

[eInclusion in]

The Netherlands

Nederland



ICT & Ageing

Geographic Digital Divide

eAccessibility

eInclusion

Cultural Diversity

Inclusive eGovernment

Digital Literacy & Competences

Country Profile
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Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to give an overview of the general eInclusion status in the Netherlands. Even though every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be assumed. Neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on its behalf can be held responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

Country Profile

Basic data and indicators

Basic Data

Population (1 000)*: 16 577.6 inhabitants (2010)

GDP at market prices: 571 979.0 million Euro (2009)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-27 = 100): 130 (2009)

GDP growth rate: -3.9 % (2009)

Inflation rate: 1.0 % (2009)

Unemployment rate: 3.4 % (2009)

Government debt/GDP: 60.9 % (2009)

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): -5.3 % (2009)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

**Provisional value*

Area: 41 526 km²

Capital city: Amsterdam

Official EU language: Dutch

Currency: Euro

Source: [Europa website](#)

Information Society Indicators

Percentage of households with Internet access: 90 % (2009)

Percentage of households with broadband connection: 77 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals regularly using the Internet: 86 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for uploading self-created content: 19 % (2008)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for reading online newspapers/magazines: 46 % (2009)

Percentage of Individuals using the Internet for finding information about goods and services: 79 % (2009)

Percentage of Individuals using the Internet for seeking health-related information: 50 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for looking for a job or sending a job application: 17 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for doing an online course: 5 % (2009)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for seeking information with the purpose of learning: 17 % (2009)

Percentage of: individuals using the Internet for interaction with public authorities:
obtaining information 49.9 %, downloading forms 33.6 %, returning filled forms 32.5 % (2009)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

Editorial notice: Statistical indicators referenced in this section reflect those of Eurostat at the time the Edition is being prepared.

eInclusion History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [ePractice news for eInclusion](#)

Recent News

July 2010

The [Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations](#) (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*) and the ['Barrier Free' Quality Mark Foundation](#) (*Stichting Waarmerk drempelvrij.nl*) are in the process to renew the existing **Web Guidelines**, whose previous version is dated back to 2004. To this end, a public consultation was launched on 19 July and will be open until 13 September 2010. Interested parties can provide their feedback on the [dedicated website](#).

March 2010

The kick-off meeting of '[Transnational Digital Networks Migration and Gender](#)' (MIG@NET) took place on 11 and 12 March 2010 in Athens, Greece. This project will undertake the task of researching and analysing the ways in which migrants participate in the production and proliferation of transnational digital networks. It will furthermore explore the effect of transnational digital networks on migrant mobility and integration.

News 2001-2009

2008

The [Regelhulp.nl](#) website in the Netherlands has won **two national awards** for the best innovation by a Dutch public authority. Regelhulp sees itself as an on-line 'route planner' for the chronically ill, people with handicaps and older people. It helps them to track down the care provisions they need. These can range from a specially adapted bicycle or wheelchair to help with financial entitlements such as healthcare reimbursements and social security allowances. The site points users to the right provisions, gives a short description of each one, tests if the person qualifies for a particular service, provides the application forms and lists organisations that can give more help.

Regelhulp is an initiative of the [Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport](#) (*Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport*, VWS) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (*Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid*, SZW) together with the social security institutions. Three pilot boroughs helped to develop the scheme. It won both the jury's and the public's prizes at the annual fair held in March by InAxis, the Dutch Commission for Innovation in Public Administration.

2006

In *June 2006*, according to a decision of the Dutch Council of Ministers, all official websites in the Netherlands will need to be easily accessible by all groups of citizens, including the handicapped, and particularly the visually impaired, [by 2010](#). Ten official websites received priority in the switchover, including Government's education portal ([Kennisset](#)). In addition, as from September 2006, all new Government websites should be constructed in compliance with the new Web Guidelines and standards. This **accessibility drive** did not concern the national level only. In April of the same year, local authorities and provincial Governments had already signed a declaration of intent on this subject.

2005

In the period *2005-2006*, the ministries jointly developed a [Style Guide for Corporate Websites for Ministries](#), in their efforts to establish a common web policy for the Dutch central government. The **Web Guidelines** have been part of the key concepts of the style guide.

