

1.2 National youth law

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Existence of a National Youth Law

A new law in effect

The [Child and Youth Act](#) (2015) regulates how youth care should be addressed at the local level. It is a parliament's bill approved on the 1st of March 2014 and concerns the rules about the municipal responsibility for prevention, support, help and care for youth and parents with growing up and upbringing, youth mental health problems and disorders. It came into effect on the 1st of January 2015. There is no specific period of time it covers.

In paragraph 1.3 more information is given about the decentralization and the accompanying transformation of all support and care for children, youth and families for which the Child and Youth Act provides the legal basis.

Different laws concerning Dutch youth

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child forms the basis for all rules and regulations concerning youth in the Netherlands. The needs and rights of young Dutch people are addressed in different laws and the governance responsibility has been decentralized mostly since 2015. There is not one encompassing law, but there are six relevant laws:

Local responsibilities

- Stimulating participation and citizenship; [Social Support Act](#) (2015).
- Addressing needs for preventive and specialized care; [Child and Youth Act](#) (2015).
- Stimulating participation in the labour market; [Participation Act](#) (2014).

National responsibilities

- Access to Education for all: Educational acts such as the [Act on Primary Education](#) (2016) and the [Act on Secondary Education](#) (2016).
- Access to education for children with special needs: [Appropriate Education Act](#) (2014); also a local responsibility for municipalities to streamline the collaboration between special education and mainstream schools within the regions.

Scope and contents

Services

The municipalities now steer a wide range of services for children and families, ranging from universal and preventive services to the specialized (both voluntary and compulsory) care for children and young people between 0 and 18 years. Also provisions in the social field are now part of the responsibility of local municipalities with the view towards further integrated approaches.

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Revisions/updates

[Revision of the Child and Youth Act](#)

According to article 12.2 of the [Child and Youth Act](#) (2015), in 2018 the Ministers involved had to send to Dutch Parliament a report about the effectiveness and effects of the act in practice. This first [evaluation of the Child and Youth Act](#) showed that since the act came into force most changes made could be characterized as transition, as both legal and financial structures had been transferred to the local level. By January 2018 the act's transformation goals still had to be achieved for the most part. The [evaluation report](#) stated that more time is needed to fully implement the act.

Paragraph 1.3 describes the decentralization and transformation that are regulated in the Child and Youth Act.

[Preparation of a supplementary act](#)

Cabinet prepares a new Improvement of Availability of Care for Youth Act, which will come into effect in 2023 and will revise parts of the Child and Youth Act. Long-term cooperation between local authorities and care providers on a supraregional scale should improve the availability and continuity of specialized youth care, child protection and youth probation.