

Project: **The Transformation of Political Mobilisation and Communication in European Public Spheres**

Project acronym: Europub.com
Project website: <http://europub.wz-berlin.de>

Funded by: 5th Framework Programme of the European Commission
Contract No. HPSE-CT2000-00046
Work package: WP 4 (Internet)
WP Coordinator: Ruud Koopmans
Deliverable number: **D 4.1**

Working paper **Internet – a new potential for European political communication?**

Case report: **Netherlands**

Author: Jovanka Boerefijn and Jeannette Mak
Date: 16 April 2002

Structural features of the Internet Communication Network

The Independent Post and Telecommunication Authority (*Onafhankelijke Post en Telecommunicatie Autoriteit* – OPTA) is an independent organisation that has been supervising the Post and Telecommunication Market in the Netherlands since 1 January 1997. It was created under pressure of the parliament and in reaction to the requirements of European legislation in this policy field. The OPTA law came into force on 1 July 1998. In December 2001, the National Competition Authority and the OPTA produced a common report on competition amongst Internet providers in the Netherlands. One of their conclusions was that there is a separate market for smallband point-casting, by telephone, and broadband point-casting providers, by means of cable or fast telephone; xDSL. Until a formal decision is taken, smallband connections fall under the regular telecommunications law, whereas services of broadband providers are unregulated. The OPTA notes that the market position of KPN (former Dutch state telecommunications company) is particularly strong as it offers both small and broadband connections and network access. Nevertheless, it deems that for the moment, there is sufficient competition. (OPTA 2001) In December 2001, the OPTA equally decided that earlier limitations for Flat Rate Internet Access Call Origination (FRIACO) to users of an ISDN-line were abandoned. Since improvement of the infrastructure had made practical arguments on limited capacity obsolete, it was deemed unfair that consumers were being discriminated against on the basis of their type of telephone line. Moreover, it was expected that flat rates would enhance internet usage. (OPTA 2001a)

There is no recent secondary material on Internet Service Providers in the Netherlands. Primary material on absolute numbers and market shares is difficult to find and, if available, for sale only. The Dutch organisation for Internet Providers (*Branchevereniging van Nederlandse Internet Providers* – NLIP), represents 55 official members but does not possess an overview of figures of its members. It assumes that there are about 120 ISP's in the Netherlands. According to a private study of April 2000, the biggest ISP market share was in the hands of three daughters of KPN: Het Net (16 percent), Planet (14 percent) and XS4all (2 percent). Other large players are 12 Move (7 percent) and Worldonline (5 percent) of Tiscali, Zon (5 percent) of Versatel, Freeler (5 percent) of ING, Chello (5 percent) of UPC and Wanadoo (3 percent). (European Internet Barometer 2001) In 2001, there were 18 providers that offered internet services for free in the Netherlands, of which one demanded a small registration fee. 19 providers offered Internet by cable. At the beginning of 2002, Planet Internet announced to raise its prices for an ADSL subscription by ten percent. KPN had announced earlier to raise prices by almost 25 percent. Both market players stated that the price raise was necessary to safeguard quality and service. (Webwereld 2002) In general most ISP's provide either smallband or broadband connections. Only some ISP's, like for example Wanadoo and Kabelfoon, provide both. Most market players expect that free internet subscriptions by smallband will disappear as too little money is being earned of usage of the telephone line only. In due time, the smallband point casting is supposed to be fully replaced by broadband connections. Development of xDSL lines is expected to be dependent on the supply of other types of broadband connections. In the mean time, customers will most likely have to pay according to the quality and capacity of the line they desire. Internet connection by cable is so far much cheaper than a xDSL connection. The latter possibility is for the moment limited to the Western part of the country and the bigger cities. (OPTA 2001)

The ICT sector, and in particular the soft-ware and services involved, are of evident importance for the Dutch economy. Its share in GDP grew from 4,5 percent in 1995 to 5,55 percent in 1999. The number of computer-service offices grew from 6 925 in 1994 to 11 835 in 1999. The number of telecommunication companies grew in the same period from 275 to 830. In the period 1996-1998, 17 percent of economic growth was due to the ICT sector.

