software for financial markets. From 1992 to 1995, she worked in the Sales Department of Boston Securities SA in Buenos Aires. She also taught English to children and adults, and mathematics to secondary school pupils and first-year students.

New York

From July 1996 to February 1998, Princess Máxima worked for HSBC James Capel Inc. in New York, where she was Vice-President of Latin American Institutional Sales. From then until July 1999 she was Vice-President of the emerging markets division of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson in New York, specialising in Equities. She then moved to Deutsche Bank in New York, where she was Vice-President of Institutional Sales. From May 2000 to March 2001, she worked at the EU Representative Office of Deutsche Bank in Brussels.

Marriage and family

On 30 March 2001, Máxima Zorreguieta became engaged to the Prince of Orange. She became a Dutch citizen on 17 May 2001. On 3 July 2001, the two houses of parliament passed a bill submitted by the government consenting to the marriage. The civil marriage ceremony was conducted by the Mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen, in the Beurs van Berlage on 2 February 2002. The Reverend Carel ter Linden officiated at the church ceremony, which took place in the Nieuwe Kerk. On her marriage, Princess Máxima received the title of Princess of the Netherlands.

In spring 2003, the couple moved to Eikenhorst on the De Horsten estate in Wassenaar. Their first child, Princess Catharina-Amalia, was born on 7 December 2003. Their second child, Princess Alexia, was born on 26 June 2005 and their third child, Princess Ariane, on 10 April 2007. All were born at Bronovo Hospital in The Hague.

Since 2002

Civic integration

Princess Máxima completed her civic integration programme in early 2005. Since becoming engaged, the Princess has been familiarising herself with Dutch society and the society of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, a programme that includes the study of Dutch language, history and constitutional law.

Council of State

Since 20 October 2004, Princess Máxima has been a member of the Council of State, the most important government advisory body.

Official duties

Princess Máxima, often with Prince Willem-Alexander, represents the Royal House at official occasions of all kinds. She also accompanies the Queen on state visits.

Committee for Ethnic Minority Women's Participation

Princess Máxima was a member of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Women's Participation from July 2003 till summer 2005. The Committee supported the 30 largest municipalities in promoting the participation in society of women from ethnic minority groups. It was chaired by former Member of Parliament Paul Rosenmöller. The Princess sits on the board of governors of the Chair on the Management of Diversity and Integration at the Free University of Amsterdam.

Microfinance

At the invitation of the United Nations, Princess Máxima was involved in the Advisors Group to the International Year of Microcredit 2005. Throughout 2005 the Group met on a regular basis to discuss progress towards achieving universal access to financial services.

In February 2005 the Princess visited Uganda and Kenya to see microcredit in action. She also met with government, business and NGO representatives. At the end of 2005 Princess Máxima made similar visits to Brazil and Argentina.

In June 2006 Princess Máxima joined the United Nations Advisors Group on Inclusive Financial Sectors, charged with following up on the results of the International Year of Microcredit 2005. As well as microcredit, which involves making small loans available to the economically active poor, the Advisors Group addresses the issue of wider access to all financial services for small businesses. Such services include loans, savings accounts, insurance, money transfers and other financial products. The Princess wants to contribute to the Advisors Group by entering into dialogue with businesses, donors, legislators, supervisors, microfinance institutions and international organisations on the role they could play in giving more small businesses access to the financial sector.

Orange Fund

Princess Máxima and Prince Willem-Alexander are patrons of the Orange Fund, which was set up to promote social welfare and cohesion in the Netherlands. Every year in May, the Princess presents Appeltje van Oranje awards to institutions that set an example in the field of welfare.

Prince Claus Chair

The Princess chairs the Board of Trustees of the Prince Claus Chair, which is occupied in turn at Utrecht University and the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. The Chair was endowed to promote training and research in the field of development cooperation.

Leisure pursuits

Princess Máxima enjoys nature, the arts, music and dance. She also enjoys skiing, water sports and running.

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