

HOPE, COURAGE AND PRIDE – Framework Coalition Agreement 2024 – 2028 Freedom Party (PVV), People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), New Social Contract (NSC) and Farmer-Citizen Movement (BBB)

The Netherlands is a wonderful country.
A country to be proud of.

We have to work hard – every day anew – to earn the trust of the Dutch people.

Because that trust cannot be taken for granted.

Despite having good intentions, politicians and public officials have fallen short in recent years because they have not always taken people’s concerns seriously.

We are forging a new path.

By forming a programme-based government in which the PVV, VVD, NSC and BBB offer stability and support.

A government that shows courage and pride. A government that gives hope.

We have big ambitions when it comes to socioeconomic security, healthcare, the money people have in their pockets and the availability of an adequate supply of housing.

We also want to stem the excessive inflow of asylum seekers and immigrants. We want farmers, growers and fishers to have a future again.

We envisage a government that is a beacon of reliability for all Dutch people.

People who deserve legal certainty and good governance. And safe neighbourhoods for their families.

To that end, the PVV, VVD, NSC and BBB have set out the following concrete steps in this agreement:

- Tax cuts starting in 2025, for hard-working Dutch people of all ages, including middle-income households, and business owners. And relief and socioeconomic security for people in difficult circumstances.
- The strictest ever asylum admission system and the broadest ever package of migration control measures.
- A major boost to homebuilding, infrastructure, connectivity and the energy transition.
- Reduction of the health insurance excess by more than half to 165 euros in 2027 and investment in care for older people.
- Farmers and fishers in control of their own businesses; a boost for the future of these sectors and for the country’s food security.
- More say for citizens through a different electoral system and strengthening of fundamental rights through a constitutional court.
- Keeping the people of the Netherlands safe by taking a robust approach to crime and terror.

We live in a time of great tensions, such as those caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The global economy is under pressure. There are serious new threats to the security of our society and the stability of the democratic legal order from different state and non-state actors.

These are not just remote threats; they are increasing and quickly coming closer. This requires us to make adequate and timely preparations now, and to remain vigilant and strengthen resilience in society in the broadest sense, including the resilience of individuals and businesses.

The new government will develop a governing programme that is based on this framework coalition agreement and its 10 key themes:

1. Socioeconomic security and purchasing power
2. Bringing asylum and migration under control
3. Housing, infrastructure, public transport and aviation – every region counts
4. A good future for agriculture, fisheries, food security and the natural environment
5. Energy, energy security and climate adaptation
6. Accessible public services: health and care, and education
7. Good governance and the rule of law
8. National security
9. International security
10. Sound public finances, the economy and the investment climate

In order to achieve all of this, it is crucial to safeguard our democracy and the rule of law and to maintain stable public finances. The government will develop a governing programme on the basis of this framework coalition agreement.

1. Socioeconomic security and purchasing power

The Netherlands is one of the world's most prosperous countries. Our economy has emerged stronger from the crises and there have never been so many jobs. Our strong economy is driven by all the people in the Netherlands – employees and entrepreneurs – who work hard every day and thereby contribute to our prosperity.

And yet many people in this country are worried about their future. They are worried about their daily lives and their livelihoods, but also about the costs of basic necessities (food, housing, energy) and whether they are assured of access to these necessities in the medium term. People are concerned not only about their income and income security but also the accessibility and availability of housing (for example, for new entrants to the housing market), health and care services, and education. These concerns are found not only among people on lower incomes, but also among those on middle incomes.

In addition, nationwide and municipal income-support schemes, such as supplementary benefits, are too complex or conflict with each other. The system is hard to navigate, especially for vulnerable people.

Measures are needed now that people will feel immediately in their pockets, so that their pay better reflects the work they put in. Measures aimed at socioeconomic security and participation in the labour market that do not entail further income redistribution and at the same time prevent poverty, especially child poverty. The new government will therefore aim to ensure that (child) poverty figures do not exceed the reference year 2024. Furthermore, measures are needed to ensure that people are actually better off if they work more, with specific attention for working people on middle incomes.

Measures on housing, education and enterprise are set out elsewhere in this document. The following measures relate to income, purchasing power and healthcare:

- Reductions in taxes on labour and the marginal effective tax rate for individuals, through the introduction of an extra income tax band for example, to ensure that when people work more this is reflected in their pay.
- A problem-centred approach for specific groups of people whose income is below the minimum standard, including the working poor.
- Reduction of the health insurance excess by more than half to 165 euros in 2027.
- We will promote labour market security – for genuine self-employed people for example – by means of the policy on the self-employed and the regulation of the employment agency sector. In addition, we will seek to increase the number of employees with permanent contracts. To this end, parliament will continue to consider the bills introducing the Labour Relations Assessment and Legal Presumption (Clarification) Act (*Wet verduidelijking beoordeling arbeidsrelaties en rechtsvermoeden*, VBAR) and the Labour Provision (Accreditation) Act (*Wet toelating terbeschikkingstelling van arbeidskrachten*, WTTA).
- Efforts to improve the help given to people with debt problems (by municipalities) will be continued, with the focus being on tackling the problem at its source.
- The overhaul of the childcare system (childcare nearly free for working parents and a switch to direct payments to childcare institutions) will be continued.
- Gradual improvements will be made to social security, tax relief schemes and supplementary benefits, so that it pays more to work. Legislation will be prepared to reform the supplementary benefit and tax system.

2. Bringing asylum and migration under control

The Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe. There has been a considerable and persistent increase in the numbers of asylum seekers, labour migrants, highly skilled migrants, student migrants and family reunification migrants. The Netherlands needs to limit the scope and regain control of all forms of migration to our country as quickly as possible, both to address the current situation and with a view to the longer term. Concrete steps will be taken to establish the strictest ever asylum admission system and the broadest ever package of measures to bring migration under control.

The entire asylum and migration system will be reformed. Targeted action will be taken to minimise the inflow of migrants on the basis of a broad package of measures that will resolve the current acute situation, provide space for those who are actually permitted to stay here and maintain public support.

First, the exception provision in the Aliens Act 2000 (*Vreemdelingenwet 2000*), on the basis of sections 110 and 111, will be activated as soon as possible. In the requisite order in council, which will include substantiating reasons, the provisions of the Aliens Act 2000 that prevent immediate action aimed at resolving the acute situation – in relation to the influx of asylum seekers in general and the reception of asylum seekers in Ter Apel and the other reception centres in particular – will be declared inoperative or replaced by provisions aimed at achieving this objective.

Second, a temporary Asylum Crisis Act (*Asielcrisiswet*) will be introduced immediately in order to establish crisis measures to combat the pressing asylum inflow and reception crisis for the coming period by, among other things, withdrawing the Dispersal Act (*Spreidingswet*). The powers conferred by this Asylum Crisis Act will be exercised for a maximum of two years in order to:

- Compel registration and suspend the processing of asylum applications (i.e. there will be a freeze on asylum decisions). During the suspension, the right to reception will be limited in a differentiated manner and scaled back significantly.
- Expel people without a valid residence permit in so far as possible – forcibly if necessary.
- Deviate from the Housing Allocation Act (*Huisvestingswet*) by prohibiting the practice of giving priority to beneficiaries of international protection in the allocation of social housing on the basis of the fact that they have refugee status.

Where possible, this Asylum Crisis Act will contain the first steps towards structural measures, such as strengthening border checks and management and tightening mobile security monitoring operations, partly in connection with border control measures based on the Schengen Borders Code. The national asylum system will be strengthened by bringing it under the unequivocal control of the member of government who bears primary responsibility.

Third, an opt-out clause with regard to EU asylum and migration policy will be submitted to the European Commission as soon as possible. As well as systematically enhancing mobile security monitoring operations, the Netherlands will work closely with like-minded and neighbouring countries in order to be able to respond effectively in times of shared crisis involving the influx of migrants ('mini Schengen').

