

Ministry of Education,  
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# *Cultural Policy in The Netherlands*

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Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Hague  
Boekmanstudies, Amsterdam

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## FOREWORD

Society is changing. Our culture is changing. And with it, cultural policy is changing also. *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands* describes how the process of change takes place in the different sectors and at varying speeds. The historical, inclusive overview provided in the book allows us to discover which values have remained intact throughout the ages and are still respected today. Moreover, it shows us why cultural policy, when seen as the whole of dynamic change and shared, permanent values, is so typical of our country.

The previous edition of *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands* had a print run of a few thousand copies, which ran out after five years. It is time for a new edition. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science initiated a partnership with the Boekman Foundation, in order to create the opportunity to radically restyle the book. The restyling has greatly benefited the text and made it more accessible for a wider audience.

We are convinced that what you have before you is a readable book, for both specialists and the broader public. It is intended for anyone who is interested in cultural and media policy, but in particular for our foreign colleagues; our counterparts working in the field of culture in other countries. This book is an instrument that can broaden knowledge, and that will hopefully lead to enhanced cultural relations and international cooperation.

Policy, including cultural policy, is becoming ever more interactive. The advantages of new media allow us to keep updating the written text on a continual basis. The so-called POD (Printing On Demand) version of *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands* will allow us to make this a dynamic book, as sections can easily be revised so that we can make a totally updated version at any time. In this way, we can continue to convey to you the dynamics of cultural life in the Netherlands in the years to come.

*The Director General Culture and Media, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science*

**Judith van Kranendonk**

The Hague,  
Autumn 2006



## INTRODUCTION

This publication describes the Dutch government's cultural policy and is addressed to anyone who is interested in the history of cultural policy and the latest policy developments in the Netherlands for professional or academic ends. This edition describes the situation as of Autumn 2006.

From mid-2003 until June 2006, Dutch cultural policy was part of the policy of the government in power, led by Christian Democrat Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende. This administration was a coalition of Christian Democrats (CDA), conservative liberals (VVD) and the democratic liberal party D66. Together they made up what is known as the 'Balkenende II Cabinet'. This government fell three months prior to the finalisation of this publication, but it is the cultural policy programme of former State Secretary for Culture Mrs Medy van der Laan (D66), of this latest administration, which still determines the main developments and debates in Dutch cultural policy today. At the time of publication, the status of several proposed policy developments and legislative amendments remains uncertain.

In this publication we have tried to provide an update of the latest developments in cultural policy that can be attributed to the most recent government in power. To this end, the final chapter (Chapter 5: Trans-sectoral policy themes) includes information on current debates and decisions that have affected, or will affect, the cultural sector. Chapter 5 also discusses the main contemporary inter-sectoral cultural policy *themes*, including international cultural policy, diversity and the distribution of culture across the country. In addition, some of the newest themes in cultural policy discourse are introduced, such as Culture and ICT, which may continue to occupy centre stage in the coming years. The extent to which the population consumes and participates in the arts, culture and the media is presented in an annex.

The bulk of the publication (chapters 1 to 4) primarily constitutes a reworking of "*Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*" [OCW, 2003]. The text draws heavily (and literally for the main part) on this book, but it has been updated and greatly condensed. This publication therefore resembles a *resource book* of the most relevant developments and priorities of past and present cultural policy rather than a reference work containing an exhaustive, statistically backed exposition of its background and an in-depth analysis of the whys and wherefores of the way in which cultural policy is organised today, such as was provided in the 2003 edition.

Chapter 1 gives a general introduction to the Dutch cultural policy system, and revisits some historical trends that have made the cultural policy landscape what it is today. Before turning to current cultural policy, we give a brief but necessary outline of the Dutch administrative and political system in Chapter 2. However, to understand properly the typical *features* of the cultural policy of the Netherlands, we need to look in more detail at the historical background. Therefore, the first part of Chapter 3 summarises the history of Dutch cultural policy, in particular outlining the background to the various ways in which the government supports culture in the Netherlands and the variety of motives involved. Chapter 3 also looks at the organisation of Dutch cultural policy in the past and present, and at the policy-making system as a whole, including an analysis of some of the constant factors that apply to cultural policy in the Netherlands.

Chapter 4 focuses on the various sectors, or policy areas: *cultural heritage* (museums, heritage sites, archaeology, and archives and public records); *media, literature and libraries*; and *the arts* (visual arts, architecture, design, film and new media, performing arts, amateur arts and art education<sup>1</sup>). The description of each sector begins with a very short historical outline, supplementing the general discussion in Chapter 3. We then look at the nature and extent of government involvement and the administrative framework. General policy goals for the sector and current key areas are also considered. The infrastructure of the sector is briefly outlined, as is the relationship between central and local government. The trends in central government funding are also examined.

The book ends with a short list of bibliographical references. In the text as well as in the footnotes, the Dutch equivalents of the institutions, policy documents and other names referred to in the book are provided. As a general rule, the Dutch names are given only the first time that the institution or policy document is mentioned, unless we consider it useful to repeat the Dutch name for clarity's sake. If an institution has no official English name, we have provided our own translation in a footnote.

Where possible, the Internet addresses of all institutions are provided in the footnotes.

Many of the statistics on cultural amenities and the sums spent on subsidising the arts included in this book are taken from official publications of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), primarily from the *Cultuurnota* and the *Kerncijfers 2001-2005*. Besides this, the National

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1 Also referred to as *cultural* (or: *culture*) education. As the term art education is commonly used internationally, we here stick to this variant.

Statistics Institute - “Statistics Netherlands” [*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek: CBS*<sup>2</sup>] collects data annually on public expenditure on culture from all layers of government (state, provinces, municipalities). An important difference between the data of the Ministry and Statistics Netherlands is that the Ministry only collects data on its own spending, whereas Statistics Netherlands provides information on central, provincial and municipal government expenditure.

CHAPTER 1

CULTURAL POLICY IN  
THE NETHERLANDS:  
AN INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Main principles of cultural policy in the Netherlands

The main concern of cultural policy in the Netherlands is the creation of the necessary conditions for the maintenance, continuity, development, social and geographical spread and expansion of cultural expression(s), to allow for a flourishing cultural life. The system adopts a position somewhere in between the continental tradition of direct government intervention and the Anglo-Saxon tradition based on the arms-length principle of government. According to foreign observers, this in-between position can be characterised as a *halfway house* between government and art.<sup>3</sup> Quality and diversity are principal considerations, primarily though the allocation of subsidies or grants to organisations and institutions in the areas concerned. An important aim of contemporary cultural policy is fostering the participation of young people and immigrants in different forms of cultural expression. The cultural policy debate is rarely about the legitimacy of the above-mentioned priorities. It is usually about the allocation of subsidies, or about proposed policy changes of specific sectors.

Apart from sparse disagreements in past and present, culture has never given rise to major political conflict in the Netherlands. There has always been a broad consensus that government support for culture is legitimate, based on the desirability of a general cultural climate in which individual freedom of expression, in the broadest sense, is paramount. Another subject on which there is broad fundamental agreement is diversity. The fight for pluralism has produced a high degree of tolerance in Dutch society and widespread interest in a broad range of cultural patterns. The third important point is that cultural policy has been based on the quality principle in recent years. The fourth and final principle of Dutch cultural policy - one which enjoys wide support - is that government and politicians must abstain from judgement on content and quality, a principle which involves certain paradoxes. The government has to be selective if it is to fulfil its 'civilizing' role, but at the same time it must not make value judgments. To avoid this dilemma, it delegates the business of selection. In the last forty years, this has taken the form of an advisory procedure, whereby the Minister asks for expert advice before making a decision.

There is a long-standing tradition of decentralised control over cultural funding, not only geographical but also functional. Under the Dutch system, not only the municipalities but also a variety of social groups, marked by their own ideologies, have regularly been given the means to maintain

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3 Matarasso F. & Ch. Landry (1999) *Balancing Act: twenty-one strategic dilemmas in cultural policy*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe

their own cultural amenities. This type of decentralised control was the first tool used to promote participation. Functional decentralisation is also implemented through the cultural Funds, which administer a significant portion of cultural policy as independent bodies.

### **1.2 The development of public administration in the cultural sector**

Cultural policy in the Netherlands is based on the premise that the state should distance itself from value judgements on art and science. Artistic development in the past, therefore, was mainly the result of the activities of private citizens and a large number of foundations, many of them related to culture. Over the years, the government has gradually assumed the role of moderator of cultural activities, apart from being the largest patron for art and culture. A Department for Art and Culture has been in existence since 1945. Two years later, in 1947, the Council for the Arts [*Raad voor de Kunst*] was installed by the Cabinet. Until some twelve years ago, political responsibility lay in the hands of ministers. In 1994, the political responsibility for arts and cultural affairs was given to a State Secretary, in combination with media affairs.

The history of cultural policy in the Netherlands is complex, reaching right back to the sixteenth century. To introduce the topic, this paragraph sketches the main developments from the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. In paragraph 3.1, the roots of Dutch cultural policy are traced in more detail.

Up until the 1960s, Dutch society was characterised by pillarisation. Different social groups, or pillars – liberal, socialist, Catholic, Protestant – expressed their ideology via their own means of transmission, including specialised newspapers or broadcasting channels and amateur art organisations. This development, however, had little direct effect on professional artistic life. In the 1960s, the ideological pillars gradually became less important. In order to support as many different individual expressions of culture as possible, the government started to subsidise works based on new criteria – such as quality. The definition of quality was left to advisory committees. The goal was to achieve a nationwide cultural infrastructure to host a cultural supply of a rather standardised quality. To this end, the government changed the nature of its arts funding and cultural supply from a temporary to a more permanent basis, involving the municipalities in building local facilities and giving them responsibility over their exploitation.

In the 1970s, cultural policy became an increasing part of the government's welfare policy. The benefit and relevance of culture to society as a whole became a priority, notably in terms of cultural participation. The social role of culture was perceived on the levels of both social class and geographical spread.

The economic stagnation of the early 1980s meant that the government had to reconsider its tasks in various fields, including culture. Two movements began in the field of cultural policy. On the one hand, the government continued to fund cultural institutions that could guarantee high artistic quality and professionalism. On the other hand, the state aimed at keeping public spending within specific boundaries. Fixed budget funding replaced operating (open-ended) subsidies. It was at the end of this period that the government undertook to prepare a cultural policy document<sup>4</sup> every four years.

The 1990s witnessed a change in the attitude of the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture, which became the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 1994. Instead of providing across-the-board funding to cultural organisations, the government started to offer financial incentives. Cultural organisations were encouraged to become financially more independent, both by seizing opportunities to acquire extra earnings and by looking more closely at their market, i.e. their audiences. They were called upon in particular to cater for the needs of a new, young audience and to an increasing population of ethnic minorities. In addition to the tasks of the state, private initiative and private funding were welcomed. As a result of economic recession, a relatively long period of gradual and general growth in the state budget for culture and media ended in 2004. Increasing and decreasing budgets have been announced simultaneously, with the budgets for cultural heritage and cultural education increasing slightly until 2008 and the budget for the performing arts remaining stable at best. The funding for so called 'support organisations' (documentation, research, mediation, professional services, etc.) in the field of the arts and culture have been reduced by 10% (i.e. Euro 5-6 million). Public broadcasting budgets will be reduced substantially; starting in 2006 with a budget cut of Euro 60-80 million<sup>5</sup>.

### 1.3 Overall description of the system

Government in the Netherlands has three layers: central government, provincial government and municipal government. A system of dual responsibilities prevails everywhere, and Parliament, county councils and

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4 *Cultuurnota* [www.cultuurnota.nl]

5 Source: *Compendium of Cultural Policy in Europe*, EricArts/Council of Europe [www.culturalpolicies.net]

local councils have the right to amend the financial and governmental works of the Cabinet, Provincial Deputies and of the Mayor and Aldermen. Cultural policy initiatives are taken by the governing bodies, in most cases after consulting the official advisory bodies. Parliament and councils have to give their consent to, or rejection of, these initiatives after public discussion. The most important decision-making moment is the fixing of the annual budget<sup>6</sup> for the coming year.

In preparing and fixing regulation, laws and cultural policy programmes, central government takes the lead in cultural matters, even though it covers only one third of all expenses related to art and culture. Major cultural institutions like the National Library of the Netherlands [*Koninklijke Bibliotheek*: KB<sup>7</sup>], the National Archive [*Nationaal Archief*<sup>8</sup>], the National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape en Built Heritage [*Rijksdienst voor Archeologie, Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten*: RACM<sup>9</sup>], a number of larger national museums, and almost all educational facilities like conservatories and other higher art education institutions are closely related to state government. The main task of central government is to guarantee a sound performance of these institutions and companies. Central government also subsidises several hundred performing arts companies, visual art institutes, all kinds of artistic initiatives and a number of infrastructural institutes and expertise centres. Next to arts and cultural heritage, central government also has primary responsibility for the national public broadcasting system.

Municipalities and provinces, spending almost two thirds of the national budget on arts and culture (the municipalities spending by far the greater part – 62%), take care of distribution and mediation between local and regional supply and demand. The majority of Dutch museums are financially dependent on the municipalities. Public cultural facilities, such as theatres and libraries, are decentralised in the Netherlands. Central government only supports libraries by funding an expertise centre. In order to understand the Dutch cultural policy system better, it is important to pay attention to four key issues:

- 1.3.1: **the relationship between the state and other levels of government;**
- 1.3.2: **the role of advisory committees;**
- 1.3.3: **the role of funding bodies in the arts; and**
- 1.3.4: **law-based regulations for planning cultural policy.**

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6 The national government programme budget for culture amounts to more than Euro 685 million in 2005, and will rise to nearly Euro 730 million in 2008 (source: “*Cultuurnota 2005-2008*” [OCW, September 2004])

7 [www.kb.nl](http://www.kb.nl)

8 [www.nationaalarchief.nl](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl)

9 [www.racm.nl](http://www.racm.nl)



### 1.3.1 **The relationship between the state and other levels of government**

In the early 1970s, a debate began concerning the issue of decentralisation. In the 1980s, the division of tasks among the state, the provinces and the municipalities was reconsidered, in order to increase efficiency. A large part of the performing arts sector, for example, was centralised. A system of mixed responsibilities came to an end and the state took full responsibility for maintaining symphony orchestras, including regional orchestras, and performing arts groups with a national reach. Apart from a small number of state museums, museums in general were placed under the responsibility of municipalities and provinces. The same applied to libraries and archives. The National Library of the Netherlands and the National Archive in The Hague are supported by the state. In addition, a number of infrastructural and umbrella organisations receive subsidies in order to provide support and other culture-related activities.

In a more general sense, the *provinces* were given the task of spreading, regulating and maintaining the supply of culture at a provincial level. The *municipalities* bore responsibility for maintaining the various venues and facilities and for scheduling performances. In practice, however, this division of tasks was not always applicable and centralisation and decentralisation tendencies became intertwined.

At present, municipalities and provinces are partners in a number of national cultural policy programmes. Since 1997, joint financing agreements between central government, regions and cities have been made for shared activities. These are mostly implemented by institutions, but shared responsibility is also taken in specific participation policy schemes. The partners involved are the eight covenant partners, as they are called, including the three largest cities, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague and five clusters of provinces and bigger cities: Central Netherlands, Northern Netherlands, Eastern Netherlands, Southern Netherlands and Western Netherlands.

### 1.3.2 **The role of advisory committees**

The original principle of the Dutch government remaining neutral in assessing arts issues is still intact. The government is expected to focus solely on policy issues, which is the reason why the government leaves decision-making about the arts mainly to various committees of independent experts. The Council for Culture [*Raad voor Cultuur*<sup>10</sup>] is an autonomous body that advises the government when formulating policy. While the gov-

ernment is no longer (since 1997) obliged to consult the Council, a healthy amount of cooperation remains between the government and the Council.

Advisory bodies also exist at municipal and provincial levels including, for example, the Amsterdam Arts Council [*Amsterdamse Kunstraad*<sup>11</sup>]. At provincial level, there are several cultural councils, whose tasks are usually advisory but who are occasionally involved in consultations, supply and demand mediation, support and public information activities.

The State Secretary of Culture frequently appoints external committees and private consultants to advise on politically and administratively charged issues of reorganisation. In the 1980s, for instance, special committees were appointed to advise on restructuring the state policy on theatre, dance and music. In 1993, an expert report was produced, “*Stimulating the Audiovisual Production in the Netherlands*”<sup>12</sup>, which greatly influenced restructuring in the film sector. More recently, commissions were created to advise government about claims from private families to return paintings and other art treasures that became state property after World War II.

### 1.3.3 The role of funding bodies in the arts

There are several public and semi-public Funds that have traditionally supported the creative arts. The national government’s responsibility goes no further than furnishing money, appointing board members and determining the specific conditions under which the Fund must operate. The Parliament has the final word when it comes to the size of the budget. Some examples are the Literary Fund [*Fonds voor de Letteren*<sup>13</sup>], the Mondriaan Foundation [*Mondriaan Stichting*<sup>14</sup>] and the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture [*Fonds voor Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst*<sup>15</sup>]. At present, the Council for Culture gives its advice on the Funds’ policy plans every four years.

### 1.3.4 Law-based regulations for planning cultural policy

The *Specific Cultural Policy Act*<sup>16</sup> determines aspects of cultural policy, such as the government’s obligation to submit a cultural policy plan to Parliament every four years, which is a major feature of the Dutch cultural policy system. The four-year plan outlines activities for the forthcoming period as well as reviewing achievements from the previous period. Furthermore, it regulates the government’s option to issue subsidies to provinces and municipalities.

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11 [www.kunstraad.nl](http://www.kunstraad.nl)

12 McKinsey, 1993

13 [www.fondsvoordeletteren.nl](http://www.fondsvoordeletteren.nl)

14 [www.mondriaanfoundation.nl](http://www.mondriaanfoundation.nl)

15 [www.fondsboekvb.nl](http://www.fondsboekvb.nl)

16 *Wet op het specifiek cultuurbeleid* [1993]

In 2005, State Secretary Medy van der Laan initiated a political discussion on the four-year system. In a policy paper entitled *Making a Difference*<sup>17</sup> she proposed a redistribution of institutions in the subsidy system, and the removal from law of the government's *obligation* to submit a cultural policy document (plan) every four years.

The parliamentary discussion that took place on 16th October 2006, that was chaired by the successor of State Secretary Medy van der Laan, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science Maria van der Hoeven (Christian Democratic Party), led to the following decisions. Subsidy requests from smaller cultural institutions and companies will no longer make up part of the four-year cultural policy document (planning) cycle, but will be submitted to the Funds. The Funds will be empowered organisationally, in order to meet their extended responsibilities. Moreover, to create more efficiency, a single Fund for Performing Arts will be created, incorporating the current Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund [*Fonds voor Amateurkunst en Podiumkunsten*<sup>18</sup>], the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund [*Fonds voor Podiumprogrammering en Marketing: FPPM*<sup>19</sup>] and the Creative Music Fund [*Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst*<sup>20</sup>]).

More generally, a rearrangement of cultural institutions will be made, redesigning the dividing line between institutions that will belong to the basic infrastructure<sup>21</sup>. Before 1 March 2007, the Council for Culture is to produce an analysis of the cultural sector, defining what belongs the cultural infrastructure.

In order to realise the above, an amendment must be made to the Law by 1 June 2007. Cultural institutions can submit funding requests before 1 February 2008.

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17 "Verschil Maken: Herijking Cultuurnotastystematiek" [OCW, September 2005]

18 [www.fapk.nl](http://www.fapk.nl)

19 [www.fppm.nl](http://www.fppm.nl)

20 [www.fondsscheppendetoonkunst.nl](http://www.fondsscheppendetoonkunst.nl)

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21 *Landelijke culturele basis infrastructuur*

CHAPTER 2

THE NETHERLANDS: A POLITICAL  
AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC OUTLINE

## 2.1 Geography and language

The Kingdom of the Netherlands comprises the Netherlands itself plus the Caribbean territories of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. With an area of 41,526 sq. km. and a population density of 468 per sq. km it is one of the smaller and most densely populated countries in Europe. It is situated on the North Sea and at the mouths of four major rivers, the Rhine, Maas, Scheldt and Eems. About half the area of the country is below sea and river level, making effective water control vital. Over twenty percent of the land has been reclaimed from the sea, a skill for which the Netherlands is known all over the world. Many tourists are attracted by the unusual landscape and the rich cultural heritage.

Altogether some 25 million people speak Dutch, in the Netherlands, the Caribbean territories, the former Dutch colony of Surinam and the Flemish part of Belgium. A variety of regional languages and dialects are spoken, in addition to or instead of Dutch. Frisian has a special status, being recognised as the second official language of the Netherlands. Over 400,000 people speak it in their normal daily lives, most of whom live in the northern province of Friesland. The language is adequately taken care of as a specimen of cultural heritage. The cultural and literary value of the language-related Frisian heritage is preserved by the Frysk Academy *Frysk Academie*<sup>22</sup> in Leeuwarden, the capital of the province of Friesland. Some time ago, it was decided that all official government and parliamentary documents would be available in the Frisian language. With the influx of other nationalities, over a hundred languages are now spoken in the Netherlands.

## 2.2 Population and demography

In mid-2006, the Netherlands had a population of just over 16.3 million. The population is ageing, with about 14% in the over-sixty-five age group. By 2030, the percentage will have risen to nearly 25%.<sup>23</sup>

The Netherlands, like many other countries in Western Europe, is in effect an ‘immigration country’. This trend began soon after World War II, with a wave of immigrants from the former Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia. One special group of immigrants were the Moluccans, most of whom had served in the former colonial army and brought their families with them. Over the past thirty years, the number of nationalities has increased considerably, with Turkey and Morocco as the main countries of origin. In the sixties, Dutch companies that were having trouble filling

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22 [www.fa.knaw.nl](http://www.fa.knaw.nl)

23 Source: Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) [[www.minvws.nl](http://www.minvws.nl)]

vacancies recruited Turkish and Moroccan workers. After Surinam became independent in 1975, a large number of Surinamese who had Dutch nationality decided to take up residence in the Netherlands. The last twenty years have seen an influx of asylum seekers from various parts of Africa and Asia as well as Europe. Most immigrants live in or near the major cities. Whereas in 1960 there were fewer than 120,000 foreigners living in the Netherlands, by 1975 the number had risen to 320,000. Official figures put the foreign population in 2006 at more than 3 million (not including illegal immigrants), which is about 19% of the total population<sup>24</sup> (See Table 1).

Table 1: Ethnic minorities in the Netherlands by ethnic group in 2006<sup>25</sup>

	<b>Total immigrants</b>	<b>% total population in 2006</b>
<b>Morocco</b>	323.239	1.9
<b>NL Antilles and Aruba</b>	129.683	0.8
<b>Surinam</b>	331.890	2
<b>Turkey</b>	364.333	2.2
<b>Other non-Western</b>	570.905	3.5
<b>Total non-Western</b>	1.720.050	10.5
<b>Western</b>	1.427.565	8.7

From 1970 to 2000, the Dutch population grew by 2.9 million (19%). The same period saw a decline in the populations of the major cities, with many people settling on the outskirts of the urban conurbations or a short distance away, resulting in the growth of dormitory towns. This trend was encouraged by government policy, in order to spread out the population and separate the areas where people live from those where they work. The planning concept of the 'compact city' was developed in the eighties. The cities

<sup>24</sup> Source: *Statistics Netherlands* [www.cbs.nl]

<sup>25</sup> Source: *Statistics Netherlands* [www.cbs.nl]

were rediscovered as attractive places to live, and as cultural breeding grounds. The difference between town and country is not as marked, however, as in a centralised country such as France. Most of the Netherlands can be regarded as urbanised, as it has a highly developed regional infrastructure, services are well distributed, and distances are small.

### **2.3 The organisation of government**

The Netherlands has been a constitutional monarchy since 1815. The symbol of national unity is the royal family, the House of Orange. Although Amsterdam has been the capital since the French era, The Hague has traditionally been the seat of government since the Middle Ages.

The Netherlands is a parliamentary democracy based on proportional representation with a bicameral Parliament (the States General). The Upper House has 75 members who are elected by the members of the Provincial Councils, making it an indirectly elected regional chamber. The Lower House has 150 members who are elected directly in general elections. Universal suffrage for men was introduced in 1917, and women received the vote in 1919. Since 1978, all Dutch nationals over the age of eighteen have had the vote. Elections to the Lower House, the Provincial Councils and the municipal councils are usually held every four years. Foreign residents also have the right to vote in municipal elections under certain conditions.

Government in the Netherlands, though it is not a federation, has traditionally been rather decentralised. There are twelve provinces and 458 municipalities. Each province is governed by a Provincial Council, which elects an executive committee (the Provincial Executive) from among its members. The latter is responsible for drafting and implementing Provincial Council decrees and bylaws, and for implementing any central government decrees delegated to the provinces. The Provincial Council and Provincial Executive are chaired by the crown-appointed Provincial Governor. The provinces receive central government funding from the Provinces Fund<sup>26</sup>, and the Municipalities from the Municipalities Fund<sup>27</sup>, based on population size and criteria such as the socio-cultural make-up of the population. Provinces and municipalities, in particular the four major cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague, enter into separate administrative agreements with central government on certain matters. With a few exceptions, the provinces and municipalities are autonomous when it comes to spending.

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26 *Provinciefonds*

27 *Gemeentefonds*

Each municipality is run by a municipal council chaired by a Mayor. The Mayor and Aldermen form the municipal executive. The funding from the Municipalities Fund is used to pay for cultural and recreational amenities such as theatres, sports fields and swimming pools, among other things. The *Grants to Municipal Authorities Act*<sup>28</sup> lays down how resources are allocated to the various tiers of government. Municipalities are regarded as an essential element in democratic government. A situation has gradually come about where local government cultural policy initiatives are able to provide a counterbalance to central government measures.

City and district councils are responsible for implementing policies in clearly defined areas such as housing, public green areas, the registry office, streets, swimming pools and sports fields.

#### **2.4 Politics and society**

For a long time, politics in the Netherlands was dominated by three main ideologies: denominational, social democratic and liberal. None of the various political parties which represent them has ever succeeded in winning an absolute majority in a general election during the twentieth century. They were therefore obliged to enter into ever-changing coalitions with one another. Each ideology had its own political parties, educational institutions and socio-economic organisations, forming confederacies referred to as 'pillars'. In this 'pillarised' society, Socialists, Catholics, Protestants and - to a lesser extent - liberals lived in worlds that were virtually apart from one another. Each had their own newspapers, magazines, broadcasting organisations, trade associations, youth clubs, sports clubs and leisure clubs. Many people's religious and political preferences coincided; an exception was the relatively small - moderate, freethinking section of the population, who had no desire to set up a pillar of their own. However, the differences between the pillars did not present an obstacle to the formation of coalition governments, as their political leaders succeeded in resolving contentious issues at national level. The result was a tradition of consensus, with organisations in society being consulted before political decisions were taken. Consultation involved not only the denominational organisations but also increasingly the employers' associations and trade unions in the various sectors of the economy. All this reflects the desire to involve as many of those directly involved as possible in every decision, complementing proportional representation in the political sphere.

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28 *Financiële verhoudingswet* [1996]



In the mid-sixties, the pillars went into a rapid decline. Fewer and fewer people found themselves able to identify with a denominational grouping and people were beginning to seek information, entertainment and leisure activities outside the traditional areas. This trend was reflected in the political arena: ninety new political parties (mostly local) were founded in the nineties. 2001 saw the founding of two new national parties, which did not base their politics on existing ideologies, but focused on topics such as law and order, administrative reform, health care and education.

Another factor was secularisation. Whereas in 1955 80% of the population belonged to a religious denomination, by 2001 the figure had fallen to 60%, of which 22% were churchgoers.<sup>29</sup> The pillar phenomenon has not lost its meaning for all minority groups, however. The Orthodox Calvinists, for example, still have their own daily newspapers, political parties and broadcasting organisation<sup>30</sup>.

During the 1917-94 period, denominational parties held power uninterrupted (except during the German occupation), with the socialists and liberals alternating as coalition partners. Not until 1994 did we see an end to the long succession of governments that included denominational parties, with the formation of a 'purple' coalition comprising the PvdA (Labour party) and two parties from the liberal wing, the traditional liberal VVD and the more radical D'66. This coalition came to an end in 2002, and since then the denominational Christian Democrat Party has again secured a dominant place in the ruling coalition.

## 2.5 Economic and social trends

The Netherlands is a prosperous country with a stable economic climate. Economic growth stagnated in the eighties, and also recently (2003-2005), but in general it can be said to fluctuate between 2% and 4%, with inflation usually a few percentage points lower<sup>31</sup>. The Dutch economy is particularly noted for high productivity and the relative concord between employers and employees - a perfect example of the Dutch tradition of consensus. The result is moderate pay rises and good industrial relations, with strikes few and far between. The large number of people not in employment - particularly the elderly, the disabled and the long-term unemployed is one of the main factors in the relatively high level of people receiving social security benefit, as table 2 shows.

29 Source: *Statistics Netherlands* [www.cbs.nl]

30 *Evangelische Omroep (EO)* [www.eo.nl]

31 Economic growth in the first quarter of 2006 was 2.9%; inflation 1.3% (source: *Statistics Netherlands* [www.cbs.nl])

Table 2: Gross domestic product (GDP), average income, total population, potential workforce and number of employed and unemployed, 2004-2007 [prognosis]<sup>32</sup>

	2004	2005	2006	2007 [prognosis]
<b>GDP</b> (billion euro)	488.6	501.1	523	545
<b>Average income per annum</b> (euro)	29000	29000	29500	30090
<b>Total population</b> (x 1000 persons)	16282	16321	16347	16376
<b>Potential workforce age 15-64</b> (x 1000 persons)	7398	7402	7459	7537
<b>N.o. employed age 15-64</b> (x 1000 persons)	6919	6918	7037	7191
<b>N.o. unemployed</b> (x 1000 persons) <b>incl % of total potential workforce</b>	479 (6.5%)	483 (6.5%)	422 (5.6%)	346 (4.6%)

Just under three-quarters of the workforce are employed in the trade and service sectors. Although farming and industry are still very important to the economy, they provide only a small proportion of total employment. The rise in the number of jobs in the service sector is typical of the shift towards a society where knowledge has become by far the most important production factor.

A good deal of the benefits of post-war economic expansion went into building a welfare state that actively promotes education, health care, care of the poor and elderly, social security, social services and cultural amenities. The welfare state can be seen as a sort of nationalised private sector, with the government assigning public powers and duties to private-sector bodies. A good example is public service broadcasting, which on the one hand is subject to a lot of rules and regulations, and on the other is still dependent on private-sector organisations for supplying the actual broadcasting.

32 Source: Centraal Planbureau – meest recente kortetermijnramingen [www.cpb.nl]

The post-war years saw not only the development of the welfare state but also radical changes in public morals. Choices which had been more or less imposed by the pillars made way for the pursuit of personal fulfilment. A predominantly submissive, quiet way of life was superseded by a more liberal lifestyle with new ideas about sexual relationships and commitment, including, for example, same-sex relationships and marriages. All this resulted in a high level of public and private tolerance of individual and group behaviour; indeed, tolerance became a sine qua non in the public arena. Pluralism also affected artistic and aesthetic judgments. Forms of culture hitherto regarded as trivial - e.g. pop music or comic books - started to be taken seriously. Quality had to be judged on a case-by-case basis; there was no fixed canon any more.

But tolerance, once a hallmark of Dutch society, has come under pressure in recent years. New sensibilities have developed following violent incidents at home and abroad. Political correctness is no longer taken for granted as being desirable, and public debate is at times unusually fierce. More and more people are defying the risk of being labelled intolerant, and certain types of unconventional behaviour are no longer tolerated automatically. In other words, the famed Dutch tolerance has become more selective.

## 2.6 Education

The first education act was passed in 1801, laying the foundations for the Dutch education system by introducing the distinction between state schools, which were publicly financed, and private schools, which were maintained by the private sector. This inequality led to the school funding controversy, a political struggle by the Protestant and Catholic sections of the population to achieve equal treatment - including funding - for state and private primary schools. Equality was enshrined in the 1917 Constitution and was subsequently extended to cover secondary and higher education.

Schooling has been compulsory since 1900 (originally from the ages of six to twelve, and now full-time from five to sixteen and part-time from sixteen to eighteen). In practice, almost all children attend school from the age of four.

Freedom of education is enshrined in the Constitution and covers the founding of schools and their affiliation and organisation. In all other respects education is governed by law. The number of teaching periods and the subjects are laid down, for instance; there are prescribed educational

objectives and examination syllabuses; teachers are required to have particular qualifications; each school must have a parents' participation council; and funding depends on having a minimum number of pupils. Provided they abide by these rules and regulations, schools have a relatively large amount of freedom in the manner in which they provide education.

This freedom of education enables organised groups of people to set up and run their own schools. Some schools are merely based on ideological principles, others mainly on educational ones. The state schools are run by the municipalities. Parents and pupils are free to choose any school they like. Schooling is free until the age of sixteen, and primary schools provide books and teaching materials free of charge. Schools may ask parents for voluntary contributions. Student loans are available to students aged 18-27 in full-time higher or higher vocational education. Under the current system, part of the loan is converted into a non-repayable grant if the student gains sufficient course credits.

Another point that has become increasingly important in recent years is the proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities. In the four large cities in particular, over half the pupils at many schools are from the immigrant community. Differences in background, assimilation and integration and in some cases learning difficulties - usually caused by language problems - are leading a good number of Dutch parents to choose other schools for their children, with the result that separate 'black' and 'white' schools have developed.

Education and culture used to be allies in the post-war Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences that existed until 1965, when the arts were transferred to the Ministry of Welfare. In 1994, the alliance was restored by the formation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Only two years later, in 1996, a strong liaison between cultural policy and education (schools) policy was made in the government programme "Culture and School", whereby cultural education is seen as a means to acquaint pupils with the arts and cultural heritage, and culture is seen as an instrument that can teach certain subjects and competencies. (For further reading on the "Culture and School" project, see §5.5)



CHAPTER 3

THE CULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK:  
FROM PAST TO PRESENT

### 3.1 Historical outline

#### 3.1.1 The sixteenth to the nineteenth century

The value of individual freedom, which to a large extent shapes the general cultural climate in the Netherlands, dates back to the revolt by the Northern Netherlands against the Habsburg King Philip II of Spain; the Eighty Years' War (1568-1648). In 1798, freedom of religion, along with freedom of the press and the right of association, was enshrined in the Constitution of the Batavian Republic. The acceptance of freedom of religion made it possible for denominations other than the Dutch Reformed Church to have their own places of worship. Thus religious freedom was one of the earliest Dutch constitutional rights. The 1798 Constitution was also the first to separate church and state at national level.

The Netherlands, unlike most of its neighbours, has hardly any tradition of patronage. Under the Calvinist regime of the Republic of the United Provinces (1588-1795) civic and regional authorities, 'stadtholder'<sup>33</sup> and other bodies that exercised secular or ecclesiastical power, commissioned works from architects, painters and sculptors on a modest scale. The last hereditary stadtholder, William V, threw open part of his art collection to a select public. In doing so he created one of the very first public museums, the other being *Teylers Museum*<sup>34</sup> in Haarlem, founded in 1780. His library became the National Library, later renamed the Royal Library under King Louis Napoleon, which is still located in The Hague. Civic authorities also took an interest in art and culture. As early as the seventeenth century, cities such as Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam had theatres. In the eighteenth century, the enlightened bourgeoisie began to form cultural societies. The Dutch Scientific Society [*Hollandsche Maatschappij van Wetenschappen*]<sup>35</sup>, for example, was one of the first quasi-public bodies to award prizes for exceptional cultural achievement.

The period of French rule (1795-1813) was very important in the development of cultural policy. The establishment of the Batavian Republic in 1795 created a unified nation state and laid the foundation for what would subsequently develop into an organised national policy on culture. The 1798 Constitution appointed various 'Agents', including an 'Agent for National Education', whose duties included promoting the 'Arts and Sciences'.

