

# Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

## Kingdom of the Netherlands Review Report

2024

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### Explanation and reader's guide: the Kingdom of the Netherlands

The Kingdom of The Netherlands consists of four countries: the Netherlands in Europe, and the Caribbean Island States of Aruba, Sint Maarten and Curaçao. The four countries have equal status within the Kingdom. To a large degree, they are each responsible for their own internal affairs. That is why each country has prepared its own contribution for the current report. The contributions of the Netherlands, Aruba and Sint Maarten can be found within this report. The contribution of Curaçao has been sent to UN Women separately.

The country of the Netherlands consists of a European part and a Caribbean part, with the latter including the islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. These have a status largely comparable to that of Dutch municipalities. These regions are covered in the answers on the country of the Netherlands. Most answers primarily concern the country of the Netherlands, unless otherwise indicated explicitly.

## I: Section One

### Highlights

In the narrative report, please provide a one-to-two-page synthesis highlighting:

- *the core elements of the country-level review process*
- *progress, challenges, and set-backs in the implementation of the BPfA, based on statistical data, as well as the factors that influenced the success or failure of progress across critical areas*
- *how the Government has considered and addressed the specific needs of women and girls from marginalized groups in line with the principle of leaving no one behind*
- *two or three examples of good practices and lessons learned that may be relevant for other countries, preferably with a focus on measures with a transformative potential, considering the interlinkages and synergies between the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*
- *areas where the country would need support in terms of finance, capacity-building, policy advice, data gathering and analysis, technology, and partnerships, among others.*

### Process

The reporting process has given us an overview of our achievements in the past, showing which topics deserve our attention in the future. Within the process we mostly gained information out of policy documents such as the Gender Equality and LGBTIQ+ Equality Policy Plans (*Emancipatienota's*) that show the government's priorities for 2022-2025. We also used the progress reports on equality of [2020](#) and [2022-2023](#) and the [overview document of equality policy 2017-2021](#).

Civil society organisations had the opportunity to provide written input on the draft Beijing+30 report. [WO=MEN](#) (Dutch Gender Platform) has been commissioned and receives funding to, jointly with [Atria](#), [Institute for Gender Equality and Women's History](#) and [Netwerk VN Vrouwenverdrag](#) (UN Women's Convention Network), coordinate the civil society processes for the international emancipation policy processes CSW and CEDAW. WO=MEN has shared the report within their network. The input provided by civil society organisations will be reviewed carefully and considered by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The Ministry has consulted with WO=MEN on a manageable way to share the report and gain input from these organisations. The civil society organisations were also involved in the development of the Gender Equality and LGBTIQ+ Equality Policy Plan 2022-2025 (*Emancipatienota*), which we used as starting point for this report. Given the cabinet's outgoing status, the report cannot make any commitments on future priorities.

## Examples

Based on the last five years we would like to share two of our achievements as an inspiration for other countries.

First, to tackle sexual misconduct and to contribute to a culture in which people respect each other's boundaries and wishes, the 'National Action Programme (NAP) Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual violence' was launched in January 2023. This cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial approach is used for public communication, supports social initiatives, activates bystanders, discusses sexually transgressive behaviour, conducts research, improves assistance, and tightens standards and legislation. In essence, the NAP focuses on the cultural change that is required to address the root causes of the issues, which among many other things can be found in gender norms, dominant ideas about sexuality and unequal power relations. To this end, the government also assigned an independent Government Commissioner against Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual Violence, Dr Mariëtte Hamer. Her main goal is to strengthen the approach to prevent and combat sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence and to drive the cultural change necessary to do so. For more details, please see question 15.

Second, as of 1 January 2022 a new act entered into force to achieve a more balanced male/female ratio in top positions in the private sector. Listed companies now have to comply with a statutory diversity quota of at least one-third of women in their supervisory boards. A new appointment that does not contribute to a more balanced male/female ratio will be null and void. For more details, please see question 22.

## Progress Gender Equality (EIGE)

With 77.9 points out of 100, the Netherlands ranks second in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Its score is 7.7 points above the score for the EU as a whole. Since 2010, the score for the Netherlands has risen by 3.9 points, mainly due to improvements in the domain of power (+ 15.8 points). Since 2020, the country's score has risen slightly (+ 0.6 points). As a result, since 2020 the Netherlands has climbed from 3rd to 2nd place in this domain. The country has seen the highest improvement in the domains of both power (+ 3.8 points) and knowledge (+ 2.1 points).

Since 2020, the biggest rise in the Dutch ranking has been in the domain of money, going from 7th to 5th place. The country scores 88.1 points in this domain – this is 1.5 points higher than 2020, which saw the third biggest rise among all EU countries in this domain. An improvement in the sub-domain of economic situation (+ 1.9 points) has been the key driver of this change. Unfortunately, since 2020 the Netherlands has dropped from 3rd to 5th place in the domain of work, despite a slight rise in score of 0.6 points. This backward step in the ranking for the work domain is due to a drop in the sub-domain of segregation and quality of work (-2.4 points), which lowered the Dutch ranking from 1st to 5th

The Netherlands has the greatest room for improvement in the domain of knowledge (69.1 points). Despite gaining 2.1 points since 2020, faster progress on the part of other Member States has resulted in the Netherlands falling from 7th position to 8th in this domain. Within the domain of knowledge, the Netherlands ranks 16th in the sub-domain of segregation (52.0 points), falling one place since 2020.<sup>1</sup>

No score is given to the Netherlands in the domain of violence, due to a lack of comparable EU-wide data.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Equality Index (2023). <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023/country/NL>

To see what we have done to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalised groups, please see question 3.

#### Highlights Aruba

The main way in which Aruba has recently addressed gender equality and its advancement on the island is through the National Gender Policy and its Action Plan which were made public in May of 2022. The Aruba National Gender Policy was an initiative by the Government of Aruba and facilitated by the Gender Steering Committee, which was instituted by Aruba's first woman Prime Minister, Evelyn Wever-Croes, together with the former Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Glembert Croes. The Gender Steering Committee guided the process together with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean (UN Women, MCO - Caribbean), and received input from a wide range of actors from the government, non-governmental organizations, NGOs, academia and the private sector that participated in various planning and feedback sessions. Aruba now has its first official Gender Policy for a more equitable and sustainable development on the island.

One of the focuses of the National Gender Policy was gender-based violence. Gender based Violence in Aruba like most countries often manifests as violence predominantly against women and girls (VAWG), specifically intimate partner violence, and sexual harassment as well as child sexual abuse where girls and boys are at risk, however data points to girls being the majority of the victims. While VAWG prevalence data does not yet exist for Aruba, anecdotal evidence, and administrative data points to a high level of VAWG, worsened by the restrictions and stresses imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Prime Minister, through a ministerial decree, has set up a committee tasked with writing an action plan with recommendations on how stakeholders on the island should go about combatting the issue of gender-based violence. The committee "stop violencia contra hende muher y mucha muher" has until November of 2024 to finalise this action plan. The gender policy's Action plan includes much research and baseline assessment. In this context, meetings on conducting different studies on the island will be held with the University of Aruba, the Central Bureau of Statistics, and possibly other entities and international partners. The plan should have coordinated actions that have to be taken to eliminate inequalities between women and men in Aruba, to effectively slow down and stop (domestic) violence against women, and to implement the recommendations included in the national gender policy.

One of the challenges Aruba faces regarding gender equality and data collection is the lack of sex disaggregated data. Currently, Aruba's Constitution espouses gender neutrality in its legislation, policies, and plans. However, the country does adhere to international instruments that express commitment for the promotion of gender equality—including the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the 2004 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Activities that fit into the gender plan have been carried out, by CEDEHM, Futura, FCVR, UNHCR, HIAS, the University of Aruba and many more as the plan is public. Yet, we need to make a next push regarding implementing the gender policy in a coordinated manner. This requires dedicated staff and expertise as mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies is a substantial task that takes capacity building to shift perspectives and make impact. Additional technical support from experienced professionals with regional experience would be of great assistance to leapfrog implementation of the BPfA.

#### Highlights Sint Maarten

Over the past five years, Sint Maarten's empowerment of women and girls addressed challenges such as domestic violence, poverty, and gender-based discrimination through a comprehensive approach. Regulatory measures have been established to combat sexual and gender-based violence, while support systems provide assistance to victims and counseling for perpetrators. Initiatives include engaging teens through mime performances and social media campaigns to address dating violence, as well as offering basic self-defence training to empower women, particularly in the wake of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. Community-based empowerment programs, facilitated by Women's Desk within the government, aim to strengthen the position of women through guidance, counseling, and information dissemination. Additionally, efforts to promote women and girls in STEM fields, support single mothers with personal growth and financial independence, and foster entrepreneurship through skill-building programs reflect Sint Maarten's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.

## II. Section Two

Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

### 1. **Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?**

*In the narrative report, please explain why your country considers these important, how it has addressed them, the challenges encountered and the factors that have enabled progress or led to setbacks in each case. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (3-5 pages).*

In the last five years an important achievement has been the increased attention to transgressive behaviour in the public debate and government policy. Please see questions 15, 17 and 19 for more details. Another achievement is the growth in women's labour force participation and economic independence. Please see questions 6, 8 and 10. The introduction of partner leave (birth leave) and paid parental leave can also be considered as great achievements. Please see questions 7 and 12 for more details. There have been no real setbacks on gender equality and empowerment in the last five years, although progress is always slower than we would like. For example, key concerns regarding the labour market remain - such as pregnancy discrimination, women's economic and independence – as well as regarding political participation.

Key Concerns Regarding the Labour Market:

#### 1) Pregnancy discrimination still a problem in the labour market

Of women who are active on the labour market and have had a child in the past for years, 40 percent have experienced situations that indicate pregnancy discrimination. Research by the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (College voor de Rechten van de Mens) shows that in all stages of the labour process, women are at risk of discrimination as a result of pregnancy. Pregnancy discrimination of poorly recognised and rarely reported.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> College voor de Rechten van de Mens (n.d.) Zwanger en werk. *Pregnant and work*. Via <https://www.mensenrechten.nl/themas/gendergelijkheid/zwanger-en-werk>

<sup>3</sup> College voor de Rechten van de Mens (2020). Zwanger en werk, dat baart zorgen. Via <https://publicaties.mensenrechten.nl/publicatie/5fb7dfef1e0fec037359c640>

## 2) Women's participation and economic independence

The majority of women in the Netherlands are in paid employment. Still more women compared to men are working part-time. About half of all women are financially dependent<sup>4</sup> on their partner or the government, sometimes even when they work. This is not surprising, since in practice the care tasks are often unevenly distributed and child care facilities are not always available for reasonable costs. The difference in employment rates between women and men and the limited economic independence that goes with it relates not only to the right to equal treatment, but also to the right to an adequate standard of living. When women are financially dependent on their partners, it limits their opportunities to participate freely in society or leave abusive relationships.

## 3) Gender segregation (see pp. 22-23)

Key concerns regarding (political) participation:

Women are still underrepresented in Dutch politics. 38 percent of all Dutch politicians is female. Recent research by Atria and Ipsos I&O (forthcoming), commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, shows that female politicians in decentralised governments (municipalities, provinces and waterboards) are significantly more often victims of online aggression and violence than their male colleagues. The analysis of a survey among over 3000 political officeholders shows, among other things, that 47% of female decentralised politicians have experienced online aggression or violence in the past 12 months, compared to 36% of men. This difference remains when other explanatory factors are taken into account, such as position, experience and political party. Online hate limits female politicians in their functioning and freedom to express themselves in the public debate. This can impair the political representation of women in politics and therefore harms democracy in itself.

### Setback Aruba: post-COVID poverty levels

Prior to COVID-19 there were indications that poverty was not considered high in Aruba, though there were no comprehensive studies done to statistically verify this. Yet many persons lived in vulnerability, near to the poverty line and thus at risk of poverty. Vulnerability however is not uniform across different groups. Single mother households were over-represented group with 28.7% in vulnerability. Notably, the prevalence of single father households in vulnerability was considerably lower at 19.5%, which is below the total average across all households.

Preliminary data from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) 2020 suggests a worsening of this situation. The study estimated that 10.6% of people in Aruba are now living below the World Bank poverty line for high-income countries because of the COVID-19 economic crisis. This is an increase of 116.3% percent compared to 2019. Though sex-disaggregated data is not available, it is expected that single mothers who experienced heightened vulnerability pre-COVID-19 were more likely to be pushed into poverty because of it.

One of the main challenges in fully updating and adopting comprehensive legislation in line with the international human rights obligations, is the streamlining of investments into strengthening legislative mechanisms. For this purpose, the Caribbean Centre for Legislation (CCL) has been set up, which provides for the training and certification of new legislative lawyers. The Ministry of Interior Affairs and Kingdom Relations has financially supported the establishment of the CCL

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<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2023). Page 7. Voortangsrapportage Emancipatie 2022-2023. Progress report Emancipation 2022-2023 via [Voortangsrapportage Emancipatienota \(overheid.nl\)](https://voortangsrapportage.emancipatienota.overheid.nl)

## 2. Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?

*In the narrative report, please explain why your country considers these priorities and how it has addressed them. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (3-5 pages).*

At the beginning of a new government term, the Minister of Gender Equality and LGBTIQ+ Equality sets out the government's vision and priorities in a Gender Equality and LGBTIQ+ Equality Policy Plan (*Emancipatienota*). This plan is submitted to Parliament. In the latest *Emancipatienota* (2022-2025), the Dutch government divided its policies on gender equality into five main themes: employment, safety, education, care, equal treatment and legislation. When possible, links are made between women's equality and LGBTIQ+ equality. We will briefly explain the content of these five themes.

### Employment

Whether it concerns participation on the labour market, hours of work or salary, inequality remains in the area of labour and income between women and men in the Netherlands. In total 68.1% of women have paid work, compared to 76.4% of men. Women on average work eight hours less in paid employment per week than men, and on average earn 13% less per hour than men. In total, 43% of pregnant women have experienced situations that indicate pregnancy discrimination. Only 14.7% of company board positions are held by women – what's more, 61% of all big companies have no women in board positions.

Particularly women migrant workers face discriminatory and exploitative work conditions such as lower pay, longer hours, poor housing conditions, irregular employment and threats of violence.<sup>56</sup>

Although progress has been made, we are still a long way from equality. Almost half of all women are (partially) financially dependent on their partner or the government. When we look at the group of women with low educational levels, only 22.6% are financially independent. Immediately after completing their education, women work fewer hours than men. However, most women who work part-time would like to work more hours if certain conditions were met.

The government considers gender equality in the labour market to be of great importance on an individual and collective level. For women, on an individual level this means more equal work-care balance, the possibility to work more hours, equal pay, more financial independence, and therefore more self-reliance and freedom of choice. At the collective level, greater gender equality leads to more work and working hours, and thus a positive impact on the macro-economy, including economic growth and reducing staff shortages in vital sectors. The role that men play in the division of labour and care is of course important here.