(CPB 2001) Moreover, in 1998 and 1999, over 40 percent of foreign companies settling in the Netherlands were ICT related. Nevertheless, national investment in research and development is lagging behind. Therefore, the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Education set up an action plan on competition in ICT competences in 2000. It has three goals: translating ICT knowledge into practical applications, strengthen the infrastructure of ICT technology and improved efficiency of ICT knowledge.

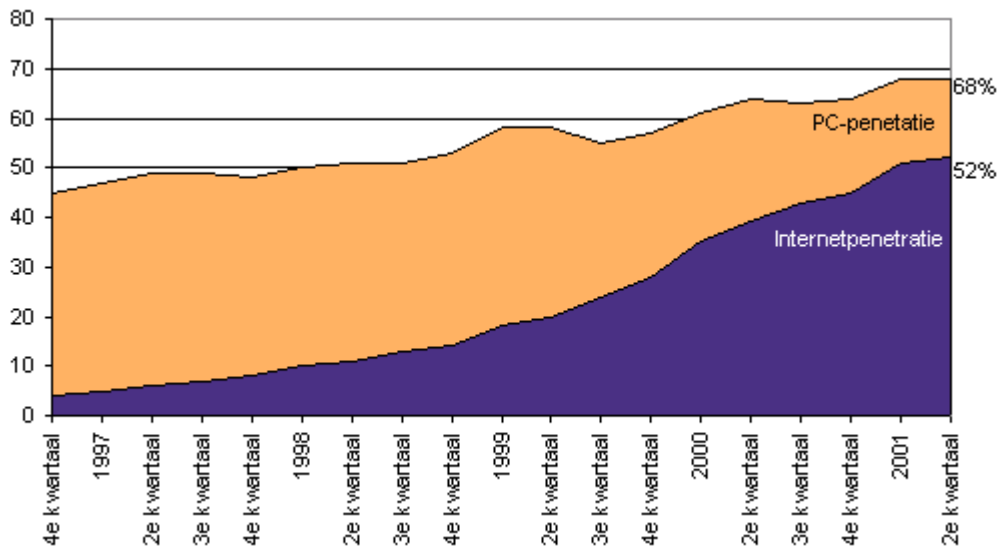
Internet Usage in General

In the second quarter of 2001, internet access of Dutch households had risen to 52 percent, while the number of people who possess a PC had risen to 68 percent. The number of Dutch people of 16 years or older who use the Internet at least once a month had risen to 56 percent in the second quarter of 2001. A comparative research of 36 countries in February 2001, showed that the Netherlands came fifth worldwide in terms of Internet usage. The same rank is obtained for possession of a mobile phone. 76 percent of the Dutch population has access to a mobile phone, whereas this is 84 percent amongst Internet users. Only 4 percent uses a mobile phone for e-mail and 3 percent for access to Internet. (NIPO 2001a)

Even in a small country like the Netherlands geographic variation exists in Internet usage. This is primarily due to differences in access and cost between regions. In the cities, Internet through cable is increasingly available. Analysis shows the following findings:

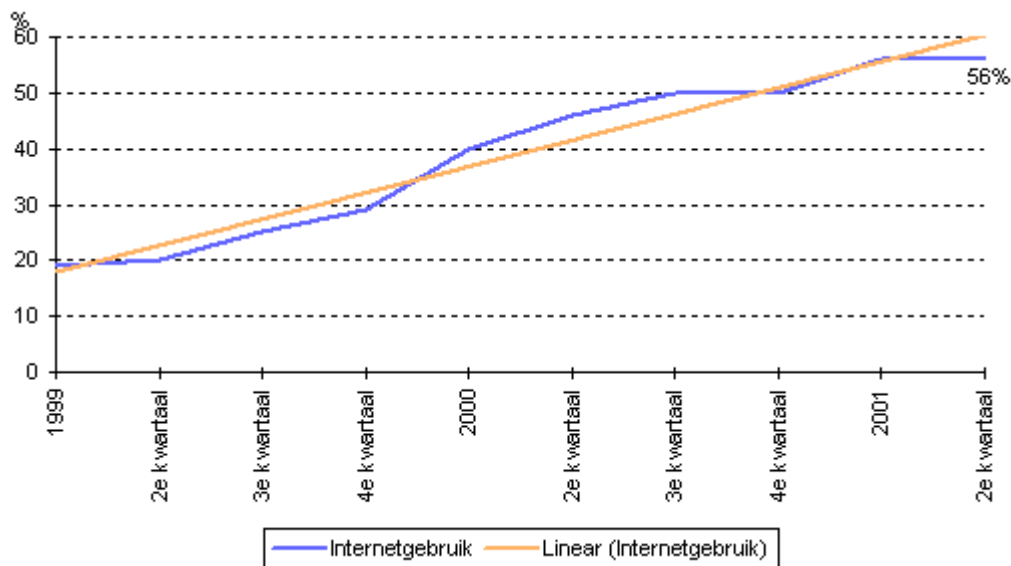
- The percentage of people with access to the Internet is the highest in the north of Noord-Holland and 't Gooi while larger cities like The Hague, Rotterdam and Amsterdam are lagging behind.
- The Internet penetration in the east, the southwest and the south east is the lowest with less than 40% users.
- The percentage of Internet users in Flevoland is higher than 55%. (Interview-NSS 2000)

Internet access of Dutch Households (1996/4 – 2001/2)



(Bron: NIPO Interactive 2001)

Internet usage of Dutch people over 16 years of age (1999/1-2001/2)



(Bron: NIPO Interactive 2001)

The usage of the Internet is not equal divided around age. From the age group between 15 and 24, 84% uses the Internet, whereas it is used by only 11% of the Dutch elderly of over 60 years old. The older the people, the less hours a week they use the Internet. Equally, there is a difference in *intensity* of Internet usage between men and women. 25 percent of all women who use the Internet, spend three hours online. Amongst men, this percentage is 40 percent. Most women, in contrast to me, spend less than one hour a eek on Internet (38%). (Interview-NSS 2000)

In spring 2001, the percentage of the Dutch population that has used the Internet to access Government online over the last twelve months was 31; this is 54 percent of all those who used the Internet at least once in the month before the question was posed. Most people used

Government Online services for Information Seeking (24%), while only 5 percent used it to pay for services. No more than 8 percent of all Internet users purchased e-government services, whereas 19 percent bought other online products. Users are on average aged between 25 and 54 years, more likely to be from higher income households and with a higher level of education. Males have a significant higher usage (37%) than women (25%) do. This is very much in line with the general profile of Internet users. Of the Dutch population, 23 percent considers it to be safe to use the Internet to provide the government with personal information, whereas 70 percent considers it unsafe. However, security concerns not always prevent people from using the services. 42 percent of those who have transacted online considered that it was unsafe to provide the government with personal information. An international comparative study of 27 countries showed that the Netherlands has above average usage of e-government. (NIPO and TNS 2001)

By far, most people use the Internet for e-mail access, followed by surfing the w.w.w. Much less popular is chatting or the use of newsgroups. Chatting is most popular amongst 15-17 year olds, while in comparison to the population as a whole, the elderly use the Internet mainly for e-mail. While surfing the web, the most popular topic amongst the Dutch population is ‘leisure time activities’, followed by ‘travel’ and ‘information about products’, (Interview-NSS 2000)

Websites of search engines and public services like banks and telecom services are for obvious reasons frequently visited. In January 2002, the ten most popular websites in the Netherlands were the following:

	Dutch sites only	All sites
1.	www.startpagina.nl (1)	www.microsoft.com (1)
2.	www.msn.nl (2)	www.startpagina.nl (2)
3.	www.ilse.nl (3)	www.msn.nl (3)
4.	www.omroep.nl (5)	www.geocities.com (4)
5.	www.postbank.nl (12)	www.ilse.nl (5)
6.	www.kaartenhuis.nl (4)	www.google.com (6)
7.	search.msn.nl (6)	www.omroep.nl (8)
8.	www.clubs.nl (8)	www.postbank.nl (17)
9.	www.rabobank.nl (10)	www.kaartenhuis.nl (6)
10.	www.kpn.com (9)	download.cnet.com (7)
Bron: Visiscan-onderzoek van Multiscope , januari 2002. Het getal tussen haakjes is de positie in december 2001.		

Internet Usage of Collective Actors

There are near to no studies on the Internet strategies of relevant collective actors. Therefore, hereby some more primary findings.

“Digital” Actors

The following organisations are, amongst others, active in the field of ICT, society and public sphere:

- <http://www.epn.net>: The Electronic-highway Platform Nederland (EPN) is an independent organisation with the aim to stimulate a stable introduction of ICT in society. It is a co-operation structure of the private sector, politics, science and government. EPN carries out research, publishes and organises debates on ICT and society. Examples of recent initiatives are recommendations on ICT for the coming parliamentary elections in the Netherlands and a forum discussion on the possibility of referenda by internet.
- <http://www.publiek-politiek.nl>: The Institute for Public and Politics (*Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek - IPP*) is a national, independent organisation that aims to stimulate political and societal participation. One of the key-issues of the organisation is new media. It regards itself as a center for knowledge and development for new media and democracy and has a lot of experience with internet discussions and web chats. In August 2000, the IPP published a report on Internet tools that are available to the authorities in order to stimulate participatory democracy. They identified three types: discussions and chats; virtual reality and opinion-polling mechanisms. (IPP 2000)
- <http://www.pels.net>: The virtual platform for electronic voting (PELS) was created in August 1999. It is a common initiative of the EPN, Domestic Governance (*Binnenlands Bestuur*), IPP, Dutch telecom (*KPN*) and 'Media Plaza'. Many national politicians have underwritten the pleads of the organisation to explore electronic voting.
- <http://www.forumdemocratie.nl>: The Forum for Democratic Development (*Forum voor Democratische Ontwikkeling*) aims to stimulate public discussion on democracy ad to strengthen the link between state and citizen. Although the Forum was set up on the initiative of the Minister of Home affairs in 1999, it is explicitly independent. The two central themes of 2000 and 2001 were Local Democracy and Europe. For 2002, special attention will be given to 'Internet and Democracy'.
- <http://www.edemocracy.hhs.nl>: The Interactive Multidisciplinary Innovation Platform eDemocracy (*Interactief Multidisciplinair Innovatieplatform eDemocracy*) is a project of a public vocational training organisation that aims to identify factors that may lead to an active virtual society that will research and experiment with distributed decision-making processes.
- <http://www.cyberacties.nl>: This website, which is a private initiative, stimulates political action by means of internet. It gives tips how to set up homepages and to organise or facilitate collective action by means of electronic tools.

"European" actors

Specifically active on European matters are the following organisations:

- <http://www.democratisch-europa.nl/>: The Society Democratic Europe (*Vereniging Democratisch Europa –VDE*) aims to concentrate a variety of critical notions about the process of European integration into a critical mass, in an effort to create enduring openness and justification from the side of the involved politicians. The Society does not reject the process of integration but takes as a central theme the necessity of a public and more critical discussion of main parts of European decision-making.
- <http://www.socialquality.nl>: The European Foundation on Social Equality was established in 1997 by a number of European social scientists who feared that economic integration would dominate social integration.
- In 1999, the two before mentioned organisations, together with the Dutch Forum for Democratic Development set up the project 'The Voice of Civil Europe'. This initiative was motivated out of a concern for the lack of public debate on European

politics in the Netherlands. Surrounding a specific theme it aims to have each year a widespread discussion by means of a substantive digital debate, articles, seminars etc.

