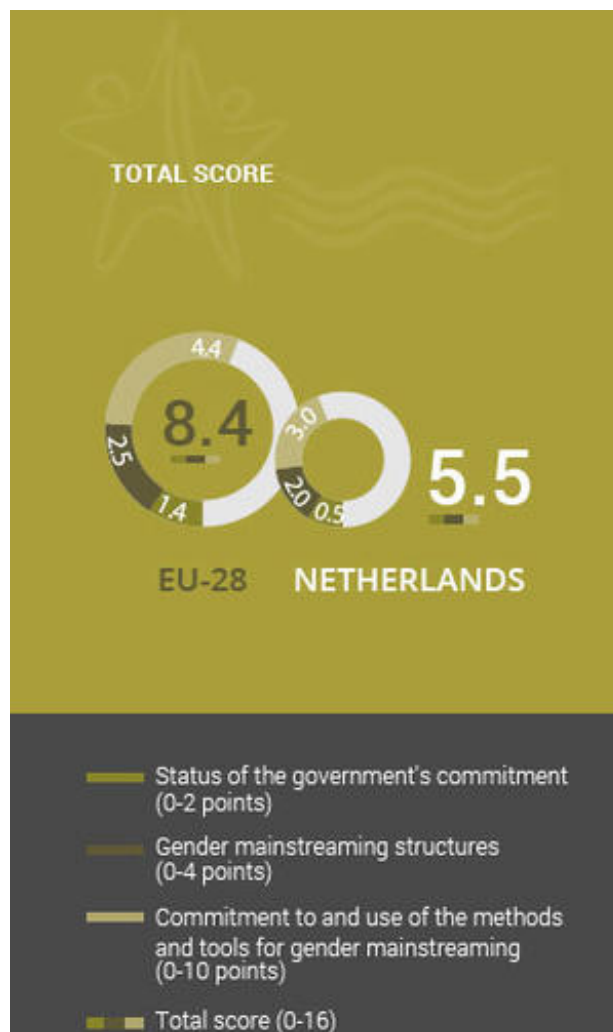


Netherlands

About

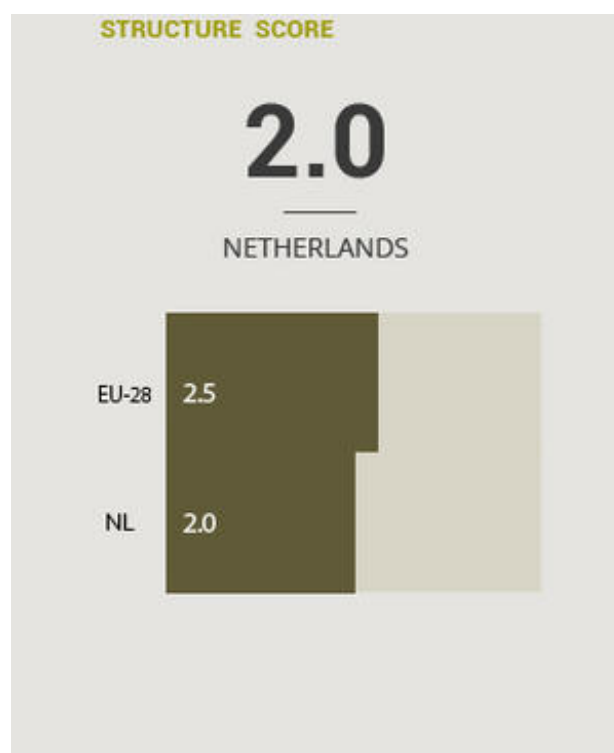


In the 2000 Multi-Year Policy Plan: Emancipation, the Dutch government announced its preconditions for gender mainstreaming and required both departmental and interdepartmental structures to be set up. The plan also required that all ministries should prepare a report on gender mainstreaming indicating how the five preconditions were met.

In 2004, the Emancipation Review Committee (VCE) was established by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (which was responsible for emancipation policy at that time). The VCE

Affairs and Employment (which was responsible for emancipation policy at that time). The VCE was assigned the task of following up, assessing and stimulating the Dutch government's progress on gender mainstreaming. In 2007, the final VCE Report on the evaluation of gender mainstreaming and the Dutch government's emancipation policies concluded that progress had stagnated since the decision to sustainably integrate emancipation objectives into all regular policymaking. As part of this policy, the Cabinet formulated a position on gender mainstreaming in 2001, which defined five preconditions and indicated that the quality of gender-equality policies was declining. In the period following the VCE recommendations, the Netherlands's approach to gender mainstreaming has changed. The two most recent gender-equality policies and their progress reports to the parliament reflect the revised approach, the core concept of which is the 'system responsibility' of ministries with regard to national emancipation policies. This means that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science takes the lead in the national emancipation policy, but that the responsibility for its formulation, implementation and evaluation is not left solely with that ministry. The ministry makes cooperation agreements with other ministries when emancipation priorities fall within the mandate of their policy domain. These cooperation agreements specify what those ministries are to contribute to the realisation of the emancipation objectives set out in national policy. An important aspect of this system-responsibility approach is that other ministries besides the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science are to be held accountable by parliament regarding the implementation of gender-equality policy.