2004

Early *2004*, the [Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations](#) (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*) commissioned the [ICTU Foundation](#) (*ICT Uitvoeringsorganisatie*), a body in charge of coordinating ICT developments in Government, for the development of a standard which should make the Internet more transparent, more accessible, more effective and more efficient. Thereby, Internet has been considered as a main communication and transaction channel between the government and citizens and between the government and businesses. In October 2004, the first version of the [Web Guidelines](#) was developed. **Sustainability** and **accessibility** were guaranteed through a layered architecture, strict separation of style and content, no dependence on 'optional technology' and correct application of open Web standards.

2001

In *April 2001*, the [Ministry of Internal Affairs and Kingdom Relations](#) (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*) created the [ICTU Foundation](#) (*ICT Uitvoeringsorganisatie*), a body in charge of coordinating ICT developments in Government.

News 2000 and before

- ▶ In *2000*, the 'No barriers' (*Drempels weg*) programme was initiated, supported by the [Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport](#) (*Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, VWS*). Within its framework, several main sites were analysed on **accessibility**, including those concerning banking, political parties, local and regional authorities. The results were presented to the directors by the four appointed special ambassadors, who were blind, deaf, intellectual and severely motor impaired. According to results, inaccessibility was not caused by disability itself (as impairments have been compensated by technical devices) but by the design/construction of the websites. The results also demonstrated that solutions can be simple, under the condition however that they should be applied right from the very beginning.

After the expiration of the 'No barriers' (*Drempels Weg*) programme, a nationwide agency on accessibility (*Landelijk Bureau Toegankelijkheid*) and the Accessibility Foundation played a guiding and stimulating role in this area. The hallmark '[Barrier free](#)' (*Drempels Vrij*) was one of the results.

- ▶ Topics in the field of possibilities of ICT for the development of products for persons with a disability and the accessibility of ICT for persons with a disability have been under discussion since the EU TIDE program (*ca. 1990*). In those days, it was concluded that text-speech systems, functionalities of keyboards and other devices can offer a wide range of chances for persons with a disability to use ICT based products. The transition from text based operating systems (MS-DOS) to graphical systems (Windows) hampered the use of PCs by persons with a disability.

eInclusion Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

eInclusion Policy

There is no collective eInclusion policy in the Netherlands. Responsibilities for the subject of eInclusion are distributed over the 14 [ministries](#). The policymakers in the different ministries are responsible for specific priorities in their respective fields.

eInclusion Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eInclusion

eAccessibility Legislation

Ministerial Declaration on the Quality of Government Websites

According to a National Ministerial declaration on the **quality of government websites** of June 2006, all public websites must be in compliance with web guidelines which include the W3C guidelines. The goal is to achieve compliance for all public websites to the standards of the Web Guidelines (*webrichtlijnen*) before the end of 2010.

eCommunications Legislation

Telecommunications Act (2004)

The Telecommunications Act entered into force on 19 May 2004. This Act transposes in Dutch law the five directives constituting the **EU regulatory framework for electronic communications**: the framework directive, the access directive, the universal services directive, the authorisation directive and the privacy directive. However, telecoms services for the disabled, such as text telephones, do not seem to be part of the category of universal services, though it appears that anyone who requests these from the universal service provider will be supplied with the service at an affordable price.

eInclusion Actors

Main roles and responsibilities

National eInclusion

Policy/Strategy

Government Ministries

There is no collective eInclusion policy in the Netherlands. Responsibilities for the subject of eInclusion are distributed over the 14 [ministries](#) in the country and notably to: Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*, BZK); Ministry of Economic Affairs (*Ministerie van Economische Zaken*, EZ); Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (*Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport*, VWS); and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*, OCW).

Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, BZK*)

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom relations is responsible for the field of eAccessibility. Moreover, the State Secretary of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has the political responsibility for the coordination of the eGovernment policy.

Ministry of Economic Affairs (*Ministerie van Economische Zaken, EZ*)

The Ministry of Economic Affairs is responsible for defining, implementing and regulating the enforcement of economic policy in the Netherlands. With respect to eInclusion, the Ministry is responsible for the field of digital competencies and the reduction of the administrative burden. The latter subject is addressed by the [Regulatory Reform Group](#), a joint directorate of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Finance. Regulatory burdens include the costs, efforts and annoyances caused to both businesses and citizens by laws and regulations.

Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (*Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, VWS*).

The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport is responsible for the field of ICT and Ageing, as well as for matters concerning people with disabilities.

Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, OCW*)

Implementation

ICTU Foundation (*ICT Uitvoeringsorganisatie*)

The [ICTU Foundation](#) (*ICT Uitvoeringsorganisatie*) was established in 2001 to coordinate ICT developments in Government. Its main objective is to contribute to the structural development of eGovernment. Since then ICTU executes [programmes and projects](#) which implement the eGovernment policy. Early 2004, [the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations](#) (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*) commissioned ICTU for the development a standard which should make the Internet more transparent, more accessible, more effective and more efficient. This action resulted to the establishment of the first version of the Dutch Web Guidelines in 2004.

Support

'Barrier Free' Quality Mark Foundation (*Stichting Waarmerk drempelvrij.nl*)

The 'Barrier Free' Quality Mark (*Waarmerk drempelvrij.nl*) is the quality logo indicating accessible websites in the Netherlands. The 'Barrier Free' Quality Mark Foundation (*Stichting Waarmerk drempelvrij.nl*) is responsible for managing and monitoring the quality of the Mark, as well as its usage. Consisting of the management and of a Committee responsible for standards (*Normcommissie*), the Foundation aims to promote accessibility of Dutch websites for everyone, including people with disabilities and seniors.

Taskforce Handicap and Society (*Taakgroep Handicap en Lokale Samenleving*)

The Taskforce Handicap and Society (*Taakgroep Handicap en Lokale Samenleving*) is aimed at stimulating the integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society. Citizens with disabilities should be able to participate in activities such as work, sports, living, hobbies, entertainment and travelling, just like every other citizen. The Taskforce focuses in particular on three core aspects to reach these goals: ideational and emotional realization; empowerment; and inclusion. The Taskforce holds the view that every new policy initiative should be designed from ground up taking into account its impact on people with disabilities.

In order to reach its goals the Taskforce organises several activities, such as debates and trainings for local governments on participation and safety. It also stimulates local platforms of citizens with disabilities to grow in their role as representatives of issues on inclusion. The Taskforce is represented in the Expert group of the ministry of [the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations](#) (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties*) and in Steering committee Praktijkspoor of the [Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports](#) (*Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, VWS*).

eInclusion Who's Who

Main eInclusion decision-makers and executives

Ministers responsible for eInclusion



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Source: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/>

eInclusion Areas

Riga Declaration Priorities

ICT & Ageing

Status in ICT & Ageing

In 2030, the Netherlands will have four million inhabitants older than 65, almost 25 % of the total population. In 2005, only 14 % of all inhabitants had that age. The growth of the number is a result of the post war baby boom and the increase of the number of births until about 1970.

Actions to support ICT & Ageing

During the '90s of the last century the ministries of Economic Affairs and of Health, Welfare and Sport financed a programme to stimulate the use of technology by **elderly people**. An important issue was diffusing knowledge and use of technology on ICT to elderly people. Several modules were offered to train the use of ICT. One of the results was a portal called senior web. This portal leads to information relevant for these persons. This domain includes banking issues.

Another line of the programme aimed to invite persons to buy advanced domestic devices at a rather early age. Generally speaking these persons (age 50 up) are at the top of their income and they do not hold financial responsibility for children any more. At a later age, this equipment might prevent special care. A third line aimed to develop and use of "design for all" as a guiding principle to prevent homecare. These three lines were continued separately without general governmental sponsoring.

eAccessibility

Status of eAccessibility

According to a **national ministerial declaration** on the quality of government websites, since September 2006, all new Government websites in the Netherlands have had to comply with the Web Guidelines and standards. Existing government websites should be aligned with Web Guidelines at the latest by the end of 2010. With the adoption of the '[National Implementation Programme for Services and eGovernment](#)' (*Nationaal Uitvoeringsprogramma Dienstverlening en e-Overheid*, NUP), the Web Guidelines also apply to local authorities, including municipalities, provinces and waterboards.

Web Guidelines

The 'Web Guidelines' focus on the web sites, as these are the media through which information and services are made available. They constitute a quality model comprising a total of **125 quality requirements** for websites so that they, and the information on them, will be accessible by the widest possible range of users, including people with (visual) handicaps, browsers and search engines.

The 'Web Guidelines' have been designed in to tackle problems identified in the process of developing web sites. Thus, they are derived from hands-on experience placing the users at the centre. However, they do not explicitly focus on specific designated communities, such as persons with a disability. This **inclusive approach** safeguards the interests of such groups, while avoiding the decline of support for web accessibility that can be a by-effect caused by focussing on special needs groups.

