

## **1.8 Cross-border cooperation**

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## **Cooperation with European countries**

### **European Dimension of youth policy**

The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport is the ministry to contact for international relations and organizations. Under the authority of the ministry, the [Netherlands Youth Institute](#) carries out several international activities and act as the Dutch correspondent for the EKCYP, the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policies of the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

The Ministry of Health Welfare and Sport has cross-border cooperation in the youth field through different European channels:

### **EU and the Council of Europe**

Concerning youth policy the ministry has, like all other EU-countries, cross-border cooperation with the EU and the Council of Europe through the Permanent Representation. There is exchange of information, knowledge and good practices about the subject of youth policy, and the ministry sees the Youth Wiki tool as a good service instrument for this exchange. There are no obligatory EU rules and regulations on how to shape youth policy in your country. Each country is responsible for its own youth policy.

The Youth Directorate of the ministry disseminates the information on the youth programmes of the EU and the Council of Europe to all relevant Dutch organizations in the field.

### **The Netherlands EU Presidency 2016**

During its EU presidency in the first half of 2016 the Netherlands' guiding principles are a Union that focuses on the essentials, a Union that focuses on growth and jobs through innovation, and a Union that connects with civil society. The Netherlands will be focusing on four priority areas: migration & international security, Europe as an innovator & job creator, sound finances and a robust Eurozone, and ahead-looking climate and energy policy.

Youth issues

The Netherlands EU Presidency describes the focus on [youth issues](#). It states that there is little European legislation governing education, youth, culture and sport. The member states mainly deal with these areas themselves. The EU will facilitate cooperation and the exchange of information and experience. It mentions Erasmus+, Europe's grant programme that supports education, youth and sport.

During its EU Presidency, the Netherlands will focus on the following issues on education and youth:

- How can we better align the education system with the labour market? What kinds of knowledge and skills do students and citizens need in a changing society?
- How do we ensure that our secondary vocational education and higher education systems are geared to the future? How do we create more scope for talented learners, and for various kinds of open and online education? What do lifelong learning and internationalisation mean in practice?
- What role can education and youth work play in integrating migrants and refugees? How can we convey our common values and combat radicalization?
- How can youth work help combat violent extremism among young people?
- How can we ensure that young people with mental health problems can participate in society, whether within the community, the world of education or the labour market?
- How can we initiate a structured dialogue between member states on the theme of 'Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe – Ready for Life, Ready for Society'?

## **European Social Network (ESN)**

The [European Social Network](#) (ESN) is a network for local public social services in Europe. The ESN has more than 120 member organizations in 35 countries, including national associations of directors, departments of social welfare within government, regions, counties and municipalities, funding and regulatory agencies, universities and other research and development organizations. The [Netherlands Youth Institute](#) participates in a peer review and compiles a country profile on child care services in the Netherlands.

The report 'Investing in Children, Improving Outcomes', with the implementation of children's services in The Netherlands and 13 other EU countries will be launched at the final meeting of the project group during the European Social Services Conference 20-22 June 2016 in The Hague.

## **International cooperation**

UN

Through the EU-presidency (from January to June 2016 - see above) the Netherlands is the official spokesman of the EU in talks with the UN. In July Slovakia will take over the EU-presidency for the second half of 2016.

According to the Convention of the Rights of the Child, both the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Safety and Justice report every 5 years about the situation of children's' rights in the Netherlands.

## **OECD**

The Dutch government has cross-border cooperation with the OECD about early childhood, children's rights and wellbeing.