To promote gender equality in the labour market, the payment percentage for paid parental leave was raised to 70% of the daily wage. This came into effect in August 2022. To increase the percentage of women on company boards, the government introduced legislation that requires a minimum of 33% women on the supervisory boards of listed companies, among other measures. The Netherlands is also

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<sup>5</sup> Kenniscentrum Inclusief Samenleven (KIS) (2022). [Geen structurele aandacht voor migrantenvrouwen binnen EU. No structural focus on migrant women within EU.](#) Via ['Geen structurele aandacht voor migrantenvrouwen binnen EU' | KIS](#)

<sup>6</sup> Fairwork (2021). [Hidden at Work: Arbeidsuitbuiting, seksuele uitbuiting en intimidatie van vrouwen in de \(privé\) sfeer. Hidden at work: Labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and harassment of women in the \(private\) sphere.](#) Via [Hidden at Work: Arbeidsuitbuiting, seksuele uitbuiting en intimidatie van vrouwen in de \(privé\) werksfeer - FairWork](#)



working on the implementation of the EU Pay Transparency Directive and revising the childcare system.

For more information please see questions 6, 7, 8 and 10.

### Safety

Everyone must be given the freedom to be themselves, without the negative influence of inequality, discrimination or sexual and gender norms, and without being confronted with verbal, physical or online violence and intimidation. As this freedom is not yet self-evident for everyone, the government is committed, among other things, to increase the physical and social safety of girls, women and LGBTIQ+ persons in the public space, at home, at work, online, and in asylum policy, sports, education, science and healthcare.

The figures are a cause for concern. Women are often victims of serious and structural violence. The prevalence monitor of domestic and sexual violence shows that 9% of the women surveyed (vs. 7% of men) aged 16 and older in the Netherlands were a victim of domestic violence in the last year. For sexual violence the difference is bigger: 15% of women indicate having been victims of sexual violence (vs. 7% of men). Moreover, 53% of Dutch women have experienced sexually transgressive behaviour. Women are at a significantly higher risk of being murdered by their current or ex-partner. In six out of 10 (56%) cases of murdered women, the perpetrator is their current or ex-partner (versus 4% among men). These numbers are even higher for LGBTIQ+ women, with 25% of lesbian women and 44% of bi women experiencing sexual violence.

In addition to these forms of violence, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, honour-related violence and forced marriage still occur. Harmful practices mainly occur in closed communities where traditional ideas about gender roles, positions, education and sexuality of women and men prevail, affecting young women and girls disproportionately. On 1 January 2018, almost 41,000 women residing in the Netherlands had experienced genital mutilation. An estimated 4,200 girls run the risk of genital mutilation in the next 20 years. The number of victims of forced marriage is estimated to be between 338 and 957 per year. Young women are more likely to be victimised than men. Yet, forced marriage is a criminal offense in the Netherlands and carries a prison sentence of up to two years. If a Dutch person has forced someone abroad to get married, they can be prosecuted in the Netherlands.<sup>78</sup>

Annually the Zero Tolerance Day against FGM is organised in the Netherlands by Platform 6/2, a collaboration between civil society organisations, often supported by local government. For example in 2023 the Zero Tolerance Day was in collaboration with GGD (public health service) GGD IJssel and GGD Noord- and Oost Gelderland<sup>9</sup> and in 2024 with support of GGD Hart voor Brabant and the municipality of Tilburg.

The government is working on a broad approach to gender-based violence, the 'National Action Programme (NAP) Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual violence'. This programme runs from 2023 to 2025. The focus of the approach is on sexual and gender based violence and sexually

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<sup>7</sup> Landelijk Knooppunt Huwelijksdwang en Achterlating (n.d.) Signalen huwelijksdwang vaak niet herken.

*Signals of forced marriage and abandonment often not recognised.* Via [Signalen huwelijksdwang en achterlating vaak niet herkend - Landelijk Knooppunt Huwelijksdwang en achterlating](#)

<sup>8</sup> NL Times (2023). Hundreds of young Dutch people at risk of forced marriage during summer holiday. Via <https://nltimes.nl/2023/06/07/hundreds-young-dutch-people-risk-forced-marriage-summer-holiday>

<sup>9</sup> Pharos (2023). Zero Tolerance Day 2023. Via [Zero Tolerance Day 2023 \(pharos.nl\)](#) (Pharos Expertise Centrum, Plan international en KIT Royal tropical institute are the het Platform 6/2).

transgressive behaviour, and the role that gender norms and stereotypes play in this. To tackle harmful practices, the government has given an extra boost to the Harmful Practices Action Agenda.

For more information please see questions 15, 17 and 19.

#### Education

A student's gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, sex characteristics or other identity markers, such as ethnicity should not influence a student's school, academic and career choices and opportunities, or how a student is treated by their teachers and peers. Young people must be able to make a choice that suits their interests, talents and capabilities without being influenced by social expectations, gender norms or roles, discrimination or lack of safety. This is why efforts are being made to provide information, break gender stereotyping in career orientation, and guide and encourage more girls and women to pursue careers in science, technology and IT.

Comprehensive sexuality education is an important factor in teaching children to develop equal relationships and engage respectfully with gender and sexual diversity. Moreover, it contributes to preventing unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence. Through the programme 'Healthy School' and 'Healthy Relationships and Sexuality', the Netherlands encourages schools to teach comprehensive sexuality education and use scientifically recognized teaching methods to do so.

For more information please see questions 8 and 10.

#### Care

There is still insufficient knowledge in the field of healthcare on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics and age, and how a combination of these backgrounds can lead to specific problems. This creates unequal treatment and unequal access to health services. It is vital to gain more insight into the relevance of gender and sex differences in healthcare, both in drafting policy, in carrying out research, and in implementation of this knowledge in the medical consultation room. This information allows healthcare professionals to better understand differences and provide more targeted treatment. That is why ZonMW – the Dutch organisation for health research and health innovation – has conducted research into this on behalf of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

For more information please see questions 12.

#### Equal treatment and legislation

Equal treatment starts by guaranteeing legal equality. Every individual should be able to count on complete equal treatment, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, gender characteristics, ethnicity or other characteristics. Legal equality is a condition but not a guarantee for equal treatment. This also requires awareness and enforcement.

For more information please see questions 22.

### **3. Over the past five years, what specific actions have you taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (2 pages max.).*

To prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalised groups, we have done the following:

1) Preventing and combating sexual, gender-related and domestic violence in migrant communities in the Netherlands.

Project SAMEN (TOGETHER) offers psychosocial support, training, opportunities to exchange knowledge, referrals and other measures aiming to prevent and combat sexual, gender-based and domestic violence within migrant communities in the Netherlands. The services are provided to adults with a migration background who belong to marginalised groups, such as women, young adults and people from the LGBTIQ+ community. More than 250 persons have already benefited from the support. The project runs from September 2022 to August 2024.

2) Better support for women during integration via the Integration Act 2021.

Actions are taken in three areas. First by focusing support particularly on migrant women. Second, by developing expertise, sharing best practices and raising awareness among municipalities. Third, by removing hindering factors, for example when it comes to childcare.

An e-learning tool has been developed for client managers at municipalities to guide female newcomers on their way to work. In addition, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment urges municipalities to pay more attention to the possibilities to better guide women during the broad intake.

3) Promote financial self-reliance and sustainable participation of women with a migration background in a situation of dependency.

The Netherlands has commissioned the organisation [Diversio](#) to help women become financially resilient by increasing their knowledge about financial matters and by providing guidance on how to earn income. The deployed intervention 'Choose work?' consists of training courses aimed at both transferring knowledge (financial insight) and offering perspectives for action. Diversio works together with grassroots women's organisations. The project runs from May 2023 to May 2025. Knowledge about financial matters is the first step towards financial resilience.

In addition, a pilot has started to promote the financial independence of women with a migration background in a situation of dependency in closed communities. Aim of the pilot is to map how women from closed communities can participate sustainably in the labour market, what limits their self-determination obstacles, and how these obstacles can be overcome. The pilot applies and tests interventions for guidance to work or training to gain insight into the circumstances under which interventions work for this specific target group. In collaboration with various organisations that specifically focus on vulnerable women with a migration background, it is currently examined what types of support from municipalities best suit this target group.

#### Data

As of 2024, the Emancipation Monitor ([Emancipatiemonitor](#)) will include sex-disaggregated data on the position of women (and men) with disabilities in the areas of education, labour and social participation. This is expected to provide valuable information and support policies to improve the position of women (and men) with disabilities. The Equality Monitor is the most extensive routine survey containing sex-disaggregated data in the Netherlands and is published every two years by Statistics Netherlands (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, CBS*).

**4. Over the past five years, how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what measures have you taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please give concrete examples of the effects of different crises on specific critical areas of concern and of measures your country has taken to prevent a reversal of progress and respond in a gender-responsive manner (1 page max.).*

COVID-19 has not affected all women more severely than men in the Dutch labour market. Various studies have also researched the influence of COVID-19 measures on gender-based violence. Although there were no clear signs through collected data of an overall increase in gender-based violence during the pandemic crisis, marginalised groups like sex workers were disproportionately hit. They were not allowed to work during lockdown, but were excluded from receiving financial support like other workers. Due to this reality, 65 percent of sex workers faced financial difficulty. Sex workers who continued working during lockdown out of financial necessity (2020: 55% and in 2021: 90%) experienced more police surveillance, and 40 percent experienced physical or sexual violence<sup>10</sup>. It exemplified what (further) repressive measures mean for the health and safety of sex workers. The following measures have been taken:

- 1) In 2020, the campaign 'It won't stop until you do something' (*Het houdt niet op, totdat je iets doet*), which urges people to take action if they suspect or are affected by domestic violence or child abuse, was modified and its scope widened owing to the higher risk of domestic violence caused by pandemic lockdown measures. In addition, information was provided on how to deal with rising tensions as a result of COVID-19 measures. A social media campaign entitled 'Concerns about domestic violence and child abuse' (*Zorgen over huiselijk geweld en kindermishandeling*) on the range of support services was conducted from July to September 2021. The 'Safe at Home' national network (*Landelijk Netwerk 'Veilig Thuis'*), the Children's Helpline and the programme 'Violence has no place in the home' (*Geweld hoort nergens thuis*, GHNT) partnered to develop an online prevention campaign around the concept of 'Time Out' (18 October to 14 November 2021).
- 2) Domestic violence shelters prepared for an anticipated demand for additional places, but no such increase in demand took place. Also, additional measures were taken to cater for victims for whom the existing support channels were unsuitable.

In addition, we have a more gender-sensitive approach when it comes to climate issues; see question 31.

**5. Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country through laws, policies and/or programmes?**

*In the narrative report, please provide brief reflections on how you plan to address these priorities. In doing so, countries are encouraged to reflect on how their future actions will build on lessons learned from past successes and setbacks (3 – 5 pages).*

Because of recent elections, the Netherlands is awaiting the priorities of the new cabinet for the upcoming years. Until then, the priorities of the current *Emancipatienota* remain standing.

See sections 4 and 6 for more details.

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<sup>10</sup> Amazing Erasmus MC (2022). *Sekswerkers in coronatijd: geen inkomen, veel geweld. Seks workers during corona: no income, lots of violence.* Via [Sekswerkers in coronatijd: geen inkomen, veel geweld - Amazing Erasmus MC](#)

### III. Section Three

Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

#### A. Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

**Critical areas of concern:**

- A. Women and poverty
- F. Women and the economy
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

**6. Over the past five years, what actions has your country taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. Where appropriate, please also report on your engagement or intention to engage in the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection. (2 pages max.)*

Major inequalities exist in the Netherlands between women and men in terms of employment and income. For example, more women than men tend not to be economically independent (a labour income of at least 70% of the full-time legal minimum wage), let alone financially independent (100% full-time minimum wage). Furthermore, 70% of working women work part-time, compared to 28% of men. Women are not always sufficiently aware that they are in a vulnerable position if they aren't economically independent. This includes women who work in small part-time jobs, women who do not work and receive benefits, and non-beneficiary women who depend on their partner's income.

The government is committed to improving the participation of women in the labour market. It is important to note that the percentage of women with paid work keeps growing. Women's labour participation in the first quarter of 2023 was 68.6%, compared to 68.1% in 2022. A similar increase is noted for men, from 76.4% to 76.7%. Financial independence is also increasing among both women and men.

The government is committed to increasing women's economic independence and financial independence. Working more hours can lead to more economic independence, pension accrual, career opportunities, relief of work pressure among colleagues and more social contacts, among other things. . Additionally, working more hours leads to more pension accrual, which would be very welcome as the Netherlands has the largest gender pension gap in the EU, mainly resulting from the fact that women work fewer hours on average than men. There are also sector-specific differences in pension

accrual: in typical women's sectors, pension schemes are less generous than in typical men's sectors.

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More economic independence is good for everyone. On an individual level, it means more freedom of choice and financial independence for women. On a collective level it contributes to economic growth and solving shortages.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment work together to reduce disadvantages of specific groups of women whose economic independence is relatively low. This particularly concerns women with a migration background and women with a practical education. It requires customisation that can best be delivered by the municipalities and UWV (Employee Insurance Agency), because they are in close contact with citizens, can put their interests first and take into account their circumstances and capabilities. Through the subsidy around 'economic independence' within the programme 'Skilled at Work' the cabinet supports the development and dissemination of proven effective interventions within municipalities that take into account specific barriers for women who are distant from the labour market.

### Actions

The Dutch government has done the following to improve the labour market position of women and combat inequality and discrimination in the labour market:

- 1) The government subsidised the NGO [WOMEN Inc.](#) to develop a roadmap to help employers measure and address actual and possible pay differences within their organisation. The goal is to detect and prevent pay differences. The roadmap, together with a campaign on equal pay, was launched on Equal Pay Day 2022.
- 2) The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy supported the FundRight initiative. Fifty investors came together and created awareness about diversity. In 2022 it was decided to continue the initiative under the international flag of Diversity VC, in order to increase the share of investments in female startups and the number of female startups.
- 3) The government is financing the [More hours work!](#) project from the National Growth Fund. The project aims to empower able and willing part-time workers to work more. The government has conditionally allocated €30 million and reserved €45 million for the second part of the project. The [Financially Strong through Work](#) alliance is committed to the sustainable financial independence of practically educated women in the care, cleaning and childcare sectors by removing barriers that prevent women of working more. Barriers include small part-time jobs that are the norm, irregular shifts, high work demands and unfavourable working conditions characterised by flex contracts, low wages and little autonomy.