The reign of Louis Napoleon (1806-10), the brother of the French Emperor, also had a major influence on the nature and organisation of gov-

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33 Viceroy, or in Dutch: *Stadhouder*

34 [www.teylersmuseum.nl](http://www.teylersmuseum.nl)

35 Now the *Koninklijke Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen* [[www.hollmij.nl](http://www.hollmij.nl)]

ernment involvement in the arts and sciences. An important milestone was the founding of the Royal Institute of Sciences, Literature and Fine Arts [*Koninklijk Instituut van Wetenschappen, Letterkunde en Schoone Kunsten*] in 1808, which was subsequently replaced by the Royal Academy of Sciences [*Koninklijke Academie van Wetenschappen*<sup>36</sup>]. The fact that national policy on culture in the first half of the nineteenth century was still largely a function of the royal court was particularly clear in music, theatre and crafts. King William I (reign: 1815-1840) realised that craftsmen needed to be properly trained if the country's declining industry was to be brought up to international standards. The nationalisation of museum collections and their funding are among the lasting achievements of William's reign.

The 1830s brought a decline in government involvement in the arts and sciences, which mainly affected commissions and individual purchases from artists. Liberalism gained ground and there was opposition to the idea of the government exerting any control over the arts and sciences. The introduction of the parliamentary system in 1848 brought public expenditure under the scrutiny of Parliament, and this too affected spending on culture. Characteristic of the mid-century period is that the state no longer took the initiative in the arts and sciences but left this, in accordance with liberal principles, to enthusiastic citizens, thus engaging citizens' responsibility.

### 3.1.2 **From 1850 to 1917**

For most of the nineteenth century, the nationalistic bourgeoisie of the newly unified Dutch state believed that the population could be united intellectually and culturally as well. It was this aim that lay behind the first national cultural policy in the modern sense. The earliest national policy on education and the arts and sciences aimed to advance the Dutch to their rightful place among the nations of the world and educate them to be able, decent and patriotic citizens. These efforts produced various concrete results, including a standardised spelling and grammar, uniform educational methods, the first museums of Dutch history and culture, and increasing interest in historical sources and monuments.

As democracy took hold, it became clear that the moderate Protestant upper classes had grossly underestimated or even ignored the religious and cultural diversity that existed in the rest of the population, and the Netherlands of the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century was still

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36 Now the *Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie der Wetenschappen* [[www.knaw.nl](http://www.knaw.nl)]



far too divided for a national public culture of any substance to develop. Yet, although this was an era of ideological and religious divisions regarding education, in the cultural arena the nation succeeded in creating national institutions such as the *Rijksmuseum* in Amsterdam, and the beginnings of heritage conservation were seen.

In 1862, the maxim propounded by the liberal Prime Minister Johan Rudolf Thorbecke, ‘the government is not a judge of science or art’, meant that the state should not, as a matter of principle, express any opinion on the content of the arts and sciences, nor decide what direction they should take. Over 150 years later this principle still applies, witness the government’s practice of leaving judgments on the content of art and culture to outside advisory bodies.

From 1875 onwards, opinions on the government’s aloofness from society changed, and it started systematizing and enlarging museum collections. Simultaneously, works of art in private ownership were gradually handed over to the municipalities and the state, which then made long-term contracts providing a stable place for art in the newly built museums. The Rembrandt Association [*Vereniging Rembrandt*<sup>37</sup>], which was set up in 1883, played a crucial role in the process of building a publicly accessible collection of art. What was true of works of art was perhaps even truer of historic buildings and monuments that were a valuable part of the cultural heritage, whether or not they were owned by the nation. Right from the start, the aim of state conservation policy was to safeguard examples of the rich Dutch architectural tradition, as the earliest restoration grants show. Late nineteenth-century conservation policy was based on scientific and cultural respect for the objects themselves, with no distinction as to their religious or political background. This broad-based content approach has remained a typical feature of national cultural policy.

### 3.1.3 **From 1918 to 1940: a pillarised society**

Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Netherlands, like other countries, found itself having to deal with new technologies for disseminating information at the same time as the standard of living among the lower classes was improving. Income levels rose and the eight-hour working day was introduced, enabling the masses to take advantage of the facilities brought in by the new era. Books and magazines with photographic illustrations, gramophone records and films were consumed in large quantities.

The leaders of the political movements did not welcome this, considering the latest products of science and culture to be anti-Christian and regarding them with suspicion. To religious minds, the rise of mass culture was tangible evidence of the secularisation of society. Socialists argued that a narrow entertainment culture was an obstacle to the advancement of workers.

Following the introduction of universal suffrage in 1917, the liberal parties lost their majority in Parliament and the denominational parties found themselves at the hub of political power, where they remained for over three-quarters of a century. From this position of strength they made strenuous endeavours to have their religious values accepted as universal rules and the Netherlands was ruled for a long time on the basis of a Christian belief system, its influence permeating virtually every area of society. A perfect example is the tightening-up of the morality legislation in 1911 with the introduction of special laws.

By the mid-1920s pillarisation took hold. Each Dutch 'pillar' had its own organs and organisations - newspapers, magazines, publishers, leisure clubs, libraries, choirs, musical associations, and later on broadcasting associations. Within these closed networks they propagated their own values and checked that these were observed.

The religious pillars developed their own concepts of the organisation of society and the role of the state, allowing great autonomy for ideological organisations. Both the Protestants and the Catholics imposed essential limitations on the state's powers in the social and cultural domains, and developed a wide range of activities in the quasi-public and private spheres. As these activities enjoyed a not insignificant amount of state funding, the term 'subsidised freedom' came into vogue. The pillarised organisation of social and cultural activities was to consolidate and expand for a period of over fifty years.

Since the predominant denominational philosophy saw government as having only a limited role to play in culture, there was no cultural policy of the kind that developed later on. Promoting the arts and culture (provided they were 'decent', of course) was left to the private sector in the first instance, although it was seen as the state's job to restrict unacceptable forms such as feature films, jazz and titillating literature. The government became a guardian of morality.

Government involvement in film and radio began in 1918 and 1925 respectively, not in the form of grant aid but of censorship and other restric-

tions, under the Home Affairs Ministry. In 1926, the *Cinema Act*<sup>38</sup> was passed, introducing a system of national film censorship that remained in force for almost fifty years.

Radio was initially seen in the Netherlands as a technical and commercial affair, not a public one. This soon changed when the leaders of the pillars realised what opportunities it offered for spreading their message. When they also realised that there was a risk of it falling into the hands of a 'neutral', non-religious, non-pillarised organisation that targeted the listening public as a single entity, political attention focused on the new medium. In the space of just a few years, four new broadcasting associations started up, representing the Catholics, Protestants, liberal Protestants and socialists respectively. The 'radio controversy' - a typically Dutch phenomenon - was essentially about the allocation of airtime and the right to set up transmitting stations. It soon came to a head in a confrontation between the 'neutral' and 'pillarised' camps. The 1930 *Broadcasting Time Decree*<sup>39</sup> divided up the airtime available on the two radio stations among the five associations - one 'national' and four pillarised - thus establishing a pillarised system of radio broadcasting. The idea of a national broadcasting system based on cooperation between the various ideologies was defeated. The denominations gained official recognition and cultural diversity was confirmed on the airwaves. Until the German occupation of World War II, radio programmes were funded from the broadcasting associations' own resources, generated by membership fees.

A pillarised cultural policy was established for the public library sector also: 'Public reading rooms and libraries should be of an educational and instructional nature and exclude all literature that is morally harmful or merely propaganda'. Non-denominational reading rooms and libraries 'should be impartial, contain reading matter of every ideology and have every existing ideology represented on their boards as far as possible'.

Soon after the turn of the century, the Netherlands Heritage Society [*Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond*<sup>40</sup>] urged the introduction of a law to protect historic buildings and sites. In the twenties, modernisation and increasing traffic resulted in the facades of old buildings being destroyed and canals being filled in. In the thirties, any measures to deal with this were crippled by cuts in public spending. In spite of limited government funding, the first forty years of the twentieth century saw significant growth in the number of museums. Municipal museums joined the existing national

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38 *Bioscoopwet* [1926]

39 *Zendtijdsbesluit* [1930]

40 Now the *Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond* [[www.knob.nl](http://www.knob.nl)]

museums. Over a hundred new museums were opened between 1920 and 1940. The amount of cultural heritage in public hands grew substantially as a result of private initiatives, donations and bequests.

Unlike in the case of cultural heritage, the state took scarcely any interest in the arts in the early part of the twentieth century. Before the cinema became popular, it was theatre that satisfied the general public's need for entertainment. There was no such thing as 'serious theatre', and theatre was not highly regarded as an art form. Throughout the pre-war period, opinions on its merit continued to be divided, in Parliament as elsewhere. This discord stood in the way of any government support at national level. The large municipalities led the way in subsidising theatre, and those that ran a theatre as a municipal amenity had close ties with the theatre world. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague were the first to provide funding - which goes to show how important local autonomy has been to cultural policy.

Unlike theatre and opera, orchestral music was taken under the government's wing at an early stage. The political debate did not run up against questions of morality, as in the case of theatre. A linked subsidy system developed, under which central government aid was dependent on simultaneous aid from a municipality or province. Criteria laid down just before World War II for grant aid to orchestras are still in force. At the turn of the century, one requirement was that the repertoire should include a certain proportion of music by Dutch composers, for instance, and the goal subsequently paraded as 'the dissemination of culture throughout society' in the fifties had been heralded in the thirties by the requirement to organise 'people's concerts'.

The government made a modest start on providing support to creative artists such as painters, sculptors and writers, introducing a budget item for 'support to needy authors' in 1919. After a failed attempt in the early twenties, central government funding was again earmarked for visual artists from 1931 onwards, in order to commission works to adorn government buildings. The welfare aim returned once more in the *Artists' Provident Fund*<sup>41</sup> set up in 1935 to provide temporary financial assistance to artists and musicians. It was funded from central and municipal government grant aid and contributions from the members of the affiliated professional organisations.

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41 *Voorzieningsfonds voor Kunstenaars*

### 3.1.4 **Occupation and liberation (1940-1946)**

Soon after the invasion on 10 May 1940, the German authorities radically reorganised and Nazified national policy on culture. In 1942, unified organisations for producers of culture were introduced, and anyone wishing to work in public as a creative or performing artist had to be a member of a *Kulturkamer*.

Whereas the pre-war government had been the moral watchdog over cinema and radio, censorship was now introduced for all the public arts. The fact that on top of this the government started propagandising a racist ideology was a sharp break with tradition. The government's patronage was also extended to cover film, theatre and dance, which had not so far received government funding. Broadcasting was funded from a licence fee payable by everyone who owned a radio set. National pay schemes and welfare facilities were introduced for orchestras and actors registered with the *Kulturkamer* (musicians were registered as members of an orchestra or ensemble, and actors individually).

The occupying regime's treatment of Jewish artists, who were excluded from all facilities, led to protests, particularly from artists, many of whom refused to register with the *Kulturkamer*. Known as the 'Artists' Resistance', this was one of only a few opposition movements by a particular profession and it gained a good deal of goodwill for artists. It was here that plans were forged for the Federation of Artists' Associations [*Federatie van Kunstenaarsverenigingen*<sup>42</sup>] and the Council for the Arts, which were to play a major role in the post-war arts scene. The Council for the Arts was created on 28 May 1947, with advisory powers.

Under the first post-war Minister of Education, Arts and Science, the theologian and social democrat Gerardus van der Leeuw, the separation between the arts and sciences was not only reflected in the administrative set-up, it was also provided with a theoretical basis. In his notions of cultural policy - a term which he helped introduce - it was not the sciences that occupied a central position alongside the arts, but facilities for 'extramural education'. Although Van der Leeuw's successors took up only a few of his ambitious plans, his definition of the object of cultural policy won general acceptance, and to a large extent they respected the beginnings of adult education and youth policy he formulated during his brief period of office. Van der Leeuw's cultural policy was also the vital link in the creation of a national concept of cultural policy. It was partly through his efforts that people

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42 [www.federatievankunstenaarsverenigingen.nl](http://www.federatievankunstenaarsverenigingen.nl)

started regarding culture, both in social democratic circles and in actual government policy, as a matter of national interest that should not be split up among the ‘pillars’.

### 3.1.5 **The post-war welfare state**

#### *The beginnings of arts policy*

Just after the war there was a general belief that Western civilisation was in danger of losing its moral and cultural roots. As they did before the war, religious and political leaders took the view that it was their ‘pillars’ that were best equipped to ward off the harmful influence of popular culture.

Although the government had been forced to adopt a frugal pattern of spending in the interests of post-war reconstruction, the idea that it should take responsibility for culture in its various guises gained ground, and the budgets for the arts, which had risen considerably during the war, did not drop back to pre-war levels. Bizarre as it may seem, the fact is that both the Germans and the Artists’ Resistance movement helped to bring about a much more favourable climate for government involvement in culture.

Spending rose rapidly during the fifties. In 1949, a start had been made, for social reasons, on what was known as the ‘Quid Pro Quo Scheme’<sup>43</sup> for visual artists. Dance, theatre and literature were now subsidised, as well as music and the visual arts.

Until the sixties, the political parties held to their view that support for the arts could only be a temporary measure, to repair the damaged relationship between the artist and society. The government paid for less than half the running costs of cultural institutions at the time. The idea of grant aid as a temporary measure faded. The number of subsidised institutions and the level of public funding increased substantially, not only in the arts but also in the area of cultural heritage. Cultural activities and institutions were implicitly regarded as public amenities that should be paid for by the community. The scale of the increase becomes clear if we compare the numbers of subsidised arts bodies in 1950 and 1980: the number of symphony orchestras rose from seven to sixteen, theatre groups from seven to twenty, and mime, youth theatre and dance companies from five to forty.

The sixties and seventies saw the rapid development of arts policy (the word ‘policy’, virtually unheard-of in the fifties, was being used less than ten years later to refer to almost any government action). One of the main

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43 *Contraprestatierегeling*

driving forces was the rise in national income. As in some other Western countries, the Netherlands used economic growth to create a system of provisions funded and guaranteed by the state, and it was taken for granted that the arts should be part of this.

Notwithstanding the government's aim of disseminating culture, so strongly proclaimed at the time, the ties between the arts and the public weakened. Despite the increasing amount and artistic variety of live performances on offer, the public preferred to consume music and drama through the new electronic media (radio, television and video). The music industry took on formidable proportions in the sixties, not least as a result of the increased spending power of young people, and twenty years later, when the gramophone record was superseded by the compact disc, it managed to double its turnover in a trice. New patterns of cultural behaviour developed as a result of the rise in disposable incomes, levels of education and mobility. For many years the government did not see these developments as affecting its cultural policy. Its aim, which could be summed up as 'subsidised dissemination of the arts in public', did not change. In the seventies, brief attempts were made to target the arts at particular groups or regions, giving rise to phenomena such as 'community arts'. Until the eighties, the government paid hardly any attention to the dynamics of the new electronic media and their implications for cultural policy.

*The end of the 'pillars' and the beginning of democratisation*

The sixties heralded a U-turn and the government stopped intervening preventively, both in regard to cinema and to other mass media. Subsidies in general could no longer be justified by saying that the arts needed to stem the tide of popular culture. Policy documents referred cautiously to 'different lifestyles' or 'subcultures'. The government became even more reluctant to make moral or artistic judgments, while the major political parties continued to support state funding for culture. Quality became a criterion for government policy, but precisely what that meant was left to others to decide. It was not until the eighties that quality became an explicit and leading criterion in cultural policy. (See §3.2.1 *Quality*)

Furthermore, people no longer condemned expressions of other beliefs or lifestyles from the standpoint of the certainty offered by religious or political ideology. Personal taste was increasingly recognised as the expression of the individual's sovereign, independent choice. Pop music, comic

books, Hollywood films and many other forms of culture formerly labelled as being in bad taste gained a certain degree of recognition, in some cases even enjoying grant aid. In other words, pluralism also made itself felt in the aesthetic sphere. Quality was no longer a matter of convention but had to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The changes in the cultural climate that began in the sixties influenced amenities organised wholly or partly on a pillarised basis, such as libraries, the press and above all radio and television. Libraries abandoned the principle of denominational differentiation in 1975. In the case of newspapers and magazines, de-pillarisation coincided with increases in scale brought about by technology and economic concentration in the publishing industry.

The 1967 *Broadcasting Act* made it possible for new broadcasters to come on the scene and also created more scope for the umbrella organisation, the Dutch Broadcasting Foundation [*Nederlandse Omroepstichting*: NOS<sup>44</sup>], to broadcast non-pillarised programmes. It was not until the nineties that commercial television captured a substantial proportion of the viewing audience from the public service channels. In 1976, the *Cinema Act* was superseded by the *Film Performances Act*<sup>45</sup>, which relaxed the censorship system considerably. Nowadays the government relies on cinemas, video stores and broadcasting organisations to exercise their responsibility to protect audiences – especially young people – from unexpected encounters with extremes. In the field of the arts, quality and not morality is now the criterion for deciding which artists, art works or institutions are eligible for support.

As funding for the press was based partly on the rapid rise of television commercials, in the seventies the government started to regard broadcasting and the press as interrelated. The term ‘media policy’ – or ‘coherent media policy’ – was introduced. One of the implications was that the government examined developments in broadcasting in terms of their economic impact on the dailies and weeklies. The main aim of media policy was still to maintain denominational pluralism.

The government’s media policy at the time was as little affected by structural changes in public interest as its arts policy. While most of the radio and television audience had ceased to regard the traditional broadcasting organisations as representing the denominations, the government clung to a broadcasting system in which ideologically neutral items such as entertainment and culture were provided on the same lines as information

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44 [www.nos.nl](http://www.nos.nl)

45 *Wet op de Filmvertoning* [1976]



and comment. The aim of ensuring diversity resulted in protection of the status quo, with no scope for new ventures such as a separate channel for classical music or pop music for a long time to come.

*The welfare perspective*

Towards the end of the sixties many of the subsidised facilities provided by the welfare state fell under the heading of 'welfare policy'; the idea being that increased material prosperity had not produced a corresponding degree of non-material well-being. Culture was regarded as part of welfare in that sense, and it was this attitude that led to the splitting-up in 1965 of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Science into a separate Ministry of Education and Science and a new Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work. The arts, antiquities and nature conservation, broadcasting and public libraries were hived off from education and science.

In the early years of the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, cultural policy was seen mainly as a tool for reforming society. Culture became synonymous with creativity, structural change and exploring boundaries. The Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work was presented as a 'social laboratory'; the Ministry that concerned itself with quality of life, which was often identified with everything 'innovatory' and 'experimental' - the antithesis of 'marketable'. During the seventies the emphasis shifted. Activities and arts which were expected to alleviate deprivation among particular sections of society met with the greatest approval. 'Social relevance' became the rallying cry of cultural policy. Some cultural activities were subsidised not primarily for their quality but because they contributed to diversity or appealed to minorities. Sometimes diversity of beliefs was regarded as being so important that the government lost sight of the quality criterion and allowed itself to be led entirely by diversity. The 'welfare' perspective had a lasting influence on the way many policy areas are handled, including cultural policy.

**3.1.6 From 1980 to the present day**

The economic stagnation at the beginning of the eighties forced the government to re-examine its role, also in the area of culture. The welfare state was called into question. Key issues in the debate were public spending, deregulation, privatisation and reorganisation. Many areas of culture saw a new trend towards decentralisation. The transfer of funds earmarked

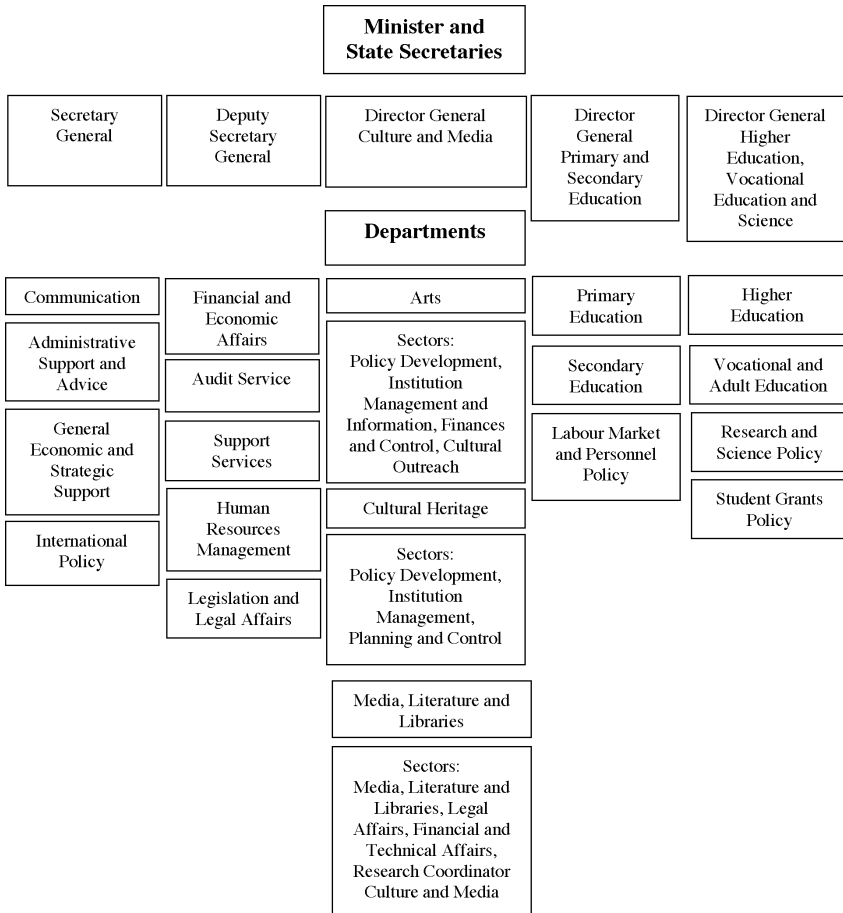
for libraries, the visual arts and heritage conservation to local government, the transformation of the national museums into self-governing bodies and the creation of a number of cultural funds all resulted in more direct lines of communication and faster, more flexible decision-making.

When it came to awarding grant aid, criteria such as artistic quality and professionalism were given even more weight. The government realised that it was its responsibility to ensure that adequate opportunities were provided for culture of high artistic quality, even when there was not much public interest in it. At the same time, the question of whether the arts could be made less dependent on public funding was looked into, and museums and the performing arts started attracting commercial sponsorship.

The idea of having one ministry responsible for widely differing 'cultural' policy areas under the heading of 'welfare' was again discarded, and the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work was absorbed by the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs in 1982.

In the early nineties, it was realised that the listening and viewing public had ceased to align and organise themselves on the basis of a single principle, so a two-pronged approach was developed, with space for various forms of commercial broadcasting alongside a strong, distinctive public service broadcasting system. Culture is regarded fairly universally as an area of government responsibility in its own right. The special nature of cultural policy received a boost in 1985, when media policy was combined with policy on the arts, museums, heritage conservation and archives in a single department (libraries were added in 1989). In a way, the process came full circle in 1994, when policy on culture was de-linked from policy on health and welfare and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science [*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*: OCW<sup>46</sup>] came into being.

Chart 1: Departmental Organisation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2006



### 3.2 Basic ingredients of Dutch cultural policy

In the mid-eighties, quality and diversity became the keys to cultural policy – so much so that they figured as key terms in the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*, which lays down that the Minister or State Secretary must base his policy on the preservation, development, social and geographical dissemination and expansion of culture on considerations of quality and diversity. Based on the wording of the Act, the key concepts of quality and diversity are regarded as independent principles of equal value. Greater diversity does not necessarily produce better quality, and better quality is not necessarily conducive to greater diversity.

#### 3.2.1 Quality

Quality is anything but an objective concept. There can be endless permutations of professionalism, originality and authenticity, but not all of them will bear the hallmark of quality. Without them, on the other hand, artistic and cultural quality is completely inconceivable. Most importantly, applying the quality principle means that culture is selected not only on the basis of the requirements of the market, the likes and dislikes of the masses or some political or ideological slant. The concept of quality is ideologically and politically neutral: The allocation of grant aid is not based primarily on numbers of supporters; in many cases, forms and activities which attract small audiences and are therefore in financial straits are often the very ones which are subsidised.

#### 3.2.2 Diversity

Diversity is a term used to express the variety of arts, genres and styles, regional forms and values, and popular likes and dislikes. Diversity is a far more superficial concept than quality, relating to formal, external characteristics. It refers, for instance, to the importance of having forms of culture that cater to different public tastes, thus reflecting the variety of preferences among the population. In recent years, cultural diversity has become a pressing issue in terms of how to meet the cultural ambitions and entitlements of new immigrants.

In 1999, the then State Secretary Rick van der Ploeg placed the art and culture of our new fellow citizens on the political agenda in his policy document *Make way for cultural diversity*<sup>47</sup>. Using targeted budgets, he tried not only to encourage immigrants to take advantage of the aid available but also

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<sup>47</sup> “Ruim baan voor culturele diversiteit”  
[OCW, 1999]

to induce the native Dutch population to show more interest in the multi-cultural society that the Netherlands had become in recent years.

The last State Secretary for Culture, Medy van der Laan, has continued to expand on the theme of diversity. In June 2006, she proposed several concrete actions to promote artistic enrichment through diversity. (See paragraph 5.7 *Cultural diversity*, where these issues are treated in more depth)

### 3.2.3 **Assessment**

The government's long tradition of not judging artistic content has enabled the arts professionals to exert a lot of influence on cultural policy and selection. Whether a particular application for aid is granted depends almost always on the judgment of outside - in any event non-ministerial - advisory bodies made up of professional experts, which apply the test of quality and diversity independently of the political system and the government. Applications from organisations for Cultural Policy Document funding are assessed by the Council for Culture. Thus neither ministers nor civil servants are involved in judging artistic quality. It is, of course, possible to question the arguments they put forward, and this happens with increasing regularity. The Council's authority is not absolute.

In accepting the judgment of its advisers, the government still retains responsibility. This means that whenever a cultural policy decision becomes a political issue, the government could become involved in the question of artistic content. This is particularly likely to occur when the government does not adopt the recommendations of the advisory body because it believes that its policy obliges it to take a different decision.

Critics claim that allowing professional experts to do the selection automatically produces art which anticipates their judgment - art that is not based on a state programme or public taste but is essentially art for art's sake. This type of art is therefore inaccessible to anyone unfamiliar with the art that preceded it and that is contemporary with it. The more specialised the advisers, the greater the risk of professional one-sidedness. If the advisers are from the same sector as the artists there can even be a conflict of interest.

### 3.2.4 **Distribution of competencies**

The traditional approach in the Netherlands has been to distribute power and competencies. The general principle here has always been that of subsidiarity, i.e. jobs that can be done by a lower-level body should not be

taken on by a higher-level body. Matters relating to amenities provided and used locally should thus be decided locally.

The closest the cultural sector has come to the ideal of geographical devolution of authority and funding is in the way libraries, the amateur arts and art education are subsidised. There was already a tradition of decentralised supply in these areas, with a network of libraries, arts and crafts centres and music schools spread throughout the country - like sports facilities. All these networks originally received central funding, and although the municipalities exerted the greatest influence, most of the money came from central government.

The government started transferring most of the money to the municipal authorities in the seventies. Control over the heritage sector is also decentralised, although there is still a central component in the funding. Those in the organised art world, on the other hand, were not happy about the devolution of responsibilities from central government. They felt more secure with the central authorities and had little confidence in the ability or willingness of local councils to safeguard their interests. Thus for the performing arts, linked subsidies were abolished and money was transferred from the provinces and municipalities to central government to allow it to take responsibility for the entire supply side. The trend here, then, was from local to central control and funding. The theatre companies in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague were a separate case, receiving 40% of their funding from central government and 60% from the municipality.

It was with a view to improving cooperation and specifying more clearly what was expected of the regional bodies that the system of administrative covenants, which had existed for some time in the major cities, was extended to the entire country in 1996. The covenants emphasise the shared responsibility of the various tiers of government. They help municipalities and provinces define their ambitions in financial terms; and where the aims of the partners coincide, the coordinated deployment of financial resources allows them to achieve the maximum result.

Despite the widespread introduction of covenants, central government is still largely responsible for the supply of the performing arts, and it is increasingly focusing on consumption as well. Maintaining venues and attracting audiences remain the responsibility of the municipalities. (For current priorities in the distribution of competencies, see §5.2 *Urban/regional dynamics*).

### 3.2.5 **Separating policy-making and implementation**

Within central government, there is the aim of keeping policy-making at arm's length from implementation. One of the ways the government has sought to remain at arm's length is by taking the task of implementation away from the Ministry. Thus, in addition to the multi-annual subsidies to cultural institutions, many grants are awarded to one-off projects and individuals in the arts and museum sectors. As decisions on these applications do not usually have political or administrative implications, these are allocated to the funding bodies.

The cultural Funds themselves have begun to take advice from the professionals. The Funds' governing bodies, which are appointed by the Minister, usually base their decisions on the advice of a committee of professionals and other experts appointed by them. The government took a notable step in the eighties when it decided to delegate responsibility for monitoring and managing the broadcasting system to an independent administrative body; the Media Commission [*Commissariaat voor de Media*<sup>48</sup>]. Unlike in the arts and the media, in the field of cultural heritage much of the work of implementation has long been carried out by government agencies, which have gained varying degrees of independence, depending on their nature, in recent years. The main part of the operation was about allowing the institutions more managerial autonomy, turning the national museums into independent non-profit making bodies. These changes have made it possible for the museums to operate independently and flexibly, and their business management is more efficient now that their employees are no longer civil servants. The RACM and the State Archives Service [*Rijksarchiefdienst*<sup>49</sup>] are also independent when it comes to implementation, although they retain the legal status of government departments.

With less control from the centre, the government's policy has become more effective across the board, as it is now able to concentrate on allocating budgets and monitoring performance budgets. The funding bodies distribute the budgets they receive from central government, making them the 'front offices'. All of this fits in perfectly with the Dutch tradition of government at arm's length when it comes to the content of art and culture.

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48 [www.cvdm.nl](http://www.cvdm.nl)

49 [www.nationaalarchief.nl](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl)

### 3.3 Administrative framework

#### 3.3.1 Covenants

A debate on the respective roles of central, provincial and municipal government has been going on since the early seventies, based on the desire of central government to transfer a large number of powers and responsibilities (including cultural policy) to local government as part of an operation to improve efficiency. The idea was to reorganise local administration and improve the way central government works. At the same time, there was a demand in the cultural sector for a simpler grant aid allocation system based on a transparent distribution of responsibilities among central, provincial and municipal government. This desire arose mainly from the experience of 'linked subsidies'. Under this system, a particular cultural amenity, e.g. a regional orchestra or theatre group, was maintained by various grant-giving bodies, in some cases at all three levels of government. Funding in such cases was dependent on a large number of government regulations. With no clear demarcation of powers, a central government proposal could only be implemented if all the parties agreed. Also, if one of the grant-giving bodies withdrew its aid, this meant in practice that the whole subsidy structure, and thus the amenity, was endangered.

The ensuing reallocation of responsibilities among central, provincial and municipal government had far-reaching consequences. As a general rule, central government was responsible for maintaining national museums, symphony orchestras and national theatre and dance companies. The provinces were responsible for the distribution, coordination and maintenance of culture at provincial level. The municipalities were primarily responsible for the upkeep and programming of venues. However, it was far more difficult to separate these three areas in practice than in theory.

In the case of the major cities, the government opted for a different approach, entering into special agreements, known as *covenants*, with Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. These set out the arrangements for the funding – by central and municipal government – of city arts institutions such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra [*Koninklijk Concertgebouworkest*<sup>50</sup>], the Dutch National Ballet [*Het Nationale Ballet*<sup>51</sup>], Netherlands Opera [*De Nederlandse Opera*<sup>52</sup>], Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra [*Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest*<sup>53</sup>] and the Ro Theatre [*Het Ro Theater*<sup>54</sup>] in Rotterdam.

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50 [www.concertgebouworkest.nl](http://www.concertgebouworkest.nl)

51 [www.het-nationale-ballet.nl](http://www.het-nationale-ballet.nl)

52 [www.dno.nl](http://www.dno.nl)

53 [www.rpho.nl](http://www.rpho.nl)

54 [www.areyouvital.com/rotheater](http://www.areyouvital.com/rotheater)



The reallocation of responsibilities was not confined to the relationship between central, provincial and municipal government. New ways of devolving powers were developed, where necessary, based partly on the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*. Administrative changes such as the transformation of the national museums into self-governing bodies, the channelling of funds for visual arts commissions to the municipalities and the creation of a number of funding bodies were all part and parcel of the operation. The desire of central government to reduce its powers and responsibilities was a major factor: a more detached government is better able to focus on the broad outline of policy than one which constantly has to deal with a host of details and is politically responsible for them into the bargain.

If we were to draw up a balance sheet for the last few years, we would see that there is no clear system pointing in one direction - devolution or centralisation. In the cultural sector, the review of government responsibilities has had contradictory effects. Cultural heritage, for instance, has been decentralised on a large scale, whereas simplifying the administration of the performing arts and visual arts has made it more centralised. The 1997-2000 Cultural Policy Document, *Armour or Backbone*<sup>55</sup>, represented a major step forwards in the consultative arrangements with the provinces and municipalities, reflecting their shared responsibility for the cultural infrastructure. The ties between the partners were further strengthened through even closer consultation with other tiers of government and joint policy-making under the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan*<sup>56</sup>, financial matching for the Culture and School project and the 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document, *Culture As Confrontation*<sup>57</sup>. The 2005-2008 Cultural Policy Document has extended the *Cultural Outreach Plan* in a modernised form for another four years: 30 municipal councils and twelve provinces will match the financial central government subsidy of Euro 13.7 million annually. (See §5.2 *Urban/regional dynamics*)

### 3.3.2 Planning

In December 1988, certain aspects of cultural policy that were the responsibility of the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs were laid down in the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*. The Act contained only a few sections. Section 3 required the government to present a Cultural Policy Document to both houses of Parliament once every four years, giving an overview of implemented and proposed cultural policy activities. The Act

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55 "Cultuurnota 1997-2000: Pantser of Ruggengraat" [OCW, 1996]

56 Actieplan Cultuurbereik

57 "Cultuur als Confrontatie" [OCW, 2000]

showed the government's intention to extend the system for the arts that had been introduced by the 1988-1992 *Arts Plan*<sup>58</sup>, which had proved effective, to cultural policy as a whole. The four-year system was based on the government's desire to tighten up its grant system and above all make it more systematic. At the same time the new system met the wishes of arts and cultural institutions to be able to programme for a number of years ahead with financial security.

The *Specific Cultural Policy Act* came into force on 16 April 1993. As well as introducing the four-year policy cycle it defines the responsibilities of the Minister. The Act requires him (or the responsible State Secretary if he decides to delegate the work) to create the conditions for maintaining and developing 'expressions of culture' and disseminating them socially and geographically or otherwise. The Minister is to be guided in this by considerations of quality and diversity. The Explanatory Memorandum to the Act gives an indicative list of the areas the Minister's policy should cover: 'the arts, museums, heritage sites, archives and public records, the media, libraries and international relations in these fields'. The Act itself does not define these areas; areas are delineated and policy laid down in the Cultural Policy Document.

The first Cultural Policy Document 1993-1996 *Investing in Culture*<sup>59</sup>, placed the broad principles of cultural and media policy in a joint framework for the first time. The 1997-2000 Cultural Policy Document, *Armour or Backbone*, is, if anything, even more integrated. Unlike its predecessor, it is not a collection of separate documents on the various sectors; instead it deals with cultural policy in its entirety, based on nine fundamental principles. The 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document, *Culture as Confrontation*, placed even more emphasis on the principles, not least in the nature of the State Secretary's arguments and the way he approached the debate with Parliament and the arts and culture scene in line with the title of the document. The current cultural policy document in force (2005-2008) revolves around three main themes: less bureaucracy and more individual responsibility in the cultural system, more connection and interaction in cultural life, and reinforcing the cultural factor in society. (See §5.1 *Recent cultural policy documents*).

On 2 June 2006, the State Secretary sent a policy paper to Parliament further refining her intention to bring about structural changes to the cultural policy-making system, as set out previously in her policy document

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58 *Kunstenplan [1988-1992]*

59 "Cultuurnota 1993-1996: Investeren in Cultuur" [WVC, 1992]

“*Making a Difference*”. Reasons for adapting the system include the explosive number of applications for government subsidy of the last few years and the continuing elaboration of procedures that weighed on the system. Under the motto “at arms length where possible, but involved where necessary”, several changes are intended to be made to the system.

