

ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

Netherlands

PRÉCIS

The Dutch government describes international cultural policy as a “pillar of the Kingdom’s diplomacy” and sees ECP as a “unifying link between political, economic and social topics in cultural and foreign policy” (Government of the Netherlands, 2020). The government views ECP in a multi-faceted way: it explicitly uses the language of “soft power”, but also stresses the importance of economic and reputational benefits of cultural links, as well as supporting culture and the arts for their own sake. The Netherlands has important strengths in education and culture, yet without a targeted geographic footprint, population, or substantial investment, it lacks a truly global ECP strategy.

KEY INDICATORS 2019

Population	Rank/number	68 th / €17,282 million
GDP per capita	Rank/number	17 th / €810,247 million
Education economy	As share of GDP	0.4 ⁽²⁰¹⁸⁾
R&D economy	As share of GDP	5.1 ⁽²⁰¹⁸⁾
Media economy	As share of GDP	1.99 ⁽²⁰¹⁸⁾
Geopolitical position	Hard power	36 th
	Sharp power	7 th
	Soft power	10 (72.03)
	Diplomacy rank	16 th

OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

Number of countries present	23 target countries
Number of institutions abroad	Limited, works mostly with local partners
FTE staff	Min. 1200
Freelance and local staff	-
Government support	€22,470,000
Comparative rank	medium

Main Objectives

- Strengthen the Dutch cultural sector
- Help build a safer and more just world
- Put culture to effective use in modern diplomacy

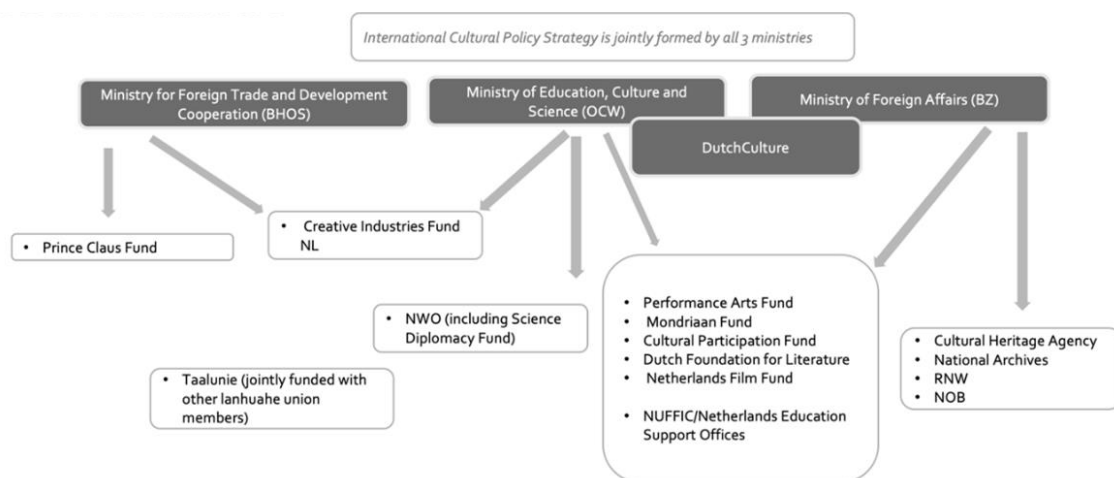
Policy Context

- Shrinking space for culture and expression
- Need to promote the Netherlands as a place of business and culture
- Need to promote SDGs

Regional Focus

- Sub-S. Africa: -
- South-East Asia: -
- East Asia: -
- Europe: -
- Middle East/NA: -
- North America: 131: -
- South America: 181: -

INSITUTIONAL MAP



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BZ), the Ministry for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (BHOS) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) all collaborate to shape the Netherlands' strategy, with extra input provided from Dutch Culture. In addition to the Prince Claus Fund, which is state-funded, the government has established six other arm's length cultural funds (Performance Arts Fund, Mondriaan Fund, Cultural Participation Fund, Dutch Foundation for Literature, Netherlands Film Fund, and Creative Industries Fund) to carry out ECP. Organizations like the Cultural Heritage Agency and the National Archives are also active.

FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015	Comment
Culture and the Arts			
Number of countries present	23 target countries	19 target countries	
Number of institutes	Dutch Culture: 9 global partners	Dutch Culture: 8 main partners	
Number of FTE staff	DC: 19.83 PC: 19.83	DC: 23 PC: 16.62	
Number of artists in exchange programmes	Dutch Culture: 40 visitors; database of residencies 150 covered by Prince Claus mobility fund	Dutch Culture: Unchanged Prince Claus: 114 mobility grants	
Budget	Dutch Culture: €2,959,288 Prince Claus Fund: €6,727,600	Dutch Culture: €2,942,637 Prince Claus Fund: €5,446,960	
Government Support	DC: €3,109,081 PC: €3 million	DC: €2,906,906 PC: €3.21 million (BZ); €500,000 from lottery	

	2019	2015	Comment
Language: Taalunie			
Number of members	-	3	
Number of language teachers	-	6500	
Budget	-	€10,231,163	
Education – Primary & Secondary			
Number of countries	115	120	Data refer to AEFÉ
Number of schools	197	200	
Number of students	13,840	14.698	
Number of staff / teachers	966 teachers, 189 school leaders	-	
Budget	€12,003,952	€13,755,640 (2018)	
Government subsidies	€11,828,168 (BZ)	€12,926,223 (2018)	2015: 250 per pupil per year, later eliminated
Education – Tertiary			
Number of countries present	170	-	
Number of foreign students	89,555 (2018)	62,653	
Number of students in exchange programs	-	768	
Government financial support	€5000 per student	€5000 per student	
Science and Research: SDF			
Number of countries present	7	N/A	Turkey and Russia are primary focus, others include Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa. Limited to non-EU countries
Number of projects	~30	-	
Number of scientists in exchange	Calls currently open (34 teams won last time)	-	
Budget	€150,000	-	
Government financial support	-	-	
Media			
TV: BVN ("Best of the Flanders and the Netherlands")			
Number of countries broadcasted to	8 (plus worldwide satellite)	8	
Number of languages	2	2	
Number of channels	Part of Dutch and Flemish channels	Part of Dutch and Flemish channels	
Audience	700,000 per week	-	

Government support (€ million)	1.5 from MFA in 2019	approx. 1.5	
RNW Media			
Number of countries broadcasted to	13	13	
Number of languages	2	Same, used to have radio broadcasts in Indonesian, Dutch, Spanish, English	
Number of channels	2 major projects	-	
Audience	21.2 million users	20 million web users	
Budget	€14.777 million	€18.411 million	

CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- For a country of its size, the Netherlands is in a remarkably strong international position. It is generally well-perceived abroad (Portland, 2019) and is an attractive destination for international business and education. Still, this success comes at a cost. Rather than imprint its culture around the globe, Dutch ECP has been more successful at making the Netherlands a global entrepôt in which foreign capital, students, scientists, and businesspeople interact, often in English. There has been some backlash to this process, as the pushback against foreign students—and the general strengthening of right-wing populist politics—suggests.
- This leaves Dutch ECP in a bind: should it continue to harness its strengths, which often rely on the use of foreign languages? Or should it stress the Dutch language, perhaps increasing its use slightly, but knowing that this could make the Netherlands a less attractive destination overall? This tension between ECP as a tool to promote culture and the national image versus a method to increase economic attractiveness strikes at the very core of competing aims in the Dutch ICP strategy.
- Another hurdle to the effective exercise of cultural power is the lack of funding. Dutch ECP experts describe a “defensive” posture, a feeling that is backed up numerically by the repeated budget cuts over the past decade. From dismantling broadcaster RNW’s worldwide operations to cuts in subsidies for foreign schools to removing offices for university internationalization, key components of Dutch ECP have felt the brunt of post-2008 austerity politics. In the wake of the economic downturn from COVID-19, further cuts could be introduced, causing more damage to the Netherlands’ ability to craft and execute a comprehensive cultural strategy.

DATA SOURCES AND REFERENCES

Government of the Netherlands. (2017). *International Cultural Policy 2017-2020*. Retrieved from: <https://dutchculture.nl/en/international-cultural-policy-2017-2020>

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Portland. (2019). *Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power*. Retrieved from: <https://softpower30.com/>

FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A user-friendly summary of with additional data and data sources is here: “*Netherlands – External Cultural Policy: Data Fact Sheet*”
- A full set of references are presented here: “*Netherlands – External Cultural Policy: References*”
- A fuller report with a descriptive analysis is found here: “*Netherlands – External Cultural Policy: A Report*”

Imprint

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