### Challenges and setbacks

Still, almost half of all women are financially independent. And if we consider this intersectionally and break it down to other background characteristics the differences are even greater. For example, significant differences by level of education persist. Women with a theoretical education are more likely to be financially independent (78.1%) than middle- and low-educated women (55.5% and 25.8% respectively). Similarly, age can be a factor. Women aged between 25 and 35 are more likely to be financially independent (70%) than women aged between 55 and AOW age (43.2%). Furthermore, women born in the Netherlands (61.7%) are more often financially independent than women who are

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<sup>11</sup> Kali et al (2021), Gelijke rechten, maar geen gelijke pensioenen: de gender gap in de Nederlandse tweedepijlerpensioenen, Tilburg: Tilburg University, see here: [P20210916 Netspar-Design-Paper-178-WEB.pdf](#)



first-generation migrants (45.6%). In addition, last year's report 'A broad look at welfare' by the Dutch Social Planning Agency (SCP) <sup>12</sup> shows that there are several groups of people on welfare that stand out: 48 % of those on welfare are older people with a basic level of education and health problems (approx. 250,000 people), 5% of those on welfare are young single mothers (around 25,000 people).

## COVID-19:

Women were overrepresented in occupations that were crucial during the COVID pandemic, such as health care, child care and education. 60 percent of these occupations were carried out by women. Women were also overrepresented in sectors that were hit hardest by the lock downs, such as tourism, retail, sex work and the cultural sector. Among others, sex workers were not allowed to work. Many continued working which resulted in targeted physical and sexual violence.<sup>13</sup> Other marginalised and disadvantaged groups of women working in so-called female-dominated informal labour sectors, such as migrant domestic and care workers, were faced with barriers to accessing government support. Especially practically educated women and women with a migration background were hit: unemployment rates increased with 15,3 respectively 14,3 percent points among these groups.<sup>14</sup> In addition, women took up more care tasks and experienced less free time and more working pressure and stress as compared to fathers. Almost half of working mothers (48%) increased their working hours outside of office hours (evenings, weekends and free days) as compared to 38 percent of fathers.<sup>15 16</sup> After the first lockdown, fathers' increased share of care work declined again.<sup>17</sup> Abortion clinics were closed during COVID in three provinces, disproportionately affecting women living in rural areas.<sup>18</sup> While the government's submission to the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility<sup>19</sup> includes equal opportunities as a cross-cutting theme<sup>20</sup>, there is no stand-alone priority on gender equality.

## Measures Aruba

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<sup>12</sup> Van Echtelt et al (2023), Een brede blik op bijstand, Den Haag, see here: [Een brede blik op bijstand | Publicatie | Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau \(scp.nl\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> Cubides Kovacsics, M., Santos, W. & Siegmann, K. (2022). Sex Workers' everyday security in the Netherlands and the Impact of COVID-19. *Sex Res Soc Policy* 20, 810–824 (2023). Via [Sex Workers' Everyday Security in the Netherlands and the Impact of COVID-19 | Sexuality Research and Social Policy \(springer.com\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> Ardon, D. & Steijaert, M. (2022) Factsheet Gelijkheid onder druk door de coronacrisis: feiten, cijfers en aanbevelingen. Atria. *Factsheet: Gender equality under pressure by the covid crisis: facts, numbers and recommendations*. Atria. Via [atria-fsheet-corona-gendergelijkheid-los.pdf](#). Accessed 6 May 2024.

<sup>15</sup> Ardon, D. & Steijaert, M. (2022) Factsheet Gelijkheid onder druk door de coronacrisis: feiten, cijfers en aanbevelingen. Atria. *Factsheet: Gender equality under pressure by the covid crisis: facts, numbers and recommendations*. Atria. Via [atria-fsheet-corona-gendergelijkheid-los.pdf](#). Accessed 6 May 2024.

<sup>16</sup> COGIS-NL COVID Gender (In)equality Survey Netherlands. Policy briefs and scientific publications, [Publications – COGIS NL](#)

<sup>17</sup> Yerkes et al. (2021). COGIS-NL COVID Gender (In)equality Survey Netherlands. Derde Policy Brief. [COGIS NL Policy brief nr3.pdf \(uu.nl\)](#). Accessed 6 May 2022

<sup>18</sup> Cui N, Gemzell-Danielsson K, Gomperts R. *Why women choose self-managed telemedicine abortion in the Netherlands during the COVID-19 pandemic: a national mixed methods study*. *BMJ Sexual & Reproductive Health* 2023;49:105-111.

<sup>19</sup> European Commission (n.d.). Netherlands' recovery and resilience plan. Via [Netherlands' recovery and resilience plan](#).

<sup>20</sup> European Commission (2022). COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Analysis of the recovery and resilience plan of the Netherlands Accompanying the document Proposal for a COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for the Netherlands, page 18. [EUR-Lex - 52022SC0292 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#). Accessed on 07-05-2024.

CEDEHM, the Bureau of Women's Affairs in Aruba, is one of the key agencies in charge of the executing parts of the National Gender Policy Action Plan. The bureau works a lot with people in low-income households to help them achieve success in the labour force by providing workshops on job application, nurturing professional skills, and also etiquette in the workplace.

The action plan of the National Gender Policy indicates that to ensure decent work and entrepreneurship a strategic objective is to increase decent work opportunities and strengthen capacities for entrepreneurship and employment for women and marginalised groups. A key result area is strengthening social protection and social insurance systems to be gender-responsive, inclusive and redistribute the unpaid care burden. The priority here is first collecting data on the unpaid care burden and conducting training with the Central Bureau of Statistics to recognize and measure time spent on unpaid care (SDG 5.4.1) through labour force surveys and censuses.

**7. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Specific examples of how the increase in unpaid care and domestic work during COVID-19 pandemic was addressed are encouraged. Where appropriate, please also report on your engagement or intention to engage in the Global Alliance for Care. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

In the past five years we have done the following:

Actions

1) Increase paid parental leave

To promote gender equality in the labour market, the Netherlands increased the payment percentage for paid parental leave from 50% to 70% of the daily wage for nine weeks of the first year of the child. The regulation came into effect on 2 August 2022.

2) SamenSprak

To gain more insight into the experiences of people around gender equality in the labour market, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment started a dialogue entitled 'SamenSprak'. Within this dialogue various groups in society discuss the division of labour and care and societal expectations about men and women at work, in the family, and more broadly the job market.

3) The Dutch Economic Resilience Coalition

The Dutch Economic Resilience Coalition, a collaboration of a large number of scientific and social parties, researches how women's economic resilience can be increased. They also look at the role of partners, employers and midwives. The aim of the projects is to help women increase their economic independence in a sustainable manner. This research consists out of three projects and an overarching research.

- a. A living lab focused on the economic independence of working women after the arrival of their first child;
- b. A living lab in which system interventions are being developed to guide mothers on benefits to sustainable employment;
- c. A study to gain more insight into the group of women without benefits and paid work;



Please see question 11 for more actions to promote work-life and family balance.

**8. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

In the past five years we have done the following to reduce the gender digital divide:

1) Coalition 'More girls and women in science, technology and ICT'

The coalition 'More girls and women in science, technology and IT' was launched at the end of 2021 with the aim of making more girls enthusiastic about technical training and professions. The coalition wants to reduce the shortage of female technicians on the labour market by organising joint activities, combating fragmentation and exchanging knowledge. In 2023, an inventory was made of existing initiatives of the various partners.

2) Supporting Task Force Diversity and Inclusion in ICT sector

The Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce is an initiative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, trade association NLdigital, and companies focused on increasing the share of women and other minorities in the digital sector. Businesses formulate joint objectives and actions, share best practices and decide on an annual benchmark. In 2023, specific efforts were made to activate companies in the digital sector to get started with their own objectives for diversity and inclusion.

3) Alliance Werk.en.de Toekomst

In 2018-2023, the alliance [Werk.en.de Toekomst](#) (Work and the future) was committed to breaking gender stereotyping in education and the labour market. In this regard, [the Dutch Women's Council](#) and [VHTO](#), two of the alliance partners, focused on digital inclusion and created a factsheet on gender differences where digitisation is concerned. VHTO and Emancipator have also worked to provide information in schools to encourage girls to choose technical studies. An annual event is held on Girls' Day, where girls can be introduced to a technical study.

**9. In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in your country, and what macroeconomic policies has your country implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details on the evolution of public and private finance mobilized to advance gender equality, monetary and trade policies, as appropriate, as well as any effects of fiscal consolidation / austerity measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, on women and men, boys and girls. (2 pages max.)*

The government has made few cuts in recent years. The macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment did not affect implementation of the BPfA.

## B. Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

### **Critical areas of concern:**

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and health
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

### **10. In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

We think it is important to pay extra attention to poverty among women and girls – especially marginalised groups like female status holders, pregnant women, and women who are practically trained deserve our attention.

For women, economic independence reduces the risk of falling into poverty due to life events such as divorce, separation, or partner's death.

- 1) The cabinet is commissioning several pilots to increase the economic independence of women distant from the labour market. These are pilots aimed at:
  - a. Employment guidance of female status holders with little education in the municipality of Den Bosch;
  - b. Economic independence of pregnant women and new mothers who are, or risk becoming, welfare-dependent in the municipality of Rotterdam;
  - c. More opportunities for benefit-/nonbenefit-entitled women on the labour market in the municipality of The Hague.
- 2) To ensure increased financial independence of practically educated women, the Netherlands has entered into a partnership with 'Financially Strong through Work', an alliance of [WOMEN Inc.](#), [Bureau Clara Wichmann](#) and the [Potentieel Pakken](#) (Capture Potential) foundation. This alliance enters into discussions with employers and provides tools and knowledge on better working conditions and expansion of earning capacity and advocates for measures from the government to remove barriers for women to become sustainably financially independent. Also the women themselves activated. Trade unions in healthcare, childcare and cleaning are likewise addressed to represent the interests of these women.

#### Measures Aruba

The social security and social welfare system in Aruba are not gender specific. While Aruba follows the Residual Welfare Model of social policy, such key social insurance programmes as the old age and

orphan and widow(er) pension schemes along with the universal healthcare system are universal and non-contributory in character. Furthermore, the social security system encompasses contributory employees' insurance schemes, including accident insurance, severance pay and sickness insurance, and a third-tier general pension scheme. In other words, the access of women in general to these programmes is warranted.

Moreover, what are also in place are such means test based public assistance programmes as the welfare check transfer programme ("Bijstand"), assistance with funeral costs and subsidies for legal services. Additionally, relevant social welfare services are delivered directly by governmental departments, but the majority of the social services targeting for instance battered women, disabled persons, long-term care for the elderly, etc. are delivered by NGO's and are largely subsidised by public funds. Consequently, welfare services and benefits to the reference groups are greatly paid for and or warranted by state funds. Little or no contribution of fees is paid by concerned beneficiaries of these programs.

In conclusion, low or no incomes do not inhibit accessibility to the above-mentioned benefits, care and services.

#### **11. In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. In answering this question, countries are encouraged to reflect on any lasting, gender-responsive social protection innovations adopted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

In the last couple of years we have done the following to improve access to social protection for women and girls:

1) Combating pregnancy discrimination.

To combat pregnancy discrimination, the Netherlands will strengthen its commitment to a sustainable form of information and communication about rights and obligations during pregnancy and work. [WOMEN Inc.](#) has been asked to carry this out. WOMEN Inc. has developed a toolbox and implemented an awareness campaign about pregnancy discrimination that had a wide reach among the target group (women between ages 25 and 44). To reach pregnant employees at the right time, collaborations have been initiated with channels (GGD Groeigids app, 24baby and Pregnancy Portal) that this group uses. In addition, extra efforts will be made to reach employers and draw attention to the risks of pregnancy discrimination and to rights and obligations related to pregnancy and work. The role healthcare professionals can play in the spread of information to combat pregnancy discrimination will be explored in the near future. This approach is part of the [Labour Market Discrimination Action Plan 2022–2025](#).

2) The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has agreed with the overarching organisations and unions in higher education that the current support options for pregnant students be included in the Student statute describing the rights and obligations of students per institution.

## **12) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The government wants everyone to receive appropriate care. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. The healthcare system still exposes insufficient knowledge and experience in the areas of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics. This can lead to unequal treatment and a greater risk of health problems, e.g. there is insufficient (gender related) care available for trans people, with a waiting time for a first appointment of 2 years on average<sup>21</sup>. We have done the following to improve the health outcomes of women and girls:

### Actions

#### 1) Customised Healthcare Alliance 2

The Government provided an institutional subsidy to the [Customised Healthcare Alliance 2](#). This partnership of [WOMEN Inc.](#), [Rutgers](#) and [COC](#) is committed to equal health care for women and LGBTIQ+ people. The alliance continues to draw attention to the experiences of these people and is committed to advocating for research that takes diversity into account and the implementation of this knowledge in healthcare practices into account. The alliance aims to raise awareness and increase knowledge of healthcare professionals. This is done on a more general scale, for example through training, but also on a more specific scale, by developing a e-learning tool for GPs that focuses on gender diversity and intersex people.

#### 2) Development agenda specific to women's diseases

A research agenda, an implementation agenda and a social agenda with prioritisation of actions on women's diseases are being developed by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Dutch Association for Obstetrics Gynaecology ([NVOG](#)), supported by [ZonMW](#). A working group has started an impact analysis. Discussions were held twice with a large/diverse group of field parties. Additionally, ZonMW has been asked to bundle information about endometriosis and make it more available. The Customised Healthcare Alliance 2 also works on more knowledge of and better healthcare for on hormone-related syndromes.

#### 3) Research surrounding menopause & work

The number of working women is rising. In 2020 almost 1.8 million working women in the Netherlands were aged 45 and older. From this age, women generally experience menopause and associated symptoms. Substantial numbers of working women in the Netherlands suffer from menopausal symptoms: an estimated 315,000 (16% of female employees) between ages 40 and 75 are in menopause, with 80% (approximately 251,000 female employees) experiencing symptoms occasionally or regularly (source: TNO). Especially women in perimenopause, the phase around the last menstrual period, indicate experiencing menopausal symptoms (source: RIVM). These symptoms can have an impact on women's vitality and employability. About 36% believe they function less well at work due to e.g. pain, fatigue or concentration problems. They can also experience uncomfortable situations in the workplace, for example due to hot flashes, mood swings or leakage (31%). Female workers

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<sup>21</sup> [Meer transgenderzorg nodig om wachtlijsten terug te dringen | Zon \(zonmw.nl\)](#)

with regular menopausal symptoms experience burnout three times as often (39%) as their age peers without menopausal symptoms (13%). Given the importance of discussion in the workplace, it is relevant that workshops on transition and work appeared to have a positive effect on participants' knowledge and helped resolve issues (source: Panteia). The research offers some practical starting points on how to break the taboo in the workplace, giving employees, employers and occupational health and safety care professionals perspectives for action.

4) Improved access to contraception and abortion

The government funds the programme 'Pregancy? Not now'<sup>22</sup>, a partnership between Rutgers and GGD GHOR. The programme offers support and tools to health care professionals to discuss reproductive plans, sexuality and contraception. The programme focuses specifically on people in vulnerable circumstances, and aims to ensure they are able to make informed decisions about their reproductive health. When it comes to legislation, access to abortion has been improved in several ways. The abortion pill will be made available at general practitioners from 2025 onwards, making it more accessible to those seeking an abortion. Also, the previously legally mandatory reflection period of five days for an abortion has been replaced by a flexible reflection period. This allows for quicker and better access to abortion services and acknowledges the autonomy of women over their own bodies.

