



*More opportunities  
for women*

*Emancipation policy 2008-2011*

O N D E R  
U N C S U M  
L T U U R  
N E T E M  
S C H A P

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## Introduction

The Balkenende IV Coalition Agreement stipulates that a new Emancipation Memorandum will be formulated during this government's term of office. You now have before you this Memorandum, which is entitled 'More opportunities for women' and describes the emancipation policy for the period 2008-2011.

This Memorandum replaces the previous government's long-term policy plan on emancipation for 2006-2010. The basic principle of the Memorandum is that, although a lot has been achieved, the issue of emancipation is an ongoing one. This is clear, among other things, from the Social and Cultural Planning Agency's 2006 Emancipation Monitor and from the final report of the Auditing Committee Emancipation entitled 'A bit better is not good enough!'. A large gap remains between equal rights for women and men on the one hand and social reality on the other. In order to break through the current stagnation in the emancipation process it is necessary to depart from the trend, which is why the government plans to give new impetus to the emancipation policy on a national, provincial and municipal level.

The government supports the overall target of 80% labour force participation given in the SER's (*Social and Economic Council*) medium-to-long term advice. In its advice to the SER the CPB (*Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis*) has illustrated how this objective may be achieved. A distinction is made between the categories men and women aged 20-54 and elderly aged 55-64. For the purpose of the Emancipation Memorandum the CPB has calculated what this illustration would mean for the category women aged 20-64. The answer is 74% by 2016. To achieve this target a number of new measures will be implemented during this government term, such as an extra tax incentive to discourage non-working and make employment more worthwhile. It will also become easier to combine work and childcare through an improvement to the accessibility and quality of day-care and an extension of parental leave from 13 to 26 weeks. Because departing from the trend also requires a change in culture, a Part-time Plus Taskforce will be set up that will work on realising cultural changes in companies and a more positive self-image among women. Role models will be used to get girls interested in technology. Forerunners in provinces and municipalities who come to agreements about smarter opening hours in the care and services sectors and about flexible working hours and location-independent service provision will receive support.

In addition to labour force participation, new target values and plans have also been formulated to increase the number of women at the top and reduce the pay gap between women and men, whereby the government itself will set an example. The objective is for 25% of senior civil servants to be female by 2011 and for the pay gap between women and men in the government sector to have been halved.

The objectives regarding the contribution of women to the total national income and the contribution of men to care tasks have been dropped. The objective in respect of women's contribution to the total national income has since been achieved. The objectives in respect of men's share of care tasks do not fit in with the government's vision. This government wants to work on making it easier to combine work and care for women and men, not on redistributing the care tasks at home between men and women. It is no longer possible to achieve the objective of 60% of women being economically independent by 2010. The current level is too low for this and is rising only slowly. Through the extra focus on increased labour force participation for women, expectations are that this target value will be achieved by 2016. For 2010 the objective of a 65% labour force participation for women stays on the agenda.

In addition to the themes of labour force participation and the position of women in the employment market, the Memorandum looks at three further themes: the talents of women from ethnic minorities, (sexual) violence against girls and women and the position of girls and women in the world. These themes also formed part of the previous Emancipation Memorandum. The policy focus on these themes has now been expanded and intensified. Among other issues attention is given to the importance of the emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities and the prevention of (sexual) violence through education.

In this Memorandum the theme of women's participation in decision-making and administration, which was a separate theme in the previous Emancipation Memorandum, has been brought under the theme of more women in top positions in government, education and business. These functions are essentially decision-making positions too, which means the policy focus is being given shape in a comparable manner. The key to this theme is putting the value of proportional representation and diversity on the agenda and making the results visible.

To give new impetus to the emancipation policy, an indicative additional amount of up to a potential 10 million Euros in 2011 will be released in this term of government in the budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This amount is intended to support both the emancipation policy and the homosexual emancipation policy. The additional resources will be used to give new impetus to the emancipation policy at national, provincial and municipality levels, in order to better anchor emancipation within the different policy domains and reinforce the emancipation process in society.

The departments draw up the way in which they plan to give shape to the emancipation policy within their own domains on the basis of 5 conditions for the successful anchoring of the emancipation policy. These 5 conditions were derived from the government Memorandum on Gender Mainstreaming (2001) and are in line with international documents. These conditions are: the commitment of administrative and political management, a clear allocation of responsibilities, the availability of expertise, the application of instruments and the existence of targets and resources. The departments each submit their contribution to the emancipation policy and their reaction to the Auditing Committee Emancipation's final report to Parliament separately. This method emphasises the responsibility and duty of accountability that each individual department has. The departmental contributions form an addition to this Memorandum, which restricts itself to the priority themes. The departmental reports show that there is improved anchoring of the emancipation policy and of new initiatives throughout the government.

Simultaneously with the Emancipation Memorandum I have also submitted an emancipation policy review to Parliament. The policy review provides a good insight into the outline of the objectives, instruments, means and results of the emancipation policy and therefore makes excellent reading as a background document to the Emancipation Memorandum

The minister for Education, Culture and Science,

Dr Ronald H.A. Plasterk

## Summary

### A lot has been achieved

In the fight for equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the Netherlands, we have managed to achieve a lot in a relatively short time. It was only 50 years ago that the legal incapacity of married women was deleted from the law and female teachers and civil servants were no longer obliged to resign once they got married.

The Tendeloo motion went down in the history books. The text was short and sharp: 'The Parliament, having heard the debate on the Royal Decree of 13 September 1955, is of the opinion that it is not up to State to prohibit married women from working, and hereby invites the Government to revise the regulations that conflict with this view.'

A very small majority, 46 against 44, voted in favour, including all the female Members of Parliament.

Since then we have made a lot of progress. The basic principles of equality of the sexes and equal treatment of women and men are legally anchored in international treaties and European and national legislation, including in the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Amsterdam Convention and equal opportunity legislation. Increasing numbers of women take part in all domains of social life: politics, administration, science, culture, the media, employment, sports etc. As a result emancipation has become a lot more matter-of-course in the Netherlands.

### This is not the same everywhere in the world

Unfortunately there are still many countries where emancipation is far less advanced, where the rights of girls and women are being abused and where sexual and reproductive rights ('a woman's right to choose') are not sufficiently guaranteed and protected. This means the Dutch commitment to improving the position of girls and women in the world is still sorely needed,

particularly now that fundamentalist and orthodox religious movements are gaining strength globally.

### In the Netherlands emancipation is by no means a fait accompli either

Although we have made a lot of progress in the Netherlands in the area of women's liberation, a large gap continues to exist between the equal rights of women and men on the one hand and social reality on the other. This gap has hardly been reduced in recent years. The emancipation process has come to a virtual standstill. The number of women in top positions in the government, in education and in business is increasing only slowly and the pay gap between women and men has remained at the same high level for many years. Although young women have managed to catch up on the educational disadvantages they used to have compared to men, this is not reflected in the income position of women or in their position in the employment market. The labour force participation of women in terms of hours and the number of women in top positions are among the lowest in Europe. This is the result of the large number of women who stop working or work fewer hours during the years when they bring up their family (around age 35 to 40). As a result women's talents are not sufficiently utilised. Another consequence of the faltering emancipation is the fact that the number of women who are economically independent is only slowly increasing. This is mainly because many women with children don't work or work only very few hours.

Two-thirds of Turkish and Moroccan women in the age group up to 35 do not have basic qualifications. They often came to the Netherlands via marriage migration, have not received any education in the Netherlands and have trouble finding paid employment. Because of the traditional role perceptions of men and the women's limited command of the Dutch language and a lack of

contacts outside their own community, they are also threatened with social isolation. This means a whole new generation is at risk of social and economic deprivation, which, in turn, will affect the development opportunities and emancipation of their children.

### **Stereotypical perceptions and role models**

In practice, creating equal opportunities requires effort. This starts early, in the upbringing and education of girls and boys. The technical talents of girls and the caring talents of boys are noticed, appreciated and encouraged less. This results in a strong segregation in education and professions, and in large differences in the employment market and income positions of women and men at a later age. From the point of view of emancipation and the added value that diversity creates in the work environment this is an undesirable situation. A greater diversity in role models is needed and may stimulate girls to make different study and professional choices than they have done traditionally, and to invest more in their career.

### **New insights and challenges**

The emancipation process is changing. In recent years it has become increasingly clear that the participation of women is not primarily a matter of redistribution, but mainly a matter of combining. In the Netherlands the vast majority of women want to combine motherhood with a (small) part-time job. Women say they would not necessarily work more if their partner worked less. However, women would want to work more if they could structure their working hours flexibly, if they had the opportunity to work from home and if they could keep more of their net income.

From the point of view of the ageing population the talents of women cannot be overlooked. The government and the social partners therefore need to make considerable investments to create work opportunities

that are worthwhile and that can be combined with care for children and with informal care. Not just mothers but fathers, too, would benefit from this.

Another perspective is the fact that the emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities is not keeping pace. Girls and women from ethnic minorities are indicating increasingly strongly that the traditional views of boys and men are obstructing their emancipation, integration and participation and that this creates tension in the upbringing of children, in marriage and in the family. There is a need for a dialogue with boys and men about emancipation. The success of the Father Centre in the Hague shows that among many men themselves, there is also a considerable need for dialogue and for personal and social development. Experiments in employment facilitation and reintegration have shown that a combined approach for women and men is more effective than an individual approach. The emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities therefore specifically requires extra attention.

A new challenge in the emancipation process is presented by the sexualisation of society, including by the ever-present depiction of girls and women as sex objects and the associated unattainable beauty ideals. Through all sorts of media girls and boys are exposed to openly sexual acts, insinuations and advances at an increasingly young age. As a result this approach becomes an increasingly 'normal' part of youth culture. This presents girls and boys, as well as their parents, with new challenges. If, in the past, the emancipation process of young people was strongly linked to fighting for freedom and individual choices, today the freedom of many young people is so great that emancipation also becomes linked to the risk of boundless freedom. This applies particularly to the area of sexuality. Young people are relatively vulnerable and are not always able to properly set their own boundaries and respect those of others.

### **Departing from the trend is necessary**

The stagnation of the emancipation process means it is necessary to depart from the trend. This is why the government wants to create more opportunities for women:

- 1) more opportunities for women in the employment market;
- 2) more opportunities for women from ethnic minorities to utilise their talents;
- 3) more opportunities for girls and women to have a life without (sexual) violence;
- 4) more opportunities for girls and women in the rest of the world, particularly in developing countries.

The basis of the government policy is the long-term policy plan on emancipation for 2006-2010 and the meetings the government has had with the social field about the new impetus needed in the emancipation policy. Many of the emancipation targets were formulated as early as the year 2000. As a result of the stagnation of the emancipation process in recent years these targets have become difficult to achieve. The government wants to make an effort to 'catch up' with a more active approach, new measures and extra investments.

### **Government sets the right example**

The government itself will set the right example regarding the appointment of women in top positions and the equal remuneration of women and men. The target is to halve the pay gap between men and women during this term of government. At present all Secretary Generals are male. The target is for 25% of the senior public service positions to be occupied by women by 2011. Half of all general and general technical advisory bodies must consist of women. In order to increase the number of female professors the government is using a target value of 15% for 2010. For the other educational sectors quantitative target values have also been formulated. The government will encourage others to

follow its good example and set concrete target values. The results of authorities, educational institutes and the business world will be tracked and compared via monitoring and benchmarking (performance comparison). It is important that good and bad performances are rendered visible by means of '*naming and shaming*'.

### **More opportunities for women in the employment market**

The government subscribes to the analysis in the SER's (*Social and Economic Council*) medium to long-term advice, which stipulates that an extra increase in the labour force participation is needed in future to counteract the burden imposed by the ageing of the population. To this end social partners have committed to a participation objective of 80% by 2016. This will require considerable effort. A situation where women who are in the stage of establishing a family (age 35-40) stop working early must be prevented, whereas a situation in which women work more hours must be promoted. A comprehensive package of measures to achieve such a situation is therefore included in the government's policy programme.

There will be additional tax advantages to discourage non-working and to make employment more worthwhile, also for women. The transferable tax credit for the non-working partner will be phased out over 15 years. It will become more attractive and easier to combine work and childcare: the government plans to improve the availability and quality of day-care and will increase parental leave from 13 to 26 weeks, so that fewer women stop working when they have children and more women return to work after their parental leave. The government will also increase the number of Extended Schools (so-called 'brede school') and improve the coordination between education, childcare, sports and cultural activities, among other means by creating 2500 combined positions. There will be a public benefits scheme for pregnancy and maternity leave for the self-employed.

The government will set up a Part-time Plus Taskforce to increase the labour force participation and working hours of women and create a greater base of support. This will require a cultural change within companies and more positive perceptions among women themselves. It must become easier and more attractive for women to work more hours. In many companies the possibilities for working flexible hours are still limited. Together with the provinces and municipalities the government will work on flexible opening hours and tailor-made services to make it easier for parents to combine work and childcare.

In order to promote future generations of women becoming economically independent, girls will be encouraged towards a greater diversity in their study and career choices, and to a greater investment in their career. In schools that participate in the Girls and Technology Promotion Programmes a 10-25% increase can be seen in the number of girls who choose to pursue a technical course of study. In the coming years the government will make further investments in this area. Existing initiatives that are working well will be broadened and intensified and female role models will be used.

### **More opportunities for women from ethnic minorities to utilise their talents**

The government wants to increase the social participation of 50,000 women from ethnic minorities by helping them find volunteer work and paid employment. A good command of the Dutch language and an understanding of the Dutch culture is an essential condition to achieve this. The Integration Delta Plan is expected to make it possible for people from ethnic minorities to catch up on their integration. To this end, the plan makes it possible for women who have been in the Netherlands for longer to also follow an integration course. The Thousand-and-One Strengths project, which is aimed at

volunteer work, is linked to the Integration Delta Plan, thus creating a dual integration and social participation progression. The objective is to halt the fragmentation of good initiatives.

For women without basic qualifications, a coordinated process of integration, education, social participation and - ultimately - paid employment is needed, also based on the concept that equipping women in this way can contribute to preventing violence in the longer term. In its administrative agreement with the municipalities the government has undertaken to support 25,000 people who are not entitled to benefits to find work. This agreement also provides new opportunities for women from ethnic minorities. The same applies to the plans the municipalities are making for the 40 special attention neighbourhoods. The municipalities have agreed with their social partners that they will create (para-professional) functions for women from ethnic minorities. This will also give the talents of these women higher visibility in the employment market. In addition, the government will support the national 'rollout' of emancipation initiatives for girls and women from ethnic minorities that have proven their value in recent years.

The government wants to prevent girls and women being obstructed in their emancipation, integration and participation by traditional views, restrictions to their liberty or (threats of) violence. The emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities will therefore be given extra attention.

### **More opportunities for girls and women to have a life without (sexual) violence**

Emancipation is closely linked to women's right of self-determination: the opportunity to make choices freely and safely. The safety of women still leaves a lot to be desired. Domestic violence and sexual violence occur on a large scale even in the Netherlands.

Honour-related violence and the scale of forced

prostitution and trafficking in women are causes for serious concern. Women without an independent income or residence status are particularly vulnerable. The government is intensifying and broadening its current efforts to reduce violence.

Young people are also relatively vulnerable and are not always able to properly assess their own boundaries. The government therefore feels it is extremely important to give more attention to media astuteness, sexual and relational education and assertiveness and to promote expertise in this area. Advice on sexual matters alone is not enough. Girls and boys must also learn to be able to set their own boundaries, learn to respect the boundaries of others and be able to defend themselves against undesired sexual approaches and violence. The government will explore what young people, parents and professionals need in this area and what can be improved. The government will make extra funding available for the development and application of methodologies in the areas of sexual and relational education and assertiveness in schools and colleges and the promotion of expertise in vocational training.

### **More opportunities for girls and women in developing areas**

The government wants to structurally improve the focus on the position of girls and women in developing areas and, to this effect, signed the Schokland agreement earlier this year together with a large number of social organisations.

The Netherlands will urge other countries to fulfil their political and financial promises. This applies particularly to the sexual and reproductive rights of women and girls' right to education. In the area of peace missions and conflict prevention the government is implementing a national action plan.

### **Improved emancipation policy in the departments**

The government wants to broaden the emancipation policy across the entire government sector. This applies to the priority policy themes outlined in this Memorandum, but also to other policy themes not included in this Memorandum. Examples of such themes are physical policy areas such as a public housing, spatial planning, the environment, agriculture, nature management, water management, traffic and transport. In these areas there are opportunities for linking emancipation and sustainability together. The responsible departments will work this out further. The above can also be developed within a broader diversity policy.

In its final report entitled 'A bit better is not good enough!' the Auditing Committee Emancipation concludes that expertise in the area of emancipation and structural anchoring of the emancipation policy in the departments are lacking. Neither is there a central focus on the emancipation policy. This government wants to improve this situation by making the departments' contribution to the emancipation policy as transparent and verifiable as possible, increasing emancipation expertise and giving substance to the role of Minister for Emancipation as a driving force and supporter of the emancipation policy.

The departments each submit their own reaction to the final report of the Auditing Committee Emancipation and their contribution to the emancipation policy to Parliament. In their contributions the departments interpret the conditions for the successful anchoring and realisation of the emancipation policy. These conditions are: the commitment of the administrative and political top to the emancipation policy, a clear allocation of responsibilities with regard to the emancipation policy, the availability of emancipation-related expertise, the use of emancipation instruments and clarity about emancipation objectives and means. The contributions

of the departments show that there is improved anchoring of the emancipation policy across the entire government sector and that there are also new initiatives.

Depending on the phase of the emancipation policy and the nature of the policy domain each department gives this objective structure in its own way.

In 2010 the government will conduct a 'midterm review' on the emancipation policy in the departments. The review will be conducted by the individual departments themselves and will look at the results achieved during this term of government and include an exploration of new opportunities.