'Web Guidelines' focus on the correct use of open web standards through: a strict separation of content, style and logic; use of web standards such as (X)HTML, CSS, DOM, ECMAScript and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines; an application of the standards that is not only syntactically valid, but also

semantically correct. The Web Guidelines can be seen as a guide to an accessible website. This project has been a 2005 eEurope awards finalist at the Manchester eGovernment conference.

Quality mark 'drempelvrij.nl'

In 2005, the [Quality Mark](#) 'Barrier Free' (*drempelvrij.nl*) was introduced. It is a scheme for the (manual) testing of websites on accessibility. Until 2007, this scheme was based on the minimum accessibility requirements from W3C, i.e. on the WCAG 1.0 Priority 1 checkpoints, which are also part of the Web Guidelines. Consequently, the Quality mark *drempelvrij.nl*, the **norm for accessibility checking**, almost seamlessly fits on the Web Guidelines, which is a quality model.

Style Guide for Dutch governmental websites

The [Style Guide](#) for Corporate Websites for Ministries is the key to develop a common web policy for the Dutch central government. It is aimed at harmonising the presentation of the ministries on the internet. The Web Style Guide provides obligatory guidelines, conventions and 'best practice' advices. Included are a mandatory navigation model, shared semantics (e.g. Dublin Core metadata), a visual design and more. **Accessibility and quality** of the site construction are guaranteed due to the fact that the Dutch quality model named 'Web Guidelines' is fully integrated in the Style Guide. Benefits from the application of the Style Guide include a greatly improved user experience, much lower implementation costs as well as a better web communication overall.

Actions towards eAccessibility

Several tools have been developed to measure the compliance with the web-guidelines, electronically and manually, while a large amount of tests have been carried out to ensure compliance of government websites with those guidelines.

- ▶ To enable verifying compliance with Web Guidelines and standards, the development of an automated validation instrument started in 2005. This instrument, called 'Web Guidelines Quicksan', provides for automatic testing on 47 out of 125 guidelines. It has been used since September 2005 to examine the accessibility and constructive quality of more than 800 government websites. To test a web page for conformity to all 125 guidelines, an additional manual test should be carried out based on the Norm document Web Guidelines, available at www.drempelvrij.nl/webrichtlijnen.
- ▶ Compliance with the Web Guidelines is being monitored on a special website which is open to the public. Ministries can enter their data on new and existing websites. On this website, the compliance results can be seen as well as the web-designer who has built the website.
- ▶ The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (*Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, BZK*) and the 'Barrier Free' Quality Mark Foundation (*Stichting Waarmerk drempelvrij.nl*) are currently in the process to renew existing Web Guidelines, dating back to 2004. To this end, since 19 July 2010, a [public consultation](#) is ongoing, where every citizen is invited to express his/her opinion about the new (2nd) version of the Web Guidelines. The survey will run until 13 September 2010.

Digital Literacy and Competences

Status on Digital Literacy and Competences

Policy on **eSkills** in the Netherlands relates to the fields of education, (e-)Inclusion and SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises). Both (e-)Inclusion and the use of ICT by SMEs are addressed in 'Strategic ICT-Consultation' (*Strategisch ICT-overleg*), a framework of action for eSkills, in the policy frameworks 'The Netherlands in Connection' (*Nederland in Verbinding*) and in the 'Government-wide ICT agenda 2006-2007' (*Rijksbrede ICT agenda 2006-2007*). 'ICT in education' is a project in the area of eSkills in education. Further programmes to stimulate the use of ICT within SMEs are developed in the framework of the 'The Netherlands goes digital' (*Nederland gaat Digitaal*, NGD) and 'The Netherlands pioneers with ICT' (*Nederland baanbrekend met ICT*, NDBI) initiatives.

Actions towards stimulating Digital Literacy and Competences

'Strategic ICT-Consultation' (*Strategisch ICT-overleg*)

The 'Strategic ICT-Consultation' (*Strategisch ICT-overleg*) is aimed at inspiring companies, organisations, government bodies and citizens to an optimal integration and use of electronic communication in their economic, social and administrative fields of work. This is important in order to stimulate a network society as the pacemaker of prosperity and economic growth. In this field, the Netherlands needs an appealing and ambitious vision. The 'Strategic ICT-Consultation' (*Strategisch ICT-overleg*) identifies seven initiatives of major importance for the Netherlands that should be supported, one of which is eSkills (*eVaardigheden*). People should be able to use the computer and internet for complex actions; modern education should contribute to this.