5) Measures in the BES islands

To improve health outcomes the ministry of Health together with relevant Dutch and Dutch Caribbean organisations made screening for certain medical conditions available on the BES-islands (Bonaire, St. Eustasius and Saba). For women, screening for breast cancer and cervical cancer have been introduced to diagnose and treat these conditions in an early stage.

Although non-invasive prenatal testing will not (yet) become available in a screening programme for all women on the BES, qualitative care for pregnant women is available on the BES according to Dutch legislation and guidelines.

Unintended pregnancies are prevalent on the BES due to non- or inadequate use of contraception. Qualitative care for women with unintended pregnancies is available in both primary and secondary care. Educated professionals can help these women by informing them on possible options or helping them in their choice for induced abortion and contraception postabortum. Furthermore, local governments put effort in collective prevention of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases with specific education programmes on sexuality and contraception for children and young adults.

Measures Aruba

Aruba generally has relatively strong sexual and reproductive health services integrated within the healthcare system and supported by organisations like Planned Parenthood (Famia Planea Aruba (FPA)) that also provide sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. FPA works to promote the right and easy access to services and information on the use of contraceptives and sexual health to the community of Aruba, without discrimination on any basis. The organization offers a variety of contraceptive methods and provides counselling, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Programs in and out of schools, alongside the provision of digital sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. There is also online counselling available.

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<sup>22</sup> Nu niet Zwanger (n.d.) Over ons. *About us*. Via <https://www.nunietzwanger.nl/contact/#Over-ons>

**13) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Good education is a prerequisite for an equitable and safe society. We pay specific attention to marginalisation in education based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, sexual characteristics. These characteristics should not stand in the way. Young people must be able to make suitable career choices without being hindered by social expectations, gender norms and roles, or an unsafe school environment.

**Social safety at schools**

Social safety at schools in primary education is generally good, but the national safety monitor shows that the well-being of girls is clearly lower than that of boys. The draft 'Free and Safe Education' bill tightens the requirements for social safety in schools, including an extension of the annual monitor of safety perception and the introduction of the reporting obligation for serious incidents. This proposal strengthens social safety for students and educational staff. Based on the outcome of the monitor, it will be assessed whether additional measures are necessary to reduce risks and ensure safety in secondary vocational education, also for LGBTIQ+ students.

The government made €4 million available per year (2022-2031) to research and monitor, share interventions and knowledge, and create awareness and cultural change to improve social safety and inclusion in higher education. The government is also working on a care duty for institutions towards student safety. This is to be laid down in the Higher Education and Research Act.

The government will invest €30 million annually in secondary vocational education (2024- 2027) so teachers can make use of the professional development offer of The Citizenship Expertise Center, as reported in the MBO Working Agenda.

**Gender segregation in education and the labour market**

While the percentage of girls choosing STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) at school has risen somewhat over the past years, numbers vary greatly between vocational and other study programmes. In order to solve the labour shortage in STEM and ICT and so women and girls can benefit from the economic opportunities these sectors offer, the government is committed to attracting women and girls to these sectors. In doing so, the cabinet considers it important that everyone be able to make study and career choices in order to fulfil their own potential, irrespectively of gender-stereotypical norms and expectation patterns.

Gender stereotypes stand at the basis. Overcoming the gender stereotypes that discourage girls from choosing for or staying in STEM careers is crucial. Girls express less confidence in their digital literacy and STEM skills than boys, even though they perform just as well as boys or even outperform them in these subjects. Research by Atria<sup>23</sup> as part of the alliance Werk.en.deToekomst showed that internalized gender stereotypical views and gender norms influence the study choices of young men and women, which in turn translate into gender stereotypical career paths (gender segregation) and

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<sup>23</sup> Thijs, P. et al. (2022) Vrij om te kiezen? Genderstereotypen en de levensloop: implicaties voor emancipatiebeleid. *Free to choose? Gender stereotypes and the life course: implications for emancipation policy.* Via [atria-rapport-vrijomtekiezen-A4-definitief.pdf](#).



an unequal division of paid and unpaid labour. A choice for a STEM education does not automatically translate into a choice for a STEM career. The share of women working in a technical profession in the Netherlands is low, at a mere 14%. In addition to the meagre influx of women into STEM sectors, retention of women in STEM jobs remains problematic. Women working in STEM choose to leave their field relatively often (45% more frequently than men), commonly citing the difficulty to thrive in a predominantly male working culture. Much remains to be done in terms of working culture as well, which constitutes a responsibility for businesses in the STEM sectors.

Some remedies implemented by the government to ameliorate gender segregation include:

1) Alliance 'Becoming who you are'

The government has concluded an alliance entitled [Becoming who you are](#) (*Alliantie Worden wie je bent*) with civil society partners Stichting School & Veiligheid, VHTO, Emancipator and Movisie. The project is focused on breaking the gender stereotypes that influence pupils' career choices, and includes guest lectures, workshops, teacher trainings and research. The target population consists of primary, secondary and vocational education. Budget is around €4.5 million. Of crucial importance are role models: 'You can't be what you can't see'. This is why the government supports the annual Girls' Day, organised by VHTO, where girls get to visit STEM companies and meet female professionals to familiarise themselves with STEM job opportunities at a young age.

2) Technology Pact

The government has entered into a **Technology Pact** (*Techniekpact*) with school boards, the private sector, employers and employees, and local authorities that includes a focus on attracting more girls and women to STEM sectors. Implementation is coordinated by the Platform Talent for Technology, which has developed an interactive monitor containing education and labour market data with a special theme of women in engineering (and ICT). Educational institutions can see in the monitor how they're doing when it comes to the male/female ratio and take action accordingly.

3) Action Plan for Green and Digital Jobs

Measures have also been taken further down the pipeline, on the labour market. The Ministries of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy; Social Affairs and Employment; and Education, Culture and Science have launched a new **Action Plan for Green and Digital Jobs** (*Actieplan Groene en Digitale Banen*) aiming to increase investment in digital skills, education and development, and the number of female ICT specialists. Apart from aiming to attract more girls and women to STEM education, it also includes a focus on lifelong learning, reskilling and cultural changes within STEM sectors, in terms of work schedules, working conditions and a safe working environment free from harassment and gendered prejudices.

**14) What actions has your country taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete innovations, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information, with a focus on measures that have outlasted the emergency response. In doing so, countries are encouraged to reflect on lessons learned from the pandemic for ongoing and future crises. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Dutch recovery and resilience plan has been drawn up for an amount of €4.7 billion out of the European coronavirus recovery fund. With the help of social organisations, several measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for everyone were included in the objectives. During the implementation of the recovery and resilience plan, research will be conducted into the desired/undesired social effects of the measures in the recovery plans, whereby possible blind spots in policymaking can be identified.

### C. Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

#### **Critical areas of concern:**

- D. Violence against women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

#### **15) Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has your country prioritized for action?**

*In the narrative report, please explain why your country considers these priority areas or contexts and how it has addressed them. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses (3-5 pages).*

Everyone must have the space and freedom to be themselves visibly and openly, without the negative influence of sexual and gender norms and stereotypes and without being confronted with verbal, physical, online or sexual violence. Unfortunately, there is reason for concern. Women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons are often victims of serious and structural violence. The government focuses on increasing the safety of women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons in the public space, at home, at work, online, and within asylum policy, sports, education, science and healthcare. . It is important that cases of gender-based violence are investigated and prosecuted and that people feel taken seriously by the police. Research of Plan International showed that of the young women who reported to the police, over a quarter indicated that the police did not take the case seriously (27%).<sup>24</sup>

The government has done the following:

- 1) To tackle sexual misconduct and to contribute to a culture in which people respect each other's boundaries and wishes, the 'National Action Programme (NAP) Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual violence' was launched in January 2023. This cross-sectoral and cross-ministerial approach is used for public communication, supports social initiatives, activates bystanders, discusses sexually transgressive behaviour, conducts research, improves assistance, and tightens standards and legislation. In essence, the NAP focusses on the change in culture that is required to address the root causes of the issues which can be found in e.g. harmful gender norms, dominant ideas about sexuality and unequal power relations. To this end, the government also assigned a Government Commissioner against Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual Violence, Dr Mariëtte Hamer. Her main goal is to strengthen the approach to combat sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence and to drive the cultural change necessary to do so. She provides the government with solicited and unsolicited advice. The NAP outlines five action lines or end goals:
  - a) There are shared societal values and standards about how we want to treat each other in society.

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<sup>24</sup> Plan International (2023) Seksueel geweld en intimidatie op staat. *Sexual violence and street harassment*. Via <https://www.planinternational.nl/uploaded/2023/02/Plan-International-Seksuele-intimidatie-en-geweld-op-straat-Februari-2023.pdf?x5738>



- b) Legislation and regulations reflect changing societal values.
  - c) Organisations have processes in place for prevention, detection and monitoring.
  - d) Everyone will be able to recognise sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence and respond to it.
  - e) There is good care provision that is easy to find.
- 2) To tackle violence against women, the Netherlands has developed an approach against gender-based violence that includes special attention to femicide. The focus lies on promoting expertise, prevention and a tougher approach against perpetrators.
  - 3) To combat violence and aggression against women and LGBTIQ+ people, four new discrimination investigators have been appointed within the Dutch police force. Diversity networks in the police forces have also been strengthened.
  - 4) To ensure the safety of women and girls in public spaces, the number of municipalities that participate in the programme [Safe Cities](#) has expanded to 20 cities across the country. The programme focuses on strengthening women's and girls' safety in public spaces when they go out.
  - 5) Over [250 municipalities](#), public organisations, and institutions in the Netherlands have united in support of the Orange the World global campaign against violence targeting women and girls. This annual campaign spans from November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to December 10, International Human Rights Day. The intervening days constitute the 16 Days of Action.
  - 6) [Amendment of the bill on sexual crimes](#): This bill amends the Penal Code and other laws in connection with modernising the criminalisation of various forms of sexually transgressive behaviour (Sexual Offences Act).
    - a) Having sexual contact with someone against their will becomes punishable. A person is punishable if they know or should have known that the other person does not want it;
    - b) Sexual harassment, both offline and online, becomes punishable;
    - c) Adults sending sexually explicit messages to children under 16 (sex chatting).
    - d) To prove rape or sexual assault it is no longer necessary to prove that there was coercion, violence or threat. A person is already punishable if it was clear that the other person did not want sex but they persisted anyway;
    - e) The maximum penalties for a number of sexual offences go up, for example in cases of sexual abuse of children and persons in marginalised positions;
    - f) Exchanging sexual images (sexting) will no longer be punishable if done voluntarily;
    - g) Victims will be able to report sexually transgressive behaviour in more cases;

The aim is for the new law to come into force in 2024. Until then, relevant organisations, such as the police and the public prosecutor's office, should prepare for the law's enactment.
  - 7) The Netherlands has committed to ratify and implement ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work. The Netherlands is currently preparing the approval bill, which is expected to be presented to Parliament in 2024.
  - 8) Through cooperation with Rutgers, Atria and COC Netherlands in the alliances Act4Respect and Act4Respect Unlimited, the Netherlands works with young people and professionals to build a future in which sexual and gender-based violence is no longer tolerated. See question 19 for more information.
  - 9) Several Ministries, under leadership of the Ministry of Justice and Security, have committed to working with and funding the Sex Work Alliance for Destigmatisation (SWAD), aiming to improve the social and legal position of sex workers in the Netherlands. Thanks to their joint commitment, it will e.g. become possible for sex workers to obtain a business bank account and insurance, to which they were excluded despite their legal status and tax payments.

## Measures Aruba

The National Gender Policy states that enhancing access to justice and quality services regarding gender-based discrimination and violence is one of the four main policy objectives. In December of 2023, the Prime Minister issued a ministerial order for a commission to form that will be tasked with developing an action plan for all stakeholders in charge of handling domestic violence cases and laws and regulations. The plan must include recommendations for every government entity including cabinet members, the police, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Department of Legislation and Legal Affairs, the Department of Social Affairs, etc. It may also include recommendations for other organisations such as NGOs or "sui generis" organisations that are not necessarily governmental entities but do receive financial support from the government.

In 2021 the Coordination Centre on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling (CMMA) developed a programme to reach out to sex workers. The programme named 'Alternativa' is a cooperation between CMMA and local foundations/support groups and received funding from the government of the Netherlands for execution starting in 2022. This programme will provide support for women that want to leave sex work and/or want to report on indicators or cases of human trafficking.

While no legislation for gender-based violence or domestic abuse exists, this is criminalised under Articles 2:273 to 2:276 of the Aruba Penal Code (APC) where all forms of abuse (simple assault, assault with a weapon, and aggravated assault) may be punished by four to twelve years' imprisonment. Article 2:277 of the APC also states that the maximum punishment imposed under the aforementioned articles on abuse are to be increased by one-third if the abuse was committed against the offender's mother, father, husband or wife, partner, biological child, or foster child, or someone entrusted to his/her care, education, or supervision. The penalty for statutory rape is imprisonment not exceeding 12 years or a fine. The minimum age of consent is 16 years. Sexual harassment is outlawed in Aruba and employers are required to introduce and enforce sexual harassment policies within the workplace. In 2012, stalking was added to the new Criminal Code.

CEDEHM participates with FCVR in activities regarding conscientization of violence against women and girls including domestic violence. CEDEHM provided gender sensitivity training to police officers in training at the police academy.

The Department of Social Affairs is also working on an implementation plan and legislation to ratify the Istanbul Treaty, Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210). However, the committee "stop violencia contra hende muher y mucha muher" was not tasked with ratifying this treaty, therefore, the implementation plan the members were tasked with writing is more of an action plan for government entities while the Department of Social Affairs will be responsible for legislation and policies.

### **16) In the past five years, what actions has your country prioritized to address gender-based violence?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- 1) There are several specific programmes and policies to prevent and combat sexual violence, femicide, sexual harassment and other kinds of gender-related violence (see answer to

question 15 for more examples). With the mentioned National Action Programme, an additional €6 million is being spent on these goals.

- 2) The government has prioritised combating domestic violence. The now defunct programme 'Violence has no place at Home' (*Geweld Hoort Nergens Thuis*, GHNT) ran from 2018 to 2021 and aimed to reduce domestic violence and child abuse, limit the damage caused, and break the cycle of intergenerational violence. The programme has ended and combating domestic violence is now regular and ongoing policy. This policy consists of many measures such as awareness-raising campaigns, development of tools for risk assessment, monitoring the impact and prevalence of domestic violence, and stimulating the use of the reporting code for domestic violence. The target population is all citizens of the Netherlands. The government is now working on the programme 'Future outlook for child and family protection' to introduce an improved system for combating domestic violence.
- 3) The government and several social organisations are working together to tackle gender-based violence and making policies aimed at combating violence more gender-sensitive. This is part of the implementation of the Istanbul convention. The approach to combating gender-based violence consists of three pillars: expertise development, femicide prevention and a special approach for perpetrators. The government is also working on tackling the ground roots of gender-based violence with gender-equality policies. Please, see the answers to questions 2 and 17 for more information.