The Minister for Emancipation will come to customised agreements with the departments regarding collaboration and support in the reinforcement of the emancipation policy in the departments. These agreements may relate, for instance, to enhancing the emancipation expertise or to the methods for implementing the departmental observations. In addition the Minister aims to collaborate with a minimum of 25 municipalities. Social institutes, emancipation agencies, women's organisations and self-help migrant organisations can make an important contribution to this target. The government will reserve extra funding for impetus at a national, provincial and municipal level.

### Quality of the emancipation knowledge infrastructure

The government wants to improve both the quality and the efficiency of the knowledge infrastructure for emancipation. The International Information Centre and the Archive for the Women's Rights Movement (IIAV) will be housed at the Institute for Social History (IISG). Expectations are that these measures will improve the quality of collection management and the availability and accessibility of information. With regard to E-Quality the same applies: fusion with other knowledge institutes

is expected to lead to further quality and efficiency benefits. The government is currently investigating the options in this area. Furthermore, for both institutes it will be critically assessed which tasks do and do not form part of the basic knowledge infrastructure.

### Additional funding for the emancipation process in society

As part of the government's policy programme, an indicative additional amount of up to a potential 10 million Euros in 2011 will be released during this term of government. These funds will be distributed between the emancipation policy and homosexual emancipation policy. Additional funds are available (in addition to the emancipation budget) for the through-flow of women to management positions within education, culture and the sciences and for the through-flow of girls to technical studies. The government will use these extra funds to spur on the emancipation policy at national, provincial and local levels.

The current subsidy arrangement with relatively small emancipation projects will be terminated. Many valuable initiatives have been developed. It is now especially important to apply and anchor more broadly those initiatives that have proven effective in practice. In this context it is important that municipalities, social organisations and self-help migrant organisations work closely together and develop plans. New initiatives are also needed for the emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities.

With the additional funds for the emancipation policy:

- a) the Part-time Plus Taskforce, which focuses on encouraging more women to work and encouraging women to work more hours, will receive support;
- b) on the basis of collaboration agreements, departments and municipalities will receive support in the development and realisation of their emancipation policy;

- c) ) the Thousand-and-One Strengths project, which aims to guide 50,000 women from ethnic minorities toward social participation, will receive support;
- d) on the basis of collaboration agreements, forerunners among provinces and municipalities will receive support to implement flexible opening hours and customised services, making it easier to combine work and child-care;
- e) a programme aimed at reducing the segregation in education and the employment market and increasing the number of girls in scientific and technical professions will receive support;
- f) a programme for sexual education and assertiveness of young people and for increasing the expertise of professionals will receive support;

- g) the national rollout of a number of emancipation initiatives of social institutes that have proven effective will be supported;
- h) a number of new initiatives for the emancipation of boys and men from ethnic minorities will be supported;
- i) a number of innovative programmes organised by women's networks will be supported;
- j) the emancipation knowledge infrastructure will be supported and improved.

With these investments the government wants to give the emancipation process a new dynamic and visibly decrease the gap between equal opportunities and unequal social reality in the coming years.

## Summary table of Emancipation Memorandum objectives

### Main objectives

#### Labour force participation

##### Main objective 1

Increasing the labour force participation of women in terms of numbers and hours.

#### Women and girls from ethnic minority groups

##### Main objective 2

Offering opportunities to and utilising the talents of women and girls from ethnic minority groups

### Sub-objectives

##### Sub-objective 1.1

Working has to be worthwhile

##### Sub-objective 1.2

Improving the combination of work and childcare

##### Sub-objective 1.3

Better distribution: more women in top positions, less professional separation and smaller pay gap between women and men

##### Sub-objective 2.1

Increasing the social and labour force participation of women and girls from ethnic minorities

##### Sub-objective 2.2

Increasing the self-sufficiency and personal development of women and girls from ethnic minority groups

##### Sub-objective 2.3

Promoting the emancipation of men and boys from ethnic minority groups



### Safety

#### Main objective 3a

Preventing and combating violence against women and girls

#### Sub-objective 3.1

Preventing and combating domestic violence against women and girls

#### Sub-objective 3.2

Improving the provision of information to prostitutes

#### Sub-objective 3.3

Preventing and combating honour-related violence

#### Sub-objective 3.4

Combating female genital mutilation

#### Sub-objective 3.5

Enhancing the expertise of professionals

#### Main objective 3b

Sexual and relational education of girls and boys and increasing their ability to defend themselves against (sexual) violence

#### Sub-objective 3.6

Gaining an understanding of the consequences of the sexualisation of the role of girls and women in society

#### Sub-objective 3.7

Increasing the assertiveness of girls and boys

#### Sub-objective 3.8

Preventing teenage pregnancies

### International emancipation policy

#### Main objective 4

Contributing to the (global) abolition of all forms of discrimination against women and the structural improvement of the position of women

#### Sub-objective 4.1

Guaranteeing a structural focus on the position of women in developing regions

#### Sub-objective 4.2

Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for girls and women

#### Sub-objective 4.3

Guaranteeing systematic attention for the effects of international peace missions on local women and giving thought, where necessary, to the composition of the team to be sent

#### Sub-objective 4.4

Structural focus on improving the position of women in all international areas of policy



## Chapter 1

# Labour force participation

### Main objective 1:

Increasing the labour force participation of women in terms of numbers and hours

#### Sub-objectives:

1.1 Working has to be worthwhile

1.2 Improving the combination of work and childcare

1.3 Better distribution

# 1 Labour force participation

## Introduction

Economic independence is the foundation of many other areas of emancipation. Paid employment is a step towards self-determination and self-fulfilment. Furthermore, for a woman faced with domestic or honour-related violence it is easier to escape her situation if she is economically independent. A good education is a condition for economic independence, but is not enough in itself. There also have to be ways to combine paid employment with the care of children or other dependents. Furthermore, women must be rewarded for their economic efforts in the same way as men. In other words: equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for advancement to management positions.

In our ageing society the labour force participation of women is essential to the European economy<sup>1</sup>. According to the Lisbon objectives six out of ten women between the ages of 15 and 65 should be in paid employment by 2010. At first glance the Netherlands appears to be doing well: if we apply the statistics used for the Lisbon objectives 66% of women between 15 and 65 are employed. Only Denmark and Sweden have a higher proportion of working women than the Netherlands. However, measured in full-time jobs Dutch women work considerably less than women in most other countries in the European Union. Only in Malta, Italy and Luxembourg do women work fewer hours per week on average than in the Netherlands. As a response to the Dutch National Reform Programme the European Commission therefore recommends that efforts should be made to increase the number of hours that women work on average.

The fact that a large majority of women in the Netherlands have (small) part-time jobs is a result of our views on parenthood. Of women with two children only 12% work more than 24 hours a week<sup>2</sup>. To what

extent this preference for part-time jobs is a result of 'the power of the obvious' remains a point for discussion. This debate is further elaborated on in the Emancipation Policy Review<sup>3</sup>. It is a fact that this distribution of tasks has far-reaching consequences for the income development. For instance, women work below their level much more frequently than men because it appears to be much easier to implement part-time working in lower functions. Pension accrual in the Netherlands is linked to individual salaries, which means that women also have less income at an older age.

**Table 1: Why women earn less than what is 'proportional'**

Difference men/women	Women	Men	W : M
Step 1 = Participation difference <sup>4</sup>	64%	82%	0,78
Step 2 = Part-time factor <sup>5</sup>	24,9 uur	37,2 uur	0,67
Step 3 = Difference in hourly wage <sup>6</sup>	€ 15,81	€ 19,59	0,82

Women form half of the population, but do not earn half of the combined income. Firstly this is because fewer women than men have jobs, secondly because women who do have a job work fewer hours than men and finally because on average women earn less for each hour worked than men do.

**Figure 1: Income distribution women and men (aged 15-65) in 2005**



WML = Minimum Wage and Minimum Holiday Allowance Act  
Source: CBS (2007), adapted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

The above figure shows that men earn an above-modal income (over € 30,000 gross per annum) four times as often as women. Only one in three women between the ages of 15 and 65 has a gross monthly salary that is higher than the statutory minimum wage (over € 16,000 per annum).

The objective of the emancipation policy is for more women to start earning an independent income. To define 'economic independence' the emancipation policy uses a norm of 70% of the WML (*Minimum Wage and Minimum Holiday Allowance Act*). In 2004, 42% of women could be classed as economically independent according to this norm. The previous government's objective of 60% of women being economically independent by 2010 is no longer possible to achieve. Expectations are that, with the extra focus on labour force participation, it will be possible to achieve this level by 2016. In this context it is not only important that more women start working, but also that they work more hours on average per person.

In summary, an increase in the labour force participation

in terms of hours is desirable for two reasons. In addition to counteracting the effects of the ageing of the population, it also promotes the economic independence of women, which is an important condition for emancipation.

## Approach

The government supports the overall target of 80% labour force participation given in the SER's (*Social and Economic Council*) medium to long-term advice. In its advice to the SER the CPB (*Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis*) has illustrated how this objective may be achieved (table 2). A distinction is made between the categories men and women aged 20-54 and elderly aged 55-64. For the purpose of the Emancipation Memorandum the CPB has calculated what this illustration would mean for the category women aged 20-64. The answer is 74% by 2016. This will require considerable effort. A situation where women who are in the stage of establishing a family (age 35-40) stop working early must be prevented, whereas a situation in which women work more hours must be promoted. A comprehensive package of measures to achieve such a situation is therefore being included in the government's policy programme.

**Table 2 – The 80% objective of the SER advice 'Prosperity growth for and by everyone'<sup>7</sup>**

	2006	2016	2016
		Basis pathway	SER-pathway
Gros participation level 20-64 total	73	75	80
Women 20-54	71	74	79,5
Men 20-54	89	89	92
Elderly 55-64	43	51	58
Women 20-64	64	68	74
Part-time factor women	1,221	1,221	1,221
Men 20-64	82	82	85
Part-time factor men	1,026	1,026	1,026

Source: SER medium to long-term advice, CEP 2007, CPB Research Memorandum 134

1 European Commission, De demografische toekomst van Europa: probleem of uitdaging? (The demographic future of Europe: problem or challenge?), Statement (2006), 571  
2 SCP, Moeders, werk en kinderopvang in model (Mothers, work and day-care, a model). The Hague, 2007.

3 Submitted to the Lower House simultaneously with this Memorandum.  
4 CPB, Macro-economic Exploration 2007, appendix A7.  
5 2006 Emancipation Monitor, p. 78.  
6 2006 Emancipation Monitor, p. 189.

7 The SER medium to long-term advice does not include an age category women aged 20-64; instead the classifications are women aged 20-54 (79.5 % in 2016) and elderly aged 55-64 (58% in 2016). For the purpose of the Emancipation Memorandum the CPB has recalculated the figures for women aged 20-64 = 74% in 2016.

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Apart from the objective of more women entering the employment market, it is also important that women with jobs start working more hours on average. The majority of Dutch women (84%) indicate they would like to do so under certain conditions. These conditions are the opportunity to combine work and childcare, for instance through flexible working hours, and financial remuneration. For women with young children these conditions appear to weigh heavier than for other women.

**Table 3 : Conditions under which non-working and part-time working women would be prepared to work more hours in paid employment**

Conditions	Women with child ≤ 12	All women
If I can (better) coordinate the hours I work with my private life	46%	22%
If I can take time off if a child or family member is ill	37%	14%
If it would be necessary from a financial point of view	35%	22%
If it would be an attractive step forward from a financial point of view	31%	20%
If I could be certain that everything at home is running the way I like it (childcare/housework)	25%	12%
If I can find a job with the number of hours I want to work	23%	17%
If I can do work I enjoy (more)	21%	21%
If I can work from home (more) often	20%	11%

If I can outsource (part of) the housework to a cleaner	16%	9%
If my partner were to work fewer hours	16%	7%

Source: Emancipation Monitor 2006, p. 136.

In order to increase the labour force participation of women in terms of hours and numbers in the next few years the government will be working on the improved conditions desired by women. In this context we use three sub-objectives:

1. working has to be worthwhile;
2. improving the combination of work and childcare;
3. better distribution.

The Emancipation Monitor systematically records to what level and to what extent the labour force participation of women increases in terms of hours and numbers. The target is to bring the level of the labour force participation of Dutch women in terms of hours up to the European average as quickly as possible.

## 1.1: Working has to be worthwhile

### 1.1.1. Making working (more hours) financially attractive

At present there are few women with a part-time job who want to work more hours. Views on the proper care for the family are a major reason for this. The traditional 9 to 5 working day and the fact that women often earn a lower hourly wage than men also play a role. Furthermore, the so-called *marginal tax and premium burden* is a factor. The marginal tax and premium burden influences the level of a family's net second income. If this burden is high the family income after taxes and premiums increases only a little if the woman is to work more hours. Working more hours brings little financial

reward because of the progressive income tax, the income-based cost of day-care and the reduction in, for instance, rent supplementation. Nearly 40% of people who work part-time would 'lose' more than half of the gross amount they could earn by working extra hours as a result of the marginal tax and premium burden. This makes working more hours rather unattractive<sup>8</sup>. A reduction of the marginal tax and premium burden can stimulate the participation of (part-time) working women. The government wants to take the following steps to implement this reduction in the marginal tax and premium burden:

- ⋮ An increase in the supplementary combination tax credit (as of 1 January 2008) and gradually making it income-related (as of 1 January 2009). This will reduce the marginal tax and premium burden. For the partner who earns less this will make it more worthwhile for them to work extra hours, as the value of the tax credit increases with the income.
- ⋮ The transferability of the general tax credit will be gradually eliminated over 15 years, starting 1 January 2009. This will reduce the marginal tax and premium burden for those re-entering the employment market and for part-timers (the so-called re-entry trap and part-time trap). This measure will apply to those born after 1971 and do not have children in the ages between 0 and 5.
- ⋮ Increasing the employed person's tax credit (as of 1 January 2008) and making it income-related (as of 1 January 2009). This reduces the re-entry trap by increasing the gap between income from employment and benefits, thus making it financially more advantageous to work.

The employer's contribution to day-care has been compulsory since 2007. This has made applying for childcare allowance easier for parents. Because the government has increased this allowance, day-care has become cheaper in recent years.

### 1.1.2 Towards a properly functioning market for personal services

In the Coalition agreement and at the Participation Summit it has been agreed with the social partners that special attention will be given to the development of a market for personal services (cleaning, childcare and handyman work). The Council for Work & Income (RWI) has since formulated two advisory memorandums on a market for personal services. Before that, two study groups on Market Forces, Deregulation and Legislative Quality researched this subject matter. The government is currently evaluating the possibilities for stimulating the market for personal services as part of the lower echelons of the employment market. In preparing a government response to the RWI advice, the government will consult the Joint Industrial Labour Council and the VNG (*Association of Dutch Municipalities*). The government response is expected in October 2007.

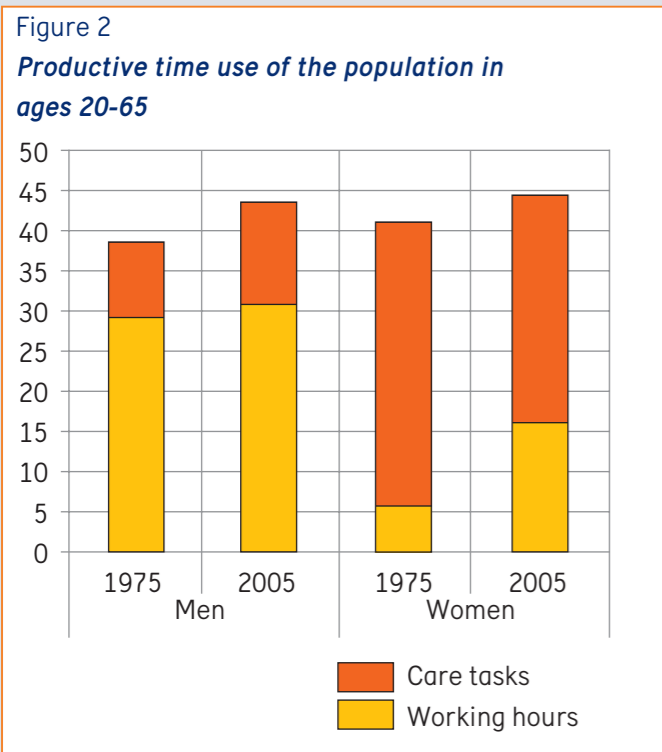
Stimulating the market for personal services is something that is easier said than done. This is clear from the number of reports and government responses of recent years. In this area the policy touches on a number of material questions about our economy. Economic growth is based on labour distribution, on the purchasing of goods and services rather than 'DIYing'. The time that is freed up by not having to do everything oneself is invested in acquiring one's own income. However, this mechanism is not gender-neutral. For a long time only the balance between paid employment and leisure time came into play in the economy. From an emancipation perspective unpaid work must be added to the equation.

Figure 2 shows that little has changed for men in the past 30 years. Between 1975 and 2005 the average Dutch man has started working three more hours of paid employment and performing three more hours of care tasks (household work and caring for children and other dependents). For women the change has been

<sup>8</sup> In the longer term, financial stimuli also appear to influence preferences. See, for instance, E. van Koesveld, *De verborgen opbrengsten van beleid* (The hidden revenue of policy), Economic and Statistical Reports, 27 July 2007.

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much more radical. On average - in other words, including women who do not have a paid job - Dutch women have started working 10 more hours of paid employment per week. In 2005 women spent less time on household tasks than in 1975 (now 21 hours, before 30 hours), but one hour more on caring for children<sup>9</sup>.



In principle there are three ways in which women can free up time for paid employment: outsourcing certain tasks, transferring tasks to men and ceasing to do certain tasks. It is clear that there are limitations to the latter. As a society we do not want to 'economise' on unpaid care<sup>10</sup>. We want to 'invest' in the next generation or care for our parents. However, the fact that until now this work was mainly done 'for free' by women does not mean it does not come at a cost<sup>11</sup>.