Fourth, in order to curb the inflow of asylum seekers the Netherlands must belong to the category of member states with the most stringent admission rules in Europe. To that end:

- The admission procedure will be tightened (the allocation of the burden of proof will be changed; intentional failure to provide proof of identity will not be rewarded; the safe-country criteria will be amended and enforced; the Dublin Regulation will be enforced; mobile phone data will be extracted; and legal aid will be limited).
- Mobile security monitoring operations, border checks and border control will be systematically stepped up. Irregular migrants encountered during checks at the Belgian or German borders will be immediately returned to those countries. This applies, for example, to anyone without a valid identity document.
- Country policy will be overhauled. At present the Netherlands is too attractive to asylum seekers; admission percentages, which are currently above the European average, must be reduced to below average, for example by reversing the burden of proof so that the IND does not have the responsibility of proving that a person does not have the right to stay here.

- A 'two-status system' will be introduced and will include influx-reducing restrictions such as:
 - o no automatic family reunification for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection; and
 - o significant limits on family reunification, including restricting eligibility to the nuclear family with children under 18, and extending the waiting time before reunification is even possible.
- All applications for judicial review in asylum cases will be heard by a single court and no appeal will be possible.
- The permanent asylum residence permit will be abolished and the temporary asylum residence permit will be changed.
- Asylum seekers who are unlikely to be granted asylum will be housed in separate locations with minimal facilities and a partially closed regime; the central government contribution to the National Immigration Facilities (*Landelijke Vreemdelingenvoorziening*) will be terminated.
- Legal aid for asylum seekers will be restricted as much as possible and minimised in the event of repeat asylum applications.
- Proceedings will be shortened and pared down, for example by reducing the time limit for lodging an application for review and restricting the possibility of lodging repeat applications. Penalty payments for failing to give timely decisions on applications will be abolished or limited.
- Tougher action will be taken against people who display antisocial behaviour.
- Crime committed by and among asylum seekers will be tackled rigorously, for example by taking direct action against offenders. This will include removal from the reception centre, more expeditious termination of the asylum procedure and more expeditious cancellation of residence permits, by expanding the scope for issuing decisions declaring a person to be an undesirable alien (exclusion orders) and by tightening up the 'sliding scale' so that criminal aliens can be expelled sooner. At application and reception centres strict and rigorous action will be taken against violence and antisocial behaviour by asylum seekers, particularly when it is directed at women asylum seekers and asylum seekers with an LGBTIQ+ and/or Christian background.
- Failure to cooperate with the expulsion process after receiving a final denial of asylum or after losing the right to reside in the Netherlands will be made a criminal offence.
- Efforts to ensure return will be stepped up, for example by expelling asylum seekers whose previous application for asylum in another EU member state has been denied, expanding immigration detention and the exclusion order regime, and limiting municipal services for asylum seekers (financing) to the most basic reception facilities. The 'safe country' concept will be expanded to include safe regions of countries on the basis of Ministry of Foreign Affairs country reports. Country reports will, in principle, not be made public.
- Following its adoption, the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, with its tighter asylum rules and admission procedures, will be implemented as soon as possible. With respect to relocation, this will include opting for payment in lieu of reception of asylum seekers.
- At the same time, the Netherlands will press for more far-reaching EU rules (for example with regard to screening asylum seekers who are unlikely to be eligible for international protection), robust procedures on the EU's external borders and agreements with third countries on return.

The Netherlands will work with other EU member states to arrange reception in non-EU countries of migrants who are attempting to reach the EU.

- The Netherlands will work at national and EU level to combat human trafficking and people smuggling, and tackle all illegal immigration routes.
- A higher personal contribution towards the cost of accommodation and services will be payable by displaced persons from Ukraine.
- Maximum efforts will be made to achieve reception in the region and conclude migration deals to that end.
- Against the backdrop of the above, the Netherlands will lobby for modernisation of the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and will seek to collaborate with like-minded UN member states in order to achieve this. The Netherlands will press for amendments to EU legislation and treaties where necessary.

Fifth, measures will be taken to manage the scope and composition of other migration categories. It is essential to manage labour migration more effectively. Our economy and business owners need labour migration, but we need to critically consider who we need and who needs us. A framework will be developed to assess the needs of new businesses in terms of labour migrants, space and energy.

Measures will be taken to limit labour migration characterised by low wages and poor working conditions:

- The recommendations presented in the report of the Migrant Worker Protection Task Force (also known as the Roemer report) will be implemented.
- Unscrupulous employment agencies will be dealt with rigorously. Employment and recruitment agencies will be subject to an accreditation system regulated by the Labour Provision (Accreditation) Act (*Wet toelating terbeschikkingstelling van arbeidskrachten, WTTA*).
- An employment permit requirement is to apply with regard to labour migrants from outside the EU, with the exception of highly skilled migrants. The Netherlands Labour Authority (NLA) will step up its enforcement activities, including in relation to this group .
- Employers of non-resident labour migrants will be responsible for any antisocial behaviour and costs associated with labour migrants who do not have regular housing (short stay and mid-stay). They must agree arrangements with the municipalities where their employees have short-stay and mid-stay accommodation. Local and regional authorities will be encouraged to allow more scope for employers to provide accommodation on their own premises.
- Employers of long-stay labour migrants will be responsible for ensuring these employees learn the Dutch language.
- An assessment will be made to determine whether, and if so which, tax benefits under the extraterritorial costs scheme will be scaled back.
- With regard to labour migration, the Netherlands will advocate for restrictions on the free movement of persons within the EU if and in so far as enlargement of the EU is at issue.

The Dutch economy needs highly skilled international workers and international students, but the scale of these forms of migration must be proportionate to the capacity of municipalities, educational institutions and healthcare services to absorb them, and the availability of housing. For these reasons:

- The qualification requirements for the highly skilled migrant scheme will be raised and made more stringent.
- Enrolment of international students in undergraduate programmes in higher education will be limited, except in the case of study programmes in areas where there are labour shortages. Local circumstances will be taken into account, in other words the greater the problems, the greater the restrictions.
- Admission of international students will be more selective: more study programmes will be taught in Dutch, restrictions limiting the number of international students and eligibility for the basic student grant will be introduced, and tuition fees for non-EU students will be increased.
- The Netherlands must not be naive about state actors sending or directing people here to commit espionage. Measures will be taken to protect our knowledge.

There will be additional, mandatory effort with regard to civic and social integration. The guiding principle is that if you participate in society and endorse Dutch values you will be considered one of us.

- The civic integration curriculum is to include knowledge of the Holocaust and its victims.
- The standard waiting period for naturalisation will be extended to 10 years, regardless of whether the applicant holds a temporary or permanent residence permit.
- Foreign nationals who wish to acquire our nationality must, if possible, renounce their other nationality.
- The language requirement for naturalisation will, in principle, be raised to B1 for everyone.
- Measures will be taken to tackle undesirable foreign interference exerted, for example, via 'weekend schools'.
- Rules will be introduced to regulate electrically amplified calls to prayer.
- Measures will be taken to combat harmful practices such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

3. Housing, infrastructure, public transport and aviation – every region counts

3.1 Tackling the housing crisis

Housing is a governmental responsibility under the Constitution. The historic housing shortage is a serious obstacle to socioeconomic security for young people in particular. Easing this shortage is a top priority.

Efforts to build enough homes are being constrained by demographic ageing (as well as ageing within the over-65 cohort), smaller average households, immigration, a tight labour market, rising construction costs and land prices, interest rate fluctuations, complex and lengthy building procedures, a lack of space and inefficient use of available space, and counterproductive tax relief schemes. No additional, national sustainability rules will be laid down for newbuilds.

A designated minister will coordinate spatial planning and decisions on where homes should be built, and how many. Account will be taken in this regard of homes for specific target groups (young people, older people, smaller households and homeless people).