### **17) In the past five years, what strategies has your country used to prevent gender-based violence?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- 1) **National Action Programme Tackling Sexually Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual Violence**  
The action programme is a broad approach against sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual and gender based violence. The government aims to achieve this by detecting and stopping behaviour quickly and by offering victims and those around them support and help as well as immediate action in stopping offenders and suspects. The action programme also focuses on the role of bystanders. The programme contributes to changing social norms and views on how to interact with each other in society, also online, and what is required to that end. Explicit attention goes to gender stereotyping and power inequality. Mariëtte Hamer is the government's sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence commissioner. She will give solicited and unsolicited advice to the cabinet on the development and implementation of the national action programme. In addition, she is a driving force and supporter of the social conversation that contributes to the cultural change that we jointly strive for.

- 2) **Programme Violence has no place at Home**

The now defunct programme 'Violence has no place at Home' (*Geweld Hoort Nergens Thuis*, GHNT) ran from 2018 to 2021 and aimed to reduce domestic violence and child abuse, limit the damage caused and break the cycle of intergenerational violence. The programme was organised along three lines of action: earlier and better identification of domestic violence by e.g. raising awareness among employers and reinforcing local teams; prevention and long-term solutions such as multidisciplinary and system-oriented collaborations; and focusing on specific groups, including victims of sexual and honour-related violence and forced

prostitution. The target population consisted of families both with and without children, thereby broadening the scope of the programme to gender-based violence. The programme succeeded in forming a solid base for early detection and for stopping domestic violence thanks to its regional strategy of strengthening the approach to combat domestic violence. Monitoring the impact of activities pertaining to the programme was done by an independent research commission. Certain elements of the programme are continued in the programme 'Future outlook for child and family protection' (*Toekomstscenario kind- en gezinsbescherming*).

3) Harmful Practices action plan

To prevent, identify and combat harmful practices, the Harmful Practices action plan (*Actieagenda schadelijke praktijken*) was launched in February 2020; it is an elaboration of the aforementioned programme 'Violence has no place at Home'. With the action plan, a strong impulse was given to prevention, early detection and repression of harmful practices, and support of victims. It focused on combating female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-related violence, forced marriage and abandonment. To achieve these aims, the programme included several targeted actions to raise awareness in communities and professionalisation within relevant sectors such as healthcare, education and security. Important actions contributing to reaching communities were the use of cultural mediators in migrant organisations and the national information campaign 'Right to No'. Thanks to their success, these actions are continuing, as is the effort to invest in competence development of professionals. Although the action plan ended in late 2022, it has formed a solid foundation for the current and future strategy of preventing and combating harmful practices, as the societal task to end these forms of violence remains.

All the above-mentioned programs are contributing to the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

**18) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The world is becoming increasingly digital, and we see algorithms being used for all kinds of topics. From an emancipation viewpoint, there are risks and opportunities. In terms of risks, this could include an increase in obvious and unseen discrimination due to unrepresentative training data, black-box effects, stereotypical ideas in the rules of the algorithm, or a belief in the objectivity of algorithms that does not correspond with reality. It is important that existing inequalities not be maintained or increased by the use of algorithms. A balanced composition of people working in the IT sector can contribute to this, as can awareness among creators and users of algorithms. The opportunities of algorithms are twofold: on the one hand, by running a large data set through the algorithm it can be demonstrated that there is indeed systematic discrimination which can then also be countered, and when algorithms are built and used correctly this can counteract people's (unconscious) prejudices.

1) Stimulating implementation ethical guidelines for AI. Within UNESCO.

The Netherlands together with other countries promotes implementation of the ethical guidelines for AI ('Group of Friends'). Within the framework of UNESCO, we will continue to make efforts to draw attention to this topic.

2) Research

In response to GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1 on the digital dimension of violence against women, the Ministries of Education, Culture and Science; Justice and Security; and Public, Health, Welfare and Sport commissioned research to outline what is happening in the Netherlands regarding the digital dimension and what is needed to properly implement this recommendation in practice. The research was completed in September 2023 (Regioplan Report).

3) Development of an integrated, coherent and structured approach

In the coming years, the Netherlands is committed to developing a more integrated, coherent and structured approach to online discrimination, racism and hate speech, including online hate against women. This approach will be based on support for victims, enforcement and legislation, prevention and awareness, better registration, and research. These pillars are currently being developed into concrete actions by a working group consisting of the Ministries of the Interior and Kingdom Relations; Education, Culture and Science; Justice and Security; Social Affairs and Employment; and Health, Welfare and Sport. Our aim is a co-creation with relevant parties, so together we can make sure our approach is as practical, efficient and effective as possible.

4) Other initiatives

The Alliance [Politica](#) is an alliance of the civil society partners [WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform](#), [Vote for a Woman Foundation \(Stichting Stem op een Vrouw\)](#) and the Dutch Women's Council ([Nederlandse Vrouwenraad, NVR](#)) in association with [Emancipator](#) funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This alliance already conducted research to gain insight into to what extent seeing online hatred towards female politicians has an effect on whether female aspirants become politically active.<sup>25</sup> Results show that female political aspirants 1) doubt to become politically active, the political ambition is tempered or postponed, 2) become politically active behind the scenes rather than in the forefront, and 3) withdrawal from social media, to be less present on social media to prevent online hate.

Besides, alliance [Politica](#) has developed a [training](#) 'Resilient together against online hate'. During this training political groups learn how to become more resilient as an organisation and individually, and how to embed internal support in their political organisation. It pays particular attention to how hate expresses itself differently towards women and other underrepresented groups.

At the recent [HeForShe Summit 2023](#) hosted by UN Women in New York, leaders from both the public and private sectors convened to address the potential risks associated with AI and emphasized the importance of its safe development. During the summit, discussions centred around the influences shaping contemporary narratives of masculinity and proposed tangible, constructive alternatives for men to champion allyship and leadership in advancing gender equality, all under the banner of being respectfully disruptive. In the Netherlands, [the HeForShe campaign](#) is notably active, with a focus on engaging men, including CEOs, in promoting women's rights and fostering gender equality both online and offline

**19) In the past five years, what measures has your country taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV?**

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<sup>25</sup> Alliantie Politica, Runderkamp, Z., De Jong, J. & Van der Poel, N. (2023) Anyone still wanting to enter politics? Via [1710850905.pdf \(wo-men.nl\)](#)

*In the narrative report, please provide amounts of funding and concrete examples of activities or organizations funded, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. (1 page max.)*

1) Alliance Act4Respect

This alliance works with young people and professionals to build a future in which sexual and gender-based violence is no longer tolerated. In February 2023, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Robbert Dijkgraaf, informed Parliament that the Ministry's cooperation with the Alliance Act4Respect had been renewed for another five years, based on their new application and theory of change, resulting in the new Alliance Act4Respect Unlimited. Act4Respect is a collaboration between Rutgers, Atria, COC Netherlands and the Ministry working together with young people and professionals to promote equal relationships and prevent gender-related violence, through four action paths:

a. *Social Norm campaign aimed at youth*

The Alliance Act4Respect (by organisations Rutgers and Atria) launched a campaign in 2019 aimed at youth, addressing stereotypical ideas that often play a part in the emergence and continuation of physical and online sexual and gender-related violence: <https://www.generatiejaen.nl>. In November 2020 they launched a follow-up focusing on the problem of victim-blaming in cases of sexual and other forms of gender-related violence. This campaign continued in 2021.

b. *Increase expertise*

Professionals in particular play an important role in developing and implementing gender-sensitive preventive interventions and in creating a socially safe environment. Act4Respect therefore offers them support, training, and relevant tools and tips. This enables them to better identify and prevent sexual violence, current/former partner violence and cyber violence at an early stage. The desired end result is that professionals can apply gender-sensitive policy in practice, by selecting and implementing appropriate interventions.

c. *Further developing effective interventions*

Gender-sensitive interventions among at-risk young people can prevent victimisation and perpetration, increase their resilience and strengthen violence prevention. All youth should receive comprehensive sexuality education that focuses on resilience and pays attention to gender and sexual diversity. However, some groups of young people are more vulnerable than others, like LGBTIQ+ youth, young people with practical training, or those with mild intellectual disabilities. By researching these at-risk groups and then creating targeted prevention, Act4Respect aims to increase impact. The overall aim is to develop existing interventions in a targeted way by making them more gender-sensitive.

d. *Knowledge hub*

The alliance is developing an interactive knowledge HUB in co-creation with professionals. Here we will share knowledge and experiences on sexual violence, current/former partner violence, and cyber violence from research and practice. We do this through a digital HUB and by facilitating knowledge exchange at events and meetings.

2) GELIJKSPEL (Equal Game)

GELIJKSPEL was founded in 2019 and is led by three young women who are on a mission to change the sexual culture among students. Sexually transgressive behaviour is common among students. Research by Amnesty (2021) shows that over 1 in 10 female students have experienced nonconsensual sexual penetration during their college years. Students are at a vulnerable age. Studies show that young people aged 16-24 most often experience transgressive behaviour, especially women (Dutch Bureau of Statistics, 2022). The goal of GELIJKSPEL is to change the harmful culture that allows room for



sexually transgressive behaviour among students in their study spaces, at clubs and at parties/while going out, so that during their studies they can have desirable and equal sexual interactions with each other.

In 2024 and 2025 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will fund GELIJKSPEL for €1 million for the following four activities:

- a. Give 300 workshops based on their own developed and tested intervention to at least 30,000 students in higher education.
- b. Organise 20 meetings for at least 120 boards of student associations (e.g. sororities, fraternities, student sports clubs and study associations) to create awareness about sexually transgressive behaviour and its impact, and to stimulate the exchange of best practices on how to tackle the issue.
- c. Organise a full-scale intervention programme for 30 student associations to help them set up the necessary culture and policy structure in order to prevent and if needed sanction sexually transgressive behaviour.
- d. Run a pilot project to translate the workshop from the context of higher education institutions to vocational training institutions (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*, MBO).

**20) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples, including aims and scope of measures taken, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- 1) It is important that everyone feels represented in the media. To gain insight into this, the Media Authority investigated representation in the media. The government would like to expand this monitor with other characteristics, to make sure a more complete picture of the status of the visibility of certain marginalised groups is obtained and the results can also be viewed intersectionally.
- 2) The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is committed to policy communication on policy measures resulting from the Emancipation Memorandum. This is done, for example, through press releases, working visits and media appearances, articles on OCW Stories, or through social media posts on the channels of the minister (MOCW) and/or the corporate channels (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science). These are some social media posts and/or articles that deal with gender equality:
  - a. [Campaign to make sexually transgressive behaviour negotiable in the workplace](#)
  - b. [Statement Minister on the Commission on the Status of Women 68](#)
  - c. [Street harassment and signing of Safe Cities Letter of Intent by minister](#)
  - d. [Interview on OCW stories about the alliance Financially strong through work](#)
  - e. [Post distribution cabinet m/f on international women's day](#)
  - f. [Informal council on gender equality in Brussels](#)
  - g. [SER Scorecard Top Women's Act](#)

**21) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?**

*In the narrative report, please refer to the list of marginalized groups under question 3 and provide up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- 1) The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport coordinates the Dutch approach to combating harmful practices. The answer to question 17 discussed more details of this approach (*Harmful Practices action plan*).
- 2) The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment support the alliance *Change from Within*. This partnership between the *Consortium Self-determination*, *LCC+* and Movisie is committed to safety, equality and acceptance of women and LGBTIQ+ persons within closed communities. Breaking stereotypes images of femininity, masculinity and relationships is part of this. The alliance is committed by involving municipal officials and professionals encouraging and facilitating change.
- 3) The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science co-supports project SAMEN (strengthened assistance for migrant women) which aims to raise awareness of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) within migrant communities in the Netherlands and facilitate access to healthcare. SAMEN is implemented in six Dutch cities: Amsterdam, Arnhem, The Hague, Nijmegen, Rotterdam and Utrecht.

SAMEN consists of the following measures:

- a. Teams of trained cultural mediators and medical professionals offer psychosocial support to migrants
- b. Strengthening the healthcare sector through workshops
- c. Promoting information exchange and collaboration in the chain around the target group
- d. Developing information materials
- e. Lessons from the field are collected in a recommendations report

#### **D. Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions**

##### **Critical areas of concern:**

- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

#### **22) In the past five years, what actions and measures has your country to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific*



groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)

- 1) To stimulate and perpetuate the representation and participation of women in politics, the Netherlands started a five-year partnership in 2023 with [Politica](#), an alliance of the civil society partners WO=MEN, Vote for a Woman Foundation ([Stichting Stem op een Vrouw](#)) and the Dutch Women's Council ([Nederlandse Vrouwenraad, NVR](#)) in association with [Emancipator](#). The alliance contributes to increased participation of women in all their diversity in Dutch politics. Politica works together with political parties, sets up trainings and networks, conducts research and contributes to increasing a more positive image of women in politics..

Research conducted by Politica in 2023 identified three significant barriers for women. Firstly, socio-cultural barriers involve the broader role gender plays in our society and how cultural gender norms and conceptions of women influence politics. Secondly, political barriers concern the way politics itself is organised. Lastly, women still lack access to the right information, role models and networks.<sup>26</sup>

Besides, Politica has a working group consisting of delegates from seven national political parties. They provide members from three layers of the party: the party leadership, party office and (if there is one) the women's network. Together, they work party-wide on a safe and inclusive political sector.

- 2) [Women in leadership positions](#)

#### *Private sector*

As of 1 January 2022 a new Act entered into force to achieve a more balanced male/female-ratio in top positions in the private sector. Listed companies now have to comply with a statutory diversity quota of at least one-third of women and men in their supervisory boards. Any new appointment that does not contribute to a more balanced male/female ratio will be null and void. The quotas have indeed boosted women's presence on supervisory boards<sup>27</sup>, but progress on executive boards lags.<sup>28</sup>

Additionally, an obligation for large companies (approximately 5,000 businesses) has been introduced to set 'ambitious' targets to reach a more balanced male/female ratio in boards of directors, supervisory boards and senior management. Large companies are obliged to draw up a plan for achieving these targets. On an annual basis, these companies have to report on the state-of-play and the progress made, on a comply-or-explain basis.