Many women find it less difficult to outsource household work than care tasks. However, the market for personal services in the Netherlands is slow to get off

the ground. After all, the 'customer' has to pay the 'contractor' a gross wage from her own net income. Many women continue to do the unpaid work themselves and therefore 'ration' the time they work outside the home.

The transition from a 'breadwinner economy' to a 'combination economy' raises new questions. In the light of the brief overview in this paragraph the government is commissioning a socio-economic study into the long-term effects of the increasing labour force participation of women on unpaid work in the economy.

### 1.1.3 Stimulating female entrepreneurship

The objective of Cornerstone 2 of the Policy programme is 'More independent entrepreneurs who employ personnel and more rapid growers in 2011'. An increasing number of women indicate they would prefer to utilise their talents by becoming an entrepreneur instead of an employee. The government applauds this development, which is why they aim to stimulate female entrepreneurship by supporting networks of female entrepreneurs. In addition, the government will make it easier for people to make the transition from employee to entrepreneur, making entrepreneurship more attractive for women in particular. In the capacity of entrepreneur women also work part-time more often than men.

A facility for micro credits will be introduced. This facility is expected to make the transition to entrepreneurship easier for people entitled to benefits, people with a lower education, people of ethnic minority groups and women. For all Ministry of Economic Affairs subsidy schemes in which the applicant is a natural person, it will be recorded whether the applicant is a male or female entrepreneur. The executive organisations SenterNovem and EVD (Netherlands Foreign Trade Agency, an agency of the Ministry of Economic Affairs) will report to the Minister of Economic Affairs on these statistics. If these reports give cause for policy changes

(for instance more targeted information to networks of female entrepreneurs) the Ministry of Economic Affairs will report on this in its budget. Finally, the target value for the participation of women in international trade missions will be increased from 10% to 20%.

## 1.2: Improving the combination of work and childcare

For many Dutch women the way in which they can combine paid employment with childcare tasks is the deciding factor in the number of hours they are prepared to work (see table 2). Financial incentives alone are not enough. To make it attractive for more women to work more hours, it is therefore essential that non-financial provisions for the combination of employment and childcare are improved further.

### 1.2.1 '7 to 7': towards a flexitime structure

Attempts have long been made to fit the combination of employment and the care for children and parents into the traditional working week: working Monday to Friday from 9 to 5, and going shopping together on Saturdays. However, it is precisely because so many activities have to be completed in such a relatively short time that the combination of different tasks is often so difficult. The time pressure we experience in the Netherlands is reduced considerably if we no longer try to complete everything in 5 x 8 hours. For this reason one of the starting points of the emancipation policy is: 'From 7 to 7': towards a flexible day structure. This does not mean that the working week can now be 60 hours long, but it does mean that with more flexibility the 'edges of the day' could be better utilised. For instance by starting work a little earlier and therefore being able to stop that little bit earlier (flexible working hours), working from home one day a week so that we spend less time travelling (home working & teleworking), a GP who has an evening surgery instead of an afternoon surgery

twice a week (coordination between working and opening hours) and a municipal desk that is open during late-night shopping evenings, or a passport that can be applied for digitally (location-independent services).

To a large degree, the effort to make our day structure more flexible must be given shape 'in the market'. Employers can increasingly see the advantages of being more flexible. For GPs and health insurance companies there are no longer limitations (either legal or financial) preventing evening surgeries. Insofar as there are still obstructions to the introduction of more flexible hours the government aims to eliminate these as much as possible. For a broader use of flexible working hours and coordination of working and opening hours, a comprehensive effort in an array of areas and on the part of various players is important:

- ⋮ The government will set up a Part-time Plus Taskforce to increase labour force participation and working hours of women and create a greater base of support. This will require a cultural change within companies and more positive perceptions among women themselves. It must become easier and more attractive for women to work more hours. In many companies the possibilities for working flexible hours are still limited.
- ⋮ The government will commission a cost-benefits analysis of the effects of time and location-independent working on various policy areas (for instance the labour force participation of women, traffic jam problems, air quality). Flexible working hours and teleworking make it possible to better combine work and care tasks and therefore have a positive effect on the labour force participation (of women) and also on other social objectives. Making the existing telework arrangement more flexible fits in with this.
- ⋮ In its role of exemplary employer, the government will promote the introduction of flexible working hours and teleworking. A teleworking framework arrangement is in effect that the individual departments can define further.

9 De tijd als spiegel (Time as a mirror), Study into the way people spend their time in 2005, Breedveld & van der Broek, SCP, 2006.  
10 See, for instance, Ooms et al. Analyse van arbeidsparticipatie en kinderopvangbeslissingen van moeders met jonge kinderen (Analysis of the labour force participation and childcare

decisions of mothers with young children), SCP, 2007 or Portegijs et al. Hoe het werkt met kinderen (How it works with children), SCP, 2006.  
11 Example: at the time when household tasks for the elderly were increasingly funded by the Personal Budget, an article appeared in economic publication ESB entitled 'Einde van de

'gratis' mantelzorg (End of the 'free' informal care) (ESB, 5 September 2003).van de 'gratis' mantelzorg (ESB, 5 september 2003).

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- ⋮ Social innovation is one of the themes in the 2008 work programme of Syntens (foundation that advises entrepreneurs on innovation). In 2008 Syntens will conduct advisory courses on making labour in small to medium-sized enterprises more flexible, where possible with the aid of previously developed instruments and solutions. The Dutch Centre for Social Innovation focuses on the theme of rendering labour more flexible. Best practices in the area of social innovation, including examples of how labour and day structure may be made more flexible, can be found in the Dutch Centre for Social Innovation's databank ([www.ncsi.nl](http://www.ncsi.nl)). Through the use of social innovation employers can attract more potential target groups and better utilise existing employees.
- ⋮ The Dutch Health Authority (NZa) has been asked to research how acute healthcare should be organised effectively and on a chain basis, with the aim that patients have access to quick, high-quality and effectively organised healthcare. Evening GP surgeries can be viewed in the light of this acute healthcare chain. The NZa report will be published at the end of 2007. The Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport will formulate a position on the basis of this report.
- ⋮ The expansion of the opening hours of municipalities will be included in the ten-point plan for the improvement of services to citizens.

Experiences with the Day Structure ESF3 project show that municipalities and provinces can play an important driving and guiding role. Important improvements regarding the combination of work and care can only be implemented at a local level through municipal guidance. Examples are: in a number of municipalities the time obstacles and time wishes of the inhabitants were mapped out, parties that were relevant for changes were brought together, agreements were made about different opening hours, services and communication were digitised.

In practice a 'time policy' proves difficult to get off the ground at national, provincial and municipal levels alike. Often this is because of obstacles that people consider to be their own problem and for which they try to find an individual solution, such as taking a day off or working fewer hours. This does not mean there is no problem, or that this is the optimum solution for the people in question and for society. In most cases it requires cohesive changes in different parties at the same time that are 'sector transcending'. Often the benefits are not accrued by the party that is required to incur the costs. There is insufficient (logical) collaboration between (potential) interested parties: employers, employees, urban and rural planners, umbrella and sector organisations (for instance GPs, hospitals, consumer organisations). In order to accelerate this development a group of forerunners among municipalities and provinces has been set up. They work with relevant partners on the cohesive time policy in their municipality or province. This approach will expressly map out what obstacles these forerunners encounter when making these changes, so that they may be eliminated. The number of forerunners will be increased to 25. The achievements of the forerunners will be made visible and consequently others will follow.

## 1.2.2 Childcare for young children

The labour force participation of women in terms of persons, but also in terms of hours, comes under strong pressure when there are children involved. A situation in which women with children stop working early or stop working without really wanting to must be prevented. Until the children are school age, paid employment almost by definition means outsourcing care for the baby or toddler. In 2006 56% of the population said they felt it is good for a toddler to spend a few (2 or 3) days per week in a day-care centre. For babies in their first year of life 19% share this view.<sup>12</sup>

12 2006 Emancipation Monitor, p. 126.

In the Coalition Agreement it was decided that statutory parental leave will be expanded. In view of the preferences of young parents a period was chosen that is long enough to allow two working parents to care for their child themselves during his/her first year of life if they both use their statutory right to parental leave. The government is planning to expand parental leave from 13 to 26 weeks effective from 1 January 2009. For leave taken, the parent will be eligible for the parental leave discount, provided the parent in question participates in the life-course savings scheme. This entitlement is not transferable.

There will be a public benefits scheme for pregnancy and maternity leave for the self-employed. Self-employed women will be entitled to 16 weeks of benefits. The amount of the benefits depends on the self-employed person's income in the previous year and will not exceed the statutory minimum wage (1317 Euros gross per month). This scheme will be funded from general means, which means that self-employed women need not pay a separate premium. The scheme will be included in the Work and Care Act and is expected to come into effect in the second half of 2008.

One group that appears to benefit insufficiently from the current arrangements for employment and the care of young children is that of students in intermediate vocational education (MBO), higher vocational education (HBO) and at universities. They have been shown to face many obstacles, certainly if they are single. In the spring of 2007 the Support Point for Mothers in Education made an inventory of these obstacles and submitted it to Parliament. In response the Minister for Education, Cultural Affairs and Science undertook to map out the current facilities for mothers in education and to assess whether additional measures are needed.

13 Kremer, M. (2005), How Welfare States Care, Ph D thesis University of Utrecht.

14 2006 Emancipation Monitor. People were asked how inconvenient they felt it was for a mother to work outside the home if the children go to a day-care centre.

## 1.2.3 Children to day-care with peace of mind

The labour force participation of women is determined to an important extent by views on the care of young children<sup>13</sup> For instance, parents in the Scandinavian countries feel they are short changing their children if they do not send them to a day-care centre. In the Netherlands the views on this subject have changed dramatically in recent decades. In 1981 35% of the population felt that a day-care centre was an acceptable solution. In 2004 this percentage had increased to 70%.<sup>14</sup>

An important starting point for this government is the fact that the increasing labour force participation of women must not come at the expense of the quality of care for their children. Parents must be able to choose how they want to give shape to the care for their children. For instance, some parents choose to care for their children themselves by taking parental leave and working part-time. They are prepared to outsource some of the childcare, but only if they can do so with complete peace of mind. Affordability and availability of day-care are, in themselves, not sufficient<sup>15</sup>. The pedagogical quality and safety of the day-care facility must be beyond question, there must be sufficient continuity in the care and, perhaps the most important point, children must enjoy going there. This applies to babies and toddlers, but especially to older children too.

This is why, since the Nineties, many municipalities have been working on day-care arrangements: a continuous range of day-care facilities, education, lunchtime facilities, welfare and cultural activities. Such continuous day-care facilities, which are often given shape in 'community schools' (brede school), offer children to the age of 16 improved development opportunities and give parents the opportunity to better combine childcare and employment. The success of the Extended Schools combined with sports and culture is partially dependent on an integral

15 WRR (2006), De verzorgingsstaat herwogen; over verzorgen, verzekeren, verheffen en verbinden (The welfare state reconsidered; about caring, insuring, elevating and connecting) Amsterdam, p. 189. SCP (2006) and SCP (2007).

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approach. This means that policy themes are linked together, financial resources are bundled and (government) agencies and various social organisations collaborate. The Scientific Council for Government Policy advocates a "cohesive concept for a socio-pedagogical infrastructure for children aged 0-12".<sup>16</sup>

The government is working on improving day-care in the following ways:

- ⋮ The quality of care will be improved. In addition to intermediate vocational (MBO) level group leaders, group leaders with higher vocational (HBO) level education will also be employed.
- ⋮ The government wants all children who need it to participate in preschool and early age education (VVE) (100% target group reach).
- ⋮ From 1 August 2007 schools are responsible for coordinating after-school childcare. In a number of regions the demand exceeds the supply and people are on waiting lists. On Prince's Day, Parliament received an action plan based on the findings of the Bruins Taskforce.
- ⋮ In the Day-care Arrangements & Combined Positions programme a number of municipalities around the country are involved in planning 100 experiments with (coordinated) day-care arrangements for children to age 16. The national government and the municipalities share the costs in a 45% / 55% ratio. In this subsidy scheme, which will run until 31 July 2008, combined positions are also being implemented.
- ⋮ This government aims to considerably increase the number of Extended Schools. Extended Schools are characterised by the close collaboration between different sectors. This is why the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, together with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, will make funding available for the employment of professionals who will constitute a bridge between various sectors and, consequently, broaden and enhance these sectors: so-called combined

positions. The objective is to create 2,500 combined positions by 2011.

## 1.2.4 Combining work and informal care

Two drops in labour force participation can be seen during a woman's career. The first drop is associated with care for children. The previous paragraphs specifically focused on measures aimed at enabling young women to work (longer hours).

A second drop in labour force participation is seen when, at a later age, women take on the care for parents or other family members. To make it possible for these women to continue to optimally participate in the labour process, possibilities for combining work and informal care must be created. The State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport will shortly be sending a policy memorandum on informal care and volunteer work to Parliament. This memorandum will list a number of spear points aimed at, among other things, the improved facilitation of combining work and informal care (for both women and men).

## 1.3: Better distribution

In the Netherlands a lot of female talent is underutilised. Three related factors are responsible for this. Firstly, women have less chance of getting a managerial position than men, for instance because they spent a number of years working part-time when they were bringing up their children. Even in traditionally female sectors, like education and healthcare, by far the greater proportion of managers are men. A second factor is the professional separation by gender. It is cause for concern that this horizontal professional separation appears to increase with the rising labour force participation. The third factor is the fact that in the Netherlands, as in virtually all other countries, the pay gap between women and men continues to exist. This gap is partially caused by the fact that women and men work in different sectors,

women are less likely to move on to higher positions and accrue fewer years of work experience.

## 1.3.1 Increasing the number of women in top positions

The proportion of women in the top levels of companies and institutions hardly ever corresponds with the proportion of women in the sector in question - or with the population as a whole, when we look at the representation of women in politics and government. This is related to the 'glass ceiling', a collective term for all the factors that obstruct women from getting to the top. One example is the way in which top civil servants and (government) administrators are recruited. In many cases candidates are recruited from the familiar 'old boys' network. If there are few women in this network a man is not likely to be succeeded by a woman.

### The government as an exemplary employer

As indicated in the emancipation paragraph of the Coalition Agreement, in the coming years the government will be focusing on exerting direct influence on those

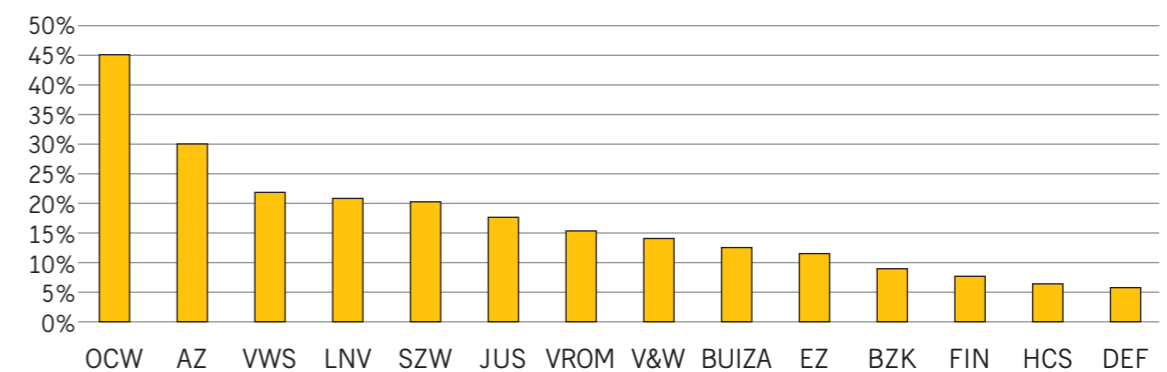
domains for which it is responsible. When new members of general and general technical advisory bodies need to be appointed, a woman will be proposed in half of all cases<sup>17</sup>. The administrative agreement between the government and the municipalities stipulates that by 2011 the central government and the municipalities will have a more diverse workforce and will achieve this by increasing the number of people of ethnic minority groups, women (in particular in management positions) and older employees.

The objective for the central government is for at least 25% of senior civil service positions<sup>18</sup> (hereafter referred to as ABD functions) to be occupied by women by 2011. Figure 3 outlines the current situation per department.

The following actions are being undertaken to ensure that by 2011 25% of the Senior Public Service will consist of women:

- ⋮ utilisation of the ABD review and 'own' networks;
- ⋮ the deployment of (specialist) recruitment agencies;
- ⋮ the development of an (action) programme to interest,

Figure 3 - % Women in ABD functions per department (2006)



OCW = Ministry of Education, Culture and Science  
 AZ = Ministry of General Affairs  
 VWS = Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport  
 LNV = Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality  
 SZW = Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment  
 JUS = Ministry of Justice  
 VROM = Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment  
 V&W = Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management  
 BUIZA = Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
 EZ = Ministry of Economic Affairs  
 BZK = Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations  
 FIN = Ministry of Finance  
 HCS = High Institutions of State  
 DEF = Ministry of Defence

Source: Senior Public Service; for ABD functions see footnote 2.

17 This standard does not apply to specialist technical advisory boards.

18 ABD functions = managerial functions with integral ultimate responsibility for people and resources (salary scale 15-19). The Senior Public Service comprises a total of approx. 800 persons.

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develop and commit female candidates to ABD functions;

- ⋮ when recruiting for the ABD candidate programme the target is 50% women;
- ⋮ the departments will endeavour to ensure that the selection committees for ABD functions will be made up of at least 25% but preferably 50% women.

