

2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

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Governance

Over 5.6 million Dutch people are active in the voluntary effort sector. Society as a whole benefits from their unpaid activities.

Coordinating role

The Department Social Support (in Dutch: Dienst Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning) of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport has no special policy concerning voluntary work among young people. Volunteers policy is decentralized. The department does have a coordinating role concerning voluntary work in the Central Government. This means that the department deliberates and discusses about relevant developments within the Central Government and with external actors in the field of voluntary activities and work.

Other ministerial departments are also part of the volunteers work. For example, the Ministry of Safety and Justice gives special attention to volunteers in the police force and the fire brigade. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment focuses on the link between paid labour and voluntary work.

As part of its coordinating role the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport subsidizes the volunteers umbrella organization [NOV](#) (more information under subheading 'Actors' in this paragraph).

Local context

Most of the voluntary work takes place within the local context in municipalities, in the combined action between volunteers, volunteers organizations, local organizations, companies and local government. The Dutch government puts in every effort to help remove legal bottlenecks and other limitations for volunteers, and works on innovating and facilitating volunteers policy. This cabinet invests in the collecting and dispersing of knowledge, information and good practices about volunteers and voluntary work, for example via [Movisie](#) Netherlands centre for social development (see par. 2.1) and [NOV](#) Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organizations (more information under subheading 'Actors' in this paragraph).

Volunteering close by

Besides Movisie and NOV the cabinet supports thirteen national volunteers' organizations in care and welfare in the three years programme Vrijwillig dichtbij (Volunteering close by). Goal is to equip volunteers in care and welfare with tools about all aspects of volunteering and to be able to anticipate changing demands. The thirteen organizations work on better local cooperation and offer training and (individual) coaching to volunteers.

Main actors

The Association of Dutch Voluntary Effort Organizations (NOV)

[NOV](#) is the leading organization within the voluntary effort sector of the Netherlands. NOV has 350 member organizations that work with or for volunteers. NOV is unique because it is the only organization in the Netherlands geared to strengthening voluntary effort and work. It has two kinds of members: organizations that perform voluntary work and those that fulfil a supporting or coordinating role.

Main tasks:

- To serve the interests of the voluntary effort sector.

NOV is the spokesperson and lobbyist of Dutch voluntary work and as such a serious discussion partner of politicians, government officials and other policy-influencing parties. NOV provides advice, both solicited as well as unsolicited.

- To provide a major stimulus to the voluntary effort. NOV works towards more public recognition of voluntary effort, but its name is also used in innovative initiatives.

NOV focuses on the voluntary effort sector as such. The member organizations determine NOV's future policies, and they are invited to make maximum use of the networking role of the NOV.

Netherlands centre for social development (Movisie)

Movisie is the Netherlands centre for social development. Their mission is to promote the participation and independence of citizens by supporting and advising professional organizations, volunteer organizations and government institutions.

Main tasks

Five themes are central to their work: effectiveness; professionalization; participation; combating

and preventing domestic and sexual violence; social care.

The expertise of Movisie ranges from active citizenship to client participation, and from combating domestic and sexual violence to effective interventions in the social sector.

The organization collects knowledge from abroad, to gain international inspiration and to place developments in the Netherlands in a broader international context.