31 October 2023 marked the first deadline for companies subject to the new Act to report on target figures and f/m ratios in their top/sub-top, in the online Diversity Portal developed by the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (*Sociaal Economische Raad*, SER) for this purpose. On 29 January 2024, SER published an overview report of progress made, which showed that the percentage of women on supervisory boards has risen, partly due to the

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<sup>26</sup> Alliantie Politica & Runderkamp, Z. (2023) Barriers for women to become, to be and to stay politically. Via [1710851453.pdf \(wo-men.nl\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> Sociaal-Economische Raad (2024). SER Scorecard 2024: Monitor genderbalans in het Nederlandse bedrijfsleven. *The Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands. SER Scorecard 2024: Monitor gender balance in Dutch business sector.* Via <https://www.ser.nl/-/media/ser/downloads/thema/diversiteitsportaal/ser-scorecard-2024-genderbalans-bedrijfsleven.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Lückérath-Rovers, M. (2023). De Nederlandse Female Board Index 2023. *The Dutch Female Board Index 2023.* TIAS School for Business and Society. Via <https://www.tias.edu/docs/default-source/kennisartikelen/femaleboardindex2023.pdf>

introduction of the inclusion quota for listed companies. After several years of growth, the proportion of female supervisory board members appears to be stabilising; it went from 38% to 39%, exceeding the desired minimum of 33%. However, for the second year in a row the percentage of female directors also remains almost the same (15%), and this is still far from a balanced f/m distribution. Progress in the percentage of women on boards of directors is thus rising slightly yet lags behind. Sectoral differences do vary widely, according to the Monitor's Scorecard. New for companies is that they have to report on the sub-top and plan of action. About four in 10 companies (38%) had a formal plan of action for achieving their stated ambitions, even though reporting is mandatory for all of them. The sub-top comprised an average of 26.3% women by the end of 2022. Despite remaining challenges, this measure exemplifies that (temporary) special measures work to correct past and current forms of discrimination against women.

#### *Public/semi-public sector*

In addition to the measures for the private sector, the government has committed to measures in the public/semi-public sector. Within ministries and their implementing organisations, each organisation will aim to reach 45-55% women in the top/sub-top within five years. New appointments will be reviewed to see whether they contribute to this target. In addition, the aim will be to appoint 50% women to independent administrative bodies and advisory boards.

For the entire public/semi-public sector there will be a legal obligation to formulate a target figure for the top/sub-top, as well as a plan for realising the target figures. The government calls on organisations to also work towards 50% women in these positions. The law, yet to be developed, will maintain a minimum of one-third, which is equal to the quota in the corporate sector.

The legal target will be evaluated after three and after five years. Should this show insufficient progress in terms of a proportional male-female distribution, it may be decided to introduce a statutory quota for the public/semi-public sector.

- 3) The government has also taken specific measures to increase the number of women in leadership roles in the public and semi-public sectors. In the monitor 'Gender diversity at the top of the public/semi-public sector', the Netherlands shows the average percentage of women at the top of the ministries of the central government: in 2023 this was 44%, an increase of two percentage points over 2022. The dashboard, which can be found at [www.genderdiversiteitindeoverheid.nl](http://www.genderdiversiteitindeoverheid.nl), is updated on a yearly basis with the latest figures for the entire public/semi-public sector. Two meetings have been organised to exchange good examples and to promote organisational support in improving gender diversity at the top/sub-top of their sector. Two meetings, involving representatives from government, civil society, academia and the semi public and public sectors themselves

### **23) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- 1) The study 'Better is not yet good', published in early 2022, showed that there is still widespread and structural gender inequality in the Dutch film and television sector. An alliance consisting of *Vrouwen in Beeld* (Women in the Picture), Point of View, Dutch Academy For Film (DAFF) and the Netherlands Film Festival (NFF) will conduct five follow-up studies in collaboration with the University of Utrecht on this topic.
- 2) In 2023, the study 'You cannot be what you cannot see' was conducted by DSP group in collaboration with Utrecht University. The study looked at diversity and inclusion in the film and audiovisual sector. This research shows that filmmakers of colour have a less strong position in the sector than their white counterparts. In addition, female characters of colour and stories from their perspective are virtually absent. The State Secretary for Culture and Media intends to continue to periodically monitor developments in this area.

**24) Please describe your country's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that your country taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it.**

*In the narrative report, please provide a summary of the evolution of your country's national machinery for gender equality, its mandate, location within government, current budget (in local currency and as a proportion of total government spending). Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Minister of Education, Culture and Science (also responsible for gender equality and LGBTIQ+ equality) has an important role in establishing the overall framework for gender equality policy and embedding it within the various ministries and societal organisations. When necessary or appropriate, the minister makes agreements with the responsible ministries in order to achieve specific gender equality objectives. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science has overall responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and assessing progress in all aspects of gender equality in the Netherlands. Interdepartmental coordination guarantees that the entire political leadership and all senior civil servants are involved in producing the international and national reports on gender issues.

Aruba

Aruba has a Bureau of Women's Affairs in charge of promoting gender equality on the island which acts as a lead agency in implementing key actions within the National Gender Policy Action Plan.

The national strategy and action plan for gender equality in Aruba is the National Gender Policy, commissioned by the Prime Minister of Aruba, Evelyn Wever-Croes, and published in May of 2022.

On March 8, 2020, International Women's Day, the Prime Minister of Aruba and the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor installed a steering committee for the development of a national gender policy, which resides under the two Ministers. The steering committee is composed of representatives from the government, NGOs, academia and the private sector, and guides the process of jointly developing, together with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean (UN Women MCO-Caribbean), the development of a National Gender Policy.

National Gender Policy is understood as critical and central to further inclusive and human centred development, and the achievement of Aruba's sustainable development in furthering the governments' commitment to boost gains towards gender equality on the island.

**25) In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has your country used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive,**

Legislature or Judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women's organizations)

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

- a) On 18 May 2018, the Minister of Foreign Affairs – then coordinating minister for the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs – undertook making the impact of new proposals for policy and legislation on the achievement of the SDGs a visible part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment, RIA (*Integraal Afwegings Kader, IAK*) for new policy and legislation.<sup>29</sup> This included adding a quality requirement on the impact on gender equality ('gender assessment') to the RIA on 24 January 2019. In 2023, the RIA was replaced with the Policy Compass (*Beleidskompas*), a renewed policymaking tool for government officials that has integrated the quality requirement on the impact on gender equality. It requires policymakers to assess whether policies will have intended or unintended different impacts on men and women due to existing social inequalities. It is a way of encouraging gender mainstreaming within the policy cycle. Currently, Movisie is conducting research on how to improve implementation of the 'gender assessment.'
- b) A study on conducive and impeding factors for including gender impacts throughout the central government policy cycle is also currently being undertaken, the results of which are expected in the second half of 2024. This research by Movisie will provide recommendations on how to gender mainstream more effectively within central government.

## **26) If there is a national human rights institution in your country, what measures has it taken to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. In doing so, countries are encouraged to report on the institution's role in promoting women's rights in national legislation and policies. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (*College voor de Rechten van de Mens*) protects, advances and monitors human rights in the Netherlands. It does so through independent research and by providing advice and information. The Institute is empowered to investigate and rule on individual cases of alleged discrimination. It produces an annual report outlining the status of human rights in our country. The institute also reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).

Each year, the Institute receives and responds to hundreds of complaints, enquiries and 'requests for a ruling' related to discrimination on the grounds of sex. The Institute has paid explicit attention to violations of women's rights and gender equality through its multi-year programme on gender equality (2020-2024). The programme focused on women's participation in employment, gender-

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<sup>29</sup> For more information on the Regulatory Impact Assessment, please see the answer to question 6a.

based violence against women, and sexual harassment in the workplace.

#### *Women's participation in employment*

The Institute pays regular attention to women's participation in employment, particularly their representation in leadership roles in lower and middle management. It also addresses broader causes that hinder the achievement of women's participation in employment by addressing the government (about new policies and legislation) as well as businesses and organisations. The Institute has published letters to Parliament, for instance about a bill on equal pay in 2020, and has been in contact with different ministries, e.g. about the EU Pay Transparency Directive and the social dialogue initiated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SamenSprak) about gender equality at work.

The Institute has also developed and published various tools. The Institute created a [tipsheet with advice on how organisations can promote the advancement of women into lower and middle management](#), a [factsheet on preferential policies for women](#) and a [guide 'pregnant and working'](#) that is aimed towards employers and employees, explaining the common pitfalls where employers run the risk of being guilty of pregnancy discrimination, as well as prevention tips. It promotes these tools through multiple channels, such as presentations for industry networks and podcasts.

#### *Gender-based violence against women*

The Institute regularly publishes reports on gender-based violence against women, reflecting on the measures taken by the government to prevent and combat this type of violence and responding to the information contained in the government's own reports. It also frequently writes letters to Parliament setting out the government's human rights obligations in relation to gender-based violence against women. In March 2023, the Institute reported on the follow-up/implementation of the recommendations (2020) made by GREVIO, an independent forum that monitors compliance with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence 2011 – better known as the Istanbul Convention. The Institute's report on the follow-up/implementation confirms that the government seems to have taken the GREVIO recommendations seriously, particularly with regard to the need to develop gender-sensitive policies, but that a lot remains to be done/improved. In 2024, the Institute will submit another report to GREVIO for the second reporting cycle on the Istanbul Convention.

#### *Sexual harassment*

The Institute regularly publishes about sexual harassment at work. This consists of the findings of its own research as well as reflections on the measures taken by the government to prevent and combat sexual harassment.

The Institute conducted and published two recent studies on this topic. In the first study it explored to what extent people currently report incidents of sexual harassment at work. For victims, sexual harassment is often a drastic event with many consequences for their work and well-being. The study showed that sexual harassment in the workplace is a widespread problem. In the past 10 years, 16% of Dutch employees have experienced it. Women are affected twice as often as men.

The second study aimed at understanding how to prevent sexual harassment, focusing on bringing about cultural change inside organisations and what measures employers can take. Several steps are necessary to start to change an organisation's culture towards a work environment that both actively prevents incidents from happening and follows up on sensible reports. Key steps an organisation can take towards a culture change are: first, create a climate for change. Next, it is important that the issue becomes alive throughout the organisation. The whole organisation must

be involved and there must be support for the intended interventions or changes. Once these first two steps have been taken, the focus can shift to securing the new work culture.

The Institute has also published several letters to Parliament that reflect on measures taken by the government to better combat sexual harassment. For instance, in 2023 the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment presented a new regulation that obliges organisations with more than 10 employees to have a confidential advisor. The Institute endorses the importance of this regulation. Every employee, if faced with undesirable behaviour, should have access to a confidential advisor. The regulation did add that employees working for organisations with fewer than 10 employees should also have access to a counsellor.

## E. Peaceful and inclusive societies

### **Critical areas of concern:**

E. Women and armed conflict

I. Human rights of women

L. The girl child

### **27) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information, including specific actions related to National Action Planning on 1325 and the WPS Humanitarian Action Compact. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

The fourth Dutch WPS National Action Plan 1325 was launched in 2021 with five strategic outcomes in accordance with the pillars of the UN WPS agenda: participation; prevention; protection; relief, reconstruction & recovery; and WPS mainstreaming. Based on evaluations of NAP 1325-II and III, the fourth National Action Plan has both an international and a national focus on the WPS agenda and is provided with a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning framework. New to the NAP 1325 community is the focus on WPS mainstreaming in all relevant sectors and the national WPS agenda, i.e. the better protection and meaningful engagement of women and girls from conflict contexts in The Netherlands. A dedicated Oversight Board (comprised of government and civil society representatives) was established to oversee the implementation progress, as well as the reporting process to the Dutch Parliament. For the very first time government submitted an NAP 1325 progress report to parliament in November 2022.<sup>30</sup> It is acknowledged that this was a good first step in terms of accountability. The government has committed to bi-annual reporting as annual reporting was not deemed feasible

The Netherlands' efforts to contribute to the implementation of the NAP-IV include gender mainstreaming, gender diplomacy and WPS-earmarked government financing as part of the Dutch

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<sup>30</sup> NAP 1325 progress report, see here: <https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/ronl-02416efde41c02cfb0333c2a1e21645a661c87b7/pdf>



SDG5 Fund. An amount of EUR 35 million is reserved for the implementation of specific WPS programs in 9 different countries in the period 2021-2025. These strategic partnerships focus on enhancing protection of women and girls in conflict and post conflict environments, decreasing harmful gender norms, and creating equal leverage in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, relief and recovery. Important crosscutting elements are southern leadership, inclusion and intersectionality, engaging men and boys, engaging (religious) leaders, and digitalization.

Seven new WPS [partnership](#) programmes started in 2021 for a period of five years (total €35 million). These programmes, spread across nine countries, focus on women's participation in peace processes and in political decision-making. The programmes are implemented in a partnership of several Northern and Southern organisations. An example is the partnership with Cordaid and others in Colombia, with its focus on a *'peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable Colombia. A lasting peace process in Colombia based on gender justice in which women and girls have equal rights and opportunities as men and boys.'* In doing so, they focus on three sub-goals: *S1: Local and departmental governments implement the gender measures established in the Peace Agreement.*

*S2: Women and their organisations actively participate and influence decision-makers to apply existing policies and mechanisms for the prevention, protection and punishment of GBV in the territories.*

*S3: Women are recognised in their communities and departments as key political actors for the sustainable and equitable development of their territories.*

In the context of UN peacekeeping missions, the Netherlands has actively worked to bring WPS to the forefront of UN policy (negotiations of the C34 - the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations). Efforts focused broadly on effective [implementation](#) of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, increasing participation of uniformed women in peacekeeping missions, achieving the targets set in the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy, integrating a gender perspective into planning and analysis within missions, gender-sensitive reporting, and an improved position of gender advisors.

In addition, funding continued for the Spanish-Dutch 'Gender in operations course' for a period of five years. This is a gender training course to promote gender perspective in the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and international missions and operations, conducted four times a year by the Ministry of Defence in cooperation with Spain. In collaboration with the US, Ghana and Zambia, the Netherlands launched a pilot project on women's body armour at the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial in Accra, Ghana in December 2023. This project, funded by the US and the Netherlands, aims to address inadequate personal protective equipment for women peacekeepers.

**28) [In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?](#)**

*In the [narrative report](#), please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

## Actions

Call upon other countries to implement the Treaty of Istanbul. The government also continues to call on other countries to sign and implement the Agreement of the Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence and domestic violence against women.

Seven programmes began operations in 2021 in nine nations (total €35 million): Burundi, Colombia, the DRC, Iraq, Myanmar, the Palestinian Territories, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen. The programmes focus on promoting participation by women, in all their diversity, in peace and decision-making processes and conflict resolution. Another key focus is protecting women and girls and combating gender-based violence in conflict situations.

Activities focus on capacity-building for local organisations, including women's rights organisations, influencing policy on legislation and other matters, and debating harmful gender norms in order to bring about change. The programme attempts to involve men and boys, as well as traditional actors such as local and religious leaders. Authorities and institutions are offered training on gender and on the importance of access to justice and other services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

The programmes seek to achieve equal collaboration between all partners. All the organisations involved have a say in the programme's design, planning and day-to-day management.