The influx and through-flow of women in management positions in general (including at ABD level) is also one of the objectives of the government-wide diversity policy that comes into effect in 2007 and about which Parliament was recently informed.<sup>19</sup> Investing in the 'pipeline' as a whole is essential for the through-flow of women to the highest levels of management. The departments will initiate their own campaigns to achieve this. Once a year the Government Annual Social Report monitors what proportion of women are in the top positions (scales 17 - 19) and in middle management (scales 14 - 16) in each department. The Annual Social Report also contains information about the increase in the proportion of women in ABD functions. Once a year the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations also formulates the so-called Spear Point Memorandum. This Memorandum contains the - government-determined - parameters for negotiations on employment conditions for cabinet sectors, but in practice the Spear Point Memorandum also serves as a guidance framework for all the other government sectors. The Spear Point Memorandum also serves to put into practice the emancipation section of the Coalition Agreement. Finally, the Government Trend Memorandum on Labour Affairs provides the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations with a periodical report on the status of the diversity objectives (including the proportion of women in top positions) in the 14 government sectors (central government, provinces, municipalities, defence, water boards, the judiciary and the seven education sectors, including university medical centres).

## Women in education

In the education sector there are few women in top positions, while it is precisely education - the daily environment of the new generation - that should be setting an example. In spite of the fact that women are in the majority in the educational environment (in primary education they constitute 80% of employees and in secondary education over 50%), only one in three (primary education) or one in five (secondary education) managers are women. These figures illustrate the persistency of the glass ceiling.

The agreement on the professionalisation and support of educational personnel in primary and secondary education includes the agreements that were made to improve this situation.

In higher education and scientific research there is also a clearly disproportional participation of women as we get higher up in the hierarchy. In the initial stages of a scientific career, the participation of women is sufficient: 50% of students in higher education are women. Among doctoral candidates this percentage is 40%. After this the participation of women continues to decline. The percentage of female professors has increased from just over 5% in the late Nineties to around 10% today. The key objective of the science policy is to promote a continuation of this trend. The Netherlands aims for a percentage of at least 15% of female professors by 2010 (the Lisbon objective is 25%). The appointment of more female professors and women in managerial positions in the scientific community is essential because of the model role of this sector and the influence on the 'powers that be' in the academic world. Universities appear to be insufficiently able to follow current social trends. It would seem an obvious solution for the government to redirect this development. In 2008, an amount of one million Euros will be allocated to the Aspasia programme.<sup>20</sup> This programme will be supported by:

- ⋮ An administrative dialogue with the institutes (focus on appropriate personnel policy and the through-flow of talent, focus on under-utilised female potential, transparency of the selection procedures, efforts to achieve equal remuneration, commitment agreements about the representation of women in higher scientific and management positions, 'naming and shaming');
- ⋮ Individual talent programmes aimed at the through-flow of women to the top of the scientific field; (Vrouwen in de Vernieuwingsimpuls (Women in the Innovation Impulse), Aspasia);
- ⋮ Research into gender mechanisms within the scientific community;
- ⋮ Supporting the National Network of Female Professors (LNVH) by providing a network and mentoring function in the field;
- ⋮ Efforts through the Seventh European Framework Programme for Research and Technology, Science and Society, Women in Science.

## Women at the top in business

The target is to have a minimum of 20% women in the top levels of the business world by 2010. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will at least continue to subsidise the 'Glass Ceiling Ambassador Network' in 2007 and 2008. The Ambassador Network consists of prominent managers from the business community, the government and non-profit organisations. Its target is to increase the proportion of women in top positions. This year the Ambassador Network will be developing a Diversity & Inclusion Code. On the one hand this Code will provide companies with tools that will allow them to get more women in the top positions. On the other hand the Code can help companies get an insight into and publicise their diversity policy. The plan is to present the Code during the final meeting of the Network in March 2008 and have the ambassadors sign it. The Ambassador

Network will also dovetail with the Glass Ceiling Index of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This Index is a benchmarking tool that makes the current status regarding the number of women in top positions visible. The Ministry of Economic Affairs wants to dovetail the Ambassador Network website with this Index so that companies can compare their performance to that of other companies in the sector. Via the website existing tools can be better utilised and publicised. In addition there will be a focus on making the added value of diversity for both the business world and the economy more understandable.

On 30 October a TopBrainstorm on diversity policy will be held in the Netherlands with the Prime Minister, the Minister for Emancipation, the State Secretary of Economic Affairs, a number of women in top positions, academic experts and representatives from the Dutch business world. This TopBrainstorm must be the start of a structural diversity policy aimed at improving women's participation at the top level in the Netherlands. This year the Frijns Commissions<sup>21</sup> is researching the level of diversity of Supervisory Boards and the effect this level has on their functioning. Based on the results of this research the Commission will make recommendations for including the issue of diversity in the Tabaksblat Code (Dutch corporate governance code). In addition, the so-called transparency benchmark for Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship (MVO) will focus expressly on the criterion 'Women in top positions'. Increased transparency can encourage companies to actively aim for greater utilisation of female talent. In the appointment of chairpersons and members of advisory bodies of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the target is the proportional participation of women and persons from ethnic minority groups.

Code) and to monitor compliance with the code by Dutch listed companies.

19 'Voorbeeldrol Rijk' (Exemplary role of the Government), Memorandum from the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to the Lower House, 5 December 2006.

20 The Aspasia programme was established in October 1999 as a temporary programme aimed at increasing the number of female senior university professors (UHDs). Every year NWO

makes approx. 20 Aspasia bonuses available for Executive Boards that promote female Vidi and Vici laureates (2005 round and later) to UHD or Professor within one year after the subsidy allocation.

21 On 6 December 2004 the Corporate Governance Code Monitoring Commission was established. The task of the Monitoring Commission (which is chaired by Prof. Dr. J.M.G. Frijns) is: to promote the currency and practicability of the Dutch corporate governance code (also referred to as the Tabaksblat

# 1 Labour force participation

## 1.3.2 Reducing the professional separation between women and men

In recent years the educational level of women has increased: women participate in higher education increasingly often and also complete their PhD more often than before. Furthermore, women graduate faster than men. As a result the difference in the educational levels of women and men is becoming smaller.<sup>22</sup> Segregation by educational direction, however, has hardly reduced at all. Technical education is still dominated by male students. Healthcare education sees a majority of women. Although many girls in secondary education are still aiming for the Nature and Health profile, the through-flow of girls to scientific or technical follow-up studies is negligible. Hardly any girls choose Nature and Technology (NT) to start with. In addition to the fact that women occupy higher positions considerably less often than men, there are therefore also certain professions that have very few women in general. For instance, women's participation in scientific and technical positions is remarkably low: the percentage of women in technical professions was only 6.7% in 2004<sup>23</sup>. Of course there are also professions in which there are very few men, but when we look at the actual positions, women have a choice of fewer professions than men. In an international comparison by Eurostat the Netherlands is shown to have the highest segregation with regard to the vocational choices of men and women<sup>24</sup>. The vocational choices of women and men and the preceding choices of vocational education therefore show systematic, large differences. This educational and professional segregation has disadvantages. Girls who choose a 'male' study direction are often the exception and don't have female role models. This may make it more difficult for them to complete their education. Furthermore, the remuneration of 'female' professions is often lower than that of 'male' professions, even if the function level is comparable. The economy would benefit from a mix of male and female

talent in all professions and sectors. Furthermore, the opportunities for resolving shortages in the scientific and technical fields can mostly be found in improved utilisation of the female potential. This distinction between 'typically' female and 'typically' male professions is also referred to as the 'glass wall'. International comparisons show that the vocational choices of women and men are strongly determined by culture<sup>25</sup> and are associated, among other things, with perceptions about professions and the attitudes of teachers in elementary and secondary education<sup>26</sup>. This implies that it would be possible to realise a shift of women into male professions and sectors and vice versa. Practice backs this up. Schools and companies that participate in 'Science and Technology Platform' activities and the 'Glass Wall' project score considerably better on the influx and through-flow of girls to scientific and technical profiles and training and professions in that direction. However, this increased through-flow is not yet resulting in a breakthrough in the figures at macro level and is also still limited too much to forerunners. In order to come to a better distribution of men and women across professions and sectors we will be doing the following:

- ⋮ The positive influence of the 'Science and Technology Platform' and of the 'Glass Wall' project on the choices made by girls will be broadly publicised in schools and companies. The efforts to promote this through-flow will be expanded and intensified. Agreements will be reached with schools about the objectives for a higher influx and through-flow of girls in science and technology and, among other things, they will be offered programmes to achieve these objectives. In the coming years the Platform will pay extra attention to girls in VMBO (*pre-vocational secondary education*) and MBO (*upper secondary vocational education*) level education. These efforts must result in at least half of the increase in the science/technology influx consisting of girls and women.
- ⋮ An Education and Employment Market Taskforce will be established, through which a plan of approach

will be formulated for and by companies (via forerunners and think-tanks) in order to combat the shortages in the employment market for science and technology professions. The angle of improving utilisation of female potential (school leavers, lateral entrants, re-entrants) will be introduced and defined via the think-tanks.

- ⋮ The expertise of (mainly male) science teachers and school managers regarding the vocational and educational choices of girls will be fostered.
- ⋮ More female role models will be used and collaboration between the education field and the business world will be intensified.
- ⋮ A programme for reducing the segregation in education and the employment market and increasing the number of girls in science and technology professions will be given support.

To see how much effect these efforts have, the results of these actions will be monitored.

## 1.3.3 Reducing the existing pay gap between women and men

Women earn less than men. The government has documented its commitment to ending this inequality in the Coalition Agreement. During the Participation Summit, agreements on this subject were also reached with the social partners. The Netherlands is not an exception; in virtually all countries a pay gap exists between men and women. However, research has shown that in our country the wage discrepancies between women and men are on the high side compared to other European countries<sup>27</sup>. The most recent studies by the Labour Inspectorate show that in 2004 women in business earned on average 21% per hour less than men (uncorrected)<sup>28</sup>. A large part of this discrepancy can be statistically explained by factors like part-time working, work experience, sector and function level. However, the corrected pay gap of 7% is much harder to explain. This does not mean that there is

wage discrimination per sé. There is a possibility that through further definition of the research method an objective explanation may be found for (part of) this remaining pay gap of 7%. Among government employees, women in 2004 earned on average 14% less than men uncorrected and 4% corrected.<sup>29</sup>

The measures for reducing the pay gap have not yet delivered the desired result: so far there is no clear lessening of the pay gap.<sup>30</sup> In part this may be explained by the fact that men and women work in different sectors, women progress to higher positions less often and they accumulate fewer years of work experience. The actions announced in this chapter are therefore likely to contribute indirectly to reducing the uncorrected pay gap. The government will also make every effort to reduce the corrected pay gap.

The Minister of Social Affairs and Employment is the responsible administrator for the pay gap theme in general. On 11 June 2007 a government response to the final report of the study group 'Equal remuneration, that works!' was submitted to Parliament.<sup>31</sup> This response outlines the plans for reducing the pay gap between men and women, including annual participation in the Equal Pay Day, keeping the website [gelijkloon.nl](http://gelijkloon.nl) live for the next three years, establishing an equal remuneration network and bringing the manual on gender-neutral function evaluation to the attention of CAO (*Collective Labour Agreement*) negotiators. In addition, the possibility of including equal remuneration in a stipulation about the combating of discrimination in the Working Conditions Act is being considered. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has also asked its social partners to report on what they have done regarding the recommendations of the study group by 1 October 2007. Finally, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment will continue to conduct a biennial study into the pay gap. The next report is due at the end of 2008.

22 2006 Emancipation Monitor.

23 CBS, 2004.

24 Eurostat, 'The concentration of men and women in sectors of activity, Statistics in focus' 53, 2007.

25 Ditto

26 See also 'Ongezien Onderscheid' (Invisible difference), Sardes, 2006

27 'Tackling the pay gap between women and men', European Commission (COM), 424, 2007.

28 'De arbeidsmarktpositie van werknemers in 2004. Verschillen in beloning en mobiliteit' (The employment market position of employees in 2004. Differences in remuneration and mobility), Labour Inspectorate, 2006.

29 For an explanation of the terms 'corrected remuneration gap' and 'uncorrected remuneration gap' see 'De arbeidsmarktpositie van werknemers in 2004. Verschillen in beloning en mobiliteit' (The employment market position of employees in 2004. Differences in remuneration and mobility), Labour Inspectorate, 2006.

30 'Gelijk loon – nu of nooit'. Eindrapport en aanbevelingen (Equal remuneration - now or never. Final report and recommendations). Study group 'Equal remuneration, that works!', 12 March 2007.

31 Parliamentary documents Lower House, 2006-2007, 27 099, no.18.



# 1 Labour force participation

In July 2007 the European Commission published an announcement on equal remuneration<sup>32</sup>, which concludes that the existing pay gap indicates the necessity to evaluate the ways in which unlawful discrepancies in remuneration can be combated.

To this effect 4 priorities have been designated that require an active effort on the part of all the interested parties:

- studying ways to improve and implement legislation on equal treatment and equal remuneration;
- the full utilisation of the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs;
- encouraging employers to include equal remuneration in their personnel policy;
- stimulating the exchange of good examples of equal remuneration.

The Commission has proposed actions for each of these priorities. These actions correspond with the actions included in the government response to the final report and the recommendations of the study group 'Equal remuneration, that works!'

The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is responsible for the central government sector. Remuneration studies show that within the government there is also a pay gap between women and men. Until now it has been assumed that the central government sector is no different in this than other government sectors. For this reason attention has recently been focused on the cultural change that has now been initiated in most Ministries. In order to formulate a targeted policy in respect of the pay gap the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations will investigate, based on the available data, what the scope of the discrepancies in the Central Government sector is. Based on this zero measurement a plan of approach will be formulated in conjunction with the Ministries and the government personnel departments to reduce the measured discrepancies in the coming term of

government, whereby the target will be to halve the gap. After two years an interim measurement will be taken to evaluate the effect of the implemented measures and, where necessary, adjust them. The 2007-2010 employment conditions agreement for the central government sector notes that, in view of the current incongruencies in the wage scale structure and the expected employment market problems in the coming years, the current wage scale structure must be updated. The design of the new wage scale structure will be ready no later than 2010. In view of this development the current wage scale structure will not be included in the measures for reducing any remuneration discrepancies. The zero measurement for the central government sector will also serve as the basis for further exploration of the status of and the approach to the pay gap in other government sectors.

In the scientific field women are also more often in lower function levels than men and therefore often on a lower salary scale<sup>33</sup>. Among professors the discrepancies are considerable. Nearly three times as many male as female professors are in the highest salary scale for the position they occupy. These scale differences cause a considerable pay gap. In 2005 the top level of scale 18 was nearly 1400 Euros higher than the top level of scale 16, which most female professors are in. Focus on equal remuneration has been included in the administrative dialogue with institutions (see paragraph 1.3.1).

## Chapter 2

# Women and girls from ethnic minority groups



### Main objective 2:

**Offering opportunities to and utilising the talents of women and girls from ethnic minority groups.**

#### Sub-objectives:

- 2.1 Increasing the social and labour force participation of women and girls from ethnic minority groups.
- 2.2 Increasing the self-sufficiency and personal development of women and girls from ethnic minority groups.
- 2.3 Promoting the emancipation of men and boys from ethnic minority groups.

32 Tackling the pay gap between women and men', European Commission (COM), 424, 2007.  
 33 Female Professor Monitor, Simone de Beauvoir Foundation and others, 2006, p. 17 ([http://www.lnvh.nl/bestanden/Monitor\\_SdB\\_2006.pdf](http://www.lnvh.nl/bestanden/Monitor_SdB_2006.pdf)).

## 2 Women and girls from ethnic minority groups

### Introduction

The position of women from ethnic minority groups has become an important point for attention in the emancipation policy in the past period. Alarming figures on the relatively high proportion of women who do not actively participate in society, have a poor command of the Dutch language and do not have contact with people outside their own group were the direct cause for this increased attention.

Over 830,000 women of ethnic minority groups live in the Netherlands<sup>34</sup>. This is around 10% of the total female population of the Netherlands. Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam and Antillean/Aruban women are the largest groups among women from non-Western ethnic minorities (67% of the total). Of these women, 79% are in a vulnerable position or in a position that offers few opportunities with respect to the level of participation in Dutch society<sup>35</sup>.

Women of ethnic minority groups have a significantly lower education level than women of native Dutch heritage, but are also lower educated than the men from their own origin group. This applies especially to older, first-generation Turkish and Moroccan women. Of these women over the age of 40, 80% of Turkish women and 90% of Moroccan women have had at most primary education. A large number of these women have never learned to read or write. Surinam and Antillean women are notably better educated than Turkish and Moroccan women, but still do not reach the level of women of native Dutch heritage. Although the generation that was born and raised here has caught up considerably, in 2003 two-thirds of Turkish and Moroccan young women (age 20-34) still had to make do without basic qualifications. Turkish and Moroccan young men had basic qualifications somewhat more often (40%). Among their contemporaries of native Dutch heritage, it is women who have basic qualifications more often than men (80% and 76% respectively).

One of the consequences of this lower education level is the fact that women of ethnic minority groups tend to have more problems with the Dutch language than men of ethnic minority groups. It is estimated that one third of people of ethnic minority groups who were not born in the Netherlands are functionally illiterate (can barely read and write). The proportion of women in this group is larger than the proportion of men. For this group of women it is even more difficult to learn a new language<sup>36</sup>. In 2004 the PaVEM Commission (*Commission for the Participation of Women from Ethnic Minorities*) estimated the number of female 'oldcomers' (in other words, first-generation women) with a serious language deficit to be around 240,000<sup>37</sup>.

Despite the fact that pupils of ethnic minority groups in primary education are doing better all the time, they still have a considerable deficit compared to pupils of native Dutch heritage. Pupils of ethnic minority groups are much more behind in language skills than in arithmetic. In most of the groups of ethnic minority groups, girls are advised to progress to havo/vwo (higher secondary education/pre-university education) slightly more often than boys, but this does not apply to Turkish and Moroccan girls.