A Housing Summit will be held as soon as possible. It will bring together central government, pension funds, housing associations, representatives of employers and employees, municipalities and provincial

authorities with a view to making enforceable agreements on increasing homebuilding on a structural basis. There is an agreed political objective to build an additional 100,000 homes a year in keeping with the demographic and spatial developments that will arise in the coming years. In addition, the following measures are intended to force a breakthrough:

- A greater role for housing associations will be promoted in the (lower) mid-priced rental segment by seeking amendments to the relevant rules at EU level.
- Better use will be made of the existing housing stock by broadening the scope for redesignating existing buildings and where desirable providing appropriate legal underpinning (redesignation of office and commercial premises, upward extensions of and/or division of homes, multigenerational homes, home sharing, tolerating the use of recreational homes as permanent dwellings).
- Newbuild projects will be accelerated by means of the following measures:
 - o Ensuring that more land is available (small sites adjacent to existing built-up areas, and sites both inside and outside urban areas); in areas to be given new designations, homebuilding will take precedence over wind turbines in the event of competition for land. Housing development will be future proof and take account of water-, soil- and landscape-related considerations and the quality of urban development.
 - o New sites will be designated for large-scale homebuilding, supplementing existing homebuilding locations and (ongoing) regional housing agreements, preferably in the vicinity of existing infrastructure. To this end, a proposal will be made as soon as possible, partly based on the NOVEX programme.
 - o There will be greater availability of affordable land for housing development, lower costs and greater autonomy for subnational authorities by means of a tax on undeveloped land with residential zoning. The scope for a spatial planning benefits levy (subject to an upper limit) or similar system for homebuilding will be utilised. It will be agreed with municipalities that the entire proceeds will be used for improving the accessibility of the neighbourhood and building affordable homes for rent and for sale.
 - o Procedures will be accelerated by: limiting the scope for appeals (in line with the Housing (Strengthened Coordination) Bill (*Wetsvoorstel versterking regie volkshuisvesting*)) and removing other obstacles (availability of sites, land and financial and tax incentives; limiting rules that pose unnecessary obstacles to construction in rural areas, for example farmstead redevelopment; tackling problems relating to capacity and knowledge). Besides sounding board groups for local residents, sounding board groups will also be set up for people who are looking for a home.
 - o Legal and financial constraints on a new third sector – cooperative housing – will be removed.
- Affordability:
 - o At least 30% of newbuild dwellings on average – that is to say with area-based differentiation – must be in the social rental sector; the Housing (Strengthened Coordination) Bill will be amended to give municipalities more local leeway here. Two-thirds of new homes to be built must be affordable for middle-income households.
 - o The letting policy of social housing landlords must enhance affordability and at the same time enable the necessary investment in newbuild dwellings, sustainability and liveable neighbourhoods.

- Up to 2026, social housing rents will be adjusted in accordance with the existing agreement with housing associations, namely the index of collective labour agreement wage rates minus 0.5%. The consumer price index plus 0% will be adopted for this purpose from 2026. In this way, with a stable housing benefit, the socioeconomic security of tenants on the lowest incomes will be maintained.
- Measures will be taken to make private rentals, mid-priced rentals and deregulated rentals more attractive.
- The construction of (private) rental dwellings will be incentivised by reducing the regulatory burden and where possible the tax burden. The homebuilding incentive scheme will be used in part for this purpose.
- Binding agreements will be made with housing associations, including on the mid-priced rental segment.
- Homes for sale:
 - In order to mitigate uncertainty in the housing market, there will be no change to the way an owner-occupied dwelling is treated for tax purposes.
 - Increases in municipal housing-related charges (property tax - OZB) will be capped under agreements with municipalities.
 - In (local) programmes to build more homes for sale, account will be taken of the need to provide sufficient homes for older people, so that others can get on or move up the property ladder.
 - There will be an examination of whether and, if so, under what strict conditions, the right of social housing tenants (excluding high-income social tenants) to buy their homes could be structured.
 - Mortgage interest tax relief will be left intact; imputed income from home ownership will remain unchanged.

3.2 Infrastructure, public transport and aviation

For homebuilding, infrastructure and connectivity, the area-based approach is paramount. Every region counts. Action is needed to maintain and further improve connectivity throughout the Netherlands both in the immediate future and in the long term.

- A great deal of effort will need to be put into infrastructure maintenance in the years ahead. The objective is to ensure that the existing road, waterway and public transport infrastructure continues to meet the minimum basic quality requirements.
- In addition – subject to the availability of sufficient personnel, resources and scope for granting permits – the 17 projects that have been put on hold will be resumed (for example the A1/A30 (Barneveld Oost), the A67 (Leenderheide Geldrop), the Volkerak and Kreekrak locks, and the IJsselmeer – Meppel waterway). Priority bottlenecks in the public transport network are the Lower Saxony line (Groningen - Almelo/Enschede) and Amsterdam - Haarlemmermeer, and in the waterway network, the navigability of the River IJssel.
- As regards rail connections, requirements will be assessed region by region, not focusing exclusively on the major urban centres. In border regions, good cross-border rail connections are essential.
- Incentives for more sustainable vehicles will be continued. Drivers of electric vehicles will make a fair contribution in order to ensure sustainable revenues in the longer term.

- Where possible, the speed limit on motorways will be raised to 130 kilometres per hour.
- Construction of the Lely railway line will continue, starting in Groningen if this is technically feasible. International rail transport will be encouraged by eliminating barriers to new entrants. A proposal will be submitted for cross-border rail transport, including connecting five train stations to international high-speed lines (for example Hengelo, Venlo, Heerlen, Groningen and Zwolle).
- Transport links in rural areas will be improved by strengthening bus services between villages.
- In consultation with transport operators and other public authorities, measures will be taken to improve safety and security on public transport. This could involve the deployment of more special enforcement officers (BOAs) on trains and buses with genuine capacity and authority to take action (for example by giving BOAs more options in relation to identification) and giving senior conductors on trains the option of wearing bodycams.
- As regards aviation, the focus in the years ahead should be on settling matters relating to the legal protection of local residents (noise nuisance) while maintaining the quality of Schiphol's network. In the longer term, continued growth is possible with quieter and cleaner aircraft.

4. A good future for agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, food security and the natural environment

Pride, courage and hope, and being able to make a good living. These are the core principles of our agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and nature policy. We need to cherish our farmers, growers and fishers because of their important role in providing our food and maintaining the Dutch cultural landscape. These sectors are also an inseparable part of our Dutch culture. High-quality farmland will be protected. Policy will not be aimed at mandatory contraction of the livestock population but at conservation of key nature areas.

- There will be a special focus on safeguarding future opportunities and on young farmers, so they can start or succeed to a business.
- At European level, we will be unwavering in our commitment to securing amendments to European directives so that they are practicable and support the revenue model. Our aims are:
 - o A new, region-specific derogation from the Nitrates Directive (based on actual water quality measurements, as in other countries).
 - o Zones around Natura 2000 sites where the derogation does not apply (transitional areas) will only be established around nitrogen-vulnerable nature areas.
 - o Buffer margins will be reduced from 250m to 100m.
 - o The limit of 170kg/ha nitrogen from livestock manure that can be applied annually will be scrapped from the Nitrates Directive.
 - o Natura 2000 sites will be reassessed with a view to creating a core network of robust nature areas (no 'fragmented nature areas').
- No new, additional national requirements on top of EU policy requirements. Existing requirements of this kind will be scrapped as much as possible.
- We don't want to import products we aren't allowed to produce in the Netherlands.
- A level playing field should be the key priority when negotiating new international trade agreements.

- Closer legal scrutiny of proposed rules and regulations in order to avoid court cases after they have been passed into law.