One of the programme's is Leaders of Peace in South Sudan ([\*Strijden tegen gendergerelateerd geweld in Zuid-Soedan - PAX \(paxvoorvrede.nl\)\*](#)). In this programme, Plan International Nederland, PAX, HealthNet TPO, the South Sudanese NGOs AMA and EVE, and other local partners are working on a more inclusive peace process, protection of women and girls and changed attitudes and beliefs of civil society (CS) to facilitate inclusion of women and girls and promote gender equality (GE). Female leaders are role models who work for women, peace and security in South Sudan, supporting local organisations by influencing policy and offering leadership training. They also use their knowledge to increase access to justice and other services such as psychosocial support for survivors of gender-based violence. In 2021-2022 the partners trained 60 volunteers in basic psychosocial skills, and 358 individuals received gender-sensitive counselling. They also disseminated knowledge of gender and women's rights, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and human rights to over 20,000 people, plus trained 40 local organisations.

Its backing of €20 million to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) makes the Netherlands one of the top donors out of a total of 38 countries that contributed undesignated to this fund. The PBF funds proposals for peacebuilding activities jointly submitted by UN agencies, aiming to implement and sustain peace agreements and dialogue, among other things. In 2021, the PBF approved proposals in 31 countries, totalling US\$ 195,067,769. Within the UN, the PBF is considered a leader in gender-sensitive peacebuilding, and one of the fund's three priorities concerns inclusion of women and youth. 47% of the fund was spent on gender-responsive initiatives. Through the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI), NGOs could also submit proposals on themes related to women and youth via an annual call for proposals. Thanks to Dutch policy advocacy, the sub-topic 'Promotion and strengthening of mental health and psychosocial well-being for women and youth as part of local peacebuilding processes' was chosen in the GYPI call for proposals in 2021. This led to 11 projects totalling US\$ 15.6 million in this area.

From 2021 to 2022, the Netherlands was a member of the Peacebuilding Committee. As part of inclusiveness, the Netherlands has also consistently put forward the 'Women Peace and Security' agenda, and promoted participation of women (organisations) in discussions in the PBC.



The Netherlands funded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and the Peace Track Initiative (PTI) to influence the peace process in Yemen, also through the development of a Feminist Roadmap to Peace and the organisation of the Yemen Feminist Peace Convening (see link to Results OS 2021).<sup>31</sup>

**29) In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

In March 2023 the European Union (EU) imposed sanctions under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against persons and entities guilty of sexual violence and large-scale violations of women's rights. This marked the EU's stance in support of global victims of sexual violence, as it adopted a thematic sanctions package on violence against women (VAW), including conflict related sexual violence (CRSV), with the Netherlands among the initiating Member States. On 24 April 2023 the EU, at the initiative of the Netherlands and other Member States, adopted additional sanctions against those responsible for the massacre of civilians, including women and children in Tadamon, a suburb of Damascus in Syria. Subsequently, another VAW package was adopted by the EU in July 2023, again in part attributable to Dutch initiative. The thematic focus was chosen because VAW (in fragile and WPS relevant settings) is a flagrant violation of human rights affecting mostly women and girls but also the society at large.

From 26 to 28 March 2024 the government of the Netherlands, together with the office of UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (UNSRSG) Patten, organised the first 'International Conference of Prosecutors on Accountability for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence'. A total of 53 prosecutors from over 30 countries, were present to exchange experiences and best practices on the prosecution of perpetrators of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) to improve the rate of investigation, prosecutions and adjudication of CRSV cases.

As lead nation on point 7 of President Zelensky's Peace Formula, Restoring Justice for Ukraine, and also in the light of its feminist foreign policy, the Netherlands pays special attention to including the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda into the various accountability tracks:

- In 2023, the Netherlands initiated a project that supports the Ukrainian justice sector in the domestic investigation and prosecution of international crimes through a project targeted specifically to the international criminal justice chain with 9 million euros. A part of this project has a strong focus on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in Ukraine, and takes a survivor-centred and trauma-informed approach. The project aims to improve legal representation of CRSV survivors in the courts and provide knowledge and practical skills to effectively prosecute CRSV among the Office of the Prosecutor General and other relevant actors.
- Since the registration of non-material damage, including suffering as a result of conflict related

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.nlontwikkelingssamenwerking.nl/en/#/results/themes/womens-right-and-gender-equality/equality-peace>

sexual violence, has become part of the work of the Register of Damage for Ukraine, which is now operational, the Netherlands will continue to pay special attention to ensuring that a future fully-fledged compensation mechanism will also include damage suffered by conflict related sexual violence.

- Paragraph 6 of the Political Declaration of the Ministerial Conference Restoring Justice for Ukraine, the outcome document of this Conference held in The Hague on 2 April 2024 and co-organised by the Netherlands, includes a strong condemnation of all forms of conflict-related sexual violence and gender-based crimes and thereby specifically links these crimes to the working area of the organs and organisations mentioned in the declaration, including the Ukrainian justice system, the International Criminal Court, the Register of Damage for Ukraine and many others.

The Ljubljana-The Hague Convention (LHC) was adopted by consensus by 68 states at a Diplomatic Conference in Ljubljana on 26 May 2023. The adoption of the Convention is a milestone in the fight against impunity, aimed at improving national investigation and prosecution of the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other international crimes by facilitating cooperation among states. The LHC was signed by the first states at a signing ceremony on 14 February 2024 in The Hague and all states can become parties to the Convention.

### **30) In the last five years, what actions has your country taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

#### Actions

##### 1) Investigate the role of gender in child abuse.

The government has examined how the data in the 'Impact Monitor on Domestic Violence and child abuse' can provide a better picture of the role of gender when it comes to child abuse. To this end, data was added to provide more insight into gender-related violence, such as data about the relationship to the perpetrator, gender of the perpetrator to gender of victim, number of different forms of violence, and the problems to which the violence has led.

## **F. Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation**

### **Critical areas of concern:**

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

### **31) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific*

groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy is in the lead of the Dutch climate targets, which are set out in the national Climate Act. Three policy instruments are included: the five-yearly Climate Plan, the biannual Progress Report and the annual Climate Memorandum. In this Climate Memorandum, the government accounts for its climate policy and describes progress over the past year. It uses preliminary estimates from the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency on the progress of climate policy. Climate policy in the Netherlands focuses on mitigation (reducing the extent of climate change), adaptation (adapting to negative impacts of climate change) and climate damage (repairing and compensating for climate damage). Bearing in mind that the impacts of climate change and climate change policies on citizens is a potential exacerbator of existing inequalities (including gender inequalities), in recent years the Dutch Government has taken measures to integrate climate justice into its policies on climate adaptation, mitigation and damage. Instrumental in prompting these steps has been the report by the Netherlands Council for Government Policy (*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*, WRR) on climate justice and the distribution of climate costs.<sup>32</sup> Additional research into gendered impacts has prompted and is foreseen to prompt further steps to improve the gender responsiveness of climate policies.

The paragraphs below set out the practical and research steps taken. It is important to note that other measures have been taken to enhance gender equality in education (and choices for career paths) and the labour market which are also meant to have a positive effect on the gender responsiveness of climate policy. See the answer to question 13 for more information on measures taken to remedy gender segregation in education and in the labour market. See the answer to question 22 for more information on measures taken to achieve a more balanced female/male ratio in top positions in the private and semi-public sectors.

- 1) In 2022, in the run-up to the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) – which focused on the priority theme of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change and environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes – the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science commissioned a preliminary study on the gendered impacts of climate change and climate policy in the Netherlands,<sup>33</sup> which was conducted by Atria (Institute for Gender Equality and Women’s History<sup>34</sup>) and 75inQ (Centre of Expertise for an Inclusive Energy Transition<sup>35</sup>). The main conclusion of this report is that international and European conventions and policy agendas provide starting points for integrating gender equality and addressing climate change, but that more gender-disaggregated and intersectional data are necessary for their full and effective implementation.
  
- 2) In 2023, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science launched the Programme Climate and Energy<sup>36</sup> with climate justice and gender equality as two of its overarching pillars, underpinned by an intersectional approach. In the aftermath of CSW66 the Ministry developed a starting

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<sup>32</sup> C.C.J.H. Bijleveld et al. (2023), *Rechtvaardigheid in klimaatbeleid: over de verdeling van klimaatkosten*, Den Haag: WRR, available [here](#).

<sup>33</sup> M. Feenstra et al (2022), *Klimaatverandering en gender: aanbevelingen, beleidsanalyse, lexicon – Verkennende studie naar de effecten van klimaatverandering en -adaptatie op gendergelijkheid in Nederland en Europa*, Amsterdam/The Hague, available [here](#).

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.atria.nl>

<sup>35</sup> [Instituut 75inQ • 75inQ](http://www.75inq.nl)

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-onderwijs-cultuur-en-wetenschap/documenten/rapporten/2023/10/13/uitvoeringsagenda-klimaat-energie>

analysis exploring the status on the connection between climate change, climate policy and gender equality in the Netherlands; knowledge gaps, opportunities and risks; and the potential role of women and girls as agents of change. In the process it consulted a wide range of civil society partners as well as youth representatives. Knowledge gaps remain, especially regarding exact numbers on the way women and girls are disproportionately hit by climate change and policies, for example in the form of energy or water poverty, or limitations in their ability to adapt (in relation to their living conditions, e.g. housing sustainability). In order to fill in the identified knowledge gaps, and taking into account the recommendations by the researchers of Atria and 75inQ, the Ministry requested additional gender-disaggregated intersectional data from Statistics Netherlands, with a view to improving the implementation of measures aimed at achieving the climate justice goals as set out in a letter to Parliament by the Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy in April 2023.<sup>37</sup> The Central Planning Bureau (*Centraal Plan Bureau*, CPB) has been commissioned to conduct additional intersectional analyses on the impact of individual climate measures on household burden developments (categorisation starting by household composition and disaggregated by sex, educational level and migration background). In this way, any increase or decrease in gender/other inequality can be monitored more effectively.

- 3) On 21 and 22 February 2024, the Netherlands – in cooperation with the European Commission and Slovenia – hosted the ‘Mutual Learning Programme: Synergies between Gender Equality and Climate Action’ in The Hague, bringing together a wide range of government officials from various EU member states, EU officials, and representatives from academia and civil society to reflect on the intersection of gender and climate issues, and to share knowledge, experiences and best practices.

### **32) In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, target population, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

On 11 March 2024, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science put out a tender for a study on the intersections between gender and climate, with a focus on the least future-proof areas within the Netherlands and Bonaire. These constitute the most at-risk areas in terms of climate damage, as identified by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (in cooperation with other parties), in the Climate Impact Atlas (*Klimaat-effectatlas*).<sup>38</sup> The decision to put out the tender was prompted by the aforementioned report of the Netherlands Council for Government Policy (*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid*, WRR) on climate justice and the distribution of climate costs,<sup>39</sup> and the government’s appraisal thereof, which acknowledges the need to prevent leaving behind citizens with low and middle incomes in the least future-proof housing. The aim of the study will be twofold, providing insight into:

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<sup>37</sup> Rob Jetten, Minister of Climate and Energy Policy, Voorjaarsbesluitvorming Klimaat, available [here](#).

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.klimaat-effectatlas.nl/en>

<sup>39</sup> C.C.J.H. Bijleveld et al. (2023), *Rechtvaardigheid in klimaatbeleid: over de verdeling van klimaatkosten*, Den Haag: WRR, available [here](#).

1. data on the residents of the least future-proof housing in the Netherlands and Bonaire, disaggregated by gender, age, migration background, type of housing (social rent, rental or owning) and level of income (low and middle, including actual/risk of poverty), and intersections between these.
2. possible interventions, e.g. using good examples, to prevent gender inequality in these areas and promote gender equality instead (within climate adaptation).

The study, with a maximum budget of €100,000, is to be conducted within twelve months after awarding of the contract.

## IV. Section Four

### National institutions and processes

**33) Please describe your country's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.**

*In the narrative report, please provide a summary of goals, targets, and priority actions, including target population, budget, status of implementation, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

At the commencement of each new government period, the Minister of Gender and LGBTIQ+ Equality produces a 'vision document' on emancipation policy which is submitted to Parliament. The *Emancipatienota 2022-2025* sets out the current outgoing government's equality policy in detail, whereby the links between the various topics and the relevant SDGs are made explicit. In the last *Emancipatienota* (2022-2025) the Dutch government divided its policies on gender equality into five main themes: employment, safety, education, care and equal treatment and legislation. Where possible, links are made between gender and LGBTIQ+ equality and marginalised groups.

**34) Please describe your country's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.**

*In the narrative report, where possible, please provide disaggregated information and data on resources allocated to specific critical areas of the BPfA as well as reflections on achievements and challenges encountered in making budgets gender responsive. (2 pages max.)*

The Netherlands does not yet systematically use gender-responsive budgeting. In 2022 the Dutch government committed to make gender budgeting the starting point for funding decisions in foreign policy and to make gender analysis a standard part of decision-making around potential programme and grant spending based on the OECD gender marker.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Kamerbrief Feministisch Buitenlandbeleid (2022). *Parliamentary letter Feminist Foreign Policy*. Via [Feministisch-Buitenlandbeleid \(overheid.nl\)](https://www.feministisch-buitenlandbeleid.nl)

Below is an overview of the national budget for equality policy (women and LGBTIQ+) over the last five years. For reference, the total amount of expenditures budgeted for 2024 was 433.6 billion euros.

2020: €15,167,000  
2021: €14,147,000  
2022: €14,541,000  
2023: €20,241,000  
2024: €20,965,000  
2025: €21,859,000

The ODA budget for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women's rights and gender equality over 2022, 2023 and 2024 (pursuant to Article 3.2 of the International Trade and Development Cooperation Programme) is €148,951.

### **35) What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

*In the narrative report, please describe participatory processes and mechanisms, including their impact on the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda. Please also describe any mechanisms that are in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups (listed under question 3 above) can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes. (1 page max.)*

The equality policy also contributes to the realisation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In SDG 5, for example, the pursuit of gender equality is an inseparable part of the realisation of the SDGs. But this government's equality policy also contributes to the realisation of other SDGs, such as SDG 3 (health and well-being), SDG 4 (accessible and good education), SDG 10 (less inequality), SDG 11 (sustainable cities), SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (international cooperation).

As mentioned in question 2, at the commencement of each new government period the Minister of Gender and LGBTIQ+ Equality produces a 'vision document' on equality policy which is submitted to Parliament (*Emancipatienota*).

A wide range of civil society organisations in the fields of gender equality and LGBTIQ+ equality were involved in the preparation of this *Emancipatienota*. Three meetings were organised (two of which were online), where the question was asked: 'What do you think should not be missing from the *Emancipatienota*?' More than 30 organisations participated, ranging from large knowledge institutes to a local women's organisation.

The results of the sessions with civil society organisations are in line with current policies, but also resulted in points of criticism. Moreover, the civil society organisations had the overall wish for things to go faster. The participants mentioned numerous major and minor bottlenecks they encounter in practice. The emphasis was often on marginalised groups, who are extra vulnerable. Some themes recurred: the role of education, the importance of a good position on the labour market, and safety.

Two red lines could be discovered in the input:

1. It was widely shared that gender and LGBTIQ+ equality policy should be more intersectional – for example by focusing on the specific position of people with little education or people with a migration background.