In secondary education, girls of ethnic minority groups do better than their male counterparts, in the same way that girls of native Dutch heritage do better than their male counterparts. However, girls of ethnic minority groups have not yet caught up the deficit they have when compared to girls of native Dutch heritage. In general, girls of ethnic minority groups leave secondary education without a diploma considerably less often than boys of ethnic minority groups. However, the high level of Turkish girls who leave secondary education (vmbo, havo and vwo) without a diploma in the final year is remarkable. Among Turkish girls there appears to be a divide between the girls who do really well in secondary education and progress to higher education,

and those who do not even get a secondary school diploma. It appears that this latter group leaves school early to get married. Once women of ethnic minority groups have obtained a diploma in continued education, they progress to the next step more often than women of native Dutch heritage. They are also more likely than women of native Dutch heritage to choose the highest possible education. In higher education, therefore, they have definitely caught up. It is noticeable that women of ethnic minority groups tend to make less gender-specific choices than women of native Dutch heritage and are more likely to choose educational directions that have good prospects in the employment market.

Of women from non-Western ethnic minorities 38% are in paid employment, compared to 56% of women of native Dutch heritage<sup>38</sup>. Obstructive factors are, among others, the educational level (see above), perceptions about the role of women and the fact that women of ethnic minority groups tend to have children at an earlier age than women of native Dutch heritage and also have larger families on average, and discrimination in the employment market. There are enormous differences between the different groups of ethnic minority groups. At 55% the net labour force participation of Surinam women, for instance, is virtually the same level as that of women of native Dutch heritage. Among women from Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, in contrast, only 10 to 15% work. Among the large minority groups the labour force participation of Moroccan (27%) and Turkish women (31%) is very low<sup>39</sup>. Of the women of ethnic minority groups who are in paid employment, half have to resort to entry-level and lower-level jobs. The same, incidentally, applies to men of ethnic minority groups. Among women of native Dutch heritage this figure is just over a quarter. Thirty-one percent of independent entrepreneurs in the Netherlands are women. The proportion of female

entrepreneurs among non-Western ethnic minorities lags behind the national average. The number of second-generation entrepreneurs from non-Western ethnic minorities is increasing strongly (both men and women). Because the increase in the number of male entrepreneurs in this group is higher than the increase in the number of female entrepreneurs, the proportion of female entrepreneurs among second-generation non-Western ethnic minority groups has declined somewhat<sup>40</sup>. In line with the low labour force participation, the dependency on benefits (disability benefits, social assistance or unemployment benefits) of women of ethnic minority groups between ages 15 and 65 is a lot higher than that of women of native Dutch heritage: 25% versus 12%<sup>41</sup>.

Many women who are not in paid employment and do not participate in society in some other way have hardly any contact with the Dutch population of native heritage or members from other ethnic minorities. These groups also have the most traditional views on emancipation and male-female roles. Conversely, in all groups the women tend to have more progressive views on emancipation than men and are clearly more in favour of a more equal role distribution than men.

The current situation with regard to education shows us that women of ethnic minority groups have made a tremendous leap forward, and are still doing so. If they can see and are given opportunities they will use them, which is why there is a considerable opportunity and challenge here for the emancipation policy - an opportunity and challenge the Minister for Emancipation, together with fellow Ministers, plans to take make the most of.

### Approach

In the recent period various initiatives and projects aimed at increasing the social and/or labour force participation of women from ethnic minorities have

34 Unless stipulated otherwise, data in this introduction is derived from the 'Sociale atlas van vrouwen uit etnische minderheden' (Social atlas of women from ethnic minorities), SCP (Social and Cultural Planning Office) 2006.

35 Emancipatie in estafette; De positie van vrouwen uit etnische minderheden (Emancipation as a relay race; The position of women from ethnic minorities), SCP, 2004.

36 2005 Annual Report on Integration, SCP, 2005.

37 Participatie van vrouwen uit etnische minderheden - Taal Totaal (Participation of women from ethnic minorities - language figures), Advice from the PaVEM Commission, 2004.

38 2006 Emancipation Monitor, SCP (Social and Cultural Planning Office) and CBS (Central Statistics Bureau).

39 2006 Emancipation Monitor, SCP and CBS.

40 2006 New Entrepreneurship Monitor, EIM (Small Business Research and Consultancy Institute).

41 2005 Annual Report on Integration, SCP.

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been implemented. Instruments and methods were developed and tested at municipal level. This collaboration between the central government and local authorities has ensured that the participation of women from ethnic minority groups has been placed higher on municipal policy agendas. The government wants to increase the room for municipalities to implement customised participation-promoting policies. To this end, efforts are being made to remove existing dividers between the various budgets aimed at reintegration and participation. By expanding the possibilities to use these budgets, and with the instruments and methods that have been developed in recent years, municipalities can get to work on promoting the participation of women of ethnic minority groups. It is up to municipalities to ensure that the focus on the position of women of ethnic minority groups takes root, so that more women are reached on a structural basis and more women can develop and resist potential obstructions imposed on them by their environment. This development starts with the political desire to work on this issue across different policy domains. The next requirement is strong municipal direction to ensure that different policy domains are in fact linked together. Municipal direction, and the reinforcement thereof, is one of the policy starting points. In addition, or rather first and foremost, there is the role played by the target group itself, with its own strengths and talents.

The emancipation of women from ethnic minority groups is partially an extension of integration issues. For this part of the emancipation policy we are therefore looking at a close coordination with the integration policy.

The main objective 'Offering opportunities to and utilising the talents of women and girls from ethnic minority groups', has three important sub-objectives:

1. increasing the social and labour force participation of women and girls from ethnic minority groups;
2. increasing the self-sufficiency and personal development of women and girls from ethnic minority groups;
3. promoting the emancipation of men and boys from ethnic minority groups.

### 2.1: Increasing the social and labour force participation of women and girls from ethnic minority groups

For women who have a poor command of the Dutch language and/or lack the necessary employment qualifications, the distance to the employment market is often insurmountable. For these women social participation (participating in low-threshold activities, voluntary participation) is an important first step. With regard to women for whom the move to the employment market appears to be more feasible, it is extremely important that the government does everything possible to stimulate and facilitate this move. The government aims to achieve this as follows.

#### 2.1.1 Supporting municipalities in their policy development

Pursuant to the Plan of Approach for Emancipation and Integration the '*participation toolkit*' was developed under the previous government and tried out in five municipalities. The toolkit is an instrument that municipalities can use to develop a cohesive policy to promote the participation of women from ethnic minority groups. By order of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, a further 10 municipalities will, in the period 2007-2008, receive assistance in the use of this toolkit and, therefore, the development of a cohesive approach. Knowledge institutes will also be given the use of the toolkit in order to advise municipalities on emancipation policy for women from ethnic minorities.

Pursuant to an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the government will also come to administrative agreements with municipalities, which can stimulate local initiatives that can increase the self-sufficiency and personal development of women and girls from ethnic minorities.

#### 2.1.2 Realisation of the Integration Delta Plan

The majority of people going through the integration process are female (in some cities 80%). The implementation of the Integration Delta Plan (Minister of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration) is aimed at improving the quality of integration. Integration must actively result in (labour force) participation. By 2011 80% of the integration processes will be dual or, in other words, linked to processes aimed at social participation or labour force participation, or at progression to vocational education. In the context of the Integration Delta Plan, opportunities for flexible day-care are also being investigated. The lack of suitable day-care is often still a barrier that prevents women from participating in integration.

#### 2.1.3 Expansion of the project 'Thousand-and-One Strengths; women and voluntary participation'

On 8 March 2007 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, together with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration signed an agreement with six municipalities<sup>42</sup> in respect of the project 'Thousand-and-One Strengths; women and voluntary participation'. This project is aimed at getting 50,000 women from ethnic minorities involved in volunteer work, the interculturalisation of volunteer organisations and the reinforcement of the chain of integration, social participation and paid employment. Pilots of the project

are currently running in six municipalities. In the coming period the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science will take the lead in encouraging and supporting other municipalities to implement (parts of) this project in their municipality as well. Key to this is municipal direction and a cohesive approach in which objectives and funding flows (*Wmo (Participation Education Act)*, *Wwb (Work and Assistance Act)*, *Web (Adult and Vocational Education Act)*, *Wi (Integration Act)*) are linked more effectively.

#### 2.1.4 Encouraging sectors to create para-professional positions for women from ethnic minorities<sup>43</sup>

Paraprofessional positions offer women good opportunities for gaining work experience without formal qualifications and entering the employment market. During the Participation Summit the government entered into agreements with social partners about adjustments to the job description/wage scale structure, which will create room for paraprofessional positions for women from ethnic minorities. In the context of the Part-time Plus Taskforce the government is evaluating the possibility of coming to agreements with different sectors about the implementation of these positions. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has already had exploratory talks on this subject with housing corporations. This sector offers good opportunities for creating paraprofessional positions.

#### 2.1.5 Steering Group Women of ethnic minority groups and Employment

The Steering Group Women of ethnic minority groups and Employment (established by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment through to 31 December 2007) supports eight municipalities that are trying to increase the chances of jobs for women from ethnic minority groups. They are doing this by experimenting with independent entrepreneurship, empowerment, the use

<sup>42</sup> Utrecht, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Breda and Nijmegen.

<sup>43</sup> A paraprofessional works in an area in which she has not had any (formal) training. The paraprofessional is close to the target group or is part of this group and does work that puts her in direct contact with the target group of women from ethnic minorities.

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of coaches and ambassadors, the creation of para-professional positions, organising network meetings, approaching employers and creating an integral approach. Based on these experiences a guide will be prepared that can be used to support other municipalities.

### 2.1.6 Other measures

In addition to the aforementioned specific measures a number of general measures are in place in which the position of women from ethnic minorities is given specific attention.

- ⌘ The government has agreed with the VNG (Association of Dutch Municipalities) that 75,000 benefits recipients and 25,000 people who are not entitled to benefits will be mobilised. A large proportion of these are women.
- ⌘ The government will stimulate independent entrepreneurship by making micro credits available to starting entrepreneurs. Specific attention will be given to female entrepreneurship, among other means through the support of networks. In the context of the 'Power Neighbourhoods' Action Plan the government is talking to municipalities about the way in which women from ethnic minorities in the neighbourhoods in question can be given specific support.
- ⌘ Research is being conducted into the extent in which people from ethnic minorities benefit from the reintegration policy and into the effectiveness of this policy for the target group in question. In this research specific attention is given to women from ethnic minorities, both those receiving benefits and those not entitled to benefits.
- ⌘ The government wants to encourage women from ethnic minorities to follow vocational training. Partly they are doing so in the context of the Integration Delta Plan, by offering integration processes in a dual format. In addition, efforts are made to improve the progression from integration to vocational training, which can encourage people without basic qualifi-

cations to obtain these qualifications. The problems surrounding early school leavers will be further explored; an ambassador function/girl network may be created around this problem.

## 2.2: Increasing the self-sufficiency and personal development of women and girls from ethnic minority groups

Traditional views (of women and men) about the role and position of girls and women result in obstructions to the personal development of women and in social isolation. Furthermore, a mutual lack of understanding and prejudices influence the perceptions about women from ethnic minorities. This means their talents are not always recognised. The talents of women become more visible and better utilised if the self-sufficiency of women increases and if positive perceptions are stimulated by means of a dialogue. Self-sufficiency relates to discovering one's own talents, being able to make choices and personal development. This process is stimulated by, on the one hand, coaching and training and, on the other hand, positive perceptions. In order to increase the self-sufficiency of women the government will take the following measures.

### 2.2.1 The use of female and male role models

The use of role models can be an effective method of encouraging people to visualise and utilise their opportunities. On a small scale successes have already been achieved with the use of 'buddies' or mentors (for instance hbo/wo (higher vocational education/higher education) students acting as mentors for vmbo/mbo (pre-vocational education/upper-secondary vocational education students). The government is making financial resources available to implement these types of initiatives on a larger scale.

### 2.2.2 Promoting dialogue

As part of the Plan of Approach for Emancipation and Integration, which was implemented under the previous government for the benefit of women (and men) from ethnic minorities, dialogue proved to be an excellent approach to bring people into contact with each other with respect for each others views. It also proved to be possible to have people talk about taboo subjects, such as male/female relations, 'loverboys'(a commonly used Dutch term to indicate men who look to get into relationships with young women for the purpose of exploiting them, often through prostitution), domestic violence etc. The government wants to continue and support the use of the dialogue. The Ministry of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration subsidy scheme, 'Room for contact between the non-Dutch heritage and native Dutch heritage populations', will continue through to the end of 2008. As a follow-up to this scheme, a project will be initiated that promotes intercultural contact on a local level. Within this project the participation of women and the position of women will receive explicit attention.

## 2.3: Promoting the emancipation of men and boys from ethnic minority groups

Traditionally, activities for the emancipation of women have focused on women. This would seem logical, but at the same time it is also clear that the emancipation of women is being obstructed by the traditional views of men. Girls and women from ethnic minorities are indicating increasingly urgently that this situation creates tension in the upbringing of children, in marriages and in the family. To make sure that the emancipation of women from ethnic minorities is not put at risk, the government feels it is important that boys and men from ethnic minorities are also emancipated.

### 2.3.1 supporting local initiatives

Where the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has come to agreements with municipalities about focusing on the emancipation of men and boys, support will be provided by local initiatives.

## Chapter 3 Safety



**Main objective 3a:**  
Preventing and combating violence against women and girls.

*Sub-objectives:*

- 3.1 Preventing and combating domestic violence against women and girls.
- 3.2 Improving the provision of information to prostitutes.
- 3.3 Preventing and combating honour-related violence.
- 3.4 Combating female genital mutilation.
- 3.5 Enhancing the expertise of professionals.

**Main objective 3b:**  
Sexual and relational education of girls and boys and increasing their ability to defend themselves against (sexual) violence.

*Sub-objectives:*

- 3.6 Gaining an understanding of the consequences of the sexualisation of the role of girls and women in society.
- 3.7 Increasing the ability of girls and boys to defend themselves against (sexual) violence.
- 3.8 Preventing teenage pregnancies.

## 3a Preventing and combating violence against women and girls.

### Introduction

In the public opinion, domestic violence, sexual abuse of girls and boys and human trafficking receive less attention and recognition as being a social problem than, for instance, the so-called 'senseless violence' in the public domain. It is the government's responsibility to ensure the safety of all of its citizens. Violence against persons must be combated, whether it takes place in the open or behind closed doors. In many types of violence the gender of the victim or the perpetrator plays a role. In 'private' forms of violence women and girls are the victims disproportionately often while the perpetrators are mostly men. This is the reason that the prevention and combating of violence against women and girls has been one of the main objectives of the central government's emancipation policy for many years. Violence against women is one of the more serious consequences of the unequal balance of power between men and women and, at the same time, also a phenomenon that helps maintain this unequal balance. The prevention of violence against women is associated with views and prejudices about the responsibilities and qualities of men and women and about maleness and femaleness in themselves. It is also associated with views about the sexuality and reproductive rights of women and men. The fact that women are often dependent on men from a socio-economic point of view is one of the causes of the unequal balance of power.

The policy distinguishes between the following forms of violence against women and girls: domestic violence, human trafficking, honour-related violence and female genital mutilation.

### Violence in general

Exactly how often violence against women and girls occurs, either in public or in private, is difficult to say. Violence in the privacy of the home is impossible or difficult to observe and - because of the sensitivity of the subject matter - is not always reported. According to the CBS police statistics over 9,100 sexual offences and over 55,300 incidences of abuse were reported to the police in 2004. According to this data, women are the victim of incidents of sexual violence relatively more often and men are the victim of abuse relatively more often. Violence against women takes place in the home, at school or at work much more often than violence against men. In the majority of cases men are the perpetrators of the violence, both in the case of male and female victims and both in the public and private domain.

### Domestic violence

Domestic violence is violence that is committed by someone from the victim's domestic sphere<sup>44</sup>. The word 'domestic', therefore, does not refer to the place where the violence takes place (it may be in the home or elsewhere), but rather to the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. Domestic violence refers to physical, sexual and/or psychological forms of violence which include partner abuse, child abuse, parent abuse and elderly abuse. Forms of psychological violence may include, for instance, humiliation, threats and/or stalking.

Every year the police receives over 57,000 reports of domestic violence<sup>45</sup>. Over 70% of these reports relate to violence by a (former) partner. In many cases children witness the violence. It is estimated that only 12% of all incidences of domestic violence are reported to the police. This means that every year there are around 500,000 incidences of domestic violence. In order to get a better understanding of the nature and scope of domestic violence a national population screening into domestic violence will start in 2007.

### Human trafficking

The term 'human trafficking' not only includes exploitation in the sex industry but also exploitation in other sectors. The vast majority of victims of human trafficking are women<sup>46</sup>. In 2005 the Foundation against Female Trafficking registered 424 reports from (suspected) victims of human trafficking. This was an increase of 5% compared to the previous year. Most of the victims were aged between 18 and 30 and a large proportion ended up in prostitution (37%)<sup>47</sup>. (Potential) victims of human trafficking are primarily: underage girls who have become victims of "loverboys" (a commonly used Dutch term to indicate men who look to get into relationships with young women for the purpose of exploiting them, often through prostitution), underage asylum seekers who are in the Netherlands without their parents, women in asylum reception centres and women with a dependent residence status<sup>48</sup>.