- <http://www.europese-beweging.nl>: The European Movement of the Netherlands (*Europese Beweging Nederland*) aims to stimulate critical formation of opinion on the process of European unity and thereby contribute to the eventual accomplishment of European integration. It provides general information on European matters on her web-site and runs several digital discussions on topical European affairs.
- <http://www.europacentrum.nl>: The aim of the Europecenter (*Stichting Europa Centrum*) is to enlarge knowledge of, and interest in, European co-operation and to stimulate discussion on the matter amongst young people. It provides (practical) information on European matters and also organises web-discussions.

Domestic Politics

Because of local elections in the Netherlands in March 2002 and national elections in May 2002 there are a lot of new sites with information about national politics:

- <http://verkiezingen.kennisnet.nl>: This site is an initiative from the Ministry of Education (OC&W) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It provides information about the elections for young people. It contains voting advice, information about (local) political parties, polls and a forum discussion.
- <http://www.ukomttochook.nl/www.jijkomttochook>: The government invites on this site the national public to vote during the coming elections. The site is part of the campaign of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to increase the turn-out. It contains information that can be useful before, while and after voting. Questions like how to vote, where to vote and why to vote are being answered. Besides practical information it contains the latest news, an e-quiz, banners and screensavers.
- www.dnpp.nl: The goal of DNPP (“Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen”) is to provide systematic and accessible information about political parties in the Netherlands. It is about activities of the parties outside the parliament and the senate.
- <http://www.omroep.nl/nos/specials/nederlandkiest>: This site of the national public television station (NOS) contains information about the elections, polls, discussions and the latest political news. It also has an archive which contains the most important political events of the last 6 months.
- www.politiek.nl: On this site there are discussions about actual political topics. It is divided in several policy domains. Discussion about Europe can take place in the section foreign politics. Especially for the national elections the site contains information about the election programs of the different political parties. The main topic of this site are however the discussions.
- www.politiek-digitaal.nl: Internet has provided democracy with opportunities for renewal. Politiek-digitaal makes the most of these opportunities. This website offers news, background articles, opinions and columns about Dutch politics and new media. It evaluates amongst others personal websites of Dutch MP’s. Politiek-digitaal is operated by the independent association pol-di.net, founded by the creators of the successful German website *Politik-digital*. Its goal is to stimulate an open, democratic information society.
- <http://politiekejongeren.nl>: This site is an initiative of the political youth organisation (PJO). The goal of the site is to provide information about politics for young people. It contains information about the history of political parties, the differences between the parties and visitors can discuss about political topics.

- <http://www.futurenetwork.nl>: Future Network is an interactive community for children and teenagers. They can discuss about several topics. The site contains information about the national elections and politics in general.

Obviously, all political parties have their own web-sites. At this point, we will not discuss them.

Printed Media

The Board of Directors of PCM, the biggest publisher of newspapers in the Netherlands who produces amongst others *de Volkskrant*, *Algemeen dagblad*, *NRC Handelsblad* and *Trouw* announced in September 2001 to limit its internet activities. Due to a lack of advertisers the activities were no longer profitable. The department for interactive media would be closed and the Internet services would be limited to a kind of teletekst. (*de Volkskrant* 2001)

The sites of the four newspapers we analyse in our project, contain about the same information. They all have actual news, dossiers, discussions and polls. The difference between the sites is the focus of the news. In the “left”-leaning newspaper the focus is on actual politics and world news. The “right”-leaning paper focuses on national politics and sports. The tabloid focuses at sport immediately and the regional paper starts with news about the region.

<http://www.volkskrant.nl/>

<http://www.ad.nl/>

<http://www.telegraaf.nl/>

<http://www.leeuwardercourant.nl/>

Broadcasting companies

There are few websites which combine media and television. The ones we found contain discussions and/or dossiers. There is also actual news on these sites. There is a small difference in focus between the public broadcasting companies and the commercial ones.