2. It was also frequently mentioned that the effects on gender and LGBTIQ+ equality should be taken into account in almost all regular policy areas.

The government is adamant in actively and meaningfully involving civil society partners in other processes as well. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has therefore concluded the alliance with WO=MEN, Atria, Institute for Gender Equality and Women's History and Network CEDAW (*Netwerk VN Vrouwenverdrag*), in which it funds these organisations to coordinate Dutch (and, where relevant, international) civil society organisations to deliver their input in international gender equality processes. This entails the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the related reports on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the UPR cycle for CEDAW (including the writing of a shadow report). Additionally, WO=MEN has been appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the coordinating civil society partner for the implementation of SDG 5 on achieving gender equality internally and externally.

**36) Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.**

*In answering this question as part of the narrative report, countries are encouraged to describe participatory process and to reflect on the contributions that different stakeholders have made to the national report. (1 page max.)*

Civil society was given the opportunity to provide written input on the draft report. This was coordinated by WO=MEN, Dutch Gender Platform.

Civil society organisations were also involved in preparing the *Emancipatienota*, in 2022 through two consultation meetings organised by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Because of recent elections, the Netherlands is awaiting the priorities of the new cabinet for the upcoming years. Once we receive more clarity on the composition and objectives of the new cabinet, civil society organisations will be involved in developing a new Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy Plan (*Emancipatienota*).

**37) Please describe your country's action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.**

*In answering this question as part of the narrative report, please indicate the year of your last review under CEDAW or the UPR and outline any follow-up actions your country has taken to implement the resulting recommendations. (1 page max.)*

In July 2022, the seventh periodic report of the Netherlands was submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The [full report](#) describes actions taken concerning the List of Issues as presented by the Committee, based on prior Concluding Observations and Recommendations. The Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy Plan 2022-2025 (*Emancipatienota 2022-2025*) contains an overview of policy measures foreseen for that period. Implementation of the relevant SDGs and international treaties, such as CEDAW, is an overarching goal. Measures fall into the following categories: work, safety, education, care, and equal treatment and legislation, with coherence of government policy and intersectionality as overarching principles applying to all categories. The full Policy Plan can be accessed [here](#) (in Dutch only). A mid-term review was published in December 2023. This progress report ([Voortgangsrapportage Emancipatie 2022-2023](#)) gives an



overview of the progress made in those years. Given the caretaker status of the current government, it must be noted that further implementation of international treaties will be a matter for the incoming government, which is still to be formed. When we draw up a new Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy Plan, recommendations from international conventions will also be taken into account.

## V. Section Five

### Data and statistics

#### **38) What are the most important areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?**

*In the narrative report, please provide details of up to three concrete examples of measures taken, including aims and scope of measures, budget, impact evaluations, lesson learnt, and links to further information. Please also provide information about actions for specific groups, such as those listed in question 3. Where relevant and possible, please provide data to support your responses. (2 pages max.)*

Over the past five years more gender statistics have become available, primarily due to various new routine surveys that started in that period: the Prevalence Monitor for Domestic Violence and Sexually Transgressive Behaviour, the Monitor for Sexually Transgressive Behaviour, and a monitor for gender representation in Dutch non-fiction television programmes.

Furthermore, the former Companies Monitor Women at the Top (*Bedrijvenmonitor Topvrouwen*) has been further developed into two online dashboards that report on gender representation in management positions in the public/semi-public and private sectors. The answer to question 41 provides more detailed information on these and other routine surveys.

The availability of ‘policy indicators’ has been improved. Policy indicators are the key indicators used to assess the effectiveness of the policy cycle and yearly budget cycle. These indicators are based on existing data from reports and underlying datasets. A new, more extensive set of policy indicators on gender and LGBTIQ+ equality became available on the data portal [OCW in Cijfers](#) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 2023.

#### Aruba

The statistics available from the Central Bureau of Statistics is mostly on labour and advancements in the labour force compared to the last gender statistics which were published in 2019. The updated gender statistics includes labour force participation, people employed who are own-account workers by sex, employment, and contribution to family by sex, adult population who are entrepreneurs by sex, employment population by sector by sex, informal employment in non-agriculture sector by sex, unemployment rate, proportion of women in managerial positions. The Department of Social Affairs is responsible for tracking unemployment and how this translates into welfare dependent citizens by gender.

#### **39) Over the next five years, what are your country’s priorities for strengthening national gender statistics?**

*In the narrative report, please provide a brief explanation and examples of your plans (2 pages max.).*

A priority for strengthening national gender statistics is the availability of more intersectional data. Various routine surveys already include intersections for some data, such as that between gender and level of education, age, or ethnicity (often defined as 'migration background'). Although work remains to be done in order to fully report on these data. Additionally, the major routine survey on LGBTIQ+ persons also provides data disaggregated by gender. For the upcoming 2024 editions of two major routine surveys, the Emancipation Monitor and the LGBTIQ+ Monitor, the aim is to also include specific data on women with disabilities.

Another priority is broadening the definition of gender in the available data. Many routine surveys include data disaggregated by sex, based on people's legally registered sex. This means that transgender women and men, non-binary people and intersex people are often invisible in the existing data. In the upcoming 2024 edition of the LGBTIQ+ Monitor, the aim is to include self-identification for respondents that will allow for a disaggregation of cisgender, transgender, non-binary and intersex people. Statistics Netherlands (CBS) has already conducted a recent pilot with such self-identification questions in their 2023 Safety Monitor.

#### Priorities Aruba

1. Strengthening collection, analysis and use of data and gender statistics by mobilising communities and community organisations, academia, research organisations, media and Government agencies and departments to build their capacity to engage in research, the collection and analysis of sex disaggregated and gender statistics, and to empower them to lead advocacy around this gender equality including high level and policy advocacy. Key actions to achieve this are
  - a. Conduct training with government departments and agencies, community organisations, and media houses on how to collect, analyse and utilise gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data;
  - b. Coordinate and support the development of tools to monitor and encourage women's participation in public and private sector decision-making positions and equal representation at all hierarchical levels.;
  - c. Collaborate with educational/academic institutions, research organisations in order to share and execute pioneering research and statistical models and instruments to enhance the knowledge of, and ability to use, data among Government, policymakers, researchers, journalists, civil society and academia;
  - d. Conduct an assessment, including recommendations, of the social insurance and social protection frameworks to ensure that those who are most marginalised, including the elderly, people with disabilities and those in the informal economy, are able, and incentivised, to be sufficiently covered.
  - e. Develop thematic/sectoral knowledge products and summary reports highlighting key gendered trends.
2. Increase accessibility of data and gender statistics through partnerships with media and the private sector
  - a. Publish and advertise data and thematic reports on traditional and social media to encourage uptake in the private sector, civil society and schools for advocacy, knowledge building and informed decision-making.

#### **40) What gender-specific indicators<sup>41</sup> has your country prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

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<sup>41</sup> The term 'gender-specific indicators' is used to refer to indicators that explicitly call for disaggregation by sex and/or refer to gender equality as the underlying objective. For example, SDG indicator 5.c.1 captures

*In the narrative report, please also explain any challenges for collecting and compiling data on these indicators.*

The progress on the SDGs is monitored in the Monitor of Well-being and SDGs (*Monitor Brede Welvaart en SDG's*) and the Monitor of Well-being and SDGs Caribbean Netherlands (*Monitor Brede Welvaart en SDG's Caribisch Nederland*) by Statistics Netherlands (CBS). For specific indicators, please refer to the reports by [Statistics Netherlands](#) (CBS).

### Aruba

A priority has been to strengthen social protection and social insurance systems to be gender-responsive, inclusive and redistribute the unpaid care burden by collecting data on the unpaid care burden in Aruba. However, the office of gender affairs oversees conducting training with Statistics Netherlands (CBS) to recognise and measure time spent on unpaid care (SDG 5.4.1) through labour force surveys and censuses.

### **41) Which data disaggregations<sup>42</sup> are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?**

*In the narrative report, please describe progress in data disaggregation over the past years, explain why certain disaggregations may have been prioritized and what barriers, if any, stand in the way of more comprehensive, routine disaggregations of data from major surveys in your country.*

Major surveys in the Netherlands regularly include disaggregations by sex (often legal sex, sometimes gender), ethnicity (defined as 'migration background'), income, age and education. There are various specific routine surveys that include other disaggregations or allow for such disaggregations after further analyses.

Data disaggregated by sex (or gender) is included in various routine surveys in the Netherlands, in which the challenge remains to strike a balance between maintaining a representativeness of the data for the entire population and meaningfully including marginalised groups. The major routine survey containing the most extensive set of sex-disaggregated data is the Emancipation Monitor (*Emancipatiemonitor*):

- The Emancipation Monitor has been published every two years since 2000 by Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and includes data disaggregated by sex and, in some cases, also by ethnicity, education or age. The data is taken from various underlying routine surveys, such as the Safety Monitor (*Veiligheidsmonitor*) by Statistics Netherlands. Topics of the Emancipation Monitor include household situation, health (well-being and life expectancy), education (level and field of education, progress from education to work), labour (labour participation, working hours, paid work/care division, horizontal and vertical inequalities, attitudes on the importance of work), income (gender wage gap, economic and financial independence) and violence (violence against women, domestic violence, sexual/other intimidation and bullying at work, cyberbullying, femicide, perception of safety, attitudes on violence/sexual violence).

Other major surveys containing disaggregated data on sex (or gender) are:

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the percentage of countries with systems to track public allocations that are directed towards policies and programmes that promote gender equality – which is the underlying objective. The term is also used for indicators where women and girls are specified within the indicator as the targeted population (see UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York).

<sup>42</sup> As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education, marital status, religion and sexual orientation.

- The National Safety Monitor for primary and secondary education (*Landelijke Veiligheidsmonitor in het primair en voortgezet onderwijs*) is published about every two years by ResearchNed and contains data on experiences of bullying, violent incidents, sexually transgressive behaviour, coercion and discrimination. The underlying data can be disaggregated by sex. However, as most differences found between girls and boys are not statistically significant, the publications primarily focus on disaggregating by LGBT status.
- The Monitor of the Technology Pact (*Monitor Techniekpact*) reports yearly on the share of female and male students in STEM in secondary education (VO), secondary vocational education (MBO) and tertiary higher education (HO). Additionally, the monitor reports on the flow of female and male STEM students towards careers in STEM. Data can be further disaggregated by type of education and geographic location.

Three routine surveys with disaggregations by sex (or gender) have been newly introduced in the past five years:

- The Monitor for Sexually Transgressive Behaviour (*Publieksmonitor Seksueel Grensoverschrijdend Gedrag*) has been published every year since 2023 by I&O Research. Some data is disaggregated by sex. The survey includes data on the knowledge of, experiences with (as victim or perpetrator), and attitudes towards sexually transgressive behaviour. The introduction of this survey is part of the policy decision to prioritise tackling sexual violence and sexually transgressive behaviour through a National Action Plan.
- The Prevalence Monitor for Domestic Violence and Sexually Transgressive Behaviour (*Prevalentiemonitor Huiselijk Geweld en Seksueel Grensoverschrijdend gedrag*) has been published every two years since 2020 by Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and contains data disaggregated by sex, age and sexual orientation on domestic violence (verbal, physical, coercive control), stalking by an ex-partner, offline and online sexual intimidation, and physical sexual violence.
- The Dutch Media Authority (*Commissariaat voor de Media*) investigated the representation of women in Dutch non-fiction television programmes. This representation monitor was published in 2019 and 2021. A third issue of the monitor is expected in 2024 and will, if possible, include an intersectional approach and a wider view on gender diversity.

Several routine surveys that contain data disaggregated by sex or gender have been further developed over the past years:

- The Monitor Gender Diversity (*Monitor Genderdiversiteit*) by SEO Economisch Onderzoek reports on the number of women, men and non-binary persons in top management positions in the public and semi-public sector. The monitor is being published yearly between 2022 and 2027, both as a report and through an online [dashboard](#). Together with the new dashboard by the Social and Economic Council, the Monitor Gender Diversity is a renewal of the Companies Monitor Women at the Top (*Bedrijvenmonitor Topvrouwen*), which existed until 2020.
- The Social and Economic Council (*Sociaal-Economische Raad*) reports on the number of women and men in top management positions in the private sector through an online [dashboard](#). The dashboard is available since 2023 and is updated yearly. Together with the Monitor Gender Diversity, this dashboard is a renewal of the Companies Monitor Women at the Top (*Bedrijvenmonitor Topvrouwen*), which existed until 2020.
- The LGBT Monitor was published by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) every two years until 2022, and will be developed into an LGBTIQ+ Monitor as of 2024 by Panteia, Movisie and I&O Research. The monitor contains data disaggregated for lesbian, bi+ and transgender women. As of 2024, additional disaggregations are expected for asexual women and for non-binary and intersex people, as well as for race/ethnicity and disability where data allows for such disaggregations. The monitor contains data on safety, sexual violence, health

and economic situation, and disaggregated social attitudes towards LGBT(IQ+) people, where possible data are disaggregated by relevant characteristics.

- The Monitor of Well-being and SDGs Caribbean Netherlands (*Monitor Brede Welvaart en SDG's Caribisch Nederland*) by Statistics Netherlands provides sex-disaggregated data on the Caribbean Netherlands (CN) which is not included in most other routine surveys that only cover the European Netherlands. Most data is available yearly. Topics in this monitor and in the available underlying data include labour participation and management positions, income, education, health and well-being, violence and perceived safety, and culture. Other disaggregations are also included in this monitor.

Barriers include the fact that most routine surveys are based on the legally registered sex of respondents. As mentioned in the answer to question 39, this means that transgender women and men, non-binary people and intersex people are often invisible in the existing data.

### Aruba

Aruba is working on setting up a broader national statistical system based on international guidelines to produce official statistics. The aim is to produce relevant, reliable, and timely data for policy formulation and monitoring.

## VI: Section Six

### Conclusion and next steps

In the narrative report, please provide 1-2 pages of key takeaways from the review, including reflections on:

- *lessons your country has learned from the review process and how it will apply them in the continuing implementation ongoing and future challenges for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in your country*
- *priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda, notably as part of the Decade of Action for sustainable development*

One of the important lessons of the last decade is that emancipation policies should be more intersectional. For each topic, looking at how an intersectional approach can be used for more effective policy interventions can make a difference. This applies to topics within the emancipation policy itself, as well as to interventions in any other regular government policy area. In a given policy area it may be relevant to look, for example, at differences between older and younger LGBTIQ+ persons, between women with or without a migration background, or between women of colour and white women; and at the effect of socioeconomic status or disability. Policy interventions are more effective when these differences are taken into account.

Because of recent elections, the Netherlands is awaiting the priorities of the new cabinet for the upcoming years. Until then, the priorities of the current *Emancipatienota* remain standing. Which actions we would like to take to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 agenda is also a decision of the new cabinet. When we draw up a new Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy Plan, recommendations from the BPfA will also be taken into account, as well as input provided by civil society, whom we aim to meaningfully involve throughout the process.