Public finances continue to normalize in the Netherlands, reaching a small fiscal surplus in 2016

The government balance has improved from a -5.4% of GDP in 2009, at the trough of the international financial crisis, to a surplus of 0.4% of GDP in 2016. The primary balance, which measures the overall balance excluding net interest payments on government debt, went from -1.2% of GDP in 2015 to +1.2% of GDP in 2016 (according to the System of National Accounts definition). This result was due, in part, to a 1.7 p.p. decrease in the level of public expenditures that declined from 45.3% of GDP in 2015 to 43.6% of GDP in 2016.

Women have a high participation in politics in the Netherlands

Female participation is an important feature of a healthy and inclusive political system. In parliament and legislature bodies, the average share of women seats for 2017 across OECD countries was 29%. Yet in Netherlands this share is higher: the share of women parliamentarians was 38% for the same year. Within the executive branch, while the share of women ministers in 2017 was 28% on average among all OECD countries, in Netherlands this share reached also 38.

The Netherlands continues to conduct regular government spending reviews

The country has a long-standing tradition of conducting public expenditure reviews. Between 2008 and 2016, the government of the Netherlands conducted public spending reviews on an annual basis: 1 comprehensive review and 8 targeted spending reviews, where the scope is limited to a single program or line ministry accounting for up to 5% of all government spending.
Public Finance and Economics

**Fiscal balance** (2015, 2016)

% of GDP

- 4.8% 2016
- 2.8% 2015

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Government expenditures** (2015, 2016)

% of GDP

- Netherlands 2015: 45.3%
- 2016: 43.6%

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Government investment** (2015, 2016)

% of GDP

- Netherlands 2015: 3.3%
- 2016: 3.1%

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Government gross debt** (2015, 2016)

% of GDP

- Netherlands 2015: 78.1%
- 2016: 75.8%

Source: OECD National Accounts

How to read the figures:

- Country value in blue (not represented if not available)
- Average of OECD countries in red
- Range of OECD country values in grey
- Values have been rounded.
- n.a. refers to data not available

Public Employment

**General government employment as % of total employment (2015)**

- Netherlands: 12.8%
- 18.1%

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Women in the civil service ...**

- Netherlands: 44.2%
- 53.0%

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

**Percentage of central government employees aged 55 years or older (2015)**

- Netherlands: 30.3%
- 24.9%

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Composition of the workforce in Central/federal Governments

Public Sector Compensation

**Annual compensation across central government positions (2015)**

- Secretarial Positions
- Senior Professionals
- Middle Managers (D3 positions)
- Senior Managers (D1 positions)

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on the Compensation of employees in central / federal governments
### Human Resource Management

**Composite indicators on HRM practices in central government (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extent of delegation of HRM practices in line ministries</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of the use of performance assessments in HR decisions</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of the use of performance related pay</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of separate HRM practices for senior civil servants</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection of administrative data</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (2016) Strategic Human Resources Management Survey

### Budgeting

**Performance budgeting practices at the central level of government (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (2016) Survey of Performance Budgeting

### Regulatory governance

**Composite indices on regulatory governance for primary laws* (2014)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder engagement in developing regulations</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Impact Assessment for developing regulations</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex post evaluation of regulations</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance (iREG)

### Public Procurement

**General government procurement expenditures (2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General government procurement expenditures</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD National Accounts

**Strategic public procurement - Objectives (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for green public procurement</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for SMEs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for innovative goods and services</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OECD (2016) Survey on Public Procurement
Note s
 Fiscal balance as reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.

 Regulatory governance indicators: The results for stakeholder engagement and Regulatory Impact Assessment apply exclusively to processes for developing primary laws initiated by the executive. Data is not applicable to the United States, where all primary laws are initiated by Congress. In the majority of countries, most primary laws are initiated by the executive, except for Mexico and Korea, where a higher share of primary laws are initiated by parliament/congress (respectively 90.6% and 84%).

 Government gross debt is reported according to the SNA definition, which differs from the definition applied under the Maastricht Treaty. It is defined as all liabilities that require payment or payments of interest or principal by the debtor to the creditor at a date or dates in the future. All debt instruments are liabilities, but some liabilities such as shares, equity and financial derivatives are not debt.

Open Data

OURdata Index: Open, Useful, Reusable Government Data (2017)
Composite index: from 0 lowest to 1 highest

Digital Government

Individuals using the Internet for sending filled forms via public authorities websites in the past 12 months (2016)

Core Government Results

Satisfaction and confidence across public services (2016)
% of citizens expressing confidence/satisfaction

Differences in income inequality pre and post-tax and government transfers (2013)

Limited government powers (2016)

Notes
• Fiscal balance as reported in the System of National Accounts (SNA) framework, also referred to as net lending (+) or net borrowing (-) of government, is calculated as total government revenues minus total government expenditures.
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Government at a Glance 2017

Government at a Glance provides readers with a dashboard of key indicators assembled with the goal of contributing to the analysis and international comparison of public sector productivity and performance. Indicators on government revenues, expenditures, and employment are presented, alongside key output and outcome data for education, health and justice. Information on key enablers to increase productivity including on digital government, budget procedures, strategic human resource management, open government data and innovative practices are also included. In a context of tight budget constraints in many member countries, good indicators are needed more than ever, in order to help governments make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and to help restore confidence in government institutions.

The Excel spreadsheets used to create the tables and figures in Government at a Glance 2017 are available via the StatLinks provided throughout the publication: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2017-en

For more information on the data (including full methodology and figure notes) and to consult all other Country Fact Sheets: www.oecd.org/gov/govataglance.htm