Netherlands Labour Authority
Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment

Foreword and introduction of the Dutch Multiannual Plan 2027 - 2030

Foreword

The capacity of public authorities to act needs to be continuously improved.

This appeal has not gone unheard.

Since the foundation of the Dutch Labour Authority 136 years ago, joint supervision of work,[1] with employers, employees and other stakeholders, nationally and internationally, is the defining feature. Safe, healthy and fair work concerns us all. By way of illustration, health and safety catalogues 'give employers and employees unprecedented opportunities to check themselves how to work safely and healthily in a sector. Another example is that the Dutch Inspectorate has been a model for the International Labour Organization (ILO) how an inspection board should function. And we are working together with the *European Labour Authority* for more decisive action across borders.

This broad cooperation ensures we can react adequately on events, work more effectively to improve health and safety standards, and make better regulations. Such as banning hazardous substances worldwide. Or issuing alerts that cheap labour migration can disrupt entire sectors of the economy.

Our preventive approach to accident investigations is also one such example. Rather than using fines as a deterrent, we put place great emphasis on the learning effect of having employers involved in accident investigations. We make employers responsible for investigating and reporting accidents. They are involved from the outset: visiting the accident site, securing evidence and gathering the relevant information. Employers are expected to submit their findings within a reasonable timespan of several weeks. The inspector then responds promptly to the employer. The effectiveness of this new method and the support of employers for this approach is much greater. It's faster and prevents similar accidents from happening again.[2]

That is also how continue to respond to a rapidly changing world: by working closely with employers supporting them in fulfilling their responsibility and encouraging to take action. Our aim is to have make tangible improvements on the workplace rather than resorting to judicial processes.

Concretely, this means the following: in the coming years we want to apply the positive lessons learned from the accident reports to the reports about fair work. The approach must will first be tested in a a pilot project, for which we have chosen the Foreign Nationals Employment Act (. The aim is to alert employers much more quickly when a violation has occurred and to focus their attention on preventing it. This should result in actual fixes rather than legal processes. The new method will be announced and explained on the website.

Successive governments have imposed targets. Consequently, less supervision and detection capacity, means having to accept greater risks. These include risks to the protection of workers, and risks to fair competition between companies.

Supervision always involves making choices where to focus capacity and which risks to assess. Given the targets, these choices must now be made even more carefully. Bearing in mind the desired decisiveness, the Labour Authority has made those choices, described in this Multiannual Plan 2027-2030.

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November 2026

1 Humans Are Not Machines: Netherlands Labour Authority 1890–2025, dr. Timon de Groot, 2025, WBooks.

2 Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 2025-2026, 25 883, nr. 545.

1 The mission, vision and working method of the Labour Inspectorate

1.1 Introduction

The Dutch Labour Authority works to ensure fair, healthy and safe working conditions and to promote financial security for everyone. These tasks and working methods are laid down in laws and regulations. These include the Working Conditions Act, the Minimum Wage and Holiday Allowance Act (Wml) and other labour laws, the Work and Income Implementation Organisation (SUWI) Act, the Criminal Code and the instructions of the Prime Minister regarding the national inspections.

Every four years, the Dutch Labour Authority draws up a multiannual plan setting out how it will carry out its responsibilities in the years ahead. The plan describes its ambitions, priorities, approach and activities. This multiannual plan for 2027-2030, explains the principles that guide the Labour Authority's work and sets out intentions for supervision in the period 2027-2030. It also includes the annual plan for 2027.

Cooperation has been a defining feature for 136 years. From the beginning of the Labour Authority, its approach to supervision was developed jointly with employers, employees and other stakeholders, nationally and internationally. This tradition continues today.

There is considerable continuity between the Multiannual Plan 2023-2026 and the new Multiannual Plan. Our main activities continue to be: inspecting following reports, intervention projects based on risk selection, criminal investigations and issuing alerts. The latest Inspection Authority wide Risk Analysis (IRA)[3] provides a basis for carrying forward many of the risks identified as priorities in the previous multiannual period and addressing them over the next four years.

The Labour Authority will continue to use a broad intervention mix of different monitoring, enforcement and detection tools– from inspection and administrative enforcement to compliance communication. This commitment to better compliance and appropriate enforcement is in line with the Enforcement Direction of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.[4] Reports, monitoring and detection contribute together to a responsive, effective, knowledgeable and transparent Labour Authority.

A key feature of the supervisory model is that the combination of to complementary forms of supervision. On the one hand, active programmes focus on large risks and the sectors in which these risks are common. On the other hand, monitoring in response to reports provides a safety net, for the risks and sectors that are not covered by the proactive, risk-oriented approach. Developments in and analysis of reports may reveal new focus areas for future active programming. And with the Trends and Developments programme, there is also room for exploring emerging and emerging risks during this multi-annual period.

However, not everything stays unchanged. Monitoring and tracing requires making choices. The Netherlands has more than 2.5 million businesses, of which approximately 350 thousand are employers. About 10.4 million people work in the Netherlands.[5] We cannot visit every employer. Nor would it be effective to select employers at random. Instead, we focus our efforts in areas where risks are the greatest and where supervision can make the biggest difference. Experiences in the current period and developments in the environment force us to make change. The same applies to the targets set by the Schoof and Jetten cabinets. As a result, choices have to be made even sharper. This is what this multi-year plan does.

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3 The figures for IRA 6.0 are based on 2024 data. This is the most recent closed year for which all relevant figures are available. More recent sources have also been used to provide more qualitative information.

4 Parliamentary Papers II, 17050, No 613. Letter to Parliament on the multiannual enforcement course of 2026-2029.

5 CBS, Labour Market, Jobs and Unemployment Dashboard, Employment measured in different ways | CBS, 2025.

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