The parliamentary discussion that took place on 16th October 2006 led to the following decisions. Subsidy requests from smaller cultural institutions and companies will no longer make up part of the four-year cultural policy document (planning) cycle, but will be submitted to the Funds. The Funds will be empowered organisationally, in order to meet their extended responsibilities. More generally, a rearrangement of cultural institutions will be made, redesigning the dividing line between institutions that will belong to the basic infrastructure. Before 1 March 2007, the Council for Culture is to produce an analysis of the cultural sector, defining what belongs the cultural infrastructure.

In order to realise the above, an amendment must be made to the Law by 1 June 2007. Cultural institutions can submit funding requests before 1 February 2008.

### 3.3.3 **Legislation**

There are several types of legal provisions that affect the cultural field, ranging from general legislation, such as the constitution, to very specific legislation on culture.

#### *Constitution*

Two articles of the Dutch Constitution<sup>60</sup> are relevant to the cultural field:

- *Article 22, Part 1*, states that the government is assigned to create adequate conditions for cultural development for all citizens; and
- *Article 7* protects freedom of speech.

#### *Division of jurisdiction*

There is no law-based division of responsibilities between central government, provinces and municipalities. In the *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act*<sup>61</sup>, the *Public Records Act*<sup>62</sup> and the *Artists' Work and Income Scheme Act (WWIK)*<sup>63</sup>, specific tasks and competencies for municipalities and provinces are laid down.

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60 *Grondwet*

61 *Monumentenwet [1988]*

62 *Archiefwet [1995]*

63 *Wet Werk en Inkomen Kunstenaars (WWIK)*

Apart from these laws, municipalities are free to develop cultural policy in any direction whatsoever. On the other hand, the State Secretary of Culture is obliged to consult provinces and municipalities before sending the four-year cultural policy documents to parliament. As part of this process, a contract system has been developed to coordinate cultural policy initiatives launched by the three levels of government - the Cultural Outreach Action Plan.

#### *Allocation of public funds*

In the *Specific Cultural Policy Act* (1993), Section 9 enables the Minister to create Funds to finance the arts and culture. These Funds operate at arm's length and the Minister only decides about the quantity of money reserved for them.

Domestic legislation is laid down in the *Budget Act*<sup>64</sup>, which stipulates that all public spending should be annually approved by Parliament. Due to special laws, long-term subsidies in culture are possible in principle. According to EU legislation, the compulsory tendering for larger funds is also applicable to culture and architecture.

#### *Social security frameworks*

General laws (including social security legislation) related to independent entrepreneurs also apply to artists. Specific regulations are indicated in the *Artists' Work and Income Scheme Act* (WWIK). In the *Dutch Unemployment Insurance Act*<sup>65</sup>, an exception is made for freelance artists. Acceptance criteria (based on the period of unemployment) are less severe for freelance artists in comparison with other professions.

#### *Labour laws*

There are many collective bargaining agreements (CAOs)<sup>66</sup> in the performing arts and more generally in the cultural sector. CAOs are labour agreements between employers and employees. This means that a CAO only applies to employees who are working with an employer. When this is not the case, the national legal agreements are enforced. The existing CAOs are used mostly in broadcasting, cinema, public libraries, arts training, performing arts, television, subsidised theatre, orchestras, mime, dance and independent museums. Special trade unions exist to enforce or monitor these agreements.

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64 *Begrotingswet*

65 *Werkloosheidswet* (WW)

66 *collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst* - CAO

Almost all art and cultural institutions are organised in the Culture Federation [*Federatie Cultuur*<sup>67</sup>], an umbrella employer's organisation which monitors the results of annual collective bargaining with respect to work and related conditions between the large Dutch unions, central government and the employer's organisations.

Tax law permits volunteers to receive an annual tax-free expense allowance of up to 667 euro (indexed on 1 January 2000). Up to this amount, volunteers do not need to account for their expenses. Costs above this amount may be reimbursed, but it has to be proved that these costs were incurred.

#### *Copyright law*

A description of copyright regulations and related policy in the Netherlands can be found in §3.3.7 *Copyright law and policy*.

#### *Data protection laws*

In 1996, the European guidelines on databases were adopted. In the Netherlands, these guidelines were implemented in national law in 1999 (*Databank Law*<sup>68</sup>). The law can be seen as an extension of copyright regulation.

#### *Language laws*

In 1980, the Dutch Language Union [*Nederlandse Taalunie*<sup>69</sup>] came into being. It implements an inter-governmental treaty between the Netherlands and the Flemish Community which aims to integrate the Dutch and Flemish community as far as the Dutch language is concerned. Frisian is one of the official languages of the Netherlands that is used in budget planning exercises, in the National Education Examination Programme and in official parliamentary reports. (See §4.2.3 *Literature*)

#### *Legislation on culture*

The *Specific Cultural Policy Act* of 1993 was considered a milestone for the formation of a legal basis for Dutch cultural policy. The act was necessary to ratify specific payments by the government to local authorities and national cultural Funds. It also regulates specific policy and financial relations with provinces and municipalities. The Act focuses on long-term (four-year) subsidies meant for arts and cultural institutions. Short-term subsidies (mostly for one year) are administered by the Funds.

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67 [www.federatiecultuur.nl](http://www.federatiecultuur.nl)

68 *Databankenwet* (1999)

69 [www.taalunieversum.org/taalunie](http://www.taalunieversum.org/taalunie)

*Tax laws*

Tax law, for which the Minister of Finance is responsible, also contains elements that affect culture. Here follow just a few examples:

There are three rates of VAT; a normal rate of 19%, a reduced rate of 6% and a 0% rate. The European Union rules permit Member States to apply the reduced rate to admission charges for shows, theatres, circuses, fairs, grounds, amusement parks, concerts, museums, zoos, cinemas, exhibitions and similar cultural events and amenities. Sales of books and newspapers have been subject to the reduced rate for many years. Artists such as composers, writers and journalists are exempt from VAT. The Ministry of Finance has ruled that grants awarded under the *Cultural Projects (Funding) Decree*<sup>70</sup> are not subject to VAT. The Decree covers all grants made by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science under the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*, including subsidies provided by cultural Funds set up by the Ministry.

In 2005, former football player Johan Cruyff started complaining in public about the high percentages of gift tax; 11% of the original donated sum. Cruyff is very successful in attracting money, which he spends on football facilities for young and deprived people. After some debate, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Wijn, proposed to reduce gift tax to 8%, and later to 0%. His proposal was taken over by the Balkenende administration and by Parliament. The 0% gift tax now applies to the art and cultural sector.

### 3.3.4 **Grant system**

The policy cycle associated with the Cultural Policy Document means that cultural policy in its entirety is debated every four years as a rule. The debate is not confined to the principles of policy but also covers the financial repercussions for the various sectors and bodies.

Before the days of the Arts Plan and the Cultural Policy Document, all subsidies were decided by the Minister annually. The aim of laying them down for a four-year period was to make the culture budget more flexible, by stopping the granting of annual subsidies to established bodies and subjecting these bodies to a simultaneous across-the-board examination at regular intervals. Another aim was to give cultural institutions a certain degree of continuity and legal security. The new system would also improve the transparency of governance by forcing both the authorities and the institutions to formulate policies and account for their actions more clearly than in the past.

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70 *Bekostigingsbesluit Cultuuruitingen [1994]*

If a subsidy is granted during a Culture Policy Document period, which is less and less common now that individual subsidies are provided through funding bodies, it remains valid until the end of the period.

Each institution is at liberty to submit a fresh application for each new period, but it does not derive any rights from the fact that it has previously been awarded grant aid. On the other hand, there are cases where it would not be realistic to call the very existence of the institution into question every four years. Nevertheless, the amount of subsidy and the institution's policy plan are a matter for debate, even in the case of 'crown jewels' such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra or the Rijksmuseum.

An institution must submit its application for a structural subsidy no later than one year before the start of a new Culture Policy period, setting out its policy for that period. The Minister passes on the applications to the Council for Culture, which makes recommendations. A decision is made no later than thirteen weeks before the start of the new period. The policy plan must provide full information on the artistic or substantive goals for the next four years and include an evaluation of the institution's policy during the previous period. Each plan must be accompanied by an income and expenditure budget for the new period. The policy plan forces the institution to formulate clear principles and realistic goals and implement them systematically. For the authorities, it provides a benchmark when deciding how much grant aid to award (if any) and evaluating the results (both during and after the subsidy period).

The government lays down general and specific terms for subsidies, relating to the quantity and quality of output, distribution and audience reach, as well as the quality of financial management and financial and general reporting, so as to ensure that the recipients meet its cultural policy objectives. The Council for Culture is responsible for appraising plans and evaluating results. The Council monitors the institution's work artistically, drawing up regular appraisals and indicating whether the institution is fulfilling the promises it has made in its policy plan. One or two meetings between the Council and the institution make up part of the appraisal. The Minister also checks whether the implementation tallies with the policy plan as approved. If excessive discrepancies are found along the line, he may decide to withdraw part or even all of the funding.

The parliamentary discussion that took place on 16th October 2006 led to the following decisions. Subsidy requests from smaller cultural institu-

tions and companies will no longer make up part of the four-year cultural policy document (planning) cycle, but will be submitted to the Funds. The Funds will be empowered organisationally, in order to meet their extended responsibilities. Moreover, to create more efficiency, a single Fund for Performing Arts will be created, incorporating the current Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund [*Fonds voor Amateurkunst en Podiumkunsten*<sup>71</sup>], the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund [*Fonds voor Podiumprogrammering en Marketing: FPPM*<sup>72</sup>] and the Creative Music Fund [*Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst*<sup>73</sup>].

More generally, a rearrangement of cultural institutions will be made, redesigning the dividing line between institutions that will belong to the basic infrastructure. Before 1 March 2007, the Council for Culture is to produce an analysis of the cultural sector, defining what belongs the cultural infrastructure.

### 3.3.5 Consultation

The Dutch government makes few decisions about art and culture without first consulting a committee of independent experts. This practice is in line with two basic principles: (a) that government should concern itself with the broad principles of policy as far as possible, and (b) that government should refrain from making value judgments on art and culture.

A single Council for Culture was set up towards the end of 1995 to provide advice. This was the successor to the Council for the Arts, which had been operational (albeit in provisional form) since 1947, and the Cultural Heritage Council [*Raad voor het Cultuurbeheer*], the Media Council [*Mediaraad*] and the Library and Information Services Advisory Council [*Raad van Advies voor Bibliotheekwezen en Informatieverzorging: RABIN*]. Unlike with the old councils, political administrators are no longer required to consult the Council for Culture or any other advisory body. This is one of the changes the new advisory system has brought with it. Only in the case of legislation does the Council of State have to be consulted, and the Social and Economic Council [*Sociaal-Economische Raad: SER*<sup>74</sup>] has to be consulted on certain socio-economic issues. It is still standard practice to consult the Council for Culture, however, and unlike all the other advisory bodies, the Council is consulted not only on the broad principles of policy but also on all cultural institutions applying for multi-annual subsidies. The Council assesses their artistic quality or the cultural heritage value of their proposed

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71 [www.fapk.nl](http://www.fapk.nl)

72 [www.fppm.nl](http://www.fppm.nl)

73 [www.fondsscheppendetoonkunst.nl](http://www.fondsscheppendetoonkunst.nl)

74 [www.ser.nl](http://www.ser.nl)



activities and advises on budgetary matters. Although its recommendations are influential, only the administrators have the power to make decisions, and it is not infrequent that the responsible Minister or State Secretary has to consider the broader picture. In addition to the advisory system described above, ad hoc external advisory commissions are set up by the Minister from time to time to consider questions of reorganisation that have major political repercussions.

In January 2006, a new Council for Culture was installed, whose composition is such to allow it to advise on leading issues, rather than being organised by sector, as was previously the case. Advice on issues concerning the level of institutions and subsidy allocations is treated in commissions, which feed the Council their advice.

### 3.3.6 Funding bodies

New government-created and financed Funds began to appear in the second half of the 1980s, encouraged by the *Creative Arts (Funds) Act*<sup>75</sup>, which came into force in 1981. It was repealed in 1993, when the *Specific Cultural Policy Act* came into force. The new Act created the power to set up Funds for any area of cultural policy.

While it is true that the Funds currently in operation are in the form of non-profit making bodies, this does not affect their status under public law. In principle, the government's responsibility towards a Fund goes no further than providing money and setting conditions for the way it operates. The power to grant subsidies from the annual budget is delegated to the Fund management. Parliament has the last word when it comes to the size of the budget. Ministerial control is generally confined to approving the Fund's articles and the regulations laying down how grant aid is allocated, with the Minister taking advice from the Council for Culture. The Minister does, however, appoint all the members of the management board and monitor its policy.

The procedure for awarding grants to individual artists or arts bodies has been simplified considerably as a result of the introduction of the Funds. Funds generally handle large numbers of similar applications for grant aid on which the Minister used to consult the Council for the Arts or some other permanent advisory body. Under the fund system, responsibility for judging quality and financial management rests with a Fund management, which also obtains advice on quality from outside experts.

75 *Fondsenwet Scheppende Kunsten* [1981]

76 [www.fondsvoordeletteren.nl](http://www.fondsvoordeletteren.nl)

77 A reorganisation may take place in 2007/8, see §3.3.8 *The support infrastructure*

78 [www.fondsscheppendetoekunst.nl](http://www.fondsscheppendetoekunst.nl)

79 [www.fondsbkvb.nl](http://www.fondsbkvb.nl)

80 [www.nlpvf.nl](http://www.nlpvf.nl)

81 [www.mondriaanstichting.nl](http://www.mondriaanstichting.nl)

82 [www.archfonds.nl](http://www.archfonds.nl)

83 [www.filmfund.nl](http://www.filmfund.nl)

The following Funds are currently in operation:

- Literary Fund [*Fonds voor de Letteren*<sup>76</sup>] (1969)
- Creative Music Fund<sup>77</sup> [*Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst*<sup>78</sup>] (1982)
- Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture [*Fonds voor Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst: BKVB*<sup>79</sup>] (1987)
- Dutch Literary Production and Translation Fund [*Nederlands Literair Produktie- en Vertalingen Fonds: NLPVF*<sup>80</sup>] (1991)
- Mondriaan Foundation [*Mondriaan Stichting*<sup>81</sup>] (1993)
- Architecture Promotion Fund [*Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur*<sup>82</sup>] (1993)
- Dutch Film Fund [*Nederlands Fonds voor de Film: NFF*<sup>83</sup>] (1993)
- Libraries for the Visually Impaired Fund [*Fonds voor het Bibliotheekwerk voor Blinden en Slechtienden*] (1995)
- Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund [*Fonds voor Podiumprogrammering en Marketing: FPPM*<sup>84</sup>] (2002)
- Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund [*Fonds voor Amateurkunst en Podiumkunsten*<sup>85</sup>] (2002).

There are three further Funds that are not governed by the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*:

- Press Fund [*Bedrijfsfonds voor de Pers*<sup>86</sup>] (1974)
- Dutch Cultural Broadcasting Promotion Fund [*Stimuleringsfonds Nederlandse Culturele Omroepproducties*<sup>87</sup>] (1988)
- Special Journalistic Projects Fund [*Stichting Fonds Bijzondere Journalistieke Projecten*<sup>88</sup>] (1990)

If the role of the Funds is to be expanded in 2007, as described in the previous paragraph, it is expected that the system of monitoring the Funds will also be stepped up, by means of four-year evaluations and perhaps a system of visitation.

Recently, Parliament submitted a vote to allow the cultural sector to develop a plan for the subsidising of modern music compositions, after the intentions of the state secretary<sup>89</sup> to close the Creative Music Fund (through a merger with the Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund) caused some unsettling reactions in the sector.

A parliamentary discussion that took place in October 2006 led to the proposal to set up a single Fund for Performing Arts, incorporating the cur-

84 [www.fppm.nl](http://www.fppm.nl)

85 [www.fapk.nl](http://www.fapk.nl)

86 [www.bedrijfsfondspers.nl](http://www.bedrijfsfondspers.nl)

87 [www.stimuleringsfonds.nl](http://www.stimuleringsfonds.nl)

88 [www.fondsbbp.nl](http://www.fondsbbp.nl)

89 "Making a Difference" ("Verschil Maken") [OCW, 2005].

rent Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund, the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund and the Creative Music Fund.

### 3.3.7 **Copyright law and policy**

Copyright plays a special role in the interface between economics and culture. Thanks to the 1912 *Copyright Act*<sup>90</sup>, the ‘creator of a work of literature, science or art’ is able to reap the fruits of his work. Copyright thus makes a vital contribution to the continued existence of literature, science and art and helps them to flourish.

In 1993, the *Copyright Act* was joined by the *Neighbouring Rights Act*<sup>91</sup>, which extends the protection of creative output to performing artists, music and film producers and broadcasting organisations. Under this Act they enjoy similar rights to copyright, hence the term ‘neighbouring rights’. In 1996, the *Copyright Act* introduced a provision entitling copyright holders to a fee for the loan or rental of their works. Copyright holders have the last word on fees for commercial rentals, e.g. from video stores. In the case of library loans, the size of lending fees is decided by a negotiating body on which the libraries and authors sit, under the chairmanship of an independent third party. The fees are collected and distributed to the copyright holders by the Public Lending Rights Office [*Stichting Leenrecht*<sup>92</sup>]. Lending rights apply to CDs, videotapes and DVDs as well as books, so not only authors and publishers but also copyright holders in the music and film industries benefit from them.

The Publishing Rights Organisation [*Stichting Reprorecht*<sup>93</sup>], a statutorily designated organisation, also works to enforce the rights of authors and publishers, and since 1988 it has been responsible for collecting copying fees. Each year it receives fees from government bodies, libraries and secondary schools for photocopies of copyright works. These fees go mainly to authors and publishers of educational, scientific and academic works, including periodicals, and publishers of newspapers and news magazines also benefit. In 2002, the scheme was extended to cover industry.

The *Copyright Act* traditionally allows individuals to make copies for private practice, study or use. When cassette recorders and video recorders came on the scene, there were calls for compensation in this area too, resulting in a tax on blank audio and videotapes in 1991. This is collected from manufacturers and importers by the Home Copy Association [*Stichting de Thuiskopie*<sup>94</sup>], which distributes the money to the various copyright holders

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90 *Auteurswet*

91 *Wet op de Naburige Rechten*

92 [www.cedar.nl/leenrecht](http://www.cedar.nl/leenrecht)

93 [www.reprorecht.nl](http://www.reprorecht.nl)

94 [www.onbezorgdkopieren.nl](http://www.onbezorgdkopieren.nl)

through their organisations. In addition to the ‘traditional’ levy on cassettes and videotapes there is a new one on recordable and rewritable compact discs and minidisks. Some of the proceeds are spent on culture.

Copyright and neighbouring rights are affected by developments in other countries that restrict national freedom to make policy. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Justice [*Ministerie van Justitie*<sup>95</sup>] has primary responsibility for copyright law and policy on copyright. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Economic Affairs [*Ministerie van Economische Zaken*<sup>96</sup>] also bear some responsibility and therefore work together closely with the Ministry of Justice. The importance and status of copyright are changing as a result of the development of new media, especially digital media. EU directives are playing a major role in the development of policy in this field.

### 3.3.8 **The support infrastructure**

Support institutions are active in the field of information provision, documentation and archiving, education, research and debate, distribution, consulting, representation and advocacy. An issue very much on the agenda currently is the way the performance, as well as the effectiveness of the supporting infrastructure on the sector is evaluated. Art-makers and producers are continually evaluated on artistic quality by audiences, the press, the public and the Council for Culture. The supporting institutions are only subjected to an evaluation by the Council for Culture. The improvement of the supporting infrastructure should eventually benefit the whole cultural sector; the related professional groups as well as the public in general.

The current government’s approach to the supporting infrastructure is indicative of its intention to increase citizens’ and organisations’ own responsibility. It is therefore necessary to keep defining for which tasks and amenities the government should care and for which tasks the sector itself is responsible. In the framework of the Cultural Policy Document 2005-2008, a reorganisation of the supporting infrastructure has already started. When completed, this will result in the grouping of several support functions into one institute per sector. These institutes will be eligible for long-term government funding. Besides this, a number of supra-sectoral support functions in the field of international cultural policy, diversity, education, documentation, reflection and professionalisation have been adopted in the basic infrastructure.

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95 [www.justitie.nl](http://www.justitie.nl)

96 [www.ez.nl](http://www.ez.nl)

*The reorganisation of the supporting infrastructure*

In order to find ways to reduce the national budget, State Secretary Van der Laan asked a consultancy bureau to make an inventory of the cultural infrastructure and their functions. The bureau made a list of 150 organisations, and placed them into four categories: (1) branch organisations, (2) organisations carrying out commissioned tasks, (3) organisations of cultural heritage, and (4) organisations related to the cultural system as a whole. Although the Council for Culture was unwilling to agree to these categories or to setting apart organisations branded as “supporting”, a proposal was made to reorganise the “supporting sector”, combined with a subsidy cut-back of 10%. For this reason, almost all organisations involved were granted subsidies for one year only instead of the usual four years. Following this, at the beginning of 2005, the Secretary of State announced that a large reorganisation would take place and subsidies would be reorganised according to a new format. In the course of the year, it became clear that within the general process of reducing subsidies, four major reorganisations were about to take place in the field of amateur arts, film and heritage and in the field of music. In the field of amateur arts, the support institutions would be reduced to one per sector. In the field of music, the Secretary of State proposed to reduce 7 music “support institutions” of varying sizes to a maximum of 2 major institutions, focusing on documentation and promotion. The proposed mergers should be legally realised as of 1 January 2007. The new organisations should start functioning as of 1 January 2009. In the coming years, the State Secretary will reserve Euro 34.8 million per year for the support institutions<sup>97</sup>.

### 3.4 The financial framework

#### 3.4.1 Public funding of culture: the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Government arts funding has its legislative base in a number of laws, including specific laws such as the *Specific Cultural Policy Act*, which regulates the subsidies based on cultural policy decisions<sup>98</sup>, as well as the *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act*, the *Public Records Act* and the *Media Act* (see table 3). The subsidy laws deal with three main lines of funding: multi-annual subsidies to institutions, project subsidies and specific subsidies. The largest of these is the first – the multi-annual subsidies to institutions. These funds are distributed every four years, on the basis of evaluated

97 Source: Compendium of Cultural Policy in Europe, EricArts/Council of Europe

98 *Wet op het specifiek cultuurbeleid (WSC); Bekostigingsbesluit cultuuruitingen (BBCU); Regeling subsidies en uitkeringen cultuuruitingen*

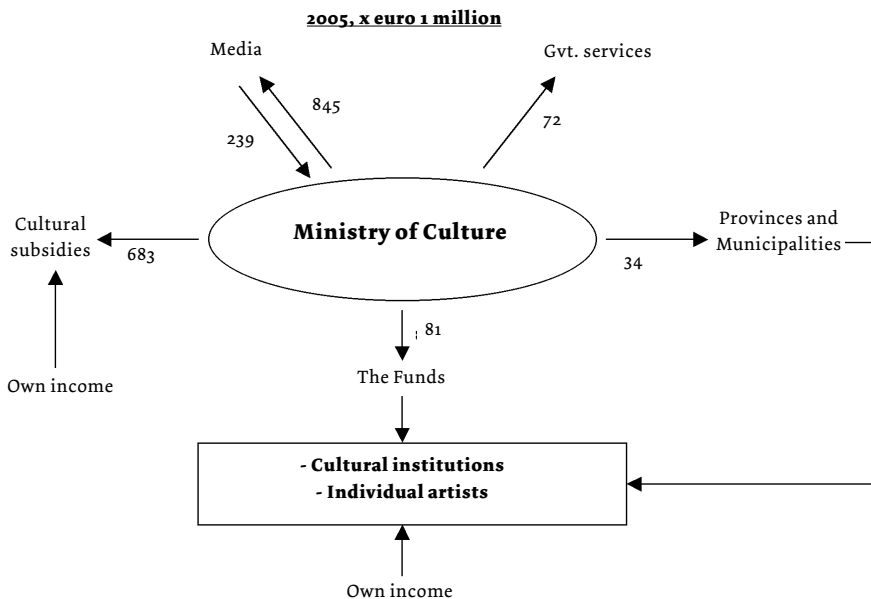
subsidy requests under the Cultural Policy Document system. Institutions receive their subsidy via a system of budget financing, implying that they can reserve a positive balance for later additional activities, or for exploitation costs, should this be the case.

In the four large cities, and in some larger municipalities, cultural institutions receive funding from both the state and the local authority, through a linked subsidy system. Agreements concerning the funding system are laid down in the covenants.

Short-term projects and subsidies for individual artists and organisations take place via the Funds.

A breakdown of central government spending on culture over the last four years is presented in table 3 on the next page.

*Chart 2: Ministry spending on culture and the arts – financial flows, 2005*<sup>99</sup>



99 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

Table 3: Ministry spending and income for culture and media, 2000-2005<sup>100</sup>

(x 1 million euro)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1.423,0</b>	<b>1.493,3</b>	<b>1.535,4</b>	<b>1.547,6</b>	<b>1.672,2</b>	<b>1.732,7</b>
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
Visual arts, architecture, design	54,5	73,4	45,6	44,9	41,8	43,2
Film	11,5	19,5	10,5	11,5	11,4	14,8
Performing arts	147,9	180,8	174,5	179,8	180,1	184,5
Amateur arts and arts education	20	23,2	23,7	24,5	29	26,4
Other subsidies arts	20,6	39,7	42,7	37,6	32,5	34,2
<b>Total expenditure libraries,</b>						
<b>literature and language</b>	<b>38,7</b>	<b>43,3</b>	<b>39,1</b>	<b>40,9</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42,3</b>
Libraries	26	27	29,7	31,1	29,5	32,6
Literature	11,5	15	7,9	8	7,8	7,9
Dutch language union	0,8	0,9	1	1,2	1,2	1,3
Frisian language and culture	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4
International			0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1
<b>Total expenditure media</b>	<b>830,6</b>	<b>836,1</b>	<b>881,3</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>867,5</b>	<b>845</b>
Radio Netherlands World service	39,9	42,5	44,2	46	44,4	43,8
Regional public broadcasting	40,8	43,3	45,4	46,5	46,9	47,6
Other expenditure	153,4	98,1	115,5	85,8	103,5	82,1
National public broadcasting	596,5	652,2	676,2	700,7	672,7	671,5
- Licence holders and NPS	359,2	379,9	387,2	396,8	339,5	285,0
- NOS RTV	117,5	134,2	138,1	143,9	142,4	109,7
- NOS Services	68,1	72,4	74,2	76,2	68,4	71,9
- Other broadcasting services	51,7	56,1	57,2	59	57,5	42,8
- Programming					42,3	139,8
- Development new services		9,6	19,5	24,8	22,6	22,3
<b>Total expenditure cultural heritage</b>	<b>284,7</b>	<b>260,1</b>	<b>227,1</b>	<b>229,5</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>371,6</b>
Museums	183,5	138,4	141,4	140,6	157,7	166,2
Monuments	94,8	113,4	77,9	80,3	101,4	175,7
Archaeology	3,6	5,1	4,2	4,8	4,3	3,3
Archives	2,7	3,2	3,6	3,9	3,7	26,4
<b>Funds</b>			<b>74,4</b>	<b>77,6</b>	<b>82,7</b>	<b>81,4</b>
Arts			61,6	61,8	68,4	66,9
Literature and Libraries			7,7	7,9	8,3	8,3
Heritage			5	7,9	6	6,2
<b>Other expenditure</b>	<b>14,6</b>	<b>17,1</b>	<b>16,5</b>	<b>22,3</b>	<b>25,9</b>	<b>17,6</b>
<b>Apparatus (gvt services)</b>					<b>95,3</b>	<b>71,7</b>
<b>Total income culture</b>	<b>246,1</b>	<b>236,1</b>	<b>227,1</b>	<b>258,8</b>	<b>275,3</b>	<b>353,9</b>
<b>Income cultural heritage</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>3,8</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>0,2</b>	<b>14,6</b>	<b>111,1</b>
<b>Income from media</b>	<b>243,3</b>	<b>231,3</b>	<b>222,2</b>	<b>255,8</b>	<b>259,3</b>	<b>239,0</b>
Income from advertising	234,6	222,2	216	213	217	181,0
Interest	7,7	8,4	5,1	3,8	3	1,4
Other income	0,9	0,7	1,1	0,1	0,4	20,0
Income distribution radio frequencies				38,9	38,9	36,6
<b>Other income</b>	<b>0,5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>1,3</b>	<b>3,8</b>

*Public cultural expenditure by level of government*

Here we give the figures collected by Statistics Netherlands, to show government spending on culture from all three tiers of government. Table 4 gives an overview of expenditure by central, provincial and municipal government on culture, in 2004.

Table 4: Gross Public cultural expenditure by level of government, in million euros, 2004<sup>101</sup>

	<b>Total</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Joint Funding</b> (all layers of government)
<b>Arts</b>	1340	358	91	860	31
<i>of which</i>					
Performing arts	265	195	10	60	0
Performing arts venues	361	0	5	357	0
Visual arts, literature, film	131	67	12	52	0
Amateur arts and arts education*	355	47	12	265	31
Other arts	227	49	52	126	0
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	769	316	68	369	16
<i>of which</i>					
Museums	399	164	30	205	0
Monuments	249	109	37	103	0
Archives	121	43	1	61	16
<b>Public libraries</b>	552	69	48	424	10
<b>Media (broadcasting)</b>	996	867	119	10	0
<b>Total**</b>	3657	1610	326	1663	57

\* Professional arts education excluded

\*\* Administration and cultural relations abroad excluded

### 3.4.2 Other sources of funding: inter-ministerial cooperation

Culture, of course, is affected not only by the cultural policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science but also by other Ministries and government measures. For example, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment [Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer: VROM<sup>102</sup>] has a grant scheme known as the 'percentage scheme', which aims to spend 1.5% of the construction costs of government buildings and 1% of those of school buildings on commissions or

101 Source: Statistics Netherlands (CBS)

102 [www.vrom.nl](http://www.vrom.nl)



purchases of art works to furnish and adorn them. The *Culture and School* policy document<sup>103</sup> was published jointly by the State Secretaries for Education and Culture in 1996. In the area of heritage conservation and architecture policy the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works together closely with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management [*Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat*<sup>104</sup>]. The Housing Ministry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries [*Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit*: LNV<sup>105</sup>] have been contributing an annual Euro 2.7 million to the Belvedere Project since 2001 (see §4.1 *Cultural heritage*). The Ministry of Economic Affairs started to cooperate with the department of Culture recently. See § 5.6 *Culture and Economy*. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs [*Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*<sup>106</sup>] shares responsibility for international cultural relations and pays a 50% contribution to the Culture Fund<sup>107</sup> for the presentation of Dutch culture abroad.

### 3.4.3 Tax incentives

State Secretary of Culture Van Leeuwen (2002-2003) placed the issue of private donations on the cultural policy agenda. In his view, additional funds for culture would be available if only a “culture of giving”, as he called it, would be stimulated systematically through fiscal incentives. See also §3.3.3 *Legislation*. His successor, Medy van der Laan, has pursued the matter of private giving. The result is that private individuals and businesses who donate money or works of arts to cultural institutions (i.e. museums, performing art companies) or cultural foundations are exempt from gift and inheritance tax and are eligible for a reduction in income or corporate tax. A 0% gift tax now applies to the art and cultural sector. Under a special scheme for museums, a museum (or its supporting body) can apply to the Minister of Finance for complete exemption from gift tax. To qualify, it must have a collection of national or regional importance and the donations must be in the public interest.

In the Netherlands, there are investment trusts that invest at least 70% of their capital in artistic and cultural projects. Private investment in these “cultural trusts” yields a high return, mainly thanks to income tax deductions. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science developed a brochure informing private individuals and businesses about these incentives in September 2004.

A scheme that has existed in France and the United Kingdom for many

103 *Notitie Cultuur en School* [1996]

104 [www.verkeerenwaterstaat.nl](http://www.verkeerenwaterstaat.nl)

105 [www9.minlnv.nl](http://www9.minlnv.nl)

106 [www.minbuza.nl](http://www.minbuza.nl)

107 *HGIS* (*Homogene Groep Internationale Samenwerking*). Total budget Euro 10 million per year. Share Ministry of Foreign Affairs = Euro 5 million.

years was introduced into Dutch tax law on 1 January 1997, whereby inheritance tax can be paid by donating works of art that form part of an estate to the state. This avoids situations where the inheritance tax on an estate consisting largely of works of art can only be paid by selling some of them off. The scheme applies to objects that are of cultural value to the Netherlands or that would cause cultural impoverishment if they were to be taken out of the country.

A tax allowance for personal expenditure on historic buildings, which helps to preserve the cultural heritage, has been included in the *Income Tax Act 2001*<sup>108</sup>. Any expenses and amounts written down in connection with a historic building in residential use in excess of 1.1% of its value are tax-deductible.

In 1999, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Economic Affairs agreed on the introduction of a tax exemption measure for private investors wanting to invest in films. It was expected that this measure would encourage private investors to support cultural enterprises and generate profits on their investments. In practice, this meant that investors supported mainstream film productions, as art films and documentary films were less attractive. In general, however, the tax exemption measure was welcomed by filmmakers, because it improved the situation of the Dutch film industry as a whole. In 2003, the Dutch government decided to revoke the tax exemption because it was considered only as a temporary measure to help entrepreneurs. According to the Ministry, it was never envisaged as a form of long-term structural support. As a result of a parliamentary vote, the Cabinet decided at the end of 2004 to continue its tax policy for the film sector with a budget of Euro 20 million per annum.

#### 3.4.4 **Private investments**

In addition to turnover generated by consumers and government grant aid there is a third source of cultural funding, which comes from private associations and non-profit making bodies. Many private-sector institutions qualify for a reduction in or remission of gift and inheritance tax, as outlined above. The objects they aim to support are set out in their articles. Large institutions have general aims of a social and cultural nature, whereas small institutions often have specific aims, e.g. providing study or travel bursaries or grants for the purchase of materials. Non-profit making bodies which hold shares in a company combine a wide

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<sup>108</sup> *Wet Inkomstenbelasting [2001]*

variety of functions. Their articles set out the social and cultural aims which they support. In the case of an unlisted company, they help to prevent it falling into the wrong hands. Either way, their work can have an impact on the company's image.

In 2006, a Dutch bank, the Triodos Bank, introduced the first cultural investment fund recognised by government under the fiscal regulations for cultural projects (2004)<sup>109</sup>. This public-private cooperation offers entrepreneurs the possibility to borrow against a low interest rate and gives investors the chance to invest in a fund that supports culture, without a loss on return. A minimum of 70% of the Fund's capital must be invested in cultural projects, if the Fund wants to enjoy the fiscal benefits. Triodos Cultural Fund invests in museums, concert halls, theatres, galleries, ateliers and artists. Some of the first investments include the theatre *Carré*<sup>110</sup> and the *Stedelijk Museum*<sup>111</sup> in Amsterdam.

#### 3.4.5 Societies of friends

An increasing number of subsidised cultural institutions have Societies of Friends or private support organisations which fund particular activities for them, e.g. the purchase of artworks or instruments. Their income comes from membership fees, donations and legacies. Societies of Friends (e.g. of museums) also provide an essential source of voluntary staff.

#### 3.4.6 Sponsorship

The fourth source of funding is trade and industry, under agreements between individual companies and cultural institutions or venues. A company provides money or services in return for the right to associate its name (or the name of one of its products or services) with the venue or institution or one of its productions. Sponsorship can provide an additional source of funding for the cultural sector, while assisting trade and industry in their marketing operations. Sponsors tend therefore to be attracted to the larger, well-established institutions and to events aimed at a mass audience, e.g. festivals and special exhibitions.