The sites <http://www.omroep.nl/nos/noshome> and <http://www.rll.nl/actueel> provide actual news. Sites like <http://www.omroep.nl/vara/buitenhof> and

<http://www.vpro.nl/programma/buitenhof> provide discussions, polls and dossiers. The most extensive news site is <http://www.novatv.nl>. NOVA is a program with background news.

There are opinions, dossiers, the latest broadcast, topics of the coming program and discussions about recent news. They also deliver the site <http://www.politiekebarometer.nl/>

The *politieke barometer* contains the latest polls for the national elections. It is an initiative of the television program *NOVA*.

Unions

- <http://www.fnv.nl>: FNV is the largest trade union of the Netherlands. The site contains besides information on Dutch issues, information about European regulations in the field of labour, economics and terms of employment. They compare election programs of the Dutch parties on national and on European themes at their temporary “verkiezingsite”. On the site, there are links to European organisations and other (European) unions. Together with other Dutch unions, churches and humanitarian organisations they have a website, <http://www.socialealliantie.nl/>. This website contains also information about the national elections and compares party programs on social topics. They give their own view for the Netherlands.
- <http://www.vno-ncw.nl/verkiezingen/overzicht.htm>: VNO-NCW is the largest Dutch employers organisation. On this site it is possible to compare election programs of the political parties on different subjects. You can also compare them with the view of the organisation.

Government Policies

The Dutch government seems to make a rather large attempt to stimulate the active use of ICT by the private sector, the government itself and the citizens. It has set up a large number of institutions and undertaken a wide range of activities.

It is first of all the Directorate General for Telecommunications and Post of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management that is responsible for a competitive ICT market. Its agenda has been set out in the nota '*Netwerken in de Delta*', which stresses a further liberalisation of the market for ICT infrastructure, stimulation of competition between infrastructures, safeguarding availability of new services and an efficient use of the available frequencies. The aim was to stimulate innovative services. The first steps to consistently regulate the telecommunication market in the Netherlands were taken in February 1998 by the presentation of the legislation of the electronic highways (*Wetgeving voor de elektronische snelweg*) by the Minister of Justice.

The widespread discussion on ICT in the Netherlands was however rather initiated by the publication of a study by the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) in March 1998; '*Staat zonder land*'. The title refers to 'deterritorialisation'; the idea that functional and territorial aspects may be further disintegrated as a result of the growth in ICT, thereby on the one hand limiting the regulative and directive capacities of the state, on the other hand provide impulses for globalisation as well as regionalisation and localisation. The report equally hinted towards a declining identification of people with the nation state as a result of enhanced importance of both international aspects and regional ones. However, since social interaction was believed to remain primarily national, the state would not become superfluous overnight. Consequently, adaptation of the national government to the new situation was deemed necessary. In order to do so an open and explorative attitude was recommended. (WRR 1998)

In April 1998, the National Action Plan Electronic Highways (*Herijking Actieplan Elektronische Snelwegen – Boven NAP*¹) was approved. At the same time, the Council for Public Administration (*Raad voor Openbaar Bestuur*) put forward a recommendation 'Serve and earn with ICT' (*Dienen en verdienen met ICT*) in which it pointed towards the possibilities the ICT sector offers for a more efficient, effective and more individualised service of the government for its citizens. (ROB 1998) In December 1998, Minister van Boxtel of Urban and Integration Policy presented the Action Plan 'Electronic Governance' (*Elektronische Overheid*). This document describes how the authorities may give an impulse to the public services by means of ICT. Main themes were the following:

- Electronic access of Government Information. A single web-site was created, via which all sites of the public authorities could be accessed: www.overheid.nl, and as many public documents as possible would be posted on the web. Other initiatives for enhanced information exchange with the citizens by means of new media would include: interactive teletext, call centers and e-mail question and answer services.
- Stimulation of wide-spread access to, and use of, Internet. This not only meant lowering costs of access but also stimulation of computer literacy. All public libraries would for example be equipped with high quality material for internet access.
- Better public services. This meant, amongst others, offering information and services, irrespective of the place and time that the citizens requires it. Moreover, it would imply improvement of public functions related to social security, employment and health care.
- Internal professionalisation and improvement of efficiency. This would, amongst others, lower costs of public services for the citizens.