The following subjects should be put on the agenda:

- ▶ customised education to enhance the level of education in the Netherlands, digital learning environments offer possibilities for custom-made education for individuals;
- ▶ extra schooling for teachers to acquire eSkills. eLearning and digital learning environments could offer new possibilities for learning-on-the-job;
- ▶ new alliances surrounding schools to develop modern learning- and communication means on schools;
- ▶ new competences for employers needed for the use of ICT in companies and government;
- ▶ collection of 'best practices' and lessons learned from other European countries on the field of eSkills.

'The Netherlands in Connection' (*Nederland in Verbinding*)

Based on trends identified and recent developments, the Dutch cabinet elaborated a policy framework entitled 'The Netherlands in Connection, Policy Framework for the Electronic Communication' (*Nederland in Verbinding, Beleidskader voor de elektronische communicatie*), which comprises six policy aspects. These aspects resulted in several challenges and 'items on the agenda', one of them being the ICT-competences of the Dutch citizens in both private and professional life.

ICT experts and **educated employers** in ICT are important for the knowledge economy, however according to OESO the Netherlands do not educate enough ICT specialists. In addition, 'policies aimed at ensuring ICT skills do not seem particularly prominent'.

The following subjects are on the agenda:

- ▶ The Dutch cabinet will list the need of ICT competences of the elderly, less educated and inactive people on the labour market. The cabinet will explore whether specific policy measures are needed.
- ▶ Employers and employees are in the forefront of keeping ICT competences of the labour force at a high level. This will involve offering sufficient and continuous education- and training facilities. Part of this process was a conference on ICT competences in fall 2006 and an inventory of ICT competences of the Dutch work force.

Another issue on the agenda (on the field 'innovating with ICT') is the realisation of productivity through the integration of ICT applications in companies. Here it refers to NGD and NDBI.

'Government ICT agenda 2006-2007' (*Rijksbrede ICT agenda 2006-2007*)

In the 'Government ICT agenda 2006-2007' (*Rijksbrede ICT agenda 2006-2007*), the most important ICT goals are identified. One of these priorities is eSkills (*eVaardigheden*), as citizens and companies need the right skills to be part of the information society.

Actions on the field of eSkills will be:

- ▶ A vision of the cabinet and action plan to solve the possible shortages (qualitative and quantitative) of diverse groups of employees and to increase general digital skills.

- ▶ The active contribution of the Netherlands towards the European action programme for eSkills.
- ▶ Following the cabinets reaction on the advise 'Media wisdom' of the Council of Culture.
- ▶ The extra impulse toward professionalising teachers as part of the Action Plan 'Verbonden met ICT'.

Besides these priorities, two larger areas of attention are identified, including a range of actions in these two areas. The first important area is the better use of ICT in trade and industry and the second area of attention is to strengthen the ICT basis of the Netherlands. The goal of 'the better use of ICT in trade and industry' refers to enlarging productivity, competition and innovation by integrating ICT applications throughout the complete chain of business activities.

This goal will be reached by:

- ▶ Changing the aim of the 'The Netherlands goes digital' (*Nederland gaat Digitaal*, NGD) programme towards a concept based on eBusiness and the integration of processes with the help of ICT.
- ▶ Enlarging the skills of SMEs, thus facilitating companies to make the right choices on the use of ICT.
- ▶ Achieving more cohesion in activities which can help SMEs on using ICT; examples are creating connections between eGovernment policies and the use of 'The Netherlands Broadband Country' (*Nederland Breedbandland*) platform within SMEs.
- ▶ Extending the use of research through 'communities of interest'.

In the area of 'strengthening the ICT basis' goals are to issue the action programme 'Connected with ICT', to use ICT applications to realise important goals in education. The cabinet has worked on a vision on eCompetences, which was published in spring 2007. It has included the topic eSkills, part of the vision has been an action plan for the period 2007-2010 and has included actions to address the possible shortage (quantitative and qualitative) of employees, including civil servants.