In the nineties, a Cultural Sponsorship Code<sup>112</sup> was drawn up (1993, revised 1999) at the behest of the Culture Ministry, to lay down criteria for sponsoring and mark out the limits within which sponsorship agreements could be entered into and implemented at the parties' discretion. The main point in the Code is that the sponsor should not interfere with the content of

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109 *Fiscale Regeling Cultuurprojecten 2004*

110 [www.theatercarre.nl](http://www.theatercarre.nl)

111 [www.stedelijk.nl](http://www.stedelijk.nl)

112 *Code cultuursponsoring [1993/1999]*

its cultural partner's activities. Sponsorship must not be at the expense of reasonable public access to sponsored events (performances, exhibitions, presentations), and there has to be a reasonable balance between the sponsor's input and what the sponsored body provides in return. A Cultural Sponsorship Code Foundation [*Stichting code cultuursponsoring*<sup>113</sup>] has been set up to deal with complaints of non-compliance with the code. In 2006, in the light of a major sponsorship contract between a major Dutch bank and the *Stedelijk Museum* in Amsterdam, the Code will be re-evaluated against current sponsorship practice.<sup>114</sup>

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113 [www.cultuursponsoring.com](http://www.cultuursponsoring.com)

114 Source: *Brief OCW aan de Tweede Kamer*, 28/06/2006 [OCW]



CHAPTER 4

THE POLICY AREAS: CULTURAL  
HERITAGE; MEDIA, LITERATURE AND  
LIBRARIES; THE ARTS

#### 4.1 Cultural heritage

Heritage policy was primarily dominated by two subjects during the last twenty years, (a) the need to deal with neglect in the field of conservation and (b) the need to make national cultural institutions self-governing to improve their management. Thanks largely to the *Delta Plan for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage*<sup>115</sup>, initiated in the early nineties, these areas have been tackled. In order to keep an overall overview of the content and quality of the Dutch cultural heritage collection, the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (*Instituut Collectie Nederland*: ICN<sup>116</sup>) functions as an independent knowledge institute for the preservation and management of moveable cultural heritage. The ICN has four core tasks: advising on the preservation and management of collections, carrying out research, training restorers and managing the ICN collection.

The second half of the nineties saw particular attention paid to using cultural heritage for educational purposes - both inside and outside school - as urged by the 1997-2000 Cultural Policy Document and the Culture and School document (1996). In mid-1997, the organisation *Erfgoed Actueel*<sup>117</sup> was created to interface between schools and heritage institutions.

From this time onwards, it was also decided that better use needed to be made of cultural heritage to improve the quality of our environment, and a partnership between three Ministries (Education, Culture and Science; Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; and Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality) was set up to coordinate cultural heritage and planning policy. Heritage policy, hitherto confined to the traditional museums, heritage sites, archaeology and archives sectors, was now extended to include *planning* and the term 'cultural planning' was introduced. This essentially involves working together with other interested parties and a development-oriented rather than conservation-oriented approach.

Cultural heritage policy accordingly focused more on the public and the possible uses of artefacts, rather than the artefacts themselves. Different kinds of heritage were presented to the public alongside one another or used to improve the quality of the environment. This change requires an approach to heritage policy that goes further than the traditional sector-based approach, and the opportunities afforded by the new digital media are proving very useful.

In her 2003 policy document *More than the sum*<sup>118</sup>, State Secretary Van der Laan describes the process of digitisation as a vital tool for cultural her-

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115 "Deltaplan voor het Cultuurbehoud" (1990-2000)

116 [www.icn.nl](http://www.icn.nl)

117 [www.erfgoedactueel.nl](http://www.erfgoedactueel.nl)

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118 "Meer dan de Som: Beleidsbrief Cultuur 2004-2007" [OCW, November 2003]

itage organisations. She adds, however, that ICT initiatives are often not in line with the national infrastructure and fail to be noticed by the general public. There should be a single digital collection [*Digitale Collectie Nederland*<sup>119</sup>] within the Netherlands, which is easily accessible to the public, so that they can be informed regarding the nationwide cultural supply. The Dutch Digital Heritage Association [*Stichting Digitaal Erfgoed Nederland*<sup>120</sup>] has the task of collecting and disseminating knowledge about ICT standards and other quality instruments in the field of cultural heritage.

In the cultural policy document 2001-2004 *Culture as Confrontation*, emphasis was placed on a more effective use of existing heritage, audience reach and social gain by means of cultural education. Furthermore, it was stated that the cultural heritage of immigrants should be preserved and made accessible. After a meeting on migrants and migrant culture in 2001, an inventory was prepared by the Institute of Social History [*Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis*<sup>121</sup>] in Amsterdam, looking for relevant material in the Dutch archives. It was advised to use the written, photographed and recorded fragments of migrant history for small exhibitions in municipal archives throughout the country. By organising such exhibitions, migrant organisations could make themselves more visible to a potentially interested audience. Recently, the project *Cultural Heritage of Minorities*<sup>122</sup> has been given a new boost.

Another key policy document was *Shaping the Netherlands, architecture policy 2001-2004*<sup>123</sup>, which was submitted to Parliament in 2000. It designated ten Major Projects, including the refurbishment of the *Rijksmuseum* and the *Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie* defence line.

More recently, the mobility of museum collections was put on the political agenda. Knowing that the ambition of exchanging collections between museums leads to increasing international traffic, central government decided to improve its indemnity regulation, which means that the state will absorb insurance costs for museums preserving and exhibiting state-owned collections. The regulation was launched in October 2004 and welcomed by the museums. However, some were disappointed by the lower than expected financial ceiling that is built into the indemnity for budgetary reasons.

Plans are being developed and implemented to integrate concepts of cultural and historic value into the spatial planning of the Netherlands as stated in a policy document entitled the *Belvedere policy document*. Recently,

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119 [eu2004.digitaliseringerfgoed.info/cultuurtechnologie/cultuurtechnologie/i000000.html](http://eu2004.digitaliseringerfgoed.info/cultuurtechnologie/cultuurtechnologie/i000000.html)

120 [www.den.nl](http://www.den.nl)

121 [www.iisg.nl](http://www.iisg.nl)

122 *Cultureel Erfgoed Minderheden*

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123 "Ontwerpen aan Nederland: Architectuurbeleid", 2001-2004" [OCW, 2001]



however, due to budget reductions, it was announced that historic buildings would be designated as national monuments only on an incidental basis. Exceptions will be made for important monuments that would deteriorate excessively without state help. The Ministry is to prepare new selection criteria in order to create regulations that are well balanced, easy to handle and affordable.

The **Belvedere policy** document was published in 1999: this project involves the Ministries of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries; Transport, Public Works and Water Management; and Education, Culture and Science, including the Dutch Archaeological Expertise Centre and the Netherlands Department for Conservation. The aim is to develop an integrated cultural heritage policy at central government level for landscape, archaeology and heritage conservation.

*Action Programme on Spatial Planning and Culture*<sup>124</sup>

The impact of urban and rural development on spatial quality in the Netherlands has increased in recent years. It brings pressure to bear on the economy and the environment, but also on culture, including architecture and the design of areas and landscapes. The Dutch government aims to realise spatial quality by integrating and strengthening economic, ecological and socio-cultural values in spatial planning. The Action Programme on Spatial Planning and Culture focuses on cultural features in spatial planning by increasing the involvement of the design disciplines in spatial planning and by bringing cultural history to bear on development. It is desirable to involve the design and cultural history disciplines at an early stage in the development process. This will help ensure that the thought processes involved in spatial planning issues and processes are more complete and integrated, thus reinforcing the integration of cultural and user value with value for the future.

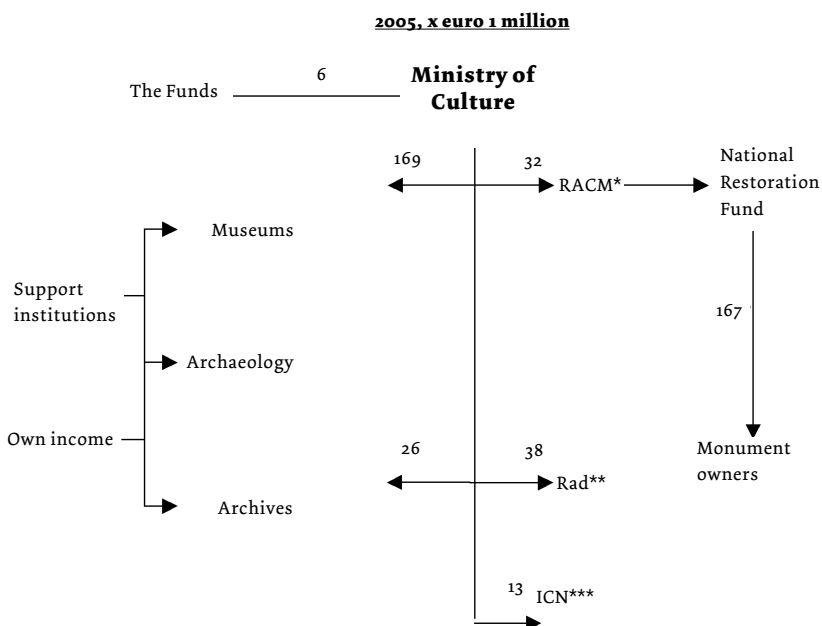
The main objective of the Action Programme on Spatial Planning and Culture is to improve the spatial quality of our buildings, villages, cities and landscapes. The action programme combines architecture policy and the Belvedere policy (aimed at strengthening the influence of cultural history on spatial planning) and is a step towards increasing the volume and consistency of cultural policy input in spatial development policy. Linking the

architecture and Belvedere policies in a single programme will reinforce the basis for cultural objectives in spatial policy and broaden inter-ministerial cooperation.

#### Financing heritage

Ministry financing for cultural heritage is primarily channelled through the RACM, the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage and the National Archive, as well as the subsidised institutions (museums etc). Of the latter, museums and monuments (restorations) receive the lion's share. Depending on the needs, the provinces and local authorities receive a multi-annual budget for restoration, which they distribute in the form of subsidy allocations. The Minister can then allocate the funds to the monument owners. These payments are handled by the National Restoration Fund [*Nationaal Restauratiefonds*<sup>125</sup>].

Chart 3: Central government spending on cultural heritage in 2005<sup>126</sup>



\* **National Service for Archaeology, Cultural Landscape and Built Heritage**  
(Rijksdienst voor Archeologie, Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten)

\*\* **State Archives Service** (Rijksarchiefdienst)

\*\*\* **Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (Instituut Collectie Nederland)**

125 [www.restauratiefonds.nl](http://www.restauratiefonds.nl)

126 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

## 4.1.1 Museums

Table 5: Direct Ministry spending on museums, 2000-2005<sup>127</sup>  
(excluding what is channelled through the funds)

x 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total expenditure cultural heritage	284,7	260,1	227,1	229,5	267	371,6
- of which museums	183,5	138,4	141,4	140,6	157,7	166,2

The foundations of the present-day museum system were laid in the first half of the twentieth century, when over a hundred museums were created, partly as a result of private individuals bequeathing their collections to the nation or the community. The government developed a strategy, setting up an advisory system and creating administrative bodies.

Until 1987, even museums which were not in state ownership were subsidised to cover their operating losses. In many cases they were jointly funded by various tiers of government under the 'linked subsidy' system. The *Museums Policy Document*<sup>128</sup> put an end to this in 1985, setting out which museums were the responsibility of central government, based on such criteria as the breadth of the museum's remit, the range and quality of its collection and how representative the museum is of its particular field. In line with these criteria, responsibility for a number of museums was transferred to provinces or municipalities in 1987, along with the associated funding. Only a small number are now the exclusive responsibility of central government.

The end of the linked subsidy system and the transfer of government subsidy to the Provinces Fund have placed a heavier burden on the provincial authorities, which have allocated responsibilities and funds in consultation with the municipalities involved. The provinces have developed their own museum policies, as have the municipalities.

As mentioned above, the *Delta Plan for the Preservation of the Cultural Heritage* enabled the conservation backlog to be dealt with and laid the foundation for turning the national museums into self-governing bodies. The concept of the *Collectie Nederland* was introduced, which takes national cultural heritage as a whole (rather than the individual museums' collections) as the basis of museum policy. In practice, this meant that the collections

127 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

128 "Notitie Museumbeleid" [1985]

and buildings remained in state ownership and the national museums became legal entities in their own right. This gave the museums operational independence without the government relinquishing its responsibility for their continued existence. The Cultural Heritage Inspectorate [*Inspectie Cultuurbezit*<sup>129</sup>] was set up to oversee the preservation of the national collections.

In November 2005, State Secretary Medy van der Laan presented a policy paper on museums to Parliament, entitled “*The Future of the Past*”<sup>130</sup>. Major alterations in museum policy are proposed in this document. Museums that house state collections, or collections that have been placed in the care of the state, will leave the four-year funding system and will become eligible for long-term funding instead. The grants will cover the running costs of the museums, such as staff, housing, upkeep of the collections, new acquisitions and exhibitions. Museums that are given the perspective of long-term funding will participate in periodical performance assessments by a visiting committee of national and international experts. Additional funding will be available for specific activities of the museums aiming at, *inter alia*, increasing participation of target groups (youth, ethnic minorities), upkeep and presentation of the cultural heritage of minorities and heritage education programmes for school children. An earmarked budget for such activities will be transferred to the Mondriaan Foundation. All museums in the country, and thus not only museums subsidised by the Ministry (about 30), will be eligible for grants from this budget.

#### *Attendance*

In 2003, Statistics Netherlands counted 873 museums in the Netherlands open to the public, the vast majority of which are run by non-profit making bodies, associations, educational institutions, companies or private individuals, and the rest by a municipal or provincial authority. About 50 are the responsibility of central government. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science does not have sole responsibility for the national museums (circa 30). The Ministry of Finance, for instance, subsidises the Dutch Coin Museum [*Het Nederlands Muntmuseum*<sup>131</sup>] in Utrecht and the Tax Museum [*Belasting en Douanemuseum*<sup>132</sup>] in Rotterdam, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs subsidises the Royal Tropical Institute [*Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen*<sup>133</sup>]. The Ministry of Defence [*Ministerie van Defensie*<sup>134</sup>] is responsible for over forty military history collections, some of which are housed in

129 Since 2005 part of *Erfgoedinspectie* [[www.erfgoedinspectie.nl](http://www.erfgoedinspectie.nl)]

130 “*Bewaren om te weeg te brengen*” [OCW, november 2005]

131 [www.geldmuseum.nl](http://www.geldmuseum.nl)

132 [www.bdmuseum.nl](http://www.bdmuseum.nl)

133 [www.kit.nl](http://www.kit.nl)

134 [www.mindef.nl](http://www.mindef.nl)

museums open to the public, e.g. the Dutch Naval Museum [*Marinemuseum*<sup>135</sup>] in Den Helder and the Military Aviation Museum [*Militaire Luchtvaart Museum*<sup>136</sup>] in Soesterberg.

Museum attendance increased up to the beginning of the nineties. Whereas 7.5 million visits were clocked up in 1970, by 1980 the figure had risen to just under 15 million. Since 1990, there have been over 20 million visits a year to Dutch museums. Societies of Friends play an important role vis-à-vis the museums. Most are affiliated to the Dutch Federation of Friends of Museums [*Nederlandse Federatie van Vrienden van Musea*<sup>137</sup>], an umbrella organisation which aims to improve relations between them and promote exchange of experience. Table 6 on the next page shows the number of visits to Ministry-funded museums in the period 1999-2003<sup>138</sup>. Table 7 shows the number of visits to all types of museum, broken down by collection type, for the year 2003.<sup>139</sup>

Table 6: Visits to Ministry funded museums 1999-2003

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
(x 1000)					
<b>All museums</b>	<b>4.701</b>	<b>4.907</b>	<b>4.605</b>	<b>5.382</b>	<b>4.825</b>
Former national museums <sup>1</sup>	4.099	4.293	4.047	4.791	4.224
Non-national museums <sup>2</sup>	601	614	558	591	601
<b>Other museums <sup>3</sup></b>	<b>369</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>363</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.070</b>	<b>5.249</b>	<b>4.925</b>	<b>5.701</b>	<b>5.188</b>

<sup>1</sup> Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam  
 Ned. Scheepv. Museum, Amsterdam  
 Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam  
 H.W. Mesdag, Den Haag  
 Meermannoo-Westreenianum, Den Haag  
 Mauritshuis, Den Haag  
 Catharijneconvent, Utrecht  
 Volkenkunde, Leiden  
 Boerhaave, Leiden  
 Oudh + Penningkabinet, Leiden  
 Naturalis, Leiden  
 Kröller-Müller, Otterloo  
 Paleis Het Loo, Apeldoorn  
 Twenthe, Enschede  
 Zuiderzeemuseum, Enkhuizen

<sup>2</sup> Afrika Museum, Berg en Dal  
 Ned. Openluchtmuseum, Arnhem  
 Joods Historisch Museum, Amsterdam  
 Teylers Museum, Haarlem  
 Princessehof, Leeuwarden  
 Hollandse Schouwburg, Amsterdam

<sup>3</sup> Muiderslot, Muiden  
 Slot Loevestein, Poederroijen  
 Gevangenpoort, Den Haag  
 Kastelenstichting, H-Z Haarlem  
 Huis Doorn, Doorn  
 St. Hubertus (Jachtslot), Otterloo  
 Radboud, Medemblik

135 [www.marinemuseum.nl](http://www.marinemuseum.nl)  
 136 [www.militaireluchtvaartmuseum.nl](http://www.militaireluchtvaartmuseum.nl)  
 137 [www.federatievriendenmusea.nl](http://www.federatievriendenmusea.nl)  
 138 Source: *Kerncijfers 2000-2004* [OCW]

139 Source: *Statistics Netherlands* ([www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl))

Table 7: Visits to all museums broken down by type of collection (2003)

	<b>Total visits</b>	<b>Free visits</b>	<b>Paying visits</b>	<b>Foreign visits</b>
<i>Categories</i>	<i>x 1000</i>			
<b>Total all collections</b>	<b>19558</b>	<b>5965</b>	<b>13593</b>	<b>3473</b>
<b>Visual arts</b>	6748	2270	4479	1288
<b>History</b>	6074	1541	4533	892
<b>Natural history</b>	1847	670	1177	523
<b>Technology</b>	3070	903	2167	435
<b>Anthropology</b>	663	205	458	153
<b>Mixed collection</b>	1155	376	779	

In the 2005 policy paper *The Future of the Past*, the State Secretary for Culture analysed the social developments that are relevant for museums. The paper also includes an analysis of the ways in which museums respond to the rapidly changing society and the needs and expectations of the younger generation and immigrants. The crucial question now revolves around *what* museums do with their collection for society. The State Secretary advocates greater cooperation between museums and independent sector organisations. She also argues that museums must make clear choices, through reflecting on what would be the best way for them to assume an active role in society. At the same time, the policy paper announces a new funding system for museums: the possibility of multi-annual funding for the exploitation of a small group of museums, combined with quality insurance through a system of assessment visits. Besides this, all museums that submit high-quality plans will be eligible to have these funded.

There are a number of bodies that serve the museum sector in general, as well as being concerned with the conservation and presentation of collections, digitisation, special public activities, acquisitions, international presentations and grants for research into collections. These schemes are administered by the Mondriaan Foundation.

The Netherlands Institute for Art History [*Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie*<sup>140</sup>] in The Hague supports museums by collecting, managing and researching information on Dutch art and making it available. The Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage was set up in 1997. It advises on the management and movement of movable cultural heritage, does research in this area, organises courses and symposiums and manages national collections not kept in museums. The Netherlands Museum

Association [*Nederlandse Museumvereniging*<sup>141</sup>] promotes the interests of Dutch museums. The *Stichting Museumjaarkaart*, set up by the Association in 1981, issues annual museum passes, which provide free admission to museums that are members of the scheme and give reductions on tickets for special exhibitions.

Many museums are members of the International Council of Museums (ICOM)<sup>142</sup>, a non-governmental organisation affiliated to UNESCO.

*Policy on returning of works of art*

A special agency (*Herkomst Gezocht*<sup>143</sup>) was set up to survey the 4,000 or so works of art returned to the Netherlands after World War II which are now in the custody of the Dutch state<sup>144</sup>. It tried to trace the original owners from 1998 until 2004. A committee (the Ekkart Committee) is monitoring the agency's work in terms of methods and quality. The committee also advised the Dutch government on the return of cultural property from the war. The World War II Cultural Property Claims Advisory Committee<sup>145</sup> was set up at the beginning of 2002. It advises the Minister on applications for the return of such items in state custody. The possibility to submit claims under the liberalised restitution policy is currently restricted according to the Ekkart advice, until April 2007. The Restitution Committee will issue recommendations until 4 April 2008.

*Special laws and rules*

The Netherlands does not have a 'Museums Act' as such, but it does have legislation that affects museums and their collections. The 1985 *Cultural Heritage Preservation Act*<sup>146</sup> is designed to prevent objects of importance to Dutch cultural history being exported. There are also aspects of tax law that affect museums. For instance, donations to museums attract a considerable reduction in gift tax and inheritance tax, and in certain cases remission (see §3.4.3 *Tax incentives*).

There are also international rules and conventions on the protection of valuable cultural property, including the 1970 UNESCO Convention - still not ratified by the Netherlands - on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. The European Commission passed a regulation on the export of cultural property to third countries in 1992.<sup>147</sup> In 1993, the European Commission passed a Directive on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed

141 [www.museumvereniging.nl](http://www.museumvereniging.nl)

142 <http://icom.museum>

143 [www.herkomstgezocht.nl](http://www.herkomstgezocht.nl)

144 *Nederlands Kunstbezit* or *NK Collection*

145 *Adviescommissie Restitutieverzoeken*

*Cultuuroederen en Tweede Werldeoorlog*

146 *Wet tot Behoud van Cultuurbezit* (1985)

147 Council Regulation (EEC) No 3911/92 of 9 December 1992 on the export of cultural goods, Official Journal L 395, 31/12/1992.

from the territory of a Member State.<sup>148</sup> The Cultural Heritage Inspectorate, set up as part of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 1997, is responsible for enforcing the European regulations.

#### 4.1.2 Heritage conservation

Table 8: Direct Ministry spending on cultural heritage, 2000-2005<sup>149</sup>  
(excluding what is channelled through the funds)

x 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total expenditure cultural heritage	284,7	260,1	227,1	229,5	267	371,6
- of which monuments	94,8	113,4	77,9	80,3	101,4	175,7

Heritage conservation covers the preservation and restoration of the historically valuable built environment, consisting of churches, chapels, monasteries, town halls, castles, mansions, windmills, farms, city gates, city walls, pumping stations, forts, earthworks, mints, butchers' halls, weigh houses, arsenals and, last but not least, private houses. The government is interested not only in individual buildings but also in townscapes and village-scapes - mound villages and round villages, for instance, as well as historic town centres and suburbs. The *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act* 1988 defines 'monuments' as 'immovable property created by man which is more than fifty years old and of general interest on account of its beauty or scientific or cultural history value'.

It was not until after the Second World War that heritage conservation really got off the ground, driven by the need to restore war-damaged historical buildings. The 1961 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act* paved the way for the protection not only of individual buildings but also of valuable historical entities such as townscapes and village-scapes. The Act required a list of historic buildings to be drawn up for each municipality, a task which was completed in 1970. It also banned any alterations to, or demolition of, listed buildings without the Minister's consent.

Recently, there have been three trends in heritage conservation, the most important one being decentralisation. Secondly, the interpretation of the term 'monument' has gradually become broader and there have been changes in selection policy and the scope of protection. Listing no longer

<sup>148</sup> 13 Council Directive 93/7/EEC of 15 March 1993 on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State, Official Journal L 074, 27/03/1993.

<sup>149</sup> Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]



means that the site is automatically fully protected; what it means is that, where conflicting interests are involved, its cultural heritage value must be explicitly taken into account. The current approach allows such aspects as function and utility value to play a greater role. The protection has also been extended to more contemporary architecture.

The third trend is the increasing interlinking of heritage conservation with other policy areas. It has always overlapped with museums policy when it comes to items in historic buildings (e.g. furniture that forms an ensemble with wooden panelling) and with archaeology policy, as the protection of archaeological sites is based on the 1988 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act*, and both of these areas are strongly tied in with planning policy. Heritage conservation policy also overlaps architecture policy. These reciprocal links with increasing numbers of policy areas are due to the fact that the traditional approach based on individual buildings is making way for one based more on geographical areas, and rightly so, since historical sites and ensembles are an increasingly important factor in the management, use and development of land. This is why there is now close collaboration with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, as well as regular consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality. Cultural tourism is promoted in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance is an important partner when it comes to the tax and funding aspects.

Under the 1988 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act*, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for designating listed heritage sites, which he does after consulting the municipality where the site is located (or the Provincial Executive if the site is not within a municipality), and the Council for Culture. If the application is approved, the site is listed on the register of historic buildings and monuments, providing protection and making it eligible - in principle - for grant aid. The Netherlands has some 55,000 listed national heritage sites. The majority (about 32,000) are private houses. Other major categories (with approximate figures) are farms (6,000), churches (3,700), windmills (1,100), earthworks (800) and public buildings (1,300). As well as individual buildings and monuments there are some 350 listed townscapes and village-scapes; parts of a town or village that are in need of protection because of their historic nature.

With the decentralisation of heritage conservation, the municipalities

have been given a key role. It is at municipal level that decisions on land use are made, a funding plan is drawn up and the planners, architects and PR people provide input - not to mention private individuals and organisations. The 1988 Act also lays down that responsibility for permit policy - how protected buildings are dealt with - is also decentralised, in the vast majority of cases to the municipalities. If an owner wishes to demolish, move or make alterations to a listed building, he must obtain a permit from the municipal executive. Before deciding on the application, the municipality consults the Minister of Education, Culture and Science.

The RACM is responsible, on behalf of the Minister, for the ministerial duties arising under the 1988 Act. As well as supervising the application of the Act, it is required to advise the municipalities on alteration permits which they propose to issue and on the planning and execution of restoration work.

The government hopes to attract international attention to the value of some Dutch heritage sites by nominating them for the UNESCO World Heritage List. Six sites have been listed, including four built sites, including the Rietveld-Schröder House<sup>150</sup> in Utrecht, the Kinderdijk group of windmills in South Holland and the Defence Line of Amsterdam [*Stelling van Amsterdam*<sup>151</sup>].

Not only the government but also many private individuals and organisations are involved in the conservation, restoration and maintenance of historic buildings and monuments. Private-sector organisations are closely involved in the development and implementation of heritage conservation policy. Particularly worthy of mention are *Stichting Nationaal Contact Monumenten* (NCM)<sup>152</sup> and *Stichting Archeologische Monumentenwacht Nederland*<sup>153</sup>. The NCM brings together those working in the private heritage sector, establishing contacts between hundreds of organisations. It acts as a go-between for its member organisations and the government. The object of *Stichting Archeologische Monumentenwacht* is to prevent historic buildings falling into decay. It inspects them on behalf of the owners and takes preventive measures where necessary.

The restoration and maintenance of heritage sites cannot be funded solely by the government; substantial contributions from the private sector are needed if we are to keep the built heritage. The government has a general responsibility to protect and conserve buildings and structures of special cultural value, and it puts this responsibility into practice first and fore-

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150 [www.architectuur.org](http://www.architectuur.org)

151 [www.stelling-amsterdam.org](http://www.stelling-amsterdam.org)

152 [www.stichtingncm.nl](http://www.stichtingncm.nl) (Foundation for the National Platform of Museums [trans: ed])

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153 [www.archeomw.nl](http://www.archeomw.nl) (Foundation for Netherlands Archaeological Monuments Preservation [trans: ed])

most by subsidising restoration and maintenance. If a property is to be eligible for grant aid it must be listed on the register of national heritage sites. In addition to the national list, there are provincial and municipal lists. The National Restoration Fund was set up in 1985 as a forum for institutional investors to work together with central government. The Fund takes care of some of the technical aspects of administering the grant schemes. Owners of listed buildings can borrow money for restoration work at low interest rates. The Fund also provides non-refundable grants, advance financing of grants and mortgages for restoration work and financial advice. As the Fund provides some of the government grant aid for restoration work in the form of loans, the repayments and interest contribute to a revolving fund, enabling the money to be repeatedly re-channelled into heritage conservation.

Heritage conservation policy has been under review in recent years with the aim of shifting the emphasis still more from restoration to planned maintenance. This has led to a new subsidy system being brought into force as of 1.2.06, which focuses on the conservation of protected monuments. Owners can apply for a six-year subsidy. There has been positive experience of the system during the first year.

#### 4.1.3 Archaeological heritage

Table 9: Direct Ministry spending on archaeology, 2000-2005<sup>154</sup>  
(excluding what is channelled through the funds)

<i>x 1 million euro</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total expenditure cultural heritage	284,7	260,1	227,1	229,5	267	371,6
- of which archaeology	3,6	5,1	4,2	4,8	4,3	3,3

The government's involvement with archaeological heritage dates back to the eighteenth century and was for a long time purely ad hoc. The government was initially interested in two aspects of archaeology; excavating sites and distributing the finds among museums. After the Second World War, a proper system of heritage conservation was needed for archaeology, similar to the one for historic buildings. As a result, the Dutch Archaeological Expertise Centre was set up in 1947. The 1961 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act* provided a legal basis for archaeological heritage conservation,

154 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

enabling not only sites but also objects such as mounds and megalithic graves to be put on the protected list. The 1961 Act was superseded by the 1988 Act of the same name. A bill amending this Act (and other legislation) has been drafted to implement the *Malta Convention*.

The archaeological approach in recent years has increasingly leant towards conservation in situ, i.e. in the ground. This is only likely to be successful, however, if the archaeologists are involved in planning at an early stage. This practice is increasingly being accepted, partly in anticipation of the implementation of the *Malta Convention* and partly because the steps being taken to integrate the cultural history aspect in the planning process can also benefit archaeological heritage conservation. Where conservation in situ turns out not to be feasible, the only option is emergency excavation, if we are to preserve the archaeological information for posterity.

#### *The system*

Under the 1988 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act*, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for policy on protecting archaeological sites. He designates these after consulting the municipality where the site is situated (or the Provincial Executive if the site is not within a municipality) and the Council for Culture. Currently some 1,600 archaeological sites enjoy national protection. The total number of sites of archaeological interest is much higher, however.

The 1988 *Monuments and Archaeological Sites Act* lays down the conditions for obtaining an excavation permit. Permits are issued by the Dutch Archaeological Expertise Centre on behalf of the Minister. They are only issued to state institutions, university institutions and municipalities that meet the statutory criteria. The Centre also records important archaeological data in its central Archis database<sup>155</sup>. The professional organisation of archaeologists has drawn up a *Dutch Archaeology Quality Standard*<sup>156</sup> with the aim of improving the quality of excavation. An Archaeological Quality Board [*College voor de Archeologische Kwaliteit*<sup>157</sup>] has been set up to keep the standard up to date. The State Inspectorate for Archaeology [*Rijksinspectie voor de Archeologie*<sup>158</sup>] is the supervising authority.

Nowadays, archaeology is increasingly an industry too, with some fifty companies engaged in prospecting, digging, specialised research, consultancy, IT, restoration and presentation; many of them members of the Association of Archaeological Agencies [*Vereniging van ondernemers in*

155 see [www.archis.nl](http://www.archis.nl)

156 *Kwaliteitsnorm Nederlandse Archeologie*

157 [www.cvak.org](http://www.cvak.org)

158 [www.archinsp.nl](http://www.archinsp.nl)

archeologie<sup>159</sup>]. Private-sector organisations also take an interest in archaeological heritage sites (*Stichting Archeologische Monumentenwacht Nederland*, for instance) and numerous private-sector antiquarian associations and many provincial and regional museums are involved. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science helps to improve the quality of the archaeology infrastructure by subsidising private-sector bodies.

The umbrella organisation is the Netherlands Archaeological Association [*Stichting voor de Nederlandse Archeologie*<sup>160</sup>], which promotes the political and social interests of archaeology in the Netherlands and provides advice to authorities and individuals involved with the archaeological heritage on request or on its own initiative. The interests of municipal archaeologists are represented by the Assembly of Municipal Archaeologists [*Convent van Gemeentelijke Archeologen*<sup>161</sup>].

#### *The Malta Convention*

Along with other European countries, the Netherlands signed the *Malta Convention* in 1992. Drawn up by the Council of Europe, it aims to improve the protection of the archaeological heritage in Europe. Important elements are involving archaeologists in the planning process at an early stage and the application of the 'culprit pays' principle. This archaeological equivalent of the 'polluter pays' principle generally accepted in environmental protection means that if the soil is disturbed, the costs of archaeological investigation and any excavation work should be included in the total cost of the project. The archaeology system will change considerably as a result of the Convention being implemented.

In October 2003, the State Secretary sent a legislative proposal to Parliament for a new archaeology law that accepts the points of departure of the *Malta Convention*. Main points of the draft law include that, if the soil is disturbed, important archaeological remains must stay intact, and preferably in the soil. The draft law has been discussed with representatives from the relevant authorities, archaeologists, large landowners and the building sector. The law will only enter into force after it has passed through the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament. And only after the Council of Europe has been informed as to the manner in which the Netherlands will execute the Convention through its law will the Convention be formally ratified. It is expected that the law will enter into force in the spring of 2007.

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159 [www.voia.nl](http://www.voia.nl)

160 [www.sna.nl](http://www.sna.nl)

161 [www.gemeente-archeologen.nl](http://www.gemeente-archeologen.nl)

4.1.4 **Archives and public records**

Table 10: Direct Ministry spending on archives, 2000-2005<sup>162</sup>  
(excluding what is channelled through the funds)

× 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total expenditure cultural heritage	284,7	260,1	227,1	229,5	267	371,6
- of which archives	2,7*	3,2*	38,6	39,2	41,3	41,9

\*excluding spending on National Archive

Archives and public records are the memory of a community. They provide a means for the authorities and individuals to substantiate their rights. They perform an essential role in society as an aid to good governance and a guarantee of the constitutional state, besides serving as an important source for research into aspects of the past. As time goes by, they become more and more valuable to the study of cultural history. They are indispensable to the historical and political education of new generations.

Government has been involved in creating and managing archives ever since it started using written documents. This entails three things: (a) taking care of the physical records, (b) ensuring that they are kept public and (c) ensuring that every citizen has access to them, as is his/her right. The 1995 *Public Records Act* lays down that selected records of the national government must be handed over to the State Archives Service (National Archive) after twenty years.

The public records offices have taken steps in recent years to improve access, e.g. by taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by information and communications technology. They aim to enlarge and broaden their public, to enable more people to actively search for information and to gear their products more to the wishes of various sections of the population.

Since 2002, the General State Archives is called the National Archive<sup>163</sup>. It houses the central repository of the State Archives Service. The aim of the National Archive is to provide information on the history of the Netherlands to a varied public and to encourage cultural activities by supplying information - e.g. interactively - and organizing activities based on the collection. With this in mind, it acquires and manages records of national importance from national (central) government and private institutions and individuals.

162 Source: Annual reports of OCW for the years 2001 to 2005.

163 [www.nationaalarchief.nl](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl)

By setting up Regional Historical Centres [*Regionale Historische Centra*: RHC], a process of pooling forces on a regional basis has been finalised. The 'national records offices' in each province are joining forces in these RHC's with other cultural institutions, to create collection-managing bodies that are able to provide better public access in the regions.

*The system*

The *Public Records Act 1995* requires the various government bodies generally to take good care of the records in their keep. Statutory regulations specifically lay down requirements for the design of repositories, methods of conservation, selection and destruction, and openness and access. There are three types of repositories: national, municipal and those of water control corporations. Central government is responsible for the National Archive in The Hague, the 'national records offices' in the provinces (now part of Regional Historical Centres), all of which fall under the State Archives Service. The 'national records offices' in each provincial capital acquire records of the provincial authorities and national government agencies in the province. Municipalities and water control corporations are responsible for their own records offices.

All documents in a public records office are normally public unless special arrangements have been made when handing them over. They can be consulted by anyone free of charge. Charges may be made for special services such as processing and loans. Researchers are permitted to make copies or reproductions of documents or entries. Documents may also be loaned to other institutions.

The Minister of Education, Culture and Science decides policy on general matters relating to (national) public records. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations [*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*, BZK<sup>164</sup>] is responsible for coordinating the management of records at the Ministries, with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science playing an advisory and inspecting role. The Public Records Inspectorate [*Erfgoedinspectie*]<sup>165</sup> oversees the management of central government records on behalf of the Minister until such time as they are destroyed or transferred to a repository.

Provincial public records inspectorates (acting on behalf of the Provincial Executives) oversee the management of the provinces' own records. They also oversee the statutory keeping of records by municipalities, water control corporations, joint bodies and the police, both before and

164 [www.minbzk.nl](http://www.minbzk.nl)

165 Now *Erfgoedinspectie* [[www.erfgoedinspectie.nl](http://www.erfgoedinspectie.nl)], previously called: *Rijksarchiefinspectie*.

after transfer to a repository. Municipal archivists and water control corporation archivists oversee the management of their organisations' records until they are transferred to a local repository.