¹ Herijking Actieprogramma Elektronische Snelwegen 'Boven NAP', april 1998, Kamerstukken II, 24 565, nr.6.

On 21 June 1999, the government as a whole published a paper '*De Digitale Delta*'. Point of departure was that the Netherlands had the ambition to be one of the core countries on the electronic highway and the aim was therefore to give the country an excellent ICT basis. The policy had five focus points: (tele)communication infrastructure, knowledge and innovation, accessibility and know how, legislation and finally ICT in the public sector. Consequently, the governmental organisation *de Digitale Delta* became responsible for ICT in the Netherlands and its tasks include: liberalisation of the telecom market, the action plans E-commerce and E-government, legislation for Internet etc. Other initiatives at the national level were the programme for 'Technology and Society' of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the activities of the Rathenau Institute on the integration of new technology in society. Finally, there was the Action ICT for education and the Millennium Platform, which was responsible for a smooth changeover to the year 2000. (Infodrome 1999) The activities of *de Digitale Delta* would have a time horizon of three to five years.

In September 1999, the Dutch government set up an additional think-tank on ICT, which would during a period of two years execute studies, write reports, organise conferences and other activities in order to contribute to the national decision-making on ICT. Its time perspective would be longer than that of the *Digitale Delta*. The organisation, *Infodrome*, fell under responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, was steered by the secretary of state for culture and advised by a committee in which the directors of all ministries were represented. Its mission was threefold: obtaining an overview of the societal consequences of the information revolution; organising and providing input in the public debate on the role of the authorities in this process and finally advising the government on strategic choices. The research would be focused on eight policy areas: education; citizenship and safety; living; sports and culture; welfare; science; environment and international relations. (Infodrome 1999) In October 2000, mid-term conclusions were published. Four types of public policy with regards to ICT were identified: regulation of the ICT infrastructure; stimulating the use of ICT in society; development of e-government and anticipation of the changes in society under influence of the Information Age and the changed role of the authorities. The latter type was explicitly the focus of Infodrome.

In 1999, the Dutch Ministry of Home Affairs started a project 'voting at distance' (*Kiezen op afstand*), that examines the application of new technologies to voting procedures. One of the issues under research was voting by Internet. During the general elections of 2002, experiments will be carried out and shadow elections will take place by electronic means. '*Nederland gaat digitaal*' is the title of the public information campaign that has informed the citizens of the benefits and state of affairs of ICT since April 2000. It is a common initiative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, The Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Justice. In May 2000, the Minister of Urban and Integration Policy published 'Contract with the Future' (*Contract met de toekomst*), in which three themes were central: freedom in solidarity, a vision on the electronic relationship government-citizen; the approachable government and a dynamic government. In early 2001, the stimulation program '*Subsidies telecommunicatie*' has been initiated; aimed at the use of new (tele)communication technologies. One of the bigger projects in that framework is '*Kenniswijk*' (neighbourhood of knowledge); a large-scale experiment with a progressive communication infrastructure and consumer oriented services, that explores the possibilities of new technologies and its effects on society. Another project is *de digitale trapveldjes*; initiatives in less developed urban areas, meant to stimulate internet access and literacy.

On 6 September 2001, the ICT and Government Advisory Committee published its report 'Citizen and Government in the Information Society, the need for institutional innovation'. On 27 August 2001, a special committee on Government Information published its report 'In

service of democracy' (*In dienst van de democratie*). Both reports advocate a more intensive use of internet in the publication of information and data held by the authorities. On the website of ON21 (<http://www.on21.nl>), a common body for all Dutch public authorities specialised in practical ICT applications, citizens can ask questions and give their opinion on all aspects related to the public sector and ICT.