Agriculture and horticulture

- For centuries, farmers have worked the soil, kept livestock, shaped the landscape and worked with nature. Farmers and growers are the professionals, so their professional expertise is at the heart of our policy, with a focus on the goal instead of on the measures. And farmers will be in the driving seat.
- To achieve this, emission targets for the quality of nature, water and air, and targets relating to climate policy will be determined where possible for individual holdings. A legally sound, material flow accounting system will be developed as quickly as possible so that farmers have insight into their situation, can adjust their farm management to the goals and ensure these are fully attained. To make haste, the starting point will be elements that can be implemented in the short term, with goals – where necessary – being defined at regional or farm level.
- The manure crisis will be addressed with priority, so that a general reduction can be avoided.
- Under the Nitrates Directive member states have to review the designation of vulnerable zones every four years. The Netherlands has designated its entire territory as vulnerable. This can be revised. The Netherlands will show the European Commission that certain areas are no longer vulnerable. This can be done directly. Instead of designating all of the Netherlands as vulnerable, specific vulnerable zones will be designated. This is important because the ceiling of 170kg N/ha from livestock manure only applies to designated vulnerable zones. This will immediately result in more scope for manure application. The nitrogen and phosphate limits for surface waters will be aligned with the norms that apply in our neighbouring countries, Belgium and Germany. In this way we will reduce the total nutrient-polluted area.
- Every effort will be made to reverse the phasing-out of the current derogation and to reach agreement within the EU on better standards and arrangements that will actually work in practice. In the meantime, we will explore which emergency measures need to be taken to resolve the manure crisis.
- We will encourage cooperation between arable and livestock farms. Differences in fertiliser regimes for grassland and arable land will be eliminated where possible. For example: allowing farmyard manure applications on arable land with a standing crop (such as for winter wheat in spring) without the manure needing to be incorporated into the soil – a requirement that does not apply to grassland. Uniform policy would also increase the scope for manure application.
- Policy will not aim for mandatory contraction of the livestock population and there will be no involuntary expropriation.
- Innovation is a broad concept that includes fodder and management. Innovation will be given the breathing room it deserves; procedures will be adapted and innovation funds designed so that new concepts can be applied quickly, without legal obstacles, and the goals can be achieved.
- There will be a separate innovation programme for robotisation aimed at reducing the amount of human work required.
- Measures for making a good living:
 - o Payment of market rates and provision of long-term financial security for agricultural stewardship and ecosystem services.

- Development of new revenue models and the food supply chain, including industry and banks, contributing towards the revenue model.
- Red diesel to be reinstated for farmers, growers and agricultural contractors.
- Where modelling is unavoidable, models will be based on actual measurements and knowledge, including observations in the field. The Aeries Calculator model for environmental permitting will be replaced as soon as a legally sound alternative is available. We are working hard on this.
- For permitting purposes, a new system to evaluate low-emission livestock housing and systems will be introduced as soon as possible, based where possible on measurements on site.
- There will be regular consultations with farmers' and growers' associations and the fisheries sector, and policy will be based on practicability.
- Producers will be offered good economic prospects, thanks to a better revenue model. Consideration will be given to the four stages proposed by Johan Remkes (innovate, make operations more extensive, move operations, end operations). A generous, voluntary and long-term exit scheme for farmers must be implemented in a tax-friendly manner.
- Any buying-out measure should target outdated farm holdings with the least conducive circumstances in terms of climate and/or environmental conditions and animal welfare. The obligation to demolish farm buildings for farmers who signed up for the national exit scheme for certain livestock production locations (LBV and LBV+) will be suspended until the manure market has stabilised.
- Central government will take charge of permitting for manure processing activities. Permitting issues will be resolved swiftly and efficiently in collaboration with local and provincial authorities.

Humane livestock sector

- Concrete steps will be taken towards a livestock sector that is fit for the future and treats animals even more humanely.
- In the long term, there will be rules on the criteria that livestock housing for each type of animal must meet. This will give farmers a realistic timetable to adapt or replace their housing, in accordance with the normal depreciation period. The government will facilitate the initiation of concrete pilot projects.
- Elaboration of the rules will take account of the investment required from farmers and what part they can recoup via a good revenue model. If this is insufficient, the possibility of a government contribution or for amending the policy will be considered.
- Supplementary to this, consideration will be given to ways of ending the long-distance transport of live animals, if this cannot be done in accordance with EU animal welfare standards and compliance with these standards cannot be enforced.

Nature restoration policy

- The Netherlands' natural environment and the cultural landscape created and maintained by our farmers and growers are beautiful. Where necessary we will take an area-based approach to conservation. We will strengthen the environment in which people live and work, and ensure that the natural environment is inclusive of agriculture.

- Nature policy will be based principally on actual measurements of the condition of nature areas. The critical deposition value will be scrapped from legislation and replaced by a legally sound alternative.
- The national databank of flora and fauna will be made fully and freely accessible for public purposes as soon as possible.
- The nitrogen strategy will be area-based, with emission targets set for individual holdings.
- Nitrogen reduction will take place where it is demonstrated to be necessary for nature conservation and in combination with action on other pressures. Nitrogen reduction is necessary in order to create scope for activities that cause nitrogen emissions, with provincial authorities being able to issue environmental permits on the basis of emissions being reduced elsewhere ('external offsetting').
- There will be a legally sound, scientifically based mathematical threshold level of at least 1 mol/ha per year. This figure, or the scope provided by external offsetting, will be used to legalise, as a matter of priority, the activities of holdings for which no environmental permit application was made under the integrated nitrogen strategy ('PAS-notifications'). Arrangements will be designed so they have a strong legal basis.

Fisheries

- We are proud of our Dutch fishers, who have been contributing to food security for many centuries. We will ensure that fishers and associated businesses in the sector will once again be able to make a good living. It is vital for the Netherlands that we continue to have our own fisheries in the future. To this end, we will give Dutch fishers maximum support in making the fleet fit for the future. Fishers are part of our culture, and we will do everything we can to defend their interests, including in Brussels. Fishers can count on support in the areas of innovation, safety and the development of sustainable fishing methods.
- At European level, the Netherlands will do everything in its power to reverse the ban on electric pulse fishing.
- In the short term, we will secure better access to the North Sea and other fishing grounds with sufficient space for fisheries.
- Bottom-towed fisheries and shrimp fisheries are struggling. Together with these groups of fishers we will actively search for large areas that we can designate as priority fishing grounds ('visakkers') for them.

The new name of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Security (LNV in Dutch) is to be the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN).

5. Energy transition, energy security and climate adaptation

The Netherlands is currently too dependent on untrustworthy countries for energy and the security of its supply. The energy transition must focus on reducing existing dependencies and avoiding new ones, but it is crucial that this does not come at the expense of low-income households and small businesses, such as the local bakery or handyman. Part of the existing funds for the energy transition will be earmarked specifically for these groups. Firm action will be taken on climate adaptation to ensure the Netherlands is well prepared for the future.

Stable policy is important: people and businesses need to know where they stand. Climate policy must be manageable, realistic and feasible, and it is crucial that individuals and businesses are offered guidance on what they themselves can do. We will stand by existing agreements and draw up alternative policy only if we fail to reach the goals. There will be no new, additional national requirements on top of EU policy requirements.

Energy transition

We will strive for greater energy independence and domestic production of sustainable energy. With the right measures, it is possible to promote green growth and reduce harmful emissions. By investing in sustainable energy sources and innovation, the Netherlands will create a good business climate that will deliver not only a cleaner environment but also economic growth and new business opportunities.

We will work on the following elements:

- Part of the financial resources for climate policy will be used to assist low- and middle-income households and businesses with the energy transition. For instance:
 - o Support for households and small businesses in making their homes or business premises more sustainable, bringing down their energy bills. Attention will be given in particular to households confronted with a much higher energy bill as a result of being connected to a district heating network.
 - o There will be no obligation to improve the energy performance label of owner-occupied homes. The rule requiring the installation of a heat pump upon replacement of a gas boiler from 2026 onwards will be scrapped.
 - o Buying an electric vehicle will continue to be encouraged, but the interests of drivers of fossil-fuel vehicles and the need for a fair distribution of costs between the two groups will also be taken into account. All subsidy schemes will end as of 2025, but the reduced motor vehicle tax for electric vehicles, based on a lower vehicle weight rating, will proceed as planned. We will examine how the introduction of zero-emission zones could be postponed, for instance through provisions at national level (standardisation) that would enable exceptions to be made for businesses. Municipalities will continue to be the competent authority for establishing zero-emission zones.
- The Climate Fund will be used for investments in innovation and technology, such as carbon capture and storage (CCS) and green hydrogen. If necessary, blue hydrogen can be used as an interim solution. Subsidies for bioenergy with CCS (BECCS) and for biomass power plants will be stopped as soon as possible, in accordance with the previously agreed phaseout pathway.
- The previously announced carbon tax increase will be cancelled.
- The customised approach for individual companies is necessary to ensure our industries remain competitive and profitable. This approach will therefore be continued and possibly extended to, for instance, new or regional companies and technologies that could contribute to the transition.
- The nuclear power plant at Borssele will remain in operation and the existing plans for two new nuclear power plants will go ahead. We will also build two further nuclear power plants, leaving open the possibility of building multiple small plants as well. Good spatial integration of the plants is crucial, also for ensuring sufficient public support. The government will be involved in public-private partnerships and contribute to knowledge development for the construction.