National government spending on public records goes mainly to the State Archives Service (National Archive), although other bodies are also subsidised, e.g. the *Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie*<sup>166</sup>, a family history documentation centre which acquires and manages collections, publishes books etc., organises courses, and does public education and research work.

The umbrella organisation, DIVA - the Association for Records Management and Archives [*Vereniging voor de documentaire informatievoorziening en het archiefwezen*<sup>167</sup>], set up in 1999, combines documentary information and public records - important at a time when information and communications technology are becoming increasingly important and digital information services have major implications for archiving.

In 2002, the State Secretary for Cultural Affairs submitted a letter to Parliament, setting out his idea of the future organisation of the public records system (*Interactief Archief*). The Interprovincial Consultative Council [*Interprovinciaal Overleg: IPO*<sup>168</sup>], the Union of Netherlands Municipalities [*Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten*<sup>169</sup>], the Union of Water Control Corporations [*Unie van Waterschappen*<sup>170</sup>] and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science then signed a covenant with the aim of increasing the reach of public records offices among the general public. This sets out some action points and plans for three surveys, into quality standards for public access to records, into the legal status and management of new Regional Historical Centres and into the supervision of records offices. The covenant ended in 2005.

In June 2006, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations sent the policy paper "*Information in order*"<sup>171</sup> to Parliament, sparked by the report "*A demented government?*"<sup>172</sup> by the Public Records Inspectorate. The aim of the paper is to order the paper and digital archives of the central government services to such an extent that all relevant government information is accessible for members of society (for example for citizens, civil servants and researchers) and moreover to make sure that it is reliable, authentic and complete. In the policy paper, eight action lines are set out to ensure the structural improvement of information and archive management in all national government organisations.

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166 [www.cbq.nl](http://www.cbq.nl)

167 [www.divakoepeel.nl](http://www.divakoepeel.nl)

168 [www.ipa.nl](http://www.ipa.nl)

169 [www.vng.nl](http://www.vng.nl)

170 [www.uvw.nl](http://www.uvw.nl)

171 "*Informatie op orde; vindbare en toegankelijke overheidsinformatie*" [OCW & BZK, 29 June 2006]

172 "*Een demeterende overheid?*" [January 2005]



## 4.2 Media, literature and libraries

### 4.2.1 General policy – ensuring variety and access

Although media policy, literature policy and libraries policy each have their own tradition and policy tools, they share a common basis: freedom of opinion. Freedom of opinion for citizens, which was added to the Constitution in the early fifties, implies the availability of a wide range of information for them to choose from. Since the early seventies, growing emphasis has been placed on the government's active duty of care to guarantee such availability.

By virtue of its duty of care enshrined in the Constitution, the government is responsible for the pluralism, accessibility and affordability of information. Its policy is rooted in a broad-based view of the information society, based on social, cultural and democratic values. There are two main objectives: firstly, to ensure a wide variety of high-quality radio, television, books, newspapers, magazines and new media, and secondly, to ensure these amenities are accessible to, and affordable for, all sections of the population.

Article 7 of the Constitution gives the press and broadcasters independence, through the protection it affords information providers from prior state supervision. The main tool for state support of public values in the media (variety, quality, access) is the *Media Act*<sup>173</sup>, which regulates the organisation, funding and remit of public service broadcasting, sets a number of rules for commercial channels and cable operators and provides for support to the press. The *Media Act* dates from 1988. There have been a number of amendments over the years, the most recent dating from 1 January 2006. Media policy also includes the allocation of the limited space available on cable and the airwaves.

As regards literature, the paramount concern is the diversity of, and access to, books (non-literary as well as literary). Public libraries receive government aid to enable members of the public to have access to a broad range of information, education and culture at low cost.

**Dutch Constitution: Article 7 [Expression]**

- (1) No one shall require prior permission to publish thoughts or opinions through the press, without prejudice to the responsibility of every person under the law.
- (2) Rules concerning radio and television shall be laid down by Act of Parliament. There shall be no prior supervision of the content of a radio or television broadcast.
- (3) No one shall be required to submit thoughts or opinions for prior approval in order to disseminate them by means other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, without prejudice to the responsibility of every person under the law. The holding of performances open to persons younger than sixteen years of age may be regulated by Act of Parliament in order to protect good morals.
- (4) The preceding paragraphs do not apply to commercial advertising.

**4.2.2 The media**

Media policy and other fields of cultural policy are closely linked, but at the same time the media represent a separate set of policy traditions, institutions and regulations. Further on in this section, we give a short history of media policy and define the main elements of current regulation. Here, we will make a few remarks about the typical features of media policy.

The starting point for media policy is freedom of expression and the important role media have in a democratic society. The media shape public agendas and citizens' information about, and views on, issues. As a consequence, independence, diversity and access are the main principles guiding media policy. Quality is an issue too, but not so prominent as in arts policy, for instance.

Compared to arts policy, media policy is less about subsidising specific products and more about intervening in markets. This has been the case particularly since the early nineties, when media policy widened its scope from press and public broadcasting to the media market as a whole. The core business is the regulation of all media, public and private, and the funding (of national public broadcasting) is a secondary instrument in

media policy. Also, media policy is highly affected by European regulation, as broadcasting and telecommunications are part of the Common Market.

There is less political consensus about media policy than about the other fields of cultural policy. The system of public service broadcasting, in particular, is subject to political controversy and heated debate every so often. This has to do with the turbulent development of the media market. But also, the great interest politicians take in public radio and television is a product of their dependency on the media for getting their message across.

In the cultural sector, media is relatively big business, involving large private companies and occupying the larger part of people's leisure time. Thus, proposals for changing government policy – for example the auctioning of airwaves or regulation of cable distribution – usually gain considerable public attention and are much debated in press and Parliament.

#### *Main trends in media policy*

Over the years, the relationship between the public and commercial media has been an issue. In the seventies and eighties, the key point was the 'inter-relationship' between the press and broadcasting - which at that time was still entirely public. With the introduction and expansion of radio and television advertising, a temporary scheme was introduced in the eighties to compensate the press for its alleged loss of income. In the nineties, the focus shifted to the market relationship between public and commercial broadcasting, which share the same audience, advertising market, rights market and distribution infrastructures. The government can influence the balance of power through its policy. To prevent the emergence of large media conglomerates with excessive power over public opinion, the Media Act limited cross-ownership of newspapers and television channels within one company. Dutch media policy continued to support public service broadcasting with a wide programming remit, reaching out to the larger public. At the same time, more obligations were imposed upon the public service broadcaster to ensure that public programme output meets certain standards and differs from commercial radio and television. In contrast, Dutch commercial broadcasters have always enjoyed great freedom. They only have to meet rules about European production, advertising and protection of minors that stem from the EU Directive on Television.

Media policy during the last ten years has been characterised by liberalisation, against the background of a rising standard of living, the ongoing

integration of Europe, and technological advances that offer the prospect of an abundant information and media market with a great deal of individual freedom of choice. Faith in the wholesome effects of greater competition and fewer rules and regulations increased, also in the broadcasting market. This is most evident in the field of radio and television distribution.

In the nineties, local governments sold their cable networks to private companies and changes in legislation allowed these companies to offer programming services of their own. At the same time however, media policy acknowledged market failures: there is still scarcity of airwaves, cable companies have a regional monopoly, and there is horizontal and vertical integration in the media market as a whole. Given this situation, media policy is encompassing new aims such as freedom of choice, access and affordability for members of the public. This is particularly evident in the way cable is regulated: cable companies are obliged to offer everyone a basic package for a reasonable price. Councils involving members of the public advise on which channels should be included in the basic package. Fair access to the infrastructure for providers is another major aim. To this end, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works together closely with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, which is responsible for competition policy and the technical communications infrastructure. Recently, the governmental body and non-departmental agency of the Ministry of Economic Affairs that operates as an autonomous administrative authority for telecommunication – OPTA [*Onafhankelijke Post en Telecommunicatie Autoriteit*<sup>174</sup>] – has been given the authority and responsibility to ensure the fair and open access of consumers and content providers to the cable networks.

A general belief in the benefits of the market led the Dutch government to auction radio frequencies to the highest bidder in 2001. Specific provisions were made for variety. For instance, the *Media Act* allows for groups of frequencies to be ring-fenced for particular types of radio programmes, e.g. classical music.

Media policy is traditionally about radio, television and the press, but as a result of technological developments the scope is widening. Internet is a much-used medium in most Dutch households, digital television (cable and terrestrial) is taking off and audiovisual mobile services are developing. Competition policy and media policy stimulate such developments in two ways. Firstly, the government promotes competition between and within distribution networks. Secondly, the public broadcaster is expected to

develop new digital services. At the end of 2006, analogue terrestrial distribution of the national and regional public television channels will be discontinued in favour of – free to air - digital terrestrial distribution. At the same time several new digital audiovisual services will be launched by the national public broadcaster. Thirdly, media policy gradually extends subsidies into the new media. Two older Funds for press and television nowadays also support Internet productions in the field of journalism and culture. In addition, a special scheme, called *Digital Pioneers*, was introduced to support grassroots initiatives on Internet that contribute to public debate.

In 2006, Dutch government gave its view on future media policy in response to a report from the Scientific Council for Government Policy [*Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid: WRR*<sup>175</sup>]. In this document, renewed attention is paid to fundamental principles underlying media policy: independence, variety, quality and access of the media. In the ever-changing digital, international and mainly commercial media landscape, the state's role is to protect these principles. Funding a public media organisation is just one of several state interventions to ensure public values in the media. In the future, media policy might include more rules and subsidies for enhancing the quality of content produced by private companies.

*Funding*

Table 11: *Direct Ministry expenditure and income on media, 2000-2005* <sup>176</sup>  
 (excluding what may be channelled through the funds)

<i>x 1 million euro</i>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Total expenditure media</b>	<b>830,6</b>	<b>836,1</b>	<b>881,3</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>867,5</b>	<b>845</b>
Radio Netherlands World service	39,9	42,5	44,2	46	44,4	43,8
Regional public broadcasting	40,8	43,3	45,4	46,5	46,9	47,6
Other expenditure	153,4	98,1	115,5	85,8	103,5	82,1
National public broadcasting	596,5	652,2	676,2	700,7	672,7	671,5
- Licence holders and NPS	359,2	379,9	387,2	396,8	339,5	285,0
- NOS RTV	117,5	134,2	138,1	143,9	142,4	109,7
- NOS Services	68,1	72,4	74,2	76,2	68,4	71,9
- Other broadcasting services	51,7	56,1	57,2	59	57,5	42,8
- Other programming					42,3	139,8
- Development new services		9,6	19,5	24,8	22,6	22,3
<b>Income from media</b>	<b>243,3</b>	<b>231,3</b>	<b>222,2</b>	<b>255,8</b>	<b>259,3</b>	<b>239,0</b>
Income from advertising	234,6	222,2	216	213	217	181,0
Interest	7,7	8,4	5,1	3,8	3	1,4
Other income	0,9	0,7	1,1	0,1	0,4	20,0
Income distribution radio frequencies				38,9	38,9	36,6

Up to 2000, the Dutch public service broadcasting system was funded from the fluctuating revenue from radio and television advertising and a statutory licence fee, which had to be paid by every household that owned a radio or television. The licence fee was abolished in January 2000 and replaced by an index-linked government grant to public broadcasting funded from taxation. The government also makes the net proceeds from advertising on the national public networks available. The *Media Act* includes safeguards for the independence of public broadcasting and the level of funding. Still, the Dutch government has reduced the budget three times since 2000. For 2007, national public broadcasting has a total budget of Euro 640 million.

*Broadcasting*

Government policy is concerned mainly with national public service broadcasting, although it also covers local, regional and international broadcasting. Commercial broadcasting in its various forms also has to contend with light government control. Distribution issues cut across all types of broadcasting.

<sup>176</sup> Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

> *National public service broadcasting: the system*

Dutch public service broadcasting has a unique organisational structure rooted in 'pillarisation' of Dutch society as a whole. Broadcasting time on the public radio and television channels is shared by a large number of broadcasting associations and several other non-profit organisations, which are granted broadcasting licences either because they are deemed representative of a particular section of population, or on the basis of a specific programme remit. For many years, these organisations operated under a self-appointed general management. When commercial television entered the market and the audience share of public television declined, this organisational structure failed to produce an effective answer. Dutch governments responded by altering the *Media Act* several times, gradually changing the organisation of public service broadcasting. On the whole, the autonomy of the separate broadcasting organisations was reduced, whereas more power was vested in a central body, i.e. an independent Board of Directors. This Board was installed in 1998 to coordinate and oversee programming and ensure common interests. In 2000, the *Concessions Act*<sup>177</sup> was introduced to further improve the responsiveness of public service broadcasting. The duty to provide public service radio and television has been entrusted to the Board of Directors, whose job is to ensure that the broadcasters together - as participants in the concession - comply with the statutory remit to provide a high quality, varied range of programmes that reach large and small sections of the Dutch population. Over the years, the Board of Directors has gained power over spending, production and programming within the system. For some years, the broadcasting associations kept seats in the supervising Board of Governors, but since 2005 this Board is entirely made up of independent members (appointed by the Crown).

In 2005 and 2006, the organisation of public service broadcasting was again the subject of heated political debate. State Secretary for Culture Medy van der Laan proposed several changes, further centralising decision-making about programming within the system and introducing direct competition between the public broadcasting organisations and independent production companies. She produced a proposal for a New Media Act, but soon afterwards the coalition Cabinet fell and Parliament decided not to proceed with the legislative proposal on broadcasting.

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177 *Concessiewet [2000]*

> *Organisations making up public broadcasting*

Subsequent changes in the *Media Act* have not changed the basis on which the public system operates. Various broadcasting associations representing various schools of thought and groups within Dutch society are still at the heart of the Dutch public broadcasting system. They can get a licence every five years. The *Media Act* lays down that new broadcasting associations entering the system must represent an ideological school of thought. To be assigned a licence for the first time, a new broadcasting association must have at least 150,000 paying members and demonstrate that it will add a new kind of programme to the public channels. Associations which are already part of the public broadcasting system need at least 300.000 paying members to keep their licence. In 2006, eight broadcasting associations shared responsibility for public radio and television: KRO (Catholic), NCRV (Protestant), EO (Protestant), AVRO (neutral), TROS (family viewing), BNN (the young), VARA (progressive) and VPRO (progressive).

In addition, the Dutch system includes three large organisations without members and with a specific programme remit. The Dutch Broadcasting Federation [*Nederlandse Omroep Stichting*: NOS<sup>178</sup>] is a foundation based on the *Media Act* that is responsible for news, sports and national events. The Dutch Programming Foundation [*Nederlandse Programma Stichting*: NPS<sup>179</sup>] is assigned the task of complementing the programmes of the other broadcasters, mainly with cultural programmes, educational youth programmes and programmes for and about ethnic minorities. The Educom is a private non-profit organisation that owns a license for education programmes.

*Stichting Etherreclame* (STER, a not-for-profit advertising bureau)<sup>180</sup> was set up to sell airtime on public radio and television to advertisers and broadcast commercials. Public service programmes and commercials are kept strictly separate. The *Media Act* restricts advertising on the public service channels. It is not permitted to interrupt programmes, for example, and total advertising time in any one year must not exceed 6.5% of total radio and television airtime.

A small part of airtime on the public channels is open for use by churches and other ideological organizations.

Lastly, political parties and the government can be allocated airtime.

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178 [www.nos.nl](http://www.nos.nl)

179 [www.omroep.nl/nps](http://www.omroep.nl/nps)

180 [www.ster.tv](http://www.ster.tv)



> *Programming and accountability of public broadcasting*

Compared to other European countries, Dutch media law contains detailed obligations about programme output on public television. At least 25% of airtime must be dedicated to culture and the arts and 35% to information and education.<sup>181</sup> A maximum of 25% is set for light entertainment. Specific programming obligations are laid down for the NPS, assuring the larger part of its output is about culture and/or aimed at various ethnic minorities.

To promote national audiovisual industry, 25% of airtime on the three general public television channels must be filled with programmes made by independent producers. (Commercial television channels have to meet the European minimum of 10% independent production.)

The national public service broadcaster operates under an elaborate scheme of accountability. Every five years, it produces a policy plan, laying out the policy for production, programming and distribution. Based on this five-year plan, the government and the Board of Directors sign a performance agreement, with a selection of specific goals, for example about the output of original homemade drama and audience reach.<sup>182</sup> This is followed by yearly reports about actual realisation and the use of budgets. Every five years, an independent commission evaluates the functioning of the national public broadcasting system.

Cultural programming on national and regional public television is given an extra boost by the Dutch Cultural Broadcasting Promotion Fund which allows additional funding of high quality drama, documentaries and programmes about heritage and the arts.

> *Regional and local broadcasting*

Each province has its own regional station, and some have two, which broadcast both radio and television. Many municipalities have local stations. Under the *Media Act*, the main criteria to be met by regional and local public service broadcasting organisations are: they must provide radio and television programmes geared to the cultural and social needs of the communities they serve; at least 50% of their airtime must be devoted to informative, cultural and educational programmes; and they must not be commercial - as far as advertising and sponsorship are concerned they are subject to the same rules as public service channels.

Funding regional and local stations is the responsibility of provinces and municipalities. When the radio and television licence fee was abolished

181 As some programmes fall in both categories, the percentages can not be added to represent the programming schedule.

182 In 2005, the first performance agreement was delayed due to negative financial prospects and - later - the fall of the Cabinet.

in 2000, the option of charging a surcharge for regional and local broadcasting went with it, so provinces and municipalities have been compensated for this through the Municipalities Fund and Provinces Fund. Commercial broadcasting has been permitted at non-national level since 1996: it is mainly radio stations that take advantage of this facility.

> *Radio Netherlands World Service*

As a complement to the national public service broadcasting system, Radio Netherlands [*Wereldomroep*<sup>183</sup>] broadcasts Dutch-language radio programmes on short wave to listeners in Europe and the rest of the world and since 1996, a television programme by satellite. 1 January 1998 saw the inception of BVN-TV<sup>184</sup>, a joint venture by Radio Netherlands and the NOS, which were joined by the Flemish public channel VRT<sup>185</sup> on 1 September 1999. BVN (the acronym stands for ‘The Best of Flanders and the Netherlands’) aims to transmit a range of typical Dutch television programmes by satellite. The Dutch and Flemish governments have earmarked additional funds to enable BVN to be received in North America, Canada and the Caribbean (including the Netherlands Antilles).

> *Commercial broadcasting*

The Dutch government lays down minimum rules for commercial broadcasting in line with the European Directive. The regulatory system is light, emphasizing freedom of broadcasting and calling upon the commercial channels to exercise their social responsibilities only to a limited extent with, for instance, rules on advertising and sponsorship, a minimum percentage of European-produced programmes, and rules on sex and violence designed to protect children. The government also regulates aspects of distribution that affect the commercial broadcasters. There is a new proposal for legislation that requires the commercial channels to subtitle a part of their programmes for the deaf and hard of hearing.

The general-interest commercial television channels rely mainly on films, drama series, games shows, entertainment, news and sport. There are about ten national commercial radio stations on air.

Publishing companies are involved in a number of stations. To prevent any one entity from monopolising the supply of information, the *Media Act* places limits on media cross-ownership. Permission to run a national commercial station is subject to strict restrictions if the company has more than 25% of the Dutch newspaper market.

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183 [www.wereldomroep.nl](http://www.wereldomroep.nl)

184 [www.bvntv.nl](http://www.bvntv.nl)

185 [www.vrt.be](http://www.vrt.be)

> *Cable TV information services*

The *Media Act* provides for the operation of cable TV information services. These combine still pictures and text and are broadcast by the various cable networks. They may contain advertisements. After a slow start, these services have well and truly taken off. Most of them are operated by publishers of daily and non-daily newspapers. The main purpose of cable TV information services is to supply local and regional information. It is the ideal medium for fairly short announcements.

> *Allocating the available frequencies*

The scarcity of transmission frequencies and the dominance of cable have forced the government to ensure that the limited number of channels is shared out fairly. This involves providing equal opportunities for broadcasters, freedom of choice for the general public and varied and affordable content.

It is government policy to promote the digitisation of networks and competition on and between networks. Digitisation increases the capacity of networks and makes two-way traffic and interactive services possible. Viewers connected to a digital cable network can, for instance, receive additional television channels, view electronic programme listings or access the Internet. Competition and digitisation should eventually result in a broader range of programmes and services and greater freedom of choice for consumers.

Cable networks, originally introduced as a public utility, are now being operated on a commercial basis. No less than 93% of households in the Netherlands are connected to the cable system, making the country one of the most densely cabled in Europe. A statutory basic package was introduced in 1997 to guarantee access to affordable programmes. Cable operators are also obliged to offer transmissions by the Dutch and Flemish national public service broadcasters. A programming council advises on the composition of the basic package, and an operator may only deviate from this if it has compelling reasons to do so. The programming councils are set up by the municipalities.

It is important for public service and commercial radio stations to broadcast on terrestrial frequencies so that they can be received by people on the move and with portable sets. The national public radio stations, Radios 1-5, have FM transmission networks, which provide national cover-

age. All the regional public radio stations broadcast on FM. FM frequencies have also been allocated to a large number of local public stations.

More frequencies have become available for commercial radio in recent years. Licences for commercial radio frequencies are issued by auction. The *Media Act* allows for groups of frequencies to be ring-fenced for particular types of radio programmes, e.g. classical music.

*Digitenne*<sup>186</sup>, a consortium of broadcasting organisations working together with the NOS, started to provide digital terrestrial television in 2002.

The market share of satellite television in the Netherlands is fairly small, less than 10% of households. They have access to a wide range of Dutch and foreign stations, both free-to-air and pay-per-view. The public service television channels are broadcast digitally by satellite.

#### *The press*

Dutch government policy on the press relates to those categories of publications that are instrumental in informing the general public and helping them form their opinions. In practice, this policy is limited to the daily and non-daily newspapers and news magazines.

##### > *Dailies and non-dailies*

The Netherlands has seven national and over twenty regional dailies. Since the summer of 1999, free newspapers (*Metro* and *Spits*) started to be distributed to public transport passengers on weekdays. The free sheets are likely in the long run to cream off substantial circulation from the paid newspapers, some of which are more vulnerable to this price competition than others. The Netherlands also has non-daily newspapers (local papers published between once and five times a week). The NNP: the organisation of local news media [*NNP: organisatie van lokale nieuwsmedia*<sup>187</sup>] has a membership of over a hundred local papers with a combined circulation of almost two million. About half of these are sold on a subscription basis. Like dailies, non-dailies are sold and should not therefore be confused with local free sheets.

##### > *News magazines and magazines*

News magazines provide analysis, comment and opinions on current events, both national and international. They aim mainly to reveal the links between events, clarify the background and present a point of view. The best

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186 [www.digitenne.nl](http://www.digitenne.nl)

187 [www.nnp.nl](http://www.nnp.nl)

known are the traditional news weeklies, *Elsevier*<sup>188</sup>, *Vrij Nederland*<sup>189</sup>, *HP/De Tijd*<sup>190</sup> and *De Groene Amsterdammer*<sup>191</sup>, whose combined circulation per issue runs at around 250,000.

Over 2,000 magazine titles are published in the Netherlands, with the trade journals category alone totalling over 1,800. Within the category of general-interest magazines, the radio and television listings magazines and the news weeklies have always been a special group; the listings magazines because of their history as the cornerstone of the broadcasting system and the news weeklies because of their important role in disseminating information and helping to form public opinion. There are also a large number of weeklies and monthlies targeted at the general public or particular sections of the population (women, young people, the elderly, minorities). Although not usually classified in the news magazine category they do contribute to the pluralism of the information supply.

> *The Press Fund*

The desire to protect press pluralism by means of specific measures while keeping the government at arm's length resulted in the founding of the Press Fund [*Bedrijfsfonds voor de Pers*<sup>192</sup>] in 1974. All financial support to the press is channelled independently through the Fund. It is financed not from public funds but with revenue from advertising on public service radio and television.

The Fund provides grants and loans to publications that meet the following statutory requirements: they are published in the Netherlands and target the Dutch public; they provide a substantial amount of news, analysis, comment and background on a variety of topical issues, partly in an effort to influence political opinion; they are edited by an independent editorial team according to a charter that sets out their editorial identity; they appear regularly (at least once a month); they are available to everyone; they are sold; they are not published by or on behalf of the government; they are not published or distributed to readers on the basis of membership of, participation in or financial support to an association, church or other organisation.

Since the *Media Act* came into force in 1988, the Fund has been an autonomous administrative authority within the framework set out in the *Act*. The State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science scrutinises the decisions reached by the Fund's board in terms of the *Act* and can suspend any decisions that fail to comply with its provisions or have them annulled.

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188 [www.elsevier.nl](http://www.elsevier.nl)

189 [www.vn.nl](http://www.vn.nl)

190 [www.hpdetijd.nl](http://www.hpdetijd.nl)

191 [www.groene.alias.nl](http://www.groene.alias.nl)

192 [www.bedrijfsfondspers.nl](http://www.bedrijfsfondspers.nl)

> *Media concentration*

Since 2000, the Media Authority has been responsible for monitoring concentration in the broad area of media and information, as the government is concerned about the harmful effects this could have on the pluralism and independence of news and information in this country.

The Media Authority has published yearly reports about the markets for newspapers, radio and television, cable distribution and audiovisual production. The reports show that three companies dominate the larger part of most markets, whereas a number of smaller companies share the rest. Radio was the only sector where concentration was not a problem. The Authority recommended introducing special rules on media concentration to supplement the overall supervision by the Dutch Competition Authority.

In 2006, new rules on concentration were announced by the government. The plan is to abolish current rules on cross-ownership which limit combined ownership of newspapers and television channels. Instead, mergers between owners of daily newspapers will be restricted to a maximum of 35% of the market. Furthermore, a limit will be set on the maximum percentage of combined market share that may be acquired via mergers on the three markets for daily newspapers, radio and television. The maximum percentage will be set at 90% of the combined markets.

> *Media in a multicultural society*

Media policy is based on the principle that the changes in the make-up of the Dutch population should be reflected in the content and producers of the media and the target audience. The NPS (Dutch Programming Foundation) has always played a special role here, as it is required to devote 25% of its radio airtime and 20% of its television airtime to multicultural programmes. The *Media Act* also requires the other broadcasters to reflect cultural diversity, both on the screen and behind the scenes, through the remits and reporting duties it imposes on them. For many years now, the NOS has had an agency (*Bureau Beeldvorming en Diversiteit*) that urges programme makers to represent different sections of the population on radio and television - men and women, Dutch and ethnic minorities, young and old.

In the four big cities, and other areas with relatively large immigrant populations, local broadcasting provides a forum for ethnic minority

groups and a good way of disseminating information to them. Since 2001, the government and the four big cities have been funding *Multiculturele Televisie Nederland* (MTNL)<sup>193</sup>, an organisation which makes television programmes in collaboration with regional and local stations for the four main target groups, Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. A few years later, the government and the four big cities supported a radio initiative of local public broadcasters, called *FunX*. This radio station providing popular music, news and information is very successful within the young, urban and ethnically mixed subculture and now enjoys a window on national radio too.

In 2001, the Press Fund started a special scheme in favour of publications for ethnic minorities.

#### 4.2.3 Literature

Table 12: Direct Ministry spending on literature, 2000-2005<sup>194</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

x 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
- literature	11,5	15	7,9	8	7,8	7,9
- Dutch Language Union	0,8	0,9	1	1,2	1,2	1,3
- Frisian language and culture	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4

The term 'literature policy' in the broad sense refers to three areas: (a) books in general, (b) promotion of reading, and (c) promotion of the quality and diversity in Dutch and Frisian literature. This last category focuses on literary writers and translators, and publishers of literary works. Other areas of literature policy per se cover the conservation of, and access to, literary collections and the dissemination and promotion of Dutch literature abroad. This classification, still in use today, was initially proposed in a letter (the *Letterenbrief*) submitted to Parliament by the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs, Hedy d'Ancona, in 1990.

193 [www.mtnl.nl](http://www.mtnl.nl)

194 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

*Copyright*

In the eighteenth century, it was normal for the publisher rather than the author to own a text once it was published. This all changed when the *Copyright Act* came into force in 1817, shifting the balance in favour of authors. The *Act* laid down that the writer had the first right to duplicate and exploit his work. The 1912 *Copyright Act* improved the negotiating position of writers vis-à-vis their publishers, though it did not improve the socio-economic position of writers and translators in any real sense and in practice it tended to benefit the better organised publishers. Writers could often be persuaded to assign their copyrights to the publishers, who thus acquired sole rights to the manuscript.

*Government support for literature*

The writing profession was relatively late organising itself in the Netherlands compared with other countries, and the Association of Authors [*Vereeniging van Letterkundigen*] was not founded until 1905. Even before 1940, artists and writers began receiving modest government grants, known as ‘honorary stipends’. Before the war, the state subsidised the odd literary volume (such as the monumental publication by the World Library in 1927 of the complete works of the seventeenth-century poet Joost van den Vondel). After 1945, the government became more involved with literature. In 1946, for instance, it introduced an annual budget for research into literary history, and the Dutch state prize for literature, the P.C. Hooft Prize, was established the following year. In the fifties, the government started supporting the Foundation for the Promotion of the Translation of Dutch Literary Works [*Stichting ter Bevordering van de Vertaling van Nederlands Letterkundig Werk*]. It took some responsibility for the national literary heritage by subsidising the Dutch Literary Museum and Documentation Centre [*Nederlands Letterkundig Museum en Documentatiecentrum: NLMD*] and the Frisian Literary Museum and Documentation Centre [*Fries Letterkundig Museum en Documentatiecentrum: FLMD*], founded 1954 and 1959 respectively. It also started subsidising literary journals. Nonetheless, the basic situation did not change for writers, who lobbied in a variety of ways for an improvement in their socio-economic position. The Writers’ Protest at the end of 1962 culminated in a unique strike by authors, ultimately leading to the setting up of the Literary Fund in 1965.

The Literary Fund was the earliest cultural Fund in the Netherlands.



When first set up, it had a budget of about Euro 136,000. By 1988, this had risen to Euro 1.82 million, and at the start of the 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document period it ran at around Euro 5.3 million per year. In the 2005-2008 Cultural Policy Document period, the Fund operates at an annual budget of Euro 5.8 million<sup>195</sup>. All that time, the Fund's main objective has not changed - to promote quality and diversity in Dutch and Frisian literature. Right from the start, the Fund has awarded grants to literary authors and translators to permit them to spend a substantial part of their time on literary work for publication in book form. The quality of the applicant's work is the main criterion.

Until 2001, the main tools of the Fund were multi-annual bursaries (mainly to authors), and supplementary fees paid following publication (mainly to translators). The grant system was changed radically in 2001. Bursaries and supplementary fees were replaced in 2001 with project bursaries designed to finance well-defined plans or projects. The principle of a bursary that gradually grows based on the size and quality of the body of work has been abandoned. As regards translations, project bursaries basically provide more opportunities to subsidise good translators working on interesting projects and fewer chances, if any, of grants to 'mainstream translators'. The Fund has also introduced incentive schemes for authors and translators embarking on their careers, and more is invested in the development of literary non-fiction, including biographies. The Fund works together closely with the Flemish Fund for Literature [*Vlaams Fonds voor de Letteren*<sup>196</sup>], with which it has a co-funding agreement to avoid duplication of grants.

The Dutch Literary Production and Translation Fund [NLPVF] was set up in 1991. Whereas the Literary Fund is aimed at authors, the NLPVF targets Dutch and foreign publishers. It subsidises publishers to help them produce special, high-risk books of Dutch and Frisian literature, including publications on the humanities intended for the general public, with the aim of making them available at reasonable prices - e.g. classical works or expensive collected editions and unsaleable contemporary genres such as essays. Publishers can also receive grant aid for the translation of foreign classical texts from difficult languages, and a similar scheme is available for the translation of works by authors from non-Western cultures living in the Netherlands but not yet writing in Dutch. Literary magazines can apply for three-year grants, with the amount awarded dependent on quality, or one-

195 Source: *Cultuurnota 2005-2008* [OCW, 2004]

196 [www.fondsvoordeletteren.be](http://www.fondsvoordeletteren.be)

year incentive grants. The second task of the Fund is to promote the export of literature, encouraging the foreign publication of Dutch literature in translation. The NLPVF attends major international book fairs such as the *Frankfurter Buchmesse*, the children's book fair in Bologna and other events in Europe and elsewhere. Another promotional tool is organising literary events in other countries to present Dutch authors, in connection with a book fair or otherwise. The NLPVF provides grants to foreign publishers towards the cost of translating Dutch literary works. Foreign translators can stay in the Translators House (*Vertalershuis*) of the NLPVF in order to improve their skills and knowledge. In the period 2005-2008, the annual budget of the Fund is Euro 1.4 million.

The Special Journalistic Projects Fund, created in 1990, attempts to raise the quality of journalism by providing financial aid to investigative journalism, biographies, essays and other types of non-fiction of special quality.

A number of literary events receive a structural subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.. The oldest event is Rotterdam's Poetry International<sup>197</sup> festival, which has been running since 1970. Poetry International also organises the National Poetry Day. Aside from contributing to recurring events, the Ministry can also award grants to one-off literary happenings or projects that enhance the literary climate. In September 2005, the State Secretary indicated in her policy document *Making a Difference* her intention to outsource an important part of the state-subsidised literary manifestations to the literary Funds.

#### *Preservation and conservation*

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science subsidises two institutions which collect, conserve and provide access to the national literary heritage, e.g. through exhibitions and publications; the Dutch Literary Museum and Documentation Centre and the formerly Frisian Literary Museum and Documentation Centre, now part of the Friesland Regional Historical Centre in Leeuwarden.

The Digital Library of Dutch Literature [*Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren*<sup>198</sup>], which is also subsidised, is digitising Dutch literary texts. This initiative will probably be incorporated in the activities of the National Library of the Netherlands, the coordinator of *Metamorfoze*; a national programme that aims to conserve and digitise culturally valuable

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197 [www.poetry.nl](http://www.poetry.nl)

198 [www.dbnl.org](http://www.dbnl.org)

printed material, such as literary collections. Libraries which act as repositories, and similar institutions holding literary collections, can put forward projects for 70% grant aid. A total of around Euro 9.53 million was available for the 2001-2004 period.

#### *Books*

Books are valuable both economically and culturally. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science fulfils its responsibility for the cultural function of books by taking steps to correct or bolster the market mechanism so as to enhance the economics of the book industry. These measures fall under the heading of general book policy, to distinguish them from policies that explicitly target literature or encourage people to read.

#### > *The book market*

The book market is traditionally divided into three areas, general-interest books, school textbooks and educational books, and scientific and academic books. The general-interest book market is the largest. This category is divided into fiction and non-fiction: genres such as literature, poetry, children's books and thrillers are counted as fiction, and hobby books, books about leisure pursuits, information books and books on man and society are examples of non-fiction. In 2005, Dutch consumers purchased books amounting to Euro 400 million. The average price per book was Euro 15.55. The Netherlands is the largest export market for British and American publishers outside their own language area.

Bookshops are still the main sales outlets for general-interest books. The number of booksellers has remained fairly constant over the past 25 years, with a small increase in recent years. Rising running costs are a threat to the survival of the small independent bookshops in particular. More and more booksellers are joining partnership schemes such as chains, franchising organisations and purchasing consortia, and they generally sell only a narrow range of fast-sellers. This trend is countered by the rise of mega-bookstores and specialist bookshops in the major cities, which do carry a wide range. There are various other retail outlets for books in the Netherlands, e.g. book clubs, remainder stores, Internet booksellers and outlets such as supermarkets, museums and petrol stations.

Like bookselling, book publishing has seen a trend in recent years towards concentration, as well as a tendency to focus on bestsellers in order

to generate profits. Three large groups currently account for 80% of the general interest books published. Nevertheless, splits do take place from time to time and small independent publishers still figure on the book market. The high hopes of technological innovations such as printing on demand and e-books have not yet come true, and both of these remain marginal in terms of availability and economic importance.

> *Fixed book price*

The main component of general book policy is the fixed book price system: a particular book is offered for sale at all outlets at the same price, set by the publisher. Up to 2005, this was laid down in a commercial agreement between publishers and booksellers. The government approved the agreement on the basis of its cultural policy aim to maintain a rich variety of titles and widespread availability of books. In 2005, the fixed book price was regulated in law for all general and scientific Dutch-language books, which brought an end to a discussion that had been taking place for years.