'ICT in education'

The Dutch Government focused on 'ICT in Education' from 1997 onwards, but the focus of the programme shifted from facilitation of computers towards the use of ICT in education. At the beginning, the policy 'Investing on a leading position' (*Investeren in voorsprong*), 1997-1998, focused on computer facilities in schools. After that, with 'Education Online' (*Onderwijs Online*), 1998-2002, schools decided in which way they wanted to use ICT and ICT was imbedded in the national education policy. Later on, the focus shifted to improving eSkills of teachers and the didactical use of computers in schools according to the 'Learning with ICT' (*Leren met ICT*), 2003-2005. ICT should be used in an effective and responsible way; thanks to this action plan € 4 million was made available for improving the professional skills of teachers.

From 2006 on, in addition to the development of **eSkills of teachers**, interest has been on the use of ICT combined with other **education innovation**. The role of teachers includes the whole design of education and learning of children.

The action plan 'Connected with ICT' (*Verbonden met ICT*), 2006, has two goals:

1. to demonstrate how ICT can directly and substantially contribute to education priorities as a first step to further integration of ICT in education policy;
2. take on current bottleneck difficulties in the use of ICT.

One of the priorities is knowledge, skills and attitude of teachers. The goal is to improve didactical ICT knowledge and eSkills of teachers. Possible actions include:

- ▶ broaden knowledge and ideas on possibilities on the use of ICT in education;
- ▶ spread the awareness on the necessity of using ICT;
- ▶ create feelings of self-confidence by teachers;
- ▶ broaden basic ICT skills.

eInclusion and Cultural Diversity

Actions towards eInclusion and Cultural Diversity

The Netherlands participate in the European ['Transnational Digital Networks Migration and Gender'](#) (MIG@NET) project, dedicated to the study of migrant participation in transnational digital networks. The project will furthermore explore the effect of transnational digital networks on **migrant mobility** and **integration**. To this end, the project will study transnational digital networks as instances of socioeconomic, gender, racial and class hierarchies, where the participation of migrant communities entails the possibility of challenging these hierarchies.

The participation of migrant communities - at times inclusive, joining in larger transnational digital projects, at times exclusive, creating separate and relatively closed transnational spaces - will be investigated in detail through particular case studies in seven thematic areas, namely: border crossings; communication and information flows; education and knowledge; religious practices; sexualities; social movements; and intercultural conflict and dialogue.

Against a dominant trend that perceives the phenomenon of migration according to host and sending societies and devises methodological tools and policy responses based on ethnocentric approaches, MIG@NET will be based on a transnational perspective that focuses mostly on the links and networks that cross, and transcend, national and gender borders connecting migrant individuals and groups across the globe.

The project consortium gathers [partners](#) from eight countries: France, Germany, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Turkey and the United Kingdom. 'MIG@NET' is funded under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), Specific Programme on Co-operation, theme 'Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities'.

Inclusive eGovernment

Status on Inclusive eGovernment

Inclusive eGovernment in the Netherlands is aimed at facilitating citizens and businesses to be in contact with the government. The administrative burden reduction is a major policy priority in the Netherlands. Administrative burden is defined as the costs incurred by businesses and citizens due to their efforts to comply with government laws and regulations. The Dutch Government's goal is to reduce the administrative burden and improve the quality of public services, in particular focussing on ten high priority aspects. The Dutch Government considers ICT to be a strong enabler for the reduction of the administrative burden. ICT can help streamlining processes and simplifying administrative tasks.

In the Netherlands, there are two relevant programmes: the administrative burden reduction for businesses and the corresponding programme for citizens.

Especially target groups such as chronically ill persons, the disabled, the elderly, the unemployed, voluntary organisations and benefit claimants face additional difficulties to comply with government laws and regulations, which may be overlapping and sometimes contradicting. The 'Reduction of the administrative burden for citizens' (AB citizens) programme tries to make it easier for these people. Eventually all citizens in the Netherlands will benefit from this.

Actions towards Inclusive eGovernment

In order to create a clear picture of bureaucracy and red tape each group is defined in a profile. These profiles are represented by real citizens and they incorporate all the laws, regulations and obligations faced by that group. For example, what does the unemployed Johan encounter in his efforts to find work? And with which agencies do the parents of disabled Bart have to deal with?

Each profile can be compared with a plan of an underground line, where does it stop and where do you have to take another metro. These represent the contact moments with government agencies. At each contact moment it is defined what ICT can do to make it easier, and the linkage between the stops (different agencies). The programme AB Citizens has developed a methodology to measure the improvements.

Other projects:

Understandable government forms

This project has as its aim to make it easier for all people to understand government forms. As of September 2007, new forms of central government need to be understandable. The top 25 most important forms will be made understandable by the end of 2008. In order to realise this, standards are developed, a helpdesk and education is arranged.