### Honour-related violence

Honour-related violence is 'any form of psychological or physical violence committed on the basis of a collective mentality in response to a (threatened) violation of the honour of a man or woman and therefore his or her family, of which the outside world is aware or may become aware'<sup>49</sup>. This type of violence occurs particularly in communities that have a close bond and strong social control. Honour-related violence does not have a religious basis. In the Netherlands this type of violence occurs mainly in the Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam, Hindi and Pakistani communities<sup>50</sup>. Honour-related violence may take on different - not always punishable - forms. In extreme cases it can result in murder or manslaughter. In honour-related violence we see a distorted balance of power between the sexes, but also between the elderly and the young and between the individual and the group. Research and practical experience show that in cases where honour-related violence may play a role there are often several potential causes. Often there

are a number of factors (sexual, business, personal or other other-related issues) that make it difficult for an outsider to distinguish the main issue from the peripheral issues<sup>51</sup>. Exact figures on honour-related violence are not available. A pilot study in the Haaglanden police region<sup>52</sup> has provided an indication of the extent to which honour-related violence occurs. In 2006 the Haaglanden police identified 252 cases of possible honour-related violence. These cases are being analysed further. They occurred both inside and outside the Haaglanden region. In the context of the government's Honour-related Violence Programme, further research will be conducted in the coming period into the occurrence and manifestation forms of honour-related violence.

### Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation – also referred to as female circumcision - is a collective term for medical interference with the exterior - and sometimes interior - female reproductive organs for cultural or religious considerations. Female genital mutilation is against the law in the Netherlands and is considered an unacceptable violation of a person's physical integrity. In the Netherlands an estimated 50 girls are circumcised each year<sup>53</sup>.

### Approach

In recent years a lot of effort has, in the first instance, been put into the combating of violence against women and girls. After this and in addition to this there has been more focus on the safety of victims, enhanced prevention and increased expertise among professionals. The current government is continuing this approach. The ambition is to reduce aggression and violence by 25% by 2010 compared to 2002, with a new emphasis on dealing with perpetrators and committers of violence. People who commit domestic violence will be faced with a temporary restraining order. Immediate assistance (crisis intervention teams and 24-hour accessibility)

44 Huiselijk Geweld, Aard, Omvang en Hulpverlening (Domestic Violence, Nature, Scope and Assistance), Van Dijk et al, 1997.

45 Binnen zonder Kloppen; Omvang, aard en achtergronden van huiselijk geweld in 2005 op basis van landelijke politie-cijfers (Come in without knocking; Scope, nature and backgrounds of domestic violence in 2005 on the basis of national

police figures), Advies en Onderzoeksgroep Beke, February 2006.

46 2006 Emancipation Monitor, SCP and CBS.

47 Ditto 48 Ditto

49 Eerwraak of eengerelateerd geweld? Naar een werkdefinitie (Honour-related revenge or honour-related violence? Towards a practical definition). Ferweda and Van Leiden, Advies- en

Onderzoeksgroep Beke, The Hague, 2005.

50 Eerwraak of eengerelateerd geweld? Naar een werkdefinitie (Honour-related revenge or honour-related violence? Towards a practical definition). Ferweda and Van Leiden, Advies- en Onderzoeksgroep Beke, The Hague, 2005, or Ernstig eengerelateerd geweld. Een casuonderzoek. (Serious honour-related violence. A case study). Van der Torre, Schaap, COT (Crisis

Research Centre), 2005.

51 Bekend maakt onbeminde! (Unknown is unloved!) Saskia M.M. van Aalst and Roy H. Johannink, S.L., In-pact Politieadviescentrum, 2007.

52 TK 2006-2007, 30388, no. 8 and 15.

53 Commission combating female genital mutilation, Zoetermeer, 2005.

## 3a Preventing and combating violence against women and girls.

must prevent things getting out of hand. The government is dealing with privacy restrictions for the professional groups involved and is encouraging research into and the development of prevention programmes. The government has also formulated the Action Plan for Dealing with Child Abuse. This Plan was submitted to Parliament by the Minister for Youth and Families on 5 July 2007 and focuses on preventing, identifying and halting child abuse and on limiting the damage. Part of this plan is the intention to improve the identification of child abuse, which may be achieved, for instance, by promoting the expertise of professionals and by the use of a reporting code in all sectors that work with children<sup>54</sup>. Criminal abuse in the prostitution sector must be dealt with harshly, especially in the case of threats, intimidation and human trafficking.

The government has formulated the following objectives for preventing and combating violence against women and girls:

1. preventing and combating domestic violence against women and girls;
2. improving the provision of information to prostitutes;
3. reducing the number of victims of related violence;
4. combating female genital mutilation;
5. enhancing the expertise of professionals.

Sub-objectives 1 - 4 are given minimal clarification below as they form part of ongoing processes or programmes or of imminent government responses, and the initiative therefore lies with other departments. Sub-objective 5 is new. Recently an inventory was taken in vocational training for professionals employed in the youth sector to see how much attention is given to violence against women during the training<sup>55</sup>. This inventory showed that many courses deal with this theme but often on a limited and incidental basis. This theme is not a structural component of the education. There is a

need for external expertise, information and lesson materials. The Minister for Emancipation plans to put this on the agenda.

### 3.1: Preventing and combating domestic violence against women and girls

In recent years the programme 'Private Violence - Public Concern', which was part of the safety programme 'Towards a safer society' has focused strongly on dealing with domestic violence. The result of this approach can be read in the report entitled 'Approach Under Development'<sup>56</sup>, which was written on the basis of an assessment into the approach of municipalities, the police, the Public Prosecution service and these organisations between themselves for dealing with domestic violence. A response to this report was submitted to Parliament on 5 July<sup>57</sup>. The report shows that the approach for dealing with domestic violence has developed strongly in recent years. However, a major effort on the part of all the organisations involved remains necessary. The programme 'Dealing with Domestic Violence' will be continued for the duration of this term of government, whereby the recommendations from the aforementioned report will be incorporated in the programme.

For this next phase in the approach to dealing with domestic violence, the government wants to guarantee the achieved results of the past years and respond to new developments. The government will be giving the main points priority. Among other things, these include an increased focus on early identification and prevention (including implementation of the Temporary Restraining Order Act), improvement of the support of and aid to victims of domestic violence, privacy with respect to professional confidentiality and an insight into the effects of dealing with domestic violence. These points will be further defined in the coming months, as Parliament was informed in a memorandum dated 5 July 2007 from the

Minister of Justice, also on behalf of the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Minister of Cultural Affairs, Education and Science<sup>58</sup>.

### 3.2: Improving the provision of information to prostitutes

In spite of its legalisation (as a result of the lifting of the ban on brothels) the prostitution sector remains a well-spring of cash-in-hand working, trafficking in women, money laundering and other forms of illegality and criminality. The government wants to take strong steps to remedy this situation. Victims of human trafficking and women who want to leave the sector will receive extra attention, protection and aftercare. In 2007 the second evaluation of the lifting of the ban on brothels was completed<sup>59</sup>. An important conclusion of this evaluation is the fact that the (legal) position of prostitutes has not improved after the lifting of the ban on brothels in 2000. In the sector there is confusion about the way labour relations should be developed. Improvements do not 'automatically' come about in this sector. The Plan of Approach for the Regulation & Protection of the Prostitution Sector states that it is important that prostitutes themselves understand that their labour position must become clearer. This is important for their future social security, and also applies to prostitutes who work independently.

The National Reporter on Human Trafficking's (NRM) fifth report (2007) also reports situations of abuse in the licensed prostitution sector<sup>60</sup>. A government response to the second evaluation on the lifting of the ban on brothels and to the fifth report of the NRM will follow in the second half of 2007. In addition to aspects relating to the regulation of the sector, this response will also focus on improving the position of prostitutes in order to prevent forced prostitution. In this context both labour relations

and the social position of prostitutes will be looked at closely. After all, in addition to problems in the area of labour law, prostitutes are also faced with health risks and social problems - sometimes specific to their profession - such as exploitation, language problems and violence.

If prostitutes were more aware of their (legal) position they would be able to better resist coercion. However, the information, advice and assistance available to prostitutes is limited. Of course prostitutes have a number of local agencies they can contact, but the same facilities are not offered everywhere. In the coming period the government will explore what the possibilities are for improving the information provision to prostitutes.

### 3.3: Preventing and combating honour-related violence

In 2006 the government decided to set up an inter-departmental programme in order to arrive at an effective approach in dealing with honour-related violence. The programme integrates concrete measures in the area of social prevention, support, protection and criminal law, so that agencies that are faced with honour-related violence at a local level can deal with this violence effectively.

Because of the complexity of the issue, a programme-based approach was chosen in which the parties involved work in a result-focused manner on concrete measures to achieve ten objectives. In the area of social prevention (Minister of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration), minority organisations receive support in making the problem of honour-related violence a topic for discussion in their communities and indicating that this type of violence is not accepted in Dutch society. In the area of support and protection (State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport), shelters are being set up in which all groups of victims (including girls and men) can

54 TK 2006-2007, 31 015 and 29 815, no. 16.

55 Inventarisatie van aandacht voor Huiselijk Geweld, Seksueel Geweld en Kinder mishandeling in de beroepsopleidingen Jeugd (gezondheids)zorg tot 12 jaar (Inventory of focus on Domestic violence, Sexual Violence and Child Abuse in vocational courses for Youth (Health)care to age 12), TNO (Dutch Institute for applied scientific research), Movisie (knowledge and advice

centre for social development) and the Dutch Youth Institute (Nji), February 2007.

56 Aanpak in Ontwikkeling. Strategie, samenwerking en visie bij huiselijk geweld (Approach in Development. Strategy, collaboration and vision on domestic violence). Jos Kuppens, Agnes Cornelissens, Henk Ferwerda, Advies- en Onderzoeksgroep Beke, 2006.

57 TK 2006-2007, 28345, no. 47.

58 Ditto.

59 Scientific Research and Documentation Centre, TK 2006-2007, 25437, no. 54.

60 These indications originate from a major criminal investigation (2006) into human trafficking, called 'Sneep'.

## 3a Preventing and combating violence against women and girls.

receive adequate support, and screening and treatment methods are being developed to be able to offer effective support and assistance. In the area of criminal law (responsibility of the Minister of Justice), a lot is being done in terms of preventative efforts by the police. Every police corps now has an honour-related violence coordinator, who is trained to be able to adequately intervene in cases of honour-related violence and who works to increase the recognition of (possible) honour-related violence within his or her corps. The programme runs for five years and will end in 2010. Agreements have been reached with three municipalities that they will start a project to take in hand the coordination of the efforts of local authorities. Using their experiences a model will be developed to ensure that the measures from the programme are guaranteed at municipal level. Twice a year the Minister of Justice will inform Parliament on the progress of the programme.

### 3.4: Combating female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (VGV) is a serious form of child abuse the government wants to put a stop to in the Netherlands as soon as possible. Once a year the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport reports on the progress of the elimination of VGV. These elimination efforts focus particularly on prevention and improved identification of VGV. The intention is also to improve the chances of prosecution through improved identification, reporting and monitoring.

Among other areas, the measures are aimed at information activities, the promotion of expertise, the development of a discussion protocol and the extension of the period of limitation. Furthermore, in 2006 an intensive and integrated approach to eliminating VGV was set up in six regions with the highest concentration of risk groups (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven and Tilburg). The objectives of this approach are: good access to risk groups, enhancing

the expertise of professionals, increasing knowledge among intermediary groups such as teachers, the introduction of the discussion protocol, specific focus on VGV in the chain surrounding child abuse and increased knowledge about the nature and scope of VGV in the six regions.

Part of this approach for dealing with VGV is the fact that population groups have to be actively involved and speak out against this custom. In addition to FSAN (Federation of Somali Associations in the Netherlands), local ethnic minority organisations and key figures also play a role. Before the end of 2007 the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport will report to Parliament on the progress in the approach to VSV and any new measures.

### 3.5: Enhancing the expertise of professionals

In the efforts to prevent aggression and violence, early identification by professionals is essential. It is necessary for professionals-in-training to receive structural training on domestic and sexual violence, child abuse and culture-related forms of violence in order to be able to recognise indications of this violence at an early stage. Students must also learn to develop the skills needed to make the issue a subject for discussion and to be able to adequately refer victims on to the necessary agencies/aid providers.

In 2006 TNO (*Dutch Institute for applied scientific research*), Movisie (*knowledge and advice centre for social development*) and the Dutch Youth Institute (Nji) conducted a study into the focus on domestic and sexual violence and child abuse in vocational courses in the youth (health)care sector. The assessment was completed in February 2007<sup>61</sup>. The researchers note that many vocational training courses only pay limited and incidental attention to these themes. An analysis of

professional (competency) profiles shows that the knowledge and skills surrounding the problems of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse are rarely included expressly<sup>62</sup>. Stakeholders from the vocational education field recognise the outcome of the report and subscribe to the urgency of this problem.

In addition to professionals in the youth (health)care sector, (primary school) teachers are also an important link in the chain; they can recognise signals of various forms of violence at an early stage. Often they are the first point of contact for the paediatrician and GP if there is a suspicion of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse. The report recommends that it be investigated whether teacher training courses focus on these types of violence<sup>63</sup>.

On 1 August 2006 the expertise requirements for teachers came into effect. One of the competencies that corresponds with these problems is the pedagogical competency. In order to comply with this competency, teachers must, among other things, be able to identify problems in the socio-emotional and moral development of students and, where necessary in consultation with colleagues, formulate a plan of approach. In addition, teachers must be able to work together with the environment. For instance, they must be able to maintain contact with parents or other interested parties, be familiar with the social environment of parents/carers and with the cultural backgrounds of the pupils, and know how to take these aspects into account. The teacher training courses help teachers acquire these competency requirements. The Minister of Cultural Affairs, Education and Science is having research conducted to evaluate whether teacher training courses pay sufficient attention to domestic and sexual violence and child abuse. It is important that, in their curriculum, teacher training courses focus on these types of violence. For existing teachers, a domestic violence refresher course has been developed to promote their expertise.

In order to get a good insight into the possibilities the government has for enhancing the expertise of professionals in various areas, a work conference will be organised for the spring of 2008 with experts from the fields of education, youth (health)care, care provision, the police, the judiciary and other professional groups that are exposed to signals of violence in a broad sense in their professional practice. During this conference it will be assessed, among other things, how the focus on violence can be structurally embedded in the vocational education of professionals.

61 Inventarisatie van aandacht voor huiselijk- en seksueel geweld en kindermishandeling in de beroepsopleidingen Jeugd(gezondheids)zorg tot 12 jaar (Inventory of focus on Domestic violence, Sexual Violence and Child Abuse in vocational courses for Youth (Health)care to age 12), TNO, MOVISIE and NJi, February 2007.

62 Ditto.

63 Ditto.



## 3b Sexual and relational education of girls and boys and increasing their ability to defend themselves against (sexual) violence.

### Introduction

Teenage girls who perform sexual acts in exchange for a drink, a prepaid phone card or an expensive pair of jeans, suggestive underwear for young girls in the racks of a department store, girls who undergo surgical alterations to their genitals: these are the types of phenomena we are confronted with in the media on an almost daily basis. This development is also referred to as the sexualisation of society<sup>64</sup>. A social debate is currently in progress in which questions are being raised about the depiction of girls and women as sex objects, unrealistic beauty ideals and the increasing commercialisation and sexualisation of the female body in the media.

In this social debate, such developments are not only attributed to the influence of men; the role of girls and women themselves is also questioned. It appears that they sometimes consciously (want to) turn themselves and other women into sex objects, whereby they invoke a feminist principle (sexual liberation)<sup>65</sup>. At the same time, there is a strong countermovement of women who protest against this behaviour and the depiction of girls and women as sex objects by both men and women. They oppose the same unrealistic beauty ideals, the commercialisation of the female body and the increase in plastic surgery interventions<sup>66</sup>. The public debate progresses mainly along these apparently opposite lines – people are either prudish and conservative, or liberated and unconventional.

In the context of the emancipation policy it is important to be aware of the possible consequences of this increasing sexualisation. For instance, the current sexual morals among young people appear to lead to a vulgarisation of sexual conduct, which puts the physical integrity and safety of girls at risk. One in six girls and one in twenty boys under age 25 have been forced to perform or undergo sexual acts they did not want<sup>67</sup>. In one-third of all cases of recorded sex offences by young

people in the years 1996-2004 the offence was committed in a group<sup>68</sup>.

Teenage pregnancies are also a cause for concern because young motherhood comes with its own specific problems. In 2005, 2,795 children were born to mothers under the age of 20. The number of teenage mothers is relatively highest among non-Western ethnic minorities<sup>69</sup>. Some of these young mothers are able to cope well with these problems, but others cannot cope at all. They have to deal with an unstructured life, interrupted education, little support from their family, no safe place to stay, problems with boyfriend(s), abuse and little or no income. The relationship with the (young) father and their parents often comes under pressure and in many cases the young mother or teenage mother ends up a single mother. It is obvious that all this has serious consequences for the life of mother and child. It is a general misconception that the majority of teenage pregnancies in the Netherlands were unplanned: some girls say they more or less consciously chose to have a child at a young age<sup>70</sup>. In the development of prevention programmes this aspect will have to be taken into account.

This government feels that good sex education is extremely important for preventing unplanned pregnancies in young girls. In the first instance it is the parents who are responsible for this education but schools must also be asked to make a contribution, certainly now that research has shown that, in spite of the increasing sexualisation of society, parents are often unable to expressly address the issue of sexuality, either because of a generation gap or because they have trouble discussing this topic because of their cultural, social and/or religious background<sup>71</sup>. To make young people more assertive - in other words to teach them to set their own boundaries - with regard to the sexualisation of girls and women and (sexual) violence, this government, in addition to sex education, also wants to focus on good relational education - through schools and colleges or by other means.

### Approach

Where there are excesses of sexualisation, such as a threat to someone's physical integrity or a threat of sexual violence, there is a role for the government in contributing to the protection of young people if the parents are unable to do so. For instance, the government can support parents in specific issues relating to the upbringing of children or in setting standards or boundaries. They can also help young people themselves learn to be more assertive. First of all this requires a thorough exploration of the effects of the sexualisation of society on (the physical and mental health of) girls and boys. Awareness of the problems among young people and awareness and the promotion of expertise among teachers are also very important. But it goes even further: ultimately the objective is to make young people able to defend themselves against (sexual) violence, for instance via school or via young people's own media, such as popular Internet sites, music stations and television programmes. It is important that girls and boys learn to deal discerningly with the sexualised culture and are able to be assertive with regard to sexual violence. The government will explore whether it is possible to coordinate with assistance on formulating a code of conduct in schools and with the codes of conduct for audiovisual media. Both have to result in making media safer for young people (for instance by combating the negative sexual depiction of girls and women in reality shows and video clips). The government also wants to improve the provision of aid to and support for teenage mothers.