The fixed price enables publishers and booksellers to finance the production and distribution of culturally worthwhile but commercially risky titles by subsidising them internally from the revenue from successful books and best sellers. Because of the European rules and regulations, the fixed price applies only to Dutch books, not to books imported from abroad.

The drawbacks are the no-strings-attached nature of the system and the potentially higher average price of books. Publishers and booksellers are under no obligation to use higher margins on bestsellers to achieve cultural policy objectives. From the point of view of economic theory, the system also interferes with the market mechanism and as such does not promote innovation and efficiency in the trade.

*Reading incentive schemes*

A separate policy, with connections to both literature policy and library policy, was developed in the eighties and nineties to encourage reading. This was caused by the fall-off in reading levels. Virtually all sections of the population spend less and less of their free time reading printed media such as books, magazines and newspapers. A pivotal role is played here by the Dutch Reading Foundation [*Stichting Lezen*<sup>199</sup>], whose aim is to increase people's willingness to read by maintaining contacts with schools, libraries and other relevant institutions particularly targeting children in the 4-18 age

group. It also coordinates the acclaimed annual National Reading Aloud Day<sup>200</sup>. The Foundation collaborates with the Netherlands Public Library Association and the promotional institute of the book industry. During the 2005-2008 period, the Dutch Reading Foundation receives an annual subsidy of some Euro 2 million.

Another important organisation with annual subsidy that encourages reading is *Stichting Schrijvers School Samenleving (SSS)*<sup>201</sup>. SSS helps to organise readings and other types of visits by writers to schools, libraries, cultural centres and bookshops. Public interest in such visits, which reach some 400,000 children and adults a year, is still on the rise. As well as acting as a go-between, SSS compiles material for schools to encourage pupils to read, e.g. videos and lists of suggested reading. The visits also generate a substantial additional income for authors, especially for youth writers.

Illiteracy has become a substantial problem in the Netherlands. The Reading & Writing Foundation [*Stichting Lezen & Schrijven*<sup>202</sup>] was launched on 27 May 2004, with the objective of devoting attention to the 1.5 million members of the Dutch population who, due to literacy-related problems, are unable to participate fully in society. The foundation, an initiative of H.R.H. Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands, aims to stimulate discussion about this problem and to contribute to its alleviation.

### *Language*

#### > *Dutch language*

In 1980, the Dutch and Belgian governments signed a treaty establishing the Dutch Language Union, an intergovernmental organisation whose object is to foster the linguistic and literary integration of the Netherlands and the Dutch-speaking community in Belgium, through the joint development, study and promotion of Dutch language and literature. The Union's work consists mainly in coordinating and encouraging joint activities by Dutch, Flemish and Surinamese organisations. It is responsible for organising and awarding various prizes, including the annual Language Union Playwriting Prize and the triennial Dutch Literature Prize. It also helps to improve the expertise of literary translators, and a history of Dutch literature is being produced under its auspices. Every ten years, the Dutch Language Union publishes the so-called "green book"<sup>203</sup>, containing the preferred spelling of Dutch words. Recent changes in Dutch spelling led to considerable criti-

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200 *Nationale Voorleesdag*

201 Foundation Writers-School-Society  
[[www.sss.nl](http://www.sss.nl)]

202 [www.lezenenschrijven.nl](http://www.lezenenschrijven.nl)

203 *Groene boekje*

cism. In 2006, therefore, an alternative-spelling book (“white book”) was published by the major Dutch newspapers and the NOS. The Union’s policy, which is decided by the Committee of Ministers, comprising two Dutch and two Flemish Ministers (of Education and Culture respectively), is formulated and implemented by the Union’s General Secretariat in The Hague. An inter-parliamentary committee maintains ties with the Dutch and Flemish Parliaments. The Committee of Ministers consults the Council for Dutch Language and Literature, on which Flemish and Dutch experts are equally represented. Surinam is involved/consulted in all these platforms.

In June 2004, a new concrete step was taken by the opening of the Flemish-Dutch Institute [*Vlaams-Nederlands Huis*<sup>204</sup>] in Brussels, the objective of which is to promote Flemish-Dutch culture in Europe and to house debates on cultural diversity, society and politics in an increasingly unified Europe

> *Frisian language and culture*

Frisian has a special status, being the second official language of the Netherlands. The government provides financial aid to the Province of Friesland (*Fryslân*) to promote Frisian language and culture. The special status of the language is reflected in the ratification by the Netherlands of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in respect of Frisian. The government and the Province signed a covenant providing new administrative agreements on Frisian language and culture. The covenant includes agreements concerning education in the Frisian language, the use of Frisian by the judiciary, in the courts and in public administration, in the media and for cultural activities and amenities, as well as the use of Frisian in economic and social life. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is a permanent member of the inter-ministerial working group that monitors its implementation.

The use of the Frisian language is steadily decreasing. Only a few hundred thousand people are still Frisian native speakers. At the same time, the language is adequately taken care of as a specimen of cultural heritage. The cultural and literary value of the language-related Frisian heritage is preserved by the *Frysk Academie*<sup>205</sup> in Leeuwarden, capital of the province of Friesland. Some time ago, it was decided that all official government and parliamentary documents would be available in the Frisian language.

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204 [www.vl-nl.be](http://www.vl-nl.be)

205 [www.fa.knaw.nl](http://www.fa.knaw.nl)

#### 4.2.4 Libraries

Table 13: Direct Ministry spending on libraries, 2000-2005<sup>206</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

× 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure literature and libraries</b>	<b>38,7</b>	<b>43,3</b>	<b>39,1</b>	<b>40,9</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42,3</b>
- of which libraries	26	27	29,7	31,1	29,5	32,6

With the decentralisation of the public library system in 1986, the subsidising of public libraries became the responsibility of the provinces and municipalities for the most part. The appropriate resources were transferred to the Provinces Fund and the Municipalities Fund. The Ministry - because of its responsibility for the system as a whole - does however fund the umbrella organisation of public libraries, the Netherlands Public Library Association. The Cultural Policy Document budget for the Association was stepped up by just under Euro 500,000 in 2001 for investments in ICT. During the 2005-2008 period, the Association will receive around Euro 5.1 million per annum. The Association was founded on 18 April 1908 to lobby the government on behalf of public libraries and supply products and services to its members. In 1998, the unit which dealt with central services split off under the name of *Bibliion*.

There are thirteen 'academic support libraries' at regional level which keep collections of scientific and academic literature of a more specialised nature than those held by ordinary public libraries - some even of the level of a university library. The government shifted the responsibility for funding these libraries to the Provinces Fund in 1993. Their holdings are listed in the national catalogue.

The library service for the visually impaired, consisting of four libraries for the blind, will gradually be integrated with the public library service. The policy document "*Library amenities for the blind and visually impaired, 2006-2008*"<sup>207</sup> describes a two year integration process starting in 2007. The national budget includes an annual Euro 12.5 million for libraries for the blind.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science also subsidises special library facilities for seamen and inland shipping crew, Dutch people abroad and other travelling groups such as circus and fairground workers. This

206 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

207 *Bibliotheekvoorziening voor blinden en slechtzienden 2006-2008*

service (the former *Bibliotheek voor Varenden*<sup>208</sup>) has been fully integrated in the public library of Rotterdam since 2004.

The first public reading rooms and libraries were established around 1900. 'Municipal libraries' had already existed in a number of towns and cities for centuries, but they were usually open only to the bourgeoisie, as were the numerous reading rooms. The British concept of the public library formed the basis for the system that developed in the Netherlands at the beginning of the twentieth century. It embraced two ideals; to make books accessible as universal culture and to raise the level of popular leisure pursuits. In the Netherlands, the reading room movement advocated public libraries for everyone. Various library organisations merged to form the Central Association of Public Reading Rooms and Libraries [*Centrale Vereniging voor Openbare Leeszalen en Bibliotheken*]. It distributed the state subsidy, which it was granted in 1911, among its member libraries in a dozen or so towns throughout the Netherlands.

The non-denominational public reading rooms were soon joined by Catholic and Protestant ones. In 1921, the 'pillarised' policy on public libraries was formalised in the *Government Subsidy Terms for Public Reading Rooms and Libraries*<sup>209</sup>. Protestant libraries were subsidised alongside Roman Catholic and neutral libraries - in other words, denominational alongside non-denominational. This subsidy system remained in force until 1975, with the occasional amendment. The regulations not only laid down minimum contributions by municipalities; they also contained various provisions on the nature of the facilities to be provided: 'Public reading rooms and libraries should be of a generally developmental and educational nature and exclude all literature that is morally harmful or mere propaganda'. Non-denominational reading rooms and libraries 'should be impartial, contain reading matter of every denomination and have every existing denomination represented on their boards as far as possible'.

In the post-war years, the distinction between non-denominational and denominational libraries gradually became blurred, resulting in mergers between the two categories by the sixties. In 1972, this national trend was reflected in the founding of the Dutch Library and Reading Centre [*Vereniging van Openbare Bibliotheken*].

In 1975, the *Government Subsidy Terms* were replaced by the *Public Libraries Act*<sup>210</sup>, which aimed to develop library services systematically. The Act came as a boon particularly to rural areas, whose library facilities -

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208 Library for those at sea [trans: ed]

209 *Rijkssubsidievoorwaarden voor Openbare Leeszalen en Bibliotheken*

210 *Wet op het Openbare Bibliotheekwerk*



which had been vastly inferior to those in the cities - expanded considerably after 1975. In addition, the new *Act* exempted children from membership charges. The *Act* remained in force until 1 January 1987, when the library system came under the *Social Welfare Act*<sup>211</sup>. This transferred the responsibility for libraries entirely to the municipalities, and ever since then, provincial and central government have played a supporting role. One of the most important consequences of this change is that central government is no longer directly responsible for public library accommodation, management or running. The provisions on public libraries were incorporated in the *Specific Cultural Policy Act* in 1993.

### *Policy*

The main objective is to develop, manage and provide general access to up-to-date, wide-ranging and representative collections of writings, audiovisual material and digital data. Central, regional and local government involvement is aimed at maintaining a network of good-quality public libraries throughout the country. The libraries are largely autonomous when it comes to deciding what is in their collections. The government refrains from interfering with the content of the books and other media available for borrowing at libraries, on the basis of freedom of expression as guaranteed by the Constitution. In addition to lending old and new media, most libraries provide access to the Internet and a variety of services that are free-of-charge to users, e.g. access to information folders and reference books and the use of reading rooms.

The aims of central government policy are: (a) to foster quality, pluralism, coherence and efficiency within the public library system; (b) to encourage cultural participation, especially through reading; (c) to coordinate the work of public libraries and research libraries and other information and documentation organisations nationally; (d) to conserve and make accessible the literary and cultural heritage on paper.

The government is keen that the public libraries should work together with schools and local cultural and social institutions. In various municipalities, public libraries and schools, from primary to higher vocational level, cooperate to teach language and literature and provide reading promotion schemes and schemes for the educationally disadvantaged. Educational institutions and libraries also cooperate closely in the fields of adult education and Dutch as a second language.

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211 *Welzijnswet*

The library is not only a provider of information, education and culture; it is also a public forum where people and their cultures come into contact with one another. By working together with social institutions, libraries can perform an important role in the local community, e.g. by providing information points on health, culture, employment and government. In this way, they can also help to integrate newcomers into Dutch society.

#### *The library system*

Libraries are generally divided into three categories: research libraries, usually attached to universities or research institutions; public libraries, intended for the general public and open to everyone; and special libraries, either attached to companies or public or private institutions, or operating as independent specialist libraries.

Public libraries form part of a network of local, provincial and national library institutions. Within this network, a number of national institutions and organisations provide services to the library system. A special case is the National Library of the Netherlands (KB), which runs a national research and documentation network. The KB is also responsible for the national catalogue, which covers the collections of all research libraries and larger public libraries. The KB holds a copy of every title published in the Netherlands, which is donated voluntarily by the publishers.

The current public library system in the Netherlands comprises over 308 local library organisations with a total of 1,123 libraries and branches<sup>212</sup>. These are supported by eleven provincial library centres and the libraries' umbrella organisation, the Netherlands Public Library Association. Almost every municipality in the Netherlands has a public library. Larger cities have a central library and local branch libraries. Municipalities with no library organisation of their own either link up with a library in a nearby town or provide mobile libraries, which visit districts with no library facilities.

Public libraries reach a large section of the population: 57% of under-18s are members of a library, as against 17% of adults.

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212 Source: [www.debibliotheken.nl](http://www.debibliotheken.nl)

Table 14: Loans from public libraries, 1999-2002<sup>213</sup>

	Number institutions	Collections			Loans		
		Total collections	Total number books	Total number audiovisual material	Total number loans (incl books + other material)	Total number books borrowed	Total number audiovisual material borrowed
		x 1 000					
2000	542	42.859	37.700	2.376	162.400	148.100	7.400
2001	536	42.800	37.600	2.428	158.000	143.000	7.500
2002	483	41.466	36.300	2.432	153.300	138.900	7.200
2003	473	38.600	34.000	2.500	151.700	136.200	7.700
2004	467	35.790	32.200	2.364	145.443	131.303	7.076

In 2000, a Public Libraries Restructuring Steering Group<sup>214</sup> investigated what problems there are in the current library system and what could be done about them. The report, 'Gateway to Knowledge'<sup>215</sup> [2000] recommended investing in ICT applications and improving professionalism to make libraries a 'gateway to knowledge' for everyone. It also considered that libraries ought to be more demand-driven, carrying out systematic research among users and having up-to-date performance figures to enable them to apply modern management techniques. Lastly, libraries ought to play a greater role in providing government information. At the end of 2001, the municipal, provincial and central government authorities set out their ambitions to revamp the library system in a covenant in which they underlined their joint responsibility.

Since 2001, the process of improvement of the library system has been steadily continuing. The development runs along two main lines: 1) improvement and broadening of library services, and 2) strengthening of the general library system. Of primary importance is the strong involvement of the provinces and the local level.

213 Source: Statistics Netherlands [www.cbs.nl]

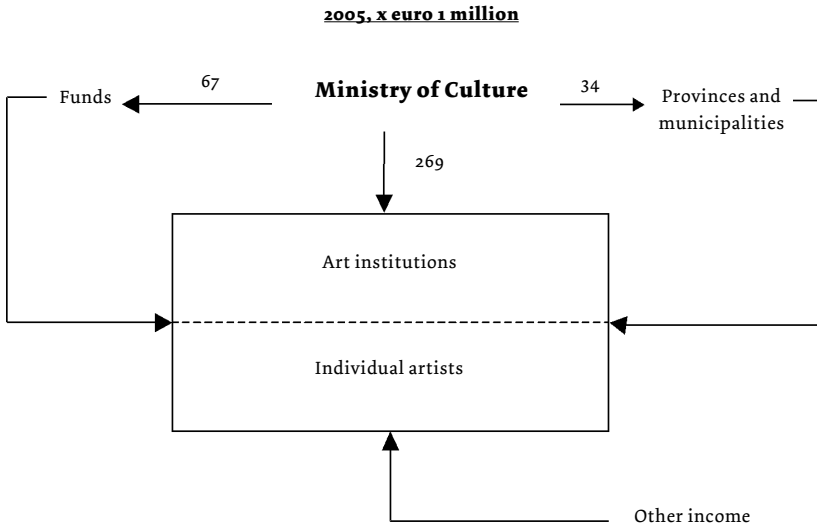
214 *Stuurgroep Herstructurering Openbaar Bibliotheekwerk*

215 *Open Poort tot Kennis* [OCW, 2000]

### 4.3 The Arts

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture finances arts institutions in the areas of visual arts, design, architecture, film, new media, performing arts, amateur arts and arts education. The financial flow for the year 2005<sup>216</sup> looked as follows:

Chart 4



A large proportion of grant aid for the various arts comes from central government. Table 15 shows how Ministry of Culture funds are distributed among them.

216 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

Table 15: Direct Ministry spending on the arts, 2000-2005<sup>217</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

x 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
- of which visual arts, architecture, design <sup>54,5</sup>	73,4	45,6	44,9	41,8	43,2	
- of which film	11,5	19,5	10,5	11,5	11,4	14,8
- of which performing arts	147,9	180,8	174,5	179,8	180,1	184,5
- of which amateur arts and arts education <sup>20</sup>	23,2	23,7	24,5	29	26,4	
- of which other subsidies (arts)	20,6	39,7	42,7	37,6	32,5	34,2

Table 20 shows the number of institutions in each arts sector in receipt of multi-annual subsidy under the Cultural Policy Document for the 1997-2000, 2001-2004 and 2005-2008 periods. The number increased by over 120 in the 2001-2004 period. The 2005-2008 period sees a slight reduction in the number of institutions funded, but totals remain substantially higher than ten years ago.

Table 16: Subsidised arts institutions, 1997-2000, 2001-2004<sup>218</sup>, 2005-2008<sup>219</sup>

Period	1997-2000	2001-2004	2005-2008
<b>Performing arts</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>239</b>
- Orchestras and ensembles	33	57	48
- Music and opera	35	63	77
- Dance	18	28	23
- Theatre and youth theatre	69	86	86
- Other performing arts	8	7	5
<b>Film</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Visual arts, architecture and design</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Amateur arts</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>340</b>

During the 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document period, the Netherlands witnessed a larger number of young talent entering the subsidised sector, as well as initiatives with an intercultural background.

<sup>217</sup> Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

<sup>218</sup> Source: *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*, 2003, OCW, p. 153

<sup>219</sup> Source: *Cultuurnota 2005-2008: Toekenningen* [OCW, 2004]

#### 4.3.1 **Visual arts and design**

##### *Supporting visual artists*

The motives underlying pre-war policy on the contemporary visual arts were alternately social and cultural. The first government subsidy dates back to 1923 and took the form of a support fund for needy artists. It existed for only one year. In 1931, another budget for visual artists was introduced, to commission works of art, mainly for government buildings. The National Advisory Board on Art Commissions<sup>220</sup> was responsible for assessing and selecting commissions. This scheme was a forerunner to the ‘percentage scheme’, instituted in 1951 by the Ministry of Housing, which earmarked a fixed percentage of the construction cost of government buildings for art works. The social motive returned in 1935 in the Artists’ Support Fund<sup>221</sup>. The Fund gave artists and musicians temporary financial support and was financed from membership fees and state and municipal subsidies. The Fund no longer exists, having been swallowed up in 2002 by a new organisation *Kunstenaars&CO*<sup>222</sup>.

*Kunstenaars&CO* supports artists to acquire an independent income for working as an artist, by offering services they are able to use for their further professionalisation, such as information, education and training, personal guidance, and a credit regulation. The organisation also stimulates the demand for artists inside and outside the art sector.

Under the authority of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and in cooperation with the Amsterdam School of Art, a Higher Vocational Education course has been developed for performing artists who also want to deploy their qualities outside the stage. Perhaps most importantly, *Kunstenaars&CO* annually examines the professionalism of thousands of artists who want to make use of the WWIK (the Income Provisions for Artists Act). For an explanation of the WWIK, see further in this paragraph.

From 1940 to 1945, visual artists were among the few who played an active role in the resistance movement. This gave rise to the Federation of Artists Associations [*Federatie van Beroepsverenigingen van Kunstenaars*], which, after the country’s liberation, managed to convince the government that it needed to create a climate conducive to the production of contemporary art, e.g. by means of acquisitions, commissions and grants. In 1949, their efforts, motivated by a combination of social and cultural considerations, resulted in the implementation of a special *National Assistance for*

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220 *Rijkscommissie van Advies voor Opdrachten aan Beeldende Kunstenaars*

221 *Voorzieningsfonds voor kunstenaars*

222 [www.kunstenaarsenco.nl](http://www.kunstenaarsenco.nl)

*Artists scheme*, renamed the *Quid Pro Quo Scheme*<sup>223</sup> a few years later. In 1956, after various amendments, it was replaced by the Visual Artists Financial Assistance Scheme<sup>224</sup>. This scheme was unique. In effect, it provided social security benefit, but officially it involved municipalities purchasing artists' recent works and commissioning new works. The benefit paid out included the cost of materials. The scheme ensured not only the artist's livelihood but also the continuity of his or her work. In effect, it was a job creation scheme with a cultural component. Between 1960 and 1983, the number of artists who took advantage of the scheme increased from 200 to 3,800. The majority of artists became financially dependent on it. The cultural component of the scheme had been submerged by the social one. Moreover, there was a storage problem for the works of art purchased through the scheme. All this meant the end of the scheme and it was discontinued in 1987, whereupon many professional artists were forced to search for alternative sources of income at short notice. Many had to claim social security benefit. About half the works in storage were donated to non-profit making bodies, a quarter was returned to the artists and the remainder went to the Visual Arts Foundation [*Stichting Beeldende Kunst*<sup>225</sup>] in Amsterdam, which lends them out through its art lending centres.

In 1997, the government decided to enact a separate law on benefits for artists in all the arts, the *Artists' Income Scheme Act*<sup>226</sup>. This scheme provided a temporary basic income for artists intending to embark on an artistic career and unable to live off their earnings as yet. In 2005, the scheme was replaced by the *Artists' Work and Income Scheme Act (WWIK)*<sup>227</sup>, which lays more accent on the development of the 'profession', whereby a combination of work on one's artistic career and work in employment elsewhere is stimulated.

### *Design*

The government's first involvement with design also dates back to the pre-war period. In 1921, central government and the Municipality of The Hague founded the Institute for Decorative and Applied Art [*Instituut voor Sier- en Nijverheidskunst*], an advice and documentation centre that helped artists win commissions for works of applied art. The Institute's role remained marginal, however.

Immediately after the war, the Ministry of Trade and Industry was involved in two initiatives, the National Foundation for the Arts and Crafts [*Stichting Centraal Orgaan voor het Scheppend Ambacht: COSA*] and the

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223 *Contraprestatieregeling*

224 *Beeldende Kunstenaarsregeling (BKR)*

225 [www.sbk.nl](http://www.sbk.nl)

226 *Wet Inkomensvoorziening Kunstenaars (WIK)*

227 *Wet Werk en Inkomen Kunstenaars (WWIK)*

Institute of Industrial Design [*Instituut voor Industriële Vormgeving*]. The former remained in existence until 1984, its main aim being to improve the position of craft artists through promotion and by bringing consumers and artists together. The Ministry discontinued the grant aid in 1984. The second initiative involved the Housing and Planning Ministries as well, its aim being to promote industrial design. The idea was for the Institute to lead an independent existence after receiving a start-up subsidy, but it was unsuccessful and was abolished in 1975.

Ten years later, another joint venture with the Ministry of Economic Affairs came into being. *Stichting Industrieel Ontwerpen Nederland (ION)*<sup>228</sup> was founded in 1984 with the aim of improving industrial design, providing public education and enhancing sales potential. The organisation closed shop in 1990 when the Culture Ministry withdrew its support on the grounds that ION had been acting as a shop window for commercial enterprises and had thus lost its independence.

In 1990, the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs published a draft policy document on design, which, in line with recommendations from the Council for Culture, called for a Netherlands Design Institute [*Nederlands Vormgevingsinstituut*] to be founded jointly by the Welfare and Economic Affairs Ministries. It argued that there was an urgent need to strengthen the design infrastructure to prevent worthwhile initiatives and projects remaining one-offs, with no coherence or continuity. The emphasis was on improving the quality of Dutch design and boosting demand. The Institute was established, but its subsidy was discontinued after 2001 on the advice of the Council for Culture, because the Institute was not fulfilling its objectives. In 2002, the Premsele Foundation [*Premselestichting*]<sup>229</sup> was set up. The Foundation provides coordination, profiling and network control in consultation with those concerned. It has an activities budget to support promising projects, though it does not act as a funding body providing grant aid; the idea is for it to actively initiate projects and co-fund important ventures. The Foundation's main aim is to establish links with other sectors, acting first and foremost as a go-between between the sector, private enterprise and the government. It also intends to specialise in providing information, improving expertise, and promoting and looking after the design heritage.

*Young Designers & Industry*<sup>230</sup> exists to match commissions from the profit and non-profit sector to young designers.

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228 Dutch Foundation for Industrial Design  
[trans: ed]

229 [www.premsele.org](http://www.premsele.org)

230 [www.ydi.nl](http://www.ydi.nl)



*Supply and demand*

The visual arts sector is small and flexibly organised, with an extensive and close-knit infrastructure. The visual arts budget is distributed through the funding bodies, and a substantial part is allocated locally (via provinces and municipalities) through Visual Arts and Design Funding<sup>231</sup>. A small number of bodies receive multi-annual subsidies direct from central government.

Before 2001, visual arts policy had been concerned with both the supply side as well as distribution and consumption, the main objectives being to develop and boost the quality of contemporary art, to make it an integral part of Dutch society, and to improve the international status of Dutch art and artists. Since 2001, the emphasis has shifted to the demand side, with more attention being devoted to consumers. Funding bodies, workshop centres, presentation centres and museums thus aim not only to improve quality but also to reach the general public and act as cultural entrepreneurs. The shift affects the division of responsibilities between central, provincial and municipal government. It was agreed in 1990 that central government's primary responsibility lies on the supply side and that local government should concentrate on broadening and deepening interest in art. The special attention central government now pays to cultural outreach has made this division of labour less clear-cut.

Design embraces industrial design, fashion design, interior design, graphic design, applied art and, increasingly, digital media design. The boundaries between these areas are becoming increasingly blurred, as a result of new technologies and the work of multidisciplinary teams. The emphasis is on developing the contribution that design can make to prosperity and well-being, focusing on the commercial aspects of design rather than design per se. Government policy is shifting from the supply to the demand side, with four special areas of concern: more policy control in government and in the trade; bringing the work more into line with the production and distribution channels; strengthening strategic parts of the infrastructure; and looking after the design heritage, exhibiting it and making it available to the public. Design per se remains under the wings of the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture and the Mondriaan Foundation.

*The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture*

The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture, in Amsterdam, administers government policy aimed at individual artists,

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231 *Geldstroom Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving*

architects and designers. Its first consideration is quality, which it promotes by awarding individual and basic grants. Since 2001, it has been able to subsidise what are known as ‘intermediaries’ (critics, curators and agents). It also encourages public debate on the arts, organises exhibitions to justify its allocation policy, and endeavours to enhance the international status of Dutch artists.

Individual grants enable artists to concentrate fully on their creative processes for a certain period of time, or to work on special projects that are important to their artistic development. These basic grants are intended to help artists who would otherwise be entitled to social security benefit, with both working expenses and living costs. Artists are selected not only on the quality of their work but also on their artistic skill, and since 2001 this latter criterion has been made tougher, now being referred to as ‘cultural entrepreneurship’. Basic grants are unique in that applicants can use them as a current account spread over a maximum of four years.

#### *The Mondriaan Foundation*

In the same way that the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture offers financial assistance to individual artists, the Mondriaan Foundation subsidises institutions, providing grants for: museum activities, such as conservation, coordination of collections, acquisition, educational projects, presentations; art, photography and design commissions; exhibitions and other events; publications and magazines devoted to art and design; activity programmes by artists’ initiatives and international activities in these areas.

The *Art Acquisition Scheme* [*Kunstkoopregeling*<sup>232</sup>] was entrusted to the Foundation in 1997. Under the scheme, individuals receive subsidies towards the interest on loans taken out to purchase works of art. The purchases must be made from galleries recognised under the scheme, which are obliged to meet certain criteria of quality and professionalism. Their locations are also taken into account so as to ensure a reasonable geographical distribution.

#### *Art and Design Material Fund*

The Art and Design Material Fund [*Materiaalfonds voor Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving*<sup>233</sup>] is an endowment fund which provides interest-free loans to artists and designers. Loans are granted on the strength of project propos-

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232 [www.kunstkoopregeling.nl](http://www.kunstkoopregeling.nl)

233 [www.materiaalfonds.nl](http://www.materiaalfonds.nl)

als, which are scrutinised by an independent committee of experts. In general, projects must be concerned with expanding the market, e.g. the production of prototypes by a designer.

*Postgraduate courses*

Three postgraduate institutions, known as ‘workshop centres’, are in receipt of government subsidy: the National Academy of Visual Arts [*Rijksacademie voor Beeldende Kunsten*<sup>234</sup>], the Jan van Eyck Academy<sup>235</sup> and the European Ceramic Work Centre [*Europees Keramisch Werkcentrum*<sup>236</sup>]. These aim to bring students’ expertise and professionalism and the quality of their work up to international standards. Workshop centres are important in at least three respects: as a selection system; for nurturing talent; and for developing networks.

*Production and presentation centres*

The government also subsidises seven institutions (under the 2005-2008 cultural policy document) that provide artists with opportunities to present themselves. These institutions differ from museums and galleries in that they do not have their own collections, nor do they generally aim to involve a diverse cross-section of the public in their activities. *Witte de With*<sup>237</sup> in Rotterdam is an example of such a ‘presentation centre’, also known as *kunsthuis* (‘art house’). It keeps an eye on international trends in the art world and brings them to the attention of Dutch artists through exhibitions. In many cases, it co-produces events with similar bodies in other countries.

Institutions such as the World Wide Video Festival<sup>238</sup> and *Noorderlicht*<sup>239</sup>, which organise events and festivals in their respective fields every year showcasing international trends, also fall under the heading of presentation and production centres.

*Advice, support and intermediary organisations*

Advice, support and intermediary organisations act as a catalyst for initiatives and debate in the art and design field. The Art Lending Federation [*Federatie Kunstuitleen*<sup>240</sup>] is the national umbrella organisation of non-profit making art lending centres. Since 1987, these centres have been subsidised solely by the provinces and municipalities. *Stichting Kunst en Openbare Ruimte (SKOR)*<sup>241</sup> partners other bodies in initiating visual arts projects in public areas and oversees the artistic and organisational aspects.

234 [www.rijksakademie.nl](http://www.rijksakademie.nl)

235 [www.janvaneyck.nl](http://www.janvaneyck.nl)

236 [www.ekwc.nl](http://www.ekwc.nl)

237 [www.wdw.nl](http://www.wdw.nl)

238 [www.wvwf.nl](http://www.wvwf.nl)

239 [www.noorderlicht.com](http://www.noorderlicht.com)

240 [www.fku.nl](http://www.fku.nl)

241 [www.skor.nl](http://www.skor.nl) (Foundation for Art and Public Space [trans: ed])

*Visual Arts and Design Funding*

Table 17: Direct Ministry funding for the Visual Arts, Architecture and Design, 2000-2005<sup>242</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

x 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
- of which visual arts, architecture, design <sup>243</sup>	73,4	45,6	44,9	41,8	43,2	

Since 2001, visual arts and design funding has been part of the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan*. Each year, some Euro 13,7 million goes to the twelve provinces and thirty municipalities with populations of over 90,000. The policy framework for the funding was approved by central government, the Inter-provincial Consultative Council and the Union of Netherlands Municipalities in July 2002. It was agreed that the resources would be used for outreach work, the main objectives being to reach more people and encourage cultural entrepreneurship, to assist institutions (e.g. art lending centres and visual arts centres) with running costs, and to enhance the production climate by means of presentations, studios and workshop centres. (See §5.4 *Cultural outreach and participation*).

In the 2005-2008 Cultural Policy Document period, the Visual Arts and Design Funding will be primarily directed towards strengthening the visual arts and design infrastructure (ateliers, technical facilities, new media, etc.).

*Photography*

The Dutch Museum of Photography [*Nederlands Fotomuseum*<sup>243</sup>] in Rotterdam organises exhibitions, including the Photography Biennale, provides information on all aspects of photography as well as documentation and advice, and coordinates publications and events.

4.3.2 **Architecture**

Architecture policy is the pivot between building policy and cultural policy. One of the main policy themes in recent years has been improving the architectural climate. The infrastructure of the profession has been strengthened so as to create a solid foundation for this. Municipal and provincial government have the tools with which to develop their own

<sup>242</sup> Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

<sup>243</sup> [www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl](http://www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl)

architectural policies, and the private sector is encouraged to incorporate cultural elements into building projects.

Architecture policy is unique in that the government can apply its aims not only through policy, but also when commissioning buildings. Each year, central government is responsible for approximately 10% of all investment in this area, including earthworks, road-building and hydraulic engineering projects. It initiates schemes of all sizes, ranging from railways, roads, and waterways to landscaping projects and government buildings, enabling it to influence the planning quality of pioneering and eye-catching projects. In its ongoing role of commissioning body or contract partner, it is able to monitor quality systematically.

Central government has traditionally been responsible for the buildings occupied by ministries, the national police, employment exchanges, embassies in foreign countries and royal palaces. These are managed by the National Buildings Service [*Rijksgebouwendienst*: RGD<sup>244</sup>], headed by the Chief Government Architect, who is involved in the selection of architects and designers of government buildings. In the last few decades, opportunities have been given to talented youngsters. Most government building projects are contracted out to private-sector developers and architects; the RGD only designs 20% itself. It falls under the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment.

#### *Policy*

Architecture has now been made an area of cultural policy, closely linked as it is to visual arts policy. Organisationally, there was always a historical split between architecture, heritage conservation and archaeology. In recent years, a partnership has sprung up, taking shape in the form of a broad ‘cultural planning’ policy. Cultural planning is based on the idea that architecture policy, rather than being isolated, should be integrated with heritage conservation, archaeology, urban planning, nature conservation, road-building and hydraulic engineering, to improve the quality of the environment. Cultural policy thus influences the way in which town and country planning takes place in the Netherlands.

Architecture policy has given rise to a variety of initiatives, ranging from grants for exhibitions and a one-off national prize for architecture, to the more recent start-up grants and work and travel allowances for architects, awarded by the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture. The relationship between architecture and the visual arts is

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244 [www.vrom.nl.rijksgebouwendienst](http://www.vrom.nl.rijksgebouwendienst)

also reflected in the ‘percentage scheme’ introduced by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment in 1951, under which 1.5% of the cost of constructing a government building - or 1% of the cost of a school building - can be used to commission or purchase art or design.

In 1991, the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs issued a joint policy document entitled *Space for Architecture*<sup>245</sup>. Since then, the two Ministries have been working together, with an inter-ministerial Platform for Architecture Policy<sup>246</sup> chaired by the Chief Government Architect, and playing a coordinating role. An indirect result of the policy document was the burgeoning of local architecture centres throughout the country. As of 1994, the infrastructure was strengthened with two architectural institutions: the Netherlands Architecture Institute [*Nederlands Architectuurinstituut: Nai*<sup>247</sup>] and the Architecture Promotion Fund.

The second policy document, issued by the Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, and entitled *The Architecture of Space*<sup>248</sup> (1996), dealt explicitly for the first time with rural areas and related infrastructure design to environmental design. Another phenomenon discussed is the growing involvement of the private sector, which is a major factor in the development of the Netherlands; especially the new housing developments in the government’s VINEX urban expansion scheme.

The third architecture white paper, *Shaping the Netherlands: architecture policy 2001-2004*<sup>249</sup>, drew up a concrete plan of action comprising nine Major Projects covering the entire spectrum of architectural and planning design in the Netherlands (e.g. the *Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie* defence line and the *New Rijksmuseum*).

#### *Institutions*

The Architecture Promotion Fund was set up in 1993. Its remit includes supporting events, exhibitions, publications and architectural competitions, and it subsidises projects to increase public involvement in architecture and to raise quality awareness of all those involved in the building process. It also supports municipal architecture policy plans and visual quality plans - frequently-used aids in municipal planning. It does not organise projects itself.

The Netherlands Architecture Institute (*Nai*), also founded in 1993, plays a crucial role in disseminating information on architecture and plan-

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245 *Ruimte voor Architectuur* [1991]

246 *Platform Architectuurbeleid*

247 [www.nai.nl](http://www.nai.nl)

248 “*De Architectuur van de Ruimte*” [OCW, 1996]

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249 “*Ontwerpen aan Nederland, architectuurbeleid, 2001-2004*” [2000]

ning, both to members of the profession and to commissioning authorities and the public. At the heart of its collection is a substantial archive of works by architects from the past. It runs a regular programme of exhibitions and has a study centre and a publishing division. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science funds its running costs, and the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment contributed towards the construction of its new premises.

Since 1989, the Berlage Institute<sup>250</sup> in Amsterdam has offered a post-graduate course for highly talented young architects from the Netherlands and abroad. The Institute receives financial support from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment.