- Priority will be given to resolving grid congestion problems, with the government exercising authority over matters such as the prioritisation of who can be connected to the grid, and when.
- Security of energy supply will be safeguarded. We will enter into long-term contracts for natural gas and build up reserves of gas and other critical raw materials. The gas fields in Groningen will not be exploited any more; exploitation of the North Sea fields will be scaled up. To the greatest extent possible, wind turbines will be built offshore rather than on land, but space for fisheries will be considered first. We will seek to strike a careful balance.
- There will be no new, additional national requirements on top of EU policy requirements. Subsidies for fossil fuels for energy generation will be phased out at European level.
- Reducing dependencies on other countries is central to the raw materials transition. Materials will be reused where possible.

Climate change adaptation

The Netherlands needs to adapt further to climate change.

- The adaptation strategy will be updated, and will in any case address:
 - o the impact of drought on food production and the foundations of buildings and infrastructure, among other things; and
 - o freshwater availability (also in connection with salinisation).
- Rivers are vitally important for the Netherlands: for inland shipping, freshwater supply, water storage, nature and recreation. The Room for the River programme will be updated, ensuring the continued navigability of the rivers and giving them more space.
- The High Water Protection Programme will be reviewed to ensure that our dikes will continue to protect us effectively in the future.

6. Accessible public services: health and care, and education

Health and care

Healthcare is an invaluable good. The people who work in the health and care sectors and dedicate themselves to their patients' wellbeing day after day deserve our respect. This is also important for our older people, who have been responsible for developing our prosperity and our society, and who deserve our care when they become in need of it.

- Because of demographic ageing, labour market shortages and rising costs, access to health and care services cannot be taken for granted by everyone or in every part of our country. We will take a number of measures to improve this:
- Reducing the health insurance excess by more than half to 165 euros in 2027 will reduce healthcare avoidance and remove obstacles for people with long-term conditions or chronic disease.
- The position of primary care will be strengthened and cooperation between primary care providers – such as general practitioners (GPs), home care nurses and informal carers – will be improved.
- There will be a safe, decentralised system for access to electronic patient records, that will also allow for the exchange of medical data with due consideration for privacy and data protection.

- When people take out health insurance, it must be crystal clear to them what the policy conditions are and which care providers have a contract with the insurer. The Dutch Healthcare Authority monitors the readability of policy conditions.

Other issues to be addressed now and in the longer term:

- Labour shortages in the health and care sector will be addressed with priority. Jobs in the health and care sector will be made more attractive by increasing workers' autonomy, offering better career prospects and employment conditions, and reducing the regulatory and administrative burden, for instance through innovation. In drawing up rosters, employers will be encouraged to give first choice of shifts to staff who have employment contracts.
- Aggression and violence against care professionals and healthcare fraud will be tackled.
- There will be a framework agreement aimed at controlling expenditure and the quality of health and care services; hospitals will make effective regional agreements on regional access to emergency medical services and with a view to keeping regional hospitals open. Research will be done into alternative forms of financing emergency medical care, other than the current market-based mechanism.
- Disease prevention will be given a more central role. This includes sport and physical exercise for better health, reducing health disparities and managing demand for healthcare.
- There will be a review of different therapies and forms of care, to identify those proven to be ineffective and those proven to be vital, and to tackle healthcare overuse and care providers that abuse the system.
- The system will be organised such that the care setting is appropriate to the care needs. Aligning the implementation of different healthcare legislation in the short term will contribute to this.
- We will invest in better elderly care in the form of, for instance, expanding availability of nursing care.
- We will implement the youth care reform agenda and, in accordance with the recommendations of the Netherlands Court of Audit and the Advisory Division of the Council of State, we will reform the structure of tasks, competencies and needs assessment in order to improve youth care outcomes. We will develop a new approach to secure youth care, aimed at accelerating the phasing out of secure youth care. The number of care orders will be reduced and the rights of children and parents will be improved.
- A new, coherent policy approach will be introduced for vaccinations, particularly with regard to protecting children.
- We will examine how the right to palliative and terminal care can be laid down in healthcare legislation, to ensure coordination between all the parties concerned with end-of-life care.

Due care must be exercised in the social and political debate on issues relating to end of life and beginning of life, in terms of working with embryos and carrying out embryo research, abortion and euthanasia. Health and care professionals, ethicists and researchers should also participate in this debate. No changes will be made to existing legislation on these issues, except in the case of significant, unforeseen developments, and consideration of two pending private member's bills will also proceed as scheduled.

Education

With regard to education, which is both a fundamental right and a governmental responsibility under the Constitution, many pupils are struggling to achieve basic levels of proficiency in reading and arithmetic. A plan to restore the quality of education is urgently needed to turn the tide. Such a plan should contain the following elements:

- It should put an end to the unbridled proliferation of subsidies; these should be converted into sound, structural funding with standard amounts for the primary process and a ceiling for overhead costs, with school leaders and teachers being given a say in how funds are spent.
- The current curriculum revision will be continued. The attainment targets will be revised; the number of targets will be cut back drastically and remaining targets will have a stronger focus on basic skills – reading, writing and arithmetic. These have absolute priority. Targets relating to relationship and sex education must be neutral and will be better geared to pupils' age, particularly in primary education.
- The plan will promote more lateral-entry recruitment, encourage more men to go into primary school teaching by offering separate teacher training courses for those wanting to teach older and younger pupils, give teachers more say, and substantially reduce regulatory pressure and administrative tasks.
- Teaching methods should be proven effective and politically neutral.
- Assessment methods should be improved.
- Appropriate and special education will be a focus for attention.
- Preschool provision and early childhood education can be important. Additionally, efforts will be made to ensure reasonable travel times for pupils in both urban and rural areas, for various types of school. Funds from the education budget must be reserved for this purpose.
- Primary education will prepare pupils for secondary schooling, be it vocationally or theoretically oriented. Secondary vocational education (MBO) will pay closer attention to alignment with the labour market.
- In higher education, the binding recommendation on continuation of studies will not be relaxed and the existing scope for admission based on additional requirements will be retained.
- Funding for higher education institutions will be changed in part to a capacity-regulated model in order to retain courses that are vital for the labour market or the region but face falling enrolment. The student grant component of student finance will be retained. Those who studied under the student loan system will receive an extra one-off compensatory payment.
- Promoting proficiency in Dutch will again become a core task for all higher education institutions. The widespread use of English as the language of instruction will be curbed, with strategic exceptions for courses of training for occupations with high rates of unfilled vacancies.

Freedom of education is a fundamental right that must be protected. No scope must be given to the dissemination of opinions that are antidemocratic or undermine the rule of law, either by teachers or through teaching materials. The Inspectorate of Education supervises educational institutions' compliance with the statutory obligation to provide citizenship education in primary and secondary education and in secondary vocational education. The aforementioned statutory obligation will be tightened up with a view to preventing radicalisation. It will be easier to dismiss educational

administrators who do not adequately implement this statutory obligation. Article 23 of the Constitution will not be amended but, within the legal scope provided by this article, steps may be taken to further restrict undesirable and excessive elements such as teaching that is antidemocratic or undermines the rule of law. Supervision of informal and formal education will be laid down in law so that indications of hate and violence can be followed up.