For the main objective of sexual and relational education of girls and boys and increasing their ability to defend themselves against (sexual) violence, the following sub-objectives were formulated:

1. Gaining an understanding of the consequences of the sexualisation of the role of girls and women in society;

2. increasing the ability of boys and girls to defend themselves against sexual violence
3. preventing teenage pregnancies.

### 3.6: Gaining an understanding of the consequences of the sexualisation of the role of girls and women in society

American research shows clear negative effects of the sexualisation of role models on the mental and physical health of young Americans<sup>72</sup>. Society also appears to be paying the costs: sexual violence is increasing and there is more undesired sexual conduct as a result of excessive sexualisation in the media. In the Netherlands there are also indications that the constant exposure to sexually charged images influences the sexual behaviour and self-image of young people<sup>73</sup>. These indications are a reason for further research. In the coming years the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is therefore commissioning research into the consequences of the sexualisation of (the role of girls and women in) society on both young people and on society itself. The link between religion and culture and violence/intimidation against girls will also be incorporated in this research. Based on the results of this exploration the approach will be further defined.

### 3.7: Increasing the ability of boys and girls to defend themselves against sexual violence

During this term of government, extra attention will be given to the sexual and relational education of young people through schools and colleges. Young people will be taught how to deal with the messages and images they are confronted with in various media on a daily basis. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport already has a comprehensive policy in the area of sexual education, including increasing assertiveness and preventing teenage pregnancies. This policy forms part of broader

64 Activiteiten en ontwikkelingen in 2006-2007 (Activities and developments in 2006-2007), Rutgers Nisso Group, Knowledge Centre for Sexuality.

65 See, among others: 'Female Chauvinist Pigs. Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture', Ariel Levy, 2007

66 See, among others: <http://www.beperkthoudbaar.info/> and <http://www.deadline.nl/news/Echt+sexy:+aan+klacht+tegen+MTV->

cultuur.

67 Sex before 25 – Seksuele gezondheid van jongeren in Nederland anno 2005 (Sex before age 25 - Sexual health of young people in the Netherlands in 2005). Rutgers Nisso Groep/Soa Aids the Netherlands.

68 Looije et al, Gedwongen seks als groepsactiviteit: een dossierstudie naar groepszedendelicten (Forced sex as a group activity;

a dossier study into group sex offences), in: Tijdschrift for seksuologie (Magazine for sexology) (2004) 28, 183-196.

69 Minder allochtone tienermoeders (Fewer teenage mothers of non-Dutch heritage), CBS, 4 September 2006.

70 Heft in eigen hand((Being in control), Fiom, JSO and Stade Advies.

71 <http://www.rng.nl>

72 Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls, American Psychological Association, Washington, 2007.

73 Tieners seks; vormen van instrumentele seks onder tieners (Teenage sex: forms of instrumental sex among teenagers), Graaf, H. de, et al, Rutgers Nisso Group, Utrecht, April 2007.

## 3b Sexual and relational education of girls and boys and increasing their ability to defend themselves against (sexual) violence.

interventions aimed at promoting the sexual health of young people in particular and preventing sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and sexual violence. For instance, the Ministry subsidises different organisations (including the Rutgers Nisso Group) and Area Health Authorities promote primary prevention. The Area Health Authorities are also responsible for the implementation of lesson packages in primary and secondary schools.

In 2007 a new programme was started at ZonMw (Dutch organisation for health studies and healthcare innovation), aimed at prevention and sexual health for young people. This programme will run for a period of 5 years. In the area of prevention with regard to sexual health, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport collaborates with the Minister of Youth and Families, and, together with the Youth and Family programme, it also targets youth culture and lifestyle. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport is also revising the Rutgershulpverlening (*Rutgers Aid*). This is to become a low-threshold facility where young people can go with their questions on sexuality from 2008. The 'public health' subsidy arrangement for the financing of low-threshold facilities was recently submitted to Parliament by the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport.

To increase the ability of young people to defend themselves against sexual violence it is very important that teachers are able to recognise signs of sexual intimidation or (sexual) violence at an early stage and deal with the situation adequately. We will, therefore, explore how the promotion of teachers' expertise in this area can be increased. We will also investigate the possibility of coordinating with assistance on the formulation of rules of conduct in schools.

It is also important to teach young people how to handle the messages and images they are confronted with in

various media on a daily basis. Via the television, Internet and magazines, young people are constantly exposed to sexuality, unattainable beauty ideals and the commercialisation of the (female) body. The images that are shown are often distorted. But who will teach young people how to put the images and texts they absorb through the various media in perspective? If clear reference frameworks are missing, young people may develop unhealthy behaviour in respect of sex and relationships as a result, with all the associated detrimental consequences<sup>74</sup>. Not only young girls are the potential victims of this visual culture. For boys and men, the sexualisation of girls also has consequences for the way they view relationships and sexuality. It is important that children, parents, teachers and experts are supported in learning to deal with media communications. In this context we also talk about media astuteness<sup>75</sup>. The aspect of media astuteness receives attention in the educational field and is already being incorporated in some schools. During this term of government we will investigate further what is needed to increase the media astuteness of young people, educators and professionals.

Finally, the government is evaluating whether it can stimulate more realistic perceptions about girls and women, and how 'safer' media messages can be implemented, whereby the direction outlined to Parliament in 2006<sup>76</sup> is the starting point. Following on from previous projects in 2007, the Stichting Leerplan Ontwikkeling (*Dutch Institute for Curriculum Development*) (SLO) will be testing a method for making children 'media wise' in practice. A curriculum will also be developed for schools for secondary education (from LWO (*learning path supporting education*) through to VWO-plus (*pre-university education*). The SLO is developing further material. The curriculum will be evaluated by the 'field' and improved on the basis of the findings. With the aid of all this material, schools can give 'media astuteness' a place in the curriculum,

for instance as a part of subjects like citizenship, cultural diversity, Dutch, arts and culture, people and society and social studies.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is currently looking into the possibility of structuring a network organisation for media astuteness and a possible programme for such a network.

### 3.8: Preventing teenage pregnancies

To be able to effectively prevent teenage pregnancies it is necessary to have a good picture of the causes and scope of the problem. It is a known fact that a large proportion of women who have their first child before age 20 will have to deal with a weak social position, caused by a bad financial position and an often incomplete education. However, the way in which teenage girls experience their pregnancy and motherhood and the circumstances they are in can differ strongly, often depending on the role played by family. The problem of teenage pregnancies is concentrated in specific areas and in specific population groups, particularly among Antillean and Surinam girls. Among these groups we often see unwanted pregnancies as well as an ill-considered choice for motherhood. The former is shown, among others, from the relatively high number of pregnancy terminations in these groups. The latter, the ill-considered decision to become a mother, is mainly associated with the fact that this improves the status of these girls and may give them a better social position, for instance because of the independent entitlement to (child) benefits that is part of motherhood. Often they don't realise what it will mean for their further development and they often find motherhood hard to deal with<sup>77</sup>. A specific problematic consequence of teenage pregnancies is the fact that pregnant girls and teenage mothers are sometimes rejected by the family in which they grew up because of embarrassment and honour-related issues. This government feels that these girls require specific help and support to prepare them

for an independent life with a child (and perhaps a partner). In the period up to 2011 the government will therefore give extra impetus to the aid and support of unintentionally pregnant girls and teenage mothers. However, the government is focusing its main efforts on prevention. If we really want to do something about this problem we will - in addition to providing proper support for existing teenage mothers - mostly have to try and prevent young girls becoming unintentionally pregnant in future. The government wants to achieve this by making the problem more transparent, gaining better access to the target group and increasing the assertiveness of (potential) teenage mothers. In the context of prevention the government focuses strongly on the sexual and relational education of young people. Additional investments are made in respect of people of ethnic minority groups and sexual health. To complement the existing policy, the government is also evaluating how young people can be reached by other methods, for instance through the use of cultural means such as the theatre, television series (soaps) or a website with a forum on the Internet. Recently the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport submitted to Parliament the ethics policy memorandum, which deals with the provision of information to this group with the aim of preventing unwanted pregnancies.

74 Activiteiten en ontwikkelingen in 2006-2007 (Activities and developments in 2006-2007), Rutgers Nisso Group, Knowledge Centre for Sexuality.

75 'Media astuteness' is a term that was introduced by the Council for Culture in 2005. It refers to a combination of knowledge, skills and attitude that citizens (and institutions) must

possess to be able to participate consciously, critically and actively in today's media-run world.

76 Zelfregulerend audiovisuele media (bescherming jeugdigen) (Self-regulation audiovisual media (protection of young people)), TK 2005-2006, no. 29326.

77 Van Berlo et al, *Achtergronden van tienerzwangerschappen* (Backgrounds of teenage pregnancies), 2005.

## Chapter 4

# International emancipation policy



### *Main objective 4:*

**Contributing to the (global) abolition of all forms of discrimination against women and the structural improvement of the position of women.**

### *Sub-objectives:*

- 4.1 *Guaranteeing a structural focus on the position of women in developing regions.*
- 4.2 *Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for girls and women.*
- 4.3 *Guaranteeing systematic attention for the effects of international peace missions on local women and giving thought, where necessary, to the composition of the team to be sent.*
- 4.4 *Structural focus on improving the position of women in all international areas of policy.*

## 4 International emancipation policy

### Introduction

There is systematic discrimination against women and girls on a global scale. For instance, 70% of the poorest people in developing countries are women and girls. Many girls and women in developing countries cannot go to school or get a job because they are discriminated against as women. In many regions the participation of girls in secondary and higher education is below par. Paid employment is essential to reinforce the economic position of women but is also important to generate more income for poor households and improve the wellbeing of children and families. As a result of poor infrastructures, women often spend a lot of time on housework. The percentage of women in paid employment in the non-agricultural sector increased in most countries between 1990 and 2002, but women are unemployed or engaged in the informal sector more often than men. Poor working conditions and unequal remuneration occur frequently. In many countries, property and inheritance legislation in respect of women is not or poorly regulated. As a result of the inequality in access to education, training, the employment market and legislation and regulations, it is difficult for women in particular to escape poverty.

Women have less power and political influence. The percentage of women in governments around the world increased by 6% in the past 10 years, but was still only 17% in total in 2006. In this context it is remarkable that the growth in the number of female Members of Parliament has in effect gone down again in the last year.

Poor women in particular - with little or no education - are often not in a position to decide when and how many children they want to have. This prevents them from actively participating in the economy, politics and the socio-cultural life which, ultimately, does not benefit the development of a country. Obstetric deaths occur on a large scale. Every year an estimated 500,000<sup>78</sup>

women die from complications during pregnancy and birth. That is more than one woman every minute.

Violence against women occurs on a large scale. Trafficking in women, child marriages, systematic rape, female circumcision and gender-specific abortion are widespread. Particularly vulnerable groups are women and girls in conflict situations, marginalised women and adolescents.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing *Platform for Action* are important starting points for the Dutch international emancipation policy. In addition, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Safety and the Action Programme of the Population Conference in Cairo (1994) in respect of sexual and reproductive rights are also both relevant.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has a leading role in the monitoring of the general emancipation policy, including in an EU context. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science also plays a leading role in the Netherlands' implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing *Platform for Action*.

The departments are individually responsible for integrating the emancipation policy in their international policy dossiers. In view of their policy domain, a number of departments have specific responsibilities in the international area. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is coordinator of the integrated foreign policy and, among other things, is responsible for the human rights and development aid policies. Ministries that are involved in international peacekeeping tasks also have a specific role.

There is interaction between national and international emancipation policies. Dutch experiences and insights

are contributed to international forums. At the same time new themes and developments at an international level are translated back to a national level, after which it is assessed what the consequences of the international agreements and themes are for national policy. This way, the emancipation policy will be anchored in general policy.

### The international playing field

International Treaties, action programmes, obligations and agreements aimed at promoting equality between men and women constitute the framework of the international emancipation policy. As a member state of the EU, a member of the UN and the Council of Europe, and as a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Netherlands has many obligations in this area. At present these obligations are largely the responsibility of the Minister for Emancipation, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other departments that are involved in various aspects. Below follows a summary of the main Treaties, agreements and programs in the area of the international emancipation policy.

### United Nations

#### *UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women*

According to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, ratified by the Netherlands in 1991), the Netherlands has an obligation to report to the supervisory UN Committee (CEDAW Committee) every four years. Early in 2005 the fourth international implementation report was submitted to the CEDAW Committee. In January 2007 this report was discussed with the Committee in New York. The Minister for Emancipation forwarded the Committee's comments and recommendations to Parliament on behalf of the government, together with a reaction<sup>79</sup>. The next (fifth) international report, which will be submitted to the UN in 2008 with a copy to

Parliament for its information, will respond to the comments and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee. In addition to the periodical international report, a national report is formulated every four years in the form of an in-depth study of a theme from the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. These national reports are good instruments for enhancing the knowledge of a specific emancipation area, and are always submitted to the government. In 2007 a report was submitted on invisible differences in education<sup>80</sup>.

#### *Beijing Platform for Action*

During the fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the participating countries came to agreements on the emancipation policy. These agreements were documented in the Beijing *Platform for Action* (BPfA), which comprises strategic objectives with associated actions in 12 areas<sup>81</sup>. The General Meeting of the UN evaluated the implementation of these agreements in 2000. As a result of this evaluation it has been decided that, in order to implement the entire BPfA, the individual member states will have to take the policy in hand more strongly. In 2005 the BPfA in its entirety was re-ratified by the UN member states. The BPfA is an important guide for the Dutch emancipation policy. The Netherlands has committed itself to these objectives and actively participates in, for instance, the annual session of the UN *Commission on the Status of Women* (CSW), where the 12 themes of the BPfA are discussed. During this session the Netherlands actively contributes to the discussion, provides examples of successful national policies and takes part in the negotiations on new resolutions and 'agreed conclusions' regarding the 12 themes of the BPfA. The objective in such negotiations is to maintain at least the 1995 Beijing standard, as the agenda is under increasing international conservative political pressure.

## 4 International emancipation policy

### **UN Millennium targets**

In 2000 all the member states of the UN promised to considerably reduce poverty in the world within fifteen years. To this effect eight millennium development objectives (MDGs)<sup>82</sup> were formulated. In the area of emancipation, objectives MDG3 (working on equal rights and opportunities for girls and women) and MDG5 (putting an end to obstetric deaths) are important. The progress of all the objectives benefits from specific attention being given to the development and position of women. At the same time MDG3 cannot be achieved if the rights and opportunities of women do not get sufficient attention in the other objectives<sup>83</sup>. With the project entitled *Bringing the Millennium Development Targets Closer*, the Netherlands wants to actively contribute to achieving these targets.

### **UN Safety Council Resolution 1325**

In October 2000 the UN Safety Council adopted resolution 1325, 'Women, Peace and Safety'. The resolution calls for both the reinforcement of the role of women in the planning, preparation, decision-making and implementation of peace missions and for a greater focus on the effects of conflicts and peace operations on women. Work on the implementation of this resolution is under way at all levels. Before the end of 2007 a Dutch National '1325' Action Plan will be formulated to turn words into actions.

### **International Conference on Population and Development**

In 1994 179 countries signed the action plan of the *International Conference on Population and Development* (ICPD) in Cairo. By doing so they acknowledged that population issues, the combating of poverty and sustainable development are all closely linked and determined that individual freedom of choice for women is the key to development. The Netherlands is a fore-runner and important international advocate in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

### **UN Reforms**

In the context of the current UN reforms, system-wide coherence (a single UN concept) is being worked on. This also applies to the structure of the emancipation policy within the UN. One of the recommendations from the *High Level Panel (HLP) on Systemwide Coherence*, which issued advice on the way in which the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN may be increased, is to combine the three existing units within the UN that currently work on reinforcing the position of women into a single organisation.

The report by the HLP also asserts that the target of gender equality cannot be left to this single organisation, but that it is and must remain a task and responsibility of the entire UN system. The Netherlands is a firm supporter of an optimal UN-wide task definition in the area of gender equality and has committed itself to this area.

### **UN Forums on Human Rights**

The UN forums on human rights develop instruments for the rights of women. The Human Rights Council has a special reporter which, among other things, makes recommendations to countries on how to better combat violence against women. The Minister of Foreign Affairs reported on the visit from the special reporter to the Netherlands in 2006<sup>84</sup>. The Netherlands has committed to submitting a resolution on violence against women during the Third Commission of the General Assembly of the United Nations every year since 1997. By doing so the Netherlands contributes to the setting of standards in respect of violence against women and keeps this subject prominently on the international human rights agenda.

### **European Union**

#### **Treaty of Amsterdam**

The fundamental principle of equal treatment of women and men forms part of the *Treaty of Rome* (1957). Article 119, on the right of equal remuneration for men and women, was incorporated in this Treaty. This was

the start of the European legislation on equal treatment, which resulted, among other things, in the Equal Treatment Directives. In 1997 the *Treaty of Amsterdam* was signed in which, among other things, the abolition of inequality and the promotion of equality between women and men were included as 'horizontal objectives'. This means that the member states will promote equal opportunities for women and men and take concrete measures to integrate the emancipation perspective in all areas of European policy. In addition, in the context of the broad non-discrimination policy based on Article 13 of the Treaty, discrimination is combated in all areas, for instance in the areas of employment, education, social protection and access to goods and services.