The Dutch government had installed a committee 'fundamental rights in the digital age', that has in May 2000 advised the authorities on the adjustment of articles 7, 10 and 13 of the Dutch Basic Law. The articles deal with respectively freedom of speech, right to privacy and the confidentiality of mail, telephone and telegraph.

In order to take away ungrounded fears amongst the general public and small and medium enterprises on internet usage and to warn the population for the possible dangers that are present on the world wide web, the government has initiated a special website that is called <http://surfopsafe.nl>. It draws attention to the risks of viruses, hackers, electronic fraud, abuse of personal data and undesirable content of websites.

The Dutch minister of Urban and Integration Policy, Van Boxtel, who is responsible for the co-ordination of ICT policy for citizens has had his own web-site ever since he took office. The site has an exemplary role for the other ministers. It contains the agenda and diary of the Minister, a weekly column, a survey and you can invite the Minister for lunch to discuss pressing matters. The pages are equally available in English, Arab and Turkish. The minister has once a month a one hour live chat on a topical issue. In December 2001, Minister van Boxtel announced that 25 percent of the public services of the authorities were available on-line. On that occasion he announced the foundation of a digital ombudsman. Citizens can there complain about all problems with digital public services. Since October 2001, a rank list has been published on internet, judging what authorities have the best websites. In January 2002, it was Eindhoven for the municipalities, Friesland for the provinces and the Ministry of Finance for ministries, who took the lead.

Not only all Dutch ministries have their own web-sites, including options for chats and web-discussions, but also both the Upper and the Lower chambers of the Dutch Parliament have very elaborate ones, including a well developed overview of their debates and the respective relevant documents. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently become very active in its information and communication activities on the EU and more in particular on enlargement. The website for debating these matters is <http://www.europa-interactief.nl> and called 'Europaportaal'-enlargement EU (*Europaportaal-Uitbreiding Europese Unie*). It contains amongst others general information, an overview of media reporting and several opportunities for debate.

References:

- Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2001), *De Digitale Economie 2001*, Voorburg.
- ICT and Government Advisory Committee (2001), *Citizen and Government in the Information Society*, the need for institutional innovation, The Hague, 6 September 2001.
- Infodrome (1999), *Missie Infodrome*, De Overheid in de Informatie Samenleving, 26 October 1999, <http://www.infodrome.nl>.
- Infodrome, (2000), *Instituties onder druk*, De uitdaging van de informatiesamenleving voor politiek en beleid, 16 October 2000.
- Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek (2000), *Internetgereedschappen voor Interactieve beleidsvorming*, Amsterdam, 20 August 2000.
- Interview-NSS (2000), *Internet Barometer*, July 2000, <http://www.interview-nss.com>.
- NIPO Interactive (2001), *Nipo Interactive E-Monitor*, <http://www.nipo.nl>.
- NIPO (2001a), *Wereldwijd E-commerce Onderzoek 2001*, Amsterdam, 28 June 2001.
- NIPO and TNS consultants (2001), *Government Online, a national perspective*, November 2001, <http://www.nipo.nl>.
- OPTA (2001), *Consultatie document Internet toegang*, 20-3-2001, <http://www.opta.nl>.
- OPTA (2001a), *Geen beperkingen meer voor internet tegen vast bedrag*, Press Release, 4-12-2001, <http://www.opta.nl>.
- Raad voor het Openbaar Bestuur, (1998), *Dienen en verdienen met ICT*; over de toekomstige mogelijkheden van de publieke dienstverlening, April 1998.
- Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, (1998), *Actieprogramma Electronische Overheid*, Kamerstuk 26387 (1998-1999), The Hague, 18 December 1998.
- de Volkskrant, (2001), *PCM draait geldkraan voor internet dicht*, 7-9-2001.
- Webwereld (2002), *Planet Internet verhoogt eigen tarief ADSL*, 5-3-2002, <http://www.webwereld.nl>.
- Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, (1998), *Staat zonder land*, Een verkenning van bestuurlijke gevolgen van informatie- en communicatietechnologie, Rapporten aan de Regering, 1998-54, Sdu Uitgevers, Den Haag.