7. Good governance and the rule of law

Government organisations have had a lot to contend with in recent years. They have done – and continue to do – a great deal of good work. Nevertheless, public confidence in government and politicians has been seriously damaged. The serious failings in the childcare benefit system and the problems stemming from natural gas extraction in Groningen are, unfortunately, the most obvious causes of this loss of trust, but they are not the only ones. It is essential to repair the damage that has been done, and to do so with a sense of urgency. Recent parliamentary inquiries have found that ‘it could happen again’: that is, the possibility remains that members of the public could suffer injustice at the hands of government. Government should, as a rule, assume that people are acting in good faith, and continue to make use of the hard-working, expert professionals who are devoted to the public interest at all our government organisations. We need an agenda for good governance and respect for the rule of law.

This framework coalition agreement, the coalition programme and initiatives proposed by the four coalition parties are all in keeping with the constitution, fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law, as expressed in the final report issued by *informateur* (mediator) Ronald Plasterk on 12 February 2024. The institutions that help to uphold the rule of law, in particular the courts, the media and science and academia, will be strengthened. Good governance also requires stability and reliability.

On that basis, an agenda will be developed for the renewal of democracy, the rule of law, public administration and oversight. The aim is to bolster the importance of the Constitution and of fundamental rights, checks and balances in our democratic system, rule of law institutions and legal principles. This agenda will therefore include the following measures:

- A bill introducing a new system for electing members of the House of Representatives will be presented this year. The new electoral system is intended to strengthen the regional ties between voters and elected officials. The new legislation should enter into force in time for the next elections.
- A constitutional amendment bill repealing the ban on constitutional review in article 120 will be submitted. It will become possible to review Acts of Parliament and treaties for compliance with the fundamental provisions of the Constitution.
- A constitutional amendment bill establishing a constitutional court empowered to review the constitutionality of Acts of Parliament will be submitted, along with a bill setting out the envisaged substance and scope of this form of review.
- The Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State will be granted autonomous status.
- A Permanent Committee on Fundamental Rights and Constitutional Review of the House of Representatives will be established. The Advisory Division of the Council of State and this

Permanent Committee will elaborate plans for strengthening the processes of constitutional review and advising on constitutionality that take place before policy proposals and bills are submitted, international and EU treaties are approved and EU legislation is implemented.

- The debate will move forward in the second reading of the private member's bill on the corrective referendum.
- The method of appointing mayors will remain unchanged.
- The way in which treaties are established, approved by parliament and implemented will be revised, with a stronger role for parliament and a process of explicit assessment of compliance with article 91, paragraph 3 of the Constitution.
- A Europe Act (*Europawet*) will be introduced, and will include rules on information provision and procedures during the preparation and establishment of European legislation.
- Members of parliament will be given an enhanced procedure for compelling the provision of information in accordance with article 68 of the Constitution, whereby the ground for exception 'the interests of the State' can be submitted for assessment (elaborated and assigned) to the Permanent Committee on Fundamental Rights and Constitutional Review of the House of Representatives.
- A determination will be made as to whether and, if so, how further requirements can be laid down for the representativeness of interest organisations with a non-commercial objective on the basis of article 3:305a of the Civil Code (*Burgerlijk Wetboek*).
- The House of Representatives will receive more support (for legislation, analysis and research).
- The Electoral Council will be converted into an Electoral Authority with greater autonomy and an expanded mandate.
- The right to make a mistake will be established. A single error will no longer be allowed to cause an individual serious problems. Reminder and collection fees charged by the government will be significantly reduced.
- It must be easier for people to contact government organisations. This will be achieved by, for example, expanding the opportunities, times and locations for in-person contact, facilitating more timely and effective telephone contact, and increasing the availability of assistance in using digital government services. Existing options for non-digital communication between members of the public and government organisations will be maintained.
- Protections for whistleblowers will be strengthened.
- A scientific standard will be established for the use of models and algorithms. Models and algorithms must be publicly available and verifiable. The published information must clearly state what they are and are not intended for, and what they can and cannot be used for.
- Government use of artificial intelligence (AI) has advantages but will be subject to conditions to protect people's security, privacy and rights. Knowledge of digitalisation within the public sector must be enhanced, and government and society must be made more resilient to disinformation and 'deep fakes'.
- The Open Government Act (*Wet open overheid*), its implementation and the related costs will be evaluated.

- Legislation regulating the independent inspectorates, supervisory bodies and authorities, and their enforcement methods, will be introduced (National Inspectorates and Authorities Act (*Wet op de rijksinspecties en autoriteiten*)).
- The civil service will demonstrably increase its focus on professionalism, knowledge, implementation and impact on the public; in this connection, recruitment for and rotation within the Senior Civil Service will be reformed.
- The knowledge infrastructure and the use of it in policy and budgets will be improved, particularly with respect to the medium-to-long term and demographic developments.
- The growth in the number of civil servants and engagement of consultants at the ministries in recent years will be reversed and rolled back even further than that, but implementing agencies will not be affected. These cutbacks will be linked to reductions in rules and in the administrative burden for the public and for the parties responsible for implementation.
- Government records will be put in order. To that end, the Public Records Act (*Archiefwet*) will be modernised.
- The government will present a proposal containing an overview showing which recommendations from the parliamentary inquiry reports, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and the Venice Commission will be added to this agenda.

Good governance for the people also means that central government, municipalities, provinces and water authorities must be able to function effectively and independently as democratically legitimate government bodies. The Netherlands is a decentralised unitary state. Local and regional authorities are involved at an early stage in the preparation of policy and legislation; the legislature makes the final decision. Major challenges such as housing, socioeconomic security and the energy transition have to be addressed collectively. In addition, good governance means honouring agreements and pursuing stable and predictable government policy, including policy that enhances the business and investment climate.

The government will invest in structural cooperation with the regions. In consultation with businesses, knowledge institutions and local and regional authorities, the existing Regional Deals will be expanded to form strategic investment agendas that include agreements on housing, transport and accessibility, education and the economy. Key joint programmes such as the National Livability and Security Programme and the 'Every Region Counts' Programme will be continued. The Netherlands values the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

In a democracy governed by the rule of law, reliable provision of information is essential. The public service broadcaster NPO will be reformed in order to ensure high-quality journalism and programming diversity. Future-proofing and cost transparency are key objectives. The decision-making process will be streamlined. The NPO must focus on digitalisation and reaching a younger audience.

The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets will be given more tools to prevent online and other news services from declining further and/or falling into foreign hands. For example, we will examine whether safeguarding the qualitative diversity of the Dutch media landscape can be incorporated into the assessment criteria applied under the Competition Act (*Mededingingswet*).

Finally, there are still aspects of policy, legislation and implementation practice that have excessively harsh effects on people. The Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State, the Council for the Judiciary, the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Ombudsman and the Children's

Ombudsman will submit a list of these harsh effects annually, or as often as they deem necessary. The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations will be instructed to coordinate with the other ministries to address these effects and issue public reports. The importance of legal principles will be more widely acknowledged and their application will become common practice. In addition, a constitutional court will be established to directly assess questions of fundamental rights.

8. National security

A wide range of individuals stand constantly at the ready to keep people safe and free: police officers, special enforcement officers, firefighters, the intelligence and security services, officers of the Royalty and Diplomatic Protection Department, members of the judiciary and many others besides. We owe a big debt of gratitude to everyone who keeps us safe, and we will support and stand up for all guardians of our democracy under the rule of law, so that they can safely continue doing their essential work with sufficient staff and resources. A great deal more needs to be done, however, to keep the Netherlands safe and secure for all. Our freedoms and security are under pressure.

Our democracy under the rule of law is being threatened by Islamic terrorism and directly undermined by organised crime. Furthermore, our security is under pressure from human trafficking, diverse threats, terrorism, cybercrime, psychologically disturbed individuals, societal polarisation and public dissatisfaction. Security and a resilient society are top priorities. This requires firm action against all who threaten our freedom and security. Our national security must be protected. Serious organised crime must be fought with resolve. Authority and respect in the public sphere must be restored. In addition, more needs to be done in regard to prevention in general and preventing recidivism, particularly by first offenders. Prevention and penalisation are equally essential elements of effective security policy.