#### **Lisbon strategy**

In the context of the Lisbon strategy, emancipation objectives were formulated in six areas in a European context: employment; remuneration discrepancies; access to education and training throughout a person's entire life; promotion of new work formats; restructuring of working hours; sharing of tasks and responsibilities. Progress in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy is monitored by the European Commission. The EU receives periodical reports on the progress, including in relation to the increase in the labour force participation of women and the stimulation of more women in top positions. The progress report on the Lisbon objectives describes which measures (from the National Reform Programme) have been implemented in the past year or are being implemented. The report also looks at the recommendations and points for attention the European Commission has formulated for the Netherlands. For 2006 the recommendations focused on improving work provision for the elderly, women and vulnerable groups. One point for attention was increasing the number of hours worked by women in particular. To this effect, good and accessible day-care is being stimulated, the marginal pressure on the second income is being

reduced, the Part-time Plus Taskforce is being established and the pay gap is being reduced, to name but a few.

#### **European Commission: roadmap for the equality of women and men**

On 1 March 2006 the European Commission adopted a roadmap for the equality of women and men. With this roadmap, the Commission makes it clear what actions it will undertake up to 2010 to promote gender equality<sup>85</sup>. In this way the Commission is proceeding with its instruction to promote the equality of women and men and to ensure that its complete policy contributes to this objective. The roadmap supports the Commission's focus on the continuation and intensification of its efforts in this area. Since 2004 the European Commission has, after consultation with the member states, presented an annual report on the developments in the area of gender equality to the Spring Summit.

#### **Gender Pact**

During the European Council of 23 and 24 March 2006, the member states adopted the European Pact for Gender Equality. The Pact reflects the willingness of the member states to focus on promoting employment for women and creating a better balance between work and care, in order to meet the demographic challenges.

#### **High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming**

Twice a year the member states meet at an administrative level in the EU High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. With the aim of more equality between women and men, both in the individual member states and in the EU as a whole, the EU member states exchange good practices in this forum and jointly develop quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the progress of the implementation of the Beijing *Platform for Action*.

82 1) By 2015 extreme poverty and hunger will be eliminated; 2) By 2015 all boys and girls will go to school; 3) By 2015 men and women will have equal rights; 4) By 2015 infant mortality numbers will have declined strongly; 5) By 2015 fewer women will die from pregnancy-related complications; 6) By 2015 the spread of diseases like Aids and malaria will have been halted;

7) By 2015 more people will live in a sustainable environment; 8) By 2015 there will be more fair trade, debt reduction and aid.

83 See also under 4.2-4.4.

84 TK 2006-2007, 30800V no. 86.

85 European Commission, 'Roadmap for equality between women and men, 2006-2010'.

## 4 International emancipation policy

### European Gender Institute

In 2006 it was decided to establish a European Gender Institute. The task of this Institute is to support the European Commission and the member states in the implementation of the Community objectives for the promotion of equality between men and women and the combating of gender discrimination. Among other things, the Institute will be conducting coordinated research and developing instruments. Early in 2007 a start was made on the procedures for appointing a Director and an Executive Board and on formulating a work plan. Early 2008 will see the official start of the Institute. From 2010 the Netherlands will form part of the Executive Board of the Gender Institute.

### PROGRESS

In 2007 *PROGRESS* (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity), the new Community programme for employment and social solidarity was started, within which five previously separate programmes and Commission activities have been brought together. There are five sections in *PROGRESS*: employment; social protection and integration; working conditions; the combating of discrimination and encouraging diversity; equality of men and women. Gender mainstreaming is promoted in all sections; the last section expressly provides for this.

### Council of Europe

As a member of the Council of Europe the Netherlands participates in the *Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men*. This Committee meets twice a year and its target is equal focus on men and women in all the work of the Council of Europe. Specific themes the Committee focuses on are gender mainstreaming, mechanisms for the promotion of equality between women and men, violence against women, human trafficking and women in situations of armed conflict.

In these areas the Committee, together with the member states, organises activities such as seminars and campaigns. The Committee also develops recommendations to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

In 2004 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe established an ad hoc Committee for the combating of human trafficking. In 2005 the Council of Europe adopted a new Treaty for the combating of human trafficking, in which the Netherlands actively participated. The Dutch approval procedure is currently in progress.

### Approach

The main objective of Dutch efforts in the area of international emancipation is contributing to the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women and the structural improvement of the position of women. Many national themes logically reoccur in an international context. The Netherlands submits its policy wishes and examples in international forums: for instance, the labour force participation of women is an important subject on the European agenda and, in an ILO context, this theme is submitted under the theme of *'decent work for all'*. Involving women in decision-making is seen, among other places, in the policy surrounding (post) conflict situations. In an EU context, the Netherlands regularly asks that attention be given to migrant women. In the Third Commission of the General Assembly of the UN (which is involved in human rights, social and humanitarian affairs), the Netherlands has been submitting a resolution on combating violence against women every year since 1997.

The Netherlands feels that equal rights and opportunities for women are important. This concerns human rights and development, and the Netherlands has committed itself, both nationally and internationally to improving the position of women and to striving for greater

equality between men and women. Treaties and agreements on women's rights have been signed almost universally and constitute an excellent framework for the Dutch policy<sup>86</sup>.

The Netherlands is well positioned to bring together different relevant parties and to look for collaboration and synergy, so that the signed agreements are actually converted into actions. Both internationally and nationally, the Netherlands focuses on the (improved) implementation of policy. A focus on results also means looking for effective, sometimes innovative methods, for instance linking into tradition, culture and religion to achieve the objectives. And focusing on results also means looking for the correct strategy, means and instruments for achieving specific results. The results of the international efforts in the area of emancipation show that more attention needs to be given to the following subjects:

- 1) secondary education for girls;
  - 2) sexual and reproductive health and rights;
  - 3) time-saving infrastructure for women;
  - 4) well-regulated property and inheritance law;
  - 5) formal employment opportunities and equal opportunities in the employment market;
  - 6) participation and representation in politics and government and
  - 7) the combating of violence against women.
- Women and girls in conflict situations, marginalised women and adolescents all require special attention.

To achieve the main objective the government has formulated the following sub-objectives:

1. Guaranteeing a structural focus on the position of women in developing areas;
2. Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly of girls and women;
3. Guaranteeing systematic attention for the effects of international peace missions on local women and

paying attention, where necessary, to the composition of the team to be sent;

4. Structural focus on improving the position of women in all international areas of policy.

### 4.1: Guaranteeing a structural focus on the position of women in developing regions

Without substantial improvements to the position of women in the world, we will fail to achieve not only MDG3 (working on equal rights and opportunities for girls and women), but also other MDGs. In gender equality, the main concerns are equal opportunities, equal rights and the combating of discrimination or exclusion. Progress with all the MDGs is helped by giving specific attention to the development and position of women. The reverse is also true, namely that achieving MDG3 depends on the extent to which the rights and opportunities of women are the focal point in the other MDGs. Broadly speaking, the performance in respect of MDG3 is worse than the other MDGs. The results in the area of the participation of women in administration and paid employment in particular lag behind the other MDGs.

Poverty is increasingly becoming a female problem. Women have relatively fewer opportunities and possibilities to escape poverty than men. This starts at a young age, including in education. Of all the illiterate young people, for instance, 63% are girls<sup>87</sup>. This gives many women a much worse starting position when they look for work. In many areas this position is worsened further by discriminatory legislation, for instance in the areas of working hours, property and inheritance law. The deficit in the political power of women - in many developing countries women only occupy a very minor percentage of parliamentary seats<sup>88</sup> - contributes to the fact that these problems are low on the political agenda and little changes.

86 Starting points are: a) Maximising the Dutch added value; b) More political willingness and commitment of donors and authorities; c) Not alone but together; d) Efficient use of resources; and e) The rights and opportunities of women are everyone's business.

87 UNESCO estimate.  
88 In the OESO region the average is 24%; in developing countries the average is 16%, whereby the Middle Eastern and Northern African regions score lowest with 8%. In a number of Arab countries no women have a seat in Parliament.

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The lack of opportunities for the economic right of self-determination and political power also translates into unequal opportunities in other areas, such as healthcare. We are seeing a 'feminisation' of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the reduction in obstetric deaths (MDG5) lags behind target objectives. Internationally, the focus on and budgets for sexual and reproductive health and rights and family planning have been reduced in recent years.

The Netherlands is strongly committed to equal rights and opportunities for girls and women, particularly regarding equal opportunities in education, the position of women as silent victims of war and violence and keeping sexual and reproductive health and rights on the international agenda (SRGR).

Globally the progress in the proportion of girls and boys who participate in primary education is reasonable to good, thanks to targeted investments. With regard to secondary and higher education, the situation is less favourable. Education makes an important contribution to achieving the millennium objectives. After all, higher-educated women have fewer children, tend to have better health and pay more attention to hygiene and sexual protection. This has a direct effect on the health of the family, the spread of HIV/AIDS and the reduction in infant mortality.

Progress in the area of combating AIDS and the improvement of reproductive health partially depends on the functioning of the healthcare sector. The Netherlands contributes to and advocates, both bilaterally and multilaterally, a reinforcement of the healthcare, among other means by improved working conditions for personnel in the healthcare sector. The importance of the integration of HIV/AIDS interventions with sexual and reproductive health rights (SRGR) and with the improvement in the position of women form part of the operational objectives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The promotion of the rights of and opportunities for girls and women is an integral part of the portfolio of the Dutch Human Rights Ambassador. As one of the priorities of the human rights policy, this theme will receive even more attention in the coming years. Among other things, the focus will be on sexual and reproductive health and rights, violence against women, education and formal employment. On a regional basis, special attention will be given to the position of women and girls in the Middle East and the Gulf region. The Minister of Development Cooperation has now made MDG3 and MDG5 policy priorities in development policy for the coming years (see also objective 4.2).

In concrete terms, the enhanced focus on the rights and opportunities of women among the current Ministers will result in the establishment of a 'virtual MDG3 fund' with strategic partners to make a contribution to an all-out 'catch-up effort'. In addition, specific efforts will be made to combat violence against women at a national level in 3 to 6 countries. This includes supporting international women's organisations in the area of combating female circumcision and human rights. Reforms within the UN aimed at reinforcing the 'UN Gender architecture' can also count on our support.

At present the MDGs and UN Security Council resolution 1325 are powerful instruments to latch onto, in order to ensure that equal opportunities and rights for women and girls remain on the international agenda.

### 4.2: Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for girls and women

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRGR) have a key place in MDG5. Improving the 'health of mothers' and 'access to reproductive health for everyone' are not easy because a range of issues have to be organised. Poor women especially are still not able to choose how many children they want to have and when. Furthermore, the HIV/AIDS problem is different for women than for men, as women and girls are disproportionately vulnerable to HIV.

Since the international Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (ICPD) in 1994, the Netherlands has been active in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRGR). In that year 179 countries signed the Cairo Action Programme that focuses on access to information, resources and services in the area of reproductive health for everyone by 2015. MDG5 continues to build on the Cairo agenda.

Reproductive health comprises everything to do with procreation and sexuality. If women and girls claim their sexual and reproductive rights, they can define their own sexual life and determine when and with whom they want to have children. Only if women can make their own decisions about their family situation can they become more actively involved in politics, the socio-cultural life and the economy. MDG3 and MDG5 are therefore closely linked. Being guaranteed these rights also benefit women's health and that of their families and communities and results in more development opportunities for a country.

The Netherlands has a broad outlook on SRGR, concerning a combination of improved (health)care, sex education, more aids like condoms and contraceptives, the promotion of rights in respect of

sexuality and number of children, and the equality of men and women.

The reduction in obstetric deaths and 'reproductive health for everyone' will remain focal points in the Dutch development aid policy in the coming years. The Netherlands will therefore focus on the following aspects:

- 1) improving access to contraceptives and other *reproductive health commodities*, including for young people and particularly in (post) conflict countries;
- 2) improving the quality of (pre)natal care by training midwives;
- 3) reinforcement of healthcare systems, particularly emergency assistance in pregnancy, birth and terminations and preventing HIV being passed on from mother to child;
- 4) requesting attention for sexual health and reproductive rights as well as emphasis on the feminisation of the Aids epidemic;

Via UNFPA, UNAIDS and specialist international NGOs, the government is making extra funding available, both in the partner countries (bilaterally) and in (post) conflict countries. The Netherlands encourages other countries to keep their political and financial promises. In order to improve SRGR the Netherlands, in conjunction with developing countries, contributes to education and information, healthcare, emancipation and the combating of HIV/Aids.

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### 4.3: Guaranteeing systematic attention for the effects of international peace missions on local women and giving thought, where necessary, to the composition of the team to be sent

Increasing the involvement and control of women contributes to the resolution of conflicts and to a safe, stable and livable world. Safety is a condition for women utilising opportunities. A country cannot develop if it is not safe and if women lag behind in their development. The Netherlands is committed to the participation of women around the negotiating table, involving women and children in the mobilisation processes and paying attention to male/female relations in granting humanitarian aid and during reconstruction processes.

UN Safety Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and safety touches on various sub-areas of foreign policy, varying from safety policy to humanitarian aid and reconstruction. The resolution focuses on several aspects of the theme of women, peace and safety. A reformation of the safety sector is closely associated with the reform and restructure of, for instance, the police organisation. The participation of women is essential to the proper functioning of the police organisation. Women must also be protected against violence. Once again this is important for a credible and sustainable reconstruction process that enables proper administration and the development of a constitutional state. The political side of a peace process (de-escalation and confidence-inspiring measures) also benefits from this.

Dutch efforts in the context of '1325' focus on:

- ⋮ increasing the extent to which programmes for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration take the different requirements of male and female former fighters, and the persons who depend on them, into account;

- ⋮ contributing to the reinforcements of a gender perspective in the implementation of peace agreements in the area of peace construction and restructuring, including the development of the safety sector;
- ⋮ supporting the observance of the human rights of women and girls, in particular insofar as they relate to the Constitution, the electoral system, the police and the justice system, with a special focus on the protection of women and girls against gender-related violence such as rape.

In addition, attention is given to the implementation of 1325 in international peace missions.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the coordination of foreign policy in the area of peace and safety. The implementation of this policy takes place in close collaboration with the Ministry of Defence in particular, among others in the area of peace missions. To publicise the issue of gender in different ways inside and outside the Ministry of Defence, the Genderforce Project was started up. This project, with efforts from the Defence administration, ensures a structural and sustainable embedding of the gender policy within the Ministry of Defence. In the planning and implementation of peace missions, the gender perspective is expressly taken into consideration. There is focus on the effects of a Dutch mission on the women and men who will be part of the mission and on the local women and men. There is also focus on involving women in the process of promoting peace and reconstruction.

In the context of peace and safety, a National Action Plan 1325 is being worked on. In the formulation of this national action plan the Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes the lead, whereby it works closely with other Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, and with a broad range of social organisations. To this effect

a specific Schokland Agreement was formulated in the context of Project 2015. By no later than the end of 2007, a broadly supported National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Safety Council resolution 1325 will have been formulated.

### 4.4: Structural focus on improving the position of women in all international areas of policy

If the different positions and roles of men and women in society are not adequately taken into account and if the policy and the deployment of resources are not coordinated to these positions and roles, interventions are sub-optimal. An analysis of the millennium development objectives shows that the progress of all objectives will benefit from giving specific attention to the development of women. Conversely, achieving MDG3 (working on equal rights and opportunities for girls and women) depends on the extent to which the rights and opportunities of women are the focal point in the other MDGs. It is therefore very important, as in the national policy, to pay structural attention to the improvement of the position of women and girls in all international dossiers. This contributes to a coherent approach in international policy that increases and reinforces the efforts and cohesion in specific areas.

The Emancipation Policy review has shown that the international emancipation policy is effective as long as it is expressly shown to be an emancipation policy. As soon as one focuses on emancipation aspects in general policy (*gender mainstreaming*), or upon translating international policy back into a Dutch context, its effectiveness can be described as inadequate. There is, therefore, still much to be done with regard to interplay between international and national emancipation policy.

In addition to embedding emancipation in national policy, more attention in the coming period will be given to the

anchoring of emancipation in international policy. In order to achieve good results and consistent efforts, it is important that the coherence with international foreign policy be optimised. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science have agreed to actively monitor this in international organisations and in other countries. Given successful collaboration with other government departments, such as the Ministry of Defence, with regard to women, peace and safety, a coordinated effort will result.

When it comes to emancipation aspects in the general policy (gender mainstreaming), or the translation of international policy to the Dutch context, the effectiveness may be called poor. In the interaction between international and national emancipation policy, clear benefits can be obtained.

In addition to embedding emancipation in the national policy, in the coming period more express attention will be paid to embedding emancipation in the international policy. For good results and a consistent effort it is important to optimise the cohesion in the foreign policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science have agreed to monitor this cohesion in international organizations and in third countries. In good collaboration with the fellow Ministries, such as the Ministry of Defence where it concerns women, peace and safety, we will see a joint effort.

A more active effort to embed the emancipation perspective in the international area also corresponds well with the gender mainstreaming strategy of international agencies themselves, which the Netherlands strongly supports and promotes (see, for instance, the Roadmap of the European Commission, the gender mainstreaming strategy of the Council of Europe and the proposed gender structure within the 'Single UN' concept).



## 4 International emancipation policy

The following actions will be undertaken:

- ⌘ In order to achieve a more prominent position in a European context, the State Secretary for European Affairs will perform an analysis of all the important European dossiers for the coming period, in order to evaluate where and how the Netherlands can make a contribution to equal rights and opportunities in the European context. In mutual consultation, agreements for further collaboration will be reached between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the relevant Departments;
- ⌘ To reinforce the interaction between national and international policy, the possibilities for applying internationally developed indicators in emancipation areas in the Netherlands are being investigated;
- ⌘ Reporting obligations are used as a reason to evaluate or adjust existing policies or to propose new policies. This reinforces the interaction between international and national policy.





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