#### 4.3.3 **Film and New Media**

Table 18: Direct Ministry funding for film, 2000-2005<sup>251</sup>

(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

<i>x 1 million euro</i>	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
- of which film	11,5	19,5	10,5	11,5	11,4	14,8

Dutch film policy aims to: increase the output and improve the quality of Dutch films, including international co-productions; improve the distribution of non-commercial films of artistic merit; expand the market for Dutch films; foster cooperation between the film sector and broadcasting; create better conditions for the selection and training of young talent; manage the cinematic heritage properly and make it available to the public; and protect young people.

The government's first involvement with the film world was through the censorship system. The first type of aid it provided to the industry was a grant scheme for short artistic and cultural films in 1947. In 1956, it extended its policy to feature films by setting up the Production Fund for Dutch Films [*Productiefonds voor Nederlandse Films*]. Two years later, the Netherlands Film Academy [*Nederlandse Filmacademie*] was founded in Amsterdam, now known as the Netherlands Film and Television Academy [*Nederlandse Film- en Televisie-Academie*<sup>252</sup>].

250 [www.berlage-institute.nl](http://www.berlage-institute.nl)

251 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

252 [www.filmacademie.nl](http://www.filmacademie.nl)

Cinema-going began to decline in the second half of the sixties, threatening the already vulnerable distribution of non-commercial art films and leading the government to subsidise some distributors and importers of these films. Festivals could also apply for grants. The result was a unique network - by European standards - of some 120 art house cinemas, showing mainly films of artistic merit. The government was also involved in film conservation and promotion and subsidised two film periodicals, *Skrien*<sup>253</sup> and *De Filmkrant*<sup>254</sup>.

The 1977 *Film Performances Act*<sup>255</sup> brought an end to general film censorship for adults, which had been introduced in 1928, replacing it with a process of statutory certification covering the screening of films to persons under the ages of sixteen and twelve. Films are certified under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. The video industry has its own self-regulation system. The Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media [*Nederlands Instituut voor Classificatie van Audiovisuele Media: NICAM*<sup>256</sup>] was set up at the end of the nineties. Its *Kijkwijzer* pictograms provide a classification of audiovisual media. This system, which came into force on 22 February 2001, replaced the *Film Performances Act* and the censorship system.

#### *Defining film as an art discipline*

A new film policy letter was published by the State Secretary for Culture Medy van der Laan on 31 March 2006.<sup>257</sup> In the letter, she announced a redesign of film support policy, putting it back on the cultural policy agenda and defining film as an art discipline. In order to make room for the artistic power of film, she added Euro 6 million to the film budget. Next to this, she announced an extra subsidy to stimulate the exposition of 'commercially vulnerable' Dutch films. Van der Laan's letter also mentions a reconstruction of the tax incentive regulation for film productions. What these proposals will look like in reality has not been set out in the letter.

#### *Film production*

In 1993, two funding bodies (one supporting aesthetic production, and one commercial) were merged to form the Dutch Film Fund, which administers government policy in support of the production of all types of films. Its object is 'to promote cinematic production in the Netherlands, focusing on quality and diversity'. In line with this aim, the Fund is also responsible for fostering a more receptive climate for cinematography in the Netherlands.

253 [www.skrien.nl](http://www.skrien.nl)

254 [www.filmkrant.nl](http://www.filmkrant.nl)

255 *Wet op de Filmvertoning* [1977]

256 [www.kijkwijzer.nl](http://www.kijkwijzer.nl)

257 *Brief over het filmbeleid*,  
[OCW 31 March 2006]



The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science lays down the Fund's policy and appoints its board members. This accounts for the lion's share of the film budget, the remainder going to film festivals, distribution, publications, improving expertise, managing the Dutch cinematographic heritage and making it available to the public, and film education.

The Fund sees itself as having three functions: initiating, i.e. developing new funding tools; administering, i.e. assessing project applications, contributing to international co-productions and providing aid to production companies for long-term project development; and facilitating activities designed to increase expertise. At the beginning of 2003, the Fund set up a European digital network of 175 film theatres that show documentaries. To date, nine EU countries are participating in this project.

Although the global film industry has every reason to be optimistic, the situation in Europe is far from ideal. Because of the fragmented nature of financing and distribution in Europe, European films rely on national subsidies and are not seen sufficiently outside their home countries. European films had a market share in the European Union of 22.5% in 2000. American films had a market share in the Netherlands of as much as 84% in 2001. The market share of Dutch films reached 10% in 2001 - 4% more than in 1999. In 2005, the share was 13.6%. The European Union's MEDIA Programme is designed to target the weak spots of Europe's film industry; specifically professional training, project development and distribution. The Netherlands is party to co-production treaties on film with countries including Belgium, France and Canada, and it was one of the founders of the European co-production Fund Eurimages<sup>258</sup>, which it supports financially. At home, the government has introduced a programme to revive interest among external private investors in large-budget films. For quite a long period, policy-makers have tried to promote Dutch film production as an economic activity within the cultural field, rather than a state-subsidised one. The economic approach was primarily introduced as an attempt to pull the Dutch film industry in from the margins. Since too much emphasis was placed on the artistic value of film, no opportunities were created to free it from elitist cult connotations, and to convert it into a cultural industry with a substantial turnover, a vast audience and a solid financial infrastructure. The introduction of tax incentive regulations can be seen as an attempt to stimulate film to develop economically. (See §3.4.3 *Tax incentives*)

Holland Film<sup>259</sup> promotes Dutch films abroad. It is affiliated to the

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258 [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

259 [www.hollandfilm.nl](http://www.hollandfilm.nl)

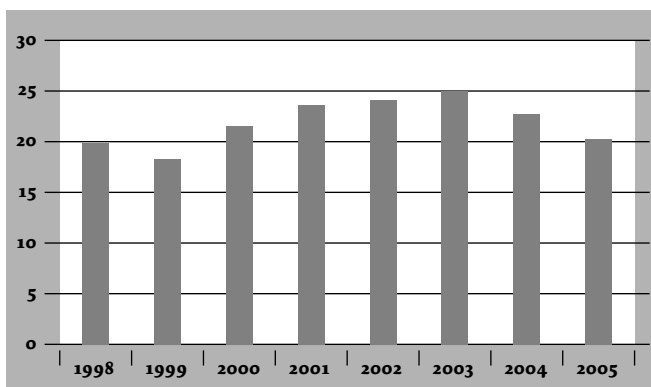
Dutch Film Fund and thus knows about production plans at an early stage. It provides a service to Dutch film makers and producers by publicising Dutch films at festivals and markets. It also maintains contacts with organisers of major festivals, drawing their attention to Dutch films.

The founding in 1994 of the Maurits Binger Film Institute<sup>260</sup>, in Amsterdam, gave the Dutch film industry its own centre of excellence, with an international postgraduate course and training centre. The Netherlands Institute for Animation Film [*Nederlands Instituut voor Animatiefilm*<sup>261</sup>], in Tilburg, is a long-standing workshop where young makers of animated films can benefit from the expertise of celebrated film makers, artists, producers and other professionals. It has also taken on other work in the field of animated film.

#### *Cinema attendance*

Most films are still made initially for the cinema, though they reach the largest audience through television. The average European is estimated to watch about a hundred films on television every year, either direct broadcasts or on purchased, rented or home-recorded video tapes, while going to the cinema no more than 1.9 times a year. Average cinema attendance in the Netherlands is even lower, at 1.1 visits a year. 97% of Dutch households own a television set, and the video/DVD recorder has a market penetration of over 70%.

Chart 5: Cinema visits 1998-2005<sup>262</sup>  
number of visits  $\times$  1 million



260 [www.binger.nl](http://www.binger.nl)

261 [www.niaf.nl](http://www.niaf.nl)

262 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

Local authorities play an active role in the art house circuit by subsidising the venues. Central government concentrates on the distribution of non-commercial films of artistic merit and on improving the infrastructure. A number of non-commercial distributors are subsidised under the Cultural Policy Document.

The art house organisation is the government-subsidised Association of Netherlands Film Theatres [*Associatie van Nederlandse Filmtheaters*<sup>263</sup>], which promotes quality films and advises member cinemas. The Association and the Dutch Federation for Cinematography [*Nederlandse Federatie voor de Cinematografie*<sup>264</sup>] have an agreement on the distribution and presentation of films in Association cinemas. The commercial cinemas are pressing for tighter regulation of the art houses.

Various film festivals are organised in the Netherlands every year, providing a national and international guide to trends in the film world. Some of them are government-subsidised. The Rotterdam International Film Festival<sup>265</sup> has become one of the largest festivals of independent film in the world. Tiger Awards are presented to directors of new, innovative films. Another annual event, the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA)<sup>266</sup>, culminates in the presentation of the Joris Ivens Award. The Netherlands Film Festival<sup>267</sup> in Utrecht provides an overview of the year's harvest of Dutch films. The Golden Calf and other prizes are awarded for various genres and aspects of filmmaking. Another annual event is Cinekid<sup>268</sup>, the festival of films for children. The Holland Animation Film Festival<sup>269</sup> is held every two years in Utrecht, featuring a competition for applied animation and independent animated shorts and a separate competition for films made by students.

#### *Film Museum*

The Film Museum<sup>270</sup>, in Amsterdam, looks after an important part of the country's cinematic heritage; its object being to collect, manage and provide access to films and associated material. It has a collection of approximately 30,000 titles, as well as film-related documents and an extensive library. In 2009, the museum will be moving to a newly built building, commissioned especially for the museum. The Culture Ministry has allocated an extra Euro 400,000 subsidy for the relocation.

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263 [www.filmtheaters.nl](http://www.filmtheaters.nl)  
 264 [www.nfcstatistiek.nl](http://www.nfcstatistiek.nl)  
 265 [www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com](http://www.filmfestivalrotterdam.com)  
 266 [www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)  
 267 [www.filmfestival.nl](http://www.filmfestival.nl)

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268 [www.cinekid.nl](http://www.cinekid.nl)  
 269 <http://haff.awn.com>  
 270 [www.filmmuseum.nl](http://www.filmmuseum.nl)

*Presentation centres*

The Netherlands Media Art Institute [*Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst*<sup>271</sup>] and the *Maatschappij van Oude en Nieuwe Media*<sup>272</sup> in Amsterdam and *V2 Organisation*<sup>273</sup> in Rotterdam are production houses as well as presentation centres, acting as laboratories and providing scope for experimentation with new media and technologies. The Virtual Platform [*Virtueel Platform*<sup>274</sup>] was created as an umbrella for a number of cultural institutions specialising in new media to meet the demand for exchange of knowledge, discussion and cooperation.

**4.3.4 The Performing Arts**

*Table 19: Direct Ministry funding for the performing arts, 2000-2005*<sup>275</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

<i>x 1 million euro</i>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
<b>- of which performing arts</b>	<b>147,9</b>	<b>180,8</b>	<b>174,5</b>	<b>179,8</b>	<b>180,1</b>	<b>184,5</b>

*General policy and funding*

Government policy on the performing arts is to guarantee quality performances while ensuring a certain degree of variety and geographical distribution. Innovation and outreach are also important policy considerations. The main tool used is grant aid. Central government is responsible for variety and continuity in the performing arts nationwide. Municipalities are responsible for venues (theatres, concert halls, etc.), and provinces for the range of events available at provincial level and their distribution within the province. Policy coordination between central government, the provinces and the larger municipalities is achieved through ‘culture covenants’.

Most productions are put on without government grant aid. Not all the subsidies can be counted as being in the commercial sector, however, as they include performances supported by other government bodies and the Performing Arts Fund.

One-off grants for theatre, dance, opera and musicals, etc. have been provided since 1993 by the Performing Arts Fund. In the majority of cases, these are for single productions by ad hoc teams. Grants are awarded on the

271 [www.montevideo.nl](http://www.montevideo.nl)

272 Society for Old and new Media [trans: ed]

273 [www.v2.nl](http://www.v2.nl)

274 [www.virtueelplatform.nl](http://www.virtueelplatform.nl)

275 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

basis of artistic quality, pluralism and regional distribution. In 1997, the Fund began awarding two-year subsidies, thus bridging the gap between the structural aid awarded directly by the Culture Ministry for four-year periods and one-off grants for single projects. As well as providing project grants, the Fund is responsible for issuing travel and study grants and for promoting the Dutch performing arts in other countries.

In July 2002, the Performing Arts Fund merged with the Amateur Arts Fund to form the Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund. The Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund began work in 2002, providing grant aid direct to participating venues so as to boost ticket sales for both subsidised and non-subsidised performances. The Fund has a bridging scheme with the Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund to boost supply and bring it into line with demand. The Creative Music Fund is the biggest commissioner of new music in the Netherlands.

#### *Support organisations*

There are various intermediary bodies which help to distribute productions throughout the country or support one or more of the performing arts. The Dutch Theatre Institute [*Theater Instituut Nederland: TIN*<sup>276</sup>] is a documentation and information centre for theatre, dance, mime and puppet theatre. It runs a museum collection portraying the history of theatre, encourages research, contributes to the theatre debate through symposiums and publications, and helps to promote Dutch theatre abroad, mainly as an intermediary. With the advent of the *Bureau Theaterconsulenten*<sup>277</sup>, the Institute is able to advise operators of Dutch venues on programming and subsidies.

The Gaudeamus Foundation [*Stichting Gaudeamus*<sup>278</sup>] is a centre for contemporary music which holds an annual music week and a competition for performers, as well as organising programmes on a project basis. Other specialist organisations were set up in 2002 to advise operators of venues, e.g. *de Kamervraag*<sup>279</sup>, the Dutch Jazz Connection<sup>280</sup> and *Bureau Theaterconsulenten* of the TIN. This major operation separates advisory services from financial support.

*Donemus*<sup>281</sup> contributes to the promotion and publication of Dutch contemporary music. The *Dutch Jazzservice* and Dutch Jazz Connection promote jazz nationally and internationally in the same way that *de Kamervraag* promotes chamber music.

In the course of 2005, it became clear that within the general process of

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276 [www.tin.nl](http://www.tin.nl)  
 277 Bureau of Theatre Consultants [trans: ed]  
 278 [www.gaudeamus.nl](http://www.gaudeamus.nl)  
 279 [www.dekamervraag.org](http://www.dekamervraag.org)  
 280 [www.dutchjazzconnection.nl](http://www.dutchjazzconnection.nl)

281 [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

reducing subsidies, a major reorganisation was about to take place in the field of music. The Secretary of State proposed to reduce 7 music “support institutions” of varying sizes to a maximum of 2 major institutions, focusing on documentation and promotion. The proposed mergers should be legally realised as of 1 January 2007. The new organisations should start functioning as of 1 January 2009 (see §3.3.8 *The support infrastructure*).

#### *Symphonic music*

For a long time, government policy on music was restricted to supporting symphonic music. It was through the efforts of the bourgeois elite in the nineteenth century that professional orchestras came into being. In 1888, the board of the Concertgebouw concert hall in Amsterdam decided to form a professional symphony orchestra, the Concertgebouw Orchestra. This was followed within a few years by other professional orchestras.

At first, the symphony orchestras were funded mainly by well-to-do private individuals, but around the turn of the century, the orchestras’ governing bodies turned to the local authorities, citing the general good. Municipalities had compelling reasons to provide funding, i.e. local economic prosperity and educational motives, as music was thought of as having a civilising influence.

The Concertgebouw Orchestra was the first symphony orchestra to apply to central government for funding in 1906, though to no avail. It was not until 1918 that a sum of Euro 9,000 in aid was earmarked for symphonic music. The size of the grants was linked to the financial contributions made by the local authorities, and this linkage was retained until the late seventies.

There was another argument in favour of subsidising orchestras. In the thirties, a considerable number of MPs were afraid of the Netherlands being engulfed by American mass culture. In post-war years, Parliament continually lobbied for a regional network of orchestras, and by 1976 there were 21 professional orchestras in the Netherlands (including radio orchestras), employing around 1,550 musicians on full-time contracts.

In the late sixties, there was growing criticism of the music scene. There was a feeling that orchestras were receiving a disproportionately large share of the music budget; in 1946 they had taken up 94% of the national music budget and in 1966 they still accounted for 81%. Artistic considerations also fuelled the debate. New music was not receiving much attention,

as subsidised orchestras hardly ever performed works by contemporary Dutch composers. Attendance at symphony concerts was falling, whereas jazz and, later on, pop music, which were not subsidised, attracted huge public interest. These issues continued to colour the debate on Dutch music policy until well into the eighties.

It was not until the National Orchestra Network Working Group<sup>282</sup> set up a plan to restructure the sector in the eighties, that funding began to come available for other music genres. It opted to cut not the number of orchestras but their size. If a small orchestra wished to perform a large symphonic work, it should get together with another orchestra. The Working Group recommended a system whereby musicians would no longer automatically be employed on a full-time basis but would be paid for the number of shifts worked. The three largest orchestras would be unaffected. Parliament passed the Working Group's proposals in September 1983. The reorganisation yielded a saving of Euro 5.5 million, about Euro 4 million of which ultimately went to non-symphonic music, thus reducing the proportion of the music budget accounted for by symphony orchestras to 73% in 1986. The new system soon ran into problems, however. The orchestras wanted to offer a broader repertoire than their size allowed without having to depend on other orchestras, but increasing the number of full-time players while keeping the same number of orchestras would have cost more, not less. It was therefore decided that there should after all be fewer, larger orchestras; namely three full-size regional symphony orchestras.

Following a period of relative calm, in 2000 the orchestras were faced with a recommendation by the Council for Culture 'to save at least Euro 4.5 million for use in other areas of music by disbanding or amalgamating a number of orchestras'. The idea was to use Euro 1.3 million of the money thus saved to boost the quality of the three top orchestras. As a result, orchestras were restructured, and one even disbanded. The lion's share of grant aid to the performing arts, then, still goes to maintaining ten symphony orchestras. One of these is primarily an opera and ballet orchestra, and the others play for opera or ballet as a sideline. Five of the ten orchestras have their home bases outside the three major cities. There are four broadcasting orchestras funded from broadcasting resources. These are increasingly involved in other areas of the mainstream music scene in addition to their work for radio and television.

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282 *Landelijke Werkgroep Orkestenbestel*

*Opera*

Contrary to general opinion, the Netherlands has a long-standing operatic tradition, with Italian, French and German companies taking up residence for varying periods of time in Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam. The Wagner Association, which existed from 1883 to 1959, provided a powerful stimulus to quality, and with support from wealthy benefactors it was responsible for many performances of an exceptionally high international standard. It never received any government funding.

In 1986, the Netherlands Opera (after quite a turbulent existence since the 1920's) moved from the Municipal Theatre to Amsterdam's new Opera and Dance Theatre. At the same time, the company was allocated an extra Euro 4.5 million outside the framework of the regular arts budget. To provide the music for its productions, the Dutch Philharmonic Orchestra was formed from three existing orchestras. The company employs other orchestras as well. As far as funding is concerned, the Netherlands Opera is almost entirely dependent on government subsidy. Almost all its performances take place in Amsterdam.

The National Touring Opera [*Nationale Reisopera*<sup>283</sup>] developed from Opera Forum in 1994 and performs in the larger provincial cities. The independent Orchestra of the East [*Orkest van het Oosten*<sup>284</sup>] performs a substantial amount of symphonic work as well as playing for opera productions. Other regional orchestras are engaged to play for the National Touring Opera. Together with various local authorities, central government now subsidises Opera South [*Opera Zuid*<sup>285</sup>], a production team that supplements the other companies. Different orchestras are used for each production. These three companies together stage around two hundred performances at local theatres throughout the country, with the exception of the one hundred or so productions staged by Netherlands Opera at the Opera and Dance Theatre in Amsterdam.

*Chamber music, pop music and jazz*

It is only in the past few decades that cultural policy has included non-symphonic classical music, pop music, jazz, world music and improvised music. For a long time, only a small part of the music budget went to support these types of music. The gradual expansion of the budget reflects the reduction in the number of orchestras.

For many years, non-symphonic classical ensembles had to rely on

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283 [www.reisopera.nl](http://www.reisopera.nl)

284 [www.orkestvanhetoosten.nl](http://www.orkestvanhetoosten.nl)

285 [www.operazuid.nl](http://www.operazuid.nl)



project grants from the Performing Arts Fund. Many of their members had jobs in one of the orchestras as well. The 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document changed this and removed the restriction, resulting in the number of subsidised ensembles rising from 11 to 31. In the 2005-2008 Cultural Policy Document period, responsibility for the ensembles has been returned to the Fund. Jazz and improvised music began to gain growing recognition in 1970. In 1996, the Performing Arts Fund developed a system of project grants for improvised music, thus introducing a separation between supply-side and demand-side grants. In 1997, *Jazz in Nederland* merged with the Netherlands Theatre Network [*Theater Netwerk Nederland*] to form the Music and Theatre Network. With the increased separation between supply-side and demand-side subsidy, and between advisory services and grant aid, the demand-side grants for jazz have been handled by the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund from 2002. As a result, the Music and Theatre Network has ceased to exist.

The Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund also subsidises world music. Festivals such as *Festival Mundial*<sup>286</sup>, *Dunya*<sup>287</sup> and *Music Meeting*<sup>288</sup> have played a pioneering role in promoting world music. Expertise in this area and know-how when it comes to intercultural programming are still scarce. RASA World Cultural Centre [*RASA Wereldculturen centrum*<sup>289</sup>] plays a major role as a workshop for developing talented newcomers and improving their professionalism. Musicians can apply to the Performing Arts Fund for project grants.

Pop music was not included in cultural policy until the mid-seventies. Indeed, the government saw its job as being to curb the nuisance caused by this 'barbaric' music. With quite a few bands performing at subsidised youth centres, however, it came under welfare policy in the early seventies. A few years later, pop musicians got together in the Netherlands Pop Music Association [*Stichting Popmuziek Nederland: SPN*] and questioned the government's music policy, denouncing the monopoly status it accorded to opera and orchestral music. It was not until September 1977 that the government granted its first subsidy to pop music (through the Association), along with the reorganisation of the orchestra network, which enabled the Association to put its *Podium Plan* into effect and organise a nationwide competition for new bands. The first arts plan provided the Association with a regular Euro 500,000 subsidy in 1987. In the nineties, State Secretaries saw possibilities in pop music for establishing links with immigrant culture, and accordingly

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286 [www.festivalmundial.nl](http://www.festivalmundial.nl)

287 [www.dunya.nl](http://www.dunya.nl)

288 [www.musicmeeting.nl](http://www.musicmeeting.nl)

289 [www.rasa.nl](http://www.rasa.nl)

increased the pop music budget. The Association, renamed the Dutch Rock and Pop Institute [*Nationaal Popinstituut*<sup>290</sup>] in 1997, stepped up the Podium Plan and its international operations. State Secretary Rick van der Ploeg regarded pop music as a major element in his policy and raised the budget to Euro 2.2 million, including Euro 900,000 for the Netherlands Pop Music Plan<sup>291</sup>, the successor to the Podium Plan. Like the demand-side grants for other areas, the budget for the plan was transferred to the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund in 2002.

Table 20: number of performances and attendance in the field of music<sup>292</sup> and opera<sup>293</sup> for the period 1999-2003<sup>294</sup>

Total performances			Music performances			Opera performances		
1999	2001	2003	1999	2001	2003	1999	2001	2003
38.183	41.204	47.035	10.421	12.303	13.844	3.921	4.125	4.764
Total number visits (x 1000)			Music performances (x 1000)			Opera performances (x 1000)		
1999	2001	2003	1999	2001	2003	1999	2001	2003
14.302	15.668	17.298	5.371	6.055	6.484	1.165	795	1.006

### Dance

Before the war, dance was scarcely thought of as an art in the Netherlands. Despite this climate and thanks to the influence of foreign stars, a few dance companies and some dance schools and studios were founded. There was no continuity, however. The first classical ballet company, the National Ballet, was founded in 1940 but folded a year later. It was not until 1954 that stage dance became a budgetary item in its own right, and even this initial proposal met with opposition. In the sixties, the Netherlands had two leading ballet companies, the Netherlands Dance Theatre [*Nederlands Dans Theater*<sup>295</sup>], founded in 1959, and the National Ballet [*Het Nationale Ballet*<sup>296</sup>], founded in 1961. 1961 also saw the founding of the Folk Dance Theatre [*Het Folkloristisch Danstheater*], now called the International Dance Theatre [*Het Internationaal Danstheater*<sup>297</sup>]. The dance sector expanded over the ensuing years, as the political objections to state funding that had been felt in 1954 faded away.

Dance has continued to develop in recent years, with modern dance in particular occupying a prominent position. The number of modern dance

290 [www.popinstituut.nl](http://www.popinstituut.nl)

291 *Nederlands Popmuziek Plan*

292 Pop, jazz, blues, classical music, DJs, etc.

293 Musicals, revue, operetta, opera, modern music theatre, etc.

294 Source: Statistics Netherlands ([www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl))

295 [www.ndt.nl](http://www.ndt.nl)

296 [www.het-nationale-ballet.nl](http://www.het-nationale-ballet.nl)

297 [www.intdanstheater.nl](http://www.intdanstheater.nl)

companies has grown and dance workshops have been created. With a number of festivals and troupes for children and young people, the scene is complete.

In 1985, the National Dance Network Working Group<sup>298</sup> published a report entitled 'Space for Dance'<sup>299</sup>, showing that dance was structurally disadvantaged compared with the other performing arts. The only way of overcoming the problem was with the aid of external funding. An extra Euro 5.5 million needed to be added to the dance budget, taken either from the other arts or from outside the arts budget, with a substantial part of this money being used to improve conditions of employment. The sector was subsequently able to improve its position, assisted by a more generous grant aid budget, enabling it to grow and become more professional.

*Table 21: number of performances and attendance in the field of dance<sup>300</sup> for the period 1999-2003<sup>301</sup>*

<b>Total performances</b>			<i>Dance performances</i>		
<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>
38.183	41.204	47.035	3.045	2.211	2.910
<b>Total number visits (x 1000)</b>			<i>Dance performances (x 1000)</i>		
<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>
14.302	15.668	17.298	2.389	2.687	3.443

### *Theatre*

Until the fifties, the state had never run or subsidised a theatre or theatre company. The first type of theatre to be accepted by the religious denominations was the morality play. In the twenties and thirties, morality plays and pageants formed a fairly common backdrop to Catholic ceremonies. The national budgetary item for the dramatic arts, which appeared once on the budget of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Science in 1920, did not reappear before the German occupation. The major cities were ahead of central government in subsidising theatre, with Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague being the first cities to subsidise theatre. Immediately after the Liberation, the Minister of Education, Arts and Science and the municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht opted to jointly subsidise three theatre companies, each funding 50% of their running costs, on con-

298 *Landelijke Werkgroep Dansbestel*

299 *Ruimte voor de dans [1985]*

300 Dance, folklore, classical ballet, modern dance, mime, etc.

301 Source: Statistics Netherlands ([www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl))

dition that they performed in the regions as well, because it was felt that the post-war economic and moral reconstruction of the Netherlands should not be limited to the major urban conurbations. 1953 saw the first government-subsidised provincial theatre company. The second was founded in 1956. The geographical distribution was not completed until the second half of the sixties. Mime, puppet theatre and object theatre evolved after the Second World War as independent forms.

In October 1969, students at the Amsterdam Drama School interrupted a performance by the prestigious *Nederlandse Comedie* by hurling seven tomatoes. The rising generation of theatre makers was airing the view that Dutch repertory theatre was 'rotten' and needed to become more socially committed and artistically innovative. The protesters, calling themselves the Tomato Action Group<sup>302</sup>, believed that theatre, attracting as it did hardly any audience from the lower classes, had become a bourgeois institution. In retrospect, the Tomato campaign can be seen to have influenced the development of theatre, with not only theatre makers but also the authorities recognising the necessity for change. This set a trend in motion which resulted in theatre being dominated by the goals of innovation and artistic variety at the expense of reaching the general public. The number of subsidised companies increased. In the 1969-70 season, there were nine repertory companies receiving government subsidy, and by 2001-02 the figure had risen to thirty, including theatre groups and production teams - not counting youth theatre, mime and puppet theatre.

Since 1985, the larger companies outside the three major cities have only been able to survive thanks to central government funding. Local authority co-funding is found only in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague, with central government providing around 40% of the funding and the municipalities around 60%. Youth theatre is an exception, being co-funded by central, provincial and municipal government. In the mid-nineties central government began to support performances. With the advent of the Performing Arts Programming and Marketing Fund, a start has at least been made on reorganising programming grants and matching supply and demand.

As of 2002, about 25% of the budget for the performing arts is spent on theatre (including youth theatre). One-off theatre grants from the Performing Arts Fund enable theatre makers who receive no other form of government subsidy to put on productions of their own, thus providing

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302 *Actiegroep Tomaat*

work for young artistes and those who choose not to work in larger, permanent organisations. Most of these productions are staged at smaller venues.

Theatre workshops and producing theatres offer facilities to up-and-coming theatre makers. These are flexible production units with a permanent business structure that are able to respond to changing artistic demands.

Youth theatre introduces children to the theatre at an early age, either at school or in theatres themselves. In most cases, they are co-funded by central, provincial and municipal government; the provinces providing a substantial share of the money, often upwards of 60%.

*Table 22: number of performances and attendance in the field of theatre<sup>303</sup> and cabaret<sup>304</sup> for the period 1999-2003<sup>305</sup>*

<b>Total performances</b>			<i>Theatre performances</i>			<i>Cabaret performances</i>		
<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>
38.183	41.204	47.035	12.686	13.065	14.591	5.588	5.622	6.201
<b>Total number visits (x 1000)</b>			<i>Theatre performances (x 1000)</i>			<i>Cabaret performances (x 1000)</i>		
<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>
14.302	15.668	17.298	1.987	2.330	2.580	1.962	2.051	2.215

#### *Interdisciplinary Festivals*

Around Euro 5.3 million is earmarked each year for festivals. The largest sum goes to the country's most important international event, the Holland Festival<sup>306</sup>, which features theatre, music, opera and dance, mostly from abroad. Another subsidised festival worth mentioning is the theatre festival *Oerol*<sup>307</sup> on the island of Terschelling<sup>308</sup>. Support for regional festivals is provided through the Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund.

303 Theatre, comedy, drama, puppet theatre, youth theatre etc.

304 Cabaret, shows etc

305 Source: Statistics Netherlands (www.cbs.nl)

306 [www.hollandfestival.nl](http://www.hollandfestival.nl)

307 [www.oerol.nl](http://www.oerol.nl)

308 [www.festivalboulevard.nl](http://www.festivalboulevard.nl)

4.3.5 **Amateur arts and art education**

Table 23: Direct Ministry funding for the amateur arts and arts education, 2000-2005<sup>309</sup>  
(excluding what may be channelled through the related funds)

× 1 million euro	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>Total expenditure on the arts</b>	<b>254,4</b>	<b>336,7</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>298,4</b>	<b>294,8</b>	<b>303,1</b>
- of which amateur arts and arts education	20	23,2	23,7	24,5	29	26,4

The amateur arts can be defined as non-professional artistic endeavours pursued as a leisure activity, organised or otherwise. Art education embraces the entire realm of education in the arts excluding higher vocational and university arts and arts policy courses. As early as 1985, the *Memorandum on Cultural Policy*<sup>310</sup> pointed out that policy on the amateur arts and art education was ‘an explicit component of arts policy’. In that same year, the *Memorandum on Art Education, the Amateur Arts and Arts Policy*<sup>311</sup> specified that the government’s policy was to foster and sustain skill and artistic quality in the amateur arts and to improve the quality and accessibility of art education. It also aimed to establish ties between the education system and the professional arts scene.

The amateur arts are practised on a huge scale, and a large proportion of the cost is borne by the amateurs themselves. They represent an important social, and in particular cultural, activity. The organised amateur arts - choirs, brass bands, amateur dramatic societies, folk dancing associations and amateur photography and film clubs, for instance – are privately run. Courses and lessons are becoming more popular, from which it may be concluded that artistic ambitions are rising. Many amateur artists - e.g. writers and poets - work on an individual basis. Short events outside the traditional organised domain, particularly initiatives by young people, are common. The average number of hours a week devoted to the amateur arts has remained fairly stable since 1975.

There are many professional organisations that support amateur artists in the Netherlands. For example, the *Engelenbak*<sup>312</sup> Theatre offers its space to amateur artists and groups to hold their performances. Five national organisations collectively address the needs of amateur artists: Unisono<sup>313</sup> (music), the National Centre for Amateur Dance [*Landelijk Centrum voor*

309 Source: *Kerncijfers 2001-2005* [OCW]

310 “Notitie Cultuurbeleid” [1985]

311 “Notitie Kunstzinnige vorming, amateuristische kunstbeoefening en kunstbeleid” [1985]

312 [www.engelenbak.nl](http://www.engelenbak.nl)

313 [www.amateurmuziek.nl](http://www.amateurmuziek.nl)

*Amateurdans*<sup>314</sup>], the Foundation for Visual Amateur Arts [*Stichting Beeldende Amateurkunst: SBA*<sup>315</sup>], the Foundation for Theatre [*Stichting Theaterwerk Nederland*<sup>316</sup>] and the Foundation for Writing. They are funded by government as mediators between suppliers and potential clientele. At the moment, a merging process, in which all participants will unite into one sector institute for amateur art, is about to be completed. (See §3.3.8 *The support infrastructure*)

Since activities are often organised and funded by the participants themselves, the amateur arts are relatively independent of subsidy. *Art education*<sup>317</sup> is more dependent on grant aid, but it is not only subsidised institutions that provide it. Some is also provided by the private sector, e.g. ballet and dancing classes, music lessons and tuition in the visual arts. The contribution of the commercial sector is assumed to be substantial, although there are no reliable data.

The amateur arts and art education world is not entirely separate from the professional arts world. Together they form the infrastructure necessary for a flourishing cultural climate for all citizens. The professional arts set an example for amateurs. People who are involved in the amateur arts are more likely to attend professional arts events. Amateurs are particularly interested in cultural events that correspond to their own favourite pursuits; conversely the amateur sector is important to the professional arts, e.g. as a reservoir of youthful talent and a supplier of high-quality choral singing.

The connection between the amateur arts and art education is seen most clearly at art education centres, which offer instruction and guidance to amateur artists. Classes are often taught by professional artists. Courses that broaden artistic skills and knowledge of art also enhance the appreciation of professional art, as practising particular art forms develops taste and discrimination. Regarding education, the 1996 *Memorandum on Culture and School*<sup>318</sup>, issued jointly by the two State Secretaries of Culture and Education with the aim of finding a proper place for cultural education in schools, offers a starting point for extensive cooperation. The main tool the government has at its disposal is subsidising national organisations that support the various amateur arts. The function of these institutions is to improve overall quality in the sector by developing and offering courses (e.g. in management skills), organising top-level national events, disseminating information, broadening repertoires and acting as a go-between. The aims of the national art education organisations are similar, e.g. quality

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314 [www.dansweb.nl](http://www.dansweb.nl)

315 [www.amateurkunst.net](http://www.amateurkunst.net)

316 [www.theaterwerk.nl](http://www.theaterwerk.nl)

317 *Kunstzinnige vorming*

318 "Notitie Cultuur en School" [1996]

assurance, providing information, acting as a go-between, and developing art education in collaboration with provincial and local institutions.

Apart from supporting umbrella organisations, the government has a budget for amateur arts projects. For many years, the Ministry was directly responsible for expenditure, but in 1997 this responsibility was transferred to the Amateur Arts Fund, which merged with the Performing Arts Fund in 2002. A few organisations that are of national importance by virtue of their influence on the entire amateur sector also receive government subsidy, e.g. the main Dutch youth orchestras and organisations for the development of youth talent.

The provinces are responsible for activities at provincial level, for supporting provincial organisations and for the upkeep of provincial amateur arts and art education facilities. They also normally fund arts teaching in primary and secondary schools.

The municipalities are responsible for administration, awarding subsidies for local activities and to clubs and associations, providing rehearsal accommodation and grants for events, and funding music schools and arts and crafts centres. Under the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan*, however, authorities jointly subsidise projects to increase participation in the arts, and the amateur arts and cultural education benefit from this. (See §5.4 *Cultural outreach and participation*).