That is the reason for these priorities.

- The Netherlands will strengthen its approach to combating organised crime, from prevention to surveillance, and from security to prisons. Greater efforts will be made to confiscate assets, in accordance with EU practice. The anti-money-laundering strategy will be stepped up. The aim is to improve information-sharing while safeguarding privacy and taking account of the position of the overwhelming majority of members of the public, who have no malicious intentions yet are faced with lengthy checks if they wish to open a bank account, start a business or buy a house. The policy of confiscating criminal assets will be coupled with the prevention policy. The regulations on suspects turned (prosecution) witnesses will be expanded. We will strengthen efforts to tackle the continuation of criminal activity from inside prisons, following the example of Italy's model. And we will step up cooperation with other countries.
- Efforts to deal with drug retrievers and logistics hubs used by criminals (such as ports) will be expanded.
- The authorities will continue working on effective measures and interventions to prevent young people from becoming involved in crime (and serious criminal activity in particular).
- The scope for police officers, public prosecutors and examining magistrates to be identified by code numbers will be expanded.

- There will be a visible police presence, and more police officers and police command posts in neighbourhoods, districts and the wider region; criminal investigation teams will be strengthened. Efforts will be made to ensure that as many neighbourhood police officers as possible are able to spend more time in their designated area of operation.
- Teams such as Roze in Blauw (Pink in Blue) and the Jewish Police Network will be strengthened.
- In recent years there has been a rise in the number of threats made against politicians and guardians of the rule of law. For that reason, the team responsible for protecting politicians under threat will be expanded, and Surveillance and Protection will be made a general focus area.
- Law enforcement professionals, including police officers and special enforcement officers, are neutral, and may not display any religious symbols or attributes on their person.
- The authorities will take extremely firm action against inappropriate behaviour, intimidation targeted at any individual, and all forms of hooliganism. Perpetrators will be arrested, tried and punished – and possibly imprisoned – and the potential implications for a perpetrator’s right of residence will be examined: all means will be deployed in an appropriate manner.
- There will be greater scope to hold parents responsible for damage caused by their children.
- Efforts to combat antisemitism will be stepped up.
- Measures to tackle honour-based violence will be strengthened.
- Juvenile criminal law concerning 14 to 16-year-olds will be made stricter, including by raising maximum penalties. More extensive reasoning will be required when adolescent criminal law is applied in respect of serious offences committed by individuals aged 18 and older.
- The number of offences for which prosecution is subject to a limitation period will be reduced. A ban on community service orders will be introduced for violent offences committed against emergency workers and care providers. There will be no limitation period on the enforcement of criminal penalties. The penalties for serious offences, including terrorist offences and serious violent or sexual offences, will be increased.
- The prohibition on the possession, sale or manufacture of drugs will remain in force.
- The security services and the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV) are responsible for protecting national security and combating radicalisation and terrorism. Legislation on those services’ powers in regard to digital developments will be amended; the Intelligence and Security Services Act (*Wet op de inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten*, WIV) will be updated as soon as possible. Research will be conducted on the scope for establishing a security organisation with tasks and powers comparable to those of the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Intérieure (DGSI) in France.
- The definition of participation in a terrorist organisation will be broadened. The length of the sentence for terrorist activities will be increased to 20 years. A study will be carried out to establish whether, and if so how, convicted terrorists can be stripped of their Dutch nationality. Furthermore, the scope for expanding deprivation of Dutch nationality to include all categories of offences for which it is allowed by the European Convention on Nationality will be examined.
- A further study will explore the scope for expanding the statutory categories of convicted persons who can be stripped of their Dutch nationality. This will include examining whether both terrorism and serious criminal offences can be added to the European Convention on Nationality as grounds for denaturalisation.

- Efforts will be made to develop a smart ban on undesirable foreign financing of Dutch associations, foundations, church organisations and informal organisations. Consideration of the Civil Society Organisations (Transparency) Act (*Wet transparantie maatschappelijke organisaties*) will be continued. Any legal persons affiliated with terrorist organisations that are prohibited in other EU member states will be prohibited here as well. The open expression of support for terrorist organisations will be prohibited. Incitement to violence, glorification of terrorist acts and openly expressing support for terrorist organisations will each be a separate criminal offence, subject to a severe maximum penalty.
- Efforts to tackle cyber threats posed by state actors and cyber criminals will be stepped up; close cooperation among government, the security services, and the academic and business communities will be encouraged. The maximum penalties for cybercrime will be increased. The powers and resources of the security services will be increased with respect to combating economic espionage. Electronics (such as scanning equipment) and services from countries with increased espionage risks will be phased out in strategically important sectors. Espionage will be subject to more severe penalties.
- In order to give the police sufficient scope to deal with these priorities and core tasks, certain activities, such as those involving psychologically disturbed individuals and administrative duties in the asylum system, will be transferred to organisations with expertise in those areas.
- Victims' rights will be strengthened, by giving victims considerable say in pardon procedures, improving the system of compensation in regard to damage suffered, and introducing an independent exclusion order.
- The authorities will work to develop sufficient appropriate victims' services, including in the area of restorative justice.
- The resolution of disputes and conflicts and the disposal of common criminal offences by community courts will be encouraged.
- The administration of justice will be made quicker and more effective by giving the Council for the Judiciary more control over the digitalisation process. Performance agreements will be used more widely in the criminal justice system. The facilities provided in custodial institutions will be less extensive; imprisonment must be an effective punishment.
- The use of penalty orders (penalties imposed by the public prosecutor rather than a court) will be examined.
- Too often, the police are confronted with the use of illegal fireworks. Increasingly, such fireworks are being used to blow up cash machines or cause other explosions, or to harass emergency workers. F4-category fireworks will therefore be brought within the scope of the Firearms, Ammunition and Offensive Weapons Act (*Wet wapens en munitie, WWM*). The government will examine whether, through the granting of a permit, this category of fireworks can continue to be used for professional fireworks displays.
- Genealogical databases will be deployed in an effort to solve cold cases.
- A clearer distinction will be made between peaceful demonstrations and public order disturbances. Disorder, threats against others and violent conduct in public places will not be tolerated. The Public Prosecution Service, local authorities and police will be urged to take firm action when demonstrators cross the line and commit criminal offences. Known rioters will be dealt with firmly and punished severely.

- Extra measures will be taken (along the lines of the UK model, for example) to deal with football hooligans more firmly. Individuals who are subject to a stadium ban will more often be required to report to the authorities (either by electronic means or in person), and a permit will be granted for every (high-risk) match. In addition, a ban on face coverings in football stadiums will be introduced.
- Digital equipment such as ANPR cameras can help police track down criminals more quickly. The authorities in the Netherlands' border regions will therefore examine whether the digital equipment available there is adequate.
- Efforts to combat child abuse will be stepped up.
- To enhance security, structural resources will be made available so that capacity requirements can be met across the entire criminal justice system. In this connection, funding decisions will be based less on output and products and more on effective cooperation and performance.
- Police officers will enjoy full internal support where their tasks are concerned, including from their force command.
- Police officers currently have to devote too much attention to dealing with psychologically disturbed individuals. People with psychological disturbances or other mental health needs should receive the assistance and care they need more quickly. The government will therefore encourage close cooperation between the police and mental health services. Where necessary, it must be possible to rapidly share relevant information.
- Robust action will be taken to combat corruption. A government-wide strategy will be developed to this end. Key focus areas in this regard will be increasing individuals' resilience to corruption and willingness to report it, as well as using IT systems (and access to them) to reduce risks.
- The minimum-age limit for sex workers will be raised to 21.
- The maximum penalty for violent disorder in a public place will be increased by one-third.

Personal freedoms will be strengthened. Measures will be taken to combat violence against LGBTIQ+ persons. An effective approach will be introduced to protect (vulnerable) young people who are forced to suppress their sexual orientation. Firm action will be taken against anyone guilty of discrimination, racism, antisemitism or Islamophobia, whether in a public space or online.

