

Modernising Government in the Netherlands

A powerful government that listens and takes responsive action

The 'Andere Overheid' action programme was launched in 2004 with a view to modernising the Dutch Government. A range of improvement projects were already being conducted at the level of central government and also at municipal and provincial levels. But there was a need for an assertive, unified approach. One face, one label – a Modernising Government. / Andere Overheid.

Andere Overheid is working on becoming a powerful and decisive government, which puts the community central. The Action Programme entails improvement and initiatives around the following themes: **Improved Services, Less bureaucracy and a Decisive organisation**. Referring to all tasks a **different way of working** is necessary, such as teamwork, cooperation and listening to citizens.

Approach

Andere Overheid is more than a policy matter. It is a movement by and for government organisations and – professionals in order to work more purposeful and society orientated. Throughout the country projects are initiated in order to realise this.

The role of the Andere Overheid team is to boost the process. This is being done by signalling and offering platforms. By exchanging amongst all participants progress and good examples and by signalling the processes that need improvement as well as by supporting transformers and joining forces.

It takes a lot of time before public service has adapted a different way of working as its own. It begins and ends with governments that are willing to put their public service first and by people who want to make the difference. Only then government will change.

Time path

Andere Overheid is the programme of the Dutch Government Balkenende II and will run until mid 2007. In the beginning of 2003 the vision and the action programme were offered to the sitting government. 15th January 2004 marks the start of the team. As well as the beginning of the action lines, aimed at the different themes of the Andere Overheid.

The aims of the programme are becoming more clearly visible and noticeable in the country. Ministries, provinces, local government, district water boards and enforcement organisations all give their own support to the programme. There is a lot of enthusiasm in improving the level of public service and the service to society as a whole.

At the end of this Governing period (beginning of 2007) the task will be done for Andere Overheid. Once the intended movement has started the Programme will have succeeded even knowing that working on a better government will never be finished!

Better Service

Service to citizens and companies can be improved and be more efficient. This is done by using the possibilities within ICT and a more service orientated frame of mind.

Less Bureaucracy

Society demands more space for its own initiative. By diminishing rules and regulations government can create that space.

A decisive organisation

A well organised functioning government is very much needed in order to decisively execute its tasks, its authority and its responsibilities.

Different working method

The success of Andere Overheid stands or falls with a different working method and mentality. A culture of working together and listening to the citizens is a must.