CHAPTER 5

TRANS-SECTORAL POLICY THEMES

## 5.1 Recent cultural policy documents

### 5.1.1 Culture as Confrontation

*Culture as Confrontation*<sup>319</sup> was the cultural policy document presented by State Secretary Van der Ploeg (Social Democrat Party, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kok Cabinet, 1998-2002) in the year 2000. Government priorities identified were cultural diversity, audience reach and cultural entrepreneurship. In preparation for the Cultural Policy Document 2001-2004, Van der Ploeg programmed cultural diversity as an important policy priority, especially in the Dutch multicultural society. He also emphasised the importance of audience reach interacting with a broader, more diverse audience (cf. policy document 1999 entitled “*Make Way for Cultural Diversity*”<sup>320</sup>). His third priority focused on cultural entrepreneurship. In his view, a strict division between the state domain and the commercial market was no longer realistic. Subsidy should also be used to get a grip on the cultural market, in order to make artistically high-value performances more popular, and to improve expressions of popular culture, in the sense of a more artistic content. Cultural entrepreneurship would open up possibilities to reach a multicultural or similarly diversified audience.

### 5.1.2 “More than the Sum”<sup>321</sup> and the ‘Cultuurnota’ 2005-2008

In the second “Balkenende Cabinet” (2003-2006), State Secretary Medy van der Laan was charged with political responsibility for the arts, cultural heritage and media. In her policy document “*More than the Sum*”, published in November 2003, she focused on three main themes of cultural policy:

- › *Less bureaucracy and more individual responsibility in the cultural system*

If administrative obligations for institutions are considered disproportionate, they should be reduced. Too many regulations within a particular Fund should be counteracted. Regulations in the field of monuments will be reduced. Where necessary, the relationship between institutes and the subsidising Ministry will be simplified. Less bureaucracy must preferably be mirrored by fewer expenditures. With regard to saving public money (and in view of necessary government budget costs), a more efficient and less expensive role for what are termed ‘support institutions’ is an option.

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319 “*Cultuur als Confrontatie*” [OCW, 2000]

320 “*Ruim baan voor culturele diversiteit*” [OCW, 1999]

321 “*Meer dan de Som: Beleidsbrief Cultuur 2004-2007*” [OCW, November 2003]

> *More connection and interaction in cultural life*

Are all functions of organised cultural life covered sufficiently? Are there overlaps? Are cultural facilities spread evenly throughout the nation? Are there connections to economic sectors and tourism? Interaction should be stimulated between young talent and larger performing arts companies, between leading venues and regional theatres, between visual artists and their potential consumers, between museums and public libraries or digital public initiatives. In the field of cultural heritage, there should be tighter selection procedures in the admittance of new objects as items of national cultural heritage. At the same time, new ways must be found to create more understanding of history content and continuity. In the field of language and literature, the position of the three language and literature Funds should be re-examined within the context of a merger.

> *Reinforcing the cultural factor in society*

New initiatives and new alliances should increase the importance of art in other policy fields. Special attention will be paid to the relationship between culture and economics, as creative industry offers opportunities that are crucial for a growing culture sector. At the same time, culture creates jobs and attracts industrial entrepreneurs looking for a cultural ambience.

In the Cultural Policy Document 2005-2008<sup>322</sup>, the government's objectives as formulated in "*More than the Sum*", after having been debated and commented upon from various perspectives, are translated into decisions regarding the allocation of national government subsidies for the upcoming four-year period. This policy document is the result of a procedure that began in 2003. In addition to presenting the subsidy allocations<sup>323</sup>, the document pays special attention to:

- Urban/regional dynamics
- International cultural policy
- The supporting infrastructure
- Cultural diversity
- E-Culture

## 5.2 **Urban/regional dynamics**

In *More than the Sum* (2003), the Cabinet underlined the importance of a strong cultural infrastructure. A high-quality, diverse and geographically well-spread network of cultural amenities is not only necessary for a flour-

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322 "Cultuurnota 2005-2008" [OCW, September 2004]. See [www.cultuurnota.nl](http://www.cultuurnota.nl) for allocations and budgets.

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323 The financial framework of the Cultural Policy Document 2005-2008 amounts to Euro 392 million (Source: "Cultuurnota 2005-2008" [OCW, September 2004])

ishing cultural life; theatres, concert halls, museums, and cinemas make a municipality more attractive for the creative class - educated professionals who apply creativity to their jobs. Economic growth also benefits from a tolerant climate and the presence of a creative, talented workforce. An attractive cultural climate reinforces these factors and influences enterprises in their choice of location. Thus cities consciously develop strategies to employ culture not only as a goal per se, but also as a means to stimulate economic development.

#### *Cultural covenants*

Cohesion between state cultural policy and that of the provincial and local authorities is ensured by means of a system of covenants with the three large cities and with five clusters of the twelve provinces and thirty large and medium-sized cities.

Consultation with the Inter-provincial Consultative Council and the Union of Netherlands Municipalities has resulted in the agreement that each of the forty-two covenant holders should develop a cultural profile, characteristic of its own situation and context. This should include a description of the actual state of affairs, as well as an inventory of the requirements for the coming cultural policy document period. In this way, both the Council for Culture and the Cabinet can take regional and local specificities into account when making policy decisions.

The Council for Culture identifies possible 'white spots' when assessing the geographical spread of the cultural infrastructure (amenities). This has led, for example, to a financial allocation for the development of a dance amenity in the cluster South.

#### *Visual Arts and Design Funding*

Visual Arts and Design Funding<sup>324</sup> is allocated through targeted funding in twelve provinces and fourteen municipalities. Strengthening regional dynamics has the most chance of success in areas that can independently attract both artists and public (audience, buyers and commissioners). Nine cities<sup>325</sup> have been selected on the grounds of this potential. These are home to art education institutions, galleries, art lending centres, museums and studios, etc. They have established positions in national and international networks. Besides these cities, five municipalities<sup>326</sup> are eligible for funds that are specifically linked to the development and growth of artists and designers.

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324 *Geldstroom Beeldende Kunst en Vormgeving*

325 Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Den Haag, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Groningen, Enschede, Arnhem, Maastricht

326 Den Bosch, Tilburg, Breda, Zwolle, Leeuwarden

The provinces use Visual Arts and Design Funding to identify and facilitate regional developments. In consultation with local authorities, they ensure that the required means are concentrated in those cities and institutions, which contribute to the strengthening of an infrastructure for visual arts and design.

### 5.3 International cultural policy

Globalisation, increasing migration and mobility, media developments and European integration have all contributed to the need to make contacts with other cultures, and allow foreigners to acquaint themselves with Dutch arts and culture. Dutch contributions to international cultural events are often of high quality and reinforce the idea of the Netherlands as an innovative country. But the arts scene is related to social contexts which have changed everywhere in the world over recent years. The Netherlands, too, has been the stage for radical developments in a range of areas. Partly as a result of these changes, and despite the successes achieved, there have been sufficient reasons to redesign international cultural policy.

#### *Policy changes*

In the eighties, international cultural policy served primarily to reinforce the international status of Dutch culture. In the nineties, the accent was transferred to cultural *cooperation*; not only promoting understanding between peoples, but also enriching both parties and clarifying the Netherlands' international profile. Current Dutch international cultural policy has four objectives: (1) the presentation of Dutch culture abroad, (2) the enrichment and inspiration of Dutch culture by means of encounter and collaboration with other cultures and artists from abroad, (3) testing the level of quality and the relevance of Dutch artistic and cultural practices against international criteria, and (4) preserving the cultural heritage the Netherlands shares with other countries. Whilst these objectives remain relevant, the last few years have seen a return to the notion of the importance of profiling Dutch culture abroad. In May 2006, the State Secretaries for Culture and Foreign Affairs jointly announced their intention to make Dutch culture more recognisable on the international map<sup>327</sup>. In order to gain transparency and efficiency, a clear distinction was presented between *practical* and *strategic* international cultural policy, also financially. The resources for strategic policy were raised to 50% of the HGIS Cultural Resources, also known as the Netherlands Culture Fund<sup>328</sup>.

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327 Policy document: "Setting Course. More cohesion in international cultural policy" [Koers Kiezen, 10 May 2006]

328 HGIS (*Homogene Groep Internationale Samenwerking*)

Strategic policy will be more directly linked to three specific categories. In the first place, a connection between national and international policy will become standard practice. For instance, *'national' themes such as culture and economy and cultural diversity will be strategically translated into international cultural policy programmes*. Secondly, foreign policy priorities are no longer guided by the concept of so-called priority countries.<sup>329</sup> Until 2006, the size of the Netherlands and the limited resources available made it necessary to focus on a few countries and regions. Priority countries were selected on the basis of such factors as their importance to Dutch culture, the opportunities for marketing Dutch culture there, the level and quality of local culture, and foreign policy considerations. As of 2006, relevant combinations between disciplines and countries will be implemented into policy programmes in a flexible manner. Thirdly, international cultural policy will allow different approaches to the various cultural sectors; a sector-specific approach.

#### *Shared cultural heritage*

Over the course of time, the Netherlands has maintained intensive relationships with a number of countries in the context of a shared cultural heritage. A number of stages in history gave birth to intangible and tangible memories that are still referred to as common cultural heritage. Dutch society is the product of a long and sometimes difficult history that has to be made understandable for Dutch inhabitants today. This applies also to the countries with which the Dutch share a past.

Through cultural policy programmes, the cohesion that already exists with other cultural and social sectors will increase. Specific policy frameworks and structural activity plans will be developed, in which present-day themes can be profiled within the wider scope of cross-border shared cultural heritage, such as the history of slavery, water, fortifications and strongholds.

In addition to a more structural approach, it is important both from the scientific perspective as well as from the perspective of the heritage field itself, that the innumerable and multifarious acquisitions of shared cultural heritage continue to be preserved and to be made accessible at a central location. Welcome in this respect are private initiatives that set up provisions for the compilation and distribution of knowledge and expertise in this area, as a result of which it will be possible to forge relations with other heritage fields, such as world heritage.

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329 Priority countries comprised the 25 EU Member States and the accession countries, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Surinam, Turkey, the United States and South Africa.

*Additional themes and programmes*

The Netherlands as a *free port* has been a much-heard term in international cultural policy in the past years. Programmes that confirm this concept include the provision of art education scholarships for foreign students; assistance for well-known Dutch festivals to invite foreign journalists and undertake promotional campaigns to raise their international profile; artist-in-residence programmes to allow leading foreign artists to live and work in the Netherlands for lengthy periods; visiting programmes for intermediaries, policy makers and programmers to find out about the culture on offer in the Netherlands and the details of Dutch cultural policy.

On a European (EU) level, the Netherlands is currently striving to create more synergy between the European Commission's cultural programmes and its own policy. The Council of Europe's standpoint, that freedom of expression is paramount as a fundamental right, plays an important role in Dutch media policy. UNESCO has programmes to update legal instruments to protect cultural heritage in the world, to which the Netherlands contributes financially.

*Implementing infrastructure*

Besides the Culture Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the various cultural Funds and umbrella organisations have delegated responsibilities for administering international cultural policy, for which they receive special grants from the Netherlands Culture Fund in addition to their subsidies under the Cultural Policy Document. 50% of the funds of the Netherlands Culture Fund for the presentation of Dutch culture abroad has been reallocated to the cultural Funds to this end. The budget of the Fund for 2006 amounts to more than Euro 8 million.

Since 1999, the Service Centre for International Cultural Activities [*Stichting Internationale Culturele Activiteiten: SICA*<sup>330</sup>] has been acting as a platform for the cultural arena and a link to the government. It collects and disseminates information on policy and activities, provides advice and surveys Dutch international activities. It also acts as the 'Cultural Contact Point' for the EU's Culture 2000 programme. Cultural attachés at Dutch embassies play an important role in implementing international cultural policy abroad.



#### 5.4 Cultural outreach and participation

The rise in the standard of living since the sixties had major repercussions on cultural participation. The steady increase in disposable income, for instance, paved the way for the rapid penetration of new technology. Nowadays, most households possess a television, an audio system, a video recorder and a PC connected to the Internet. The higher standard of living, combined with greater mobility, has made a variety of activities with a cultural element interesting to the commercial sector. What was once disapprovingly labelled 'mass culture' has been transformed into a wide-ranging, international culture industry, offering a huge range of large and small-scale activities.

The combination of shrinking spare time and higher spending power is leading people to divide up their time among more and more activities, resulting in a 'grazing culture'. Besides the consumers of culture, there are some two million amateurs who practice the arts seriously by taking courses and being active members of clubs and associations. These people are willing to spend time and money on culture, at least in their own particular fields of interest.

##### *Cultural Outreach Action Plan*<sup>331</sup>

The supply of culture is concentrated (even more than is warranted by the population density) in the four major cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. This pattern is strongest in the subsidised and non-subsidised performing arts, which are highly concentrated in the west of the country, particularly Amsterdam. People who live in the four major cities thus have far more opportunities to attend cultural events in their area than those who live elsewhere. In 1999, State Secretary Rick van der Ploeg's policy document 'Make way for cultural diversity'<sup>332</sup> led to the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan*, the aim of which is to involve more people in culture, especially newcomers such as immigrants and young people. The plan defines culture in the broad sense, not just the performing arts or museums but also popular culture, e.g. pop music. In order to put the *Action Plan* into practice, central government and the provinces and municipalities entered into agreements and put programmes in place for the 2001-2004 period. Because of the success of the incentive, State Secretary Medy van der Laan decided to continue the lifespan of the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan* for another four years, in a somewhat modernised form. The Cabinet has reserved an annual Euro

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<sup>331</sup> Actieplan Cultuurbereik

<sup>332</sup> "Ruim baan voor culturele diversiteit"  
[OCW, 1999]

13.7 million subsidy for its implementation, which is matched by the twelve provinces and thirty municipalities. Thus the regional and local authorities contribute to implementing special programmes to attract new audiences to arts and culture. (For more information on trends and figures related to cultural participation, see Annex: *Cultural consumption and participation*)

*Initiatives promoting participation*

Initiatives aiming to broaden cultural participation, especially among the young and socially disadvantaged include:

- *Cultural Youth Passport* [*Cultureel Jongerenpas*: CJP<sup>333</sup>] - to promote public participation in cultural life. People under the age of 26 receive discounts on entrance fees for theatres, cinemas and museums.
- *City Passport* [*Stadpas*<sup>334</sup>]. Holders receive a discount on admission fees. This passport is issued to people with modest means, i.e. those on social security and pensioners.
- *Museum Pass* [*Museum Jaarkaart*<sup>335</sup>]. This pass costs Euro 30 /year (2006). Holders are given free admission to the vast majority of museums, special exhibitions not included.
- *Free admission for youth*. Some museums grant people under 19 years of age free admission.

## 5.5 Culture and School

Culture and School is a project that saw the light in 1996. The aim of the project is to acquaint pupils with the arts and with cultural heritage, not only for cultural, creative and artistic reasons, but also with the purpose of using culture as an instrument to teach certain subjects and competencies. A monument, for example, tells pupils much more than only its architectural history. A monument may contain biological, mathematical, cultural and/or geographical information. To this end, some schools adopt a monument in the vicinity, and employ this monument for more than one subject. The two-way system is effective; schools have become more familiar with the regular supply in their neighbourhoods, while cultural institutions know more about the motivations of pupils and teachers.

In the period 2001-2004, a sum of circa Euro 14 million was made available annually for Culture and School, contributed by twelve provinces, thirty municipalities and the State. Currently, the project is being expanded with an extra investment that amounts to around Euro 22 million in 2007;

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333 [www.cjp.nl](http://www.cjp.nl)

334 [www.stadspas.nl](http://www.stadspas.nl)

335 [www.museumjaarkaart.nl](http://www.museumjaarkaart.nl)

meant for primary education and aiming to anchor cultural education more firmly in the fixed curriculum of primary education. This aim also applies to the first tier of secondary education, and is already more or less the case in the second tier of secondary education, since the subject Cultural and Arts' Studies has existed since 1998.

The introduction of arts and cultural education as a new school subject (1998) is part of a large-scale innovation in Dutch education. The general goal is that pupils learn to make a motivated choice of cultural activities that are meaningful to them. The core of the subject is participation in cultural activities; in other words, pupils should *experience* culture. The government helps to cover the expenses of these cultural visits by providing each pupil in their final two or three years of secondary education with an amount of about 20 euros in vouchers, that can be used as payment in museums, theatres and cinemas. The vouchers are meant to support the 'digestion' of cultural activities. In August 2006, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Maria van der Hoeven, (Christian Democratic Party) announced that the voucher system will be replaced by a free 'culture card'. All secondary school pupils will receive a cultural *chipknip* card with an annual budget of 15 euros, for free entry to museums, theatre or film. Other parties, such as municipalities, parents or companies, can top up the card.

As of 1 August 2006, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has made an extra Euro 1.2 million available for cultural education. A maximum of 120 projects, submitted by cultural institutions and schools in partnership with one another, will be eligible for subsidy.

## 5.6 Culture and economy

The programme Culture and Economy aims to strengthen the economic potential of culture and creativity, by giving an impulse to the Netherlands' creative potential. The fruits of this endeavour are that the business sector gets more insight in the possibilities offered by the creative industries, which can lead to a new source of ideas for the development and use of new technologies and products. At the same time, the cultural sector is made more aware of its market potential. Culture and Economy is a cooperation programme of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Culture Ministry. Besides this, several institutes from the field of the arts are involved, such as the Premsele Foundation for Dutch design.<sup>336</sup>

The Dutch Cabinet put forward four arguments for promoting collabo-

ration between the two departments. Firstly, the creative industries have become a relatively large sector after a period of constant growth. They now provide 240,000 jobs (3.2% of the labour market), and are still growing rapidly, especially in the Amsterdam region. They represent an added value of an estimated Euro 8.4 billion. Secondly, heritage and performing arts have indirect effects. They are a magnet for the 'creative class' – a term coined by the American economist Richard Florida – and make cities more attractive and more competitive. Moreover, they attract other businesses and fuel the tourism industry. Thirdly, content is an instrument for the adoption of new (multimedia) technologies and the implementation of the broadband infrastructure, which makes the country internationally competitive. And lastly, industrial design makes products – good and services – not only more beautiful, but also cheaper in production and distribution, and more sustainable.

In October 2005, on the basis of an extensive research programme that was set out in a *Mapping document*,<sup>337</sup> a policy document entitled *Our Creative Potential, paper on Culture and Economy*,<sup>338</sup> was presented to Parliament by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The document introduces a Programme for the Creative Industries; a coherent set of measures and schemes to help creative industries to achieve their full economic potential. In the paper, 'creative industries' are broken down into three sectors: arts and cultural heritage, media and entertainment, and creative services. The last category includes design, fashion, architecture, new media, computer games and advertising. No normative distinction is made between subsidised and other creative industries.

The main objectives are:

- To connect culture and the economy, by means of a tender entitled the Creative Challenge Call. The Cabinet allocated a sum of Euro 8 million, to stimulate the development of smaller and larger networks, to the creative industries and other business sectors.
- To strengthen the financial conditions of the creative industries, by means of such instruments as incentives for starters in the creative industries; alternative sources of financing for the arts and heritage; the strengthening of cultural sponsorship.
- To improve the conditions of intellectual property. The Cabinet supports *Creative Commons*, a system of licenses within the existing copyright legislation, that allow for new business models.

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<sup>337</sup> cf. B. Hofstede and S. Raes (2006) *Creatief vermogen*.

<sup>338</sup> *Ons creatieve vermogen, brief cultuur en economie*. Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education, Culture and Sciences, October 2005

- To intensify internationalisation, by strengthening the creative industries' position in export; addressing the mobility of collections; international promotion; collective marketing of Dutch design.
- To further professionalise cultural management. This mainly refers to 'cultural entrepreneurship'<sup>339</sup>, a term introduced in 1999 by State Secretary for Culture Rick van der Ploeg. He was the first to submit a policy plan to help artists, producers, art commissioners and programmers in developing themselves as cultural entrepreneurs, to bridge the divide between the subsidised and the unsubsidised parts of the cultural sector.

*Our Creative Potential* runs until 2008 and has a budget of Euro 15.5 million. After this first period, it will be evaluated.

### 5.7 Cultural diversity

Since the attention paid to cultural diversity by State Secretary Rick van der Ploeg at the turn of this century, the diversity of cultural life has increased visibly. Nevertheless, the current Cabinet believes that there is still a serious problem in the cultural landscape – namely the phenomenon of separated, independent cultural circuits. The 2005-2008 period will pay attention to establishing 'intercultural connections'. Accentuating the separate status of multicultural institutions does not contribute to interconnection. Intercultural encounters should be extended to all sectors of the cultural landscape. The Cabinet intends to stimulate innovative intercultural programming, whereby makers from different backgrounds decide themselves in which manner they interconnect and cooperate. This also implies that established institutions should have an open attitude towards intercultural activities and programming and that the multicultural institutions should attempt to interconnect with the established circuit.

To this end, all the Funds have been asked to formulate their vision on cultural diversity and to free up means for this in their budget. Some of the Funds already have running activities to stimulate interculturality, notably the Amateur Arts and Performing Arts Fund, the Literary Fund and the Mondriaan Foundation. To stimulate intercultural activities on a local level, the *Cultural Outreach Action Plan* foresees in the provision of scouts who seek out intercultural talent and give them professional guidance. The organisation *Kunstenaars&CO* pays special attention to guiding immigrant artists.

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339 "Nota Cultureel Ondernemerschap"  
[OCW, 1999]

In the field of media, diversity has been ensured by the recent establishment of the production company MTNL (Multicultural Television the Netherlands) and the radio station FunX, which targets a youth audience. Since 2003, FunX has been received in the four large cities, which together contribute 50% of the costs. MTNL makes television programmes for the four large minority groups (Surinamese, Antilleans, Moroccans and Turks) and transmits in the major cities.

In her policy paper "*More than the Sum*" (2003), State Secretary Van der Laan defined the intercultural situation as follows: "What we refer to as Dutch culture is the result of centuries of intercultural interaction and constant change. Long-term cross-border dynamism has formed the recognisable, unique and yet mobile cultural supply in the Netherlands. Intercultural enrichment is achieved by giving space to cultural diversity, which, paradoxically, also serves to bind culture. Here, cultural heritage plays a key role, as cultural self-awareness is essential for the intercultural debate. The implementation of the cultural diversity policy should be differentiated, with every institution developing its own approach in accordance with its target groups – which are not automatically the young or ethnic minorities. Diversity can be expressed in repertoire innovation and marketing, but also in the social composition of the board, management and staff. Greater emphasis should be placed – also by the Council for Culture – on the qualities of non-Western cultural expressions".

In June 2006, Medy van der Laan continued to expand on the theme of diversity, by indicating in a policy paper to Parliament several concrete actions to promote artistic enrichment through diversity, which include inter alia: the setting up of a Programme for Cultural Dialogue (see below); the creation of a national regulation for cultural education; a new impulse for cultural cooperation with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

#### *Programme for Cultural Dialogue*

In order to build bridges between the different cultures represented in the Netherlands, this Cabinet considers it necessary to intensify the dialogue between groups of 'old' and 'new' Dutch citizens. To this end, it is important to provide a platform where citizens can learn more about each other's culture, background and values.

Artistic programming will be announced already in 2006. A national three-year pilot phase is envisaged, which will be financed by the Ministry

of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, each to an initial sum of Euro 2.5 million.

The four large cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague) will develop their own activities, which will be funded in part from their own local funds, and in part from central funds. Cultural manifestations, artistic events (exhibitions, literature, music, poetry, dance, film, new media), reflection and debate are expected to draw a large public from differing backgrounds.

### 5.8 Culture and ICT

Digital and interactive communication technology continues to make information more accessible to a wider audience. In 2005, the Council for Culture stated that our society is becoming increasingly media-driven. ICT is an important content carrier and an invaluable production factor in the creative industries. The aim is to exploit the connecting potential of this interface within and outside the domain of culture in the coming years. The policy document on E-Culture published in 2002<sup>340</sup> explores the implications and possibilities of ICT for cultural institutions and media. In that year, about Euro 50 million was spent on utilising ICT in the arts, the cultural heritage and public broadcasting.

Heritage institutions, libraries and creative laboratories have been participating ever more frequently in programmes of the EU funds. In the Netherlands, the Mondriaan Foundation has made funds available to subsidise the digitisation of the collections of heritage institutions. In addition, the government decided in 2004 to make substantial means available for the digitisation of heritage and the further development of a virtual library in the public library sector. Important national digital services have since been set up.

At the same time, the innovative nature of E-Culture was acknowledged. It is not only valuable for the exploitation of cultural potential in libraries and heritage depots, but also for other forms of knowledge distribution and to reach new audiences. The organisation *Virtueel Platform*<sup>341</sup> has become an expertise centre for e-culture.

In 2006, a survey was conducted by the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands [*Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau: SCP*<sup>342</sup>], describing the current use of ICT in the cultural sector. In the EU, the drive is towards large-scale digitisation of European heritage in the coming years. In the

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340 *BeleidsbriefeCultuur* [OCW, 2002]

341 [www.virtueelplatform.nl](http://www.virtueelplatform.nl)

342 [www.scp.nl](http://www.scp.nl)

Netherlands, a first major step in this direction will be taken from 2007 onwards with the digitisation of large parts of the Dutch audiovisual heritage.

### **5.9 Canon and Museum for National History**

In September 2006, the Van Oostrom Commission<sup>343</sup> produced a report on the question of how best to convey information about the most important events and figures in Dutch national history to school pupils in primary and secondary education. The Commission's advice concerned the so-called 'canon', comprising those pieces of knowledge that every Dutchman should know about the history of this country. Following a six-month discussion period, the canon should be established for a period of five or ten years in the spring of 2007<sup>344</sup>.

In parallel to the canon discussion, there is an ongoing debate concerning the creation of a Museum for National History. The Cabinet's plan is to model this museum on the example of the German "*Haus der Geschichte*" in Bonn. The museum is to be situated in The Hague.

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343 Named after Frits van Oostrom, professor of Dutch history at the University of Utrecht

344 [www.entoen.nu](http://www.entoen.nu)



## ANNEX: CULTURAL CONSUMPTION AND PARTICIPATION

*Trends*

Research into participation in culture, media use and leisure pursuits has a long-standing tradition in the Netherlands. The first studies in this area were carried out before the Second World War. Since the 1970s, large-scale periodical surveys have been conducted by the Social and Cultural Planning Office [SCP], which was founded in 1973. One of its main tasks is to conduct scientific research into social and cultural trends. The results show a clear correlation between cultural interests - especially interest in traditional culture - and education. All other things remaining equal, the better educated show more interest than the less educated. The educational level of the Dutch population has risen considerably since the 1970s. In 1975, only 8% of the population had completed either university or professional higher education (Hogeschool in Dutch). By 2000, this percentage had climbed to 22%. Given the much higher level of education among the Dutch population, a growing interest in traditional culture could be expected.

However, this expectation has not been met. Important reasons are diverging preferences of younger and older people. In general, people do not show an interest in traditional culture, e.g. classical music, opera or visual art, until later in life. The age at which people start to be interested in traditional culture has risen over the years. In 1995, the turning point (the age at which a person started visiting traditional forms of culture more than the average) was around 40, and four years later it had shifted to 45<sup>345</sup>. Visitors only interested in traditional culture make up a mere fraction of the Dutch population. This exclusive interest is also largely confined to older people with secondary and higher education. Conversely, the proportion of the population interested exclusively in popular culture rose from one-fifth in 1983 to a quarter in 1999. Particularly striking is the strong interest in popular culture among young people with secondary and higher education.

The majority of the audience for culture consists of "omnivores" who have both traditional and popular forms of culture on their menu and alternate between them. The breakdown of the menu has changed, however. The most far-reaching changes have taken place among young people with secondary and higher education. The portion of traditional culture, which in 1983 was about the same as that of popular culture, has been halved by 1999. Older people with the same level of education had more popular forms of

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345 Source: Social and Cultural Report 2000, p. 502

culture on their agenda in 1999 than in 1983. Traditional forms of culture predominate, however.

Young people's dwindling interest in traditional culture is one of the reasons for stimulating arts education in schools as well as for starting the Cultural Outreach Action Plan in 2000. Another reason is that ethnic minorities are under-represented among visitors of cultural institutions. This is particularly true of Turks and Moroccans, and to a lesser extent of immigrants from the former Dutch colony of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles (still a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands).

#### Figures

The first results of the 2003 participation survey have been published. These results are encouraging. The "ageing" of the audience of traditional culture seems to be stopping. There is a significant increase of museum visits within the youngest age group. The interest of minority groups in visiting museums and performing arts venues is also rising.

Table 24: Visits to cultural venues by age and ethnicity: population aged 12 and over (In percentages, at least one visit during the last 12 months)

	Museums			Performing arts*				
	1991	1995	1999	2003	1991	1995	1999	2003
Population ≥12	40	34	36	37	25	27	25	25
12-17	48	43	43	50	20	18	20	20
18-34	40	31	28	27	24	24	22	22
35-49	43	38	39	39	28	30	24	25
50-64	39	36	43	43	28	33	34	31
≥65	30	27	34	33	22	23	27	25
Ethnic minorities**		17	15	22		10	8	14

Source: Social and Cultural Report 2004

\* "Traditional" performing arts i.e. professional theatre, classical music and ballet

\*\* Of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean descent

That most time within the media time budget is devoted to television is not surprising. Television is the predominant medium in the Netherlands, as it is in the rest of the industrialised world. What is remarkable is that the amount of time spent watching television has risen only slightly since 1985.

Before then, Dutch people had only two public channels to watch in their own language (some of them also had a Flemish channel). In the late eighties and the nineties, the number of channels increased considerably, mainly thanks to commercial channels. Nowadays there are more than ten Dutch language channels to choose from. The less educated generally watch more television than the better educated, but the differences between the two categories became smaller in the last quarter of the 20th century. Young people spend more time watching commercial channels than public channels.

Time spent listening to the radio has declined continuously since 1975. The biggest decrease was among young people. This may be due to the growing use of the Internet, which provides facilities for downloading and playing music.

Since the first participation survey in 1975, the amount of time spent on reading has declined. This, of course, concerns print media only, as the use of a television or a computer screen also involves a lot of reading. The biggest decrease has been in book reading. Whereas the Dutch population read books for 1.6 hours a week on average in 1975, by 2000 the figure had almost halved, to 0.9 hours a week. The decline in book reading was first seen among young people, but since 1995 the time older people - aged 35 and over - spend reading books has also declined. Prior research has established that watching television is done partly at the expense of book and newspaper reading. Viewing time has not increased over the last five years, however, so it may be that it is no longer the television but the personal computer connected to the Internet that is eating away at the time spent reading books, newspapers and magazines.

The use of personal computers and in particular the Internet has grown exponentially in recent years. In 2004, more than 70% of Dutch households were connected to the Internet. Young people aged 12-19 are ahead in the use of PCs and the Internet. From 1995 to 2000, the proportion of the Dutch population using computers and the Internet in their spare time almost doubled, from 23% to 45%. Given that the total time spent on the media remained constant during that period (19 hours a week), this has been at the expense of watching television and reading. Although there is again a positive link between PC and Internet use and levels of education, the differences between the less educated and the better educated are smaller than in the case of visits to cultural venues.

Table 25: Media use: watching television (inc. video and cable news), listening to the radio (inc. audio), reading, computer use (inc. Internet) as a main activity, population aged 12 and over, 1975-2000 (in percent, hours per week and index 2000, 1995 = 100)

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	index
Media use (hours per week)	18.5	17.8	19.0	18.8	18.8	18.7	100
watching television	10.2	10.3	12.1	12.0	12.4	12.4	100
listening to the radio	2.2	1.8	1.4	1.2	0.8	0.7	79
reading printed media	6.1	5.7	5.3	5.1	4.6	3.9	86
computer and Internet		0.1	0.5	0.9	1.8	186	
Media use: participation (%)	99	100	100	100	99	99	100
watching television	94	96	98	97	96	97	101
listening to the radio	68	60	52	50	41	36	89
reading printed media	96	95	94	91	89	84	94
computer and Internet			4	13	23	45	193
Media use by participants (hours per week)	18.6	17.9	19.0	18.9	18.9	18.8	100
watching television	10.9	10.8	12.4	12.4	12.9	12.7	99
listening to the radio	3.2	3.0	2.7	2.4	2.1	1.8	89
reading printed media	6.4	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.2	4.7	91
computer and Internet			3.5	3.7	4.0	3.9	97

Source: Huysmans and De Haan 2001, p. 77

By and large, arts and culture have stood up to the competition posed by different branches of the leisure industry rather well. Visits to performing arts, museums, historical buildings and sites have increased since the 1980s. Visits to popular arts and culture have grown rapidly: pop and rock music 72%, cabaret 27% and films 18%. The interest in traditional arts and culture grew as well, albeit to a lesser degree: theatre and ballet 15%, museums 7% and classical music 6%. The frequency of visits to artistic and cultural venues has remained the same since the 1980s. The only cause for concern is a decline in the amount of leisure time spent on reading, even though the time spent on reading literature did not decrease between 1995 and 2005 (see Table 26 below).

Table 26: Trends in cultural reach 1983-2003: indexed trends in visits and participation (1983=100)

<b>Based on % who have visited at least once in the last 12 months</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2003</b>
Museums	100	111	116	98	105	107
Historic buildings	100	103	115	100	97	104
Theatre	100	102	110	110	119	111
Professional theatre	100	102	108	109	116	115
Ballet	100	124	108	99	100	115
Cabaret	100	97	102	101	125	127
Classical music	100	113	123	133	115	106
Popular music	100	113	134	138	153	172
Cinema	100	93	95	101	112	118
<b>Based on % who have watched and / or listened at least once in the last 12 months</b>						
Arts programmes on radio and television	100	114	110	100	90	99
<b>Based on % who have performed artistic discipline at least once in the last 12 months</b>						
Visual arts	100	97	107	72	82	85
Playing an instrument and / or singing	100	102	125	96	119	95
Theatre	100	98	98	66	102	58
<b>Based on % who read for at least a quarter of an hour in the preceding week:</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	
Books	100	92	92	80	65	
Magazines	100	97	87	89	74	
Newspapers	100	96	90	85	76	

Source: Huysmans, Van den Broek, and De Haan (2005)

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- “Cultuurnota 2005-2008” (*Cultural Policy Document*) [OCW, 2004];
- “Meer dan de Som, Beleidsbrief Cultuur 2004-2007” (*More than the Sum, Policy document by Medy van der Laan*) [OCW, 2003];
- “Actieplan Cultuurbereik 2005-2008 in het kort” (*Cultural Outreach Action Programme*) [OCW, 2005];
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- “Verschil Maken, Herijking Cultuurnotasystematiek” (*Making a Difference*) [OCW, 2005].

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The statistics are taken from:

- the book *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*, 2003;
- the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science’s publications “Kerncijfers 2000-2004 and 2001-2005” (*Key statistics*),
- the “Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek” (*Statistics Netherlands*) [[www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl)]
- the “Centraal Plan Bureau” ([www.cpb.nl](http://www.cpb.nl))
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**Key organisations and portals**

Ministry of Education, Culture and Science: [www.minocw.nl/english](http://www.minocw.nl/english)

Council for Culture: [www.cultuur.nl](http://www.cultuur.nl)

Service Centre for International Cultural Activities [www.sica.nl](http://www.sica.nl)

*Research, statistics and documentation*

Social and Cultural Planning Bureau of the Netherlands: [www.scp.nl](http://www.scp.nl)

Statistics Netherlands: [www.cbs.nl](http://www.cbs.nl)

Boekman Foundation, study centre and library: [www.boekman.nl](http://www.boekman.nl)



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Ministerie van Onderwijs,  
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From mid-2003 until June 2006, Dutch cultural policy was part of the policy of the government in power, led by Christian Democrat Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende. This administration was a coalition of Christian Democrats (CDA), conservative liberals (VVD) and the democratic liberal party D66. Together they made up what is known as the 'Balkenende II Cabinet'. This publication provides an update of the latest developments in cultural policy. New themes in cultural policy discourse are introduced, such as Intercultural Dialogue, Culture and ICT, and Culture and Economy, which may continue to occupy centre stage in the coming years. This publication resembles a resource book of the most relevant developments and priorities of past and present cultural policies. It describes the Dutch administrative, financial and legal systems governing the arts and culture. It is addressed to anyone who is interested in the history of cultural policy and the latest policy developments in the Netherlands for professional or academic ends. This edition describes the situation as of Autumn 2006.

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