Structures



The central gender-equality policy department in the Dutch government is the Directorate for Emancipation, established in 1970. It has been situated at an intermediate level in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science since the Cabinet changes of 2007. Women's emancipation and the emancipation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people have been integrated into its portfolio. The Minister for Education, Culture and Science presents the national emancipation policy framework to parliament in what is known as a policy letter. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which has a specific Department for Gender Equality, also formulated an international gender policy in 2011 and presented it to parliament.

Other support structures for gender mainstreaming include the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Emancipation Policy (ICE) and the Emancipation Review Committee (VCE), tasked with following up, assessing and stimulating the Dutch government's progress on gender mainstreaming.

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Laws and policies

In the Netherlands there is no differentiation between equal opportunities and anti-discrimination law. Rather, both are included under the Equal Treatment Act, enforced by an Equal Treatment Commission (merged in 2012 into the newly established Netherlands Institute for Human Rights). Gender is thus treated as a relevant category of discrimination.

Gender mainstreaming is subject to many policy documents. In 2001 the government adopted a position paper on gender mainstreaming. Five preconditions for gender mainstreaming were defined:

- 1 | Commitment on the part of senior politicians and officials;
- 2 | An explicit emancipation policy with clear objectives;
- 3 | Set responsibilities;
- 4 | Availability of gender expertise;
- 5 | Available resources (budget and staff) and instruments.

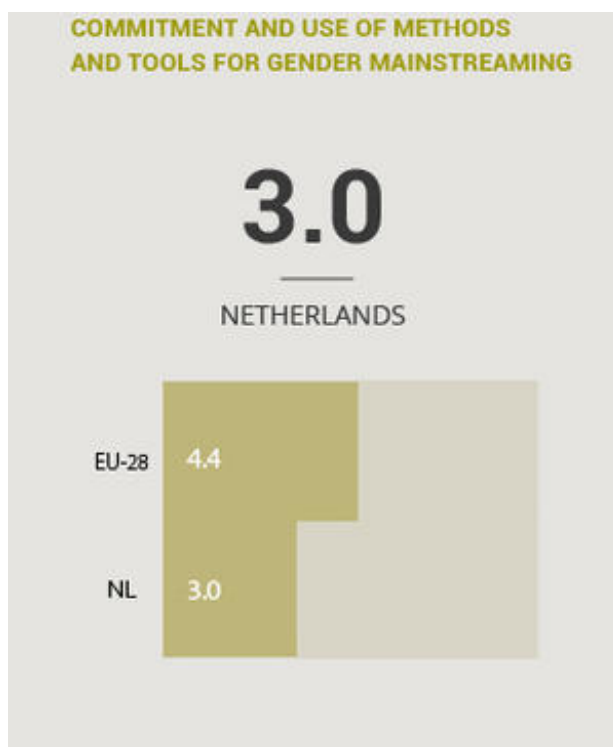
The position paper also addressed what departmental and interdepartmental structures were required. With respect to departmental structure, ministries were requested to prepare a report on gender mainstreaming. This report was to indicate how the five preconditions are to be met and

organised, point to concrete gender-mainstreaming targets, projected results and an improvement agenda, and contain a financial section specifying the required budget and staff allocation. These departmental reports were to be peer-reviewed by the ICE. With respect to how interdepartmental support would be structured, three dimensions were presented. First, the ICE was to be strengthened by a steering group, for which the annual budget and accountability cycles were considered important elements. The ICE was also expected to provide advice on policies for which a gender impact assessment was relevant, and would evaluate the progress on departmental gender-mainstreaming strategies. Secondly, a review committee was to be installed to recommend how gender mainstreaming could be strengthened. Thirdly, the ministry responsible for the national emancipation policy would have a supportive and coordinating role vis-à-vis gender mainstreaming in other departments. Gender mainstreaming would be supported by the development of additional instruments, including gender-sensitive budgeting, an interdepartmental knowledge network, databases and a module on gender expertise for regular training and courses.

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Methods and tools



Several gender-mainstreaming methods have been put in place, such as gender planning, knowledge generation/research, indicators, monitoring and more.

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Good practices

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