9. International security

For the protection of our international security, political and military cooperation with NATO partners is paramount. The Netherlands will remain a constructive partner within the EU. We will work with other EU member states to achieve greater strategic independence and step up defence cooperation in the areas of transport, production and industry. The Netherlands will continue to provide Ukraine with political, military, financial and moral support against Russian aggression. We will also continue helping to increase NATO capacity in member states' territory and participating in international missions.

Together with the other affected countries, the Netherlands will keep doing all it can to establish the truth and achieve justice and accountability with regard to the downing of flight MH17. This includes working to ensure that the perpetrators and other responsible parties do not escape punishment and evade responsibility.

Expenditure on our armed forces, the tasks of which are enshrined in the constitution, will be brought to the level of the NATO norm of at least 2% of GDP, and this will be laid down in law. Efforts to enhance and modernise the employment conditions of Ministry of Defence personnel and veterans' care provisions will be continued. Strengthening the digital capacity of our intelligence services and the cybersecurity of our defence apparatus is a priority.

The Netherlands will work to facilitate the defence industry both at home and in the European Union.

Increasing our society's resilience is of paramount importance. This challenge will place demands on the government's communications and information services, and on its cooperation with the public, the business community, other public authorities and civil society partners. The armed forces' voluntary service year (a scheme that emphasises that military service is a right rather than an obligation) will be continued and, where possible, scaled up.

The aim in this regard is to foster a society that is better prepared for disruption. To bolster its security and resilience, the Netherlands must maintain strategic stocks of essential items such as medicines, ensure its food security in particular is in good order, and safeguard its critical infrastructure, including water and energy supplies. To this end, the recommendations made by the Netherlands Court of Audit in 2022 will be adopted.

Policy on trade and industry, including in the framework of the EU, will help reduce strategic dependencies, for example in relation to China in the area of critical raw materials. With a view to preserving our prosperity, the Netherlands will work to conclude trade agreements in which equal and reasonable standards are a key feature.

Where foreign trade and development cooperation are concerned, the Netherlands will help boost food security and enhance water management in other countries (benefiting their stability in the process) and contribute to migration policy (including reception of migrants in the region).

The Netherlands supports Israel's right to exist and its security. With due consideration for solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Netherlands' diplomatic interests, a government study will examine when would be an appropriate moment to move the Dutch embassy to Jerusalem. The Netherlands will initiate the establishment of an international tribunal to try crimes (including genocide) committed by Islamic State (Daesh). The Netherlands will support Armenia at European level.

The Netherlands will not accept, and will take action in response to, threats targeting holders of political office, whether made by or emanating from within other countries that refuse to cooperate in the investigation, prosecution or trial of such threats.

It is crucial that we preserve our national sovereignty. The Netherlands will take a highly critical stance on the further enlargement of the European Union. No concessions will be made in regard to the Copenhagen criteria on membership of the EU.

10. Sound public finances, the economy and the investment climate

10.1 The economy and the investment climate

A healthy economy and thriving businesses are essential to the prosperity of the Netherlands. Jobs and money for public services are dependent on a stable economy and a strong SME sector. We need investment by entrepreneurs and their value to society is crucial.

A stable Dutch economy and healthy businesses require a good investment climate. The Netherlands should be in the top five countries in terms of competitiveness. Companies should want to locate in the Netherlands and stay here. Primacy must be given to the Netherlands' earning capacity. The Netherlands must continue to be a country where enterprise can take root, blossom and grow. Dutch businesses large and small, including businesses in the agricultural sector, must be able to continue exporting. Dutch industry is crucial to our earning capacity. It is important that we maintain our manufacturing base. Businesses that are clean and that deliver added value to the Netherlands have a big future. It is important in this connection to have a vision for the spatial and economic structure of the Netherlands. At the same time, it is also necessary to take immediate action. There is currently too much restrictive regulation that is standing in the way of enterprise. The government will work with entrepreneurs and employers, with employees and their trade unions on all these points. To this end:

- Improving the investment climate is the top priority. Consideration will also be given to tax measures in this connection. Recent increases in taxes for entrepreneurs, the increase in the tax on energy and capital announced since Budget Day will be partially reversed.
- The regulatory burden will be reduced by involving the Dutch Advisory Board on Regulatory Burden and implementing agencies from the outset when devising policy and legislation.
- Companies will be given assistance in addressing the energy transition and resolving grid congestion (see the chapter on the energy transition).
- Availability of talent, strengthening the knowledge economy, innovation and (digital) infrastructure will be given priority.
- Energy costs (for both businesses and consumers) must not be significantly out of step with neighbouring countries. An assessment will be made as to what measures are needed to support businesses and consumers.
- There will be no new, additional national requirements on top of EU policy requirements. Existing extra national requirements that impose an additional regulatory burden will be scrapped where possible.
- In legislation and policy, account must be taken of the impact on small businesses, for example with regard to costs and risks, so that it remains possible for businesses to hire employees.
- InvestNL will be bolstered as an important vehicle for investment in innovation and in the potential of our economy.

10.2 Sound public finances

Sound financial and economic policy is important to prevent the burden of debt being endlessly shifted onto future generations and to avoid having to continually raise taxes.

In order to restore calm and stability to fiscal policy, the fiscal rules described in the recommendations of the 17th Budget Margin Study Group (appendix 11) will be implemented, with one or two exceptions as set out below.

To avoid ever-increasing costs, the aim will be a multiyear EMU balance of no more than 2.8% of GDP during the government's lifetime. Public debt will remain below 60%. The EU fiscal norms as laid down in the Sustainable Public Finances Act (*Wet Houdbare Overheidsfinanciën*) and the Stability and Growth Pact will be respected. We have a fully funded package of measures and action will be taken to reduce the current deficit to the agreed level. If agreed spending reductions on the expenditure side cannot be achieved in practice or yield less than envisaged in this agreement, this will be offset by (partly) not indexing expenditure in line with rises in wages and prices. If the Central Economic Plan of the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis identifies an imminent risk that the deficit will exceed the 3% reference value in the following year, additional measures will be taken, and spending cuts will be the first option considered.

In accordance with the Sustainable Public Finances Act, a trend-based budgetary policy will be pursued. This will involve a separation of revenue and expenditure, a predetermined spending framework and revenue framework, and a single fixed moment in spring for key decision-making by the Minister of Finance. Automatic stabilisation will be achieved on the expenditure side by placing only cyclical expenditure and autonomous developments (including unemployment benefit, social assistance benefit and interest) outside the framework.

Revenue will move in line with the economy. In accordance with the rules on fiscal discipline, setbacks will in the first instance be absorbed within the budget in which they occur. Windfalls can be used to cushion setbacks or improve the balance. By way of exception, windfalls under the Health Insurance Act (*Zorgverzekeringswet*) will be automatically used to reduce premiums.¹ Furthermore, the government will apply a windfall formula in the event that the actual EMU balance is better than -1.5% of GDP on a multiyear basis. If applicable, a decision will be made on this in spring each year. New expenditure must be offset by spending cuts elsewhere in the central government budget. Expenditure on military and humanitarian support for Ukraine and the reception of refugees from Ukraine in the Netherlands will not come under the expenditure framework. The attribution of first-year reception costs of refugees to the ODA budget will be capped at 10% from 2027 onwards. In other respects, asylum expenditure will be a general item. In addition, expenditure on Surveillance and Protection under the budget of the Ministry of Justice and Security will be a general item.

On the revenue side, the policy-related trend in the tax burden as currently envisaged will be maintained. Policy-related deviations from this trend should be offset. Non-policy-related developments in revenue will be reflected in the balance (that is to say, automatic stabilisation will take place). The impact of the coalition programme in financial policy and budgetary terms will be analysed by the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB) at the next opportunity.

The effects of the framework coalition agreement on public finances are set out in the budgetary appendix. In other respects, the parties will adopt the budget baseline. This agreement will be incorporated in the budget using all the figures in the tables in the appendices.

¹ The reverse will apply to setbacks in the health and care sector. The setback will have to be absorbed within the expenditure framework.