Multichannel policy

The ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is developing a multichannel policy for public services. Next to the government portal www.overheid.nl the aim is to create an interconnected system of telephone information desks at municipalities, which the public can use to forward questions to the government, as a whole. Simple questions will be answered; more specialised questions will be transferred to the responsible organisation.

Personalised service delivery

The aim is to create facilities for doing business and exchanging information with the whole of government in a personalised manner, at any time and any place, as quickly and cheaply as possible and minimizing the administrative burden, taking shape in the project 'mygovernment.nl'. Currently a pilot is running, involving 10 to 15 public service providers such as municipalities, *Informatie Beheer Groep* (student grants), *Kadaster* (Land Registry), Social Insurance Bank, Tax Board, Centre for Work and Income, Employees Insurances Agency (UWV), with 1500 users participating in the experiment. 'Mygovernment.nl' is using other eGovernment building blocks like DigiD (eAuthentication).

The Future of eInclusion

Research in Practice & Future Challenges

Research in Practice

The Netherlands' involvement in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7)

The [Seventh Framework Programme](#) (FP7) comprises, under its umbrella, EU research initiatives that play a vital part in attaining the objectives of growth, competitiveness and employment. The broad objectives of FP7 have been grouped into four categories: [Cooperation](#), [Ideas](#), [People](#) and [Capacities](#). eInclusion aspects hold a prominent place in this programme, which has been operational since 2007 and will expire in 2013.

Approximately € 400 million have been allocated to FP7's [Challenge 7: 'ICT for Independent Living, Inclusion and Governance'](#), one of the seven 'Challenges' of the [ICT Work Programme](#) 2009 – 2010 under FP7. The aim of 'Challenge 7' is to create ICT products, through research and development, which will foster independent and active living among Europe's ageing population, improving living standards and mitigating ICT complexity in order to encourage groups with special needs to uptake and use ICT tools and technologies to their benefit.

'Challenge 7' set three objectives:

Objective ICT-2009.7.1: [ICT & Ageing](#)

- ▶ Service robotics for ageing well
- ▶ Open Systems Reference Architectures, Standards and ICT Platforms for Ageing Well
- ▶ RTD roadmaps and stakeholder coordination.

Objective ICT-2009.7.2: [Accessible and Assistive ICT](#)

- ▶ Embedded Accessibility of Future ICT
- ▶ ICT restoring and augmenting human capabilities compensating for people with reduced motor functions or disabilities
- ▶ RTD research agendas & coordination of constituencies.

Objective ICT-2009.7.3: [ICT for Governance and Policy Modelling](#)

- ▶ Governance and Participation Toolbox
- ▶ Policy Modelling, Simulation and Visualisation
- ▶ Roadmapping and Networking for 'participation, governance and policy modelling'.

The Netherlands is involved in the following FP7 projects:

1. ['Social software for inclusion of \(marginalized\) young people'](#) (INCLUSO)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.2 Accessible and inclusive ICT
Project start date: 1 September 2008
2. ['Vital mind'](#) (VM)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.1 ICT and ageing
Project start date: 1 January 2008
3. ['Self mobility improvement in the elderly by counteracting falls'](#) (SMILING)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.1 ICT and ageing
Project start date: 1 January 2008

4. ['BCIs with rapid automated interfaces for nonexperts'](#) (BRAIN)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.2 Accessible and inclusive ICT
Project start date: 1 September 2008
5. ['Integrated cognitive assistive and domotic companion robotic systems for ability and security'](#) (COMPANIONABLE)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.1 ICT and ageing
Project start date: 1 January 2008
6. ['Haptic, audio and visual interfaces for maps and location-based services'](#) (HAPTIMAP)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.2 Accessible and inclusive ICT
Project start date: 1 September 2008
7. ['European ambient assisted living innovation alliance'](#) (AALIANCE)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.1 ICT and ageing
Project start date: 1 January 2008
8. ['Extending professional active life'](#) (EPAL)
Research area: ICT-2007.7.1 ICT and ageing
Project start date: 1 February 2008

European Commission - eInclusion Practice

eInclusion practice (epractice.eu) is an information and exchange service for European professionals.

The eInclusion factsheets are one of the epractice.eu services. The factsheets present an overview of the eInclusion status and progress in the European countries.

The eInclusion factsheets are produced and updated once a year.

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